

Jones' world 'right in my backyard'

BY JAMES REANEY
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One of London's leading artists of the 1970s has died at the age of 57.

Brian Jones, whose paintings are in many collections, including Museum London's, died at a Collingwood hospital on Wednesday. He had been battling cancer.



JONES: Leading artist in 1970s.

Among Jones's most famous images were elastic, elongated and ballooning figures in dreamlike variations on everyday settings. He said those works were in his "neighbours" style.

"I don't have to travel. I can see the world in my backyard," Jones once said. He also drew continuing inspiration from childhood memories of growing up in Chatham and visits to his grandfather's cottage on the St. Clair River, friends said.

"His point of view in his paintings was absolutely unique," London gallery owner Michael Gibson, Jones's London dealer, said yesterday. "He stayed with that front porch, back porch, back alley kind of situation."

Born in 1950 at Chatham, Jones studied art at Beal secondary school in London from 1969-1971. He had his first one-person show at a Museum London forerunner in 1978. His painting, *Winter Neighbours*, made into a CANSAVE Christmas card for that year.

Among the first to recognize Jones's talent was former Museum London curator Paddy O'Brien.

"We shared an affection for Stanley Spencer," O'Brien said yesterday of the late British artist who died in 1959. Jones visited Cookham, England, centre of Spencer lore and collections. Jones also cited the late London artist Jack Chambers as an influence.

Friends recall that Jones only donned a suit twice. Once was for his wedding to former Free Press reporter Susanne Tausig. The other occasion was for his meeting with the Queen and Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau when Jones was named a Canadian young achiever. The couple left London for Toronto in 1984 before moving to Collingwood about 10 years ago.



Private Collection, Courtesy of Michael Gibson Gallery
Baby View, oil on canvas, 1994