Newsletter

Fall 2009

Watercolor Honor Society

Watercolor USA Honor Society is dedicated to focusing national attention on watercolor painting through exhibitions, educational opportunities and the recognition of artists working in watermedia.

Missie Dickens, Margo & Bill Armstrong pose in front of the newly dedicated Bill H. Armstrong Gallery at the Springfield Art Museum.

WHS Calendar

- Janurary 25: Prospectus available for Watercolor U.S.A. 2010 - entry forms mailed to artists.
- March 30 : Last day for receipt of slides or CD and related entry materials for Watercolor U.S.A. 2010.
- April 15: Jury notification cards mailed for Watercolor U.S.A. 2010
- April 3: Watercolor U.S.A. Honor Society Exchange Exhibition opens in Tokyo, Japan.
- May 12 : Last day for receipt of accepted entries for Watercolor U.S.A. 2010.
- June 11: Reception for Watercolor U. S. A. 2010
- June 12: Watercolor U.S.A. 2010 opens to public
- June : WHS meeting for Board and members starting at 9:00 a.m. at Springfield Art Museum, 1111 E. Brookside Drive. WHS annual dinner in evening.
- August 8 Watercolor U.S.A. exhibition closes at 5:00 P.M.

Note: All members are welcome to attend the board meeting and annual dinner. If you are planning to attend the dinner please notify the president so adequate space is reserved for the event.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The *2009 Watercolor USA* exhibition was memorable for many reasons. This was the first year that, due to the expansion of the Springfield Art Museum, more specifically the addition of the Bill Armstrong wing, 155 paintings were chosen to be on display; this in addition to the 30 paintings in the JWF Exhibition. Watercolor USA has always been a showcase for some of the best watercolor paintings in the country. It is now on track to become one of the largest exhibitions in the country. The JWF Exhibition was a wonderful addition.

WHS was also happy to welcome Mr. Atsuhiko Sakai, JWF Project Committee Coordinator, Ms Hiroko Tadakuma, Project Committee Member and Ms Yoko Shirai, Project Committee Member. The visiting delegation was able to watch a demonstration by WHS member Judi Betts, have the opportunity to visit the city of Springfield, view the Watercolor USA Exhibition and interact with WHS members. Mr. Sakai also treated WHS members to a woodblock demonstration using 300 year old woodblocks. The JWF portion of the WHS/JWF Exchange show displayed 30 uniquely Japanese contemporary paintings. All were extraordinarily rendered, and gave us a display of the creativity of this group of outstanding artists.

This was also the weekend that WHS honored Lee Weiss as one of the recipients of the WHS Lifetime Achievement Award. WHS also posthumously honored Judy Richardson Gard, Georg Shook, Rob Erdle and Electra Stamelos. Family and friends of all came to honor these deserving recipients. Lee Weiss was the keynote speaker, giving insights into the history of her work, and her methods of painting.

Lee Weiss receives printing instruction from Ms Hiroko Tadakuma. Judi Betts is pictured in the background waiting her turn to pull a print from the ancient woodblocks.

We're now looking forward to the WHS portion of the WHS/JWF Exchange show in Japan at the National Art Center, Tokyo in April of 2010. Works by 30 WHS artists will be shown as our part of the exchange in an effort to make the shows equal and balanced. Any WHS member interested in visiting Japan to join the JWF/WHS Exhibition Exchange in April, 2010 as part of the WHS delegation should contact either of our WHS Project Exchange Coordinators, Kenji Nishikawa at knishi78@aol.com or Hiroko Shikashio at hiroko1@aol.com for details.

WHS EXCHANGE SHOW WITH JAPAN

Ms Hiroko Tadakuma (top) and Ms Yoko Shirai (below) pose in front of their paintings at the WHS/JWF opening.

Mr. Atsuhiko Sakai displays his tinted woodcut print, "*Boy with Peach*."

Below, Jerry Berger, SAM Director, receives a plaque from the JWF delegation.

All JWF photos courtesy of Missie Dickens.

Watercolor Honor Society Directory

The following is a list of active members whose dues are paid for 2009. Any member who has not paid membership dues by January 31, 2010 may be removed from the membership list and will no longer be eligible to receive newsletters or have the opportunity to exhibit art in any WHS sponsored events until dues are paid. If you feel your name has been erroneously left off of the list please contact the membership chairperson.

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*Designates Lifetime
Achievement Award Winners

WHS Board Members for 2009-2010

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Vice-President: Caryl Morgan

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Membership: Mary Britten Lynch

Historian: Missie Dickens

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Howard Kaye - Past President Ex-Officio

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Welcome New Members

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Gary Adamson
Chalen Phillips
Karen Brussat Butler
Jody Henderer Burns
Mark E. Mehaffey
Brian McCormick
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Frances Wells
Jerry Berger

Member News

• **Mary Lou Ferbert** published *Book of Hearts* in 2008, a collection of personal Valentines, painted over a twenty year period that are about life, passion, and spirit. Information about the book can be found on her website, www.marylouferbert.com. During the fall of 2008, a retrospective of Ferbert's work was hung at the Gathering Place, a cancer support organization in Cleveland, Ohio. In spring 2009 she was represented in the *125th Anniversary Exhibition of the National Association of Women* in the Arts at Rutgers University, then at the UBS Gallery in New York City.

• **Mike Mazer** had two of his maritime paintings chosen by the USCG for their 2008 permanent collection in Washington D.C. Three of his works have been accepted into the permanent collection of the New Bedford Whaling Museum, which is the largest museum in America devoted to the history of the whaling industry of America. Two of his works are included in *Splash 10, Passionate Brushstrokes.* He also had a solo show of his maritime paintings at the Cape Cod Museum of Art in Dennis Mass that ran through May 10, 2009.

•**Margaret Huddy** has written and illustrated a book, *State Flowers*, published by Credit Union House, Washington, D.C.

• **Marilyn York** won the American Frame Award in the *Texas Watercolor Society 60th Annual Exhibition* in March, 2009.

• **Missie Dickens** had work chosen to be published in the upcoming *Splash 11: New Directions.*

• **Harold Gregor** is being honored by Illinois State University to help celebrate his 80th birthday with a three month (June 10- Sept 13) exhibition entitled *Radiant Plains: Recent Paintings and Watercolors* by Harold Gregor. The exhibition includes his "*Trailscapes*" and "*Vibrascapes*" works and includes sixteen watercolors and thirteen canvas paintings completed between 2000-2009. Samples can be found on his website a www.hgregor.com. He also was pleased and honored to have his 5'X7' oil and acrylic landscape *Illinois Landscape #120* chosen, on loan, to hang in the presidential oval office private dining room.

• **Robert Lee Mejer** had a 40-Year Art Retrospective (1968-2008) titled *Inscapes* at Quincy University in Spring 2009. He had work chosen to be published in the upcoming *Splash 11: New Directions.*

• **Tom Linden's** painting *Durand Dusk*, was selected for publication in *Splash 11: New Directions*. Durand Dusk also took second place in the *North Light Magazine's* annual cover competition. Tom's painting, *What Once Was*, received the prize of honorable mention at the *Watercolor Art Society-Houston's 32nd Annual Exhibition*. Tom also received Signature Membership – Bronze Status with the *Watercolor Society of Alabama.* Tom is scheduled to host a three day watercolor workshop at the Peninsula School of Art in Door County Wisconsin September 10-12, 2009

• **Mary Britten Lynch** recently had an article published in *American Artist Magazine* titled "*Asking and Answering Questions to Direct the Painting Process*". Her concept for the article was formed on the legal term "due process".

Congratulations to Jerry Berger!

The WHS board of directors recently voted to bestow upon Jerry Berger, Director of the Springfield Art Museum, the title of Lifetime Honorary Member. This is a rare honor, recognizing Jerry's outstanding contribution to the domain of watercolor through his support of the Watercolor USA and Watercolor Now! Exhibitions over the years. These exhibitions continue to not only provide a prominent venue to artists working in watermedia, but, through resulting museum purchases , have given the Springfield Art Museum one of the largest permanent collections of contemporary American watermedia paintings in the nation. On a more personal level, Jerry has been an invaluable board member, and has always been very supportive of WHS. The board is very pleased that he has accepted this honor.

DOROTHY M. JOINER REVIEW
WATERCOLOR USA 2009

The largest in its history, the *Watercolor U.S.A. 2009* exhibition was held from June 6- August 2, 2009, at the Springfield Art Museum in Springfield, Missouri. Curated by Jerry A. Berger, Museum Director, Chalen Phillips, Curator of Collections, and Sarah E. Buhr, Curator of Exhibitions, the show included 155 paintings chosen from among the 659 entries by 357 artists from 42 states. Since its inauguration by the Springfield Museum in 1962, the annual competitive exhibition has featured some of the country's finest works in aqueous media. Containing a noteworthy tradition, this year's exhibit displays technical mastery at the same time that it provides pleasures of both thought and perception.

Among the most striking works are those alluding to art of the past. Carolyn Grossé Gawarecki's *Yellow House—Homage to Hopper* (2008, Springfield Art Museum Purchase Award, Potomac Valley Watercolorists' $350 Cash Award) projects a two-story structure against a deep blue sky with green foliage in the distance. A single tree stands near the bare wall on the right, and large stones occupy the foreground, symbolic perhaps of emotional "weights." Strong light falls on the bright yellow façade, while a reddish shadow covers the right wall, echoing the color of the roof. A half-raised curtain offers the only hint of a human presence in this stark, yet colorful, Hopperesque scene.

Kent Addison's Vincent, *Dutch Master #2164* (2008) imitates a van Gogh self-portrait, cropping the head and the beard and recreating the original's thick impasto with heavy, colored lines. On the artist's anguished face Addison "hangs" with trompe l'oeil precision a king-of-hearts playing card, paint brushes, and a cigar box cover decorated with a mock-up of Rembrandt's *Syndics of the Cloth Guild*, labeled "*Dutch Masters.*"

Also celebrating a Dutch masterpiece, George F. Kocar remakes Rembrandt's *The Night Watch* with cartoon-like figures. In the center Captain Cocq gestures almost like a dancer, and the girl in yellow on the left is nearly as tall as he, her face half-shadowed à la Picasso, who stands in a visual anachronism on the left, staring at the boisterous scene. The Mediterranean meets the *North in Pablo's Night Watch* (2009).

With a Fauvist's palette, Robin Avery paints *Peter's Cat, Max* (2009, Patron Purchase: Shirley Reynolds $250 Cash Award) in turquoise with bleeding areas of lavender, purple, and indigo, the eyes chartreuse and fuchsia, with a touch of red. Placing the feline against a luminous ground of orange and red-orange, Avery uses "wild" colors as a playful metaphor of the domestic beast's predatory inclinations.

A number of works reveal a Surrealist fantasy. Extending arms and a leg in ecstatic movement, the stylized figure of Ellna Goodrum's *Log Dance* leaps into the air from dark brown timbers, which are actually raised from the painting's surface, like trapunto. Silhouetted against an inky night sky, the androgynous creature seems lighted from within. Goodrum's lush, primitive world is one of ritual and magic, a realm where man identifies with mystical natural forces.

Analogous to a writer employing a stream-of-consciousness technique, Miles Batt Sr. lends a vivid visual order to a seeming jumble of imagery in *Sweet Harbor' N* (2008). Beginning with random marks made by his students, Batt interweaves reminiscences of summer evenings on the northern California coast—rounded arches of a bridge, boats, clouds, even a Hershey bar wrapper. The artist maintains a clever aesthetic logic knitting these apparently disparate elements together, contrasting colors and values as well as 2-D areas with simulated 3-D ones, as, for example, a very real-looking button in the upper right opposes a deliberately flattened pink boat near the center.

From her series titled *Nightland* Karen Butler's *Thunder Moon* (2008, Nancy L. Pate $250 Cash Award) conflates two age-old sobriquets for the moon: "thunder Moon" and "blackberry moon," both describing the satellite during August. Menacing, angry clouds partially conceal the white orb that casts brilliant, colored

reflections on the water below. A quaternity of fanciful figures pluck and nibble blackberries or gaze intently at the sky, lending the scene a mood of mystical contemplation.

Like a latter-day Hieronymous Bosch, Stephen Vosilla in *A Romanticist's Perspective* (2008) relates a complex narrative with a plethora of charmingly stylized figures: squarish heads, like the Simpsons, circles or arcs for eyes, and energetic gestures. On the left, Vosilla's little people cavort in flower-filled Edenesque pastures, demonstrating evident delight in creation. God's oversized hand tugs gently at the shoulder of a miniature "Adam," who ogles his "Eve" with anticipation. Others relish a rain shower, and a reclining figure whiffs a flower's fragrance. On the right, however, science has erased wonder, eroding joy and souring expressions. Cloned sheep occupy vats, and an illuminated screen depicts steps in evolution. Science has conquered the romantic's naiveté, Vosilla argues, and with it his happiness.

Other works embody what might be described as an updated "picturesque," that 19th-century predilection for what is slightly out-of-date, tarnished, and somewhat dilapidated. Epitomizing this sensibility, John Constable said, "Old rotten planks, slimy posts, and brickwork, I love such things." In a similar sensibility, Caryl Morgan frames a superannuated hotel sign against an indigo sky in *Pueblo Hotel, Tucson* (2009, Springfield Art Museum Purchase Award, Al Zerries Memorial $350 Cash Award). The lettering is almost illegible in part; neon letters are missing; wires dangle. Especially amusing is the old-fashioned figure on top, posed before she leaps from a diving board into an imagined pool.

A second example of "nouveau picturesque" is seen in Howard J. Eberle's *Chain Reaction* (2008), a knot of rusted chain forming an irregular triangle in depth against a neutral gray-blue ground, resulting in a witty visual pun. Highlighting a grim reality, Loran R. Creech's *Infrastructure* (2009, Watercolor USA Honor Society Purchase for the Museum Collections, Robert E. Goodier $1,000 Cash Award for Traditional Transparent Watercolor Given by his wife, Mary, and children Winslow and Elizabeth) shows a bridge dramatically canted, in red and gold. This once proud structure is in dangerous dilapidation: cracks cut into the roadbed and supporting pipes are broken from their sockets. Nor has nature fared well: debris litters the water's surface below. Gone are the comforting pleasures of rustic life so characteristic of the picturesque in the past.

Reinventing, as it were, another time-honored tradition, the still life, Robert Langford simulates a section of old-movie film with perforations along the side to guide through a projector. In the center is a single roller skate, partially concealing a replicated caution sign for a playground. Placed horizontally is the image of a slender young woman next to a pear, whose white blossom in China is both a symbol of mourning and of life's evanescence. The title *Her Name was Lola* (2008, Jack Richeson & Co., Inc. Award) crystallizes the work as a memorial to a life ended too early, a contemporary incarnation of the *vanitas* theme characteristic of still lifes.

The experience of seeing this year's exhibition of works from prominent American artists is enhanced by the fact that it coincides with a show from the Japanese Watercolor Federation. An honor society begun in 1940, the JWF numbers over 300 members and presents Japan's largest annual watercolor exhibition. Encouraging fresh interpretations of traditional concepts and methods, the organization encourages contemporary expressions and technical innovation. This show is the first in an exchange program between the Watercolor U.S.A. Honor Society (WHS) and the Japan Watercolor Federation. In 2010 works from WHS artists will be shown at Tokyo's Art Center.

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EXHIBITION LABELS: TIME FOR A REVIVAL
BY WARREN TAYLOR

Several years ago while on a museum field trip with my students, we requested the opportunity to see three works by Georgia O'Keeffe in a special viewing room near the museum vault. I had phoned ahead and discussed our desire to see this series of works that is not normally on exhibit. When we were ushered into the room, these works were sitting on a ledge with the back side facing the viewer. What immediately took our attention was the elaborate system of exhibit labels attached to the back of the work detailing the provenance of the work. All or most of the exhibitions in which these works had been exhibited were represented with an appropriate and attractive label. Currently speaking, art organizations and some museums or art centers would do well not to overlook this professional courtesy.

In the past, as we saw that day on the O'Keeffe paintings, a work of art accumulated a registry of information attached to the back regarding its curatorial and exhibit past. All of these then accompanied the work into the future and this legal and printed provenance figured in the resale or changing hands of the work. The attachment of special labels guaranteed that the exhibit record of the work would not become obscure and that the special exhibit efforts on the part of the artist and the curatorial interest and location of exhibitions would not be lost to obscurity. The great auction houses of the past and of our own time pay special attention to these mini documents. At one time, serious collectors with large collections even added their own labels.

To bring this issue to a current point of discussion, competitions and institutions need to honor artists and works of art by attaching more appropriate labels that can be considered permanent fixtures. Considering the increased costs of entry and handling fees, shipping and crating, it is rather aggravating to realize that all one might have to show for the work and expense is a photo-copy half sheet on the back that doesn't even list the name of the show, the museum or institution, the organization or the year. This flimsy attachment is hardly permanent. And, unless one attaches a catalog (which isn't really appropriate), there is no record of the paintings past activities, thus its provenance.

The solution really could be very simple and not necessitate the printing of special gummed labels. It could be suggested that along with the entry form, the identification label at least include the name of the exhibit, the year and location. This could be filled out by the artist and attached to the work upon notice of acceptance. This label need not include the price because if it becomes part of the permanent record, the artist may wish to adjust the price later on. Granted this label could be attached in a bogus fashion to work not selected for a show, the chance of that is overweighed by the accepted works being honorably labeled. If the sponsor and/or hosting institution does not wish to put the identification tag on the entry form, a proper and attractive tag could be sent with the acceptance notice or on arrival.

The best possible tag is very simple. It should bear a logo of the organization and the name in attractive letters, the museum or art center exhibiting the work, and the year of the show. Then under this information would appear the name of the artist and the title of the work. If this label is part of the original entry form mail-out or if it comes after the jury process, it then includes relevant information in a form that helps solidify the provenance of the work. On the other hand, one courtesy that often accompanies a work returning from an exhibition is the attachment on the back of the exhibition tag that appeared next to the work on the gallery wall. If this card bears the name of the show and the artists name and, of course, the title of the work, then this could act as the appropriate authentication. This then could act as verification of the work in a specific exhibition if it displays the relevant information

and if the 'take down' crew has the presence of mind to remember to save the tags and to attach them.

If the exhibition refuses to give the work a permanent tag, in a discrete and appropriate manner the artist might assemble a tag from a spare exhibit catalog. The cover of the catalog could be cropped down and the page indicating the specific entry can be joined together and glued to the back giving specific proof in an attractive fashion. Most artists have litte if any use for ribbons that might be returned with a painting so if these don't clutter the back, they too might be in context. (By the way, there weren't any ribbons on the back of those O'Keefe works if that tells one something about the artist and her exhibitions.) And in the past, I have even used two reception invitations (front and back) to verify a works inclusion in a show that produced neither a catalog nor any sort of a respectable tag.

Many artists have their own labels to provide information for the future 'grand unknown'. This label can be smartly fashioned and certainly tasteful and original. It can include the artists name, the title of the work, date, location of signature on the front and several lines at the bottom for 'remarks' or other pertinent information. Perhaps in this location, exhibitions featuring this specific work can be detailed. By the way, the artist might like to add the suggestion to future owners that the work not be permanently displayed in or near direct sunlight.

As a college art professor, many times over the years I have been asked to look at a work of art to determine any information whatsoever about it. While it may be signed, it is frustrating to have little information other than a signature that might or might not be legible. Also, since we work on paper, it might be wise to jot down some facts about you and the work directly behind the work itself in addition to what goes on the dust cover.

If you are included in one of the "Who's Who" compilations, a copy of this might provide an appreciated short biography. Most of these efforts now fall under the category of vanity schemes, but a copy of your listing might assist in knowing you on into the future.

Art magazines routinely fill pages with ads from museums, organizations and art centers that value the annual competition. For many, these events serve an important need to the artist, the gallery and the viewing public. Artists wanting to get a start, and those who are established on the exhibit 'circuit' may enter many shows in the course of a year. With not too many acceptances, an artist can easily tally up thousands of dollars in all of the expenses involved in exhibiting art. One of the concerns every artist should foster is that for all this effort and expense the proper verification of these professional activities be in direct evidence. The right tag on the back of the work is just the right solution.

The future owners of a work appreciate this information because it can help validate their decision and commitment to own the work. And the best place for this little document is still the attachment to the work itself and not the exhibit catalog which probably will not accompany the work in its journey into the future. Further, in this age of attractive computer printing and graphic options, the outdated pica or elite just doesn't get it. Organizations sponsoring exhibitions and competitions need to give this label more thought because it could last for many generations to come if they take the time to craft it seriously and allow it to reflect the same pride with which other details of the exhibition are handled. Perhaps all it takes is to remember to add the name of the show to the entry forms and understand that this simple little tag gives an important dimension to this work of art – being its provenance.

Warren Taylor is a member of WHS, and has been an exhibiting artist for 35 years. He is a Professor of Art at Midland College in Midland, Texas, and has juried both watercolor and works on paper exhibitions.

MORRIS MEYER

Morris Meyer became interested in watercolor as a medium in the late 70's, but his true inspiration to begin painting came in 1987 after visiting a gallery in Oregon exhibiting the work of artist Mike Burns. Mr. Meyer's occupation, until his retirement, had been that of a mechanical engineer. He also now found himself painting, entering local and state exhibitions, and achieving successful recognition at that level. Morris went on to enter national exhibitions, where his natural talent in painting realistic subject matter soon garnered him acclaim and awards.

Morris is a signature member of the National Watercolor Society, the Northwest Watercolor Society, the Watercolor Society of Alabama, the Audubon Artists, and of course Watercolor Honor Society, among others. According to a recent web biography on Morris : "He has had numerous solo exhibitions. His paintings are on permanent display in galleries from San Francisco to Stone Harbor, New Jersey, restaurants in Dublin, Ohio, and in his own gallery in Dublin, Ohio. His work appears in the *Best of Watercolor II* and *Best of Watercolor Portraits* (Rockport Publishers). Whether it be water/boat scenes, landscapes, still life's, portraits, or flowers, Mr. Meyer's impeccable technical craftsmanship provides a comfortable aura of realism to the work. His use of intense pigments heightens the contrast between lights and darks to promote the happiness of sunlight and shadows. It is understandable that his work has found its way into many private and corporate collections."

In addition to winning awards in past Watercolor USA Exhibitions, Morris Meyer had two outstanding paintings accepted into this year's Watercolor USA Exhibition.

Mr Sakai with Kenji Nishikawa at the welcoming dinner. Mr. Sakai presented acopy of his wood block, "*Boy with Peach*," to WHS members and guests.

Mr Sakai (opposite page bottom left) teaches print class with ancient antique woodblocks as Howard Kaye learns from the master.

Ms Hiroko Tadakuma (opposite page bottom right) presented handpainted fans to dinner guests.

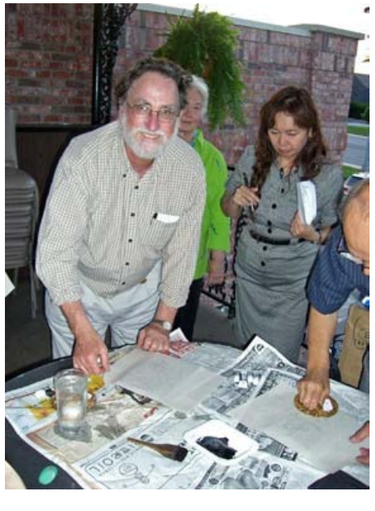
JUDY SEYFERT

Care Center Series: Waiting for Jesus

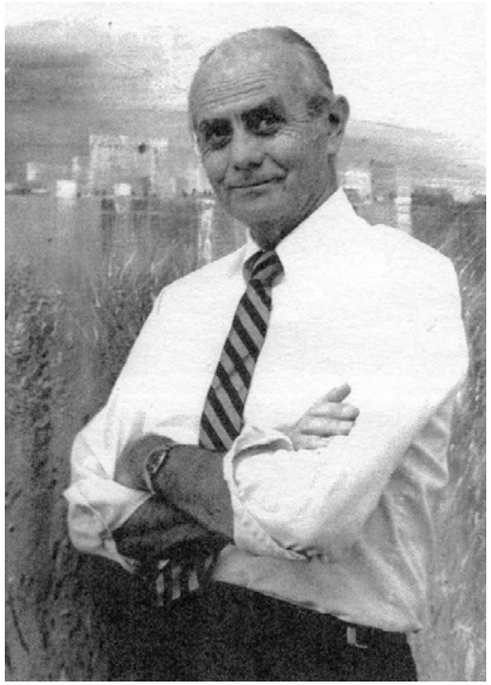
Judy Seyfert is an artist who has truly found her medium of choice in watercolor. As quoted by Judy : "I love watercolor. I love the way it drips, splatters, flows and puddles. I love the colors, luminosity and transparency. I love the complexity and challenge of the medium. I love the creative expression it offers. It is an adventure every time I pick up my brush."

Judy received a degree in education from Concordia Teacher's College, then took art courses at both Meramec Community College and Fontbonne University. After graduation she married, taught school and raised four wonderful children, all of which she found extremely rewarding. After 25 years of not lifting a brush, she decided to follow her heart, which led her back to art. This time she elected to follow her own path to knowledge, through experimentation, study and taking workshops from numerous nationally known watercolor artists. Judy soon developed her own distinctive style. What she hopes to portray in her work are people and the affirmation of the human spirit. She likes to portray them as they appear to her: "children of the living God whose short journey in this life has impacted me on some level." Her subject matter has been based on frequent visits to the nursing home where her mother in law, the actual subject of her award winning painting *Care Center Series:Waiting for Jesus*, lived for the past few years. She feels her greatest spiritual inspiration has been Christ and her faith, but that here on earth it has been her husband and the support of her students. Judy says she almost gave up on art, but once she started teaching watercolor found inspiration in her students to continue to paint and grow as an artist.

Judy is past president and co-founder of the Saint Louis Watercolor Society, and has served on the boards of the American Art Alliance, the Missouri Watercolor Society and the St. Louis Artist's Guild. She teaches watercolor at the Missouri Botanical Garden and at the St. Louis Artists' Guild. She is currently working on her next series of paintings, focusing on the Carondelet area of St. Louis.



IN REMEMBRANCE: FRED MESSERSMITH



Fred Messersmith was both a Charter member of Watercolor Honor Society and one of the original Board members. In addition he served in 1962 as a juror for Watercolor USA. Fred was also a member of the American Watercolor Society, a Charter member of the Florida Watercolor Society and an Honorary Life Member of the Florida Artists Group. During his lifetime he was honored with numerous one-man exhibitions both nationally and internationally; he currently has work on display at Yale University, Ohio University, Stetson University and Ohio Wesleyan University among others. The Butler Museum of American Artists owns one of Fred's casein on rice paper paintings, for which he became quite well known.

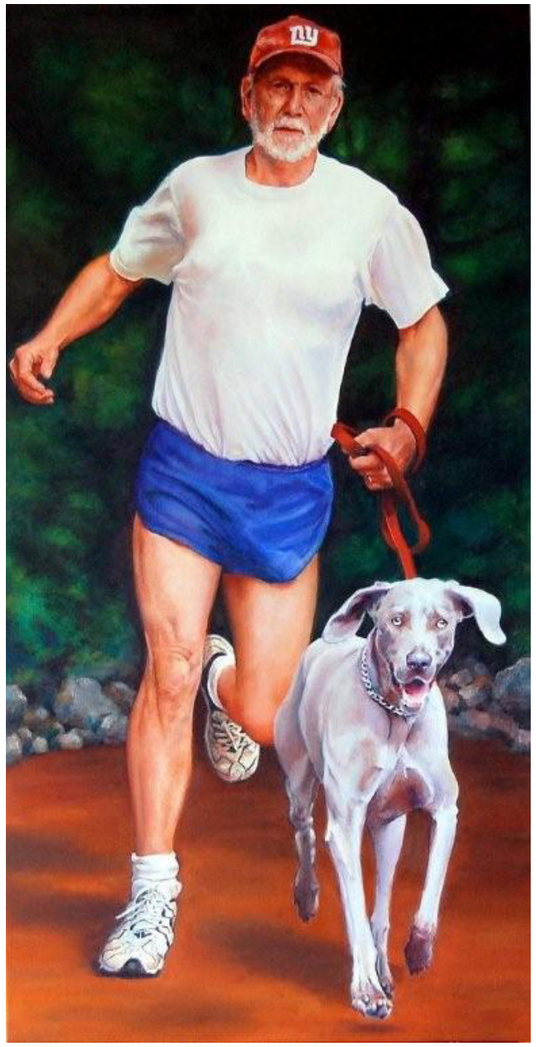
During his lifetime Fred was Chairman of two Art departments, West Virginia Wesleyan College, 1949-1959 and Stetson University, 1959-1989. He was dedicated to the teaching of art, and considered it a privilege to work with young creative minds. He inspired many to pursue a career in art simply by his life example. His enthusiasm for creating art was boundless and was reflected by his continuous production of art for over sixty years.

Fred was a regionalist, an abstract expressionist and a journeyman painter. He never refused anyone's request for a painting or drawing. Through his contact with Francis Chapin, Chicago and Martha's Vineyard artist, Fred was invited to visit Martha's Vineyard Island in the summer of 1964 to paint. He was later to become the Director of the Martha's Vineyard Art Association, where as a gallery director he worked with Stetson's Friends of Art to conserve the university's permanent art collection. On the island Fred was also well known for both his watercolor demos and his stories. The family bought land there in the 1960's, and built a studio home in the 1980's.

According to his wife Jane, he was a great father to his six children and loved family life. He and his devoted wife Elizabeth Jane were married for 60 years. Fred believed, "Individual lives are fragile and tenuous, and our moment on earth brief. Yet we are part of a continuing natural order, and I try to show this through paint on paper." Fred had a Vineyard retrospective show of his paintings, a grand finale, the summer of 2008, and passed away on March 23, 2009. A celebration of his life was held on April 3, 2009, the day that would have been his 85th birthday. According to his wife Jane, "Fred would have loved that!"

Many thanks to Jane Messersmith for the information she provided for this article.

IN REMEMBRANCE: AL ZERRIES



Al Zerries, *Self-portrait, Two Gray Dogs*

Al Zerries was a prolific, talented and dedicated artist. He recently passed away due to a tragic accident in the prime of his painting career.

Al was born in New York City, and graduated from Pratt Institute with a major in advertising. After graduation, he served in the Army as a 1st Lieutenant, Airborne and Ranger qualified. Post-military he worked for twenty-plus years as an art director, TV producer and creative director at a number of Manhattan ad agencies. He also taught advertising at The School of Visual Arts.

In the mid-nineties, Al began to paint; he studied with Burton Silverman from 1998-2000. Using the mediums of pastel, oil and watercolor, Al was primarily a portraitist. He began showing work in 2001, and since that time had work accepted into over 125 national exhibitions. Along with numerous other awards, he was honored with 15 Best in Show awards. He was a signature member of numerous watercolor societies, and highly respected for both the quality of his work and his commitment to supporting societies through the submission of his art. In addition to being a visual artist, Al was also a writer, and collaborated with his wife Jean to write the novel *The Lost Van Gogh* under the name A.J. Zerries.

Al was generous with his time in participating in the Celare/Revelare interview for the WHS Fall 2008 newsletter. Responses to the questions asked indicated he put his all into whatever project he was involved in. When asked to describe Al, his wife Jean said, "he was funny, he was outspoken, he couldn't abide pretention. At the same time, he was a complex passionate man. It's all there in his paintings." Everyone in the watercolor world is saddened by the loss of Al Zerries.

Watercolor USA Honor Society
Caryl Morgan
116 1/2 North Main
Newkirk, OK 74647

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Judi Betts demonstrated her painting techniques to both the Japan Watercolor Federation delegation and WHS members at the Springfield Art Museum this past June. Judi Betts and Hiroko Shikashio are hosting a "Cultural Tour of Japan" April 1 - April 15, 2010. One of the highlights of the traveling group will be the opening of the *JWF / WHS Exchange Exhibition* in Tokyo in April.

Watercolor USA Exhibition Prospectus Information

- Email: WatercolorUSA@springfieldmo.gov.
- Write and include SASE:
  Watercolor USA Exhibition
  Springfield Art Museum
  1111 E Brookside Drive
  Springfield, MO 65807
- Call: 417-837-5700
- Fax: 417-837-5704
- Visit: Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday:
  9:00 am – 5:00 pm
  Thursday: 9:00 am – 8:00 pm
  Sunday: 1:00 pm-5:00 pm
- Closed: Monday, City of Springfield and National Holidays

- For Online Prospectus: www.springfieldmo.gov/egov/art

Membership Dues

It is time to pay your membership dues for 2010. Members who pay dues after January 31st may not receive both spring and fall newsletters or be eligible to exhibit in WHS sponsored exhibitions.

W H S Membership Dues Form:

Date:

Name:

Address:

City/State/Zip:

Phone:

E-mail:

Annual Dues: $40 Checks payable to: W H S

Mail to: Wayne Conyers, Treasurer
1603 Jody Lane
McPherson, KS 67460

MEMBER NEWS & OTHER INFORMATION

Please include only the following information for Member News: Awards in Exhibitions, Publications, Solo or Two Artist Exhibitions, Small Group Invitational Exhibitions, Serving on Juries, and Additions to Permanent Collections. **Send your selections to: Sandra Schaffer, WHS Newsletter Co-editor, 12700 E 64th Ct., Kansas City, MO 64133, e-mail: lschaffer@kc.rr.com (first symbol is a lower case L) by February 15, 2010.**