

NEWS

www.jamesriverartleague.com



CHANGING LIVES THROUGH ART



The Winter Issue

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ART 180 HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE EXPRESS THEMSELVES

ART 180 trains fine artists to work with children in challenging circumstances.

As ART 180 trustee Heilbron Rushing-Cooper said: "What we care about most is having children use the tools and techniques of various art styles to express something deep and personal about who they are and what they care about.

"We call it a focus on creative expression."

Rushing-Cooper will discuss the work of ART 180 at the James River Art League meeting at our new time, 11 a.m., Jan. 18.

The artists working with ART 180 are encouraged not only to teach skills, but also

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SAVING THE HOFFBAUER MURALS

Get a behind-the-scenes look at the restoration of an iconic piece of art and Virginia history.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Lois Shipley

Whether you want to further your knowledge of the arts, meet with friends of like interests, have a forum to exhibit your work, or give back to the community, you are in the right place. We all have different reasons for joining James River Art League, and JRAL meets those needs in a variety of ways.

We hope you will consider taking a larger role in the coming two years. At our January 18 meeting we will have a sign-up sheet available for those of you who would like to volunteer to help on a committee. We would particularly like to encourage our newest members to

learn about the committees and decide how they would like to serve the art league. Committee Chairpersons are available to answer any questions you have about the operations. This is a great opportunity to meet other members and see how things work behind the scenes.

As many of you know, our First Vice President and Program Chair, Mary Kent has recently undergone back surgery. We wish Mary a speedy recovery. In anticipation of rehabilitation time, she asked that we find someone to

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ART 180 HELPS YOUNG PEOPLE EXPRESS THEMSELVES

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to allow the young people to express themselves seriously through their art.

ART 180 partners with other nonprofit organizations to serve children in challenging circumstances in Richmond. Through the programs, youths discover ways they can positively engage in and influence their surroundings.

Artists and volunteers work with children after school for 12 weekly sessions. Each program grows from the needs and interests of the young people being served.

The young artists explore personal statements that reinforce their senses of identity and purpose. Programs end with public presentations of their artwork, and have included such things as billboards, art exhibits, poetry readings, audio recordings and videos.



Rushing-Cooper will bring examples of some of the outstanding artwork of the talented and inspired young people.

She has graduate degrees in pedagogy, linguistics and social foundations, and taught at VCU for six years before leaving to become a wife, mother and material artisan.



In her studio at Plant Zero, you'll find ongoing projects such as an 8-foot origami chandelier, a handmade suitcase decorated with fabric collage, a quilt and a child's decorated jacket.

"I relate to most everything by its materiality," she said. "Its texture, its feel, its reflectiveness, its tensile pliability. The more I delve into materials, the more I realize how similar they are, and how they can be used in unexpected, yet practical ways.

"Like most artists, I'm truly obsessed."



PROGRAM SCHEDULE



Date	Type	Details
WINTER / SPRING		
11 a.m. January 18	Meeting Program <i>Speaker</i>	Heilbron Rushing-Cooper of Art 180 tells us about the work of this local organization that creates and provides art-related programs for young people living in challenging circumstances.
11 a.m., February 15 Virginia Historical Society 428 North Boulevard, Richmond, VA	Local Field Trip	Visit the Virginia Historical Society to learn about projects to restore the Charles Hoffbauer military murals. See the restoration in progress by conservator Cleo Mullins.
11 a.m. March 15	Meeting Program <i>Video Presentation</i>	Watch "Snow Hill," a self-portrait of Andrew Wyeth, one of our greatest American painters. This film incorporates his great works of art along with home movies of N.C. Wyeth and authorized interviews with Andrew Wyeth and famed model Helga Testorf.
April 19	Out-of-town Field Trip	Travel to Newport News to see "Working South," a special exhibit of paintings by nationally recognized watercolorist Mary Whyte, at the Peninsula Fine Arts Center. Afterward visit the Maritime Museum next door and enjoy lunch at the Museum Café.
11 a.m. May 17	Annual Meeting	Share results and enjoy critiques of work from the annual Member Challenge. Outer dimensions of artwork and frame: 20"x24"

Programs and schedule are subject to change. For updates, visit the website: www.jamesriverartleague.com

Admission fees may apply for field trips. Meals and transportation are at members' expense.

NEWS, NOTES FOR AND ABOUT JRAL ARTISTS

Recent sales

Pat Trgina ended the year on a high note, selling four of her paintings at Crossroads Art Center.

Stella Jones sold a painting — to a classmate who bought it before the paint was dry.

Marla Coleman sold "Upper Meadows," a painting in the recent For Art's Sake show featuring members of Virginia Plein Air Painters.

While traveling to Florida over the holidays, **Lois Shipley** stopped for gas, so she checked her cell phone messages and found that she had sold her large painting, "After the Harvest" that had just won second place at the Crossroads Art Center juried show. It was a good day, she said.

Exhibits

The Pastel Society of Virginia is having a show at Uptown Gallery from Feb. 1 to March 30. Several JRAL members are also members of this new society and will show in this exhibit, PSV's first in Richmond.

Stella Jones and **Marla Coleman** are among those exhibiting in the Virginia Artists show in the General Assembly Building during the current legislative session. Sponsored by the Virginia Senate, the show will run through Feb. 23.

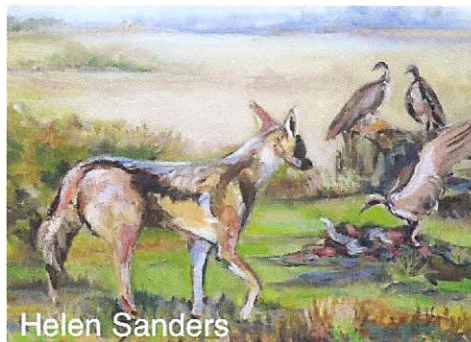
Note of Thanks

Suzie Counts thanks everyone who sent her cards and get well wishes during her recent surgery and recovery.



Out of Africa

Helen and Earl Sanders currently have a special show at Uptown Gallery, featuring his photos and her painting from their recent African safari. There will be a First Friday reception, 5-9 p.m., Feb. 1.



Virginia Orchid Society Art Show

Artists are invited to participate in the art competition of the Virginia Orchid Society's Spring Show, Feb. 22-24, at Strange's Garden Center, 12111 W. Broad St., Richmond.

For details and a registration form, go to the group's website at: www.vaorchidsociety.com

Classes and Workshops



Donna Campbell Allen on painting the portrait

Donna Campbell Allen, who demonstrated portrait painting at the November JRAL meeting, will teach "The Watercolor Study" at the Visual Arts Center, beginning Feb. 18. For info on the daytime and evening classes, go to www.visarts.org. She will also do a one-day workshop, "Getting Started in Watercolor," on Feb. 2 at ArtHaus. Details at www.ArthausRichmond.com.

Also, **Nancy Tucker** is teaching classes at the beginner and intermediate levels at Goochland Art Center. Students may work in a choice of media and classes are ongoing so you can begin at any time. For details, call: 804 556-3159 or e-mail tuckerzoo@juno.com

Uptown Gallery is offering a workshop, "Watercolor Portraits of Children," on Feb. 16-17, taught by Brenda Stankus. For information, contact Rosemary McKnight at 804 314-4153 or Betty Drozeski, 804 740-4720.

It's a lament of many artists who create beautiful paintings, rich in color and detail. They may even take gorgeous photos, expertly composed, properly exposed. But capturing their paintings in a photograph is a challenge.

As with painting itself, the secret is in paying attention to the details.

Everyone agreed that you should take your photos before you frame the artwork. There's just no way to get a good photo by shooting through glass.

Stella Jones learned a long time ago to photograph every successful painting – to create her own archive, for use in prints and reproductions and, perhaps most important, to trace her path as an artist. Robert Caldwell, who did a presentation for the league about his nature paintings a while ago, encourages taking photos of not only the finished work but of every step in the creation, as points of reference during the painting process.

Stella suggests using natural sunlight although not in direct sun, which tends to wash out the photo. She prefers open shade or a slightly cloudy day. And make sure the painting is flat – preferably taped to a board – to prevent portions of the image from being out of focus.

Elizabeth Hood has enough natural light in her breakfast room, which has windows on three sides, to get a good color balance. She cautions about using artificial light, which can cause serious color shift, or relying on the camera's built in flash which can burn out the color.

Elizabeth makes sure she has a neutral background, propping or mounting her art on gatorboard or foam core (which also helps to hide kitchen clutter and prevent random reflections). And she puts down a white or beige cloth on her table to keep the wood from reflecting onto her painting.

Also make sure there are no shadows or glares on the paintings. These are often hard to see with the naked eye, but the camera will intensify them.

Sandy Bruton says that before she gave up and turned the job over to professionals, she found that her camera read colors best when she used a mid-value gray behind her artwork. Professional photographers use what's known as an 18% gray card for general light level readings (something

close to the 20% value in the gray scale below).

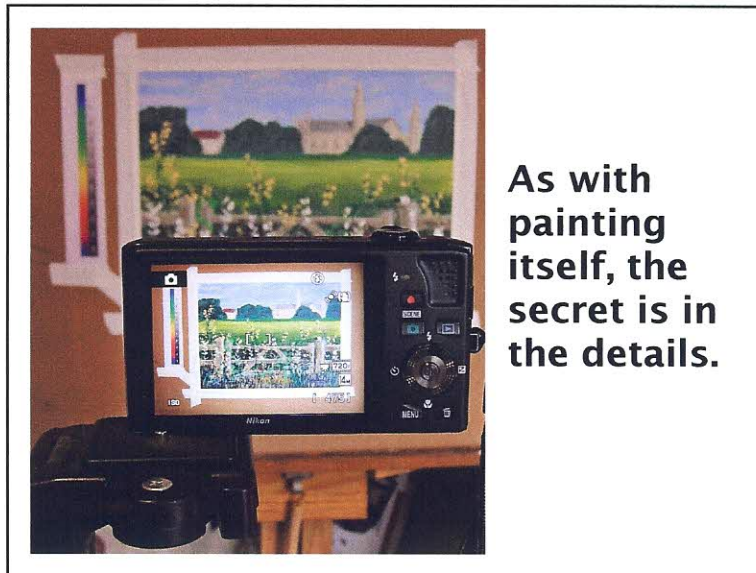
Once you've got the light level issues resolved, you can turn to actually positioning the art and the camera.

Collin Hoskins has trouble with “keystoning,” which is when the top of the image comes out wider than the bottom (like trapezoidal stone at the top of a classic stone arch).

This happens when the plane of the painting and the plane of the back of the camera where the image is recorded are not exactly parallel. (See illustration on Page 5). As you're making the adjustments, it helps to have a very steady hand – or a tripod.

Elizabeth uses a small easel to position her painting (and backing board) on the table top. Then she sets the camera on a tripod, making sure the camera lens tube is perpendicular to the center of the painting. (See illustration).

(Continued on page 5)

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PICTURING ART

(Continued from page 4)

The best way to check this is to look at the image on the screen at the back of the camera (or through the eyepiece) and make sure that each edge of the painting is parallel to the corresponding side of the screen frame. (Notice the alignment in the photo on Page 4). It may take a while, with some careful adjustments — and some choice words — but you will get a perfectly squared picture.

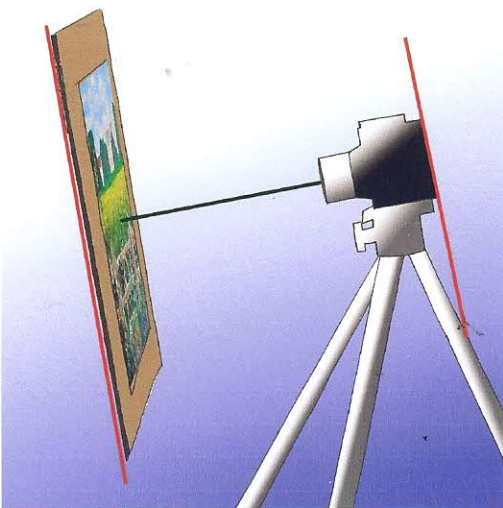
It also helps to set the camera lens in a slightly telephoto range, even if you have to back up a little to get the whole painting into the frame. This will eliminate lens distortion at close range.

If you have a camera with lots of bells and whistles, enjoy the ringing and whistling, but they're not really necessary. Most automatic cameras will give you fine pictures on the automatic settings.

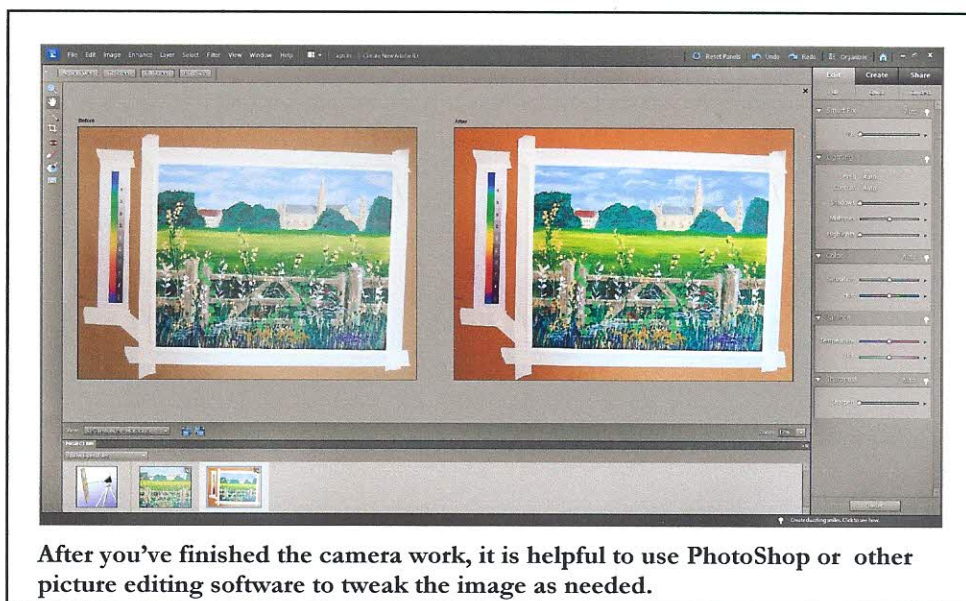
There are lots of different photo file formats to select, but the most common and versatile is .jpg (sometimes listed as Jpeg). Generally, setting the camera for the highest resolution gives you the best options for reproduction, but the tradeoff is that it takes up more memory on your camera; so you should download the files to your computer and delete

them from the camera as soon as it's feasible.

After Lois Shipley has taken the photos, she downloads



It is crucial that the plane of the painting and the plane of the camera (red lines) are parallel, and that the camera lens is pointed (green line) directly at the center of the painting.



After you've finished the camera work, it is helpful to use Photoshop or other picture editing software to tweak the image as needed.

them to her computer into a "My Paintings" folder, with sub-folders to help her keep track of things. She uses Photoshop Elements to crop, rotate (if needed) and to adjust color, contrast and brightness. (Photoshop is perhaps the leading image editing software, but the package that came with your camera will probably do an adequate job, at least for starters).

And that brings us to the bar at the bottom of Page 4.

It is a color and tonal value card. Using your own computer and your own printer, print the page and clip out the bar. Then tape it beside your painting when you take the photo.

Load your photos into the computer, and compare the image on the screen with the paper color bar. They probably will not match, but it will tell you which colors are off and what needs to be corrected.

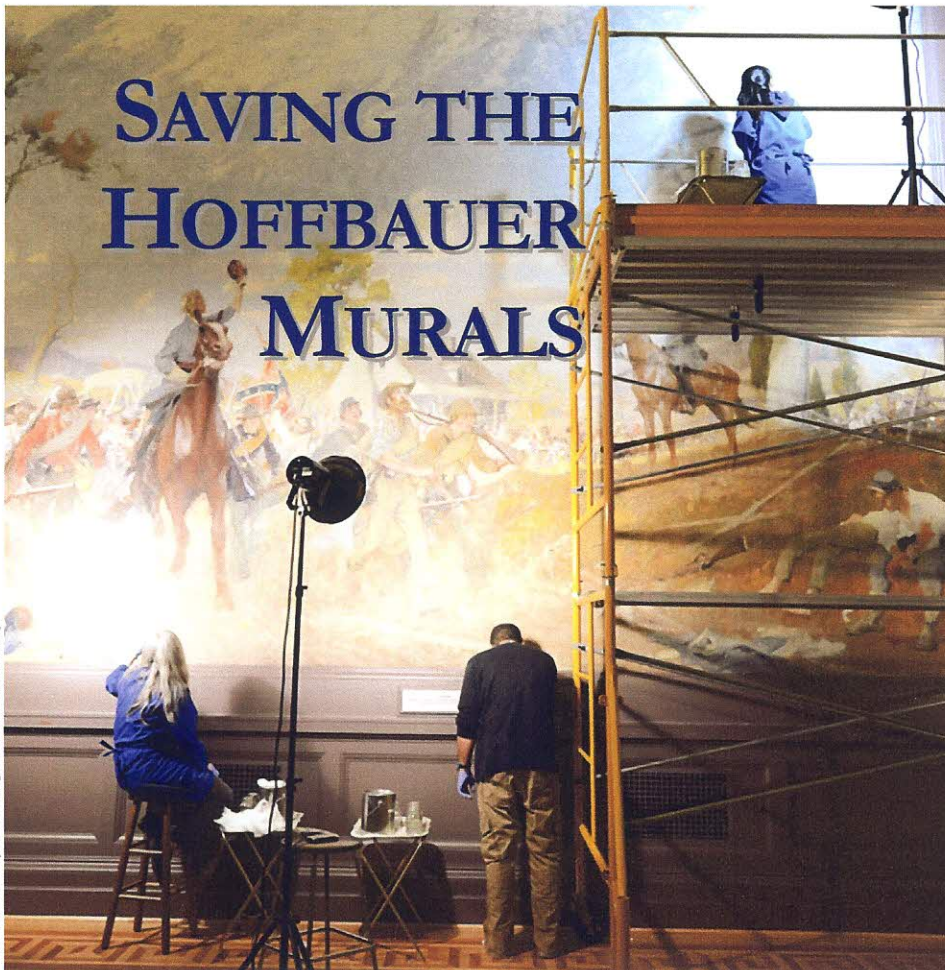
The gray bar will also tell you how much detail you're losing. The color and gray bars are together for convenience; there's no direct relationship between them.

The color and gray bars will vary from printer to printer, but if you use the same one consistently, at least it will give you a base line for comparison.

And with a little practice, you will avert photo disaster.

Ten Tips for Good Pix

1. Take pictures at each creative step
2. Photograph before framing
3. Use natural sunlight in open shade
4. Use a neutral background
5. Watch for glare, reflections and shadows
6. Use an easel and a tripod
7. Line up the artwork and camera carefully
8. Use a slightly telephoto lens setting
9. Use the color bar for quality control
10. Learn to use photo editing software



SAVING THE HOFFBAUER MURALS

Art conservators work on "The Four Seasons of the Confederacy"

In 1913, under a commission of the Confederate Memorial Association, the French artist Charles Hoffbauer began work on a set of murals depicting the four seasons of the Confederacy in the Civil War.

His work was interrupted when he went back to Europe to fight for France in World War I.

When he returned, he realized that his own experiences had altered his perspective on warfare, so he redid much of his work, finally completing the project in 1920.

After the paintings were damaged by soot from coal-fired furnaces and water from a leaky roof, Hoffbauer returned again in 1937 for the first of four restorations of the monumental works. In some places where there was severe damage, he scraped down to the canvas and repainted.

The second restoration was done by a German art conservator in the late 1940s.

In 1962, the murals were restored by local artist Helen Bailey. (She was the art teacher who encouraged some of her students to form a group that would, in 1964, become the James River Art League).

Fifty years later, the iconic paintings housed at the Virginia Historical Society are again being restored.

Led by Cleo Mullins of the Richmond Conservation Studio, a team of conservators is laboring over Charles Hoffbauer's masterpiece in a project that is likely to take three years.

It is slow, painstaking work, with cotton swabs cleaning away layers of varnish and accumulated grime. At times, badly damaged or missing areas are repainted — working from Hoffbauer's

original sketches or archival photographs.

The murals are in 8 panels that are 14 feet tall and up to 36 feet wide.

For Mullins, it is the biggest restoration project ever. Much of her usual work is in restoring portraits. She estimates this project is equivalent to doing 700 portraits.

Mullins, who has a master's degree in conservation of historic and artistic works, has held internships and fellowships at the National Museum of American Art and at the Smithsonian Institution.

Since 1974, she has been a conservator of paintings and decorative objects for numerous museums, historic homes and private collectors.

She will lead JRAL members on a private tour of the Hoffbauer project as our February 15 field trip.

We will meet at 11 a.m. in the lobby of the Virginia Historical Society, 428 North Boulevard, Richmond.

After the program, we will have box lunches from Homemades by Suzanne at the VHS. The cost of lunch will be \$11.

Janice Clark, program chair, will have a menu and sign-up sheet at the Jan. 18 meeting. For those not at the January meeting but who want to have lunch at the tour, call her at 804 282-7335.



On a good day, the conservators may clean and restore an area of two square feet.

EXHIBIT SCHEDULE



Location

About This Exhibit

Important Dates and Info

WINTER / SPRING

Crossroads Art Cntr

2016 Staples Mill Rd.
Richmond, VA

January 18–March 4
15% commission
40 artists, 1 painting each
All paintings must be for sale.

Drop off: 10-11 a.m., Jan. 12
Pick up: 10-11 a.m., March 5
Reception: 6-9 p.m., Jan. 18

St. Giles

Presbyterian Church

5200 Grove Ave.
Richmond, VA
2012 Artist Challenge
Pictures

March 7–April 29
No commission
25 artists, 1 painting each
Maximum Size Restrictions:
35" W x 21" H

Drop off: 9-9:30 a.m., March 7
Pick up: 9-9:30 a.m., April 29
No reception
No prices on cards

For Art's Sake

Gallery

8538 Patterson Ave.
Henrico, VA

March 4–April 30
30% commission
20 artists, 2 paintings each
Maximum Size Restrictions:
32" x 32"

Drop off: 10-10:30 a.m., March 4
Pick up: 10-10:30 a.m., April 30
Reception: 5-8 p.m., April 5
All paintings must be for sale.

SPRING / SUMMER

James Center Atrium

1015 E. Cary St.
Richmond, VA

June 1–22
Annual Judged Exhibit
65 Paintings—1 per artist
No commission
Max: W=34"/H=37"

Drop off: 9:30-10 a.m., June 1
Pick up: 9:30-10 a.m., June 22
Reception: 2-4 p.m., June 9

CAPITAL ONE West Creek

15000 Capital One Dr.
Richmond, VA

May 3–Aug. 30
No commission
40 artists, 1 painting each
Max: W=32"/H=32
All paintings POR or NFS

Drop off: 2-2:30 p.m., May 3
Pick up: 4-4:30 p.m., Aug 30
Not open to public
Guests may call 804 284-6015
to visit exhibit

FALL / WINTER

Suntrust Bank

919 E. Main St.
Richmond, VA

Sept. 3-30
No commission
30 Artists / 1-2 paintings
No commission
Note: No prices on tags

Drop off: 9:30-10 a.m., Sept. 3
Pick up: 9:30-10 a.m., Sept. 30
No reception

Montpelier Center

17205 Mountain Road
Montpelier, VA

Oct. 1-29
30% commission
75-80 paintings
Max: W=36"/H=36

Drop off: 9:30-10 a.m., Oct. 1
Pick up: 9:30-10 a.m., Oct. 30
Reception: 2-4 p.m., Oct. 6

Tuckahoe Library

1901 Starling Dr.
Henrico, VA

Dec. 2-30
No commission
30 artists, 1-2 paintings
Maximum 60 paintings

Drop off: 1-1:30 p.m., Nov. 30
Pick up: 9:30-10 a.m., Dec. 30
No reception

Diana Robinson, Gallery Co-Chair: 741-5550 (H), 512-9389 (C); dnr36@comcast.net

Kate Towler, Gallery Co-Chair: 565-2606 (H), 432-4188 (C); katetowler@verizon.net

Gigi Vranian, Exhibit Chair: 784-8087 (H), 337-3720 (C); vraniangigi@comcast.net

NOTES: Sign-up is a must for all exhibits. Please call Gigi if you sign up but can't make it. Schedule is subject to change. Please visit the website,

www.jamesriverartleague.com, for most current information.

Receptions: Food provided by exhibit participants, unless otherwise notified by the Hospitality Committee.

Entries in the Fall/Winter shows will be credited to the 2013-14 exhibit year.



Karen Witthoeft with Sharon Gilbert

BLOWN AWAY BY GLASS

By Karen Witthoeft

Nine years ago during my first year of watercolor painting classes at *For Arts Sake*, Ed and I wandered into the Contemporary Art Center of Virginia in Virginia Beach. I was "blown away" by the chandelier by glass artist Dale Chihuly and I painted from photos taken that day. Because I admired his work, my art class friends brought me photographs of Chihuly installations they came across in their travels.

My family reacted to my excitement of the Chihuly exhibit at the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts by giving me a wonderful "glass experience" for Christmas. They rented a morning session at the Talisman Glass Studio in Chicago where daughter Susan and I formed glass paper weights and then enjoyed a glass blowing demonstration by studio owner, Sharon Gilbert.

Sharon noted that the colored glass chips used to color all fine art glass come from Finland which has the world's finest sand.

She added that there is 35% breakage of glass in the production process, which is what occurred during her demonstration—one out of three pieces broke.



James River Art League

Lois Shipley
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Janice Clark
1st Vice President
Program Chairman

Collin Hoskins
2nd Vice President
Parliamentarian

Jane Cox
Recording Secretary

Sally Booth
Corresponding Secretary

Maryanne Evans
Treasurer

Committee Chairs

Elizabeth Hood
Membership

Suzanne Spooner-Munch
Publicity

Diana Robinson
Kate Towler
Gallery

Gigi Vranian
Exhibit / Contact

Stella Jones
Historian / Archivist

Lisa Nye
Pam Roach
Hospitality

Sandy Bruton
Telephone

Mike Steele
Newsletter

Our Mission:
To encourage the creation and
appreciation of good art.



HOLIDAY PARTY

James River Art League members and guests gathered in the Marble Hall of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts on Dec. 14 for the annual holiday luncheon. It was also an opportunity to enjoy the holiday art and decorations and, for some members, to revisit the Chihuly show.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

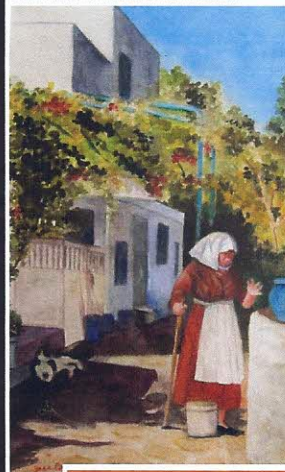
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take over the remainder of her term.

The Executive Board appointed Janice Clark, and we are grateful for her willingness to step into that position. Janice, whose day (and/or night) job is as a nurse, has been a member of the league since 2002.

As our 50th anniversary celebration approaches in 2014, there will be a lot of exciting planning to do in this year. These are great times for the James River Art League.

Greek Shadows / Jane Cox



Exotic places,
intriguing
faces

Sentinel / Collin Hoskins



Trixie / Mary Pedini



Sisters / Helen Sanders



Wading Birds / Anne Twisdale

Crossroads Art Center

2016 Staples Mill Road
Richmond, VA

January 18 to
March 4, 2013

Reception: 6-9 p.m., Jan. 18