



THE CAPITOL HILL ART LEAGUE

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[www.caphillartleague.org](http://www.caphillartleague.org)

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## Spring 2011 Newsletter

### Dear CHAL members and friends,

It's been a busy season with a very successful Wrap-It-Up in December and sales booths at both Eastern Market and the Barracks Row festival on 8<sup>th</sup> St SE in the fall. CHAL put on also a number of artist development workshops in the fall and winter. Below please find more details on all of these as well as photos. Additionally, there are some artist tips presented in an article on framing work appropriately (and safely) for CHAL shows.

### The schedule for the remainder of the 2010-2011 show season at CHAL is:

<b>APRIL 2011 – “Art That Moves”</b> <b>Juror: Peter Dimuro, director of Dance/MetroDC and CHAW dance programs director. This show is held in conjunction with the city-wide dance festival, “Dance is the Answer.”</b> The show runs April 9 – May 11.	
Receiving	Saturday April 2 <sup>nd</sup> 9:30-11:30am Monday April 4 <sup>th</sup> 9:30-11:30am
Judging	Monday April 4 <sup>th</sup> 12:30-2pm
Opening Reception	Saturday April 9 <sup>th</sup> , 5-7pm in the CHAW Gallery, Juror’s Remarks and Awards 5:30pm
<b>MAY 2011 – “Coming Home/Lighting Out”</b> <b>Juror: Jack Rasmussen, director and curator of the American University Museum</b> The show runs May 14 – June 3.	
Receiving/ Judging	Submission and judging to be done via digital images. <b>Deadline April 15<sup>th</sup></b>
Acceptance Notification	Artists with accepted works will be notified by May 1 <sup>st</sup> .
Delivery	Accepted works to be delivered May 7-10
Opening Reception	Saturday May 14 <sup>th</sup> , 5-7pm in the CHAW Gallery, Juror’s Remarks and Awards 5:30pm

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## **CROSS-POLLINATION OPPORTUNITY FOR CHAL**

Just as the April show is inspired by and a collaboration with the artistic world of dance, so we have now an opportunity to place our art within the context of the world of music. The Capital City Symphony is playing a concert on May 8th that features a piece called Pictures at an Exhibition (Mussorgsky, 1874). The piece is comprised of a series of short movements, each inspired by a work of visual art created by the composer's friend, Viktor Hartmann. More details about the music and some images of the artist's work are on-line at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pictures\\_at\\_an\\_Exhibition](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pictures_at_an_Exhibition).

The Capital City Symphony would like to project onto the stage images of art that capture the mood/essence of each movement in the piece. At the above link, a description and audio clip of each movement can be found. (No pictures would be used for the "Promenades" between each movement.) This presents a wonderful opportunity for CHAL artists (current members only) to get their art into the local art scene with no more effort than emailing on a couple digital files. So to participate, read through, or better yet, listen through the descriptions and clips at the above Wikipedia link, and consider how any of your art illuminates and illustrates the mood in a movement from the piece. Perhaps you are even inspired to create new pieces based on this music.

Send your high resolution images to [caphillartleague@yahoo.com](mailto:caphillartleague@yahoo.com) with the title and medium by April 27<sup>th</sup>. A full listing of all the art works will be included in the printed programs handed out at the concert.

You can find out more about the Capital City Symphony at <http://www.capitalcitysymphony.org>. A brief synopsis from the web site:

"The Capital City Symphony strives to make great orchestral music approachable by presenting affordable concerts to the public, performing innovative programs in a relaxed concert format, and providing a musical outlet for talented amateur as well as professional players.

2005-2006 was the inaugural season for the Capital City Symphony. Formerly known as the Georgetown Symphony Orchestra, this organization has enjoyed a long and fruitful history as a community orchestra in the DC metropolitan area. The name change comes with a neighborhood change – we have moved from Georgetown to the Capitol Hill area, and will be permanently located at the new Atlas Performing Arts Center on H Street NE. The Capital City Symphony is a volunteer community orchestra relying on grants, corporate sponsorships and individual donations."

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## **The Art of Framing Your Art: How to prepare your work for exhibit**

CHAL jurors have recently rejected some submissions for poor framing. They did so on their own, without even consulting the CHAL member handbook! So, here is a review of CHAL framing guidelines and policies for submitting 2-D art work:

Paintings on canvas or board, and fabric art must be securely prepared for hanging, normally with screw eyes and wires firmly attached. Work will not be accepted if poorly prepared or still wet. Edges must be finished. No staples or tacks may show on front or sides. If they do show on the sides of your canvas, you can cover them with strips of finished wood, as if framing.

Works on paper, watercolors, drawings, sumi-e, lithographs and other print media, photographs, and anything with a paper mat should have a protective covering of glass or Plexiglas. No taped or clip frames are allowed. To show off your work to its best advantage, we suggest that you use white or cream mats and simple frames (unless the frame is part of the artwork itself). Some pieces have been rejected by jurors because the frames were cracked or otherwise of poor quality. Additionally, extremely ornate gilt frames such as used for Old Masters in museums do not translate well to a white-walls gallery for a group show, so jurors have also rejected pieces for overly ornate frames.

CHAL requires sturdy frames with wire on the back for hanging. Please refrain from using weak frames. The wire must be connected to the frame via eye-screws or Nielsen wire holders so it will be secure enough to hold solidly. If the wires are tied onto V-shaped metal anchors that slip between the frame and backing board and rely on tension to stay in place, this type of wiring will be rejected at receiving.

These guidelines and policies are to help artists put their best foot forward in an exhibit setting as well as to ensure the safety of all the people who use the Gallery at CHAW where CHAL shows are hung.

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## **CHAL November 2010 Show Opening - juror: Gene Weingarten, Capitol Hill community member and columnist with the Washington Post**

Not often are the words schlock and art uttered in the same breath at CHAL, but that's just the start of what juror Gene Weingarten had to say. On November 6th CHAL members and patrons gathered for the opening of our theme-less November show at CHAW. After a witty and amusing introduction from Stu Searles, the emcee, Gene Weingarten proceeded to rip the art from the walls (metaphorically of course) and place it gently back on the wall. With his blend of self-deprecating humor, studying eyes and rapier wit, Gene entertained the crowd for 15 minutes dissecting the art and challenging his own artistic sensibility. With a teeming stream-of-consciousness discourse on how one piece reminded him of the holocaust, he head-shakingly and belly-laughingly defined the abstract. It was a great experience for all involved.

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## **Spreading Our Wings**

The Capitol Hill Arts League participated in two outreach events this fall, Barracks Row 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Oktoberfest, September 27th and Eastern Market, October 10th.

Our goal of introducing CHAL to the community was met. Jackie Saunders did a fascinating watercolor demonstration on Barracks Row that drew a low of attention. Lots of folks stopped by to see us and we sold several pieces of our art at Eastern Market.



Tom Pullen, Kay Fuller, Ellen Cornett and Tara Hamilton at Eastern Market.

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## Survey Says...

This summer the Steering Committee sent a survey to CHAL members, asking about various art league programs and how to improve CHAL receptions and boost attendance. We also asked a few questions about CHAW programs. Thirty-five members completed the survey, which was more than half of our membership at the time.

### CHAL ♥s Jurors

The main theme that came out loud and clear was that juror comments are a key part of CHAL and are highly valued. In response, we will once again feature jurors who are recognized artists and art professionals.

Members asked that jurors talk more about art in general and speak about more than just the pieces that won awards (although not about every piece in the show). You asked that jurors also talk about their selection process and how a work of art makes an impression on them. In response, CHAL has updated its juror guidance document to reflect these comments.

### **Publicity for CHAL Shows**

CHAL members asked for greater publicity for the opening receptions and shows. This has also been on the mind of Steering Committee members, who recently formed a publicity subcommittee. In the past, CHAL relied on CHAW's media outreach about art league receptions and shows. You have probably noticed the new vigor in publicity: CHAL had a presence on the Barrack's Row Street Festival and at Eastern Market, and a new website was developed: [www.caphillartleague.org](http://www.caphillartleague.org).

Watch this space, because there's more to come!

While attendance at CHAL receptions seems to be down from previous levels, most who took the survey said they attend the receptions. As noted above, most asked for better advertising about the opening receptions.

Most survey takers said CHAL generally does things right, and CHAL membership provides a great way to meet other artists and show art in a public venue. Meeting other artists is fun and always a learning experience. To that end, the Steering Committee looks forward to scheduling and announcing more museum tours and other programs in 2011.

### **Suggestions**

Suggestions included one that CHAL should form strategic relationships with other arts organizations (galleries, non-profits, and educators), to announce openings, seek members, or develop reciprocal arrangements. Another was that openings should be more of an experience, such as including live music and possibly a lecture/art talk before or after the reception. Activities that CHAL members and the general audience would equally enjoy. All are great suggestions that we look forward to working on.

### **The Path Forward**

If you would like to volunteer for the Steering Committee, helping at receiving, getting the CHAW gallery ready for receptions or publicity, please contact Rindy O'Brien at [rindyob@mac.com](mailto:rindyob@mac.com). She is the intrepid Volunteer Coordinator for CHAL. Also, look for future CHAL events and special programs in the months to come.

Finally, tell your friends and colleagues about CHAL. The best publicity and membership drives come from friends and trusted colleagues.

--- Dan Glucksman (CHAL Steering Committee) ([digluxe@yahoo.com](mailto:digluxe@yahoo.com))

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## **CHAL FALL and WINTER WORKSHOP & EVENT ROUND-UP**

CHAL offered two workshops this fall, taught by well-known members of the local art community. The Saturday workshops at CHAW were aimed at helping artists improve their portfolios and expand their horizons.

In October, Kate Fraser, owner of the recently-shuttered Fraser Gallery in Bethesda, offered a portfolio review that focused on the business side of an artist's career. She provided guidance and information about how to develop your art portfolio and where and how to market your art. Several participants felt they had their eyes opened to new possibilities to explore for exhibiting their work. She encouraged one participant to pursue getting a solo show at a gallery. She would like him to keep his selected gallery up to date about his work by sending a CD of new work every six months. Another artist was pointed toward non-profit spaces that might be interested in exhibiting documentary style photography.

In November, Lisa Semerad, professional artist and teacher who is knowledgeable in many fields of art and photography, offered a portfolio critique seminar. Lisa explained the important elements to look for when doing a critique. Then she offered her critique of the artwork participants had brought. One member said Lisa was helpful in pointing out design weaknesses and general thoughts for correction. Another felt that Lisa provided a lot of helpful feedback in a direct but constructive way, and that the session was well worth the time and money. "It's too bad others weren't able to take advantage of such a good opportunity to learn how to improve," she commented.

In March, Geoff Ault and Sarah Porter, two CHAL steering committee members provided a tutorial seminar at CHAW for CHAL members wanting to learn the basics of how to manage digital photo files, particularly how to edit and format these files for juried shows requiring submissions in digital format. Separate tutorials were held for Mac and PC users. The well-equipped Mac lab at CHAW helps make such hands-on learning events possible.

On March 13<sup>th</sup>, CHAL hosted a tour of the Textile Museum's show: "Colors of the Oasis – Central Asian Ikats". The ikats on display were 100-200 year old robes from Central Asia made of hand-dyed fibers. Close to 200 pieces of Central Asian ikat were donated by one patron, Murad Megalli. The ikat process, which is said to have originated in Indonesia, involves tying certain strands of the warp or weft fibers (the vertical or horizontal threads for weaving) so they do not absorb a particular dye color while the other fibers will. Repeat this process several times with 200 yards of woven fiber and...voila you have an ikat cloth. Sort of. Cutters and tailors made the robes from the finished cloth.

CHAL was represented on the tour by the author. CHAW voice instructor Sarah Markowits also attended as did local Capitol Hill fiber artists (local knitters). We got in on the very last day of the show. The garments will be cleaned and put in cold storage for 3 years before being shown again. This preserves these delicate pieces.

Watch this space for future CHAL tour announcements!

Also in late March, Greg Staley once again was on hand at CHAW for a day of photographing art works. He takes professional images of art pieces in digital format, especially useful for artists who do not photograph their own art or have pieces that are particularly tricky to photograph.

---Marilyn Christiano, Sarah Porter, and Dan Glucksman (CHAL Steering Committee, tour program coordinator)

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## **Juror's Notes from Paula Amt for CHAL Show, March 2011**

*Our March juror, Paula Amt was unable to be at the opening reception to present her remarks on selecting and creating this exhibit. Below are her comments.*

The process of selecting artwork is subjective and personal. Everyone has his or her likes and dislikes and even a professional juror brings that to the table when asked to select for a group exhibition. My primary considerations are composition, contrast, commitment and craftsmanship. I respond immediately to a work that feels balanced and solid and that's what a good composition does for a piece. This, along with an intriguing technique, is what attracted me to Judy Searles' collage and monotype "Stone Cold".

I also find that bold contrast catches the eye, makes you stop, look at and consider a piece of art. I noticed in this collection of work that shadow and light figure significantly in many pieces in different mediums. Martha Huizenga's black and white photo "Gettysburg" seems obvious, but the play of light and dark with the fence and the trees offers a juxtaposition of manmade and natural patterns that is very appealing. Contrast and pattern recur in Marilyn Christiano's photographs and also in Livia Tonczyk's "Dog Show".

I often describe artworks as confident. That, of course, comes from the artist, but when you see the piece it is clear and you respond to it. Tom Pullen's sculptures are great examples of this. His idea is expressed and conveyed clearly and the hard metal as material punctuates the message that "truth hurts". There is great appealing commitment in Jill Finsen's color and brushstrokes. Michael Fleischhacker photographs a young woman who engages the viewer as the shawl drops and exposes her breasts a little more.

I am a fan of a well-executed work of art. In my opinion, a concept is not wholly successful unless there is skill and attention displayed in the technique and implementation of the process. This show offers a wide range of adeptly handled media: painting, collage, photography, printmaking, and sculpture.

Congratulations to all the participants and I hope you enjoy the show!

---Paula Amt, owner Gallery plan b

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## WRAP IT UP - December 2010

Over 60 pieces were bought at CHAL's annual holiday art sale, with over \$3300 in sales. This year introduced craft art pieces being included in the sale. From hand-crafted journals and hand-printed carves to original art cards, these items were very popular with shoppers.





