

WEST HILLS ART LEAGUE

Minutes for Meeting of January 18, 2018

Ashley Robles Presiding

Treasurer's Report - Audra Zampogna reported a current balance of \$4306.21

Membership Dues – The group approved the suggestion that we reinstate the \$35 family dues rate in addition to the \$25 individual rate. The question was raised as to whether we could change the minimum age for membership (It's now 18), but because we are a non-profit, we would have to revise our by-laws to allow it. Ashley will research this and get back to us.

Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce Exhibit Space – The group voted to change artwork quarterly. The committee in charge of this activity will get back to us with timing details. The suggestion was made that we restrict our hanging to space with hanging rods. (Other walls require nailing picture hooks – and repairing the resulting holes when artwork is removed.)

Cindy Gilberti reminded the group that our membership in the Chamber entitles all WHAL members to attend all Chamber events (after payment of fees). She encouraged us to review upcoming events (schedules are available at the Chamber's front desk or on their website) and cited her own recent experience when she paid \$35 to hear a review by Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald. She said the networking opportunities, both for individual artists and for WHAL, were extensive.

Northland Public Library – Ashley has taken a tour of the library and was impressed with the exhibit space. WHAL has scheduled an exhibit of member works during March through May. Drop off is scheduled for March 5 and takedown after Memorial Day on May 29. Participants are not allowed to put prices on their work, but can include contact information.

Gilberti Fine Art Events – Cindy Gilberti announced a number of upcoming events at her gallery;

Oil Painting with Dianne Bauman – six weeks beginning February 14

Figure Drawing classes with Ash Robles – six weeks beginning February 22

Realistic Watercolor classes with Doug Brown – six weeks beginning March 8

Expressive Watercolor classes with Cindy Gilberti – six weeks beginning March 12

Drawing Made Easy classes with Marianne Hilke – four weeks beginning March 19

Workshop (multi media): Journey of Landscape Painting with Russ Recchion – May 8-9-10

Workshop: Zentangle Basics and Beyond with Jan Steinle – May 22

Art Marketing Roundtable – In addition to the above events, Cindy also announced another Art Marketing Roundtable with Art Marketing Consultant Becky Sciuлло. This one is on Pricing

Your Artwork. Sign up either for Thursday, March 8 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. or Saturday, March 10 from 10 am – 12 pm. Both sessions are free.

North Hills Art Center Animal Portraits Show – As a fund raiser for animal rescue, North Hills is scheduling a “Spring Paws” Art Show for March 10 through April 6. This is a non-juried show. Participants are invited to submit up to three pieces, featuring animals, with either a donation of \$10 for each piece or an equivalent amount in pet food or accessories. Drop off dates are March 5 from 7 pm. to 9 p.m. or March 5, 6, 7, 8 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Opening reception is Saturday, March 10 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. Pick up dates are April 9 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. and April 9-13 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Merrick Art Gallery call for Artists – The Merrick, in New Brighton, is scheduling its biannual exhibit of contemporary art for May 20 through July 15. Up to three pieces may be submitted on a CD from which the jury may (or may not) select one for exhibition. A prospectus is available on line.

Demonstrator: Our guest presenter was Peggi Habets, who lives and works as an artist in her hometown of Pittsburgh, Pa. Her deep love for the fluidity and spontaneity of watercolor has led her to paint and teach in the medium for over 15 years. Her figurative and cityscape paintings have been exhibited and collected internationally and she has received awards in many prestigious shows, including the National Watercolor Society and the American Watercolor Society International Juried Exhibitions. Publications of her work include “Splash 18” and the upcoming “Splash 19” watercolor books, as well as magazine articles in *The Art of Watercolour*, *Pratique Des Arts*, *Watercolor Artist*, *Watercolor Magic*, and *Palette* magazines. She is the author of *Watercolor Made Easy: Portraits* and was featured in *The Art of Drawing and Painting Portraits*, both books published by Walter Foster Publishing.

Demonstration – Peggi painted the head of a model, for which she had taken a photo. She had pre-drawn the head (in pencil) on a piece of 300# watercolor paper, mounted vertically on a table easel.

Preparation – Peggi takes pictures of her subjects, blows them up to the size she wants, then cuts out the outline of the subject and traces it onto her paper. (She says this makes it easier to fill in details.) She then makes several versions of the original photo, including a posterized version and a b & w version to help her determine values and distribution of lights and darks. Finally, she makes quick preliminary studies of the subject, which helps her to further determine color and shading.

Paints and Palette – She currently favors M Graham watercolors. Instead of arranging her colors on her palette by color family, she positions them according to transparency (from very transparent to opaque.) She doesn’t use gouache except for correcting mistakes (see below). Her principal hues for skin color are burnt sienna and permanent rose. She even uses this combination for subjects with darker skin, sometimes adding in ultramarine blue. She rarely uses watercolor pencils except to sign her name.

Mixing colors – Peggi prefers to blend her colors on the paper rather than pre-mix them on her palette. She thinks pre-mixing often results in “flat-looking” colors.

Brushes – For her demonstration, Peggi used what appeared to be a #10 round brush. She has experimented with both natural and synthetic fibers as well as blends and currently uses natural bristles. (She said she used to worry about “humane” treatment of animals used for brush hair

and currently uses a brand called Rosemary.) In addition to the brush she used for her demonstration, Peggi uses 1 ½” and 2” flat brushes as well as smaller brushes for detail.

Paper – Peggi has been using Arches 260 or 300# cold press paper, but she senses lately that the composition has changed. She’s currently experimenting with a Canson paper called L’Aquarelle, which she likes.

First Steps – She started her work by painting around the lightest areas of the face with a mix of her skin colors – burnt sienna and permanent rose. She doesn’t pre-wet the paper. She then began to lay in some of the darker areas with a deeper shade of the skin colors – sometimes adding a bit of ultramarine blue. When she came to a large area that was in deep shade, she glazed over the original skin color with ultramarine blue. At first, this looked too blue and too dark, but as she noted, it dried lighter. She then overglazed the blue with her skin color blend. When it dried, it looked like a natural shading of the skin color.

Facial Features – Peggi pre-wet an eyebrow before dropping in color. For the eye, she noted that the lash and the iris were almost identical in color. For the white of the eye, she dropped in some blue, noting that the whites of younger people’s eyes tended to be bluer, while older people’s whites had more of a yellow tint.

Hair – While she didn’t get to paint the model’s hair during the demo, Peggi noted that it was often possible and more effective to treat it in an abstract way – Ice. as a mass of color rather than highly detailed strands of individual hairs. For this model’s dark hair, she intends to use a mix of sepia and ultramarine.

Backgrounds – In determining backgrounds, Peggi says that the preliminary studies are a great help in deciding how detailed they should be as well as how dark or light they should be and of what color.

Mistakes – Peggi insists that nearly all mistakes are correctable with scrubbing or overlays of opaque color or with titanium white. The only difficult colors to correct are the staining colors.

Timing – For some of her larger ballerina pictures, Peggi said she spent 10 to 12 hours, but she added that most of the time was spent in “designing” the pictures.

Our next meeting will be on March 15.

Respectfully submitted,

Will White