

■ Upcoming

April 23 and May 7

Figure Drawing

The Artful Lawyer, Blacksburg • 6–8 p.m.

The model, easels and drawing boards are provided and the cost is \$10. Reserve your spot online by the Friday before each session at <http://artfullawyergallery.org/events>.

April 26, May 23 and June 3

Mosaic Workshops with Nikki Pynn

The Artful Place, A Fine Art Studio, 106

Faculty Street, Blacksburg • 6:30–8:30 p.m., 2–4 p.m. on June 3

Don't miss one of these three opportunities to design and create mosaics. The stained glass will be prepared for safe handling and finished pieces will go home ready to hang. The fee of \$25 supports local art initiatives. For more information, visit <http://artfullawyergallery.org/events>

April 27

Reception, Research in the Abstract

Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine, Roanoke • 5:30-7:30 p.m.

This exhibit features the results of collaborations between medical researchers and artists. Works will be on display through July.

May 10

Whet Your Palette Reception

The Artful Place, A Fine Art Studio, 106

Faculty Street, Blacksburg • 5:30–8:30 p.m.

This "Gardener's Haven" exhibit features the art of Charles Bruce, Caleb Flood, Andrew Hill, Ava Howard, Rita Montrosse, Isaac Preston, Ann Shawhan, Annie Waldrop, and George Wills. For more information, visit <http://artfullawyergallery.org/events>.

May 11

Paint Party

The Artful Place, A Fine Art Studio, 106

Faculty Street, Blacksburg • 7–9:30 p.m.

The theme for this party is "Desert Cactus." Join in the fun — \$30 covers all supplies. Register at <http://artfullawyergallery.org/events>.

May 12 and June 9

BRAA Monthly Lunch and Art Spot

Lucie Monroe's (May), Golden Corral (June), Christiansburg • 11:30 a.m.

Join your fellow members for lunch and

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Clarity in vision —

Seeing the work in your mind before you make it

By James Glass

I love taking spontaneous, candid pictures of people in their everyday lives — it's an important part of my work. I equally love doing conceptual pictures that I stage using models, props and artificial lighting. These types of pictures require a lot more from me though, and they're not possible to make without having a clear vision of what I want the picture to look like long before I push the shutter button. Often these conceptual works involve allegory to illustrate a larger idea, so this means I must have a very clear understanding of both the picture and the message I want to convey before I even pick up my camera.

To make a staged picture the process usually plays out like this: 1) I have an idea, 2) I refine that idea in my mind so it's clear, 3) I figure out how to execute the technical aspects (lighting exposure, and composition), 4) I scout locations, and finally, 5) I find models and a crew to help me realize my vision. Often, these pictures are further complicated by 1) being shot outdoors (which means navigating the weather), 2) complex lighting (which means bringing electricity since there are no outlets in the woods), and 3) finding just the right models and helpers. It isn't enough to just find any models—they have to be perfect for the picture, for example, it took seven people (four models and three crew members) to get this picture:



James Glass Photography

This picture was adequately complicated that I needed to know what I was doing before I took seven people to an abandoned shack in the woods. I would have wasted the time of all these good folks, which would have been especially tragic since they were willing to show up at 11 p.m., take their clothes off, and wander around an abandoned shack more often used for angst ridden teen sex and drug use than art

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■ Upcoming *continued from page 1*

hear about the latest art happenings. The May Art Spot will be presented by Leia Wood of The Floyd Center for the Arts. In June, Jerry Niles will be talking about art opportunities with Virginia Tech's Lifelong Learning Institute.

May 20

Plein Air Opportunity at Cruise In Downtown Christiansburg • 4-7 p.m.

Plein air artists are invited to paint at the annual Cruisin' in Downtown Christiansburg event. For more information, contact Ruth Lefko at rlefk02@gmail.com.

June 3-4

Sidewalk Art Show

Downtown Roanoke

This annual show infuses downtown Roanoke with energy, excitement, and creativity. Don't miss the great selection of original paintings, prints, watercolors, etchings, mixed media, photography, fine craft, and sculpture from more than 140 artists.

June 7

Art Walk

Downtown Blacksburg • 5-7 p.m.

Rain or shine, stroll through an evening of art in downtown Blacksburg. A variety of businesses will participate in this free art walk. To get started, make the Community Arts Information Office on College Avenue your first stop.

June 17

Reception, New River Art Biennial Juried Exhibition

Floyd Center for the Arts • 5-7 p.m.

This reception will celebrate works in this biennial exhibition, which is a joint effort of the Floyd Center for the Arts, Pulaski's Fine Arts Center for the New River Valley, and BRAA. The art will be on display until August 5.

July 5-7

Obsessive Compulsive Collage with Vera Dickerson

Christiansburg Presbyterian Church, 107 W. Main Street • 9:30-4 p.m.

This workshop will be three days of joyous color and pattern art. Participants will produce collage papers using stencils and stamps and then refine their color sense by selecting those which describe the chosen images. The fee is \$175; supply list will be provided. Contact Sue Farrar at Montgomery Museum at 540-382-5644 for more information.

July 15

Art at the Market

Blacksburg Farmers Market • 9 a.m.-2 p.m.

This juried exposition and celebration of the town's vibrant arts community is held in conjunction with the annual breakfast at the farmers market, which showcases local food and live music.

Clarity in vision *continued from page 1*

photography. I had to have absolute clarity in my vision. I had to convey that vision to the models and the crew. I had to see the picture in my mind before I could ever hope to make it real. *Dissident, Rising* is about conformity bias and majority argument, and I needed to show that one person was apart from (and leaving) a group.

Without a clarity of vision, planning is simply impossible. For *Dissident, Rising*, I took the extra step of doing a test shoot the night before the actual shoot. A test shoot allows me to be far more in control when I later direct the actual shoot. I'm able to mark the spots for the camera and models ahead of time; I'm able to figure out exposure and white balance, and I can get a handle on setting up the lighting. It had taken two months to get all seven people needed for this picture lined up on the right day, so I couldn't screw up—a test shoot was an absolute requirement in making my vision a reality. Here's an example from the test shoot (using the principal model and one crew member for lighting).



James Glass Photography

With the picture from the test shoot, I had the first tangible evidence of my vision. I had taken my abstract idea to a concrete reality, and I could compare the picture in my mind to the picture in real life to see if they matched. In this case, they did, so I felt good heading into the actual shoot.

This is all fine, but of course, I still fail. I fail spectacularly. All the time. I fail to get the picture to match my vision. I fail to get the right models. I screw up the location. I can (and do) screw up, often, in a myriad of ways. Sometimes those failures become great pictures regardless, and sometimes it's just a failure in which I learn how NOT to do something. My point is, and I can't stress this enough, that the chance of failure is radically reduced if I have a clear vision before I begin the work. I realize that others might work differently, but this is how I go about it. I find that having a clear vision before I pick up my camera is extremely helpful in making good pictures.

But, let's put this to the test! I have a shoot planned for this spring — let me tell you about it, in detail, so that I can share how this process works, and so that you, gentle reader, can see if my vision can be made into a reality. I'll let you be the judge if I had adequate clarity in vision to get the picture I wanted.

The working title for this upcoming picture is "We Carry Our Own Death" and it will show a young woman with dark hair (nude) carrying a deer skull in the forest during spring time. The goal is to show the biological functions of living through the allegorical representations of spring (new life), the woman (life) and the skull (death). The woman will carry the skull in her right hand and she will be shot from behind and left of center in the frame (3:2 ratio). I have an alternative idea to shoot this with a second woman (blonde hair and faired skinned) wearing a white flowing dress while walking just ahead of her and to her right. This woman would represent human fellowship and how we needn't carry our burdens, including our own mortality, alone. I will probably shoot both versions of this picture and then compare which I like better. I have models lined up for this shoot. I have the deer skull. I'm scouting locations now and should have one soon. I'll share the result, either through the newsletter, or by bringing a print to a future luncheon. Wish me luck! ■

James Glass' photography was recently displayed at Roanoke College's Olin Gallery. His talk from that exhibit can be viewed on [YouTube](#).

■ Kudos

Pat Bevan's pastel painting "Blackberry Autumn" (right) has been selected By North Light Books for inclusion in a new book. She and some 100 other artists' work will be featured in "Art Journey Abstract Painting" which will be available in late April.



"Having a Ball" by **Jennifer Carpenter** has been accepted into the VMRC Juried Art Exhibition in Harrisonburg, Virginia. Of the 559 works submitted by 205 artists from 30 states, 100 were accepted.

Members **Jeannie Fender** and **Teresa Regil** are sharing the spotlight at Glencoe Mansion and Gallery in Radford, with photographers Linda Waggaman and Joyce Sims. "Four Women; Four Visions" will be displayed through the end of May.



Linda Moll

Group painting to benefit Micah's Closet

BRAA recently accepted an invitation from the Blacksburg Newcomers' Club to participate in a joint project to benefit a local non-profit. **Gerri Young** drew a scene representing the diverse population in the New River Valley and she and **Ruth Lefko** helped the group work on the piece at a painting session on April 11. Gerri will complete the painting and it will be auctioned at the club's May 23 social event. The proceeds will go to Micah's Closet, which distributes clothing to children in need at local schools.

Jenny Feghali (left) from the Blacksburg Newcomers' Club poses with Gerri Young and the in-progress painting that will be auctioned at a May 23 event.



Riley Chan

Participants were hard at work during the February Abstract Watermedia Workshop at the Hahn Pavilion. The three-day class was taught by Rita Montrosse.

■ Now Showing

April 15 – July 15

(except where indicated otherwise)

Lisa Acciai, Zeppoli's wine room, Blacksburg

Raf Bedia, Pointe West Management, Blacksburg

Pat Bevan, Zeppoli's dining room, Blacksburg

Patricia Bolton, The Farmhouse, Christiansburg (thru June)

Jennifer Carpenter, River City Grill, Radford (thru April)

Charlotte Chan, Blacksburg Transit

Marie Collier, Haga Law, Christiansburg (thru June)

Judy Crowgey, The Farmhouse, Christiansburg (thru June)

Carole Davis, Community Arts Information Office (CAIO), Blacksburg (thru April)

Susan Hensley, See Mark Optical, Blacksburg

Teri Hoover, Virginia Tech Women's Center

Ava Howard, Brown Insurance, Blacksburg

Sidra Kaluska, Hahn Garden Pavilion, Virginia Tech (thru April)

Ruth Lefko, Christiansburg Library (thru June)

Sally Mook, First Bank and Trust, Christiansburg

Betty Moore, Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Blacksburg

Diane Relf, VTLS, Blacksburg

Suzanne Davis Ross, Mill Mountain Coffee and Tea, Blacksburg

Karen Sewell, Main Street Inn, Blacksburg

Linda Weatherly Shroyer, Rack Space, Blacksburg

Jane Thorp, Route 8 Donuts, Christiansburg

Nancy Trump, New River Bank, Christiansburg

"It is better to begin in the evening than not at all. ~ English Proverb

■ Exhibits and other opportunities

New River Art 2017 Biennial Juried Exhibition

June 9 – August 5
Floyd Center for the Arts

Visual media artists within 150 miles of Floyd are invited to submit artwork for this 14th biennial exhibition. The exhibit rotates every two years between the Floyd Center for the Arts, the Fine Arts Center for the New River Valley in Pulaski, and the Blacksburg Regional Art Association. Top cash prize is \$500 and other cash prizes and honorable mentions will be awarded. Artwork will be selected by Juror Amy Shawley of Virginia. The deadline is **April 25** and the entry fee is \$40. For more information visit floydartcenter.org.

Artist-in-Residence Program at Carilion Clinic

The Dr. Robert L.A. Keeley Healing Arts Program at Carilion Clinic is looking for artists who enjoy sharing their work with others to provide bedside activities for patients, demonstrations in public spaces and workshops for staff. Visual, performing and literary artists are encouraged to apply. A stipend will be provided as well as orientation and supplies. Time commitment is 8 hours weekly, scheduled during weekdays, over a 9-month period.

For more information, contact the Carilion Clinic Foundation at healingarts@carilionclinic.org. Applications received by **April 30** will be considered for a current opportunity at the Carilion New River Valley Medical Center.

Simply Elemental 2017

August 1 – September 30
Hahn Horticulture Garden, Virginia Tech

The theme of this year's outdoor installation is Garden Variety. The proposal should include a .jpg file of the planned work and possible location, approximate measurements and any special needs. Include with the proposal a short bio with an image of the artist(s) and contact information. Because this is an exhibit of relatively short duration, materials used in the pieces can be non-permanent but need to hold up to the elements for eight weeks. As the Hahn Garden is open

to the public at all times, the garden cannot guarantee security for the works on display. The entry deadline has been extended to **May 15** and submissions should be sent to artinthegarden@vt.edu.

Virginia Watercolor Society

October 14 – January 7
**Museum of the Shenandoah Valley,
Winchester, Va.**

The 38th annual juried exhibition of the Virginia Watercolor Society is now open for entries. The deadline is **June 1** and VWS membership is required. Go to www.virginiawatercolorssociety.org for full information, schedule and application.

Art at the Market

July 15
Blacksburg Farmers Market

Art, music, and breakfast at the farmers market are the highlights of the day. The entry deadline for displaying your art is **July 1** or until spaces fill. For more information and application, email events@downtownblacksburg.com.

Montgomery Museum Events **300 Pepper St., Christiansburg**

Please contact Sue Farrar at 540-382-5644 if you are interested in being a part of any of the following activities.

May 20 — Cruisin' Downtown Christiansburg Classic Car Show. Artists are invited to paint en plein air.

June 17 — Mountains of Music on Main, Downtown Christiansburg. Vendor and demonstration opportunities for artists. \$25 booth fee.

August 26 — Heritage Day, Christiansburg. Plein air painting, demonstrations, and children's activities.



The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Roads on the Ridge" (right, acrylic, 20 x 20") by Ava Howard. This and more of her work can be viewed at Brown Insurance in Blacksburg until July 15.



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