

Artists find inspiration in other cultures

■ **MOVED BY OTHER CULTURES**, work by Lin Golden, Gloria Massé and Carole Itter, Surrey Art Gallery, 13750 - 88th Ave., Surrey. To Nov. 22.

By **ELIZABETH GODLEY**

Lin Golden has never set foot in Japan, but the country's art and culture have intrigued Golden since her art-school days in the early 1960s.

The influence of Japanese art — especially woodblock prints by masters like Kitigawa Utamaro and Katsushika Hokusai — is obvious in Golden's work, now on view at the Surrey Art Gallery. Indeed, the gallery's current exhibit owes its title to the fact that all three artists find inspiration in cultures not their own.

Golden isn't interested in contemporary Japan, home of the Toyota and the Walkman, but in the nation's imperial past, as described in the 11th-century novel *The Tale of Genji*. The six paintings and seven ink drawings on view here might be illustrations for this tale, about a 10th-century nobleman who embodied all the romantic, manly virtues of the day.

In *Day of the Iris*, a diptych, Japanese warriors astride galloping horses hurtle past a group of komono-clad women. Their stillness and tranquility contrasts with the violent motion of the riders.

In *Genji at Suma*, a pattern of swirling waves recalls the famous view of Mt. Fuji, almost obscured by a huge breaker, by Hokusai.

Despite her love affair with Japanese art, Golden (who lives near Courtenay, B.C.) is not a copyist. Her paintings are looser and more emotional than those that inspire her, and she occasionally includes such Western touches as collage. Colored shoelaces are glued to one of her canvases.

If Golden's interest in Japan is cerebral, Gloria Massé's interest in India is sensual. Her India-inspired paintings are imbued with heat, dust and the odors of dung, smoke and crowds. Painted in oils, in luscious reds, violets and greens, they radiate warmth and passion.

Massé, who lives in Vancouver, has visited India four times, and her delight in the country's

fecund vegetation is evident in several works — *Grass Hut*, *In a Mango Tree Toran* and an untitled four-part installation that mimics the thatch and wood pillars of a peon's hut.

In *River Gods*, she portrays two supernatural beings huddled under a black broly, deftly combining the real and the fantastic to evoke the spirit of a country where nothing is as it first appears.

Carole Itter finds her inspiration closer to home, in the almost-lost culture of British Columbia's native Indians and the coastal landscape. Itter's huge installation, 27 feet long and almost six feet high, casts eerie shadows on the wall behind it, conjuring up the spirits of a primeval forest.

Composed of the cast-offs of a wasteful society — wooden kitchen utensils, car parts, unravelled rope, rusty chains and strings of bottle caps — it clanks and rattles at the touch, a ghostly reminder of a culture that honored its surroundings in a way modern British Columbians do not.



DAN SCOTT

LIN GOLDEN'S *Day of the Iris*

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