

Statement by Pierre Paul Art Gallery

“Canyon Color”- A Solo Exhibit by Leslie Masters

Written by Beth Mitchell

In her solo exhibit, **Canyon Color**, Leslie Masters has elevated her already superior work to an extraordinary new level. The Grand Canyon is her muse as she takes the viewer down the mighty Colorado River. Her palette, while vibrant, is also deep and rich. She views the canyon through many-colored lenses, creating works such as *Grand Canyon - Yellow* and *Grand Canyon - Turquoise* that come to life with a wide range of color values. In these paintings, Masters explores her landscape by using focused palette, each one reflecting one of the myriad moods of the canyon.

This 24 piece collection, like the Grand Canyon itself, tells the story of its creation through its many layers. The first layer, her preliminary sketches, was created by Masters while in the Canyon, surrounded by the awesome vistas and rainbow rock walls. Masters finds the vocabulary for her story by playing with color, light, and perspective in each sketch. Like Monet, she sometimes revisits the same location at various times of days to see how the light and shadows have transformed the landscape. In these sketches, the river itself becomes a reflection of Masters' mood, flowing from tranquil serenity to darting rapids.

From these sketches, the viewer now can truly understand and appreciate the intricate layers of Masters' exquisite, larger works. Created in her studio upon her return, each of the 12 large paintings is a well thought out expression of her experiences traveling through the Grand Canyon. From the thick, palette-knife application of paint on the canvas displayed in *Canyon Falls* to the translucent, thin layering of paint on *Grand Canyon-Purple*, Masters uses a variety of techniques to communicate and interpret the many voices of the Canyon.

Pierre Paul Art Gallery owner Lee Jean-Gilles calls “Canyon Color” a landmark collection that shows Leslie Masters is an artist to be lauded for her wondrous and seductive play on color and light. He says, “Leslie is a master-colorist working at the height of her powers and we are delighted to showcase this remarkable collection.

Artist Bio

Leslie Masters, painter, creates her masterful, brightly colored paintings using acrylics. She graduated with her M.A. in Art at the University of Michigan and a B.A. in Fine Art at Indiana University.

Masters, inspired by Monet, is a colorist. She uses lucid, dynamic colors with an energy and confidence that makes each piece glow. She says, "The paintings are all about the shimmer of color, the response to golden light." Masters loves creating her art. "I think of art as a spiritual experience. The creative process puts you in tune with your center, and that is what people need to feel connected to their lives."

Masters shares her knowledge of color and painting as a teacher. She has taught at the Bloomfield Art Center, the University of Michigan at Dearborn, Ann Arbor Art Association, the Center for Creative Studies, and Mercy College in Detroit. She has also taught at the Canton Art Institute in Ohio and at Indiana University. In its second edition, her book, *How to Paint a Rainbow*, is bringing her joy and knowledge of painting to a larger audience.