

Sojourner Cafe

SHELBY'S WORLD

By Kerry Methner / CASA

BEARING THE DEPTH OF SOMEONE who has finally declared, "it's time for me and for my work," an exhibit of Shelby Harbison's creative canvases are on display at the Sojourner Cafe through April 30th with a 1st Thursday reception planned for April 7th from 5 to 11pm.

In acrylic on canvas and watercolor on cotton paper, Harbison has populated her studio and now Sojourner Cafe with over 20 works, both fanciful and imaginative, that are at the same time introspective.



Shelby Harbison

"In my professional life I was a copy editor... I raised my children on the beaches of Laguna, Hawaii, and Dana Point. When they grew up and left the nest I began to create art. It had always been there; there just weren't enough hours in the day," she writes on her website (shelbyharbison.com). In the intervening ten to twelve years since her children

grew up, she's been painting, every day.

As her work attests, Harbison explains that she is inspired by "Picasso, Frida Kahlo, Elizabeth Murray, Andy Warhol, and many other artists who have experimented with their expression." The work at Sojourner is mostly abstract, but also loosely references something the artist might have seen or imagined from life.

"We had a lot of freedom as kids," Harbison shared of her upbringing. "Our parents were creative and we seemed to just be able to make things all the time... I've always been a natural artist."

Of particular interest is the detailed *Seated Nude*, with a dark background, white figure, and a world of imagination floating inside and out. Also of note located to the back of the left room is *Beach Dog*, the only oil painting in the show.

"Art, like for a lot of creative people,



Roberta by Shelby Harbison

is my way of communicating. It's a passion, and a way of having a good time," Harbison noted.

While Harbison is basically self trained, through the California CETA program she took college level classes in drawing, graphics, silk screening, printing, and design. "I love the printing business - I love the ink on paper," she shared.

Part of that love for ink on paper has translated since she started painting to a love for detail and color on paper. Some of her watercolors are brimming with so much detail, its like words spilling off the page. "I'm a child of the sixties," Harbison offered. "We had the color, the music, all that could be 'in there.'"



Abstract by Shelby Harbison

Sojourner Cafe is located at 134 E Canon Perdido St and is open daily 11am-10pm. Reach them at 688-4454.