



Heather Soos

From an early age, British Columbia artist Heather Soos was inspired to focus her considerable talent on wildlife subjects. Heather spends time researching her subjects and habitually goes out in the field to observe them, often accompanied by her husband, who photographs most of her reference material.

After completing two years in the Fine Arts program at the University of Victoria, Heather realized she was not getting the instruction she needed for painting animals. Determined to pursue wildlife painting, she then decided to take a commercial art course to further her knowledge in composition, perspective and anatomy. Before finishing the course, she began painting animals, at first using gouache, and later changing to acrylic and pastel.

Heather's work has been exhibited in galleries on Vancouver Island, B.C., in Nova Scotia, and overseas in Enschede, The Netherlands, and Bruges, Belgium. Heather's art can be seen on her website, at the Riverway Gallery in Courtenay, B.C., and at select Ducks Unlimited Canada events in 2008.

Heather's *Winter Whites on Water – Trumpeter Swan* was selected to join Ducks Unlimited Canada's 2008 National Art Portfolio. This limited edition series is only available through Ducks Unlimited Canada fundraising initiatives. The money raised through this program supports Ducks Unlimited Canada's on-the-ground wetland conservation work, scientific research and education programs.



The Inspiration for *Winter Whites on Water – Trumpeter Swan*

My inspiration for this painting came one winter morning when I caught sight of several trumpeter swans swimming by in a line, parallel to the bank opposite us.

The scene was slightly backlit, creating warm-coloured reflections of the trees in the tidal marsh's water and lighting the swans. I thought how beautifully the colour of the whites and the reflections worked together. Then and there I visualized this painting.

I intended to put in only two swans, swimming in line as I had seen them, but ended up adding a third. The setting for the swans turned out to be perfect in that the white of the birds is repeated in the snow and the natural rusty tinge on the swans' heads happens to be the colour in the reflections. The biggest challenge was painting the different whites of the ice, the snow and the snow's reflections in the water. The title refers to these whites as well as to the three swans.

