

**MANCHESTER ART ASSOCIATION  
ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20  
May 20, 2020**

It is important to note at the beginning of this report that the last three meetings of our standard year (March, April, May) were cancelled due to the Corona Virus Pandemic of 2020. This global pandemic of a novel Covid-19 virus which has of this writing no cures or vaccines, required a general shut down of the country. Group meetings of any size were (and as of this writing still are) not permitted by order of the Governor.

MAA's outgoing officers and board members for the fiscal year 2019/2020 are Carolyn Emerson, President; Sue Masse, Vice President; Ellen Chaponis/Rhea Sutter, Secretary; Judy Burnham, Treasurer; and Mary Bollash, Jeff Blazejovsky, Normand Charlette, Jerry Madara, Jan McCollum, and Austin Pouliot as Board Members-at-large.

Upon approval of the Nominating Committee's Slate by the Board of Directors, the following Officers and Board Members were elected for the 2020/2021 year. There being no Annual Meeting due to the pandemic, voting was conducted by internet ballot over a three-week period, and sealed on May 20, 2020, the date when our Annual Meeting would have occurred. Elected were Sue Masse, President; Jeff Reid, Vice President; Eric Vogel, Treasurer; Judy Burnham, Secretary; and Normand Charlette, Don Ludwig, Jan McCollum, Austin Pouliot and Carolyn Emerson, ex officio, as Board Members-at-large. These positions were assumed immediately after the election. A complete list of officers and committee chairs is posted online on MAA's website under "About – Governance."

Many thanks to MAA's Board of Directors who over the past year worked with our membership to support our mission: "Bringing artists and art-loving people together, encouraging artistic growth in the area, and fostering interest in all forms of artistic expression." With membership dues and good participation in our workshops our financial status has remained strong throughout the year. Some highlights of the year in addition to our monthly meeting activities:

- "An Evening with the Impressionists" fundraiser (postponed)
- Launch of new website
- Full use of our Open Studio space by non-members as well as members
- Exhibit opportunities at the Manchester Town Hall, Manchester Hospital, and the South Windsor Library
- Curating exhibits for WORK\_SPACE Galleries
- Sale of original design, all occasion note cards
- Increase in Scholarship Money to \$5500
- Holiday Party
- A time for Artwork

Membership increased by about 10% over last year. Monthly meetings were well attended and participation in MAA exhibits and activities has been high. Due to the hard work and dedication of its board and members, MAA remains a vibrant and supportive artist community. The Board thanks all MAA members for their support and participation this year. We also had the support of many others within the community for which we are grateful. A description of the year's activities and accomplishments follows.

### **NOMINATIONS**

Thanks to this year's Nominating Committee, headed by Carolyn Gimbrone with assistance from Judy Burnham and Emilie Beckwith, for their diligence in seeking members to serve as officers, board members-at-large, and committee chairs. Thanks, as well, to all those who agreed to serve when asked. It definitely takes a village.

### **MEMBERSHIP**

Thanks to Sue Masse and Deb Parker who handled membership duties, arriving early to meetings to pass out name tags and receive dues. Keeping a running accounting of membership numbers. At year end we were at 116

members of which 30 plus were new in this year. Attendance at meetings varied between 33 and 57 members.

## **MEETINGS**

MAA is grateful to The Arbors for the use of their auditorium for our evening meetings, and for the services they provide on our behalf.

Our monthly meetings this year were very well attended to the point of raising concerns that we may be outgrowing our home at The Arbors. We are in the process of researching possible alternate venues.

Thanks to Gail Crook and Theresa Harrington, hospitality committee chairs, for keeping us well provided with refreshments at our meetings and to all those who brought homemade treats. Joyce Armentano, Emilie Beckwith, Doris Phillips, Peggy Cramer, Jeff Reid, Marianne Cornish, Robin Simpson, Neill Monteserin, Gail Crook and Theresa Harrington all contributed goodies to our refreshment table during the course of the year.

Program Chairs, Joyce Armentano and Carolyn Gimbrone put together a year of engaging demonstrations for an enthusiastic membership. Our roster of artists covered many mediums:

- September – Jacqueline Jones – Oils
- October – Michael Angelis – Monotype printing
- November – Jamilah Zebarth – Henna painting
- January – Carmen Canal – Interactive Drawing
- February – Barbara Healy – Acrylics
- March, April, May meetings cancelled due to pandemic

Our December holiday meeting was held at the Manchester Country Club, with members each invited to bring a guest. Thanks to Normand Charlette for once again making all the arrangements for the party, and for suggesting that door prizes be given during the course of the evening. Board members Jerry Madara, Jeff Blazejovsky, Jan McCollum, and Austin Pouliot were charged with supplying the door prizes, a mixture of gag gifts, holiday décor, and useful art materials. Our customary Art-of-the-Month competition was held and had by far the greatest number of submissions ever. The membership is to be congratulated for donating 194 dry and canned goods at the holiday meeting that were provided to the MACC food pantry. Members and guests filled the event room to capacity and a grand time was had by all.

## **EXHIBITS**

Our 9 exhibit opportunities during the year were all met with excellent participation by the members. Chris Larson and Judy Burnham headed the exhibit committee for the Town Hall, while Nijole Currie, Jim Oliphant, and Donna McMahon took care of the Manchester Memorial Hospital Gallery. Many helpers regularly assisted in hanging the quarterly change-outs at both of these venues. Thanks to Ellen Chaponis, Austin Pouliot, Janet Heller, Betty Gustafson, Don Ludwig, Emilie Beckwith, Jeff Blazejovsky, Carolyn Emerson and Jan McCollum (who provided all of our exhibit signage) for showing up when and wherever needed. These rotating shows continue to be well received by the public. In keeping with the single-medium exhibits at the Town Hall this year's exhibits were:

- Oil and Acrylic – June – Sept
- Watercolor - Sept – Dec
- Photography - Dec – March
- All Mediums - March - June

THE 15<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEMBER JURIED SHOW was held in September at the South Windsor Library, ably juried by Doug Gillette. Judy Burham and Betty Gustafson were the co-chairs for this exhibit, overseeing the hanging, and planning a wonderful reception. The list of winners follows. Watercolor Division: 1<sup>st</sup> Place – “Chrysler Windsor” by Jeff Blazejovsky; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – “Eggs in a Basket” by Mary Andrews; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place - “Brilliance” by Mary Andrews; Honorable mention – “June Blooms” by Rita Borden. Oil and Acrylic Division: 1<sup>st</sup> Place – “Barn Owl #7” by Jerry Madara; 2<sup>nd</sup>

Place – “Sunny Street” by Micheline Champagne; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – “Villas in the Hills of Fiesole” by Rhea Sutter; Hon Men. – “Abstraction” by Sara Reid. Pastel, Etc., Division: 1<sup>st</sup> Place – “Quiet Confidence” by Eric Vogel; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – “Elizabeth Park Bridge” by Helena Deary; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – “Serenity After the Storm” by Helena Deary. Hon. Men. – “Sunrise Hill” by Adrianna Young. Photography Division: 1<sup>st</sup> Place - “3 to 6” by Normand Charlette; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place – “Dark-Eyed Beauty” by Jim Oliphant; 3<sup>rd</sup> Place – “Mossgate” by Douglas Willey; Hon. Men. – “Florida Delight” by Gail Crook. Best-in-Show: “Pike’s Market” by Carolyn Emerson (subject photo – Normand Charlette).

WORK\_SPACE GALLERIES. This past year, in conjunction with the Town of Manchester’s WORK\_SPACE Galleries, MAA took on a special project. Carolyn Gimbrone and Carolyn Emerson met with Chris Silver (Town of Manchester, Dept. of Leisure, Families, Recreation) and Stacey Zackin (WORK\_SPACE Manager) to discuss MAA assuming curation duties of the WORK\_SPACE Gallery for the span of one year. Funding was seen as a major impediment to operating the gallery. C. Emerson and S. Zackin submitted a number of grant proposals in hopes of receiving help with funding. Fortunately, several of them came through. Carolyn Emerson chaired the curating responsibilities, and with an abundance of help from the hanging committee, repaired and repainted the walls at WORK\_SPACE again and again, hung beautiful, interesting, at times provocative artwork, arranged and set up receptions, and offered otherwise unavailable weekend viewing opportunities to the general public. The roster of exhibits was as follows:

- July, August – Auto Fueled Show (W\_S responsibility)
- September – Jerry Madara (Acrylics) & Art Scholz (Watercolors)
- October – Veronique Fournier Wynne (Oils) & Jane Penfield (Pastels)
- November, December – Perspectives: Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (Juried Show)
- January – Better Manchester Magazine Cover Art (W\_S responsibility)
- February, March – High School Exhibit (Cheney Tech, East Catholic HS, Great Path HS, Manchester HS)
- April, May – Shauna Shane & Kayla Farrell (multi-media) Cancelled due to pandemic
- June, July – Veterans’ Exhibit (Fate unknown as of this writing due to pandemic)

SYMMETRY. A fourth gallery space, the Symmetry galleries, under the capable guidance of Normand Charlette , had one exhibit this year. The works of members Mary Andrews, Laura Kinlock, Robin Simpson, and Gennadiy Goldenshteyn, along with guest artist Janine Roberts, were featured through the summer months. Symmetry once again provided a fine reception. Since that time there has been a hold on new shows. It is hoped that the absence of changing artwork on the Symmetry walls will tweak their desire to have future exhibits.

ONLINE GALLERY. Our online gallery showcases members’ artwork. Guidelines for participating in the gallery can be found at the top of the website gallery page. MAA Members also participated on an individual basis in local and state juried shows as well solo and group exhibits

ART OF THE MONTH, an ongoing opportunity for members to show new artwork, continued to be an important part of every monthly meeting. Co-chairs Jim Oliphant and Donna McMahan checked in and organized the hanging of the paintings each meeting, announcing winners at the close of the business portion. Work brought by members was judged by the demo artist of the evening, the four winning selections then distributed to participating libraries, banks, and the Arbors, to hang for the month. First place Art-of-the- Month winners were awarded a \$50 Jerry Artarama gift card, limited to one card per person, per year, the card passing on to the second-place winner if the first-place winner had previously received one. Winners for the year are shown under Exhibits on the website.

BE INSPIRED, Normand Charlette’s gift to the MAA community, has been a very popular project over the last two years. Norm supplied a slew of his photographs last May at the Annual Meeting which many members picked up for use as subject matter in their work. The resulting paintings appeared often during the course of this year, artists crediting Norm when their work was hung, Norm posting the paintings on the website beside his corresponding photos. We hope this new tradition will continue when we are able to meet again.

A TIME FOR ARTWORK. Unable to meet in March, April and May, daily art postings through the online newsletter were initiated. Members were invited to submit pieces of art that they were working on during the long period of

social isolation. Each day Chris Larson posted photos of new paintings, drawings, crafts, and even a little pandemic era poetry, with associated email links to enable comments to be relayed to the artists. This project proved to be very popular, drawing a good deal of participation and whole-hearted appreciation from the membership.

## **COMMUNICATIONS**

Many thanks for the vital work that our communications volunteers continue to do for all of us.

MAA SECRETARY: Ellen Haines -Chaponis was our elected Secretary – note taker at all meetings, both Board and Member. Unfortunately, personal circumstances led to her resignation in late fall, and Rhea Sutter kindly stepped into the position for the remainder of the year. Thank you both for serving MAA so reliably in this important capacity.

CHEER: Special thanks to Carol Bryant, MAA’s chairperson for Cheer, who sent cards on behalf of MAA to members who were hospitalized or sick.

PUBLICITY for all member activities and shows was competently handled by Susan Aitner , Chris Larson , and Barbara Pinti. These unsung heroes merit special attention for it goes without saying that without the invaluable tasks they perform, we could not function.

Susan Aitner has been our website manager for many years. She keeps it updated on a daily basis, assembling all pertinent information and formatting it with photos and text. Her ability to keep it fresh and visually interesting is laudable.

Chris Larson sends out the ‘e-news,’ our all-important newsletter, which is emailed to members announcing upcoming events and activities, with links to related materials. Her job has been especially important during the pandemic. Members have been invited to send in art projects they have worked on during this time, and Chris has posted them daily. Many members have written to say how much they enjoy and look forward to these daily bits of creativity and connection.

Barbara Pinti takes care of getting announcements out to the world beyond MAA via newspapers, radio, television and internet vehicles.

## **WORKSHOPS**

MAA is grateful to Chairperson Emilie Beckwith for the enticing schedule of workshops she arranged this year. Income from our workshops goes toward funding the art scholarships we award each spring. Workshops were coordinated with meeting demonstrations when possible to encourage participation. It is helpful to observe an artist’s style and teaching manner before signing up for an extended commitment of time. MAA has attempted to keep workshop fees at a very reasonable rate, enlisting the artist’s help and cooperation with the understanding that any profits MAA realizes are a primary source of our scholarship awards. Our workshop statistics this year speak for themselves:

- |              |                  |             |               |                 |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| • September: | Jacqueline Jones | Oil (Waves) | Attendees: 9  | Profit: \$1,075 |
| • October:   | Robin McCahill   | Wet Felting | Attendees: 7  | Profit: \$ 345  |
| • October:   | Karen Israel     | Composition | Attendees: 6  | Profit: \$ 150  |
| • November:  | Ellen Chaponis   | Collage     | Attendees: 5  | Profit: \$ 325  |
| • January:   | Carolyn Emerson  | Watercolor  | Attendees: 15 | Profit: \$1,500 |
| • February:  | Barbara Healy    | Oil/Acrylic | Attendees: 8  | Profit: \$ 900  |
| • March:     | Cancelled        |             |               |                 |
| • April:     | Cancelled        |             |               |                 |

TOTAL PROFIT: \$4,295

## **WEBSITE**

This year Chris Larson took on a task that had gone wanting for several years, that of creating a new MAA Website. Our former website had served us well for a very long time, but needed updating to a clearer, simpler format, more easily navigated by the viewer, as well as the Website Manager. After seeking bids from website developers, it was evident that our treasury would be mightily impacted were we to choose a professional company. Chris then stepped up, volunteering to give it her best effort. Her 'best effort' proved to be nothing short of spectacular. We are indebted to Chris, assisted by Sergio Monteserin, for a beautiful new website, original address preserved, with all sorts of new features compatible with today's internet usage.

## **FINANCES**

Judy Burnham as MAA's Treasurer kept precise records of our income and expenses throughout the year. The treasury stood at \$17,200 in July 2019, and ended with \$13,700 in May. In September, 2019, as suggested by the previous Board of Directors, the current board moved to increase scholarship monies for the 2020 spring awards by \$1000, bringing the total to \$5500.

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Thanks to Sue Hollister who has handled the MAA High School Scholarship Application process since its inception. The High School recipient of MAA's \$1500 scholarship this year is a student from East Catholic High School, Michael Bierbaum. He will be attending Montclair State University studying industrial and product design. You can get a glimpse of this fine young man by going to <http://linkedin.com/in/michael-bierbaum>.

MCC scholarships this year were handled differently as a result of the pandemic. Connecticut schools and colleges were closed in March. The customary awards ceremony at MCC was therefore cancelled, and we were unable to hand scholarship recipients their individual awards. \$4000 was provided to the MCC Foundation for art award purposes. To date, we do not know the names or the number of recipients and assume that information will be forthcoming when available.

## **FUNDRAISING**

Our guaranteed funding sources are comprised of our annual membership dues and workshop profits.

Our big FUNDRAISER this year was intended to be "An Evening with the Impressionists," a movie, exhibit, food and wine informal gala scheduled for April 25, 2020. Unfortunately, the date fell within the quarantine, and has thus been rescheduled for this coming fall in October. Sue Masse headed this fundraiser and has covered every detail from major to miniscule with her remarkable organizational skills. It is ready to go. Committee members helping with this event are Natalie Chirico, Gail Crook, Bonnie Lindland, Don Ludwig, Deb Parker, Robin Simpson, Cindy Krupa, and Laura Kinlock. "Impressionists" is to be held at the UUS:E Meeting House in Manchester. It will feature artwork done in the impressionist style by members, a documentary of the impressionists' gardens, and a gala cocktail party. Ticket sales are open to the public as well as the membership. Ticket receipts are donations to MAA.

NOTECARDS, selected from entries by MAA members last spring and put into production over the summer were packaged and ready for sale at the September Meeting. By mid-season our expenses had been covered and by March our profit was just shy of \$400. There are approximately 90 packets left out of the original 250 packets of four 5 X 7 cards each (1000 individual cards printed in all). Thanks to Normand Charlette, who conceived of the notecard fundraiser and volunteered to receive and resize for publication all of the entries. The artists whose work was chosen for the four designs were Veronique Fournier-Wynne, Ellen Haines-Chaponis, Sue Masse, and Eric Vogel. Thanks to all who submitted designs, fifteen entries in all.

## **MEMBER SURVEY**

Sue Masse created and conducted an online member survey this past year, seeking opinions from the general membership as to their satisfaction levels with current activities, and ideas for future additions. Some good suggestions resulted, many of which have been or will be incorporated into the program as we go forward. The general response was gratifyingly positive and appreciative.

## **OPEN STUDIO**

Open Studio participation increased notably this year, and the numbers remained surprisingly steady throughout the months of operation. For those who are able to take advantage of this offering, every Wednesday is an anticipated occasion. We were looking forward to the summer months which Wednesdays were dismayingly unavailable last year but were to be ours this summer. Alas, once more the pandemic leaves that opportunity up in the air. Emilie Beckwith and Carolyn Emerson continue to oversee Open Studio Wednesdays. Fridays are available as well, but have not been utilized. Open Studio remains, as always, open to the public. It has proven to be a good recruitment tool for MAA.

## **FUTURE PLANS**

The board continues to strive to discern and meet the needs of the membership. The coming year will see an excellent roster of demo and workshop artists. Here are some events and activities we anticipate in addition to our regular program:

- Our Impressionist fundraiser, rescheduled for October 10, 2020
- Presence on social media
- Children's programming under the leadership of Mary Bollash
- Bonnie Lindland's project of MAA participation in the Hartford Atheneum's floral/painting competition and show
- Cyndi Krupa's project of an MAA 'artful' Christmas tree for the Festival of Trees

The Board is dedicated to working together to nurture the creative spirit of our members, to share our members' art with those around us, and to work with other organizations to enhance the arts in Manchester.

Respectfully submitted by the MAA Board 2019-20

### Note from the President:

I thank the board members, committee chairs and co-chairs for their continued commitment toward making MAA the best that it can be. The number of volunteer hours devoted to the planning and implementation of concepts and projects are uncountable. I have enjoyed and appreciated the thoughtful discussions at board meetings and the willingness of BOD members to take on challenges and tasks. Your time and energy have insured another successful year, despite the unexpected interruption of Covid-19. Thanks, also, to all the MAA members who participate in this wonderful organization. Without your enthusiasm and dedication, there would be no organization. You are the heart of MAA.

I am especially pleased to be handing over the gavel to Sue Masse for the coming year. Sue is everything a president should be – smart, thoughtful, capable, organized, resourceful and forward looking. Above all she is one of the finest human beings you will ever know. Good luck to you, Sue.

Carolyn Emerson