



Gallery COR Opens in Asheville

Photos by Aidan Hjelmsand

By NATASHA ANDERSON

A new gallery celebrates the work of artists who have built their careers outside of the usual channels and institutional framework. Gallery COR, at 19 Biltmore Avenue, was opened by Leslie Rowland in May to fulfill her desire to see self-educated Asheville-based artists who create paintings with a message, story and purpose represented in downtown Asheville.

“Cor is the Latin root for heart and courage,” says Rowland. “At Gallery COR, the paintings speak truth and represent what we see in the world and what we hope the world will become.”

Gallery COR has four contributing artists, including Rowland. All are self-educated and have developed distinctive styles and elevated messages.

Much of Rowland’s work focuses on ecological concepts, condensing relatively complex scientific scenarios into single images. Butterflies, bees, hummingbirds and other pollinators are puzzled together with imagery of flowers from which they derive nectar and pollinate. Animals are depicted benefitting ecosystems and humans. Other work focuses on technology, exploring communication with messages in binary code, and still other pieces present sound waves from well-known songs.

Meryl Lefkovich’s paintings explore self-discovery and themes related to nature, growth and sanctuary. In these works, she builds up layers in gesso and paint which she carves and scratches into shapes and forms, then glazes with color and scrapes back more to reveal texture and depth. “I feel I have finally found my true voice in my current work with oils and oil sticks,” says Lefkovich. “They contribute to the looseness I’ve been striving for, as well as a more ethereal and abstract quality which contributes to my focus on

self-exploration and growth.”

Frances Domingues presents work created with vintage industrial reclaimed metal and other objects. She is drawn to patina, rust and items that have a history. She employs what she describes as “alchemy, Living Waters, acrylics, mixed media and

oxidation” in her creations.

Objects with a history are also important in Stephen Quinn’s work. The use of implements collected over the years allow him to form rhythmic and dramatic patterns. Quinn works in multiple layers of texture, often playing with the juxtaposition of organic and architectural



textures. “While I am working, I am often in a very calm, open and receptive state,” says Quinn. “It is this peace and sense of allowing I’d like to pass along to the viewers.”

To learn more, visit GalleryCOR.com or follow the gallery on Instagram @GalleryCOR_Ashville.