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Seascapes And Local Scenes By Shirly Sontag Now On View

Newcomers in the Sandhills art world are in a fair way to make the established artists look to their laurels.

Latest to enter the field here, though a painter with training and hard work behind her, is Shirly Sontag, Mrs. Emanuel Sontag, of Southern Pines, whose show is now on view at the Library gallery.

Mrs. Sontag's medium is the subtle and difficult one of water colors and she shows competent understanding of it. Her subjects suit water-color technique. Both land-and seascapes are among the paintings shown and she has adapted her medium to the scene chosen, using it interpretively, with skill and discrimination.

In her well-worded statement descriptive of the work and her point of view towards it, she says: "I am trying to get a mood and to stimulate the viewer to an emotional awareness and a sensitivity to the dramatic quality embodied in nature. I am concerned with the atmosphere of a scene and try to capture its lyric aspect, even to the density of the air itself."

This latter quality actually forms the chief impact of this artist's work: her uncanny presentation of atmosphere. This is gained through very real skill with the wash technique, especially her rendition of sky. In "Rain At Dawn" and several other of the marine paintings, the effect of moisture-laden air is remarkable.

Low-lying rain-clouds, mist over the water, the air over a mountain view, these are vividly and skillfully portrayed.

Mrs. Sontag, in her remarks, stresses her belief that composition and design are the basic necessities of any painting. The balance of color, line and mass are, she feels, essential for a painting "to feel right." She believes, too, that the viewer should be able to share the experience conveyed by the painting, and her own work leans strongly to the subjective.

With the seascapes on view are also a number of compositions with a local setting. In her feeling for the lonely cabin with a big tree beside it; in her rendition of the glitter of pine-needles, the waterfall quality of sand, the moving curve of a railroad track, the artist shows her sympathetic understanding of the local countryside.

—LEONARDO

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4 bedroom house two miles from town. 2 baths. Large living room with fireplace, opens onto large screened porch. Full basement. Steam heat with new oil burner. Permanent stairway to floored attic. Small cement wading pool. About 2 acres. \$17,500

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