



The Central New York Watercolor Society NEWSLETTER

February 2009

New Officers for CNYWS

I am pleased to announce that the open offices of our Society are now to be filled. William S. Elkins has agreed to take on the position of President of CNYWS, and Catherine M. Bennett has agreed to become the Vice President. According to the Constitution, the Board of Directors has the authority to fill any vacancies, whether an Officer or Director. The first order of business at the next Board meeting in March will be to pass a resolution naming Bill and Catherine as President and Vice President, respectively. Both have agreed to take on the duties of their office immediately because of the work which needs to be completed before the March meeting.

Bill and Catherine are currently serving as Directors on the Board. Their change to fill the officer vacancies leaves two open Director seats on the Board. At the March meeting the Board will appoint Roland Stevens, who has been serving as Vice President, to fill one of those seats. The other seat will

be vacant for the rest of this year. Bill Elkins has been a Signature Member of CNYWS for many years and has served several terms as a Director on the Board. That experience will allow him to step into his new duties immediately, insuring a smooth transition and continued programs for CNYWS.

Catherine Bennett is also a Signature Member and has served one term on the Board. She has also worked on the planning and coordination of the annual workshop and served on the Exhibitions Committee. She will bring a great deal of energy and enthusiasm to her office as Vice President.

All of the current Officers and Directors heartily endorse the willingness of Bill and Catherine to take on these positions. We wish them well and pledge our full support. I will at last officially become Immediate Past President.

Carl Crittenden

Message from the "President-Probable"

I think it was in November that I received THE CALL. As most of you must know, Carlton Crittenden decided that six (or was it seven?) years was long enough to serve as President of CNYWS. No one stepped forward with a burning desire to stand for election to the position by the time of the Annual Meeting, so the ship left port without a captain.

It was agreed that various members of the Board would agree to run the meetings on a rotating basis. The first such meeting on October 30, 2008, actually ran quite well. Carlton's mother had just passed away, and he was unable to attend. It seemed that there was something in the air that told each of us to step up to the plate to fill the various voids. We were all pretty pleased with ourselves that we had survived the first meeting rudderless.

Back to THE CALL. Carlton called to say that a contingent on the Board believed that it was important that there be a central figure (a lightning rod?) at the head of the table. Would I reconsider my previous protestations, and agree to fill the presidential role?

Well, as a matter of fact, I had been wrestling with the very question for some time. I wasn't sure that I was the right person, but I HAD been on the Board for awhile, and had some "institutional memory". So, when Carlton called, I mumbled a string of weak excuses that didn't even convince ME.

So, here I am I am, not yet the President-Elect, because I have to pass muster at the next Board meeting. So, I call myself the President-Probable. I am humbled to be in this

position, but I am confident that there is enough talent and doggedness on the Board and among our membership at large to get the job done. And a special "thank you" to Catherine Bennett, who is now the Vice President-Probable.

We have identified three show venues for 2009, and it looks like we have a good geographic mix and some interesting new and renovated facilities. Let's try to make a good showing of our hard work this year.

The first Signature Member show will be at the newly renovated Arkell Museum in Canajoharie from April 3 to May 29. This facility owns works by Winslow Homer, George Inness, William W. Chase, Childe Hassam, Mary Cassatt, Georgia O'Keefe and Robert Henri, so we will be keeping good company! This is a distinctive gallery and it's important that CNYWS be well-represented by a large number of entries.

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*Featured Artist
and the
new
"President-
Probable"
of CNYWS*

**William S.
Elkins**

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2009 Officers

President	
William S. Elkins	315-449-1627
Vice-President	
Catherine M. Bennett	315-481-1864
Corresponding Secretary	
Catherine Blind	315-457-1029
Recording Secretary	
Sandy Plumb	315-865-8301
Treasurer	
Jean Madden.....	315-672-9644
Immediate Past-President	
Carlton R. Crittenden, Jr	315-633-2817

2009 Board of Directors

Heather G. Abrams	Jeri Meday
Bonnie Goetzke	Cecilia Pigula
Drayton Jones	Roland E. Stevens III
Katherine H. Kernan	Lorraine Van Hatten

2009 Committees

Annual Meeting	Carlton Crittenden and William S. Elkins
Annual Meeting Demo Night	Heather G. Abrams
Annual Meeting Registration	Catherine Blind and and Jean Madden
Annual Meeting Hospitality	Drayton Jones
Annual Meeting Raffles	Roland E. Stevens III Catherine Blind, and Katherine H. Kernan
Annual Meeting Slides	Carlton Crittenden Jr.
Annual Meeting Publicity	Heather G. Abrams
Annual Workshop	Catherine Miceli Bennett and Lorraine Van Hatten
Door Prizes	Kathy Kernan
Exhibition Committee	William S. Elkins, Jeri Meday, and Bonnie Goetzke
Guest Artists	William S. Elkins and Drayton Jones
Newsletter Editor	Jean Madden (retiring) and Cecelia Pigula
Publisher	Lorraine Van Hatten
Jury of Selection	Carl Crittenden Jr.
Membership	Catherine Blind
Website	Carlton Crittenden Jr.
Other Events	Roland E. Stevens III William S. Elkins Catherine M. Bennett

Show Committee Chairs

Cooperstown Art Association, <i>Cooperstown, NY</i>	open
Arkell Museum, <i>Canajoharie, NY</i>	open
Gibson Gallery at SUNY/Potsdam, <i>Potsdam, NY</i>	open

Book Review *By Martha Deming*

Confident Color

by Nita Leland

ISBN 978-1-60061-012-7, North Light 2008

For watercolor artists color is often at the heart of what we do, the element that grabs us emotionally and motivates us to create a painting. It's often color that makes painting so much pure fun. Nita Leland has provided us with a beautiful new book focusing on that very topic. *Confident Color* follows in Leland's tradition of thoroughly researched, lavishly illustrated and thoughtfully presented information as seen in her previous books, including *The Creative Artist*, *The New Creative Artist*, and *Exploring Color* (1st and 2nd editions).

Throughout *Confident Color* she presents color concepts page by page, accompanied by understandable text, technical illustrations, and various artists' works that exemplify the concept under discussion. Almost every page has a "try it" sidebar with one or more ideas inviting the reader to experiment and learn. Along with the "try it" suggestions are color swatches and color "card" samples to inspire the reader.

Among the topics included are chapters on color "rules", theory and terminology; color as a design factor; types of color contrast; color as a unifier; purposeful color choices and schemes appropriate for the needs of a painting; strategies for putting color concepts to work; and "step-by-steps" in watercolor, acrylic, mixed media, casein and fabric arts by 7 artists demonstrating expressive use of color.

There are templates for color cards, viewfinders, color wheels and other learning tools plus a thorough color index and ASTM chart, a page on color symbolism and a useful bibliography. Meaningful quotes from artists past and present are scattered throughout, and helpful hints abound.

Experienced artists will find inspiration for freshening their approaches to color and ways of making their existing color palettes do more, while beginning and intermediate artists will find steady guidance and encouragement as they travel the painter's road to excellence. *Confident Color* will also be invaluable to CNYWS members who teach or mentor, providing reference and structure for lessons on color.

Nita Leland's years of studying color and her well-honed instructional expertise have culminated in *Confident Color*, a user-friendly book that will surely become an essential in every artist's library, be they student (and aren't we all students of this magical medium?) or instructor, beginner, intermediate or advanced.

Newsletter Schedule

The deadline for submitting material for the August 2009 CNYWS Newsletter will be July 20, 2009. For those members who have e-mail addresses, an e-mail reminder will be sent out in early July. If possible, please send your items by e-mail to make re-typing unnecessary to cpigula@twcny.rr.com. Ceil Pigula is our new editor taking over from the very capable Jean Madden, who volunteered as a temporary editor.

Featured member...

William S. Elkins

I was quite overwhelmed when asked if I could write something about myself as the Featured Artist. I feel like a mere neophyte in the company of so many very accomplished watercolorists in the CNYWS!

My formal art education ended with the eighth grade (my rural high school did not offer art classes). I was regarded as having some art ability, even in high school, but I was thoroughly defeated when the cousin of a classmate visited our school one day, and whipped off a gorgeous sketch of a horse. Eight years later, when I needed a basic design course to apply to the S.U. School of Architecture, this same young man was my design teacher at R.I.T. in Rochester!

Many watercolorist friends tell me that it's not fair that I am an architect, because it means that I already knew how to draw when I took up watercolors in 1995. It never occurred to me that sketching out toilet room details automatically qualified me to paint.

In 1995, my brother and sister-in-law invited us to spend a week with them on Monhegan Island. I was sure that there would be nothing to do there. My wife Betsy insisted that I take along a sketch book. Little did I know that Monhegan is INFESTED with artists. There seemed to be an easel behind each bush. We visited many of the studios on the island. I returned to Syracuse with quite an itch to try my hand at something. My intention was to get some oils. But, as I thought about it, I recalled doing some simple watercolor washes in architecture school, and decided that was enough to get started.

I drove down to Commercial Art Supply, grabbed a shopping cart, and told the young woman who waited on me to "fill 'er up". I returned home with quite a pile of stuff.

I proceeded, over the next couple of years, to read every "how to" book in the Onondaga County Library system. A friend suggested that I accompany her to an Onondaga Art Guild meeting. Suddenly there were all sorts of connections. I met pastel artist (and now oil painter) Nicora Gangi when she gave a presentation, and immediately signed up for private classes. Nicora put me through "basic training", breaking down bad habits, and starting me at the beginning with basic design principals.

I guess that I might call myself a "modern realist". I often wish that I could develop a more Impressionistic approach, but Nicora once told me not to fight what I do. I have often thought of taking advantage of mid-winter slow periods in my architectural practice by spending one day each week in my studio. But it always creates a feeling of guilt. And about the time I decide to do it, my practice gets busy again. My plan is to slowly work into retirement from the architectural world by adding painting studio time. Perhaps then I can pursue the business side of developing an art business. Currently, I don't want to spend my spare hours contacting galleries, etc. – I want to spend them painting!



TOP TO BOTTOM:
 "Uncle Elmer's First Ford", "Marco Polo Trade" and "The Student".
 All images supplied by Bill Elkins.

Website News

"Members Only" Area Added to Website

The CNYWS website now provides a convenient method to view and manage information in a secure Members Area, accessible only by current members. Within the Members Area you can view, list, print and export member information. Each member can edit or update their address, e-mail and password entries to keep the information current.

The web application is designed to work with the most common web browsers available. Any personal computer with dial-up or broadband internet service can access the secure Members Area with the following browsers:

- Windows: Internet Explorer 6.0 or greater
 Firefox 2.0 or greater
 Opera 9.0 or greater (not tested at this time)
- Macintosh: Safari 3.0 or greater (not tested at this time)
 Firefox 2.0 or greater

If your web browser is not listed or has not been tested, access the Members Area and log in to determine the feasibility of your browser.

To access the *Members Area*, open www.centralnewyorkwatercolorsociety.org in your web browser. Click on the *Membership* link on the left side and then click *Members Area* link to open the Login web page. Log in with your Username and Password (see below). Your Username is the latest e-mail address you have supplied to us. It is imperative that you keep us informed of your current e-mail address if you wish to use this site. If you do not have an e-mail address, there is still a way you can access your Member Profile if you have use of a computer. Please contact Kitty Blind, the Membership Chair, for these instructions.

To establish a Password on your first visit (or if you have forgotten it) click on the Reset Password button. You will quickly receive an e-mail with instructions on how to proceed. (For security reasons, you must use the same computer from which the initial request was made and follow the Reset instructions within 24 hours, otherwise you will need to submit another Reset Password request.) Once you have access to the Members Area, you can click on the *My Profile* link on the left to view your personal information. At the bottom of your personal page are buttons to Edit Profile and to Change Password. Selecting the Change Password button will allow you to enter your own choice of Password for future use in accessing the site.

A User Guide will be posted to the Members Area which will explain how to view lists of members, view a member's (or your own) profile, and make changes to your own profile information when necessary. You will also be able to e-mail a member and/or print out lists of member information. Please contact Kitty Blind at kitsacct@hotmail.com with any questions you have.

The revised Constitution will also be posted to the secure Members Area for your reference.

President's Message

(continued from page 1)

From August 9 until September 5, we will go to the northern reaches of our membership at the Gibson Gallery at SUNY/Potsdam. There are three galleries with 3,340 square feet and 400 running feet for temporary exhibits. The show will be in place when students, parents, grandparents, etc. arrive for the opening of school in the fall. This too will be a Signature Member show.

Finally, we will have our Annual Juried Show, which is open to all members, at the recently renovated Cooperstown Art Association from October 9 through November 4. We understand that some important refurbishment has taken place since our last show at this facility.

We hope that our members will take advantage of these fine opportunities to showcase our hard work and talents. There will be a need for Collectors for each of these exhibits, so please contact any Board member and let them know you are willing to help.

We are offering a spring workshop, which will take a close-up look at giclee reproduction at the David Revette Photography studio in Syracuse on Saturday, April 18. Details will be available later.

Karen Rosasco, our 2009 Guest Artist will be conducting an experimental watermedia workshop on Friday, September 18, at Dibble's Inn in Vernon. She will also give a presentation, demonstration and slide critique as part of our Annual Meeting on September 19. Karen is a distinguished CNYWS member and has generated great enthusiasm in artists who have participated in her imaginative approaches to creating art.

We are hoping to have art supplies available again this year during our Annual Meeting events. No guarantees yet, but it is a good possibility.

Bill Elkins

Art Show Locations Sought

Some members have asked if we could schedule art exhibits in different areas of New York State. Our exhibit Chairs are always scouting for good show locations and would be grateful to have any suggestions for new venues. No doubt there are many possible sites that we are not aware of, and that's where our members can be very helpful.

If you know of an art center, gallery, winery or similar institution in your area that might welcome a CNYWS art exhibit, please give this information (including telephone numbers, websites if available, and contact names) to Bill Elkins or Catherine Bennett.

Welcome New Signature Member

On October 30, the Jury of Selection met to review one application for Signature Membership, which was accepted. We are pleased to welcome Deborah Rosato, of Deerfield, NY, as our newest Signature Member. Debbie had previously been an Associate Member for three years.

Members in the News ...

Congratulations to several members who won awards at the 2008 Adirondack National Exhibition of American Watercolors. The show featured over one hundred aqua media paintings at the Arts Center at Old Forge. The Bradley C. Barnard Award was presented to **Robert J. O'Brien** for his painting, "*Kingdom Camp*." **Katharine H. Kernan** was awarded the Realism in Nature Award for her piece, "*Awaiting Spring*." The Trails and Streams Medallion: For a Woodlands Theme Award was presented to **Celia Clark** for her painting, "*Overshadowed*," and **Mina Angelos** won the Dr. Donald and Helen Budd Burness Memorial award for "*Breakfast Time*." In addition, the CNYWS Award was given to Dominick Ciarla of Memphis, NY for his "*Pumpkin*." The juror of the show was Judi Betts, an internationally recognized watercolorist and author of the book, *WATERCOLOR...Let's Think About It*.

Roland (Chip) Stevens created the poster art for the ANEAW 2009 show, the second year his work was selected. He also created in watercolor the publicity artwork for the Genesee Valley Hunt Races. One of his two entries accepted in the Rochester Art Club show won a merit award, and one of two juried into the Niagara Transparent Watercolor Society show received a fourth place award. Chip also had art in a 3-person exhibition at the Century Club, and was represented by four paintings in the AIA show at the Bausch & Lomb Gallery, both in Rochester.

Bud Bolte achieved his third juried entry in The Florida Watercolor Society's 37th Annual Exhibition. The September 2008 show was held in Delray Beach, Florida. The Society now acknowledges Bud as Signature Member in the FWS. Bud also received an Award of Distinction at the Mount Dora, FL Art League's Fall 2008 Show.

Kitty Blind, Elaine E. Patterson and **Sally Clark** each had their work displayed at the Central Adirondack Art Show, last summer at the Arts Center/Old Forge. **Linda Kollar's** watercolor "*Clean Sweep*" was included in the 2008 Cooperstown National Exhibit, and in December she won an Honorable Mention for her painting "*The Elders*" at the Colonie Art League's Holiday Show.

Joanne Neff, Jan Waters, and **Nancy Shampine** recently attended a two-day watercolor workshop at the studio of Paul Niemiec. All three participants were very impressed with the quality of the workshop and recommend it "for anyone truly interested in taking their work to the next level." Paul Niemiec's studio/gallery is located next to Beaver Lake near Baldwinsville, NY, and he will be hosting more workshops on Saturdays and Sundays in February, at a cost of \$200. Paul can be contacted at (315) 638-6313.

Ann Pember taught a 5-day workshop in San Jose, CA for the Santa Clara Watercolor Society in October. In 2009 she is scheduled to teach a 4-day workshop for the Kentucky Watercolor Society in June, and in October she will jury a show and conduct a 5-day workshop in Honolulu for the Hawaii Watercolor Society.

Patricia Gancarz showed her work in an exhibit of floral watercolors at the Manlius Library through the month of January 2009. **Doretta Miller** had a one-person exhibition of gouache paintings at First Street Gallery, 526 W. 26th

Street, New York City entitled "Tales of Three Cities: Beijing, Florence, and Saratoga Springs." The show was held in November. **Jeanne Dupre** won the Popular Vote Award at the 2008 Adirondack Theme Exhibition, "All in the Family," for her painting "*Hikers*."

Martha Deming will be teaching a workshop at the Old Forge Arts Center on June 15, 16 and 17, 2009. It is titled "Ways with Color" and will be for all media, all levels. For more information, go to the website at www.artscenteroldforge.org or call the Art Center at 315-369-6411.

Robert J. O'Brien will be teaching a three-day workshop, "Fundamentals of Watercolor" at the Cascade Art Center, at Rochester Art Supply, May 1, 2 and 3, 2009. **Patrice Centore's** painting, "*Garlic Study*" was accepted at the 2008 annual national North East Watercolor Society art show in November.

Last October, **Kathy Kernan** attended a weeklong Mary Whyte watercolor workshop at the Hudson Valley Art Workshops in Greenville, NY. Kathy recommends that anyone who has the opportunity to take a Mary Whyte workshop should do so. Mary Whyte is the author of *Alfreda's World* and *Watercolor for the Serious Beginner* among others.

Karen K. Rosasco judged the 14th Annual Juried Show of Art and Photography for the Clifton Park-Halfmoon Public Library, Clifton Park, NY in January and will give a demonstration entitled "Abstracting the Landscape" for the Colonie Art League, Latham, NY in February. In March Karen will critique the work of the Bethlehem Art Association at the monthly meeting in Delmar, NY. She will also teach a three-day Experimental Watermedia Workshop in Staunton, VA for the Beverley Street Studio School March 6-8, and a 5-day Experimental Watermedia Workshop for the Hudson River Valley Art Workshops in Greenville, NY in July. Check Karen's web site www.karenrosasco.com for other one-day and weeklong workshops this spring around the Albany area.

Heather G. Abrams had three water media monotypes in a recent group show in the Edith Barrett Art Gallery at Utica College. The exhibition of faculty and staff artwork was entitled "Creativity Matters." She had a monotype included in the inaugural Food Art Show at the RCIL on Genesee Street in Utica, during November and December and was named September's Artist of the Month at Brookdale Senior Living in Clinton, NY. Eighteen of her water media monotypes representing images and symbols of the Southwest were on exhibit.

The Rome Art Association is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, and in a related activity they will enter a float in Rome's annual "Honor America Days" parade on July 25th. **Jane Taylor** will be on the float painting a large mural as it travels the parade route.

Dee E. Smith's painting "*In Full Bloom*" was accepted at the 29th Pennsylvania Watercolor Society International Exhibition. The exhibit was at the Chester County Art Association in October. Her work, "*Northern Lights*," was juried into the North East Watercolor Society's Annual International Exhibition, last fall. Dee also was accepted into the Philadelphia Water Color Society's International Exhibition of Works on Paper, for her piece, "*Hidden Patio*," and displayed at the McKinney and Long Galleries, Mitchell Hall, West Chester University, West Chester, PA in November and December.

CNYWS Has Entered the Digital Age

Recently the Board approved the purchase of a digital projector and camcorder. We have been spending several hundred dollars each year renting equipment for our Annual Meeting. Owning these will save us money over time, and now we will have the equipment available whenever it's needed for additional programs or workshops. The digital projector can be used with the camcorder to project and/or record painting demonstrations or other CNYWS activities with sound and video. Recordings could then be transferred to a CD or DVD and made available for further use or duplicated for distribution to members.

Connecting the projector to a computer will allow us to display digital images for presentation of applicants' work for the Jury of Selection. Applicants for Signature Membership will now be able to submit images for review on a CD, and the same option will be available if we have a show where jurying is done in advance. The computer-to-projector option also allows for a greater range of programs at our Annual Meetings. Some of you may remember the presentations Diane Maxey did three years ago using this method.

The next Jury of Selection will meet after the March Board meeting. For the time being we will continue to accept slides for review. However, we encourage new applicants to submit their work in digital format if possible. Since the images will be projected onto a screen, below are a few guidelines to make sure that your images properly represent your paintings.

Whether your work is scanned or photographed, professionally or with your own digital camera, the image files should be submitted on a CD in jpg format (Ex. mypainting.jpg). They should have a resolution of at least 300 ppi.

The only images on the CD should be the six paintings you are submitting for review. Each image should have a title and not just a number. Make sure each image is oriented properly. Write your name on the front of the CD and mail it together with your completed application form.

If you have any questions, e-mail Carl Crittenden at robertscrittenden@verizon.net or call him at 315-633-2817.

(For an application for Signature Membership see the article below).

Signature Application Schedule

The deadline for submission of images for the next review will be March 15, 2009. Carl Crittenden has assumed the duties of Chair of the Jury of Selection, which will meet at the conclusion of the March 26 Board meeting. Applications for Signature Member status are available from our website at www.centralnewyorkwatercolorssociety.org. Six images, either on slides or CD, should be submitted with the application. (For information regarding digital images, please refer to the above article.) They should be mailed to Carl Crittenden, 947 Route 31, Bridgeport, NY 13030.

Membership

Please direct all membership questions to Kitty Blind, our Corresponding Secretary and Membership Chairman at kitsacct@hotmail.com.

CNYWS Upcoming Events for 2009

Annual Meeting & Workshop

Dibble's Inn, *Vernon, NY*

September 18 and 19, 2009

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Annual Juried Show

Copperstown Art Association, *Cooperstown, NY*

October 9 to Nov. 4, 2009

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Signature Shows:

Arkell Museum, *Canajoharie, NY*

April 3 to May 29, 2009

Gibson Gallery at SUNY/Potsdam, *Potsdam, NY*

August 9 to Sept. 5, 2009

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Plus: Spring Workshop 2009

Gliclee Printing Demonstration

David Revette Photography Studio, *Syracuse, NY*

Saturday, April 18, 2009 - 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM

News from the Art Center in Old Forge

The prospectus is now available for the Adirondack National Exhibition of American Watercolors. They are accepting digital entries as well as slides this year for the first time. Entries are due by March 20th, 2009. This is the 28th Annual exhibit and the dates are August 22 to October 4, 2009. Check the website for more info: www.artscenteroldforge.org.

The Art Center in Old Forge is offering a number of workshops for the watercolor artist:

"Whimsical Way With Watercolor" with **Gordie Bashant**,
June 29 - July 1.

"Watercolor Landscapes" with **Frank Webb**, AWS, df, NWS,
July 27 - 31.

"Watercolor Journaling" with **Don Getz**, AWS, KA, NWS,
August 11 - 13.

"Floral Watercolor Landscape" with **Janet Walsh**, AWS,
August 17 - 20.

"Watercolor" with **Carol Z. Brody**, NWS, August 24-26.

"Watercolor" with **Frederick C. Graff**, AWS, NWS,
TWSA, September 14 - 17.

For information on any of these workshops please contact Barbara Getty, Workshop Coordinator. Phone 315-369-6411 or e-mail: bgetty@artscenteroldforge.org.

Newsletter Forum....

Contributions to this column have been made by some Board members as well as a few others who are known to be enthusiastic plein air painters. If you have a subject that you would like to see addressed in a future Newsletter, please mention your idea to any current Officer or Board member.

The question: Many books and instructors recommend plein air artwork as an exciting end in itself as well as being beneficial to one's studio work. Plein air or studio-- which do you prefer, and why?

Kitty Blind: Since starting my journey in watercolors, I have spent most of my painting hours en plein air. Living in the Adirondacks, I have always been mesmerized by the many moods and seasons of the area. It lends itself to more paintings than I will ever accomplish!

If great paintings are those in which you must put your heart and emotions, then plein air painting will facilitate and deepen your involvement in your work. I realize studio painting is easier and quicker, since you don't have to travel to your workplace. But I really believe that you will do more emotionally-invested and inspired work, even if you go to a site and then go back to the studio to start/finish it. The time I spend en plein air is so personally satisfying and entertaining that I believe it is a great end in itself in making me a better painter.

Dick English: In my early years of watercolor painting I tried plein air painting and found it to be a helpful learning experience. I highly recommend it for beginning painters. One has to quickly focus on a subject, decide on a composition, simplify, paint loose and fast, and learn to observe colors. It is much more effective for learning than copying a photograph. However, I never enjoyed all the bother of bringing a lot of supplies, finding a comfortable vantage point and putting up with the vagaries of weather, bugs, etc. Living in upstate New York, I do lots of winter scenes but I never found a way to do plein air paintings in winter.

I found that painting in my studio allows much more opportunity to vary size, experiment with the composition and try different techniques in a controlled environment. As a result, my studio paintings have always been much more successful than my outdoor paintings. I always take sketching materials on field trips as well as a camera. This helps me get the same connection with my subjects as I would have by painting on site.

I have known several artists who do excellent plein air paintings. They go out for the afternoon and return with a complete or nearly complete painting. I go out on a field trip and return with ideas, sketches and photos for one or more paintings. By the time I finally decide on a composition and start placing color on the paper, many days, weeks or even months may have elapsed. So, I envy those who have mastered the art of plein air painting.

Debbie Rosato: This is an interesting and thought-provoking question. In the past I preferred studio painting exclusively, I would take many pictures, do some sketching and go back to the studio to plan and execute paintings. However, this past summer I participated in a few workshops that included

plein air painting. At first it was overwhelming because time is a major factor, and generally I am a rather slow painter. What plein air did for me was force me to organize my thoughts and subject matter rather quickly. Spontaneity plays a huge role -- you have to plan and paint fast. Also you have to paint much more "loosely" because there is little time to contemplate the next step. It really drills in the concept of simplifying your painting. It also forces you to focus on shapes and values rather than details.

One experience in particular that really encouraged and helped me to see the advantages of plein air work occurred this past fall at Trenton Falls Gorge. I was involved in a paint-out where all the artists painted some aspect of the falls, and all of the paintings were auctioned to benefit the Tug Hill Tomorrow project. At least one painting had to be completed during the day-long event. Fortunately the weather was perfect and it was a very enjoyable day. My experiences with plein air painting have all been favorable thus far. Weather can play a major role in whether you have a successful day or not.

In conclusion, I would say that I enjoy both settings for painting and both have their advantages. But the climate we live in here in Central New York isn't conducive to doing only plein air painting. Also there are times when you need to spend time thinking about your subject, and certain techniques are best done in the studio. In my opinion, plein air experience has improved my painting techniques and overall composition. I think I will continue to paint outdoors as much as possible and I believe it will continue to benefit my work.

Bill Elkins: When I first began painting in 1995, I did a bit of plein air painting on Monhegan Island, complete with gawkers, kibbitzers and critics. It was quite daunting, but I came to find it a good exercise.

Unfortunately, I have gotten away from plein air painting for a variety of reasons. I don't care for lugging a lot of equipment around. I have been painting more people scenes lately, and they don't like to stand still. And, it seems that my daylight hours are too occupied with other activities.

However, I dream of the day in a couple of years when painting becomes a more central activity in my life, and when I can get outside to paint. I do believe that it is an important part of learning and producing art.

Dick Price: I have to admit that most of my paintings are done in the comfort of the studio. After all, I live in the northeast and often paint at night. Plein air painting, though, is something everyone should try. It has the feeling of an adventure and the thrill of a hunt. It can snap you out of a rut and fire up your creativity. Relating directly to the subject, not only visually but with all the senses -- experiencing the warmth of the day, the sounds, the smells -- is a nice change from the studio.

It's a compositional workout as we decide what shapes, forms, textures and lines are important to the subject and try to capture them while the light lasts. Color and forms are more defined in real life than in the static chemical reaction of a photograph. Lights, shadows, reflections and subtle hues are much clearer to the eye, and the way light wraps around objects is easier to see. If you wonder about something, you can just walk closer and look at it! Outdoors, I often find myself grabbing at colors on my palette in new and different ways than in the studio, and I always come away feeling as if I've learned something, good or bad.

(continued on page 10)

2008 Demo Night and Juried Show Reception A Great Event

The evening of September 12 saw the Utica College Library Concourse and Barrett Gallery filled with an enthusiastic audience, there to watch eight of CNYWS's best at work for our Demo Night event and to view an outstanding collection of member artists' paintings in the Annual Juried Show.

The show, co-chaired by Kathy Kernan and Kitty Blind, was juried by Sandra DeVisser and curated by Carolynne Whitefeather. It featured 51 paintings and truly demonstrated the versatility of both the participating artists and the medium of watercolor. Award winners were: *Best in Show* – Chip Stevens; *Best Architectural Landscape* – Nancy Neaheer Maas; *Best Natural Landscape* – Jody Primoff; *Best Portrait* – Catherine O'Neill; *Best Still Life* – Bonnie Goetzke; and *Best Abstract* – Martha Deming.

Works by Signature Members Murray Wentworth and Lloyd Schafer were shown in memoriam. Our guest artist, John Salminen, who attended with his wife, Cathy, commented very favorably on the quality of the show. There was also an excellent video on view, prepared by Carolynne Whitefeather, on the subject of the watercolor medium.

Demo Night, co-chaired by Heather G. Abrams and Martha Deming, featured eight artists who demonstrated their various approaches to painting. All had interested groups observing and interacting with questions and comments. **Drayton Jones** displayed several marvelous sketchbooks of plein air studies and worked on two paintings based on these sketches. **Lorraine Van Hatten**, a new Signature Member, had a figure in a landscape painting in progress, demonstrating her painterly style which capitalizes on the transparency of traditional watercolor. **Bud Bolte**, who is known for his colorful landscapes on gessoed surfaces, demonstrated his methods for applying paint

and the important lifting techniques which give his work its distinctive qualities. **Angela Wilson** made significant progress on a monochromatic portrait of her husband,

George. Angela, is especially noted for her figure and portrait paintings. **Catherine Bennett** was busy demonstrating the pouring techniques that she uses in her colorful work. **Polly Blunk** worked on one of the historic architecture studies she is so well-known for. Consistent attention to detail is a central feature in Polly's work. **Kathy Kernan**, also a new Signature Member in 2008, showed her sketchbooks of pen and ink combined with watercolor and discussed the importance of frequent sketching. She also displayed a very professional-looking bound portfolio of her work that she designed online at the Kodak website. **Sandra Schick** worked on one of the pet portraits that she does so well. This is the first time we have had artists demonstrating pouring techniques and pet portraits. Another innovation was a full-color handout featuring the eight demo artists.

The guest book reflected the best attendance ever for a CNYWS Demo Night event. This can be attributed to several factors: the excellent venue, the joint publicity efforts of Heather G. Abrams and curator Carolynne Whitefeather, and the combination of events for the evening.



Left to right: Bobby Plourde, UC Catering Director, Heather G. Abrams and Martha Deming.

John Salminen 2008 Workshop

Twenty-four members participated in the CNYWS fall workshop at Dibble's Inn given by John Salminen. I decided to join in because I had attended John's five-day workshop in Old Forge and wanted more of his ideas to stick in my brain. John is a kind, generous, accepting and very talented artist and an excellent teacher. His background is in teaching high school art. John is a representational artist whose focus is most often on urban landscapes; his street scenes of Chinatown in the rain at night are amazing. He was accompanied by his equally kind and talented wife, Cathy.

The focus of this workshop was design, which John says is the basis of every successful painting. To represent the design principles most clearly, he works with students in creating an abstract painting. He reasons that a recognizable subject can distract from the fundamentals he wants to convey, while working in abstract completely removes this obstacle. To my surprise I had a ball and loved the whole process.

First we established random lines on watercolor paper. Then, with his guidance, we found a "white" space that would be about a third of the paper, would be irregular and unpredictable in shape, would be oblique (at an angle to the page), and would exit the sheet in three places. John says that predictable is boring. Curvilinear shapes OR linear shapes should dominate, one being 20% and the other 80% of the surface. A lot to think about, and we haven't yet talked about color!

I won't continue with the details of the technique except to add that John says the white of the paper is the most powerful thing we have in our toolbox. To really make your lights glow, the whites (level 1 of the value scale) should be surrounded by 2's, the 2's surrounded by 3's, etc.

This was a lot to cover in a one-day workshop, and we all felt that our heads were spinning with the amount of great information he presented. John sells a DVD which covers the full five-day workshop step-by-step.

Submitted by Sandy Plumb

Additional Door Prize Winners from the 2008 Annual Meeting

Seven items that had been expected for use as door prizes at the Annual Meeting arrived after that weekend was over. As a result, at the October Board meeting, names of all who had paid to attend the annual event were "put in a hat" and seven winners were drawn. The winners and their prizes are listed below:

Toloo Perry & Miriam Brown each won a one-year subscription to *Watercolor Artist*.

Ray Cassidy, Bernie Keleher, Pam LoCicero, Nancy Neaheer Maas and Prudence Slentz each received a \$100 gift certificate for supplies from Jack Richeson & Co., Inc.

Demo Night 2008 and Annual Juried Show Opening at Utica College



1. Angela Wilson (photo by Jane Taylor), 2. Polly Blunk, 3. Catherine M. Bennett, 4. Bud Bolte, 5. Sandy Schick, 6. Lorraine VanHatten, 7. Drayton Jones, 8. Katherine Kernan. (Photos 2 to 8 supplied by Utica College students.)

Newsletter Forum

(continued from page 7)

It helps us understand the difference between what the camera sees and what we perceive and to make better use of our artistic license. That's a helpful step in moving from just copying photos to creating more dynamic designs. Cameras can flatten, distort and skew things, and we should feel free to change them back or move them around to achieve what we want to see.

When painting outside, it's best to keep supplies simple and mobile. I like to carry a small campstool with a storage compartment and shoulder straps. I usually have my palette, paper and brushes in a separate portfolio case. An empty slide frame or other rectangle can be handy for framing a composition. Sometimes I'll only sketch with a pencil, then "paint" the sketch with markers. A 60% grey marker, a black one and the white of the paper give me three distinct tones. I always take photographs of the subject in case I want to develop a more elaborate studio painting later. These photos also help me see the difference between the camera's eye and mine. I take along some bug spray and bottled water -- and leave unreasonable expectations home to ensure a fun and relaxing session.

Many of my plein air paintings turn out to be less than I would like a finished painting to be, but many have a freshness and energy that I'd like to see in all my work. If you haven't tried it, you really should. Before long, you'll be laughing in the faces of hungry mosquitoes, shrugging off the occasional frostbite or mountain lion, and bringing home some valuable sketches, experiences, and paintings with a new dimension.

Chip Stevens: I find plein air painting and sketching both exhilarating and challenging. For me that's the fun of it. Finding an exciting composition at the right time of day, in rain, snow, wind or sun, invites endless possibilities. Sometimes mistakes occur that can lead to creative approaches.

I feel at home with the sounds of life around me, with bugs, changing shadows, and sometimes with people -- if they're not too talkative. I can add or delete elements to make a better composition, change colors, shift the focal point almost anywhere -- regardless of the drawn composition. I can work much faster, especially in tidal marine scenes and on cloudy days. Working fast forces me to capture the essence of my initial excitement and interest. I can easily do three watercolors and sometimes four in one day if I get out at 6:00 AM and paint 'till dusk.

I reserve studio painting for commissions and animal paintings where I use photo reference materials.

Kathy Kernan: For years I only painted watercolors outdoors. I liked the way the sun and wind helped things dry. I almost always finished a painting in one sitting, preferably in two or three hours, because of course the sun's angle changes. Now that I actually have a studio (my bedroom) I do more planning, create more work from photos as reference and work on a painting over multiple sessions.

There are advantages to both ways of painting. Outdoors the stimulus is immediate. It is 360 degrees in circumference and the changing atmosphere gives motivation that no studio can. Since part of the beauty of watercolor is its immediacy, speed (with planning) is part of the game. However, it is possible for me to work longer in a studio. I can work on cold,

rainy, wintry days and at night. I can take a break and come back. This is good. The question becomes: how do I utilize my studio and the outdoors for their best possible use? Am I willing to leave my comfort zone? These are questions each of us has to answer.

Martha Deming: Plein air painting is defined in the traditional sense as work done outdoors, on site, directly from the subject. The experience is essential to developing skills of observation and composition, for learning to "seize the moment," quickly and efficiently getting the essence on paper. Because of lighting and weather changes, the "quickly" part is important, meaning that all one can spend on a given piece is perhaps a half hour to maybe two hours. This effectively eliminates the opportunity to include too many details, the process we call "overworking" that is the downfall of many a painting. Plein air works are characterized by a fresh, expressive quality that is too often lost in the studio where there is more time to "fuss."

I like to do both plein air and studio work, but not on the same piece. Plein air painting is challenging and satisfying, even if the results aren't always what you expected. It teaches you to see and think on your feet, almost literally; to make decisions when faced with the almost overwhelming surfeit of visual riches inherent in the out of doors, a chosen portion of which has to be captured in a short time before the light changes. You learn to "find paintings" where you might not have noticed them before. It helps you focus on the big shapes, the division of space on the paper. It helps you learn to judge value and color. It leads you to develop faith in yourself that you can take on a challenge and meet it. It helps you learn to more freely invest yourself in your work. Of course, to get good at plein air painting takes practice and that's something I'd like to do more of. But Central New York weather being what it is, and because I don't like to go out painting alone, I don't do as much as I'd like.

All the things you learn as a plein air painter can be applied directly to studio work, which is what I do the most, especially in our long, cold, dark winters. When you get used to working en plein air, though, photos just don't cut it as reference material. But having been out there painting, you have a rich knowledge base which enables you to infuse your work with a life that's lacking in the second-rate (compared to the real thing) image in a photo. Without the first-hand experience, you would have to rely fully on the photo. One of the most condemning comments I ever heard from a professional-level critic is that "the painting looks like it was done from a photo." However, in the studio you do have more time to experiment and explore your medium and equipment, which gives you knowledge to use in both plein air and studio work.

To sum up, I like to do both and I think each is essential to doing well with the other. Each offers by itself not only learning experiences that can make you a better painter, but also knowledge that can be applied to the other, to the benefit of both. Every artist would profit from schlepping one's gear, fighting the bugs, the heat, the cold, the wind, whatever it takes to get out there and paint, at least once in a while. At the least, it will make you more appreciative of the ease of working in studio, at best it will make a strong contribution toward becoming a better painter -- and isn't that what we all want to become?

Guest Artist...

Karen K. Rosasco

We are very pleased to announce that Karen Rosasco will be conducting a one-day workshop for our members on Friday, September 18, and will also provide a presentation, demonstration and critique at our Annual Meeting on the following day.

Karen is a prize-winning artist who conducts week-long watermedia workshops at the Hudson River Valley Art Workshops and around the Northeast. She also escorts group painting and sketching tours to destinations around the world through her "Art Escapes" project. After 40 years of painting realistic interpretations, she found that a concentration on the relationships between the basic elements of art (shape, value, line, color and texture) provided a more exciting personal approach to her art. Consistently good composition and design are her goals to hold the viewer's eye.

Her workshops feature experimental watermedia and cover many techniques: layered acrylic, paint over charcoal, collage, drag, layered mixed media, and textured gel medium. She continually searches for new and unusual subjects as themes for her many paintings.

Karen's workshops are consistently described as exciting, exhilarating and fun. CNYWS Director Drayton Jones attended one of her five-day sessions and reported that she is very helpful, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. He said that the experience helped give him a different way to think about creating art.

All events will be held at Dibble's Inn in Vernon, NY. Spaces at workshops are limited, so be sure to submit your registration forms early if you plan to attend. Karen's work can be viewed on her website: www.karenrosasco.com.

TOP RIGHT: "On The Way".

RIGHT: "Asian Forms".

Both are paintings by Karen Rosasco.



Art Supply "Wish Lists" Requested for Vendors

Many members have expressed their interest in having art supply vendors present at our Annual Meetings. As you know, Commercial Art Supply of Syracuse had been providing this service until 2007, when they abruptly informed us they were no longer willing to participate.

Thanks to Chip Stevens' contacts, Rochester Art Supply has expressed an interest in showing some products at our 2009 Annual Meeting weekend. We welcome this opportunity and want to make it a positive experience for them as well our members. If they are there as planned, it is important for those in attendance to support and encourage the company by purchasing any art materials that might be of interest to them. This can also be a good chance to stock up on supplies without adding shipping charges.

It is important that the company know what kinds of items they should plan to bring to Vernon. With that in mind, we are asking for members who expect to attend to submit their "wish lists" of art supplies they would hope to find there. If you have specific items, brands, sizes, etc., that you are interested in, that information would be helpful, too.

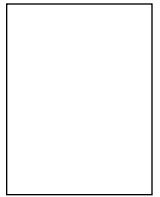
Please send your "wish lists" by March 15th to cpigula@twcny.rr.com or mail to: Ceil Pigula, 6043 Devoe Road, Camillus, NY 13031

2009 Annual Meeting Events

This year's Annual Meeting events will be held at Dibble's Inn in Vernon, NY. This was a popular venue last year and we're sure members will again enjoy the hospitality, convenience and good food that they provide. The Friday workshop and Demo Night (which will also be held at the Inn) are scheduled for September 18th, and the Annual Meeting will take place on Saturday, September 19th. Karen Rosasco, our guest artist for the workshop, will also be presenting an exciting program and demonstration at the meeting. This should be an art-inspiring two days to share, so be sure to mark your calendars now.

Central New York Watercolor Society

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www.centralnewyorkwatercolorsociety.org

CNYWS NEWSLETTER

February 2009

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RIGHT: Photos from the 2008 John Salminen workshop.
(Supplied by Catherine M. Bennett).

