JANUARY 2017

VOL VIII ISSUE 1

Red Deer Arts Council
literary | performing | visual

Creating a vibrant community that celebrates the Arts

Selfies take over the world in Renu Mathew's exhibit in the Kiwanis Gallery!

December 29, 2016 to February 19, 2017
Selfies: Mixed Media by Renu Mathew

Enter the digital age where it has become increasing popular to snap a 'selfie' of yourself and post it to a social media site. Our sense of privacy is changing and more of our lives are open to others. In her exhibit of mixed media work, paintings and figurative sculptures, Olds artist Renu Mathew presents the images that individuals have chosen to publicly portray themselves, taken from Facebook, Twitter and the public domain of friends and acquaintances.

Renu has taken a look at 'selfies' from another perspective. The artworks reflect her ideas of how people want others to see them 'in the moment' and how fleeting we think these images are. But the images have more permanency than we realize, and may have longer-term effects than we intend.

Our First Friday Red Deer is January 6 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm. Refreshments served. The artist will be in attendance.



Arline's Family,
Mylar/Ink/Newspapers,
Renu Mathew





Madison,
Cables/DVD's/Acrylic,
Renu Mathew



Laurel,
Styrofoam Peanuts/
Garbage Bags/Pins,
Renu Mathew

First Friday Red Deer is sponsored by the Red Deer Downtown Business Association

THE CITY OF Red Deer

Alberta Foundation for the Arts

downtown Red Deer Business Association
Supporting the Arts Downtown

RDPL
RED DEER PUBLIC LIBRARY
open for discovery

Red Deer Arts Council: From Our Chair

"Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time." — Thomas Merton, *No Man Is an Island*

Every year there is a thing called the New Year's resolution. Every year 45% of us promise to do something to better ourselves whether it is to make us healthier through exercise, spend more time with loved ones, lose some weight, be sure to call old friends, eat better or quit smoking. Of that 45% that makes a resolution, only 8% actually succeed, or a total of 3.6% of the total population succeed. That is rather discouraging. Perhaps it is not just the person, but the resolution itself! It is too hard or too impractical for those persons and their busy lives. I put forward an easier resolution: one that we can fit into our busy schedules without realizing it, one so simple because we do it every day. It is, appreciate the arts a little more.

Art is in our lives every day. It may start first thing in the morning for some of us when we wake to the clock radio and have it set to music rather than the alarm. That music playing was created by a performing artist. If we do not hear it on our alarm clock, perhaps we listen to it while jogging and listening to an iPod, driving to work and listening to the radio or simply singing a song while having a shower. Appreciate it. Let someone know your day was better because you heard your favourite artist or song. I don't know about you, but hearing my favourite songs lift my spirits and encourages me to have a better day.

Let us move away from music for a moment and think about the visual arts and how they are intertwined into your everyday lives. Did you look at a photo today, or a picture? Do you have a painting or a sculpture in your house? Did you see one of the many ghosts of Red Deer that grace our downtown while riding the bus? Are you admiring a young lady's coloured silk scarf or drinking from your favourite hand-turned coffee mug? Voila, art has come into your life once more! The Red Deer Arts Council is pleased to present First Friday Red Deer at the Kiwanis Gallery where you can see art works by a variety of artists in a relaxed and warm setting while listening to or seeing a performing artist.

And how about those literary artists? Where do they fit into your life? Reading a good book in print or on your KOBO reader? I know that when I was a kid, Sherlock Holmes was introduced into my life at a very young age and now adorns our house in literary (I have a whole bookcase of just his stories and pastiches), performing (videos (I even performed him once)), visual form (I have a bust of him and a poster). Almost all of us have a hero from our youth that we remember with fondness. Stories appear everywhere now – on social media, on emails, on the satellite radios where we listen to the old time radio shows and even from video games. And yes, video games too are art! Performing artists lent the games their voices, visual artists the scenes, literary artists their stories and other performing artists the background music.

And finally back to performing arts. Do you dance? For me, dance lifts my spirits and makes me feel alive. We have the Friday Family Dance three times a year. Did you know that? It is a relaxed fun evening of families, friends and it is an event that breathes life into both young and old.

When I act, I always am happy and ecstatic when people I know are coming to the show. It lifts my spirits up and it makes my day by having someone do that simple gesture of supporting me in the art I love. If you know an artist, whether it is a literary, performing or a visual artist, promise yourself something: support that person. It will make you a richer and happier person and you will always be remembered for that simple act of kindness.

As Picasso once said, "Art washes away from the soul the dust of everyday life." The Red Deer Arts Council does this through all of its events and it encourages it. It is our mantle. Perhaps it can be your resolution too.

Craig Scott, Chair, Red Deer Arts Council

Betty Schnell: Have paints, will travel
Interview by Paul Cowley

Art like writing can be a solitary pursuit.

So, plein air oil painter Betty Schnell doesn't mind a little company sometimes when she's out in nature armed with her canvases, palette and easel.

More than a few times, she has attracted her own small audience as she captures mountains or other scenery in vibrant colour.

"When I'm out painting people stop and talk. You get all this excitement. You're out in the world. . . I love it when they stop."

Painting at Emerald Lake and other beauty spots in the Rockies in the summer, she regularly draws a small crowd when Japanese tour buses arrive.

"It's just great. I think I paint from their energy."

Born and raised in southern Saskatchewan, Betty has always been drawn outdoors for her artistic inspiration.

"When I try to paint from a photo my paintings just became so bland; the colours are not exciting. I need to have the real thing in front of me."

For years, she has crisscrossed the province in her trusty camper van from the mountains and Emerald Lake or Lake O'Hara to the big-sky vistas of the Prairies and Drumheller's unique natural drama.

"I love them all. You need a variety," says Betty.

That connection with nature has changed her art over time. "I think it's got a lot more bold, with bold colours and good brush strokes."

She also has found inspiration in painting trips to Ireland, Britain, Italy and France. She has showcased her work, oils and watercolours, at numerous shows during her 40-year painting career, which had to wait to get going while she raised seven children. Her works were seen recently at white gallery at Red Deer's Sunworks.

Betty's works are in private collections throughout Canada and the U.S., and as far as England, Germany and Brazil.

Her advice for those who feel an unfulfilled desire to paint? "Just pack up your paints and get out there. . . Learn your own technique. Everybody does it differently.

"I think you just have to get out there and do it."



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I am the Arts



Betty and Gerry Schnell,
60th Wedding Anniversary, 2016
Photographer Gwen Torie

I am a mother, grandmother and great-grandmother .

I love to travel, mainly in Europe .

My husband and I recently celebrated our 60th wedding anniversary .

We love to garden and visit family.

I am a visual artist. I am Betty Schnell.

I am proud to call Red Deer home.

Join me in discovering the best our City has to offer.

Upcoming Exhibit in the Kiwanis Gallery:

February 22 to April 23

Trains, Planes and Automobiles - Journeys from the Past and Into the Future - A Red Deer Arts Council Visual Arts Members Juried Exhibition

Tidbits from our board meeting:

~ Thanks to everyone who attended the Culture Café at Golden Circle on November 16th, and everyone who filled out the subsequent survey! Thanks for making Culture matter!

~ We are in the process of creating a new and important Committee, the Fund Development Committee. In the capable hands of Committee Chair Scott Barnabé, we will begin to investigate fairness in service delivery, corporate sponsorship and other important issues in our Arts and Culture community. Stay tuned!

~ Thanks to all volunteers who helped us paint the Kiwanis Gallery space on November 21! It is now fresh and sparkling new.

~ We would like to report that Stephanie Doll's workshop was a great success. Thanks to all attendees.

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Happy New Year 2017 from us all!

THE CITY OF Red Deer

Thanks to the City of Red Deer for all their support through Culture Services!