

Contemporary Portrait

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2009

The Canadian Portrait: today and tomorrow



Image by:
Katharine Stone

Join us for the Portrait Society of Canada's 8th Anniversary Exhibition

The Canadian Portrait: today and tomorrow

Exhibition of contemporary portraits

Celebrate the art of portraiture in Canada
March 3 - March 27, 2008

at the John B. Aird Gallery, Toronto

MacDonald Block, 900 Bay Street, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1C2 tel. 416 928 6772

Featuring beautiful works of Professional Portraitists from all of the provinces in Canada.

All forms of fine art portraiture: oil, acrylic, pastels, charcoal, watercolour, and sculpture

Opening reception is on Thursday March 5, 18:00 - 20:00

Gallery hours: 10:00 - 18:00, Monday to Friday

Our annual member's exhibition will be held at the John B. Aird Gallery in Toronto again this year.

The February 1st deadline for submitting works is fast approaching. Notification of acceptance of works will be made by mail before February 10th.

Exhibition of contemporary portraits at the John B. Aird Gallery, Toronto

March 3 to 27, 2009

Regardless of whether you are participating in this year's show, please join us

at the gallery to celebrate the Portrait Society's 8th anniversary exhibition. The opening reception will be held on Thursday, March 5, from 6 to 8 pm.

See you there!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Have you met . . . ? 2

News & Events 3 - 5

The business of art 6 - 7

Contribute to the newsletter 7



Image par:
Katharine Stone

Venez voir l'exposition du portrait qui marquera le huitième anniversaire de la société du portrait du Canada

Le Portrait Canadien: aujourd'hui et demain

Exposition des portraits contemporains

Célébrez l'art du portrait au Canada
Le 3 mars jusqu'au 27 mars 2008

à la Galerie John B. Aird à Toronto

Édifice MacDonald, 900 rue Bay, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1C2 Tel. 416 928 6772

Présentant des beaux travaux fait par des portraitistes professionnels qui viennent de toutes les provinces canadiennes

Tous les styles artistiques: l'huile, l'acrylique, le pastel, le fusin, l'aquarelle et la sculpture

La Réception d'ouverture aura lieu le jeudi 5 mars, 18:00 - 20:00

les heures de travail: 10:00 - 18:00, Lundi à Vendredi

Have you met . . . ?



Marjorie Morton

Watch this space for a profile of a Portrait Society member in each issue.

Name: Marjorie Morton

Medium: Oil

Location: Sicily!

I have the same story as many classical realists: I couldn't find the right teachers, and finally went to Florence and studied at one of the studios there—

Charles Cecil—and that helped me get the basic training I needed to get some control of what I wanted to do. When I came back from Florence, I started working with Irena Korosec and learned a lot more about colour.

What are you inspired by:

Training was critical, but inspiration is also part of the equation and I have spent a lifetime in the visual arts, with a BA in Art History and a Master's in Film Production. I taught Film Production for 23 years in the Faculty of Fine Arts at Concordia University before retiring to paint. And I can say that in my life, inspiration comes from every which way—of course from the great classical masters, such as Titian, Caravaggio, Velasquez and many more—but also from the magnificent color fields of Rothko, the fascinating photo collage work by David Hock-

ney that probes the issue of perspective in realism in ways that challenge the Renaissance (heresy, heresy...), and from poetry and literature, too. It all overlaps. It sends the mind into a field of reverie and into moments when you feel truth so strongly. Another great source of inspiration is communicating and exhibiting with other artists, and so I deeply appreciate what the Portrait Society has brought into my life.

What are you working on now?

My current project is taking off for Sicily and setting up a studio in the countryside! With my studio in a state of chaos and the shippers due to arrive, friend and fellow-artist Marina Dieul helped me so that I could photograph Canadian Olympian Joannie Rochette. The photo session is in preparation for a painting for the still unconfirmed Olympic Exhibition that we so want to work out for the

Portrait Society.

What books would you recommend to other portrait artists?

- Nobel laureate Orhan Pamuk's novel, *My Name is Red*—a murder mystery that is a meditation on the nature of style.
- Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*.
- Italo Calvino, *Six Memos for the Next Millenium*—essays on values that are important in literature, but also apply to visual arts.



Upcoming workshops

Master's workshops will be scheduled for the summer and fall of this year.

Watch upcoming issues of the newsletter for information about the workshop schedule, and how to register.



Dan Thompson workshop

You can read the latest issue online. Choose the file size you prefer:

[High resolution](#)

[Low resolution](#)

Canadian Brushstroke Magazine

The January/February 2009 issue of Canadian Brushstroke Magazine is now available online.

In this issue, you will find a listing of the winners of the magazine's latest competi-

tion—Portraits and Figurative. Congratulations to Marina Dieul, who was the competition's grand prize winner!

The issue also includes coverage of the 2008 Portrait

Arts Festival, with information about presenters and competition winners.

There's lots more as well—use the links on the right to download a copy.

Members' exhibitions and news

Congratulations to Marina Dieul and Jean Miller Harding, who were both featured in the December/January 2009 issue of *International Artist*.

Marina's painting, *La Belle Astrid*, was chosen as a finalist in the magazine's People and Figures competition. You can see Marina's work at marinadieul.blogspot.com.

Jean's article "Props banish the creative block" was published in the same issue, and included many examples of Jean's work, in addition to a demonstration of art in the making! To see Jean's work, visit www.millerharding.com.

2008 Portrait Arts Festival

In December, the Portrait Society hosted its fifth Portrait Arts Festival. The festival was held at the Toronto Centre for the Arts, and included presentations by internationally renowned artists:

- Juan Martinez gave an interesting and informative talk about classical drawing and proportion
- Morton Harris demonstrated how he creates an expressive caricature, and gave an animated explanation of his technique
- Gwenneth Barth drew a beautiful pastel portrait and showed her process from laying in the structure to layering colour
- Yuqi Wang painted a portrait over two sessions
- Dan Thompson showed us how he works in vivid colours and makes beautiful colour transitions
- Irena Korosec worked on the finishing stages of a portrait, adding detail and refinement

- A panel of the guest artists critiqued approximately 25 of the members' paintings
- Jean Miller Harding led a panel discussion about the business side of art
- Dieul, "Alexander Gaudry-Lipenski"
- 3rd prize: Kristy Gordon, "Craig"
- People's Choice: Katherine Stone, "The Paintbrush"
- Best portfolio: David Xu
- Certificate of merit: James Ian MacDougall



Pascal by Jim Middleton

The presentations were well-attended, and participants left the festival with inspiration to try new approaches.

The festival also included a competition, and the work of the 18 finalists was on display during the festival.

The award winners were:

- Grand prize: Mahmoud Meraji, "Levon"
- 1st prize: Katherine Stone, "The Paintbrush"
- 2nd prize: Marina

You can see the work of all the finalists on the Portrait Society website.

If you weren't able to attend this year's festival, we hope you" join us at the next one—wonderful things happen when artists and viewers come together to share their energy and commitment!

Visit YouTube to see videos of the 2008 Portrait Arts Festival:

[Click here to watch!](#)

Commission a portrait web page

The Portrait Society of Canada is pleased to announce its "Commission A Portrait" project. This project is part of a fundraising campaign aimed at the creation of a Contemporary Portrait Gallery in Toronto.

All members are welcome to participate. A web page

will be created for each participating artist. The page will display a portfolio of 8 images, as well as an artist statement, procedure, and pricing information. The pricing should include a 20% commission to the Portrait Society of Canada; this commission fee will be used help establish the portrait gallery.

To create these individual pages, we will need to increase the capacity of our website, and will have additional fees for the webmaster. To fund these additional expenses, each participating artist will be charged a one-time initiation fee of \$50.

The proposed inaugural exhibition would feature portraits of Canadian Olympians and would honour their contribution to Canadian culture.

Gallery for Contemporary Canadian Portraiture

At the Portrait Arts Festival, we announced our plan to create a Gallery for Contemporary Canadian Portraiture in Toronto.

The gallery will be a home for our art work and our activities. Plans include a permanent collection, rotating

exhibitions, and a commission fund.

The proposed launch for the gallery is 2010; this is designed to coincide with the Vancouver Olympics, with an inaugural exhibition of portraits of Canadian Olympians.

Your feedback and fundraising ideas are greatly appreciated.

Watch the website and this newsletter for further updates about the project.

Tips & ideas

Those of you who attended the Portrait Arts Festival saw Gwenneth Barth use a wood rasp to sharpen her pastels. Gwenneth finds that a wood rasp is really useful for creating a fine point on hard pastels, such as Nupastels or CarbOthello pencils.

Juan Martinez used a knitting needle for measuring proportions. This approach avoided the problems which occur when you use a tapered edge—such as a paintbrush—to measure a drawing.

Do you have any tips to share? Tools that work well for you? Let us know!



The business of art

By Jean Miller
Harding

Do you have questions about the business side of art? Or topics that you would like to see covered here? Let us know! And of course, share with us any great finds, advice, stories or suppliers that would help the rest of us do our business better. Looking forward to hearing from you

Let me begin by saying that I am not a writer! But after more than 30 years as a commercial medical illustrator and now as a portrait artist, somehow or other the business end of art seeped in via osmosis . . . or as the need arose. My experiences have given me some insight into the business side of art, which I am happy to share with you.

Colleges of art, universities, or ateliers leave the artist dangling upon graduation . . . they spew out students into the real world without giving them an inkling how to tackle the need to make a living from all the artistic knowledge that's been crammed into their heads. But the need is there; just ask yourself these questions:

Are you an artist?
Are you a professional artist?
Do you run a business?

In response, you may ask yourself "what is a professional artist anyway?" I've been grappling with this nomenclature for a long time and I found this definition of a professional artist given by the Ontario Arts Council:

"A professional artist is someone who has developed skills

through training and/or practice, *and* is recognized as such by artists working in the same artistic tradition, *and* has a history of public presentation or publication, *and* seeks payment for her or his work *and* actively practices his or her art."

So how do you fulfill that mandate? Just painting 100% of your time doesn't do it. If you create the most fabulous, wonderful pieces and you are an unbelievably talented artist, that doesn't fulfill that mandate, either—because nobody knows who you are, and if no one knows who you are, then nobody is going to buy the work and therefore you can not be classed as someone seeking payment—which means therefore you are not professional . . . which is the goal, after all.

I once heard someone refer to painting as a "dance between passion and the intellect" Over the years my passion ran full speed and I lived in a storage unit for my paintings instead of a home. So somehow I had to use my intellect or business sense

to get rid of the inventory. We're going to touch on some aspects of how to get rid of that inventory in future articles, but for now, I'd like to focus on the fact that there is business side of art and that it doesn't need to be at odds with creativity.

Someone said to me that he wouldn't bother coming to the business seminar I gave at the conference in December because "commercialism would get in the way of his creativity." He admitted that his house was overrun with paintings, so he just threw out what he didn't like. My response was that one person's trash is another's treasure . . . why didn't he invite all his friends over, have a party and place a nominal fee on the paintings and have the guests take away the "trash." If the money taints his creativity, give the work away to charity. But he is a businessman whether he likes it or not. The trick is to realize that business can be just as creative....and fun!

If you don't think you really are "in business," ask yourself this question:

—continued on page 7



1057 Steeles Avenue West
P. O. Box 81665
Toronto, Ontario
M2R 3X1

Phone: 555-555-5555

Fax: 555-555-5555

E-mail: info@portraitsociety.ca

Contribute to the newsletter

Do you have an idea for an article?

A tip to share with other artists?

Or maybe a good book, video, or

website to recommend? Let us

know and we'll include it in an upcoming issue. Send you information to:

news@portraitsociety.ca



The business of art —cont'd

How much time do you spend at the easel and how much time do you spend per day doing “other”?

I don't know if your breakdown is similar, but I find that 50% of my time is actually at the easel, and 50% of the time is “other.” I am running a small business—the product just happens to be art.

So what can be as important as being at the easel? If you think you don't do anything else for furthering your career, consider this:

Who picks up the telephone? you are the **receptionist**. You are the first gatekeeper into your world that a potential client has contact with. Who writes all the letters? Who keeps track of your contacts in the outside world, the competitions you enter? You are the **secretary**. You are the **bookkeeper**—someone has got to keep track of all those pieces of paper to give to the government at the end of the year. And you are the **accountant**—you must file a return. If

you've got a website, you're likely also the **webmaster** and the **IT person**. And you have to deal with the **legal issues**, such as contracts. You are the **Promoter and Marketer** of your product, so you are the **Product Manager**. And to manage your product you have to be the **Liason Officer** and communicate with galleries, collectors, and art consultants. And what are you going to give these people to show who you are? You'll need the 3 Bs: bio, business cards, and brochures. You have to design them and print them, so you are a **Designer and Printer**. But before you can do all this, you run the **Supply Department**. You research and buy your art supplies and office supplies. Once you've got that art done, you are the **Photographer, Archivist, and Frammer**, and then you are the **courier** after you are the **packager**, which brings you back to being a **Liason Officer** when you play **delivery boy**. You are the **Health Officer**, because you have to find

out what is toxic . . . those benign looking little tubes can be killers. And you are the **staff coordinator**, because there is always something that needs fixing in the studio—such as electricians or plumbing—for which you need to arrange the repairs.

If you're like me, you wear a few other hats as well. You are also the **coffee maker and caterer**. When gallery owners came to my studio, I had to feed them or ask them to bring a picnic basket—since I lived out of town, I had to actually lure them with the idea of a free dinner. And lastly, I am the **cleaning staff**, because I don't let people into my studio when there is wet paint, and neither does my artist husband—besides ME of course—so I clean two studios: his and hers!

Now, let me ask:

Who is running a business?