



Blue Heron Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of  
America

# Blue Heron News

January 2022

## Announcements\*

- **January 14** – firm deadline for entry into Exhibition at Paul Street Gallery Exhibition (see *page 5* for details.)
- **February 12** – deadline to email Donna Wynn about your entry into Exhibition at Gallery 21. (See *page 5* for details.)
- Class at Norfolk Botanical Garden on Tuesdays, 11am – 1pm for 5 consecutive weeks. Registration is handled by the garden. Instructor: **Norene Spenser**
  - Learn the fundamental techniques of Sumi-e and explore some of the more contemporary techniques. Class subjects are classic natural elements

## Winter-Spring 2022 Chapter Meetings

Date	Time	Location	Program
Jan. 16, 2022	2-4 PM	Kempsville Christian Church	Jill Valentine, Palm Trees
Feb. 3, 2022	1-4 PM	Paul Street Gallery	Sumi-e and Bonsai Art Reception
Mar. 20, 2022	2-4 PM	Kempsville Christian Church	Joe Nicholas, Washes
Apr. 17, 2022	2-4 PM	Kempsville Christian Church	Bill Larkin, Feel the Rhythm
May 15, 2022	2-4 PM	Kempsville Christian Church	2023 Calendar Selection

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

# Message from the Chapter President

Happy New Year Greetings *Blue Heron Friends!*

Recently, I have been combing through my 2021 calendar noting what actually did happen according to plan and what didn't. All I can say is – there were a lot of surprises! Sometimes outcomes exceeded my expectation, like our new meeting venue (Kempsville Christian Church—thanks Rose!) and the Blue Heron table at the Children's Festival (Bill—thank you!), the virtual learning opportunities (Cathy and Gail—we appreciate you guys). I could go on and on—awesome newsletters & member care (Mary Ann and Masha), shiny org/meetings (Erin and Bonnie), exhibit “hunting” prowess (Donna), amazing website and calendar (Chris and Betty). Thank you all!

So, in sum, as an organization, it looks like we had an excellent 2021. But I want to ask you personally, like me, have you found yourself at times a little lost and off track in your artistic pursuits. If so, I'd like to make a few suggestions that I'll be following in the months ahead. They all have a particular word at the core—resourcefulness.

Resourcefulness as a personal trait is defined in this way:

A resourceful person is one that can adapt to new or different situations, is able to find solutions, think creatively to reach a satisfying outcome with what they have available to them. (Adapted from Pick Everard Insights).

Without being too wordy, here are some resourcefulness principles I've applied to my artistic pursuits. I hope they will encourage you all as you think about your sumi-e activities for 2022.

1. **Be more hopeful about old obstacles.** I am going to try to rethink things that were less than ideal in 2021. Maybe those obstacles are directing me to do something new or innovative.
2. **Persistently go after the information and skills I lack.** So, I've decided to study some new artistic approaches—sumi-e figures? abstract painting? Not sure yet.
3. **Delay the gratification of a quick-fix, reactive plan.** I feel frustrated sometimes about everything being slow to open back up after our pandemic experience. So, maybe I need to guard against impatience. I have felt the urge to give up my artistic aspirations. So, to counter this, I am going to make a yearly plan again—make a reading list, line up trips that will inspire me, offer art-related service, and move forward confidently, step by step.
4. **Meditate and research and come up with a 3-sentence vision that will guide me in 2022—meaning is so important.** My inspiration will be steadier and more satisfying if I spend time answering the ole question— “Why?”—regarding my artistic pursuits.
5. **Have fun—creativity and playfulness correlate.** I want to be intentional about having fun in my studio and with my art community.

Blessings,  
*Mike Lane*

## Message from the Chapter Treasurer

As I mentioned at our September meeting, this past summer the Board made the decision to change the beginning and ending membership dates for our chapter. In the past, the Blue Heron Chapter membership started in September of one year and concluded in August of the next year. This created challenges when submitting the club's treasurer report to the National Sumi-e society, since they require information ranging from January to December. Starting this year, to better align with the National Sumi-e society, the Blue Heron Chapter's membership will begin in January and end in December of the same year.

Any new members who joined between September and December of 2021 will still be active members when the new year begins. For those who were members last year, we extended your membership until the end of December. As it is the end of December, that means it is time to renew your membership to the Blue Heron Chapter!

### How to join the Blue Heron Chapter:

1. New members: Go to <https://blueheronsumie.org/> then click on "membership" in the top bar, then scroll down to the "membership application" and download.
2. Returning members: You do not need to fill out the membership application if nothing has changed in your contact information (address, phone number, etc.).
3. Membership is \$20 for the year.
4. Make checks payable to "Blue Heron Chapter, SSA."
5. Mail Check to Erin Smyth 1519 McLean Ave, Norfolk VA 23508.

*We have already had 15 people join the Blue Heron Chapter for 2022, including three brand new members!*

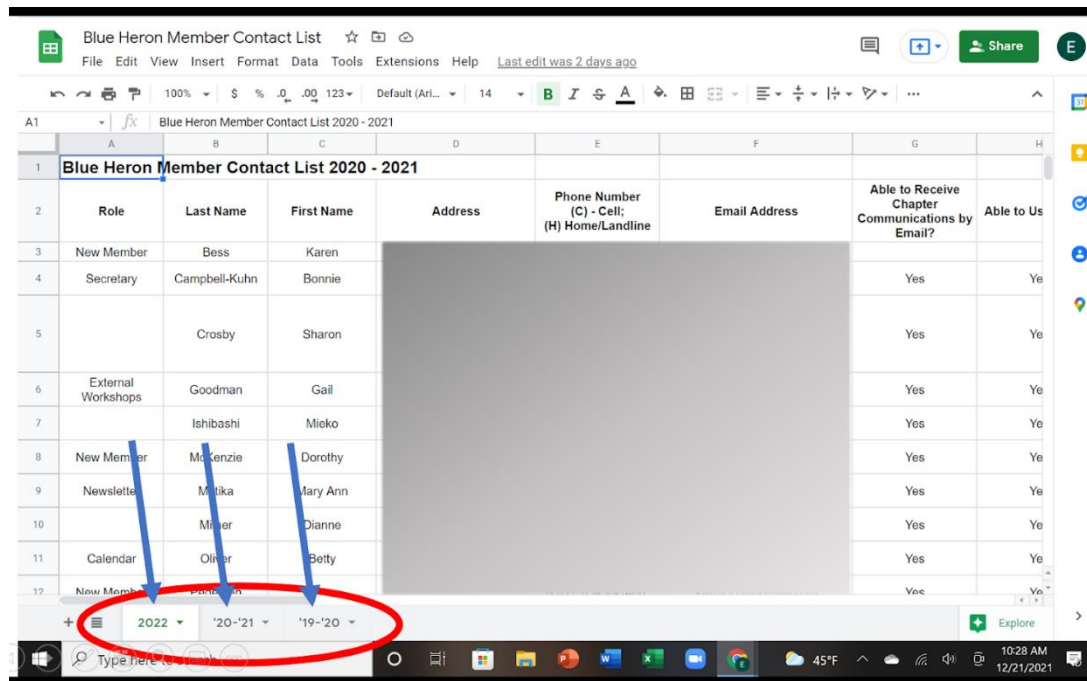
If you have any questions about your membership status, please email me:  
[smyth.erin10@gmail.com](mailto:smyth.erin10@gmail.com)

### How to Access the Blue Heron Chapter Contact List:

When you join or rejoin the Blue Heron Chapter I will email you a link to the contact list. This list is ONLY accessible to the email address that receives an email from me. In other words, if you ask your neighbor to click on the link, they will not be able to access the document, since I have not given their email address permission to do so. This is to protect everyone's privacy.

You can use that same link to access the contact list all year, as it will automatically update on your end when I make changes on my end. This is helpful so that everyone always has access to an up-to-date and accurate contact list.

This link also allows you to view the contact list from last year and the year before in case you need to contact a former member. To access the different lists, look for the tabs at the bottom of the screen. Each tab is labeled with the year of the contact list. If you look at the image below, I have circled the tabs and drawn arrows to each of your three options. If you want to look at the contact list for 2022, then you will click on the left most tab which says “2022.” Notice that the top row of the spreadsheet tells you which contact list you have open.



Whenever I send an official email to the entire membership, I include in my signature a link to the Blue Heron Chapter website and a second link to the Blue Heron Chapter Contact List. I recommend saving one of my emails so you have easy access to the list. You may also bookmark the page in your internet browser.

### Special Note:

This should be the only time of the year that I pester you all for money. If you ever receive an email from someone claiming to be me and asking for money, it is a scam. If you are not sure, please call me and I will confirm: 804-822-1415. In fact, if you ever get an email from ANYONE asking you for money, it is wise to take steps to triple check that it is a legitimate request from someone you know!

*Erin Smyth*

## Message from the Exhibits Chair

*Dear Blue Heron Membership,*

We have just completed a wonderful exhibit at the Bayside Library and have been

asked to come back anytime! Thank you to everyone who participated and coming so quickly to pick up your work when the take down was happening. If anyone got an offer or sold a piece, please do let me know or share with the group.

We have two events coming up for 2022:

### First:

Along with the Bonsai Society, there will be an exhibit at the Paul Street Gallery. Thursday, February 1 through March 14, 2022. The theme of the show is "The Year of the Tiger."

There is a limit of two entries per person. Paul Street Gallery will hang the show themselves, but I will be coordinating the entries. The deadline for entries to be at the Gallery is January 14, 2022, NO EXCEPTIONS! With each entry there must be an Artist Agreement signed and attached to your work. Mike has emailed the agreement to you. I need to know if you will be putting a piece or two in the show and as usual, I must have a title of your piece along with a selling price, if for sale. Please notify me by email [dwyner@cox.net](mailto:dwyner@cox.net) if you will be participating.

There will be an opening reception held on Thursday, February 3, 2022, from 1:00 to 4:00 pm. The Gallery will provide coffee, tea, napkins, and plates. They are asking us to provide individually wrapped "STORE BOUGHT" goodies.

Leigh will start accepting your work even before the show. The office is open Monday-Thursday, from 12:30 pm - 8:30pm. PLEASE DO NOT SHOW UP THERE WITH YOUR WORK UNTIL ALL IS COORDINATED WITH ME. It is important that this all runs smoothly! Thank you.

### Next:

I am super excited about the Gallery 21 Exhibit. Our exhibit opening is scheduled for Saturday, February 26 from 5-8:00 pm. The show will run through April 2, 2022. During the reception Jim Todd will provide wine and a server, if we want to have food, we are to provide.

There is no minimum price for your work, but less than \$200.00 cheapens the value of your paintings. The gallery can accommodate 40-90 pieces depending on the size and spacing of the artwork. Set up day and hanging will be Tuesday, February 22. We are responsible for the hanging. So again, I will need some wonderful help with this. Email me the information about your submission by February 12, 2022, giving me plenty of time to put a master list together for Jim.

Any questions feel free to email me and I promise to get right back to you.

*Donna Wynn*

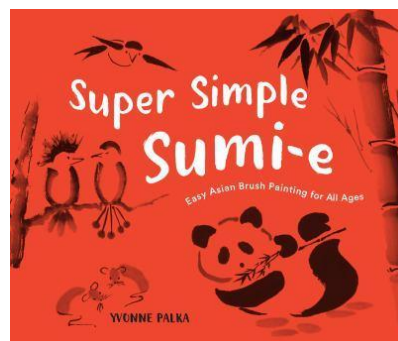
## Message from the Virginia Children's Festival Chair

On October 2nd, members of Blue Heron Chapter, SSA participated in the 2021 Children's Festival at Town Point Park in Norfolk. Mike Lane, Betty Oliver, Cathy



Peyton, Mary Ann Matika, and her husband Bob helped the children appreciate and understand Sumi-e by presenting brush, rice paper and ink, and showing how the strokes are used to make such images as panda bears, birds, and dragons.

"Super Simple Sumi-E" by Yvonne Palka directed our presentation. This is an excellent book for introducing Sumi-e to children or anyone new to the art form. Over one hundred parents and children enjoyed painting with us.



*Bill Larkin*

## Message from the Calendar Chair

The calendars were a huge success. There were sixty-one calendars sold at a profit of \$140.65. At the May meeting, we will vote on thirteen paintings to be in the 2023 calendar. It is not too early to decide which painting you want to put in the calendar.

I hope you enjoy your 2022 calendar.

*Betty Oliver*

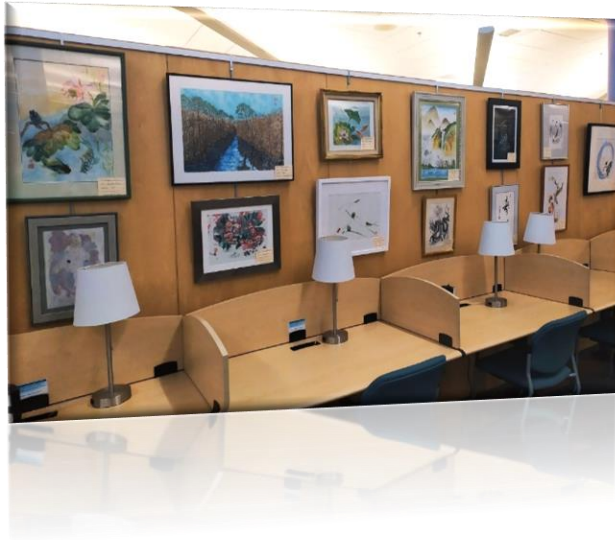
## Field Report from Bayside Library Exhibition

**Rose Burroughs**

I was happy to get to go to the Bayside Library to see our excellent Sumi-e exhibit. Thanks to Donna. We each had our special place with a desk space and a chair. You could sit down and really study each picture. A young man was doing that. He loved art and shared with me a complicated coloring book on which he was working. I explained our technique. He hopes to be able to paint. The three staff workers were pleased that I introduced myself as one of the artists. They



would have liked for us to leave the paintings up longer. They said many library visitors complimented our show.



## Notes from Chapter's September Meeting



During the Chapter September meeting, Rose Burroughs demonstrated techniques of painting on black rice paper. "You have to use more vivid watercolors and do several layers of paint," said Rose. The members enjoyed assembling around the table to watch Rose paint under the open skies of Mary Ann's and Bob's lovely garden. Thank you, Rose, for your program and efforts inaugurating our first gathering after a more than a year of "no-see" in-person.

Members also enjoyed listening to Sharon Weinstein reading her poem, sipped Bill Larkin's homemade wine and snacked on ice cream during this September afternoon.

*Moon Palace* by Rose Burroughs

# How to protect a Sumi-e Brush

Ting Mei

*From the Program presented at October Chapter meeting.*

Taking care of a brush is protecting the tip of a brush.

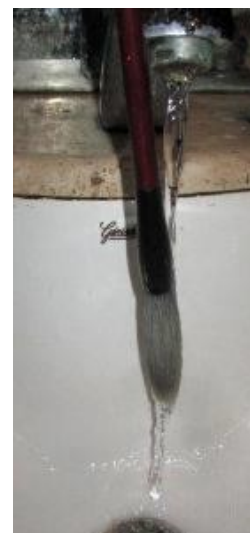
## 1. Open a new brush

The new brush head has glue applied to stick all hairs together. Some brush heads can be opened by gently squeezing with your fingers until the whole brush head becomes soft. Then rinse the brush head in water for couple of minutes to remove loose hairs and glue. But some brushes need soaking: Soak the brush in the low-temperature warm water for several minutes. Please do not soak too long time, because the glue at the root part of the brush head is important and should be kept.

Old saying: *a Xuan Brush does not need to be soaked and a Hu Brush does.* However, in the current market, this rule is outdated. For example, most Shuang Yang brushes, the No.1 Brand, can be opened with fingers, but the fine script brush still needs soaking.

Most finger-open brushes are good for soaking method, but some do not. So when getting a new brush, try finger-open method the first.

To remove loose hairs, rinse the brush by running water again to clean all glue as shown in the picture. It is important to (1) follow the direction of the hairs, (2) stream the water gently. Then it is ready to use.



## 2. Prepare the brush

The life span for a brush depends much on the proper usage. How to dip ink and color is a big issue. For a new or used brush, fully dipping in water before dipping in ink is critical for hairs. Never dip a dry brush into ink or colors even if they contain water. Wetting the brush before grinding ink and preparing paper is a good idea. Or wet the brush twenty minutes before dipping ink.

After wetting the brush, “dry” the wet brush on a piece towel or used rice paper ( the best way is dragging the brush on the paper to get off extra water). This is for the better ink result.

## 3. Clean the brush

Forgetting and inadequate cleaning after usage are enough to ruin the tip and inside of the brush head. Two ways to clean: Either (1) rinse under a gentle stream of water following the direction of the hairs, as in the picture or (2) rinse in a water container then change water, and repeat until water is clean.



#### 4. Dry the brush

The plastic cap is to protect unused glued brush head. Never use the cap again: it is just for the new brush. Keep this in mind: dryness is the key. Hanging brush to dry is the best. Laying down the brush to dry is OK but not perfect due to the gravity. For the same reason, do not use a pen pot to dry.

#### 5. Store the brush

Storing brushes in a box, in a roll up organizer or hang them is better for brush tips. If the brush head is squeezed or compressed, game over.

## Every day with Sumi-e

Cathy Peyton

*Program presented at November Chapter meeting.*

Each member selected a painting to evaluate. Below are members' critiques of Cathy's daily practices with painting samples in no particular order.

*Happy Chi*

*Beautiful brush strokes*

*Faded leaves accent the work- my eyes go right to them. This is a very peaceful painting - inner feeling  
Confidence through and through*

*Composition - carries the eye in direction of the left  
Mixture of effects of pouring, impression, and detail  
Different brush strokes, different brushes  
Awakening, heavy to light, natural bend, out of ordinary*

*A little hesitancy - use of overlapping leaves  
Excellent tonal, appears four shades of grey  
Good balance in composition - triangle  
Suggesting x'ing line across center  
Rocks need shading  
Happy particularly with orchid flowers, delicacy  
Good energy - relaxed and peaceful*

*Tone lacking in ink  
Bird added for balance, but may be better w/  
more white space  
Too many different plants*

*I can feel the living bird, the wind in his feathers, the determination  
in his eyes, and the clutching of the big branch  
He is energetically present and grounded  
I can feel the breeze through the flow of the brush*



*I love the blurring of the black ink in the branch*

*Would like to see you fill up brush w/ more tonal values on branches rather than adding black brushstrokes to them*

*Absence of main branch, colors of leaves does not match*

*Used all senses to observe art*



## Erin Smyth

*Holiday Card Exchange program was presented at December Chapter meeting as well as conducted online in the spirit of the year 2020.*

Please click [here](#) to view a slideshow with music online.

**19** members participated and exchanged **62** cards. There were **15** members present at the meeting, **4** participated online, while **2** members did both the in-person and online exchanges.



Members had wonderful time making rounds in drawing their turn number to pick the holiday cards displayed on the table and then choosing one.



## Close-Up of Donna Wynn, Exhibits Chair

### **STATISTICS:**

Family: Married to Jimmy Wynn, 45 years!

Two sons, Curt and Drew

Two daughters-n-love, Heather and Lauren

Four grandchildren: Annabelle, Dylan, Grayson and Zoey!!!!

Pets: Josie, our 6-year-old Labrador

Occupation: Retired Optician

Education: Virginia State Licensing Optician Program Certified Ophthalmic Technician Community College

### **Of what achievement are you most proud?**

My family and being an inspiration to my four grandchildren

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

Art Museums - I could spend hours and hours in them.

I totally love the work of Claude Monet, and he is my absolute favorite artist!

Nature inspires me.

Colors - I love observing all the colors in this world of ours

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

Painting and creating in my studio or drawing Zentangles in an awesome coffee shop for hours

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

Relax into life, don't be so intense! Always learn to trust your own intuition.

**If you could invite three famous people living or dead to dinner, who would they be?**

Georgia O'Keeffe (artist), Claude Monet (artist), and Mary Oliver (poet)

**How did you become a painter?**

I took art all through high school and community college. I've been attending art retreats and learning everything I could about watercolor. I am passionate about painting! I am still learning and growing and fine tuning my own creative style.

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

Be gentle with yourself, it takes time ... lots of it to learn the process. Enjoy the gift of peacefulness that this art form brings. This is not an art form that can be rushed through, it takes time to perfect. You must paint something each and every day, to allow brush to hit the paper. Some pieces may disappoint you and then some will completely surprise you. This is a mental art as well as a physical art. Come to the table expecting great things to happen ... and don't forget to appreciate your tools and materials!!!!

**Favorite Painting Tool:** My newest chop created for me ... "Donna Lee" - figured it was time to custom order one for myself

**Comfort Food:** Yummy Cheesecake

**Favorite Movie:** The Holiday Celebrity Twin: Meg Ryan

**First Celebrity Crush:** Robert Redford (always and forever!)

**Pet Peeve:** When others in line have more than 10 items in express!!!

**Favorite Gadget:** My new Apple Watch

**Favorite Things to Do:** Create Art ... Teaching others Zentangle ... Weaving

**Book You Would Recommend:** All the Hillerman novels about Navajo mysteries

**Is there anything else you would like to share with Blue Heron members?**

I am so excited to be a part of such an incredible group of painters. I have formed friendships and learned so much from all of you! It is an honor for me to be your Exhibits Chair. I am excited about our exhibits for 2022! This group is loving, patient, encouraging and friendly!

## Sumi-e Painters Become Authors

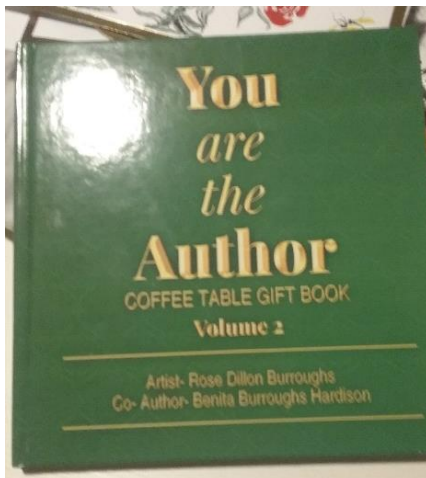
***YOU ARE THE AUTHOR, Volume II***

**By Rose Burroughs**

My love of Sumi-e inspired me to author books that have the reader explore the feelings and meanings imbedded in my art and poetry. The books have separate pages for you, the author, to write what you wish. I plan to publish four volumes of *You Are the Author*. There are about twenty-four pictures in each book. I needed to revise Volume I, and so



Volume II is coming out first. I just sent VOLUME IV with its pictures and poems to the publisher. All are 8x8" hard back coffee table gift books. Each volume is a distinct color. Amazon and at Barnes and Nobles will sell the books for around \$16.00.



### ***OLLIE AND MOLLIE MEET NEW FRIENDS*** ***Written and Illustrated by Betty Oliver***

I have written a third book, *Ollie and Mollie Meet New Friends*. During the pandemic, I painted every day. To my surprise I had painted over fifty animals. I decided to take Ollie and Mollie, my penguins, on another adventure. In the book they meet animals like the cheetahs, zebras, and sharks. Ollie and Mollie, as well as the readers learn many interesting animal facts. Through colorful sumi-e paintings, the illustrations bring delight and smiles. The cost is about \$10.00.



### ***CELEBRATING ABSENCES*** ***Written by Sharon Weinstein***

During our September 2021 Sumi-e meeting, I read a poem, "A Gathering of Writers," aloud to our group. The poem was commissioned by the Dean of Arts and Letters at



Norfolk State University where I was a Professor of English. Although the title names “writers,” it is about all artists and the true divine source of all we do!

We are privileged to have this gift of visual beauty.

I think of the fine Virginia writer, George Garrett, who said: “Honor your gifts and go as deep as you can.”

This poem appears in my book of poems, *Celebrating Absences*, published by Road Publishers, and is available through Amazon and me, for \$10.00

## The Van Gogh Immersion

Mary Ann Matika

If you have not seen the Van Gogh Immersion, you are missing amazing inspiration for



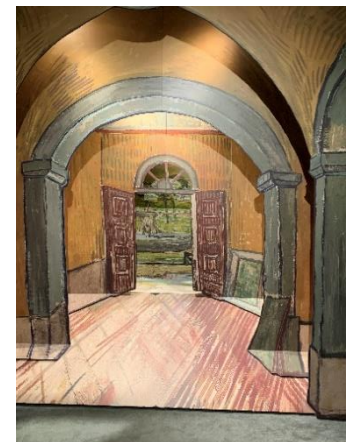
*Sunflowers Projected on the Wall*

painting. It is a 360-degree, *digital art exhibition that invites you to step into the universe of the Dutch genius*. The show projects Van Gogh's paintings on the walls, floor, and ceiling of a large room. One of his paintings morphs into another, and the viewer becomes spellbound.

Van Gogh has a direct link to Sumi-e. His love of Japanese woodcuts inspired his painting. “The art of the future,” **Van Gogh** was convinced, “*had to be colorful and joyous, just like Japanese printmaking.*”

One of the best parts of the show was learning about Van Gogh's life and reading his words about being an artist. He was a prolific thinker who left the world with over one hundred quotes, such as the following:

*I dream my painting, and I paint my dream.*



*View from Van Gogh's Room  
in the Mental Institution*

The show ends with a virtual reality viewing of the scenes Van Gogh saw, followed by his painting of that scene.

The closest show is in Raleigh, NC, beginning in mid-April. A senior ticket purchased online is \$24.90. If you are interested in attending, email [maryannmatika@gmail.com](mailto:maryannmatika@gmail.com).

# Sumi-e Heads for Outer Space

**Mary Ann Matika**

Join in congratulating Joan Lok for having two of her paintings decorating the outside of the James Webb Telescope launched into space on Christmas day. Fewer than twenty artists were selected by NASA to paint the telescope.

A virtual reality Gallery Artist Talk video includes five paintings, two of them by Joan, by three artists. Joan used Tarashikomi technique of dripping ink on gold paper and Po Mo, pouring ink on rice paper, in the selected artwork. Watch for the release of this video.



Meanwhile enjoy a video about the Webb telescope. The video is one hour and twenty minutes long and will thoroughly engage people who are science enthusiasts. If science is not your field of interest, watch the introduction, fast forward to 6:00 to see Joan's artworks. Fast forward to end of the video and see Joan's name in the credits. Click on the following for the video on YouTube:

[Things We have Never Seen: The James Webb Space Telescope Explores the Cosmos](#)

What an honor for Joan Lok to have her paintings among the stars of the Universe!

\*Photo Curtesy of NASA