

CANVASS

Volume XI, No. 7, November 2008

<http://www.mennonitechurch.ca/programs/gallery/>

hours: Mon. – Fri., 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM; Sat., noon – 5 PM

an institution of Mennonite Church Canada

located on the campus of Canadian Mennonite University

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS: The MHC Gallery's budget is met primarily through private, tax deductible donations. Please, help keep the gallery alive and growing. Make cheques payable to: MHC Gallery. Mail to: MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. Credit card donations, contact Connie Wiebe at cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca.

(204) 888 6781; Ray Dirks, curator, rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca



Odia Reimer

Standing: A Journey of Resilience

juried exhibition sponsored by the Victims' Voice program of Mennonite Central Committee

+

Through the Flowers by Edith Krause

OPENING:

Friday, November 7, 7:30PM

November 7 – December 10

from the gallery

While unrelated, both of these exhibitions deal with the lives and experiences of victims.

When Wilma Derksen approached me to ask if the gallery would be interested in an exhibition by and about those victimized by violence I immediately said yes. There is bravery, dignity, courage, rawness and healing in this art. And, even, some lightheartedness. Healing comes in many ways.

Wilma's own family is involved, two as artists, one as organizer. Their art and involvement, passion and conviction come out of the ultimate trauma, the violent loss of a daughter and sister. Wilma is more than the instigator of this exhibition, she is a model of grace and compassion.

Standing: A Journey of Resilience Statement

by Wilma Derksen

People can change dramatically in positive ways as a result of encountering devastating events. This personal development occurs in the context of suffering and significant emotional struggle. It emerges from the struggle to cope, not the trauma itself. And yet, the trauma is the catalyst, the seismic event that shakes the foundations of one's life and demands a response.

Victims' Voice program of the Mennonite Central Committee has brought together artists who have created art in response to a traumatic victimization. The art has been created out of a healing process after a serious crime or work that comes out of that horrific experience. This exhibition is about art that expresses the resilience of human nature.

The Artists:

Alicia Buhler, a student working towards her Master of Divinity at Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, is an avid scrapbooker who feels that it is important to tell one's story to heal. Resilience is expressed in story photography dedicated to help women leave abuse.


Sharon Cornelsen, a Winnipeg artist, uses art to express emotionally and visually the spiritual journey and human experience. Her current pieces were used to put "grace and forgiveness into action and let go of any resentment" she had toward the loved-one who oppressed and almost crushed her.

Cliff Derksen, a Winnipeg sculptor who has been inspired by Jordan Van Sewell, portrays resilience through three dimensional cartoon sculptures. He believes that a balance of stamina together with a sense of humor and the ability to laugh is necessary to survive and remain resilient. He invites everyone "to just smile with him."

Heidi Friesen is a Winnipeg photographer who likes to capture beauty in the simple everyday. This past year a quote from Freeman Patterson has been her inspiration. "Beauty never requires justification, because it balances the ugliness, hurt, and sorrow that are present in every human life to a greater or lesser degree... beauty is invariably a positive factor, an enriching presence, a healing influence."

Carol-Anne Grenier from Ottawa, who advocates for victims of domestic abuse and sexism, strives to create unique glass jewelry,

functional and architectural art work. "I constantly push myself to be more creative with each new piece..."

Joanie Peters, a Winnipeg photographer, found new energy by using a different medium — video — to further express her goal. She's inspired by Elizabeth 

Proposals?

Artists, please, submit your proposals to us! The gallery hosts exhibits in approximate two month blocks throughout the year.

Mailing list

To receive **CANVASS**, invitations to all exhibitions and other gallery updates contact Connie Wiebe, cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca.

Contact

Ray Dirks, MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB Canada R3P 0M4. Ph: (204) 888-6781. E-mail: rdirks@mennonitechurch.ca

Thanks

Bill and Margaret Fast, Herb and Erna Buller, Frank and Agnes DeFehr, The Winnipeg Foundation, Friesens, Herb Peters and Donna Peters-Small, Ted and Mary Paetkau, other donors

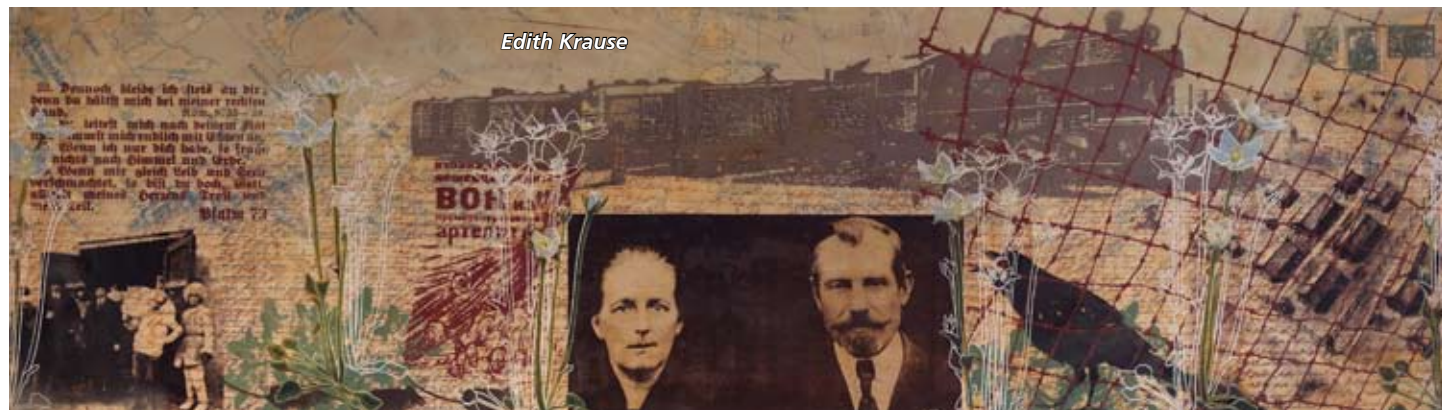
Through the Flowers Statement

by Edith Krause

From 1928 until 1933, during the first of Stalin's Five Year Plans to develop the infrastructure of the Soviet Union, millions of farm families had their homes and land expropriated. Because they were exemplary farmers, the Mennonite people were prime targets of this campaign. The documentary *Through the Red Gate* tells the story of how Franz and Liese Bergen and their children managed to escape and immigrate to Canada. While it was illegal and virtually impossible for those in the Soviet Union to communicate with family outside the country, the Bergens received 463 letters from family members who were still living through the nightmare. Much of the text of the letters is told "through the flowers", in veiled language, to protect the writers and recipients.

Based on these letters, the art exhibit *Through the Flowers* attempts to reflect the experiences of those who were left behind.

Edith Krause is a printmaker from Langley, British Columbia. Through screen-print, photo-intaglio and photo-lithography, she has incorporated archival photographs into collaged portraits of individuals and families who lived through this bleak time in Mennonite history.



Next

Faces of Courage III, portraits of people with breast cancer, opens on the 81st birthday of artist Betty Smith, Tuesday, December 16, 7:30PM.

Standing continued

Barrett Browning's words, "With stammering lips and insufficient sounds, I strive and struggle to deliver right the music of my nature."

Odia Reimer graduated from the University of Manitoba's Bachelor of Fine Arts Program, where she majored in ceramics but loves all two handed art forms. Her art is emotionally charged, dealing with issues of spirituality, loss, and disappointment. Her current installation art explores these issues, allowing the viewer to interact with form and texture.

Grace Rempel, a Winnipeg artist, was influenced by the Ugandan civil war in the 1980's to address violence. Using charcoal and pencil, she captures human images, mingled with those of their predators, representing the chaos, fear and pain created by violence.

Thanks to Wilma Derksen, Odia Reimer.

CANVASs

also

A series of four artworks by BC artist Hilda Janzen Goertzen are also featured. They depict her response to the horrors of Stalinist Russia as experienced by Mennonites, including her own family.

Through the Red Gate

Join filmmaker Ruth Derksen Siemens for the Winnipeg premier of *Through the Red Gate* at Springfield Mennonite Church, 570 Sharon Bay, Sunday, November 9 at 7:00PM. Ruth will also introduce the book *Remember Us: Letters from Stalin's Gulag (1930-1937)*.

Peter Bergen was just seven years old when he and his family narrowly escaped the Russian Gulag and an almost certain death. The rest of his relatives were not so fortunate. During Stalin's reign (1922-53), thousands of Mennonites were among the 45-60 million people who perished through enforced exile, execution, famine, and resulting disease.

Now, in a story that crosses continents and binds together generations, a rare and long forgotten cache of letters reveals the terrifying details of his family's fate.

Give so the gallery can live

Thanks to all who attended the gallery's annual fundraiser. With all the economic turmoil and uncertainty, we did not know what to expect. We did receive less than hoped for but many did give generously. We are extra thankful for that in these uncertain times. If you still plan to give, we pass along an extra measure of thanks to you, as well. To break even this year we still need some

substantial donations and all the smaller ones, too. If you value the work of the gallery — both within its walls and in the community — we ask that you consider a donation this year.

To give, drop off or send us a cheque made out to the MHC Gallery. The address is MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4. Call Connie Wiebe at 888 6781 to donate by credit card.

Please, consider a donation

I'd like to support the MHC Gallery (PLEASE PRINT)

name _____

address _____

_____ postal code _____

phone number (____) _____ amount _____

Make your cheque payable to the MHC Gallery

Mail to: MHC Gallery, 600 Shaftesbury Blvd., Winnipeg, MB R3P 0M4

contact Connie Wiebe at (204) 888 6781 or cwiebe@mennonitechurch.ca to donate by credit card

DONATIONS ARE TAX DEDUCTIBLE

art from *Through the Flowers* by Edith Krause



from *Standing: A Journey of Resilience*

detail from
*Swimming
against the
current* by
Carol-Anne
Grenier



by Odia Reimer

from series by Hilda Janzen Goertzen

