

# Speakeasy

**By Jane Taylor and Reccia Mandelcorn**

When the convergence of creative energy and artistic excellence takes over The Speakeasy, unanticipated conversations emerge, surprising and inspiring us as hosts. This happened on Wednesday's broadcast when we were joined by Sheryl Thomas of Marquee Theatrical Productions, Daniel St-Amant, experimental fine artist, and Stephanie Nicolo, ACC Gallery Curator.

Sheryl is a force of nature. As founder and General Manager of Marquee Theatrical Productions, Sheryl has led this once grassroots community theatre group of volunteers to a level of professionalism that challenges any major big city theatre company.

Starting out as a fundraiser for the Trinity Anglican Church, Marquee Theatrical Productions has become an incubation of talent and destination for those who enjoy quality musical theatre. Offering opportunities for the youngest to the oldest, Marquee Theatrical Productions definitely has you covered.

A creative spirit, Sheryl is never happy to rest on her accomplishments; rather she seeks new, innovative ways to engage the community. We loved hearing about Marquee's newest offering, Broadway Babies, where parents and babies ages 10 months and up play instruments and learn songs from Broadway musicals. We could just imagine how fabulous family times together would be, sharing the delight of creating music together.

Marquee Theatrical Productions brings professional expertise together for a full set experience; everything from actual ?rain? on stage for Singing in the Rain to building a car that flies and swims out of a golf cart for Chitty Chitty Bang Bang.

This year's big musical is Mamma Mia, featuring the music of the iconic Abba. Just listening to our opening of Dancing Queen made sitting in our seats for the broadcast quite a feat.

Whether you've always wanted to be a star, are looking for community involvement or want to enjoy first class musical theatre, this local gem will not disappoint. To find out more Marquee Theatrical Productions, check out [www.marqueetp.com](http://www.marqueetp.com).

Daniel St-Amant is a rising star in the art world, creating paintings that are conceptual, interactive and that spark important conversation about environment issues. A fine art major with a love of realism and painting, Daniel's current work starts out in the street and not in his Toronto studio.

Picking up on a portfolio challenge from

one of his professors at NSCAD University to do something really different, something outside his comfort level, Daniel uses roadways to emphasize our global footprint. By capturing tire tracks on canvas, he uses these distinct markings as backdrop for his beautiful detailed animal portraits.

This unique; sometimes random; often crazy process challenges the viewer to reflect on how industrialization and the over-use of resources change lives and habitats globally. Paintings often include found objects in nature, creating natural textures and palettes. Daniel St-Amant speaks a global message, but he is a voice of Canada; his roots in rural Quebec showing in exquisite paintings of moose, wolves, raccoons and birds.

Daniel St-Amant's exhibit, *Running*

*Forward*, can be enjoyed at the Aurora Cultural Centre until May 25. An artist reception will be held Friday, March 22, 6-8 p.m., and *Ways of Seeing ? Artist Demonstration* on Saturday, March 30, 12 ? 2 p.m. is a must to experience.

March is definitely a busy month of culture and fun for all ages. To find out that's in store at the Aurora Cultural Centre, visit [www.auroraculturalcentre.ca](http://www.auroraculturalcentre.ca) and to check out what's happening at Aurora Public library, visit [www.aurorapl.ca](http://www.aurorapl.ca).

With so much going on, there's no need to leave Aurora for your cultural fix. From *The Speakeasy ?* see you next month!

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Manager at the Aurora Cultural Centre and Reccia Mandelcorn is Manager of Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. They co-host *The Speakeasy* on the first Wednesday of each month on 102.7 CHOP-FM.