



Newsletter

March 2016

Verdugo Hills Art Association, P.O. Box 8059, La Crescenta, CA 91224
verdugoarts.org Dave Crandon, Editor, dave_vhaa@yahoo.com

Spanning the centuries - Encaustic - the ancient art of mixing pigment with hot wax. Demonstration on March 11

by Sara Griggs

I originally was spellbound by the Fayum mummy portraits from Egypt done around 100-300 A.D. The dimensional quality and luminous color were mesmerizing. In the 20th century such notable North American artists such as Jasper Johns, Tony Scherman and Diego Rivera also used encaustic. Encaustic painting which is known as hot wax painting can be used to paint, to shape and sculpt, to layer and collage. On March 11, VHAA is privileged to have Caryl St. Ama give us a demo on this medium.

As artists we are often moved by tragedy. Caryl St. Ama, our demonstrator this month, says, "This current body of work focuses on the effects of both natural and man-made disasters affecting the Gulf coast. I was especially struck by the images that poured in from the media from the BP Oil spill many years ago. I didn't recognize places that I once called home, I didn't recognize places that I played as a kid and young adult, but like a train wreck, I couldn't turn away. Finally, after visiting the homestead and seeing with my own eyes the reality, I reentered my studio to try to make sense of the tragedies.



Work from Caryl's current show at Groundspace Projects in Los

The work I make today is a constant reminder of what a delicate balance the cycle of life is. I make work using encaustic, layered with a variety of collage materials and oil paint. I love the way the wax encapsulates the feathers, leaves or lace and creates a natural depth that one can look into and through. I love the reflective nature of the wax. I use wooden panels and combine them in different ways to create a dialog or a narrative the way one would weave a tale to warn those of things to come or how things once were." As she began her exploration into encaustic she discovered its luminosity and flexibility to propel her work forward in focusing on the disasters affecting the Gulf of Mexico.

This past year Caryl was invited to participate in WaterWorks 2, an International Juried Exhibition which highlighted the immense issues relating to water. Her other exhibitions and installations are too numerous to list here. Work from Caryl's current show is at Groundspace Projects in Los Angeles. In addition to being a fully tenured professor at Glendale Community College, she is teaching two upcoming workshops at the IEA Art Expo in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Caryl is a storyteller of life and the cycle of life. Her work has amazing depth as she uses encaustic with a variety of collage materials, feathers, leaves, lace and found objects as she weaves her artistic story. Let's have some fun and explore a new dimension that we can incorporate into our own work as well.



Work from Caryl's current show at Groundspace Projects in Los Angeles

Weekly Studio Painting Opportunity in Highland Park

Our members have an amazing opportunity for a "free" weekly studio painting experience at the Highland Park Seniors Center, at 6152 North Figueroa. Please join a welcoming community of artists for non-structured painting in a beautiful and spacious local setting. Visit our website,

<http://www.verdugoarts.org/highland-park-seniors-center.html>, for details



A 1-Day Watercolor Landscape Workshop in April, with Julie Hill



In this workshop on April 16, we will paint a landscape scene composed of an old barn, rolling hills, blue sky and trees. Students will learn how to handle these subjects with differentiating approaches, colors, brushstrokes, etc. This workshop is perfect for all skill levels, and will teach students how to set up a strong composition, creatively use color, use broad brush strokes and fun washes to create engaging and dynamic paintings. Students must bring their own watercolor materials. Suggested materials list and reference photo will be provided upon enrollment. Julie is a native Southern Californian who has been painting since 2004. In describing her painting, Julie states, "When painting, I really like to play...I play with colors and shapes and keep things loose and fun. I think by keeping it loose I encourage viewers to let their imagination engage so that they can see their own lives, see their own beauty, and tell their own stories. This is art to me." Please visit our web site, verdugoarts.org, under the "activities" tab to get the workshop flyer, or just [click here](#) if you are reading online.

Richard Scott - How to Strengthen a Painting

by Dave Crandon

We have been fortunate to hear presentations from several inspiring artists this year. They have shared techniques for improving the quality of our work, and ideas for new things we can try.

Richard Scott's talk was unlike any of the others we have heard. He did not apply a single stroke of paint and, in fact, did not focus on any particular medium or technique. Instead he used paintings and photographs created by our members and guests, critiquing them as he would when acting as juror for an exhibition, to teach us fundamentals of composition.

Funny, articulate, a good story-teller, and always constructive, Richard engaged a sizable crowd in discussion about how to create a captivating image. One message he repeated over and over was that an artist needs to determine what element of his or her creation is "the star." There should only be one in a painting or photograph, and composition should focus attention on the star.

Richard showed us how easy it is to look at a representational image and identify the "thing" that was the star - be it a person, or a building with interesting architecture, for example. Once we did so, Richard would flip the image 180 degrees, telling us that a good composition should look just as good upside down as it does right side up. Looking at the flipped image we would suddenly discover that the thing we had identified as the star had suddenly disappeared into an abstract image. At the same time, something else in the image would jump out at us in the abstract, upside down image. Then he would flip the image right side up and, surprise, we could see opportunities to strengthen our work.

That became the starting point for constructive suggestions on how to improve an image. He showed us examples of how member paintings might be strengthened by changing color values and/or temperatures, by cutting back on details in elements that are not part of the star, and by cropping an image to ensure better focus on the star.

This was a fun and valuable meeting. Richard is a really engaging artist. If you have the chance to learn from him, please don't miss the opportunity.

Thoughts on Creating Art

by Sue Peacock

"A life spent making mistakes is not only more honorable, but more useful than a life spent doing nothing."

— George Bernard Shaw

"Eleanor was right. She never looked nice. She looked like art, and art wasn't supposed to look nice; it was supposed to make you feel something."

— Rainbow Rowell, Eleanor & Park

"Art is not what you see, but what you make others see."

— Edgar Degas

Do any of these statements ring true for you? Earlier this month I said to a friend that I didn't feel like painting. I haven't felt like doing art for quite a while. And I know that much of it is because I expect perfection from myself. But I am not a trained artist; I hated art in school; I didn't take up art until I was in my sixties. So George Bernard Shaw tells me to "Make those mistakes"; Rainbow Rowell adds, "And accept them"; and Degas encourages me to let others see what they see in my art. It's not the mistakes I see, it's my vision that others see.

Presidents' Letter

by Sue Peacock and Nikki Thomas

We give a great big "Thank You" to Sandy Rooney for volunteering to finish out the year as Exhibition Chair while Leona Sanderson recovers from surgery.

Remember the VHAA Paint out every third Saturday at the Montrose Citibank, lower level. The next two are February 20 and March 19.

Please sign up for the Julie Hill watercolor workshop, April 16. She was our demonstrator in October. To refresh your memory, you can go to verdugoarts.org, click on "Useful stuff", scroll down and click on "Old newsletters" and look at the October issue in our 2015-2016 collection, or just [click here](#) if you are reading this newsletter online.

Kimberly-Ann has arranged an Artists' Reception for our Spring Show at the La Canada Library. Save the date: Saturday May 21. We will let you know closer to the date what you can bring for food and non-alcoholic beverages.

Our small-image exhibit has been changed to June so we will have double the space available. Three dimensional artists: the Pasadena library uses locked cases, so this is the perfect time to enter your work.

February Artists of the Month

by Judie Apablaza



April Drew Foster was our blue ribbon winner in the "Premier" category. She started her watercolor painting, "French Sea Shore," in France, at a beach in Brittany that made her feel very happy and peaceful, while she was on a magical art workshop with the late Chris Van Winkle. She will always treasure her memories of the international plein air workshops and Chris' witty style and astute critiques.

April grew up in Southern California in a coastal community. For her, the sea has always represented peace, beauty and tranquility. The French town by the seashore seemed to speak to April of life by the sea. She loved the hard and soft lines of the ocean and the land intersecting, portrayed so masterfully in her painting.

April has been painting from a young age, having majored in art. She has taught for many years with LAUSD, recently finishing twenty-five wonderful years of teaching art in adult education. She also studied for 3 years with Mission Renaissance, and was a docent in the British, French and American art collections at the Huntington Art Galleries. April hopes to continue teaching privately as well as doing commissioned artwork. April states that she is "very fortunate that art has taken her on a lifetime visual journey where she visits beautiful places and meet wonderful people."



Kimberly-Ann Talbert is our first place winner in the "Open" category, with her striking photo, "Harbor Cove Sunset." This photograph is now on display at the Buenaventura Art Association (BAA). Kimberly has had a very positive experience with BAA's galleries, and the popularity of her work has grown over time. To see more of her work, visit <http://www.verdugoarts.org/member-shows.html>.

Like April, Kimberly-Ann has an affinity for the ocean. She loves to walk along the beach and take photographs, sometimes as many as 200 photographs at a time. She makes a distinction between the "fine art" of her work as opposed to "vacation photos" that most people bring back from trips. She states that she is very tuned into the abstraction of colors and textures that only the spontaneity of photography can capture. Kimberly-Ann loves catching the action of nature and creating a "visual memory" on film.

Like many artists, pursuing an education in the arts was not encouraged by her family. She prevailed with a degree in art and a Masters in Library Science and Information Systems. Her career allowed for art and travel. Her passion is revealed by the artist's eye behind the camera.

2015 - 2016 Key Contacts

Co-President - Sue Peacock
626-282-2852 suesingsbass2@gmail.com

Exhibitions - Sandra Rooney
818-249-9006 artistrooney@gmail.com

Publicity - Jennifer Swain
818-429-6906 jen@getdigitalorange.com

Co-President - Nikki Thomas
323-257-3817 nikkithomas1@gmail.com

Membership - Cherrie O'Hagan
818-864-6288 ohagans@charter.net

Workshops - Jeanne Windoffer
818-240-2104 jwindoffer@sbcglobal.net

Demonstrations - Sara Griggs
626-797-5773 sarandipity33@gmail.com

Newsletter and web site - Dave Crandon
dave_vhaa@yahoo.com

Artist of the Month - Judith Apablaza
818-243-7290 apablaza.j@sbcglobal.net

Verdugo Hills Art Association is looking for YOU!

by Sue Peacock and Nikki Thomas

Did that title create an image? What's your picture? Is it Uncle Sam wielding a paint brush, easel and camera? Is it Mary Talwar bringing food to the table at our meetings? Is it David McCully at the donations table, or Anna Seu renting DVDs? The VHAA board is looking for volunteers - that's you!

First up we need two members, plus an alternate, who are not on the board to serve with three board members, plus an alternate, on the nominating committee. They will meet to make the slate of officers for next year.

We need many volunteers who can give a little bit of their time. Some board members are very visible at our meetings while others work their magic behind the scenes. Some take a minimum commitment; some take lots. We don't want that one champion volunteer; we want many people to fill as many positions as possible; you can even job share. What we need now is to know you are interested. Please contact Suzanne Bitterman, sbitte8670@aol.com, to say, "I want to help."

Please help your organization continue to thrive. Volunteer to serve. Our board officers are: President, 1st Vice President (gets demonstrators), 2nd VP (fund-raising), Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer, Auditor, and Parliamentarian; Committee Chairs are: Artist of the Month, Exhibitions, Historian, Hospitality, Member at Large, Membership, Newsletter, Publicity, Scholarship, Video Librarian, Webmaster, and Workshops.



Please check additional content on web site

There is plenty more interesting content on our web site. In particular, we include a selection of Kimberly-Ann Talbert's stunning photos that have been juried into an exhibition at the Beunaventura Art Gallery (<http://www.verdugoarts.org/member-shows.html>). Also, look for information on some fun plein air trips at <http://www.verdugoarts.org/artist-getaway-trips.html>.



Verdugo Hills Art Association, P.O. Box 8059
La Crescenta, CA 91224

Upcoming Meetings
March 11, April 1

Board Meetings
March 7