



*Ottawa Watercolour Society*  
*La société d'aquarelle d'Ottawa*



*“Plaisance Falls”, 2002,*  
Pat Smith

## Message from the President



Greetings All,

This has been the greatest winter for painting! It has been too cold to do anything else. We had a great AGM and silent auction in January—very productive.

My daughter, who is working as a paper conservator in Dublin, was on a one-week course on pigments given at the Chester Beatty Library. The most interesting afternoon was about the colour blue. In the Roman and Greek times, blue was considered a colour of mourning and of Barbarians, so they actually never had a word for blue. The sky or sea, or anything blue, would be referred to using different greens or greys, etc. The Celts and Germans dyed their faces blue to frighten their enemies in combat, and later when they got older they tinted their hair blue.

At the start of the Middle Ages, only the poor wore blue clothing, made from the ‘woad’ plant. Blue played no part in architecture, in the rich costumes of the clergy, or in the decoration of churches. Blue became more popular later on during the Middle Ages, after Abbé Suger rebuilt the St. Denis Basilica in Paris in 1140 and installed stained glass windows in cobalt. When this was combined with the red light from the other windows, it filled the church with the most amazing violet. The church became a stunning marvel of the Christian world, the colour known as “bleu de St Denis”.

In the 12<sup>th</sup> century, lapis lazuli was imported from Afghanistan and became associated with holiness, humility, and virtue.

By the time of the great Dutch painters of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, ultramarine became the most expensive pigment. The most expensive painting one could buy was a painting containing six guilders' worth of ultramarine. If your portrait had been painted showing you wearing a pair of blue gloves, everyone would know that you didn't have as much wealth as someone whose portrait showed them wearing a blue suit or with blue curtains in the background.

As you might know, I am moving to Manchester, England, this spring. I have never been there before and wonder whether they have a watercolour society. I started my last painting in Canada of my daughter and a friend as they stood near the highest pub in Ireland, Johnny Fox's, on Easter Monday last year. I will finish it in England and send you a copy when it is done.



All the best for a great year,

Rosemary Randell

BA, BFA, CSPWC, SCA, FOWS

March 2014

## Annual General Meeting 2013

The Ottawa Watercolour Society's Annual General Meeting was held on January 24, 2014, at the Trinity United Church on Maitland Avenue. Those who braved the cold wintry night enjoyed a delicious potluck supper, a silent auction, and a chance to meet old and new friends.

Although attendance was not as in previous years, twenty eight members, including executive members, came to the meeting. Rosemary Randell, President of the OWS, reported that the membership has grown by 16% in the past year, bringing the total to 134. There were two main exhibitions held in 2013: "Water's Edge", the 67th exhibition, held at St. Brigid's, and "Wet and Wild", the 68th exhibition, held at the Shenkman Centre. Rosemary also noted that two OWS members—Murray Stephens

and Sonia Tarantour Pearl—had passed away in 2013 and would be missed.

Various members of the executive then reported on their activities throughout 2013. This was followed by a lively discussion about a proposal put forward by Alain Godbout concerning a modification to the conditions for submission for juried shows. In the end, the proposal was adopted, with amendments.

This year's AGM is planned for the fall of 2014. It is hoped that more

members will come out to meet fellow artists and enjoy an evening of great food and conversation.

(The official minutes of the Annual General Meeting are available on the OWS website.)



## OWS EXHIBITION AT WALTER BAKER CENTRE

Ten members of the Ottawa Watercolour Society participated in the latest exhibition at the Walter Baker Sports Centre on Malvern Drive in Barrhaven. A total of 18 beautiful paintings are on display until March 22, and each piece is available for purchase from the artist. There is a wide range of very interesting styles—a wonderful representation of what artists can do with watercolour, imagination, and their own unique approach.



*Yvon Perrier with his painting "Petit march de Boston", along with Betty Sullivan and OWS President Rosemary Randell*

Any OWS member can display their artwork at the Walter Baker Centre. New paintings that members may wish to exhibit can be brought to the Walter Baker Sports Centre (on the second floor, in the area joining the Sports Centre to the school) during the morning of March 22. There is no cost to exhibit and only a small fee to be paid if a painting is sold.

Thanks go to Betty Sullivan and her husband Pat who have been coordinating this exhibition. Rick Sobkowicz will be filling in for Betty on March 22 and is waiting for confirmation from other OWS members who can help him take down the existing paintings and hang up any new paintings members may bring.



More photos (provided by Rick Sobkowicz) from the exhibition at Walter Baker:



*Celine Bessette,  
"Givre"*



*Carmen Renaud, "In the Woods"*

March 2014



*Claire-Andrée  
Bourgeois, "Et...le  
temps s'arrete"*



*Yvon Perrier, "Intemporelle"*

*Claire-Andrée Bourgeois, "Lacher prise"*



*Alain Godbout "Promenade du Portage"*



March 2014



## **To participate (or not) in shows...a recurring question**

Article and photos by Alain Godbout



One of the first things you are invited to do upon joining the Ottawa Watercolour Society is to display your paintings at one of several shows. The same invitation is extended every year from various sources. Like most of us, your first reaction has likely been “I’m not ready for that”, or “Maybe later.”

Let me suggest another approach.

You may have exhibited your work with a local art group, at a community event, or on the walls of a local business; you may think you are just starting to paint, or you simply believe that shows are for the professionals or for those who seek to make a living from their art. Forget all that! One of the goals of the Watercolour Society is to provide you with the opportunity to grow, and shows are one way to achieve that growth.

One reason why the Society organizes shows is as a way to promote its members. Changes to membership status within the Society come as a result of participation in annual shows. You can become an associate member and a fellow when your work is accepted by peers in annual juried shows. Getting recognition is hard when your work is not seen by fellow members of the Society. They will likely be the people who will root for you when the time comes—but they have to know and understand what you do.

The question for a majority of members is always, “Am I ready to participate in shows?” The answer is more likely yes rather than no.

You must first realize that it is extremely difficult to judge your own work. It requires a level of objectivity that does not come naturally. As artists, we tend to evaluate our work by judging the difference between what we wanted to do and what we have actually achieved, by judging the difference between what we intended to say and what the results communicate. Most of the time, we see the difference as a failure to perform to our expectations. Seeing objectively takes a degree of effort that very few will attain. Even though some people will try to convince you that there are objective criteria, the appreciation of watercolour, like any other art, is fundamentally subjective. This creates challenges, since we cannot improve when we cannot

evaluate the results, and, from there, build on our strengths and eradicate our weaknesses. This is true for all artists, whether good, better, or the best.

Shows provide a second and a third opinion for your work. The second opinion is the one given by the jury that the work does not have major flaws and reaches a standard of acceptability. In fact, the standards of the jury are usually relatively constant. Standards tend to be higher when there are more and better participants. Jurying is done in steps. The first step will usually be to limit the number of works exhibited by each artist and then to eliminate the weaker ones.

When we consider the experience of the juried shows of the Ottawa Watercolour Society, the majority of the submitted work is accepted, and most of the 30 or so artists who submit two watercolours tend to qualify with at least one. Let's just say that the odds are in your favour.



The third opinion is more important for you as an artist. Shows provide an opportunity to look at your work next to another artist's and to see how people react to all of the exhibited work. This is a rewarding experience in itself. People visiting shows are nice people—at least in Ottawa. You will meet some people who like what you do, as well as some who prefer the work of someone else. You have an opportunity to exchange opinions about what you see, about what you like, and to evaluate where you are now and where you are going.

This is priceless, not so much because the opinions matter, but because you get a totally different view of the same work when people are using a different set of criteria.

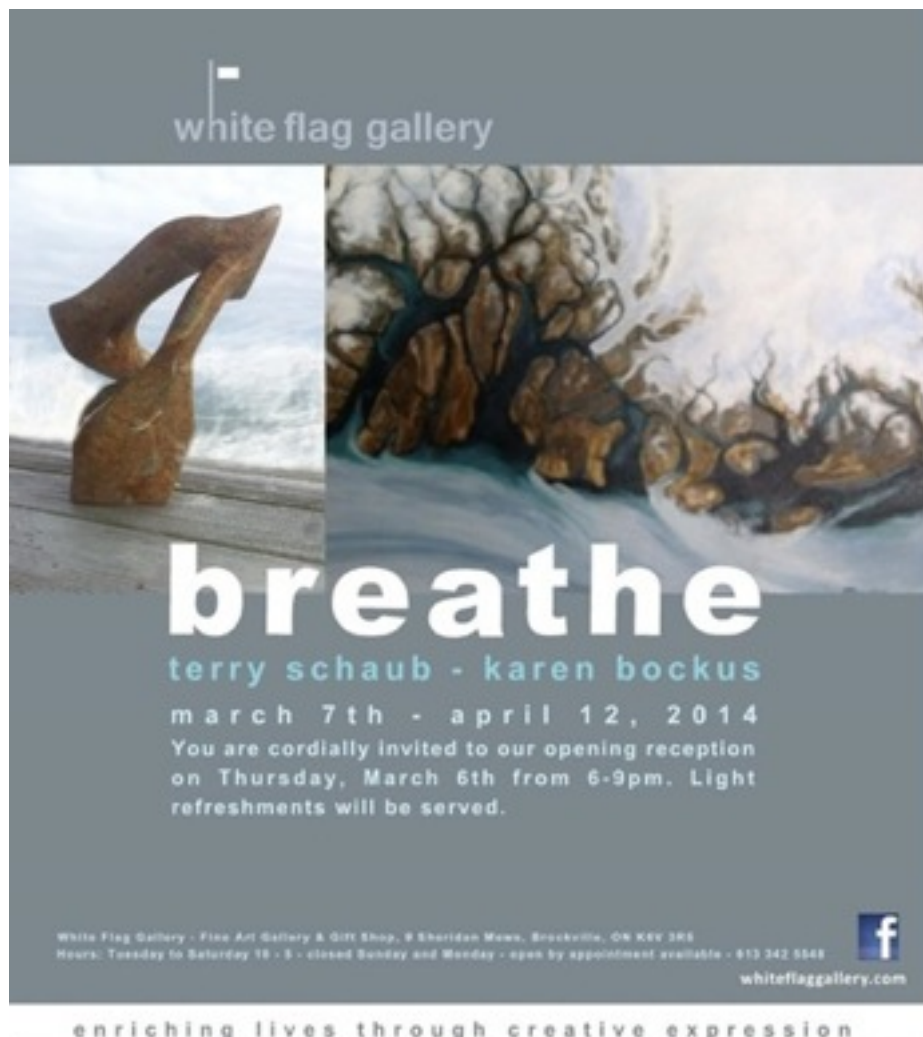
When registering for a show, you will want to put forward what you consider to be your best work, based on your perception of your efforts. Showing your work gives you a different appreciation of what holds the painting together, what is the right format for a show, how you should frame your watercolours, what subjects attract viewers, and even what colour schemes are “fashionable”. Shows rapidly build your experience and teach you a great deal in a short period of time. It may take months of reading and years in the studio to get to the same level of understanding of what your work should contain.

The final question is about awards and commendations. If you register with the idea that you will walk away with an award, you may not be doing the right thing, or, more

likely, you are setting yourself up for deception. It's not that awards are not important; they are. Awards mean recognition from peers or the public as to what they appreciate. But there are only a few, and you have little control over the end results. Awards will certainly boost your career if you want to turn professional. However, selling a painting is more rewarding in the short term than getting an award from a jury. Meeting a gallery owner has more potential for turning you into a full-time artist.

Shows are rarely the place to sell your work. Galleries, weekend art fairs, and exhibitions are generally better venues. If you manage to get an award, go ahead, blow your horn and make noise about it; it is an achievement. What is more important, however, is that you have been there and you were part of the show.

When the next invitation for an OWS juried show comes along, think about how you will participate, not when. Tell yourself, "I'm ready."



March 2014

## Pearls of Wisdom from Anne Remmer Thompson

by Jane Barlow (Photos by Renate Hulley)

Anne Remmer Thompson, Fellow and long-time member of the Ottawa Watercolour Society, volunteered to give us a wonderful and stimulating afternoon critique on Saturday, January 25. We were a little worried that people might be reluctant to come

out on a winter's afternoon, but the room was full of artists eager to get some feedback on their latest creative endeavours.

We discovered that Anne had been chosen as a young child to participate in an artistic experience with the National Gallery of Canada, in which she spent time with experienced artists learning to develop her own creativity. Only years later did she realize that these "old men" were the Group of Seven!

Anne was also a school teacher in a past incarnation and was able to get *this* whole "class" participating, offering up ideas on what was making the paintings work as they

were, as well as what might be tried to possibly improve them. She was particularly skilled in making everyone feel supported and encouraged, to such a degree that no one wanted to stop until everyone had had a critique.







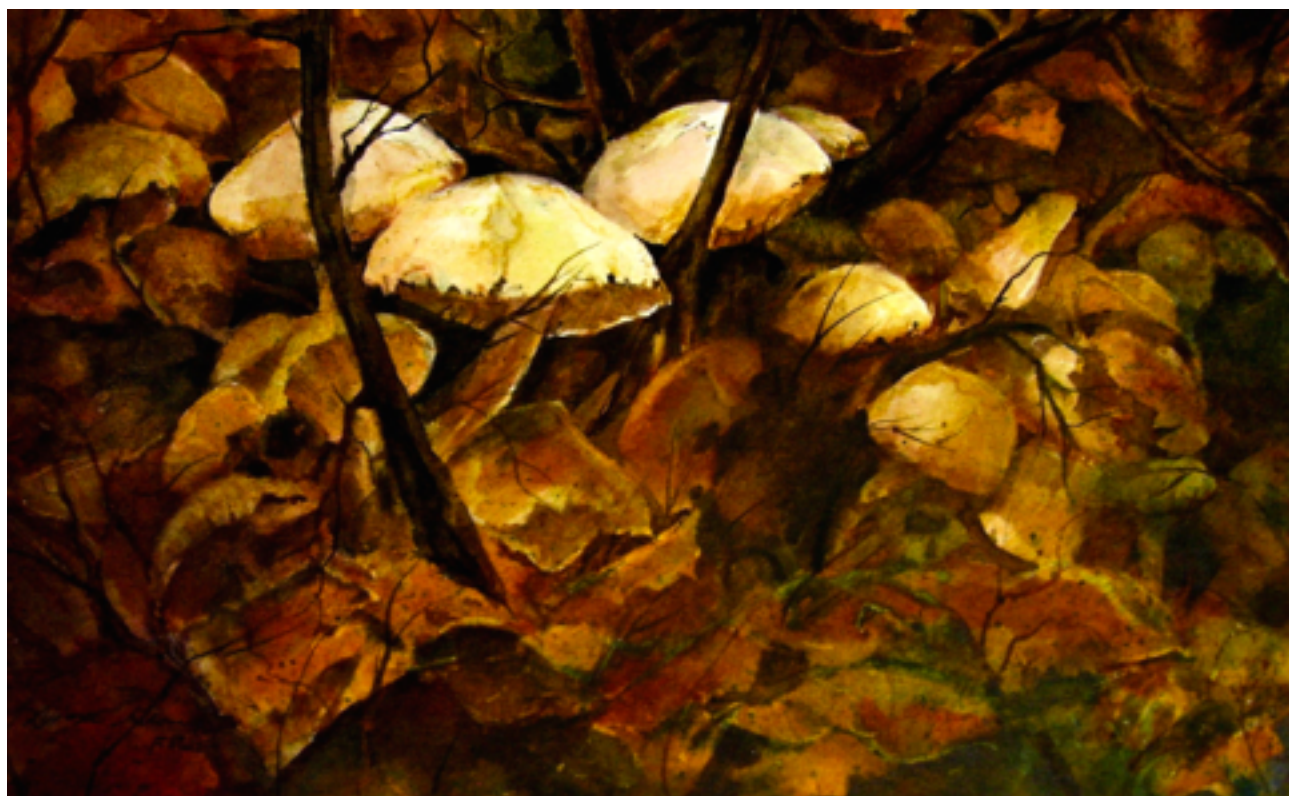
Many thanks to all who came. It is clear to me that the critique format is very successful, and I plan to continue arranging them three to four times per year.

### **More News from Jane Barlow**

**Paintouts** will restart in May, likely with the Tulip Festival, and I am hoping to arrange for an experienced *plein air* artist to provide a demo at the Festival. The schedule will start with the second Wednesday in May (14th) and likely with the third Saturday (17th) to keep both dates within the Festival. Subsequent dates (second Wednesday and fourth Saturday) will be scheduled soon, as well as meeting place details.

This is the final announcement about the watercolour landscape **workshop with Art Cunanan** to be held on June 7-8. There are just a few spaces left, and if they are not completely filled by March 15, I will be advertising with other art associations. The workshop will run from 9 to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday at the College Square Loblaws. The fee is \$150 for the weekend, with a full refund minus a \$20 processing fee until May 23. Art is an excellent teacher with considerable experience and is particularly skilled with composition and light. (To register, please notify Jane Barlow at [barlowjanem@gmail.com](mailto:barlowjanem@gmail.com) or 613-224-4409.)

## Springtime Arts Exhibition - Aylmer Arts Council



The Aylmer Arts Council presents the 59th edition of its Springtime Arts Exhibition. The vernissage is open to all visitors and will be held on Friday, April 4, from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the DoubleTree Hotel (formerly the Château Cartier), located at 1170 Aylmer Road, Gatineau.

The exhibition will be held on Saturday, April 5, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., and Sunday, April 6, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Featured are the works of 44 artists selected by an independent jury, some of which will be offered by draw.

Many OWS members will be exhibiting their work, including Brian Seed, Alain Godbout, and Diane Groulx—whose painting above, "*Jardin endormi*", will be part of the exhibition.

**Free Entry** and **Free Parking** is available. For additional information, please call Andrée Sincennes at (819) 682-3766 or Josée Prud'homme at 819-962-2905, or email [123@joseeprudhomme.ca](mailto:123@joseeprudhomme.ca).

## Upcoming Exhibition Opportunities

**Event:** The **International Watercolour Biennial** exhibits the best in modern and traditional contemporary watercolour painting. The exhibition is open to artists worldwide, aged 18 and over. Submissions are limited to a maximum of four pieces.

All artwork must be the artist's original creations completed within the last two years (2012 - 2014) and must not have been exhibited in Belgium before.

Accepted paintings must be appropriately framed and wired for hanging.

A maximum of 3 paintings per selected artist will be exhibited from August 15 to September 7, 2014, at the Castle of Bourgogne (Estaimbourg, Belgium).

This exhibition celebrates the use of light in painting. Each painting will be considered based on the merit of the single piece and on its concordance with the theme of the show: CELEBRATION OF LIGHT!

**Deadline:** Submission closes on March 31, 2014.

**Contact:** Please contact Catherine De Ryck, President of the 2014 Organizing Committee at [exhibition@eauencouleurs.org](mailto:exhibition@eauencouleurs.org). See the website for more details: [www.internationalwatercolourbiennial.comCandidature](http://www.internationalwatercolourbiennial.comCandidature).

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**Event:** The **Musée Laurier of Victoriaville** invites artists from Canada and abroad to submit a file for its upcoming exhibition on the "BIRD" theme. The exhibition will run from June 6 to September 21, 2014, at the Musée de l'Hôtel des Postes (located on 949, Bois-Francis South blvd, Victoriaville, QC, Canada).

**Deadline:** March 31, 2014 (the postal stamp will be used as proof)

**Contact:** Richard Pedneault (Director-Curator), 16 Laurier West Street, Victoriaville, QC, G6P 6P3, 819-357-8655, or email at [expositionmlaurier@gmail.com](mailto:expositionmlaurier@gmail.com)  
See also <http://museelaurier.com>.

**Additional Information:** Eighty-five (85) works presenting birds will be shown. Among these works, fifty (50) will be selected from the artists' files received. The call is open to all visual artists producing works of all medium, techniques, formats and styles. Any proposal will be considered if it is part of the theme.

The interested artists may submit a complete proposal as described below.

Selection Criteria: the relevance of the work within the theme "Birds"; the work must be original and reflect a mastery of technique

The submission must include: contact information (address, phone, email); resume; artistic statement; ten (10) proposed works available for exposure; digital photographs of all proposed works (jpeg format, on dvd, CD or USB key), and a brief description (title, year, medium, dimensions height x width x depth, value); press kit (if available); self-addressed return envelope, if desired.

Only the candidates selected will be contacted.

Your complete file can be sent to the contact shown above, by mail or e-mail.

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**Event: Ottawa Watercolour Society 69th Juried Show** at St. Brigid's Gallery, May 10 to May 18, 2014. This is an open exhibition of original works only for transparent watercolour on paper.

**Deadline:** Digital Submissions by April 2, 2014.

**Registration time and location:** Saturday, April 12, 2014, from 10 to 11 a.m. at the United Church in Bells Corners, 3955 Richmond Road, Ottawa, Ontario. Paintings to be picked up between 1 and 1:30 p.m. on April 12, 2014. (Please see the OWS website or the last page of this newsletter for the registration form.)

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**Event: Ottawa Orchid Society Show** at the Kanata Recreation Complex, 100 Walter Baker Place, on April 19 and 20, 2014. The artwork must be based on an orchid theme. At last year's orchid show, a number of OWS members did very well in



the different categories, including winning the rosette for Best in Show. Members can view the photos for the 2013 show by clicking on the following link: <http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/awards2013.html>.

**Deadline:** All work must be pre-registered by April 8, 2014.

**Contact:** For more information, please contact: Jane Logan, Art Gallery Chair, 613-830-9403, [jane@loganstrategy.ca](mailto:jane@loganstrategy.ca).

**Additional Information:** For details on the upcoming 2014 orchid show, please go to <http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/2010show.html>. For registration information and to register, go to <http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/ART%20GALLERY%20FORM%202014.pdf>. If members wish to see photos of orchids, there are many to be found each month in the Ottawa Orchid Society's newsletter "Spike" at [www.ottawaorchidsociety.com](http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com). To access any of the newsletters, use the following link: [http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/spike\\_list.html](http://www.ottawaorchidsociety.com/spike_list.html).

(If members wish to take photos of real orchids, there will be an orchid show in Montreal on March 29 and 30, 2014, at CÉGEP DE MAISONNEUVE, 2700 rue Bourbonnière, Montréal. Show hours are Saturday 12 to 6 p.m., Sunday, 9 to 5 p.m. Adults \$10, children and seniors \$8. For more details, visit [www.orchidophilesmontreal.ca](http://www.orchidophilesmontreal.ca).)

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**Event:** **West Carleton Arts Society Fall Show** and Sale 'Expressions of Art' 2014 - October 3, 4, and 5 in the Carp Agricultural Hall, Carp fair grounds, 3790 Carp Rd.

**Deadline:** June 1, 2014

**Contact:** Application Forms and Show Guidelines available for download at <http://www.westcarletonartsociety.ca> or contact the show organizer at (613) 839-1918.

## **Critique available of your digital email images, slides or photographs of paintings/artwork**

Alex Powers has been a full-time, self-employed art teacher since 1970 and has taught workshops extensively in the U.S. and Canada. Alex won the Gold Medal in 1997 at the American Watercolor Society in New York and is comfortable critiquing all styles of work, from very traditional to very contemporary and all visual art media.

Fee: \$90 U.S.

The only instruction many artists need is a couple of critiques a year.

Here is how it works:

1. Send digital images by email (3 to 15 images) to: [alxpwr@yahoo.com](mailto:alxpwr@yahoo.com) or slides or colour photo prints (3 to 15 images) by postal or other mail delivery to: Alex Powers, 401 72nd Ave. N., Apt. 1, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572 (include a self-addressed stamped envelope for return.)
2. Alex will type an extensive email critique for your images.
3. You may ask as many 'follow-up' questions as required.
4. Send a cheque for \$90 to: Alex Powers, 401 72nd Ave. N., Apt. 1, Myrtle Beach, SC 29572

Free bonus:

"Observations on Art", a 19-page email attachment on 34 art topics.

Other email attachments as needed, such as: change of style; struggling with backgrounds; design elements and principles; design images; content (expression); shapes or marks.

## **Members' Home Pages and Websites**

(If you don't see your name on the list and would like to have it in the next newsletter, please get in touch with Rosy Somerville.)

[Adriana Saba](#)  
[Alain and Audrey Bain](#)  
[Ann Gruchy](#)  
[Anne Barkley](#)  
[Anne Remmer Thompson](#)  
[Arlette Francière](#)  
[Barbara Brintnell](#)  
[Brenda Beattie](#)  
[Charles Spratt Art Gallery and Studio](#)  
[Janet Agulnik](#)  
[John Hiscock](#)  
[Josie Braden](#)  
[Mary Nunn](#)  
[Pam McKinnon](#)  
[Pat Smith](#)  
[Renate Hulley](#)  
[Rosemary Randell](#)  
[Rosy Somerville](#)  
[Shernya Vininsky](#)  
[Shirley Moulton](#)  
[Ted Duncan](#)  
[Victor Pavlov](#)

## WORKSHOPS

OWS member Shernya Vininsky is offering one- and four-day intensive workshops in watercolour at her studio in Hudson, Quebec.



1-day intensive workshops:

9-4 p.m.

Tuition: \$75.00

**Date:** June 10, 2014

4-day intensive workshops:

9-4 p.m.

Tuition: \$265.00

**Date:** June 10 - 13, 2014

There are nearby accommodations. (The Willow Place Inn is one of our favourites for lunch, and lodging is available too!)

For payment by cheque or for information on paying in instalments, please contact workshop coordinator, Barney, at 450-458-6660 or email [kv@ca.inter.net](mailto:kv@ca.inter.net). For more information, see [shernyavininsky.ca](http://shernyavininsky.ca).





#### NOTE FROM THE EDITOR:

Thanks to those of you who responded to my request for a “spring” painting. The cover of this edition of the newsletter features a painting by Pat Smith, a fine rendition of what the spring breakup in the rivers and streams might look like—when it gets here!

The painting to the left, entitled “*Bientôt le printemps*” by Yvon Perrier, a lovely stone house waiting for spring, and the one below of summer poppies by Renate Hulley give us all hope that soon warmer weather will prevail.



## Note from the Editor (Cont'd)

I have also included a more whimsical submission below by Dominique Racine of a March hare.

In the next edition of the OWS News I hope to include a new segment called “Introducing Artists”. This idea was suggested to me by an OWS member who thought it would be a good way for members to get to know other members. If you are interested in providing a brief bio and examples of your work (and a photo of yourself, too, of course) in the next newsletter, please let me know.

If you have any other suggestions or ideas for the newsletter, I’m all ears!



Elizabeth

## Registration Form for OWS 69th Juried Show

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Membership

No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Home): \_\_\_\_\_ (Office):

\_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_ Registration fee (\$25.00)  
attached: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Conditions:**

Original works and digital submissions.

The registration fee of \$25 must accompany this registration form. (Make cheques payable to the Ottawa Watercolour Society)

Up to three (3) paintings may be submitted. There are no size restrictions.

Must be transparent watercolour on paper.

For jurying purposes, all paintings must be either ready for hanging (under glass) or presented matted only. If at all possible, please use clear sleeves for works that are not framed. Mats must be white or off white only.

Paintings must not have been previously accepted into an OWS exhibition.

Digital submissions are to be sent by email to

[digit\\_submission@owswatercolour.com](mailto:digit_submission@owswatercolour.com). Size to be no larger than 300 dpi, 4x6, and submitted by April 2, 2014.

## Registration Form for OWS 69th Juried Show (Cont'd)

For digital submissions, the registration form must be completed and mailed with cheque enclosed to 46 Macassa Circle, Kanata, Ontario, K2T 1J8 , and be received no later than April 2, 2014.

All work must be original. Material produced or worked on in a class is not to be presented for jurying.

You must be a member of the OWS to register.

The OWS takes no responsibility for theft or damage of any paintings. Artists are responsible for obtaining their own insurance.

All paintings should be clearly marked with title, artist's name, price, and size of piece.

All paintings are to be for sale; a commission of 15% goes to the Gallery.

Accepted paintings will need to be brought to the St. Brigid's Gallery for hanging on Wednesday, May 7, 2014, between 10 and 10:30 a.m., and picked up on Sunday, May 18, 2014, between 4 and 5 p.m.

Painting No. 1      Title: \_\_\_\_\_      Size: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Price: \_\_\_\_\_      Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Jury Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

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Painting No. 2      Title: \_\_\_\_\_  
Size: \_\_\_\_\_



Price: \_\_\_\_\_ Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Jury Decision: \_\_\_\_\_

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Painting No. 3      Title: \_\_\_\_\_      Size:  
\_\_\_\_\_

Price: \_\_\_\_\_ Medium: \_\_\_\_\_

Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Jury Decision: \_\_\_\_\_