

Gloria and her creations

by Margaret Gabriel

Think of Gloria Massés' paintings and one immediately sees her mysterious wolves and her oddly touching orangutans.

"It started with snakes. The most vivid memory of my childhood was finding a nest of snakes in the grass, which I put in my pocket and presented to my mother as treasures."

Gloria Massé was born in 1942 in Windsor, Ontario. She moved to Vancouver in 1971. In 1972 and 1973, accompanied by her 10-year-old daughter Cindy, she backpacked to Europe and on to India, Afghanistan, Nepal, Turkey, and Iran. They stayed in India for six months. Following that, she returned to Canada and obtained a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from UBC. After this rather lengthy hiatus she returned to her animals, completing a series of carousel horses ~~pics~~ inspired by the carousel at the P.N.E.

Gloria transformed the horses and added costumed riders. Then came a Canada Council grant and back to India, three more times, with her partner John Calder. The exposure to the art, landscape, costumes, music, ancient cities and villages resulted in paintings of cows, water buffalo and decorated hump-back cattle. Remembering the grass-

es she played in as a child and viewing the grasses around the tea estates she painted works of grasses. In the late '80's she started to paint wolves.

Gloria moved to Gambier Island in 1989. She painted in a rented room in the Pennington's House, then in a room at John Calder's, inside a mosquito tent in summer before getting her own studio, which is situated behind her cottage.

She was prompted to organize the first annual Gambier Island Fine Arts Exhibition, when she realized there were artists on the island no one was aware of. "Like my immediate neighbour **Bruce Erickson**," she said, "who paints oils and carves rocking horses, and my neighbour down the road, **Margaret Terfry**. Many of the exhibitors have had their work shown elsewhere, but here was an opportunity to put all the talent together."



Gloria's works may be viewed at the John Ramsay Gallery on South Granville in Vancouver and at the Sheppard Gallery in the Chateau Whistler in Whistler Village.

She was one of 13 artists featured in "A Child's View", a hands-on art show for children at the Richmond Cultural Centre, just recently completed. As a note of interest this show was curated by the artist **Barbara Greig**, a frequent visitor to Gambier Island who comes here to be inspired and renewed.

Gloria Massé outside her Gambier Island studio. Her work "Snowflakes/Wolves" is from her 1994 collection for IntraWest at Whistler.

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