

## **Belmont Art Association Meeting: June 17, 2021**

**Location:** Our eleventh Zoom meeting was brought to order virtually by Dari Paquette and briefly by Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas with 12 people present:

**Attendees:** Nicole Bernstein, Naomi Ellenberg-Dukas (Co-Chair), Becky Holmes-Farley, Bert Halstead (Treasurer and Membership Coordinator), Louise Halstead, Kirstin Ilse, Anne Katzeff (Webmaster), Peggy Kornegger, Jessica Parsons Lomeli, Dari Paquette (Co-Chair), Janet Smith, and Jane Wentzell (Recording Secretary).

### **Meeting**

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

- 1. Utility Box Public Art Project:** Dari brought us up to date on our "Transforming Belmont" project. The deadline for entries is June 20<sup>th</sup>, Fathers Day. She has received three fabulous entries and thinks another is on the way. This year the BAA has received a generous donation to pay for painting the utility boxes. This is most likely because the Belmont Cultural Council had fewer requests for funds, since people couldn't have gatherings due to the pandemic, and it may not be as high next year. Each artist will receive \$750 for a painted box, while Arlington artists are receiving \$400 and Boston artists \$500. The winning entries will eventually be posted on our website, belmontart.org.
- 2. BGA Virtual Show:** Belmont Gallery of Art's latest virtual show is still up, called "Hope Is the Thing with Feathers." BAA member Becky Holmes-Farley has an accompanying solo show. The virtual reception for these shows was on June 3<sup>rd</sup>. You can see it at virtualbga.org. The BGA is looking for volunteers to hang birdhouses in the spring after they are painted for their birdhouse public art project that accompanies this show.
- 3. BAA Swap Shop:** Ian Todreas reminds members of the BAA art materials swap shop, where members can list unneeded art materials for other members to pick up. The Swap Shop document can be accessed by members here:  
[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Xwqjwh8x0GtZbRmfl\\_mL9p0TsDQW78zqwglOzqIKtmo/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Xwqjwh8x0GtZbRmfl_mL9p0TsDQW78zqwglOzqIKtmo/edit?usp=sharing)

### **4. Announcements:**

There will be no BAA meetings in July and August. We will reconvene in September. If you have suggestions about increasing our membership participation or about program planning, please contact Naomi or Dari.

Nicole announced that she is teaching an art workshop in the Loire Valley in France where her great grandmother grew up.

Bert announced that the Boston Camera Club, of which he is a member, is hanging a 250-foot horizontal banner at Fan Pier on the Greenway in the Boston Seaport District near the ICA. This banner will show 88 of the best photos from each of their members, in all different styles. This impressive public art project, called "The Focused Eye: Our Unique Views," will be on display until November of this year. There will be a reception on Sunday, July 18<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 pm. You can view the photos online at [www.bostoncameraclub.photos](http://www.bostoncameraclub.photos).

### **Presentation: Challenge Art Projects**

**Jessica Parsons Lomeli** spoke to us from her attic studio, saying she is a painter and mom of two school-age children. She also has two cats and a dog, so she's busy. Jessica was an art history major at Mass Art, then a graphic designer, then an acrylic and watercolor painter for commission. She now

enjoys painting what she wants to paint. She has done four or five painting challenges in the past and enjoys them as a way to push herself artistically. She feels they are a great way to create a lot of work in a short time and provide material to enter juried shows.

Most recently Jessica chose a “30 paintings in 30 days” challenge via Instagram. She showed images of her 30 paintings and shared tips and tricks she has learned from participating in these events:

1. Pick a theme – something that inspires you, that you won’t get bored with. Jessica paints mostly flowers and the ocean.
2. Paint small: 8x8” or 12x12” – something you can do in a couple of hours
3. Paint ahead – cheat! Paint in batches and plan supplies ahead. Do four, then just post one a day.
4. Warn your loved ones that you’re going to spend time doing this so they are more understanding.
5. Have fun!
6. Stay accountable by posting daily on social media. It builds interest and leads to sales.
7. Take great photos of your work along the way from all angles so you are ready to send to shows or post on your website.
8. For series, name paintings after song lyrics.
9. Curate the collection later and repaint the ones you don’t like, if necessary.

Jessica told us that she didn’t like every painting she posted (that’s life), and she took out 10 at the end. Because of her blog and the interest of her followers, she sold 10 paintings in the month after she launched the 20 she kept, and she entered three into juried shows. She felt it was a good experience to make herself do this 30-day challenge. It opened up her style and strengthened her creativity. It was great for the BAA to view her colorful, impressionistic paintings and hear the delightful titles she gave them. For instance, “She’s Messy, But She’s Kind.”

**Anne Katzeff** studied graphic design, also at Mass Art. After working as a graphic designer for 10-15 years, she switched to web design, which she does now, along with teaching web design. She worked in pastels for about 15 years but recently took a watercolor course in Florida at the Naples Botanical Garden, and because of that she switched to watercolor.

Anne recently finished a 100-day challenge on Instagram in order to create something every day. This was her first challenge. She decided to limit herself to 1-2 hours per day doing studies and sketches. She regained an appreciation for the seasons after returning to Massachusetts. Pastel artists don’t paint outdoors during the winter! She had to learn how to paint snow. Because it was winter when she started, pictures of bare trees launched her challenge. Over the course of the challenge she used mixed media: watercolor + pen and ink + colored pencils. She made discoveries along the way, finding that landscapes are easier in pastel, florals in watercolor.

At 69 days into the challenge, Anne experienced a breakthrough as she began to experiment more with improved watercolor tools, explored different types of papers and varied techniques, such as wetting the paper or working on it dry. She said she was always struggling between detail and looseness, sketching versus painting. She experimented with different compositions, different styles for different subjects, and the same subject in different attempts. She did a few series, such as daffodils and crocuses. Anne said this challenge has helped her overcome her internal self-criticism, negative self-chatter, and let go of her need for perfection. Since the BAA membership is already familiar with Anne’s work, we could see how much she developed as an artist during these hundred days.

## **Next Year**

Dari summed up this year at BAA. She said we can be proud of what we've done in nine months on Zoom. She needs to know what members want to do next year. She said we need great ideas and we need the energy of more artists. Bert observed that we've both lost and gained by using Zoom. We've lost the social aspects of an in-person meeting, but we've gained a larger attendance for our Zoom meetings because it's more convenient for people to stay at home. We have about 40 members, and we usually get about one quarter of our members in attendance at our meetings on Zoom, even on snowy evenings.

Dari told us that the transformer box project takes a great amount of time and energy from her and Naomi. The second week in October is when the grant applications are due at the Mass Cultural Council. Then there are meetings with Town officials, writing and getting out the Call for Entries, judging the entries, overseeing the work, photographing and publicizing it. It's a lot to do, and Dari and Naomi do it all. This organization could really use more active members to pitch in. Naomi is going to be very busy with her other activities and family this September. We would appreciate more help!

Nicole asked when we could mount another members show at the BGA. The BGA currently expects being able to open in September. Bert's answer was 2022 at the earliest. He said perhaps we could put together a committee in September. Volunteers would be needed to do this.

We discussed a possible party in September and how we might be able to do it safely outdoors. Another group activity might be for everyone to all paint the same subject.

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