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ARTS & LIVING

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Inspired by change

Lisa Grossman to paint landscapes for 2003 Phoenix Award winners

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Since moving to the Midwest in 1988, Lawrence artist Lisa Grossman has been captivated by the seasonal changes in Kansas.

Such changes often serve as inspiration for the landscape paintings she creates on the prairie and not in the studio.

"To me, the sky itself has endless possibilities," said Grossman, a Slippery Rock, Pa., native. "The longer I work, the simpler they get. They become more minimal. It's always thrilling to work on the landscape and respond to all the changes in the weather and season. I paint year-round. I love it when weather comes in like snowstorms and thunderstorms."

Grossman's paintings wowed the Lawrence Arts Commission, which selected her to create the awards for the eighth annual Phoenix Awards. The awards recognize outstanding achievements in arts in the Lawrence community.

"Lisa Grossman's paintings are technically very accomplished works of art that cap-

Phoenix rises

Nomination for the eighth annual Phoenix Awards are due by 5 p.m. Oct. 1 at City Hall, 6 E. Sixth St., the Lawrence Arts Center, 940 N.H., or the Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vt. Forms are available at those locations and at www.lawrenceks.org.

The Phoenix awards ceremony will be at 2 p.m. Nov. 2 at the arts center.

ture the Kansas grassland landscape in a hauntingly beautiful way," said J. William Carswell, a member of the commission that asked Grossman to create the awards. "They are done en plein air and often depict Konza Prairie scenes at dusk when the muted land colors and natural atmospheric at the end of the day are at their most complex and subtle. Her paintings are very environmental; the landscapes in her work seem to have a lonely vulnerability, like the fragile ecology of

the prairie itself. They can evoke a potent sense of place for people who have an affection for the natural landscapes and skylines of Kansas."

Deadline for Phoenix award nominations is 5 p.m. Oct. 1. Nomination forms are available at City Hall, 6 E. Sixth St., the Lawrence Arts Center, 940 N.H., and the Lawrence Public Library, 707 Vt. The awards ceremony is 2 p.m. Nov. 2 at the arts center.

Awards will be presented for musical arts, visual arts, performing arts, arts education, literary arts, arts volunteer and exceptional artistic achievement. All the awards will be landscape paintings from Grossman.

"It will be a related series of paintings, but they'll all be unique," Grossman said of the 6-by-6-inch oil paintings.

Grossman began focusing on landscape painting in the late 1980s after becoming an illustrator for Hallmark Cards.

"Shortly after I arrived, I discovered the Flint Hills and wide open spaces and huge skies," said Grossman, who has a bachelor's of fine arts degree from Kansas University.



Mike Yoder/Journal-World Photo

LAWRENCE ARTIST LISA GROSSMAN is creating awards for the eighth annual Phoenix Awards. Each award will be a unique but related landscape painting.

Recently, Grossman's paintings have been on display at the Dolphin Gallery in Kansas City, Mo. Her last three shows at the gallery were sold out. Within the past year, she also had her first show in Los Angeles.

Grossman, though, is more at home on the prairies of Kansas.

"Kansas is fabulous, if you like sky and open space, which is my central theme," Grossman said. "The Flint Hills is kind of the center of my inspi-

ration and where my ideas come out of. I like minimal spaces, wide stretches of land and open sky and being able to see to the horizon."

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