



Blue Heron Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of America

# Blue Heron News

*October 2018*

## Announcements

### 2019 Calendar News from Betty Oliver

The 2019 black and white calendars are on sale for \$5.00 each. If you haven't purchased one, don't delay, as there are only a few calendars left. For 2020, Joe Nicholas's paintings will be featured for his many years of service to the Blue Heron Chapter as an instructor and a leader.

### Guest Artist Workshop News from Gail Goodman

This past summer the Blue Heron Chapter Board met and discussed several options for choosing a guest artist for the three-day workshop that is usually held in the spring. I presented material from six different artists for the board to review. Although, Susan Frame was not a part of this list, the board unanimously agreed to send an exploratory letter to Susan to determine if she was interested and willing to accept our contractual requirements.

I am proud and very excited to announce that Susan Frame will be our guest artist for the external workshop from April 26 - 28, 2019. Susan is one of my favorite artists, and she has actually conducted workshops for us in the past in 2002 and in 2010. Always interesting and creative, and the recipient of many Sumi-e awards, she will be welcomed back with very open arms. Susan has also written a book, available on Amazon, titled "Japanese Ink Painting". The original book or the red cover updated version are priced very reasonably at less than \$5.00 in many cases. This workshop will be beneficial to all skill levels among our Chapter artists. Registration for the workshop will probably open up in either December or January.

Blue Heron image is from <http://www.wetcanvas.com/Community/images/03-May-2005/21167-HeronWC500.jpg>

## 2018-19 Chapter Meetings

Month	Program
<b>October 21, 2018</b>	<b>China Trip Report and Reflection</b> <b>Mike Lane</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>
<b>November 4, 2018</b>	<b>Creative Packaging with Asian and Botanical Twist</b> <b>Gail Goodman</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>
<b>December 9, 2018</b>	<b>Painting Birds</b> <b>Joe Nicholas</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>
<b>January 13, 2019</b>	<b>Creating Depth</b> <b>Norene Spencer</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>
<b>February 16, 2019</b>	<b>Reception for Exhibition of Members' Art</b> <b>Paul Street Gallery at Titustown</b> <b>10AM-1PM</b>
<b>March 17, 2019</b>	<b>Creating Optical Illusion, Concave &amp; Convex</b> <b>Bill Larkin</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>
<b>April 27, 2019</b>	<b>Guest Artist Reception and Demonstration</b> <b>Susan Frame</b> <b>Westminster Canterbury, 2-4PM</b>
<b>May 19, 2019</b>	<b>Background Wash Techniques</b> <b>Lee Wertheimer</b> <b>Tea Party</b> <b>Pretlow Library, 2-4 PM</b>

# Close-Up with Sumi-e Painter

**Bill Larkin, 2018-2020 Chapter President**

## **Statistics**

**Family:** Wife, Gail, and children, Jeremy, Sarah and Will

**Occupation:** Retired science teacher

**Education:** B.S., M.S. Ed, both from ODU

**Favorite Painting Tool:** Toss-up between the medium flow brush and the big idea brush

**Comfort Food:** Home-grown tomatoes

**Theme Song:** "Hold on Loosely" by 38 Special

**Favorite Movie:** *The Edge* with Anthony Hopkins

**Favorite Tool:** Leatherman Multitool

**Favorite Thing to Do:** Paint with friends

***Of what achievement are you most proud?*** With my best friend, I have raised three of the neatest kids I have ever known.

***Who or what inspires you?***

- Being a drummer myself, I am passionate about the music of John Coltrane, American jazz saxophonist and composer, and Elvin Jones, American jazz drummer.
- When I play Go, an abstract strategy board game invented in China more the 2,500 years ago, I am inspired by Go Seigen, a Chinese-born Japanese master.
- The people who have kept the Blue Heron Sumi-e Chapter alive and well all these years motivate me to do my best as President.
- Ning Yeh's art inspires me to be a better painter.

***If a snapshot was taken of you enjoying a perfect day, what would it look like?***

I enjoy a mild autumn day with friends and family.

***If you could give your ten-year-old self one piece of advice, what would it be?***

Develop a sense of balance and good character and then recognize these traits in others.

***If you could invite three famous people living or dead to dinner, who would they be?*** James Madison, Deng Ming Dao and Bill Belichick

***How did you become a painter?*** I met some nice folks from Blue Heron at the Moon Festival at Town Point Park, and it all made sense to me. The more I learn about Sumi-e, the more I like it!

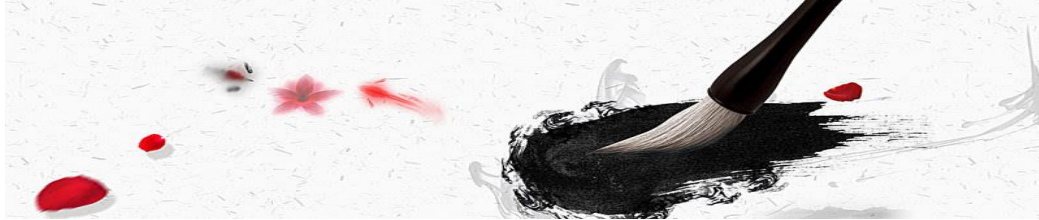
***What words of wisdom can you share with someone who does Sumi-e?***

I would say the old traditions are your friends. Don't be intimidated by the techniques and particulars, rather use them to have fun and express your inner spirit.

***Add anything else you would like to share with Blue Heron members.***

Thank you for including me in this wonderful enterprise. Please, please, please share with me how you think we can make the chapter better.

# Words from the Pros



From Pngtree

## Joe Nicholas

As this will be the first in a series of articles meant to enhance your brush painting skills, I will start with what I believe to be the most important aspect of brush painting – making the correct brush stroke! You may have heard a lot of this before, but its importance bears repeating.

All of us hope our paintings reflect *Ch'i* – that rhythmic vitality or spirit resonance that is the paramount element in Chinese art. *Ch'i* is achieved through the combination of ideas and technique. Technique, in turn, rests on the correct use of brushwork as well as ink and color. (See references at end of article.)

Getting the right brushstroke is not a simple task considering the numerous variables that are at play. Those variables include: **Paper** in use – the degree of absorbency; **Brush** in use – size and type of bristles; **Brush held properly** – vertical or slanted; **Brush correctly loaded** – moisture content, ink, or color; **Pressure** placed on brush when stroke is executed; **Brush angle** – angle to painting surface; **Movement angle** – in play when brush is in a tilted position; and last, **Speed** of the stroke. Wow, a lot to think about; however, you have control of all of those variables. I know what you are thinking: I can't think of all that every time I make a stroke. That's true. How you overcome that is through **PRACTICE**. You may not want to hear that, but it's the key to success.

Some of the more common brush stroke mistakes I encounter include: wrong moisture content in brush for the effect desired; improper loading of ink/color; trying to make a side stroke with the brush handle in an upright position; brush too small for the task at hand; wrong brush type bristles in use – soft hair vs hard hair; and, stroke too slow causing unwanted absorbency by paper.

I believe the best ways to improve your brush skills are by practicing calligraphy and copying the masters. Calligraphy will improve your center stroke brush handling dexterity and confidence – guaranteed. To work on your slanted brush skills, you need to copy, copy, and copy some more. Whatever route you choose for working on your brush skills, **THINK** about the variables **BEFORE** you put brush to paper!

As for reference material on brushwork, here are a few references I highly recommend: *Chinese Brushwork in Calligraphy and Painting*, by Kwo Da - Wei. I view this as the bible on the aesthetics of brush painting. It also devotes more than 50 pages to the techniques of Chinese brushwork.

*Chinese Brush Painting; An Instructional Guide*, by Ning Yeh. Good practical/basic instruction on how to hold and load the brush with ink (pages 12-14).

*A.B.C. of Chinese Painting*, by Ning Yeh. Good practical/basic instruction how to hold and load the brush with color (pages 12-14).

Good luck with your painting and I look forward to your suggestions on subjects you would like to see me address in future articles.

### Hints on Mixing Color from Susan Frame

1. Mix your color thick and then thin it with the water in your brush.
2. Susan's favorite brand of Western Watercolor is Holbein. She likes the buttery texture. Student grade colors don't stay as brilliant.
3. ALWAYS dilute green with black.
4. To make green, use indigo and Gamboge Yellow.
5. To make a poppy red color, use Alizarin Crimson or Permanent Rose and Gamboge Yellow.
6. Add a little mucilage glue to red to prevent bleeding during mounting.
7. Use indigo and Permanent Rose to make purple. No red with yellow in it.

Throughout the coming year, more hints from Susan will be shared in the newsletter.

## Photo Gallery from Summer 2018 Painting Parties

### Jill Valentine

A group of us at the oceanfront timeshare of Minh-Chau Truong, busy at work on our Sumi-e strokes!





