

Rick Brereton – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #33

winnipegriverarts.com/rick-brereton-focus-on-local-artists-issue-33/

Bill C

January 2015

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features woodcarver Rick Brereton from Lac du Bonnet.

Brereton's work is known throughout western Canada and the north central USA. His highly skilled knowledge and passion for his craft has him much in demand on both sides of the border. As an accomplished carver, he has won many best of show awards. He is also an experienced and knowledgeable competition judge and a sought-after instructor, teaching woodcarving throughout the year in Canada and the USA.



Rick Brereton

Brereton grew up on a farm near Birtle, Manitoba where he developed a love of wildlife and a passion for working with wood from his father, a carpenter and farmer. During a thirty-five year career with the Winnipeg Police Service, he honed his skills of working with people and developed a strong background as a qualified hands-on instructor.

He joined a woodcarving club twenty-three years ago and has continued developing his skills and sharing them with others. Brereton and his wife Cathie, also an accomplished woodcarver and crafter, have spent a great deal of time promoting their passion for woodcarving, and working for the woodcarving community to help it grow and develop.

Brereton has worked with many of the world's top woodcarving instructors, but credits his early local mentors for the true inspiration for his work. In the early years, he fell in love with relief style woodcarving, which led to many commissioned carvings, including a large buffalo relief at the University of Manitoba and a series of large historical panels in Minnesota.

Retirement brought the Rick and Cathie Brereton to their lakeside home in Coppermine. Their woodcarving shop, on the second floor of their garage, is the weekly gathering place for over twenty-five people learning the craft. Brereton believes that encouraging new carvers to share in his passion provides him a wealth of satisfaction.

The accompanying picture shows him with what he considers one of his best relief carvings, The Wizard, which has earned him a number of Best of Show awards.

Bernice Phillips – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #34

winnipegriverarts.com/bernice-phillips-focus-on-local-artists-issue-34/

Bill C

February 2015

This month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features Bernice Phillips, a visual artist from Powerview-Pine Falls. Although she has lived there for thirty-nine years, she still feels inspired by the beauty of the river and surrounding forests.

Phillips grew up in Rivers, Manitoba, but moved to the area in grade ten. After marriage, she lived in Toronto for two years, but returned to be closer to her family and nature.

Phillips paints mostly with acrylics, on various surfaces, and likes to decorate useable objects such as glass blocks and furniture. She also learned how to use water colours and airbrush, and paints murals on walls of all kinds.

Like many artists, she took up painting after attending a workshop. Since then, she has taken many classes and gone on to instruct other artists. She notes two workshops which especially influenced her, one with Nancy Lou Ateah from Victoria Beach, and another with Roberta Laliberte from Powerview-Pine Falls.

Phillips likes experimenting, and reads to learn more about brushes, paint and other products. She says, “I look at growing things, to see how they’re put together. I try to replicate that.”

In 2013, she exhibited her work at Eastman Judged Art Exhibition in Pinawa. During March, her paintings will be displayed at Gwen Fox Gallery in Selkirk, which will also showcase the art of her sister, Emily De Groot. Phillips used to sell her work, along with forty other artists, at the Artists’ Coop near Grand Beach. She also served on the Winnipeg River Arts Council board.



Bernice Phillips



For twelve years, Phillips sold local artists' work in her store, "Through the Arbour," in downtown Pine Falls. This store also carried coffee, chocolates, handicrafts, health foods and herbal products. Her husband, Jon Phillips, does massage therapy in a room in the back and proudly shows visitors examples of his wife's art.

Recently, Phillips downsized her business but the store is still open and the massage therapy continues. She says, "I am grateful; my family has always supported my art. It means a lot to me."

Edgewater Recreation – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #35

winnipegriverarts.com/edgewater-recreation-commission-focus-on-local-artists-issue-34/

Bill C

March 2015

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features the Edgewater Recreation Commission, with its goal of providing quality recreation and opportunities that encourage and promote healthy living.

Although it is located in Powerview-Pine Falls, it also serves people from adjoining regions: the Beaches, Great Falls, Stead, St. Georges, and other areas on the east side of Lake Winnipeg. In fact, forty to fifty per cent of participants in their programs come from outside the town.

Edgewater Recreation Commission started out on July 30, 1981, as the Pine Falls Recreation Association. The present Recreation Director, Lori Vialoux, has worked for the commission since 2007.

She lives in Traverse Bay, and her family ran the Birchwood Motor Hotel for twenty years, so she knows the people and the area well.

Edgewater Recreation joined WRAC because many of their programs include arts activities. They hold PHAT Camp for kids, with dance, theatre, and creative movement. At various times, they've offered guitar and fiddle lessons. In the annual Fall Fest, they hold photography and scarecrow decorating contests. In summer day camps, the kids make lots of art, mixed in with exercise and competitions.

Edgewater also offered a special program called "Creative Families," in partnership with Wings of Power. Every week, adults and kids of various ages got together to work on a specific art project. One week, they took water colour lessons from Victoria Beach artist, Nancy Lou Ateah. In other sessions, they created tie-dye tee-shirts, beaded necklaces, soap, and lamps.

Vialoux also helped organize the Beaches Drama Club. Actors of all ages would meet at the Victoria Beach Sports Club, start rehearsing in January, and put on productions in June. Vialoux says, "This group is still interested in performing, but we haven't got the energy to



Recreation Director – Lori Vialoux

put on a show right now.”

In 2014, Edgewater Recreation organized “Fall in Love with Art.” For four weeks in the fall, students met in Powerview School art room, after regular classes ended, and worked with visual artist, Roberta Laliberte, creating mini-collages (“Junk Journaling”) in old books. For another four weeks, they worked with Nancy Lou Ateah.

For 2015 Winter Fest, Vialoux hired a professional snow sculptor to give lessons. He carved a giant snow horse for the festival and taught kids how to make snow sculptures.

In addition to arts, Edgewater coordinates and promotes local sports, recreation, and fitness programs. Examples of their unique programs include: dog obedience, Kids in the Kitchen, Earth Day activities, Growing Your Own Mushrooms, science camps. They distribute a wide-ranging annual publication listing dozens of activities, events, and groups.

Please note an upcoming opportunity to make art with Edgewater – on April 18, Nancy Lou Ateah will be teaching a water colour workshop from 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The venue will be announced at a later date.

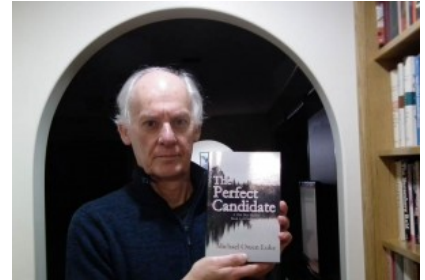
Michael Luke – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #36

winnipegiverarts.com/michael-uke-focus-on-local-artists-issue-36/

Bill C

April 2015

For this month, Winnipeg River Arts Council features Pinawa writer Michael Luke. Born in England, he came to Canada at age ten and grew up in the Montreal area, on the banks of the beautiful Richelieu River. After graduating with a B.Sc. he did research at a major pharmaceutical company in Montreal for several years before moving with his wife, Anna, and newborn son to Pinawa to take up a job with AECL. Apart from two years in Victoria and two years in Deep River, Ontario, Luke has lived in Pinawa ever since.



Author Michael Luke

He says, “Writing for me has been an ever-present hobby, something I’ve enjoyed for as long as I can remember. I can recall as a teenager buying thirty-five cent paperbacks and thinking to myself that one day I’d like to see my name on a book.”

It took over fifty years, and retirement, but Luke finally made it with his first novel, *The Perfect Candidate*, a self-published murder mystery set in and around the Whiteshell area. The most gratifying aspect of getting into print has been the reaction of local readers who have told Luke how much they enjoyed his novel.

The Perfect Candidate is the first book of a trilogy. Book 2, *The Morning Light Conspiracy*, will be available in June. For both books, the many moods of the Winnipeg River, at times scintillating and joyful, at others dark and moody, have been both an inspiration and an effective backdrop. Luke is keen to encourage others with a story to tell or a history to recount to get into print or to go the eBook route. These days, for anyone interested, a range of helpful tools can assist in producing this kind of self-expression.

Luke also serves as chair of Pinawa Library Board and would like to see rural libraries take a bigger role in facilitating authorship.

Cathie Brereton – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #37

winnipegiverarts.com/cathie-brereton-focus-on-local-artists-issue-37/

Bill C

May 2015

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features Cathie Brereton, a wood carver from RM of Lac du Bonnet. Born and raised in Ottawa, she's been coming out to the family cottage since 1990. After retirement from Winnipeg careers in 1994, Cathie and husband Rick became year-round residents.

When Cathie saw how much Rick enjoyed carving, she tried it. In Winnipeg, they belonged to a group called "Les Gens du Bois." This name means "people of the wood" and is taken from the title of a book by Benoit Des Chenes, whose carvings can be found in St. Boniface churches, hospitals, and many other places. In June, the Breretons plan to visit him in his home town, Ste. Jean Port Jolie, Quebec – "The Carving Capital of Canada."



Cathie Brereton

Brereton's passion for wood and wildlife drive her art. She says, "I also love it because I get to spend time with Rick, carving and going to shows. Also, I like the creative process, the freedom of forgetting about perfection."

She has won various acclamations, including "Best of Show" and "People's Choice" in Lake Bronson, Minnesota, and also awards from Prairie Canada Competition in Winnipeg. She loves classes and shows, and says, "The people we meet are so interesting, a whole different culture, getting together and sharing secrets."

The preferred material is basswood, from Minnesota. It is a hardwood and holds details, but doesn't chip or crumble.

The Breretons host informal classes at their Cape Coppermine home. About twenty-seven adults attend, (but not all at once) to learn about reading grains and handling tools. Brereton says "People just throw in a few bucks to pay for materials. I'm always amazed by how quickly people learn and how projects turn out."

Brereton also quilts and belongs to the Riverside Quilters, and enjoys creating beaded bracelets. Along with her work as reeve, she has more than enough to keep herself occupied.

Diane DePauw – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #38

winnipegiverarts.com/diane-depauw-focus-on-local-artists-issue-38/

Bill C

June 2015

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features multi-media visual artist, Diane DePauw, from Lac du Bonnet. She grew up in Morris, but moved to Winnipeg where she worked as a teacher.

After fourteen years in Winnipeg, her love of travel led her to pursue a career as an international educator, living and teaching in England, Thailand, Viet Nam, Tanzania, and Venezuela. In summers, she often visited her sister's cottage on the Lee River. She loved the area and eventually bought a house the town of Lac du Bonnet.



Diane DePauw

DePauw's great inspiration is nature and she spends a great deal of time in the surrounding forests. They provide many of the materials she uses, such as pine cones, tree branches, bark, flowers, and leaves. She incorporates these elements into her work, also using acrylic paint, ink- stamping, pencil crayons, paper, and canvas.



Five years ago, DePauw took a two-week course offered by the Model Forest, called “Non-Timber Forest Products.” This course taught the participants how to use natural objects to make artistic creations and other useful items.

Four years ago, the drive to create grew stronger and she started to think about art more seriously. She had already learned plenty from artists who taught in the many schools where she worked, all over the world.

In Viet Nam, she spent more and more time with artist friends, watching them work, looking on-line, and finding pictures of art she liked. She says, “I regretted that the art supplies found in North American stores like Michael's, were not available to me, but the markets, and nature, provided me with materials.”

DePauw has not exhibited her art, but has given lots away as gifts. She says, “After a career that demanded so much structure and planning, art gives me the freedom to explore aspects of myself that I never knew were there.”

Bibliotheque Allard Regional Library – Focus on Local Organization – Issue #39

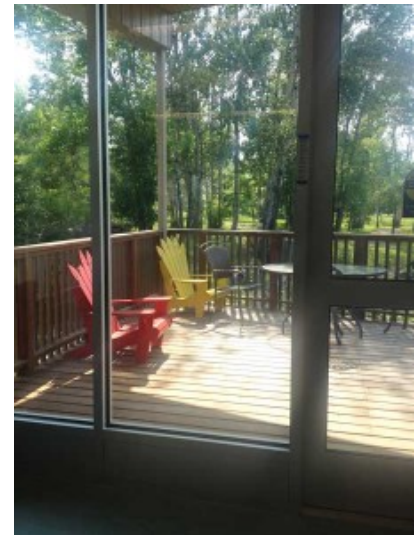
winnipegiverarts.com/bibliotheque-allard-regional-library-focus-on-local-organization-issue-39/

Bill C

July 2015

For this month, WRAC features Bibliotheque Allard Regional Library, which opened on May 3, 1983, in École Communataire St. Georges. In November, 2008, it moved to its own space on Highway 11, thanks to fundraisers, donations, grants, and municipal funds.

Library Allard is also the administrative centre for Victoria Beach Branch which opened in November, 2009. The two libraries serve RM of Alexander, Town of Powerview-Pine Falls and RM of Victoria Beach. Library Allard also provides open shelf service to Manigotagan, Bissett, and Seymourville so people in these communities can receive books in the mail and access the library's catalogue.



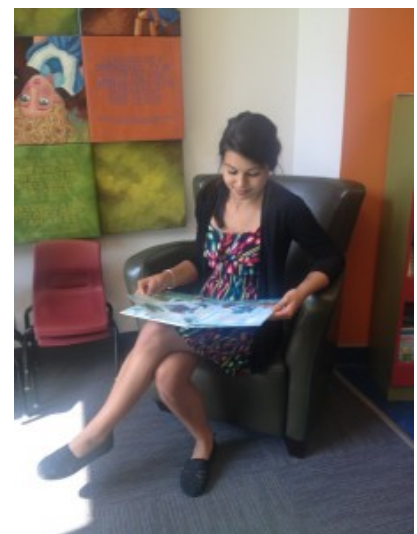
Outdoor Reading Deck

The library's mission is to provide access to resources and programs, and to enhance knowledge, joy of reading, and quality of life. It has hosted multiple displays such as "Now That's a Hat" Exhibit from Brandon's Daly House Museum in fall of 2014 and this spring's Myrtle Lalor Art Exhibit with wine and cheese reception.

Each year, they present Remembrance Day displays, Crèche Festivals (nativity scenes in multiple formats, from end of November to beginning of January), and the popular TD's Summer Reading program for kids. The library also hosts ongoing art and craft classes, from water colour painting to Lego Club, with a Lego sculpture contest on the September long weekend.

Author presentations happen often. Next upcoming readings include: Michael Luke in July with his newest from the "Finding Cindy" series, The Morning Light Conspiracy,

Andreas Oertel's newest junior fiction in October. The library organizes a photo rally in early October and is working at getting two storytellers and two musicians in November. For more info about programs and events, check out www.allardlibrary.com or their Facebook page. Dedicated and friendly staff include: Kelly Murray, Jen Kemball, Madeleine Boisjoli, Valerie



Kailyn Coss – Summer Student

Townsend, Kailyn Coss (summer student), and from Victoria Beach Branch, Maggie Tagliaferri, Vicki Peterson. Board members include: Bruce Morrison (chairperson), Lorie Finkbeiner, Gord Kaye, Gerry Dupont, Linda McMillan, Vicki Jonsson. Head librarian Kelly Murray says, "Our board's desire is to have the library as the hub of the community."

Robert Munn – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #40

winnipegiverarts.com/robert-munn-focus-on-local-artists-issue-40/

Bill C

August 2015

For this month, WRAC features Pinawa visual artist Robert Munn. At the recent Eastman Judged Art Exhibit in Lac du Bonnet, one of his pieces won first place in the drawing category.

Munn was born in Fort Frances and grew up in Atikokan. Prior to working for twenty-five years as a broadcaster for CJOB Radio in Winnipeg, he attended Ryerson University where he studied Radio-Television Arts. After graduation, a radio station in Thunder Bay hired him.

When he left CJOB, he wrote a Nostalgia Column and ran a Nostalgia Music radio program for Seniors Today. In 2002, Munn moved to Pinawa with wife Karen, who took over the restaurant at Pinawa Club. Karen is a WRAC board member, quilter, and owner of Karen's Market and Quilt Shop.



Robert Munn

Munn took a drawing course at Ryerson, but did not pursue his talent until a year ago when he decided to take drawing classes, organized by WRAC and taught by Mary Louise Chown, a well-known artist and storyteller from River Hills. These classes re-ignited Munn's interest and, ever since, he has produced plenty of drawings.

Munn uses pencils and adds colour with inks or coloured pencils, or a combination of both. He has tried oil paints, but finds them too imprecise. He says, "I love the detailed work – adding all the lines and colours of fur or feathers."

When asked about his influences, he says, "I like realistic art, not abstract. I prefer Rembrandt and Gainsborough to Picasso. As for modern artists, I admire Canadians like Robert Bateman and Ron Parker, for their portrayals of wildlife, and the American artist Paul Calle, with his pictures of trappers and mountain men."

He plans to sell his art at the Pinawa Christmas market. He does not draw to sell his work; his main focus is creating art. But he looks forward to setting up a display table with Karen, who also loves making art, with multi-coloured fabrics instead of pencils.

Annie Bergen – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #41

winnipegriverarts.com/annie-bergen-focus-on-local-artists-issue-41/

Bill C

September 2015

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features visual artist/muralist Annie Bergen.

Bergen painted her first mural at seventeen. Since then, she has created several large pieces in Winnipeg. She says, “The end result is something for everyone to enjoy and appreciate – adding color and beauty to urban landscapes.”

She also instructs in the Artists in the Schools program, travelling throughout Manitoba, working with students to research, design, and paint murals to beautify their schools.



Annie Bergen

Bergen enjoys the physicality of the large scale of murals and the fact that the design process pulls art and research together in a pleasing way. She graduated from University of Winnipeg, majoring in History, so she says, “The research part engages my mind and satisfies my inner historian.” She also enjoys incorporating mosaics into her art and community projects. She says, “I am especially proud of “Restoration,” the wall art on the Red Road Lodge in Winnipeg.”

Working with family, friends, and community groups to engage the Main Street population, she created this mosaic/mural, combining glass, tile, found objects and painted elements. Funded by the Manitoba Arts Council and the “Neighborhoods Alive!” organization, this wall art received Winnipeg’s 2013 Mural of the Year award.

In 2014, Bergen collaborated with Siyee Mann to create another mural, working with neighborhood kids and summer youth groups. This project, located on an MTS building on Salter and Burrows Streets, won another Mural of the Year award.

Bergen lives east of Whitemouth, with her partner Lee and daughter Aurora. Three years ago, they moved from Winnipeg, determined to follow their dream of self-sustainable life on a rural property. They wanted to be located near the Whiteshell and other parks, but still be close enough to Winnipeg to visit city family and friends.

Bergen gets inspiration from family, their new rural lifestyle, and the surrounding lakes, rivers, and wilderness. She also loves sharing her skills with young people, engaging the community, and collaborating with artists.

She sums up her artistic motivation a quote from Henry Ward Beecher – “Every artist dips his brush in his own soul, and paints his own nature into his pictures.”



Annie Bergen

Pinawa Players – Focus on Local Organization – Issue #42

winnipegriverarts.com/pinawa-players-focus-on-local-organization-issue-42/

Bill C

October 2015

For this month, the Winnipeg River Arts Council features the Pinawa Players. The well-known local theatre group had its roots in Deep River, Ontario, a town established in the 1940s for employees of Atomic Energy of Canada Limited (AECL).

In the early 1960s, AECL expanded its operations to Manitoba, and created the town of Pinawa. Most of the employees came from Ontario, with many of them already active in the “Deep River Players.”

In 1964, this nucleus of thespians formed the fledgling “Pinawa Players.” They helped guide the construction of the Pinawa Community Centre Auditorium, and its stage, which benefited not only the Players, but also many other community groups.

In April of 1964, they presented their first production, “Variety – The Spice of Life,” in the Pinawa Elementary School gymnasium, featuring a one-act play “Mother’s Day,” and showcasing local musical and dance groups. In the autumn of 1965, they hosted the first Players’ production the new Auditorium.

For John Tait, the present chair, the 1979 musical, “Annie Get Your Gun,” sticks out in his memory. He says, “With a cast of over 100 community members, it was a memorable extravaganza, involving the whole town – adults and children from community groups, choirs, musicians, and even acrobats!”

For 51 years, the Pinawa Players have presented over 100 plays including comedies, dramas, musicals, dinner theatre, and children’s shows. They usually stage two



Pinawa Players Production 1964 “The Alley Cats



“The Volunteer Fire Brigade” Men’s Barbershop Quartet

productions per year for enthusiastic Pinawa and surrounding-area audiences. This year, they continue their tradition with the dinner theatre, "Dixie Swim Club," being held during November 18-22.

The Players continue to support community building. In 1982, they helped found the Association of Community Theatres (A.C.T.), which connects Manitoba's amateur theatre groups and sponsors an annual drama festival. They've hosted four festival weekends, most recently in 2013.

Also, they participate in Pinawa Birthday Weekend Parade, host the annual Christmas Carol Sing at the Shopping Mall, and have joined Winnipeg River Arts Council.

The Players welcome anyone interested, whether it be acting or helping backstage. John Tait says, "There's no lack of jobs and fun when a performance is being prepared!"

~ Information and photos submitted by chairman John Tait

Marcel Fortin – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #43

winnipegiverarts.com/test/

Bill C

November 2015

For this month, WRAC features visual artist Marcel Fortin. Born in North Bay, Ontario, he lived for several years in British Columbia. While living in BC, he met his wife, who is from this area. About fifteen years ago, they moved back to the town of Lac du Bonnet.

Fortin identifies as a self-taught artist and uses oil paints to create his life-like paintings. He took the usual art classes in school and says he was interested in art “off-and-on,” since he was sixteen. But, in 2008, he decided to pursue his artistic talents more seriously.



Marcel Fortin

This happened after he painted his first big project, a hockey mural on his son’s wall. People who saw it said he really should do more art. Inspired by their encouragement, he used the books and videos of famous art teacher Bob Ross to refine his techniques. Ever since then, he has worked hard at developing his distinct style. Fortin says, “I use art as a form of meditation and a way to relax. I get completely absorbed in it.”

This dedication appears to have worked. He sells paintings to interested patrons and gets commissions for specific subjects. Although he doesn’t have a website, he has created a Facebook page for his art and posts samples of paintings on the “Living in Lac du Bonnet and loving it” Facebook page.

In 2013, he submitted his work to Eastman Juried Art Exhibition in Pinawa. In 2014, he won People’s Choice Award at the art show held in conjunction with Fire & Water Festival. In 2015, he won another People’s Choice Award at the Eastman Juried Art Exhibition in Lac du Bonnet.

Fortin’s art attracts plenty of positive attention. He says, “I get lots of good comments. And the biggest fan of all is my mother!”



Marcel Fortin



Marcel Fortin

Erika Uustalu~Nicholson – Focus on Local Artists – Issue #44

winnipegiverarts.com/erika-uustalunicholson-focus-on-local-artists-issue-44/

Bill C

December 2015

For this month, WRAC features Erika Uustalu-Nicholson, who creates both fabric and visual art. Born to Estonian parents who came to Thunder Bay, Ontario, after World War II, she says, “From an early age, my family instilled in me an appreciation of nature and art.”

Upon graduating from high school, she was accepted at both the Ontario College of Art and the Faculty of Fine Arts at the University of Manitoba. She could not decide which school to attend until a close friend was also accepted at the U of M. This led her to venture out west.



Erika Uustalu-Nicholson

She says, “One doesn’t realize the life-changing enormity of our youthful decisions until much later.”

But Uustalu-Nicholson doesn’t regret her decision. She has enjoyed a satisfying career as an art teacher in the Interlake and Winnipeg School Divisions. She raised her family in Manitoba and exhibited her art, predominantly drawings and paintings, over the past several decades at various galleries and venues.

Upon retirement, she moved, with her husband Archie, to the Lac du Bonnet area. Through various fishing trips, they had come to know the region. They live along the Pinawa Channel where they enjoy the inspiration of nature and close friendships with neighbours.

Currently, Uustalu-Nicholson is associated with various creative individuals and groups including WRAC, Pinawa Art 211, Gwen Fox and Wayne Arthur Galleries, the Prairie Edge Rug Hookers, and the GAWMYS (Good Art Won’t Match Your Sofa) artists. In 2015, she helped organize and participated in the Eastman Judged Art Exhibition in Lac du Bonnet, and received awards in the Drawing and Fibre categories.

Uustalu-Nicholson sums up her artistic passion with these words, “Art has been my study, my career and my therapy during my whole life. Over the years, my work has evolved and changed in media and style but the underlying currents and subjects have remained quite

the same – the world of nature and the many facets of the human condition – both inner and global.”

