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Watercolors, oils and porcelain pleasing at Fayetteville's Limestone Art and Framing Gallery

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Courtesy of Lucie Wellner CENTRAL NEW

YORK artist Lucie Wellner exhibits a group of watercolors at the Limestone Art and Framing Gallery in Fayetteville. She titles this piece "Lucie's Garden."

The details

What: "Luminous Perspectives."

Where: Limestone Art and Framing Gallery, 207 Brooklea Drive, Fayetteville.

When: Through June 4.

What to expect: Watercolors by Lucie Wellner, oil paintings by Bridget Bossart van Otterloo and porcelain pieces by Katherine Houston.

Admission: Free.

Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday.

Info: 632-4445 or **www.limestoneart.biz**

Sometimes you just want to look at a few pleasant paintings or objects ... nothing heavy, or too challenging. It's not always about finding the meaning of life in a work of art, or connecting to a broader universe through an

artist's eyes. Sometimes, a rose is a rose is a rose; or in this case, a magnolia, a peony or an artichoke.

Pleasant is probably the best way to describe the current exhibition on view at the Limestone Art and Framing Gallery in Fayetteville.

The show, titled "Luminous Perspectives," is comprised of watercolor paintings by Syracuse-artist Lucie Wellner, paintings in oil with gold and silver leaf by Elmira artist Bridget Bossart Van Otterloo and porcelain fruits and vegetables by Boston-based ceramist Katherine Houston. There is nothing earth shattering about any of the work in this exhibition, but it's all quite competent with some works rising to the level of accomplished.

Wellner is a Central New York artist known for her work in watercolor. Landscapes are the dominant theme in this body of work, but there are a couple of garden paintings that rise above the others. While Wellner's landscapes are well executed, they are what they are with little interpretation.

Wellner's eye is drawn to pastoral views of Fabius, a pristine winterscape and nicely cropped views of Adirondack terrain. But, in "Lucie's Garden," she goes beyond merely rendering what lies before her and ventures into something more personal in expression. She takes liberties with color and rather than trying to get everything just so, she loosens her hand and the painting begins to breathe. "Lucie's Garden" is her best painting in the show.

Van Otterloo's luminous florals reference the techniques of the Old Masters and the style and subject matter of the 17th and 18th century Italian and Spanish still life painters. She also gives a nod to 17th century Dutch floral painters. The paintings appear restrained to the point of austere, but that's a conscious choice.

Van Otterloo situates her subject matter -- peonies, an amaryllis, a pear, a magnolia -- against stark backgrounds comprised of silver or gold leaf. These lighter than air sheets of silver and gold provide subtle contrasts in color, tone and texture to her flatly painted subject matter. Van Otterloo presents her objects with such care and "preciousness" they tend to read like portraits rather than mere representations.

Finally, Houston's charming and skillfully sculpted porcelain fruits and vegetables also reference artists and artisans of the past. Like ceramists of the 18th century, she hand sculpts hard paste porcelain and then decorates the forms using a wide range of color glazes. Think Sevres, Meissen and Limoges.

The works included in this exhibition play on botanical themes -- "Oh so Pretty Artichoke," "Tuscan Radicchio," and "Triple Lemon." Houston also shows a couple of more complex pieces -- "Spring Bowl Textured" and "Large Citrus Bowl," which assemble a variety of fruits and vegetables into a single vessel.

In all of these pieces, she demonstrates masterful technique. Houston's sculpting and carving are true to form and in her glazing, she captures both richness and a wide range of color.

The show remains on view through June 4.

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