



# The Creative Edge

VALLEY ARTISTS GUILD

Volume I

Issue 6

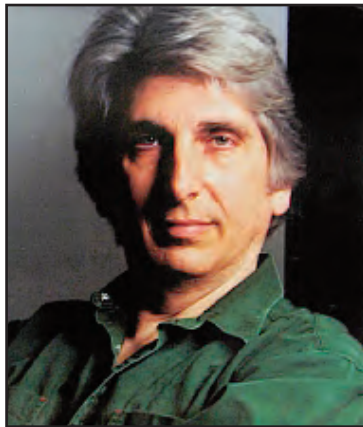
November 2011

## Don't Miss This Opportunity! Last Chance to Sign up for Rick Rotante's Painting Workshop

**Enroll now! Space is limited!**

Join us for this one-day workshop, *Making a Painting from Start to Finish*, led by renowned painter Rick Rotante on Sunday, November 13, from 10 a.m.–3 p.m. at the Granada Pavillion, 11128 Balboa Boulevard, Granada Hills, California 91344. The fee is \$35 for VAG members, \$50 for non-members.

Attendees may work in oil or acrylic or pencil and/or charcoal. Explore new methods and techniques. Learn about value, contrast, and composition, as well as Rick's method that emphasizes a color tone and mass lay-in. No experience necessary! Complete information is available on the downloadable PDF flyer and registration form at [www.valleyartistsguild.org/workshops/VAG-Painting-Workshop-Rick-Rotante.pdf](http://www.valleyartistsguild.org/workshops/VAG-Painting-Workshop-Rick-Rotante.pdf).



Rick Rotante is a graduate of Manhattan's School of Industrial Art. He is a member of California Art Club and Oil Painters of America. Rick paints private portrait commissions, has taught at Glendale Community College, and currently teaches painting and color theory at BMAI in Montrose. His work is shown at La Galleria Gitana, Modest Fly Gallery, and Segil Fine Art as well as galleries in San Francisco and New York. Rick gave an inspiring demonstration to VAG members at the group's June meeting. This is your chance to experience his teaching first-hand!

Seating is limited and available on a first-come, first-served basis. Enroll now—space is filling up fast! Questions? Contact Barbara E. Jones at 818-346-2704 or [bjones2796@aol.com](mailto:bjones2796@aol.com).

## Calendar

### Encino Terrace Center

**Exhibit** . . . . . November 7–February 3  
15821 Ventura Blvd., Encino

**Board Meeting** . . . Wednesday, November 9  
7 p.m., location TBD

### Painting Workshop with

**Rick Rotante** . . . . . Sunday, November 13  
Granada Pavilion, Granada Hills

**General Meeting** . . . Tuesday, November 15  
Presentation: John Paul Thornton  
7 p.m., \$7 members, \$8 guests; Encino  
Community Ctr., 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino

### Encino Terrace Center

**Reception** . . . . . Friday, December 9  
4–6 p.m., Encino Terrace Ctr. (address above)

**Board Meeting** . . . Wednesday, December 14  
7 p.m., location TBD

**Holiday Soirée** . . . . . Saturday, January 28  
Champagne Brunch, Odyssey Restaurant

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Karen Robbins

## President's Message

# The Joy of Flexibility

*The reed which is flexible and can easily bend will not break with the gale winds...but the tree which is firm and brittle can be brought down."*

This is a saying from the ancient *Book of the Tao* that seems to apply not only to life, but to art-making as well. Being a flexible reed means being able to have suppleness. How does this equate to art-making? As artists, we have an advantage by being open to move about in many directions if need be. We have an advantage when we are able to change and adapt to new environments and un-foreseen events. We have strength when we give up our need to wield control. Storms blow by...hurricanes pass, and we can remain intact by being pliant. This flexibility could pertain to our stamina, our ability to persevere. It could also mean our ability to not cling to fixed ideas. Many of us explore techniques and areas for years, and when the day comes that we recognize that transformation should occur, are we able to embrace that? Are we willing to let go of something in order that another area might benefit from our attention?

So what of the mighty tree, which will not bend to the gale winds? The image of the hero who would never give up is not the archetype here, but rather the person who believes that he has found the correct way to be and conduct himself. He holds the final answer which will not be discussed...and so his rigidity makes him an easy target. He hits the storm without living to fight another day.

Flexibility means being able to adapt to a creative situation with wits, risk-taking, savvy, and grace. Yes, the reeds are graceful as they bend. They are graceful as dancers when they move to and fro. By not sticking to a rigid position, they thrive and live out their cycle. We artists should take the chance to dance in the wind and be flexible. It leads to surprises...and to life.

—John Paul Thornton



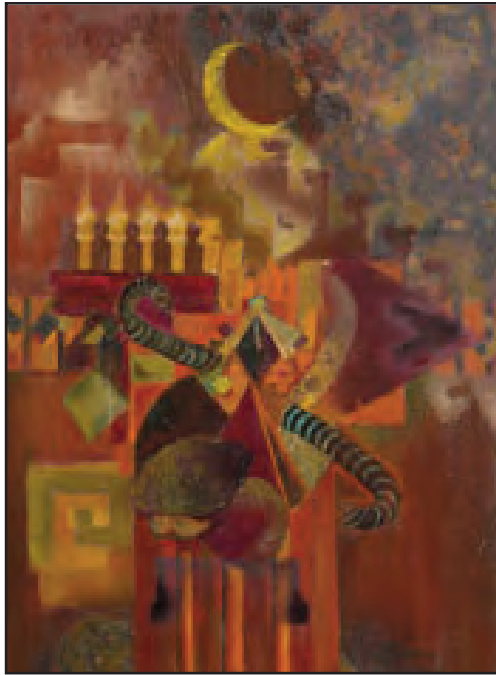
**Save the date!**  
**Saturday, January 28, 2012**  
**Annual Holiday Soirée & Champagne Brunch**  
**Odyssey Restaurant in Granada Hills**  
**Stay tuned for details**

## Members Are... Shining a Light

**Ione Citrin** won multiple awards in the American Art Awards online show in September. She garnered a total of eight prizes, including third places in both the fantasy landscape and futurism categories. The show was juried by principals from two dozen U.S. galleries, and covered 55 categories and presented 300 winning pieces from 20 countries.

**Debra Hintz** has three exhibits opening in November. Four paintings have been accepted into Margaret Danielak's

*Winter's Light* exhibit at Blinn House in Pasadena (opening reception November 10, 6-9 p.m.), and five paintings have been accepted into VAG's Encino Terrace Center exhibit. Debra is also participating in the holiday season-themed exhibit at Red Brick Gallery in Ventura, where she will debut her new Autumn series



Citrin's *Arabian Nights*

*continued page 8*

## Encino Terrace Exhibit Features 28 VAG Members

We are gearing up for VAG's first Encino Terrace Center exhibit. Over 150 artwork entries resulted in 73 pieces by 28 artists chosen for display. Congratulations! The selection committee had a difficult time choosing artworks due to the high quality of the entries. Please join us at this beautiful terraced commercial building venue for what promises to be an exciting exhibit. The holiday-themed reception, slated for December 9 from 4 to 6 p.m. so that building tenants can join the festivities, will feature refreshments. Members and friends are also welcome. Accepted artists are invited to bring bin work for sale (and bins) to the reception. Flyers and e-mail will be sent to building tenants, so we expect a big turnout. The exhibit runs from November 7, 2011 through February 3, 2012. Encino Terrace Center is located at 15821 Ventura Boulevard in Encino. Building hours are 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Friday, and 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday.

### Local Art Events

## All Aboard for Chatsworth Artists' Studio Tour

A studio tour fundraiser sponsored by the Chatsworth Fine Arts Council (CFAC) features five local artists' studios: watercolorist Gail Benton, multi-media painter Chet Collom, fused glass artist Christina L. Johnson, watercolorist Phyllis Solcyk, and whimsical mixed-media artist Lorraine Stieby. The reception at the Chatsworth Metrolink depot includes exhibits, demos, and door prizes. The event raises funds for CFAC's art activities, including its annual art show at the train depot.

The event is Sunday, November 6, from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., 10042A Chatsworth Metrolink Depot, Old Depot Plaza Road between Devonshire and Lassen. Tickets are \$10 in advance or \$12.50 at the door. To order by mail, send a check to the Chatsworth Fine Arts Council, PO Box 5122, Chatsworth CA 91311; include name, address, telephone, and e-mail address. Advance orders receive tickets and studio tour map by return mail. For questions, call 818-772-1639 or send e-mail to [chatsworth-arts@att.net](mailto:chatsworth-arts@att.net).

## VAG Needs You to Serve on the Board of Directors: Many Positions Available

VAG elections for the Board of Directors are approaching for the new year. We are looking for strong individuals who could volunteer to participate on the board. This could be done either directly as a board position or indirectly on a committee.

If needed, we can work to train individuals for certain positions. Please contact a current board member if you are interested.

*November Demo Artist*

## Thornton's Art: Color, Light, and Social Context

by *Karen Robbins, Editor*

Vibrant color. Thick, powerful brushwork. Inspiring emotion. They all come together when John Paul Thornton paints. Known for his ability to paint while weaving compelling true stories for his audience, Thornton will offer a presentation on color and reflective light as tools for conveying depth and expression when he takes over the stage as November's demonstration artist.



Thornton, author of *Art and Courage: Stories to Inspire the Artist-Warrior Within*, links the act of making art with the human desire for transformation and healing. His art has taken him around the globe, creating projects in China, India, Japan, Mexico, and Nepal. Most recently, Thornton worked in the largest tent city of Port-au-Prince, Haiti, through a grant from the United Nations Foundation. His work has a humanitarian connection that adds layers of interest and social context to his images. For VAG, he will take advantage of high-definition video projection to reveal every brush stroke up close, allowing members to see the balance between bold abstraction and delicate realism. Don't miss it!

*continued page 6*

## Adventures in Canvas

*A true story.*

The timid but desperate phone call came early in the morning. A fellow VAG member had a problem that needed an immediate solution.

In preparation for the upcoming exhibit at the Terrell Moore gallery, the artist—who had just returned from a month overseas—explained that he had purchased a stretched canvas here, then removed the canvas from the frame to fit in his suitcase and took the canvas overseas to work on it.

He further explained he had completed the oil painting overseas and, upon his return to L.A. the previous day, unrolled it and tried to put it back on the frame. Much to his horror, he discovered that the perimeter dimensions of the 30-by-48-inch image on the canvas had shrunk to 29½-by-47¼ and no longer would stretch onto the frame! He was adamant that he hadn't over-sprayed it with picture pucker\* or done anything obvious to cause the shrinkage.

What to do? He needed a photo of the painting to submit his entry to the upcoming exhibit, but all he had was a loose, rumpled and wrinkled canvas, and a bare frame it wouldn't fit onto. Getting that canvas flat enough to photograph was hurdle number one.

Knowing we could crop a photo to remove unpainted parts at the edges, we stapled it onto the frame, stretched as smooth as we could. Using lighting tricks to hide the wrinkles, I shot it, cropped the photo, and he was able to submit his application. Unfortunately, the piece wasn't accepted for the exhibit, but his problem still remained.

Now what? He had spent a lot of time on the painting and it needed mounting. He couldn't stand the thought of throwing out a perfectly good frame. Also, what to do about major wrinkles in the canvas from the suitcase trip?

Solutions came in pairs. He pulled out his electric iron and removed the wrinkles after multiple, very careful passes. I determined I could cut his frame down to the needed size, cutting a half-inch and three-quarters of an inch, respectively, off the sides. Two hours and a pile of sawdust later, the frame pieces were trimmed down, reattached with corner braces, and the canvas stretched flat with the image edges matching those of the frame.

Over lunch after finishing the frame job, the artist vowed never to try this again.

*\*Picture pucker: a little-known material that shrinks pictures down so they will fit into a finished frame that is just a little too small. It is usually on the shelf right next to unobtainium.*

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Reach over 150 VAG member artists, and their colleagues, friends, and associates, by promoting your creative products and services here! It's easy and inexpensive. Contact Trice Tolle at 818-345-1671 or tricetolle@aol.com.

## Submit to *The Creative Edge*

Do you have news? Do you like to write? Submit articles to *The Creative Edge*! You can write a review of an art book or exhibit; a how-to article about an art technique, method, or material; art resources; or a piece about a well-known (or not-so-well-known) artist.

Maybe you're unsure about writing but have some good ideas for articles—we'd love to hear them. Where

do you find artistic inspiration? Has another VAG member inspired you? Tell us about it!

The next deadline is **December 8** for the January issue. Send your submissions to VAG newsletter liaison Cat Van Der Heiden at cvanderheiden@att.net. Let her know if you'd like to take on a writing assignment. Or contact her with your ideas and questions.

*The Creative Edge* is your newsletter, and only you can make it happen.

*November Demo, continued from page 4*

The Valley Artists Guild president studied with Hans Burkhardt and Saul Bernstein before traveling abroad to paint in the capitals of Europe. His *Paintings of Hope* project, portraits of America's missing children, has been displayed in Washington, D.C. His work has appeared at the Nobel Peace Center in Oslo, Norway through the U.N. Environmental Program. He is the recipient of grants from the NEA and L.A. Department of Cultural Affairs, and has been honored by CBS Television, the California state senate, and the U.S. congress for his work linking art to social causes.

*Artists represent  
boundary-crossers  
in our society.*

—*Mona  
Simpson*

## Now's the Time: Renew Your VAG Membership

It's time to renew your VAG membership. Annual dues are \$45 for exhibiting and associate members. You will receive (or have just received) a renewal notice by mail. Please send your check in the self-addressed return envelope. Send renewals to Ken Ronney, VAG Membership Chair, 7357 Hesperia Avenue, Reseda, CA 91335. Questions? Call Ken at 818-996-1630 or send e-mail to [kronney@aol.com](mailto:kronney@aol.com).

## Create a Personal Expression of Nature with Quinton Bemiller

Sunday, November 6, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.  
at the home of Veronica Stensby in Tarzana  
cost: \$60 per person

### *Last chance to enroll in this art retreat!*

Combine color theory, art history, and observation of nature in a one-day art retreat at a lovely residential setting. Emphasis is placed on personal expression. All levels of painters and other visual artists are welcome. All drawing media and/or water-based paint media may be used. Participants receive handouts, personal consultation, and demonstration.

Painter, teacher, juror, and curator Quinton Bemiller is well-known to VAG members, to students of art history at Chaffee College, and to visitors of the Cal Poly Pomona Kellogg Gallery.

He received art degrees at Pasadena City College, the Art Institute of Boston, and Claremont Graduate University. He is represented by Offramp Gallery.



For more details and to register, contact Veronica Stensby *now* at 818-342-2554 or [vezzosa@earthlink.net](mailto:vezzosa@earthlink.net).

## Experimental Artists Group Openings

LA Experimental Artists Group III has openings available. The cooperative artists' group meets monthly on the third Thursday of the month in Studio City, sharing and teaching old and new mixed-media and collage techniques. For more information, contact Sylvia Goulden at 818-761-9392, [shgoulden@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shgoulden@sbcglobal.net) or Erella Teitler at 818-605-9000, [erellaart@yahoo.com](mailto:erellaart@yahoo.com).

## Toni Scott's Multiple Media, Multiple Histories



By Teri Starkweather

Finding inspiration in everything from her unique family tree to the human faces of the world, Toni Scott presented an overview of her career with a focus on her current work in multiple media. Art was always in Toni's bones: her great-grandmother was a muralist; her grandmother, a gold-leaf artist and sculptor; her father, a wood carver. Today, Toni uses these techniques and more in her photography, painting, sculpture, and collage to make artistic statements about family, society, history, and connectivity.

The California native grew up around all sorts of art and museums. She told the history of her interesting and multicultural family tree, composed of African American slaves, White slave owners, and Muscogee Native Americans. Her collected ancestral photos are both inspiration and actual material for her art. Toni showed her early childhood drawings and paintings and revealed how her artistic awakening came during her teens after reading *Drawing On the Right Side of the Brain* and learning automatic writing. Over time, she experimented with wire figure sculptures and expressionistic figure drawing. She worked as an assistant muralist, and inspired by Picasso began to paint large figurative canvases.

Toni showcased her more traditional *The Missing Paintings* series, borne of her awareness of the absence of African and African American portraits in museums. She created the paintings in a traditional Old Master style, learning this craft from John Paul Thornton.

After studying with Thornton, she collaborated on his Lost Children project as documentary photographer and came to understand how artists can comment on society and help change it. Photography led the artist into digital imagery and manipulation that combined collage, painting, and digital art.

She also highlighted her landmark installation *Bloodlines*, currently on display at the California African American Museum. The paintings, sculptures, photographs, collages, and recreation of a slave cabin combine with authentic slave narratives to present a mixed-media milieu that envelops the viewer through all the senses. A dozen plaster life masks seem to be a direct result of Scott's source of the human face as inspiration, as she notes that "the human face is the first thing we see in life."

Scott is a 21st-century artist and an inspiration for her artistic voice, energy, and talent.



*The ones who  
are crazy enough  
to think that they  
can change the  
world are the  
ones who do.*

*—Steve Jobs*

*Members, continued  
from page 3*

(artists' reception December 3, 6-9 p.m.).

**Terry Romero Paul** also has two paintings in the *Winter's Light* exhibit at Blinn House in Pasadena (artists' reception November 10, 6-9 p.m.).

**Erella Teitler** is participating in the Jewish Ritual: Rethinking, Renewed exhibit at Hebrew Union College's Skirball campus, running through December 31. An artists' reception will be held November 16, 7-9 p.m. To RSVP, call 213-765-2106.



Hintz' *Winter of Content* showing at Blinn House

***Is your work on display? Are you part of an event? We want to know!*** Send your most current information, preferably upcoming exhibits and events that VAG members can attend once they know about it. Priority to items that are upcoming or currently on display, but very recent exhibits and awards may be published if space permits. Contact newsletter liaison Cat Van Der Heiden for details at [cvanderheiden@att.net](mailto:cvanderheiden@att.net).



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