

NEWS RELEASE

For more information, contact:

Jodie Littleton
Communications Consultant
Adkins Arboretum
410.490.6930
jlittleton@adkinsarboretum.org



(RIDGELY, MD—August 3, 2016)

***Four Seasons*, Plein-Air Oil Paintings by Julia Sutliff, on View through September at Adkins Arboretum**

Guaranteed to lift the spirits even in the sultriest days of summer, Julia Sutliff's small oil paintings are joyous, fresh and playful. In *Four Seasons*, her fourth solo show at Adkins Arboretum, on view through Sept. 30, you'll find bright flowers dancing among meadow grasses, water glinting under trees heavy with summer leaves, and cattails standing brave and brittle in thin winter sunshine. There will be a reception to meet the artist on Sat., Aug. 13 from 3 to 5 p.m.

Sutliff paints outdoors. She finds it doesn't work for her to paint from photos or from memory, so she searches out pockets of nature surviving in the suburban sprawl near her home in Cockeysville, north of Baltimore.

"I try to catch nature in a free state, without interference from us," she said. "So I haunt woods, ponds, streams and fields, looking for images that express the riotous celebration of life all around me."

She often paints in places someone else might pass and never even notice, but Sutliff has honed her eye to see the magic of fleeting moments of light and color. She finds weather and the changing seasons constantly renewing the landscape and celebrates the shifting scenes they create, painting milkweed plants caught in the full sunlight just as their seedpods are swelling, then later as their color fades under cloudy autumn skies, and again in winter, stark and brittle against the snow.

Like many artists, she returns to similar themes to explore them in depth. Again and again, she paints cattails, branches leaning over water, and fields scattered with wildflowers. The changing seasons offer



Julia Sutliff, "Bright Reeds and Blue," oil on board

her infinite variety, and she delights in discovering something new and energizing in familiar scenes.

Two skills, developed over many years of painting, make Sutliff's landscapes so lively—the lightness of her brushstrokes and the ability to use color to remarkable effect.

Late autumn flowers in luscious shades of orange sing out against the lime and grass green reeds around them and the soft shades of gray water behind in "Water's Edge, Tangerine." In "Patapsco, View of Ridge," brushy strokes of color turn into a symphony of contrasting greens as light shines through the summer trees.

Sutliff's color range is exceptionally broad. While many of her paintings burst with colors in mischievous combinations, others are achingly subtle. She has a particular mastery of the nuanced hues of winter. Her paintings of cattails capture an infinite range of lighting effects, from silvery reflections glinting off the ice, to the warmth of sunset's glow, to the softness of overcast snowy skies.

These skills bring freshness to each painting. It's as if you're seeing something for the first time—catching a precious, intimate glimpse of nature as each new scene materializes from her quick, playful brushstrokes.

"I need to express grandeur, beauty, respect, awe," Sutliff explained. "But I think playfulness trumps them all because it's powerful enough to overcome the frustration of trying to get something 'right,' and to somehow let you participate in the beauty around you."

This show is part of Adkins Arboretum's ongoing exhibition series of work on natural themes by regional artists. It is on view through Sept. 30 at the Arboretum Visitor's Center located at 12610 Eveland Road near Tuckahoe State Park in Ridgely. Contact the Arboretum at 410-634-2847, ext. 0 or info@adkinsarboretum.org for gallery hours.

###

Adkins Arboretum is a 400-acre native garden and preserve at the headwaters of the Tuckahoe Creek in Caroline County. Open year round, the Arboretum is the region's resource for native plants and education programs about nature, ecology and wildlife conservation gardening. For more information, visit adkinsarboretum.org or call 410-634-2847, ext. 0.

Adkins Arboretum 12610 Eveland Road Ridgely, MD 21620
410.634.2847 www.adkinsarboretum.org info@adkinsarboretum.org