

## WEST HILLS ART LEAGUE

### Minutes for Meeting of October 19, 2017

Ashley Robles Presiding

**Minutes** for our 9/21/17 meeting have been posted on line. Anyone with corrections or additions should feel free to submit them.

**Treasurer's Report:** Audra Zampogna reported a current balance of \$3701.51.

**Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce** – The Pittsburgh Area Airport Chamber of Commerce will open its offices on November 17. WHAL is a paid member of the Chamber and has been offered the exclusive chance to hang pictures in the new location at 830 Beaver Grade Road in Moon. A committee has been formed to manage scheduling but more members are needed. Cindy Gilberti emphasized the special opportunity this venue offers and encouraged artists to “paint big.” There are no restrictions on subject matter except that works not be “political” nor contain any nudes.

**Holiday Sale** – The Annual Holiday Sale in the Robin Hill Carriage House will be on Saturday, December 2 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m... A volunteer is needed to coordinate participation. There is room for 10 artists. Tables are provided but artists must provide their own covers. There is no commission. Smaller items, priced under \$100, seem to sell the best.

**Free Roundtable:** Gilberti Fine Art is hosting a free roundtable on “Social Media Strategies” for selling art. Two two-hour sessions are scheduled: Thursday, November 2 and Saturday, November 4, both at 10 a.m. Registration at [gilbertifineart@gmail.com](mailto:gilbertifineart@gmail.com) or call (412) 303-4590.

**Artist Talk:** Member Amy Short will open her exhibit at Gilberti Fine Art with a talk on the Autumn Celebration in Coraopolis and give a demonstration of her sculpting. Her show will run through November.

**Reading of New Plays:** Beginning November 6, Gilberti Fine Art will host a series of 20-minute readings from new plays which were finalist submissions to [reading@pittsburghnewworks.org](mailto:reading@pittsburghnewworks.org). Programs begin at 7 p.m. on the first Mondays in November, December, March, April and May. The November 6 program will feature readings from three plays: “Stars Daughter,” “Art of Life,” and “Favorite Colors.” Admission is free but donations are accepted.

**Member Show:** Doug Brown will exhibit over 60 of his paintings and note cards at the Hopewell Volunteer Fire Station #2 on Rte 51 & Gringo Rd., Saturday, October 21, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**Demonstrator:** Our guest presenter was William Pfahl, who paints cityscapes, figures and portraits in oils and pastels. A graduate of the Rhode Island School of Design, he has taught art in the Pittsburgh Public Schools and since 2007 has conducted workshops and classes at Touchstone Center for Crafts. He is a member of the Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, was 2015 Artist of the Year at .Touchstone and is currently represented by Panza Art Gallery.

For his demonstration, Bill did an oil portrait of member Dianne Bauman.

**Support:** Bill squeegees Elmer's Glue on Gatorboard and covers it with canvas which he buys by the roll at Pat Catan's . He coats this with white semi-gloss house paint which he has tinted with black, to make a gray background for his subject.

**Palette:** He uses three colors to lay in basic shapes and values: burnt sienna, white and ultramarine blue. For skin colors he uses cadmium red, orange, yellow and green. His palette is a glass rectangle.

**Brushes:** Bill uses a 69¢ one-inch "chip brush" to coat his board and to lay in shadow shapes. For finer detail he uses #4 and #6 Filberts.

**Composition:** He's made himself a viewfinder which he has framed with tape and on which he has drawn a cross, dividing it into quadrants. He uses a small standard viewfinder to compose his model – and then uses his custom finder to translate this to the canvas.

**Gesture:** He uses burnt sienna mixed with a combination of mineral spirits and walnut oil to lay in basic shapes and values. He uses paper towels to lift away color and refine shapes and edges. As for the rule "dark to light," he says start with middle tones, and then you can work up or down.

**Skin Color:** He then uses his palette of skin colors to develop the portrait. He cautions that one shouldn't be in a rush to add the color, being careful to first establish values and shapes. The beauty of oils is that you can go over and over and continue to refine. He quotes Leonardo da Vinci as saying "Value does all the work but color gets all the credit."

One color combination he likes is cad green mixed with orange. It greys down the latter for a "beautiful" color. He uses a combination of phthalo blue and cad red for contrasts but says you have to be careful because it is very strong.

**Background Color:** His main rule for background colors for his models is to make sure it recedes and doesn't compete with the subject for attention. He also commented that he doesn't think background color (other than his preparatory gray) is always necessary.

**Lighting:** Bill has no problem with using studio lights to illuminate his subjects, saying that on the rare occasion when he has used natural light that it was "okay" but not necessary.

**On Landscape Painting:** While this was a portrait demonstration, Bill does a lot of plein air cityscapes and brought along a number of examples. Striving to complete a picture on the spot is a challenge he likes. It forces you to quickly cover your whole canvas with paint and develops your ability to make quick decisions about lights and darks. Bill was the winner of this year's Mt. Lebanon "Paintout" which gave artists only four hours to complete their works.

Our next meeting will be on November 16 when our demonstrator will be portrait painter Patrick Lee.

Respectfully submitted,

Will White