

Shelburne Art Gallery features watercolour nature paintings in latest exhibit

Written By SAM ODROWSKI

Calling all art and nature lovers!

There's a new exhibit at the Town of Shelburne Art Gallery.

Dr. Wendy Van Drunen, a biologist and natural history artist, took over the gallery with her new exhibit, 'An Entangled Bank' on April 5. It's on display until April 23.

As a scientist turned artist, Dr. Van Drunen's work revolves around botanical paintings that blend artistic beauty with storytelling.

'Her intricate watercolour works showcase the hidden ecological and evolutionary stories of plants - from resilient greenery sprouting through cracks in concrete to delicate wildflowers in the midst of urban landscapes,' reads a press release from the Town of Shelburne.

'Wendy strives to create art that teaches as much as it inspires, transforming a sea of green into a tapestry woven with the unseen tales of plants.'

Before becoming an artist, Dr. Van Drunen spent 15 years studying plant biology and evolutionary ecology. She holds a PhD from the University of Guelph as an evolutionary ecologist and has worked as a researcher and science educator at several universities across Ontario.

When describing her approach to art, Van Drunen says, 'I aspire to use art as a means of science communication, sharing my excitement about botany and nature with those who see these paintings.'

A reception for the exhibit will be held on Saturday, April 12, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m., at the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery (203 Main Street East, Shelburne).

'The Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery is thrilled to feature Dr. Wendy Van Drunen as our April artist. Her exhibit, 'An Entangled Bank,' is a breathtaking fusion, revealing the hidden narratives of plant life in our everyday surroundings. Wendy's ability to translate ecological and evolutionary stories onto canvas aligns perfectly with our mission to showcase professional artwork that resonates with the community,' said Chantel Richards, curator of the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery.

'Since its redevelopment in 2023, the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery has been fully booked, reflecting the incredible interest in local artistry. We are proud to provide a space where artists, educators, and organizations can share their creative works, ranging from historical to contemporary themes. We encourage everyone to visit the gallery and experience Wendy's intricate watercolour paintings while they're on display. Don't miss this opportunity to witness nature through the eyes of a scientist turned artist!'

Dr. Van Drunen recently moved to a small home in Shelburne where she and her husband live with their two retired racing greyhounds.

For more information and to view Dr. Van Drunen's work, visit wevandrunen.github.io.