

## **Greetings and Happy New Year!**

We deliberately held the winter newsletter until after the holidays to avoid the proliferation of cards and letters you receive in December. I'm sure the Mail folk will be grateful too!

I do hope you and your families have had a happy holiday season. It is always wonderful to share news and participate in happy events, but truthfully, I'm always glad when I can get my house back in normal order, and return to regular activities, especially to my painting.

Your executive has had two meetings this term to discuss workshops, critique nights, possible venues for exhibitions and the ever important development of a BAC website. At our first meeting, we had a good "brainstorming" session, to determine what our website should contain. At our second meeting, Gerry Jenkison and Peta Lomborg attended to help us put our ideas in a format suitable to present to different technical experts in order to get estimates of feasibility and cost. (See page 6)

Our aims for a website are: to promote our organization to the general public, to communicate with our existing membership and to attract new members. In addition we hope to provide gallery space for our members and provide a link to your own websites (if that is appropriate.)

I know from our membership surveys that many of you do paint together in small groups but some of you feel isolated because you are out of town or have not been able to attend our workshops or critique nights or participate in our exhibitions. A BAC website will be a wonderful link for you, as our newsletter has been in the past. We encourage you to visit other Botanical websites, easily accessible on the internet, to get a taste of what is possible for our organization!

We look forward to seeing some of you participating in some upcoming events like Canada Blooms and a critique night being organized for early spring.

As you can see there are several good reasons to get back to the "drawing board" and I wish you productive and happy painting days for 2006!

**- Lynda Bryden**

## **Critique Morning and Mini (Botanical) Marketplace**

Join your fellow botanical artists in a morning of learning and sharing! Bring a painting (or two) that you wish to have critiqued. Plus, bring any items that you might like to sell, trade, exchange or just share! These could be books, your cards, prints, brushes, paints, or anything related to our art.

Date **March 25**

Time 9.30 to 12 noon

Location: Upper auditorium. Lawrence Park Church 2180 Bayview Avenue. (North of Eglinton, south of Lawrence, west side) Parking south or north lots.

## **FINANCIAL UPDATE**

As at mid December 2005 BAC had \$5,093.19 in the Bank account.

## **MEMBER ACHIEVEMENTS**

Congrats to Donna Greenstein and Emily Luks who have had work accepted at a gallery in Yorkville and at Blue Dot Galley in the Distillery district, respectively. Emily also has a painting included at the US Longwood Gardens' Centennial Exhibition of orchid botanical artwork.

## **ABSA exhibitions**

The American Society of Botanical Artists has two major juried exhibitions that are open to members only: (International membership is \$65 pa)

- September – November 2006: New York. Deadline for entries March 17, 2006.
- October 13 – November 26, 2006: Seattle. Deadline for entries April 15, 2006.

ABSA, 47 Fifth Ave, NY, NY 10003. For exhibition info contact Carol Woodin [cwoodin@verizon.net](mailto:cwoodin@verizon.net) or [ASBAExhibitions@aol.com](mailto:ASBAExhibitions@aol.com)

### Assessing your work!

Here are some useful notes taken from **Bulletin**, a Hunt institute publication. These are from a lecture by United Kingdom artist, Anne-Marie Evans, on evaluating botanical work. Her premise is that botanical art relies on scientific accuracy and precision so that the subject can be identified by genus and species. Here are questions that should be asked:

**Scientific Botanical content:** Does the artist have the ability to see, understand and describe the subject? Has the artist studied the original plant and made minute observations? Is the information significant for identification purposes? Are the different surfaces described graphically?

**Aesthetic Content:** Is there deliberation in positioning the subject within the composition. Is the artist directing your eye in the picture? Are light and dark masses used to create balance and contrast? Is there a physical presence to the plant?

**Technical Skill:** Are textures, gradation of tones and modeling used to create a three dimensional quality? Is there a quality and a control to the line? Is the use of colour accurate? Does the artist use accurate perspective?

Anne-Marie Evans concludes that with good tuition, determination and patience many can achieve a competent standard in botanical painting. What makes a masterpiece, is each artists' unique and special ability to translate a subject not only accurately but in an aesthetically pleasing manner.

### Reflections on Botanical Art

*The Art of Botanical Painting*, by Margaret Stevens, is a 2004 book published by Collins in association with The Society of Botanical Artists in the UK.

What got my attention are the different approaches to composition. I don't see myself as a strictly botanical artist, even though my botanical subjects are accurate. I personally believe that on perspective, a botanical piece is a visual rendering, usually matted and framed for viewing. It follows within my logic that its visual impact should support its botanical value, a view that by no means contradicts the scientific information it needs to portray. For me, the measure of the work being successful is how it engages the viewer's attention. The botanical accuracy is a given!

In this book there are many examples of what are called Flower Portraits, where the main specimen is combined with a secondary one in delightfully harmonious ways. There are also small insects to be seen, a subject that has been discussed in our midst many times. Again, my logic tells me that something like that gives an added element to the piece, as it shows part of the life of the plant by showing one of its predators.

Or showing the plant habitat, when a fragment of what surrounds it comes into the scene. For me it is rather a matter of proportion, never wanting to see the specimen overpowered by any secondary element. The works and demonstrations included are in graphite, watercolour and coloured pencils.

A gorgeous piece of work, a *Leucadendron* "Safari Sunset", done with coloured pencils had me drooling at its colours and craftsmanship. It is interesting to study work by UK artists, where the more available pencils are rather hard, compared to the common Prismacolor in this part of the world.

There is a small section recommending green coloured pencil mixes by Hilary Buckley, well known coloured pencil botanical artist, now expanding into other subject matters. You can see one of her botanical pieces at <http://www.ukcps.co.uk/Buckley.htm>

I highly recommend taking a look at this book, available through our Toronto library system. Absolutely refreshing...

- Raquel Baranyai

**Botanical Painting and Illustration Juried Exhibition** – Edinburgh, Scotland.  
Deadline May 24, 2006. A portfolio of four original artworks is required. For more information:  
[www.royalcaledonianhorticulturalsociety.org/exhibition1.htm](http://www.royalcaledonianhorticulturalsociety.org/exhibition1.htm)

## Carbon Dust Illustration

### *Report on a BAC Workshop by Lynda Bryden*

Some of us had the recent pleasure of attending a BAC workshop to learn the skills of Carbon Dust Illustration. David Mazierski from the Biomedical Communications Department of the University of Toronto guided us over one and a half days of fascinating learning.

First, let me tell you a little about David, our very capable teacher. Dave graduated from the Department of Art As Applied to Medicine at the University of Toronto. His very first job was a commission to travel to Israel to do a comprehensive series of drawings of the anatomy of (of all beasts!) the ungainly camel. It became a project that lasted three years, and the result was a complete and published book with the most intricate and detailed drawings of every part of the camel, from tip to hump to toe!

Fortunately, Dave suggested we choose simple subjects for our work, such as a plant, a leaf, a round vegetable or piece of fruit.

The supplies required were quite specific: A carbon pencil, a sandpaper block for sharpening, several good erasers, including a barrel eraser, and a kneaded eraser, Crescent Illustration Board #310 (or other equivalent), sketch and tracing paper, a piece of chamois, (also for erasing), some soft flat and round watercolour brushes and a small lozenge container to store the "dust" and lastly, white gouache for highlighting.

I chose a pomegranate for my subject. To enhance lights and darks and shadows, I placed the subject matter under a small lamp. To begin, we were instructed to do a simple accurate drawing on sketch paper.

This was then transferred to tracing paper using the carbon pencil. By means of a burnishing tool (like a ruler, or back of a spoon) the traced image was "rubbed" on to our good piece of illustration board.

Then the fun began. We created a "pudding" of carbon dust (by sharpening the pencil on a sand paper block, then brushing the results into the small tin). With a soft flat brush, we picked up the dust and began to "paint" our drawings with small amounts of carbon. Then it was a long but very enjoyable process of adding darks by painting and drawing and subtracting lights using our various methods of erasure. The chamois "picked up" the dust for soft highlights, while the kneaded eraser and the fine barrel eraser removed quite specific lights. Playing back and forth with the carbon dust, or the carbon pencil, and then removing those darks, our image began to take shape.

What resulted was a wonderful black and white drawing with great depth and volume. To add sparkling highlights at the very end (to berries or the smooth skin of a fruit, for example,) white gouache was added in very small touches.

Carbon Dust illustration was very popular for scientific illustration because of its ability to be accurately reproduced in publications. To further your interest, visit "Carbon Dust Illustration", on the Internet. There are several good websites, even one that provides a brief lesson! I certainly loved learning this new skill, and am looking forward to working with the materials again soon.

### **HOT TIP FROM CELIA GODKIN**

Here's something that looks like the beginning of a great resource. The British library is scanning books, making page-turning animations in 3D and then integrating them into a Flash interface. It makes you feel like you are really turning the pages (if you can imagine your hand to be tiny, pale, and pixelated).

Elizabeth Blackwell's herbal is included for those of you with a fondness for botanical illustration. And, the link: <http://www.bl.uk/onlinegallery/ttp/ttpbooks.html>

## BAC WEBSITE PLAN – YOUR IDEAS PLEASE

Here is the planned navigation for the BAC website. Please send any comments by the end of January to Lynda Bryden at [brydens@rogers.com](mailto:brydens@rogers.com)

- Home page (welcome and introduction to BAC)
  - A brief history of botanical illustration
  - Members' gallery – an index of individual BAC member's galleries and links to those pages:
    - One member's page that includes text plus jpegs of up to 6 works; they should be shown as thumbnails that, when clicked, are enlarged in a separate window
  - Membership information – benefits, membership form (MS Word) to print, complete and mail or to fill out online and submit via email
  - Exhibitions and events – list of current and upcoming exhibitions, workshop announcements, with link to BAC archive page:
    - BAC archive page with text and links to downloadable PDFs of BAC newsletters and other documents of interest
  - Link to sites of interest (ASBA, Kew, Hunt Institute, UKCPS, whatever we feel is interesting and relevant)
  - Contact us – text and email pop-up

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz

### A BAC DICTIONARY?

Books of lists and books about dictionaries are all the rage, so over the next few issues we will bring you a collection of artist's terms that has been compiled by **Emily Luks** from various sources, among them websites and material from the Paul Getty Museum, Harvard University and the Metropolitan Museum of Arts.

**Album:** Storage format of print and drawing collections until the nineteenth century. Drawings by artists were mounted onto pages of a blank bound book.

**Bistre ink:** is a brown solution made by boiling or soaking wood soot in water. Once the liquid is filtered to remove any insoluble residues, the result is a transparent and luminous ink. The exact tone of the ink depends upon the kind of wood that was burned to create the soot. A golden brown ink comes from the chestnut, while birch produces an ink that is yellowish brown.

**Black chalk:** A mix of carbon and clay, it has a natural cohesiveness that allows it to be cut and sawed into sticks that can be used to create firmly rendered lines of amazing precision, it is also friable. (An adjective used to describe the extent to which a dry drawing medium crumbles and flakes). With Black Chalk one can produce large-scale drawings of great tonal breadth. It has been known since antiquity, but it was little used as a graphic medium until the sixteenth century, when artists recognized chalk's ability to produce delicate transitions in tones with a smooth and seamless unity.

**Brush drawing:** A drawing made by applying a water-soluble pigment or diluted ink with a fine brush. The brush can be used to create very fine, linear stroke.

AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz AaBbCcDdEeFfGgHhIiJjKkLlMmNnOoPpQqRrSsTtUuVvWwXxYyZz

## WINTER AND SPRING COURSES

### NELLIE SUE POTTER

(416) 769-5968, [nspotter@sympatico.ca](mailto:nspotter@sympatico.ca)

- Artworks Art School, [www.artworksartschool.com](http://www.artworksartschool.com), 2451 Bloor St. West, 416-766-0662 Wed. 7:30-9:00, and Thurs. 10:00-12:30 and Thurs. 1:00-3:30
- Cedar Ridge Creative Centre, 225 Confederation Drive, Toronto. 416-396-4026 Wed. a.m. 9:00-12:00

### PAMELA STAGG

#### Toronto Botanical Garden

- Master Class in Ornamental Leaves, February 3 – 5.
- Botanical Painting in Watercolour, Advanced Class, March 4 – 8.
- Botanical Painting in Watercolour, Beginners' Class, April 1 - 5. (Advanced students are welcome to register and can paint with ongoing individual feedback)

For more information and registration, contact Graham Curry at Toronto Botanical Gardens, 416-397-1362, or [www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca](http://www.torontobotanicalgarden.ca)

- Here's one to bookmark for the fall. From October 1 – 3, Pamela will be teaching a 3-day Introduction to Botanical Painting at Memorial University Botanical Garden, St. John's, **Newfoundland**. "I'm really excited about teaching this program and look forward to meeting some of the talented painters on The Rock". For more information and registration, contact Margaret Best at 709 753-2643, or [mbest@nl.rogers.com](mailto:mbest@nl.rogers.com)

### LESLIE STAPLE

#### Northern Secondary

Botanical Watercolour  
Jan. 10 - for 9 weeks  
Tuesday 6:30 - 9:30  
Toronto District School Board.  
416 338-4111 [www.tdsb.on.ca/coned](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/coned)

#### University of Toronto, School of Continuing Studies

Botanical Drawing, A Follow-up  
Feb. 2, - March 16  
Thursday 6:30 - 9:00

Botanical Watercolour, A Follow-up  
Feb. 4 - March 18  
Saturday 10:00 - 12:30  
416 978-2400, [www.learn.utoronto.ca](http://www.learn.utoronto.ca)

### MARGIT KORITAR

Please confirm dates, times and fees with the various organizations.

<p><b>Woodland-Garden Studio</b> (705) 944-5695 <a href="mailto:margit@nexicom.net">margit@nexicom.net</a></p> <p><u>Botanical Drawing and Watercolour – I</u> Tue., Feb. 14, 21, 28, 200 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. \$ 96</p> <p><u>Botanical Drawing and Watercolour – II</u> Tue., Mar. 21, 28, Apr. 4 9:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m. \$ 96</p>	<p><u>Painting in the Perennial Garden</u> Fri/Sat/Sun – May 26, 27, 28, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. \$ 175</p> <p>Fri/Sat/Sun – June 23, 24, 25, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. \$ 175</p> <p>Fri/Sat/Sun – July 21, 22, 23, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. \$ 175</p>
<p><b>Toronto Botanical Garden</b> Att: Graham Curry (416) 397-1354 <a href="mailto:programs@torontobotanicalgarden.ca">programs@torontobotanicalgarden.ca</a></p> <p><u>Colour Theory and Beyond (in Oils)</u> Fri., Mar. 31, Apr. 7, 21, 28, May 5, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 pm</p>	<p><u>Botanical Drawing &amp; Watercolour (Beg &amp; Int)</u> Thu, Mar. 30, Apr. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 pm</p> <p><u>Botanical Sketchbook – Journal</u> Thu/Fri – May 18, 19, 2006 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 pm</p>
<p><b>Trent University</b> Att: Melanie Sedge (705) 748-1011 ext. 5055 <a href="mailto:continuing@trentu.ca">continuing@trentu.ca</a> <a href="http://www.trentu.ca/continuinged">www.trentu.ca/continuinged</a></p> <p><u>Botanical Drawing &amp; Watercolour (Beg &amp; Int)</u> Sat. Mar. 25, Apr. 1, 8, 22 12:00 noon – 4:00 p.m.</p>	<p><b>Haliburton School of the Arts</b> (705) 457-1680 <a href="mailto:contact@HaliburtonSchoolofTheArts.ca">contact@HaliburtonSchoolofTheArts.ca</a></p> <p><u>Botanical Drawing &amp; Watercolour (Beg and Int)</u> Mon-Fri, July 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 2006 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.</p>

**CELIA GODKIN**

**AT ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE, BROCKVILLE**

- **BOTANICAL WATERCOLOUR:** intermediate to advanced  
For students with skills in botanical drawing, the next step is botanical watercolour. This challenging medium is preferred by botanical artists because its delicacy and transparency are ideally suited to capturing these qualities in flowers.  
12 classes, 6 - 9 pm, Monday evenings, starting January 16, 2006
- **DRAWING FROM NATURE:** beginner to intermediate  
Using natural objects such as bones and shells, this introductory level course teaches realistic drawing skills. Expertly designed exercises teach accuracy, proportion and shading to heighten the sense of realism in your drawings. Individual instruction allows students at different levels to work at their own pace.  
Choice of two weekend workshops: February 25/26, 2006 - Brockville campus OR March 4/5, 2006 - Smiths Falls campus
- **ANIMAL PORTRAITS:** beginner to intermediate  
Animals have inspired many artists with their beauty and complexity of Forms. Working from photographs, you will learn the basics of animal portraiture, using color pencil as the medium of choice. Animal anatomy, as it applies to the artist, will be covered. Please bring several large color photographs of your pet or a favourite animal to class.  
Weekend workshop: March 11/12, 2006

For more information or to register call (613) 345-0660 x 60 or see [www.sl.on.ca](http://www.sl.on.ca). Courses are held at the Brockville campus, unless otherwise indicated.

<b>AT THE CENTRAL EXPERIMENTAL FARM, OTTAWA</b>	For more information or to register call (613) 230-3276, e-mail <a href="mailto:thefarm@cyberus.ca">thefarm@cyberus.ca</a> or check <a href="http://www.friendsofthefarm.ca">www.friendsofthefarm.ca</a>
BOTANICAL DRAWING: beginner to intermediate level. Two weekends from 10 - 5 each day, May 27/28 and June 3/4, 2006	BOTANICAL WATERCOLOUR Two weekends from 10 - 5 each day, June 17/18 & 24/25, 2006
<b>AT HALIBURTON SCHOOL OF THE ARTS, HALIBURTON</b>	For more information or to register call (705) 457-1680 or 1-866-353-6464 or check <a href="http://www.HaliburtonSchoolofTheArts.ca">www.HaliburtonSchool of The Arts.ca</a> or <a href="http://www.flemingcollege.com">www.flemingcollege.com</a>
WRITING AND ILLUSTRATING FOR CHILDREN A one-day workshop, Saturday July 15th, 2006	ANIMAL PORTRAITS One week: July 17 - 21, 2006
<b>AT ST. LAWRENCE COLLEGE, BROCKVILLE</b>	For more information or to register call (613) 345-0660 x 60 or see <a href="http://www.sl.on.ca">www.sl.on.ca</a>
DRAWING IN THE PARK 3 days: August 9-10-11	

**Other Events Calendar 2006**

Date	Event	Details	Contact
March 8-12	Annual Juried Botanical Art Exhibit Canada Blooms, Toronto	<a href="http://www.canadablooms.com">www.canadablooms.com</a>	Margit Koritar (705) 944-5695 <a href="mailto:margit@nexicom.net">margit@nexicom.net</a>
Sat, March 4 & Sun 5, 9:30 - 4:30	"Enhancing Form - Creating the Illusion of Volume" - a workshop with Robin A. Jess	Bradgate Arms, 54 Foxbar Road, Toronto, \$ 235 non-refundable; deadline February 1.	(705) 944-5695 <a href="mailto:margit@nexicom.net">margit@nexicom.net</a>
March 25 9.30 - 12	Critique Morning and Mini (Botanical) Marketplace, Upper auditorium. Lawrence Park Church	2180 Bayview Avenue. (North of Eglinton, south of Lawrence, west side) Parking south or north lots	See page 1
May 13, 14	Rolling Hills Studio Tour; Woodland-Garden Studio	10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.	<a href="http://www.rhstudiotour.com">www.rhstudiotour.com</a>