

Not so far from home

Inspired by soldiers' emotional homecomings, artist's work at Scott & White gallery focuses on home

By **Laura Kaae**
Scene

It's where the heart is. There's no place like it. And now it's the subject of a new exhibition at the Scott & White gallery — home.

After spending several days at Fort Hood, Dallas-based artist Lynn Noelle Rushton was inspired to create works of art that described the unique perspective soldiers who have been deployed for well over a year have on home.

During a 1st Cavalry Division homecoming ceremony in November, Rushton asked soldiers to write down words that to them, expressed home. She then photographed them holding their words, which was, Rushton said, her favorite part of the exhibit.

"They are really sweet," she said. "Some (words) are intimate, some are ideals and some are what you'd expect someone to say."

The exhibit, which features 16 works of water-based painting, oil-based painting and photographs will be on display for a month, beginning at 10 a.m. Feb. 6 at the Smith Art Gallery at Scott & White Memorial Hospital in Temple.

Rushton, a Texas native who received her bachelor's degree in fine arts from Vanderbilt University, said she was surprised by the tenderness soldiers expressed to her.

"I was allowed to sketch as the soldiers returned home," she said in an artist's statement. "I was present when the soldiers returned from 16 months of duty — what has become the most dramatic and anticipated of events in American military life. It was during the homecoming that I saw the magic of the word home, when the soldiers crossed a field, searching for the people they loved."

Home, she said, is a symbol for who we are and what we have become personally and culturally.

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Lynn Noelle Rushton
artist

Some of the soldiers wrote the names of their children, others wrote specific of places or things.

"Home means friends, family, God, country," she said. "That is our connectedness to each other."

After photographing the soldiers, Rushton then took the photos back to her studio and enhanced them with oil-paints. Other works include paintings of soldiers from WWII in the exhibit.



"Welcome Home" and "Repair on the Dome of Heaven": Oil on linen

The exhibit, titled "Letters from Home," opens at 10 a.m. Feb. 6.

The Smith Art Gallery is on the first floor of Scott & White, next to the McLane Dining Room. The gallery is open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and is free to the public.

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