



OIL PAINTERS of AMERICA®

Dedicated to the Preservation of Representational Art

volume 29 issue 2

SUMMER
2019

Brushstrokes

2019 NATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONVENTION A REAL CROWD PLEASER

The Illume Gallery of Fine Art, Authentique Gallery of Art & Design and The Mission Gallery, all located in the inviting city of Saint George, Utah hosted the 2019 OPA National Convention and Exhibition. These three galleries, owned by Jane Bell Meyer, offered a unique and pleasant experience in presenting approximately 240 paintings throughout 3 separate buildings. We thank Jane, her staff and all those in the city of Saint George who helped make this year's event a memorable experience.

The convention opened on Monday, May 6th, with the "Southwest Treasures" Wet Paint Sale and



Daud Akhriev OPAM won the Gold Medal in the Master Signature Division for "Isaiah"

Competition. Artists wishing to paint outside chose from various locations such as the Snow Canyon State Park, Kayenta Wash, Red Rock Canyon and the gem of Utah, the Zion National Park. Those wishing to paint inside assembled at the St. George Social Hall where models were present, as well as still life set ups.

The Wet Paint Sale and Competition continued Tuesday at the Dixie Academy, featuring a variety of models and still life arrangements for those wishing to paint inside. Tuesday ended with *Southwest Art Magazine's* Welcome Reception at the St. George Social Hall. The evening presented a pleasant opportunity to relax while seeing old friends and making new ones. Appetizing food and drinks were

served with enjoyable music in the background.

Southwest Art Magazine hosted their annual "Pampered Paint Out" on Wednesday, the final day of painting for the Wet Paint Competition and Sale. Again at the Dixie Academy, artists were invited to paint a diverse group of models in costumes, as well as still life set ups. A tasty lunch was accompanied by the music of Jack Kelly Dunn, who sang and played his guitar. And for those who found the plein air painting stressful, a masseuse was available in the park outside, to massage away painting tension.



The Gold Medal in the Associate and Signature Division was awarded to Susan Lyon for "Gems"

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2019 Natl. Exhibition con't.

On Thursday morning Juror of Awards Kenn Backhaus OPAM presented an inspiring demonstration on painting the subtleties of an entranceway. While describing his use of color and technique he kept the audience involved by answering questions as he created his work of art. After lunch, attendees were given the opportunity to watch four more artists, Lyn Boyer, Michael Malm, Stephanie Birdsell OPA, and Doug Fryer, exhibit their talents in a group painting demonstration. These four enlightening demonstrations were followed by a panel discussion on how an artist could work toward building a positive business relationship with galleries and art collectors. Moderated by Illume Gallery owner Jane Bell Meyer, a group of top artists and art executives discussed the rapport that should be developed to best accommodate all parties involved in the purchase and sale of art.

After a full day of informative and enjoyable sessions it was time to relax at *American Art Collector Magazine's* Celebratory Party. Attendees were treated to a delicious buffet dinner, at the posh Entrada at Snow Canyon Country



Mike Malm was awarded the Bronze Medal in the Associate and Signature Division for "Spring Riches"

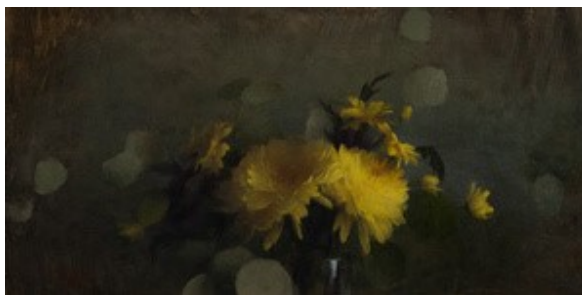


"The Chinese Robe" painted by John Michael Carter OPAM won the Silver Medal in the Master Signature Division

Club. Dinner was followed by dancing on the terrace to music MC'd by well known local radio personality DJ Lex.

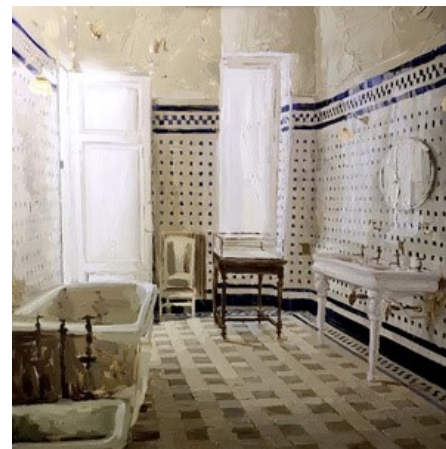
Wet Paint Juror of Awards Lori Putnam OPA welcomed everyone to her painting demonstration on Friday morning. Her two and a half hours of painting exemplified how a talented artist can turn a blank canvas into a soothing, pastoral landscape, making it look effortless.

After Lori's enlightening demo, Blick Art Materials hosted a luncheon presentation by Joe Gyurcsak OPA. Gyurcsak presented a lecture on safety, related to the oil painting industry both in and outside of the studio. His presentation was followed by another instructive and educational painting demo, this one by Gary Ernest Smith. Smith is well known for his rural and native paintings, exemplifying how an ordinary subject can become a most interesting and attractive painting.



The Silver Medal in the Associate and Signature Division was awarded to Katie Liddiard for "August Mums"

Illume Gallery officially opened the 2019 OPA Exhibition and Convention with a standing-room-only reception on Friday evening. This gave everyone the opportunity to view all 240+ paintings entered in the exhibition prior to moving to the Electric Theatre for the big event of the week, the Awards and Recognition Ceremony. First, tickets were drawn for the winners of the 5 raffle baskets, which contained a variety of art supplies and goodies. Congrats to raffle winners: Johanna Harmon OPA, David Mueller OPA, Patricia Rice, Candy Rideout and KK Walling. Then the newly confirmed Master Signature and Signature members were invited to approach the stage to receive their pins for these highly acclaimed designations. In attendance was Master Signature member William Schneider as well as Signature members: Karen Budan, Angela Campbell, David Dibble, Joe Gyurcsak, Greg LaRock, David Mueller and Sabina Turner. Lastly, was the announcement of the award winners of the National Exhibition and the Wet Paint Competition. A hearty congratulations to National Exhibition Gold Medal winner Susan Lyon (Associate and Signature Division) and Daud Akhriev OPAM (Master Signature Division). Also, congratulations to



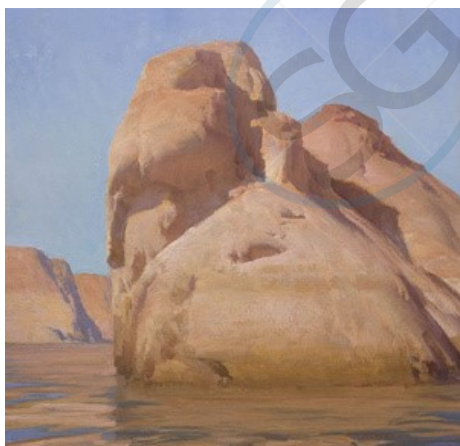
"Parisian Bathroom 2" by Mary Sauer received the Members' Choice Award in the Associate and Signature Division

2019 Natl. Show con't.

Wet Paint Competition winners Doug Braithwaite (Plein Air Division) and Nancy S. Crookston OPAM (Studio Division). A complete list of winners follows this article. After this ceremonious event many attendees visited the Red Cliff Gallery to view the entries, and winners, in the Wet Paint Competition.

The final day of the convention, Saturday, began with the Annual Business Meeting, open to all OPA members. Board members reviewed the current status of OPA and spoke of upcoming events and expectations before everyone adjourned to the exhibitors' area, where a number of artists gave demos, using the exhibitors' products. Signature member David Dibble ended the convention with a demonstration, explaining how he developed his skills as an artist and came to be the well-known painter he is today.

Taking place at the same time as the Convention was the multifaceted presentation "Start with Art". This program was designed with the serious art collector in mind and included informative



The Alden Bryan Memorial Landscape Painting Award was given to Joshua D. Clare for "Lost Eden Canyon, Lake Powell"



"Coexistence" painted by Jeff Legg OPAM won the Realism Award of Excellence in the Master Signature Division

lectures and demos ranging from the significance of representational painting in today's world to focusing on collecting quality art to the relationship of the artist, gallery and collector, along with other presentations. Those attending this collectors' track program were also invited to attend the opening reception and awards ceremony.

ASSOCIATE & SIGNATURE DIVISION

Gold Medal: Susan Lyon for "Gems" - funded by OPA

Silver Medal: Katie Liddiard for "August Mums" - funded by *American Art Collector Magazine*

Bronze Medal: Mike Malm for "Spring Riches" - funded by *Fine Art Connoisseur Magazine*



Dorothy Driehaus Mellin presented the Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship for Mid-western Artists to William A. Suys OPA for "Settling In"

Best Signature Award of Excellence: Johanna Harmon OPA for "Nature's Reverie" - funded by FASO, Gamblin Artists Colors and Airfloat Systems

Best Signature Honorable Mention: Tom L. Nachreiner OPA for "Sunday Afternoon" - funded by Revelite and Savoir-Faire

Best Associate Award of Excellence: Neal Hughes for "Dream Boat Nocturne" - funded by Cheap Joe's Art Stuff, FASO and ArtFrames

Best Associate Honorable Mention: Steven Walker for "Streaming at Dusk" - funded by Revelite and Savoir-Faire

Most Original Award of Excellence: Jenna Lineweaver for "Creative Mind at Rest" - funded by Artwork Archive and Savoir-Faire

Outstanding Composition and Technique Award of Excellence: David Dibble OPA for "Brevity" - funded by Artwork Archive and Savoir-Faire

Presidents' Award of Excellence: Robert Papp for "May Day" - funded by past presidents Zhiwei Tu OPAM and Betty Schmidt



"Brevity" painted by David Dibble OPA won the Outstanding Composition and Technique Award of Excellence



The Bronze Medal in the Master Signature Division was awarded to James Tennison OPAM for "Champion"

2019 Natl. Show con't.

Art Renewal Center Realism Award of Excellence: Blair Atherholt for "Harshes Critic" - funded by Art Renewal Center

Realism Honorable Mention: Jenedy Paige for "Grace in the Fall" - funded by Trekell Art Supply and Jack Richeson & Co

Ted Goerschner OPAM Memorial Impressionist Award of Excellence: Derek Penix for "Abundance" - funded by Friends of Ted Goerschner OPAM

Impressionist Honorable Mention: Mike Peterson for "Not in Service" - funded by Gamblin Artists Colors and Liliedahl Video Productions



The Donor's Award of Excellence in the Master Signature Division was awarded to Cindy Baron OPAM for "Lines of Heritage"

Animal Award of Excellence: TJ Cunningham for "Many Long Years Ago" - funded by Blick Art Materials

Animal Honorable Mention: Joe J. Ceballos for "The Return" - funded by JFM Enterprises and Liliedahl Video Productions

John August Dietrich Memorial Figurative Award of Excellence: Robin Williamson for "Holding on to a Dream" - funded by Ray-Mar Art

Figurative Honorable Mention: Raj Chaudhuri for "Childhood Brook" - funded M. Graham & Company and Rett Ashby Designs

Alden Bryan Memorial Landscape Award of Excellence: Lost Eden Canyon, Lake Powell - funded by Alden and Mary Bryan Arts Fund and the Vermont Community Foundation

Landscape Honorable Mention: J. Ken Spencer OPA for "Evening Glow" - funded Blue Ridge Oil Colors and Rosemary & Company Artists Brushes

Portraiture Award of Excellence: Steve Atkinson OPA for "Tough Enough to Wear Pink" - funded by Savoir-Faire



"Childhood Dream" painted by Jan Peng Wang OPAM won the Most Original Award of Excellence in the Master Signature Division



Quang Ho OPAM's painting "By Mountain Stream, High Key" won both the Impressionist Award of Excellence and the Members' Choice Award in the Master Signature Division

Portraiture Honorable Mention: Kurt Anderson OPA for "Bradford" - funded by Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors and SourceTek Art Supply

Seascape Award of Excellence: Karen Blackwood for "Atlantic Storm" - funded by Michael Harding Artist Oil Colours

Seascape Honorable Mention: Rebecca Leer for "Rocky Cove" - funded by Williamsburg Handmade Oil Colors and Ampersand Art Supply

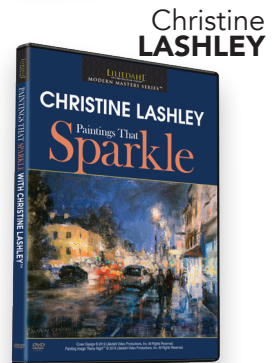
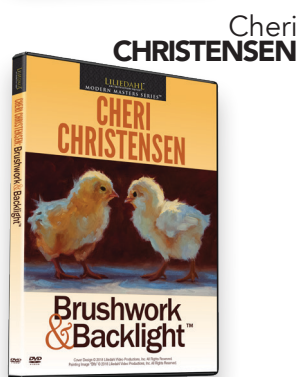
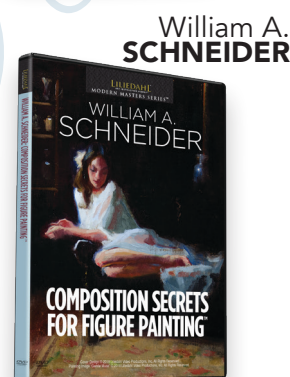
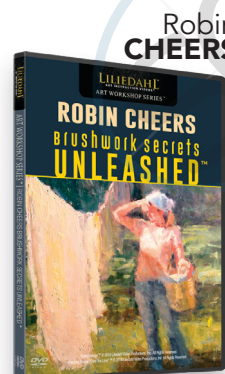
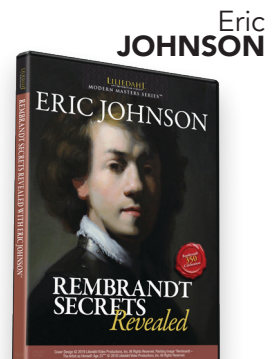
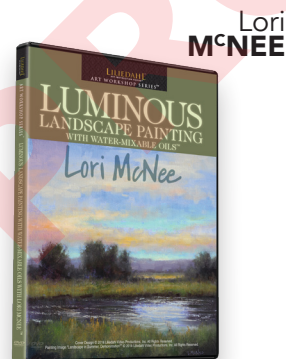
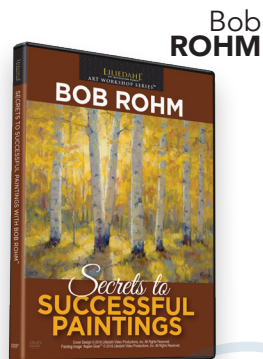
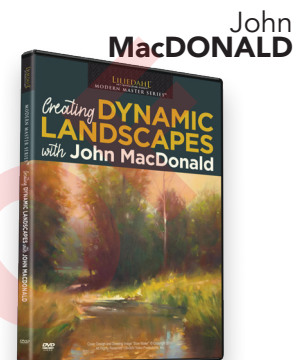
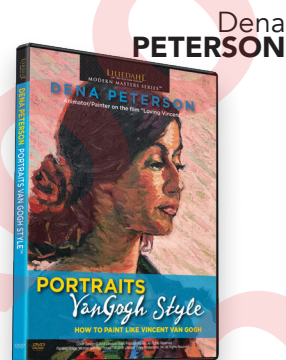
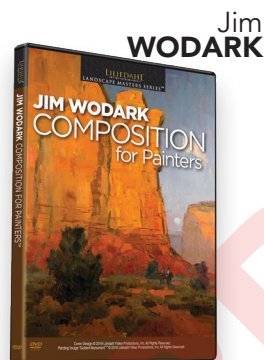
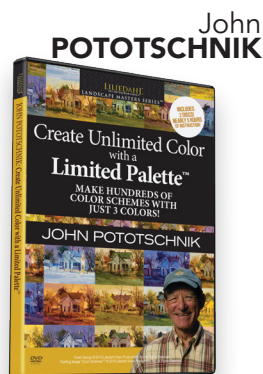


Derek Penix won the Ted Goerschner OPAM Memorial Impressionist Award of Excellence for "Abundance"

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"Nature's Reverie" won Johanna Harmon OPA the Best Signature Award of Excellence



Jeanna Lineweaver's painting "Creative Mind at Rest" won the Most Original Award of Excellence



The Best Associate Award of Excellence was given to Neal Hughes for "Dream Boat Nocturne"

2019 Natl. Show con't.

Still Life Award of Excellence: Jim T. McVicker for "Silence" - funded by Maimeri Puro Oils

Still Life Honorable Mention: Yelena Snovsky for "Cheese and Wine" - funded by Rembrandt Oils and SourceTek Art Supply

Neil Patterson OPAM Award of Excellence: Jim Carson for "The Bowery" - funded by Past President Neil Patterson OPAM

The Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship for Midwestern Artists: William A. Suys OPA for "Settling In" - funded by The Richard H. Driehaus Foundation

Members' Choice Award of Excellence: Mary Sauer for "Parisian Bathroom 2" - funded by Blick Art Materials

Members' Choice Honorable Mention: Derek Penix for "Abundance" - funded by Grumbacher and Schmincke

MASTER SIGNATURE DIVISION

Gold Medal - Master Signature Division: Daud Akhriev OPAM for "Isaiah" - funded by OPA and Friends of OPA

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

Bronze Medal - Master Signature Division: James Tennison OPAM for "Champion" - funded by *Plein Air Magazine*

Most Original Award of Excellence: Jan Pang Wang OPAM for "Childhood Dream" - funded by *Southwest Art Magazine*

Donors Award of Excellence: Cindy Baron OPAM for "Lines of Heritage" - funded Michael Harding Handmade Artist Oil Colours and Friends of OPA

Realism Award of Excellence: Jeff Legg OPAM for "Co-existence" - funded by Savoir-Faire

Impressionist Award of Excellence: Quang Ho OPAM for "By Mountain Stream" - funded by Blue Ridge Oil Colors and FASO

Shirl Smithson Founders' Award for Master Signature Members: Albert Handell OPAM for "Peaceful Flow" - funded by the Shirl Smithson Family

Members' Choice Award for Master Signature Members: Quang Ho OPAM for "By Mountain Stream, High Key" - funded by JFM Enterprises and Bella Muse Productions

Members' Choice Honorable Mention Award for Master Signature Members: Nancy S. Crookston OPAM for "The Secret Adversary" - funded by Gamblin Artists Colors.



TJ Cunningham was awarded the Animal Award of Excellence for "Many Long Years Ago"

JUROR OF AWARDS STATEMENT 2019 NATIONAL EXHIBITION KENN BACKHAUS OPAM

The challenge that faces the modern day representational artist is creating art that has an interesting enough idea and visual message beyond the surface of the canvas. A message that transcends the visceral response and as a visual, can resonate with one's mind and spirit. Like very thoughtfully chosen words of the writer or well-orchestrated notes of the composer, the visual artist must control the idea through line, shapes, values, colors, textures, rhythms and harmonies. The artist's skilled and experienced hands, with well-chosen tools and medium, deliver the message with confidence, accuracy, definition and with a possible hint of visual and surface surprise.

The Oil Painters of America has attracted some of the best of those artists with their ambitions to excite the world with their creative efforts. The organization's Annual National Exhibition has attracted a membership pool of very skilled artists with academic abilities that rise well above the norm in regards to proficiency with brush and medium. When having to judge and measure one's work over another's, and when the sound principals and foundations of quality art excels in almost every work, it allows for very little difference. What remains and must be measured is the uniqueness of the visual idea. We've all probably heard the comment, "it's all been done before"! There might be a lot of truth to that, but also there are possible new ways to visually say something. Comparison of works in an exhibit identifies if an idea has been executed in a similar fashion before, or has a particular artist exercised and introduced new creative elements in portraying that idea. Having visited many museums over my years of studying masters' works, what began to intrigue me was not only the artist's ability to convey a visual illusion but the occasional work that was so unlike others even though the topic had been translated before! For instance, the uniqueness to a common idea through a depiction of an unusual vantage point, a unique value range (high key, middle key or low key), an unexpected color harmony, the controlled and well-designed use of an unusual format. The uniqueness to a subject matter can sometimes come through the design choices that the artist chooses. Spatial arrangement of shapes, both positive and negative, can have a more memorable and lasting impression on the viewer.

Another discovery in my visits to museums turned out to be very profound when trying to understand what I refer to as "The WOW Factor"! We have all probably experienced seeing an awesome work in a museum, stood in front of it, mouth open and just quietly said, WOW! In the meantime the painting to the right or left could have great qualities of execution, etc., but your reaction to it may be far from the WOW factor. This WOW factor can be identified for various reasons, some which I mentioned earlier, e.g., uniqueness of the idea itself, the design, use of color, value, format, etc. Also, one has to remember that the Wow Factor to one viewer could be very different to another. They may say Wow to that other painting to the right of left of the one that moves you!

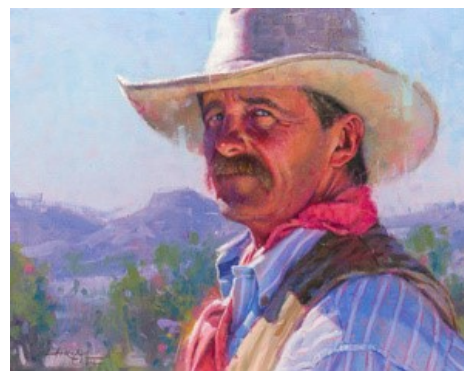
See page 13 for continuation of Juror's statement.



Karen Blackwood won the Seascape
Award of Excellence for
"Atlantic Storm"



"May Day", by Robert Papp
won the
Presidents' Award of Excellence



The Portraiture Award of Excellence
was awarded to Steve Atkinson OPA
for "Tough Enough to Wear Pink"



Demo artist Susan Lyon, representing
Rosemary & Co. Brushes



John P. Lasater IV
representing Rembrandt Oil

Demo artist, sponsor
and owner
Elizabeth Robbins,
representing Bella
Muse Productions



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Patsy Ledbetter OPA
Jeff Legg OPAM
Joyce Pike OPAM
William A. Schneider OPAM
Zhiewi Tu OPAM
Sabina Turner OPA



The Still Life Award of
Excellence was given to
Jim T. McVicker for "Silence"



Blair Atherholt won the Art
Renewal Center Realism
Award of Excellence for
"Harsh Critic"

"Holding on to a Dream"
by Robin Williamson won
the John August Dietrich
Memorial Figurative
Award



**MEET THE MASTER SIGNATURE DIVISION
GOLD MEDAL WINNER
DAUD AKHRIEV OPAM**

Daud Akhriev was born in the former Soviet Union in 1959. He studied classical painting and drawing for 14 years, graduating with honors from the Repin Institute (Russian Academy of Fine Art) with a Master's Degree in Fine Art, under the tutelage of the late painter and Academic, Piotr Fomin. In 1991 he emigrated to Chattanooga, Tennessee. Akhriev, now a U.S. citizen, shares his time between Andalusia, Spain and Chattanooga, Tennessee with his artist wife, OPA member Melissa Hefferlin.



Akhriev is internationally sought after as an instructor for figure and landscape painting and for his monumental work. The Four Seasons, his four 9-foot bronze figures completed for the city of Chattanooga, are listed on the national Public Art Registry. Additional public art includes the Erlanger Chapel Mosaic and the Baylor School Mosaic, as well as murals at the Collegedale Seventh-Day Adventist Church and St. Peter's Episcopal.

Daud Akhriev, Stylistic Pluralism was published in 2002 by Common Place publishing. He is also featured in *Traditions Rediscovered*, the Finley Collection of Russian Art. Akhriev's drawings are in several books about the Repin Institute, both in Russian language and in Chinese, and in numerous magazines such as *Artists Magazine*, *Pastel Journal*, *Island Journal*, *Chattanooga Magazine*, *Southern Living* and *American Art Collector*.



**MEET THE ASSOCIATE AND SIGNATURE DIVISION
GOLD MEDAL WINNER
SUSAN LYON**

Susan Lyon grew up in Oak Park, Illinois. Her initial interest in art was sparked by a PBS television show on Georgia O'Keeffe, that inspired her to take drawing classes. Lyon studied art at the American Academy of Art in Chicago and was an active participant in Chicago's Palette and Chisel Academy of Fine Arts. It is there she first began exhibiting and selling her work; at twenty-three she was the youngest winner of the Academy's prestigious Gold Medal which she won two consecutive years in the annual Oil Painting show plus a third place in the Academy's Silver Medal show.

Susan draws inspiration from painters of the Gilded Age such as Anders Zorn, Joaquin Sorolla and John Singer Sargent. She also is passionate about artists like Philip Malavin from Russia and contemporary masters Richard Schmid and Nancy Guzik. Lyon's technique is to paint wet on wet to start and then wet on dry for her finishing touches. "My style is realistic with as much impressionistic color as possible. I like to combine wide brushes for sweeping strokes in the background with small, soft brushes for subtle details in my center of interest." One of my greatest passions is drawing, I hope to show collectors that works on paper is a wonderful addition to a serious collection.

Susan Lyon lives in a rural area of North Carolina with her husband, artist Scott Burdick, whom she met at the Palette and Chisel Academy of Fine Arts in Chicago. She and her husband travel widely "The excitement of traveling, seeing so many new sights and people, plus incredible works in museums; combined with the challenge of painting on the spot make me a travel addict! Even before I go on a trip I'm planning the one after."

Susan works equally in oil and pastel/charcoal.

She has been featured in numerous publications as well as having published *Visions and Voyages-The Art of Susan Lyon*.



“SOUTHWEST TREASURES” WET PAINT COMPETITION JUROR OF AWARDS STATEMENT LORI PUTNAM OPA

It was thrilling to see so much participation in this year’s “Southwest Treasures” Wet Paint Competition. With judging two separate categories, the task was both challenging and invigorating. Many of the entrants submitted work in both the plein air and in the studio sides of the competition. Needless to say, the diversity of subject matter was as impressive as the exhibition itself.

As a judge, the first thing I look for are those paintings one might identify as meeting a certain list of standards. Among them are drawing, design, composition, value, color, and edges. However, a work which has overwhelming intention also warrants a high score in my book. I believe you can tell the difference between an inaccurate drawing and an intentionally stylistic drawing. The same is true for paintings. In an organization which is dedicated to the preservation of representational art, a judge must tread carefully. While some artists may bend “rules,” there is obvious truth if something is lacking, be it skill or communication. When an artist communicates clearly, there is no lack of skill. Conversely, the opposite is also true. Those paintings that receive stellar marks on my own personal tally sheet, are both full of the artist’s voice as well as meeting the guidelines of Oil Painters of America’s exhibitions of traditional oils.

There were so many stunning pieces in this exhibition. I studied them for several hours, up-close, from a distance, taking them off of the wall and placing them next to others, or looking at them in different lighting. In the end, of course, there were only so many awards to hand out. I found it quite difficult when those last half-dozen or so works had to be cut. Many of them are still so clear in my mind, and I often wonder if the artist would want to know that had I been able to give an extra award or two, theirs would have received one.

I hope you will agree that final list of award winners was just as diverse as the show itself. Thanks to everyone who participated and put your trust in me. Congratulations to all of you!

Following is a list of the 2019 Wet Paint Competition Award Winners.

PLEIN AIR DIVISION

First Place: Doug Braithwaite for “St. George” - funded by *Southwest Art Magazine* and OPA

Second Place: John P. Lasater IV for “Snow Canyon” - funded by *Western Art Collector Magazine*

Third Place: Kalie Graves for “Pots” - funded by *Plein Air Magazine* and FASO

STUDIO DIVISION

First Place: Nancy S. Crookston OPAM for “Sage Advice” - funded by *Southwest Art Magazine*

Second Place: Jeremy Goodding for “Blue Green Vase” - funded by *Western Art Collector Magazine*

Third Place: Julie Rogers for “Farra in White” - funded by Tre-kell Art Supplies, Maimeri Puro Oils and FASO

COMBINED DIVISION Wet Paint Awards of Excellence

Bill Cramer for “Before the Rain” - funded by Holbein Art Supplies, Guerrilla Painter and New Wave Fine Art Products



Pioneer Woman, Wet Paint Model



Model, Abraham Lincoln



Native American Warrior Model

“SOUTHWEST TREASURERS” WET PAINT COMPETITION PLEIN AIR DIVISION WINNERS



First Place was awarded to Doug Braithwaite for “St. George”



John P. Lasater IV won Second Place for “Snow Canyon”



“Pots” painted by Kalie Graves won Third Place

Wet Paint Competition, Natl. Show.

Greg LaRock OPA for “Desert Path” - funded by Holbein Art Supplies, Guerrilla Painter and New Wave Fine Art Products

Lynn Fearman for “Grafton Cabin” - funded by New Wave Fine Art Products and OPA

Kelli Folsom OPA for “Roses on Marble” - funded by Guerrilla Painter and New Wave Fine Art Products

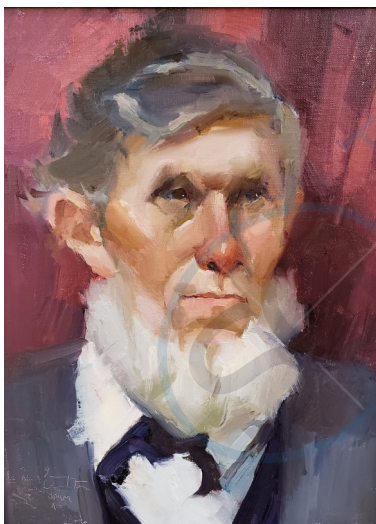
Alicia L. Finlayson for “Morning on the Desert Ledge” - funded by Jack Richeson & Co.

Vicki Walker for “Iris in Red” - funded by Jack Richeson & Co.

Bonnie McGee for “Kazenta Morning” - funded by New Wave Fine Art Products and OPA

Kathie Odom for “Borrowed Time” - funded by New Wave Fine Art Products and OPA Fine Art Products

STUDIO DIVISION WINNERS



Nancy S. Crookston OPAM won First Place for “Sage Advise”



“Blue Green Vase” by Jeremy Goodding won Second Place



Third Place was awarded to Julie Rogers for “Farra in White”

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR 2020 NATIONAL EXHIBITION & CONVENTION

Don't miss next year's exhibition at RS Hanna Gallery, LLC, located in Fredericksburg, TX. The 2020 National Convention will begin May 12 and will run through May 17 with the Awards and Recognition Ceremony taking place May 15. Exhibition dates are May 15 through June 13.

Canvas size is not to exceed 1,200 square inches. More details will follow as they become finalized.



Dorothy Driehaus Mellin, William Suys
OPA and President Kurt Anderson OPA

INTRODUCING THE DOROTHY DRIEHAUS MELLIN FELLOWSHIP FOR MIDWESTERN ARTISTS WINNER WILLIAM A. SUYS OPA

Oil painter Bill Suys is a Signature Member of both the Oil Painters of America and the Portrait Society of America whose greatest joy in life is standing behind his easel, indoors or out, with a brush in his hand. Bill creates plein air and studio works using wide-ranging subject matter: portraiture/figurative, landscape, animals, still life and architecture. Suys paints, teaches, judges, lectures and demonstrates. He has won a great many national and international awards and is proud to serve on the OPA Board of Directors.

Bill's recent accomplishments include the Dorothy Driehaus Mellin Fellowship Award at the 2019 OPA National Exhibition, Best Body of Work and the Matisse Award at the 2018 Olmsted Plein Air Invitational and the Silver Medal at the 2018 OPA National Salon show. Suys's work has been selected to hang in 8 OPA National Exhibitions since 2010 (awarded Best Animal in 2016, Animal Award of Excellence in 2017), has been repeatedly chosen as finalist and award winner in the ARC Salon, and in 2013, awarded Best in Show at the Salon International.

In addition to numerous group and one-man gallery shows, event invitations, awards earned, juried show acceptances – and some wonderful editorial coverage in *Southwest Art*, *Fine Art Connoisseur*, *Plein Air* magazine and *American Art Collector* magazine – Suys's devotion to his craft, his participation in plein air invitationals and juried exhibitions, judging, and increasingly teaching, have helped him grow not just in reputation but as a soulful painter who believes in lifelong learning, 'no excuses', and the power of observation.

Suys believes that 'a rising tide floats all boats' and generously shares his acquired knowledge; he is committed to lifelong learning, the quest for excellence, and to creating work that stands the test of time.

Artist's Statement: Every day of my life, I'm striving to create work with its own heart and soul; work that compels those who see it to go beyond the surface and to become personally, intellectually and emotionally involved. I am committed to artistic excellence, lifelong improvement, and to creating a body of work that will stand the test of time.



National award winners and sponsors pose for a group photo after the Friday night Awards and Recognition Ceremony
Top Row: Mike Malm, Michelle Montes, Katie Liddiard, Bill Suys OPA, Symi Jackson, John Michael Carter OPAM
Bottom Row: Juror of Awards Kenn Backhaus OPAM, Jeremy Goodding, Kurt Anderson OPA, Jeff Legg OPAM, Steve Atkinson OPA, David Dibble OPA, Raj Chaudhuri, Nancy S. Crookston OPAM, Susan Lyon, Kalie Graves, Jenna Lineweaver, Kelli Folsom OPA, Johanna Harmon OPA, Kaline Carter, Kristen Hoerth, Doug Braithwaite, John P. Lasater IV, Jeff Olson

Continuation of National Juror of Awards Statement by Kenn Backhaus OPAM

This brings up the topic of personal influence or taste. The judge must remove his or her personal likes from the duty of judging. Early on in the transition from commercial art into the fine art world, I had the chance to meet the late Irvin Shapiro. Mr. Shapiro was born in Chicago, Ill in 1927. He studied his art profession at the Chicago Art Institute and the American Academy of Art in Chicago. He taught art courses at the American Academy of Art from 1944 until 1994 and served for many years as the Director and President of the Academy. He was a very well respected watercolorist and instructor around the world. During a workshop that he was conducting years ago in my native state

of WI Irvin had offered the opportunity for local artists to bring in any artistic works they wished and he would critique the work. It was an open session and artists brought not only representational works but every "ism" of artistic discipline, sculpture, photography - you name it, they brought it in to have Mr. Shapiro critique it. I was amazed that he could review and make great sense and critique so many various works while using the historic and traditional principals and foundations of art that are the ingredients to quality visual works to guide his thoughts and comments. It was also revealed that his personal influences and tastes were set aside for this task. After that moment I had thought very differently about my future comments to fellow artists about their works. My place in the art

world would be forever changed, and that if at any time in the future, I would be of a place in my career that I would be asked to critique or judge, I knew how I would best approach that challenge. Just as other creative outlets such as music, composing, writing, acting or dance has its standards of principals, foundations and guidelines so, too, does the visual arts. Without the proper use of these historic components, the visual world will collapse under self-indulgence.

The last element of judging a large body of works that I feel is very important, and many times slightly overlooked, is the presentation of the work - the framing of ones chosen piece. As a visual comparison, I

Continued on page 14



Entrance to the inviting Entrada at Snow Canyon Country Club, with panoramic views in all directions



Danni Hu shares a quiet moment with past presidents Betty Schmidt and Zhiwei Tu OPAM



The opening reception was a well attended event



Demo artist Gary Ernest Smith explaining his technique



Two models pose for multiple artists during one of the Wet Paint sessions



Joe Gyurcsak OPA speaks on various aspect of safety at his luncheon presentation

Backhaus statement con't.

have used over the years in my teaching, a simple description of myself dressed in the black tuxedo. Starting with a visual from top to bottom, i.e., well-groomed hair, properly tied bowtie, white shirt with black buttons, beautifully pressed jacket along with pressed pants and beautifully shined brown shoes... What? Brown shoes???? I think you get the picture! Presentation can be that last factor that either makes or breaks that possible tie between two last works for award consideration. Hopefully all of the above gives you an insight into my judging process.

I feel that I have started to lecture and that is not what I want to come across in my statement, but more of what drives my decisions as a judge. It is an honor in one's profession to be asked to judge such an event with

so many great and inspirational contemporary artists and their works. I admire your convictions and contributions to the world. As one artist to another, we are the ones responsible to carry the torch that so many have carried and kept lit before. We have a wonderful opportunity to educate, inspire and yes, occasionally create that "Wow" painting! It was a pleasure to serve as the awards judge for a most prestigious 28th Annual National Juried Exhibition of Traditional Oils. Thank you to Jane Bell Meyer for offering her beautiful galleries to exhibit this major show. Thank you to Jane's wonderful staff for giving me any help needed and mostly thanks for allowing me the extra time needed to conduct my duties. Thank you to the Oil Painters of America's President, Kurt Ander-

son, for your confidence and this honor to be this year's awards judge. A big thanks to the OPA Board, Kathryn Beligratis and all of the staff members who made my visit and experience a real pleasure!

When the duties of judging are completed, the best opportunity is still awaiting, and that is the opportunity to meet so many of you wonderful, creative artists. It was great to see old faces and meet so many new members of OPA. Once again, congratulations for making this a very successful national exhibition, and congratulations to all the exhibiting artists and the award winners!

I will leave you now with a comment I have used for many years when departing my artist friends... *Keep That Brush to the Canvas!*



max. canvas height: 20"
min. canvas height: 6"

telescoping for height adjustments

independent leg spread

3 part telescoping legs great for uneven surfaces

clip for hanging your bag to add weight

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Slim and lightweight easel, designed to work with most tripods. Holds canvases or panels from 6" - 20".
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Sienna Tripod
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CT-SB-0101

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SPRING 2019 ASSOCIATE ONLINE SHOWCASE AWARD WINNERS ANNOUNCED

Juror of Awards Nikolo Balkanski OPAM reviewed over 525 entries before making his final decision on who should be awarded the top honors in the Spring, 2019 Online Showcase. To view a complete list of the winners, or see all entries to confirm how difficult this process of decision making was, visit the OPA website. Go to the "OPA Online Showcase" menu under "Education & Events" and click on the March 1 - May 15, 2019 entries.

As in the past, this competition would not be possible were it not for the generous support of Dorothy Driehaus Mellin and the Richard H. Driehaus Foundation, who provide the financial support for these awards. Their ongoing support of OPA and representational art is appreciated.

The following is a list of the award winners:

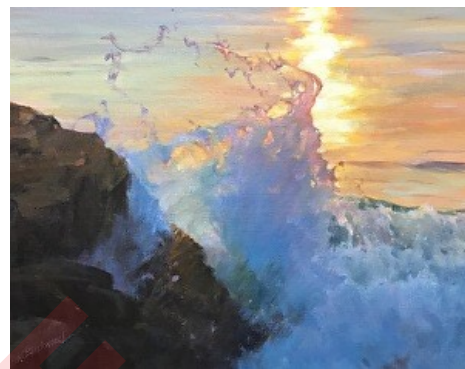
First Place: Karen Blackwood for "Illumination"

Second Place: Janet Frost for "Winter Sunset"

Third Place: Tina Garrett for "Reverie"

Honorable Mentions: Brandon Gonzales for "Royal Sticks & Stones", Lani Browning for "Hydrangeas", Jim Wodark for "Awaiting Dawn", Sherrie Nielsen for "Happiness Is", Paige Thomson for "Portrait of John Henry Hanzlik", Hope Reis for "The Gold Coat", Barbara Coleman for "Raking Light at Ghost Ranch", Yvonne Bonacci for "Mellow Yellow", Trent Gudmundsen for "Morning Coffee" and Dorothy Lorenze for "Mechanical Staccato and Scotch".

The Fall Online Showcase is open to both Associate and Signature members, with separate honors being awarded in each division. The cost remains \$14 per entry with no limit to the number of entries you may submit.



Online Showcase First Place painting
"Illumination", created
by Karen Blackwood



MEET THE SPRING ONLINE SHOWCASE WINNER KAREN BLACKWOOD

Karen Blackwood was born in New Hampshire and received her BA in the Fine Art Dept. at the University of N.H. studying under Conley Harris and Sigmund Abeles. After spending the earlier part of her professional life as an Art Director for a major New York City Ad Agency, she moved to California, picked up her brushes and dedicated herself to painting.

Trained in the classical tradition, Karen painted portraits and figurative work before focusing on landscapes. Karen feels light is a defining factor, and it is the atmospheric quality of the light she captures in her paintings. Her work is a desire to paint what inspires her and to capture the very essence of the scene. Now living in New-

buryport, MA, the coastal scenery is providing her with endless inspiration for her marine work, garnering her a multitude of awards including two recent awards of First Place in the Spring Oil Painters of America Online Showcase and the Seascape Award of Excellence in the 28th National Juried Oil Painters of America exhibition in St. George, UT.

Karen's paintings have been included in exhibitions organized by the Marine Art Society where she is a Signature member, touring 6 museums Nationwide, and many other nationally acclaimed exhibitions.

Her paintings and her work have been recognized in multiple publications including various art magazines, *The NY Times* and the *LA Times*.

A sought-after workshop instructor, she teaches in workshop locations across the country.



MY WORKSHOP EXPERIENCE - THE ATELIER By Cassandra Ronning

Finding The Atelier on The Artist Renewal Center's website changed my life. I had been searching for a classical training in oil painting for years and was ecstatic to find that atelier type programs existed. An atelier in the traditional sense was a small painting studio where students could study with one or more master painters. This program is focused on training the eye to identify the nuances of light as it pours over a mass. Through careful study and critique from the five teachers that work with the full-time program, a student progresses through a series of projects that introduce different problems to solve.

You begin with charcoal as your medium to study the figure from life and the cast in controlled lighting situations. Once a *working knowledge of charcoal as a medium is achieved, black and white oil paint is introduced with the same subjects*. Typically, this is completed within the first year and the student begins working with color on still life as a subject in the second. The third year is loosely centered around color portraiture and the fourth builds on all you have learned with the study of portraiture in the interior.

During my first year as a student at The Atelier, I completed three long term charcoal studies and 10 – 15 pencil studies of the figure. I worked on two long term cast projects in charcoal and painted one of them in black and white. Over the summer I plan on many plein air studies, one long pose figure painting and working on a personal portrait. When school begins in September, I will start on still life set ups in natural life and delve fully into color.

What I have learned so far is hard to put into words. My eye has greatly improved with the ability to create more accurately in the first stages of a drawing or painting. I have found that I can "lie" less to myself when there are inaccuracies in my drawings or paintings. This ability to see the truth allows me to move through changes quicker even when they are a bit of a pain. I can build a project faster allowing me to spend more time on finishing work instead of chasing the pose or constructing a drawing.

I want to thank Oil Painters of America for supporting me in this pursuit of knowledge. I feel privileged to have been chosen by an institution dedicated to representational art and its continued practice. I know painting is my calling and it is encouraging to be counted with others who believe in the beauty of traditional mediums and what they can create.

EXHIBITORS AT THE NATIONAL CONVENTION



Gamblin Artists Colors



Rett Ashby Frames



Bella Muse Productions



Maimeri Puro Oils



Michael Harding Artist Oil Colours



Rosemary & Co. Artists' Brushes



Savoire-Faire

STRADA

Also, thank you to STRADA Easel for exhibiting at our convention

NOTES FROM YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The Board of Directors sends a sincere Thank You to past Board Member Konrad Hack OPA. Konrad recently stepped down from his seat on the Board. He was on the Board for over 15 years, chairing the Scholarship Review Committee for many of these years and also chairing the Signature Review Committee in recent years. Konrad was also the recipient of the Dorothy Drieaus Mellin Fellowship for Midwestern Artists in 2011.

Plans for the Twenty-ninth Annual Oil Painters of America Exhibition and Convention are well under way. The 2020 Exhibition will be held at RH Hanna Gallery, LLC, located in Fredericksburg, Texas. The ever popular wet paint event and competition will open the convention on May 12. Other programs will include painting demonstrations, lectures and an introduction to the Distinguished Artist of the year. The Recognition and Awards Ceremony is scheduled for Friday evening, May 15. As always the most recently appointed Signature and Master

Signature members will be recognized, as well as the winners of the Wet Paint Competition and the National Exhibition. More information will be mailed in November. But in the meantime, start working on those paintings, canvas size not larger than 1,200 square inches. Juror of Awards for this spectacular event is Rose Frantzen. Be sure not to miss this great event.

For those who might not have entered an exhibition recently, note that you may now enter up to three entries for jurying into a show (though only one may be chosen). Entry fees are \$30 for one, \$45 for two and \$60 for three entries.

Plans are in the works for the 2020 Western Regional Exhibition at Montgomery Lee Fine Art in Park City, UT, with the Eastern Exhibition at Reinert Fine Art in Charleston, SC. And mark your calendar for the 30th Anniversary, 2021 National Exhibition taking place in Escondido, CA. More details to follow.

There has been a slight increase in the cost of a critique. Moving forward critiques will cost \$30 to OPA members with the cost for non-members being \$50. These critiques are given by OPA Signature and Master Signature members and are offered year round to anyone wishing to apply.

Just a friendly reminder that applications for Master Signature status are due September 1st. Applications may be submitted online by going to Member Services on the OPA website. Click on the Information/Join/Renew/Rejoin menu and scroll down to Master Signature Membership. You must be a current Signature Member to apply for this status.

Applications for Signature status are due at OPA by October 15th. For information on the 2 methods by which you may apply, visit Member Services on the OPA website. Click on the Information/Join/Renew/Rejoin menu and scroll down to Signature Membership.

BUY NOW, AVOID THE HOLIDAY RUSH

There are many items available to help show you are a proud member of OPA. Visit the website to purchase any of these items, and to view more. Prices listed include tax and shipping within the United States



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EARRINGS
\$18



POST
EARRINGS
\$12



APRON
\$25

PAINTING OUR FUTURE NEWS BRIEFS AND SPECIAL OCCASIONS

Suzie Baker OPA was one of the artists selected to be interviewed and written about in the May issue of *Southwest Art Magazine*.

Mark Beale received two ARC Salon International Finalist awards for his works "Breaking Dawn" and "Plantation Field, Overgrown" and a Bold Brush Favorite 15 Jury's Award for "Golden Moonrise".

Roger Dale Brown OPAM was a featured artist in the August, 2019 *American Art Magazine*, in the article "The Secret Sea".

Aimee Erickson OPA was featured in the August *American Art* magazine. Aimee also has a solo exhibition at Meyer Gallery in Santa Fe from August 30 - September 7.

Crystal Despain is pleased to announce the opening of her first solo show in traditional oils. The opening reception is part of August, First Friday Art Walk in Denver's Santa Fe Art District.

Joseph Fama's painting "Shadow" was accepted into The New Haven Paint & Clay Club 118th Annual Juried Art Exhibition. The exhibition ran May 11th - June 1st. Joseph also has had 16 of his landscape paintings on display at Nathaniel Witherell Gallery in Greenwich, CT through the month of July.

Sheri Farabaugh OPA's work was featured in the May issue of *Southwest Art Magazine* in an article entitled "Compelling Reflections".

Peggy Immel was the featured artist of the ongoing column "The Studio of . . ." in the July/August issue of *Art of the West Magazine*.

Andrei Kushnir has recorded the history of the Shenandoah Valley through a series of paintings that capture the extraordinary beauty and vitality of the region, qualities that enticed pioneers to settle there and inspired artists to try to capture its vistas.

Sivananda Nyayapathi describes how his upbringing has influenced his painting, in the article "East and West" in the August edition of *American Art Magazine*.

Ken Requard won a First Place Award in Experimental Category at the July 2019 Wild Rivers Plein Air Art competition in Red River, NM. His winning painting, "Gorse on the Gorge", is a mixed media work of oil paint and cold wax



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JOIN OPA'S BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OPA is an artist led organization that depends on its hard-working volunteers. We are looking for individuals to join this energetic group of artist leaders helping to guide the OPA in its important role as the foremost showcase and advocate for representational oil painting.

We are specifically looking for members with professional experience in one of the following areas: technology, business, accounting, fundraising, or marketing.

If you think you could contribute to our mission and help OPA grow and evolve over the next few years – we want to hear from you! Please email your resume and cover letter to: Kurt Anderson OPA, OPA President, kurt@kurtanderson.net

IN MEMORIAM

With deep sympathy to the family and friends, we note the passing of:

Master Signature Member Everett Raymond Kinstler of New York, New York, in May, 2019, a member since 2007,

Signature Member Robert (Bob) Kuester of Rio Rancho, New Mexico, in June, 2019, a member since 2000.

DATES TO REMEMBER

September - November - 14th Annual Great Paint Outs held throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico

For more information, visit: www.oilpaintersofamerica.com and go to "Paints Outs" under the "Education & Events" menu.

September 1 – Deadline for submission for 2019 Master Signature membership status. Minimum requirement is current Signature status.

October 15 - Deadline for submission for Signature membership status. Minimum requirement is current Associate status. Two options are available for application. Visit the OPA website and look under the "Member Services" menu for "Information/Join/Renew/Rejoin" for complete details.

December 1 – Deadline for submission for 2020 Shirl Smithson Memorial Scholarships.

NATIONAL EXHIBITION

Twenty-Ninth Annual National Juried Exhibition, Convention & Wet Paint Competition - RS Hanna Gallery, LLC. in Fredericksburg, Texas

Convention Opens: May 12 Exhibition: May 15 - June 13, 2020

Exhibition Juror of Awards: Rose Frantzen

Wet Paint Competition Juror of Awards: John Pototschnik OPA

REGIONAL EXHIBITIONS

October 10 - November 11, 2019 - Eastern Regional Exhibition - Beverly McNeil Gallery in Birmingham, Alabama

Juror of Awards: Roger Dale Brown OPAM

November 1 - 30, 2019 - Western Regional Exhibition - Sorrel Sky Gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico

Canvas Size: not to exceed 1,200 square inches

Entries due: June 10 - August 30

Juror of Awards: Kathryn Stats

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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