

Notes from Sept 24, 2016 OBA quarterly meeting



For more photos from our gathering at the Straub Center in Salem - scroll to the last few pages.....

*Left to right:
Kip Nordstrom,
Janene Walkky and
Alice Debo*

Those attending:

Janet Parker	Alice Debo	Kip Nordstrom
Carol Mason	Aislinn Adams	Tina Lange
Janene Walkky	Dorota Haber Lehigh	Carol Mason brought a guest, Suzanne Jones

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We had a smaller turnout than usual, but a great meeting anyway. Sorry to miss those of you who weren't able to attend.

We decided to begin the meeting, after settling in and grabbing coffee, with asking people to talk about the work they'd brought in to share, if they felt comfortable doing so.

Alice talked about her work to start off -

She had finished 3 pieces using glass and birch panels, in which she had put liquid gold leaf paint into a squirt bottle to draw the outlines of various of plants onto the glass, then on the other side of the glass, painted acrylic to fill in the shapes of the plant subjects - water lilies, a mushroom, and an evergreen tree. We felt they suggested cloisonné, and that the water lilies would certainly be an interesting subject at Lan Su.

Besides these pieces she's experimenting with, she brought in drawings for 2 other pieces she's working on specifically for the Lan Su show. Life size studies in pen& ink, of a blackberry lily.

These were gorgeous drawings, at an impressive scale, and included architectural design elements from the garden.

Janet talked about some pieces she has begun for a class she's teaching that allows students to try 3 different mediums, starting with graphite, so that each rendering informs the next one, going from graphite, to pen & ink, to colored pencil. Since everything she's doing right now has Lan Su in mind, the subject she chose for this study is a Chrysanthemum.

Janene talked about her commission of Lupine. Her subjects in this composition are Columbia Gorge Lupine, which blooms at the same time as balsam root. The beautiful purply-blues of the Lupine are stunning with the golds and yellows of the balsam root. It's wonderful to see this work in progress, and to see Janene's technique for depicting hairy stems and leaves.

Carol Mason brought in a composition of Cally Lilies in colored pencil. It was a beautiful handling of the medium. Since Carol invited feedback on it, a few people shared thoughts about altering the composition in ways that might reduce the focal point on the center leaf, and altering a negative space shape that also had the potential to draw the eye away from the beautifully-rendered spathes (new word for me! that's the proper description of the "flower" of the calla lily....)

Kip brought in her latest sketchbook - Rebecca Brown Thompson's, and talked a bit about her painting of a mallow there. She was concerned about getting the color right, but it looked fine to us!

Dorota brought in several pages of drawings of mushrooms. Beautiful renderings of lobster mushrooms; a page tying colors together - Lobster mushroom, pacific crabapple, boletus, maple seeds, vine maple leaf. A beautiful gathering

At 11:30 we broke for lunch, since we had started in without really sampling the breakfast. Once again, a great potluck brunch was contributed and enjoyed by all.

During the rest of the afternoon, we had some discussions followed by a few mini presentations.

Aislinn talked about Society 6 - an online source for "printing on anything". Cafe Press is another source of this kind. Also, Aislinn's drawing of squash vine made its way onto Pumpkin Spice seasonal product packaging for some Williams Sonoma products, and we're all eagerly waiting to see it!

A lively discussion arose around • making a living at this kind of work, • reproducing our work, • photographing our work for Etsy stores.

Aislinn is involved in a group called Rising Tide, whose motto is "Community, not Competition", where these kinds of subjects regularly get discussed.

She mentioned that RACC does a workshop on how to succeed on Etsy. Bottom line, it takes some work!

Then **Janene** mentioned selling work via Instagram. Apparently lots of collectors buy / find artists on Instagram.

Alice set up an #Oregonbotanicalartists (one word) account on Instagram. She'll send me a brief how-to for uploading individual members' work, and a tutorial about use of @ and # hashtags. We thought we might need a lengthier discussion of this, and Alice offered to help.

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- **Aislinn Adams** caught us up on her Silver Falls State Park project - and talked a bit about her process too.

She created a sketchbook using 12 quarter sheets of Fabriano wc paper, with an inexpensive tracing paper between each sheet, brought this to an office printer (like Kinko's) and had them spiral-bind it. She sometimes uses graph paper taped into her sketchbook - a great little tool especially when having to work from photos, to get proper scale on her record. She's using Strathmore Bristol 400 series for her pen & ink drawings. And she's been playing with the Golden Mean for composition ideas (from Heeyoung Kim's class a couple of years ago). (Alice Debo mentioned that Columbia Art Supply ALWAYS has Bristol pads on sale, two for price of one.)

- **Carol Mason** shared a book by Celia Thaxter, called, "An Island Garden", originally published in 1895 - Carol's was a new edition out in 1988. The book was set in Appledor Island, Maine, and Thaxter was a poet. Carol read a wonderful, evocative excerpt from the book, about the California Poppy.

- **Janene Walkky** generously shared a recent paper study she explored, and talked about a controversy about Fabriano watercolor paper. Janene is currently not using Fabriano paper anymore. (Fabriano is in the process of re-calibrating their machinery after many complaints from botanical artists - about a paper that many artists have faithfully used for years - and the upshot is that their revised product is not expected to be on the market for another 2 years.

She tried 6 brands of papers in her study:

Fabriano 300#, Fabriano 140#, Arches, Sanders, Waterford, Strathmore 500 Bristol board 4-ply, vellum finish, and Moulin du Roy. Outside of Fabriano and the Strathmore Bristol board all the papers tested were 100% cotton rag, 300# smooth finish, hot press. Of all of these, Janene preferred the Moulin du Roy as a best substitute for Fabriano.

She did the same tests on each paper type, using wet washes, using dry brush, lifting, etc.

She prepared a small packet of labeled swatches of each of the paper types in a little plastic bag so that each of us could try them for ourselves.

- **Dorota Haber-Lehigh** is giving a workshop on drawing mushrooms Oct 1 at the Tillamook Forest Center, 1-4 pm, on Hwy 86. Her work will be exhibited there for the month of October. It's the center's 10th anniversary and there are many events - check out the website. She'll be participating in a workshop on how to extract dyes from mushrooms on Oct 8th. and (unrelated to Tillamook events-), she will be taking the PNBA workshop in Seattle with the Russian mushroom painter, Alexander Viazmensky (Sasha), on November 5th and 6th.

- **Alice Debo** has offered to help people with their scans for the Lan Su show (scanning and color-correcting work) at the Dec 7th members meeting.

Some additional miscellaneous announcements, and comments from my notes:

- **Catherine Alexander's** certificate program will probably launch next fall. The expectation is that we may work with OSA in Portland and Gaiety Hollow / Lord and Shriver home in Salem, as the venues for the classes.

- April and May - Aldemans Peony Farm Festival.

- Here's a list of URLs of our members' blogs - check them out!

www.alicedebo.com/blog

<http://rbrowndesigns-blog.com/>

<http://jswbotanicalart.com/blog/>

<http://www.aislinnadams.com/blog/>

- Silverpoint class - Oct 5th! There's a lot of interest in this

- A plug for voting for funding for outdoor schools on Nov 8th!

Alice Debo, starting off the meeting with sharing about various pieces she's been experimenting with while planning for the Lan Su Chinese Garden show.

The square pieces immediately below are acrylic paintings on glass, mounted to wood, with some gold leaf paint added for a unique cloisonné effect. Bottom row, in b/w, are smaller scale plans for large pieces showing plants in stages of growth, and employing architectural elements borrowed from Lan Su garden structures.



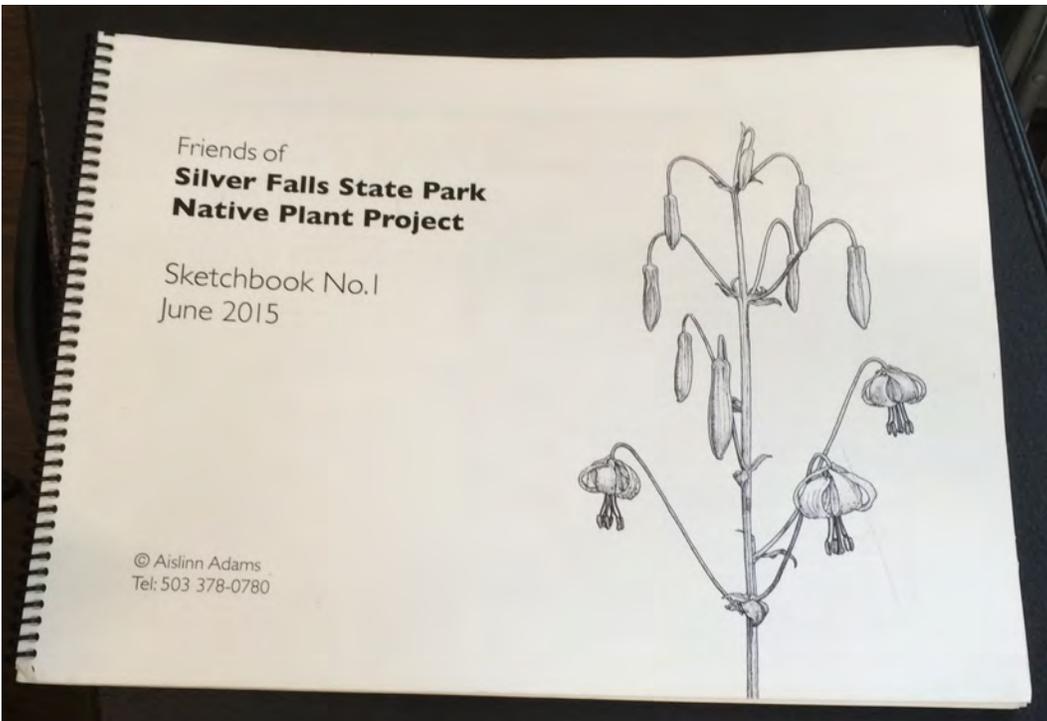


Some pieces on the display tables for group sharing: Top left - Janet's sketchbook in foreground, showing a rose hip study, and on easels, two versions of a chrysanthemum study, pieces being used in a new class she's teaching at OCAC that introduces students to 3 different mediums while working on one subject.

Top right - On easel: Carol Mason's colored pencil portrait of a Calla Lily; left foreground - Rebecca Brown

Thompson's wonderful felted envelope made for her Traveling Sketchbook, at right foreground.

Bottom right - Janene Walkky's in-progress commissioned watercolor painting of Lupine and Balsamroot, and bottom left, an enlargement of the leaf at lower right of her composition. Janene talked about the challenges of painting hairy plants! On stalks, on leaves, and even on the petals.



Aislinn Adams showing some of the inked, hand colored finished pieces for the Silver Falls state park Native Plant project she's engaged in, and her wonderfully organized sketchbook, at left.

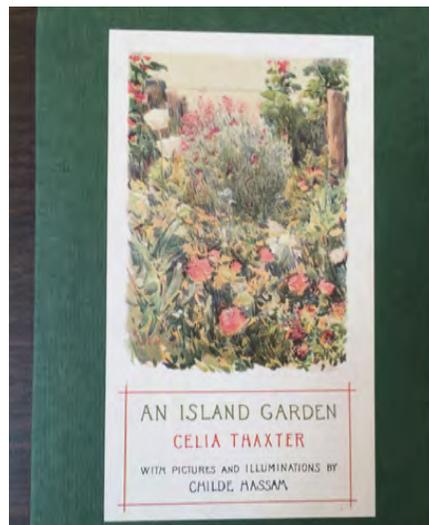
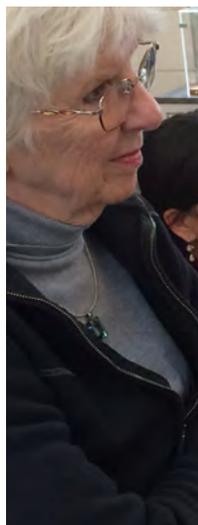
Tina Lange and Janene Walkky at right, above.

Dorota Haber-Lehigh presenting several works on various local mushrooms in colored pencil, for a workshop, show, and exhibit at the Tillamook Forest Center on the Oregon Coast, in celebration of their 10th anniversary this year.





Janene Walkky shared her study of a variety of different watercolor papers, due to problems with a botanical artist-favorite, Fabriano Artistico Hot Press papers. Janene wrote about this on her very informative blog, <http://jswbotanicalart.com/blog/>, for those who would like in-depth information about the study. L to R: Aislinn, Janet, Janene.



Carol Mason introduced us to this lovely book, "An Island Garden", by poet Celia Thaxter (with illustrations by Childe Hassam, and read from her poem on the California Poppy.