

Denmark  
Finland  
Iceland  
Norway  
Sweden

April - May, 2011

www.nordic5arts.com

**spring membership meeting** Saturday, May 21, 10 AM - 12:30 PM

*On the Agenda* - Update - Current Exhibition at the Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA  
- Future exhibitions

*Hosted by* Betty Rasicott Pillsbury, 1735 10th St., Berkeley, CA 94710

*RSVP* 415-242-3350, hfs@helenesobol.com

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



Cover, Exhibition Catalog. "Ship in Trollfjorden" (detail) by Ellen Faris  
View Exhibition and Catalog at Nordic5Arts.com

**current exhibition in tacoma, wa**

**NORDIC 5 ARTS - Voyages of Discovery**

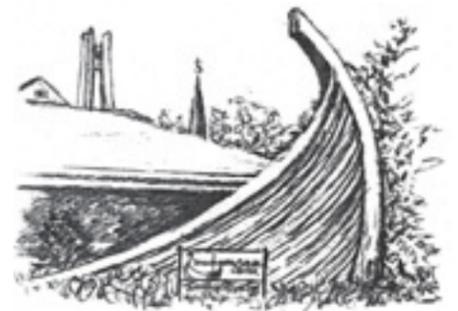
Contemporary work presented by artists of Nordic Heritage from the San Francisco Bay Area

Patricia Bengtson-Jones, Kati Casida, Olivia Eielson, Jason Engelund, Mark Erickson, Ellen Faris, Pam Fingado, Norma Andersen Fox, Marc Ellen Hamel, Russell Herrman, Maj-Britt Hilstrom, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Justin Olerud, Betty Rasicott Pillsbury, Loren Rehbock, Diane Rusnak, Helene Sobol, Stevens Strauss, Lee Williams

April 8 - November 15, 2011

Scandinavian Cultural Center  
Pacific Lutheran University  
Tacoma, WA

The Scandinavian Cultural Center (SCC) is a 6,700 square-foot facility housed on the first floor of the University Center at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU). Completed in 1989, the Center features a great hall, exhibit galleries, and a demonstration kitchen.



A 25-foot, custom-carved Viking ship prow serves as a dramatic visual statement, welcoming guests to the Center.

**about the exhibition...**

Our group show offers a broad array of artwork: paintings, drawings, photographs, mixed media, sculpture, weavings and ceramics. Each artist expresses his or her own unique vision through their chosen art form, yet believes their work is also in one way or another informed by the Nordic culture of their heritage which both consciously and unconsciously nourishes their imaginations. A variety of approaches to both abstract and representational expression are used and statements from each artist accompany their work which, we hope, will offer a deeper understanding of each artist's motivation.

Being members of Nordic 5 Arts has highlighted and enhanced our connections to family stories, to our ancestors and to the "home country." It contributes to our self-definition and the content of our artistic expression. When we meet as a group or view one another's artwork, we cannot help but reflect on similarities and differences in viewpoint and inspiration. Connecting with fellow artists of similar heritage leads us to ask ourselves questions about our identity: How we are like - or unlike - our fellow artists with similar backgrounds? What path did our forebears travel upon that brought us to the "new world?" How did we find our way to becoming artists? How does personal memory show up in our artwork? We ask these questions of ourselves and the answers engender further queries about "how has my own personal and artistic path been influenced by my Nordic heritage?"

Whether we traveled to the United States ourselves as first generation immigrants or are familiar with the journeys made by earlier generations of immigrants from the Nordic countries, this harkening back to our histories is a fruitful quest that enriches what we do today. It enhances our public and private artistic lives where each and every one of us is on a voyage of discovery about who we are.

By sharing a common bond and working together since the inception of Nordic 5 Arts in 1993, we have a unique opportunity to collaborate, create, network and participate in exhibitions in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond. In 1998-1999 we presented another exhibition, *Voyage*, at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Seattle and we are pleased to be showing our latest work once again in the Pacific Northwest, this time at the Scandinavian Cultural Center at the Pacific Lutheran University.

Marc Ellen Hamel and Helene Sobol, Co-coordinators, Nordic 5 Arts

**about scc...**



by Susan Young  
Director

Scandinavian Cultural Center  
Pacific Lutheran University

In partnership with Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) and in accordance with its educational mission, the Scandinavian Cultural Center (SCC) brings together individuals and organizations of the Pacific Northwest to support the university's Scandinavian Studies Program (SSP) and Scandinavian Immigrant Experience Collection (SIEC), to promote development and understanding of Nordic immigrant and Scandinavian-American experiences, cultures, and heritage, and to promote ties with, and awareness and understanding of, contemporary Nordic cultures and societies.

Cultural exhibits representing the five Nordic countries appear throughout the year. The exhibits cover all that can be expressed through Scandinavian arts, from traditional folk art to contemporary designers. Educators discuss the similarities between Viking and Northwest Coast native art, or how Norway's struggle for independence is reflected in Edvard Grieg's musical compositions. Each exhibit represents the art as well as the natural and social history of Scandinavians and Scandinavian-Americans.

The SCC houses nearly 3,000 artifacts that represent the immigrant experience. This collection also reflects contemporary art and culture of Scandinavia and includes textiles, tools, costumes, paintings, wood carvings, pewter, and porcelain that serve as tangible evidence of a heritage appreciated and preserved for the education and enjoyment of generations to come. In 2011, we are pleased to present *Nordic 5 Arts - Voyages of Discovery*, an exciting exhibition of contemporary works by artists of Nordic heritage from the San Francisco Bay Area.

## two new members

I use many different techniques and have just started painting in watercolors. My latest large-scale works are based on colorful and vibrant photographs of people nesting in California scenery.

I was first attracted to these images by the saturation of the colors displayed within the photographs. I was trying to learn how to duplicate the colors in paint. The subjects play together and create a seductive world.

By painting from photographs, I want to emphasize a certain liveliness and sometimes desolation that the figures emanate. I grew up on a pig farm in southern Minnesota with a Norwegian father and a Swedish mother.

paintingsbyolerud.com



**justin olerud** Zoe/Landscape Watercolor

## lee williams

My paintings reflect images from a path that takes me along the boundaries between imagination, spirit, and world. The paintings start with an impulse, an image, or a memory. I enter and invite the viewer into the natural world of forest, water, and light, and into the abstract world beneath the surface of daily consciousness. These works develop through the successive layering of translucent acrylic colors and unryu washi paper on canvas or watercolor paper. The long silky threads that swirl through the translucent paper suggest the swirling pulse of life that moves through all of nature.

My Norwegian great grandfather settled in the Dakota Territories in the late 19th century and my mother was born in South Dakota. I feel that this part of my heritage is foundational to my artwork, echoed in feelings of kinship with ocean, river, forest, and a love of travel.

leewilliamsart.com

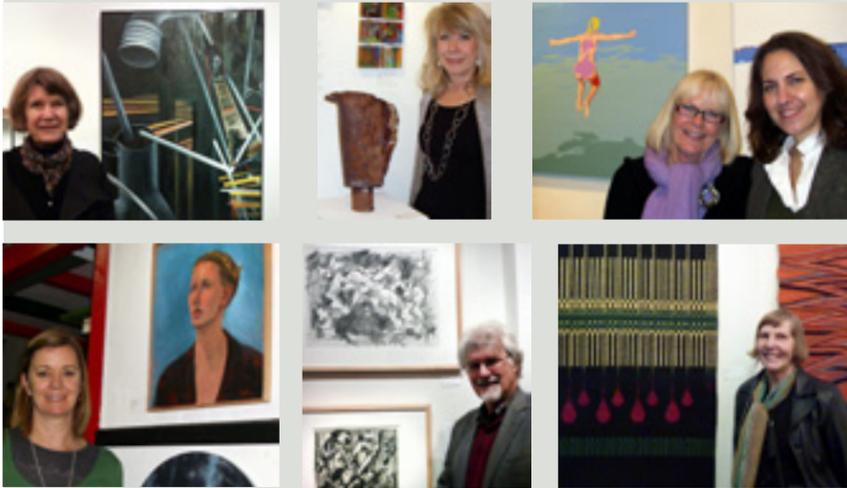


*Stations on a River Journey 3*  
Acrylic/Mixed media on canvas, H20" W16"

## Inclusions Gallery San Francisco "Voyages of Discovery"

January 15- February 19, 2011

Colette Crutcher, Diane Rusnak, Elizabeth Stokkebye, Ellen Faris, Helene Sobol, Loren Rehbock, Lotte Dyhrberg, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Marc Ellen Hamel, Mark Erickson, Olivia Eielson and Stevens Strauss



Artists Reception, January 29, 2011 - Clockwise from top left: Olivia Eielson, Stevens Strauss, Ellen Faris with Gallery Director Lisa Moro, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Loren Rehbock and Lotte Dyhrberg.

## artists news

**kati casida** In May, Casida's large sculpture, *Jonsok*, will be permanently installed in Skjolden, at the end of the Sognefjord in Norway. She, together with her family, relatives and the local community which raised funds for the fabrication and installation of the sculpture, will be present at the celebrations on Midsummer's Eve, June 23.



**norma andersen fox** (photo left) was featured in the March issue of *The Salem Evening Post*: "(She) has been a dedicated artist all her life. Early on she created a scarf which appeared in a show for Young Americans in the American Craft Museum in NYC...one of her rya rugs appeared on the cover of 'Craft Horizons,' a publication of the museum.

She has taken courses, attended seminars in painting, photography, etching, engraving, and most recently basketry. "I create pieces with a strong presence of their own, divorced from any suggestion of utility... I let the natural materials talk to me..." Norma's baskets are in private collections as well as various museums and galleries." **maj-britt hilstrom** is exhibiting in *Light/Dark* at the Berkeley Art Center, April 2 - May 29. Excerpt from the *Berkeley Times*: "(she) presented her print work, a book-box titled *Rivers from A to Z... six pages - mounted accordion style - that had been unfolded upwards almost reaching the ceiling.*" In May, **anne oseberg** participates in the Society of Western Art and the Sequoia Art Group shows in Redwood City. **barbara stevens strauss'** work was chosen among 6000 entries to be featured in the book, *500 Raku*.

## minutes Fall Meeting, November 13, 2010

The meeting was held at Olivia Eielson's home in Oakland. Attendees: Pat Bengtson-Jones, Olivia Eielson, Jason Engelund, Marc Ellen Hamel, Russell Herrman, Debra Jewell, Dorothy McCall, Margaretha Miglo, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Anne Oseberg, Loren Rehbock, Diane Rusnak, Helene Sobol and Barbara Stevens Strauss. Guest: Ellie Kouvonon.

### upcoming exhibitions

**1. oakland, ca** *From the North: Contemporary Art of Nordic Heritage*  
Accepted 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. Jason Engelund gave an overview of the status of the exhibition and details were discussed. (The show was subsequently canceled due to sale of the state building.)

**2. tacoma, wa** Marc Ellen Hamel, who had visited the Scandinavian Cultural Center at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma, WA, and made contact with Susan Young, the Director, showed pictures of the exhibition space with large walls and display cases. Details were discussed regarding participation, shipping, duration of show, etc. Artwork would be offered for sale, with a commission given to SCC. Dorothy McCall encouraged us to exhibit there and offered to give a lecture in connection with our show. An additional meeting was suggested to finalize details and Maj-Britt Mobrand offered to host the meeting.

**3. san francisco, ca** Colette Crutcher (not present) had made the arrangements with Lisa Moro, the Gallery Director at Inclusions Gallery, for a show by our group in early 2011. Lisa would be requesting submissions and be responsible for printing postcards and doing PR.

**officers** No changes.

**membership committee** Two new members were accepted by the Membership Committee: Lee Williams and Justin Olerud (see their artist statements and photos above.)

**next meeting** Betty Pillsbury offered to host the meeting. Date to be determined.

**many thanks** to Olivia Eielson for hosting the meeting

Respectfully submitted by Barbara Stevens Strauss.

## norway day festival Fort Mason, San Francisco April 30 - May 1, 2011

Exhibiting Artists: Ellen Faris, Justin Olerud, Anne Oseberg, Helene Sobol and Stevens Strauss

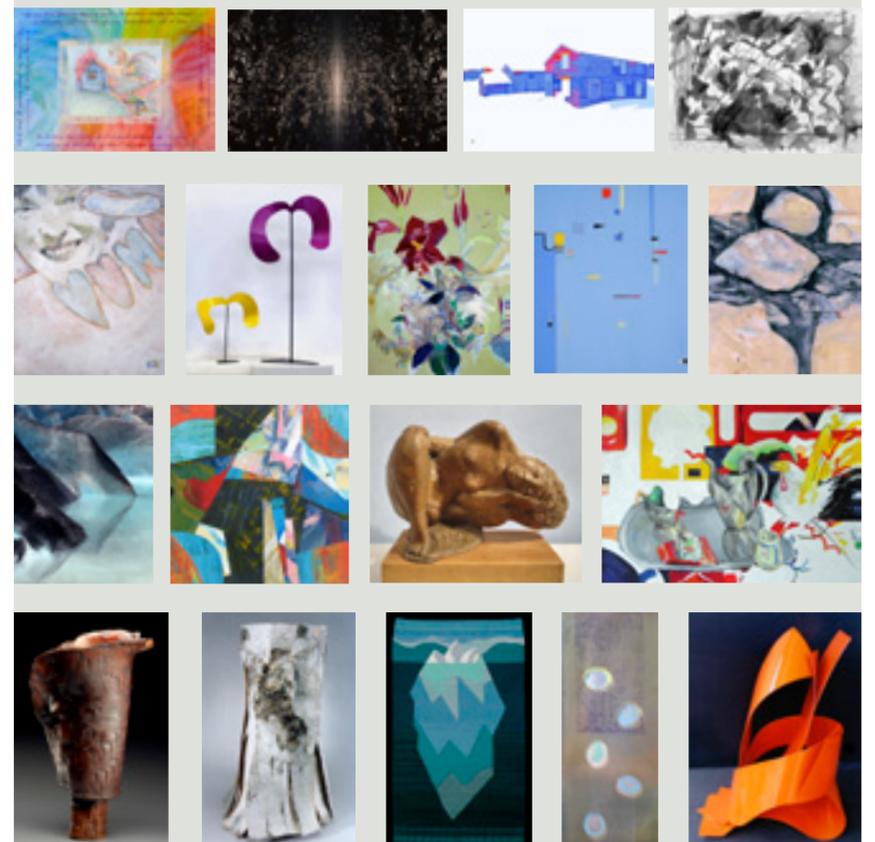
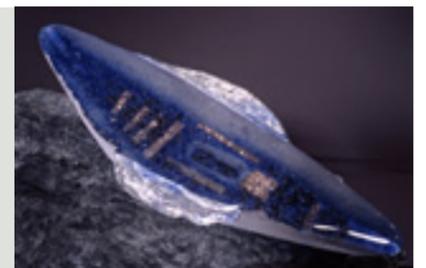


Left to right: Anne Oseberg, Helene Sobol and Ellen Faris

## our art on display until Nov. 15, 2011

Scandinavian Cultural Center,  
Pacific Lutheran University,  
Tacoma, WA  
[www.plu.edu/scancenter/](http://www.plu.edu/scancenter/)

**view the exhibition online at**  
[nordic5arts.com](http://nordic5arts.com)



Exhibition (partial) Top: Patricia Bengtson-Jones; 1st row: Diane Rusnak, Jason Engelund, Ellen Faris, Loren Rehbock; 2nd row: Justin Olerud, Russell Herrman, Pat Fingado, Marc Ellen Hamel, Lee Williams; 3rd row: Helene Sobol, Mark Erickson, Betty Rasicott Pillsbury, Olivia Eielson; 4th row: Stevens Strauss, Norma Fox, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Maj-Britt Hilstrom, Kati Casida

The nordic 5 arts NEWSBRIEF is published in spring and fall. Edited and designed by Helene Sobol.

The publication supports and promotes artists with Nordic heritage in the San Francisco Bay Area. Subscription \$10; membership dues \$25.  
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