

Stefan Muresan – *Ink and Watercolour*

Visual Description

This exhibit is of ink and watercolour paintings, mostly small in scale. I will describe 5 of the works. The prints are matted and framed in simple white or black frames. They are arranged from 1 to 5 images 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 are north facing and south facing. 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.

Born in Cluj-Napoca, Romania and longtime resident of New Westminster, Stefan Muresan is a mechanical designer and drawing is an activity he has enjoyed for many years. A few years ago he took some watercolour classes, at Anvil Centre and Shadbolt Centre, and as he learned more, he realized that he had found a hobby to last for a lifetime. His artwork focuses mostly on landscapes and cityscapes, with inspiration drawn from West Coast scenery, the magnificent natural beauty of our province and from cities he has had the chance to visit.

Stefan says of the exhibit, “Watercolour is an unpredictable medium, challenging to control sometimes, one that requires flexibility in approach, careful planning and quick execution. The ink drawing acts as counterbalance, having more structure, bringing details in focus and allowing for better control of the creative process. And so, the combination of ink and watercolour seems to strike the right balance for me between rigid and creative and helps the two sides of my brain work together.”

“My favourite subjects are landscapes and cityscapes, usually inspired by places I visited. Many times I use my own photos and this lets me remember places I like, brings back memories and gives me the opportunity to relive happy moments - all I can hope for is that my artwork gives some happiness to the viewer as well.”

Panel 4 Middle – Brockton Point (6"x8")

This painting is of the Brockton Point Lighthouse in Stanley Park. The square lighthouse is centered in the image, and we see the lighthouse from the path, facing northeast. The path and guardrail are rendered in ink with some hatching for shadow, and lead the eye toward the lighthouse building. On the left side of the path is a bit of green and brown grass and the stone retaining wall going down to the water. The lighthouse sits over the path and has a dark grey base with openings to walk through. Above the base is the white main part of the building, divided by a thick red stripe around the middle of the building. At the top of the white section is the light encased in a red frame, and surrounded by a white guardrail. Behind the lighthouse is a faintly blue sky, and two boats floating on the water with a hint of the north shore behind. The simple colours of the grass, red stripe on the lighthouse and pale blue sky keep the painting focused. The painting is on rough-edged paper and is matted on a grey-blue inner mat and white outer mat.

Panel 7 Left Side – Mills Canal, Cluj-Napoca, Romania (8"x10")

This painting is of a canal or built-up river with a walkway on the right side and buildings right down to the water on the left side. At the side of the walkway is a wrought-iron railing, which also goes along the sides of the pedestrian bridges that cross the waterway. The walkway is just hinted at with a few cobbles. Most of the painting is detail of the houses on the left side of the water. These are 2 to 4 story houses that touch each other, in different but not wildly dissimilar styles, which have walls going right down to the water. Some of the pedestrian bridges go directly into the houses. Architectural details include window casements, rooflines, balconies and chimneys. The ink detail is precise, but the colour is quite vague. The houses almost seem to be painted in a wash of light brown, unifying the line of buildings. The bit of sky we can see is just a hint of blue. The edge of the colour, especially on the left side of the picture, is not clear-cut, but rather looks like brush strokes, and gives the impression that the line of buildings continues far past our viewpoint. The water in the canal or contained river is richly textured, and is a dark grey colour.

Panel 8 Top Row Left Side – Mount Douglas Beach (8"x10")

This is a landscape of a west coast beach (presumably near Mount Douglas or Pkols in Victoria). In the bottom right are five or six large boulders, in dark brown and black. Up the right side of the painting is the dark foliage of a conifer, and from underneath that dark corner comes a tree, reaching first horizontally and then on a diagonal up and out across the middle of the painting. Its thick trunk tapers significantly as it goes up, with leafy branches on either side. There are a few bare branches too. On the left side of the picture is the beach itself, which looks to be rocky and pebbly, with some seaweed and areas where the tide is covering the beach. A few dark shapes in the distance could be figures or larger rocks. Beyond the beach is some water and another piece of forested land further in the distance. The sky is a pale blue. The picture captures the difference between overexposed colour in the intense brightness of the sun on the left side and the deep shade of the forest on the right.

Panel 5 Middle – Sinclair Centre (5.5"x7.5")

This painting is of one of the towers on the sides of Sinclair Centre, a historic building on the corner of Hastings and Granville Streets in downtown Vancouver that now houses government services and a shopping centre. The painting looks up toward the roof of the corner tower, and we can see some ornate columns, topped by statuary. Above the columns is a clock face, and on the very top is an ornate, domed green roof, topped with a weather vane. Behind the building we can see just the sky, which is hinted at with some blue giving the appearance of scattered cloud.

Panel 5 Right Side– Siwash Rock (8"x10")

This black and white ink drawing is of the iconic Siwash Rock along the Stanley Park Seawall. The viewpoint is from behind the rock, looking out toward the northwest. The rock itself rises in a thick column from the water, and is richly covered in texture. This texture is rendered in careful drawing and cross-hatching. There is some vegetation on the top of the rock, but otherwise it is bare, with its lines, crevasses and ridges showing through. Beyond the rock the water is indicated with some ripple lines and a bit of treed land is visible beyond.