



Newsletter Spring (at last!) 2005

Spring is at the Aird!! March 31 to April 22nd

What a wonderful opening reception we had as over 250 guests joined BAC artists to enjoy viewing 74 beautiful paintings at "Spring is in the Air" at the John B. Aird gallery in Toronto. Dale Barrett, the gallery curator, expertly hung the paintings in appropriate plant groupings. There were many compliments on the work, and on the refreshments and flowers, attractively displayed on lilac cloths.

We were thrilled to have Mrs. John B. Aird and many members of her family. Kate Menear, her granddaughter, officially opened the exhibition with a well-delivered speech, which included reminiscences of her grandfather and his support for the arts.

What a difficult job it must have been for our three jurors to make their final selections of paintings! It was pleasing to know that each entrant had at least one painting on display. That gives us all encouragement to participate in future shows. Our thanks go to Celia Godkin, Sheila Seigerman and Pamela Stagg for volunteering their time.

There are so many people to thank for creating the art exhibition and for making the opening such a success.

- My first bouquet goes to Ann Stirling whose vision and dedicated hard work made this show happen. Ann spent countless hours contacting artists and volunteers, receiving entries, organizing lists, receiving the paintings, storing and delivering them to the Aird, intact, catalogued and in order. As one volunteer exclaimed, "This is so well organized and so easy to set up!" Ann deserves a huge thank you from each and every one of us, for a job superbly done!

- As you can imagine a great deal of planning and implementation went on behind the scenes. I want to sincerely thank the Coordinating Committee of BAC for all of their work, patience and support. The countless emails and phone calls to ensure every detail was thought through, added up to much computer memory, mounds of paper and hours of time. Thanks to Raquel Baranyai and Mary Rose Woodbridge for being our links to the members.

- To Jan Mok and Karen McLean and their helpers who organized a wonderful reception of cheeses and fruits and cold refreshing beverages, thank you. Members were very generous to offer home baked cookies or additional food items.

To all of our volunteers who gave of their time and especially to the artists, your efforts are very much appreciated!

One of BAC's mandates is to increase the awareness of botanical art. "Spring is in the Air" has already met this goal. The show continues until April 22.

- Lynda Bryden

More from the President....

GREAT ACHIEVEMENTS

I understand, from at least one participant, that a recent seminar organized by Margit Koritar and conducted by Dick Rauh, was an excellent learning experience.

I had a chance to peek in on the Botanical Exhibition at Canada Blooms in March. This year, because it was a special birthday, Peg Graeb's work was being featured. BAC congratulates Peg, and wishes her a very happy birthday! All of the paintings in the show were fabulous. It was a real tribute to the participants, and to Margit Koritar, Convenor.

BAC AGM

The Annual General Meeting will be held on **Wednesday June 22** from 6 to 9 pm at Lawrence Park Community Church, 2180 Bayview Avenue, Toronto. If you have any suggestions for a speaker or activity, please contact us. One thing we must do is provide an opportunity to get to know each other better, so we can be aware of each other's needs, interests and talents. As usual a contribution of snacks will be welcome, but is not a condition of attending! I'll look forward to seeing you.

UPCOMING COACHING

Another of BAC aims is to provide training, so we can learn new skills and increase our own knowledge of botanical art. To this end, I hope you will support the great efforts made by Emily Luks, to provide a very interesting series of Coaching Sessions for this spring, summer and early autumn. A carbon dust workshop is also planned for October.

Animal, vegetable or mineral? The great debate

© By Pamela Stagg

When my family moved to Canada, my parents decided that we would spend our summer holidays in Maine. In those days – before the 401 and the interstate system – it was a miserable three-day drive to the tiny cottage we rented. Our three cats howled all the time and were often carsick. We three young children bickered all the time and often let the cats jump out of the window at stops. We complained that it was too hot, too cold, too crowded in the car, too boring ...

My parents quickly came up with a variety of games and pastimes to occupy us on the trip, one of which was 20 Questions.

For those of you who don't know the game, one person thinks of an object and the other participants have to guess the object by asking no more than 20 questions about this mysterious thing. The only initial hint is whether the object is animal, vegetable or mineral.

This game came to mind because I've discovered lately that some artists aren't entirely clear which subjects qualify as botanical. In my classes, students sometimes ask whether they can paint feathers, shells, insects, pebbles or even chipmunks. Sorry folks, not in a botanical painting class. If it moves or belongs to something that once did, it's part of the animal kingdom. A rock? Leave that one to the geologists. Botanical means plants.

There is a gray area and that's mushrooms. Since fungi don't really fit in with geology or zoology, they're generally lumped in with botanical subjects, as are lichens. Also, if plants have an unusual pollinator, such as a hummingbird or a moth, it is permissible to include the pollinator as long as it is not the dominant subject. Baskets, bowls and decorative objects turn a botanical subject into a still life. (Many of the magnificent Dutch flower paintings, with flowers arranged in elaborate urns, are technically still lifes.)

I think it's great when painters want to broaden their scope, as long as they understand they're no longer creating a botanical painting. (Drawing animals is something I really enjoy.) The Guild of Natural Science Illustrators is an excellent resource for those who want to spread their wings by tackling subjects that go beyond the purely botanical; the Guild's technical source book covers everything from fish to medical illustration.

Our mandate in BAC is defined as strictly botanical painting. Given that we're trying to educate a public which doesn't really know much about botanical painting, all BAC members need to be very precise about what is or isn't botanical.

So if you're not sure about your subject, simply ask yourself whether it's animal, vegetable or mineral.

Field Studies: Picturing Flora in Canadian Art

This exhibition of Canadian floral art is a must-see for Toronto-area botanical painters. Superbly researched and curated, the show combines botanical prints, paintings and drawings; floral paintings; photographs; and landscapes and still lifes with flowers – even x-rays of roses. The range of artists is truly impressive and includes no less than five David Milne works, paintings and prints by Group of Seven members, a dozen original hand-coloured prints from Catherine Parr Trail's flower book of the 1850's, landscapes by Molly Lamb Bobak and Bruce St. Clair, as well as botanical paintings by BAC's Pamela Stagg.

- **Frederick Varley Gallery of Markham, 216 Main Street, Unionville, until May 1st.**

BAC COACHING PROGRAM

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limited to 18 people

Emily Luks and her team have assembled an excellent group of instructors and BAC members for the very popular coaching sessions introduced last year. This is a great opportunity for any member who wants to improve their skills by concentrating on one area at a time. Join for 5 sessions, on selected days & evenings. The fee is \$60 and covers all 5 sessions for members; it is \$90 for non-members. **[See detailed information attached]**

Saturday, May 21, (10 – 4.30) - Douglas Purdon - Watercolour & Gouache
 Wednesday, June 15 (evening)- Celia Godkin – Mixed media
 Wednesday, August 24 (evening) - Emily Luks- The Power of Drawing
 Wednesday, September 7 (evening) - Karen Taylor - Deep colours
 Wednesday, October 19 (evening) - Tasira Strimban - White Background? Not Necessarily.

| | |
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| <p>Emily Luks recommends...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guide to Flowering Plant Families by Wendy B. Zomlefer <p>An illustrated reference for all plant enthusiasts. ISBN (Softbound) 0-8078-4470-5 ISBN (Hardbound) 0-8078-2160-8 The University of North Carolina Press E-mail: uncprees-orders@unc.edu</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Here is a great catalogue for artist's materials. Daniel Smith of Seattle. Tel 1-800-426-6740 Website: www.danielsmith.com | <p>Need a special treat?</p> <p>Join these Orient Express Hotel painting tours with artists from the Shirley Sherwood Collection</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peruvian Orchid Painting with Carol Woodin – October 16-24, 2005 • Hotel Cipriani, Venice, Italy with Jenny Phillips – October 9-14, 2005 <p>Inquiries: Janet DiBenedetto Tel 212-302-5055; Janet.dibenedetto@orient-express.com</p> |
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A New Flowering: 1000 Years of Botanical Art – May to September 2005

One thousand years of botanical art will be displayed in the lead exhibition of 2005 of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford, England. This provides a unique opportunity to compare illustrations by contemporary artists, including BAC member, Pamela Stagg, with the remarkable botanical art of the past. The exhibition includes botanical painting by artists worldwide and the rich historical treasures of Oxford's libraries and museums.

The oldest exhibit is a drawing of a thistle made by a monk in the late 11th century and the most recent painting, by Angela Mirro, is of a rare Peruvian slipper orchid discovered in 2002. By contrasting the old with the new throughout the show, it becomes apparent that the criteria for botanical illustration have not changed throughout the centuries. The scientific quality found within illustrations from the 17th century onwards originates from detailed and accurate observations, which have remained essential to the representation of plants and their anatomy today.

<http://www.ashmol.ox.ac.uk/ash/exhibitions/exh075.html>

A note from the Coordinating Committee – 2005/2006 memberships

Your support has contributed to BAC's growth to 87 members, and made possible such a great event as the current *Spring is in the Air* Botanical Exhibition.

Effective this July, the Coordinating Committee has decided to increase the yearly fee to \$30. This is an increase of \$5 per annum.

The ideal time to renew your membership is at the AGM, to be held this year on June 22. If you are not able to attend, please mail your cheque payable to 'BAC', to **Raquel Baranyai, 203 Shaughnessy Blvd #403, Toronto ON M2J 1J9, Tel (416) 498-9279**
raquelbaranyai@sympatico.ca

Being prompt with your payment is the best way to ensure you receive updated information about classes, shows, Critique Night and all other events related to BAC.

Thank you and let's look forward to another great, creative year!

Canada Blooms – 2005 Botanical Art Exhibit

A report from Margit Koritar, Curator/Organizer

To celebrate our Fifth Anniversary we presented a selected collection of Margaret (Peg) Graeb's botanical watercolours in addition to our juried collection. Peg's paintings have graced our exhibits for the past five years and every year the jurors praised the excellence of her craftsmanship and marvelled at the detail in her paintings. Her work epitomizes everything that is beautiful in this art form. Peg has consistently produced an unparalleled body of botanical paintings, which deserved to be shared.

This year, as every year, we had a core group of artists participating with many new artists joining us with their wonderful works.

In addition to being praised for our paintings and marvellous attention to detail the compliments were equally given to Leslie's installation.

Presentation is crucial and Leslie surpassed herself this year with the assistance of our faithful volunteers: John Eedy, Marguerite Nault-Kubera and Zoltan Koritar.

Many of our visitors and artists travelled great distances to view our exhibit...Myra Sourkes' sister came from California, Kerri Weller came from Ottawa and Margaret Best's spouse came from Calgary. The list can go on and on...

Thank you all for participating as artists, jurors and volunteers for without you we would not have a show. I hope that the Board of Directors of Canada Blooms invites us again for 2006 and that more of you will join our ranks next year.

Jean Johnson reports on Dick Rauh's two-day workshop, "*Fruit, the Seed Dispersal Agent of Flowering Plants*". This was a complete botany lesson, fascinating and informative. Dick discussed the development of fruit from flower, for example, a banana is a 'false berry, from a simple ovary'. Using pencil, we drew fleshy fruits, creating form using a single light source, a valuable exercise. A botanical artist, Dick's drawings are beautiful. He is an inspired and delightful teacher. I would welcome the opportunity to explore the intriguing domain of botany again with him. He has a wide range of knowledge to teach us.

Events Calendar

| Date | Event | Details | Contact |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| to May 1 | Field Studies: Picturing Flora in Canadian Art, exhibition | Frederick Varley Gallery of Markham, 216 Main Street, Unionville | http://www.city.markham.on.ca/markham/channels/gallery/exhibitions.htm |
| to May 19 | "Treasures of Algonquin" - Denise Hart, Aliya Ebrahim and Sara Carlisle: Exhibition illustrating the flora of Algonquin. | Algonquin room in the Visitors centre, Algonquin National Park. | |
| May to Sept | A New Flowering: 1000 Years of Botanical Art, exhibition | Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, England | See website |
| May 21 - October 19 | BAC coaching sessions | See details attached | Emily Luks (416) 441-1992 |
| June 13-17 9.30 - 12.30 or 4 | Painting in a summer garden with Celia Godkin | Emily Luks' garden at 8 Wilket Road, Toronto | Celia Godkin (416) 591-0491 or (613) 275-7204 |
| June 22 6 to 9 pm | BAC AGM | Lawrence Park Community Church, 2180 Bayview Avenue, Toronto | Lynda Bryden (416) 250 9417 Raquel Baranyai 416-498-9279 raquelbaranyai@sympatico.ca |
| July 18 - 20 | Drawing in the Park with Celia Godkin | St Lawrence College 1000 Islands Summer School of the Arts, Brockville, ON | 1-888-838-0698 (press 6) www.sl.on.ca |

LATE BREAKING NEWS

BAC member **Nola McConnan** pulled off a coup at Toronto's recent Art Expo, a juried show of 225 visual artists and sculptors. This is not a botanical show, and Nola's skills with sports images, animals, as well as her painting of the cat among the pink geraniums, proved really popular. She sold nine original paintings, and more than covered her costs of exhibiting. The Expo attracts over 40,000 people, and has a waiting list of over 100 exhibitors.

Thanks

I and my family would like to thank BAC for the donation you made to The Nature Conservancy in honour of my father. It would have pleased him to know that with your gift, you are helping to preserve Canada's fragile natural heritage.

Many thanks, too, to all of you who supported me through your calls, letters and cards. This has been a very difficult time for all of us. I look forward to the time when my father's estate is wrapped up and I can get back to normal life again.

- Pamela Stagg

BAC COACHING PROGRAM

BAC COACHING PROGRAM

BAC INVITES YOU TO PARTICIPATE IN OUR
COACHING SESSIONS 2005 - limited to 18 people

We have assembled an excellent group of instructors and BAC members. This is a great opportunity for any member who wants to improve their skills by concentrating on one area at a time. Join for 5 sessions, on selected days & evenings. Fee: \$ 60.00 covers all 5 sessions for members, non-members \$90.00.

Make your cheque payable to 'BAC' and mail to Donna Greenstein,
14855 Concession 10, RR 3 Schomberg ON L0G 1T0.

Sessions marked with * will be held at:

Lawrence Park Community Church, 2180 Bayview Ave (On the west side, north of Sunnybrook hospital, south of Lawrence Parking on the south side lot next to the church, or in the north parking lot off St. Leonard's Ave.)

Time: 7:15pm to 9:15pm

NOTE: If you are receiving this electronically, if you want larger type to read, just highlight the information below and change the font size.

Saturday, May 21st - Douglas Purdon - Watercolour & Gouache
(Double session) **Time: 10am to 4:30pm.**

Place: At Hannah Levitt's apartment building, # 2727 Yonge Street. Party room - Visitor's or street parking - please bring brown bag lunch.

Materials: The following is a list of basic materials required for this session. You may of course bring additional colours if you wish. A selection of coloured pencils and pastels will be provided for you to experiment with.

| <u>WATERCOLOUR SUPPLY LIST:</u> | <u>GOUACHE SUPPLY LIST:</u> |
|--|------------------------------------|
| COLOURS: | Permanent White (37ml Tube) |
| Permanent Rose | Cadmium Red Pale |
| Winsor Red | Cadmium Yellow |
| Winsor Yellow□ | Sap Green |
| Winsor Green□ | Ultramarine Blue |
| Winsor Blue | Ivory Black |
| <i>Winsor Violet</i> | |
| Burnt Sienna or Sepia | |

I recommend only Winsor & Newton Gouache. It uses the same binder as their watercolour and will produce good results. Many other brands of gouache use inferior binders, are difficult to work with and give unsatisfactory results.

BRUSHES:

3 Watercolour Round

8 Watercolour Round

1 inch Flat watercolour

Wash brush

A Hake, or watercolour mop brush

PAPER or ILLUSTRATION BOARD - A Minimum of 2 sheets of 140 lb. - Cold Pressed Watercolour Paper or 2 sheets of illustration board (recommended Bainbridge 80).

OPTIONAL SUPPLIES: Sketchbook, pencils, eraser, masking tape

REFERENCE MATERIAL: Photographs, sketches, actual plants or flowers for reference.

*** Wednesday, June 15th - Celia Godkin – Mixed media**

Coloured pencil is an excellent medium when lines and fine detail are required, and watercolour is great for large areas of flat or graded colour. By combining the two media you can exploit the best of both.

Materials:

- Smooth illustration board or Stonehenge, smooth (hot press) watercolour paper.
- Watercolour brushes: a fine sable eg. Winsor & Newton series 7- #000, plus a large sable or synthetic. I recommend the Loeb-Cornell # 10 as it has a good point.
- Set of watercolour paints and palette.
- Set of Prismacolor artist quality pencils and a set of Verithin pencils.
- Pink Pearl eraser.

Should you wish to economize, the minimum colour set is as follows:

- Watercolours: Winsor Newton new gamboge, alizarin crimson, Winsor violet
- Prismacolor: 942 yellow ochre, 914 cream
- Verithin: 734 white, 745.5 terra cotta, 746 dark brown

The minimum set will allow you to render Chinese lanterns, which we will provide. If you prefer other subjects, bring something that has fussy detail and lots of lines, such as a mushroom with the gills exposed. You may also wish to bring completed watercolours, which could benefit by the addition of some crisp lines or detail.

Wednesday, August 24th - Emily Luks- The Power of Drawing

The creative strength within ourselves. Drawing with graphite pencil and a touch of colour gouache to achieve not only accuracy, but also to develop our emotions and to elevate our spirits. *"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiasm"* - R.

Waldo Emerson

Materials:

Paper: Bristol smooth or vellum, Hot pressed watercolour paper. One small palette, brushes.

Gouache will be provided

Tracing paper. All papers no larger than 11x14 inches

Graphite pencils: H-2H-HB-B-B2

Mechanical pencils: 0.3mm B-HB-2H

Erasers: White and kneaded. A small palette

Time: 7:00pm to 9:15pm

Place: 8 Wilket Road Toronto (Bayview & York Mills)

*** Wednesday, September 7th - Karen Taylor - Deep colours**

A great session on dark deep colours – how to mix and how to work with them.

Participants only need their watercolour paint, paper and brushes. If they have a suitable botanical subject, like an eggplant or pansies, they may bring that as well, but it is not necessary.

*** Wednesday, October 19th - Tasira Strimban - White Background? Not Necessarily.**

Tasira Strimban will demonstrate easy and effective methods on how to create coloured backgrounds on paper. You will learn how to combine pre-designed backgrounds and paint the subject of your painting with gouache.

You will need:

An object: your favorite flower or colorful leaves.

Paint: gouache Zinc white, Cadmium red deep, Prussian blue, Primary yellow.

Other: paint brushes, drawing materials, scissors.

You will be provided with pre-designed paper backgrounds and sketching paper.

PAINTING IN A SUMMER GARDEN

With Celia Godkin and friends - in Emily Luks' garden at 8 Wilket Road, Toronto

One session only: June 13 – 17, 2005

**Cost: \$360 for full days 9:30 am – 4 pm, or
\$190 for mornings only 9:30 am – 12:30 pm**

To enroll, please send the attached registration form, accompanied by a cheque payable to:
Celia Godkin, 10 James Street, Mod. 6, Comp. 12, Frankville, ON, K0E 1H0

Space is limited and you will be registered on receipt of cheque. The course fee is non-refundable within two weeks of the course, unless we can fill your space with someone from the waiting list.

Previous botanical drawing and watercolour experience is recommended. Should you have any questions, please call Celia at (416) 591-0491 or (613) 275-7204. For last minute change of plans, call Emily at (416) 441-1992.

Directions

Wilket Road is one block South of York Mills Road, East off Bayview.
By TTC: from York Mills subway station, take any eastbound bus (the #78, 95, 115 or 122) along York Mills Road to Bayview. Walk one block South and turn left (East) on Wilket Road.

Supplies Checklist

- If you're coming for the whole day, please bring a packed lunch
 - Don't forget to bring a sunhat and sunscreen
 - Watercolour supplies as for botanical painting*, plus verdian
- Should you wish to work large scale (landscapes) you will need:
- a large pallet (the Pike is recommended ~ from Curry's)
 - Larger brushes: a 1 inch flat and a large #14 or #16 round; e.g. Loew-Cornell
- * List available on request from celia.godkin@utoronto.ca

**PAINTING IN A SUMMER GARDEN
~ ENROLLMENT FOR JUNE 13 – 17, 2005 ~**

NAMEPHONE
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E-MAIL

STREET ADDRESS

CITY POSTAL CODE

Please register me for:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Full day classes (9:30 am – 4 pm) | Mornings only (9:30 am – 12:30 pm) |
| I enclose a cheque for \$360 | I enclose a cheque for \$190 |

Please make cheque payable to:
Celia Godkin, 10 James Street, Mod. 6, Comp. 12, Frankville, ON, K0E 1H0