



## Maryland Pastel Society

### Winter Newsletter

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January 2016

#### MPS Board & Volunteers

**Co-Pres:** Dawn Capron and Joyce Lister  
**Treas:** Mary Anne Warner  
**Rec.Sec:** Lyn Laviana  
**Membership:** Kathleen Risk  
**Workshops:** Joyce Lister  
**Exhibition Chair:** Susan Gleason  
**Web:** Mary Boeh

#### Planning Calendar

**Jan 23:** Winter Meeting at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center in Glenwood  
**Feb 1:** Deadline for membership dues  
**Apr 1:** Members-only show opens with reception, Ocean City, MD  
**Apr 23:** Spring Meeting at Gary J.

#### From the President's Easel

Happy New Year!

I hope 2016 brings you many successful and joyful painting opportunities. The Maryland Pastel Society will play its part by bringing renowned pastel artists to our meetings and workshops throughout the year to share their skills and techniques.

Starting our year with a multi-talented artist, instructor, and studio director, Hai-Ou Hou will be demonstrating a landscape in pastel at our January 23rd meeting. Hai-Ou was born in Beijing where she received a Bachelors of Fine Art degree from the Central Institute of Fine Art and Design in Beijing. She earned a Master of Fine Arts from Towson State University, Maryland and taught painting and design at the Hubei Fine Art Institute Wu Han, China. Hai-Ou has adapted a powerful abstract aesthetic to impressionist painting, creating intensely colored, highly textured and provocative art en plein air.

Hai-Ou is also the director and owner of the [Chesapeake Fine Art Studio](#), located just over the Bay Bridge on the Eastern Shore. The Chesapeake Fine Art Studio is a fairly new fine art school and art center, hosting artists from around country to teach classes and workshops. The studio also holds weekly art classes, teaching plein air, still life and portrait painting to students of all skill levels. As many members know, Hai-Ou hosted MPS last August for our Summer Meeting at her spacious studio, free of charge.

Hai-Ou's demo on January 23rd could be just the inspiration needed to jump start your 2016 studio work. You won't want to miss it!

Also upcoming in 2016 will be a juried Member's Exhibit at a lovely and relatively new gallery in Ocean City. The exhibit will open April 1st. We plan to make arrangements through a few selectively-located volunteers to transport paintings to and from the gallery, saving accepted artists extra trips. More info to follow.

Arthur Community Center at Glenwood

**Jul 23:** Summer Meeting at Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood

**Oct 22:** Fall Meeting at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood

### Directions to Glenwood

[Directions to our meetings at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood](#)

At our December 19th board meeting, Kathleen Risk, Membership Chair, reported our highest enrollment figures to date: 225 total members, 115 of whom are Artist Members and 110 Signature Members.

Looking ahead, we have identified the venue for our 2017 Shades of Pastel show. It will be at the beautiful [Glenview Mansion in Rockville, Maryland](#).

Finally, we are considering implementing PayPal as a future optional dues payment method. If you have the expertise, or are willing to develop the expertise, to help us implement this tool please contact a board member. Thanks!

See you on the 23rd!  
Dawn

### Next Meeting

As noted above, our Winter General Meeting is January 23rd. Come join us for a terrific demo by Hai-Ou Hou.

To learn more about Hai-Ou, please visit her website <http://chesapeakefineartstudio/>

And, as always, please remember to bring

- lunch for yourself.
- food to share so you can put your name in the box and perhaps win a prize.
- samples of your recent work.

See you on Saturday, January 23rd at Glenwood! ([Click here for directions to the Gary J. Arthur Community Center](#))

### Upcoming Workshops & Opportunities

There are still slots available for the Jeanne Rosier Smith Workshop. The Maryland Pastel Society is sponsoring a 3-day indoor pastel workshop with Massachusetts artist, Jeanne Rosier Smith, April 20 - 22, 2016 in Columbia, Maryland. Jeanne's "Loosen Up Your Landscapes" workshop will focus on significant steps we can take to make our landscape paintings bolder, looser and more assured.

Visit the [MPS web page](#) for additional information and registration form.

Jeanne is an excellent and very supportive workshop instructor. Generous with information and help, she provides students with a great deal of individual attention.

Jeanne is a Signature member of the PSA, the Connecticut Pastel Society, and the Pastel Painters Society of Cape Cod, and she is also a member of the Master's Circle of IAPS. Her work has been included in the Pastel Journal's Pastel 100 for the past three years. Jeanne is

known for her dramatic wave paintings and she has won awards in numerous significant exhibitions, To learn more about Jeanne, please visit her web page [www.jeannesmithart.com](http://www.jeannesmithart.com).

Please check our website for other local activities. They can be found under the Artist Opportunities section of the MPS web page.

## Upcoming Exhibitions

### Members Only Show at The Art League of Ocean City, Center for the Arts

The Maryland Pastel Society will hold a Juried Members Only show at the [Art League of Ocean City](#), 502 94th Street, Ocean City, Maryland, from April 1-April 30, 2016. All Artist and Signature members in good standing of the Maryland Pastel Society are invited to submit work for selection.

The juror for this show is David Diaz. David works in oil and pastels and currently lives in Annapolis, Maryland. He received formal training in the public schools of Western Maryland and Frostburg State University; as well as University of Maryland, Towson and Catholic University.

He is award-winning artist and educator who has taught art in Maryland, in both Allegany and Anne Arundel County, and has worked with students from elementary through middle school, as well as adult education and private lessons. His work is in collections in the United States, Europe, and Asia. David is primarily a plein air painter with a focus on regional subjects and is a member, and Chair of Bd. of the Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters. He is also President of the board at Maryland Federation of Art, and the chair of exhibitions, and works with installations at Quiet Waters art galleries. To learn more about David, visit his web page <http://www.artworksbydaviddiaz.com>

### Important dates

Deadline for submission: February 15, 2016

Notification letters mailed: March 1, 2016

Work to be delivered: March 28, 2016

Show opens: April 1, 2016

Opening Reception: April 1, 2016, 5pm-7pm

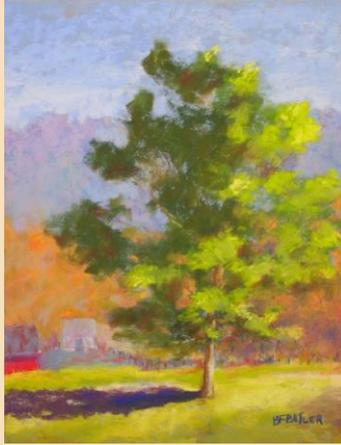
Show closes: April 30 2016

Pick-up of work: May 1, 2016

### How to enter

An entry form and prospectus with complete details, including specifications for digital entries, are available for download from the Maryland Pastel Society website: [www.marylandpastelsociety.com](http://www.marylandpastelsociety.com). If you need to have a prospectus mailed to you, contact the show's Chair, Susan Gleason, at 301-919-4213.

## Featured Artist: Bonnie Ferguson Butler



Hold Out



Beach Cottages at Sunset, Cape May

Bonnie Ferguson Butler describes her journey into art:

Bonnie saw her first tree, figuratively, when she was a Senior at Wofford College, the result of a required Art class outside of her Science majors. After many years balancing biochemistry, fiber arts and amateur photography, she took time off to become a mother and fine art flowed as a result. Her Master of Humanities work with an emphasis in Art History at the University of Richmond gave her the foundation for studying and pursuing fine art, while area instructors shared their passion with her.

As a new mother, Bonnie concentrated on watercolor painting. For the years since then, she has worked in soft pastel and oil. An award winning artist and photographer, her emphasis is working en plein air and she sees trees regularly these days.

Bonnie has studied under Master Pastelists Richard McKinley, Jean Hirons, Maggie Price, Liz Haywood-Sullivan, and Alan Flattmann. Further, she has been a student at The Art League in Alexandria, ACE in Fairfax, and Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton.

Bonnie's favorite award to have received was a First Place prize in 2012 as judged by Hullahen Williams Moore, a student of Ansel Adams.

In 2011, she took a leap to found the Pastel Society of Virginia and is the current president.

Bonnie has been a juried Associate at the Workhouse Arts Center since 2009 and exhibits as both a painter and a photographer. In 2013, Bonnie was elected an Associate Member of the Pastel Society of America and in 2014 juried as a Signature Member of the Maryland Pastel Society.



King George Farm



Seaside Cliff Town, Curacao

Signature Members may sign up to be a Featured Artist by sending an email to [mdpastels@gmail.com](mailto:mdpastels@gmail.com). You will need to provide a write-up and images upon acceptance.

## Inspiration Corner

### Teachers' Tips

The Maryland Pastel Society has a number of teachers, past and present, among its ranks. We invited our members with teaching experience to share advice with us, and several members volunteered. This is the first in a series of five Teachers' Tips columns.

The first question posed to our teacher members is intended to introduce you to them and give them an opportunity to do what so many pastelists do: **Pass It On**. With this question, they are passing on advice that they have treasured from their past teachers and experience.

**As artists, we all recall a teacher who gave us cherished advice that we pass on to others. What advice do you pass on to your students that you learned from one of your teachers?**

#### **Chris Powell**

The person whose actions affected my understanding of creativity was my eighth grade teacher. She awoke the whole class of students on Monday mornings by rearranging the desks so that we needed to search for our own desk. The different configuration of the desks spurred our curiosity as to why she reshaped the usual classroom setup. It was also invigorating. She woke us up from Monday doldrums and caught our attention.

That is what we need to do as artists. Viewers look at a painting for a few seconds. Their brains scan for something that is relevant to their knowledge, memory or emotions. When you place an object, complementary or discord color in an area where it is not routine, the viewers may stay longer looking at you painting and thinking about what you are expressing. You will stimulate awareness and energy. Be creative and unusual in your art work. Experiment. Routine is what everyone else does. Be different.

**Rebecca Shorb**

I went to convent school-there was NO ART. However, I drew on many of my assignments. Mrs Harrison, my French teacher, recognized my art ability and wrote on my paper "Have you thought about what you want to do with your life? I think it's art for Becky's sake". Eventually I found my path to art and have loved every minute of the journey. I hope that I always played forward her encouragement.

**Jack Pardue**

Albert Handell taught me to understand color value, and I will not forget that, and he taught me how to use colors of similar value for great effects in a painting. Of course I have passed all that info along to my students over the years.

**Jean Hirons**

It was Doug Dawson in 2004, the last time he was here prior to this fall, who recommended that I do color studies. I took him seriously and started doing them. I was confused at first and couldn't figure out how to do them. Should I just focus on the final color or include the underpainting in the study? I had a lot of questions. But somehow, over time, I worked it out and my paintings became much better as a result. I don't always do them now, only when I need to. But I this really made a difference in my work.

**Joyce Lister**

Advice I often pass on is something humorous I heard Richard McDaniel say at a workshop some years ago. It is appropriate for those who are too involved with painting details - and that is: "First the dog, then the fleas!"

**Dot Stepenaski**

I was fortunate to have Florence Collins as a high school art teacher and mentor for years after. The first day of class, she lectured that this was a Major, not a class to avoid math or science. Anyone who was doing that, she would escort to the guidance office. There were about eight students who left with her. I felt a chill go up my spine when she did this! She taught us for three years on a college level, treating us as serious artists. She taught all aspects of drawing, but also talked about expression and emotion in art. When I teach, I often think back to how Florence expressed her lessons so clearly and I try to emulate her.

**Susan Klinger**

The advice I have passed on to my students the most did not come from another teacher, but from my many years of teaching high school art. It is that every piece, no matter how accomplished you are, will go through a 'YUK' stage. A piece can start out great, but in the process will pass through that stage when you just want to toss it. That is when the most learning will occur, when you have to work through the YUK stage to bring it out the other side.

We hope that the advice these artists have embraced may be an inspiration to you. Which of your teachers gave you priceless advice that has shaped you as an artist? Have you passed-it-on?

## Member News



Deep Thoughts  
9x6

**Linda Harrison-Parsons**, is now showing work at [NOMA gallery](#), 437 N. Market St., Fred., MD, she has new works at The Little Gallery at Smith Mountain Lake, VA and at The Manheim Gallery, Cottonwood, AZ. She was accepted into the AZ Pastel Fall Juried Show. Coming in 2016 she will have works included in TAG, Frederick, MD anniversary show, exhibit at Rice Gallery along with teaching a pastel workshop at McDaniel College. NOMA gallery, two-woman show in July and featured artist at Matrix Gallery in October.



Between Seasons

**Elains Shortall** was busy last fall painting en plein air at locations around the Shore. She also resumed classes at the local [Academy Art Museum in Easton](#), experimenting with different pastel surfaces, textures and colors of backgrounds, underpainting and, finally, painting snow in pastel. In mid-January Elaine will participate in the "30 pictures in 30 days" at the Academy Art Museum, in Easton, Maryland - a challenge to make time every day to make that 1 small, no larger than 6"x 6" pastel painting. She says it is fun and the rewards were great. The image above is her Christmas card.



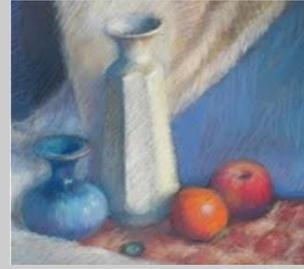
The Composer  
26x18 on Mi Tientes

**Andree Tullier's** painting, *The Composer*, was juried into the [Cumberland Valley Artists Exhibition](#) at the Washington County Museum of Fine Arts, in Hagerstown, MD. The exhibition is Jan; 23 - Apr.10, 2016. The opening Reception and Awards Ceremony the Sunday, January 24, 2016, 2:00 - 4:00 pm



Dawn At Langeais

**Mary Anne Warner's** painting, *Dawn At Langeais*, received Honorable Mention by the Pastel Society of Virginia Members show judge. She currently has a pastel in "Dialogues" show at the [Atlantic Gallery in New York City](#).



Radiance

**Janet Darlington's** painting, *Radiance*, will be in the Maryland Federation of Art (MFA) national exhibition at the Lowe's State House from Jan. 15 - Apr. 11 at the Lowe House of Delegates Building in Annapolis. For more information visit the MFA [web page](#).

### **More Member News!**

Three of **Mary Ellen Simon's** paintings were accepted into the juried exhibit "Maryland State of Mind" which will be on view at the Maryland House of Delegates from January through April, 2016.

**Jean Hirons** will be teaching her popular pastel class for all levels on Mondays, Wednesdays and Sundays from Jan. 17-Mar. 23. The Sunday class is full and the Wed. class is close to full, but there is plenty of room in the Monday class, which begins on Jan. 18th. All classes are 10:00:-1:00 at [Washington ArtWorks in Rockville](#). For more information, contact Jean at [jeanhirons48@gmail.com](mailto:jeanhirons48@gmail.com).

In other news, Jean will be one of six international jurors for the Pastels en Perigord show in St. Aulaye, France this summer. She will be there for the show opening. Jean's work will also be represented in the Art Hamptons art fair on Long Island in late June. She plans to attend this event as well. A big summer ahead.

### **Remembering Gretchen Moyer**

Maryland Pastel Society Signature member, Gretchen Moyer, passed away from cancer July 24th last year in Williamsport, PA. Gretchen was an award-winning artist who exhibited her art both nationally and internationally. She found joy in riding, and in nature, which inspired her art.



Her artist statement summed up her passion, "The animal image inspires me, and my work is a kind of modern day bestiary complete with the metaphor and symbolism that accompanied the medieval

genre. Simply put, the world is wrapped in wonder, and still, I am amazed."

Gretchen was a visual artist who worked in pastel, printmaking, and mixed media works on paper. She exhibited in many solo and group exhibitions including The Center for Book Arts, Delaware Art Museum, Maryland Pastel Society, National Arts Club, New York Public Library, Pastel Society of America, State Museum of Pennsylvania, Virginia Art Museum, Virginia Watercolor Society, and the Wichita Art Museum. Moyer, a Kentucky native, received the Bachelor of Fine Arts in drawing from James Madison University in 1977. She earned the Master of Fine Arts degree in printmaking from the University of Delaware in 1987. In 1988, she and David Moyer began Red Howler Press to create fine, limited edition and one-of-a-kind artist's books. She taught drawing, printmaking, and book arts at the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, PA.



## More News and Opportunities

### Maryland Pastel Society Aprons

At the Fall 2015 meeting, we introduced our members to the new MPS work apron. It is black with two pockets and the MPS logo embroidered on the front. There are about 18 aprons left. They can be purchased for \$12 each at the January 23rd meeting.



MPS board members model new aprons.

### The 28th IAPS Juried Exhibition is Open for Entries!!

The 28th International Association of Pastel Societies (IAPS) Juried Exhibition is Open for Entries and is hosted at the SALMAGUNDI CLUB of New York City. The entry deadline is March 20, 2016. To read online and enter [CLICK HERE](#). This link takes you directly to

the show on [OnlineJuriedShows.com](http://OnlineJuriedShows.com). Entry is open to any artist who has an up-to-date membership with an IAPS Member Society. The Maryland Pastel Society is a member of IAPS.

### **Laurel Art Guild's 47th Annual Open Juried Exhibition**

All MPS members are invited to enter the Laurel Art Guild's 47th Annual Open Juried Exhibition to be held at the Montpelier Arts Center in Laurel, MD in March, 2016. Submissions are due January 30, 2016. Please see [Laurelartguild.org](http://Laurelartguild.org) and click on "LAG Open" for a copy of the entry form.

### **Albert Handel Talk/Slide Presentation at the NOMA Gallery in Frederick, Maryland.**

DATE: Saturday May 7th

TIME: Noon - 3:00 pm

For more information, visit NOMA's web page <http://nomagalleryfrederick.com/>

### **Margaret Evans Workshop - Pastels Unleashed (with other media)**

The York Art Association is hosting a workshop with Margaret Evans again this year. The workshop is April 15-17th in York, PA. To learn more about the workshop, visit the association's web page at [www.yorkartassociation.org](http://www.yorkartassociation.org).

### **Kitty Wallis Paper Update**

Kitty Wallis reported late last year that they are still working on finding a facility that will allow them to produce Wallis paper with the quality and archival properties that you have all come to expect. In the meantime, we do have both sizes of pads available in Warm Mist. Warm Mist is very similar to our Belgian Mist, but with a maroon oxide undertone rather than the brown oxide undertone you're familiar with in the Belgian Mist.

As of late last year, here is what was available.

12" x 18" Warm Mist Pad, 8 sheets, shipped in 3-packs  
3 pads - \$114, free shipping

9" x 12" Warm Mist Pad, 8 sheets, shipped in 5 packs  
5 pads - \$100, free shipping

You can keep up with any updates, ask questions, or see what other Wallis users and societies have to say by liking the Wallis Facebook page at [facebook.com/WallisArchival](https://facebook.com/WallisArchival).

To keep up on the latest development in Kitty's art, you can find her and friend her at [facebook.com/Kitty.Wallis](https://facebook.com/Kitty.Wallis).

## **Welcome to New Members & Signature Members**

Maryland Pastel Society is growing! We are excited to welcome the following new members:

Lindsay Leggin

Sandra Schraibman  
Barbara North  
Rolf Ness  
Karen Mazza  
Jackie Eastwick  
Rebecca Denny

The deadline to apply for Signature status is February 4th. Please visit the [MPS Membership Web page](#) for information and forms for Signature application.

## Past Events

### Fall Meeting: Christine Swann Demonstrates the Power of Pastel

By Mary Boeh  
Photos by Joyce Turk and Mary Boeh



The October MPS meeting featured guest artist Christine Swann from Pittsburg, PA. It was a jam-packed demo, full of great information and a real treat to observe!

Christine teaches a workshop "The Power of Pastel". Immediately, most of us probably thought of how pastels have captivated us and hold a power over us, but Chris was quick to explain that's not what she is talking about. Instead, she focuses on the intensity (or power) of the actual pigment in the pastels - whether it's a pastel pencil, a hard pastel, or soft pastel stick - the more pigment and less binder there is, the more powerful the intensity of the stroke. Chris no longer thinks about pastels as being hard or soft; she thinks about the power of the pigment when she lays down that stroke.

To demonstrate, Chris compared pastels by making marks on her hand. She began with a pastel pencil. Then she made a similar mark with a hard pastel. The hard pastel mark was stronger and more visible than the pastel pencil mark. Then she chose another, softer pastel, which made an even brighter, stronger mark. The basic

rule: more binder, less pigment, less power. Less binder, more pigment, more power. Chris emphasized that, regardless of the hardness or softness, or the intensity of the pigment to binder ratio, the full range is important in pastel painting. The questions you must ask as you paint is, "what strength do I need for my painting?" and, "at what stage do I use what level of power?"

### **Before You Begin...**

When you are deciding on a subject to paint, Chris insists that the first question to ask yourself is what is your intention behind the painting. "Your intention drives the painting," Chris explained, "ask yourself: What is the most important thing to me in the painting? What do I want the viewer to focus on?" The answer to these questions will drive your decisions on composition, values, edges, colors.



Once Chris decides on her intention and hence the focal point of her painting, she begins a five-stage process that enables her to build the painting until it successfully conveys her intention. She describes her process as having five layers - each of which builds upon the previous layers.

In the photo to the left, she describes her intent with this portrait of her son, and how she designed the elements of the composition to draw the viewer's eye through the painting to see what is important.

If you are using a photo reference for your painting, there are four things you must have in the photo in order to be able to interpret the subject matter for a successful painting. There four things are:

1. A clear highlight
2. A clear lit area
3. A clear shadow area
4. A clear reflected light

Consider these points before beginning your painting. If they are lacking, you will run into problems, especially when you move into the second stage of painting, as described below.

### **Layer 1: Where is Everything?**

Chris calls the first stage, layer 1, "Where is Everything?" In this stage, she determines where to place things in the painting. First, consider the four edges of the picture plane. What are its dimensions? How is your subject impacted by the plane? Then she applies the Pythagorean Theorem of harmonic divisions of the

rectangle to divide up the plane. The concept of harmonic divisions is derived from Pythagoras' discovery of harmonics in music. Chris recommends Juliette Aristides' book, *Classical Painting Atelier*, which explains the theorem and how it applies to compositional schemes in painting (see chapter 2, "Composition - Design Systems of the Masters"). These harmonics may be in thirds, fourths, or fifths. Chris uses these principles to build "armature" lines to support her composition. She describes the points at which the armature lines meet and cross as sweet spots. Chris will place her focal point at one of these sweet spots and then will use the armature lines to build the composition and steer the viewer's eye through the painting. "Think in terms of armatures - like a drying rack, the more elements you put on these lines, the stronger the composition...Intentionally follow these lines," she adds.

For the demonstration, Chris decides that the model's left eye will be the focal point of her painting. It is what drew her attention and as she builds the composition, she will be sure to direct the viewer's eye to this point in the painting.

Here, she has drawn in the armature lines and has begun to draw in the eye. Note how she has placed the focal point along one of the armature lines and near the intersection of multiple armatures.



Does Chris do thumbnail studies? Yes. She also does color harmony studies and tries out different armatures. She pins the studies up in her studio around her work area. This helps her stay on track as she works through the various stages of painting.

For layer 1, Chris uses a colored pastel pencil to lay in the armature and block in the initial drawing. Because the "power" of the pastel pencil is low, you will be able to add many layers and more powerful pastels on top of this initial layer.

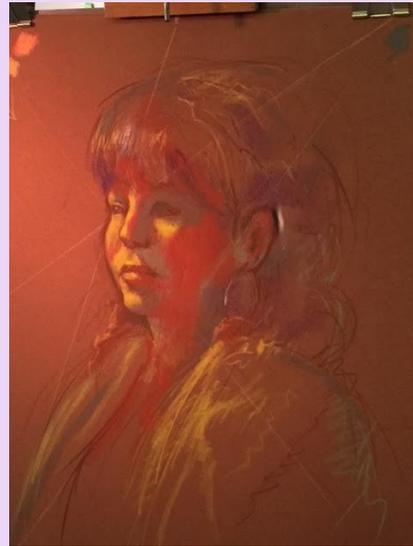
## **Layer 2: Find the Lights**

Once she is satisfied with the placement of her subject and the lines of armature, Chris begins to focus on the light. This is the stage where the painting starts to take shape. "This is the blueprint for everything that is to come," Chris exclaimed. Coming in to this stage, you have already determined that your subject has the four elements noted above (a clear highlight, a clear lit area, a clear shadow area, and a clear reflected light). Now you ask yourself, what is the light doing? Observe at how the light falls across the subject. What is lit, and what is not? Be aware of the properties of light - the "law of light". Light is linear. Highlights are perpendicular to the source of light.

Chris carefully observes the light. She uses a yellow pastel pencil to capture all the areas where the direct light touches the subject - those clearly lit areas and the highlights. Because the pencil has a low power, she can apply as much yellow as she needs to effectively capture the light. As she demonstrated this with the portrait, she noted that she uses the yellow pencil to "follow the light" - everything in yellow must be in the path of the light. She then uses a blue pastel pencil for the lights in the shadow area. Chris spends a lot of time on this stage. She must accurately capture the light before moving on to the next stage.



Chris starts with a yellow pastel pencil to identify the light on the subject.



Now Chris has begun adding the mid-tones. Here's where it starts go "crazy" colorful.

### **Layer 3: "My Rainbow Stage" (or the "crazy color stage")**

"This stage is like a free for all," Chris remarks, "I find areas where I can push the colors - really exaggerate the colors!" This is why Chris calls this the crazy color stage. She explained that the more she played at this stage, the more fun it became. Although she is pushing the colors, she is not using the most powerful pigmented pastels, she reserves those for the final stage. Much of this stage is where she captures the mid-tone values. As she proceeds with the portrait demonstration, she notes that where the light breaks on an object, that is the brightest color. In this case the light breaks on the bridge of the model's nose, so this will be the brightest color in Chris' painting. Chris smiles as she points out, "if you don't put orange in the highlights of hair, you are missing something." The colors chosen during this stage, while they may seem crazy, are building on the earlier structure and will add to the vibrancy of the painting as you progress through the next layer.

### **Layer 4: The Real Color**

In this stage, you transition to the real color. For years Chris was primarily a water color painter. This shaped her approach to pastel and her perspective on the power of pigment. She thinks of color

choices like chords on a piano, very much like the idea behind mapping out the armature - the idea of harmonics and chords can be applied to the color wheel. When it comes to the color wheel, Chris prefers "The Color Star", developed by Johannes Itten. You can look it up on the Internet (try searching for the words: Itten Color Star). Chris recommends you make your own Color Star, because a commercially made Color Star color wheel is very expensive. The Color Star differs from the standard color wheel in that it has additional colors. Itten's color star is divided into 12 hues and then each is subdivided into different shades and values. Then there are templates you can overlay to show various "dyadic chords" of color, such as compliments or triads of color, etc.

Chris encourages you to find a "chord" for your painting -- pick your color harmony. For the demonstration painting, Chris chooses two mid-power (e.g., Girault) color pairs for mid-tone skin colors. She chooses one pair for the light side and two pairs for the dark side. All are in the mid-tone range. As she progresses, she works from the mid-tones and builds "to the light".

### **Layer 5: The "Beauty Mark Stage"**

This is the final stage of the painting. It's where you apply the finishing marks that are uniquely and distinctively yours. "There's something beautiful about a deliberate mark in a painting." These marks tell what is happening in the painting. It all goes back to the original questions you asked before you began the painting: What is my intention? What is the most important thing in this painting?

In the demo painting to the right, you can observe that Chris has gone from the "crazy" color stage to real colors and has added those bits of beauty mark touches.



Chris pointed out in the painting of her son, that through every stage, she built upon the original armature at every stage to emphasize her original intent. The final marks were no exception. That little strand of hair, the highlights on the ears - each stroke in the final stage of that painting was deliberate and intended to reinforce the lines of the original armature. Each was intended to steer the viewer's eye to the most important thing in the painting. As Chris summed up her demonstration, "I want my marks to tell the story. That's what it's all about." And, as all who attended the fall meeting observed, Chris succeeded beautifully!

Christine is a Signature Member of the Pastel Society of America and is a member of the IAPS' Master Circle. She is an award-winning artist on the international level, including winning the 2015 "Prix de Pastel" Best of Show Award and the 2013 Gold Medal of IAPS Award. Visit her web page at [www.swannportraits.com](http://www.swannportraits.com).

## Book Review

### **ITTEN - The Elements of Color**

**A treatise on the Color System of Johannes Itten based on his book *The Art of Color***

Edited and foreword and evaluation by Faber Birren

A book review By Chris Powell

This fascinating book summarizes Johannes Itten's exploration of color. His studies deal with seven kinds of color contrasts:

1. Contrast of hue
2. Light - dark contrast
3. Cold - warm contrast
4. Complementary contrast
5. Simultaneous contrast
6. Contrast of saturation
7. Contrast of extension

The book is laid out well with color plates displaying each contrast. Itten, quite an art historian, mentions various painters and particular paintings which exemplify each color element. However, to see the examples, since they are not printed in the book, it was beneficial to google the names of painters and titles on an iPad or computer.

*Itten - The Elements of Color* can be borrowed from the public library or purchased on amazon.com new or used. The book can also be downloaded from [www.monoskop.org](http://www.monoskop.org) however, I found the color plates are not as vivid as those in the book, but still informative.

*Itten's Color Star* (cited by Christine Swann during her demo at our fall meeting) package with its cutout patterns displays the various harmonic complementary color combinations. It can be purchased "used" at a fraction of the original price from amazon.com It is a very helpful tool to use for color harmony.

I recommend studying this treatise on Itten's color system since color contrasts influence the compositional strength and emotional effects of our paintings. Color contrasts are powerful.

## Art Tips: Try This - Three Variations on the Same Painting

### **Catching the Light--Three Times Around**

By Jean Hirons

My husband and I celebrated our 20th wedding anniversary at the Inn at Little Washington. During a late afternoon walk, I saw a small shed in the distance that was lit with afternoon light. After taking many

pictures, I realized that I had my subject for an upcoming demo for the Rockville Art League. My talk was on doing a useful underpainting and I planned to use hard pastel and alcohol, which I've been using for a number of years now.

However, when I started looking at the picture, I realized that it was the perfect "center of interest" painting, something which lends itself nicely to a watercolor underpainting. Not having used watercolor in a number of years, however, I was not about to use it for the Rockville Art League! (I thought my "Richard McKinley phase" had ended!)



Catching the Light, 1

Note: unlike Richard McKinley, I decided to apply the watercolor to the board flat on a table, rather than standing it upright on the easel. This kept the watercolor from draining to the bottom.

I did the demonstration and finished it in my studio. Then I did it again as a demo for my class at Washington ArtWorks, using the same size Pastelbord but a watercolor underpainting. This was a revelation! I realized that the hard pastel was filling in a lot of the surface tooth on the Pastelbord, leaving it fairly smooth. The watercolor



Catching the Light, 2

underpainting retained all the tooth and it was a joy to work on! I was in pastel heaven! In doing the second painting, I was influenced by the time of day that I did the demo. On the way to the studio in the morning, I saw a lot of blues and blue greens in the trees and decided to use these in my second painting. Thus, the first painting is warmer and looks more like afternoon light, while the second is cooler and looks more like morning.

One of the projects for the class was making one's own surface. So I decided to do it yet again on a hand-prepared toned surface. The surface is BFK Rives printmaking paper with two coats of clear Colourfix Liquid primer, toned with umber and sienna liquid acrylic paints. I did a light pencil sketch but no underpainting, beginning directly on the surface with Girault pastels. To begin with I was at a loss for the colors, but the reddish brown drew me to blue green complements and I finally settled on a palette. I displayed the three paintings in my studio at the Open Studios weekend at Washington ArtWorks early in November.



Catching the Light, 3

People were really fascinated with the pictures. The difference in color, light effects and the different texture of the third painting really interested people. They were also interested in the difference in sharpness between #1 and #2 and the softer look of #3. Some thought #3 had more depth to it. Others liked the degree of contrast in #1 and #2.

Unlike some artists who always use the same surface, I enjoy using different surfaces that can produce different looks. Through years of experimentation, I've gained a sense of which surface will work best for each subject. But sometimes different surfaces work equally well!

### **Can You Lend A Hand?**

Do you have experience with setting up PayPal or with web page design and management? If so, please let the board know. We are looking for people to help us modernize our MPS on-line services. Please talk with one of the board members if you can offer assistance.

Many thanks to the members who sent in items to this Winter's newsletters! We really appreciate your contributions!

If you would like to contribute articles, book reviews, or recommend a museum exhibition, please contact [mdpastels@gmail.com](mailto:mdpastels@gmail.com).

### **Parting Thought:**

"Make your art a gift of inspiration to others to work toward better things."

-- Richard Schmid

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