



The Creative Edge

VALLEY ARTISTS GUILD

Volume II

Issue 3

March 2012

LACMA Field Trip: In Wonderland Exhibit

by John Paul Thornton

She confronts us like a warrior, a priestess of suffering, courage, and vulnerability. We know her as Frida and we rarely can bathe in her aura, save for images of her portraits in books. Yet fortunately for us, the iconic face of Frida Kahlo graces the walls of LACMA this April. Is it her eyes? Her dominating brow? Her exotic pet monkey, challenging our civilized identity? Yes! Frida's most rich and fantastic self-



portrait is here in our city! But she is not alone. Surrealism has become the language of our century, thanks to many fabulous artists' continued examination of dreamscapes and fantasies. Seeing the paintings of so many lesser-known masters of Surrealism from Mexico is a rare treat. Mexico is a land of passion, spiritual belief, and intimate humanity. While so much of Surrealism from France was "boys' club," this exhibition gives us a woman's vision. While saying that a female artist paints like a woman has been sexist and (thankfully) out-of-step for decades, these women Surrealists infuse their imagery with a feminine voice that proclaims with pride, sincerity, and confidence that painting like a woman is to wield power and unapologetic poetry.

LACMA describes its *In Wonderland* exhibit:

North America represented a place free from European traditions for women Surrealists from the United States and Mexico, and European émigrés. While their male counterparts usually cast women as objects for their delectation, female Surrealists delved into their own subconscious and dreams, creating extraordinary visual images. Their art was primarily about identity: portraits, double portraits, self-referential images, and masquerades that demonstrate their trials and pleasures. The exhibition includes works in a variety of media dating from 1931 to 1968, and some

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Calendar

Gold Medal Exhibition

OpensMonday, March 5
Venice Arts Gallery, 1702 Lincoln Blvd., Venice

Gold Medal Exhibition

ReceptionSaturday, March 10
5–8 p.m., Venice Arts Gallery, 1702 Lincoln Blvd., Venice

Board MeetingWednesday, March 14
7 p.m., location TBD

General MeetingTuesday, March 20
7 p.m., \$7 members, \$8 guests; Encino Community Ctr., 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino
Guest Artist: Jose De Juan

Museum TripSunday, March 25
Frederick R. Weisman Museum, Pepperdine University, Malibu

Gold Medal Exhibition
ClosesSaturday, March 31

Museum TripSunday, April 22
LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Spring Exhibition
OpensSunday, June 3
Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery, 2414 Honolulu Ave., Montrose

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Newsletter

Karen Robbins

President's Message

Embracing Change

The ancient Greek philosopher Heraclitus said, "Nothing endures but change." We all

know this is true, but we sometimes don't like change and feel more comfortable with the familiar. Our dear president of seven years, John Paul Thornton, has decided to step down from his post. We have all become very comfortable with his engaging wisdom and vast knowledge about art and artists. What strikes me most

about John Paul is his ability to appreciate every individual he encounters. It is obvious that John Paul loves artists and all kinds of art. From the first time I met him, I knew I liked him, because he takes the time to listen to your story. He is not only an artist advocate; he is a people person in the best kind of way. I would like to thank John Paul for his years of service to this organization. He has enriched our lives and inspired us. Thankfully, he is staying on as a vice president in charge of programs.

The last thing on my mind when I joined VAG and met John Paul, was trying to fill his shoes. I am not usually the one to seek office or even volunteer. But a couple of years ago John Paul asked me to be on the board, and I have really enjoyed my association with the board members and being savvy to important decisions of the organization. VAG has a wonderful group of artists on the board who make our exhibits happen. When some board members asked me if I would serve as president, my first inclination was to not believe in myself, and ask if there wasn't someone else who could do it. I am reminded of a quote by Eleanor Roosevelt, who said, "You must do the thing you think you cannot do." So I will do my best to be your president and hopefully help our organization grow in membership, wealth, and opportunities.

Changes have been part of our local art scene recently. We have lost the Valley Institute of Visual Art and our organization's usual place to exhibit. Some of us mourn its loss but then again, perhaps this change may be an event that brings about other changes and growth within our organization. In response to this loss, we have found new and exciting venues to show at during 2011 and 2012.

Our board and I have some new ideas for growth and change in our organization. The first is to expand our organization to



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Members Are...Ready for Spring

Shula Singer Arbel has three paintings in the *Red* exhibit at the Women's City Club of Pasadena. The show features 60 works by 27 California-based artists and runs through March 30 at the historic Blinn House, 160 North Oakland Avenue, Pasadena, 91101. **Bryan Fair, Marian Fortunati, Lucie Hinden, Terry Romero Paul, Christina Ramos, Diana Stewart, and Teri Starkweather** also participated in this exhibit. Several works in this show have already been sold.

Beth Summers opens her 14-piece show, *Spring Fling*, in Mammoth Lakes at the Friends of the Library Gallery, 400 Sierra Park Road. It runs March 5 through April 30, juried by curator Bill Michaels. Beth's 60-by-48-inch work, *Mammoth Springtime*, is on continuous view there.

Fritz Suter has two works in Ironstone Vineyards Gallery's 15th juried Spring Obsession competition and sale. The show runs through May 6. Located at 1894 Six Mile Road, Murphys, California 95247.



Arbel's *Pablo's Girl*.



Fortunati's *For the Birds*.



Starkweather's *Nature's Heart*.

VAG Welcomes New Members

by Ken Ronney, 3rd Vice President—Membership

Associate Members

The Valley Artists Guild warmly welcomes four new associate members: Joyce Kossack, Jamie-Ami, Gregory Radinov, and John Sarkisyan.

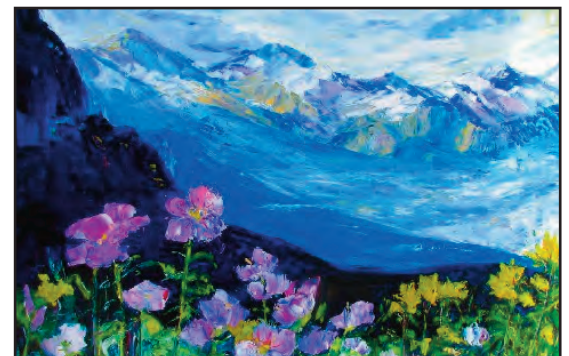
Exhibiting Members

Six associate members were elevated to exhibiting member status at the February Board of Directors meeting and jurying session.

The meeting took place at Ken Ronney's house, where nine associate members each brought three works for review by the jurying committee. All the works were carefully examined, evaluated, discussed, and voted on. The artists whose works received a majority of "elevate" votes were juried in.

Those members elevated to exhibiting status were: Irina Dzhalyants, Lucie Hinden, Joyce Kossack, Gregory Radinov, John Sarkisyan, and Marilyn Stempel.

Congratulations to our new exhibiting members. Everyone in the Valley Artists Guild hopes you will enter your works in our upcoming exhibits, so we can all appreciate your talent and efforts.



Summers' *First Spring Flowers*.

Annual Winter Brunch Features *Expressions* Talk

by Terry Romero Paul

Saturday, January 28 was VAG's annual Winter Brunch at the Odyssey Restaurant in Granada Hills. If you were not able to attend, you missed a wonderful party. Barbara E. Jones and Ken Ronney organized this beautiful event. There were lovely flower centerpieces and never-ending glasses of champagne, and a delicious buffet that seemed never-ending as well. Gift baskets and books were raffled off and there was a fun exchange of 4-by-4 art pieces created by our members. After our new board was introduced, John Paul Thornton entranced us with a talk entitled *Public and Personal Expressions*. He spoke about two well-known and important artists, Rodin and Van Gogh, in an unexpected and interesting way. He told us how Rodin influenced a young female student, Camille Claudel; and how Van Gogh's sister-in-law Johanna fought, after his death, to get the public to understand his art and then to appreciate it. John Paul talked about these two women's public highs and lows.





Page 4, from top: Judith Bloch and Ilse Dattinger; Bryan Fair, Ross Williams, Linda Leifer, Chuck Buch, Barbara Schade, Donna Buch, Terry Romero Paul; Cat van der Heiden; Pat and Richard Herd. This page, from top: Donna and Chuck Buch; Barbara Schwartz; Ross Williams and Dori Marler; Debra Hintz; Marilyn Stempel.

Pepperdine Museum Trip with VAG

Join us on Sunday, March 25, 2012 as we meet at the Frederick R. Weisman Museum at Pepperdine University in Malibu to view the beautiful exhibition *The Epic and the Exotic: 19th-Century Academic Realism from the Dahesh Museum of Art*.

The Weisman Museum describes its exhibition:

“In the 19th century, the great academies of Europe represented a continuation of the grand tradition of European classical art. By emphasizing idealized forms, perfect detail, and noble subjects inspired by history, these official art schools stressed rigorous technical training. Having fully mastered the craft of painting, these artists chose subjects that were often epic, drawing upon the highest ideals of Western civilization, and exotic, providing a glimpse of distant lands such as Africa and the Middle East. This exhibition is drawn from the holdings of the Dahesh Museum of Art, the only institution in the United States dedicated exclusively to 19th-century European academic art, and includes works by such luminary talents as William-Adolphe Bouguereau, Jules Breton, Jean-Léon Gérôme, and Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema, among other masters.”

Valley Artist Guild members and friends and families will meet as a group to view the exhibition and enjoy a beautiful day in Malibu.

Date and Time: Sunday, March 25, 2012 at 11am.

Parking: \$5

Museum Admission: Free

For directions to the museum, visit its website at <http://arts.pepperdine.edu/>.

Art Studio Secrets

Treasury of Imagery

by Marjorie Sarnat

Assembling a visual reference file is one of the best things you can do to boost your creative output. Almost every great master has relied on reference of some kind. Your visual library will be a helpmate throughout your art career.

The right image at the right time can set your creative wheels moving in a fresh new direction, as well as provide details and information for current work, such as the shape of an eye or the anatomy of a flower. Great reference helps you bring an artistic statement to life.

Developing a visual library is a personal project for each artist. Images of almost everything are available online, but a customized collection culled from many sources is handier and offers more depth. Collect images that inspire you, delight you, intrigue you, inform you, or speak to you in some artistic way.

RICH HUNTING GROUNDS FOR VISUAL TREASURES

Gems abound among ads, books, catalogs, fabrics, greeting cards, magazines, newspapers, packaging, photos, postcards, pressed leaves and flowers, travel brochures, vintage publications, and your sketches. Gather anything you love that you can file in a folder.

THE ART OF CATEGORIZING

Select or add titles and create sub-categories, too, such as children or dancers under “people.”

Categories: abstracts, animals, cityscapes, color effects, ethnic styles, fantasy, flowers, people, landscapes, styles, seascapes, still-life ideas, surface textures, your favorite themes.

Label manila folders for organizing images and store them in file drawers or boxes. Tip: Tape small clippings to larger sheets of paper.

Images for your reference library are exciting to collect because they’re usually free but become priceless when they help you create a work of art.



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Send Your Ideas to *The Creative Edge*

Do you know a great quote about art or a quote by an artist? We'd love to hear it. Where do you find artistic inspiration? Has a VAG member inspired you? Do you have news? Tell us about it! Can you review an art book or exhibit, or write a how-to article about an art technique, method, or material?

Submit your ideas and articles! The next **deadline is April 8** for the May issue. Send submissions to VAG newsletter liaison Cat van der Heiden at cvanderheiden@att.net. Let her know if you can take on a writing assignment.

President, continued from page 2

include all of Southern California, and therefore we plan to change the name to reflect that. We are also considering renting a space where we could have workshops and exhibits. If you happen to see a vacant space in a business district that looks big enough, let us know about it. I want to also remind you that this is your organization. Help us to keep it the kind of organization that provides its members with opportunities, information, and camaraderie without exclusivity, sexism or cronyism. We need your input and your volunteer efforts. Exciting things will happen this year, so talk it up to your friends and encourage them to join. I will see you at our Gold Medal exhibit at Venice Arts Gallery on March 5, 2012.

—Teri Starkweather

In Wonderland, continued from page 1

later examples that demonstrate Surrealism's influence on the feminist movement. Iconic figures such as Louise Bourgeois, Leonora Carrington, Frida Kahlo, Lee Miller, Kay Sage, Dorothea Tanning, and Remedios Varo are represented, along with lesser known or newly discovered practitioners.

Join us on Sunday, April 22 to view *In Wonderland: Surrealist Adventures of Women Artists* at LACMA. Bring friends along to see this fantastic show. Meet at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA) at 12 noon in the BP Grand Entrance (Wilshire Blvd.) at the Urban Light street lamp installation. *In Wonderland* ticket price \$22.

*A single villa can mar a landscape,
and dethrone a dynasty of hills.*

—John Ruskin

