

Fraser River Winter II

Learning is a life long journey and humans have an innate tendency to be curious and strive to understand our surroundings by experience, exploration, and through the sharing of knowledge. Many consider that post- secondary education is primarily a route to obtain an improved socio -economic status. However, education means much more to me as it has provided many skills that have enhanced my personal journey. Education has not only allowed me to obtain a career that provides me with the necessities of life, it also continues to provide me with an environment to explore my potential through creativity.

I have worked as a Registered Nurse since 1985, but have always had a passion for creating art. After a day of caring and making critical decisions for people, I embrace the healing of creation. Being an artist allows me to experience and problem solve in a different manner from my work environment. I do not consider my art to be decorative or pretty. It is a manifestation of my experience, memory and existence. My painting, *Fraser River Winter II* reflects this. My art class has provided me with new pathways to gain different perspectives in how I experience the world. For example, my assignment inspired me to explore the potential of landscape painting, so I set out to sketch the Fraser River this winter. I sat in solitude on the slippery, cold rocks of the river's edge surrounded by cold snow and ice. The sun provided some hope as it peered out occasionally from the clouds as I observed the round grey rock forms in a frozen embrace of dormant plant life. Clumps of cruel ice clung to this earth and vegetation. The ice became a life form as it's loud cracking and shifting reminded me of the transient power it possessed. However, closer observation revealed beautiful ice crystals that conveyed a special opulence. I then had an epiphany that even a cold, ordinary place can have beauty and relevance if we are open and tolerant.

My art education has allowed me to see associations that others may not consider. For instance, the intrigue or beauty that a frozen rock landscape possesses. I attempted to convey the beauty of this transient moment with colour, pattern and mark making. From my perspective, the patterns in the rock cracks and waves created by time and forces of nature are metaphor of life. Although we may endure elements of struggle through our experience, it is the documentation of the journey that provides relevance.

Being a nurse and artist are symbiotic as this relationship empowers my roles through creative problem solving and by critical thinking. Learning is a complex and ever evolving process, and halting it would be giving up on the journey. Education is much more than the transformation of knowledge and skills that enable the student to achieve a career. It is the sum that becomes greater than the parts.