

Kenny McKenna

McLarry Fine Art, May 21-June 4

WIDELY APPRECIATED FOR THEIR sunlit, deeply infused colors, vibrantly textured brushwork and expansive yet embracing compositions, Kenny McKenna's landscapes have long been prized by collectors. But when aficionados attend the opening reception of *From Vistas to Valleys*—his latest exhibition at Santa Fe, New Mexico-based McLarry Fine Art from May 21 to June 4—they're bound to notice a new focus to his work: a greater emphasis on and even deeper appreciation of northern New Mexico.

The shift can be credited to the move McKenna and his wife, Janet, made to Santa Fe in July 2022. It's not the first time they have been based there, as they resided in the city for some of 1999 and early 2000, and lived about an hour drive away in Albuquerque briefly in 1970 and

then again in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Now, says the artist, "we're getting more married to Santa Fe all the time," with a home on a third of an acre about 10 minutes south of the Plaza, and plans in the works to build a dedicated separate studio there. "So, I'm closer to all the subjects that I love to paint."

As the show's title suggests, those subjects do, indeed, include breathtaking vistas and valleys—sometimes both in a single work, as epitomized by *LOOKING TOWARDS SANTA FE FROM LOS ALAMOS*, an elevated southeast-facing perspective that sweeps from evergreens and desert scrub to the Rio Grande Valley and on to the distant snowcapped Sangre de Cristo Mountains. More intimately but no less inspiringly, McKenna portrays the autumnal beauty of Georgia

O'Keeffe country with his northern New Mexico scene *ROAD TO ABIQUIU*, a setting so serene that even crows pecking along the highway stay undisturbed. By contrast, the artist's large-scale canvas *ECHO AMPHITHEATER* presents the grandeur of another Abiquiu landmark noted for its awe-inspiring acoustic properties. "I know the colors might seem a little wild but they're fairly accurate. The sky gets so intensely blue, especially when you're looking upward toward the zenith, and the rocks are just phenomenal colors," says McKenna.

"What excites me about Kenny's work," notes McLarry Fine Art's owner Chris McLarry, "is the way he captures emotional depth through his masterful use of texture, color and light. Each piece invites the viewer to engage with

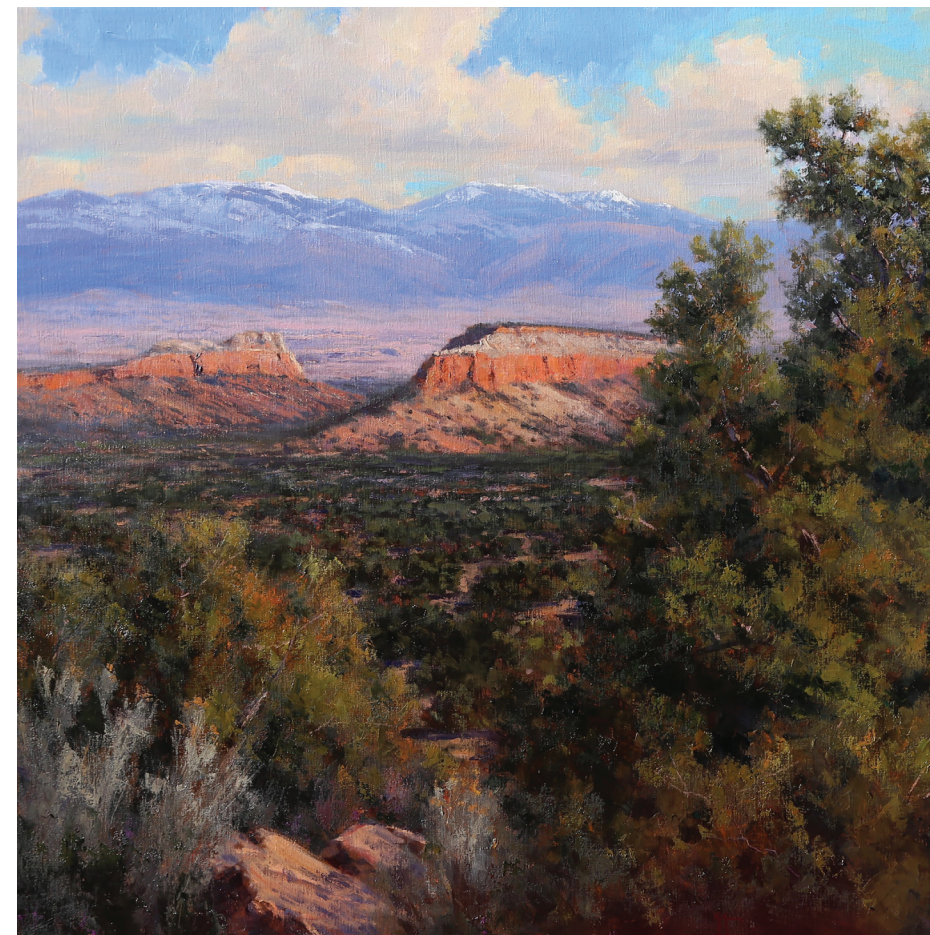


Echo Amphitheater (Abiquiu), oil, 44 x 78.



FROM TOP
Road to Abiquiu,
oil, 20 x 30.

**Looking Towards
Santa Fe from
Los Alamos,**
oil, 42 x 42.



the narrative behind it. Collectors are drawn to that unique combination of visceral appeal and intellectual depth, which evokes powerful emotions while challenging the viewer to see the world through his lens."

In addition, as McKenna was nearing his deadline for the show, he was hoping to complete about four plein-air works to include. "I'm trying to improve my outdoor painting chops," he says. Visitors may even have a chance to witness the process live, as the artist intends to set up and create a painting just outside the gallery's entrance starting around 10 a.m. the day after the May 23 opening reception from 4 to 6 p.m. "Unless," he adds with a laugh, "it's spitting hailstones that morning." —Norman Kolpas

contact information

(505) 988-1161
mclarryfineart.com