



# ArtBeat

May 2007

<http://www.WestCarletonArtsSociety.ca>

## Message from the President

by Lis Allison

Seems like it's been a while since I hacked out one of these 'messages'. I guess we've missed a couple of newsletters.....mostly my fault, I'm afraid. The rest of the newsletter team was ready to do their things, but I was bogged down in other work. OK, not all work....

Anyway, good news about this month's program. Jen Muise has arranged for Suzanne Warren Powell to come and give us a critique. Suzanne is a well-known local teacher and painter, and her critiques are terrific - quick, to the point, and always positive. Bring one or two pieces you want evaluated, or that you are having problems with. You'll go home full of new ideas! I'm looking forward to seeing your work, and to hearing her comments!

But some not good news about the Society as a whole. For the last few years, we, the intrepid Board, have worked hard to try to get the group back to

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Mixed Media: C. Gutsche  
"Wash Your Hands"



## May Meeting

Wednesday, May 23, 7:30 pm

NOTE the date is moved to the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday this month.

St. Paul's United Church, Carp

(park in the back, go in the back door, and follow the voices)

Suzanne Warren Powell will be visiting the West Carleton Arts Society meeting on Wed. May 23<sup>rd</sup> at 7:30pm to critique work brought in by members. Please bring 2 or 3 of your recent works for Suzanne to critique.

Suzanne is originally from Montreal, with a Master's Degree in Educational Technology, Suzanne has been teaching Watercolour and Mixed Media to artists from the Ottawa area for 20 years. She has exhibited her work in numerous group and solo shows in the Eastern Ontario and Quebec regions.

In 2001, Suzanne co-founded OMMA - Ottawa Mixed Media Artists ([www.omma.cn](http://www.omma.cn)) and is its Artist/Mentor. She has juried many shows in the Ottawa Area, has given talks and lectures on art to various art associations in Ontario and Quebec.

Suzanne teaches for the City of Ottawa and also runs her own Studio/Gallery "So Zen" from her country home near Almonte, Ontario, where she conducts tutorial workshops throughout the year. Her focus is on design and coaching students in finding their own art-making style.

In addition, Suzanne is a "working artist" for the Tri-Art company, a Canadian acrylic paint manufacturer, based in Kingston.

Suzanne is also member of Arts' Mana, a group of Francophone art teachers from Quebec.

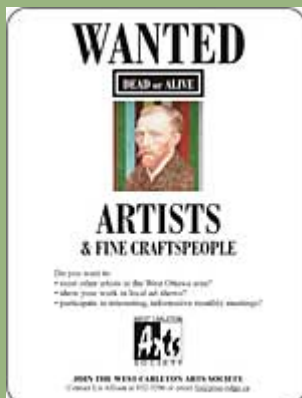
When she is not painting and sometimes when she is, Suzanne sings jazz vocals. She also designs and makes original jewelry and hand-knit clothing."

### Call for newsletter feature artists.

Each month we would like to feature a different artist as our front cover artist. Please consider sharing an image or two of your artwork.

### Minutes for the General Meetings

Remember to go to the website, <http://www.WestCarletonArtsSociety.ca>, to read the minutes of the meetings.



Download the poster at: <http://www.westcarletonartsociety.ca/events/images/poster.jpg>

### Message from the President... continued

a state of health. For a while it seemed to be working, but lately we seem to have gone pfffft again. We have arranged some excellent programs, only to have an attendance at the meeting that can only be called embarrassing. We have worked hard to arrange Exhibitions, and have barely had enough artists to put on a show. The Mini-conference in March was pretty well attended, but I note that most of the participants were from outside our group.

So it is time for some plain speaking.

There are a lot of great artists and fine crafts people in our area. But they are overwhelmingly not joining WCAS, and those few who are, are not participating in any active way. I know some of the problems, of course. How often haven't I heard '...all I really want to do is paint....', and '...I don't have time to volunteer....', and, my favourite, '... selling my work doesn't really matter, I just want people to see it....'. Then add in all the different opinions as to what counts as 'art', whether or not we should 'jury', whether we should allow fine crafts, where we should have our shows, how much should it cost, on and on, and where are you?

The first thing we should admit is that we want to sell our work. It's all very well to say we are painting, or potting, or making fine art jewelery or whatever because we 'want' to, and there is of course truth in that, but it is not the whole truth. Art is a form of communication and without a viewer or wearer or buyer, the communication is incomplete. The Red Trillium Studio Tour has no trouble attracting over 40 artists, and at much higher cost than our shows. You want to sell your work. Nothing wrong with that. Admit it, and be proud of it. It is good enough to sell, and you are brave enough to try to sell it!

The second thing we have to agree on is that selling our work takes time, energy, and some input of money. Someone coming to your door with a big truck and announcing that they have come to buy all your work, at some amazing price, is a nice fantasy, but it ain't gonna happen. You are going to have to make an effort, and it is going to cost money. Maybe I had better add, too, that it may also lead to some bruises - selling (or showing) work you have put your heart into can have its painful moments. I could write a book on the priceless comments from customers, passersby, and, biggest ouch of all, other artists. So make that, 'you are going to have to make an effort, it is going to cost money, and you will need to be tough'.

Thirdly, we have to accept that our area does not have an 'art scene'. It is a formerly rural area, with some encroachment by residential patches, now mushed in with a much larger City. It has no real centre or focus. It is not a neighbourhood. It never was, and the amalgamation with Ottawa made it even worse. The people who live around here do their shopping and playing elsewhere. They come here to sleep....this will change, but maybe not soon, and certainly not without effort on the part of those who want to do new things. Carp village is an opportunity waiting to happen, but it suffers from a very negative and 'excluding' group of business people who will do everything they can to stop new ventures. Pretty much like the existing art scene in downtown Ottawa, come to think of it.

Lastly, we each have to realistically assess where we are as artists. Are you a beginner? Do you have something to say? Are you ready to put your inner being on display? To risk watching people walk by your work without even a glance? To let it go in exchange for some money which will only go to pay your hydro bill? Or, if you are more advanced in your art career, are you generous enough to tolerate others of lesser stature showing their work alongside yours? Are you willing to help others develop their careers? Are you ready to take on a leadership role? One of our members said that artists are not people who work together. This is true, but only at one level. Farmers aren't people who work together either, but take a look at the Carp Farmers' Market. We are all competing to sell our products, so in that sense we don't work together, but we do work together to make and maintain a vibrant

## Message from the President... continued

Market. I just set my booth up there, for the 18th time. It can be done. With all that in mind, your Board has decided to propose four plans, and to let you, the members, choose the one you want. I will describe them, in reverse order of my personal preference.

1. We can quit. We can go dormant for a year, and see whether anyone pops up to revive the group, and if not, then hold a nice wake followed by a burial. Our small bank account can be given to either another art group, or perhaps the Rural Roots Theatre group or some other local group.

2. We can scale back to only a yearly Exhibition and Sale. One is already in the works for this Thanksgiving. No membership, bulletins, newsletter, website, meetings, nothing. Just a yearly Show and Sale.

3. We can scale back to only the Exhibition and Sale with maybe one or two other events during the year. For example, we could have a Christmas get-together at someone's house, and a Spring event with a great speaker, some working sessions and so on like our Mini-conference. No newsletters, the website only updated occasionally, no email Bulletins, a minimal membership list, no meetings. We would have to use posters and ads in the newspapers to let you know if anything is happening.

4. We can get to work. We can each of us contact the other local artists and fine crafts people we know, and convince them to get involved. We can each choose a job or area of responsibility to take on - from bringing the milk and cookies to being President. We can commit to working hard to publicize and promote our Exhibition and Sale this fall. We can bring our ideas to the group, and discuss them in a positive, let's-do-it fashion. How about renting that place in Carp which has been empty for eons? We could put a nifty little co-op gallery in there. We could invent and create some sort of community event (a paint-in to raise money for the Food Cupboard?) which would attract residents and be the start of creating our own art scene. We could find a space and set up art classes, both for youngsters and former youngsters. We could do an Art Lunch. We could do something or other to promote ourselves and the group at the Market one Saturday. We can write articles for the newspaper.... I am sure you have other and better ideas, too.

Have I said enough? I like corny sayings, so let me finish by saying, the gauntlet is down. It's right there on the ground in front of you, large as life and twice as ugly. It's staying there until the May meeting.

If nobody picks it up, by then, it's option 1.

## Fall Exhibition and Sale Update

The deadline to apply to our Exhibition and Sale approacheth! It's **June 30**, but our planning would be easier by far if we were to hear from you sooner....

Just to remind you, the Sale will be in the Carp Agricultural Hall, at the Carp Fairgrounds. A good location - lots of room, bright atmosphere, and an address people recognize. And the Thanksgiving weekend timing should be good too. Not much chance of a snowstorm! The Show is Saturday and Sunday, so you will still have Monday for your own Thanksgiving celebration.

We need your application, and if possible, pictures of your work. While we aren't yet completely decided on what form the advertising will take, it will likely include images of the work which will be on display. And if someone were to volunteer to write an article or two for the Weekender, that would also be a big

## Fall Exhibition and Sale Update... continued

help. We'll have ads, but articles ahead of time make people aware that the show is coming, and then they really notice the ads. So if you have the urge to write, please get in touch.

This Exhibition is open to all local artists, so you may wish to tell other artists or fine crafts makers about it. The application form and the Guidelines which explain how the sale is run are both available on the website.

Let's make this a really good Exhibition!

### **WCAS Fall Exhibition and Sale**

October 6 & 7, 10 am to 4 pm, setup Oct. 6, 7am to 10am

\$60 for a table or a grid display space

Carp Agricultural Hall

**DEADLINE: June 30, 2007**

## **KANATA ART CLUB**

March Central Community Center,  
1030 Riddell Drive, Kanata

### **Margaret Ferraro**

June 4-8 -- 9am-4pm

PASTEL AND THE FIGURE: EXPLORATIONS IN DRAWING AND COLOUR

July 16-20 -- 9am-4pm

INTRODUCTION TO PASTEL

Sept 10-14 -- 9am-4pm

PASTEL AND LANDSCAPE

## **NEPEAN FINE ARTS LEAGUE**

Studio 7, Creative Arts Center, Bell's Corners

### **Watercolor Essentials with Gord MacKenzie**

scheduled for Sept 4-7, 2007

For Information and to register call Dorothy Hayter 613-592-6639

### **ATTN MEMBERS:**

If you have a web site and you wish to have it added to the WCAS web site, submit it to Catherine Gutsche.

[calico@storm.ca](mailto:calico@storm.ca)

### **WCAS web site.**

<http://www.WestCarletonArtsSociety.ca>

For a sample of the artist web page that you can have for \$20/year click on the Featured Artist link from the home page. You can have 3 images of your artwork and a Bio/Artist Statement. You may also include your contact information. If you have a full website with more of your work we'll link it.