

Apsley Autumn Studio Tour 1994-2018

25th Anniversary Edition!

By Molly Moldovan

In my studio sits a wall of stacked boxes, each containing 700 freshly-printed studio tour brochures - finally! Every April the arrival of the brochures brings that same excitement – a new year, a new beginning, a new brochure. From the May long weekend until Studio Tour weekend – September 15 & 16 – those 20,000 brochures will be distributed throughout much of southern, central and eastern Ontario.

It's the 25th anniversary of our tour, and with every year that passes I'm increasingly proud of what we've achieved. The first tour – in 1994 – had very humble and uncertain beginnings.

I credit Ilene Simpson, whose little home-based art and craft shop sat across from the Legion in Apsley, with getting us motivated to organize the first tour. Ilene had the idea of staging a one-day arts event to take place somewhere in Apsley. The few who showed up to meet with Ilene left with nothing decided. Three of us - June Harris, Rosslyn Reed and myself – continued the discussion for days, finally deciding that we should organize a studio tour for our area. We put out a call via the now defunct Chamber of Commerce for artists and artisans who might be interested, and ended up with 16 artists and artisans in 10 locations between Woodview and Lasswade Rd.

With a small grant from the town council, we created our first brochure - a tri-fold 8.5 x 11" flyer that we photocopied – a run of 500 - at the Apsley Chamber of Commerce. 500 brochures – it seemed huge to us! Having no budget at all, we improvised stands for our brochures – wood with cardboard fronts and did our best to distribute the brochures throughout the area.

Due to the miraculous mention of our tour in a column in *The Globe and Mail*, that first tour was an unmitigated success, with hundreds of visitors streaming through our studios throughout the weekend.

Since then, the tour has grown in scope, although not always in size. Our tour is juried, with a view to maintaining a high quality and diversity of work. Through the years, our offerings have changed and changed again as artists joined or left the tour, but the unvarying components have been the quality and interesting nature of the work being exhibited.

Pick up a brochure and see for yourself!

For more previews and information about this year's tour artists, visit us at apsleystudiotour.com. For updates, please follow us on Instagram or on Facebook.

Molly Moldovan is a visual artist and founding member of the Apsley Autumn Studio Tour - now in its 25th year.

Featured works by local artists: On the left, *Turbulent Heart IV*, acrylic/wood painting by Molly Moldovan. Below: *Northern Lights* vases, glass art by Susan Rankin.



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