



From the Arts  
with Nicole Bauberger

## Larger than Life

### Suzanne Paleczny presents portraits of four Yukon artists in her new show

**Y**ou are not alone. Whitehorse artist Suzanne Paleczny's seven-foot tall portraits of three Yukon Artists @ Work members tower from the walls of their gallery's solo show room, almost filling the walls. : Joyce Majjski, Donald Watt and Paul Baker seem to gaze at you from the oil paint.

Paleczny has both created and curated her show, *Artists At Work*, which you can see until July 3. Along with their portraits, Paleczny displays artwork made by the artists depicted.

She has installed Baker's metal sculptures on brown wooden crates, arranging them artfully to display his welded metal wrench-birds at different levels.

Gallery audiences rarely see Watt's *papier-mâché* models for the enormous snow sculptures he designs. Here, Paleczny offers them to the viewer on snow-white stands. She also hangs two of Majjski's caribou prints in progress from lines with clothespins, as they would have been hung to dry in the printmaker's studio.

Paleczny has written artist's statements that introduce the show and each painting. She has read and thought deeply about art, craft and the way they embody a kind of knowing, quoting from Martin Heidegger, Karl Marx, Indra Kabis MCEwan and Theodor Adorno.

Each painting's text ends in a series of questions which invites viewers into further contemplation.

The whole show represents a carefully crafted body of thought.

*Artists At Work* is a serious contribution to the conversation about art and society in the territory, specifically the role of Yukon Artists @ Work, itself. It's also generous for an artist to so deeply feature the work of other artists in a solo show.

But this show delights on other levels as well.

The brushwork shimmers – different colours reflected off of the different surfaces appearing in the tones of the faces and in light caught around the edges of forms.

Each painting invites you into the artist's workplace.

Baker stands in front of his glowing forge, silvery dents on his anvil. A bird with saw blade wings perches on his gloved hand. One of his sculptures on display near the painting stands in progress in a clamp behind him.

Watt's red Skookum parka pops against a wall of snow, a layered complexity of whites, pale yellows, blues and grays, his snow tools ready.

Majjski's canvas has been extended to show her whole printing press, its silvery cylinder catching the wintry light from the window behind, the radial lines of its crank tying the composition together.

Artwork by all four artists throughout the gallery can also be found throughout the gallery space. And you can always meet artists working their shifts at the Yukon Artists @ Work Gallery. The cooperatively run business relies on its members' volunteer hours to remain open. The show *Artists At Work* adds a new dimension to this opportunity.

The day I visited, Majjski herself was working on the desk.

A viewer exclaimed, "That looks like you!"

The live artists are happy to answer all your questions.

Meet these larger than life artists "at work" at the Yukon Artists @ Work Gallery on Industrial Road in Whitehorse until July 3, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily.

**Nicole Bauberger is a painter, writer and performer living in Whitehorse. Find out where you can see her work at [www.nicolebauberger.com](http://www.nicolebauberger.com)**

*Paul Baker, top, Joyce Majjski, and Donald Watt and seem to gaze at you from Suzanne Paleczny's seven-foot portraits on display at the Yukon Artists @ Work Gallery until July 3.*

PHOTOS: courtesy of Suzanne Paleczny



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