



OIL PAINTERS of AMERICA®

Dedicated to the Preservation of Representational Art

volume 25 issue 2

SUMMER
2015

Brushstrokes

2015 NATIONAL EXHIBITION AND CONVENTION SIMPLY STUPENDOUS

The ambience of the nation's oldest city was not only found while walking along the streets of Saint Augustine, Florida but was carried through the doors into Cutter & Cutter Fine Art's Brilliance in Color Gallery during OPA's 2015 National Exhibition. Len and Sonya Cutter and sons Matt and Mark were ably assisted by their staff of gracious and charming personnel to make the exhibition run like clockwork.

The event started with the "City by the Sea" plein air competition in which artists could paint almost any site of their choosing either in St. Augustine or outside the city. Those who participated were offered the opportunity to enter their work in a competition juried by Marc Hanson OPA. These works were then displayed at one of Cutter & Cutter Fine Art's other galleries, the Galleria del Mar. Kimberly Moore, Regional Sales Manager hosted *Southwest Art Magazine's* annual Pampered Paint Out on the second day of the plein air painting at Washington Oaks Gardens State Park. This was a lovely



Jonathan Stasko won the Gold Medal in the Associate & Signature Division for his painting "Pure Religion is This"

location for viewing and painting flowers, as well as interesting rock formations, a coy pond and an occasional dolphin as it swam off the shoreline.

Interesting and informative lectures were presented during the next few days at the charming and historic Casa Monica Hotel. Joe Gyurcsak, of Blick Art Materials gave

a history lesson on oil colors. Barbara Carter showed how to repair damaged frames. Scott Gellatly, of Gamblin Artist Colors, spoke on the benefits of oil paints as well as safety issues. Master Signature member William Whitaker was interviewed as this year's OPA Distinguished Artist. And Zhiwei Tu OPAM told about his journey from humble farm village boy to internationally acclaimed artist who has had a museum dedicated to him in his native country of China. Articles on each of these presentations will appear in this and future *Brushstrokes* as well as on the OPA Blog. Insightful painting demonstrations were given by Juror of Awards Huihan Liu OPAM, Louis Escobedo OPA, Don Demers, Marc Hanson OPA, Albin Veselka OPA, Dominic Avant and Morgan Samuel Price.

Thursday evening, the St. Augustine Art Association welcomed OPA members and guests to a reception introducing visitors to the home of the "Lost Colony" artists of St. Augustine.

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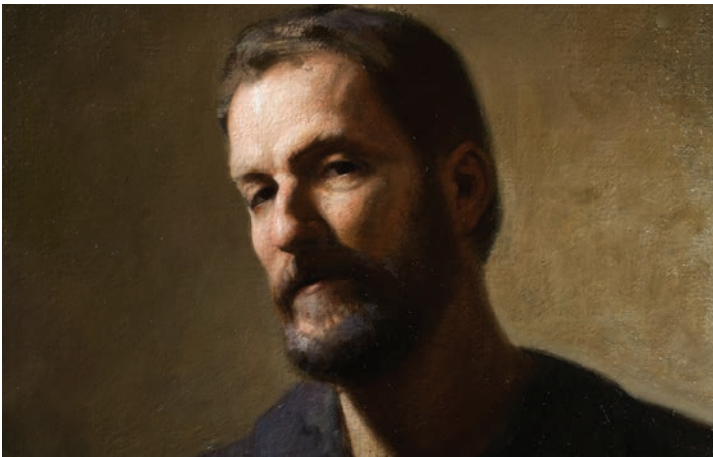


Kathy Anderson "How to Paint Flowers in the Studio"



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“Winter” by Mary Qian won the Silver Medal in the Associate & Signature Division



Hodges Soileau OPA won the Best Signature Award of Excellence for “The Fiddler”



National Exhibition con’t.

Once again *American Art Collector Magazine* hosted an evening celebration for members and guests. This year’s “Seaside Celebration” was held at the Northeast Florida Marlin Association. The food and entertainment were a pleasant respite after the preceding days of continuous activities. And if you were adventuresome, and took a walk at the right time, you might even have seen the manatees who rested in the harbor of the bay.

What an emotional evening of awards when Gold Medal Award Winner in the Associate and Signature Division, Jonathan Stasko took the stage to accept this honor. To add to the excitement of this evening, Jonathan was accompanied by his wife, children and parents for this momentous occasion. Jonathan recounted the story of the creation of his masterpiece, cited later in this *Brushstrokes*.

Thank you to Juror of Awards Huihan Liu OPAM for the herculean task of choosing only 32 paintings from the many spectacular entries. Thank you also to Dorothy Driehaus Mellin for again offering the Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship for Midwestern Artists. It

was great having Dorothy and her husband, Art, in attendance for this impressive event.

The following is a list of the award recipients for the 2015 National Exhibition and Convention.

ASSOCIATE & SIGNATURE DIVISION

Gold Medal: Jonathan Stasko for “Pure Religion is This” - funded by OPA

Silver Medal: Mary Qian for “Winter” - funded by *American Art Collector Magazine*

Bronze Medal: Mike Wise OPA for “Saturation Point” - funded by *Plein Air Magazine*



The Bronze Medal in the Associate & Signature Division was awarded to Mike Wise OPA for “Saturation Point”

Best Signature Award of Excellence: Hodges D. Soileau OPA for “The Fiddler” - funded by FASO

Best Associate Award of Excellence: Paul F. Batch for “The Last Pines” - funded by FASO

Most Original Award of Excellence: Justin Kunz for “The Days were Accomplished” - funded by Jack Richeson & Company

Donors’ Award of Excellence: John D. Cook for “Am I Ready for This” - funded by Friends of OPA

Presidents’ Award of Excellence: Charles Young Walls for “The Eternal Dance” - funded by past presidents Zhiwei Tu OPAM and Betty Schmidt

Realism Award of Excellence: Jack Saylor for “The Tavern” - funded by Blick Art Materials, Gamblin Artists Colors and New Wave Fine Art Products

Realism Honorable Mention: Agnieszka Pilat for “A Moral Scale” - funded by M. Graham and Amper-sand Art Supply

Ted Goerschner OPAM Memorial Impressionist Award of Excellence: Kim Casebeer OPA for “Cloud Dance” - funded by the Friends of Ted Goerschner OPAM

National Exhibition con't.

Impressionist Honorable Mention: Fongwei Liu OPA for "Backyard" - funded by Williamsburg Paints and Sourcetek

Animal Award of Excellence: Jay Davenport for "Keep Your Eye on the Ball" - funded by Jack Richeson & Company, New Wave Fine Art Products and OPA

Animal Honorable Mention: William Pealaterre for "Golden Boy" - funded by Michael Harding Handmade Artists Oil Colors and Martin F. Weber

John August Dietrich Memorial Figurative Award of Excellence: Sue Foell for "Looking Back" - funded by RayMar Art

Figurative Honorable Mention: Esperanza Chavez for "Traces of Time" - funded by Williamsburg Paints and Martin F. Weber



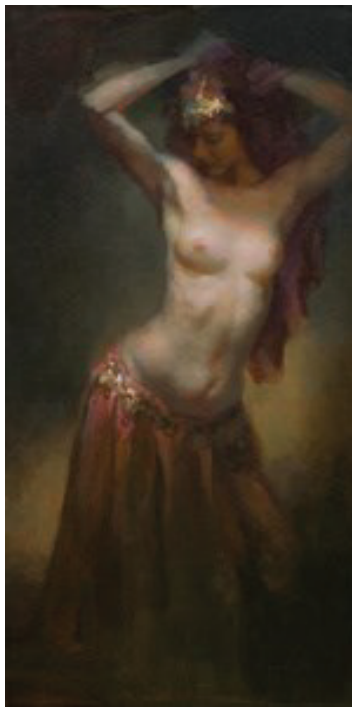
"The Last Pines" by Paul F. Batch won the Best Associate Award of Excellence



"Am I Ready for This" by John D. Cook won the Donor's Award of Excellence

Landscape Award of Excellence: John Budicin OPA for "As Evening Approaches" - funded by Glaser Frames, Gamblin Artists Colors and New Wave Fine Art Products

Landscape Honorable Mention: Cristen Miller for "Aspen View" - funded by Michael Harding Handmade Artists Oil Colours and Guerrilla Painter



Charles Young Walls won the Presidents' Award of Excellence for "The Eternal Dance"

Portraiture Award of Excellence: Jeff Morrow for "Bruce" - funded by Holbein Artist Materials, New Wave Fine Art Products, Sennelier Plein Air Oils and Savoir-Faire

Portraiture Honorable Mention: Dominique Medici for "You Done Yet?" - funded by Natural Pigments and Airfloat Systems

Seascape Award of Excellence: Vahe Yeremyan for "Harbor" - funded by Rosemary & Company, New Wave Fine Art Products and OPA

Seascape Honorable Mention: Katie Dobson Cundiff for "Tarpon Reflections" - funded by Michael Harding Handmade Artists Oil Colours and ArtFrames.com

Still Life Award of Excellence: John P. Lasater IV for "Sharing the Stage" - funded by Schmincke, Holbein Artists Materials and OPA

Outstanding Composition and Technique Award of Excellence: Christian Hemme for "Texas of the South Pacific" - funded by Yan Sun Art Museum



The Most Original Award of Excellence was given to Justin Kunz for "The Days were Accomplished"



"Bruce" by Jeff Morrow won the Portraiture Award of Excellence

MASTER SIGNATURE DIVISION

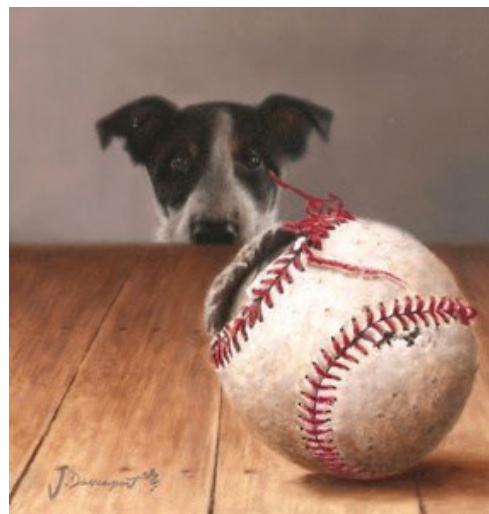
Gold Medal - Master Signature Division: David Leffel OPAM for "The Beauty of the Dance" - funded by OPA and Friends of OPA

Silver Medal - Master Signature Division: John Michael Carter OPAM for "Caroline" - funded by *American Art Collector Magazine*

Bronze Medal - Master Signature Division: Ruo Li OPAM for "Rocks by the Sea" - funded by *Fine Art Connoisseur Magazine*

Most Original Award of Excellence-Master Signature Division: David Hettinger OPAM for "Book of Dreams" - funded by *Southwest Art Magazine*

Donors' Award of Excellence - Master Signature Division: Daniel Gerhartz OPAM for "Crimson and Rose" - funded by Michael Harding Handmade Artists Oil Colours and Friends of OPA



The Animal Award of Excellence was given to Jay Davenport for "Keep Your Eye on the Ball"

National Exhibition con't.

Neil Patterson OPAM Award of Excellence: Douglas Morgan OPA for "Road Warriors" - funded by Past President Neil Patterson OPAM

The Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship for Midwestern Artists: Shelby Keefe for "Other Side of the Tracks" - funded by The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

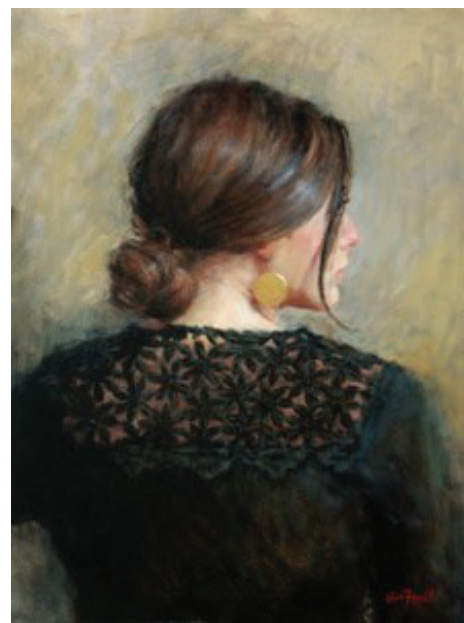
Shirl Smithson Founders' Award of Excellence for Master Signature Members: Kevin Macpherson OPAM for "Yi Shu Jia" - funded by the Shirl Smithson Family.



"The Tavern" by Jack Saylor won the Realism Award of Excellence



Kim Casebeer OPA won the Ted Goerschner OPAM Memorial Impressionist Award of Excellence for "Cloud Dance"



The John August Dietrich Memorial Figurative Award of Excellence was awarded to Sue Foell for "Looking Back"



JUROR OF AWARDS STATEMENT By Huihan Liu OPAM

I am honored and privileged to have had the opportunity to be the Juror of Awards for the 2015 National Juried Exhibition, held at the beautiful Cutter & Cutter Fine Art Galleries in St. Augustine, Florida. I congratulate all of the participating artists for their dedication in presenting their best work at the show.

It is a difficult job to be a juror. I understand that art is hard to define objectively since people have different points of view and intuitive feelings. I tried to be more objective when carefully studying each piece and tried to distance myself from personal impressions. Instead, I looked back and forth many times to study what the artist wanted to say, how well the artist conveyed and interpreted his/

her theme, how well the piece was executed in terms of unique compositional design, even how the piece caught my attention at the first glance. Generally, I appreciate quality of brushwork, texture, and edges, but I was not beholden to that rubric if it seemed that the artist was instead expressing his/her particular idea from a different technical standpoint and visual language. The best work has a unity in its visual dialog to connect to the viewer no matter what kind of subject matter, paint application and style. I am happy for those award pieces that have quality and varied voices.

Thanks for all the participating artists who submitted their best work to the show. Thanks to OPA and Cutter & Cutter Fine Art Galleries, and hats off to everyone who made the show so successful!



Painting by Larisa Aukon



Scottsdale Artists' School is a non-profit organization dedicated to developing the capabilities of artists and aspiring artists of all levels. The School houses six fully equipped studios and offers more than 200 diverse programs a year.

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MEET THE ASSOCIATE & SIGNATURE GOLD MEDAL WINNER JONATHAN STASKO

Jonathan grew up exploring the foothills and valleys of Upstate New York, between the Catskills and Adirondacks. History in the Northeast is as rich as the soil of the valley where he still lives. It wound itself into his childhood fantasies and drawings. He became captivated by historical illustrations from textbooks and magazines, and continued to draw, acquiring a keen interest for narrative art and the human figure in action. Supported in his love for art by his family, he continued developing his passion- studying the works of great artists from the past and present.



He completed both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Commercial Art from Pensacola Christian College. He credits his instructors with cultivating technical excellence using traditional and time-tested methods, while promoting creativity and an analytic approach to art. In addition to his formal education, Jonathan enjoys studying the works of the Impressionist Masters, American illustrators and contemporary artists.

Jonathan worked for a time as a commercial illustrator for a publisher of children's educational material. He has had gallery representation in Pennsylvania and New York, and shows regularly around the United States in national and regional exhibitions and competitions.



Themes Jonathan is exploring in his work include Scriptural subjects, America's past, portraiture, and personal experiences that remind him of God's power and goodness. Source of inspiration, and his greatest Motivation. Jonathan's desire is to enrich and inspire the lives of those who view his art, as he strives to visually communicate truth and love.

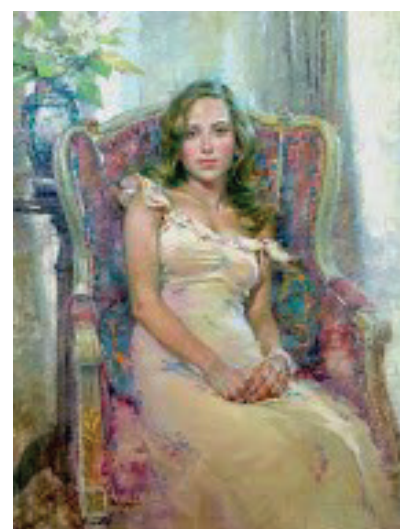
← Executive Director Kathryn Beligratis, Gold Medal winner Jonathan Stasko, Juror of Awards Huihan Liu OPAM and President Ken Cadwallader OPA



The Gold Medal Award in the Master Signature Division was awarded to David Leffel OPAM for "The Beauty of the Dance"

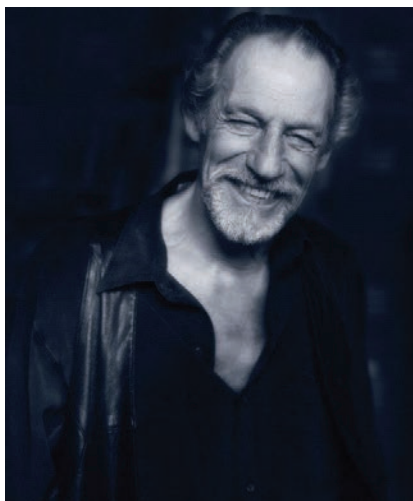


Ruo Li OPAM won the Bronze Medal in the Master Signature Division for "Rocks by the Sea"



"Caroline" painted by John Michael Carter OPAM won the Silver Medal in the Master Signature Division

MEET THE MASTER SIGNATURE GOLD MEDAL WINNER DAVID A. LEFFEL OPAM



David A. Leffel is a modern Master recognized by his peers as a painters' painter. His subjects range from figure and portrait to landscape and still life but his real subject matter is light flowing and drifting over surfaces.

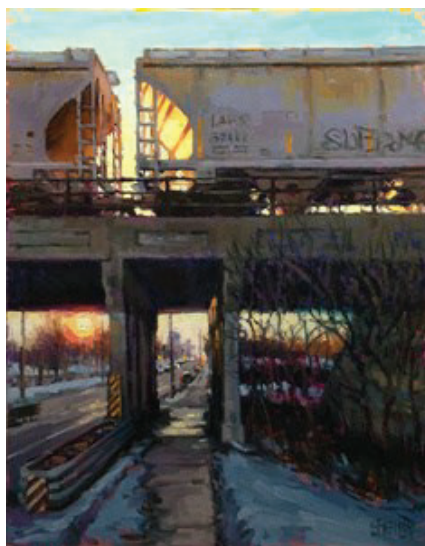
He grew up in New York City and studied art and painting at Parsons School of Design, Fordham University and then at the Art Students League (ASL) of New York. He later returned to the ASL as an instructor until he moved to Taos, NM in 1992.

Leffel has received many honors in his career including Gold and Silver medals at NAWA now called the Prix de West; Allied Artists, NY; and National Academy of Design, NY. He has also participated in many group and one-person shows.

In 2003 a collection of his teachings, *An Artist Teaches, Reflections on the Art of Painting* was published by Bright Light Publishing to world-wide acclaim for its ability to integrate his philosophical views and humor with an understanding of technique that can be appreciated by artists and collectors alike. In 2009 Bright Light also published his second book, *Self-Portraits: A Visual Journey of Insight*.

His work can be found in permanent museum collections throughout this country as well as numerous private collections here and abroad.

MEET THE DOROTHY DRIEHAUS MELLIN FELLOWSHIP FOR MIDWESTERN ARTISTS WINNER SHELBY KEEFE



Shelby Keefe won the Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship for "Other Side of the Tracks"

Shelby Keefe is a nationally recognized, award-winning impressionist painter, teacher and performance artist. Earning a BFA in 1981, she embarked on a career as a graphic designer. She became a full-time fine artist in 2005 and travels nation-wide painting, teaching and competing in plein air competitions as well as producing work in her studio/gallery in the Third Ward in Milwaukee, WI. She is becoming noticed nationally, having been recently published in *Southwest Art*

and *Plein Air Magazines* --both being honored as the cover artist. She continues to garner more national attention having been featured in June's *Fine Art Connoisseur* as one of the "Three to Watch". Her paintings are being collected around the country as well as in corporate surroundings and public spaces. She is represented by Edgewood Orchard Galleries in Door County, WI, the Marshall Gallery of Fine Art in Scottsdale, AZ, Oh-Be-Joyful Gallery in Crested Butte, CO and Castle Gallery Fine Art in Fort Wayne, IN.



THE STORY BEHIND THE ASSOCIATE & SIGNATURE GOLD MEDAL PAINTING

By Jonathan Stasko

Art has the ability to enrich the lives of those who experience it. Art can also enhance life by inspiring us to some positive or constructive action - whether a landscape, causing one to begin looking for the beauty of light in the course of their everyday life, or a figurative, motivating them to take part in touching others' lives for good. My desire for my art is to not only enrich the lives of its viewers but also to enhance them.

Pure Religion Is This was inspired by a connection formed between my family and children in a remote Ugandan orphanage through the experiences of my sister, Danielle, who spent over three months doing what she does so well- pouring her heart into others. During her stay at Excel Childcare Centre and Orphanage in Kyenda-Mubende, Uganda, Danielle sent frequent reports about the children and the conditions under which their limited resources forced them to live.

While doing all she could to care for their physical needs, Danielle also focused on attending to the deep emotional voids of these precious little ones. Her hugs and kind words were in high demand and it was amazing to hear of just how far reaching their effect was.

"I only wish all of you could be here with me and see these little faces, and get their hugs and kisses and laughter all day. Yesterday was my best day here, when after a full week of bandages, love and attention, I finally saw the two littlest boys here running and laughing and talking) They've been my projects- silent since I've been here, zoned out, eyes down, unresponsive to anything...and yesterday they were like little wild boys, tackling, dancing and laughing till they finally fell asleep on my shoulders. I'm filled up...and I keep crying. Someone please come...I'm so blessed to be here but there's more love then I can hold and more needed than I can give. Miss you all. So thankful for letters, and knowing you're all praying. Xoxo Goodnight from deep in the heart of Africa."

Upon receiving the following text from Danielle I instantly began weeping and our family began working that same day to do what we could to better the lives of the children there.

"Please pray for baby Praise - he's one year old. He has been taking malaria medicine for two weeks but today his fever came back...I have held him for seven hours. He's throwing up, his chest is full and his breath is wheezy. They lost a boy here to malaria, a week before I came...when I heard that I told God I did not want to lose one baby. I'm feeling pretty helpless holding him and keeping his head wet, but I know I'm just taking Him to Jesus, and letting Him hold him and rock him."

The Holy Scriptures state that "pure religion" involves making a difference in the lives of others, specifically orphans, and that is what we are striving to do. My hope for my art is that it will enhance the lives of its viewers by inspiring them to make a difference for others. We are compelled by love. Please join us.



The Seascape Award of Excellence was awarded to Vahe Yeremyan for "Harbor"



The Landscape Award of Excellence was awarded to John Budicin OPA for "As Evening Approaches"



"Sharing the Stage" by John P. Lasater IV won the Still Life Award of Excellence

ZHIWEI TU OPAM: AN ICONIC FIGURE OF OUR AGE

By Kurt Anderson OPA



One of the most compelling presentations at the OPA National Show and Convention was given by OPA Master Signature Artist Zhiwei Tu. A current board member and former president of OPA, Tu is known for his bold, colorful and expressionistic paintings of figures, landscapes, and historical subjects.

He talked about his incredible journey as an artist, which began with the humblest of prospects as a young boy in a subsistence farming village in Maoist, China. There was no art instruction at the one room school house, but one day a sign painter from Guangzhou arrived at the village to paint a mural depicting Mao. Tu watched him

and studied what he was doing intently, and then decided to try painting his own mural. The villagers realized that Tu's painting was the better one, and placed it on the second level facing the street. This was the event, Tu said, that set him on the path of becoming a professional artist. His skill as an artist provided an escape from the village and entry into the high school in the big city where he received his first formal lessons.

He went to the Guangzhou Academy of Fine Arts from 1972-75. Among his fellow students were Mian Situ OPAM and Huihan Liu OPAM, lifelong friends who would also find acclaim as artists in the United States. They organized painting expeditions to work plein air, and Tu showed examples of these early postcard size landscapes in gouache. He also showed 30 color studies he made from memory after seeing his first color movie. They were remarkable for their accuracy and finish.

He went to graduate school in art at the Academy from 1978-81. Tu showed many of his works from this period, including one painting from a

momentous life study session. It was the first time since the beginning of the Cultural Revolution that art students in China were allowed to paint the female nude.

After he graduated he taught at the academy. It was at this time that he heard that there were scholarships available for Chinese students to study in the United States. He stopped in the US consulate and to his amazement they showed him brochures of American colleges and encouraged him to apply. Due to the generosity of Americans who wanted to help Chinese students, he received sufficient funds to attend Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa. He could only stay in the United States as long as he was a student, but it was during his time there that the Tiananmen Square crackdown on political dissent occurred. Because of this the US government gave him a necessary visa so that he could continue to live and work in the US, and Tu eventually became a US citizen.

After getting his second Master's degree Tu settled in Chicago, partly because of the presence there of the Palette and Chisel. This is an artist



The Outstanding Composition and Technique Award of Excellence was given to Christian Hemme for "Texas of the South Pacific"



"Road Warriors" by Douglas Morgan OPA won the Neil Patterson OPAM Award of Excellence

Zhiwei Tu con't.

society that occupies a house in the heart of the city and provides daily open studio model sessions for artists. Tu attended the sessions obsessively, and was part of a coterie of brilliant artists and students (most notably Richard Schmid, who Tu said was greatly admired in China when Tu was a student there). Tu showed many paintings from this period where he continued to develop his own very personal and highly colorful, muscular and expressionistic style of painting.

Tu was one of the original Master Signature Members of the OPA when it was founded in 1991. It was also during the 1990's that Tu completed and sold his first monumental paintings of Chinese legend and history. Tu began designing and painting these works as early as 1978 when he was still a student at Guangzhou Art Academy. During the 1990's, as China began to open up to western influence and economic development, Tu was able to visit his home province and display his paintings and murals. Tu's brilliant work was readily embraced by a country that was taking pride in its new standing in the world and pride in its long and storied history. Wealthy Chinese sponsors pur-

chased the murals, and more were commissioned. Tu's work was given an honored place in the major art museums of China, including Guangdong Art Museum in 2000, and the National Art Museum in 2007.

In the early 2000's the idea of a museum devoted exclusively to his work began to be floated among officials and businessmen in his home county of Wengyaun. A museum was originally opened as part of an existing museum by the Shaoguan City Government in 2006. It was also at this time that different sites for a whole new museum building were explored. It was finally decided to place it at a scenic bend in the Wengyaun River near an historic island where an ancient Buddhist monastery had been located.

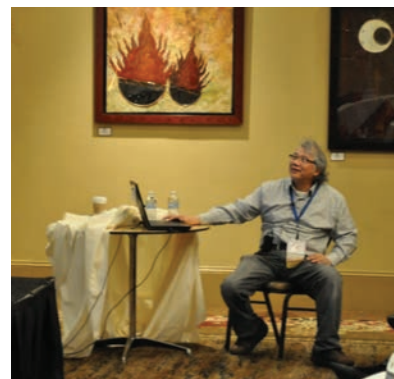
Shortly after this Tu brought a delegation of artists from the United States, most of who were associated with the Oil Painters of America, including then president of the OPA Neil Patterson OPAM, and current OPA president Ken Cadwallader OPA. This was the first of three painting expeditions (2008, 2011 and 2014) in which Tu invited leading OPA artists to paint and exhibit in China.

These expeditions were also big media events in which the artists were regaled by Chinese leaders and officials. In receiving such attention and hospitality the Americans came to understand how much the Chinese honored and admired Tu. They also were in awe as the Zhiwei Tu Museum took shape over its seven year design and construction. When it was completed in 2013 Tu invited OPA president Neil Patterson OPAM to be a part of the ceremony. In his speech Patterson explained how Tu was admired in the United States and had been a leading force in the OPA. He then presented Tu with a lifetime achievement award from the OPA, and the plaque is now displayed at the entrance of the museum.

Tu concluded his presentation with photos of the museum. Designed by Tu, it has a massive three story atrium. Over 400 works by Tu are on display including seven of the immense murals which are part of the series he calls "Body Language". The final series is to include three more murals which Tu is currently painting. He explained how the museum includes an enormous studio space. A 30 foot long electronic easel allows him to raise and lower



The amazing and beautiful Zhiwei Tu Museum, with over 400 of Tu's works



Zhiwei Tu OPAM
recaps his life through photos

Zhiwei Tu can't.

a mural in a long hole in the floor so that he can work on any portion of the painting he needs to. He also has ample space to stand back and see the painting as a whole. The museum also includes a private apartment for the artist and a piano studio for Tu's

wife Danni Hu. She is an accomplished pianist, and Tu designed the museum to roughly mimic the shape of a piano.

Tu said he was returning to China in the coming month to continue his work. He invited OPA members to visit him in his home prov-

ince so that they could see the museum in person. As one awe-struck participant at the presentation said, "This museum not only speaks well of Tu, it speaks well of China – that they would have the wisdom to recognize this artist's accomplishment, and give these masterpieces of representational painting the showplace they deserve".

2015 NATIONAL CATALOG AVAILABLE

Copies of the OPA 24th National Exhibition catalog are available for purchase at a cost of \$25.00 each (three or more for \$21.00 each). You may purchase either online or by sending a check to:

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“CITY BY THE SEA” PLEIN AIR COMPETITION FUN FOR ALL



First Place Painting “Aviles Street” by
John Michael Carter OPAM



Second Place Painting “Washington Oaks Sunlight”
by Albin Veselka



Third Place Painting “Spanish Umbrella” by Kami Mendlik

About 30 artists participated in the plein air paint out held during the first two days of the national convention. Many of those who painted also participated in the competition that followed, juried by Marc Hanson OPA. Paintings had to be appropriately framed for the competition and Cutter & Cutter graciously offered a beautiful frame for a nominal price for those artists who did not bring a frame for the event. The competition ended with an awards ceremony on Saturday evening at the Gallery Del Mar, where the paintings were then displayed. Congratulations to the awards winners:

First Place: John Michael Carter for “Aviles Street” - funded by *Plein Air Magazine*

Second Place: Albin Veselka OPA for “Washington Oaks Sunlight” - funded by *Southwest Art Magazine*

Third Place: Kami Mendlik for “Spanish Umbrella” - funded by *Fredrix Artist Canvas*

Fourth Place: Louis Escobedo OPA for “Hidden Pond” - funded by Guerilla Painter

Fifth Place: Karen Rose for “Cloudscape Meditation” - funded by Guerilla Painter

Honorable Mention: Kirk Larsen for “Coquina Rocks” - funded by Guerilla Painter

Honorable Mention: Suzie Baker for “Passing Through” - funded by Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors

Honorable Mention: Howard Friedland OPA for “Spanish Moss” - funded by Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors

Honorable Mention: Donna Biggee for “Momentary Shadows” - funded by Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors



Artists painting at the Washington Oaks
Gardens State Park



Luncheon and entertainment at *Southwest Art Magazine's* Pampered Paint Out



Kurt Anderson OPA works on his entry for the “City by the Sea” plein air competition

THANK YOU TO OUR AWARD SPONSORS, RAFFLE CONTRIBUTORS AND VENDORS

A heartfelt thank you to all of our award sponsors, raffle contributors and vendors. The National Exhibition and Convention would not be the successful event it is without the continuing support of these people, companies and organizations. This year 6 baskets were offered in the raffle. The lucky winners were: Doreen St. John, Eve Albrecht, Glenda Keyes, Len Cutter, Diane Reeves and R. Thomson.

Airfloat Systems
American Art Collector Magazine
Ampersand Art Supply
ArtFrames.com
Betty Schmidt
Blick Art Materials
Blue Ridge Oil Colors
Dorothy Driehaus Mellin and
The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
Fine Art Connoisseur Magazine
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Glaser Frames
Guerrilla Painter
Holbein Artists' Materials
Jack Richeson & Company
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M. Graham & Company
Martin F. Weber Company
Michael Harding Artist Oil Colours
Natural Pigments
Neil Patterson OPAM

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Plein Air Magazine
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Rosemary & Co., Brushes
Savoir-Faire
Shirl Smithson Family
SourceTek Art Supply
Southwest Art Magazine
Williamsburg Paints
Yan Sun Art Museum
Zhiwei Tu OPAM

KEEPING UP WITH THE TIMES

As you know, social media has vastly influenced the way consumers purchase products these days – including fine art. OPA is working hard to increase its social media presence, and this, combined with your marketing strategies and the gallery's efforts, has resulted in our reaching more potential buyers than ever before – ***and this is very exciting news!***

In the past, OPA has not allowed for presales at its exhibitions, giving preference to collectors who attend our regional and/or national events in person. But OPA has realized that times have changed, and we must adapt to the new buying behaviors that come along with it. In other words, we want to take full advantage of the opportunity to sell your work when the buyer is ready to buy.

Therefore, hosting galleries will now be able to sell paintings prior to the opening reception but the works must remain on display through the duration of the exhibition. If you have been accepted into one of OPA's shows and have a collector interested in purchasing your painting, please advise them to call the hosting gallery directly to arrange the purchase.



Cutter & Cutter's beautiful
Brilliance in Color Gallery



The gracious, and always smiling Cutter family, Mark, Sonya, Len and Matt



Members and guests view the raffle baskets while attending the Wednesday night opening reception

SPRING 2015 ASSOCIATE ON-LINE SHOWCASE AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Honoring only 12 artists out of 560 entries was a difficult task for Juror of Awards Elizabeth Pollie OPA in our Spring Online Showcase. Thanks to Dorothy Drieaus Mellin and the Richard H. Drieaus Foundation for their continued support of our Online Showcase.

First Place: Deborah Tilby for “Twelve Small Boats”

Second Place: Damien Gonzales for “Mummy Cave - Canon del Muerto”

Third Place: Marci Oleszkiewicz for “Summers’ End”

Honorable Mentions: Nancy Boren for “Mama Mia”, Christian Hemme for “Blue is Red”, Alan Larkin for “Chimera”, Lindsey Bittner Graham for “Fast Turf at Churchill Downs”, Tina Garrett for “Mint Julip”, Anne Blair Brown for “A Little Bit of Country”, Rob Rey for “Bioluminescence”, Lori Putnam for “Red Rocked”, and Paul Batch for “Beacon”.



“Twelve Small Boats” by Deborah Tilby
won the First Place Award
in the Spring, 2015 Online Showcase

Submission for the 2015 Summer Associate On-Line Showcase are being accepted now through August 15. The cost remains at \$14 per entry and you may enter as many paintings as you would like. Visit the OPA website for entry info and to view the rest of the award winning entries.



MEET THE ONLINE SHOWCASE WINNER DEBORAH TILBY

I am Canadian but lived for many years in England where I painted watercolours of English and European street scenes, attracted by the weathered buildings, the textures and colours of old brick, stone and peeling paint and plaster, and the narrow streets offering interesting perspectives. I have often returned to the streets of Europe for my inspiration, sometimes in watercolour but now more often in oil.

I also enjoy everything the local landscape has to offer although the subject within the landscape is secondary to my main inspiration and focus which is the light, the shadows, the interplay of warm and cool, and the subtle colours of the seasons.

Landscape painting is a challenge, one that is endlessly fascinating and deeply fulfilling.



Jonathan and Catherine Stasko stand beside his
Gold Medal winning painting



Chen Su Juan & Ye Mei of Guangzhou, China, Ken Cadwallader OPA, Huihan Liu OPAM, Jonathan & Catherine Stasko, Len & Sonya Cutter and Kathryn Beligratis

OPA IS OFFERING OUR SECOND SALON SHOW

If you attended the 2013 Salon Show, held at the Crooked Tree Arts Center in Petoskey, Michigan, you will remember what a spectacular event it was. If you didn't attend, then you have another opportunity to participate in one of OPA's salon exhibitions, open to all categories of members. This year's Salon Show is being hosted by the Beverly McNeil Gallery, located in the historic Lakeview District of Birmingham, Alabama. The event will run from October 8 through November 5. The Beverly McNeil Gallery is hosting an opening reception on Thursday, October 8, from 5:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. with the awards presentation being held at 7:00.

The canvas size for this show is limited to 320 square inches (unframed) so that 275 oil paintings will be able to be juried into the competition. Cash and/or merchandise awards will be a minimum of \$12,000. You must be a current member of Oil Painters of America to submit an entry, at a cost of \$30 for one or \$45 for two. Entries are being accepted online now through July 31, 2015. To submit an electronic entry go to:

<http://www.juriedartservices.com>. (Please make sure to enter the correct competition as we are accepting eastern regional show entries at time also.)

Don't miss the fun of a Birmingham, Alabama's museums and sites, as well as the Lakeview District's dining and entertainment offerings. This should be another great Salon Show.

WHY NOT HOST AN OPA PAINT OUT?

There's still time to sign up to host an OPA Paint Out in September, October or November, 2015. Visit our website for answers to the most frequently asked questions about Paint Outs and for the application to be a host. Applications being accepted through July 15. We will help contact members. All you need do is find a location, a date (and rain date) and supply the enthusiasm. For more information go to the OPA website and look under the Education & Events menu for "Paint Outs".

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2015 OPA DISTINGUISHED ARTIST: WILLIAM WHITAKER OPAM

As part of this year's convention, Bill Whitaker OPAM was interviewed by Kimberly Moore of Southwest Art Magazine. Following is a summary of that interview, written by OPA member Stuart Fullerton.

William Whitaker OPAM gave an interview at the OPA National Conference and Exhibition that was highly entertaining and informative. He was interviewed by Kimberly Moore of *Southwest Art* magazine.

Whitaker grew up painting and drawing in a family of artists and musicians, but he described experiencing what he called an "A-ha!" moment in the summer of 1970. That moment was when his 14 year old niece came to visit him in Utah and agreed to sit for him to paint. She wore an off-white gown, and had pale skin and dark hair, and Whitaker described how this combination struck him so much that it became a theme for him over the years.

Whitaker said that he has about six paintings under way at any one

time. He often begins with a grisaille into which he will lay color. He likes to start paintings, and in the process, he finds that for the first week the painting seems perfect -but then the work seems to bog down in the middle, when he feels as if he is "crawling across the desert" until it's suddenly done. Sometimes he experiences a feeling of "how did I do that?" about his own paintings.

Whitaker doesn't put too much stock in awards and honors, but he recalled fondly being profiled in the 1980's for a show on PBS. According to Whitaker, awards at shows are often just the luck of the draw—whatever the judge likes the most on that particular day.

Whitaker advised painters to follow their feelings, to "let art pull you by the nose". Talent was not an important factor for Whitaker - more important is that the artist just needs to love to paint - love it enough to keep doing it through the inevitable disasters that will happen along the way. Whitaker keeps a sketchbook at all times and advises that anyone can learn to draw if they do it enough. The difficulty is to get over

the way in which we see the world in a form of visual shorthand. According to Whitaker, we often are so overwhelmed with visual information that we invent a form of shorthand for seeing things - one that we can't really overcome until we partake of drawing or painting. We can say that we see a banana, for example, but unless we are able to draw that particular banana, we aren't seeing it in real way.

Among his influences, Whitaker counts Tom Lovell, the illustrator, and Jean-Louis Messonier, a huge figure in 19th century art.

Whitaker is critical of the abstract expressionist movement of the 1950's, which has been followed by difficult times for art education in this country. Whitaker likened art education now to the reinvention of the wheel, since so much has been lost in the wake of abstract expressionism.

Whitaker's final advice for painters was to "paint what is important to you".



Juror of Awards Huihan Liu OPAM's painting demo



William Whitaker OPAM being interviewed by Kimberly Moore of *Southwest Art* Magazine



Highly acclaimed maritime artist Don Demers' painting demonstration

NOTES FROM YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

25th NATIONAL SHOW

Plans for the 2016 National Exhibition and convention are well under way. Next year's show will be held at Southwest Gallery in Dallas, TX from May 14 through June 15. As this will be our 25th year, we are celebrating by offering cash and prize awards in the amount of **\$100,000**. This is definitely an exhibition you won't want to miss.

CURRENTLY

ACCEPTING ENTRIES

OPA is currently accepting entries for 2 shows at the same time, the Eastern Regional Exhibition and the Salon Show. When applying for one of these shows, please make sure that you click on the correct link for that competition. You may not submit the same painting in both competitions.

ENTRY SIZES

Remember: when submitting an entry in a competition please note that the dimensions should be entered as height x width. The third dimension is the thickness of the canvas. Sizes are to be submitted in inches and may be rounded off.

PAINTING OUR FUTURE

NEWS BRIEFS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

George Bodine is pleased to have recently been accepted as a new member in the prestigious Salmagundi Club.

Ava Cosey has been given the great honor of being nominated 2015-2016 Texas State Artist by the Texas Art Commission.

Gene Costanza was pleased to be part of the two artist exhibition entitled "Costal Light", held in March at the Principle Gallery Charleston.

Katherine Galbraith was awarded 1st Place in the Portrait Society of America's Members Only Competi-

tion in the Commissioned Portrait category. The competition was featured on the cover of *The Art of the Portrait* and was the lead article. Katherine's work will also be featured in *International Artist Magazine's* upcoming issue.

Susan Hotard recently won first place for her painting "In Slumber" in the Richeson 75 Small Works Oil/acrylic division. Her alla prima portrait of "Texas Tim", that won third place in the OPA Fall Online Showcase was exhibited at the 15th Annual American Impressionists Society Show 2014, Abend Gallery, Denver, CO. Susan recently had a

solo exhibit at Academy Gallery at The New Orleans Academy of Fine Arts.

Debra Keirce was thrilled that her 2.5 inch tall miniature painting "Vanilla" was awarded best of show at the 2015 Prairie Winds 16th National Annual Miniature Show in Grand Island, NE.

William Schneider OPA was pleased to announce that "Lamia, Transformed", based on the poem by Keats, will be featured as a step-by-step demonstration in the June/July issue of *International Artist Magazine*.



Dinner and conversation at *American Art Collector's* "Seaside Celebration"



Some attendees at the "Seaside Celebration" were entertained by a manatee off the dock



Members and guests are welcomed to the St. Augustine Art Association

DATES TO REMEMBER

September 1 – Deadline for submission for 2015 Master Signature membership status. Minimum requirement is current Signature status.

October 15 – Deadline for submission for Signature membership status. Minimum requirement is having been juried into three OPA National Exhibitions or two National Exhibitions and three regional and/or salon shows. (Regionals/salons must be within the last 5 years.)

December 1 – Deadline for submission for 2015 Shirl Smithson Memorial Scholarship.

NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Twenty-fifth Annual National Juried Exhibition & Convention - Southwest Gallery in Dallas, Texas

May 14 - June 15, 2016

Juror of Awards: Kevin Macpherson OPAM

More details to follow as they become available

REGIONAL & OTHER EXHIBITIONS

2015 Western Regional - Wild Horse Gallery, Steamboat Springs, Colorado - August 7 – September 7

Juror of Awards: Johanna Harmon OPA

List of participating artists available online

Virtuosos of the OPA - Salmagundi Club, New York City, New York - September 17 - October 1

Juror of Awards: Tim Newton, President of Salmagundi Club

Participation now closed, previously open to Signature & Master Signature OPA members

2015 Salon Show - Beverly McNeil Gallery - October 8 - November 5

Juror of Awards: OPA Signature or Master Signature Member

Canvas size not to exceed **320** square inches - online entries being accepted through July 31

2015 Eastern Regional - Eckert & Ross Fine Art, Indianapolis, Indiana - November 6 - December 5

Juror of Awards: David Hettinger OPAM

Canvas size not to exceed 1080 square inches - online entries being accepted through July 31

ON-LINE SHOWCASES

June 1-August 15 - open to Associate members only

October 1-December 15 - open to Associate and Signature members, with separate awards for each division

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