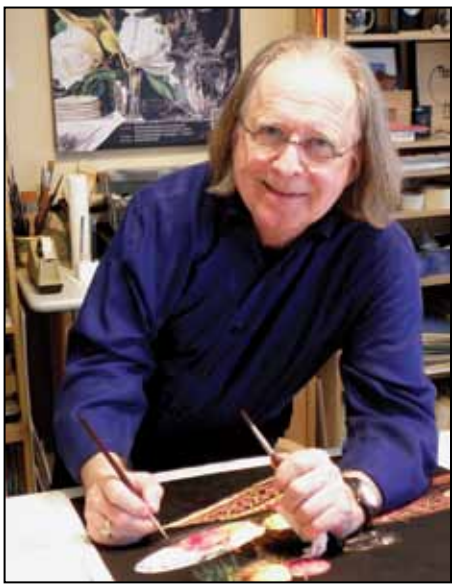
Newsletter Watercolor Honor Society

President's Message

Fall 2016

Dear WHS Members,



Laurin McCracken, President

I am honored to represent all of you as the president of your Society. The relationship between the WHS and the Springfield Art Museum is a unique relationship and we should celebrate that relationship. We have a fine board, many of which have been working for the society for some time. We also have some new talent on board. I am looking forward to a productive year.

I have recently met with Nick Nelson, the Director of the museum and Sarah Buhr, Curator of the museum. We all affirmed that the goal of the museum and the society is "to showcase watercolor paintings that are pushing the barriers of new development in watercolor, balanced with what the viewers expect to see in such a national quality exhibition."

The quality of the work exhibited as the past few years' shows has fulfilled that goal. The quality of the work in each of our shows continues to grow. However, we need more entries if we are to maintain that level of excellence. I am asking the board and each of you, the members of the society, to encourage all of your watercolor friends to enter the upcoming "Watercolor USA" and "Watercolor Now" exhibitions.

Because of our unique relationship with the Springfield Art Museum the paintings that are selected for Watercolor USA are not only displayed in an important national watercolor exhibition, but they are also part of a Museum Exhibition. This is a great addition to anyone's resume.

The interest in watercolor painting is growing across the nation and around the world. More and more, the artists from many nations are coming together to share their knowledge about the techniques of how to paint in watercolor and to share the unlimited approaches to using this medium. Over the next few months I will be attending meetings in Greece, Russia and China. I have asked the museum and the board to consider opening the submissions to Watercolor USA to the international community and I would like to hear your thoughts about this. I strongly believe that if we are going to learn more about our chosen medium we need to avail ourselves of the knowledge that is being shared internationally.

This year we lost one of the driving forces behind the Watercolor USA Honor Society, Bill Armstrong. You will find a remembrance elsewhere in this newsletter.

One of my personal goals is to get the Watercolor USA competitive exhibition and the society better known across the country and around the world. If you have any ideas about how to spread the word about one of the few true national watercolor organizations, please share it with me or one of the board members.

(continued on page 2)

DETAILS FOR WATERCOLOR USA 2017

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR CALENDAR AND ENTER!

January 4, 2017 - Prospectus available on the Springfield Art Museum website: www.sgfmuseum.org/

March 6, 2017 - Deadline for entry and payment

March 28, 2017 - Notification of accepted artists on the website (www.sgfmuseum.org)

June 2, 2017 - Opening reception 5:30 - 7:00PM

June 3, 2017 - Exhibit official opening

August 27, 2017 - Exhibit closes.

President's Message continued

If you have an interest in being board member of Watercolor USA Honor Society or serving on one of its committees, please contact me or one of the board members. We would welcome your participation in expanding our efforts and to helping us inform the art world about our wonderful exhibitions.

The world is full of talented watermedia painters. We need to let them know that they can be a part of the Watercolor USA Honor Society by entering Watercolor USA.

Laurin McCracken AWS NWS WHS

Laurin McCracken, President

Watercolor USA 2016 Review

By Dorothy Joiner
Watercolor USA 2016
Springfield Art Museum
June4-August 28, 2016

During its 55-year history, the annual Watercolor USA exhibition has certainly reflected the ongoing evoltion of aqueous media. And the 2016 show not only offers evidence of this evolution but it also mirrors, as one would expect, the tastes and the personality of the juror, Lynne Warren, Curator at the Museum of Contemporary Art in Chicago. Selecting 78 from among the 447 works entered by 254 artists, representing 39 states, Warren included not only conventional transparent watercolors on paper but also traditional aqueous media on unwonted supports, such as acrylic sheets, paper bags, and unprimed canvas. She selected as well artist books and a paper sculpture. Commenting on her choices, Warren noted that she particularly favored pieces exhibiting "humor" or "whimsy": qualities enhanced by watercolor's delicacy, which makes "the whimsy more poignant and the humor more Immediate." These more fanciful works, together with others allied to the time-honored traditions of still life and landscape, created an exhibition offering pleasures both visual and intellectual.

Among the show's playful paintings is Helen Long's watermedia and collage, Rock, Scissors, Paper (2015), titled after the dispute-settling game of hand gestures that originated in China centuries ago and came to the West through Japan. Acting out the game, four elfish figures frolic against a blue, cloud-filled sky. One leaps up from a rock about

Table of Contents

President's Message pp 1 & 2
Watercolor USA Review pp 2 & 3
WHS Member Features pp 4 & 5
WHS Awards pp 6 & 7
Memorials pp 8 & 9
Member News p 9
Museum Collection p 10
Membership Renewal p 11
Watercolor USA 2017 p 12

to crash over a giant pair of scissors, which has clipped the tip of a paper sail. Another manipulates the scissors, while the third walks on a rope leading to the rock; and the fourth dips his fingers in the variegated blue water at the bottom.

Gail Deler_Silhouettes

Even more waggish, Bruce Thayer echoes the irreverence of Chicago's Hair Who in Dog Park (2015), a good-natured satire of the contemporary political scene in Washington. Strutting down the capitol's street identified twice as a canine area a surreal politician wearing the colors of the flag, holds a significantly "crooked" leash for the blue dog who sniffs litter on the ground or is it a "crooked" stick? A "fat cat" and "rats" have invaded the dog park, and a gardener (?) is uprooing a plant: so much for the landscaping. Another figure with spindly legs seems to be running without benefit of trousers, his underpants blue and white, his tie red and white. Has he been caught "pants down"? Two prominent windows on the front of the capitol in the distance show sketchy figures; obviously their deeds are on the shady side. Smoke stacks belch red emissions against the blue and white sky: a smoke screen?

Transmuting a catastrophic house fire into art, Blake Tiggemann paints Lost in the Fire (2016) on six paper bags. Choosing this uncommon support because "it didn't feel right to use the pristine white paper" that had survived the conflagration, Tiggemann used a deliberately "outsider" and child-like manner to create a kind of visual inventory of his losses: household goods, clothes, electronic items, art supplies, labeling each with slightly skewed inscriptions. Echoing his feelings of "starting over and questioning things," the painting serves as an esthetic catharsis of his loss.

More sobering is Beth Shadur's handmade book, Tremble (2015), which calls attention to the fragility of life by memorializing murdered youth. During 2014, Shadur recorded the names and ages of all the young people who died in Chicago because of violence, listing their names on the back of the book. She also inscribed long poem by her friend and collaborator Lois Roma-Deeley on the reverse of two pages. Opening accordion-fashion, Tremble gives visual expression to the words of the poem at the same time that each page focuses on a particular issue, such as the sacrifice of children and violence against women. Like book ends, the first and last leaves are shaped like angel wings those of the "avenging angel" mentioned in the poem.

A number of works exploit watercolor's legendary potential for conveying the effects of light, as, for example, Don Dickinson's Lawn Chair Holiday (2015), a brilliantly illuminated cityscape of the Minneapolis Sculpture Garden at the Walker Art center, with Claes Oldenburg's Spoo bridge and Cherry (1988) in the distance. Dick Close also focuses on light in Duff (2015), an intriguing image of a fluffy, bronze-hued dog standing across a sun-filled road that winds its way through a leafy forest. Yet even as the endearing animal gazes out at the viewer, heavy violet shadows lend the an ominous edge to the scene.

Blake Tiggemann

A kudos to Warren who has assembled such a rich and varied exhibition, offering evidence of the watercolor's admirable legacy and its capacity to adapt to contemporary practices.

Dorothy Joiner
Lovick P. Corn Professor of Art History
LaGrange College
LaGrange GA

JOHN DORISH, New York, NY
Watercolor USA 2016 WHS Award Winner

John Dorish New Dream

I was born in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in 1947.
I do remember some very warm encouragement from Mrs. Group my kindergarten teacher for my drawing. In the fifth grade my mother showed me a painting on the cover of the Pittsburgh Press Sunday magazine and said: " paint like this, Johnny, and you will be successful." The painting was by Nat Youngblood, the Art Director of the Pittsburgh Press, a very fine artist / illustrator with a very unique style. I copied his paintings well into high school.

I never went to art school but was fortunate enough to go to college. In 1970, I graduated from Clarion State Teachers College in Pennsylvania. While a student there, several art teachers encouraged me to develop my artistic talent. One art teacher insisted we enter a painting of mine into a student competition at Washington and Jefferson College in Washington, Pennsylvania. I won an 'honorable mention' for my piece but was more impressed when someone approached me and asked, "do you sell your work?" The idea that one could make art and sell it had quite an impact on me. Later that year, in my second year of college, I entered an art festival in Kennerdale, PA and was awarded second prize for watercolor. The judge was the Art director of the Pittsburgh Press, Nat Youngblood.

After college I returned to Pittsburgh for several years and exhibited with several art groups including the Pittsburgh Watercolor Society. I drove a taxi cab to pay for my art supplies. In 1977, a 'leap of faith' brought me to New York City where I took a job as a shipping clerk and had little time to paint. One day, I saw some artists showing their art near the Museum of Modern Art. I had a number of small watercolors and decided to try my luck on the streets of New York. It took a while but I was eventually able to leave my office job and become a full time artist. Since then I have sought out opportunities to show my work in various venues. I have had success at various outdoor art festivals in the Northeast. Bottom line always is: Tomorrow I can wake up and make a painting.

In the mid 1990s I painted a series of surreal watercolors which I called "Still Life Migration Series" In 2000, I sent a digital entry to the Pittsburgh Watercolor Society Aqueous 2000 exhibition. It was my first reconnect with my hometown in more that 22 years. I received a "best of show" award and a very generous stipend.

As far as technique is concerned, I use Winsor Newton watercolors and Titanium White acrylic for opacity. In 2013, I began a series of semi-abstract paintings which were a radical departure from my city paintings. With no travel plans and no other commitments, I was able to dedicate about 7 months to explore a new way of working. I stayed focused on this new direction and worked diligently every day. The concept was to have no preconceived idea of what the finished product would be. Usually on a full sheet (T H Saunders 140 lb) I began laying down planes of paint - usually lighter color first and working darker over top. Even lighter over darker and mixing white acrylic with watercolor to achieve tonal qualities. Certain areas were defined with Paynes Gray, (never black) or I use a black ink pen. Occasionally watercolor pencils were to add texture. Many times I added familiar things like clocks , plants, moons or fruit. What I really was trying to do was make a beautiful painting. It was an exhilarating experience. "Composition I" is one of the 45 paintings I completed in that time span.

John Dorish

WHS Member Feature

John Dorish

I have been influenced by many artists over time and the list is always changing. The semi-abstract series that I began in 2014 were inspired in part by paintings of Juan Gris and early Picasso. I also like Ferdinand Leger. I have "borrowed" from many artists which I think is typical for many of us. I remember in college that I felt an affinity for Paul Klee and Rene Magritte.

I remember what an artist Archie Teeter told me in Jackson Hole Wyoming in 1971. He said: "doesn't matter what you paint, could be anything, just paint it like nobody else never painted it before." Today, when I am showing my etchings and paintings, the best compliment I can get is when someone says "I've never seen anything like this before." We are hard workers, us artists, and it is so rewarding to be recognized. Thank you WATERCOLOR USA HONOR SOCIETY for this recognition. It truly means a lot.

Gail Delger

WHS Member Feature

GAIL DELGER
Mckinney, TX
Watercolor USA 2016 Award Winner

Gail Delgen_Fish House Final

I've always enjoyed creating things ever since elementary school. After seeing the Southwestern Watercolor Society Show in Dallas, I was blown away by the amazing paintings and wanted to learn how to paint with watercolors. I took a watercolor class and then started painting on my own with the idea of entering competitions. I liked the challenge of painting with watercolors, because I knew it was a difficult medium to learn. I started off painting realistic watercolors and slowly moved into more whimsical subjects with watercolor and acrylics on paper. I like putting birds and fish in many of my paintings. I like to let the viewer decide what they think the painting means and usually I will put images in the painting that look like they don't make sense. I will usually paint 5 to 10 paintings in a series. By painting in a series I try to make the paintings have a similar connecting image, but not look too similar to each other. I have always admired the artists Romare Bearden and Frederick Hundertwasser. The late Rob Erdle was a wonderful artist and had a big influence on my painting techniques. The motto I try to live by is from Phyllis Diller, "Housework can't kill you, but why take a chance." Getting signature in the national watercolor societies, including the Watercolor USA Honor Society have been some of my goals and I'm happy to have accomplished them.

Gail Delgen AWS Bird

Thank you, Gail

Marilyn Hill San Pablo, CA

Thomas Jackson Cedar Rapids, IA

Howard Kuo Hannibal, M

Ellna Goodrum Dallas, TX

Beth Shadw

John Dorish New York, NY

Dongfeng Li

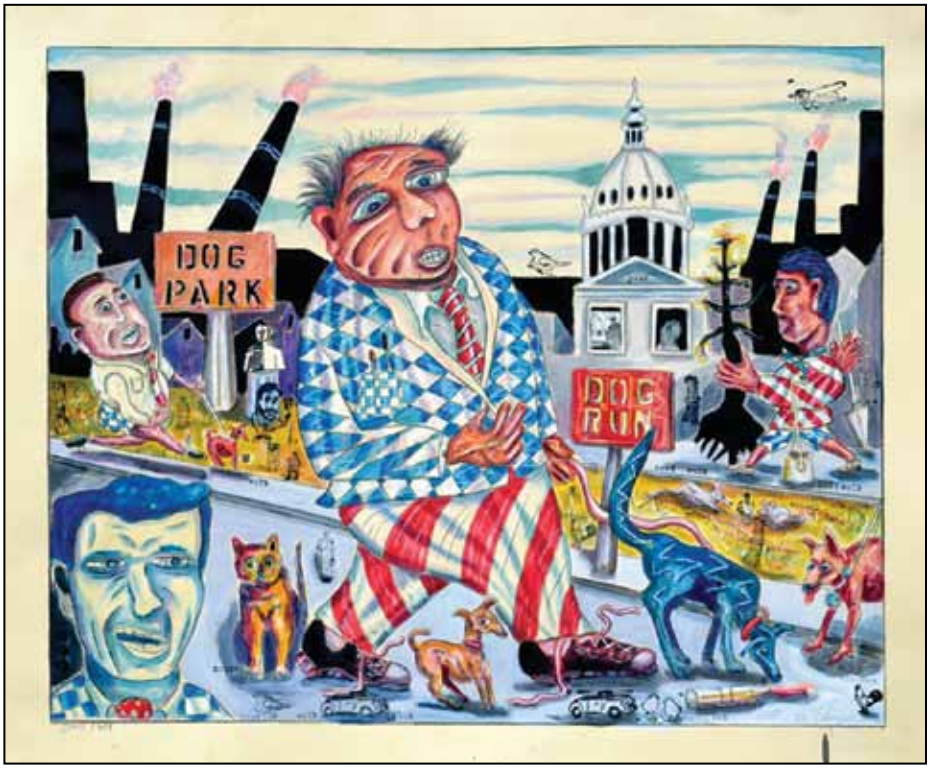
Society Award Winners

IO

Miles Batt, Jr Jacksonville, FL

Dashuai Sun Elmhurst, NY

ur Highland Park, IL



Bruce Thayer Mason, MI

Morehead, KY

In Memory

B. H. (Bill) Armstrong
(1926-2016)
First President of Watercolor USA Honor Society

Bill Armstrong Papillom

Bill Armstrong was a brilliant, legendary artist passionate about the arts and education. He was a philanthropist, jazz and symphony aficionado, world traveler, veracious reader, gourmet cook and gardener. He was an Emeritus Professor of Southwest Missouri State University and founder of the Graphic Arts Department. The contributions of Bill Armstrong to the medium of watercolor are many. Because he was such a talented, innovative painter and a visionary, he took on the task of talking with artists from around the country who had been a part of the early years of Watercolor USA. Most agreed that the show had been very important to their success, and Bill knew that something had to be done to ensure the continuation of Watercolor USA.

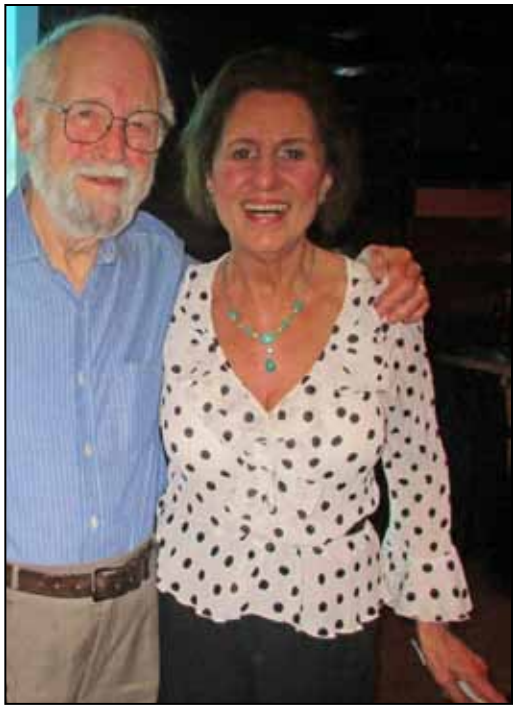
He was instrumental in establishing Watercolor USA Honor Society as an independently governed, not for profit arts organization, connected to the Springfield Art Museum. The articles of incorporation were signed October 7, 1985, and his dream came true.

The first Directors were Bill Armstrong, first WHS President; Lee Weiss, Vice-President; Bob Johnson, Secretary; and Bill Senter, Treasurer. Bill collected the energy, supported the passion, encouraged the imaginative ideas and constantly kept the ambitious WHS members focused on the purpose and goals of Watercolor USA Honor Society. A conference was called in San Diego, CA to plan WHS's first member exhibit held November 1 – December 27, 1987, at the Springfield Missouri Museum of Art in Springfield, MO. WHS member exhibitions would be titled Watercolor NOW I! in honor of the WHS first symposium held in Wisconsin in 1986.

The WHS exhibit was unprecedented because artists made their own choices for the exhibition. There was no jury of selection, and this debut exhibit displayed an excellent cross-section of watercolor paintings being produced in America.

Because of the vision of Bill Armstrong, Watercolor USA Honor Society exists today as a nationally recognized organization, and we thank you Bill. He was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award from WHS in 2006.

More WHS history available on our website
http://www.watercolorusahonorsociety.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/A-Brief-History_Of-Watercolor-USA-Honor-Society.pdf



Bill Armstrong Papillom

Memorials and Member News

Barbara Maxwell (1938-2016)

Barbara was an amazing painter who found her inspiration through travel and her family. She lived to expand all of her horizons each and every single day. International travel was inspirational to her art, and as a result she was juried into shows all over the country to include a gallery on 5th Avenue in New York. She was an honorary member of numerous watercolor associations to include Missouri, Kansas, California and Colorado and also served as a board member for the Missouri Watercolor Society. She was a devoted mother of 5 who provided her children with the tools and curiosity needed to prepare them to enter the world as kind people who recognized and nurtured their special gifts.

Barbara Maxwell Tillies Cooking

Please send news of awards won in 2016, solo exhibitions in 2016 or 2017, and shows you have juried in 2016 or will jury in 2017. I will list these under Member News in the next newsletter. Please send details in an email to chrisbuthfurn@gmail.com by MARCH 30.

Thank you
Christine Buth-Furness
Newsletter Editor

Katherine Chang Liu was the sole juror for the 2016, Rocky Mountain National Watermedia Competition, Foothills Art Center, Golden, CO

Catherine Mahoney has a solo exhibition at the Margaret Harrell Art Museum in Poplar Bluff, MO. She's exhibiting 40 original watercolors made for three children's books that she's been working on for the last fifteen years from September 10 - October 23, 2016.

Karen Poulson's painting, Expressions in Black and White, was awarded Best of Show by Katherine Chang Liu in the 43rd Rocky Mountain National Watermedia Exhibit in Golden, Colorado (through October 2016)

Karla Trammell has a solo show in Bolivar, MO. It is at the Driskill Gallery on the Southwest Baptist University campus and runs from October 10 through November 4, 2016. Opening reception at 6:30 p.m. on October 18.

Springfield Art Museum's Watercolor Collection and Collecting Efforts, Sarah Buhr Curator

Sarah Buhr, Curator

One of the strengths of the Springfield Art Museum's permanent collection is its broad collection of contemporary American watermedia, which is tied almost directly to the Museum's annual Watercolor USA exhibition, founded in 1962, from which the Museum has made annual acquisitions. This collection now numbers over four hundred paintings and mixed media works on paper and has been supplemented over the years by additional acquisitions made from galleries and artists not necessarily associated with the Watercolor USA exhibition.

In 2013, the Curatorial staff at the Museum developed a Collection Plan to set forth specific collecting goals after an in-depth review of the Museum's permanent collection. This plan was subsequently reviewed and approved by the Museum's Board of Directors and now serves as the primary rubric for new acquisitions. This plan recognizes the Museum's watermedia collection as a primary collecting focus. The Museum seeks to develop and build upon this already significant collection with the continued acquisition of important work in watercolor by significant American artists. Because the collection is so large, the Museum's focus is now prioritized to two areas: historic works that will 'fill the gaps' in the current collection (ex. Arthur Dove, Andrew Wyeth) and a continued focus on contemporary artists that are incorporating watermedia into their work in unique ways. In terms of contemporary work, the Museum has committed to continuing to collect from the Watercolor USA exhibition but is also actively looking at work by other contemporary artists. Along these lines, the Museum recently acquired a watercolor by New York-based artist Richard Kalina.

Additionally, the Museum's Curatorial team is dedicating time towards researching the works in the Museum's current watermedia collection with the intention towards publishing a "Handbook to the Collection" dedicated solely to the watermedia collection in three to five years.

Paula Henderson
Watercolor USA 2016 Award "Groundwork" Chicago. IL

Vicky Lilla
"Synery" Robert Goodier Memorial Award Spring Green, WI

WHS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL
(Please complete and mail in separate insert)

DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2017

Annual Dues: $40 - Checks payable to: WHS

Mail Check to:

Chalen Phillips, WHS Treasurer P.O. Box 645, Big Horn, WY 82833

The Fall 2016 newsletter will be the last paper issue mailed out to everyone. In the future all newsletters would be e-mailed, as well as posted on the WHS website. Members without e-mails will still receive a paper copy. Please contact Carole Hennessy, WHS Membership Chair, 1057 W. Monroe Street, Chicago, IL 60607, cjhennessy@comcast.net, (312) 841-8799 if you have questions.

Sarah Capps "Golden Years" Pera Appleby Memorial Award Belle Rive, IL

Watercolor USA Honor Society
Christine Buth-Furness, Newsletter Editor
19830 Trilby Ct. Brookfield, WI 53045

DETAILS FOR WATERCOLOR USA 2017

PLEASE PUT THESE DATES IN YOUR CALENDAR AND ENTER!

January 4, 2017 Prospectus available on the Springfield Art Museum website: www.sgfmuseum.org/

March 6, 2017 - Deadline for entry and payment

March 28, 2017 - Notification of accepted artists on the website (www.sgfmuseum.org)

June 2, 2017 - Opening reception 5:30 - 7:00PM

June 3, 2017 - Exhibit official opening

August 27, 2017 Exhibit closes.