

*“A COLOURFUL LIFE – the art and drawing of Josh Silburt”*

Art-Square Gallery

334 Dundas St. West, Toronto

*October 7 – November 4, 2013*

This press kit contains:

- Invitation
- Art exhibition overview
- Weekly event synopses

For more information about Josh Silburt, please visit

[www.joshsilburt.com](http://www.joshsilburt.com)


For further information, contact:

**Jill Spitz, Publicist**

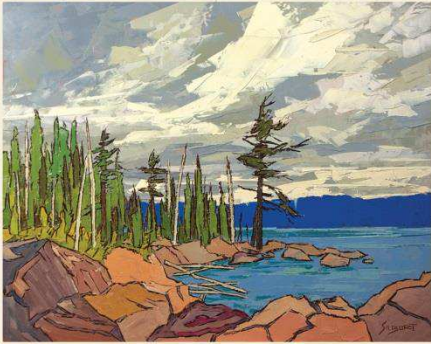
**T: (416) 482-1370 [jillspitz@rogers.com](mailto:jillspitz@rogers.com)**

## Show invitation

*A Colourful Life*  
The art and drawing of  
**Josh Silburt**  
Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> - Nov. 4<sup>th</sup> 2013

  
ART SQUARE  
gallery  
www.art-square.ca

334 Dundas West, Toronto, M5T 1G5  
416.894.6456 www.art-square.ca info@art-square.ca



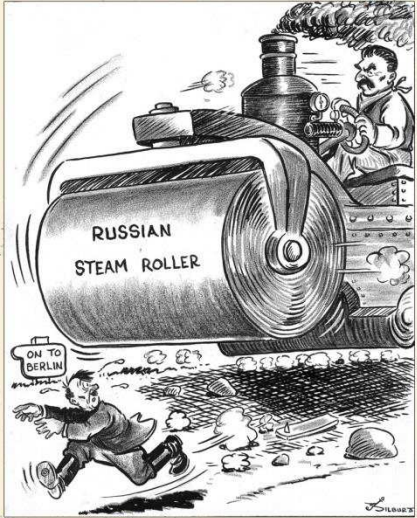
**Thursday Oct 10, 7pm**  
Vernissage and book launch: 'A Colourful Life - the art and drawing of Josh Silburt', Allan Silburt, author.

**Thursday Oct 17, 7pm**  
Book launch: 'J.B. Salsberg - a life of commitment', Dr. Gerald Tulchinsky Prof Emeritus, Queens University.

**Wednesday Oct 23, 7pm**  
'Behind the Podium at Sotheby's', David Silcox, Former President of Sotheby's Canada, Senior Fellow at Massey College, University of Toronto.

**Tuesday Oct 29, 7pm**  
'A Tang of the Woods: The Group of Seven and their influence on Canadian landscape painting', Catherine Sinclair, Senior Curator at the Ottawa Art Gallery.

More details at: [www.joshsilburt.com](http://www.joshsilburt.com)



Rolling Again. *Toronto Daily Star*, June 29, 1944 <  
Gathering Storm. Oil on panel. 16 x 20 in., ca. 1985 >

*A Colourful Life*  
[www.joshsilburt.com](http://www.joshsilburt.com)

## Art Exhibition Overview

The political cartoon drawings and oil paintings of mid-20'th century artist, Josh Silburt (1914 – 1991) are featured throughout the month of October at Art-Square Gallery, 334 Dundas Street W. opposite the Art Gallery of Ontario. Josh Silburt was born in Plum Coulee, Manitoba, July 24, 1914 and spent most of his childhood in Winnipeg. He studied at the Winnipeg School of Art under the direction of Group of Seven member, L.L. Fitzgerald. In the early 1930's, Josh rode the rails to Toronto and became a sports and political cartoonist. He continued his studies in the evenings at the Ontario College of Art and Design and at Central Technical School while he tried to earn a living by day with his drawing. In the meantime, Josh became a committed Communist and his political activism created a complex set of challenges that culminated in his being fired from his job as staff political cartoonist in the early days of the cold war. At the end of the Stalin era, Josh, and many of his cohort on the Jewish left wing, abandoned their political ideals and set their lives in a new direction. Josh, along with a small group of landscape painters from the Willowdale Group of Artists in north Toronto, focused on interpreting the Canadian wilderness, building upon the style and perspective of the earlier Group of Seven. As Canada passed its 100th birthday, and many Canadians re-kindled a love for their natural surroundings, Josh developed his unique style of palette knife application of vivid oil impasto and later brushed acrylics, capturing the beauty and ruggedness of Canada. Over the next 4 decades of prolific painting and evolving technique, Josh enjoyed considerable success with numerous one-man shows across Canada. His work appears in private and public collections throughout the world.

The show brings together a selection of Silburt's paintings of the rugged scenery of Algonquin Park, Haliburton and Algoma as well as the west coast of Canada. In addition, original line drawings of political cartoons from the 1940's published in the mainstream and communist press including the Toronto Daily Star, The Globe and Mail, Toronto Telegram and Sydney Post Record will be on display.

## Weekly Event Synopses

Thursday October 10, 7pm: Vernissage and book launch: “A Colourful Life – the art and drawing of Josh Silburt”, Allan Silburt, author.

“A Colourful Life” is a showcase of Silburt’s work over the six decades of his career as an artist and cartoonist. With over 250 illustrations presented in high resolution and large format, it is a delight to the eye. The biography is presented based on first-hand accounts by the artist’s son, Allan Silburt and supplemented by extensive research on the relevant events of the time period including a capsule history of life on the Jewish Left in the mid-20th century. The graphic design, by Marie-Claude Quenneville, is elegant and tasteful as drawings, photographs, newspaper clippings and artwork are woven together with the narrative.

Allan Silburt is the youngest son of the artist. He grew up surrounded by paintings in a home in which vacation meant tagging along on road trips throughout Canada with artists and family members. Allan runs Seven Oaks Fine Art which is dedicated to the preservation of the art of Josh Silburt. He holds degrees in Engineering and Applied science from the University of Waterloo and Carleton University.

Thursday October 17, 7pm: Book launch: “J.B. Salsberg – a life of commitment”, Dr. Gerald Tulchinsky, Prof. Emeritus, Queens University.

This book follows the life and intellectual journey of Joseph Baruch Salsberg, a Polish-Jewish immigrant who became a major figure of the Ontario Left, a leading voice for human rights in the Ontario Legislature, and an important journalist in the Jewish community. His life trajectory mirrored many of the most significant transformations in Canadian political and social life in the twentieth century. It is fitting that this book launch takes will take place right in the heart of the riding of St Andrews, that Salsberg represented as MPP for the Labour-Progressive (Communist) party from 1943 to 1955.

Gerald Tulchinsky is an emeritus professor in the Department of History at Queen’s University. He is also the author of Canada’s Jews and a winner of both the J.I. Segal Award and Toronto Jewish Book Award.

Wednesday October 23, 7pm: “Behind the Podium at Sotheby’s”, David Silcox, Former President of Sotheby’s Canada, Senior Fellow at Massey College, University of Toronto.

David Silcox is an art historian and cultural bureaucrat, who has written books on Christopher Pratt, Tom Thomson (with Harold Town), the Group of Seven, and David Milne, including a 2-volume, fully illustrated Catalogue Raisonné of Milne's paintings. He has served three levels of government in senior

cultural policy positions, two universities: Associate Dean at York University and as a Senior Fellow at Massey College, UofT, and a multinational corporation for twelve years as President of Sotheby's Canada, from which post he recently stepped down to pursue projects in the arts -- beginning with a limited edition facsimile publication of a long lost diary of Emily Carr's trip to Alaska in 1907, which he found last year. David will speak about the Canadian art auction market in general and stories about the Group of Seven art market in particular.

Tuesday October 29, 7pm: "A Tang of the Woods: The Group of Seven and their influence on Canadian landscape painting", Catherine Sinclair, Senior Curator – Ottawa Art Gallery.

In 1913, young Canadian artists Lawren S. Harris and J.E.H. MacDonald travelled to see a touring show of Scandinavian art at the Albright Art Gallery in Buffalo, NY. Though their thoughts of painting their homeland were already fermenting, this experience was considered notable by both, and served as an inspiration for the method with which they tackled this idea. Indeed, for Harris and MacDonald the inspiration lay in the way in which the northern European artists had sought to depict their own soil through attempting to capture a greater spirituality of the land. Reflecting on this experience, MacDonald wrote in 1931, "may there always be a tang of the woods in Canadian art, whatever it may make of the standards of Paris."<sup>[1]</sup> It was in this that they encouraged each other and the other young artists who came together to form the Group of Seven in 1920.

Catherine will speak on the genesis of this trend in Canadian landscape painting and its influence on subsequent painters such as Henri Masson and Josh Silburt.

Catherine Sinclair is Senior Curator at the Ottawa Art Gallery (OAG). She earned a Master's Degree in Canadian Art History from Carleton University (Ottawa, ON) in 2006. At the OAG, she has contributed essays to numerous exhibition catalogues, including most recently *Natural Motif: Lorraine Gilbert and Natasha Mazurka* (2013) and *Pat Durr: Persistence of Chaos* (2012), and curated many exhibitions, such as *Explode: Marcelle Ferron and Rita Letendre* (2013), *Wally Dion: Star Blankets* (2011), and *Wyse Works: Exposing the Inevitable* (2011). Furthermore, she has presented on a variety of Canadian art historical topics in forums including the University Art Association Conference (UAAC) (Concordia University, Montreal, QC, 2012), the Magnetic North Theatre Festival (Ottawa, 2011), an Ontario Association of Art Galleries (OAAG) panel at the Art Gallery of Hamilton (2011), the University of Ottawa (2009), and the Canadian Women Artists History Initiative Conference (CWAHI) (Concordia University, Montreal, QC, 2008 and 2012).

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<sup>[1]</sup> J.E.H. MacDonald, "Scandinavian Art," lecture given at the Art Gallery of Toronto, April 17<sup>th</sup>, 1931.