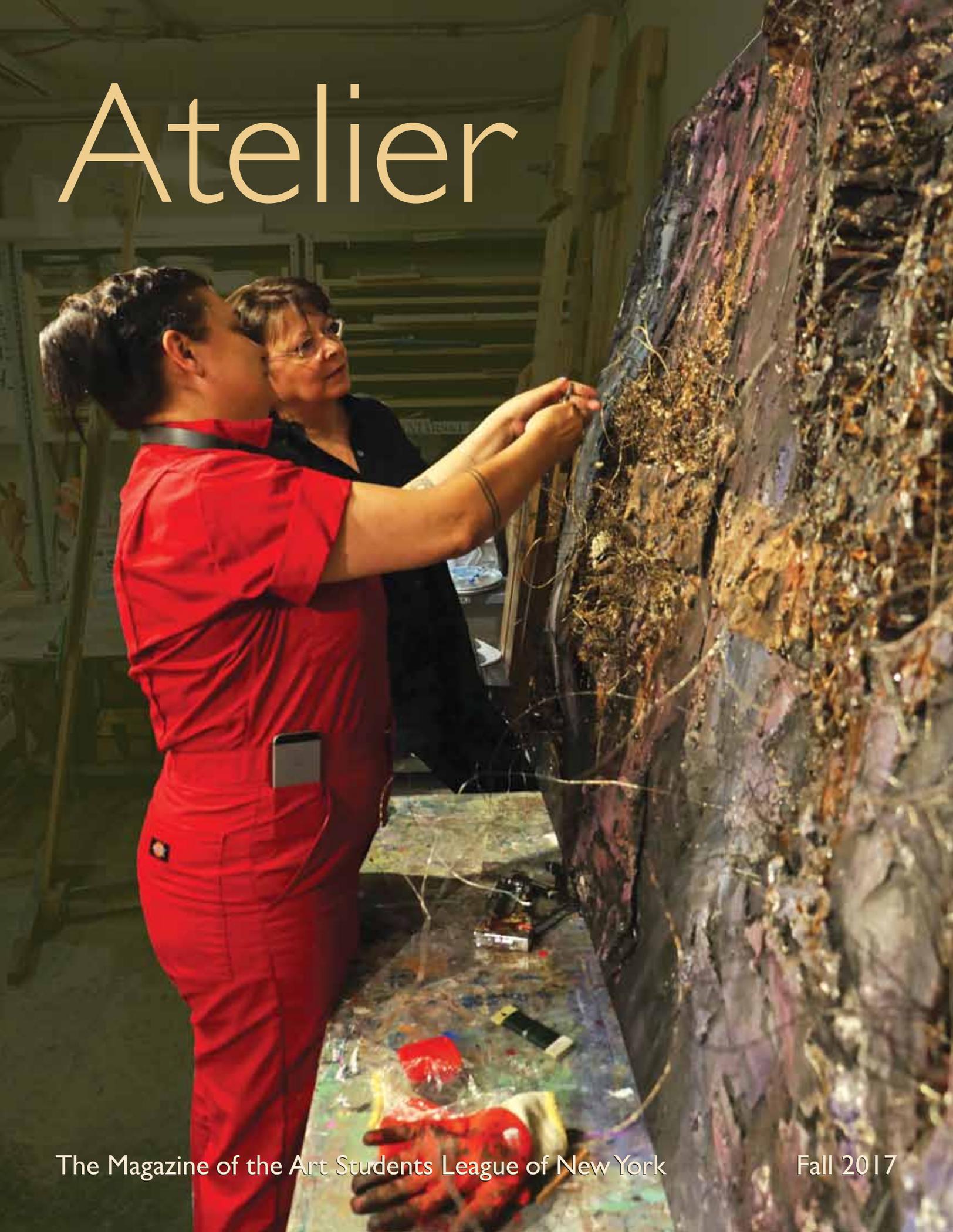


Atelier

A photograph of two women in an atelier. The woman in the foreground is wearing a bright red jumpsuit and is focused on adjusting a piece of thin, light-colored material on a large, dark, textured wall. The woman behind her, wearing a black top and glasses, is looking on. The wall they are working on is covered in a complex, layered texture of dark purple, brown, and gold tones, with some fibrous or root-like structures protruding. The floor is cluttered with art supplies, including a red glove and various tools.

Message from President Ellen Taylor

Dear Members, Students, Instructors, and Friends,

As a member of the League community, you have probably worked many hours, days, months—maybe even years—in our school’s renowned ateliers, the studios where our master-artist instructors train our dedicated student-artists in a tradition that goes back centuries.

Nowhere in the world is there a collection of ateliers that rival the League’s. Nearly 80 instructors teach more than 100 classes here in a variety of media, styles, and philosophies to the benefit of thousands of devoted students each year. As League life member James Harrington explains:

The atelier system was brought back from France by American artists. Students were free to come and go as they wished from communal studios, so long as they contributed their fee to the studio’s expenses. Master artists were asked to come in and critique twice a week. A raw beginner would learn a great deal of the basics by observing more experienced students. Students could change ateliers if they chose to follow another master.

Sound familiar? That’s why we think “Atelier” is the perfect name for the artist magazine formerly known as *Lines from the League*. *Atelier* explores the process of educating artists, celebrates the accomplishments of our alumni, and shares news of the League’s programs and events. The new name also better differentiates this print magazine from our online art journal LINEA (asllinea.org). LINEA is a platform created specifically for the instructor’s voice at the League, to capture some of the diverse intellectual currents flowing within our studios.

Several articles in this issue explore the remarkable history of the League’s landmarked home, the American Fine Arts Society, to celebrate the building’s 125th anniversary. You will also learn about the importance of questions in Deborah Winiarksi’s teaching, and about what our fellow League students, like painter Ezra Cohen, have been up to. Plus, you can see the news, member listings, recognition of our donors, and much more—including thirty beautiful reproductions of work by League artists.

Please enjoy this inaugural issue of *Atelier*. As you reflect on what the League means to you, I hope you will be as generous as possible in making a year-end gift. Your contribution to the League really does make a difference.

Best wishes,



Ellen Taylor

President, Board of Control



PS: Save the Dates – March 2 and 3, 2018 –
to celebrate the 125th anniversary of our home!

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Atelier welcomes letters to the editor as well as comments, suggestions, and corrections. Send correspondence by e-mail to atelier@artstudentsleague.org.

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Cover image: Deborah Winiarski with student Cecilia Monteverde. PHOTO: LILIAN R. ENGEL

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Art Under Construction

Ken Park

This past June, an outdoor gallery blossomed on 57th Street when the construction pillars in front of the League were transformed into an exhibition of art and quotations by League alumni and current instructors.

Our perennial window exhibitions may be obscured by a lattice of scaffolding bars, but the Art Students League continues its outdoor showcase.

The new Art Under Construction gallery calls attention to the artistic construction that goes on *within* the League.

An exhibited quote from Chinese artist Ai Weiwei, a League student from 1983 to 1986, tells it like it is: “The Art Students League is very important as a part of [the art education] tradition, a strong part of New York, and also as a part of me.”

Art Under Construction dresses forty-one scaffolding pillars with banners showcasing reproductions of artwork by League artists including representational painters Frederick Brosen, Peter Cox, Leonid Gervits, Dan Gheno, Sharon Sprung, and Costa Vavagiakis, and abstract artists Bruce Dorfman, Ronnie Landfield, Pat Lipsky, Knox Martin, Larry Poons, and Peter Reginato. Works were licensed for display from former students and instructors Will Barnet, Thomas Hart Benton, William Merritt Chase, George Grosz, Yasuo Kuniyoshi, Roy Lichtenstein, Louise Nevelson, Barnet Newman, and Jackson Pollock.



Thoughts about art by other prominent League artists are also on display. Passersby can ponder quotations from League alumni such as Robert Rauschenberg (“Having to be different is the same trap as having to be the same.”) and Mark Rothko (“A painting is not about an experience – it *is* an experience.”). Other quoted artists include former students Louise Bourgeois, Georgia O’Keeffe, and Norman Rockwell, current instructor Lisa Dinhofer, and technical instructor Natsuki Takauji.

While League students always have a variety of opinions on any topic, most students seemed pleased with the new installation. “A very professional appearance. Money well spent,” was the opinion of Gordon Bevin, a member studying drawing this summer.

Exiting the building through the new gallery after his sculpture class with Arslan, member David Chalfin, MD, Ph.D., said,

“This is the kind of needed exposure for the League that is both pleasurable and informative. I love it.”

The new display also includes a space for a calendar of upcoming public events.

The panels were created by designer Mark Tatum and graphic design director Lilian R. Engel. The artwork was selected by curator Jillian Russo and former executive director Ira Goldberg. Social media manager Rudy Bravo laid out the exhibition. *Art Under Construction* was produced with the help of ArtBridge, a New York non-profit that transforms construction spaces into canvases for artists.

The gallery will exhibit new works and quotations over the course of the construction of the Central Park Tower next door. If you haven’t been by the League in a while, please come take a look.

On Teaching: Deborah Winiarski

Stephanie Cassidy



Deborah Winiarski, *Lines Written: Rose III*, 2017, fabric, encaustic, oil, pastel on panel, 20 x 16 x 3 in.

Stephanie Cassidy

Your development as an artist began long before you discovered the medium of encaustic. Did you start with paint on canvas or were you always drawn to using other materials?

Deborah Winiarski

I have always been drawn to working with a variety of materials. I grew up in a home where there was always some sort of painting, building, or creating going on. My

parents had a wood shop in the basement of our family home.

When I first came to the Art Students League, I worked primarily with collage and paint. Over time, I started working on a larger scale, with acrylic, papers, and sand on canvas. I would work flat and splash thin washes of paint, looking to create a depth of field within the layers and layers of color.

Early on, my knowledge of encaustic had been limited to Jasper Johns's paintings and the Fayum portraits of ancient Egypt. I had

never considered encaustic for my own work until I saw my first translucent encaustic painting where the wax was not heavily pigmented, and you could see through to the layers below. I found that intriguing. I started researching encaustic in print and online, eventually finding Joanne Mattera's book *The Art of Encaustic Painting: Contemporary Expression in the Ancient Medium of Pigmented Wax*. I began to teach myself. For a few years, while I was still learning, I was working separately in both acrylic



and encaustic. Working in both mediums became increasingly unwieldy, aside from the fact that acrylic is not compatible with encaustic, so I decided that I had to choose between the two. I've been working exclusively in encaustic for about ten years.

SC So you just started experimenting, working mostly on your own and without a teacher?

DW Yes. I was figuring it out for myself, using several references as a guide. From the beginning, I was making my own medium. Now I also incorporate commercial paint.

SC How did you begin to think of yourself as an artist, one who could teach?

DW I first came to the League not that long ago, around 2003, but for years prior I had been requesting a League course catalogue and marking up its pages. There was something within that kept me from entering. I suppose it was fear. But once I finally walked into the building, I felt a huge weight lifted. Here was a community that believed in the same things I believed in. You didn't have to defend or explain yourself or what you were creating. People worked in all different ways. I found it very exciting that here was a place grounded in a belief in the importance of self-expression and respect for the human spirit. I studied at the League for only two years. It just took that long to affirm for myself I had it within me to do this on a professional level.

The affirmation that I received at the League gave me the confidence to see possibilities. I was encouraged to leave the classroom as soon as possible and leaving was the most significant benchmark to becoming an artist.

"One of my most important goals as an instructor is to help students clarify what they are looking for in their own work. It is within this constant clarification that a student may begin to develop a distinct and unique visual voice."

SC How did you feel when you received that message?

DW It was unexpected, but then I realized it was meant in the best possible way. I knew that the best thing I could do for myself as an artist was to be out on my own.

SC In the weeks after you left, as you became untethered from the classroom routine, how did you forge your own creative agenda and find new work rhythms? I think it is a transition most artists experience.

DW Before leaving the League, my mentor conveyed the idea of "throwing out the sofa," literally and metaphorically. If you truly believe in something, you do whatever it takes to make that something happen. I've heard it said that one should be able to make art in a closet. Clean out the closet and that's your studio. I began to make changes in my life based on those ideas of what I needed to do.

The thing about being in the studio by yourself and not having a mentor to rely on is that you have to really be present with the work. You have to really look and listen to what the work is telling you. It was frightening and thrilling at the same time. Another challenge was discipline, which I sometimes struggle with even to this day. Having a studio in your home is luxurious but also distracting because there are always things to pull you away.

SC When you left, did you find that you immersed yourself in the wider world of art outside of the League, in the city or online?

DW At first I looked a lot. I would go to the museums and to Chelsea often. But while there was some wonderful work in Chelsea, there was some I also wondered about. Now I believe that one has to be selective in what one sees. Seeing too much or trying to see everything can bring distraction, disillusionment, and even despair.

SC Compulsive looking might also interfere with seeing your own work clearly and make you unduly susceptible, consciously or not, to influence.

DW Right, too much influence can be a dangerous thing. Once an artist starts creating to appease something other than his or her own desires and preferences, they are sunk. I advise students that they should have two sets of ears. There are the outside-the-studio ears and the inside-the-studio ears. When they're outside the studio, they may hear wonderful things and perhaps not-so-wonderful things about their work. They're going to see questionable and confusing things that make them wonder. But it's important not to let those things into the studio or into their heads. Once at the studio, they should wipe their feet at the threshold and focus only on what it is they need to see. This can be a real challenge.

SC What is a painting day like for you?

DW Since I work with wax, there's a lot of heat involved, so first I turn my palettes on. My main palette is a hot box consisting of a large anodized aluminum plate that's heated from below. Using both molten and solid wax, I create my imagery on the heated plate, pressing in fabrics that absorb the imagery and color. Basically, it's a monotype process. I do that in large batches. Once the printing is done, I begin to make compositional decisions, cutting and sewing the fabric. I then use these sewn elements in the final composition on the panel. Mine is a multi-step process. I work afternoons, noonish to 4 or 5 p.m. about four days a week.

SC Mixed media is a broad field. You must have students in your classroom working on myriad things simultaneously. What do you do as an instructor to help them?

DW I love materials. I try to keep up to date on new developments in materials and media. There are students in class working with metal, wood, paper, plastic — with so many different materials. In mixed media, the challenge is to transform the materials sufficiently so that they as a whole serve the statement of the artist. If materials aren't transformed sufficiently—put together in a way that identifies the creator and clarifies statement, then the work becomes more



Opposite page: Student Linda Cool with Deborah Winiarski. *This page:* Deborah Winiarski at work with students Rosa Rivera (top) and Daniel De Raey (below).

about the material, and the statement can be lost.

I talk with my students primarily about the formal aspects of their work: composition, color, line, form, movement, texture, etc. — the things you can actually see. I find that my teaching involves a great deal of listening. I ask my students many questions and listen to their answers very carefully. One of my most important goals as an instructor is to help students clarify for themselves what it is they are looking for in their own work. It is within this constant clarification that a student may begin to develop a distinct and unique visual voice.

I work with each person individually. Since the mixed media room is small, when I'm speaking with one person, everyone's listening. But it's the same type of conversation over and over again even though one person may be working with wood, another with paper, and another with paint. Most conversations are rooted in bigger issues than what glue to use. We do discuss the technical aspects of what they're doing, but more often than not the conversation turns to the bigger issues of being an artist. I don't much discuss statement with students, only enough to help them clarify whether the materials and composition are serving their statement in a clear way. I never try to talk students into doing something. In fact, I tell them not to listen to me or anyone else — only to themselves.

SC What are some of the best qualities you've taken from your mentors that you try to bring into the studio as an instructor?

DW One of the greatest things I learned from my mentor is generosity. There was a generosity and honesty to my mentor's teaching that I found very profound. Also, I

learned from my mentor the value of taking each student seriously and working with each person as an individual. When I first came to the League, I was listened to and taken seriously. This made a huge impact and was vital in my development.

I try to emulate these same qualities with each of my own students.

SC Do the open-ended discussions you have with students affect your own work?

DW Students don't know what struggles I'm having in my own studio and they needn't. That's for me to work out on my own. But sometimes something will come up for one of them, and we'll have a

discussion aloud in class. The conversation can result in a clarification for me about something I was questioning or struggling with in my own work. That happens a lot actually.

SC So outside of your studio, your teaching and work with students keeps you connected to your own work.

DW Absolutely. It goes back to the idea of generosity. I do my best to give my students my all, but in the end get back so much more. I often say to students that art is a way of life—a way of being. The act of creation can be life affirming and life changing. It's certainly has been for me.



Impressionism on 57th Street

Jillian Russo

This December the Art Students League celebrates its 125th year in its landmark building, which was designed in a French-Renaissance style by architect Henry Janeway Hardenbergh and opened in 1892. The founding of the building, and its expansive ground floor Vanderbilt Gallery, was initiated by landscape painter Howard Russell Butler. The unique story of collaboration between artists such as Butler and philanthropists such as George Washington Vanderbilt II, which brought the project to fruition, is explored in *A Landmark Exhibition: An Alliance of Artists and Patrons on 57th Street* (November 7 – December 4). An important subplot of this Gilded Age story of institution building is the Art Students League's role not only in introducing Impressionism to New York City but also in pioneering the Midtown gallery district.

The League's contribution to the development of American Impressionism began in 1878, only four years after the *First Impressionist Exhibition* in Paris, with its decision to hire Munich-trained painter William Merritt Chase. Chase developed a distinctive style that combined the dark, dense colors and realistic subjects of the Munich School with the loose brushwork of French Impressionism. Since many of the American painters including John Singer Sargent, James McNeil Whistler, and Mary Cassatt were expatriates, by the mid-1880s, Chase was the foremost Impressionist painter working in America.

At this time, the League added several other prominent American Impressionists to its faculty. The new instructors included James

Carroll Beckwith, who had worked with Sargent in Paris, Julian Alden Weir, who was experimenting with Impressionist techniques in landscape paintings of the region surrounding his Connecticut home, and John Henry Twachtman, a close colleague of both Chase and Weir. In 1898 Weir and Twachtman, in collaboration with Childe Hassam, founded the Ten American Painters, an organization devoted to promoting exhibition opportunities for the American Impressionists. They also established a summer artist colony in Cos Cob that many League students, including Ernest Lawson and Allen Tucker, attended in the early 1890s. Paintings such as Lawson's *Sunrise* (1892) and Tucker's *October Cornfields* (1906) reveal Monet's influence as filtered through the teaching of Weir and Twachtman.

It was James Carroll Beckwith, however, who had the most influence on Howard Russell Butler and the construction of the League's new home. After earning a bachelor's degree in science at Princeton and a law degree from Columbia University, Butler decided to pursue his passion for art. After briefly taking classes with renowned Hudson River School painter Frederick Edwin Church, he studied at the League with Beckwith in 1884–85. A driving force behind Butler's campaign for a permanent home for the Art Students League was his conviction that the organization supported revolutionary styles, such as Impressionism, and represented "a distinct modern art movement" in America. Butler recalled Beckwith's enthusiasm for his proposal for a building that would provide permanent exhibition space for the Art Students League, the Society of American Artists, and the Architectural League of New York: [Beckwith] endorsed this idea highly and, turning to me, suggested that I, having had some business training, should take the matter up and push it through."

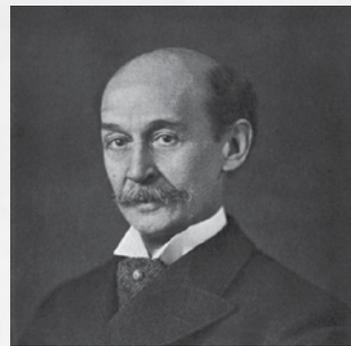
When the Vanderbilt Gallery opened in 1893, it was the first art gallery on 57th Street. Modeled after the Galerie Georges Petit in Paris, it was one of the grandest venues for viewing art in Manhattan and, along with Carnegie Hall, established 57th Street as a cultural center. One of the first major art galleries to follow the League uptown was Durand-Ruel, owned by the famous Impressionist dealer who was instrumental in popularizing the revolutionary style among both French and American audiences. Beginning in the 1880s, the Durand-Ruel family operated a small gallery on Fifth Avenue to market Impressionist paintings to New York collectors. Seeking a more prominent space, in 1910 Durand-Ruel commissioned Carrère & Hastings, the renowned Beaux-Arts architectural firm that had designed the New York Public Library, to create an eight-story building with a ground floor art gallery at 12 East 57th Street. The gallery opened in 1913 and that December presented an exhibition of works by Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, Sisley, and André D'Espagnat. In 1925, Knoedler Galleries, one of the most prestigious New York dealers, moved uptown as well. Their new space at 14 East 57th Street was located next to Durand-Ruel and further solidified the neighborhood as a hub of twentieth-century American art.



Ernest Lawson, *Sunrise*, ca. 1892, oil on canvas, 20 x 28 in. Permanent Collection of the Art Students League of New York.

A Selected Chronology of the American Fine Arts Society Building

Stephanie Cassidy



Henry Janeway Hardenbergh, architect of the American Fine Arts Society building, 1906

Over the last 125 years, the Art Students League of New York (ASL) has become synonymous with its building, the American Fine Arts Society (AFAS). But in 1892, when the AFAS first opened, the ASL was just one constituent of the building, which it shared with the Society of American Artists and the Architectural League of New York. It was not until 1941, when the ASL bought out the stock from these two organizations, that it became the sole shareholder. The AFAS has its own complex history as a stockholding corporation; an artists' cooperative; a collection of north-lit teaching studios; a series of sky-lit galleries designed for loan exhibitions; a limestone facade that pays homage to the French Renaissance, and a piece of Fifty-seventh Street's illustrious history. Presented here is an overview of some of the people and events that have transformed this New York City landmark.

1889

Howard Russell Butler, a Columbia-trained lawyer and painter, proposes a cooperative building to house young, cash-poor art societies. His project, the American Fine Art Society, joins the Art Students League of New York, the Society of American Artists, and the Architectural League of New York, as equal shareholders in a stock corporation, which is overseen by a separate AFAS board. The AFAS is incorporated on June 10.

1890

On May 3, the AFAS board purchases six adjacent lots on a block between Seventh Avenue and Broadway for \$154,000. With 75 foot frontage on West 57th Street, the lot extends just over 200 feet through to 58th Street.

In an effort to raise capital quickly, Henry G. Marquand, president of the board of trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, purchases shares on behalf of the ASL, which he offers for sale to its individual members.

A competition to design a building for the AFAS attracts thirty-nine entries. The committee selects Henry Janeway Hardenbergh's plans, which are publicly unveiled at the Architectural League of New York's *Seventh Annual Exhibition* at the Fifth Avenue Art Galleries.

1891

To help finance construction, George Washington Vanderbilt II, an art collector, agrees to loan the AFAS \$100,000 in exchange for a portion of lot, 75 x 58 ft., along 58th Street, on which he erects the Vanderbilt Gallery, a spectacular public gallery, modeled on the George Petit Galerie in Paris, with forty-foot, sky-lit ceilings. The AFAS agrees to pay back the loan within two years.

1892

On February 8, a cornerstone dinner is held at Andrew Carnegie's Music Hall, where artists and patrons toast the project alongside New York City luminaries in education, letters, law, and publishing.

A formal opening reception for the AFAS is held on December 3 with nearly 3,000 in attendance. Two simultaneous inaugural exhibitions are featured in its galleries: *Prints from the Collection of George Washington Vanderbilt* and the *Retrospective Exhibition of the Society of American Artists*.

On December 31, George Washington Vanderbilt II donates the Vanderbilt Gallery and the deed to the land to the AFAS, in effect, forgiving the loan.

1893

Two loan exhibitions in the AFAS galleries, *Bronzes by Antoine-Louis Bayre* and *Old Dutch and Flemish Masters from the Collection of Louis B. Ebrich*, attract 28,000 visitors.

Andrew Carnegie gives the AFAS a bronze reproduction of *Seated Hermes*, one of the most celebrated Roman works discovered in 1758 at the Villa dei Papiri at Herculaneum.

1894

A peak year for loan exhibitions in the building, the AFAS calendar included: *Pictures Contributed by Sweden, Norway, and Holland of the World's Columbian Exhibition*; the *Theodore Graf Collection of Ancient Greek Portraits*; a memorial exhibition of the paintings of George Inness; the *Herter Collection of Japanese Color Prints and Paintings*; and *Paintings of Japanese Scenery in conjunction with Hellenic-Egyptian Portraits from the Tombs of the Fayum*.

Though allocated over 10,000 square feet in the building, the ASL must rent supplemental studio spaces outside the building to accommodate its classes.

1895

The AFAS receives tax exemption by New York State.

1896

The West Side YMCA building opens at 318 West 57th Street, which includes a dormitory where painter George Bellows first lived while studying at the New York School of Art with Robert Henri.

The AFAS galleries host *The Masters of Ukiyo*, the first complete



From left: Carved ornament on the limestone of the AFAS facade; an early photograph of the American Fine Arts Society Building, c. 1895. Museum of the City of New York; *Seated Hermes*, a gift from Andrew Carnegie; students relaxing on a windowsill in the Art Students League's second floor gallery, formerly the ALNY library.

historical survey of Japanese paintings and color prints, spanning 1630 to 1850, which “depict activities and scenes from the entertainment district of Edo.” The exhibition was accompanied by a descriptive catalogue written by Ernest Fenollosa, curator of Oriental art at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston.

Instructor William Merritt Chase leaves the ASL to open the New York School of Art in rooms at 57 West 57th Street, where he continues teaching until his return to ASL in 1907.

1901

On May 3 a fire caused by decorations hung for a Society of American Fakirs costume dance on the building's fourth floor destroys its roof. Over the summer while repairs are made, the ASL's classes are moved to the South Gallery on the first floor.

1903

Taber Sears uses the Vanderbilt Gallery to paint a mural-sized oval canvas *New York Received by Europe at the Eastern Gateway of the Americas* for the Alderman's Chamber at City Hall.

1904

The Comparative Exhibition of Native and Foreign Art, organized by the Society of Art Collectors, presents 200 nineteenth-century paintings by American and European artists, hung side-by-side “to stimulate the appreciation of American art at its true value.”

1905

Howard Russell Butler resigns as president of the AFAS board. William Bailey Faxon, the board's treasurer, succeeds him and continues as president through 1921.

1906

The National Academy of Design moves into the first-floor offices of the Society of American Artists and assumes their shares in the building when the two organizations merge.

1907

The East, West, and Central galleries combine into a single large “Second Gallery,” that is situated between the Vanderbilt and South galleries.

1907–08

A new studio building, designed by architects Pollard & Steinam, is completed at 130 West 57th Street, an addition to three nearby

buildings catering to artists: the Sherwood Studios at 58 West 57th Street (1880); the Rembrandt at 152 West 57th Street (1881); and the Holbein Studios at 139–151 and 146–152 West 55th (1888).

1916

The Fine Arts Federation holds a memorial for artist John White Alexander in the Vanderbilt Gallery. A high-relief portrait of Alexander in bronze by Herman Atkins MacNeil is placed temporarily in the NAD's office and later permanently installed in the AFAS lobby.

The Rodin Studios open across the street at 200 West 57th Street.

1920

The Vanderbilt Gallery is destroyed by a fire that began during the installation of the Architectural League's *35th Annual Exhibition*. The loss of art objects is valued at over \$500,000. The AFAS takes out a mortgage to finance the rebuilding and skylight repair, which is completed in January 1921.

1922–23

Fifty-seventh Street is widened to promote commerce. The AFAS removes a stoop with steps and grass plots with granite curbs and replaces the sidewalk. Andrew Carnegie gives the AFAS board a grant to defray from expenses to excavate bedrock to accommodate a new boiler room beneath the street.

1925

In addition to its three shareholding organizations, the AFAS building serves as headquarters for the Fine Arts Federation of New York, the Allied Artists of America, the American Water Color Society, the New York Watercolor Club, the National Association of Women Painters and Sculptors, the Society of Mural Painters, and the New York Chapter of the American Institute of Architects.

1927

The Architectural League of New York moves out of the building to 115 East 40th Street but retains its shares in the AFAS. The ASL rents its second-floor quarters.

1928

A pageant marking the eightieth birthday of Robert W. de Forest, a founder and the fifth president of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and regarded as “the captain of philanthropy,” is held in the Vanderbilt Gallery.



From left: George Washington Vanderbilt, 1895; A detail from the AFAS front entrance; John Singer Sargent, *Henry G. Marquand*, 1897, oil on canvas, 52 x 41 3/4 in. Gift of the Trustees, 1897, The Metropolitan Museum of Art; a detail from second floor of the AFAS facade.

1936

On view in the Vanderbilt Gallery is the *National Salon of Photography*, an exhibition of 351 prints by amateurs and professionals, that was organized by the Oval Table Society, a proponent of pictorialism.

1940

Paul P. Juley of Peter A. Juley & Son, New York City's oldest art photography studio, moves into offices in the B.F. Goodrich Company Building, at 225 West 57th Street. Juley continues to photograph many ASL instructors and studios in the AFAS.

1941

The National Academy of Design vacates its first floor offices in the AFAS and reunites with its schools (then located at Amsterdam Avenue and 109th Street) in a Fifth Avenue townhouse donated by Archer M. Huntington. This move marks the end of forty years of academy annuals, 1901–41, in the AFAS galleries.

After its relocation uptown, the National Academy of Design sells its stock to the ASL. The Architectural League of New York follows, selling its stock, making the ASL the sole shareholder in the AFAS.

1945

In April, an exhibition of documentary photographs, *Heroes and Martyrs of the European Ghettos*, sponsored by the Jewish Labor Committee, opens on the second anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. It is one of the last exhibitions held the AFAS first floor galleries before the ASL converts them into studios to accommodate the influx of former G.I.s. Continued overcrowding prompts the ASL's board to consider a building expansion, and a new fundraising effort is launched.

1950

The name "Art Students League of New York" is mounted in brass letters on the AFAS facade over the front entrance.

1958

The ornamental ironwork staircase is removed and replaced by two elevators.

1959

The partition between Studios 9 and 10 on the fifth floor is removed to create a single studio.

1961

Instructor Frank J. Reilly requests that his large and popular classes be designated a single "unified area" in the AFAS building. The ASL's board declines the request. Reilly leaves the ASL to establish an eponymous school in Steinway Hall, one block east, at 111 West 57th Street.

1968

The AFAS is designated a New York City Landmark.

1974

The ASL establishes a new building fund designated for additions, alterations, and renovations.

1980

The AFAS is added to the State Register of Historic Places.

1983

A small restoration to the building's two rear entrances on 58th Street is completed.

1987

The ASL receives large donations from the Russell and Janet Doubleday Fund and the Gladys & Roland Harriman Foundation for its building fund.

1996

The ASL's summer classes are relocated to studios in Carnegie Hall during an asbestos abatement in the AFAS.

2003

The AFAS building is cleared out for an extensive renovation that includes the expansion of the sculpture department in the basement.

The AFAS second-floor gallery is officially named the Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery.

2005

The AFAS sells air rights to Extell Development for \$23.1 million that enables them to add additional stories to a skyscraper to be constructed on the adjacent lot at 225 West 57th.

2014

The AFAS sells additional air rights to Extell Development for \$31.8 million, which permits part of the Central Park Tower to cantilever over the AFAS building.

Grant Competition 2017

Over the years notable artists like James Rosenquist, Lee Bontecou, and Cy Twombly have received scholarships to study at the Art Students League, underscoring the importance of philanthropy to the fulfillment of the League's mission. Those gifts, often provided by artists and their families, connect one generation of artists to the next generation of rising talent.

During the week-long scholarship and grant competition this past May, judges reviewed the work of 254 applicants to award 15 grants and 37 merit scholarships. The judges—artists, gallerists, academics, and critics from New York City's arts community—were Sigmund Abeles, Hugo Bastidas, Jeffrey Bergen, Marcus Burke, Lisa Farrington, Richard Heinrich, Morton Kaish, Tom Freudenheim, Ben Schonzeit, and Lois Wagner. Presented here are the winners of the top grants for 2017.



Clarissa Payne Uvegi, *Henry (Vest, Red Tie, Cane, Ring)*, 2016, oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in. Recipient of the Doreta Kesson Masterton Grant



Ezra Bookstein, *Stage 4*, 2017, plaster with metallic paints, oxidizers, and pastels, H: 18 1/2 in. Recipient of the Ann & Bruno Lucchesi Grant



Susie Amato, *Surrounded by Bottles*, 2017, oil on linen, 64 x 46 in. Recipient of the Kuniyoshi Award for Painting

Sergio Cabrera, *Unplug*, 2016, concrete and copper wire, 71 x 19 x 16 in. Recipient of a Nessa Cohen Grant



Santiago Apolo Troya, *Reflection #3*, 2017, plaster painted with acrylic and oil, 9 1/2 x 5 1/2 in. Recipient of a Nessa Cohen Grant



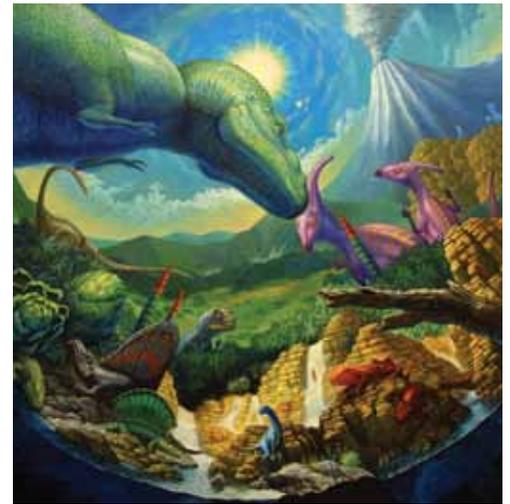
Alecia Chenoa, *So, this is what it's like to feel beautiful*, 2017, oil on canvas, triptych, 5 x 12 ft. Recipient of the Marianne Brody Gaston Grant



Jessie Taylor, *Daphne*, 2015, stone lithograph, 7 x 5 in. Recipient of the Kuniyoshi Award for Printmaking



Sam Goodsell, *Tania*, 2017, oil on linen, 43 x 33 in. Recipient of the Gregory Lysun Grant



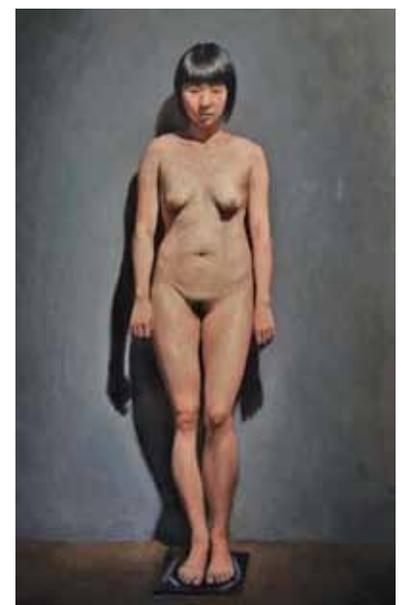
Naoaki Funayama, *X-don*, 2017, acrylic on canvas, 24 x 24 in. Recipient of the Donn Russell Grant



Chin Yin Katz, *Reverie 2*, 2014, marble, 16 1/2 x 10 1/2 x 11 in. Recipient of the Edward G. McDowell Travel Grant



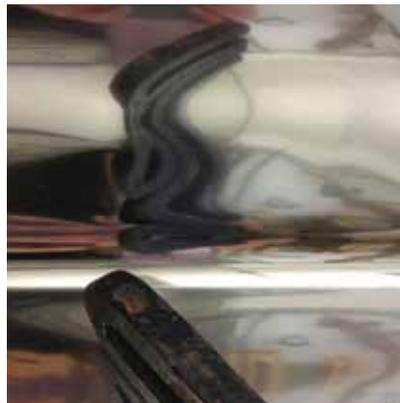
Vidhi Mehrotra, *Interconnectedness*, 2017, acrylic, 48 x 48 in. Recipient of a Xavier Gonzalez & Ethel Edwards Travel Grant for 2017



Christopher LoPresti, *Cherry*, 2017, oil on linen, 36 x 24 in. Recipient of a Xavier Gonzalez & Ethel Edwards Travel Grant



Gaby Vargas, *Untitled*, 2017, oil on canvas, 45 x 45 in. Recipient of the Marilyn Laurie Grant



Janet Fekete Bolton, *A metal distortion photographed for a maquette study*, taken from the artist's sketchbook, 2016. Recipient of the Will Barnett Grant

Establishing a named grant or scholarship is a very meaningful way to honor or memorialize a cherished family member, friend, or colleague. For more information about creating an award, please contact Jeanne Lunin, Director of Development, at 212.247.4510, ext. 185 or jlunin@artstudentsleague.org.

Member Exhibitions &



Bobbi Adams

Museum acquisition: The Morris Museum of Art (Augusta, GA) acquisitioned four pastel drawings by Bobbi Adams for its collection, which already includes several of her pastels.

Susie Amato

Workshops: Amato is now leading studio and plein-air workshops through paintadventure.com.

ShinYoung An

Publication: An's Face series *Winds of Hope* is featured on the online publication *Vice*.

Angela Barbalace

Award: Barbalace received Honorable Mention in *3x3 Contemporary Illustration Annual 2016*.

Samantha Beste

Group show: Beste's print was included in *Fight or Flight*, a juried exhibition at the Painting Center, June 20–July 15, 2017.



Sigalit Biopcik

Group show: *Controlled Chaos Art*, Image Gallery (Brooklyn, NY), April 28–30, 2017.

Ellen Buselli

Group show: *81st National Midyear Annual Exhibition*, The Butler Institute of American (Youngstown, OH), July 9–August 20, 2017.

Erin Butler

Group show: *A Quartet of Soloists: Itzhak Beery, Elinore Bucholtz, Erin Butler, Ann Marie McDonnell*, Samuel J. Wood Library Gallery, Weill Cornell Medicine (NYC), March 20–May 5, 2017.



Katharine Butler

Group show: *The Graphic Image*, an exhibition of relief prints, Belskie Museum of Art & Science (Closter, NJ), November 27–December 4, 2016.

Nevio Carcich

Solo show: *Landscapes*, ART Unije 13 (Unije, Croatia), July 27–August 30, 2017.

Joanna Cotler

Solo show: *Earthly Delights*, Atrium Lobby Showcase Gallery East, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY, May 11–July 10, 2017.

Kenroy G. Dolly

Group show: *Artists without Frontiers*, Union Headquarters of 32BJ, June 3–August 31, 2017.



Evelyn Eller

Group show: Eller's artist book *Jerusalem Pilgrim* was included in *City of God, Bronze and Light: Jerusalem between Word and Image*, Yeshiva University Museum, April 23–July 30, 2017.

Terry Finch

Commission: Finch collaborated with John Zullo, the artistic director and choreographer for the dance company Raw Movement, to create the designs for the backdrop and dancers' costumes for his new work *Liabile to Change*.

Susan D. Friend

Solo show: *Nature Inspires*, Amagansett Library, July 1–31, 2017.

Gillian J. Furniss

Group show: *Papercutting of Countryside and Cities*, Artist Alley, Rosenzweig Arts Center, October 2017.

Carole Hallé

Solo show: *Drawings Manifest: Carole Hallé*, Union Arts Center (Sparkill, NY), June 10–July 30, 2017.

Betsy Heffron

Group show: *TOAST Annual Open Artist Exhibition*, ONE Art Space (NYC), October 16–28, 2017.

Victor Honigsfeld

Group show: *In the Meeting of Rock and Sea*, Susan Eley Fine Art (NYC), September 13–November 2, 2017.

Ruth Hurd

Group show: *Annual Open Artist Members Exhibition*, Blue Door Art Center, July 13–August 26, 2017.

Yuka Imata

Group show: *The Portrait Project: Artists Portraying Artists*, Westbeth Gallery (NYC), May 6–20, 2017.

Suellen Frick Lash

Award: Lash received the Dagny Hultgreen Award for Oil/Acrylic at the *100th Annual Members Exhibition of the Greenwich Art Society*, Bendheim Gallery, Greenwich Art Center, (Greenwich, CT).

Yolene Legrand

Group show: *Life on the Canal Then by Artists Now*, Erie Canal Museum (Syracuse, NY), May 29–July 31, 2017.

Awards

Fei Li

Group show: *Bellingham National 2017 Juried Art Exhibition and Awards*, Whatcom Museum (Bellingham, WA), June 11–September 10, 2017.

Margaret Montgomery

Group show: *New York City Invitational Exhibition*, George Billis Gallery (Chelsea, NYC), July 25–August 18.

Walter Lynn Mosley

Award: Mr. Mosley received the Award for Narrative Excellence for the *National Oil and Acrylic Painters Society Online International Spring 2017 Exhibition*.

Ula Movchan

Award: Movchan received an Honorable Mention at the *26th Annual National Juried Exhibition of Tradition Oils*, organized by the Oil Painters of America and held at Eisele Gallery of Fine Art.

Bob Palevitz

Award: This past spring Palevitz's *Space and Mass* received the Jane Peterson Memorial Award for Still Life at the *84th Annual Exhibition of the Hudson Valley Art Association*.

Ellen Nathan Singer

Publication: Singer's "React! Resist! Protest!" is an illustrated article about prints that reflect today's vital political concerns, which appears in the July 2017 issue of the *Journal of the Print World*.

Janice Stanton

Two-person show: *Janice Stanton and Lisbeth McCoy: Fragments / Strangely Familiar*,

Anders Wahlstedt Fine Art (NYC), June 22–July 28, 2017.

Bonnie Steinsnyder

Solo show: *Watercolor Paintings of Orchids by Bonnie Steinsnyder*, Lasdon Park and Arboretum (Katonah, NY), July–August 2017.

Theodosia A.G. Tamborlane

Group show: *Art and Design*, Bridgehampton Museum, July 6–9, 2017.

Preeti Varma

Solo show: *Preeti Varma*, Walter Wickiser Gallery (NYC), September 2–27, 2017.

Steven E. Walker

Group show: *Society of American Graphic Artists 83rd Members Exhibition*, The Old Print Shop (NYC), July 11–August 11, 2017.

Susan Woldman

Solo show: *Current*, Narthex Gallery, December 19, 2017–February 1, 2018.

Leslie Shaw Zadoian

Group show: *ViewPoints 2017*, Aljira Center for Contemporary Art (Newark, NJ), June 1–30, 2017.

Fulvia Zambon

Group show: *Nation V–Thru the Rabbit Hole*, Sideshow Gallery, January 7–February 26, 2017.

ASL Bronze Artists

Group show: *Williamsburg Bronze Exhibit*, an exhibition by ASL Bronze Artists, led by Oscar Garcia, Condor Hotel (Williamsburg, Brooklyn), June 21–23,



2017. Members of the group include Gaelle Hintzy Marcel, Elena Komer, Eileen Munson, Maria Stephens, Nidia Taboada, Natalie Vie, Mark Dawson, Richard Fallica, Markus Holtby, Tony Piscitello, Paul Yarden, Jessica Mandrick, Catherine Abrams, Toru Tokashiki, Ralph Erman, Brian Lewis, Sonia Stark, Val Brochard, Kate Grandin, Stanley Sheran, Freddy Borges, Bette Elman, Zalmen Glauber, Ray Warner, Grady Searcy, Ella Sherman, Larry D'Arrigo, Sandra Schulz, Maxwell Singer, Michelle Smith, Tina B, Muriel Kneeshaw, and Shosana Vidra.

IN MEMORIAM ASL MEMBERS

Cornelia B. Barnes
Dale Meyers Cooper, former instructor
Peter Cox, instructor
Lucile Driskell
Gerald Dale Fairclough
David L. Ginsberg
Esther Glazer
Hazel Briller Gluck
Meryl Greenfield, former BOC member
Margaret E. Harris
Florence Dykstra Karns
Beatrice M Cohen Koch
Myra Kyle
Martin Landau
Irving I. Lehr
Geoffrey K. Mawby, former BOC president
Elinor Bunin Munroe
Erica L. Nilson
James A. Rosenquist
Bernice Foster Saxon
Mildred C. Schachinger
Hillard Schneider
Marie Schonthal
Robert J. Schwartz
Carol Lee M. Shahid



Opposite page, from top: Shin-Young An, *The U.S. Citizen*, 2015, oil, gesso and acrylic on a background of a collage of newspaper, 36 x 36 in.; Susan Woldman, *Level*, 2017, acrylic paint on birchwood, 48 x 60 in.; Margaret Montgomery, *Cyclone, Coney Island*, 2017, watercolor & gouache on paper, 26 x 38; Yuka Imata, *Eric*, oil on panel, 14 x 11 in.; *Top right:* Ruth Hurd, *Crossroads IV*, 2016, acrylic on Yupo, 11 x 15 in.; *Above:* Samatha Beste, *Puzzled People (Chrysler)*, aquatint with collage, 10 x 20 in.

News in Brief

43 Things You Might Not Have Heard About the League

Ken Park

The League's 143rd regular session opened in September with a **dozen new classes and ten new instructors.**

We welcome (or welcome back) artists Sigmund Abeles, Garin Baker, Peter Bonner, Bil Donovan, Emily Hubley, Simon Levenson, Fran O'Neill, Kamilla Talbot, Jason Yarmosky, and Weiqing Yuan. Ms. Talbot, Mr. Bonner, and Mr. Yuan join us from the National Academy, whose schools are on hiatus while they search for a new building.

Good news by the numbers. The League made strides in many areas during fiscal 2017, which ended May 31, 2017. Here's an overview of the progress:

- Revenues from class tuition, workshops, the store, and development all rose significantly, led by a 26% increase in fundraising. The number of donors giving for the first time increased by 27%.

- 107 new members were approved at the League's April Members Meeting, the most in eight years.

- Attendance in the gallery for exhibitions and other programs topped 32,000, a 10% gain from last year.

- Applications for the Certificate Programs rose more than 50% for the year.

- For the first time in five years, the number of new students registering rose, to over 2,400 during the year.

There's a **new Florida Keys Sculpture Trail** with sculptures by artists in the **League's Model to Monument (M2M)** public art program! This summer, eight pieces from M2M Year Six were de-installed from Riverside Park South and Van Cortlandt Park and trucked to the Florida Keys to create the trail stretching eighty miles from Islamorada to Key West. The trail realizes the inspiration of two longtime Key West philanthropists, John Padget and Jacob Dekker, who saw the League artists' sculptures in New York City in 2016. Mr. Padget says, "Providing a permanent home for these sculptures from artists at the Art Students League is a real thrill. And local artists will be

stimulated to submit their work as the trail grows." The M2M Year Six sculptors are Aaron Bell, Sheila Berger, James Emerson, Tanda Francis, Markus Rudolph Holtby, Shiho Sato, and Sarah Thompson-Moore. Major support for the Year Six M2M program was provided by Ludmila Schwarzenberg Bidwell, Susan Dryfoos, Kathleen H. Seidel, and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs. The Keys Council of the Arts reported that the installed sculptures "stood strong" through Hurricane Irma.

Maquettes from the M2M program were featured as part of *A Summer of Sculpture* at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in Manhattan's Morningside Heights neighborhood. Presented by the Cathedral, the League, and the National Sculpture Society (NSS), the exhibition also showcased the work of League instructor and M2M mentor Greg Wyatt, who is also sculptor-in-residence at the Cathedral, and more than two dozen monumental bronzes curated by the NSS.

This fall, the League's Certificate Program includes a dozen students who had been pursuing certificates at the National Academy. In May, when the Academy announced that they were suspending classes, they selected the League and two other schools to accept their certificate students. In total, **some 75 students, including more than 70 internationals and 2 veterans, are working toward certificates at the League this fall.**

In response to the huge turnout for a Saturday talk on oil painting materials last February, **the League's Art Supply Store has launched a series of art material lecture/demonstrations this fall.** Each talk is presented in the Phyllis Harriman Mason Gallery at three separate times (lunchtime and evenings on weekdays, and Saturday morning) to make it convenient for all our students to attend. Check the "Events" listings on the League's website for information on upcoming programs.

Speaking of lectures, the League is



Fran O'Neill, *Shutter*, 2016, oil on canvas, 48 x 48 in. She is teaching an afternoon painting class this year.



New and prospective students at the League's monthly Open House.

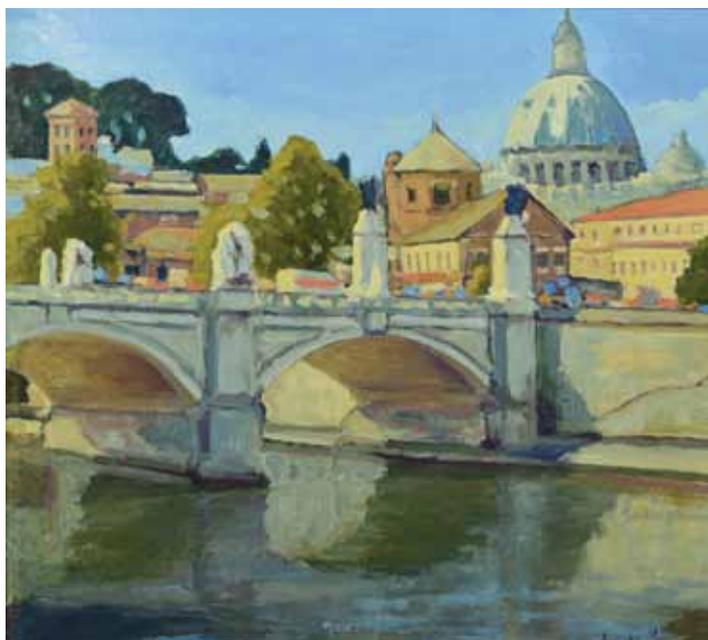




From top: A girl with her “Mexican mirror,” created at Arrow Recreation Center in Queens, NY; Artists who “painted nature” at Van Cortlandt Park, Bronx, NY.



Opposite page: *Wind Tower*, a collaborative piece by the Year Six M2M artists installed in Grimal Grove on Big Pine Key, Florida. Above: Florida Sculpture Trail philanthropists, Jacob Dekker (center) and John Padgett with Florida Keys officials in June.



Dumitru Molesica, *Ponte Vittorio Emanuele II, Rome*

bringing back the **popular Lunchtime Lecture Series organized by instructor Ephraim Rubenstein**. Among the events, held Wednesdays from 12:30 to 1:30 pm: League instructor James Little will present “The Lack of Constructive Analytical Criticism and the Proliferation of Descriptive Analysis in Contemporary Art” on November 15, and Marcus Burke, Senior Curator at the Hispanic Society of America, will give a talk, “Joaquin Sorolla as an Alternative Path to Modernism,” on December 13.

Can’t get enough art talk? Then please join us for the **League’s venerable Fall Lecture Series, evenings in the gallery**. Among the highlights of curator Jillian Russo’s programs is a panel discussion on the **History of 57th Street**, on November 9, 6:30-8:00 PM. **All the League’s lecture programs are free and open to the public**. You can RSVP from the “Events” listing on the League’s website.

The League’s Community Outreach Program co-sponsored fifty events around the city this summer for hikers, families, aspiring graphic artists, and people who attended “meetups.” “Twilight Hike & Draws” at the Van Cortlandt Nature Center offered a chance for a relaxing hike and plein-air drawing. “Make Your Mark” at the Bushwick Inlet Park taught graphic novel skills. Another “Make Your Mark” in the Bronx’s Starlight Park was part of a celebration of “The River House,” the Bronx River Alliance’s new

home. “Painting Nature,” held in the afternoons at Van Cortlandt’s Woodlawn Playground, brought families to cool events on hot days, and weekly evening “Urban Sketching Meetups,” in conjunction with the 34th Street Partnership, drew hip crowds to sketch in Herald Square. Led by League teaching-artists, Community Outreach events promote the League while extending the League’s educational mission to hundreds of folks in far-flung locations around the city.

Those outreach programs, in addition to the Seeds from the League program, are held at NYC Parks Recreation Centers, like the Summer camp at ARROW Recreation Center in Queens. **Seeds also provided scholarships to sixty-four students for study at the League this past summer.**

With sadness and appreciation, the League community marked the retirement of long-time **Facilities Engineer Dumitru Molesica** in August. Dumitru started taking classes at the League in 1991, just months after coming to the US from Romania. He joined the maintenance staff the following year and became Facilities Engineer in 2003. Dumitru looks forward to painting, kayaking, and enjoying his time as an artist at his home on Shelter Island. “The League changed my life,” he says. “Here were the most beautiful years of my life, and the League will always be a part of me.” Many, many thanks to Dumitru for all he did for the League. He’ll be missed.



From left: Satoko Takahashi, *Figure Study*, 2016, oil, 22 x 18 in.; *The Queen and the Mirror* (one page of a five-page comic), 2017, pen and ink, 17 x 11 in.

A Long Way From Home

An interview with Satoko Takahashi Julia Montepagani

For many of us, studying at the League requires only a subway ride and a short walk. For others, it can take more than a year, several flights, and a small mountain of paperwork before they can first set foot in the school's lobby. This is the reality for many of the international students who apply to the League's Certificate Program. Satoko Takahashi is one such student. Originally from Tokyo, Japan, she had already studied in the US once, graduating with a BFA from Nebraska University. She returned to Tokyo to work and had to put her art on hold for several years.

In 2013, after a lengthy and costly legal process to obtain the proper visas, she was accepted to the League's Certificate Program. Despite these obstacles (or perhaps because of), Satoko was focused and prolific while at the League, having studied with Timothy J. Clark, Lisa Dinhofer, Leonid Gervits, Dan Thompson, Costa Vavagiakis, and Steven Walker, among others.

She described more of her journey to me in the League's café:

Julia Montepagani: Did you always know you wanted to be an artist?

Satoko Takahashi No—I started as a history major. I accidentally took a drawing class in my sophomore year. The drawing professor encouraged me to switch majors—and I did!

JM After your undergraduate studies, you had to take a break from art to work. What made you come back to art?

ST I thought I could live like everybody else, not being an artist. But after seven years or so, I realized it was killing me.

JM How did the League impact your art?

ST Before I came here, I thought I was dead. I didn't really know how I should live. Here we can choose anything we want, and it's no problem. It was really hard for me to choose one course for myself, but the League let me experiment.

JM You are clearly interested in representational art [Satoko won a Merit Scholarship for Realism in 2015], but you also studied comic illustration for three years here.

ST The reason I became interested in art is because I loved comics. I grew up reading them.

JM Is comic illustration another possibility for you?

ST I'm horrible at making stories, so I know I cannot be a comic-maker. But I want to combine my representational drawing and comic drawing. I haven't done it yet because I'm still struggling with painting—but I would like to explore this.

JM What was your biggest struggle upon coming to the League?

ST A lot of things: communicating with people around me, self-discipline, and of course, always having to think of the next step.

JM What are your long-term artistic goals?

ST I want to continue studying and making art until I die. That's for sure. I don't need to be famous or rich, but if I can make something that makes people happy or inspired, that's all I need.

Satoko is currently studying at the League on an OPT visa, which allows her to work for an additional year after school. After, she will apply for an Artist Visa, which is considerably more difficult to obtain. You can view more of her work on Instagram: @satokotakahashi106

Something Different

An Interview with Ezra Cohen

Julia Montepagani



Twenty-four-year-old Ezra Cohen's path to art seems to have been immediate and direct – much like his painting style. Born and raised in Hell's Kitchen, his dynamic and multi-textured works – a mix of various types of paper, cloth, and cut shapes from yesterday's paintings – are at least partly the result of his creative upbringing. The son of a playwright and a dancer, Ezra was home-schooled and he self-selected his path to painting. He met his first mentor, Edla Cusick, through a friend when he was only eight, and was introduced to his long-time teacher, Knox Martin, eight years after that. Ezra's strong connection and deep respect for his teachers is evidenced by their ongoing relationships. Since he was sixteen, Ezra has split his time between Knox's class and his shared studio space with Edla. This

summer, Knox and Ezra shared a show at Todd Merrill Studio in Southampton. We spoke in Knox's classroom:

Julia Montepagani You've been painting most of your life. Was there a point when you discovered your "style?"

Ezra Cohen I just came in and I painted every day—I didn't really try to find a style. A lot of people try to find their style, and then if they sell a few paintings in that style, then they keep making more of the same. But they don't really move forward and become free. I don't like to label myself. I never know what I'm going to do the next day.

JM What informs your work?

EC I look at a lot of art. All different types. Knox told me to surround myself with everything, and then eliminate what's



Left: Ezra Cohen, *XXX*, 2017, mixed media on canvas, 60 x 72 in. *Above:* Ezra Cohen, *K*, 2017, oil and paper on canvas, 60 x 72 in.

not working. I absorb as much as I can of the good stuff. I come in and paint and don't put any restrictions on myself – and just let it rock. The perfect example is the show now at MoMA, the Rauschenberg show. Each piece is totally different than the next. He may have lost it at some points, but he never limited himself.

JM How has Knox Martin impacted you?

EC Knox has completely changed the way that I see art. He's been doing it for ninety-four years. He's changed my aesthetic, how I take out what's good or bad.

JM And now you're in a show with him.

EC Having a show with Knox is a huge leap. I'm honored that he would do that with me. I'm hanging next to a master.

JM What do you think about as you paint?

EC Every time I come into the studio, my paintings grow. I am confident in that. I'm just excited for the next painting.

JM What do you want people to feel when they look at your paintings?

EC I want it to be fresh for them every day, so they find something new in it. I have a painting above my bed that I did a few years ago, and there was something wrong with it, and I couldn't figure out what it was. I showed Knox and he goes, "Get me a medium brush with white." He writes my name huge across the top. It was kind of shocking. I put the painting away for a while. Now I have hung it above my bed, and every time I look at it, I see something different, something fresh in it. That's what I want people to get from my work.

You can learn more about Ezra and his work at www.ezracohenstudio.com.

Embracing Decay

An Interview with Ezra Bookstein

Thomas Tacik

As an accomplished documentary filmmaker, Ezra Bookstein received an Emmy Award for Outstanding Documentary Camera. His creative life in film media, however, is intertwined with life as a sculptor. As a student of Barney Hodes at the Art Students League, Ezra was a merit recipient of the Vivian A. Frankel Scholarship in 2016 and is this year's winner of the Ann & Bruno Lucchesi Grant.

Tom Tacik You were an art major as an undergraduate and transitioned from sculpture into filmmaking. Then you came to the League around 2014. How did that come about?

Ezra Bookstein I studied sculpture at the University of Oregon under the late great Paul Buckner (1933–2014) and focused in figurative art. After college the figurative aspect of my work fell away, primarily because I didn't have access to models. I stumbled into camera work and found that I was really good at it. There were a lot of similarities in terms of the eye, composition, and telling a story. I'd been working at home on sculptures that were abstract, sometimes with found and everyday objects, and I also created a sculpture toy that I was selling in design stores. But it was on the top of my list to get back in front of the model, back into the clay. I was looking for where I could go to sculpt live models in New York and the League popped up online.

TT Can you be specific about how what you do as a filmmaker might crossover into what you do in your sculpture?

EB I've always been an artist, and the training of my eye became much more acute through camerawork. Aside from trying to tell a broad story visually, in camerawork the choices of how I want to reveal something in terms of framing and camera movement can be very subtle and aesthetic. I think that relates to sculpture pretty clearly in many ways. But why I like sculpting people? I think it's just because I'm really interested in people: people's stories and people's wrinkles. I'm just interested in faces and people's lives – humanity. I like sculpting portraits, very much. I also like filming documentaries. There must be a connection.

TT Who have been your inspirations in sculpture, in your artwork?



EB Rodin really opened my eyes in my early twenties. I spent a week at the Rodin Museum in Paris, just staring. My mind was blown by the emotion he was bringing out in his pieces. Then, Richard Serra – on the other end of the spectrum – is so powerful in the feelings his sculptures bring out in the viewer. I also love Andy Goldsworthy and what he does with permanence and impermanence.

TT Talk a little about how you develop your ideas and concepts and where you see your work going.

EB Aesthetically, I find decay really beautiful. So I model a piece until I'm happy with it, and then in the casting and patina stages I either wear things down or make them feel like they've been weathered or beaten, or old and aged. And then there are wonderful accidents and serendipity, things that happen that you get to embrace. I'm open to something going wrong (or not) and seeing what I can do with it – I enjoy getting surprised that way. I don't

start with a preconceived idea. When the model is there, I ask, what do I feel like working on; what do I want to go for; how far do I want to go? I start building the armature with no planning other than on the spot. I try to let the first sit find some inspiration, and then it usually will evolve. So by the time I reach the patina it can be pretty far from the initial spark. But then I'm on a bit of a highway going in a direction, trying to see how far I can push it. Trying to break things apart more and more. That's inspired my work here at the League very directly.

TT What has it meant to you to have won a merit scholarship and now the Ann & Bruno Lucchesi Grant?

EB The merit was a great encouragement to keep going. It's a wonderful recognition by the League. And winning the Lucchesi is just a huge honor. There are really wonderful sculptors with amazing technical skills and experience that I learn from here, and to be recognized this way (and lucky) is truly an honor.

Ezra Bookstein, *Stage 4*, 2017, plaster with metallic paints, oxidizers, and pastels, H: 18 1/2 in. Recipient of the Ann & Bruno Lucchesi Grant

Artists and Patrons

A Creative Alliance

Jeanne Lunin



Howard Russell Butler, c. 1920, Macbeth Gallery Records, Archives of American Art.

On December 4, 1892, the doors opened to the American Fine Arts Society (AFAS) building, venerable 57th Street home of the Art Students League for 125 years and a New York City landmark. Financing the construction of the building is the remarkable story of a creative alliance of artists and patrons, spearheaded by Howard Russell Butler, an indefatigable young lawyer-turned artist. Butler had been “gripped” by the idea of obtaining exhibition space for the “revolutionists,” the younger artists returning from the ateliers of Europe only to be shunned by the academy.

As a member of the American Society of Artists and having studied at the League, Butler was convinced that the “modern art movement... would come into greater prominence and favour with the public if these younger organizations were united in cooperation, with a permanent domicile of their own.” Using his legal expertise, he swiftly drew up a “Plan and Agreement.” The Society of American Artists, Art Students League, and the Architectural League of New York would retain their independence, while a separate entity—the American Fine Arts Society—was incorporated in June of 1889 to erect and manage the proposed building. The colleague organizations committed to leasing studio, office, and exhibition space to cover annual operating expenses. Now it fell to Butler to secure capital for the construction.

The certificate of incorporation of the AFAS had established a capital stock of \$50,000, with each organization entitled to a quota of \$16,600, to be held in their respective treasuries. Butler prophesied that “this union of younger organizations would awaken an interest and enthusiasm on the part of the public, which could easily be converted into money.” The members of the cooperating societies subscribed for stock on the installment plan, most of them taking one share that they would eventually transfer to their affiliated organization.

Substantial capital investment was still required and, in his quest, Butler would use his social connections to approach some of New York City’s leading Gilded Age philanthropists. According

to League archivist Stephanie Cassidy, he was able to channel the passion many eminent New York collectors felt for their art objects to a related concern for the welfare of contemporary American artists. This fundraising strategy was sincere and ultimately proved successful.

Henry G. Marquand, Jr., then President of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, advanced the Art Students League \$5,000 for the purchase of stock. Strolling on Fifth Avenue one day, Butler seized on a chance encounter with George Washington Vanderbilt II, a passionate art collector and member of the prominent Vanderbilt family that had amassed a fortune in steamboats, railroads and other business ventures. After his persuasive entreaty, Vanderbilt proclaimed on the spot, “I will be one of eight [patrons] to give \$5,000.”

Butler launched a whirlwind of a campaign, writing letters and calling on prospective donors with artists James Carroll Beckwith and Eastman Johnson at his side. Over the course of months, seven additional patrons joined the campaign including steel magnate Andrew Carnegie, Henry O. Havemeyer (founder of the American Sugar Refining Co.) and his cousin William F. Havemeyer, Jr., railroad baron C. P. Huntington, banker Darius O. Mills, Charles L. Tiffany (founder of Tiffany & Co.), and Cornelius Vanderbilt II (George’s brother).

Butler’s intention from the outset was to keep control of the building in the hands of artists so they would be free to practice their art without restrictions. He wisely invited Marquand, a man of impeccable reputation, to chair the Gift Fund he had organized to manage capital for the project. With his father’s counsel and in a stroke of brilliance, Butler persuaded the founding patrons to deed the AFAS to the artists after twenty-one years. If the artists could keep the building afloat until 1912, ownership of the property would belong solely “to the profession.” This remains true today.

Soon after Butler convinced Vanderbilt to purchase a portion of the building site on 58th Street and to erect a gallery which the society would be able to rent for exhibitions. In late December 1892, Vanderbilt unexpectedly donated \$100,000 to the society for the purchase of his gallery and land, a gift without strings that met with Butler’s shock and delight. Of Vanderbilt’s generosity, Butler declared: “No gift ever did so much for the art of this community.”

A few days after Vanderbilt made his gift, a great dinner was held in the gallery for about 400 guests from the art world. The Art Students League plans to mark the 125th anniversary of its home with a great celebration in its studios and galleries next March. We welcome everyone in our legendary community to come together to pay tribute to all those who made the AFAS possible—with gifts large and small—and to contribute to the future of the extraordinary school that has become synonymous with our landmark home.

Thanks to Our Contributors

The Art Students League of New York is grateful to the many individuals, foundations, corporations, public agencies, and other organizations whose generous gifts and grants help make possible the League's outstanding classes and programs. Listed below are those contributors who made gifts and grants of \$250 and above between June 1, 2016 and May 31, 2017.

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