President's Message

I hope you will enjoy this year's Watercolor USA 2017 exhibition. I believe that it continues our tradition of presenting some of the nation's highest quality and most innovative work to our public. I urge you to go to the Springfield Art Museum to view the paintings and see, first-hand, how fabulous watercolor can be. Then go home and wet a brush and paint a winner for next year's show.

One the goals of Watercolor USA is to recognize the innovative use of watercolor. I believe that you will find a number of fine examples of this in this year's exhibition. You will see paintings that break the traditional rectangular borders of the frame of a painting, paintings that use watercolor to create three dimension statements of art and paintings that use three dimensional objects to enhance the story the artist is communicating to their viewer.

As this year's juror, I recently completed selecting the paintings for Watercolor USA and I thought that it would be useful to those that entered, and to those that might consider entering in the future, to know some of the reasons that your painting might not have been selected for inclusion in this year's show.

One of the main reasons that paintings were rejected was for bad photography. If you have spent so much effort in creating a painting that you believe is worthy of selection, then you should be as skillful in taking or having a photo taken that matches the quality of your painting. A painting submitted to any competitive exhibition should only include the painting itself in the submitted image. This means that you should not include the matte, the frame, the easel it is sitting on and certainly not the background in the room or the yard where the photo was taken should not be included. I saw all of this among the submitted images.

The image must be in focus and in a high-resolution image file. In some cases, where an artist submitted two paintings, one image would be sharp and crisp and the other very much out of focus. The out of focus painting might have qualified for the inclusion, but it was impossible to tell, so it was rejected. More than 15 paintings were rejected this year because the image was out of focus.

In some cases, the image submitted was such a small file, about 500 KB, that it could only be seen at about 3" x 4" on my computer screen. When it was made larger the image it broke into pixels so that I could not see the details. I recommend that your image should be at least 1

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to 2 MB in size. If you don't understand these terms talk to your nephew or granddaughter.

Good lighting of your painting is also important. A few the submitted images were so dark that I could not tell what the true colors of the art were. If the whites in your painting are not white in your image, then you can be pretty certain that the colors will not be true. You can make corrections to your photo to make it look identical to the painting.

If you are going to copy another painter's style, which I do not recommend, then you should be sure that you can paint at least as good or better than the artist you are copying.

If you are going to paint realism, then look at the realism paintings that in the show and recognize the quality level that is the standard. Having a few items in a painting that are very realistic and others, such as the background, that is not painting in a realistic style, is not the standard. Realism has become, in the past few years, more and more prevalent in watercolor and the quality of this style of painting has risen significantly.

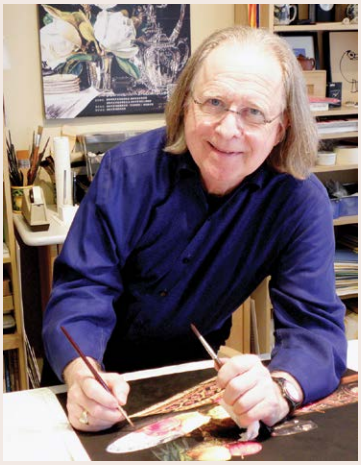
Many of the paintings submitted were just too cute, just because you have a cat or a lovely grandchild does not mean that painting them will create a painting worthy of such an exhibition as Watercolor USA. Other paintings might have been acceptable as a New Yorker cartoon, but not as a serious painting subject.

Allow me to state my bias regarding signatures. How you sign your painting is up to you, but when your signature becomes a major feature of the painting, and in one case where all the elements in the painting point to the signature, then I think you have crossed the line of what is acceptable.

I want to encourage everyone to enter their paintings in Watercolor USA and other competitions. Juried shows are one of the best ways to both share your work with other painters and as a way of determining if your painting is as good as you think it is. It is a test of the quality of your painting as judged against others that are submitted to that competition. Your painting is not being judged against all the paintings in the art world, it is only being judged against those that were submitted.

Your painting does not have to be highly complex to get in a competitive show. Sometimes, a simple painting, masterfully painted, can be as effective as the most complex painting. Some-times a painting can be too complex. If it takes the juror some length of time to figure out the message the artist is trying to covey to its viewer, it will probably be passed over. A strong message, expertly executed and carefully photographed will help get your painting included in next year's Watercolor USA.

"Watercolor continues to enjoy a growing interest around the world. When I talk to the suppliers and importers of watercolor related art materials, they all tell me that their business is growing. This bodes well for organizations like the Watercolor Honor Society. This year, there were 70 submissions to Watercolor USA by artists who had never submitted entries in Watercolor USA before. We, as the members of the Watercolor Honor Society, need to continue to encourage the highly qualified artists, as we meet them in our art adventures; art trips, museum visits, workshops, etc., to submit their work to our competitions and exhibitions. Our next event will be Watercolor NOW. Be sure to watch the web site and this newsletter for details. We look forward to seeing your work in all of these events.



Laurin McCracken,
WHS President

Wishing you all productive and enjoyable painting."

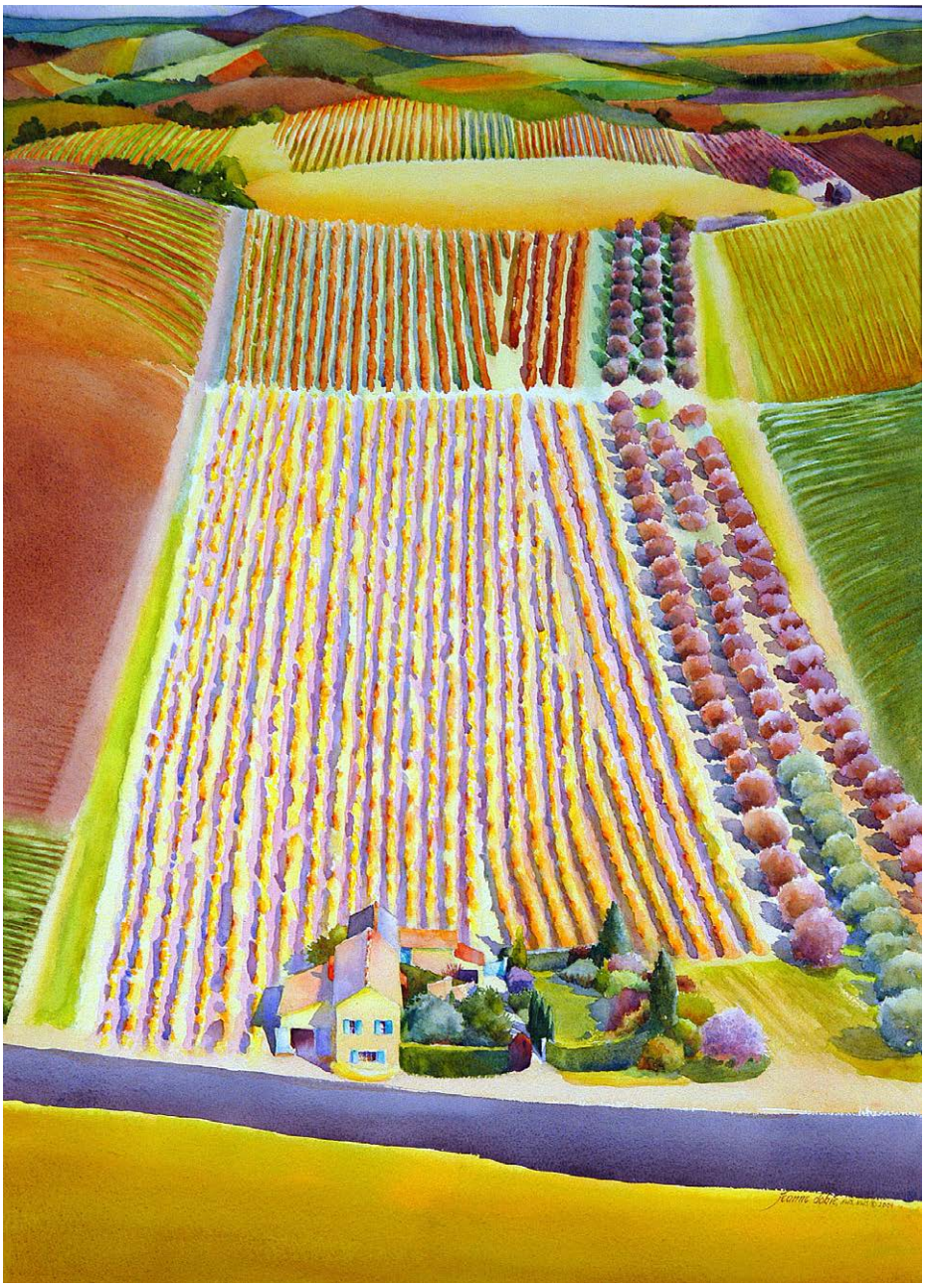
- ***Laurin McCracken AWS NWS WHS***
President, Watercolor USA Honor Society

In The Studio *By Jeanne Dobie, HS, AWS, NWS, TWSA*

My parents said I was born painting - everything! When I was 9 years old, my younger brother wanted a dog and I decided to win one for him. I entered a national Playmate Magazine contest and won a pedigreed American Kennel Club champion cocker spaniel. With that success, I was inspired to win poster contests, medals, culminating with four scholarships to the Philadelphia Museum School of Art (now the University of the Arts).

Marriage to a non-artistic engineer and five children later, I continued painting outdoors with the children in tow. They created caterpillar races, played games in the dunes and fields, and love nature to this day. At a seashore art show, a distinguished gentleman bought my winning water-color. He was Henri Marceau, the director at that time of the Philadelphia Art Museum, PA. How encouraging to a mother with five children!

Also encouraging, was winning the High Winds Medal at the AWS Exhibition, 1980. The painting "Three Bretonnes" was purchased by the Frye Museum, Seattle, WA. As a result, striving for a museum quality became important to me. I decided to take advantage of my homebound years and concentrate upon becoming a better artist. I set up challenges for myself, making brighter greens without using blue, leaving 1/2 of the paper unpainted and describing it by the painted half, turning errors into assets, and more. Color, I believe can be as important as composition when composing a painting. Color is the emotional response to a subject, while composition is the analytical response. When you combine the two, you have a great combination!

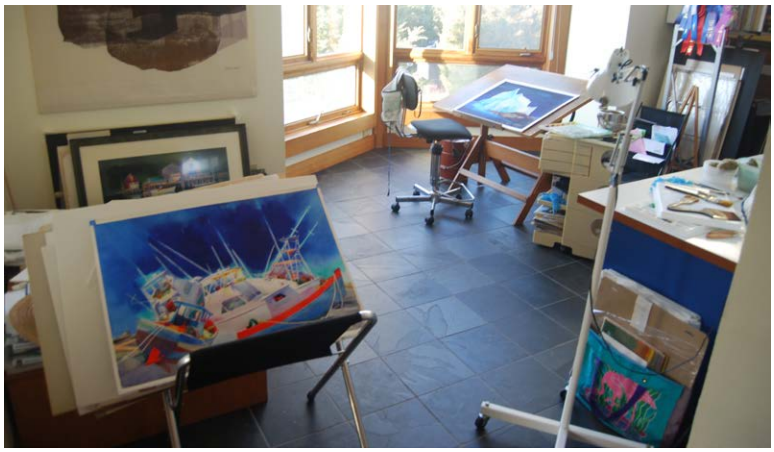


American Quilt, Jeanne Dobie

Most of all, I enjoyed pursuing ways to make colors glow or vibrate. I think of colors as having "personalities" like people, they can work well in some areas and not as well in other areas. I gave the mixtures names to help students identify their use,...
(continued on page 4)

In The Studio-Jeanne Dobie *(continued from page 3)*

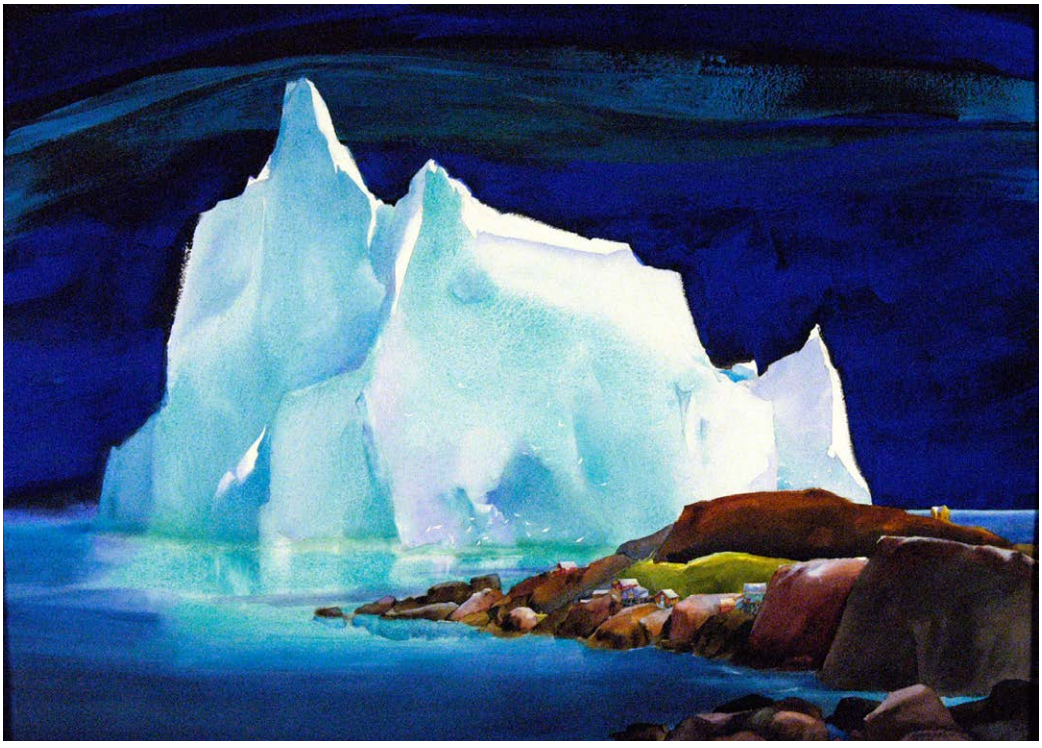
..."mouse power" to accent "jewel" colors, "stain and remain" darks, "octanic'" (my word) for high powered color when needed. I like to see paintings with "personal" mixtures, that don't look like pigments straight out of a tube. Later, these challenges became my lessons when I taught at Moore College of Art, Philadelphia, PA; at Barse Miller's Master Class, Maine; in U.S. workshops and my "Paint-escapes" to Europe. My lessons and paintings appeared on covers and in American Artist, Watercolor, the Artist Magazine, and in Europe, Palet and L' Art de Aquarelle. Watson Guptill requested a book which I titled "Making Color Sing" to share the many ways of composing with color. Then a movie director produced a DVD Workshop Set filmed during the Arizona Watercolor Society Workshop, available to homebound artists, such as I was years ago.



Inside Dobie's studio

My approach reflects my "training" as a mother ferrying my children around, passing by a great scene and having to formulate it later "in my mind", as I timed swim meets, sat through play practices, etc. Thanks to my children I developed a "mental sketchbook" so I knew how I would approach my painting when I had time to return. With time so limited, I always go for the essence first, whatever excites me the most. If time runs out, I've captured the important nucleus of my painting. Less critical areas can be added later.

You asked for artists that I have admired over the years: the Oriental woodcut masters, Alex Katz, - for reducing areas to the simplest forms, beautifully designed. Recent artists are Lawren Harris, one of the Canadian Seven for powerful clean shapes, and Robert Genn for his color infused atmospheres. While an artist may admire other artists, I would like to stress, that you should never waste your talent painting like someone else. Make your own contribution to art!



Ice Palace,
Jeanne Dobie

In the Studio *Bob Mejer, Past President of WHS*

l. What most influenced you early in your life, to become an artist?

I taught myself how to draw by copying master drawings from the family's encyclopedia at an early age of 11 years. For some reason I felt a need and desire to create art as a means to express myself. A portfolio of my drawings opened up opportunities, affirmed my drawing skills and piqued my interest in art, which led to the experience of encountering adult artists who offered to become my mentors. In my sophomore high school year I wanted to take art and was informed that art was 'for girls" and that they did not offer classes for boys to take. Fortunately, the principal's secretary knew of my interest and invited me to attend an adult watercolor class that she was taking at the local South Bend Art Center. Jozef Wrobel, a former student of Eliot O'Hara, did not want me to observe but wanted me to participate in the class. At the end of the session all participants showed their work and received a critique. I had a lot of positive reinforcement regarding my work. Through the efforts of Mr. Wrobel (who felt that I could draw but needed lessons regarding color) I obtained a scholarship to study with him and had the experience of working with other instructors in sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, life drawing and oil painting. For two years I became his teaching assistant. My love of color and watercolor I attribute to Mr. Wrobel.

2. Talk about your approach to the medium. You are well known for your watercolor and water-based monotypes. How has the development of this technique has given you a unique voice in the medium?

Because of the art portfolio that I managed to assemble I was provided an opportunity to attend Ball State University (Scholarships & Gallery Assistant) and Miami University of Ohio (Teaching Assistantship). Ball State stressed diversity of experience in all media and stylistic approaches. Working in the Gallery exposed me to historical, contemporary and current types of artwork. All of my work was representational. Watercolor was not considered a serious medium and was not taught at either institution except for interior design and commercial art. .

At Miami University I was able to explore what interested me more in painting and that was non-representational Art. I lived during an exciting time of Abstract Expressionism. I worked non-objectively in oil and acrylic painting. Watercolor was still on the back burner.

It wasn't until I started to teach that I felt a need to create a course in watercolor. This rekindled my interest in this medium, and I developed a further appreciation for its uniqueness.

I also established a printmaking program at Quincy University. Being in a unique situation of teaching both majors and non-majors, I sought a way to link both courses to add a unique experience for our students. So in 1979 I came up with this idea that watercolor can be reconstitute, and therefore it can be printed. It was my way of introducing painting students to the experience of printmaking and the printmaking students to that of painting. A short description of my monotype process can be found in the Watson-Guptill book by Julia Ayres-***Monotype, Mediums and Methods for Painterly Printmaking***. There is a 55 minute video of my approach to monotypes on YouTube: ***Bob Mejer Monotypes***. As a teacher I push students to seek their own voice, maximize their potential, and be creative.

3. Are there certain recurring motifs in your work? And would you talk about the architectural motifs I see in your imagery and your use of color to define form and develop spatial exploration?

I am interested in Universal symbols and patterns. The geometry of life: squares, circles, triangles, rectangles, plus signs, x-signs, etc. I am fascinated by how our vision is focused via windows and doorways. I am interested in the structural and expressive power of color. My work is a synthesis of collage space, flat space, and color fields. The tension created within this synthesis excites me and offers a wide range of possibilities. I aim to "present" the painting as an object and not as a representation. I strive for emotional intensity via my own voice in hopes to realize myself in a moment of time. "The artist makes visible the invisible." Paul Klee

4. Because you teach in a traditional classroom format describe briefly what you'd most like your students to understand about the medium.

I expose my students to all types of watercolor styles, subjects and approaches to the medium. I emphasize those qualities unique to watercolor: transparency, fluidity, the white of the paper as a lightbox, luminosity, portability, individuality, inner glow, techniques of gradated/flat washes/textures, defining edges, and most importantly-color. Good design is stressed along with the pictorial ordering principle of paint application. Near the end of the semester, students are required to create a series, which helps them negate "artist's block", exhaust stereotypical solutions, and clarify their own passions.

Papier Colle Study with Finished Watercolor, Robert Lee Mejer

In summary I share the following with the student:

- What you have to say is more important than technique(which develops over time)
- There is more than one way to paint anything
- That it is important to "encounter" the real thing
- Observing/Seeing is very critical to good painting
- It is you and not the technique in charge of the painting
- Try to arrive at the value/color with the fewest applications of paint

5. How much do you develop personal content in any of your paintings and does it matter?

I guess the content would be my life experiences as reflected by the painting. I avoid being a camera or making social/political statements. My work is about real space rather than represented space. I attempt to merge in my work collage space, the flat plane (integrity of the picture plane), and color field space. My work reflects the unconscious and the spiritual. All my work concerns the manipulation of space within the realm of Modernist ideas. I like to think that I create music for the eyes—I listen to the painting and it tells me where to go. I try to be authentic in terms of who I am.

6. Name two artists whose work you admire and tell why.

It's difficult for me to narrow this question to just two artists. I find when I am in the studio dealing with an idea-problem I imagine what another artist would do to tackle that same challenge. For me that artist becomes important, at that point in time, and one that I admire in helping me to reach my solutions. The following artists had a tremendous impact on my development through their work and writings:

Mappings III, Monotype Assemblegraph, Robert Lee Mejer

Russian artist, Wassily Kandinsky (1866-1944) who wrote, "Color is the keyboard, the eyes are the harmonies, the soul is the piano with many strings." He is credited with painting one of the first recognized purely abstract works. He gave to me the freedom to pursue non-objective art.

Another artist that I admire is Dutch artist Piet Mondrian (1872-1944) who developed a new style of art called "Neo-Plasticism: Harmony of Opposites." He explored the duality of opposing elements in painting, striving for equilibrium, excluded symmetry, concerned with relations and sought to retain the integrity of the picture plane. To Mondrian, the flat surface is not emotionally flat. In the master's hands, it becomes a dynamic microcosm of life.

I also credit German-born American Abstract Expressionist painter Hans Hofmann (1880-1996), who did abstract works that exhibited a concern with pictorial structure, spatial illusion and color relationships. He stated that "the ability to simplify means to eliminate the unnecessary so that the necessary may speak." and discussed "push-pull" spatial theories, that art has spiritual value and showed his reverence for nature as a source for art.

Lastly, my understanding of color is influenced by German-born American artist Josef Albers (1888-1976) and his book "Interaction of Color." He is most remembered for his famous series, "Homage to the Square."

7**. Who or what has most influenced your work?**

All of the artists from the 19th & 20th century Modern Art movements and American Abstract Expressionists have played an important role in my development, especially their ideas on color, space, and the importance of the picture plane.

Two artists who made images via printmaking that have left an indelible mark on my thinking about the history of art and the process of abstraction as a way of getting to the essence of the subject are Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) and his work 'Bull', a suite of eleven lithographs, all pulled from a single stone. He visually dissects the image of a bull to discover its essential presence through a progressive analysis of its form. The other, Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923–1997), in a series of six, progressively simplifies and abstracts a Holstein cow.

A watercolorist that I admire the most and who has influenced my thinking regarding painting is WHS Lifetime Achievement Award recipient Miles Batt, Sr. Miles authored a book "Creative Watercolor" which is unlike any watercolor book in the field. It is comprehensive in covering all aspects of technique, elements and principles of design, composition, and the importance of creativity.

8. What do you feel is your greatest accomplishment either in life, or as an artist?

One will never know what true love is until one gives birth to another human being. My son is that accomplishment. He was a truly gifted artist who loved life. As an artist/father I took great pride in our being the only father/son juried into the 2013-2014 Shenzhen Watercolour Biennial China Exhibition and both being published in the book by Sue St. John-***Journeys to Abstraction 2***. As an artist-teacher, I hope that what I offer to my students will be a life changing experience for them and a tool for the future.

Variant Neborn, Robert Lee Mejer

Artist Statement:

I am a Geometric Abstract Intimist that seeks to express, via watercolor and monotypes, various emotional situations and psychic spaces through a layering process that operates out of a collage-flat space-color tradition. I create works that unite the Modern tradition of Classical formal structure of geometry with the Romantic/Impressionist concern for color and gestural improvisation in order to create visual drama—via dynamic opposites and relationships, that equates to the pulse of life. I seek the unknown. I agree with Kandinsky that the circle is the most peaceful shape and that it represents the human soul. In my work I hope TO PRESENT (inside to out) rather than REPRESENT (outside to in). **Contact Bob for more information: mejerbob@quincy.edu**

Watercolor Exhibitions of Note

"American Watercolor in the Age of Homer and Sargent"
at the Philadelphia Museum of Art. The work is on display through May 14, 2017
More info visit: http://www.philamuseum.org/exhibitions/851.html

You can read the Wall Street Journal review of "American Watercolor in the Age of Homer and Sargent", at https://www.wsj.com/articles/american-watercolor-in-the-age-of-homer-and-sargent-review-1488404290

Chris Jorgensen, 1903-04 Watercolors at the Mission San Francisco de Solano Mission in Sonoma, CA
If you ever travel to Mission San Francisco Solano in Sonoma, CA on display you will find a collection of beautifully rendered watercolors of the 21 California Missions. From 1903 to 1904 Chris Jorgensen documented all the missions of California in the medium of watercolor. It's well worth the visit to see this permanently housed collection. To read more, please visit these links:
http://missiontour.org/wp/jorgensen/jorgensen-watercolors.html or
http://missiontour.org/wp/sonoma/mission-san-francisco-solano.html

Memorials

Jerry Douglas Berneche 1932-2016

He received his bachelor's in fine art in 1956 from the John Herron Art Institute in Indianapolis, Ind. While attending Ohio University in Athens as a graduate assistant in drawing and design, he met and married an art student, Joanne Zucco. Upon graduation from Ohio University, he taught at Cooper Art School of Design in Cleveland and Montana State University. He then accepted a faculty position at the University of Missouri in 1966, from where he retired as a professor of art in 2008. While at the University of Missouri, he helped enrich and develop the art department curriculum as well as the Summer Study Program in Florence, Italy, for many years. Jerry and his wife, Joanne, still donate to the scholarship that would help fund students to be able to travel to Italy. He was also the visiting instructor for the Department of the Army in Seoul, Korea.

After retirement, Jerry was able to work in his home studio offering help, critiquing students, former students, fellow artists and friends. He was most proud of the impact and influence he made in the careers of many students. Teaching, painting and listening to classical music were his great passions. He entered and was accepted in over 30 national, international and regional shows and received awards in several exhibits; one of them being the Watercolor USA Honor Society. His artwork is located in several private and public museums, businesses and cultural centers. His teaching was enriched by his involvement with the community as a board member of the Missouri Watercolor Society and School of Access Arts and an active member of the Columbia Art League.

Nina Fry 1938-2016

She grew up in Akron, Ohio, attaining her MA degree in art at Kent State University in Akron. While teaching in Yuma, Arizona, she met her husband, Frank, and on retirement, moved to Trinidad, Colo., then to Pueblo in 1990, where Nina was a founding member of the Southern Colorado Watercolor Society, also founded the Exhibitionists, a group of women artists. She was also a member of a number of national water color organizations, including the Pikes Peak Water Color Society and the National Watercolor Honor Society. Nina's love of color and whimsical designs made her works distinctive and recognizable. After retirement from teaching, she devoted her life to painting and created a large body of work of watercolors, acrylics as well as making handmade paper. All of her work distinctively shows her love of bright, bold statements. All genres of her artwork have been displayed nationally and have won many awards. Her works hang in collections across the nation.

Nina enjoyed traveling but was always glad to get home to her own backyard.

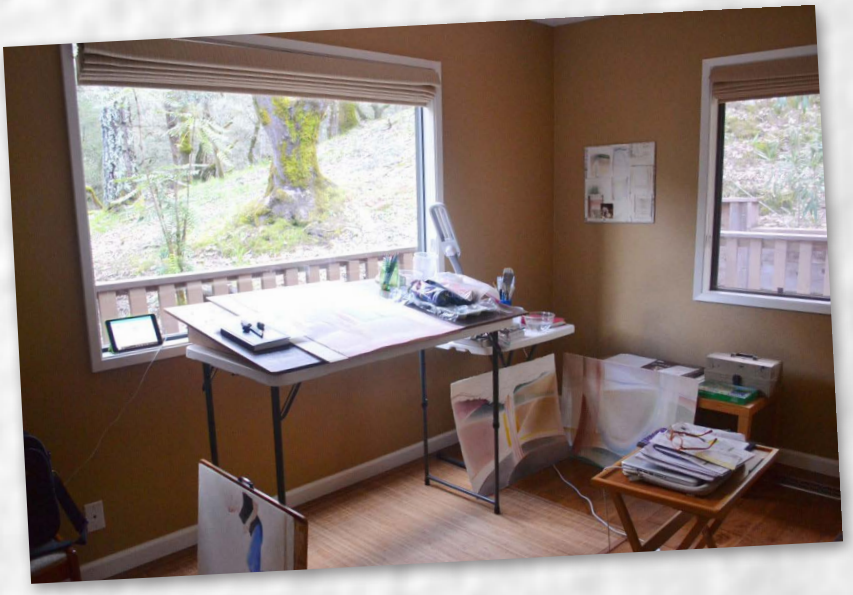
A View into the Studio

Bob Mejer in his studio

Watercolor painters work in many different ways. I asked several WHS members to share photos of their workspaces/studios and the ways they work. I hope you enjoy this section. If anyone wishes to share a photo of their workspace, please send a jpeg (72 dpi, 800 pixels on the smallest side) to chrisbuthfurn@gmail.com.

Chris Buth-Furness,
Newsletter Editor

Wayne Conyer's studio



Chris Buth-Furness' studio

A View into the Studio

Sandra Schaffer in her studio

Peter Scaturro's studio

John Dorish's studio

Member News

Rita Crooks

Her painting "Checkmate" was accepted into the Rocky Mountain Watermedia Exhibition held at the Foothills Art Center in Golden, CO, September 17 through October 23, 2016

Her painting "The Bicyclists" was juried into the 8th Annual Signature American Watermedia Exhibition at the Fallbrook Art Center, Fallbrook, CA. Show runs February 5 through March 19, 2017

The Bicyclists by Rita Crooks

Bob Mejer

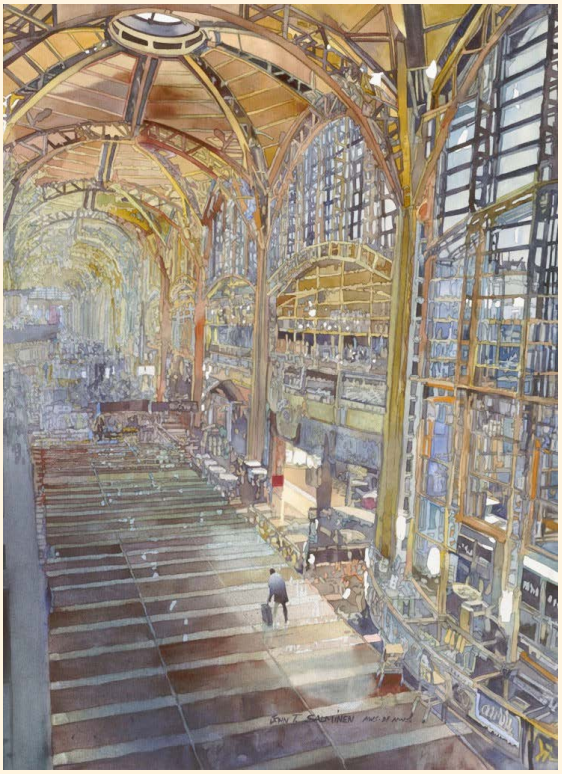
Was interviewed for the February 2017 ISEA Newsletter, Issue — Contributors Corner-Life's Plateaus as an Artist. To view that article - click here or go to: https://gallery.mailchimp.com/b5f5a32a8f3745defe-99b8ac2/files/2d5bc793-d6e2-44e4-aece-96552a8c8634/Issue_8_Feb_2017_.pdf

"Winged Totem" and "Variant: Solar Eclipse" were exhibited in Illinois State Fair-Professional Art Exhibition during the Illinois State Fair

"Take PC #18 received a Merit Award in the 43rd Annual Rocky Mountain National Watermedia Exhibition at the Foothills Art Center in Golden, CO in 2016

"Take PC #47" received the Dick Blick Art Materials Merchandise Award in the 2016 San Diego Watercolor Society International Exhibition. He is also being awarded Signature Status in the San Diego Watercolor Society.

"Cloud Break" received an honorable mention in the Illinois Watercolor Society National Members' Show



Washington National by John Salminen

Publishers of McClain's Relief Printmaking Supplies Catalog selected the multi-plate color monotype "Gestation" for color reproduction in their 2016 Catalog.

His monotype assemblegraph "Aqueous II" was included in the Mid-America Print Council (MAPC) Members' Juried Exhibition. The exhibition was held at the Carnegie Center for Art & History, New Albany, Indiana during the MAPC Print Matters,Printing Matter Conference.

John Salminen

Was interviewed in the November 14, 2016 issue of artistdaily.com To view that article - click here, or go to: www.artistdaily.com/blogs and enter "Salminen" in the search bar

Katherine Chang Liu

Was the sole juror for the 2016 43rd Annual Rocky Mountain National Watermedia Exhibition at the Foothills Art Center in Golden, CO

Sole Juror for the Coos Bay Art Museum, "Expressions West Exhibit", 2017 in Coos Bay, OR. April 14 to July 1, 2017. Opening April 14, 2017.

Mark your calendars

MEMBERS please plan for...

WATERCOLOR USA 2017

June 3 - August 27, 2017

Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, MO

Opening Reception: Friday, June 2, from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. at the Wiesel and Kelly Galleries

Congratulations to WHS members

Please congratulate WHS members who were juried into Watercolor USA 2017.

Beth Shadur
Brian McCormick
Bruce Bobick
Bruce Thayer
Carolee Hennessy
Charlene Gerrish
Chris Krupinski
David Boggs
David Neil Mack
Denny Bond
Diane Schmidt
Dongfeng Li
Eileen Mueller Neill
Ellna Goodrum
Gordon West
Howard Eberle
Howard Kuo
Jacqueline Gnott
Jerry Ellis
Kathleen Giles
Kathy Bay
Kristine Frethiem
Lance Hunter
Lynne Kroll
Lynne Railsback
Mary Britten Lynch
Muriel Mimura
Richard Hanson
Robert Mejer
Sean Barrett
Terry Genesen Becker
Z. L. Feng

Please welcome the new members (2016-2017) to WHS

Benjamin Mau
Beth Shadur
Cindy Kopenhafer
Diane Geoghega
Elizabeth Concan
Gail Delger
Howard Kuo
Ione Angilan
Janet Doll
John Dorish
Joseph Russ
Larry Carver
Marilyn Hill
Maruta Racenis
Natalie Smythe
Renee Alyson
Vicky Lilla

Upcoming Issues & News

Dear WHS members,

If you wish to send items for the "Member News" section of the Fall 2017 issue, please send to my attention at **chrisbuthfurn@gmail.com** Please send news in a format that I can copy and paste. News may include: **1)** Awards won in 2016 or 2017, **2)** Solo or two artist exhibitions, and **3)** Shows that you have juried.

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 30, 2017

If there are books, films or exhibitions that you would recommend, please send to my attention as well, and I'll share in the fall issue.

Best wishes,

Chris Buth-Furness

WHS Newsletter Editor

Thank you to our new Graphic Designer, Aaron Wilbers of Crow's Mouth Design, for his re-design of our newsletter.

Crow's Mouth