

SILKWORM

The Magazine of Silk Painters International

Volume 20, Issue 1, 1st Quarter 2013

Welcome to Our 20th Anniversary Issue!

Light As Air

LYNN MEEK
ROMANCING THE SILK

RENÉE ANGELA FILICE
SILK TAKES A HOLIDAY

SPIN AT THE RATNER
SIX YEARS AND STILL
GOING STRONG

MASTER CLASS
RON GUTMAN REVEALS
HIS FAVORITE RESIST

Peonies by Lynn Meek

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Hello SPIN Member,

Mary is still out of the country, but she wanted to say hello and introduce herself to the membership. She'll swing into action in full force with the Summer issue.



From Mary:

Members of SPIN always look forward to their new issues of the Silkworm. This seems to hold true year in and year out. As the new volunteer Editor of the Silkworm, I would like to thank the longstanding Editor, Tunizia Abdur-Raheem, for her superlative work to build and nurture this publication. She has been one of the reasons that our members enjoy receiving new issues. I hope to add to the success of this unique publication with as much skill and energy as those who have come before me.

I am still a novice at silk painting but I have a strong background in writing and an enduring love for fabric art. I have loved and admired the art of silk painting for many years. To feed my desire to paint on silk, I actually found a class about three years ago that was only 175 miles from where I live! I have enjoyed every minute of learning this ancient art and I look forward to caring for the Silkworm.

Mary Grace Umlauf
Editor-in-Chief

*I can be reached by email at
editor@silkwormmagazine.com*

Message from the President

We are in a new year and already it's March. Your SPIN board has been busy.

We have a web committee that is working diligently to update our website to make it more valuable for all of our members. We have a SPIN "Signature designation" that will help us all achieve excellence in silk painting.

Our board is growing and becoming more diversified so that one person is not doing it all. We pride ourselves on being a strictly volunteer organization. This puts demands on a few or many, depending on the board members stepping up. We have openings for members to be more involved with committees. If you would like more information on committee openings please contact myself or Kaki Steward.

Our Chapters Chair Suzanne Knight has done a great job in keeping up with the chapters and encouraging others to get involved. We now have 12 active chapters in various parts of the world comprised of 127 of our members. This is the bond through which we can encourage one another; art focused fellowship that is fun and exciting.

We welcome Gloria Lanza-Bajo as our new membership chairman. She is doing a wonderful job! I feel that the membership chair is a "Very Important Job." Without our members we would be nothing and to know who you are, where you are, and what you need from our organization is important to us. This lady makes it happen!

Tunizia Abdur-Raheem has returned to the board and is helping to keep our website updated and finishing up as Silkworm editor. We have come a "long way baby" from a mimeographed newsletter to the new and improved magazine that everyone wants a copy of. It is beautiful and exciting to look at as well as containing informative and useful content.

Tunizia will be retiring from the Silkworm and Mary Umlauf will be the new editor. Mary has been in Japan for the past year teaching and will be home this month. We look forward to working with Mary and seeing her enthusiasm and artistic abilities displayed in the "Silkworm."

We are planning a Mini-Festival in Tallahassee, Florida. It will be August 7 to 11, 2013. We will send out an eblast soon and registration should be open by the time you get this issue of Silkworm. Our instructors list includes Suzanne Punch, Debra Younglao, Jan Janas, and Diane Tuckman and a few more. Our fun feature takes us to the Wakulla Springs State Park (where the Tarzan movies were filmed) for an all day trip with sight-seeing on the riverboats, lunch, photography, and sketching, maybe some plein-air painting as well as some swimming -- if anyone likes a cold dip in a spring. The show "Art in Motion" will be the show accompanying the banquet. Le Moyne Art Gallery, our host of the festival, will have a juried silk art show in the month of August. I am looking to have a lot of entries. This is our debut in the south.

We need you, our members, to talk, get out and shout about how wonderful silk painting is. Once you see the dyes flow over a piece of silk you are hooked. Try a few of these, "Did you know that..." Or, "Can you imagine that is happening in the silk world?" comments that entice someone to cross over to silk. New ideas and techniques are happening every day. New ideas, such as quilting, is becoming more and more a part of us.

Exciting times are happening. Encourage others to come join us and enjoy the excitement of Silk Art. Just look at our Facebook page and see how contagious is the enthusiasm for silk painting.

"Be a sneezer and spread your organization's viral news wherever you go. Ideas are like viruses, they are contagious, spreading from person to person. You want to create an epidemic of good buzz about your organization all around." – A tip for nonprofit organizations.

Blessings,
Joyce Estes, President of the Board of Directors

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After Bon Appétit by Aileen Horn

Please send Letters to the Editor. Stay in touch. We want you to be involved. If you have comments, complaints or suggestions, please let us know.

If you have photographs of your art that you would like to have showcased in the Silkworm (as fillers or whenever a picture may be needed or desired) send photos with your name and the name of the piece. The photo size should be minimum 5"x 7" and 300 dpi for best printing.

Please send correspondence or photos to editor@silkwormmagazine.com.

A Pleasant Silk Holiday

RENÉE ANGELA FILICE

by Sarah Ann Allen



Westside Morgan Hill

A cool glass of vintage wine, perfectly aged, a plump grape full of juice fresh on your tongue, and a back porch with the perfect view of a sunflower field reminding you there is no place you need to rush off to anytime soon. That is what I was looking at and longing for when I dialed Renée Angela Filice's number on my iPhone. After exploring her website, I had a list of questions on the iPad beside me and my laptop prepared to type up everything she said. I had studied her gallery and felt my heartbeat slow. The whimsical and colorful images filling my screen transported me to the coast of California, the wine sitting on the back porch having that perfect Sangria sweetness. I tapped the green button and heard the mechanical ring.

The sweetest woman answered. Her voice reminded me of her paintings – light and bright. Immediately I could tell where her inspiration for her style came from – her nature. She uses her art as a release valve, a way to get away from her world for a bit – something I as an artist myself could relate to – and her paintings reflect this “mini-vacation.” But, I am getting ahead of myself.

To get things started, we began talking about SPIN and her involvement with the people she has met through the organization. “I really want to emphasize that I have met a wonderful group of women. We have a great group of 12 women who keep in close contact through email. When it started out we would just ask each other questions about problems we were having or things we were trying and then everybody would respond with what they do. We have

gotten together in the SPIN festival gap years to paint together and talk. It has expanded my life by knowing these people. It has been really great. We learn so much from each other.”

I asked Renée how she got into silk painting. She herself is a self-taught artist though talent apparently runs in the family.

“My mother is an artist. She’s always painted. She is one of five siblings and they all do some kind of creative activities so it is in the family.” Renée married an artist and subsequently their daughter inherited creative inclinations. “My husband does a lot of photography and my mother oil painting; we have art on every available surface. My living room is the Vanessa Gallery – that’s my daughter – I have all her paintings in there.”

Renée began painting watercolor 25 years ago but was getting frustrated with all the layering needed to get vibrant colors. When she saw a painting in a friend’s house with the color vibrancy she had always admired, she wondered about the wonderful colors. “After seeing that painting, I did some research and

then was lucky to find a silk painter nearby who gave a one-day beginners workshop. After that, it became ‘my’ medium. I took a one-day class but my watercolor background helped me jump right into it after I figured out the basics, like gutta.”

Renée’s style of silk painting has a strong watercolor influence – I should know, as watercolor is “my” medium – but with the luminosity of the silk medium. Her whimsical paintings will take you to the relaxing setting or lure you in with the vividly painted flowers. She posted on her website that her favorite things to paint include Italian ceramics, vintage 50’s linens, flowers, the Mediterranean, and the tropics, as well as landscapes of California – her home. Why these places?

“They share one thing in common- vivid rich colors. Take Italian ceramics. I just love the bright colors they use as well as the simplicity of the designs. I especially like the fruits that are often depicted.”

The same goes for the vintage 50’s linens which she started collecting because of the happy and bright images. “Whenever I have a party, I bring out the tablecloths and cover all my tables, inside and out, with them, often overlapping several on a large table.”

She is drawn to sunny places like California and the Mediterranean countries. “The landscapes, and consequently our lives, are lit up by that light. I try to capture them in my paintings and often pull out an old tablecloth to include on one of the tables in my paintings.”



Sunflowers in Provence

“So how do you come up with your compositions?” I ask her. “Do you ever steal any of your husband’s pictures and turn them into paintings?”

She laughs, “I do steal some of his photographs but I take a lot of photographs all the time. I’ll get an idea about something and then I’ll look through my photographs for certain elements and then turn them into a painting. I’ll assemble them into a puzzle of what I want there. I don’t take everything directly from a photograph; I’ll add or subtract. My photographs aren’t perfectly composed so I figure that out with a paper and pencil.”

Her arrangements place the viewer in the painting. So much so that she created a series of frameable art “mini-vacation” pieces. “The mini-vacations came about due to all the people who would see my paintings and comment, “Oh, I would like to be in that painting!” or “Oh I want to sit at that table and be there.” So I realized that perhaps looking at one of my paintings might simulate the pleasure of a vacation, even if the viewer is sitting in an office! I like putting a deck or patio scene with tables laid out with wine and goodies in front of a gorgeous scene. I use it as a device for bringing the viewer into the landscape as a participant rather than an observer.”

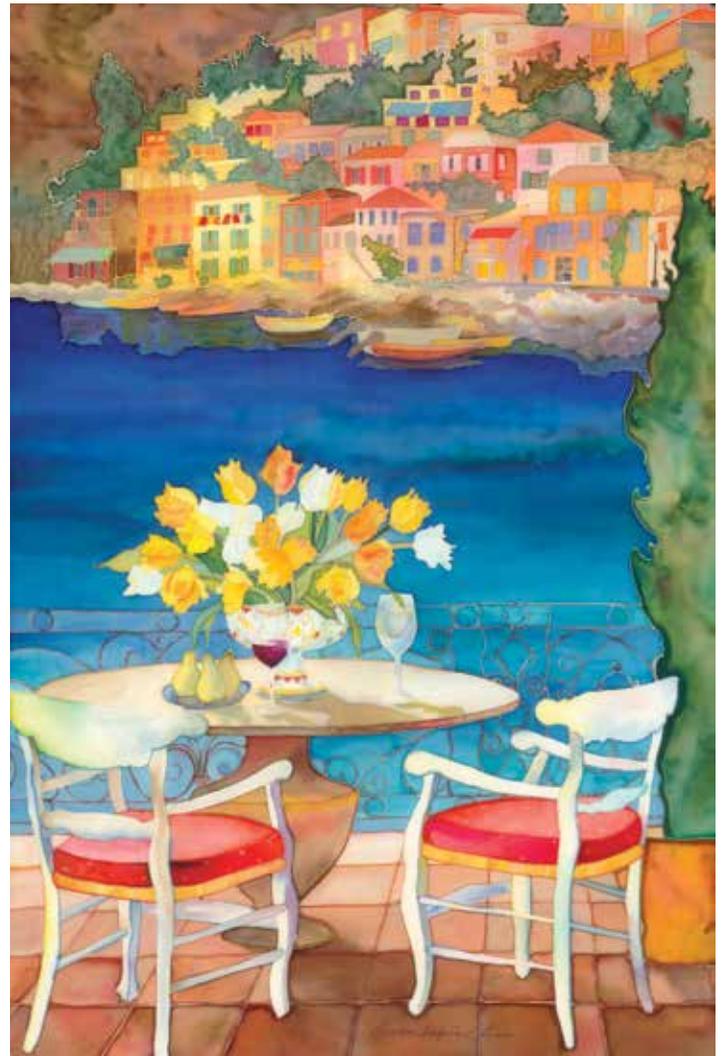
“I was thinking that when I was exploring your gallery!” I laugh. “That is so funny. I noticed that you don’t have any gutta lines – or at least none that are visible to me. I have limited experience with silk painting, but did you not use

gutta or do you know a secret I haven’t figured out yet?” I ask as I fix the phone on my shoulder and prepare to type.

“I do use gutta; I just hide it.” She uses the gutta serti technique almost exclusively with the process of ‘under-painting.’ This is the process where the artist paints the white silk with the background color first, or a colored outline with a very small, very dry brush and then applies the gutta on top. “It involves much planning if I intend to ‘hide’ my white gutta lines. For example, “Wine Country” and “Westside Morgan Hill” have a lot of detail, with no white gutta lines.”

From there she strives to avoid “muddy colors” in her paintings by carefully mixing her dyes. She started out using strictly primary colors to learn the reactions and resulting colors. Though she has now mastered the fine art of mixing colors on her porcelain palette, she still keeps a limited palette of primaries and a few other fun colors, but they also happen to be the colors she can’t mix well herself like Sennelier’s Coral Red 9 and Island Blue 58, “Oh and DuPont makes an olive green color but the label says Bronze 802. That’s a good color.”

“Talking about mixing colors do you mix them on the silk or do you mix them on a palette or something else?” I wonder. “Actually I have this most wonderful little palette where years ago I took a Chinese painting workshop where I had to buy a little 5 inch-round porcelain palette. It’s worked great for



Scenic Italian Coast



Wine Country

silk painting." She mixes her colors mostly on her palette, "I drop them [the colors] with droppers onto my palette."

When applying the dye to the sensitive silk she constantly asks herself "What is the complement?" Rhodies (*see back cover*) is a beautiful example of complementary colors. The red and orange flowers are tempered by the green leaves and blue glass vase. The colors vibrate making each other pleasing to the viewer's eye. Renée tries to use complementary colors for visual stimulation – at which she is quite successful. Her vivid colors are the heart of her work. "I don't know why I love them, but everything I do with them is bright and rich. It has become my style."

Going a little deeper into her knowledge of the art form, I query, "Many artists say that when they initially try silk painting, they are drawn to the quality that the art has of making beautiful mistakes – I know that's why I love watercolor. But, once they get into painting seriously, if the dye makes a "mistake," they aren't always so happy. Do you make mistakes that you don't find pleasing?"

"I can happily say that I have achieved some control over my application of dyes. I have learned what it will do when I paint with it in certain ways. However, I always find new surprises – which some people might call mistakes!

And yes, I have learned to deal with them. For example, I had a few gutta lines that weren't fully connected on my last painting. So, of course, the dye leaked out to the white background. Those leaks quickly became new leaf buds!"

She went on to explain her setting and framing process. Once her painting is complete she wraps it in newsprint and steams it to increase the permanence of the dyes. She has a really interesting picture of an old steamer on her website that you should check out. "I can't remember where I got the instructions to make that one. Now I use a purchased horizontal steamer laid across a two-burner electric hot plate. There are many creative steamers out there – mine is pretty boring and basic. I still use newsprint and occasionally include an old white sheet in the sandwich."

Then she mounts the piece on acid-free foam core. "I place the painting on top of the foam core. Then I start at one edge and use straight pins to attach the painting to the edge of the foam core. Let's see how I can explain this. You know, the edge that is cut shows some foam. I put straight pins into the side, about an inch or so apart all around the 4 sides of the foam core. Using this method, it is easy to adjust the silk. When I started with foam core I taped it to the back but it wasn't quite right. It was very hard to go back and fix the position. Another painter showed me how to pin it to the foam core. Also I was afraid the tape wasn't – what are the words? – the most archival."

"I sometimes use cotton padding between the foam core and the silk as well. The 100% cotton gives it a little softness. And I spray glue the cotton padding down. I do not use any adherent or medium on the silk itself, although I do frame using glass or Plexiglas to protect the silk. I personally love seeing the texture of the silk. You lose that by coating it [the silk] with anything. However, gluing it down or painting another substance over it just gives it a different look. It can still be a wonderful painting. One is not better than the other, just different. I prefer the look of pure, unadulterated, naked silk."

But it is not just all about the painting itself for this sweet woman. "I often donate paintings to our local Foundation that distributes funds to local charities. The fund closest to my heart raised money over the years to place defibrillators in public places and athletic fields."

"I noticed that, on your website, you teach silk painting at the Filoli Garden Estate in Woodside, and in Morgan Hill and Capitola. How did you get into that?"

"Since there are so few of us silk painters, I have made it my mission to spread the word about the medium and the thrill of painting on silk." Once a year, Renée teaches a four to six- week course – where they meet one day a week – to give others the chance at finding their medium as she did when she first discovered silk painting. "I always tell people this is a color/painting class, not a drawing class, because the first thing some students will tell you is 'I can't draw.' We use enlargements of clipart for some subjects, and also shapes versus representational objects. It works! Of course, if students with some art background want to draw their own pictures, rather than trace clipart, I help them with that and bring in objects for still life paintings: branches of fall grapevines (they are California's answer to colorful fall leaves), figs and fig leaves, etc." With a background as an elementary and middle school art teacher, the transition was easy for her to make. Though she now helps manage a shopping center, painting is a part time gig for her and a release valve for her creative tendencies.



Tropical Bouquet

"What's next for you?" I ask. "Are you going to keep doing frameable art or are you thinking about branching out?"

"I am always trying to be better and improve. There has to be a challenge sometimes. You don't want to do the same thing over and over again." After all that is how she discovered silk painting in the first place – but she wants to stick with her current projects. "I want to keep doing frameable art; I have a number of sketches. I have tried making the silk like watercolor paper using stiffening things so the dye doesn't run. I've tried it just to see what it would be like but decided right now I just like the flow of the dye. The good news about it is you don't have to use gutta to stop the flow; the bad news is it stops the flow – just another technique of thickening the silk. I've tried it and it's kind of fun and you can get a lot of detail, but I'm going back for now. It's always interesting to try though."

Though she only took a class for one day, she now teaches others silk painting and has sold pieces in several galleries. She kept the light-and-bright style she developed in watercolor and enhanced it in the softer and more sensitive silk medium, a practice she finds both sensuous and spiritual.

She encourages others to paint as much as they can. "Stretch yourself - if you like to paint flowers, go ahead and paint a few, but then challenge yourself with a new subject. Only by trying many subjects will you gain mastery over this difficult but fulfilling medium. Silk painting rewards you every time you put brush to silk."

See more of Renée's work at reneeangelifilice.com.



SPIN AT THE RATNER MUSEUM In It's Sixth Year and Still Going Strong

by Phyllis Gordon

SPIN has been fortunate to have an ongoing show for silk paintings by members for several years now in a charming and inspiring museum.

That venue is The Ratner Museum in Bethesda, Maryland – located within 20 minutes of downtown Washington, DC. The opportunity to exhibit there evolved from the friendship between SPIN founder Diane Tuckman and the Ratner family and, since 2008, more than 22 SPIN members from 11 states and 4 countries have taken part in the exhibit.

While we have written about the show in previous issues, we've never actually taken the time to explore just what this organization is about.

The story behind the museum:

"As teenagers growing up in Northwest Washington, Dennis and Phillip Ratner made a pledge to one another. If Dennis became a successful businessman and Phillip became a famous artist, they would give something "smashing" to the Washington community.

This year (2001), the two cousins made good on their promise, opening the \$2 million Dennis and Phillip Ratner Museum on Old Georgetown Road in Bethesda.

The 7,000-square-foot museum features sculptures, paintings, tapestries and children's books depicting characters and stories of the Hebrew Bible..."

(Bill Broadway of the Washington Post July 7, 2001)

As you first enter the Museum grounds, you see beautiful archways and entry doors of galvanized steel paying tribute to music and musicians. Inside, are two levels of exhibition space surrounding a central atrium.



Current SPIN Exhibit at the Ratner

The upper gallery features Phillip Ratner's permanent exhibition of over 100 sculptures, 50 wall hangings and a library. The themes of his work range from Bible Stories, to Dante, Shakespeare, children's literature and more. Among Mr. Ratner's best-known work are five bronze sculptures installed at The Statue of Liberty and 40 sculptures on Ellis Island -- national historic sites in the New York City Harbor. A note to our

international members: Ellis Island is where, in the early years of the last century, a massive influx of immigrants first entered the United States. Mr. Ratner's sculpture poignantly portrays their stories.

SPIN exhibit

On the spacious lower level, monthly exhibits feature both emerging and established artists and represent a broad variety of media that may include photography, painting, printmaking, glass, wood, metal or fiber art.

In the center of the building, the atrium is open to the second floor balcony. It is there that our members' beautiful silks are displayed. They are visible from both the first and second levels, are well lit and float gracefully from unseen rods along the wood paneled wall

Information on the gallery artists is displayed near the front entry and includes a catalogue dedicated to SPIN. Additionally, the Museum has graciously included the silk painters information on their website calendar page: www.ratnermuseum.com.

I met with Stella Bernstein, who is the Director and Curator of the museum. She coordinates exhibits 11 months a year (the Museum is closed in August). Generally 8 artists, each individually interviewed and juried, are shown each month and the shows are planned three years in advance. In the



Moonscape by Doris Knape

7 years she has been there, 753 artists have shown in the galleries.

Artist receptions are held each month and the main gallery space is also made available to non-profit groups, corporations, churches, book review groups and others and often rented for social events, all of which bring a constant stream of visitors and supporters of the arts.

The Museum averages 600 visitors a week traveling from a wide radius. Many tour groups from across the country also include the Museum on their itinerary. In 2012, Stella conducted 401 tours for groups ranging from 15 to 50 people. The work of SPIN and our silk painters is getting a lot of exposure.

Behind the main building is The Carriage House where there are classrooms and meeting space. The rooms contain photographs from the installations at the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island and Mr. Ratner's newest project: portraits of 100 outstanding people that have made a difference in our generations.

Appealing to the whole family, there are children's tours that include art projects and access to the large collection of children's books.

Who is Phillip Ratner?

Phillip Ratner is a prolific artist who expresses himself in multiple media. His work is internationally known and in collections that include the Smithsonian Museum, the United States Supreme Court, and the White House. The Folger Museum in Washington, DC, a Shakespearian Library – owns 32 of his sculptures. He works in bronze, resin, polyclay and steel and his expertise includes sculpture, painting, drawing, and other mediums. The permanent collection is comprised of this myriad of work.

Mr. Ratner's studio is in a separate building on the campus. There are several photos of him at work in his studio on the museum website. I highly recommend a visit to the website. www.ratnermuseum.com.

Where and how does silk painting fit in?

The owners and the curator, Stella Bernstein, love the art of silk painting and have been supportive sponsors of the SPIN floating exhibition. The silk fits well among many examples of fiber art displayed in the Museum. Several times a year, as the next SPIN exhibit is prepared, the newly submitted silk panels are brought to the Museum, presented without identifying the artist, and Ms. Bernstein selects the show pieces. Artist statements, resumes and photographs are then included in the SPIN catalogue on display.

With the next scheduled exhibit set for May 1, there is still time for members to submit their painting(s) to Aileen Horn (Aileen@ailsilkworks.com), Coordinator for the Ratner show. Work is accepted on a continuing basis – but to be included in the May 1 show must be received by April 1st for digital images and April 15th for silk panels. If you miss this round, go for the next one. September 1, 2013 gives you plenty of time to plan.

To send a digital submission, you'll need a Dropbox account. You can get a free one at www.dropbox.com. Send your digital submissions to Aileen at aileen@ailsilkworks.com.

For Entry Form and guidelines for submission visit: <http://silkpainters.org/exhibits.html>.



Close-up of the Exhibit

MEMBER INFORMATION

POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR 2013

June 2013 – Environment and Nature (If you know anyone - or you paint nature scenes on fashions, contact the Editor.)

September 2013 – Silk as Surface for Design

December 2013 – Pushing the Edge – Do the Unusual

If you want to contribute to any of the above issues and are interested in submitting work to be reviewed, please check the website at silkwormmagazine.com for further instructions.

CALL FOR ENTRIES

The Ratner Museum and Silk Painters International

A Silk Panel Exhibition
Call for Entries

Philip Ratner has invited our members to present an ongoing floating exhibition. This show began in Fall 2008 and will end when the Ratner Museum tires of us (or we no longer have a deep enough portfolio of panels to rotate through the display)! The artwork will be for sale. We will be rotating the panels every few months to display as many artists as possible throughout this extended exhibition. All members are welcome. You may send your submissions at any time.

Show submission dates for 2013 are: January 1, April 1, and September 1.

SIGNATURE MEMBERSHIP

The Signature Membership has taken a short hiatus. More details will follow. If you're interested in applying, continue watching the website and your email alerts.

MINI-FESTIVAL 2013

For anyone who missed the last Silk Festival – or for those who simply can't get enough – stay tuned as a mini-festival is in the works for 2013. Prices are being finalized and instructors and classes are being confirmed.

The festival head is our own President, Joyce Estes, and is scheduled for August 7-11, 2013. There's even talk of some pre-conference workshops. It is being hosted by Le Moyne Center for Visual Arts in Tallahassee, Florida (www.lemoyne.org).

Everyone is welcome - SPIN and non-SPIN members alike, so bring a friend. Watch the Silkworm and silkpainters.org as events unfold and plans are finalized.

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Website Maintenance. Do you know HTML? Familiar with Dreamweaver or similar software? We need someone to work with us developing the websites. Contact Tunizia at spin@sacredworldarts.com

2014 Festival Chair and Team. Looking for a Festival Chairman. Coordinate and lead a team of eager volunteers who are ready to get started designing the 2014 Silk in Santa Fe Festival. Many of the upfront details are already in place since we're continuing at the same venue. If you're interested, please contact Kaki at silkweeds1@gmail.com.



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Romancing the Silk

Lynn Meek

by Suzanne Visor

Composing the opening statement for this article from my kitchen chair I discovered I was gazing at our Soul of Silk February calendar illustration. Salmon colored blossoms against blue gray cactus pads. An unusual color duo. Suddenly the painter's name, Lynn Meek, jumped out at me! The woman in fact I had just interviewed. Hmm, serendipitous I think.

Lynn, a Canadian by birth, lives with hubby Jim, 90 miles east of Atlanta, Georgia by a lake and forest she describes as idyllic. With children out of the nest, about 5 years ago the Meeks built their dream studio which they share; Jim is a pastel artist.

When first we spoke, she described the following: "A military deployment ball, an embassy reception in Oman, a cruise along the Amalfi Coast, a Sting concert and a special anniversary celebration at the Plaza in New York...just a few of the magical places my silks have traveled! I'm living vicariously through my silks' adventures. They travel more than I do!"

Let's go back to the beginning. Lynn met her future husband when her Toronto family and his Atlanta family, each on vacation, met in Florida. She was 14, he 17. Four years later they married and have lived in Georgia since 1965. At age 40 Lynn became a Delta flight attendant and saw the world. 9/11 changed life for a lot of people, the Meeks among them. Since the airlines were cutting back, she was offered the chance to retire and jumped at it. Lynn, with a lifelong interest in drawing and painting, began stretching herself beyond her first love, watercolor. Internet explorations led her to silk painting. She discovered a Diane Tuckman -- Jan Janas book. And that was the start of her romance with silk. She is mostly self-taught, without the luxury of a local silk chapter and very little formal training.

Peruse the photos on these pages and you will note Lynn works on large blanks of silk, 22 by 90 inches, stretched on a PVC pipe frame. Notice that she holds the frame at an angle instead of flat. How can she do that? Lynn uses PVC fittings and shorter "legs" to brace the frame at an angle (see page



Dahlia Wrap

14). To better describe this process she states, "I often use two frames: I mount my pattern on the back frame and stretch my silk on the front frame. This system lets me follow the pattern through the time of transferring it to the silk itself. I came up with this 2 frame system because I wasn't happy with other methods of transfer....and I'm always looking for easier and quicker ways to get to the fun part which is the painting itself."

Chiffon and charmeuse silk, each in great contrast to the other, share the luxurious texture and richness we want in the best garments and art-to-wear. Her lush imagery is pure romance, from the natural world and beyond. Look closely at the blue grapes, green leaves and tendrils pictured. Try blocking areas of the scarf in one of the following ways: make a small frame with your thumbs and index fingers or cut out a little paper frame. Move the frame around on the scarf looking for

areas that become abstract vignettes within the parameter of the frame. Using this method one can imagine an abstract painting hidden within a more representational work. Imagine handling or draping one of these scarves so that two dimensions become three, transforming motifs into floating sculptures. The works are so beautiful that they make gorgeous photos. With these gorgeous photos, the works sell themselves!

About what stimulates her Lynn says, "nature is my biggest inspiration. We're fortunate to be out in the country, in the woods and on the lake in a quiet secluded cove -- birds, trees, wildlife -- a limitless source of subjects for motivation and the peace and quiet to let me focus on creating. Flowers, birds and trees are my best sellers. I think I've been successful because I know my clients' demographics. I paint for 'mature' -- I know, I hate that word too! -- women who appreciate traditional designs painted on one of a kind art-to-wear and who can afford to collect them."

And where, pray tell, does she peddle her wares, you ask? Lynn explains her daughter dragged her, kicking and screaming, onto Etsy.com where daughter, herself, has found success selling vintage, re-purposed goodies. Lynn's site can be found at www.SilkSiren.com. Here's what Lynn has to say about her marketing experience. "Etsy has such a global presence I knew I could reach a huge market ... a much bigger market than I could ever reach with an independent website. In researching Etsy, I knew I had to offer a unique product which is difficult to do with well over 200,000 vendors worldwide. I researched the silks and realized no one was offering the large size wraps I like to paint. And larger size meant a higher price point as well. Fortunately, buyers 'found' me almost immediately and I've developed a loyal client following: my silks have been shipped worldwide. I don't blog or market my silk otherwise..... I think my best marketing tool is the feedback I've earned on Etsy. My advice for anyone considering an Etsy shop would be: find your own niche, offer a professional product at a fair value and provide the best customer service you can."



Asian Motifs



Grapes

We know Lynn is a successful artist and businesswoman. So does that mean she NEVER has mistakes? This is what she says, "Oh my gosh! Who doesn't have flops in silk painting???" If a silk becomes a problem child, it's banished to the 'time out' box. If I have a major steaming disaster, I'll salvage what I can for collage projects and if I can save larger pieces, I'll put them aside to make small cosmetic type bags or wine bags to include as 'thank yous' when I mail off my silks."

Reader, if it seems the artist here lives pretty much in a vacuum, know that's not true. She gives a lot of credit to Karen Sistek, our well known painter and teacher in Washington State. Yes, they met via the Internet. "When I began painting 5 years ago, I googled 'silk painters' and came across Karen's wonderful website. I sent her a short email commenting on her stunning florals. To my surprise, she immediately sent an encouraging, gracious note back to me. Fast forward to today: she is my inspiration, my mentor and my adopted silk sister. I've had the pleasure of traveling to Port Angeles and spending time with Karen. She is the most generous artist I've ever met, mentoring painters around the globe and graciously sharing her knowledge and experience working in silk."

Still Lynn has developed her own method of silk painting based on her experience with watercolor painting. "This signature loose watercolor style I've developed lets me paint in a more expressive manner reflecting my own painting aesthetic. I originally started out using resist in silk painting but



Peonies

quickly discovered I wasn't an 'inside-the-lines' personality type. It felt too constricted and controlled." She goes on to say, "I discarded the resist and came up with my own method. I use thickener in my dye where I want control or a hard edge. Otherwise I like to paint wet-on-wet letting the dye flow and blend on the silk. This is sometimes quite a challenge since I do paint at an angle. It's often a matter of a hairdryer and paper towel in one hand and a paintbrush in the other... and a vigilant eye for any runaway dye!"

Let's talk about the dyes for a minute here. "I'm a big fan of Jacquard dyes and the company too. They've been helpful with my questions and problems. Lots of silk painters use French dyes, but the Jacquard Reds have worked beautifully for me and I think they are a better value than the imports." She does confess to having some favorite Tinfix colors that she can't make herself. And she still feels like her use of color needs work. "It's not intuitive and I really have to work at it. I tend to get in a rut with certain colors and need to force myself to experiment with different palettes." Having said that, Lynn comments that, contrast and values in her designs IS intuitive. "If I had one tip for any painter it would be to realize the importance of



Tiger, Tiger

using different values. To me, any painting done in a flat monotone value looks amateurish. I'm always looking for opportunities to use value and contrast to bring drama to my paintings. My mantra, 'light behind dark and dark behind light' works like a charm." Did you all get that?

Now you have a picture of the artist creating in her naturally lit studio in an idyllic setting, right? All is in order, ready to receive the mistress with sunbeams and sweet breezes each sunny morning. Lynn admits to spreading out beyond her equitable space. Who can blame her, with all those cumbersome frames, drawers of silk, AND a monster of a steamer gurgling away. And how much space does pastel paper and chalks take up anyway? Does Lynn put up with some messiness as do most of us who are "working"? "Yes, it is messy most of the time," she chuckles, "but that's okay. It's when the messiness weighs on the creativity, I have to bite the bullet and clean it up." Then she's ready to just turn up the volume on her country rock or golden oldies, letting the music play on while she gets down to business.



Sunrise

We talked about bringing new challenges into her work. Lynn claims to have no sewing skills. Being a proficient seamstress would be a boon for her to move into a wider field of wearables. Finding, training and supervising a seamstress can be another job in itself. This is what interests her and what may be doable. In the meantime it's still in the "idea" stage. Last summer she took a break from painting silk. Learning some wonderful shibori and tie-dyeing methods on rayon caftan tops was a new, exciting adventure. And those techniques opened doors to abstract design ideas she's since put on a new Etsy shop, www.ShiboriChic.com "to support my habit," she says.

Attending the biennial conference, Silk in Santa Fe, is always an eye opener in many ways. Lynn was with us last July, 2012 in the high desert and these are her thoughts: "As far as silk painting goes, I'd love to move into clothing design, maybe long flowing coats or tunics. I was blown away by the awesomely amazing silk in the SPIN fashion show in Santa Fe. The level of silk painting and clothing construction sent me home totally inspired. Unfortunately my only exposure to sewing was a 7th grade Home Economics class where I made an apron! Yes, this is the direction I'd like to go in....but it's only in the 'would like to' stage right now."

Lynn's unsolicited comment to me is one to share with silk painters everywhere: "Being a member of SPIN opened up my silk painting world. Kudos to all the directors and members who run it so well. And through the SPIN Facebook page I have a wonderful family of silkies around the world whom I treasure. This forum for sharing tips, ideas and friendship is priceless."



See more of Lynn's work at shiborichic.com or silksiren.com.

NEW SPIN BOARD MEMBERS

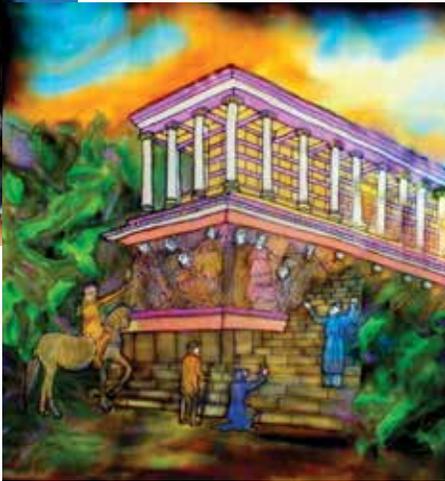
Some Long-Time Members and A New Member

Join the SPIN Board of Directors



It's really my pleasure to serve on the Board and I truly want to give something productive and profitable to the Board for everyone.

Rashmi Agarwal
and her creation
Historical Monuments



Being surrounded by silk artists who care to change things around a little, and create a better SPIN...is where I belong. I am passionate about Chapter life, so taking the SPIN Chapter Director's seat is just me....."Walkin' my talk". Which U.S. President said "A Chicken in every pot!?!". ..Well, I say "A Chapter in every state!!!". Lofty goal... Or is it?



Suzanne "Suz" Knight
and one of her creations



I've been a SPIN member for many years and decided I'd like to contribute my extensive experience, in marketing/ advertising and running non-profit boards, to the growth of SPIN as an organization.

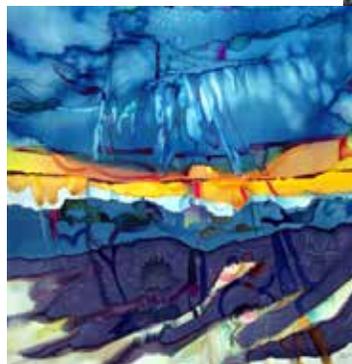
Gloria Lanza-Bajo
wearing her work and a jacket
created by her



We've been around a while. I served on the Board about 2008-9, I think. That was a time of struggle for SPIN. We were trying to invent SPIN. We had no road map. We were traipsing through the wilderness, we came a long way. I've seen lots of growth, enthusiasm, hard work and leadership to get us where we are today. Kaki Steward was responsible for having the guts to bring into our organization fiber artists I never dreamed would be our advocates and champions. Those efforts were brave, daring and the right thing to do. That's why I'm back on the Board. She and many others have helped me to grow, be daring and contribute what I can for the good of us all.



Suzanne Visor
and her work
In the Blink of An Eye



The Quality and Uses of Resists - RESISTAD

by RON GUTMAN



Cattleya Orchids - painted on 8mm flat crepe, 14" X 72"
clear Resistad (50% distilled water/ 50% Resistad)
French dyes (Sennelier & Dupont) Serti technique

I have been using Resistad now for several months and find that I no longer reach for my familiar solvent or water based guttas. Although I do believe that all resists have their own unique properties, each serving an intended use or application, the Resistad has become my favorite. In this article I will endeavor to explain the benefits and virtues of this (what I consider revolutionary) extraordinary textile resist.

I have sometimes (jokingly) been called an art/craft supply 'junkie' by many of my former students! The Internet has opened the doors wide open to a plethora of information, coming from all corners of the globe. I love researching whatever medium, topic or idea I may venture into and go on cyber treasure hunts looking for articles, photos, materials/supplies and the like. There is much fun and excitement to be had with discovery and I really enjoy new 'toys'...especially the art supply kind! I guess it's just that kid in me and yes, when I grow up...I want to be young!

When I decided once again to take a brush to silk after exploring many other mediums, I found myself surfing the web nightly (sometimes even into the wee hours of the morning...yawn!) to find out all I could on this most fascinating Art of Silk Painting. In my nightly excursions I happened to spot a blurb/blog post concerning an interesting item called Resistad...wow!, a new (to me) art supply.

Little information was actually to be found but luckily...Bingo!...a web address for a textile art supply company in New Zealand called Procolour. First thing the following morning I contacted them.

A reply to my request for further information was not long awaited.

John Mitchell is the owner/proprietor of Procolour and it was he who created & developed this wonderful substance, Resistad.

Here is some information from John's in-depth information sheets:

The gutta comes in three concentrated forms:

1. Thin Resistad 2. Medium Resistad 3. Thick Resistad

Why three concentrates? Here's the story:

All three can be easily converted into ready to use guttas by the addition of simple proportions of water, liquid dye or fabric paint.

Besides its versatility, you get twice as much product from the light weight concentrate and therefore can get a savings benefit in shipping from New Zealand.

Should you want a metallic gold gutta, you can mix together 1 part Thin Resistad with 4 parts gold textile paint. Most water based textile paints of any color can be converted into gutta using this recipe.

If you want to screen print, and you want a printable black (or colored) gutta that does not impair the hand of the silk, you can make it by mixing 1 part Thick Resistad with 1 part liquid dye. The Thick Resistad



Asian Floral - 8mm flat crepe, 14" X 72", tinted black Resistad, French dyes (Sennelier & Dupont) Serti technique



Ron's Well-Organized supplies

converts most liquid dyes, or water, into screen printable viscosity guttas. All printing utensils are easily cleaned with water.

If you want a pastel gutta for hand pipette application...you can make it by adding 1 part Medium Resistad to 1 part diluted dye. With this recipe, the Medium Resistad converts most liquid dyes, or water, into a suitable viscosity for gutta serti work, brush painting, stamping, sponging or block printing.

With the above recipes, allow time for the Medium and Thick Resistad guttas to evenly thicken before they are used. I find that a large plastic syringe is useful for transferring your mixed gutta into your pipette bottle. A thin palette knife may also be helpful. Its consistency is not unlike honey, being a bit thicker than most gutta types, and not quite as pour-able. Upon application, ensure that the gutta penetrates through to the backside of the fabric throughout the entire length of your lines. As with all guttas, slight mixing proportion adjustments and experimentation are necessary to accommodate the various weaves/weights/techniques required by your particular painting project. I let my Resistad dry naturally, but John has suggested that if you are losing sharpness then, rapid drying with a blow heater or hairdryer will sharpen definition.

At this point, I would like to mention an important aspect of working with Resistad. That is, one compulsory step...heat setting. This is what activates the gutta's water repellency transforming it from water miscible to water resistant. The efficiency of the heat setting step, determines the resistivity of the gutta. John suggests the following methods of accomplishing this (in diminishing order of efficiency):

Iron, or oven baking, or a commercial textile paint infrared heat-setting tunnel, or a heat press etc. (150 degrees for 2 minutes is recommended).

Leaving at close range in front of a blow heater on high for 20 minutes.

Leaving for 24 hours in a warm place.

I have only used the household iron method, being careful to evenly, slowly and consistently cover all areas and lines. I have had success with this method but have read that some have encountered slight problems. John has recommended another way of getting superior results and that is to steam the piece after the gutta application and before painting for approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours. With this method your lines will remain very crisp, the resist will hold up extremely well, and you will not run any risk of blurring or bleeding of the lines or the dyes. This method, from what I have read, works very, very well although I have yet to give it a try.

With the three available concentrates of Resistad it is possible to very simply make a gutta of any color or viscosity... textile paint, water or dye based. Understandably, all of these possibilities make for a very versatile product for textile design artists.

Currently, I can find no disadvantages with Resistad. I use the Medium concentrate...because the majority of my work utilizes the gutta serti technique. As there is only a very small amount of solvent used in its manufacture, a slight, not unpleasant odor is all that can be detected. One of the best attributes of the Procolour Resistad concentrates is that they are water based -- meaning that all application utensils wash up in plain water!

The Medium and Thick Resistad does not impair the luster or softness of the silk even if you are applying broader lines or strokes. For serti techniques, the gutta lines can be extremely thin. When properly heat set, the lines hold up to over painting, and dye flooding, just as well as solvent based gutta or even wax. I have yet to have any lines dissolve or disappear and no leaks with proper application via pipette.

Note: I have read that certain alcohol based silk dyes like Dupont can be a bit corrosive to the Resistad, however I have not had any problems and have even used these same dyes to color the gutta. So far I have tried Dupont, Sennelier, Pebeo and Jacquard dyes...all have been successful.

One other note of interest...if the Resistad has not been thoroughly heat set, any over painting with dyes will act like anti-fusant (this can be used to your advantage depending on the look/technique you are trying to achieve). Conversely, once heat set, the dyes will bead up on the surface of the Resistad and this can then be removed with a cotton swab or other suitable absorbent material.

The Resistad does not require dry cleaning for its removal. I find this to be a big plus. After completion of painting and fixing your dyes via ironing, fixative, or steaming, all that's necessary is to rinse in plenty of warm soapy water or any of the textile detergents/rinses available on the market. Then rinse again in cool water until clear.

My pieces are then rolled into an absorbent towel, removed, then hot iron pressed while semi-damp. Even without a pressing cloth there has been no smearing of colored or black guttas and the hand and sheen of the silk is superb.



Rhubarb - painted using tinted and clear Resistad.



Tinted Resistad applications



Painting within the lines created by the Resistad

I have applied Resistad to Habotai, Chiffon, Charmeuse, Twill, Crepe De Chine and Flat Crepe ranging in weights from 8mm to 12mm...heavier weights and Jacquard weaves have yet to be attempted...but, indeed I shall experiment with them too!

A bit more information on Resistad can be found on the SPIN website at silkpainters.org. Go to the 'Silk Wiki' tab and look under the resists category. The writer, Linda Marcille, has also had much success with this product and goes into detail concerning its cost effectiveness and shipping from New Zealand.

My thanks go to John Mitchell from Procolour for creating such a wonderful product as 'Resistad' and also to Jean-Louis Mireault for suggesting that I share my explorations. In the words of John Mitchell, "Resistad is a unique product, as you will discover...it will expand your creative horizons".

For more about Resistad visit the website: www.procolour.co.nz

Communicate with Ron at ron@rongutmanstudio.com. View more of his work at www.rongutmanstudio.com which he says is "still a 'work in progress'...just like me!"



2012 Dragon - 10mm Habotai, 35"X35"
Red Green & Aqua tinted Resistad, French and German dyes
(Sennelier Tinfix, Dupont, Seidicolor), Serti technique

SILKWORM CONTRIBUTORS

Phyllis Gordon. Phyllis usually proofreads the Silkworm every issue. This month, in addition to her proofing work, she stepped up to a writing assignment, researching and gathering information for the article about the Ratner Museum - a museum she loves and visits often. She hopes she conveyed her love of the museum through the article.

Suzanne Visor. Suzanne is a long-time member and previously wrote for the Silkworm. She is stepping up her writing contributions once again with the article about Lynn Meek.

Ron Gutman. Ron contributed the wonderful article about the new product, Resistad. Ron is certainly a master with Resistad, a fine painter and a great instructor.

Sarah Ann Allen. Lastly we have Sarah joining us as an intern from Florida State University. Sarah Ann is graduating this Spring with a Bachelor's in English, concentration in Editing, Writing and Media and a minor in Business from Florida State University. She is a hobby Chinese-watercolorist in her spare time and has work in two galleries in Florida. She is planning on continuing her education with a Master's with an international emphasis, program yet to be determined, and then build an international career in business and/or editing. Coincidentally, she is also Joyce Estes' granddaughter. She's our first intern and has whetted our appetite for another. Thanks, Sarah Ann!



Sarah Ann Allen

SILKWORM

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20th Anniversary Issue!

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Paisley by Ron Gutman

8mm flat crepe, 14" X 72"

Resistad tinted Purple with Jacquard (Red Label) dye.

Painting done with steam set Swiss dyes (Arty's One)

Serti technique, alcohol

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***Rhodies* by Renée Angela Filice**