

Jane Seymour (nee Joyce Frankenberg) To Show Watercolors at Wentworth Gallery

By Amy Krakovitz

Perhaps you know her as Dr. Quinn, Medicine Woman. Or maybe as Elise McKenna, Christopher Reeve's lost-in-time lover from *Somewhere In Time*. You might even remember her turn as Natalie Jastrow-Henry in *War and Remembrance*. And today, she is best known for her "Open Heart" jewelry designs. But however, you remember her, she is best known as Jane Seymour, actress and artist. And the Charlotte community will have an opportunity to meet her and view her art at an exhibit at the Wentworth Gallery in April.

How does a well-known and celebrated actress turn from the screen to the canvas? "I've been drawing as long as I can remember," Seymour said in an interview in February. "I could have studied art." Instead she decided to become a dancer and her acting career followed.

But about 20 years ago, in the midst of a personal crisis, when she bought a portrait of her children at a silent auction, the artist who came to her home to do the drawing saw some of her work. Impressed with her talent, he gave her a few lessons in painting in watercolors and "my whole spirit flew," she says. "Everything that was pulling me apart flew away. I literally became addicted to it, it was like therapy."

The surprise to her was that

anyone would be interested in buying or showing her work.

Much of her influence comes from where she lives, on the water. But her family is a great influence on her work and life as well. Her mother, as most people know now, gave her the idea of the "open heart" theme. But it is her father who influenced her themes of family and community.

Her father, John Benjamin Frankenberg, was a second generation Polish Jew. His father emigrated from the Polish area of the Pale of Settlement to Great Britain. Most of her father's side of the family were not practicing Jews, but she felt inspired by the Jewish dedication to family and community. Her children all attended Jewish preschool. And Judaism played central in her life when she was cast as Natalie Jastrow-Henry in the mini-series *War and Remembrance*.

Suddenly Seymour was thrust into the role of a Jewish woman who observed many mitzvot. She learned to say the Friday night blessing on the candles. She experienced the horrors of a concentration camp. She even brought her parents to the filming location where they both were brought back to their World War II experiences.

For her mother it was in a con-



Jane at work on one of her ocean-themed paintings.

centration camp on the other side of the world. As a Dutch citizen in the Dutch East Indies, she was interred in a Japanese camp in Indonesia. Her father, on the other hand, as a part of his duties in the Royal Air Force, liberated Bergen-Belsen. What was even more hor-

rible for him was to discover that three of his cousins had been murdered there.

But as for her art, "it all comes down to one thing," she says, "God's presence in nature." It can be seen in her still life paintings of a single flower or in the calm blue tones in her seascapes. She is also available to paint on commission and would love the challenge of completing a project that taps into her Jewish heritage.

The exhibit will be hung at the Wentworth Gallery in SouthPark Mall from April 1. The actual exhibit opening will be April 8 and



Family and the seaside are both common themes in Seymour's watercolors.

9. Ms. Seymour will be at the gallery April 8 from 7-9 PM and April 9 from 5-8 PM. Those unable to attend due to Shabbat obligations are encouraged to view the pre-show exhibit. ☆

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JCC
tributes

Thank You
It is with deep appreciation that we express our gratitude for the community's support following Dan's untimely death. Your thoughtfulness and concern have helped us endure this sad and difficult time.
Ellen Dubin and family

"I changed, you can too!"



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