

Gun LeynerPeel Biogr.
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Controlled chaos is Leyner's theme

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Special

Mississauga artist Gun Leyner doesn't have a particular object in mind when she starts a painting. She prefers to let her emotions and her brush lead the way.

The results can be seen in Leyner's upcoming show, *From Watercolors to Acrylics*, which opens next Wednesday, Oct. 14 at Etobicoke's Neilson Park Creative Centre.

The exhibition features 32 pieces done in watercolors, acrylics and charcoal. It runs until Oct. 25.

Leyner often starts her paintings arbitrarily with a framework of lines and colors. She then lets that artistic framework sit, sometimes for a month, before she returns to the paintings to see what she can come up with from seeming chaotic lines and colors.

"The paintings very seldom work immediately," said Leyner.

When they do work, some of them evolve into fairy tale scenes like *In the Cave* and *Mystique In The Woods*.

In both paintings the light comes from the back of the paintings, which suggests a world beyond what is seen.

Her other paintings depict formless abstract landscapes that take the viewer into Leyner's imaginations and dreams.

In *October At Bridgewater*, her autumn trees appear as flaming fireballs that are about to burn through the painting.

"It's sort of fun to let things happen," said Leyner. "A little part of me comes through in the work."

Painting accurate reproductions of images is difficult for Leyner.

"I have to be free," she said.

Leyner said this upcoming show will be her first solo exhibit in five years.

"You don't have too many good paintings in a year as you get older," she said. "I would be happy with just one show.

You have no idea of the work involved."

Leyner was born in Stockholm, Sweden where she studied commerce and later worked at the Swedish Red Cross. In 1954, she came to Mississauga with her husband, who opened a subsidiary of a Swedish pharmaceutical company.

In Mississauga, Leyner was a homemaker, looking after her children and the household. When her three kids grew up, Leyner started taking life drawing and watercolor classes at Visual Arts Mississauga.

"I am very fortunate that there are all these workshops where everybody can join," said Leyner. "Everybody is growing. It's important to have teachers who help you find your own style. I've grown tremendously."

Leyner also feels Canadian art has grown since she first came here.

"In those days, in terms of design, Europe was ahead," she said. "It's amazing how Canada has changed."