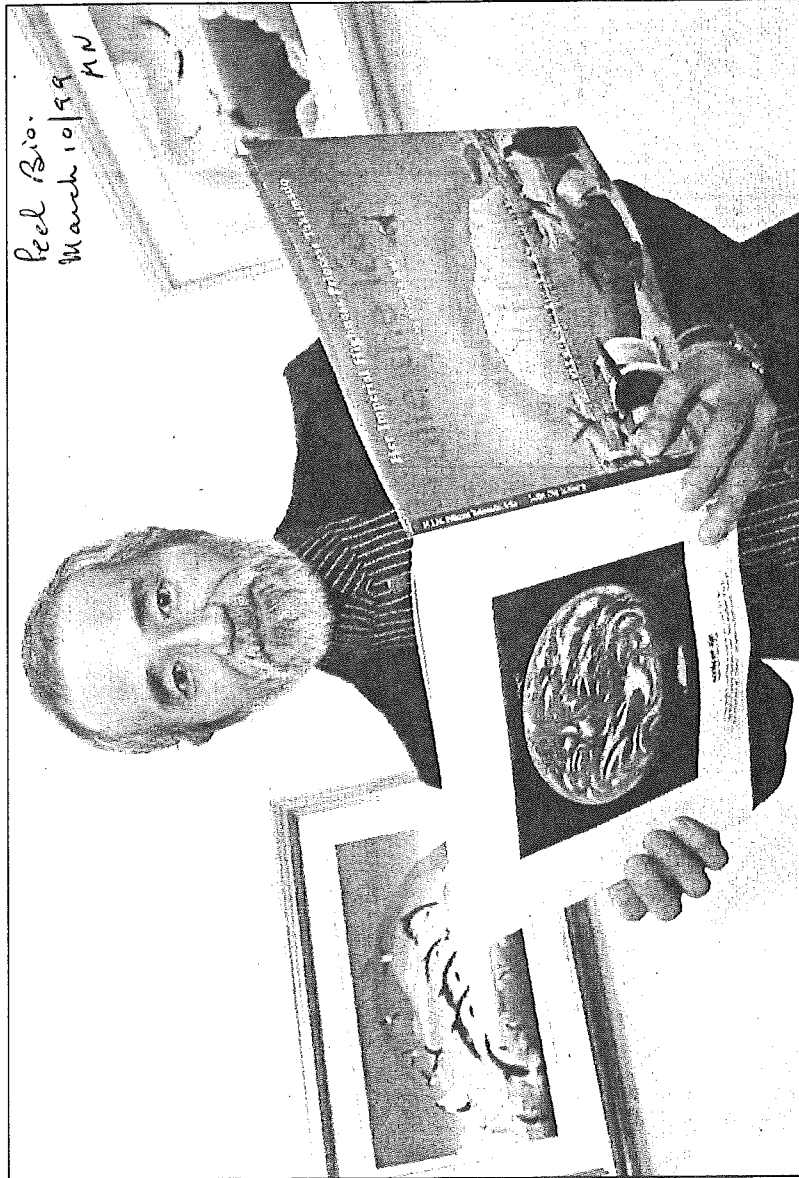


The world of Lulie the Iceberg comes to life in Aska's drawings



Staff photo by Fred Loek
Mississauga artist Warabé Aska was on hand at the Living Arts Centre's (LAC) Laidlaw Gallery to open a show of his original illustrations for *Lulie The Iceberg*, a children's book penned by Japan's Princess Hisako.

With his trademark clarity and vivid, breathtaking colors, Aska was just the man to capture the wondrous colors of the frigid waters, the bold Arctic landscape and the wildlife of the frozen north.

Aska's works already illustrate more than 20 children's books, not to mention a 1995 UNICEF greeting card.

Putting a face to *Lulie the Iceberg* took two years, while Aska hopped aboard an Icebridge cargo ship en route to Baffin Island for inspiration.

It was all a very different situation for Aska.

"I had always had a drawing first and then authors would add text or poems to my work. At first, when the Princess commissioned me, I was a little hesitant," he said.

"I couldn't say no. She was very aggressive. It was a lot of pressure."

Aska lives in Mississauga with his wife and three teenage children. He came to Canada in 1979, arriving in Mississauga in 1982.

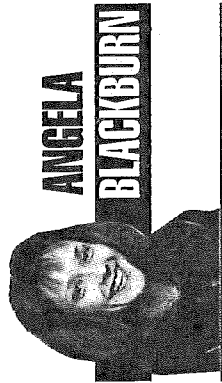
Aska was born Takeshi, which means Samurai warrior, in 1944 in Kagawa, Japan.

Raised by his seamstress mother and his grandmother in the countryside, he later trained in graphic design and fashion illustration to eventually work as a commercial artist in Tokyo.

His first children's book, *Discovering Japan in 80 Days*, was published in 1974.

His 1984 effort, *Who Goes To The Park*, earned a Toronto Book Award. *Seasons*, published in 1990, was nominated for a Governor-General's Award.

Aska has shown his unique work in exhibitions around the planet, from Tokyo to London, including in Spain and Germany.



**ANGELA
BLACKBURN**

Japan's Princess Hisako of Takamado and Mississauga artist Warabé Aska have lots in common.

Particularly Lulie the Iceberg.

Aska, an internationally-known illustrator of children's books, opened an exhibit of his recent drawings last week in Laidlaw Hall at the Living Arts Centre.

On display are 22 oil-on-canvas paintings and drawings that are the pictures for a new children's book penned by the princess — *Lulie the Iceberg*.

The exhibit continues to April 4.

The Canadian launch of the book, LAC's Royal Bank Theatre.

meanwhile, is set for March 28 in the Lulie, it seems, is a globe-trotting ice-berg. Princess Hisako conjured the tale following her travels in 1995-96 to Baffin Island in Canada's Northwest Territories and Greenland.

"I was fascinated by the immense expanse of ice," she said.

"I realized that the energy I felt must be the ancient history that was contained within, seeking release."