



King Weekly Sentinel

Arts & Entertainment

Parallels between dancers, butterflies explored in flight2

By Brock Weir

Dancers have the power to convey significant emotion with a deceptively simple shift in their body.

They are celebrated the world over for their fluidity and grace, and have inspired no end of artistic inspiration.

King artist Grazyna Tonkiel is also attracted to grace and fluidity in her work. But rather than depicting dancers mid-movement, her attentions are focused on the humble butterflies of Canada.

The grace and movement of both butterflies and dancers have now converged in flight2, an exhibition coupling Ms. Tonkiel's drawings of butterflies and sculptures created by Gordon Becker, hosted virtually by the Aurora Cultural Centre.

flight2 is the first gallery exhibition hosted by the Aurora Cultural Centre in Town Hall following the temporary closure of the historic Church Street School during Library Square construction.

As closures and lockdowns continue, however, what they hoped to deliver in-person to the public has been translated by the Centre into a virtual exhibition that is on now through February 27.

Ms. Tonkiel, an artist and musician, takes her work very seriously. Her King Township garden is a designated wildlife and butterfly habitat, providing her with no end of artistic inspiration.

"My degree is in Operatic Performance and acting, so for 30 years of my life, I have been an opera singer and a second interest has always been visual art," said Ms. Tonkiel, sitting down

with curator Clare Bolton during the gallery's installation. "Now, having retired as an opera singer and singing only occasionally, I have been drawing butterflies as my full-time job. [It started] as a simple project of drawing butterflies for my daughter's bedroom. Once I was doing it, I started drawing more and more butterflies. That sparked an interest in learning about butterflies.

"Butterflies have been the symbol of beauty through the history of human kind and dancers also reflect the symbol of beauty. They possess complete control over their body and as fragile as they look, they are extremely small [and strong]. I point, for example, to the migrant monarch butterfly. It travels sometimes 9,000 km. As fragile as they are, they also have tremendous strength."

The strength and complexity of the butterfly is very much reflected in her work.

Her drawings not only depict the colourful wings we're so familiar with, but the underside of the butterfly as well, a dimension which offers its own unique beauty.

While her work is two-dimensional, it's kicked up to the third through the application of such media as gold leaf to bring out the depth and the light within her subjects.

"We all need a ray of light to uplift our souls and spirits," she said. "I hope that flight2 will raise hope in anybody to conquer the sadness or the anxiety in the moment we are [in] at the present."

"The preparation for this exhibit sparked an idea because I was at the very beginning of my process of draw-

ing butterflies, I was drawn more to tropical butterflies. As I went and my sanctuary grew, I am more and more inclined to do everything for the butterflies and I am more than ever interested in Canadian butterflies. I am going to work on creating the only collection of Canadian butterflies. There are 160 [species of] butterflies in Ontario, so I don't think I will be short coming on subjects to draw. I don't know

if I ever will finish 160, but I will try to actually draw a lot of them to bring awareness to the public. We are familiar with monarch butterflies, but very few people can name any other Canadian butterflies."

For more on flight2, including a complete gallery of works created by Grazyna Tonkiel and Gordon Becker and how to purchase the works on display, visit auroraculturalcentre.ca.

Heritage Facts

KCSS celebrates diamond anniversary in 2021

By Kelly Mathews

When King City Secondary School (KCSS) opened on Tuesday Sept. 5, 1961, it was originally called the King City Composite School (KCCS).

In Canada, the term "Composite School" refers to a secondary school that offers academic, commercial, and industrial subjects. The suffix "Secondary School" was applied to the institution in September 1965, at the start of its fifth year.

Before KCCS opened its doors in 1961, the great majority of students that were high-school age in King, attended Aurora High School, which was renamed Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School (named after Dr. David Garnet Wolseley Williams) the year that KCCS opened. KCSS school has undergone many major additions and renovations over the years to meet the ever-changing needs of its growing community and changes in the delivery of academic, athletic and student services.

Just weeks before the school opened, an article titled "Rushing Work on New King City High School" stated that the opening of the school is "the most important current event for the next few weeks" (August 24, 1961 Newmarket Era & Express). The article went on to say that there was an estimated enrollment of 550 students in Grades 9-13 with a staff of 25 teachers the day the school opened.

Today, the KCSS website indicates that the student body exceeds 900 students supported by more than 90 teachers and support staff.

KCSS will be celebrating 60 years of service to the community in 2021 – a diamond anniversary that I'm certain will not go uncelebrated after an unprecedented 2020, which challenged the school to deliver quality education in the face of a global pandemic.

Although many things have changed at KCSS over the past six decades – a great many other things have held true. The mascot, a fierce and brave lion, and the school colours; gold, green and white, have remained constants on the school campus as has their enduringly appropriate motto, in Latin, "semper progrediens" which translates in English to "always progressing."

The 1960 King City Composite School Song: Green White and Gold:

"We are proud of the colours of GREEN, WHITE and GOLD, and we sing of the glory foretold;

"We will always stand up for the cause that is right, when we sing of the GREEN, WHITE and GOLD.

"In the school that is best from the East to the West, that's where we will meet the test;

"We are always progressing with spirit and zest, at our own K.C.C.S (now K.C.S.S).

"We are loyal and true alma mater to you, we are always advancing with you;

"We will always remember our years here at King, when we hear of the GREEN, WHITE and GOLD!"

Kelly Mathews, vice-chair of the King Township Heritage Advisory Committee, is currently working under commission for the King Township Historical Society to research and write a comprehensive history of King Township. Kelly will be contributing monthly to the King Weekly Sentinel "Heritage Facts" section sharing some interesting findings from her research to date.



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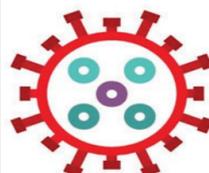
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3:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

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