

June 5, 2023 Meeting Members' Night Critique by Mary Ann Boysen

The June meeting was bittersweet. It was the first monthly meeting after the unexpected passing of our president Lee Peters on May 21. Secretary, Sue Herrle was in-charge for the evening. She promptly started the meeting, channeling her 'inner Lee' and representing EAA's new president, who could not be there due to a prior work commitment. Members were asked to renew their membership. Sue thanked the many people who helped with our Spring Fine Art Show at the Library. It will be a busy summer ahead, planning for the August Art & Rummage Sale, the Lake Farmpark show in the fall and our September 11th Celebration of Life for Lee Peters. Sue encouraged members to actively participate with the board in planning these events.



There were 25 members who attended the critique, each bringing in one piece of art including award winning art from the spring show. Our assistant program director, Bernie Russ, introduced artist, **Mary Ann Boysen**, judge of our Spring Fine Art Show and the evening's art critic. Recruited to 'move the art along', Eddie Mitchell entertained us by doing his best "Vanna White" impression.



Mary Ann, who resides in Chagrin Falls, is a mother, grandmother, working artist and a professional watercolorist since 1974. She studied at Florida State and Southern Methodist University, pursuing a degree in Advertising Design. She did not take up

watercolor painting until much later when her children were in school and she could devote long hours to the practice of painting. Mary Ann ran a gallery, taught art around America, traveled to Europe teaching students to paint at famous places and has published several e-books on watercolor. She is an award-winning artist and her art has been collected by many corporations in Ohio, Denver and North Carolina.

"Art is in the eye of the beholder." Mary Ann said that she could paper her walls with all her rejections. She related a story of her favorite glazed watercolor with flying geese being rejected for a show because the judge didn't like the geese! But she did! Never giving up and trying again, it won an award in a future show!

The critique started with Carol's oil pastel portrait. The color in the face was good. Mary Ann said to look at a person's face and decide what colors you see. "Artists are observers and can see what others don't." All faces have reflected light from other sources....green, violet, blue, etc. So never buy a tube of flesh-colored paint! Mary Ann commented that she begins most of her paintings with her three favorite colors - Cobalt Blue Hue, Quinacridone Gold and Opera.



The Best of Show, Yellow Roses by Bernie Russ won high praise from Mary Ann. The energy and use of color inside the roses, with contrasting blue, 'grabbed her'. "Oh, my word!" was her comment for Sandi's rice paper batik of poppies, having tried batiks when she first started . . . "but it was not for me!" Terese's pen & ink was spectacular, intricate and well executed, showing a light and tender touch with a ballpoint pen. She loved it, but not the matting. She said to use a real rag and acid free mat, preferably in white versus the \$2.99 mat Terese purchased from Marcs.

Mary Ann told the story about a lady choosing a white mat at her gallery. The lady stayed at the store from 10am until closing, looking through hundreds of white mats until she finally found the one! However, after the piece was matted and framed the lady complained that was not the mat she selected!

Apparently glass changes the color of the mat! "Glass has color", Mary Ann said. Always show the mat under glass...a lesson learned! Another important lesson, "never have art directly touching the glass!"



"I can tell if you are outgoing or shy", she said as she looked at Eddie's powerful sunset, suggesting that he make some of the sparkles of water elongated. She could tell that the upper right section was overworked. On Sandy's photo of Chagrin Falls, Mary Ann suggested the water over the falls could have more sparkle and that the rocks on the right side were a distraction. She made lots of good suggestions for Annette's purple iris watercolor....repeat the yellow green color below as a highlight, the background could have more lavender in it, it was too much the same value.



Looking at Rozenia's acrylic painting, she said "This one has a message." In addition, Mary Ann looked for focal point, mood, color and technique. She wished that there was more color in the faces. She thought Marguerite's pink orchid watercolor was very nice, but two things bothered her. There were too many hard edges in the background and suggested softening them using Cheap Joe's scrubber brush. The petals looked outlined because each one was done separately...you can see the line where the paint stopped. She suggested using the wet-in-wet technique.



Tip: A good teacher once told her, "A good design goes off the page in three different directions."



Mary Ann made a good suggestion on how Dennis could make his award-winning photo, although beautiful, even better. Make the two figures behind the focal point paler in value. Cheri's watercolor was a good example of negative painting, suggesting Cheri create more negative space within the stems and soften the red edges in the center. For Char, she said "you used every trick in the book to show texture", i.e. salt, sponge, fabric. However, there was too much repeated texture. She suggested getting rid of repeated patterns using the scrubber brush. And there were many more good critiques to follow before the evening ended.

We thank Mary Ann for an enjoyable evening of art. She also shared her latest passion, "Creations Boutique", an organization promoting and supporting non-profit agencies in Greater Cleveland that benefit children. Their fundraiser, "A Unique Boutique", scheduled for October 14, 2023, 10am - 3pm, sells handcrafted items for all occasions, located at Family Life Center, 16349 Chillicothe Rd., Bainbridge, OH. Mary Ann invited us to attend!

Thank you to everyone who brought treats to share. A delightful table of goodies was enjoyed by all! The lovely peonies are from Terese's garden.

