

ISLAND ARTS MAGAZINE

July - August 2023
Issue # 65



MADE IN CANADA

DIGITAL
INTERACTIVE PUBLICATION



Feature Artist
**Helen
Utsal**

Thanks to our contributors

John Warden

“Pausing for a long, slow look, I feel the currents of nature coalesce into compositions of simplicity, subtlety, rhythm, and majesty – asthenic values that colour my thoughts. I breathe out and with a click, my feelings flow, onto the canvas of my camera.”



Photo credit - Debra Kelly

David Essig

As well as being a Canadian Musician, Songwriter & Producer, David Essig knows his way around the kitchen.

Having spent much time in Italy, he is our foodie columnist, sharing his culinary skills with our readers. Buon appetito and grazie David.
davidessig.com



Island Arts Magazine

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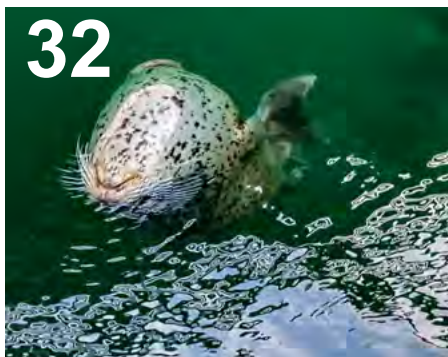
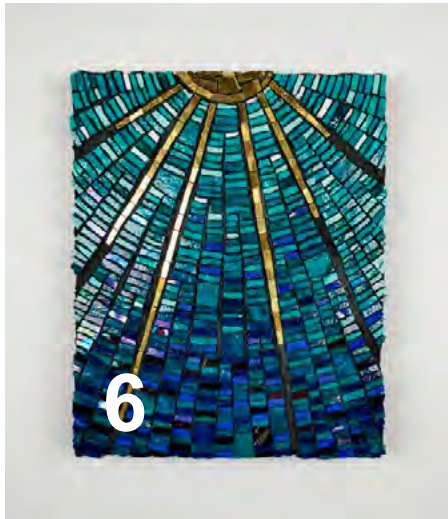
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ISLAND ARTS MAGAZINE



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Note

from your Editors

Susan Schaefer
Jeff Shields

Chace - mascot

Summertime and the living is easy!

Warm winds, bright sunshine, fruit ripening on the vines... cool ocean breezes...farmer's markets... street markets...artists' markets...beach markets... summer is the best!

It's the best time to get together with friends for a backyard coffee date, a bar-b-q or an afternoon cocktail. Burgers, hot dogs and potatoe salad always taste better when shared with a friend or two.

Tacos on the beach never tasted so good. Ice-cream running down your face feels divine and nothing cools you down like watermelon. And fresh corn... don't get me started on that!

July 1st celebrations with all the red and white colours, parades and music tops the list.



Summertime is a time to explore. Get in the car and see new places, discover new trails. It's a great time for beach combing.

And of course enjoy the lazy dog days of summer. Afternoon naps and reading a good book in your backyard hammock screams of summer fun.

Be safe, have fun and enjoy your summer., wherever it takes you.



MAC and the OCAC Present:

"TRANSITIONS"

**MOSAIC ARTISTS OF CANADA
2023 EXHIBITION**

Mosaic Presentations, Workshops, Events



Terry Nichols

William Brown

Sharon Josephy

Roxane Campeau

JULY 1 – AUGUST 27, 2023

Mosaics Exhibit, Workshops, Events



McMillan Arts Centre

133 McMillan Street, Upper Level, Parksville, BC
(250)248-8185

www.mcmillanartscentre.com

GALLERY HOURS: TUESDAY – SUNDAY, 11-3PM

Mosaic Artists of Canada

By Deb Hogen

Get ready to witness the stunning beauty and creativity of contemporary mosaic art at the highly-anticipated Transitions exhibition, hosted by Mosaic Artists of Canada (MAC) at the McMillan Arts Centre in Parksville, BC.

We will be welcoming mosaic artists from across Canada to showcase their work in this juried exhibition, running **July 1- August 27, 2023**.

A panel of expert jurors from around the world will ensure visitors will be treated to a stunning display of the best contemporary mosaic art that Canada has to offer. Prepare to be wowed by the incredible array of textures, colours, and materials ranging from traditional stone and smalti, to less conventional items such as dishware, wood and rusted metals.

In addition to viewing the beautiful mosaic artwork that will be on display, visitors to the exhibition will be able to learn about this exciting medium that is so popular in Europe, the UK and the US. There will be a series of artist talks by some of Canada's best, classes will be offered and there will be opportunities to engage with mosaic artists as they work to create a piece of art.

In the Cloakroom Media Gallery photographs of mosaic art from across Canada will be shown on multiple monitors which will allow visitors to see the breadth and depth of this traditional art form that is still vibrant and exciting today.

This exhibition will be the fourth to showcase Canadian mosaic art. The first was in Hamilton, Ontario in 2017, next was Montreal, Quebec in 2018 and then in 2021, at the Art Gallery of Alberta in Edmonton.

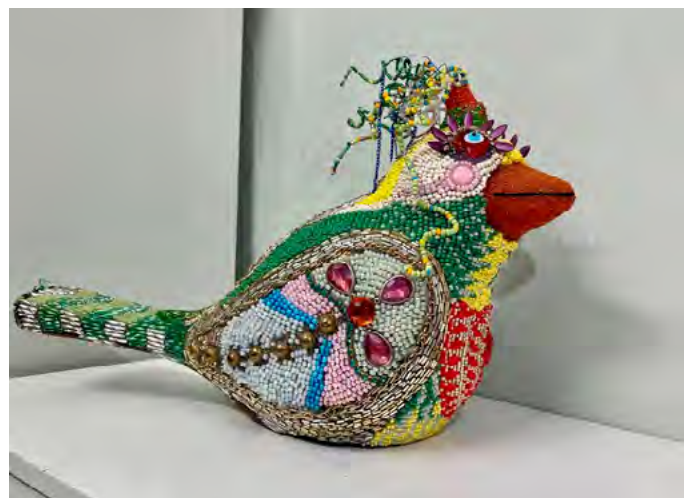
Previous exhibitions has been a resounding success, generating buzz and excitement around this beautiful and timeless art form. Transitions, in the summer of 2023, will be no exception.

Mark your calendars and bring your summer visitors to see Transitions!

McMillan Arts Centre, 133 McMillan St
Parksville BC www.mcmillanartscentre.com



Embracing the unknown, by Cecilia Barboza



I Identify as Fabulous, by Stephanie Michaels



Grand Prix d-Art in Qualicum Beach BC Celebrates their 30th Anniversary

Dan Gray, has worked with soft pastels since 1975. 30 years ago he brought the idea of the Grand Prix Artist d-art, an exciting event that he had seen in Europe, to the director of the Old School House Arts Centre, in Qualicum Beach. BC. The town, and the artists embraced it as it grew in popularity each year, making it one of the major summer events in the oceanside area. Artists from all over the island and on the mainland participated in this fun event.

Unfortunately the event has been modified over the past few years with CoVid protocols in place.

For more information and to register for this year's Grand Prix d-Art, contact TOSH @ 250-752-6133.



Summer Events



SEE YOU
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Admission

Art in the Park
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Presented by **Parksville Beach Festival**


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A perfect summer day is when the sun is shining, the breeze is blowing, the birds are singing, and the lawnmower is broken. James Dent



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Elissa
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SusanSchaeferFineArt.ca

Why I love Art Galleries



I love art galleries (and museums)! My all-time favourite trips have been primarily for the purpose of seeing art. The cities in Europe that I travelled to all had major art galleries and museums that, as an artist, I felt compelled to spend time in.



My last trip to Europe (1987) was like an abbreviated tour of the History of Western Art: beginning in Athens, Greece; I visited the Parthenon and spent many hours sketching the ancient art pieces in the Acropolis Museum (now known as the "Old Acropolis Museum", as a new one has been added to the site since my visit).



Following my time in Greece; the next leg of my journey took me to Italy where I spent time drawing in Pompeii Rome and Florence.

Later came the many Art Galleries and museums of Paris and London, where I recall drawing furiously in the National Gallery while being shooed from the building by the guards at closing time.

By the time I arrived home to Canada from that Art-History filled journey; it felt as though my place as an artist in the grand scheme of things finally made sense, and it was a very satisfying feeling.



Having moved to the Cowichan Valley about five years ago; I felt a great desire to be able to see the art of the world closer to home. To that end; I became involved with the Cowichan Public Art Gallery and hope to see their vision of an exciting new major Public Art Gallery come to life.

This beautiful place we live in is absolutely brimming with people whose creative paths could be positively impacted by having intimate and personal access to the high-level art exhibitions that a proper Public Art Gallery would be able to attract, not to mention the effects on future generations of budding artists.

There is no question that to establish, build and fund such a top level Public Art Gallery is a very ambitious project; one which would have no hope of success whatsoever without the combined efforts and energy of many dedicated individuals and groups.

I invite and encourage you to add your voice to this cause, and play a part in making the vision of a Public Art Gallery in the Cowichan Valley a reality.

Dorian Melton, CPAG Director
web: cowichangallery.ca



The Old School House Arts Centre
122 Fern Rd W. Qualicum Beach, BC

www.theoldschoolhouse.org

Cowichan Public Art Gallery
cowichangallery.ca
Tues. to Sat. 10am - 4pm
126 Ingram Street, Duncan

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Kate Bridger, Comox BC, Fabric Artist
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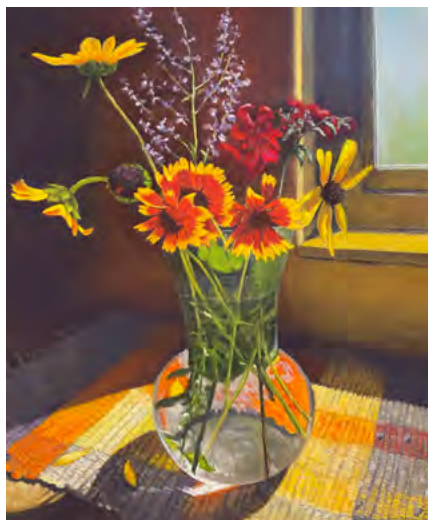
Published by Golden Artists Colors, Inc.
Written by Ben Gavett

All things are poison, and nothing is without poison; the dosage alone makes it so a thing is not a poison. —Paracelsus, 1538

If just joining the community of Golden Artist Colors product line users, one might not know we avoid the term “nontoxic”. It implies an absolute guarantee, and its promise seems in opposition to label statements on many of the color labels stating “WARNING: This product contains a chemical known to the State of California to cause cancer”, or, currently for Europe, “Warning! Hazardous respirable dust may be formed when used. Do not breathe dust.”

A good answer to the “nontoxic” question requires a little more than a “yes”, or “no”. The long answer: PanPastel Colors contain no material in sufficient quantity known to be toxic or injurious to health. Meaning, in accord with United States Federal law, and consistent with the United Nations system of Global Harmonization of hazard identification and communication, the product formulas have been carefully evaluated by an independent toxicologist and, from everything known about the chemical components, the toxicologist has determined that based on their toxicity and concentration in the product, along with the anticipated use of the products, they are not deemed to present an acute or chronic health hazard. Assurance to this is provided on every label with the statement “Conforms to ASTM D 4236”. However, that does not mean the products are without ingredients that have toxicity data associated with them.

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“Sunny Window”, by
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Featured Artist

Helen Utsal



“

I am so lucky to spend time everyday in Nature, and living on Vancouver Island puts me right in the heart of some fantastic landscape. I live close to the ocean and am inspired to paint her many moods. Nature is my sanctuary and place for renewal; trying to express it in an emotive way on canvas is a happy meditation.

Featured Artist

Helen Utsal

By Susan Schaefer

After attending Concordia University in Montreal to study Fine Arts, you continued your study by working as a Studio Assistant to Montreal artist, Tom Hopkins for three years. What did you learn from Tom and how have you applied it to your own career?

I learned so much from Tom. He was my painting teacher and also taught a course at Concordia called Materials and Methods where we learned how to make art in traditional methods.

We did work on frescoes, we painted in the method of Michelangelo (starting with a black and white painting and adding colour in layers of glaze, we learned traditional encaustic painting and egg tempera. As his studio assistant I learned how to mill wood to make stretchers and frames, I made traditional recipes of grounds, sizing from rabbit skin glue.

Eventually, I was trusted to do his underpainting. I would stretch out large canvases and he would tell me roughly what he had in mind for the composition. I would paint it out in the complimentary colour (reds and oranges) and he would paint over it.

The big things I learned from him were traditional techniques, such as how to work on a large scale and also to not be so precious about the work. I worked for other artists and photographers as well, and learned a lot. Donigan Cumming (photographer) retouching large gelatin silver prints (Nettie), making small scale mock ups of his exhibitions. Michael Flomen (photographer) printing out enormous 6ft x4ft gelatin silver prints. Graeme Metson (artist) and a carpenter who I helped build display cabinets. All these skills gave me confidence that I could learn how to do whatever came up.



You also have a background in painting scenes for the film industry in Toronto. How did that opportunity come about?

I had kind of given up on becoming an artist. Living in Toronto, the competition felt too big, and I just didn't know where to start. I had applied for a job as a receptionist at an up and coming ad agency, thinking maybe I would learn how to do computer illustration on the side. The president and founder of the company Pavin Bratch interviewed me and learned about my art background. He offered me the job but gave me the number of a Production Designer friend he had, suggesting I call him first, saying it sounded like I might be happier doing art more directly.

I gave Spike Parks a call, went by the sound stage where he was working and he hired me on the spot! I worked with him for 3 years on rock videos, commercials and non union films. It was loads of fun and sometimes gruelling long days.

continued on page 16...

Featured Artist

Helen Utsal

By Susan Schaefer

What inspired you to make the move to Vancouver Island in 2006?

I had been working in Whistler. My son Jaak had just turned 2 and my marriage was a disaster. I had a good friend in Comox who invited me to come stay, I was grateful for the support she offered and found that I loved the Comox Valley.

I have lived in cities most of my life, and I liked that the valley felt big enough to have some anonymity, but small enough to feel a real part of the community. Jaak and I made new friends and found a great life here in the valley.

Drawn to the natural beauty of the west coast of Canada how would you describe your artwork?

My work is constantly shifting and changing as I explore, and fall in love with different elements of the landscape I live in.

The big picture for all my paintings is about light. I used to paint figurative work, but moving out west I found the trees became my people. I base out my paintings with acrylic paint, and then go into them with oil paint mixed with cold wax medium.

I work from bits of photographs I have taken and from my imagination. In the last few years I have been incorporating more drawing in my paintings. I love to see artists' drawings, and seeing the

work of Toulouse Lautrec, and Daumier in person inspired me to bring it into my painting.

Drawing feels more intimate to me than painting; you can really sense the hand of the artist and the thought process as they make their mark. My paintings are based in realism, and are about feeling. My paintings express energy and joy and hopefully feel peaceful as well.

Working as a full time artist, is there any advice you would give to those who are just starting out in their career?

Being an artist is a long game. If you don't love it, you won't have the stamina to keep going after the pitfalls and through the learning curves that are necessary to grow your art and your business.

I regret that entrepreneurship and basic business skills aren't taught in art school. Artists need to develop those skills. Art is learned by doing. I feel a bit protective of my vision for my art, not wanting to be too influenced by what is around me or what is trending.

I would encourage people to experiment and not be afraid of making mistakes. I love encouraging people at my workshops to be bold, and use colours they love instead of what they think they should use. There are no rules, and you don't have to stick to reality. The great liberty in being an artist is that we get to make it up as we go along!

Listen to our interview with Helen page 25.



"All things painted inside the studio will never be as good as things done outside." Paul Cezanne

This year, marks the 11th Annual Alberni Valley Paint Out and artists are again invited to gather and respond to the Valley's diverse landscape.

This year's event will be organized by Alberni Art Rave. We sincerely thank artist, Astrid Johnston from Port Alberni's DRAW Gallery, for her work in bringing this event to the Valley since 2012.

Artists of all skills and mediums are invited to the Alberni Valley Paint Out on Sept. 9th & 10th for an event held in conjunction with the International Plein Air Painters (PAP).

Saturday, Sept. 9th, artists will be able to enjoy access to a private property on the shores of Sproat Lake. The extensive gardens and expansive views across the lake will offer inspiration and options for a variety of creative interpretation. Sunday, Sept. 10th, the group will again gather at Harbour Quay which offers views up the inlet and Beaufort Range.

For information please contact Jillian Mayne at 250-735-8430 or alberni.artrave@gmail.com. Follow us on Facebook at AlberniArtRave or at alberniartrave.org



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What is Sacred?

Coast Salish Art Revitalization Exhibit at Nanaimo Museum **on until Saturday, November 18, 2023**

This exhibit is a partnership with Exhibit Curator Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun, and was created in collaboration with Snuneymuxw FN Administration and a cross-section of local Coast Salish artisans.

Nanaimo - Coast Salish art is a distinct style among the art of the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific Northwest. The feature exhibit, *What is Sacred?*, explores the past, present and future of Coast Salish art, highlighting a selection of artists from Snuneymuxw and other Nations of the mid-island region. The exhibit runs until November 18, 2023.

The exhibit features Snuneymuxw spindle whorls and a collection of historical and contemporary Coast Salish art, including artists from Snuneymuxw and another Coast Salish Nations of the mid-island region.

The art in the exhibit - wool and cedar weavings, stone sculpture, wood carvings - reflect cultural teachings that have been passed down for thousands of years. *"This exhibit honours Coast Salish art,"* says Exhibit Curator, Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun. *"The ancestors who left it for us, our Elders who did the work to make sure*

it continued, the contemporary Coast Salish artists who innovate and expand, and the future generations for whom we all work."

Interactive activities for all ages guide learning about unique qualities of Coast Salish art. Experience how the art form is now flourishing, in a celebration of the richness and vitality of Coast Salish art.

Exhibit Curator Eliot White-Hill, Kwulasultun, is a visual artist and storyteller from the Snuneymuxw First Nation, one of many Coast Salish nations. He is also descended from families in the Hupacasath and Penelakut First Nations. In 2021, Eliot received the Emerging Cultural Leader award from the City of Nanaimo and his public art in Nanaimo can be seen at Beban Pool and the Vancouver Island University Library.

The museum is open Tuesday -Saturday 10am – 4pm and admission is by donation. The Nanaimo Museum is located in the Vancouver Island Conference Centre, beside Serious Coffee.

www.nanaimomuseum.ca



Update Robert McMillan Pottery

Robert McMillan, award winning potter, creates works inspired by the Atlantic scenes that surround him in Eastern Canada.

As you may recall in Island ARTS Magazine Issue # 62, Nov 22 - Feb 23 we did an artist's profile on Robert. Shortly after that Robert's Studio had burnt down, no fault of his own, but he had lost everything.

Thinking of him, we reached out to Robert for an update. This is what he had to say.



"Thanks for connecting again.

I have re-built a small studio in my garage and currently taking a slow long route back up.

I am looking at my business and products and trying to figure out how to re-design my product to be less stressful, time consuming and expensive to produce.

I'm very much liking my small studio for a change. Everything is so close and I get surrounded by my work which is very enjoyable and inspiring.

Many of my clientele are anxious and continue to demand product. However I am taking a step back for a short while so that I can recharge and figure out the best way forward for myself."



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Beach Bonfire Under a Full Moon, 10"x 16", Acrylics on board
Dale Byhre SFCA CSMA, Cloverdale BC

What summer means to me? It's a warm summer night on the beach under the light of a full moon cooking a feast of salmon and crabs. www.marineartbydale.com



Blue Jeans and Rubber Boots

By *Susan Schaefer*

About Getting Older

This is not original to me, but I think it has value and I wanted to share it with my readers.

I asked a friend who has crossed 70 & is heading towards 80 what sort of changes she is feeling in herself? This was her advise.

After loving my parents, my siblings, my spouse, my children and my friends, I have now started loving myself.

I have realized that I am not "Atlas". The world does not rest on my shoulders.

I have stopped bargaining with vegetable & fruit vendors. A few pennies more is not going to break me, but it might help the poor fellow save for his daughter's school fees.

I leave my waitress a big tip. The extra money might bring a smile to her face. She is toiling much harder for a living than I am.

I stopped telling the elderly that they've already narrated that story many times. The story makes them walk down memory lane and relive their past.

I have learned not to correct people even when I know they are wrong. The onus of making everyone perfect is not on me. Peace is more precious than perfection.



I give compliments freely & generously. Compliments are a mood enhancer not only for the recipient, but also for me. And a small tip for the recipient of a compliment, never, NEVER turn it down, just say "Thank You."

I have learned not to bother about a crease or a spot on my shirt. Personality speaks louder than appearances.

I walk away from people who don't value me. They might not know my worth, but I do.

I am learning not to be embarrassed by my emotions. It's my emotions that make me human.

I have learned to live each day as if it's the last. After all, it might be the last.

I am doing what makes me happy. I am responsible for my happiness, and I owe it to myself. Happiness is a choice. You can be happy at any time, just choose to be!

Don't wait to be 60 or 70 or 80,. Practice this at any stage and age?



Tips for Plein Air Painting

By Brent Lynch

With 'En Plein Air' season upon us, we asked veteran painter Brent Lynch to share some tips for a successful plein air adventure.

1. Travel light and get creative with your choice of materials. Be brutal with yourself when editing equipment...."Do I really need this or that"?

2. Use your smart phone (no 35's) to capture visual reference; this is a 'no brainer' and is of great assistance for detail; again small and compact is what plein air is all about.

3. Use easily portable cases to transport supplies; pochade box that fit into a knapsack or something larger with a built in easel like the 'French Easel' are proven systems for easy transport.

4. Layer up when it comes to clothing; especially on the west coast. No bright shirts or bold color as sunlight reflects off the material effecting your colour perception while painting.

5. Work on a toned canvas or board (no more than 20% value); neutralize the surface of you board or canvas as it helps deal the power of natural light on 100% white surfaces.

6 Keep your medium clean; working with a fouled medium can muddy color.

7 Limit your palette. Work with primaries and a few earth colours,. Black and yellow make great greens. Primary colour triads make for beautiful neutrals. Titanium white for opaque applications and zinc white for tonation. Keep it simple!

8. Umbrellas for shade when in mid daylight and don't wear sunglasses. Direct bright sunlight will skew our perception and may lead to disappointing results.

9. Use good paint. Have everything going for you. There's nothing worse than paint that won't move, cover or appears dead and lifeless.

10. Be patient, grateful and humble - move with purpose, LOL. Mother nature usually wins.



www.brentlynch.net



Julie Nygaard Art
 Photography/ Abstract Art/ Interior Design
julienygaardart@gmail.com
julienygaardart.blogspot.com
[instagram@julienygaardart](https://www.instagram.com/julienygaardart)



Endless Summer Group Exhibit July 11th – Sept 1st

Our 'Gallery Beyond Walls' offers contemporary Canadian West Coast Art in an intimate setting. Celebrating the diversity and talent of local and regional artists. Works by gallery artists can be viewed and purchased online or on location.

DRAW Gallery continues in our tradition of showcasing work from a variety of our gallery artists with originals & prints including paintings, photographs, mixed media, glass and copper featuring work by local and Island Artists such as Courtney Anderson, Cynthia Bonesky, Cecil Dawson, D.F. Gray, Karen MacRae, Patricia M. Mansell, Miriam Manuel, Ann McIvor, Shannon McWhinney, Emma Paveley, Mark Penney, Sarah Platenius, Todd Robinson, Susan Schaefer, Marla Thirsk, Sue Thomas, Tamas Zalatnai among others.

Works exhibited in the Gallery are available for viewing from home with our Online 'Gallery Beyond Walls' and onLocation, too! Our main Gallery & Shop, 'Gallery Beyond Walls' holding all the News, Shows and Art works over time, may be viewed by clicking on Enter 'MAIN GALLERY' button at drawgallery.com.

Visit us Online www.drawgallery.com. and onLocation at the corner of Melrose & 8th Ave in the dynamic Alberni Valley. Open Tuesday thru Friday 12-5 pm and by Appointment, too! Call 250-724-2056 or toll free 855-755-0566.

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June 28 - Sept 28, 2023

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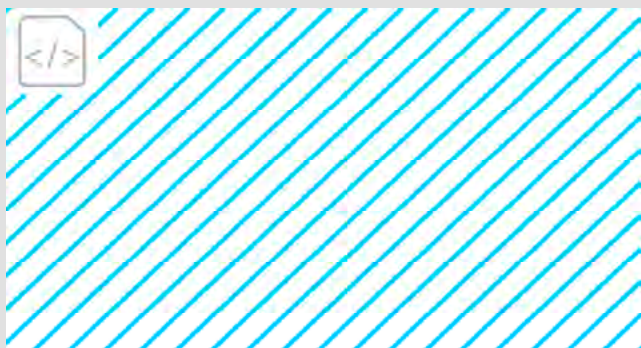
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Interview
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When I used to Fish

July 26th thru Sept 2nd at Artful : The Gallery

"When I used to fish..." is Joe Ziner's visual record of a lifetime of creative production as a sculptor and printmaker. Ziner pioneered the Japanese art of Gyotaku (fish printing) on Vancouver Island, and his extensive collection traces the history of using nature prints to record the fisherman's catch.

Ziner made his way to the West Coast of BC and attended the Vancouver School of Art (1969-1971). He remained, working both as a woodsman and a fisherman, while making art to record the world he lives in relationship with; the people, the places, and most especially the fish. As a printmaker or a sculptor, Ziner's insatiable curiosity and skillful command of mediums is evident across this body of work.

"When I used to fish..." is often the initiating signal for tales of adventure, hilarity, the uncanny and unimaginable. Come share your fish tales!

Opening reception with the artist in attendance Saturday, July 29th, 7-9pm. 526C Cumberland Rd, Courtenay, BC.

Gallery Hours: Weds-Sat, 12-5 pm. artfulthegallery.com or follow us on FB and Instagram @artfulthegallery.

"When I used to fish..."



An exhibit of prints, drawings and sculptures

By Joe Ziner



July 26th thru September 2, 2023

Artful : The Gallery

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Whatever you do today, do it
with the confidence of a 4 year
old in a bat man t-shirt.

Ladysmith Art Gallery

A Long Time Coming: The New Ladysmith Gallery Opens To The Public

By Francesca Reside, Communication and Marketing Coordinator

The Arts Council of Ladysmith and District opened its doors to an exciting new addition: the Ladysmith Gallery on June 7. Located right in the heart of downtown Ladysmith, this bright and easily accessible art gallery boasts a diverse array of artwork that showcases the immense artistic prowess of the local artist community. Opening with their current exhibition titled "Happiness," this gallery is set to become an art destination for both residents and visitors alike.

An exciting feature of the gallery is its monthly member art exhibitions, which will showcase a diverse range of 2D and 3D artwork. This rotating display ensures that visitors will always have something new to admire.

The gallery will also offer a retail space where visitors can find an assortment of small works, including hand-printed cards, jewelry, pottery, and more. The addition of an online gallery will also extend the artists reach to connect with a broader audience. As the year progresses, the gallery plans to further support artists by allowing them to rent the gallery space for their own shows.

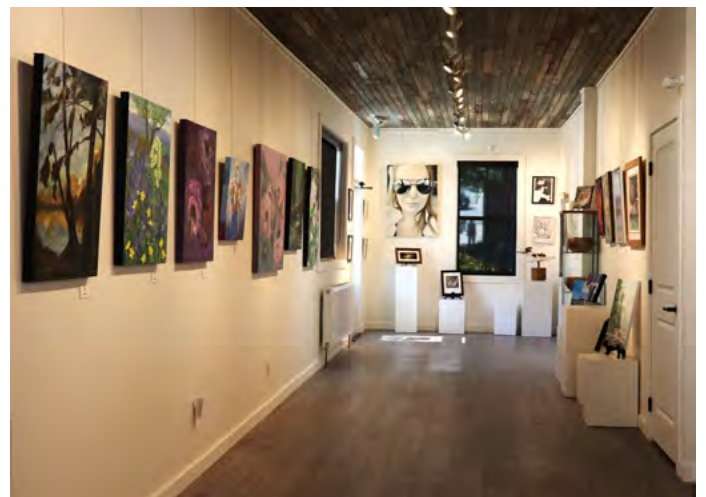
What truly sets the Ladysmith Gallery apart is its unwavering commitment to promoting and supporting local artists. By exclusively featuring artwork from artists primarily based on Vancouver Island and the Gulf Islands, the gallery fosters a strong sense of community.

The Ladysmith Gallery prides itself on curating high-quality artwork, ensuring that every piece displayed is of exceptional artistic merit. This



commitment to excellence positions the gallery as a go-to destination for individuals seeking unique gifts or looking to acquire west coast art that reflects the region's distinctive character.

Visit the new Ladysmith Gallery located at 32 High Street, Ladysmith. Current hours of operation are 10 AM - 5 PM, Wednesday to Saturday. Free admission. For more information, contact the gallery coordinator Farrell Elliott at gallery@ladysmitharts.ca



By David Essig

Simple Summer Polenta Casserole

While we often think of polenta as a hardy winter staple, summer is the perfect time to enjoy this Italian classic in a light, quickly prepared dish that's just the thing for after the theatre or a day out hiking. It's a simple casserole that, after some basic prep, goes together easily. This is Italian comfort food that perfectly complements an Aperol spritz or glass of Frescobaldi.

Step One: make some polenta at least a couple hours before you plan to eat - earlier in the day is fine too.

For two servings, bring 3 cups of salted water to a boil, then add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of cornmeal in a slow steady stream, stirring constantly to prevent lumps. Lower the heat to a quick simmer and stir the polenta, off and on, for about 15 minutes.

While it's still hot and soft, empty it from the saucepan onto a sheet of baking parchment on the kitchen counter. Quickly spread it out with a spatula to a depth of about $\frac{3}{8}$ ", more or less. Let it cool for at least an hour.

Step Two: Make the simplest sugo improvvisato. My favourite is to quickly fry some loose Italian sausage meat in a little olive oil. Once it's browned, drain off the excess fat and oil and add some ready-made tomato passata and maybe a bit of chopped green pepper and/or olives. Capers also work - whatever is at hand that will enhance the simple flavour profile of the sauce.

Step Three: With a biscuit cutter or egg coddler lid, cut out discs of the now-firm polenta. Save all the trimmings. Take two small casseroles or



ramekins, smear a bit of the sugo in the bottom each and then layer in the polenta discs, slightly overlapping. Use the trimmings to fill in any gaps. Add another layer if there's still polenta left over.

Step Four: Spoon a good layer of sugo on top of the polenta - maybe to a depth of $\frac{1}{2}$ ". Slice some cheese with a vegetable peeler: mozzarella, parmesan, fontina, gorgonzola - individually or mixed -whatever suits your taste. Add these to the top of the casseroles and then top each with a slice of prosciutto.

Step Five: Bake in a preheated 350 degree (F) oven for 5 to 10 minutes - until the cheese is all melted and the prosciutto is crispy.

Step Six: Allow to cool a couple minutes and serve with a green salad and a light wine.

Buon appetito tutti!

davidessig.com



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FUN FLOWERS **Saturday July 15** **Port Alberni BC**

What says summer more than brightly coloured sun-flowers? They are the perfect subject to paint offering showy colours, curvy lines and forgiving designs.

Time: 10 am - 2:30 pm

Location: #7 - 5440 Argyle Street, Port Alberni, BC

Cost: \$125. All levels welcomed.

Register: 250-724-3412 or online at www.alberniarts.com



SCENIC LANDSCAPES **Saturday August 26** **Summerland BC**

Whether it's water, mountains, trees or land, Susan will show you how to simplify your landscapes by looking for shapes and patterns. This will be a fun day of creating successful landscape paintings.

Times: 10 am - 2:30 pm

Location: 9525 Wharton Street, Summerland BC

Cost: \$145. All levels welcomed.

Register: 250-586-5510

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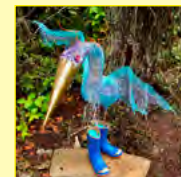
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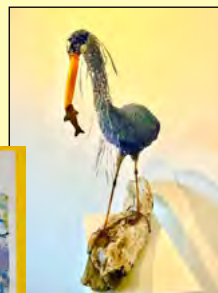
Two fish are in a tank. One says,
'How do you drive this thing?'

"Renewal" at The Green Bough Gallery



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TECH TALK

By Jeff Shields yaadev.com

IOT - does it Matter?

IOT (Internet of Things) are smart devices with sensors used in home automation such as lights, security cameras, smart plugs, thermostats and even some medical equipment. Home fridges, ranges and other appliances are also incorporating smart technologies.

Until recently, you could not mix and match devices due to incompatibilities in their underlying software. Two communication protocols, Zigbee and Z-Wave, were in use, so many devices could not talk to each other. So if you were using Echo, Nest, Alexa or HomeKit, you had to select devices that were compatible with those hubs.

Late in 2022, the 3 major tech companies - Google, Amazon and Apple - and many device manufactures including Samsung and Phillips and the Zigbee Alliance released a new protocol, Matter, that is an extension to Zigbee. Any device that supports Matter can communicate with each other and do not need a central hub. It means that you can now mix and match devices from different manufactures as long as they support Matter.

Older devices that support over the air upgrades will eventually be upgradeable to Matter. Some will use an existing hub that can be upgraded to Matter, unifying your IOT devices.

One of the benefits of Matter is that you will not need a central hub and is meant to be local to your home so you do not need to depend on the cloud. It also uses AES encryption, which is backed-up by banking-standard, public-key cryptography.

The list of devices that Matter will cover is pretty exhaustive – lighting and electrics, heating and cooling, locks and security devices, windows and blinds, and TVs are all included – and the line-up of alliance members and participants reads like a who's who of the smart home tech world: Huawei, Oppo, Logitech, Xiaomi, iRobot and Panasonic are just some of the names on the 240-strong list.

In short, it should have your whole smart home covered.

Although still in its infancy, Matter is the future of home automation. So, does it Matter? The answer is 'yes'.

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New Line of Paints By Artist David Langevin

"I have teamed up with the Canadian paint manufacturing company Tri Art to create the ultimate collection of paints.

I am often asked what paints, and colors, I use in my art. While I don't make specific recommendations I do suggest that artists use the best quality paints. The reason is simple, you will have the greatest range of expressive possibilities and freedom when you use good quality paints.

Good paints make you a better painter. I also think it is a good idea to use only single pigment colors, and to divide your acrylic paints into two categories: Fluid or Liquid acrylics for your transparent colors, and; High Viscosity paints for use with the more opaque pigments.



I have put together two sets of paints: The 'Professional Series' and; the 'Master Artist' collection. The Master Artist set has a few more colors and focuses more on providing a cool and warm version of each hue."

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Uplifting Spirit for 35 Years

Monique Quail, Marketing Officer
National Gallery of Canada

As a self-taught artist and former art instructor, my mother has always collected art magazines. During my visits, I often browse through these old publications, which have recorded artists and events in the Canadian art world over the years. Browsing through them recently, I stumbled across a copy of Equinox Magazine from 1988. In an article titled “Art of the State,” which featured a picture of the National Gallery’s Scotiabank Great Hall, author and artist Ross Skoggard profiled the opening of the new building and described the new technologies and facilities that would help the national collection shine at its permanent home on Sussex Drive.

Between 1966 and 1976, when the Gallery was still situated on Elgin Street, Jean Sutherland Boggs served as the Gallery’s director, the first woman to hold the post. Subsequently an art professor at Harvard University and director of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Boggs was called back to Canada by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1982 to become CEO of the Canada Museums Construction Corporation. She was charged with two highly important museum projects – the National Gallery of Canada and the Canadian Museum of History (then the Canadian Museum of Civilization) – both of which had to be completed within five years.

With her staff, Boggs interviewed more than 79 architectural firms and finally commissioned Montreal architect Moshe Safdie – best known for his modular apartment house Habitat for Expo 67 – to design a new Gallery in early 1983.

In his November 2022 interview with architectural writer and cultural journalist Adele Weder, Safdie said “There was a wonderful team of people headed by Jean Sutherland Boggs who is one of the greatest clients I ever had. She knew museums, she knew what worked in museums, but she was also open-minded to explore new ideas about what a museum might be.” For him, the building “was totally transformative ... because, after Habitat, it was the first major public institution, the first museum.” He also recalls that Trudeau, who had the casting vote on the chosen design, said: “The museum of the future is open, is inviting.”

Marking the launch of his memoir *If Walls Could Speak: My Life in Architecture*, the interview was held in the Gallery’s Scotiabank Great Hall. Reflecting on this space, he commented: “The Great Hall was not in the initial program. It was called the Foyer. And increasingly, as we discussed the building, we realized that this is the nation’s capital and this room should be a room that can really handle community events of all kinds.”

The project was completed in 1988, providing innovative spaces and galleries, ready to be filled with a rich variety of works from the collection. Just one year into her ten-year tenure, Shirley Thomson was the Gallery’s director at the time. She played a pivotal role in the success of the opening in May 1988 and in the ways in which the collection would be shown to the public for years to come. She compared her job to that of a ship’s captain: “People above deck try to make it go, but I’m still in touch with the engine room.”

Read the complete story at www.gallery.ca

Credit the NGC Magazine: First published in National Gallery of Canada Magazine, May 2023; www.gallery.ca/magazine.



Photo credits: NGC, Ottawa

Perspectives by John Warden

Hunting Herring

Breathing... where there shouldn't be! Spooky!

In the silence of the shoreline, calm, deep, regular breaths. Very close. I felt the hairs on the back of my neck and along my arms charge with electricity. What am I hearing? Then came a snort, like a person blowing water or mucus out of their nose. Really close...right by my feet.

Most mornings I come down to the government wharf near our home to practice Tai Chi. And that's how this story started. Since February, I'd been seeing herring congregating under the wharf and all around the adjacent floating dock. After I finished my practice up on the pier, I'd go down to the dock and watch the herring. There was a huge ball of them, actually, less of a ball and more like a wall of tiny fish, thousands, maybe even hundreds of thousands of them.



Through March the fish were getting noticeably bigger. It was amazing to see so many fish, so much life, but nothing seemed to be eating them.

None of the diving ducks that frequent the nearby bay were hanging around the dock helping themselves to the herring.

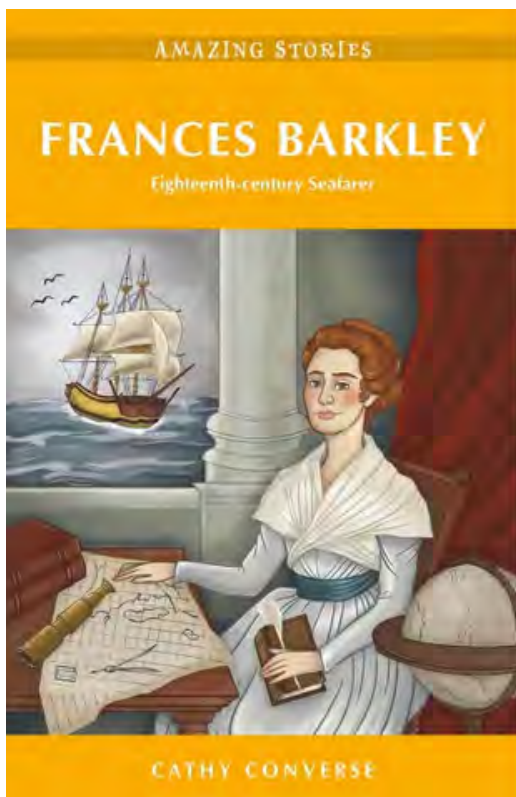
Then, that day, right at my feet, just off the edge of the dock, close enough to touch, there was a seal, lying on its back, with just its mouth and nose above the surface of the water. And it was breathing. Loudly.

At first I thought the seal was asleep. Maybe that's how seals get their rest, what do I know about seals? But no. After watching it for a while a pattern emerged. The seal would lie on its back, barely moving, until a swarm of herring gathered below it in the water. Then arching its back, the seal would curve over and dive down through the fish, circling rapidly around below them. In response, the herring spiralled up towards the surface and the seal followed, torpedoing straight up through the centre of their swirling mass, feasting on fish. The herring would instantly scatter in all directions. The seal would make a couple of underwater passes like a silent submarine, looking for stragglers and then...the whole pattern started all over again. The seal, laying on its back on the surface of the water until the herring gathered underneath it once again. Fascinating!

I got to experience this life and death drama for several days and thought for sure that it would make an interesting story. But how do I relate 'nature red in tooth and claw' to Island Arts? Then I realized that what I was seeing was the fine art of hunting.



Book Review



Bestselling Victoria-based author Cathy Converse has a new book called *Frances Barkley: Eighteenth-century Seafarer*, newly available and already a BC Bestseller!

Cathy has published several books all focusing on unsung women in British Columbia history, and *Frances Barkley* fits right into that niche.

This new book is an immersive retelling of Frances Barkley's life, who as a young woman, travelled the world with her sea captain husband. Frances Barkley was a trailblazer for her time—she was the first woman to openly circumnavigate the world twice, is considered to be the first European woman to have ever visited Canada's west coast, and was the first known European woman to set foot on Hawaii and Vietnam.

The book is also unique as it is written in the form of a diary based on Cathy's extensive research, Frances' own journals, and even interviews with descendants. Many locations in BC are still named for the Barkleys.

Cathy Converse is an award-winning author and historian whose career has spanned more than thirty years. cathyconverse.com.

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"Follow your passion. Stay true to yourself. Never follow anyone else's path unless you're in the woods and you're lost and you see a path. Then, by all means, follow that path."

Ellen DeGeneres



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Cat Lady in Tokyo

By Kat Cearns



Tokyo is a place of multitudes. Most people, when they think of Japan's Capital city, imagine scramble crosswalks mobbed with people, flashing billboards on tall buildings, and other chaotic urban sights. But the Tokyo I had the chance to experience during my four-week artist residency at Almost Perfect Tokyo

was a completely different place to the stereotype. Almost Perfect is hosted in a swaying three-storey, hundred-year-old building, nestled in the homey neighbourhood of Kuramae, Taito, Tokyo. Once a rice shop, it is now home to a rotating cast of creatives of all walks. This spring I was lucky enough to count myself among them.

The place itself became a well of inspiration during my stay. Kuramae is packed with small businesses providing all the materials I could need for my project. I sourced ink and paper from the local ink shop and paper store respectively. The building was a wonderful space to work; its walls radiated a sense of comfort and happiness, its windows let in beautiful light, but I especially enjoyed working in the first-floor gallery space where I could people watch while I drew and painted. Initially I intended to gather ideas purely through "field trips" around and outside of Tokyo, but I quickly realized that the inspiration I was seeking could be found in abundance just outside the doors of my residency.

The concept and title for my project in Tokyo, formed before I left Canada, was "Cat Lady." I've always loved cats, but only recently have I begun

to incorporate them widely into my art practice. A woman who loves cats can easily be stereotyped in our culture, but in Japan, a wild love of felines is the norm. It was the perfect place to embrace my inner cat lady through my art. Surrounded by the cat culture of Tokyo, I started to form a small body of illustrative work featuring snapshots of cats enjoying tiny, glimmering moments of life in the city. Within three weeks I had accumulated enough work to cover the walls of the little gallery. For my exhibition, I painted a "Noren" or an entrance curtain, with two cat faces and the words "CAT LADY" in bold brushstrokes.

Opening night was nerve wracking for me. But the moment the doors opened, I was greeted with smiling faces and exclamations of "I'm a cat lady too!" followed by me being shown countless adorable photos of everyone's cats. It was a great reminder that when you create art that is authentic to yourself and share it with the world, it has the beautiful tendency to connect people.

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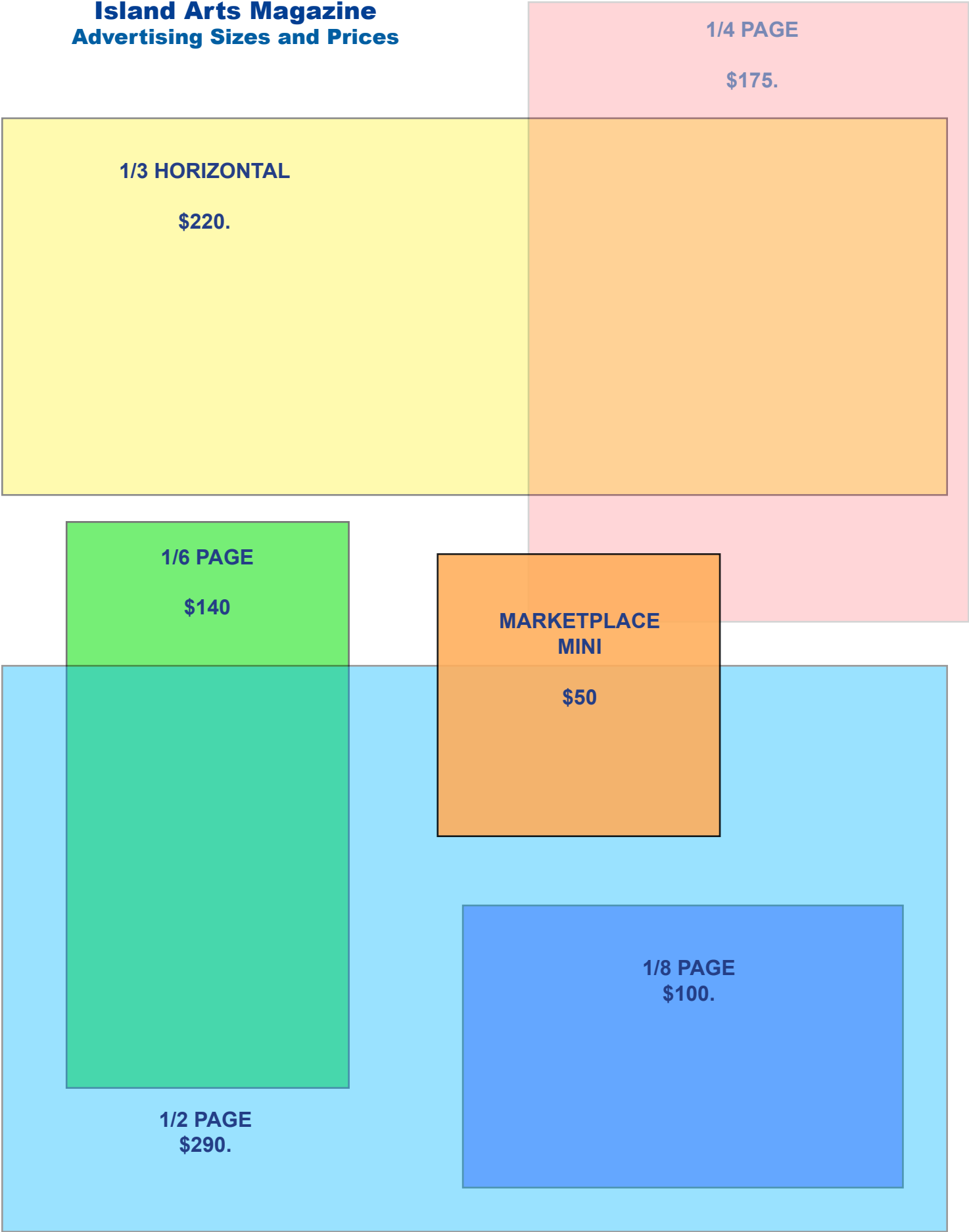
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PLEIN AIR SEASON IS NOW

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This summer, get inspired by nature, and try capturing your favourite outdoor scene with plein air painting. Visit the Opus Resource Library online for great videos and articles to inspire, including two new videos with artists Sheree Jones (above) and Gaye Adams!

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