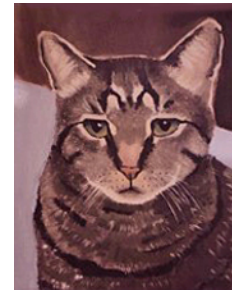
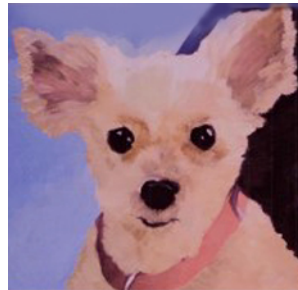
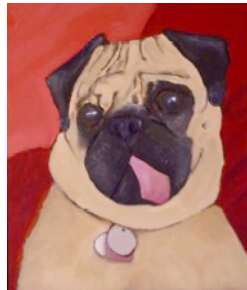
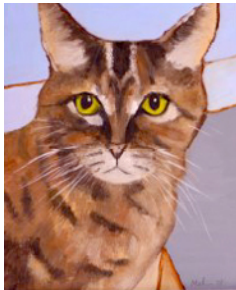
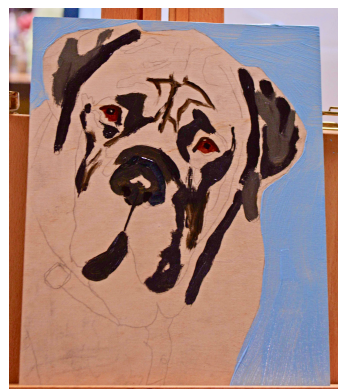


**Demonstration**  
**February 3, 2020**  
**Melissa Mary O'Grady - Beloved Pet Portraits in Oil**

On this balmy February evening, with the temperatures nearing 60 degrees, close to 40 members and guests came to see our featured artist, **Melissa Mary O'Grady**, demonstrate "Beloved Pet Portraits in Oil". Melissa is a multi-media artist who specializes in portraits of both humans and animals. Not only does she work in oils, but in gouache and pencil, as well. In addition to painting, Melissa is also a book artist focusing on pop-ups. She formerly made small sculptures in wood and dolls in fabric. Melissa lives in Cleveland Heights, and makes her living as a hospital health librarian.



At the start of her demonstration, Melissa asked the audience to share their thoughts while she painted. Linda McGreevy asked many relevant questions throughout the evening. Selecting a beloved 'bull mastiff' as her subject, Melissa cropped and scaled a photo of the pet and then traced that image onto a small prepared wooden board. After painting the background in a color to complement the animal, she focused on the eyes and then the darker shapes and shadows before adding the lighter colors. The medium she used was Liquin gel (an oil painting medium - when added to pigment, alters the viscosity of paint for various purposes and promotes drying). She also likes wax medium, but was not using it tonight. Eddie Mitchell, an accomplished oil painter, further explained the idea of incorporating wax as a medium in oil painting...."Van Gogh used it," he added.



Having fun with a variety of brushes and paint brands, Melissa took steps to show blended colors and the texture of fur, adding the collar earlier so fur shows over it. For the nose, she used a mixture of ultramarine blue and raw umber, making black paint, but used real black paint (ivory black) in the nostrils. Soon the likeness and personality of the bull mastiff came to life on her wooden canvas. Melissa does pet commissions, but she admits to being nervous. "People know how their pets look." "Can I really capture their pet's likeness and personality," she wonders! Based on this demonstration, we say "YES". Thank you, Melissa for an entertaining evening of art.



“Homemade is where the Heart is” was the valentine theme for the evening’s refreshments, prepared by our hosts, **Ellen Howard** and **Sandi Richards**. Everyone enjoyed three kinds of homemade cookies and kielbasa bites. Sandi’s raspberry-filled sugar cookies disappeared instantly. Pretzel bites with queso dip and veggies with hummus rounded out the fare. Everything was devoured. All the veggies and hummus even disappeared....thank you, Eddie! Many thanks to Ellen and Sandi, too.

