

 BOTANICAL ARTISTS *of* CANADA

**SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT:
THE BAC EXHIBITION AT TODMORDEN MILLS, FALL 2010**



Juror's First Place Award: *Miltoniopsis* 'Breathless', Pansy Orchid © Kerri Weller

THE BAC 2010 EXHIBITION

A report by Nellie Sue Potter, BAC President and Exhibition Coordinator

The opening reception for BAC's Second Annual Juried Exhibition was a lovely event. Live music filled the air as guests surveyed the fall harvest of botanical artwork. Rita-Anne made sure we had wine (a BAC first) as well as delicious nibbles. There were three parts of the exhibition: the juried show of 40 pieces, the Member's Showcase of 30 pieces and a 31-piece retrospective of Jean Johnson's work.

The show was remarkable in its richness. Our artwork represented the full range of approaches to Botanical Art. We had Sherry Mitchell's incredibly rich colour and photorealistic detail, Linda Le Geyt's delicate traditional studies, Rayma Peterson's lucid watercolour style depicting native plants *in situ*, Valerie Roos Webster's large canvases of gorgeous garden flowers and Ann Love's arrestingly simple wildflowers. We had traditional white backgrounds and dark backgrounds; single specimens, collections, progressions, dissections, and environmental settings. We had watercolour, oil on canvas, graphite, carbon dust and coloured pencil; roots, shoots, flowers and fruits!

Jean Johnson's Retrospective enriched the exhibition in additional dimensions. We saw a progression of Jean's artwork from the Group of Seven-inspired landscapes of the 40's and 50's (oil on canvas) through the modern styles of the 50's-70's (watercolour, charcoal, pen and ink) and finally to the exquisite botanical watercolours of the present. In addition to Jean's artwork, we were delighted with the charming photo of Jean as a child and the beautiful oil portrait of Jean as a young woman, painted by her friend, Jean Townsend.



Peter Ness at the piano adds an extra touch to the festivities



Hannah Levitt and friend admiring the portrait of Jean Johnson painted by Jean Townsend



Jean Johnson with friends

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When the crowd gathered for the awards ceremony, the first order of business was to introduce and thank each member of the 2010 Annual Event Team. The audience expressed appreciation with a warm round of applause. Jean Johnson then spoke, expressing her appreciation for the retrospective and emphasizing the importance of our organization, BAC. Then it was time to hear from the jury; Margit Koritar, Janet Harrison and Peg Graeb.



The Annual Event Team: Mary Rose Woodbridge, Raquel Banyai, Rita-Anne Piquet, Sophie Barbara Phillips, Jessica Hsiung, Nellie Sue Potter, with Liz Tudor behind her and Jean Johnson seated in front.

In our last newsletter, I shared a bit about the jurying process and printed part of the Juror Guideline document, so that you, the artists, could know more about the jurying process. Opening Night provided further opportunities for this. Kathryn Chorney, Professor of Scientific Illustration at Sheridan Institute, represented the jury in a short speech on Botanical Art: its definition, challenges and current international standards. The awards were then announced and certificates given. Afterward, the jurors led a Jurors' Walkthrough, in which they went to each of the award-winning artworks and explained why they had chosen it.



Prof. Kathryn Chorney comments during the juror's walkthrough



Nellie Sue Potter and Prof. Kathryn Chorney announcing the awards

AND THE 2010 JUROR AWARDS ARE:

First place:
(Cover art)

Miltoniopsis 'Breathless', Pansy Orchid © Kerri Weller

Second place:

Trillium erectum, Red trillium © Emily Damstra



Third Place:

Malus domestica, Cortland Apple © Emily Damstra

Honourable Mentions:

Quercus alba, White Oak
Acorn Sprout © Nellie Sue
Potter (below, left)

Pyrus communis, Bartlett
Pears © Kerri Weller
(top right)

Capsicum annuum, Red
Pepper Pair © Nellie Sue
Potter (middle right)

Matteuccia struthiopteris,
Ostrich Fern Fiddleheads
© Ann Love (bottom right)



Throughout the 2-week run of the exhibition, many BAC members served by "sitting the show". Congratulations and thanks to all concerned! It was a wonderful exhibition!

Nellie Sue Potter
President and Exhibition
Coordinator



Jurors Janet Harrison and Margit Koritar with Prof. Kathryn Chorney, Juror-in-training



Emily Damstra and friend, talking with Margit Koritar and Kathryn Chorney

ABOUT OUR JURORS

Peg Graeb is a Botanical Artist who has exhibited in Canada, the United States, and Great Britain. In 1996, she was awarded the Bronze Grenfel Medal by the Royal Horticultural Society, England, for her paintings of Pelargoniums. Her artwork is in the permanent collection of the Hunt Institute, Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh, PA.

Janet Harrison is a biologist at the University of Toronto with a broad based education. She's a volunteer naturalist at the Toronto Zoo and for the North American Native Plant Society (e-newsletter editor, plant rescues and restoration projects) and a steward of ZooWoods, a naturalized area at the U of T.

Margit Koritar has devoted herself full time to painting, teaching and promoting botanical art since 1998. She teaches for the Toronto Board of Education, Toronto Botanical Gardens, the Southampton School of Art, Trent University and the Haliburton School of the Arts. Her paintings are included in the permanent collection of the Hunt Institute for Botanical Documentation at Carnegie Mellon University, Pittsburgh and in private collections in North America and Europe.

Kathryn Chorney (Juror-in-training) is a Professor at Sheridan Institute, where she helped develop the new Applied Degree program in Illustration. Sheridan has the only 4-year full time Illustration program in the country, and it's the only Illustration program that offers a comprehensive Scientific Illustration curriculum, which Kathryn heads.



Raquel Baranyai admiring work by Sophie Barbara Phillips



Nellie Sue Potter with Cecilia & Barry Martin

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An attentive audience listens to Nellie Sue Potter



Emily Damstra receiving second and third place awards from Nellie Sue Potter



Unknown viewer admiring Juror Peg Graeb's artwork Gerry Jenkison and Michael Kainer admire Kerri Weller's pears

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Rita-Anne Piquet and Gill Alkin



BAC Sales Coordinator Val Rabold with Lynda Bryden on the sales desk



Unknown viewers admiring Jean Johnson's work



Guests, Jurors and Artists mingle and enjoy the show

Many thanks to photographer Steven Potter (Nellie Sue's husband) for all the above photos

JEAN JOHNSON WRITES ...

This fall, the Botanical Artists of Canada awarded me a wonderful, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to mount a retrospective of my work as part of the annual members exhibition. The collection of 24 of my works, exhibited together in the great space at Todmorden Mills, from early to current, was an enlightening and rewarding experience - to be able to follow the influences and experiences that inspired my interpretations, and technical achievements, was enlightening.

I began painting landscapes - as artists then aspired to follow the "Group of Seven". From there, I explored nature in all its forms - ultimately concentrating on the wondrous structure of plants - botanical drawing.

Thank you BAC for this wonderful opportunity. It was fun to share my work with the members and I learned from seeing my work in one place. As every artist should have this experience, I support the continuing of a retrospective exhibit with our annual show.



ABOUT JEAN

An enthusiastic gardener and artist since childhood, Jean's first job on graduating from art school was drawing Captain Marvel comics. From 1969-1979 she served as Curator of the Merton Gallery, Toronto, and from 1979-2008 as Coordinator of the Craft Studio at Harbourfront Centre. She was awarded the Order of Canada for her work with the Canadian Craft Community.

Retirement has provided Jean with more time for botanical art and for active participation in BAC, where she serves on the Coordinating Group. She's also a member of the program committees of the William Morris Society of Canada and the Canadian Society of Decorative Arts.

< *Aquilegia*: Columbine © Jean Johnson