



Dragica Vidakovic

Off The Beaten Track

Just as the title implies, this collection is somewhat of a departure from the style, technique and process usually found in my work.

While the paintings are representational of the landscape, people remain the inspiration for this series. None is present, yet the work is the result of leaving the sanctuary of my studio, where work is done in a certain amount of solitude, for what I call a “boot camp trek” into the outdoors with a group of close friends and fellow artists; my inspiration.

Being transplanted to a spectacular location with a group of wonderful artists is an opportunity to connect, laugh, commiserate and learn from each other and to be challenged by nature and all that it entails. Light, wind, the pared down assortment of paints, tools and the diminutive (by my standard) size of the boards, combined with commentaries and stories from each and every member of our little group, all play an important role in taking me out of my shell, push me to experiment with different subjects, materials and textures and look at the scenery from a different perspective.

When painting in a “plein air” situation, particularly when done in a place such as Georgian Bay, there is no time for wandering and pre-thinking your work. You need to be fast at setting up, fast at applying paints and mostly fast at grasping the beauty, smells and textures around you. The whole environment can change within seconds. Wind, sun, clouds, rain, and even flies have a tremendous impact on how you capture and respond to it.

Fundamentally, however, it is still about people. It is about being with a group of very talented friends and learning from each other, sometimes choosing directions we may not have explored on our own.