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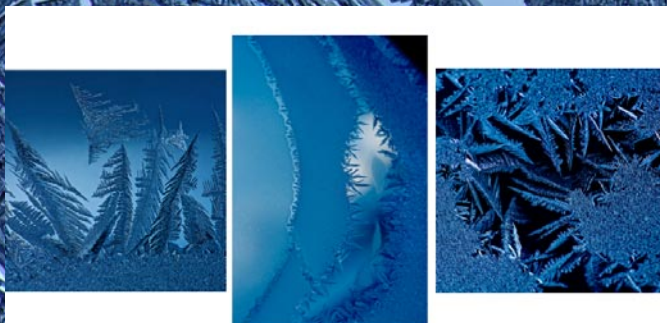
MAGAZINE

November 2020 - February 2021
Issue # 52

**Supporting Western
Canadian Artists**

Feature Artist - photographer

**Brenda
Castonguay**



The Frost Collection by Brenday Castonguay

www.islandartsmag.ca

Thank You John Warden

John has been a regular contributor to IAM for several years, kindly sharing his passion for photography and words.

“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



ISLANDARTS

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YOUNG AT ART, 701 ERMINESKIN AVENUE, PARKSVILLE BC CANADA V9P 2L4

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Note from your Editors

Susan Schaefer / Jeff Shields / Chace



Well folks, this has been one heck of a roller coaster of a year. We should all give ourselves a pat on the back, as we did the best we could, under the circumstances. Good job everyone!

I have heard from many artists, read posts on line and experienced it myself - that there seems to be a new interest in fine arts. Artists are selling their work and getting commissions. The flood gates are beginning to crack. Let's hope it busts wide open next year.

Perhaps people have spent too much time at home, looking at their bare walls and re-decorating. More and more people are surfing around online. Or perhaps at a time when we have somewhat lost control of a lot of things, ART is the only constant that we have control of. We can admire and purchase what and when we like. Whatever the reason, let's keep the energy moving.

This season when you are looking for that gift for someone special (and that special someone could be you) think ART. We have included a shopping directory on page 16 & 17.

On a more personal note, we would like to thank everyone for their continued support. We told you in April that due to CoVid we had made the decision to go digital. You supported our decision without question. As a result we have been able to go forth with renewed energy, bringing you what we feel is a bigger and better magazine.

Thank You - Best Wishes for a Healthy & Creative 2021



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BROWN GALLERY

The Old School House Arts Centre
122 Fern Road West, Qualicum Beach, BC Canada
Zoom Opening Reception Wednesday October 14, 2 PM

VIRTUAL SHOW:

<https://www.theoldschoolhouse.org/2020-fca-gallery>

THESE AND ADDITIONAL JURIED WORKS by the artists will also be shown virtually on the FCA website:

https://federationgallery.com/show/arrowsmith_25th_anniversary_fall_juried_exhibition/0

The Arrowsmith Chapter of the FCA (Federation of Canadian Artists), is excited to celebrate their 25th Anniversary at The Old School House (TOSH) Art Centre in Qualicum Beach BC.

The Arrowsmith FCA <https://arrowsmithfca.ca> was founded 25 years ago by a few local artists who wished to collaborate and learn from each other, as well as to represent successful artists in the community. The chapter has thrived over the years and now boasts over 70 accomplished artists from Nanaimo to Campbell River and every point in between. Our artist members are looking forward to displaying their artworks that they have created in anticipation of this show.

This 'celebration' show will feature 40 pieces using acrylic, oil, water colour paints, pastels and media in the Brown Gallery at TOSH. All 40 artworks can be viewed by visiting the virtual show: <https://www.theoldschoolhouse.org/exhibitions>



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- 4-1/2 cups sugar
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- 4-1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- 3 cups chopped walnuts, toasted
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 ounces white baking chocolate, melted

Line a 13x9-in. pan with foil; coat with cooking spray. In a heavy Dutch oven, combine sugar, milk and butter. Bring to a rapid boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Cook and stir 5 minutes. Remove from heat.

Stir in chocolate chips, marshmallows and chopped chocolate until melted. Fold in walnuts and vanilla. Immediately spread into prepared pan. Drizzle with melted white baking chocolate; cool completely.

Using the foil, lift fudge out of pan and cut into squares.

BRIAN BUCKRELL

Comox Valley Artist



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Robert Genn - "Serious Collectors"

In my experience, collectors come in all shapes and sizes. Some are turned on by mystery and challenge, others by art that makes them feel comfortable. Investment, decoration, escape and pure impulse are factors in collectorship, but you have to know that collectors may respond to a variety of motivations that are often beyond an artist's calculation.

Collectors may take the advice of someone, but the best ones make up their own minds. They are often compulsive, acquisitive and upwardly mobile. Collectors may admire craft and technique precisely because it is beyond their own reach. The best ones honour this instinct.

Serious collectors have art in their closets. Serious collectors think they see value better than others. Thankfully, the value they see is arbitrary and relative. They think art has magic. They appreciate the freedom to choose. They may have some sort of trigger mechanism between their cerebrum and their cerebellum that causes them at times to spend with abandon. We artists are blessed with their passion.

Best regards, Robert

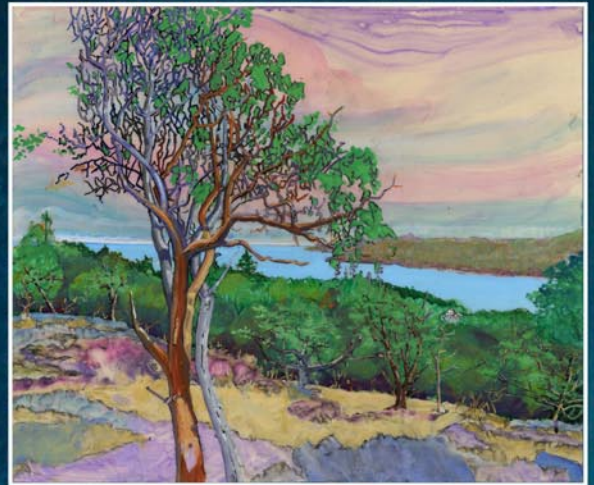
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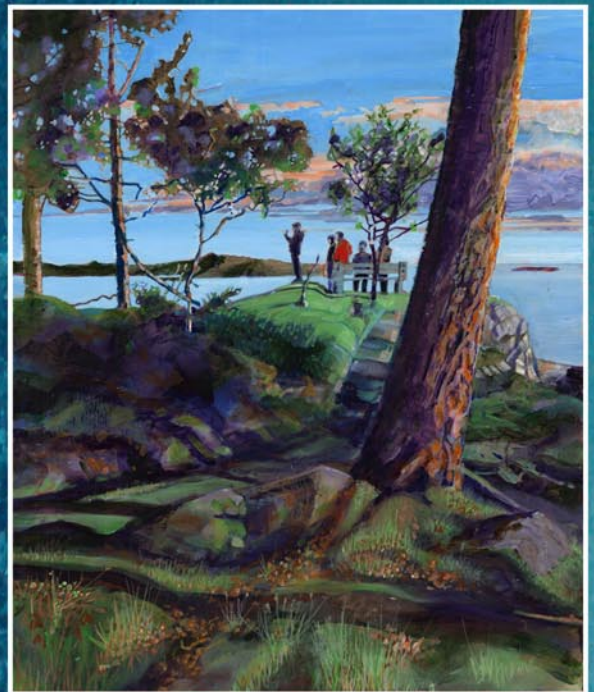
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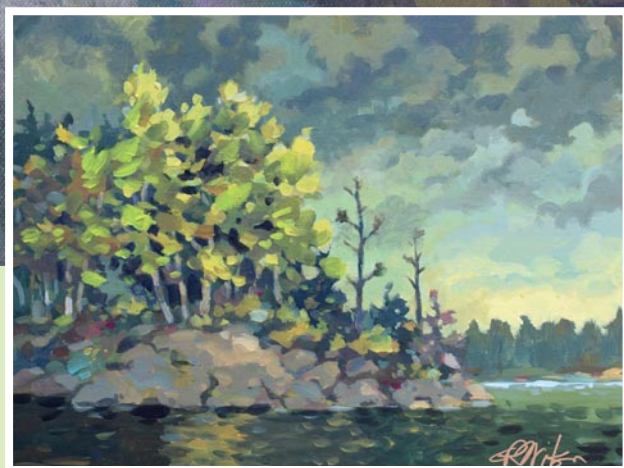
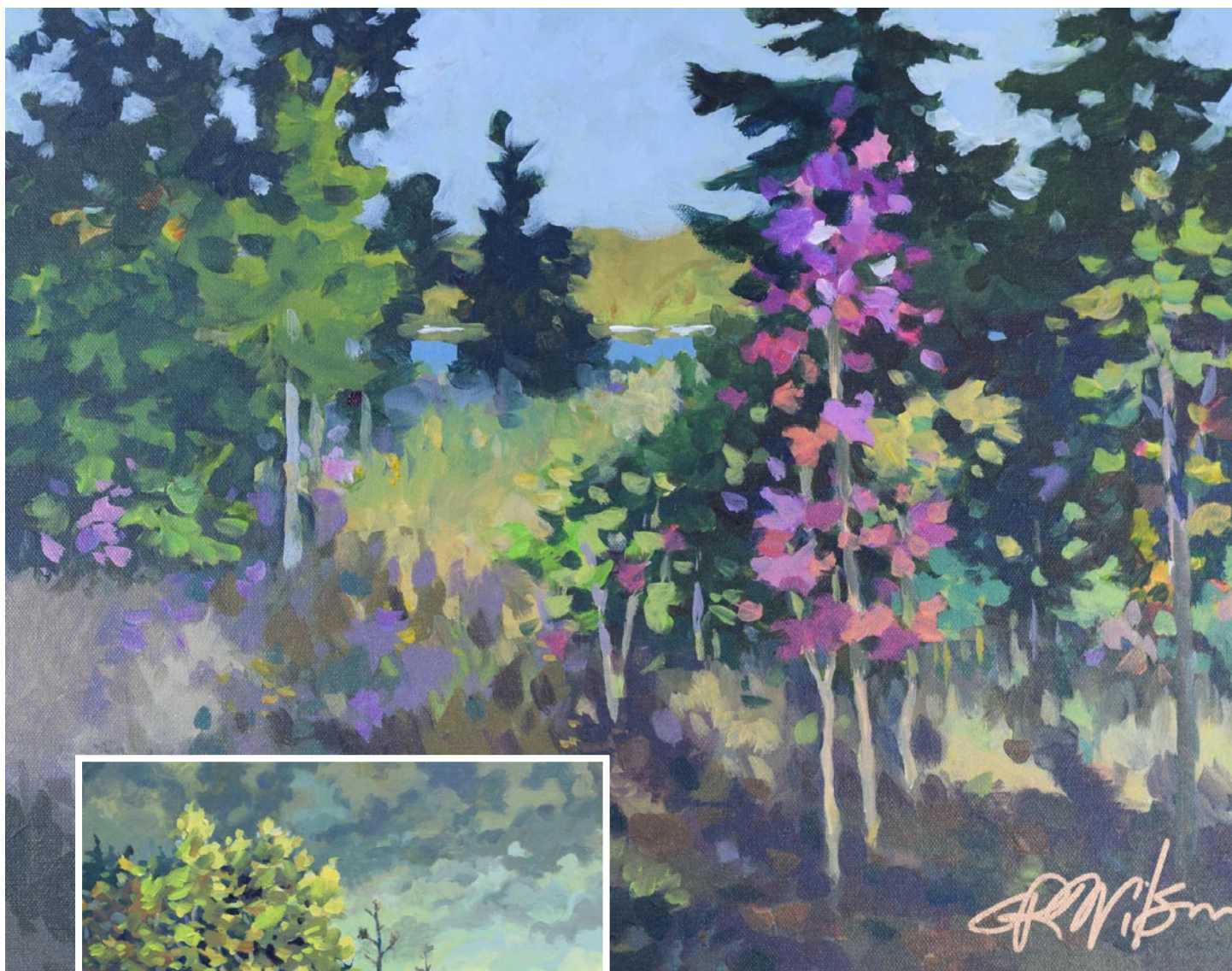
RICHARD ALM BA AFCA

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Gallery Forecast 2021

The Old School House Arts Centre

Qualicum Beach BC

While COVID19 put a lurch in our operations and public access, it gave us an opportunity to update our physical spaces and our digital processes. We learned new skills in short time frames and cultivated new relationships with other arts organizations on Vancouver Island. We continue apace with our digital strategic planning with the other arts institutions on the island and are really looking forward to the outcomes of that research.

In 2021 we have 6 shows planned, each with 2 or 3 local artists or groups that will include an element of community programming. Our exhibition calendar will feature each group of artists for 8 weeks. We will introduce online art classes and continue with small in person workshops.

The music program will include both in person concerts at the community hall with a maximum of 40 seats, and free live-streamed shows. We are hopeful to be able to bring an outdoor concert series this summer.

We continue to support our mandate and the formative words that shape TOSH: connection, creativity, community, and education. We are excited about the future and remain hopeful for the things that come. 2020 has shown us how important the arts are, and our intention is to make our programming increasingly accessible to everyone, regardless of their age, or ability!

Keep in touch with us on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and our website where you can sign-up for our newsletter.

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Gallery Forecast 2021



Cowichan Valley Arts Council

Through the Lens

Window landscape views. Dr. Bonnie Henry painted as a Mary Poppins character. Even papier mache made from toilet paper rolls - as a sly nod to the empty store shelves earlier in the pandemic. Those were some of the entries in the Cowichan Valley Arts Council's Living in Lockdown show in September displaying artistic responses to the pandemic that has turned our lives upside down this year.

As CVAC begins its 50th year in 2021, we are stronger than ever, having emerged from our own five-month closure knowing we can pivot quickly: our huge spring fine arts show - the largest non-juried art show on Vancouver Island - was online in 2019, seen by thousands of viewers and reaching further than we expected. The two galleries offer a sanctuary for people who want to view art, while our new studio is becoming a hub for people who want to dabble, learn or express themselves. Two videos we produced on art therapy are online as well.

Where will CVAC and the arts community be in 2021? Hopefully even more responsive, tech-savvy and collaborative than ever. We plan to present more than 30 shows representing modern life through the lens of art, kicking off the year with Then and Now, inviting artists to submit two works - one old and one new - and link them with a statement on their personal artistic journeys that got them from A to B. - Susan Down Managing Director.

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"King of the Hill", 16 x 20 , a/c

Looking at trees, I squint my eyes and admire their simplified shape and design. I see the negative space and shape between the branches. I watch for movement. This is how I like to paint them.

susan-schaefer-fine-art.ca

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FEATURED ARTIST

BRENDA CASTONGUAY

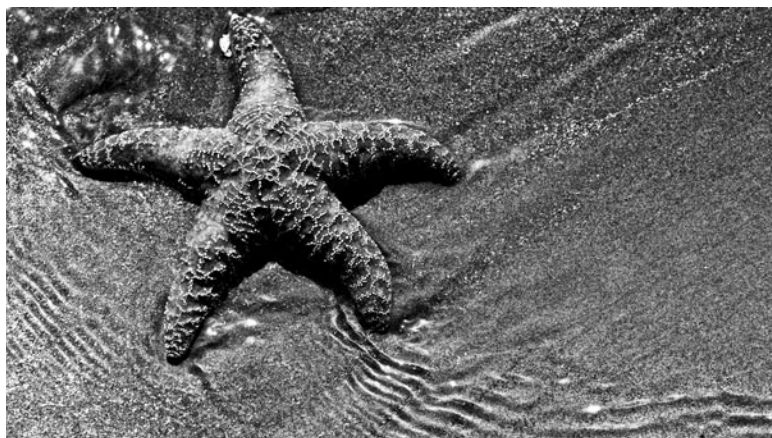


Brenda Castonguay is an award winning photographer with over twenty years of professional photography experience.

With an extensive background in photojournalism and fine art, Brenda Castonguay specializes in black and white landscapes. Her passion for photojournalism caught fire in the early 90s while she was enrolled at Montreal's Dawson Institute of Photography for commercial photography studies.

Now living on the west coast of Canada, she has focused much of her practice on combining her past experience in art with her passion of photography by printing her images on high gloss metal, then hand painting the textures and details with acrylic textured gel mediums, resulting in a highly detailed tactile experience of her stunning landscapes and macro florals.

ART that you are encouraged to TOUCH!



Brenda Castonguay - Q & A

When did you make the move from Calgary to Vancouver Island and Why?

About six years ago I decided to close up my photography studio in Inglewood, Calgary and buy a retirement home. My hubby was retiring and we wanted to move to the island for its stunning natural setting and ocean air. We were both burnt out and craving the laid back “island time” pace. Over the years of living downtown Calgary, we would make a habit of vacationing on the island. It never failed to rejuvenate the soul and my eye for landscapes and macro florals!

What prompted the transition from traditional photography to painting on metal?

Since I was a hardcore black and white film photographer/printer most of my career, it seemed most comfortable to keep with a high contrast, silvery aluminum substrate while moving into the digital era. Before I became a professional photographer, I was in art school and loved it, but left it for a career in photography and thought I’d never look back. I missed painting and decided to marry my images with textured acrylics on the silvery high gloss substrate.



Tell us about the process.

I find the marriage of the three passions of a silver based substrate, photography and textured painting fascinating in that I now “see” differently. The art of finding that perfect image is now all about the textures I’d like to paint to achieve the final product. It’s no longer about a pretty picture. It’s now an adventure in how to turn a one dimensional image into a sculptured tactile experience for more than just the eye. I ardently encourage my audience to touch the painting, that extra dimension, in order to bring the senses out of disbelief. Some of my work can be a real test in patience as it can be very detailed. This kind of attention to re-creating details can take upwards of 60+ hours!

What do you do in your spare time?

My time spent landscaping our property keeps me in focus. My five year plan is to have a stunning garden that I can host an art in the garden tour with multiple artists. My garden is my muse for my burgeoning Macro Florals collection.

In the interim, you can find me scouring the many famous gardens of the island and painting my found treasures at the McMillan Art Centre every Friday from 11-3. Work in progress is an image from Butchart’s Japanese Garden. The title is aptly named “Confinement”. The hundreds of years of twisted growth in the tree’s branches seem to be confined to the edges of the substrate, unable to escape. The 20x36 is painted/sculpted with multiple iridescent and interference hues, phosphorescent greens, iron oxide gel, among others. ~

toviewmore.ca



Shopping Guide



Yvonne Maximchuk
Artist - Potter - Author
www.yvonnemaximchuk.com



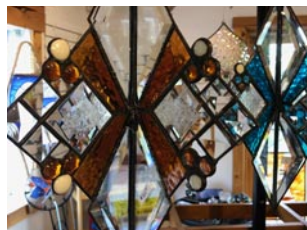
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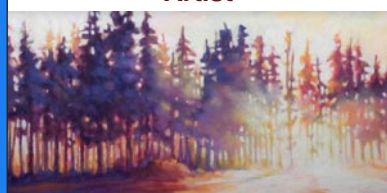
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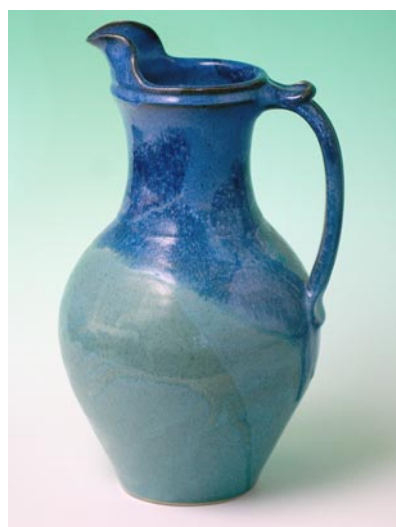


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Celebrating 40 Years

Saying Goodbye to Bill Shurniak

by Susan Schaefer

It was a sad day when I received an email in early August of 2020 from the gallery director to say that Bill Shurniak had passed away.

My personal relationship with Bill started in 2014 when we stopped at the Shurniak Art Gallery on a road trip out to Saskatchewan. I had called prior to our visit. On our arrival it was no surprise that Bill was surfing my website.

Bill made himself immediately available to us and gave us a personal tour of the gallery. The history of the Shurniak Art Gallery is that after many years of working abroad, Bill returned to his hometown of Assiniboia Sask. and built the gallery as a way to give back to his prairie roots. It houses his personal collection of exquisite art work from all over the world. He jokingly told us that he never got much work done, as his 'Group of Seven' paintings hung in his office and he was constantly being interrupted by folks wanting to see the collection. Of course, we wanted to see them too.

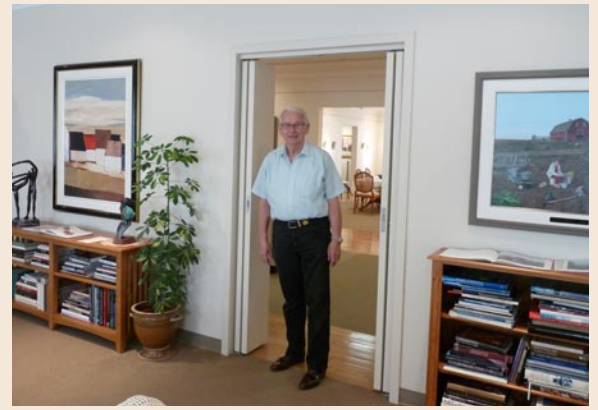
In 2016 I had the great honour of having an exhibition at the Shurniak Art Gallery. Due to open in June, I was not able to attend my opening, as my father had just passed and my heart was broken. At the end of that summer, I went out to Sask. to help my mother, and retrieve my paintings from the gallery.

Bill had arranged to have a small 'tea party' for our arrival. I was overwhelmed with emotion when he told me that he was purchasing two of my pieces to add to his 'private collection'. He would have an original Schaefer amongst his Group of Seven collection.

I always imagined another visit with Bill on our next drive out to Sask. About once a year I would give Bill a call just to chat. He was a great story teller and he would say "Just a minute, I'm not done with my story" and then he would continue on.

I will be forever grateful to this kind, and generous man, for his hospitality and support. He will be remembered in the Canadian arts community for his vision as the Shurniak Art Gallery carries on.

Thank you Bill



Bill Shurniak



Shurniak Art Gallery



the gallery is warm and inviting



Bill with his two new purchases of my art



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DRAW Gallery, Port Alberni BC

Our 'Gallery Beyond Walls' offers contemporary
We celebrate the diversity and talent of local and
regional artists.

Works by gallery artists can be viewed and pur-
chased online or on location; *thru Nov 27th* - **Fall
In Love With Art!**, Exhibit of eclectic works in
glass, wood, paint, metal, photography and fea-
turing work from this year's 8th Annual Plein Air
Paint Out!

DRAW will be showcasing works by Artists such
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Coltman, Jacques De Backer, Cynthia Bonesky,
Cecil Dawson, Lucas Chickite, D.F. Gray,
Pamela Holl Hunt, Perry Johnston, Jillian Mayne,
Ann McIvor, Shannon McWhinney, Mark Penney,
Todd Robinson, Susan Schaefer, Perrin Sparks,
Marla Thirsk, Sue Thomas, Gordon Wilson and
Nancy Wilson.

Dec 8th – Feb 26th, 2021 - Heart of Winter

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cation at the corner of Melrose & 8th Ave in the
dynamic Alberni Valley or Call 855-755-0566.
www.drawgallery.com



Bazaar Buttercream Spice Cake

This recipe was created by Kristina from the Hollyhock kitchen.

Hollyhock creates meaningful experiences for personal growth and social transformation. Their main campus on Cortes Island includes delicious garden-to-table meals.

Learn more at hollyhock.ca

Ingredients:

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, room temperature
- 1 tablespoon grated lemon peel
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup sour cream or yogurt
- 1/2 cup whole milk

Method:

Cream butter and sugar together.
Add eggs.
Mix dry ingredients in separate bowl.
Add to butter mixture alternating dry with wet (Yogurt and milk) until combined.
Bake at 350 until tester comes out clean

For the buttercream we used butter, icing sugar, saffron liquid (soak a pinch or two of saffron threads in hot water and then strain liquid out). We also added orange blossom water to the icing.

Bon appetit!



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Island Arts Magazine



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Salmon with a Blackberry Reduction

2 cups of fresh blackberries
2-3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

Combine ingredients and puree in the food processor. In a small saucepan on med-high heat, continuous slow stirring to prevent sticking to the bottom of the pan, until the consistency of watery oatmeal. Strain seeds out in a good fine sieve. Let sit for half-hour.

Fish: BC Steelhead, two fresh fillets of fresh, skin on. Lightly pat dry. Season with fresh ground sea (or Kosher) salt and fresh ground pepper. Apply the Blackberry reduction

Cook on a cookie sheet, aluminum or copper sheet, on the BBQ until internal temp of 145F (approx 9 min), do not over cook. Let stand approx 5 min.

Serve with a standard Caesar salad.

Tim McGrath www.Its-Food.ca
www.facebook.com/ITSFoodca

Cabbage Roll Soup

4 cups beef broth
8 ounce can tomato sauce
1/2 cup uncooked long-grain rice
1 bay leaf
3 tsp brown sugar
2 tsp parsley
2 small spoon olive oil
A pinch of salt & pepper 1 pound ground beef or turkey
1 onion diced
2 tsp small garlic
4 cups chopped green cabbage
2 carrots sliced

In a large pot , heat the olive oil and add the ground beef and season with pepper and salt . Cooked ,divided the meat with a spatula until beef is browned, about 6 min . Add the garlic and onion cook about 4 min



Add in the pot the carrots/cabbage/beef broth/rice/tomato sauce/bay leaf /and sugar; and add salt/pepper.

Bring and cook about 26 min until rice is done.



Motion in Stillness

By John Warden

I noticed a heavy mist gathering along the roadside as I left Port Alberni. After three days exploring the beaches around Tofino, I was headed for home. By the time I got to Comox, though, a heavy blanket of fog was layered across the valley. At the airport, my concern was confirmed. There would be no flights out that day. But I had my camera and there was the fog.

I spent an hour with the swans along Knight Road, trying to be creative with white on grey. Then, remembering the pilings along the shoreline near Bayside Road, I headed that way, wondering if the old timbers would offer a strong contrast against the soupiness of the murk.

Parking the rental along the side of the road, I opened the door and stepped into a complete and silent stillness. And yet...over by the pilings, there was movement. Some ducks were dabbling in the single ray of light that was etched along the surface of the water.

So, on a day when I should have been flying back to Edmonton, I tuned my art to the currents of nature and encountered motion in the heart of stillness.

Mary Flores

Pottery Inspired By The Sea

I've often been asked how I got interested in working with porcelain clay. I believe it was a happy accident. After moving to Qualicum Beach in 2017, I was looking for a new creative outlet. At first, I took painting class after painting class, thinking this was what I wanted to do in my spare time. I knew it just wasn't the right fit for me. Then a friend suggested I take a pottery class with her. After the first class, I was hooked! I loved the feel of the clay in my hands, the smell of the wet clay, and that I could form the clay into something I envisioned in my head. I had found my NEW creative outlet, in hand building with porcelain clay!

I believe my past life and artistic experiences have led me to where I am at today in my porcelain art. My previous artistic endeavours over the last forty years have included working as a graphic designer, calligraphy, fibre art, jewellery design, fused glass art, and glass lamp work beads.

Growing up in Texas, near the Gulf of Mexico, and later living near the South China Sea, the diverse coast of Chile, and now the Salish Sea, I have always had a deep appreciation for the ocean and all it's natural wonders....hence Pottery Inspired by the Sea.

People are usually quite surprised when they see my jewellery, to learn it's made from porcelain and not glass. I can play with the glazes to give the look of stone, coral, or wavy water effect. In some of my porcelain beads, I embed a cubic zirconia into the finished bead, which gives my jewellery one more final unique detail. It's a quite long process from forming each bead by hand, adding the fine detail, drying, firing in the kiln, glazing and firing again. The beads are then finally ready for me to make into bracelets, earrings and necklaces.

My pottery is not only limited to jewellery, but also includes organic forms of bowls, coral, sculptural waves which are mounted on stone, all formed with porcelain clay.

www.mfloresbythesea.com





Wild Places of BC

Landscape artist Tom Shardlow will present his first solo exhibition “Wild Places of BC” showing 50 British Columbia landscapes at the McMillan Arts Centre in Parksville BC from November 3 to 28.

His work, described as bold and unsentimental contemporary impressionism, portrays many of BC’s wild places. Shardlow’s paintings have been exhibited in over 60 juried exhibitions and have won multiple awards. His works have been acquired by a major private collection lending to the National Gallery in Ottawa and will be included in a University of BC collection.

Shardlow, a life-long BC resident, studied at the Vancouver School of Art in the late 1960’s before graduating from UBC to



research fish and wildlife. His travels as a biologist inspired him to document on canvas and paper many of BC’s wild and rugged landscapes.

“Meet the Artist” on November 14.

Tom Shardlow, AFCA, SCA



www.tomshardlow.com • 250-758-0390



Catherine Taron Art
www.catherinetaron.ca

Deb Peters
debeters.ca
250-741-4143



See Me @ TOSH in Qualicum
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Wendy Schmidt
Wildlife Artist



www.wendyschmidt.ca



An Artist's Musings

by Susan Schaefer

Having a crazy hair day?

Most of them are like that. But then I think, nobody's coming over to the house, so it doesn't really matter.

I have put a lot of these non-essential matters on the back burner during CoVid. Believe me it's easy to put housework on hold.

We use to do a lot of entertaining and having dinner guests pre-covid. Now, our guests are treated to coffee on our outdoor patio on a warm sunny day. As the rains start in November, we will have less and less sunny days. Perhaps we could set up a cosy coffee cafe in the garage? Oh honey...

Some of my priorities have changed during covid. I have pulled out and are using the good dishes. I have taken out the nice linen. I am using my good

paint brushes. Why? Our lives have been completely turned upside down and sideways. You never know what tomorrow will bring. Wear those pearls around the house!

I've also let a lot of things go. I've gone through cupboards, drawers, etc. I've asked myself "is this still serving a purpose?" If not, I've either recycled it or moved it forward for someone else to enjoy.

I've also had to let go of control. That was hard as I like to plan a year in advance - sometimes 5 years. 2020 was the year that we were finally going to experience the Grand Canyon. That all went down the drain. But all is good. We have no complaints. As my wise old mother said "The Grand Canyon isn't going anywhere."

I've noticed my art practice has also taken a crazy turn, to what I call the "I don't give a darn CoVid stage".

I am bolder, looser, and braver with my paintings. I have moved outside my



comfort zone. I am letting go of control and in some cases, painting directly on the canvas instead of sketching it out first. What?! That's crazy and reckless behaviour!

As we approach the new year I encourage you to paint with renewed exuberance. Make bigger brush strokes - take bigger risks. Loosen up and have some fun. I have a saying posted above my easel that says "Become the artist you've always dreamed of being."

Wishing you a happy and healthy 2021 with all it's new experiences.



Sandra Heavens

Watercolour Pastel Artist



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Illustrating Guided Reading Books

by Bill Helin



In my art career I have spent most of my time creating native jewelry, large wood carvings and painting cultural designs, all in the style of my Tsimshian Aboriginal ancestors from my fathers lineage. Commercial fishing was our main source of life until 1978 when I was injured on my boat and ended up attending a native art school for six months, which was the beginning of a wonderful cultural creative journey.

After learning how to make carving tools, design mythological animals and carve wood art, I ventured into the world of hand engraved story jewelry. I was very fortunate to learn from 3 different master carvers at the Ksan Native Art School in a little town in Northern BC called Hazelton.

As a young boy I was always drawing pictures. I would use a pen or pencil and draw on any kind of paper I could find. We were very limited with those resources back then, unlike now when we can draw on digital tablets and on a huge variety of papers.

I had a vision for my creative future but it was never tied into my Tsimshian Indian Heritage, mainly because my dad married a Norwegian lady and there was a bit of a stigma towards the way most of society viewed Indians and the lives on a reservation. Our government made sure of this unusual cultural mistreatment and my dad wanted to raise a family that wasn't going to be affected by prejudices of the world.

During my teens I was taught by my dad's mother about some of the culture and she was always encouraging me to learn how to draw traditional Tsimshian art and maybe carve totem poles and canoes too. All of those things meant absolutely nothing to me but I was interested in some of the mythological creatures that Haida artist Bill Reid had drawn. I was more interested in cartoons and other fantasy art until fate shocked me into submission of a very amazing cultural journey.

Jumping ahead to 2013, I was far from going away to become a cartoonist or an animator for Disney in the USA and had already opened 4 different native art galleries and had my art go into outer space a couple of times, so NASA said. Now my reputation in the aboriginal art world opened up a 3 month totem pole carving project in Hong Kong as a resident artist at the Canadian International School there.

It was an amazing journey in an amazing city thousands of miles overseas from my home and family, keeping overly busy helped me not miss everyone too much until the last few weeks. I taught over 1800 students from 54 nations and was really hurting bad to the point of never wanting to carve wood ever again. Ya right, famous last words.

continued pg. 28

Just before I was finished the two 15 foot totems I was contacted by a long time friend of mine who lived in Nanaimo. Her name is Terri Mack. Terri and her husband had bought a book resource company and were looking for an illustrator to help teach children in the school system using advanced guided reading books.

I knew nothing about guided reading but was very excited to be contracted to illustrate the first set of books, 23, all written by Terri and two other authors. What a blessing to finally take my art on a new learning journey working with a team of brilliant enthusiastic retired teachers.



At first I was just overly saturated into the development of both human and animal characters and developing a design process that would better accommodate the writing visions of the authors. We all had so much fun fitting scenes together with their

text and for them to see their writing come to life was truly a great thrill for me, fun and unique from all my other aboriginal art projects.

Like most of my new creative experiences through the years I was so caught up in my own creative glory that I missed the true educational essence of what I had been generously brought into, then I was awoken by founder Terri Mack about how guided reading works.

I knew the stories seemed very simplistic and sometimes repetitive, as some Doctor Seuss books are, but little did I know that each little guided reading book for kindergarten progressing towards young teens, had a planned learning continuum. The 3 authors had planned and dreamed about uniting on this exciting journey

for many years of their friendships.

I was further impressed by the response our books received at our first education conference we attended in Vancouver, where most of the teachers and educators excitedly complimented and praised the ladies for finally bringing guided reading into the needed levels for students of all ages. It was impressive and exciting to witness such an enriching educational spectacle.

I had no idea how such simplicity could be so powerful. That was a big lesson for this detailed and busy minded artist to learn. Such an important project that was totally funded by the owners of Strong Nations Publishers, which is why we were able to produce a few hundred books in a five year period.



Last year I worked with a stuffed animal company called Plush Toys, located in Surrey, to produce some small stuffed animals and

finger puppets that I designed to be similar to eight of my book characters. They are being used by educators to act out fun lessons and journeys with children at home, home schooling and public schools too.

My book writing and illustration projects have truly blessed my life in many ways and with so many children and teachers expressing their gratitude for all our hard work, it is more fulfilling than anything I've experienced in my 40 year art career. I also have a much deeper appreciation and respect for all the wonderful educators that I have met through all my school presentations, especially my three authors and friends at Strong Nations. ~

billhelin.com



A Boatbuilder's Perspective

by Tony Grove

I have always loved discovering new ideas and creating which has led me into several careers throughout my life.

After completing a four-year boatbuilding apprenticeship at Vancouver Shipyard that started in 1980, I honed my skills as a shipwright eventually specifically specializing in wooden boat restoration and construction as well as boat interior building.

In 2001 one of largest boat building projects I worked on was the construction of a 34' sailboat for a Vancouver client. With the help of boatbuilder friends and several previous boat school students there was a successful completion and launching of "Prospector" in the summer of 2005.

At present I am working on Dorothy, a 30 ft sail boat owned by the BC Maritime Museum in Victoria. It is the oldest registered, functioning sail boat in Canada, built in 1897 in Victoria. I have been restoring her so she may one day sail again.



I am also a self-taught artist and inspiration for painting boats struck me when I stumbled across an old boat tucked away in an unused boat shed. Sunlight streamed through cracks in the sheds siding, highlighting the dust in the air while casting streams of light and shadows over the worn wood and peeling paint of this sleeping beauty. Who built it, why was it built? How has necessity defined its shape and function?



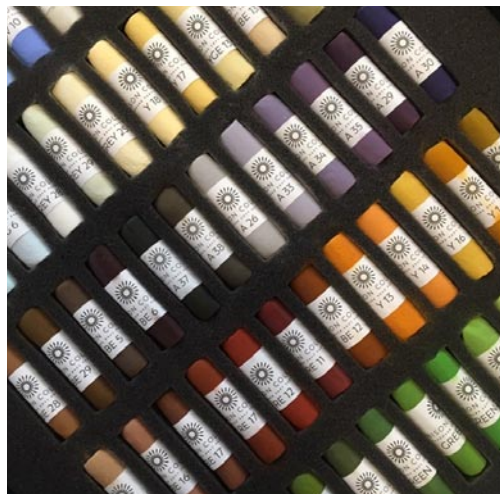
As a boatbuilder and as a career, I have chosen to preserve old wooden boats. I am fascinated by their historic value, an intrigue that draws me into a careful study of their build and design. Many of the boat images I create come from the inspiration of working on the vessels themselves, or of their historic role they've played in the past.

Intrigued by the myriad of hulls shapes, styles and construction, I find true beauty, and joy with artistic license, by using light and colour to capture the essence of the boat in his paintings.

I also briefly worked as a commercial illustrator and artist, producing work for Vancouver clients and magazines. One of my largest projects was in 1989 where I illustrated a book for the United Nations through the FAO, which has since been published into several languages for distribution around the world.

In 1992, my love for art and wood, allowed me to naturally combine my skills to start a successful business in the field of custom furniture design and building. Alongside my business in 1995, I co-founded the "Lava group" a collaboration of some of the most creative furniture designer builders in BC, where they came together for an annual exhibition (and party) of their new furniture designs and functional art.

www.tonygrove.com



**Product Review
by Dragonfly Art
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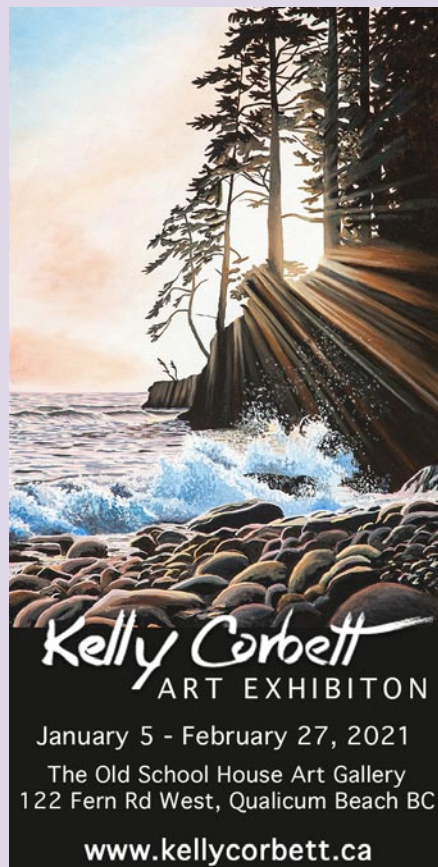


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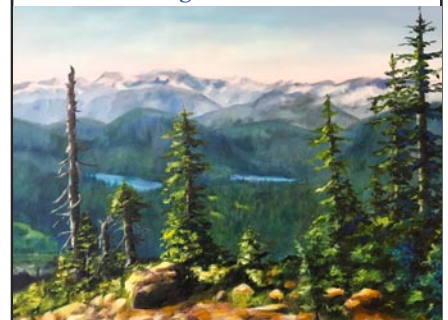
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Is your website content fresh?

by Jeff Shields

Does your website attract and hold visitors?
Do you rank well in the search engines?
Is your content over 12 months old?

It might be time to freshen things up. It can be overwhelming to attempt to refresh your website all at once. If you have google analytics installed as part of your website, it can be used as a starting point. If you don't have google analytics, the first thing I would do is install it. Otherwise start with the home page.

The general rule of thumb is: "content is king". Quality, unique and recent content should be your main focus. Using google analytics, look for the pages with the highest bounce rate. One page a month makes the task a bit less onerous.

What is the main point of the page? Come up with a key word phrase that best describes what the page is about. Then 4 or 5 additional key words or phrases that support that idea. Now you can write your content using these key words and phrases. Use synonyms to broaden the possible search matches.

Before you take your new content live, spell check it, have someone read it over, and try reading it out loud to yourself. Good luck and happy writing.

Global Art

MARIO LOPRETE

Catanzaro, Italy

"I live in a world that I shape at my liking, throughout a virtual pictorial and sculptural movement, transferring my experiences, photographing reality throughout my filters, refined from years of research and experimentation.

The new series of works on concrete is the one that has given me the most personal and professional satisfactions. It was born as a result of an important investigation of my work, the research of that "quid" that I felt was missing. Looking at my work in the past ten years I understood that there was the semantics and semiotics in my visual speech, but the right support to valorize the message was not there.

The reinforced cement, the concrete, was created by two thousand years ago by the Romans. It has a millenary story, made of amphitheatres, bridges and roads that have conquered the ancient and modern world. Now it's a synonym of modernity. Everywhere you go and you find a concrete wall, there's the modern man in there.

The successive passage was obvious for me. If man brought art on the streets in order to make it accessible to everyone, why not bring the urban in galleries and museums? It was the winning step to the continuous evolutionary process of my work in that "quid" that I was talking about before



For my Concrete Sculptures I use my personal clothing. Throughout some artistical process, in which I use plaster, resin and cement, I transform them in artworks to hang. My memories remain concreted inside, transforming the person that looks at the artworks a type of post-modern archeologist that studies my work as they were urban artefacts."

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