

Places to Visit

# The Buckhorn Fine Art Festival





previous page, Get Your Own Fish, by Clint Jammer



above, Last signs of Winter, by Vladimir Ribatchok

Calm Reflections, by Jake Vandenbrink

## A celebration of art and community spirit

written by Michael Dumas

The winter storm lasted much of the night and the first grey light of dawn rising over the village of Buckhorn reveals a magical world of snow-laced trees and pristine fields. It is quiet and still with just a hint of an awakening community stirring to greet the new day. The tranquility of the scene belies the underlying energy of this small community nestled in the Kawartha Lakes region of Ontario's Near North. As the sky brightens, the tracks of a number of vehicles draw lines into the parking lot of the Buckhorn Community Centre. Inside a small meeting room, warm and bright, with the smell of coffee being freshly brewed, plans are being made for an event more than half a year away.

This annual ritual began thirty-five years ago, when resident gallery owners Edwin and Barbara Matthews were first approached with the idea of starting a local art show to raise funds for the

Buckhorn Community Centre. The Centre itself came into being through the willingness of a number of residents to sign as guarantors on the mortgage. The hope was that the art show would provide significant relief to the Centre's financial commitments and operating costs. Little did anyone know then, that the success of that first year would open the door to an event whose influence would reach well beyond this scenic village on Buckhorn Lake.

Initially, the exhibits were housed within the Community Centre and the public school across the street. Display panels were borrowed from a local lumber supply outlet, on the condition they would be returned undamaged and free of nails. Local residents quickly lent their support to everything from erecting the display booths to promoting the event. The cooperative spirit displayed then has continued over the ensuing decades, forming a continual stream of volunteers up to the present. Over time large tents were



Sunrise Resort, by Mike Smith



Wolf and Pup, by Billy-Jack Milligan



above, Casual Balance – Eastern Chipmunk, by Michael Dumas  
below, Saw-whet Owls, by Paul Brunelle



above, Ancient One Reflects, by R. Kris Nahrgang  
right, The Opportunist, by Michael Dumas





above, *The Dance*, by David Foy



top right, *Wood Ducks in Pickerel Weed*, by Patricia Pepin  
bottom right, *Timeless*, by Sheila Ballantyne



brought in to accommodate the growing number of exhibitors. These in turn were replaced by an expansion of the main Community Centre building and the addition of 11 permanent mini-galleries in the woodland setting that now forms Festival Park. All of these physical changes have been mirrored by a rise in the quality of art on display. What was essentially a local small town art show has grown into the Buckhorn Fine Art Festival, an award-winning event featuring national and international artists, many of whom have been featured prominently in ARABELLA magazine.

The Kawartha Lakes region has long been a popular tourism destination. Its location on the edge of the Canadian Shield provides a taste of the North within an easy drive of the city of Toronto. A profusion of lakes, resort facilities and country charm offers visitors both relaxation and activities to suit a multitude of tastes.

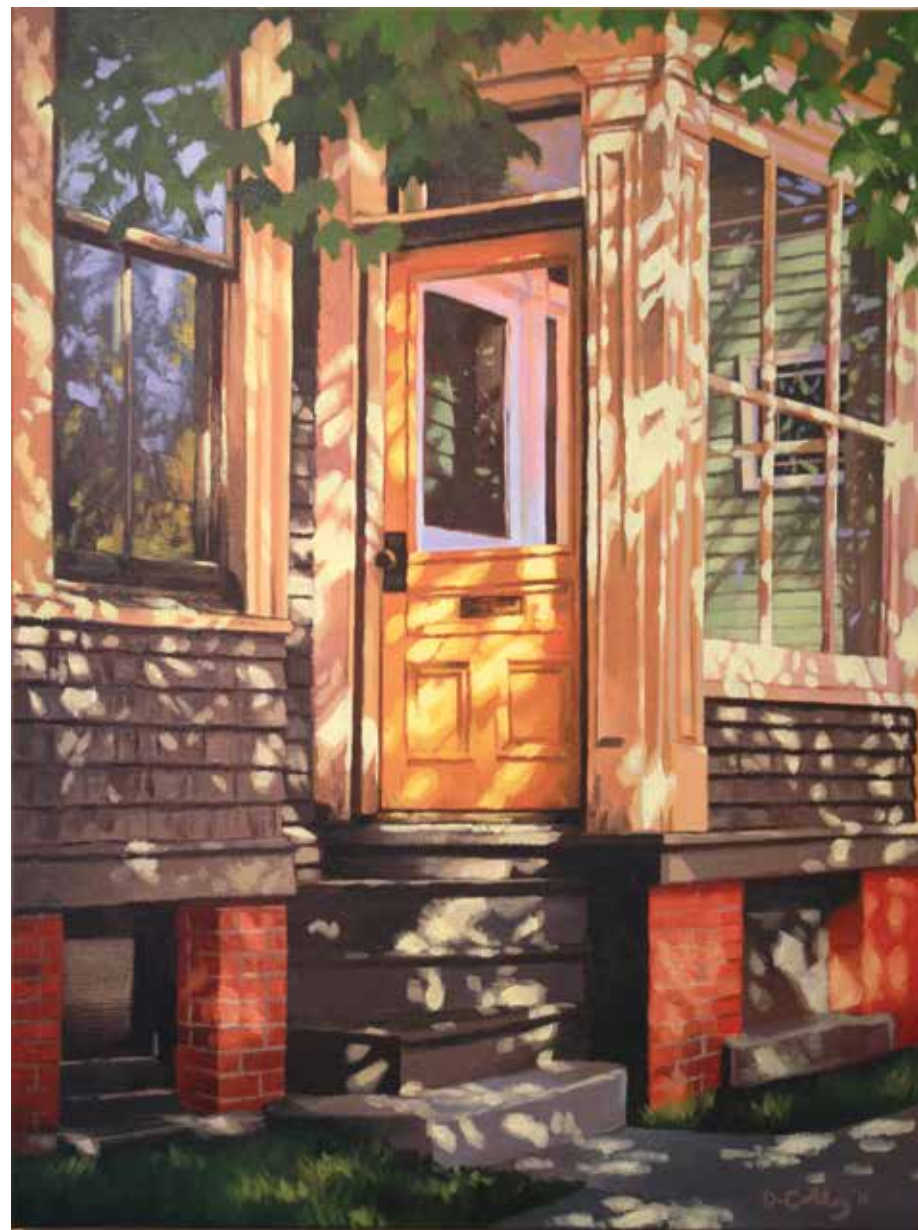
The Buckhorn Fine Art Festival adds another dimension to the Kawartha experience on one very special weekend in August.

This year the Festival takes place August 18 and 19, with an evening gala opening on August 17, from 7:00 to 10:00 pm. Visitors will find ample free parking, and a pleasant stroll along a wooded path takes them directly to the Buckhorn Community Centre grounds. Pick-up and drop-off areas at the Community Centre entrance are available, as well as shuttle bus service from Lock 31 and the upper parking lots. Friendly greeters offer information and printed guides for the exhibits, special activities and food and beverage services. The organized layout makes everything easy to find and the picturesque atmosphere among the pines is ideal for the leisurely appreciation of things artistic in nature.

In many ways, the artworks on display have



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1 Christmas Island Local, by Kelly McNeil  
2 Sun-dappled Porch, by Daniel Colby

3 Northern Lake, by Margarethe Vanderpas  
4 Luke 12:13 – Eastern Chipmunks, by Kelly Dodge



above, Still Waters, by Clint Jammer



below, Solitude, by Lynda Cunningham



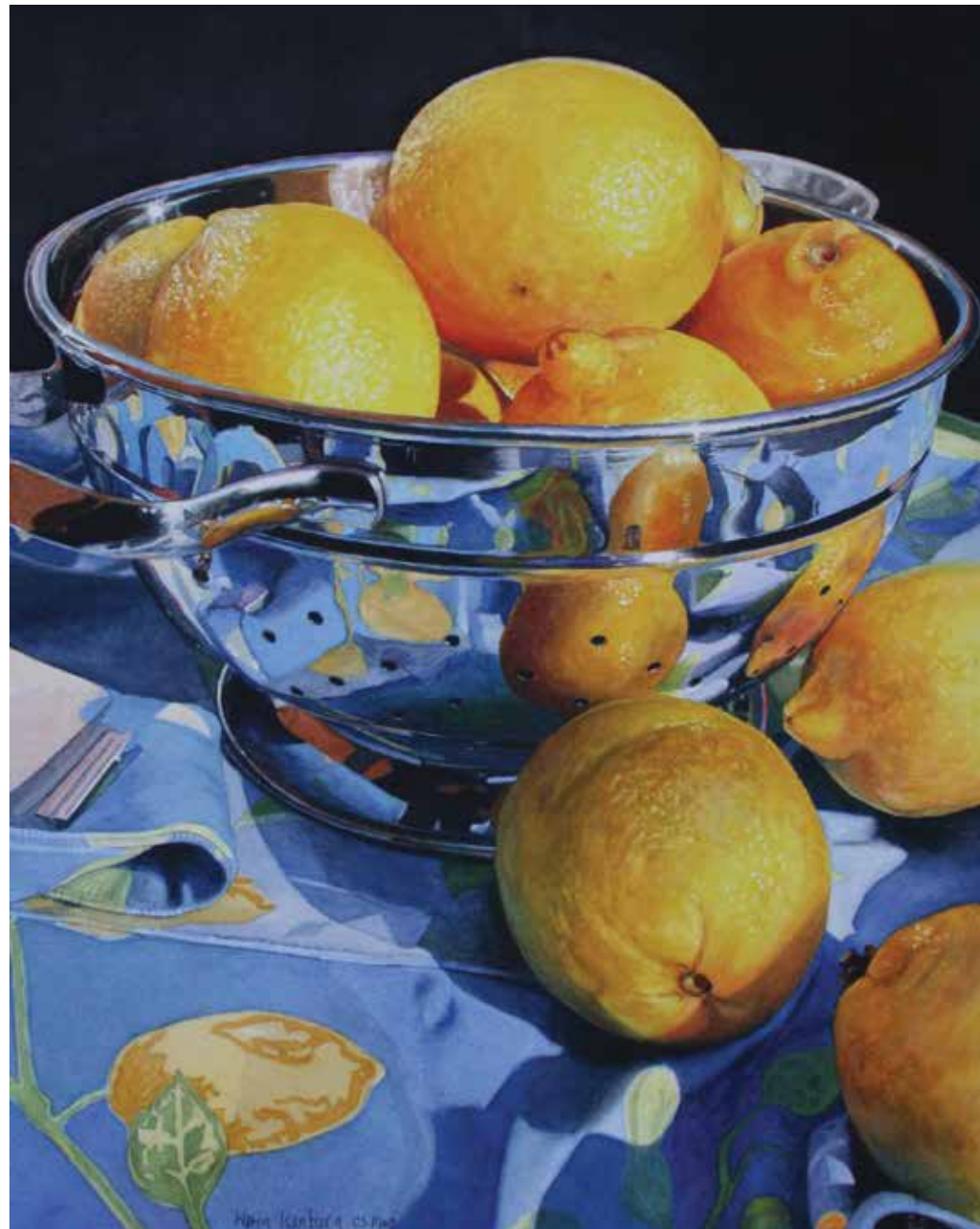
top, Grey Monday,  
by Mike Smith

middle, Beautiful  
Dreamer, by  
Michael Pape

bottom, Chickadee,  
by Patricia Pepin



Barnyard Bird, by Debra Lynn Ireland



Lemons, by Karin Isenburg



Plums and Pewter, by Bob Thackeray

always reflected the influences of nature and the outdoors. For many years the event was known as the Buckhorn Wildlife Art Festival, even though a significant amount of art on display was not of this category. A name change incorporating the term 'fine art' was chosen in 2005 to better express the variety of subject matter presented, as well as indicate the rising quality of the work itself. True to its origins, wildlife themes are still well represented but so are landscapes, rural subjects, still life and the human element. These are presented in diverse stylistic approaches and a variety of materials – in drawing, painting, sculpture, pottery, jewellery and photography. All exhibitors are on site in

person for the duration of the show and many of them demonstrate their particular skills at their own display, or by scheduled presentation in the Festival lecture room.

Recognizing the need to provide continual and positive change has not only generated renovation and enlargement of exhibit areas for better display, and an overall increase in art quality, but in 2010 a new and ambitious project was added to the mix. The concept was to create an area designed to function as a showcase within the greater format of the Festival at large. For this purpose, a formal gallery space was designed and created by artist David Foyn, a volunteer and exhibitor in the Festival. The inaugural

display, Canadian Masters, formed a collection representing noteworthy Canadian artists both living and deceased. Original works by the likes of Cornelius Krieghoff, A.J. Casson, J.F. Lansdowne, Ken Danby and Robert Bateman were featured. The special exhibit in 2011, titled Dimensions, featured an international display of sculpture; with the work of each of the 15 artists endowed with their own unique combination of materials and style. These events marked a real milestone in the Festival's history and development, adding to an already distinctive showing of art and reflecting a continuing commitment to quality.

Celebrating a 35 year milestone warrants a special commemorative exhibit, and as the snow

lay soft and still on Buckhorn in the early days of 2012, the assembled committee of volunteers began to address the hopes and aspirations to celebrate three-and-a-half decades of community spirit and love of art. To that end, this year's display will showcase 35 original works, selected from submissions by Buckhorn Fine Art Festival alumni. This full integration of festival exhibitors and the showcase display, highlights an important aspect of the Buckhorn Fine Art Festival; that here in this small community in cottage country one finds a collection of exceptional art most often associated with high-profile institutions and large urban centres.

A rich 35 year history, a variety of superb art, a friendly atmosphere in picturesque surroundings



top left, Immature Bald Eagle,  
by Michael Pape

top right, Evening Breeze,  
by Lori Dunn

bottom left, Waiting for Spring,  
by Judy Minor

btom right, Nature's Imperfections,  
by Lori Dunn

and a host of on-site events and amenities has earned the Buckhorn Fine Art Festival the distinction of being listed as one of the top 100 events in the province by Festival Events Ontario. Those who have visited the BFAF will understand just how well deserved this recognition is, and if you have yet to discover this jewel in the heart of the Kawarthas, you could hardly choose a better year to get acquainted. For further information please visit our website below or telephone.

#### Buckhorn Fine Art Festival

Preview Night Gala: Canadian Journeys,  
benefits the Canadian Canoe Museum  
August 17, 2012. 7:00pm to 10:00pm

Show Hours & Dates:  
August 18 - 19, 2012. 10:00am to 5:00pm each day  
[www.buckhornfineart.com](http://www.buckhornfineart.com) or phone 1.877.300.9766





Tranquil Forest, by Chris Morton



Spring Light, by Anna Kutishcheva



Sunlit Cedars, by Chris Morton



Hail to the Hypnotoad, by Alicia Wishart

Red-eyed Leaf Frog, by Ingrid Saaliste, photographer



Fashionista, by Alena Vyborna



Robin, by Patrice Wolput





left, La Pomme, by Brenda Little



top, Attitude, by Emil Varga  
bottom, Fred and Lucky, by Lynda Cunningham

