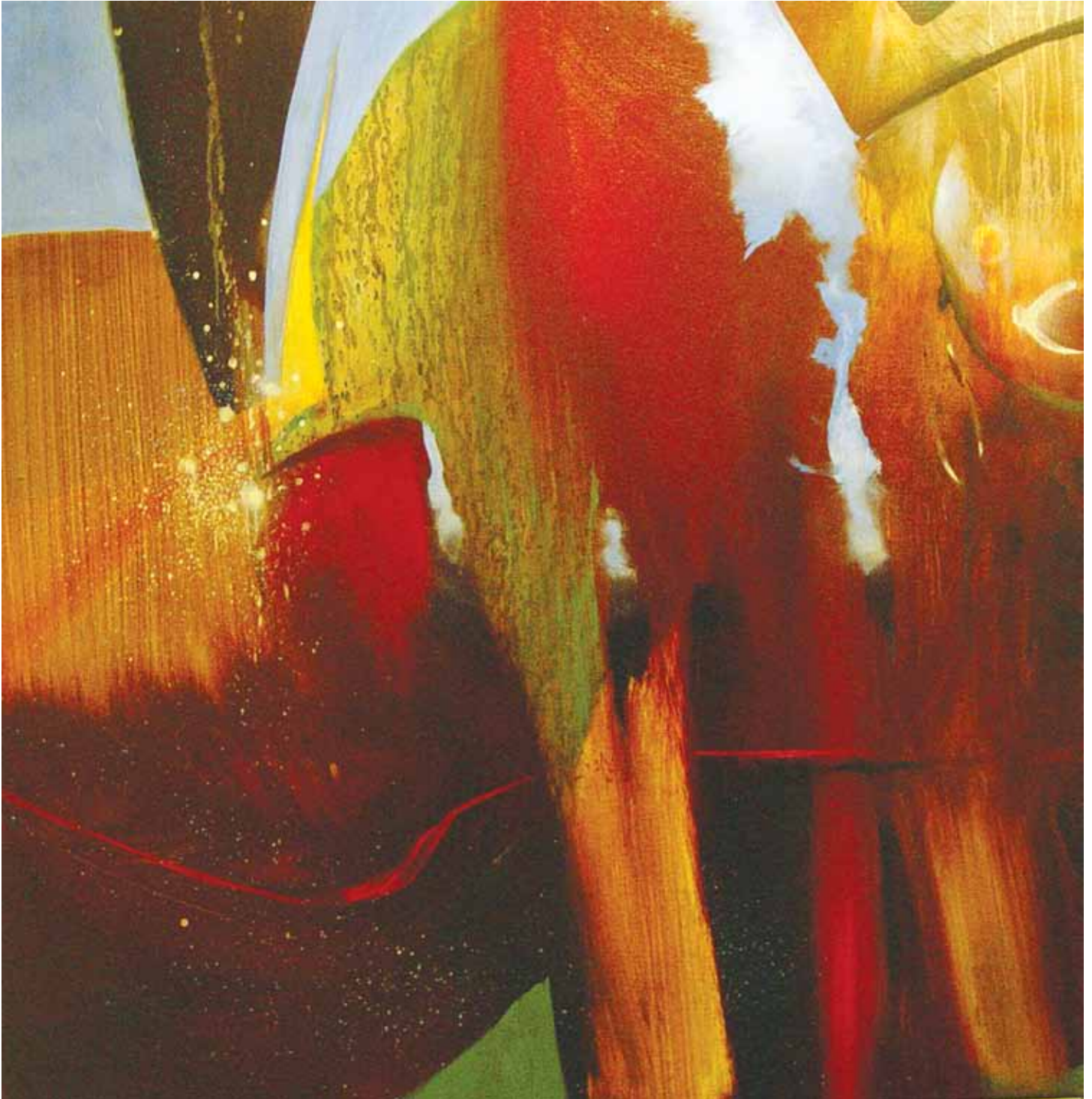


# LINES *from the* League



STUDENT AND ALUMNI MAGAZINE  
WINTER 2012 – 2013



# Letter from the Executive Director

## Will Barnet: May 25th, 1911 – November 13th, 2012

*In February 2012, President Obama honored Will Barnet with the National Medal of Arts for his contributions as an American painter, printmaker, and teacher. The White House noted his role as “a constant force in the visual arts world, marrying sophistication and emotion with beauty and form.”*



**H**e was our champion, our captain, our guide through art and time. Penetrating the barriers of longevity, he found terra firma where few have landed. A herald of what is yet to be, an avatar of the artist’s journey, we now know that the possibilities of art are endless. I so wanted him to continue. What more discoveries would lie ahead? What more could he have taught us about what it is to be an artist, by staying engaged in the process? He had gone so far with such undiminished clarity proving what artists before him could only hypothesize; that learning never stops. Age breaks through the veils of thought and shrinks the distance between the artist and art. The act of creation is immediate. There is nothing to prove, no point to be made, no story to tell. Perception is expressed with freedom and intelligence unencumbered by any attenuation.

One of America’s great artists, Will’s career in art spanned over eighty years, including a fifty year affiliation with the Art Students League. He embodied the spirit and ideals of the League, from his time as a student to his development as a master printer, instructor, and finally Instructor Emeritus. Equipped with talent and determination, he flourished within its rich environment. He is an example of what I often cite as evidence of the League’s

success and importance in the history of American art and how an institution can be a catalyst in its evolution. One may argue whether or not Will Barnet would have been as good an artist had it not been for the League. But I can say without a doubt that the League would not be the institution it is today had it not been for Will Barnet. As with so many of our faculty, he guided us in understanding and absorbing the intricate complexities of the language of visual art and taught us how to search and explore on our own and embark on what for many has been a never ending journey of discovery. It has been an extraordinary privilege for me to know him. I am especially proud to have called him a friend and fortunate to have learned so much from him.

Like the stars whose light remains visible long after they have extinguished, Will’s art and his teachings will continue to engage and inspire us to reach beyond our limits. He certainly proved during his extraordinary lifetime that in art, there are no limits.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ira Goldberg'.

*Ira Goldberg  
Executive Director*

**Editor**

Denise L. Greene

**Senior Editors**

Helen Dwork  
Julia Montepagani  
Thomas Tacik

**Copy Editor**

Erin Butler

**Design Director**

Lilian R. Engel

**Designer**

Yuko Ueda

**Director of Individual and Planned Giving**

Denise L. Greene  
denise@artstudentsleague.org

**Director of Communications**

Ken Park  
kpark@artstudentsleague.org

**Commentary Welcome**

*Lines from the League:*  
*Student and Alumni Magazine*  
welcomes letters to the editor  
as well as comments, suggestions,  
and corrections. Send correspondence  
by e-mail to friend@artstudentsleague.org.

**Executive Director**

Ira Goldberg

**Feature Stories**

**I Don't Like to Take Myself Too Seriously 4**

Cathryn Aison

**Salvaging Pieces to Make a Whole 7**

Sylvia Mendel

**Design Lights the Way to Sculpture 10**

Jay Moss

**Larry Katzman, The Cartoonist 12**

Larry Katzman

**Edith Lake Wilkinson: A Treasure Locked Away 13**

Jane Anderson

**A Life in Art 15**

Al Johnson

**Peter Ruta: *Nulla Dies Sine Linea* 16**

Suzanne Ruta

**Studio 12 in the AM 18**

Milt Rubin

**Seeds of the League**

**2012 Jack Kamen Scholars from the High School of Art & Design 20**

In Their Own Words

**The Models**

**On and Off the Model Stand 24**

Pigeon

**Blane Charles: To Dance! To Model! To Live! 26**

**Monica Lynch: The Muse 27**

**Raven 28**

**Jaece Lutece: A Voyage Around the World 29**

**Mickey & Len Sirowitz 30**

Len Sirowitz

Mickey Sirowitz

**The Hall of Fame Gala and Celebrating the Line  
"Celebrating" a "Gala" Autumn 32**

**Thank You Gala Attendees & Contributors 34**

**League Dates to Remember 35**





# I Don't Like to Take Myself Too Seriously

by Cathryn Aison

I believe I have always wanted to be an artist. Both my parents, Elna and Joseph Shulof, were “recreational” artists, actually very good ones. My mother studied on and off at the League with Leo Manso, and at the National Academy with George Nama. My father studied at the League as well with Moses and Raphael Soyer, and at the University of Pennsylvania in an architecture program. He never became a professional artist because my grandfather died in 1929, so he became the breadwinner for his family. My grandfather had sent him to Germany in the early 1920s to study art, but while in Germany my father's uncle, who was a successful furrier, apprenticed him. After my grandfather died, my father's uncle sponsored him in New York as a furrier.

I grew up in the suburbs of New York in the 1940s. I remember spending Sundays with my father drawing floor plans for the ideal home. I was going to become the architect my father had forsaken. I studied mechanical drawing for four years in high school. I applied and was accepted to the architecture school at the then Carnegie Institute of Technology. Unfortunately, the new dean, Norman Rice, had other plans for the three women accepted into the program. He felt that it was too strenuous for women, who would never make it as architects. He strongly urged us to register for fine arts instead, with the assumption that if we did well we could major in Industrial Design after our preliminary two years. This was clearly a turning point and a significant event in my artistic life. The basic Fine Arts curriculum had a very strong emphasis on drawing from the model. I had never had any experience with this kind of drawing before and was in shock. I failed drawing and was devastated, never having failed a class before. I finally convinced my father that if I was going to study “Fine Art” I should do it in New York City, not Pittsburgh. After two years in Pittsburgh I returned home, despondent and broken. I then spent the next year convincing my parents to let me live in the



Clockwise from top: *Croc*;  
*Butterfly Man*; *Yellow Chess* print;  
*Cat* print  
Opposite page: *Set and Board*



city so I wouldn't waste time commuting. I registered at the League and made an attempt to learn to draw, and draw from the model. I failed again!

As a twelve-year-old I had studied dance with Martha Graham and been halfway good, so I made an attempt to become a “modern” dancer by taking classes at the Graham school from morning to night, six days a week. I did that for a year and learned fortitude and discipline, but I did not learn to be a very good dancer. This was in the late fifties and the Graham Company was in its prime. Studying there was a wonderful exposure to many very extraordinary artists. Martha Graham was a force. She was a spectacular choreographer and an even more amazing teacher. She created a very special dance pedagogy that I was privileged to participate in. One of the many lessons I acquired from that time was Graham's continual statement, “It takes ten years to become a dancer.” I think it takes ten years in any discipline to really know your way. At the time I didn't think I had ten years. I desperately wanted to be in her company, but realized that was never going to be.



I needed a vocation so I took a typing class. As luck would have it I had a friend who was leaving her job at *Mechanics Illustrated Magazine* as the reader mail aficionado. I never finished my typing course, but took her place at Fawcett Publications. There were some very interesting people working there at the time. One of the editors was Lawrence Sanders, author of the *Deadly Sin* series. It was very exciting for me to have a job and earn a living. I felt like I was working in a 1930s film environment starring Claudette Colbert and Clark Gable. I continued to take dance classes but only in the evening and on weekends. I guess I stopped thinking about being an "artist." Then I met my future husband who was an up-and-coming graphic designer and a teacher. He published his first children's book with Atheneum Publishers and introduced me to Harry Ford, the art director, production manager, and poetry editor. Harry hired me to be his assistant and I worked for and with him on-and-off

for the next thirty years. I would have to say that more than anyone Harry Ford was my mentor. He supported and encouraged so many of my efforts. Through him I was able to build my self-esteem and confidence.

My husband, Everett Aison, was teaching at NYU in 1964 when Silas Rhodes, director of the School of Visual Arts, suggested that he set up a film school at SVA. He did and was the chairman of it until 1972. As his wife I had the rare privilege of taking any course offered. I became fascinated with animation and was quite lucky to study at SVA with Shamus Culhane, a masterful Fleischer/Disney animator. I started making films with collage and photography, but the camera was avaricious and the only way to feed it was to draw. I finally had the right motivation and found out that drawing, like knitting, was a learnable skill. I was so pleased to think that Mr. Radio, my drawing teacher at Carnegie, would be rolling over in his grave if he could see me now. I made several funky animated films

while studying at SVA and then, on a fluke in the summer of 1972, got a gig to animate for an ABC TV show called *Make A Wish*. I did many of the segments for this show from 1972 to 1976, when it was replaced by *Animals, Animals, Animals*, which I worked on as well. I graduated from these two gigs to writing and creating segments for Sesame Street as an independent freelance contractor. I did my first Sesame Street film in 1975. At the same time I continued working as a freelance graphic designer and somehow raised two children—my daughter Courtney born in 1969, and my son Patrick born in 1973. Being a mother of two wonderful, creative and clever children was definitely instrumental and inspirational in forming my subject matter for the films I made for Sesame Street.

Sort of simultaneously to my animation life I became more and more interested in working in ceramics. I first started at the 92nd Street Y, where my son was in Nursery School, and it seemed more practical to

stick around and take a class than to leave and come back to pick him up two hours later. What started as a hobby became an obsession and continued for the next twenty-five years.

In retrospect, I was very fortunate to have been able to make a living doing my TV animation for ten years. In the early eighties these opportunities were drying up for me; the computer was taking over traditional animation and I was not interested and could not afford the investment in the computer. I tried my hand at more commercial aspects working for advertising, but it was a very bad fit.

My marriage ended and I needed a stable form of income. In 1983 Harry Ford came to the rescue and offered me a staff position, twenty years after I had left Atheneum to be a freelancer. A variety of events caused me to bounce around the publishing industry until 1988 when, again thanks to Harry Ford, I landed at Vintage Books as their Art Director for interior book design. I retired from Vintage in January 2012 to





become a “full time artist.” I am discovering that this is a very difficult job with not very good pay.

Vintage, which is a division of Random House, was willing to pay for my tuition if I returned to school. So in 1989 I enrolled as a second semester junior in evening part-time classes at Hunter College. I took a few academic courses but mainly concentrated on ceramics. At the time, Hunter had a wonderful ceramics department headed by Susan Peterson. I was able to take classes with Bruce Dehnert, Kim Dickey and Susan Peterson. I actually became a fairly good student and Kim Dickey started me on a project I continued with until 2004. Her assignment was to reproduce an object from The Metropolitan Museum of Art. I chose a twelfth century Persian chess set. I became intrigued with the idea of a chess set for many reasons, not the least of which being that living in NYC, there was not a lot of room to hold large pieces. A chess set could serve as a maquette for larger sculpture ideas. Also a chess set presented a good set of challenges: thirty-two pieces that worked together, an integral hierarchy and a history. I have made at least 20 chess sets in ceramics along with a host of pieces I have called “the audience.”

The Hunter College Ceramics Department became a less friendly environment in the late 1990s, and I also had to deal with breast cancer from 1996 to 1997, so I left Hunter in 2000 and took up again at the 92nd Street Y, where there was the possibility of a high fire reduction kiln which had been eliminated at Hunter by then.

As I was now finally financially stable and able to support myself and my two children, I was free to do whatever I wanted with my “art.” I didn’t have to think about selling or showing, I could just do whatever I liked. I created my own world with these small ceramic pieces, creating many different characters to play with. After a while I thought about creating a board, a home, for my “pieces.” The ceramic boards I was making just did not feel right. My friend Yoko Inoue, whom I met while a student at Hunter, was instrumental in introducing me to the League and printmaking. The Random House office is located around the corner from the League and one day in the fall of 2004 Yoko came for lunch and walked me over to check out the League.

I was interviewed by Michael Pelletier, who I don’t think knew quite what to make of me. I told him I wanted to make a chess board and he was willing to let me try.

After fulfilling my initiation requirements, Michael was very helpful in the making of my chess board. To date I think it probably is my best accomplishment in printmaking. The environment in the printmaking department at the League was so friendly and inviting and stimulating I had to stay on; it became my new obsession. Major inspiration for me at the League came from Takamune Ishiguro and Akiko Hoshino. Taka was monitor when I started and he was helpful and inspiring in so many ways. If I would ask his opinion or advice, my favorite response from Taka was “Up to you.” When I am in doubt I still hear him say that to me. Akiko was just Akiko, a beautiful flower in full bloom who made the room glow whenever she would show up. I miss them both so much.

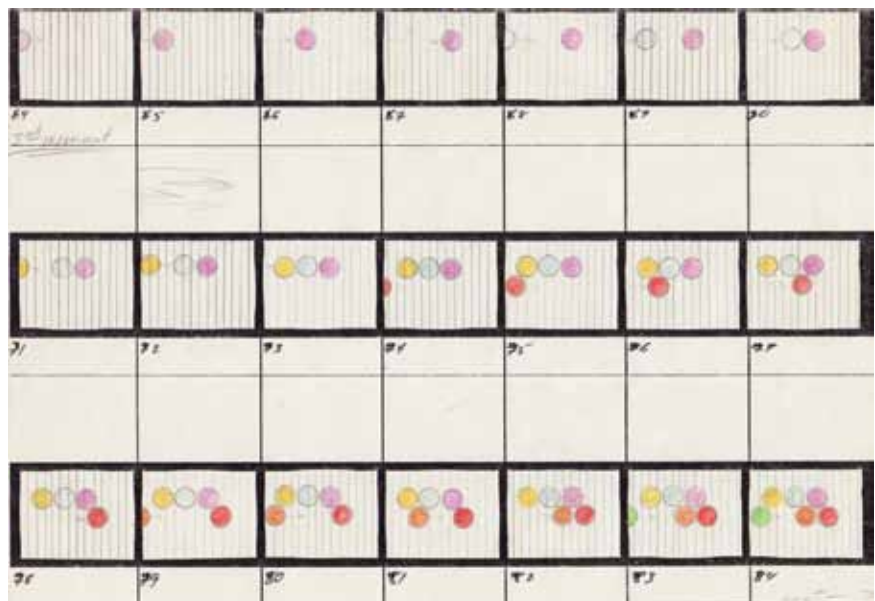
Although I always aspired to be an artist I don’t think I realized I was one until I was middle-aged. Even now I am suspect. I

know I am compelled to work on my “art.” I know I am diligent and persistent even if not always aesthetically pleasing. I love process more than product and am happiest when I am pursuing. I am truly thankful for my artistic temperament; it is a gift from my parents that I cherish.

In the back of my mind my film *Geometry of Circles*, which I conceived and created in 1979, has always been a source of pride for me. I love the fact that it travelled around the world anonymously and was seen by many, many children for years and years. Over the years I have encountered people who have seen it and been influenced by it. It is always a treat to hear them say something and I love showing it to my grandchildren. It is quite an honor, and a surprise, to have it now included in the *Century of the Child, Growing by Design* show at MoMA.

It would be wonderful not to worry about money. If money were not an issue, I think I would hire a life editor to organize all my various projects and help me rid myself of excess to make room for more.

One more wish would be to design and build a proper display for my chess board and pieces. Any ideas are welcome. 🌱



From top: MoMA Exhibition; *Geo Circles*

*Sylvia Mendel's work begins with and embodies her memories and experiences. The accidental quality of found materials, which she uses to construct her artwork reflects the contingent nature of human experience. It is a deeply personal expression. Here, Sylvia shares recollections that underscore and elucidate her creative process.*



## Salvaging Pieces to Make a Whole

by Sylvia Mendel

I once had a picture of my father holding my hand. I lost that and many other reminders of my childhood in London when we were bombed out three times during World War II. Our flat was in the East End, an area heavily bombed because it was near the docks, a prime target for the Germans.

On September 1, 1939, Operation Pied Piper evacuated almost 3.75 million people from London. In the first three days of official evacuation, mothers, pregnant women, disabled people, teachers and other “helpers” were moved. Hosts were often put to inconvenience, especially by many children who seemed to be vulnerable to stress symptoms.

I had turned 9, my brother Stanley was 18 months younger than me, and my sister, Helen, was about 4 years old. Stanley and I were to be evacuated September 1, 1939. We were told we were going on a day trip. Parents had to take us to our schools about 5 a.m. and buses took us to the train station. They gave us chocolate and gas masks. A common phrase of the time was “destination unknown,” to guard against trains being bombed if station locations were known. Parents were informed of children’s locations after they were settled into billets (safe houses). There are newsreels and pictures of parents trying to stifle their crying because it would contradict what the children were told.

On the internet, I found the girl who was

evacuated with me—Goldie Levy. What follows is an excerpt of her recollections from that day:

“People came and chose who they wanted (just like slavery). We were the last. Finally, Sylvia Mendel and I were billeted with a Colonel and Mrs. Boyd...The Boyds were as kind as could be expected, but we were too confused by the whole experience. We ate in the kitchen with the cook. On Sundays we had green tea with the Boyd’s in the dining room.”

My sister had to be accompanied by our mother to a billet until she turned five, she cried because she wanted to go with Stanley and me. As soon as she turned five that November, my mother returned to London. My father was a gambler and contributed financially only when he got lucky at the races, so my mother worked from 8 a.m to 6 p.m six days a week.

Together with Goldie, I was placed with my brother in Hertfordshire, 19 miles from London. The Boyds are the only family of that time whose name and kindness I remember. I even remember their address—the house was Roanoke on Berks Hill (at the top of the hill by the side of the woods). I was given a doll and cradle as a Christmas gift. It was a black baby doll in a wicker cradle with pink satin sheets and pillow and a little mattress. She had no clothes so I knitted a black and red checkered sweater—complicated knitting for a 9-year-old—and made a Prussian blue frock. I’ll never forget

that color. I remember it precisely. I remember not letting go of that doll. I called her Bonnie, and she had eyes that opened and closed.

I became seriously ill early in 1940 and required surgery and convalescence. This left my brother alone, but my sister, now five, could be evacuated without a parent. My mother didn’t want her two youngest children separated, and had to accept what was available for Stanley and Helen in Reading, 38 miles from London. There were two mementos of the time after I was sick, letters I’d written to my mother from the convalescent home. One of them, now lost, had a drawing of a side view of a little girl standing in front of an adult, who was in a threatening posture, bending towards the girl and pointing her finger. The little girl was holding a doll behind her back. I remember the adult’s name as Miss Gaguine. I vaguely remember her as a gym teacher. I suppose she must have been one of the teachers expected to stay with their London classes until they were settled in local schools. The drawing was mature for a 9-year-old. Another letter I found showed a drawing of an apple, captioned “Mmm doesn’t this look as though it would melt in your mouth? Don’t you want to eat it?” Of all those experiences, the loss of Bonnie still triggers anger, sadness and longing. Anger often cloaks sadness and is less painful. Those are the facts I remember, that and my love and tenderness for Bonnie—for of





course Bonnie must have been me.

There were no more billets available by the time I left the convalescent home, so my mother was advised to take me home. Daily exercises were necessary to correct the disfigurement caused by the surgery, and this kind of attention could not be assured in a stranger's home. Coming home from school one day I was amazed to see my brother and sister waiting for me to open the door. Stanley had taken the exact amount of spending money given him by my mother and left Reading with my sister Helen, taking the train to London. Having visited them once with my mother, I fully understood their planned departure. Their caretaker was a frightening person with a large, long-haired, dirty-white cat who walked on the table poking her nose in the disgusting food. The outdoor lavatory was primitive—a pail, a board and newspaper on a hook. My brother was then nine and my sister near seven. She remembers his threats to take her back if she didn't stop crying. My mother found a wonderful placement for them at a wartime Habonim hostel, which they loved and where they spent the remainder of the war years.

A method to revive traumatic memories and then re-process them was discovered by Francine Shapiro in 1987. It has proven successful in banishing the most disturbing Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) symptoms. PTSD shatters memory because traumatic events must be processed—especially for children—in order to be remembered. I can only surmise from nightmares the events I don't remember, and sometimes ordinary events cause flashbacks. So some of my quirks (only they're more serious than quirks) come from that time.

I do want to remember. I have only recognized, in my advanced age, the long-term impact of those events. In writing this it occurred to me that these losses are hidden symbolically in the folds of my work. I convalesced in a home for poor Jewish children, all needing long-term care for diseases like rickets, mastoid abnormalities, tuberculosis. I remember two other incidents from my convalescence—putting my fingers inside the bandages on my neck to feel what was there, and a sexually abusive incident by an older girl. A cousin and a friend, both in the same home at that time, told me tales of mistreatment and cruelty. One was of our

being made to stand naked by our beds at night. Other cruelties specifically inflicted on me were told to me by my friend.

One bright spot that I have no memory of was a visit from Conrad Veidt, a gifted actor who had played Major Heinrich Strasser in *Casablanca*. He had escaped from Germany to England and showed his gratitude by visiting sick children. My cousin remembers the play we performed for him. All I remember of those times are names, movies and songs—all the lyrics and movie music fresh in my memory. I have tried to place myself in that period of time by scouring the internet for events and dates that I know of. I use Veidt's appearance in *Casablanca* and his visits to the convalescent home to give myself a time frame. Filming for *Casablanca* began in May 25, 1942. He came to visit the children in the convalescent home so I know I was still there in May 1942, and that I was back in London by age 12, for I was going to begin secondary school.

During and after the war, shortages of materials made rationing necessary. My Aunt Sadie worked for Norman Hartnell, the Royals' dressmaker. She would bring home luxurious remnants for me from the cutting room floor. My parents worked in a service uniform factory. The remnants they brought home for me were rougher. When sirens warned of approaching German bombers, my materials had to be in a "state of readiness," for we had to hurry to bomb shelters. Folding seemed practical and storing them in old socks was the easiest way to carry them. When the war ended in 1945 I began to experiment by folding newspapers in fan shapes like the Japanese fans I'd seen in books—perhaps the forerunner for the folded papers I made later.

At 17, my mother reminded me gently that I had to bring some money home. I began to sell brooches and belts that I had made. I found my first and only job in England, which lasted six years, until I immigrated. As described in the reference given by the very English director where I worked, I was a "first class" telephonist/typist. He called me Miss Finkelstein every day, though my name has always been Mendel. That's an example of what is referred to as casual anti-Semitism; the director was unaware of his bigotry and presumed superiority as a White Anglo-Saxon Protestant.

I left England in 1953, arriving in New York in January 1954. My sister joined me the following year. I was living temporarily with an aunt who had sponsored both of



us. My English accent seemed to impress people and within a week of my arrival I got a job at Geyer Advertising, whose biggest client was American Motors. I loved the job and the people I met. My job was to organize countrywide mailings of advertising insertions in local publications. I was thrilled at the evocative names of places across the country. When I hear those names now, I feel happy that I know the origin of many of them and how to spell them.

A former evacuee called me from Australia about 20 years ago and identified me as his “girlfriend” before 1939. He sent me photos and I remembered him well. He gave me details of our “courtship” from seven to nine years old. His parents didn’t want him to be evacuated and he came to look for me when I returned to London in 1942 after my convalescence. He said I looked ill and that I wouldn’t let him in the house because my father got angry when any boys came to visit me.

I received full scholarships for college and graduate work. After Brooklyn College I got a Masters in Social Work at Columbia University in 1976. My degree from Brooklyn College was granted after the first year of study at Columbia—a special early entrance privilege, which I was the first to be awarded. I became a licensed clinical social worker, and in 1980 I was offered a great job for the city as a senior consultant, providing mandated consultative and oversight services to mental health programs receiving city and state contracts. I specialized in PTSD, established a private practice and made frequent presentations on the disorder to clinicians.

I’m omitting marriage, but not two daughters, now in their 50’s, and two grand-



Previous page: *Elsa Hedy*, collage on parchment,  
Above: *Lysistrata*, collage, paper  
Above right: *Wear Gold*

children, 11-year-old Adele and 8-year-old Jack. At their request, I’ve given four art lessons in each of their classes at school with samples of my own pieces and materials for them to choose from. It’s instructive to see how many skills they needed to make an integrated piece from the disparate materials I brought. That is the only venue in which I’ve been a celebrity.

In 1992, my first instructor at the League was Ethel Edwards. She inspired me and identified qualities in my folded pieces that I hadn’t yet observed. It was a long time before my belief in myself matched the belief she had in me. She died in 1999, and I took Anita Steckel’s class for a few months. Ms. Steckel was unique in what she communicated with collage and drawing to make a compelling statement, and in her method of teaching: asking us to select one limb to draw. I drew a perfectly beautiful leg, worthy of framing, on a huge piece of Arches paper. Eventually, it tore at the fold and I plan to frame separately each half of the leg in the spirit of restoring pieces so they are whole.

My salvaging habit is played out at auctions, thrift shops and on the streets. I find the remnants from estates seeming to be of no value to survivors (or perhaps there are no survivors). One treasured cache found on 104th Street and West End Avenue consisted of letters, diaries, photos and a passport. These discarded documents told a fragmented history of a Viennese family whose end most likely was immigration or a concentration camp. Diaries from 1930 in German, records of properties in New York from 1955, a passport from 1950 (perhaps the surviving mother brought to America by her son). This particular find was significant because it is related to the question of form and function when telling a story in art.

In 2004, my first folded piece was a prize-winner in the Art Students League’s exhibit of members’ works. The piece was hung low enough for a close look, and I noticed three viewers getting very close to the piece and discussing it. One of them was trying to look inside the folds. I’ve always wanted viewers to look closely and that experience led me to view these folded pieces as seductions and subversions. The mystery of the folds seduces and I hope to subvert viewers to curiosity about something not previously considered or valued. Recently I looked through my unframed folded papers (still stored conveniently in old socks). I saw that I’ve written something meaningful to me in all of them, usually expressed in a



song or poem. The themes seem to be longing and integration.

In 2008, a piece of my work was seen by a London gallery owner at the Affordable Art Fair in New York. It was my largest piece shown through Exhibition Outreach, for which I thank Leah McCloskey. The dealer wanted to take it back to his London gallery and asked for three more in the same style. I’ve been in many juried shows, competing only in those judged by curators from well-known museums in New York. The chief curator of the Brooklyn Museum selected one of my folded pieces for permanent exhibit online in the Curate NYC 2011 competition, out of 2500 entries.

I’ve always loved the medium of collage and I revere Kurt Schwitters—in my opinion the most accomplished collage artist. Successful collages achieve an integrated whole from disparate fragments—my purpose in making the folded pieces. Now I’m making bracelets from coffee cups and pendants from eyeglass lenses. These items sell well, providing some funds for materials and taxis to and from the League, because I’m usually loaded down with work and supplies. I plan to continue in that direction with my fragments. Moving from the folds is a major shift that feels like a coming-out-of-hiding. I once asked my League instructor Mariano del Rosario, “When will I stop making these folded pieces?” He answered, “When you’ve exhausted their possibilities.” This may be the time. 🍷

<http://www.sylviamendel.com>

# DESIGN LIGHTS *the Way to Sculpture*

by Jay Moss

In grade school I did simple, child-like profile drawings of my parents and my whole family complimented me on the likenesses. In the 8th grade an interesting elective was woodworking. It was very obvious! I had to make a tilting art table for drawing. All this time I whittled small fishes and birds in pine and other soft woods.

From the age of 12 or 14 I made model airplanes from a ten-cent balsa wood kit. I showed it to the hobby store owner and, even though it took me three weeks to make it, he gave me 50 cents for the finished painted model. It was in the store window for a month. Was I proud! I also built an art table in the back of my Dad's store and made signs for local merchants, ten for two bucks, and so on.

The principal of Eastern District High School spoke to my mother and told her to transfer me to the High School of Industrial Arts (now the High School of Art & Design). After three years there working in graphic arts, three-dimensional design, and studio drawing, the school offered an interesting incentive—if you could find work in your field of study, you could spend your final semester doing it. I found a job at Davega, a chain of 40 stores selling electronics and sporting goods. I worked at the company's office, where a model window was used to experiment with design ideas for all the stores. I also had short-term jobs at an advertising agency and at Metro Mat Service, an advertising service.

During four high school summers, I was an arts and crafts counselor at Camp Wayne in the Pocono Mountains and carved an 18-foot totem pole, which is still at the entrance to the camp. I played the drums and designed sets in an adult camp in the Adirondack Mountains (Timberland), and I did sets and played in a band in the Catskill Mountains.

Shortly after high school I was drafted to fight in World War II and served in a Combat Engineer outfit. After the war I came to the Art Students League under "Public Law 16 of the GI Bill of Rights," a special law



Clockwise from top left: Jack Paar etc. designs; NBC designs; *Oscar for Torturers*; Press clips

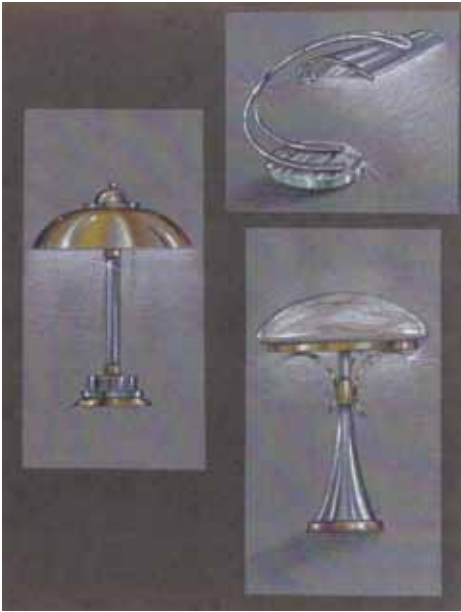
which provided help for disabled veterans. I had been evacuated from the Anzio Beachhead in World War II with pneumonia, trench foot and malaria. I chose the League because of my art background.

I left the League in the early 1950s after three-and-a-half years of fascinating work and fun. My instructors at the League were: José de Creeft, sculpture; Morris Kantor, painting; William Zorach, sculpture; and M. Peter Piening, design & graphic arts.

A friend's father had a rather important post in the Masons and he told me of a program they had to help returning veterans gain employment. By writing letters on my behalf on Masonic stationery they got me the job at NBC's TV Art Department, which I left as its head after 12 years. Some of the shows assigned to me were: *The Sid Caesar Show*, *Texaco Star Theatre* (Milton Berle), *Hallmark Hall of Fame*, *The Home Show* (Arlene Francis and Hugh Downs), *The Today Show*, *Your*







*Show of Shows, Howdy Doody, and The Jack Paar Show.* I created a logo for *The Open Mind*, which has been on the air continually for over 50 years.

With the shift of art production to California, the art department dwindled from 18 employees to 8. I had just bought a house and rather than take a pay cut, I quit and formed my own company designing and manufacturing decorative accessories in the basement of my new house. The company, Museum Designs, made decorative mirrors and antique wall art, and proved quite successful. I then settled into a new factory and



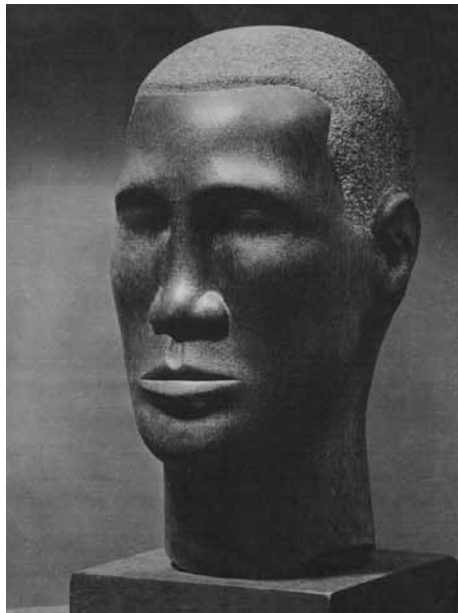
Clockwise from top left: *Lighting Design 1; Deranged Clown; Polynesian; Lighting Design 2*

*Deranged Clown* (directly left)

This clown was made of scraps of the sheet metal alloys that I use for much of my sculpture. I originally called it *A Foolish Clown*, but it seemed too gentle a name. Fierce, crazy or mad seemed more appropriate. I settled on "deranged." I hope to use these scraps more often.

*Polynesian* (below, right)

This mahogany piece was done rather early in the José de Creeft class at the League. I entered it in a show titled *Artists Under 25* at the Jacques Seligman Gallery on 57th Street. I took it there bolstered by two classmates. We all agreed it would not be accepted. I was surprised to see a photo of the sculpture in *Art News Magazine* with a critic's review of the show. I loved working in wood and that acceptance was what I needed.



teaching a course on lighting product design at the Parsons School of Design. I also taught television graphic arts at the RCA Institute.

During all these years, I worked on my sculpture. I had a 50-minute documentary about sculpture on TV in Western Massachusetts and I had a one-man show of my sculpture at the Historic Wells Gallery in Lenox, Massachusetts. Additionally, I received the sculpture prize at the NCAA (Nassau County Art Association) and served as a panelist on the New York State Council on the Arts for Nassau County.

The art and aesthetics I absorbed from teachers and fellow students during my time at the League were, in some real measure, responsible for the success I enjoyed in my design work, at many companies including my own, for over 50 years. 🌟

acquired two partners. Within two years, a major lighting company bought my firm for the purpose of diversifying into decorative accessories.

I designed lighting products exclusively for more than a dozen firms over the next 17 years. Some prominent firms were: Bloomingdales, Sears Roebuck, Corning Glass, JC Penney, and Beth Weissman. I traveled to Italy, France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Hong Kong, and the Philippines to find new manufacturing sources for the American firms that retained me. In addition to my commercial activities I began



# Larry Katzman, *The Cartoonist*

I was born June 14, 1922, in Ogdensburg, NY. The family moved to Utica, NY and I lived there until I was twelve. My adult life was spent in Brooklyn and Manhattan until 2008. I now reside in Harrison, NY.

Like all cartoonists, I drew on my schoolbooks and cartooned for high school and college newspapers. I knew early on that I wanted to be a cartoonist, but decided that it would be a good idea to first get a college education, get into a profession and do my cartooning evenings and weekends. By 1944 I had earned a degree in electrical engineering at the University of Pennsylvania and immediately entered the Army where I served in the Signal Corps from 1944–1946. I had an opportunity to work on cartooning while Officer-in-Charge of *Hard Times*, the Signal Corps weekly newspaper in Europe. Upon my return to the States, I joined my father in his small one-product family company and studied evenings with Reginald Marsh at the Art Students League from 1946 to 1947. My mentors were some established magazine gag cartoonists I had met—Henry Boltinoff, Ben Roth, and others.

A turning point came in 1949 when I sold the cartoon feature *Nellie Nifty*, *RN* to *Modern Medicine*, one of the two leading medical magazines at the time. It ran for many years and established Nellie as a favorite cartoon of doctors, nurses and hospital personnel. Through 24 Nellie book collections and greeting cards I became known around the globe as the cartoonist of medical cartoons. In 1952 I became a regular cartoonist in *The Saturday Evening Post*, the most important cartoonist showcase in the U.S. at the time.

My technique has been consistent over the years. I started with

ball-point pens and India ink on 2-ply Strathmore paper and changed to a simple black Flair on single-ply Strathmore, eliminating dipping a pen or brush. I would make the base drawing in pencil on copy paper, correcting as I went along. Working on a light-box, I would then place that drawing as a guide under the Strathmore and ink directly, spraying fixative over the finished piece (which well-preserved the inking for over 50 years and counting).

At the same time my career as a cartoonist was moving forward I was making my way in the business world. I took over as President and CEO of Kaz, Inc. in 1956, building it to the largest manufacturer of electric vaporizers, humidifiers, heating pads, air cleaners, and thermometers. Along the way I helped in licensing the trade name Vicks for electric health appliances.

Experience has taught me that you can accomplish anything if you want it enough. For 25 years, when I came home from my office every working day, it was “shower, dinner, drawing board.”

After 25 years, my small company had grown into a pretty fair-sized company. I learned that if you’re president and CEO of a company, you don’t work 8 hours a day—you work 16-plus hours. I stopped the every-evening cartooning except for my features, which took only a few hours here and there. After 54 years I retired and turned the company over to my son Richard, who did a great job continuing to build it. He acquired Honeywell Consumer Products and Braun’s thermometer and blood pressure monitoring business to become the worldwide thermometer leader.

My current motivation is to keep active in my old age. With magazine cartoon markets virtually gone, I exhibit and sell my cartoons on the internet and soon on apps. I am spending more time on my HeadLines acrostic-type puzzles, my objective being to build a reception for them. 🍷



“Oh Raymond, you shouldn’t have!”



“And so begins the Generation Gap.”

Above: *Oh Raymond, You Shouldn't Have*;  
Left: *And So Begins the Generation Gap*;  
Right: *We're making progress. You're coming out of your shell.*



“We’re making progress. You’re coming out of your shell.”





This page: Works by Edith Lake Wilkinson

## Edith Lake Wilkinson: A Treasure Locked Away

by Jane Anderson

Back in the 1950s, my mother was having one of those restless days, visiting the in-laws in Wheeling, West Virginia. She proposed to my Aunt Betty that they go up to the attic of Grandma's old three-story house and see what treasures they could find. A couple of old trunks belonging to Uncle Eddie's long-forgotten maiden aunt, Edith Lake Wilkinson, had been sequestered there for years. No one in the family ever talked about poor Aunt Edith. She had been shut away in a mental institution for years and back in those days that was just something that nice families didn't talk about. But when my mother opened her trunks, she found something astounding: tucked away with Edith's clothes and possessions was a collection of artwork—landscapes from the early 1900s done in sun-blached, impressionistic strokes and canvases from the early '20s done in a bolder Fauvist style.

This wasn't the work of an amateur painter or a mentally unstable naïf. These were sophisticated pieces done by a gifted artist, who was clearly trained and influenced by the

art movements of her day. My mother asked Aunt Betty if she could have some of these paintings, and Aunt Betty, who was an outdoorsy person, was glad to have her take some off her hands. Apparently she had already unloaded a bunch at a garage sale and where those paintings are, nobody knows.

I was born a few years later and grew up surrounded by Edith's work. She taught me how to paint. When I was a kid, my mother gave me Edith's brushes in an old brush case that she had found

in the trunks. The bristles were still intact and I painted with them until they wore out. When I was 20, I moved to New York City. I took classes at the Art Students League and kept sketchbooks filled with subway riders, bag ladies, sunbathers in Central Park, scenes from Coney Island and the Lower East Side. Around that time, I found some of Edith's sketchbooks and I was astonished to see that sixty years earlier, Edith had been wandering those same streets sketching the people she saw: street vendors, immigrant women with their children, uptown ladies arranged on park benches.

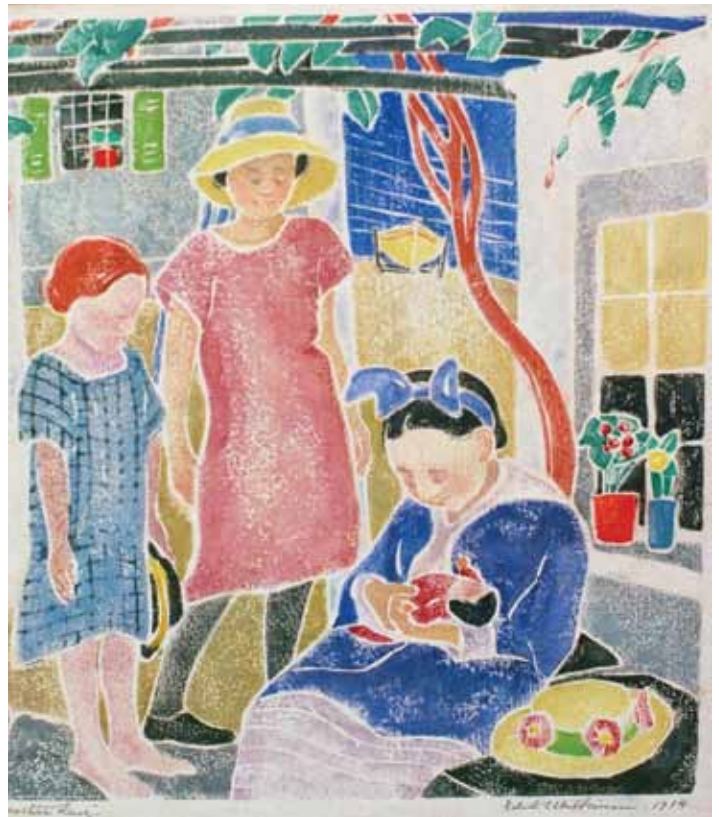
I set out to find out as much







This page: Works by Edith Lake Wilkinson



about Edith as I could. My aunt and uncle very kindly let me root through their closets and drawers for any scrap I could find. I went to the Art Students League archives and found her membership card and a record of her classes. I went to Provincetown and looked for traces of the summers she spent there, painting and drawing and making her beautiful white-line block prints. I got whatever records I could from the asylums where Edith was sequestered for the second half of her life for “depression.” I found a letter from the Wilkinson family lawyer who was in charge of Edith’s estate, advising her against living with her “companion” Frannie. Later letters from a circuit court in West Virginia reveal, on typing paper as thin as onion skin, that the same lawyer had absconded with most of Edith’s estate and was headed for prison after years of bilking his clients. I pieced together as much as I could of Edith’s story. It was thrilling to unearth the clues. It also made me incredibly sad that such a talent had been so cruelly shut down.

I went to the local museum and galleries in Provincetown, hoping to get Edith a showing. No one was interested. She was far too obscure. So I took a long break from Edith. I packed up her work and moved to L.A. Her paintings hang on the walls of the house that I share with my spouse, Tess, and our son. They have been witness to my own happy life. I’ve benefited from all those grand social movements that have given women of my generation the freedom to live however we please. I’m now in my late 50’s, the age when Edith was put away. I’m still productive and I’m still loved. I have the life that Edith should have had.

So, forty years later, I’m taking up the Edith cause once again. But this time I have the marvelous tool of the web to spread her work around. The site is for anyone who loves art and loves a good mystery. Here’s to giving all the lost and gifted souls of this world their final due. 🌐 <http://www.edithlakewilkinson.com/>







# *A Life in* Art

by Al Johnson

Clockwise from far left: *Seeking the New Directions*; *Assault on the Conscience*; *Divine Universe*

As early as grade school, all of my teachers, and especially my art teacher, recognized that I had talent. My art teacher entered early paintings of mine into a citywide poster art contest for public safety, and my work was chosen for an exhibition at the Whitney Museum. One of the jurors on the panel who chose my work was Romare Bearden. I didn't realize the importance of this master artist at the time—only that he said to me something along the lines of, "You got a good eye for composition kid."

Throughout public school I was in art class. Back then, there was a furniture dealer called Sachs Quality Stores. Sachs sponsored an art program with the artist LeRoy Neiman, which I attended. While I was in high school my art teacher, Rita Dominguez, who was friends with Jimmy Breslin from the NY Daily News, offered to take me to a courtroom to observe the work of a courtroom artist. The court case was the Rubin "Hurricane" Carter trial, and I actually sat in with professional courtroom artists. It was there that I met other illustrators for the first time. I knew then that commercial illustration was a direction for me.

I attended the Albert Pale School of Commercial Arts, Pratt Institute and the Art Students League, where I met Jack Faragasso. There have been many mentors, though not all of them were artists. Mentors have come to me at various times of my life for all sorts of reasons, but Jack introduced me to form and composition in a way that opened my eyes as an artist. He showed me how to understand what is seen in the artwork by understanding what is not seen. The best thing about the League, aside from the great instruction, is the great artists you meet there.



I'm a mixed media artist and constantly evolving. There are so many ways to explore my expression as an artist. Being able to mix media is a challenge every day and keeps my art exciting and interesting. Mixing media is a new freedom for me. I'm inspired by the emerging artists who are willing to go beyond the current trends and define their own means of expression. What's more, when my work inspires others, it motivates me.

A significant recent event in my artistic career was the unveiling of my portrait of Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm on the steps of Borough Hall, Brooklyn, where it is permanently installed. Receiving the recognition of over 500 people for my accomplishment was a real high point for me.

I survive as an artist by juggling fine art and commercial art on a daily basis. I create storyboards for films, which keeps me active in the creative world. When I'm not drawing, I'm painting. I also teach and mentor sometimes.

Being an artist has taught me that in this life, no matter how much money I make, I know that my existence was not an accident: through creating, my destiny is already determined. I hope that the influence my art has on others will outlive me. My dream project would be to open my own school.

Currently I am working on programs that will enable my art to be more accessible to the public through exhibitions, limited edition reproductions, and public art projects. 🌟

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/aljohnsonart/show/www.aljohnsonartstudio.com>



## Peter Ruta: *Nulla Dies Sine Linea*

by Suzanne Ruta

**B**orn in Germany in 1918, raised in Italy from 1923, Peter Ruta reached New York in October 1936. He had ten dollars to his name, and the promise of a job (no small feat in those Depression years) with the New York agent for his uncle Gustav Kirstein's Leipzig art publishing firm, Seemann Verlag.

Ruta (then Peter Paul Franke-Ruta) arrived in New York full of ideas. He tried to volunteer to fight with the American brigade in the Spanish Civil War, but his German passport made him suspect, and they rejected him. He applied for work as a reporter for the city's German language newspaper, the *Staatszeitung und Herold*, and was rejected there too, because of his poor English, stumped by the word "blvd."

Meanwhile, working 48 hours a week in the stockroom among high quality reproductions of masterpieces, he became interested in art and in fall 1937, enrolled as an evening student at the Art Students League. He knew at once he had come to the right place. His mother back in Italy saved his letters and bound them later in two sturdy volumes that sit on a shelf in our apartment.

"The Art Students League is one of the leading schools in the US," he informed his parents. He liked the atmosphere in the school cafeteria: "Bohemians with long hair and long beards, half-dressed models" and he liked the conviviality of after class get-togethers at a bar on the corner of 57th and Fifth.

When, after an entry year of drawing with Nikolaides and Bridgman, he began to paint, he knew he had found his vocation. "I started painting this week. It's a rewarding medium," he wrote his parents in November 1938. And in January 1939, "It's a year now since I started painting." The letters glow with youthful confidence (perhaps affected for his anxious parents' sake.) "I know that I will be one of the best painters of my generation, just as now I am one of America's

most promising artists," he wrote in 1940. He sent his parents samples of his work, often with the proviso, "by the time these reach you I will already have improved."

Impatient to paint full time, Ruta quit his job and hitchhiked to Mexico for six months in early 1939. Teachers at the League were generous supporters. Jean Charlot, the League instructor who had taught Italian fresco technique to the Mexican muralists in the 1920s, provided introductions. Ruta boarded in Mexico City at the house of Angelica Rodriguez, the fiancé of David Alfaro Siqueiros, who had just returned from Spain.

Back in New York, Morris Kantor was Ruta's mentor and protector, framing his painting for the year-end exhibition, including his work in the yearly League catalogue and finally in late 1940, nominating him for the scholarship that allowed Ruta, on the verge of dropping out for lack of funds, to become a day student. In 1940, Ruta sold his first painting ever—a small portrait of a boy with a bubble pipe—to playwright Clifford Odets. But he still felt—and would for many years—that his professional life lay at least five years in the future. He was in his forties, he recalls, before he felt he had come of age.

On December 16, 1940, Ruta began to study with Charlot, eventually becoming class monitor. "Fresco is a proper medium for a man" he wrote his parents. "I'm working on a 108 square foot fresco with eight figures in it." This fresco is still visible in the basement of the League, if you know where to look. Entitled "Walther Reuther assaulted by thugs at the Ford Motors strike in 1940," it shows the union leader being beaten. In the upper left hand corner, on a kind of makeshift balcony, the artist himself looks down with a sorrowful countenance.

War loomed for Ruta and his generation. The atmosphere at the League was WPA and leftist. The artists most admired were Dalí and Balthus. Julien Levy on 57th Street ran the most serious gallery. Most teachers and most students were American.



PETER PAUL FRANK-RUTA *Kantor Eve. Class*

From top: 1953, *Positano Woman*; Untitled; 1940–41, *ASL Catalog*





Above: *Molino de los Arcos Chiapas*, 1973, 30 x 33 inches; DONATED BY LEIPZIG 2011

Karl Bissinger from Cincinnati, Charles Owens from Shepherdstown, West Virginia, and Nick Carone, from New York, became life-long friends. “The League didn’t teach me how to paint, but it got us together, people who loved art and spurred each other...” Ruta said. The place was insular and provincial by today’s standards and for intellectual stimulation, Ruta sought the company of recent refugees from Paris, the surrealists, the neo-Romantics.

But the League was family. His first unrequited loves were League classmates, an admiral’s daughter from Virginia, and a coffee planter’s daughter from Colombia. His first romance was with a League model five years his senior. He wrote to her for years. His first wife, a child prodigy, was Kuniyoshi’s star pupil in the 1940s. They met on 57th Street in 1945.

Released from the army that year, Ruta returned to the League (“I felt like a student returning after a big school holiday.”) After his wartime experiences, ground combat in the Philippines, severe wounding and a long recovery in the hospital, the League helped ease him back into normal life. The atmosphere was more serious, with many veterans studying on the GI bill. He studied graphics with Will Barnet (only a few years his senior).

Ruta’s first marriage ended abruptly in 1949. I met Peter twenty years later, through my aunt, Elsa Miller, a livewire

organizer for the models union in the early 1940s. Our family had strong League ties going way back. Elsa brought her younger sister Dorothy, to the League as a model. Sculptor Mahonri Young was stunned by her beauty. Taking out calipers, he measured her proportions and exclaimed to the class, “Just as I thought, a perfect Botticelli.” His nickname for her thereafter was Primavera. Dorothy’s gifted younger sister, Virginia, was a model and monitor for Moses Soyer at his school on 14th Street, beginning in her teens. In 1941, a high school graduate, she won a full scholarship for study at the League, though family responsibilities prevented her from taking it. The Miller family, a kind of mythic offshoot of the League, welcomed Ruta, a serious, disciplined artist, into their midst and worked to advance his career. I’m their niece, Peter’s wife of over 40 years.

*Nulla dies sine linea:*

Ruta painted landscape in Southern Italy throughout the 1950s. In New York, in the 1960s, he painted scenes of political turmoil based on news photos (his Pop period) while editing *ARTS* magazine. From 1970 on, he painted large ambitious landscapes in Mexico (Chiapas), New Mexico, New England, and France. At 94, Ruta works in his New York studio in winter, on a vast series of still lifes. In summer, in Italy, he paints landscapes from the motif. He has had four museum shows in the past eight



From top: *Battery Park City Cranes*, 1981, 40 x 48 inches; *Accitrezza*; *Road to Clines Corners*, 1992, 48 x 40 inches

years. At Villa Rufolo, Ravello in Italy, this past spring, he chatted with the public every morning and then escaped to a remote window to paint the view in perfect peace. Peter’s October 2012 show of forty big paintings from 1949–2012 at Westbeth Gallery included landscapes never shown in New York before and was a big success. A former League teacher who saw it exclaimed, “Best show we ever had at the gallery!” Her husband conceded, “Peter, I didn’t know you were this good.” Another painter gave me her opinion: “He’s an American master, he belongs in the Whitney.” 🌐



# Studio 12 in the AM

By Milt Rubin

The Art Students League morning watercolor class taught by Rick Brosen is composed of a highly congenial and collegial group of serious students. The level of good-natured buzz and interaction among the students and Rick is an integral part of the learning of watercolor skills. Members of the class get to recognize their compatriots' styles, techniques and subject matters.

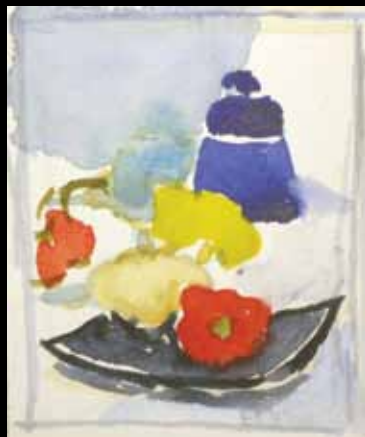
It was in this atmosphere that I was moved to mark the upcoming year-end holidays with a little twist. While ordering art supplies, an item jumped off the catalog page that I knew I needed to order as a gift for each classmate and for Rick: a small packet of ten sheets of watercolor paper packaged as "Artist Trading Cards". Each watercolorist would receive a pack as a holiday gift. But there was one condition:

"There are ten sheets in this packet. Nine are yours as a gift. But one needs to be returned to me with a painting by you."

The results were gratifying. Twenty-seven mini masterworks were returned which Rick then displayed in our Class Show at the League. They mark a point in time, and in the life of the class. Some artists have since moved back to their home countries, others have come and gone in the ebb and flow of students, and many are still painting side by side with Rick in Studio 12, enjoying each other's company and skills. 🌟









# SEEDS OF THE LEAGUE

2012 Jack Kamen Scholars from the High School of Art & Design

Jack Kamen Scholarships offer New York City high school students the chance to attend summer classes at the League free of charge. The application letters that follow came from 18 of the 22 High School of Art & Design students who earned these scholarships in the Summer of 2012.



Lyle Pierson Stachecki

I am very interested in learning at the Art Students League. I would prefer to take the morning class with Mary Beth McKenzie, as I am interested in her painterly approach to art and would like to learn that from her. I would enjoy attending the Art Students League because it is a great school with international recognition. Many outstanding artists have gone there and I would be honored to follow them. I feel that the Art Students League will allow me to advance. I plan to devote myself to expanding my abilities as an artist over the summer. I am dedicated to art, and would be very pleased if I were allowed to learn at the Art Students League.



Christopher Wu

I want to study at the Art Students League this summer because I need the teaching and experience the school has to offer. Learning from new teachers will give me a fresh perspective that I can incorporate onto my artwork. Going to the Art Students League will give me a responsibility over the summer, making me more productive. I currently draw from live models both nude and clothed; however, the sessions are short and the models are inexperienced. I want to learn about new techniques and styles at the League so I can add a different kind of variety to my work, thus making me a better artist. I have not gone to the Art Students League before, and exposing myself to a new school would really benefit me.



Perla Herrera

If I were able to join the Arts Students League it would be a great experience for me. The reason why I want to join is so I can gain experience and improve my skills. Also, I'll be able to use this experience for future purposes. I love art and would like to continue studying it. I plan on making artwork that I can put in my portfolio and trying new types of art I have never done before. I would like to show what I am made of and join the Arts Students League so I have a better interpretation of the art world.

## Kira M. Britt

### *Arts Students League*

There's so much more I would love to get into that my school cannot supply to me. As one of my first steps to being a better all around artist, I thought the best thing would be to go to the place where the best of the best go. Being around artists like Mary Beth McKenzie would put me on the

path that I want to be on. I haven't really focused on figure drawing my past year, and it's something I regret highly. I need to work on my future full-time and I feel personally that's not even enough. Any time working on my problem areas will really help me progress forward to being the artist I really want to be. I hope that you will give me this marvelous opportunity to become a better artist.





## Jessica Edwards

### *Why I want to be a student of the league*

I would like to attend the Art Students League to improve and develop my style as an artist. The chance to become a student at the League is a wonderful opportunity. Through history the League has produced numerous phenomenal artists. My late grandfather was an artist, and I am told it is he who I get my talent from. Since I never met him I consider art my only link to him and I believe that the atmosphere of the League can strengthen that bond.

During the summer I also plan to take up summer employment, so I can't attend every day, but I would like to be able to put in hard work surrounded by people who care just as much about art. At the League my skills can improve while I also become closer to finding and understanding my style as an artist. If I can attend I would like to study under Michael Grimaldi in his Drawing and Anatomy class.



## Cheyenne Julien

I am a rising senior and I hope to attend the Rhode Island School of Design. I want to continue my studies in Illustration next year, and the Art Students League will prepare me for this major. What I need to work on the most is anatomy. If I have the chance to study at the League again I will be able to improve. I have taken classes at the League before, and it was incredibly helpful. I learned new techniques and ways to approach painting and drawing from life. I had a chance to learn while having fun. It was very helpful to be next to older and experienced artists. I got a chance to learn from others and the teacher as well. I love the League and hope to come again.



## Roxana Santana

The Arts Students League summer program has caught my attention since freshman year. What makes this program special is that you get the freedom to do what you want to do with your art work. The fact that you're given a scholarship for the summer to choose what class and teacher you want is amazing.

The Art Students League is the one place I can work with many experienced artists. Being surrounded by others at work will motivate me and influence my art works.

Being able to take something with me out of this course will be good for my portfolio. If I am given this scholarship I will take full advantage of it for the fact that I want to build my portfolio and gain another point of view on art.



## Shannon Sims

I attended Art Students League last summer for painting & drawing from life with Oldrich Tepy. Being with Tepy was an amazing experience of learning from a phenomenal Artist. He made me feel welcomed in his classroom; everyone was so nice and Tepy would use my art work as examples in class. I improved my proportions in faces and in being more painterly. I also took an anatomy class every day. From my experience I learned a lot of new techniques, for example using a palette knife and drawing with charcoal. Going back to school my teachers saw improvements in my art work. I have won various awards, including a silver key from Scholastic for a palette knife painting of a female model. One of my chosen pieces was exhibited in the Executive building in the White House and in the Kenny Gallery at Art and Design High School. I was accepted to New York City College of Technology for Art and Advertisement Design. I hope to have a productive experience in the Art Student League this summer and to use what I learn for college. I would like to improve on watercolor, anatomy, and drawing skills.



## Mei-Li Ham

I am an aspiring artist who wishes to improve her skills. I wish to improve on my drawing and painting—especially of anatomy, and (if possible) try out sculpting. It would be a great honor to enroll in your program. I wish to enroll because it can help my art become better and can help me achieve my dream of having a career in art in the future.





## Kirk Lorenzo

My name is Kirk Lorenzo, I currently attend the High School of Art and Design as a junior and I take AP Illustration as a major. I've attended The Art Students League twice before, once as a kid on Saturdays with Martha Bloom while my Mother took classes with Ronnie Landfield, and during the summer of my freshmen year. Both of my experiences were one of a kind. Drawing from life at the Art Students League has served me as great practice. During my return to high school in my sophomore year my teachers realized a huge improvement in my drawing skills and have encouraged me to continue my practices at the League. My goal for attending the Art Students League is to improve on anatomical figure drawing and to perfect my oil painting techniques. To attend the Art Students League again would be an honor.



## Veronika Hollenbeck

I go to the High School of Art and Design, and found out about the classes at ASL from my AP Illustration teacher, Mr. Harrington. As soon as I heard about it, I was very excited. Art is a very dear passion of mine; I do it for fun as well as to enhance myself as a person. By taking classes I can improve my skills as an artist, and make art more enjoyable. Not only can the classes better the skills I already have, but they can teach me things I've never experienced before. I would participate in drawing classes (drawing being my strength), as well as something exotic—something I know nothing about—such as sculpting. There's no better way to learn than by being in a creative environment with helpful teachers. These art classes will benefit me tremendously by giving me the tools I need to become a successful artist. With the excellent reputation that the Art Students League upholds, I can only hope that some of it will rub off on me, and I can gain a respectable reputation in the art world.



## Erika Rospigliosi

I am a senior at the High School of Art and Design. Up until I began high school, I was mostly self-trained as an artist. My plans for the future are very vague for now but I want to work as a commercial artist and eventually be able to sell my work. In my artistic career, I've painted murals at the Andaz Hotel and the IAC building in Manhattan. I recently helped paint table tops for a new Whole Foods Market in Manhattan and in 2008, I had a self-portrait exhibited at the Queens Museum of Art. This year I won a scholastic award for my art portfolio.

I want to attend the Art Students League to improve my skills. I'm proficient at vivid color and painting but my shapes could use work—my accuracy isn't always correct and I'm hoping to fix it. Attending the League will not only help me improve my shape accuracy, but it will help me grow as an artist.



## Rosa Loveszy

I would like to receive a scholarship to take classes with Max Ginsburg this summer so I may improve my skill in painting from life. Since the summer of my freshman year, when I began classes at the Art Students League, I have always found them to be the most productive part of my summer. When I return to school in the fall I am able to implement the techniques I learned during the classes. This summer will be different than most because in the fall I will be entering college. The things I learn this summer by taking classes will carry me through college and all the challenges that the art programs there have to offer.

## Alejandro Bonilla

When I was younger my dad always talked about the Art Students League.



He always told me how the League helped him out so much as an artist and said it was another home for him, so I was excited when I got the chance to go to the Arts Students League last summer on a scholarship. There is so much I've gotten out of the Arts Students' League. It was an honor working around such great artists and learning from them. I wish to grow even more as an artist. With the help of the Art Students League and the scholarship I will work on my drawing from life and oil painting skills. I also want to learn how to render anatomy as best as I can. These are the key skills I know I'm going to need as I enter college this coming fall. With the scholarship to the League I can go into college with confidence.



## Devon Rodriguez

I would enjoy taking figure drawing classes at the Art Students League so that I could gain knowledge of the fundamental principles of perception—light, plane, structure, tonal value, perspective, proportion. I also want to practice my observational skills by drawing from life. I am extremely interested in figurative art and enjoy studying the human form. The experience of drawing the live model accelerates the process of training the eye, especially in terms of gauging proportion. It is often said if you can draw the figure, you can draw anything. It is also vital for me to learn anatomy so these classes would be great.

Moreover, I would like to draw the figure from life on a regular basis to keep my artist's visual and spatial abilities in good form and develop a better work ethic.

In addition, this class would be a great and fun experience for me. It is a way to have a productive and enjoyable summer, and it would look great on my résumé to get into the School of Visual Arts.



## Casiana Torres

I would like to go to the Arts Students League of New York because I love the arts. As a young artist in training, I have so much undeveloped skill. I would love to spend my summer in a productive way, and by going to the Arts Students League I'll be able to do so. I'm passionate about my future in the arts and I know that in order to sustain a job in that profession, I'll need a substantial amount of skill.

My previous experience with the Arts Students League was one of the most amazing summers of my life. I worked by so many amazing and talented people that inspired me to continue working toward a higher technical skill. I met numerous professionals who gave me pointers and encouragement. I learned so much more about myself and who I want to become. I know I've learned far more in one summer of the Arts Students League than I have in an entire year in school and I look forward to growing even more this upcoming summer.



## Miguel Trujillo

As a student at the High School of Art & Design, I am growing as an artist. This opportunity will give me more of the time to develop my drawing skills. I have gotten better at getting the contrast, value and color in the subject by using color pencils (my preferred medium), but my problem is getting the shape and size correctly. The medium I most desperately want to improve is oil painting. I am determined to accomplish a huge improvement before I start my classes at FIT. I realize one must have discipline, great artistic skills and amazing creativity to become a successful Illustrator. Already, I have won a silver key for the Scholastics Art and Writing competition, been chosen to take a free figure drawing college course at School of Visual Arts and been a semifinalist at a greeting card contest. These things were only achieved through perseverance, passion, and loyalty to the subject of art.



## Nicole Anne Bowden

Art to me is not just a hobby, it is an important aspect of my life. Art is the only thing that I find that I can enjoy yet take seriously at the same time. I just can't help but love the feeling I get when I create something amazing. That is why I want to be able to improve my skills to a point where I am able to accurately create the aspects of my imagination without fail.

I have searched for programs in the past but the same thing usually happens: I at first get excited about going to that program, thinking that the people there will be

serious in teaching me what I need to know but when I actually get there the kids are either really disruptive and we end up not getting things done. Or, the person that is supposed to teach me isn't really serious and I end up learning nothing at all, resulting in my time being wasted. I'm in desperate need of a mentor and I'm getting tired of people wasting my time. That is why I want to attend the Art Students League over the summer. I just have a feeling that both the students and the teachers there will teach me something that I am more than willing to learn. 🌱



# On and Off the Model Stand

Life drawing is at the center of the League's approach to teaching art. And at the center of life drawing classes are the models. At any particular time, there might be 70 different models working at the League, according to Model Coordinator Sylvia Eneriz. In the following pages, five of the League's models tell about their lives on and off the model stand.

## Pigeon

**B**asically, it's beautiful. It's a beautiful experience. The thing that I loved about it the first time: the stillness, the quiet, the focus are the things that I love day to day. I'll admit that there are some days that the stillness is really hard, but it's rare. I think actually it's the stillness that's my favorite part. Because when I'm completely still, I can feel my emotions and thoughts very clearly. They're pure and clear. It's a powerful experience. Sometimes it's overwhelming. Sometimes my thoughts lead me to a really strong feeling and I can feel it rush through my entire body.

That's how I approach modeling. The first, most important thing to me is a sincere gesture. Before every pose, I try to ask myself, "Alright Pige, what're you feeling right now?" And then try to avoid my logical mind and let my subconscious show me the pose. Either I'll get a picture of it in my head, or literally let my body just fall into it. Then it's, "Can I actually hold this?" It can be challenging to predict what's going to be hurting two weeks from now. And something is going to be hurting two weeks from now; it's just a question of what's tolerable discomfort and what's too much pain. Yes, pain! Often people will say to me, "But you're just sitting there"—and it makes me laugh every time. It's true sitting down for twenty minutes doesn't hurt normally because every time a part of your body is fatigued it moves automatically without your even having to think about it. But, not moving for 20 minutes can be quite uncomfortable, especially if three fourths of your entire body weight is thrust onto one little part of your body. And if you're twisting—forget it—then your nervous system starts going crazy sending incessant messages to your brain: Move dude!!! What're you doing?! This is crazy. Move your leg right this instant!!! But you know you've got about 13 minutes left of the pose. It's in this moment that I smile and I think to myself what a weird job. All of a sudden, the only thing my life's about is fighting every instinct I have to move, not letting the pain show on my face and making it

13 more minutes, just 13 more minutes. Finally, the timer goes off and there's a burst of joy until I realize how much it's going to hurt to move out of the pose! And, I think to myself wow. People need a truly compelling reason to do this because it hurts sometimes. Maybe they need extra money; maybe they're an actress or dancer or fashion model. Maybe they need extra money; maybe they're an actress or dancer and its close enough and they can't find something else. Or, they love it. And, I love it.

Just the act of using my body to express my feelings and my state of mind all day is incredible. The relationship between model and artist (subject and artist) is so intriguing to me. The gaze, for one thing, is powerful. The act of being looked at, really looked at, sounds intimidating and sometimes it is. A fair amount of the day people are just looking at my face, or trying to understand exactly where my knee is or what my bones are doing. But they also see what's happening inside. Even if they don't realize it; it's communicated somehow. Mostly, in the classroom, the student is not consciously trying to depict the model's emotional state. But almost every artist I've worked with privately is extremely conscious that they are relating to me and my experience and describing their perception of that through their medium to the viewer. What they really want to convey is our thoughts.

Our bodies are constantly communicating what we're thinking and feeling. Always. There's no way to escape it, really. Essentially, every gesture describes at least one feeling or emotion. I love that the body has a truly abstract way of doing this, especially if I'm feeling a lot of different things. It's sometimes hard to verbalize what the gesture is saying, but we can just "get it" on a gut level.

So, when I get on the stand, my first concern is showing my current emotional state. People often assume it's the nudity that's revealing, but to me it's allowing my true feelings to show. It's not just the gesture that reveals the internal state of the model, it's their mood, it's their "vibe," it's the look on their face. I try really hard



not to hide—to reveal everything. This is where I so appreciate the nudity. The body has such a brilliant way of expressing emotions. The sensation of my ribs descending into my pelvis is extremely meaningful for me. I realize that probably sounds a bit ridiculous, but it happens every day. And there are so many ways the torso can express an attitude or feeling. So many feelings: awkwardness, sadness, confidence, trepidation. And that’s just the torso! The pelvis alone can say a lot with just the smallest movement. And, again the nudity is so key here. With clothes on, I feel like most of my vocabulary has been taken away. I can express much, much more if my bones and muscles are available to me. That said, the gesture of a drape can be full of emotion as well. I just adore the purity of boom—here’s my ribs, here’s my pelvis, here’s my attitude. Be it demure or bombastic; nothing contrived or premeditated; here’s the truth right now—draw it. I’m getting excited just thinking about it—can’t wait to get on the stand today.

One thing I do want to say about posing clothed that I like is that the focus for me is less on the overall gesture and expression of my body and more on what’s coming out of my eyes or my overall “mood” during the pose. And again, absolute stillness is essential for me because that’s when the emotions are the most potent and intense. I am always trying to keep my thoughts on something emotionally engaging, because whatever is on your mind will show on your face. And after a few years, I decided that revealing my true feelings—allowing my actual feelings to come through on my face—is the best way, the only way. So, I’m constantly saying to myself, “Don’t pose, don’t pose.” Meaning, whatever I am actually feeling, I want it to pour out of my eyes. Because that’s what artists are looking for, right? Someone who’s experiencing life. So that’s my job: to show people how I’m responding to life in this moment. God, it’s beautiful. And when they relate to what I’m feeling, or at least what they perceive I’m feeling, we have a powerful piece of work on our hands. Because then the viewer can feel it too. But I think it only works if we’re being honest and sometimes I have to really fight with myself to let my true feelings show. But I gotta or it’s just not the same.

I could go on and on forever trying to describe what an experience it is to model. I often become overwhelmed with the romance of the gesture. It’s the subtle things that push me over the edge—the way the fingers just barely wrap around the back of the chair, or the toes curling under shyly. Or how my neck is pulling away from the rest of my body and how my head tilts tells me everything about how I feel right then. Is it dreamy, languid, irritated, confrontational, searching?

Basically, it’s beautiful. Being painted, sculpted, and drawn is a deeply beautiful experience. My favorite thing from the beginning was the stillness. And it remains so. The stillness, the quiet, the focus. Feeling a moment over and over, going deeply inside yourself in that moment and holding it powerful. 🌟



Clockwise from top left: *Pigeon* by Robin Smith, Michael Grimaldi, Sharon Sprung, Marshall Jones, and Ellen Eagle



# TO DANCE! TO MODEL! TO LIVE!

By Blane Charles

One of my fondest childhood memories is learning new dance moves with my sister as we watched *American Bandstand* and *Soul Train*, and then picking out the wardrobe for our performance during weekend dinners with our aunts. Aunt Lula Henry lived with her sister, Fannie White in the projects of Spanish Harlem in New York City. Their home was an oasis of total acceptance and love; it was a place where I could hide away from the cruel world, just kick off my shoes and be me! Little did I know that this passion for dance and fashion would take me around the world.

ACT-UP, a diverse, non-partisan group of individuals united in anger and committed to direct action to end the AIDS crisis, played a key role in my acceptance of my sexuality and in my empowerment to empower others in the LGBT community. Upon joining in 1989, I was officially crowned “The Chalk Queen.” My duties were to sport the latest fashion while writing discussion topics and voting results on a chalkboard. I had the honor of being one of the last models to be painted by Keith Haring and his assistant, Angel, for the New York Sound Factory “ACT-UP FOR LIFE,” Keith Haring’s benefit party for ACT-UP NY.

The fashion world got involved: Susanne Bartsch hosted the

Love Ball at Roseland, which raised money for Design Industry Foundation Fighting AIDS (DIFFA), and I was featured in a centerfold of *People* magazine for my participation in this event. Additionally, Patrick McMullan’s photograph of me was featured in the November 1989 issue of Andy Warhol’s *Interview* magazine.

The 5th International AIDS Conference in Montreal in 1991 inspired me to move to Canada to help mobilize the local LGBT community. I started ACT-UP MTL which helped Quebec lead the way in legalizing gay marriage. I was so honored when I made the Top 50 Gay and Lesbian Montrealers, and graced the cover of *Fugues* magazine. I wanted to adapt the concept of House Balls to celebrate all of the amazing talent in the MTL LGBT community, so Montreal premiered its first World Ball for Unity (Annual AIDS Benefit) co-produced by Luc Desaulniers and myself. Luc and I made the cover of *The Montreal Mirror* with Divers/Cité dressed as The Village People.

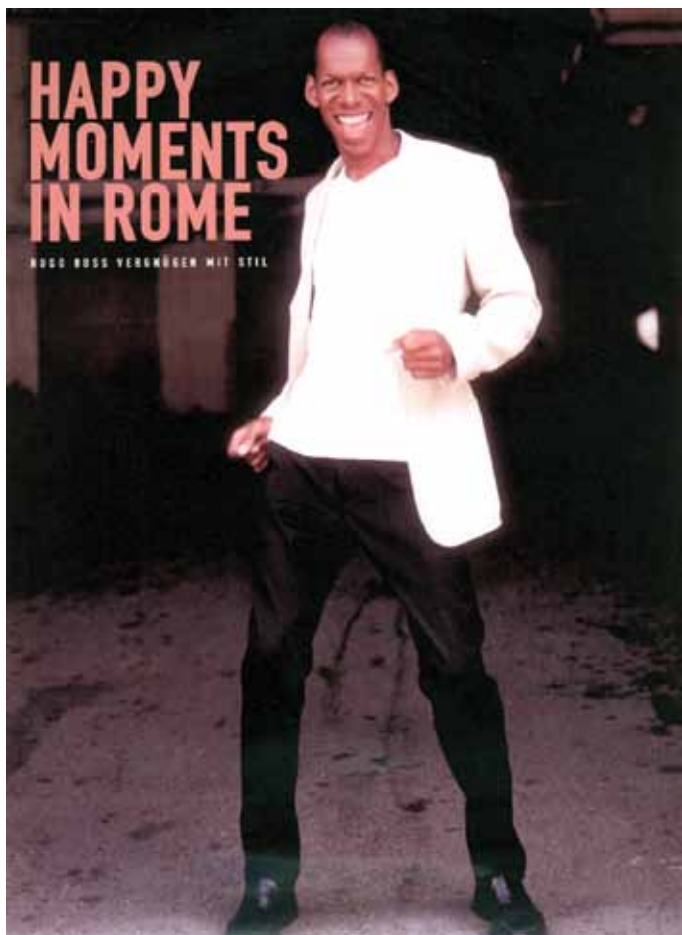
A four year stay in Paris’ Belleville followed, the highlight of which was performing for Grace Jones in October of 1993. I had the privilege of performing with her in New York at the September 21, 1994 “PARTY OF LIFE V” presented by David Spada at the Palladium. She spanked me live on stage; it was a moment that I will never forget. I was “Miss Ultra” at Le Folie’s Pigalle, and also performed at Les Bains Douches. On October 11, 1993 I witnessed my very first fashion show, Christian Lacroix, and I was seated next to Cindy Crawford because the organizers thought I was Grace Jones. On January 16, 1994, supermodel Naomi Campbell complimented me on my performance at Le Queen and said, “You have such a gorgeous body!” I kissed her hand.

In 1995, my roommates from Montreal decided to move to London and invited me to join them. This was a very strategic move for me; some of the highlights of living there were landing my first National Campaign (for Canon UK), and runway modeling for Ted Baker and Nikkos. I returned to New York in 2000 and studied Fashion and Interior Design at the Fashion Institute of Technology while consulting for clients at Barneys NY.

In 2009, I started my own business in Design Consulting, BEAU-T BY BLANE, using my eye to empower others. My talk show, *Elements of Fierce!*, celebrated its third year anniversary July 16, 2012 and is working toward syndication. It is a celebration of anyone brave enough to risk doing things their own way, and my guests have included League artists: Barney Hodes, Damien Vera, Dan Gheno, Robin Smith, and Max Ginsburg. I hope to inspire others sitting on their dreams to pick them up, dust them off, and go for it!

Modeling has always been an extension of my love of dance and celebration of my body. I’m honored to have been a part of the Art Students League family since 2010. Here I get to inspire, be inspired, and stay connected to the world of art! My heart is filled with appreciation for the life experiences which continue to enhance my work. I’m also grateful to ASL for reconnecting me with long lost friends from my activist days.

My pride in my ACT-UP NY family comes from being sur-



Blane Charles in a Hugo Boss ad



Blane Charles and Yukako Ishida at the League's Hall of Fame Gala, October 2012

rounded by such talented, motivated artists. I truly believe that the group was so effective because of the diverse talents that everyone brought to the table. Whether it was designing graphics for our signs, enacting drama for demonstrations (i.e. "Die Ins"), painting images for posters, or deciding what fashion statement to make for an action, we were at the top of our game. Being in that nurturing environment helped me

discover my own artistic talents, which I expressed through fashion.

My Aunt Lula passed away on May 14, 2001. She inspired me to be who I am today with her unconditional love and support, and every day I look in the mirror and remember what an anchor she was for my life. My first book project, *Lula's Pearls*, celebrates African-American women who have inspired men to lead lives of greatness. My heart is filled with appreciation for the life experiences which enhance my work as a model. I have come to realize that my attraction to Buddhism, AIDS activism, dance, and modeling all have something in common: this idea of immortalizing myself; the human soul possessing an endless conscious existence. 🌱

## The Muse

by Monica Lynch

*"So may the outward shows be least themselves, the world is still deceived with ornament."*

—Bassanio in *The Merchant of Venice* by William Shakespeare

I painted as a child, as children do. Mommy proudly displayed my paintings of trees and bunnies on the fridge. Rainy days were my favorite as I was encouraged to paint all day. When boredom set in, I'd run around and play and create in other ways.

I remember my family – Dad and Mom and six girls (I was the youngest, my next sibling eight years my senior) – would take weekly outings to museums. When my sisters went to college, we would visit them in Boston, Chicago, Louisville, New York and San Francisco and head to the local museums. I found myself more interested in Jane Avril, La Goulue, and Marie-Thérèse, the muses of Toulouse-Lautrec and Picasso, than in the painters themselves. "Beautiful, Mommy! What kind of dance is she doing?" I inquired, looking upon Avril. My mother explained that she was posing for the painting like I posed for my pre-school class pictures.

If only I could be them...but how? My sisters Cecelia and Mary would read the painters' biographies to me, as well as the biographies of their muses. I learned that the art models never conformed to societal expectations; never did the June Cleaver, marry for security thing. They studied dance instead of going to school, and worked in various forms of art. I wanted to find a way of honoring them and keeping the subversive undertones. How? "I will be in the arts! No! I will be in the art! I can create characters, dance, and wear beautiful

costumes and then, when Toulouse-Lautrec and Degas see me, they will beg to paint me! Yes, me!"

Loretta, my next-in-line sibling, always pointed out reality to me. "Monica, it's amazing what they do with puppets, isn't it?" as I was watching *The Muppets* and in love with Kermit the Frog. "Monica, it's amazing what they can do with paper, isn't it?" as I was watching *The Smurfs*, hoping I could be on the show one day. As I started to accept that Kermit would never be my boyfriend and I would never be cast as Smurfette II, Loretta pointed out that Avril and La Goulue had experienced things that I would never have to go through now. I had to understand the emotional lives of the people in the paintings before I started modeling. That day, I dropped my watercolors, crayons, and paper and began a formal study of acting and dance; learning to make my art completely organic.

Around age seven, a neighbor who happened to be an established painter asked me to model for several commissions. As I sat for her, I found that collaborating with a painter and learning to represent an emotion or a life on canvas were just as important to me as acting. This revelation would ultimately enhance my collaborations with directors and choreographers, as I began a journey to bring together the visual and performing arts.

In college, having already earned money from acting and art modeling, my focus was to keep transforming myself. New philosophies and techniques were being born in me as I began my path toward being a professional performing and visual artist. I have since been in over 140 plays, 14 films, 8 television shows and 30 gallery openings, using all of my life experiences in my acting and art modeling. 🌱



Monica Lynch by Walter Lynn Mosley



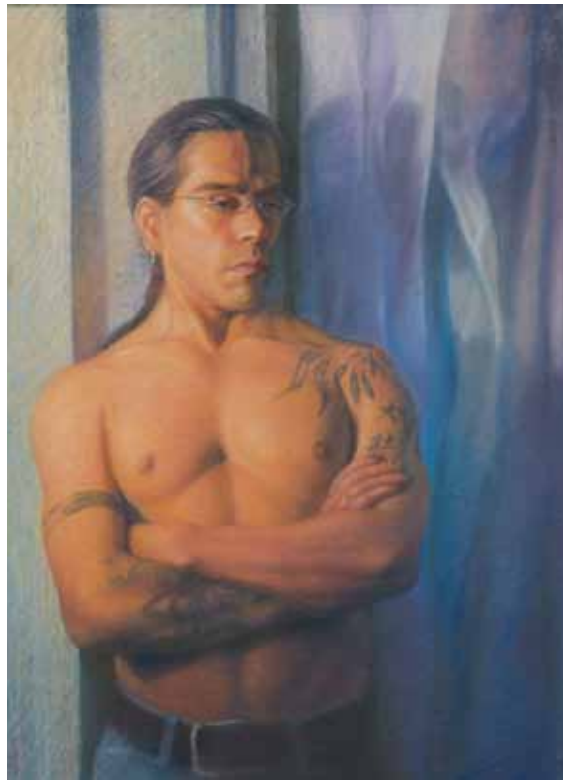
# Raven

Why do I model? It's not an easy thing to do, but the hours are great and it's a good living, though no one will ever get rich doing it. You get to meet incredible people; I have met and posed for many of the great artists in the Western Hemisphere. There's this fantasy that plays in all models' heads about being in the Met someday. Trust me, we all have this fantasy, but it seems unlikely that it will happen. More often, the results of my hard day's work tend to be crumpled up sheets of paper tossed on the floor, sighs of frustration as someone paints over my failed image in an effort to reuse the canvas, and demolished sculptures that, after a backbreaking three-month pose, will never see the light of day.

On a rewarding day, people seem to be genuinely inspired, frantically scribbling away, pencils on fire. Sculptors are walking around you, studying your form instead of throwing clay at each other. Instead of texting during class, painters get that focused look on their faces where they hardly glance from the model, brushes gliding across the canvas; in the painters' zone.

People always ask, "What do you think about when you're posing?" Sometimes it's my grocery list—nothing too profound, but every now and then I will put myself in a deep meditative state only to have some inconsiderate person's phone blare out like an air-raid siren when I am on the brink of enlightenment.

Posing is a very surreal experience the first few times. Standing up in a room full of people to deliver a speech is terrifying enough, try being nude and told "now express this thought or action, be dynamic but make yourself comfortable, do you think you could turn your head painfully to the right so that your eyes are in that light for a month? Good! Now, we're all going to look at you for three hours a day and scrutinize your form." It takes physical stam-



*Raven* by Akiko Asanuma

ina and emotional fortitude to bare your body and sometimes what feels like your soul to a room of strangers who all want to capture something of you.

Fortunately, most models are born performers who love to lend themselves to others' creativity. Many of the best models I know are accomplished dancers, actors, or yogi, and there are some very good models without formal training who radiate emotion and hold the students' interest from week to week with nothing more than an expressive gaze. My friend Betty is a master at this and always upstages me and my enormous pectorals when we pose together.

So, why do I model? There are times when the room is cold and the heater won't work, times the monitors say "twenty minute pose," and forget to set the timer then leave the room for half an hour. Times they insist on a standing pose for three weeks and everyone paints my head.

I love my job and all its quirks. It may sound strange but through modeling I feel a connection to humanity across the ages. Artists have always strived to study the human body. When we look to antiquity, we see 40,000 year old cave paintings and the 25,000 year old Venus of Willendorf: simplistic but observant attempts of ancient man to document his neighbor. We see idealism of human form during the Hellenistic period and the Renaissance revival of "the Golden Ratio." Nineteenth century photography sparked competition with realists, then Picasso came along a little later and challenged everyone's perspective altogether.

I feel a connection to the artist who created the Venus of Willendorf, to the ancient Greeks and Romans who idealized the human body, and to Leonardo da Vinci, the scientist who studied anatomy with an artist's eye. I feel a connection today with the artists around me and a connection with the future. If only one day my image could be in the Met. 🖼️

# A Voyage Around the World

## Jaece Lutece (JoAnn Morton, before 1972)

**A**fter playing the role of Art Model in Ben Levinson's *The Young Provincials* in 1958, and posing privately one evening for a sculptor, I began modeling at American Art School, Pan American Art School, and the Art Students League. [Former League Director] Rosina Florio liked me. I had taken dance, swimming, and ice skating lessons, and took to the long standing poses in the Robert Brackman and sculpture classes. My acting classes helped with concentration, and I found the seated poses relaxing and meditative.

The studies in art, styles, and techniques became more and more fascinating with each visit into a new class. I thought it akin to a voyage around the world. Several new teachers came from abroad and one, Marshall Glazier, demonstrated as to how he whittled his own drawing pen from a wooden reed. His one-line full length 20 minute drawings made for an inspired class through many a year.

Acrylics began to enter the picture and the long-term parfum of the oils diminished, fading the "old world" ambiance somewhat. Two French models remained—one, Claude, claimed to have worked for Matisse. Some models drank wine, and the other French model, Mary, always had a tomato, Laughing Cow cheese, and a bottle of beer for lunch. I partook of toast and tea in the café; Rosina took the fruit salad. Betty, a model older than myself, instructed me to keep my gum on the top of my mouth so as not to chew while at work.

As my acting lessons continued, I could work on some improvisations and sense memory exercises while in the peace of posing. Rosina found me some private bookings with artists in their studios, and a student sculptor hired me for a series of poses in his Broome Street loft. The art schools I posed for were in such close vicinity that I could work all day into the evening. I liked that I could have afternoons free, and if I went on an audition it was nice to come back to the League to relax and not have any competition. All of the models were so friendly and we exchanged schedules whenever necessary.

The 60's brought personal and family challenges—illness,

moves, and ultimately the loss of custody of my son in 1967. I had moved from New York to Indianapolis and back to New York by the end of the decade. During this time I still managed to find modeling work at the Herron School of Art at Indiana University, continuing through 1967 with a few side jobs in offices, singing, waitressing, and teaching hatha yoga and dance at the YWCA.

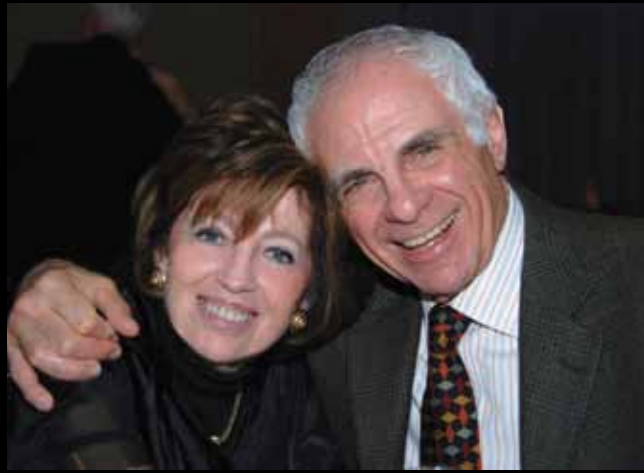
On a 1969 trip to Luxembourg and France I found work in Paris at Académie de la Grande Chaumière, Académie Julian, and École des Beaux-Arts, and studied mime under Marcel Marceau. By 1971 my time was split between miming, modeling and singing in Indianapolis and Paris. I became pregnant but continued to model until February 12, 1973, when I gave birth to Marcel-Pierre and returned to New York. I worked approximately one week in the Brackman painting class, holding the baby, before I quit for baby care.

Five years later, I moved on to Hawaii, modeling in colleges there. By the end of 1979, Child Protective Services called us in and seized the baby, who was having tantrums. Psychiatric tests showed that he was okay, but nobody knew me well enough to serve as a character witness, resulting in court battles lasting almost six years. During that time I found work in the Foss School of Fine Arts, where models rotated between mountain and beach locations. Marcel-Pierre learned to draw and paint well himself, and he collected and drew from the baobab tree, coconuts, fish, frogs, and tadpoles.

We returned to New York where Marcel-Pierre enrolled in junior high school and I returned to the Art Students League, mime practice, and clowning. My new affiliation with the Model Union put me in jobs in college and high school classes around the five boroughs and New Jersey. In 1999, laid up in the hospital following an accident, two students brought me a dressing gown and engaged me in drawing exercises in bed. Upon recovering, I returned to work, less kinesthetic than usual but so happy to be living.

Now, looking back, I find inspiration thinking about all the classes I posed in, and all the instructors and students I met along my "voyage around the world." 🌍





# Mickey & Len Sirowitz

**W**hen Mickey Sirowitz met her husband, Len, she wondered if they would grow to share each other's interests. She needn't have worried. After fifty-seven years of marriage, they're still going strong. Recently, their combined interests in art and children's advocacy have led to their generous support of the League's Seeds of the League program. Funding scholarships for youth study at the League and employing League students as teaching artists in New York City's parks and schools, "Seeds" mirrors the values of this creative and conscientious couple.

## Len Sirowitz

### *My Formative Years*

As a child, I always loved to draw. Fortunately, my mother saw the value that drawing had for me and at the tender age of twelve, took me to the Art Students League on Saturday mornings to study with young folks' instructor, Ethel Katz. She also took me to see a distant relative, Harry Meister, who was working for the General Outdoor Advertising Company. Harry's fame came from creating huge posters throughout the city. I remember being so proud of him and wanting to do the same thing when I grew up.

After two years of Saturdays at the League, I was accepted to the High School of Music & Art. There, I was exposed to advertising and graphic design and met the love of my life and my sounding board for the rest of my life, Mickey Florman. (This year we celebrated our 57th wedding anniversary.) From Music & Art I went on to Pratt Institute where I majored in Advertising Design.

At Pratt, I studied with my first important mentor, Herschel Levit. Herschel was revered by so many of us at Pratt. He enriched our lives by demonstrating how all the arts are interrelated—how music, art, theater, and dance had so much to do with each other. He empowered us to confidently adapt our personal styles as we were about to enter the "real world."

### *My Career*

For me, creating advertising was an enormous thrill. First of all, from my very first job and throughout my career, I would only work at places where good creative was paramount. I never settled for more money if it meant working at a bad place. After spending my first few years at several "good" places, one came to my attention that was creating dramatically different ways to communicate fresh, new advertising ideas. My mouth watered for a chance to be part of that. So I put my portfolio together and applied to Doyle Dane Bernbach where I was hired by my next mentor-to-be, Bill Bernbach, known as the Father of the Creative Revolution. Surrounded by people with incredible talent, my own work soared. My focus was on utilizing new ways to juxtapose words and pictures that persuaded the public to respond. While winning a multitude of awards and honors, I always tried to produce bold, well-designed executions of brand new ideas for such major clients as Mobil, Sony, Volkswagen and others. I then went on to co-found my own advertising agency, Rosenfeld, Sirowitz & Lawson. Our clients included John Hancock Life Insurance, Champion International, Royal Caribbean Cruise Lines and many others. Of all the awards and honors I received over the years, the one I am most proud of is my induction into the Art Directors Hall of Fame.



### *Then and Now*

The relationship between the work I am most proud of in the past and my best work here at the League, lies in what I try to do with every large format drawing I create. I strive for bold, dramatic interpretations of the model's pose, drawn with spontaneous sweeping lines and most importantly, it should be part of a strong, well-designed composition. For me, that last prerequisite is what makes the difference between just a good drawing and a drawing that becomes a work of art. Although I did not pursue fine arts during my career, I often thought of going back to the League one day. And so, on the very next day, after retiring from the advertising business, I signed up for a course at the League. I had not been in the building for fifty years. Walking into the very same classrooms, which looked exactly the same as I remembered, was simply astonishing to me.

I chose Bob Cenedella and Eric Alberts' classes because I felt most comfortable with drawing. It came closest to the quick scribbles I previously did to convey advertising ideas. I was in a strange new position of going from directing commercial art to making fine art for myself. If one's hands could be tongue-tied, mine were, in

spades. It was very humbling indeed. Of all the valuable pearls of wisdom I received from Bob, this one stands out in my mind the most: After several years of struggling to perfect my skills, Bob stopped by one day to look at my work and said, "You've become very proficient, Len." At first I took it as a compliment. Then, just as I realized it wasn't, Bob uttered, "Okay, now make a mess!" Bong! A bell went off in my head. I knew just what he meant.

In the past, I was motivated to use my creative and marketing skills for the benefit of worthy causes such as the anti-Vietnam war movement, Ban the Bomb efforts, political campaigns, highway safety issues, and more. In essence, it was my way of giving back to society. In much the same way, I now find myself highly motivated as I use those very same skills on behalf of the League's efforts to expand its programs and its outreach. It is my way of giving back to the League for all that it has given to me at this stage of my life.

## Mickey Sirowitz

Len and I met at the High School of Music & Art when I was fourteen and he was seventeen. I was a music student (piano and violin) and he was an art student working with all mediums. I was required to take an art history course; he a music survey course. I never painted or sculpted; Len never played a musical instrument. Will we, I wondered, in time share each other's interests? Sixty years later, I'm happy to say that it has been an amazing, supportive collaboration. However, let me not skip ahead without telling you a little about myself.

After attending kindergarten for two years, I was determined to become an early childhood teacher. And indeed, in spite of majoring in Psychology at Hunter College, I got my Early Childhood Education license qualifying me to teach Nursery, Kindergarten, First and Second Grade. I taught Kindergarten at P.S. 214 in Queens and loved it.

Not until my two children, Laura and Michael, were teenagers did I go back to school and received a Master's Degree in Special Education. My interest was teaching low-functioning children, whose disabilities challenged me to support the concept of a public school education for all children. (It was at the time that the Federal government had mandated bringing children out of the institutions and into special classes.) I was on my way professionally.

In 1986, I segued into a "full-time" career as a volunteer. I learned about a relatively new social welfare agency that utilized volunteers in the treatment of families "at risk" of child abuse and neglect. I trained to become a Parent-Aide and worked with a mom who had two children. The children were mandated by the courts to be placed in Foster Care while the family received supervision through SCAN New York's social service staff. It was not easy to establish an ongoing, trusting relationship. It took three years. We bonded, we persevered, and ultimately, the family was reunited. At the end of that period



of time, I was asked to join the Board of Directors and ten years later I became President of the Board (a position which I held for four years).

SCAN New York (Supportive Children's Advocacy Network) grew into a multi-million dollar organization providing after-school programs, family support therapy, literacy programs, tutoring, mentoring, athletics, and violence prevention; all with the goal of building self-esteem through positive interventions. We developed a "Reach for the Stars" upward bound program whereby our young people were helped to attend out-of-town prep schools and ultimately to go on to college.

Len joined me in support of SCAN's work by spearheading our Public Relations outreach efforts. He designed logos, brochures and promotional materials. Together we produced two emotionally engaging videos titled *We Make Miracles* and *Yes, I Can*, (the latter became our rallying cry years before Barack Obama's presidential campaign). It was incredibly satisfying to combine our creative energies to impact the lives of so many needy children and families.

Our love of travel provided us with yet another shared creative outlet. Len and I created at least ten sketchbook/journals, in which Len's drawings and my commentaries documented some of our most prized travel experiences. In addition to the joy of each experience, we love sharing them with family and friends. (Our final and most treasured sketchbook/journal, called *Finding Yasha*, an adoption story, was truly a labor of love and a heartfelt legacy to our son Michael and grandson Yasha.)

Finally, for the past fifteen years, I have been attending private art lectures conducted by numerous art historians. We visit museums, galleries and even artists' studios in order to

keep abreast of the current art world. And now, I am thrilled to share Len's Art Students League life, relationships and involvement. I love his large format charcoal drawings and take great pride in his creative accomplishments. Happily, our artistic interests have harmonized so beautifully. 🌟



Opposite page: Ads by Len Sirowitz for Volkswagen and the Vietnam Moratorium Committee  
This page, above and center: Drawings by Len Sirowitz  
Above: Mickey and Len at the High School of Music & Art prom, 1952



# “Celebrating” a “Gala” Autumn

The past is always present at the League, in architecture, ideology, and legacy. Yet despite its history—or, indeed, because of it—its character always remains fresh. Sometimes it helps to pause and reflect on this phenomenon, to examine the unique ways that our history continues to breathe life into daily studio practice. This retrospection manifests itself in the publication of *A History in Art—A Timeline of The Art Students League of New York*. It is a decade-by-decade chronicle of the life of the League and of the pulse of current events reverberating through it.

THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 7, 2012

16 ST

**EVENING HOURS**  
Bill Cunningham  
**Season Opener**



27



28

Oct. 4: The Art Students League of New York held a benefit dinner at the Metropolitan Club. The league, headquartered on West 57th Street, was founded in 1875.

27. From left, IRA GOLDBERG, the executive director of the league; MIMI THOMPSON; and JAMES ROSENQUIST.

28. COLEEN FITZGIBBON and TOM OTTERNESS.

29. Artists at cocktail time.



29

**HALL OF FAME GALA** Celebrating  
the Line

**T**his past October, The Art Students League held a fundraising dinner to celebrate the great American artists who have studied and taught at the League throughout its history. The first benefit event of its kind in more than twenty years, The Hall of Fame Gala took place on October 4th at the palatial Metropolitan Club in New York City. It was followed a week later by a reception at the League’s Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery for the exhibition *Celebrating the Line: Great Illustrators, Designers and Cartoonists Affiliated with The Art Students League of New York*. The Gala was attended by nearly two hundred guests, and the exhibition is visited daily by gallery-goers and fans of illustration. Following are some thoughts by Executive Director Ira Goldberg and Curator Pamela Koob.



Artist Beñat Iglesias Lopez (left of artwork) and model Freddy Borges (seated)

# Celebrating the Line

Outstanding Illustrators, Designers and Cartoonists

American culture is as diverse as its citizens and we express our ideas and our observations through equally diverse means. The Art Students League throughout its history has been a microcosm of that diversity, providing an educational experience to prepare its students for whatever field of visual art they wish to pursue. Our heritage of educating those who would go on to be this country's great visual storytellers and image-makers—the illustrators, cartoonists and designers—is one the League takes great pride in. The poetic line infused with wit, wisdom and compassion; the series of graphic images that evokes human drama; the great designs that give clarity to and sometimes redefine form and space; these qualities are what our great alumni have contributed to American culture.

Ira Goldberg

The Art Students League rightly takes pride in the creative talents who shared their insights as instructors at the school, and in the League students who went on to forge successful careers of their own. Past League exhibitions have highlighted many of these outstanding artists. *Celebrating the Line* looks for the first time at a remarkable group of men and women who have made viewers laugh, fired their imaginations and given form to the heroes and heroines of several generations. The work of these artists entered America's visual culture not through museums and galleries, but through magazines, advertisements, books and films.

The students who established the League as a center for life drawing in 1875 were demanding a relevant education for their time. Over the decades, that tradition continued as the school added courses in mural design, illustration, advertising and fashion illustration to its curriculum of painting and drawing classes. Many of the individuals who provided or drew from these learning opportunities made lasting contributions to their fields. With a striking command of line and form, these illustrators, cartoonists and designers created a rich visual legacy, from Rockwell Kent's dramatic illustrations to Al Hirschfeld's spot-on caricatures.

Pamela N. Koob



Cornelia Graham and Sam Goodsell



Videographer Rudy Bravo, model Raven, and painter Amy DiGi



Yukako Ishida and Blane Charles



The VIP opening of *Celebrating the Line*



From left: BoC Member Howard Friedman, Gala Chair Len Sirowitz, and BoC President Salvatore Barbieri



# Thank You Gala Attendees & Contributors

The Art Students League extends its thanks to all of those who attended the Gala and who gave so generously to support our students, programs, and mission.

## *Gala Sponsors*

Cathleen Black and Thomas Harvey  
Jack Richeson - Jack Richeson & Co., Inc.  
James Rosenquist

## *Table Supporters*

Dianne and Van Bernhard  
Louise Hirschfeld Cullman and  
Lewis B. Cullman  
The Marilyn and Bob Laurie Foundation, Inc.  
Mickey and Len Sirowitz

## *Benefactors*

Elena and Will Barnet  
Georgette Bennett in honor of Bob Laurie  
March A. Cavanaugh - The Milton & Sally Avery  
Arts Foundation  
Ludmila Schwarzenberg Hess  
Winfield P. Jones  
Larry Jurgenson - The Signature Group  
of Companies  
Susan Cullman and John Kirby in honor of  
Lewis and Louise Cullman  
Pam and Chuck Koob  
Sandra Lehman in honor of  
Len and Mickey Sirowitz  
Robert L. Manger - Len Camber Charitable Trust  
Sue Nager  
Sheryl and William Rubinstein  
Mary Carol Rudin  
Wendy and Stephen Shalen  
Ruth Stover

## *Patrons*

Charles C. Bergman  
Beverly Morris and John Bergman  
Larry Condon  
Francis Cunningham  
William P. Rayner  
Milton B. and Ruth A. Rubin Philanthropic Fund  
David Schwartz - FCE Group Inc.  
Anastasia Vournas and J. William Uhrig  
Rosalind Walter

## *Supporters*

Jean Arena Barbieri and Salvatore Barbieri  
Rena Bartos  
Jenny and Scott Beck

David Black  
Babette Bloch  
Joan and Ernest Bragin  
Suzanne Crosby  
Carolyn and Richard Denning  
Carol and Irwin Dickman  
Rhoda Sherbell and Manfred David Epstein  
Marcia and Allen Fergang  
Audrey Flack  
Diane and Blaine Fogg  
Frances J. Frawley  
Joan and Howard Friedman  
Dr. Gillian J. Furniss  
James I. and Jill S. Gabbe  
Gaile Snow Gibbs and Clark Warren  
Rita and Marvin Ginsky  
Shirley and David Ginzberg  
Michael Gitlitz - Marlborough Gallery  
Silvia Franco and Ira Goldberg  
Jack L. Gordon  
Mimi Gross and Susan Fisher - The Renee and  
Chaim Gross Foundation  
James Handal - Signature Bank  
H3 Hardy Collaboration Architecture LLC  
Rita and Larry Harris  
Jane E. Heffner  
Stanley P. Heilbronn  
Thayer and Ed Hochberg  
Janet L. Hoffman - Works of Leonard Rosenfeld  
Steve Horn  
Luise and Morton Kaish  
Mimi and Robert Karlin  
Sandra Granzow and James Kearns  
Nancy and Joe Keithley  
Laurie Lisle and Robert Kipniss  
David Kraus  
Susan LaBonne  
Roseanne Patanjo and Louis Lavalley  
David Steinberg, CEO and Anthony Basile, COO  
- Lee's Art Shop  
Boris Lurie Art Foundation  
Emily and Burt Marks  
Susan Matz  
Su-Ellyn and Andrew McMaster  
John Morehouse - Washington Square Outdoor  
Art Exhibit  
Linda and Richard Moses  
Susan Nitze

Coleen Fitzgibbon and Tom Otterness  
Lisa Master and Ken Park  
Katherine Randall and Stephen Pred  
Cherry Provost  
Hilke and Dick Richards  
Ephraim Rubenstein  
Morley Safer  
Anne Sager  
Selva Sanjinés-Schenkman  
Nelson Shanks  
Anita Shapolsky  
Keith Sherman  
Lloyd and Elizabeth Sherwood  
Laura Sirowitz and Michael Isenberg  
Mike and Yasha Sirowitz  
Barbara Stanton  
Cheryl L. Starer  
Laura H. Takasaki  
Peter Tunney  
Dr. Joseph B. Walsh  
Raynor Mitchell Warner  
Norbert Waysberg  
The John L. & Sue Ann Weinberg Foundation  
Fay and Greg Wyatt  
Michele Zwirn

## *Donations*

Astrid Bowlby  
Elaine and Daniel Brownstein  
Anne Reed Dean  
Ronald Delsener  
Sheila H. Dines  
Tom Dwyer - Alvin & Company  
Jayne Goldstein - Jayne Goldstein  
Interior Design  
Caroline Greenberg  
Anne Emerson Hall  
Jack Lenor Larsen in honor of Will Barnet  
Vivienne and Irwin Levenson  
Natalie Edgar Pavia  
Jacqueline Sferra Rada  
James Routh  
Liz and Damon Sgobbo  
Susan Libby Siegel  
Larry and Eileen Teich  
Gerard Volgare  
Janet Waterston

|                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| <b>December 7–23, 2012</b>         | Annual League Holiday Show & Sale  |
| <b>December 24–25</b>              | Christmas (League Closed)  |
| <b>December 31–January 1, 2013</b> | New Year's (League Closed)   |
| <b>January 7</b>                   | Class Concours Begins  |
| <b>January 21</b>                  | Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (League Closed)  |
| <b>February 18</b>                 | Presidents Day (League Closed)   |
| <b>Beginning of March</b>          | Applications available for Scholarship and Grant Competition   |
| <b>March 8</b>                     | Deadline for New Member Applications (required to be eligible for 2013 Scholarship and Grant Competitions)                   |
| <b>March 31</b>                    | Easter Sunday (League Closed)  |
| <b>Early April</b>                 | Deadline for Dropped Member Requests for Reinstatement (required to be eligible for 2013 Scholarship and Grant Competitions) |
| <b>April 10 (tentative)</b>        | Members Business Meeting   |
| <b>April 15</b>                    | Scholarship and Grant Applications Due   |
| <b>May 20-24</b>                   | Annual Scholarship and Grant Competition   |
| <b>May 26</b>                      | Last Day of Regular Session  |

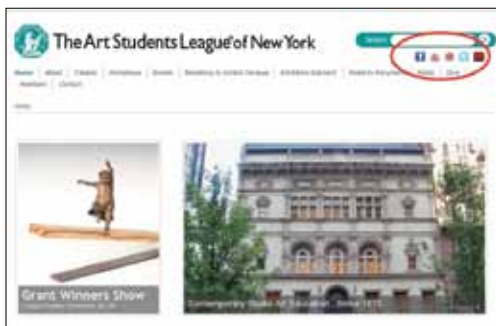
Always check [www.theartstudentsleague.org/Members](http://www.theartstudentsleague.org/Members) for member updates.

## 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 new Members page with key dates and an *In Memoriam* section.

From and League webpage you can:

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







# The Art Students League of New York

215 West 57th Street, New York, NY 10019 TEL: (212) 247-4510  
[www.theartstudentsleague.org](http://www.theartstudentsleague.org)

Address Service Requested