



Seven OPS Artists to Provide Paint Around

The Paint Around is the traditional opening event for the International Association of Pastel Societies (IAPS) Annual Convention, and it is a very popular event. In June 2013, the 10th Biennial IAPS Convention opened with five prominent pastelists, Liz-Haywood-Sullivan, Kim Lordier, Desmond O'Hagan, Stan Sperlak and Debora Stewart, as the participating artists. Each artist brought a photo for his or her painting subject. To increase the suspense and difficulty, the artists had not previously seen each other's images. IAPS and various material suppliers provided materials and easels. The timekeeper announced the start and each artist began his or her painting. After 10 minutes, the whistle blew, and all artists moved to the next easel and worked for ten minutes. This continued until each artist moved around to all paintings, and finally back to their own painting for the last ten-minute session. Folks watching the Paint Around could choose to move around the room and get a sense of all of the paintings, or to stay in one spot and watch the evolution of one or a few paintings, or do some of both. Regardless, the event was so much fun and so interesting to watch the paintings progress, especially since the artists had such different styles of painting. The final paintings were signed by all participating artists, and prominently displayed throughout the convention and finally auctioned off, with proceeds going to the IAPS/UCT Scholarship Fund.

Our OPS Paint Around will feature seven artists, Pam Brewer, Jan Hutchinson, Linda Probst, Sue Ann Rodgers, Janie Schmitz, Gary Sharp, and Becky Way, and each will bring a photo as inspiration for

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Beginning at the top, paintings from three of our Paint Around artists, Becky Way, Janie Schmitz and Sue Ann Rodgers. Paintings on the left are by Linda Probst and Pam Brewer.

Message from OPS President Donna Branson

Hopefully everyone has been able to get outdoors and enjoy our fabulous fall weather, the perfect weather for plein air painting! I was able to enjoy the start of fall color in Wisconsin last week, and I was so glad my pastels were with me!

Last month, we were fortunate to be able to watch Rita Kirkman demonstrate pastel painting on one of her large individually-prepared surfaces, what a treat! I expect we will see that completed painting winning an award. And some of us were able to attend her one and a half-day workshop as well, a truly great way to begin our 2014-15 pastel season. So thank you, Rita, for a truly informative and inspiring evening and workshop! We were able to connect with the framer Rita uses, resulting in him making a quick unplanned stop in Oklahoma City, affording some a chance to purchase frames. We hope to have him back with enough lead time to get the word out to everyone.



This month, we will have a very different art experience for our meeting. Seven OPS members volunteered to participate in a paint-around! If you have never participated in nor witnessed a paint-around, be prepared for having a great fun-filled evening! All participating artists will bring a reference photo, an easel, pastels and paper. The photo and paper should be mounted to cardboard or a board. I will supply plastic sheeting to keep the floor clean and a timer. We will have eight time periods, beginning and ending with a 15-minute session plus six 10-minute painting sessions in between. Artists will rotate from painting to painting until finally back to the painting that they started. We will end up with seven paintings that all of the artists have worked on! Trust me, you will not want to miss this meeting! Our volunteer artists are: Linda Probst, Becky Way, Jan Hutchinson, Sue Ann Rodgers, Janie Schmitz, Pam Brewer, and Gary Sharp.

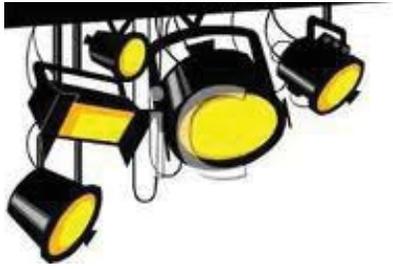
Hope to see you Monday, October 13th, for our paint-around!

Donna
Donna Branson, PhD
President, Oklahoma Pastel Society

Paint Around

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their painting. Unfortunately, they will have to provide their supplies. Donna Branson will serve as time-keeper, and everyone else will get to be the observers. The meeting will be different from our usual demonstration, instead we will have seven artists painting seven unique paintings!! It should be a fun evening for everyone. Don't miss it!



Spotlight on OPS Member Donna Connelly

How long have you worked in pastel?

I started working in pastel about 15 or 16 years ago.

What drew you to that medium? Why do you prefer to work in pastels? Do you work in any other mediums?

Once I started drawing again I knew I wanted to move into color. I started with pastel because my drawing instructor at the time, Gary Lennon, suggested them as a good way to transition into using color in my drawings. I fell in love with them because I absolutely love color. I think that as human beings one of our greatest abilities is that we can see color, and the subtle variations in color. I remember as a child standing outside in mid-spring on the farm I grew up on and being in awe of the different shades of green in the surrounding landscape. I tried expressing this awe to my older sister. Her response was, "You are such a weird little kid." A sentiment she expressed many times while I was growing up! I've learned that some animals can see color into the ultra-violet range, how cool would that be? I know people who are afraid to use color in their homes, clothing, etc. and I simply don't understand. It's color, what's not to love? I love pastels because buying and using them is like being a collector of color. I have started working under Dennis Parker's instruction in using oil paints. I tend to over mix my colors though because I throw every color on my pallet together, but I'm getting there. I have worked in oil pastels and acrylics in the past and may take them up again.

Have you always pursued painting or is this something that came about more recently?

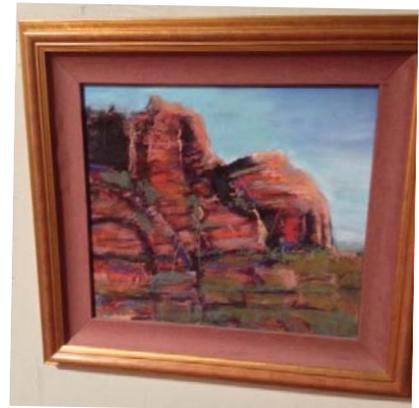
Painting is a relatively new area for me (if you can consider 15 or so years as new).

What is your favorite subject matter to paint?

I don't really have a favorite subject, but in the past I've done a lot of still lifes. Someone told me once to paint what you're passionate about and suddenly I was painting still lifes of food!

What kinds of experiences trigger ideas for your paintings?

I'll see patterns of color in fields of flowers, or on someone's dress as they are walking by, or in a sunrise or sunset, or the way light plays off an object and that will inspire me.



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Tell us a little about what you do in real life.

In the real world I work as a Paralegal Specialist with the FAA Legal Office at the Aeronautical Center. It's an extremely left-brained job and drawing and painting is a way to unwind.

Where are you from originally and how did you end up in OKC?

Originally I'm from a small rural community in northeast Oklahoma called Olive. I grew up on a family farm where we raised chickens, rabbits, pigs, cattle, and a variety of crops. I couldn't wait to grow up and get out of there.

What is something that very few know about you?

When I was little girl my Grandma Harris taught me to embroider and sew. Over the years I made most of my own clothes and my daughter's. During my high school and college years I embroidered my jeans and jean jackets and picked up a little money doing it for friends and girls in the dorm. I made and embroidered an apron for my ex-husband's grandmother once (she always wore an apron) and she never wore it, so I assumed she didn't like it. On the day of her funeral, one of her granddaughters pulled me aside to let me know that her grandmother had loved the apron and had asked to be buried in it, along with a fancy lace dress she had bought for her funeral. That was over 35 years ago and it still touches me that she thought so much of the gift. Life and work and raising my daughter got in the way of past pursuits and I haven't sewn or embroidered for years. I keep thinking that once I retire I will pick it back up again.

Who is your favorite artist — who inspires you?

Hmm. I can't really think of a favorite artist. I like Rubens, especially his drawings, and I love John Singer Sargent's paintings.

What are some of your favorite pastel/art books?

Right now I'm enjoying Henry Yan's Figure Drawing (Techniques and Tips). I would love to take a workshop with him.

Family history — spouse's name and occupation, children, grandchildren, pets, etc.?

My husband, Bobby, and I just celebrated our 17th wedding anniversary. He owns a delivery business, Land Rush Enterprises, delivering mostly office supplies for his clients around the southwestern United States. I have a daughter, Jennifer, from my previous marriage, but she definitely considers Bobby her dad. I also have a granddaughter, Chloe, who I swear turned 15½ in the blink of an eye. I was strapping her into a car seat yesterday and today she's driving! Her Grandbobby (as she calls him) and I have absolutely spoiled her rotten. I tend to spoil rotten my pets too. Right now I have a five-year-old long-haired Manx cat named Loki, and my late mother-in-law's long-haired white cat named Muffy who is 14 years old.

What do you do for relaxation other than paint?

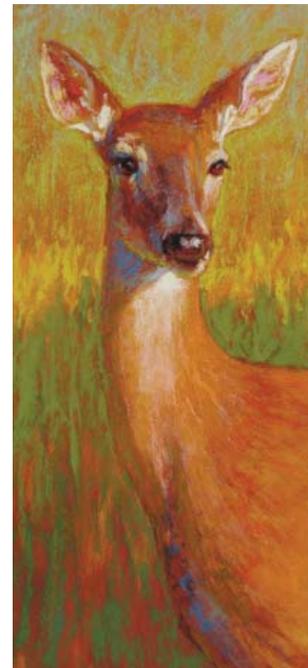
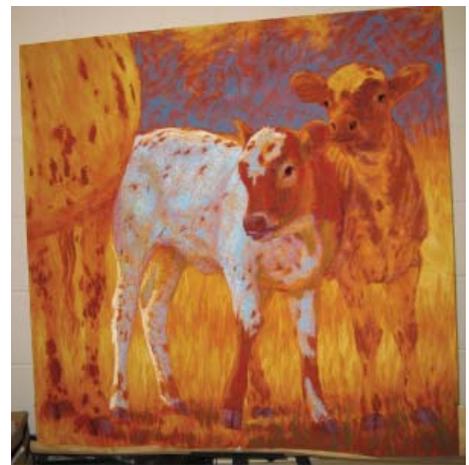
I love drawing and sketching. All through school I drew on anything I could get my hands on, but it was something that was never encouraged by teachers or parents. So, by the time I got to college, I had stopped, but I never stopped doodling. Suddenly about 15 years ago I discovered my daughter was out of college, and I no longer had to work two or three jobs to support us, and I actually had spare time, so I started taking drawing lessons. I started taking Dennis Parker's life drawing class a few years back and after a long struggle have seen a vast improvement in my drawings. So sketching has become my new go to for relaxation. I carry something to sketch with at all times, so that if I have to wait somewhere, or I'm stressed out or bored in a staff meeting, I sketch. It's more socially acceptable than screaming I've found.

Notes from the September Demo

Our September demo artist was Rita Kirkman who began drawing portraits when she was only 11 years old, and has never stopped. Whether drawing a squirming child's portrait from life, or creating a detailed drawing from a damaged antique photo, her ability to capture a likeness is amazing.

Some of the tips she shared during our September meeting were:

- Value is more important than color.
- Focus on patterns of lights and darks.
- Use larger strokes for larger paintings.
- When doing animal portraits, apply strokes the way the fur grows.
- Use a very light touch.
- You can use a plastic bag on your finger to blend.
- Paint small, it's fast, cheap and easier to sell. You can paint more and improve more quickly. It's also more versatile for buyers — cheaper, portable, easy to ship, easy to hang, and they can buy several.
- Composition, composition, composition! Your painting is only as good as the design. Good technique and expert handling of the medium will never make a weak composition into a strong painting.



Upcoming Events

Oklahoma State University's new art museum is hosting an exhibition entitled: Framing History: Highlights from the Oklahoma State Capital Senate Collection, until Oct 18; no cost for entry.

The University of Oklahoma's Fred Jones Museum of Art is hosting an exhibition entitled: Macrocosm/ Microcosm: Abstract Expressionism in the American Southwest; Oct 3-Jan 4, 2015.

OAG Call for Entries for their Fall Member Show to be held at Oklahoma Shakespeare in the Park, 2920 Paseo, OKC, Nov 6-29. Entries are due Nov 1, 10 am-1 pm.

Sign-up for IAPS Convention has been delayed due to computer problems. No date set as yet.

4th Annual Plein Air Convention and Expo; April 13-17, 2015, Monterey, CA. This year there will be tracks for oil, pastel and water media. Call 561-655-8778 or go to Pleinairconvention.com.

Jude Tolar Pastel Workshop; Nov 7-8 at Stillwater's Multi-Arts Center; 9 am-4 pm, emphasis on reflections; cost not known at this time.

Margaret Dyer Pastel Workshop; Nov 3-5; Pastel Society of the Southwest; Grapevine, TX; call 678-520-4151, or go to margaretdyer.com.

Member News

Jude Tolar has two paintings accepted into the juried New Mexico Pastel Society's national exhibition; Nov 1-30 in Albuquerque, NM. Jude also won the Pan-Pastel Award in the Pastel Society of Oregon's biennial national juried show, and the painting sold! Way to go, Jude!

Donna Branson has one painting accepted into the juried Pastel Society of the Southwest's national show; Nov 5-28 at the Convention and Visitors Bureau of Grapevine, TX.

November 10th OPS Meeting

Our guest demo artist for November will be Joey Frisillo.

Primarily a landscape artist, Joey's work is inspired by nature's subtle beauty in her Oklahoma surroundings and other intriguing locales. She has been in numerous national juried exhibitions including Gilcrease Museum's "Collectors Reserve" and has won numerous awards for her work. Mark your calendar now and plan to attend.

*Thanks to Bob & Rosanna Kaiser and Dodie Guffy
for providing snacks for our October meeting.
We need snack providers for our January thru May 2015 meetings
so let Donna or Jimi know if you're interested.*

*See you on Monday, October 13, 6:30 p.m.
at the Will Rogers Garden Center, 3400 NW 36th, Oklahoma City!*