

Lines and forms



Regina
Haggio

OPINION

Visual artists respond to words by Tower Poetry Society

Teresa Seaton, a stained glass artist, has collaborated with poets as a performance artist. So, when she heard about a project combining visual art and poetry, she jumped at the chance to get involved.

Seaton is one of the artists in PoARTry, an exhibition at Carnegie Gallery that celebrates the 70th anniversary of Tower Poetry Society.

Poet-members and various visual artists had worked together before. The poets riffed off a work of art. But this time, Lorraine Roy, a textile artist, came up with the idea of reversing the process. She asked 10 artists. All said yes.

The artists specialize in different techniques and materials. Each chose a poem from 19 composed by Tower Poetry Society members over the past 13 years.

After reading and contemplating "Every Place" by Jennifer Lynn Dunlop, Seaton set to work on a shell-shaped glass piece.

"I was looking for a poem that was full of colour and imagery," Seaton says. "Her poem popped out at me upon first reading.

"The colours were vivid and the objects of the poem, the wind, the birds, the trees, the whales, the leaves and the stars were something that I have been working with already in many of my art pieces. There was a comfort level there, knowing I could somehow bring this piece to life in glass even before I knew what I was going to do."

Seaton's shell, "Everywhere in One Place," is a spiral. Blue and

PoARTry

Where: The Barber Atrium, Carnegie Gallery, Dundas

When: until July 4.

Gallery is closed. More information

at carnegiegallery.org
Phone: 905-627-4265

green glass compartments are interrupted by white circles filled with natural forms such as feathers — one of Seaton's trademarks — a tree, and part of a whale.

"I came up with and discarded many ideas before using the nautilus shell as the vehicle to hold each of the images she described," Seaton says. "It had a very cosmic feel to it which I felt was part of the feel she was going for. 'Every Place' was not just about one personal view or one local scene. It was the combination of many views from many places scattered throughout the world."

In "Moonlight in the Orchard," Ralph Heather, a printmaker, takes a close-cropped view of a solitary apple tree. He was inspired by Jennifer L. Foster's "Wild Apple Tree," a poem of five lines.

"It transported me immediately to a place I knew well," Heather says. "I am drawn to landscapes usually very close to me that tell stories of change and disappearing.

"Not long ago a nearby line of apple trees caught my attention. The trees were unkept and ignored, the fruit had all fallen to the ground and passed their prime. 'How sad,' I thought, took some notes, did a quick sketch, a photo, and moved on. Turns out the house and property had been sold and the following year the tree was gone."

Some apples still cling to the tree, others lie on the ground. Clusters of tiny closely spaced lines for the grass and tree trunk suggest texture. Heather added silver ink to some of the apples.

"I was touched by the optimism of Jennifer's poem offering hope and rebirth. I felt I could bring this land-



COURTESY OF RALPH HEATHER

scape back to life, and the idea of creating a moonlit landscape intrigued me."

Paul Simon, a photographer, was attracted to Stella Mazur Preda's "I Touched the Heavens." She describes "an eagle tailgating on the wings of wind" and "the electric-blue wilderness."

"When I read her poem I immediately thought of my panoramic image that I took of Topaz Lake in the

Killarney area," he says. "I could just imagine eagles soaring around and when I read this poem it described the scene almost perfectly."

Originally scheduled to start June 4, the exhibition will open when COVID-19 restrictions permit (Step 1). Regina Haggio, art historian, public speaker, curator, YouTube video maker and former professor at the University of Canterbury in New Zealand, teaches at the Dundas Valley School of Art.



COURTESY OF TERESA SEATON
Teresa Seaton, Everywhere in One Place, stained glass, \$1,100. Part of PoARTry, an exhibition at the Carnegie Gallery.



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Ralph Heather, Moonlight in the Orchard, woodcut and linoprint, \$550. Part of PoARTry, an exhibition at the Carnegie Gallery.