

Arlington Artists Alliance

The Newsletter – June/July 2011

Bob Park, Editor

OUR NEW HOME



The parking lot entrance to Cultural Affairs, behind 3700 South Four Mile Run, accessing the new Alliance spaces.

A handsome facility providing office space, storage space, classrooms and meeting spaces, and support services has been offered the Alliance for a nominal annual lease, to begin this month and to run to August 2012, with an option for renewal. The Arlington County Cultural Affairs office will acquire a hanging system for our use and the Alliance will have a venue for shows in the building. The Board is to be commended for having moved quickly and decisively to take advantage of this unusual and highly advantageous offer. In his memorandum, Bryan explains this new initiative in detail below.

3700 S. Four Mile Run is located just across the Run from Shirlington's development of shops, theater and restaurants (but not easily walkable because of the Run itself). The facility lies between the intersection of S. Four Mile Run with S. Walter Reed Drive (turn south on Four Mile Run) and the intersection of S. Four Mile Run with S. Shirlington Drive (turn north on Four Mile Run). Most easily entered from parking lot behind the building. Additional pictures are attached to Bryan's memo below.



NEXT MEETING: JULY 24th at LITTLE FALLS PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, 3PM
- NOTE: A PRESENTATION on MONOCHROMATIC ART by RUSTY LYNN
BEGINS AT 2PM - See additional information in announcement below.

UNBRIDLED - Juried Show at Cassatts – June 26 through July 24, 2011

This show began in a cloud of controversy. Some members felt the theme would prove too anachronistic and might confine the inventive breadth and imaginative play of the members. It was decided to keep the theme, but to extend a broad latitude to its interpretation. The result was a delightful range of executions. The usual exciting diversity of members' styles and renderings produced a show that was enthusiastically received. The buzz at the reception was one of viewers' engagement and discovery. The show was juried by one of the most popular artists / instructors from the Alexandria Art League School, Edward (Ted) Reed, a nationally recognized and award winning realist painter, primarily of portraits and figurative art. In his courses Ted places a heavy emphasis upon the thoughtful, precise placement of color, both descriptively and in terms of the developing relationships of colors to their neighbors and to the color scheme of the whole painting. He encourages advanced students to cultivate the discipline of reaching for complex and nuanced uses of color while working from a limited palette, such as those employed in prominent ateliers or those historically identified with particular artists or specific paintings. In the submissions for Unbridled he could not have dreamt of a greater variety of color techniques or more bold ventures in the painters' uses of color. He was very pleased with the show that resulted. As were the viewers at the reception.

A particular crowd pleaser was the elegant painting of the two Assateaque ponies, *Buddies*, by Meg Mackenzie. This attractive painting was readily accessible to all viewers, at first giving the impression of a spare vignette, but rewarding repeated scrutiny with a variety of complex elements. Contrasts abound. The forms compose intimately, giving a physical energy and warmth and naturalness to the painting. The color range is lovely, lending real depth and modeled shape to the heads. The ground is softly tinted, and its texture is unobtrusive, but varied, and complements the strong animal heads. Ted Reed named this painting **BEST IN SHOW!**



FROM THE RECEPTION:





From the Hanging:



A little backstory? Interesting conversations about Meg Mackenzie's "Best in Show" painting "Buddies" were overheard at the reception. People loved the composition, and the wonderful mix of colors, and the drawing itself. But they were fascinated especially by the interesting texture, and were curious as to how Meg got that effect. Was the painting layered, with a collage before or after the main work in watercolor? How much of it was planned and how much a spontaneous expression of the heads as she worked? To find out, we asked Meg.

Here is Meg's interesting answer: *"I used 140# cold press watercolor paper to which I glued plain tissue paper, using diluted matte medium (half/half with water). Then I drew my image and painted."*

GEORGE BOWLES WINS BEST POTOMAC RIVER REGIONAL - THIRD CONSECUTIVE YEAR!

For the third consecutive year, George Bowles won first place in the Potomac River Regional Art Show in Colonial Beach, Virginia. His winning entry this year was the portrait "Kristin."

The show is at the Colonial Beach Town Center, open weekends 10 to 5, until August 7th. , about 30 of **George's** recent paintings are on display at the JarrettThor Fine Arts Gallery, also in Colonial Beach, Thursday - Sunday, 10 to 5, until August 7.



George Bellow's winning portrait, "Kristin," is a striking formal pose with a nice resonance of the background in the facial coloring. A special note might be taken of this beautiful young woman. Her red hair is often a challenging problem for painters, which George renders elegantly here. Notice how the hair works against this background!

THE FASCINATION OF ART – EVERY TWIST AND TURN LEADS TO DISCOVERIES

George's striking success with his model's red hair provokes us to ask, "And how have others handled red hair." It is not an idle question, and not just a problem of color rendition, but a recurring aspect of art history.

Wikipedia offers an interesting aside for us here, the historic attraction of painters to subjects with red hair, "Many painters have exhibited a fascination with red hair. The color "titian" takes its name from [Titian](#), who often painted women with red hair. Early Renaissance

artist [Sandro Botticelli](#)'s famous painting *The Birth of Venus* depicts the mythological goddess [Venus](#) as a redhead. Other painters notable for their redheads include the [Pre-Raphaelites](#), [Edmund Leighton](#), [Modigliani](#), and [Gustav Klimt](#)." [Wikipedia]

Wikipedia doesn't mention the extraordinary portraitist, John Singer Sargent. But from his "Madam X" to "The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit," to his famous Italian models, there is a long parade of red hair. One of John Singer Sargent's striking portraits of British and American society women was of Nora Gribble. Painted in 1888 when she was in her 20s, her son described her portrait later as portraying her "intensity ... She was a marvelously beautiful woman, blessed with divinely golden red hair and immense, almost violet, blue eyes varying in depth with her moods." Against the red hair Sargent painted, variously, black, purple, pink, green and gold. Even the famous "Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose" painting of the two little girls included one with red hair, juxtaposed against pink roses, pink in the face and a pink and yellow paper lantern. Great fun for the artist and art student!

NEW HOME FOR THE ALLIANCE!

[This is the complete notice to members distributed by Bryan Jernigan on Wednesday, July 13th, announcing the contract for new spaces. Pictured below is the Cultural Affairs entrance from the parking lot behind 3700 S. Four Mile Run. This is the easier entry for it leads directly into the cultural programs. Below you will find other pictures, one of the Four Mile Run sign indicating the facility. One appears at each end of the building. Another picture shows the reception desk, another a typical classroom / conference room, and the fourth shows the entrance on the south side of the building. Continue on to the parking lot.]



Alliance Members:

It's been a whirlwind July, so I wanted to let you in on an opportunity that was presented to the Alliance Board of Directors earlier this month.

Arlington Cultural Affairs contacted me at the beginning of July to let us know that an opera company that had an office at Cultural Affairs was going out of business. Their office space is now available to us for a nominal monthly fee.



After members of the Alliance Board had time to tour the facility (at 3700 S. Four Mile Run) and being told by the facilities manager that our office rental also includes access to Cultural Affairs meeting space, a copy/fax machine and gallery hanging space outside Theater on the Run's black box theater, we agreed to sign on for a year's lease, renewable in August 2012. Because the board has agreed to pay Cultural Affairs a year in one lump sum, Cultural Affairs will be investing in an extensive hanging system and the lobby area of Cultural Affairs will be a new venue for the Alliance (anyone interested in curating the new high-profile venue should contact me!). They will also allow us to move in in July and give us the balance of the month rent free.

The office includes utilities, has two permanent closets for storage, a desk and chair and our phone line – currently at Cassatt's – can be moved to our new office. Per our discussion at the last member meeting, the Board is in the process of purchasing a laptop and an LCD projector. The laptop can be used in the office as well as for presentations our members will make. If anyone has an old printer they are willing to donate (or get rid of), please let me know as we can use it in our new office until such time as the Board may approve the purchase of a new one.

In addition to the obvious, what this really means is we now will have a place – one place – where we can store all Alliance materials – from tablecloths and show signs to grant applications and board minutes. If you currently store any items for the Alliance, please email me with an inventory of what you have. I am to sign the rental agreement and deliver it on Friday and I'd like to try to coordinate one day when members who currently store Alliance materials are available to drop them off at the office. Please let me know in your email on what day you might be available next week – July 18-23 – to drop off supplies. I'll choose the day that works for the majority of you. In addition, this space will allow us to hold all juries in one place, hold board and member meetings and do any talks or presentations – all in a centralized location. And while they were hesitant initially, we believe we may be able to arrange for Academy classroom space down the line.

One last thing to think about: Cultural Affairs will allow us to meet in one of their classrooms in their building for our regular monthly meetings – but the building is NOT open on our regular meeting day – Sunday. So, we have the option of meeting on Saturdays or on one weekday evening. I'd like to hear from you as to your preference. Jane Coonce has suggested that it might be good to have a mix of meeting days – Saturdays during the day during winter months and a weeknight meetings during

warmer months when the sun is out longer. I'd like to get a feeling from you and then I'll let you know what the board decides.

I'm very excited about this opportunity to bring a permanent, albeit rental space, to the Alliance. It's what we've said we've wanted for as long as I can remember, and this opportunity gives us access to county officials who make grants decisions and hold weight within the Artisphere and artistic community in Arlington County. Perhaps if they get to know us a little better, a wider artistic world will open to us!

Either way, I want to congratulate the board and members of the Arlington Artists Alliance for taking the next step in professionalism for the Alliance. Bryan Jernigan

NEED EXCUSES FOR PUTTING OFF PAINTING?

A Canadian artist, Robert Genn, circulates a free letter twice a week, providing chatty advice on painting and marketing of paintings. It is a useful way to remind yourself of what your primary business is . . . not thinking about art or painting, but painting! Today's letter listed excuses he's received in emails as to why the writer "just couldn't get to the painting this week." We've all been there. But if you find yourself needing a fresh excuse, consider these. Ha ha ha!

Sixteen reasons why I won't paint today

July 15, 2011

A woman wrote recently and told me she was unable to paint because a neighbour was "using some sort of Weed Eater or Leaf Blower." . . . Then I started thinking about . . . all the excuses people give for not painting. With a little digging, I was able to find a few choice ones:

"I ran out of yellow ochre." "I saw ants in the studio." "I was too hot." "I was too cold." "Somebody broke into our house and stole the TV." "Our Jack Russell, '**Jack Russell**' had to go to the vet." "This day next week my sister-in-law is coming." "I can't think of anything to paint." "My brother is moving out." "I'm overtired from sleeping on the floor." "My art teacher died." "I had to help Dad with his walk-in bath." "I couldn't find my sketches from last year." "My brushes are in too poor shape." "My Pontiac worries me; it needs replacing." . . .

Annoying as all these impedimenta are, they shouldn't bother folks with internal drive. Internal drive is the forge of productivity. In all self-starting activities where end results are dependent on you and you alone, procrastination is the default mode. You can pretty well always find a reason not to work. But . . . there's practically always a solution if you want something badly enough.

Best regards, Robert Genn

PS: "There is no waste of time in life like that of making explanations." ([Benjamin Disraeli](#))

Robert Genn link for a free subscription: rgenn@saraphina.com

Have you checked out Painters' Post? <http://painterspost.com/>

IT'S A STEAL Show - A Success, Again

This year's *It's a Steal show* (Dana Saxerud) ran from Friday to Sunday, June 10-12, at Arlington Methodist Church. Over 300 individual works were hung or displayed. Sales amounted to \$ 3,783.

The total sales, Dana reported, were somewhat less than last year. She thought that the air conditioning of the fellowship hall, which proved very unreliable, had created viewing conditions so uncomfortable during much of the time of the show, that the heat may well have

reduced overall sales. Dana Saxerud reported at the monthly meeting that the show will be continued, though not in this particular facility. Indeed, the possibility of offering winter and late spring versions of the show is under consideration. It has been suggested that the winter show might prove an especially attractive sales venue if set for a weekend shortly before the Christmas holiday.



The numerous volunteers were effusive in their praise for Dana's leadership and administration of the show. A lively exchange of thanks and appreciation after the show was a strong endorsement of Dana and her attention to the volunteers, the scheduling, the arrangements and hanging, and the myriad of details entailed in a large show such as this.

IT'S A STEAL Volunteers

The Arlington Artists Alliance depends upon its members volunteering service for the success of its shows, service programs and events. A large number of members played an active role in the *It's a Steal show*. This is the list as compiled for the final planning assignment schedule.

Director Dana Saxerud, **Assisted by** Jean Stark and Marie Baumann.

Accepting artwork and Setup and Takedown: Linda Donaldson, Rebecca Crof, Agnes Yackshaw, Bonnie Freeman, Debbie Taylor, LeAnn Kalita, Lieve DeWulf,

Hanging the show: Beth Hudgins, Carmen Uribe, George Bowles, Nan Morrison

Sales Desk and Greeters: Sandra Gowl, Karen Hacker, Kathy Turner, Andrea Schellman, Andrea Schellman, Rosemarie Wilcox, Wen LePore, Rusty Lynn, Tony Neville, MJ Martz, Becky Salzinger, Bob Park, Patty Crowe, Anya Getter, Lieve DeWulf, Carmen Gray, Sandra Hill, Nualnapa Brown, Dot Rogers, Linda Maldonado, Elise Ritter, Meg MacKenzie, Ann Bolster

MONOCHROMATIC ART - PRESENTATION, JULY 24 – A LAUNCH FOR YOUR THINKING FOR THE COMING “BLACK AND WHITE” SHOW. COME AN HOUR BEFORE OUR REGULAR MEETING FOR SOME NEW IDEAS, NEW VENTURES IN ART!

What is monochromatic art?

As we prepare to participate in the next juried show, "Black and White, a number of members have found the topic puzzling. Just what does "Black and White" mean? I have been asked to present a brief talk on monochromatic art: and the various approaches to single color art. Monochromatic art has a long history. Highly regarded monochromatic art has been created over many years, both in 2-D and 3-D art.

Is monochromatic art nothing more than a joke? Did the critic of J. M. W. Turner who called Turner's seascapes "pictures of nothing" get it right? Of course not.

Mark Rothko, who painted many monochromatic works, said, "Good art is never about nothing."

Well, What about the black paintings of Ad Reinhardt? Is this the end of painting, or deeply spiritual evocations of one person's experience?

If you're like me, you probably find that looking at the work of other artists stimulates your creative idea machine. I'm juiced by Malevich and Monet. Who will set you dreaming and doing for the Black and White show? Perhaps Chinese brush painting, or Richard Serra's steel sculpture. Come and see what it has to offer. [P: An illustration may help you anticipate the potentials of this methodology. This is Rusty's wonderfully subtle **White Square 1**. Spend a few minutes looking at it. You will be surprised how much you begin to see. For another interesting example of Monochromatic Art, see VMFA notice below.]



We'll meet on July 24, 2011 from 2 to 3 in the Tree House Room at Little Falls Presbyterian Church, just before our regular monthly meeting. Please drop me an email to let me know you're coming! Thanks. Rusty

Link: rustylynn@earthlink.net

CREATIVE MINDS - THREE PAINTERS WITH SIGNATURE STYLES

Bryan Jernigan, Bud Hensgen and Jennifer Brewer Stone are currently featured in a show at the Lee Arts Center (July 2 – August 27). A reception was held on Tuesday, July 12th.

The following notes, adapted from their handsome postcard announcement, reveal something of the artists' intentions. Jernigan's *DC from VA* is full of texture and combines a wide palette of colors and shapes to create a personal and accessible view of the nation's

capital. Hensgen's *Waiting for the Revolution*, a series of paintings, pushes and pulls between chaos and control with active line work and large blocks of red, brown and yellow. Stone's *Dance of Life*, also a series, features tropical flora and fauna that leap from the canvas with graphic, sharp-edged applications of bright color.

The reception was well attended and the viewers were full of questions for the artists. Each had a cluster of viewers forming and reforming and posing questions.

The Lee Arts Center's second floor provides a well-lit, spacious gallery that can handle very large paintings, but smaller paintings hang at a good viewing height and do not seem out of place. The studios were open and the visitors moved throughout the space, again with lots of questions. The ceramic and print making studios were also open and were beautifully appointed and plainly in heavy use, with works-in-progress visible in abundance.



AAA -Artists' Studio Tour

On Saturday, July 16th, six members of the Alliance invited the other members and their guests to visit their Studios. This "Open Studios Tour" was a "first" for the Alliance. Some studios were in professional leased spaces, some

in members homes. The studios were opened from noon until 5pm, with the artists standing by to answer questions and to describe works on display.

If there is sufficient interest, it is anticipated that this may become an annual paid tour, very much like open homes tours of historic houses or private garden spaces. This project is modeled on similar undertakings by other artists' associations in other cities, where they have proven popular and a useful way to introduce artists to potential patrons in the community.

These were the volunteers: Commercial Spaces: Lee Arts Center, Arlington, Bryan Jernigan-Painter: Stifel & Capra: 260 West Broad Street, Falls Church - Shared Studio Beth Hudgins – Painter & Jane McElvany Coonce – Painter; Private Homes: Lieve Dewulf-Ceramic Artist, Attic Studio; Wen LePore-Painter, Studio at Home; and Marcia Koski Finnerty-Ceramic Artist - Studio: Walkout-Basement.

The Alliance owes a special thanks to these members who volunteered to open their work spaces, commercial or in their homes, as a starting point for many conversations and new friendships among our members. It is this kind of collegiality and mutual support that has given the Alliance its enviable reputation among local artists as a vital, stimulating and friendly professional association of artists.

Thank you.



A Familiar Question: Should I go into a studio space?

Combining the comments of a number of local artists in regard to renting studio spaces with others, certain clear advantages emerged. Although the convenience and accessibility of home work spaces are appealing, and sometimes necessary because of familial obligations, entering a group studio has these pronounced advantages: 1) It permits the artist to escape the interruptions and insistent demands of telephone, washer/dryers, neighbors and delivery people, friends and family, and the distraction of familiar, habitual routines. 2) It provides the fellowship and stimuli of a group of working artists, themselves focused and productive. 3) It secures the work-in-progress against being moved, changed, damaged or lost. 4) It provides a professional setting in which to meet potential clients and to display completed works. 5) It permits the potential buyer to see a display of one's work, rather than the isolated painting in a show. 6) It assures the buyer – seeing the artist in the group setting – of the professional status of the artist, and the competitive level of artistic work offered. 7) And, perhaps most important of all, it permits the artist to set fixed work hours and to make beginning and ending the work day habitual, disciplined and a matter of routine.

EDITOR'S NOTE: THE GREAT AMERICAN HALL OF WONDERS

For many years I kept a small print of George Innes' *The Lackawanna Valley* (1856) in my office. It represented for me the great optimism and confidence of the United States of that era, moving westward, inventing and manufacturing, building and growing. This is the painting (from the National Gallery of Art collection):



That painting and that era of hope and good feeling is captured in the new show at the Smithsonian's American Art Museum, July 15 through January 8, 2012.

*“The exhibition *The Great American Hall of Wonders* examines the 19th-century American belief that the people of the United States shared a special genius for innovation. It explores this belief through works of art, mechanical inventions and scientific discoveries, and captures the excitement of citizens who defined their nation as a “Great Experiment” sustained by the inventive energies of Americans in every walk of life. *The Great American Hall of Wonders* will be on view at the *Smithsonian American Art Museum* from July 15 through Jan. 8, 2012. The museum is the only venue for the exhibition, which is organized by Claire Perry, an independent curator who specializes in 19th-century American cultural history.”* [ArtDaily, July 16, 2011]

Another example of the wonderful opportunities we enjoy in the Washington area for art and for the melding of so many intellectual currents of science, art and history.

An excellent review of this show appeared in ArtDaily on July 16, 2011.
http://www.artdaily.org/index.asp?int_sec=2&int_new=49120

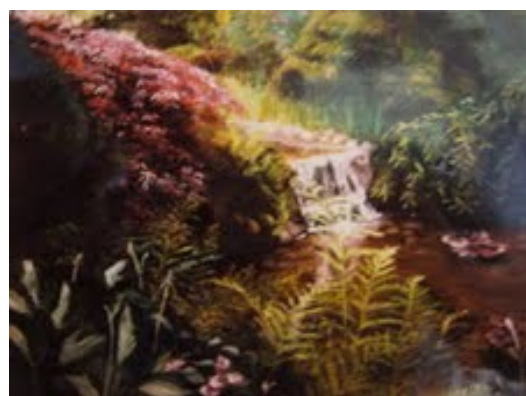
The Smithsonian's own site offers an interesting description of the show. This is an excerpt from that material.

The exhibition *The Great American Hall of Wonders* examines the nineteenth-century American belief that the people of the United States shared a special genius for innovation. It explores this belief through works of art, mechanical inventions, and scientific discoveries, and captures the excitement of citizens who defined their nation as a “Great Experiment” sustained by the inventive energies of Americans in every walk of life.

The exhibition features 161 objects, including paintings and drawings by pre-eminent artists, including [John James Audubon](#), [Albert Bierstadt](#), [George Catlin](#), [Frederic Edwin Church](#), [Winslow Homer](#), [Thomas Eakins](#), [Thomas Moran](#), and [Charles Willson Peale](#), as well as sculptures, prints, survey photographs, zoological and botanical illustrations, patent models, and engineering diagrams. The exhibition explores six subjects that helped shape America during the period—the buffalo, giant sequoia, and Niagara Falls represent American beliefs about abundant natural resources for fueling the nation’s progress, while inventions such as the clock, the gun, and the railroad link improvements in technology with the purposeful use of time.

MEMBER OF THE MONTH FOR JUNE: BETSY JONES [A Posthumous Tribute]

At the June 26th meeting, Bryan Jernigan, for the Alliance, took special note of the illness and passing of Betsy Jones, a long-time member, a strong contributor to the growth and development of the Alliance, and a good friend of many in the Alliance. [Here is a selection of her paintings from her former profile page on the AAA website.]



MEMBER OF THE MONTH FOR JULY: CARMEN URIBE



Carmen brings to painting a whimsy and playfulness that is inviting to a wide-range of viewers. As noted in her profile below, she has an eye for the revealing detail and the ability to capture the distinct personality of the subject. Even of Pandas!

The following is excerpted from the AAA website.

Carmen Uribe loves to paint eyes, which for her are the true expression of a soul. Recently, she has started painting human portraits (after many years of painting animals) which has been a great new exciting challenge. Being able to capture the personality of a human being in a portrait is fascinating. Recently, Carmen has exhibited some of her work at the Meridian House in D.C for THIS (The Hospitality International Service in Washington, D.C).

A MONCHROMATIC PAINTING AND EXPLOITING THE POWER OF A DOMINANT HUE – VMFA, Richmond

Strategies that exploit the power of using a single hue or making one hue overwhelming can force the viewer into a new posture for “reading” the painting. The conventional clues and orientation markers are changed, or gone entirely. New forms begin to assert themselves. The new show at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts takes these facts about the viewing experience and exploits them to invite the viewer into new explorations and discoveries. These two images and notes below from ArtDaily show what is going on in nearby Richmond.

The new show, Martha Jones, “Big Pink Paintings: Abstract Paintings 2008-11, will be on view July 16 through November 13, 2011. “The predominance of red and pink imparts a comic tone as th artist reflects the influence of contemporary

painting, particularly the late work of Philip Guston. The monumental scale of the largest paintings allows Jones freedom to experiment and offers viewers a larger-than-life experience.” ArtDaily, 2011-07-16.



Martha Jones is quoted, “What interests me especially in my most recent work is the way in which a consistent set of elements will combine over and over to form different compositions. During the last three years I have been primarily interested in reconciling an overall circular composition with a rectilinear format.”

Alliance members will appreciate that what Jones is doing and the framework she has adopted in using a dominating hue and repetition of elements transfers readily to the kind of abstract compositions and monochromatic painting that Rusty Lynn celebrates in his invitation to members to experiment, to play with forms and to impose upon their imaginations the liberating discipline of monochromatic art. The upcoming ***Black and White*** show provides an incentive to explore your own imagination and rendering limits using a monochromatic palette.

CANDY COATED JERNIGAN SHOW AT ARLINGTON CENTRAL LIBRARY

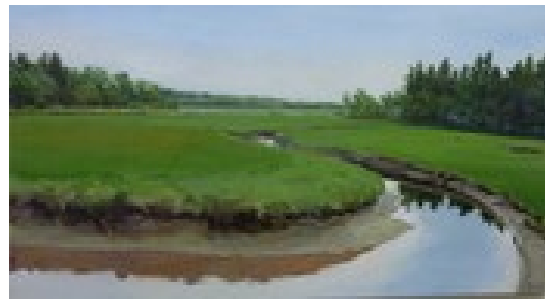
An attractive array of highly stylized and harmoniously hued paintings by Bryan Jernigan is on display at the Arlington Central Library. The hanging began July 1 and continues through the end of July. Plenty of parking, of course, and a steady stream of library patrons, so the show should enjoy very good traffic.

These striking paintings have a pleasant, whimsical coloration, and a bold graphic drawing style. The paintings are highly complementary to one another, and would hang attractively in pairs or threesomes. The playful title anticipates the



renderings of landscapes, large country buildings, country roads and rolling contours. The colors reinforce the general lightness of spirit and rounded forms.

The show is nicely hung along an extended wall space, well lit and with high and immediate visibility to large numbers of library patrons across the broad open second floor space. A second show by Kathleen Best Gillman is also hung nearby. It offers large paintings of striking design, and the two shows will certainly each be sending viewers across the room to the other. Below are two of her acrylics, "Beach Houses at Lord's Point" and "Silent No Longer."



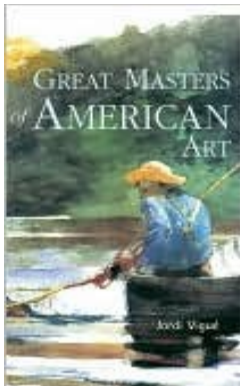
EMERITUS: A SHOW, A PROBLEMATIC VENUE



Director Beejee Juhnke reported to the Alliance monthly meeting that the show had led to some sales, and was nicely displayed, though on separate floors, which was an unanticipated complication. She thought the facilities and support were not

as had been represented, and that it does not appear to be an attractive venue for shows. The Board agreed that we should not show there again. The Alliance had indicated its interest in providing speakers to the residents of the facility, and those programs will continue as a service to the residents. The future relationship between the Alliance and the facility will be determined as we go forward.

REVIEW: Jordi Vigue, *GREAT MASTERS OF AMERICAN ART* – An Amazing Bargain



If you would like to have in your library a well-written, very well conceived reference survey of 74 of the most important American artists since colonial times, this is just such a book. The entries are balanced and develop both the historical context of contemporary painting of the artist's era and the signature techniques and artistic devices characteristic of the individual artist. The entries for the more important artists are typically six pages – e.g., Audubon, Lilly Martin Spencer, Whistler, Sargent, Georgia O'Keeffe, Warhol. For most artists there is a photo of the artist and a time-line of the highlights in the artists' career. There is an excellent introductory 21 page review of American art history. The reproductions are very good, though small (of course, given that the book itself is 5 3/8" x 9 1/2"). For each painting there is a boxed entry of its name, date, medium, size and the museum location for the painting.

How you might use this book. If you, like I am, are caught off guard from time to time by a reference to an unfamiliar historic American painter, or to a movement in the history of American art with unfamiliar terminology, you will find this a very practical way to orient yourself. It is a handy size to keep in a bedroom bookshelf, and easy to use in bed, unlike the familiar coffee table books that are cumbersome to handle and fall off the bed with a terrible crash. Of course, there is always Wikipedia, if you want to get out of bed and go downstairs and wait for the computer to load up. Ha ha ha. It is also a fun book for browsing, and full of "aha" moments and discoveries. As a painter, you will find yourself repeatedly brightening and inspired by the paintings shown, by the text, and by the clear respect and engagement of the author with each painter's work. It is one of those

books that time and again gives you an urge to get back to your paints to execute for yourself a technique or effect you have seen displayed.

What this book is not. This is not a scholarly book. It has no bibliography. The entries do not list resources for further reading. The discussion of techniques and styles is more literary than technical, but the author does not substitute biographical anecdotes for a discussion of the art. This is plainly a book by an artist for artist readers. A quote about an artist you probably do not know may show you how well he captures the spirit and method of the artist, without invoking clichés or tired stereotypes of the artist. Of Fitz Hugh Lane's *The Fort and Ten Pound Island, Gloucester, Massachusetts*, Vigue writes "Lane has based the painting on the variation of light. The light descends from left to right, while the wharfs appear in mysterious semidarkness. In this work, Lane is somewhere between luminism and the Hudson River School, giving light the lead role but not abandoning its dramatic capacity. Here he has used the light reflected on the water to create a fleeting impression rather than a deep feeling. His melancholy view of the port of Gloucester translates into very poetic filtered light at dusk." All of this is evidenced in the accompanying reproduction.

And now for a nice surprise. Every now and then an extraordinary bargain appears among booksellers. This is such a bargain. The book is offered used in good condition on both Amazon and Barnes & Noble. It is available used for less than a dollar from one seller (plus \$ 3.99 shipping), and just over a dollar from another. If you don't have it, how can you resist it, at that price? Hours of pleasure ahead!

Finally, who is Jordi Vigue? Jordi Vigue is a well-regarded art historian / writer in Spain who has written a number of substantial books on art and artists for his Spanish publisher, several of which have been issued in the UK and the US under the Watson-Guption imprint, a long time publisher of quality art books. Vigue was educated in art history at the Sorbonne in Paris. Vigue is also the author of **Great Masters of Western Art** in the same format, and of **Great Women Masters of Art**. He lives in Barcelona, Spain.

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- The book cover above is from the Barnes & Noble online site.
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