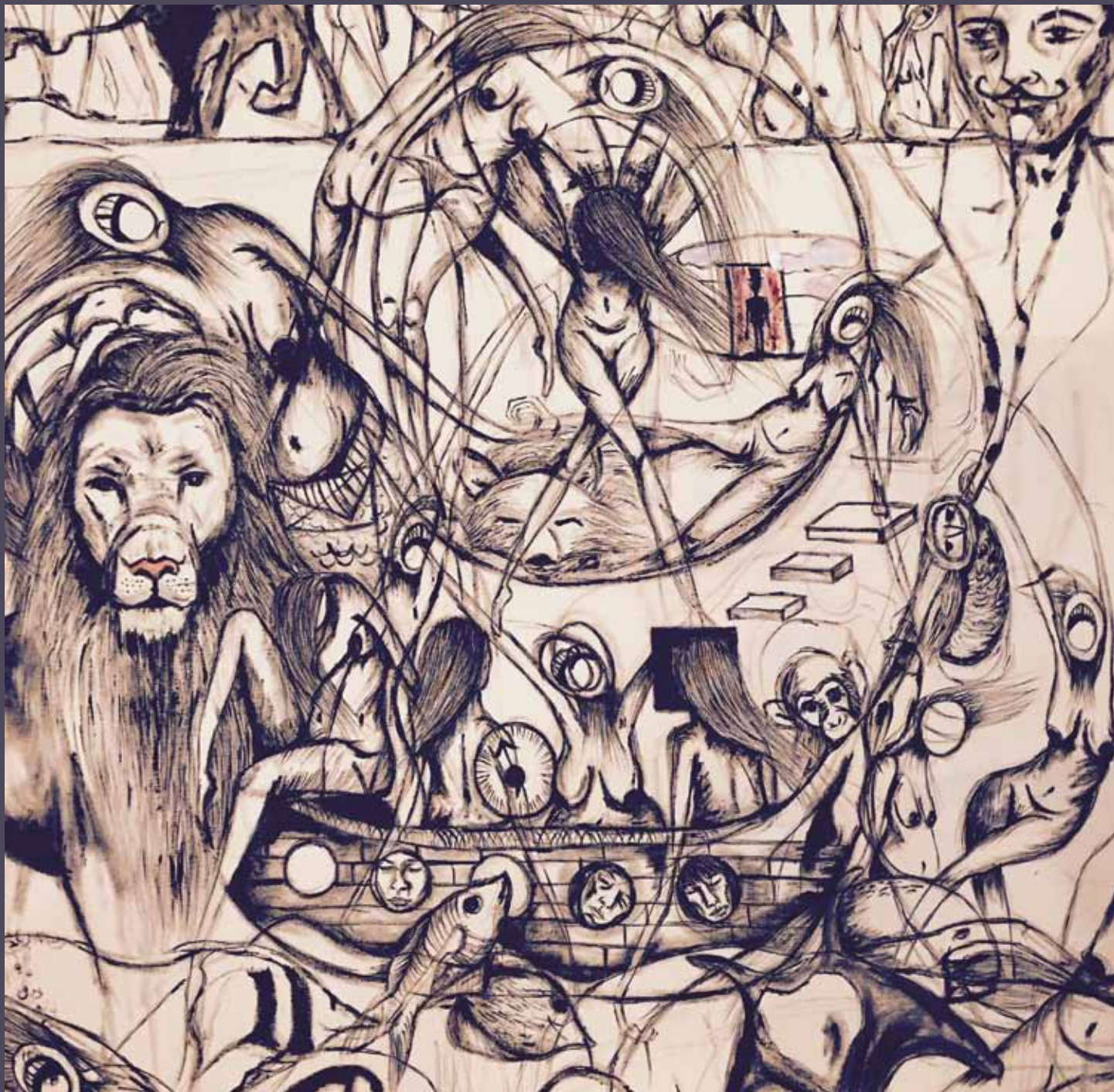


# LINES from the League



## Letter from the Executive Director

Recent times have brought a great deal of activity to the League—workshops, art trips, seminars, lectures, and special programs, to go along with our full schedule of studio classes, have the place jumping. It can be a challenge to keep up with it all, so let me fill you in on what's happening and how the League has been energized by all the goings-on.

A team of seven advanced sculptors in the League's public art training program, Model to Monument (M2M), are showing maquettes of their sculptures in the League lobby. We hosted a new drawing event for cartoonists that brought in a diverse crowd of 40 young artists. A new art history class, Modern and Contemporary Art, 1970–Present, taught by Gillian Sneed, began recently. The Student Concours in the Gallery is showing drawing, painting, and mixed media work. Studio 6 Workshops included a sold-out Color and Light weekend with Karen O'Neil. For anyone who has not been at the League since the summer, out front, the gray steel envelope the League has been shrouded in for the duration of the construction next door has been given some artistic relief. The wooden scaffold columns have been transformed by League artists into a sidewalk exhibition showcasing the quality and diversity of art being made here. When it snowed this week, 14,464 people saw our Facebook post featuring *Snow in New York (1902)* by renowned League instructor Robert Henri.

A South Korean television crew producing a documentary on League alumnus Mark Rothko interviewed instructor Knox Martin, several of his students, and me. Andrianna Campbell from the Dia Art Foundation spoke in the gallery about the late League instructor Norman Lewis, in conjunction with an exhibition at the Jewish Museum. We also launched a free Art Movie Night series and hosted an information session for the Royal Drawing School's Dumfries House Residency in Scotland, which has chosen the League as one of five elite U.S. schools from which to accept residents.

And outside the League... student and member art placed by the Exhibition Outreach Program is scheduled or showing in seven public buildings from First Avenue to West End Avenue. Sculptures from last year's M2M artists stand tall in Riverside Park South and Van Cortlandt Park. Teachers in the Seeds of the League program are working with seniors and high school students, and with 200 kids in NYC Parks Recreation Centers. Residents from Iran, California, Maryland, Brooklyn, Pittsburgh, and Pakistan worked at the League Residency at Vyt in January.

And don't forget more than 100 ongoing studio art classes.

I'd also like to mention one upcoming event: From June 19 to July 29, 2015 the League will pay tribute to the thousands of military veterans who have studied at the League with the exhibition, *On the Front Lines: Military Veterans at The Art Students League of New York*. The show will feature the work of 20 prominent League artists. We've also issued a call for any veteran who has studied at the League to participate in a coinciding juried show in the League's lobby and main office.

So next time someone asks you, "What's happening at the League these days?" I hope you'll let them know.



Ira Goldberg  
Executive Director

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*Lines from the League:*  
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**Cover image:** Ursula Mur Ferro, Untitled (work in progress), acrylic on canvas, 72 x 54 inches; See page 9.

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## Letter from the Editor

Before Tom Tacik begins editing *Lines* stories he asks, “Does this issue have a theme?” And my answer is always, “Yes: It’s quirky.” But, if pressed, I’d say this is the time capsule issue. Dolores Beaufield Alton takes us from the 1940s to the 1960s when her formal and informal instruction included artists and friends such as Larry Poons, Knox Martin, and Mark Rothko. Dulcy Brightman brings us to the “really hip” era of the 1960s: Camelot, Elvis, Twiggy, the Beatles, and student activism at the League. Donn Russell, who studied at the League from 1961 to 1963, takes us on his personal journey from music school dropout to successful Nantucket artist.

Frank Liljegren, lauded as one of America’s best known still life painters, studied with John Groth, Howard Trafton, Frank Reilly, and George Grosz between 1949 and 1956. He based his teaching method on the Reilly method. William Keller, the brother of Deane Galloway Keller (who began teaching at the League in the late 1990s), shares the artistic lineage on which Deane based his studio pedagogy.

Fast forward to the twenty-first century. As the League enters its 140th year, Ursula Mur Ferro, our Peruvian cover artist, shares her inner world and hopes for the future. Carole Hallé, from France, shares her recovery through art from traumatic experiences, while Lola de Miguel discusses her evolution from her family’s traditional Spanish values to the freedom of living life as she wants.

“How to See What to See” continues with Nicki Orbach’s reflections on Zen, painting, and the landscape. On our race to wherever, Nicki points out the beauty of stillness. We celebrate Ron Hall, who lived the life of Zen in his attention to the now, enjoyment of the everyday things we take for granted, and ability to make everyone he met feel as though they mattered.

At our Hall of Fame Gala last fall, we honored Greg Wyatt and Ai Weiwei:

*I believe that we can create bridges between our cultures through sculpture and the fine arts, they are important links that can harness our positive energies and unite us over time.* – Greg Wyatt

*Let’s talk about humanity, individualism, imagination, and creativity—those are the values a society is built on. What education are we getting? What dreams do we dream?* – Ai Weiwei

Their divergent paths embody the pluralistic spirit of the League, and exemplify harmony through creative endeavors. Let’s join them this year by being more mindful of the joy of creativity and the different paths that lead to it. We are most grateful to our gala guests, members, students, and friends for supporting the League.

Until the next issue,



Denise L. Greene  
Editor

# Twentieth-Century Memories

by Dulcy Brightman



Dulcy Brightman, *Cold Spring Harbor*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 14 x 12 inches

Just for a moment, travel back with me to the really “hip” era of the 1960s, when *Camelot* was playing on Broadway and Elvis—in a larger than life poster—covered the entire width of one of the many movie theaters that once stood on New York City’s famous Broadway. I actually saw this poster installed, when his latest feature film was about to premiere. Young women were anxious to display their legs in mini-skirts, Twiggy was a hot model, and the Beatles were about to appear on the horizon.

In 1960 I was a mere eighteen years old, and moved from the heart of the American South to New York City. I was the picture of confidence, even though I was completely naive, alone, without any family, living in a hotel, and working to support myself. When I first walked up the front steps of the Art Students League, I thought I’d gone to heaven; it was my dream school.

In New York City, as our generation was losing thousands to war in Southeast Asia, other young members of the Art Students League of New York and I were on the cusp

of rebellion. It took hold when the always independent League students hung an effigy of art instructor Frank J. Reilly out on the flag pole that overlooked 57th Street, dangling it along the facade of the building. This protest was in response to League students who did not want this “Realist” artist to dominate their own unique, artistic points of view.

That year, the school term began as usual. I went into the League office and was warmly greeted by Rosina Florio, the school registrar, who had previously reviewed my

portfolio of artworks. She handed me a catalog so I could choose which instructor(s) I thought might be appropriate for me. After registering, I looked at the artwork by students of Howard and Willa Trafton; I liked what I saw. I also signed up for Edwin Dickinson's class and soon noticed paintings by his students that were very black. That was a far cry from what my decided direction was at that time. Mr. Dickinson retired during my years at the League.

My first day walking into Mr. and Mrs. Trafton's class was a bit nerve-wracking because I was his youngest full-time student. I sat down next to a friendly man named Calvin. He would later become one of the founders of the famous restaurant Serendipity. He welcomed me to sit at the long rectangular tables arranged in a U shape in that first floor studio. Sadly, Calvin L. Holt, an absolutely wonderful artist, passed away too soon in life.

This was the setting as Mr. and Mrs. Trafton arrived on my first day of classes that beautiful, crisp, autumn morning. Mrs. Trafton wore a vest with a white, puff-sleeved shirt fastened at the neck with a cameo pin. She also wore black leggings

and a long skirt. Mr. Trafton was her equal in a starched white shirt with gold cuff links, a red and blue tie, and a fabulous black belt with a silver buckle. He giggled when he saw my incorrect perspective drawing and his smile was infectious.

Immediately, Mrs. Trafton looked concerned that her husband would possibly scare me away from his class. Then Mr. Trafton, very gentle and soft-spoken, requested if he could sit beside me. I said, "Well, of course!" He said, "Let me show you something."

Well, that was it! I knew that the Traftons were going to completely transform me into an artist. This had been proven many times before, as they were championing such outstanding students as Saul Bass, who grew into a confident and celebrated film artist, and many others in film, advertising, textile production, and television.

My father, who was a journalist and magazine editor, often traveled on business to New York City to meet with his advertising manager, so he was able to keep tabs on me. He knew of Trafton Script and told me that nearly every publisher was familiar with this original style. I marveled

as my wonderful, charming dad delighted at meeting Mr. Trafton; it was all smiles. I believe my dad was completely confident about my living in New York City after that meeting with Mr. Trafton.

I remember Ms. Lisa Specht, who was in the textile business, periodically asking the Traftons for their opinions and sound advice. She was also a class monitor and later became President of the League. She was always very supportive of me, and I did appreciate positive feedback from such a successful woman. In the early 1960s, it was very rare to find successful women in business.

My next class choices were with Julian Levi and Marshall Glasier. Mr. Levi often discussed art with Mr. Trafton and dressed in a beige, paint-spattered smock, revealing a tie and crisp, white shirt. He had a twinkle in his eyes and a bemused expression almost continuously cemented to his face. He was quiet, and spoke to his students in an almost secretive manner. However, he was very outspoken about his star students. No, I wasn't one of his best students, nor was I the worst.

Marshall Glasier always had a very amusing demeanor with his students. He was never far from telling a joke or some extraordinary story. I liked his class, but my true ambition was not black and white ink drawings.

I also studied with Robert Brackman, whose painting of a young woman is seen in the Joseph Cotton film, *Laura*. Mr. Trafton didn't really want me to have classes with Mr. Brackman. He counseled me that I would be "ruined" if I started painting in the Brackman Style; and he did not understand the Brackman Cross-Hatching-Color-Method of painting. Mr. Brackman thought his style had lots of color; I didn't. I actually attempted to describe the "Brackman Style" to Mr. Trafton, and he shook his head in dismay. I laughed to myself then, as I do now recalling that conversation.

Yes, I remember them all. I remember all of my instructors, and many of their famous students: John Cassavetes (independent filmmaker), Jean Patchett (iconic *Vogue* model and the wife of Irving Penn), Veronica Lake (American actress), Gordon Parks (photographer), and many others. Yes, the Art Students League of New York was an unforgettable, treasured experience—one that I will remember and keep close to my heart for years to come. 🌟



Dulcy Brightman,  
*The Audrey B 3  
Row Boat*, 2010,  
acrylic on canvas,  
11 x 8 inches

# Dolores Beaufield Alton

by Deirdre Erin Alton

**A** bold and inventive painter and a member of the “second generation” of Abstract Expressionists, Dolores Beaufield Alton has never allied herself with any particular movement or category. Born in 1927 in New Orleans, Alton studied with John McCrady before moving to New York in the late 1940s. Although sketching and painting since childhood, her formal art training started at the Art Students League of New York in 1945. “I loved studying at the Art Students League—it changed my whole perspective on art,” says Alton. “But I was so poor I couldn’t afford a whole month of classes. So I would sign up at the end of the month; then I would only have to pay for the last classes of each session.” At the League, she came under the tutelage of several outstanding teachers, including Stanley Boxer, who became a lifelong friend.

During the early 1960s, she and her late husband, Bill Alton, were early members of The Second City in Chicago, where she wore many hats including actor, set designer, and costumer. After several years as a faculty wife at Bennington College and the University of Chicago, she returned to New York City and was mentored by Tony Smith, who in 1966 said of her work, “[w]hile this artist’s vision is personal, her formal statement is associated with today’s modes of classical liberation.” In her honor Smith created the sculpture *For Dolores*, which is on permanent display at the Nasher Sculpture Center. She received additional instruction, both formal and informal, from artists and friends such as Paul Feeley, Josef Foshko, Vincent Longo, Larry Poons, Knox Martin, and Mark Rothko. It was

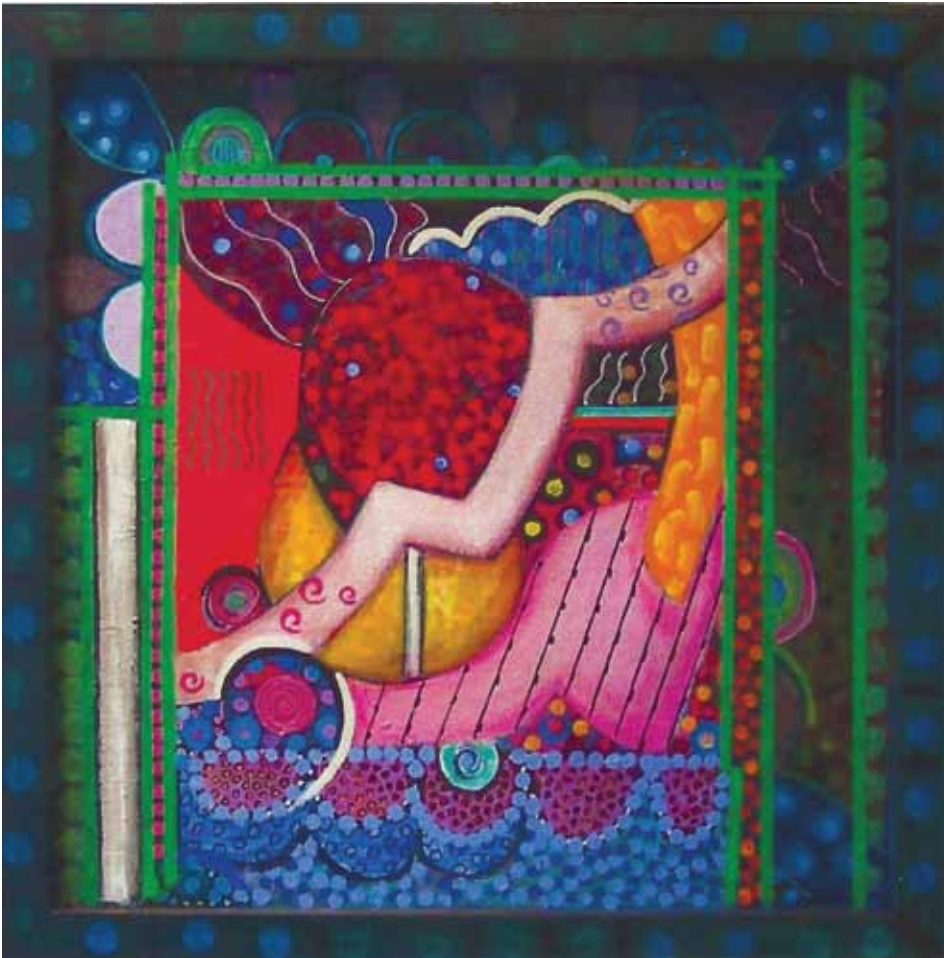


Dolores Beaufield Alton, *Dream (South of France)*, 1988, acrylic on paper, 30 x 22 inches

Rothko who, by telling her, “You have to let your paintings breathe,” inspired her to be more editorial in her work. She furthered her studies by auditing classes at Bennington College, Hunter College and Columbia University, and returned to the Art Students League in 1966 and in 1978-1979.

Alton has said the following of her

process: “If I could kill the negative critic... The critic within is what I try to pull out so that as an artist I can put down only what appears to me in each moment and, as I work, each consecutive moment moves into the next to completion without judgments. I start again fresh without judgment and create another and on and on. The paint-



ings simply arrive and continue on to the next in the truth of each moment. I call it freedom from the known—freedom to move with the creative. To recognize without interpreting it, without condemning or justifying it, without translating into words. The viewer is also in the process of liberation and the beginning of wisdom.”

Although Alton never stopped creating art, her professional career as an artist was put on hold while she raised three children and supported the acting and directing career of her husband. She reentered the art world in 1975, founding the Penthouse Loft Gallery in the Chelsea District. In 1980, she returned to New Orleans where she studied with Auseklis Ozols, founder of the New Orleans School of Fine Arts. While in New Orleans, Alton served as a visiting critic at the Tulane University School of Architecture and as an architectural project designer for several historic restorations and was the co-inventor of the Beachcone Coastal Erosion Reversal System. Moving to the New Orleans suburb of Covington in 1989, she began teaching local artists until 2008 when she moved with her daughter and grandchildren to Springfield, Massachusetts where she continues to paint, undaunted by Parkinson’s disease, which was diagnosed in 2007.

Today, examples of Alton’s work can be found in the collections of the New Orleans Museum of Art, the Historic New Orleans Collection, the St. Tammany Judicial Complex, the Springfield Museum of Fine Arts, and many private collections.

The 16 works on display at the Art Students League range from her earliest oil painting (ca. 1940) to a model study done at the Art Students League in 1978 to more recent work from the 1980 to the present. This exhibition was made possible by the Art Students League of New York and Wish of a Lifetime. 🌟



From top: Dolores Beaufield Alton, *Road to Dolores*, Mexico Series, 2004, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 inches; Dolores Beaufield Alton, *When the Wind Blows*, 1975, acrylic on canvas, 87 x 76 inches, ST. TAMMANY JUDICIAL COMPLEX COLLECTION, COVINGTON, LA



# My Inspiration

by Ursula Mur Ferro



Ursula Mur Ferro, *Howl*, 2014, acrylic on canvas, 54 x 56 inches

**T**ruthfully, I don't really know when I realized I wanted to be a painter. What I knew for a long time is that I did not want to work in an office or live life through the steps one is normally supposed to follow. I knew I wanted to create—like many others do—a different world, a different language that people could understand and relate to. I knew I wanted to do something wild and adventurous and, of course, to learn about myself—to see the world, to learn from different places and cultures; to uncover those things in my mind that tormented me and those that made me feel alive and happy. After high school I went to Corriente Alterna art school for three years in Lima, Peru, but

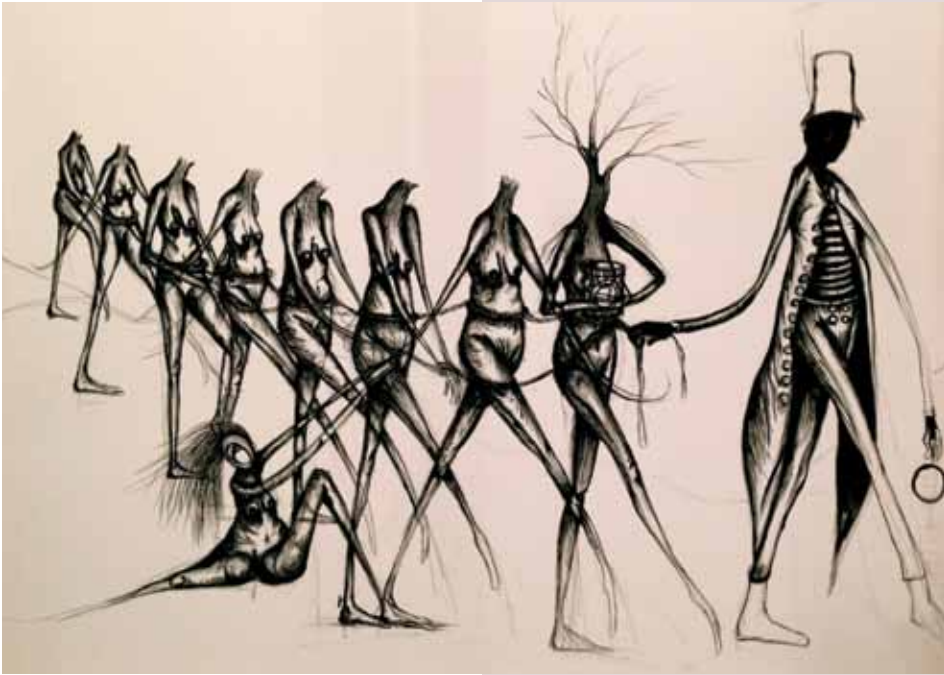
dropped out to move to New York, where I enrolled at the Art Students League.

Life keeps me motivated to go on creating. It is my release, my lover, and my home. And it is because of my faith in life that, hopefully, I will keep on believing that I can achieve great things through it. All art forms are tied to a constant struggle. But then again, in a way, so is life. Painters, writers, dancers, musicians, and so many more, are born with a certain sensibility and a certain understanding about life. They see and feel things differently. I think art is more something that happens just because it needs to, and then you find yourself doing it and hopelessly in love with it.

My family and friends are really im-

portant, as they are a big part of my life and identity. They are love and beauty to me, and they are forever young. I learned from my father that hard work is the only way to achieve anything you want. Commitment and faith, I learned from my mother, from my friends, from my teachers. There are so many stories I have heard, so many strangers met while traveling—painters, musicians, writers, leaders, dreamers, fighters—who inspired me and taught me things I would have never known. Wild souls. Good hearts. Certain moments and situations inspire me; places that are beautiful to me, memories, history. And nature, nature is the base of all, I think, and it is art in its whole form.

# Slaves of the World



Ursula Mur Ferro, *Slaves of the World*, 2014,  
oil on raw canvas, 54 x 60 inches

*Walk with no direction. Another day by  
the ocean, walking, walking, walking.  
Lost by the sea. Death has taken over our  
souls, souls that were wandering around  
the world. In solitude, I found peace, yet you  
have come for me and made me part of your  
world. We have become something else.*

*Now I am judged by you, when I was  
once free to be who I wanted to be.*

*The romantic creatures that once dreamt of  
freedom are now imprisoned in my body,  
but I still have my voice and I still have my  
mind.*

*You can take all from me, but you can't  
take away my tears, you can't take away  
my love, my pain.*

*So tie me close to you and tie a thousand  
more. We will rise high above your cruelty  
and ignorance, high above your envy. And  
while today you have the power to dictate  
the hours of my struggles, I will survive and  
I will be free.*



Ursula Mur Ferro, *Warning* (detail), 2014,  
oil on canvas, 72 x 56 inches

## Warning

*The owls have come to warn us that danger  
is near; that they will protect us if we choose  
to trust in them. They will stand close by  
when the night comes, and they will be our  
guides through the woods. They will cover  
us when we are cold and give us shelter un-  
til the beasts are long gone from this land.  
See, we are by your side, despite anything  
that came before this day.*

*There, while snow falls down in a winter  
night, the wind will whisper a melody and  
we will dance around and around. We'll be  
part of this moment; we'll be part of beauty.  
And while they cover us to sleep, we will lay  
next to them with no fear.*

## Extraordinary Machine

*The show must go on. They say, they say, the show must go on. As the world collapses, they'll stand still, those pretty ones.*

*The train has left the station. Bye, bye, my sweet land. There was a time we danced with the wind, now the wind has forgotten about us.*

*They were trained to be polite, to keep on smiling, till the curtains close and it is time to go back to the darkness, to the caves where they keep them hidden from the world.*

*Tick tack tock, and the clock points to 12 o'clock.*

*Welcome to the circus. Welcome all the visitors who came to be amused by the ugly beasts, the beautiful ones.*

*If you could see into my eyes, into the eyes of the slave. They will not bend their knees, so hit them harder, till you break their bones. And they won't cry, they won't scream, they'll stay quiet through the show and after all the people are gone.*

*12 o'clock is time to sleep, and they won't cry, they will dream.*



Ursula Mur Ferro, *Extraordinary Machine*, 2014, oil on raw canvas, 56 x 54 inches

## This is Where I Lay Awake

*There is a place hidden between this world and the next. A place that I see only when I am asleep, when my eyes are closed. They are my dreams, they are my nightmares. It is cruel and kind; sweet and sour. It is heaven and hell. There is nature, and in nature there is beauty; there is freedom. It is so simple and complex, as the world we inhabit is.*

*There will come a time when nature will claim its kingdom, a time when the animals will be wild once again; will run free. A time when we'll become part of them, or else, we'll fade away and turn into the roots of the earth.*

*Death will come for those poor and lonely souls that walk down an empty path that has driven them to madness.*



Ursula Mur Ferro, *This is Where I Lay Awake*, 2014

*Time was fair, god was forgiving and understanding, but we were not fair with the time we were given, and we were not equal to each other. We forgot how to work in community, we forgot what made this world exciting, what made this life worth living, we forgot how to love and how to live.*

*There will come a time, when the earth will shake, the volcanos will erupt, the winds will dance and spin in circles, the sun will burn our skin, will blind our already blinded eyes, and we will howl to the moon, we will sing a song for the stars, for the trees. We will sing a song so they will hear us, the dreamers.*

*This is where I lay awake.* 🌌

# Organic Shapes, Natural Connections



Above: Carole Hallé, *Soft Female*, 2012, wood, 8 x 14 x 67 inches  
Opposite page, from top: Carole Hallé, *Woodcarving* (detail), 2009, bass wood, 8 x 8 x 60 inches;  
Studio in Scotland

I don't think I ever knew that I wanted to be an artist, and even today I am not comfortable with calling myself one. I was exposed early on to classical music and dance and, since I trained as a dancer, I understood music on a very physical level. My connection to music and the arts gave me a sense of relief and comfort by providing access to something that transcended my demanding everyday reality.

My first career was as a professional dancer. I was part of the Ballet of the 20th Century under the direction of Maurice Béjart, the Cleveland Ballet, and Milton Myers and Dancers. When I quit dancing following an injury, I looked for a way to transpose what I had experienced in dance into another medium. I landed at the Art Students League, and from the first day this place felt like home. Initially, I studied clay modeling and drawing. From the beginning, I was drawn to having my hands in the clay and loved the sensuality of the medium. When I started to carve wood, I also found it immediately addictive.

About two years after I began at the League, I started training as a traditional wood carver with Bill Sullivan. Within a few years, I decided to become a carver; a craftsman. I didn't believe in myself as an artist and thought I would rather be a good craftsman than a mediocre artist. I trained seriously, apprenticed, and completed an internship for a couple years at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in the Department of Object Conservation. I apprenticed one summer at the Ateliers Goujon in Paris and with the frame maker Bob Kulicke. Over the years, I refined my craft and have been making a living carving for museums, architects, and antique dealers, among others.

About ten years ago, I experienced traumatic events in my life. My husband left our marriage as my mother was diagnosed with cancer and passed away. The pain I went through left me broken and, perhaps for the first time, I discovered pieces of myself I didn't know existed. Since then, I have been less coherent as a person but more in touch with a creative part of myself. This made me decide to return to my goal of trying to make art. The limitations of technique alone became unbearable.

by Carole Hallé

I was always pulled by natural materials and repulsed by synthetic ones, and fascinated by how these mediums affect the creation of my forms. One of my goals is to have the drawings and sculptures of different mediums relate to one another. I am trying to create similar effects in different materials, and each one must be approached differently. On paper one can create an atmosphere of ambiguity and mystery in a very different way than dealing with three dimensions. The effect that wood, for example, has on the viewer—of warmth, reassurance, and inflexibility—is very different from that of forged metal—power, masculinity, and plasticity. I am trying to understand how to work and respect each material and also combine them. My dream project would be to have a large, beautiful gallery space for exhibiting every other year. I would then have two years to create an environment composed of large drawings and sculptures. I would immerse myself in the project during the whole period and start a new one as soon as it was over.

Nature is my main source of inspiration. Any kind of organic shape attracts me: the human figure, large mammals, trees, the earth, etc. What I try to do in my work is make abstract compositions based on such existing shapes. I begin by making a sketch from my model and then work on the composition without any attempt to represent the subject figuratively. The result is often something that is reminiscent of the organic without being identifiable.

I admire many artists, but the ones that have had a more direct influence are: Henry Moore, Isamu Noguchi, Jean Arp, Ursula von Ridingsvard, and Martin Puryear. Different people at different stages of my life have been influential: Raymond Franchetti, my dance teacher; Martine Vaugel, my first sculpture teacher; and Bill Sullivan, who taught me most of what I know about wood carving. More recently, Leonid Lerman, as a drawing teacher, has transformed my understanding of volumes and shapes on paper. Two years ago, while doing a residency at Vytlačil, I began forging under the guidance of James Garvey. He has helped



me discover the specific qualities of metal. Finally, I owe much to my drawing and sculpture teacher, Gary Sussman, for all the attention and support he has given me. His teaching has been helpful in many ways, but most of all he has provided a safe place for me to explore new territories in order to find my path.

I just want to say how grateful I am for the existence of the League. The affordable tuition and the generosity of the school's grants and scholarships program (which has given me a Merit Scholarship, a Nessa Cohen Grant, an Avery Grant, two residen-

cies at Vytlačil, and the opportunity to go to Scotland at Dumfries House as an artist-in-residence) have made it possible for me to get a solid art education. The residencies in particular have transformed my relationship to my work. The immersion into one's work, the proximity of other artists having similar goals and life styles, and the peace of mind and freedom from material preoccupations have helped me gain confidence. Every time, I saw a clear evolution in my work. I am just back from Scotland where I spent a month in a beautiful studio provided by the Prince's Drawing School, surrounded by an eighteenth century manor, fields of sheep and cows, open skies, and trees older than 250 years. It was the perfect setting to focus on drawing and nature.

I try to make art because I cannot live without doing it. When I don't, anxiety rises in me like a tide. When I feel connected to my art, something feels right. Maybe being an artist has taught me that one can see beauty in unlikely situations or places. Also, that one has to trust going into the unknown. When wrestling with a composition, one doesn't know where it will take them. It is always more interesting when what happens is unforeseen. I think the same is true in life, so I feel more at peace when situations take an uncontrollable turn. 🌱



# Zen, Painting the Landscape

by Nicki Orbach

There was a very interesting article by Erica Goode titled, “How Culture Molds Habits of Thought,” in which she discussed research by Dr. Richard Nisbett. He showed Japanese students an animation of a large fish swimming along the ocean floor encountering smaller fish, seaweed, and various fauna and flora. He showed the same animation to American students. The students were then asked to describe what they saw.

The Japanese students noted interrelationships among the fish and the ocean environment, such as how the fish swam by seaweed and how the fish related to each other. The fish were seen in some sort of a context. The American students, on the other hand, only described the largest, fastest, or most colorful fish. They only attended to this fish and missed any sort of interrelationships whatsoever. He concluded that culture plays a role in how one perceives and thinks.

Why did the Japanese students see interrelationships? Could this be due to the influence of Shinto and Buddhist philosophy on Japanese culture? One fundamental aspect of Buddhist teaching relates to interrelationships and is called dependent origination.

All phenomena (whether they be mental, such as thoughts, or physical, such as objects) come into existence in dependence upon several causes and conditions. These causes and conditions are interrelated and are constantly changing. When something changes, it affects something else and that changes too. Everything is in a constant flux of interrelationships, which are impermanent. When something ceases to exist, something else ceases to exist too. Nothing is separate or independent from anything else.

In terms of Zen’s influence on painting, the best person to look at would be a Zen monk. The monk was not a professional artist in our sense of the word. He would encounter the world and paint the landscape in an awakened and insightful state unlike anything we could understand rationally. In fact, the act of brush painting was a form of action meditation—a way to develop awareness and to become enlightened. This awareness does not occur through logical thinking or through words. These things can guide us, but this type of awareness is obtained through zazen meditation and mindfulness. In this state of awareness, the ordinary self drops away and one is emptied of, and free from, all the attachments, desires, and preconceptions of the ego-driven self. In this state of “emptiness,” the perception of the world transcends conventional perception and cognition.

Before brush was ever put to paper, the Zen monk spent years in the landscape, being aware of and attending to aspects of impermanence and the interrelationships among phenomena. He was tolerant of ambiguity, uncertainty, and paradox. Mindfulness and awareness involved a sensitivity to such things as the transient nature of cherry blossoms and the permutation of the seasons. The monk was in harmony with the landscape, and he absorbed the processes of nature. He was responsive to events that happened in the present moment. His reality was found in the momentary and transitory.

The monk did not paint on-site looking at the landscape, because he was not interested in painting an imitation of a landscape, seen from one viewpoint, frozen in space-time. The painting was created later in the monastery. The monk used



Figure 1

the image of the landscape in order to convey an awareness beyond appearances, one that pointed directly to such things as impermanence and depending arising. This reality could not be depicted literally or explicitly. The monk, therefore, implied the landscape by the use of suggestion (Figure 1).

Li Jih-Hua said, "In painting, what is important is knowing how to hold and equally how to let go. Knowing how to hold consists in delimiting the outline and volume of things by means of the stroke of the brush. If the painter makes use of continuous or rigid strokes, the picture will be devoid of life. In the delineation of forms, the entire art of execution lies in gaps and fragmentary suggestion. Hence, one must know how to let go." Painting not only involves mark making but also involves feeling the relationship of space and time as the brush dances on the paper. In fact, space is not separate from time; it is a unified whole, space-time.

In Japanese, *MA* means the interval of space-time, in which stillness and the potential of movement occurs. When hearing music, *MA* is the silence between notes. When painting, *MA* is synonymous with the intervals of untouched, white paper that is left between brush strokes (Figure 2). Our eyes follow a lyrical scan path that is created by intervals of white, along with the arrangement of brush strokes. If intervals of white were in-between the calligraphic lines that surrounded a form, a permeable edge would also be created. This type of porous edge did not totally separate form from space, nor form from form. Visually, one could see that form and emptiness are not separate but interdependent.

For the monk to paint impermanence as his subject, the brush stroke itself had to indicate change. This was done in many ways, from alternations in the thickness and thinness of each stroke to variations in its tonal values (Figure 3). Emptiness could also be alluded to by mist and fog within the landscape painting. Within the mist there were no sharp distinctions between form and emptiness. Boundaries were vague or even invisible. Light ink washes blurred edges and obscured forms, alluding to the impression that "Nothing is, but is becoming." Forms arose, changed, and then dissipated within emptiness. These intervals of emptiness harnessed the potential of movement, which implied both change and transience.

In fact, emptiness within a painting was considered to be as important as form (Figure 4). Many times, large areas of the painting were left untouched. Form and emptiness are interrelated, and are dependent upon and conditioned by each other. They are both subject to change. The monk developed a simultaneous awareness of emptiness and form, of space and time, and of stillness and movement, within the present moment. The aesthetic that developed from Zen Buddhism and Shintoism was one of uncluttered simplicity, one where emptiness is charged with the potential of becoming. 🌀



Figure 2

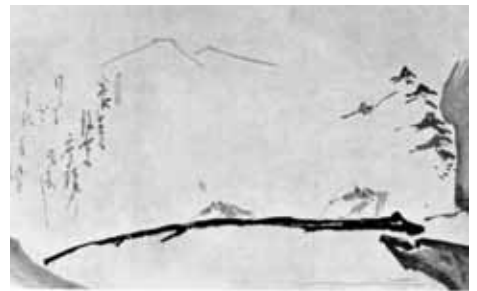


Figure 3

Opposite page: Sesshu, *Landscape*, 15th century, ink, 77 x 27 cm.

This page, from top: Shoun, *Mt. Fuji*, ink, 24 x 36 cm.; Hakuin, *Blind men crossing bridge*, 18th century ink, 28 x 83 cm.; Sesshu, *Landscape*, 15th century, ink, 21 x 1151 cm.

Figure 4



# Deane Galloway Keller

## (1940–2005)



Deane Galloway Keller, *Hendricks Head, Maine*, ca. 1978, oil, 19 x 28 inches

By the time my brother Deane Galloway Keller began teaching at the League in the late 1990s, he had placed the large-scale draped figure at the center of his concern as a draftsman. This approach fully employed the training he received from the sculptor David K. Rubins (1902–1985); John Herron Institute of Art, Indiana University, Indianapolis), in the Florence, Italy, studio of Nera Simi (1890–1987), and from his father, Deane Keller (1901–1992), who studied under George Bridgman at the League in the summers of 1923 and 1924. Deane Keller was mentored in the Yale School of the Fine Arts by Edwin C. Taylor, who had arrived in 1908 from the mural studio of Kenyon Cox. Taylor was the drawing instructor under the school's first director, John Ferguson Weir, and established the basic pedagogy

Yale implemented until the arrival of Josef Albers in 1950. This studio pedagogy valued the enterprise of drawing from the live model and from works of Renaissance and later masters.

Deane Galloway Keller, much aware of this lineage of teacher relationships, taught in Studios 1 and 2 at a time when his own engagement with figure drawing was reaching an intense phase. He brought together for himself and for his students the strands of his earlier drawing and painting, informed and motivated by his reading of literature and history and his regular travel in North Africa, the Middle East, and Turkey.

Teaching hours naturally took time from his own work. Yet he felt privileged to share his training and experience in the charged environment of the League's second floor.

The authoritative figures of Keller's desert series were created during the period he taught at the League. In these drawings he aimed for a synthesis of domains, in his conception, of what is seen, known, and felt.

Keller's lifetime project was drawing. Formal training started in the class taught by his father (professor of drawing and painting at Yale) and in the summer life classes organized mainly for his training. As a Yale undergraduate, he was exposed to senior faculty whose certainty in their own treatment of subject was virtually absolute. Forceful professors spark interest and commitment. Nevertheless, especially in the realm of craft learning (such as the study of human anatomy and drawing the figure), the master/apprentice relationship required Keller to yield to authority in order to learn the craft. In order to limit the yielding and



by William Keller

create his own core strategies, Keller broadened his study to include geology, literature, art history, and philosophy. In philosophy, he read across a spectrum of approaches but was most interested in systems of thought emphasizing individual responsibility: man stands alone. In this connection he encountered Søren Kierkegaard and Gabriel Marcel. In another vein, John Wesley Powell and T. E. Lawrence—two blazing personalities—appealed to him as distinguished figures who connected modern life with geologic time and antiquity.

But Thomas Hardy's novels of character and environment formed Keller's early and



sustaining inspirational resource for much of his work as an artist. Hardy's Wessex of England's south coast was understood by Keller to form, in his own words, "the expanded landscape against which man defines himself and acts out his destiny." He placed himself in Hardy country, knowing of the Roman ruins underfoot.

Painting outdoors, especially in the

early decades of his maturity as an artist, offered Keller a way to visualize his own place in the world. This stance is exemplified by his landscapes (first in watercolor, later in oil) of horizon broken by forms in the middle distance. In Maine, he found resonance on Damariscove Island, the early seventeenth-century fishing center and on Monhegan. And he knew the sloping fields

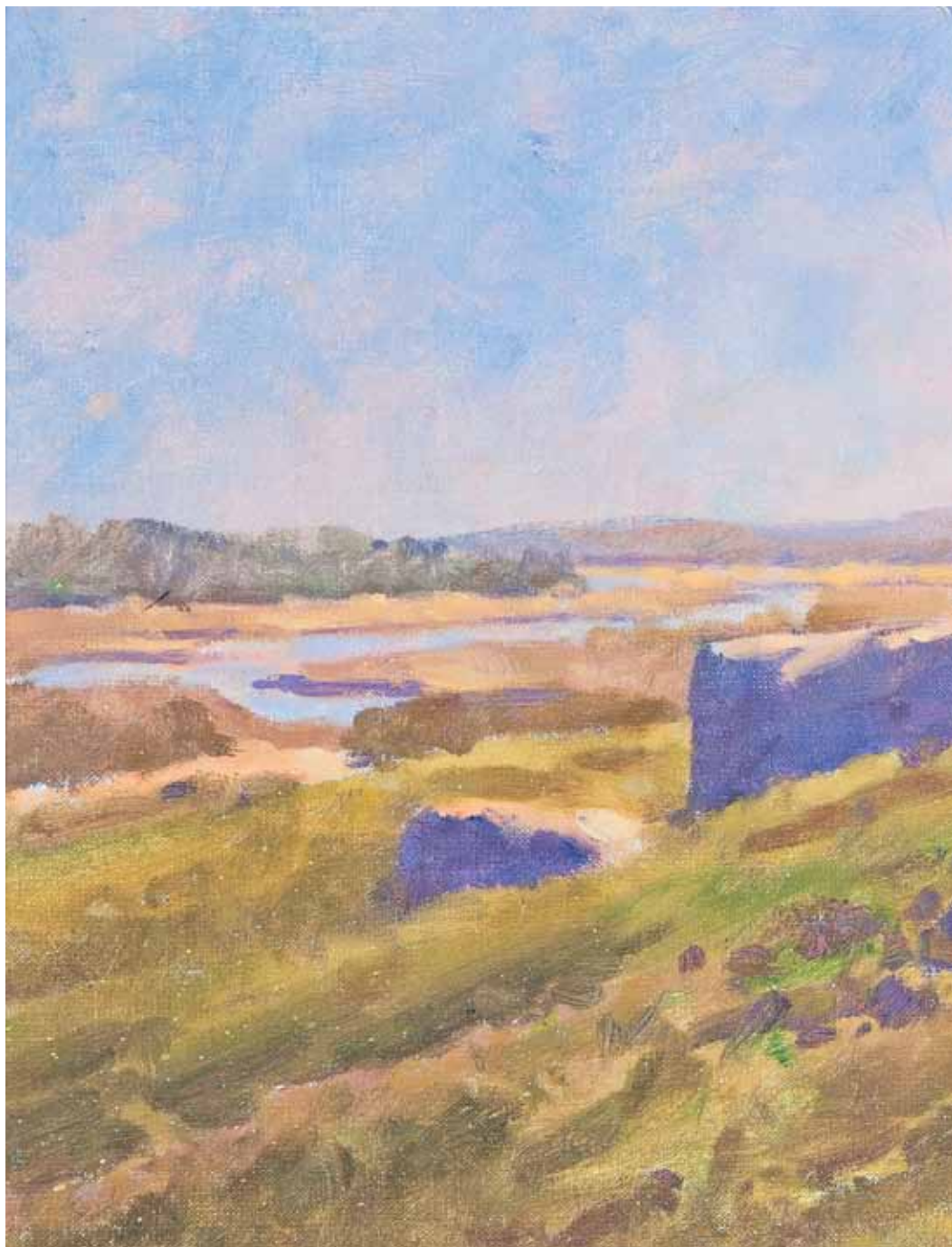


From top: Deane Galloway Keller painting on Damariscove Island, Maine, ca. 1978; Deane Galloway Keller, *Connecticut Water*, ca. 1978, oil, 21 x 35 inches



Above: Deane Galloway Keller, *Tricia*, 1984, charcoal with white, 32 x 24 inches

Right: Deane Galloway Keller, *Connecticut Landscape*, ca. 1980, oil on canvas, 11 x 20½ inches



and shoreline of Andrew Wyeth's *Cushing*, having photographed the Olson farm prior to his departure for Florence in 1964. Later, in Connecticut, in the fields near Native American sites along the Connecticut River in Middletown and Glastonbury, Keller studied the nature of place and human settlement in a series of compositions. These oils incorporate an established horizon beyond an area of open field or water, within which a natural or man-made form is placed. He had looked at Wyeth's 1930s watercolors (e.g. *The Lobsterman*

(Hunter Museum of American Art) as well as Hopper's treatment of light. In the later landscapes, Keller rendered sky and earth in an overall atmospheric unity. In this he was influenced by Corot's 1820s studies of Rome and environs such as the *Le pont de Narni* (Louvre).

But drawing was his main metaphor for feeling and thinking. Beginning in the mid-1990s, he developed a work process that allowed him to achieve something closer to his own aspirations. During Mediterranean travel, he sketched and



noted people in their natural environment, especially targeting gesture and movement. His sites of observation included ferry landings and markets in Egypt, where he found partially robed figures moving in and out of shadow. Back in the studio, and with the help of mannequins, casts, and the mirror image of his own features, Keller extracted these figures for his analysis while retaining a connection to their setting as first observed. Keller brought to these unposed figures momentum and dimension by retaining the energy of the

sketchbook and by rendering the figures in monumental scale. They are presented on paper prepared with a middle value of earth-toned fine grit. The ochre and sienna evoke desert, heat, sun, antiquity.

Though worked up in the studio, the figures remain of the landscape. In this sense, Keller realized a new formulation of the exploration of the relation of man to landscape that he had begun decades earlier.

Deane Galloway Keller's body of work awaits retrospective exhibition and assessment. Randy Melick's foundational

critical essay of 2007 was published by the Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts, where Keller taught for many years. Yet it was the totality of the League—its mission, history, setting, administration, faculty, students, and models—that meant so much. The Art Students League community values strongly held faculty approaches across a spectrum of perspectives. Supported by this community, he was able to address with freedom the learning and practice of the craft of drawing in service of the study and interpretation of the human figure. 🌐

# *Life in Paint*



Sharon Sprung, *Callas*, oil on panel, 40 x 40 inches

by Sharon Sprung

**A**s I live my life in paint, I realize there never really was a starting place or time. My approach to living is visual. What I observe is how I make sense of the world; it is how I understand people. Knowing life in paint is a different kind of knowing. It orients me; makes the world accessible, people approachable, and life joyful.

The patterns of nature, the colors, the textures, the proportions of a face, the architecture of anatomy—these are like bread crumbs to follow to find a direction.

The visual world deepens and enriches all. Observation, quiet meditative observation, is a way of finding myself, and how I fit in this very complicated world. Making art is a way of translating my experiences. My portraits and figures are biographies or part autobiography, not unlike a book; the medium is just different.

My mind is a library of images. I am very fortunate to have studied at the League when I was very young, and then a little older. My formal education took place in studios, with many models and artists playing a part.

I love working in oil and on panels. Oil paint has a depth and variety of surface unmatched by any other type of paint. The panels provide a very hard surface to work against, so that painting becomes a physical act energizing and depleting at the same time. Hours and days and now decades have passed in this pursuit. 🌱



Sharon Sprung, *Portrait of Girl in Broken Window*, oil on panel, 37 x 22 inches

# FRANK LILJEGREN

by Helen Dwork

In March of 1973, *Today's Art Magazine* lauded Frank Liljegren as one of America's best-known still life painters—a prodigious seller as well as an important figure in contemporary artistic circles. At the time that piece was published, Frank was president of the Allied Artists of America, listed in *Who's Who in American Painting* and *Who's Who in the East*, and a member of the Salmagundi Club, the Artists' Fellowship Inc., the Council of American Artists Societies, the Fine Arts Federation of New York, and the Academic Artists Association

He was also a member of the Art Students League. A graduate of the High School of Art and Design, he had earned a four-year scholarship to the National Academy of Art, which he declined when his father became seriously ill. Instead, he worked, spending evenings at the League studying under John Groth, Howard Trafton, Frank J. Reilly, and George Grosz. Initially finding work illustrating paperback books and magazines, Frank's career and reputation as a painter were to blossom in the coming decades.

In 1974, Robert Schultz, who had taken over Reilly's class, fell ill and asked Frank to substitute. "Robert Shultz asked me if I would be interested in taking over his class," Frank explains. "When he returned, he was

able to continue to teach." Frank taught at the League in 1974 and 1975, in addition to teaching in other places around the New York area. "Teaching just seemed to come naturally to me; I seemed to like explaining to others what I was up to, as best I could," he says. In an interview in 1979, he stated: "Since I have been out of school and working as a professional artist, I have read and researched many art books on the teachings of various art schools, and I still believe that there was no other school of teaching to match Mr. Reilly's."

When he and his wife, Donna, who is also an artist, moved on to Van Wert, Ohio, Frank continued to teach, using the methods he had learned from Reilly. Of Frank's classes in Van Wert, current League student Jackie Clark says: "You would be given lectures, demonstrations, and exercises in line values, perspective, composition, and color. I recall being restricted (voluntarily) to doing value studies in three, then five, then seven shades of gray. When that was clearly learned, a limited palette of colors was introduced." Reilly had explained in a June 1948 interview in *American Artist* that "I teach (1) how to draw; (2) how to paint; and (3) how to make pictures." Frank taught students like Jackie to do just that.

Frank himself was an artist from an early

age. "I always seem to have been involved in art," he explained recently. "I can remember as a youngster drawing whatever interested me." In those days, he drew whatever was around him. He told *American Artist* magazine: "I had nobody to pose for me, so I drew old sneakers, shoes, or pots instead." He found inspiration in the work of another esteemed League student, as well as from the resources of the city where he was born and raised. "I loved looking at *The Saturday Evening Post*—Norman Rockwell's covers—and going to the museum."

Harkening back to his childhood drawings, paintings of worn out objects form the core of Frank's oeuvre. His compositions can be incongruous—concerned only with visual balance, a coming together of texture and form. Objects may relate in unfamiliar ways, set off by understated drapery, generally of a different value but not particularly colorful. His respect for the objects he paints is paramount and manifests itself in the warm light in which he bathes them. "Still life can be as saintly as a Madonna painting," he told *American Artist*. Asked recently how his practice has developed, he answered, "Not too much. It seems I have always been interested in sound drawing, painting, and composition, to say the least." 🎨



Frank Liljegren, *The Coffee Pot*, oil, 18 x 14 inches. IMAGE COURTESY OF JACKIE CLARK



Frank Liljegren and his students in Van Wert  
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JACKIE CLARK

# Studying with Frank Liljegren

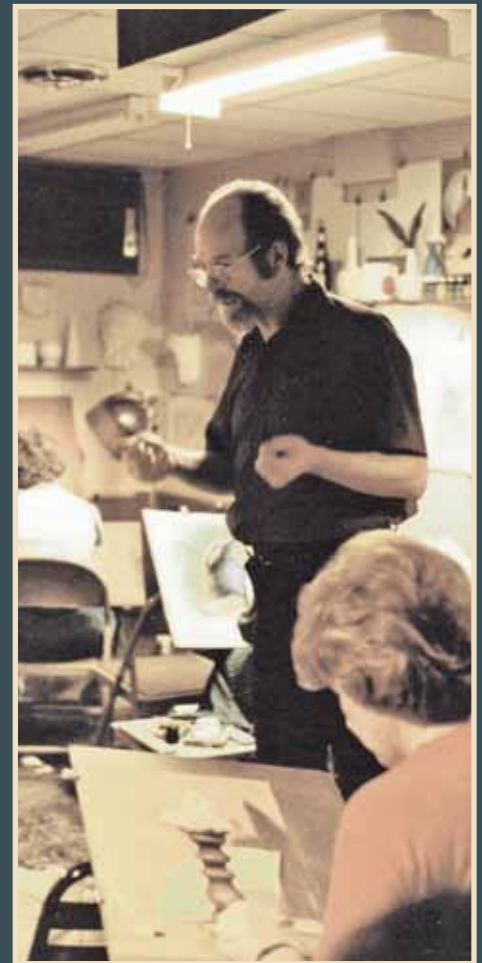
by Jackie Clark

Being in Frank Liljegren's studio class in Van Wert, Ohio, was like going to a one-room schoolhouse for academic art. His students were given the foundations of drawing and painting as well as a love for the great artists and illustrators who had been Frank's inspiration. Every class was something new; he always managed to wow us with his engaging talks on the artists and illustrators who inspired him, and in turn inspired us through him.

One topic that I was always eager to hear about was when Frank was a student of Frank Reilly at the Art Students League. His talks about those days were colorful and entertaining, and—for me—a gateway to my own personal exodus to New York to study at the famous League. Before meeting Frank and his wife, Donna, I had never considered living in New York, nor had I ever visited the city. Because of them, when I arrived I felt I had a history and connection to the place.

Before I left, I asked Frank for advice about getting started at the League—I was eager to hit the ground running. Frank had some great pointers, one of

which was to go to the cafeteria on the third floor and look around the room for the table that had a bunch of older guys sitting together talking. He said to go and sit down and get to know those guys if you want to hear some great stories. Well, I did just as he suggested, and to my surprise one of the guys at the table had been a monitor for Reginald Marsh! What were the chances of that? Well, I guess Frank knew the chances were pretty good. 🍷



Frank Liljegren teaching, ca. 1984  
PHOTOGRAPH COURTESY OF JACKIE CLARK



*Antiques, oil, 22 x 28. Notice that a similar horn and violin were used in another painting reproduced here, yet their setting and treatment are very different.*

Frank Liljegren, *Antiques*, oil, 22 x 28 inches





Lola de Miguel, *African Impressions*, 2013, acrylic on canvas, 30<sup>1</sup>/<sub>5</sub> x 31 inches

#### About this painting

This is the first painting of my art show. It represents when I arrived in Ethiopia [and my] first day in Assaita's market. Lots of impressions: smells, heat, crowded... only when I started to meet people was I feeling more comfortable. [What is] interesting about this painting is that some people see the people in the painting and others do not.

# International Impressions

by Lola de Miguel

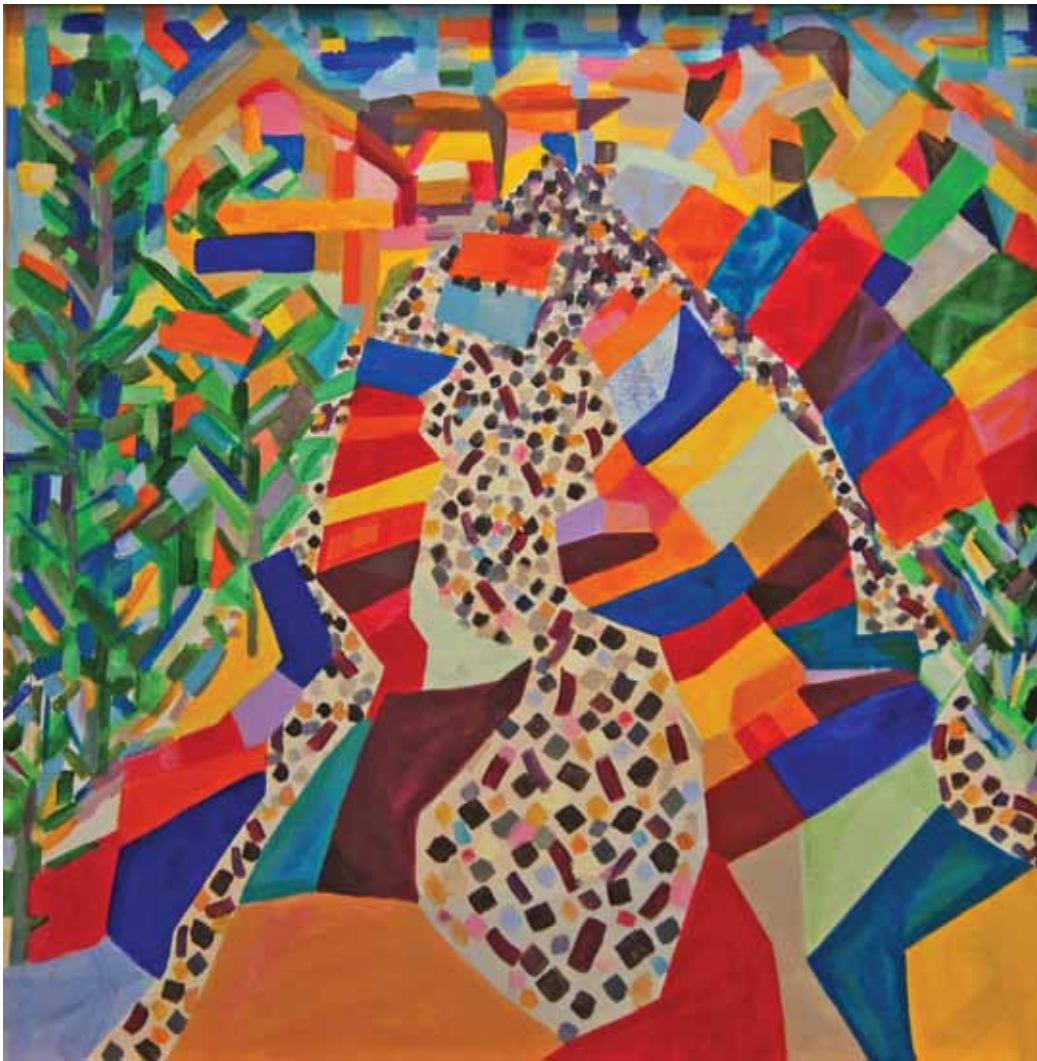
A significant event in my artistic life was a conversation I had with Ronnie Landfield the first day I started painting at the League in 2012. I felt he was giving me the freedom to paint whatever I wanted; to feel free as an artist. It was not about copying the model; it was about expressing what I felt about the model or anything, experimenting freely. I was always a creative spirit, looking for different ways of expressing myself like painting, dancing, acting, writing, etc. I have always wanted to experience, to feel, to share, to tell stories, to express. I started to call myself an artist two years ago, when I realized how happy I was just spending my days painting.

During senior year of high school, I won a full scholarship to study art here in the States. However, my traditional Spanish family did not support it, so I followed expectations and studied law with a focus on business and international relations. Coaching and education complemented my academic training. I was very successful working in the corporate international world, but my passion for the art remained. I always returned to art, specifically painting. My free time was spent in museums, at art shows, and in art classes. I love to travel, to learn, and to dance. I have lived in the States and in Spain, but also in France, Belgium, Germany, and Austria.

I took drawing and art classes at the Gaia, Art and Restoration Study Centre in Valencia, Spain. In the past two years, since

I moved to New York City, I have had the privilege of living my passion fully. I have been attending classes at the League, and I dedicate my days to painting. Here in New York, my mentors are Ronnie Landfield and Bruce Dorfman; the monitors Arne Lewis, John Zuleta, and Kate Sharkey; and fellow artists like Beatriz Elorza Herra, Rodolfo Edwards Garces, Marielos Perez-Longo, Mati Bracha; in Spain, Sara Álvarez, and Juan Grau. And, of course, the great painters and their legacy: Picasso, Matisse, Kandinsky.

I do conceptual painting. Before I paint, I need to know what I want to transmit. If the concept is strong in my mind, the inspiration is automatic. My medium is acrylic on canvas because I do not like to wait for the paint to dry. It is fast and spontaneous. I feel free. I can play with colors.



Left: Lola de Miguel, *Day Market*, 2014, 30 x 31 inches; Below: Lola in front of *African Colors*

**About this painting**

One day I was at the top of a mountain. I saw a market underneath with beautiful colorful sun protections and lots of people moving in all directions... they seemed like ants...very colorful, very dynamic.

have a feeling of accomplishment. You feel like an artisan. If you work in the international corporate world, you are a small element in a huge organization and your work represents a small percentage. The feeling of accomplishment is never as vivid.

*Self-expression is liberating—* and makes me extremely happy. Art sets me free. It is like keeping a diary.

*To sell you have to market yourself.* People like to buy consecrated artists, artists with an image, who market themselves. You only get discovered and people only buy your art if you display yourself. 🌟

My inspiration is everywhere. It can be a travel experience, a conversation on the subway, light, a movie, a feeling, a museum, a building, a piece of music. I have to say I also feel very lucky to live now in New York City—a vibrant city, where everyone has a great story to tell and where things happen. It is difficult not to feel motivated and energized in a city like this one.

In my opinion, the hardest part of becoming an artist is dealing with uncertain income—the worry of how to generate income or sell enough to continue creating in the future. If money was not an issue, I would go back to university to study art. I would have a big studio, travel the world, and help artists get discovered. I would have a free gallery space for emerging artists. I am looking for a gallerist to help me sell internationally, and I also created a blog to show my work and perhaps the work of other artists as well.

I am motivated by the freedom painting gives me to be myself—to discover myself, to explore, and to create; the feeling of happiness when I successfully express the

concept; by being surrounded by artists in New York and at the League; by my friends and by people who live for their art despite difficulties and challenges; and by seeing artist friends succeed. What also keeps me motivated is receiving positive feedback from mentors, fellow artists, art experts or clients; selling work; and to see that I am evolving as an artist, that I am improving.

**Lessons art has taught me**

*Time is relative.* Some paintings take many, many days and they are like a fight between the canvas and myself. Other ones are an easy birth; in a few hours they are there as they were always meant to be, as if I were just a medium that materializes what was already there. Time is not a key ingredient of quality or satisfaction to an artist. A painting is not going to become automatically better just because you devote more time to it.

*The satisfaction of the creative process.* As an artist you have to bring an idea to life and work through the whole process, but at the end there is a complete work. You



# Donn Russell — A Snippet in Time

by Sarah Teach

Excerpted from her article in *Yesterday's Island/Today's Nantucket*



*We gratefully acknowledge the funding for the Donn Russell Grant for Art Materials.*

After decades spent traveling the globe, serigraph master, satire sculptor, and painter Donn Russell chose to make his home on Nantucket. Long-time island art enthusiasts may recognize Russell's work from his eponymous gallery on Old South Wharf, which was active from 1978 to 2001. The artist—who has been known to give away his best work when he cannot fathom selling it—boasts a portfolio that is diverse in media yet clings to a common theme. A Russell is a snippet in time, a moment that's not quite real, but somewhere close to it. Both intricate and abstract, this artist's pieces dance the line of reality. They evoke nostalgia in you for places you've been, and also for places and moments you can only visit by viewing them. At 85, the soft-spoken gentleman-artist reflects on his creations, which are as far-reaching as the ground he has trod.

Russell grew up in a deeply artistic family, but came into his talent entirely on his own. The Braintree, MA native says, "It started when I was in high school, and I had a wonderful art teacher. She would grab things that I had painted and send them away and they'd win prizes. To look at them now, they are pretty crude. But I took interest; I stayed after school and painted with her. She was my great influ-

ence. My mother was a watercolor painter, but she didn't care about too much besides her art. A dinner roast might sit in the oven all night because she was too busy finding just the right color blue. So my dad learned to be a good cook!"

Teenage Russell was such a gifted singer that he became a crooner on the nationally syndicated CBS weekly broadcast, *Youth on Parade*. He and his fellow songbirds traveled the country dressed in costume, bringing joy to wounded World War II soldiers. "Once the war ended," Russell says, "the program lost funding, so I went to college." The young man won a scholarship to study music at Boston University. To his dismay, Russell learned that while he loved making music, he hated studying it. He says, "I quit school

halfway through my second year. Came back home with my tail between my legs, and spent the following summer with my mother, just painting in our chicken-coop-turned-studio. She'd look at my stuff and say, 'You're not so bad!'" His uncle, a noted illustrator, encouraged him to pursue art as a career. With his mother's help, Russell enrolled in Pratt Institute, and later the School of Visual Arts, then the Art Students League of New York. He says warmly, "That's where I finally felt at home."

As much as he loved the Big Apple, Russell may as well have been one of the ramblin' Allman Brothers. Starting at age 20, the young man planned a major international trip each year to assuage what he calls "almost a need to travel." He says, "I went to Mexico every summer and



From top: Donn Russell, *Shell*; Donn Russell, *Salmon Sky*, serigraph, 24 x 19 inches

“I went around the world, painting, sketching. But the more I traveled, the more I got hooked on other art mediums, like serigraphy and sculpture.”



got jobs up in the mountains, where they needed murals on the walls of their cantinas. I got free room and board, plus a few extra pesos for whatever else I wanted. I always fell in with people who were doing unusual things, and I'd join them for a while. I would go see Granada, learn how to dance. Mexico and Japan are the most artistically inspiring places I have ever been. As an artist in Japan, everywhere you go, you get dozens of little school kids coming out to see what you're doing. I would sit down and they would all crowd around my pad of paper. They would point at little things, but they wouldn't make a single noise, aside from the occasional *ahh* or *ooh*."

"I went around the world, painting, sketching. But the more I traveled, the more I got hooked on other art mediums,

like serigraphy and sculpture." Better known as screen printing, serigraphy is a highly involved process that is not for the faint of art. Russell, who cites the form's intricacy as his reason for favoring it, says, "After having taken a college class in screen printing, I went back to school for a refresher course and was hooked. I ended



up doing it for the rest of my life." In his heyday, the artist could spend an entire year on a single serigraph, creating a scene, cutting out a corresponding stencil, and adding layer upon layer of meticulously planned ink coats.

Though he traipsed all over Europe, the Middle East, Asia, the South Pacific, Central America, and Africa, Russell always made his way back home to the States. He says, "One day, the famous interior decorator Billy Baldwin came into a Madison Avenue gallery where my work was being shown. He and his two friends said they had a house on Nantucket Island, and they went there every summer. They invited me for a visit, and it was like nirvana. It has a very pure white light that artists crave. There's no land around it, no tall buildings." When visiting a place as beautiful as Nantucket, an inspired artist probably cannot help but begin making art immediately. "At first," Russell says, "I did my number of boats in the harbor like everybody else does. Then I got into designing the island, not just copying it. I took different parts of the island and put them together into something abstract yet real."

Russell himself is dealing with some changes as well. Over the past 15 years, his eyesight has suffered due to macular degeneration ("A terrible thing for an artist," he confides.), so he has slowed on the serigraph front. "Now, I do a lot of sketching type stuff," he says. "I work in beiges, browns. It's simple. I used to do very ornate work. Not anymore. I can't draw that straight a line." He chuckles softly. "I do a lot of studies now, and some oil painting." But even as his eyesight flees, the memories and images in Russell's head



remain sharp as ever. In 2010, the artist completed a book called *The Long and Short of It: Stories From a Lifetime*, which chronicles his journeys around the world. He writes, "Looking back was the greatest reward of all."

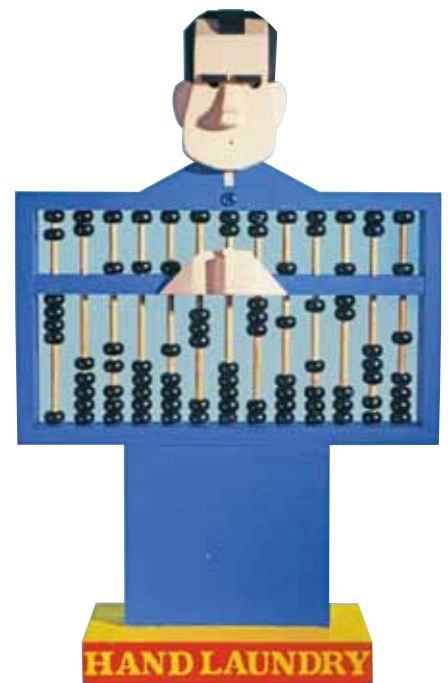
Also in 2010, the Artists Association of Nantucket honored Russell in a special exhibit called *ICONS: Influential Artists From The Association's 65-Year History*. Russell was the only living member among 16 bygone artists who were included. In Russell's case, it was for his unique output and for inventing his own formula of ink

preparation for printing that challenged fading from age or light.

In August of 2012, the last major showing of Russell's work was hosted at Made on Nantucket on Old South Wharf. "He's been one of my favorite artists forever," commented gallery owner Kathleen Duncombe, who still has some of his work at her gallery. "I was so honored and thrilled to show his work." 📸

The full article with illustrations can be read at <http://yesterdayisland.com/snippet-time-donn-russell/>. Copyright retained by Yesterday's Island, Inc.

**Russell enrolled in... the Art Students League of New York. He says warmly, "That's where I finally felt at home."**



Opposite page, from left: Donn Russell, *Mexico*, wood sculpture; Photograph of Donn Russell

This page, clockwise from top left: Donn Russell, *Summer Sunday*, serigraph, 27 x 18 inches; Donn Russell, *Inside Out*; Donn Russell, *Nixon Laundry*, wood sculpture; Donn Russell, *Scallop Shells*, serigraph, 23 x 20 inches



“When visiting a place as beautiful as Nantucket, an inspired artist probably cannot help but begin making art immediately.”

In 2010, the artist completed a book called *The Long and Short of It: Stories From a Lifetime*, which chronicles his journeys around the world. He writes, “Looking back was the greatest reward of all.”



Artwork by Donn Russell

# The Art Students League of New York Honors

## Ai Weiwei & Greg Wyatt

“Let’s talk about humanity, individualism, imagination and creativity—those are the values a society is built on. What education are we getting? What dreams do we dream?”  
– Ai Weiwei



“I believe that we can create bridges between our cultures through sculpture and the fine arts; they are important links that can harness our positive energies and unite us over time.”  
– Greg Wyatt

**The 2014 Hall of Fame Gala honored two great public artists who demonstrate outstanding commitment to artistic expression. Their divergent paths embody the pluralistic spirit of the League.**

Ai Weiwei’s sprawling oeuvre and tireless human rights activism have earned him substantial international attention and acclaim. Currently prohibited from traveling outside of China or engaging in public speech, Ai continues to find new ways to express himself and his views artistically through sculpture, installation, photography, and video. Making use of both Eastern and Western traditions, he is able to reclaim traditional materials, artifacts, and concepts and imbue them with contemporary meaning.

The year after Ai was born, his father, the poet Ai Qing, was denounced as anti-Communist and Ai’s youth was spent in exile in a remote province near the Chinese-Russian border. He spent his young adulthood in New York City, where he studied at the League between

1983 and 1986, returning to China in 1993. After publicly distancing himself from the Beijing Olympics (for which he had designed the stadium) and embarking on his own investigation and commemoration of the 2008 Sichuan earthquake, Ai was detained and exorbitantly fined for tax evasion. Since then, his work has won notice and acclaim throughout Europe and North America, and his face has become a global emblem of freedom of expression. His use of new media—necessitated by the restrictions imposed upon him—amplifies and alters the power of his works, reinforcing his relevance in the very places his government strives to keep him from and allowing him to speak on behalf of a silenced people.

Greg Wyatt encourages art engagement—through his own public works, as well as through his philanthropy and pedagogy. Perhaps most famous for his *Peace Fountain* at the Cathedral of Saint John the Divine, Wyatt has created works that grace venerable cultural and government institutions in the United

States and Europe. His expressionistic bronze sculptures evoke the classical tradition yet are infused with a contemporary intellect and sensibility.

Wyatt began teaching sculpture at the League in 2004, and in 2010, he took the helm of the Model to Monument Program—a partnership between the League and the New York City Department of Parks and Recreation—training artists to produce large-scale, site-specific work for public spaces within an intensive 9-month program. Additionally, Wyatt works with the Fantasy Fountain Fund to sponsor League students’ studies in France, and Italian students’ studies at the League. Wyatt is also active in teaching underserved youth in the New York area and in international mentorship programs. “Greg’s art, like his classroom teaching, is based less upon artistic assertion than upon artistic inquiry, less upon the transmission of a thought than upon the promotion of an exchange of views,” said Austin Quigley, dean emeritus, Columbia College. 🌐



Mickey and Len Sirowitz and guests



Joseph Rossi, Sal Barbieri, and Brian Tepper



Greg and Fay Wyatt



Domenick Ciaccia and guests



Greg Wyatt and Ira Goldberg



Ira Goldberg and Silvia Franco and guests



Shelly Fireman and guests



Chris Concannon and guests



Guests of Jean Arena-Barbieri and Sal Barbieri



Guests of Susan Levine



Tom Harvey and guests



Peter Britell, Mike Volpe, and guests of Venable LLP



Lyn Handler and guests



Ludmila and Truman Bidwell and guests



Jack and Linda Richeson and guests



Kit Seidel and guests



Louise Hirschfeld Cullman and Lewis Cullman and guests



Guests of Kit Seidel



Jean Arena-Barbieri and Donna Skebo



Guests of Kathleen Cornelius



# Drawing on Frosted Mylar

by Mary Jo Anzel, *Board of Control, Vice President*

As a teacher and artist, what really excites me is painting with bright colors as daylight pours into my studio. After working in watercolor for many years, I was reluctant to leave my comfort zone and extend myself from washes and color to drawing materials. Then, quite by accident, I discovered frosted mylar.

Frosted mylar is an affordable, archival, textured matte surface, on one or both sides, which allows the use of markers and pen and ink washes, and takes layers of charcoal and graphite. Working in different mediums is important for me as it allows me greater freedom of expression. When I eliminate color, I can focus on the light pattern and design. When I return to painting watercolor after a period of drawing, I do not worry as much about defining everything.

I started at the Art Students League in the mid-1970s. I had a full-time job and a family, but here I could study on weekends and nights and take late afternoon sketch classes. I started with Gregory D'Alessio. One day at our last session in May, a hot muggy day with only a handful of students left in the room, a student asked him, "When will it get better?" He replied, "In 8,000 drawings, come back then and tell me if it got better." Then he took us for drinks at the Russian Tea Room. I still miss him. Presently, I am with Bob Cenedella. Oddly, they have the same ideas about teaching a drawing class. Just do it over and over again. Do not stop to erase. Simply disregard unwanted lines and move on.

When teaching, I pass this advice on to my students. I encourage them never to use erasers. If and when you think you have made a mistake, disregard and keep on drawing. On drawing paper and heavier watercolor or printmaking papers, erasing is rubbing off some of the paper surface, resulting in a smudgy mess. However, when I am working on the frosted mylar I need to moderate the tonal values of the drawings—the black, white, and grays—like an old movie. I achieve this on my figures using pencil eraser to soften edges and to bring back the lights. This is my tool of choice and I have several different widths.

As I was experimenting with "my new best friend," I drew with charcoal and graphite, but I realized, to my amazement, that I did



not have to give up washes. I can use powered charcoal and apply it to the surface with Turpenoid. As the surface dries, the charcoal is still in the powdered form and can be wiped off. As I wipe the surface, I now have the ghost of drawings past. This is now incorporated into my background.

All of my drawings are produced from live models taking relatively short poses in

natural light. I usually start with a soft charcoal pencil and rarely does my charcoal ever leave the paper. Knowing that time is limited, I start applying the powered charcoal with either a chamois cloth or large bristle brushes using Turpenoid. If I need to bring back a light area, I use color shapers to take off the wet charcoal with broad strokes. I then move on to the next pose on the same sheet. I would rather explore the possible ways to link the figures and simplify the shapes than start on a new sheet.

From the beginning of my art education, I have been fascinated with great compositions, works by Diebenkorn, Jasper Johns (who has some wonderful ink drawings on frosted mylar), and Menzel. I do not always draw what I see, but I create what I want to see. All of my works are moments in time on the fifth floor. 🌀

From top: Mary Jo Anzel, *Moments in Time on the Fifth Floor*, 2012, ink and charcoal on frosted mylar, 6 x 12 inches; Mary Jo Anzel, *A Funny Day at the League*, 2014, charcoal on frosted mylar, 24 x 36 inches; Mary Jo drawing at the League's 2014 Hall of Fame Gala

# Tom Harvey

*Board of Control, Vice President*

I first took a serious art class while in high school in South Bend, Indiana. It seems that I had a bit of a discipline problem with a tendency to “act up” in study hall. Thus, no more study hall—art class instead (and also typing, where I learned on an up-right Royal typewriter). It wasn’t until I retired, following a long career as an attorney, that I found the Art Students League.

Following a few classes in drawing and some workshops, I decided that watercolor is the medium I most enjoy. It is portable, easy to set up and break down, doesn’t require toxic solvents, and can yield a satisfying painting in a manageable period of time. I particularly like to do small sketches when I travel. I currently study with Rick Brosen and have enjoyed workshops with Tim Clark—both incredibly talented artists with vastly different styles.

The League is so many things to so many different people. In my first class, I spoke with a fellow student, a retired physician, whose wife of more than 50 years had recently passed away. He began coming to the League because, as he said, he “needed a reason to get up in the morning.” The League fills a need for so many of us. Some aspire to a successful career as an artist. Others have had successful careers and, as I do, take pleasure from continuing to be creative, just in a different way. For all of us, there is a feeling of camaraderie, of interests shared in an environment that is welcoming and supportive. 🌍



Above: Larry Bressler, Beth Burns, Tom Harvey, and Cathie Black at the 2014 Hall of Fame Gala



Above: Tom Harvey, *After Turner*, 2013, watercolor, 8 x 8 inches

Below: Tom Harvey, *After Freidrich 1*, 2014, watercolor, 6 x 12 inches



# Carin Dangot

## Student & Gala Artist

I was born in São Paulo, Brazil, in 1971. I trained as a painter at the Panamericana School of Art and Design in São Paulo and at the Art Students League when I moved to New York. Five years ago, when I arrived in New York from Brazil, I went to a talk at the League given by Exhibition Outreach director Leah McCloskey. I understood right away that it was an incredible opportunity to show my work and to grow as an artist in my new city. Recent awards include the Leonard Rosenfeld Merit Scholarship in 2011 and the Lloyd Sherwood Grant in 2012. In 2012 I had a solo show at Carlos Lobo in New York, and since then I have participated in group exhibitions in New York and Massachusetts. Leah and the Exhibition Outreach Program have shown my work in different venues, and I have had the chance to sell work and to meet people interested in my art. How great is that! 🌟



Clockwise from top: Carin Dangot, *MAI*, 2012, ink on watercolor paper, 12 x 16 inches; Carin Dangot painting at the League's 2014 Hall of Fame Gala; Carin Dangot, *WEL*, 2012, acrylic on canvas, 61 x 59 inches

# RON HALL

RON HALL, LEAGUE STUDENT, WAS memorialized in Sharon Sprung's class in October 2014. His fellow students and instructors gathered to share the many ways in which Ron's friendship and interactions with them enhanced and enlightened their experience at the Art Students League.

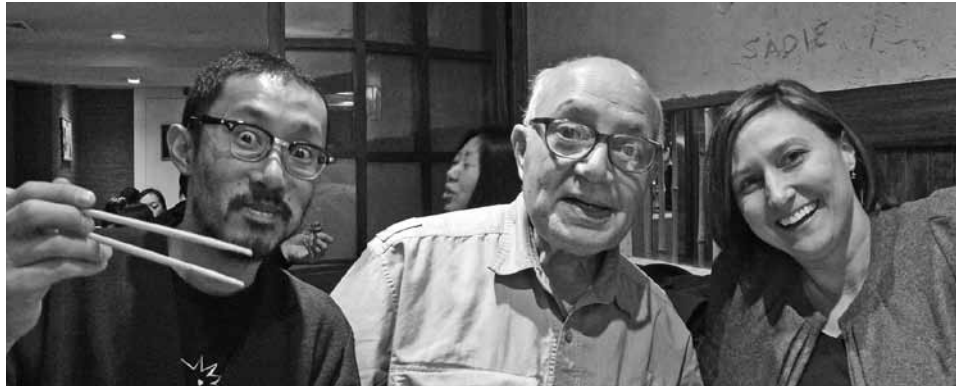
At his passing in September, Ronnie was 89 years old. And while he was one of the most senior students here at the League, Ron brought a sense of wonder and enthusiasm for art that few people ever experience.

Ron loved to read about art, whether it was art instruction or the life of an artist. Each day, he carried blank cards in his work shirt pocket, to be used for drawings of subway riders that he made on his way to art class. Sometimes I would be the recipient of one of these gesture drawings, as he used it to record the name of a book that he wanted me to order on the Internet. Ron constantly read books on art, philosophy, and Shakespeare. He owned a collection of rare books that he had inherited, and he had read every one of those books at least twice. He was known to lend these special books to instructors and classmates alike.

Ron also possessed an appetite for good food, especially if chocolate was one of the ingredients. He was always ready to share interesting conversation about art, along with a good meal. We met at restaurants throughout Manhattan, after class or a lecture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Ron enjoyed everything from sushi to Indian cuisine to Russian food.

As people told their memories of Ron, it became apparent that he touched many of our lives in a myriad of ways, but with the common denominator of his celebration of life and art. The following is just a sampling of the memories that were shared about Ronald M. Hall that afternoon in Studio 14.

– Kathleen Cornelius



From left: Satoshi Okada, Ron Hall, and Reneé Larson

*IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO THINK OF RON without smiling. He embodied the wisdom of an elder with the wide-eyed curiosity of a child. Once, during a hallway conversation, he mentioned a spiritual center that, coincidentally, my sister has had an affiliation with for decades. The founder of the institute, a swami from India, had invited Ron to travel to India with him twice. My sister was impressed. "The swami doesn't invite just anyone to India," she said. This gave me a hint to the deep inner life that his humble and gracious social demeanor precluded. Though he had a world of experience, he seemed to only want to unselfishly shine a light on whom ever he was with. In another memorable conversation, he lovingly described his morning oatmeal in vivid detail, ending with the phrase, spoken almost reverentially, "Oh, it was a beautiful experience." Thank you, Ron, for reminding me to see beauty everywhere and look through eyes of wonder.*

– Nancy Swendseen

**TO PARAPHRASE MAYA ANGELOU:**

*Most people will forget what you said, most people will forget what you did, but almost everyone will remember how you made them feel. I think most people would agree that that's how they feel about or remember Ron Hall.*

*Ron was a good and kind man. In an age where kindness is often considered a weakness, Ron reveled in it!*

*A few weeks ago I was talking about Ron, and said I most associated him with the phrase "random acts of kindness." But in hindsight, they might not have been so random.... A piece of pastry from Petrossian could go a long way toward alleviating the frustration of capturing the likeness of a model.*

*Ron was a joyful man. If you were on the receiving end of a "Good Morning!" or a "Hello," it was a day changer! Whatever was going to happen that day was going to*

*happen, but you felt empowered to actively participate in its outcome.*

*His sincere "Thank you" often made me wonder how such a small gesture or act could be appreciated so much, and sometimes made me feel I should have done more.*

*Ron celebrated people. He was a stand-up guy. Ron would enthusiastically show up for every opening or show he was invited to, or join a group of friends to paint or watercolor in Central Park. God bless Ron Hall. God bless us all.*

– Ted Gosciowski

The following letter was read to the group gathered for the memorial on October 21, 2014:

*Dear Sharon,*

*I want to thank you for the event that you are hosting to honor Ronnie Hall. I wish I could be there. Ronnie was in my class for two years, from 2002–2004. He then traveled with me to France where I taught cityscape in oil. Ron was a delight! He always brought a gift—a food item, a mobile for my daughter when she was born—he was so generous and very funny. I will always remember his iron handshake and his quick wit.*

*Please tell your students and friends how much I will miss Ronnie. He was an unforgettable presence whose absence leaves so many wishing for more time with him.*

– Dan Thompson

*THIS MAY BE THE THIRD OR FOURTH attempt to sit down and write something about Ronnie. He touched many lives; he made lots of people feel special, loved, and filled them with his great positive attitude toward life. And yet my relationship with him felt so unique and special that it is incredible to realize that I am not the only one who felt this way toward him. On the contrary, probably everyone who got to know Ronnie felt the same way.*

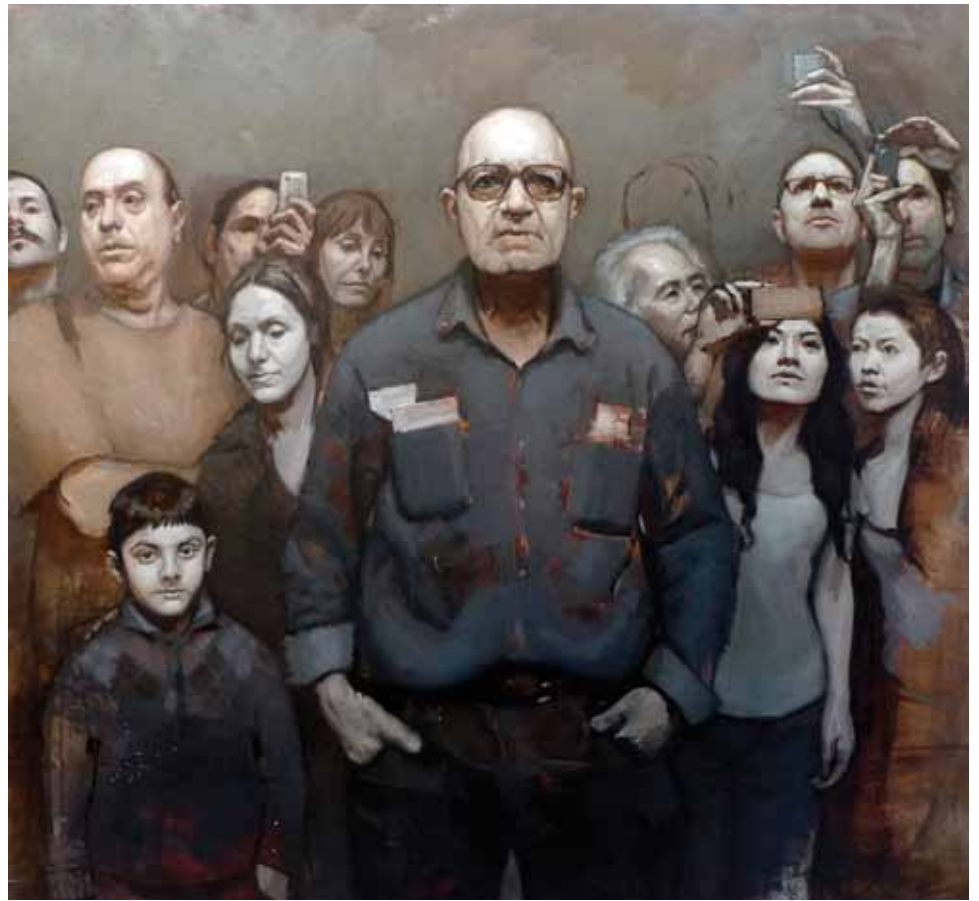
Meeting Ronnie was a pleasure and a life changing experience. From day one at the League, through the next 10 years of our lives, till the time spent with him at the nursing home during his last few days—he transmitted to me a sense of self-belief that, as a newcomer in the city, I needed. Ronnie didn't really need to say much to transmit that sense of self-belief. He had the ability to listen to people and make them feel comfortable, and that was probably enough.

I was fortunate to enjoy his company in class and outside of the League, too: openings, museum visits, dinners, lunches, barbecue parties, breakfast, and ice cream here and there. You name it, anything he was invited to, he showed up ready to have a good time, enjoy the company, and enjoy the food.

He was kind, positive, and charming; a smart man filled with an incredible amount of energy. Ronnie was like a walking life lesson to me, but not because of the things he said. It wasn't like he was preaching what you should and you shouldn't do in life (although I believe that he had very strong morals). I just felt that the way he approached life and the way he interacted with others was very good. He brought a lot of joy to my life, taught me a lot about life and, in a very special way, about death. He did not whisper any magical words to me; it was the way he dealt with it that I found quite amazing. He was the same till the end, and there was no drama about what was happening to him. He peacefully accepted that death is a part of life.

Sharp, charming, and kind as he always was, Ronnie spent his last few days surrounded by people who loved him and caring for everyone around him. If this world had more people behaving the way Ronnie did, this would be a better place. Boy Oh Boy! I will miss this great man.

– Beñat Iglesias-Lopez



Beñat Iglesias-Lopez, *The Louvre Project* (work in progress), 2010, oil on canvas, 60 x 65 inches

## An Acrostic of Ronnie Hall by Rashmi Pierce, League model

Ron inspired his fellow students to memorize and recite Shakespearean sonnets in order to improve their memories. He was convinced that this would not only enrich their intellect, but would also improve their drawing from memory, as espoused by Robert Henri.

Reach now, beyond the many bags you carried  
On this earth...feel the weight of them  
No more! Walk lightly into that realm where  
No longer, are your shuffled steps bound...Rest  
In peace, with your head held high...  
Embrace and receive all the Love left behind.

Hold us all, in your heart as we gather  
Around...as we celebrate your  
Life and all the  
Love you gave, silently now, without a sound.

# Welcome New Members

*Elected to the Membership of the Art Students League at the  
October and December 2014 Membership Meetings:*

Naoko Amemiya  
Anya Andreeva  
Katherine Arnoldi  
Lillian Bayer  
Marites E. Bienvenida  
Marlene Bloom  
Emily Brasher  
Marc Bratman  
Victor A. Bustamante  
Sergio Cabrera  
Young Cho  
Katie Dang  
Arlene D'Arienzo  
Matthew Feinstein  
Janet Fekete Bolton  
Denise Marie Felix

Fumiko Fisher  
Tanda Francis  
C. Robert Friedman  
Rosemarie E. Gates  
Patricia K. Gause  
Roz Goldfarb  
Orna F. Greenberg  
Maria M. Halkias  
Sidney H. Harris  
Carole Peck Harrison  
Alex Haskel  
Robert J. Hernandez  
Raymond J. Howard  
Marcelene Mosca Isaacson  
Judith I. Karasik  
Nicholas R. Keslake

Vicky Duk D. Lee  
Ronald Lindahl  
Yoko Maeda  
Ainara L. Martinez  
Dominique I. Medici  
Sara Yolima Montoya Bello  
Stephen Moore  
Maria Mottola  
Vesna Musicki-Kovacevic  
Sandro Nigrelli  
Elizabeth Del Carmen C. Osorio Romo  
Veronique Ouaknine  
Christopher J. Page  
Kie Soo Park  
Salome Pereira  
Stephen J. Rosenthal

Yuki Sakaguchi  
Ruby C. Schechter  
George Sierzputowski  
Virginia R. Soyka  
Patricia A. Spence  
Susana T. Tavel  
Adnane Tmart  
Qixi Wang  
Brenda Warther  
Jane L. Wechsler  
William A. Welsenbach  
Shelby S. Werner  
Amy L. Wong  
Joyce A. Yasner  
Madeline York Letwack

## League Dates to Remember

**Sunday, April 5, 2015**  
Easter (League closed)

**Wednesday, April 8, 2015**  
Members Meeting

**Monday, May 18 – Saturday, May 23, 2015**  
Grants & Scholarships Competition (Gallery closed)

**Sunday, May 24, 2015**  
Last day of 2014–15 Regular Session

**Monday, May 25, 2015**  
Memorial Day (League closed)

**Tuesday, May 26 – Sunday, May 31, 2015**  
End of Session Clean-Out for 2015 Summer Session

**Monday, June 1 – Saturday, August 22, 2015**  
2015 Summer Session

**Monday, June 1 – Monday, June 15, 2015**  
*The Red Dot Exhibition*

**Friday, June 19 – Wednesday, July 29, 2015**  
*On the Front Lines:  
Military Veterans at The Art Students League of New York*

**Saturday, July 4, 2015**  
Independence Day (League closed)

**Monday, August 3 – Sunday, August 16, 2015**  
*Technical Instructors Exhibition*

**Monday, August 24 – Monday, September 7, 2015**  
End of Session Clean-Out for 2015–16 Regular Session

**Tuesday, September 8, 2015–Sunday, May 29, 2016**  
2015–16 Regular Session

**Tuesday, September 8 – Friday, September 25, 2015**  
*Instructors Exhibition*

## Stay in E-Touch

If you've enjoyed *Lines*, you'll want to keep up with League members and events online by visiting our website, [www.theartstudentsleague.org](http://www.theartstudentsleague.org). We've added a Members page with key dates and an *In Memoriam* section.

**From the League's website you can:**

- Join our E-mail list
- Become a Facebook fan
- Subscribe to our YouTube channel
- Follow us on Twitter & Pinterest
- Join our Alumni Group on LinkedIn



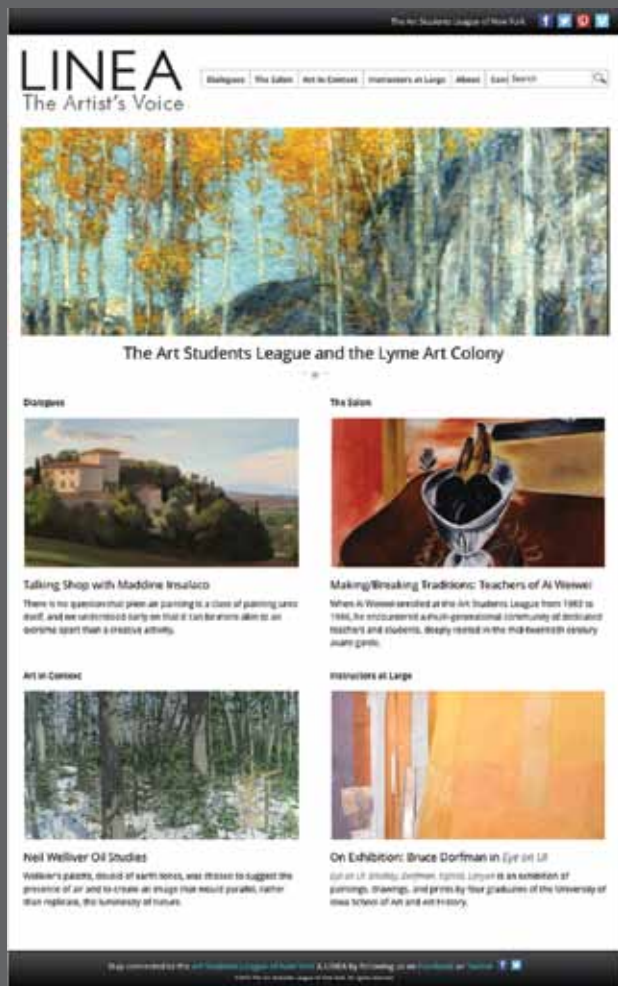
# ON THE FRONT LINES

## Military Veterans at The Art Students League of New York

Returning veterans rejuvenated the League after World War II. The modernist paintings of veterans at the League, including Robert Rauschenberg, Al Held, Charles Alston, Paul Jenkins, Alfred Leslie, and Michael Goldberg, kept the League in the forefront of American art.

**JUNE 19—JULY 29, 2015**

See their work and honor the thousands of veterans who have attended the League.



## LINEA

A Platform for the Instructor's Voice  
[www.asllinea.org](http://www.asllinea.org)

LINEA's articles encompass the instructor's expertise, as both creator and thinker.

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# The Art Students League of New York

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[www.theartstudentsleague.org](http://www.theartstudentsleague.org)

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