

# Forgotten artist rediscovered by area woman

**KATE GILDERDALE**  
Correspondent

When David Morrison died close to a decade ago, he left a legacy of artwork which has only recently come to light. Lana Black, who bought the house next door to the artist's former home on Musselman's Lake, learned about Morrison from her neighbours. Tragically, he took his own life, leaving behind a wealth of sketches, watercolours, pen and ink

drawings and designs. Although some were removed by his family after he died, many were left in the house, which was demolished at the beginning of September.

"(Morrison's) mother sold the house and everything in it to the present owner eight years ago," said Black. The remaining paintings were stored there until this summer, when the owner removed the entire contents. "I saw this huge painting - it was bigger than a door." Impressed by the work, she talked to the home owner, who told

her it was just one of many. "I asked if I could have some of them and he said, 'Take whatever you want.' There must be 200 pieces." From two full boxes of personal items, which included everything from parking tickets to a resumé, she discovered that Morrison was "a writer, designer and painter in all media and all styles and was also into photography."

Born in Toronto in 1948, Morrison began taking an interest in art when he was eight. He moved to Richmond Hill with his family in 1962 and enrolled at Bayview Secondary School in Grade 9, where he studied art. In Grade 10 he switched to Richmond Hill High School, where he completed his education and studied music.

"High school students were not permitted to study both art and music," he wrote later. "(I) have disliked bureaucrats and rules ever since." After graduating in 1968, he studied photography for eight years, while working at a number of different jobs. He also took many art-related courses including life drawing, pottery and glass forming, which he studied at the Ontario College of Art in 1974.

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His work was exhibited at a number of shows, among them the 1976 Sheridan College Group Show; the Toronto Outdoor Art Exhibition and Art in High Park in 1979; York Studios Group Show in 1981 and 'The Cow Show' at

Studio Gallery Nine in 1982. Black has several of his whimsical cow sketches in her collection, which runs the gamut from stark, sometimes unsettling, realism to impressionism and abstract pieces. While some of the nude studies are almost ethereal in their execution, others are bleak, evoking the suffering brought about by malnutrition and despair.

Although her attempts to locate Morrison's family have been unsuccessful, she is hoping to attract interest in his work. "My dream is to find someone with the vision to help promote (these paintings) and have a big show and justify this man's life - to make something happy come out of this tragedy."

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