

From the Cobourg Daily Star, Friday January 23, 2009

Colborne Gallery features international artist San Murata
by Bob Owen

San Murata is more than a painter. He is one of Canada's foremost jazz and pop performers. He plays jazz violin alongside many of Canada's top performers. He and has been nominated by the National Jazz Awards as Violinist of the Year four times.

Jan. 24, Mr. Murata will open his solo art exhibition, Places, at the Colborne Art Gallery. Mr. Murata's gouache paintings are deceptively simple in appearance, leaving a lasting and compelling impression of the landscape or cityscape being portrayed.

In the gallery press release for the show it states, "His gouache paintings are lively, colourful, and whimsical yet display a mastery of what can be a very challenging medium. His paintings often have the feel of visual melodies...."

The Port Hope artist states, "I've learned that life needs balance. No rapid swings from high to low. No turning things upside down. No racing around without stopping to enjoy what is at hand. Relax. Breathe. Feel. Live. Love."

Mr. Murata is the great-great-grandson of Tatsunosuke Hori, diplomat and translator for Commodore Matthew C. Perry, the U. S. naval officer who negotiated the opening of Japan to the western world in 1854.

Mr. Murata spent his early years in Japan. He travelled to Canada in 1968, to "have a look around". He decided to stay and built a career here using his graphic design abilities, illustrating books, magazines and newspapers.

When he started painting in 1994, he chose to paint places he had visited in northern Italy, the south of France and Greece. Recently, he has been painting the Northumberland countryside and the St. Lawrence townships of rural Quebec.

Since 2004, Mr. Murata has toured Japan several times bringing his unique style to the jazz-lovers of the Tokyo, Hokkaido and Kyushu areas. He has produced four CDs and is working on his fifth.

A lover of tennis as well, Mr. Murata was the 2005 and 2006 Ontario Seniors Doubles Champion and, in 2008, he took fourth place in the Eastern Canadian Senior Indoor National Championship Games.

Mr. Murata has received numerous awards for his work. In 1996, one of his illustrations was selected by UNICEF and, in the late 1980s, an artwork commissioned for the YMCA by Roslyn Eskind was selected by the Smithsonian Institute for its permanent collection.