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MOSAIC

Literary Issue

ENGRAVING THE LAND

Interview with the Clifford-based wood engraver Wesley Bates.

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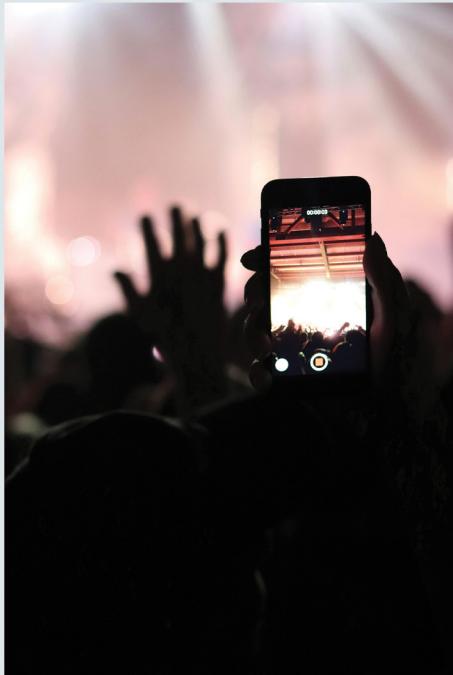
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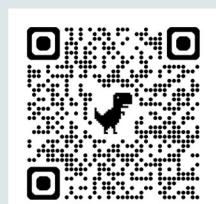


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Cover Image:

FLIGHT OVER KENTUCKY

Wesley Bates

On transformation.

Resilience is a feature of humanity, in all of us, to be tapped into - Samuel Beckett.

As we begin to emerge from another long and snowy winter, thoughts shift towards the renewal that comes with spring. The snow will melt, the days will warm, sap will flow and be transformed into the sweetest Canadian delight, maple syrup. But not all transformations are growth. Something is often lost so that newness may emerge.

In this issue of MOSAIC — the literary issue — we mark the passing of time, the passing of lives, and the transformations that result. Through fiction, poetry, and the stories of local happenings, we check in on the lives that surround us and gain strength from the resilience of others.

Whether through a shared meal, an art exhibit, a chorale concert, or a visit to a bookstore, our rituals assist in easing these passages, the renewal of seasons, and the remembrance of those we have lost.

With resilience we can lift each other up and begin again.

- Ken Bryson

MOSAIC

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Remembering Barry Dempster

Richard Yves-Sitoski

November 2025 marked the passing of a titan of Canadian poetry, two-time Governor General's Award nominee Barry Dempster, who lived his last years in Owen Sound.

Barry was my dear friend and poetic mentor, a gentleman and gentle man who had written 15 collections of poetry, five books of fiction, a children's novel, and who had edited, or contributed to, more fiction and poetry anthologies than I can list. Along the way he won, or was a finalist for, 15 national and provincial literary awards.

There were many Barrys, not all of whom I knew: the attentive mental health worker, the magisterial Banff writing instructor, the sure-fingered wielder of a red pencil as acquisitions editor for Brick Books. The Barry I knew was a devoted husband to his dear Karen, a lover of cats, a movie buff, a raconteur, a drinker of margaritas. A bowler, a Scrabble player, an enthusiast of butter chicken and hot chocolate.

I knew him mostly as a poet, a caster of spells who could seize an audience with a voice no louder than the rustling of a page, 6'3" of alchemist transmuting the lead of the mundane into glittering reflections on life and art: even construction cranes outside his window aroused his wonder, and he found a way to turn them into pure cinema.

I will perhaps remember him most fondly as a teacher. He found art in everyone, and it didn't matter whether it was your first haiku or your tenth Griffin – he'd connect with you and inspire you to improve.

This dedication to mentorship and imparting the craft is one of the hallmarks of his Owen Sound years. He was the catalyst for the Dempster Fire Writers' Group that meets at John O'Neill's patch of Eden in Grey County for weekends of good food, fellowship, and furious poetry. There he instructed us to look deeply beyond ourselves into pebbles so we could find the universe in the crystalline structure of the everyday.

Similarly, he also led writing sessions for the residents of Southbridge. What greater testament to the beauty of the man than that a two-time GG's nominee for poetry should be there for people experimenting with verse for the first time at 80!

But perhaps that's because until his very last second, Barry lived poetically, disentangling the frayed knot of intention, accident, and fate that binds us; investigating the existential



Photo by Leandra Ruttan

Barry Dempster

implications of a discarded pink sock; inventing synonyms for bewilderment; and expressing the ineffability of the self.

He never finished the job, but that is indeed one of the best things you could say about him, because art is a job no artist should ever finish. For if you are finished with art, you are finished with life – and Barry Dempster was never finished with life.

The page is the night in reverse – for Barry Dempster

The page is the night in reverse,
waiting for the black
stars of your words to rise.

What shall I tell it?
That you never once
apologized for reverence.

That you wrote
as if death were not
the destination.

That you carried joy
like a child given something
too fragile for his hands.

That in all the years
you were leaving us
you never went far,
just sat at your desk
with the lights off
to better hear the singing
high above the earth.

The fine art of nourishing connection

Frances Condon

One recent evening, my husband and I drove along Route 9 toward Kincardine – through the Greenock wood and wetlands, past snow-covered fields and farming hamlets, into the deepening blue-grey of a winter night.

Our destination: George's on Harbour. We had yet to visit the restaurant opened in 2024 by Chef Alex Lussier and his partner, Deborah Weiler (and named for their basset hound, George). On this night, we aimed to share a fabulous meal there as well as to celebrate Mike's birthday.

George's on Harbour is tucked in close by the shores of Lake Huron in Kincardine. The views of the lake from the restaurant are spectacular, particularly at sunset. A reclaimed home, patrons enter George's through an enclosed front porch, exactly as you would if you were visiting a neighbour, and from there into a welcoming front room, warmed by a beautiful wood burning pizza oven. This space has the feel of an upscale British pub, tastefully decorated with fine ceramic art created by a local artist.

There is a sacred quality to the meals Mike and I share on special occasions, as we celebrate our lives, love, and years together. Birthdays and anniversaries, we delight in one another's company and in the adventures we find as we share meals. **And so, happily ensconced at a perfectly situated table, we perused a menu carefully curated to please the happy-go-lucky vacationer, as well as those seeking a leisurely fine dining experience.**

Chef Lussier is well positioned to provide delicious food to all and sundry, having worked at George's Blanc in Vonnas, a Michelin three-star restaurant, as well as the prestigious Fauchon, in Paris, and the Michelin-listed Da Gigetto also located in Vonnas. Chef Alex also represented Canada at the Skills Competition in Switzerland, placing sixth in the world. He won the Best Toque Blanche Chef in Canada award and the Roger Bouvier trophy as the best pastry chef in Montreal (this last, at the age of seventeen)!

Mike and I began our dinner with seasonal P.E.I. oysters served with the most exquisite mignonette sauce I have ever tasted: a perfectly tart-sweet compliment to the plump shellfish. Our brilliant server, Arlo, guided us through the menu, recommending that we try the lumpia with chili sauce, a perfect accompaniment for the crispy deep-fried spring rolls that are a Filipino specialty. Delicious!

I have an operating theory when trying a new restaurant: by way of entrees, don't necessarily try the most avant garde dish first but instead taste the deceptively simple, difficult to perfect entrees that test the mettle and the artistry of the chef and their staff, proving their expertise.

Having spied the curing chamber of Chef Alex's dry-aged meat program, I opted for a rare tenderloin steak served with an accompanying peppercorn sauce. Velvety and tender, the meat was perfectly prepared – and the sauce, heavenly. With a delicately nuanced flavour profile, the peppercorn sauce exquisitely complimented the steak without overwhelming the mildness so typical of the cut.

I don't know that I have ever had a tastier tenderloin. I have certainly never had a better sauce. As we raved over our entrees, Chef Alex emerged from his kitchen to greet us. When I praised his sauces, he smiled happily, saying merely, "The sauces are everything." Later, as I sipped a very nice Chilean cabernet sauvignon (Maria's Legacy), I watched with enjoyment as Deborah, leading the front of house staff, moved with grace among all the diners, chatting with them as any old friend might do. I looked at Mike and smiled happily. Everything seemed right with the world at table in this place.

The great American food writer, M.F.K. Fisher reminds her readers that "there is a communion of more than our bodies," when we break bread together. Vital to the fine art of cuisine creation is the nourishing of relationship – between chef, their aides, their food, their place – and those lucky enough to enjoy the fruits of that creative labour.

This fine art sustains our lives with and for one another: beloved and stranger, all bonded by shared need and pleasure met by good food and good company. And this is what George's on Harbour is serving.

From dishes created by Michelin chefs to the plethora of farm, woodland, lake and stream ingredients in use, from avant garde and haute cuisine to an array of culinary traditions and cultures, writer Frankie Condon explores the diversity of fine dining experiences available along the shores of Lake Huron, the Georgian Bay, and the villages and towns of the Saugeen Peninsula.

Frankie Condon works as a professor in the Department of English at the University of Waterloo. She is a writer of creative nonfiction, memoir, and poetry as well as of scholarly prose.

Engraving the land

Interview by Ken Bryson

Wesley Bates chose the road less taken. Working in one of printmaking's oldest traditions, the Clifford-based artist's career has spanned commercial design, print making and book illustration — ultimately translating rural landscapes and human stories through the visual language of wood engraving.

How did you first get into art?

I suppose it is in the genes. My mother graduated from the Winnipeg Art School in 1947. She studied there with LeMoine FitzGerald and Bertram Brooker, both of them noted Canadian artists of the period. She went on to study in New York at the Art Student's League. While working a summer job in Banff she and her two art school friends heard that waitresses at the hotel in Whitehorse Yukon were given gold nuggets as tips. They left Banff, went to Vancouver and took a boat to Skagway, and made it to Whitehorse where they did get a few gold nuggets as tips. I have the gold ring she had made for my father to prove it. In Whitehorse she met my father, a fellow Winnipegger and RCMP officer. He was a creative type and very handy as well, who built his own boat so that he could patrol his stretch of the Yukon River.

My mother always had art materials around and she encouraged my desire to draw and paint. I was a lack-lustre student in my early schooling except for art classes. In Grade 5 my parents enrolled me in children's art classes at the University of Regina. Later in Grade 10 my art teacher took an interest in me and he was my art teacher through to grade 12. He gave me extra projects beyond the prescribed curriculum. The biggest was a 30 foot mural in the physical education department of my high school. I believe he arranged a bursary for me when I graduated, although he would never admit to it.

How did you end up in Clifford?

In the late 1990's I began working with the Canadian Food Grains Bank, an NGO established to counter famine around the world. My volunteer role was as a liaison between an urban group and a rural group that worked to produce a crop of grain that was then deposited into the Food Grains Bank. The rural group at Letterbreen were my first introduction to the farming community in this area. I made some wonderful

friends there. Glenn and Carol Leibold used to let me camp out in an old trailer in their wood lot and from there I went out and sketched the landscapes. Before my daughter Rae left home to go to university she came with me on a drive up to Mount Forest / Letterbreen because I was searching for an affordable place to move to after having lived in Hamilton for about 20 years. I found my place in Clifford, a store building with a huge empty main floor that would hold my printing presses and easels. When I arrived to introduce myself to the seniors group that used the building as a club house I was greeted by a very official in-charge lady who asked who was I and what did I want. I told her I was the artist who now owned the building and she looked me over and said, "You don't look like an Artist." I made a point of reassuring them that I would take over the building slowly. My dad had cautioned me that these seniors were not the people in Clifford to piss off.

How did you become involved in the local art scene?

When I moved here, I planned not to join anything for two years. I was going to settle in first and re-establish my illustration business. The first thing I did join was the Minto Arts Council. It's a good organization with several provincial awards to its credit. The interesting thing is you start on one committee, and before you know it you are on a bunch of committees. At one point, I was on at least six different committees. If there are eight people on a committee, five of them were on other committees with me. That is how small rural towns work.

How did you begin working commercially as an artist?

After I left university the first full time job I found was as a bartender at the Royal Hamilton Yacht Club. I worked there for six years while at the same time pursuing my art work. Over those years I got to know some of the club members who took an interest in my artistic interests. One of those people was the art director at the Consolidated Bathurst Corrugated



Wesley Bates, ROOTS TO THE EARTH COVER.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Box Company. John Hanson was an artist and exhibited his large scale watercolour paintings in places like the Art Gallery of Hamilton. He knew my father in law who was the director of the AGH for many years. One day Mr. Hanson approached me at the bar and suggested I bring a portfolio of prints, ones that especially showed multiple colours that registered with overlap where the colour came together. That portfolio got me my first graphic artist job.

What kind of commercial work did you do over the years?

Wood engraving has been my primary medium for 46 years. But for the 35 years I did commercial illustration I used a medium called Scraper Board. Wood engraving during the Victorian Era was the primary medium for putting an image

into print. In the mid 1800's scraper board was invented to imitate wood engraving. Photography became economical by the later part of the 1800's and scraper board fit right in the new techniques that photography brought to the printing industry. I was fortunate to work for some of the major publishing companies and graphic designers after I left the corrugated company. I illustrated for periodicals, advertising, book publishers and also for independent fine presses that made books by hand.

How did you come to work with the poet and activist Wendell Berry?

I came across Wendell Berry when I worked as a bartender. On mid-winter evenings when the club was deserted I would

"There is often confusion between woodcut and wood engraving. They are both part of the relief print medium which also includes Linocut, and even the humble potato stamp."

take a break and watch the Dick Cavett show. One evening Cavett interviewed this gentleman who talked about farming and rural communities. I found it fascinating and I became a fan on the spot. About 20 years later I was attending a Fine Press Book Fair in Delaware where I came across Gray Zeitz of Larkspur Press, stuck in a corner, but with the largest array of book titles in the whole place. As I looked at the titles on the spines I saw Wendell Berry again and again many times. I asked Zeitz, who was dressed in jeans with suspenders and a T-shirt with a chest pocket, if he knew Wendell Berry. He smiled and said that Wendell lived across the river from him.

I was at the book fair to see if I could drum up some wood engraving illustration work. I had in my car a portfolio of engravings that I had done to accompany eight of Wendell's poems. I was planning to publish the poems and engravings under my own imprint, West Meadow Press. I had picked the eight poems because I thought they expressed what a farmer thinks about while he is working. I retrieved my engravings for Wendell's poems and showed them to Zeitz and after looking them over he said I should show them to Wendell. Well, I laughed and thought that lightning would strike me first. But thanks to Gray Zeitz I made a trip to Kentucky the next year and met Wendell and presented him with a copy of my book of his poems with my engravings titled *Roots to the Earth*. That was 1997 and I've been traveling to Kentucky almost every year since to work with Gray and sometimes to visit with Wendell and his wife Tanya.

Larkspur Press has commissioned me to illustrate ten books of Wendell's poetry and short stories.

What is the difference between woodcut and wood engraving?

Well, let's start with a bit of history. It is agreed by historians that Thomas Bewick (1753 -1828), a metal engraving by trade was the first to develop wood



Wesley Bates

engraving as an art form. In the late 1700's the usual way to illustrate a book was to use an etching or a metal engraving. Bewick was looking for a more economical way to put an image into print. He chose to use a hard dense wood and turn it so the endgrain was the working surface. He had the block milled to the same dimension as type, which allowed the printer to place the engraved block in the same press as the type. That was a major breakthrough for the printing industry and wood engraving went on to become the premier illustration medium throughout the Victorian period. I tell people, if you have a book printed between 1825 and 1860 it's almost certain the image is a wood engraving.

Because Bewick was familiar with using his engraving tools to engrave lines that when printed onto paper showed a black lines. When he moved to endgrain blocks he just carried his engraving tools over but instead the lines in wood showed up as white marks in a black surface. The trick being that the white lines are what has been engraved and they are telling the story. Think of drawing on a black board. It was a revolutionary change in the way an image could present an image.

There is often confusion between woodcut and wood engraving. They are both part of the relief print medium which also includes Linocut, and even

the humble potato stamp. The difference is how the wood is used. Woodcut, the oldest of the two, is worked on the side grain, think table top grain. To work on side grain the artist must use the knife family of tools, chisels, U gouges, V gouges and planes.

Wood engraving is worked on the endgrain, think tree stump. On the endgrain the artist uses the family of gravers, of which there are too many to list but my favourite is called a Spitzsticker. Gravers are used on metal and endgrain wood.

You are working on a wordless novel. Where did the idea come from?

About 35 years ago, I thought I needed a hobby so I took up fly fishing. The idea for my story came from both daydreaming while fishing and from a few experiences I've had while I was on the river. I played around with sketches for a few years and a publisher saw the sketches one time and suggested that a book might be developed from them. That project never went to press.

Over the years I have enlarged the scope of the story and at some point I realized that I had a narrative, a story arc. The story has been through five drafts and finally I sent it out to a group of readers. The critiques that came back have been so valuable and now I am in going



Wesley Bates, WINDOW ON THE WORLD.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Wesley Bates, WINTER TO SPRING.
Image courtesy of the artist.

through a sixth revision. I hope this is the last one before I start on the engravings.

What kind of work do you naturally gravitate toward?

I like this question. When I was doing commercial illustration I had draw all manner of subjects. I once showed my portfolio to an art director who was looking to hire someone to illustrate a pair of shoes. In my samples I had an illustration of cowboy boots. When he saw the boots he said 'Can you draw shoes?'

So I took out my sketch book and drew a pair of mens shoes and hoped that he wasn't going to say he wanted women's shoes. But the question is what do I gravitate toward when I am just working for myself. Generally I love figurative images and in particular images of people with the objects of their life around them. And I tend towards realistic images but not like a photograph. Call it interpreted realism maybe.



Wesley W. Bates works full time as a printmaker, letterpress printer and painter under his own imprint at Wesley W. Bates Gallery and West Meadow Press in Clifford Ontario Canada. In his gallery he features paintings, original prints, wood engravings, handmade books, letterpress art, broadsides and custom Ex Libris. His wood engraved prints have been exhibited widely and are held in public and private collections in China, Spain, Japan, England, the U.S.A. and Canada.

Endless River

Wesley Bates

Endless River is a working title for a novel-length story I am working on — told entirely without words. The story is carried through a visual narrative alone. We all see and hear long before we read, giving images their own inherent grammar and meaning. The reader of a visual narrative is challenged to bring their imagination to each image in sequence.

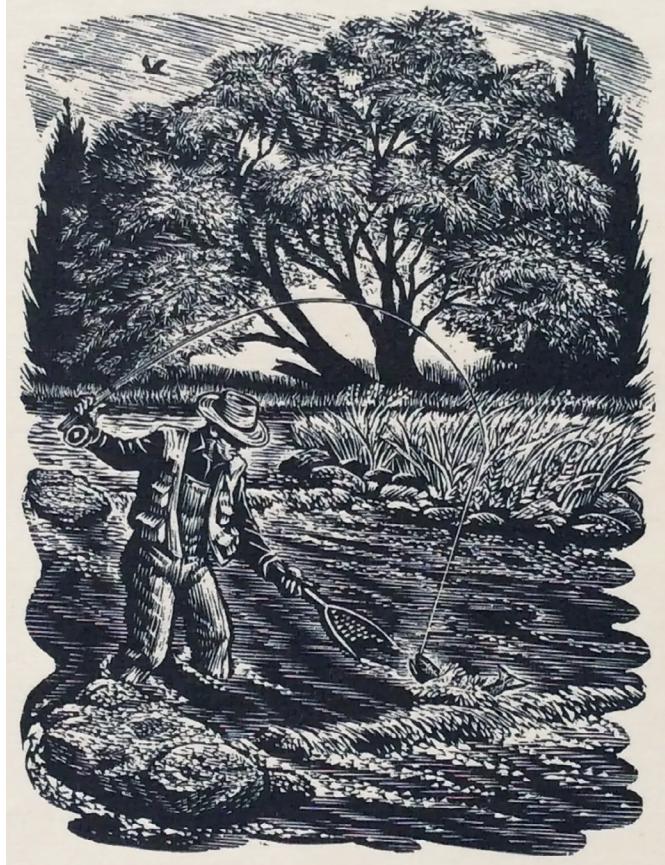
Endless River will be conveyed through approximately 175 black-and-white wood engravings. The process of creating the story continues to evolve until the moment it becomes necessary to bring it to an end through printing. The project will take at least two years to complete the engravings and another year to print. My intention is to engage interested people through subscriptions and special offers via my website, where there will also be regular updates and videos from the studio and printshop.

I aim to be part of the legacy of the wordless novel, particularly those stories told through wood engraving. I encountered wood-engraved images very early in my career, and they left a lasting impression. The medium has been closely associated with books since the late 1700s. It is relatively small scale and the slow, deliberate accumulation of detail feel well suited to the time and reflection required to tell a story without words.

Wood engraving has been my primary medium for 46 years. Many people may not be aware of wood engraving, though they have likely seen examples. Wood engraving belongs to the broader family of relief printing, which includes woodcut, linocut, and even the humble potato print. In relief printing, material is removed so that the remaining surface stands in relief, receives ink, and transfers an image to paper.

We can thank Thomas Bewick (1753–1823) for developing wood engraving as an art medium. His motivation was largely pragmatic: he wanted to reduce the cost of producing books that combined text and image on the same page. Trained as a metal engraver, Bewick adapted the tools of his trade to hard end-grain wood blocks milled to the same height as metal type. This allowed images and text to be printed together on a letterpress. Working in the end grain also created a new kind of image, where the story is drawn in white line rather than black, and that proved to be a turning point.

From Bewick's *A General History of Quadrupeds* (1790) onward, wood engraving became central to book illustration.



Wesley Bates, *ON THE RIVER*.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Throughout the Victorian period, everything from postage stamps to full-page newspapers relied on engraved blocks.

I have illustrated many literary projects using wood engraving, and my work has often been described as narrative. The *Endless River* project has been evolving for more than 30 years.

In 1996, an early sequence was intended as the centrepiece of a proposed book about fishing and the characters and stories that surround that pastime. The book never reached publication, but I continued to return to the images. Over time, a larger narrative arc emerged. After many revisions, I came to see that I had a complete story and a plot.

The story considers the relationship between humans and the natural world. It is a search for meaning and belonging that unfolds through resistance to corporate control, the sacrifice of standardized comforts, and a desire for community and connection to place.

The main character is caught in a life that is steadily closing in on him. He breaks away — almost without intending to — and embarks on a life-changing journey. He steps into the river and into the nature that surrounds it. Guided by a natural spirit, he undergoes a deep personal transformation. **■**

Fostering a vibrant literary arts culture

Jeremy Clark

Public libraries are an ever-present partner for authors and the literary arts in communities at home and around the world. From a person's first steps in their literacy journey to collecting works from local authors, libraries play a quintessential role in a culture's literary scene.

This is especially true across Grey and Bruce Counties, where public libraries champion the literary arts, and work together to provide support to authors and readers alike. Librarians are eager to point out that libraries are far more than just book warehouses. In fact, the idea is a cliché; with libraries offering tools to help authors explore publishing their works. Free services like Pressbooks help authors format their work, generate eBooks, and create print-ready files — tasks many new authors find intimidating.

These and other support services make the daunting task of becoming an author easier, putting tools previously available only to publishers into the hands of the creative community.

From first draft to publication, authors navigate many challenges, and libraries are well-positioned to help. Far beyond simply lending books and other items, libraries offer the freedom to explore — from finding inspiration in the works of others to expanding knowledge horizons.

Public libraries are a central hub in our communities and support literary culture in countless ways. Our earliest readers find a place for discovery and learning as their literacy skills grow. Community members taking part in library-based English as a Second Language (ESL) and other programs create opportunities for themselves to dive deeper into aspects of other cultures through language and literature. Library programming works both actively and passively to encourage literacy, fostering contributions to the literary arts.

Programs are often just as important for those attending the library as the books they borrow. A community of literacy takes root in a library's writing groups and contests, author visits, and other programs. Learning from and sharing with others adds to the diversity of culture and experience found in literature, something we all benefit from.

Aspiring and published authors may hone their craft through library-based book clubs and discussions with visiting writers, learning from their expertise.

Many libraries manage a "local author" collection, a process through which local writers may submit their published works to become part of the catalog. By collecting these titles, the library supports authors in their communities — and literary arts — while also expanding what a library patron might find to read and enjoy.

From programs and literacy to services, collections, and more, public libraries are a long-time partner of literary culture and of the individuals who contribute to it. Libraries will proudly continue supporting the community in this way and look forward to journeying with future generations of authors and readers. Whether it's reading a local author, joining a writer's program, or browsing for fun, visit your library today to take part.

Jeremy Clark is the Digital Initiatives Coordinator for Bruce County Public Library. Discover your local Bruce County Public Library and explore online resources at library.brucecounty.on.ca

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A cabin memory

by Ann Chaban

In the summertime when I was a child, in the late 1970's, my parents would drive us up north to stay in a rented ancient farmhouse near a pine forest. The interior walls were exposed thick log cabin timbers. It was a very small house with one open room on the main floor, a small kitchen at the back and a narrow stairwell that led to our bedrooms upstairs. A trap door in the living room floor opened to a rickety wooden stairwell leading down into a musty basement. It had a dirt floor and embedded river rock walls with webs in dark corners. We hardly ever went down there.

Before bedtime, for fun, my mother would bundle my hair under a red bandana which she tied into a knot behind my neck just like Rhoda on that television show she loved to watch.

Now we were well prepared for stepping outside for the experience of nightfall at the edge of the forest. As the sun went down, we stood in front of the old farmhouse and we waited and watched. From behind the fake brick shingles on the facade of the farmhouse, the bats would emerge in great numbers to fly out into the forest. The bandana was my mom's idea of protection in case a bat got caught in my hair.

We would often see the flickering tiny light flashes of fireflies and we'd watch the sky to see if we could catch sight of shooting stars to make wishes on as we sat beside a bonfire. In early summer the spring peepers would sound a loud chorus; in late summer the crickets would chirp as we tucked ourselves into the creaky old beds upstairs. We always slept well. It was because of the fresh pine forest air my mother would say. I

often wondered about who slept in this farmhouse before me. Maybe they even slept in those same old wrought iron framed beds. The farmhouse held mysterious stories and I imagined them as I fell asleep.

Later in my adult years I found out that it was the Supernault's, a French Canadian family that lived in the log cabin farmhouse on the property from 1896. They remained there for the rest of their lives until 1953. They were one of the very few families of

French background who pioneered in Bentinck township. The Quebec Census of 1871 showed them living in the Lacolle, Quebec region previously.

The last remaining family member of the Supernault's became bedridden and remained in the house. An arrangement was made with two doctors in her later years.

They would take care of her and the arrangement was that she lived there until the day that she died then the doctors would become owners of the property. She lived upstairs with the only tiny window where daylight peered in. During those bedridden years they would carry her down the stairs and take her out for drives to see the world outside.

She must have waited day after day for those driving adventures to get out to smell the air, see the trees, the endless skies and the passing farm fields. I wondered if her ghost had watched us as we slept in that room way back then when we stayed there on our summer vacations. Our minds were full of dreams with all the sights we saw; the forest, the fireflies, swooping bats and rabbits leaping out of tall grasses.

When we spent our summer holidays in the old farmhouse the morning light would come in through that small window upstairs to wake us up. Soon we'd be off following the old road to the lake or to swim in the stream. Sometimes a snake would slither across our path and my father would use his walking stick branch to usher it away.

I was deathly afraid of snakes. My father would also point out the small porcupine high up in the tall Jack Pine hiding his head from us; the animal did not think we'd see the rest of its backside exposed.

Swimming in the stream was the best part of summer. While we listened to the buzzing sounds of cicadas, we dried out in the sun and then wandered afterwards through the tall grasses picking wild daisies, Brown Eyed Susan's and Queen Ann's lace. My mother showed us how to weave them into wreaths that adorned our heads. Wearing our flower crowns we followed the path back home to the farmhouse after our swim.

Later, the two hundred acre farm property would be divided into lots. My parents purchased two of them and my father built a small cabin on one. Other folks also purchased their own lots and more cabins were soon built hidden in the woods. We had our own pine forest around the cabin with tall slender spruce trees that swayed back and forth and made soothing whispers in high winds. Fragrant old cedars grew around us with thick trunks. Rabbits would come out of the forest to graze in front of the cabin at dusk. We still watched the sky for falling stars by a bonfire and swam in the same stream on summer days.

Later on as months went by, Thanksgiving dinner was made in the city, transported and reheated on a Coleman stove and was laid out beautifully on a picnic table. We slept peacefully, with turkey induced dreams, as my mother fed the wood stove throughout the night to keep us warm. The sound of my father's snoring was a comforting lullaby for us knowing he was there keeping us safe. One Thanksgiving weekend we awoke to a magical dusting of snow on the grass and the cedars and pine trees around us.

After my parents passed away, my sister and I did our best to preserve the cabin. We made plans often to go up and stay overnight. It was painted with a fresh coat, like new, faithfully every other year. We lovingly, deeply, inhaled the old cabin smell each time we opened the front door. There were many

more bonfires and burnt marshmallows. The old plastic mesh woven ribbons of the folding metal lawn chairs were repaired because they reminded us of mom and dad sitting by the fire. Sometimes not the best idea as they still would collapse under our weight after many repairs! The frayed wool blankets covered us at night with that old cabin scent and wood fire smoke.

Years went by and a pandemic brought us isolation. My husband and I found ourselves wandering the city avoiding contact with people and it brought a desire to escape into nature. We sought bits of nature hidden in the city. The Leslie Spit was a favourite haunt, a man-made nature preserve built out of city landfill rubble. High Park with its small city zoo. Even the zoo's peacock escaped at one time for other surroundings. It leaped from rooftop to rooftop in nearby Roncesvalles until it returned on its own because it was missing its mate. Two Cabybara's soon to be delivered to their new home in the zoo had also escaped as the doors to the van opened. They were eventually lured back with tasty corn cobs and were named Bonnie and Clyde.

We needed an escape. We craved nature and the cabin that my father built was the answer.

The divided lots were purchased by developers and new homes were being built around our cabin. So we decided to escape the city. We wouldn't be alone in the woods with neighbours living close but still far enough away. We traded our century old city home for a newly built one where the cabin once stood. Each window in our new home now looks out onto a memory. The kitchen is now where the cabin once stood. A tall window looks out to where the picnic table once was, where we sat and shared meals with my parents sheltered under a canopy of cedars.

The tall spruce trees still sway back and forth on windy days soothing us with delicate whispering sounds, and a tree frog who has taken up residence in the yellow birdhouse calls out to us once in a while.

Looking outside our kitchen window, I imagine my parents sitting in the cool shade of the cedars in the weathered lawn chairs. This always brings me comfort.

Ann Chaban lives in West Grey, Ontario where she writes and creates art.

SNOW ANGEL

We moved up north and my sister died.
The two seem related. However,

my wife and I had weighed our decision
transitioning from city life on weekends,
testing the landscape, frequenting

small towns, obfuscating knots,
crossroads in perpetual white-out,
mined, blinded, snow-globed.

Or the thrust of
animals, deer carrying
their skeletons on their heads.
Sheep, goats, horses on trial,
jury the weather.

Frozen lakes, too, we tried to account for
pitiless winds, we bundled and
argued against them but still decided

this might be a place to start again
that in retrospect seems like
a first tour of oblivion,
drear preview, the way
the eye here knows no boundaries, storms
seen coming from miles off.

But my sister didn't test the proposition,
didn't get to fall backwards into snow, to wave her strong
but human arms
and legs just
once or
twice
before heaving
herself
back up again.

John O'Neil

ABSTRACT

weary from the struggle to translate
art into something ethereal and abstract,
transform an object, landscape, or portrait
into depth, shadow, movement and thought.

launch a technical drawing into a representation of
physical details to a specific feeling, or idea
from consumer art into an intellectual piece
filled with wonder, questions, and different interpretations

create a piece that generates enough mystery
to stir the imagination of the viewer and
provoke thinking beyond realism and
stimulate our minds with possibilities?

Anne Seymour

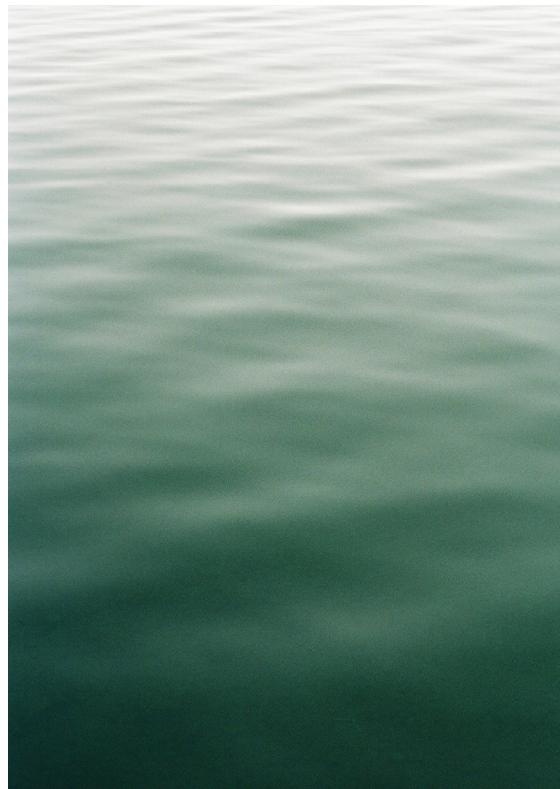


Photo by Kelsey Vansickle

APOLOGIA TO TWO DAUGHTERS

I apologize to you
and your others of significance
at the likely fact that you one day
will disassemble magnificence.

Seven bookcases have I now
within my several rooms.
Poetry and journals,
my Quaker holy books.
And novels, lots of novels,
holding up the walls.
Histories and mysteries
my husband's shelf of fantasies —
I wonder why that's so.
Mythology, anthropology,
children's books of nursery rhymes
and how-to books, compendiums,
many books of recipes
and travel — lots of those —
“A Bird's Eye View of Waterloo”
and “Britain from the Sky”.

I've also tomes on astronomy, anatomy,
gardening and philately,
and books about the brain,
though nothing about trains.
Books about books, calligraphy,
photography and art.

And this is just the start.

Yes, to you youngish daughters
and to your counterparts
I now apologize
as still I fantasize
of libraries in heaven
where cases number more than seven
to occupy me eternally.

Apologies, again.



Photo by Kelsey Vansickle

FROM THE WIND

It comes from the wind...
Our sense of flight;
Our want of wings.
For the blue of the sky
Is mine, but for this while.

The heads of pines bend and squeal,
In the might of a March sway,
Their narrow torsos lodged in dirt,
Their green life higher still,
Then Thou.
If not for these embedded roots
— Oh Yes, they would but fly —

Liberty will lose the chains;
The winds will not be calmed.
The creature that is my mind,
Is black from green and vast;
A vision slowly reaching,
Beating, beating the tides of air,
Before my eyes in March.

Jennifer Frankum

Brenda Korell



Larkspur Books

Step into a different world

Kevin Land

Most of us have a memory of an early encounter with a book, a sense perhaps, that the object we just unwrapped, or found amongst the stacks at the local library, or unearthed from a dusty shelf in our grandmother's attic, might be an invitation to a place we've never been, let alone knew existed.

It is undoubtedly this which, despite the appearance to the contrary, keeps the book industry healthy. In the U.S., Barnes and Noble has announced that it will open 60 new stores this year — a shot in the arm for the physical artifact.

Book-selling is certainly alive and well in Grey and Bruce counties as well, with independent stores spread out over much of the area, drawing the attention of readers from all ages. Dan at Phoenix Books in Owen Sound and Nella from The Bookstore in Durham have observed a steady rise in young readers the past few years. They are attracted to all types of books, from Classics to Romance to Fantasy.

Olivia at Word Squirrel in Kincardine has even seen young customers who have purchased a printed version of a book they had already read digitally as a “trophy copy”. Ryan at The Book Hive in Meaford believes the resurgence among young readers came about, in part, due to the Covid shutdown, when customers “wanted a physical book in their hands”.

Most book retailers provide additional offerings to attract customers. Great Books & Cafe in Williamsford, located in a historic mill, gives clients the opportunity to enjoy lunch after browsing through its large inventory of new and used books.

“You just never know what book might sell,” Tamara from Great Books & Cafe quips.

The customers feel it walking in: the scent of old books, the lure of the latest release, the timelessness of a classic.

The Bookstore in Durham has an extensive selection of crystals and stones; Book Hive connects to a brewery/restaurant and has a book club (as does Word Squirrel) and a small gallery for local artists; and Speaking Volumes Books in Markdale hosts book launches and author signings at a local church and has recently created a small gallery for local artists, as well as coffee that's always free.

Operating a bookstore is like no other retail experience. My background was in jewellery, both retail and wholesale, where I felt the objective was to be a part of the most significant events in customers' lives — weddings, anniversaries, births, birthdays and funerals.

But it doesn't even approach the experience of having a bookstore. The customers feel it walking in: the scent of old books, the lure of the latest release, the timelessness of a classic. A good bookstore becomes a community hub, a place to learn and to re-discover what you already knew.

Last summer a customer phoned to ask if he might become engaged in my store because it was the site of their first date. His fiancée's excitement was infectious and the photo of the two of them and the book he created for their lives together, resulted in our most-viewed post ever.

Every one of these stores has a story like this. Probably every bookstore as well. You could find out for yourself. All you have to do is step inside one.

Kevin Land is a playwright, director, producer, and educator. He owns “Speaking Volumes Books and Audio” in Markdale.



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Bookstore Listings

About Books

Owen Sound Farmers Market
www.aboutbks.com
Tel: 519-371-2100

About Books celebrates 25 years in Owen Sound! Visit us any Saturday morning at the Owen Sound Farmers' Market where we specialize in lightly used books in most subjects. We have a special interest in Gardening, Natural & Domestic Science, Local History and Children's Books. Members of The Antiquarian Booksellers' Association of Canada, we also offer a selection of older books by appointment.

Berford Street Bookstore

572 Berford Street, Wiarton
facebook.com/berfordstreetbazaar
Tel: 519-387-1087

An eclectic old soul, mostly used bookstore which survived both Covid and downtown reconstruction. Come in the afternoons as it's only open then; but plan to bring your lists. The bookstore also sells its own blend of locally wood-fire roasted coffee beans that are worth the drive to Wiarton on its own.

The Bookstore

144 Garafraxa St. S., Durham
www.thebookstore.ca
Tel: 519-369-2974

The Bookstore is a carefully curated, community-focused shop where every item is chosen with intention. You'll find a thoughtful mix of new, used and vintage books, metaphysical, Wiccan, New Age, Christian, Buddhism, hard-to-find titles, children's books, fiction and nonfiction, and unique finds you didn't know you were looking for until you saw them.

Great Books & Cafe at the Williamsford Mill

316070 Highway 6, Williamsford,
www.greatbooks.ca
Tel: 519-794-4625

Great Books & Cafe at the Williamsford Mill is housed in a historic mill and features over 200,000 new, old and out-of-print titles across more than 100 categories from art and architecture to science, history and zoology. The collection spans over 6,000 square feet across three floors and features books from the 1700's to the present day including signed first editions, leather bound volumes, rare and out-of-print works.

Larkspur Books

188 High Street, Southampton
www.larkspurbooks.ca
Tel: 519-389-1475

Larkspur Books is an indie bookshop in Southampton, located right beside the coffee shop! We are passionate about community, and love to host bookish events that bring people together (think trivia nights, book clubs, author events, collabs with other local businesses, etc.) With a wide variety of lovingly curated books, there is something for readers of all ages and interests to be found on the shelves - ask us for personalized recommendations!

Reader's Haven Book Store

10 Bay Street, Tobermory
www.readershaven.ca
Tel: 519-596-2359

Reader's Haven Book Store is a family-run bookstore/gift shop in beautiful Tobermory. While our primary focus is our eclectic book selection, we also have locally sourced gifts, take-out coffee, and a variety of flavoured popcorn made in-house. Serving local residents and visitors from around the globe year-round.

Speaking Volumes Books and Audio

42 Main Street West, Markdale
www.speakingvolumesbooks.ca
Tel: 226-452-2665

Speaking Volumes Books and Audio is a curated new and used bookstore in Markdale, Ontario. It offers a wide selection of rare and popular works, and specializes in Canadian and international fiction, history, social science, philosophy, the arts, classics, vintage, books for young readers, as well as an extensive collection of non-fiction.

Word Squirrel Books

325 Durham Market North, Kincardine
www.wordsquirrelbooks.com
Tel: 226-396-2010

Word Squirrel Books is a cozy independent bookstore nestled in Durham Market North across from Victoria Park in Kincardine. We carry a wide variety of new books for all ages, stationery, greeting cards and puzzles and would love to help you find your next favourite book!



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The smell of a good book

An ongoing conversation about art between Jennifer Norman & Timothy Dyck

Tim: I rarely read a book beginning-to-end. I tend to jump around in the text.

Jen: You read the end?

Tim: Oh, yeah, because I want to know where the writer is going. I don't want to invest all that time in reading a book if I don't know where it's going.

Jen: What percentage of the time do you read the last few sentences and say, "nope, I'm out."

Tim: Not very often, because usually by the time I pick up a book, it's because I like the cover, I like the feel of it in my hand. And the smell. The whole reason I got into bookbinding was to put my artwork into people's hands, to manipulate and navigate through it rather than being precious on the wall. The downside is every time you handle something, you wear it out.

Jen: They feel very much open-ended. They're an invitation.

In a way, they're the original contemporary art installation, because they're not complete unless we engage with it; immediately the oils in our fingers start to damage and degrade it.

So that cyclical quality is kind of what's amazing about it. Each person who interacts with a book finishes it in a new way.

Tim: One time a child coloured on a book I had exhibited.

Jen: So that is a reality that book artists face: if I put it out there, people are gonna do different things with it. Back in 2006 I had just come back from studying in Italy, and I was in this studio together with a small group of people, and a little bickering would sometimes happen. On my walk to and from the studio I found some seeds which I collected. Since there were these tensions in the group, and individuals would come talk to me, I got them to write their secrets down. And while they were talking, I would sew them into these seeds. It was very performative. By the time we had our exhibition, I assembled and included this stack of secrets. I think there were 101. At the exhibition several of them were stolen. I was really angry at first, but then I had to contend with the way they're reading it, and I had to kind of see where that takes me.

Tim: One of the functions of bookbinding that we teach is to make it durable. It has to be sound to function properly.

Jen: But where does that come from? Like, why do we want that? In my classes, I encourage students to use a cereal box and just repurpose disposable stuff that won't last. At that stage when they're really just figuring stuff out, to take themselves a little bit less seriously, be less precious about their work.

Tim: **In book-making, you could make a book that is compostable You could bury it, and dig it up to see what's happened.**

Jen: I love the idea of leaning into the ephemeral nature of it. Like with natural inks. Nothing's precious anymore. Everything's a commodity. So the momentary nature of it becomes that much more precious.

Tim: Do you ask your university students, what is precious?

Jen: I haven't, and I think I will explore that. Nowadays there's a lack of a sense of awe. You know, you see you see the mountains for the first time and it just makes you feel sort of insignificant in a way, small, but also part of something bigger. In studies, that sense of awe lowers cortisol and inflammation, physically benefits us, and mentally benefits us to have this sort of perspective. So, I have them now doing walks, take their earphones off and look for something magical. So... do you think about artist books differently than painting?

Tim: Good question. I often think about artist books in multiples, in editions, so they are more affordable than a single artwork. I once handprinted an edition of four decks of playing cards. But making books by hand is very labour-intensive, and it's a mini-engineering project. Today, we come out of an era in the 1800s where books became mass-produced. Before that, of course, they were worked on for months by teams of monks or labourers, just to produce one book.

Jen: I love the idea of deep-diving into a project like that. But then nobody was ever credited or named. Which is also appealing. [smile] You want some tea?

Jennifer Norman teaches at Ontario College of Art and Design, and is Director of Durham Art Gallery. Tim Dyck is an artist / bookbinder and operates The Colour Jar in Durham.



nicholas x bent, UNTITLED.
Image courtesy of the artist.

Wisdom of trees, exhibited

Jennifer Norman

Driving home, enveloped in a sudden snow squall, relief comes in the form of a windbreaking hedge of trees lining the edge of a field, providing a momentary reprieve, blocking the blowing snow just long enough for this white-knuckle driver to regain their bearings before moving forward.

As I drive, I find myself thinking about the wisdom of trees — the protection they offer, the quiet relief they afford. This fleeting moment mirrors the visual narratives found in *marginalia*, an exhibition of monochromatic photographs by nicholas x bent on view at the Durham Art Gallery from January 31 to March 29. The exhibition depicts the local trees that inhabit the edges, borders, and margins of fields and meadows — landscapes both familiar and overlooked.

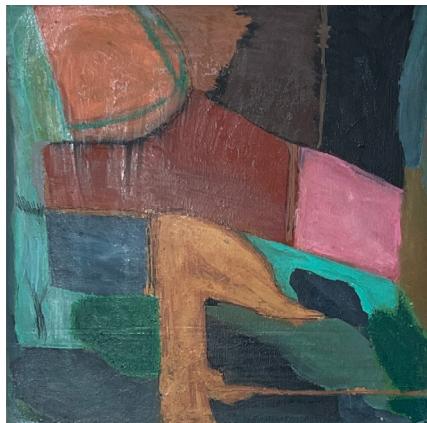
The photographs in this exhibition merge bent's process with the subject matter to evoke a haunting sense of ephemerality. A photographic technique called intentional camera movement (icm) is used by the artist to evoke the blurred sense of temporal glitching that invites viewers to pause and reflect on the trees as characters in a larger narrative.

Much like handwritten notes in the margins of a book, these wounded trees seem to dilate time and mark the edges of human intervention — they offer records of historic presence, pressure, and persistence in compromised ecosystems.

These photographs hold space for what is typically sidelined: suppressed histories, eccentricities, and alternate ways of being. In doing so, the work invites viewers to consider the margins not as failures of order, but as sites where complexity endures.

marginalia reflects on the pressures of conformity — both social and ecological — and gestures toward the urgent need to preserve marginal spaces as places of resistance, resilience, and becoming. Like the stand of trees that briefly shields a driver from a storm, these images remind us that what exists at the edges of our daily lives often provides the clarity we need to move forward.

Jennifer Norman teaches at Ontario College of Art and Design, and is Director of Durham Art Gallery.



Simon Kattar, *A LINGUISTIC FORM.*

Image courtesy of LE Shore Gallery.

Gallery Listings

The Mosaic Gallery Listings are available for free to all local galleries and studios with new openings or exhibits.

To list your opening, contact mosaic@artisanmedia.ca

Bruce County Museum

33 Victoria Street N, Southampton
www.brucemuseum.ca
Hours: Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 1-5

Renewal

Jan 10 - Apr 19

Renewal is an exciting exhibition made up of 33 pieces of fine textiles & fibre art that was assembled by the organization Studio Art Quilt Associates. The exhibition provides perspective on the hopes and challenges we experience through renewal.

Durham Art Gallery

251 George Street E, Durham
www.durhamartgallery.com
Hours: Thu-Sun 11-5

nicolas x bent: marginalia

Jan 31 - Mar 29

marginalia is an exhibition of photographs that conflate image and process to evoke a haunting sense of ephemerality. the corporeal forms of remnant trees that subsist along property edges and borders bear the scars of occupation thereby revealing a divergence from wild ecosystems.

Tom Thomson Art Gallery

840 1st Ave W, Owen Sound
www.tomthomson.org
Hours: Mon-Sat 10-5, Sun 12-4

Harold Klunder: The Dance of Life

Jan 24 - Apr 18

Klunder's paintings pulse with dissonant, jazz-like rhythms and are structured by an underlying compositional architecture, holding beauty and darkness, chaos and order, joy and anguish, in a provocative tension that reflects the full spectrum of human experience.

Forecast: January to June

Jan 24 - Jun 20

During the final spring of his career, Tom Thomson created a remarkable series of sketches in Algonquin Park that served as a visual diary of the season unfolding.

In addition to Thomson's work, a salon-style hanging of selections from the Gallery's collection traces the progression of the seasons in step with the exhibition running dates.

Grey Gallery

883 2nd Ave E, Owen Sound
www.greygallery.ca
Hours: Thu-Fri 10-5, Sat 10-4

The Year of the Horse Community Art Show

Until Mar 28

Marc Matei: Rogues, Outlaws and Barbarians

Apr 2 - May 2

Marc Matei is an emerging artist in our area. In this series his thoughtful, layered portraits of outsiders of various kinds speak to the issues of our time.

Deep Water Gallery

583 Berford Street, Wiarton
www.deepwatergallery.ca
Hours: Thu-Sat 11-4

Emma Smith: The Shape of Things

Mar 28 - Apr 25

The Shape of Things brings together sculptural ceramics, film photography, and a live performance piece to explore material, process, and presence within the gallery space.

The Gallery at LE Shore Library

173 Bruce Street S, Thornbury
thebluemountainslibrary.ca/art-gallery
Hours: M, W, F, Sa 10-5; Tu, Th 10-7

Viz Saraby & Simon Kattar: Abstracted Realities

Mar 7 - Apr 1

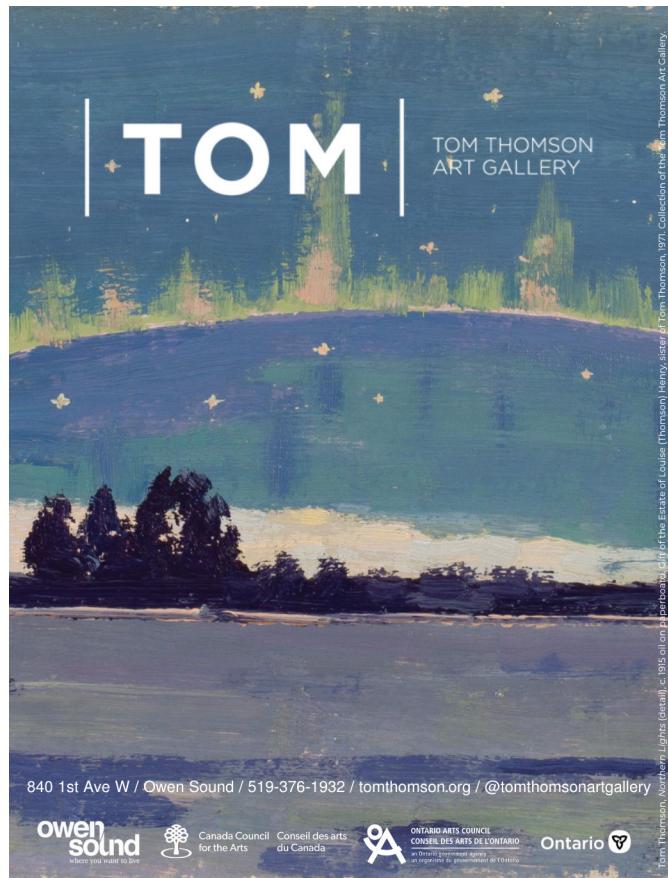
Abstracted Realities takes everyday experiences and transforms them into something entirely new, inviting viewers to explore a world where reality is just the starting point.

Bonnie Hastings & Wanda Haayen:

A Closer Look

Apr 11 - 29

Step away from the panoramic and take a closer look at the familiar in this new exhibition reflecting on the quiet beauty of small moments.



GG
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We invite you to visit Grey
Gallery when you are next
downtown

The Year of the Horse Community Art Show
until March 28

Marc Matei: Rogues, Outlaws and Barbarians
April 2 - May 2

A poster for an exhibition at Grey Gallery. The top half features a portrait of a man with a hat and a mustache, with swirling blue and red patterns behind him. The text 'GREY GALLERY PRESENTS' is at the top, followed by 'ROGUES, OUTLAWS' and 'AND BARBARIANS'. The bottom half shows a painting of a horse's head and neck in a dynamic, expressive style. Text on the right side reads 'NEW MIXED MEDIA SERIES FROM MARC MATEI', 'EXHIBITION DATES: APRIL 02 TO MAY 2026', 'OPENING NIGHT: APRIL 04 FROM 4-6 PM', '883 2ND AVE E, OWEN SOUND', and 'WWW.GREYGALLERY.CA'.

883 2nd Ave. E. Owen Sound; 226-664-2776

A new place for connection in Port Elgin

Andrew Hill

In an era marked by digital disconnection, Saugeen Shores has gained a new venue with a goal to bring neighbors together through shared experiences. *Loft 1020*, located in Port Elgin, opened its doors in mid-2025 as both a performance space and community gathering place.

With “third places” becoming increasingly important to community life, *Loft 1020*’s role as a cultural hub for the performing arts addresses a growing need in Saugeen Shores. Performing arts venues fill this role uniquely, creating shared experiences that foster connection between neighbours.

The collective experience of live performance, whether music, theater, or dance, builds the kind of social bonds that strengthen community fabric.

The performing arts are also an important social lubricant. Sitting together in a darkened theater or standing side-by-side at a concert, we participate in a “collective effervescence.” This shared experience reminds us that our joys, struggles, and stories are not solitary.



Performance spaces support this mission of connection. In addition to a professional-grade stage, *Loft 1020* features a retro-styled bar and café area, intended to encourage community members to arrive early and linger after performances.

Offering a dedicated stage for local and Canadian talent, *Loft 1020* does two things simultaneously. It validates local identity, showcasing regional artists allows residents to see their own lives and landscapes reflected back at them, strengthening the bond to their home. It also bridges the social gap, bringing people out of their homes and into a common space that forms the building blocks of a resilient community.

By focusing on Canadian and regional talent, *Loft 1020* provides a platform for local artists while allowing residents to see their own stories and landscapes reflected through performance. This emphasis on homegrown talent strengthens both the local arts economy and residents’ sense of place and identity.

As Saugeen Shores continues to expand, the arrival of dedicated cultural infrastructure reflects the community’s evolution. The venue offers residents something increasingly rare: a reason to leave their homes, to sit in a darkened room with their neighbors, and to share in the immediate, unrepeatable experience of live performance.

Now is the time to step out of the isolation of the last few years and rediscover the person living next door.

Whether through the soaring notes of a Canadian musician or the dramatic tension of a local theater production, *Loft 1020* offers the “fabulous” setting we’ve been waiting for to finally say “hello” again.

■

A new beginning with St. John's Passion

Michael Schmidt

In 1984, the Saugeen Bach Choir was founded to celebrate choral music in Grey and Bruce. And despite George Orwell's dire predictions in his novel named for the same year, the past 42 years have seen concerts by the Saugeen Bach Choir, under various capable conductors. The choir has enriched the souls of audiences and singers alike.

Exactly 35 years ago, the Saugeen Bach Choir, together with the Kitchener Waterloo Symphony, presented a historically significant concert in the little town of Formosa with its majestic Church "Immaculate Conception" — some call it "the Cathedral of the North".

It was the first North American performance ever of Franz Liszt's 3 hour long oratorio *Christus*.

In 2026, the Saugeen Bach Choir is transforming into a new vocal ensemble, a chamber choir called Saugeen Bach Chorale. Its vision is to explore the world of historically profound works of the great masters.

This Good Friday we celebrate our new beginning with a performance of Bach's *St. John's Passion*. A challenging and deeply moving work, musically describing the last days and crucifixion of Jesus. There could not be a more appropriate place for this performance than the "Cathedral" in Formosa.

The *St. John's Passion* is partly a dramatized narration of Good Friday, with world-class soloists and musicians performing. The theme is about humanity trying to understand itself, thankful to have hope in spite of Orwell's darkest visions of the future.

There are so many healthy things to feed a heart. But increasingly we will have to search for and cherish them. The Saugeen Bach Chorale is just that, overcoming the darkness of today's clouds with the healing sounds of Bach's most profound compositions, the *St. John's Passion*.

The Saugeen Bach Chorale performs "St. John's Passion" on Friday April 3rd, 2026. 8:00 pm. Tickets at www.symphonyinthebarn.com

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Journey with the Moon's cycle

db johnson

The Moon is of the Earth, our companion, our protector, our shadow keeper. Her orbit is a womb holding the Earth, moving the fluids that give us life and passion.

We began beneath the fiery halo of an Annular New Moon Solar Eclipse on February 17, a ring of light framing a portal into your Heart. Providence offers the strength to sing your deepest desires into your future self. You were asked to dream big, trusting that the building blocks of manifestation would appear in their own mysterious timing.

That moment was an invitation.

○ **Virgo Total Lunar Eclipse-Full Moon – March 3**

An unexpected event gives you pause, an act of God or an unGodly act. Do not despair, quietly retreat to the comfort of your family or close friends and reflect on the clarity of your dreams. Use your shadows and wounds to discover true beliefs.

○ **Waning Gibbous – March 4-10**

Internal quiet reflection continues this week. Ask, what does purity mean to me? Pay attention to how you are relating to business associates, intimate partners, and spiritual leaders. It may be best to listen.

○ **Sagittarius Last Quarter Moon – March 11**

Begin to turn your attention outward to community. If your vision is foggy, be patient, this eclipse cycle is still fresh. Work to combine your dreams and service to community.

○ **Waning Crescent Moon – March 12-18**

As the Moon sweeps through the culminating phase of the cycle following the Eclipse, you must be honest about the challenges encountered within and without. Remain open to surprising opportunities that will assist navigation.

○ **Pisces New Moon – March 19**

The weeks since the February Solar Eclipse may have felt like living in a shaking snow globe. Now is the time to sit in silent stillness and watch the snow settle. Listen for the voice of Creation and know that it speaks through you.

○ **Waxing Crescent Moon – March 20-24**

Clarity returns. Time to take action! Pursuit of your highest aspirations is supported by a renewed sense of self and a loving energy to find the light in the shadow.

○ **Gemini First Quarter Moon – March 25**

Speak your truth. Don't dwell on what was, focus on what will be. Your Heart won't lie and it holds the power to heal all wounds. Feel and engage with your Heart power.

○ **Waxing Gibbous – March 26 - April 1**

Healing energy is heightened this week. A fever burns hot in the recovery process. Fire brings heat and light, both of which are purifying elements. Talk to yourself, talk to Creation.

○ **Libra Full Moon – April 2**

The quiet within is matched by the potential for harmonious relationships. Not that complexity or challenge is absent, but you see the larger picture and know that systemic change must be a group effort.

○ **Waning Gibbous – April 3-9**

With interpersonal relationships stabilized, the time is ripe to probe deeper into emotional connections. How do other peoples' shadows affect you? Your capacity for understanding is expanding fortified by communication with your Divine Heart.

○ **Capricorn Last Quarter Moon – April 10**

You are the authority of your Divine origin. Consult the Ancestors to help ground your value structure. Then share this wisdom with others.

○ **Waning Crescent – April 11-16**

Your sense of self is settled, your personal relationships have deepened, now is the time to expand your human capacities and embrace the world community. Spread love through Earth-based engagement, ritual and gratitude practices. Your fellow Beings will get the message.

○ **Aries New Moon – April 17**

You are strengthened and well-resourced to begin a new cycle. Be open to new radical possibilities as we are on the precipice of a great shift in our collective ability to communicate, not just with each other but with all Beings on this planet and beyond.

Each of us will experience these lunar energies in a unique and personal way. For a personal reading, you may contact me at johnelmerjohnson@prontonmail.com

A

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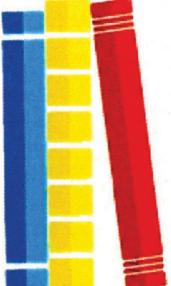
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Séan McCann
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June 27



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