



## Westmount

Division des événements communautaires  
Community Events Division

### *Pierre Desjardins and Claire Salzberg*

*featured in duo exhibition at The Gallery at Victoria Hall*

*November 26 to December 18, 2008*

The Gallery at Victoria Hall is pleased to feature the work of two Westmount artists – Pierre Desjardins and Claire Salzberg. Desjardins' humorous surrealist paintings and floral designs share the space with Claire Salzberg's ceramic pieces, full of narrative detail that nostalgically captures the feel of people and their neighborhoods. The exhibition runs from November 26 to December 18. The vernissage takes place Tuesday, November 25 at 6 p.m. Both artists will be present.

Claire Salzberg is well known for her ceramic sculpture, characterized by exquisite attention to detail and narrative overtones that speak to a sense of community and history. The exhibition includes 18 works, both two and three dimensional pieces. Many have a strong Montreal theme - *St. Viateur Bagel Shop, Lea & Perrins, or Simcha's Fruit Market*, to name but a few. The artist notes, "The humor and pathos of certain situations inspires me. Friends, family, neighbors, store owners and people on the street are a continual source of ideas." Other pieces provoke a more contemplative mood, such as "An Uphill Climb" inspired by painter Andrew Wyeth's famous painting, "Christina." Constructed of red or white earthenware clay, the sculptures are finished with stains and glazes, or oil paint for heightened colour and detail. Salzberg's formidable body of work conveys both mature mastery of materials and poetic vision.

Claire Salzberg, who originally taught art in New York City and Maine, has been on the faculty of Vanier College for many years. The artist has participated in many exhibitions over the years and was featured on the CBC TV program "On the Road Again" in 2004.

Pierre Desjardins started painting for his own enjoyment almost six years ago and quickly found a calling in the depictions of the whimsical character "Maurice". Desjardins' style is surrealistic, fostering a sense of play and humour. "I have always been fond of René Magritte and his amusing sense of deception," notes Desjardins. "Surrealist artists placed great value on children's drawings and untrained amateur painters whose art sprang from pure creative impulses." At the start of his "Maurice" series, Desjardins articulated the outline of a face and ears. The signature character quickly evolved, however, to a black bowler hat floating above empty shoulders, seen in every imaginable venue from beach and garden to Stonehenge and the local museum. More recently, Desjardins' style has evolved artistically both in colour and composition, often employing impressionistic floral motifs. While Maurice can be seen hiding in the foliage at times, a few of these latter works stand as accomplished still life paintings in their own right.

Following a long career in the insurance business, Pierre Desjardins now devotes most of his time to painting. He has enjoyed considerable success with two exhibitions in Paris and many commissions throughout the world. His work is in many private collections.

Source: Maureen Lafrenière  
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