

Art Matters

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Fall Art Festival Report *by Ron Backwell*

WOW! We have had nothing but compliments on this year's Fall Art Festival, held September 18 to 20, 2009. The weather cooperated, the setting was perfect in rustic Camp Samac in Oshawa and the people were friendly. You could feel the positive energy as people admired the incredible artwork from the 59 participating artists. Patrons mingled leisurely with artists on the balcony overlooking the spectacular lake, and enjoyed refreshments supplied by "Art With a Heart," while taking in the views of nature. All of these things, along with the work of our well-organized committee, paid off in higher attendance and sales.

Personally, I would like to thank the Fall Art Festival Committee-- Dianne Darch, Sheri Gundry, Cliff Harden, Al Herrington, Anne Labelle-Johnson, Paul Livingston and Laura Recalla-- for their dedication in making this the best art show in which I have participated.

Ron Backwell

Fall Art Festival Chairman 2008 & 2009



Brenda Virtue does an acrylic painting demo at the festival.

Meet our Members at the Fall Art Festival

Mary Smith Mary created art in her youth, but she was primarily a writer when she took a course based on the book, *The Artist's Way* by Julia Cameron. In the book, Cameron tells the reader to look through magazines and cut out pictures that mean something to him or her. This creative method was a re-entry into art for Mary, who started with collage and then with drawings based on the cut-out pictures.

Mary works on paper with pen and ink and coloured pencil. Some of her images are based on her imagination, some on fairy tales and some on photos. Her drawings and her poetry are (often humorous) comments on women's and children's lives.

After a group of friends attended a studio tour, Mary lamented that it was very difficult to get poetry published. One of the group sug-



gested that she put it on a bookmark. So now Mary produces bookmarks with a drawing and title on one side and a related poem on the other. Not surprisingly, titles of drawings are very important to this writer-artist. She considers her short poems affirmations or punch lines

about feminist issues.

Mary joined the OAA in 2003 and one of her life drawings in pencil was accepted to the juried show that first year. Another drawing, in ink and colour, titled *Queen of Hearts*, was accepted this year. It is part of a series based on playing cards. A woman's face with "big hair" and a crown are drawn above legs and high heels. A drawing of a small queen of hearts playing card is on the upper left. Several arrows connect parts of the drawing and lead the viewer's eye around.

Someone once said to Mary, "Your artwork makes people think. But some people prefer to look at pretty pictures." Mary, a member of the Writers' Circle of Durham Region, expresses her thoughts about women's issues through poetry and thought-provoking drawings.

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Meet our Members at the Fall Art Festival continued



Felix Sossi was born in northern Italy and moved to Australia in 1955. He lived there for forty years. In 1995 he came to Canada after falling in love with and marrying a Canadian woman who was on holiday in Australia.

When he was young, Felix worked as a typewriter and adding machine mechanic, then became a hotel chef. He started painting in oils, teaching himself as he went along. Then he moved from Melbourne in the south, to Gosford in the north and found a job cleaning new cars.

He became frustrated with his art when "some paintings turned out and some didn't" so he decided to enrol in a class. From the teacher he learned about colour theory, such as using cool colours to make objects appear to recede.

Some of Felix's paintings depict the dry scenery of Australia. Landscape is his favourite subject matter but he also paints birds, religious subjects, seascapes and flowers. He paints partly from pho-

tos and partly from his memory. He gets some of his ideas from books but changes them to make them his own. For example, in a dramatic painting of a ship on a stormy sea, he created his own sky and water.

Although sketching comes easily to Felix, he usually doesn't begin with a drawing. He starts painting the background first, then works toward the foreground. The oil medium allows him to change and correct his paintings as he progresses.

Felix paints in oils on canvas and on distinctive slabs of cedar wood that have been cut on an angle. To prepare them for painting on, he dries the oval slices slowly in his basement, applying linseed oil from time to time to prevent them from cracking.

Felix enjoys the challenge of painting. He once watched an artist paint a portrait of a child in thirty minutes. That is a skill that Felix would like to acquire as he continues to create his colourful oils.

June Walker grew up in a small mining town called Schumacher, near Timmins, and drew as a child. There was no painting taught in school, so she didn't try to paint until she was an adult. She is mainly self-taught but she took an adult art class in North Bay. And at an art show at Buckhorn she won first prize which was a weekend of art classes at Buckhorn School of Art.

At first, June painted in oils but she was allergic to them, so now she works in acrylics. June explained that her way of working is to do a sketch on paper first, then draw on her canvas with a brush.

On her own, she studied the works of the Group of Seven. She especially likes Lawren Harris' and Tom Thomson's paintings. Once she listened to A J Casson at a lecture in which he read an early (1929) review about the "bad" art of the Group. The encounter convinced June that artists shouldn't get discouraged because opinions about their work might be wrong.

June's paintings bear some resemblance to

the Group of Seven's. Her winter paintings of buildings from her childhood in Schumacher are reminiscent of Jackson's views of Quebec towns. The yellow house where she grew up and the wooden building where men entered the mineshaft to work, can be seen in the townscapes. She likes painting buildings and gives them a whimsical quality with curving lines and soft pinks, blues, reds and yellows.

After creating paintings of her childhood, she turned to paint the row houses on Olive Street in Oshawa. "I pick houses that interest me," she explains. As well as Ontario buildings, she enjoys painting lighthouses and fishing villages of eastern Canada.

She also paints landscapes "from my head" that are similar to Tom Thomson's, with stylized trees and vivid colour. She always underpaints with an orangey-red colour because she noticed that Thomson followed that method. She uses only primary colours to start with, and mixes colours like green from the primaries. She prefers ultramarine blue to other blues,



such as cobalt. She uses several reds, such as cadmium and alizarin, and yellows such as ochre and cadmium.

At the Fall Art Festival many of June's relatives, friends and fans came to chat with her. She has won several awards for her whimsical and colourful acrylics of houses and landscapes.



Patty Kingsley who paints in acrylics and oils, was a member of OAA about twenty years ago and has rejoined our group recently. She has drawn pictures since she was a child and found that making art was "a place of peace and rest."

Patty is the founding chair of a licensed charity, the Room 217 Foundation. She creates a live art experience by painting while people are watching and listening to a presentation. In stadiums, in stadiums, hotel conference halls and at churches, she paints spontaneously in acrylics in response to the theme and the words, images and music around her. For example, she moved her studio to a hotel during the Ontario Hospice and Palliative Care joint conference and created paintings there.

Some of her imagery, such as *Behold*,

which depicts God holding the earth in the midst of the universe, is based on the Bible. At a Christian convention where every denomination, including native churches, was present, she painted *Follow Me*. It is a 30-by-40-inch painting which shows the feet and legs of a native dancer marking time together with a barefoot francophone dancer. Patty explains that it "unifies the ancient past and the new" and was created while Caucasian and native musicians were singing, drumming and dancing together.

Because she needs to create quickly at events, Patty paints in fast-drying acrylics. At home in her studio, on the other hand, when she paints portraits and other traditional subject matter, she also uses oils. When she isn't painting, Patty enjoys her two small daughters and singing and playing the guitar. ♪

Art with a Heart Sheri and Taylor Gundry and Leon Burt Guest Speakers at our September Meeting

Sheri began the presentation about her project, *Art with a Heart*, by reflecting on the role of art in her life. "Art keeps me sane," she said. She believes that each person is created for a purpose. She then posed this question: "If your art were found in the future in an archeological dig, what would your art say?" Art can express beauty or document pain and suffering. One day, when Sheri was frustrated that she couldn't give money to a worthy cause, she realized that she could give her art. So she began to paint with a purpose. Sheri studied art at Durham College. Then, after marriage and the birth of her children, she began a daycare and taught art to the youngsters. She also taught and encouraged her own children, one of whom, Taylor, age fifteen, has become an excellent artist.

A few years ago, Sheri saw and admired the batik art of David Kibuuka, who grew up in Uganda. Sheri studied modern batik with David three days a week for six months. This new method of painting on cloth with dyes is more painterly and less messy, Sheri explained.

David Kibuuka, who fled Idi Amin's brutality in Uganda, supports World Vision and



Sheri Gundry's batik of an orphan and a caregiver.

other charities through his art. With the help of government grants and sponsors, he works in the Jane-Finch corridor of Toronto, encouraging at-risk youth. Sheri has also helped the disadvantaged, working for two years at an Oshawa food bank.

Sheri was also inspired to help people by the

stories of Leon Burt, from her church, who visited orphanages in Ukraine and brought back many photos of the children. Based on his pictures, her batik paintings of the children are colourful and upbeat. "Bubble Girl," painted mainly in dark pink, shows a girl with short hair blowing bubbles happily. Sheri paints on cotton using small packages of dyes and inexpensive brushes. She paints with the wax and then applies coloured dyes, working from light to dark. Wax is used to cover up the colours she wants to keep as they are. The resulting images are soft and velvety in texture and bright in colour.

Sheri's church decided to go on a mission to Ukraine to investigate how best to help the orphans. To help raise money for the flights, Sheri decided to use her batiks of the children to illustrate a calendar which will be sold.

Only ten per cent of the "orphans" actually lost both parents to death. Most were abandoned by their families. Societal reasons, including alcoholism, are the causes of this abuse. The kids are considered "cursed" by society, so they are outcasts. The team plans

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Meetings Art Shows Exhibitions Classes Call to Artists

Meetings

OAA October Meeting Wed. Oct 14, 7pm. At Art Resource Centre, 45 Queen St. (beside McLaughlin Gallery.) *Now held in the Green Room on the main level. Speaker: Allan O'Marra will present pictures of his work, including the various themes and solo shows he has produced and exhibited in the last four decades. www.allanomarra.com

OAA November Meeting Wed. Nov. 11, 7 pm. Speaker: Susan Fisher will speak about her painting in encaustic, which is a mixture of pigment and beeswax. www.fisherencaustic.com.

Art Shows & Exhibitions

Robert McLaughlin Gallery, 72 Queen St., Oshawa, 905-576-3000. Brenda Joy Lem: *Homage to the Heart* Sept. 5 - Nov.1. Peter Sager, 1920 to 1985: *Rediscovered* Sept. 26 - Sept.19, 2010. Prints from CPR Magic Lantern Slides 1885 - 1930 Sept. 12 - Nov. 8. Smith Potteries Sept. 19 - Oct. 30.

Station Gallery, 1450 Henry St., Whitby 905-668-4185. Sarah McDougall-Squared Sept. 12 - Oct. 25 (with OAA member, Sarah McDougall). Curator's Walk & Talk Sept. 24, Oct. 15, 7 pm. Lauren Schaffer Sept. 12 - Oct. 25. *Seduced* by Clay Oct. 31 - Dec. 6. Opening Reception: Oct. 31, 1pm.

Visual Arts Centre of Clarington, 143 Simpson Ave. Bowmanville, 905-623-5831. www.vac.ca. Ron Eccles: *Parallel World* Sept. 6- Oct.11. 29th Annual Juried Show of Fine Arts Oct. 25- Nov. 15. Opening Reception Oct. 25, 2-4 pm. Municipal Office: Oshawa Camera Club, Oct. Taylor and Sheri Gundry, Oct.-Dec.

Sumi-e for Today: Int'l Exhibition of Ink Painting and Calligraphy Oct. 3-28, 11 am -5 pm., at Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre, Don Mills (west of Don Valley Pkwy, north of Wynford Dr.) www.sumieartistsofcanada.org

The Art of Recovery: Reflections of Hope Art Exhibition at Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Sciences. Reception and Awards Oct. 24, 1-2 pm.

"Sweet and Lo" Art Exhibition ONE DAY ONLY: Sun. Nov. 8, 2-6 pm, with wine and cheese reception. Showcase of the latest paintings of Marissa Sweet and Lois Lenarduzzi. Please RSVP by Nov.1. 20 Shepherd Rd., Brooklin www.taopad.com www.loislenarduzzi.com

Ajax Creative Arts Fall Show Oct. 23, 24, 25 at 22 Sherwood Rd. W., Pickering Village

Classes

Still a few spaces left for **OAA Acrylic Workshop with Tony Johnson**, Nov. 7, 10 -4. At Superstore (upstairs), Harmony and Taunton. Cost \$40.

Robert McLaughlin Gallery, Oshawa, 905-576-3000 Life Drawing Oct. 29 - Dec. 3. Life Painting Oct. 28 - Dec.2. Expressive Portraits Oct. 7- Nov.11. Experimental Productions Oct. 18 -Nov. 22.

Station Gallery, Whitby 905-668-4185 whitbystation-gallery.com. Open Studio Uninstructed Mondays to Dec. 14, 10 am - 3 pm. Experimental Painting Oct. 6-27 and Nov. 3 - 24. Beg. Figure Drawing Oct. 1 - 22. Arts Mix Oct. 1 - Nov. 19. Etching Oct. 8 - 29. Weekend Workshops: Acrylics Oct. 4, Monoprints Oct. 4.

Visual Arts Centre, Bowmanville, 905-623-5831. www.vac.ca Adult Pottery Sept.21-Nov. 16 and Sept. 24-Nov. 12. Intro. Watercolour Sept. 21-Nov. 16. Adv. Watercolour Sept. 22-Nov. 10. Beg. Life Drawing Sept. 22-Oct. 13. Oil Painting Sept. 24-Nov. 12. Uninstructed Life Drawing Sun. Oct. 11, Oct. 25, Nov. 8.

Curry's Art Store, call 905-728-2868 for details.

Meta4 Gallery, Port Perry, www.meta4gallery.ca 905-985-1534. Intro. to Glass Blowing Oct. 17-18.

Uninstructed Life Drawing with a professional model at the home of Catherine Delhaise. Starts Sept. 23, 7:30 -9:30 pm. Every Wed. except the second Wed. of the month. Call 905-655-3483.

Arts Resource Centre, 45 Queen St. Oshawa. 905-436-5654. 8-Week Classes: Portraiture starts Oct. 5, Pastels starts Oct. 8, Pottery & Sculpture starts Oct. 6 and 7, Sculptural Plasticene Art starts Oct. 6, Beg.-Inter. Stained Glass starts Oct. 7.

Call to Artists

Station Gallery Juried Show, "eXcel". Submissions accepted Oct. 1 - Nov. 1. whitbystationgallery.com

11th Annual PRAC Juried Art Show, November. Entry info notice of intent due Oct. 9.

VAC (Bowmanville) Annual Juried Show application and entries due Oct. 14. Show Oct. 25- Nov. 15

Art with a Heart Art Show Oct. 31 at Lviv Hall, Oshawa. To book a space contact Sheri Gundry for details 905-430-7339 info@artwithaheart.ca

Artists requested to donate artwork to be sold at the Gala of Hope's 6th Ann. Pink Martini Dinner Dance on Nov. 13. To benefit new Heather Griffith Breast Assessment Centre, Oshawa. Info: Betty Lea 705-786-0507 betty@thegalaofofhope.com.

Applications accepted for 2010 art exhibitions at the McLean Community Centre, Ajax. Due Nov. 19. Call 905-831-6057, pineridgearts.org/mclean.html or togwen@rogers.com

Submit your work to Surfacing Arts Magazine. Submissions are continuously accepted. For submission details go to www.surfacingonline.com

Heart ...cont. from pg. 3

to work with teenaged orphans to train them and give them self-esteem. Then the teens will teach the children. As well, many orphanages have unpleasant conditions and lack physical, emotional and mental stimulation for the children. The team will help to renovate and construct buildings, such as dance and art studios, for the orphans.

Taylor, Sheri's artistic daughter, had just returned from a trip to Ukraine and showed us her power-point presentation of the trip. She found that the orphans were very creative. In one of the better orphanages, Taylor witnessed their art and dancing. In turn, she painted the children's faces and her father twisted balloons for them. She was delighted and impressed by some of them who were talented and polite, and moved by the plight of others who couldn't speak or who lived in terrible conditions.

Leon Burt, a writer, was the final speaker. He is troubled by the future prospects of the orphans. Because they are outcasts and very few are adopted, twenty percent commit suicide, many of the girls become prostitutes, and many of the boys, thieves or pimps. Leon met a teenager, Oxana, who personalized their hopeless, meaningless future for him. (One of Sheri's batik paintings is a portrait of her.) Oxana and her three siblings were abandoned by their parents. After her aunt could care for them no longer, Oxana came to live in an orphanage. Leon decided to help give her a bright future. He and his wife are sending money so that she isn't forced to become a prostitute.

Leon asked us to think about our legacy. "What do you want to leave behind? Will it be things or people? If people, must it be people who know you?" Leon reasons that Oxana's future children and grandchildren will break the chains of the "curse" if her future changes

for the better. Otherwise, the orphan will beget another orphan.

Leon reasons that two hundred dollars, the proceeds from one painting, could be used to encourage one orphan child to be an artist. If that artist mentors ten children a year for forty years, as many as 400 children would lead productive lives and would parent strong, stable families. There could be a huge legacy from one painting.

Leon has been inspired by the orphans to write poems about them. He has published a book of his poetry called *To Love and to Give*. He is also selling sponsorships so that orphans will receive a "Glow Bear," a stuffed toy whose fur glows in the dark.

The team, Art with a Heart, is hosting an art show and sale at Lviv Hall on October 31. If you are interested in becoming involved, call Sheri at 905-430-7339 or info@artwithaheart.ca ☎

Comments during the Festival from OAA Members

Dianne Darch (part of the FAF committee): "It has been great to be here. I have heard many positive comments from customers such as that this tranquil setting reminds them of the Buckhorn Festival."

Mary Lumb (not participating this year): "There's an atmosphere here that you just don't feel at Northview. Everyone seems happy here."

Sharon Recalla (long-time exhibitor): "It's a great show. The crowds are phenomenal and the atmosphere is joyous. We were fortunate... there's a warm ambience here with the fireplace and wood. I've heard very positive feedback from the patrons. It was wonderful to see so many children with painted faces. It was an awesome addition. I hope we have it again next year."

Janet Powers (first-time exhibitor): "It has been a very positive experience. I have met and got to know other artists. The public has been kind and considerate in their comments. It's been an honour to be here."



Oshawa Art Association Executive 2009

Position	Member	Phone No.
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2nd V.P.:	George Marlow	905-725-2232
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Fall Art Fest. Chair:	Ron Backwell	905-576-4547
Studio Tour Chair:	Ron Backwell	905-576-4547

Visit OAA's New Website! www.oshawaartassociation.com

A BIG THANK YOU to SHARON STEINHAUS for adding to her website a page that was devoted to OAA news, info and photos. We appreciate your hard work for several years to keep the page updated.

Art Matters Ruth Greenlaw Editor ruthgreenlaw@live.com 905-725-4223
David Schembri Graphic Designer dsda@rogers.com 905-666-0779

We are looking for a person to fill the position of Hospitality Convenor. If you are interested please contact Anne at 905-435-0575

Found at the Fall Art Festival one silver and blue earring.
Contact Anne— 905-435-0575

OAA Membership Application (Please Print)

Mr. Ms. Name _____

Address _____

Apt. _____

City/Town _____

Postal Code _____

Phone () _____

Email _____

I would be willing to serve on a committee. **Make cheque payable to:** Oshawa Art Association (\$40.00) **Mail to:** Oshawa Art Association, P.O. Box 30637, Oshawa, ON L1J 8L8. Annual membership fee due by Jan. 31st of each year. Payment after October 1st will apply to the next year.