



Carol Fox photo

Lisa MacLean took a break from hanging her new show Monday to talk about her work.

Merging materials suits artist's style

By Carol Fox

Lisa MacLean hopes to someday travel to all the places her art has been.

Since she graduated with an honors diploma in printmaking at Emily Carr in 1985, MacLean has entered countless contests and her work has accompanied travelling exhibitions to Scotland, Yugoslavia, Peru, Korea, Italy, Poland, Spain and Japan, as well as Canada and the U.S.

Hanging her show at the Station Arts Centre in White Rock Monday for her opening today (Wednesday), MacLean said she had just returned from three weeks of working and learning in a print studio in Paris.

But further travels will probably have to wait until the 33-year-old completes the two-year master of fine arts program she's entering this fall at UBC.

MacLean's decision to study art in 1982 grew out of a lifelong love of art and a sev-

eral-year-long job at a bank. Having completed her bachelor of arts in English and philosophy at UBC in 1980, MacLean worked in a bank while deciding what to do with her education.

"I didn't want to teach high school, although I probably would now," she laughs. So when her husband suggested she go to art school she jumped at the chance.

Until then, she had never considered art as a career.

"I think he thought I would be a graphic artist," she says, smiling.

Instead she fell in love with printmaking, something she'd watched a friend do but never tried herself.

"I like printmaking because it's not as immediate as painting. It allows you to think about what you're doing," she says.

She also enjoys painting, but considers it more difficult than printmaking. For variety, she likes to switch back

and forth between the two forms of expression.

MacLean's style of printmaking is anything but orthodox. Huge and colorful, it combines collage, collograph (an etching technique using cardboard instead of metal), woodcuts and painting.

Traditional printmakers don't approve of MacLean's style of work, she says.

"It's neither print nor painting, but I don't care about those distinctions."

People either like her work or hate it, she says.

"Some people find it jarring and offensive, others like the color. It's not something I think about," she says.

Her work can be admired for its color and lines, but there's lots more to see if one cares to look deeper. Skeletons, human, and architectural forms are equated in her work, and she chooses her images carefully. Magazine pages echoing a

See Page A20

Artist conceals meanings

From Page A19

pages echoing a classical architecture theme can often be spied under the color.

"There's stuff scattered as shadow or suggestion, and if somebody wants to look deeper into it, they can find it."

Like many printmakers, MacLean works in series. Her four-panel work *The Path You Did Not Take* is actually part of a 16-piece

series. It's hard to imagine how big a room you'd need to house it.

"It's meant to be like frieze or bas relief — something that would go around a temple," she says.

Despite her impressive list of shows, including 10 solo exhibitions since 1982, MacLean still finds time to act as the paid director of the Malaspina Print Society on Granville Island. She has

worked there four days a week for the past three years, and done much of her work there, but plans to cut that back to three days a week when she begins school.

When she's not at Malaspina, she works in the garage of the White Rock home she moved into last year.

Her show, entitled *Figure and Ground*, runs at the Station until Sept. 15.