

She Dreamt

SHE DREAMT...

Do you think that the Feminine should be acknowledged as equally important in all things, including the SPIRITUAL? If so, you will find the exhibition "She Dreamt" by Redland artist calligrapher, Ruth Venner, of great interest. After all, women are 50% of the world's population...

Ruth has done a very competent job of acknowledging the female aspects of art and spirituality. Her exhibition in the Dunn Wing of the Museum contains numerous examples of her calligraphic artwork, much of which has been inspired by her visit to Angkor Wat and Borobudur in 2011. One example of this is Lady Buddha, seen here on the right.



Another example is Kuan Yin and Child, seen below. Kuan Yin is the Chinese Goddess of Mercy and is often, as here, represented as a Mother Goddess with child.



Ruth's creations are varied in their presentation and style. Although many reflect an Oriental influence others show a European influence, as is seen in the one featuring the German 11th century abbess Hildegard von Bingen, who was a young woman well ahead of her times in thought and deed. Hildegard not only

founded monasteries at Rupertsburg and Eibingen, but also wrote many books on herbs, healing, music and theology. Not only this, but Hildegard corresponded with people from many walks of life, exactly as

Jesus did centuries before her in Palestine and Judea.

A talented composer and musician, Hildegard also composed what is considered to be the first opera, "Ordo Virtutum". Her songs are enjoying an unprecedented popularity in current times. Not a bad effort for a female who lived long before the advent of Germaine Greer and women's liberation...

Ruth has presented Hildegard dressed in her black abbess' habit. Below her portrait is a paragraph in Latin, the Medieval language of the Church, written in exquisite calligraphic style by Ruth, who excels at this art.



Ruth is a versatile artist calligrapher and combines the two skills—artistry and calligraphy—perfectly in many of her creations. This is seen very clearly in "Apsara" on the left. The Buddha-like female in the centre of this piece is dominated by the elegant flourishes and scrolls surrounding her. These can be interpreted as wings in angelic style or, alternatively, as a stylised heart. This all depends on ones personal interpretation of the piece.



The exhibition is given an added dimension, too, with several of Ruth's exquisite hangings suspended to form an aisle in the Dunn Wing. Here we see the one featuring the emergence of Persephone from the waves. Not only does it testify to Ruth's talent as an artist, but it showcases her calligraphic talent, too...

These is but a glimpse of Ruth's exquisite creations. There are many more in the Dunn Wing, where they will remain until 31st January, 2015, when the exhibition closes.



SANDRA DAVIS.