



PRELUDE

This is the first Communiqué since the lockdown of the pandemic of COVID-19 in March 2020. We were about to have our last speakers in the Art Talks series when provincial orders came in precluding any gatherings. Our April Communiqué was therefore cancelled.

This Autumn Communiqué is meant to make a permanent record of how numerous arts groups responded to the pandemic and how we may move forward.

INSIGHTS

Insights is held annually in the Exhibition Hall of the Wellington County Museum. It is now one of the most important and highly regarded amongst all the annual juried art exhibitions in Ontario. In 2020 Insights was to shift from a summer exhibit to the spring. Preparations were being made by the all-volunteer committee when institutions and gatherings were affected by limitations of the pandemic in March.

ELORA COMMUNITY THEATRE A NEW HOME

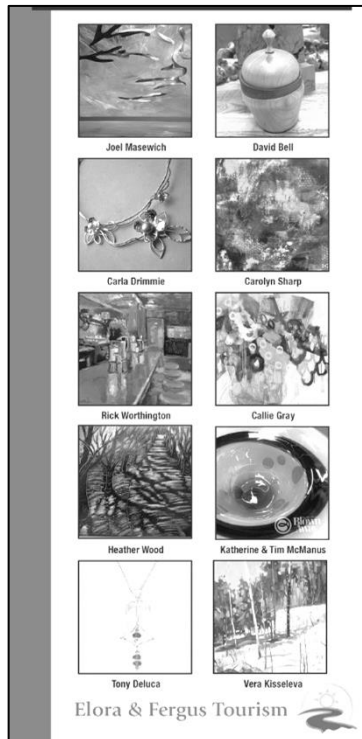
With the recent pandemic, the Elora Community Theatre Group has not been able to present our annual performance series which covers costs and rental for all the Company's rehearsal space and site for set building. A storage facility free of overhead would be needed to keep ECT fluid during these trying times. On Sunday July 26th, members and local volunteers gathered in masks to move all ECT's staging, props, and wardrobe back into Centre Wellington and closer to their stage home at the Fergus Grand Theatre. We are pleased and extremely grateful with Skyline Community Hub's generous offering of 2000 square feet of storage space located at 900 Tower St South in Fergus. The new space will provide a secure setting for all the Company's possessions until productions can start back up again.

INNOVATIVE RESPONSE BY ECT:

- Hosting of on-line script readings throughout the summer.
- five virtual performances which were broadcasted live to YouTube
- Live fundraising events outdoors: Mayor Linton appeared in a Bissel Park production of "Love Letters".
- Trillium "A Broadway Trio Cabaret" has had to postpone two concerts to be performed outside the Elora Centre for the Arts as fundraiser for ECT.

ELORA FERGUS ART IN THE OPEN

September 27-28; October 4-5



Some members of the Elora Fergus Studio Tour have joined together to host an event in lieu of the regular Elora Fergus Studio Tour which has been cancelled this year. Visitors will get the opportunity to view new work by these artists which will be displayed at their residences. Gardens, porches, tents and garages will all be used so physical distancing can take place while enjoying the art. Please bring a mask in case it's needed.

Please note that, although the traditional Studio Tour (visiting artist studios) has been cancelled this year, there are 10 of our Studio Tour artists participating in 'Art in the Open' where you can visit their property and view their work "in the open" over two weekends. Maps will be available in the gallery at ECFTA as well as the Tourism office downtown.

ELORA FERGUS STUDIO TOUR

The Elora Studio Tour has had to make the prudent decision to cancel the annual tour this year. We were particularly concerned about the Gala opening held each fall to kick off the tour, and the visits to studios. The executive met by Zoom early in the lockdown to discuss artists' concerns. We had information from a Nik Nanos poll recently taken that showed 30% of the art-supporting public would not go back into galleries, studios, concert halls etc until there was a vaccine. 23% would go happily anywhere anytime, and the middle group were being cautious. We took a wait and see approach until mid-summer when it was apparent that circumstances had not changed enough and a second wave was in the offing. At that point we decided to cancel the tou

Exhibit at Elora Centre For The Arts

Studio Tour had already booked space at the Elora Centre for the Arts who were happy to announce that the annual Studio Tour Show & Sale will still take place in the gallery featuring a sample of each Studio Tour artist's work. The juried Show & Sale in the gallery will run from **Sept 17 - Oct 11 (Thurs-Sun check hours on the ECFTA website)**. This also marks the official re-opening of the gallery and artisan shop. This show is different from our usual opening as all pieces will be for sale, and there will be no official opening. In addition, smaller works will be for sale in the Artisan Shop. Social distancing protocols will be in effect.

PROFILE



TONY McMANUS- Celtic Guitarist

On a sunny August Saturday in 2020, young Nick Mercouri was busking up a storm in downtown Elora, floating up songs and leaning into his guitar now and again to produce some cool melodic riffs. I was paying attention, because some of Nick's guitar chops came from the teaching and encouragement of the person I was sitting with, Elora's own Tony McManus, a man at the pinnacle of the world scene of Celtic guitar. That day, Tony was masquerading as a cooked lobster, the result of four sun-drenched days of canoe-camping in Algonquin Park. To the soundtrack of Nick's serenade, we drank red lemonade and Tony described for me how life and music brought him to Elora and have kept him here

Tony was a 10-year-old Glaswegian when the world of Celtic music was energized and transformed by the emergence and popularity of legendary bands like *The Chieftains*, *Planxty* and *Bothy Band*, and his soul was captured forever by their music. He tried playing the fiddle just long enough to adapt to fingering with his left hand and bowing with his right, a hard trick for a left-handed person, but the guitar quickly became his passion and his primary instrument.

Despite being left-handed, he has always played right-hand instruments. He taught himself to play guitar by listening to his family's recordings of Celtic traditional music and to the "Athlone" radio channel (RTE - Ireland) his mother so often tuned into, and as he listened and played he became possessed by twin passions: for traditional Celtic music itself, and for playing this music on acoustic guitar as the melody instrument.

Tony also was good at math. He earned a degree in mathematics from the University of Glasgow and a scholarship for advanced study at the University of Exeter. While at Exeter, however, the siren call of a career in music became stronger than his love of numbers and he returned to Glasgow to try his best to succeed as a professional musician. He played every small gig and open-microphone venue that he could, and eventually some established musicians heard him and took notice.

Tony's first career mentor was Dick Gaughan, a popular Scottish singer and guitarist who successfully urged the BBC to record Tony and broadcast his talent; this was a breakthrough. In 1994-97, he toured internationally with Brian McNeill, previously of the *Battlefield Band*, and in 1997-99 with the renowned Scottish traditional fiddler Alasdair Fraser. It was during this time, on a gig in Cape Breton, that Tony met the Canadian woman who eventually led him to a new home in Canada, first in Toronto and then, in 2004, in Elora.

Tony is a self-taught guitarist. He developed his own style of play and approach to arrangements and harmonies in the absence of both the structures and the strictures of formal guitar instruction. He uses both finger picking and flat-picking techniques and employs a range of standard and non-standard guitar tunings and harmonies to achieve the colours and moods of the music he wants to play. He also appreciates and incorporates elements of music of many kinds outside of the strictly Celtic genre, from Bach to Bluegrass. The result is a unique style and sound that is complex, rich and much in demand. Several other guitarists have informed and influenced Tony's playing along the way. Among them are his early mentor Dick Gaughan, *Ossian* guitarist Tony Cuffe ("He was my Jimmy Hendrix."), Irish guitarist Arty McGlynn, and the Breton guitarist Soïg Siberil.

Tony's musical career coincided with a continuous series of technical and economic upheavals in how music is made and how musicians are paid. He experienced the tail end of the age of vinyl and then the digital revolution with its sequential waves of CDs, DVDs, personal computers, smart phones and the on-line streaming of everything. Some of this has been a boon to music and some, like popular streaming services, have made it hard for musicians to earn a living. On Tony's website, you can find 10 CDs of music, 7 teaching DVDs, and a long list of music collaborations, including with Paul Reed Smith (PRS) Guitars. However, what counts most for Tony in his professional life are his live performances and his students.

Live performances, solo and with fellow musicians, are thrilling every time and allow Tony to share his twin musical passions with real people in real time all over the world. And with his students too, he is sharing with real people, wonderful people, characters of every sort, all over the world, connected miraculously by the Internet. Because he never had guitar teachers himself, Tony found teaching to be challenging at first. His students came to his rescue, however and Tony learned from them what worked well and what did not; over time they have provided him with an unmatched personal master class in guitar instruction that seems to have no end. Tony has a recurring dream that, one day, all his guitar students will gather together with him in one place and just celebrate the joy they have found in each other.

For the past decade, Tony has held his signature annual guitar workshop, his Guitar Summit, hosted at The Drew House in Elora each fall. This is a many-layered event. At its centre are Tony and 15 or so eager guitarists gathered to improve their playing and to learn from their instructors and each other. Each year Tony invites at least one other well-known guitarist to teach and play; recently it is British guitarist Chris Newman and his Irish harp-playing partner Máire Ní Chathasaigh. A guitar-making luthier usually participates also, to explain the key points about instrument construction and the important variables when choosing an instrument. Importantly, the workshop always includes a public concert so the whole community can enjoy the music that inspires the players to gather in Elora.

Tony knew no one in Elora when he arrived in 2004, but he soon found he was no longer in an impersonal big city. When he first cautiously went down to the Dalby House to see if he might be allowed to join in the regular Friday Celtic session, he was welcomed with open arms by people who at first had no idea who he was. In Elora, he met friendly people from every walk of life and found a cosmopolitan community that also was firmly rooted in place. It has been the right place to become a father and watch his son grow. Tony is rooted in Elora now and, since arrival, has never been tempted to live anywhere else. Check him out at <https://www.tonymcmanus.com/>

Interview by: Ted Leighton

PUPPETS ELORA

The puppets were deeply sorry to have missed an opportunity to shine in a display in Stratford in the summer of 2020. Their Puppet Fest was cancelled due to COVID. No performances will be given at Christkindl Market this December 2020 because it is not safe.

Schools and libraries which have been our traditional venues have been closed. Puppets Elora has maintained its storage home for the puppets at the Elora Centre for the Arts.

As for the puppeteers, they have remained healthy and busy with family and other parts of their lives but do look forward to resuming puppeteering when it is safe and possible. There are amazing new on-line courses which professional colleagues from other countries now offer because they can't meet face to face. Through our Facebook page we are connecting our puppet friends to these resources.

Update on Name revision of our LOCAL ARTS COUNCIL?

GALLERY CONCERT SERIES

Due to the ongoing situation with Covid-19, much of the world of music has been put on hold. The current requirements for mounting an indoor concert with a live audience present numerous obstacles. The stringed instruments may be played provided the performers are masked, brass instruments may be played, if the instrument itself is "masked" and the woodwind instruments and singers are prohibited completely. In addition, the performers must be socially distanced within the group, as well as from the audience. The final hurdle is the audience size. In the case of the venue for the Gallery Concerts, the total number of persons allowed is currently 22, including the performers.

This of course makes any series of concerts unviable, as costs would remain the same while ticket sales would be limited. But the welfare of all involved is important as well. How many would be willing to attend a concert when even many performers are reticent to take the risk?

The current thought is to suspend any concerts until there is sufficient improvement in the medical situation that there is confidence in social contact. In the interim we will be examining the options. This could include one or two small concerts in the spring, the use of alternate avenues with more space also in the spring, or possibly the use of electronic media.

Please visit us at our new website to view updates on any future developments.

We hope this situation improves sooner than later. To our loyal performers and audience members, be well. We look forward to getting underway again in the future. <https://www.galleryconcertseries.ca> or view through EFAC website.

ELORA POETRY CENTRE AND GALLERY

We at the Elora Poetry Centre & Gallery have been welcoming people to listen to poets and musicians for almost ten years. It has been an adventure, at first not knowing if anyone would be interested and then being blown away by the support we received from all of you. For this we have to thank the people who have come here so often and offered themselves not only as audience, but prepared food and helped with funding when we were in need. This spring was a very sad time for many arts groups, including *croc E Moses* with whom we co-signed for the Calgary Concert which of course had to be cancelled, and at this point we realized that we would have to do something for all our Friends in return for their efforts.

So far we have sent out three newsletters in which specific poets from different parts of Canada and the US have been featured, and a fourth newsletter is due by mid-September. We have tried to round up information from other sources which would provide interest to others, and so far have received very good feedback.

We hope the feedback will keep coming in and that soon we will all be able to meet again, in person, to share our usual food and wine. Until then we will try to keep the newsletter going for anyone who wants to read a copy or give one to a friend. To request the online or hard copy Newsletter write: Beaverhouse@bell.net.

THE EFAC ART -TALK SERIES

It was with real regret that the March 2020 Art Talk had to be cancelled. It will be rescheduled as soon as larger gatherings are possible. This Art Talk will feature participants from the Elora Community Theatre: Gary Bryant, Julie Wheeler Bryant and Deb Stanson. We anticipated many amusing stories of life backstage.

AGM THE ELORA FERGUS ARTS COUNCIL

The Board met on September 15, 2020

At the meeting of the Board, there was discussion of how to deal with the inability to hold an AGM. It was decided to distribute the financial statements to the membership along with this Autumn Communiqué. Further investigation is being undertaken to determine if we can do an online vote for the AGM.

In the interim, the **EFAC Financial Statement** is enclosed as an insert with this Communiqué for membership mailings. We will be investigating possible online voting or Zoom meeting for an AGM.

Guidelines have been set by the Province for NGO Annual General Meetings during this time of Covid19.

NAME CHANGE TASK FORCE

Work has continued on this initiative. Research and documentation is still necessary to go forward, and we search for a new logo for EFAC as well.

ARTS ROUND TABLE

EFAC will soon launch a survey which will be sent to all arts groups in Centre Wellington. This will replace our physical round table and be followed with the virtual roundtable at a later date.

ADMINISTRATIVE NEWS

Our thanks to **John McGill** who has been a valued contributing board member of the Arts Council for several years and who is retiring from the Board. He has been active in many of our undertakings. John's photography will be displayed in the window of Greg Oakes' Office in Elora for the month of October.

All good wishes for her retirement to **Janice Hindley**, Administrator of Wellington Place. The Gallery Music Group and Insights, in particular, have enjoyed working with Janice and acknowledge her longstanding support.

We look forward to working with the new Director, **Jana Burns**. Jana has led the County Economic Development division since 2012, working with the member municipalities, local stakeholders and business community. She holds a Master's degree from the London School of Economics and a Bachelor's degree from the University of Waterloo.

To follow the activities of EFAC's many member and associate groups, and to visit previous Profiles of artists, please visit our webpage:

www.eloraartscouncil.ca

Communiqué is published quarterly and has been in constant production for 35 years. It provides information & an archival record of EFAC's activities.

Next issue: January 2021 deadline for submissions, January 05, 2021.

EAC Members may include notices of events in our calendar sent by e-mail if space is available.

Editors: Beverley Cairns.

e-mail: eloraartscouncil@gmail.com

website: www.eloraartscouncil.ca



Memberships by month you join, with reminders for renewal.

Application/Renewal

Please print. Make cheques payable to:

The Elora Arts Council,
P.O. Box 3092
Elora, ON., N0B 1S0

- Artists (\$20)
- Individual Supporters (\$20)
- Family Supporters (\$30)
- Students (\$10) Organizations (\$30)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel. No: _____

E-mail: _____

I am interested in working as a volunteer at EAC events, or being part of a committee.

These are my particular interests:

ELORA ARTS COUNCIL EXECUTIVE May 2019-April 2020

Chair: Barbara Lee
Vice Chair: Mary Anne Dalkowski
Secretary: Susan Thorning
Assistant Secretary: Louise Dench Beney
Treasurer: Linda Lane
Membership: Linda Lane,
Beverly Cairns, Rachel Lauzon
Projects: Dorothy Collin, Melanie Morel.

Meetings of the Volunteer Board usually take place the first Wednesday of each month at 7.30 p.m. Members are encouraged to come to meetings.
For location, please phone 619 846-0556.

<http://www.eloraartscouncil.ca>

Bring us your project proposals

BE ASSURED YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME

ART IN PUBLIC PLACES

Review since March 2020

Curated by the Elora Arts Council volunteer committee

In the Township Council Chamber

During the Spring months the photography of Mark Heine hung in the Council Chamber. All municipal buildings closed as of March and the show was removed.

The next show will feature three batiks by Salem artist Linda Risacher Copp. Of particular interest is a very large and beautiful batik of the Elora Mill. There will also be four historical watercolours of Elora and Fergus by Barbara Cook, including one of the old walking bridge in Elora. Inquiries for sale of any of the pieces exhibited should be directed to the Arts Council.

In the Fergus Sportsplex Boardrooms

At present the Board Rooms are not open at the Sportsplex.

In the Lobby of Groves Memorial Community Hospital

The new hospital has continued to provide space for rotating shows of art, which is greatly valued by staff, patients, and visitors. However, for six months or so the allotted space will be given to directions to areas of the new hospital. Shows curated by the Arts Council will resume, perhaps in the new year.

Our first exhibitor will be Gail Brown.

In the Window of Greg Oakes office Monthly Shows

In the summer months, the ceramics of Dorothy Colin were exhibited, complemented by weavings of Melanie Morel.

The window for August- mid- September featured the Stain Glass artist Melanie Schaffer.

A coming exhibit will be the photography of John McGill in October.

ELORA SCULPTURE PROJECT-2020

Like most everything in 2020 the Elora Sculpture Project season has had some twists and turns. As an outdoor exhibition with good distance between installations we were confident the exhibition could go ahead. With the perseverance of our contributing artists and our local sponsors we kept moving forward. The usual mid-May launch and opening reception had to be cancelled and replaced with a soft opening over a period of weeks. The replacement of the Badley bridge in Elora also led to the relocation of one site. The sculptures will be exhibited till November.

We are pleased to report now that all 18 sites; 13 in Elora and 5 in Fergus are hosting new sculptures for your enjoyment. Participants include many returning artists and some new entrants from across Ontario and as far away as Alberta. Although we could not hold our annual Artist Walk, Wightman Community TV produced a show in August that highlights installations along with artist interviews and commentary. It has aired twice and may be shown again.

Thanks to everyone behind the scenes who made this year's exhibition happen in these trying times: Jim Reed, Heather Wood, Paul Hannigan, Kirk McIlwain, Rick Beasley, Kent Smith, David Cross and Jane Bowen, and all our sponsors.

5th ELORA PLEIN AIR PAINTING FESTIVAL

The increased publicity and planning for this yearly four-day festival by a large and enthusiastic committee which normally takes place on the long weekend in May, was regretfully cancelled because of the pandemic.

Artist and teacher Mary Anna Goetz was to be Judge for the many prizes offered participants, and offered to demonstrate the process and technique of painting 'en plein air'. We hope by May of 2021 this project can go forward.