

THE 9 WINNERS OF OUR ALL MEDIA COMPETITION

the
artist's
magazine



DRYING OILS
and What is
"Oiling Out?"
p.22

**ART FROM
IRAN**
Embroidered
Dreams
p.8

**PICTURE
BOOKS FOR
CHILDREN**
with Eric
Rohmann
p.64

PLUS

Sketching at
the Airport
Jane Austen
Discovered

**Living
With Art**
The Artist as
Collector

**Paint Your
Vegetables!**

The Art of the
Cookbook

**Determining
Values in
Watercolor**

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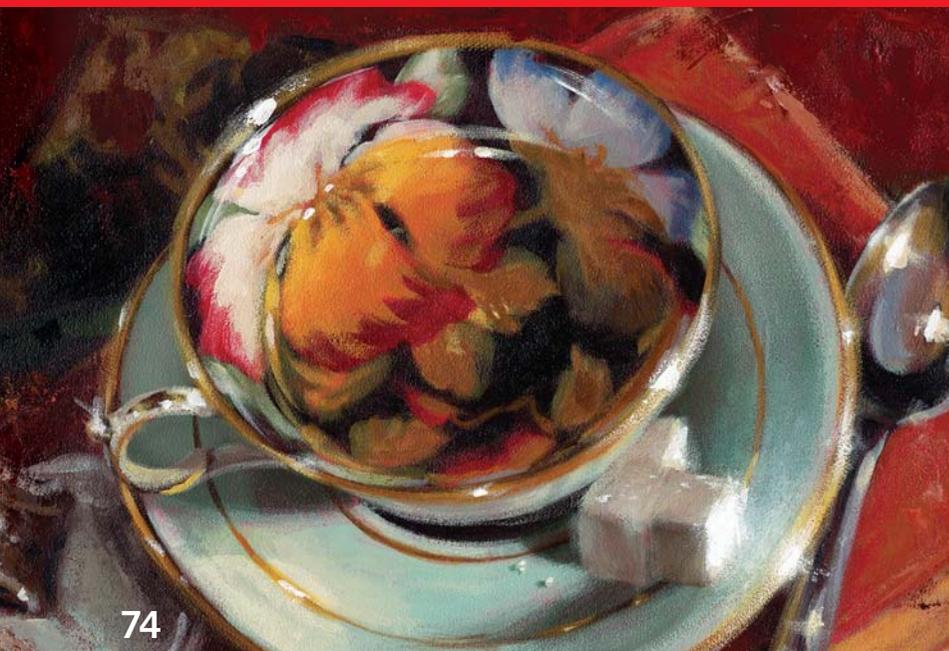
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IN THIS ISSUE

JULY/AUGUST 2017 VOLUME 34 NUMBER 6



74

FEATURES

30 Living With Art

An artist whose parents were artists has amassed a collection through gifts, purchases and trades. BY JERRY N. WEISS

38 The Skull Beneath the Skin

Lush, painterly and far from morbid, **Leslie Shiels's** paintings meditate on death. BY B.J. FOREMAN

46 Past As Present

Enamoured of ancient artifacts, **Bruce Erikson** imagines contemporary figures in historical tableaux. BY JOHN A. PARKS

54 Of Paper, Paint and Pantries

Mollie Katzen, David Meldrum, John Burgoyne and **Robin Ha** illustrate the splendors of the table. BY MCKENZIE GRAHAM

64 Building Wings on the Way Down

Caldecott-winner **Eric Rohmann** experiments until he finds the right technique to tell a story. INTERVIEW BY WILL HILLENBRAND

74 Best in Class

All Media Competition winners extol the working properties of watercolor, oil, acrylic, pastel, graphite/charcoal, colored pencil, digital and mixed media. BY MICHAEL WOODSON AND HOLLY DAVIS

COLUMNS

- 4 Letter
- 7 Perspective
- 8 The Artist's Life
- 10 Drawing Board
- 16 Brushing Up
- 22 Ask the Experts
- 26 Exhibitions
- 88 Road Test
- 96 Competition Spotlight



ON THE COVER

- 74 The 9 Winners of our All Media Competition
- 38 La Nature Morte
- 26, 30 Living With Art: The Artist as Collector
- 54 Paint Your Vegetables! The Art of the Cookbook
- 16 Determining Values in Watercolor
- 22 Drying Oils & "Oiling Out"
- 8 Art from Iran
- 64 Picture Books for Children
- 10 Sketching at the Airport
- 9 Jane Austen Discovered

COVER: **Erica in a Print Dress**, (oil on linen, 38x32) by Jerry N. Weiss

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

In Love with Paint

ABOVE:
Ghost Story (oil on canvas, 48x48) by Leslie Shiels



ALL PAINTERS LOVE PAINT but in a few cases the devotion is so fervent and the paint application so ecstatic that we call such a painter “a painter’s painter.” One such painter was Vincent Van Gogh and another is Leslie Shiels (“**The Skull Beneath the Skin,**” page 38) In *Ghost Story* (above), Shiels pays homage to the master, by coupling children’s drawings with a tilted yellow field that quotes Vincent’s rhapsodic way of seeing. In this issue, too, Jerry N.

Weiss tells the story of his art collection (“**Living with Art,**” page 30 and on the cover); Bruce Erikson unites classical motifs with contemporary

figures (“**The Past As Present,**” page 46); and Caldecott-winning illustrator Eric Rohmann explains the trial and error that are behind the process of visually telling a story (“**Building Wings on the Way Down,**” page 64). Illustrating children’s books, Rohmann adapts his style to the story; in a similar way, Mollie Katzen, John Burgoyne, Robin Ha, and David Meldrum draw the fruits of the garden and the splendors of the table as dictated by recipes (“**Of Paper, Paint, and Pantries,**” page 54). And finally we are thrilled to honor the superlative work of the nine winners of our All Media Competition (“**Best in Class,**” page 74).

Maureen Bloomfield
EDITOR

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the artist's magazine

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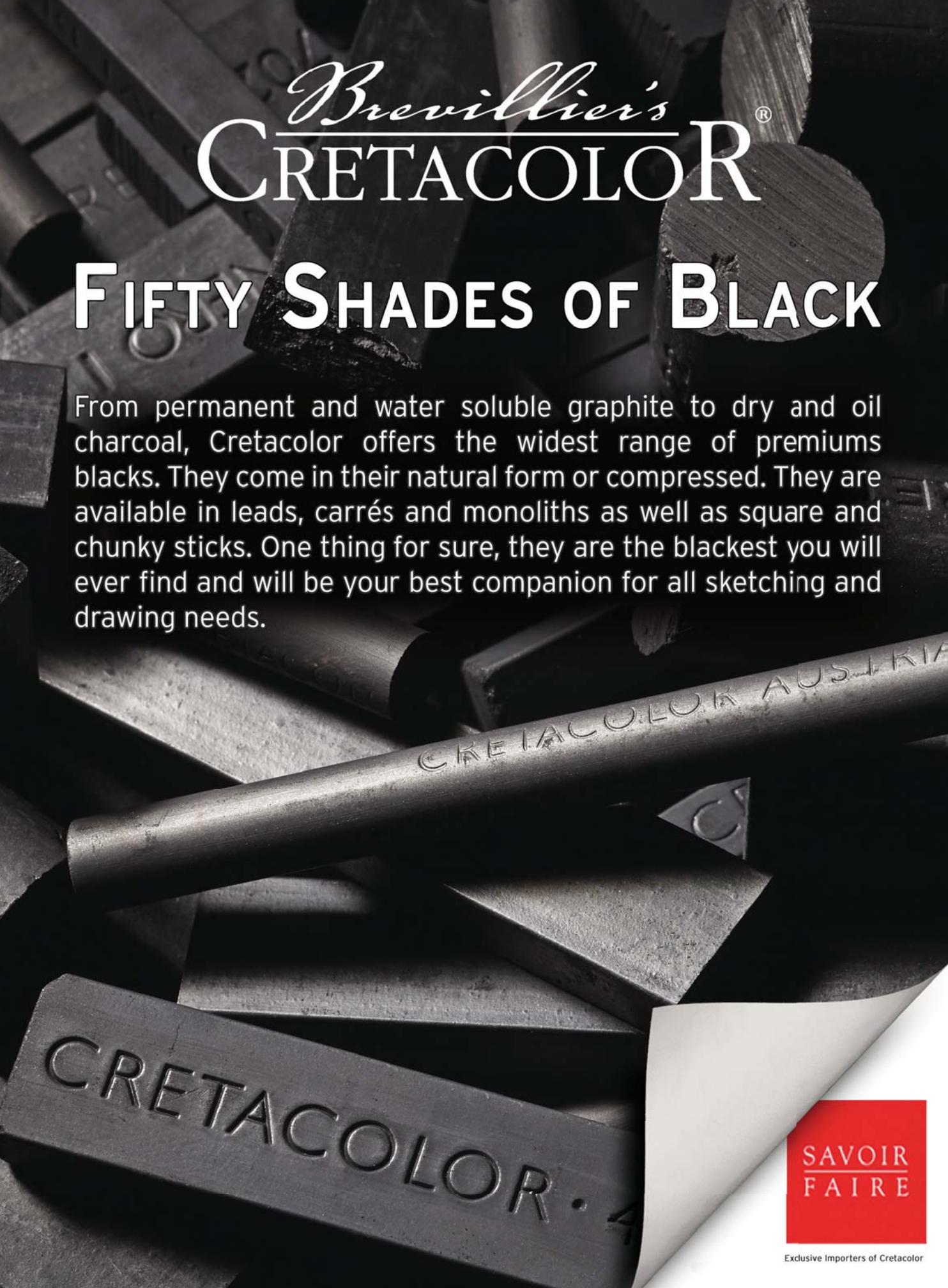
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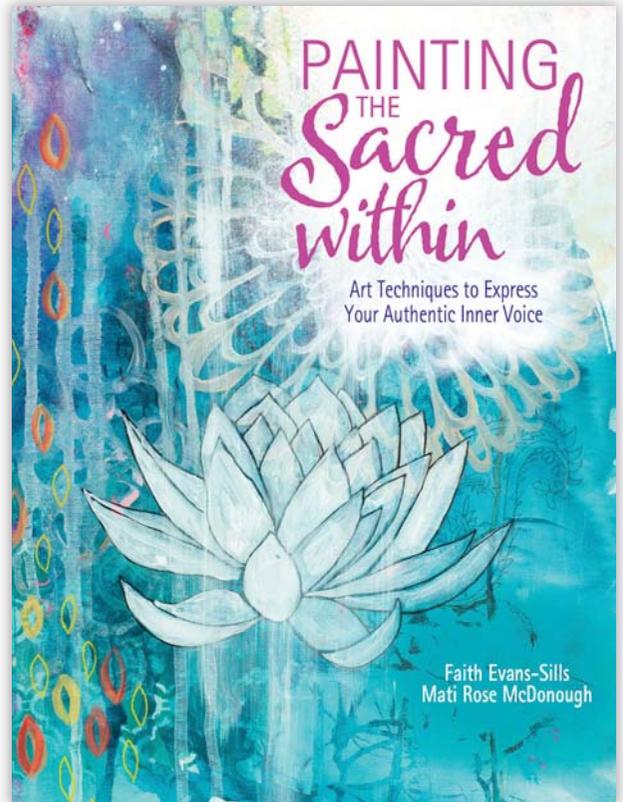


Painting the Sacred Within

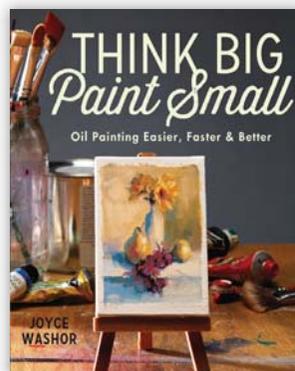
By Faith Evans-Sills and Mati Rose McDonough

By *Painting the Sacred Within* you, you'll unlock a new rhythm of working intuitively to allow space for your own transformation. Inside these pages, you'll discover twelve areas of focus as you learn to see your world through paint and to experience deeper self-exploration. You will learn new ways of seeing, how to experiment with abstract techniques, how to work with natural elements, how to meditate with mandalas and much more.

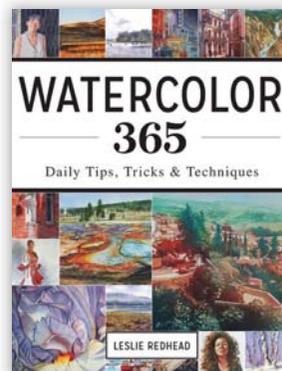
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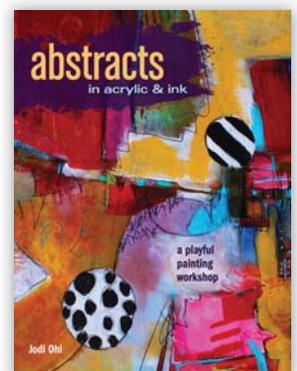
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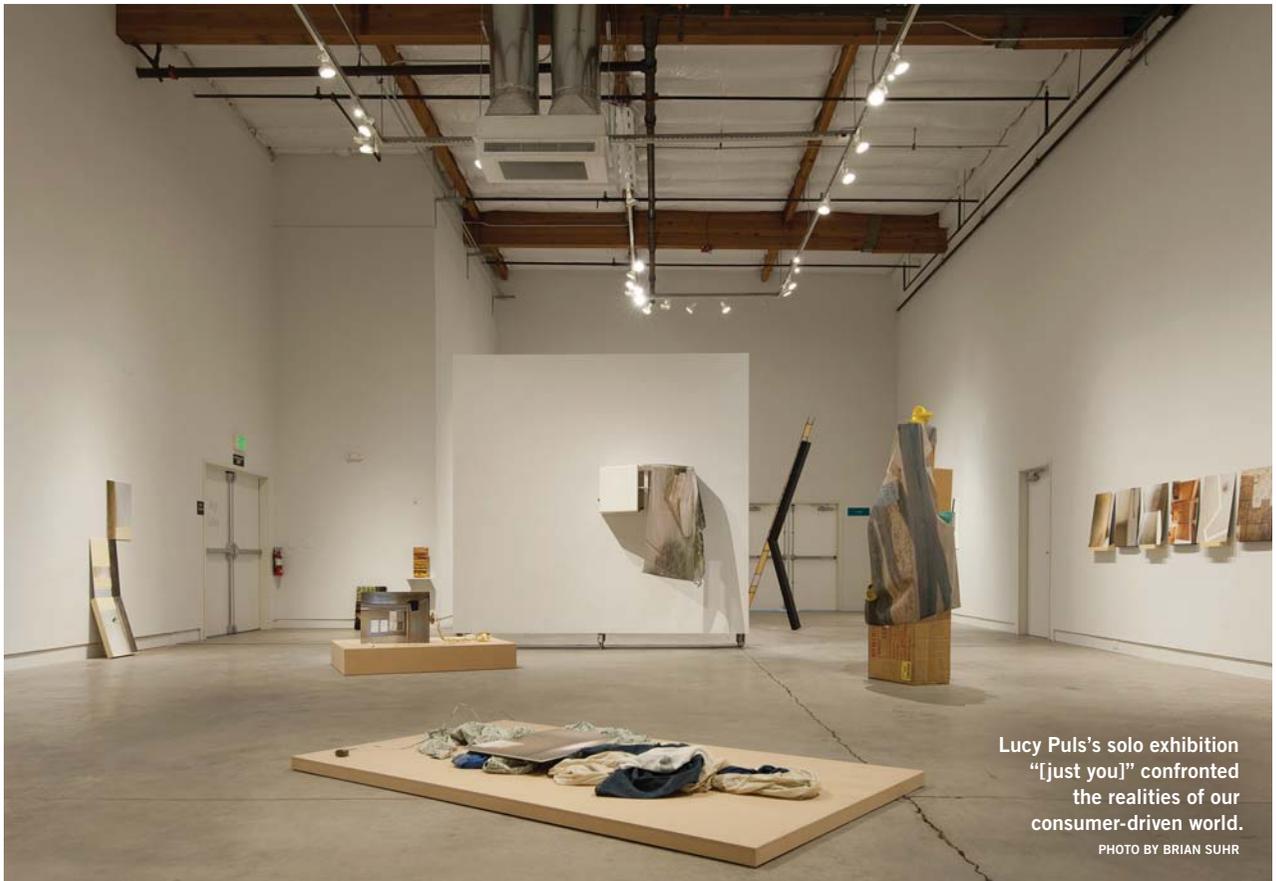
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GALLERY SPOTLIGHT

VERGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS



Lucy Puls's solo exhibition "[just you]" confronted the realities of our consumer-driven world.

PHOTO BY BRIAN SUHR

VERGE CENTER FOR THE ARTS

isn't just a gallery for modern art. It's a place where artists can find affordable space to work in Sacramento; it's a place for public educational programs in the arts, and it's a place to see the most up-and-coming contemporary art exhibitions. Susanna Tu, Deputy Director of Verge, says, "Emerging and midcareer artists creating works not often shown in Sacramento are the focus, as well as artwork made by people of color, women and LGBTQ artists."

WHILE YOU'RE IN SACRAMENTO:

Check out the Crocker Art Museum. Its exhibition "Full Spectrum: Paintings by Raimonds Starprans" will be on display starting June 25, showing the "thoroughly Latvian" artist's Californian landscape and architecture works in full, rich color. See more information at crockerart.org.



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THE ARTIST'S LIFE

Edited by McKenzie Graham



Recording a Moment's Dream

Iranian artist Maryam Ashkanian uses a needle and thread to depict the faces of those lost in slumber.



MARYAM ASHKANIAN WAS BORN IN IRAN in 1988 and has continued her art education and career in Tehran, branching out to Europe in 2012. Since then she's had exhibitions in Edinburgh, Scotland; Warsaw, Poland; Athens, Greece and many other cities, including her 2016 show "Sleeping Series" at Pedrami Gallery in Antwerp, Belgium. "The

pillow is a metonymy of a dream," says the artist. "Dreaming opens a window to the broader universe." In Ashkanian's embroidered faces, we peek into the experience in which we often participate but rarely observe. From this vantage point, the viewer can see bliss, fear, peace and oblivion—all expressed through the eye of a needle.

IMAGES ABOVE:
Sleep Series
(embroidered pillows, 19½x27½)

IMAGES ARE COURTESY OF MARYAM ASHKANIAN.

TO SEE MORE OF ASHKANIAN'S WORK, GO TO MARYAMASHKANIAN.COM

"Dreaming opens a window to the broader universe." Maryam Ashkanian

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LITTLE PRIDE IN A SISTER'S PREJUDICE

This July marks the 200th anniversary of the death of Jane Austen, famed British author of such classics as *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*. Around 1810, Jane's sister Cassandra Austen began a watercolor portrait of her but stopped her work midway through. It's said that when Cassandra showed her family the portrait, they didn't take to it and offered her kind advice to stop painting. There aren't many known portraits of Jane Austen

available, so Cassandra's half-finished piece became more important than her family would ever imagine. See the portrait at the National Portrait Gallery, in London. *MW*

ABOVE: *Jane Austen* (ca 1810; pencil and watercolor on paper, 4½x3½) by Cassandra Austen



WANT TO SEE MORE?

Follow us on Instagram (@artistsmagazine) for more art, more inspiration and more behind-the-scenes pics.



TWITTER POLL

This week, we conducted a poll on Twitter to see when the best time is to get those creative juices flowing: morning, afternoon, night, always? The majority, 32 percent, chose afternoon. So much for the afternoon slump! Still, don't miss your micro nap. Salvador Dali believed one of the many reasons for his success was the one-second nap he would take in his armchair. Holding a key between his fingers, he would allow himself to drift off until he heard the key fall to the ground. Upon waking, he believed his creative energy to be refreshed and ready for the canvas! ■



Two exciting new releases to sharpen your skills!

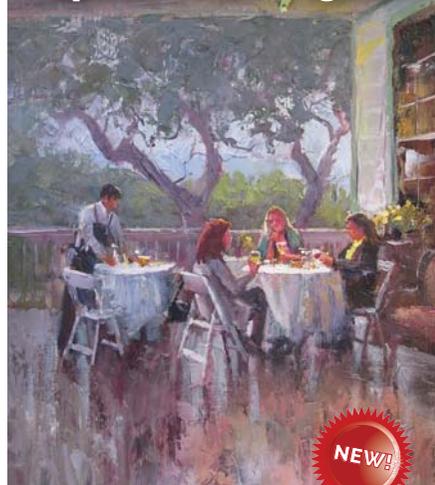
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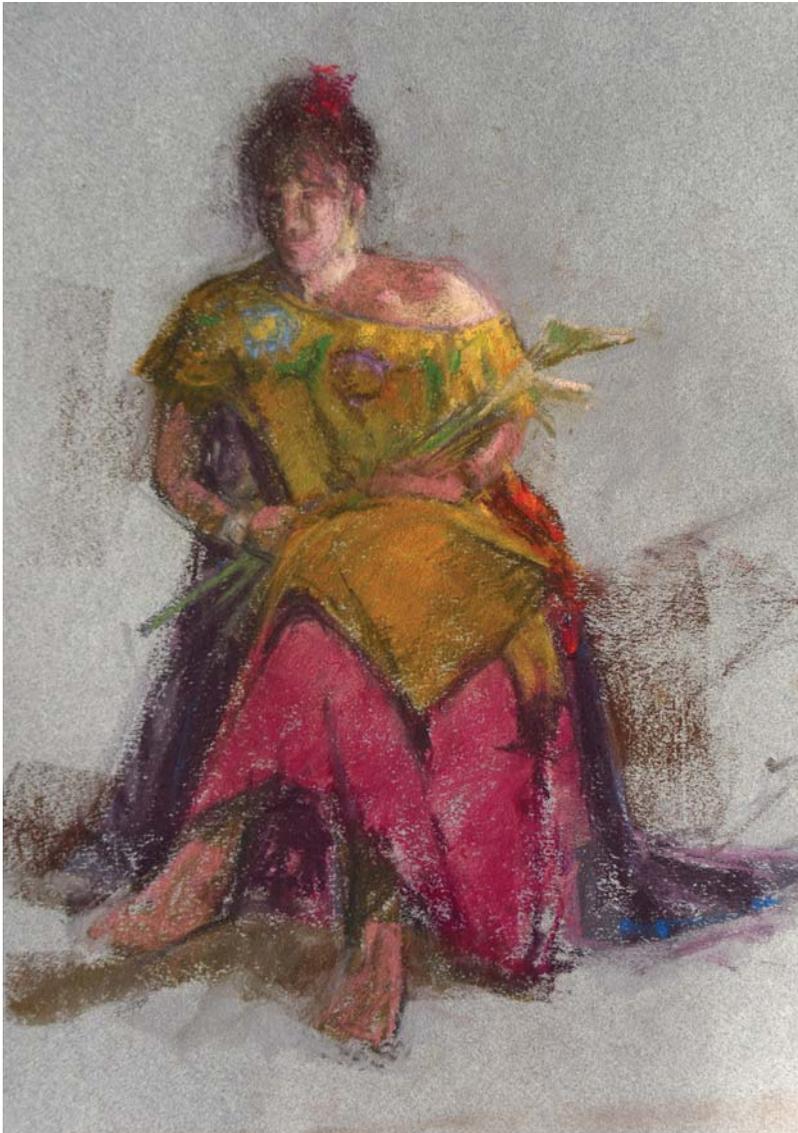


DRAWING BOARD

By Michael Chesley Johnson

Sketch While You Wait

Airport layovers don't have to be a waste of time. Use this streamlined setting to practice drawing sketches of people in motion and at rest.



ABOVE: Knowledge gained from sketching helped me capture the subject's gesture and her clothing's drape in *Gold and Violet* (pastel on paper, 18x12).

DON'T GET ENOUGH PRACTICE sketching the figure? Take sketching tools and a small notebook to the airport before a flight. Nothing improves your gestural drawing skills like trying to sketch a figure racing to catch a plane! When flyers aren't hurrying through terminals, they're idling at the gates. Take this time to slow down and study gestures and figures more carefully.

Tools of the Trade

I like to keep my travel materials simple and small in size. In the past I've taken wood-cased 6B pencils, a sharpener and any sketchbook that fit in my traveling backpack. Lately I've taken mechanical pencils so I can leave the sharpener behind. I have two mechanical pencils that I like. One is a Paper Mate ComfortMate Ultra with a 0.5 mm HB lead. It's great for fine lines and anatomical studies. My second pencil is a Staedtler Mars Technico Lead Holder with a 2 mm 4B lead. It's softer and broader, so it's great for massing in form quickly and making dark marks.

Since I use soft lead, I need to keep my drawings from smearing. The best way to do this is to use a small (3½x5-inch) sketchbook with a sewn spine rather a spiral-bound book. Moleskine's Art Plus Collection has some good options. Pages shift easily in a spiral-bound book so, if you do use one, stretch a rubber band or an elastic hair band around the covers when the sketchbook is closed; this keeps the pages from rubbing together and smearing your work. When you get home, give each page a spray of fixative.

Figurative Genres

People in airports are typically doing one of three things: scurrying with their bags to the next gate, strolling leisurely or sitting in a waiting area.

The scurrer: This is the person hurrying to a gate, running as fast as the carry-on luggage will allow. You may have 30 seconds—or less—to sketch. There's no time to do a detailed study of form; instead, all you can

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DRAWING BOARD



The fewer and simpler your travel tools, the more accessible they can be for sketching.

Denoting Hardness Remember the No. 2 pencil you were required to use in school to fill in the bubbles on questionnaire forms? That No. 2 is a designation of hardness on the U.S. scale, which goes from 1 to 4 with No. 1 representing the hardest lead. This scale isn't used in the art world. Instead, the European scale is used. In this scale, "H" denotes hard leads, "F" denotes the middle range of the scale, and "B" denotes soft leads. A number is paired with the letter—sometimes two letters. Your childhood No. 2 is the same as an HB, which sits between F and B. From hard to soft, the European scale, with its U.S. equivalents in parentheses, goes like this: 9 through 3H, 2H (No. 4), H (No. 3), F (No. 2½), HB (No. 2), B (No. 1), 2B through 9B. The lead in a No. 2 pencil is 2 mm wide—the same size my Staedtler Lead Holder uses.

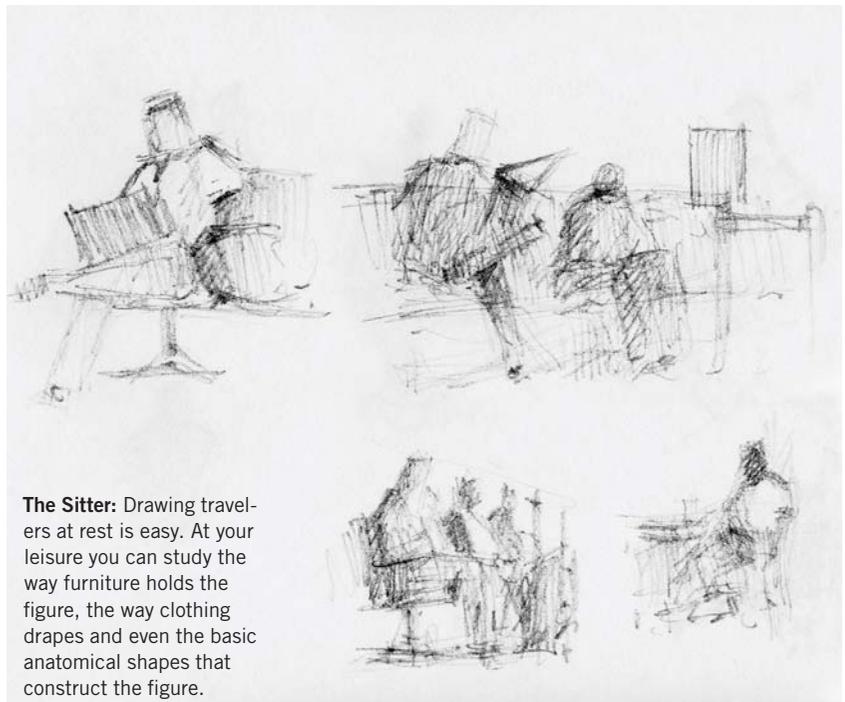


The Scurrier: Making quick thumbnail sketches is the best way to capture a traveler on the move.

capture is the gesture. I like to make quick thumbnail silhouettes. A lot of artists worry about being caught in the act of sketching from life. The scurrier doesn't have time to pay attention to you, so sketch all you want!

Pay close attention to posture. I mentally drop a plumb line from the subject's abdomen (where the center of balance is located) and observe how the arc of the spine and legs relate to this line. I just mass in the form with shading. Also note the way carrying luggage changes posture. Often an arm carrying a bag creates a pleasing opposing arc to the figure's overall gesture. Sometimes I even start the sketch by noting the weight and position of the bag—it can be an anchor around which you can build the figure.

The stroller: This person has plenty of time between connections



The Sitter: Drawing travelers at rest is easy. At your leisure you can study the way furniture holds the figure, the way clothing drapes and even the basic anatomical shapes that construct the figure.



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DRAWING BOARD



TOP LEFT: **The Stroller:** People casually walking through the airport give you time to analyze gesture and movement.

BELOW LEFT: Escape curious eyes by sketching from a photo snapped with a tablet.



almost limitless—slouched, perched forward on the seat, sitting upright or leaning with head held in hand. Sitting at a cafe or bar, this person may be eating or drinking; at the gate, the sitter may be reading, texting or watching TV. Any of these is worth studying. I observe folds in the shirt or pants and the way clothes hang on the body. If the head is interesting, I sketch it.

Discretion and Privacy

Getting caught can be embarrassing or even dangerous. In airports, especially, you need to take care. The authorities may wrongly interpret intense sketching. Keep your sketchbook small, your movements discreet and your answers honest: “Really, officer, I’m an artist!” (Actually, I’ve never been approached by an official.) To keep from appearing suspect, look as if you’re sketching something beyond your subject, wear dark sunglasses or, if spotted, smile and put your sketchbook away. You can also ask your subject directly whether he or she minds being sketched, but I prefer to move on to another subject. Another option is to use a tablet in conjunction with a sketchbook. You can snap a photo of your subject quickly and silently, and then sketch from that.

Although sketching can be an end in itself, it’s a useful activity for painters, too. Most painters I know don’t sketch enough. Having a few simple, easy-to-carry tools always at hand for the idle moment is a great way to improve your drawing skills. ■

MICHAEL CHESLEY JOHNSON is a frequent contributor to *The Artist’s Magazine* and the author of *Outdoor Study to Studio: Take Your Plein Air Paintings to the Next Level*. His five art instruction videos are available through northlightshop.com. He also teaches plein air workshops throughout the United States. For more information, visit mchesleyjohnson.com.

to stop by shop windows and think about a gift. You, too, have more time—and the opportunity to study physical types, walking styles and the way carry-ons and personal items affect the figure. The stroller probably won’t notice you sketching either.

I observe the way strollers carry their weight. If they’re standing still, they’re most likely carrying the center of balance over one leg. The faster they move, the farther the center of balance will be ahead of the trailing foot. I may drop a plumb line from the center of balance and build the body around that line. Again, I look for how luggage is carried. Shoulder bags,

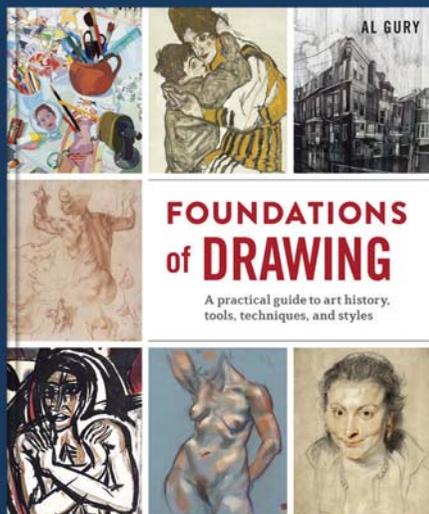
backpacks and carried bags all affect the body’s posture in different ways.

The sitter: This person is “shopped out” or maybe patiently waiting for the gate call. If you can work discretely, you can sketch these types for an extended period. You can study a variety of seated postures as well as the anatomy of the clothed figure. This person also provides a great opportunity for a head study. Sometimes the sitter is a sleeper so you won’t have to worry about getting caught. You’ll probably even have time to erase and correct the sketch!

When I’m sketching the sitter, I have a lot of fun. The positions are

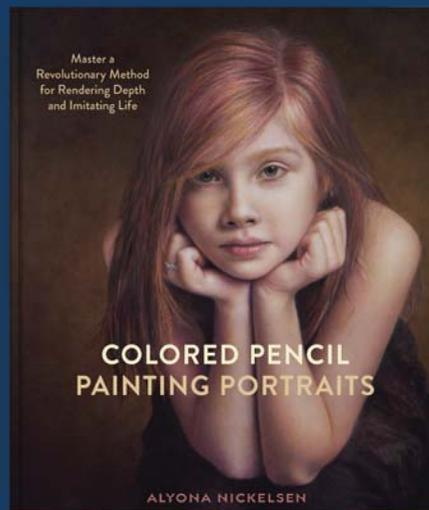
GO BEHIND THE CANVAS

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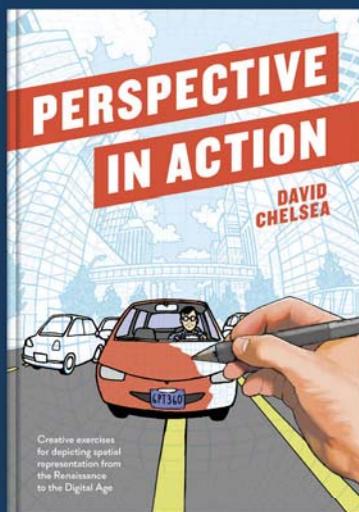
“An engaging exploration of drawing from every possible perspective.”

—Ross Lance Mitchell, director of Barnes-de Mazia Education and Outreach



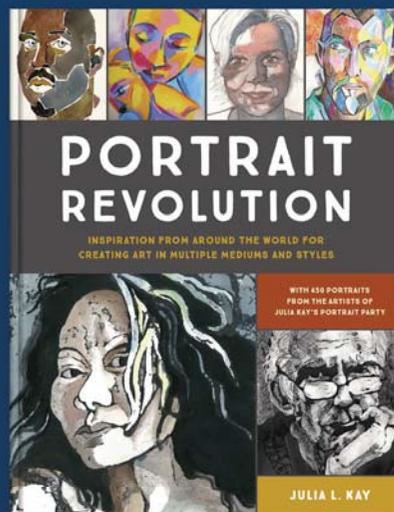
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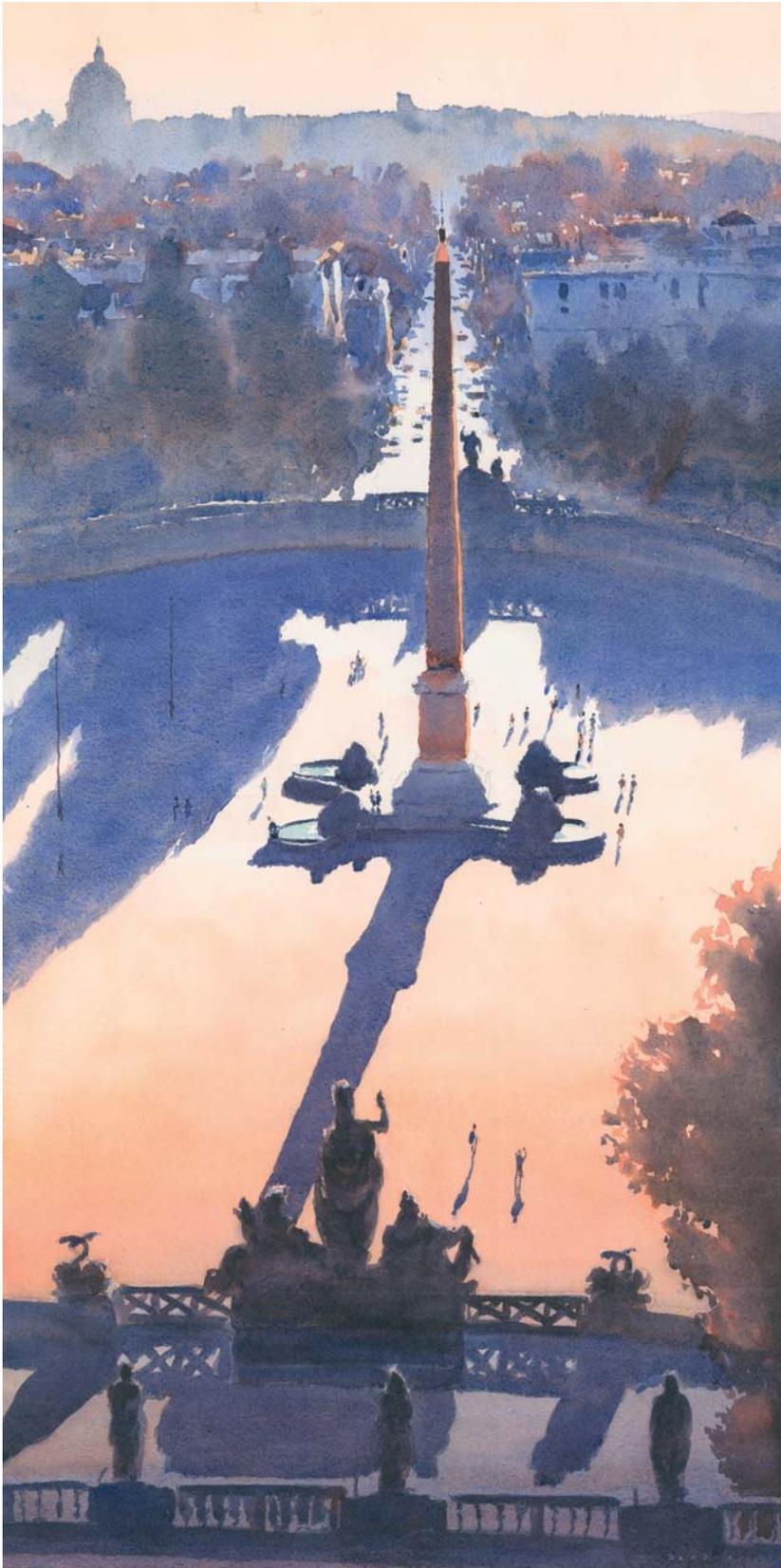
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BRUSHING UP

By Michael Reardon



Value-able Formula

The water-to-pigment ratio is key to achieving correct values in watercolor.

THERE IS AN ONGOING DEBATE regarding the relative importance of value versus color in representational painting. Many artists feel that a value plan is all that is necessary. For them, color is subsidiary to value. Colorists, on the other hand, feel that color is most critical, that patterns of color make a successful painting and that the value scale is intrinsic in colors.

Value of a Value Study

I'm not going to take sides in this debate, although I lean toward the values argument. The more I paint and teach, the more I believe a strong value plan is imperative. Even after decades of painting, I continue to do a pencil value study prior to every piece. With my values determined, I can then select the colors that I need to yield these values.

LEFT: Note the values of the deep blue shadows in *Piazza del Popolo, Rome* (watercolor on 140-lb. cold-pressed watercolor paper, 28x14). On a value scale of 1 to 10, these shadows achieve about an 8, even though they're painted at almost full strength. The color base is cobalt blue mixed with a bit of quinacridone burnt scarlet to increase the value range and give it a slight purple tint. The true black areas are a mixture of this deep blue with phthalo green and carmine, also close to full strength. The red tile roofs in the distance are painted with dense cadmium orange. The same cadmium orange is in the plaza foreground, almost fully diluted. The water-to-pigment ratio is key to achieving the correct values; by knowing the range of individual colors, you can mix the values you desire.

Many students, who are often reluctant to do a value study, get lost somewhere in the middle of a painting or have to go over previously painted areas because they didn't know the values they wanted. While color is crucial, following a solid value plan is a sure road map to a

BELOW: The sense of light in *South Anchorage, Golden Gate Bridge* (watercolor on 140-lb. cold-pressed watercolor paper, 22x11) is created from the juxtaposition of contrasting values. The white of the paper is preserved on the anchorage, the light through the fog in the distance and the waves below. The black of the foreground pier creates a strong contrast against the sunlit side, drawing the eye to the focal point, the spot of greatest value contrast. The other light areas suggest the light but are secondary to the focal point. Manipulating these values evokes an illusion of distance and the feeling of a misty San Francisco evening.



successful painting (see Value-Plan Road Map, page 18).

But let's assume you've made your value plan and are ready to paint. How do you create the values you want for your colors?

Water-to-Pigment Ratio

In watercolor, value is determined by the ratio of water to pigment in a mixture. The more water, the lighter the value. The more pigment, the darker the value. This manipulation of values is the backbone of watercolor painting. It determines the lightness and darkness of a piece and is essential for both flat washes and wet-into-wet work.

To assist in understanding the water-to-pigment ratio, I've developed a set of dairy analogies. Keeping in mind the consistency of dairy products, from nonfat milk to yogurt, will help you determine how much water to mix with your paint (see Dairy Scale of Values, at right). For the lightest values, you'll use a nonfat milk or 2% milk consistency. For the medium to dark values, you'll use a whole milk, cream or yogurt consistency.

There isn't a dark tube or a light tube in watercolor. The value of a color is achieved only by varying the ratio of pigment to water.

Value Ranges of Colors

Although you can create different values by adjusting the pigment-to-water ratio of your watercolors, you must also keep in mind that the pigments themselves set limitations on the range of values possible. All colors can be made light. Not all can be made dark.

Let's assume a value scale of 1 to 10, with white as a value of 1 and black as a value of 10. Values 1 to 3 are

TEXT CONTINUED ON PAGE 20

DAIRY SCALE OF VALUES



A



B



C



D



E

A. NONFAT MILK: A very watery ratio, with little pigment and a lot of water.

B. 2% MILK: Still a watery ratio, but with more pigment than nonfat milk.

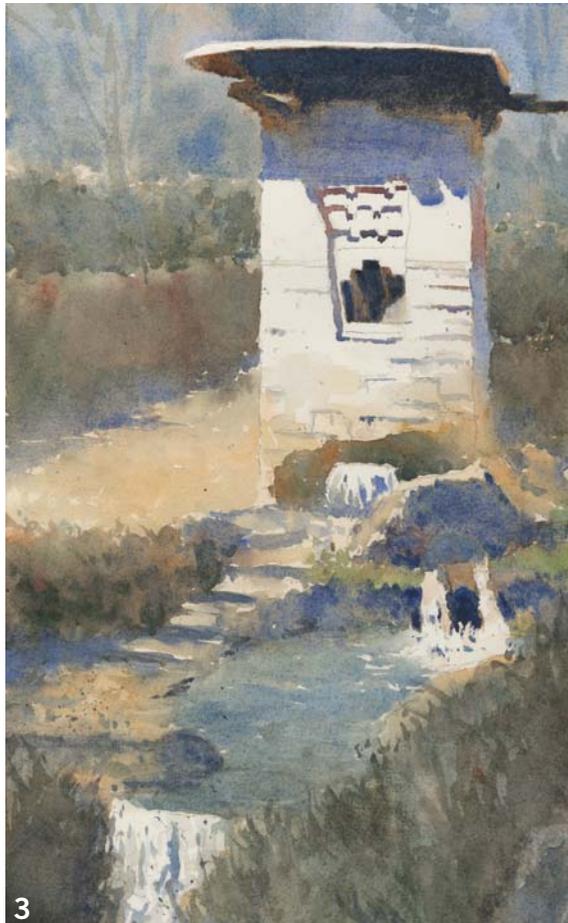
C. WHOLE MILK: This mixture has even more pigment than nonfat and 2% milk.

D. CREAM: This mixture is indeed creamy, having little water and a lot of pigment.

E. YOGURT: This is pigment right out of the tube, with perhaps a little bit of water to make it flow.

demo

VALUE-PLAN ROAD MAP



MATERIALS

SURFACES: 140-lb. cold-pressed watercolor paper (Arches for the watercolor study and Saunders Waterford for the finished painting); Bee Paper Aquabee sketchbook for the graphite value study

MEDIA: Daniel Smith watercolor for most colors, Holbein for ultramarine and cobalt blue; 2B graphite pencil for value study

BRUSHES: Escoda Aquario No. 14 squirrel mop for underpainting, Escoda Perla and Prado No. 10 rounds for general painting and details

1. REFERENCE SKETCH: I created a watercolor sketch while trekking in Bhutan, then reproduced it in black and white to show the values more clearly.

2. VALUE STUDY: The main difference between my reference sketch and value study is that I cropped the foreground in the study and created a lighter background. As an artist, you can take control of things like cropping and value composition to create a strong design.

3. FINISHED PAINTING: My value study gave me a road map for selecting and mixing my colors. You can see that the value composition in the finished painting *Prayer Wheel, Bhutan* (watercolor on paper, 14x9) matches that in my value study.

IN WATERCOLOR, VALUE IS DETERMINED BY THE RATIO OF WATER TO PIGMENT IN A MIXTURE. THE MORE WATER, THE LIGHTER THE VALUE. THE MORE PIGMENT, THE DARKER THE VALUE.

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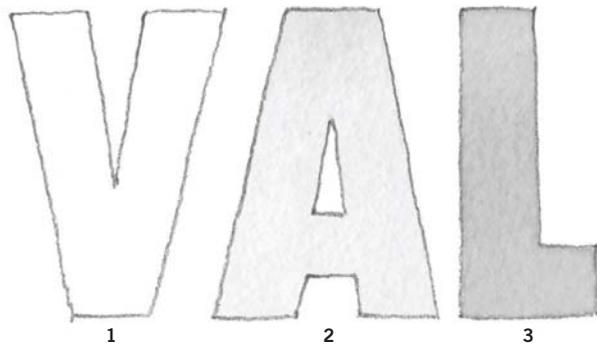


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VALUE RANGES OF PRIMARY COLORS



BISMUTH VANADATE YELLOW: All yellows have a limited value range, from 2 to 3. Bismuth vanadate yellow, a relatively strong yellow, reaches a value of 3 at full strength. Some yellows, such as aureolin, are very weak and can only reach a value of perhaps 2. You can never make a dark yellow.



CARMINE: Generally, reds have a scale of 2 to 8. These include the powerhouse reds, such as carmine and alizarin crimson. There are some weak reds, such as rose madder, that only span 2 to 5 or so.



PHTHALO BLUE: Blues have a similar value range to the darker reds, with some variations. Phthalo blue can be a 9 on the value scale. Cobalt blue and cerulean blue only reach a 6 or 7.

TEXT CONTINUED FROM PAGE 17

considered light values; values 4 to 7 are midrange; values 7 to 10 are dark. None of the primary hues possesses the full range of 1 to 10. Yellow, for example, rarely gets beyond 3 in value. Reds and blues have a greater range, but never get to 10 on their own. They must be mixed to reach a true black. (See Value Ranges of Primary Colors, above.)

Generally the staining colors (colors that are difficult to remove, once dry) have the greatest range. For example, I make black by mixing phthalo green and carmine. Cobalt blue is strictly a midrange hue. No matter which colors are mixed with this blue, it will never get very dark. Knowing which colors have large value ranges and which have small ones is important.

Also keep in mind that watercolors dry much lighter than they appear when wet. It's common to think you've painted a rich, dark color when, in fact, it has a midrange value when dry.

Limited Versus Full Value Range

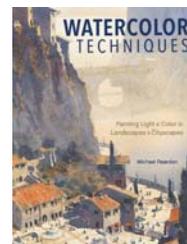
Using a full range of values isn't always necessary. Many paintings with a limited value range are quite convincing. Soft and hazy lighting usually has few jumps in value because the closer the values are overall, the weaker the light. For this reason, a limited shift of values often yields an evocative painting.

On the other hand, paintings that have the full range of values are dynamic. By using the full gamut of values, you have many more tools

at your disposal to create a sense of light. A wide range of the mid-value tones, coupled with the light and dark values, creates a treat for the eye.

Value composition lights up a painting and sets the mood. If you get the values right, you can do almost anything with the color, and the painting will work. ■

MICHAEL REARDON (mreardon.com) is an award-winning fine artist and architectural illustrator. This article was adapted from his book *Watercolor Techniques: Painting Light & Color in Landscapes & Cityscapes* with the permission of North Light Books, an imprint of F+W



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ASK THE EXPERTS

By Michael Skalka



Slow the Yellowing!

Reduce the discoloration of oil paint with the informed use of drying oils.

Q What causes the darkening or yellowing of oil paint?

A In ages past, the darkening of oil paint was influenced by the interaction of certain pigments with each other as well as with hostile environmental conditions. The use of sulfur-based pigments interacting with lead and the pollution of the atmosphere caused by extensive coal burning darkened paintings to a degree that historical records contain remarks made by artists about changes to works of art over time. As the use of natural vermilion and lead fell out of favor, the primary culprit that accounted for discoloration became the oil binder in paints.

The cause of yellowing involves a chemical interaction of materials in drying oils used as binders (binding oils) or as additives in oil paint. A full explanation of the chemistry is out of the scope of this discussion; however, simply put, yellowing is a conversion process of chemicals in oils that causes a reaction that manifests itself in discoloration of the binding oil. While the discoloration happens over the entire painting, most artists notice the changes in the lighter colors, especially passages that contain large quantities of white pigment.

LEFT: Like all oil paintings, *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl* (oil on canvas, 83 $\frac{3}{8}$ x42 $\frac{1}{2}$) by James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) will continue to darken over time. Oil paint manufacturers, however, have come a long way in reducing this “yellowing” tendency.

HARRIS WHITMORE COLLECTION; COURTESY NATIONAL GALLERY OF ART, WASHINGTON

Manufacturers of paints and binders have long known the chemistry of drying oils. Before the advent of synthetic binding agents like acrylics, the paint industry depended on natural drying oils. Treatises on the benefits of certain types of oil processing are found in handbooks on the chemistry and formulation of paints for all purposes.

Drying oils have been washed in water, left to sit while exposed to abundant amounts of sunlight, heated in the presence or the absence of oxygen and mixed with lead or other metallic compounds to influence their gloss or drying time. It's interesting to note that an oil heated without the presence of oxygen will retard the tendency to yellow. This process results in a product called "stand oil," which is used as an additive to paints to make them very glossy. Unfortunately, stand oil is too thick to be useful as a primary binder for paint; incorporating pigment into such a thick drying oil is far too difficult.

PALE DRYING OILS: PROS AND CONS

Q How can I eliminate or slow down the yellowing process?

A Paint with watercolors! But if you, like me, are dedicated to painting in oils, you'll find solace in knowing that a solution to finding a binder that slows down or eliminates the yellowing process has been on the minds of artists and manufacturers for a long time. One of the ways to inhibit yellowing is to seek out other drying oils that will mix well with traditional pigments but also are inclined to remain clear as the paint dries and ages. Artists pursuing that goal have used oils such as walnut, poppy and a range of vegetable drying oils from safflower to sunflower.

The drawback to using oils other than linseed oil, derived from the flax plant, is that all the other oils have lesser strength in terms of film formation. Linseed oil contains a broad range of fatty acids that form a strong film. Oil polymerization is the process of having short molecular chains link with each other to form long chains linked at multiple points. That's how a hard film forms. Bear in mind that the system continues to be dynamic. The film imbibes oxygen molecules that link the matrix together. Further, the drying process also initiates the degradation process. Slowly over time, compounds in the complex fatty acid groups react with each other, and a by-product of that reaction is the appearance of yellowing. While oils like walnut and poppy do not display pronounced yellowing, they do not form as robust a film as linseed oil does.

Manufacturers have a few work-arounds to retard the appearance of yellowing. Some grind their white and pale-hued pigments in a vegetable oil like safflower to lessen the yellowing. With some of the pigments still based in linseed oil, the combined intermixing

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ASK THE EXPERTS

of safflower and linseed oil colors provide a "happy medium" (pun intended) that yields the best qualities of both types of drying oils.

Artists can employ some of the pale drying oils as mixing mediums, if desired. They should bear in mind, though, that adding any oil puts a bigger load of material into the paint film that will be subject to yellowing.

Artists cannot stop or reverse the tendency of drying oils to turn yellow. They can only dilute the effect to minimize its visual impact on a work of art. Further, artists should take steps to avoid displaying paintings that have direct exposure to bright sunlight. The ultra-violet components in sunlight accelerate the yellowing process. Sunlight exposure only helps to bleach darkened drying oil medium when a painting has been kept in total darkness for a period of time.

OILING OUT PRECAUTIONS

Q Please explain oiling out: Why and how is it done? Are there any drawbacks?

A I wish I could provide a good reason why artists should oil out a painting because, despite warnings not to do this on many online forums, the practice continues. Oiling out is the process of taking a little of an artist's favorite painting medium or a diluted bit of straight linseed oil and putting a thin coating of the medium over a dried painting to resaturate the colors. This makes the dried paint look wet again so that subsequent paint applications will match in hue, tint or tone, and value. One of the worst things an artist can do is to use varnish to oil out and resaturate a painting surface.

The problem with oiling out is that it introduces a layer of medium that could come back to harm the integrity of a painting over time. Many artists use some version of a traditional thirds medium (one part linseed oil, one part damar varnish and one part solvent—traditionally turpentine) but, in reality, the medium is really just linseed oil and varnish because the solvent evaporates. Varnish is notoriously soluble in fairly mild solvents for extended periods of time. It also yellows far more than the natural aging and yellowing of traditional drying oils used to bind the pigments in an oil painting. Furthermore, if a final varnish coating should ever be removed from a painting for cleaning or restoration, both the varnish and the paint that was placed on top of the oiled-out area could come off along with the surface coating of varnish.

To achieve a wet look to match subsequent applications of paint—without creating a soluble layer or adding a high-yellowing agent—use a very thin coating of slow-evaporating solvent with a very small quantity of linseed oil. ■

MICHAEL SKALKA has degrees in art history and museum studies. He is the chair of the Subcommittee on Artist Paints and Related Materials for ASTM International.

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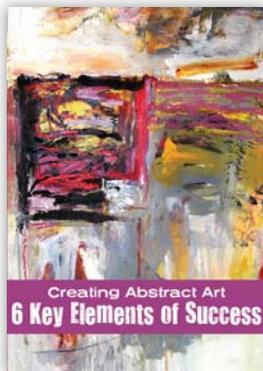
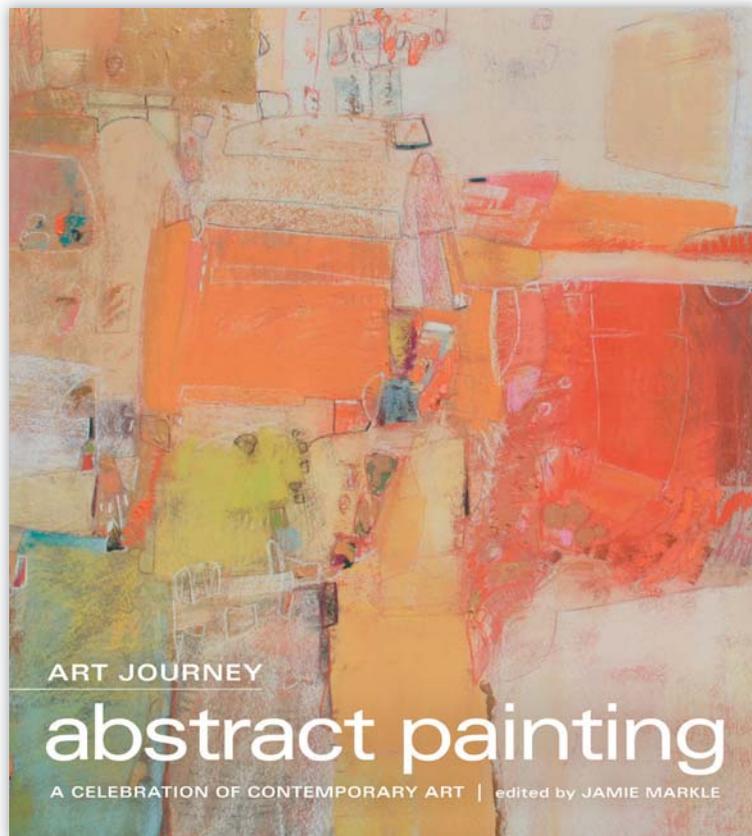
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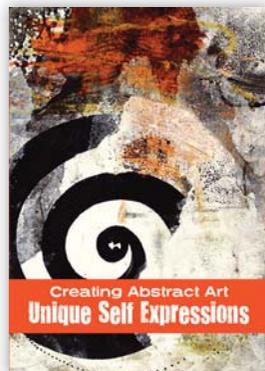
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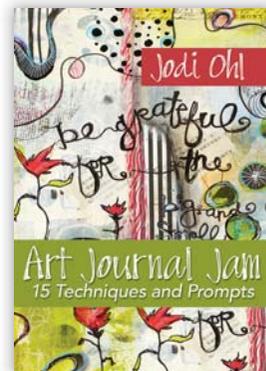
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EXHIBITIONS

Edited by Michael Woodson

Collecting is Another Art

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On view are more than 100 works collected by Woodner and by his daughters Dian and Andrea Woodner. Much of the collection is devoted to the Old Masters, and the works on display date back to the 14th century. Among the artists represented are Leonardo, Dürer, Raphael, Rembrandt, Giovanni Battista Tiepolo, Goya, Ingres, Degas and Picasso.

ABOVE LEFT: *Head of Saint John the Baptist*, (ca 1523, black chalk on paper laid on panel, 13x9½) by Andrea del Sarto

ABOVE RIGHT: *Red Squirrel*, (1578, watercolor and gouache over traces of graphite on vellum, 9½x7) by Hans Hoffmann



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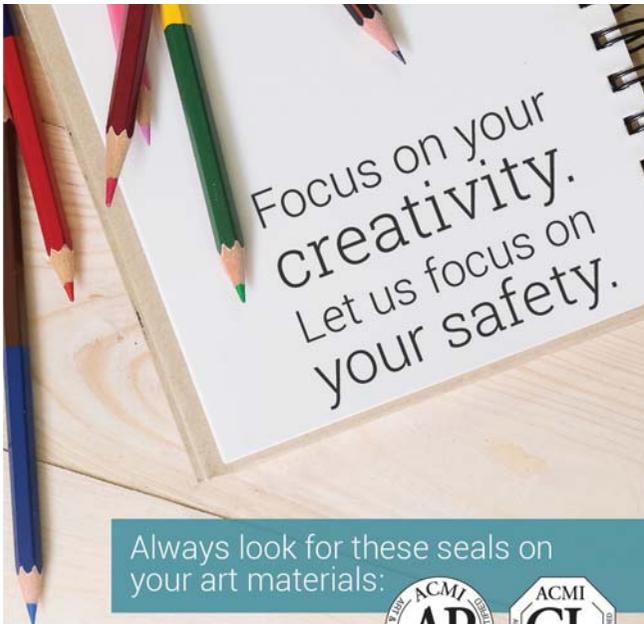


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PLATE. CCXVII



Louisiana Heron. ARDEA LUDOVICIANA. Will. Male adult.

Engraved, Drawn, & Coloured by R. Swain, 1825

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“AUDUBON: DRAWN TO NATURE,” an exhibition at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, celebrates the singularly vibrant and lifelike prints of artist and naturalist John James Audubon (1785–1851). An ornithologist, Audubon created a peerless library of images of American birds, which he published in *Birds of America*, his landmark book of hand-colored engravings. Seventy-five of these images are on display, with subjects ranging from owls to herons to pelicans and flamingos. The selection provides a snapshot of a moment

in preindustrial America, as many of the birds Audubon drew are now extinct or endangered.

Also on view is one of the few remaining printing plates for the original printing of *Birds of America*, on loan from the Smithsonian Institution’s National Museum of American History. All the artwork is accompanied by descriptions of the birds’ habitats and characteristics, and the exhibition also presents an “immersive gallery” to give the feeling of being with the artist in the wilderness. ■



OPPOSITE: *Louisiana Heron (Tricolored Heron)*, (1827–1838; hand-colored engraving, 20¾x25¾) by John James Audubon and Robert Havell
 IMAGE COURTESY JOEL OPPENHEIMER, INC.

ABOVE: *Wild Turkey*, (1827–1838; hand-colored engraving, 38½x25½) by John James Audubon and William Home Lizars
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BOTTOM: *American White Pelican*, (1827–1838; hand-colored engraving, 38½x25¾) by John James Audubon and Robert Havell
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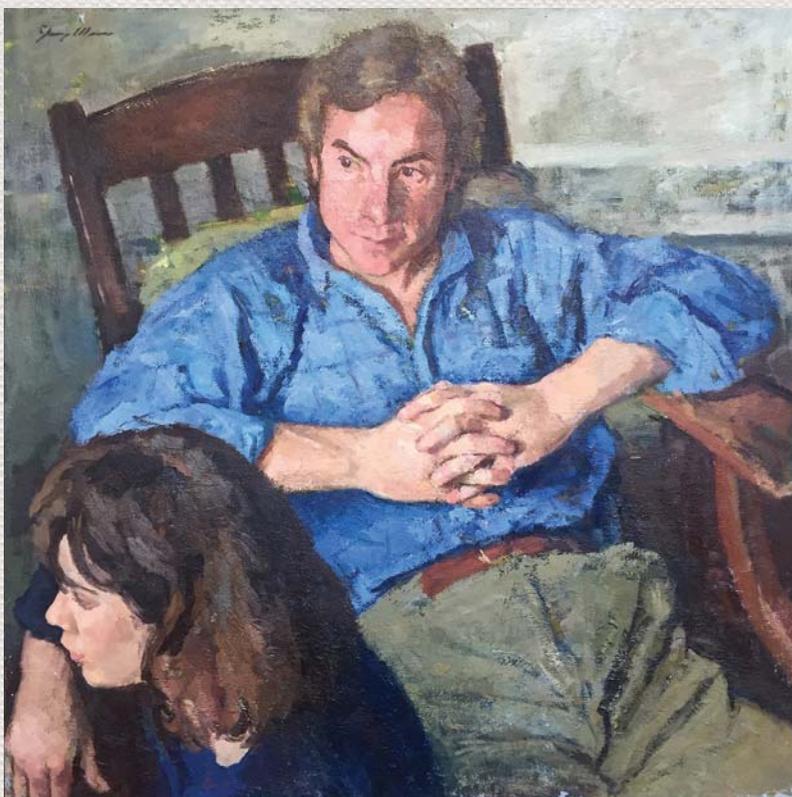
Nearly buried amid the inventory of my drawings and paintings are works by other artists. To refer to these as comprising “my collection” inadvertently and incorrectly summons the image of artwork carefully selected over time and installed in a special viewing area. In truth, the collection has been amassed haphazardly through purchase or trade, as gifts or via dumb luck, and though some pieces are hung on the walls of my studio, many more are stacked alongside my own paintings or kept in flat files. They come from friends and colleagues, as well as family and former students. My most recent acquisition is a

lovely head painted by my friend Tom Root, the product of an exchange of canvases. The oldest work I possess is a pen drawing by Edwin Austin Abbey, bought at auction.

There’s no premeditation to my efforts in gathering art, other than admiration of the artists and their work. What follows are some selections, which I think are all the more interesting for the accompanying stories.

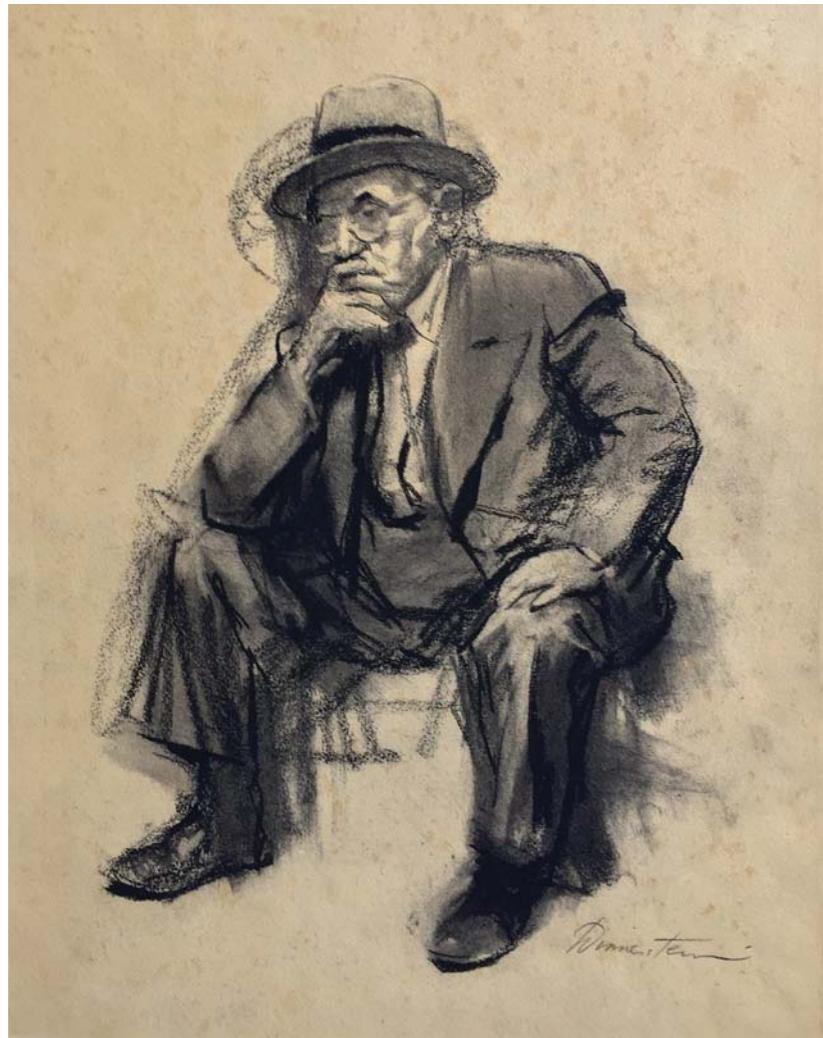


ABOVE: **Couple** (ca 1981; oil on linen) by Jerry Weiss: An alla prima study painted in Harvey Dinnerstein's morning class at the National Academy



LEFT: **Dan and Susan** (ca 1985; oil on linen, 24x24) by Jerry Weiss: This was initially intended as an individual portrait of my friend Dan Gheno, seated next to a window in a Manhattan apartment. The addition of my friend Susan Mazer in the foreground was nearly an afterthought, but her presence makes the painting.

WORKS ON PAPER



ABOVE LEFT: **Academic Figure**, (ca 1912; charcoal on paper, 24x16) by Edmund F. Ward: When I met Mr. Ward, he was 86 years old and it was my 19th birthday. Taking a kindly interest in the figure drawings I showed him, he suggested a trade. This was a study he drew in George Bridgman's class at the Art Students League of New York.

ABOVE RIGHT: **Study of Mr. Meltzer**, (1960s; charcoal on paper, 15x11¾) by Harvey Dinnerstein. A terrific quick study by my former teacher; some of my favorite works by Harvey are his rapid and vigorous drawings and pastels.

THE FIRST WORK I ACQUIRED in a trade was a charcoal of a standing male nude drawn by Edmund F. Ward. Mr. Ward had been a successful illustrator and was still an enthusiastic painter when I visited him in 1978. *Academic Figure* was drawn in George Bridgman's class at the Art Students League of New York around 1912. According to Mr. Ward, each week Bridgman assessed his students' work in numerical order. Mr. Ward recalled that he sometimes came in second, but never earned the top rating, which always went to his friend and roommate, Norman Rockwell. The drawing is a fine example of the academic

approach of the time and lacks the more mechanical stylization that characterizes the drawings of Bridgman's students in later years. The cylindrical study of the lower arm was probably a demonstration sketch by the instructor.

I have many drawings by my father, who was a professional cartoonist of note. When I was younger, he'd send me glad tidings through the mail, enclosing checks within cartoons drawn just for my benefit. In addition to these private drawings are figure studies he made in Bridgman's class at the League around 1940, and numerous cartoons and comic strips, dating from his years in the service,



LEFT: **Portrait of Blanche Weiss**, (ca 1986; charcoal pencil on paper, 11x14) by Susan Mazer: Susan and I had set up my parents to paint an informal double portrait. Neither of our paintings amounted to much, but this preparatory sketch has a quiet emotional charge.

BOTTOM LEFT: **It Never Fails**, (early 1940s; pen and ink on paper, 10x12½) by Morris Weiss: *It Never Fails* was a cartoon panel my father created when he was in his 20s. You can see my dad's flair for creating characters and skill in handling the pen.



when he illustrated army newspapers. Pictured above is a wonderfully drawn gag strip from the 1940s.

One day, while searching eBay for art books and fine art, I came across a marvelous charcoal by my former teacher Harvey Dinnerstein (page 32). The model was a Mr. Meltzer, someone Harvey drew and painted frequently in the 1960s. The drawing has a great variety of textures, with a touch that is both quick and emphatic. Its powerful technique and effective characterization are qualities that attracted me to study with Harvey more than 35 years ago. When I enrolled in his class at the National Academy

of Design, a large oil painting of Mr. Meltzer hung in the school's lobby.

Because of the impression of immediacy, some works on paper seem more poignant than finished paintings. There's a drawing of my mother by Susan Mazer (above), an artist with whom I lived and worked in the 1980s. It's an accomplished piece of draftsmanship that was conceived as a study for a painting that was never completed. The drawing was given to me by Mazer's family soon after she passed away in 2001. Her work demands more attention.

ABOVE RIGHT: **Drawing of Harvey Dinnerstein** (1984; charcoal pencil on paper) by Jerry Weiss: This was drawn in a school studio, most likely on a day when the model didn't show up or fell ill and Harvey sat for his students. I dated this 1984, but by that time I'd left school, so I don't have a clue what the precise circumstances were.

PAINTINGS BY COLLEAGUES



ABOVE: *New Jersey Industrial Scene* (ca 1989; oil on linen, 32x44) by Tom Loopp: In the early 1990s I shared a studio in New York City with Tom Loopp. I not only admired Tom's paintings, but his work ethic as well. This was an abandoned idea for a multi-painting cityscape commission. When Tom was preparing to reuse the canvas I convinced him to let me have it instead.

SOME PAINTINGS HAVE FOUND their way to me in unusual ways and are testaments to being in the right place at the right time. In the early 1990s, Tom Loopp and I shared a studio in New York City, and over time we amassed a small collection of one another's work. We spent much of the summer of 1991 painting together on the street and beside the East River in Manhattan and Brooklyn. I came to own his large oil sketch, *New Jersey Industrial Scene* (above) when we met one Sunday in a parking area under Brooklyn Bridge and Tom took the unfinished canvas from the trunk of his car with the intent

of painting over it. For several minutes we stood and played tug-of-war with the canvas and, after some argument, it was surrendered to my possession.

An artist I had the honor of teaching alongside was Deane G. Keller. Deane taught primarily figure drawing and anatomy—he idolized Bridgman, and even acquired some of his drawings—and one day we traded paintings we had each done as classroom demonstrations for students. I chose a study of a plaster cast he'd made of his arm (opposite).



TOP LEFT: **Red Crane, Brooklyn Bridge** (1991; oil on linen, 25x34) by Jerry Weiss: I spent much of the summer of 1991 painting en plein air in New York City, along with my friend Tom Loepp. Tom and I had access to the top of a barge that was moored in the East River. I painted this while the floor beneath me gently bobbed on the river's current.



BOTTOM FAR LEFT: **Arianna** (oil on linen, 16x12) by Tom Root: I've admired Tom Root's work for a long time. Last summer we finally had an opportunity to spend a few days together, during which time we painted one another, conversed about art and traded canvases. This is the painting I chose. I think it exemplifies a lot of what I like about Tom's work: keen draftsmanship, a feel for atmosphere, fine color sense and sensitivity to personality.



BOTTOM LEFT: **Study of the Artist's Arm**, (oil on canvas, 34x12) by Deane G. Keller: Deane was interested in all facets of figurative study, which meant that he often left the figure-drawing studio to visit the sculpture department. This study was painted from a plaster cast Deane had made of his arm, and the canvas subsequently hung in a sculpture studio at the college where we both taught. For a brief time Deane held an advanced anatomy class at the Yale School of Medicine, where he lectured on the dissection of corpses.

Seizing the Chance I gained a fine artwork from my friend Dan Gheno in an unexpected circumstance. Once many years ago, we were using my car to help Dan move his possessions from one apartment to another in midtown Manhattan, and he decided to leave some "junk" items on the sidewalk in front of his old building. Among the discards was a fairly large pastel, which I scooped up and still have more than 30 years later.

WORKS BY FORMER STUDENTS



ABOVE: *Jen Reclining* (ca 2003; oil on canvas attached to board, 18¾x28) by Caitlin Deppe Lewando: This is a wonderfully lively figure study. I'd done a couple of demonstrations from this pose, one with a palette knife, so Caitlin took up the challenge and painted much of this with a knife as well.

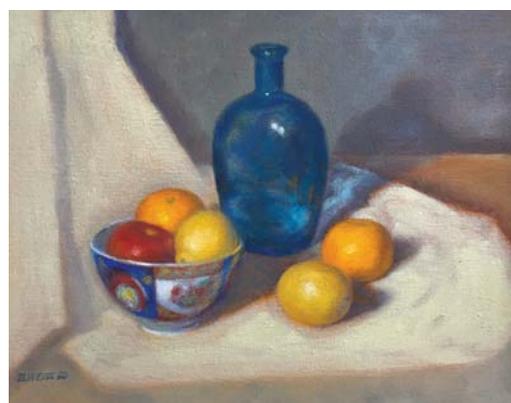
IF YOU TEACH LONG ENOUGH, you'll have the good fortune to work with talented students and, in this respect, it seems I've been exceedingly lucky. A terrific landscape painter named Eric Jacobsen was present during my first year as an instructor, and I probably haven't worked with a better plein air painter since. As with most of the artists mentioned here, several of Eric's works surround me, and one of them hangs over the desktop where I write; this particular canvas is stacked with my work. Eric painted *Spring Landscape* (page 37) in a field behind my studio.

Jen Reclining (above) by Caitlin Deppe Lewando is one of the few paintings I own that was done in my class. I was much impressed by Caitlin's natural ability—this painting looks as if it must have been accomplished quite easily, but we know better. The color is bright and subtle, the brushwork vigorous.

Foreshortened figures often drive students to distraction, but here the skull is seen convincingly in perspective, and the rib cage is as solidly conceived as a painter could wish.

Good artists are invariably intelligent, and I enjoy their presence as much for the conversation as the art. When Paula Billups began studying with me, she was inexperienced as a painter but profoundly curious and interested in learning the process of making art. Paula soon became an accomplished painter, and her intellectual character shows up in her visual art. Her portrait, *Kate* (page 37), seems to be a projection of the artist's own complex intelligence and direct personality. In a lively patchwork of color, the subject is seen standing, illuminated by artificial light.

I've invoked George Bridgman's name several times, as the teacher of Edmund F. Ward and my father, and



as an inspiration to Deane G. Keller. There is, as far as I know, one artist who studied both with Bridgman and with me: my mother. My mother and father first met while both were studying figure drawing at the Art Students League of New York. More than 60 years later she attended workshops that I taught. Included here is a still life my mother set up and painted on her own (*Still Life with Blue Bottle*, above right). I don't know if she consciously realized the composition she formulated, with drapery and shadows forming contrary diagonals, and the bottle standing at the center of an "X." My suspicion is that the design was as intuitive as her sense of color, in which case I'm all the more impressed.

THE BEST REASON TO COLLECT

Considering these drawings and paintings together, I can appreciate that they represent an intersection of work that I

admire and artists whom I regard with great fondness. The contributions of my parents, predecessors, colleagues and students have enriched my life; if some have learned from me, it's certain that I've drawn even more from these connections. The best reason to collect isn't for the sport of it, nor for profit. My father gathered a phenomenal collection of work by cartoonists and illustrators because he liked their work, and that's the reason I've collected, too. Each of these drawings and paintings speaks to the artists' observations and aspirations, and each of them resonates with me for various and personal reasons. ■

JERRY N. WEISS (jerryweiss.com) is a frequent contributor to *The Artist's Magazine*. He teaches at the Art Students League of New York.

ABOVE LEFT: **Kate** (ca 2007; oil on canvas, 36x24) by Paula Billups: Paula's paintings are always constructed with great thoughtfulness. This portrait suggests a woman of independent and intelligent will, surely a projection of the artist's qualities.

TOP RIGHT: **Spring Landscape** (1995; oil on linen, 26x24) by Eric Jacobsen: Eric was already a skilled plein air painter when he began studying with me. This light-filled canvas was painted on a hillside behind my studio.

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Still Life with Blue Bottle** (1980; oil on canvas, 16x20) by Blanche Weiss: My mother too rarely had the opportunity to paint. In her later years, she attended many of my figure painting workshops, which must have been interesting for the other students, especially when she offered advice on running the class. I like this painting a lot.





A painter's painter, **LESLIE SHIELS** contemplates death within life, decay as a prelude to transcendence.

the SKULL BENEATH the SKIN

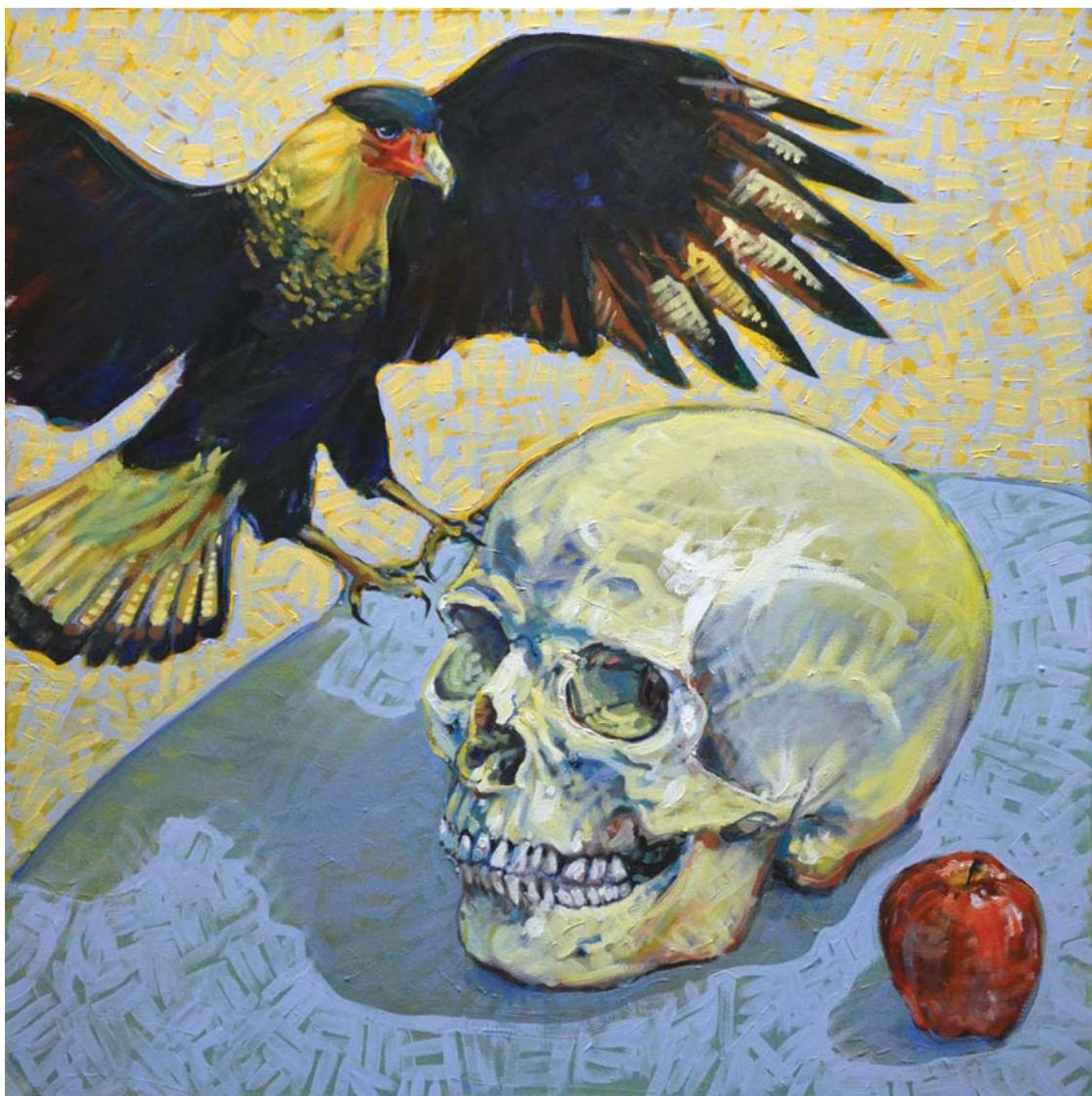
BY B.J. FOREMAN

A still life by Leslie Shiels is vibrant and dynamic. Her skillful manipulation of paint calls to a viewer from across a gallery. That viewer might be fooled into thinking the artist's paintings are just that—painterly, bold and energetic—but beneath it all, many of Shiels's recurring themes and the objects that occupy her work are deeply symbolic. The paintings are almost always remembrances of friends or pets that died too young, whose loss bears testimony to the transience of life. "They're souvenirs of a life, as well as amulets of culture," says Shiels.

Her paintings often have cryptic titles, and behind each painting is a story. Shiels is a great storyteller, in paint and in words, but her many awards, exhibitions, sales and inclusions in prestigious collections prove that the paintings work without explanations.

LEFT: *Requiem for a Dane* (oil on linen, 30x30)

RIGHT: The caracara is a beautiful bird, but in **Crested Caracara and Pomme** (oil on linen, 30x30), it's striking in appearance and action. "It's an aggressive scavenger. It eats carrion and ... it's coming!" says Shiels with a twinkle in her eye and an advancing crooked finger. The walls and tabletop are pastel colored, but the bird casts a gray shadow over the skull, and an apple in the foreground references the tree of knowledge.



Vanitas

(Latin for "vanity" in the sense of "emptiness" or "futility") is a class of symbolic still life paintings, often associated with 17th- and 18th-century Dutch and Flemish artists. These works signify the futility of earthly ambitions and acquisitions, and often carry a *memento mori* theme.

Memento mori

(Latin for "remember you must die") is an ancient Roman expression used to remind victorious generals, prone to arrogance, that they would inevitably surrender to death. Early Christian artists picked up the theme with symbols and allegories that still appear in art today.

MEMENTO MORI

In Shiels's still lifes, items such as sunflowers, parakeets and a French Provençal tablecloth are all stand-ins for particular losses. They share space with birds, globes, skulls, apples and clear glass vessels, all traditional props in the grand tradition of **vanitas** and **memento mori** that harkens back to bygone centuries, reminding us that beauty is vanity, that flowers die and fruit rots, and that life is fleeting—like a bird's flight.

Still life or, in French, *la nature morte* (dead nature), comprises much of Shiels's work lately. One floral has scissors on a table with an arrangement of sunflowers—dead flowers, their lives cut short with those scissors (see *Scissors & Sunnies*, page 44). Backgrounds are often

repeated patterns, painted with gusto in rich, luscious color, even when that repeated pattern is of skulls, as in *The Globe* (see *Layering Color for Vibrancy*, page 43). The symbolism of flowers is exhaustively referenced in the history of art but, for now, let's just say that there is often that funereal favorite, lilies, in Shiels's still life paintings—because, you know, death will follow.

OF FLESH AND BONE

When Shiels is inspired by an idea, the result is often a series of paintings. She paints the thoughts that consume her, as well as things she has consumed, which is to say, eaten.

"I love winning at the value game. It's like a color game I play with myself. I love working out the complements of as many colors as I can and making them work together."



WEDDING GIFTS Shiels's oeuvre does include paintings of a lighter nature. Some are strictly floral still lifes—abundant, titled with people's names, free of deep messages—although they still include meaningful elements. She paints these works as wedding gifts. Shiels is the guest who makes off with a centerpiece and returns it later, along with a painting commemorating the day. In *Katy* (at top), for instance, the ribboned shovel handle echoes the bucolic décor at that bride's outdoor wedding. The names of the wedding couple and date of the wedding appear on the shovel's handle. Other florals include more commonplace remembrances of a particular wedding, like the slice of cake and glass of wine in *Allison* (above).

TOP: *Katy* (oil on linen, 30x30)

ABOVE: *Allison* (oil on linen, 30x30)



Shiels lives in a semirural area where deer are numerous and, as an animal lover, she has seen the circle of life. The subject of *Buck* is a deer she has, indeed, eaten. This noble animal, rather than appearing in the landscape, stands for his portrait in front of a gorgeous vine-and-floral fabric backdrop that is, in fact, a tablecloth. Subsequent deer portraits are titled *Eaten 2* (not pictured) and *Eaten Too*, and the flowers in the backdrop become bullet casings, still rendered in gorgeous color. (See Background Story, page 44.)

Acorns (at top), is a still life of the skulls of two bucks, arranged on a tablecloth and

TOP: *Acorns* (oil on linen, 30x40)

ABOVE: Shiels, who loves dogs, has learned the painful truth that they don't generally live as long as people.

A Boy and His Dog, (oil on linen, 48x48), however, emphasizes that, despite differing life spans, all creatures are mortal.

TOP RIGHT: **Gone Girl** (oil on linen, 30x30)

TOP FAR RIGHT: **Gone Boy** (oil on linen, 30x30)

BOTTOM RIGHT: **Gone, Gone & Gone** (oil on linen, 40x60)

MATERIALS

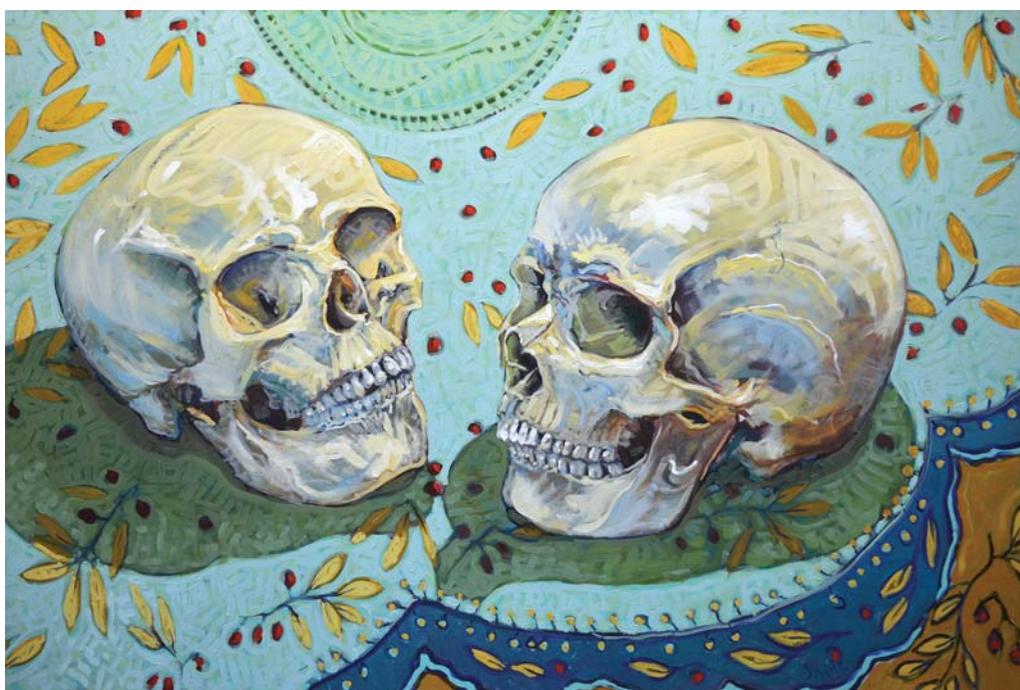
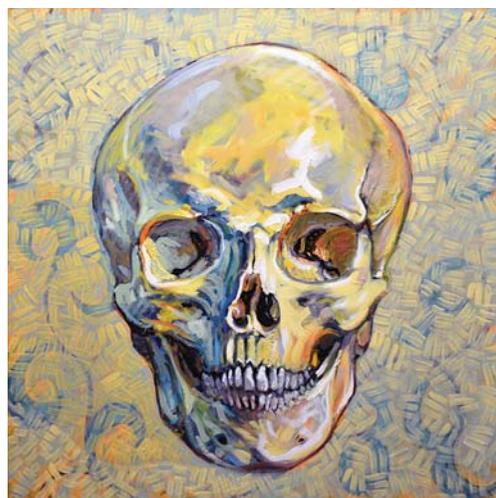
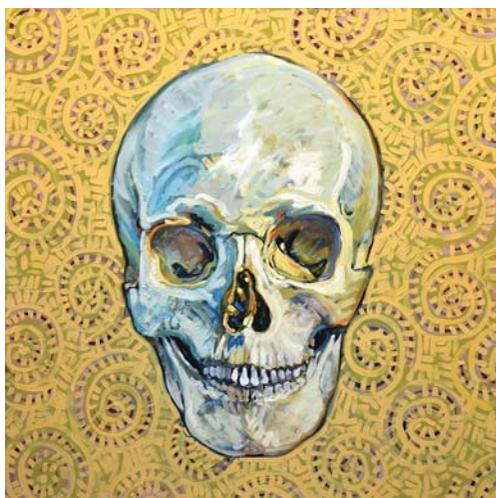
SURFACE: made-to-order Masterpiece Monet Pro oil-primed linen

OILS: Old Holland, Williamsburg, Blockx, Gamblin whites and Torrit Grey*

BRUSHES: Winsor & Newton Monarch (can take hard use), Robert Simmons Signet, da Vinci kolinsky red sable for oil, Raphaël sable (for details and fine glazing)

OTHER: Liquid Glove (seals Shiels's skin, so she can paint with her fingers); nonlatex gloves (for wiping down oil-primed canvases)

*Each April, in recognition of Earth Day, Gamblin Artists Colors takes the pigments from its Donaldson Torrit air filter to make Gamblin Torrit Grey. In this way, Gamblin creates a lovely gray while keeping its "waste" pigment dust out of the environment. The color varies from year to year, but Gamblin says it ranges from medium dove to dark earthy gray, with a greenish tinge from phthalo green pigment. Learn more at gamblincolors.com/torrit-grey.



among what deer love to eat: acorns. "The hunters were waiting for the deer where their favorite food was. As with people, the objects of desire are sometimes their undoing," says Shiels.

Skulls are a recently recurring image. Shiels collects them. Her *Gone* series includes the still lifes *Gone Girl*, with a female skull (at top, left); *Gone Boy*, with a male skull (at top, right); and *Gone, Gone & Gone* (above), which shows two skulls on a table covered with a French Provençal tablecloth. The skulls pictured are of Teutonic origin, matching Shiels's own cultural heritage. The paintings address the vanishing ethnic divisions in Europe. "Every time I go to France, it's less French," says the

self-admitted Francophile. "There are more immigrants, more European Union, more Roma people."

LAYERED COLOR, LATTICED STROKES

Inspired by a loss of a more personal nature, *Requiem for a Dane* (pages 38–39) features the skull of a friend's late great Dane. After the dog died, the friend took it to a hilltop. A year later he returned and collected the skull. The formal composition is anchored in the triangle between the red of the apple, the pure blue of the vase and the yellow of the sunflower but, working with her values, the pink-tinged stargazer lilies predominate against a subtle field of aqua with blue hatch marks in the background.

demo

LAYERING COLOR FOR VIBRANCY

By Leslie Shiels



To begin, I wipe down oil-primed linen with turpentine. I hate the smell, so I do this at the end of the day. Then I underpaint with a thin wash of cadmium red, darkened and grayed with either deep earth green or Gamblin Torrit Grey.

1. COMPLEMENTARY COLOR BLOCK-IN: I organize space on my canvas by drawing directly with a brush, usually in indigo blue deep. I immediately wipe out what doesn't work with turpentine on a cloth. The paint remnants—or “ghost”—on the canvas don't concern me. I block in areas with a foundation of primary colors and their complements, in this case red and green for background and table, and orange and blue for the sphere. For any incidental structures, I used any color in a reasonable value.

2. VALUE BLOCK-IN: In the next stage I work more intentionally with values. I blocked in the parakeet, started pulling the foreground and background apart visually, defined the tabletop pattern, established the darks of the background and strengthened the skull pattern. For the skulls, I applied a gray with a purple cast, which would tend to complement the yellows I'd eventually use in the background. The color balance within the globe will help establish the color relationships between the globe, the background and the parakeet.

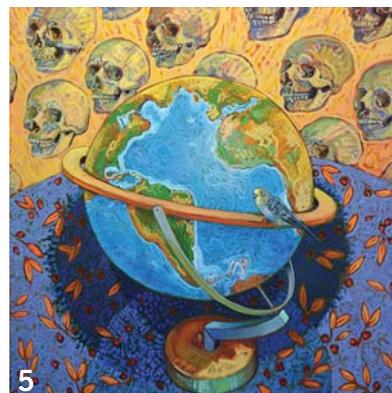
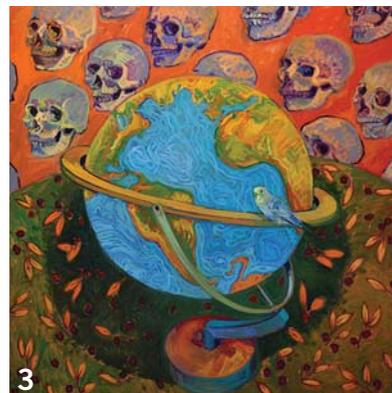
3. STROKES OF COLOR: At this point I begin laying in rhythmic strokes, staying in the same color field as I used for the



previous layer and refining the saturation. I'm trying to achieve values through the buildup of color, and I am working on the whole painting at the same time. I'll sometimes mix in a touch of a color's complement (for example, a little yellow ochre in ultramarine violet) so that the first color stays alive but falls behind the second color. You can see that the shadows on the skulls have taken on a definite color presence but don't compete for the same visual plane as the globe shadow. I've also begun pulling together smaller elements, such as the olive leaves in the tablecloth.

4. LIGHT VALUES: Next, I apply lighter values and highlights, building on the value structure I set up in step two.

5. TENSION COLORS: In the final stage, I add the clear, clean “tension colors”—complementary or contrasting colors that create depth and richness. Spaces between my strokes reveal the sequence of colors—a build up of hues and tints.



I also changed the direction of my strokes from one layer to the next. For example, if a red-orange brushstroke in layer three or four was on a diagonal to the right, then the yellow-orange brushstroke in layer five went to the left.

The colors' values pull areas forward or push them back on the picture plane. The particular value of yellow on the edge of the globe pulls it forward from the yellow in the skulls; the blue on the table pulls ahead of the yellow wall; the green on the front of the globe base pulls ahead of the table. The parakeet is my forward-most focal point, established partially by yet another yellow on its head and the only spot of clean titanium white in the painting. That small passage of titanium white is powerful—an effect made possible by color-value choices I made from the beginning. Of course, if my choices hadn't worked, I could remove the day's paint with a wide wallpaper scraper and try again.

ABOVE: *The Globe* (oil on linen, 48x48)



BACKGROUND STORY

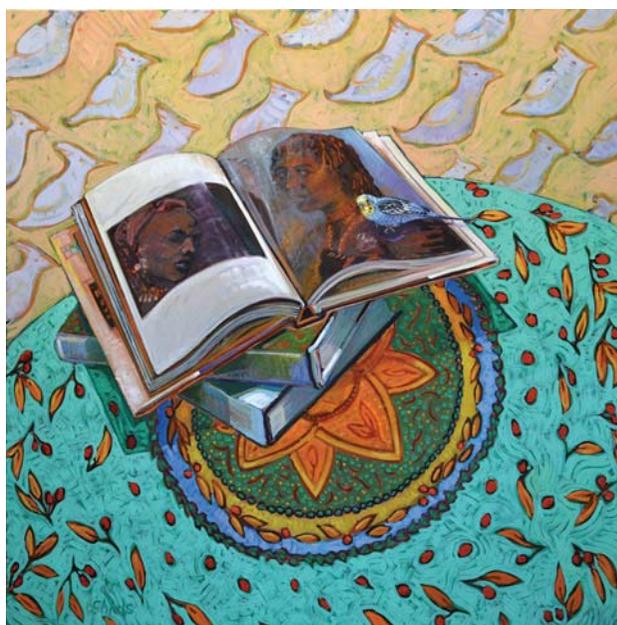
These three images demonstrate Shiels's development of a theme and her subtle use of symbols. *Buck* (left), the first in a series of deer paintings, commemorates a deer that had been hunted near her home and was subsequently butchered. The leafy floral background might allude to the creature's natural habitat, but it's also a tablecloth pattern. In *Eaten Too* (middle), the background pattern is abstracted, although leaves are still discernible. Shiels reveals, however, that the "flowers" are actually bullet casings. In *Bullet Buck* (right), the leafy floral theme is gone, and the disks, although still not obviously representative of bullet casings, have no leafy context to associate them with flowers.

An observer might never pick up the darker meanings behind many of Shiels's paintings, but the artist makes sure collectors are aware of what they're buying. "If the meaning is dark, I always tell the customer," she says, "because the customer will own it and should be told. Sharing the information has never nixed a sale."

ABOVE LEFT: ***Buck***
(oil on linen,
40x40)

ABOVE MIDDLE: ***Eaten Too***
(oil on linen,
40x60)

ABOVE RIGHT: ***Bullet Buck***
(oil on linen,
40x40)



ABOVE LEFT: ***Scissors & Sunnies*** (oil on linen, 36x36)

ABOVE RIGHT: The open pages in ***History Book II*** (oil on linen, 48x48) signify humankind's tendency to preserve the history of cultures rather than the peoples and cultures themselves.

"I love winning at the value game," says Shiels. "It's like a color game I play with myself. I love working out the complements of as many colors as I can and making them work together."

Her signature stroke work—short swipes of color applied with a brush or finger—creates a latticework that allows previous layers of color to show through. In *Red Ladder* (opposite), the backdrop is a light yellow basket weave over blue. While these strokes lie horizontally or vertically, the aqua

strokes on the tabletop create a similarly rhythmic pattern, though less directionally predictable, over a blue underlayer. The artist compares her rhythmic strokes to musical time signatures, such as 2:2 or 4:4 time.

Shiels likes to imagine that she's in a teeny-tiny spaceship, similar to the one in the science fiction film *Fantastic Voyage*, and that she can fly into her own paintings, traveling between the many layers of paint. She says she would take pleasure in confirming, for example, that a certain richness of color



LESLIE SHIELS always knew that she wanted to be an artist. When she went to art school, she ignored the age-old message: “Girls don’t paint professionally.” She earned a bachelor of fine arts degree and took graduate courses from the University of Cincinnati College of Design, Architecture, Art, and Planning. Today, her work is highly collected and exhibited, and part of many museum collections. Shiels divides her time between painting in the studio and en plein air.

Visit Shiels’s website at leslieshiels.com.

LEFT: *Red Ladder* (oil on linen, 60x40)

would be lost “if this green wasn’t under this orange, which wasn’t under this yellow, which wasn’t under a blue.” She loves her paint. “Even on days when it goes all wrong,” says Shiels, “when I scrape off all the paint, when I do visual battle with work I’m in the

midst of, I love it. I love how it smells, I love to manipulate it. I love that there’s no such thing as a mistake. I just love it.” ■

B.J. FOREMAN is an art critic and a longtime contributor to *The Artist’s Magazine*.



PAST AS PRESENT

Bruce Erikson yokes techniques of the old masters with a classical visual vocabulary to convey the commonalities between ancient and contemporary cultures.

By John A. Parks



THE ANCIENT WORLD HAS EXERTED a powerful attraction for European painters ever since the Renaissance. The idea of a golden classical past—one with intellectual endeavor, humanist ideals, graceful architecture, plentiful nudity and a panoply of gods who often behaved capriciously—has provided rich subject matter that could be endlessly recycled. A shared store of narratives based on ancient myths, legends and poetry could be used to explore human behavior, engage philosophical ideas and even provide an opportunity for covert commentary on contemporary events. For instance, when Manet painted his *Déjeuner sur L'Herbe*, an audacious critique of the mores of the Parisian middle class of the 19th century, he quoted a grouping of figures from an engraving by Marcantonio Raimondi made after a drawing by Raphael in the 16th century that was, in turn, based on a group from a Roman sarcophagus—an artistic conversation conducted over two millennia.

The contemporary artist Bruce Erikson is building on this tradition. He sets his figure paintings in the Roman world, once again using the classical past as the stage on which he is able to explore a variety of themes. Nude women stretch languorously on divans and beds—reading letters and poems, surrounded by urns, ewers, sculpted reliefs and classical architecture. We're invited to imagine that these are private and intimate moments taking place long ago and far away. The clear forms, exotic accoutrements and dreamy light lend the scenes an almost magical and otherworldly aura, even as we recognize that the actions and emotions of the subjects are much like our own.

“While I consider myself a figure painter, and always have,” says Erikson, “I grew tired of painting figures without interesting settings, without a defined place that added to the meaning of or challenged the narrative. When I started adding contexts, I began by painting the figures in front of frescoes that also represented women. There was this

ABOVE LEFT: *Clodia Reading Catullus #5*, (oil on linen, 29x59)

ABOVE RIGHT: Erikson's *Detail Study of Meidias Painter's Name Vase* (egg tempera, pigment, gesso and ink, 7x5) shows Castor abducting Eriphyle. The original Athenian red figure vase dates to the late 5th century B.C. and is now in the British Museum, London.



ABOVE LEFT: *Study for Prelude* (charcoal, graphite and white colored pencil on egg tempera-prepared paper, 14x11) is one of several drawings Erikson created to determine the best handling of light falling on fabric folds.

ABOVE RIGHT: Neo-classical sculptor Randolph Rogers (American, 1825–1892) spent most of his life in Italy, where he created marble sculptures. Erikson's *Study of acanthus leaf base of Randolph Roger's Nora* (Conté crayon and colored pencil on egg tempera-prepared paper, 14x11) references Rogers's *Artist's Daughter Nora as Infant Psyche*.



The artist's interest in the ancient world increased when he began studying Greek archaeology at the University of Cincinnati. "I have found comrades in arms with people who share this love of understanding the origins of much of our culture," he says. "Furthermore, I harbor an aesthetic love of things archaic and antiquated. I don't typically find these things driving around in my car, shopping for groceries or watching TV."

PRIMACY OF THE FIGURE

Although Erikson presents complete tableaux of figures and their surroundings, his paintings start with ideas for the figure. "I tend to begin with the notion of a gesture of a figure that speaks to me in some way or has some sort of sentiment or associative potential that goes beyond formal compositional interest," he says. Erikson will work up these figure ideas in a series of thumbnail sketches and then employ a model to take the pose the artist is most interested in portraying. "I then try to respond to that idea," he says. "Sometimes something is evoked from the model that isn't quite my initial thought. Then I start trying to do some refinements and variations incorporating this new stimulus."

Eventually, as he settles on the final pose of the model, the artist begins to consider the surrounding space. "I start to recreate or build a space that speaks to me or suggests a setting

layering of representations that I started to build on. The influence of two previous visits to Pompeii emerged in my work. This is where it began, about seven years ago."

CONNECTION TO THE PAST

Erikson soon realized the advantages and possibilities of placing his figures in classical settings. "I think there's always an expectation that, to be relevant in our field, we must paint subject matter from our immediate surroundings," he says. "In addition, the past is often seen as irrelevant both in terms of conceptual and aesthetic inspiration. For me, there's a complexity within the classical that allows us to be objective with our assessment of that culture while still able to see ourselves in it, allowing us to relate to it. As Faulkner said, 'The past is never dead. In fact, it's not even past.'"

Erikson's Advice to Young Artists Get the basics down as soon as you can. Try to address things you're not good at so that you don't have gaps in what you know how to do. This doesn't mean you have to paint realistically if that isn't your goal, but knowing how to do so is essential. Secondly, I think it's important to be ambitious in your work. Always try to paint beyond your abilities rather than just repeating what you already know how to do.



TOP AND LOWER LEFT: **Study for *Le Nouveau Flaming June*** (top left; graphite on paper, 11x14) and **Study for *Le Nouveau Flaming June (reclining)***, (lower left; graphite on paper, 11x14) were inspired by *Flaming June*, a classically styled painting by Sir Frederic Leighton (English, 1830–1896) depicting a sleeping woman in a flowing orange garment.

MATERIALS

SURFACE:

Claessens No. 13 double oil-primed portrait linen glued to ¼-inch birch plywood.

OILS: Old Holland and Williamsburg

MEDIUMS: copal varnish, Maroger medium, egg/oil emulsion (egg yolk, distilled water and dry pigment from Kremer Pigments, Sinopia Pigments, Sennelier or Zecchi) for detail work

BRUSHES: Escoda Clásico bristle and Ópera synthetic sable, and Winsor & Newton Monarch synthetic mongoose (primarily filberts, plus small rounds for detail work)

that I believe could fit in my imagination,” he says. “From there I start thinking of things that I can include in the scene that are accurate historically—things we know could be there—and also have some sort of connotative or symbolic resonance.” To obtain this material, the artist relies on his research in various museums. A teaching stint in Paris once a year allows him to roam the Louvre, and he also culls ideas for props from the collections of the Metropolitan Museum and the National Gallery.

“I’m quite a museum rat,” he says. “I develop some kind of rapport with those objects as I work. Once I have everything on the stove and cooking, the real chore is to make those references fit together as though I had them all in front of me at the same time. In order to do that, I have to discard a lot of the information in my references. Light sources, for instance, often have to be changed.” In fitting together objects from different sources, the artist says he frequently discovers appropriate relationships only through the act of painting, as when light is reflected from one object to another.

COMPOSITION IN PENCIL AND BRUSH

For his final painting Erikson works on preprimed linen glued to a board, which provides a hard and stable surface. He begins by



making a careful line drawing of his composition in pencil. “I don’t like charcoal,” he says, “it moves too easily. I’m looking for something tight that will remain.” Erikson emphasizes that, while this drawing establishes scale and perspective, it doesn’t include every detail; he leaves room for invention as he paints.

Once he has finished the drawing, he paints over it with a light coat of Maroger medium or copal varnish in order to fix the lines. He then tones the whole canvas with raw umber or Indian red and allows it to dry. “I will then go over all of my pencil work with a sable brush and reddish oil paint,” he says, “almost like making a cartoon for a fresco.”

ADJUST AND ENRICH

To begin building the painting over his painted drawing, Erikson applies a tonal



ABOVE: **Praxilla Reading by Moonlight** (oil on linen, 16x20) depicts Praxilla of Sicyon, a celebrated lyric poet of 5th-century B.C. Greece. The background references the carving on the end of a Greco-Roman marble table in the Metropolitan Museum of New York.

OPPOSITE: **Study after Canova** (graphite on paper, 8x10) is based on a sculpture by Italian neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova (1757–1822).

underpainting—in warm browns for the figure, while for the background he works directly on the toned ground. “I’m more deliberate with the figure,” he says. “I’m more worried about its reading well and being the best part of the painting. Some of the surrounding setting and the accoutrements can be more loose and not as developed.”

Erikson builds his painting from dark to light and then, having established the main forms, he uses thin glazes to adjust and enrich. “I also work warm to cool,” he says. “The shadows tend to be warm and translucent while the highlights are bluish colors and greens.”

For the most part, the artist works with soft brushes but will sometimes use a bristle brush to establish the first layer. To gain the fluid brushing and translucency that he needs, Erikson uses a Maroger medium—a mixture of cold-pressed linseed oil, litharge, mastic varnish and turpentine (see note on **Jacques Maroger**, opposite).

Gradually the artist achieves a powerful illusion in which forms take on color and tonal transitions of great subtlety. “I used to use a fan brush to blend and achieve the finish,” he says, “but now I tend to mix the transitions.” This approach yields more refined color and allows the paint handling to remain visible on the surface.

For final details, Erikson sometimes works with an egg/oil glaze. This is a mixture of egg yolk and damar resin that forms an emulsified liquid when thinned with water. “It’s incredibly quick drying,” says the artist. “You can mix it with pigment and put on some marks, and they will be dry in minutes. You can then layer it to get fine detail.” Erikson says that this approach works best if he first oils out the surface—applies a thin coat of oil from a drop on his fingertip. “The glaze will then take beautifully,” he says, “and it will allow you to make lovely long lines.”

Knowing that trapped moisture can create an unsightly “bloom” under varnish,

necessitating its removal, Erikson waits patiently before applying this final protective coating. “Sometimes I wait as long as two years,” he says. “The longer you can let the painting cure, the less likely there will be any moisture left in the paint. I wait for the fall or early winter when the air tends to be dryer.” He points out that the varnishing helps to bring back the translucency of the glazed darks. “It’s amazing how rich they are,” he says. “The deep values come right back. It’s a lovely thing.”

CLASSIC EXAMPLE

The results of Erikson’s efforts are on display in *Clodia Reading Catullus* (pages 46–47), in which a nude woman lying on a divan reads a sheet of papyrus in a shadowy room. Statues, paintings and pottery adorn the space while the view from the balcony shows a sculpted facade of classical figures topped with a red-tiled roof—a setting based on the **House of the Vettii** at Pompeii. A tiny male sparrow in the center of the composition flies toward a female sparrow sitting on the rim of a bowl, providing a symbolic reinforcement of the central image. Clodia is generally identified with Lesbia, to whom the poet Catullus wrote a love poem (“Catullus 85,” also called “Odi et amo”—“I hate and love”), and here Erikson imagines her on a visit to Pompeii, reading the poem that has just been brought to her by a messenger.

The subtle handling of the light and the immaculately rendered accoutrements work together to form a completely convincing space and a coherent light envelope. The very completeness of the scene and the thoroughness of research bring to mind certain Victorian painters. “Nineteenth-century French academic art and some British Victorian art have played a huge role in my work with the finish, the specificity and the focus on story-telling,” says Erikson.

Jean-Léon Gérôme and Sir Lawrence

Alma-Tadema are the two artists who have influenced me the most. I love the fact that the setting is an extremely important factor in their work. I also love Alma-Tadema’s thoroughness of research. He did measured drawings of ruins on site—including Pompeii—studied artifacts and depicted them with an archaeological correctness. I also love how these painters invoke a human condition and element in the historical past, even though it is through the lens of the time they live in.”



Jacques Maroger (1884–1962) was a painter who worked as the technical director of the Louvre laboratory from 1930 to 1939. He was interested in the painting mediums of the old masters and eventually championed several mixtures that involved cooking litharge (yellow lead oxide) in linseed oil and then mixing it with mastic or other resins and thinning with turpentine. This process results in a gel-like medium that enables dazzling brushing and fine glazes. Maroger moved to the United States in 1939 and popularized his ideas in his book *The Secret Formulas and Techniques of the Masters*, published in 1948. While many artists have embraced his mixtures, some conservators regard Maroger medium as unsound. Mixtures of resin and oil have the potential to crack and fall apart eventually. Some sources suggest the medium be limited to 20 percent of any paint film. JAP

The House of the Vettii was once an upper-class residence in the ancient city of Pompeii, Italy. The house was buried during the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. The residence, noted for its well-preserved frescoed murals, was excavated in the late 1800s; its most recent restoration was completed in 2016.

Jean-Léon Gérôme (French, 1824–1904) was a leading painter of the academic style, known for his works centering on historical subjects, Greek mythology and Orientalism.

Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (Dutch, 1836–1912), who painted classical and historical subjects, is particularly known for his works depicting scenes of the Roman Empire’s upper classes.



ABOVE: Erikson based the objects in the foreground of *Pompeian Odalisque* (oil on linen, 11x14) on objects in a fresco in the Villa of Mysteries, a home buried by the eruption of Vesuvius and excavated in the 1900s. The figure, lying between the still life objects and a deconstructed depiction of the fresco, enters a conceptual and formal dialogue with the fresco.

CONTROLLED AND COHERENT COMPLEXITIES

Erikson also counts composers among his influences and feels a deep debt of gratitude to the inspiration of Claude Debussy. On the practical side, his ability to compose a wide range of reference material into a single piece was greatly helped by studying at the Illustration Academy in Kansas City, Mo. “I studied with the greats; Mark English, Gary Kelley, C.F. Payne and Jack Unruh,” he says. “They all taught me the importance of references, how to use photography as a resource and how to use composition to tell a story so that the way the viewer encounters images chronologically is the equivalent of reading a book or listening to music. Very helpful experience.”

The richness and complexity of Erikson’s paintings present a wealth of both pleasures and challenges for the viewer. “I try to layer my work so, when the viewer sees it, he can respond aesthetically to the image, even if he’s not interested in the subject matter,” he says. “Perhaps viewers can respond to the atmosphere and setting of what I’ve invented and appreciate the craftsmanship in it, the effort. If they can project some of their own personal responses onto the work, begin to question what’s going on, what the person is feeling or experiencing, and consider those things for a moment—maybe even identify with them—that would be nice to hear about. Viewers more familiar with classical themes, places and forms that I’m using are rare, but I have conversations



on those topics with my friends from archaeology, and it's very exciting."

Certainly Erikson has succeeded in creating a coherent world, a stage on which he can put into play dramas and displays of emotions that mirror those he has encountered in his own life. In doing so, he has rediscovered the value of the tradition of

painting classical themes as a means of considering the contemporary world in a socially and politically neutral setting. ■

JOHN A. PARKS is an artist as well as a writer. His latest book is *Universal Principles of Art: 100 Key Concepts for Understanding, Analyzing, and Practicing Art*. Visit his website at johnaparks.com.

ABOVE: The title *L'Extase* (oil on linen, 11x14) is French for "ecstasy" or "rapture." The red-figured vases in the background depict narratives of mythological women in the same emotional state as the subject of the painting, a woman reading a love letter. Erikson repeated the gestural line of the figure with the row of vases and again with the mountains. "My idea," he says, "is that there's a progression from the individual (the nude) to the historic or classical (the vases) to the universal (the earth and geologic time).



BRUCE ERIKSON (bruceerikson.com) earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in drawing from Edinboro University (Penn.). He also studied at the Illustration Academy (Kansas City, Mo.) and earned a master of fine arts degree in painting from the University of Indiana (Bloomington). In 2005, Erikson won Best in Show in the Annual Greater Washington, D.C. International Fine Arts Competition, hosted by Fraser Gallery; and he took second place in painting in the State Museum of Pennsylvania (Harrisburg) Art of the State competition. Venues for his solo and juried exhibitions include the Centre Culturel de l'Arsenal (Maubeuge, France), the Butler Institute of American Art (Youngstown, Ohio), the Haggin Museum (Stockton, Calif.), the Rockford Art Museum (Ill.), the Westmont Ridley-Tree Museum of Art (Montecito, Calif.), Dacia Gallery (New York City), the Salmagundi Club (New York City) and Maryland Federation of Art (Annapolis). He's an associate professor of Xavier University (Cincinnati), where he teaches drawing and painting. This summer he will work in Pylos, Greece, as scientific illustrator for the Temple of Nestor excavations, directed by Dr. Jack Davis and Dr. Shari Stocker of the University of Cincinnati, Department of Classics.

COOKBOOKS

OF PAPER, PAINT AND PANTRIES



COOKBOOKS REMAIN A DIVERSE SOURCE OF INSPIRATION FOR ILLUSTRATORS AND FOOD ENTHUSIASTS WHO BELIEVE COOKING AND MAKING ART ARE ONE AND THE SAME.

BY MCKENZIE GRAHAM





MOLLIE KATZEN

BEYOND MOOSEWOOD



Among the ranks of classic cookbooks, Mollie Katzen's Moosewood Cookbook is the cherry on top of a literary sundae that gives little solace to vegetarians. It's been more than four decades since the book was initially self-published by Katzen, and still, the book reigns supreme having never gone out of print—complete with her charming black-and-white illustrations and hand-lettered text to accompany the recipes.

Although her original success in Moosewood is going strong, she finds success, too, in art. "After making two black-and-white books with decorative illustrations and hand-lettering in pen-and-ink," she says, "I wanted to expand to color and full compositions so I could bring my love of painting into the process." What resulted was *Still Life with Menu Cookbook*, in which pastel vignettes, more fully formed and with bright

color, accompany the menus laid out by Katzen. That was in 1988. Now, Katzen does little cooking ("I enjoy eating very simply from my garden"), but she's still making art. "I'm presently doing some art projects," she says, "that are not food-related ... what I call 'dreamscape interiors.' I'm using watercolor and collage." The collages worked their way into the end papers of her most recent book, *The Heart of the Plate*.

"People approach their plates with a visual sense as well as through the olfactory sense and actual taste and mouth-feel," says Katzen. "Because my cooking is based largely on plant food, there is so much color to work with. It makes life more enjoyable when food is beautifully arranged—not fussy, just reflecting a sense of visual joy."

PHOTO OF MOLLIE KATZEN BY LISA KEATING

MOLLIE KATZEN is listed by the *New York Times* as one of the best-selling cookbook authors of all time. She graduated with a degree in fine art from the San Francisco Art Institute. [See her books, recipes and illustrations at molliekatzen.com.](http://molliekatzen.com)

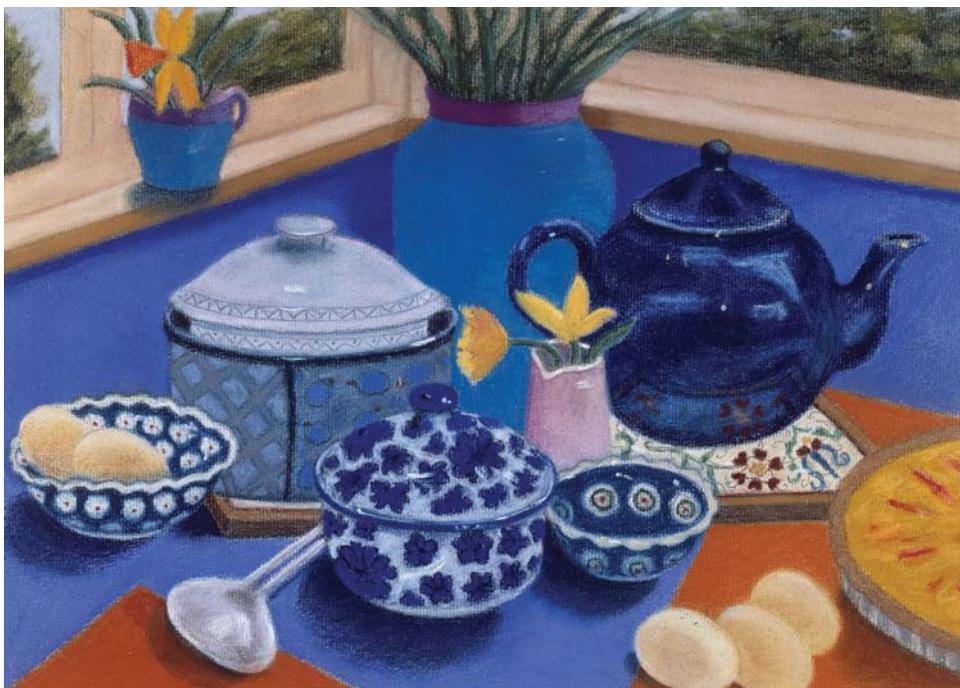


OPPOSITE LEFT:
**Broccoli on Chinese
 Silk** from *Still Life
 with Menu* (pastel
 on paper, 9x13)

ABOVE RIGHT: **Pasta
 on Floral Fabric**
 from *Vegetable
 Heaven* (watercolor
 on paper, 12x18)

RIGHT: **Blue Still
 Life** from *Vegetable
 Heaven* (pastel on
 paper, 12x18)

OPENING SPREAD:
Vegetable Heaven
 from *Vegetable
 Heaven* (pastel on
 paper, 18x24)





DAVID MELDRUM

ALL AND EVERYTHING

We're all too familiar with the dreaded food resolution. Don't eat fun things: cake, butter, choose-your-weakness—David Meldrum's resolution was of a different nature. "One evening whilst waiting for a bowl of noodles to cool," he says, "I started drawing them. I thought, perhaps, a day's food intake would be interesting, then perhaps a month's, before deciding that a year's would be really interesting and challenging!" That's how the Food Illustrator Project was born and, at the end of it, he would land a gallery show to display each of his 365 finished works. His favorites are less associated with the food and more with the

memories of the day. That being said, look out for frogs. Meldrum ate 122 Cadbury Freddo milk chocolates over the course of the year.

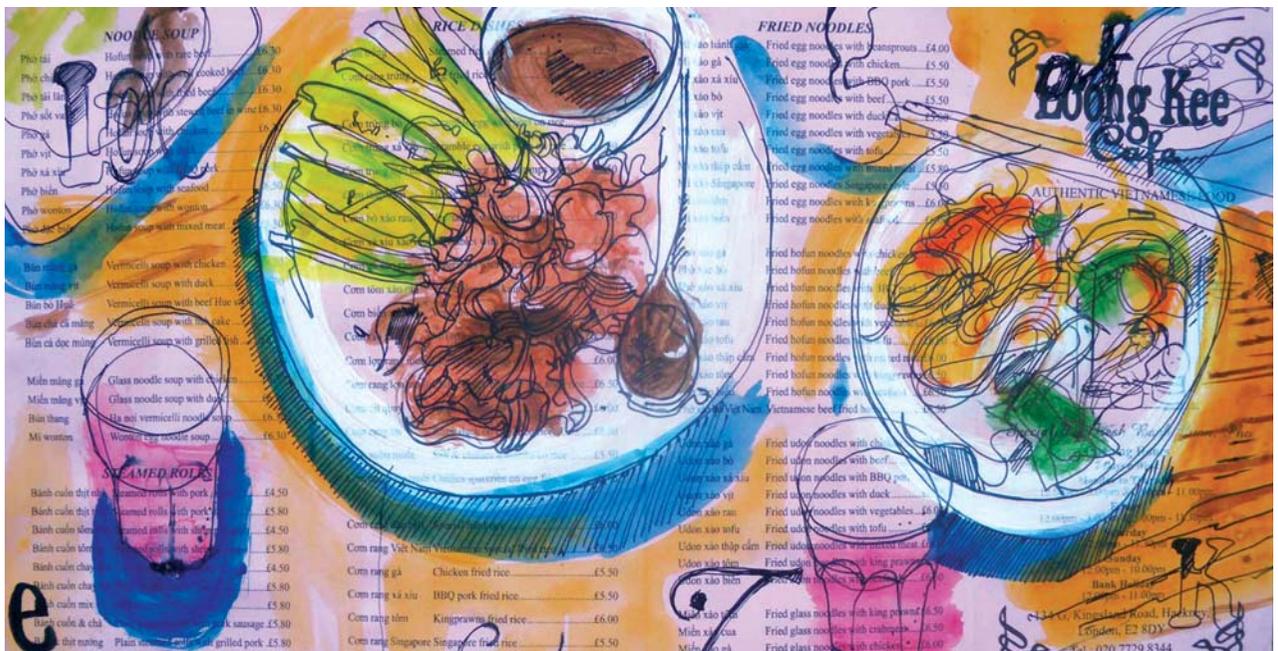
"I hope the Food Illustrator Project acts not only as a record of what I consumed, but also as an historical record of today's food related trends, packaging design and typography," he says. Packaging design is of particular interest as Meldrum's primary business is confectionary packaging with his company Sherbet Creative. "If nothing else in the world links us, food does," he says. "Artists from Dutch masters to pop artists have used food and packaging as a theme."

Meldrum would begin each night with all of his materials from the day set out in front of him. These might include pictures, wrappers, his own quick sketches and, from the center out, he would apply collage elements before adding color in acrylic or watercolor. He finished the pieces with black pen-and-ink drawings over the other layers. "I never cheated," he says, "and included all and everything in one way, shape or form." The long way took Meldrum nearly two hours every day. "Some evenings, catching up would mean six to eight hours of drawing!" His next project? Menus. "Food is never too far from my life!"

OPPOSITE TOP: collage, acrylic, watercolor, pen and ink on paper, 11 $\frac{7}{10}$ x16 $\frac{1}{2}$

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: collage, acrylic, watercolor, pen and ink on paper, 11 $\frac{7}{10}$ x16 $\frac{1}{2}$

BELOW: acrylic, pen and ink on a paper menu, 8 $\frac{3}{4}$ x11 $\frac{1}{10}$

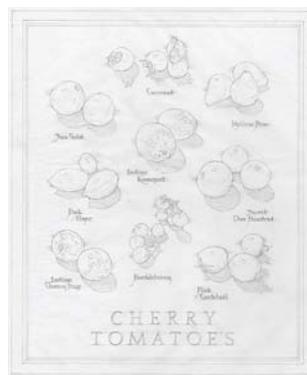
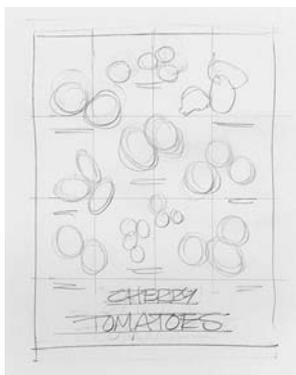


DAVID MELDRUM has worked in print, fine art, graphics and sculpture. He attended the Camberwell College of Arts, in London, and graduated with a degree in graphic arts. Today, Meldrum collects contemporary art and works in art education. His company, Sherbet Creative, designs food packaging. [See more of his work at thefoodillustrator.com.](http://www.thefoodillustrator.com)



JOHN BURGOYNE

ILLUSTRATING COOK'S ILLUSTRATED

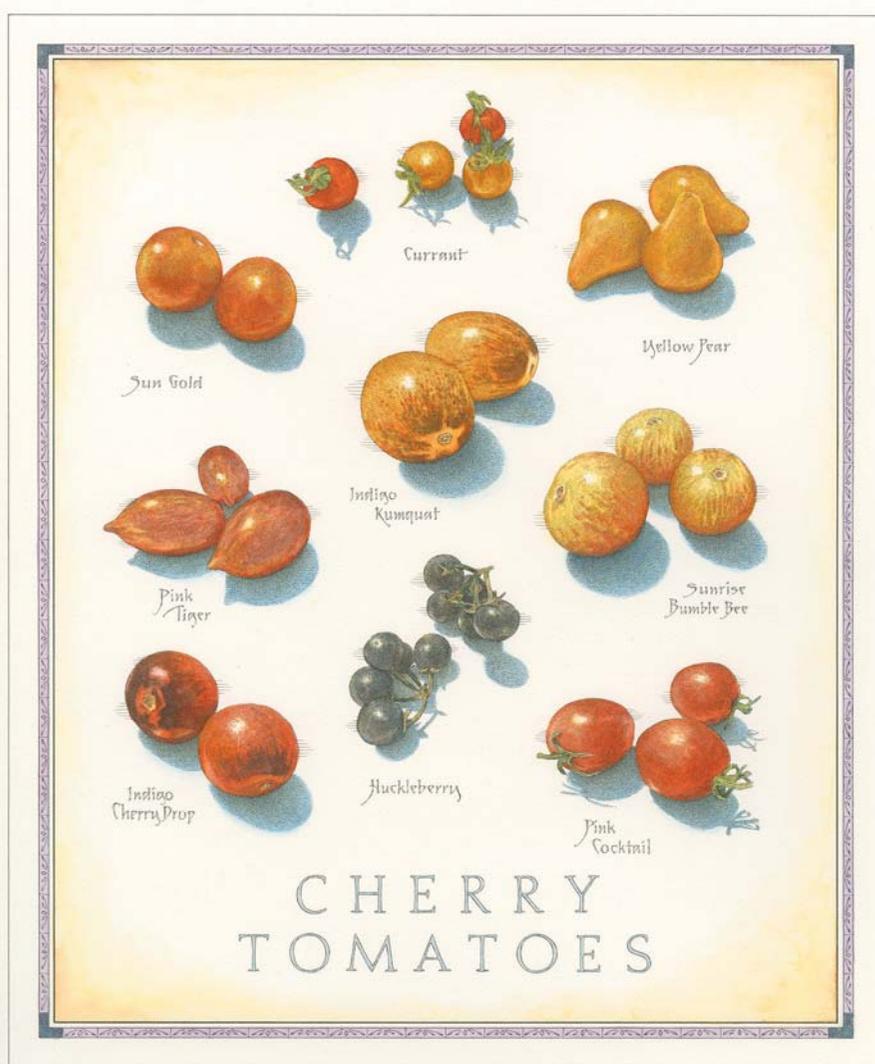


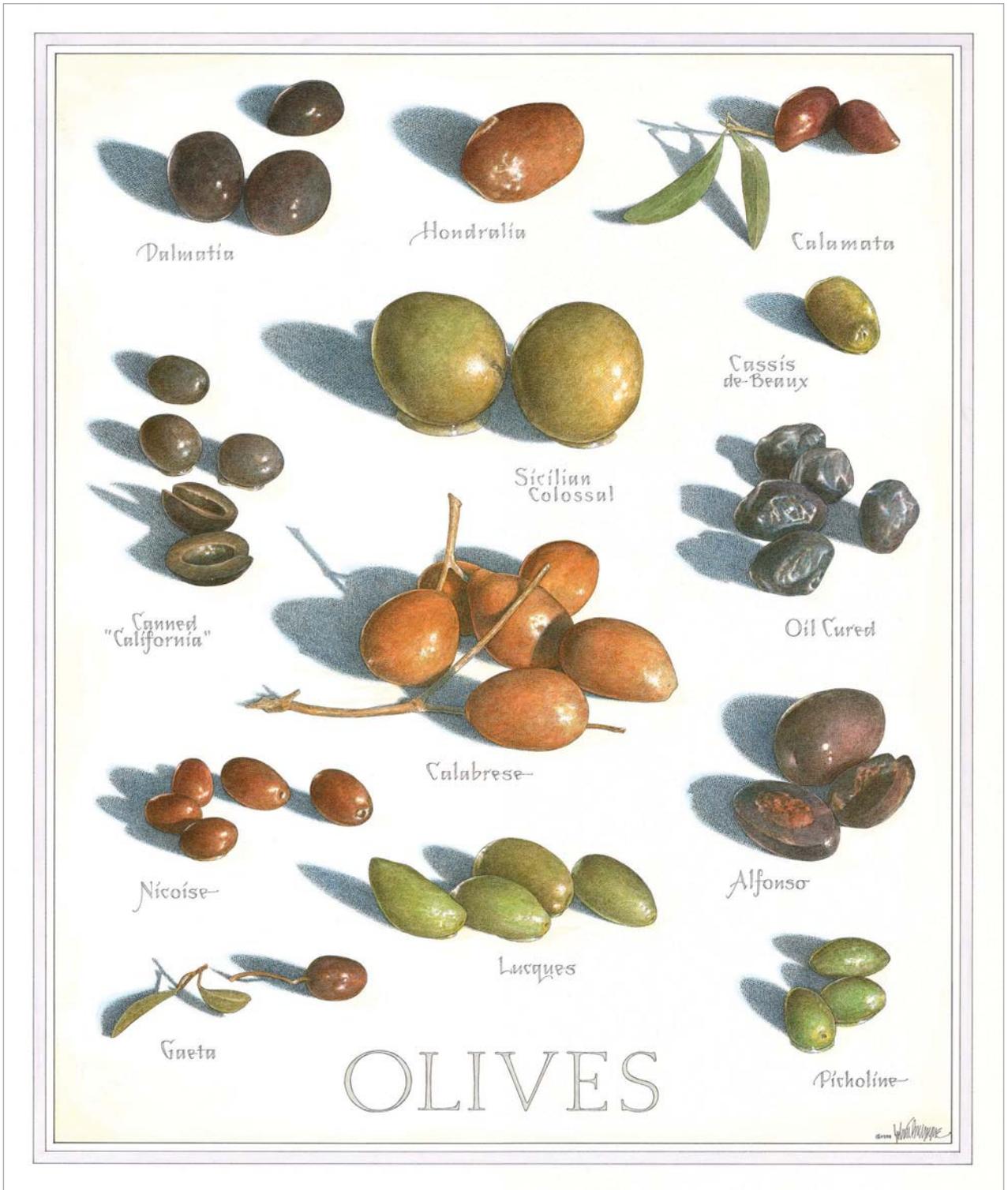
LEFT AND BOTTOM: Burgoyne's sketches and finished illustration of *Cherry Tomatoes*, *Cook's Illustrated* (pen, ink and watercolor on paper, 13½x11)

OPPOSITE: *Olives*, *Cook's Illustrated* (pen, ink and watercolor on paper, 19½x16¼)

Scientific and classical, the food drawings that John Burgoyne creates highlight the ingredient itself as unadulterated—the pinnacle of man's cultivation. You might recognize Burgoyne's work from the back page of *Cook's Illustrated*, a page he's been creatively executing for nearly two decades. The page is typically of a single food item in its many iterations: varieties of heirloom tomatoes, types of French cheeses, even more playful food groups like hard candies. "In 1998, Amy Klee redesigned *Cook's Illustrated*," says Burgoyne. "Part of the redesign was to illustrate the back covers, and they brought me on board. Editors have been so passionate about the magazine and its artistic personality." That passion has translated into 108 back covers for Burgoyne in his signature bold, academic style, and he says collectors are starting to take notice.

As for Burgoyne's process, it starts with attentive consideration for the details. Although each illustration is a collection of individual ones





within a group, each back cover is still created with careful thought. "As it develops from concept to final sketch," he says, "my primary focus is on composition and the small compositions within each page. Balance of color and shapes is part of that process."

One might imagine, with so many behind him, that the illustrations begin to blend together. Not so for Burgoyne, who says his favorite is still one of his first. "Olives (above) is my favorite back cover," he says. "I drew it in the beginning of my relationship with

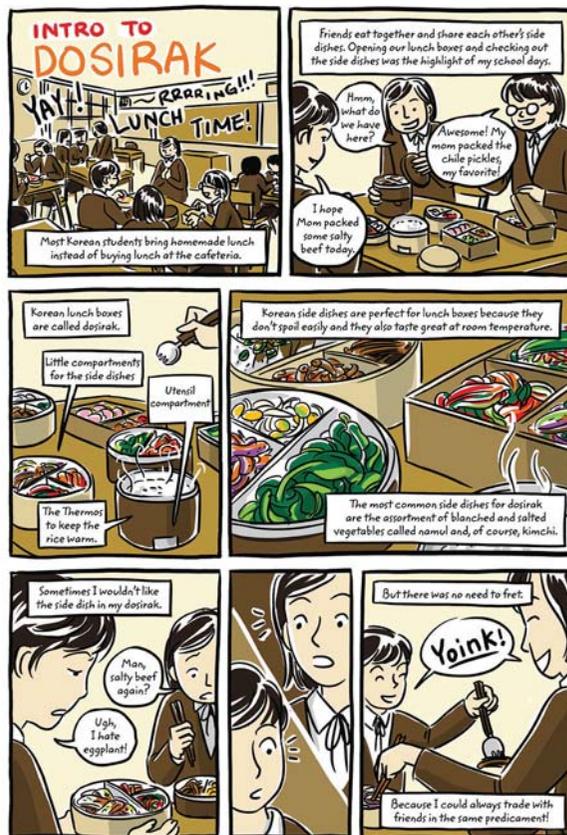
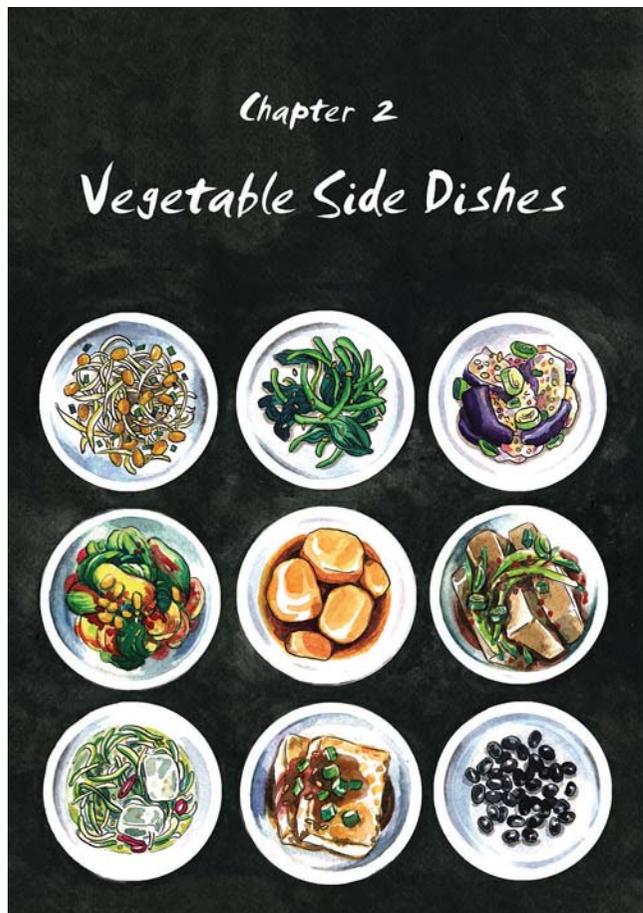
Cook's Illustrated. I compare it to a musician or band that records its first album, and it's a result of all the years of experiences, creativity and ideas. There was a lot of energy that went into *Olives*."

JOHN BURGOPYNE received a bachelor of fine arts degree from the Massachusetts College of Art and Design. His clients have included *National Geographic*, Apple, and the *New York Times*. See more of his work at johnburgoyneillustration.com.



ROBIN HA

CULTURAL COMICS



59

Spot kimchi in your local grocery store and you probably wouldn't bat an eye, but that hasn't always been the case. "Kimchi has become such an international food in the last decade, and it's also one of the most quintessential foods in Korea," says Robin Ha, author of *Cook Korean!*, a comic-book-style cookbook bringing accessible, simple Korean techniques to the home cook. Although Ha's education was in fine art and

illustration, she's always been drawn to the style of comic books, finding it approachable. "*Cook Korean!* came out of the blog that I started in 2014 called *Banchan In Two Pages*, where I combined two of my favorite things: food and comics," says Ha. "It was my way of sharing my culture." The recipes are broken down into frames, and the visual steps make each recipe seem easy and delicious. Bold colors and lines

bring to life the many vegetables inherent in Korean cooking. "I see the use of different tastes in cooking as the use of different colors in painting," says Ha. "I needed another creative outlet that I could be playful with while I was doing design work. I never follow a recipe. It's a very similar process to making paintings or illustrations. The true satisfaction comes when I take a chance and it comes out beautifully." ■

ABOVE LEFT: *Vegetable Side Dishes* (watercolor on paper, 12x9)

ABOVE RIGHT: Dosiraks are packed Korean lunch boxes.

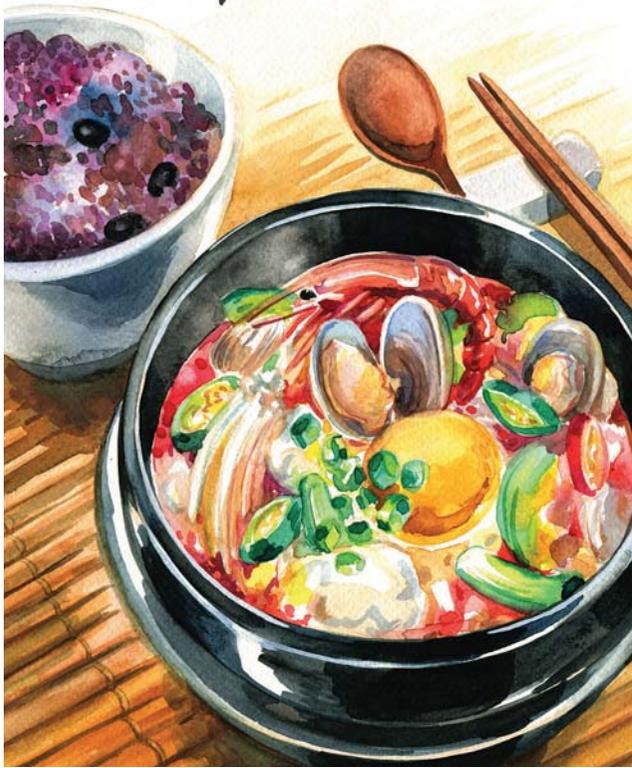
OPPOSITE TOP LEFT: *Soups and Stews* (watercolor on paper, 12x9)

OPPOSITE TOP RIGHT: Soups can be sweet or spicy, as shown in Ha's comic.

OPPOSITE BOTTOM: Ha's recipe for kimchi was the first on her blog.

ROBIN HA has wanted to be an artist since she was a child. She attended the Rhode Island School of Design and graduated with a degree in illustration and has learned classical art techniques from a plethora of schools and teachers. [See more of her work at robin.megaten.net.](http://robin.megaten.net)

Chapter 5 Soups and Stews



87

easy Kimchi (Mak Kimchi)

This is an easy, modified kimchi recipe for beginners. You can use more or less of the Korean red chile flakes, depending on your taste.

Prep time: 1 hour Fermentation time: 1 day
Makes 12 cups

Food prep gloves highly recommended!



- INGREDIENTS**
- 4 pounds napa cabbage
 - 1/2 cup kosher salt
 - 2 cups water
 - 4 green onions, green and white parts
 - 1 (1-inch) piece fresh ginger, peeled
 - 10 large cloves garlic, peeled
 - 1 1/2 pounds daikon radish
 - 1 large carrot, peeled
 - 1/4 cup Korean red chile flakes
 - 5 tablespoons fish sauce
 - 3 tablespoons saeujeot (tiny salted fermented shrimp)
 - 2 tablespoons sugar

FIRST:



Cut the cabbages lengthwise into quarters. Then cut the quarters into bite-size pieces.

Second: Rinse the cabbage in cold running water, then drain. Sprinkle the salt all over the cabbage, then pour the water over it, and mix well.



Set aside for 45 minutes and toss the cabbage once in a while for even salting.

Meanwhile
Let's make the seasoning. Crush the ginger and garlic together. I like to use the butt of the knife. Cut the green onions on the diagonal.



Julienne the radish and carrot.

Add the chile flakes, fish sauce, saeujeot, and sugar.

Add the green onions, garlic, ginger, carrot and radish, and mix well.

THE SEASONING IS READY!



Back to the salted napa cabbage.

You will notice the volume of the cabbage has been reduced by half. Remove the excess salt by rinsing it 5 times with cold running water.

Gently squeeze the water out of the napa cabbage and put it in a big mixing bowl.



Finally 2

It's time to put the gloves on!

Pack the mixture into a clean glass jar to within an inch of the top. Close the lid and put the jar in a plastic bag in case the juice overflows during fermentation. Leave the jar at room temperature for a day, after which it will be ready to eat. It can keep for up to a month in the refrigerator.

Mix the seasoning with the napa cabbage.

ENJOY!

26

27

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Eric Rohmann's art studio in his home outside Chicago

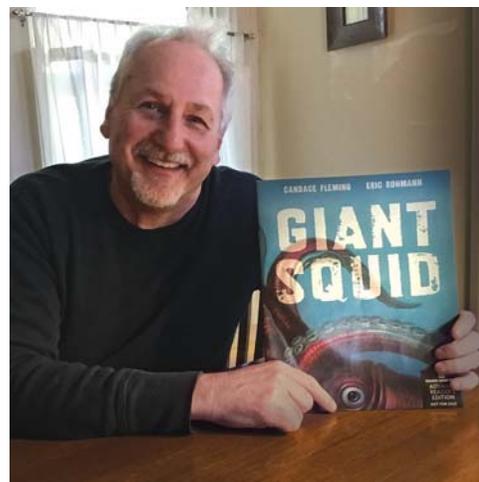


BUILDING WINGS ON THE WAY DOWN

Persevering through disasters is the way to make discoveries—illustrious illustrator **Eric Rohmann** talks to Will Hillenbrand about the nitty-gritty mysteries of craft.

Interview by Will Hillenbrand

Eric Rohmann won a Caldecott Medal for *My Friend Rabbit* (Roaring Brook Press, 2002) and a Caldecott Honor award for *Time Flies* (Crown, 1994). Born in 1957 in Riverside, Ill., Rohmann has undergraduate degrees in art and studio art from Illinois State University; he earned a master of fine arts in printmaking/fine bookmaking from Arizona State University. He is married to the writer Candace Fleming, with whom he often collaborates (e.g., *Oh, No!*, *Bulldozer's Big Day*, and *Giant Squid*). Will Hillenbrand talked to Rohmann at his home outside Chicago.



Will Hillenbrand (WH): I'd like to start with a question about style. You seem to have two distinct styles—one representational and one cartoon-like. How do you arrive at the one that's going to work for the story?

Eric Rohmann (ER): Style always arises organically from content. The story is the thing. I suppose the great idol we all bow to, in making picture books for kids, is the story. We tell stories two ways: we tell stories with words and we tell stories with pictures.

When I'm approached with a story or I think of a story, I try to think of all the different ways I can tell that story. If you're a writer you might tell it in first person; you might use a slang or an accent. As an artist I have to figure out what kind of picture making best tells the story. For example with *My Friend Rabbit* (Roaring Brook Press, 2002, below), I set aside a week and chose an image of a rabbit and made an oil painting; then I did a watercolor; then I cut it out and made a three-dimensional paper mock-up; then I tried it in monochrome. What I finally arrived at was a chunky relief print, hand colored, that seemed to work best with this frenetic, funny story.

I consider what the story needs, and what the story often needs is a technique that I don't know. This requires a big learning curve, not always the most positive thing, but I've also found if I work on a style that I'm unfamiliar with, it's like what Ray Bradbury said: "Living at risk is jumping off the cliff and building your wings on the way down." I find I'm anxious and it's difficult—and it always is better.

A few years back I did a book called *The Prairie Train* (Crown, 1999, page 66) and although I'm proud of the book, I don't remember a lot about making it because I had become too facile at making my oil paintings. It was as if all the questions had been answered.

WH: The illustrator receiving the story is like a conductor receiving a score and saying, "This is the way I am going to interpret and frame it."

ER: The story provides a fence. We all like to think that

open-ended is the best way to work, but it really isn't. You have to have a fence and then within that fence you can do whatever you want. You can explore every corner, but if you don't have a fence, there are just too many places to explore.

WH: It's a structure.

ER: Exactly, it's the bigger structure, perhaps not the structure that's dictated by the technical means, but the bigger structure that's set up by the storytelling. I use this example: Imagine *The Cat in the Hat*. An odd, six-foot tall cat knocks on the door and two 6-year-olds home alone open the door to a stranger. Now imagine the scene in black and white charcoal made like Chris van Allsburg's *Jumanji*. It would be creepy!

WH: I'd like you to talk about the drama of the page, specifically in *Time Flies*, with the birds, as you're making them fly from page to page.

ER: The single most important characteristic of picture book making is the page turn. It's the confluence of expectation and surprise. I don't know any other art forms that do it so beautifully.

When you're thinking about a book like *Time Flies* (page 67), you know you have a bird that's flowing from left to right, as he moves through the pages. I think—how can I use the expectation of what's about to happen next? In your imagination, as a reader, you're guessing, filling in, using your experience to anticipate what's going to happen next. Our task as storytellers is to fulfill some of those





ABOVE: *The Prairie Train* (Crown, 1999)
 OPPOSITE TOP: *Bulldozer's Big Day* (Atheneum, 2015)
 OPPOSITE BOTTOM: *Time Flies* (Crown, 1994)

expectations but also allow the reader to be thrilled by what she thought would not happen.

WH: The reader turns the page and the bird flies from one page to another. You need that sequence, the element of time, in order to make those pictures work.

ER: That's so thoughtful, but I got to be honest, it didn't occur to me. *Time Flies* originally began with a boy instead of a bird, and the boy is actually swallowed, and then later, when the museum turns back into a museum, he's inside the rib cage of the dinosaur. A boy getting eaten in a book—that sort of delighted me! That was something we used to see all the time in books in the '40s, '50s, even in the '60s.

Once I thought of the bird and the possibility of multiple viewpoints (flying!), I realized that there's also a positive coincidence, because all living birds are essentially dinosaurs. A lot of stuff made sense once I figured out the bird. I never go into a book fully knowing. That's the reason I don't call myself a creator; I'm more of a discoverer. I have to sit down and do the work and then look at it.

“THE QUESTION IS ALWAYS: HOW DO YOU TAKE THOSE THINGS THAT WORKED WELL IN A DIFFERENT CONTEXT AND HOW DO YOU TRANSLATE AND USE THEM IN YOUR WORK?”

Eric Rohmann

WH: You have to make the wings as you're falling down.

ER: And I don't know what the feathers should look like either!

WH: Is there a sense of panic?

ER: Yes, there's anxiety. I've been doing this long enough to know that it's going to work or it's not. If it doesn't work, I have another option: I can try something else...and try something else and try something else.

WH: How did you get to that frame of mind?

ER: It so happens I was reading a book about Delacroix, and the author talked about Titian, as well. He described what Titian would do with a painting he didn't know what to do with. He'd turn it to a wall, and after a long period of time, sometimes as long as 30 years, he'd turn it around and one of three things would happen. Either he'd see right away what needed to be done and he'd do it, or he'd see that he didn't really care about this painting anymore; then he'd scrape it off and use the canvas, or three, he would have no clue what to do—so he'd turn it back to the wall. That's my play!

The Beatles, strangely enough, are another influence. We know that of the around 400 hours of recording—trying to lay down the tracks—they kept just 4 percent of what they made—10 or so hours. We dig up a ton of ore for one nugget. I realized that I just need to keep working on it to make it work. It's difficult, but there's no other way to do it.



WH: How do we communicate that to young people?

ER: I'll show them all the mistakes I've made. With *My Friend Rabbit*, I'll show them 32 different spreads, but only 18 of them made it into the final book. And the ending changed completely—after I'd finished the book and had sent it in. Disasters occurred because I didn't know what I was doing. If I can show young artists and writers the mistakes I've made, instead of just showing them the finished product ... they get it.

WH: They see that you persevered.

ER: I would love to say that I'm persistent, explorer-like, but I'm reading a book about the Prussian naturalist and explorer, Alexander von Humboldt. The stuff he endured, as he went around the world, collecting and learning—that's true exploration, when your body is just one giant mosquito bite for a year. I think the poet Billy Collins said, "Poetry is hard but it ain't coal mining." So what we do is hard, but it's supposed to be hard, because we want to be good at it.

One of the problems with a lot of artists is that they become facile, and although they do produce beautiful things, the fact is that they're not evolving. The example that's often given in the art world is Picasso. Sometime around 1930, he started making Picassos; before that he was always more inventive! His later sculpture is brilliant—I just saw a show at MoMA—but you can see the way he's riffing on who he was. I find no problem with that, but I also find that if *I* start to do that, my work feels stale.

MATERIALS

Woodcut tools

PVC Foam

Rives BFK paper

WH: My interpretation is that you're concerned with your audience: how are you going to make this new for your reader.

ER: We are so lucky that we work for this audience. Kids don't just look at a book; they inhabit a book. They crawl inside it. They look at everything. There are details everywhere that they spend time with; there are small stories that they pick up, page to page, that are complete inventions of theirs, sparked by something we do.

I remember how I would climb into books that weren't particularly great books like *Hop on Pop* and *Yertle the Turtle*. There was something I grabbed on to, and it blossomed for me. It was a book, yes, but it became a bigger part of my world. Knowing that kid, that 7-year-old I once was, it would just be wrong for me not to honor that audience.

WH: You haven't made a complete, closed circle and not included the readers. You've made a partial circle that has an opening to it. Their eyes will create closure, but you're allowing that kinetic energy to be filled by your readers.

ER: I may live in an immovable house, but I want always to be looking out the window, instead of standing on the porch looking in a window. Extending the metaphor, the windows have to be open, and it has to be bright inside. The house has to invite the reader in. I believe the best picture books are those that meet the reader halfway.

WH: For instance in *Time Flies*, the bird disappears—there are just a few, tiny feathers left in the sky. My breath goes out of me!

ER: I was thinking, How do I show the bird getting eaten? I was watching cartoons, and Sylvester tossed Tweetie into his mouth and coughed—a single feather popped out.

The question is always: How do you take those things that worked well in a different context and how do you translate and use them in your work?

For the monochromatic pictures in *Time Flies*, the light sources make no sense. I lifted that directly from Rembrandt, who had multiple light sources that add to the dramatic tension. For instance, it makes no sense that there's a light behind the allosaurus in the darkened museum. I continually ask myself, How can I use my knowledge of what's been done effectively and borrow it?

I did another book called *Bone Dog* (Roaring Book Press, 2011, page 68). At the beginning one of the main characters, a golden retriever, dies—which is not a usual

convention in picture books! I've asked kids: What did you think when the bird gets eaten in *Time Flies* or when the dog dies in *Bone Dog*? Did it worry you? And the universal answer is: "There's the whole rest of the book!" Children have been told stories; they understand the world by way of narrative, and they trust the author to have a good reason why things happen the way they happen. Unlike many adults, never has a child put the book down because there's a death.

WH: In addition to directing the story, you have amazing techniques. After you've built a book dummy, the three-dimensional diagram of what it will look like, it comes down to being able to take it now from one plateau to the next. Let's start with *Time Flies*.

ER: I've seen Maurice Sendak's dummies—brilliantly beautiful things—but mine aren't. I want to save whatever surprises for the actual making of the finished artwork. For *Time Flies*, I made oil paintings on paper. The reason they're on paper is that I wanted some texture, but I didn't want canvas because sometimes the weave is overly visible. In 1992-3 they were scanning pictures on a drum scanner, so I couldn't make the book larger than 24 inches.

I used acid-free printmaking paper, Rives BFK. I stretched it onto a board, even though I was putting an oil-based medium on it, because I wanted the surface to be completely flat. I then



Bone Dog
(Roaring Book Press, 2011)

applied multiple layers of thin gesso, maybe six layers, so the oil paint wouldn't rot the paper.

WH: You work at an easel rather than at a drawing table. Why is that?

ER: I do some pencil drawings, but I like to use the paint directly, because there's a different feeling to drawing. Imagine holding a brush as compared to holding a pencil. I work at the easel, standing up, because on a drawing table the movement is confined to my fingers, my wrist and little bit of my arm. But when I'm at an easel, it's also my shoulder, plus my entire body moving back and forth.

Typically the paint I draw with is the sludge that's on the bottom of my brush-cleaning jar; it tends to look somewhere between Payne's gray and burnt umber. I am using that time-honored technique of starting an underpainting that's like burnt umber. It dries fast and is a warm color. If you

look at any of the pictures in my books, that's the underlying color. Rembrandt would use paint thinner sludge the same way—I stole

from a number of sources: Charles R. Knight, the famous painter of dinosaurs, who would leave touches of old-master-looking brown throughout his images. I knew the beginning of the book would be monochromatic and my inspiration was *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*.

All this borrowing! What did T. S. Eliot say? "Immature artists imitate; mature artists steal." So it's T. S. Eliot's fault if you have a problem with this!

Once I started using that monochromatic brown, I realized that the brown of the paint resembled the brown of museum dinosaur bones:

On Breaking into the Business of Picture Books

BEFORE YOU START: Look at other books; know what's going on. There's no reason to reinvent the wheel. There are so many brilliant ways the form has been used, but you, too, can have a go at it.

LEARN YOUR CRAFT. A physicist has to learn math, understand it, make it intuitive. For us it's drawing: that's our engagement with the world. Drawing is seeing; it's translating what's out there; it's seeing and transposing what we care about onto a two-dimensional surface.

ONCE YOU START WORKING: The two most important things: Show that you can make a character—not just an elephant and a pig; not just a hippo, but George and Martha (*George and Martha* series by James Marshall). We want to see a character. Rembrandt was maybe the best painter ever, but there's a good chance he could not have illustrated *Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus* (by Mo Willems).

AND LEARN HOW TO MAKE PICTURES IN SEQUENCES. Understand how a story unfolds visually. In other words, learn how to tell a story.



Clara and Asha (Roaring Book Press, 2005)

That synchronicity was not something I'd thought of; it wasn't a creation; it was a discovery. Once I got that, I said, "Yep, that's right." Because all the full-color pictures are underpainted with the brown, they rhyme throughout the book.

Then on top of the underpainting I use maybe 10 colors—because I want there to be harmony between all the images and mixing all the colors with just 10 colors gives you some consistency. When I create a shadow, I tend to use a single neutral purple, a mixture of ultramarine blue, alizarin and a little bit of viridian. In *Time Flies*, I applied the color in transparent glazes, building layer upon layer.

The last two things I paint are the deepest darks and then the brightest highlights; the highlights are more opaque. In the later editions of the book, as the technology got better, the colors are quite true to the original pictures. In the earlier editions (dating from 1993), the colors tend to break up. Somewhere in the 2000s, the publisher wrote me and said the scans were lost; can you send the paintings? They rescanned them and the images are much better

WH: Tell me about your newest book, *Giant Squid* (Roaring Brook Press, 2016). Did the techniques you used for *Time Flies* roll into that book, as well?

ER: Initially I was going to illustrate *Giant Squid* (page 72) with a printmaking technique; I had wanted to use monotype to apply multiple layers—up to 10 layers of transparent ink. Unfortunately, the printed surface started rejecting the ink—it was like trying

to paint watercolor on a piece of Saran wrap, so I switched to oil paint on paper. A lot of those drawings for *Giant Squid* were painted directly on the paper; I used little thumbnails as reference.

The big challenge with *Giant Squid* was that much of the story happens a mile down in the lightless sea, and so the palette was going to be limited, if I want to be honest with the color. Obviously if I were true to the actual environment, it would be 24 pictures of nothing, so I did take liberties. Also while I was doing research, I was looking at video—there are just a few videos of actual giant squids in their natural habitat. The single bright light of a submersible is what I borrowed for my paintings.

The palette was so limited, I found it incredibly intimidating, and then incredibly liberating—blue and red and some silvers.

What it did is it made me not rely on novelty in color. In other book illustrations, if I had a page that was mostly yellow, I'd use some green to change the mood, but in *Giant Squid* I used composition, I used movement—all those drawing things, as opposed to color.

WH: The choices you make put you in a corner ...

"I REALIZED THAT I JUST NEED TO KEEP WORKING ON IT TO MAKE IT WORK. IT'S DIFFICULT BUT THERE'S NO OTHER WAY TO DO IT."

Eric Rohmann



Rohmann's worktable shows the equipment for carving woodcuts. The artist cuts the key image (the relief print); then the color monotype is printed in multiple layers—one layer for each color (see colored illustration at right).

ER: Exactly, Garrison Keillor once said that when you write a letter, always write it by hand; don't write it and then transcribe it. Write yourself into a corner and figure your way out of it, and you'll have a much truer letter.

WH: It's certainly true here. When you have an interval between working in one technique and another, is it like getting back on a bicycle?

ER: It's like getting back on someone else's bicycle that only goes backwards! It's familiar, but there's a learning curve. I'm often shocked at how bad my first attempts are at the next project.

I just finished the pictures for *Bulldozer Helps Out* (Atheneum/Caitlyn Dlouhy Books, 2017) made with multiple color relief prints. *My Friend Rabbit* is done in relief prints with black line and watercolor. For *Oh, No!* (Schwartz &

Wade, 2012) I made multiple color plates, but used transparent ink, so multiple colors on top of one make more colors. They are all the same technique done slightly differently, so when I started each project, I had to figure out what the hell I was doing. That's wildly difficult, incredibly anxiety provoking—and the only way to work.

WH: I did hear your wife once say sometimes she hears things flying across the room. Is there any truth to that?

ER: Yes, absolutely. Where I make the prints is right below her office where she does her writing. The glory, as well as the horror, of printmaking is that it's a chemical medium—I'm putting an ink on top of another ink. The ink dries; it has a different viscosity; certain inks are oilier than other inks; they dry differently. Certain inks are grainier than other inks are. In the process of learning, there will be times I drop ink on top and for some reason the ink is rejected—and that's when the cursing begins. Or the pressure on the press isn't right. The process involves placing a piece of paper on top of the plate, sometimes dry, sometimes



A block plate for *Oh, No!*



A Kitten Tale (Alfred A. Knopf, 2008)

wet. Then I have to put something on top to protect that—it can be a piece of newsprint, or a piece of museum board or a felt blanket. I have to figure out what works best. Something can easily go wrong and more cursing ensues.

WH: You work it out! What I love is the way that you play with the distance between the book and the reader. A lot of that has to do with cropping the images, and it also has to do with mark making. In *Oh, No!* it's both: The printmaking marks and the graphic line have energy everywhere, even in the eyebrow of the tiger.

ER: Drawing with pencil, you typically pull it toward you. In the process of making a relief print, a woodcut or linocut, you are actually pushing the tool away. It's an unfamiliar movement, number one; number two, you're pushing through material; there's a physical, kinetic energy that's occurring as you push. It does something different than what a pencil line does, and so you get a line that's energetic; you get a line that looks fresh in a way that sometimes the pencil line doesn't. That's one of the reasons I

chose it. The other reason: It forced me to simplify. I find that as I'm ramping up the emotion, I want the viewer to be right there. In *Time Flies*, it's when the allosaurus and bird see one another; in *Giant Squid*, it's when you see the beak—these are moments that are high emotion, and that calls for drawing the reader in.

WH: You do something quite special with eyes.

ER: Here's the thing: eyes are usually the last thing I make because they're probably not right as I'm trying to figure out what a bone looks like or a tentacle. This is going to sound odd, but I just keep working on the eyes until they communicate.

I've been doing it for a while now so I know that on the cover of *Time Flies* the allosaurus is supposed to look hesitant and afraid and

surprised. In *Oh, No!* the tiger is supposed to look a bit smarmy and confident, I wouldn't say evil, but he has that sort of darkness in him. I did not know how to do that except in a rudimentary way: if you want someone to look angry, you make little v-shaped eyebrows that tilt toward the nose. In fact, I would say in *Oh, No!* (bottom right and page 73) and *My Friend Rabbit* and the *Bulldozer* books—probably for a third of them—I cut away the eyes and then went back and added them later with a stencil.

WH: The lines are all extremely fluid.

ER: I think that's a choice I made, but it has also something to do with printmaking. Most people who make prints will use a piece of linoleum or a piece of wood, birch or maple that's extremely grainy or extremely hard. Linoleum is a wonderful thing, but when it's old, it's hard to cut. The way linoleum is held together, with sand or grit, dulls the tools. Early on I invested, by the suggestion of a professor of mine, in really good tools. The company that makes my wood-cut tools also makes samurai swords. You'd think \$50 for a single tool is a lot, but as an artist, you know that, for instance, a sable water-color brush is going to last you most of your life.

Sharp tools and a plastic sheet material called PVC or polyvinyl chloride (dense foam that's easy to cut; you get it in sign-making shops) are necessary. The sharpness of the tools, along with the foam—leads to fluid movement.

WH: That accounts for the line, but what about the color palette for *Oh, No!*

ER: I knew it had to be limited, because these are reduction prints: All the color comes from a single plate. For example, if I make a picture of a yellow bird flying past a cloud in a blue sky—I cut out the cloud first. When I print the blue on white paper, the cloud is white. Then I cut out all of the blue sky, leaving the bird shape, which is then printed yellow on top of the blue. I use a single plate for three colors. If I were to show you these plates, there'd be nothing left; the subsequent cutting reduces the surface; hence the name: reduction print.

The reduction print process gives you lots of colors. I was using mostly transparent inks—five or six colors. I did cheat a little, there's some stenciling, and I went back in with a secondary plate sometimes, especially to do the tiger orange. It's a reduction plate with modifications.

RIGHT: For a relief print, the protruding surfaces are inked; the recessed areas print white. For *Oh, No!* Rohmann cut out the previously printed areas until there was nothing left of the block, creating reduction prints.



Giant Squid (Roaring Book Press, 2016)





Oh, No! (Schwartz & Wade Books, 2012)

WH: You're not printing these the way printmakers would be printing an edition; this instead is an edition for the book.

ER: My printmaking professors would say, "These are great! You're not doing it right!"

WH: Not right in one way, but right in that it tells the story.

ER: One of my favorite printmakers in children's books is Stephen Savage. If you're a printmaker looking at his his linocuts, you'd say "wet ink on top of wet ink"—the surface is rejecting it and it's not the surface you want if you're doing a multiple color print, but the genius of Stephen is that it works for his storytelling. He said once to me in an email, "I don't know anything about printmaking; I just roll it out and take what it gives me." But what it gives him is brilliant.

I was at a lecture by a famous picture book artist whom I admire greatly and he said, "Every picture has to stand on its own." I raised my hand. "I don't agree," I said. "You can't have a Broadway musical where every song is a show stopper. There has to be an ebb and a flow."

If you look at *My Friend Rabbit*, there are two scenes where there's basically nothing interesting visually. I sacrificed those pages, because I wasn't making a portfolio of pictures; I was making a book.

WH: I couldn't agree with you more.

ER: I don't know if it works this way with you, Will, but at some point when I'm working on a book, I realize there are going to be 1000s of copies out there, and I'm not going to be able to change them.

I was working on a book recently. One of the pictures would have been serviceable, would have worked, and that's when that demon popped up on my shoulder and said, "You're not going to change this because you'd rather have it easy." Then I said to myself, "Whom are you really cheating here? You're not cheating

the publisher; you're not cheating yourself. You're cheating your reader." You always always have to remember the reader and what he will eventually have in his hands.

If I do a book that has 18 paintings I'd describe it this way: In six, I nailed it; in six, I wish I had two more months; for the other six, I have no clue.

WH: Don't tell us which are which!

ER: You could probably guess some of them, I'm sure.

WH: I'm sure I couldn't. Thank you for taking the time to talk to us and thank you for your beautiful work.

ER: It's so much fun to talk. The weird thing about what we do, Will, is that we sit alone in a room and try to reach as many kids as we can.

WH: When we do that, we're not lonely. We are in a world that's full and complete and inviting—and when artists and children go into this wonderful world of imagination, what happens is magic.

ER: Sometimes.

WH: It's the best that we can do! ■

WILL HILLENBRAND is the award-winning author and illustrator of more than 60 children's books, including *Down by the Station*, *Asleep in the Stable* and *Snowman's Story*. Visit his website to see films of his process and movies for children at willhilenbrand.com.

Visit Eric Rohmann's website at www.ericrohmann.com



BEST IN CLASS

Winners of the 2016 All Media Competition

Nine artists show their prowess in the medium of their choice.



Why drawing? I love how direct drawing media are, how I can use line to express the gesture and mood of any particular theme. There is a challenge in controlling the more subtle values, but it's a challenge I look forward to.

Visions of Passenger Pigeons (mixed media on paper, 22x51¾)



Grand Prize Winner
GABRIELA DELLOSSO

WEST NEW YORK, NEW JERSEY • GABRIELADELLOSSOART.COM

The inspiration for *Visions of Passenger Pigeons* is the story of the extinction of the passenger pigeon that used to fly in flocks that darkened

the skies for hours. At the height of the species' population, it's estimated they numbered at least 3,000,000,000. American

ornithologist John James Audubon witnessed their migration in the sky and wrote, "I cannot describe to you the extreme beauty of their aerial evolutions, when a hawk chanced to press upon the rear of a flock. At once, like a torrent, and with a noise like thunder, they rushed into a compact mass, pressing upon each other towards the center." I wanted to tell the story of the bird's journey through time. If only people were a little more thoughtful, perhaps the passenger pigeon would still be around today.

My conceptual process involves coming up with the idea and then acquiring the reference material to execute

it. If I can, I will work from the actual objects, but if that is not possible, I will use reference material, like photos. The hat on the central figure, I actually constructed and drew from. I also constructed the feather collar and drew from that. To complete the costume, I found an authentic Victorian fur coat and a pair of old brass opera glasses. I was my own model—so I used a combination of working from a three way mirror and reference photos.

The best advice I've been given is to paint what you love. Be excited about what you create. Be dedicated and focused; don't let critics discourage you. *MW*

Graphite, Charcoal, Ink and Scratchboard

MELISSA BREAUT

MONTREAL, QUEBEC • MELISSABREAUT.CA

Why charcoal? I often work in pastel but, given the intimate nature of *Body and Soul*, I felt that rendering the flesh colors would make the piece too personal. I like that everything isn't said.

Also, working in black and white charcoal allows me to concentrate on the quality of the light without the distraction of color.



Body and Soul expresses the vulnerability in each of us that men, especially, succeed so well in hiding. One morning I woke before my boyfriend and saw that the light on his face was perfect. I quietly reached for my phone and snapped a few pictures. To be honest, I felt sneaky—but also lucky to witness a moment when body, mind and soul were so peaceful.

Fortunately, my boyfriend didn't object.

I worked in black and white charcoal on dark gray, sanded paper. The gray of the paper was slightly warmer than the gray of mixed black and white charcoal, so I could play with color temperatures as well as values.

I established the shadows with thin layers of black charcoal or by leaving the paper bare. The lighter areas have thicker layers of white

charcoal. The result is a natural-looking three-dimensional effect, as light areas are often closer to the viewer when the light comes at an angle from the front. *HD*

Body and Soul (charcoal on sanded paper, 8x12)

FINALISTS:
Chi Han Cheng
Agnes Grochulska





Watercolor and Gouache

MATTHEW BIRD

SYKESVILLE, MARYLAND
MATTHEWBIRD.COM



There are places around the world that have inspired artists for centuries—cities like Venice or Paris. In the United States, one of those places for me is New Orleans. There's just no other place like it. While I was exploring the French Quarter, this red vintage Volkswagen Beetle caught my eye from several blocks away. That was the very beginning of my process with *NOLA Beetle*

I spent a lot of time around the location with my model, working out the best composition and making sure I would have all the reference material needed. Once back in the studio, I took my value sketch and did the preliminary drawing, specifically dividing the composition down the middle to heighten the drama that would come with the warm and cool colors. I masked off some areas where I wanted to preserve the white paper and then began laying in large washes, starting with the warm building on the right. I worked counterclockwise around the painting, bringing each section to a near finish before moving on. Finally, I went back and glazed the areas where the value or hue needed to be adjusted. *MW*

Why watercolor? Watercolor can create many effects that cannot be achieved in any other medium.

When I did my first wet-into-wet wash, I was immediately fascinated by the way the pigment and water flowed and mixed. Watercolor is a notoriously difficult medium, and I guess I love the challenge.

NOLA Beetle (watercolor on paper, 30x22)

FINALISTS:
Nien Misure
Qiming Yin



Colored Pencil
TANJA GANT

MADISON, MISSISSIPPI
TANJAGANT.COM



Although the model for *1992* was my stepson, the painting is, in effect, a self-portrait, reflecting my state of mind during the title year. In the spring of 1992, the outbreak of war in my homeland of Bosnia had a profound impact on me and the trajectory of my life. I struggled to come to terms with my new reality and felt imprisoned mentally and physically—ergo the straightjacket. After 24 years I've finally found a way (and the courage) to express those feelings.

In contrast to the complexity of those feelings, my work process was straightforward. Because creating pictures in colored pencil involves so much time, I always work from photographs. Using a grid system, I transferred the image directly onto the drawing paper and then worked from light to dark in sections. Although I usually try to finish as much of the face and other areas of visible skin first, this time I started with the straightjacket. The smooth bristol paper I work on can't take as many layers as textured paper, so I limited my colors to about 20.

I often work in graphite (I love the way it reduces my work to a black-and-white image, forcing the viewer to see its most basic elements: shapes and values), but for *1992*, I wanted to add a new dimension. I felt color would have a bigger impact on the overall narrative. *HD*

1992 (colored pencil on paper, 24x15)

Why colored pencil? I'd always wanted to paint in oils but couldn't afford them. Then, in 1999, I was given a full set of Prismacolor Premier colored pencils, and I was immediately hooked. Colored pencils are easy and safe to use; they require virtually no cleanup, and different brands offer a variety of softness and texture.

FINALISTS: Titika Faraklou
Azadeh Sheibanimarvast



Oil and Oil Pastel

MARK PUGH

PLEASANT GROVE, UTAH • MARKRPUGH.COM

Why oil? The diverse possibilities of oils can't be matched. I have the most control with oils, and for my style of painting, where I'm continually changing and layering areas, oils allow me to do that. The slower drying times let me choose whether I'd like to make adjustments while the painting is wet, or wait for it to dry and paint on top. I can incorporate previous layers by painting transparently, or I can cover them with opaques. Working this way also builds up some interesting textures.

FINALISTS:

Emina Adrovic
Marion Tubiana
Cindy Roesinger



I wanted to capture the struggle that everyone experiences when growing into one's self, and I found the perfect example in my 3-year-old daughter's learning to ride her tricycle. Her headband, while normally an accessory, was now an obstacle, obstructing her vision, making it difficult to develop a new skill. The sparrows are a symbol of her determination, as well as a way to create a sense of movement. Her bright dress is a colorful representation of self, contrasting with the bleak world around her. At the time I painted this, I had recently quit my full-time job to exclusively focus on my

art; I was experiencing my own similar struggle—against both the difficulty of the task, and the expectations of those around me. This painting became an emotional release, and a way to express my experience in a way I was unable to do with words.

While some paintings can take a while and a lot of work to complete, others just come together. This was the latter. I probably spent half as much time on this painting as I usually do. Most of the decisions I made felt right the first time. I spent very little time repainting anything. *MW*

Learning to Peddle a Tricycle
(oil on panel, 30x48)

Mixed Media and Collage

PATRICIA ROBINSON STOLARSKI

LONG GROVE, ILLINOIS • PMROBINSONSTUDIO.COM

Why mixed media?

Mixed media provide a more complete way for me to tell a story. Textures created by various papers and acrylic media are all part of the basic narrative.



Options has many layers—the painting itself as well as the thought process. In working on the piece, I considered the many times in life we might be at a crossroad, even if we don't recognize it at the time.

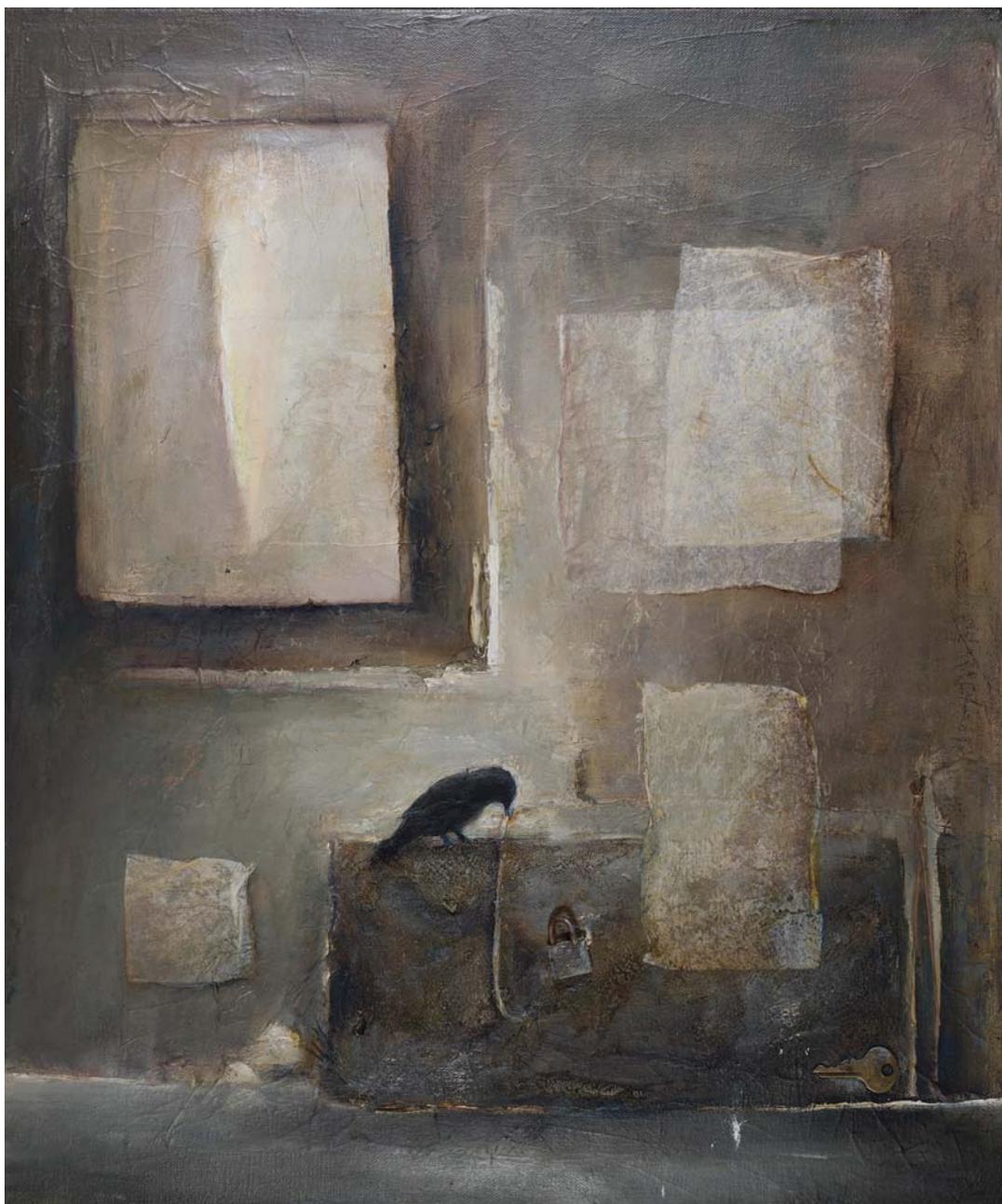
Many options and alternate paths present themselves; we have to decide whether we choose the more difficult, uncertain path or the safer one. There are always surprises—darkness and light, treasures and challenges—on the journey.

Paint from your heart and soul. This is the most valuable advice because when I am painting what is most personal to me, I am at my best. *MW*

Options (mixed media on canvas, 24x20)

FINALISTS:

Jennifer Greenfield
Lucy Peveto





Pastel

Yael Maimon

ASHKELON, ISRAEL • YAELMAIMON.COM

Why pastel? I work in a variety of media, all with their own benefits, but I do feel that pastel allows me greater color experimentation than any other medium.

FINALIST:
Eve Miller



You know those early cold mornings in which the world seems to be monochromatically blue? Spending such mornings watching the street cats eat in this freezing cold, single-color world inspired me. I let it all sink in, made sketches and wrote some notes to myself about what exactly triggered me. It was magical, quiet

and beautiful, but also sad.

It was important to me to paint this scene from a view with a low angle, so that the spectators are at the cats' eye level. It unconsciously helps to bridge the gap between humans and animals, and communicates a sense of empathy and understanding.

I started *Two Cats, On a Cold Day* with no specific expectations; I felt it was a

great opportunity to explore the blue color family. Most of the piece was done working quickly with suggestive strokes; however, some elements were done with high precision. *MW*

Two Cats, On a Cold Day (pastel on paper, 17x21)

Acrylic

ANGELA BANDURKA

LYNNWOOD, WASHINGTON • ANGELABANDURKA.COM



I knew both great grandmothers on my mother's side, and all of us loved to drink tea from their fine china, of which I've inherited many pieces. *One Lump or Two* centers on a cup with a lovely interior design, the tea warming the temperature of the colors. The red book under the saucer belonged to my great grandfather.

I usually paint still lifes from the actual setup, but for this particular piece I started the drawing and established

color notes, then worked from a photograph while giving a painting demonstration. I prepped my canvas with a thin layer of light molding paste, which creates a lovely texture for the drybrush technique I use to create soft edges. I then applied a layer of clear gesso mixed with liquid acrylic in naphthol red light—a warm red that shines through unpainted or thinly painted areas. As I neared completion of the painting, I loaded a palette knife with paint to soften the areas around my focal point. I embrace the

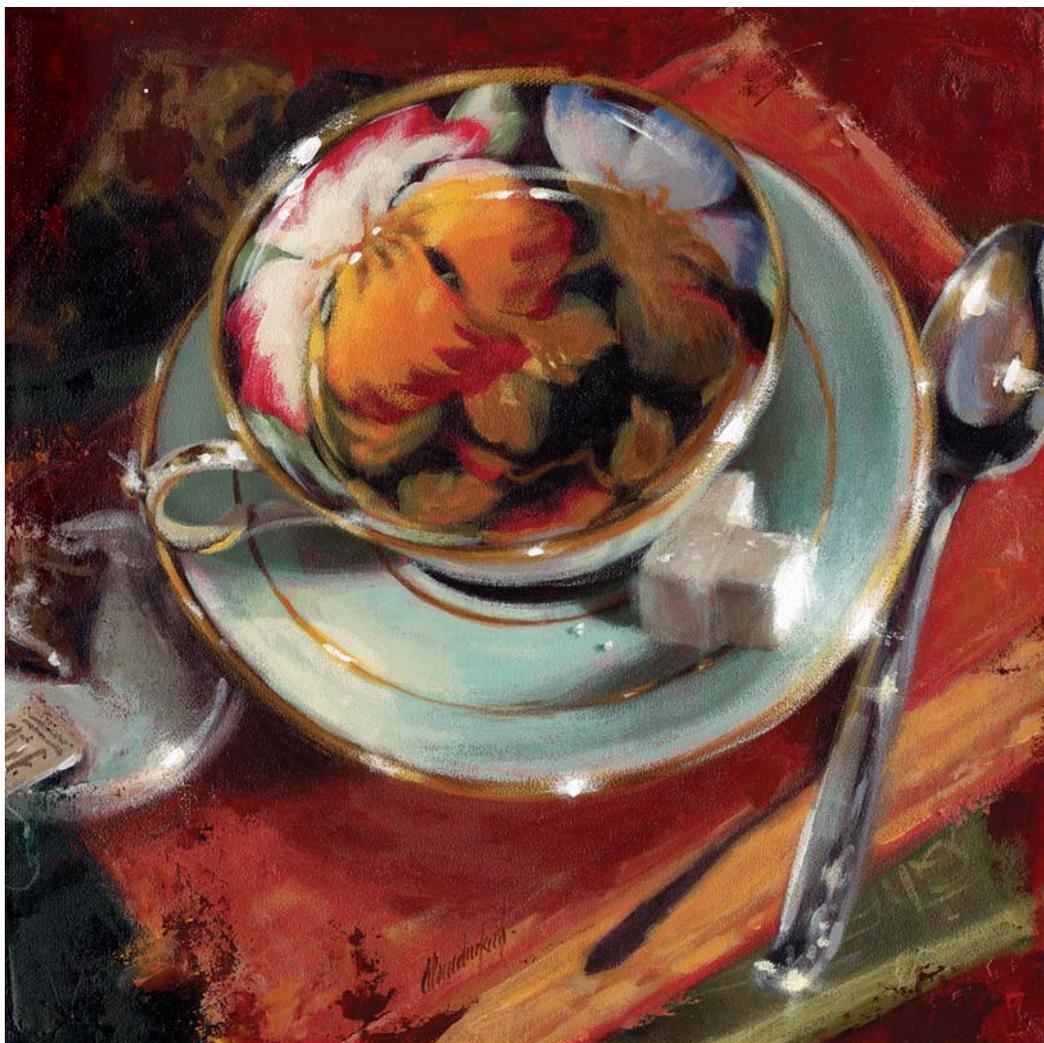
quick-drying properties of acrylics by working in thin layers and avoiding mediums.

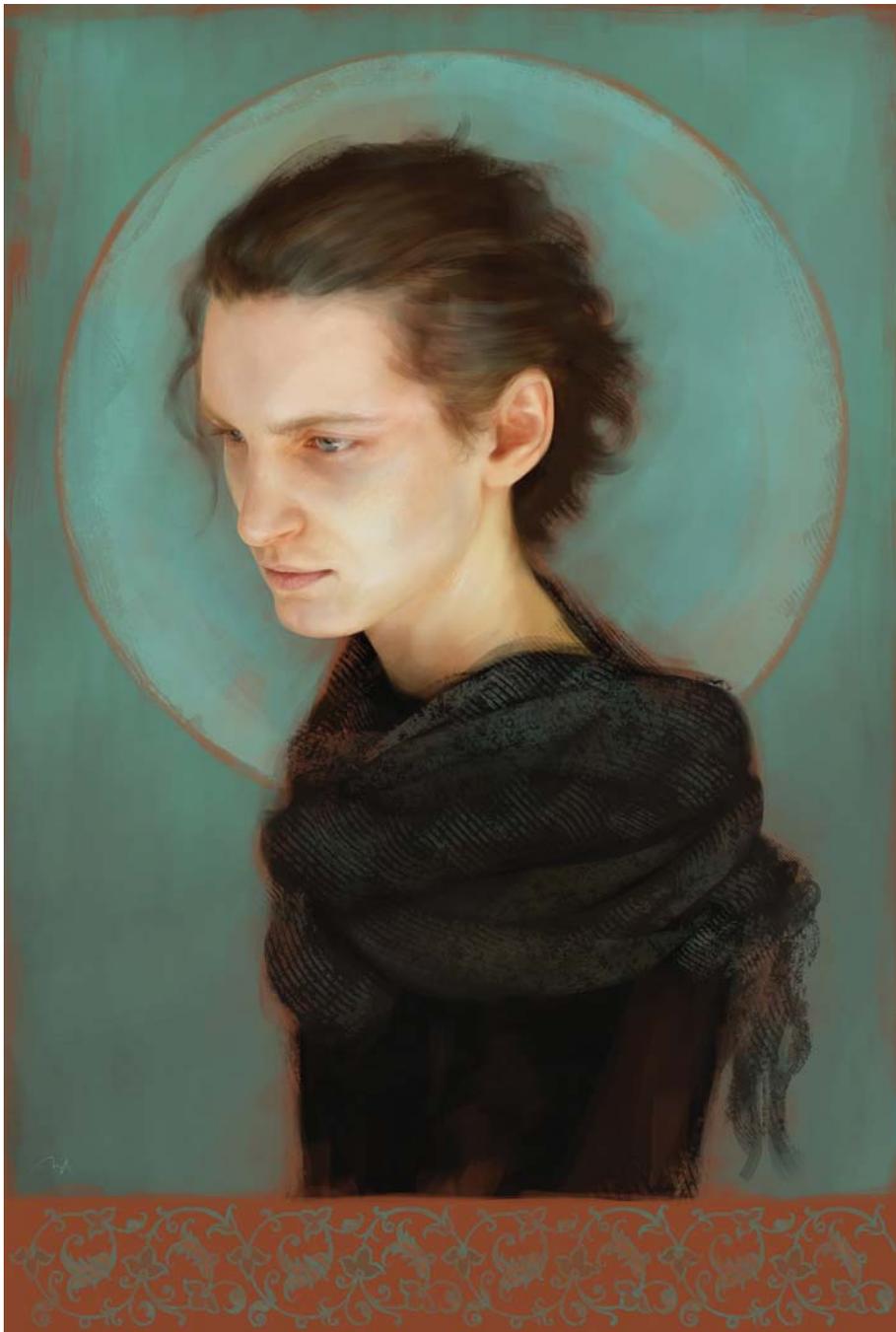
I come from a large, extended family of artists, and so many of my paintings have family memories referenced in them. Although I now generally paint with acrylics, from time to time, I like to use the oil paints my grandmother passed down to me. It's almost as though she's there in the paint, helping me move forward with my art. *HD*

One Lump or Two (acrylic on canvas, 12x12)

Why acrylic? I remember my grandmother saying she'd tried acrylics in the 1960s, but the medium was new and no one would exhibit the work. That—and the fact that a few instructors I admire use acrylics—gave me a challenge. It's now my preferred medium. I love how it dries quickly and layers easily.

FINALISTS:
Lynette Cook
Claire Duncan





Digital

NYKOLAI ALEKSANDER

FLORENCE, ITALY
ADMEMENTO.COM



Arabesque originally looked quite different. The subject had long

hair styled in a feminine manner and was wearing a small octopus on the side of his head as one would wear a stylish hat. I wasn't happy with the way the painting was developing, so I set it aside. One day I decided to strip it of all the things that were supposed to "make" the image: the long hair, the octopus and the background. I overpainted and added random digital brushstrokes, leaving certain areas rough in comparison to the face. With a rake brush I erased bits of the cowl, giving it those distinct stripes where the background colors show through. The nimbus is simply a way of focusing the viewer's attention, and the arabesque pattern at the border gave rise to the painting's name.

My technique for painting digitally is similar to what I use when painting in oils. I may shoot reference photos, but for the painting itself I generally start with a line drawing done directly in Photoshop on a Wacom Intuos Pro tablet. Then I block in the base colors and follow up by refining the different elements. In Photoshop there's no magic button to produce a painting; I work with digital brushes, which have different brush tips, much like traditional brushes. I'm a painter, no matter what medium I choose to work in. **HD** ■

Arabesque (digital)

Why digital? Having had no art education to speak of, the digital approach made learning how to paint less complex; I didn't have to consider surfaces, color mixtures or mediums; I could simply concentrate on painting techniques. Now, however, I work with traditional media as well. Oils are especially fun because working with them comes closest to painting digitally.

FINALISTS:

Nick Byer
Eden Lance

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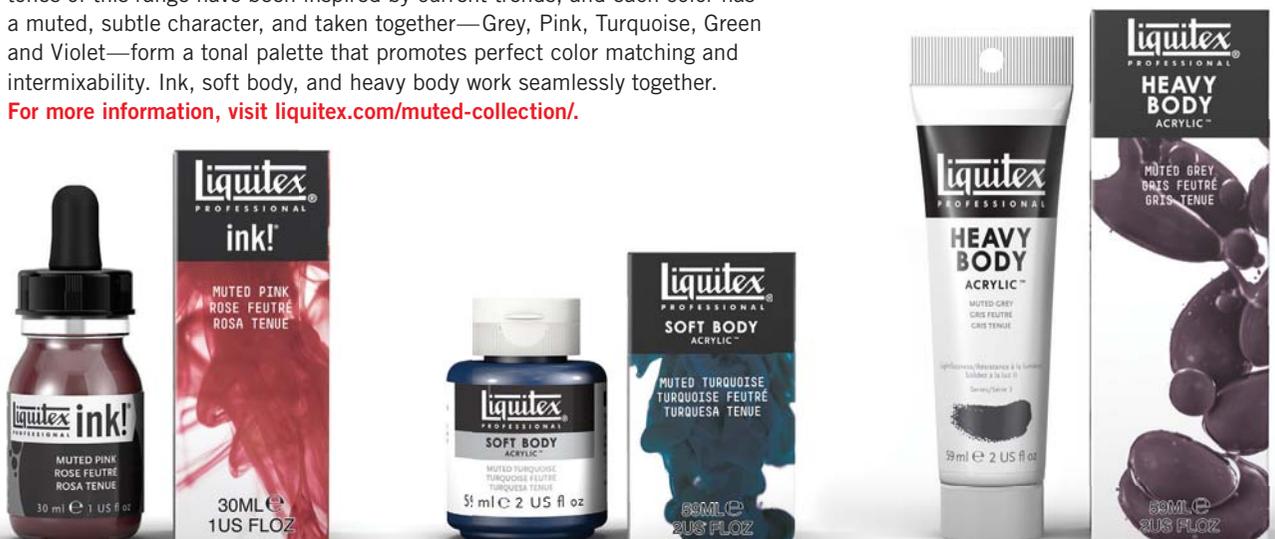
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ROAD TEST

By Ursula Roma

Paper That Doesn't Bleed

Crescent RENDR No Show Thru paper is ideal for the artist who is on the go and for the stay-at-home sketcher who works in multiple media.



ABOVE: RENDR No Show Thru paper accepts multiple layers and applications of media, like markers and acrylics, without bleeding through to the other side.

CRESCENT RECENTLY SENT ME several pads of RENDR No Show Thru Paper to test with different media. The sketchbooks I received had various bindings: a few were hardcover sketchbooks, 5.5x8.5 and 8.5x11, and one was an 11x14 drawing pad. On these surfaces I worked with watercolor, ink, acrylic, markers, and even collage. Crescent also makes spiral-bound books whose pages lie flat—particularly useful when painting



en plein air. Crescent Rendr No Show Thru paper is acid- and lignin-free—very important to artists and illustrators who want their drawings to be archival. Works on this paper will not become yellow and will not disintegrate over time.

Working with Watercolor, Markers, Acrylics & More

The best quality of this paper is that virtually no medium will bleed onto the next page. It's almost miraculous! I piled on tons of watercolor and acrylic, and added designs in marker on top—nothing bled through; I could have even worked on the other side of the paper, if I'd wanted to.

The paper itself is smooth and a dull white. It receives most media quite well, though water-based inks tend to be absorbed into the paper



MATERIALS

Used with **RENR No Show Thru Paper**

Winsor & Newton ink, acrylics, watercolors

Golden acrylics

Liquitex acrylics

Prismacolor color pencils

Luma Brilliant concentrated watercolors

Daler-Rowney FW acrylic artist ink

Copic markers

Pantone markers

OPPOSITE RIGHT: If I applied a wet application of watercolor on a single sheet, the paper curled but that could be remedied by placing the paper under a weight.

LEFT: For this image I used inks, marker, color pencil, metallic markers and fragments of collage (fixed with Aleene's Tacky Glue).

and thus lose some pigment and color intensity. Occasionally, areas of watercolor spread, but that may have been caused by my having too much water on my brush.

Copic markers worked great and didn't dry out! I tried Winsor & Newton inks and watercolors; Liquitex, Golden and Winsor & Newton acrylic paints; Prismacolor color pencil and Pelikan opaque watercolor—all performed well. I had

the best results with Pantone markers and with Daler-Rowney FW Acrylic Artists inks. All the many acrylics I tried worked beautifully. I also loved the way the paper responded when I layered various media.

Purposeful Sketching

RENR No Show Thru sketchbooks are ideal if you are a meticulous sketcher and like to maintain a daily sketchbook that has page after page

of finished art. With the RENDR No Show Thru sketchbook, you won't need to put a piece of cardboard between your pages to prevent bleeding onto the following page. Despite the fact that the RENDR No Show Thru paper is only 110 lbs., it's hardy stock and can take several layers of watercolor, marker and colored pencil and still not bleed onto the consecutive page. And no matter how many layers you apply, the paper will rarely



rip when erased. It seems to me, as an artist rather than a scientist, that the sheets are soaked in something that prevents the full absorption of wet media. There is a slight chemical smell to the freshly opened sketchbook that might be connected to the paper's durability.

RENDER No Show Thru paper is not a watercolor paper per se. As with most lightweight papers, curling happens when very wet media, such as inks and watercolors, are applied. These areas flatten, however, if you apply a weight or stack books on top, once the surface is dry. The quantity of liquid determines the amount of curling, so don't use too much water.

An unexpected effect: when I painted a plaid pattern (above), I found that the paper dented on the

back, so from the front, a relief-like pattern became visible when multiple layers of color were applied.

Artists on the Go

RENDER No Show Thru sketchbooks are great for marker sketches (e.g., as in *Urban Sketchers*). They're perfect for artists who are meticulous about their sketchbooks—artists who get it right the first time. It's also a good paper for design comps—what graphic designers create, as they get close to the final stages of a design project. (The design comp allows the client to approve or reject the design.)

For my own studio work, I have other papers that I prefer to use as single sheets, but I think the RENDER No Show Thru sketchbooks are perfect if you're an artist on the

ABOVE LEFT: Inks and markers blend beautifully but retain the integrity of each mark on RENDER No Show Thru paper.

ABOVE RIGHT: RENDER No Show Thru paper allows you to play with texture and color, while retaining a strong linear design.

go, for there is virtually no waste of paper. You can even use the back of the sheets—that's how clean they remain after the application of color.

Strong & Useful

I think the strength of this paper is its second greatest asset. Multiple layering doesn't degrade the paper; in fact, it seems to strengthen it, even with the application of collage elements. An amazing paper! The more I used RENDER No Show Thru paper, the more I liked it and the more I could see its usefulness and practicality for sketching and journaling. ■

URSULA ROMA is a fine artist, illustrator, sculptor and graphic designer. Visit her website at ursularoma.com.

RENDER NO SHOW THRU SKETCHBOOKS ARE PERFECT IF YOU'RE AN ARTIST ON THE GO, FOR THERE IS VIRTUALLY NO WASTE OF PAPER. —URSULA ROMA

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Cool Zone (25x19) by Glen Maxion

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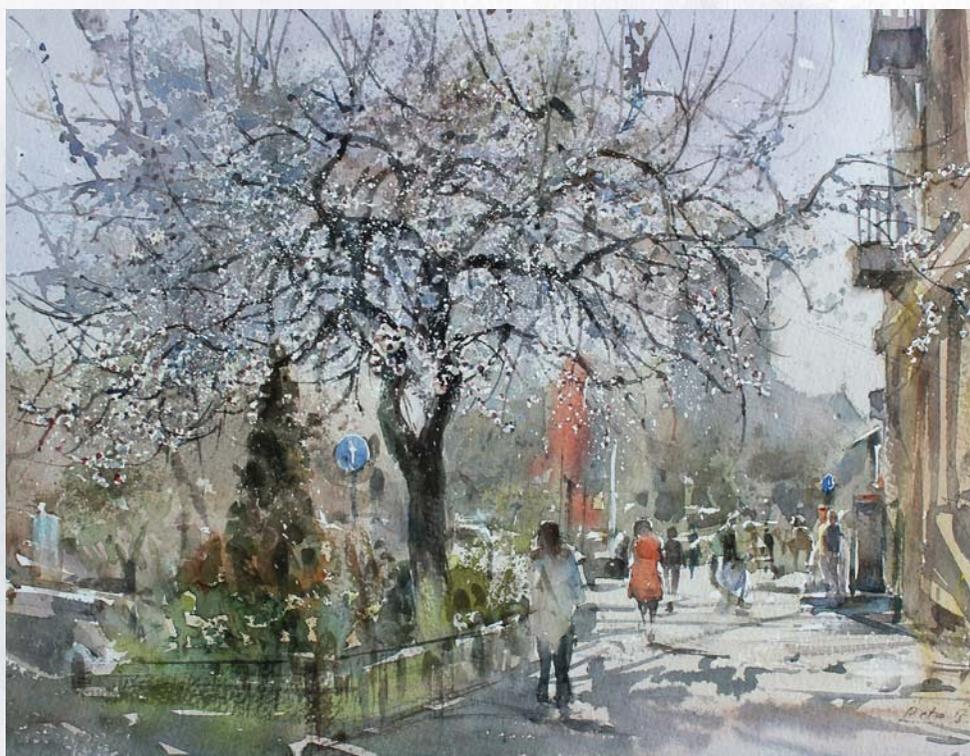
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To the Church (watercolor on paper, 9½x13), Peto Poghosyan, Yerevan, Armenia

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Robbie Laird
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Pastel Society of America. The 45th Annual Open Juried Exhibition: Enduring Brilliance! at the National Arts Club, New York City, September 5-30, 2017. Soft pastels only. More than \$40,000 in awards. Online digital entries only. Download prospectus at www.pastelsocietyofamerica.org or send SASE (#10) to Pastel Society of America, 15 Gramercy Park South, New York, NY 10003. Info 212/533-6931 or psaoffice@pastelsocietyofamerica.org

DEADLINE: JULY 1, 2017
Allied Artists of America celebrates their 103rd Anniversary, 2017 Annual Exhibition, August 31 - September 17, 2017 at the Salmagundi Club. Open to all artists - Oil, Watercolor, Pastel, Graphics, and Sculpture. \$24,000 in cash prizes and medals including a Gold Medal of Honor Award for \$5,000. JPEG entries accepted. Juror of Awards - Lisa Chalif, Curator, Heckscher Museum of Art, Long Island, NY. Exhibition reception, Sunday, September 17, 2017. For Prospectus, send SASE to Rhoda Yanow, 19 Springtown Road, White House Station, NJ, 08889 or visit - alliedartistsofamerica.org

DEADLINE: JULY 15, 2017
Maryland Pastel Society's "Shades of Pastel" 2017 National Juried Exhibition, October 15 - November 17, 2017 at Glenview Mansion Art Gallery in Rockville, MD. Juror: Desmond O'Hagan. More than \$6,500 in cash and merchandise awards. Soft Pastels Only. Members

\$30 for 1 image, \$5/additional image up to 3 total. Non Members \$40 for 1 image, additional \$5/image up to 3 total. To apply, please go to www.onlinejuriedshows.com

DEADLINE: JULY 24, 2017
North East Watercolor Society 41st International Juried Exhibition at Kent, CT: October 15-29, 2017. \$8,500 in Awards. Mel Stabin, AWS, Juror of Awards. \$30/1 entry or \$40/2 entries. Entries by CD or E-mail. For prospectus visit www.northeastws.com. Email request to info@northeastws.com or SASE to NEWS, 866 Cadosia Rd., Hancock, NY 13783, 607/637-3412.

DEADLINE: AUGUST 1, 2017
2017 NorthStar Watermedia National Juried Exhibition. October 2-31, 2017. Minneapolis/St. Paul, MN. \$4,000 minimum in cash and prizes. Entry fee \$35/members, \$45/non-members for up to 3 entries. Watermedia only. Prospectus: NorthStarWatermedia.com or CallforEntry.org. Digital entries at CallforEntry.org

DEADLINE: AUGUST 31, 2017
ViewPoint 49 Cincinnati, OH. Cincinnati Art Club's 49th Annual National Juried Art Exhibition. Over \$6,000 in awards. All traditional 2D media, plus sculpture. Digital entries only. Open M-F at Greenwich Gallery, Cincinnati 10/6-11/3, 2017. Two ways to apply. Visit our website www.cincinnatiartclub.com for complete details.



DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 3, 2017
Little Rock, Arkansas: Arkansas Pastel Society, "Reflections in Pastel" 7th National Competition for Soft and Oil Pastel. November 10, 2017 - February 24, 2018. Christine Ivers, Juror. Over \$2,500 in awards, including \$1,000 grand prize. Digital entries. Prospectus at www.onlinejuriedshows.com

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 3, 2017
Pastel Society of New Hampshire Ninth Annual National Juried Exhibition, October 21 - November 26, 2017 at Discover Portsmouth Center Gallery, Portsmouth, NH. Juror of Selection: Kim Lordier, Juror of Awards: Christine Ivers. Awards: \$5,000+, \$1,000 Best in Show. Members \$35/Non-members \$45, up to 3 entries. Soft pastels only. Online entry. Submit your entries at www.showssubmit.com Prospectus: www.pastelsocietynh.com

DEADLINE: SEPTEMBER 8, 2017
Cape Cod Art Association All New England Open Juried Exhibition & Sale. October 16 - November 12. Submit digital images through <https://client.smarterentry.com/> capecodart before September 8 deadline. Accepted work received by October 16. Reception: 5-7pm Thursday, October 19. Pickup: November 13. Over \$3,000 cash awards. www.CapeCodArtAssoc.org

DEADLINE: OCTOBER 1, 2017
American Artists Professional League's 89th Grand National Exhibition Annual Open Juried Show On Line. Show dates October 9 - December 29, 2017. Open to all artists. Media: Oil & Acrylic (Oil Technique), Water Media & Acrylic (Watercolor Technique), Pastel, Mixed Media & Graphics and Sculpture. Over \$15,000 in awards, medals and merchandise will be given. Submit your entries online at www.americanartistsprofessionalleague.org. The prospectus can be downloaded from the website, or send a SASE to: AAPL, Salmagundi Club, 47 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10003. More Information: Email: office@aaaplinc.org or Tel: 212/645-1345.

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10/2-10/6/17, Huntsville. Brian Bomeisler, Drawing on the Right Side of the Brain.
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Robbie Laird, Director
 530/259-2100 (Pacific Time)

Workshop DVDs

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Wash-n-Dry - Alexis Lavine, NWS
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*of the above artists and Video Clips of
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Registration opens June 15th
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COMPETITION SPOTLIGHT



I WORKED MAINLY WITH SOFT PASTELS before I made *Catarina*. When I decided to try oil paint, I wanted to make something that could help me practice and understand the medium. With this painting, I wanted to use the model's freckles as a challenge in the reproduction of their texture, color and detail.

As I thought about this painting as an exercise, I tried to keep my color palette relatively limited. I used titanium white, cerulean blue, ultramarine blue, cadmium yellow, cadmium red, alizarin crimson and raw umber. I worked from a photo reference.

Whenever I'm struggling to reach a desired result with a project, I take a break from it, in hope that upon returning to it, I will be able to see more clearly the problems I need to work on and to better understand how to approach those problems. ■

LEFT: *Catarina* (oil on canvas, 31½x23⅔)

From my experience, one crucial aspect of the painting process is knowing when to stop and distance yourself from the work.

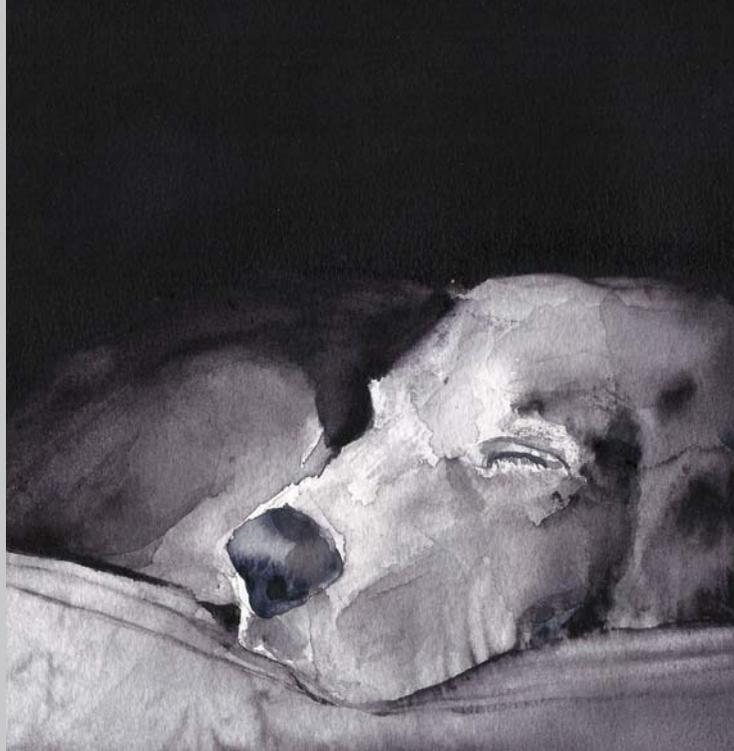


Manuel Rodriguez Almeida

Viana do Castelo, Portugal

COMPETITION SPOTLIGHT ARTISTS ARE CHOSEN FROM *THE ARTIST'S MAGAZINE'S ANNUAL ART COMPETITION FINALISTS*.

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Stickley at Rest, by Janet Evander. Third-place winner,
2016 Shades of Gray Competition

Drawing

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