



# Artists United

*Newsletter — August 2020*

## *September Meeting*

**Tuesday, September 1**

12 noon — in the comfort of your home

Expect an email with a link on the morning of the meeting.

### **Program**

Mike Mosely, tattoo artist in Burien, speaking about his work.

### **Artwork of the Month Theme**

“Open” or “School Daze”

## **In This Issue**

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## OPPORTUNITIES

En plein air painting led by Paul Ilian resumes Tuesday 9- 2 at the Highline Botanical Garden.

### **In the Artist's Studio**

Paul Ilian will record an "In the Artist's Studio" segment for Burien Arts & the Highline Heritage Museum on Tuesday 1 PM. He will work on several paintings in his studio while answering viewer submitted questions. He will start a painting, show composition development on another, mid-painting adjustments on a third and finish a fourth.

If you're interested in participating let Paul know.

Paul, [illcon@msn.com](mailto:illcon@msn.com)

## **Whew!**

This issue of the newsletter is a long one but, as they say, there are a lot of pictures.

It was a real challenge. It's great that there is so much going on in our little corner of the world. I suspect that it is keeping a lot of us more or less sane.

Yer faithful editor.

*Since 1949 — Seventy years of promoting art and encouraging artists.*



## August Program Review

Patti Curtis, artist and owner/curator/marketer for Fogue Gallery in Georgetown, ([foguestudios.com](http://foguestudios.com)), gave us an insider's view of the pleasures and perils of making and selling art in today's world – even before the pandemic changed the game.

Fogue is a commercial gallery that Patti founded only a couple of years ago – although I'll bet she was laying the foundations for it much earlier. Fogue is a membership gallery and only represents artists over the age of 50. The name is a light hearted jab at "fogey" as in "old fogey". It opened with a roughly 1000 square foot space but now is up to 6000 square feet. Her pre-gallery-owner background is in marketing and that is very much why Fogue is prospering.

Fogue sells art for its members in person and through a website store and takes only a 15% commission (most galleries take more like 50%). Fogue also has a solo-show gallery and rents studio space to a few of its members – limited, obviously, by the space available. Part of the gallery's success is that it has three revenue streams: membership dues, studio rentals, and commission on sales.

Patti is a relentless marketer and is very good at it. She is keenly attuned to the art market and adept at pivoting to whatever is needed to keep the gallery solvent. She is very active in promoting both her art and the gallery on social media – largely Instagram where she has thousands of followers – and she openly says that she is posting to social media every day to keep what is there fresh. While the pandemic is restricting visiting

the gallery she and a group of other Georgetown artists are putting on a pop-up "Outdoor Art and Vintage Mart" and Fogue is participating with about 40 local galleries in the on-line Deconstructed Art Fair ([seattledestructedartfair.com](http://seattledestructedartfair.com)).

She made it very clear that if you want to sell a lot of your art promote, promote, promote is what you have to do.

## Crank Letter Department—Part I

Your faithful editor cannot argue with any of what Ms. Curtis said and I tip my beret to her.

"Know what sells and make it visible" are the two touchstones of commercial success. I subscribe to the online ArtDaily ([artdaily.com](http://artdaily.com)) newsletter. The artwork I see on the Fogue website (and on the Deconstructed Art Fair website) is in the mainstream of what is currently hot and hip, on or near the cutting edge. It also pretty much comprises work that presents well when viewed on the screen of a smartphone or tablet. That is not to say that it wouldn't look better, hopefully much better, in person.

Will this approach work for us? Well, not for me. What I do is much nearer the rusting edge than the cutting edge and I'm ok with that. It does not present well on a smartphone's screen, in fact it looks pretty dead there. I'm not even keen on how it looks on a desktop computer screen.

Neither am I willing to spend a lot of time on social media. I update my website once a month and publish a newsletter (also once a month). That's about all I can stand.

It's a good thing that I don't have a gallery to support. - ronh



Pattiann Kelley — Cannon Beach



Karen Smith — Ink



Suzanne Uschold — Lake Superior



Karen Smith — Beach #2

Donna asked that her piece be used only for the meeting and not for the internet or social media.



Suzanne Uschold — Going to the Beach

Donna Cheeseman — Sea Lions at the Beach





**President's Message**  
**just a short 'n sweet one this time.**

Greetings. Here's hoping you all are healthy and well in mind, body and spirit. If that is not the case, please reach out...we are here for each other, and, as the old Beatle's song goes, "I get by with a little help from my friends." This is a hard time for many folks, and, I think, especially hard for those who live alone and/or are not yet comfortable using technology to stay in touch. If you have not been Zooming, and would like some help getting started, please let me or Ron know.

Local venues are inviting you to bring in your art for display and sale. It is good for the soul to 'peddle' your art and receive well deserved wows for your efforts.

Paul Illian is hosting us at various outdoor locations for some plein aire painting or drawing. I joined him last week and had a great time. While I ended up wasting one side of a perfectly good piece of water-color paper, I learned a lot. Start small, and stay focused. Don't try to paint the whole garden on a 9X12 inch piece of paper.

I host, via Zoom for now, gatherings on Thursdays at 12:30 (let me know if you would like to be added to the list). We chat, share our progress, and actually make art together

Our next Board Meeting is scheduled for August 17 (but I may be changing that to August 16 for this month only, so check

with me when we get closer to the date.) As our Cove art show is cancelled (AGH!!) we are considering two shows next year and have other important matters to discuss at the Board Meeting.

Our August 4th General Membership Meeting was great fun. We had about 20 members present. Quick announcements were shared, and the focus was on beach art (photography and painting and pen and ink).

A few garage sale items were shared (I think they all have homes now). Our presenter, Patti Curtis (alias Diva Fogue) shared her story of founding (and keeping vital and healthy) the Fogue Gallery for artists over 50. She also shared multiple tips on marketing our art during a pandemic.

I will posting the minutes on our Website under Members section. If you still need the password, contact me, Ron Hammond, or Doug Early.

So, please stay connected and informed via our Newsletter, Howler, Web Site, Facebook, and each other. Gather in Covid-safe ways, and, for heaven's sake, keep making art,

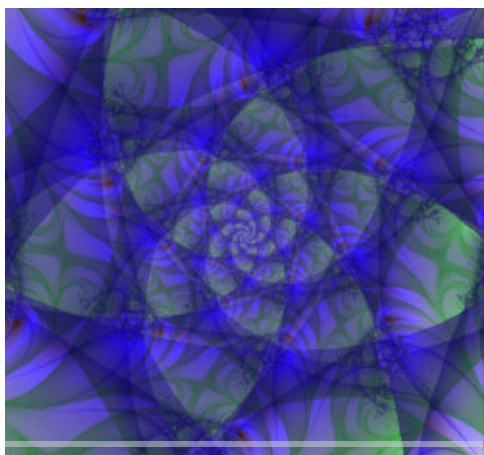
I leave you with this thought from the late, great Georgia O'Keeffe, who gave painting flowers a whole new significance in the art world. She said, "Whether you succeed or not is irrelevant; there is no such thing. Making your unknown known is the important thing."

Fondly, Debra

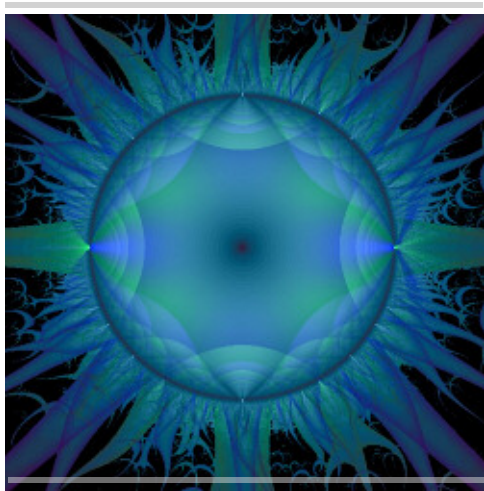


### Linda Jorza at "Kent Creates"

Linda says: I was flabbergasted to learn I won awards in the "Kent Creates" online gallery. My pieces are fractal images. I have entered art about 5 times now and was I shocked to learn this time I won. They pay \$200 for each piece chosen. It's really going to come in handy. The web address is <https://www.kentcreates.com/exhibitions>.



Blue Rose Fractal



Blue Light Fractal

### Pattiann Kelley at Page2 Books

Her paintings will be shown at Page2 during September

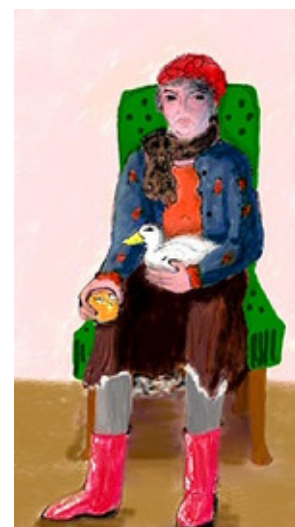


### Patricia Layden on Louise Penny's Book Club

Patricia posted her AOTM piece from last month, "Ruth, from the Inspector Gamache Mystery Series" on the Face-book group for Louise Penny fans. She did so not even as art so much as a part of the book club.

At last count it has scored going on 1200 hits, including a question about whether prints would be available.

Patricia asks "Does this support the idea that posting on social media can get some sort of response?"







Laura Scheuffele — When the Fisherman are away.

### Crank Letter Department — Part 2

My answer to Patricia's question "Does this support the idea that posting on social media can get some sort of response?" is a qualified yes..

"Know what sells and make it visible." is a broadcasting approach. **"Know where what I do sells and make it visible there"** is a narrowcasting approach.

By putting "Ruth" on the Louise Penny book club's Facebook group Patricia knew in advance that people there would likely be interested in **that** image! If she had posted it on her own Facebook page would they have seen it? If she had posted it on Instagram would they have seen it? Doubtful.

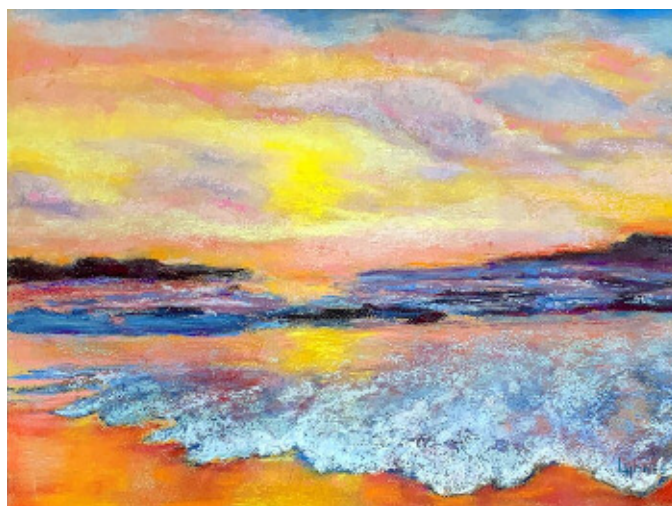
With any social media, or on a website, it's also important to add keywords to the metadata for an image. Search engines are very good at rummaging through words but obviously very bad at finding images.

Putting your contact info on physical images is also a good idea.

Twice I have sold prints out of the blue to people who found one of my photographs from keywords and twice from having my email address on the back of a mounted print. — ronh



Sharon Hitt



Louise Hones — Beachin'



Linda Jorza — Pink Morning at the Beach



## Tim's Vermeer – A Movie Review

Maybe it was reading *The Last Painting of Sarah DeVos* that got me to thinking about----- The Netherlands and the spectacular artists who lived and painted there in the Golden Age. Reubens, Rembrandt, Vermeer. It's a treat to be able to look at these artists' works and marvel at their talent.

About 20 years ago a guy named Tim decided to try to paint a Vermeer. He'd read a book by the contemporary English artist David Hockney called *Secret Knowledge: Rediscovering the Lost Techniques of the Old Masters* and it got him to thinking. Did Vermeer use something like a Camera Obscura to achieve the exquisite details in his paintings? He decided to find out by painting a Vermeer himself, using the same techniques he thought the artist had 400 years ago.

*Tim's Vermeer* (available to rent on Amazon, VUDU, Apple TV and other places) is a film about Tim Jenison and his attempt to duplicate *The Music Lesson*, painted by Johannes Vermeer between 1662 and 1665. With a little help from his friends Penn and Teller.

Tim Jenison is a self-proclaimed tech nerd who made his fortune in television and film and a thing called Video Toaster. He's also an inventor. He took Hockney's ideas about Old Masters using optics – not just the Camera Obscura – to enhance their ability to paint such realistic, detailed masterpieces. This film is the documentary of that process, as interpreted by Tim Jenison.

At 90 minutes in length *Tim's Vermeer* follows how and why Jenison decided to do this crazy thing and how it ended up. He goes through a couple of different ideas on how to duplicate a Vermeer, discards them one by one until he has what he thinks is the final answer – optical lenses, which

the masters of the 17th century would clearly have known of, and a mirror. I highly recommend you watch this documentary. You'll learn a lot and you'll get to decide whether or not Tim managed to recreate a Vermeer masterpiece in spite of the fact that Tim was not an artist and had never painted anything until he decided to try this feat.

I will confess that I've tried this myself and got a fairly decent, although reversed, drawing of *The Girl with the Pearl Earring*. I was in Tasmania.



No, no, stick with me here. I visited the Museum of Old and Modern Art just outside of Hobart and the museum had an exhibit called *Hound in the Hunt* which featured Tim Jenison's Vermeer (which is astonishingly good), a bunch of other "Vermeers", an artist using

Tim's method to paint a Vermeer, and an option for visitors to give it a try. So I did. As you will find out when you watch the documentary, part of the secret is to look at an image – in my case, *The Girl with the Pearl Earring* – in a mirror positioned such that you can see the actual painting in the mirror and copy it onto (in my case) paper. When things line up exactly with the lines you are drawing on the paper and the image you're looking at, you produce an (almost) exact copy. And it works. When you use paints and colors, you simply (I say *simply* – it's not simple) match the color paint to the color you see in the mirror and Voila! You have a painting.

Tim didn't copy the Vermeer *Music Lesson* painting, really, because it's hanging in Buckingham Palace and is owned by the Queen. What he did was lots of research which allowed him to recreate the room represented in the painting. It happened to be the room in the upper floor of





Tim's Vermeer



Vermeer's Vermeer

Vermeer's house in Delft. Tim visited it. Took measurements. And, using a print of the painting, set up that room in a warehouse he rented for precisely this purpose. He filmed himself painting the scene.

There are skeptics. A review in The Guardian states "*Tim's Vermeer is a film about a man who totally fails to paint a Vermeer. That's right – fails. This is not how the acclaimed cinema documentary bills itself or how it has been received by reviewers. At the risk of offending the Education Secretary, I have to quote Blackadder here. It's a brilliant theory, with just one tiny flaw: it's bollocks. Tim's painting does not look anything like a real Vermeer. It looks like what it is: a pedantic and laborious imitation.*" Jonathan Jones, The Guardian, January 29, 2014

My advice is to watch the film and decide for yourself.

Karen Smith

## Crank Letter Dept. Part 3

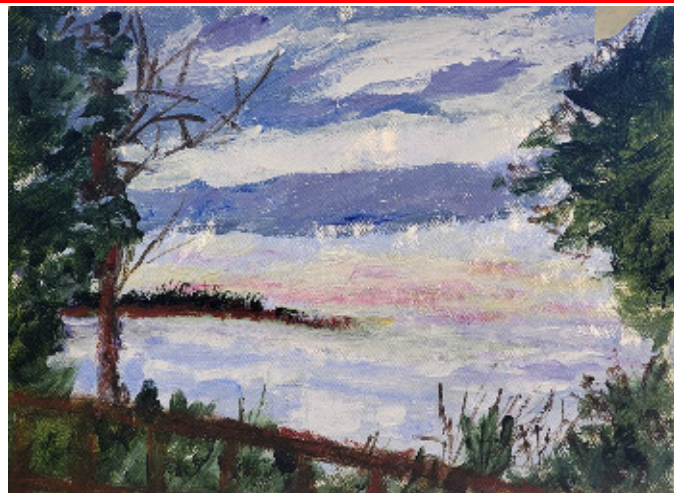
Painter David Hockney soon realized the his speculation about the use of optical aids was "out of his skill code" and teamed up with a physicist, Dr. Charles Falco, whose specialty is optics. Shortly after the book was published Dr. Falco did a lecture at UW (I immediately bought a ticket). His lecture made a very good case for their speculations but he emphasized that they were, in fact, speculations and not certainties.

I was delighted with his response when confronted by howling criticism that he was demeaning the talent and skill of Vermeer and others and that he was accusing them of "cheating". His response (perhaps not verbatim but this is what is in my journal) "*If Vermeer could paint like that I don't care if he had to make a pact with the devil to do it!*" — ronh'





Don Zimmerman — Ruby Beach



Sharon Hitt



Don Zimmerman — Dead Man's Cove



Debra Valpley "Are You My Mother"

### Looking for a Good Home

Pattiann Kelley has 5 picture mats - 5x7 inside, 8x10 outside. Some are beveled, some are not. Email me if you are interested. [pattiann.art@gmail.com](mailto:pattiann.art@gmail.com).



Linda Logie — Beach at Kauai



Patricia Layden



Ron Hammond — Ist Beach, Lapush

## Artists United Club

Our goals are to encourage artistic development and to bring art into the local community.

Meetings are at **NOON** on the first Tuesday, September through June (except when they aren't) at:

Normandy Park Cove,  
1500 SW Shorebrook Dr  
Normandy Park, 98166  
[npcove.org](http://npcove.org)

**Artists United**  
PO Box 66902  
Burien WA 98166  
[artistsunitedclub.com](http://artistsunitedclub.com)

## 2019-2020 Artists United Officers & Chairpersons

President: ..... Debra Valpey  
Vice-President: ..... Karen Smith  
Secretary: ..... Kits Morgan  
Treasurer: ..... Jann Volk  
Membership: ..... Paul Illian  
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Juried Show: ..... Doug Early  
Art Fair (Cove Show): ..... Tom Fletcher,  
Newsletter: ..... Ron Hammond  
Website ..... Doug Early  
Facebook Page ..... Tom Fletcher  
Storage: ..... Tom Fletcher, Anita Corby  
Artwork of the Month: ..... Patricia Layden  
Hospitality/Kitchen: ..... Linda Logie

To contact any officer or chairperson, email  
[artistsunitedclub@gmail.com](mailto:artistsunitedclub@gmail.com)