



TO: Members  
FROM: Communications Committee  
Barb Parisien and Judy Harvey, Editors

DATE: January 1, 2022

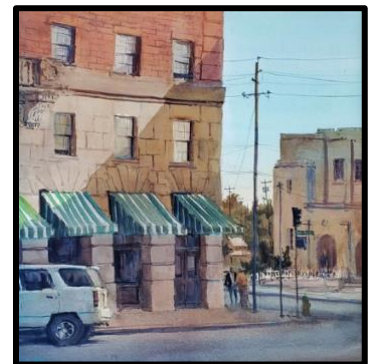
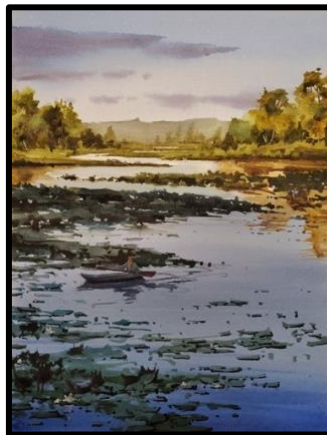
**NORTHSTAR WATERMEDIA SOCIETY IS  
COMMITTED TO WORKING TOWARD A MORE  
INCLUSIVE, JUST, AND EQUITABLE ART  
COMMUNITY. ALL ARE WELCOME HERE.**

**MEETINGS will continue to be virtual until at least April 2022.**

**NEXT MEETING - Mark your calendar!**  
**Virtual Demo by Brienne Brown**

**Thursday, January 20**  
**7:00–9:00**

**A link to this demo (via Zoom) will be sent to you about January 19.**



Brienne Brown showed talent in art and music from a young age but wanted to pursue a career in the sciences. She majored in art and chemistry in college and then worked in a toxicology lab. She later realized she wanted more art in her life and, after leaving her job as a toxicologist to raise her first child, she had an opportunity to paint more consistently. Prioritizing painting and taking workshops paid off. Soon she was not only exhibiting and entering shows regularly, but also winning awards.

Brienne holds signature membership status in the National Watercolor Society, American Impressionist Society, Western Federation of Watercolor Societies, Pennsylvania Watercolor Society, and Utah Watercolor Society. Since 2015 Brienne has been an invited faculty member at the annual Plein Air Convention. Also, every year, she participates in several national juried plein air events and teaches workshops all over the country. Her work has been published in *Splash 17 Best of Watercolor: Inspired Subjects*, *PleinAir Magazine*, *Southwest Art Magazine*, and *Watercolor Artist Magazine*.

"I find beauty in everyday life, the so called 'mundane'. Ordinary people going about their everyday lives inspire me. I especially enjoy painting en plein air, where each painting reminds me of where I was, of the experiences I had, the sounds, smells, and the people I met. As I try and capture the essence of a scene, my paintings are always more about a moment in time than about a particular location. I enjoy sharing how I see the world." - Brienne Brown

For more information, visit Brienne's website [www.briennembrown.com](http://www.briennembrown.com).

## GREETINGS FROM OUR PRESIDENT

**Deirdre Vaughan**



Our guest demo artist for December was Seattle-based artist Stephanie Bower. Stephanie is a visual artist, architect, author, urban sketcher, and teacher. Stephanie says, "I not only draw like an architect, I also paint like one." Her "Perspective in Watercolor" demo depicted a Venetian building scene. Stephanie began by explaining the three essential steps in drawing perspective: identify and sketch a dominant geometric

shape, find the vanishing point, and establish the eye level line (in landscapes, the horizon line). The building in her reference photo contained multiple arches. She explained how to use the anatomy of an arch to draw them accurately. Stephanie concluded by showing sketches of places and spaces from her travels around the world.



Stephanie's demo may be found on the NSWS YouTube channel at:

<https://youtu.be/X6NGhkCgCMU>

More information about Stephanie Bower is available at:

Website: <http://www.stephaniebower.com/>

Instagram: [Instagram@stephanieabower](https://www.instagram.com/stephanieabower)

Blog: [DrawingPerspectives.com](http://DrawingPerspectives.com)

Wishing all our NorthStar members a very happy, healthy, and art-filled New Year!  
Hoping to see you in person in April.

- **Deirdre Vaughan**, NorthStar President

## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

- Sandra Gensmer
- Grace Haverty
- Liesa Miller

## **VIRTUAL WORKSHOP WITH MICHAEL REARDON**

**February 25-26**

**Register now** <https://northstarwatermedia.wufoo.com/forms/zkrzviw0lpnfmz/>

- 12:30-4:30 CST with a 10-minute break halfway through each afternoon
- Registration is \$200 for members, \$230 for non-members
- For intermediate and advanced artists
- Limited to 8-16 students
- Line drawings, reference photos, value studies, and a materials list will be available as soon as students sign up
- Workshop videos pre-recorded and narrated live
- Open to NorthStar members first and to others after January 15
- There will be a 30-minute review at the end of each day, as well as mini reviews throughout the day
- Student questions during the pre-recorded demonstrations
- Recordings will be available for 30 days after the workshop

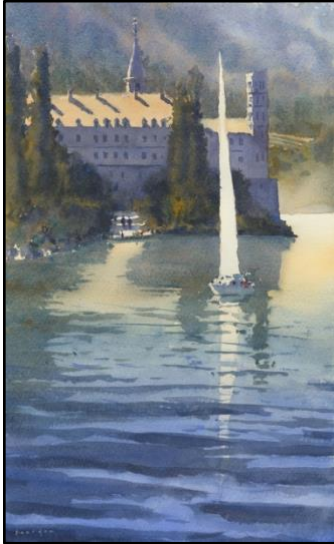
Participants will complete one full painting each day: first, of a former convent in Venasque,

France, followed by a French coastal stone church. Each painting will be broken into several steps. After each step is demonstrated, there will be time to paint that area.

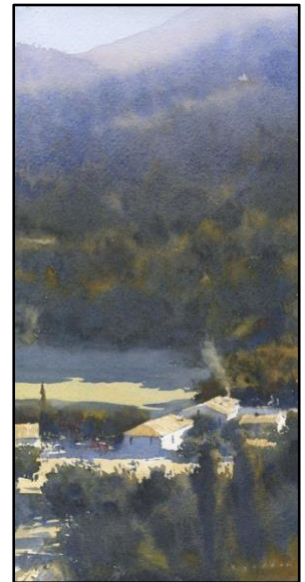
Demos will be pre-recorded, allowing for close-ups and review. A 3-minute preview is on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/y5ls2q7b>.

Fundamentals covered: working wet-in-wet, creating a strong composition, evoking a sense of light through the use of values, and manipulating color for its full expressive effect.

Michael Reardon has been painting in watercolor for over thirty years. An avid traveler, he uses watercolor to record his observations, convey a sense of place and light, and communicate his impressions of the built, natural, and imagined worlds. He works from his studio in Oakland, California.



In 2005 Reardon was the recipient of the prestigious Gabriel Prize from the Western European Architecture Foundation, which enabled him to spend three months painting in Paris. Originally trained as an architect, with an architecture degree from UC Berkeley, he was an architectural illustrator for over thirty years. In 2004 he was awarded the Hugh Ferriss Memorial Prize, the premier award in the field of architectural illustration.



Reardon's watercolors have been exhibited nationally and internationally, including the National Watercolor Society, the American Watercolor Society, and the California Art Club. Reardon is a signature member of the American Watercolor Society, National Watercolor Society, Watercolor West, and California Watercolor Association. He is also the author of *Watercolor Techniques: Painting Light and Color in Landscapes and Cityscapes* from North Light Books.

## **2022 MEMBER EXHIBITION**

### **"Re-Awakening"**

March 14 – April 9, 2022

Wildwood Library, 763 Stillwater Rd, Mahtomedi

Don't delay. Register now. The first 60 members to register will be admitted. Deadline for registration is February 18.

Exhibition rules and important dates can be found on the NorthStar website under Exhibitions.

**Please use this link to the application form:**

<https://northstarwatermedia.wufoo.com/forms/z1p1rnzb1d1iqy4/>

We are happy to announce that Kraig Thayer Rasmussen will be the juror for this exhibition. Kraig creates large atmospheric landscapes and waterscapes. He experiences Minnesota forests, lakes, and fields in his kayak or by horseback. He attended the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and has been an arts activist, teacher, museum and gallery curator, exhibit designer, arts administrator, and gallery director.

**- Heidi Nelson, Co-Chair**

## **ARTREACH FOR JUSTICE**

This column highlights artists, places, and events in keeping with our commitment to work toward a more inclusive, just, and equitable art community. Our focus in 2019-2020 was on current local artists, sometimes those just making a name for themselves. We will focus this year on artists who have made important historical contributions to the wider art world.

### **A New Deal for Artists**

After the 1929 stock market crash, the art market collapsed and sales of imported and American artwork decreased some 80%, along with the loss of teaching and other employment opportunities in the arts. During The Great Depression in the mid-1930s, over 50% of American artists were eligible for public assistance.

As part of its New Deal Program, the Roosevelt Administration's Works Progress Administration (WPA), launched the Federal Art Project (FAP) to employ artists, musicians, writers, and actors to create public works of art. To qualify, artists needed only to show they were unemployed and incapable of finding other work and provide a portfolio showcasing their skills and commitment to the arts. They were paid roughly \$40-\$80 a week (about \$400-\$800 today), according to their abilities.

"Good thing we had the WPA, because otherwise a lot of artists would've starved to death." - Tyrus Wong, WPA artist

In addition to aiding the unemployed, the program sought to make art accessible to the population-at-large "to integrate the fine with the practical arts, and more especially, the arts in general with the daily life of the community."<sup>(1)</sup> Themes and subjects emphasized Americans' everyday activities, especially their lives at work. During the program's 8-year span, the FAP employed more than 5,000 artists,



produced over 200,000 visual art works (paintings, sculptures, print designs, poster designs, and murals), and established 100 community art centers.

Because the FAP contained a non-discrimination clause, “it attracted and hired not just white men but also artists of color and women who received little attention in the mainstream art world of [that] day.” <sup>(2)</sup>

In the next few newsletters, we’ll look at individual WPA artists from those groups, their importance, and their often-overlooked contributions to the arts.

### Fay Chong (1912-1973)



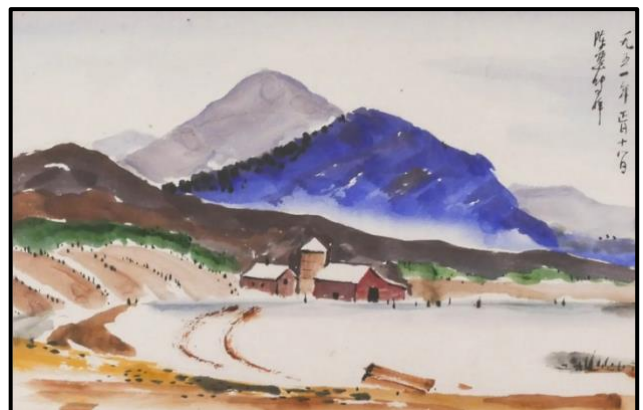
Fay Chong, a Chinese American artist employed by the WPA, made major contributions to the art world between 1930 and 1960, but is no longer garnering much recognition from art historians.

Chong’s family emigrated from Southern China in the early 20th century and later settled in Seattle, where Chong became a significant member of the art community. Chong returned to China twice during his early life to study calligraphy and Chinese brush painting, both critical elements of his work.

Above left: Fay Chong painting on the beach at La Push, WA, c. 1961

Chong entered the FAP program in 1938, and like other FAP artists, used his time there to establish a professional identity, share his interests with other artists, and further develop his skills. His initial FAP work consisted of linoleum prints before he began experimenting with watercolors.

Chong ultimately worked exclusively in watercolor, collaborating with fellow artist Andrew Chinn. Along with Chinn, Chong created an exciting new watercolor technique which proved instrumental in the development of the Regionalism and Abstract Expression art movements. They mixed Chinese ink with watercolors, painting on rice paper with a Chinese brush. Using traditional Asian techniques and materials to portray everyday subjects from the Western United States resulted in a unique fusion of East and West. The subject matter was varied, often of rural businesses, industrial structures, and regional landscapes.



Above right: “Northwest Landscape”, watercolor, Fay Chong

One author describes Chong's process as "abstracting from manmade and natural motifs with energetic calligraphic brushwork and spreading designs across their surfaces with colorful watery washes." <sup>(3)</sup>

Chong continued studying, painting, and teaching in the Seattle area throughout his life, developing a new abstract style but continuing to paint his Regionalist (realistic) watercolors. His work was widely exhibited, winning major art prizes in his region.

"Simplicity and energy are my destination." - Fay Chong

## Resources

- (1) *What We Can Learn From the Brief Period When the Government Employed Artists*, Tess Thackara, 2017. <https://portside.org/2021-02-25/what-we-can-learn-brief-period-when-government-employed-artists>
- (2) *Art of the New Deal: How Artists Helped Redefine America During The Depression*, Neda Ulaby, npr News, <https://www.npr.org/2020/05/25/854864293/art-of-the-new-deal-how-artists-helped-redefine-america-during-the-depression>
- (3) *Fay Chong and Andrew Chinn: Asian Masters of American Art*, James W. Ellis, [http://op.asjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/OP12\\_Ellis.pdf](http://op.asjournal.org/wp-content/uploads/OP12_Ellis.pdf)

- **Rockie Weymouth**

## ARTISTS' MARKET

We are going ahead with plans for Artists' Market 2022. You will be able to display all those painting you have stockpiled during the pandemic. Tentative dates are Friday and Saturday, June 10-11, 2022. Acceptable media include water media, acrylic, alcohol ink and water miscible oil. Printed greeting cards will be allowed this year. All other artworks must be original. Two-dimensional artwork only. Guidelines for printed cards and other information will be posted to the Artists' Market page of the NSWS website. More information will be included in the February newsletter.

- **Sue Olson**, Artists' Market Chair [marketartists099@gmail.com](mailto:marketartists099@gmail.com)

## ART 4 SHELTER

Artists, please continue creating 5" x 7" paintings for the 2022 Art 4 Shelter fundraiser. This is a great event which provides support for Simpson Housing Services. More information will follow in our February newsletter.

- **Marilyn Jacobson**, Art 4 Shelter Liaison

## CHECK THIS OUT

### Minneapolis & St. Paul Gallery Guide

If you're looking for a new gallery to explore, this can be a terrific place to start. The website provides a wide range of resources for all things art in the Twin Cities. There is a comprehensive list of galleries, studios, museums, and other art-related entities, with a street address and a short description of what's offered by each. In addition, the site features written articles on a variety of topics and listings of current and upcoming events. Learn more at:

<https://www.mplsart.com/>

### Mia: Kamoda Shoji: The Art of Change

December 11-April 17 – Cargill Gallery, free

Kamoda Shoji (1933-1983) became one of Japan's most celebrated potters. His groundbreaking approach to the interplay among material, form, and surface helped revolutionize the way Japanese artists approached ceramic production. This exhibition, the first outside Japan, features nearly 50 works from 10 private American collections and spans the breadth of his brilliant artistic career.

<https://new.artsmia.org/exhibition/kamoda-shoji-the-art-of-change>

## NORTHSTAR WATERMEDIA SOCIETY COMING EVENTS

Jan 20	Online demo by Brienne Brown
Feb 17	Online demo by Shari Blaukopf
Feb 18	Deadline for Member Exhibition registration
Feb 25-26	Online workshop with Michael Reardon
Mar 14-Apr 9	Member Exhibition at Wildwood Library
Mar 17	Reception at Wildwood library
Apr 14	Online demo by Kent Estey

## MINNESOTA WATERCOLOR SOCIETY COMING EVENTS

Jan 13	Online demo by Karen Knutson
Feb 1-7	Spring Juried Exhibition submission period
Feb 10	In-person demo by Suzanne Shaff at Hopkins Center for the Arts and online

## CONTACT US



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**All are welcome here. We do not discriminate based on race, color, national origin, (ancestry), religion, ability, political affiliation or beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or age.**

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