

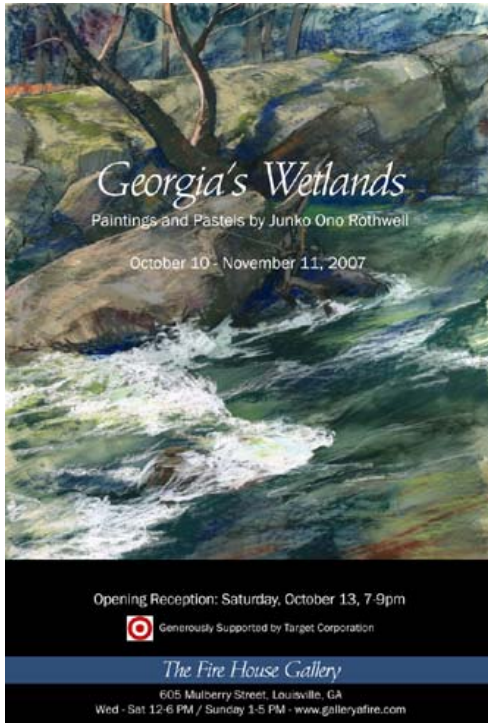
News From



THE FIRE HOUSE GALLERY

An Environmental Eye –

Junko Ono Rothwell Captures Georgia's Precious Wetlands



October 10 - November 11, 2007

Georgia's Wetlands – Paintings and Pastels by Junko Ono Rothwell

Opening Reception, October 13, 7-9 pm

Japanese-American painter Junko Ono Rothwell has lived thirty years in Georgia, and she's traveled nearly every inch of the state exploring and painting what she finds. Ms. Rothwell has been especially drawn to Georgia's waterways – its marshes and channels, creeks and rivers – and it's not surprising.

Raised on the Inland Sea in Japan with its thousands of small islands, Ms. Rothwell remembers her own childhood home perched on a hill above a small stream. "Whenever I stand next to water, whether streams in the mountains or coastal marshes, it reminds me of home," she says.

An open air painter, Ms. Rothwell explains, "I can learn and understand more with the subject in front of me. When I stand in a field, I can watch the water rise at high tide, smell the ocean, hear the birds and taste the salt air. When I paint on location I see and feel everything vividly, as if I have become part of nature. This is what I try to express on my canvas."

The exhibit at The Fire House Gallery will

include about forty paintings – ranging in size from smaller 10x12" pieces to larger oil canvases at 48x60". All of them reflect "the beauty of everyday life and ordinary things." With every change of tide, the painter sees new compositions. "Early in the morning there's a very orangish bright light and in the afternoon there's a golden time from four o'clock to six o'clock, when there's such a beautiful strong light. Watching all of the changes I try to capture the movements in the atmosphere."

"I also love the creeks in the northern mountains, too. The composition in the mountains with rocks and streams and darker paths changes dramatically in the fall."

"Mostly I go out with other artists," she adds. "I'm a member of the Plein Air Painters of Georgia – there are about thirty members, and once a month we decide on a place and meet on location. We pick a place like St. Simon's and stay a while and paint for a week." It's a great experience for camaraderie and study.

"I can always learn from others. It's the best chance to learn how to capture the marsh or how to use the colors. We learn from each other – we paint side by side and you can see the differences in our styles and get inspiration

from the other artists."

Still, this openness to venturing around the state has made Ms. Rothwell a witness to encroaching development of Georgia's natural environment. "When we go to paint I can see so many changes. Once we painted a beautiful field and when we went back the next year it was gone. Sometimes I feel very sad to see the changes and I hope we can keep our Georgia landscape as beautiful as it is."

The Gallery selected Ms. Rothwell's work for exhibition this month in an effort to harmonize with Ogeechee-Canoochee Riverkeeper's October 20 fundraiser dubbed, "At Water's Edge," an elegant evening at Old Town Plantation featuring speakers Robert F. Kennedy Jr., Chairman of Waterkeeper Alliance, and author Janisse Ray. For more information regarding "At Water's Edge" call or email Chandra Brown at 912.764.2017 or cbrown@ocrk.org.

We hope you will all join us for the opening of Ms. Rothwell's exhibit on October 13 in our celebration of Georgia's most delightful and critical natural resource.



Ms. Rothwell's stunning "Sunrise at Creighton Island, Georgia"