



newsletter

A Message from the President

Through charm, or the preliminary idea, the painter achieves universality. It is charm that decides the choice of subject and corresponds precisely to the painting. If this charm, this preliminary idea, fades away, nothing is left but the motif, the object, which thrusts itself upon the painter and dominates him. After that his painting is no longer his.

—Pierre Bonnard

As the new year begins we are also entering a new decade which presents us all with new opportunities and challenges. We as a group are also presented with new opportunities and challenges. We are currently in the process of turning over control of major offices to new people. Elene Page for example is the new Aqueous chair, and is off and running doing a fantastic job. I am getting adjusted to my new role as president. I am very excited about the new directions we are aiming at, for example we are planning to build connections to other watercolor organizations around the nation to invite participation in Aqueous, and also to offer expanded awareness for our members of exhibition opportunities with other groups.

We do face challenges as we go forward. We are short on volunteers and there are still empty spots to fill on some committees.

I look forward to working with all our members as we forge ahead into new and exciting opportunities for group and personal growth.

Barry Winsand

President

2010 | No. 1

Send information to
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If possible, please email

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Screening for New Members: Sept. 11

1 p.m., Simmons Hall, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts

Board Meeting: Sept. 26

1 p.m., Simmons Hall, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

Events and News

Waterworks 2010

Show Dates: May 2 to June 6

Opening: May 2, 2010, 1-4 p.m.

Location: Sim Cha's Gallery, 1735 E. Carson St. (South Side), Pittsburgh 15203, 412-421-3369

Drop-off : April 22-25 at the gallery

Pick-up: June 10-13 at the gallery

Application Deadline: April 17

How to apply

PWS dues must be current. Send letter of application with check for \$15 (made out to "Pittsburgh Watercolor Society"). **Letter must state your name, phone number, title of your painting, and price.**

Send application to: Cindy Gilberti, 832 Old Thorn Run Road, Moon Twp. PA 15108. Questions: mail Cindy at c.b.gilberti1@verizon.net

Please put identification on your painting! Tape the following to the back of your painting: Name, phone number, title of painting, price.

Aqueous Open International 2010

Show Dates: Oct. 1-30

Opening: Oct. 1, 5-9 p.m.

Location: Fein Art Gallery, 519 E. Ohio St., Pittsburgh 15212 (North Side)

Workshop Dates: Sept. 27-30, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. daily

Don Andrews will facilitate the workshop this year. Spots are already going for this workshop. For more information, call Elene Page at 412-264-9150 or email elenepage@verizon.net.

Workshop: Figures

Jeannie McGuire

April 15 & 22, McMurray Art League

July 30-Aug. 2, Poconos (fee \$200)

For art groups interested in hosting a workshop or individuals and small groups interested in taking a workshop in her home studio contact Jeannie at jdm@jeaniemcguire.com or call 412.344.3380

Double Door Gallery to Close in Spring 2010

It has come to the point that the remaining members of the gallery have figured it best to end the decade long experiment of a co-op gallery.

Double Door Gallery (formerly Watercolors Gallery), founded by members of the Watercolor society at 9th and Penn downtown, has in recent years been gradually been losing membership to the point that it has been decided in the best interest of those remaining to bring it to a responsible end.

There will be a final Exhibition Feb. 5 through March 6.

The gallery will also be planning on holding a closing ceremony event in the spring.

Aqueous 2009 Winners

Best of Show—"Award of Excellence" was presented to Carol Hubbard from Monroe, Conn., for her painting entitled, "Industrial Revolution." PWS members taking awards included Mary Kay Richardson at 4th place, Jeannie McGuire at 5th place, and Frank Webb at 7th place.

Other PWS members whose work was chosen to appear in the show included Jennifer Boget, Connie Clutter, Don Graeb, Bryce Herrington, Sally Heston, Barbara Jewell, Gloria Karn, Phyllis Koehler, Jan Landini, James R. Lefebvre, Calvin Lynch, Marianne Marino, Eileen McConomy, Joan Milsom, Kit Paulsen, William Perry, Sherri Plonski, Ruth Richardson, Dan Siemasko, Christine Swann, and Bill Vrscak.

Artist News

Cynthia Cooley attended a watercolor workshop in June in Giverny, France, where she painted in Monet's garden and other nearby places for a week. A new book, "Names of Pittsburgh" has her painting on the cover. Her photograph titled "Moonlight/Firelight" is in the PSA-sponsored exhibition "When Night Falls" at the Pittsburgh Center for the Arts.

Marianne Marino's watercolor, "Apple Pie," is included in the 14th Annual regional Juried Exhibit at Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art in Ligonier. The show runs through February 13, 2010.

Jeannie McGuire's work will be featured in a fall issue of *Watercolor Magazine*. The editor contacted Jeannie after seeing her prizewinning painting in the 2009 California Watercolor Association exhibition.

On November 12, 2009 the Covered Bridge Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society, based in Washington County, presented Venetia resident **Arlene Popko** their Conservation Award for her commitment and dedication to habitat improvement in Western Pennsylvania. Over the years she has donated original watercolor paintings of covered bridges in the Washington Country area to the RGS chapter for their fundraising events, which have made a significant impact in the conservation and restoration of grouse and woodcock habitat. Arlene is a signature member of the Pittsburgh Watercolor Society. The Ruffed Grouse Society is the one international wildlife conservation organization dedicated to promoting conditions suitable for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and related wildlife. Information on the RGS, its mission, management projects and membership can be found on the web at: www.ruffed-grousesociety.org.

Kathryn Strutz exhibited paintings in the Hoyt Mid Atlantic and the PA Watercolor shows this year. She had a collagraph print accepted in the Keystone National exhibit this fall. Kathryn's print won 4th place at the 14th Annual Southwestern PA Council for the Arts exhibit.

Dan Winters lectured art students at Upper St. Clair High School in December 2009. The subject was the quickest way of learning how to mix colors.

Frank Webb has again been invited to send a painting to the Second Invitational Exhibition of Contemporary International Watermedia masters to be held at the Jiangsu Provence Art Museum Gallery in Nanjing, China. In September he was the sole judge of the inaugural "American Signature Watercolor Exhibition" in Fallbrook, Calif. In January he served on the jury of selection of the American Watercolor Society's 143rd Exhibition. In June he will conduct a workshop in Dinan, located in Brittany, France. Details on his website: www.artshow.com/webb. Domestic workshops will also be found listed on the website.

Rita Lee Spalding won third prize at the juried Hoyt Institute of Fine Arts Mid Atlantic Show in New Castle in September. Also she is in the juried Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art 14th Annual Regional Show in Ligonier November 21-February 14. She also won a Juror's Award at the Penn Hills Arts and Music Festival in July. Two of Rita's paintings were accepted into the juried "Women in Art" Exhibit at Seton Hill College in October.

A Meeting of Real Artists

Frank Webb is as good a philosopher as he is a painter. No wonder Frank was the first one we thought of when we looked for a wise guide as our October Salon took on the question, Am I Really an Artist? It also took a dozen courageous souls willing to share their personal assessments. Turned out we had six men and six women: Darla Rae Duffy, Tom Gallovich, Leo Goode, Stephany Myers, Elene Page, Susan Ray, Sue Schneider, Dan Siemasko, Karl Steinmetz, Frank Webb, Bob Yonke, and Kathleen Zimbicki. What a wonderfully educational time. Here is a thorough report...

In our first tally, most of us easily pronounced ourselves artists—although some of us qualified our titles and, OK, a couple of us couldn't quite make our mouths form the full sentence, "Yes, I am an artist!" If you've been to one of Frank's workshops, you know how ready Frank is to encourage folks along that path.

"I never had to worry about being an artist," Frank said. "Blessed is the one whose work is also play. Yes, take classes, learn to be an artist, practice, but keep a child's heart. Some people who retire early become very serious about their art—like doctors, engineers, and architects—but I'm always telling them that an artist is a person with 'superfluous caring'—that is, ride your brushes lightly, with delight, from your heart. Sure, you want to build your paintings with skill, but also with love, driven by what you like. Consider your art a love letter, a statement of the fun you're having. If you think about what people say, your art and your status as artist are threatened."

Folks brought paintings with them—some more representational, some more abstract. Perhaps real artists are less objective, less subject-matter-directed?—we asked Frank what he thought.

"If you don't know where your art is going, the surprise will be wonderful when you get there," Frank began. "Yes, sometimes I'll start with a picture or a sketch, but I let my insides direct me, not the reference. Things will just happen, and I like that. I'm always encouraging my students to paint following what transpires on the board in front of them. There's a great freedom and pleasure that comes from working from the inside out, from your passion to the paper. I don't start to paint until I have a drawing that excites me.

"As for realism versus abstraction," he continued, "I see a sweet-spot on the continuum that I like to call 'aesthetic fusion,' between task-ish representation and just blown-up scribbles. That's where I like to paint."

Elene Page brought a painting by a "real professional" artist and one she did, trying to explain the difference. "I never know what I have in mind before I begin, never a forethought. I just let the paint do what it's to do. But the artist here has been on safari in Africa and captured this lion perfectly, so I'd say he's the 'real' artist and I'm not."

Susan Ray said she considers herself just a "hobby artist," not a professional. "I enjoy painting. I sell pieces. I even receive awards, but I don't understand why a judge would choose mine. Often I think I'm an amateur compared to those in the exhibit. Yet twice recently I've won—one best of show!" Susan's exhibition was in Vandergrift.

Tom Gallovich disclosed to us all that he was that show's juror ... and he went on to explain why he chose Susan's painting. He then shared some of his professional photos and paintings.

Sue Schneider told us about her preparatory "am I an artist" journaling. Two columns: 1) why I clearly am and 2) what other concerns I have. "Part of me feels I need to be doing real work that contributes to society," Sue said. "Another part of me feels incredibly self-indulgent. For example, I have a body of work around the women of Malawi, and now I'm playing around with geometrics, which I just enjoy. Sometimes I feel I need to follow a definite plan, and sometimes, like now, I wonder about it all."

Leo Goode brought a definition with him: An artist is a person whose creative work shows sensitivity and imagination. “I paint. To say I’m an artist sounds presumptuous. How do I stay fresh?—that’s my question. Painting is a solitary activity, so it’s great to have salons like this to hear from other artists.” Of his painting, Leo explained, “I try to communicate a feeling as opposed to a picture in my head. Here, the peaceful stillness of the woods; not a sound, just falling snow.” He certainly captured it.

“If I’m pleased when I’m finished and laugh about it, it’s good,” said Kathleen Zimbicki, who brought one of her fantasy paintings, “some critters in the woods,” and shared what drives her works: “Fantasy/realism—I don’t call my work abstract.” A piece honoring her recently departed son just won an award at this year’s Associated Artist show at the Carnegie, done with Max’s day-planner and photos from his yearbook. “Sometimes we all get so caught up in different techniques. Hey, we are all just artists!” (By the way, Kathleen is about to become President of Associated Artists next year.)

We were also privileged to have Bob Yonke with us, another artist/teacher (his website: www.appalachianstudio.com). “I let it go, whatever comes,” he said. “I, too, don’t call my work abstract; it’s realistic to me.” He’s currently working on gessoed canvas the size of a door—with watercolor, and finishing in polyurethane. In his workshops, Bob said, he doesn’t demonstrate; he simply encourages participants to “be themselves.” Young people today, Bob said, are so artistically free that they’re beyond his abilities.

Kathleen identified with his experience. “They don’t have as much fear as we did. Once you’re beyond fear, there’s no right or wrong, no ‘artist versus no-artist.’”



Darla Duffy shared a beautiful work of pumpkins. “I don’t stress myself out doing a painting,” she said, “and every time someone buys my work it’s a sweet thing. I don’t take anything for granted.”

Karl Steinmetz, an architect artist, shared some of the challenges he faces trying to paint the way he now wants to: more loosely. “I’ve been a professionally precise artist,” he said, “and now, like you say, Frank, I want to learn how to paint from the inside, from my emotions.”

My own experience: I consider myself an artist because I’m often in that place of freedom—“Artizona,” I think of it. For me, that has to be the zone where other artists like Kandinsky and Van Gogh had to go in order to get what they got. If you’ve been there, you know what I mean. You’re an artist! Too few people go there.

This was Stephany Myers’s first time at one of our Salons. She’s a new PWS member. “It was special to hear artists with much more professional and commercial experience than I, sharing many of the same concerns, joys, and experiences that I have. An evening with Frank Webb! Loved the wonderful dialogue, critiques, camaraderie, and insights.”

2009 PWS Board Members

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PWS needs board members!

There are several positions on the board marked "OPEN" that are waiting for volunteers to step up. If you'd like to participate, please contact one of the Directors!

News from Other Societies

Call for Entries: PA Watercolor Society 31st International Exhibition 2010

Dates: Oct. 1-Nov. 14

Location: Crary Art Gallery, Warren, Pa.

Opening: Oct. 2, 1-5 p.m.; awards ceremony at 3 p.m.

More than \$5,000 in cash awards plus merchandise will be available to an inspiring group of fine artists from across our nation and around the world.

For prospectus and entry form, visit the Pa. Watercolor Society's website: www.pswc.com

Or send SASE to John W. Walker, Exhibition Chair, at 4077 Bowser Road, New Freedom, PA 17349; phone 717-235-5310; email walkerjohnw@gmail.com.



c/o Jennifer Matesa
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