

Folk. Memoirs

Irene McCaugherty ■ Hazel Litzgus ■ Doris Zaharichuk ■ William Panko



Acknowledgements

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We acknowledge that we are located on Treaty 8 territory—the ancestral Land of the sovereign Dane-zaa, Nehiyawak, Dene, and Otipemisiwak Nations. We acknowledge the many Indigenous Peoples who have lived and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us. We make this acknowledgement as an act of reconciliation and gratitude.

The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie also recognizes that Land Acknowledgments are not enough. Through our actions we commit to truth, reconciliation, decolonization, and allyship in support of Indigenous lifeways and wellbeing.



Alberta Foundation for the Arts

TRAVELLING EXHIBITION PROGRAM

The Alberta Foundation for the Arts (AFA) has supported a provincial travelling exhibition program since 1981. The mandate of the AFA Travelling Exhibition Program is to provide every Albertan with the opportunity to enjoy visual art exhibitions in their community. Three regional galleries and one arts organization coordinate the program for the AFA:

Northwest Region:

The Art Gallery of Grande Prairie, Grande Prairie

Northeast and North Central Region:

The Art Gallery of Alberta, Edmonton

Southwest Region:

The Alberta Society of Artists, Calgary

Southeast Region:

The Esplanade Arts and Heritage Centre, Medicine Hat

Each year, more than 600,000 Albertans enjoy many exhibitions in communities ranging from High Level in the north to Milk River in the south and virtually everywhere in between. The AFA Travelling Exhibition Program also offers educational support material to help educators integrate the visual arts into the school curriculum.

Exhibitions for the TREX program are curated from a variety of sources, including private and public collections. A major part of the program assists in making the AFA's extensive art collection available to Albertans. This growing art collection consists of over 9,000 artworks showcasing the creative talents of more than 1700 artists. The AFA art collection reflects the development of the vibrant visual arts community in the province and has become an important cultural legacy for all Albertans.



The AFA and TREX partners respectfully acknowledge that the artistic activity we support takes place on the territories of Treaty 6, 7 and 8: lands of First Nations and Métis peoples.



Funded By:



Program Sponsor:



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Irene McCaugherty

Irene McCaugherty was a self-taught artist, writer, and poet. Her folk-art paintings explore the people and cultural narrative of southern Alberta's pioneer days in the later part of the 19th and early 20th century. She recorded the daily happenings of life in early Alberta with humour and colour, and invited viewers to enter her world of auction sales, musical rides, road building, small town life, and ranching.

Irene McCaugherty often painted in an unusual dimension, long and narrow. That rectangular shape reflected the view she had out the window of her pick-up truck, as she drove around southern Alberta to capture the stories of the people and the places she called home.

Her watercolours do not conform to traditional one-point perspective, and she found a voice that was uniquely hers, capturing the imagined past and invented history of life on the prairie. She created more than 1,000 paintings before her death in 1996, many of which have been donated by her family to the Lethbridge College Campus where they are on display in the Founders' Square Space.

Hazel Litzgus

Hazel Litzgus continues to captivate the hearts of Albertans with her charming and nostalgic folk images of early Alberta life. Born on a farm near Lloydminster, Alberta, Hazel, through her paintings give us a glimpse of her early childhood and her many recollections of early rural and small town life on the Alberta Prairies.

Working in the unforgiving medium of watercolour, Hazel Litzgus narrates moments from her past in vivid detail with whimsy, in a naïve painting style. Whether it be the detailed wallpaper and patterned linoleum floor in a country farm house, or a school yard full of excited children playing various games, her art work is very reflective of her as a person. Hazel is a charming, soft spoken lady with a strong and determined character. She is full of life and stories and one feels right at ease as she tells of her experiences on the Prairies. Hazel's book, *Where the Meadow Lark Sang* was published in 2003 and received great attention. In a review by CM Magazine, University of Manitoba, wrote: "In her use of bright colours and carefully detailed drawing, Litzgus created illustrations that are reminiscent of William Kurelek."

Doris Zaharichuk

Doris Zaharichuk was a painter of lyrical, rural images depicting memories from her childhood and her Romanian heritage. Her paintings combined a charming narrative with a sensitive representation of the Alberta landscape, and captured the span of the seasons, the daily activities of work and play, and the sense of warmth to be found in community and family.

Zaharichuk was largely self-taught, and started painting after her husband passed away in 1974. She took classes at the Edmonton Art Gallery from artist Peter Lewis, who encouraged her self expression. She found a sense of joy and peace in her artwork, and often painted two or three canvases a month, despite her chronic arthritis.

Zaharichuk exhibited often at the Kathleen Laverty Gallery in Edmonton, as well as at Heffel Fine Art in Vancouver, the now defunct Beaver House Gallery in Edmonton, and the Prince Arthur Gallery in Toronto. Her work hangs in public and private collections in Canada and Australia.

William Panko

William Panko emigrated from Austria in 1911. Panko worked as a farm labourer in the summer months and as miner in Drumheller during the long Albertan winters. Panko fell ill with tuberculosis in 1937, and spent ten years at the Baker Memorial Sanatorium in Calgary. As a young man, Panko did not receive any formal art training; however, he seemed to have an innate understanding of colour and composition. Panko started painting at Baker Memorial, and with the support of well-known artist Marion Nicoll, he painted approximately 30 watercolour paintings. Nicoll insisted that his primitive folk style was unique, and she believed that he shouldn't receive any formal instruction, as that type of tutelage would have disrupted his individualistic style. His works' delineate scenes of his life, primarily they tell the tales of his life in Drumheller, from his garden to his home. The Coste House in Calgary exhibited his watercolour paintings during the winter of 1947. The Muttart Gallery, included Panko's work in a travelling exhibition, titled *The Primitives*, which travelled to The Edmonton Art Gallery, The Prairie Gallery in Grande Prairie, and the Southern Alberta Art Gallery (SAAG). Panko passed away from a fatal heart attack on March 17, 1948 at the age of 56.

Exhibition Statement

Folk Memoirs

Curated by Jamie-Lee Cormier

Folk Memoirs is a collection of visual narratives experienced while growing up on the Alberta prairies. Sourcing these rare historical moments from the Alberta Foundation for the Arts permanent collection, you will see paintings by Hazel Litzgus, Irene McCaugherty, William Panko and Doris Zaharichuk. The works are described as folk art, which is a unique style of art that reflects the cultural life of a community. Inspired by scenes from everyday life including: helping with housework, farm labour, playing outside, going to rodeos and more.

A memoir is a narrative composed from personal experience. The paintings in this show speak for themselves, taking you back in time to recall or learn the history of what life was like in the mid nineteen hundreds. Folk art takes on a very whimsical and colourful style of expression. This genre of artists are typically not concerned with making their subject look realistic. As you can see in William Panko's paintings, he doesn't worry about painting the scenes with the exact perspective or proportions – rather, he gives the paintings a more two dimensional or 'flat' appearance. More importantly, he depicted the story and what he remembered.

This group exhibition showcases simple everyday work-life balance. Hazel Litzgus's work is a perfect example of this, from painting scenes of harvesting and cattle round up to dancing in the kitchen and rodeos. Enjoy finding hidden details of Irene McCaugherty and Doris Zaharichuk's paintings as they draw the viewer in to enjoy how natural and simplistic life was. The works in this exhibition are a memoir of the artist's life, savouring and reflecting on stories of the past.



List of Artworks

Artwork by: Hazel Litzgus



Hazel Litzgus

CANNING PEACHES, 1970

Watercolour on paper

14 5/8 in x 15 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Hazel Litzgus

MISS ABEL GOES TO CHURCH, 1985

Watercolour on paper

14 5/16 in x 21 5/8 in

Collection of the Alberta
Foundation for the Arts



Hazel Litzgus

THRESHERS WASHING UP, 1997

Watercolour on paper

15 in x 22 5/8 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Artwork by: Irene McCaugherty



Irene McCaugherty

THE ROUNDUP, 1971

Watercolour, ink, gouache on paper

7 1/2 in x 21 7/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty

WINTER FUN 1929, 1981

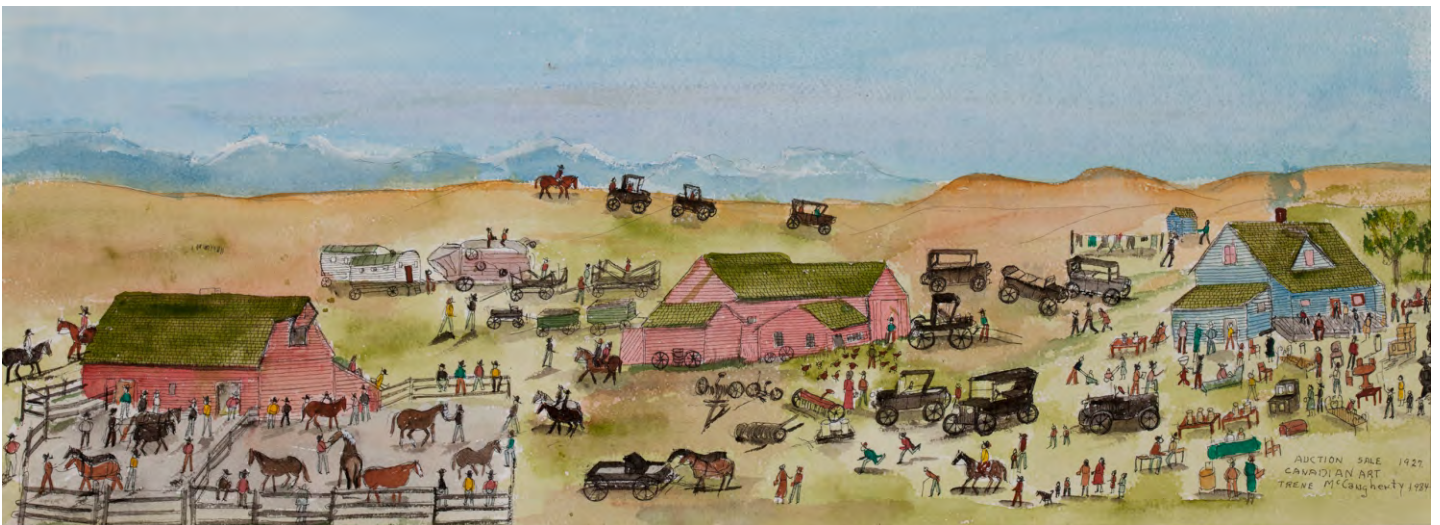
Watercolour, ink, gouache on paper

7 1/2 in x 21 7/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty
HORSE POWER THRESHING MACHINE, 1905, 1981
Watercolour, ink, gouache on paper
7 1/2 in x 21 7/16 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty
AUCTION SALE 1927, CANADIAN ART, 1984
Watercolour and ink on paper
8 in x 21 15/16 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty

SUNDOWN HANK, 1993

Watercolour on paper

15 in x 22 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty

MY PONIES, 1985

Watercolour and ink on paper

5 3/4 in × 11 1/8 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty

KITCHEN SWEAT EVERYBODY DANCE, 1987

Watercolour and ink n paper

15 1/8 in × 22 5/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty

BUFFALOED, 1991

Watercolour and ink on paper

15 1/16 in × 22 1/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty
CHORE TIME, 1992
Watercolour and ink on paper
8 1/8 in × 22 1/16 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Irene McCaugherty
1920'S HARVEST TIME, 1994
Watercolour and ink on paper
8 3/16 in × 22 1/16 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



William Panko
THE GARDENERS, 1946
Watercolour and gouache on paper
16 1/2 in x 12 1/2 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



William Panko

HAPPY CABBAGES, n.d.

Gouache on paper

12 1/4 in x 16 5/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Doris Zaharichuk
POTATO HARVESTING, 1989
Oil on canvas
10 1/16 x 13 7/8 in
Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Doris Zaharichuk

WOMAN BATHING, 1993

Oil on canvas

10 3/16 in x 14 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the
Arts



Doris Zaharichuk

COUNTRY HARVEST, 1998

Oil on canvas

20 1/4 in x 27 15/16 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the
Arts



Activities



Overview

Practice storytelling through images by making a group picture book. *Folk Memoirs* is all about sharing stories and memories, either between friends or family.

Supplies

- Sketch paper
- Watercolour paint
- Glue
- Magazines / newspaper / patterned paper
- Scissors

Instructions

Step 1

As a group pick a fairytale or story you want to recreate. Talk about what the key points are in the story, and how to show them without words.

Also, how will you tell that this is one story?

Will the main character have a distinctive feature; like a red coat, big shoes, or blue hair?

Then let everyone choose a scene from the story to recreate.

If it is a short story feel free to double up and make two versions of the same story.

Step 2

Use watercolour paint to make the background.

Think general colours and shapes, this isn't where the focus is going, this is to make it more than a white background.

Is the story in the forest, ocean, or inside a house?

Step 3

Cut out patterned paper for your main characters, you can also use pictures found in magazines as characters.

Step 4

Put all the pages in a binder to make your storybook.



Overview

Recreating an artwork is a great way for the student to sit down and take a closer look at the details that are in the piece. Get them to choose their favourite piece in the show and sit down with their paper and pencil to re-create it, paying attention to the outlines of the subject matter.

Supplies

- Watercolour paper
- Pencil
- Watercolour paint & brushes
- Painters tape
- Cardboard to tape paper to

Instructions

Step 1

Tape your piece of watercolour paper down on all 4 sides to the piece of cardboard or if you have clipboards that would work too.

Step 2

Site down in front of the piece you want to try and replicate and use your pencil to draw what you see.

Step 3

Once you are done drawing it, take out your watercolours and add some colour to your piece. If you have scrapbook paper or magazines around, they could use these to add in shapes and patterns, say if they wanted to add in wallpaper.

Step 4

Once they are happy with the amount of colour added to the painting, gently peel off the tape. Display the working on a wall in your space for everyone to enjoy!



Hazel Litzgus

CANNING PEACHES, 1970

Watercolour on paper

14 5/8 in x 15 in

Collection of the Alberta Foundation for the Arts



Tissue Box House



Overview

As you will see in this exhibition you get a glimpse into the artists house or homestead. Take notice of the patterns on the wallpaper and in the fields. In this activity you will create your own little house with a tissue box.

Supplies

- Tissue box or shoe box
- Glue
- Magazines / newspaper / patterned paper / white paper
- Popsicle sticks / pipe cleaners / toilet paper rolls
- Scissors
- Colored crayons or markers

Instructions

Step 1

Prepare your tissue box by cutting the hole on the top a bit bigger.



Step 2

Look through the magazines for ideas for your wall paper, pictures on the wall, table cloth, or couch fabric.

Start glueing down the wall paper and then move to making your accents like a table, chair, couch or bed.



Step 3

Once you have the free-standing furniture made, start gluing them in place. Use the plane paper and coloured pencils to make a pet portrait for the wall, a clock, a fridge or a piece of artwork for the wall.

Step 4

Once you have done your final touches display your finished boxes in the classroom and go around and talk about what you added to your room and why.





