



## Maryland Pastel Society

### Winter Newsletter

January 2015

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#### MPS Board & Volunteers

**Co-Pres:** Dawn Capron and Joyce Lister

**Treas:** Mary Anne Warner

**Corr.Sec:** Linda Light

**Rec.Sec:** Barbara Steinacker

**Membership:** Kathleen Risk

**Workshops:** Joyce Lister

**Exhibition Chair:** Susan Gleason

**Web:** Mary Boeh

#### Planning Calendar

**Jan 24:** Winter Meeting at the Gary J. Arthur Community Center in Glenwood

**Feb 1:** Deadline for membership dues

**Feb 7:** Deadline for Spring Signature Member applications

**Mar 28:** Deadline to submit items for Spring Newsletter

#### From the President's Easel

**2015!** The Maryland Pastel Society welcomes you to another year of learning and growing with pastels. The Board has planned a year of demonstrations and workshops designed to strengthen your skills and ignite your interest.

We will begin our first General Meeting of the year on Saturday, January 24 with a demonstration by Greg Johannesen. Greg is a Signature Member of MPS and has been involved with art all his life. He has shown an affinity for nature, particularly wildlife, and favors beach and nautical settings. Greg received a degree from Tidewater Community College in Advertising Design and Drawing and earned a BFA at Virginia Commonwealth University in Illustration. He's worked for 20 years as an illustrator and graphic designer and has his own studio in Southern Maryland where he also pursues fine art, often using the Chesapeake Bay as his inspiration. On January 24, Greg will demonstrate how to paint a boat, always a tricky proposition.

Our April 18, Spring Meeting will feature a demonstration on nightscapes by Christine Ivers that will follow her three-day workshop on the same topic. There are still two slots open for the workshop. If you want to sign up, see the MPS web page for additional information.

The August 1st Summer Meeting will be on the Eastern Shore at the Chesapeake Studio of Fine Arts. David Lawton will demonstrate, and then teach small groups, figure drawing. More information will follow, but please do some forward thinking about this day because we will need to RSVP with numbers ahead of time. Think early seafood dinner!

The Fall Meeting will take place on October 24, when Christine Swann will demonstrate portrait painting. Check out her website! [swannportraits.com](http://swannportraits.com)

Finally, you will receive information about a workshop with Doug Dawson to be held in conjunction with our 2015 National Shades of Pastel Exhibition scheduled for the first week in October. Doug will be our judge for the show on the 5th and conduct a workshop in Rock Creek Park on the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of October.

Please mark your calendars now for all five of these outstanding opportunities.

**Apr 18:** Spring Meeting at Gary J. Arthur Community Center at Glenwood

**Jul 8 - Aug 23:** Members-only show at Quiet Waters, Annapolis

**Aug 1:** Summer Meeting at The Chesapeake Fine Art Studios, Stevensville, Maryland

**Oct 5- 28:** SOP show at the Hill Center, Washington, DC

**Oct 24:** 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](#)

and....

Hoping they will be helpful, I have noted four of Harley Brown's "30 'magic' solutions to common problems"\*:

- 18. When painting something with volume, feel its thickness. Create the illusion that there's a backside to it. The great actor, playing a dentist, makes you feel he's been a dentist all his life.
- 26. Always work your backgrounds along with your foregrounds. A good habit worth acquiring.
- 27. Don't wait for inspiration to strike. Remember that inspiration kicks in only after the first stroke, when you get lost in your creative juices.
- 29. In painting as in life, you can get away with a great deal as long as you have your values right.

Looking forward to seeing you January 24th!!!

Dawn

\*Harley Brown's Eternal Truths for Every Artist, Harley Brown with Lewis Barrett Lehrman, International Artist Publishing, Inc., pages 118-119.

### Next Meeting

As noted above, our Winter General Meeting is January 24th. Come join us for a terrific demo by Greg Johannesen.

To learn more about Greg, please visit his website

<http://gregjohannesen.com>

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 24th at Glenwood! ([Click here for directions to the Gary J. Arthur Community Center](#))

### Upcoming Workshops & Opportunities

There are two slots left in the Christine Ivers Workshop to be April 15-17, 2015 at the Howard County Center for the Arts, Ellicott City, MD.

This is a 3-day indoor pastel workshop that will focus on drawing, temperature, and techniques of painting the night or nocturnal scenes. Chris will also provide students with valuable advertising and camera information from her many years in the advertising field. Students can work from their own photos or ones taken by Chris and can also work on their own surface or on Chris's handmade boards. Students of all levels are welcome.

Chris is Past-President of the CT Pastel Society and a Master Pastelist of the PSA. She was inducted into the IAPS Master Circle of Pastelists and also holds memberships in many other well-known art organizations. Her work has won significant awards, honors and recognition in numerous shows and exhibitions and has been featured in several art books and magazines.

Please visit the [MPS web page for additional information](#).

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

## Upcoming Exhibitions

Heads Up! We have two big shows coming up later this year.

This summer the MPS will have a Members Only show at Quiet Waters in Annapolis. In the fall, we will have our biennial national show, "Shades of Pastel." The SOP show will be at the Hill Center at Old Naval Hospital in Washington, DC.

More information on each of these shows will be sent out later this year.

## Featured Artist: Bob Borrell



I am fundamentally a landscape artist who occasionally dabbles in still life and abstracts. Having had an earlier background in watercolor I found it easy to take up pastels when I took my first workshop with Lisa Sheppard in 2010 at the Carroll County Art Center, Westminster, MD. I have been plugging away and honing my skills ever since.

I enjoy the immediacy of pastels and the tactile effects of painting on paper or board. Usually I begin with a quick charcoal study to come up with a readable and valid composition. My reference for these studies is most often a photo taken locally or of the New Jersey shore. I have done plein air, which is the normal modus operandi at summer workshops. But, I feel more comfortable and less distracted in my studio. Often I will use a plein air piece as a starting point for a larger, more refined painting.

In 2012 I took an abstract workshop in York, PA with Linda McCloskey using acrylic and watercolors. I have since moved to York and have taken several more abstract workshops with different instructors. I feel these short courses have helped loosen me up and have definitely affected my color choices and structure in my pastels. I have done a few abstract pastels, but consider myself still in the middle of a learning curve. I have included my "Xmas Selfie" (above right) as an example.

I am rather happy with my progress and the response I have gotten from my peers..... I have been juried into several exhibits in Annapolis,

MD and York, PA. and received several awards in both towns. I'm most proud of the Signature Member status I received in 2013 from the Maryland Pastel Society. It is great to have such a strong community of artists willing to share their time and skills supporting aspiring artists and each other. My only regret having moved away from Maryland is that it is very difficult to volunteer more.

Hopefully someone seeing my art work today will relate to the mood and sense of place that caused me to render the piece to begin with. My work is currently on display at Broadway Art, 106 Broadway, Hanover, PA 17331. I am one of four local resident artists... click on [squareup.com/market/broadway-art-gallery](http://squareup.com/market/broadway-art-gallery) to see the fall exhibit.



Signature Members may sign up to be a Featured Artist by sending an email to [mdpastels@gmail.com](mailto:mdpastels@gmail.com).

## Inspiration Corner

### Member Inspirations

Art inspires! Chris Powell shares this story with us:

"I recently read a book by my cousin, Jamie Malanowski, - the thrilling, fascinating description of the life of "Commander Will Cushing, Daredevil Hero of the Civil War". But I draw your attention to it only because the author was inspired to investigate and write the history

because of an illustration, "The Sinking of the Albemarle" by C. E. Monroe Jr. which appeared in Life Magazine in 1961 to mark the centennial of the Civil War. When you are creating and working, remember that your Art could be the source for others inspiration. May you have a creative year full of inspiration! Celebrate your Artwork!"

## Presidential Pointers

The Maryland Pastel Society has a legacy of wonderful, dedicated leaders. Here is part 2 in our series of tips from our presidents, past and present:

### What advice would you give to someone new to pastels?

#### Jack Pardue

Take the wrappers off your pastels before you start to paint with them!!! Paint with them, use them like a paint brush. Drawing, composition and color value, and warm and cool colors, are essential to your success.

#### Dawn Capron

I would advise those new to pastels to take a lot of workshops and to read a lot of books by pastel artists. Take classes too. Ask Board members and others in MPS about borrowing pastel books, including me! Start with me!

#### Jean Hirons

I would advise them to buy the best materials they can, but also to experiment. Buying samplers of paper and pastels from Dakota is a great way to try out various pastels on different surfaces. The key to beautiful pastels is the ability to apply the pastel in multiple layers of luminous color. This requires both a knowledge of ones materials and an understanding of values and color theory. Try to study with a good teacher if you can. If you are working full time, take workshops with people whose work you admire.

#### David Lawton

The medium of pastel is the perfect bridge between drawing and painting. Always try to see and paint shapes not things. Learn as much as you can from as many artists as you can and never stop learning! When deciding on a specific teacher find one whose main goal is to help you become the best artist you can be. Part of that means they will always tell you the truth about your work both the good and the bad.

#### Deborah Maklowski

The same advice I give my colored pencil students: great technique cannot overcome poor composition; the right value is more important than the right color; pay close attention to edges and make conscious choices about which to lose and which to find; and if you think your job as an artist is to copy photographs, then you seriously need to rethink why you're spending so much time and money making a painting look just like photo you already have.

#### Joyce Lister

Have a wide range of colors and values and get the best quality paper and pastels you can afford. Experiment with mark making and different ways to hold the pastel stick and control the marks you make. Attend

classes, watch demos, view dvds, and read books and articles by artists whose work you admire so you can observe the different ways artists work and achieve the results they get. Don't be afraid of making a mistake. Pastel is a forgiving medium and there is no right or wrong way to paint. Above all, relax and have fun.

### **Dolores Andrew**

I usually try to determine where they are coming from -- what experience they have in other possible media, and go from there. I try to discuss the similarities between the media, and also the differences. I urge them to try "color"--- some are afraid of "IT", so I give them simple paper and simple objects to try at first, and work up to more complicated subjects. Of course, some want to start with portraits and water scenes right away, so I tell them that these are like practicing multiplication tables before beginning the big math problems. The biggest problem I sometimes have is with people, mostly very neat ladies, who don't want to get their hands dirty !!

## **Member News**



Treatise

**Lynn Goldstein's** artwork, "Treatise," was accepted for exhibition at the Smithsonian S. Dillon Ripley Center in Washington, DC. The work will be on view from Feb 4 - May 1, 2015. Lynn's painting, "Like Glass" won 3rd place in Maryland Pastel Society's "Pastels Unleashed." Additionally, Lynn is preparing for a solo exhibition of pastel and mixed media landscape paintings to take place Apr 20 - Jun 8, 2015 at the Crossroads Gallery in Falls Church, Virginia. Lynn continues to teach pastel painting weekly at the Workhouse Arts Center in Lorton, Virginia, as well as various



Between Seasons

**Alice Kelsey's** oil and pastel paintings were recently featured in a solo exhibition at the Bellefonte Art Museum, and an Invitational Exhibition at the Art Association of Harrisburg. An article about the five artist exhibit at the Art Association appeared in the [Patriot News](#).

**John Davis Held** will be the featured artist in March at the Troika Gallery in Easton, MD. Most works will be in pastel with a few oil paintings as well.

**Jean Hirons** will be teaching pastel painting on Mondays from 10:00-1:00, from Jan 19 - Mar 23 at Washington ArtWorks (12276 Wilkins Ave., Rockville). The class is open to all levels and will focus on color usage. Students typically do landscape paintings from photos. To sign up, [click here](#). Jean will also be teaching a workshop at the biennial IAPS convention this year for the first time. The workshop, which will focus on working with color studies and the use of black and white photo references, is full.

workshops throughout the year.

### **More Member News!**

The Yosemite Conservancy has accepted **Penny McCre** as a Volunteer guest art instructor in Yosemite National Park for one week in 2015. The Yosemite Art Center strives to inspire visitors to connect to the park through art. The volunteer guest artists lead daily workshops and encourage creative involvement in the arts for a wide array of park visitors. The Yosemite volunteer guest artist is a residency position with Yosemite Conservancy. The volunteer guest artist is responsible for leading six public art workshops beginning on the Monday of their assigned week and ending the following Saturday. While there, Penny's artwork will be on display.

**Joan Howe** has a one-man show at Woods Memorial Church in Severna Park, Maryland from January 6 - February 15. The church boasts a long corridor leading to their main meeting room and always has art work displayed there. It is a very nice and popular place to display one's work. Joan also will have 2 pieces on the newly established "art wall" at the main lodge in Heritage Harbour.

**Philip Bennet** has a monotype titled Swirls #2 in the Old Print Gallery's winter show that runs through February 14. His print as well as all the others in the show can be viewed by going to [www.oldprintgallery.com](http://www.oldprintgallery.com) and scrolling down to the description of the show.

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

We're thrilled to welcome new members Kathleen Edwards, Kathleen Quinn, September McGee, Bonnie Butler, Mary Bird, Donna Finley, Darlene Perry, and Brendan Donegan.

Also, the board is pleased to announce that we have two new Signature Members. Congratulations to Bonnie Butler and Susan Pearcy!

### **Past Events**

#### **Results of the MPS Multi-Media Show at the Strathmore**

By Linda Light

The MPS' first ever pastel and mixed media juried exhibition, "Pastel Unleashed: A Mixed Media Approach" at the Strathmore Mansion in Bethesda was a great success.

The show opened on November 22 and ran through January 4th. To the right, our Juror, Stewart White, awards the first place award to Chris Powell. Stewart is from Baltimore, MD and is a nationally known watercolorist, architectural designer and illustrator. He is currently the president of the Mid-Atlantic Plein Air Painters Association.



**First Place:**

"Follow Through" by Chris Powell won first place. Juror, Stewart White said, "The composition is very well considered, there are several aspects of water that are expressed here, movement, texture, reflectance, and opacity."



**Second Place:**

"Surface Attraction" by Dawn Capron won second place. Juror, Stewart White said, "The painting walks on the edge of representational and abstraction: the marks of pigment are considered, space is defined and objects recede and come forward. It is a delight to bounce the eye to and fro."



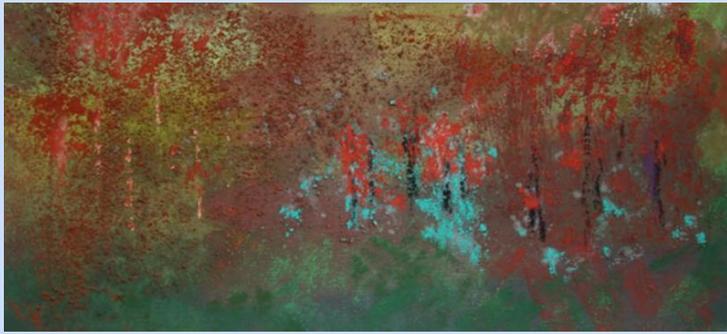
**Third Place:**

"Like Glass" by Lynn Goldstein won third place. Juror, Stewart White said "This is a very good design, usually a reflecting image creates a nice symmetrical design, but this goes a bit further in that areas of the dark value balance the smaller lighter areas and bring attention to the delicacy of the detail."



**Merit Award:**

"Conflagration" by Deborah Maklowski won a merit award. Juror, Stewart White said, "As an abstraction it holds together/ excellent design and balance of shapes."



**Merit Award:**

"Woods" by Barbara Steinacker won a merit award. Juror, Stewart White Said, "The scale is wonderful, intimate, mysterious, full of harmony, very jewel like, and the composition is daring as the values are all in the same key and yet there is form and focus."



**Merit Award:**

"Practice Makes Perfect" by Susan Ellis won both a merit award and the Members' Choice Award. Stewart White, our juror, said, "There is a confident execution with a bit of the freshness of the sketch. I like the transitions."

Finally, congratulations to MaryAnne Warner and Susan Ellis for the sales of their paintings "Storm Coming" and "Practice Makes Perfect."

## Fall Meeting: Jane McGraw-Teubner Warms Members up with a Winter Scene Demo

By Catherine Nickle



At our Fall members meeting, we were honored to welcome Jane McGraw-Tuebner as our guest artist. Jane painted a winter scene in pastel.

Jane loves being outside and enjoys plein air painting. For the demonstration, she chose a favorite location near her home in New

York state. It was along a trail she often treks. "That's my love - landscapes. I like to go back to places I've been many times before."

For plein air painting, Jane uses the All-in-One Easel as it is light weight and is designed to carry both pastels and paper. She has her main pastels in a little mint box. Jane strongly recommends starting with a 2x3 inch thumbnail study. She typically uses a black sharpie and white pencil on gray paper to create a three-value study. She reminded us to focus on big shapes, not details. Jane follows advice once received from Maggie Price: do a 10-minute warm up study before starting a painting. She suggested we try this, too, and she strongly recommended setting a timer for the task. Jane then produced her color sketch, done on a 5x7 inch warm grey Canson paper. This color sketch was used as her reference guide as she proceeded.

To start the painting, Jane sketched her scene with pencil on Wallis mounted on foam core. Jane likes to use white Wallis, Uart 400 or 500, or Pastel Board. "I work on white most of the time, because I often do an underpainting." This is the approach she demonstrated at the meeting.

Jane used a limited palette of 15-20 colors for the winter landscape. She used local colors for the underpainting. The dark shapes were blocked in with a medium blue grey. She applied the lightest light color to serve as a placeholder "so I'll know what my limits are." No bright colors were used in the under painting. In some spots, she let the raw surface show through. She painted over the trees in the underpainting stage and indicated that she would redefine them later. The underpainting was fixed with an alcohol wash, starting at the top and working down. This gave us a sense of where the painting was going.

Jane described her approach: "My work always starts out rough and a little loose, then I'll tighten up". As she worked, she explained further, "I'm not putting in any details yet. They will be [added] in the last half hour of the painting... The last thing I'll put in will be the trees." While she keeps the original photo reference nearby, Jane relies mostly on her small study to guide her.

As Jane continued, she painted the snow with subtle color and value changes. Yellow was used to get a warm feeling of sun on the snow. She made the shadow edges soft but colorful to make them look alive. Jane used Terry Ludwig medium cobalt blue to develop snow shadows and establish variations in them. She then used the blue on the tree trunks for reflected shadow. She pointed out that trees get lighter as they go up to the sky and as they go further in the distance; she applied lavender over the trees in the distance to set them back. Jane observed that winter trees in the background often take on a soft brown pink glow. Also, she pointed out that reflections are duller on ice than on water and colors are closer in value. "The color of ice is closer in value than water would be. The trick is keeping ice from looking like water."

She reminded us to try to keep our paintings as abstract as possible. Also, she noted that it is nice to put in an unexpected color note, for example a touch of turquoise or red.

Jane painted with a light touch and kept some areas close in value, vague, and mysterious. She said, "Don't let an area look like a repair job, and don't overthink or you get hung up on the detail": Jane stressed that we should not try to put everything we see in the painting or it will look cluttered. She also recommended that we draw the negative shapes, not the object. Other pointers:

- Do not trust photos. "Listen to your painting...Listen to what it needs."
- Do try to make a strong statement, not hesitant strokes.
- Watch for repetition of shapes and equal spacing.
- If you need to rework an area, brush off the pastel and repaint. You can use alcohol to set and start over with pastels.
- Step back from your painting to evaluate and listen to your painting. Jane works in 20 minute segments then steps away from the painting.

Jane does not spray her pastels nor use mats. She uses spacers, museum glass and plein air frames.

It was a wonderful demonstration! Members were fascinated with the way Jane captured the reflections in the ice and how beautifully she transformed a plain white pastel surface into a winter inspiration!



Jane does a small color sketch before starting her pastel painting.



Working on white paper, she blocks in initial colors.



Jane then applies alcohol to set the underpainting.



Jane adds the final touches after a wonderfully informative demonstration.

Visit Jane's webpage to see more of her pastels <http://janemcgraw-teubner.com>.

## Desmond O'Hagan Workshop: Loosen Up and Enjoy Painting

By Shirley Boats and Mary Boeh



In November, MPS hosted a 3-day workshop with Desmond O'Hagan. It was a wonderful workshop. Shirley Boats summed it up well:

"I had the good fortune recently to attend the Desmond O'Hagan workshop. Desmond is an artist who is not afraid to show strong strokes in his paintings that can only be accomplished using a stick of pastel. His compositions, mostly city scenes at night, were quite complex. He asked us to use markers to do two black, white and gray value studies for our compositions. At first I balked because I was anxious to start my own painting. However, I found the exercise to be very beneficial as I sometimes have difficulty determining value. He suggests turning the photo upside down to study the values. This too was of great help as the photo becomes abstract. Desmond also challenged me to use color and pastel techniques that were out of my comfort zone."

"I found Desmond to be approachable, informative and an effective teacher. His enthusiasm encouraged me to consider painting more complicated subject matter and try unusual colors and pastel technique. In a nutshell, loosen up and enjoy painting."

When it comes to composition, Desmond offered some simple "rules" to get us started:

- \* Don't put a subject in the center, unless it is a portrait.
- \* Never cut the composition in half, vertically or horizontally.
- \* Maintain balance.
- \* Look at good artwork [for examples of good composition].
- \* Be a little unpredictable.
- \* Experiment.

Desmond also emphasized the importance of contrast and how to achieve contrast using changes in value, color, and temperature. "Your eye is attracted to the area with more contrast," he noted. In a slide show, he showed us examples: where values were similar, there were no hard lines, and an edge was typically represented by an extreme change in value. Desmond noted that if you have the right values, you are "75 percent there". He acknowledged that all artists struggle with values; as Shirley noted above, Desmond suggested turning your painting upside down to help assess value. He also suggested another

option: set your camera settings to black and white and then look at your image using your camera. If the image looks good, you're on track; if it looks gray, it's not working, and you need to make adjustments.

Next, Desmond discussed color contrast. He showed us color contrast through his use of intense color against muted colors, citing that gray-blues and gray-greens are among his favorite muted colors. Thirdly, Desmond explained that it is important to contrast color temperatures - warm vs. cool colors. If your colors become too warm, add cools and vice versa; if your colors are too cool, add warms, but be sure to stay in the same value range.

Desmond likes to work on Canson Mi-Tientes colored papers - grays, burgundy, and tans, for example. Once Desmond has decided on his composition and blocked it out on his surface in charcoal, he begins to apply the dark pastels. The darks are the road-map. The bones. When blocking in the darks, he simplifies. "Anywhere I see I can connect my darks, I'll do it." He builds his darks using colors like deep blue, burnt umber, dark green, pewter green, and black (he uses black to darken other colors).

"When you are working on dark paper," he notes, "all your darks seem lighter until you add the lights. Then they [the darks] turn dark." Working from dark to light, Desmond next adds the mid-tones, followed by "upper mid-tones". At the very end, he adds the lights - the frosting on the cake. He never uses white pastels. Instead, to capture "white", he will use a light color such as light blue, green, yellow or pink.

An important component of painting is individual style. Desmond recommends that you vary your strokes - change direction and apply different amounts of pressure on the pastel to create character. Change your shapes. Change your strokes. Big bold strokes and implied details add interest to a pastel painting. "Treat a painting like a conversation. Say what you need to say, and stop when you've said it."

Desmond emphasized that the whole idea of developing a style comes from doing a lot of painting. The more you paint, you will find your style and color combinations that work for you. "Paint how you see," he said. Certainly, by the end of the 3-day workshop, all attendees had learned to "see" a little differently, as evidenced by the wonderful works on each easel in the room.



Desmond planned out his composition in advance. Here you see the composition drawn in charcoal.



He begins blocking in the darks.



He continues adding darks. Note how he simplified the forms.



He begins adding the mid-tones. He varies the strokes for added interest.



Finally, Desmond adds the lights and the painting is done. Wow!



The class listens attentively as Desmond explains how to paint realistic trees by varying strokes and values

To see more of Desmond's artwork, visit his website, <http://www.desmondohagan.com>.

## Art Tips & Treasures

### The Sharples Family - Distinguished Artists and Pastellists

By Mary Boeh

While I am not a hard-core devotee, I do enjoy an occasional episode of BBC's Antiques Roadshow, especially when an episode features a forgotten art treasure. Usually it's an oil painting, a small sculpture, a watercolor, or perhaps an illustration or poster, but one day, I was tickled to see a beautiful pastel portrait. The art expert on the show was delighted, so I knew it was going to be a good one. It was a pastel portrait from the 18th century. A French artist? No. This pastel portrait was painted by British artist James Sharples. What was more exciting was that Sharples travelled to the United States and painted distinguished Americans, to include George and Martha Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, Dolly Madison, and John Adams. I was intrigued. As soon as the episode was over, I searched the Internet for more information about James Sharples.

James Sharples, Sr., was born around 1752 in Lancashire, England. By the age of 22, he had exhibited at the Liverpool Society of Artists and subsequently sent exhibits to the Royal Academy from 1779 to 1785. He advertised as a "portrait painter in oil and crayons", crayons being the term at the time for pastels. He married three times, his first two wives died young, each parenting one son, George and Felix, who later became artists. James' third wife was one of his drawing students, Ellen

Wallace Sharples. Ellen was known for her miniatures as well as pastel portraits.[1]

The Sharples travelled to America where James set up business in 1794 initially in New York, and later in Philadelphia. He focused his business on making profiles of local and national politicians. According to Neil Jeffares' *Dictionary of pastelists before 1800*, Sharples was pretty much the only serious pastel artist active in the United States. His portraits were in great demand. He typically completed pastel portraits in two hours, charging \$20 for a full face and \$15 for a profile. Sharples made his own "crayons" and reportedly used a fine brush to apply powdered pastels. Sharples also used a physiognotrace, a mechanical drawing aid invented by Saint-Mémin, to quickly capture the outline of the subject's profile. This enabled him to work quickly and make accurate copies of his portraits.

Because copies of famous people were popular, Sharples and his family members would copy his original portraits for resale. According to his wife, Ellen, "I decided soon after our arrival in Philadelphia, where Congress then assembled, to make my drawing, which had been learnt and practised as an ornamental art for amusement, available to a useful purpose. Mr. Sharples was usually engaged drawing in crayons the portraits of the most distinguished Americans, Foreign Ministers, and other distinguished visitants from Europe: copies were frequently required; these I undertook, and was so far successful as to have as many commissions as I could execute. They were thought equal to the originals, price the same." [2] James' children Felix, James Jr. and Rolinda joined the family enterprise at ages 17, 15, and 13, respectively. Each became known as distinguished artists in their own right. [3]

James Sharples died in 1811 in New York. After his death, Ellen and daughter Rolinda returned to England. Ellen founded the Bristol Fine Arts Academy in 1844 and died in 1849. She had trained her daughter Rolinda in the art of painting and drawing. [4] Rolinda specialized in portraits and genre paintings in oil. She exhibited at the Royal Academy and the Society of British Artists, of which she became an honorary member. [5] Sons, George, Felix, and James, Jr. also distinguished themselves as artists. Between 1808 and 1811, Felix Sharples, was in Virginia, painting pastels in Norfolk, Suffolk, and many of the Tidewater counties. [6] If you search the Internet for each of the family members, you will find plenty of images of their artwork. Here are some examples:



Martha Washington, pastel by James Sharples.



George Washington, pastel by James Sharples.



Thomas Jefferson, pastel by James Sharples.



George Washington, pastel by Ellen Wallace Sharples.



Sarah Lloyd Hillhouse, pastel by Ellen Wallace Sharples



Self portrait of Rolinda Sharples and her mother Ellen (oil).



Portrait of a Man, ca. 1811-1824, pastel by Felix Sharples.



Pastel Portrait of John Broadley Wilson by George Sharples.



Eleanor (Nelly) Parke Custis, pastel by James Sharples.

- [1] Jeffares, Neil. *Dictionary of pastellists before 1800*. Online Edition, updated 2 December 2014. <http://www.pastellists.com/Articles/Sharples.pdf>
- [2] Quick, Richard. Bristol Art Gallery Catalogue of the Sharples Collection, 1900. <http://library.si.edu/digital-library/book/cataloguewithbio00city>
- [3][http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James\\_Sharples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Sharples)
- [4][http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen\\_Sharples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ellen_Sharples)
- [5][http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolinda\\_Sharples](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rolinda_Sharples)
- [6]<http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/VAGuide/va-art.html>

## Call for Volunteers

We are always looking for help with the newsletter. If you would like to contribute articles, book reviews, or recommend a museum exhibition, please contact [mdpastels@gmail.com](mailto:mdpastels@gmail.com).

Thank you...

- Penny McCrea for volunteering to join Bob Borrell as hospitality co-chair.
- All the members who contributed to this issue of the newsletter.

## Parting Thought:

"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way - things I had no words for."

-- Georgia O'Keeffe

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