

THE PARK RECORD

The Kimball Art Center Unveils the First Winter Art Salon at Stein Eriksen Lodge

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The Kimball Art Center, a nonprofit organization, is known for its annual Park City Kimball Arts Festival during the summer, which brings renowned international artists into Park City for a weekend of art and celebration.

The event, which is the Kimball Art Center's biggest fundraiser, has been such a success that executive director Robin Marrouche wanted to present a unique winter fundraiser during the height of Park City's ski season.

So, Marrouche and Susan Swartz, an internationally renowned, Park City-based painter, have collaborated to organize the first annual Winter Art Salon, which will be held from Friday, Feb. 21, to Sunday, Feb. 23, at the Stein Eriksen Lodge.

Throughout the run, the salon will host artist receptions. On Saturday, the event will offer high tea from 3 p.m. until 5 p.m. and on Sunday it will present a continental breakfast.

The salon, which is free and open to the public, will feature artwork by Swartz, the late Nelson Mandela, Prince Charles, Dale Chihuly and jewelers Linda Lee Johnson and Alexandra Hart.

A portion of the art sales will be donated by the artists to the Kimball Art Center, which supports free arts education in the community.

"I've been an admirer of the works of Susan Swartz and have been following her extraordinary career for the past few years," Marrouche said. "I knew about an event she did at the Carlyle Hotel in New York and I asked if she would be open to do a similar event here in collaboration with the Kimball Art Center."

Swartz agreed and reached out to art dealer Anna Hunter.

Hunter and her daughter, Laura Walford, own Belgravia Gallery of London and represent Swartz in the United Kingdom.



Nelson Mandela's "The Cell Bars" is a documentation of the South African leader's 18 years incarceration at Robben Island. The drawing will be part of the Kimball Art Center's Winter Art Salon fundraiser. (Image courtesy of the Belgravia Gallery of London)

"I have known Susan for about three years and she is one of our gallery artists," Hunter told The Park Record during a phone call from London. "We had a wonderful exhibition of her works here about a year ago. It was beautiful and very well attended.

"During that time, Susan spoke so warmly of Park City and told me about the salon and we thought it would be a great idea for us to [participate]," Hunter said.

(For more information about Susan Swartz's involvement at the salon, please see accompanying story titled "Question and answer with artist Susan Swartz about the Winter Art Salon")

The seven works the Belgravia Gallery chose by Mandela have some historical significance, she said.

"There are some quite charming sketches and writings by Nelson Mandela when he was incarcerated at Robben Island for 18 years.

"What is interesting about these works is that Nelson saw Robben Island as a triumph for diversity and not a horrible place where dreadful things took place," Hunter said. "My daughter and I had the opportunity to spend the morning with Mr. Mandela at his home in Johannesburg. We filmed him signing his lithographs that will be on display."

These works were originally unveiled by Mandela and the Belgravia Gallery at Robben Island a few years ago.

"At that time, [Mandela] spoke about how much he enjoyed doing the drawings, and I spoke about how important they were," Hunter said. "It's a wonderful opportunity to bring these works to a different part of the world than we normally do."

Since then, the works have also been exhibited on the House of Lourdes in England, Rockefeller Center in New York and the Peace Museum in Luxembourg.

"Now we can add Park City to that list," Hunter said.

In addition to the Mandela works, the Belgravia Gallery will bring over some watercolors by Prince Charles.

"He's a noted artist and has some works that he did under a pseudonym into the Royal Academy," Hunter explained. "He has a style that's all his own and shows a love of nature, something that Susan also has."

The 13 watercolors are of places that have special meaning to the prince.

"There are no sheep, no cows or people," Hunter said. "Instead, he paints landscapes that feature lovely buildings. He paints his castles that he's associated with and his homes and the areas around them."

Prince Charles usually sells his paintings to raise money for charitable organizations.

"So it's very appropriate that these will be used in a situation to raise funds for an art center," Hunter said.

Marrouche said working with Hunter and the Belgravia Gallery continues the Kimball Art Center's mission of working with other organizations and individuals to bring art to Park City.

"[Over the years] we have forged a relationship with Dale Chihuly, Chihuly Studios and Holsten Galleries through one of our board members, Buzz Strasser, who is a glass collector," she said. "We also worked with some of our other patrons to understand which jewelers we could invite to the salon."

The event would also not have been made possible without the Kimball's cultural partnership with Stein Eriksen Lodge and Zion's Bank, Marrouche said.

"This way, we are not only able to invite our community, but we can invite tourists, visitors and second-home owners to come and enjoy the works of these incredible artists," she said. "Although the Winter Art Salon is a fundraiser for the Kimball Art Center, it is also one more way that we can demonstrate that Park City is becoming a thriving art community."

The Kimball Art Center will present the first annual Winter Art Salon at the Stein Eriksen Lodge, 7700 Stein Way, from Friday, Feb. 21, to Sunday, Feb. 23. Friday and Saturday hours will be from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. and will run Sunday from 8 a.m. until noon. Admission is free. For more information, visit www.kimballartcenter.org.