

Going for it Artist Teruko Wilde remains 'In Search of That Secret Place'

By T.L. Testerman

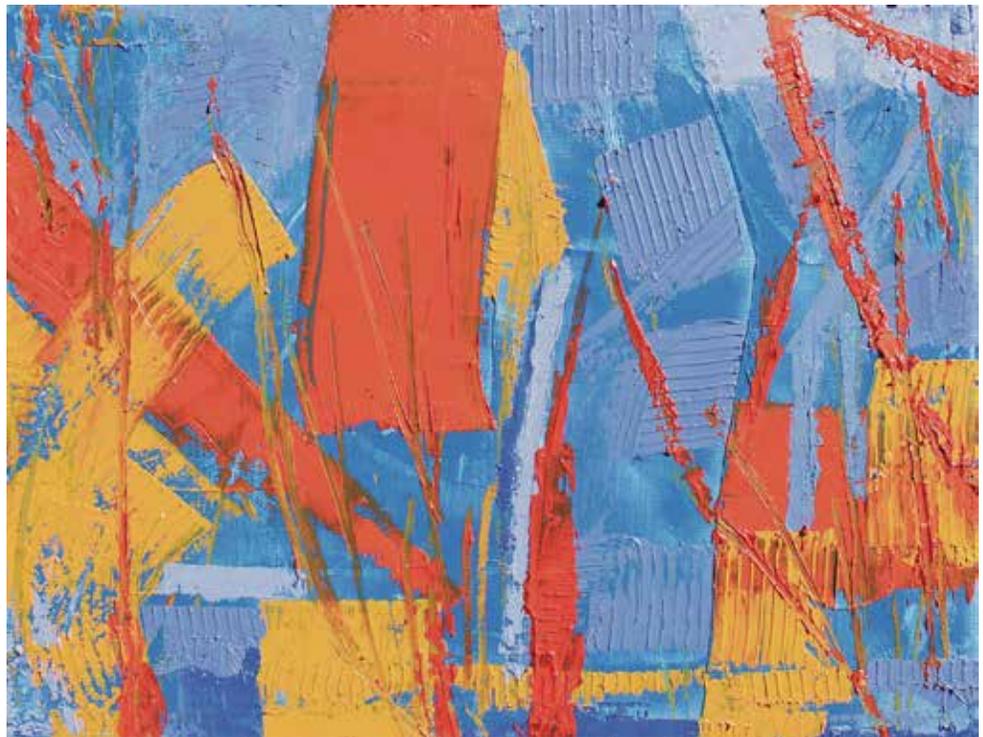
Taos artist Teruko Wilde's new work is evocative. Her canvas and brush strokes seem to harness the momentum of time and light. Her use of color is bold.

The new show is titled "In Search of That Secret Place," a metaphor for Wilde, about finding balance or inner peace in life. It is slated to open with a reception Friday (July 13), 5-7 p.m., at Total Arts Gallery, 122-A Kit Carson Road.

The new work from this artist who is known for never resting on her laurels and always pushing herself out of her own comfort zone is a brave new world with integrity, sensitivity and boldness, capturing with each line, the quintessential Taos experience.

Wilde said she began painting this work in August of last year, and it is about "going for it ... I'm a very emotional person. Color is how I express myself, which makes me excited."

As an artist, Wilde said she feels she has reached a place after painting for 40 years where "the lines come, one after the other in a natural rhythm." She doesn't see this as a new direction but rather a coming home or moving full cycle from the beginning.



"I feel more comfortable and confident now than when I started my career 40 years ago," she said. "Forget about approval. Forget about acceptance. It is exciting to be traveling into the unknown. It's a search within, not for a place or thing." She continued, "I've always worried about how to survive. This is a new beginning...my whole life at an end."

Her work is in private collections all over the world and represented in many galleries in the United States. She has taken part in group exhibitions in London, China and Australia.

Her daughter, Total Arts director Emily Wilde, said her mother's work "has been walking a line between representational and abstract for many years now ... It is the struggle

in being forced to earn a living and therefore meeting expectations and the need to express herself honestly and purely. The internal conflict plays out on her canvases over the years definitely autobiographically."

"In Search of That Secret Place" is apropos, she continued, because Teruko Wilde "looks at the land and observes its balance, it's peace and she wants it. She has been looking



for it her whole life. The painting allows her to connect with it, but she has yet to understand it and so the search continues."

Emily Wilde describes her mother's work ethos, "She has built a third-floor studio that has all the space and light she needs and feels grateful for it. She paints because she has to because, she is still searching."

Teruko Wilde compares abstract painting to the classical music she listens to daily in her studio. "One must take the time to get into it. One needs to have the patience to look and see what the artist is trying to say ... what excites me about abstract painting is that each viewer will have a different viewpoint on what they saw." She continued, "People need to have patience whether for art or a relationship."

Teruko Wilde's restlessness as an artist is because she's not satisfied

to only concentrate on technique. "When I feel I've accomplished something, I want to move to the next," she said.

Before moving Taos in the mid-1980s, Teruko Wilde owned a gallery and framing shop in Ohio and co-published the regional arts magazine and a newspaper. Taos felt like home from the moment she arrived.

She grew up in a mountainous village in Japan with geographical similarities. Something inspires her daily: the mountains, moving clouds, trees and the skylines. "I used to meditate on how clouds move, then return to my studio to paint," she said.

She finds pleasure in simple things. "The land and sky around us," she said, "Traveling and then coming home. Hot baths with a view of the land or sky." To fuel her inspiration,

the artist said she sits on her porch outside her Earthship studio every day. Her space looks at Pueblo Peak where she "finds spiritual inspiration."

The artist said that her relationship with daughter Emily brings her the greatest happiness. "I am happiest when she is smiling and relaxed. I need to learn a lot from her," Teruko Wilde said.

Emily Wilde said she returned to Taos over a decade ago to be close to her mother "and learn about her" as well. She is a former U.S. Marine, a graphic artist and a "collector of stray dogs and cats" who lives in El Rito with her husband and a menagerie of animals, including a cantankerous rooster.

Teruko Wilde took care of her own mother for over a decade in Taos, building a home next door to look after her. She said she was her mentor and inspiration.

"My mother, Moto, was a strong, independent, intelligent woman ahead of her time. She lost everything, including her husband, my father. She raised three children during and after World War II with no government help. Yet, she was a generous and kind person who shared with others even though she had little for herself."

Total Arts Gallery opened in Taos in 1969. It is the oldest, occupied, gallery in town. It is spacious with thick adobe walls that span six rooms in a historic hacienda built in the 1800s. Teruko Wilde, Harold Geller and Emily Wilde manage the space together with a stable of artists that "represent world-class achievements in a wide range of techniques from traditional to contemporary and in paintings to sculpture."

For more information, call the venue at (575) 758-4667 or visit totalartsgallery.com.