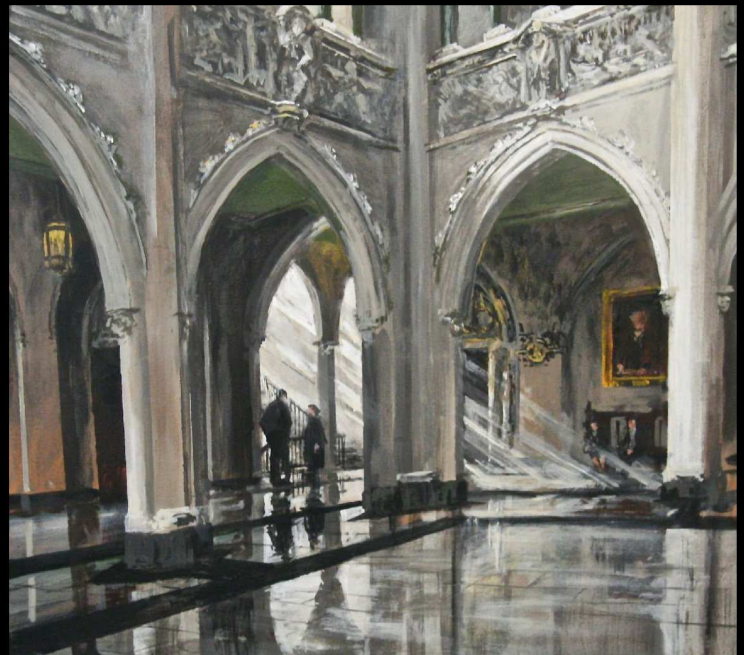


Canadian Visions

JOHN B. AIRD GALLERY - TORONTO - 2014



Canadian Visions

Kim Atkins Anthony Batten Heidi Burkhardt Maurice Snelgrove

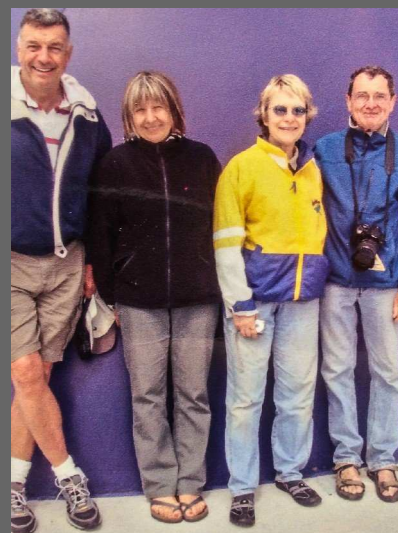
Front Cover:

KIM ATKINS
"YELLOW HOUSE, NEWFOUNDLAND"
Chromogenic print
11 x 14"

HEIDI R. BURKHARDT
"SHIPWRECK"
Boneyard Bay, Parry Sound
Oil
36 x 48"

MAURICE SNELGROVE
"PEAK, OGILVIE RIVER"
Dempster Highway, Yukon
Watercolour and chalk pastel
14 x 21.5"

ANTHONY J. BATTEN
"THE FOYER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS"
The Centre Block, Parliament Hill, Ottawa
Acrylic on canvas
30 x 30"



Canadian Visions

The Canadian landscape can hardly be defined as having one singular identity. Depending on location and season it can provide a myriad of opportunities for an artist; vista after extraordinary vista, from prairie farmland and old growth forest to northern lakes and Arctic sea. Closer to home there is also the urban landscape -- built forms and streetscapes that can present their own potential and challenges. How do artists capture and distil the essence of these varied landscapes, and can they bring a coherent artistic vision to bear on so broad a subject?

Canadian Visions unites the work of four Toronto based artists who have made their depiction of the Canadian landscape a lifelong passion. Kim Atkins, Anthony Batten, Heidi Burkhardt and Maurice Snelgrove have spent more than 30 years travelling, often together and sometimes apart, relentlessly seeking painting locales across Canada. For this exhibition they have drawn on experiences as far afield as the Yukon and Newfoundland, Nunavut and Saskatchewan and many places in between.

Working within a well established landscape tradition and often outdoors, each artist's individuality nevertheless remains evident through their choice of materials and stylistic expression.

For Atkins and Burkhardt the landscape itself is the focus. Through a judicious selection of natural forms, each of these artists brings to the subject a singular point of view. Atkins achieves pared down compositions through the simplification of elements, whether they are truncated trees casting deep shadows, dark pools of glassy water or meandering streams. Her photographs inhabit two worlds: street photography and images derived from the Canadian landscape. Unlike her paintings they are more likely to demonstrate her interest in repeated motifs and patterns. Through them she captures the chance juxtaposition of objects in a scene or the fleeting moment of an ongoing narrative.

Burkhardt employs oil sticks to render forms loosely in bold swathes of natural and non-naturalistic colour, all the while pulling out and intensifying the design elements inherent in massed rocky outcrops, tree formations, and skies reflected across lake water. The resulting paintings are striking portraits of Ontario's near north and southern regions.

Possibly the most well travelled of the group in Canada, Snelgrove uses watercolour to build his elements in finely observed detail across the picture plane; there he creates an intimate space for us to inhabit. In other works he places the viewer on the periphery looking into and across a vast landscape that inevitably reminds us of nature's diverse beauty and special place in our lives.

Anthony Batten is as much at home painting a city street as he is a rural landscape. Working in acrylics he creates compositions that convey great atmosphere through the sensitive handling of shadow and light. On his urban streets the human element provides scale as well as the hustle and bustle that characterizes the life found in our city centres. In many works the subtle gradations of foreground and background shadow set the older architecture against the towering forms of new development that seems in danger of swallowing up our cities and their familiar landmarks.

The paintings and photographs resulting from these travels illustrate the ability of each artist to convey a real sense of location. Using the often iconic elements found within a landscape as a starting point, they skillfully re-interpret them according to their own sensibilities as astute observers of Canada's varied land forms and urban spaces. While the resulting works remain uniquely personal, they are also universally accessible and serve to reinforce our own image of Canadian places whether we've actually been there or not.

Gillian Reddyhoff
Independent Curator

Kim Atkins

"NEW BRUNSWICK SHORELINE"

Oil on canvas
16 x 20"



"QUEEN'S PARK , TORONTO"

Chromogenic print
11 x 14"



"TIFF, TORONTO"

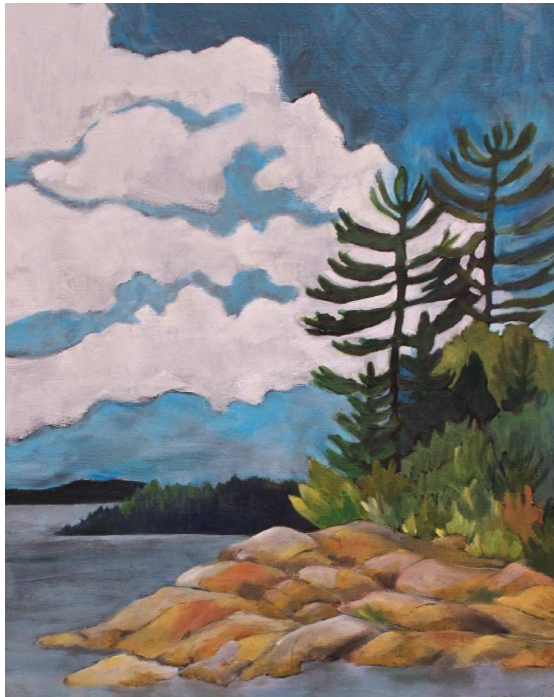
Chromogenic print
11 x 14"



"THE MALAHAT: FEBRUARY"

Oil on canvas
12 x 14"





"ST JOSEPH'S ISLAND EAST OF SSM, ONTARIO"

*Oil on canvas
16 x 20"*



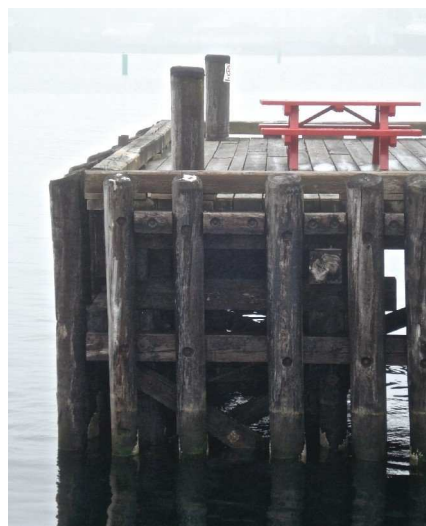
"ALGONQUIN PARK, ONTARIO"

*Oil on canvas
16 x 20"*



"BAY OF FUNDY AT ST ANDREWS BY THE SEA, NEW BRUNSWICK"

*Oil on canvas
16 x 20"*



"LUNENBURG, NOVA SCOTIA"

*Chromogenic print
11 x 14"*



"ALONG ONTARIO HWY 60 IN FEBRUARY"

*Oil on canvas
12 x 24"*



"RESOLUTE, NUNAVUT"

*Gelatin silver print
11 x 14"*



“

This boy riding his bike along a gravel road up to a stop sign printed in the Inuit script captures the vast emptiness of a very small town of barely 250 people. Resolute is the northernmost of all Canadian inhabited communities. It was settled by the Dorset and Thule peoples as early as 1500 BC though these early settlers left the area about 1000 BC. The town was resettled in 1953 by moving Inuit people from Quebec and other Nunavut areas. This was an effort by the Canadian Government to maintain a permanent presence in the high Arctic.

“ This view is from the east coast of Vancouver Island driving north from Victoria. The road climbs to 350 metres with long views out to the Gulf Islands. The highway goes through heavy forests and the land drops off in steep cliffs. It is named for the First Nations peoples who lived in this area.

“ Looking west late in the day. The sky was filled with heavy dark clouds which slowly moved away to open some blue patches and leave reflections in the watery sand. The Bay of Fundy empties and fills four times a day with 100 billion tonnes of sea water. This is the highest tidal range in the world.

“ Lunenburg, home to the BlueNose, is a UNESCO World Heritage site with a remarkable collection of historic buildings, each maintaining a fine level of conservation. The town has a long wharf along the waterfront. This photograph was taken in an early morning fog.

Anthony J. Batten

"SNOW FLURRIES IN OLD QUEBEC CITY"

Rue de la Montagne and the Laval Monument
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 40"



"CAPE NORTHUMBERLAND, BEECHEY ISLAND."

Acrylic on canvas
30 x 36"

"THE EBBING DAY, TRINITY EAST, NEWFOUNDLAND"

Looking towards Trinity Bay and the Skerwink Trail Headlands
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 48"



"INTERSECTION"

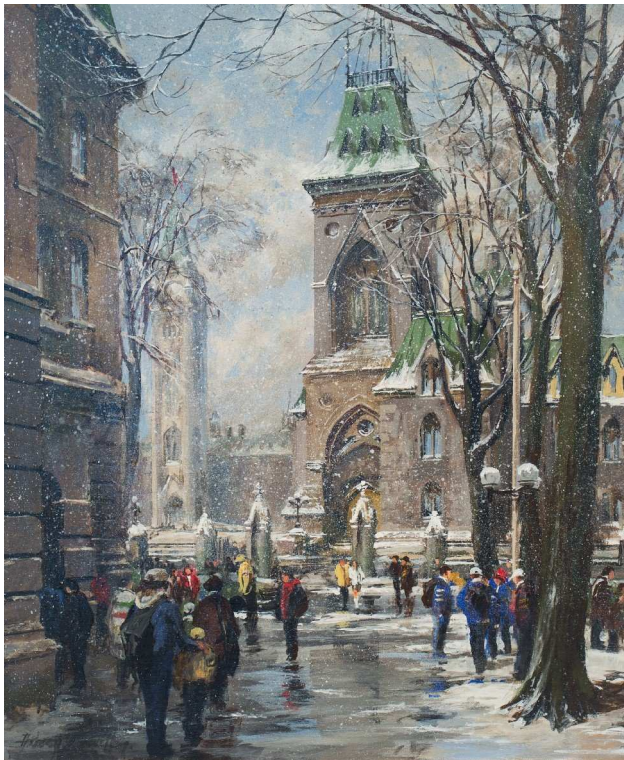
Queen Street east at Spadina, Toronto
Acrylic on canvas
12 x 12"



"...AND SO THE SEASONS CHANGE"

A Toronto landmark structure, Charles Street
Acrylic on canvas
40 x 40"



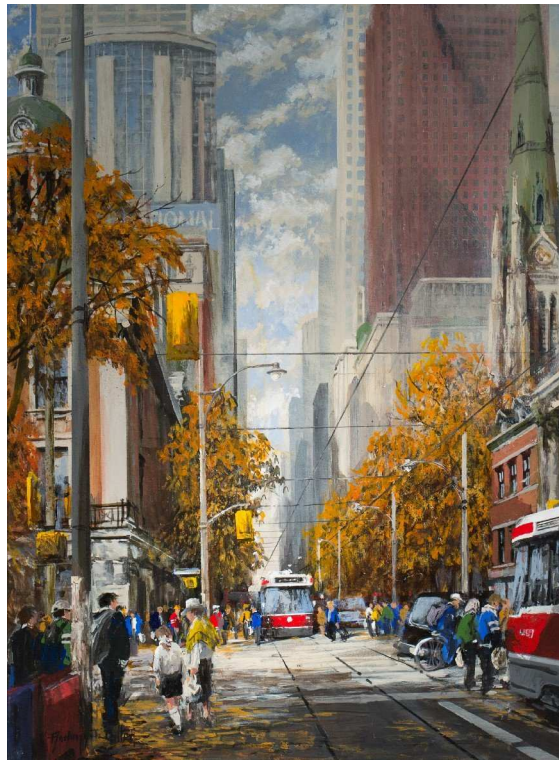


"CAPITAL LANDMARKS"

*The East Block and Parliament Hill,
Ottawa*

Acrylic on canvas

36 x 30"



**"SATURDAY MORNING AT
KING AND JARVIS"**

*Looking west towards the Business
District*

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30"

**"AUTUMN, BEHIND
PALMERSTON BOULEVARD"**

Toronto laneway

Acrylic on canvas

12 x 36"



“A day spent on the waters of Toronto’s harbour in his sister’s boat many years ago became the inspiration for this urban “landscape.” Over the years the artist has produced several versions of this composition with only the vessel itself remaining relatively unchanged.

This version was painted in 2012 and incorporates many of the new structures that now surround the Trillium’s berth. The artist did elect to omit the “O’Keefe Centre” apartment building now being finished that effectively blocks any views of older city structures.

This painting won a “PEOPLES CHOICE AWARD” in the Arabella Magazine’s Canadian landscape painting competition. That award was announced in February 2014 and the work is featured in the current issue of the publication.

“THE TRILLIUM AT THE FOOT OF YONGE STREET”

Toronto Harbour and the landmark side-wheeler

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 48”

“

This detail of a nineteenth century residential building was inspired by a building on Charles Street, near Church, in Toronto. The artist briefly lived on the same block in the late 1960's and he developed an admiration for the rather romantic landscaping that evolved around the substantial side addition to the second empire style main structure.

“

This view of the hamlet of Trinity East was one of Tony's submissions to *Arabella Magazine's* recent "Great Canadian Landscape Competition".

The members of the group have, either individually or as a gang been visiting Trinity Bay for decades. It has become a favourite painting destination. Later this year the PORDS will again be painting in the area and then they head north to Little Bays Island. That island community, famed for its legendary setting and scenery, will become the focus of their Newfoundland trip.

“

The painting was a very recent response to the now active redevelopment of the site. Much of the building is slated for demolition with only the main street façade being incorporated into yet another condominium tower.

The image is one individual's very personal reaction to fond memories and also a questioning of why Toronto appears to be so reluctant to create meaningful preservation and conservation regulations.

Heidi Burkhardt

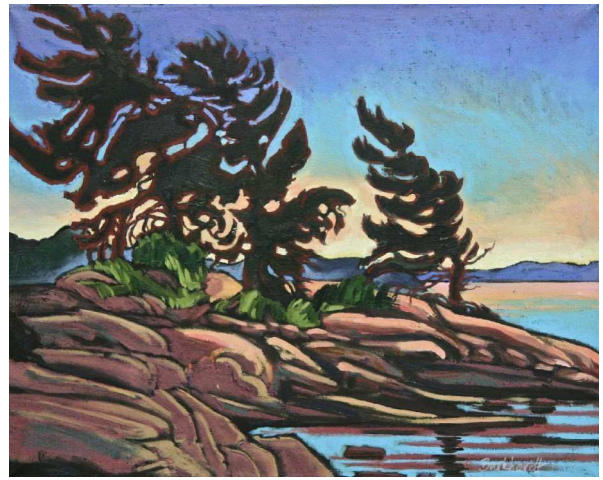
"FRANTIC FARM SUNRISE"

Southern Ontario
Oil
36 x 40"
N.F.S.



"POINTING THE WAY"

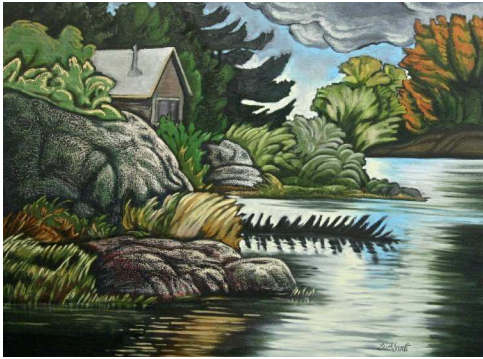
Georgian Bay
Oil
16 x 20"



"SECRET PASSAGE"

Parry Sound,
Georgian Bay
Oil
48 x 84"





"SHIPWRECK"

Boneyard Bay, Parry Sound

Oil

36 x 48"

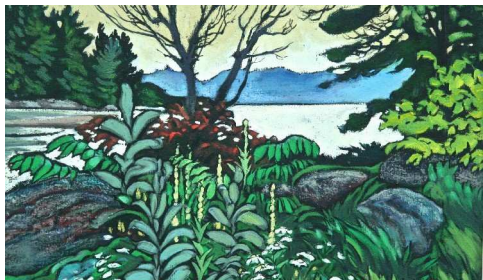


"DAWN ON STONY"

Stony Lake, Kawarthas

Oil

18 x 24"



**"SUMACH AND
MULLEIN"**

*Stony Lake, Casement
Island*

Oil

18 x 24"

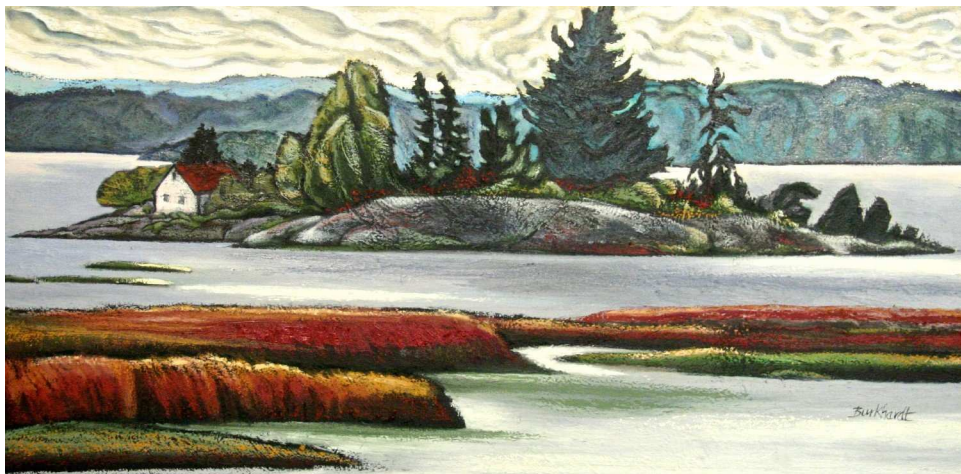


**"CLOUDS OF
GOLDENROD"**

Don Valley, Toronto

Oil

12 x 16"

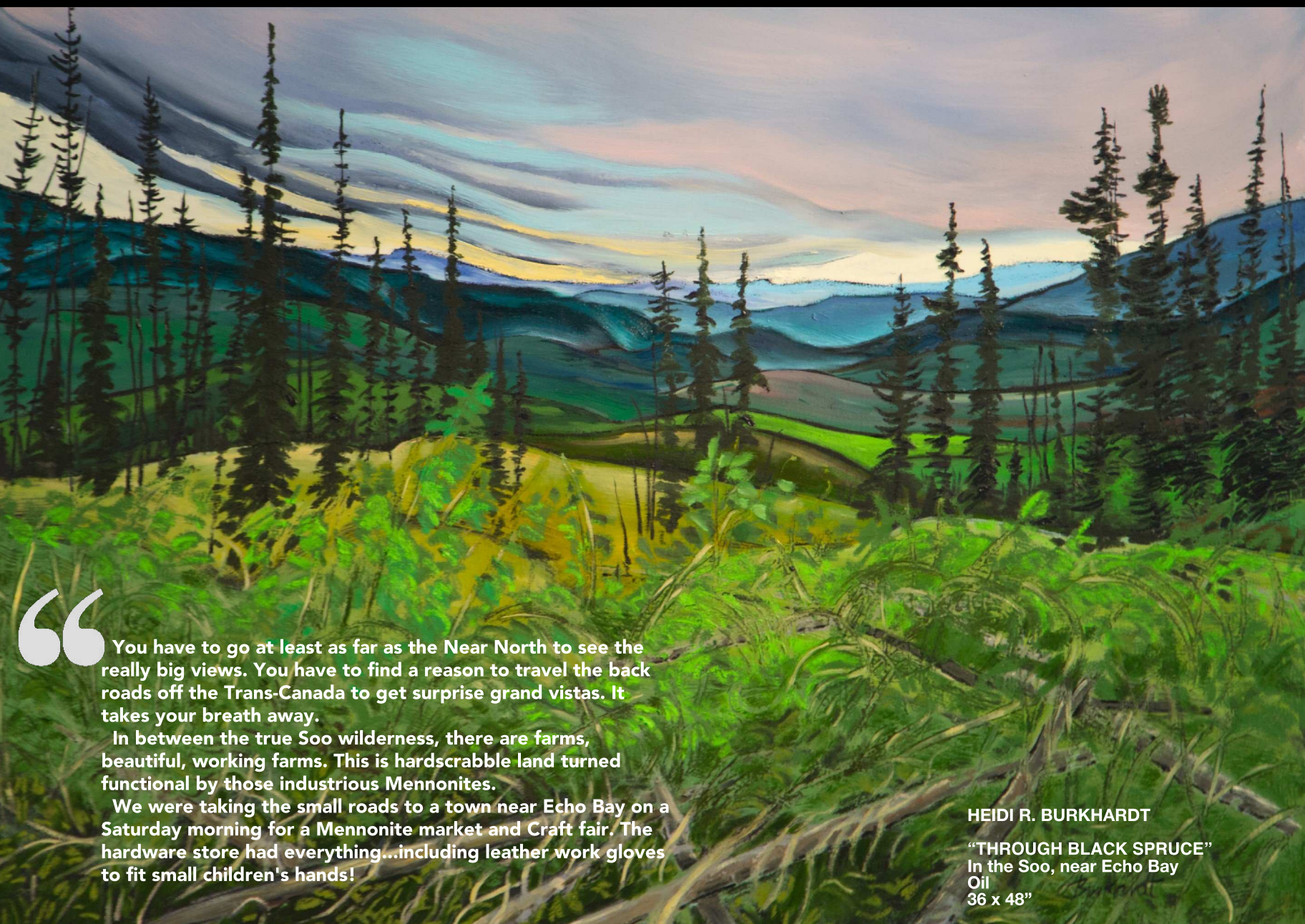


"A SUMMER PLACE"

Stony Lake

Oil

24 x 48"



“

You have to go at least as far as the Near North to see the really big views. You have to find a reason to travel the back roads off the Trans-Canada to get surprise grand vistas. It takes your breath away.

In between the true Soo wilderness, there are farms, beautiful, working farms. This is hardscrabble land turned functional by those industrious Mennonites.

We were taking the small roads to a town near Echo Bay on a Saturday morning for a Mennonite market and Craft fair. The hardware store had everything...including leather work gloves to fit small children's hands!

HEIDI R. BURKHARDT

“THROUGH BLACK SPRUCE”
In the Soo, near Echo Bay
Oil
36 x 48”

“ If you are cruising in Parry Sound, there is a narrow passage between Isabella and Parry Islands connecting Three-Mile Bay and the South Channel. You have to know where the rocks are and it can only happen when the water level is not too low (unless you are in a canoe). The water level keeps mysteriously changing. Is Nestle's really draining Lake Michigan and sending fresh water to China? If it gets lower still, some islands will become peninsulas!

At the mouth of the passage are spectacular cliffs forming a small canyon. Once I saw baby Rattlesnakes there on the bare rock shoreline, freshly hatched, exposed.

Who was looking after them? The Osprey was coming for them for sure.

“ My friends and former students Paulus Tjiang and Monica Johnston live on Frantic Farm near Warkworth where they frantically blow glass and make pottery. Their old Canadian barn now houses a wood kiln which gets fired up several times a year. A firing is a party. Participants travel from east and west to help tend the fire. This sunrise is the chilly fall morning scene out the back door of the barn on a six o'clock shift. Behind me the warm fire is getting stoked, above the roof, the chimney burps puffs of dark smoke.

“ Initially negotiating the vast network of waterways of Parry Sound was intimidating. There lies before you subject matter to paint for a lifetime. Floating around in a boat provides endless excitement for the roving eye.

The startling flesh coloured granite and pines trained by the prevailing West Wind make the iconic images of our Georgian Bay. Was I lost? Often. One could get tense about sudden changes in weather conditions, and losing the light before you were close enough to home to know the landmarks. "Don't worry, Heidi," said my Native friend Mike King from Parry Island, "you can't get lost....all the trees point to town!"

“ Behind Oak Island in Parry Sound Harbour is Boneyard Bay. It is so called because there are a number of sunken wrecks around there. Apparently, the old fashioned way to decommission a ship was to sink it! It was great for diving adventures...all kinds of scrap turned up. Steamship boilers, portholes, interesting bits of wood and hardware exciting for swimmers with snorkels.

The ship skeletons used to be fully under water with just tips emerging. We gauged the water level of the Bay by how far the ribs were showing. Now they are fully exposed to the elements. That means they will deteriorate and disappear.

Maurice Snelgrove

"BYLOT ISLAND"

Davis Strait, Nunavut
Watercolour
14 x 21"



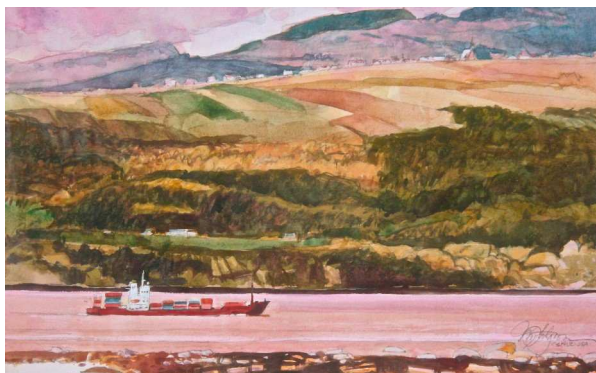
"TRINITY"

Newfoundland
Watercolour on canvas
21.5 x 28.5"



"PRAIRIE PATTERN"

Saskatchewan
Watercolour
14 x 21.5"



"SUN AND SHADE"

Les Eboulements, Charlevoix, Quebec
Watercolour
14 x 21.5"

"FIRST SNOW, RICHARDSON MOUNTAINS"

Northwest Territories
Watercolour
14.5 x 21.5"



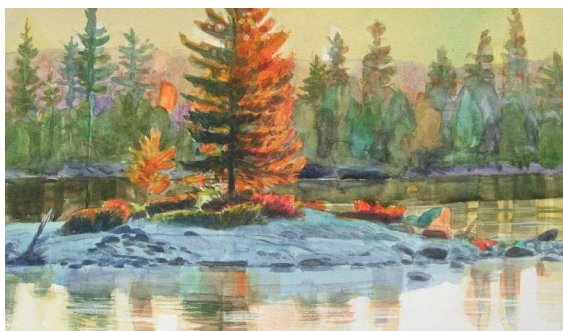
"MOUNTAIN MISTS"

Northern British
Columbia
Watercolour
21.5 x 28.5"



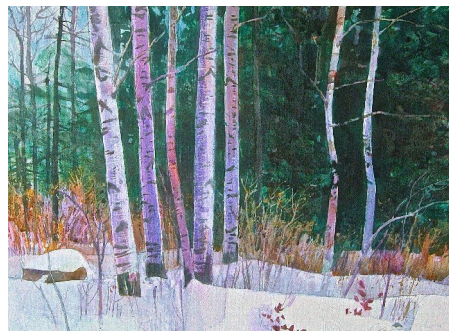
"AUTUMN POND"

Haliburton, Ontario
Watercolour
21 x 29"



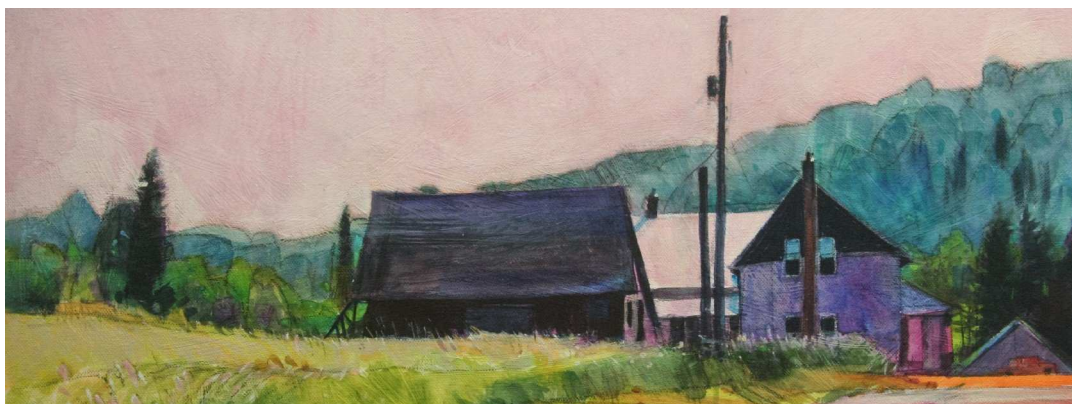
"SUMMER SUNRISE"

Kennisis Lake, Ontario
Watercolour
14 x 21.25"



**"FOREST
COMPANIONS"**

Opeongo Lake Road,
Algonquin Park, Ontario
Watercolour on canvas
24 x 30"



**"VALLEY
HOMESTEAD"**

Ontario
Watercolour
12 x 24"

“

The Dempster Highway runs 736 kilometers through the arctic wilderness, from the Klondike Highway in the Yukon, to Inuvik in the Northwest Territories. It is the only Canadian all-weather road to cross the Arctic Circle. It traverses two major mountain ranges on its way to the MacKenzie Delta, the Ogilvie and the Richardson Mountains. Travelling north and into the Northwest Territories autumn quickly turned into the drama of the impending arctic winter.

M. J. 2008
CSWDC-OSA

“ The old homes and log barns dotting the area between Bancroft and Renfrew bring to mind the hardships endured by those early settlers who struggled and still persevere in this often unforgiving land. However, painting opportunities abounded. Heidi and I took advantage of these while teaching at Camp Walden for the Scarborough Board of Education Art Camp.

“ Motoring north through British Columbia on our way to the Yukon: a gravel road, heavy rain and a low overcast. We pulled into a service station to repair a flat tire. Out of the clouds descended a twin engine aircraft. It landed on the roadway and taxied into the service station! Not a good idea flying through mountains with zero visibility.

“ A roadside pond on the road to Kennisis Lake. County road 7 travels roughly due north from the village of West Guilford to what is now cottage country, but vestiges of an earlier logging history remain. In fact the logging trucks still ply this road. Fifty thousand acres of the Haliburton Forest, a privately owned preserve at the end of the road attracts tourists for camping, canoe tripping, concerts in the forest, snowmobiling and the Wolf Centre.

“ The community of Trinity and its harbour have provided shelter for fishermen, loggers, shipbuilders and others for over 400 years. Its cultural and built heritage attracts thousands of visitors per year. Descending the highway towards the town provides a visual panorama of Trinity and the harbour.

“ On a painting trip, partially retracing the journey of the ill-fated Franklin expedition, our vessel the *Akademik Ioffe*, sailed past Bylot Island. Initially we were some distance offshore. After a friendly appeal to the captain we were brought considerably closer; the shoreline and glacial landscape came into detailed view. As we sailed slowly by, thoughts of Lawren Harris's painting of Bylot Island came powerfully and inspirationally to mind.

A Continuing Journey

Kim Atkins, Anthony Batten,
Heidi Burkhardt, Maurice Snelgrove



...a continuing journey

