

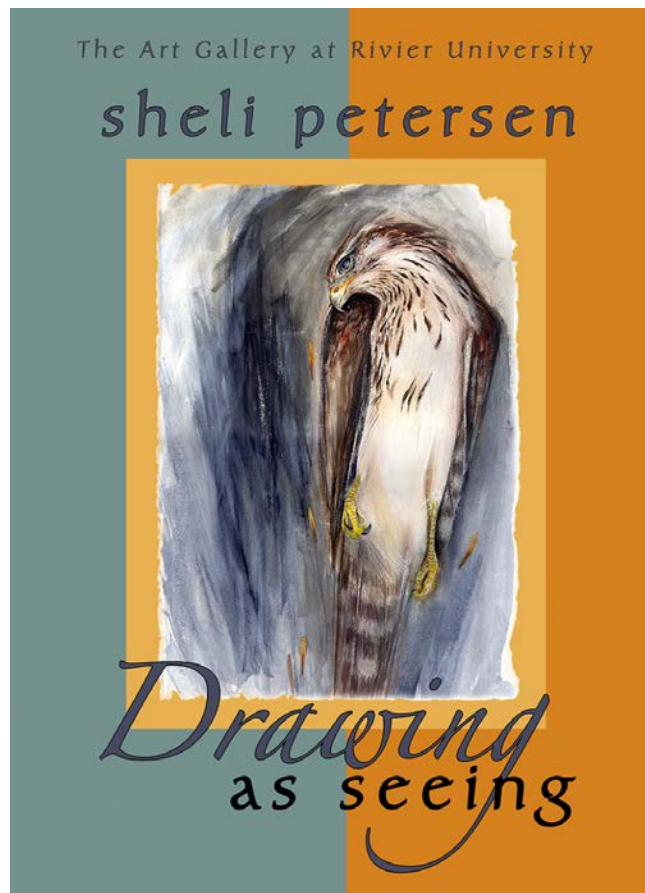
NEWS FROM THE ART GALLERY

(October 29, 2020)

Sr. Theresa Couture
Director, The Art Gallery at Rivier University

Dear colleagues,

This message comes to update you on COVID's impact on the functioning of The Art Gallery at Rivier.



First, yes, there is an exhibition currently on view in the gallery. Last March when COVID brought the in-person dimension of campus life to a halt, we had just completed mounting work by **Sheli Petersen**, a former faculty member in art at Rivier. Sheli is both a wildlife illustrator and a children's storybook illustrator known for creating characters informed by both wildlife and human traits. We have been fortunate that Sheli agreed to extend the loan of her work into the current semester. This has also allowed us to reschedule our collaborative project with the Department of Biology at Rivier, an endeavor in two parts. This semester we have recorded a virtual tour of the exhibition with the artist herself as speaker. Next week, biology students will view the video and also visit the exhibition in person. This will be followed by a Zoom Q&A session with Sheli who currently heads the design and illustration programs at Texas Women's University. The second part of the project will be completed during the Spring-2021 semester after the gallery exhibition closes. Sheli will return by Zoom to give a

drawing workshop to participants from both Rivier's biology department and her own science illustration course. The purpose is to sharpen scientific observation skills through the process of drawing what is seen. For Rivier students, the session will take place at the new Science and Innovation Center which is well equipped with the necessary cameras. The project in its entirety is partially funded by a science grant.

Like many other academic galleries and museums across the country, this semester we have restricted access to our spaces. For us, those spaces are particularly tight. However, we do welcome requests for visits by small groups. A feature of the current exhibition is that we have accompanied some of Sheli's finished pieces with preliminary concept sketches that document her drawing and narrative processes. This may attract interests in creative thinking, children's literature, storytelling, and the general appeal of personification. In addition to the innovative picture books, the realistic yet artistically interpretive wildlife illustrations are dynamic and expressive images that we are honored to make available for viewing. To request a small group visit, send an email to tcouture@rivier.edu. Please specify preferred date and time as well as the number of people in your group.

With new concerns about COVID now emerging, we remain uncertain about gallery offerings during the **Spring-2021 semester**. Currently, two exhibitions are tentatively planned, but everything will depend on how well we can implement university-wide safety mandates. Please do stay tuned for future announcements.

Wishing you well during these pandemic times,

Sr. Theresa Couture
Director
The Art Gallery at Rivier University