

Rob Niezen is a painter, printmaker and illustrator, who is partly self taught, and studied at Vrije Akademies in The Hague and Delft, Netherlands (drawing and painting), at the Art School of Peterborough (painting), and at the Haliburton School of the Arts (printmaking).

In printmaking he creates narrative works, experimenting primarily with linocuts, including reduction prints. Current work includes his 'Heads & Tales' series that combines linoprint, blind emboss, collage (stamps), and text. In 2018 he was one of the selected artists included in Roll-O-Matic, Public Acts of Printmaking, as part of ArtsWeek Peterborough. His oil paintings have been shown seven solo exhibitions—three in 2019. He has participated in over two dozen group shows, and in over thirty juried exhibitions. His studio has been a stop on the Kawartha Autumn Studio Tour, juried by the Art Gallery of Peterborough, since 2010.

In 2015, Peterborough County awarded Rob Niezen a Leadership in Arts & Culture Recognition Award. He was a board member at the Art School of Peterborough for six years—three years as chair—and is still involved as a volunteer in marketing the school— and an elected member of the Ontario Society of Artists. He was born in The Hague, the Netherlands, and lives and works in Douro, Ontario, Canada.

### **Artist Statement**

As a young boy it was comics that inspired me to draw, and art has been my passion ever since. In my observations of daily life, I explore the effects of light and reflections on contrast and colour harmony. With an eye for randomness I view the ordinary from extraordinary angles or at extraordinary moments. In my still-life and (urban) landscape oil paintings, I seek the drama, the exaggerated and the surprising in objects and places. My painting style is grounded in classic and impressionistic oil painting practice.

To share my observations, I view and interpret; I then isolate and emphasize my subjects. My still-lives take this approach, creating visual narratives of moments in time, and of lives well lived. The paintings reveal rich colours and the play of light and shadows.

In printmaking I work primarily with linocuts, including reduction prints, blind emboss, collage and text. My painting and printmaking are both influenced by European graphic novels and Dutch graphic tradition. My approach to layout and composition is significantly influenced by my experience in advertising and graphic design in Europe and Canada. Similarly, narrative and visual contrast—in colour and value— are essential elements in my work. Traditionally, relief prints were used for illustrations; likewise I create my linocuts as narrative pieces.

### **Awards and Grants**

Exhibition Assistance Grant, Ontario Arts Council, 2020

Annual Juried Show, Art Gallery of Bancroft, honorary mention in the Still Life category, 2019

Leadership in Arts & Culture Recognition Award from Peterborough County, 2015

Exhibition Assistance Grant, Ontario Arts Council, 2013

Annual Juried Show, The Lindsay Gallery jurors award, 2012

Colour and Form Society Biennial Open Juried Exhibition, third prize, 2012

Seventh Annual Juried Art Show, Quest Art School + Gallery, Midland, Ontario, second prize, 2011

Buckhorn Wild Festival Amateur Art Competition, Buckhorn, Ontario, 1st prize Open Section, 2004

### **Corporate and Public Collections**

Siemens Canada, Burlington, Ontario

SickKids, Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, Ontario

Peterborough Optometric Centre, Peterborough

Peterborough Regional Health Centre, Peterborough, Ontario

Siemens Milltronics Process Instruments Inc, Peterborough, Ontario