

Headwaters Arts Fall Festival Juried Art Show and Sale returns

By Constance Scrafield

Happy days are here again for the Headwaters Arts Fall Festival, a well-established juried show and sale of the best of Headwaters Arts member artists.

These artists do not necessarily live immediately in the area; many have joined from around Ontario but every paid membership bespeaks the respect and appreciation for the organization that exists throughout Ontario.

The Headwaters Arts Gallery at the Alton Mill Arts Centre is the beautiful stage in which the festival is taking place from September 14 to October 2.

Speaking to Susan Powell of Headwaters Arts, she told the Citizen about what is coming up during the festival, beginning with the end of it: 'We've partnered back with Nancy Frater of BookLore who is offering on October 2, a 'Bookish Afternoon.' She's presenting an authors' night with three fabulous authors.

'Of course, we're promoting the opening night soiree on September 15. That's the kick off from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00p.m.'

This opening night is a ticketed event on September 15, which includes wine, a jazz combo, the Sidemen quartet and is catered by Gregory's.

The jurors will be there as well, to announce the prize-winning artists.

This must have been quite the challenge to decide for the 78 works, taking over and hung in three galleries within the Mill, submitted by 54 artists.

Celebrating 26 years, the Arts Festival is set in the same weekend as the Village of Alton celebrates its 200th anniversary.

Paul Morin, well-known Alton artist, displays his work in his fabulous art gallery which he converted within the historic Alton Town Hall. He also has a painting in the festival's juried show.

More to the festival is the arts market, showcasing artists' work on Saturday, September 17 under the tent in the forecourt of the Mill.

Later on in the festival, the Campfire Poets are entertaining on Friday night, September 30.

The Citizen took the opportunity to interview two of the artists who have not participated in the festival before.

Eric David, living in Toronto, has two pieces hanging in the galleries, a photograph of a peaceful nature scene, catching the sun in an interesting combination of light and mist. However, it is the painting he submitted that we discussed.

A tunnel, graffiti covering the walls, shows at the far exit a crowned king and queen are outlined, walking hand in hand out of the tunnel. A jester dances behind them, his three-pointed hat tipped to one side.

The graffiti on the wall includes another jester.

The jester is COVID the king and queen are humanity being chased by the jester whom we hope won't catch up,' he explained.

'The viewer has his own interpretation. COVID is a like a jester,' he added, encouraging us by saying there is hope.

At the end of the tunnel is the clear light and the buildings of a city.

‘Painting has been part of my life since I was nine years old,’ he said. ‘It’s an integral part in how I see the world.’

Margot Roi’s painting is a gestural abstract landscape of the harvest moon.

‘I’ve always been drawn to the glorious stages of the harvest moon,’ she commented.

More or less retired from teaching for 35 years at a number of schools, including the University of Toronto and Brock University, Ms. Roi is still teaching at Dundas Valley School of Art and from her own studio, Brushes Up! as well as online lessons.

‘I am now a full-time artist, with two studios and lots of shows coming up,’ she said. ‘I am going through my abstract style, gestural abstraction - it means a rough style, intuitive process and going with the flow.’

This form of painting is not dealing with a concrete resource. It is an emotional abstract of a painterly approach to painting and one that has lots of layers.

‘I’m into layers and the colours get on top and I really enjoyed the colour palette of that one.’

Ms. Roi’s painting in the festival looks like a landscape but more of a feeling, an experience of nature.

The roots of her enthusiasm for pattern come from her education at Sheridan College in the fabric design program.

Currently she has taken the fall off to concentrate on developing her work further and in January she is doing a show with her uncle who is a sculptor.

The Headwaters Arts Festival opening night is next Thursday, Sept. 15 and runs until Oct. 2.

For all the information and to purchase tickets, go to headwatersarts.org/fall-festival-2022.