

Call for First Nations artists

THE North Vancouver Community Arts Council is looking for First Nations artists to participate in *Pushing Boundaries*, an exhibition that will showcase contemporary First Nations artwork.

The exhibition will be held at the CityScape Community Art Space in North Vancouver from June 3 to July 2, and will be part of a tour organized for National Aboriginal Day on June 21.

For the month-long exhibition, the arts council is seeking artists who can create "contemporary work with traditional association using non-traditional mediums or traditional mediums with a contemporary edge," according to a media release.

Any artists interested in participating are asked to submit: up to six printed photos, in JPEG or PDF format, of work to be juried; a list of work including the artist's name, title, medium, size and price; a resume, biography and statement from the artist. Email submissions are not permitted.

Artists who are members of the North Vancouver Community Arts Council will be charged a \$10 jury fee; non-members will be charged \$15.

Deadline for submissions is Saturday, April 30 at 4 p.m. For more information, please call the arts council at 604-988-6844 or email exhibitions@nvartscouncil.ca.

—Niamh Scallan



NEWS photo Paul McGrath

Fit to print

J. Carl Heywood celebrates the launch of his print, *Remembering Paris*, the latest addition to the Artists for Kids Gallery, at a reception held last month. Heywood is known for his strong architectural style.





PRINTSHOPS

When I was a young print artist in my thirties I was struck by the fact that the most successful printmakers often knew little or nothing about print processes. They were often painters whose prints were produced in professional studios by master printers. This seemed unfair, somehow, that the artist did not do everything him/herself. But the fact remained that even I, the "true" printmaker found these collaborative works much more exploratory and interesting. The "artist" was urging on the "artisans" to greater works.

I decided that I could continue to grumble about unfair advantages, or I could try working with master printers myself. This was the start of many happy sessions of work in many printshops in many countries with many fine printers who knew far more than I did about some aspect of printmaking.

PRINTSHOPS – THEIR IMPORTANCE, THEIR LIMITATIONS, AND THEIR THRILLS.

There are several categories of printshops. My long and happy life as a printmaker has taken me to many of them.

1. Professional printshops do custom printing for artist. They must make a profit to stay in business. Sometimes the artist is invited to work in these studios, but usually anyone who can afford the costs is very welcome. Sometimes these printing costs are paid by a publisher, sometimes by a grant, sometimes by the artist.

In my case the costs were always paid by the artist. I have worked in shops of this sort in Tokyo (Akagawa), in Toronto (Press Werk), in Germany (Katelhon), in Quebec city (Pierre Auger et Luc Nadeau), and London (Advanced Graphics)

The great advantage to working in this kind of printshop is that highly skilled printers make it their pride to realize anything the artist can conceive. All technical limitations are removed from the path of imagination. The artist can fly very high without being limited by his/her own lack of competence. I have often worked closely with these master printers, serving a sort of apprenticeship during the editioning of my works, so that I can push further next time.

2. Another kind of printshop is the commercial printing company with an interest in art. Sometimes these businesses make facilities available to artists for a price (but not for a profit) because they love their profession and enjoy the stimulation of an artistic challenge.

I have worked in shops of this sort in Toronto (Mintmark Press), Paris (Graficaza) and Montréal (Bellemare). The artist benefits from the technical expertise, the regulated workday, and advanced facilities but pays a price in noise levels and constraints on availability of presses because of other jobs that are paying the bills for the company.

3. Another kind of printshop is the school print department. Universities and art schools are often well equipped with presses and space and occasionally with technical support. Sometimes artists are invited (or invite them-

selves) to work in these premises. I have worked in this situation at the university of Alberta. There can be a good exchange of energies between the artist and students in such situations.

4. The fourth kind of printshop is the artists collective. These shops are usually inexpensive, convivial, well equipped substitutes for a personal studio. They are often funded with grants and fundraising schemes.

Canada (and Scotland) are well provided with this kind of printshop, and they are found in many other parts of the world. They are good places to meet and work with other print artists, and to share ideas and information. I have worked in such shops in Toronto (Open Studio), Aberdeen (Peacock) and Quebec City (Engramme) and have enjoyed the friendly atmosphere, visual stimulation and exchange of ideas.

These collective printshop are vitally important links in the development of new print artists who can find in them the community and the equipment that is so sorely needed when school ends.

Often Artists participate in these collectives in the early stages of their career, while building a portfolio and establishing contacts in the art world. They then move on when they can afford studios of their own.

PRINTSHOPS AND STYLES

When ever a group of artists work together, a pool of ideas seems to form and a style develops. Printshops often favour certain equipment and approaches and develop a common " look ". This can be a great benefit to artists at a certain point in their career and a great hindrance at other points. Examples of this would be Atelier 17, Atelier Circulaire, University of Alberta, and Crown Point Press. Print artists can benefit by seeking an atelier that will enhance their own vision, but must be able to self-diagnose when the studio begins to limit their growth...

There is nothing more daunting -or more bracing- for a print artist than to go to work in an unfamiliar printshop. The comfortable support system of shared ideas and processes vanishes. It then becomes a question of " adapt or die ", as an artist. This sort of shock/stimulus/challenge is what makes us move from one shop to another in an attempt to rise above our own limitations, and respond to new challenges.

I have found great excitement, great anxiety, and great inspiration in working in unfamiliar printshops. The spirit is different in each, as well as the basis of thinking and the physical approach to image making. It is impossible to do the same work in different workshops - and it is difficult to know ahead of time what you might do. In fact the secret is to go to work in a shop twice. The first time you prepare yourself for what you think you can do there. The second time you know what they are good at, and how you can make best use of it - what new part of yourself can emerge.

This is a very thrilling experience for a printmaker. I would recommended it to anyone...

Carl Heywood