

NOTL artist fundraises for women's programs

Jessica Maxwell
The Lake Report

Niagara-on-the-Lake artist Filomena Pisano is donating about 10 per cent of the proceeds from her new art project to women's initiatives.

As part of the effort to fundraise and support her art, the mixed media artist took her favourite painting from her entire collection, "Frida Number 3," and printed a high-quality, exclusive run of 250 pieces to be sold for \$250 each.

"Frida' was professional scanned. The technology is amazing," Pisano said. "Each mark is so vivid, full of colour, my strokes are visible. I can barely tell the print from the original."

She was inspired by famous Mexican painter Frida Kahlo and by many of her own life experiences.

Pisano said it has been a blessing for her to release the pieces and once all of them are sold she will be

donating \$5,000 to Gillian's Place women's shelter and \$2,000 to Moon Time Sisters, a program that helps young women in northern communities across Ontario and Saskatchewan access menstrual products.

"'Frida Number 3' is a reminder for all of us to bless one another whenever we can," Pisano said.

The original artwork was scanned and giclée printed on archival paper. With the process, ink is sprayed on to mimic the actual texture of the original painting rather than a typical ink jet printing process.

Pisano then wax-sealed them by hand to preserve them, provide texture and making them look as much like the original as possible.

So far 20 of the limited-edition prints have been sold, some travelling as far as Alberta.

Anyone looking to purchase a piece and support the project can contact Pisano through her website at www.pisano.art.



Filomena Pisano stands over her limited edition prints with the wax she uses to preserve them. JESSICA MAXWELL

Residents crowd NOTL Museum for annual treasure sale

Evan Saunders
Local Journalism Initiative
The Lake Report

The Niagara-on-the-Lake Museum's annual Treasure Sale and Pig Roast fundraiser was a smashing success on Aug. 2, raising more than \$4,600.

People were lined up around the block before the event started to support their local museum and witness the unveiling of its long-awaited addition, the Tiny Museum.

"It certainly feels good to be supporting the museum again," NOTL resident Joe Baxter said as she rifled through the copious treasures on display.

"I keep picking stuff up and I don't know what to get," she said.

Assistant curator and educational programmer Shawna Butts said it was the busiest treasure sale the museum has ever had.

Museum managing director Sarah Kaufman was shocked at the turnout.

"I am overwhelmed by



Droves of residents stand in line to get their chance to buy books and treasures on Monday. EVAN SAUNDERS

the support the community is giving us today. I just wanted to officially say thank you so much to everyone for coming out," she said.

"We've had tough times through COVID-19 and it's really heartwarming to see the community come out and support us in this way."

The isolation of the pandemic drew people out who have not visited the museum for a while.

"I hadn't been here in so long. I live in Niagara-on-the-Lake but I haven't been to the museum in years,"

Sylvia Angelkötter said.

"When I heard this was happening I said, 'Let's go.'"

Not only was the sale good for individuals to get out of the house and support the museum, it was a benefit for a community long shuttered by pandemic restrictions, NOTL resident Chris Girard said.

Girard got her hands on a beautiful necklace that was part of the jewelry display. The allure of the treasure sale was too much for her to resist.

"This is my first time

here and I've lived in Niagara-on-the-Lake for 12 years," she said.

"Shame on you," volunteer Judy Thornton teased.

Showing up to purchase treasures wasn't the only way the museum received community support.

Almost all the items on display had been donated by NOTL residents, with a few pieces of the museum's own collection out as well.

Kaufman emphasized the generosity of the donations. "People might say, 'Oh it's a garage sale.' It's not a garage sale, it's a treasure sale. People donated some really nice stuff," she said.

Items included historical books, crystal glassware, silver cutlery and cups, jewelry, paintings and a myriad of knickknacks and decorative pieces.

The unveiling of the Tiny Museum also went over smoothly.

"It's our first time that we've actually been able to use it," Kaufman said.

It was completed in May 2020 but the pandemic pre-

vented the museum from putting it to use until the treasure sale, she said.

The trailer-mounted Tiny Museum is a replica of the museum and features a rotating exhibit that the museum changes to cater to the areas and events that it is taken to.

The museum hopes to bring it out to schools, villages and events such as Canada Day and the many fruit festivals that (usually) take place across the municipality.

If they were doing an event in St. Davids, for example, the inside would become an exhibit of the village's history, Kaufman said.

The Tiny Museum's latest exhibit is called "People of Niagara" and includes an array of displays featuring Indigenous people in Niagara, loyalist history and the Syrian refugees who called NOTL home in the 2010s.

"It's amazing. Whoever built it is a master," Sylvia Captein said after examin-

ing the Tiny Museum exhibit.

"It feels much more spacious than it looks and they can just change the theme to whatever. It's amazing."

Exhibit designer Amanda Balyk said she drew inspiration for the exhibits in the Tiny Museum from her work as a teacher.

"I really asked myself what I would want my students to know and what would I want out of a museum. Then I consulted some teachers and planned accordingly," she said.

That careful planning and attention to education was not missed by visitors.

"It's an educational device that is so, so fun," Dee Travette said.

The museum is working on a tiny exhibit featuring the history of the Canada Games, which are scheduled for the Niagara region next year, with sailing and tennis events in NOTL.

"We're working with Brock University and Canada Games to develop something," Balyk said.



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1501 Niagara Stone Rd.
905-468-5344 | info@blissaveda.com

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