

APFTA offers first glimpse into Bancroft fall studio tour



By Chris Drost

Art enthusiasts will not have to wait until September to get a glimpse of some of the work that will be included in this autumn's Bancroft Studio Tour. The Annex Gallery at A Place for the Arts will be showing and selling the work of 14 of those artists from June 1 to June 25. Participating artists include Karen Instead, Bill Kafka, Joanna Hankus, Ketha Newman, Pat Doherty, Ken Fraser, Teena Surma, Barb Allport, Ken Balmer, Daryl Phillips, Miriam Hookings, Robert Pearson, Michael Hankus and Nancy McKinnon. Joanna Hankus' artistic expression began with the making of quilts. Later, she discovered a passion for making mosaics. Now, she does both mediums, "designing unity from the chaos of unrelated pieces." Michael Hankus' work in photography, captures familiar settings of dwellings and landscapes from unique vantage points. Nancy McKinnon is described as a "vibrant landscape painter" whose mediums of choice are acrylics and oils. "I love the texture and the movement created by the paint. I thirst for the shapes and faces of the colours," she says. Robert Pearson (a.k.a. Krys) works in pastel, charcoal, and oil. He favours landscape and figurative work accenting light and dark. While his home and studio overlook Baptiste Lake, his works span everywhere from Bancroft to British Columbia, to New Brunswick and Africa. Ken Balmer is an artist who describes his work as "most often inspired by a search for and appreciation of spirituality in all its forms. Orenda is an Iroquois name for a supernatural force believed to be present in all people and creatures. It is the spiritual drive for accomplishment; the essential element that allows us to thrive and survive. My artistic interpretations of animals, birds, fish, or insects strive to capture that essence in each subject," says Balmer. Miriam Hookings (known by the moniker Lucky Maloo, has lived in the region for more than 20 years. She is inspired by the land, water, and sky in creating unique clothing and accessories with zero waste. She uses 100 per cent recyclable materials. Her work is described as "sustainable, one-of-a-kind, comfortable and happy making." "I imbue every piece with the joy I feel in their

creation," she says. Barb Allport paints primarily in acrylics and is inspired by the rural world around her. "The energetic beauty of the rocks, trees, water, and wetlands sings to me, and my paintings are created in thanks to nature for its every present love and beauty," she explains. Daryl Phillips has also found inspiration from the natural world's beauty, complexity, and its "life-sustaining qualities." He enjoys finding connections between nature and the lives of people. "I am consistently inspired by what I see and experience. My photographs are an expression of those experiences to share with others and a way to recall those memories for myself," he says. Ketha Newman's old cabin is always a popular destination on the fall studio tour. From that beautiful location, Newman paints with watercolours, and does mixed media and printmaking. Patterned and stylized interpretations of scenery, plants, animals, and local activities are themes she often explores. Newman also enjoys community-engaged art projects, creating public art and drawing. One of her projects included The Canadian Backwoods Colouring Book that features 40 of her pictures from North Hastings. Karen Istead is a glass artist in Bancroft who works with fused glass. Through the process, Istead captures reflective light from trees, sky, and waterways. Her pieces are intended to hang in windows, or sit on a stand under room light, while others are useful items such as plates and candle holders. Teena Surma creates one-of-a-kind dolls and ornaments using air dry paper-clay. This Bancroft artist is self-taught. Her works includes dolls, animals and other creatures that are inspired by classic fairy tales or through her imagination. Pat Doherty has been painting since 1990, experimenting with various media along the way. He enjoys combining unusual objects with traditional formats to create unique pieces of work. As his work continues to evolve, he maintains strong roots in his childhood traditions. Ken Fraser is a self-taught painter/sculptor who enjoys "creating playful images that capture the wonder of the world around us." He paints on old wood and creates sculptures from found materials and clay. Bill Kafka creates pieces in stone that are inspired by the layers and shapes of the raw stone. "My techniques are in the Shona tradition, mostly carved entirely by hand using only chasing hammers, chisels, rasps, sandpaper for finishing and finally achieving a highly polished finish after applying a heated colourless wax," explains Kafka. All the stone he uses is from the Great Dyke, a 510-kilometre series of ridges running through Zimbabwe. The opening reception for the show is Thursday, June 1 from 6-8 p.m at 23 Bridge St. West in Bancroft. For more information visit www.apfta.ca.