



Phoebe A. Watson (Canadian, 1858-1947)
"Artist's Impression of the Proposed Civic Square,
Berlin, Ontario", May 1913
watercolour on paper
H 71.5cm x W 101.5cm (framed)
Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery Permanent Collection.

Photo: Courtesy of the Kitchener-Waterloo Art Gallery.

CELEBRATING OUR OWN COMMUNITY CURATOR SENTA ROSS Q+A

What role has visual art played in your life?

I developed an appreciation for art at an early age while looking through my mother's art books, and was particularly attracted to Henri Rousseau's *The Sleeping Gypsy*. Since then, visiting art galleries has been an important part of my life. I am personally drawn to galleries of a smaller intimate space where one can really appreciate the exhibits and collections. After I became a volunteer at KWAG, I found I became especially invested in visual art. Attending the exhibition openings, artists' talks and a variety of programs, as well as getting to know the dedicated and creative staff, has strengthened my appreciation and understanding of contemporary art. I am also a supporter of the Canadian Clay and Glass Gallery where excellent work is continually being done.

What inspired you to contribute as a Community Curator at The KitchenerWaterloo Art Gallery?

I remember viewing the first Community Curator exhibit, curated by Tarin Hughes, in 2010 and I thought to myself, "What an enriching experience it would be to learn more about the Permanent Collection and to work closely with the gallery curatorial staff in the development of an exhibition." Over the years, I have examined the Community Curator exhibitions with great interest and have been impressed with the variety of themes and artwork. At one point I asked myself, "Why not apply to be a Community Curator?" and here I am!

Who are some of your favourite artists?

Jane Buyers, whose 2013 KWAG exhibition entitled *Gather... Arrange... Maintain* captivated me with its beauty and expanse of work. Canadian children's author and illustrator **Barbara Reid**, whose plasticene artwork never fails to delight. **Cathy Ross**,

whose still life watercolours are exquisite in their intricate details.

Portraits: No matter who the artist is, when I look at one I always wonder about the person who is facing me. John Singer Sargent's portraits are particularly mesmerizing. I would have liked to have met Mrs. Allison L. M. Heasley, whose beautiful portrait is on display in the *Celebrating Our Own* exhibition.

How do you want visitors to feel when they walk through your exhibition?

I would like viewers to note the rich history and influence the visual arts have played, and continue to play, in Waterloo Region. I also want the exhibition to acknowledge how fortunate we are to have the KitchenerWaterloo Art Gallery in our community. With KWAG celebrating its 60th anniversary, it is particularly fitting to recognize artists with a local connection, especially since several of them were founders of the KitchenerWaterloo Art Gallery in 1956. The exhibition is also an opportunity to acknowledge the generosity of the artists and private patrons who have donated works of art to the Permanent Collection.

What is intriguing to you personally about the pieces included in the exhibition?

Learning about these artists and how they enriched the visual arts scene either locally, nationally, or internationally has been a fascinating journey. Each individual artist included in the exhibition has made a meaningful and lasting contribution to the vibrant cultural community within Waterloo Region, offering inspiration to those who followed.

Celebrating Our Own was curated by Senta Ross. Senta Ross is a KitchenerWaterloo Art Gallery member and volunteer.