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From Intern to Featured Artist: Lucas Opens at Grenning Gallery

by The Sag Harbor Express



"East End Bounty" by Edwina Lucas.

By Dawn Waton

Edwina Lucas dared to dream big. And it's paying off.

In just a few short years the 24-year-old Sag Harbor native has gone from art gallery intern, to manager, to featured artist at the Grenning Gallery in the village. Not only has the classical painter's most recent work been selected to hang in the three-artist exhibition "Bretzke, Lucas & Sanders," her piece, "Amagansett Ravens," will be the show's most prominent image. The 48-inch-by-40-inch oil-on-canvas will be featured on the back wall of the front room of the Washington Street gallery for the duration of the show, which will be on view from Saturday, April 9, through May 15.



"Amagansett Ravens" by Edwina Lucas.

That particular painting was created this past fall after the artist noticed a murder of crows lingering in a cornfield near summer's end.

"The contrast of the dark birds with the golden yellow of the dying stalks caught my eye," she recalls. "I knew I needed to paint something like this."

Capturing the beauty of the natural world and transformative power of light are critical to the painter, who works from life whenever possible. Not content to remember the scene with just a sketch or photograph, she likes to recreate moments and images as best she can.

"I cut down a bunch of corn and brought it into the studio. Then I added some taxidermied crows," reports the artist of how she approached "Amagansett Ravens." "It's important to be able to walk up to something and look around it and see how it's working with the form next to it. That's something you can't get from a photograph."

A quick study, Ms. Lucas graduated Summa Cum Laude from Skidmore College in 2013 with a major in Studio Art and minor in Art History. She interned at Grenning during the summer of 2012 between her junior and senior years, then came back to manage the space after graduation. During that time, the art student was not just allowed to experience the real-world workings of a busy gallery; she got to soak up valuable information from the successful artists it represented. Now, she's one of



them.

"Spotted Fish" by Edwina Lucas.

"I've always been inspired by the artists that Laura [Grenning] brought in. I learned so much from her and the artists, it was amazing to get to watch them, spend time with them, and witnessing their work and their shows coming together," she says. "It's been a total dream of mine to get to do this."

It's the second big show that Ms. Lucas has been involved in at Grenning, though smaller selections of her work have also hung in larger group exhibitions. For the upcoming "shoulder season" show, seven of her paintings will hang alongside those of her fellow featured artists.

Gallery owner Laura Grenning has known Ms. Lucas since she was a baby. The painter's mother is fellow artist Maryann Lucas, who is also represented at Grenning. The gallerist has seen the young artist learn at the knee of her mother; then from other studio stars, such as Ben Fenske; and now as a student of world-renowned artist John Alexander, who has a home and studio in Amagansett. She's pleased and proud to see the painter's progression.

"It's remarkable. She was a great intern and a great gallery manager and now she's continuing to come into her own as a painter," says Ms. Grenning. "She has some really promising paintings even from the beginning. It's interesting to see where she grows."

The Grenning Gallery will open "Bretzke, Lucas & Sanders" with a reception on Saturday, April 9, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. The exhibit will remain on view through May 15. For additional information, visit www.grenninggallery.com.

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