



CAPITOL HILL ART LEAGUE

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

News & *Views*

September 2009

Welcome to the 2009-2010 Season!

The September show, "Landscapes" opens Saturday, September 19th with the reception and gallery talk and will run through October 1st.

The judge for this show is Catriona "Kate" Fraser. Ms. Fraser is an award winning photographer, the owner and Director of the Fraser Gallery in Bethesda, Maryland and the founder of Secondsight <<http://www.secondsightdc.com/>> , an organization for women photographers.

Her work has been exhibited widely in many galleries in Europe, Latin America and the United States. Additionally, her work has been exhibited in the Carnegie Museum in Pittsburgh, the Otero Museum in Colorado, the Museu de Brusque in Brazil and the Rufino Tamayo Museum of Contemporary Art in Mexico City.

As a curator and juror, Ms. Fraser has orchestrated, organized, curated, and juried over 100 exhibits, ranging from being the peer juror at the 1996 Northern Virginia Fine Arts Festival to curating exhibits for various DC, Virginia and Maryland galleries and artists' organizations and leagues.

Ms. Fraser serves on the Bethesda Art and Entertainment District Advisory Panel <<http://www.bethesda.org/>> and Washington School of Photography Advisory Board <<http://www.wsp-photo.com/>> . She has also served on the Advisory Panel for the Arts and Humanities Council of Montgomery County <<http://www.creativemoco.com/>> and serves as Chair of the Trawick Art Prize <<http://www.bethesda.org/>> , a fine art competition that will award \$14,000 in prize money to artists residing in Maryland, DC and Virginia. Additionally, she is Chair of the Bethesda Painting Awards <<http://www.bethesda.org/arts/painting-awards.htm>> , an annual competition that awards \$14,000 in prize money to painters residing in the same area. Ms. Fraser is also the Director of the annual Bethesda Fine Arts Festival <<http://www.bethesda.org/arts/artsfestival.htm>> .

The Photography of Catriona Fraser >> <<http://www.the-frasergallery.com/artists/CFraser.html>>



Frothy Water, watercolor, Maria Valle-Riestra (Tati)

Artomatic

By Nancy Donnelly

I like Artomatic. It's huge, and messy, and demanding, and I've had a good time every time.

Artomatic is a rather loose organization of artists, curators, arts administrators, and arts groupies. Its purpose is to take unused buildings and repurpose them as exhibit and performance space for 5 or 6 weeks every year or two. It used to use decaying abandoned places, but lately the unused buildings in DC are brand-new, never used.

My first Artomatic was in 2003, at the Waterfront Mall in the huge, drab, decaying EPA building that was cut up into a thousand hallways, offices, lunchrooms, and lobbies. How astonished I was by the explosion of unhinged creativity – paint on the floor, sequins on the walls, free-standing monsters, and some work I thought was great! I first participated in 2005 in the former Children's Museum at 3rd and H NE, previously a nunnery and orphanage, with an impressive chapel and a seemingly infinite expanse of large and small rooms. I got a hallway which I painted dark blue and hung paintings and photos, and I sold 3 paintings. I wandered around the building dreaming of my great art future.

Now those exhibit spaces were about to be demolished or significantly redone, and the artists could do practically anything short of burning the place down. In 2007 free funky spaces were hard to come by, owing to the gentrification of DC, and after months of searching, Artomatic took place on several floors of an office building in Crystal City. I didn't take a space at that one, but I went, focusing on people I knew, like Geoff Ault and Tim Tate, who had work there.

In 2008 and 2009, this situation continued -- abandoned buildings were in very short supply in DC. But for developers of new buildings, tenants were also hard to find, so the brilliant negotiators of Artomatic found utterly new spaces with clean bathrooms, working elevators, pristine windows with great views, and hundreds of thousands of square feet.

This year, in a brand new space by the new stadium, about a thousand artists and performance artists showed off their wares and skills for 5 weeks. The space was so huge it never seemed crowded, but every time I went I found significant numbers of people, even in the middle of weekdays. Everybody I spoke with agreed that sales were down (of the glass artists, none sold a piece that I know of except me, and that was a fluke). But the place was full of energy, from the Brazilian drummers the first night to the rock bands at closing.

There's something to be said for damaged spaces -- to be exact, in a new space you have to be more careful, and there were more rules for artists this year. Things seemed a little more orderly than usual. Some might think that was desirable.

Artomatic is too big to see everything in one go or two, and wandering is recommended. Works can be great, bad, or indifferent. Never mind - I saw many, many works I never would have seen otherwise. Showing off the range and energy of DC's artists is the best part of Artomatic. Doing something new like Artomatic is good for creative juices. It's certainly been good for me, and I recommend it to every artist.



Ellen Cornett's Artomatic wall.

Art Enables

By Wally Szyndler

Art Enables is an arts-entrepreneurial program for adults with developmental and/or mental disabilities. There are currently thirty artists in the program whose disabilities include but are not limited to Down syndrome, autism, cerebral palsy, traumatic brain injury, schizophrenia. What they have in common is an uncanny ability to tell their stories in striking visual images.

Art Enables is a place where the artists make friends, meet fans and bask in the compliments from buyers.

Staff facilitates the arts process but does not teach art. Their role is to make sure that the artists produce the most professional work of which they are capable while staying true to the style for which they are known and appreciated.

The colorful, spirited, and unexpected artwork produced at Art Enables is sold at shows in their studio at 411 New York Avenue, NE, and around the city and via their online store (www.art-enables.org).

Wally Szyndler, member of the CHAL Subcommittee has been involved as an advisor and later as resident artist with Art Enables from its inception more than eight years ago. Below is a photo of Wally working with a participating artist in the creation of a mask which was sold along with other gourd masks and gourd vessels at a past Christmas show which earned close to \$1,500.

Encaustic Workshop

For three hours on June 18th, about 15 artists met at CHAW to learn about and experiment with encaustic painting. It was the first of what is hoped to be many workshops arranged by WPA and was a huge success according to the participants who were members of the Capitol Hill Art League or the Washington Project for the Arts. Megan Irving led the workshop. She is a painter and demonstrator for Daniel Smith Artist Materials, which provided all the materials needed.

Megan explained and showed how to use the melted wax. She pointed out the advantages of the process -- the medium is re-workable, more waterproof than acrylic, and can be used with collage, oil painting, photography and drawing. Then participants, most novices, got to melt the richly colored beeswax on a heated palette, paint several mat boards and fuse the encaustic painted surfaces with a heat gun to harden wax to a shiny finish. The intensive hands-on workshop exposed participants to the basic techniques and the materials needed to begin encaustic painting on their own.

2009-2010 Exhibit Schedule

September – Landscapes Show

Receiving – Saturday September 11 & Monday September 14 – 9:30 – 11:30 am
Judging – Monday, September 14, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening September 19th
Judge – Catronia Fraser, Owner Fraser Gallery

October – No Theme

Receiving – Saturday October 10 & Tuesday October 13 – 9:30-11:30 am
Judging – Tuesday, October 13, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening – October 17th
Judge – Delna Dastur, Instructor at the Alexandria Art League

November – Cityscapes

Receiving – Saturday, November 7 & Monday, November 9 – 9:30-11:30 am
Judging – Monday, November 9, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening – November 14th
Judge – Kim Ward, Former Director of Washington Project for the Arts

December – Wrap-It-Up

Receiving – Saturday, December 5 & Monday December 7 – 9:30-11:30 am
Opening – December 12th

February – No Theme

Receiving – Saturday, February 6 & Monday, February 8 – 9:30-11:30 am
Judging – Monday, February 8, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening – February 13th
Judge – Betsy Anderson

March – Seascapes

Receiving – Saturday, March 6 & Monday, March 8 – 9:30-11:30 am
Judging – Monday, March 8, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening – March 13th
Judge – Trudi Van Dyke

April – No Theme

Receiving – Saturday, April 3 & Monday, April 5 – 9:30-11:30 am
Judging – Monday, April 5, 12:30 – 2 pm
Opening – April 10th
Judge - Berthold Schmutzhardt

May – Escapes

Receiving – TBA
Judging - TBA
Judge – TBA