
June 2011

Reminder: Election for New Board of Directors

Don't forget to vote in the upcoming election for the new Board of Directors of The Art League. Current members are eligible to vote and should have already received an election email. Please download the attached ballot from our website, print it out, and mail it back to The Art League by June 13, 2011. If you have difficulties downloading the ballot, please contact admin@theartleague.org. Paper ballots are also available in The Art League Gallery.

Membership Dues are Due!

All gallery memberships expire June 30. For our new fiscal year, fees in the gallery will increase as follows:

Renewing Members: \$80

New Members: \$95

Bin Gallery Members: \$65 for 2-D artists and \$45 for 3-D and pastel artists.

Entry fees: \$5 per piece

Save time and a stamp and renew online!

June Gallery Exhibit: "Emancipation and Freedom"

This exhibit is part of our Year of Diversity in the Arts. Artists are encouraged to interpret personal meanings of emancipation and freedom and to examine the historical context of these terms. Emancipation is the act of freeing or state of being freed – liberation. It can also be defined as freedom from inhibition and convention. Freedom brings to mind concepts of liberty, independence, autonomy, and self-determination. For inspiration, seek out Jasper Johns' iconic images of the American flag, collage by Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence's depictions of the Great Migration, and Kara Walker's cut-paper silhouettes. With 2011 being the sesquicentennial of the Civil War, this provides artists with an opportunity to consider the importance of freedom as many around the world are fighting for the same rights that we so often take for granted.

Juror, Norm Parish

Parish is the owner of Parish Gallery in Georgetown. He graduated from the Art Institute of Chicago with a BFA in 1988. In 1991 he opened Parish Gallery and has operated in the same location in Canal Square ever since.

Award: The Urquhart Award (\$125) was established in 1975 to honor Eva Marie Urquhart, who served The Art League in many offices, from its early days on Cameron Street through its move to the Torpedo Factory.

Receiving: Monday, June 6, 6:30 – 8:30 pm and Tuesday, June 7, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon.

Reception: Thursday, June 9, 6:30 – 8:00 pm; Awards at 7:30.

Ann Zahn's "The Gravitational Pull of Memory"

Veteran printmaker and world traveler Ann Zahn creates intricate linoleum cuts and lithographs full of depth and vibrancy that serve as a visual record of her life experiences. These prints evoke all of the senses – not just the visual. Using deeply personal symbols and expressive colors, Zahn's prints preserve the memories that, like the force of gravity, "keep us grounded." A solo exhibition of these works will be featured in The Art League Gallery, June 9 – July 5, 2011.

Zahn meets the very physical process of printmaking head-on. She carries linoleum blocks with her around the world so she can sketch on-site. Each block is cut, inked, and pressed by hand. She sometimes creates collages from various prints, layering pieces to create an intricate web of color and line. As a printmaker with more than 30 years of experience, Zahn can work with ten or eleven blocks to create a single print. The result is a composition with incredible depth.

Each of the works featured represents a distinct memory. Whether it's swimming with penguins in the Galapagos, meeting a curious rooster on the beaches of Kauai, or recording scenes from her own fertile gardens, Zahn presents her various adventures through printmaking. These pieces each have their own story to tell, and Zahn's goal is to find a balance between sharing her experiences and allowing viewers to bring their own perspective to her work.

Zahn holds degrees in psychology from Duke University and painting from The American University, and studied printmaking at Montgomery College. Her body of work encompasses a wide range of printmaking techniques: etching, lithography, woodcut, and linoleum cut are well represented. Zahn began the Printmakers Workshop, which is run out of her home studio, in 1977. Her work is included in both private and public collections, including the Corcoran Gallery of Art, the Museum of Modern Art, and the National Museum of American Art.



The Bristlecone Print, Oldest Living Tree

July Exhibits: All-Media Membership Exhibit, Emphasis on Sculpture July 7 – August 1, 2011

Please note the change in receiving days due to the Fourth of July holiday

Receiving – Tuesday, July 5, 6:30 – 8:30 pm and Wednesday, July 6, 10:00 am – 12:00 noon

Juror: Twylene Moyer. Moyer is an author and the Managing Editor of Sculpture Magazine, which is an international monthly publication dedicated to all forms of contemporary sculpture.

Award: The Larry Kirstein Award (\$125) is given in honor of Art League student and supporter, Larry Kirstein – an artist, art appreciator, and collector. Larry was a philanthropist in many ways and active in local charities. His career began in residential planning, then he moved to clinical therapy, and then he later found his voice in art.

Opening Reception: Thursday, July 14, 6:30 – 8:00 pm; Awards at 7:30 pm.

Solo Exhibit: "Prints In Pieces: Images of South County" by Frances Borchardt

Frances Borchardt documents the people and places of South County, Maryland in a unique format - using antique type block trays, Borchardt divides her photographs into the compartments to create intriguing patterns in a noteworthy arrangement.

Upcoming Exhibits

Make sure to plan ahead! Here's what's coming up later this summer and this fall:

August: 'Scapes – our annual landscape exhibit. **Juror:** Sarah Tanquy of ART in Embassies and an independent curator.

September: All-Media Membership Exhibit. **Juror:** Barbara Wolanin, curator of the Capitol.

October: Two Exhibits: All-Media Membership Exhibit AND Altars, Icons and Reliquaries. **Jurors:** TBA.



by Jill Banks, Best in Show: 2010 'Scapes Exhibit

Bin Gallery Orientation for New and Returning Members

Orientation Sessions:

Thursday, June 23, 6:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Friday, June 24, 5:00 – 6:00 pm

If you have been juried into at least three shows since July 1, 2010, you are eligible for Bin Gallery membership. Annual dues for Bin Gallery membership are \$65 for all two-dimensional artists. Dues for three-dimensional artists and pastel artists (those who cannot display work in the bins) are \$45. Bin dues are in addition to your yearly \$80 gallery membership. You must pay your \$80 gallery membership dues in order to be a Bin Gallery member. Both fees can be paid at the same time, either in person or online.

An e-mail or letter will be sent in mid-June to all those who are eligible for the Bin Gallery in the FY2011. All eligible members who want to join the bins must attend an orientation meeting. If you've been a member previously, attendance is not required but highly recommended. You can learn about the changes for 2011-2012, including how to take advantage of our new online bin gallery.

Visit our website to download the Bin Gallery packet.

Board of Directors Guiding Policy

The Art League Board just finished a two-day retreat to consider the direction the organization will be taking in the coming years, and to determine how the Board may best be involved to help the organization reach these future goals. The May Tidings had a wonderful article about the fact that we are seeking a permanent school space and are looking for ways to continue all our wonderful services. The current and future Board considered many options and adopted the following as its guiding policy:

"To effectively manage expenses, increase efficiencies, where possible, and actively develop current and untapped resources, with the overall goal of sustainability."

As we move forward, we hope you will continue to support The Art League during our annual Benefactor Campaign, and continue to stay active by joining classes, attending events, entering exhibits, shopping at our store, volunteering, and inviting your friends and family to do the same.

Thanks again for all your generosity and support – especially during the recent Spring2ACTion campaign!

Sincerely,

Betsy Anderson
Art League Board President

The Art League Wins \$2,500 Grant During Spring2ACTion!

Thanks to an outpouring of generosity from our many artists, students, and supporters, The Art League leapt to second place on the leaderboard during Alexandria's Spring2ACTion campaign and won a \$2,500 grant! We ended the event with 159 donors and raised \$5,975 in addition to the \$2,500 grant we received. A BIG thank you goes out to everyone who donated during the 44 hour online event from May 5-7! You had the power to make this happen and you did - thank you!!



Spring2ACTion was a 3-day innovative online community-wide fundraising event designed to inspire unprecedented levels of charitable giving in Alexandria. Every donation gave your favorite organization the chance to win even more money through matching donations and prizes. Spring2ACTion is transforming Alexandria philanthropy into a massive grassroots effort. This event was an initiative of ACT (Alexandria Community Trust) and ACTION Alexandria.

Opportunities for Members

Waterfront Activation

To help enliven the Alexandria Waterfront, The Art League and other local organizations including the Seaport Foundation, Alexandria Archeology, and the Torpedo Factory Artists Association will be providing monthly activation activities on Sundays throughout the summer. Visit the City Marina and enjoy the fun!

The Art League will be featured on the first Sunday of every month:

Sunday, June 5, 1:00-3:00 pm – Patrick Kirwin will conduct an activity for kids using stencils, iridescent and day glow paints, and various textures. Adults can join in the fun, too!

Sunday, July 3 & Sunday, August 7 – The Art League Plein Air Painters – If you are interested in participating, please contact Jean Schwartz: jksland@cox.net.

Exhibition Opportunities

Our blog is constantly updated with local and out-of-the-area exhibition opportunities for artists. Please visit frequently to stay in the loop, theartleaguegallery.blogspot.com.

Our Blog!

We're posting all sorts of fun stuff on our blog, including a series of instructor video demos. If you're not following along, you're missing out! Please follow along and see what we're up to, theartleaguegallery.blogspot.com.

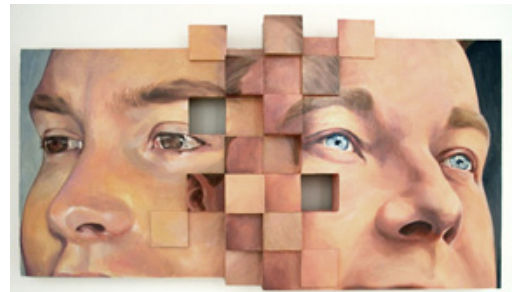
School News

Summer Registration!

Don't miss out on an opportunity to sharpen your skills or try out a new medium this summer! Summer programming begins the week of June 27, and many abbreviated classes are offered to accommodate people's travel schedules. Check out our offerings and register online.

June Workshops

Can't commit to a class for the summer? Try a workshop! Most are only two days long, perfect to squeeze into busy travel schedules!



by Matthew Cuenca

Introduction to Kiln-formed Glass with Judith Conway, June 4 & 5

Advanced Monotype with Penny Barringer, June 13-17

Quick Portrait Painting with Matthew Cuenca, June 14

Shape Painting in Watercolor with Peter Ulrich, June 15 & 16

Alternative Photo Process with Alison Duvall & Pete Duvall, June 18 & 19

Sketchbook Workshop with Avis Fleming, June 18 & 19

Painting the Seasons in Watercolor with Susan Herron, June 18 & 19

Perspective Drawing with Patrick Kirwin, June 18 & 19

Landscape from Photos with Kurt Schwarz, June 18 & 19

The Ins and Outs of Anatomy with Nick Xhiku, June 18 & 19

Basic Matting and Framing with Eileen Yeager & Ron Yeager, June 18 & 19

Making Space – Perspective in Watercolor with Gwen Bragg, June 20 & 21

Clay Animation Movie Camp (ages 8-15) with Andrew Morgan, June 20-23

Loosen Up with Abstracts with Marsha Staiger, June 20-24

Jumpstart in Ceramics with Blair Meerfeld, June 25

Exploring Surface Design: Open Studio with Julie Booth, June 25 & 26

Jumpstart in Wood Engraving with Rosemary Feit Covey, June 25 & 26

tidings, June 2011

Exploring Photoshop with Libby Cullen, June 25 & 26
Portrait Sculpture Workshop with Charles Flickinger, June 25 & 26
Landscape Painting Techniques: Trees & Plants with Patrick Kirwin, June 25 & 26
Finding Your Visual Language with Rosemary Lockett, June 25 & 26
Portrait Photography with Robin Reid, June 25 & 26
Gestural Florals with Jackie Saunders, June 25 & 26
Gesturing the Figure in Oil with Priscilla Treacy, June 25 & 26

Art Camp Internships Available

As the school gears up for a big summer season, we will be interviewing intern candidates for our summer camps. Summer-long internships for college credit are also available. High energy is a must! For details please contact our Art Camp Coordinator, Ali Wunder Procopio, in the school office: 703-683-2323, aliw@theartleague.org.

SOHO Graduation, June 2!



Please join us as we celebrate the graduation of our 2011 SOHO girls on Thursday, June 2 at 5:30 pm in the Torpedo Factory Art Center. The event will feature an art exhibit and the before-and-after room renovation video! Check out our YouTube page (youtube.com/theartleague) to see the wonderful room renovations from the past few years.

Our award-winning "Space of Her Own" (SOHO) outreach program engages at-risk, low-income, 5th-grade girls in a year of personal growth centered on art. This collaboration with the Alexandria Court Service Unit pairs each girl with an adult, female mentor to participate in art lessons led by Art League artist instructors. Each week, girls and mentors work together to create expressive artwork. These sessions become the catalyst to discuss larger life concerns, decision-making, and emotional issues. At the completion of the program, the teams remodel each of the girls' bedrooms, incorporating all of their artwork, to truly give each girl a "space of her own."

Travel to Barcelona this Fall!

Barcelona, Spain Museum exploration/sketching with Jim Burford October 2 - 10, 2011

Considered to be Spain's most cosmopolitan city, Barcelona is an art lover's dream. It's Old Town Centre contains the greatest concentration of Gothic Architecture in all of Europe, with many preserved as World Heritage Sites. Many museums of ancient and contemporary art are also located here. We will explore and sketch in some of the best locations in Barcelona including, the Fundacio Joan Miro, the famed Picasso Museum, Guell Parc and La Sagrada Familia designed by Antoni Gaudi, and the Dali museum in Fuentes. Named by National Geographic as one of the best beach cities, Barcelona's scenic coast boasts almost three miles of spectacular waterfront and sunshine.

\$1,975 per person, double occupancy. Limited single rooms available for an additional \$325.



For more information and to register, please contact: Margaret Cerutti, margaretc@theartleague.org, 703-683-1780 x13

Which Piece of Art is "Better?" by Bill Doying

How do we judge the quality of art, our own work or that of others? How should we? At what points, for what purposes, are we justified in reaching such judgments?

Just so I don't disappoint anyone, let me admit that this mini-essay won't provide answers to these rather ambitious questions. At least I don't think it will, though I haven't actually written it yet. Let's say I'll be satisfied if I can raise some additional questions.

I'll start on what I think is firm common ground, but will leave it fairly quickly: It seems entirely legitimate to judge a work of art on the basis of the artist's demonstrated competence in his/her chosen medium. But I would suggest that the non-practitioner, the observer who has done little or no actual work in the medium in question, is on very shaky ground in evaluating such competence. I say this as (primarily) a watercolorist, and relying in part on what many oil painters have said about the singular difficulties of watercolor – but think about it, whatever your medium: All media offer an endless path to full technical mastery, which is a large part of what keeps us interested, coming back for more. We would never take instruction in that medium from someone who didn't work in it; just the suggestion seems ridiculous. Why, then, submit our work to be judged by such a person?

I raise this issue reluctantly, recalling that the first juror perceptive enough to admit one of my pieces to a League show, while she carried curatorial credentials from an eminent institution, confessed that she herself did not work in any art medium. And of course more broadly, our all-media shows are necessarily juried by those without working experience in some – even many – of the media involved. If the problem can't be avoided, though, we can at least take comfort in considering it when we're rejected!

But what about evaluative criteria beyond technical competence? Most jurors and critics purport to evaluate someone else's art based on what he/she (critic) thinks the artist was trying to do, and what choice they made of subject matter or approach (for example, realism vs. various degrees and kinds of abstraction), and whether these were "good" choices. Suppose, generously, that the critic correctly identifies the artist's intent? On what basis does he/she go on to conclude whether it was a worthy one, or as worthy as that of the artist whose work hangs in the space adjacent? Does such criticism have any more claim to objective force than the assertion that it is wrong to like – or despise – chocolate, warm weather, flipflops, sky-diving, or classical music? Can anyone legitimately say, of such choices, anything more compelling than "it's not to my taste"?

Let me veer away from the edge of the abyss – the suggestion of the illegitimacy of most art criticism – for the moment, and discuss a particular case of such criticism: the issue of painting which seeks extreme realism versus looser, freer, more personally expressive work.

One of my teachers whom I hold in great respect seems to characterize photo-realism, or the attempt to achieve it, as essentially a waste of time in a photographic age. The case for this view is very easy to understand, conforms to a somewhat romantic view of the artist as independent soul, and is seemingly echoed by most jurors and critics, who try to identify what of him/herself the artist has put in the work.

And yet . . . who of us has not had the experience of encountering a painting or drawing that takes our breath away with its sheer technical mastery – and the relentless work it demonstrates – in portraying reality with our more-or-less clumsy media? Should we value this less than the work that captures the impression (to borrow a word) of a moment of reality with a few deft brushstrokes – at whatever level of abstraction?

When we speak of the worth of a painting (here not referring directly to market value, a mare's nest for another day), are we clear whether we are speaking of its value to the artist in terms of personal achievement and resonance with life experience? Or do we mean to measure the worth to the viewer who encounters it for the first time, probably in the context of a vastly different life underlay? Does worth inhere in the image alone, or should it include what we know or think we know of the artist's life and body of work? Thus, if we are shown a scribble and told that it is a Picasso, has it suddenly acquired merit it lacked a moment before? Do we, in other words, need to be reassured that the artist has demonstrated mastery elsewhere that is not shown in the work before us? (Is this the flip side of the cliché response to "modern" art: "my kindergarten kid could do better"?)

What about the role of "meaning" in evaluating art: the effort by critics and essayists to attribute to the artist an intent that may well be entirely alien to the process by which the work was actually created? Isn't it enough that we enjoy, are even inspired by, a work of art? Do we really need to import gravitas to the role of critic by indulging him/her in this sort of

invention? Surely there have been eras and schools of painting or sculpture that clearly and consciously invoked allegory, often with a heavy hand; but to universalize this mode of dealing with art, particularly more contemporary work, seems to suffer from systematic failure of proof – though the artist may be too ready to indulge it if it keeps the critics coming. ("Any publicity is good, as long as they spell my name right!")

What about novelty as a value in art? In modern critical circles this element seems to be deemed essential for work to be accorded "serious" regard. Beyond the obvious limitation that it is a wasting asset, I respond happily to the cynical observation of the late novelist Wilfrid Sheed, that if a critic chases after "the new thing, he will only get it wrong and wind up praising the latest charlatans, the floozies of the New."

I hope you've found these thoughts stimulating, or at least annoying. Keep on creating as long as it gives you satisfaction!

Bill Doying
Art League Board Member at Large

May Juror's Dialogue and Awards

May 2011 All-Media Exhibit Juried by Lillian Fitzgerald

Art consultant and curator Lillian Fitzgerald is no stranger to The Art League Gallery. As a frequent visitor, patron, and past juror, she is well aware of the high-caliber of artwork one can find within our walls. "The Art League offers a wonderful opportunity for artists – it's one of the few places they can go to participate in a monthly, juried exhibit no matter what their professional level. The organization has had a great impact on the careers of a number of artists. As a curator, I have turned to The Art League Gallery to find artists for my exhibits, and am happy to have given a number of artists their first solo shows. I have also found the Art League a great resource when purchasing artwork for my clients' permanent collections. This is a wonderful venue," Fitzgerald stated.



"Blinkers" by Pete McCutchen

When jurying an exhibit, Fitzgerald seeks to select work with a high level of craftsmanship. "An artist needs to be technically articulate for their idea to communicate successfully." She's also looking for originality and an artist who speaks with a unique voice. [Click here to read the full article.](#)

Award Winners

The Amelia T. Clemente Family Award: Pete McCutchen

Second Place: Susan O'Neill

Honorable Mention: Neyla Arnas, Meryl Silver, Marsha Staiger, Ann Zahn

2010–2011 Board of Directors

President: Betsy Anderson

First Vice President: Nancy Pane Fortwengler

Second Vice President: Jane McElvany Coonce

Recording Secretary: Betsy LeBleu Curry

Treasurer: Ellen Fishbein

Members-at-Large: Emile "Duke" DePlanque, William Doying, Maggie Garten, Diane Tesler, Patsie Uchello, Elizabeth Weathers, Edward Yawn

Advisory Committee:

Charles K. Collum, Jr., Val P. Hawkins, Patricia Hertzberg, Timothy McEvoy, Cora J. Rupp, Beth Temple, Marian Van Landingham.

theartleague

105 North Union Street
Alexandria, VA 22314
www.theartleague.org
gallery: 703-683-1780
school: 703-683-2323
store: 703-548-8127
development: 703-519-1741

Calendar

June 2011

June 2/Thursday, 5:30 pm: SOHO Graduation in the Torpedo Factory Art Center.
June 6/Monday, 6:30-8:30 pm: Receiving for "*Emancipation and Freedom*" and Bin Gallery.
June 7/Tuesday, 10:00 am-12:00 noon: Receiving continues.
June 7/Tuesday, 6:30-7:30 pm: Early pick up of unselected works.
June 9/Thursday, 6:30-8:00 pm: Opening Reception for "*Emancipation and Freedom*" and Ann Zahn's solo exhibit, "*The Gravitational Pull of Memory*." Awards presented at 7:30 pm.
June 16/Thursday, 4:00 pm: Annual meeting in the gallery.
June 20/Monday: Summer Art Camp begins.
June 23/Thursday, 6:00-7:00: Bin Gallery Orientation.
June 24/Friday, 5:00-6:00: Bin Gallery Orientation.
June 27/Monday: Summer term begins.

July 2011

July 4/Monday: CLOSED for Fourth of July Holiday.
July 5/Tuesday, 6:30-8:30 pm: Receiving for *All-Media Exhibit with an Emphasis on Sculpture* and Bin Gallery.
July 6/Wednesday, 10:00 am-12:00 noon: Receiving continues.
July 6/Wednesday, 6:30-7:30 pm: Early pick up of unselected works.
July 7/Thursday: "*Prints In Pieces: Images of South County*" by Frances Borchardt opens.
July 14/Thursday, 6:30-8:00 pm: Opening reception for July exhibits. Awards presented at 7:30 pm.