

Arlington Artists Alliance
The Newsletter
December 2011

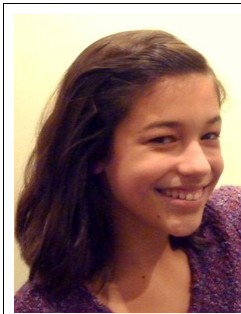
Bob Park, Editor



Cynthia Gilmour and Some of Her Art Students

STUDENT SHOW RECEPTION

Arlington Artist Alliance has a fine reputation for its receptions and show openings, but it would be difficult to match the energy level and pure delight that washed about Cassatt's Restaurant on Sunday afternoon, the 4th of December. Without equivocation, everyone attending would have to admit that they had never seen artists in such buoyant moods, taking so much pleasure in their paintings, so eager to explain their work, or with such sticky fingers! Brownies, cupcakes, and cookies abounded. Less sophisticated, perhaps, but far more satisfying to taste and heart than tiny bits of caviar on little crackers or chilled sliced vegetables. This was the food of gods! Sugar! Chocolate! Candy decorations! Buttery cream icing! And perfectly suited to the high activity levels and bubbly conversation of these artists. And their beaming parents!



Allison Cuesla



Lotus Flower, pastel

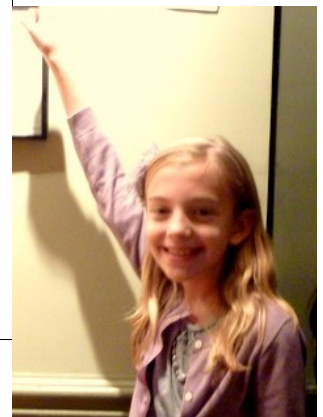
A GOOD PLACE TO START our little tour of this show is with this lovely pastel of a Lotus blossom by Allison Cuesla. The viewer's pleasure lies not just in the interesting forms and the delicate coloration, but especially in the amazing range of hues and tones she has captured in this painting, the play of light and the careful use of shadow. The number of variations cap-

tured is awesome. And the subtlety of these elements make this painting a rewarding focus for “seeing” and for understanding the lotus. In the classical writings of Asia, the lotus is a symbol of purity, purity of body and mind. This bit of tradition helps the viewer appreciate the import of grace and delicacy and serenity in the painting.

Our next stop is a delightful animal pastel, Giraffe Love. The drawing is graphic and sure, the animal gestures are natural and fresh. Presumably, the students typically are working from reference photographs, and part of the developing skills of the students is the choice of a photograph that they can render. This is a fine choice, and the pastel painting captures the photograph faithfully, while adding that elusive credibility of the painter. A painting just of a photograph is a flat version of the photograph, but an artist's rendering of a photograph gives it punch, authority, immanence. Our young artist here has accomplished that beautifully.



Giraffe Love



Ella Juengst, 12 yrs,



Julia Wine, 10 yrs, *Blue Footed Booby*

This is a pastel painting of a *Blue Footed Booby*. Don't laugh. That's the name of the bird. When I read her label I thought this little artist was putting me on. Wouldn't most of you have suspected it, too? So I went to the internet, and *voila*, there it was. This photograph from the internet by Richard Duerksen (EarthShots.org) proves the point. Look at those eyes! Well, this bird and its chicks are as authentic as they can



be, accurately drawn, and just about as fascinating to look at as Blue Footed Boobies can be! Delightful! A great picture!

When children pick subjects for painting, you can count on there being a good number of animal paintings. In this show what was surprising was the number of animal paintings offering extraordinarily interesting actions or gestures. Giraffe's "kissing," bear cubs at play around their mother, a mare and her foal, exotic birds, etc. A particularly charming pastel painting was that of a Polar Bear surrounded by three cubs, tumbling and climbing about and over her.

To catch the gesture of an animal or of a human figure is a skill that comes with insight and practice. Even though the mechanics of an animal gesture has been captured in a photograph, it is still not easy to convey that



Patricia Massaro

kinesthetic moment to the viewer – body mass, structure, movement, action. But see how here the artist has rendered the essential body posture of each of the four bears in an entirely credible way. Each is life-like and convincing. This is as much an action painting as any painting of an athletic event, and it is well done. Congratulations, Patricia!



Sara-Jane Owens, 14, *The Pincher*, oil

This is a splendid piece of work. The drawing is solid, detailed and bold. It is perfectly placed and scaled as a composition. The coloring is vivid, graded, nuanced with shading and the overall effect is a real eye-catcher. It presents as a disciplined specimen drawing, and the matting and framing show it off to its best effect. It makes the viewer wonder what lies ahead --- cultivating the strong rendering skills, a fascination with zoology or a turning to

the fine arts? Or some combination of the three? Great promise. A beautiful piece!

Here's a bit of whimsy that everyone will enjoy, Maya Wheeler's charming pastel, *Lazy Cat*. Maya is 14 years old. This little painting catches her saucy cat in a familiar "cat-like"



Maya Wheeler, 14, *Lazy Cat*

pose, studying human beings. Maya's "laid back" tiger cat has eyes that grab our attention, and an arm that captures perfectly cat insouciance. The proportions and the rendering of the fur are nicely done. This is a painting you would enjoy hanging in a bedroom, hallway or kitchen, an every day a reminder that "cats rule." We dare not forget it!

A cat of a different stripe, one might say, if given to bad puns, is Lia Chen's handsome, strongly stated cheetah. It brings to mind Blake's "... burning bright, in the

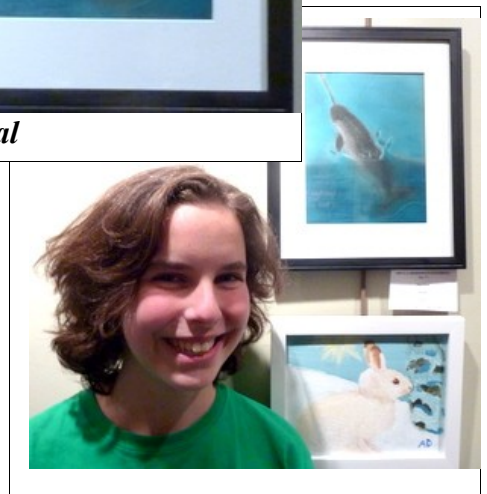


Lia Chen, Moonlight Sonata

forest of the night," for there is a very strong air of the predator about this animal. The composition is almost a vignette, using the cover of the leaves to frame the cat's head, peering out of the brush. The soft leaf "drapery" sets off the strength of the cheetah's head. A nice composition. Pastel was a fine marriage of medium to subject matter. Again, to invoke Blake, a "fearful symmetry," indeed!



Narwhal



Becca Merriman-Goldring, 13 years old, did this very nice pastel painting of a Narwhal. Becca reveals a good eye

in her composition: the big mammal is appropriately placed; the water and sky – which tremble on the edge of dividing the painting in half – settle appropriately at roughly 3:5; the whale is rounded and the viewer feels the great mass of the mammal; and the iconic tusk rises dramatically. It is a solid painting that will fascinate many who get to view it.



Elena Lockland, 11, Pear

Elena Lockland tackled that classic painting exercise, the pear. A wonderful still life subject and Elena has done a very good pastel painting of it. What painting the pear teaches is legendary – finely textured skin (like human beings), nuanced transitions

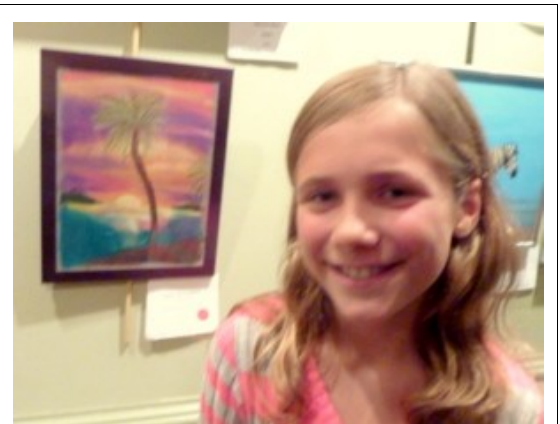
of tone and shade, the problem of rounded forms, the mottling of imperfections, the discipline of monotonic painting and independence of the drama of color, composition with plain forms and the infusion of ordinary objects with meaning and emotion . . . here, a simplicity of great appeal. The painting was matted and framed to present it at its best. A handsome piece.



Kit Martin painted two horses, perhaps a mare and her foal, with that spontaneity and focus that makes learning to paint so satisfying. This painting clearly dealt with a subject that Kit cared about. And may well know a good bit about. She did a very good job. A bright and upbeat painting. The large horse has presence and is alert. A pleasing painting. Full of energy and life.

Kit's subject matter and earnest execution raises an important aspect of drawing children into the pleasures and rewards of painting. Finding subjects that engage, even excite, the student artist. An experimental study some years ago revealed that even young students with no drawing training learn to draw very well the things they care about, or know about. Children raised on farms, who thought they had no drawing ability, could do very good drawings of farm animals. Teenage boys who would have fled from an art class were found drawing customized cars, hot rods, motorcycles and airplanes with precision and accuracy.

What is striking about Emma Hutchinson's pastel painting is her use of light and color. The foreground is a shoreline that is abbreviated, almost merging into the frame. Beyond is a band of a very pure color, the ocean, visible in the painting to the right. That rich, pure, radiant pigment divides to permit the setting sun and its reflection in the water to form the intense



Emma Hutchinson, 10 yrs, Sunset in the Carribean, pastel

focal point of the painting, bordered by small silhouetted land forms . Above this eye riveting ball of light is one of those spectacular sunset skies so often seen against summer storm clouds in Florida and the Carribean, itself a series of bands of color and light. This is a vibrant, dramatic painting.



TJ Hutchinson, 8 yrs, Guitar Rock

Here we look at another Hutchinson pastel painting, but by a different Hutchinson, by "TJ". Here, also, we see a

very strong use of color. It must be a family gift! Strong, even stark, graphic drawings of electric guitars on display. And again, a powerful, pure ground in blue-greens. I asked TJ if he played the guitar. “Nope. Drums.”

This painting is solidly straightforward. It would make a nice decorative piece. A bold, stark piece of graphic art. Good job, TJ.

What is particularly liberating about art in modern times - not “modern art,” but all art in our time – is that the public has been trained, to a large degree by advertisers, commercial artists, propagandists, film and tv, and illustrators, to enjoy art in many forms – realistic art, symbolic art, photorealism, abstract forms, etc. The public is diverse, collectors are sophisticated, and no canon or conventions or strict boundaries control more than a small fraction of the art that is being produced. Room is made for idiosyncratic styles, anti-art media and materials, confrontational and shocking juxtapositions, and even the banal and *kitsch*. In the Student Show, one of the pieces that reached for an edgy statement, perhaps even a brutal use of color and bold, simplified graphic imagery, was Rachel Merriman-Goldring's colorful piece, *Rainbow Eye*. Notice that even the iris is rainbow colored. And perhaps this is not coincidental. *Iris*, in Greek mythology, was the goddess of the rainbow, as well as the messenger of the gods. Hmmm.



Rachel Merriman-Goldring, 16 yrs, *Rainbow Eye*



Adult student works were included and were covered in the first review of this show in the October-November AAA Newsletter. We revisit just one painting, *The Bubble Blowers*, by Susan Gartner, because we can now show the artist with the painting. You will remember that delightful yard party, a turbulent, playful moment captured in her lively oil painting.

This stimulating show and its reception was a great art event! Parents and children, viewers and artists alike felt goals achieved and abounding inspiration! New aspirations! New confidence! Encouragement for new ventures and visual growth. What more could one ask of any art show, of students or of accomplished professionals.



Patricia shows paintings to guest

Cynthia Gilmour has a vision of teaching art that infused painting after painting and the enthusiasm of her students, “. . . my feelings on the special work that each individual puts forth is that each one's vision is '**special, singu-**

lar, unique, and personal.' Kids do these things naturally. Even if they are using reference material. For me, each of us has a gift for art, and my job is to help each person bring out their unique vision, express it and broaden it.”

Although we could not cover all the paintings displayed, we touched on as many paintings as we could find children to stand with their work. A fun array of varied styles, varied subjects and artists of different ages. This was the **Student Show, November-December 2011**. From the breadth of smiles, the talent displayed, and the enthusiasm, it seems very likely that we shall be seeing more interesting pieces from these artists in the future.

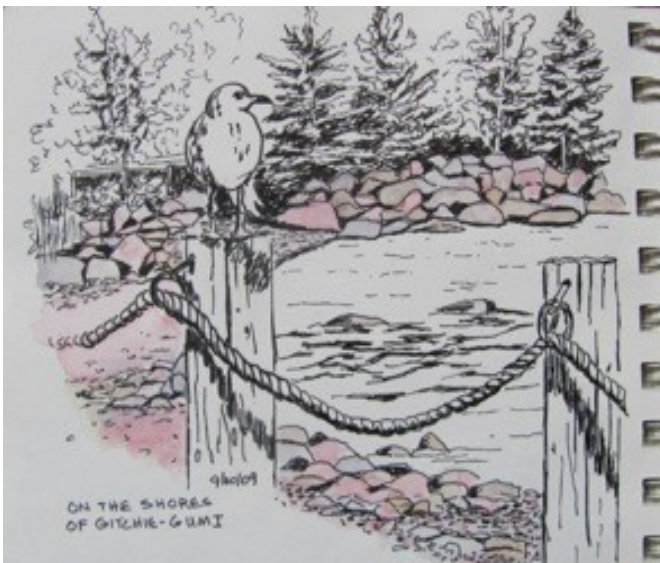


In fact, we can say confidently, these artists went home imprinted with the pleasures not only of having made art that people enjoyed seeing, but a collegial celebration of the creative spirit. Artists enjoying art together! Was there another Alliance show in 2011 as full of life and joy and promise for the future of American art than this? Surely not. This was a triumph!

SKETCH TO FINISHED PAINTING: *NORTH WOODS*

by MARIE BAUMANN

[In the following article Marie Bauman invites us into her professional consciousness as she takes us from an interesting field sketch through its use as a reference drawing to her final watercolor painting. It is especially instructive to see her readiness to rethink the elements of her sketch and the alternative compositions she weighs, until she settles on her plan and turns to the issues of execution. At every stage we see a well-trained eye assessing the possibilities and culling away extraneous or distracting elements. It is a fine lesson in the old maxim that the integrity of the superior painting is defined not only by what it portrays, but by what the artist has chosen to leave out. An informal and informative window into “the mind of an artist.” **Thank you, Marie!**]



On the Shores of the Gitche Gumi

Marie Baumann, pen & ink field sketch

I did this charming field sketch in pen of a gull at Lake Superior in Minnesota, and knew I wanted to make a watercolor painting of it. I liked the way the rope and the line of rocks curved around the water. There was also a dreamy, misty quality in the background trees (hard to capture in a pen sketch) against the unique pink and gray rocks. On my sketch, I used watercolor to paint the rocks so I would remember their pink color.

Originally, my watercolor sheet was twice the size it ended up. I originally painted the whole right-hand side of the sketch, with the second post and the the continuation of rocks along the far shore. I wasn't happy with the result; it seemed uninteresting (I don't have a photo of that part), so I put the painting away for a long time.

When I returned to it, I decided that the right-hand side was not working, so I concentrated on the left-hand side, focusing on the bird. To make the gull "pop" in the painting, I left him mostly white, and behind him put in a very dark, blurred background of blue-greens and indigo into wet paper, suggesting trees, and editing out some of the background on the left. However, the sky had some light in it, so that is reflected in the water, along with the colors of the background trees.

The sketch is 5" x 6", and the final painting is 10" x 14".

A few details on the foreground rocks, the rope and post, and in the movement of the water, completed my painting, which I titled "North Woods." Now I will never forget those pink rocks!



North Woods, Watercolor
Marie Baumann

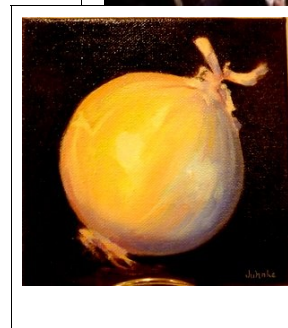
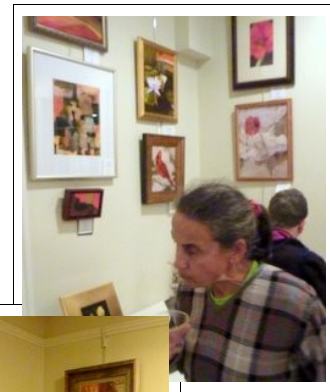
DECEMBER ARTFUL WEEKEND FORT C. F. SMITH

Another successful, well-attended and enthusiastic Reception at the Artful Weekend launched a display of works by 40 participating artists. From Meg Mackenzie's friendly welcome and continuing throughout the show, in every room there was an upbeat energy and an enthusiasm for the high quality of paintings and ceramics displayed. The curator was Elisabeth Hudgins. Congratulations, Beth, and to all of your volunteers.

CURATOR'S NOTES:

Our 9th annual "Artful Weekend" Show was successful by all counts. The quality of the artwork was very fine, the attendance was great at 450 patrons, and the sales were brisk, at over \$10,000. I appreciate all the hard work by the participating artists, and especially Debbie Taylor, who managed the work schedule; Jocelyn Hunn who coordinated the catering; and Linda Maldonado who helped curate the show, and did sales training so the sales desk works smoothly.

A big thank you to all,
Beth



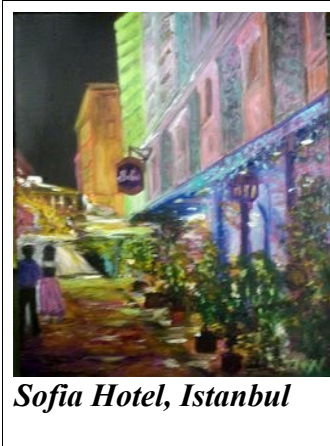
BOLSTER – SCHELLMAN SHOW OPENS - DEC/JAN AT COMMONWEALTH ORTHOPEDICS

Ann Bolster and Andrea Schellman will be exhibiting their work at Commonwealth Orthopedics for the months of Dec-Jan. 1635 George Mason Drive Suite 310.

[Curator: Andrea Limmer]

ALL MEMBERS SMALL WORKS SHOW - Dec 5 – Jan 14

The Annual Small Works Show for the holiday period provides members with an incentive to offer several small works, since sales tend to be especially good during this gift giving season and the convenient size and modest prices of these paintings attract a wide range of viewers / collectors and gift givers.



Sofia Hotel, Istanbul



Pink Lady, Concetta Scott



Les Champs Elysees, Carmen Uribe



Green Plums and Berries, Concetta C. Scott



Provence, Sandi Parker

PARVANEH LIMBERT'S PHOTOGRAPHS FROM MARSHA STAIGER'S MAINE WORKSHOP

Members will be interested in seeing Parvaneh Limbert's photo-review of the abstract painting workshop that she and Becky Salzinger attended together last fall. The photographs by Parvaneh were used to illustrate Becky's article in the last issue (Oct/Nov), where Becky described their trip and gave suggestions of how one might prepare to attend such a workshop.



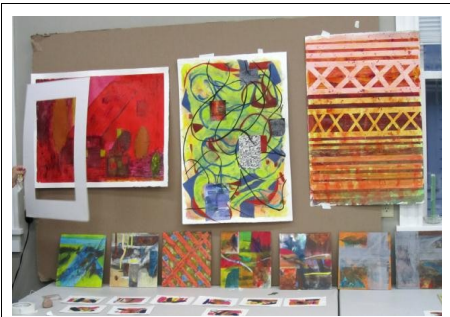
Artists at Work I

Parvaneh's photographs are presented here as a separate item, and capture nicely the three phases of any workshop experience – **First, the day to day work sessions.** Two of Parvaneh's photographs show the participants in workshop sessions, with the teacher and the artists are at work on their paintings. **The second phase of any workshop is when participants display their work and critiques by teacher or teacher and colleagues are undertaken.** This is an important opportunity to sharpen the sensitivity of one's artistic eye and to focus on composition, the artists' intentions, tactics and technique. Here

you see a display of Pavaneh's own paintings and in another photograph the leader of the workshop is shown at a work table reviewing paintings by Becky. **The third phase of a workshop is often what Becky described nicely in her article, participants enjoying the environs of the workshop, particularly if participants have time before or after the workshop to tour or otherwise enjoy the setting.** Parvaneh chose for this idea a waterfront shot of a spectacular sunset, where she and Becky were enjoying a delicious lobster dinner and the scenic Maine harbor. A delightful series of pictures.



Artists at Work II



Pavaneh's Display of Paintings



Critique of Becky's Paintings



Waterfront Lobster Dinner & Sunset

Nan's January, 2012, National Gallery of Art tours

Sunday, January 15

3:30 p.m. - East Building Highlights, including Picasso, Alexander Calder, Jackson Pollock and Richard Serra.

(meet at East Building Information Desk, 4th Street entrance)

Sunday, January 22

2:30 p.m. - American Collection, including George Catlin, Winslow Homer, Augustus Saint-Gaudens and Andrew Wyeth.

4:30 p.m. - West Building Highlights, including Leonardo, Rubens, Rembrandt, Matisse and Monet.

(for both Jan. 22 tours - meet in West Building Rotunda at sign "tours start here")

Saturday, January 28

11:30 a.m. - East Building Highlights, including Picasso, Alexander Calder, Jackson Pollock and Richard Serra.

(meet at East Building Information Desk, 4th Street entrance)

FAIRLINGTON COMMUNITY CENTER - 2011 SHOW / SALE – Dec 16/17 - Sandra Hill, Curator



The Fairlington 2011 Show & Sale took advantage of the large open space, both for a good wall display of paintings and for easy walk-around viewing at the floor

tables for ceramics and small paintings. I overheard good chatter from viewers, who admired the bright color work of Sandra's cherries and mountain lake; the clever action figures in the boxed paintings with stick levers, impossible to describe faithfully, but great fun to manipulate;

the strong watercolor rendering of the Potomac at Great Falls by Ginnie Luster; the whimsy of Anya Getta's *Kisses*; the serenity of Tony Neville's *Virginia Country Road*; the bold color statement of Karen Hacker's *Lookin' Good*; and George Bowles richly de-



Tony Neville

Virginia Country Rd



George Bowles

A Study in Obliquity

tailed interior painting, *A Study in Obliquity*. A number of other paintings were drew very favorable comments and sustained attention from visitors. A good show; a good range of subjects, media, style and techniques; a good range of prices for a diversity of potential buyers; and a bright welcoming space.



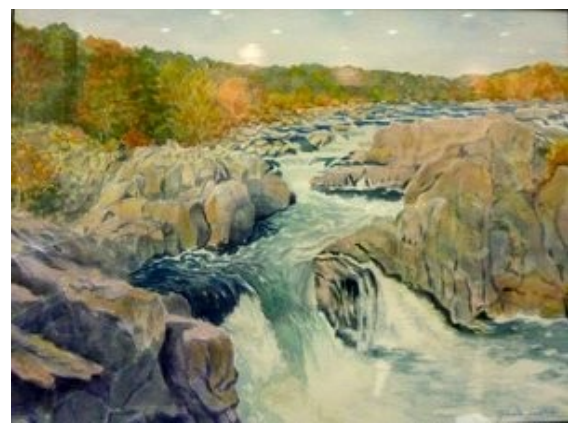
Anya Getter, *Kisses*



Karen J. Hacker, *Lookin' Good*



Sandra Hill, *Mountain Sunset*



Ginnie Luster, *Great Falls in the Fall*

ARLINGTON CULTURAL AFFAIRS – NEW GALLERY – FIRST SHOW: BLACK & WHITE – JANUARY 7 HANGING – SHOW WILL CONTINUE UNTIL FEBRUARY 13TH

The Cultural Affairs hanging system is ready and we are excited about hanging our first show there. The Black and White show will go up first and Kathy Turner and I will hang on Saturday, January 7, starting at 10 am. The "take down" for the show will be February 13 at 3 pm. That is when "Think Like a Child" will go up.

So, those of you who have work from the Black and White show:
Cultural Affairs: Black and White, up on 1/7 at 10 am, take down on Feb. 13.

Information on promoting shows and hosting receptions at this new venue is still to

come . . . after Dec. 25! I'm assuming Think Like a Child will be well promoted, with a reception.

Happy Holidays, Sharon

sharonmalley@comcast.net

www.malleygallery.com Telephone: [703-888-7238](tel:703-888-7238)

LECTURE SET FOR MARCH 17th, 2012 AAA MEETING – “WHY IS THAT ART?” EMILY SMITH, Ex. Dir., 1708 Gallery

[Announcement by AAA President Bryan Jernigan, with thanks to Alliance member Elise Ritter-Clough for helping to arrange this lecture program.]

Looking at modern art can often be challenging. It always raises questions, even amongst the most knowledgeable viewers: What is an abstract painting "of"? How do you determine if something is "good"? A close look at the history of modern art, dating from roughly 1870 through 1950, demonstrates that the changes that occurred, chiefly that art became more abstract, were not arbitrary but rather developed along deliberate paths. Artists were not working in a vacuum but were responding to changes in technology like the development of photography, cultural moments like the industrial revolution and WWI and WWII, as well as the artists and movements that preceded them.

Using works from Virginia Museum of Fine Arts collection, this chronological telling of important moments in modern art provides the context in which to answer questions like those above. This program has been organized by the VMFA Office of Statewide Partnerships and is funded, in part, by the Jean Stafford Camp Memorial Fund.

AAA Policy: Lectures normally follow the morning meetings and will be from 12 noon to 1:30 PM,. Members are welcome to bring a bagged lunch so that the lectures can follow immediately after the normal meeting is completed.

FEBRUARY MEETING RE-SCHEDULED FOR 18TH TO PERMIT BRIEFING ON “THINK LIKE A CHILD” SPRING COMPETITION

The regular meeting of the Alliance has been rescheduled to permit members to hear from our “Think Like a Child” juror as to her criteria for that competition. That talk, by Juror Lisa Semerad, a prominent local artist and art instructor, will discuss the paintings she accepted for the show, and will be presented at

11am on Saturday, 18 February at the Arlington Cultural Affairs building. [Consult Bryan Jernigan's email on December 15th for two attachments detailing the criteria and for an explanation as to how that show will be administered. The jurying of paintings is scheduled for February 13th, snow date: February 17th.]

This show will hang at four venues, including Cassatt's and the Arlington Central Library. Curator: Linda Kosovych, cell: 571-282-1727.

RENWICK POSTCARD COMPETITION TO CELEBRATE THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MUSEUM

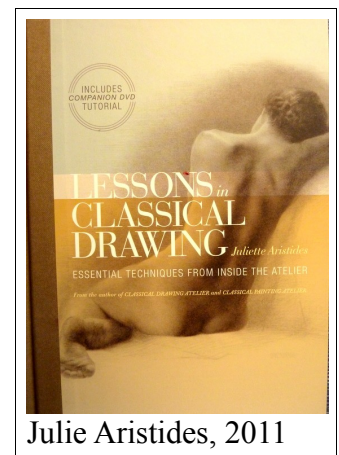
The Smithsonian's Renwick Museum is sponsoring a design competition for a postcard celebrating the Renwick's 40th anniversary. This outstanding arts and crafts museum is encouraging widespread participation. This competition is entered by email, and the entry must be sent by January 17th, 2012. Details are readily available at: <http://www.americanart.si.edu/renwick/postcard/>

[The book review below ran in the draft copies of the October-November issue of the Newsletter, but was removed to reduce the length of that issue. A very few members will already have seen this piece.]

BOOK REVIEW:

LESSONS IN CLASSICAL DRAWING: ESSENTIAL TECHNIQUES FROM INSIDE THE ATELIER, Juliette Aristides, Watson-Guptill Publishers (2011)

The author of two of the most distinguished art instruction books currently in print, Juliette Aristides, author of *Classical Drawing Atelier* and *Classical Painting Atelier*, has released a new, modestly priced book on drawing that brings with it an instructional DVD. At \$ 29.99, and published by the distinguished old line art publishing house, Watson-Guptill, it is an outstanding value. But, surprise, it is available through Amazon for \$ 19.95! A book rich in detail, loaded with her experience as a nationally admired teacher of classical drawing, and at simply an astounding price!



Julie Aristides, 2011

If you have an artist friend or know a student artist whom you would befriend this

Christmas, give them this book! It is stunningly beautiful just to leaf through, and stuffed to the gills with practical, insightful and illuminating instructional notes. Aristides is on the faculty of the Classical Atelier at the Gage Academy of Art, Seattle, Washington. Her work can be seen at www.ArtRenewal.com.

To start with, the book is lavishly illustrated with extraordinary drawings, drawings so lovely and satisfying that one's first reaction is simply to despair that one might ever do such work. But for Aristides, drawing is a craft that can be taught; more importantly, that the dedicated student can learn. Talent is another level of any art. But with an open mind, an attentive eye, good instruction and practice - practice - practice - practice - never ending practice, persons of even modest talent can master superior and deeply rewarding drawing skills. Here are examples of her advice so you can see for yourself what fresh and practical guidance her book affords, even adding insight to those canonical rules that we all have heard repeatedly, but often forget.

To Begin a Drawing Well , Plan How It Will End

“Spend time looking before you start to draw.”

“One of the most immediate things beginners can do to improve their work is to draw lightly. . . . An artist who starts off too dark and specific . . . will find their drawing finished long before they intended and not know how to go back.”

“There are many ways to draw. The technique is less significant than the principles underlying the method.”

“Give careful consideration to your first few marks – the rest of your drawing hangs on this structure.”

“ . . . learn to differentiate between essential and unnecessary lines, and distill a concise pattern onto which you can build your work of art. The more clearly you identify the underlying structure of your subject, the easier it will be to draw . . . “

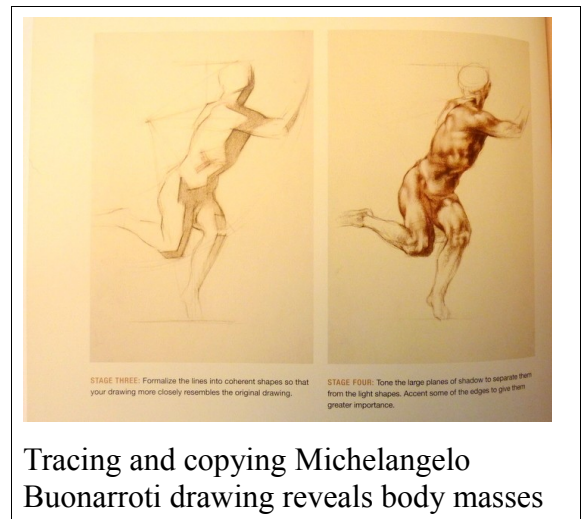
“Form one essential vision when you start your drawing that will still be evident upon completion.”

“I determine which lines are most important by asking myself, ‘If I had only one line, where should it be placed to reflect the movement or action of the piece?’”

“Straight lines serve as the artist's shorthand and ensure that the larger issues are considered before more nuanced ones. . . . A curved line tends to feel complete even if it is not accurate, making it difficult to find and correct errors as the drawing progresses. While essential, curves are notoriously hard to judge accurately, so I tend to use them judiciously – especially at the beginning of a drawing.”

A Book of Instruction, Not Just of Art Theory

For each lesson she offers a list of materials, discusses their use, and shows how



technique is affected by the materials chosen. This continues with additional information on www.aristidesatelier.com.

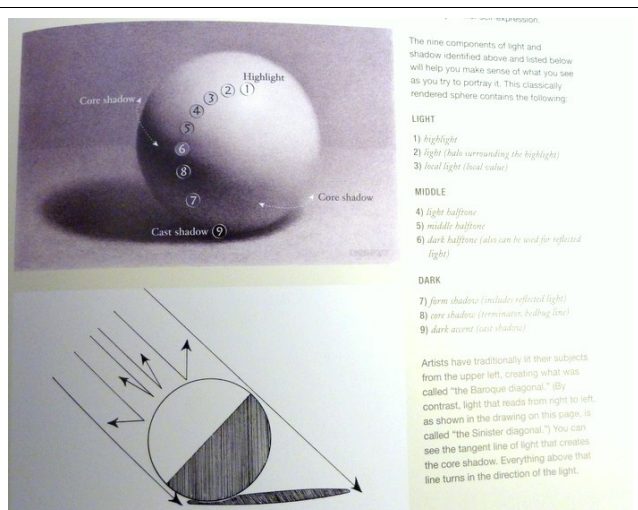
Over and over Aristides returns to the drawing as a whole. Most teachers urge students to begin with the large shapes and forms, but her focus is on **establishing coherent shapes**. Coherence is an added and disciplining demand of the student. She wants the student to think in terms of the whole, not in terms of stitching together a collection of well-drawn parts. Issues of proportion arise – and even lay people can spot defects – but conventional ratios are not to be imposed on the drawing. These long established ratios - how many heads to the pubis, how do the lengths of arms and legs relate, how many heads wide are female shoulders - only help us anticipate gross forms, but then they significantly help us identify the deviations in the model. A credible likeness or plausible whole comes from looking and thinking and drawing the real person, not reproducing ratios.

No artist ever “grows” beyond the need to measure, measure, measure! It must become second nature.

She notes a wide variety of things we can do. For example, copying from anatomy books helps us recognize landmarks in the form, landmarks that may be subtle in our lighting conditions or faint in the musculature of our particular model. But always, we are drawing a real person, not the universal abstraction of a body or head or face. The reason we draw a pose over and over, as Degas emphasizes (see the discussion of the London Degas show in this issue), is not to abstract out the universal form, but to abstract out the minimalist vision, the unique, the structural, the pure essence of our model’s pose.

Of course, Aristides, like others, emphasizes measurement and particularly the internal relationships of the forms, but she also emphasizes how these internal relationships and proportions bear upon the movement or weight bearing positions of the body! Thus, gestures are not merely positions or physical attitudes, but relate to what the body is doing, and to what it can and cannot do.

Students’ drawings often go awry because they have no clear sense of the vertical or the horizontal. The model is sitting on a chair, but the figure in the drawing is floating, or falling, or held in place by miraculous, i.e., *unbelievable*, forces. Classical artists used plumb lines to assure an accurate perception of the weight distribution of the model. In the ceiling of the Royal Academy in London are metal grids attached to the ceiling because John Singer Sargent would attach plumb lines that hung down around the model. Aristides notes, to emphasize this point, that Poussin’s and Rubens’ studies sometimes showed an explicit “vertical weight line drawn



Only a few values for tone and shading are necessary, but there are nine components of light and shadow that permit you to render even complex patterns of light, halftones, reflected light and shadows.

from the top to the bottom of their figures.” Why would steps the masters’ thought necessary be ignored by today’s student? But the plumb line is not commonly observed in the classroom or studio.

You can readily see how thorough her instruction is, how pointed and clarifying. A wonderful book!

The Chapter Topics Show How Thorough She Is -

After the topic for each chapter, we have given in parentheses the focus of the Lesson for that topic. **Beginning Lines** (Master Copy Sketch); **Harmonious Relationships** (Measured Drawing); **The Elegant Contour** (Rhythmic Line Drawing); **The Illusion of Depth** (Volumetric Drawing); **Tonal Composition** (Tonal Sketch); and **Light and Shadow** (Form Drawing).

Each chapter is divided into eight to twelve subsections dealing with particular techniques, problems, historical practice and absolutely dazzling illustrative drawings. Then each chapter concludes with an explicit lesson that draws it together. And throughout the book are illustrations worth the price of the book in themselves.

The DVD. The book includes an instructional DVD that would normally have a market price as high as the book/DVD package, or higher. An unexpected bonus, it too is beautifully done. **A Bibliography and an Index** are included.

Conclusion: Without qualification, I recommend this book/DVD combination. It is a great value. If you are looking for a wonderful gift, a sensible study aid for any art student, or a little something to reward the artist within you, you can end your search by buying this splendid book. You will love it.

To all ARLINGTON ALLIANCE Artists and Friends . . .

HAPPY HOLIDAYS!

Comments or suggestions to:
Bob Park, rparkfam2003@gmail.com
Thanks.