

CentreArts

May 2020 || Volume 3, No. 8

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The Rise of The Makery Mask Makers

As the COVID-19 crisis began to unfold in late March, sewing instructors at The Makery received several emails from former students asking how to make face masks. The studio staff quickly researched the issue and realized: 1) that fabric facemasks were a scarce but necessary part of our community's protection during the crisis; and 2) that the studio could provide former students with the patterns, support, and most important, materials, needed to create these masks.

The Makery quickly created a Facebook group, The Makery Mask Makers, and compiled and delivered mask making kits to anyone interested in sewing for the cause. In the month since then, the group has filled over 3,500 mask requests to local healthcare and essential workers. The 450 group members are still working to fulfill needs as quickly as possible. [CA](#)

If your organization is in need of fabric facemasks, email hello@themakerypa.com.



Some of the local organizations benefitting from the Makery Mask Maker's efforts include the Penn State University Police (*above*) and Centre County PAWS (*right*).



Maker Kits at Your Doorstep

In addition to sharing fun, family-friendly creative activities daily on social media, The Makery is offering State College-area home delivery of their popular "Maker Kits." These boxes contain all of the materials for a specific creative project. To learn more about all of the studio's Maker Kits, go to www.themakerypa.bigcartel.com.

CentreArts

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Cover images from top left: Julia Nelson, Lisa Turner, Ingrid Booz Morejohn, Christine Hill; *second row*: Bob Placky, Amy Frank; *third row*: Heather Fry; *bottom row*: Tom Mickle, Steve Torok, Anni Matsick

Art Alliance Classes Go Virtual

When the spring session of classes in the Art Alliance's Art Center in Lemont was cancelled, two of the instructors decided to offer their classes online. For the next eight weeks Bob Placky taught 'Acrylics Painting 101' and Susan Nicholas Gephart taught 'Pastel Painting' and 'Oil Painting.' All three classes were taught on Zoom. Based on the success of this "experiment" a new session of classes will begin the week of May 11.

The three original classes will be held along with two new ones Jennifer Kane will teach Drawing With Inks, which she describes as "a fun class featuring India and watercolor inks, a medium that allows the artist to work quickly and enjoy spontaneous results." All these classes meet once each week for eight week

Nicole Packard will teach Introduction to Watercolor Painting. In this four-week class students will learn to take a painting from sketch to finished product using a variety of techniques.

Ingrid Morejohn will teach "Introduction to Gelliplate Printmaking" and "Turning your Gelliplates into an Art Journal."

More information and registration for these classes can be found at artallianceofcentralpa.org or by emailing artalliance05@gmail.com. CA



Susan Nicholas and her students embark on a new adventure — traversing the new technology of getting their oil painting class up and running on on Zoom!

Zoom Adventures with Art Alliance Instructor Bob Placky



By Bob Placky

This story is going to be about a dozen firsts and that is not only literally but figuratively as well. I am a Central Pennsylvania Art Alliance board member, being the secretary and exhibition chair; that role allows the recording of details, taking the pulse of the Art Alliance exhibits and events.

The story starts in early February when I was asked to teach an adult class in acrylics. I was a high school art teacher in the State College Area School District for 40 years, teach privately and have been teaching teen art classes for the last few summers. I said "yes."

In mid-February, the Art Alliance was laying out plans for our members show, the spring teaching calendar and then an emergency board meeting in early March put a hold on everything. It was my first halt to life. The "stay at home" guidelines put a two-week freeze on classes, starting and delaying exhibition hours at our Art Alliance Downtown Gallery. And then those guidelines were extended through the next three months.

The Art Alliance was faced with a financial crisis: cancel all classes or attempt to save our outreach to the art community. Zoom was suggested at a special social distancing Art Alliance board meeting. There have been quite a few uplifting messages floating around in the social media air during this health crisis. The message that hit home for me was "during the

quarantine you should learn a new skill." With that given I contacted my adult learners and asked about a virtual acrylic painting class. All five agreed. So my very first Zoom Acrylic 101 class went live on March 17 from my art studio basement in Park Forest.

Now without sounding redundant, almost everything in the next part of this story is a first, many on several levels. We had to work with a free Zoom application, which limits users to 40-minute segments, which is challenging for a three-hour session. Since those first few meetings, the Art Alliance has pur-

continues on page 4



Bob's set up — prepped like s chef show in advance



Left column from top: Examples of my students' work: Alla prima, Kristy; Stencil, Jennifer (left) Impasto study, Charlie (right)

Right column from top: PDF examples of techniques; final work critique slide

Centre Gives 2020

Centre Gives 2020, Centre Foundation's 36-hour online giving event, is set to begin May 12 at 9 a.m and conclude on May 13 at 9 p.m. The Art Alliance will join other nonprofits to give donors a fun and exciting way to support their favorite organizations and see their gifts go further through the \$200,000 stretch pool plus \$100,000 bonus pool and \$40,000 prizes fund.



"Since 2012 when the first Centre Gives was held, the donations made to the Art Alliance in these annual campaigns have become an important part of our budget," Marie Doll, executive director of the Art Alliance says. "Through the pandemic we have lost income from events that were canceled and face uncertainty about when regular activities can resume. We hope donors will continue their support of our organization at whatever level of giving their budgets allow."

Bob Placky, from page 3

chased a professional copy of Zoom that is currently shared by a half-dozen instructors. On the first night the students wanted to watch me paint and follow along.


In my years of teaching art, I capture the students' attention with a few great images for direction, a quick demonstration of the technique of the day, then announce to the class to get to work. I love my role of art lifeguard; you walk around the pool, encourage stronger strokes, mention areas of strength and guide the artists who are just splashing around.

But they wanted to watch, so my hardest virtual goal was allowing the students in. I simply had to get over it. One's art studio is a sanctuary; the few that entered rarely watched. So I improved lighting, set up my phone as a remote camera and prepped each Tuesday night as a British baking show. I would have paint supplies on hand, many finished examples, the finished artwork to pull out of the oven for the voila moment.

I found myself prepping more examples in PDFs to share, sending out art history videos in advance, maintaining two email contacts a week with every student as well as being open

for questions, comments. I found myself learning new things about artists, watching other artists teaching art online, increasing contact with local artists/instructors and attempting to master this.

Each of those areas are a success, but the most difficult lesson of any art class is the critique. As a teacher, you measure understanding of the lesson by the work displayed on the board, questions asked of the paint, more questions asked of the technique, all done live with the student input. In a virtual classroom that is a challenge, so I adopted an open sharing approach. Students send me images of finished work, I put those images in a slide with a statement of intent. Then in our meeting, we share the art examples. I do miss walking around looking over shoulders, but this is art critiquing thru a social distance lens.

I will be offering a second three-hour Acrylic 101 painting class on May 12 for eight weeks. The best part of the class: It won't be my first. 

Check the Art Alliance website for more information on this and other upcoming online art classes: artallianceofcentralpa.org


'Stay At Home' Art Projects



"Stay At Home Art Projects for Artists of All Ages" on the Art Alliance website features fun projects suggested by instructors in the organization's summer art camps.

Following simple instructions and photographs, participants can make a museum, create art sculptures out of common household items, make liquid watercolor paints from markers, or watch a video on how to make puppets.

More fun art ideas will be presented in two one-hour Zoom classes taught by Jenny Binus "Art to Help You Relax" (May 2 at 10 a.m.) combines yoga moves and breathing techniques with doodle journals and zentangle. In "Hey, I Can Do That!" (May 9 at 10 a.m.) everyday items become art.

Both these classes are free but students need to register on the Art Alliance website (<https://artallianceofcentralpa.org>) or by emailing artalliance05@gmail.com. 

Art Alliance Artists in "Art of the State" Exhibition


Art of the State, an exhibition held annually at the State Museum of Pennsylvania in Harrisburg, gives Pennsylvania artists the opportunity to exhibit their work and receive statewide recognition. For the 2020 exhibition jurors chose 109 works from more than 2,000 entries, including pieces from Art Alliance members Linda Hale and Anni Matsick.

Linda's piece, called "400" is a coil built pot with a rusty chain around it. "I was doing some hand building last summer while listening to a news program about the first slave ship arriving in America 400 years ago," she says. "It occurred to me that both pots and ships can also be 'vessels'. My vessel represents the inhumanity of slavery starting with the capture and storage like transporting of these people. The pot is deep, dark and bound in chain. It serves as a repository and ship simultaneously."

Anni's watercolor is titled "Stripes." "My subject, ceramist Brian Giniewski, was in State College last July as a juror for Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts when I met him as a volunteer," she says. "I was intrigued



by his round eyeglasses and tousled curly hair so I took some quick snapshots in the Festival office to use as reference. I worked loosely with a wide, flat brush to keep the image fresh and understated". Anni's painting of Boalsburg resident Helena Burchill was included in the 2018 Art of the State exhibition.

The exhibition's original opening in June has been delayed until Sept. 13, corresponding with Harrisburg's annual Gallery Walk. 

Linda Hale is a photographer, sculptor and ceramic artist living and working in Port Matilda.

Anni Matsick is a freelance illustrator and painter working from her home studio in Boalsburg. More artwork can be seen on her website at annimatsick.com

Cancellation of Art Alliance Art Exhibitions

For the 26th year, the Art Alliance's Recycled Art Show was planned for the month of April in the Alliance's Gallery Downtown in the Martin Luther King Plaza. Each year this show is an opportunity for artists to express their concern for the environment and the importance of recycling programs like Centre County's. As in previous years, an extended show of several of the pieces would be displayed at the Centre County Recycling Interpretive Center.

Unfortunately, with the outbreak of COVID-19 and the subsequent Stay At Home orders, as with so many other events, the Recycled Art Show was canceled. But the exhibition will be rescheduled for later in the year with the same theme of "Rings and Things." Since all or most of the materials for a recycled piece are found in the home, organizers point out this is the perfect time to create a piece for the future show.

Other cancellations include the annual "Kids Love Art Show" with artwork from students in grades 3-5 from every school district in Centre County and the Alliance's Figurative Show. The rotation of paintings in Outreach Exhibitions in retirement communities, lobbies of businesses and restaurants became impossible as well.

The annual Members Show is up and we did have an opening, but with the stay-at-home orders following shortly afterwards, we closed the downtown gallery and Kish Bank also limited its availability, and so not very many people have been able to see the show.

Exhibition committee members were faced with the question "How do we have an art show when galleries are closed with no definite date set to reopen?"

"On-line art shows" was the answer and Art Alliance artists are invited to send us images of the art they were doing in their home studios. The result is a wonderful show of work in a variety of media and styles.

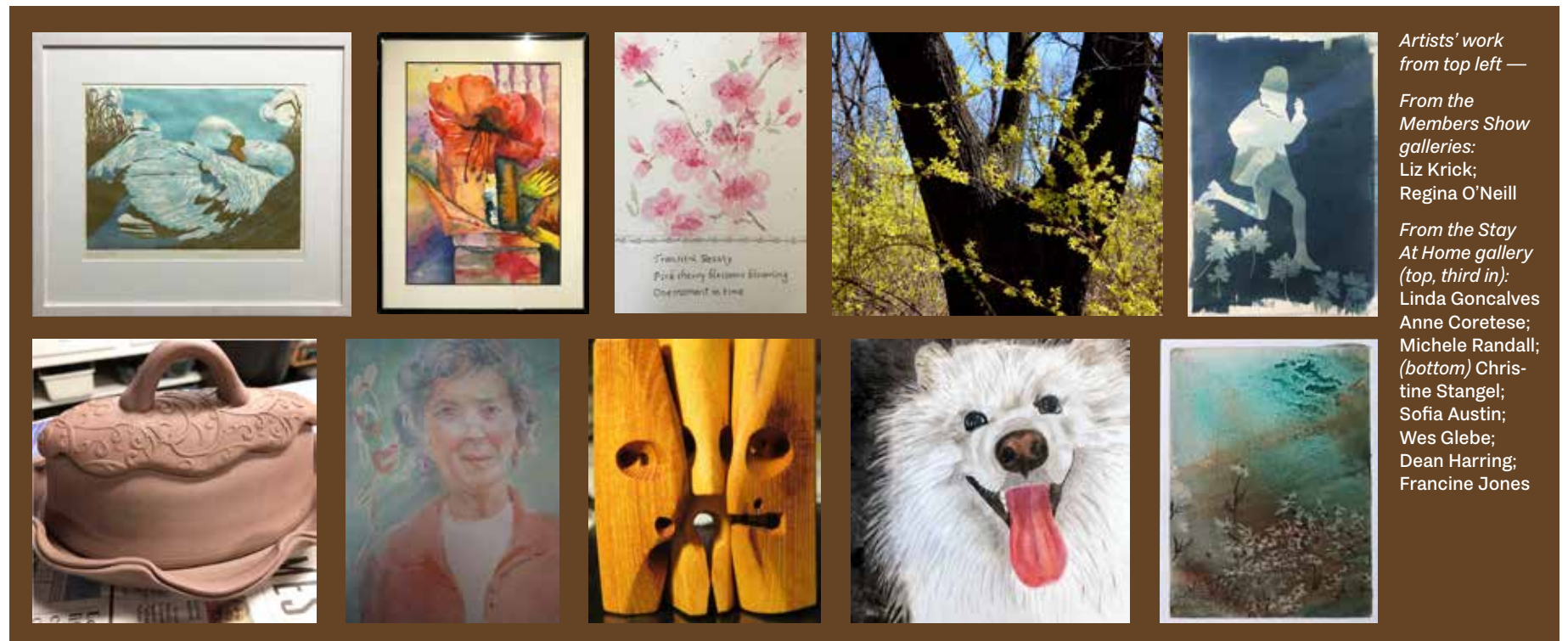
With the amazing help of Andrew Shilling at Kish Bank, who took pictures of the artwork at the Expect More Store on 114 S. Allen, and Adrienne Waterston, who took pictures at the gallery downtown, the Art Alliance and Art Alliance Gallery Downtown websites also have online galleries for both parts of the Members Show. 📷

We invite you to visit all the online art galleries at both websites: artallianceofcentralpa.org and artalliancegallerydowntown.org.



"Corona Novena" made by Stacie Bird for the Recycle Show, "Rings & Things." For her inspiration she writes: "A dear artist friend of mine passed away in January 2019. Her family sorted through her belongings and set aside many, many materials for her artist friends to adopt. I was looking for inspiration and literally found a basket of musical instruments that was almost all bells. The bracelet, bells and handmade paper all came from "Chez Harriet" as well as some of the buttons and the sequins.

We are also posting artwork from these online galleries on our Facebook page!



Artists' work from top left —

From the Members Show galleries:
Liz Krick;
Regina O'Neill

From the Stay At Home gallery (top, third in):
Linda Goncalves
Anne Coretese;
Michele Randall;
(bottom) Christine Stangel;
Sofia Austin;
Wes Glebe;
Dean Harring;
Francine Jones