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Forging New Paths

California Art Club's 105th annual Gold Medal Exhibition pays tribute to its pioneering artists while showcasing art that pushes boundaries.

With more than 200 contemporary-traditional paintings and sculpture on display, the California Art Club's 105th annual *Gold Medal Exhibition* continues to honor those who founded the organization in 1909. Many of the group's original artists worked in the California Impressionist tradition, with the *Gold Medal Exhibition* events of today evolving and departing from the plein air landscapes that defined the earlier years. The 2016 event, which runs April 3 to 24, with an Artists' Gala Reception on April 2 at 6 p.m., will highlight the exhibiting artists' use of "classical fine art techniques to create works that push the boundaries and explore topical imagery and messages."

On view will be figuratives, cityscapes, images of daily life and more by nationally recognized artists. Included in the show are Peter Adams, Clyde Aspevig, Warren Chang, Scott L. Christensen, Dennis

Doheny, Daniel F. Gerhartz, Jeremy Lipking, Jennifer Moses, Alicia Ponzio, April Raber, Ray Roberts, Mian Situ, Christopher Slatoff, Joseph Todorovitch, and more.

Gerhartz's *On the Edge*, a 30-by-40-inch oil painted entirely from life, pictures a young model from Los Angeles who is a family friend of the artist. The piece was completed over several days, as they had to return to the spot during the same midday lighting for consistency.

"There is an air of confidence in her pose," says Gerhartz. "The title *On the Edge* refers to the notion of pushing the boundaries, and yet the lighthouse in the distance kind of draws her back to center, always being a guiding light."

While Raber was visiting her daughter and son-in-law in New York City, she became interested in water towers on the buildings neighboring the one her family lived in. From there, she began a series of

"underappreciated" architecture works of the city, such as the bridge in *Into the Light*.

Of the work, Raber says, "New York, the city of steel. Girders and tresses, stacked over time as the needs of the city grew. Above it all, the sun shines down into the depths, leaving an interesting play on light and shadow. I love walking the major bridges in New York at different times of day to examine the shapes and shadows firsthand. They make an amazing art installation, cleverly disguised as a practical commercial necessity."

In *Gill Gallery Interior*, Chang depicts his evening painting classes at the Pacific Grove Art Center. "Every Wednesday, like-minded artists gather to share in the expense of working from the model from life. Dedicated to concentrating on observing and painting the human figure from life, we all share the common belief that 'working from life' enhances both our skills and the truth in our art," Chang explains. "A work of art done from



1



2

1
Jennifer Moses,
Transcendence,
oil on canvas
panel, 24 x 26"

2
April Raber,
Into the Light,
oil, 36 x 36"

3
Daniel F.
Gerhartz, *On the
Edge*, oil, 30 x 40"

4
Alicia Ponzio,
*Portrait Study I:
Mr. Koch*, plaster
on wood,
21 x 9 x 9"

5
Warren Chang,
*Gill Gallery
Interior*, oil,
28 x 57"



3



4



5

life is the result of decisions made moment by moment by the artist and results in a more honest and emotional interpretation of the subject by the artist. It reveals the level of skill achieved by the artist and can be seen as the measuring stick for how committed they have been to their craft."

Moses often is drawn to more intimate aspects of the landscape and says, "It is the essence of a place that is at the core of my work." Her landscape *Transcendence* will be among the pieces in the *Gold Medal Exhibition*. Moses says, "*Transcendence*

was inspired by the bold graphic shapes of the water's reflective surface in contrast to the last light of day softly stippling the surrounding foliage."

A sculpture in the exhibition is Ponzio's stained plaster *Portrait Study I: Mr. Koch*, which "is a portrait and expression study for a two-figure composition that involves two male figures entangled in an argument," she says. "A life-size portrait study of the model gives me the opportunity to learn how the forms [of] their face respond to their moods, to learn their likeness and persona. My

model, Mr. Terry Koch, posed for the more aggressive of two figures."

In addition to the show are events and educational programs presented by California Art Club. On April 3 from 1 to 3 p.m. is the panel discussion and demonstration "Giving Life to Still Life" with Jim McVicker and Kate Sammons. "The Makings of a Great Art Collection" tour with Jean Stern happens April 9 from 1 to 3 p.m. Then, on April 24 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. is the "California: The Early Decades" paint and sculpt out. ●