



📁 People & Events

## ARTIST PROFILE: Amy Montgomery

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Successful graphic designer and photographer Amy Montgomery was looking for a challenge. "I accidentally started painting. It was not unlike when someone decides to try knitting or something like that," she says. "I was thinking I might like to paint a couple of Christmas gifts or fill a wall in my dining room."

Montgomery hadn't painted since university, but this time she couldn't stop. "I had this desire to create and explore something hands on, rather than observational like visual photography," she explains. "I felt like I had to get it out of my system. I was nearly obsessively painting and painting, trying to teach myself something new and craving the creativity that comes with that."

For one year, Montgomery painted exhaustively, sometimes through the night. Wondering what she would do with all the art, she shared her work on Instagram. Then something wonderful happened. Shane Norrie, an established Canadian artist, became interested in her work, and asked Montgomery to submit paintings for the April opening of his Stratford gallery, Shane Norrie Contemporary.

"I wasn't sure if I was ready for that, I needed that affirmation to take it to the next level and it really propelled me to try painting bigger and more confidently. It's amazing when people come alongside of you in life," she says.

It's been an exciting ride for Montgomery being represented by Norrie. She met the first couple to buy one of her Muskoka landscape paintings "" *The Point* "" an abstract with bold brushstrokes. *Stay A While*, her first painting to hang on a gallery wall, was also sold. "When I finished it back in March, I remember feeling more than any time before, that a piece of me had been poured into that panel," she says.

*First Light*, an exhibition of Montgomery's recent paintings and Shane Norrie's ceramics, is at Shane Norrie Contemporary, located on 61 Albert Street, Stratford, Ontario. The opening reception is on Saturday, October 1 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. with both artists in attendance. *First Light* continues until Sunday, October 16. Twelve of Montgomery's contemporary abstract paintings "" acrylic on canvas or wood "" are on display.

Painting has opened up many opportunities for the Burlington resident, but supporting her community remains a priority. For the last three years, she's volunteered at Oakville's Kerr Street Mission soup kitchen, washing dishes. She also donates artwork to fundraisers including the Kerr Street Classic Golf Tournament and Joseph Brant Hospital Gala. "I'm keen to be purposeful with my work and if it means I can give back to these organizations that do so much for our community, it's very gratifying," she says.

Muskoka is Montgomery's second home. It's where she met her husband, her family cottages and where she creates contemporary art with a nostalgic feel. Her subjects include nests, moose, flowers and her favourite trees. "I'm a tree girl and it always circles back to trees partly because it's a subject to play with light. That's really what I'm looking for in every scene. I show that light is hitting, and how I translate that in a meaningful way is what challenges me," she explains.

Becoming an artist has been a three-part process. "Those building blocks of working with shapes and composition in graphic design and then looking at objects and light in photography "" that's huge in my paintings," she says. "I wasn't aware of that in university. As I was getting my degree in art and even though all those years I wasn't painting, I think I was growing as a painter and now these play a key role in my work."

For more info visit: [amymontgomery.com](http://amymontgomery.com) or [@amymontgo\\_art](https://www.instagram.com/amymontgo_art) on Instagram