

Headwaters Arts celebrates 30 years with a soirée and juried art show

By Constance Scrafield

Headwaters Arts is marking its 30th anniversary this year with an opening night soirée on Sept. 17 at the Alton Mill Arts Centre, launching a month-long celebration of local and regional artists.

Running from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., the event will provide an opportunity to meet the artists, enjoy the ambiance of a premier art gallery, and view the works of award-winning fine artists.

This is the Headwaters Arts Fall Festival Juried Show and Sale running from September 16 to October 4, titled 'A Celebration of Art, Culture and Community.'

Sue Powell, media representative for Headwaters Arts, is a Mono based artist and has been involved with Headwaters Arts for many years. In addition to her routine work, largely as a volunteer, she has been instrumental in the successful application of grants for Headwaters and the Alton Mill Art Centre.

Currently, she is working on a 30th anniversary piece, which she described as 'a collection of memorabilia.' It will be beautifully arranged to display a valued history.

'Three decades ?? it's amazing how many people have given so much of their time to keep this together. From Al Pace and Signe Bell [In the Hills Magazine] all the sponsors, Margi Taylor and Steve Hertzberg on the Board of Directors as presidents for years,' said Powell.

Some of the evening will be under the tent covering the court outside.

'The jurors were pretty tough,' Powell said. 'They are doing a jurors' walk through the gallery with their remarks about the works on Sunday, September 20. That is really interesting for everyone and helpful for the artists.'

The two jurors are Liza Zhurkovskaya and Julia Veenstra, an internationally recognized landscape artist and owner of the Crown and Press Gallery in Hamilton.

Liza Zhurkovskaya is a Toronto-based curator, art advisor and founder of Kefi Art Gallery. In addition to her assessment of the art, she noted that the artist's statements are an intrinsic part of the submission.

The two jurors were surprised and pleased that they independently chose some of the same pieces from the 130-plus submissions (200 images). Of this impressive collection, they selected 70 outstanding two-dimensional pieces and seven top three-dimensional works.

There is no ticket price for the Jurors' walk, although registration at www.headwatersarts.org is requested as a measure of how many people are to be expected. This is also to encourage artists to join the walk and hear the observations the jurors made about the works.

Nancy Kluger, chair of the Events Committee, said, 'What makes our Juried Art Show so special is the calibre and diversity of the work. You don't have to be an art collector to enjoy it ?? you just have to walk through the gallery and see what speaks to you.'

She talked about this year's submissions and noted the Call to Submit brought in a quality and diversity of art that has really raised the bar, as she put it.

?There is such a variety in the submissions this year,? she said. ?Not only paintings, although there are many paintings, but also wood working and multimedia works, beautiful textiles, and fibre pieces. It's exciting.?

Margi Taylor has been president of Headwaters Arts for 15 years. Twelve years ago, she took a break from the board to concentrate on the scholarship fund Headwaters Arts manages.

What keeps her involved reminds us that Taylor is a renowned artist herself from OCAD University in Toronto.

?I like to support artists. It is fulfilling to see the youth with these scholarships that provide some assistance with their post-secondary arts education; seeing them graduating from high school and continuing ? it makes you feel good. The fact that an arts organization keeps open secure revenues for that is a real feather in anyone's cap.

?It deserves great credit to the Board of Directors working, making projects happen. They have projects that they undertake.?

Taylor reminded us that ?they're not artists but professional business people.?

She added, ?Some have become artists. But they were corporate before.?