

East-end artist fiddling with new exhibit

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East-end artist Cindy Quayle Hauck has followed a similar path in both painting and music. Her latest exhibit, on display through May 30 at her own Rothwell Hauck Gallery, is a combination of those twin passions; specifically, playful portraits of violins that are both a tribute to the artists of the Old Masters school who have influenced her and the instrument itself

As it turns out, Quayle Hauck was a student of the violin before she became a student of visual art; she began learning the instrument as a second grader. How appropriate then, that she hails from Mason City, Iowa; best known as the birthplace of Meredith Wilson, creator of the Broadway hit, *The Music Man*.



Image supplied

Though art became her focus through high school, Quayle Hauck eventually rediscovered the violin, albeit in a different form, while spending time in the southern U.S.

"I started playing old-time fiddle and I decided I loved it. I never liked bluegrass or anything like that but when I started playing the old tunes in the way there were meant to be played – I studied with a fiddle master – it was so much fun I decided violin doesn't have to be serious."

Fun is certainly a word comes to mind when viewing the paintings; one, entitled 'I'm Too Sexy for my Case,' features a violin on its side, set against a sensuous boudoir background and draped with a negligee.

"It just hit me," Quayle Hauck says. "I started out classical, just like I did with painting. I started out with classic still-lives and then evolved into more fun (work). Isn't that funny?"

Her enthusiasm for this latest series of paintings is palpable in conversation; as is her prolific nature. For now, the new series consists of nine new works, but the artist says there is more to come.

"There's no end in sight for this series," Quayle Hauck promises.

Though she became serious about the violin first, she recalls a very early inspiration for her visual art explorations.

"I remember (being) really young, early on, sitting with my mom at the table and drawing things," Quayle Hauck recalls. "She never considered herself an artist in any way. I was always fascinated at how she'd do faces."

She describes her hometown as a very arts-friendly place; a description she also applies to her schooling.

"When I got into elementary school — it had an arts program — all I wanted to draw was horses," she laughs. "Pretty soon it got to a point where the art teacher said, 'You can do what you want. Except you, Cindy; you can't draw horses anymore.'"

In junior high school, under the tutelage of a "fabulous" art teacher, Quayle Hauck was introduced to oil paint, which remains her medium of choice.

"(The teacher) was very liberal; she really stretched my imagination."

Other of her teachers weren't so liberal; one insisted upon precision and realism.

"But that was okay because that taught me basic form, composition, line drawing."

Since opening the Rothwell Hauck Gallery six years ago, Quayle Hauck has had relatively little time to spend on her own work, with only her Sundays left open for painting.

Still, she says working to further the Ottawa art scene — which she feels is not always appreciated by locals — is worth the sacrifice.

"We have some great cultural stuff going on here. I feel like the tourists know more about Ottawa than people who live here. Do you know how many people I talk to who were born and raised here and they've never been to the National Gallery?"

Cindy Quayle Hauck's new work will be on display at the Rothwell Hauck Gallery (1718 Montreal Rd.) through May 30. For more information, see www.rothwellgallery.com.

-- Steve Fouchard