



Orchid Pots by Priscilla Powers

Mission Statement: The Wilmette Arts Guild encourages, supports and promotes the development of the visual arts in a welcoming spirit of creative community.
 September 2008

Calendar of Programs September 2008

Sept. 2 - 1131 Central Ave. WAG Critique You should bring a painting, sculpture or photo that you are working on.

Sept. 10 - WAG Office 1131 Central Ave. Regular Board Meeting-7:00PM WAG Office

Sept 12 - Metra Parking Lot -

Festival setup 6:00PM - 10PM

Sept. 13 - First Day of the Fine Arts Festival - Artist's Setup 6:00AM
 Festival has been extended to 9:30PM to take advantage of the Wilmette Village Block Party.

Sept. 14 - Metra Train Station

9:30AM Festival Awards Breakfast.

11:30AM Jim Kendros's Rare Instruments

4:00PM 50/50 Raffle Winners Announced

5:00PM Artists take down

Sept 15 - Nap time for all participating Festival Artists

Sept 16 - WAG Office 1131 Central Ave 7:00PM Festival review with champagne and treats.

Sept 21 Auditions for the Young Artists' Recital on October 26th.
www.wilmette.com for information and applications

October 2008

Phil Simmons of the Wilmette Fine Arts Commission informs us of the following events so far in October:

October 2008 is Arts Awareness Month in Wilmette. Support the local programs sponsored by the Wilmette Fine Arts Commission!

Oct. 3 - Wilmette Fine Arts Commission Photography Show
 Opening from 5:30-7:30PM- North Shore Community Bank, 1145 Wilmette Avenue.

Dear Friends,

Welcome back! September is here!

The Wilmette Fine Arts Festival, 2008 is ready for September 13 and 14th! I would like to thank all of you who will make this a gorgeous, fun-filled reality. A Festival needs volunteers and we have the best, the most eager, and cheerful. We have great food, great music and above all great art! Come one, come all! Look at art, buy art and ENJOY!

Best to all,

Julie Ressler

President of the Wilmette Arts Guild

Calls for Art:

Support the arts! WAG needs new members - artists and non-artists, all are welcome. Application on the last page of the Newsletter.

Photographers for Wilmette Arts Guild First **All Photography Show** at the Wilmette Public Library, Dec 1- Dec 30th. Opening Night Party:TBA

By September 2, apply for College of Lake County Holiday Art Sale 2008, November 22-25, 2008 - 847-543-2405 or email: crasmussin@clcollinois.edu.

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Treetops Studio in Hubbard Woods

A Thought-full Conversation

By Julie Ressler

photos by Jonathan Roob



Meta Joutras

The Treetop Studio in Hubbard Woods is a retreat, a protected lair from everyday cares, family, phones, the TV. Jane D'Angelo, Mary Jo O'Gara, Lucie Phillips and Meta Joutras realize that a critical part of being a serious artist is to take oneself seriously, creating a private space, a quiet place to let the mind rest in it. They feel that Treetop Studio legitimizes their work, both in their own minds as much as the public's view of them.



Lucie Phillips

round the back. Before he could enter, she threw the money out the window to him so he would not have to come tromping in and disrupt the creative energy. The consensus is "Every artist should have "caller ID!"

Mary Jo tells the story of one of her sons needing some money so he drove

I asked how they stayed out of each other's hair... they all laughed.



Old House by Lucie Phillips

"All of us need to be here." This is not filling time! This is my life! When I am painting, I look up at the clock and can't believe that it's been three hours. It seems like a minute." Everyone agreed. Someone mumbled, "It's a little like coming out of a coma, except there is the painting to show for it. At least you know where you've been." Lucie said, "However, when I work at home, I never stop working. At 3:00AM I can wake up and just doing one last thing. So having the studio actually makes me focus while I'm here and then be able to leave it."

had to impress everyone, but then, I realized that not only did they not care what I did, I didn't care whether they cared. I was "doing" for myself. Does that sound weird?" Everyone chimed in, "No! No! NO! You have to paint for your own self or it doesn't work." Lucie suggested that if you paint for others' good opinion, you end up dry and run out of creative juice. I volunteered that I had heard that also and everyone agreed

Meta, the newest member, said that she has grown to like working with other people around. "At first I would paint very fast thinking that I



Jane D'Angelo



Last Light by Jane D'Angelo

Do you ever give each other advice? "Only if asked" and then very tentatively. The most usual question is "Is it finished?" As far as technical suggestions go, it is information sharing and networking in a very usual way... Jane uses the computer as reference, sometimes the others use photos or digital screens... Lucie said she would use a projector only to get the roughest proportion on a large scale piece. There was over all agreement that modern innovations were a boon and in no way stifle creativity or diminish the skill and judgment it takes to finish a good painting. Modern innovations make a good drawing or an outline happen quickly.

There are always the people who will say dreadful things to you, many with the best intentions in the world. You have to be "out there." ... "or you are going to have quite a lot of paintings in your attic!" Everyone laughed. They all agreed that when they are asked by a beginner or another artist for their 'critique,' they are very careful to "mix it up" - the good with the bad and then finish with the good and keep everything very specific.

The consensus is that every artist needs "rhino hide" - thick skin that is bullet proof.



Mary Jo O'Gara

Jane brought up a fascinating point. After an artist has painted for years, it is quite exhilarating to go back and look at the basics. The fundamentals are so important. This seems so obvious and yet, how to lay things in, improves every painting. Drawing more accurately improves the way you see in every respect. Going "en plein air," will force your work forward faster than you would believe possible.

In my notes, I missed who said it, but it's so true of life and their wonderful paintings, "We are all so different, but we are best at being who we are."



Fortitude
by Franco Muscarella

Brushes With Art

by Janice Asien LaRosa

Until August 23, 2007, at 3:30 in the afternoon, I thought we all had happily settled into our new lives. Suddenly the skies grew very dark. Usually, I love storms, but in a "mother moment," I rushed my two youngest to a lower level of our house for safety.

It was seconds later that we felt our house shake as we watched a giant tree topple onto our house, followed by the shrill ringing of all our upstairs smoke alarms. I thought a tornado was hitting. I never once thought of fire. What sounded like an ocean wave moving through our upstairs was actually crimson colored heat melting everything in its path as lightning moved through our second level.

I got my children, dogs, and even our hamster outside to the safety of my car, which also had a fallen tree strewn over it, but was a better place than our home which by now was engulfed in flames. I stood on the sidewalk watching our home, our belongings and our dreams go up in flames.

In the weeks to follow, I'd find a daily moment of comfort and temporary escape from our nightmare by driving to the next town and sitting quietly sipping a cup of hot cocoa. I noticed a picture displayed in a window across the street. Carrying my cup, I crossed the street to get a closer look. And there it was, the most magnificent drawing I had ever seen. It was a picture of a tree, bare and bent almost to breaking by the wind, but yet it stood. "That's me," my heart said as I stood looking at it.

Everyday as I wondered how we would get through this, I'd just stand in front of the picture. Each time what I saw somehow gathered from somewhere deep inside what I needed, just for that day, to hold on. The picture's title, FORTITUDE, meant courage. "Ah, yes, how perfect," I thought. "I could hang on a little longer."

One day when I got to the window, the picture was gone! I called the phone number I had remembered and was told the picture was indeed still available.

I had money that someone had given me to buy myself some new clothes, but I hesitated to spend the money. How could I indulge myself by buying this? My walls which at one time had been strewn with beautiful pictures had all burned away.

I called and shared the story with the artist's mother, of daily gathering strength from the picture. "Then you must have it, at no charge," she said, "My son will give you the picture!"

But knowing how powerfully and profoundly his talent had healed my heart, I decided that the meager wardrobe I had would do and instead I wanted to encourage and sew seeds into his life, so others could feel what I felt from his work. "Fortitude" hangs as the lone picture in my home. It's the only picture I need. Like the battered tree, I am still standing. If you look closely at the bottom of the tree, there is one single leaf.

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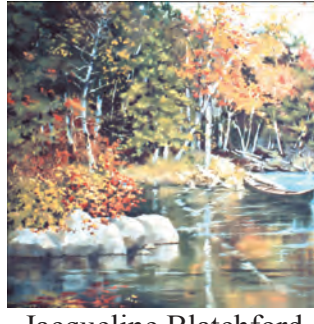
Festival Artists



Patricia Berg-Drazin



Susan Willis



Jacqueline Blatchford



Amy Taylor



Julie Ressler



Mae Connor



Meta Joutras



Natalya Sots



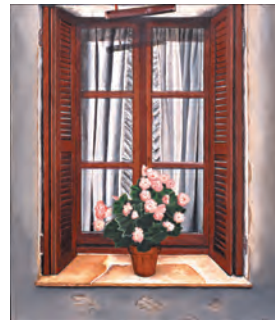
Keri Ippolito



Mary Hadley



Barbara Roseman



Richard Campbell



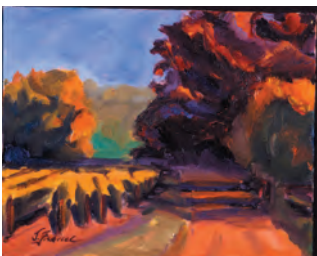
Jane D'Angelo



Hans Eric Olson



Ala Jaron



Jacqueline France



Claire Hirsch



Kris Schroeder



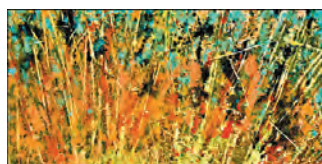
Daina Roseman



Jeff Nelson



Bonnie Eastwood



Crystal McCann



Kristin Ashley



Anita Miller



Lucie Phillips

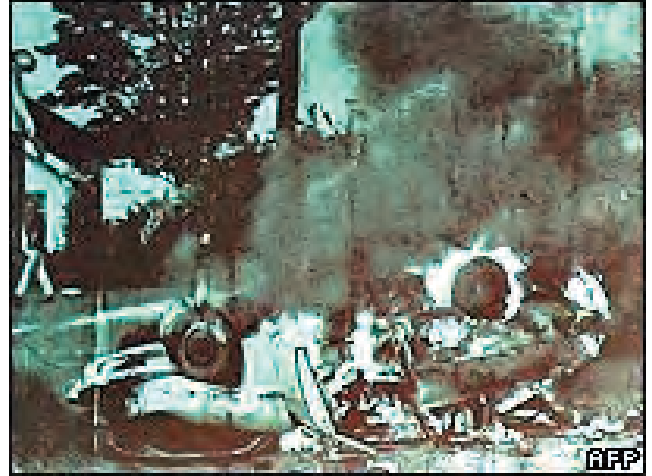
THE BIG DISCONNECT

How did we get here from there?

by Everett Campbell

Contemporary art has been selling for record sums over the past twenty years. Recent auctions at Sotheby's and Christie's have realized huge prices for work by the abstract expressionists from the fifties, pop artists from the sixties and even many artists who are still producing new work. At a time when old master paintings are selling for \$8-10,000,000, a silkscreen by Warhol sold for \$70,000,000.

What is amazing is the way in which the demand for new and often controversial art has become dominant in the world of collectors, museums and in the media. Normally the most recent developments in art are considered to be "avant garde", perhaps "experimental" and only gradually do these works really enter the mainstream of the art collecting world. When the impressionists began to be admired on a large scale in the first decades of the twentieth century, it was still within the reach of middle class people to buy work by Monet, Renoir and Van Gogh. Over time there was a steady increase in the appreciation of the newer styles and their values rose. Now there is a sense that things are upside down with art of the past thirty years outselling the older established works. Museums are vying for whatever is new and seems hot. Review exhibitions like the Whitney Biennial seem more like fashion shows than venues for new art.



Car Wreck by Warhol

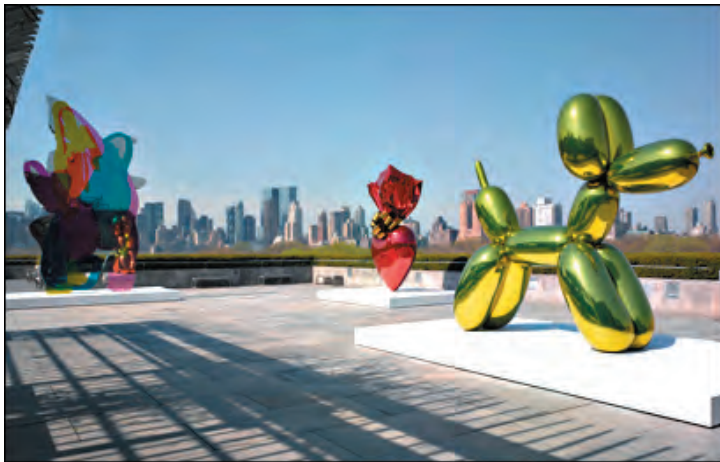
Why is all of that surprising? Mainly it is because the vast majority of this new art is stuff that 95% of the art loving public does not admire. Most of these high profile works are things which they would not accept as a gift, unless it was for the purpose of reselling. These are not works which most people want to actually look at, to display in their homes or offices. So the question arises, who is buying them and what is their motivation? Is it because the buyer thinks that these works are great art? Is it because they believe them to be a good investment? A recent example in which a feverish competition for the new trumped traditional concepts of value is the sale of a Jeff Koons sculpture, "Balloon Dog," for twenty million dollars.

Somehow a big disconnect has developed between the vast majority of the art loving public and the people who control art media, museums and

academic art departments. When a piece sells at auction it simply means that at least one collector believes it to have whatever value he paid for it. There is, however, a direct relationship between how much that collector is willing to pay and how that work has been valued by various members of the art establishment. Somehow the collective wisdom of said establishment has created a demand for a lot of art whose primary virtue is that it is in fashion at the moment. How has this come about? Why is it that so few people find it remarkable?

The whole issue of "what is art?" is a philosophical subject which requires a great deal of discussion to even scratch the surface. A much more accessible question is "why do people value a given work?" On a superficial level the answers are fairly straight forward. Most people think a work has value if there are two elements, skill in drawing and evidence of some real effort to produce it. Those are things which seem obvious to the lay person, namely that not just anyone could have done it and whoever did it put in a lot of honest effort in order to complete it. Paradoxically by that standard the illustrator would be the best artist in the world. So there is more to the issue of value than is immediately apparent.

When one looks at the commercial work of a successful illustrator such as Edward Hopper one finds consummate skill in rendering an image and this obviously required effort to produce.



Balloon Dog by Koons



Sailing by Edward Hopper



Night Hawks by Edward Hopper

But when you look at the paintings he did as fine art there is something else present: namely an original work, something creative rather than done purely as illustration. His iconic masterpiece “Night Hawks” embodies plenty of skill in rendering a scene, obviously required a lot of effort but the greatness comes from his ability to make an original statement. People have different opinions about the meaning of this painting, but almost everyone would say that it does mean something - it expresses something abstract and not easy to describe, somehow Hopper has created something that was not there before. What is important in comparison of two examples the same artist’s work is that in “Night Hawks” there is something that not

everyone could do, not even every illustrator could do, rather there is an act of creation. That is the real basis for thinking that the painting is great and thinking that it has value. That means that if someone wants to buy it they will be willing to pay a lot, if a museum buys it they will feel that the museum made a good choice. In short they find value in the work. Thus it is the quality of original creation which finally determines value, but that involves subjective judgment. Who gets to decide just how valuable and what work is so important that it belongs in public collections?

When something new takes the world by storm, when the fashionable people start spending megabucks on stuff that no one has seen before, there are usually some promoters creating a world of hype for the new product. In the art world these agents are variously dealers, collectors and people who write about art. How far can hype go towards establishing the value of new art? A good question.

Auction houses are selling art which has only been around for thirty years or less for record prices. Often these are works which the average person does not find aesthetically pleasing or even interesting. New price levels for a given artist are usually attended by a bevy of critics who fall all over themselves with paeans of praise. Generally the vocabulary is a bit fuzzy, using terms like “heroic”, “triumph”, “over powering” etc. which definitely connote approval, but are sufficiently vague that they can apply to any work of art whatsoever. If the printer accidentally switched the names around in a typical piece of art criticism no one would notice a discrepancy. Public acceptance of new art follows the printed word. People may not find that the art is inspiring but no one wants to look like a Philistine. After all, the experts have spoken.

When a certain critical mass of new work makes its way into big collections the museums are not far behind. So how do these collectors first come to appreciate the new work and support it with such largess? Obviously there are many factors: some people just want to say that they spent more than anyone else for a given work. Others are gamblers, thinking that there will always be a bigger fool than they have been. What is usually the case is that people wishing to build a major art collection hire advisors and decorators, those who “know what great art is.” These agents along with dealers are in a position to create the standards by which high end art is judged. Thus the collectors, working with select dealers, actually create the market. They are frequently aided and abetted by journalists who collaborate in bringing these discoveries to the public. Once such progress is endorsed by museum curators by way of exhibitions the new work becomes part of the cultural establishment. Major donors line up for the privilege of sponsoring shows and new acquisitions. With affirmation like that who would want to be so gauche as to suggest that the whole process is just a gigantic sales job? There is a note of arrogance at times when various spokespersons of the art world deliver opinions on new art *The Chicago Reader, November 29, 2007* printed quotes from a lecture given by Peter Schjeldahl, chief art critic for the New Yorker magazine. Speaking in Chicago he said that New York was a “transmitter” city, like Paris or Berlin and that Chicago was, like most of the other cities in the world, a “receiver” city. Well, he is right, those brilliant innovators in New York are busy transmitting seven days a week but what people on the receiving end make of it all is another matter. By no means does all the art public feel obliged to accept all such transmissions at face value. What is surprising is that there are not more critics, especially in all those “receiving” cities, asking the question: “Does the emperor actually have new clothes?”



The Emperor’s New Clothes


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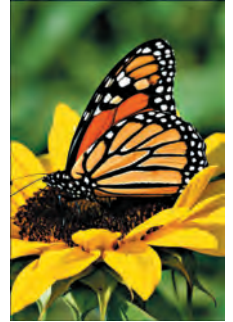
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Jolanta Szolyga



Lisa Kleppinger



Kate Hetzel



Laura Hedien



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Karen Santucci



Sandy Atkins-Moran



Dianna Dinka



Teresa Dever



Carmen Perez



Paula Jacko



Julie Schilf



Peter Rujawa



John Freda



Shelly Lawler



Edwin Schmidt



Carol Viazanko



Hans Max Stroessler



Zofia Tomala



Kangsheng Liu



Margaret Biggs

Festival Artists



Ursula Jonas



Sally Schoch



Franco Muscarella



Laurie Walker



David Roth



Donald Enz



Jack Wohlstadter



Gordon France



Igor Menaker



Nick Engelhardt



Carole Crowley



Terri Myer



Debbe Horgan



Glen Sung



Walt Anderson



Xin Zhang

All fine art is different,
so are insurance policies! by Jack Rosen

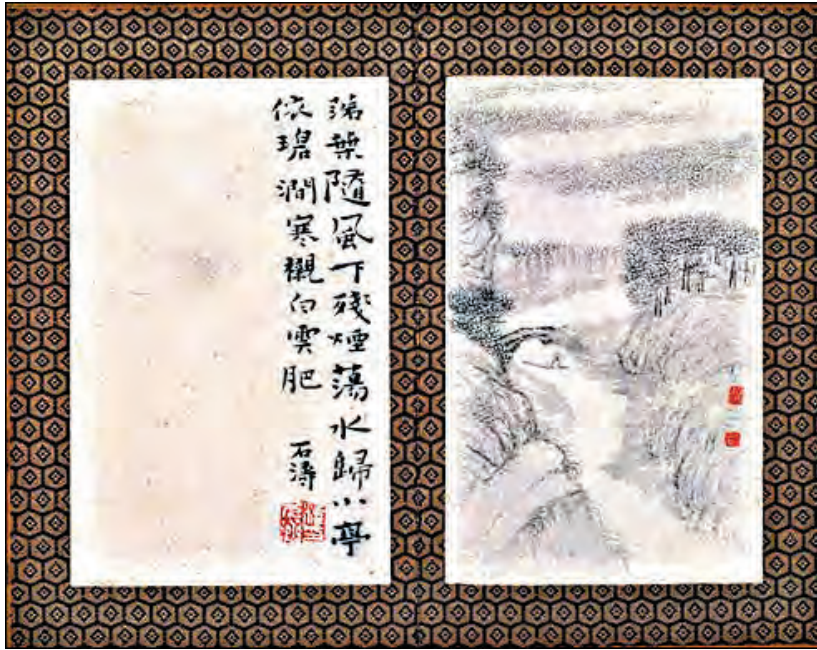
Just as every work of art is unique in its own way, so are the insurance policies people use to protect them. All insurance policies do not provide the same coverage. Companies differ as to how they choose to cover these items. These differences can determine if coverage exists and how much the insured will receive at the time of loss. Some carriers require you to itemize each valuable, others do not. To receive a loss settlement, each item must be appraised so that a dollar amount can be determined.

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Cindra Macciomei's Pocketful of Poems

(The Verbal Inspiring the Visual)



Courtesy Metropolitan Museum of Art

Returning Home

As falling leaves descend
with the wind,
I return by the water
through a thinning mist;
I see a tiny hut clinging
to the bank of a green stream,
How soft and fat the white
clouds look in the cold air.

-Shitao 1695

Thank You!

A big thank you again to Bryan Brick, Traci and Jim at EJ Graphics for their continuing help getting the *WAG Newsletter* printed, Jon Roob's fantastic photos of the Student Art Show & Member's Reception, Bonnie Forkosh of the Wilmette Library for providing us with a beautiful venue and a helpful staff. Thanks to Marge Graham for her eagle eye proofing.

Thank you! Thank you!



Wilmette Arts Guild Membership Form

Note: memberships run from June to June

You can support the visual arts by joining the Wilmette Arts Guild! Your dues will help sponsor our monthly movies, lectures, demonstrations, as well as joint programs with the Lyric Opera, the Art Institute and the Wilmette Library. Our Galleries run all year to help members become known and sell their art. We have the Wilmette Fine Arts Festival in September. Everyone interested in the visual arts is welcome! We are an inclusive arts organization. We can't do it without you!

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photo by Jonathan Roob - JonJRoob@gmail.com

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|-----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Donna Rice | Julie Ressler | Kristen Beaulieu |
| Gloria Moschel | Ed Willer | Wayne Brewer |
| JoAnn Dominic | Laurie Walker | Richard Campbell |
| Barbara Roseman | Lindsay Brown | Virginia Mallard |
| LeRoy Cox | Joan Hall | |
| | Marge Graham | |
| | Ralph Greenhow | |
| | Cynthia Gehrie | |
| | Linda Carroll | |

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Peonies with Ants by Festival Artist Mae Connor

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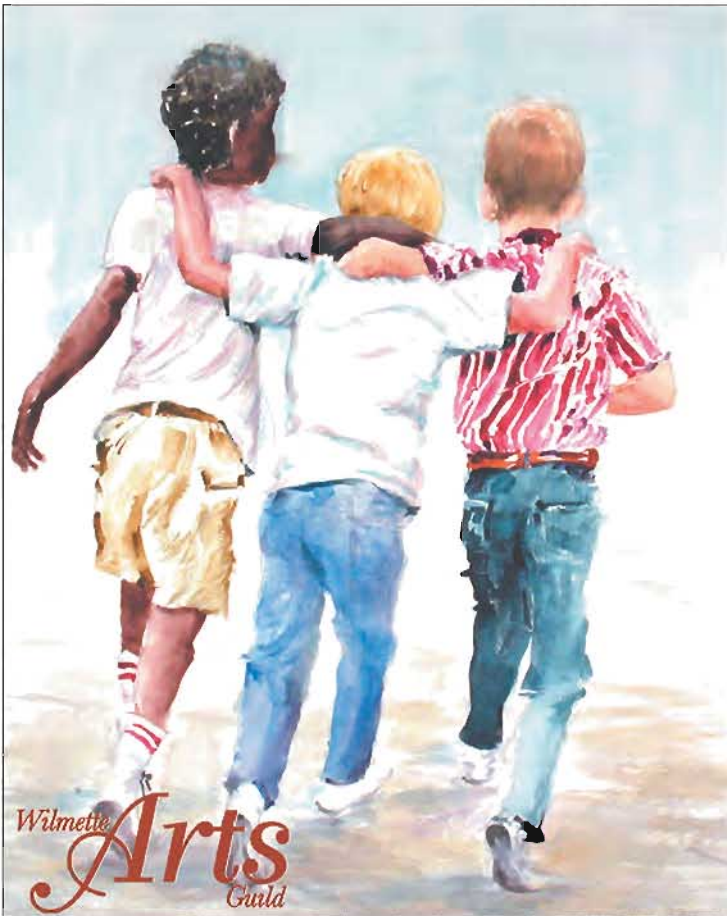


photo by Festival Artist Mary Hadley



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