

## Glass artist and painter team up for Circuits des arts exhibit



Photo Peter Varga

### Stephan Martel and Catherine Benoit

#### Magog Peter Varga

For glass artist Catherine Benoit, the Circuit des Arts Memphremagog arts festival is a doorway back to her roots, to getting her work known in her native region of the Eastern Townships.

The 25-year-old Austin native, daughter of former Orford MNA Robert Benoit, currently works out of Montreal, where she makes both commissioned and creative works out of glass. Her glassworks are now on display with the paintings of friend and fellow artist Stéphan Martel in this year's 11<sup>th</sup> edition of the Circuit des arts.

"This gives me the opportunity of being seen by all the people of the Eastern Townships," she said last Friday, while meeting onlookers at a vernissage that opened her most recent

exhibit. "I have three galleries on the island of Montreal, one in Baie St. Paul and another in St. Jerome, but none in the Townships."

Teaming up with Martel last year, the two began a collaboration that enabled them to exhibit their works together for the Circuit. For this year's festival the two are exhibiting their work in a newly-built garage in Magog, which doubles as Martel's studio.

"This year we have enough items to put on our own exhibit," said Martel, who teaches art at a private high school. "The Circuit des arts really is a place where people can meet the artists in their workshops. For Catherine, it's difficult, because there are too few glass-furnace workshops where she can exhibit her work."

Benoit was originally inspired to become a glassworks artist at

the age of eight, she recalled, when she witnessed a glassblower at an open-air art exhibit. She eventually took on studies in glassmaking at the Centre des métiers du verre du Québec, and has pursued the trade since graduating two years ago. The artist creates her work in a rented workshop in Montreal, and sells through shows, galleries and private contracts. Recent contracts have included plates for retirees of the City of Montreal, and trophies for the Montreal Science Centre.

As well as blown glass, the artist's work includes glass sculpture, known as pate-de-verre, which is created using a process similar to bronze sculpture. Her rare art form, displayed side by side with Martel's paintings, makes Martel and Benoit's exhibit unique among the 52 others on display at the festival.

"I'll have my own pate-de-verre workshop within a year," Benoit said. "I'm looking to rent some space for a studio and then eventually, I tell myself in 10 years, I want to move back here to the Townships and open my own studio."

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## Lake tours

#### Magog Peter Varga

Artists Aships Memphren their work Saturday in Townships' tours. The des arts Me featuring so the modest Bay Festival five sites d works by lo until August

#### Georgeville Bay Festival

The Festival its second dating back to a Georgeville began a small in the town Mary Cartm is also exhib This year's the work of from Stanstead neighbouring paintings, sculpture, jewelry, works of glass

Organizer audiences by the Centre La Fourmili where they c of works by Other venues year's festival Barn, where