

## Galleries

### All about Poole

We're all egotists at heart, and ~~\*~~ Barbara Poole makes no bones about it in her show at the Bromfield Art Gallery, "It's Always About Me." Poole's large-scale drawings and paintings feature herself acting out allegories that could apply to everyone.

"Wrapped in her cloak of invisibility, she fearlessly ventured forth into the jungle" a three-panel painting, has our heroine clad in a fur coat and jeans, making her way through the underbrush of a lush rain forest. She appears many times: prowling on hands and knees, climbing up a branch to pick a flower, or seated on the ground at the foot of a tree, looking wonderfully self-satisfied.

Poole is no supermodel; she's a middle-aged woman who has lost her glasses in the jungle. It's comical to have such an ordinary-looking heroine in the middle of the wilderness thoroughly pleased with herself, but it's also encouraging. The viewer can't help but identify with her and cheer her on.

Also at Bromfield, abstract painter Mary Hughes ruminates on the nature of stone walls. She spent time in the west of Ireland, admiring the ages-old walls that seam the fields. She noted what testaments they are to a farmer's long-ago handiwork and the passage of time. In her paintings, she attempts to capture the immediacy of the walls on the surface, with boldly drawn circles, but she also creates a pictorial depth that suggests echoes into the past. \*

The contrast works especially well in her watercolors, where the translucence of her medium makes the slow, gradually subtler repetitions of the circles more ephemeral.

By Cate McQuaid

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