

Canadian Living

DIY & CRAFTS

MEET CANADA'S CRAFTERS: CAROL KNOWLTON-DORITY

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- <https://www.canadianliving.com/home-and-garden/diy-and-crafts/article/meet-canadas-crafters-carol-knowlton-dority>

Hi friends,

As you know, every once in a while I like to post a profile of someone I've had the chance to meet through my work with developing craft stories for [Canadian Living](#). I had the chance to meet one such inspiring person a few months ago. [Carol Knowlton-Dority](#) is the creative mind behind the fun and fancy-free plastic flowers that you'll find featured in our [April issue](#). These flowers are a harbinger of spring in my Toronto neighbourhood; when they pop up all around [Christ Church Deer Park](#), I know that the good weather (and chocolate bunny) isn't far

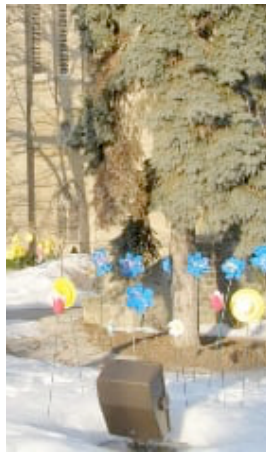


off!

Back in October, I sat down with Carol, the church's rector, Canon Dr. Judy Rois, and the director of children's education, Samantha Caravan, to chat about those flowers (and so many other things). Since then, I had the pleasure of corresponding with Carol over the following months. Now, as the time for those flowers draws close, I'm happy to bring you this profile.

Hi Carol. Please tell us a little bit about yourself. I have enjoyed a variety of opportunities to bring children and visual arts together; as a classroom teacher in both public and private school settings, and as an art educator. I created and implemented in two Ontario District School Boards, Journey Into Peace: A Bullying Prevention Program Through Visual Arts. Part of my practice as a Visual Artist includes opportunity to be involved in educational and community experiences. As President of [Mural](#)

[Routes](#), I am part of a great team whose purpose is to engage and enhance communities through the creation of mural and public art. Making art is a transforming experience in every way. It makes me happy and connects me to others. I aspire to be open to new and sometimes surprising thoughts which develop as I consider my part in the human experience. Creating visual art is a way of reviewing and reflecting upon these ideas. **How did the plastic-dishware flowers idea get started?** The plastic flower “dura” garden evolved from a request to “decorate” the outdoor gardens of the church that I attend, [Christ Church Deer Park](#), at Easter. It was quite a surprise the first Easter Sunday. Everyone has found some humour in it and we’ve been building it up year after year. Some of the original flowers



are 15 years old. You can see them [here](#)

What is your prime focus right now? I really find that my experience of painting is tremendously important to me. Although at times, it can be difficult and frustrating, it’s immensely exhilarating, freeing and peaceful. I’m thankful for a wonderfully supportive family. ([See my paintings online.](#)) One of Carol's paintings, "Swimming Girl."



How is it that “reflective, thoughtful” paintings and kooky plastic flowers come from same artist? What do we want in life? Joseph Campbell, author of [The Power Of Myth](#) and many more

wonderful books, assures us that we want “the experience of being alive”! Plastic dishware masquerading as an abundance of kooky flowers-why not? Paintings that challenge my thinking, my ideas and world view—I hope so! Many artists and creative thinkers urge us to be open and discover. My friend Brian Dench says, "the genius of the kooky plastic art is this – people who want to foster artistic desire but feel they can't or don't have the talent or know-how, are empowered to take early steps with simple materials quickly achieving do-able results. They can begin the quest to satisfy their inner creator (or their inner Creator) even if they felt they might be not so talented (yet) with the oils and the brushes. It is an inviting, easy way to launch and come up with something joyous and fun



...Dishware R Us!

Where do you find your inspiration?

“Straight on till dawn”....Peter Pan. I’m having a sensational experience: Painting, Playing with ideas, reflecting. Being in a space where ideas may pop up. Cultivating elusive stillness. Loosing myself in play. Finding that things move and create themselves. Coping with trying to “sharpen my tools”. Stretching myself toward what is outside my reach. Straight on till dawn.... ***Thanks so much, [Carol!](#)***