

Belmont Art Association Meeting: February 24, 2021

Location: Our seventh Zoom meeting was brought to order by Co-Chair Dari Paquette at 7:00. There were 17 attendees:

Attendees: Nicole Bernstein, Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas (Co-Chair), Irene Fairley, Beth Ann Fricker, Bert Halstead (Treasurer and Membership Coordinator), Louise Halstead, Kay Hudgins, Steve Johnson, Anne Katzeff, Susan Kottler, Mary Lee, Sally Naish, Dari Paquette (Co-Chair), Janet Smith, Adine Storer, Fleur Thesmar, and Jane Wentzell (Recording Secretary).

Meeting

Dari began the business meeting with six items on the agenda.

- 1. Transformer Boxes:** Dari announced that the Belmont Cultural Council approved our application for funds to pay for the design and painting of three more electrical boxes. The details are to be worked out with the Town and possibly Verizon. If you have a suggestion for the location of a high visibility box, please let Dari know. Painting these boxes is excellent publicity for the BAA. The Belmont Media Center plans to interview representatives from the BAA and the Cultural Council about this project.
- 2. Website Update:** Recently Paul Beckingham decided to quit being our webmaster. Anne Katzeff is now teaching Dari how to make simple updates to our website. If you want your art featured on our site, send Dari your .jpg files. We very much appreciate Anne coming to our rescue!
- 3. Dues:** Our annual dues of \$35 were due in January. Bert Halstead, our Treasurer and Membership Coordinator, reported that he has received several checks and PayPal payments. If any member is in financial difficulty due to Covid or otherwise, communicate with Bert and he will discretely continue the membership. We don't want to lose members due to financial difficulties.
- 4. BGA Virtual Spring Show:** Adine Storer, Co-Director of the Belmont Gallery of Art, came to our meeting to announce that the BGA has put out a Call for their annual spring show, which will be virtual. Submissions are due by March 18th. Visit www.virtualbga.org for further details. This show will pair with the Belmont Library's annual program, "One Book, One Belmont." The BGA show takes a look at how art can be healing. This topic is open to each artist's interpretation.
- 5.** We offer congratulations to member Kay Hudgins, who has received a big award for her painting "After de Heem" at the Members Juried 1 show at the Concord Art Association, and she also sold the painting immediately. She copied a Dutch Master painting in an abstract style using a palette knife to pile up very thick paint, making other transformations when she translated the exuberant colors and composition. The Concord Art Association produced a video of Kay talking about her process, which you can watch at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ofLOFSuEwGc&t=10s>.
- 6. Paint Pals:** Ian Todreas has been interviewed by the Belmont Media Center to publicize his "Paint Pals" program for older adults living alone during the Covid pandemic. You can watch it here: <https://www.belmontmedia.org/watch/news-now-paint-pal-initiative-012921>

Photography Presentation: Naomi gave Bert the Zoom hosting capability so he could introduce our four presenting photographers, including himself, to speak about their practices

and show their photography. Bert organized this presentation for the BAA. Speaking first was **Nicole Bernstein**, who spoke about her portraiture. Having painted and photographed portraits for 70 years, she had a lot of tips to share. She said that above all, the portrait must please the client, preferably be recognizable, and subtly improve their looks. Nicole does not ask her clients to pose; rather, she talks to them and walks around them with her camera. Nicole uses as few background colors as possible to limit distractions, prefers an off-center composition, and she may mute color tones to suit the theme of the portrait. She may also erase some age lines, but not too much, or her subject might not recognize himself if all lines are smoothed out—the skin can look like plastic. She does both digital retouching and painting manually on top of printed photographs. Nicole shared some of her amazing portraits.

Susan Kottler described her evolution as an artist as she searched for her niche. She found it in photography. She prefers layers of use in her images of street photography and people; she does not do landscapes but does enjoy still life, such as a striking image of a frozen cabbage at Sergi Farm. She shared a wide variety of beautiful photos taken in France, Italy, and in Maine where she grew up and discussed “what is your vision?” and the concept of “take a picture vs make a picture.” She implied some frustrations with post-production processes.

Beth Ann Fricker runs a business specializing in family photos using black and white or color. Parents are often anonymous in her portraits of infants. She seeks pockets of light in her personal work. She showed us a photo of her son getting a pandemic haircut from his dad at home, with everything in place to tell the story, even reflected in the mirror. She also showed us an iconic shot of a mother standing holding her newborn with her two other young children hugging each leg which has received accolades. Beth Ann also takes floral close-ups outdoors.

Bert Halstead presented his work last. He showed some of his beautiful travel and astrophotography from places such as New Zealand, Crete, Mono Lake in California. He enjoys shooting cloud formations, comets, and solar eclipses. He has also worked with fashion models, bodybuilders, dancers, and has created composite images, such as with a model and Naomi’s jewelry. He appreciates shapes and lines, seen in a photo of wind-scalloped sand dunes in the Mojave Desert or mud patterns at a New Zealand hot spring. He showed a photo of a lenticular cloud formation, for which he used a long exposure and the “Rule of 500” which states that exposure time x lens length ≤ 500 .

Bert also mentioned the Boston Camera Club’s “Motion Still” show at the Griffin Museum in Winchester, which was having a virtual artist reception on Feb. 27th, and the Boston Camera Club’s upcoming Photo Fence Project in Boston on the Greenway. Bert is very active in the Boston Camera Club. Bert did a great job organizing this presentation!

Recording Secretary: Jane Wentzell, 617- 489 - 0412
Edits and additional notes by Dari Paquette