



Genesee Valley Plein Air Painters, Inc., a not-for-profit artist association, promotes and inspires quality plein air painting while providing socially pleasant painting opportunities for its membership throughout the year.

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As Sinclair Lewis once observed, "Winter is not a season, it's an occupation." Leaving aside plein air painters, who supposedly relish knee-deep snow and ice-covered streams, conditions that admittedly make beautiful paintings, winter is definitely turning into an occupation. Plowing, snow blowing, shoveling, deicing, skidding, falling, sanding walks, donning and shedding mountains of cold weather garb, and gawking incredulously at thermometers seemingly stuck on single digit numbers bring up the age old question, How much is enough? The foreground hand below belongs to me.



Enough already! I rest my case. (Full disclosure: I don't ski anymore, which may color my current dyspeptic view of the winter wonderland.)

MEMBER NEWS

The following GVPAP members received awards for their works in the Penfield Art Association show at Barnes and Noble.

Jurors Awards:

Teresa Barlis	“Medici Seal”
Bob Keim	“Bird Watching”

Merit Awards

Teresa Barlis	“Fairport Crew”
Barbara Jablonski	“Painting #1 (Pont du Rennes Bridge)”
Bob Keim	“Cold Stream”

Perhaps I am the last one in the world to stumble on this fascinating site. If not, take a tour of Google’s Art Project (<http://www.googleartproject.com/>) which takes you to the major holdings of the most famous art museums in the world: London, St. Petersburg, N Y City, Florence, Paris, and many others. You may study the paintings from a distance or microscopically, read detailed information about the work and the artist, progress to other works by the same artist by a simple click of the mouse. Then, if you are so inclined, you can take a tour of the museum itself, moving from gallery to gallery, admiring the works and the architecture. The site is user friendly, which is welcome, since it contains so many possibilities for enjoying some of the finest art ever created.

Factoid: Contained in one of Robert Genn’s recent letters is this remarkable statistic: “Based on (my) subscriber list, workshop attendance and popular statistics, 78% percent of living painters are women. And to the disgruntlement of some of the boys, we know that women in general tend to have better art-brains.”

Continuing the winter theme, Barbara Jablonski has forwarded an excerpt from Eliza E. Rathbone's book "Impressionists in Winter." Considering Monet's vast experience outdoors in all conceivable weather, it is hard to believe that he would find our winters daunting in the least.



Monet's commitment to plein air painting was aided by a constitution usually hardy enough to sustain it. An account from the 1860s describes a vision of the artist, out in temperatures below freezing, bundled into three overcoats, a heater at his feet and standing at his easel in order to capture en plein air precisely what his eye observed. In his 1878 *Les Peintres impressionistes*, (Theodore) Duret wrote, "Winter is here. The impressionist paints snow. He sees that, in the sunlight, the shadows on the snow are blue. Without hesitation, he paints blue shadows. So the public laughs, roars with laughter."



By December 1895, however, when Monet accepted an invitation to Norway to paint its snowy landscape (choosing it over Venice), his reputation was established and he was well known as a painter of snowscapes. As luck would have it, the winter was bitterly cold and snowy. Monet is said to have painted outside in temperatures of minus thirty degrees Celsius (22 degrees below zero Fahrenheit).

His letters attest to his humor and hardiness.

On 26 February 1896, he wrote from Norway to Gustave Geoffroy, "Dear friend, a brief note just to assure you of my fates, so that you don't suppose that I have died from the cold...I have never suffered, to the great amazement of the Norwegians, who are more sensitive to the cold than I am!" He concludes his letter, "Everything is frozen and covered with snow. One should live here for a year in order to accomplish something of value....I painted today, a part of the day, in the snow, which falls endlessly. You would have laughed if you could have seen me completely white, with icicles hanging from my beard like stalactites."

- Eliza E. Rathbone

While on the subject of Monet and Impressionism, those of you with an interest in the subject can treat yourselves to the BBC miniseries entitled "The Impressionists" (2006). This two DVD production is marked by excellent acting and extraordinary photography as it traces the major Impressionist figures of late 19th C. France. A scene of Monet painting in the countryside is magically merged into one of his famous paintings. Many scenes encapsulate the ideas these iconoclastic artists had in their struggle to forge a new path through an art world that was dominated by the stuffy Academy. Once that was accomplished, however, Monet could say, "Since the appearance of impressionism, the official salons, which used to be brown, have become blue, green and red." This production is available through Netflix for those who are members.

Thanks to Barbara Jablonski for providing the following information for all members curious about outdoor shows and the requirements for participating in them.

Plein Air Competitions Around the Mid-Atlantic States

Some of you may wish to try your brush at a plein air competition and try to win some of the big bucks being offered. In the prominent competitions, you first need make the “cut” before traveling to the competition. I found it very easy to see what’s out there when I googled “Plein Air Competitions”. Tons of competitions pop up. I added “New York State” or other regional states to the sort and it scaled the listing quit a bit. So, narrowing your google search regionally saves a lot of effort looking for painting competitions.

The Easton Maryland Competition July 18–24th has grown very quickly and has become very competitive and nationally known. It’s great to get on their mailing list and keep track of the action. Also, the second annual Cranford, New Jersey <http://www.jcas.org> is developing into a quality, competitive show. And, there’s another at Havre de Grace, Md. <http://www.hdgpleinair.com> These may be a great opportunities to compete with other quality artists. There is usually assistance with matching up artists for D.O. for accommodations with these shows.

A couple of good sites for viewing national and some international competitions are <http://www.ARTSHOW.com/juriedshows/page3.html> and <http://www.thepleinairscene.com/plein-air-competitions/>.

Art Show lists competitions chronologically on the Entry Submission Deadline. When viewing **Plein Air Scene**, check out the other resources for plein air painters.

Locally there is a painting festival at <http://www.BillsboroWinery.com> (no cash awards) and small pap competitions (with some cash) such as one in Sackets Harbor and Watertown. Unfortunately, a startup pap competition from last year in Clayton, NY has lost sponsorship and will not continue. We will publish the information for these local opportunities in the weeks to come.

Finding Your Festival and Preparing for the Big Event

Are you ready to try your hand at selling at Arts & Crafts Shows?

Well, now that you have a monstrous inventory of paintings, you are considering selling them in regional arts & crafts shows. First question --- where do I want to sell? Well, let “google” do your art show hunting for you.

If you search for “Arts Festivals New York State” many listings pop up such as <http://nystatearts.org/orgs/?discipline=Festivals> and <http://www.smartfrogs.com/ny.html> Here you may explore arts organizations and festivals in every county. Also the well-known festivals such as Allentown in Buffalo will pop up.

The easier thing to do is simply "google" the name of the arts festival in the area such as Fairport Canal Days, Clothesline Arts Festival, Waterfront Festival, Sonnenberg Mansion, Cornhill, etc. If you specifically "google" the regional towns such as Spencerport, NY or other communities that hold festivals, you will quickly find the town webpage or connecting web link to the arts festival.

A new festival which has great promise as reported by Bobbi Prince is the June 11 & 12th <http://www.KeukaArtsFestival.com> so check out this link. Chris O'Handley has had success at the Rochester Public Market Art Day in September, which has minimal booth setup too.

But what's next? You may have to buy or borrow a display tent setup equipment. That means generally a 10'x10' festival tent as well as display racks, tables, etc. The investment in this setup equipment is usually the determining factor in the decision process of going into arts festivals. So, your decision is not "casual," it is a commitment. Don't forget the computer work needed to organize your inventory, prices and, of course, the transportation and physical setup labor.

Lastly, in your decision you need to be "legal" ... And this is the easiest thing of all. You need to call NYS and get a tax number so that you may collect sales tax and then annually send it into NYS. At all established festivals, this certificate is posted at your booth. For any individual in Monroe County who sells less than about \$37,000 in gross sales, or collects less than \$3,000 in sales tax, your filing of sales tax with NYS occurs one a year (March) and there is no charge for your tax permit. If you call the NYS Department of Taxation and Finance in Albany and speak to them directly, you will find that the sign up process is very easy and quick.

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And the last word goes to the inveterate *plein air* artist Claude Monet whose clothes were bleached from the sun, soaked in the rain, and covered in a blanket of ice and snow in the winter. Even with years of hardship and a work ethic that would make most painters feel ashamed of their efforts, he considered himself a failure. Despite his long life, he died too early to see the error of that harsh judgment.

It's on the strength of observation and reflection that one finds a way. So we must dig and delve unceasingly.
-Claude Monet