

Where Art Lives

Established in 1914 January 2024



Skylight Project, C'est Tout Fini!

After years of planning, and thanks to tremendous support from our generous donors, the Lyme Art Association's Skylight Project is complete. The skylight system was designed by noted architect Charles Platt when the gallery was built in 1921. He created an ideal environment for viewing fine art, bathing the gallery in natural light while preserv-

ing wall space. After 100 years, though, leaking and energy loss had become major problems.

The project included replacement of the gallery skylights, the art studio skylights, the roof, the addition of insulation in the attic, and upgrading the electrical system to ensure safety and compliance. Construction began July 17th and wrapped up by mid-September.

Today the new, insulated skylights have made the building weathertight and sustainable, while preserving the building's historic character. This project was not only critical for maintaining the structural integrity of the building, but also for improving its energy efficiency. The art on our walls is safer than ever, and we have taken strides towards reducing energy expenses - a win-win for us all.

I am very grateful for both our generous donors and for the excellent





leadership team that provided direction and oversight. This included LAA's Capital Project Committee, led by Paul Loescher (Board member and newly Elected Artist). Committee members also included Beverly Schirmeier (President), Paul Sellier (Treasurer), Caroline Walters (Board member), and myself. The project team also included Point One Architects, Enterprise Builders, and subcontractors R.A. Parady and Sons and Stanley Wiesen. (Continued on page 3.)

Save the Dates!

Sunday, January 14: Exhibitions Opening Reception 2–4 pm. First Impressions: Associate Artists Annual Show. Congratulations, New Elected Artists. Nostalgia Exhibition.

Sunday, March 3: Exhibitions Opening Reception 2–4 pm. Exhibition in 4 Acts: Rock of Ages, Phases of Light, Stillness: A Still Life, and Strictly Abstract. All the World is a Stage.

Saturday April 20. Art Supply Expo. 10 am to 3 pm.

Friday, April 26: Exhibitions Opening Reception 2–4 pm. Ship to Shore Marine Exhibition. Catherine Lorillard Wolfe Art Club Show. John Caggiano Solo Show.

Friday, May 3: Sea & Sky Soiree. Featuring Fine Art, Music, Dueling Painters and Silent Auction.

Monday, June 3: Swing for Art: Nine-hole golf party at the Old Lyme Country Club.

Saturday, June 15: Exhibitions Opening Reception 5–7 pm. Expanding Visions Exhibition. Hudson Valley Art Association, 91st National Exhibition. Hope is a Thing with Feathers featuring young artists.

Saturday, June 22: Paint the Town. Wet paint day, cocktail party and art sale. Rain date is Saturday, June 29.

Saturday, July 13: Family Day.

Saturday, July 27: Midsummer Art Festival.

Friday, August 2: Exhibitions Opening Reception 5–7 pm. Elected Artist Annual Show. Taking Flight Members Show. New Haven Paint & Clay Club Select Members Exhibition.

Friday, Sept. 20: Exhibitions Opening Reception 5–7 pm. New England Landscape Show. CT Pastel Society Renaissance in Pastel.

Wednesday, October 17, 5:30 pm. LAA Annual Membership Meeting,

Thursday, October 17, 6–9 pm.
Palate to Palette, a fun-filled evening of fine food, live music, silent auction, and mystery paintings.

Sunday, November 10: Exhibitions Opening Reception 5–7 pm. Deck the Walls Holiday Show. Bon Appetit.

Details at www.LymeArtAssociation.org

From Board President Beverly Schirmeier

I want to start by expressing my profound gratitude for your generosity and goodwill towards LAA. Thanks to you, our beautiful building with its brand-new skylights is ready to welcome us into a bright new year! Our staff and committees have been hard at work planning a full calendar of art shows, educational programs, and community events.



Membership here has many benefits for artists and art supporters alike – excellent art on display throughout the year, a wide array of learning opportunities, and the chance to greet old friends and make new acquaintances at opening receptions, members' events, art demos and lectures, family programs, and so many other wonderful events.

Understandably, providing so much to the LAA community has a price. We are facing a financial challenge this year, which we will need your help to meet. State support for cultural institutions declined this year. At the same time the cost of operations has gone up significantly, especially the cost of building insurance. Although we successfully completed the skylight project, the costs raised exponentially during fundraising, making it necessary for us to go to our reserves. We also continue to face ongoing expenses to maintain the historic building that is our home, including an urgent septic upgrade that must be done this year.

We are committed to maintaining excellence in operations and to meeting these financial challenges. Did you know that membership dues and entry fees for shows only cover about 20 percent of our budget? In order to meet the other 80 percent, our professional staff, board members, and volunteers are working diligently to identify

grant opportunities, plan special fundraising events, and cultivate corporate sponsors, while keeping a tight rein on expenses.

This is where you come in! Will you help us? Please, promptly maintain your dues, enter our shows, enjoy educational opportunities, attend our events, introduce us to your friends in the business world, and volunteer your own service. We are so grateful for your help. I look forward to working with all of you to maintain our cherished LAA and its beautiful building. Thank you again for being the core of this wonderful art association.

Board of Directors Beverly Schirmeier, President

Michael Centrella, Vice President Paul Sellier, Treasurer Katherine Simmons, Secretary Harley Bartlett, Past President John Beatty, Audit Committee Del-Bourre Bach, APEC Maura Cochran, Strategic Planning Margaret Jane DeRisio, Development Debbi Goodman, Palate to Palette Randie Kahrl, Education & Activities Lois Lawrence, Governance Paul Loescher, Capital Project, Building & Grounds Erin Schaaf, Palate to Palette Lorraine Yurkewicz, Education & Activities, **Assistant Secretary** David Zuckerbraun, Development

Staff

Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director Paul Michael, Gallery Manager Jolie Collins, Communications Manager Ann Chan, Business Manager Sara Drought Nebel, Gallery Associate Sarah Kentoffio, Gallery Assistant Franceska Nebel, Development Assistant



LAA staff kept in close contact throughout the project with the Project Superintendent, Scott DuBois, who provided oversight of the subcontractors and ensured the safety of all staff, volunteers, and guests. Thanks to Scott's help and careful planning, we were able to minimize gallery closure time, though we are all looking forward to a full summer of shows in 2024. We are grateful for the patience of our artists and visitors alike during this important project.

During gallery closures in August, we organized weekend pop-up art shows open to all members. In September volunteers helped us clean the dozens of laylights that transmit light from the attic into the galleries, as staff prepared for a strong reopening full of new exhibitions, educational programs, the annual meeting, Palate to Palette, and more. Truly there was no down-time for staff or our hard-working committees!

Thank you again to all of the contributors to the Skylight Project, especially J. David Kelsey and Caroline Walters, to whom we are deeply grateful.

What's next? The Capital Project Committee continues to evaluate the building's short and long-term needs, and has prioritized future projects based on need and feasibility. Top priorities include upgrading our outdated pump chamber to prevent untimely failure of the septic system, repainting the building's trim, and enhancing accessibility, especially at the front entranceway.

We are committed to ensuring the building's structural and historic integrity while providing a safe, welcoming, and accessible space for all of our artists and visitors. Here's to a bright future for the Lyme Art Association!

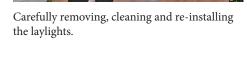
Best regards, Elsbeth Dowd, Executive Director





Studio Skylights (above), before and after









CONGRATULATIONS - New Elected Artist Members

SUSANNA DALPONTE has been painting since childhood, although earliest memories are of the paint-by-number variety. Staying within the lines, however, was never that interesting. So began the journey that today finds her painting original works in pastel.

The journey with the pastel medium began with a set of Grumbacher pastels purchased for a class taken while earning a Master of Arts from Wesleyan University. Susanna's formal art education, coupled with a business degree, led her to a career in marketing and graphic design.

Today Susanna pursues her passion for painting full-time, especially painting plein air. A life-long curiosity and love of nature compel her to paint landscapes. Portraying our ever-changing planet provides endless possibilities and inspiration. Susanna's award-winning paintings have been exhibited throughout the United States.

Primarily a plein air painter, **ISABEL LANE** is inspired by the natural beauty of the Connecticut shoreline. She holds a BFA and an MFA from The School of Visual Arts, NYC. She also holds a BS in Art Education along with her Professional Educator Certification from Southern Connecticut State University, New Haven, CT. These studies were rounded out through her involvement with the Art Students League of New York and The Lyme Academy of Fine Art, Old Lyme, CT.

James McNeil Whistler, William Turner and Emile Gruppe are just a few of the influences for her oil painting. She worked for many years as a textile designer, and her illustrations have been published in Home Textiles Today, The Language of Drawing, Merrimack Books and Portfolio 11.

PAUL LOESCHER started painting watercolors on vacation in Maine, at a camp next to a pristine mountain lake, unplugged from the world.

Paul is a graduate of Rhode Island School of Design with both a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Architecture Degree. Most of Paul's professional life as an architect was spent designing and managing residential, commercial and educational projects for both private architectural firms and for 25 years as the Facilities Planning Director and Campus Architect for Southern Connecticut State University

"Watercolor is the perfect medium for me. Painting watercolors is a struggle between what is planned and what happens when water and pigment mix. I become immersed in this give and take relationship between what I want and what is happening on the paper. What surfaces from the turbulence of the process is a painting. I strive for a mood or feeling and atmosphere in my paintings. Light and how it plays within the scene is most important. I don't try to depict every detail but leave things up to the viewer to complete the picture on their own."



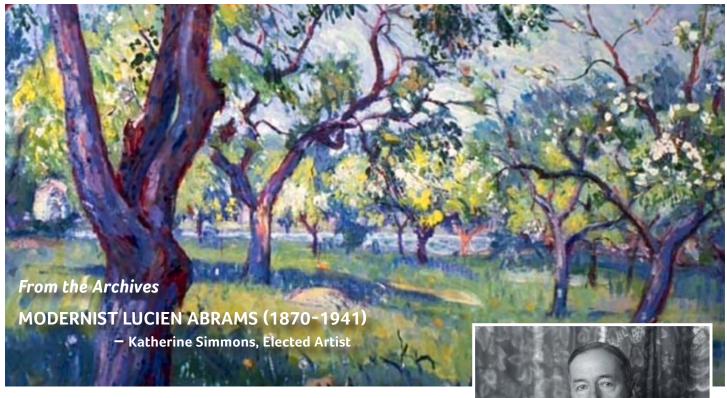
Susanna Dalponte, On the Edge, pastel



Isabel Lane, Snow Glow, oil



Paul Loescher, Waiting for the Evening Train, watercolor



Abrams exhibited with the Lyme Art Association on a regular basis from his arrival in 1915 until his death in 1941. Abrams' modernist sensibility is clearly evident in his painting, *The Orchard*, shown above from the Florence Griswold Museum collection. The influence of Fauvism is on display in this painting with its highly charged color palette.

Born into a wealthy family in Lawrence, Kansas, Abrams moved to Texas with his family in 1873. He graduated in 1892 from Princeton University furthering his studies at the Art Students League in New York City and, in 1894, at the Academy Julian in Paris.

Coming from a wealthy background, Abrams spent a considerable length of time traveling and studying art in Europe during which time his own artistic voice would emerge. Abrams studied with James A. McNeil Whistler in Paris. From 1894 to 1905 he lived in Paris or at the family villa on the Mediterranean. He painted in Belgium, Provence, Brittany, Italy, and Spain and in 1905-1906, he produced a

number of works during a six-month stay in Algeria. The following year, he worked in Rockport, Massachusetts, and New York City, returning to France in 1908 for a six-year stay, chiefly in Provence. Abrams' personal style drew inspiration from Whistler and the Impressionists, Post-Impressionists, and Fauvists painters of the period.

Abrams exhibited at the New Salon of the Société National des Beaux Arts from 1899 to 1901. From 1902 to 1914 he showed annually at the Salon d'Automne and the Société des Independents in Paris. He also exhibited at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts in 1903 and 1911, at the National Academy of Design in New York City in 1907, and with the Society of Independent Artists in 1917 and 1919. His works were shown at the Art Institute of Chicago, the Dallas Art Association, Fort Worth Museum of Modern Art and the Witte Memorial Museum, San Antonio.

At the age of 44, Lucien married his wife Charlotte Gina Onillon, a graduate of the Sorbonne. Old Lyme became his permanent home although he maintained a family home in Dallas and in San Antonio, Texas.

During his time in France, Abrams began his life-long passion of collecting the paintings of Auguste Renoir. Upon his death, Abrams bequeathed his Renoir collection to the Marion Koogler McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas. Abrams is buried with his wife at Duck River Cemetery in Old Lyme.

Sources: Ancestry.com. Antiques and Fine Art Magazine. Archive.org. AskArt.com. FindAGrave.com. FlorenceGriswoldMuseum.org. Texas State Historical Association, "Handbook of Texas", online at <u>tshaonline.org</u>.

SAVE THE DATES









Reserve Your Place in one of our 2024 Summer Workshops

THE ESSENCE OF THE SEA

July 8 thru 11 from 9 am to 4 pm

Instructor Karen Blackwood

LAA Members: \$645 ; Non-LAA Members: \$695

Register online.

A successful painting is alive! It evokes emotion and draws the viewer in, informed choices elevate your work. This four-day workshop will focus on what is essential in seascape and landscape painting where light is a factor. Basic art principles will be demonstrated and discussed, everything from color mixing to composition to "why paint this?"

Karen will start each day of the workshop with a morning demo. The rest of the first day, students will be working on color and design sketches and paintings from their own coastal plein air painting studies, sketches and or photo references. The following day will be spent outside (en plein air) with a demo from Karen and you painting or sketching your own work. The third day again outside (plein air) painting your own work from nature as Karen comes around to everyone for individual guidance. Individual guidance will be from what ever level you're at in your artistic journey with the intent of bringing you to a higher level of artistic understanding and expression.

THE BEAUTY OF BIRDS

July 15 thru 18 from 10 am to 3 pm Instructor Michael DiGiorgio

LAA Member \$575 ; Non-LAA Members: \$600

Register online.

Create realistic drawings and paintings of birds that show their true character. Using careful observation, learn to sketch birds from life capturing their unique gesture and individuality.

The second half of the course concentrates on how to paint birds and their complex plumage in watercolor, and how to place them in an environment with background foliage and light.



Karen Blackwood, Kissing the Sun, oil.



Michael DiGiorgio, Scarlet Tanager, watercolor





When Anne got up and left the gallery after our two hour long chat, I looked down at my pages of notes. This could be a novel, I thought. What an amazing life!

Dr. Anne Bingham Pierson was born on June 9th,1929 at Presbyterian Hospital at Columbia University College of Physicians and Surgeons, the same hospital where she would later earn her Master's Degree in Public Health.

When she was in first grade her family was living in Peking, Chi-

na, where her father, Woodbridge Bingham, was earning a fellowship. He was a Professor of Far Eastern History. Anne and her younger sister would ride to school every day in a rickshaw or pedicab. She saw people in poor health and, as their pediatrician in Peking was a woman, Anne realized that women could be doctors. She decided then, at age eight, that she would become a doctor someday.

Her mother was a member of the Griswold family. Ursula Griswold met Woodbridge Bingham at a concert in Old Lyme at The Brick House at Griswold Point (where Anne lives today). The Brick House was built by Anne's great grandfather, sea Captain Charles Griswold, in 1822. Anne is the eldest of four girls. Her great grand-

father's office eventually became a library. The barn is now a residence. She and Florence Griswold are distant cousins.

Anne's grandfather (Woodbridge's father), Hiram Bingham III was the famous Yale explorer who discovered Machu Picchu!

Though she knew she would become a doctor at age eight, she was captivated by art at a young age as well. One of Anne's elder Bingham relatives was a painter.

She worked very hard from a young age to attend Vassar College and go to Medical School at Physicians and Surgeons Hospital/Columbia University. There she met her husband Richard

Pierson, whose father Dr. Richard Narns Pierson delivered her when she was born! After raising four children, she went back to earn her Master's Degree in Public Health, achieving her lifelong dream of becoming a doctor.

Dr. Pierson wanted to develop her art career too. At the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts she began her study of watercolor with Lou Bonamarte. She studied with Diane Aeschliman, Lucy Sallick, Greg Drasler and attended workshops given by Charles Sovek,

David Laffel, John Stobart and Done Stone. She has won numerous awards and Elected Artist Memberships include: Clinton Art Society, Mystic Art Association, Guilford Art League, Madison Art Society, and Lyme Art Association since 1998, where she was also treasurer and then President from 1999-2001. She has shown her work, contributed to and supported the Lyme Art Association for over 40 years.

Even at age 94 she shows no signs of slowing down. She can be seen painting in one of the plein air groups, entering shows, going to committee meetings, making (and giving) her delicious homemade jams. This year she made Quince Jam. Quince Apples have a fascinat-

ing and very old history. Her jams are made from her own fruit. There are great stories about how she acquired and planted those bushes and trees too.

We hope to get these deliveries – jams, watercolors, wonderful stories about LAA history and her family history – for many years to come.

I am happy to say that Dr. Anne Bingham Pierson is working on her autobiography.

Ann Bingham Pierson, M.D., paintings from top:

Maine Boat Off Season, watercolor; Siberian Iris, watercolor.

IN MEMORY OF DIANE AFTON AESCHLIMAN (1944-2023) LAA Elected Artist

LAA Elected Artist Diane Afton Aeschliman was a prolific painter in all genres — still lifes, landscapes, and figure paintings along with countless portrait commissions. Disciplined, classical, representational creation of art is the hallmark of her artwork. Diane studied drawing in Paris at the Ecole des Beaux Arts with Professor Jean LeFeuvre. After she graduated from the Rhode Island School of Design, Diane taught for 14 years as an Associate Professor at the Lyme Academy College of Fine Arts.

Diane also taught for many years at Lyme Art Association, sharing her knowledge and insights with students and also finding a warm community of artists who became her dear friends. She served on its Board of Directors for three years. Among her many accolades, she was a six-time award recipient of the Connecticut Society of Portrait Artists, and was elected a lifetime member of the Providence Art Club.

On a blind date she met the love of her life, Anthony "Tony" Aeschliman whom she married in 1968. Their relationship was one of romance and humor as manifested in stacks of handmade cards that they made for one another that are works of art in and of themselves. By 1980, Diane, Tony, and their two daughters moved to a 1789 center-chimney colonial in Killingworth, Connecticut, a lovely pastoral setting where Diane could continue to pursue the things she loved: painting, gardening, and being a mother.

Diane loved her role as a grandmother and relished being "Nonna" to Renee, Emily, Jack, Alexa, and Neve. She shared her gift of making all things beautiful with them, and their experience of every holiday was like what her daughters experienced—everything was done with a special touch and an eye for detail. Easter tables had crisp white cloths, lilies in pretty pots, shiny brass candlesticks, porcelain bunnies, and a scattering of pastel chocolate eggs. Beautiful baskets for collecting dyed eggs were adorned with thick satin ribbon. Easter egg decorating was brought to a new level with a rainbow of dye and a hundred markers of every color. Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, Christmas—each holiday was a feast for the eyes and a memorable experience.

Diane will always be remembered for her quiet generosity, her strong will, her refusal to accept nonsense of any kind, and her deep love for and commitment to her husband, family and work. Her legacy of caring and seeking out the good and beautiful things in people and in the world will be carried on through her children and grandchildren as well as through her many paintings. Her paintings serve as daily reminders of her presence and the joyful way she looked at and lived her life.

DIANE AESCHLIMAN MEMORIAL FUND

Diane's family has arranged to set up a memorial fund that will endow an award in her name for the Annual Elected Artist show. We are very grateful for her family's wish to honor Diane's memory in this way.

The family of artists, art enthusiasts, and patrons at Lyme Art Association invite you to join them in making a donation to the fund.

Donations may be made online.

Make checks payable to Lyme Art Association with Diane Aeschliman Memorial Fund in the memo line, and mail your donation to: Lyme Art Association, 90 Lyme Street, Old Lyme, Connecticut 06371.









Thank you so much to everyone who has contributed to the Lyme Art Association. We are deeply grateful for your support!

SECOND CENTURY CAPITAL CAMPAIGN: SKYLIGHT PROJECT

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