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Alton Mill artist?s work on display at Shelburne Town Hall Gallery

Written By **Brian Lockhart**

As an artist, Michelle Eissler has always had a unique perspective of the world around her.

You won't find the Alliston-based artist in a pasture with an easel painting a landscape of a bridge crossing a river or a field of sunflowers.

Michelle's paintings are all pure imagination and her inspiration comes from the process of creating a new work.

Michelle's paintings are currently on display at the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery, located at 203 Main Street E., Shelburne.

As a gifted artist, Michelle attended the University of Toronto's Art & Art History program where she won several awards for her paintings. From there, she chose to further her skill set and studied at Sheridan College achieving a three-year diploma in Interpretive Illustration.

After she finished school, Michelle pursued commercial work to pay the bills and completed several large-scale murals for restaurants, drawings for the Globe & Mail, and watercolour and ink work for several other clients.

At the same time, she continued to create her own imaginative work and participated in the Toronto Outdoor Art Fair.

Active in the art community, Michelle is a member of the South Simcoe Arts Council, Headwaters Arts, Art Society King, and the Ontario Society of Artists.

She's also a member of the Southern Ontario Visual Artists (SOVA) group that's running the exhibit she's currently participating in at the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery. The exhibit's theme is ?As The Artists See It? and runs until Aug. 23.

Michelle's choice of medium for her artwork is oils.

?I have preferred this medium ever since I was given a set of French oil paints as a prize during my time in university,? Michelle explained. ?I love the soft creaminess of the paint and the way everything blends so beautifully. I paint rather thin layers of of paint using many colors within one area and almost organically move around the canvas in small patches to really focus on how each colour sits next to its neighbouring colours. I used glazes after the layers are dry and this gives the paint more depth and intensity as well as a glossier finish.?

Michelle's works have a dream-like quality where reality and another world blend together.

?The most unique thing about my work is that the forms are semi-abstracted and fragmented which encourages the viewer to piece together what they are looking at and interpret the forms,? Michelle explained. ?I consider myself a surrealist and my paintings are explorations of reality and how reality is a perspective that no two people see quite the same way. I try not to model myself after anyone else and really stay true to my own philosophies, but I have always admired the work of Modigliani, and Picasso's blue period in particular.?

Michelle is an Artist in Residence at the Alton Mill Arts Centre in Alton, 10 minutes south of Orangeville, where she can be found in her studio several days each week creating new work. Her work is on exhibit on the walls of her studio.

Michelle enjoys greeting visitors to the Arts Centre, and her door is always open. Patrons love visiting her studio to see her work and discuss art. Michelle is welcoming and friendly to everyone who drops by.

She will be participating in the McMichael Volunteer Committee Autumn Art Sale Fundraiser at the McMichael Art in Kleinburg from Nov. 29 to Dec. 1.

Michelle's work will be on display at the Shelburne Town Hall Art Gallery now until Aug. 23.