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Local Gallery hosts the work of Jack Reid

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Special to *The Mississauga News*
Jack Reid can't define art. He
has to paint you a picture.

The well-known Canadian artist is no stranger to success, though. Added to his impressive list of art expos in New York, Mexico, England, Portugal, parts of Canada and the world, Reid brings his new paintings to Mississauga in a solo exhibition at Port Credit's Harbour Gallery, Mar. 4 to 18.

Born in Toronto in 1925, Reid hails from an Irish family of 12. He attended public school but dropped out in Grade 7. He is a self-taught artist with, "no formal education."

Prior to painting, Reid dabbled in graphic design and sign painting and was art director at Sampson-Matthews, a now defunct business specializing in reproducing fine art.

In the 1930s, the company reproduced Group Of Seven paintings for high schools. Young artists looking for jobs would find Sampson-Matthews a good prospect, said Reid.

Reid began painting 20 years ago but he always knew he had an artistic nature. As a boy, Reid received his only lessons in watercolor from Tom Roberts, a volunteer with the Kiwanis Club, who sparked Reid's interest in art. Reid went on to win first prize in an outdoor art show sponsored by Carling Breweries and the Kiwanis Club.

Reid now teaches painting through Trillium workshops in Port Credit. The workshop will send Canadian painters to Britain, with Reid supervising, for two weeks. They will visit places featured in Reid's paintings. Reid is also going to Washington, D.C. this summer.

Reid's medium is watercolor and he has a national reputation for paintings featuring snow. He says he likes to paint snow because it makes him feel peaceful.

"Most people don't like snow, but they buy my paintings," said Reid.

In the last few years, one of Reid's paintings has been added to the collection in the Windsor Castle. Queen Elizabeth II has one of Reid's paintings, part of the Diamond Jubilee Collection, commemorating the 60th anniversary of the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Color (CSPWC). He is also included in the collection of the Savoy Hotel in London, England, which honors their 100th anniversary.

Reid's painting of a, "tree in snow in a field," hangs in the Grill Room over a table that Winston Churchill used to sit at, he said.

It was going to be allocated to one of the suites. However, said Reid, Princess Diana wanted it put there in place of a painting Churchill disliked.

Reid's paintings range in value from \$400 to \$7,000. With success, his paintings have escalated in value. Reid said a painting which previously sold for \$85 is now worth \$1,100.

He believes a real artist has no choice but to create art, like a writer writes or a musician plays. His compulsion to paint is the reason he paints.

Former Ontario Premier William Davis will open Reid's exhibition on Mar. 4. Reid painted for Davis a picture of his family cottage in Georgian Bay as a birthday gift.

Reid can be seen regularly on Rogers Cable television.