

on&off Campus

From Where I Sit

A row of squat and spirited pears, an empty beached rowboat, two red Adirondack chairs awaiting the return of their owners. Heather Sturt Haaga's oil paintings were seen for the first time on the East Coast this fall at the Erdman Art Gallery, with a reception on September 11. The show was titled "From Where I Sit: The Spaces in Our Lives."

Haaga, a California artist and PTS trustee, was an artistic child but didn't begin painting seriously until age forty-three, and had her first formal show in 1996. When asked what prompted her to start painting again, she said, "Certain things are God things, and you let them happen." But as any artist knows, letting things happen isn't always easy. "Painting is hard work," she said, "the kind of hard work, both physically and mentally, that when you're finished, you're exhausted." The result of this effort, Haaga hopes, is paintings that "connect with the viewer emotionally."

They seemed to do so. Carolyn Nicholson, dean of student affairs emerita, and Ellen Myers, assistant for academic affairs emerita, attended the exhibit opening with Myers's husband Ralph. "My husband and I bought two paintings to give each other as fiftieth wedding anniversary gifts," Ellen Myers said. "We were delighted with Haaga's work. She's got a marvelous gift for color, form, and design, and her paintings have a certain luminosity," she said, referring to the painting her husband chose, *The Side Board*, showing oranges and pomegranates in a gleaming silver bowl.

To view a gallery of Haaga's exhibit, go to www.ptsem.edu/news/galleries/index.php.



Photo: Leigh Imaging

Heather Sturt Haaga and President Torrance at the reception