

# NIAGARA **This Week.**

**THURSDAY**  
MAY 17, 2018

NIAGARA FALLS

\$2.00

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Paul Forsyth/Metroland

Gabrielle Fischer Horvath, who used to live in Niagara Falls and St. Catharines, is shown with her life-sized bronze statue called Niagara at the new Water for Life exhibit that opened at the Niagara Falls History Museum on Saturday night. The international exhibit features 37 artists from 18 countries and is designed to promote the importance of protecting our life-giving fresh water. See coverage on pages 6 and 71.

## WATER FOR LIFE



# Water for Life exhibit opens at history museum

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A huge crowd crammed into the Niagara Falls History Museum Saturday evening to witness the opening of the new Water for Life exhibit, designed to drive home the point that it's vital to protect our freshwater.

No less than 37 artists from 18 different countries, described as internationally renowned, were invited to take part in the exhibit.

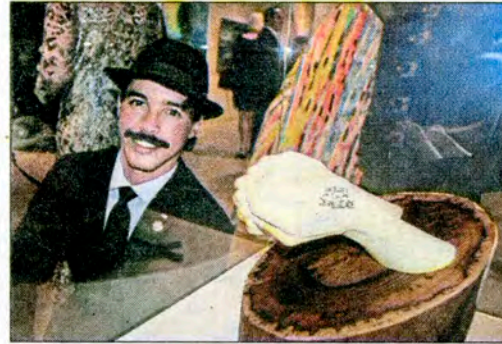
Among them is Niagara Falls native Gabrielle Fischer Horvath, whose life-sized statue of a naked woman holding orbs that looked like water is called 'Niagara' in honour of the mighty falls just a mile from the museum where a fifth of the world's fresh-water flows over.

Clark Bernat, culture and museums manager for the city, told the crowd that one in seven people in the world don't have access to safe, clean water.

"Water is essential to our very existence," he said.

The exhibit at the Ferry Street museum runs until Sept. 9

See page 71 for more coverage.



Paul Forsyth/Metroland

**Clockwise: Rafael Cardona-Acevedo of Puerto Rico is shown with his sculpture using material recovered from the destruction of Hurricane Maria on his island at the Water for Life exhibit opening on Saturday evening. Shibu Arakkal of India is shown with his artwork of the Arabian Sea. The artists are drummed in at the opening; Artists and the public jostle to have their photos taken with Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati and Antoine Gaber, artistic director of the exhibit; Artist Gabrielle Fischer Horvath, who attended Loretto School in Niagara Falls and who has a stunning bronze sculpture at the exhibit, talks with Niagara Falls Mayor Jim Diodati and Antoine Gaber; A painting entitled The Dream of Drinking Life by Brazilian artist Rosae Novichenko shows a baby lying amid rainfall.**





# ARTS & CULTURE

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## Life-giving water the focus of new Niagara Falls exhibit

*Artists from around the world showcase work at museum's 1st international show*

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The life-size woman, sitting naked, has her hands stretched upward with softball-sized orbs of glass in her palms that look like water.

On her bronze skin, droplets of water drip down.

The irony that the stunning creation unveiled at the Niagara Falls History

Museum was created by Gabrielle Fischer Horvath wasn't lost on Horvath.

After all, the former Niagara Falls resident spent some of her formative years going to school at the former Loretto School, overlooking the mighty Horseshoe Falls where water thunders down every single second just about a mile away from the museum.

Horvath, who also attended Denis Morris Catholic School in St. Catharines, is one of 37 artists hand-picked from 18 countries around the world to showcase their art at the museum and to have their say on what water means to us all. Called *Water for Life*, the exhibit was four years in the making and is designed to drive home the point that water is the es-



**Anja Hess of Mexico is shown with her acrylic paintings *Water Reflection* and *In-Between* at the *Water for Life* exhibit Saturday evening.**

Paul Forsyth/Metroland

sence of life and yet one in seven people across the world - more than a billion

souls - don't have access to clean, safe water.

It's the brainchild of in-

ternationally acclaimed Niagara Falls artist Antoine Gaber, who is artistic

director of the exhibit, and cultural promoter Angelina Herrera who personally invited top drawer artists from countries including Canada, the United States, France, India, Greece, Venezuela, Turkey, Argentina, Australia, the Netherlands, Hungary, Mexico, Switzerland, Lebanon, Brazil, Sweden and Spain.

Horvath, who now lives in Brampton, entitled her bronze creation *Niagara* in honour of the mighty Horseshoe Falls she saw each day that she attended Loretto from grades 7 to 9.

"That's what's so incredible: all of a sudden, I'm back as an artist showcasing in a museum," she said at the grand opening of the exhibit Saturday night.

Horvath said Herrera,

● See EXHIBIT, page 81



# Exhibit highlights scarcity of precious resource

● Continued from page 71

who she met at an art show in Italy, urged her to take part in the new exhibit in her old stomping grounds. She jumped at the chance to promote the importance of protecting our water in a location a stone's throw from where a fifth of the world's fresh-water flows over the falls.

"I absolutely love the cause," said Horvath. "For me, this was a natural."

The glass orbs in her sculpture's hands represent water about to burst at any second, she said.

"It's like gratitude with her hands up," she said.

Switzerland native Eric Wursten, who now lives in Spain, had three photos on display: feathered plovers taking off from water in southern Spain, fisherman on a river in Colombia, and a cooling pond for a nuclear power plant near Madrid. He met Herrera at an art show in Florence seven years ago and jumped at the chance to take part in an exhibit about water.

"Water is the basis for life," he said. "Without it there would be no life."

Clark Bernat, culture and museums manager for the city, said

in an interview that hosting the museum's first international art exhibition is a little outside of the box for his staff.

But when Gaber approached Mayor Jim Diodati with the idea, he was confident he could pull it off.

"Bringing in artists from all around the world is wonderful to showcase the power of Niagara Falls to bring people together, but also to bring their ideas from around the world about what water means to a city like ours," said Bernat.

"Every year, millions of visitors come to our city to marvel at the beauty of the falls," he said. "They feel the mist, they feel the power and they can see the majesty of this location."

"The intent of this exhibition is to draw attention to our visitors from around the world and around the corner to understand that water is critical to our future. Where best to examine this but in the global icon of Niagara Falls?"

Mexican artist Anja Hess created two paintings of water, one blue and one without blue. She marvelled at the diversity of the various pieces of art on the topic of water.

"You can see how people from

different societies perceive colour and how they express themselves differently," she said.

Shibu Arakkal, from India, brought a stark image of the Arabian Sea in dark colours. His reason for capturing that sea is simple: the body of water his village lies a short distance from is how everyone from the British who colonized India to the Dutch, Spanish and French reached the

spice-rich country.

"Except for the Mongols and Persians, everyone else came this way," he said.

Puerto Rican artist Rafael Cardona-Acevedo's art was a sculpture of hands cupping water joined with artifacts from the wreckage wrought by hurricane Maria, including a stump of a felled tree and rebar from a destroyed building.

He said half his country is still without power or running water. "But we're doing what we can to try to help each other out," he said. "We're not quitters."

Diodati called the exhibit a "great creation" that reinforces the importance of the city supporting culture.

The museum is located at 5810 Ferry St. The exhibit runs until Sept. 9.



Paul Forsyth/Metroland

**Eric B. Wursten of Switzerland is shown with his three photographs of fishermen, birds taking flight and a cooling pond for a nuclear power plant at the Water for Life exhibit opening on Saturday evening.**