



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.

June 1, 2007 E-LETTER

[GVPAP JURY FOR SIGNATURE ARTIST MEMBERSHIP – coming in June](#)

Associate Artists are invited to apply for Signature Artists Membership by submitting plein air paintings to the GVPAP Jury Panel for judging. The jury panel will be June 7. The prospectus has been issued. A copy may be found on the Download page of our website. Contact **Kathleen Hanney** to register your participation at khanney@att.net.

It's All in the Wrist by Stefan Baumann (letter in Outdoor Painting)

Of course you all have heard that “It’s all in the Wrist.” What if you were told you that you could change your painting drastically by just holding your paint brush differently?

Many artists hold their paint brush like a pencil or a pen. What happens when someone picks up a brush like a pen? It triggers the left side of the brain and tells it you are about to perform an analytical task like writing or a mathematical equation.

By simply picking up your brush with the fingers forward and the back of the hand towards you, your left side of the brain does not trigger which allows the right side of the brain (the creative side) to function. The power you will feel will be immediate.

Also, don’t paint like you are painting a barn or a wall. Allow the brush to skip along and try to go opposite the hairs for effects; use the side of the brush and relax the wrist. Move your arm and twist the brush in your fingers. All of this will bring energy to your brush strokes.



MEMBER NEWS:

Jeanette Musliner won a Merit Award for an acrylic plein air painting *Braddock Bay* in the Webster Art Club Spring Show at Barnes & Noble. Also another pap done in the Maplewood Rose Garden got a Merit Award in the Irondequoit Art Club Spring Show.

Barbara Jablonski will be included in a *Building of the New Rochester Bridge* documentary on RNEWS TV Channel 9 shown sometime in June. Since 2005, she has plein air painted the progress of the bridge thirteen times from the Ford Street and Cornhill Landing views.

Don Grieger's painting "Stream Shadows" has received an Award of Excellence in the Oil Painter's of America 16th annual national juried exhibition of traditional oils. The exhibition is held from May 10 to June 8 at Whistle Pik Galleries in Fredericksburg, Texas. The exhibition may be seen on line at the Whistle Pik Galleries web site.

Incoherent Ramblings . . . OLD LYME CONFIDENTIAL

by Columnist and Signature Artist Don Grieger

As we left our story last month, Henry Ward Ranger was making plans to establish the "American Barbizon" in Old Lyme, CT. He wanted a place that combined the forest of Fontainebleau with the hazy atmosphere of the Dutch lowlands. He thought Old Lyme was perfect. Ranger envisioned himself leading this new art colony, willingly dispensing critiques of members work and offering his opinions on everything from painting to horseshoes.

Ranger did not lack confidence. In quoting a Montreal dealer's opinion: "He said that my work would stand with the *best* and that no one was doing better, hardly anyone so well . . . he finds my work thoroughly original *as I know it is* in spite of Damn Fool Criticism, which can't get beyond the surface of things."

When Ranger arrived in Old Lyme in 1899, he took room and board at Miss Florence Griswold's home on Main Street. Florence inherited the house from her father Captain Robert Griswold whose prosperous fleet of ships sailed between America and England where he was rumored to have a second family. A second family could explain why he had nothing but the house to leave his wife and daughter. Though in disrepair, Ranger saw the potential for the Griswold house to be the gathering place for his colony. Miss Griswold eagerly shared his dream and the Griswold house became to Old Lyme what the Ganne's Inn was to Barbizon; as the Hotel Baudy was to Giverny.

When Ranger returned to New York in the fall he convinced his artist friends to join him in Old Lyme in 1900. Lewis Cohen, Alphonse Jongers, William Howe and others arrived that spring followed by Clark Voorhees, Allen Talcott and others in 1901. The colony was thriving and word spread further when Old Lyme pictures were included in the National Academy Annual Exhibition in 1902. The painters of the colony were all "Tonalists" working in limited color scales of rich brownish tones. They soon earned the nickname the "Brown Gravy School."

All of this, along with Ranger's leadership, changed in 1903 when America's leading impressionist, Childe Hassam, arrived. Hassam came to Old Lyme in search of a seaside location for his high key and broken color impressionist technique. He took an immediate liking to Miss Florence who in turn treated Hassam as one of her favorites. After the summer's painting, Hassam left for a painting trip to the Isle of Shoals, leaving behind a painting for the second annual Old Lyme Colony show. Ranger and his friends joked that Hassam's bright colored landscape would "stick out like a sore thumb." They were right. But not in the way they meant. Reviewers loved his work and thus began the conversion of the colony from tonalism to impressionism.

Aside from the competitive nature of their painting, the artists enjoyed a friendly atmosphere in the Griswold house. Picnics, games of horseshoes, baseball and canoeing on the Lieutenant River were popular activities. Evenings were occupied with parlor games and impromptu musicals and theatrics. Practical jokes were legendary. On one occasion the victim was the non-painting spouse of student painter Ellen Wilson. Her husband's preferred breakfast was Shredded Wheat with cream. The pranksters found a packing crate filled with excelsior and the next morning Ellen's husband Woodrow, dined on excelsior and cream. None the worse for his dietary experience, he went on to become the 28th President of the United States.

For the younger members, excelsior was a common packing material before bubble pack and Styrofoam peanuts. The information in this article is taken from an essay entitled "The Art Colony of Old Lyme" by Jeffrey W. Anderson.

The essay is contained in the book, "Connecticut and American Impressionism" a cooperative exhibition project concurrently in three locations and published by the William Benton Museum of Art.

NEWS YOU CAN USE -- PAINTING TIPS

A good landscape painter must paint fast to catch the light of any hour. Unless you know what to put in, what to leave out, the result is a mess. -Anthony Thieme

Publishing Your Own Artwork by Signature Artist Bob Keim

Recently I joined the Vanity Publishing Society (a euphemism for do-it-yourself ego-tripping) and published a book of my own artwork. It was through a website, blurb.com, that downloads a program to you free for creating your own book. When you are finished creating the pages and covers, you simply download that file back to them. You order your book(s) from them; they arrive in about a week. How simple compared to what one had to do a decade ago.

I created all the artwork images by photographing them digitally. To find the most pleasing image, I photographed each painting under, first, incandescent light, then fluorescent light, then a combination of both. The camera enabled me to make lighting selections, a neat feature of digital cameras. I also shot a range of exposures. I felt I would surely be able to pick the most proper image for each painting. Imagine what all that would have cost with a film camera!

After downloading the camera images into the computer, I then only had to select the format I wanted for a page (many templates are provided in the program) then select the picture to be shown, click and drag it and it's done. Portions of the page are set aside for your own text.

The program is still a beta version but I did not have any hang-ups with it. It could have some improvements but I did not feel limited with its features. There are probably other similar programs but this one worked well.

It took about two weeks of photographing (less than 8hr days) until I had completed my file. It had 52 paintings and used 62 megabytes of memory for all the images and text. I ordered one book to see how it agreed with my monitor's image. I found some of my images were a bit dark and a little too warm but otherwise I was very pleased. I corrected some of the images, downloaded the file again and ordered my second copy. I am very pleased with the result and will stop there (unless I want to add more pages!)

The cost for an 8"x10" soft cover of 40 pages is \$18.95, plus shipping. A hard cover version is \$28.95 plus shipping. Not a bad deal for preserving your artwork with your own comments. If you have the time, give it a try. They would make nice birthday and Christmas gifts.

Plein Air Perils by Columnist and Signature Artist Gil Jordan

Submissions of unusual painting experiences outdoors are invited. (Contact: gfordan@frontiernet.net)

Any plein air painter knows that the creative spirit is buoyed by a beautiful June day in a beautiful setting. And for those of us enamored of snow scenes and frozen streams that applies just as well.

Yet there are particular hazards in winter that severely test the dedication of the painter. For example, on a dreary March day heavy with melting slush, the All-Weather Gang was painting south of Batavia. We setup our easels in the driest spots we could locate by the side of the soggy road. Guy Leclair was positioned between his trademark orange cones, a warning to passing traffic that important work was in progress and that drivers should forego their race against time and pass in reverent silence.

As usual, that idyllic model was quickly demolished as wishful thinking. A pickup truck careened around the corner passing us in the blink of an eye, leaving chaos and cries of distress in its wake. His truck did to us what a speedboat does to people in canoes and rowboats, but instead of waves of water we had waves of gelid slush. Although no one escaped unscathed, Guy bore the brunt of this intrusion. He, his easel, and his open hatch were directly in the way of a solid wall of gray, dirt-filled mush, half ice, half water, and all cold. His clothes were covered with it, and the rear compartment of his van looked like the dishwashing area of a busy restaurant. But that was nothing in comparison to his half-completed painting, which was a moving exhibition, some new form of art in which a varicolored slop was sliding from top to bottom, leaving new combinations of color and textures in its

wake. It was a liquid kaleidoscope, an amazing canvas whose image, in a state of flux, was losing its struggle with gravity.

Suffering only a fraction of his grief, I invented new vocabulary, but Guy allowed himself only brief sputtering. He was a model of restraint, considering the extent of damage. He must have decided to reserve all color for future canvases, not useless displays of temper. Fortunately, succeeding adventures, all of them more serene and dry, have given him the opportunity to demonstrate this truth.

Laughs from the Louvre . . . A thief in Paris planned to steal some paintings from the Louvre. After carefully planning, he got past security, stole the paintings and made it safely to his van. However, he was captured only two blocks away when his van ran out of gas. When asked how he could mastermind such a crime and then make such an obvious error... He replied...."Monsieur, that's the reason I stole the paintings.....I had no Monet...to buy Degas...to make the Van Gogh."

And you thought I didn't have De Gaulle to publish this!

Sincerely,

Barbara. Have a great summer.

NEXT E-LETTER DEADLINE: August 25, 2007 Send information to: info@gvpap.com