



# A TABLE FOR TWO

THE ART OF HENRY & GEVEE BOUDREAU

CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY  
JANUARY 28 - APRIL 1, 2022



[WWW.CBU.CA/COMMUNITY/ART-GALLERY](http://WWW.CBU.CA/COMMUNITY/ART-GALLERY)

# A TABLE FOR TWO

THE ART OF HENRY & GEVEE BOUDREAU



# INTRODUCTION

## BY THE AUTHOR

**I've always believed the artists of Nova Scotia, and of Cape Breton Island, create some of the best folk art in the world. I bought my very first folk-art painting from the back of a pick-up truck in Mahone Bay, N.S. in 1994. Since then, I've added paintings, hooked rugs, whirly gigs, flying cows, sculptured pigs and other quirky pieces just because they made me smile.**

As an artist, I love and collect folk art for its sense of humour, its depiction of everyday life, and for its vibrant colours. With good folk art, if you look closely, you can see the artist in the piece; how it was carved, how it was painted, how it was nailed or glued together. With really good folk art, you can also see and feel how the artist saw and experienced life on the Canadian east coast.

Throughout my life, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton Island in particular, has always been one of my favourite places to visit. In the summer of 2017, my husband and I were in Nova Scotia visiting family. I first saw Henry and Gevee Boudreau's pieces online. Knowing we were going to be spending a few days in Cape Breton, I had googled "folk art for sale Cape Breton island." Up came a few photos of pieces that immediately captured my attention because they were not just of one object, but of a whole scene. And the figures were carved with so much detail. They were at a level of skill, realism, imagination and quality that was unprecedented. I had to see them in person.

Arriving at local antique enthusiast and folk-art collector Lionel Boudreau's home (no relation) in Petit-de-Grat, Cape Breton Island, my husband and I were led inside. The pieces were in glass display cases with glass shelves, filled with various East Coast scenes in many sizes. He turned the lights on. We were captivated.

**Michelle Boyer**  
January 2022

# A TABLE FOR TWO

THE FOLK-ART LOVE STORY OF HENRY AND GEVEE BOUDREAU



**When you look closely at the little characters working, playing games or just going about their lives, you can't help but experience a fleeting moment, forever frozen in time.**

To engage with the faces of each small figure is to hear the laughter over a game of cards, smell the cold salt air, sense the hopefulness in catching enough lobster or fish for the day, or feel the weight and pride of a hard day's work at the forge. And through the exacting detail set out in each scene, the viewer can easily see what Henry saw. You are

captivated, compelled to imagine what likely happened just before, and just after that moment, seeing the movement of the characters, hearing their voices, relating to their expressions. And with a talent like this, you can also see the artist's sense of humour, pride and love for this place he and his wife called home.

Unlike other folk artists on the main road who were able to use their homes and yards to promote their art, you'd never know some of the best pieces in Canada were being carved and painted in the tiny home with a shed out back, within the small Acadian island community of Isle Madame,



Henry's father had carved too, mostly sailboats. Following in his father's footsteps, Henry starting carving fishing boats, but lighthouses were his speciality. After creating many pine plaque carvings, Henry and Gevee moved on to creating intricate scenes with little people that depicted Cape Breton life, and reflected Henry's life experience. It was this well-worn experience that allowed him to create scenes and people so realistic, so believable, so magical. Every piece was unique; no two were ever the same. "I never make the same piece twice," Henry said. "I like to keep my mind active."

off the coast of Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, far from any tourist trail. Aside from a simple mailbox, you'd never know who lived there, and you'd certainly never know that day in, day out, through every season, folk-art carvings were being quietly and passionately created at a table for two.

In later years, he was often asked by friends to carve something for them. He rarely did. He said it had to have been something he had seen or experienced for it to be able to come to life. The works were labour-intensive. Henry would take a solid piece of two-inch pine and draw his vision on that square block. He would imagine what it should look like and just start chipping away. Small pieces often took up to 20 hours to carve while larger ones could take 40 or more. He could remember each detail of a scene. "When you live it, it is easy to visualize what to put into a piece."

▼ *Subject: Henry's father's early works*  
*Year: Approximately 1975*  
*Materials used: Wood, paint, rubber and wire*



Henry and Gevee were shy, quiet people, never promoting their work, never realizing in those early days just how talented they were. Henry didn't care about the art market; he created just for himself. He often said of their crafts, "I want you to smile every time you look at it and count on never getting tired of it."

Henry and Gevee prepared for the once a year local flea market and jamboree down the road from their home on Janvrin Island. They would set up a table to sell their carved and painted plaques, along with large lighthouses and sometimes boats. All weekend long, tourists and locals would come to the flea market held during the day, and the music at night. Sometimes Henry and Gevee would carve and paint all year and only sell one plaque. Sometimes there were no sales, or, Henry regretfully sold pieces to antique dealers for pennies on the dollar with large promises of future sales that never materialized. But Henry always knew they were worth more. He always hoped that year might be different.

It was in 2003 their work came to the attention of local folk-art enthusiast Lionel Boudreau (no relation). Lionel was racing through the tables, seeing what new artists and works had been created over the winter. Henry's table stopped him in his tracks. Chatting with Henry that day, Lionel fell in love with their art and their story. He called his long-term friend and fellow art collector Binney Parsons over to the table to look at Henry's carvings. He too thought their work was incredible. Lionel bought the two pieces Henry had left and began a friendship that would last the rest of Henry's life. Lionel quickly became the couple's biggest fan, offering to buy and hold onto every craft they made so they could afford to live as artists, without worrying what might or

might not sell – a gift few artists receive. Lionel helped throughout the next decade by supporting and encouraging their work, buying supplies and helping where he could. But most importantly, he believed in them and offered the most important gift of all, his friendship.

Henry was born on February 25, 1951 in West Arichat; Gevee, on the outskirts of the coal mining town of Glace Bay on March 29, 1949. They had both grown up on Cape Breton Island.

Both in their 40s and having been married and widowed before, Gevee recalls how they met at a dance in Grand Anse on September 19, 1992. Neither had planned to go to but for some reason, were drawn to attend one Saturday night. To this day, she believes fate brought them together. After dancing the night away, it was love at first sight and they were engaged within three days. Three months later, on December 1, 1992, they were married, taking on the challenge of joining their two families and becoming a household of 11 overnight. Henry had three children aged 16, 18 and 20, Gevee had six children aged 6 - 23. Gevee said they stuck together and survived many hard years. Through it all, Henry was a romantic, always leaving Gevee love notes around the house, always making special gifts for her, sometimes even carving "I love you" into that night's mashed potatoes.

Henry started carving soon after they got married. The first piece was completed in October 1994. It was a cabin cruiser with two figures that represented them. He also carved a woman knitting in a rocking chair, a woman baking bread, a woman washing clothes on a scrub board, all of which could have been sparked by stories of Gevee doing those chores in the 1960s, or seeing the older generation doing it.



▲ *Title: Sow and two cubs*  
*Year: 2004*  
*Materials: Pine board and paint*  
*Dimensions: 9 x 11 inches*

Between 1994 and 2013, approximately 500 pine-carved plaques and 500 intricate scenes with figures were created.

As much as Henry loved the idea of working together on the crafts, Gevee wasn't as keen at first. Among other things, she had a household to run and a garden to tend. While he loved carving, he greatly disliked painting and was constantly asking Gevee to paint his craft for him. She pushed back at first, reminding him it was his art, make it unique! But seeing his frustration over time, seeing how it was affecting his carving and realizing "he just didn't have the magic for it," she finally agreed. As an experienced oil painter, she knew oil would

take too long to dry on these tiny pieces, so she began experimenting with enamel paint and found a way to mix colours for the desired effect. Henry always said it was Gevee's skill with painting the figures, all the little details and even the floors that made each of his carvings come to life.

From then on, Henry and Gevee's relationship was not only of a marriage and the joining of two families, but also an artistic partnership, each having key roles in the creation of each little scene. Gevee recalls how Henry would have an idea, or they would talk things through and come up with ideas together. Then they would write down all the tiny components needed to create the final piece.

Henry did all the carving using a simple knife, with Gevee at the small kitchen table in the winter, spring and fall, and outside in the summer in the garage he built himself. Curious neighbours wandered in to have a visit and watch him carve whenever they saw the large garage doors open. Henry was known to say, "If my hands are busy, my mind is occupied. Whatever you do, don't tie my hands, I'll be lost." Henry's hands were large, and his fingers were cut and scarred from years of carving but this gentle giant would work away, carving pieces so small he could barely hold onto them.

Gevee would sit inside at the kitchen table with her painting cart beside her, carefully mixing paints to get just the right colour and applying them in a way that added a dimension to the carvings that made the scenes that much better, that much more magical. Then, together at their small kitchen table, listening to the oldies on the radio, chatting, laughing or sometimes just working for hours in a comfortable silence, Henry would sew clothing for each little person using free material from the bags Gevee had collected. And to make each detail perfect, each little character needed different types of clothing. Hair was sometimes furnished by their cat.

They had originally started with pine wall plaque carvings. Most plaques were eight inches by 12 inches, but others were a smaller size. Gevee would sketch a picture, Henry would carve the lines of the sketching, and then Gevee would paint them. But, Gevee recalls that the plaques of the scenes she had sketched were too easy for Henry to carve and didn't take him very much time. This resulted in a pile of plaques at her end of the table and a backlog of painting

work. After creating nearly 500 plaques together over a period of two years, she had had enough. At her request, they focused more on the theme of little people in their daily lives.

They made pieces that depicted Henry's childhood, stories from elders and events from people's daily lives, in pioneer or modern settings. Later, he added ideas from Gevee's childhood and present-day activities he saw her doing around the house. He had a lot of material to work with having been employed as a grave digger, brick layer, lobster fisherman, fish plant worker, carpenter, highway worker and undertaker. He also enjoyed creating animated scenes from his favourite sports: hockey and wrestling.

By 2006, Lionel and Binney were representing them and selling scenes with the little people for them at the Lunenburg Folk Art Festival, a five-hour drive from their home. If there weren't enough carvings to fill the table, Lionel would add pieces from his personal collection. With Lionel's help, the couple developed a small but enthusiastic fan club of locals and tourists who were early to recognize their talent and bought many pieces over the years. When buying a new piece, these fans would tell Lionel that anything that lifts your spirits is worth having in your home, and that every time they would pass Henry and Gevee's little folk-art scenes in their home, it would make them smile. "I like to do things that others appreciate," Henry often said.

Henry was a character. He never had a shirt on, even on the coldest days. Henry used a scroll saw and a hand drill for making pinholes to attach arms, elbows and ankles along with a thumb cut knife, hand saw and exacto knife.



He was a self-proclaimed perfectionist, but believed “there is always someone better than you are.” For him, it had to look right, not matter how long it took. He didn’t create to please buyers; he only created to please himself. The little people and the scenes had to look exactly the way Henry thought they should look. And if they didn’t, he would start over again. “I want you to see what I see, I want to show you my world.”

In 2008 Henry suffered from depression and stopped carving for more than a year. It was only after a close friend lost his wife and asked Henry to carve a blue angel of her for him that he was able to begin again. In 2013, Henry’s health started to decline and worsened until his passing on January 15, 2016.

Henry and Gevee’s relationship was one of enduring partnership, and they found a true friend in Lionel. In addition to his ongoing encouragement, love and support over a span of more than a decade, when no one else would, he bought every piece they produced at whatever price Henry wanted, no questions asked. In that way, Henry and Gevee were able to keep doing what they loved.

This exhibition highlights a portion of Lionel’s collection along with some of his photos. It also includes a selection of works from Gevee’s private collection, the table at which they worked and some of their work tools. More than anything, it has been Lionel’s dream to see Henry and Gevee’s work recognized, and for Gevee to finally “see their name in lights.”

▼ *Subject: Plaque of the Lord*  
*Title: Sacred heart*  
*Year: 2000*  
*Materials: Pine board and paint*



▼ *Subject: Plaque of a unicorn, Untitled*  
*Year: 2000*  
*Materials: Pine board and paint*



▼ Title: *Gevee painting*  
Year: 2004  
Materials used: *Wood, paint, fabric, hair and wire*



“Gevee was painting at her easel. This is how I picture her. She loves to paint and she’s good at it. I always say that without her painting, the works are nothing.”

Henry



# AN INTERVIEW WITH GEVEE BOUDREAU

## THE CREATIVE PROCESS

**MB:** Who came up with the theme ideas for the little people scenes?

**GB:** In the beginning, the ideas were Henry's. Mostly about his childhood, stories from elders, events from daily lives of people, in pioneer or modern settings. Later down the road, he added ideas from my life, childhood and present day. Some ideas came from sporting activities such as hockey, wrestling and others. Some were political ideas which were humorous or making a statement. Some carvings were made for family members, personally, and that included Lionel.

**MB:** What was the process of creating a piece?

**GB:** When we began a theme, Henry would describe in detail what he saw in his mind. He wrote down all the pieces he would need. I could visualize what he was seeing. We were both very good at visualization. Sometimes, he felt something was missing from the theme. We discussed what would be the right thing to add. Sometimes, I had a feeling something was off. We would talk about it. Most of the time we would come to an agreement. If not, we would put it aside and work on something else. Mostly we agreed, after all, he was the one who had to shape that reality into existence. Sometimes, I would ask him if he had any colour in mind on some pieces. If yes, he would want a certain colour brown, I would make different shades of brown to choose from. Most of the time, he left all the painting decisions to me. We were both satisfied with the finished product.

**MB:** What kind of paint did you use?

**GB:** I would buy small cans of enamel paints of different colors and the white paint was a main mixer in making light colours. I would save little medicine bottles to put mixed colors in them for ready paint. I would mark the caps of each colour. Also, I would have a gallon of white flat paint for primer which I always called whitewash, a nickname from Tom Sawyer's story of whitewashing the fence. As enamel paint was hard on my brushes, I was in constant need for new ones, especially the fine detail ones; which were hard to come by. My daughter who did a lot of travelling, kept an eye open for them. As I wasn't into the internet, Lionel got me a good deal on large stack of brushes online.

**MB:** Did you sketch out the themes for each piece in advance?

**GB:** We did not do sketches on the themes. The only sketches that I made were drawn on small blocks of wood. Usually an animal in a certain pose which he shaped with his carving. All those requests were made by Henry. Sometimes, we used some of my own personal sketchings for a theme.

**MB:** Where were all these pieces created?

**GB:** We created at the kitchen table mostly. Henry was always in one spot, at the end of the table. As for myself, I was in two spots. At the end of the table, I would paint the majority of the pieces and hang them on poles or stick them with beaded common pins and put them on a board that was drilled with holes that fitted the beaded heads. Sometimes, I would be painting the pieces of three or

four themes. Sometimes five, but that was pushing it. So, if my end of the table was filled, I would sit by Henry, do more painting, and keep adding to the collection of drying pieces. I would have to remind him to make floors for them which was not his favorite thing to do. Once I got the floors, I would design some tiles to be carved. Mostly I just painted the floors on my own that would follow the pattern of the themes.

**MB:** Where did Henry work?

**GB:** In the summer, Henry would do his carving in the garage which he built. The old gents from the neighborhood would stop in when they saw the doors wide open, one by one. As they talked, he continued to carve. I would stop in to see if any pieces were ready, or bring him a drink of ginger ale. He would talk about the stories the men talked about....sometimes he was forming an idea....many times I would wake up and find him in the garage with the door closed, chipping away.

In the fall, winter and spring, we did the work inside at the kitchen table. He tried to work out in the garage in the winter, but it wasn't insulated enough. He bought a pot belly stove, but even with the added heaters he minded the cold. As his health was slowly declining, he stayed inside more and more. I would then bring wood to him to measure and I would cut them with the table saw in the garage. With those chunks of wood, he would use his scroll saw for fine detailing. Although he sat at the same spot at the table, I would move the table because he loved to watch the hummingbirds come to the feeders at the kitchen window. Once they were gone, I then moved the table with his back to the window.

**MB:** Did you listen to music or talk while you worked?

**GB:** Mostly we listened to the oldies on the musical channel. We talked about many things, mostly about our daily life. He had stories galore to tell, sometimes they were about his life, or of people who were in his life and their stories. I love listening to him, he made me laugh, sometimes hysterically so.

Sometimes, I would break the silence and suggest what to cook for supper. He would say, "Woman stop reading my mind," to which I replied, "Stop putting those thoughts in my mind!" It was a standing joke with us.

## THE LATER YEARS

**MB:** I understand there was a time where Henry stopped carving.

**GB:** Yes, in about 2007 he stopped carving. He was burnt out. This led him into depression. The crafts were left unattended on the table. This went on for about two years. The doctor prescribed anti-depressants. I tried to help him in his depression, like getting him out of the house, attending family gatherings, he would go but wouldn't stay long. I took the crafts off the table and put them away. He didn't even notice. With this weight on my shoulders, I tried to stay positive and keep things functioning.

**MB:** When did he start carving again?

**GB:** In the end, it was an old friend who convinced him. One day, a friend who came down every summer to his cabin came to visit Henry. The friend had lost his wife recently, and asked Henry to make a blue angel to represent his wife for his car. We had done many crafts for this man. He told his friend, he would think about it. No sooner was the man gone, he started talking about making the

angel, and asked if I would I find some light blue material. He went out to the garage, found a piece of wood, measured it and cut it on the saw. He brought it into the house and started carving. It was good to see the spark back in his eyes. He resumed carving, and finished off the last themes from the last time. I cautioned him to take breaks, so he didn't have a relapse. He went on carving for a few more years.

**MB:** What happened next?

**GB:** His health was declining. He had COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease). Henry had another problem; his hands began to shake. At first, it was slowing down his carving but he continued to carve for a little while. His breathing got worse, so I was back and forth to the hospital. Then one night, he fell and broke his hip and he was in and out of the hospital after that. I stayed with him at the hospital, going home for a day to get some sleep, a shower, and clean clothes once a week. My family were keeping things going for me and bringing home cooked meals for both of us. This all happened from April 15, 2014 to his passing on January 15, 2016.

**MB:** How many carvings with figures do you think were created?

**GB:** It's hard to say how many pieces were made in total. I have a book of the amount made after Henry's two-year depression. That total was 456, not counting the ones not finished. So approximately from 2002-2003 to 2013, I would say 1,000 pieces were created, about 500 plaques and 500 scenes with figures, maybe more. To this day, I am haunted by one elusive craft and wonder where it is, a gent playing a fiddle sitting on a chair, he was sold to a buyer here on Janvrin's Island.

## GEVEE'S ROOTS

**MB:** Can you tell me more about your family and where you grew up?

**GB:** On the outskirts of a coal mining town of Glace Bay, Nova Scotia; I was born on March 29, 1949. I was the last and ninth child of Francis and Ida Gillis. My father was a coal miner and as the saying goes, the breadwinner of the family. In those days, a coal miner's wages were a poor man's wages. He would play the piano on the weekends for weddings and family gatherings for extra income. My mother was a great cook and baker. There would always be a large pot of soup at the back of the coal stove and plenty of homemade bread. We never went hungry and we were all brought up in a strict but sheltered homestead.

Most of my growing years were spent in the woods behind the house. During the summer time I would go about 2 miles to climb the tallest tree, sit for hours watching nature unfolding in front of me. At the same time, I was sketching kids cartoons and would watch art programs with different mediums. My older brother who had a paying job at the telegraph office saw my interest in art. He bought me a paint by number picture kit with oil paints. It was my first experience with painting. I was amazed by the different shades of a colour, then another colour. The painting went on the wall in the living room. A large picture of a fisherman in a rowboat in a storm.

My school years were harsh because I was hearing impaired and in a hearing school. I had been in a car accident when I was 4 years old, caused my hearing to dim by the time I was 8 years old. When one was different, you would be targeted to be bullied by the kids and teachers. I left school after finishing grade nine to

be a housekeeper, later training to be a hairdresser which I really didn't like. It was my mother 's choice, something to fall back on hard times she said. I left home to be married when I was 18 years old and I ended up being a widow at 26 years old. I moved to Ontario and lived there for 10 years. There, I met my second husband. That relationship ended in divorce. I had 6 children by then.

**MB:** What is your ancestry?

**GB:** Mi'kmaq is in my family on my mother's side, Blackfoot and Metis were on Henry's side through his father, and possibly his mother, too.

**MB:** Did you do crafts/painting before you met Henry? If so what kind of art did you create?

**GB:** I've done mostly oil paintings since my twenties. Music and painting helped me during difficult times, but I would only paint castles, different castles from all over the world through photographs. I made my first garden [vegetables] and helped my sister whom I was living with build a garden with many varieties of blooms. It was a total success. Once, I sketched the yellow house next door, colouring it with coloured pencils and presented it to the woman who was the owner. She had it framed and hung above her fireplace mantle. I did not pick up the brush again until about 1993. I also did poster work for advertising for many businesses.

I remember in my life, a time of strife when I was bullied and beaten in elementary school, there was a school art competition. I did a village during the Acadian times with pioneer settings. Fine detailing was done with colored pencils. The judges said my work and another student's work were tied as winners. Both of our pictures were displayed in the halls of the school for many years. That was one of my proud accomplishments.

**MB:** Have you done any crafts/art since Henry's passing?

**GB:** No, I haven't done any painting after Henry's passing. My hands are in constant pain from a mixture of arthritis, carpal tunnel syndrome and nerve jolting in my fingertips caused by my diabetes. Although I keep buying brushes and tubes of oil paints and canvases. If I feel the urge, I can hold a brush for about 5 minutes. I am involved with many groups of spiritual people from all over the world and have inspired many of them to fulfill their passions with artwork, writing, dancing, etc. and help to make a better world.

## ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

**MB:** What does this exhibition of your and Henry's work mean to you?

**GB:** People often thought Henry did all the work including the painting for the longest time. Did it bother me? Yes and no, mainly I don't like being in the limelight although Henry always corrected this assumption. Sure, I like to have credit for my work but it is the spotlight that I dislike. This exhibition will be challenging for me. Crowds cause me to have anxiety. I am going because I want Henry's art to go up in the lights and be remembered for his talent as a carver. As Lionel says, I am just as important to the work that we did. Since I must conquer my fear of crowds, I might as well accept the credit due to me.

Another reason for this exhibition is a personal one. When I met Henry in the beginning, I saw that he had many enemies, very few close friends. Even my family and friends were against our relationship. I stayed by his side no matter what. Our first year of marriage was about adjustment. Always provoked in society, which resulted in fistfights. I took a stand in this matter, by stating I won't tolerate the fighting. I told him you can be just

as effective by using a verbal response, politely as possible. Be the bigger man, don't stoop to their level. He has used this tactic and felt better about it. As time passed into years, some of the people in the community watched him change and had come to respect him. I want people to know he was a good man with a sense of humour, a family man and a great husband and team player.

**MB:** What do you think would Henry say about it all?

**GB:** As a class clown, he would jokingly say "I had to be dead to get any recognition," or something similar to it.

Seriously, about this exhibition he would say, I am glad you are getting the credit due to you. I was his best friend, lover and soulmate.

**MB:** Lionel has helped to make this exhibition possible. When did you meet, and what has he meant to you and Henry over the years?

**GB:** I do not know exactly what year we met Lionel. Lionel says 2004 according to his records. Henry knew Lionel as you would acknowledge one living in the community. There were other men who approached us on being a go between or the middleman with our crafts. They were not consistent with it. At the beginning, it was a slow process, getting to know each other. He was consistent. Lionel came often to either buy a craft or just come up and watch us working on a craft or take pictures. We talked about a lot of things under the sun. We were getting used to Lionel coming here, it was the beginning of a trusted friendship. Lionel has helped us in so many ways unimaginable. For that we were grateful. Henry, always the class clown, had done so many tricks on Lionel, that he would not forget the way Henry told him a story that had him in suspense which ended in laughter.

We surprised Lionel with crafts made from his daily life with himself and his family. That was our gift to him. Lionel stuck by us, even throughout Henry's depression. He checked in with us from time to time. Then Henry went back to carving in 2009 right to 2013. His health was spiraling downwards. For two years, he was in and out of the hospitals. Lionel visited us at the hospital because I practically lived there with Henry in his room. Still to this day, Lionel keeps in touch with me and has helped to set this exhibition in motion.

**MB:** What is one thing you'd most like people to know about Henry?

**GB:** He should not be judged by his past, everyone makes mistakes. He had an inventive mind, was a great improviser and had a wicked sense of humour. There was a gentleness in his heart which many have not seen. Very romantic...a great storyteller, a good listener and a loving and loyal family man. To me, personally, he was my soulmate.

**MB:** And what would you most like people to know about you?

**GB:** For myself... quiet, hardworking, friendly and very spiritual. Many think it is a religion, it is not. Yes, I am connected to God but not in a biblical way. Temporary on this earth plane, I am a spirit having a human experience for soul growth and help to bring love and light into the darkness of the world.



▲ *Subject: A Table for Two*  
*Henry and Gevee's kitchen table and workstation*  
*Materials: Finished and unfinished pieces including Coal Miner, Boy pulling hair, Henry's mother playing bingo, Boy feeding dog. Also seen, Henry's knife, carving tools and the carved decoy, "Lucky Seagull."*

▼ *Subject: Henry and Gevee at the table*  
*Title: A table for two*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Wood and paint*  
*Dimensions: 8 inches long x 4 inches wide x 4 inches high*







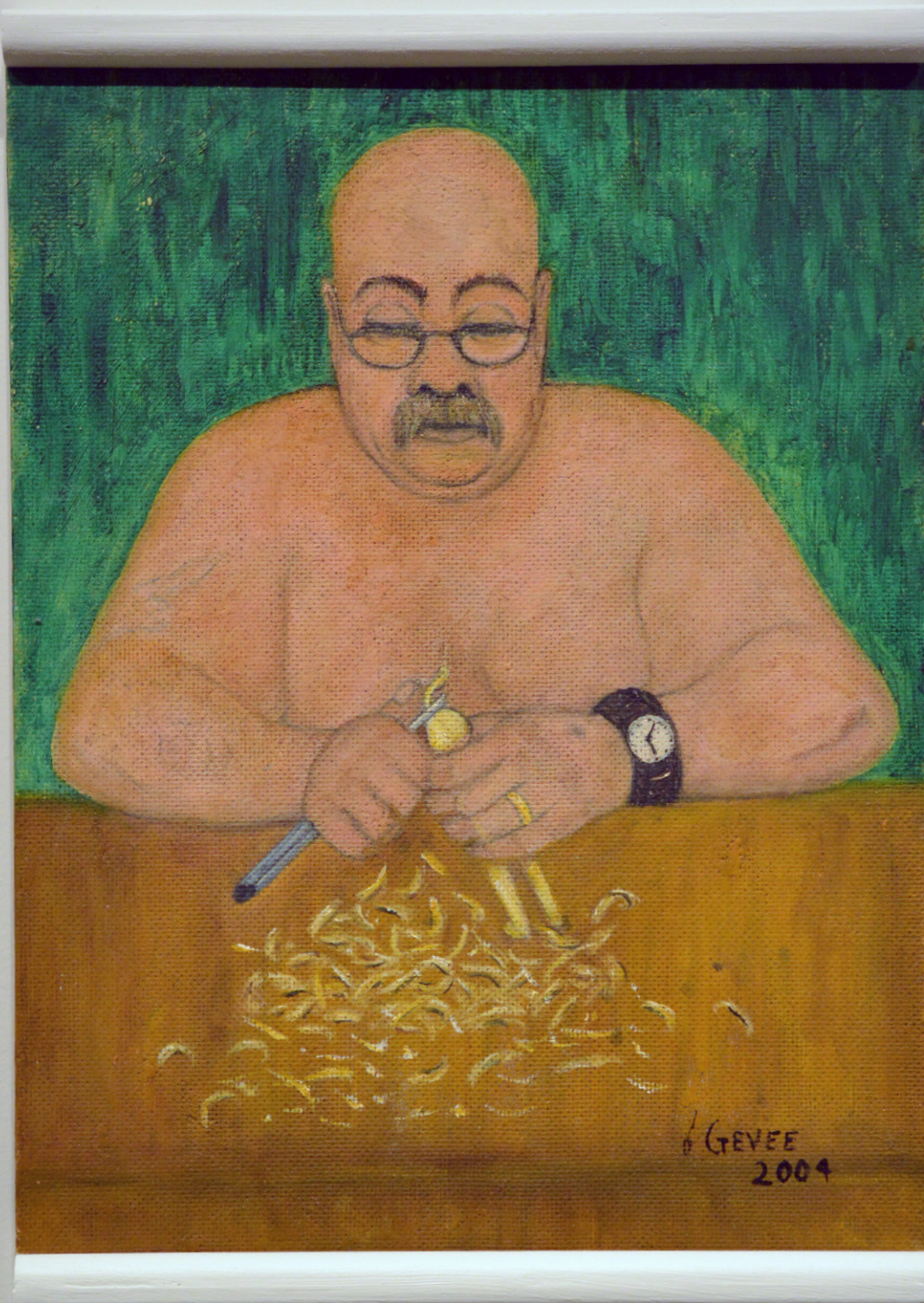
▶ *Subject: A gift from Henry*  
*Title: I love you*  
*Materials: Pine board and paint*  
*Year: 2003*

◀ *Gevee's painting box*



▲ *Subject: Gift from Henry to Lionel*  
*Title: Lionel's family making a snow bunny*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Wood, paint and wool*





▲ Title: Gevee's painting of Henry  
Year: 2004  
Materials used: Particle board and paint



▼ Title: *Father and son duck hunting*  
Year: 2007  
Materials used: *Wood, paint, fabric, hair, wire and leather*

▼ Subject: *Local politicians*  
Title: *Flushing our promises*  
Year: 2007  
Materials used: *Wood, paint, wool and paper*



▼ Subject: *Lobster feast*  
Title: *What a treat*  
Year: 2013  
Materials used: *Wood, paint, fabric, hair and wire*



▼ *Subject: Card players*  
*Title: Friday night at Lee's*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*





▼ *Subject: Sidney Crosby playing hockey,  
practicing on a dryer  
Title: Sid da Kid  
Year: 2009  
Materials used: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*





## Beaver Pole

This piece of wood was found on the shore. Every inch of it was chewed. What a beautiful texture. Gevee's idea of the life of a beaver is brought out on the stick by the scene she has painted. Because of the great significance of the beaver, this [was her] way of honoring him and his importance to the animal world. Henry said this was too hard to carve. "Once the salt gets into it, she's done for."

▲ *Title: Beaver pole*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials used: Wood and paint*



▲ Subject: Gangster scene  
Title: Gangsters, assassins, "Make my day"  
Year: 2006  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric, hair and metal





▲ Title: *The Silver Savages Verses Salt and Pepper*  
Year: 2006  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and wire  
Dimensions: 21 inches long x 16 inches wide x 10 inches high



▼ *Subject: Boy with wasp nest*  
*Title: Anybody home?*  
*Year: 2012*  
*Materials used: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*  
*Dimensions: 6 inches high*





▲ Subject: Girl with cat and milk bottles  
Title: Fluffy, scam!  
Year: 2009  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair

### King Lionel the Great

Henry called [and said] that he had a secret project on the go. "I want you to come over because I've got a surprise for you, but you have to go along with me."

Ok Henry.

When I arrived, Henry said, "I need you to kneel down on the floor and close your eyes." When I opened them, there was Henry with the crown and sword in his hand. "I dub Thee, King Lionel The Great." I lost it. I fell down laughing. Hilarious. Geveee, you gotta get a shot of this. It's a left handed sword. If you use the right hand, the names are backwards.

From the notes of Lionel Bonobono



▲ *Title: King Lionel the Great*

*Year: 2007*

*Materials: Wood, paint, cereal box and rope*

▼ *Subject: Baseball scene*

*Title: Holy smokes, 95 mph*

*Year: 2005*

*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and an old ironing board*





▼ *Subject: Cowboy on horse*  
*Title: OK Jack, let's go find the bad guys*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Wood, metal, leather, hair and paint*



▶ *Title: Fox lady*  
*Year: 2006*  
*Materials: Wood and paint*

▼ *Title: Friendship is like a chain*  
*Year: 2006*  
*Materials: Wood and paint*

◀ *Title: Native Chief*  
*Gevee's personal collection*  
*Dimensions: 10 x 16 inches*  
*Materials: Pine board and paint*  
*Year: 2003*



▼ Title: Rita MacNeil  
Year: 2004  
Gevee's personal collection  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric, wire and hair  
Dimensions: 6 inches high



▼ Title: Stompin' Tom  
Year: 2004  
Gevee's personal collection  
Materials: Wood, fabric, hair, wire, paint  
Dimensions: 6 inches high



▼ *Subject: Girl combing hair*  
*Title: So what do you want to be when you grow up?*  
*Year: 2013*  
*Materials, Wood, paint, fabric and hair*



▼ *Subject: Bed and piggy bank*  
*Title: Now I have enough for my kitten*  
*Year: 2011*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*





▼ *Subject: Boy shaving*  
*Title: Dad, is this what toilet paper is for?*  
*Year: 2009*



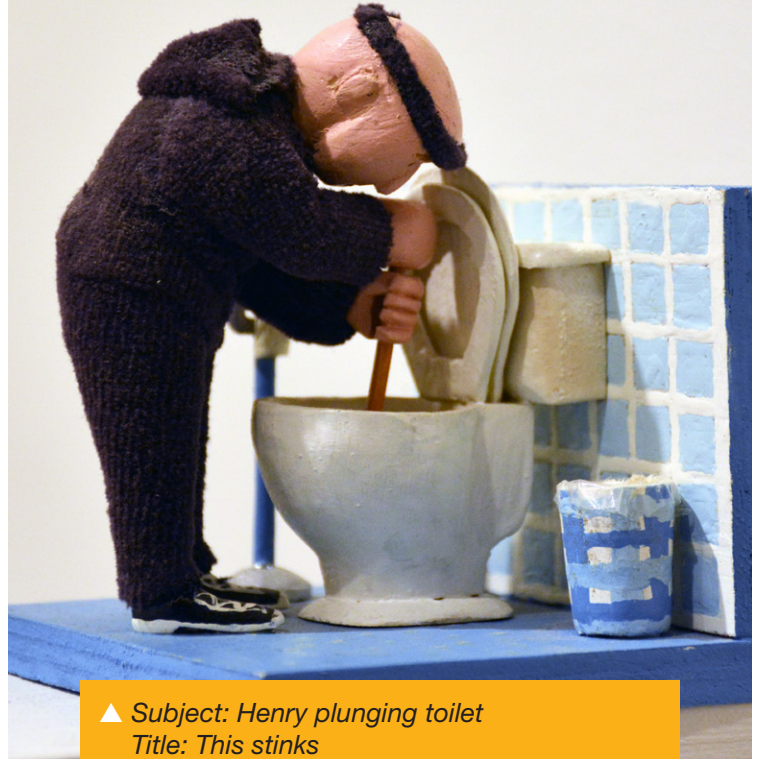
▼ Subject: Hockey player Brad Marchand  
Title: The honey badger  
Year: 2011  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair



▼ Subject: Hockey player Sidney Crosby  
Title: What a wonderful feeling  
Year: 2011  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair



▼ Subject: Canadian flag  
Title: Very proud Canadian  
Year: 2012  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric, rope and hair



▲ Subject: Henry plunging toilet  
Title: This stinks  
Year: 2009  
Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair

▼ Gevee's personal collection  
Materials: Pine board and paint  
Dimensions: 10 x 12 inches



▼ Subject: Coal miner  
Title: Dad hard at work  
Year: 2013  
Materials: Wood, paint, leather, fabric and hair



▼ Title: Time waits for no one  
Year: 2006  
Materials: Wood and paint



▼ Title: Good day  
Year: 2006  
Materials used: Wood and paint





▲ Subject: Small carvings, unfinished  
Year: 2006  
Materials: Wood

▼ Title: Private, do not look  
Year: 2004  
Materials used: Wood, popsicle sticks,  
fabric, leather and paint  
Dimensions: 4 x 5 x 7 inches high



▼ *Subject: Wiping butt with promises*  
*Title: Paul and sidekick*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*





▲ *Subject: Boy stealing pie*  
*Title: Take that you scoundrel!*  
*Year: 2011*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*



▲ *Title: Four seasons*  
*Year: 2005*  
*Materials: Hat box, paint*  
*Dimensions 18 inches wide x 12 inches high*



▼ *Subject: Boy feeding dog*  
*Title: Speak! Speak! Good Boy!*  
*Year: 2013*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*



▼ *Subject: Boy with tongue stuck on pole*  
*Title: Oh no!*  
*Year: 2013*  
*Materials: Wood, paint, fabric and hair*

# ADDITIONAL THANKS FROM THE GALLERY

This catalogue accompanies the exhibition A Table for Two, curated by Greg Davies and presented at the Cape Breton University Art Gallery (Sydney, Nova Scotia) from January 28 – April 1, 2022.

Many thanks to Deanna Manolakos (Gallery and Collections Technician) and Emily Ramsey (Gallery Intern), for their assistance with the exhibition design and installation.

A special thank you to Gevee Boudreau for allowing us to showcase their work, and for her participation and help in making this exhibition possible.

The gallery sincerely appreciates the efforts of Lionel Boudreau who over many years captured the photos and stories of these pieces in varying stages during their creative process, always knowing their work was something very special. It is what remains of Lionel's personal collection that has made this exhibition of Henry and Gevee's work possible.

And finally, to our guest author Michelle Boyer, thank you for capturing the story of Henry and Gevee, and for volunteering to create this catalogue to accompany the exhibition, A Table for Two.

## CAPE BRETON UNIVERSITY ART GALLERY

1250 Grand Lake Road  
Sydney, Nova Scotia  
B1M 1A2

902.563.1342  
art\_gallery@cbu.ca



[WWW.CBU.CA/COMMUNITY/ART-GALLERY](http://www.cbu.ca/community/art-gallery)