



■ Art Calendar

NOTE: Some of the following events may be postponed or cancelled due to the pandemic.

Second Fridays

(recovering after an all-clear signal — meanwhile, join virtual gatherings at this time)

BRAA Monthly Lunch and Art Spot

Bull and Bones, First and Main, Blacksburg • 11:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.

Join your fellow members for lunch, hear the featured speaker's Art Spot, and share news about the latest art happenings.

August (dates announced soon)

Design Theory and Composition Workshop

Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg • Times TBA

Danie Janov will teach this workshop to build artists' design and composition skills. More details coming soon, but you may contact Charlotte Chan at charlotteychan@gmail.com for immediate information.

August 15-16

62nd Annual Sidewalk Art Show

Downtown Roanoke • 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Come check out this perennial favorite in the heart of Roanoke's historic area where you'll find original paintings, prints, watercolors, etchings, mixed media, photography, fine craft, jewelry, and sculpture. This event has been rescheduled from June.

October 17-21

Keiko Tanabe Workshop

Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg • Times TBA

This BRAA-sponsored workshop will be taught by internationally-known watercolor artist, Keiko Tanabe. Visit ktanabefineart.com to view her work. More details to follow, but for immediate information, email Charlotte Chan at charlotteychan@gmail.com.

October 24-25

Botetourt Open Studios

Botetourt County • Saturday, 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sunday, 11 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Visit scenic Botetourt County in this self-guided driving tour of artists who will be offering their work and sharing their creativity in their unique studios.

For more information, visit <https://openstudiosbotetourt.com/>.

An artist's view of Morocco

by Vera Dickerson

In early September several friends and I booked a small group tour with Collette named "Colors of Morocco." That's a seductive title for those of us whose lives revolve around learning how to use the emotional properties of color relations.

Before the tour I read travel blogs and talked with people who had traveled there, learning that this country is an open constitutional monarchy, that the cities are fairly free of dress restrictions, and travel there is as safe as in our country. Moroccan food was said to be extremely good and travelers always told me the people are warm and friendly. Just before we left, Covid19 appeared in China, South Korea and Europe, but there was none in Morocco.

We arrived in Casablanca on March 6 and walked into a modern metropolis on the Atlantic with ancient quarters. Traffic and drivers were absolutely wild, stopping inches from the next vehicle, playing chicken at every intersection, daring people to cross the street at stop lights. The next day it was a relief to be on a bus and leave the city behind for quiet farm and orchard country going east to Rabat and Fez.

Peach trees were in bloom, vineyards turning green, olive orchards, alfalfa fields, open lands where sheep herds were guarded by two shepherds with each flock. Some had an ancient air while others rode ubiquitous motor bikes.

In Fez, we followed our guide into the medina's narrow streets to Riad Sheharazade for a two-night stay. The riad had been a home at one time and followed the traditional design of an open air atrium with fountain and pool, palm trees and flowers, and most all surfaces covered with

tiles, carved wood or decorative plaster panels.

Our guide, Tahmi, age 70, had been doing this work for 20 years, after a career operating a body building gym. This illustrates that strange mix of modern and old. He seemed to know every vendor in the miles of medina and carried a bag of wrapped candies which he tossed to children and merchants alike. They all told us he is a good man, and kids followed him hoping for a treat. Stalls are arranged by type of goods being sold: clothing, foods, sea foods, household goods, jewelry, hardware ... on and on. The alleyways twist, angle off, turn and are truly a maze.

It was a treat to compare that with a visit to a craft co-op where young people are being trained to throw and decorate pottery. Of course we were



photos by Vera Dickerson

An ornate restaurant in Casablanca with steps leading to the loo.



Todra Gorge, one of the world's most spectacular canyons

■ **Morocco** *continued from page 1*

then steered to a shop, but at least knew this was authentic and beautifully done.

On the fifth day out we departed Fez and turned south through ever more arid land toward the Sahara. After crossing the Atlas mountains, the road descended past a reservoir which serves much of the south, and the landscape became rocky, sandy vistas where only goats and their keepers wandered.

In the late afternoon our bus stopped at Merzouga and we climbed into a caravan of four white jeeps with drivers to take us across the sands on a 45-minute drive to our desert camp. The super moon rose, full and bright as the sun set in an amazing display in the clear, dry sky. We passed at least a dozen camps along the way, reaching our "Luxury Bivouac" at dark, and beheld five African musicians dressed all in white, welcoming us into a camp paved with oriental rugs and candle light. Not quite real!

In the desert we visited a small irrigated farm where the owner proudly displayed his crops of spices, herbs and date palms, did the obligatory camel ride out into the dunes and had photos made. The rocking motion of the gait explains one reason they are called ships of the desert. The camel behind me proceeded to scratch its head on my back and leg for the hour we rode. That shirt got bagged and dumped in the washer when I got home.



The trip included the obligatory camel ride among the dunes.

In Marrakesh, modern high rises took over, with wide boulevards, traffic and less restrictions in dress again the norm. Tours there were to the medina, Jardin Majorelle, and a center for abused women where we had a cooking lesson and ate our project for lunch. Blossom is lush and colors overwhelming. It will take a time to digest and translate what I experienced.

The food was delicious with a base of many cooked vegetables, beef, chicken or lamb. One could get "tagined out," but the tagine of steamed vegetables arranged over a meat is a staple of their diet and well cooked. Cities offered a menu of pizza, French foods, tacos (yes, tacos), Asian foods and Starbucks.

And it would be remiss not to talk about Covid19 which spread while we were in Morocco. Our Collette guide, Yassine, was on his phone a good part of the last day of the tour rescheduling flights for those in our group who had planned to fly home through Europe. He managed to get all rebooked, a feat I did not envy. And we were extremely thankful to have made the decision to fly Air Canada through Montreal, a smooth return in a strange and rather surreal journey on March 15. ■



Luxury Bivouac, a camp paved with oriental rugs and candlelight.

On the road again toward Marrakesh, a lunch stop also included a visit to a Berber museum which I found extremely interesting. Old wooden implements, written deeds, photos, clothing, pottery and maps helped to give me a better base of understanding. Moroccans come from many different backgrounds and are a mix of tribes and beliefs.

Downtown art store delivers

New River Art & Fiber, located at the corner of Main and Roanoke Streets in downtown Blacksburg, is working hard to make sure artists have the supplies they need during these unprecedented times.

Owner Jessica Jones is eager to help artists find the right tools or mediums to bring their visions to life. "I have been surprised by how easy it's been to help people shop over the phone. FaceTime and Google Duo have been especially invaluable tools these past several weeks," says Jones.

Customers who want to stay in-the-know about everything the store is doing to keep artists supplied and entertained can sign up for their newsletter on the contacts page of their website (<https://www.newriverartandfiber.com/>).

Currently orders may be called in or placed online with free local delivery, no-contact pick-up at the storefront, or USPS shipping. Business hours are 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., Monday through Friday. To place an order by phone, call 540-944-8221 during business hours. Online orders may be placed any time at <https://www.newriverartandfiber.com/>.

In-store shopping will resume after the governor's stay at home order has lifted, which is still currently in place through June 10. To prepare for that, they will be closed June 6-14 to take a little break and spend a few days deep-cleaning the store. When they reopen on June 15, masks will be required while shopping in the store. If someone doesn't have one, they will have them for sale.

Call Jessica for questions or email her at newriverartfiber@gmail.com. A high-quality art supply store is an essential ingredient of a vibrant arts community; let's support it!



photo provided by Jessica Jones



This watercolor by Nadine Allen features church steeples of Blacksburg.

The Nadine Allen Story

Nadine Allen of Blacksburg was a major force in the growth of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association created in 1950. She was a well-known artist whose many works included a series of watercolors depicting an assortment of churches in the area. Since her death in 2005, her daughter, Mary Woerner, has faithfully contributed funds in support of the Best in Show award at the New River Art Juried Biennial. She and her husband, Charles, are owners of the True Value Heavener Hardware store in Blacksburg.

Throughout the year, new and seasoned BRAA members are able to donate to the Nadine Allen Fund through the annual membership renewal form. All individual contributions are reserved for use only during the biennials. The New River Art Juried Biennial is coordinated by one of three area art associations: Blacksburg Regional Art Association, Fine Arts Center of the New River Valley in Pulaski and the Floyd Center for the Arts.

The 2020 biennial was held in The Moss Center at Virginia Tech. The Best in Show winner was Abby Ketcham of Blacksburg. The next biennial will be held in Pulaski in the Fine Arts Center. The BRAA membership application may be found at blacksburgart.org/joinus.

Call for Community Galleries Committee Co-Chair

Would you like to be involved in the planning and coordination of our community gallery schedule? If you are detail-oriented and enjoy the satisfaction of working a puzzle, this volunteer position is for you! For more information, contact Nancy Norton at npngm64@gmail.com.

Art during unusual times

by Gerri Young

On March 19, well into the throes of the coronavirus episode, I took part in the 30 Days of Drawing for Amy online Facebook event from Thailand by artist and teacher Amy D'Apice, with whom I had studied in 2019. A few weeks later, BRAA began a similar event for its members, but I could not support two at the same time, so I only posted a few to BRAA. It was a great learning experience for me. Not only did the daily painting take my mind off the state of the world, it challenged me to paint a subject I might not have painted otherwise. It was so interesting to see everyone's work and how different they all were. I started the project to just fill time and occupy my mind. I decided from the start to be disciplined about it so I used the same 6"x 6" journal, watercolor as my main medium, painting right after breakfast. I think that discipline helped make it fun. Once I read the day's theme, before breakfast, I quickly decided what to paint. The process challenged me but did not burden me; it taught me several new things as well. I am proud of and pleased with my

30-piece collection and will make it a separate journal on its own as a pleasant reminder of an unpleasant time. The piece on the right directly refers to the coronavirus. The theme word was "wheel" and I illustrated me cutting out face mask pieces.



■ New Member

A hearty welcome to new BRAA member **Jerri Nemiro**.

"And here in my isolation I can grow stronger. Poetry seems to come of itself, without effort, and I need only let myself dream a little while painting to suggest it.

~ Paul Gauguin

■ Still Showing

January 15 – July 15?

Due to the pandemic, art exhibitions scheduled for the first quarter of the year have been extended through the second quarter. The tentative plan is that exhibitions beginning mid-July will proceed as scheduled. Those who missed showing during the spring quarter will be given first priority on next year's schedule. For questions or more information, contact Nancy Norton at npngm64@gmail.com.

Lisa Acciai, Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Blacksburg

Marie Collier, The Artful Lawyer BRAA Gallery, Blacksburg

Alisa Colpitts, Glade Church, Blacksburg

Linda Correll, Main Street Inn, Blacksburg

Paula Golden, Blacksburg Transit

Maxine Lyons, Shaheen Law Firm, Blacksburg

David Pearce, The Artful Lawyer BRAA Gallery, Blacksburg

Joy Rosenthal, Pointe West Management, Blacksburg

Robi Sallee, First Bank & Trust, Christiansburg

Karen Sewell, Brown Insurance, Blacksburg

Lois Stephens, See Mark Optical, Blacksburg

Linda Weatherly, Zeppolis, Blacksburg

Norma Woodward, Long and Foster, Blacksburg

■ Kudos

The First Place Sports News Photo in the 2019 Virginia Press Association awards honoring outstanding news reporting was presented to BRAA member **Matt Gentry**. Congratulations, Matt!

Larry Bechtel, **Paula Golden** and **Diane Relf** donated time and resources to create art kits for local adults for the Blacksburg Museum & Cultural Foundation. The kits were beginner friendly and came with professional, easy to follow instructions. Recipients could choose from sewing, clay sculpting, moss vase garden/dried flower note cards or pencil drawing and shading.

■ Exhibit and other opportunities

■ *Simply Elemental* — Call for Artists

Beginning July 1 • Online via Hahn Horticulture Garden, Virginia Tech

The Simply Elemental exhibit has provided an outdoor art experience for the public in the New River Valley for the past six years in a beautiful garden setting. Many gardeners and other creative spirits are using this time of quarantine to focus on their work. You are invited to share your creativity via the Hahn Horticulture Garden webpage as they offer the annual outdoor sculpture exhibition online this year.

Suggested submissions include —

- Photographs of your art or your garden and its art
- Poetry, stories, and essays about the Hahn Garden, your garden, or nature in general
- Videos of your art process, gardening tips, topical musical, dance or other performance

The application deadline for participation in this year's event is **June 15**. For more information, visit Hahn Horticulture Garden at <https://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/index.html> or email vtgarden@vt.edu.

■ *62nd Annual Sidewalk Art Show* **August 15–16, 2020 • Downtown Roanoke** **• 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.**

From paintings to sculptures, from photography to jewelry, the Taubman Museum of Art is pleased to present one of Virginia's oldest and most anticipated outdoor art shows. Infusing downtown with energy, creativity, and excitement, the Sidewalk Art Show is a premier destination for fine art shopping and annually attracts thousands of art



enthusiasts to the heart of Roanoke's historic district — just steps away from the Blue Ridge Parkway. Entry deadline is **May 26**. For more information, visit the "happenings" tab at <https://www.taubmanmuseum.org>. For questions, contact Libba Cooper at lcooper@taubmanmuseum.org or 540.204.4120.

■ *C.O.D. — Curator Off Duty* **January 2022 • Olin Hall Galleries,** **Roanoke College, Salem**

This exhibition is open to all Virginia artists. The only curatorial criteria is that each submission must fit within one cubic foot. The exhibition aims to unite the Virginia visual arts community through diversity and inclusion. Olin Hall Galleries will host material studies and process oriented workshops until the opening of the exhibition in January 2022. At the closing of the exhibition, participating artists will have the option to sell their work to support a local cause. Artwork is now being accepted and may be dropped off any time during regular gallery hours. Each artist is invited to submit three individual works of art. Any medium is allowed and must arrive ready to hang or install. For further information, visit www.roanoke.edu/curatoroffduty.

Revised bylaws available

After several months of discussions and drafts, the updated BRAA member-approved bylaws are now posted at <https://www.blacksburgart.org/bylaws>. Thanks to **Linda Correll** for leading this sometimes arduous process. The bylaws were last revised in 2010.

NRV Garden Tour cancelled

Teri Hoover reports that the much anticipated 25th Annual New River Valley Garden Tour scheduled for July 11 has been cancelled. Unfortunately, the loss of this annual fundraiser will negatively impact the Montgomery County libraries. There is a small chance that the artists who signed up to paint the gardens will still be given this opportunity! Stay tuned, artists!

The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Alison Dreams" (left, watercolor, 20x16") by Linda Weatherly. This and more of her work is on display at Zeppoli's until mid-July.



Making BRAA Work —

Charlotte Chan, president
Alisa Colpitts, vice president
Jeanette Bowker, treasurer
Sue Hossack, secretary
Rafael Bedia, membership
Gerri Young, past president
Jeanette Bowker and **Nancy Norton**, gallery committee
Teri Hoover marketing chair
Gerri Young, plein air chair
Charlotte Chan, workshop chair
Robi Sallee, luncheon/hospitality chair, theme show chair
Lois Stephens, newsletter chair
Gerri Young, Teri Hoover, Pat Bevan, newsletter editorial board
Sue Hossack, web administrator
Linda Correll, bylaws review chair
Betty Moore, high school workshops chair



<http://www.blacksburgart.org/>



www.facebook.com/BlacksburgArt

Send Facebook news postings to:
Gerri Young at younggerri@gmail.com
 or **Teri Hoover**
 at crystalirisphotos@gmail.com

Twitter @BlacksburgArt1
 Instagram: blacksburgartassn

Send news of receptions, exhibits, awards, photos, comments, or newsletter suggestions to **Lois Stephens** (loisstevens56@gmail.com) by the 15th of each month or July 1 for June/July and Dec. 1 for Nov./Dec. issues.