

Artists open up their doors next weekend for annual tour



By Brock Weir

Nearly 30 Aurora artists are putting the finishing touches on their paintings, photography and multimedia pieces before opening up their home studios to the art-loving public next weekend.

28 artists will feature their work in eight studio locations on Saturday, November 19 and Sunday, November 20, including 15 artists from Local Colour Aurora who will be taking over Hillary House National Historic Site.

"We love meeting people who are interested in art," says photographer and multimedia artist Claire D'Aurore, who will be exhibiting at the historic Patrick House art gallery on Temperance Street along with acrylic painter Carol Beaver, photographer Judy Bobsin, multimedia artist Karen Bowen, and painter Willo Rodriguez.

Spearheaded once again by multimedia artist and writer Deborah Campo, the organizer describes this showing "one of their biggest ever in terms of the number of artists, as a labour of love.

"I have a love of the artists enjoying their passions and putting their work before the public," she says.

Ms. Campo is one of seven artists opening up their home studio for the tour, along with Najma Kausar's Noor Studio, Christa Gampp's Gamppart Studio, Christine Valentini's Studio Valentini, and Shirley Binns' Heritage Home Art Studio in Aurora's Northeast Heritage Conservation District, which is like stepping back in time.

"It is an art piece in itself," says Ms. Binns. "I enjoy meeting people on the tour, with all the hard work of preparing the house, but some people like the fact they can see the art hanging on a home wall, giving them a good idea of what it might look like in their own home."

Their home studios cover the breadth of Aurora, stretching over to the far eastern side at Gallery 15516 on Leslie Street, the home, studio and showcase for the evocative photography of Ralph and Margarete Brunner. For the Brunners, it is very important to have photography included on a tour such as this, and not just to showcase their own pieces.

"Almost everyone is familiar with painting and art of that nature, but very few people associate photography with art," says Ralph.

"We enjoy showing people what can be done with different aspects of photography. There are millions of painters who would give their eye tooth for the prices they get today for photography."

Adds Margarete: "It is an art form, not just snapshots."

For more on this year's tour, including studio locations, visit ww.aurorastudiotour.com.