

Pastel WORLD 2017

Unconventional landscapes. Contemplative portraits. Quiet interiors. Bold marks. Confident color. It's all here in this selection of 14 paintings—just a few highlights from an incredible pastel exhibition.

BY ANNE HEVENER

EVERY TWO YEARS, when the International Association of Pastel Societies (IAPS) meets for its biennial convention in Albuquerque, N.M., pastel lovers are treated to the PastelWorld Exhibition—an inspiring display that combines the IAPS Annual Juried Exhibition and the IAPS Master Circle Exhibition. This year, the result was a showcase of 184 exceptional works of pastel.

A number of distinguished artists participated in the jurying of this expansive show. Tony Allain, Tom Christopher and Diane Rappisi were the jurors of selection and artist Rae Smith the Judge of Awards for the 30th Juried Exhibition. For the Fourth Master Circle Exhibition, jurors of selection included artists

Gwenneth Barth-White, Debora L. Stewart and Margaret Evans, and Albert Handell served as the Judge of Awards. Their combined efforts produced a stunning collection of pastel paintings that offered an astonishing diversity of style and expression and a level of technical proficiency that was sometimes jaw-dropping.

On these pages, you'll find 12 of my personal favorites from the show—along with the artists' own insights into the work. If there's a common thread to my choices, it may be a strong sense of story. These are pieces that not only caught my eye, but also grabbed my heart. Some were award-winners, but most were not, which only proves the considerable talent that was represented in this exhilarating exhibition.

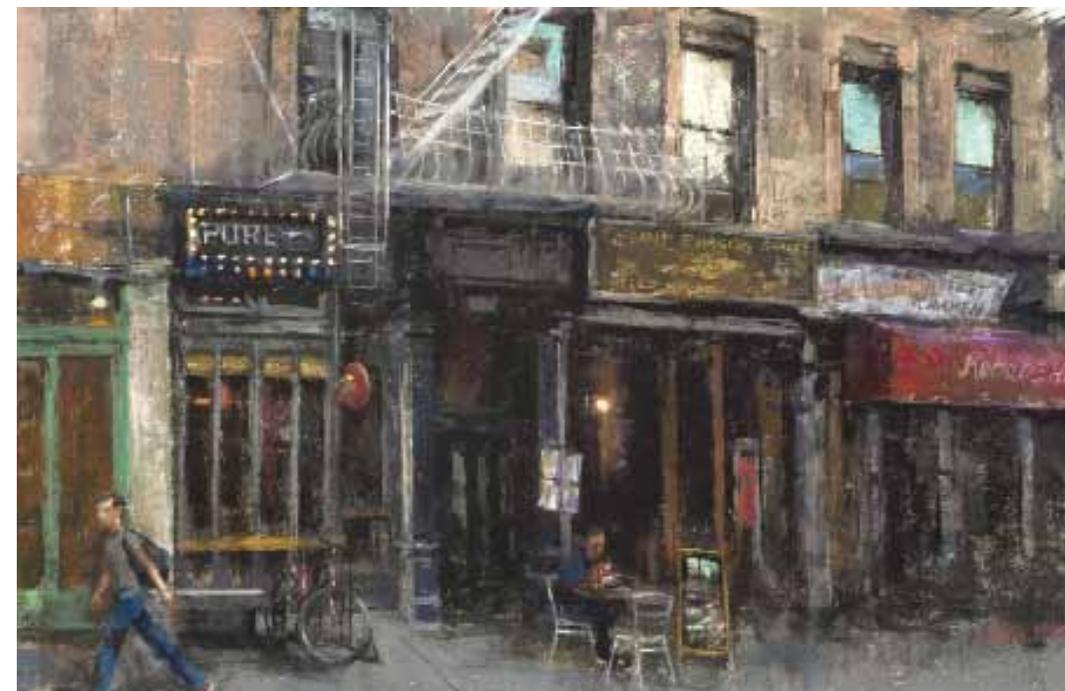


The Ancient Houses (32x15) • In spite of the age and deterioration of the buildings Zhao depicts, the artist's true subject here is beauty—brilliantly enhanced by his dramatic use of light and shadow.

BOXIN ZHAO China Pastel Network

"From the city, I have to travel by buses, ferries and a train transfer to reach my hometown. The arduous journey involves many stops. I pass through several ancient towns along the way.

The architecture of these places is replete with traces of the past; the sunshine revealing the glory of history. I believe that experiences and creations complement one another. My memories collected during these trips were present throughout the whole painting process of this piece, and remain clear even now."



Hell's Kitchen (18x28) • I felt that Mertz's streetscape had a number of invitation points, and lots of interesting elements to keep me in its grip.

NANCIE KING MERTZ Pastel Society of America

"*Hell's Kitchen* is a studio piece created from reference photos taken while I was teaching a

plein air workshop on the streets of New York City. The grittiness of the city fascinates me. I often try to soften it a bit by adding a touch of the human element."



ANN SANDERS
Pastel Society of the West Coast

“We were behind schedule on our way to a Mono Lake painting trip. The reward for being late was this spectacular sunset along California Highway 395. We pulled over for a quick pencil sketch and some photos in the hope that we’d be able to remember the colors and the feeling of solitude and peace when we’d get to our easels.”

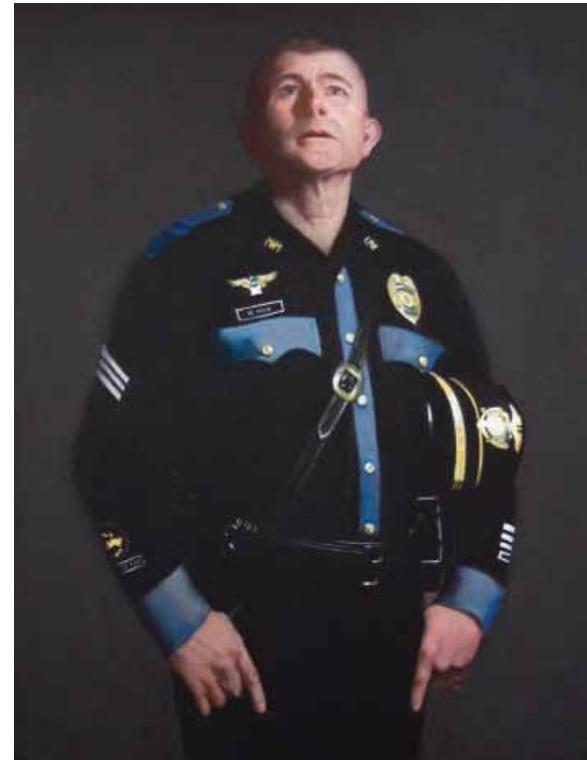
Owens Valley Clouds (16x20) • Sanders’ lovely landscape may be quiet, but it has the power to stop viewers in their tracks and demand that they soak in the serenity.

RAY HASSARD
Pastel Society of America

“In November 2016 I joined a group of about 15 artists for a week-long trip to Cuba. Since we were a fairly large group, we had to go to some places with a guide each day. One of our visits—the one that made the biggest impression on me—was to an organization dedicated to preserving and restoring the crumbling old buildings of Havana. Young Cubans are trained in different facets of restoration, such as tile work or plaster casting. In one room, this young man was concentrating quietly on his task. I never saw him look up and wondered if he was even aware of us. The light and his attitude made me think of paintings by Vermeer.”



The Cuban Carpenter (11x14) • I love an interior, probably because they seem especially suited to storytelling—in this case, Hassard’s depiction of a modest workplace and a deeply focused artisan, working at his craft.



JOHN PHILBIN DOLAN
Pastel Society of New Mexico

“This is a painting of the father of my son’s girlfriend. With all the media attention geared toward policemen lately, it’s a painting I felt needed to be painted. He’s a tough cop, but also a sensitive dad around his daughter. I also felt the title enabled viewers to have their own interpretation based on their own experiences with policemen.”



SHUHUI LONG
China Pastel Network

“The model for my painting is a young woman who went to the same university as I did. I deliberated over her demeanor and gesture, as a way to express her personality. After forming a general idea, I added colors and the bounced, soft lights from my imagination during the painting process. It was an experiment full of surprises in which I explored the interactions of color, space, light and shadow.”

The Other Side (31x25) • Between the pose and the uniform, there’s a striking formality to Dolan’s portrait that evokes the old masters, an impression that’s enhanced by the expressive, light-struck face that bends toward the heavens.

The Girl in White (32x22) • Long’s portrait felt so delicate and yet so confident at the same time. In addition to the strong draftsmanship on display, the painting possesses an emotional core that can’t be forgotten.

THE WINNER’S CIRCLE

Congratulations to all of the artists whose work was shown at the 2017 PastelWorld Exhibition. A particular shout-out to the following artists whose pastels were singled out for awards and honors:

Award-Winners in the 30th Juried Exhibition

- Prix de Pastel: Haihong Jin, *Wetlands*
- Gold: Edgar Carabio, *Vendor*
- Silver: Junhua Xu, *An Alley of Solitude 1*

- Bronze: Tara Will, *Chasing the Light*
- Founder’s Award: Annie Chirieleison, *Café Morning*
- The Maggie Price Award of Excellence in Pastel: Carol Strockwasson, *Down by the Tracks*
- Honorable Mention: Dorothy Carringi, *Mia at Eleven*
- Honorable Mention: Kathleen McDonnell, *Morning Walk*
- Honorable Mention: Jeri Greenberg, *Berries in Glass*
- Honorable Mention, Jacob Aguir, *Soft Afternoon*

Awards in the Fourth Master Circle Exhibition

- Prix de Pastel: John Philbin Dolan, *The Other Side*
- Gold: Helen Kleczynski, *Keith’s Ladders, No. 2*
- Silver: Nancie King Mertz, *Hell’s Kitchen*
- Bronze: Jane McGraw-Teubner, *Kicking Up Some Sand*
- The Maggie Price Award of Excellence in Pastel: Tatijana Jacinkiw, *Shadows Beneath*
- The Handell Award of Excellence: Tom Christopher, *Winter Grasses*

- Founder’s Award: Claudia Post, *Smokin’ in Cuba*
- Honorable Mention: Isabelle Lim, *Village Boys, No. 48*
- Honorable Mention: Kathy Hildebrandt: *The Making of Mona*
- Honorable Mention: Frederick Somers: *Timeless Wonders*
- Honorable Mention: William Schneider, *Sweet Sixteen*
- Honorable Mention: Ray Hassard, *The Cuban Carpenter*



JANICE WALL
Northwest Pastel Society

“On a sunny day at a park by the sea, I made several quick sketches with black marker. I took no photos. Later, I painted *Red Shirt* in the studio, focusing on shapes, values and a bit of mystery. I enjoy this way of working, rather than relying on photos to guide me. So much is spontaneously rendered when painting from sketches and memory, and more attention given to observation. My objective is to simplify information and give the painting what it needs rather than what reality dictates.”

Red Shirt (9x12) • I love how much Wall was able to accomplish with each and every mark, turning a simple scene into an engaging picture.

DIANE SAWYER
Pastel Painters Society of Cape Cod

“Several years ago, as I was landing at O’Hare Airport, I glanced out the window. We were descending over the outskirts of Chicago at dusk; the plane at a sharp angle to the highways filled with evening commuters below. I quickly grabbed my phone and got a couple of shots just before we hit the runway. When I went to paint it, I wanted to keep the piece loose and abstract, adding just enough detail to allow the viewer to fill in the rest. I created a hand-prepared ground, mostly black, with lighter areas for the highway and sky. It was great fun working on this surface, using the lights from the cars and distant buildings to give the illusion of dramatic deep space.



Making the Final Approach (24x36) • The tilt in Sawyer’s unconventional composition adds to the impression of immense space. The painting captures well that odd feeling of detachment you can have in flight when you’re aware of not being earthbound.

CAROL STROCK WASSON
Chicago Pastel Painters

“I’ve painted this area, which is just a few blocks from my studio, many times, usually en plein air. One of the nice things about living in a small, rural town is the ability to set up just about anywhere, even in the middle of the road. I painted *Down By the Tracks* in my studio, working from my plein air sketches and color studies.”



Down By the Tracks (18x24) • I love Strock Wasson’s composition with directionals that lead a viewer through this painting. The subject isn’t an obvious choice, which is a big part of the painting’s appeal.



Napster (16x24) • I love a pastel that looks like a pastel. All the variety of Strand’s mark-making, the playful vantage point and the delicious color add up to an altogether delightful composition.

SALLY STRAND
Pastel Society of Southern California

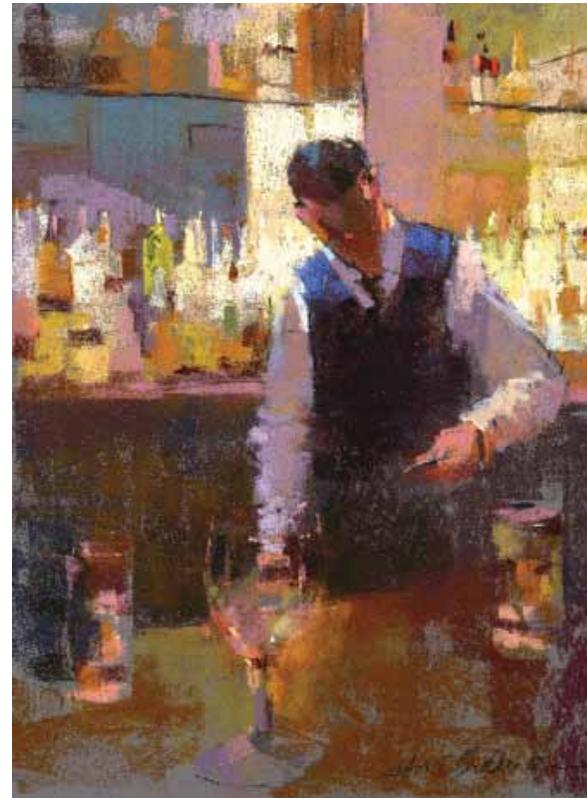
“Swimming is one of my favorite ways to exercise, and the idea for this painting came as I was swimming laps, watching people around the edge of the pool from the water. I’m trying different compositions and not necessarily abiding by all the rules I learned. Here’s what Robert K. Carsten wrote about this work in the May 2017 issue of *The Artist’s Magazine*: ‘Strand crams the figure up front and boldly crops him off the right side. She flattens the background elements of sky and grass by not including transitions in value or saturation, and the result is a play on spatial depth. The background simultaneously appears to recede and compress forward against the foreground elements, creating a dynamic tension, pushing and pulling forms through the illusory space.’”



RITA KIRKMAN
Pastel Society of America

“The idea for this painting started with a photo of my daughter from one of the many vacations from years past. Audrey was curled up on the hotel bed as was her habit. I was attracted by the light and put my camera into action. The shot caught my eye again last year when digging deep for ideas in my photo files. It probably stayed buried for as long as it had because of the absolutely hideous hotel bedspread (not shown!). Looking with fresh eyes, I realized it just needed some cropping and some new drapery. I threw a sheet across my own bed and experimented with various swags. When I was done composing, I liked the standing-on-end egg shape and the powerful red color. Musing on that and the inexorable passing of time (Audrey is now 17) helped bring to life the title of this piece.”

Transience of Innocence (26x19) • Between the creative design, the scrumptious color, the dramatic contrasts and the delightful model, I don't know what's not to love about Kirkman's piece, which—incidentally—was selected for the cover of the IAPS souvenir program.



ALINE ORDMAN
Pastel Society of America

“On a lovely weekend in Boston, I sat at the bar with my friend. The lighting, the atmosphere, the hits of light that flicked off bottles and the white shirt and dark vest of the bartender caught my eye. While he was looking at his phone, I snuck some photos. I started the piece using vine charcoal to rough in the design and started creating broad shapes with values. Once the general design was mapped in, I started to put in the details, making sure my colors were the right temperatures and intensity, so it continued to respect the original design.”



Bartender (16x12) • Ordman sets the perfect stage for her figure with a glow of light in a boozy background. There's not an extraneous mark to be seen in this loose and lush pastel gem.

Hearty Girl (15x11) • I'm in awe of Wang's exquisite rendering of the girl's skin, as well as the somewhat ethereal setting, and the serenity of expression. If I could, though, I'd like to re-translate the title to *Girl With Heart*, which I think expresses the emotional power of the portrait.



DEBORAH QUINN-MUNSON
Pastel Society of America

“The diagonal lines, suggestive of various directions, captivated me in this scene. The light source, enhanced by the arrow, suggested one direction; the gaze of the figure another; and the wheels of the bike yet another. I'm always interested in the arrangement of shapes, values and colors in a painting. Finding the balance between large, simple shapes and small, complex shapes was my first challenge. Additionally, the small amounts of dark and light values balance the large area of mid-value, as does the small amount of high-chroma color within a neutral color palette. In an effort to enhance the figure, I made some edges sharper while others I kept soft.”

One Way (17x18) • I found Quinn-Munson's simple but striking design utterly arresting. And lest we think that intriguing bike shadow is the main idea, we actually have an arrow pointing to our real subject. Love it!

BO WANG
China Pastel Network

“Quiet and introverted, the girl in the painting—my daughter—dreams of her future. She wears a dress in traditional Chinese colors with embroidery and batik patterns on it. Her Chinese comportment suggests a silent conversation with the audience.”

To learn more about the 2017 PastelWorld Exhibiton, visit the IAPS website at iapspastel.org.

ANNE HEVENER is the Editor-in-Chief of *Pastel Journal*. Her visit to Albuquerque last June marked her sixth IAPS convention.

“As artists we do important work. Our creations celebrate the best of what it is to be human. Our efforts elevate our journey through life, and we do indeed make this world a better place.”

—LIZ HAYWOOD-SULLIVAN, IAPS PRESIDENT EMERITUS