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Mystique and Multi-Media: Aboriginal Art in Streetsville



Written by Rafay Agha

Monday, 15 October 2007

Streetsville, commonly referred to as “the village” within the city of Mississauga, is lined with quaint old brick houses that exude small village charm. In one of these houses, just past the main commercial strip, is *Gallery Streetsville*. Tucked away at 354 Queen Street South, the two-story, red-bricked, 125-year-old home plays host to the Annual Aboriginal Exhibition, now in its fourth year. Displaying an impressive lineup of returning artists as well as giving opportunity to newer, lesser-known names, the gallery’s atmosphere and mandate is as natural and organic as the work in the current exhibit.

Most impressive throughout the exhibit was the creativity and variety of mediums manipulated by artists. **Laura Lee Therrien’s** use of papier-mâché and paint to create a series of ‘masks’ titled “Ignorance,” “Indifference,” and “Benevolence” capture three-dimensional emotion while retaining Aboriginal styling. Symbolizing peace between the then-thirteen colonies and Six Nations, **Hilton Henhawke’s** piece titled “Peace for All Nations” utilizes a hand-carved buffalo effigy pipe with soapstone pipe stack, wooden stem, feathers, and shells to produce a striking and visually elaborate piece.

By going through the individual grains on a slab of wood, “Living in Harmony with Creation” by **Lauralee K. Harris** is an exciting piece that demonstrates varying gradients of colour to form a psychedelic landscape. Like Ms. Harris’ work, many pieces of art involve nature, the animal, and spiritual world. Drawing influence from history, mysticism and natural elements, the art works are a cohesive collection, yet equally striking as standalone pieces. Sculpture, doll making and glasswork also add to the array of mediums.

“The response has been good. We have sold a few and actually a larger piece upstairs has already been picked up the client. Once we move down the street closer to the commercial centre, we hope for more traffic,” said Afshaan Kizilbash, the gallery manager. “We’re a stop in The Art Gallery Hop, with Blackwood and other local galleries, so we hope to get some more exposure, art student or otherwise.”

The Annual Aboriginal Exhibition is on display until October 31. Visit <http://www.gallerystreetsville.ca> for more information. On November 1, the gallery moves two blocks down to 20 Thomas Mews in Streetsville. The Art

Gallery Hop, in part with UTM's own Blackwood Gallery, happens on October 21. Visit <http://www.blackwoodgallery.ca> for information on routes and times.

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