


THE COUNTY Grapevine MAGAZINE

Prince Edward County's Lifestyle Magazine



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Artists of Prince Edward County *By Melody Wren*

Posted in: Articles

There is an indulgent feeling touring artists' studios, peeking behind the scenes where the artists create. Take the time to amble through their workspace, pondering a purchase, being inspired for your own creative indulgence. Whether you need a blast of colour in your home, or a sculpture in your garden, go see what awaits and be amazed by the abundance of artists on your doorstep!

Tucked away down a quiet backstreet, in a barn, a renovated chicken coop, a straw bale studio or a secluded garden, studios are often hidden gems that advocate regional artists, giving them space to showcase their work, and you the perfect place to while away a spare or rainy afternoon.

You don't have to travel the whole county because the artist community is largely clustered around several centers. Let's start our trip in Bloomfield, an area with Quaker and Loyalist roots, graceful houses, and historic buildings dating back to the Barley Days of the late 19th century.

Bloomfield offers a choice of unique settings for artists. Housed in a rustic, century-old barn, Moontide Studio Gallery offers a true rural experience where encaustic sculptural painter, Andrew Csafodi showcases his magnificent textured bees wax paintings. Using a variety of materials, mysterious embedded landscapes reach out beyond the art board to stir the imagination.

On the same property, the new home of Love Nest Studios is in a renovated chicken coop where fibre artist and photographer Tara Wilkinson lovingly handcrafts sacred and symbolic sculptural art nests from fibres, twigs and found materials. Each nest is unique in character and spirit, and honours and celebrates the many stages of life.

With a passion for working with natural elements, Andrew and Tara share their art and the language of the earth with visitors to their beautiful country farm.

Not far away on the map, but a vast distance artistically, Kirei Samuel's glasswork in the Lalaland Glass Studio take a sometimes whimsical, sometimes serious look at life in the County through the work of a glass artist. Kirei's work is inspiring and imaginative using everyday themes. She is constantly experimenting with new ideas in glass, often creating her own techniques or manipulating traditional ways. Her pieces range from jewellery to plates, bowls and artwork with something for every budget.

Driving towards West Lake, on the edge of Bloomfield, we call on Amelie Koning De Bourbon, known for her "Wearable art on washable silk" including blouses, scarves, shawls, capes, accessories, sarongs, chemises, camisoles, caftans, jackets, shorts. She uses a special French silk dye that is steamed into the silk and becomes washable and colourfast. Various types of silk plus paintings, prints and cards are on display.

A graduate of the Royal Academy of Art in the Netherlands, Amelie is a painter of paintings as well as known for hand-painted silks. She also works in other types of media including oil, watercolour, acrylics, and graphic art.

Located in central Bloomfield, near the Town Hall, is the studio of Bruce Milan, a blacksmith-artist devoted to original and joyous ironwork projects. Bruce says that heating, hammering and twisting hot steel is the backbone of his work along with imagination and design. His work can simplistically be described as hand forged iron work for home and garden, including obelisks, benches, arbors and many custom projects.

Across the street Caroline Shuttle's glass studio is located in a small century old carriage house. Caroline creates glass art ranging from originally designed stained glass panels to gorgeous kiln formed glass bowls and platters.



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Her work is award winning and found in homes and offices from coast to coast as well as many other countries. Her pieces are artistic, vibrantly colourful and functional .

We take a drive up Hwy 33 to Carrying Place, a hamlet of considerable historical importance and home to several artists . Florence Chik-Lau's true to life ceramic animal sculptures reflect her love of animals and is much influenced by the peaceful surroundings in the county. They are pure in form and engaging in personality. Each one is a unique and somewhat childlike character, full of charm, wisdom, warmth and humour. Individually sculpted from slabs of clay, her animal sculptures are hand stained, glazed and fired in an electric kiln.

Staying in Carrying Place, a brief drive away, the artistic mood shifts at the studio of Janna Burford , potter and Jon Hiscock, painter who are partners in life as well as art. Jon is an acrylic painter, and does custom framing, while Janna does functional pottery. Unique to the area, their studio is a straw bale structure, built in 2009 by Janna and Jon with the help of Ali Lam of Banyan Shelters. They plan to expand Owl Farm Studios in 2010 by adding a straw bale house, offering bed and breakfast accommodation and establishing a serious organic garden.

Janna's wheel-thrown pottery is serviceable as well as decorative. Jon creates large monochromatic acrylic portraits. Jon has worked as an archival picture framer for the last ten years and continues to do so at Owl Farm Studios. He considers his work to be " Graphic Realism; a combination of graphic art and realism – a balance between hard lines and pattern, with soft sprays, washes, and loose brush work."

Driving back down Hwy#33, we traveling a short distance to Consecon, and adjacent to Hwy 33, we find an innovative couple sharing a studio. Mags Kandis, textile artist shares a studio with Terry Shewchuk, a photographer. By exploring both traditional and modern techniques in their chosen media, Mags and Terry independently reflect their passion for travel.

Mags' days are fiber filled. Knit, stitched, felted and re-purposed, her heart sings when transforming wool, cashmere, silk, cotton and bamboo into special items for the body and home. An eye-catching, eclectic mix of functional kitsch combined with art, it would be difficult to leave the studio empty handed. With his camera, Terry captures the simple moments of life and generously shares his perspective. His recent fascination with pin-hole cameras, a throwback to the dawn of photography has been an inspiring force and a refreshing departure from the digital age.

Staying in Consecon, we call on Tess Moffat, at Windswept Studio. Tess , a painter works in oil and acrylic, uses her love for color passionately. She is known for her extra large canvases of landscapes and florals, and is a photographer as well. Check out her website for the schedule of weekly classes and weekend workshops. As an avid outdoor enthusiast, gardener and photographer, Tess paints the things that are dear to her heart. Light, air movement, dappled sun and moon beams: nature captured in an impressionistic style. Her art is perfect for those appreciative of the beauty & subtleties of nature. She is fascinated with the play of light on her subjects, and strives to catch luminescence using photography, oil and acrylic paint.

Hwy 33 takes us close to the mysterious Lake on the Mountain, in Glenora , but on the other side of the County, where there is a secluded gallery in a delightful garden setting overlooking Picton Bay housing the work of painter and multi-media artist Andrew Innes . Andrew is best known for his landscapes that echo "the rhythms, patterns and geometry in nature; paintings in which bold shapes and colour distinguish the essential from the merely decorative". Alongside the landscapes he has developed a series of "inside out" works layered in terms of materials and meaning, composites of symbolism and various media, "built up over time."

Close by is Picton, which is Prince Edward County's Town ,incorporated in 1837, and has a rich history. David Boorne creates in a piece of that history, working in a late 1800's county barn that he has renovated . David sculpts in wood, steel and stone. He enjoys creating small interior pieces and large garden sculptures. Most of the art in the gallery is sculpture and six sculptors have pieces exhibited there. There are small to very large pieces made of stone, steel and wood for both outdoors and indoors.

Gathering together artists from all over this colorful area, the main street in Picton has a Cooperative gallery housing more 30 Prince Edward County artists. Paintings, drawings, sculpture, photography, cut glass constructions, ceramics, folk art, jewellery, wrought iron, turned wood, and fibre art on display and available for purchase. There are new shows every 2 months. Call to register for their special preopening salon nights.

Staying in the same neighbourhood, we stop to see Peggy Dewitt who has lived in Prince Edward County most of her adult life , where she has photographed and captured the beauty of the area in all its moods and seasons.



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Email:.....grapevine@revellbisnaire.com

Phone:..... 613.476.7372

Address:..... Revell Bisnaire

Advertising & Publishing Inc.

P.O. Box 253

Bloomfield, ON.

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EVENT CALENDAR

« Aug Oct »

September 2010

M T W T F S S

	1	2	3	4	5	
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

HOME PAGE

Peggy's work is well known and appreciated for its distinctive interpretation. Among the beautiful professional framed photographs, mainly of Prince Edward County, you will find large photos mounted on canvas giving them a painterly look perfect for any décor.

Driving towards West Lake to Wellington, we come to the bright friendly studio of glassblower, and hot glass artist, Mark Armstrong, Armstrong Glassworks. The work Mark produces is clean, simple and elegant with an emphasis on craftsmanship. A wide variety of deep rich colours are used to produce work from paperweights and ornaments to more complex bowls and vases.

Steps from the Main Street, in Wellington, Painter Pamela Carter's work includes local landscapes in oil, executed in a broad contemporary/realist technique, always focusing on the effects of light and ambient atmosphere. She also has an ongoing presence with work in Arts on Main Gallery in Picton and will have a solo show in Sidestreet Gallery in Wellington for the month of September. More recently, she is has been working on large scale abstract pieces, again in oil, presently hanging at The Tall Poppy Café on the Main Street in Wellington.

Whether you pack a number of these galleries into one day or spend weeks exploring them, you are certain to enjoy the beautiful the imagination and skills of the artists set in the beautiful Prince Edward County setting.

Where to find the galleries and studios:

Bloomfield:

Painter and Fibre artist/photographer, Love Nest Studios and Moontide Studio Gallery, 54 Wilson Road, Bloomfield 613-393-1572

Lalaland Glass Studio is located across from Huff's Winery on County Road #1. 2317 County Rd. 1 (Soharie Rd.), Bloomfield, 613-393-1307.

Amelie Koning De Bourbon's studio, 15639 Loyalist Parkway, Bloomfield, 613-399-3022,

Island Forge Studio, 332 Main St. Bloomfield 613-393-2952

Elements Glass Studio, 305 Main St. Bloomfield, KoK 1Go 613-393-5187

Carrying Place:

Florence Chik-Lau's studio, 3760 County Road 3, R.R.#1, Carrying Place KoK 1Lo, 613-394-0670

Owl Farm Studios, 2603 Victoria Rd, Carrying Place 613-919

Consecon:

Mags Kandis, textile artist, Terry Shewchuk, photographer. 284 Partridge Hollow Rd. Consecon 613-392-4131

Windswept Studio., 761 County Road 19(1.5 km from Ameliasburgh)R.R. 1, Consecon KoK 1To 613-848-5150

Glenora:

Round the Bend Studio, 12306B Loyalist Parkway, Glenora 613-476-7505 just minutes outside of Picton on the road to the Glenora Ferry:

Picton:

Ridge Road Sculpture Gallery, 265 Ridge Rd., Picton 613-471-1510

Arts on Main Co-operative Gallery, 223 Main St. Picton, 613-476-5665,

Paper Images Photography 172 Main, Unit 105, Picton, (Elizabeth Street Entrance) 613-476-1099

Wellington:

Armstrong Glassworks, 326 Second Ave. Wellington, KoK 3Lo 613-399-3552,

Pamela Carter studio, 52 West St Wellington 613-399-5241

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