

Tour galleries on Culture Days

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Last January when I was excitedly telling anyone who would listen about my inaugural column, one prophet of gloom and doom (who shall remain nameless in order to protect the guilty) expressed the opinion that my days as a visual arts columnist were numbered, "since there's nothing much happening locally."



M.P. Eaton/Times & Transcript

Gerry Clement with Evening Shoreline (acrylic, 30" x 22"), depicting the Gower Coast, Rhossili, Wales. Gallery 2 is located at 120 Shediac Road, adjacent to the Medicine Shoppe and is open from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m., Monday to Friday and until noon on Saturday, but it will be open tomorrow afternoon. For more information call Gerry at 869-9153.

So let me share one day with you.

I begin checking e-mail which includes one from Roxanne Richard, cultural development officer, regarding Moncton's 2011 Gallery Tour, on Oct. 1, from noon until 5 p.m. in celebration of Culture Days. Over 20 galleries will welcome the public into their spaces to see their current exhibits, 'meet the artist' events, silent auctions and art demonstrations.

I've featured some of these galleries and artists recently. For example, you can see Raymonde Fortin's sculpture/painting installation (Sept. 23 column) at the Dieppe Arts & Culture Centre and meet Raymonde at work in her new studio at the Aberdeen Cultural Centre; meet Fredericton artist David McKay (Sept. 16) at Moncton City Hall Gallery and visit Klu'skap Art Gallery (May 27) at their new location at 887 Main St.

So while some of the galleries and artists are familiar, the list contains a gold mine of new material. Rebecca Belliveau's Persona exhibition is opening at the Moncton Public Library, for example, and I haven't visited The Loft (302 Ammon Rd.), Artgora (135 Timberline Rd.) or Mosaïque (405 Robinson St.), but now they're on my list.

Roxanne says you can get tour maps from Moncton City Hall, the city's website (www.moncton.ca) and at each participating gallery.

At 11 a.m., I'm off to a press conference at Galerie Sans Nom in the Aberdeen Cultural Centre, where curator Amanda Dawn Christie outlined the 2011-2012 season, which I'll share with you later. From Sept. 20 through Oct. 18, and including the Oct. 1 Gallery Tour, Montreal artist John Boyle-Singfield, a graduate of the Interdisciplinary Art program at l'Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, presents Body-FX, in which he transforms the space within Galerie Sans Nom into a fitness centre for artists. Meanwhile, upstairs in the studios, in addition to Raymonde, you may also see Anne-Marie Sirois and Georgette Bourgeois at work.

A series of Georgette's paintings, L'Esprit de Grand-Pré, in the permanent collection of Grand-Pré National Historic Site, N.S., is currently being exhibited at Le Grand Réveil Acadien 2011 at the University of Louisiana in Lafayette where she has the honour of being the only Canadian artist invited to exhibit. I'm looking forward to featuring Georgette next week.

Meanwhile, Nisk Imbeault, director at the Louise & Reuben Cohen Art Gallery (Université de Moncton), who was at the press conference, told me Maryse Arseneault will be at the university gallery at 1 p.m. instead of her Aberdeen studio, along with artists Jean-Denis Boudreau of Moncton and Stefan St. Laurent, Ottawa, participating in a discussion on how Acadian identity relates to their work and to contemporary art. Their exhibition, In the Shadow of Evangeline, runs until Oct. 30. Then at 3 p.m. on Oct. 1, there'll be a tour of the ecological art park on the gallery grounds.

Now back to my "typical day."

At 2 p.m., I'm on a detour around work crews on the Shediac Road attempting to reach #120 and Gallery 2 in a space leased from Tammy Davis Gallant, proprietor of the next-door Medicine Shoppe Pharmacy. Here I meet artist Gerry Clement and collector Ken McCormack. They're not on the Gallery Tour's list, as they've only been opened for a few days but they will be open on Oct. 1, and it's worth stopping by.

On the right side wall and the far back wall are oil, acrylic and water colour paintings by Gerry, who exhibits at the Moncton Art Society Gallery in Highfield Square which is part of the tour. He and his wife emigrated from Wales 10 years ago and came to live in Irishtown to be near their daughter and her family, but before that they were extensive world travellers. Among the landscape paintings are scenes from South Africa, Mexico, Holland, England, northern and western Canada, as well as ones from their native Wales and their new Maritime home. A charming scene from Irishtown depicts a rosy dawn reflected on a snowy field, marked by the frozen imprints of their grandchild's boots as he played in the

snow the day before.

Meanwhile, Ken McCormack, who moved from England to Canada in the 1950s, says he can't draw a straight line but he does enjoy art and has been collecting it for many years. As a result, the left wall of the gallery is filled with an eclectic collection by artists including Tom Forrestal, Karl Spital, Joan Gregory, Shirley McConnell, J.E. McClelland, Richard Howe and Charles Flewelling.

An hour later I'm back on the Shediac Road, navigating my way through the roadwork. Finally I'm proceeding homewards, when the open door at the Artisan's Gallery at 465 Main Street catches my eye and I decide check on Shane Myer's progress. He's just completed one of eight wrought iron trees, supported by river rocks that will define the interior space. This one will bear a banner indicating support from the City of Moncton, he says, and yes, the Gallery will be open on Oct. 1 for the tour, although the official grand opening is still a few months away. Hans Durstling will be showing his stones, alabaster carvings and museum-quality jewelry creations; Serge Martin and Lisa McKay's pottery studio is up and working, as is Cathy Lindfield's pottery and painting studio. Wendy Kitts' books and art cards will also be available there, and now I've been invited to display the new book, *Vision & Voice*, along with a few of Angelica De Benedetti's paintings, for the day, in what will eventually become the gallery's gift shop.

Somehow I doubt I'll run out of art ideas anytime soon!

P.S. - Another day and another e-mail pops up. Lynne Saintonge's studio/gallery at 344 McAllister Rd., Riverview, will also be open to the public on Oct. 1 and 2, from 1 to 4 p.m.

* M. P. Eaton is a freelance writer/photographer and author of three collections of poetry. Her weekly column touches on local artists, galleries and art issues in Metro and south-east New Brunswick. See her website at: www.eaglewingspress.ca For story ideas, contact her at 382-6146 or email: mairead@nb.sympatico.ca

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