

Artist Suzy Murphy captures 'emotional landscapes' in Aspen exhibition

Aspen Public Radio | By [Kaya Williams](#)

Published February 19, 2024 at 6:45 PM MST



Courtesy Of Suzy Murphy

British contemporary artist Suzy Murphy paints peaceful, gentle landscapes that evoke the mountains of the American West and the feelings Murphy experiences in nature. Her latest show is a solo exhibition at Galerie Maximillian in Aspen.

Suzy Murphy's paintings are peaceful, with soft, gentle lines: The branches of evergreens look like they're draped with yarn. Silhouettes of mountains are smooth and rounded, rather than craggy and sharp. Blankets of snow appear so soft and dense that even the prints look like they could absorb sound.

Murphy — a contemporary British artist with a new exhibition at Aspen's Galerie Maximillian — draws inspiration from the scenery of the Rocky Mountains, where she spent much of her childhood. She said she isn't just capturing what she sees around her, but how she feels when she's immersed in her environment; recurring motifs, like a tiny red cabin, are symbols for Murphy's own place among natural surroundings.

"I've never really seen myself as a landscape artist," Murphy said in an interview. "I always feel they're like self-portraits — they're sort of 'emotional landscapes' for me."

Murphy said she finds solace in the environment of the mountains, just as she has for most of her life.

As a young girl, Murphy emigrated from urban London to rural Canada, where "the land really took a hold of me," she said. She ultimately returned to the U.K., but still longed for the open spaces that defined her childhood; her work now captures the scenery from many later travels throughout the American West, seeking new and familiar destinations alike.

"You think you've sort of exhausted everything, and you never have," Murphy said. "And that's an incredible thing about nature — that every time you turn up, the experience is different, even in the same place."

Murphy said her sense of wonder and comfort hasn't diminished with repeat visits. Rather, it's grown — especially as she gets older.

"When you're young, you think nothing can happen to you on some level, even though you know, for sure it can," Murphy said. "And as you're older you see and experience more, ... but nature is always there, and it always holds you."

Murphy's solo show at Galerie Maximillian opened on Feb. 16, with a collection of monoprints that feature hand-painted details. It will be up for two weeks.