

■ **ARTS PROJECT:** Western sociology professor began painting to balance life

# Latecomer to art world opens solo exhibition

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Ingrid Arnet Connidis may be a newcomer to the world of art, but it allows the 61-year-old university professor to practise what she preaches.

As a researcher in the field of sociology, Connidis knows the importance for people to continue their personal growth throughout their lives.

The proof is in her first solo exhibition, *Taking Flight*, opening Tuesday at The ARTS Project.

"As a researcher (and professor) I study aging and I have found painting a great complement to my work both professionally and personally," Connidis said.

"Professionally, painting has been my way of following through on research that shows the value of expanding our horizons and balancing work with other interests."

It was in that spirit that when she went on a sabbatical to Aix-en-Provence, France, in 1994-95, that Connidis picked up a paint brush and began to explore the world of art.

"I had promised myself before I left for France that I'd take a painting class while I was there and I took this six-day course," said Connidis.

"I felt like I had discovered something about myself and I wanted to continue."

Connidis was hooked and when she returned sought out other artists in the city, learning



**The work of London artist Ingrid Arnet Connidis will be on exhibit March 20-31 at The ARTS Project, her first solo show.**

and refining her craft, joining the "Tuesday night group" and being mentored by former London art-

## IF YOU GO

**What:** *Taking Flight*, an exhibition of the work of London artist Ingrid Arnet Connidis.

**Where:** The ARTS Project, 203 Dundas St.

**When:** Opening reception 6 p.m. March 20 and continues until March 31. Connidis will be at The ARTS Project 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. March 24.

ist Fred Harrison, who now lives New Brunswick.

"It was really a lovely discovery in my life and I've been so fortunate to continue painting," Connidis said.

"There is such a lovely arts community here. I have met wonderful people in the art community of all ages, including some older friends who are terrific examples of how to live life."

Growing up in a family of seven children, Connidis said she never recognized art "as a strength" so never pursued it.

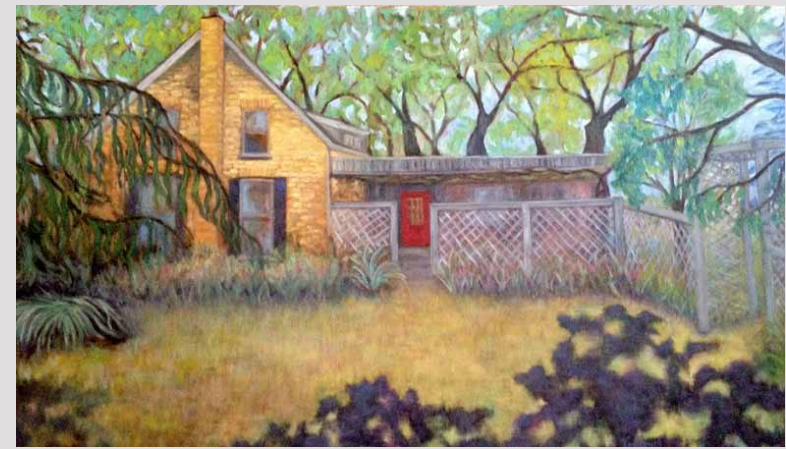
Connidis is the mother of four grown children, married to now-retired Western professor and basketball coach Craig Boydell.

Of her work, Connidis said she is "especially drawn to crows" for their "character, smarts and loyalty to each other" and trees she describes as "wise observers of life."

"Getting ready for a show has made me focus on the process of painting and then letting it go," Connidis said.

"That's a good counter to my sentimental streak about the paintings themselves and I've learned from my daughter, Nora (a 22-year-old University of Toronto English literature major and amateur actress), who has performed some terrific theatre roles, the ultimate case of letting go of an intense period of commitment and effort."

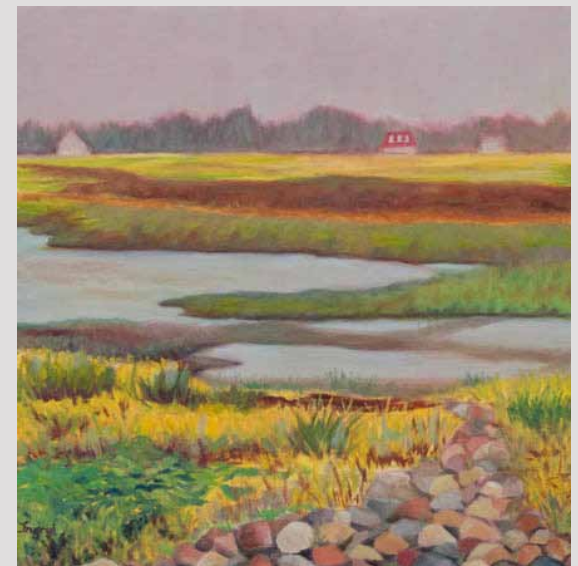
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At Donna's in Delaware, oil, 26 x 45



Gathering at Dusk, oil, 30 x 30



Marhes of Grand Manan, oil, 24 x 24