



The Creative Edge

CALIFORNIA ART LEAGUE

Volume II

www.californiaartleague.org

Issue 1

January 2013

Happy 2013!

CALIFORNIA ART LEAGUE WELCOMES THE NEW YEAR!!

We are very excited about 2013. We have a new name, a new website, and a new outlook!

To start things off right, we would like to invite all of you to our annual luncheon on Sunday, January 27, 2013, from noon to 4:00 p.m. at the beautiful Odyssey Restaurant in Granada Hills.

This is a wonderful way to meet new members and catch up with all of your friends. Make sure you read the *President's Message* on page 2 as Teri talks about some fun things happening at the luncheon!

We are also very fortunate to have our past President, John Paul Thornton, an extremely sought-after art lecturer, as the guest speaker.

You will find a form at the end of the newsletter that gives you all of the information you need. Simply print that page, and send back to our Treasurer, Trice Tolle, with the section indicated.

We hope to see all of you there!



Calendar of Events

Next Board Meeting:

Wednesday, January 9, 2013
7:00 p.m.

CAL Annual Luncheon:

Sunday, January 27, 2013
Noon-4:00 pm
Odyssey Restaurant
15600 Odyssey Dr.
Granada Hills, CA 91344

Next General Membership Meeting:

Tuesday, February 19, 2013
7:00 p.m.
\$5 members, \$8 guests;
Encino Community Ctr.
4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino, CA

CAL Gold Medal Show:

Saturday, March 9, 2013 at the
Silvana Gallery, 1731 West
Glenoaks Blvd., Glendale, CA

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President's Message

Bring an Art Book to the Luncheon!

by Teri Starkweather

Happy New Year to all of you!

CAL has a lot to look forward to this year. First of all, we will be having a fun time at our annual luncheon at the Odyssey Restaurant on Sunday, January 27, 2013.

We will be conducting a special fundraiser during the luncheon, selling raffle tickets for baskets of products. If you know of a business that would like to promote their products or services, please ask them to donate something to CAL. Please let Barbara Schwartz know at louisandbarbara@aol.com.

We are also going to have a silent auction of used art or coffee table books. I am asking every member to bring at least one nice art book or coffee table book as a donation to the auction. Please bring the book with you to the luncheon and leave it at the silent auction table. We will all bid on these books during the luncheon by writing our bid with our name. Each bid will be fifty cents higher than the last bid. Whoever has the last bid at the end, gets the book for the price they bid. The money will go directly to CAL and help us with advertising for our upcoming exhibitions. Please remember to bring a book and help support CAL. With more money to advertise, we can have some great publicity.



The Explosive Outing to the Getty Villa

by John Paul Thornton

It was explosive, massive and historic. On Sunday, December 16th, members of the California Art League and their guests met at the Getty Villa in Malibu to view the devastatingly provocative exhibit called *The Last Days of Pompeii*. The eruption of Mount Vesuvius has long been the stuff of legend, combining geology, archeological bonanza, morality tale and human drama. Ideally, those of us who have visited the actual site of the eruption and its destruction, have been treated to a "connection" with history that is almost unparalleled. To see this exhibition in the elegant Getty Villa is very appropriate, since the museum was built upon the ancient designs of Villa de Papyri at Herculaneum, a town which was destroyed along with Pompeii.



The catastrophic eruption of Mt. Vesuvius occurred on the afternoon of 24 August 79 AD. Because Vesuvius had been dormant for approximately 800 years, it was no longer even recognized as a volcano. Based on two letters of Pliny the Younger (61 AD - ca. 112 AD), the only existing eyewitness to account the tragic event, the eruption can be reconstructed. It long served as a cautionary explanation of God's wrath against pagan Roman culture, while excavations of the buried Vesuvius brought forth incredible understanding about the architecture, daily life and decorative arts of ancient Rome. *The Last Days of Pompeii* is also the title of the fanciful 1834 novel by Edward Bulwer-Lytton. This passionate, sordid novel follows characters in the doomed city just before and during the actual eruption. The Getty exhibition draws from archeology, academic art, modern art, literature, and popular culture which has explored and immortalized the event in our imaginations.

The first item on display served as a sobering reminder of the eruption itself: a cast of the hollowed cavity created when the body of a woman was buried in ash. The famous body casts of Vesuvius are iconic and to have one within reach is a remarkable moment. This woman died stretched out, the folds of her dress still intact, her hands reaching for hope which never arrived. She probably was overcome by suffocation from toxic gasses, and the ash (which was ten feet thick in Pompeii) buried her as she laid. We were then treated to a long hall of large classical academic paintings depicting the terrible eruption itself -- darkened clouds, violent swatches of crimson, thick brushstrokes of cadmium orange and nightmarish descriptions of distant human suffering which would have thrilled salon-goers of the nineteenth century, and which today still captivate us. We are used to instant photography of our contemporary disasters. In their time, these massive oil paintings made history come to life.



Another gallery displayed paintings which were careful renditions of interiors uncovered by archeologists in the nineteenth century. The French Academy had been preaching for a century about the virtues of Roman heritage and many artists, such as Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema (1836-1912), devoted their talents to recreating miniatures of scenes in hyper-realistic detail, populated by Roman lovers and gladiators (looking suspiciously like Victorian models). It is Alma-Tadema's works which are of the greatest interest. He himself put down his paint brushes at one time, picked up a shovel, and visited the excavations of Pompeii in person, sketching hundreds of archeological artifacts which he would later render faithfully in his paintings. Thus, the mosaic floors, carved marble benches, archways, lamps and jewelry shown in his paintings are authentic reproductions of actual items. California Art League's Norm Beal was especially drawn to these. Alma-Tadema has great appeal to anyone

Getty Villa (cont. from p. 3)

who loves precision and craftsmanship. Plus, the reserved sensuality of illusionistic textures playing together in his canvas remains fascinating. Painted marble, sandy roads, fine silk, cold metal, warm flesh . . . this is like time travel.

Then comes galleries with modern and contemporary visions of Pompeii. Surrealist Salvador Dali (1904-1989), Dadaist Marcel Duchamp (1887-1968), Pop artist Andy Warhol (1928-1987) and Color Field painter Mark Rothko (1903-1970) are all represented here at the Getty Villa with artworks inspired by the eruption. Rothko's vibrant red images are said to have been influenced by his trips to Italy and certainly convey our hunger for the glow of molten lava.

California Art League member Christi Work was found to be watching snippets of cinematic versions of *The Last Days of Pompeii*. Christi's work in the film industry entails recreations of accuracy similar to classical painter's insistence that pictorial images have continuity with fact. Even campy volcanic special effects seen on the video screens from bygone film days have an allure. Our culture in 2013 still has a desire to see beautiful actors and actresses swoon in revealing period costumes and then gesticulate in horror as doom approaches. Perhaps, however, the geological disasters of our own time have dampened our romanticized view.

Of course, the nicest thing about the day was being with fellow artists and friends. The rain was misty and constant. Light fog veiled the stunning architecture, and the Museum Cafe became our own salon, where lively discussions could unfold after a long morning of art viewing. And there was much more: stunning Roman busts, ancient blown glass, and the sense of gratitude that we were there taking it all in. Thankfully, volcanoes posed no threat to us . . . they only fed our imaginations.



Glaucus and Nydia
Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema



Mount Vesuvius
Andy Warhol

Nydia, the Blind Girl of Pompeii

Randolph Rogers



Gradiva Rediscovered the Anthropomorphic Ruins

Salvador Dali



Art Studio Secrets

The Still Life: Still Lively

by Marjorie Sarnat

Marjorie's current book, *151 Uncommon and Amazing Art Studio Secrets*, is available in paperback and eBook formats. Her website is www.sarnatart.com.



A still life lets you express the vitality of painting from life in the comforts of your studio. Forget those boring vases you drew in art school. Set up whatever delights you. Simple shapes and solid colors are easiest to portray, but there are no rules. Some suggestions:

- *Home:* Kitchen utensils, framed photos, perfume bottles, stuffed animals, even piles of laundry. The phrase, “doing your laundry” has a new meaning to an artist!
- *Closet:* Handbags of various shapes, a rainbow of scarves, sprawls of hangers, and vintage jewelry;
- *Yard:* Rocks, muddy boots, rusty tools, and fallen leaves and fruit;
- *Found objects:* Flea market and thrift store finds, broken or not, offer great shapes and stories;
- *Packaging:* Cereal boxes, canned goods, board games, and more put words and designs into your statement;
- *Art supplies:* Paintbrush bouquets, palettes, and paints are colorful props every artist has on hand;
- *Unexpected:* Add a jolt of interest to a traditional still life with something unexpected, such as a toy robot next to vase of flowers

Composing a Still Life

A pleasing arrangement is the foundation of your artwork. Determine a vantage point (eye level or slightly above eye level works well) then arrange things on a flat surface. Use a piece of cardboard, maybe draped with cloth for a backdrop. For well-defined lights and shadows, use direct light from a window or lamp on your subject.

Play with the placement of things, arranging overlaps and varying heights and sizes. Contrast your darks and lights, including shadows. Fabrics offer pattern accents. Use floral clay or earthquake gel to hold things in place.

Have fun expressing your personal take on the classic still life!



Old and new items tell a cheerful story. Note the repeated circle shapes, analogous colors, and variety of sizes in the composition.

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Thank You!

As we start a new year, I would like to thank everyone for their words of encouragement, support and submissions over the past few months for the newsletter. This is the first time I have attempted anything like this, so please know that your comments have meant the world to me! My goal is to make *The Creative Edge* even better in 2013.

Please know that I am ALWAYS open to suggestions any of you might have for the newsletter. If there is a column you think might be enjoyable to the rest of our readers, please let me know. If anyone has news of shows they are participating in, workshops or lectures they are giving, please keep sending them to me. Thanks to the support of the many friends of California Art League, the newsletter is starting to reach a much wider audience, so we encourage you to let us know what is going on with you!

We are also looking for inspiring quotes (see the bottom of this page), art-related stories of interest (check out *Norm's Corner* on page 9), a review of an art book or an exhibit you attended. Maybe a how-to article about an art technique, etc. (check out the *Art Studio Secrets* on page 5.)

I would also like to encourage all of you to let me know if you are interested in participating in the *Member Spotlight* section of the newsletter that will be starting up again next month. I have heard from a few of you, but would love to hear from more.

If you have a submission, the **deadline is January 15, 2013**, for the February newsletter.

Please submit to Reece Holland at gr-home@pacbell.net.
Reece Holland
CAL Newsletter

An Artist is not
paid for his labor
but for his vision

James Whistler

A work of art is
the unique result
of a unique
temperament

Oscar Wilde

Member News!



Beginning to Sparkle
Debra Hintz

Debra Hintz will be showing 10 paintings in the upcoming exhibit entitled *Moment Caught* at Red Brick Gallery in Ventura, CA. The show runs through January 8, 2013. The gallery is located at 315 E. Main St., Ventura CA 93001.



Marjorie Sarnat won first place in the Women Painters West exhibit, *Into the Blue*, for her work, *Crowdsourcing*. Juried by artist Ann Thornycroft, the show took place at the Arena 1 Gallery, 3026 Airport Ave. in Santa Monica, and closed December 15.



Crowdsourcing
Marjorie Sarnat

Erella Teitler will take part at the exhibit *Jewish Ritual: Rethinking, Renewed* at the San Diego Center for Jewish Culture. Viterbi Family Galleria • Potiker Family Arts & Culture Complex - Lawrence Family Jewish Community Center located at 4126 Executive Drive, La Jolla, CA 92037-1348. The show runs through March 6, 2013

Teffilah II-Prayer
Erella Teitler



Self Portrait
Beth Summers

Beth Summers has been juried with three paintings into the *Amazing Women* show at Blinn House in Pasadena, opening in January 2013.

Beth is also leading a workshop based on Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* for inspiring our creativity in each other. The first meeting is Wednesday, January 9, 2013, at 7:00 p.m. at her studio. For more information email her at RSummersB@aol.com

Trice Tolle and Teri Starkweather will be exhibiting paintings in the show *Impressions of Provence* at Segil Fine Art. The exhibit runs from January 26-February 23, 2013. The Opening/Reception is on Saturday, January 26, from 5:00-7:00 p.m.

The paintings for this show will be from artists who went to Provence in September 2012 with Julie Snyder and Laura Segil, of Segil Fine Art. The address is 110 West Lime Avenue, Old Town Monrovia, 91016.

Gallery hours are: Tuesday - Saturday
1:00-6:00 p.m. (626) 358-5563



Lavender in Provence
Teri Starkweather

REMINDER: Membership Renewal/Gift Membership Time

It's membership renewal time! If you have not already done so, our annual membership is due for renewal on January 1, 2013. The two-month grace period expires on February 28, 2013. This is also a perfect time to give a friend or relative a gift membership to the group. A first time, new membership is \$55.00. If you know someone who might not renew or has a lapsed membership, give them a gift! A renewal, even for a lapsed membership is \$45.00. Exhibiting and Associate membership renewal is \$45.00 for one year. The Spouse/Partner rate is \$25.00 for someone living at the same address. Since CAL is a registered non-profit organization, your membership donation is tax-deductible.

You may renew by mail, sending your check or money order to: Ken Ronney
CAL Membership
7357 Hesperia Ave.
Reseda, CA 91335.

If you wish to pay by credit card, log on to our website: www.californiaartleague.org and you can pay via PayPal

Norm's Corner

A Marriage of the Arts

by Norm Beal

Flamenco emerged not only as music; it was a reaction against social conditions. In the early nineteenth century, like jazz, it was born from the ranks of minorities and social outcasts. Flamenco could best be described as a festival of the oppressed. Moreover, in its pure form, like the poetry of Dylan Thomas, it could be a profound protest against morality.

And like jazz, it evolved from an aggregation of musical sources. To be true to itself, Flamenco must be performed more than once; the emphasis being not on virtuosity but on duende, its grasping of the heart of the song.

Today, the jazz comparison continues as social environments have changed and both have lost much of their social/political significance. This is especially true with Flamenco which in reality can only be suggested in its modern, diluted form.

So why should this be of concern to the art aficionado? Our ears are hardly being bombarded with Flamenco, good or bad.

Two words: *El Jaleo*.

There is no way of determining if Sargent had any deep understanding of the emotional messages within the still developing music. Nevertheless, through some divine spark, he was able to reveal on canvas the very essence of duende and all of its essential as few have since, despite relying upon three-year-old memories and a French model.

El Jaleo presents all of the grace and tautly controlled passion the baile demands of the dance such as the arch of the back and the delicate positioning of the fingers. Simultaneously, his capture of motion in the swirls of the white dress is near Samothracian. The face of the singer, mouth agape with soulful song supports the notion that Sargent was in fact cognizant of the importance of the cante in Flamenco.

El Jaleo remains one of the great masterpieces of art, its stature needing no extrinsic support. But for those who understand Flamenco, *El Jaleo* can be a vehicle taking one beyond the visual senses, as well reinforcing the appreciation of the genius in the paintings to both it and the music.



John Singer Sargent, *El Jaleo*

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It's easy and inexpensive.

California Art League

presents its

ANNUAL WINTER SOIREE

Sunday, January 27, 2013

Noon-4:00 p.m.

at the beautiful Odyssey Restaurant

15600 Odyssey Drive

Granada Hills, CA 91344

Tickets \$52 per person

Includes brunch, champagne, and beverages
Our featured speaker is our own renowned artist

John Paul Thornton

Raffle and surprises planned

YOU DO NOT WANT TO MISS THIS EVENT!!

Free Parking or Valet Service

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The
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