

■ Art Calendar

May 23

Opening Reception, Radford City Fine Arts Show

Radford University Art Museum, 214 Tyler Ave., Radford • 5–7 p.m.

Come view the array of juried art in this annual show. Works will be displayed until June 21.

June 1–2

Sidewalk Art Show

Downtown Roanoke • 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Sponsored by the Taubman Museum, this annual event in the downtown market area features original paintings, photography, fine craft and sculpture.

June 5

Artist Talk — Betty Moore

Hahn Pavilion, Virginia Tech • Noon – 1 p.m.

Come hear Betty Moore's insights about her art, now displayed in the Pavilion through June. For more information visit <http://www.hort.vt.edu/hhg/art.html>.

June 7

Art Walk and Scavenger Hunt

Downtown Blacksburg • 5–8 p.m.

Don't miss this self-guided tour of the downtown art galleries. Meet the artists at participating locations and enjoy light refreshments. Finish the art scavenger hunt for a chance to win prizes! For more information and list of locations, visit: downtownblacksburg.com/art-walks-blacksburg.

June 7

Artemis Reception

Taubman Museum of Art, Roanoke • 6:30 p.m.

Join the celebration for the 2019 Artemis journal. The publication is supported by the Roanoke Arts Commission and the Taubman Museum of Art.

June 13

Opening Reception, New River Art Juried Biennial Exhibition

Moss Arts Center, Virginia Tech • 5–7 p.m.

Be among the first to view the exhibition of nearly 70 works and hear the presentation of awards. The art will be displayed until August 3.

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cuba!

by Gerri Young

Where do I start?

From April 26 to May 3, I and 11 other people visited Havana and Matanzas, Cuba, on a BRAA-sponsored trip. Originally intended to be an all BRAA group, with an art theme, in the end it included myself, along with members Larry Bechtel, Ann Shawhan and Marvi Stine. The remainder came from private signups. Our organizer and tour guide, Joe Scarpaci, owner of the Center for Cuban Culture + Economy, is a veteran of 90 trips to the country, is married to a Cuban, speaks fluent Spanish, knows Cuban history and government and nearly every street in old town Havana. He has written several books about it as well. His personal contacts enabled him to provide us an extraordinary art agenda, unlikely to be copied by other guides.

I was fascinated by the idea of going to this previously forbidden location. I wanted to see it before the doors closed again.

My head is still crammed with the experience. This trip was likely the most incredible trip of my fairly well-traveled life. It was not a glitzy trip. It was hard work. It was emotional. I ended up with great respect for Cuban people who endure enormous hardships daily and deal with them, work around them, and help each other out.

The night we landed it was pouring rain. We got into an air-conditioned Mercedes 12-passenger van with a Hollywood handsome driver, ours for the entire trip. We drove through the outskirts of Havana through residential areas, businesses and crazy traffic. Even in the wet darkness I could see the horrid poverty and decay everywhere, causing me to question what I had gotten myself into.

We drove into the tiny streets of old Havana and stopped by a tall, open, brightly lit doorway with a half dozen smiling people waiting inside. A couple strong men came out to unload our bags.

It was a frenetic scene with people and bags moving, meeting each other, escorting us to our little apartments. In the midst of the chaos a man with a pedal cart pulled up to the door loaded with two large upholstered chairs and a couch and proceeded to move them inside as if we were not there.

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One of the incredible works of art at the Instituto Superior de Arte. The entire piece is made of old books. Cuban students attend for art and music at no cost.

Gerri Young

■ **Calendar** *continued from page 1*

June 14 and July 12

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.

June 28

Opening Reception, BRAA Theme Show
Radford University Art Gallery, 214 Tyler Ave. • 5–7 p.m.

Come view BRAA member's interpretation of this year's theme, Slice of Life. Works will be displayed until Aug. 14. For more information, contact robisallee@hotmail.com or visit the calendar of events tab at www.blacksburgart.org.

July 12–14

Quilting Workshop
Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg

Paula Golden, internationally recognized fabric artist, will be teaching this workshop. Contact charlotteychan@gmail.com to express your interest in attending.

July 20

Art and Breakfast at the Market
Draper Road, Blacksburg • 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.

Have breakfast, listen to music, and stroll this sidewalk exposition of unique works where you'll find paintings, collages, photography, sculpture, and more.

July 24

Reception, Inside Out – Selfies
The Artful Lawyer, 318 N. Main St., Blacksburg • 5:30 p.m.

Come check out the latest Whet Your Palette exhibit where artists will depict themselves in various media. Works will be displayed until October 24.

September 27–29

Yupo Workshop
Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg

Popular water media artist Jesi Pace Berkeley will lead this workshop on how to create exciting effects on Yupo paper. Watch for more information or contact charlotteychan@gmail.com to express your interest in attending.

October 3–5

Tri-State Sculptors Conference
Radford University's Selu Conservancy

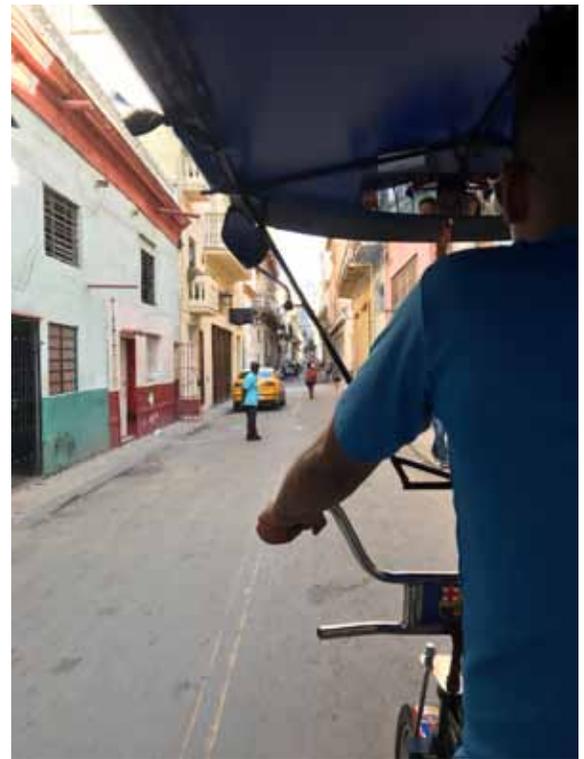
This conference features workshops, informational sessions, and demonstrations of such arts/crafts as blacksmithing and glass blowing at the Art Annex. For more information, contact larrybechtel@rocketmail.com. More notices to follow!

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Some of our men helped him with the couch and he disappeared. I have no idea where the furniture went. The whole scene felt like an old foreign movie.

We met two young sisters who spoke a little English and they showed us around their second-floor apartment. Until then, we had never been sure about our accommodations. We just knew it was not in an hotel. We had been told we would stay in private homes. Indeed, that turned out to be true, but not the way we envisioned.

The old building was three stories tall. The main door was never closed; I am not sure it had a door. The hall light was always on at night. I don't know how many apartments were in the building, but they were tiny and owned by different people. Our group was split over at least two floors. Apartments on the front had balconies with big doors opening to clotheslines and wrought iron railings. Marvi and I were happy to have a second-floor room with balcony off our bedroom. It had only one double bed, but minutes later, two people showed up with a twin to add to it. We had a tiny fridge, a temperamental air conditioner, and a bathroom with big shower, but little water pressure. We had to light a gas water heater when we wanted hot water.



View of Havana from the seat of a pedicab.

Geri Young

Outside our door was a tiny dining room and kitchen we could use, but one of the girls, 20-yr-old Cinthia, cooked us breakfast every morning. I ate mango and/or guava daily; an egg, juice, tea and bread. I think the guava was my first. When the sink was not used, the water was turned off. Windows next to the kitchen opened into a space about 10 feet wide and looked straight into the windows of the next apartment. We could watch the residents watching TV and hanging laundry in the outside space, way above the ground. The view to the bottom of the space was a jumble of wires, water barrels and discards.

Once we were settled the first night, the rain stopped and we walked to La Moneda Cubana for dinner, enjoying the evening stroll through the window-lit streets and alleys of old town. This was our first walk in Havana. It was mesmerizing. It is alive at night — people, dogs, cats, carts, old cars, music, children and tourists. We liked listening to the street sounds from our room.

There is too much to write about in this one article. I will have to do a Part Two and maybe even Three to talk about the art and what touched my emotions. In the meantime, here are some things of note:

- Many old US cars in perfect condition used mostly as taxis. An industry grew up to support the cars and keep them going. Lots of old cars from other countries like Poland and Russia. The license plates looked European. Very few late model cars.
- Lots of ways to get run over or hurt — pedicabs, vendor carts, bikes, motor scooters, huge water trucks, a group of Harley Davidson riders. Horse carriages. People on foot, potholes, cracked sidewalks, uneven curbs, cobblestones. Wild traffic.
- Lots of dogs and cats, not too bad looking. Pampered dogs on leash.
- Lots of restaurants, many upstairs. We never had bad food. We shared a rooftop dining

Art in Bloom

As part of their public arts efforts, Blacksburg Regional Art Association members **Diane Relf**, **Dave Angle**, **Susan Lockwood**, **Paula Golden** and her daughter, **Kate Golden**, along with friends created over 120 glass flowers to surround the Alexander Black House Museum and Cultural Center. They worked with **Michael Colver** and students at Blacksburg High School to fabricate the stems and sepals giving them experience in bending and shaping rebar, welding, computer design with CNC plasma cutting, metal to glass gluing, and working with community artists.



Photos provided by Diane Relf



■ Welcome New Members

BRAA has received the following new memberships: **David Ferrell**, **Thomas Jansen**, and **Lisa Wood**. Welcome!

■ Kudos

Member **Sidra Kaluszka** has been named an "artist educator" with Golden's QoR Watercolors. See more information at www.goldenpaints.com/gaep/Sidra.Kaluszka/2911.

Cheryl Mackian was a double winner at the recent opening of the Piedmont Arts Expressions show. Her painting, *That Saturday On the Boardwalk*, took first place in the oil/acrylic category. Another entry, *Window Shopping*, won Best In Show!

Congratulations!

"Art is what we call ... the thing an artist does. It's not the medium or the oil or the price or whether it hangs on a wall or you eat it. What matters, what makes it art, is that the person who made it overcame the resistance, ignored the voice of doubt and made something worth making. Something risky. Something human. Art is not in the ... eye of the beholder. It's in the soul of the artist."

~ Seth Godin

■ Now Showing

April 15 – July 15

(except where indicated otherwise)

David Angle, Brown Insurance, Blacksburg

Patricia Bevan, Pointe West Management, Blacksburg

Patricia Bolton, Long and Foster, Blacksburg

Jeanette Bowker, Montgomery Museum, Christiansburg (May–June)

Charlotte Chan, The Haga Law Firm, Christiansburg

Marie Collier, Bluefield College, Bluefield, Virginia (May–August)

Judy Crowgey, First Bank & Trust, Christiansburg

Susan Hensley, Virginia Tech Women's Center

Teri Hoover, Shaheen Law Firm, Blacksburg

Delbert Jones, Blacksburg Transit

Johanna Jones, See Mark Optical, Blacksburg

Ruth Lefko, American National Bank (formerly HomeTown Bank), Christiansburg

Darcy Meeker, Alexander Black House & Cultural Center, Blacksburg (thru June 10)

Betty Moore, Hahn Garden Pavilion, Virginia Tech campus (thru June)

David Pearce, Zeppoli's, Blacksburg

Diane Relf, Glade Church, Blacksburg

Linda Weatherly Shroyer, Blue Ridge Cancer Care, Blacksburg

Karen Sewell, Warm Hearth Village Center, Blacksburg (May–June)

Lois Stephens, Main Street Inn, Blacksburg

Lisabeth Weisband, Holtzman Alumni Center Gallery, Virginia Tech (thru May)

NOW SHOWING at Great Road on Main, Christiansburg —

Patricia Bolton, Charlotte Chan, Teri Hoover, Ruth Lefko, Betty Moore, and Robi Sallee.

■ Exhibit and other opportunities

Whet Your Palette 2019 Exhibitions

The Artful Lawyer, A Fine Gallery Inc, 318 N. Main Street, Blacksburg

Mark your calendar to apply for one or more of these remaining shows. For more information, visit www.artfullawyergallery.org or email diana@creekmorelaw.com.

July 24 – October 9 • Inside Out: Selfies
Application deadline: **June 21**

October 15 – December 18 • Fiber Art
Application deadline: **September 13**

BRAA 2019 Theme Show

Radford University Gallery, 214 Tyler Ave., Radford

The event is open to all BRAA members — exhibition approval is not required. The theme for this year's event is Slice of Life. Artists are invited to creatively interpret this theme in their submissions. **Volunteers will be needed to staff this new gallery space for the duration of the exhibit.**

Please mark the following deadlines on your calendar and watch for more information on how to register.

- Artwork delivery on **June 27**.
- Opening reception **June 28**, 5–7 pm.
- Closing and art pick-up on **August 14**.

The first 60 pieces will be accepted and entries will be limited to two works per artist. All work must be appropriately framed for hanging. Sawtooth hangers will not be accepted. 3-D works must be gallery ready.



The art featured in this month's nameplate is "Taos Transitions" (above, mixed media, 12x 12") by Teri Hoover. This and more of her work can be viewed at Shaheen Law Firm in Blacksburg through mid-July.

To participate in the theme show, visit <https://braabraa.wufoo.com/forms/z1802r9m198a4g8/>. For questions, contact robisallee@hotmail.com.

55th Annual Bath County Art Show July 20–28 • Valley Elementary School, Hot Springs

This large art show offers numerous cash awards. Artists may submit up to three paintings with an entry fee of \$10 per painting. Works must be delivered on Saturday or Sunday, **July 13 or 14**, between 1 and 5 p.m. The Bath County Arts Association receives 30% commission on sales to support community programs, award scholarships to students, visual and performing arts programs, and art education in the Bath County Public Schools. Unsold works must be picked up on Sun., July 28, between 12:30 and 2 p.m. For more information and entry labels, visit <http://bathcountyarts.org/2019-art-show/>.

71st Annual Virginia Highlands Festival Fine Art Exhibit

July 26 – August 4 • The Arts Depot, Abingdon

Artists may submit up to three paintings with an entry fee of \$20 per painting. Works must be delivered on Saturday or Sunday, **July 20 or 21**, between 2 and 5 p.m. Awards presentation will be at 5:30 p.m. on July 25. For more information and entry labels, visit VAHighlandsfestival.org.

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experience with a very large turtle and a cat walking around our feet. We walked to nearly every restaurant we ate in. I ate two hot, delicious fried plantain slices from a street vendor.

- Lots of little shops in the front room of apartments.
- Weirdly, few bugs or bad smells.
- No colorful, folding tourist map of the city existed. Without our guide, one day we got lost. No internet or phone service with our US devices, but an internet park where you could buy a code and sit on a bench to contact home.
- The botanical side of Cuba was spectacular!

We were definitely not in Kansas anymore. ■



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Thanks to Mish Mish for providing printed versions of this newsletter. Their support throughout the years has been greatly appreciated.