



OIL PAINTERS of AMERICA®

Dedicated to the Preservation of Representational Art

Brushstrokes

volume 24 issue 4

WINTER
2013

WESTERN REGIONAL SHOW WELL WORTH ATTENDING

Oil Painters of America was excited to return to SouthWind Art Gallery, considered one of the best art galleries in NE Kansas, if not the Midwest. Unassuming from the outside, the gallery is a hidden gem housing top artists from across the country, including a number of nationally recognized artists from Kansas. As gallery owner Gary Blitsch so aptly explains, "People are usually 'wowed' when they step into our gallery and see the level of artistic talent we attract." Over the years, Gary has been and continues to be a driving force in Topeka's commitment to transform itself into an exciting and vibrant art community.



"Early Morning Beside Rio Maddalena, Venice" by Charles Iarrobino won the Gold Medal in the Associate and Signature Division

This year's Western Regional Exhibition certainly was a step in the right direction. The quality of the exhibition was at its best, featuring 100 artists from across the western half of the U.S. Collectors took notice and sales were strong – including one collector who walked away with 5 paintings!

The opening reception on Friday evening was crowded and there was a sense of great anticipation leading up to the awards ceremony. It was an honor to have



The Silver Medal was awarded to Dan Robinson for his painting "Afternoon Theater"



"An Aura of Fragrances" by Bryce Cameron Liston OPA won the Bronze Medal

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Western Regional Show con't.

the Mayor of Topeka, Larry Wolgast, on hand to present OPA Vice-President Ken Cadwallader OPA with a proclamation recognizing September 6, 2013 as the Oil Painters of America Western Regional Exhibition Day in Topeka.

A wide variety of painting styles took home awards. In the Associate/Signature Division, the Gold Medal winner was Charles Iarrobino for his painting "Early Morning Beside Rio Maddalena, Venice". Taking a calculated risk by breaking from his usual western subject matter proved beneficial for Craig Tennant OPAM who took home the Gold Medal in the Master Signature Division for his painting, "Hawk".

In addition to the opening reception, OPA members were invited to participate in a 3-day workshop offered by Master Signature artist and Juror of Awards Ned Mueller. A consummate professional, Mr. Mueller is highly regarded for his exceptional teaching skills. Artists

who were not able to attend his workshop had another chance to watch Mr. Mueller demonstrate on Saturday morning. His ability to engage with his audience and provide insight into his method of painting made it a worthwhile event.

Saturday afternoon OPA members watched as OPA Vice-President and Signature member Ken Cadwallader demonstrated his painting expertise. His stylistic approach to painting is markedly different than Mr. Muellers, but no-less effective. Mr. Cadwallader's ability to convey the key points to his painting approach, coupled with his dry sense of humor made for an enjoyable and informative afternoon.

A huge thanks to SouthWind Gallery owner Gary Blitsch and his staff for all of their hard work and preparation for this year's Western Regional Exhibition.

Finally, congratulations to all of the artists who exhibited! Your paintings serve as a wonderful source of inspiration for artists and collectors alike.

A complete list of the 2013 Western Region Exhibition winners follows:

Gold Medal: Charles Iarrobino for "Early Morning Beside Rio Maddalena, Venice" - \$4,000 funded by OPA

Silver Medal: Dan Robinson for "Afternoon Theatre" - \$1,000 funded by OPA

Bronze Medal: Bryce Cameron Liston OPA for "An Aura of Fragrances" - \$1,000 funded by OPA

Award of Excellence: Olga Krimon for "Orchid on Japanese Chair" - award valued at \$3,100 funded by American Art Collector Magazine

Award of Excellence: Stacey Peterson for "Finally Spring" - award valued at \$2,000 funded by Plein Air Magazine

Award of Excellence: Annie over for "Cell Connection" - \$500 funded by OPA

Award of Excellence: Tim Perkins for "Asian Green with Persian" - \$500 funded by OPA

Award of Excellence: Michelle Usibelli for "Summer Day" - \$500 funded by OPA

Award of Excellence: Judy Crowe for "China and Primroses" - \$500 funded by OPA

Gold Medal – Master Signature Division: Craig Tennant OPAM for "Hawk" - \$3,500 funded by OPA.



"Finally Spring" by Stacey Peterson won an Award of Excellence



Olga Krimon won an Award of Excellence for "Orchid on Japanese Chair"

Western Regional Exhibition Sidebar

Whether it was good luck or planned serendipity that SouthWind Art Gallery owner Gary Blitsch decided to take Ken Cadwallader OPA and Ned Mueller OPAM for a tour of the Kansas State Capitol Building at lunch-time we will never know. No matter, the out-of-town guests were in for a treat as Kansas Governor Sam Brownback strolled across the rotunda, Sonic bag in hand!

Having met the Governor on multiple occasions, Gary quickly flagged the Governor down and made the introductions. Governor Brownback graciously invited the three gentlemen for a tour of his office, which features a number of paintings by well known Linsborg, Kansas artist Birger Sandzen. Another highlight of the tour included seeing several murals painted by famous Kansas artist John Steuart Curry, who unfortunately met with some opposition to his paintings at the time and therefore refused to sign and complete all of the murals that he had been commissioned to paint. What an unexpected, yet enjoyable, meeting.



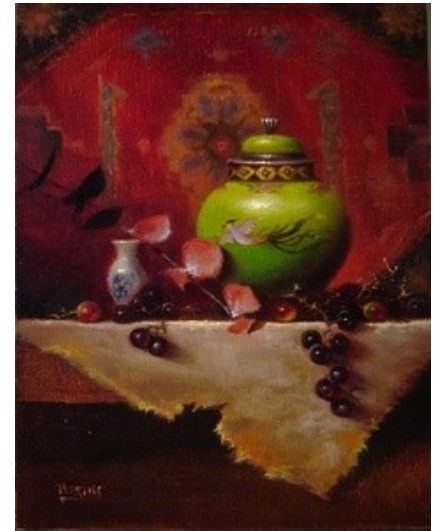
"Summer Day" painted by Michele Usibelli won an Award of Excellence



An Award of Excellence was won by Judy Crowe for "China and Primroses"



An Award of Excellence was given to Annie Dover for "Cell Connection"



Tim Perkins "Asian Green with Persian" won an Award of Excellence



Artists, collectors and friends viewed the fantastic works at the SouthWind Gallery



Juror of Awards Ned Mueller OPAM, Southwind Art Gallery owner Gary Blitsch, OPA Executive Director Kathryn Beligratis and Mayor of Topeka, Kansas Larry Wolgast

JUROR OF AWARDS STATEMENT

By Ned Mueller OPAM



I have juried quite a few shows in my many years as an artist and it is always an honor to be asked. But it is always agonizing and I wonder why I keep telling people that I would be glad to do it. This Western Regional Show in Topeka was especially tough as there were so many high quality works of Art in the show. I could only give 10 awards and there were at least 25 to 30 paintings that I could have given awards. But I had to cut it down and that is very agonizing and makes one think of what makes that difference in making the final decision.

When I am an award judge I look to find paintings that are well executed with good and somewhat unique concepts or ideas. I am not really looking at subject matter as much as I am looking for a great work of Art...and I will beg off in trying to explain what a great work of Art is...that could take a long time to explain and everyone will certainly have different ideas. I try and keep as open mind as I can as to style and method. In all my years of jurying I have given awards to classical, traditional, impressionistic and abstract paintings and sculptures. As I have said, quality and concept and what someone has to say and how they say it are big factors in whatever style or medium it is done in. All that being said and trying to be as objective as one can be, realistically if a judge is honest I think they would have to say eventually their personal tastes and prejudices will enter into the equation. As most of us know a different judge could pick ten totally different paintings and sometimes some of the same. It is certainly not a perfect system and not fair...but then what is. When it comes to this kind of exercise I feel that all of the work I picked was of a high quality and whether one agrees with the ideas and concepts I chose is certainly open to argument. I want to congratulate all those who got picked for the show. It is a fine show indeed and another panel of judges made those choices of what to include in the show.

I encourage everyone to enter juried shows at whatever level they are comfortable with and put your best paintings forward as the competition is usually quite tough. I might add that I often tell my students that they might consider what they submit to most galleries as opposed to what they submit to juried shows. It certainly is not always true of all galleries but most paintings sold in galleries are to a general taste (hope I am not getting in too deep here) and that paintings sent in to a juried show could generally be more creative and unique, as most judges I think, have seen it all and are looking for something fresh and different! Granted, it seems like everything has been tried or said... but not necessarily in your own style or certain twist that you might give. I had a great time at the show, seeing some old friends and making a bunch of new ones. Kathryn, Ken and Gary Blitsch and his gallery crew did an exceptional job and my hat is off to everyone who makes these shows so successful.



Southwind Art Gallery owner Gary Blitsch posed for Ned Mueller OPAM's demo



OPA members and guests take time out for a photo op with Juror of Awards Ned Mueller OPAM



Ken Cadwallader OPA explains his technique during his painting demonstration



MEET THE ASSOCIATE/SIGNATURE GOLD MEDAL WINNER CHARLES IARROBINO

Born in Annapolis, Maryland in 1952, Charles studied painting and printmaking at Virginia Commonwealth University and Syracuse University; graduating with a BFA in Painting and Printmaking. A member of The American Impressionists Society and Oil Painters of America, over the past three decades he has had numerous one-man shows on the East Coast as well as in his adopted state of New Mexico.

A lifelong fascination with color expressed itself initially in abstract painting, but since moving to northern New Mexico the brilliant high desert light dictated a change in the direction of his painting. Years of attempting to capture aspects

of that light resulted in an artistic output dominated by landscapes, street scenes and gardens. Numerous visits to France and his ancestral home, Italy, have provided an opportunity to explore water subjects, such as the canals of Venice and have provoked a growing interest in human interaction, as can be seen in his numerous paintings of open air markets.

“I favor a painterly approach to the handling of the materials whereby a recognizable illusion is achieved, while at the same time the paint itself is celebrated and brushstrokes are not only visible, but are intrinsic to the success of the image. The completed painting should be a world unto itself, analogous to nature, but by no means its slave.”

Santa Fe has been his home since 1981. He lives there, very happily, with the light of his life, Melissa, and their eventual dog and cat, who are, as of this date, unnamed.

ENJOYABLE TIMES SHARED AT THE 2013 PAINT OUTS

The Ringwood State Park, located in Ringwood, New Jersey was the location of this year's **New Jersey Paint Out** held on Saturday, October 5. The weather was sunny, but cool. With over 4000 acres of land, containing the state botanical garden and Ringwood Manor country home, the location offered a variety of scenery to be painted. One artist even drove from New York to participate in the event.



Bonnie McGown



Ramona Dooley



Edwin Abreu



Lisa and Nancy Quatrocchi

MEET THE MASTER SIGNATURE GOLD MEDAL WINNER CRAIG TENNANT

Craig Tennant grew up in New Jersey and began his early art training with Grey Advertising in New York. Starting in the mat room, he quickly moved to mechanicals then was made the Assistant Art Director for the Kool Aid account.

He later joined the staff of illustrators at BBD&O working on major accounts including Cambell's Soup and Dodge Chrysler for national television ads. His magazine ad accounts consisted of Tarreyton, GE, Shaffer and Pepsi (Generation).

For the next twenty years, Tennant illustrated on a freelance basis for clients including TV Guide, Mechanics Illustrated, Sports Illustrated, yearly Reports, Field & Stream, Diet Coke, Mountain Dew, Old Milwaukee, and IBM. He was elected a member of the New York Society of Illustrators in 1980 and received their Silver Medal Award in 1981.

In 1989, Tennant moved to Colorado to focus on western oil paintings. He started his own publishing business, Cheyenne Press, in 1994, to promote his work. The same year, he was voted 21st in the nation's top print artists (by a U.S. Art Magazine survey of over 850 galleries nationwide). Tennant was commissioned by the Park Meadows Shopping Resort to paint a Colorado scene for the Nordstrom entrance.



The Gold Medal in the Master Signature division was won by Craig Tennant OPAM for "Hawk"

His work has appeared on the covers of *Western Lifestyles*, *Wild West*, *The Equine Image*, *Rocky Mountain Rider*, *Colorado Country Life*, *Muzzleloader* and *Beef* magazines. He has been the subject of additional feature articles in *Western Horseman*, *Art of the West*, *Western Lifestyles*, *Southwest Art*, *American Cowboy*, *US Art*, *InformArt* and others.

Four of his Native American paintings are shown in Crabtree Publishing's *Native Nationals of North America* series of children's books published in 2001.

MORE 2013 PAINT OUT PHOTOS



The **West Palm Beach, Florida Paint Out** was held on November 9 at the Grassy Waters Preserve. This 23 sq. mile ecosystem offered wetlands, tree islands and forested hammocks as well as a great variety of wildlife, ranging from birds to otter, bobcat and alligators, to paint. About 15 hearty artists braved the weather and everyone went home with soft grey day paintings, which was a pleasant relief from Florida's sometimes overly sunny days.

ZHIWEI TU OPAM HONORED WITH LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD AT OPENING OF ZHIWEI TU ART MUSEUM, CHINA

High on the banks of the Wengyuan River in Guangdong province, China sits the impressive Zhiwei Tu Art Museum, which began construction in 2007 and officially opened its doors to the public on October 29th, 2013.



Over five hundred people attended the opening ceremony which was held outdoors on the sweeping entrance to this magnificent structure. Following speeches given by a number of government officials, the ceremony culminated with the presentation of a *Lifetime Achievement Award* dedicated to Zhiwei Tu OPAM for his contribution to the world of art.

This award is the first of its kind bestowed to an artist by Oil Painters of America. Neil Patterson OPAM, president of OPA, presented the plaque to Mr. Tu amid a fanfare of celebratory music, exploding rockets of confetti and extensive television and news media coverage.

Following a formal ribbon cutting ceremony the massive wooden doors of the museum were opened to crowds of people eagerly awaiting a glimpse of over four hundred works of art spanning Mr. Tu's lifetime from his childhood to the present. The museum was established to celebrate the art of this Master Painter during the various stages of his illustrious career.

The museum boasts eight showrooms, four art studios with living quarters for visiting artists, an art research center, a seminar and conference room, and a public bookstore and gift shop.

On behalf of all members of OPA we take pleasure in congratulating Mr. Zhiwei Tu OPAM on the opening of his museum and the acquisition of his Lifetime Achievement Award.



A NOTE TO OUR BLOG READERS

Many OPA Blog readers have admitted to having difficulty reading articles online due to the light text and dark background. If your eyes are having trouble with your current screen, visit opablog.com and click "Try the light version" on the right sidebar. Voila! Your problem should be solved.

NOTES FROM YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MASTER SIGNATURE MEMBER ANNOUNCED

The Board of Directors is pleased to welcome Nancy Howe of East Dorset, VT as the newest Master Signature Member. This designation is attained after years of hard work and exceptional talent in representational oil painting. Welcome Nancy!

SIGNATURE MEMBERS ANNOUNCED

The Board of Directors is also pleased to welcome 5 artists to the status of Signature Member: Christopher Groves of Charleston, SC, Xiao Song Jiang of Scarborough, Ont., Canada, Laurie Kersey of Pebble Beach, CA, Stacey Peterson of Evergreen, CO, and Michele Usibeli of Woodway, WA. We hope these members will proudly display OPA after their names on their paintings.

Master Signature and Signature Membership status is not easily attained. If you have applied for either and have not been awarded the designation, please try again.

SHIRL SMITHSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Each year OPA awards 4 scholarships to deserving artists based on the quality and strength of the art work submitted and the potential for further development. This year's scholarship recipient winners are: Tanya Bone of Richmond, British Columbia, Canada Matt Duckett of Chicago, IL, Denise Imke of Alto, NM and Chris Saper of Phoenix, AZ. Scholarships must be used to attend a workshop or class in representational oil painting. For more information see the OPA website.

NEWEST BOARD MEMBER

Suzie Baker of Shenandoah, TX is the newest addition to the OPA Board of Directors. Suzie brings to the Board knowledge of the advertising industry having worked for years as an Art Director in advertising agencies. She paints still life, landscape, figures and portraiture.

2014 NATIONAL EXHIBITION AND CONVENTION

Plans are well under way for the 2014 National Exhibition being held at the Bennington Center for the Arts

in Bennington, VT, June 7 - July 27. The convention will begin with local plein air painting and include many interesting demos, lectures and discussions. Prospectuses were mailed in November. If you have not received your copy please visit the OPA website, or call 815-356-5987 for a copy.

MASTER SIGNATURE ONLY EXHIBITION

OPA is pleased to announce the addition of its first exhibition open only to those members who are Master Signature members. This show will be held at Mountainsong Galleries in Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA from July 25 through August 24, 2014. Each artist will be permitted to enter two painting in the show. Further information will be available as the details are finalized.

ON-LINE AUCTION

Plans are underway for OPA to host an online auction. This first time event will be open to Signature and Master Signature members only and tentatively will be held the first week of May, 2014.

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR NEWEST MASTER SIGNATURE MEMBER, NANCY HOWE



Master Signature Member Nancy Howe is a self-taught artist whose oils exhibit a refined quality of realism and quiet presence that emphasize light and strong design. Her subject matter ranges from animals and birds, to landscape, still life and figures. Her many accomplishments include being the first woman artist in the history of the U.S. Department of Interior's Federal Duck Stamp Program in 1990, as well as being a Signature member of the Society of Animal Artists.

In 2007 she created a fundraising project "Painting a Brighter Future for Women" which is a series of original oil paintings of the people of northern Kenya. The sale of the giclee of these works benefit women in these communities. It expanded in 2011 to include other areas of the world, including Bhutan in 2011 and the Kuna Indians of the San Blas Islands of Panama in 2012.

PAINTING OUR FUTURE NEWS BRIEFS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Mark Beale won the First Place Purchase Award at the Magnolia Plantation "Garden of Dreams" national competition in Charleston, SC with his painting "Creekside Dusk". The exhibit was held at the historic plantation on November 22, 2013 and included 171 entries from 11 states. Beale also has 2 works in the "Paint the Parks Top 100" show at the Coutts Museum of Art in El Dorado, KS.

Teresa Cowley's portrait, "Grandpa", was accepted into the exhibit, "Strokes of Genius", held by the Maryland Federation of Art, at Circle Gallery in Annapolis, Maryland, from November 1 - 23, 2013.

Barbara Eisenhardt is pleased to announce that her painting, "Kelly's Dock at Midnight" was juried into the Small Works Show at the Ben-

nington Center for the Arts, Bennington, VT. The exhibit was on display until December 22, 2013.

Brenda Howell was pleased to be chosen by *Southwest Art Magazine* as one of their Artists to Watch, in their November 2013 issue.

Michael Chesley Johnson OPA has been invited to participate in the 6th Annual Grand Canyon "Celebration of Art" plein air festival September 13-21, 2014. This is Michael's third time painting as an Invited Artist to the prestigious event. The event includes workshops and demonstrations by 30 nationally-recognized artists plus an opportunity to watch them paint along the South Rim, North Rim and at Phantom Ranch along the Canyon's bottom, and it culminates in an opening reception and

public sale at the historic Kolb Studio. The festival is a fundraiser for the Grand Canyon Association with the goal of establishing a permanent art museum at the South Rim for the National Park.

David Tanner's oil painting "Joe with the Morning Paper" was a Finalist in the BoldBrush Painting Competition for August, and is now eligible to be judged in the current annual competition.

Laura Wambsgans is excited to have been included in the 22nd Annual Craftsman Weekend Exposition in Pasadena, CA as well as in the Santa Clarita Art Classic XXIV and in the upcoming 8th Borrego Springs Plein Air Invitational being held in March 2014. She was also pleased to have won Honorable Mention for her work exhibited at the 10th Annual Thousand Oaks Arts Festival.

TAMPA, FLORIDA PAINT OUT A GREAT SUCCESS

Artists came from a one hundred mile radius to attend the Santaella Studios for the ARTS first OPA **Tampa, Florida Paint Out**, hosted by OPA Member Kerry Vosler. This historic neighborhood is over one hundred years old and is undergoing a time of revitalization. The artists loved painting on the streets of West Tampa and the locals loved having them there. Many of them had never seen plein air painters on location before. And many arts patrons came from near and far to watch our artists at work.

Some painted the colorful Main Street, while others painted such sights as one of the many cigar factories, with a tower and palm trees, a man painting his fence and porch, the lovely old colorful bungalows and a well known street corner. Music was provided throughout the day for the enjoyment of both artists and observers.

Bottom row: Nathan Seay, David Kent, Kathy Baird - Row 2: Elizabeth Jennis, Katie Cundiff - Row 3: Susie Covert, Kerry Vosier - top four are event supporters Eddie Deville (musician), James & Scott Vosler and one unknown individual



DATES TO REMEMBER

NATIONAL EXHIBITIONS

Twenty-third Annual National Juried Exhibition & Convention, Bennington, Vermont
Exhibit hosted by Bennington Center for the Arts - June 7 - July 27, 2014 - Juror of Awards: Charles Movalli OPAM
Canvas size not to exceed 1200 square inches

REGIONAL EXHIBITIONS

2014 Western Regional – Mountainsong Galleries, Carmel, CA - Aug. 28-Oct. 30 - Juror of Awards: Marilyn Simandle OPAM
Canvas size not to exceed 1200 square inches

2014 Eastern Regional - Eisele Gallery, Cincinnati, OH- Oct 20.- Nov 17 - Canvas size not to exceed 1200 square inches

ON-LINE SHOWCASES


March 1 - May 15 - open to Associate members only

MASTER SIGNATURE MEMBER EXHIBITION

2014 First Master Signature Only Exhibition - Mountainsong Galleries, Carmel, CA - July 25 - August 24

MASTER SIGNATURE AND SIGNATURE MEMBER ON-LINE AUCTION

Tentative date: first week of May



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