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Old City Jewish Art Center a project of Jewish Heritage Programs
119 N. 3rd Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106, 215-923-1222 www.ocjac.org

“Point of View Art Exhibition”

June 2th - 24th, 2010

Biographies

Natalie Eisen & Stephanie Lubin

Artists who work together to complete one piece are considered highly unconventional, or “outré”. Stephanie Lubin and Natalie Eisen are two artists with different styles and subject matter interests, who look at images in a similar humorous vision.

Stephanie Lubin graduated from Philadelphia College of Art, now the University of the Arts. She worked as an Art Therapist and in various corporate positions. Her individual work focuses on bold expressionistic portraits of people whose “story” she wants to tell through her imagery. Natalie Eisen is a Hussian School of Art graduate who began her career in advertising and design. She eventually built her own decorative arts business specializing in trompe l’oeil and murals. Nature and its endless subject matter are her continuing inspiration for landscape and floral pieces’. Their unique collaborative work combines their individual strengths and creates a bold cohesive style. Outre Arts original mixed media Judaica works are in private and synagogue collections.

Point of View

Artists by nature are observers and interpreters. What they see are endless possibilities in creative expression and never paint the same subject in exactly the same manner.

The styles and interpretations in our work represent the personal expression that comes from our individual creativity. As artists we see the world differently, telling our stories in paintings of people and places. Like Joshua and Caleb, our collaborative work finds the favorable attributes and humor in the subject matter. Confidence in our abilities keeps the ego out of the work teaching us to interpret what we see in a more objective way. We create with one mind producing a seamless piece of artwork that appears to be drawn by the same hand.

As artists we are criticized for our interpretations, techniques and subjects. As creative individuals we are driven to paint what we know as true. When you find the truth in yourself, then you are delivered.

Gail S. Kotel

I have always been drawn to the face. As early as High School, I completed a series of watercolors of all the people in my life of whom I was related to or intimate with from Texas, to Philadelphia and NYC. Over a year’s time, at least 100 paintings were completed. I next moved to woodcuts, followed by monoprints; but as time went on, hand printing yielded equal parts paint on the paper and the glass, which was frustrating. This compelled me to leave the paint on the glass, still working within the process of monoprinting. But the single pane of glass was not as compelling as multiple panels (like grids for murals), and thus my love affair with windows was born!!! And as time went on 4 became 6 and even 16 panes. The complexity of fitting the subject into the panes was of great interest to me. The whole tension of who was looking at who – viewer or sitter – creates a complex struggle with voyeurism which has become the nature of the work.

My newest direction breaks through the glass taking the face apart while holding it together, creating yet another dimension of tension, moving in front, behind and out from the window.

Depending on whom you are and where you are in your life at that present moment in time, each face takes on a different meaning. Are you looking in on them; are they catching you? What else is behind that window? That is all dependent on your point of view.

Deborah Schafer

Deborah Schafer is a multifaceted artist whose work ranges from representational rendering to whimsical invention and performance. An accomplished fine artist and painter in the classic tradition of the masters, she is also a published humorous illustrator and an internationally awarded caricaturist. A graduate from the Tyler School of Art, among her most valued post graduate study are the years she spent learning with Nelson Shanks, renowned realist painter and founder of Philadelphia's Studio Incamminati. Since 1976, she has exhibited nationally and internationally in both group and one-woman shows, her work is part of many private and corporate collections.

Deborah grew up in Allentown, PA where she began her art career as a quick sketch portrait artist in Hess's Department Store upon graduation from high school. The daughter of a Rabbi and sabra mother who was a member of the Israeli Hagganah and in the 1948 war of independence, she is also the fourth generation in a family of well known Israeli/Russian artists. Born into the art world, her great-grand uncle, artist and visionary Professor Boris Schatz, founded the Bezalel School of Art in Jerusalem and established what has become known as the Israel Museum of Art.

Also known as "Art Girl," Deborah and her company have entertained at private and corporate events, as well as owning "quick sketch" retail businesses on the Jersey Shore boardwalks from Wildwood to Atlantic City's Steel Pier. However, since 1996 Ms. Schafer began what has become some of her most rewarding work: She brings relief and delight in the form of humor and "positive side effects" to cancer patients in area hospitals and cancer treatment centers by drawing their caricatures during their treatment.

In the spirit of "Art in the service of healing", in 2008 Ms. Schafer received a grant from Children's hospital of Philadelphia for a pilot program to paint portraits of children who have been undergoing facial and cranial plastic surgery. The future exhibition of these portraits will open at the U. of P. Hospital in October 2010.

Visitors to this OCJAC exhibition will see the conceptual progression presented in Ms. Schafer's "Psycho-Ambiguity Suite" which has never before been exhibited in its entirety. Viewers are invited to participate not only as observers themselves in response, but also to play. Please note the work entitled "Steinway", an exercise of optical illusion in "Point of View". Deborah invites the viewer to make hands-on use of the black guiding placards attached to the piece in order to manually assist seeing and understanding each step of the staircase in this hand colored lithograph.