

Photography show captures essence of Kingston

By Kelly Reid
Correspondent

EMC Events - When thinking about Kingston and its character as a city, the compelling power and presence of the water is one of the defining features. For professional photographer Elizabeth Hesp, harnessing that energy through photography has been a decade-long passion. Hesp's new show Sky Water Sails – now on exhibition at the Central Branch of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library – brilliantly captures the city's relationship with its landscape: a reverent but tenuous yoke.

"It's a long story," laughs Hesp when asked what inspired the Sky Water Sails collection. "It's my obsession with light. And I am just in love with Kingston."

Hesp grew up in India and remembers her fascination with the interplay between light and water during the monsoon seasons. She began her artistic career by painting, but soon found that her passion was photography.

"One form of art leads to another," she explains.

Seventeen years ago, she immigrated to Canada from India and realized that the water and ships of Kingston's harbours were intensely inspiring. The sails and the tall ships speak not just to her, but to the story of many people that immigrate to Canada. "Golden Sails," for instance, is a remarkable and timeless shot of a tall ship pulling into Confederation Harbour.

"It's a symbol of freedom, of exploring," she says. "My aim is not only to show my art, but to start a dialogue with the community."

Hesp also shows off impressive sport photography of sloops slicing across the water under brilliant sunshine.

"It shows off what you can enjoy in Kingston," Hesp says of these shots. "And it's the beauty of our environment."

Yet alongside many of the beautiful tall ship shots are some photographs that intimate the untameable power of the water: "Storm Passing" shows an ominous landscape with a foreboding sky and churning water – pointedly free of ships. For all of Kingston's ostensible mastery over its landscape, the lake ultimately prevails.

Hesp's real triumphs, though, are her abstract prints. Her series of Battery Park at night includes a gorgeous array of city lights streaking above the water, shots that would make a fantastic conversation piece in any home or office. Though Hesp shows undeniable skill with both the detail photos and the more figurative work, it's the latter that is closest to her heart.

"Abstracts are very personal," says Hesp. "It's more an experimentation. You have to have the confidence to know it will be accepted."

So far, Hesp's work has been not just accepted, but celebrated.

"I've never looked back. It's fantastic," she smiles.



Elizabeth Hesp's 'Tall Ships' series showcases Kingston's harbours.

Photo/Kelly Reid

Like her ships, Elizabeth Hesp's career is sure to keep sailing. Sky Water Sails will be on display at

the KFPL until April 30. All of Hesp's work is available for purchase as her fine art print studio, Lens Glow Cre-

ations. To view more of Hesp's photography or to order prints, visit www.lensglowcreations.com.



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