



AUGUST, 2014

**“SHOWIN’ ON THE RIVER!”
JURIED FINE ART SHOW**

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**RIVERFRONT’S 2014 “SHOWIN’ ON THE RIVER!”
JURIED FINE ART SHOW**

In the July issue, we presented the more abstract and non-traditional works in Riverfront’s 2014 Juried Fine Art Show. This issue highlights some of the great beauty show artists have achieved through more traditional means, using time-honored media of pastels, watercolors, acrylics, and oils--even a woodcut--and cherished subjects we all love. The show presents nearly 60 works, offering considerable diversity and viewing pleasure--and possibly just the thing for that empty wall!



Woodcut is one of the oldest methods of print making, used in India and China from the 5th century and only arriving in Europe by the 1400s. Drawing upon Indian heritage, Rakshika Thakor uses wood and linoleum cuts, sculpting out the unnecessary, digging out lines that will define the subject, and only leaving surfaces where ink will be applied. In this show, we appreciate *Lotus* (above), with flowers appearing as silhouettes at sunset.

Certain subjects have been cherished over time. The classic still life is one of those. With her oil *Brassed Off* (below), Rosemary Ward offers us a classic look. She says, "Every color, every brushstroke has a story to tell, and I am grateful to show up and assist in the collaboration."



With a bit more of a contemporary feel to it, Linda Capizano expresses similar pleasure in producing works like *Tea Time* (below). "I found I could make something out of nothing. As I start a new project I lose myself in it, the challenge, and the accomplishment it brings. It's very exciting to see the progress of a piece, and the finish is so astonishing to me."



Although pastels had long been portable, it was only in the 1800s that paints became available in portable containers. It was then that artists began going outdoors to capture life and scenery as it truly was rather than how it seemed to them in the studio. Those artists would appreciate Tim Brody's



sentiments about nature and his fine pastel portrait of a Black-crowned Night Heron (above). "Being present to nature is a gift to anyone who slows down enough to pay attention," Tim says. "This is the guiding principle of my art. I hope my pastels evoke a state of peace, stillness, and equanimity."

Although the Dutch had popularized scenes of village life, to high-brow Paris, street scenes and daily life took a long time to become sanctioned as a "fine art" theme. But eventually, like Ron Bendorff, artists couldn't resist capturing life as it is lived. Ron says, while staying in the artsy neighborhood of Montmartre in Paris, he and his wife came across a film crew set up at a small café, preparing for a shoot. "I really liked this scene, because it not only includes a very picturesque corner, but also has a group of interesting people engaged in a number of activities. Once intimidated by crowds, I now really enjoy the complexity and interest of such scenes."



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Beautifully classic is Laurie Mansur's oil *Hanging Out* (left). "I love the story worn shoes tell, and in this case the evening light in the window and reflecting on the wood floor of the dance studio places the

scene 'after rehearsal' when others would be having cocktails at a different kind of bar," she says.

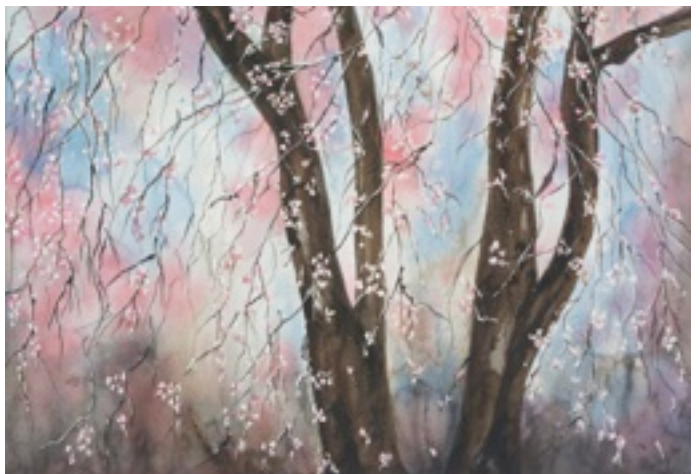
Water scenes have been ubiquitous in past shows. This time Joy Perrin's transparent watercolor, *Presidio Yachts Under the Golden Gate Bridge* (below) is the only representative of that theme. Joy says of painting plein air, "How bright and fresh and satisfying, (light bouncing off white paper and back up, through translucent pigment!) with glowing transparency achievable in no other medium."



Exquisite in the soft palette of their colors are the three pieces in the right-hand column, beginning with Kath Root's oil, *Spring Path* (top). The path does indeed lead us past the pastel tones of blossoming trees and toward a bend where we may begin to feel the chill of lingering fog.



Tom Pittard has deepened the focus of his work on the "intrinsic luminosity of space and place." Thus we see in *Sebastopol April Apple Orchard* (below) the vibrance of sunlight suffusing the scene.



With lovely delicacy in branch and flowers and an absolutely shimmering background, Sandy

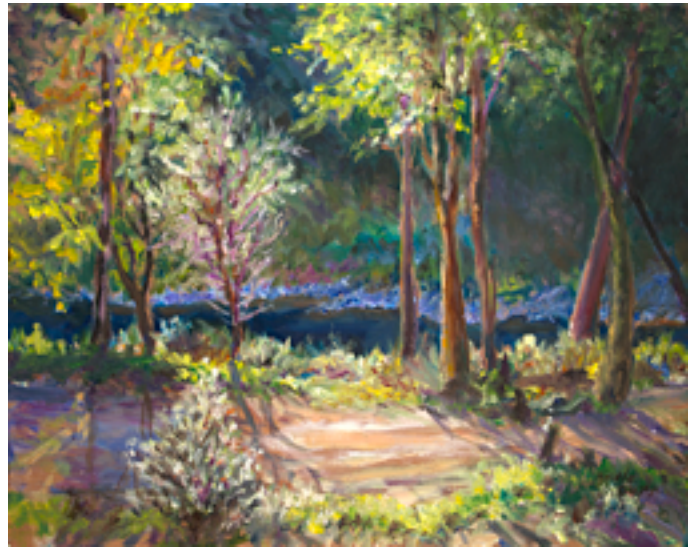
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Ferguson's watercolor, *Cherry Blossoms* (bottom prior page) easily sets us to daydreaming beneath the tree on a perfect Spring morning, with the soft hum of bees as complement. She says, "Being in the moment enhances the ability to pay closer attention to detail--and great art is a combination of observation, composition, attention to detail, passion, and free expression."

Through a masterful composition and unique treatment of spring, in *Delicate Balance* (bottom image) Kevin Brown places us amid the woods just where a single bare branch drops down into view, showing off its cluster of bright, spring-green leaves. Kevin says he retains "depth and luminosity by working in the 17th through 19th century traditions of painting in multiple translucent and transparent layers that almost seem to have an inner source of light."

Of *Hoopa Dreams* (top right), Nicole Ours says it "comes from our treasured fishing adventures on the Trinity & Klamath Rivers. Capturing the light through the trees and sharing a glimpse of the Klamath below the site for the Hoopa man's fishing cabins was such a joy. We hope his entrepreneurial vision is being rewarded! This painting revives our joy in the beauty of this place and his dreams."

In *Sonoma County Hill* (at right), a pastel work where the air seems to be colored with heat, Monica Schwalbenberg-Peña has rendered a nearby hill with the feel of Summer. She says she tried to paint "not from thoughts but from pure inspiration. I was traveling down all those little gullies as I worked. I was very pleased when I was done."



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If there is a subject as popular as Spring, it has to be Fall, a prevailing theme in the juried shows, as we see with Leona Akers's *Sonoma County Fall* (below). For Leona, art is a major element of life. She says, "I am always trying to capture that illusive moment of brilliance, so that hopefully others can feel what I felt and share with me the beauty that I saw. Art saves, and making art continues to save me every day."



October View from Matanzas, she recalls that the day was so hot she sat beneath a shady tree. "I was inspired to paint this scene because of the warm light on the trees in the distance with their beautiful shadows. The red barn in the distance caught my eye; I love the old barns of our area." Marjorie used both a pallet knife and brushes to render her multi-toned impression of Fall.



Maria Bales in *Walking Path* (above) evokes a day when newly-fallen leaves rustle beneath our feet. Maria comments, "I loved the play of light and shadow in this painting and the color of the Fall leaves. As your eye wanders up the path and through the painting, the Birch trees give a place to rest your eyes before you continue along the path again."

Sonoma County scenery is a major emphasis for Marjorie Murray-Cortez. Of her small oil,

With Thomas Creed's *Mendocino Autumn* (above), we see an exquisite paring of warm and cool colors, evoking visually the feel of the season. Although his work is referred to as realism, Thomas says, "Yet that style does not capture the most fundamental aspect of my work--to induce a deep sensory response from the viewer by translating the essence of a scene's mood onto canvas."



Kelly Sooter states her painting philosophy this way: "Through art I seek a melding of soul, motion, color & texture....helping stir the imagination to recall memories of landscapes or scenes from one's past or present--some beautiful, others stormy or mystical. I portray just enough image to start the journey--allowing the viewer to experience the emotion and feeling that's buried deep--ready to be found and remembered." *Voices of the Plateau* (above) is oil on gouache and texture.

demonstrate that all living creatures on Earth are unique and special in their own way," Fuhlin says.

Tje Koski has certainly captured the soft sweetness of this cow's trusting gaze in *Number 125* (below). "Number 125 lives on a ranch near my home up in Lake County. I frequently walk this country road with my dog Annie and pass these beautiful cows. Sometimes they come near the fence and watch me intently. I think they are very curious about Annie and me. One particular day this cow came over and stared at me, and I felt so connected to her. Her eyes seemed to express her very soul. I saw the ear tag 125 and with it I saw her life, her future. A moment later she ran away from me. And in that moment I was no longer the same."



The Chief (above) stares us down, asserting his authority. He is almost the alter ego of the sweet, little white goat Fuhlin Hsin had in the show last year. Fuhlin is close to animals, volunteering at shelters. "With my current animal paintings, my goal is to capture the individual personalities and to



This issue of the newsletter has given readers an overview of only half of the artists in the show. The others were presented in the July RAG, which featured digital art, abstracts, mixed media, and assembled works which helped give this show a decidedly innovative component. In its breadth, it is a wonderful show. Please do see it before Sept. 7th.