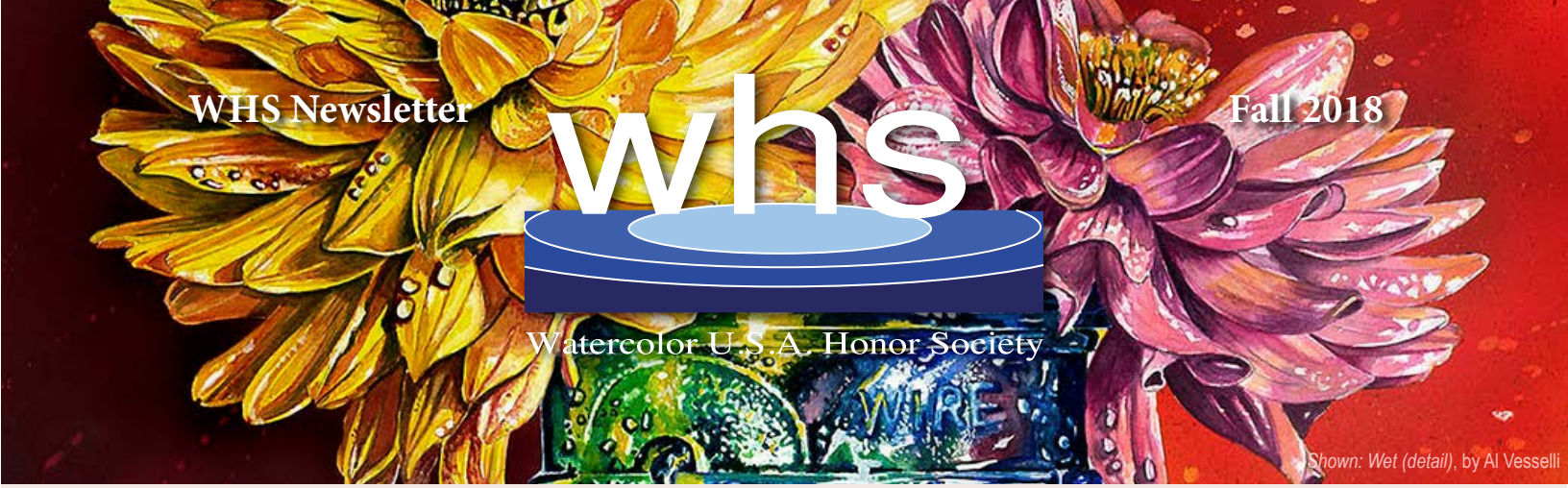

Shown: Wet (detail), by Al Vesselli

WHS President's Letter *by WHS President, Laurin McCracken*

By the time you read this Watercolor Now! 2018 will have opened at the Margaret Harwell Art Museum in Poplar Bluff, MO. This is our Member exhibition and will be on display until November 24, 2018. Many thanks to Steve Whitworth, Director of the Museum and his hard-working staff for hosting this important exhibition of American Watercolors.

I extend a special thank you to our Board Members, Wayne Connors and Bob Mejer, for their efforts in working with the Margaret Harwell Museum and managing the process of getting the paintings to the exhibition.

Laurin McCracken, WHS President

A "hats off" salute to all of you who made the effort to be included in this exhibition. We, the members of the Watercolor USA Honor Society represent some of the finalist talent in the execution of Fine Art watercolors to be found anywhere. I am confident that you will find that, when you visit the museum or explore the catalog, you will agree this is some of the finest work shown anywhere.

Your Board Members have been working to create an on-line option to pay your dues. We are in the process of creating a PayPal option for your use. While we will continue to accept checks, we hope that you will find this a much more efficient way to handle the payment of your dues. We will let you know as soon as this is in place. Again, there are a number of Board Members that have been working on this effort, especially Chalen Phillips, Treasurer and Carole Hennessy, Membership Chair. Our thanks to all that have been involved.

I would like to officially welcome Alicia Farris as a board member. She will serve as an At-Large Board Member, but will be working closely with Carole Hennessy, your Membership Chair, so that she can move into that position in the future.

It is time to start thinking About Watercolor USA 2019, next year's Springfield Museum Exhibition. This exhibition is one of the most outstanding exhibitions of talent in (continued...)

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...watercolor in the nation. Remember, one of the goals of this competitive show it to exhibit and reward innovation in the art of watercolor.

Still Life with Glass Jars - Laurin McCracken

Over the years, I have had the distinct honor and pleasure of being asked to jury a number of watercolor exhibitions and I thought I might take a minute to give you my take on what paintings are selected and how to win awards.

As I start narrowing the field of submissions and looking for the best paintings for inclusion in a show, I make my choices based on a number of basic criteria; composition, sense of color, use of the values of color and basic drawing skills, such as an understanding of perspective. I am always looking for quality in the mastery of the craft of watercolor painting.

The best advice that I can offer you is to submit a painting that is worthy of the previous exhibitions and one that will grab the attention of the juror. Every juror is different, but their first challenge is to eliminate all the paintings that are not competitive.

The easiest way to get eliminated early is to submit a photograph of your painting that does not meet the criteria listed in the Prospectus. If it is out of focus, shows the frame and/or background, is crooked or does not have a high resolution, it will be easy for the juror to discard it and move on the next submission.

A "hats off" salute to all of you who made the effort to be included in Watercolor USA 2018

A painting with a complex narrative seldom gets selected. Initially the juror does not have the time to study a painting close enough to unravel a complex narrative. While every painting needs to tell a story, a painting that tells a complex story may be a fine private exhibition painting, but usually proves to be a weak competition painting. Be sure that your story can be quickly grasped.

Not every great painting can get into an exhibit. Paint a painting for the exhibition. One that the juror can understand quickly and has all of the attributes that we associate with high quality watercolors.

We look forward to your entering Watercolor USA and we hope to see you next year in Springfield.

Please contact me if there is anything I can do to make your membership in Watercolor USA Honor Society more rewarding and enjoyable.

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

Watercolor Now! 2018

Watercolor Now! will be at the Margaret Harwell Art Museum in Poplar Bluff, Missouri and at the Poplar Bluff Library through November 25th. Admission is free. Poplar Bluff is a beautiful town of approximately 17,000. I spoke to Steve Whitworth, the museum's director and he took me on a tour of the museum. The main building is an old Victorian house at 421 N. Main and they have a 2nd house next door which they use for class rooms and meetings. Main Street at this address is a beautiful tree-lined brick road with high curbs built to accommodate Henry Ford's Model T.

The Exhibit will be open to visitors Tuesdays -Fridays Noon till 4:00 p.m. and Saturdays and Sundays 1:00p.m. till 4:00p.m. There will be a ticketed, catered special opening reception on Saturday Oct.6, at 6:00 p.m. For more information, contact MHAM director Steve Whitworth at 573-686-8002; or visit https://www.mham.org/

The museum and some adjoining buildings are historic and have artistic value of their own

Steve Whitworth, Director, Margaret Halwell Art Museum

A note from the Editor *Gary Cadwallader, Newsletter Editor*

Hello everyone! My name is Gary Cadwallader. I'll be the newsletter editor and I hope I can do as good a job as Christine. You can help me out by sending any news or tips to gary@garypaints.com. If you have suggestions or complaints, send those along too. I am especially interested in anyone who wants to be part of a long interview. We'll be placing more emphasis on tips about painting and technique, so, if you've anything you believe can help others, please, please let me know. I also want to thank Aaron Wilbers, our layout artist, without whom this newsletter would be written on scraps of paper and the backs of napkins. His art and design work is online at: www.crowsmouth.com

Thank you!

Gary Cadwallader
WHS Newsletter Editor
You can reach me at: gary@garypaints.com

Watercolor USA 2018 Review *by Dorothy Joiner*

The Watercolor USA 2018 exhibition once again demonstrates the vitality and ongoing acceleration of expertise in aqueous media. From among the 464 works submitted by 264 artists from 45 states, juror Kelly Kane, Editor-in-Chief of Plein Air Magazine, chose 82 pieces from 81 artists, representing 31 states. Kane noted the "rich diversity and skill" of the entries. Basing her selections not only on "the artists' command of design and craft," but also on their compelling narratives. Museum Director Nick Nelson further identified the "unifying refrain" of this year's show as the "larger size" of many pieces and wrote of the joy he always takes in first viewing the juror's choices. Especially notable, moreover, is the gamut of emotion expressed in the show.

Xanadu - Lorie Hess

In Xanadu (2018), Lorie Hess creates an intriguing image of teenage day-dreaming. Seen from above, the young woman reclines, arms forming right angles above and below. Blond hair streams out on the quilt as she listens by ear plugs to music from an I phone. Eyes directed upward betray a transcendent state, underscored by the title and its several associations—first the 1980 movie starring Olivia Newton-John, highly prized for its music; second, the nightclub from which the film takes its name; and finally, the exotic summer capital of Kubla Khan's Yuan Dynasty in China, immortalized by Samuel Taylor Coleridge in a poem quoted in the film: all echoes of long ago and far away.

$1,500 Cash - Bill Armstrong Memorial Award: Susan Weintraub - *McDonald Avenue*

Richard Hanson evokes a very different experience in a self-portrait titled Can't Always Hunt into the Wind (Street Series) (2017) ***See image on page 6***. Disheveled, in baggy clothes, Hanson leans against a cash machine in a dingy, desolate place, as though musing about possibilities missed and potential unrealized, a desolate mood underscored by the pessimistic title. When hunting game, a dog must be directed into the wind, but, Hanson muses, the wind's not always on your side.

Woody Duncan captures both intensity of purpose and the joy of music in his admirable portrait of a New Orleans street musician in Clarinet-NOLA (2018) . Sweaty, brow wrinkled in effort, the player is reflected in the window behind and his arm casts a shadow on the white shirt. Even though his status is at best marginal, the man evinces great pride in his work.

Particularly moving is Sydni Reubin's double portrait of a bi-racial couple, Two Ones (2017). They hold hands, she diffident and wary, with legs and feet held close together, he bold, almost defiant. Her left hand resting gently against her tummy indicates their unborn child. The social difficulties ahead, however, are symbolized by the steps behind them. They face an "uphill" life together.

Pink Dirt Town (Boulder 1966) - Emily Silver

$2,000 Cash - Greg G. Thielen Memorial Award: Sydni Reuben - *Two Ones*

One of the notably large works mentioned by Nelson is Emily Silver's Pink Dirt Town (Boulder 1966) (2017). Silver's map of Boulder celebrates the city where she grew up, showing mountains toward the west in deep magenta and plains to the east in varying shades of pink, together with lines both straight and curving to indicate streets and roads. The color derives from the fact that the rocks of the area are "pinkish," the artist says, their crumbling lending a slightly rosy hue to the landscape.

Certainly one of the most intriguing works in the exhibition is Kathleen Giles' Queen of Hearts (2017). ***See image on page 9.*** Cropping the figure just below the shoulders, Giles denies the viewer any hints about her character from her facial expression. But striped blouse, well-manicured hands, wedding ring, and the card she holds toward the plane—the queen of hearts—indicate a strong, perhaps self-willed woman who controls through a magnetic personality. Giles enhances her narrative with superb technique, showing subtle effects of light on the blouse and striated shadows on the table from the striped garment.

The 2018 exhibition demonstrates once again the remarkable diversity of contemporary watercolor. Having expanded the ken of their medium during the past several decades, these painters display not only rich and varied themes but also exceptional mastery, delighting both the eye and the mind.

Watercolor USA 2018 is at the Springfield Art Museum in Springfield, Missouri. The exhibition runs from June 2 until August 26, 2018.

Dorothy Joiner - Lovick P. Corn Professor of Art History
LaGrange College, LaGrange, GA 30240

AWARD WINNERS LIST - ***(See page 6 for WHS Awards of Excellence)***

1) $3,000 Cash - Kenneth M. Shuck Memorial Award: Kathleen Giles - *Queen of Hearts* (image on page 9)
2) $2,000 Cash - Greg G. Thielen Memorial Award: Sydni Reuben - *Two Ones* (image on page 4)
3) $1,500 Cash - Bill Armstrong Memorial Award: Susan Weintraub - *McDonald Avenue* (image on page 4)
4) $1,000 Cash - Robert E. Goodier Memorial Award for Traditional Transparent Watercolor: Robin Erickson - *Galleria Reflection*
5) $300 Cash - Ann T. Pierce Memorial Award: Al Vesselli - *Wet*
6) $300 Cash - Jo Bidner Memorial Award: Bonnie Switzer - *Free Spirit*
7) $300 Cash - Richard Clubb Memorial Award (Charter Member): Woody Duncan, *Clarinet - NOLA*
8) $300 Cash - LeRoy Fink Memorial Award: Dongfeng Li - *Helmet in the Hazy Rain*

Join us in congratulating the winners of the

WATERCOLOR USA HONOR SOCIETY

AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

2018

1

2

3

4

The Watercolor USA Honor Society Awards of Excellence are bestowed by our organization. Each award includes a monetary prize of $300.

1) Margaret Harrell - Rush Hour **2)** Alexis Lavine - To the Grandstand **3)** Michael Holter - The Whistleblower
4) Chris Krupinski - Distorted View **5)** John Fitzgibbon - Sisters
6) Richard Hanson - Can't Always Hunt Into the Wind (Street series)

5

6

From the "Tip Jar"

Goo Gone cleans masking fluid *by Gary Cadwallader*

Use Goo Gone to remove masking fluid from your brushes. I tested this out by leaving masking fluid on three brushes for thirty days. Then I soaked the brushes in an inch of Goo Gone. The first two brushes came clean in an hour. The third brush took two hours. I still only use synthetic brushes, but this will get them clean.

Waxing Doesn't Hurt *by Angela Fehr*

Traditionally, watercolor paintings are framed with a mat, under glass. This framing method, while providing protection for fragile works on paper, can be expensive. Glass can break during transport, and the biggest problem, in my mind, is that works under glass don't hang well in a collection beside contemporary works on canvas or panel. To create a more contemporary look, I've seen watercolor artists paint on watercolor canvas, or stretch watercolor paper on stretcher bars and then varnish the finished painting, but I don't love the look of a glossy varnish, or the time involved in stretching paper, when I'm not certain the painting will turn out to be worth the effort, as my intuitive painting style yields unpredictable results.

Over the last few years, I've developed a method for mounting finished paintings on cradled plywood panels, finishing with a beeswax & resin layer that keeps the matte watercolor look and protects the painting. I love the tactile process of buffing the wax into the surface of the paper. Mounting my paintings on panel means that I have a permanent, light-weight display solution, less risk of damage (no broken glass!) and a modern look that hangs beautifully beside oil or acrylic paintings on canvas or panel. Collectors love the clean look and the option to frame the painting or leave unframed. If you are planning to enter your work in watercolor competitions, you will want to check their framing requirements carefully, as this finish may disqualify your art in some more traditional venues.

Angela Fehr is a watercolor artist and instructor living in northern British Columbia, Canada. Her tutorial videos are on YouTube under the username "angelfehr" or at **https://www.youtube.com/user/angelfehr**

(Editor's Note: I've used Gamblin's Cold Wax Medium to protect watercolors. It dries clear and soaks into the paper. Do not over apply. Simply wipe off the excess immediately. Do not try to buff. The color stays the same and it will dry to a waterproof finish in two or three days. GC)

Spray Varnish Instead of Plexiglas *by Gary Cadwallader*

There are a couple types of spray varnish you can use to protect your watercolors if you choose not to glaze them. I tried Krylon which was available at Hobby Lobby. It did not change the color at all. However, it left a rough finish to the touch. It felt a bit like sandpaper.

Golden makes a UV protectant and spray varnish. **Information online, click here: https://www.goldenpaints.com/technicalinfo_varnwatercolor.** They also include a warning that the spray changes the textural quality of the paper. Remember spray varnish is permanent.

Cheap Joe's has a Youtube video at this address: **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OUUGwIl6sUs**
They recommend Golden, Krylon, Schmincke Aquarell-Fixativ as well as Golden's Gel Topcoat.

Aluminum Portfolios for Safely Transporting Framed artworks *by Fred Schollmeyer*

Transporting dozens of framed artworks to art fairs and galleries can cause dents and dings to frames. Also, with watercolors there's always that danger of breaking the glass covering. As an artist I was always looking for the best way to package artwork for safe travel without spending huge sums of money on elaborate packaging. Bubble wrap always tended to come undone leaving the artwork unprotected. A fellow artist showed us this method of making portfolios. The first step is to purchase relatively inexpensive rolls of Reflectix standard insulation and foil tape. These can be purchased at big box stores like Lowes and Home Depot. The rolls vary in size which allows the artist to purchase the size necessary to fit their specific artworks. The foil is unrolled and cut using a scissors into "envelope" like shapes. The foil envelope is then taped together forming a portfolio. Various sizes can be produced to accommodate different sizes of framed artworks. For added protection the aluminum foil portfolio can be placed in a cardboard box for additional safety.

Fred Schollmeyer is an airbrush artist working in Chamois, MO.
His web site is here: **http://fredschollmeyer.com/**

An Interview with Kathleen Giles

I interviewed Kathleen Giles via telephone and she was kind enough to let me record our talk. The following has been edited for content and readability. – Gary Cadwallader

Q. Hello, Kathleen. You've had great success with Watercolor USA lately. Do you want to talk about "Queen of Hearts" which won 1st place this year?

A. "Queen of Hearts" is a continuation of a hand series I'm doing. It came about with me wanting to work in a series and thinking what could I do with hands that was interesting. I played cards a lot with my father so I set that up wearing different tops (that's me in the picture "Queen of Hearts") and I was holding the cards doing different things and I had my husband take pictures. I would look at them and say, "That's not right," and "we should do this."

Jael - Watercolor on clay board
15" x 22"

It just worked out that the blouse that I was wearing was one that my father had bought me when I was younger, he has since passed away. But I liked painting stripes. I've had good luck with that and I like painting fabric and stripes and granite.

I just do what pleases me visually. I'm very particular about the composition.

Q. I really enjoyed the granite and I wondered how you did that.

A. It was hard and there were times I was ready to throw the thing away out of frustration. I scrubbed it out several times and just kept trying to paint the granite so that I was happy with it. And since then when I get frustrated I just remember that I didn't like "Queen of Hearts" and look what happened with that.

Lily in the Lavender
Watercolor with gesso, 21"x 29"

Q. Was it hard painting the tattoos in "Mallory's Hands"? Tattoos seem like camouflage to me, like they are hiding the muscle and bone structure. How did you overcome that?

A. That's where underpainting comes in. The way I teach it to my students is the idea of the American flag or fabric? I would put all my contouring shadows in first and then I would put in my stripes and my details. You've got to have your contours and shadowing in and then you put the tattoo over it. The challenge to me was sometimes your tattoo is too hard and it stands out too much, so I would soften different things until it looks right to my eye. There was a Gonzo tattoo on one of her arms and it stood out too much, so I ran a scrubby brush over the area where there might be a highlight and then I was happy with it.

Q. I noticed there were no heads on both of those paintings.

A. (Laughs.) That started with "Mallory's Hands". I open all my photo references up in Photo Shop Elements on my computer. I always enhance the values or colors and I'll just crop. I'll keep cropping my reference to eliminate things that aren't important. I don't know, I just kept cropping it down and cropping it down until I got

to where I could just see her hands holding the top of her purse and I said to myself, "There's the painting, right there."

I remember when I drew it, I thought, "This is so weird." I second guess myself when I do something different and I thought do I have the courage to do this because this is so different, and I told myself, "Just do it!" You've got to follow your instincts.

Q. I've heard you say your father was a big influence in your art. Do you want to talk about any help or hinderance an artist's family can be?

A. I'm sure family could be a big hinderance, but I haven't had that problem. I've been working at my art while my children were growing and that was difficult and I'm enjoying that they're grown up now and I can do what I want. My father just always… I think that anything I wanted to be, he would've encouraged me. He always encouraged my art. I started drawing when I was little, and he always gave me the feeling that I could do anything I wanted to. I think that was the greatest feeling. That's invaluable.

Q. I love your touch. I've heard you describe it as a "light touch". That's something I can't explain to my beginner students. I watched your video on the "Man with the Yellow Cup". How important is that touch?

A. It depends on what you're doing. I've been teaching wet into wet. I'll keep painting when other people have the sense to stop but I find when I'm working into a damp area, things happen that would not happen if I was working in glazes. While that first wash underneath is still damp you can build up to a finished value in one spot and still lift a little bit in another place and get the most amazing looking things. But if you are working with paper that already has pigment on it, that's when you have to just whisper over the paper because I don't want to disturb what I've put down.

Q. There are a couple of things I've heard you say that most artists can relate to. One was, "I work on it (a painting) until its right, no matter how many paint sessions it takes." Another was, "Each time I make a commitment

Queen of Hearts - Watercolor with gesso, 18" x 29"

A Sustaining Passion -Transparent Watercolor on paper, 29" x 21.5"

to my art, to just keep trying, something great would happen." Wow, that's wonderful. Can you expand on those?

A. I have a painting that I'm struggling with and I decided to start this other painting, and now, just working and drawing on my new one, I'm already seeing ways to finish the first painting because now my eyes are fresh. I do think its good to have more than one painting in the works. Also, I have easels throughout my house (with works in progress) and I'll walk by and think, "Oh, that's what I've go to do."

(On the other question) I don't think God cares what profession we have. He wants us to rely on Him and never give up on anything in frustration. When I'm unsure, I just say, "Take the next step." I think if you make a step in the next direction in good faith it just always seems like a door opens.

...you have to just whisper over the paper...

Q. Here's another thing you said, that you did not want to limit yourself through fear. Brilliant! Please, please talk about that.

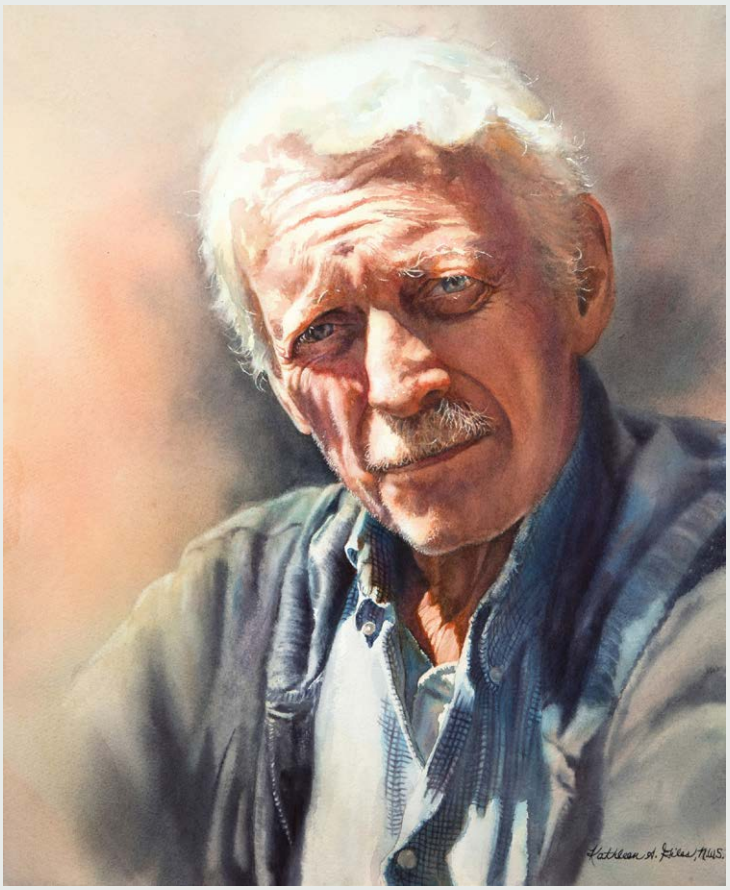
A. Oh my gosh, well that applies to art and other things in life too. You'll have a painting that's almost done and decide that you need to go in and darken something and people will say, "Oh, you're so brave." And I thought that was silly. I have to have the courage to finish my own painting! There's a ton of mediocre painting out there that doesn't have great value or colors. You can't be afraid to ruin it or you won't get a great painting.

I'm afraid every time I do something new. I used to be afraid to fly, but now I travel alone and do my workshops. Just say "yes," say, "I can do that," and then figure out how you're going to do it.

Q. Well that sounds like a wonderful place to stop. Thank you, Kathleen Giles!

(You can find Kathleen Giles' web site at:
https://www.kgilesstudio.com/#!/HOME

She is also on Youtube at:
https://www.youtube.com/user/KGilesStudio



James -Transparent watercolor on paper, 14" x 18.5 "

3D Watercolors? *by Gary Cadwallader, Newsletter Editor*

I met Steve Gorman at the Missouri State Fair and have seen his sculptures throughout the state. As we were talking, Steve mentioned that his wife calls his work "3D watercolors". I find that statement hard to argue with. Here's a bit from his artist statement:

"Every object starts out as a drawing, is then slab built (of white earthenware ceramics), smoothed, carved, and refined through a three step laborious sanding process. It is then fired, post-fire sanded again, cleaned, airbrushed, signed and then sealed. One of my goals has been the merger of painting and sculpting as one united whole, at the same time expressing ideas and concepts pertaining to life in general. My goal is to play a part as contemporary ceramics continues to metamorphosis from the genre of Fine Craft to Fine Art."

With that in mind, I wondered if there was something along these lines for the more traditional watercolorists? Yes, there is an abundance of possibilities. I tested out both QOR Cold Press Ground and Daniel Smith Watercolor Ground. I painted up two wine bottles with these grounds and did a quick test to see how the worked with regulation watercolors. Both grounds accepted paint similar to paper. (Not perfectly, but similar.) Then I waxed the bottles to waterproof them.

I make no claim that they're anywhere near what Steve Gorman could do, but only to show the possibilities.

For the record, the black was Daniel Smith black watercolor ground. The Daniel Smith product took more coats to cover, but was smoother overall. The QOR ground, although it said "cold press" was thicker and dried more rough. Both products could be used on paper, but more about that in the Spring issue.

Steve Gorman's website is: **http://stevenlgorman.com/home**

Steve Gorman at work (top-left)

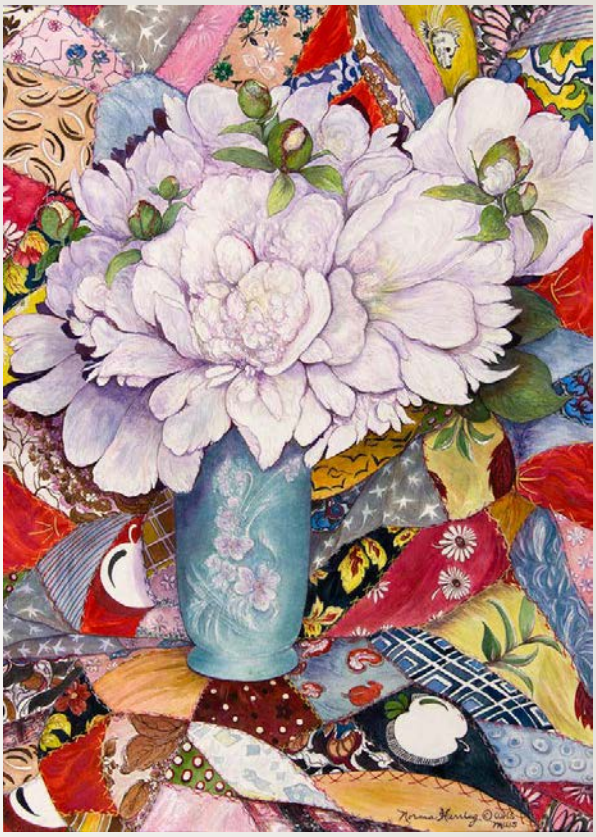
A Matter of Life and Death, Mixed media and watercolor (top-right)

Slither, Mixed media and watercolor (left)

The bottles on which Gary (the Editor) tested the watercolor ground (far-left)

Member News

Norma Herring, WHS Board Secretary, had paintings included in 2018 at ***Leawood "Arti Gras", Heartland Artists National Exhibition, Alabama Watercolor Society National Exhibition, Missouri Watercolor Society "International" Exhibition*** held in Quindao, China, ***Art at the Center "Landscapes" Exhibition, Prairie Village "State of the Arts" Exhibition*** and the ***Watercolor USA Honor Society's "Watercolor Now 2018"*** Member Show held at the Margaret Harwell Art Museum in Poplar Bluff, MO. Shown is an image of "Katie's Crazy Quilt" which will be exhibited in the WHS Member show. This beautiful quilt pictured in Herring's work was created by her maternal grandmother, Catherine Anastasia Flynn Begley, who was an expert seamstress as well as a talented artist when she was only 17 years old in 1898 . The antique blue vase was a wedding gift to her in 1900 and she always kept it filled it with fragrant peonies.



Katie's Crazy Quilt - Norma Herring, 5"x7"

Alicia Farris was hugely honored to receive 1st Place award in the Reader's Competition of the International publication, ***The Art of Watercolour magazine*** for her painting "Meeting of the Minds." She will receive a 4-page feature in the December issue of The Art Of Watercolour and a 2-page feature in the European leading fine arts magazine, ***Pratique de Arts.***

Karla Breeding Trammell had 48 pieces in a solo show from January through April of this year at ***Elliott Robinson & Company LLP in Springfield, MO.***

One of Karla Breeding Trammell's floral works (left)

Welcome to new WHS members for 2018

Al Vesselli
Alexis Lavine
Alicia Farris
Bonnie Switzer
Dean Mitchell
Donna Jill Witty
John James
Ken Goldman
Michael Holter
Robin Erickson
Sharon Wallace
Susan Weintraub
Suzanne Davis Ross *(returning)*
Woody Duncan
Yueqi Zhang

Watercolor Honor Society USA
MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

DEADLINE: JANUARY 31, 2019

Membership dues are payable on or before January 31st of each calendar year.

Date:_____

First Name:_____

Last Name: _____

Address:_____

City/State/Zip:_____

Phone:_____

E-mail_____

Website:_____

Annual Dues: $40 - Make check payable to: WHS

MAIL this form and your check to:
Chalen Phillips, WHS Treasurer
P.O. Box 645, Big Horn, WY 82833

CHECK HERE IF YOU DON'T HAVE EMAIL _____

If you have questions regarding membership, please contact the Membership Chair Carole Hennessy at: **cjhennessy@comcast.net**

We've included the original renewal form for those who would like to pay by check.
Information will be coming soon about the on-line payment option.