



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.

May, 2011 E-LETTER

News about our Editor Gil Jordan

Signature Artist Gil Jordan has painted *en plein air* for around 30 years. Gil's medium is watercolor and he paints quickly. You will always spot Gil with a big brimmed hat on and gracious smile on his face.

Gil has been our newsletter editor for two years. He has asked to take a leave of absence from this task due to other pressing issues. We are very appreciative of everything Gil has done and very sad that we won't enjoy his quick wit and skillful writing (Gil formerly taught English Literature at MCC). Gil – thank you for all that you do.

The members now are saddled and will be probably bored with me, your prez, writing this newsletter. I hope Gil's absence is only short-termed for we enjoy immensely reading Gil's works as well as I truly working with him as an officer of our club.

Gil's Art Show Announcement:

Gil is having a show at the Arts Council for Wyoming County's Gallery. The art show runs June 3rd through the 29th and the Reception is Friday, June 3rd, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The WCAC is located at 31 S. Main St, Perry, NY 14530. Hours are Wed. 9am-6pm, Thur. 11 am-7pm, Fridays 11am-7pm. Gallery: 585 237-3517 www.artswyco.org



Letchworth painting by Gil

Steve BonDurant's Wrangle Some Pixels Workshop by Claudine Bartlett

A few lucky fellow GVPAPers and I were able to take advantage of Steve Bondurant's offer to visit his studio on April 15th to *Wrangle Some Pixels*. Steve did some fancy stuff with "tools" like wiping out parts of images and moving people around and even shrinking and cloning them! This was perhaps more than I will attempt at home but it was neat to see.

We had a lively discussion of how best to photograph our work and had a chance to see how we might compensate for less than perfect photos that we often encounter. Steve showed us some fixes for these and ways to avoid them.

Even if you do not have Photoshop and do not plan to invest in the software seeing Steve demonstrate his editing routine gives you an sense of how to go about using some of the software that may be on your computer. Some of those programs are: Paint, a subheading under "accessories" of the Microsoft software; Microsoft Photo Editor and digital Imaging editor. I went home anxious to try to duplicate some of the techniques on my computer. We covered all the items promised by Steve in his course description and more.

Everyone had questions about things that they had tried or wanted to do. We had a chance to see what a difference a little tweaking could do for a presentation of our work.

The workshop was definitely time well spent. I would recommend anyone who has a chance to attend this if it is offered in the future.

MEMBER NEWS:

Three GVPAP members are being featured exclusively in the Rochester Art Club Studio for First Friday

You are cordially invited to the

FIRST FRIDAY

OPENING RECEPTION

FRIDAY, MAY 6th – 5 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Paintings by *SIGNATURE ARTISTS* –

KATHLEEN
BOLIN



Patrick

VALERIE
FRISCHMANN



Hurds
Country
Store

BARBARA
JABLONSKI



The
Bait
Shop

Rochester Art Club, Hungerford Bldg., Suite 437 – 439
1115 Main Street East, Rochester, NY 14609
Show runs May 6 – May 31, 2011



PLEIN AIR WORKSHOP SPONSORED BY ROCHESTER ART CLUB

Don't miss out on this opportunity to study with nationally known plein air artist, Frank Serrano, this fall here in Rochester NY! Frank is designing this five-day workshop for those with plein air experience. Check out Frank's website, www.pleinairgallery.com Frank is part of the faculty of American Artists' *Weekend with the Masters* each fall and has been on the cover of their *Workshop* magazine recently. He does not normally come East this is an opportunity study with him in our part of the country. Contact suzi@rochester.rr.com or 233-5645.

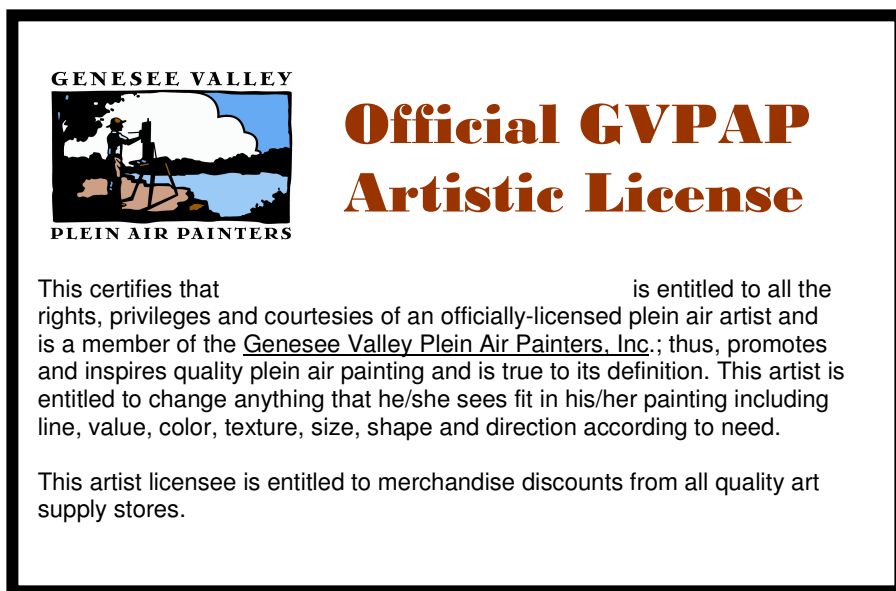
PLEIN AIR RETREAT

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN for American Artist's Weekend With the Masters Plein Air. Paint with the leading instructors of outdoor landscape painting in an intimate, four-day

regenerating retreat in the heart of the Rocky Mountains. *Weekend With the Masters Plein Air* has been created by American Artist Magazine exclusively for landscape painters. Check out this rare opportunity to improve your skill, connect with top artists and immerse yourself in the inspiring beauty of the Western landscape. See WEBSITE: www.AAMastersPleinAir.com[10]!

INFO OF INTEREST

Yates County Arts Center is organizing its 2011 Artists Studio Tour and Art Sale scheduled for Saturday, August 6 and Sunday, August 7 from 10:00 am - 4:00 pm clustered at various locations on or near Keuka Lake. For artist and visitor information, see <http://www.ycac.org/events.php?page=11>



Well, here it is again. Cut it out; write your name in the blank space place it on the back of your gvpap nametag. Now you have one for this year's painting season.... It is your Official Artistic License. Never leave home without it.

Stories of Interest: **NICOLAI FECHIN (1881-1955) The Russian Years**

by GVPAP'S Signature Artist Don Grieger

The dream of all art students in late nineteenth century Russia was to study with Professor Ilya Repin. Repin's studio was always overcrowded and his personal approval was required for acceptance. At age nineteen and a graduate of the Art School in Kazan, a city on the Volga, Nicolai Fechin was granted an interview to study with the great man. Fechin considered it a "critical moment" in his early career. He was accepted! Repin's early style was a salon type, smooth and somber. His portraiture was so exceptional that many of the elite, including Tolstoy sat for him. Repin's initial opinion of French Impressionism was not favorable. He considered it "senseless" and yet his own palette and brushwork changed under its influence. It was Repin who proved to be the link between Fechin and French Impressionism.

Fechin became the "teacher's pet". Repin tried to persuade Fechin to concentrate on historical painting because he felt Fechin had a talent for large compositions. Fechin could not follow in Repin's manner of working. In Fechin's words, "I always strove to express the

subject technically, basing my work upon the process of execution, as a musician virtuoso and not as a musician-composer.”

As Fechin was completing his formal studies he was offered a position as temporary instructor of drawing at the Kazan Art School. He happily accepted the offer and was given a private studio and complete freedom concerning his work. (Remember, the Communist revolution has not yet taken place.) The atmosphere was conducive to creativity and led to his Academy painting, “Kapusnitza” – the peasant custom of gathering and salting cabbages in the fall. The beautiful and colorful painting of villagers in native costume with bright blue sky and glints of the first snow, won the coveted “Prix-de-Rome” prize, a traveling scholarship to the major art capital of Europe, with the requirement to “paint on foreign soil”. Fechin returned to Russia in the fall of 1910 without any significant work to show the Academy. He tired of “meandering” about and suffering from visual overload, longed to return home. The Academy did not see fit to award Fechin the customary second year of travel. Fechin became the official state teacher at Kazan and happily taught there for the next ten years. He was warm and friendly often meeting with his students after classes to discuss art and his travels. Winning the Prix-de-Rome prize also assured his annual invitations to international exhibition including the Carnegie Institute in Pittsburgh. Fechin’s work drew favorable reviews and attracted the attention of collector W. S. Stimmel. Based on photographs, Stimmel purchased eighteen paintings over a span of three years. World War I brought this activity to a close.

In 1913 Fechin married Alexandra Belkovich, daughter of the Kazan Art School founder. Fechin found it difficult to reconcile the obligations of art and family. The constant demands of the studio and his comrade – students made marriage difficult, until the birth of his daughter Eya. The responsibility of a growing child forced Fechin to bring a new discipline into his life.

All would soon change, however, as the Marxist revolution sought to bring about fundamental change in the country. Those with wealth were punished and redistribution could begin. All art was used as propaganda. “I felt deeply how swiftly and uselessly I was losing my creative energy” Fechin writes. Art materials were so poor that soon Fechin was painting with tempera on wood. During the first year of the revolution the new building of the Kazan Art School lost its heat. Eventually the temperature inside the thick stone walls was equal to the winter temperature outside. With little food, no fuel, no medicine, a broken down train system, equality had been achieved – everyone was miserable. The ARA (American Relief Administration) had arrived in Kazan, to distribute food and supplies. Fechin talked about life in America and freedom to paint what he wanted. Though he loved the country of his roots, he decided he had to leave. Fechin reestablished contact with his Pittsburgh patrons and through the ARA began a long process that was ultimately successful. The Fechin’s were on their way to Amerika!

Information for this article was taken from the book, “Nicolai Fechin” by Mary N. Balcomb.

E-LETTER DEADLINE: May 31st, 2011. Send information to Barbara Jablonski, bjablons@rochester.rr.com Send news and articles of interest pertaining to plein air painting or member news about you or other members.