

SARA ROBICHAUD: ARTIST STATEMENT

“Unapologetic – Romantic Notions of a Modern Woman” by Sara Robichaud

The artworks in this exhibition stem from an ongoing painting project entitled “An Unapologetic Affair” which embodies my vision for the inclusion of my home, and the mundane routines, rituals and interactions that we live out on a daily basis, as a work of art. “Unapologetic – Romantic Notions of a Modern Woman” is a series of paintings in which I’ve traced forms and outlined cast shadows, using furniture and domestic items to create an alluring and personal visual narrative.

Over the years, I have developed an awareness of the subtle phenomena present around me at home and as part of this project, have been acting on my inclinations to draw, paint, and create using my house as a canvas. Gradually, I have transformed my home into a walk-through painting, enhancing subtle aspects of the history of our house, the objects we live with, and traces of life, making them visible but not overt.

The paintings in this Gallery exhibition are influenced by the interventions I’ve been undertaking in the house and vice versa. This seamless flow of ideas is rich, and allows for innovation as my mind operates in an alternative mode, processing possibilities and breaking perceived boundaries. The fluctuating state of my home mirrors my working process, revealing the provisional steps I take when constructing a painting, and acts like a venue to stage ideas and enact potential outcomes.

These paintings, which are made using restrained and specific formal methods rooted in non-objective abstraction, end up reading as referential / objective artworks. They are highly literal – in fact they have become still life’s of personal objects – self portraits painted abstractly. In my exploration of each object I have been patient and curious, making visible notes on the canvas in pencil to document formal characteristics and then attempting to translate the resonance of each thing in paint.

In “Vanitas” I have used the outline of a triple faceted mirror and arranged dainty objects painted with care. One of the mirrored shapes was masked and scraped with multiple coats of metallic viscous gel while another surface treatment entails painting the lace filigree of the jewelry box delicately and with a value so faint that it is only visible from one side of the painting. The essence of the original object is relayed in painterly terms. Unbeknownst to me at the time, the forming of this painting coincided with my father’s death. On the day I found out he had died, I was compelled to include the bottle of Crown Royal.

As part of the larger project, in July, August and September, guests were invited to experience my art and hospitality in my home. These intimate gatherings were informal and relaxed allowing me to bring the performative character of the project to life while providing an immersive experience. These visits also offered me the opportunity to share my process and respond thoughtfully to suggestions and ideas. As this work now transitions to the “white cube” of the Gallery, I feel a sense of tension that is both tenuous and powerful, which is an integral part of the art. In light of my feelings of vulnerability, I aspire to express my vision wholeheartedly and without apology.