

AGA Reception
[AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY]

Before I get to the body of my remarks, there's someone in the crowd I would like to recognize, one of our City Councillors, Susan Myers. Susan is a life member, former board member and a tireless advocate and supporter of the Art Gallery. By rights, she would probably be more deserving of speaking to you than me, but she made the selfless suggestion that I should deliver this greeting instead. Thank you Susan for this opportunity and for all the work you do on behalf of the Art Gallery.

On behalf of the Office of the Mayor, City Council and the City of Sault Ste. Marie I'd like to welcome everyone to this special exhibition reception and anniversary celebration.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Art Gallery of Algoma. Congratulations to the gallery, its board, staff, members, volunteers, patrons and supporters on reaching this milestone.

For forty years, the Art Gallery of Algoma has served as a keeper of the public trust and as a steward of culture in Sault Ste. Marie. The gallery now curates a significant permanent collection of works, with a combined value in the millions of dollars. As we look ahead to the future, I have full confidence that the Art Gallery of Algoma will remain a vital pillar in our community, as it continues to fulfill its mission to celebrate culture, educate visitors and enrich lives through the visual arts.

I'd also like to take this time to welcome our guest of honour, Dr. Roberta Bondar. Dr. Bondar, for many years you have served as an inspiration not only to the citizens of Sault Ste. Marie but to all Canadians. Your achievements in medicine, science, photography, environmental advocacy and of course, as Canada's first woman in space and the world's first neurologist in space, have made you a shining representative for our community. We were delighted when you served as Sault Ste. Marie's honorary ambassador for Celebrate 100 in 2012, and we are thrilled that you are able to join us and speak with us about your art tonight.

We are very proud to have Dr. Bondar's photography exhibition, Dreams and Realities, Human Sensitivity of Place, on display here at the Art Gallery of Algoma. I would like to offer my thanks to Patricia Bovey from the Buhler Gallery who is the curator and project lead for the exhibition. Thank you very much Patricia for your assistance in bringing Dr. Bondar's work to Sault Ste. Marie. I would like to acknowledge the participation of Canadian artist Carole Sabiston whose work is also displayed as part of this exhibition.

I would also like to acknowledge Dr. Bonnie Patterson and Dr. Betty Roots who are here in attendance from the Roberta Bondar Foundation. Dr. Patterson and Dr. Roots, thank you for making the trip from Toronto. We are very glad to have you with us at this event.

To everyone in attendance, thank you very much for being here and for supporting arts and culture in Sault Ste. Marie and area. I know it will be a great evening, and I'm looking forward to enjoying the rest of the reception with you!