

Wow weekend for Art in the Heart!

BRACEBRIDGE, ONT – The first Art in the Heart weekend will shape up to be one of the hottest of the season, both in weather and with the numbers of people who flocked to Muskoka. Armed with bottles of water and umbrellas for shade, eight Art in the Heart artists were set up along Chancery Lane and Manitoba Streets for the entire weekend and received rave reviews from their visitors.

Artist Mary Ann Gonneau, extremely happy with visitor interest in her work, was eager to tell a story about each piece of her art. “I spoke with a group of ladies who were travelling from Scotland - they said they were enjoying the shops in town and thrilled to discover the artist booths for new talent. One of the ladies remarked that she loved the ambiance of the outdoor market, and that after lunch, the group planned on staying in town a while longer so that they wouldn’t miss anything! Overall, this is what we’ve been hearing from our visitors.” She adds, “I am so pleased with the positive remarks I’m hearing about my work. It is really encouraging!”

According to Cheryl Kelley, Director of Economic Development for the Town of Bracebridge, “Each weekend you will see a different variety of talented artists. Some are scheduled to make a number of appearances while others can only be viewed once. It is worth the trip downtown just to see who will be appearing each weekend.”

On Art in the Heart’s second weekend, July 10th & 11th, visitors will see bead work by Henrike Clement, wood carvings by Mark Robinson, jewellery by Gladys Pentland and Peet Ricker, basketry by Jane Braden and pottery by Carmen Somerville.

Using deer hides as her canvas, Henrike Clement spends hours to hand sew tiny coloured glass beads to the surface of each piece. Drawing on her love of nature, she depicts true to form images of birds and wildlife which have a 3-dimensional feel.

Wood carver Mark Robinson says “I enjoy hands-on work, transforming basswood into a realistic wildlife form. I feel a connection to the subject while carving it and I’m able to re-live that special moment while outdoors observing wildlife in its natural habitat.”

Using quality materials in her jewellery, Gladys Pentland creates by ‘spur of the moment’ inspiration with un-coordinated colours, which make a statement. Both she and Peet Ricker are self-taught artists. “Wire wrapping is a slow, methodical process”, says Ricker, pointing to a ‘Bird’s Nest’ pendant, “As each piece progresses, I add stones which speak to me.”

If baskets are your fancy, Jane Braden has them. Jane admits, “I love the rush of excitement that comes with planning a new basket, the peacefulness and the struggle while working on it, and the pleasure of holding a completed basket in my hands. Each is different from the next”.



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Potter Carmen Somerville is happy to be part of Art in the Heart this season and present her functional porcelain ware. Somerville said, "I see my pieces being used at the kitchen table, shared with friends and becoming part of your daily living – they don't like sitting on a shelf!"

Eager to see some fresh new art? Come to Downtown Bracebridge this weekend for Art in the Heart and discover creations by local artists along Manitoba Street and Chancery Lane. With tents and umbrellas, Rain or shine, the artists will be set up Saturdays 9 - 5 and Sundays 10 – 3. Join them while visiting and shopping in Downtown Bracebridge and see what gems you will find. More information on the program is available at www.artintheheartbracebridge.com.

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About Art in the Heart: In 2008, Art in the Heart was launched as a two-weekend pilot with 15 artists and in 2009, 21 artists displayed their works over six weekends. The program offers new artists business training as well as the opportunity to showcase and sell their work in the alleyways and public spaces along Manitoba Street in Bracebridge. In addition to offering an opportunity for new artists, another the goal of the partners, Town of Bracebridge, Muskoka Small Business Centre and Muskoka Arts and Crafts, is to create a new static attraction for Bracebridge. Visitors are encouraged to come downtown to check out the changing artist line-up every weekend. More information on the program is available at www.artintheheartbracebridge.com.