

Gold Medal Exhibition

Autry Museum of the American West, April 9-30

A PROMINENT GROUP of traditional fine-art painters came together to establish the California Art Club over 100 years ago. Today the club continues to strive toward the celebration of California Impressionism and thrives as an artistic home for respected painters and sculptors throughout the Golden State and beyond. The California Art Club's annual Gold Medal Exhibition, one of the nation's premier displays of traditional fine art, kicks off this month with

the Artists' Gala Reception, a ticketed event, at 6 p.m. on Saturday, April 8. The exhibition and all related events are held at the Autry Museum of the American West, which is dedicated to sharing the stories of the people of the American West.

The exhibition is filled with events throughout the month to enable art enthusiasts to learn more about classical art forms. These include an engaging demonstration and discussion, "Giv-

ing Life to Fascinating Figures," with artists Alexey Steele and Béla Bácsi on Sunday, April 9, at 1 p.m. Near the end of the month, a lecture and tour led by an expert on California Impressionism, Jean Stern, dives into "The Art of Looking at Art," on Saturday, April 22, at 1 p.m. Finally, on Sunday, April 30, California Art Club members gather to paint and sculpt models dressed in early California period costumes.

Elaine Adams, the club's executive

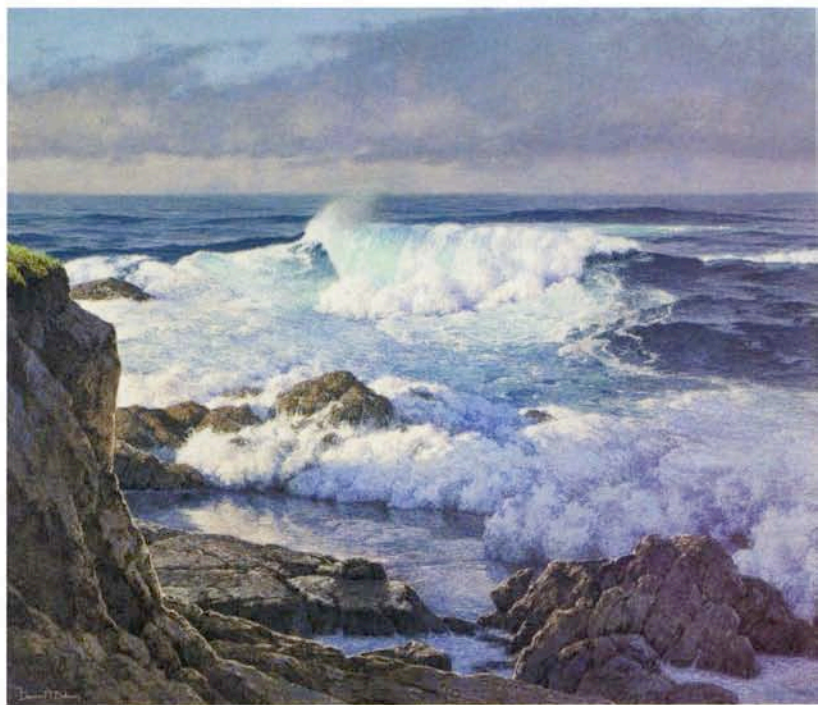


▲ Peter Adams, *Paschal Service, Russian Orthodox Church*, oil, 24 x 20.

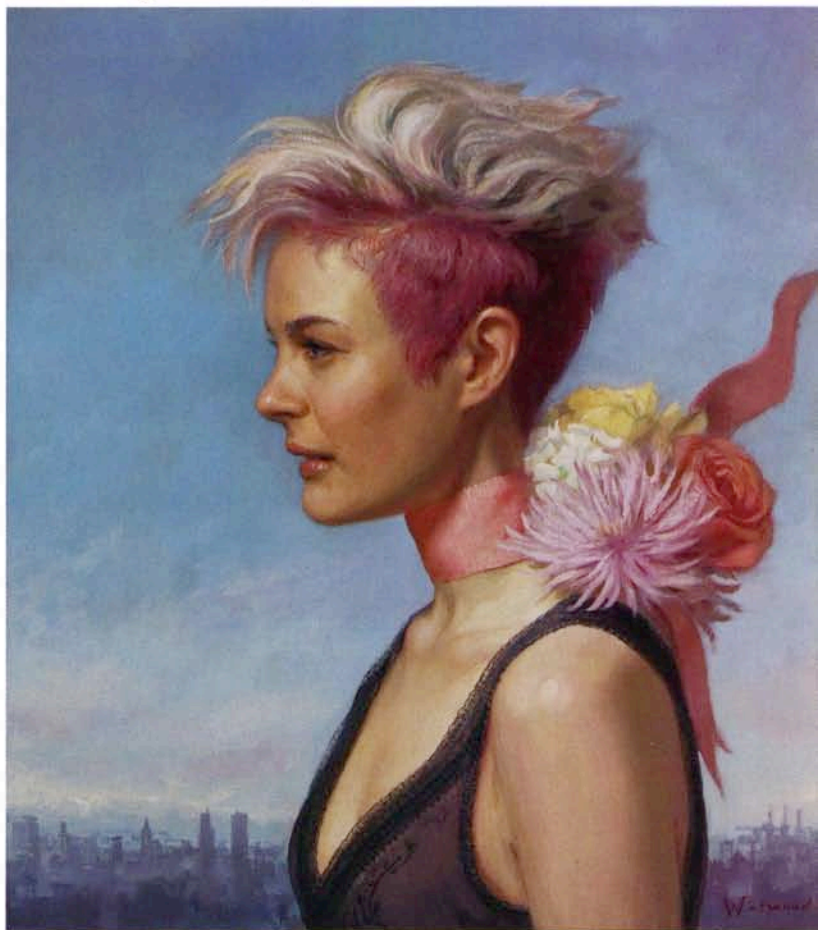
◀ Scott W. Prior, *Let Love Rule*, oil, 48 x 36.



George Carlson, *At the Gate of Dawn*, bronze, 24 x 8 x 17.



Dennis Doheny, *West Swell*, oil, 30 x 36.



Patricia Watwood, *Flowers*, oil, 22 x 20.



Rita Pacheco, Main Beach Summer, oil, 16 x 20.



Nancy Popenoe, Palace Theater, pastel, 10 x 10.



Mian Situ, Hawaii Cloud, oil, 20 x 28.



Huihan Liu, *Shopping Day in Chinatown, San Francisco*, oil, 30 x 40.

director and coordinator of the exhibition since 1993, says the inherent mission of the Gold Medal Exhibition is innovation. "It's all about the innovation of skills and the communication of the artist's message while maintaining traditional techniques," she says. "We want artists to push the boundaries and relate their personal messages to their own worldly interests." She says the level of artistry has increased every year, with only the highest level of artists being invited to submit work to be juried. Among the artists creating more than 200 representational artworks for the show are Michael Obermeyer, War-

ren Chang, Scott L. Christensen, Brian Blood, Mian Situ, William Stout, Thomas Blackshear, and Alexey Steele.

Peter Adams, who has been president of the California Art Club since 1993 and participated in the exhibition for many years before that, painted his piece for the show, *PASCHAL SERVICE, RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH*, with a spiritual message in mind. For him, lighting was the biggest concern in creating the reverent mood of the work. "The candles create a sense of mystery and awe since the light reflects and sparkles off the glass and brass," he says. Adams says he prefers to use

abstract qualities in his work so as to not over-explain the objects within the image and to let the viewer interpret the message. "It's reflective of how we glance at heaven," he says. "We don't really know what it looks like, but we all have a personal idea." —Katie Askew

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www.californiaartclub.org

See more work at www.southwestart.com/events/gold-medal-apr2017.