

Dan Tell – *Show and Tell: Landscapes by Dan Tell*

Visual Description

This exhibit is of 11 paintings by Dan Tell. I will describe 5 of the works. The paintings are acrylic on unframed, stretched canvas. They are arranged one or two to a panel on the large, freestanding gallery panels. There are four double sided panels, covered with a beige carpet-like material, stacked in a line, running north-south. The panel faces also point north-south. The panels are numbered 1 through 8, with 1 being the northernmost panel, 2 being the south facing panel on the rear side of panel 1, and so on, through panel 8 being the southernmost panel.

Well-versed as a potter and a photographer, Dan Tell's real love is landscape painting. His favourite spot of interest is a neighbourhood scene, family homes, or a park – a suggestion of home, belonging, community, and respite.

Panel 3 – Left hand side - Blue House

There are two paintings of the same size (24"x36") in portrait orientation hung side by side on this panel. The first painting is a tranquil scene of a Victorian-era wood house nestled in front of some tall dark-green trees. The house is a pale blue, and is a fairly complex building with many architectural features. The vantage point of the painting is not straight on the front of the house, but rather off to its side. We can see a large, wrap around porch on the first level, with white support posts and railing. Under the porch roof are windows into the first floor. On the second floor, we can see two windows over the porch, and a third floor with one large window under the eaves. The siding around the third floor is a deep red, contrasting with the blue of the rest of the house. It matches the red of the brick chimney. Over to the right side of the house, and away from the porch, we see plainer architectural features with a few more windows and what looks to be an add-on, though in the same style. The ridges of all the rooflines are dotted with an ornamental white crest. In front of the house is a pale green and yellow lawn, and in the very foreground are some grey rocks and a few leggy shrubs with pale yellow leaves at the tips of their branches.

Panel 3, right hand side - Church on a Hill

The second painting shows a traditional white wooden church set just behind a hedge with two large trees on either side. The church's porch and dark wooden door is toward the viewer in the centre of the painting, and is flanked by three black framed windows to its right. The windows have diagonal lines creating diamond shapes in them, but are not obviously stained glass. Above the door is a small bell tower with windows visible on two sides. It does not have a spire above it, but it does have a pointy roof. More windows are visible on the other side of the church to the left of the door. The windows all have the same shape – vertical orientation with a pointed top, like a rectangle with a triangle placed on top. The roof of the church is dark grey with striations running diagonally across it. The hedge passes right across the front of the building and is a dark green. In front of the hedge and trees is more vegetation in a lighter green with some reds and browns in a type of pointillist affect. The sky above the building is very pale.

Panel 4 – Beach with waves (24"x30", landscape orientation)

This painting is a dramatic beach scape with a huge crescent-shaped beach. The crescent is a flattened 'C' due to perspective, with the beach to the left of the painting and the open ocean to the right side. The beach itself is white with hints of light blue, light yellow and lilac. There is a white water line showing waves at the base of the sand, and right in the middle with water splashing around it, is a large outcropping of dark brown rocks. There is another line of rocks right at the bottom of the painting closest to the viewer, and in the upper right side of the painting on the far side of the bay. The water is a darker blue with hints of green, and has some dark shadows

(possibly reflections from the rocks?) coming in from the right hand side. About one third of the way down from the top of the painting is a medium brown line suggesting solid land, where the beach ends. On the left side of this are three tiny white buildings with dark roofs. They are too far away for much detail, but we can see chimneys stretching above the roofs. The sky above the buildings is a periwinkle blue, with a white stripe of cloud on the right side. There is a line in the sky that is slightly darker than the rest, which comes down to a point in the middle and up on each side, almost like a sideways parenthesis or the spread of a bird's wings, suggesting an embrace of the scene below.

Panel 5 – Pier at sunset (24"x36" in landscape orientation)

This painting is a wide, clear view of a pier, stretching out into the water. The pier cuts across the picture horizontally, dividing the work in two, and is almost silhouetted by the sunset that we can see on the right side of the canvas. The pier has six vertical supports (in pairs) evenly spaced across the canvas, and one long horizontal line that runs across the middle of the support posts, which is presumably the pier deck. At each vertical support post, smaller supports make triangles as they hold up the decking through angled braces. The lines of the pier seem relatively thin and delicate from this distance, and are painted in a dark brown, almost black. They are highlighted with peach and orange light from the sunset. No details of people or boats can be seen either on the pier or on the visible shoreline. The vertical posts of the pier are reflected in the relatively smooth water. The water also reflects the colours of the sky but in more muted tones. The sky has some clouds, deep blue of coming evening, and a bit of light purple, as well as the orange around the sunset at the bottom right. The water shows the orange and lilac purple. In the bottom right hand corner, we can see the beach where it meets the water. The sand is various shades of light brown and some pebbles are hinted at with white and black dots. The beach also shines with reflected light from the sunset. Without any human or animal activity visible in the painting, the scene feels very still and serene.

Panel 7 – Bridges over the Fraser (24"x36")

This painting shows the Skytrain Bridge and the Patullo Bridge crossing the Fraser River looking east. In the foreground are three small islands covered with green and light brown trees. Behind the bridges, are the snow covered mountains. The water of the river is the palest possible blue, and is very flat. The sky is heavily textured and is a dark grey at the top of the frame progressing through a dark blue to a light grey with wispy darker grey clouds. The support cables of the Skytrain Bridge gleam white across the centre of the picture, and their straight lines are contrasted with the red arches of the Patullo behind. The dark mass of the mountain below the snow line serves to highlight the bridges crossing the river in front of it.