

THIS WEEK

Guitarist Stuart
Weber performs
Blue Slipper
concerts

PAGE 6

Springhill
Presbyterian's
annual barn
dance Saturday

PAGE 11

24/7 Calendar

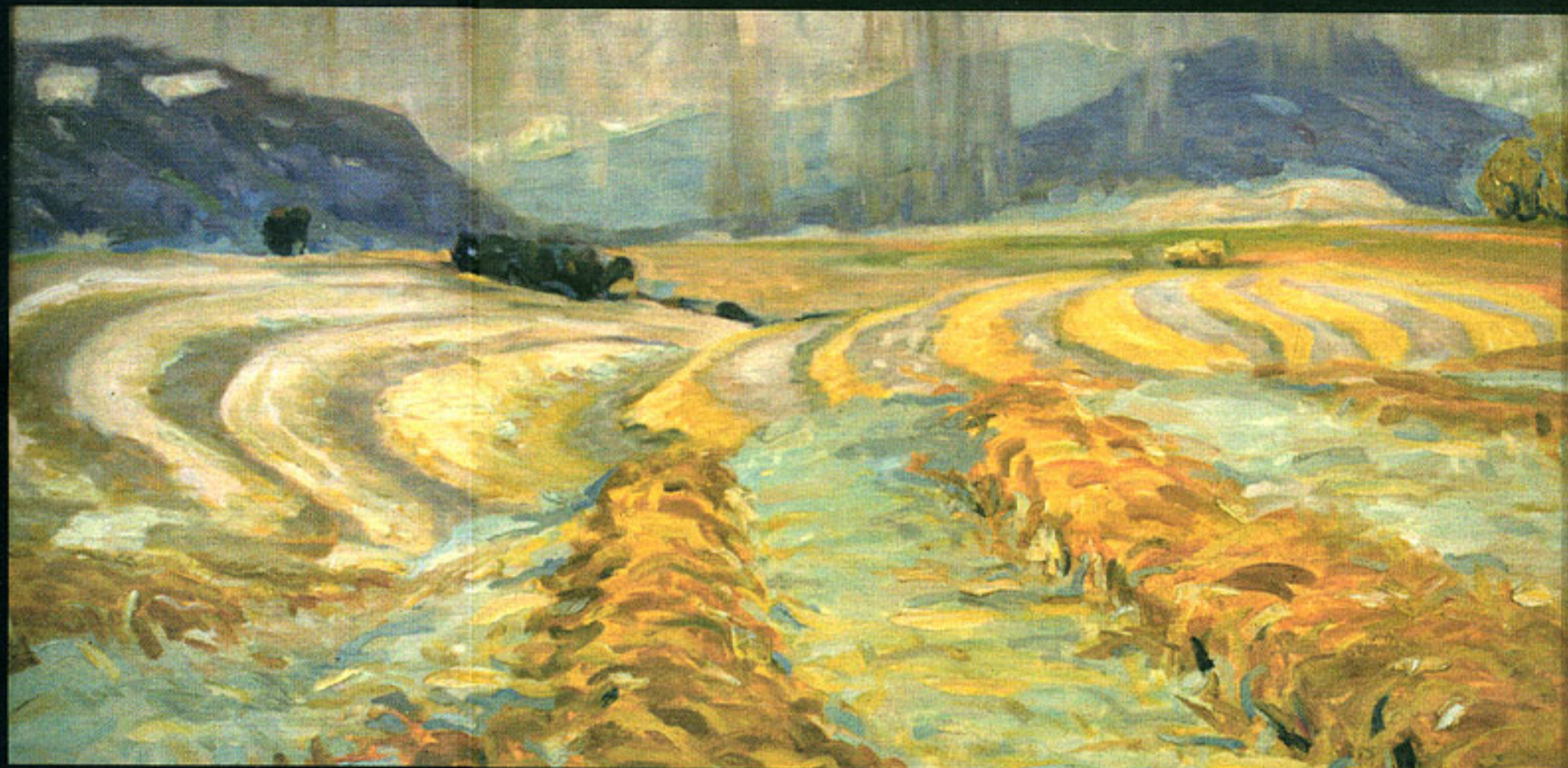
PAGES 12, 13

Solve our TV
crossword puzzle

PAGE 20

OUTHWEST MONTANA'S ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE

AUGUST 25-31



SUSAN BURROWS DABNEY

FIRST TO SHOW AT NEW **GALLERY**



Artist's passion of landscapes on display at Zoot Enterprises

Susan Burrows Dabney

A passion for painting

Zoot Enterprises opens new gallery in corporate headquarters with en plein air work of local artist

They are visions that draw you in gently, filling your senses with a mixed medley of messages. You can almost smell the colors, taste the light, hear the textures whispering to you.

Susan Burrows Dabney's haunting landscapes speak of nature in the language of dreams.

The paintings capture something the eye might miss, that the thinking mind might gloss over.

But it's there: an essence that seeps from the image and invades the chattering brain with a cool, present stillness; the kind of stillness Dabney seeks when she's putting brush to canvas.

One brief moment in time, a tiny snapshot from the endless play of nature around her, light and form captured but not bound, expressing itself in the movement of her hands.

"You become one with the land," Dabney says. "That is what has to happen for the land to speak back to you and tell the brushes what to do."



Surrounded by dozens of her paintings, and encircled by friends, fellow artists and admirers, Dabney beams as she looks around the gallery at Zoot Enterprises' corporate headquarters near Four Corners.

It's Aug. 17, and the gallery is alive with visitors sampling a company-sponsored exhibit of more than 70 of Dabney's works — the official opening of its soaring 3,000 square-foot gallery space.

Dabney smiles, chats, shakes hands.

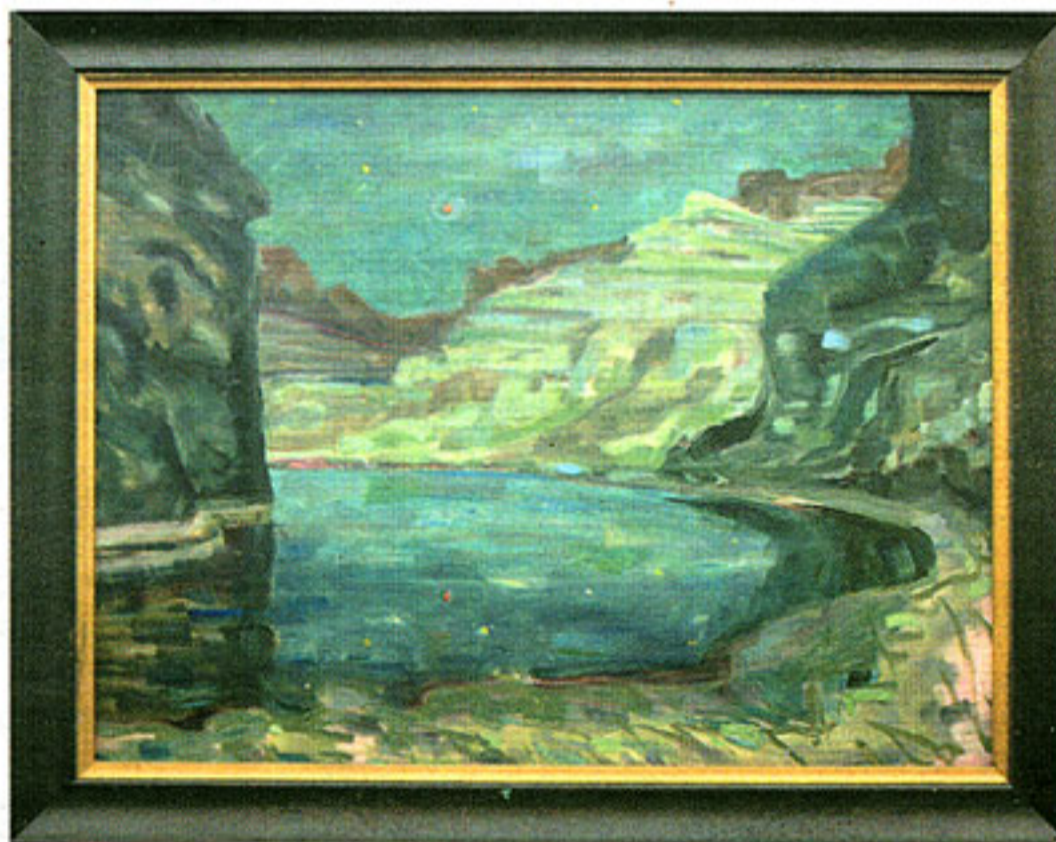
"I know it was just a fabulous gift to be asked to do this," she says.

The show, titled "Painted Preservations: Rivers and Landscapes of the World," is a retrospective of her work over more than three years.

It's also a testament to Dabney's mastery of painting en plein air — an impressionistic style that demands the painter work his or her magic in the

open air, immersed in the subject.

To capture the essence of the landscapes she paints, Dabney works outdoors — sun, rain, sleet or snow — and seeks to achieve a total focus, a Zen-like oneness with the vast scene before her, that allows her not just to see the landscape, but to feel its breath, its heartbeat.



"Moon Glow at Saddle" from Dabney's Grand Canyon collection.

"You have to be so quiet," she says. "You feel the rhythm of the land. You have to be aware of everything around you, and always you are affected by the light, the moods around you, the wind, the rain or the snow."

Dabney's passion shows clearly in the works that grace the walls of the gallery around her. Many are familiar landscapes and Montana vistas, shown in bold brushstrokes dripping with color, light and feeling, with a focus at once softer and more immediately alive than any camera lens could convey.

Her love of landscapes is a natural outgrowth of her life and her childhood, she says.

"We moved quite a bit, and I always hated leaving

places," Dabney says. "That's part of why I paint places — then I don't ever have to leave them."



Dabney was fascinated with painting from the earliest days of her childhood, surrounded by beautiful works collected by her parents. She watched and learned from artists she met as a child. She began to draw and sketch, and eventually paint. One day it became clear what path she would choose.

"I came home and told my parents I was not going to college, that I was going to art school," Dabney says.

Eventually Dabney moved to Denver, where she met her husband, Dab. The couple had two children. Dabney dropped everything and began to paint full time. She credits her husband with an almost super-human patience and understanding for her passion.

"It's really extraordinary to be married to a man who appreciates art as much as he does," Dabney says, smiling. "When I'm painting, I'm gone. I don't cook, I don't clean. I can barely talk. Most people wouldn't be able to put up with that."

Her passion is paying off.

Successful exhibitions at a Big Sky gallery (Bill Gates bought one of her paintings), an ongoing exhibit at the Emerson Center for Arts and Culture and now a high-profile opening in what is sure to become one of Bozeman's premiere exhibition spaces bode well for Dabney's future.

More well-wishers appear at Dabney's elbow as dozens more swirl up the sweeping glass staircase that leads to the bright and open gallery. Downstairs, visitors dance to swing music and sample fine hors d'oeuvres.

Dabney smiles graciously.

"I'm grateful, and I'm honored," she says.

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**COVER
STORY**

By DAVE RICHARDSON

Photography by SEAN SPERRY
of the Chronicle



Patrons gaze at paintings of Susan Burrows Dabney during the first showing at the Zoot Gallery. On the cover, Dabney looks out the window Four Corners. Her painting "Spring Showers" is on display at the gallery.

Zoot Ent. provides new space for local art work

Susan Burrows Dabney's exhibit, "Painted Preservations: Rivers and Landscapes of the World," is on display at the Zoot Gallery, located in the west lobby of Zoot Enterprises' corporate headquarters, 555 Zoot Enterprises Lane, near Four Corners.

The showing will run through October, and features more than 70 of Dabney's landscape paintings, created over more than three years.

The exhibit opened Aug. 17, and marks the official opening of the Zoot Gallery to the public.

"We wanted to create a place where local artists can exhibit their work, where we'd all get to enjoy it, and where it can be seen by some of our largest clients," said Chris Nelson, Zoot's founder and CEO.

More public exhibitions are planned for the future, Nelson said.



Susan Burrows Dabney stands by her easel at the Zoot Gallery.