

Fine Arts: Artists of Yardley holding 5th annual Open Juried Show

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By Janet Purcell | For The Times of Trenton
on April 06, 2016 at 7:00 AM, updated April 06, 2016 at 7:07 AM

Although it may not seem like many years Artists of Yardley has been on the radar screen of arts organizations in the region, a visit to their webpage, artistsofyardley.org, informs they have been in existence since 2004 and have now grown to an amazing 250 membership.

I've written about their art exhibitions for the past several years and have always found them to offer an exceptional array of varied artworks by artists representing many genre who are recognized professionally both regionally and farther afield.

And this year's 5th annual Open Juried Show is no exception.

According to the organization's president Maggy Robinson, juror, Fran Orlando, winnowed the 455 submissions down to 80 works that are now on display in the historic Janney House on the Patterson Farm in Lower Makefield that the organization calls home.

The expansive and picturesque grounds are now awakening in the full blush of spring with magnolias and fruit trees in full blossom. And having the art displayed in the old Janney house puts it in the right perspective. Whether it be traditional landscape, a contemporary photograph,



"Backyard #4" by Terri Fraser.

Courtesy photo

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or a vibrant abstraction, it all holds together on the walls of this house that not only speaks of its history but now offers what's coming next.

The first piece that caught my attention as I entered the main gallery on the first floor was a large oil on panel painting, *Linens*, by Phillip Carroll. Displayed prominently above the fireplace mantle, it offers a homespun view of white sheets and clothing hung out to dry. The artist skillfully portrays light as it falls gently on ripples and filters through where single layers of clothing and bed linens fall free.

The fireplace is flanked by built-in cabinets where treasures are displayed on shelves behind the glass. Among the art you'll find there are two vases by Fran Leyenberger. Her ceramic and pewter *Viburnum Vase* and her raku clay with a pressed tin pull, *Bubble Vase*, are both exquisite. Leyenberger's ceramics can also now be seen in the *Breath of Fire* exhibition in Trenton City Museum at Ellarslie.

On a completely different note, in the other cabinet you'll find Zhanna Martin's fired clay and painted *Carefree* bust of an elderly woman with a pink rose on her white hair and a cigar in her mouth. And Kathleen McSherry's *Time Lies To All*, a chest, clock with a Pinocchio figure stands nearby.

There's a wide assortment of works in that gallery ranging from Mateus Costa's oil *Self Portrait* and Maggy Robinson's colorful acrylic portrait of her dog *Hanna* to Jeanne Chesterton's classic oil painting, *Brassy Bananas* portraying five bananas on a shelf and one lying in a brass compote. And there is also Martin Varnedoe's highly detailed acrylic *The Lost Bag* showing figures in an interior seemingly unaware of a woman's handbag on a pedestal table.

Moving out to the entrance hall, there's a pair of dynamo works hanging side by side. One is Anne Gannon's peaceful wax, resin, and gold leaf on wood *Desert Dream* and the other is Susan Gilli's fiery *Fallen Leaf*, an acrylic and paper on canvas.

On one wall in the adjoining gallery is a collection of works done primarily in black and white or grey tones with a few accents of red. The display is interesting as are the works. Outstanding is Nancy Allen's pencil on paper *Storielle*, *little stories* in which she presents 5 people sitting in a row on a bench, each lost in his or her own thoughts as they seem to be just there waiting.

Also in that room you'll find Lisa McGovern's pastel, *Philadelphia's China Town* with its ornate arch framing the activity on the city street. Note the distinctive green "woven" frame. And also note the Joanne Grant's vertical watercolor *Water Taxi* displayed nearby in which every inch of the picture plane is filled with people at the top and colorful boats crowded in against one another. This is a tour-de-force in painting, especially when you consider it is done in watercolors.

As you take the stairs to the second floor be sure to stop by Paul Giancola's *In the Lobby B*, a patterned piece that looks like a mosaic and is done with printing ink on paper. Terri Fraser's bright *Backyard #4* draws your eye to the landing and when you reach the top you'll find Phillip Carroll's quiet *Beech Tree* and John Craig's two dramatic black and white acrylics.

There are two showrooms upstairs that offer beautiful views out the windows and good art on the walls. Space here only allows me to point out a few but I especially want to call your attention to Suzanne Dinger's pastel *Night Walkers*, a view down upon dark figures walking in their shadows while three walk in a circle of light from a streetlight stanchion.



Donald Trump?



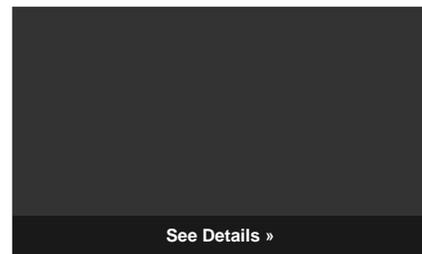
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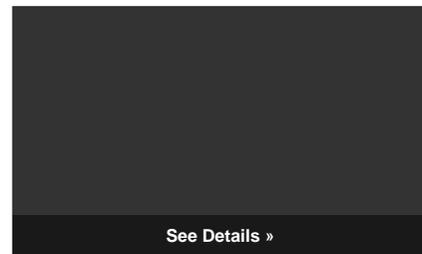
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In the other room, don't miss Samuel Vovsi's photograph *Guatemalan Marketplace*, another view looking down upon people. This, however, captures colorful crowds shopping.

And on the opposite wall three photographs capture nature at its finest. There's Darlene Towson's *Spring Snow*, in which crunchy snow surrounds a dark puddle where light swirls. And there's *Autumn Fire* by Bill Nyman showing flaming maple leaves in a dark forest, and Craig C. O'Connor, Jr.'s *In Between* where mist shrouds bare trees standing in golden groundcover.

These works mentioned here are but a handful of the 80 that fill these vintage rooms. Trust me when I say all the rest are just as outstanding. Or drive there one of these fine spring days and experience a triple-play treat: The expansive farmland, the charming old homestead, and the excellent art inside.

IF YOU GO

WHERE: A0Y Art Center, 949 Mirror Lake Road, Yardley.

WHEN: Through April 24. Hours, Noon-5 p.m., Friday, Saturday, Sunday.

CONTACT: 215-493-1205.

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