

# Brush Strokes

Volume 41, Number 3

[www.minnesotawatercolors.com](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com)

May/June 2020

## Eyes on the Prize

### What does it take to make award winning paintings?

By Tara Sweeney

Exhibition awards recognize creative and artistic excellence. But what exactly is “excellence”? And how do jurors define it as they review submissions? This is a fascinating challenge those of us who judge shows face every time we are tasked with choosing award-winning work.

#### Three components of excellence

The Oxford dictionary defines excellence as “the quality of being outstanding.” I think about creative excellence using a metaphor of a three-legged stool, with technique, composition, and originality of expression each representing one of the three legs.

If one or more of those “legs” are wobbly, the creative results still might be very good. However it can’t be “excellent” until the technique, composition and originality are equally rock solid. All three legs have to work together for memorable impact.

#### Working toward excellence

If the artwork has excellent technique and composition, but the idea or subject matter has been done before, the artist needs to keep working on taking greater creative risk. Likewise, if the artwork has a brilliant idea and memorable expression with great technique but the composition is flawed, the artist needs to keep working on design skills to support the idea better. If the artwork has a lively composition that supports the subject matter but the technique is inconsistent or flawed the artist needs to keep working for greater technical knowledge and control in the medium.

#### The “AHA” moment

When excellence in technique and composition come together to support a truly unique expression there is a memorable “aha” factor—the artwork simply won’t leave me alone. It calls me back. When I judge, it’s that “AHA!” that makes artwork feel resolved, complete, and award worthy.

#### Mentors matter

So how do artists get the feedback they need to make all three legs steady before entering a juried exhibition? And how do they improve their ideas and skills once they recognize what needs work? That’s where teachers and mentors come in. Friends and family give feedback on our work based on what they think we

want to hear. While that feedback may make us feel good (or bad), it typically won’t help us improve enough to generate our best work.

#### Find your “why” factor

Tap into why you paint—not just how. It’s the “why” that helps you make more than one great painting and helps you keep at it even when it doesn’t go the way you thought it would. Paint first for your own pleasure and satisfaction. Regular practice will advance your skills (and your confidence) more than occasional binge painting.

#### Try. Fail. Improve.

Here’s the advice I give in every class and workshop I teach: make the paintings you want to make. Don’t worry whether it’s what a juror will find worthy or whether someone will like it. That external pressure can prevent you from making authentic work. And worse, it can prevent you from making anything at all. Love your ideas enough to try, fail, and try again.

#### Show up and share

When you’re ready, share your work with others. Join or start a painting or critique group. You’ll find this external structure helps you show up for yourself and others. Make your paintings visible to an audience. Submit to annual juried group and member shows like those offered by the Minnesota Watercolor Society, NorthStar Water Media Society and State Fair Annual Juried Exhibition.

#### Play

But remember the most important aspect of all—enjoy water media any way and every way that you can. Play is a powerful catalyst for those “Aha” paintings waiting inside of you. I can’t wait to see your best work in an exhibition soon.



“Three-Legged Stool” by Tara Sweeney

# From the President

## Hello Artist Friends and Members!

The coronavirus has disrupted all of our lives, and our hearts are with the people who have been directly impacted by the virus. This pandemic generates in us a range of emotions...fear, anger, sadness, and helplessness to name a few. However, we also see the positive emotions that surface in spite of the virus such as compassion, hope, and inspiration.

Art has always been, and continues to be a major form of expressing ourselves and our emotions, and communicating and sharing with others. One of our board members said during this time of stay at home she is now considering herself an "artist-in-residence". I love that mindset! During this time, I hope many of you have a chance to do some art as a way to express yourself, and to share and stay in touch with others.

A painting challenge I have always wanted to do, and never felt I had the time is a painting a day for 30 days. I will take up that challenge starting April 1st. It will be a way for me to keep painting no matter how small or simple the painting. Maybe a few of you will take up the same challenge, or find another form of inspiration to keep painting during this time.

Going forward, our future scheduled events could change, and we want to keep you informed. We will communicate any changes primarily through the Minnesota Watercolor Society website, and e-mails sent directly to you, our members.

We appreciate your continued support of the Minnesota Watercolor Society, and sharing your paintings with each other especially during this difficult time.

Carol Wingard  
MNWS President



## MINNESOTA WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**President:** Carol Wingard, 763-218-2384  
cjwin48@hotmail.com

**Past President:** Sonja Hutchinson, 952-484-6949  
sonjahutchinson@mchsi.com

**Vice President:** Victor Perlbachs, 952-212-0532  
vperlbachs@gmail.com

**Secretary:** Carol Larson, 952-294-8053  
carol@caroljlarson.com

**Treasurer:** Hadji Bensfield, 612-554-6709  
blessedbygod123@aol.com

**Exhibition, Fall:** Janet Bates, 651-895-3119  
janet.bates@comcast.net

**Exhibition, Spring:** Melissa Moore, 952-210-4946  
Melissa@Moore4art.com  
Diane Pearson, 612-701-3314  
dianekayhennen@gmail.com

**Historian:** Carol Wingard, 763-218-2384  
cjwin48@hotmail.com

**Hospitality:** Open position, please apply to any board member.

**Librarian:** Hadji Bensfield, 612-554-6709  
blessedbygod123@aol.com

**Membership:** Anne Bendt, 612-799-1074  
abendt12@gmail.com

**Newsletter:** Joannette K. Larson, 651-210-4544  
joannette@comcast.net

**Program:**  
Marietta Turner, turner.marietta@gmail.com  
Elizabeth Franklin, Twinoaks50@aol.com

**Publicity, Web:** Kelly Kastner, 612-363-6672  
kelynych26@msn.com

**Signature Membership:** Stephen Lackore,  
507-281-0454 slackore@yahoo.com

**Workshops:** Sonja Hutchinson, 952-484-6949  
sonjahutchinson.art@gmail.com

Tara Sweeney, 651-649-0535  
tarasweeneyart@gmail.com

**IT Consultant:** Laura Hanson, 612-203-9895  
vanderolen@yahoo.com

Website: [www.minnesotawatercolors.com](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com)  
MNWS BRUSH STROKES NEWSLETTER

Editor/Graphic Design Joannette K. Larson  
joannette@comcast.net  
2722 1st Street, White Bear Township, MN 55110

Proofreader Clare Ritter

Published • January/February • March/April • May/June  
• Summer • September/October • November/December  
©2019 Minnesota Watercolor Society



## It's Membership Renewal Time Again!

**MNWS Membership year is May 1st through April 30th of the following year.**

*by Anne Bendt, Membership Chairperson*

With over 350 members, the Minnesota Watercolor Society (MNWS) is one of the largest associations of watercolor artists in the Midwest. Since its inception in 1983, MNWS membership has mushroomed with artists looking for educational information, support and encouragement. Monthly meetings, a newsletter, workshops, demonstrations, "paintouts" and exhibits provide a wealth of opportunities for artists to learn and grow. MNWS also maintains an excellent library of books for member use. Any artist, from beginner to advanced, is welcome to join the supportive environment of MNWS.

**Renewals can be completed in one of the following ways:**

1. Online via pay pal on the Minnesota Watercolor Society website at: [www.minnesotawatercolors.com/join/](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/join/)
2. Mail your check with the completed Registration Form to:  
Anne Bendt, MNWS Membership Chairperson  
1120 Tonkawa Rd, Long Lake, MN 55356-9240

**Membership Renewal fees are:**

- Students \$20
- Seniors 65+ \$30
- Single \$35
- Couple/Family \$45

Please update your Member Profile at:

<http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/member-registration/>

**Join or renew now to take advantage of our knowledgeable community of Watercolor Artists**

Questions: Contact Anne Bendt at: [abendt12@gmail.com](mailto:abendt12@gmail.com)



**Minnesota Watercolor Society Membership /Renewal Application 2020 Form**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ Renewal ☐ New Member

Address \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Single Member \$35 ☐ Couple/Family \$45 ☐ Seniors (65+) \$30 ☐ Student \$20

☐ Check here to remove your name from exhibition award donors' mail list of artists product information.

**US MAIL REGISTRATION:** Checks only. Send registration to:

Anne Bendt, MNWS Membership Chairperson, 1120 Tonkawa Rd, Long Lake, MN 55356-9240

## Spring Show New Dates

ACCEPTED PAINTINGS posted on MNWS website Monday, April 6th

DROP OFF PAINTINGS Saturday, August 1st from 10 am to 1 pm

OPENING RECEPTION is Thursday, August 6th from 6 to 8:30 pm

AWARDS BY Jeannie McGuire at 7 pm Thursday, August 6th

EXHIBITION CLOSES Friday, September 18th

PICK UP PAINTINGS Saturday, September 19th from 10 am to 1 pm



*Don't miss this exciting exhibit!*

Join us! The Minnetonka Center for the Arts is one of the favorite venues for the Spring Exhibition. Members and guests are encouraged to attend the opening reception on Thursday, August 6th from 6 pm-8:30 pm. The awards will be presented at 7 pm by Jeannie McGuire, a Pittsburgh-based award winning artist, widely exhibited internationally and featured in numerous art publications. All are welcome to attend the reception; it does not matter if one has their work entered in the show or not. It is a very fun art-filled evening.

Whenever you attend, please don't forget to vote for the People's Choice Award.

***NO LATE DROP OFFS or LATE PICK UPS will be allowed. As this is a juried show, please pay attention to the matting and framing rules on the MNWS website. Also, when determining the price of your art, take note that the Minnetonka Center for the Arts charges 40% commission to members and 50% commission to non-members.***

*<http://www.minnesota-watercolors.com/exhibitions/>*

Questions? Contact the spring show co-chairpersons, Missy Moore and Diane Pearson email: [mnwsspringartshow@gmail.com](mailto:mnwsspringartshow@gmail.com)

# 2020 MNWS Juried Exhibition INCLINATIONS

Thursday, August 6th – Friday, Sept 18th  
*Minnetonka Center for the Arts*  
*2240 North Shore Drive, Wayzata, MN 55391*

Our events are entirely dependent on COVID-19 restrictions.  
If any dates or locations change we will keep you updated.





## Minnesota Watercolor Society

Contact Sonja at [sonjahutchinson.art@gmail.com](mailto:sonjahutchinson.art@gmail.com)  
or Tara at [tarasweeneyart@gmail.com](mailto:tarasweeneyart@gmail.com)

### “Chaos to Order” with Kathleen Conover

Tuesday, November 10th through Saturday, November 14th, 9 am to 4 pm  
Ames Center, 12600 Nicollet Ave, Burnsville, MN 55337

Early Bird Discount! If full payment is completed by September 1, 2020:

\$575 MNWS members, \$625 non-members

Payment after September 1, 2020:

Full cost to members \$600, non-members \$650

A deposit of \$100 will hold your reservation

Registration for this workshop is online only at:

[www.minnesotawatercolors.com/event/kathleen-conover-workshop/](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/event/kathleen-conover-workshop/)

## Fall Workshop Fall Exhibiton



Complete Exhibition Schedule will be available soon.

\*Please keep in mind paintings cannot be dropped off early or picked up late. The White Bear Center for the Arts will not store paintings. You may arrange to have a friend or family member drop off or pick up your painting.

Registration opens: Thursday, July 16, 2020

Registration closes: Thursday, August 20, 2020

The Fall judge is Cris Franchevich.

Contact: Janet Bates at: [mnwsfallshow@gmail.com](mailto:mnwsfallshow@gmail.com)

[www.minnesotawatercolors.com/fallexhibition/](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/fallexhibition/)

## 2020 MNWS Fall Exhibition:

# SPLASH!

Thursday, September 17 – Thursday, October 15

*White Bear Center for the Arts*

*4971 Long Avenue, White Bear Lake, MN 55110*

Our events are entirely dependent on COVID-19 restrictions.

If any dates change or we move to online galleries we will keep you updated.

# Exhibitions Rules Update

## IMPORTANT Refocusing on Show Requirements

Like all arts organizations who host exhibitions, the Minnesota Watercolor Society has rules for artists to follow when submitting work for our Exhibitions. The MNWS exhibition rules are very similar to those used by the National Watercolor Society, the American Watercolor Society and the Transparent Watercolor Society.

### Following the Rules Matters

Having well-defined rules and ensuring that artists submitting work in our shows follow them, helps us maintain the integrity of our organization and exhibitions within the arts community. It also helps members learn what is expected if and when they choose to enter larger and more competitive shows.

### Exhibition Goals

While most submissions in past shows have consistently met our rules, there seems to be some confusion about what is currently acceptable and what isn't. That's why the MNWS Board has made a refocus on following Exhibition Rules beginning with the Fall 2020 Show.

*Starting with the 2020 Fall Show, we will require that rules are followed or the painting will not be accepted and/or exhibited.*

### Understanding Expectations

To help meet this important goal, the Board has prepared a "Show Submission Agreement" that artists submitting entries will be required to review and check an acknowledgement box to complete the entry process. Members are encouraged to read the Agreement carefully BEFORE deciding which piece(s) to enter so they are sure they can be in compliance.

### Important Rules Changes

Most of the Exhibition Rules are exactly the same as they have been in previous years. The only new rules involve matting and framing:

- **Matting must be white or off-white only.** No colored mats. No colored mat liners.
- **Frames must be simple, sturdy and in black, white or neutral tones only. No colored frames.** No frames with designs, embellishments or colored accents. Think PLAIN.
- **All works must include a hanging wire that is 2 inches down from the highest point at the top of the frame, canvas or board.** No sawhook or other style hangers.

Before framing a painting, members should read the Mat and Frame Requirements posted online under the Exhibition tab. Pieces not meeting these requirements will not be exhibited, even if accepted into the show prior to drop-off.

### Member Support is Appreciated

Not every rule can be easily validated by show chairs and drop-off volunteers simply by looking at a work. We are depending on members to use the "Honor System" in following all rules to ensure that the integrity of MNWS continues to be on par with other respected arts organizations.

*All entrants in MNWS Exhibitions will be required to READ and AGREE to these rules. Please familiarize yourself with these rules BEFORE deciding what to enter in our upcoming Fall 2020 Show.*

**Check out the NEW  
Exhibitions Page on our  
Website for Updated  
Rules, Show Submission  
Agreement, Framing  
Requirements and FAQs!\***

\* <http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/exhibitions/>



# Minnesota Watercolor Society

*Important new rules for anyone wanting to enter future exhibitions*

## Minnesota Watercolor Society Show Submission Rules Agreement

Any work that does not follow these rules will not be accepted. Fees will not be returned.

- Entrants must be a MNSW member with current dues paid before or upon entry.
- Painting must use water-based media on a paper surface, YUPO, canvas, or board up to 3/4" thick.
- Surfaces may be treated or coated to accept water-based media with gesso or gel medium.
- Media must be applied in a transparent or opaque manner – no impasto.
- Any collage must be treated with water-media only and not dominate the painting. No found materials may be used. Drawing elements including ink, pastel, crayons, pencil, etc. may be used.
- Work must be original and may not be copies of other artists' work, painted in a workshop or under the supervision of an instructor.
- Photo reference materials must have been taken by the artist.
- Paintings must be completed within the last two years and not previously shown in a MNWS exhibition.
- Paintings must be framed and under glass or an acrylic surface. Gallery wrapped canvas or board paintings must have finished edges and the surface treated with a fixative.
- Matting must be white or off-white only.
- Frames must be simple, sturdy, and in black, white or neutral tones only.
- Maximum frame/work size is 41" vertically or horizontally.
- All works must include a hanging wire that is 2 inches down from the highest point at the top of the frame, canvas, or board. No sawtooth hangers.

Complete rules are available at: <http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/exhibition-rules/>

Please read the rules, sign and submit with your entrance. Cut this or make a copy to submit.

☐ I have read and agree to the complete rules posted at <http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/exhibition-rules/>

Name printed please \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

3-18-2020



PRESORTED STANDARD  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
TWIN CITIES, MN  
PERMIT NO. 2805

## MINNESOTA WATERCOLOR SOCIETY

1120 Tonkawa Road,  
Long Lake, MN 55356-9240

[www.minnesotawatercolors.com](http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com)

[www.facebook.com/groups/MinnesotaWatercolors](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MinnesotaWatercolors)

*"To further the development of the  
watercolor artist by providing a  
supportive environment with education,  
exhibition opportunities, promotion  
of public appreciation and  
greater visibility of the art."*

*Minnesota Watercolor Society Mission Statement*

To become a member of the MNWS please visit our website at  
<http://www.minnesotawatercolors.com/join/>

# MNWS CALENDAR

## WELCOME!

### New Members

Melanie Vinokur

Mary Spalding

Debbie Spalding

Kay Bloom

Linda Wollerman

Carol Humpage

Jan Forbes

NJ Ceryes

Joanne Linder

Jeanne Doyle

Celeste Kanli

Beth Bartz

**We have 350 current  
paid members**

Programs are held the second Thursday of the month at 7 pm September–May only.  
Usually at Christ Presbyterian Church, 6901 Normandale Road, Edina, MN 55435  
(Corner of 70th Street and Highway 100) Check our website for locations that may vary.

May Program Cancelled Due to  
Corona Virus

Jeanine McGuire Workshop  
August 3rd – 6th, 2020  
Minnetonka Center for the Arts

Inclinations Show  
August 6th – September 18th  
Minnetonka Center for the Arts

2020 Fall Exhibition: Splash  
September 17 – October 15, 2020  
White Bear Center for the Arts

Kathleen Conover Fall Workshop  
Nov 10 – 14, 2020  
Ames Center

**Due to the Corona Virus and  
meeting cancellations, 23  
Lifetime Members will receive  
their pins via mail. Their names  
will be published in the next July  
August newsletter.**

## Lifetime Members Awarded

Congratulations to: Kathy Braud,  
Sandy Muzzy, Kris Fretheim,  
Rosemary Guttormsson, Deborah  
Ronglien, Judith Meyeraan, and  
Karen Lattery.

A total of 21 Lifetime members  
have received their Pewter Paint  
Brush Lapel Pins. Dues are  
waived while they still enjoy the  
many benefits of MNWS. Thank  
you for your contributions to  
MNWS over the years. If you are  
a lifetime member and have not  
received your pin, please contact  
Anne Bendt, Membership  
Chairman at  
[Abendt12@gmail.com](mailto:Abendt12@gmail.com)

## Northstar Watermedia Society News

*Meeting on the third Thursday of  
most months at 7 pm in the Rose  
Room, Roseville Skating Center  
2661 Civic Center Drive  
Roseville, MN 55113*

Guests are welcome.

**May 9: Cancelled**

**Art 4 Shelter** Virtual Store  
Online May 13th  
Donations received by June 30th  
matched up to \$10,000!



For more information for any  
activities see our website at:  
<http://northstarwatermedia.com/>