

# art BUSINESS NEWS

Make the Most of Your Trade-Show Experience

FALL 2013 • THE ART INDUSTRY'S NEWS LEADER SINCE 1977

## Is there a fine art to illustration?

**PART 2**

**30 UNDER 30**  
GROUNDBREAKING  
YOUNG ARTISTS

MARKET YOUR  
BUSINESS

**10**

SOCIAL  
MEDIA  
MANAGEMENT  
TOOLS

**+**  
Tom Everhart's  
homage to  
Charlie Brown

Kinkade works  
come to  
Artexpo NY

An art exhibit  
... under water?



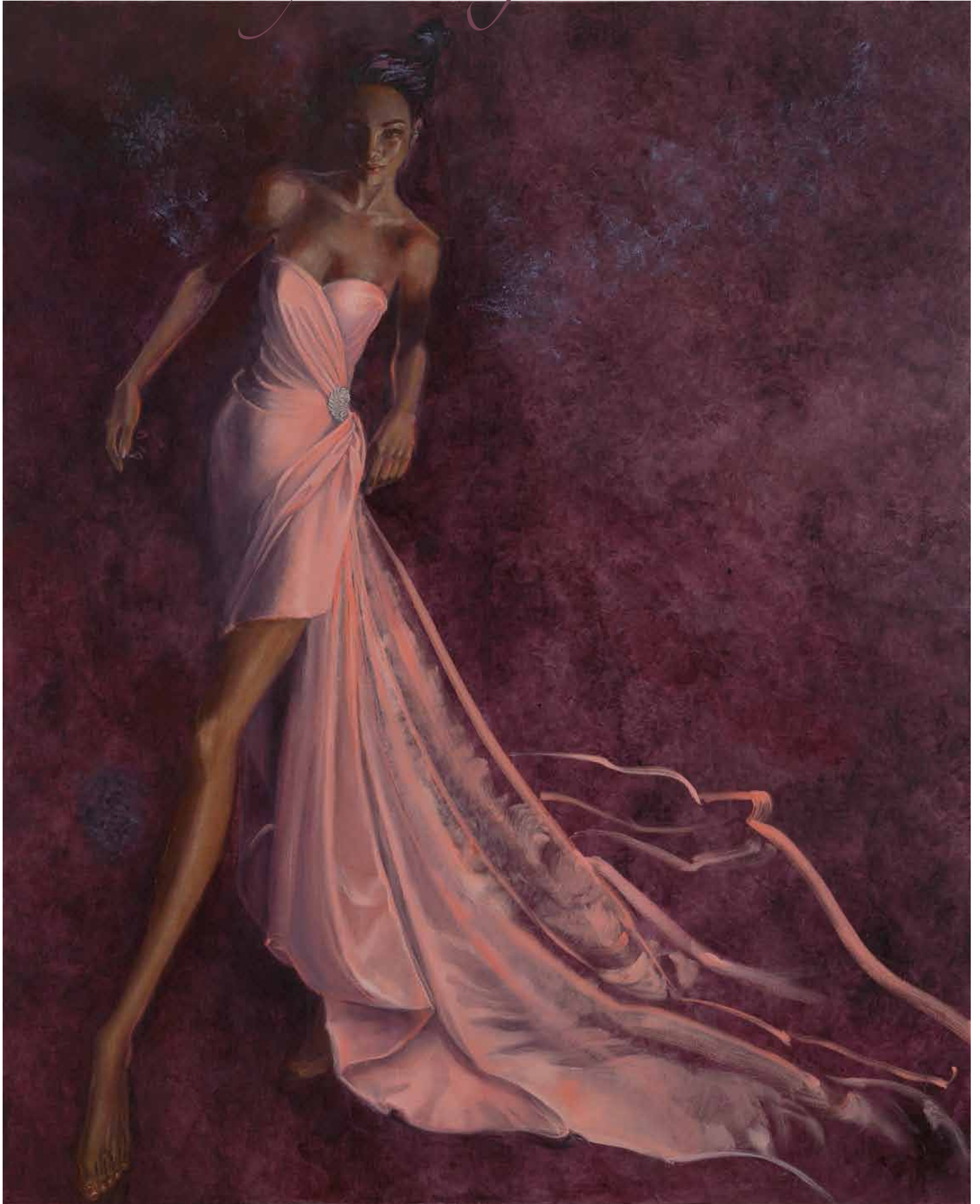


Private Label. It is oil on Canvas, 40 x 47 in. Year: 2013.

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# *Barbara Tyler Ahlfield*



*Newborn*

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Living a Stolen Dream

# ANYA DROUG

## PEOPLE PLACES STORIES



ANYA PAINTS IN OIL, with a vibrant palette and lively brushstrokes. Yet, she also uses watercolor techniques, and will apply layers of watery paint, even allowing paint or gesso to drip in a painting. The spontaneous nature of painting becomes a visible component in her work. Large fields of color create both openness and a bright luminous quality. This colorful haze surrounding beautifully detailed faces, figures, and architecture helps the viewer to make the story their own.

She uses painting to tell a story and the narrative element of her work is what is essential to Anya. Her paintings are intended to draw the viewer in and connect to the image in some way. There is a story being glimpsed and suggested, but the viewer is invited to find in it something that is his or her own. She captures people doing common everyday things and she captures emotions.

She also depicts architecture in a lively, vibrant manner, from unusual angles, and in some works will illuminate a sculpture or a single detail from a building. To Anya, buildings and monuments are very much like people; almost one subject. Buildings have stories, have a history, a personality, and are dynamic. They have energy and life. There is a core connection between these architectural entities and the people who made them.

Anya's work is about life and humanity and her greatest desire is to make people reflect on things in daily life and to enjoy life's moments. To enjoy what is happening right now. It is not going to happen again. The energetic brushstrokes and brilliant colors allow isolated moments or objects to become heightened, elevated, and rich. A new identity is bestowed on them, reminding us that these moments are to be enjoyed and celebrated.



## THE UPSIDE OF SUMMER'S END.

I love the summer. But I hate the summer. I love summer for the same reasons you do: terrific weather, vacations, barbecues and outdoor time, but I hate the summer for what it does to business.

I hate the end of summer because it's time for my kids to go back to school. My daughter Hannah is a freshman at Arizona State University, and her sister, Hayley, is beginning her junior year at Ohio University. Hayley is studying commercial photography at the Scripps College of Communication and has a passion for action shots, especially dancers. (Both girls have danced since the age of 3.)

It's no wonder that Hayley recently introduced me to a spectacular New York City photographer she's been following: Jordan Matter. Matter recently finished a book, "Dancers Among Us" ([dancersamongus.com](http://dancersamongus.com)). He has appeared on the Today Show, and his last exhibition just closed at the Savina Museum of Contemporary Art in Seoul, South Korea. How cool is that?

When Hayley showed me his work, I was captivated by his spectacular shots. His work is full of life, color, joy and a little risk. Think Andreas Gursky, the German artist known for his large-format photographs.

But the end of summer also means the beginning of fall, and that means the beginning of a long stretch of amazing trade shows, which I love.

Matter and some of his dancers will be exhibiting at SPECTRUM New York, which takes place Oct. 3 through 6 at the Javits Center North. This show, the first of many for the fall season, will welcome exhibitors including the Deljou Art Group, Perry Fine Art, Masterpiece Publishing, Stygian Publishing (Yuroz) and others.

If you plan to exhibit, check out our tips on page 22 for making the most of your trade-show experience. With the fall season ahead, there's no better time to re-examine your marketing plans. Social-media sites are perfect places to start, and we've outlined some useful tools on page 24 to help you manage those sites.

With summer coming to a close, prepare yourself for fall. Register for SPECTRUM New York; attend the seminars; learn something new; and fill your gallery with new paintings, sculptures, and who knows—maybe even a new photograph.



Hope to see you there,

Eric Smith

### Fall 2013

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NYNY #12 oil on panel 12 x16

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**Joseph Armstrong**, a recent graduate from Millersville University with multiple degrees in history, philosophy and film studies, is perpetually intrigued by the Constantine tapes, which are housed at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.



**Toni Fitzgerald** is a freelance writer who has written about everything from TV ratings to TB shots. She is also copy editor and contributor to *Gluten-Free Living* magazine. She and her late grandmother share the same favorite artist, Mary Cassatt.

**Hillary Casavant** is a writer in the Boston area and editorial assistant for *Art Business News*, *The Writer* and other publications. Her favorite museum is the Tate Britain in London, which pairs modern aesthetics with classic work by the British masters. Standing before Waterhouse's life-size painting of "The Lady of Shalott" was simply breathtaking, she says.



Award-winning writer and editor **Julie Jacobs** admits that one of her favorite paintings, for many sentimental reasons, is Renoir's "Two Girls in the Meadow." Jacobs's work has appeared in numerous national, regional and local publications, including *American Way*, *Lifestyles*, *MovieMaker*, *Inside Jersey* and *Suburban Essex*. She also maintains corporate clients and runs Wynne Communications publishing firm.



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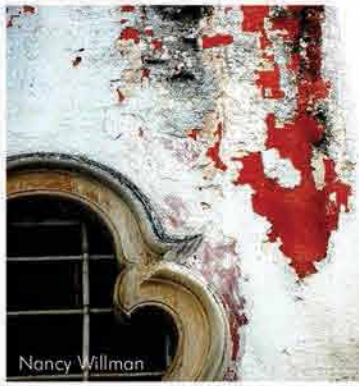
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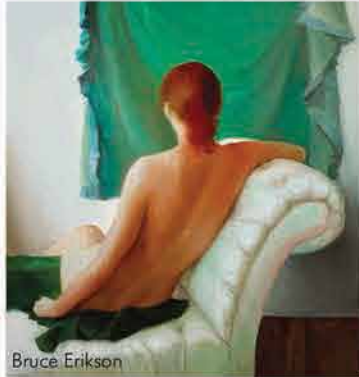
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## ART COMES ALIVE International Juried Art Competition

ACA is an annual art competition hosted by ADC, Art Design Consultants, Inc in Cincinnati, Ohio. This call to artists is meant to discover and award talented artists, and connect them with art industry leaders. Get your artwork placed in corporations, healthcare facilities and collector's homes all across the nation.

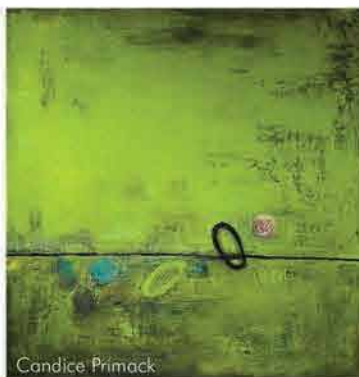
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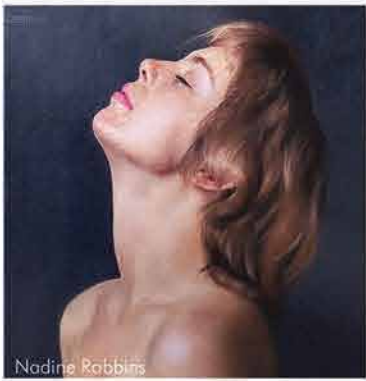
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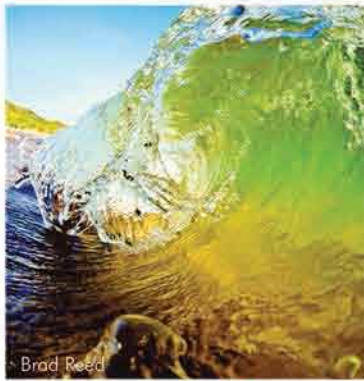
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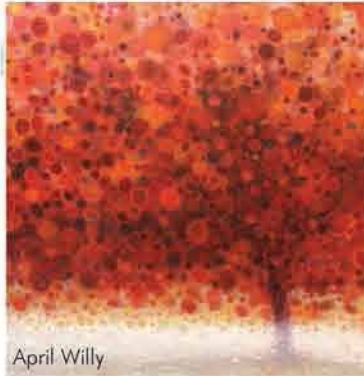
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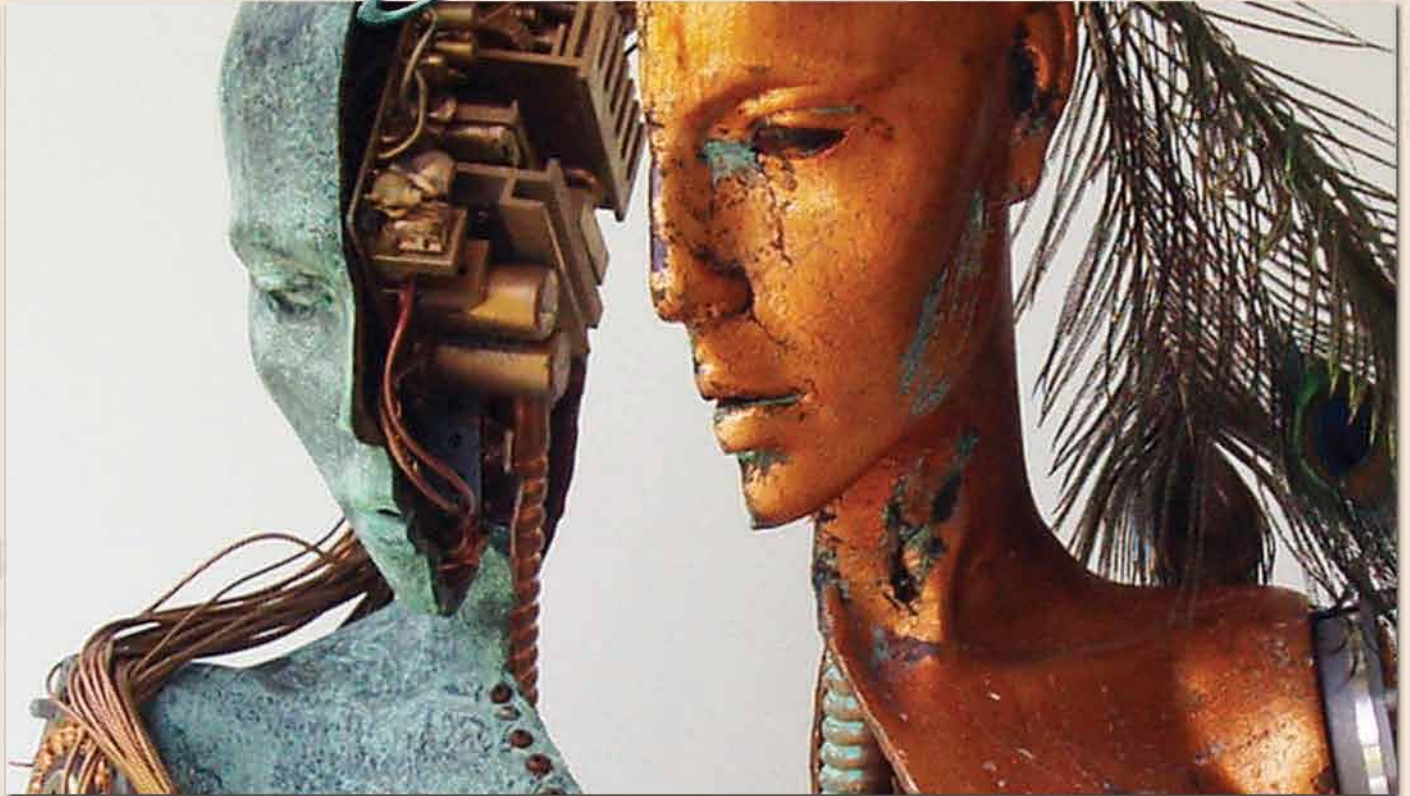
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*“I believe painting  
should serve as an  
Intellectual purpose  
as well emotional”*

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“The idea of introducing moving parts came by chance as I was working on a piece with smaller elements welded to a larger sculpture and felt they should be allowed to ‘move’ freely. At first my work would hang from the wall. Introducing moving elements gives more life and unpredictability to the work as they are propelled by a breeze or by hand. I love color; it adds joy and whimsiness, although fantasy has a dark side too . . . Movement, light and color reveal a series of isolated events, abstractions of life. ”

Marie-Hélène

**Marie-Hélène’s work draws heavily from mythology and lore.**

**Established in 2012, Gryphon Fabricators is based out of Brooklyn, NY. The works have been exhibited throughout the US, Asia and across Europe.**



You may find more on Marie-Hélène’s work  
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## INSIDE THE FRAME

# NOT YOUR AVERAGE SHOW

AN UNDERWATER EXHIBIT ALONG FLORIDA'S COAST  
PROVES THERE ARE STILL NEW WAYS TO ENJOY ART.

Earlier this summer, Austrian photographer Andreas Franke exhibited his work in a most unusual gallery setting—28 nautical miles off the coast of Florida, near Fort Myers, in a purposefully scuttled WWII warship.

In 2012, the 165-foot WWII Coast Guard Cutter Mohawk was sunk to serve as an artificial reef and now joins a host of other retired warships scuttled for the same purpose. Franke discovered another purpose for these sunken ships when he decided to display his photos in a gallery setting like no other.

From June through September, the USS Mohawk housed 12 images depicting the life of sailors past aboard the ship, images that evolved with the accumulation of marine life, which occurred naturally during their time at sea.

"I am completely fascinated by that mystical underwater world, the very peculiar emptiness and a tragic stillness, but also

by the shipwrecks," said Franke.

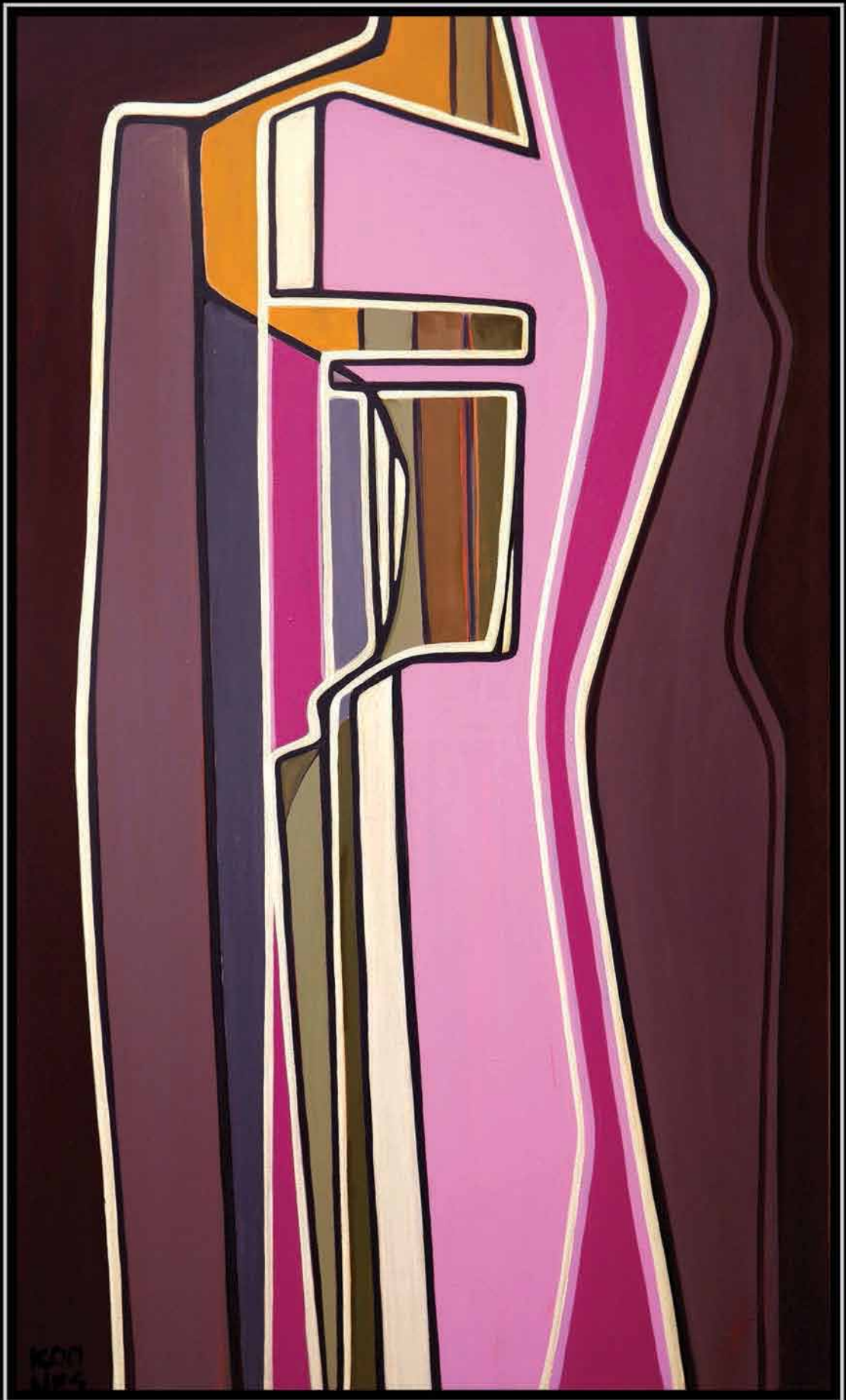
Each shipwreck has a history and a character all its own, said Franke, who has exhibited other works on the USS General Hoyt S. Vandenberg, also off the Florida coast, and the SS Stavronikita, located off the Caribbean Island of Barbados.

"What I really like about this whole concept is that the ocean and the diver decide how the final image will turn out," said Franke. "During the time under the surface, the salt water coats and redefines the images with a patina made of algae and micro-organisms. This and the touch of the divers transform each work into an entirely inimitable and absolutely unique artwork."

The images have been removed from the WWII vessel and will be on display at the Lee County Alliance for the Arts galleries in Fort Myers, Fla., until October 26.

► For more, visit [thesinkingworld.com](http://thesinkingworld.com).





[www.KoonesArt.com](http://www.KoonesArt.com)

# INSIDE THE FRAME

BY ELIZABETH JURAN

## ON DISPLAY

THOMAS KINKADE RETROSPECTIVE EXHIBIT  
TO BE HELD AT ARTEXPO NEW YORK 2014.

The works of the late Thomas Kinkade, whose idyllic paintings and intricate collectibles live on today in homes and galleries across the world, will be on display at Artexpo New York in April 2014.

Kinkade, who died in 2012, left an unforgettable stamp on the fine-art world. His works have a recognizable signature look. In each piece, he captured a picturesque dreamscape: a lighthouse standing sentinel atop a seaside cliff, a cottage tucked into a hillside among rolling meadows, or beams of sunlight streaming through a fairy-tale forest.

Born in Placerville, Calif., in 1958, Kinkade dabbled in art at a young age. He enjoyed sketching landscapes as a child and went on to study art at the University of California—Berkeley and the Art Center College of Design in Pasadena. As a young man, he experienced a spiritual awakening, became a born-again Christian, and began to create bright and bucolic paintings that inspired viewers the world over.

Kinkade fans can take in these works firsthand at Artexpo next spring. The legendary Thomas Kinkade Co. will be showcasing an impressive collection of his paintings at Pier 94 on April 4 through 6. The core line of art, depicting cottages, landscapes, lighthouses and chapels that make up the keystone of Kinkade's most popular work, will be on display, as well as some impressionist work he painted under the brush name Robert Girrard.

According to Thomas Kinkade Co. Executive Vice President Mark Hill, these rare impressionist pieces were “an opportunity to break away from some of the core romantic realism Kinkade was being made famous for. He wanted to experiment in the impressionist style, which most people would not typically associate with Kinkade.”

► For more on Kinkade's works, visit [thomaskinkadecompany.com](http://thomaskinkadecompany.com). For more on Artexpo NY, visit [artexponewyork.com](http://artexponewyork.com).



## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Upcoming Fall/Winter art shows you won't want to miss.

### → SPECTRUM New York

Oct. 3-6, 2013

New York, N.Y.

[spectrum-newyork.com](http://spectrum-newyork.com)

### → Frieze London

Oct. 17-20, 2013

London, England

[friezelondon.com](http://friezelondon.com)

### → Scope Miami Beach

Dec. 3-8, 2013

Miami Beach, Fla.

[scope-art.com/shows/miami-beach-2013/about](http://scope-art.com/shows/miami-beach-2013/about)

### → SPECTRUM Miami

Dec. 4-8, 2013

Miami, Fla.

[spectrum-miami.com](http://spectrum-miami.com)

### → Art Basel

Dec. 5-8, 2013

Miami Beach, Fla.

[artbasel.com/en/Miami-Beach](http://artbasel.com/en/Miami-Beach)

### → India Art Fair

Jan. 30-Feb. 2, 2014

New Delhi, India

[indiaartfair.in](http://indiaartfair.in)

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SPACE #442

# EXHIBITING 101

GET THE MOST OUT OF YOUR TRADE-SHOW EXPERIENCE.

**D**espite today's fast-paced world of social-media marketing and networking, there's still no substitute for meeting customers and prospects in person. And there are few better places to accomplish just this goal than at a trade show.

According to Diane Attesi, who has managed trade shows for 13 years and currently works as director of trade shows and events at Wave Systems Corp., the primary reason to exhibit at a trade show is to increase sales and expand awareness of a company, a product or a brand.

Daniel Giglio of Exhibit & Tradeshow Consultants ([exhibitandtradeshow.com](http://exhibitandtradeshow.com)) echoes these sentiments and notes that trade shows are still the most cost-effective ways to showcase products or services. "For example, if you received 100 leads at a show," says Giglio, "what would it cost you to meet with these 100 potentials face-to-face?"

Sales are vital for any business, including an art business. At a trade show, exhibitors get the chance not only to showcase their products or services but also to meet with clients, gallery owners, journalists and other art professionals. The shows enable artists to gain important feedback on their work and see what others in the industry are doing.

But deciding whether and where to exhibit is just the first step. The second is making the most of those few show days available. Even the most seasoned exhibitors can make mistakes. Here are some tips to make sure you get the most out of your trade-show experience.

**Do your homework beforehand.**

Start planning for the show in advance. Note all deadlines and communicate with show managers and show service vendors, who can be

**Make your booth space open and inviting.**

helpful in explaining rules and answering questions. Attesi suggests assigning one person to oversee this process. Giglio advises early planning, including selecting booth spaces, booth design, graphics and construction. It will "help keep costs under control and will also help keep you from last-minute craziness and exhaustion," he says.

"Product is king!" says Peter LoCascio, who has been helping companies market themselves for more than 35 years and today runs Trade Show Consultants ([tradeshowconsultants.com](http://tradeshowconsultants.com)). "The exhibit booth should be designed to transform suspects who walk the aisles of a trade show into prospects." This advice means that exhibitors must pay close attention to the layout. For example, they must leave plenty of open space for visitors and be sure that the lighting highlights the art on display.

"Lighting is critical for artworks," says LoCascio. "The exhibitor should design his or her exhibit utilizing as much illumination as possible on each of the pieces displayed."

Attesi adds that overstaffing or understaffing a booth can create an unfriendly layout. "You need two people for every 10x10[-foot] space, plus some extra staff to rotate in so everyone gets a break," she says.

**Consider your booth a store, too.**

Use a trade show not only to exhibit your latest artworks but also to promote and sell other facets of your business, such as prints, calendars and cards.

**Build contacts and mailing lists.**

Social-media websites make it easy to build a following, but trade shows offer the opportunity to make a personal connection

with those who admire your work and may be future clients. "Sales-lead management is also key to maintaining contact with booth visitors and should be a major focus," says LoCascio. "Get visitors' names, addresses, cell phone [numbers] and e-mail addresses with a synopsis of discussion topics in a form that allows effective post-show communications."

### Promote your events.

Use the time you have at a trade show to promote other events in which you will be participating. Consider printing a list of upcoming shows or workshops, dates and locations for visitors to take with them.

### Consider show specials and reduced show prices.

Show specials may help stimulate prospects that might seem to be wavering on price, says LoCascio. He suggests marking each piece with the regular price and the new special price.

"The show special should be advertised in the booth and

only last until one week after the show before the prices on selected items goes back up," says LoCascio.

### Stand up straight and smile.

Personal presentation at a trade show is important. Never leave your booth unattended, and those tending the booth should not just sit or "look uninterested," says Giglio. "Always greet and make eye contact with passersby; you never know who is walking by your booth."

"I see more 10x10 table shows where exhibitors put the table in the front and sit behind it and then check their e-mail," says Attesi. "This does not send the message, 'Welcome. Come into my exhibit. Relax, look around, have a seat, and learn more about our products!' Walking up to an exhibit where the staff is checking their phones or in a circle chatting to each other can be intimidating for attendees and is the best way you could sabotage your investment."

LoCascio also advises against exhibitors' eating in the booths. It "deters visitors who don't want to impose," he says. **ABN**



# MARKETING MADE EASY

BY JOSEPH ARMSTRONG

10

## SIMPLE TOOLS HELP USERS MANAGE SOCIAL MEDIA.

SOCIAL MEDIA can be a colossal waste of time, but it can also prove beneficial for business—especially for artists eager to build a following or for gallery owners wanting to promote their offerings. Marketing through social media can reach a vast audience. With so many websites, however, properly spreading the word can be time-consuming and downright onerous. Fortunately, there are plenty of social-media-management tools that can help. Here are 10 tools that are worth a look.

➔ **Sprout Social** allows users to simultaneously publish to multiple social-media sites. Other features include message scheduling so you don't have to watch the clock, audience-response tracking, a customizable contact list and a help desk for your audience. *sproutsocial.com*

➔ **TweetDeck** by Twitter is an app that manages an unlimited number of Twitter accounts. With TweetDeck, you can schedule tweets and track trends, and notifications allow you to immediately connect with your audience. Its customizable filters keep you on top of incoming and outgoing tweets. *tweetdeck.com*

➔ One of the more popular sites available, **HootSuite** is a social-media dashboard that organizes messages and tracks results across multiple sites at once, including Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Google+ pages and more. *hootsuite.com*

➔ **Twitterfeed**, a must-have for hard-core bloggers, feeds your posts directly into various networks, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn. Users who don't yet use blogging as part of their marketing strategies will have the time to do so with this app. *twitterfeed.com*

➔ **Seesmic**, a mobile app on the Android market, simultaneously updates Facebook and Twitter feeds. Full access to feeds allows users to track timelines and to share photos, messages, posts, likes and more. Seesmic received an average 4.3-star rating with nearly 80,000 five-star user reviews. Available in the Google Play store.

**ScroOn** advertises itself as "all-in-one community management," and that's exactly what it is. It connects users' social platforms and allows tracking across the web from desktop to tablet to mobile device. *scroon.com*

➔ **Postling** targets small-business owners, consolidating social platforms into one source and allowing for posts and responses, metrics tracking and post scheduling. Postling connects to users' e-mail and produces a "Daily Digest" e-mail that recaps recent network activity. It is also compatible with the iPhone. *postling.com*

➔ **Buffer** connects multiple networks, allows users to add team members for work distribution and provides free analytics about recent activity. Buffer is compatible with all mobile devices and newsreader apps. *bufferapp.com*

➔ **SocialOomph** schedules tweets, posts and updates; tracks trends by keyword; and connects to users' blogs and e-mail accounts. It links multiple accounts, provides activity data and has a spam filter. One key feature that sets SocialOomph apart from others is its automatic-response function: the ability to set up automatic follows, messages and responses. *socialoomph.com*

➔ The mobile-device-ready **Spredfast** app provides engagement analytics about users and their audiences, has a team-management feature and even provides audience demographics. *spredfast.com* **ABN**

# ARTISTS GUILDS

## HELPING ARTISTS DEVELOP AND SELL THEIR WORK.

By Julie Jacobs

Artistry in New Jersey's Woodbridge Township is thriving, thanks in part to the Woodbridge Artisan Guild (WAG). The nonprofit arts cooperative, nestled among neighborhood businesses on the town's Main Street, features art in many forms, from sculpture and painting to glasswork and photography. A variety of pieces adorns the walls and lines the perimeter, and the guild has furnished studio space in the rear to host classes and event receptions.

Since its inception in 2009, WAG has supported and nurtured the visual arts, increased awareness and appreciation, and provided artists with opportunities to develop and sell their work. And it's not alone in its mission. Artists guilds exist nationwide in small communities and large cities alike. Although many have been around for decades, more and more are cropping up with each passing year.

"Most of our members are emerging artists who have never shown their work in public. Here, they can get feedback and confidence," notes Glenn Murgacz, metal sculptor and current WAG president. "As artists, we enjoy discussing art and learning from one another."

Mountain Artists Guild and Gallery (MAGG) in Prescott, Ariz., holds the same sentiment. Established in 1949, MAGG is one of the oldest artists guilds in the state and includes painters, sculptors, ceramicists, wood turners and more among its membership.

"We've grown significantly since our early days, but we're still essentially about the sharing of ideas and supporting one another," says Donna Carver, a painter, printmaker and mixed-media artist who sits on MAGG's board of directors and gallery committee and serves as liaison between the two entities. "Our members get to broaden their experience and become more professional as artists. We can help them put together a portfolio and mount and frame pieces and also teach them about what's





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:  
Artist Tom Heflin critiques with the  
Rockford Art Guild.

Woodbridge Artisan Guild's public  
art mural

Chamber Mixer with the Mountain  
Artists Guild and Gallery

Artist Betty Carr with a new patron at  
her Mountain Artists Guild and Gal-  
lery reception





CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:  
Artist/photographer George Lewis with  
Mountain Artists Guild

Rockford Art Guild's Spring ArtScene 2013

Woodbridge Artisan Guild gallery



**All artists  
need ways  
and places to  
network and  
display their  
work as a  
means toward  
potential  
sales.**

### **GUILD GUIDELINES**

- ▶ Have strong, dedicated leadership.
- ▶ Give members a sense of ownership.
- ▶ Be inclusive of all mediums.
- ▶ Build a network with other art organizations.
- ▶ Know state laws for nonprofits and take advantage of tax breaks.
- ▶ Seek support from local government in the form of financing, advertising and other help.
- ▶ Investigate vacant spaces to occupy at minimum cost for exhibitions if a permanent home is unavailable.

involved with customer sales.”

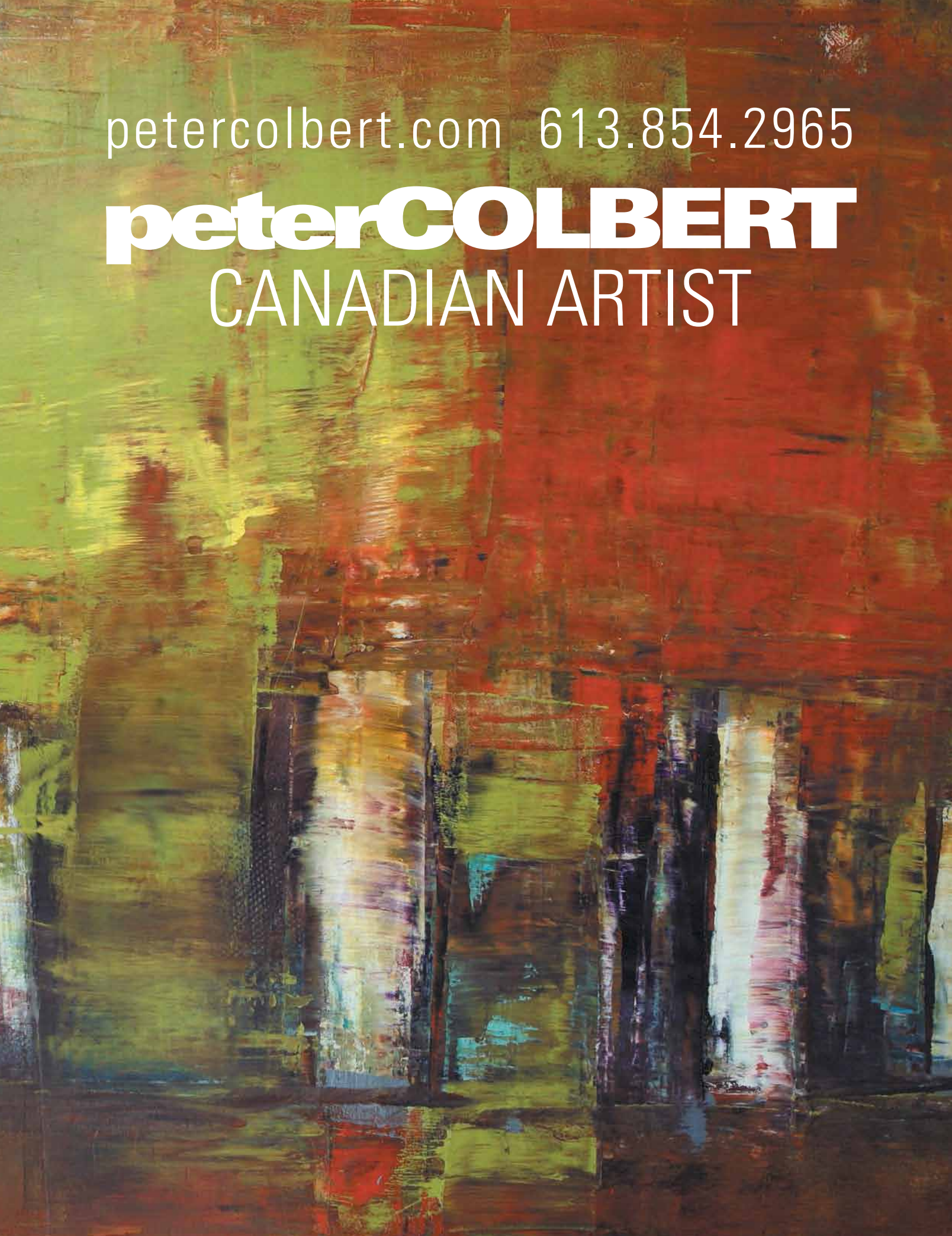
Business skills aside, all artists need ways and places to network and display their work as a means toward potential sales. Some artists guilds sponsor or co-sponsor community-based shows featuring members’ art, and some join forces with restaurants and other area merchants to bring exhibits into the neighborhood. Others, such as WAG and MAGG, also have their own buildings that include gallery space.

The Rockford Art Guild (RAG) in Illinois, formed in 1955 and located about 90 miles from Chicago, meets monthly at a local lunch spot. It does not pay a fee to do so; in exchange for the room, it decorates the walls of the coffee shop with art by guild members, varying the artists every month. RAG represents a variety of media—from painting and photography to jewelry and digital art—which it shows at spring and fall ArtScene gallery walks. This year, the guild held its first Downtown Artist/Artisan Market, taking over all three floors of the town’s Veterans Memorial Hall.

“We also did some boutique shows, such as a nature-themed show at a new conservatory, and got a lot of good press and exposure,” says Barbara Berney, a jewelry and digital artist who just ended her term as president on Sept. 3. “We’ve been trying to build our downtown as a cultural arts district, so now a lot of the restaurants and

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CANADIAN ARTIST





other establishments host monthly artists, and that provides even more exposure.”

In addition to showcasing art in its gallery, WAG has begun soliciting large pieces for prominent, permanent public display throughout the township. The guild recently received a county grant to create a public art mural on a downtown building. Eight members, some showing their work for the first time, contributed ceramic tiles to the project, which went up this past fall.

MAGG, which annually sponsors two fine art and craft festivals in the town’s Courthouse Square, also coordinates a juried studio tour and a jazz party, among other events and programs. MAGG has an extensive amount of gallery space, which includes a main gallery for members, a spotlight room for both juried members and non-members, and a Master’s Room for big-draw artists. Many of these artists are members who live locally but are collected

**Artists guilds typically are open to artists of all levels and all ages, as well as non-artists who appreciate and enjoy supporting the arts.**

nationally and internationally. “Having a building is a big anchor for us. It attracts numbers to learn and teach,” says Carver.

The guild owns the MAGG gallery and benefits from rent paid at year’s end based on sales. Like most other guilds, however, it relies heavily on grants, gifts, sponsorships, fees from workshops and modest annual dues from its members.

Artists guilds typically are open to artists of all levels and all ages, as well as non-artists who appreciate and enjoy supporting the arts, and members need not live locally. Board of directors usually govern the guilds, which usually ask or require members to pitch in at shows or man gallery space if applicable. They also frequently provide networking opportunities for members. At RAG, for example, members trade postcards of their art and engage in regular show-and-tell challenges based on a theme, such as the seasons or black and white. “They bring in their art or something else related to the theme and talk about it. It’s enabled people to chat and get to know one another,” Berney says.

Dawn Arena, a WAG member since 2009 and currently on its board, has enjoyed the camaraderie of being part of a guild and knows firsthand how valuable such an organization can be to an artist. “WAG got me back into the art world after I took a long hiatus to have and be with my son,” says the metal sculptor, who also paints and works with wood. “I would not be where I am today without the confidence and support that the WAG family has given me.” **ABN**

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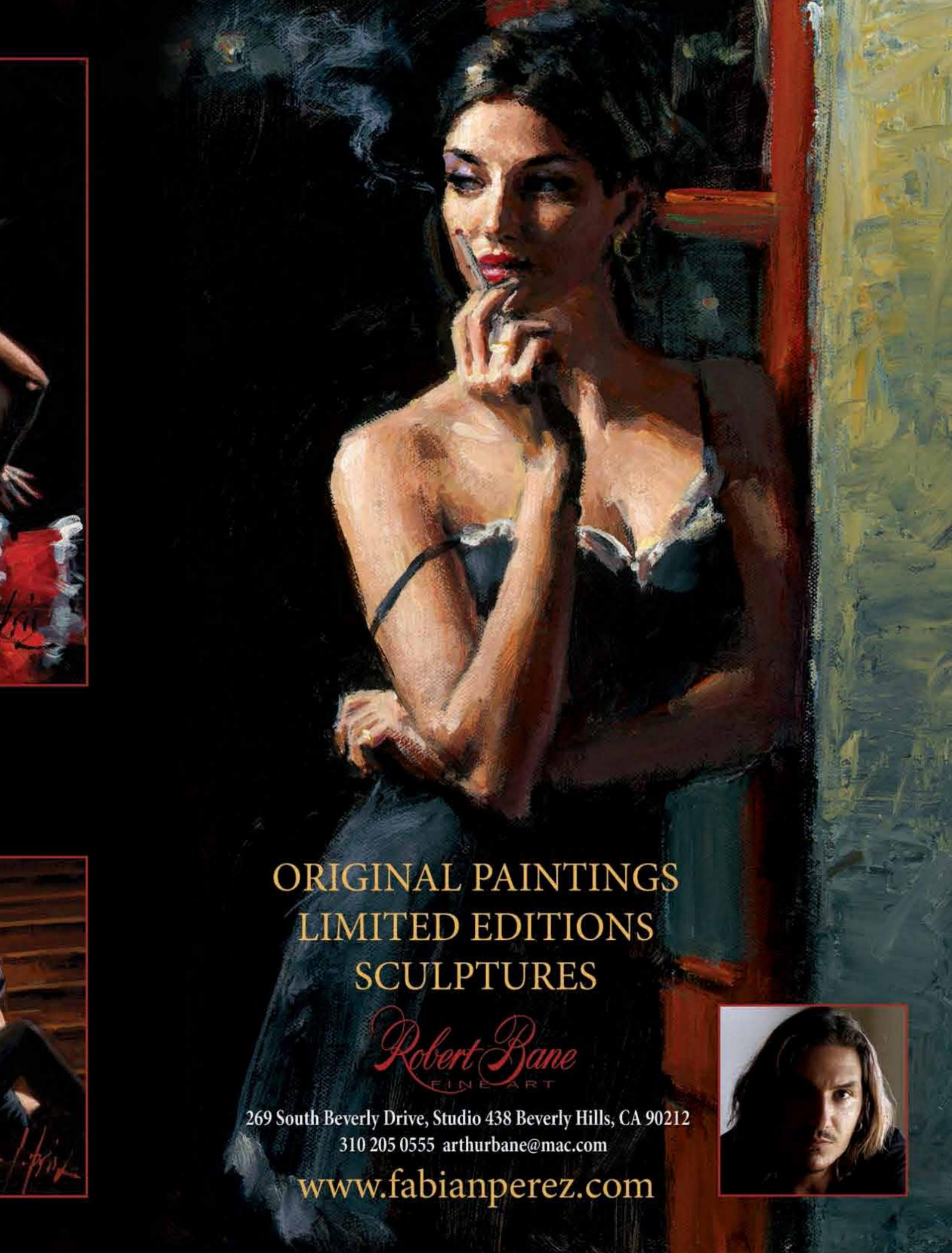
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*Palais Royal Gallery*



# Revelioti Valentin



*South sea, 90x120,2012*



*Revelioti, Sea Breath,90x150cm*



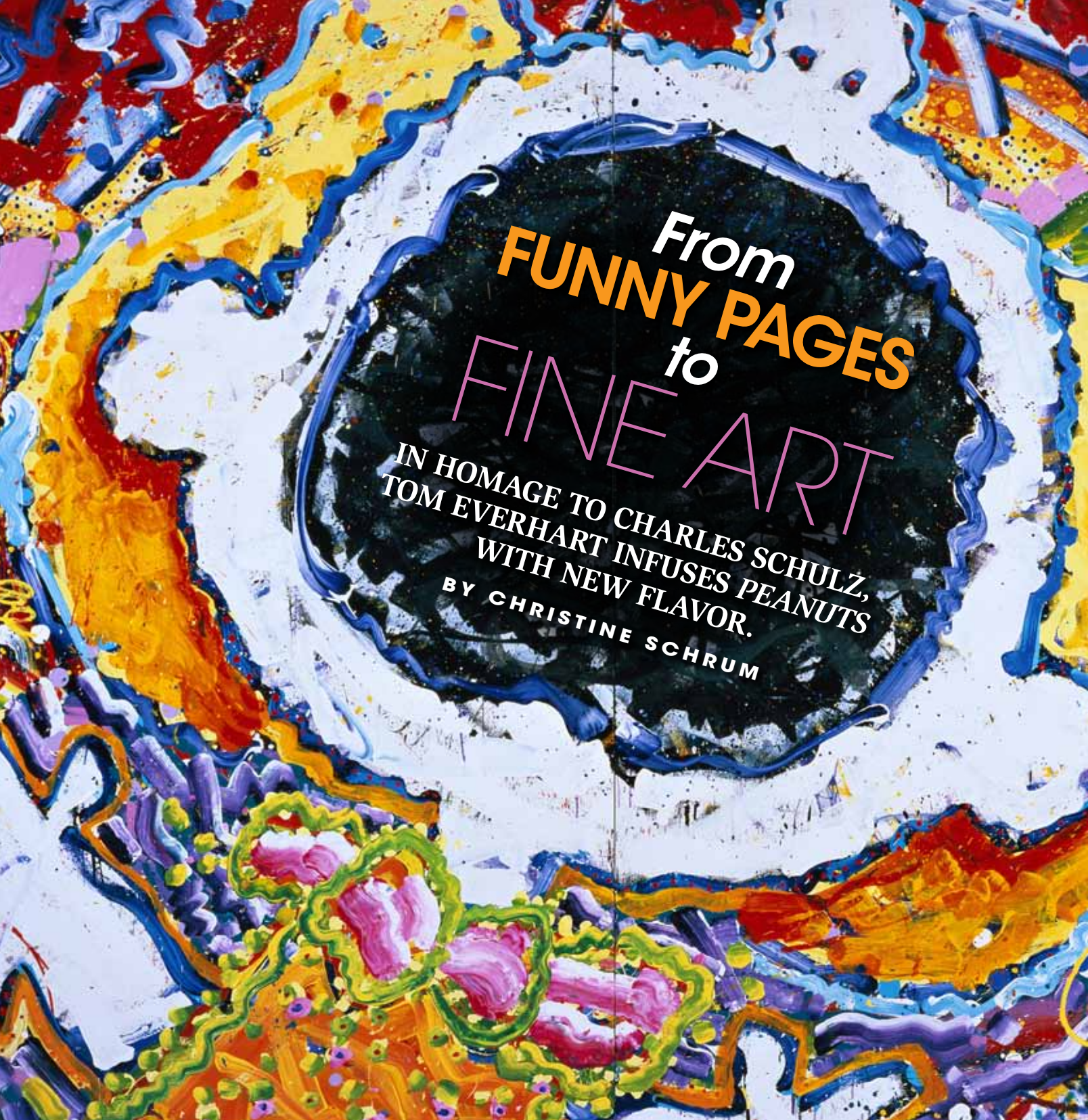
*Valentin Revelioti,Dusk is falling, 80x120cm,2010*



*Valentin Revelioti,Soft wave,100x160cm,oil on canvas.,2012*

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<http://.palais-royal.net>

"Palais Royal" Fine Art Gallery offers since 2006 young and talented artists a platform to present artworks made in the last years. Gallery's emphasis on solo exhibitions result in presentation of some of the most exciting contemporary art across the globe (Art Miami, Art Monaco, International Art Fair in Moscow). Valentin Revelioti is our celebrity and one of the most talented artists in seascapes in the world. Revelioti's seascapes mix realism with romanticism, creating vivid depictions of water



“**I**n the book of life, the answers aren’t in the back.” The great philosopher who uttered those words was not Confucius, Socrates, Karl Marx or Jean-Jacques Rousseau but Charlie Brown: the unassuming, existentialist antihero of the late Charles M. Schulz’s universally loved cartoon strip, *Peanuts*.

Life is anything but textbook-simple, and our biggest breaks often come unscripted. That’s how it was when California artist Tom Everhart met Schulz, whose works would become his biggest inspiration. At the time, Everhart was a freelance designer with no cartooning experience. A theme-park company had asked him to draw



**CLOCKWISE**

■ **"Screaming  
Low-Blood  
Sugar Blonde"**  
96 x 128  
1999

■ **"Rage Rover"**  
64 x 128  
2000

■ **"Girlfriend Dreams"**  
(from Homie  
Dreams Suite)



*Peanuts* characters for an assignment. Wanting to get a feeling for Schulz's form, Everhart projected some of the cartoonist's strips onto a 25-foot-high wall in his studio. What he saw blew him away.

### 25-FOOT PEANUTS

"Astonishing! These extraordinary, elegant black lines were presiding over my dark studio like suspension cables stretching across a bridge that gracefully wiggled from tower to tower," recalls Everhart. "I had actually blown up his strip much too large for the wall, which cropped off the text balloon and the comic-strip borders, leaving only these larger-than-life, beautiful black lines. They had motion like an echo in a canyon."

Looking closer, Everhart began to see echoes of Chinese ink paintings and the black-and-white paintings of abstract expressionists of the '40s and '50s, such as Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell.

"I never made it past that first blown-up drawing of his strip," says Everhart. "I sat in front of it for hours. I don't even remember leaving it."

Fast-forward to the pitch meeting at the theme-park company. Little did Everhart know that Schulz, wearing a track suit, had sneaked into the back of the room. When Schulz saw Everhart's fluid renditions of his own cartoons, he was so impressed that he immediately brought Everhart back to his studio for a review

**"I'M NEVER PAINTING SNOOPY," SAYS EVERHART, WHO IS THE ONLY PERSON WITH THE AUTHORITY TO PAINT PEANUTS CHARACTERS. "I'M NEVER PAINTING PIG PEN OR CHARLIE BROWN WHEN I'M PAINTING. THEY REPRESENT OTHER PEOPLE, AND THEY REPRESENT OTHER THINGS."**

session. Critique quickly turned to play.

"He broke out his ink and pen nibs, and for a long time we drew nothing but lines—just lines! But they were not just abstract marks," says Everhart. "He was actually, with each stroke, showing me his own unique language."

A close friendship was born.

### GOOD GRIEF

Then tragedy struck: In 1988, Everhart was diagnosed with Stage 4 colon and liver cancer.

"Everything stopped," he recalls of that challenging time.

Everhart made it through two 10-hour surgeries and spent a year undergoing radical chemotherapy at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore. There, in a hospital bed, surrounded by flowers, piles of art books and a stack of *Peanuts* comic strips that Schulz had sent him, inspiration came.

"The light streaming in from the window seemed to almost project a series of Schulz-inspired images onto the wall," says Everhart. "I sat there filling my thick sketchbook with drawings. I had fallen in love; I had found this new passion." These drawings would lead to the paintings that became his life's work.



With Schulz's full blessing, Everhart began creating vibrant, larger-than-life paintings based on the lines and characters in *Peanuts*. Under Everhart's paintbrush, Snoopy, Charlie Brown, Linus and the rest of the *Peanuts* gang broke free of the comic-strip borders and extended beyond the canvases. They also began to explore new dimensions of the human experience.

### A KALEIDOSCOPE OF COLOR AND EMOTION

"Rage Rover" shows Snoopy going ballistic in traffic. "Screaming Low-Blood Sugar Blonde" features Sally losing her marbles over a late lunch. "Ancient Chinese Secret — May (Taha'a)" shows a fearless Snoopy taking a swan dive from brightly hued cliffs into a boundless sea of yellow.

"I'm never painting Snoopy," says Everhart, who is the only person with the authority to paint *Peanuts* characters. "I'm never painting Pig Pen or Charlie Brown when I'm painting. They represent other people, and they represent other things."

With every painting, Everhart brings lighthearted humor to his subject matter and titles, honoring the playful spirit of Schulz, who once said, "If I were given the opportunity to present a gift to the next generation, it would be the ability for each individual to learn to laugh at himself."

In 2000, tragedy struck again when Schulz died from colon cancer in his home in Santa Rosa, Calif. "I don't remember ever experiencing such sorrow and loss," says Everhart, who by that point considered Schulz among his closest friends.

Pushing through his grief once again, Everhart took numerous trips to French Polynesia to heal his heart and inspire his creativity. It helped. The bright colors soothed his spirits, filled his canvases and became his signature palette.

More than a decade later, Everhart continues creating vibrant, emotive, Schulz-inspired works. Art mavens collect his paintings and sculptures, which hang in galleries, homes and museums across the nation and around the world.

Now a cancer survivor, Everhart credits his creative journey for his current state of health. "Today, I go and see the doctors. They say, 'We don't know how you're living, but, whatever you're doing, keep doing it!' If you can find, in your life, something that just overwhelms you and shows you a new way of seeing—whether it's a relationship, a material object, a friend—whatever it is, if you can find a new way of seeing, hang onto it." **ABN**

*Limelight Agency, a Los Angeles management group, publishes and distributes Tom Everhart's art. The group specializes in the publishing, distribution and representation of important art and celebrity artists. Its representation roster includes artists in a variety of genres. The agency is currently planning a Tom Everhart 2013-2016 North American exhibition tour. Details and gallery-hosting opportunities are available from Limelight. [limelightagency.com](http://limelightagency.com)*



# IS THERE A FINE ART TO ILLUSTRATION?

FIND OUT WHAT SETS ILLUSTRATORS APART FROM FINE ARTISTS, AND WHAT BRINGS THEM TOGETHER.

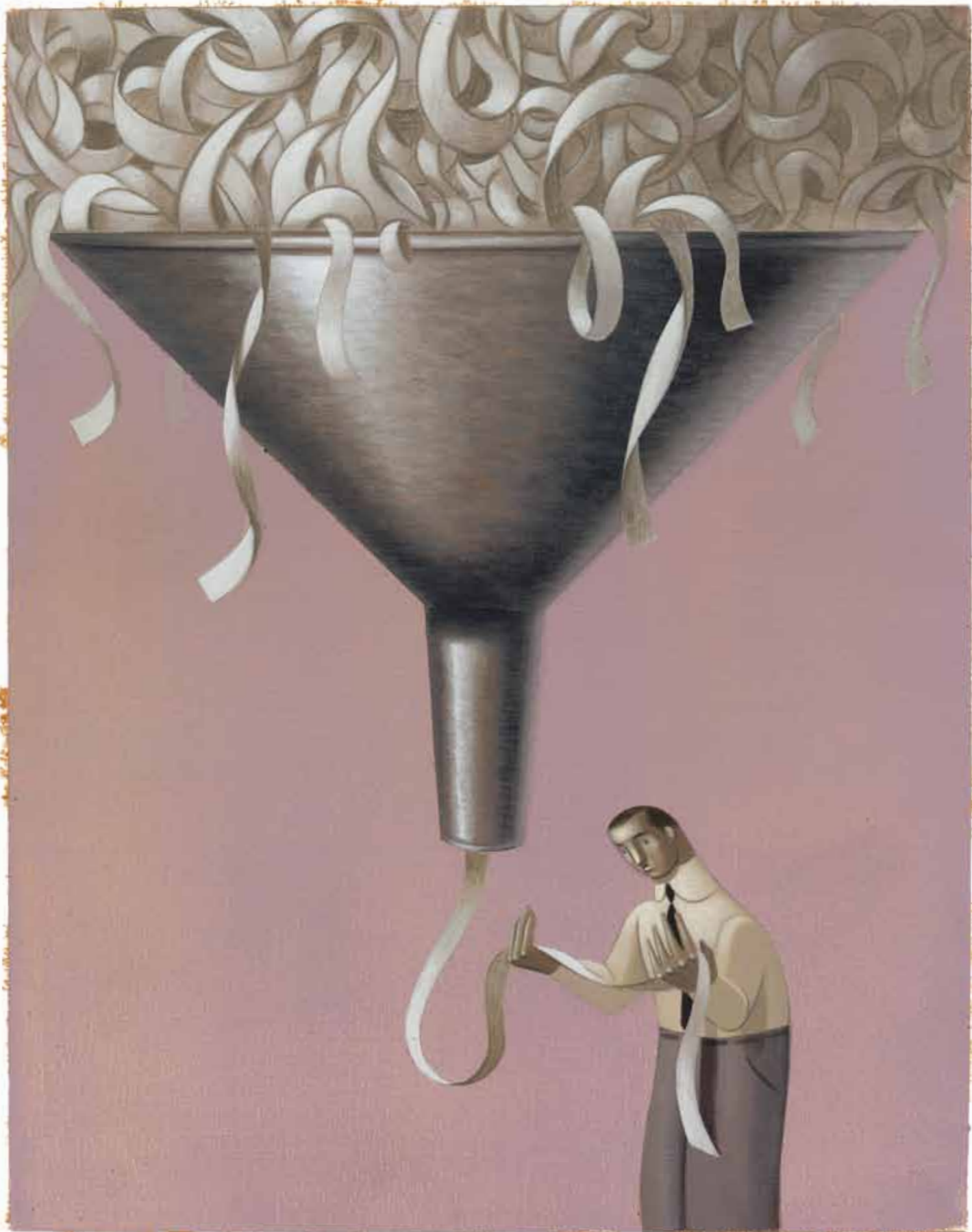
BY TONI FITZGERALD

W

HEN JON KRAUSE was in college, he took a painting class. One day, his professor asked him what he wanted to do after he graduated. Krause told her he wanted to be an illustrator.

“She shook her head and said, ‘I could see more for you than that,’” remembers Krause, who has gone on to become a successful illustrator. “I think in some circles, [illustrating] is still looked down on.”

Krause’s college experience is a microcosm of the debate that’s long simmered in the art world: Is there a fine art to illustration? Though many illustrators have long since answered that question for themselves with a resounding yes, others may disagree.



"Streamline," Jon Krause



**THE LINE BETWEEN FINE ART AND ILLUSTRATION  
IS BLURRIER THAN THE ART WORLD  
ACKNOWLEDGED JUST A FEW DECADES AGO.**

"Grace," Jenny Medved

"I'm not sure the discussion will ever be over, and I'm not sure it focuses on the same issues for all participants," says Susan LeVan, illustration chair at the Art Institute of Boston at Lesley University. "For me, being an illustrator allows me the freedom to do the work I want regardless of the current critical atmosphere or politics of the fine-art world. But I could be a fine artist with the same attitude."

In the simplest terms, what separates illustration from fine art is a paycheck. Illustrators are paid to bring an idea to life, whether it's the science behind the human brain or a child's fairy tale—all while meeting a deadline. An artist, on the other hand, may spend a lifetime chasing a personal muse and never see a cent for it.

Krause, who lives in Philadelphia, has worked for some of the best-known book publishers, magazines and newspapers in the country. He says the difference between fine art and illustration is that fine art requires you to please only one person: yourself. With illustration, you must answer to many people. "As an illustrator, you're being hired to do a job, you have to apply your skills to a piece of text and you have to please a lot of people," he

says. "Ultimately, if you do all that, you can get hired again. Every job is a job interview."

The line between fine art and illustration is blurrier than the art world acknowledged just a few decades ago. For example, a 1990 Museum of Modern Art show entitled "High and Low: Modern Art and Popular Culture," demonstrated how often the two worlds overlap and helped strengthen the case for illustration as fine art, says LeVan. "Some illustrators make a living creating personal work that's exhibited at major museums and sold through dealers [and college illustration programs that offer gallery/fine art as a concentration]," she says. "Likewise, fine artists have produced commissioned work throughout history."

Most illustrators say there's definitely a fine

art to illustration. "I don't see a difference between the two at all," says Angie Wang, a Los Angeles-based illustrator. "As a kid, I looked at an illustration as something that existed on its own. It is paired with an article. That's its commercial purpose, but on its own it could have merit."

Jenny Medved, an illustrator from Sarasota, Fla., agrees that fine art and illustration share many qualities. "A strong work of art, regardless of its intention, needs to have the same elements: successful lighting, form, color and composition," she says.

Of course, each person ultimately finds the answer to the illustration-versus-fine art debate in that person's definition of "art," and that definition is a personal one. If art, as one popular



"Alabama Blues," Jenny Medved



"Snow White," Jenny Medved

**"A STRONG WORK OF ART, REGARDLESS OF ITS INTENTION, NEEDS TO HAVE THE SAME ELEMENTS: SUCCESSFUL LIGHTING, FORM, COLOR AND COMPOSITION."**

– JENNY MEDVED

interpretation goes, is about communicating a message, then illustration is fine art. "I have to toe the line of staying true to myself and my artistic integrity while also answering the call for that specific assignment," says Krause.

If, as others suggest, art is about asking questions and not just answering them, as illustrators often do, then illustration may not fit the definition of fine art. Although Krause notes that he consciously chose his profession so that he could satisfy his artistic leanings "and pay the bills and eat," there's no denying that some artists see illustration as selling out. "Historically, the fine-art world has wanted to separate itself from what it sees as the taint of commercialism," LeVan says.

"I guess I realize why they want to make the distinction [between fine art and illustration], but that's not really the case with me," Wang says. "I kind of think it's snobby."

People are likely to debate illustration's place in the fine-art world as long as there are books to be illustrated and cartoons to be drawn. That fact, at least, is one both sides can agree on. "I think this is an age-old question. I believe it will always be discussed because there is such a fine line between the two," Medved says. **ABN**



PART 2  
OF OUR  
SERIES  
FEATURING  
THE YOUNG  
ARTISTS  
OF TODAY  
WHO ARE  
REMOLDING  
THE ART  
WORLD OF  
TOMORROW.

By Hillary  
Casavant

## PART 2

Across the globe, young artists transpose their perspectives to the canvas, pushing the boundaries of art with innovative concepts and unique approaches. In the summer issue of *ABN*, we introduced you to 15 talented artists age 30 and younger. In the second half of the series, you'll meet 15 equally gifted young artists who know no limits to their work: from Sam Falls, who uses natural forces to transform his hand-dyed fabrics, to Vimal Chandran, who travels across India to capture its social climate through illustration.

The creative process is innate for many of the artists, including mixed-media painter Lauren Coulson.

"It is definitely in my blood," says Coulson. "It pumps right through me. There is no way that I could not be an artist. Ideas and motivations race through my mind throughout the day—pouring a glass of water, making a cappuccino and seeing the swirl form, looking into the sky or into people's eyes. Finding beauty in everything inspires me as an artist to create."

With equal parts inspiration, determination and invention, young artists are breaking open the doors of a new artistic world.

# UNDER THIRTY



**Lauren Coulson**

[laurencoulson.com](http://laurencoulson.com)

Lauren Coulson layers acrylics, inks and dyes on canvas, fusing the mediums to create eye-catching, active imagery. She "assists with the aftermath" of mixing these mediums, molding the paint to obtain "the desired balance of chance and control."

The cosmos and natural phenomena play prominent roles in her work.

"I am fascinated with everything—from the macro to the micro—and love to cross-pollinate worlds that are at once violent and destructive yet delicate and beautiful," she says.

Coulson received her master's degree in fine arts from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and Tufts University and has exhibited her works throughout Boston, Los Angeles, New York and her home state of Tennessee.



"Cosmic Filth"

**Dan VanLandingham**  
[danvanlandingham.com](http://danvanlandingham.com)

Through his oil and acrylic landscapes, Dan VanLandingham captures the vastness of space and the delicate light that inhabits it. His most recent work serves as "common ground for distressed and sublime spaces at the mercy of human encroachment," exploring the abusive effects humans have on natural spaces.

"Creating images allows me to become, simultaneously, the architect, the landscaper and the steward of nature," he says.

VanLandingham earned his master's degree in fine arts from Savannah College of Art and Design. He has been published in the New York Times and exhibited his works in New York, Georgia and Massachusetts.



"Bot"



**Tomomi Morishima**  
[tomomimorishima.de](http://tomomimorishima.de)

Playing with positive and negative forms, Tomomi Morishima creates oil impressions of space, figures and architecture before dissolving into the abstract. Vibrant colors bring a playful touch to the final canvas.

"I begin to paint at first without a plan and see what happens," he says. "At that time, it looks like a pure abstract painting, and that inspires me."

Born in Paris and raised in Japan, Morishima attended the Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe and has exhibited his works throughout Germany, where he currently resides.



"Untitled"



"The Chimney"

• • • • •



# **Elsa Muñoz**

*[elsamunoz.com](http://elsamunoz.com)*

Realist painter Elsa Muñoz explores shadow and light in her oil paintings of figures, landscapes and still life. Nature and personal experiences have a large impact on her work, and her landscapes frequently portray natural disasters.

"I enjoy solitude, creative thinking, and the challenge of conveying a feeling or a thought through the use of images and symbols," she says. "I've always felt a deep need to share what I feel is beautiful and meaningful. Painting allows me to do that."

Muñoz received her bachelor's degree in fine arts from the American Academy of Art, and she has exhibited her work throughout Chicago as part of the collection at the National Museum of Mexican Art.



"Bluebird"



**Vimal Chandran**  
[vimalchandran.com](http://vimalchandran.com)

Illustrator and photographer Vimal Chandran frequently travels throughout India, gathering inspiration from the country's vibrant pop culture and social politics. The

self-taught artist has been painting since childhood and became a full-time visual artist after leaving his job as a software engineer.

"I wanted to do more on my own, so I thought art was the right medium to express my ideas, my opinions and possibilities," he says.

Chandran creates dream worlds through swathes of ink and watercolor and then infuses the imagery with poetry and meaning. He calls himself a "transcendent artist," who captures imagination with color. The messages within his work urge the audience "to look at the social and political injustices happening in and around us through the lens of art."



**Njideka Akunyili**  
[njidekaakunyili.com](http://njidekaakunyili.com)

Nigerian-born, U.S.-based artist Njideka Akunyili explores the dynamics of her culture and community through mixed-media art, melding limitless combinations of acrylic, charcoal, pastel, marble dust, colored pencils, oil, fabric or Xerox transfers into figurative collages with distinct narratives. Both critics and collectors have responded positively to her work. At Art Basel in 2012, five of her large collage paintings sold in just 30 minutes.

Akunyili received her master's in fine arts degree from Yale University School of Art and attended the Studio Museum in Harlem residency program in 2011-2012. The artist has exhibited her works throughout the U.S., England and Luxembourg, and her work remains on display at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and the Yale University Art Gallery.



"Nwantinti"



**Katherine McCullough**  
[katherinemccullough.com](http://katherinemccullough.com)

Driven by an impulse to paint, Katherine McCullough creates vibrant, abstract impressions of the material world on large-scale canvas and installations. Through textured layering, her paintings imply organized chaos and playful motion.

"Each painting contains a collection of colored shapes and fields that visually articulate the ephemerality of spatial perception, functioning between significant form and the residue of chaotic physicality," she says.

McCullough received her master's of fine arts degree in visual arts from Washington University in St. Louis. She has exhibited her works throughout Missouri.



"Colormuster 6"



"Untitled"



### Sam Falls

[mbart.com](http://mbart.com)

Spurred by invention and improvisation, Sam Falls uses photography as a driving force behind his conceptual art. Falls produces across a broad range of mediums, including painting, sculpture, digital manipulation and printmaking. He also experiments with hand-dyeing in rich colors and patterns, often using natural elements, such as rain and sunlight, to transform the fabric.

Falls has gained international acclaim since his first shows in 2010, with solo exhibitions in Paris, Rome, Los Angeles, Madrid, Zurich and New York. He earned his master's degree in fine arts at the International Center of Photography Bard Program and his work is displayed in collections at the Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art and the Statoil Collection in Norway.

### Alex Roulette

[alexroulette.com](http://alexroulette.com)

Through dreamlike paintings of suburban youth, Alex Roulette represents "a quasi-nostalgic ordinariness" thriving within the "imagined world" of his images. Inspired by photographs and memories, Roulette often begins his work with a desire to convey an emotion or a story.

"The images I paint oscillate between the observed and the imagined. Exploring those rare moments in life where time seems blurry and endless, as if you are walking through life going in and out of a daydream," he says in his artist's statement.

Roulette received his master's degree in fine arts from Columbia University and has exhibited his works throughout the U.S., including Los Angeles, New York and Baltimore.



"A Small Good Thing"



"Untitled"



### **Brendan Smith**

*brendan-smith.com*

Brendan Smith's oil paintings bind together layers of paint like woven fabric, creating texturally rich, structured canvases that pulse with motion. Inspired by his craft and materials, Smith sees "seemingly endless possibilities of how to construct a painting."

"I feel like painting is a never-ending challenge, without any definite answers, which is why I'm constantly drawn to it," he says.

Smith attended the Rhode Island School of Design for his bachelor's degree in fine arts and received his master's degree in fine arts from Yale School of Art. His work has appeared at exhibitions throughout the U.S.



### **Kevin Kopacka**

*kevinkopacka.com*

Ethereal and luminous, Kevin Kopacka's oil paintings capture a fantasy world in which shadowy forms melt into color. Kopacka finds inspiration for this surreal imagery from the literature and poetry of the Viennese Modern Age at the turn of the 20th century. He says elements of the paranormal—"the notion of things existing that go beyond our perception"—also influence his work. Films, particularly gritty horror movies from the 1970s, affect his art, as well.

Born in Austria, the artist currently studies fine arts at the University of Arts Berlin and has exhibited his works throughout Germany.



"Little Wonder"

**Travis K. Schwab**

*traviskschwab.com*

Self-taught and mostly color-blind, Travis K. Schwab has been making a name for himself in the art world since he first exhibited in 2012. He began working with oil paints four years ago and was recently featured in New American Paintings, a juried exhibition in print.

Schwab's work captures the human form with notable emotion and complexity, often obscuring portions of a figure's face with hands, blurred lines or gaps in the canvas. He finds inspiration from photographs and uses the art to answer questions and learn.

In his artist's statement for New American Paintings, he says, "For me, painting is like having a conversation without words."



"Dunk"



"Sweat"



**Anthony Keith Giannini**

*anthonykgiannini.com*

Anthony Keith Giannini's mixed-media art melds oil, acrylic and toner transfers on canvas to create a collage of surreal figures and complex textures. The deeply psychological work merges a conglomerate of actions to convey an overarching emotion. The artist says that the "push and pull between motivation and inspiration" and the "experience of infinite potential" drive his work.

Giannini graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design with a master's degree of fine arts in painting. He has exhibited throughout the U.S. and as far away as Dubai, United Arab Emirates. His collections are also on display in New York, Maryland and Puerto Rico.

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# REFLECTIONS

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Photography by *Slawek*

Looking at the world through camera lens sometimes reveals a perspective or a secret one does not see with the naked eye. These striking images of "REFLECTION" in display windows, and optical illusions are capturing glimpses of people, buildings, cars, emotions, and the passage of time.

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more info: [www.gotoslawek.org/opinia1.html](http://www.gotoslawek.org/opinia1.html)  
Cell: (317) 443-8901



While classic photography is capturing a moment, my camera is trying to understand what Light is telling me. I call this process REFLECTIONS. All Great Painters always knew that THE LIGHT is the best Master. My camera is trying to record the best creations of the Best Master - LIGHT. I deeply believe that photography is a high quality ART and as such it is comparable to all other visual arts.

*Slawek*

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**Maciej Makalowski**  
*makalowski.com*

Quirky and nostalgic, Maciej Makalowski's most recent collection, "A Real Past to the State of Happiness," imitates the vibrancy and movement of old Polaroid photos, with figures caught mid-smile. Crafted through photo transfer, colored pencil and oil paint, the work is "deeply rooted in cynicism and irony," Makalowski says.

"But at the same time, I see humor, love and beauty in it. The most important thing to me is that my work is enjoyable to make and that it makes me laugh in some way, even if it's just inside jokes between me and myself."

Born in Poland, Makalowski earned his master's degree of fine arts in painting at the San Francisco Art Institute. He has exhibited his works throughout California and the U.S.



"A Real Past to the State of Happiness"


**Hiroshi Sato**

*hiroshisatoart.com*

Hiroshi Sato's vibrant portraits reflect his interest in geometric design, with graphic shapes reminiscent of a stained-glass window. He says he draws inspiration from the "accumulation of both learning and experiencing."

"The main area I am focusing on at the moment is the clear/unclear relationship between the individual perceived reality [microcosm] versus the world [macrocosm]," Sato says.

The contemporary realist oil painter has traveled a broad portion of the world, from his childhood home of Tanzania to the Academy of Art University in San Francisco, where he received his bachelor's degree in fine arts. He has exhibited his works throughout California. **ABN**



"Resting Area"

**COMPLETE LIST OF ABN'S 30 ARTISTS**

(ALPHABETICAL)

**Njideka Akunyili**

*njidekaakunyili.com*

**Guy Ben-Ari**

*guybenari.com*

**Ian "Denimu" Berry**

*denimu.com*

**Amy Boone-McCreesh**

*amyboonemccreesh.com*

**Adina Bricklin**

*adinabricklin.com*

**Vimal Chandran**

*vimalchandran.com*

**Lauren Coulson**

*laurencoulson.com*

**Sam Falls**

*mbart.com*

**Anthony Keith Giannini**

*anthonykgiannini.com*

**Amanda E. Gross**

*amandaegross.com*

**Joyce Ho**

*joycehostudio.com*

**Joseph Koensgen**

*josephkoensgen.com*

**Kevin Kopacka**

*kevinkopacka.com*

**Karen Lederer**

*karenlederer.com*

**Minjae Lee**

*renokim.com*

**Maciej Makalowski**

*makalowski.com*

**Tom Martin**

*tommartinpaintings.com*

**Katherine McCullough**

*katherinemccullough.com*

**Tomomi Morishima**

*tomomimorishima.de*

**Elsa Muñoz**

*elsamunoz.com*

**Marcus Payzant**

*marcupayzant.com*

**Bryan Ramey**

*artbyramey.com*

**Joel Rea**

*joelrea.com.au*

**Alex Roulette**

*alexroulette.com*

**Hiroshi Sato**

*hiroshisatoart.com*

**Travis K. Schwab**

*traviskschwab.com*

**Brendan Smith**

*brendan-smith.com*

**Daniel J. Valadez**

*danieljvaladez.com*

**Abigail VanCannon**

*vancannonart.com*

**Dan VanLandingham**

*danvanlandingham.com*

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## 15 MINUTES

BY MEGAN KAPLON

# THE CORPORATE ROUTE

ROBERT BLUVER, OWNER OF LAMANTIA GALLERY IN LONG ISLAND, USES HIS BIG BUSINESS BACKGROUND TO FIND SUCCESS IN THE ART WORLD.

When Robert Bluver turned 40, he realized that he wanted to own his own business.

Bluver, then director of sales at a picture-frame manufacturer, had worked in the corporate world since graduating with a business degree from Fitchburg State University in Massachusetts. However, he longed for an ownership role and to invest his talents in a business he felt passionately about.

About 12 years ago, Bluver touched base with one of the frame manufacturer's clients, James LaMantia, owner of the LaMantia Gallery in Northport, N.Y. As fate would have it, LaMantia was looking for a partner to take over the operational side of the gallery.

Today, Bluver is co-owner of the gallery, and it is flourishing, despite tough economic times. *ABN* chatted with Bluver to delve deeper into his secrets of merging art and business.



**ABN: Were you always interested in art?**

**RB:** I was. As a young kid when we would go on vacations, my brother and sister would want to go swimming in the hotel pool, but I always wanted to go to art galleries and museums. Art was only a minor for me in college because I really felt like a business degree would be more beneficial for my career, but when I had a chance to actually own an art gallery I jumped at it. It brought together my interests ... and my desire to own a business—and it's worked out great.

**ABN: Can you describe your job as a gallery owner?**

**RB:** I wear many, many hats. I'm the chief executive officer of the company, so I deal with all the operational stuff, the financial part of the business: paying the bills, working on the budgets, buying inventory [and] purchasing. But first and foremost, I'm a sales and marketing person. That, to me, is the most fun part of owning this business. My first priority is always to work with clients, whether they're retail people that walk through the door, Internet sales [people] or commercial people. Sales are the most important part and then constantly promoting the business, whether that's through the Internet, Facebook and LinkedIn, or deciding on what print media I'm going to advertise in. I do all the public relations, I write all the press releases, and I've developed great media relations with all the newspapers on Long Island—all the local ones. Being a small-business owner, you're involved in pretty



much every aspect of running the business. It's 24/7, especially now that you're connected through smartphones. You're always available, and you always have a hand in what's going on in the business.

**ABN: How do you cater your sales pitch differently for corporate versus individual clients?**

**RB:** When a retail client comes through the door, whether they're doing framing or buying a piece of art, it tends to be more personal. You're dealing with their home, which is usually their greatest investment and where they spend most of their time other than work. So, that tends to be a very emotional purchase, versus my corporate clients—a doctor's office or an accounting office—where they have a conference room that basically needs four pieces of art on the wall. That's more of a budget-driven sale, where they say, "You have this budget, Robert. Put four pieces of art together." They want the art to look good, but the challenge is: You get a budget, and you have to make the art work within that.

**ABN: What are your criteria when you're looking for new artists to represent?**

**RB:** Number 1: It has to be an artist that we feel we don't have a niche for or a subject matter that we feel we're missing. And number 2: I want to make sure that the artist is on the

map. They don't have to be internationally famous, but they do have to have a bit of national following. That's not to say if we really, really love a local artist that we can't put that artist on the map by getting behind them and believing in them, but for the most part we really try to find artists that already have a certain collectability and a collector base.

**ABN: How has the gallery changed in the past 12 years?**

**RB:** It's become a bit more structured because I have a pretty intense business background. I've been able to take what I had trained to do and what I did day to day in the corporate world and work it into a small business. It has to do with the efficiency of the business in terms of the organization, working off a budget, knowing what my advertising budgets are, knowing what my Google AdWords cost, knowing what my average sale of a piece of art is, and [knowing] how many paintings I sell per month. What's good about that is: Let's say I know I sell X number of paintings per month. Then, I can set goals to increase that by 5 percent, 10 percent, five paintings a month or 10 paintings a month. It's a way to run a business that I know a lot of small businesses don't do; they kind of run by the seat of their pants, and that's a hard way to run a business. You have to be on top of things.

**ABN: And how has the art business changed?**

**RB:** We've seen a shift in the art world from two things: the economy and the Internet.

The Internet was a brand-new business for most galleries, and now there's a lot of Internet business that is based strictly on price. I don't like to get involved with that; my number 1 priority as far as the Internet business goes is to actually speak with the person and develop a good relationship. I have Internet clients that honestly have spent thousands of dollars on paintings from me, and they've never met me once. They don't even know what I look like, other than if they go on the website and see my photo on my bio, but I develop a great relationship with them over the phone and have been able to sell paintings.

It's also changed because of the economy. Clients are really making sure that they view the painting they're buying as value. When I'm walking somebody through the gallery, I try to make the price of the painting the lowest priority. I try to put value on the painting and develop a relationship.



Then, at the end of a sales pitch or the end of their visit, it's like, OK, how are we going to pay for this? The price of the painting becomes not even an issue because they've had this great experience in the gallery. I've sold them on the value of whatever piece of art they are looking to buy. You have to work that much harder to close a sale, but you do it with value and relationships versus ... price.

**ABN: What sorts of pieces are in your personal art collection?**

**RB:** I'm very eclectic. I don't particularly have one subject matter that I love. When you walk into my house, [you'll see that] I'll have a traditional Tuscany landscape next to a very abstract modern still life next to a realistic painting of wine bottles. It's pretty much all over the place. I buy art more for the heart than for the wall, and that's really how you're supposed to buy art. It's supposed to move you so every morning when you wake up and you come downstairs and you view the painting, you like it more and more. And that is, to me, a criterion to buy a painting.

**ABN: What is your favorite thing about working in art?**

**RB:** The best thing is the clients. To me, there's nothing more satisfying than when you sell three paintings on a Saturday; then, at 5 o'clock, you have your cold beer or your glass of wine, and you know that you had a great day because you made three clients really happy, you sold three beautiful paintings, and it's your own business. That's the greatest rush in the world. There's nothing like it. **ABN**

● For more on the LaMantia Gallery, visit [lamantiagallery.com](http://lamantiagallery.com).

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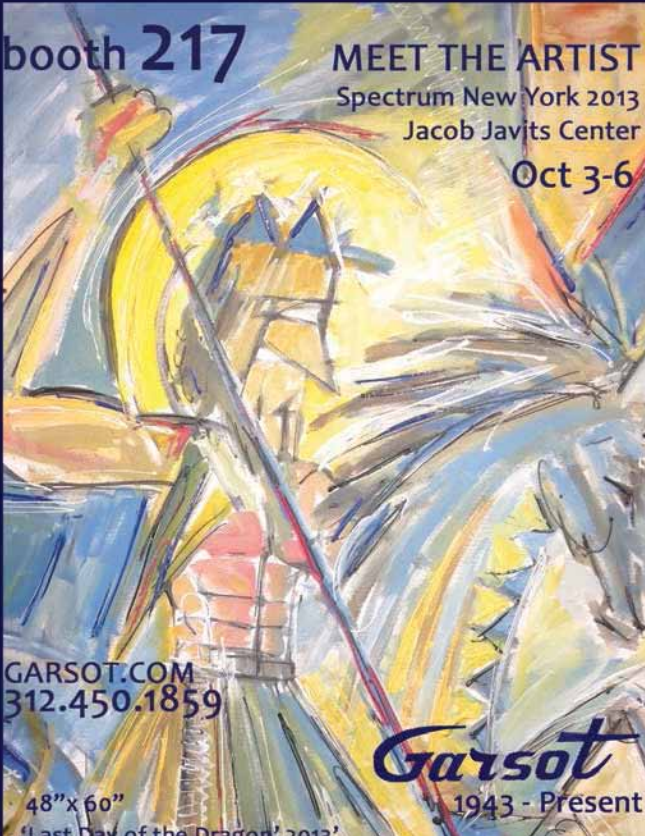
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