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# Litchfield County Times

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Covering Litchfield County, Connecticut

## **Norfolk Exhibit: Abstract Remembrances of Lost Garden**

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By Max Wittstein

**Artist Jane Rubin with one of her work**

NORFOLK—An alternative title for the upcoming art exhibit at the Norfolk Library might be “Love’s Labour’s Lost.” It’s not a barrier to romantic love that drives artist Jane Rubin but a lingering affection for a carefully nurtured garden in Vermont that she left behind when she moved to Norfolk.

Her first solo show at the town’s famed library next month is, therefore, entitled “The Lost Garden.”

Ms. Rubin, who moved to Norfolk with her husband, Manning, in 2007, left with considerable regret the garden she had been tending for seven years. The delightfully haphazard, English cottage-style garden wasn’t an easy thing to leave behind.

“It feels random and you put things next to things that light them up. If you have something bright and twirly, you have something more somber and small next to it; everything is in relation to everything else,” she said. “So it’s very much like painting, it’s a very creative endeavor. Its randomness is carefully planned, very much like my painting.”

Ms. Rubin’s abstract work is not a direct representation of the garden but rather a reaction to it. It is worth noting that she did all of the paintings after moving here, and from memories of her creation, rather than from photos. The abstract designs are meant to be emotional responses to something she had worked on for so long.

“It is my reaction to landscape that moves me to paint ... I’m an abstract painter because my work is about my response to nature rather than illustrating it,” she said.

“The best thing for me when I paint is to get lost in the process, following my instincts and knowing that somewhere inside the painting exists and I have to bring it out,” she added. “I follow my instincts; no one else has my instincts to work on that painting, but I have a trust that ... eventually its content will become meaningful to me.”

As much as she may regret leaving Vermont, Ms. Rubin has found a home in Litchfield County that she loves, too.

“I love the beauty of the landscape, and the warmth of the people,” she said. “I find remarkable that its history is regarded in a way that is really special; this part of New England reveres its history, and it’s apparent in the architecture, libraries and the town halls.”

“The Lost Garden” has a reception May 1 at the Norfolk Library, located at 9 Greenwoods Road East. The 10 paintings and five charcoal drawings are for sale at prices ranging from \$1,200 to \$2,000. More information is available by calling the library at 860-542-5075.