

■ Upcoming

January 12

Sally Mook Reception

Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center, Christiansburg • 5 – 7 p.m.

This reception for Sally Mook celebrates her mixed media fantasy paintings.

January 22

Gerri Young Reception

Holtzman Alumni Center Gallery, Virginia Tech Campus • 5 – 6:30 p.m.

Join our president for a solo show of her mixed media work.

January 24–25

Vera Dickerson Workshop

Hahn Horticulture Garden Pavilion, Virginia Tech Campus

Artist Vera Dickerson, founding member of the Studio School and renowned teacher, will be leading this BRAA-sponsored water media workshop focused on black gesso and acrylics. For more info and registration, visit <http://braaarts.wix.com/blacksburgart#>.

January 25

Exhibit Reception, Glade Church Gallery

1600 Glade Road, Blacksburg • 2:30–4 p.m.

The Passages of Time is the theme for this exhibit. Work is not limited to religious art and all area artists are welcomed to participate.

January 28

Whet Your Palette Reception for Art Through the Eras Exhibit

The Artful Lawyer, A Fine Gallery Inc., Blacksburg • 5:30–8:30 p.m.

Come view artists' interpretations of old masters' styles – romanticism, surrealism, cubism, and much more.

February 13

BRAA Monthly Lunch

Famous Anthony's, Blacksburg • 11:30 a.m.

Come join fellow members for lunch, information sharing, and an art spot presentation.

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Seeing the big picture

By Gwen Douglas • Photos by Teri Hoover

Sally Mook can see things — imaginative scenes, animals and fish and birds — in the textures she creates on her canvases, as the first step in producing many of her unusual paintings.

The Blacksburg resident will share some of her visions in an exhibit titled, "More Renderings" at the Montgomery Museum and Lewis Miller Regional Art Center in Christiansburg, opening with an artist's reception on January 12 from 5 to 7 p.m. The museum is located at 300 Pepper Street, and Sally's mixed media works will be on display through February.

Sally's fantasy paintings spark our imaginations, and we wonder if she's telling a story, or remembering a dream. She showed me some of her processes recently, and I began to understand why we see creatures and costumed figures in her compositions. Separately, the subjects may seem oddly juxtaposed, but when seen as a joyful arrangement of vivid colors and patterns, her art springs to life, inviting us to create the story with her. She described how she manipulates various media on a surface, creating abstract textures. When it's dry, she begins to see with her artist-eye, tapping memories from a happy childhood with her sister, and from her travels, to find imagery in the textures that amuse her. Sally admitted she does not start with a plan in mind — the paintings just "suggest themselves."

She will also display some new techniques, including colorful landscapes and portraits from old family photographs. In her words, "Some paintings are started with texturing, others with random bright colors that are covered with a transparent black, which is then wiped back in some areas to reveal the imagery. There will be

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Sally Mook's studio reflects the bright colors that can be found in her mixed media work.

Upcoming *continued from page 1*

February 14

Reception, Annual New Works Exhibition

Jacksonville Center for the Arts, Floyd • 4-6 p.m.

This yearly exhibit of new works is a continuing reflection of the artistic growth in the region.

March 17, 19, 20

Robin Poteet Workshop

Christiansburg Presbyterian Church

Robin returns in spring! This time she will be exploring pouring techniques with water media. For more information, contact Sue Farrar by email at director@montgomerymuseum.com.

Camp Alta Mons retreat planned for 2015

Want to spend a "camping" weekend with art and friends? BRAA has reserved Sept. 25-27 at Camp Alta Mons in Shawsville for an art retreat. Most of the details have yet to be confirmed, but participants will likely arrive at the Burrows Retreat Center (no, you don't have to camp in a tent!) on Friday, get settled in, and have dinner in the next door dining facility. Saturday will be a workshop day (subject and instructor to be determined) and an evening of movie night fun. Sunday morning is breakfast, pack up, painting, hiking and checking out by 1:00.

Workshop, accommodations and all meals prepared and included for what is expected to be a very reasonable fee. This lovely camp area provides for plein air painting and hiking for those who wish to fill the extra hours with fresh air and nature. As details firm up, they will be announced, but in the meantime, reserve your calendar for Sept. 25-27! Member Nancy Norton coordinating.

"Can anything be sadder than work left unfinished? Yes, work never begun."

~ Christina Rossetti

Seeing the big picture *continued from page 1*

collaged works, and others begun by mixing very fluid paint directly on the surface." I think we're in for a visual treat.

Her bright studio is animated by colorful canvases leaning against the walls, with a blue piano at one end, an orange rug in the middle and a warm crackling woodstove at the other end. Cat toys dangle from her work table. Cat beds are scattered around in cozy spots suggesting this place has a good vibe for contemplation, and she admits she is "owned" by four cats and three dogs. She walks almost every day with her dogs, and on these ramblings she collects bits of natural material — twigs and seed pods and pieces of beautifully grained wood — even snakeskins inspire her. Sally is intrigued by textures, and finds inspiration in nature.

Sally is a member of the Blacksburg Regional Art Association and has contributed art to this community since retiring from her nursing career. Her gifts include donating a painting to the recent Basket Auction, to support the local libraries. She has helped raise funds for The Humane Society, the food pantries, the NRV Land Trust and the Heart Association. She worked on a couple of the Hokie Birds, and has stayed active with a favorite cause, the Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), whose members drive folks who otherwise do not have transportation to their medical appointments. She mentioned that RSVP can always use some more volunteers to help with this much-needed service.

Maybe this spirit of "giving back" can be interpreted from a hand-lettered quote found over the hearth in Sally's studio — "A Bit of Fragrance Clings to the Hand That Gives the Rose." Sally said a dear friend had shared the quote with her, and it acknowledged a good deed that had been done. Is it possible that when an artist offers beauty or whimsy or introspection to the viewer and we engage with her work, that our appreciation will further inspire the artist? This creative process may influence other artists, and the experience of making or viewing art may convince all of us that we each have something to offer. We may not be inclined to paint, but getting involved in our communities, and giving something of ourselves, enriches everyone. ■



Vera Dickerson talks about painting on black gesso at the December BRAA lunch (with a colorful work by Tom Barnhart in the background). There's still time to sign up for Vera's January 24-25 water media workshop at the Hahn Horticulture Garden Pavilion on the Virginia Tech campus. For more information and registration, visit <http://braaarts.wix.com/blacksburgart#>.

Lois Stephens

■ President's Report

2015 kicked off with a bunch of firsts.

I am so very pleased to announce the establishment of a relationship between Virginia Tech's Center for the Arts (Moss Arts Center), and BRAA. Several months ago I attended a meeting with Margo Crutchfield, curator for the center, and Lauren Henson, a graduate student in the material culture and public humanities program at Virginia Tech. During that time, we discussed ways for us to partner for the purpose of promoting art in the area and bringing people to the center to enjoy local art. In December, I received a letter from the executive director of the center, Ruth Walkes, who informed me that our members **Charlotte Chan**, **Betty Moore** and **Marie Collier** were selected to hang the first BRAA exhibition in this beautiful new performance and visual arts facility from June 4 to July 26, 2015.

Additionally, they offered us the free use of the upper gallery from April 15-21, 2015, for workshops or other BRAA-sponsored events. Long range, they agreed to be the gallery space for the summer 2019 New River Art Juried Biennial. The biennial has been co-sponsored by BRAA, Jacksonville Center for the Arts (The Jax) in Floyd and the Fine Arts Center of the New River Valley in Pulaski for years. In 2015, Pulaski will head the 13th biennial. The 14th biennial will be led by The Jax in 2017, and the 15th biennial in 2019 will return to Blacksburg and BRAA. To say I am happy about all this is an understatement. We will be working closely with the center's staff over the next few weeks to bring all of this about and I will keep you informed as plans develop.

On Jan. 12, **Lisabeth Weisband**, **Marie Collier**, **Charlotte Chan** and **Jennifer Carpenter**, hung the first BRAA exhibit outside of Virginia. Their work will be on view in the Chuck Mathena Center, 2 Stafford Drive, Princeton, W.Va., until Feb. 27. Because of the high ceilings available in this gallery, Lisabeth will be exhibiting six long panels based on Egyptian history she has never shown in this area. If you are going to be near Princeton, this show is worth a look.

We had wonderful participation at our January monthly luncheon. We were so happy to have a record 33 attendees including the unheard of number of seven men in the group! It was such a fun meeting with new members, old members, seasoned members and guests. We have over 140 people on our rolls now and that is another record for BRAA! Thanks to Elizabeth Sensabaugh, the director of the Blacksburg Library, who was our Art Spot speaker about library services and its support of art in Blacksburg. She did an excellent job!



A record-setting 33 members attended the January BRAA lunch. The art spot was presented by Elizabeth Sensabaugh, director of the Blacksburg library, who talked about library services and opportunities for artists.

Big thanks to member **Jack Burn** for solving a problem we have had with the lunchroom. Every time we have a speaker we are reminded of a sound system in the room, which we have never been able to turn completely off. Jack took it upon his electrical engineering self to investigate the switch and get the manager to come look at it. Thankfully, the manager of Famous Anthony's promised to have it fixed before our February meeting.

■ Now Showing

January 15 – April 15

(except where indicated otherwise)

Jennifer Carpenter, Chuck Mathena Center, Princeton, West Va. (Jan. 12 – Feb. 27)

Charlotte Chan, Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Blacksburg, and Chuck Mathena Center, Princeton, West Va. (Jan. 12 – Feb. 27)

Marie Collier, Gillies, Blacksburg, and Chuck Mathena Center, Princeton, West Va. (Jan. 12 – Feb. 27)

Susan Hensley, Virginia Tech Women's Center, Blacksburg

Ruth Lefko, Zeppoli's, Blacksburg

Carole McNamee, ICTAS, Virginia Tech Campus (until mid-May)

Larry Mitchell, ICTAS, Virginia Tech Campus (until mid-May)

Sally Mook, Montgomery Museum, Christiansburg (through Feb.)

Mary Ratliff, See Mark Optical, Blacksburg

Joy Rosenthal, Mill Mountain Coffee and Tea, Blacksburg

Robi Sallee, Brown Insurance, Blacksburg and Community Arts Information Office (CAIO) (Feb.)

Lois Stephens, Unitarian Universalist Congregation, Blacksburg (through Feb.)

Lisabeth Weisband, Chuck Mathena Center, Princeton, West Va. (Jan. 12 – Feb. 27)

Tom Wilkinson, Pointe West Management, Blacksburg

Norma Woodward, VTLS, Corporate Research Center, Blacksburg

Gerri Young, Holtzman Alumni Center, Virginia Tech Campus (Jan. 17 – May 5)

■ Exhibit Opportunities

Glade Church Theme Exhibits

1600 Glade Road • Blacksburg

Artists are invited to contribute to themed exhibits in the church's fine arts gallery. Works are not limited to religious art and all media are welcomed. The theme for January is The Passages of Time and the delivery date is **January 13** from 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. and 5 – 7 p.m. or by arrangement with Edd Sewell (540-641-1714).

Call for Sculptors

First Danville Art Trail

The City of Danville is accepting submissions from sculptors for an "Imagine" themed exhibit. Seven works will be selected for an 18-month exhibition in various River District locations. A \$1500 stipend will be awarded to each artist whose work is selected. For more information, email playdanville@danvilleva.gov.

Art in the Garden

May 9 • 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Hahn Horticulture Garden, Virginia Tech

Artists working in two or three dimensional mediums are eligible to enter. All art must be original and executed by the applicant. Only artists accepted through the jury process will be allowed to show their art. Application deadline is **Feb. 10**. For more information, visit the events tab at <http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/>.

Virginia Watercolor Society Exhibition

May 18 – June 26

James Madison University, Harrisonburg

Water media artists may download the prospectus and entry form for this 36th annual show from the exhibitions tab at <http://www.virginiawatercolorsociety.org/>. Entry deadline is **Feb. 13**.

Simply Elemental: An Outdoor Art Adventure

August – October

Hahn Horticulture Garden • Virginia Tech

Artists, groups of artists, and art teachers and students working in any media are invited to submit a proposal with a conceptual design for art to be displayed along the garden paths and in the plantings and trees. This is envisioned as a fun exhibit featuring both realistic and fantastical pieces; visual puns and surprises encouraged! The deadline for proposals is **Feb. 1**. For a full prospectus, visit the Calendar of Events tab at www.braaarts.wix.com.

President's report

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Some changes in responsibility have taken place. **Robi Sallee** has assumed the role of managing the Famous Anthony dates and the set up of the room, freeing **Lois Stephens** for working on the newsletter. New member, **Melissa Philen**, will replace **Jeanette Bowker** on the gallery committee. Melissa and **Gwen Douglas** have joined **Fred Jones** in the ranks of feature writers and both have produced wonderful articles for our newsletter and the local media already.

We have our first workshop for 2015 this month with **Vera Dickerson** of The Studio School in Roanoke teaching black gesso and acrylic painting to a full house at the Peggy Lee Hahn Pavilion at the Hahn Horticulture Garden on the Virginia Tech campus.

We are off to a great start!

Your partner in art,



The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Garden Walk" (left, mixed media, 12 x 12") by Robi Sallee. This and more of her work can be viewed at Brown Insurance in Blacksburg until mid-April.



BRAA Officers

Gerri Young, president
Charlotte Chan, co-vice president
Teri Hoover, co-vice president
Jeanette Bowker, treasurer
Fred Jones, secretary
Nancy Norton, membership
Robi Sallee, past president



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



www.facebook.com/BlacksburgArt

Send Facebook news postings to:

Gerri Young at
younggerri@googlemail.com
or **Teri Hoover**
at crystalirisphotos@gmail.com

Twitter @BlacksburgArt1

Send news, photos, comments, or newsletter suggestions to Lois Stephens (stephens1@pemt.net)

Thanks to **Mish Mish** for providing printed versions of this newsletter. Please support our local art supply store!

Are you renewed?

Membership renewal forms can be downloaded from the membership tab at <http://braaarts.wix.com/>.