

Lindsay artist pens award-winning book

BY CATHERINE WHITNALL

Karen Richardson has won numerous awards for her skills as an artist but never thought her ability to put them into words would lead to literary prizes, as well.

The Lindsay artist's book, *Watercolour Toolbox: Essentials for Painting Success*, has won a bronze medal in the non-fiction home/crafts category, as well as an illustration award, via the Readers' Favourite Book Awards.

It's not the first time her book has captured top honours.

Earlier this year, the book was a finalist in the Next Generation Indie Book Awards and a bronze medal winner in the How-To category at the Independent Publisher Book Awards. Both were held in New York City and attracted thousands of entries, worldwide.

Artistic all her life, Mrs. Richardson parlayed her talents into a career in 1986 when she opened an art business and continued to satisfy her creative side while vacationing with her husband, John.

During the 18 years she ran her business, she also took art classes, staged solo shows and participated in juried group shows. Many of her paintings can be found in private collections in 19 countries.

When her husband retired 10 years ago, Mrs. Richardson decided to close her business. The decision afforded the couple an opportunity to travel

more extensively and Mrs. Richardson to delve into art, full-time.

Not long afterwards, she learned a gallery in Whitby was looking for a teacher with a watercolour background.

"I never thought about becoming a teacher, but I soon discovered I had a bit of a knack for it," said Mrs. Richardson. "I really like being able to impart that common sense wisdom...I've never been one to guard my secrets."

But the more students Mrs. Richardson taught, the more she found she was repeating herself when it came to some of the technical challenges with which her students grappled.

"I joked about becoming a broken record," she said, noting it was her students who suggested she write a book. "It was a good idea, but I thought, 'where's the time?'"

Then one fall, while on vacation, Mrs. Richardson caught herself jotting down a few

notes.

"In a few months, I had a manuscript."

Mrs. Richardson published the book herself, seeking out a publishing house to assist with "the rest."

"I'm really pleased with the response. It gave me an opportunity to reach a worldwide audience," continued Mrs. Richardson who is still teaching and hopes to open a classroom in her home.

She wouldn't mind writing another book; a follow-up would definitely be linked to her travels.

"Maybe something about painting in the RV," she quipped.

Mrs. Richardson looks forward to attending the Miami Book Fair International, running Nov. 16 to 23, where she will receive her most recent awards. For more on the artist and her book, visit www.karenrichardson.ca.

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• International awards keep pouring in for artist, painting instructor and author Karen Richardson, and her art instruction book *Watercolour Toolbox: Essentials for Painting Success*.

Readers' Favorite Book Awards announced recently that Richardson's book was a Bronze Medal winner in the Non-Fiction Home/Crafts category



and an Illustration Award Winner. The awards will be presented at the annual Miami Book Fair International in November.

Earlier this year, *Watercolour Toolbox* was a Finalist in the Next Generation Indie Book Awards and a Bronze Medal winner in the How-To category at the Independent Publisher Book Awards, both held in New York City. Each of these competitions attracted thousands of entries worldwide.

Watercolour Toolbox is filled with simple solutions to universal challenges that watercolour students face, based on Richardson's years of teaching watercolour, and illustrated with 40 of her own paintings.

Lindsay artist, Karen Richardson, is headed to Florida to accept the bronze medal she won in the Readers' Favorite Book Awards for her *Watercolour Toolbox: Essentials for Painting Success*.

CATHERINE WHITNALL/THIS WEEK

