REMEMBERING

Hester (Beth) Elizabeth Jankola

April 30, 1936 - April 11, 2022

Painter, Poet, Graphic Artist, Intellectual, Teacher, Mentor – Beth was “a mover and a shaker,” a recognized talent in all her fields. She held two degrees; an Education BA from UBC (1966) and a BFA from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design (1998). A powerful woman in a time when the expectation for women was to embrace the domestic. She had an amazing amount of energy and perseverance.

Beth grew up as Hester Elizabeth Saxby, in small town Southern Alberta. She had a painful upbringing which she didn’t like to talk about. She was a private and proud person. She was sent to a Catholic boarding school in another town to finish her senior secondary education. She was sixteen when she met Joe(y) Jankola while he was travelling with his baseball team. They went dancing, they loved to dance, and continued their complicated movements together for the next seventy years. After moving to the West Coast with Joe (1960s), Beth worked briefly at the Vancouver Sun, then The School for the Blind in Kitsilano. She then moved to Bamfield, to teach at the schoolhouse. After attaining her teaching degree, she taught at the New School in East Van. During this time she became actively involved in the Vancouver poetry scene,

publishing approximately 14 books/chapbooks, giving readings and supporting fellow poets.

Her other talents included finding and selling beautiful treasures at her often frequented “boutiques,” fleamarkets, and rummage sales. She had a good eye for buying, selling and making jewelry. She collected percussion instruments, pottery, woven baskets, books, Mexican artifacts, black Madonna’s, unique clothing, kitchen ware, glasses – whatever was “needed” or beautiful. She hated cooking but was a fabulous cook – dinner was on the table every night except Fridays, her “day off.” She hated housework but the house was always tidy and creatively decorated. She

liked to garden for ascetics not for production; her rock gardens and fences were admired by many. She was a prolific reader and a member of her much loved book club in Sechelt. She was also a member of a drumming circle. She was good at everything she put her energy into. Some of Beth's travels included participating in poetry readings Canada wide, attending painting classes in Italy, vacationing in her later years with Joe in Mexico and Cuba. She spent the last twenty years of her life on the Sunshine Coast where she was involved in the art scene and other organizations dear to her heart and/or necessary for her survival. Beth was a loving partner, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin, friend – not in a

traditional way but in her own unique style. She was ferociously proud of her children and grandchildren. Her family nickname was "The Bear." She was a role model for her family – always independent, creative and actively pursuing her callings.

Beth often said she was so grateful to Joe for "letting her" do her own thing. Joe built all of the frames for her paintings. They cared for each other in their own way right till the end. Joe sought out Beth in their Sechelt home, to be with him as he took his last breath on June 20, 2020. Joe's death was a tremendous shock for Beth. They were both such

vibrant, engaged with life characters, neither planned to die. Beth declined rapidly after Joe stepped off the dance floor.

Beth also adored her younger brother David, who predeceased her. It was a hard loss for her – she always had one of his childhood photos close to wherever she hung her beret. She built a small outdoor shrine for him at her Sechelt home.

Beth leaves behind her daughter Jody, son John, grandchildren Cheyenne, Skeena, Caleb and Jared, sister-in-law Mary, nieces and nephew Gillian, Gregar, Tanis, Linda and Cathy, and many other friends across Canada. Her family is fiercely proud of her and encourages you to google Beth Jankola for more detailed information about her career as a poet and artist.

We invite you to come and honour Beth and Joe at an outdoor gathering to be held on Saturday July 23rd, 2 – 5 pm, at 1711 Field Road, Sechelt. Please save the date! In lieu of flowers, please bring a lawn chair and your favourite Covid-safe finger food for an outside potluck (no cutlery required please).