



Graham Paine/Metroland

Artist Iouliana Polar is surrounded by some of her artwork, including 'Moonlight Spells'. The Milton artist is holding a silent art auction of her acrylic and oil on canvas works, with proceeds going to the Hospital for Sick Children.

IFP staffer happy to hold 1st art exhibition

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amassed a number of paintings since she began to paint.

"Over the years, I just started painting again, little by little," said Pillai, noting she was self-taught, encouraged by her mom, whom she used to paint side-by-side with in Russia. "I've never taken a lesson."

Now, with a collection of more than 30 paintings in her basement, she figured the paintings should be displayed somewhere, or at least let someone else enjoy their beauty.

Her first exhibition will be a silent auction, held in support of the SickKids Foundation.

"It's very personal to me," said Pillai, who works as circulation supervisor for Georgetown and Acton at Metroland Media Group. "I needed a surgery and no one would do it because I didn't have my citizenship yet, but Sick Kids hospital did. They help a lot of kids who cannot help themselves and stand up for those who cannot do it alone."

"It's a wonderful hospital and I think they deserve the money," said Pillai, who holds a bachelor of medical biology, after studying

pharmaceutical chemistry at York University.

All proceeds will go to Unrestricted Giving, which means unlimited impact. These gifts fund the highest priority needs at Sick Kids, and where the funds will be directed upon purchase of each painting.

The event will include entertainment and hors d'oeuvres.

Everyone is welcome.

The silent art auction, hosted by MaxiMind Learning Clinic, will be held on Saturday, May 5, from 4 to 9 p.m. at 7250 Keele St. Concord, 2nd Avenue and 8th Street within the mall, in the auditorium.

Her paintings are acrylic or acrylic and oil, with subjects including wine, people and nature. Some pieces are abstract, while others are modern.

"I like to emphasize things that we can't express, but something that surrounds us all the time," she said, adding her palette features primary colours only.

"I'm very excited about my first exhibition, and look forward to seeing many family and friends," she said. "I plan to continue painting - forever."

Iouliana Pillai was 11 years old when she arrived in Canada from Russia.

She came with her loving family - including a twin brother Max - strength of character and a will to succeed. She also had a health issue that needed to be treated, sooner than later.

At the time, her mother Elen Polar had difficulty finding a hospital to treat her. Like mother, like daughter, she refused to take no for an answer and eventually, Sick Children's Hospital in Toronto agreed to perform the delicate procedure (repairing her umbilical cord line).

Pillai never forgot that kindness.

Flash forward to today. Pillai, now 26, is married to Nathan Pillai, and has found success as an artist. Her husband purchased an easel for her, on her 21st birthday, encouraging her to paint. A psychologist, he believes music and painting are good therapy for people.

The Milton woman discovered last year that she's

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