

■ Art Calendar

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

September 23, 24, 25

Opening Reception, *More Leaves of the Tree*

Radford University Art Museum on Tyler, 214 Tyler Avenue, Radford • 4–6 p.m.

This all-media exhibit features works made of leaves, depicting leaves, referring to leaves, or metaphorically about leaves. Visitor registration is required.

October 9, November 13

BRAA Monthly Lunch

Locations TBD • 11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Mark your calendar to join fellow members (at a social distance). Catch up on the latest news and learn something new from an art spot speaker.

October 17–21

Keiko Tanabe Workshop

Moose Lodge, 115 Farmview Rd. NW, Christiansburg

This BRAA-sponsored workshop will be taught by internationally-known watercolor artist, Keiko Tanabe. It is designed for those who would like to make a watercolor painting that is strong in composition and full of light and atmosphere. Cost is \$475 for members and \$525 for non-members. See more information elsewhere in this newsletter and register at www.blacksburgart.org/tanabe.

October 24–25

Botetourt Open Studios

Botetourt County • Sat., 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. and Sun., 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/>.

November 12–16

51st Annual YMCA Crafts Fair Online Event

This annual event is making pandemic adjustments this year. Stay tuned for more information or visit www.vtymca.org.

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celebrating
70
BRAA

Delving into BRAA history – Part 2

by Gerri Young

A heavy green metal file cabinet and a bunch of cardboard file boxes gave up their innards to the curiosity of the researching team of myself and Lois Stephens. For many years, not all of them, rather copious records were kept. The vast majority of

what we have seen so far is either hand written or typed by typewriter. All sorts of different papers are in the mix. Little handwritten notes ripped out of spiral bindings from the '80's paint a picture of groups of BRAA officers talking on the fly or in quick meetings and someone jotting down the suggestions made.

Full-sized sheets of nice paper were likely handwritten, hand edited, scratched out, inserted into at home and again later in meetings. Some look as though they were edited by several different people. Perhaps that paper was later smoothed, typed and shared with the whole board or membership. The name Robert Miller appears many times in our research thus far. In this photo he is listed as a nominee for treasurer in the 1987-88 timeframe. Today he supports BRAA by providing the services of his gallery and frame shop, located a short walk away from our Artful Lawyer location, to all who may need them and attends big BRAA exhibitions or individual artist openings around town.

The little blue paper in this photo is card-stock about 4x5" which was produced in quantity, addressed by hand on the back-side and stamped for mailing to members and interested parties. This one informs the readers of a member art exhibit somewhere on South Main Street. We have found many of these as testament to just how active the organization was in years past. Today, we think BRAA does a lot of events, but it is obvious our predecessors would consider us slackers! ■



Online marketplaces: Where to sell your art?

by Andrea Brunais

Any artist with a cache of stacked-up or otherwise stored paintings has probably thought about selling online. But with a plethora of options to choose from, which route would work best for you?

A recent informal poll of artists on the popular Facebook artists' group Monet Café elicited some thoughts and experiences you may find instructive. Interestingly, even though about a dozen people offered feedback, none mentioned the megalithic sites Saatchi or Amazon Art. The bottom line with everyone's choices seems to be that artists must hustle to promote themselves regardless of the online vendor they choose.

If you've ever searched for images, you've probably encountered search results from

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November 20

Artists Sunday

Online Event, #ShopArt

Consider shopping with local artists and galleries for your unique gifts this year. Artists and arts organizations may sign up online as a supporter and receive toolkits this September. For more information, visit www.artistssunday.com.



Watercolor by Keiko Tanabe

Register today for Keiko Tanabe workshop

As many of us are missing our pre-pandemic travels to art workshops, there is a wonderful opportunity coming our way soon. Keiko Tanabe is a sought-after workshop instructor and the author of nine art books. Since 2011, she has been invited to and successfully completed more than 230 workshops and numerous live demonstrations around the world.

This Oct. 17–21 workshop is designed for those who would like to make a watercolor painting that is strong in composition and full of light and atmosphere. There will be demonstrations, plenty of one-on-one guidance and opportunities for questions each day.

Sessions are held from 9 a.m. – 4 p.m. at the Moose Lodge in Christiansburg. The fee for BRAA members is \$475. For more information and registration, visit www.blacksburgart.org/tanabe.

Our BRAA Purpose

- To promote the understanding and appreciation of, and participation in, the visual arts.
- To enhance the cultural life of its members and other residents of Blacksburg and the New River Valley Region and beyond.

Members explore the possibilities of paper



photos by Gerni Young

August 29 was a fun day of making collage papers from deli paper, paint, stamps, and stencils. The eight attendees went home with a stash of papers to use in future art creations.

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FineArtAmerica.com. A few artists mentioned using this service, which promises customers “ten million images for sale” and “thousands of artists being added each week.” One artist reported: “Unfortunately, I haven’t sold any prints or originals. At least they are catalogued. I decided to use FFA because a friend of mine was using them and she seems to sell a lot of prints. Frankly, I was disappointed at first that I made very little on a print. However you can mark up the print to whatever you want.”

A second artist confirms, “You have to market your own work in order to get any reasonable sales there. Without marketing I make \$100 to \$200 per year on selling photo prints.”

A third artist uses both a dedicated art Facebook page and a Fine Art America site. “Sometimes I sell a print,” she said. “I had an Artspace webpage, which was subscription. It looked really nice and was easy to do, but the only traffic I got was from scammers.”

A couple of artists swear by creating their own websites via Squarespace. Squarespace is the top choice “for their ease of use, and their customer support is fantastic,” as one artist put it. She says she bought her domain name from them at a cost of \$20 per year, and she pays \$30 a month to maintain the site on their servers. She says it’s easy to set up and customize a site.

Good old Instagram is a popular option, too. One artist has good luck, whenever she posts a work for sale, by including its dimension and price, also specifying whether prints are available. She usually gets a DM asking for more information, which can lead to purchase. A second artist listed Instagram as part of her tripartite approach relying on Facebook and an email list.

A less well-known option, Foliotwist, earned rave reviews from artist Iris Mack Dayoub, who rates the site “extremely helpful, easy, simple. I really enjoyed working with them to set up my site.” She had been using Fine Art America “but found it easier and more profitable to print and sell my own.”

■ Kudos

BRAA member **Donald Sunshine** received the Best In Show award and a future solo exhibit as well as a generous monetary prize for his "Body Of Work," three pieces selected (see below), for the 8th Annual Bower Center For The Arts National Exhibit. Of 224 works submitted nationally, his were three of 74 juror selected. **Joanna Sunshine** also had her work selected for this exhibit.



Donald Sunshine

H'arts on Main seeks artists' donations

The Montgomery Museum of Art and History is asking artists to consider donating art works for their H'arts on Main event. H'arts on Main will take place February 12 and 13, 2021. Last year the silent auction raised \$1300 that was used for operational expenses as well as a project for students. Operating money is very important as the museum had to cancel all fundraisers due to Covid 19. So far staff has not had to be furloughed. Application forms to participate in the event and more information can be found at <https://montgomerymuseum.org/events/harts-on-main>.

RSVP soliciting art for silent auction

Like other organizations, the Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP) has had their fundraising efforts hampered by the pandemic. In order to provide programs for senior citizens and veterans as well as scholarships for high school students, they are planning a silent auction on November 16–19. They are reaching out to local artists for donations for the event. If interested, please contact Tonia Winn at winntd@montgomerycountyva.gov.

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A couple of artists mentioned Daily Paintworks, which is the online sales site of choice for several prominent artists with YouTube and Patreon followings. One of the Monet Café artists acknowledged: "I've only sold three paintings, and two were to friends." The site was founded by artist Carol Marine and her husband, David, who built and programs the site.

Here's a brief look at four online selling options:

Artfinder: Artists must apply to sell their original art, which is screened for quality, and show evidence of an online presence elsewhere. UK-based Artfinder claims a global audience of 600,000. The current waiting time to see if your application is approved is six to eight weeks. Artfinder takes a 33% to 40% commission, though operating one's shop is free. In addition to original art, you may offer limited edition prints. The artist fulfills the orders, including producing and delivering any prints.

Daily Paintworks: Your store costs \$12.95 a month and offers PayPal checkout plus the ability to participate in auctions. You can link to your eBay or Etsy page. The niche is original fine art, but you can also post prints for sale within your gallery. There are no sales commissions except 3% for auctions. One of their testimonials reads: "I can post all my work, even paintings I have in physical galleries, and track all sales. At the end of the year, taxes are a breeze with the reports you can print out."

Fine Art America: Here's what it tells artists: "With just a few clicks, you can open an account, upload your images, select the products that you want to sell, set your prices, and begin selling your art to the millions of buyers all over the world." You add your own markup to the FAA base price of a product, while FAA handles the printing (including on

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■ Now showing

July 15 – October 15

Patricia Bolton, See Mark Optical, Blacksburg

Marie Collier, Art Pannonia, Blacksburg (thru November)

Paula Golden, Brown Insurance, Blacksburg

Maxine Lyons, Long and Foster, Blacksburg

Betty Moore, Zeppolis, Blacksburg, and Montgomery Museum, Christiansburg (thru Oct.)

David Pearce, Bluefield College Art Gallery, Lansdell Hall, Bluefield (until Dec. 4)

Diane Relf, Blacksburg Transit

Diane Gillis-Robinson, Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Blacksburg

Karen Sewell, Main Street Inn, Blacksburg

Linda Shroyer, Shaheen Law Firm, Blacksburg

Walter Shroyer, Pointe West Management, Blacksburg

Samarth Swarup, First Bank & Trust, Christiansburg



Betty Moore's "Down by the River" (watercolor)

■ New Members

A hearty welcome to new BRAA members **Mary Lekoshere, Robin Poteet, Sharon Rainey, Beth Rodgers, Christy Smith, Krista Westman, and Tracy Wills.**

"Trust the wait. Embrace the uncertainty. Enjoy the beauty of becoming. When nothing is certain, anything is possible."

~ Mandy Hale

■ Exhibit and other opportunities

■ **Smithfield Artist Showcase** September 27, 2020 • Historic Smithfield Pavilion, Blacksburg

Historic Smithfield is offering local artists the opportunity to display and sell their work under their covered pavilion and other areas on site. Participating artists may keep 100% of their sales. Smithfield will charge visitors a \$5 admission fee. Email Kenna Jewell at kjewell@historicsmithfield.org or call 540-231-3947 for more information.

■ **BRAA Member Show** October 1, 2020 • Moose Lodge, 115 Farmview Rd. NW, Christiansburg

All BRAA members are invited to participate in a show at the Moose Lodge (a non-smoking venue). The Chamber of Commerce is having a meeting at the facility the first week in October and this and other groups coming to their facility for business will offer good exposure for artists. Both large and small works can be accommodated. The delivery date for art is the week of **September 28**. If you are interested in participating in this opportunity, please email Alisa Colpitts at vp@blacksburgart.org as soon as possible with the type of art and size/s. For questions, email or call Alisa at 540-392-9888.

■ **51st Annual YMCA Craft Fair** November 12–16 (virtual)

This year's virtual craft fair will be hosted by Eventeny, a company that will provide vendors with as much technical assistance, tips and advice needed to ensure success. The "booth" fee is \$85 and includes unlimited technical support. The event site will be open from November 10 through December 31. Sellers receive their own urls. Once the unique site is set up, merchandise may be sold directly from the url with the ability to join other craft shows found on the platform. There is a 5% transaction fee. A Stripe account will be needed to handle payments through Eventeny and there is a 3% credit card transaction fee. To sign up, visit www.eventeny.com/events/vendor?id=1285. For questions, contact Lauren Blakemore at engagement@vtymca.org or 540-961-9622.

■ **Montgomery Museum Holiday Market**

The Montgomery Museum is offering a Christmas Market and is looking for new items of all kinds, but especially relative to

The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Happy in the Holler" (right, acrylic on canvas panel, 16x20") by Diane Gillis-Robinson. This and more of her work is on display at Blue Ridge Cancer Care in Blacksburg until mid-October.

Christmas! The market officially opens on Friday, **November 20**, so items must be in the shop by the **November 16**. If interested in participating, please contact Sue Farrar at 540-382-5644.

■ **We Are Art** Roanoke Arts Commission

The Roanoke Arts Commission invites artists and performers to share images of their creations and they will help promote the work by sharing with others via Facebook and Instagram. If interested, email douglas.jackson@roanokeva.gov with high resolution images of your work. Include your name, a sentence or two describing the work or your process, and your medium. Like them on Facebook and Instagram (@artinroanoke #artinroanoke #weareart) to see what others are doing.

■ **online** *continued from page 3*

canvas), framing and shipping. Customers get a 30-day money-back guarantee.

Foliotwist: For \$59, the team (artists, designers and programmers) registers your domain name and builds your website. The monthly hosting cost is \$19. A "buy now" button can link to your Paypal account. The site touts its ease of use, personal response to your questions, and "multiple unique galleries" that allow you to organize your artwork by theme or subject matter. If you pay for the full year in a lump sum – \$228 – they'll do the web setup free.

If you are still up in the air about selling online and want to research even more possibilities, here's a My Modern Met article with the lowdown on 17 websites: mymodernmet.com/how-to-sell-art-online/.

Andrea Brunais is an artist living in Bluefield, West Virginia, and the author of the nonfiction tale *Hillbilly Drug Baby: The Story* and the novel *Mercedes Wore Black*.



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Lois Stephens, Gerri Young, Teri Hoover, Pat Bevan, newsletter editorial board