BEST ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT STORY

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Annie Pootoogook: savvy artist and impish trailblazer

"Deeper down, she had something to say and that's what I think her art was about"

entitled "Pitseolak Drawing with two

She was influenced by a long line of strong, celebrated female artists and then stepped outside their shadows to win for herself a unique and permanent place in the fickle world of contemporary art.

And as Annie Pootoogook matured as an artist, curators, collectors and friends always wondered what part of modern Inuit life her eyes would rest on next and how those experiences would translate into drawings.

That anticipation came to an abrupt and mysterious end last week, hardly befitting such a talented and vibrant artist.

Pootoogook, winner of the prestigious 2006 Sobey Art Foundation Award, was found dead on the shore of the Rideau River in Ottawa's Lowertown neighbourhood on Sept. 19. She was 46.

"To know that there will no longer be her art coming out, it's such a sad feeling," said South Baffin MLA David Joanasie who knew Pootoogook and her family growing up in Cape Dorset.

"She was not afraid to explore new ways and her own ideas of how she sees the world. A lot of scenes she drew were in homes, in living rooms and kitchens, and it's just a glimpse into my childhood," he said, marvelling. "Like *exactly* the same pictures I recall from my upbringing. She captured it so well."

And though stories in mainstream media of late have focused on her sometimes troubling life in Ottawa—intermittent homelessness, addiction, panhandling, the loss of a child—those who paid tribute to her this week described a different Annie: impish, independent, resourceful, pioneering and ambitious.

"As a person, she was a very gentle and kind lady," Joanasie said.

"But deeper down, she had something to say and that's what I think her art was about. It was her way of saying 'This is what I am. This what we are as Inuit.' And think that will carry on. I sure people have be inspired by her work and carry on this new art ment."

Bill Ritchie, long time buyer for the Kinngait dios where Pootoogook to sell her drawings sometimes work when lived in Cape Dorset, sa had her own vision a unafraid to draw wh felt.

"I just saw her as ing light in the devel of what we're tryin here, to push back th typical Inuit art," sa who added that art less of the political statement it makes job, a way for many Cape Dorset to families.

Pootoogook influences, Rit including her Pitseolak Ashoon er Napatchie Pov some of Cape Du

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LISA GREGOIRE

Nunatsiaq News

The story started with a strong, emotional lede before dropping the bombshell that this artist is no longer with us. Usually, I'm an advocate for cramming the vital stuff into the lede but this story is an exception that proves the rule. Writer Lisa Gregoire does a good job painting Ms. Pootoogook both as a gifted artist and as a flawed human. I read the whole story - no skimming - and came away with a clear understanding of who Ms. Pootoogook was, how she saw the world, and the void that was left by her passing.

The blunt and subtle ties that bind, reflected in art

By Ben Bulmer

"I remember praying when Mum got pregnant that it wouldn't be a girl," said Diane Lemire. "When I was young, nobody wanted girls, because girls couldn't work, and they would just get pregnant and bring more kids. [Those are] the stories that I used to hear."

The multimedia artist equates these – "stories about my own life, stories that I heard...stories about my heritage" – to each piece of art she creates.

"When I was young, nobody wanted girls, because girls couldn't work, and they would just get pregnant and bring more kids."

- Multi-media artist Diane Lemire

Diane Lemire stands in her Farrellton studio amidst creations for her upcoming show 'Paradox.' The artist says growing up one of 11 siblings has given her plenty of inspiration for her textile based exhibit that focuses heavily on the family. The show opens at the Mississippi Valley Textile Museum, Almonte, Aug. 10. Ben Bulmer photo

one of 11 siblings in a Catholic household in 1950s rural Quebec. "When I went to school...10 kids was like a normal family," she said, adding that the pill wasn't available until 1969.

The textile-based exhibition 'Paradox' features

charged, but it's not going to be depressing," said the artist.

Producing the majority of her work with recycled fabrics and intertwining materials with lace, jewellery

her mother's hair. Lemire's work is quirky, intimate, and thought-provoking.

A family of three-foot high idually titled a girl" and

'Thank God I got a boy' are powerful reminders of the things Lemire heard while growing up.

Still searching for titles for many of her pieces, one as yet unnamed piece consists of a white felt mattress with a bold red strip painted down the middle. It's a prime example of where the show got its name – with 11 children, Lemire's parents, she realizes, must have had almost no privacy. She sees the bed as the only intimate place they had. "That's where they talked...it became a place of communication between each other." The red strip symbolizes life and struggle. "Let's say a women is sleeping but her husband comes home, but she doesn't really want to because she has five [kids]...the paradox between: you love your husband...but you don't want to get pregnant, but you do it anyway," said Lemire, adding, "I would assume she would feel very erless. If they didn't have kids they were going to ha

'Paradox' opens at th sissippi Valley Textile M on Saturday, Aug. 10. The bition continues until Sept. www.mvtm.ca.

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BEN BULMER

The Low Down to Hull & Back News

"I remember praying when Mum got pregnant that it wouldn't be a girl," said Diane Lemire. Wow! What a lede. And with that, I'm hooked. Instead of writing a run-of-the-mill story about a textile artist, Mr. Bulmer starts with a deeply personal anecdote and ties it into this woman's memories of a bygone era when families were big and "girl power" wasn't quite on the horizon. Solid writing through and through.

PHOTO: IMAGEMAGICARCHIVE.NET

PHOTO: COURTESY TIM ENGLISH

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

In 1967, psychedelic pop/rock band Spirit, left, recorded an instrumental song called Taurus, the source from which Robert Plant and Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, right, was recently exonerated for allegedly appropriating the idea for Stairway to Heaven.

Music plagiarism a very common phenomenon

By Joel Goldenberg
The Suburban

One of many amusing Beatles stories revolves around Ringo Starr's struggles to write a song for the band's LPs. Ringo would frequently present a finished song, only to find his bandmates collapsing in laughter and telling him which song he had rewritten.

They shouldn't have laughed so hard. John Lennon, George Harrison and Paul McCartney have been accused, sometimes with merit, of copying parts of other songs — Lennon's *Come Together* has lyrics from Chuck Berry's *You Can't Catch Me*, Harrison's solo smash *My Sweet Lord* has some of the same musical progressions as the Chiffons' He's So Fine, and a street singer accused McCartney of copying his song for the White Album's *Ob-La-Di Ob-La-Da*.

But what Tim English's new edition of his book *Sounds Like Teen Spirit* (the original came out in 2006) demonstrates is how common a practice it was for artists to either nick elements from someone else's song — a couple of guitar notes, for example — or brazenly copy an entire song, replace the lyrics and hope no one will notice. In fact, plenty of songwriters noticed, resulting in lots of legal complaints, out of court settlements and revised songwriting\ credits.

The Suburban spoke to English just as a Los Angeles jury found that Led Zeppelin's Jimmy Page and Robert Plant did not plagiarize the opening notes of Spirit's song *Taurus* for their most famous song, *Stairway to Heaven*, despite the fact that their opening notes are very similar.

"I didn't really know how the case was going to turn out," English said in a telephone interview from his home in New Jersey. "A lot of times, as I show in my book, these cases get settled before they ever get to court. You get it in front of a jury of non-musicians, and it comes down to something of a subjective judgment as to whether they think the songs sound alike or not."

The plaintiffs in this case made a pretty good point that Zeppelin could have heard the song Taurus on the first Spirit album. "The jury agreed that this proved access [to the song], but they did not agree the songs were substantially similar in an extrinsic — the notes, chords and time — way. A big part of this was they could not play the Spirit recording at the trial, they had to go from the recording done directly from the sheet music deposited with the Library of Congress in 1967."

English said the jury could not hear the released Spirit recording because of a court ruling that original recordings only copyrighted after 1978 could be played to a jury. (Still, it has been found that Page and Plant rewrote plenty of old blues songs, such as *Whole Lotta Love* — originally Willie Dixon's *You Need Love* — and took full credit.)

But English points out that one case where the songs don't sound all that much alike — Robin Thicke's 2013 recording *Blurred Lines* and Marvin Gaye's 1977 track *Got to Give it Up* — still resulted in a $7.3 million victory for the Gaye estate against writers Thicke and Pharrell Williams. An important detail is that the court case was a culmination of Thicke more blatantly copying three other Gaye songs. Also, the songwriters damaged their own case with contradictory testimony.

English says that if a song that copies elements of another is a huge hit, the more likely it is a suit will be brought. More money is at stake, especially if the aggrieved party gets a co-writing credit on the newer song and a cut of the lucrative publishing royalties.

On the lighter side, discovering that a new song plagiarizes an older one is great fun for music fans, like *Name That Tune*. Indeed, English says music plagiarism was a fun topic to write about, as it gave him the opportunity to hear and compare numerous songs.

"The book provides readers with a lot of 'a-ha' moments, that maybe you've heard a song a million times, but didn't know it was based on something else," the author said. "The book is sort of an interactive experience. Everybody can hear these songs, no matter how obscure the original record was, online or on YouTube."

One of those a-ha moments for me personally was the discovery, from the book, that the opening blistering guitar and drum pattern of the Beatles' fast single version of *Revolution* copies the

See PLAGIARISM, page A1

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JOEL GOLDENBERG

The Suburban (City Edition)

Well, who doesn't love the Beatles? Mr. Goldenberg's decision to start his article with a story about Ringo Starr hooked me right away. I stayed with him and got an education on songwriting and plagiarism. I'm interested in learning more, something that's got to be - well - "music" to any reporter's ears.

Judge: Steven Warburton, Managing Editor, Glengarry News, Alexandria, ON • Number of entries in the Best Arts and Entertainment Story category: 32