

Artist explores iridescence in shimmering paintings



by **Jim Donnelly**

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Northern lights were sighted in Orléans last week and according to their creator, the fiery colours and psychedelic textures aren't going anywhere soon. Artist Vivien Tytor, an accomplished painter from Ottawa's west end, recently began an almost month-long exhibit at the Visual Arts Centre Orléans Gallery exploring themes of iridescence, colour and light. Various pieces feature shimmering strands of Aurora Borealis, while others explore illuminated reflections from soap bubbles and even petrol puddles.

"Light and reflection is a consistent theme within my body of work that includes paintings, photography and video production," said Tytor following a vernissage last Thursday, July 26.

Tytor – who paints out of the west-end collective Stafford Studios and has exhibited at galleries like the Ottawa Art Gallery, Cube Gallery and Karsh-Masson – experiments with all sorts of luminous media including shiny compact discs, iridescent paint, interference colours and capturing reflected light. "It's about light, and reflection and space, and atmosphere," she said. "I'm trying to make the invisible visible, and it's a meditative process."

Having harnessed her creative urges early in life, Tytor boasts a long and varied career as a painter, videographer and photographer. "My art started in school, in art classes," she said. "And then it became a hobby. And then I started taking it seriously."

After receiving a degree in fine arts from the University of Ottawa, she immersed herself in painting and the arts full-time, she said. Now, along with self-directed experimental art, Tytor works feverishly at



Vivien Tytor Photo by Étienne Ranger