

Poulsbo Artist League Newsletter

Poulsbo Artist League
P.O. Box 764
Poulsbo, WA 98370

<http://poulsboartist.com>



WEDNESDAYS AUGUST 2, 9, 16, 23, 30 12:30 – 3:30

“One eye sees, the other feels.” Paul Klee



Birthdays

August

Laura Chesvick, Nina
Dempsey, Lone Hansen,
Dagmar Knepper,
Mike Plummer

2016-2017 Officers:

President –

Nancy Sefton

nrsefton@comcast.net

Vice President -

Bill Fulton

BillFulton2001@yahoo.com

Secretary -

Libby Anderson

minis4recess@sbcglobal.net

Treasurer -

Lisa Stowers

Jimandlisa1229@gmail.com

Webmaster -

Bill Fulton

BillFulton2001@yahoo.com

Sunshine -

Jill Newkirk

jillnewkirk@Centurylink.net

Prose from my Palette by President Nancy Sefton:



MY CAMERA DOESN'T UNDERSTAND DESIGN

It's true. I've taken enough photos outdoors to fill a hundred albums, but not one of them is "art-smart". (*So what is she talking about now?*) Well, here's the thing: my camera has so many gadgets and settings, that I'll never learn them all..not in this lifetime. But that clever little black machine does lack one important thing: it knows nothing about design and composition. The poor mechanical dummy just accepts that whatever a photographer aims at is a legitimately artistic collection of shapes and colors. So it snaps the shutter on command and records the scene. And herein lies the problem.

So many of us paint from our own photos or the work of others, that it's worth considering this handicap. WE are the artists, not the cameras. So instead of rendering exact copies of the photo in hand (very, very tempting!), it's probably worth injecting our own creativity, well before opening the paint tubes and grabbing the brushes.

So, what to consider? First, the main focus of the photo...i.e. why is the picture interesting to me? Second, as one artist put it, "I take several photos of the subject from different angles, to create my final composition. I throw out unnecessary clutter so that the eye isn't distracted from the center of interest. I may even introduce some secondary items from other sources, change some colors, put foreground items in the background, and so on. My eye will tell me what to do." Hmm. Are we born with that magic "eye?" If not, it most likely develops over time.

But as artists, we still know more about design than our cameras do, so maybe we shouldn't let the photo do all the work for us.

PAL Ponderings

PAL Ponderings by Vice President Bill Fulton



I'm a sucker for art books. The shelf next to my living room chair has a whole row of books on drawing, watercolors, pen and ink, composition, etc. As each book comes in, I greedily devour it, hoping it will transform my artistic ability.

Unfortunately, this has not happened. There is no such thing as "Watercolors made easy." Watercolors are not easy. It's all about practice, practice, practice, and no book can substitute for practice.

On the other hand, I've learned a lot from my art books. Each author provides his or her own unique approach to art, and each one shows me that it's possible to succeed in art. I'm inspired by their examples and encouraged by their words.

One of my favorite books is *Watercolor: You Can Do It* by Tony Couch. He reveals his methods and techniques and encourages you to emulate his paintings that are richly reproduced. Reading his book makes me want to grab my brushes and paint like him.

But the book I'm reading right now is *Charles Reid's Watercolor Secrets*. Reid has his own idiosyncratic style, and he offers insights into his methods by reprinting pages from his everyday sketchbooks. Of course, the paintings in his everyday sketchbooks are worthy of framing!

Reid goes against the commonplace wisdom of starting with your light values and working up to the darks. He writes, "When short of time, always start with your darks, leaving your light values the white of the paper." Another unusual piece of advice is to mix your colors only on the paper, not on the palette. This keeps the colors fresh and invites interesting washes.

Reid encourages a simple, unbroken pencil line when sketching the subject to be painted. I find this hard because I don't have the confidence in drawing that he does. But I see his point. Instead of wish-washy, overdone outlines, he starts with just a few crisp contours and starts laying in his washes with confidence.

He advocates careful brush work. Make every brush stroke count, and paint away from the edge of the wash so that you can soften it if necessary or add another color. Sounds odd, but when I try it, I find it works. Using complementary colors to mix together or to play off each other is a specialty of his.

Reid's style is so unique that you can usually identify his paintings, or those of his students, by their use of bold colors and lots of white space. It's not for everybody, and I probably won't keep everything I read in his book. But it's a great inspiration.

I hope you have your own shelf of art books and find inspiration and empowerment in each one. May your book shelves never run out of room!

Current Exhibits and Sales

Poulsbo City Hall ~ various members ~ Contact: Nancy Sefton We've been asked by the Mayor to report any changes in City Hall hangings, should you sell a painting and replace it. The City Hall staff needs an accurate inventory on file. So please report to Kati Diehl at the 3rd floor desk, or leave a note, with your name and the titles of the works involved. You may also email her: kdiehl@cityofpoulsbo.com.

Central Market in Poulsbo ~ various members ~ Contact: Richard Daugherty or Maggie Huft. **Judy Guttormsen** and **Donna Russell** have had recent sales at Central Market.

Jak's ~ various members ~ Contact: Mary Saurdiff and Marge Keeton.

Edward Jones Building~ various members ~ Contact: Shar DuFresne

Poulsbo Library ~ various members ~ Contact: Maggie Huft, Libby Anderson

Ildiko Deaky has her work on display at Liberty Bay Gallery in Poulsbo, on an ongoing basis.

Liz Haney is at Eastern Wind Glass Studio, 2604 Burwell, Bremerton, with cards and small paintings

**If you are exhibiting anywhere and would like to have it listed here, you need to let the secretary know at least by the last week of the month. Also – if you have a show that closes, please let me know so I can remove it from the newsletter.

| Venue | Collect Art | Hang Art | Return Art |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| | | | |
| Central Market | October 18 | October 21 | October 25 |
| | | | |
| Jak's | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| | | | |
| Edward Jones | TBA | TBA | TBA |
| | | | |
| Poulsbo Library | August 2 | August 4 | TBA |
| | | | |
| City Hall | 2020 | | |
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Art Opportunities/Miscellaneous

Art Opportunities

Free Matte Cutting Assistance

Judy Guttormsen is offering a free matte cutting service to members. Judy, and others who have matte cutters, could periodically bring them to meetings, with members supplying their own matte board. Anyone interested in this service should let Judy know.

Art Offerings at Poulsbo Parks and Recreation

Three PAL members will be teaching art this coming fall at Poulsbo Parks and Recreation Department:

Julia Turk: various Drawing and Painting classes

Donna Russell: four Watercolor classes for Beginners (each with a different theme)

Nancy Sefton: Intermediate Watercolor, November

For additional information, contact the above members. The Fall/Winter catalog will be available the end of August. The Poulsbo Parks and Recreation phone number is 360-779-9898.

John Adams Watercolor Classes

John Adams has eight remaining spots in his four week watercolor class beginning September 11. He may be contacted at 2john@earthlink.net or 206-842-3099. The cost is \$100 for the four weeks or \$28 per session for drop-ins.

Wanted:

A member who will share an art technique with us sometime in September. These PAL Demos are both fun and educational, so please let Nancy Sefton know if you'd like to provide one!

Painting Instruction Book Bargains

If you find help and inspiration in "how-to" art books, google "Alibris", a national bookseller (they're also listed by Amazon). I just bought a hard-to-find book on Chinese painting, retail price \$29.95, and my price was \$8 + \$3 shipping. It arrived in 2 days and it was brand new. Just FYI. –Nancy Sefton



Congratulations goes to Liz Haney for having her peonies painting was selected for the Washington State Garden Club's calendar for their 2018.