

Vibrant impressions at Cullis exhibit

Paige Seburn
The Lake Report

The Niagara Pumphouse Arts Centre came alive as visitors gathered to celebrate the opening of Rick Cullis' exhibition on Sunday, which captures the artist's deep appreciation for the town he lives in, its unique landscapes and rich history.

The exhibition, "About Town — My Impressions of NOTL," which opened on Oct. 30, hosted its opening reception on Nov. 3 from 2 to 4 p.m., with Cullis there to share his gratitude for the Pumphouse's support and insight into the inspiration for his paintings.

"I've done a lot of shows. I've helped organize shows, plan shows," he told the crowd of attendees. "Nobody does it better than these folks."

Cullis, who has dedicated over four decades to the art world, spoke about his love for Niagara-on-the-Lake and the inspiration he finds in its picturesque views.

"We've come to learn from walking the town," he said to the audience. "We won the lottery when we



Rick Cullis' exhibit at the Niagara Pumphouse showcases scenes from around Niagara-on-the-Lake. PAIGE SEBURN

came here. This town is just incredible."

During his speech, Cullis shared how he discovers new perspectives while walking, explaining how stepping back from his work allows the shapes to come to life from the blotches of paint he applies — demonstrating how crucial perspective is to his art.

Cullis welcomed questions from the audience, offering insights into his creative processes and the

stories behind his paintings.

In an interview with The Lake Report, he emphasized the personal significance of being an artist in Niagara-on-the-Lake.

The unique history and scenic views are unlike those found in any other concrete-filled town, he said.

"I love this town," said Cullis.

He said he's thankful for exhibits like this for showcasing his art to his community.

"It's a collection of work I'm doing that means something to me — and I'm getting other people to be able to see it," he said.

Residents Kelly O'Connor and Christian Medina attended the exhibit and reminisced about their connection to the Pumphouse, where they held their wedding reception years earlier.

They said they enjoy attending openings featuring new artists.

"There are some really beautiful pieces here. We were just talking to one of my mom's friends who's here, and he said the best part is to look at the art and try and picture where it is in Niagara on the Lake," said O'Connor. "We're enjoying that aspect."

This was their first time seeing Cullis' art, and they wouldn't have had the opportunity if the Niagara Pumphouse hadn't showcased it.

"It's always nice to see local artists," said Medina.

O'Connor said such exhibits draw people in to appreciate the artwork but also promote awareness of local artists.

"I always learn something," they both agreed.

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