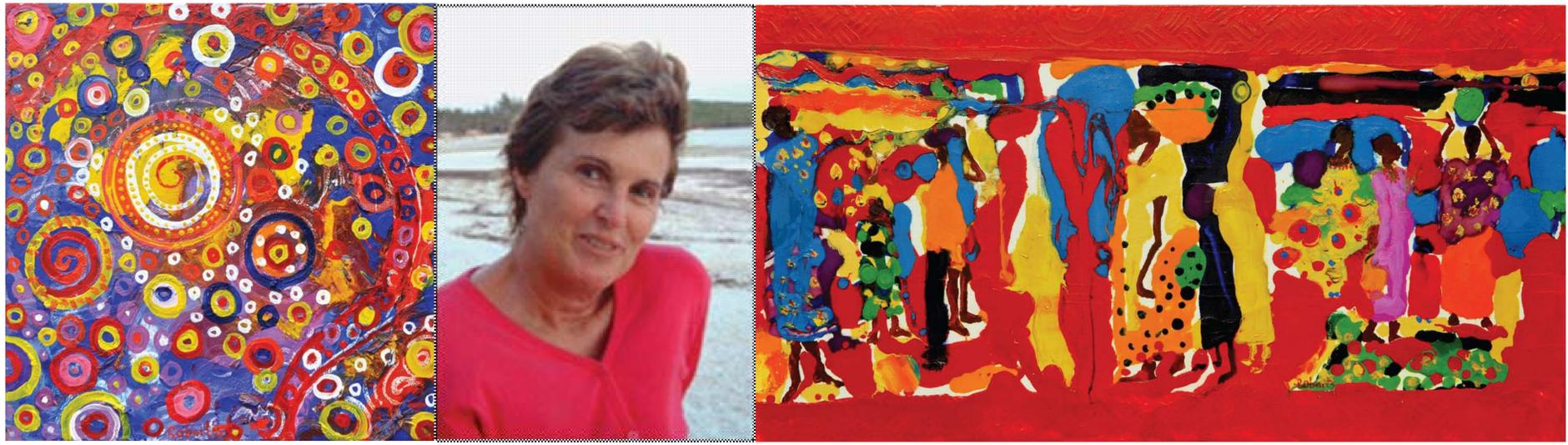


GERALDINE ROBARTS



Geraldine Robarts has a lifetime of experience as a painter and University Lecturer in Fine Art and Education who has lived in East Africa since 1964 and is a citizen. Her first public exhibition was at Everard Read Gallery in Johannesburg in 1958 at the age of nineteen. Since then there have been hundreds of exhibitions all round the world.

Her work is in great demand worldwide and is in many private and institutional collections. She is equally at home with oil, acrylic and watercolours and experiments in different ways, always pushing the boundaries of what paint, colour, and new materials can achieve. She has developed techniques unique to herself which give paintings considerable depth and soul and which she has shared with her students.

Geraldine was born in London in 1939, and grew up in South Africa. Although she was the youngest ever student to be accepted for the Slade School of Art in London, she was granted a scholarship to complete her studies in South Africa, receiving an honours degree in Fine Art from the University of Witwatersrand. She later gained MA in Education from the University of Nairobi.

In 1968 she was selected to exhibit in "Artists of Fame and Promise" in Liverpool, England and in 1977 she took the Gold Medal at the arts competition in Palermo, Italy.

For many years Geraldine was a University Lecturer in Fine Art, first at Makerere University, Kampala and then at Kenyatta University, Nairobi. In the early 1960's she brought the craft of Batik making from Indonesia to Uganda and then to Kenya because the price of paints, brushes, and canvas was beyond the pocket of local artists.

In 1988/89 worked as Visiting Professor in Art Education at McGill University, Montreal, bringing the Gusii and Inuit tribes together through their art. She collaborated on a book "Stories in Stone" and curated an exhibition of the work which travelled through Canada and the USA which helped to establish the international market for Kisii soapstone which still supports many sculptors.

In 2000 Geraldine won the open prize for designing the Africa Hall at Expo 2000, Hannover.

She is a Baha'i and has been a prominent worker with grass roots women's groups in Kenya since moving from Uganda in 1972. Prior to that also in Uganda for 9 years.

Since 1990 she has worked helping women's groups in Kitui, Kenya. She created workshops for making colourful ornamental sisal weaving and wall-hangings. These are still produced and have a market in Nairobi as well as for export.

By bringing solar fruit driers from Lesotho she created a market for organic solar-dried mangos so the women were not exploited during the harvest and created the opportunity of selling in many countries, including in London. She also created a candle making business and bakeries in Kitui.

By offering people the opportunity to have income generating projects she has improved the lives of many people who otherwise were struggling to survive.

She has done a lot of work on health improvement by building productive fruit farms and provision of dams across sandy rivers, together with pumped water systems which overcame the pressing need of the village women to spend their lives collecting water and firewood and has transformed the ability of communities to grow sustainably in the long term.

The storage of water behind dams has meant the removal of animals and people from sandy riverbeds so that the incidence of malaria and typhoid dropped and the better health from lots of fresh fruit and vegetables meant mothers and children have so much better a chance of doing well. Throughout her life Geraldine has been an enthusiastic teacher of anyone who has an interest in Art from young children to any age of adults.