

From sharp cartoons to landscapes

Son's book a tribute to his father's art and life

By Kathleen Wilker

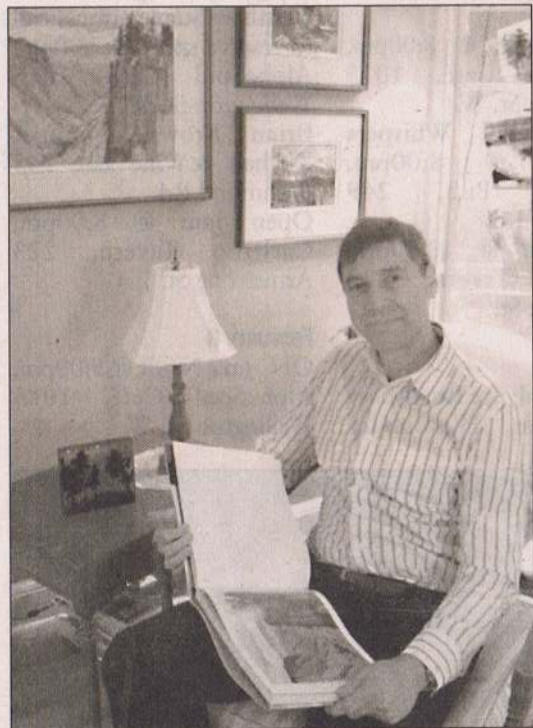
Walk into Allan Silburt's home and you're immediately greeted by his father's framed political cartoons lining the hallway.

Just 15 years old when the stock market crashed, the elder Silburt, Josh, was a Jewish communist who came of age when the labour movement and trade unions were just gaining ground.

"Having done a Masters in political cartoons myself, I was intrigued when Allan approached me with the idea for the show, a retrospective of his father's life to accompany his own book launch of *A Colourful Life*," says CUBE Gallery's Don Monet.

After many years as a political cartoonist, Josh Silburt turned to landscape painting in the late 50s when the biting comments about politics and labour he was making were no longer welcome in mainstream newspapers and he found himself out of work and struggling to support his family.

"My mother pushed him to take night school art classes and he found people doing landscape art and completely changed direction," says Silburt, who has put together a gorgeous coffee table book by accessing archives for the cartoons and contacting private collec-



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tors for the full colour photos of his father's many landscapes, painted in the style of the Group of Seven—fitting for an artist who studied under L. L. Fitzgerald, who belonged to the legendary Group of Seven.

Silburt, the youngest in his family, conducted hours of interviews with his mother, his father's colleagues and relatives while researching the book. He also writes from memories of painting trips across Canada, when his father kept one eye on the road and the other on the passing landscape, always ready to stop if a scene inspired him.

"The Art and Drawing of Josh Silburt" opens at CUBE Gallery on February 6. The event will include Allan Silburt's book launch.

