

Denmark  
Finland  
Iceland  
Norway  
Sweden

**fall membership meeting**

Saturday, November 13, 10 AM - 12:30 PM

*On the Agenda* - **Spring Exhibition** at the Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA  
- **Fall Exhibition** at the Craft & Cultural Arts Gallery, State of California Office Building, Oakland, CA

*Hosted by* Olivia Eielson, 6817 Colton Blvd., Oakland, CA 94611

*RSVP* 510-339-2126, olivia2@sonic.net

*For the pot luck brunch, please bring a dish or a beverage to the meeting.*

**new feature...**



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**a studio visit with**

**DIANE RUSNAK dream artist**

By Dorothy K. McCall, Art Historian

*"The remembrance of beauty, the beauty of a thing, or of personal relationships, or of a country, has always seemed to me the chief end of life... Remembrance is the one sure immortality we know."*

- Hudson Strode, *Finland Forever*, 1941

Before visiting Diane in her Berkeley art studio, I intended to focus on her ability to have her own studio as it signifies one is a professional artist. Familiar with many paintings of studio interiors by artists such as Henri Matisse, William Merritt Chase, and the Norwegian Harriet Backer, I believe their paintings are invitations for artistic understanding. Artists honor themselves by requiring space and privacy in which to work. Harriet Backer did many studio paintings, with strong solitary women working, in luminous light, leaving viewers to surmise their purpose. Nevertheless, after looking at Diane's art, listening to her professional history as teacher and feminist, combined with her Finnish family background, I realized she truly possesses *Sisu*, with a great love for Suomi (Finland.)

*Sisu* is defined in Finnish literature, history, music and sports as the ability to survive in impossible situations. The composer Sibelius said *Sisu* was a metaphysical shot in the arm, which makes a man do the impossible, unable to compromise his ideals, with a special kinship with the wilder variety of nature and virgin forests. While looking at Diane's paintings of lean birch trees, soft dream paintings, a purse made of wood shavings and a wall hanging honoring her missing sister, it was clear Diane has worked hard as an artist and a human being in becoming a tenacious artistic witness.

Two years ago Diane made her first trip to Finland finding family touchstones she had not expected. Her mother's family is from the far north of Finland and Diane is still in the process of learning more of their history. Upon her return, she did a portrait of a Finnish folk hero who was a distant relative, a kind of Robin Hood character, revealing him with courageous insights. Art allows us to suspend time while shifting into another world. Diane does this easily. Writer and folkdancer, Diane fits this description.

*Continued next page*

**upcoming exhibitions**

**spring 2011**

In the spring of 2011, Nordic 5 Arts will present an exhibit at the Scandinavian Cultural Center at the Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, Washington. The details of the show will be discussed during the Fall Nordic 5 Arts meeting on November 13. I will make a detailed report at the meeting, with photos of the space.

- Marc Ellen Hamel

**fall 2011**

**From the North: Contemporary Art of Nordic Heritage**  
Craft & Cultural Arts Gallery, State of California Office Building  
1515 Clay Street - Atrium, Oakland, CA 94612

We're working hard in preparation for our group show coming up in 2011 and are considering asking members to articulate how their Nordic cultural heritage comes through in their art. This is a great opportunity to share with the public important aspects of Nordic culture.

What would you like to share about Nordic Culture? How does your Nordic background come through in your art? More on this to come through future info and calls for submissions for the group exhibition.

If you haven't yet been to the Craft and Cultural Arts Gallery at the CA State Building in downtown Oakland, please pay a visit and get familiar with the space. We'll have use of at least one, if not both, of the 20' long glass display cases in the rotunda. The gallery is 29' x 51' x 15' so there's lots of great space. There's also an auditorium adjacent to the gallery for lectures.

- Jason Engelund

**the wounded angel**

*The Wounded Angel* is a painting by the Finnish symbolist painter Hugo Simberg which Diane saw at the Ateneum Art Museum in Helsinki in 2008. It provided inspiration for her work *Wings* (shown below.) Painted in 1903, it is one of the most recognizable of Simberg's works, and was voted Finland's "National Painting" in a vote held by the Museum in 2006. Like other Simberg paintings, *The Wounded Angel* evokes a melancholy atmosphere: the angelic central figure with her bandaged eyes and bloodied wing, the somber clothing of her two youthful bearers. The direct, dispassionate gaze of the right-hand figure provokes the viewer, though it is unclear whether the look denotes complicity in her rescue or contempt at her injury. Research: Wikipedia.



Diane Rusnak, *Wings*, acrylic, collage on canvas, 3' x 4'

Continued from front page

*Folkdancers* is a painting that reveals Diane's personal love of dance and predicts her future. In October, she is going to Greece for the first time, on a dance tour. We discovered we were both influenced in the sixties by our love of the movie, *Zorba the Greek*. The music, story, acting and zest caused each of us to take action in different ways. She decided to move to California from Ohio and has been here ever since. Active in many diverse groups, Diane has remained independent, yet connected with what she loves. She believes it is up to individuals to find meaning in their lives.

"Man is a spiritual being; the proper work of his mind is to interpret the world according to his highest nature, to conquer material aspects of the world so as to bring them into subjection to the spirit."

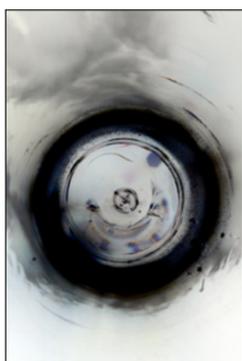
- Robert Bridges in *Finland Forever*

## artists news

**pat bengtson-jones** has had recent exhibitions at the Hayward Art Council and the Green Shutter Gallery. **colette crutcher** worked with a group of theater students at SFSU in the spring making oversized puppets for demonstrations in SF and Sacramento to protest cuts to the education budget. **lotte dyhrberg** taught art in Denmark during the summer and continues teaching art at SFUSD. **olivia eielson** continues to write and paint. In the fall, she will participate in the Biannual Exhibition at the Falkirk Cultural Center, San Rafael. In the spring, **jason engelund** had a solo show at Scharffenberger Cellars, Anderson Valley, CA. He is represented by the Modern Book Gallery which moved this summer from Palo Alto to 49 Geary, San Francisco. **mark erickson** showed in a couple of exhibitions in the spring and early summer. He traveled in Europe and painted in a studio on the Danube River in Vienna where he worked on a new series, *The Flow Factory*, and participated in studio shows and selling to European collectors. **pam fingado** devotes her time to painting as well as planning exhibits for her gallery, Fingado Art Gallery. She's also working to create an Art Center for El Cerrito. **marc ellen hamel** participated in *Angular & Architectural* at 901 Market in the spring. She is the President of the Shipyard Trust for the Arts at Hunters Point, organizing its Annual Fundraising Art Auction on October 30 and 31. **russell herrman** continues to work on his *Indoor and Outdoor Series* and will be participating in Hunter's Point Open Studios, Oct. 30 and 31. Sponsored by ArtSpan, he will teach art to children in connection with Open Studios. **maj-britt hilstrom** exhibited at the *16th Annual Sculpture in the Garden* at the Ruth Bancroft Sculpture Garden in June and July. Sponsored by the California Society of Printmakers, her work was also on display this fall in *It's Our Nature* at the Presidio Thoreau Center, San Francisco. **dorothy mccall** has a quote on her refrigerator: "It is our charge in life not to make ourselves happy, but to bring what makes us happy to others" and, this summer, she traveled to France with her granddaughter, Isabelle Webster, to introduce her to the arts and culture there. In the spring of 2011, Dorothy will be giving lectures on Nordic art to the Tri-Cities chapter of Sons of Norway in Washington state. **margaretha miglo** participated in the spring and fall Open Studios at 689 Bryant, San Francisco, together with 38 other artists. **maj-britt mobrand** has showed at Expressions Gallery in Berkeley and East Bay Pro Arts Open Studios. She has several works in a book of Textile Artists. **anne inger oseberg** spent a few months in Norway during the summer exhibiting and selling her work there. Her work is currently on exhibit at the Menlo Park League and the Society of Western Artists (SWA) in Redwood City where she won a First Prize award of \$1,000 for *Springtime* (see below.) **loren rehbock** exhibited earlier in the year at Berkeley Espresso and the French Hotel. In his weekly drawing group with a model, he paints directly in watercolor. **diane rusnak** had three shows in May and June: Gilman Grill, Books Inc. Gallery, and Pro Arts Open Studios. **helene sobol** received a commission from the Norway Day Festival for 12 posters of her photography of the Arctic to decorate the Svalbard Pub. She self published her new book *Encounter with India*, illustrated with photography of her trip to The Golden Triangle. **barbara stevens strauss'** work will be included in an upcoming publication, *500 Raku*. She also teaches art in a Montessori pre-school.



Clockwise from above:  
Anne Inger Oseberg, *Springtime*, watercolor, collage;  
Maj-Britt Hilstrom, *Diver II*, monotype and woodblock  
on handmade Japanese paper; Jason Engelund,  
*Photo-Ensos* (Abstracting the Wine Glass); Mark  
Erickson, *Silvio Dante*, acrylic & flash on canvas



### nordic 5 arts

Coordinator: Helene Sobol  
Co-coordinator: Marc Elen Hamel  
Treasurer: Maj-Britt Mobrand  
Exhibitions: Pat Bengtson-Jones,  
Jason Engelund, Ellen Faris,  
Colette Crutcher  
Membership: Pat Bengtson-Jones,  
Diane Rusnak, Olivia Eielson  
Secretary: Colette Crutcher  
Newsbrief and Website: Helene Sobol  
Artist Profiles: Dorothy McCall



Diane Rusnak, *Folkdancers*, acrylic, collage on canvas, 18" x 36"

## minutes Spring Meeting, April 24, 2010

The meeting was held at Diane Rusnak's home in San Pablo  
Attendees: Pat Bengtson, Colette Crutcher, Lotte Dyhrberg, Olivia Eielson, Jason Engelund, Pam Fingado, Marc Ellen Hamel, Nancy Hayes, Russell Herrman, Maj-Britt Hilstrom, Dorothy McCall, Margaretha Miglo, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Loren Rehbock, Diane Rusnak, Helene Sobol. Guest: Del Sonsteng.

### exhibitions

**1. tacoma, wa** Marc Ellen proposed a show at the Scandinavian Cultural Center at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA, in early 2011. She has not yet seen the space. The Center is 6,700 sq.ft, gallery 12' x 12', plus six bays 8' x 4', plus an outside foyer with wooden cabinets 5' x 40' for small works. Dorothy said it's a beautiful space and well attended. The Center provides a reception and takes no commission, but a 10-20% donation to the Center is expected if there are sales. We must handle delivery and pickup and at least one of our artists must attend the opening. Marc Ellen said there would be no problem for her to attend since she travels there frequently. Unresolved questions: Insurance? Curator? Would people attend if they don't know us? Do we want a theme? Will the gallery arrange pickup if there are sales? Who will hang the show? Russell offered his shipping expertise. Membership voted that Marc Ellen go ahead with this show, preferably in spring 2011.

**2. oakland, ca** *From the North: Contemporary Art of Nordic Heritage* Exhibition at the Craft and Cultural Arts Gallery, CA State Building, Oakland Exhibition Committee: Jason Engelund, Pat Bengtson-Jones, Dorothy McCall, Kati Casida and Pam Fingado. They will be working on finding a juror and present a timeline for the show. Jason will be the liaison to the gallery curator. The title of the show will remain as proposed by our group and accepted by the venue. Helene will design the exhibition catalog; Helena Tiainen will edit the materials submitted. Helene requested that the materials from the artists be submitted in a timely manner in a professional way. For the catalog, the jpegs should be print-ready, 300dpi at 6" high. Jason offered to help artists who may need technical assistance with their digital files. The committee will request that submissions include all materials on a CD. Once accepted, the materials will be passed on to Helena Tiainen for editing and then to Helene for the catalog design, thus simplifying the process.

**future shows** We have a list of proposed show titles that will provide the basis for future shows. There were many suggestions for show titles on the blog, (see link below.) Some members are familiar with web blogging while others are not. Regarding the question as to the usefulness of a blog, the responses were mixed with some saying yes, and others stating that they did not read the blog or add their opinions.

**new officers** Marc Ellen Hamel, new position as Co-Coordinator; Colette Crutcher, Exhibitions Committee; Olivia Eielson, Membership Committee

**membership committee** No new applicants during the past 6 months. Ashley Eriksmoen, a new mother, didn't renew her membership and Crystal Lokken has died. The membership voted to donate \$50 to the McFarland Historical Society in her memory.

**programs** It was decided to remain flexible and to incorporate a slide show or presentation if one arises naturally, but not necessary for every meeting. We would like to arrange a program/presentation for the Oakland show.

**newsbrief and website** Helene requested assistance with the collection of materials for the Newsbrief and Pam Fingado offered to help. New feature article: Dorothy McCall will interview a member for each issue.

**treasurer** Maj-Britt Mobrand reported that we have \$534.44 in our bank account. The biggest expense is for the Newsbrief. It was suggested to create an online newsbrief only, but the majority of the members voted to continue with the Newsbrief in its current printed format. It was decided to raise next year's dues to \$25. This year, many checks came in very late and Maj-Britt suggested that we should be reminded to bring our checkbooks to the next meeting so that the next year's dues can be collected on the spot.

**next meeting** Olivia Eielson offered to host the meeting. Date to be determined. If another program doesn't arise for next meeting, it was agreed that each member bring a piece of artwork to share.

**lecture** Dorothy McCall was the featured speaker and gave a fascinating slide presentation on Finnish Artists, *Touchstones in Finnish Art: From Akseli Gallen-Kallela to Helene Schjerfbeck*. We were pleased to learn about some Nordic artists who were unfamiliar to many of us.

**many thanks** to Diane Rusnak for hosting the meeting and to Dorothy McCall who gave such an interesting lecture!

Respectfully submitted by Colette Crutcher, Secretary

### post your opinions on our blog!

<http://nordic5arts.blogspot.com/2009/12/2011-show-at-craft-cultural-art.html>

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