

# Celebrating splendor of Tar Heel landscapes

By **FRANCINE ALLEN**  
Staff Writer

On an acrylic canvas, fishermen are pictured leaning over the rail of a dock while their fishing poles seem suspended in air. But if you follow the lines as they flow down from the dock, they disappear underneath the light green waters of a lake. Presumably, baited fishing hooks lie submerged in the waters, just waiting for that one naive, unsuspecting fish. The blue of the sky and the green of the trees around this scene seem to intermix, creating a setting in which trees and sky are inseparable.

A few paintings down from that one, a desolated farmhouse sits engulfed in trees, so much so that the brown of the trees and the farmhouse are intertwined. And they, like the sky and trees of the first painting, become inseparable.

Would you believe that such acrylic canvas paintings hang not on the walls of some fancy art gallery in New York or Boston but are displayed right here, in the Student Union gallery?

And would you also believe that such paintings depict the beauty of our own North Carolina landscapes?

Well, believe it. These paintings, are part of a display that celebrates the splendor of N.C. landscapes.

The exhibit is in conjunction with Women's Awareness Week and features UNC-Greensboro art instructor Suzy Andron, who says, "Painting is the most exciting, frightening and compelling thing I have done in my life."

When her paintings fail to reach her ideal, she says, that is when her work as an artist becomes frightening.

Although not a native of North Carolina, Andron has lived in North Carolina for 10 years and finds that North Carolina as well as its landscapes holds a special appeal for her.

"We live in one of the prettiest states in the United States," she

says, basing her judgment on her extensive travels across the country.

"There is an intimate quality about North Carolina, which is reflected in its rural landscapes," she says, adding that N.C. landscapes seem to have everything, from mountains to the Piedmont to the coast.

"N.C. landscapes have a human scale," she says. "People are small and the landscapes are such that we relate to them. We feel a part of them. They don't overwhelm us with awe."

Although places such as the Grand Canyon or Yosemite National Park are beautiful, they instill only majesty, she says. They, unlike N.C. landscapes, do not combine majesty and friendliness.

The blending of majesty and friendliness not only applies to North Carolina's landscapes but to its rural structures as well. Therefore, in most of Andron's paintings, landscapes are accompanied with humble structures — barns, tobacco sheds and farmhouses. "They are buildings that don't overcome people," Andron says.

Each landscape painting, with or without a tobacco shed or barn or farmhouse, follows an impressionistic mode and romantic style.

"They draw upon reality and the artist's eye," Andron says. "In each painting, I try to capture the soul essential of the place because everything has a soul. Even inanimate objects have souls because they have atoms."

The colors in her paintings, which are often an infusion of blue and green, purple and yellow, red and orange or blue and gray, are what Andron calls her reinterpretation of the landscapes.

"There is a quality about each individual landscape, and I portray that with color," she says.

When people see her paintings, she says, "I hope that they enjoy the color and that the paintings will give them a reason when they are driving down the highway to say, 'Gee, I hope they never tear

down that tobacco shed.'"

And Andron's hopes to preserve rural landscapes parallels the message she wants her audiences to receive from her paintings — "that we will never get so universalized in the use of our land that we will eradicate our rural heritage."

But she would also like her audiences to realize that her

paintings are her way of communicating with them.

"I want my heart to touch yours. We are all limited beings, so we are limited in reaching out," she says. "I reach out through my paintings. We all reach out. Writers reach out through writing, musicians through song."

Andron says she feels "highly

honored" about having her works displayed as part of Women's Awareness Week.

"When you hear about great artists, 99 percent are men and one percent are women," she says. "As artists, men and women have the same level of sensitivity — there is nothing a man can do that I can't do, creatively speaking."

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