



HIGHlight

November 2006

From the President...

How can we tell the dancer from the dance?

—William Butler Yeats, “Among Schoolchildren”

Dear PSNM Friends —

In my email last week I received a series of photos of sandcastles. Actually, “sandcastles” is a completely inadequate word. These were entire communities, steeply gabled Gothic buildings landscaped with rocks and trees, and peopled with gnomes, goddesses, dragons, and other fantastical creatures—all made of sand. And therefore, of course, all temporary. It reminded me of Andy Goldsworthy, whose work is so compelling in part because it is intended from the beginning to be

transitory. I marvel at the investment of passion and energy in an object that will soon cease to exist.

And yet, isn't that the real heart of any creative activity? Some of us, I suppose, may learn to paint or sculpt or throw pots in hopes of achieving a certain level of technical proficiency and a predictable, hopefully saleable, product. They should certainly not make sandcastles! But most of us, I truly believe, create things because it's what we love to do. We love being in that process. We love surprises; we love magic, the thrill of seeing an image evolve. It's as Seurat says in *Sunday in the Park with George*: “Look! I made a hat... where there was no hat!” That sense of wonder—that's the payoff.

—Betsy Greenlee

Monthly Meetings at the Albuquerque Museum

Saturday, November 11, 10am

Colette Ody Smith, one of the jurors for this year's National Show, has offered to be our guest speaker this month. Not only was Smith an art teacher at the elementary and middle school levels, she has built a successful career as a painter. Her current work is executed primarily in soft pastel. The subtle color layering and the lush surface texture possible with soft pastels made them her medium of choice. Working over a watercolor or acrylic underpainting in deep tones, Smith builds paintings that portray her understanding of the beauty of the natural world imbued with spiritual significance.



Saturday, December 8, 10am

Lee McVey, PSNM secretary and accomplished pastellist, is scheduled to be our presenter for the December meeting.

And if you need more of an incentive to attend the meeting, there will be a **SPECIAL AUCTION** for a nearly complete, wooden boxed set of practically unused Sennelier Pastels.

Treasurer's Report

As of July 2006

Checking Account	\$10,621.73
CD	8,183.43
Total	\$18,805.16

Sept. Program Review by Gail Murray

Jane Maclean and Creating Public Art

Our September 2006 meeting was highlighted by the fascinating tale of Jane Maclean's odyssey into creating public art. Jane's speciality is still life pastels with an historical theme, from Native American pottery and rugs to antiques and artifacts of New Mexico's diverse cultures. Her paintings can take weeks to complete. Jane had us riveted for an hour as she presented the back-story of her three paintings, now proudly hanging in the Sandoval County Judicial Complex, Bernalillo, NM. She prepared a Power Point presentation with a narrative text for each image. I want to say thanks to Jane for providing me with the text, since I was so engrossed in the presentation, I found it difficult to focus my attention on note taking. Liberal amounts of this review are derived from her text.

Receiving an offer to create public art can be exciting, exhilarating, intimidating, daunting and overwhelming all at the same time. Jane highlighted the procedure she developed for this nearly two year project which began in August 2003 when the Judicial complex was still on the drawing board. After consulting with numerous county officials, Jane developed overall goals, and ended with providing instructions for care and maintenance of her three paintings and their final unveiling in the rotunda in January 2006. The planning process also included: researching costs; presenting a proposal; developing the contract; and planning the organization of incoming data. Researching expenses included painting surfaces, studio materials and equipment, transportation, photographic supplies, photographic services, and framing. Once she had a handle on the initial planning process, she had to think about the painting process, which included: organizing the studio; planning the compositions; observing the construction site; painting the images; consulting with the framer.

Early in the project, Jane's research of the area took her to The Albuquerque Museum; local historical sites; Casa San Ysidro; Museum of Indian Arts and Culture; International Folk Art Museum; Museum of Spanish Colonial Art; Office of Archaeological Studies; El Rancho de Las Golondrinas; numerous libraries including the Library of Anthropology in Santa Fe. She consulted many people of Sandoval County and beyond to find the stories that would best tell the history of the area. She consulted two professional illustrators, one local, and one from New York City. Jane read Tad Crawford's Legal Guide for the Visual Artist. Overall goals began to develop:

connect the people of Sandoval County to the paintings and to each other; record a visual history of three diverse cultural periods; provide opportunities for visitors to find something familiar, and to learn something new.

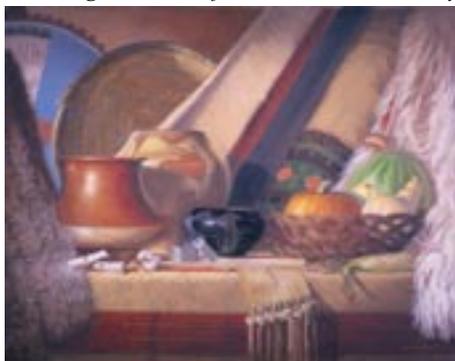
As the paintings progressed, Jane soon realized that a booklet was needed to explain the significance of the objects in the paintings. The booklets are available, free to the public, in a holder next to the paintings in the rotunda. More planning evolved: writing the booklet; installing the paintings; providing information for the reception; developing instructions for care and maintenance of the artwork.

The initial proposal was submitted in hard copy in October 2003, and included: A verbal description of her vision of the finished work in its space; notation of some personal contacts made as ideas developed; preliminary measurements of the finished images, 30" x 38," which were the actual finished measurements. By December 2003, she presented a revised proposal that included thoughts about the creation process; presentation of studies for approval, and staying within the budget. Contractual considerations included: access to historical items in museums for the purpose of photographing, sketching and recording specific items that might be included in the compositions of the three paintings; termination of the contract on the death of the artist, with provisions; title and copyright issues; lighting decisions determined by the artist; non-destruction, alteration, and maintenance, includes not changing the glass to Plexiglas; repairs, made with the approval of the artist during her lifetime; installation of the artwork; nameplates; possession, the artist has the right to possession of the works, within limits, for the purpose of exhibition; payment in three installments; deadlines and delivery dates.

Jane used four loose-leaf notebooks and one spiral notebook to track overall communication; details of each painting and a log of the progress of the painting process itself. Colored tags helped to focus on pending activity and decisions. The computer facilitated and stored everything from correspondence to images. A project this large and complicated required Jane to add more studio equipment. More easels, a tilting stool, rolling palette, additional lights and adjustable stands; computer, scanner, printer and a large air cleaner. She used these cameras: a 35 mm SLR Nikon, with a long lens for slides; a smaller Canon digital camera; a large format, 4x5 View Camera for transparencies. Two tables worked as display areas for the set ups and models for the compositions. Jane also took a class in Photoshop.

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Honoring Centuries of Native Traditions, Carrying Old Traditions to a New World, and Blending Many Traditions to Form a Union



October Program

Review by Gail Murray

Colleen Howe: It Isn't Easy Being Green



Colleen Howe, PSA, paid us a visit from Salt Lake City for the October meeting. Her formal training in art came from the Scottsdale Artists School. Colleen has been a past judge for the PSNM National Show, workshop teacher, and has been featured in *The Pastel Journal Magazine*, among others. Colleen talked briefly about her easel and pastel box set up. After her old French easel finally fell apart, she discovered a tripod mounted wooden box made by Heilman designs (www.heilmandesigns.com) while taking a Richard McKinley workshop in France. This system has worked well for her. She prefers wood to aluminum boxes because wood absorbs shock better, and your pastel sticks will be less likely to suffer breakage in transport. Aluminum containers tend to send shock waves back and forth through the case, resulting in pastel dust and crumbs rather than sticks when you arrive to paint. Recent security alerts at airports might restrict your ability to carry on board pastel sticks. Check with the airports you plan to fly through to learn what restrictions are currently being enforced on art supplies. Since pastels are just dry powder in stick form, you might be able to get them in to carry on, but inquire before you fly, or be properly prepared to check them if they are not allowed. Have lots of foam and bubble wrap with you.

Colleen loves Terry Ludwig's pastels, as well as Schmincke, Girault, Unison and Rembrandt. She bought full sets of Schmincke and Girault, but didn't know where to start with all those hundreds of colors. Yes, you CAN have too many pastels. There is really only so much you need, to paint beautiful paintings. She wanted to learn what color gaps there were in each of the sets, but to do that, she started painting with only the Schminckes. She soon learned where the gaps are in colors she didn't have or what that set was weak in. Then she did the same with Girault and so forth. From there she could fill in the gaps with custom colors or colors from other sets. In her trials, she learned that Rembrandts have great blues, greens, violets and earth colors. Their weakness is no warm red, but Unison is very consistent with reds and Sennelier makes a nice carmine red.

If you paint plein air or landscapes at all, having a good selection of greens is very important. If you struggle to find greens, look at what you have in the various sets, and pull out everything in the green family. Line them up by temperature (warm or cool) and value and see where you have gaps. Try out every one of the pastels you have so that you know what it looks like. They don't always look the same applied to a surface as they do in the box. In the darks, she likes Ludwig's and Sennelier (#155 or #157) because they don't fill up the paper too soon. They go on thinly, and not too opaque. You want the kind of pastel that stays thin in the darks; opaque darks flatten out the picture plane leaving no depth. Unison darks are very opaque and do not layer well. Colleen showed her technique for taking a favorite old chamois cloth to pull out some of the darks by rubbing and blotting. She uses the chamois for pulling out mistakes or blending. They are excellent for correcting delicate work. A word of warning, Wallis paper tends to eat up the chamois.

Colleen spoke a bit about current concerns with Wallis paper, that it isn't taking an alcohol wash for under-paintings like it used to. She has learned in the manufacturing process an ingredient is unavailable, and they are reformulating the paper. If you get a "bad batch" of Wallis paper, call your supplier or Kitty Wallis, and she will gladly replace it for you.

Two of Colleen's "mottoes" for painting are: *slow is fast*; and *the more you know the less you need*. Before starting a painting, she always does at least two thumbnails first. One is a value study in pencil and the other a color study. This enables her to know where the darks and lights will be and sets the harmony for the painting. She learns if the right temperature of color is in the right place. Keep to your plan and limit to 3 or 4 values in the thumbnails. The darkest values will be the uprights (building and trees); then sloping (roof-lines and mountains), then the ground, with the sky being the lightest. Anything on the tree should not be the same value as on the ground. She will use vine charcoal, drawing on the side to set the composition of a painting. She works from photos and *plein air*, but once the thumbnails are done, she rarely needs to look at the photo. By taking the time to plan and do the thumbnails (the slow part), your painting will go much faster.

For her demo, she had mounted a piece of Wallis paper onto gator board with Super 77 spray adhesive. She sketched in the basic composition first to establish the main shapes of objects (landscape scene of trees) and to denote areas of contrast. She did a beautiful and deep watercolor under-painting. If she is working outside, she does the under-painting as fast as she can, but is slow and deliberate when painting with pastels. Take time to plan and make the right strokes in the first place. She steps back often to look at the painting in progress. The more deliberate you are about keeping on track, the faster the painting will be completed. Slow is fast.

A trick to isolate a color is to take a 3x5 card and punch a dime-size or smaller hole in the center, and peer through the hole. You will be able to identify the color of a shadow or changes in a field of color. Minimize a large area of green, for example, by isolating the area of interest and using different colors in the field if necessary. When dealing with greens she will still do the value thumbnail. If you don't

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Workshops

LISTING POLICY: As of this month, all new announcements will be published with as much detail as space will allow. Repeated listings will be abbreviated.

Deadline for submissions to PSNM Newsletter is 15th of month preceding next issue.

Please send your listings for classes, events, workshops, or news via email to: Alice Flitter - awflitter@aol.com

SPONSORED BY PSNM

Mike Mahon Workshop

February 1, 2 & 3, 2007 • Albuquerque, NM

Cost: \$270

Frank Federico Workshop

at Masterworks

April 22, 23 & 24, 2007 • Albuquerque, NM

Cost: \$240.00.

To sign up for either of these 2 workshops, send \$100 deposit (payable to PSNM) to Lyle Brown, 8813 Brandywine Road, NE, Albuquerque, NM 87111

TAUGHT BY PSNM MEMBERS

Michael Chesley Johnson Workshop

Dec. 4 - 8, 2006 • Tubac, AZ

An early winter *plein air* pastel workshop in Old Town Tubac, founded in 1752 as a Spanish presidio. Paint colorful Old Town shops, cottonwood bosques, the Tumacacori Mission and more! Each day starts with a demo followed by plenty of student work and help at the easel. For more, see the "Workshops" section of www.MichaelChesleyJohnson.com or email: mcj@sff.net

Member News

Ben Cohen received a Purchase Award at the 30th Annual Smithville Art Show, Southampton, NJ. Second Place Award, Annual Juried Oil/Pastel/Acrylic Art Show at the Center for the Arts in Southern New Jersey, Marlton, NJ. First Place, Fine Art Award (Pastel) at the Wood Street Fair, Burlington, NJ

Dina Gregory received second place in the Lonestar Pastel Exhibition judged by Ramon Kelley for her landscape, "Autumn Beauty". "Volcanic Ashe and Boulders" has been juried into the Pastel of the Southwest show juried by Bill Hosner.

Betsy Truby has been included in four new publications: Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the World, Who's Who of American Women and Who's Who in American Art. Also, her painting of the Grand Canyon received awards in the last four shows in which it was entered: (1) first place; (2) best of show; (3) second place and (4) fifth place. Unfortunately, she did not specify the shows.

Margot Schulzke Workshops

February 11 - 17, 2007 • San Miguel de Allende, Mexico

For information, contact Linda Roemisch: artandsoul@hughes.net or call 530-265-9213.

April 23 - 27, 2007 • Mt. Vernon, WA

Skagit Valley's Annual Tulip Festival, scenic Mt. Baker, Whidby Island, Olympic Peninsula. Anacortes Ferry to either San Juan Island or Canada. Tuition \$375.

Contact LaConner Art Workshops: Robyn, 888-345-0067, ext 5, or email at robyn@laconnerartworkshops.com

July 13 - 14, 2007 • Sacramento, CA

At Sacramento Fine Arts Center. Contact Marie, 916-205-9861 or email marie@dixonart.net

Or for more information, go to: www.margotschulzke.com

Deborah Paris Workshop

Painting The Night

February 2 - 4, 2007 (Fri-Sun – Full Moon!) • Placitas, NM

Artists have long called the time from dusk to dawn "the Magic Hours" – a time when light and color create intense moods which can be communicated to the viewer.

Pastel and/or Oil – Studio class

\$295 (\$150 deposit reserves your spot). Class limited to 12.

To register call Deborah at 505-715-1991 or email deborahmparis@aol.com

From one of our National Show Sponsors — Judsons Plein Air Outfitters' website, Guerrilla Painter [GuerrillaPainter@phantomcanyonranch.com]

"There were a few items that did not make the catalog and we thought you might be interested to see some of the ideas that hit the cutting room floor..."

Bugs in a Can

Couldn't make it outside to paint today? Want to give your studio paintings an authentic plein air look? Try Bugs in a Can! Just sprinkle a few of these little winged friends onto your wet painting and voila! It is as though you had just been lakeside in Minnesota in August.



The Bi-Pod

Trying to save on weight? Want a challenge? Try our two-legged tripod on for size. A real treat.

Exhibitions...

Open Space - A View with Room

Carried over until Dec. 17th, 2006

Inaugural exhibit at the City of Albuquerque Open Space Visitor Center includes paintings by PSNM members: Lorenzo Chavez, Marilyn Drake, Bud Edmondson, Betsy Greenlee, Thais Haines, Elaine Koehler, Lee McVey, Fred Miller and Deborah Paris. The Visitor Center is located at 6500 Coors Blvd. NW (between Paseo del Norte and Montañño, turn east on Bosque Meadows Rd.)

Red Rocks, Landscape Paintings of the Jemez Mountains

Maryann McGraw and Seung Youn will be exhibiting their plein air paintings at the Walatowa Visitor Center and Museum at Jemez Pueblo through January 2007. The Visitor Center is located 7 miles north of San Ysidro on NM 4.

New Artists' Show

This year's special show for "emerging" artists was organized by Steve Reyes, with assistance from Sandra Abruzzo and Peggy Orbon. It was held at the Arts Alliance Gallery (in Fashion Square at Lomas & San Mateo) from July 28 to August 21.

New Member Malinda Menke won the People's Choice award for her painting, *Bougainvillea*.



continued from page 2 - Jane Maclean

Compositions: Each item in the paintings related to Sandoval County as much as possible. Planning the compositions began at the Library of Anthropology in Santa Fe. Her concentration had to be solely on development of the compositions, the individual stories, the beauty of the items, the relevancy to the period, the texture, color, and size. Preliminary pastel sketches of each painting were created. They were 19" x 24," and were on Canson Mi-Teintes, smooth side up, and mounted on foam core. Sizes of the objects in the paintings were approximate, and would be refined in the final images. Jane photographed every item that would be painted, and in many cases had to create models to paint from, since she couldn't keep the actual artifact during the painting process. Decisions about how to construct the images began here. A measuring tool was placed in all the photographs, from the smallest items to the largest for appropriate scale in the final paintings. The sketches were photographed, printed and presented to the County Manager, along with documentation of the included items in a loose leaf presentation notebook. During this time it was important to keep watch over the construction site. Plans had been made to put the door in the middle of the wall space. That needed to be changed. Also, the lights needed to be researched and ordered. The final painting surface is Canson Mi-Teintes, smooth side up, bonded to 8-ply rag board, with archival quality adhesive. To protect the edges during the painting process, this panel is lying inside a cardboard tray that is flush with the painting surface. The entire surface is covered with a layer of pastel.

There is much more to be said then space allows about the choice of the objects Jane depicted, their own historical significance, and the studious thought process Jane put into this entire project. While the paintings were in progress, the frames were being designed. Various colors of gold finish were considered. Greg Tindel, of Art Enhancement was the master framer. Using the design of a frame that Jane admired at The Albuquerque Museum, Greg used seven different moldings to create the profile to Jane's specs. The frame was then covered with 12 layers of a combination of marble dust and rabbit skin glue followed by 7 layers of Venetian red clay. After each layer, the surfaces had to be sanded. Gold leaf was then hand-applied, while revealing some of the red. Installation of the paintings took place January 5, 2006, secured onto the curved wall.

You can reach Jane by phone (505) 296-3058 or email: jwlawre@aol.com Her website is: www.JaneMaclean.com

continued from page 3 - Colleen Howe

want to make everything green, change things as long as it keeps up the appropriate harmony of the scene. We ran out of time to see the completed demo painting (far left), but it was well on it's way to becoming a beautiful painting, such as the one picture near left.

Colleen will be teaching four landscape painting workshops in the Utah/Montana area in March, May, July and August 2007. For more info, contact her at mail@colleenhowe.com or her website: www.colleenhowe.com. She will also be teaching how to handle different forms of water: ponds, clouds, snow, fog, mist at the May 2007 IAPS convention in Albuquerque.