

# Autumn Colour: Touring for Artists' Studios

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A beautiful autumn day is a great time to drive through the countryside to explore the studios of local artists who are showing their work. This is a time when driving is easy, without snow or ice, but you might be starting to think about Christmas presents. Surely nothing is better for “the person who has everything” than an original, hand-crafted, unique work of art.

If you make a day of it with friends, you'll stop somewhere interesting for lunch or a snack, perhaps to savour local harvest products or homemade baking. Fortified by good food and beverages, you're ready to continue exploring the back roads for hidden art galleries and rural studios.

Many communities along the Escarpment hold studio tours at this time of year. Milton Area Studio Tour offers the work of 57 artists. *Escarpment Views* profiled one of them, **Brigitte Schreyer**, in the premier issue, winter 2008. The Hills of Erin Studio Tour is



Burdette Gallery showcases the work of several artists who are part of the Hills of Erin Studio Tour.

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Beth Grant's jewellery:  
each glass bead individually made.



Jennifer McKinnon turns out wood  
bowls of all shapes, sizes and forms.

Raymond Schindler  
works iron at his forge.

another excellent tour with many artists participating in a variety of media. We featured one of these artists, **Benitta Wilcox**, in our autumn 2008 issue.

### Hills of Erin Studio Tour

A good place to start the Hills of Erin Studio Tour is at Burdette Gallery near Orton, northwest of the villages of Erin and Hillsburgh. Burdette is situated on 65 acres and has an impressive circle of standing stones close to the driveway near the entrance to the property. Four artists are guests for the tour, although the gallery regularly carries work from more than 70 artists.



George Perdue painting the stone circle at Burdette.



**Irene Shelton** is one of these guests. A painter in watercolour and acrylics, she is inspired by landscapes in northern Ontario, but also the west coast of Canada, Arizona and Peru.

She says she responds to the time "when everything connects, and you see more than what's there." As an example, she shows her painting "Totems," which first looks like a northern lakeside. Yet

when she turns the painting on its side, the reflection in the water appears as an image of a fantastically carved totem pole.

**George Perdue** also has works at Burdette but for the tour he's a guest at Paper Daisies Studio south of Erin. When *Escarpment Views* visited Burdette, he was working on a painting of the circle of stones. He paints in oils, with sure strokes that build up



the image until the colours and highlights are just as he wants them. He paints outside year round, preferring his interpretation over what a camera records.

**Raymond Schindler** is a metalworker with a forge near Belwood. Fire glows in his dark workshop near his garden. His son is eager to learn the traditional blacksmithing that Schindler uses to make wrought-iron pieces, large and small. From heaps of old iron stored inside and outside his workshop, he makes customized and unique furniture, trel-



Beth Grant demonstrates the intricacies of making glass beads.



Jennifer McKinnon turning wood at her lathe.



Irene Shelton holding her work "Totems."



An iron bench wrought by Raymond Schindler.

lises, garden arbors, sculpture, shepherd hooks and hardware. Large and small works will be for sale at the tour.

Between Orton and Hillsburgh is the studio of glass artist **Beth Grant**. The bright jewellery she makes is deceptively simple looking, because an astonishing amount of skill and risky work goes into making them. She creates every single glass bead that goes into her beautiful pieces. Working with a flaming torch, she demonstrates how a glass rod is melted and carefully moulded

around a stainless steel core, then placed overnight in a small kiln. For jewellery, the skill lies in being able to reproduce several beads of exactly the same size and appearance.

Turn-of-Fate Studio is not far from Hillsburgh, where wood turner **Jennifer McKinnon** transforms logs and "ugly" pieces of wood into treasures. Starting with a chainsaw, then a bandsaw and finally a lathe, she carefully carves away all the wood that doesn't look like a bowl, platter or dish. Using local wood that she finds or is given to her, she responds to the shape, grain and colour to reveal functional yet artistic works. Hand sanding and polishing with beeswax make these pieces lovely to handle.

The works of several other artists will be available along Erin's Main Street. **Paul Morin** has opened a new spacious gallery where his many abstract and nature paintings are hung for viewing. His pieces are suitable for all price ranges.

"With all my forest scapes you're in the landscape," Morin says. "I dive right into the foliage and paint the flickering light through the trees, capturing a split second in time."

The Porcupine's Quill will be open for demonstrations of old traditional printing and book making, with work by guest artist **Kim Sunley-Harton** on display. She is fascinated by extreme close ups of flowers.

**Sonia Bukata** is a fibre artist on Main Street, creating jackets and clothing out of manipulated

fibres and colourful design. Her guest for the tour is **Kathryn Thomson**, who offers colourful blown glass vases, bowls, jewellery and other works.

With these being just a few of the artists opening their studios, workshops and galleries this fall, art and creativity are flourishing near the Escarpment. ■

### Escarpment-Area Studio Tours

**Hills of Erin Studio Tour**, Sept. 26 & 27 [hillssoferinstudiotour.com](http://hillssoferinstudiotour.com)

**Purple Hills Studio Tour**, Creemore, Sept. 26 & 27 [purplehillstour.ca](http://purplehillstour.ca)

**Saugeen Autumn Leaves Studio Tour**, Oct. 2-4 [autumnleavesstudiotour.ca](http://autumnleavesstudiotour.ca)

**Caledon Hills Studio Adventure**, Oct. 3 & 4 [caledonhillsstudioadventure.com](http://caledonhillsstudioadventure.com)

**Milton Area Studio Tour**, Oct. 3 & 4 [fasm.ca](http://fasm.ca)

**Art in Action Burlington Studio Tour**, Nov. 7 & 8 [artinaction.ca](http://artinaction.ca)

**Around the Sound Artisans' Studio Tour**, year round [artistsaroundthesound.org](http://artistsaroundthesound.org)

**North of 89 Studios**, year round [northof89.ca](http://northof89.ca)