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Sakhavarz

Local artist answers the call of the wild

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By PATRICIA FAZZOLARI
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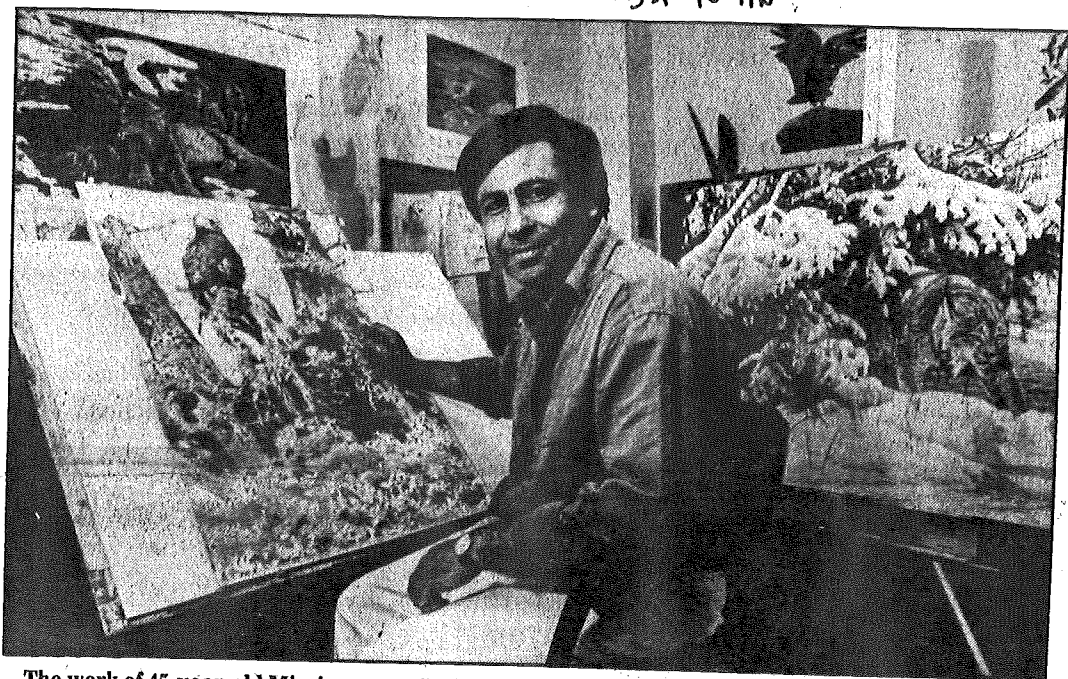
Mississauga artist Alan Sakhavarz is thrilled to be part of one of the most prestigious art shows in North America.

The 45-year-old Iranian-born artist was among 50 other artists from Canada, the U.S., and Europe whose work was chosen for the exhibition, "Wildlife: The Artist's View," which began its tour of America in Wausau, Wisconsin, in early April at the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. The tour winds up June 10 before going on a national tour of six other American states.

Having been selected from 800 artists, Sakhavarz said he's honored to be on the prestigious list.

"It's very difficult to get into the show," he said, adding that it's also a great challenge. The Wisconsin art museum also has an annual bird art show in which Sakhavarz's work has been featured for the last four years and is still on national tour.

The current juried wildlife exhibit features subjects other than birds. Sakhavarz has been among the talented few more than once as his paintings have been on national tour three times. A cacein painting of a Lynx earned him the honors this year. The painting was actually finished a year ago and has already been sold. Other Canadian artists featured in the wildlife exhibit are Robert Bateman, George McLean, Les Perance, and Chris Bacon.



The work of 45-year-old Mississauga wildlife artist Alan Sakhavarz is Wisconsin-bound as his painting of a Lynx earned him a spot in, "Wildlife: The Artist's View," an exhibit which began an American tour in Wausau, Wisconsin.

Staff photo by Rob Beintema

Sakhavarz, a Meadowvale resident, has been painting for over 10 years and it's a fulltime job. Most of his paintings are pre-sold, commissioned by hunters, collectors and large corporations. His limited edition of 500-950 prints, distributed by Mill Pond Press in the U.S., the biggest publishers of wildlife art, is selling well across the U.S. and Canada.

Sakhavarz uses all types of reference materials for his work. He took up photography and does field sketches in parks, zoos, and conservation

areas. He travels quite a bit to gather reference material. Last year, Sakhavarz went to Yellow Stone National Park to take photographs of moose, elk, and antelope. He recently returned from a trip to Vancouver Island where he gathered yet more material for his paintings including pictures of eagles and the rainforest.

Sakhavarz has been painting all his life, although he received his Bachelor Degree in English from Tehran University and had no formal training in art. He is self-taught

and maintains that most professional artists are.

He began doing cartoons and graphic art before finding his niche in wildlife art. He's always loved nature and wildlife and wanted to concentrate on that form of art.

Sakhavarz doesn't have an extensive collection of works because it takes a long time to paint each piece. In a year, he'll complete eight to 10 paintings, including three or four small ones. They range in price from \$3,000 to \$15,000.

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