

Tapestry

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A MAGAZINE OF QUALITY LIVING IN KING TOWNSHIP



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King's Grazyna Tonkiel

Graceful
Impressions



Music and visual arts motivates King's

Grazyna Tonkiel



BY Mark Pavilons

Operatic arias and graceful impressions of art pencil come together for King's artist Grazyna Tonkiel.

Singing opera and studding nature have shaped and dominated this artist's life. If you watch the beautiful movement of butterflies, you will understand just where Tonkiel derives her inspiration.

She received a Masters in Operatic Performance and Acting in her native country Poland. As a soloist at the Polish National Opera and Ballet Theatre, she won many operatic competitions including The Francisco J. Viñas International Operatic Competition in Barcelona Spain. "Creativity expressed through art has been the dominant force in my life, first as an internationally recognized opera singer, and secondly as a visual artist. Life without this creative expression would not be complete for me, but rather spoiled with feelings of deprivation and stagnation," she says. Music was not the only way she tried to express herself and her expression evolved into drawing and painting.

Throughout the course of her Masters, she extensively studied the history of art. Shortly after arriving in Canada, she joined the Canadian Opera Company Ensemble Studio, and started studying Visual Art at Humber College.

After moving to King City almost 20 years ago, she began drawing butterflies, and continued drawing them ever since. Her works have been mainly sold in Europe where she is represented by a couple of galleries. Her butterfly studies are in private collections in Australia, British Virgin Islands, Canada, England, Holland, Poland, Sweden and the U.S.

"Drawing butterflies allows me to learn from

the world's best designer, nature. The more I study butterflies, the more I am overwhelmed by nature's perfection, as there is never anything to improve or correct." Across cultures, butterflies carry a variety of meanings and different symbolic interpretations: freedom, awakening, transformation, resurrection, rebirth, love, purity, beauty or the soul. "For me they are also mystic creatures. Despite their fragility, they have inhabited this earth for more than 50 million years. I breed and watch them grow in my garden hoping they remain for eternity."

In 2001 she became the curator of the private gallery, Gallery Solo in King City, and organized exhibitions of top Canadian artists, some honored by the Order of Canada. Under her leadership the gallery organized exhibits of tapestry, photography, paintings and sculptures.

As of today Gallery Solo is fully dedicated to her work, and open to the public by appointment only.

Her main artistic interest is now focused on studying and drawing local butterflies. She primarily uses art pencil on paper with gold leaf. Tonkiel has even taken it a step further in her passion for butterflies by learning how to breed them every summer in her King City garden.

G. Tonkiel is on the board of Directors of the Art Society King, as well as the Schoenberg Street Gallery Committee. She is dedicated to the butterfly conservation efforts and is a sought after lecturer about butterflies. She often donates her work to support conservation efforts.

If you'd like to find out more about Tonkiel's work, visit <http://www.gtonkiel.com>, make an appointment, or visit her studio at Gallery Solo during Art Society King April 25th and 26th Studio Tour.

