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Press Release:
Loraine Stephanson
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In October in our rear gallery, we present recent paintings by Loraine Stephanson, a painter based in Penticton, British Columbia. Stephanson is a landscape painter who condenses expanses of land into small poignant images painted on panels little bigger than postcards. Her works are meditations on seeing and painting.

Describing her process, Stephanson states: “The paintings are ... finished with the help of memory... imagination, drawings, written notes, and photo references. Being outside painting is an important part of the process. ”

Loraine stated in an interview that “Painters that influenced me and my work are numerous and changed as my work developed. Giotto, Piero della Francesca, Pierre Bonnard, Agnes Martin, Lois Dodd” are among the names she mentioned.

Stephanson went to Italy and worked doing drawings of archaeological fragments which influenced her ability to compose a painting. “Handling and drawing Roman and Greek artifacts, I felt a strong physical connection to the mosaics and frescoes I had seen. That discipline has guided me subliminally throughout my years as a painter. It has helped me maintain focus and regain it when my painting feels temporarily lost.”

She discussed her practice of painting small: “In 2014 I undertook a self-directed study project intended to help make more deliberate choices about color and composition. I painted small watercolors exclusively, in bound sketchbooks, working from both observation and memory. After completing a stack of those sketchbooks, I began working with oil paint on small panels, treating each with the same attention and focus I would afford a large canvas”.

Stephanson attended the University of Alberta in the 1970’s to study art and education. She has served on the Boards of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria and the Penticton Art Gallery, and is currently a member of the City of Penticton’s Heritage and Museum Committee. Her studio is the upstairs floor of a 1930s orchard house.