

RIVERVIEW PUBLIC LIBRARY HOSTS ITS VERY FIRST ART EXHIBITION



Art talk Margaret Patricia Eaton

If you visit the Riverview Public Library between now and Nov. 25, you're in for a delightful surprise.

On those walls is a really a quite wonderful group exhibition, comprised of work by 33 area artists — from Riverview, Moncton and Dieppe — in various mediums. They include paintings — oils, acrylics and watercolours — photographs, fibre art, mixed media and drawings. Among them are landscapes, figurative works and still-life paintings as well as abstracts and conceptual pieces.

There's work by long time exhibitors, including Kay McCartney, Ruth Smith, Florine Rutledge, Bernadette LeBlanc, Charlie Gillan and Dianne Ryan, as well as Helen and Allan Spinnery, who I encountered a few weeks ago painting plein air at The Hopewell Rocks Provincial Park. There's work by newer artists exhibiting for the first time locally, including Jacqueline Kease, Eddie Diaz and Mandal Chase. And there are paintings by two artists I first met as students when I was on the staff of Riverview High School — Lee Anne Gibson and Alison Davidson. It was good to see them again after so many years and to see the beautiful work they're doing, although I think that until now they've been shy about showing their work. I'm so pleased they stepped forward in response to the call for submissions and are letting their artistic light shine.

So how did this exhibition come about? It's the brainchild of library director Lynn Cormier, who says she'd been wanting to have an art display ever since the new facility opened adjacent to the Riverview Town Hall in 2010.

"I'd always look at the walls and think there's not enough space, it just doesn't seem conducive to an art show,



Lee Anne Gibson with *Amsh Wonder*. The exhibition will remain at the Riverview Public Library until Nov. 25.

PHOTO: MARGARET PATRICIA EATON



Organizers of the show are, from left, Deborah Goddard, Dianne Ryan, Lynn Cormier, Danny Jacobs, Kay McCartney, Chris Antle and Ron Goddard. Behind them is a painting by Ji Hyang Yul. PHOTO: MARGARET PATRICIA EATON

However, when I mentioned it to Dianne Ryan she was very enthusiastic and that made me feel more optimistic about the possibilities."

Ryan, a well-known Riverview

artist who's had several solo exhibitions and participated in numerous group shows, teaches classes at the Lion's Community Centre and a member of Le's B'Old Haps art collective, agreed



Artist Alison Davidson.

PHOTO: MARGARET PATRICIA EATON

to co-chair" and she pulled a committee together," Cormier says.

"We met and the members were all very positive and felt it could work in the space, so we put out a call for

submissions from artists in the greater Moncton Area. Thirty-three responded which was just the right number for the space and when the show was hung it far exceeded my expectations. I think it looks very lovely." It does!

"We have a real mix, some have exhibited many times while others had never put their art out in public, but we're a free public library and we thought it was good to open it up to people who might not have had an opportunity to exhibit to do so. We also decided not to have a juried show because we didn't want to intimidate people.

"It was more important to us to give people a chance who hadn't stepped in the art world and we were thrilled with the level of their expertise," Ryan says. "We felt it would build confidence while giving artists an opportunity to see other artists' work, to see where they are on that path and to help establish community."

And it's happening already. First time exhibitors were excited about their debut and are already looking forward to next year's show. If you're interested in participating, check out the Riverview Public Library's Facebook page to review the rules and submission guidelines which call for original work, not previously exhibited and completed within the last two years. Because of space limitations, the piece cannot be larger than 25" x 36" and cannot exceed 10 lbs.

The show is also drawing interest from buyers as I noted red dots on four of the pieces, Cormier says that she understands the newly formed Town of Riverview Art Procurement Committee will be looking at the exhibition with a view to purchase one piece and there's also the possibility that another piece will be purchased for the library which will be determined by the board of directors.

Kudos to Cormier who had a dream of celebrating art in the library, to Ryan and the other committee members who enthusiastically supported her and to the 33 artists who rose to the challenge and made it a reality.

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