



Blue Heron Chapter of the Sumi-e Society of
America

Blue Heron News

September 2020

Announcements*

- ***We look forward to a great year of Chapter meetings where we can learn together. Our first meeting in September will be virtual on ZOOM. Church of the Ascension Episcopal has graciously agreed to be the host site for Blue Heron meetings, if external conditions are appropriate -- BH Vice President Cathy Peyton***
- ***Guest Artist Workshop featuring Joan Lok, October 23, 2020 2-5PM on ZOOM***

2020-21 Chapter Meetings[†]

Date	Time	Location	Program
September 20, 2020	2-4 PM	ZOOM	Mary Ann Matika, Painting Birds
October 18, 2020	2-4 PM	TBD	Ting Mei, Different types of papers and brushes, current improvements for paper making, trends and traps

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

[†] Church of the Ascension Episcopal, 405 Talbot Hall Road, Norfolk, Virginia 23505

November 22, 2020	2-4 PM	TBD	Joe Nicholas , Jen Wu in Landscapes, <i>Mustard Seed Garden Manual</i>
December 20, 2020	2-4 PM	TBD	Holiday Cards Exchange and Party
January 17, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Donna Wynn , Mindful Drawing Process
February 21, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Jerry Singer , Inspiration and Suminagashi
March 21, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Norene Spencer , Styles of Calligraphy, including Chinese, square letter, and vertical letter
April 18, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	Bill Larkin , I Ching, which underpins sumi-e, as well as many other aspects of Chinese culture
May 16, 2021	2-4 PM	TBD	2022 Calendar Selection, Tea Party
June 13, 2021		TBD	Luncheon

Message from the President Mike Lane

Dear Blue Heron Chapter Members,

I hope this letter finds you well and encouraged and putting brush to paper on a regular basis. We are moving rapidly towards our first chapter meeting on Sept. 20th, but before talking about the future, I'd like to reflect a bit on Bill Larkin's leadership over the past 2 years. Bill was serious-minded about the job, always open to new ideas, full of cool I-Ching wisdom and effective in moving our community forward in terms of sumi-e learning and friendship. Bill, thank you. Your hard work has made my work easier as I've tried to grab hold of the president's responsibilities.

In terms of activities and initiatives in the future, I hope to stick close to the National Sumi-e Society vision:

- to foster and encourage an appreciation of East Asian brush painting techniques through publications, workshops, lectures and exhibitions.
- to serve as a cultural bridge between East and West.
- to furnish information to all persons who wish to learn about this art.

That said, we have a unique Fall ahead of us, with legitimate Covid-19 fears and concerns to balance with our desires to enjoy and benefit from our great art community. The board met last month to discuss options for how we would handle meetings and art demos. It seemed prudent to start the season virtually using Zoom online technology. We'll be sending out instructions about how to join the September meeting soon. Mary Ann Matika will be presenting the first virtual demo! The topic- "Painting Birds". Again, if you feel unsure about how to use Zoom, instructions will be coming. On September

18th, you will also receive a Zoom link in your email from Masha Sosonkina for a test run. If problems arise, email us and we'll help you troubleshoot.

I hope everyone, regardless of your technology skills, will either give the Zoom a try or make plans to view the meeting with a fellow Blue Heron member (while socially distancing, of course). The Covid-19 crisis has injected a lot of uncertainty and isolation into our experience, but that's exactly why it is important for our community to be there for one another and to actively and creatively find ways to keep painting. Other ways to stay fresh and encouraged in your painting is to apply to virtual exhibits when possible and to use a cell phone app called Marco Polo. We currently have a Marco Polo group called the "Sumi-e Creatives" that has proven to be a great source of mutual support. Contact me if you want an invitation to the group.

I hope you are able to make the most of going outside. No problem with that—just stay clear of humans. Observing the design of nature and taking photos can provide grounded inspiration for the months ahead.
Blessings and stay safe.

Message from the Treasurer Erin Smyth

How to Pay Your Dues in the Time of Covid-19

If we are able to meet in person this Fall, you may bring a check to the Chapter meetings to pay for your membership dues. I will attend any in-person meetings we are able to have this year.

In the event that we are unable to meet in person, you may mail your membership dues as a check to me, Erin Smyth. My address is 1519 McLean Ave Norfolk, Virginia, 23508. I will deposit the checks remotely via mobile deposit and email you confirmation of its receipt. If you are not able to mail me a check for any reason, please contact me by phone or email and we can discuss an alternative option. My phone number is 804-822-1415 and my email address is smyth.erin10@gmail.com.

Dues are \$20 per calendar year, starting in Sept and ending at the end of Aug. *Make checks payable to Blue Heron Chapter, SSA.*

I am also compiling contact information for current members. Please either write up and mail, or email me the following information about yourself:

Name: _____
Birthday: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Phone Number: _____ (cell or landline?) _____
Email Address: _____

Are you able to receive Chapter communications by email? _____

Have you used Zoom for virtual meetings before? _____

Are you able to participate in virtual meetings (e.g., using Zoom) if we cannot meet in person? _____

Message from the Exhibit Chair Donna Wynn

The Pandemic has offered some unusual cancellations and interruptions for 2020. Alas, our annual show at the Paul Street Art Gallery was cancelled for Feb. 2021. But we are working through it all to find our way to exhibit to the public our beautiful works by members for 2021! Here is what we can tell you:

- We are thrilled to announce that we do have a positive booking at Gallery 21 in Norfolk for June 2021!
- We are also working on an exhibit at the Bayside Library in Virginia Beach for February 2021. Stay tuned for further details soon!
- By Fall of 2021, we are tentatively on the books to return once again to show our work at the Botanical Gardens.

In the meantime, our members are actively painting and creating to have great showings for all next year!

Message from the Guest Artist Workshop Chair Gail Goodman

As we all know, this next year is going to be very, very different. And that applies to the guest artist workshops that we all know and love so much. This year the plan is to hold virtual workshops utilizing the application, which is free, called ZOOM. You will have to download the application prior to the actual “go live” presentation. Further explanations on how zoom works will come in another part of this newsletter.

We will be having four separate virtual workshops on ZOOM. Each workshop will be hosted by a different artist, and they will be spread out in several months throughout the next year. They will be very affordable...however, no lunch will be served. They will be limited to 20 participants. You can paint along or just watch. They will be interactive and the platform format will go something like this.

Members of the National Sumi-e Society participated in just such a workshop

with 100 others and it actually worked out almost better than being in the room. The artist had a camera over her workspace so all 100 of us had a perfect view of the demonstration. We hope that all of you will sign up to participate and plan to keep learning from the masters.

- 45 minutes of presentation and demonstration by the Guest Artist
- 30 minutes of painting time at your home watching from your computer, iPad,
- or phone - guest artist is available for help or assistance
- 30 - 45 minutes of interactive discussion with the guest artist where you can
- ask questions, hold up your painting, and get helpful suggestions
- A supply list will be sent out prior to the meeting to all members who register.



The tentative plan for these workshops and the artists/subject material is the following:

- October 23 2020, Joan Lok, *Poppies*
(see the registration information on [page 11](#))
- November or early December 2020, Hsi-Mei Yates, *Landscape*
- January/February 2021, Henry Li, Subject to be determined
- March/April 2021, Sunsook Setton, *Hydrangea*

Message from the Calendar Chair Betty Oliver

I want to give a huge thank you to the sixteen people who entered his or her painting this year. Everyone had a chance to vote on the Blue Heron Chapter webpage. Thirteen paintings were chosen to be in the calendar of 2021. Calendars will be sold for \$10 at the end of October. Mary Ann Matika has offered her home for you to pick up your calendars. When the calendars are ready to distribute, you will be notified. I will be glad to deliver your calendar to you if that would be more convenient.

From the Report to the National Sumi-e Society

Bonnie Campbell-Kuhn, Chapter Secretary

The uncertainty and the continuing restrictions imposed by COVID 19 has required the Blue Heron Chapter, like all others, to find creative ways to pursue our passion for East Asian Brush Painting. No longer able to meet face to face, with all activities cancelled, including “garden parties” where we enjoyed casual summer gatherings in homes sharing techniques, demos, fellowship and, of course, delicious pot luck offerings, we continued virtual meetings with “Sumi-e Creatives” using the Marco Polo app. Approximately 20 members have access to daily interaction by posting live video of recent work, asking for critiques, demonstrating new techniques, tips on brushes and papers, pours, suminagashi, as well as gardening, guitar, virtual “field trips” and much more. Many of us who participate in the Marco Polo group have commented that this venue has actually given us more intimacy in our interaction than being in the same room during a class. We can observe one another in their studio, home or garden, have interaction as we communicate about one another’s paintings and take benefit from the demonstrations of our chapter President and instructor, Mike Lane. Recently Mike gave us the challenge to concentrate on bamboo every day. The stalks, joints, branches and leaves. Everyone expressed how much we learned by having this focus. Posting on Marco Polo made our paintings a collaborative effort. For example, Mary Ann Matika’s landscape began by her study of landscapes in Virginia Lloyd Davies’ book, *Mindful Artist Sumi-e Painting*.



Mike Lane, our Marco Polo instructor, taught that landscapes require layer upon

layer of paint. Another member told how to blur the outline of the landscapes that the black lines disappeared. All of the suggestions from fellow artists created a better painting than was possible by one artist alone in a studio. Much was learned, not only by Mary Ann, but also by all of the Sumi-e Creatives who participated in the online Marco Polo sessions.

HILLTOP REFLECTION IN THE LAKE by Cathy Peyton

I've been painting every day during the pandemic. For this mono print, I poured green, indigo and sienna watercolors, and sumi-e ink on a masonite board. With the pouring process, you can see the beauty of your artwork as the rice paper dries. When I saw the results, a title came to mind. For my daily posting on Marco Polo, "Sumi-e Creatives I asked viewers what I could do to make the lake look more like a reflection. Suggestions included to add foamy white on the dividing line between the land and the water and a little boat. I added some of the suggestions and came up with a finished painting. With the help of Blue Heron's online learning community, we share, we learn and we grown together.



PLAYFUL BUNNIES by Betty Oliver "When we have each other, we have everything" I loved painting playful bunnies with the variegated bamboo leaves. Suminagashi using coffee is in the background.



THE COLOR OF MUSIC by Jerry Singer This year I was introduced to Suminagashi painting techniques, and found that its' ethereal nature and abstract sense of flow intersected with two of my other favorite interests; music and kayaking. This piece is "The Color of Music". I loved learning that the kanji for "Music" is derived from the figures "Enjoy + Sound", so fitting.

Thank you, Bill Larkin

At the conclusion of the two-year presidential term for the Blue Heron Chapter, the membership gratefully acknowledged the selfless leadership and support for Bill Larkin's vigilant involvement and effort to proudly maintain a strong and active chapter as part of the Sumi-e society of America. He was presented with a gift certificate to purchase Sumi-e painting supplies and indulgences.



Let's Zoom! Blue Heron Chapter Meeting

Sunday, September 20, 2020 at 2:00 PM

Mary Ann Matika

With COVID19 safety precautions still in place in Virginia, Blue Heron members need to *Zoom* for the first chapter meeting. Since *Zoom* is so widely used now, the kinks have been eliminated, and it is safe to use, especially with the Old Dominion University firewall in place. *Please join the meeting and reconnect with chapter members. A Zoom meeting ensures fun and great social contact with friends not seen since the pandemic began.*

Follow these steps:

1. From the App Store download *Zoom* on your computer, tablet or cell phone. *Zoom* on a computer will allow you see more members on the screen at one time, but *Zoom* works for all devices.
2. You were sent an email with a link to the *Zoom* meeting. Click on the link in the email to join the meeting.
3. Please join the meeting about ten minutes before 2:00PM so any problems can be solved and the meeting can start on time.
4. You may be placed in a waiting room for the host to admit you to the meeting.
5. Click the icons of a microphone and a movie camera to leave your audio and video off when entering the meeting.
6. Once admitted, please select SPEAKER VIEW so that you may see the persons who are presenting when they speak. Please keep your AUDIO OFF (the icon microphone with a red line through it) when you are watching.
7. During the meeting if you wish to speak, raise your hand, Mike will recognize you. Click on the microphone to talk.
8. Please be patient with this new experience.

To help those of you new to *Zoom*, a short Q&A meeting will be held at 7:00PM on Friday September 18th.

There are useful *Zoom* tutorials at

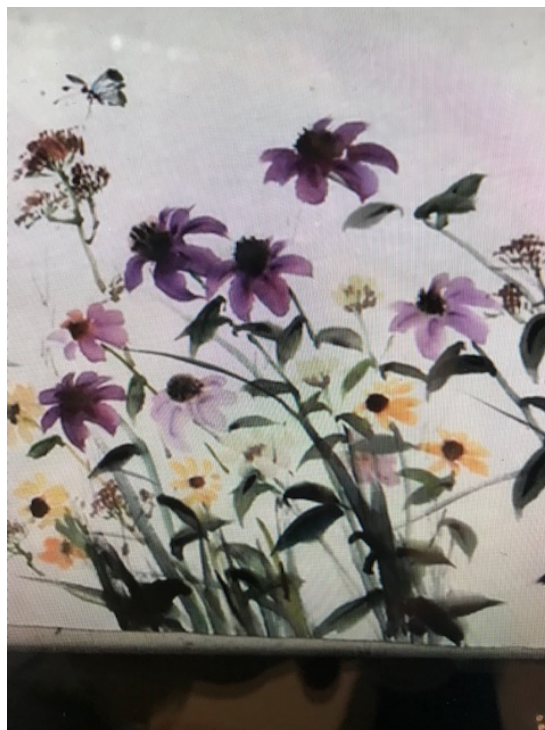
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206618765-Zoom-Video-Tutorials>

Zooming to a great new year for the Blue Heron Chapter!

National Sumi-e Annual Meeting

Gail Goodman

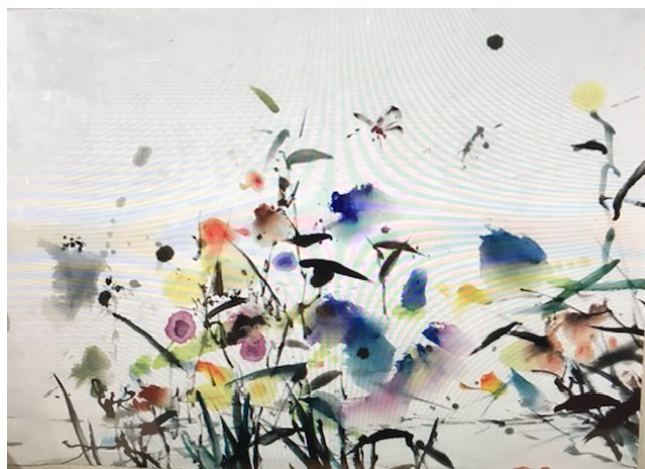
The Sumi-e Society of America of which the Blue Heron Chapter is a member and affiliated with held its annual meeting virtually in mid-August. The business portion of the meeting was brief and the next presentation was by Master Artist Sunsook Setton who first painted wildflowers in the traditional way and then painted her interpretation to music in an abstract way for two hours. This virtual meeting was held on ZOOM where 100 members attended. It was a unique experience to watch her paint and in some ways it was better than being in the room with her because the camera was right overhead so all 100 of us had a perfect view. Joining the National Sumi-e Society is \$40/year (\$10 additional if you would like to receive it first class mail), and you will receive an excellent publication 4 times/year, a special publication which includes all of the award winning paintings and a CD of those paintings. All of us are invited to join and support this organization....and encouraged to visit their website at: sumiesocietyofamerica.org.



Marco Polo is YOU!

Mary Ann Matika

Marco Polo is a free app for your smart phone, tablet or computer that lets a group of painters share their work and help each other become better Sumi-e artists.



Membership encourages and inspires the artists to paint just about every day and try new techniques and subjects. Since joining the Sumi-e Creatives Marco Polo group, I have learned and improved my painting more than ever before. The feedback on a painting is positive, input is always given and members make themselves available for

even more help if requested. Plus, I have become friends with painters that before I never really knew.

Although the twenty-one Sumi-e Creatives have used Marco Polo for over six months, smaller groups working for shorter time periods could be created around different topics. The possibilities are endless. The following ideas are just a starting place:

1. Paint what was learned in a ZOOM workshop organized by Gail Goodman
2. Try suminagashi
3. Make landscapes from pourings
4. Paint Western, more abstract Sumi-e
5. Use only black ink
6. Paint one of the Four Gentlemen for one week
7. Study and paint Cranes or any other birds
8. Practice calligraphy
9. Study and paint from a "How To" book about Sumi-e
10. Paint a landscape for each/any of the four seasons
11. ETC.

If interested, contact me with your idea, and I will organize Marco Polo groups. The potential to become a better painter is a click away in Marco Polo.

Registration for the Fall 2020 Guest Artist Workshop

OCTOBER 23, 2020, FRIDAY 2 pm to 5 pm

JOAN LOK PRESENTER VIA ZOOM

POPPIES WITH EXPRESSIVE BRUSHWORK

Gail Goodman

Joan's art is a fusion of old and new, east and west, and yin and yang. Born in Hong Kong she came to America after winning an international cultural exchange fellowship at a young age. Her work has won numerous awards and her book, "Chinese Brush Painting: Flowers" is available in several languages. You can visit Joan's work at: www.joanlok.com for full bio, artwork images and exhibition schedule. Joan loves to capture the beauty of poppies in expressive brushwork which adds freshness to your art. In this workshop she will show you some of her favorite ways to do this. In this workshop you will learn:

- Study/Botanical anatomy of a Poppy
- How to load the brush with multiple colors
- Separate sessions on painting petals, leaves, nodding buds, sepals and stalks
- Add texture to the sepals, stalks, and leaves

The workshop includes

- Two start-to-finish poppy painting demonstrations
- Downloadable workshop handout
- Downloadable supplies list (to be provided at registration)
- Live questions and answers
- Break to allow practice and opportunity to share practice work for Joan's feedback and additional guidance.

REGISTRATION CLOSES OCTOBER 10, 2020

- The fee to attend this workshop by ZOOM will be \$25 for a three-hour session, as described
- You will need to use your own device, computer, ipad, or phone
- You must provide an up to date email address
- Please mail your check to: Gail Goodman, 7329 Ruthven Road, Norfolk, VA 23505
- Make your check payable to: Blue Heron Chapter, SSA
- Membership dues must be active for 2020- 2021 mailed to Chapter Treasurer, Erin Smyth (see [page 3](#) on how to pay dues).

Checking out Chapter DVD's

Gail Goodman

Do you yearn for brush painting classes but fear the risk of getting Covid19? Do you want to gain inspiration and new painting skills from a Master Painter? Do you want to do this at your house, with the convenience of doing it on your schedule?

The Blue Heron Chapter purchased more than 15 DVD's from Henry Li and we have them available for members to check out and use at home. Below is a list of the DVD's available and you can contact Gail Goodman by email or phone to arrange pick up or delivery by mail (kcduffer@cox.net or phone 440-5887 or text 757-752-9011).

Our brush painting is a terrific way to fend off depression. Painting is inspiring and therapeutic, not to mention fun. What a great time to improve your skills.

1. HENRY LI DVD'S and other DVD's
2. Principles of Composition, Signature and Seal Placement
3. The Four Treasures
4. Bamboo, Panda, and Rocks
5. Landscape, the Three Gorges

6. Lotus, Flowers, and Frog
7. Scotch Pine and Squirrel
8. Part 1: Various Trees and Rocks
9. Part 2: Elements of Landscape Painting
10. Part 3: Rocks, Trees, Leaves, Composition
11. Red Crowned Cranes
12. Daylily, Rose, Bird of Paradise, Wooden Bridge, Plexi Mono Printing
13. Azalea, Rhododendrum, Poppies, Sparrow
14. Horse: Symbols of Success
15. Waterfalls
16. Tiger
17. Professor Ju's Workshop 2005
18. Exhibitions and Awards: 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016

Close-Up with Sumi-e Painter

Masha Sosonkina, Newsletter Co-editor

Statistics:

Family: My parents are in my home country, Ukraine, and my younger sister lives in Alabama.

Favorite Painting Tool: Small flow brush that I got from OAS

Comfort Food: Borsch; Gummi bears.

Favorite Movie: My recent favorite is [Heart of a Dog \(1988\)](#), which is based on the Mikhail Bulgakov's novel that lent its name to the movie.

Pet Peeve: Loud music.

Occupation: I teach Modeling & Simulation Engineering at ODU. Prior to that I was a scientist at Ames Laboratory of the Department of Energy in Ames, IA, and I taught Computer Science at the University of Minnesota Duluth.

Education: Ph.D. in Computer Science from Virginia Tech.

Of what achievement are you most proud? I'd say changing three countries and two social systems while learning to enjoy my life in each of them.

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

To adopt the greeting of Bokonists "It's not possible to make a mistake" (from Kurt Vonnegut in Cat's Cradle).

If you could invite three famous people living or dead to dinner, who would they be? William Blake, Thomas Jefferson, Ray Peat.

How did you become a painter? I was taking art classes when I was in middle school back in Kiev. My grandfather was a painter and an architect. I remember enjoying sitting next to him when he was painting watercolor landscapes, asking questions, and playing with brushes and paper myself.

Favorite thing to do: Learning different things. Learning as a process, in general.

Book you would recommend: Doctor Zhivago by Boris Pasternak.

What would you like to share with Blue Heron members? I really like the energy of our Chapter. Everyone is so enthusiastic and encouraging!

Words from the Pros

Joe Nicholas

Learning

If you want to learn, learn from the best. That was probably one of the ideas reflected in Hsieh Ho's "Six Canons of Painting" (fifth century) with the suggestion that copying the masters was the road to excellence. However, over the years there have been detractors to this idea, who believe that strict adherence to copying stifles creativity. It is not my intent to explore that debate. Instead, I'd like to offer my view that when done correctly, copying the masters will enhance your overall painting skills and be a positive influence on your creativity.

Your goal in copying should not be to see how well you can copy, but rather to study and understand how the artist did what he did. To do that you will first need to know the specific tools he's working with, i.e., the specific brush type and size, the paper in use and type of color/ink employed. You want to figure out how he employed the tools at his disposal along with water to create the elements of his painting, from a simple flower petal and texture of a rock to the ruggedness of a mountain or an overcast sky. How did a different painter do these same elements? It's good to look at various approaches. Lots of work? Yes, but think of all the techniques you will acquire - tools that will facilitate your ability to effectively express yourself.

So far, my focus has been on understanding the brushwork used to capture the essence of various elements in the painting. To get the most out of copying, it is important that you now focus on how the artist has arranged the elements of his painting into a cohesive design. Hopefully, it will reflect a "rhythmic vitality" (Ch'i Yuen) - the paramount element in Chinese art. Here we are looking to see how the artist has

used, not used, or misused the six essential principles of composition; Host and Guest Concept, Depth/Perspective, Density and Looseness, Dark and Light Contrast, Space, and lastly, Balance.

I believe I have made the task of copying a painting a lot more work than you had bargained for. However, if you put in the effort you will definitely improve your brush handling skill, acquire an intuitive sense of what constitutes good composition, and gain a deeper appreciation of the aesthetics of Chinese art.

Here's a quick final note on how to choose a painting to copy. Pick a quality painting by an accepted master in a painting style that is compatible with your character. For example, if you are spirited, impulsive, animated and impatient, you probably will not be comfortable with copying a detailed style painting.

References:

1. "Chinese Brushwork in Calligraphy and Painting, Its History, Aesthetics, and Techniques" by Kwo Da-Wei
2. "Magic of the Brush" by Kai-Yu Hsu and Catherine Woo
3. "The Way of the Brush Painting Techniques of China and Japan" by Fritz van Briessen

Sharon's Circle

Dr. Sharon Weinstein

Sumi-e: A MEDITATION

Our beloved, former Sumi-e leader, Joan Grosch, once said: "Sumi-e comes from our hearts not our minds. When we are painting, we are dancing."

Inspiration for Sumi-e painting comes from the touch of our hands and our brushes moving along the rice paper.

We are being.

We are not separate from what we are producing.

Western art is more cerebral. Plans upon plans. Except probably abstract art which usually emerges as it goes.

Happiness is part of our process.

Joy is our friend.

International author and artist, Naomi Okamoto, says in her book: "Japanese Ink Painting: The Art of Sumi-e." First published in America in 1996 - "Painting is an immediate expression of the subjective."

She is "fascinated by the close forms that are created in the emptiness of space, conveying the presence of the eternal quiet."



Whimsical Bowl with Fruit

For her students, she wants them to "develop a sense of the intuitive process."

Her painting journey is part of her search for "understanding the secret of beauty."

What a noble quest for us all.

Sumi-e School

Ting Mei

Mounting Paste Recipe

- *Materials needed for mounting 4 -- 6 11" x 14" pieces*

1. 1½ Tbsp of wheat starch
(A packet bought at any Asian grocery for about \$2, will be enough for years)
2. ½ Tbsp of cold water
3. ¼ cup of cold water to boil
4. Container with a lid; a spoon

- *Steps*

1. Measure wheat starch into the container



2. Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp of cold water over the wheat starch in the container. Mix well with a spoon. Make sure all wheat starch is fully mixed with water: When there is no any dry powder left, you are done.



3. Let mixture stand for 10 minutes. Boil $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of cold water. While waiting for the water to boil, give the starch mixture a stir so that it does not separate.

4. Slowly pour the boiling water into the starch mixture and keep stirring until you see the mixture changes color from white (Fig B – left) to semi-transparent (Fig B – right).



Fig. B: Dense wheat paste in the beginning of Step 4 (left); semi-transparent paste in the end of step 4 (right)

5. Once the paste is cooled off, it is ready for mounting. Cover the leftover paste and store in the refrigerator. The leftover paste should be used within one week.

Masque It

Gail Goodman

After many of us have been quarantining since March, finding nowhere to exhibit our paintings, little interaction with other painters, you may want to break out of the box and show off your work....and you can do it on a mask. *VistaPrint* offers an opportunity to put any photo on to a mask, and there are probably other vendors who do the same. Check out what Gail did with her "Fish Painting", so much fun!



Joining the Blue Heron Sumi-e Society

Donna Wynn

I remember taking Chinese Brush painting many years ago, at the Charles Taylor Art Center and completely fell in love with this gentle painting process. I bought the books, brushes, inks and rice papers, determined to dig deep into the process. As time passed, my practice got pushed further and further to the back burner until I was no longer finding the time to create.

As in life, we get pulled in many directions and time becomes a precious commodity. It seems there isn't enough time to do what you have to do let alone what you want to! Years passed and I occasionally pulled out my brush art. It wasn't speaking to me.

Last summer I was once again drawn to the art of Chinese Brush Painting. I was reading every text I could find, looking for instruction, watching YouTube and finding the time to create once again. There is such joy found in this gentle way of creating and I knew I had found my home again. I was on the lookout for like-minded artists, surely there was a group out there!

I had the pleasure of retiring as an Optician the fall of 2019 and knew I wanted to connect with other brush painters. I did an internet search and found the Blue Heron Sumi-e Society right away. I saw they were meeting in just a few weeks, on a Sunday afternoon. I decided to attend and was excited to connect with other brush painters!

It was a wonderful meeting! The program was informative and the membership was warm and quite delightful. I joined at my first meeting!! Each month I attended I found

the membership to be endearing and so much was going on. I attended my very first two-day workshop with guest teacher Virginia Lloyd Davies and from that point I had found my home! I learned so much from the instructor as well as the members. Seeing everyone's art supplies, brushes and paintings was so inspiring to me.

I know that others who have dropped into a meeting have felt the same way as I did. There is something magical about this amazing group of talented artists. They are sincere in sharing their painting wisdom and experience with others and for that I am truly grateful. I consider myself a "newbie brush painter" still and they have openly accepted me into the Blue Heron family! How happy I am to have joined this group and look forward to many creative adventures with my fellow members.

Since we had to stop meeting in person with the Pandemic, we have been meeting and sharing our work through Marco Polo, and it is a joy to see what everyone has created during these times of isolation. I am thankful each day for this group of talented artists, and I am learning something new every day! Opening up Marco Polo posts is a gift each and every day!

I have currently accepted the position of Exhibits Chairman and look so forward to the day when we can display our works again in public places and let others see what I already have ... That the Blue Heron Sumi-e Society is a place to inspire, feed the creative soul, learn from masters both past and present, and gather together for a common bond ... putting brush to paper and letting the paint dance along the way!

