



Museum Will Feature the Art of Linda Miller

By Nicki Bruce Logan – Lifestyles Editor

The first time I visited Linda Miller's home studio near San Patricio in the Hondo Valley of new Mexico, I missed the turn off and had to circle back. I did see the Texas flag Linda told me to look for, but decided we were lost when I didn't see a house or building. That's the beauty of her rustic home -- invisible from the busy highway that leads to Ruidoso -- and tucked against a wooded hill and a pasture. The perfect setting for an artist who focuses on realism and centers her work on things that please her eye -- a hummingbird, a stray black cat, a rabbit, a birds nest as well as a vintage wedding dress thrown over a chair, beaded purses, ballet shoes, and Indian trinkets.

Every corner of her studio has a still life in progress, objects she arranges, adding and subtracting until she has the look she wants to paint. Linda, who built her house with the help of friends and by bartering services from those who want to collect her work but can't afford to buy the paintings out right, just completed a 19 x 36 gallery that connects her house and studio.

At least, originally she planned the huge room to be a gallery to showcase her artwork when visitors drop by. An independent spirit who seldom consents to show or exhibitions -- because the time it takes to prepare is time taken away from her painting -- she realized that as more and more art collectors found her home, she needed a place, other than her working studio, to entertain them.

Linda did plan to make that last addition into a gallery. Instead, it evolved into a grand dining hall centered with a massive fireplace on one wall and a huge window framing a perfect mountain scene at one end.

She laughs when she confesses that after they finished pouring the Styrofoam and concrete blend that formed the foundation walls of the room, she realized it would be a crime to put nail holes in the walls. The finished walls have the appearance of anti-plaster, and complement the stone fireplace and carved 1881 wood beams.

Nature is part of Linda's home, both inside and out. Her pet goat, Miss Lilly, greets guests as they approach the house. Admittedly, Miss Lilly's interest in visitors seems to center on whether or not you're carrying a camera or Triscuits. She will pose for as long as you will take her photo, and will love you forever if you bring her Wheat Thins or Triscuits. Along with Miss Lilly, Justa Black, the stray cat, and Justa Hare, a brown rabbit, Linda has several dogs, the latest a Great Pyrenees she rescued from the pound a dovecote, subjects of her work at one time or another.

Nationally renowned for her art, Linda grew up in Snyder and began painting at an early age, yet didn't have any formal training as she was 14.

Her first art show, which featured the imprimatur of Peter Hurd and Heriette Wyeth, world-famous artists who were the nucleus of an artist's colony in the Hondo Valley where Linda settled, sold out in 45 minutes.

Her paintings are in many prestigious collections -- some of which she is borrowing for show she will have at the Museum of the Llano Estacado Sunday afternoon, December 6. She agreed to the show at



the museum, hosted by the Plainview Chamber of Commerce, Plains Art Association and the Plainview cultural Council, because her family ties to Plainview and Wayland. (She is cousin to Wilda and Harley Rein and Mike and Susie Hutcherson of Plainview and Marcia George of Hart.)

A reception will open the one week show and sale and will be a come and go affair from 2-5 PM December 6. The exhibition and sale will hang for one week only at the museum.

Miller's art career gained momentum after she was introduced to Henriette.

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