

## Diversity in sculpture

SSBC exhibit at VanDusen has 20-plus artists.

The annual summer exhibition of the Sculptors' Society of British Columbia opens July 30 at VanDusen Botanical Garden, with more than 20 artists taking part.

The society includes new artists as well as established sculptors whose work is featured internationally and in British Columbia. The theme of New and Classic is well represented by the participating artists, who include Jewish community members Suzy Birstein and Jesse Rubin.

Having just unveiled a monumental statue of Pope John Paul II for the Catholic Church, Louise Solecki Weir will be exhibiting a selection of her smaller figurative and portrait pieces. New member David Dumbrell will be displaying his piece "Namaste," the latest in his series of quirky automata (mechanically driven moving figures), in action in the foyer of VanDusen.

Jean-Guy Dallaire will be on location with bronzes and plaster creations, and "workshop/play school" for young and future sculptors – his original work

is also currently featured in the 18th Annual Peace Arch Park International Sculpture Exhibition. And, inspired by the garden, Sculptors' Society president James Fletcher will be demonstrating his creative process in public by creating a new work in stone using only the traditional hammer and chisel.

Rubin's hyper- or super-realistic small-scale sculptures showing the anatomy and fantasy creatures will once again be featured in the VanDusen exhibit. His recent work includes "Man Walking Pet," which is just 21.5 inches tall, created using resin and acrylic paint.

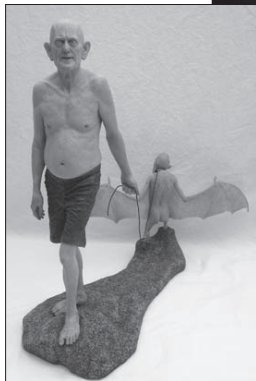
Birstein, known for her figurative mythical life-size ceramic sculptures, will have colorful and delightful creations from her "Tap to the Muse" series at the VanDusen show, on parade among the herbs within the garden.

Her most current work is inspired by her ongoing fascination with ancient and folkloric world cultures, primarily from Greece, Spain, India and Southeast Asia: sculptures in the form of Centauris (female centaurs) and female figures in narrative dresses inspired by Velasquez's "Las Meninas," or ladies in waiting. She also has been working on a series of expressive figurative paintings – oil on canvas – inspired by the sculptures.

"These pieces will soon be represented in a prominent online and brick-and-mortar gallery in Chicago, where they will be in very good company!" she said. (For information on workshops taught by Birstein this summer, see Community Calendar.)

The VanDusen exhibit will feature sculptures in a variety of styles, as well as many different materials, ranging from metal and lead crystal glass to wood, marble and terra cotta. In addition, there will be daily demonstrations from noon until 4 p.m. beside the glasshouse. Other participating artists include Ati Ahkami, Kathi Bond, Sylvia Escobedo, Anyuta Gusakova, Sam Michael Hesse, Gordon Humeny, Richard Marcus, Golschan Massah, Colleen McLaughlin Barlow, Dona Nabata, Mischa Pertsev, Bob Rangno, Linda Schmidt, Ron Simmer, Cliff Vincenzi and David Walker.

The opening reception at VanDusen runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on July 30, and special admission (\$5.75) or membership is required to attend. The exhibition runs at the garden from July 31-Aug. 3, 10 a.m.-8 p.m. For more information on the Sculptors' Society and all of the participating artists, visit [ssbc.ca](http://ssbc.ca).



Above: "Notorious" by Suzy Birstein.

Left: "Man Walking Pet" by Jesse Rubin.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARTISTS

– Courtesy of Sculptors' Society of British Columbia

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