

MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTRE Gallery

CANVASS

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<http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery/>
hours: Mon. – Fri., 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM; Sat., noon – 5 PM
an institution of Mennonite Church Canada
located on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University

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Ray Dirks, curator, rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca

Collaboration

an exhibition of quilts and paintings
by Marj Moore and Gus Froese
and
Henry's Creative Bin
woodworks by Henry Neufeld

Jan 24 - Mar 15

Opening: Jan 24, 7:30 pm

The following is adapted from an interview curator Heather Smith conducted with Marj Moore and Gus Froese for an exhibition at the Mosaic Gallery, Moose Jaw, in 2011/12:

Gus Froese and Marj Moore both grew up at Hanley, SK, but at different times. Gus's teaching career took him there to teach from 1961 to 1965. Marj was in his grade 7 science class. After many years, they reconnected when Marj came to teach at Peacock Technical High School in Moose Jaw, where Gus was already teaching. Since then both have retired from teaching and are pursuing their artistic interests.

Gus's formal art training began during Teachers' College in 1952, when Wynona Mulcaster noticed his talent and advised him to study art. He took several summer art classes at the University of Saskatchewan, Emma Lake campus, with Rita Cowley, Horace Wickenden, Art McKay, and Roy Kiyooka. In the 1970s at the Regina Campus, he took a painting class with Art McKay and ceramics from Jack Sures. In 1989 he was invited to Emma Lake to teach. His major during his Bachelor of Education degree was in Industrial Arts, but he spent the later part of his career teaching Fine Art.

Marj's mother and grandmother were both quilters. She made her first quilt with them in a very traditional style

when she was in grade 11 and hasn't stopped quilting since. "The style of pieces that I create has changed as my experiences have broadened. I still make bed quilts and household items, but I make more fabric wall hangings that would be considered as art pieces. Fabric is still my principal medium, although I do embellish with yarns, beads, metal, etc. I also hand dye some of my fabrics." Marj has taken many quilting classes over the years and now teaches quilting. "I would add that whenever I'm teaching a class, I seem to learn as much as the students do!" Marj holds a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Saskatchewan.



Marj Moore (l), Gus Froese (r), Big Emma Lake Shoreline

Marj and Gus see the prairies as an influence in their work. For Marj, the greens, gold, rusts and browns in nature draw her. "The 'prairie' is in my work," she says, "and it's just really part of all of us here. On CBC Radio I heard a writer say that it is because of the isolation of the prairie people, past and present, that we have learned how to use our 'solitary' time in creative ways; and I tend to agree." For Gus, growing up on a farm meant life was spent largely outdoors and weather changes played an important role in activities. Gus learned to study nature: landscape, sky, clouds, trees, grass, water, animals. Drawing farm animals and studying their movements, studying nature either on the way to school or skiing or hiking through the hills along the river left an impression that surfaced in his painting later on.

Working together on this collaboration has challenged both Marj and Gus. Marj has had to learn to create lines, textures and shadow with her needle, just as Gus has learned to emulate quilting with paint. For both it has been a rich partnership in which they have asked, "What could happen if we worked on each other's pieces, or if we did an interpretation of each other's work? Or what if we both did a portrayal from the same photograph? We hoped this exhibition would be a collaboration of disciplines and ideas that would be a new experience for both."

The artists offer their sincere thanks for support and encouragement in developing this exhibition to Graham Hall, Heather Smith, Kathleen Froese, Rob Froese, Judy Casey and Danny Moore.

Henry's Creative Bin

I am Henry Neufeld. My wife, Elna (Friesen), and I spent our whole married life involved in the Aboriginal community with Mennonite Church Canada. Three months short of 59 years together she suddenly came down with a massive brain hemorrhage on March 29/11 and in 3 hours went to meet her Creator. She always gave a very positive critique for the wood products I created. I have been at this for many years, creating something from a natural piece of wood, diamond willow being a favorite. I do not carve, only clean off a piece, sand it with 3 or 4 grades of sandpaper and then treat it with olive oil, water base Varathane or shoe polish. I find a great deal of satisfaction in finding an applicable piece and then creating something of the same; polishing something God has created. I sign all my pieces with Neufeld and cross the N which also makes it an H.



Henry Neufeld, Clock from aromatic cedar

NEXT: Paintings on a multi-faith theme by Manju Lodha and Isam Aboud: March 21 - May 3. April 24: a multi faith event as part of the exhibition.

Upcoming Shows at the Gallery: 2014 promises some feasts for the eyes. After Manju and Isam will be an exhibition of Zimbabwean art in May and June, a group show from Saskatchewan featuring Christian imagery and Faye Hall's portraits in the summer, and some works by South American artists in the fall. Also, a special exhibition July 3-6 during the Mennonite Church National Assembly on the theme "Wild Hope: Faith for an unknown season." (More information to come in the next Canvass.) Delights for the eyes and ponderings for the soul you won't want to miss.

Proposals?

Artists, please, submit your proposals to us! The gallery hosts exhibits in approximate two month blocks throughout the year.

Mailing list

To receive **CANVASS**, invitations to all exhibitions and other gallery updates contact Connie Wiebe, cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca.

Contact

Ray Dirks, MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB Canada R3P 0M4. Ph: (204) 888-6781. E-mail: rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca

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Canvass

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