



NEWSLETTER – March 2025

Letter from the President

Hello Everyone,

This year is an exceptional year! At our Spring juried show at Barnes & Noble we went from being without enough paintings to having enough and actually we could have had even more! Thank you to everyone that added more of their work to produce such a lovely show.

We all need to give out a huge "THANK YOU" to Mike Kamish for stepping up once again to bring together with great organization all parts of this show. (He also made the cards that are next to your paintings) A "THANK YOU" also to **Debi Bloom** for creating our beautiful ribbons. She was in Florida but managed to bring them together and get them to us.

Thank you to all the volunteers that stepped up including:

Sylvia Ball - Our Calligraphy Queen - With pen in hand she writes all your names and painting names on each certificate. Each is beautifully written.

Nina Varon - Nina takes time out of her busy schedule and creates our Programs every year with all the information and correct spelling!

Paula Fahy - Paula has a wonderful way about her when it comes to bringing together your refreshments. I love the way she puts so much effort into everything she does and always makes it look nice as well.

Linda Vanozzi - Linda created a very nice and colorful flyer, with all the information for us to hand out to family and friends.

And a huge " **THANK YOU**" to the receiving and hanging group of volunteers, and those of you that will be helping with take down and cleanup.

And finally, thank you to all that participated as artists in the show! Without your paintings, there is no show. So, thank you for having the courage and interest to share your work and being part of this annual event!

I also want to quickly address that a few members were not happy with Kathy Armstrong's critique. First and foremost, you must remember these are all her opinions. She is just trying in her own way to give you an honest opinion, to give you a pointer or two on how she feels you could improve your paintings, or to compliment you on your painting skills. It's all offered in a very positive spirit and up to us to take her feedback, combine with feedback from others, and then I hope use that feedback and our own perceptions and what we learn from comments on the paintings of others (why we share the feedback within the group) to help us all grow as artists and move forward on our artistic journey.

MARGARET MITCHELL

Letter from the Newsletter Editor

Margie said it all ... to make a show successful is a team effort and takes the contributions of multiple volunteers and requires members to be willing to engage and participate by displaying paintings as well. So, I share her words and want to thank all that contributed and participated!

I also want to thank Sylvie for presenting to us at our March meeting. Sharing sketch books is almost like sharing a diary. You are not only sharing sketches, but also sharing your personal perceptions, thoughts, and experiences and holding them up to others for commentary. It takes a lot of courage to do that – and a lot of trust that the people you are sharing that information with are your friends. I am grateful that Sylvie sees us that way, as we certainly see her in that light as well. So, thank you Sylvie! I'd like to encourage others in the group to also think about putting together a presentation as well. We of course will continue to bring in outside speakers as well and do hands on sessions, and more – but having the opportunity to get to know others in the group a little better are all welcome too!

And on the topic of sharing personal thoughts, I will also share that I can empathize with the feelings some of you have had about feedback from the judges we bring in for our shows. One of my most frequent “art critics” is my wife Jan. I'll show her what I consider “*my best painting ever*”, and more often than not, I can see her eyebrows furl a bit and will hear something like “*something doesn't look right about the trees*”, or “*it looks like there are dead animals floating in the water*”, or the innocent “*do you plan on keeping the sky like that?*” My gut reaction in my head is always a defensive “of course I intend it that way – my painting is just right!” But then after I think about it for a while and start to look at it through her eyes my resistance starts to soften, and now I'm thinking “well, maybe she has a point, and it could use a little tweak”. Then after more time goes by, the little tweak” starts to get bigger and before long I reluctantly admit to myself, “yep, she is right”. So, I go back and fix it ... and it seems that whenever that happens, and I make those kinds of changes – I like my painting more, am glad that I took a second look and am appreciative of her feedback. In fact, a lot of times the feedback is something I noticed and knew but tried to just avoid. At our recent Barnes & Noble show, Kathy commented about the face and arms of my Viking being a bit “off”. I actually knew that. It was something I also saw and even messed with a little and tried to fix. Ultimately, I left it “as is”. Her calling that out to me reminded me that if it looks not quite right to me when I am doing it ... it's probably not going to look quite right when it is done, and I should listen to that inner voice. A lesson learned!

But that is me. That may not always be true for all of you, nor will it be true for all judges. So, your experience of feedback may be different than mine and that's okay. We are all on our own journey – and our club is all about supporting our fellow members and helping them grow – not trying to force them into a certain way of thinking or forcing them down a certain path.

For this issue of the newsletter, there is some discussion about the Barnes & Noble show and a request for your thoughts and opinions on some possible refinements we may want to make to how we run shows in the future. Please share your thoughts with me for inclusion in a future newsletter.

I also want to invite all of you to participate in the newsletter by writing articles. Any art related topic is fair game. For example, in this issue, Laura Davis submitted a write up on Southwestern art. You might also recall a member that moved out of the area, that wrote an article on watercolor techniques and the tools and supplies she used. I'm also considering inviting some non-member “guest authors” to contribute – though it would sure be best if the articles came from members. So, start thinking of ideas! I am more than happy to help you with the wordsmithing and fine tuning if you think you'd like that sort of help.

UPCOMING & CURRENT CLUB EVENTS

PAG April 3rd Regular Meeting at The Pittsford Community Center

Speaker: [Victoria Brzustowicz](#)



Victoria Brzustowicz is an award-winning painter and illustrator from Rochester, NY. <https://www.victoriabcreative.com/>

Her artistic journey began at Wells College, where she earned a BA in Studio Art under the guidance of painter [Bill Roberts](#). With a focus on abstract painting throughout most of her career, Brzustowicz's artistic trajectory took an exciting turn in 2015 when she explored alla prima techniques through classes with the plein air painter [Carol L. Douglas](#).

Since embracing plein air painting, Brzustowicz has expanded her artistic horizons, attending workshops led by prominent figures in the art world. Notable artists such as Lori Putnam, Sarah Linda Poly, Ken DeWaard, Hiu Lai Chong, Robert J. Simone, Kathleen Speranza, Aline Ordman, and Kari Ganoung Ruiz have all played a role in shaping her evolving artistic perspective.

Her work navigates the balance between abstraction and representation, with an emphasis on surface textures and expressive mark-making.

As a testament to her commitment to the art community, Brzustowicz co-founded and chairs the Greater Rochester Plein Air Painters. This vibrant and inclusive group actively gathers throughout the year to paint outdoors, fostering a sense of camaraderie and shared artistic exploration.

In addition to her role with the plein air painters, Brzustowicz is affiliated with the Flower City Arts Center, where she teaches drawing, painting, and linoleum block printing. She also teaches at the Art Stop in Penfield, NY, with classes in oil painting. Her dedication to education extends beyond studio walls, as she has conducted plein air workshops for Wood Library in Canandaigua, Cummings Nature Center (Rochester Museum & Science Center), and Main Street Arts in Clifton Springs, NY.

Victoria Brzustowicz's artistic journey is marked by her exploration of the boundaries of artistic expression. Her passion for plein air painting, coupled with her role as an educator and community leader, underscores her commitment to fostering creativity and artistic growth within the artistic landscape of New York's Finger Lakes region.



On-Going Show @ Barnes & Noble Continuing through the end of March

Our 2025 Spring show is underway at Barnes and Noble in Pittsford Plaza! 24 Artists submitted 76 pieces of art – making this our biggest show in the past 3 years.

Here are some photos of the display area:



Walk-around View of All Paintings

The following photos are a “walk around view” starting from the left. Because of the way the photos are laid out, a few paintings may appear in more than one photo. The volunteers hanging the paintings tried to mix things up, spreading out paintings based on size, orientation, and keeping an individual artist’s work spread out over the area. It didn’t work out that way for everyone (for example, Barbara’s paintings were kind of clustered together) but we did the best we could. For those interested in other layouts or who want to participate in organizing the event a little differently (see the article at the end of the newsletter on show ideas) please be sure to sign up as chairperson or as a committee member to have your ideas heard and be able to have them take shape at the next show!



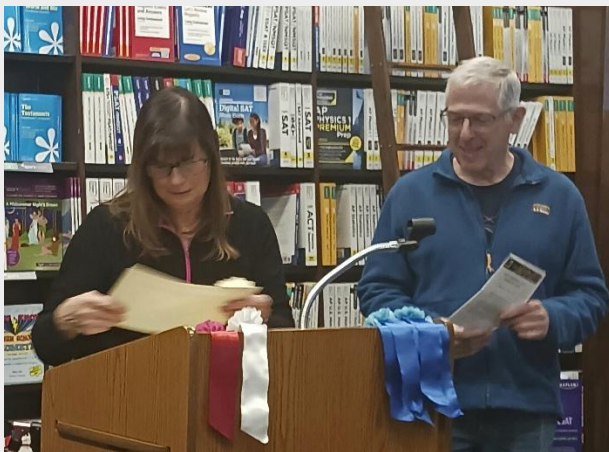




AWARD CEREMONY

Here are some photos of the award ceremony:





Photos of Award Winners that attended the Reception







Not Present to Receive Their Award

- Karen Wallin
- Betsy Thurnherr

Present but we missed the Photo Op:

- Margaret Mitchell

Last but not Least ...

A big thank you to all of our show volunteers! (If I missed anyone, please let me know so I can correct it in the next newsletter)

Art Intake & Hanging

- Karin Wallin
- Susan Trien
- Ron Boehner
- Maryanna Meuller
- Linda Vannozzi
- Carolyn Lobkowicz
- Sylvia Ball

Ribbons

- Debi Bloom

Award Certificates

- Sylvia Ball
- Margie Mitchell

Show Brochure & Printing

- Nina Varon

Co-Chairs & Prospectus

- Mike Kamish
- Debi Bloom

Reception Refreshments

- Paula Fahy

Awards Photographer

- Paula Fahy

Advertising Flyers

- Linda Vannozzi

Art Pickup and Checkout

- Sylvie Culbertson
- Hiroko Jusko
- Betsy Thurnherr

Finance

- Deb Bloom
- Margie Mitchell

Communications & Web site

- Joe Sirianni

RECENT EVENTS: March Speaker

Sylvie Culbertson



Member Sylvie Culbertson shared her collection of sketch books with the group. These books – with dates ranging from the late 1990's to the present - serve not only as a record of Sylvie's evolution as an artist – but almost as a diary as well.

Sylvie gave us the opportunity to share her many trips and unique experiences throughout the world. There sketches of deserts, and mountains, and rain forests, castles, villages, fishermen and their boats and villagers of all shapes and sizes.

Then there were sketches of plants of all kinds – big, small, flowering, stark, simple and complex. And animals. We saw goats, bears, crawly things, birds, field mice and their kin, and more.

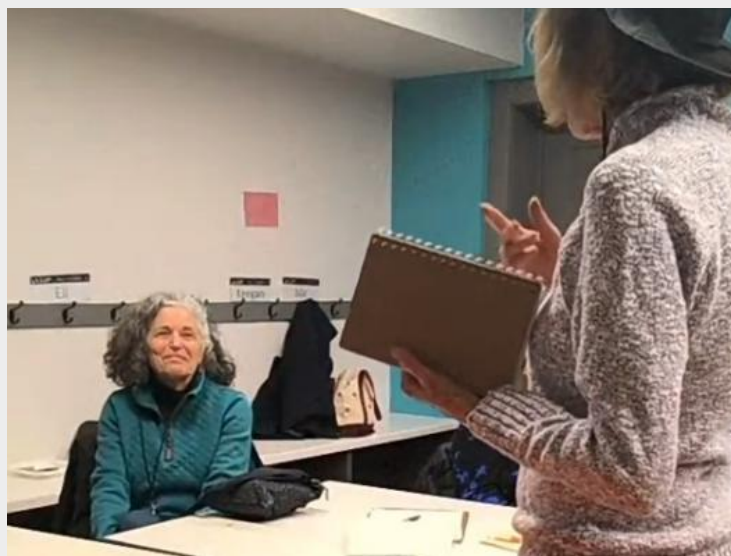
The sketches, some in black and white, and others colored in with watercolor washes, were beautifully rendered and many even included commentaries about colors and value so that they could later be translated into larger studio works of art.

My personal favorites are the ones where Sylvie added commentary about the nature of beauty and art such as what drew her to a particular scene. I also really liked the parts where Sylvie critiqued her own work and gave herself some self-advice about being looser in her work, being willing to take more chances, and simply finding joy in producing her art.

Interspersed with sharing the sketchbooks. Sylvie shared many amusing anecdotes about the sketching experience itself. Her rush to get sketches done in the captured moments when others needed the restroom, or getting caught in the rain, stopping along the highway for a quick sketch. All told, the evening was an educational and fun way to get to know a fellow member and see firsthand the great memories and benefits of using a sketchbook and keeping those sketchbooks as a record of your life.

Thank you, Sylvie, for sharing!







ROTATING EXHIBITS

The rotating exhibits are an opportunity for members to display their work at various locations around town. If you have questions about this schedule, please contact **Laura Davis**. Remember - you can share any of these exhibit spaces with other members!

	Town Hall	Friendly Home	Star P.T.	Presbyterian Church
Jan - March	Barbara Jablonski	Debbie Ingerick	Paula Fahy	Katherine Herman
April - June	Sylvie Culbertson	Niesdri Walsh	Denise Johnson	Laura Davis
July - Sept	Debi Bloom	Margaret Mitchell	Sylvie Culbertson	
Oct - Dec	Ann Limbeck		Ron Boehner	Karin Wallin

OTHER REMINDERS

Check the PAG website for a list of all upcoming events and meetings. <https://pittsfordartgroup.com/>

Guest Policy

GUESTS interested in joining are welcomed and encouraged to join us at our monthly meetings to hear and see what is going on and to watch our wonderful demonstrators. Please let Carol Schott or Margie Mitchell know of any guests in advance so that we can welcome them to the meeting.

Sunshine Committee

Sylvia Ball will send occasion-appropriate cards to members or their families. If you know of someone who is ill or a member that has passed, please contact Sylvia.

CLUB LEADERSHIP 2024 – 2025 Positions

Current Positions

Executive Board Officers

- President, Margaret Mitchell
- Vice-President, Mike Kamish
- Treasurer, Debi Bloom
- Recording Secretary, Carolyn Dey Lobkowicz
- Corresponding Secretary, Joe Sirianni

Standing Committees

- Membership, Carol Schott & Maryanna Mueller
- Refreshments, Paula Fahey
- Rotating Exhibits, Laura Davis
- Sunshine, Sylvia Ball
- Website, Joe Sirianni
- Publicity, Linda Vannozzi
- Newsletter, Mike Kamish
- Speakers, Margie Mitchell & Mike Kamish

Open Positions

We are now seeking new Board and Committee Members to replace leaders that have been at it for years. This is your club – please be part of it by participating on the Board or a Committee. Open positions are listed below. Current leaders will “show you the ropes” so we can make this very easy. Everyone who has participated in this way says they get a lot more out of the club – and make new friends – when they actively participate in this way. Please participate!

Open Executive Board Officers

- Recording Secretary
- Corresponding Secretary

Standing Committees

- Website
- Speakers

Description of positions:

Corresponding secretary - To receive and distribute all outgoing information from members and the board. Any information for the group as a whole is only to be shared through this person.

Recording Secretary - To attend all members meetings at Spiegel center and record all Business meetings and presenters' information as well as meetings with the Board.

Presenters committee - This volunteer position can be held by up to 3 members. To find new and interesting presenters for general meetings and the picnic.

Website Manager - To update our website and add new information as it becomes available.

MEETING NOTES – General Meeting 3/6/2025

**Pittsford Art Group
General Meeting
Spiegel Community Center
35 Lincoln Avenue
Pittsford, NY 14534**

Sixteen PAG members met at the Spiegel Center for the March General Meeting. Denise Johnson, Carol Schott, Debi Bloom, Sylvia Ball and Barbara Horvath joined us online.

Board members present were Margie Mitchell, President; Joe Sirianni, Corresponding Secretary; Mike Kamish, Member at Large; and Carolyn Lobkowitz, Recording Secretary.

Business

Margie reminded us that February Minutes are available online and since our Treasurer is away, we did not have a financial report.

Barnes and Noble Show

Mike reported that twenty-four artists submitted 76 paintings to the Barnes and Noble Show. Kathy Armstrong judged the works and also provided written commentary for each of the 76 paintings. She graciously volunteered to speak with anyone who may have questions.

Awards will be presented by President Margaret Mitchell on Saturday at Barnes and Noble.

Questions/Concerns

Maryanna Mueller generously donated a large quantity of oil paints for any interested member.

The business meeting adjourned at 7:15 and was turned over to PAG member, Sylvie Culbertson who shared her many wonderful travel sketch books and stories with us.

Respectfully submitted by the Recording Secretary,

Carolyn Lobkowitz

MEMBER NEWS

New Member!

A warm welcome to new member Mary Bryant!



Mary has shared two examples of her work:

“Painterly Sky+ that was done in Acrylics and is 2'-4', and “We Are One”, also done in Acrylic and is 2'-3'.



Please be sure to introduce yourself to Mary and welcome her to the group at an upcoming meeting or event soon!

Lessons Learned and Ideas for Upcoming Club Shows

The current show at Barnes and Noble has turned out great ... but we had a couple of weeks of panic during the weeks approaching the show.

The Panic ...

The panic came about because the sign-up date came and went – with hardly any artists signed up and hardly any paintings submitted. It would have been an awful looking and embarrassing show to have 8 or 9 artists and 20 or so paintings in a room as big as that at Barnes & Noble!

What could we do? Mike has a few dozen big paintings so we could have tried to fill in that way. Barabra Jablonski has tons of paintings as well. So, we could try and fill in that way too ... but we really weren't looking for a semi-private show – this was supposed to be a group event.

So, we extended the deadline by a week. But we were still way low on paintings and now, the deadline was approaching where we needed to get labels, and the brochure printed ... so the urgency to fix the issue was even greater. That's when Barbara shared with me some things the Plein Air Painters group did when they faced a similar issue many years ago: we opened a signup sheet and list for additional paintings.

Fortunately, our signed-up painters came through with more submissions – and between that and several “stragglers” that signed up to display after the deadline – we managed to pull together a respectable show that reflects well on our group. But it was a white-knuckle ride to get there and does force us to think about how we manage group shows in the future.

Some ideas on attracting more submissions ...

In talking to people in other groups, we have heard about a few other approaches. For example, charging a flat fee of \$15 or \$20 and then allowing an artist to submit up to 5 paintings each. Others suggested that a certain number of submissions be included in the regular club dues, and we set the expectation that a club member needs to submit two paintings into shows that membership year (with the option to pay a few dollars extra for additional paintings on a waiting list basis).

Others focused on the requirement that a painting should not be in a prior show and that it be recently completed. Can we relax the completion date requirement or allow people to resubmit work? Or perhaps include work like that – but have them not be eligible for competition and judging?

Personally, I rather like the flat rate with up to 5 paintings approach – but that's easy for me to say because I produce a lot of new paintings each year. Not all of the members do.

So, what is the best approach? Please think about it and share your ideas.

Questions about Judging ...

Other questions have arisen about judging. The structure of Best-in-show, Body of Work, Merit award and Juror awards is a common way to handle art shows and competitions and is a method that PAG has used for years. But might we want to expand or modify that in some way in the future?

For example, should there be a special award for the best work by a new member? Or perhaps the best wildlife painting, or best Portrait, or best seascape, or best floral?

I subscribe to several magazines such as Artists Magazine and International Artist magazine, and though not a member, I follow the award competitions for organizations like NOAPS. All those groups have competitions that focus on certain areas, whether wildlife, or abstract, or portrait, etc. We're not big enough for separate events and competitions - but can we blend the idea and thereby give members additional opportunities to win awards?

Another question came up about to what extent the choice of judge can impact who gets the awards. For example, if a judge is an abstract painter – might they be favorably inclined towards other abstract painters or can they keep themselves completely unbiased? I see the PAG competitions as friendly events (and the fact that there are no cash awards supports that) and having been a co-chairperson I have had the opportunity to talk to the judges after the shows and feel like we've picked some really good

ones that try really hard to judge fairly and even when they sometimes recognize an artist from a class or from the community, try to judge in an anonymous detached way. But the question arises from time to time so is it something we ought to think about?

One idea I have heard mentioned is to have a “panel of judges” instead of just one. For example, having 2 or 3 judges like the TV show art competitions have, and then choosing award winners based on agreement amongst the judges. That removes any personal biases that may inadvertently creep in. That of course complicates the judging – and since we pay judges an honorarium leads to a discussion about cost as well. But assuming a financial way could be found, is this something worth considering or do the biases all just wash out over time as we get different judges for every show some if one leans one way for one show, the next show the judge may lean the other way.

Personally, I am more interested in the judge’s commentary than the awards themselves – so for me – the main criterion of what makes a good judge is if they give me the opportunity to follow-up with them after the show to ask them for more personalized feedback. That is something I find most valuable. If there happened to be 3 judges giving me feedback even better because I can talk to all three – but one or three, it’s the follow-up availability that I look for most.

Perhaps you feel differently than I do or perhaps you have ideas about how to improve the judging process. If you do, please think about it and share your ideas with the group. I can publish your ideas in the next newsletter.

Something a Little Different

You may have noticed two atypical paintings at the Banes & Noble show. Typically, we see cars, landscapes, florals, seascapes, animals, and even some abstracts. But comic-book/fantasy-art? In recent years at least, I haven't seen any of that.

But this year, Ron Boehner & Mike Kamish challenged one another to come up with a fantasy art submission. Mike ended up taking a painting he had done previously of a forest scene and extended it with a Viking warrior. Ron took an abstract he was working on that seemed to have an outer space "vibe" to it, so he added in some planets and a spaceship. And there we had it ... our own "mini competition" within the big competition!

"Out of the Blue" by Mike Kamish



"Blast Off" by Ron Boehner



That gave us an idea ... perhaps for future art shows we can come up with a "theme". We wouldn't prevent people from entering any art they want like we do now – but we could come up with a theme and give an extra award for "Best Painting with the Show Theme" (or maybe you can come up with a better name than that!).

For example, our mini-competition theme was "Fantasy Art". What if for the "Friendly Home" we had a theme of "Under the Sea". That might inspire Ron to paint a shark swimming underwater (I mention that because I know that Ron already has an amazing painting of a shark underwater), me to paint an underwater landscape, and perhaps one of you to try your hand at painting an octopus or someone else to paint a coral reef.

Maybe the theme one time could be "a day at the beach". Debi has created multiple beach scenes for various shows but there have been few others. If that was the theme, then perhaps some of us would try our hand at a beach scene as well.

Or the theme can be a region. Laura Davis frequently paints scenes of the southwestern U.S. and places like Utah and Arizona. Sylvie had some southwestern scenes in her sketchbooks. We could challenge the entire group to do a "Southwestern Desert" scene or if that was too hot, maybe we could go for the cold weather with a snowy Alaskan theme.

Personally, I like the idea of a theme to inspire myself to try something new. I've never done a southwest scene, a beach scene or an underwater scene, or even an abstract. But if that was the theme of a show, I might just give it a try just like I did this time with fantasy art.

What do you think? Do you like the idea of a theme? Have an idea for the Friendly Home in the Fall? Please share some thoughts and I'll include them in the next newsletter.

On the topic of “something different”: A Different Kind of Artist

As some of you know, in addition to artwork, I have an interest in model ships and especially, building model sailing ships. There is great debate in the model ship community and all the magazines as to whether model ship building is an “Art” or a “Craft”. There are persuasive arguments on both sides that would take many pages of discussion to go through.

But suffice to say that much like in the painting world, in the model world there are “masters” whose work sells for hundreds of thousands of dollars, and in some cases go into museums. And there are “amateurs” like me, whose creations reside in basements, and you can’t give them away!

Here is an example of a local “master” named Bill Emerson. A former Xerox engineer, he has built ship models that reside in places like the Naval Academy Museum, The Navy Shipyard in Virginia, and the Smithsonian Institute in Washington.

Democrat & Chronicle

NEWS

Rochester-made model ship to dock at Smithsonian

Jim Memmott

Published 11:01 a.m. ET May 2, 2017 | Updated 12:25 p.m. ET May 3, 2017



William Emerson, middle, creator of the Langley model, and Chuck Baylis, executive director of the Military History Society of Rochester, standing beside the model of the USS Langley. Jim Memmott

Here is an example of me and one of my basement models. Something I enjoy – but not nearly at Smithsonian level.

(Though that little white one poking out on the lower left of the HMS Victory is a model of the USS Olympia – and that now resides at the Rochester Military History Society Museum in the Anderson Alley building. A small local museum worth checking out).



But that is not the main purpose of this article! The main purpose of this article is to talk about a local artist I recently met who combines both worlds: the world of art (he is a full-time commercial artist) and the world of model ship building!

His name is Joe Contento. Joe is a commercial artist who as a sideline, creates all kinds of military oriented poster art for pilots and naval officers.



Joe also has developed a technique to build model ships and combine them with painted landscapes to recreate famous naval battles. His unique approach that combines modelling, special effects, and artwork, makes him a sought-after artist.

His technique starts with looking at historical photos of military battles like Pearl Harbor and creating models that recreate the scene. Such as this damaged ship from that battle. He then uses aluminum foil, "Modge Podge" acrylic gel, and acrylic paint to create realistic looking water and waves. Next, he takes cotton balls, soaks them in glue, shapes them to look like explosions and paints those with acrylic paint to look like fires and explosions.

As a final step, he paints a background of smoke and clouds and whatever else is needed that fits the image he is trying to recreate and places the canvas behind the models – which he then photographs. It's a bit blurry but you can see him placing a painted backdrop behind a model in the photo to the right below.



When photographed together like the example below, he has created a unique, historically accurate recreation of a real naval battle – using both model building and painting skills. Begging the question once again – where is the line drawn between art and craft?



Special Feature: Southwest Art by Laura Davis

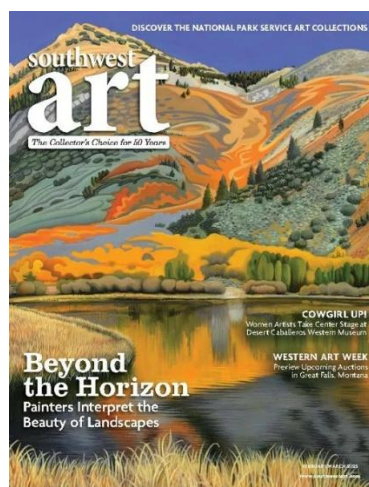
The Southwestern U.S. is a land of rugged terrains with very distinctive colors and atmosphere very different than what we experience in the Northeast. Several years ago, Mike Kamish and his wife and some friends hiked through Utah and got to see firsthand the towering vistas, the rugged valleys, the amazing blue skies, and the deep and high contrast shadows. It's no wonder the southwest is such an inspiration ... and challenge ... for artists!



Painting the southwest landscape is a challenge that many well known artists have taken on. PAG had two of them as guest speakers just last year. One was artist **Dale Terbush** who took us on a tour of his studio in Arizona. The other was artist **Nathan Fowkes**, the Dreamworks illustrator that lives in Los Angeles. Can you tell which artist painted each of the images below?



In fact, there is so much interest in southwestern art that there is even a magazine dedicated just to that topic which shows all kinds of variants on the theme from classical artists to modern and even abstract versions of the genre. You can find the magazine by “googling” the title.



The Pittsford Art Group has its own representative of this group of artists that specialize in southwestern art, our own Laura Davis. Laura has been sharing her southwest inspired art with the group for many years and will hopefully serve as an inspiration for others in the group to try their hand at this unique and dramatic style of landscape.

Laura has been fortunate enough to make several trips to the Colorado Plateau over the last 40 years. Her paintings are based on photographs she took at various times of the year, and at different times of the day.

The Color Palette

The true daytime cloudless sky color is a deep and clear cerulean, much “bluer” than anything we see up north. The desert reflects the bright sunlight in gold, red, burnt sienna, deep umber and golden green. The bright sunlight causes deep and crisp shadows and when there is water (not too often) there are sharp reflections. There are almost no pastels.

A question submitted to an AI search turned up this description of the southwestern palette:



- **Earthy Tones: The foundation of the Southwestern palette is built upon warm, earthy colors that mimic the desert environment.**
 - Ochre: This is a yellow-orange color often found in the soil and rocks of the Southwest.
 - Sand: Light tan or beige colors that evoke the dunes and desert floor.
 - Terracotta: A rich, reddish-brown color reminiscent of clay and adobe structures.
 - Muted Greens: Deep and earthy greens, like olive green, that can represent the desert vegetation.
 - Burnt Sienna: A dark red-brown color, also used in the desert landscape.
- **Vibrant Contrasts: To add a splash of color and energy, Southwestern art often incorporates vibrant hues.**
 - Turquoise: This jewel-toned color, inspired by the minerals of the Southwest, is a staple of the palette.
 - Deep Blues: Complementary deep blues can be used to create a balance with the warm colors.
 - Deep Reds and Oranges: These colors can be used in accents and as pops of color against the muted background.
- **Other Colors to Consider:**
 - Purple: Can be used as an accent color
 - Silver, Gold, and Copper: These metallic tones can add a touch of richness and sophistication
 - Grays: Neutral grays, like charcoal or Stonington Gray, can be used as a base for the Southwestern palette
 - Yellow: Yellow can be used to mimic the sun or aspen trees in the mountains

The History

Laura Davis has visited multiple times and has got to know the areas of the southwest known as the **Colorado Plateau**. The Colorado Plateau is primarily a desert. It has been in an uplift for many million years: a result of extreme heat, tectonic movement and wind and water erosion. The red rock color is a result of iron. The plateau covers about 130,000 square miles and includes nine national parks and touches on 4 states. This area is unique, the only geographical area of its kind in the world. *It is an artist's paradise!*





There is also an enormous amount of history in those mountains and valleys. Laura explains that Southwest art is primarily a product of the land and native people of the Colorado Plateau. The rich, intense colors of the plateau in Utah, Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado and parts of Nevada form a palette of brilliant blue skies, earth tones and golden greens in the land and ancient structures.



The Colorado Plateau was inhabited by Pueblo tribes from approximately 1500 BCE to 1400 CE. Descendants remain to the present time. Their art included basket making, pictographs (painted), petroglyphs (carvings), painted and unpainted pottery, and their distinctive Pueblo architecture.

The most famous of their pictographs is at Horseshoe Canyon in Canyonlands National Park. It seems the artists there had an appreciation of perspective. These pictures made by hunter-gatherers, predate the Pueblo tribe artists by several thousand years.

The ancient pueblos were built hundreds of years ago by people for domestic life and safety. Their homes were totally consistent with their environment in style and color, and remain in relatively good condition, considering their age. You will recognize many of these places in Laura's paintings. Here are a few examples.

Representative related photos (not actual photos used for painting)	Two of Laura's Paintings from the Barnes & Noble Show
	
	

The native tribes and modern artists share an appreciation of the beauty and spiritual atmosphere of the Plateau. Native people believe the land is sacred and related to their own creation, and modern visitors come to seek spiritual energy in addition to the superb atmosphere of the ancient, stark beauty of the place.

To appreciate these wonderful places, you must go there! It is a very different experience from the northeast, and one not to be missed.