

Millard and Company in Tryon, NC

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for the phone company. The skies (especially the sunsets) in the southwest were an incredible inspiration and seemed to beg to be painted on canvas. Van Vynckt obliged and began her series of sky scape paintings. She quickly found a couple of galleries in Santa Fe to show her work.

Van Vynckt mentions: "The skies were other-worldly out there. It was like being on another planet. While we lived there, I understood why so many artists have flocked there through the years to paint. It seemed like every other person I met in New Mexico was an artist. The quality of light was unique. People told me that it was because of the 7,000 ft. elevation and the dust in the air. Whatever it was, I was captivated by those incredible sunsets and it has stayed with me ever since. I must have taken at least 1000 sky photos while we lived there. Needless to say, [I] have many, many more sunset paintings to paint!"

After six years of living there, the economy began to change and it effected the livelihood of many artists and the galleries that represented them. The couple had to make some hard decisions. When Jim decided to take an early retirement, they were faced with still having a large mortgage to pay and their property taxes rose \$800 just that year due to improvements in the community. It began to get increasingly more expensive to live out there. They wanted to stay in New Mexico, but it just didn't seem feasible. They knew they would miss the 9,000 foot mountain peaks and sunsets that they viewed from their home. But when change is in the air, there is not much one can do about it, except go with the flow. That is where North Carolina comes into the story.



Work by Vicki Van Vynckt

Van Vynckt had visited North Carolina only once (over 20 years ago) and remembered how much she loved Black Mountain. The two decided that perhaps North Carolina would be a good place to settle (hopefully once and for all) because it is green, has lots of water, and especially the mountains. They had spent six years



Work by Vicki Van Vynckt

living at the base of fairly tall mountains and couldn't imagine living anywhere flat. Another plus was that one of Van Vynckt's brothers lived outside of Charlotte, NC, so now there would be family to spend holidays with. In 2010, they moved across country to North Carolina and then settled in the small town of Tryon, in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. They were surprised to learn that Polk County also has tours of artist studios (like the towns in New Mexico) and Van Vynckt has since participated in a few of them.

She says: "North Carolina has proved itself to be a beautiful gem of a place. My brother told me that by moving here, we 'hit the gold mine'. I believe he was right. North Carolina is every bit as scenic as the Southwest, but of course, in a different way. I have never seen so many waterfalls as we have here, and the biggest 'gem' of them all is how friendly the people are. We ended up buying a small round house in the woods with a creek on the property. We definitely have more green and water, however, I was still missing those Santa Fe sunsets. One day last fall, while driving north on I-26 going to Hendersonville, NC, we saw a magnificent sunset that rivaled (or exceeded) any I had ever seen in New Mexico. It had reds and oranges that slowly turned to pink. At first I couldn't believe my eyes and thought I must be dreaming. It thrilled me to no end to know that I can still enjoy that kind of beauty "above the horizon" here in North Carolina, even if it is only once in awhile...."

Van Vynckt has been creating oil paintings for over 30 years and studied fine art at the University of Southern Indiana. She continued her studies by taking some drawing and plein-air painting courses through the Atelier art school in Minneapolis, MN. She teaches oil painting classes out of her home and show her paintings in galleries in North Carolina, South Carolina, and New Mexico. Van Vynckt's paintings hang in private collections throughout the United States.

For further information check our NC Commercial Gallery listings or call 828/859-7001.

Asheville Art Museum in Asheville, NC, Features Works by Dox Thrash

The Asheville Art Museum in Asheville, NC, is presenting *Dox Thrash, An American Journey: Georgia to Philadelphia*, an exhibition celebrating the work of an influential artist who is celebrated for his discovery of the carborundum process, a printmaking technique that produces rich, velvety tones with incredible depth and nuance. The exhibition will be on view through Sept. 7, 2014.

Dox Thrash (1893-1965) was born and raised in Griffin, GA, a small town halfway between Macon and Atlanta. Thrash left school after completing only the fourth grade but nurtured his love of drawing through art correspondence courses. He left home at an early age and worked his way north to Chicago, where he enrolled in the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. His course of study was briefly interrupted when he enlisted in the US Army and served during World War I.

After returning to the United States, Thrash toured with a vaudeville troupe and held a number of odd jobs before returning to the Art Institute of Chicago in 1919. He then spent several years living in Boston, Connecticut and New York before settling in Philadelphia in the late 1920s.



Dox Thrash, "Surface Mining", c. 1939, Aquatint, 6 15/16 x 9 7/8 inches. Private Collection, Courtesy of Dolan/ Maxwell.

He remained in Philadelphia until his death in 1965.

In 1937, Thrash joined the Philadelphia Fine Print Workshop, a division of the Works Progress Administration's Federal Art Project, which was a work relief program designed to put thousands of unemployed artists back to work and to allow them to share their artistic production with the general public. While serving in the Philadelphia Workshop, Thrash experimented with carborundum, an abrasive substance used to refurbish lithography stones. Thrash discovered that

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*Postcards
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the carborundum could be used to rough up the surface of a copper plate so that it could be worked with burnishers and scrapers to create an image. Though other WPA artists employed this method, it is Thrash who is most associated with this innovative technique.

Thrash's work was shown widely during the years he served in the Federal Art Project and he continued to be prolific after the Project ended. By the 1940s Thrash was known for a powerful body of imagery that confronted cultural history, racial experience and everyday life. Throughout his career, Thrash drew on personal experience for the striking imagery in his work, with scenes ranging from childhood memories of the rural South to hard times in the urban centers of the North, patriotic defense work during wartime and poetic portraits of his community and its residents.

The works on view reflect the full breadth of his artistic production. In addition to the carborundum process for which he is so well known, this exhibition also includes comparative impressions to dem-

onstrate how Thrash developed his ideas by reworking the copper plates as well as watercolors and drawings, many of which have never been shown.

This exhibition was organized by Dolan/Maxwell and Georgia College Museum of Art.

Founded by artists in 1948 in Asheville, the Asheville Art Museum annually presents an exciting, inviting and active schedule of exhibitions and public programs based on its permanent collection of 20th and 21st century American art. Any visit will also include experiences with works of significance to Western North Carolina's cultural heritage including Studio Craft, Black Mountain College and Cherokee artists. Special exhibitions feature renowned regional and national artists and explore issues of enduring interest. The Museum also offers a wide array of innovative, inspiring and entertaining educational programs for people of all ages.

For further information check our NC Institutional Gallery listings or visit (www.ashevilleart.org).

Crimson Laurel Gallery in Bakersville, NC, Features Works by Edge Barnes, Maureen McGregor, & Conrad Weiser

Crimson Laurel Gallery in Bakersville, NC, will present *Alternative Firings*, featuring works by Edge Barnes, Maureen McGregor, and Conrad Weiser, on view from Aug. 2 through Oct. 3, 2014. A reception will be held on Aug. 2, beginning at 6pm.

The show will represent three acclaimed ceramicists from central North Carolina who are using various firing techniques to produce their individual and unique styles of work.

Maureen McGregor will be showing her charcoal and naked raku pieces. She learned charcoal firing years ago while living in Switzerland; at the time, it was a new and a fairly unexplored process.



Works by Edge Barnes

Basically, she mixed bisque fired pottery with charcoal in an insulated can, ignited the mixture with a propane burner, then waited for the temperature to rise

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