

Orkney inspires artist 30 years after first visit

By Leah Seator

American artist Jeanne Bouza Rose is still flying the flag for Orkney.

She has just returned to her home in Long Island, New York, after her third summer in Orkney leading art workshops.

Jeanne will be known by now to many for her dazzling pieces featuring Orkney landscapes, using the whieline woodblock-printing technique.

She started the Orkney Art Adventure three years ago, fulfilling an ambition to pass on to others the unique inspiration that she got from her first trip to the county.

She admits that when she first arrived here more than 30 years ago, it was the start of a love affair that has inspired her art to this day.

Her Orkney landscape scenes have brought her huge success in the States, where she regularly exhibits.

This year, she brought a new crusade of artists to Orkney to learn the technique, focusing on local sights, culture and heritage.

She explained: "The folks who came were the most immersed in art from any of my other participants, so that part was very easy for them," she explained.

"They quickly saw how the intermingling of the art with the Orkney history and artefacts helped to inspire them beyond the norm.

"They were very pleased to have met up with Neil Leask, Chris Macrae, Jane Glue and Pat Long and hear their stories.

"Visits to Maeshowe, the Tomb of the Eagles and Belgarth Bodhrans helped them to better see and hear history being created.

"We also managed to cross over to the Brough of Birsay and remain in the group of tourists not getting rescued! By following the tide times we had time to

have a wonderful sampling at the Birsay Tea Room.

"We made the traditional dancing on the Mondays, visited Kurbuster, Grindelay House, Skara Brae, the museums, walked to Marwick and continued the painting at Woodwick House.

"This is why there was no time for an art show this year!"

Jeanne has made several friends in Orkney during her visits, and was glad to catch up with several this summer.

"I also got to meet up again with Greta Craigie, my friendly moose maker as interviewed in the July *Living Orkney* magazine.

"I picked out more than the 30 mice I had hoped to return home with. I have all sorts of mice from kilted ones to hoodies to ladies in waiting.

"The Americans who are going to get these will find out how clever people can still be making mice!

"James Bryan at Woodwick, continues to cater to our sense of ambience and our taste buds. I am grateful for all the kind smiles that met me upon my return."

Jeanne isn't sure yet whether there will be an Orkney Art Adventure next year, but she will almost certainly make the trip to Orkney anyway.

She said: "Many folks this summer seemed to be encouraging me to just return and relax, and not to take folks around, but to do something that would allow me and others greater freedom.

"When I returned home, a phone message was waiting. Another customer planning ahead for her summer vacation had found my advertisement"

Visit www.rosecrossing.com to keep up to date with Jeanne's plans, and www.jeannebouzarose.com to see other examples of her work.