

NEWS RELEASE

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***Light and Life*, Plein Air Oil Paintings by Diane DuBois Mullaly, on View through Dec. 1 at Adkins Arboretum**

There's something magnetic about Diane DuBois Mullaly's tiny plein air oil paintings in her show *Light and Life*, on view in the Adkins Arboretum Visitor's Center through Dec. 1. At only six inches square, their energy and color entice you to take a closer look. At the show's reception, from 3 to 5 p.m. on Sat., Oct. 20, this Easton artist will explain why she came to the Arboretum again and again over the past year to paint its trees, meadows and wetlands in all kinds of light and weather.



"Filled with Life," Diane DuBois Mullaly, oil, 6" x 6"

Whether flooded with brilliant sunlight or glowing with the suffused light of an overcast day, these little paintings are all about the different qualities of light, color and texture she found. While many of them show wide vistas of autumn meadow grasses or paths winding into the forest, as Mullaly grew more and more familiar with the Arboretum's landscapes, she also began to paint some of the things that make it special, including gourds hung up for nesting purple martins, the rainbow picket fence of the children's garden, a tree decorated for last year's Candlelit Caroling event and even one of the Arboretum's goats.

Mullaly paints with a palette knife, troweling the paint on, sometimes scraping it back, sometimes adding more on top, until each painting hums with textures and layers of surprising color. Each one is a fleeting portrait of a specific place in the Arboretum at a specific time in a specific season. On another day—or even a few hours later—each scene would have been different.

The idea for this series of paintings grew from the Daily Painting movement, which began a dozen years ago when artist Duane Keiser began posting a new painting each day and offering it for sale online. Mullaly learned about the movement and was subsequently able to study with another of its leaders, Carol Marine. Marine's book *Daily Painting* helped define the process as a practice of creating a small painting every day by working in a fresh, loose manner with the emphasis on spontaneity and experimentation.

"Part of the whole point is making it a daily habit," Mullaly explained. "It takes away the 'preciousness' of each one so that if you fail, it's fine because you're going to do another one tomorrow. It's a good way for artists to create an income, too."

Daily painting practice can help an artist overcome procrastination and gain confidence. Painting so often also can lead to a steady stream of ideas and self-discovery.

Mullaly attended Tyler School of Art of Temple University and is an award-winning plein air painter. She teaches workshops in Daily Painting at Easton's Academy Art Museum. In addition, she recently completed Maryland Master Naturalist training at the Arboretum.

"With the Master Naturalist training, I was here a lot," she noted. "I wanted to do that to figure out a way to connect art and science, and it was so interesting to learn everything that was taught."

With this new perspective and her artist's eye, Mullaly found a seemingly infinite variety of things to paint in the landscape she was coming to know so well. Many of her paintings were created outdoors, but when weather or her schedule didn't allow, she worked in her studio using field studies, memory and photos for reference.

"It was just a joy to do this," she said. "It's amazing what I found here."

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through Dec. 1 at the Arboretum Visitor's Center located at 12610 Eveland Road near Tuckahoe State Park in Ridgely. Contact the Arboretum at 410-634-2847, ext. 0 or info@adkinsarboretum.org for gallery hours.

CUTLINE: "Filled with Life" is part of *Light and Life*, Diane DuBois Mullaly's exhibit of plein air oil paintings on view through Dec. 1 at Adkins Arboretum. There will be a reception on Sat., Oct. 20 to meet the artist and learn about her work.

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Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum offers educational programs for all ages about nature and gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

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