



# 10 to watch in 2007

They're artists, entrepreneurs and farmers. Chefs and vice-principals. Dancers, doctors, golfers and lawyers. And they all have one thing in common: They're worth keeping an eye on

WRITTEN BY MARY ANN COUHAN

## Art BRIAN SABY

BRIAN SABY THOUGHT HIS MASSIVE, abstract, colour field canvas had captured a particular vista he enjoyed near Springbank Park. "I set out to do a black painting about a tree in front of me at a landlows where the river is happening," says Saby. "Two weeks into it and it seemed like an intuitive look into being bi-polar."

Great art should push the boundaries of human understanding, and Saby's current paintings—from his Meridian series—explore the visceral juncture of brain and emotion. Each piece pulses with rivers of blood and electrons humming just below the surface of paint on fabric. But there is also a sense of rawness and pain.

His explorations of mental illness is no random matter. His

father is bi-polar, abusive and violent, and much of Saby's adult life has been spent trying to avoid a similar abyss.

Saby's artistic journey includes a fine arts degree from Fanshawe College and a long, unhappy stint in Toronto when he quit painting and worked for the likes of Garth Drabinsky. He moved back to London to pursue his art and vanquish his inner demons. Now his artistic powers grow in proportion to the emotional baggage he jettisoned.

"I am completely healed using my art as therapy," says Saby, who paints full-time in a borrowed studio tucked into a quiet garden in east London.

Represented by Thielson Gallery, his work is held in 300 collections worldwide. His best work, says Saby, is yet to come.