



STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHIEDT

Stouffville's Vicky Talwar will be submitting a painting to the Latcham Gallery's juried art show Monday.

Works set to go before Latcham jury

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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Having one's work judged solely on it and not an accompanying resume means a lot to Vicky Talwar, who has been a part of the Latcham Gallery's annual juried exhibition three of the past four years.

This year's show starts April 27 and Ms Talwar will once again be submitting pieces for consideration.

"Just being selected over hundreds of other artists makes me feel great," the Stouffville artist and Unionville art teacher said.

Each judge has their own criteria for what makes a piece worthy of a show.

Chai Duncan, the gallery's curator, is not a judge for this show, but has been on the jury of other exhibitions and said he looks for competency with the medium and "how artful is the context? Does it make me think in an interesting way?"

This year's judges are Katerina Atanassova, curator of the McMichael Canadian Art Collection; Laura Millard, artist and OCAD professor, and Sean McQuay, artist and professor at Durham College.

Last year, about 220 pieces by 118 artists were submitted for consideration. The judges chose 31 works by 27 artists. About five of them were local, according to Mr. Duncan.

A juried art show is geared more towards the emerging

artist and "it's absolutely a great career booster", he said.

It is also an opportunity to network with other artists and gain inspiration.

One local artist who has experienced success with the juried show is Jacquelin Heichert, who had a solo exhibition in the gallery earlier this year.

Ms Heichert first got the attention of former curator Maura Broadhurst when she participated in the Stouffville District Secondary School Images show a few years ago. She then had pieces chosen for juried exhibitions, which was followed by a small group show before going solo.

"That's the kind of story we love to tell," Mr. Duncan said.

The juried exhibition is open to all Ontario artists who work in any medium.

A maximum of two original works completed between 2011 and 2013 may be submitted. They must be exhibition-ready.

The fee is \$15 per artist for gallery members and \$20 for non-members.

Pieces must be dropped off at the gallery, 6240 Main St., Monday between noon and 8 p.m.

The show's opening reception is April 27, 1 to 3 p.m. The juror's talk with Laura Millard takes place May 8 at 7:30 p.m. A \$5 donation is suggested.

For more information, go to www.latchamgallery.ca

Mama Mia!

But Mame is Louise Pitre's favourite role

BY SANDRA BOLAN
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Fantine, Sally Bowles, Piaf, Annie and Donna are just some of the characters Louise Pitre has portrayed on stage.

But it is Mame who resonates most with the Canadian musical theatre maven, who performs at the Lebovic Centre for Arts and Entertainment - Nineteen on the Park Thursday.

"It's a full-on assault on your body. Probably the biggest role in musical theatre for a woman," Ms Pitre said from Halifax, where her husband Joe Matheson is performing in *Legally Blonde*.

"The script is still, to this day, ever so current, full of life," Ms Pitre said of the character she portrayed for four months in Connecticut last summer.

"I know this woman. I'm growing into this woman," she said.

The Stouffville show will be Ms Pitre, pianist Diane Leah and songs from her CD *La Vie En Rouge*, as well as material from Piaf and Gypsy.

While Ms Pitre would be happy with Mame as her swan song, it was *Mamma Mia!*'s Donna that introduced her to the musical theatre masses and garnered the actress/singer numerous accolades, including Theatre World, National Broadway Touring and Dora Mavor Moore awards. She also received a Tony nomination.

Ms Pitre, who has a degree in music education, never set out to be a Broadway performer.

In her fourth year at the University of Western Ontario, Ms Pitre accompanied a friend to an

audition for a musical.

The director asked if she would audition "because you look like you've got a lot of life in you".

How right he was.

But there was no yellow brick road leading her directly to stardom.

Ms Pitre worked as a secretary because she didn't know how to break into the business and she lost her voice, a lot, because she would over-sing.

Flash forward a number of years and Ms Pitre, who belts out *I Dreamed a Dream* with the best of them, turned some of her attention to the small screen.

Her roles included Celine Dion's mother and an appearance in *Flashpoint*.

But don't expect Ms Pitre to give up the stage anytime soon.

"Acting to nobody is very difficult," she said.

"It feels so much less human."

The one gig she would do again, however, is host *Star Portraits* on Bravo TV.

Among all of the reveals, it was the one with Jeanne Beker that resonates most with her because it was "so emotional".

"She was bawling. I was bawling. We had to cut," she said.

Ms Pitre also dipped her toes into the realm of reality competition shows as a judge on *Over The Rainbow* because, in her trademark bluntness: "they paid me a whole lot of money to do it".

Tickets for the Stouffville show are \$35 for adults, \$18 for students and available at <http://nineteenonthepark.com/>

It starts at 8 p.m.

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