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Artist Renders Everyday Scenes in Multi-Media

'Surreal-ity'

By Chris Lavin



The artist with one of her pieces.

Photo Chris Lavin

Lyn White watched her neighbor walking two dogs down the street in Moraga and ran in to grab her camera. Then she ran out to ask permission to take a photo – all this in about 50 seconds. But that was a while ago so she was probably still in her 70s, she says.

"I got the camera and then asked her if it was all right to take a picture," said White, who is now in her 80s. "I always ask permission."

What resulted was a study in blue, red and yellow, dogs tugging in two directions. It is representative of White's lifelong work of printmaking first, then multi-media treatments second. (And third and fourth.) She borrows a press, makes multiple prints, then it's back to the kitchen table with paints, glue ... multiple supplies, actually. "I use a lot of materials," White said. "Not just one medium." She then makes unique pieces from each identical print by painting and gluing and rubbing and dabbing.

A signature print of White's work hangs in her foyer, depicting her daughter on the front steps of a San Francisco apartment, looking quite dapper and 1950s. "I don't know how I came up with this," White says, peering at the fancy lace of the lapel and trying to remember how she created the effect. "I think I put down some burlap or cloth then lifted it up." The result is a perfect rendition of lace, in a world of blue and black and quaintness.

White married a civil engineer, and has spent her life helping to build bridges, literally, all over the world. Her time in Africa and Europe helped form her art: she has a woman riding a bicycle with baskets front and back full of flowers, ala France, a woman carrying baskets, ala one of many

places in Africa, and a newspaper boy heralding the latest edition above his head, ala the United States. Another signature is two women playing violin with a cellist in the middle, ala anywhere.

"I don't know where I get my ideas," White said. "I just ... see things."

White works mostly at her kitchen table. She is no longer fancy about her clothing. "This is what I wear," she says, exhibiting spotless sweat pants and a sweatshirt and turtleneck, and still managing to look totally put together. She has shelves and shelves of finished prints in her den, organized like a mechanical engineer, including drawers full of family portraits, made for events over the years – a homecoming, or graduation.

"These are all family," she said, pulling out a drawer. "Many, many prints about family. These are some of my favorites."

To view more of White's work, visit her website, which was created by her daughter, at www.lynwhiteart.com.



"Katie" by Lyn White



"Trio" by Lyn White

Images provided

In the article "Babe in the Bunker: Musings of Bay Area media star Barbara Simpson," published Oct. 8 in Lamorinda Weekly, we reported that Simpson contributes to The Talk Pod, an online community of professional broadcasters. Its website address is thetalkpod.com.

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