



CAPITOL HILL ART LEAGUE

News & *Views*

AFFILIATED WITH CAPITOL HILL ARTS WORKSHOP
545 7th Street, SE • Washington, DC 20003

December 2009

PLEIN- AIR PAINTING – A MOVEABLE FEAST

By Anne Oman

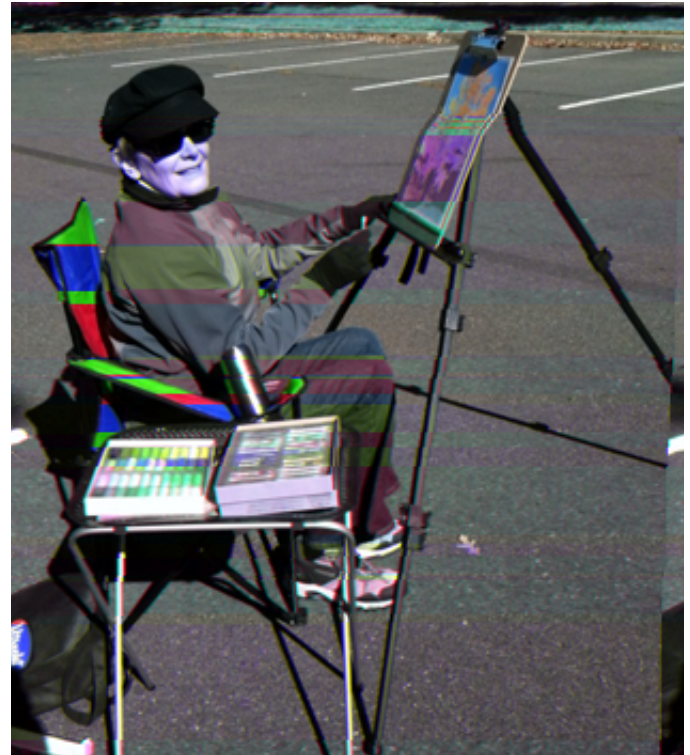
My watercolor block lay propped on the fence of the overlook high above Great Falls. As the water roared and roiled majestically through the gorge below, my brush flew frenetically from palette to paper, trying to capture the glorious fall colors, the jutting, multihued boulders, the fast-moving blue and white river. Suspecting that, as usual, the beauty of the scene had outdistanced my modest artistic ability, I stepped back to look – colliding with one of several over-the-shoulder spectators.

“I think you missed a rock,” he said.

Kibitzing spectators, wind, heat, cold, hard ground, insects. These are some of the challenges the intrepid plein-air painter must face. But they are far outweighed by the opportunity to capture the beauty of a place as you experience it first-hand. Not to mention a chance to have fun in the outdoors with other painters, and to visit nearby places you may not have known about before. Plein-air – or outdoor – painting was unknown in the Renaissance, when artists had to mix their paints from minerals, and stayed in their studios. Facilitated by new, ready mixed paints, it flourished in 19th century France, when artists flocked to the forest of Fontainebleu.

Following in that tradition, a group of local artists in various media – watercolor, acrylic, pastel, ink, colored pencil, printmaking, etc – gets together about every week for a plein-air foray. The activity is loosely organized by the Capitol Hill Art League (just as no one can really herd cats). There are no instructions and no fees, no membership requirements and no prerequisites – just a desire to work outdoors. Outings usually involve a picnic lunch, and always end with show-and-tell.

The show-and-tell sessions illustrate the principle that no one experiences a place in quite the same way. During the Great Falls foray, for example, as I tried to paint the Falls from the overlook, Alan Braley and Claire Sutherlin sat near a roaring backwater of the Potomac. Alan set up an easel and captured the fast-moving river in acrylics, while Claire sketched the couple’s new puppy, Casey. Meanwhile, M’El Abrecht disappeared into the woods, emerging with a Wolf Kahn-esque pastel of fall foliage. Donna Breslin sat on a bench by the canal, producing a large watercolor of the old canal boat. Judy Searles pro-



MaryEllen (M’El) Abrecht with her pastels.

duced a series of abstracts that reflected the colors of the woods and the water, while Stu walked down the canal and came back with some Japanese-style ink drawings. Barry Ripin took on Great Falls Tavern, creating what he modestly called “just a watercolor sketch,” but which most of us would have sacrificed our painting arm for.

To date, we have visited the Washington Sailing Marina, the National Arboretum, and Fort Washington Park, as well as Great Falls. Future outings to River Farm, Huntley Meadows, Rock Creek Park and Theodore Roosevelt Island are planned, and suggestions are solicited. To date, we’ve had great weather. When it gets cold, watercolorists may have to use vodka instead of water – as Canadian plein-air painters do.

If you’d like to join this moveable feast, just send an email to Anne Oman (ahoman1110@yahoo.com) or Alan Braley (alan@braleyart.com) and we’ll put you on the notice list.

WRAP IT UP

Double the pleasure, double the fun. That's what CHAL has gone and done.

Wrap It Up has expanded to two nights, and two locations. Twice the opportunity for you to show and sell your art: Twice the opportunity for you and others to buy fantastic, reasonably priced original works of art.

On Friday, December 11, 2009, there will be an opening of Wrap It Up at Capitol Hill Art & Frame, 623 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. This venue will feature framed art hung on the walls as well matted pieces of original art in bins.

On Saturday, December 12, 2009, there will be an opening of the Wrap It Up show at CHAW from 4:00 to 8:00 PM. This will feature all framed works hung on the walls.

Member artists may submit five framed original works for the CHAW show, PLUS one framed original work and five matted pieces for display at Capitol Hill Art & Frame. The cost for all 11 items is just \$10.00.

Receiving will be Saturday, December 5th and Tuesday, December 8th from 9:30 to 11:30 AM at CHAW for items for both locations. Additionally, there will be a receiving at Capitol Hill Art & Frame on December 7th, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon for Art and Frame items only.

Framed pieces must be no greater than 16" x 20" and the suggested price below \$250. Each matted piece will need to be in a glassine bag which CHAL will make available for 50 cents each for artists who do not have their own.. The artist will label their own matted pieces at receiving.

This is an exciting opportunity and we look forward to two successful openings.



Streetscape NYC, a digital photograph by Marilyn Christiano, is one of her pieces that won the National Museum of Women in the Arts Membership Award in November's juried show.



Kim Ward, the November judge presented her gallery talk on Saturday, November 14.

SUCCESS AS AN ARTIST

Yes, you can!

Success as an Artist. Yes, you can. And CHAW and the Capitol Hill Arts League are here to help. We have asked artist and gallery owner, Kate Fraser, to bring her "Success as an Artist" workshop to Capitol Hill.

Who Should Attend?

Whether you are a retiree looking to get into more shows and sell your work, or if you feel its time to kick your hobby up a notch or two, or if you are a recent grad ready to start your art career, this workshop is for you!

When and Where?

This exciting event will be held Sunday, February 21, 2010, 10:00 AM – 4:00 PM, at a private home in the Jenkins Row Condos, which are located across from the Potomac Ave Metro station (address and access codes provided upon registration). Continental Breakfast is included, but please bring your own lunch.

What's Covered?

In the workshop, Catriona "Kate" Fraser, covers everything the emerging artists need to know including: How to buy essential materials at the lowest cost for the best presentation; archival matting and framing; creating a resume; building a portfolio; marketing your work; strategies for getting into Juried Shows; and the best part — selling your art.

What's Included?

In addition to Kate's insights and answers to your questions, each attendee will receive a resource packet including a CD of essential documents and other reference materials.

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All this, plus networking with other local like-minded artists, for only \$80! It's a holiday gift to yourself!

About Catriona Fraser.

The presenter, Catriona Fraser, is the owner and Director of the Fraser Gallery. Ms. Fraser has over 13 years experience as one of the most successful art dealers in the

area, and has earned an excellent reputation for supporting local emerging artists. Ms. Fraser is the Director of the Bethesda Fine Arts Festival and the founder and Director of Secondsight, an organization dedicated to the support of women photographers in the D.C Metro area. In 2009, Ms. Fraser was elected President of the Art Dealers Association of Greater Washington.

Registration

(Print and mail to CHAW at the address below)

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Contact phone number _____

Email address _____

You can pay by check or credit card. To pay by credit card, please call CHAW at: 202-547-6839
Or send your check to:

Capitol Hill Arts Workshop
545 7th Street, SE
Washington, DC 20003
Make checks payable to "CHAW"