



WINDHAM REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL ARTSPECTRUM

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A Message from Cathy Shires, WRAC President

I hope everyone had an enjoyable New Year, whether you celebrated quietly or went to a big party. This year is special to us at WRAC because 2018 marks our 35th birthday. I can happily say that we will not be celebrating quietly! Longtime members may recall that we usually do a “Mystery Dinner” event every two years. The Board of Directors gave it careful consideration, and decided to host a social event that will bring the community together, especially for the occasion of our 35th year. Please mark your calendars for Saturday evening, April 28, 2018. We will be hosting a gathering at the Willimantic Elks Lodge banquet hall. We will be issuing invitations to our membership, and we hope everyone will be able to attend. We have a few special surprises in store for the evening, along with refreshments and entertainment. If any of you have memorabilia, photographs, or a story to share with us about WRAC in the past 35 years, please share it with us. We are putting together a “digital scrapbook” for everyone to see at the celebration. If you are able to help us in any way with our celebration, please let us know. We would be deeply grateful. We are also busy with other plans for the year. The After School Ballroom Dance program will begin on January 29th in two of the Windham schools. We are also sponsoring the transportation of 3rd and 5th grade students to the children’s symphony on April 4 and to the children’s opera on April 24. Please also reserve Friday, June 1st for our annual Member’s Art Show & Reception. I am very much looking forward to these events. This issue contains some interesting news about our recent Youth Music Competition, as well as some upcoming events in our greater community.

I wish everyone well for what remains of this winter.
Spring will be here before we know it!



With Gratitude

We are very grateful to the following donors who generously contributed to the Bette MacDonald Memorial Fund (as of December 29, 2017):

Harry & Honey Birkenruth
Jennifer P. Clark

Richard & Irene Brown
Carl & Julia Lindquist

Alan & Katherine Miller

All donations are used for the benefit of the After School Ballroom Dance program in the Windham schools and the SPARK (Saving Performing Arts, Reaching Kids) camp in the summer season. We are continuously accepting contributions. Donors

should mail a check to:

WRAC

P.O. Box 847

Willimantic CT 06226

(Please indicate that it is for the dance program in the “memo” portion of your check.)

Thank you for your generosity!

Young Artists Music Competition Award Winners

All the participants in the Young Artists Music Competition are to be heartily congratulated for their dedication and achievements, as well as for their courage in taking part!

In this, the 35th Anniversary year of WRAC and 32nd year that the competition was held, this is a meaningful time to take a moment to reflect on the spirit of fair play and inter-supportiveness which these talented and accomplished young musicians brought to this competition.

It was especially meaningful, to see how sincere and kind these students and their families and friends dealt with one another. Challenging surprises often occur at a live performance event. This year, these ranged from the momentary distraction of a page of music wobbling while being turned to some performers not fully hearing their accompanists to part of an instrument threatening to fall apart and needing to be ripped off during the performance! Backstage reactions of our performers experiencing these distractions were understandably varied (and, in each case, fully justified!) The offerings of consolation by fellow performers and backstage assistants (...reassuring words...hugs...pats on the back...) were



upliftingly thoughtful.

To then observe the performers visiting with each other, family and audience members while waiting for the judges' decisionsapplauding for each other as prizes were announced ..and then continuing to maintain this atmosphere of sincere good will toward one another was nothing short of inspiring!

We give our heartfelt thanks to all who took part in - assisted with - and came to be an audience for this very special event!

(Individual pictures and brief profiles of those who placed first in their division, and the participant who will solo with the Willimantic Orchestra in the Spring, will appear in the next issue of the ArtSpectrum.



Grades 7 - 9: Judges Awards

Grace Nieh
Bernie Odoy

Grades 10 - 12: String Instruments

1st Place - Percy Chen

2nd Place - Taylor Chen

3rd Place - Hannah Brule

Grades 10 - 12: Piano/Wind/Voice

1st Place - Abigail Edelman

2nd Place - Leslie Hisman

3rd Place - Anatole Keshwani

Special Awards

Edward D. Gerry Wind Instrument Award - Bernie Odoy (Alto Saxophone)

Edward D. Gerry String Instrument Award - Percy Chen (Violin)

Patricia Bellingham Music Fund Award - Grace Nieh (Piano)

Soloist, Willimantic Orchestra, Spring Concert - Percy Chen (Violin)

Artist in the Spotlight

For those of us in the work-a-day world, we often dream of that magic time of life called “retirement” followed by the awakening thought of what we will do once we reach that time of life. If you have ever had the pleasure of meeting Scott Rhoades, it is evident that he had a plan for his post-teaching years. First, he built an art studio in his back yard so that he could resume painting works of art. Now, several years into his life as a working artist, Scott is producing many award-winning paintings that are a delight to see.

Born in northern Maine, Scott grew up in Coventry, received his BA degree from Eastern CT State University and his MA degree from Central CT State University. He taught Art in the Coventry schools (grades K – 8) for 35 years. Over 6,000 students had the benefit of learning from Scott.

In September 2017, Scott’s painting *Birch* was selected among only 45 out of 450 entries in the prestigious Blanche Ames National Art Exhibition at the Ames Mansion Museum in Borderland State Park, North Easton, Massachusetts. Originally established as a regional competition open to artists from New England and New York, it transitioned into a national show in 2005. This year 450 entries were drawn from twenty seven states. Theresa Ganz, assistant professor at Brown University, was the jurist:

“The works I selected were those that surprised me, that had equal parts imagination and commitment to the craft, that did not offer simple answers but engaged the viewer’s curiosity.”

“Among the Botanical submissions, as a non-expert in the form, I chose the ones that had clear technical ability and also an unusual vision - drawing my eye to the forest floor or the end of a flower’s bloom, or the graphic possibilities of stems and tendrils piled on top of each other.”

Clearly, Scott’s acrylic painting of the complex birch image met the jurist’s expectations. The tree appears to be mature, with a twist to its main branches. The smaller branches are defoliated. The tree appears to greet us as we take a winter hike through the woods. It seems to say to us, “What are you doing out here in the cold? Go home and warm up. I will be here in the spring, with fresh green heart-shaped leaves that will click and clatter as they do with every breeze. Until then, my paper bark will glow in the gentle blue hue of winter.”

Scott told us that the Blanche Ames Exhibition was a positive experience. “The Ames Castle is in Borderland State Park in North Easton, MA. The park has over 1700 acres for hiking, and the castle library is the venue of the art exhibition. The yearly exhibition is in honor of the donor, Blanche Ames, who was also a painter. The opening was inviting and festive with much variety of art work. Catalogs were printed and passed out at the opening. It was well run, and I will most likely apply again next year”. (The full catalog can be viewed at friendsofborderland.org web page.)

Scott has had many entries in WRAC art shows over the years. His paintings of our local countryside here in eastern Connecticut are recognizable, as well as his interesting portraits of sports figures and Hollywood legends. To view a gallery of his paintings, visit his web page at scotterhoadesart.com

We wish Scott our sincere congratulations in achieving this successful milestone in his career as a working artist. We look forward to seeing more of Scott’s work in our future shows.



Scott
Rhoades



Birch

Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery

The NEW gallery hanging system at Windham Hospital has been installed! This new system allows for artwork to be hung from wires attached to the ceiling using NO nails hammered into the walls. Work is hung securely on hooks along wires and can be easily adjusted up or down, left or right, to create a balanced display. However, please be advised that this new system DOES NOT allow for saw tooth hangers.



Art exhibits at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery will include the following artists:

- January:** Lorraine DuBois - *photography*
- February:** Jeff Boccaccio - *photography*
- March:** Quiet Corner Photography Club
- April:** WRAC Group Theme Show (various media) Theme TBD

There are two months in 2018, May and October, available for individual or group exhibit.

Call Karen Olson @ 860-423-1287 if interested in showing at the hospital gallery.

WRAC's December "Small and Affordable" hospital show was a big success with many sales of various art media. There has been increased foot traffic through the hospital corridor since the opening of the "Sumner Cafe" in the atrium area.

Willimantic Orchestra

2017 - 2018
Season

Winter concert: Sunday March 4, 2018 3:00 pm

Couperin, Pieces en concert for Cello and Strings; Glinka, Valse-Fantasie; Bizet, Symphony in C

Spring concert: Sunday May 6, 2018 3:00 pm

Mozart, Don Giovanni Overture; Mendelssohn, Symphony No. 5; with the Windham Regional Arts Council Young Artist Competition winner, Percy Chen, performing.

All performances are held at the Fine Arts Instructional Center (FAIC) building at Eastern CT State University in Willimantic unless otherwise noted.



The Lion in Winter

Feb. 9,10, 16,17, 18 (matinee)
22, 23, 24

Clue: The Musical

March 23, 24,
Apr. 6, 7, 8 (matinee), 12, 13, 14

To Kill A Mockingbird

June 1, 2, 3 (matinee)
7, 8, 9, 10 (matinee)

Evening Performances:

Doors open at 7:30 pm / Shows begin at 8 pm

Matinees:

Doors open at 1:30 pm / Shows begin at 2 pm

Thursday performances:

Doors open at 7 pm / Shows begin at 7:30 pm

We invite you to join or renew your membership to the WRAC and receive
the *ArtSpectrum*

Name _____

Address _____

Town _____ Zip Code _____

Phone (H/C) _____ Email _____

Membership Category: New Renewal Date _____

\$15 (Individual) \$20 (Family) \$30 (Donor) \$50 (Patron) \$100 (Benefactor)

Do you have an area of artist skill? Visual Art Music Writing Drama Dance

Please make checks payable to the Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) and mail to
P.O. Box 847, Willimantic, CT 06226

The GALLERY @ 34 NORTH

will feature “The Art of the French Mat” by exhibiting the work of Chet Mantolesky the month of February.

“French Matting” is described as an ancient technique using pale watercolour wash panels and drawn ink lines around the perimeter of a matted piece of art. The lines and panels around the image draw the eye inward, repeating the delicacy and contrasts of the artwork. Add some exotic marbled and gold leaf paper to the mix...and you have a truly unique, custom frame design!



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What is a nyckelharpa?

A nyckelharpa is a traditional Swedish musical instrument. It is a string instrument or chordophone. Its keys are attached to tangents which, when a key is depressed, serve as frets to change the pitch of the string.



Announcing the Nutmeg String Workshop

This is an opportunity for String instrument students in grades 6 – 12 .

This includes but is not limited to fiddle, violin, viola, cello, bass, guitar, mandolin, and nyckelharpa.

Students need a recommendation from a school, community, or private music teacher to attend. At a minimum, students must be confident playing in G and D major and E and A minor keys, fluent with detache and slurred bowings (or a variety of strum patterns for pickers), and willing to learn by ear.

Students will be grouped in classes by experience level specified on the enrollment form.

When: Saturday, February 3

(snow date will be February 10)

10:00 AM – 6:00 PM

Where: Mansfield Middle School

205 Spring Hill Rd.

Storrs CT 06268

Cost: \$20.00 Scholarships available for students with financial need.

To enroll or get more information, log on google.com/view/nutmegstringworkshop/home

WINDHAM REGIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

P.O. Box 847

Willimantic, CT 06226

Find us on **facebook** 

Please check membership expiration 

Any member who would like to receive WRAC info by email should send your request to
Contactus@windhamrac.com

Attention WRAC Members

Do you have an upcoming exhibit, an art related article, a show that is looking for exhibitors or anything that you think the membership would be interested in supporting?

Email your submission to Trish Fabish
ftwart@gmail.com

The newsletter is mailed 3 times a year
February - deadline middle of January (Winter issue)
May - deadline middle of April (Spring issue)
Oct - deadline middle of Sept.(Fall issue)

The WRAC Board of Directors meet the first Monday of each month except in June. This meeting is held before the opening of the WRAC Members Show at ArtSpace in Willimantic. There are no meetings in July, August or December.



The Windham Regional Arts Council

The Windham Regional Arts Council (WRAC) was founded in 1983 to help organize community arts activities for the 50th birthday of the city of Willimantic. The Council is a non-profit volunteer organization with over 250 members. The ArtSpectrum is published three times a year and highlights art events and people actively involved in the arts community.

The organization financially supports the Willimantic Orchestra and the Burton Leavitt Theater. It sponsors an annual art show for member artists. April, Aug., and Dec. feature a group show at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Each month a different member artist exhibits at the Windham Hospital Corridor Gallery. Each year the Council holds a juried music competition for students aged twelve to eighteen and the overall winner performs a solo at the Willimantic Orchestra's spring concert.

We welcome new members and creative ideas to promote the arts in Willimantic and surrounding regions.