

Upcoming Shows

**Chatham Township
Municipal Building
58 Meyersville Road
Chatham Township, NJ**

Fall Show

Receiving

**Wednesday, Sept. 6
12-2 p.m.**

Reception

**Sunday, Sept. 10
2-4 p.m.**

Winter Show

Receiving

**Tuesday, Nov. 28
12-2 p.m.**

Reception

**Sunday, Dec. 3
2-4 p.m.**



"On the Bay," an oil painting by Debora Thedinga, will be in the group show "Plein Air Perspectives" in the Lundt-Glover Gallery at the ALC Fall Show.

Art League Fall Show to Feature Plein Air Painters

The Art League of the Chathams Fall Show will open on Sunday, Sept. 10, with a reception from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Chatham Township Municipal Building, 58 Meyersville Road. The show runs until Nov. 28.

The exhibit by the ALC's general membership will be held in the strolling gallery.

In addition, an exhibit titled "Plein Air Perspectives" will feature works by plein air painters P.J. Aduskevicz, Donatella Casirola Bocchieri, Rita Riekstins Feeney, Betsy Mirabelli, Nancy Kingman and Debora Thedinga. Their show will be in the Lundt-Glover Gallery.

A show entry form and further instructions will be emailed to members. Artwork for the general show will be received at the municipal building on Wednesday, Sept. 6, from noon until 2 p.m., and participants are asked to deliver their work between noon and 12:30 p.m., if possible. Please note that receiving will be on Wednesday (instead of Tuesday) for this particular show to accommodate returning Labor Day weekend vacationers.

The art in both shows can be viewed during the building's regular business hours, Monday through Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 4:30 p.m.

Plein Air Perspectives

By Nancy Kingman

On any given Wednesday, if the weather isn't dreadful, you are likely to find the six artists with work in the ALC gallery exhibit "Plein Air Perspectives" painting in a nearby park or arboretum, or points beyond. P.J. Aduskevicz, Donatella Casirola Bocchieri, Rita Riekstins Feeney, Betsy Mirabelli, Nancy Kingman and Debora Thedinga are all members of the New Jersey Plein Air Painters (NJPOP), a wider group of local outdoor painting enthusiasts.

Painting en plein air ("outdoors" in French) was popularized by the French impressionists, perhaps most famously by Claude Monet, who often painted the same scene or object repeatedly at different times of the day to catch the fleeting differences in light and color.

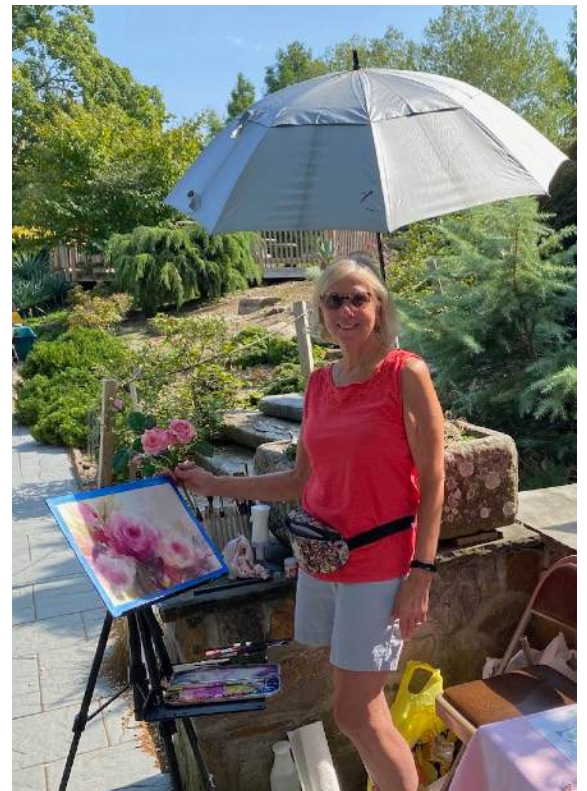
John Singer Sargent, once he made his fortune painting portraits of the wealthy and could do whatever he wanted, chose to spend his time painting outdoors, bringing friends and relatives to paint with him in the Alps, Italian gardens, and the English countryside.

Even a hundred years later, plein air painting is still popular with many contemporary artists. A monthly publication, PleinAir Magazine, fills its pages with their stories and images of their work.

What draws our group of ALC plein air exhibitors from comfortable studios to face the myriad challenges of painting outdoors?

"There is true joy for me in painting outdoors," says Donatella. "Nothing can compare to being immersed in nature: the brilliance of colors, the full sunlight, the *plein air feeling*."

Rita finds that plein air painting allows her to fully immerse herself in her artwork.



Rita Riekstins Feeney painting one of her favorite subjects, roses, en plein air.



Betsy Mirabelli, left, with her watercolors at Loantaka Pond.



P.J. Aduskevicz, right, painting in oil at Willowwood Arboretum.

Nancy finds a deep sense of connection and concentration: “You’re really forced to stop and study the roses. It’s a much more intense experience than just taking a walk in the same location.”

For P.J. and Betsy, it’s all about the landscape. “What excites me most is the versatility of landscape painting,” P.J. said. It can range anywhere from traditional realism to abstract, she adds. Landscapes are Betsy’s major focus and nature is her inspiration.

“I like organic shapes: trees, waves, and especially clouds,” she said.

An added bonus for Debora, and many of the painters, is exploring New Jersey locations that they didn’t know about before, such as the Leonard J. Buck Garden and Willowwood Arboretum, both in the Far Hills area.

“With plein air, for me it’s not about the product, it’s the process,” Debora said. “What I enjoy most is painting outside and the camaraderie of painting with other artists.”

Even if her painting doesn’t always turn out as expected, Nancy says, she still had a good time outdoors with friends in a beautiful setting.



(L to R) Donatella Casirola Bocchieri, P.J. Aduskevicz, and Nancy Kingman painting at Willowwood Arboretum.



Debora Thedinga painting en plein air in oil.

Photo by Michael Kingman.

And what of all the challenges?
“There is the heat (or cold), shifting weather—and the bugs, the bears, and the occasional utility vehicle that parks right in front of your scene,” says Donatella.
“Come to think of it, who makes me do it? Well, my wonderful plein air painting group! They are my commitment: it would not happen without them.

“We share the same views (pun intended) but also the challenge, the gripes, and the joy of spending time outdoors together and hopefully taking home a beautiful painting that day!”

Donatella’s Imagined Conversation With Mother Nature on the Challenges of Painting Outdoors

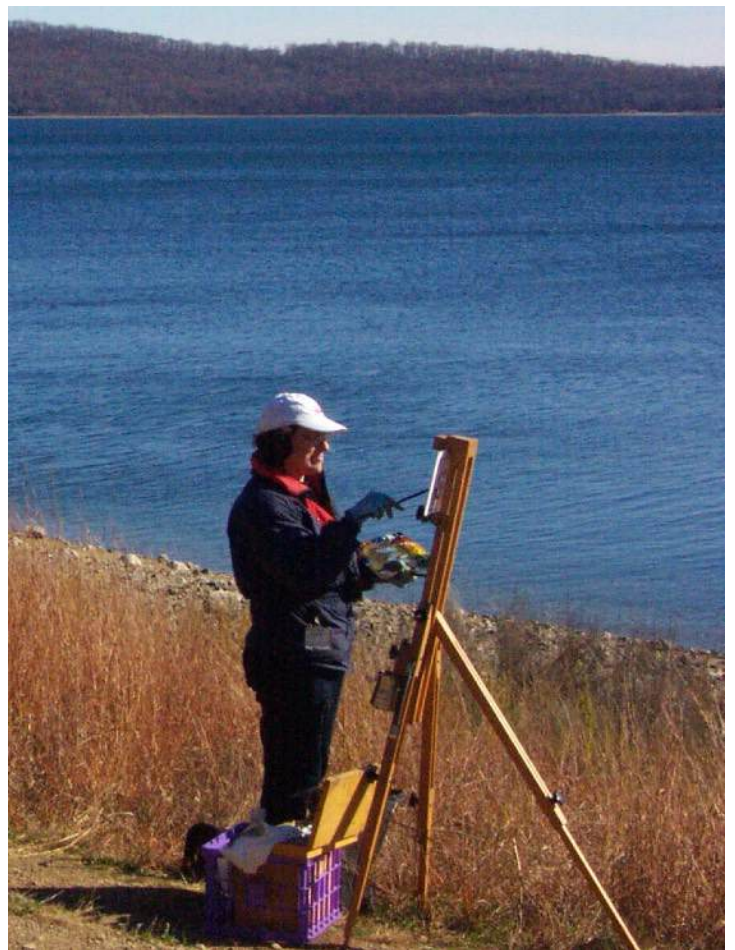
Mother Nature: “Go ahead, Paint this!”

Donatella: “You mean render your full light and colors on my flat surface using my opaque paints? All right, I like a good challenge.”

Mother Nature: “Look at that beautiful light effect— but quickly! Or how about this other one coming up right here?”

Donatella: “Wait, I am still mixing colors. And your shadows are shifting too fast!”

Mother Nature: “What? Would you like me to stop the sun for you? Paint fast, Baby!”



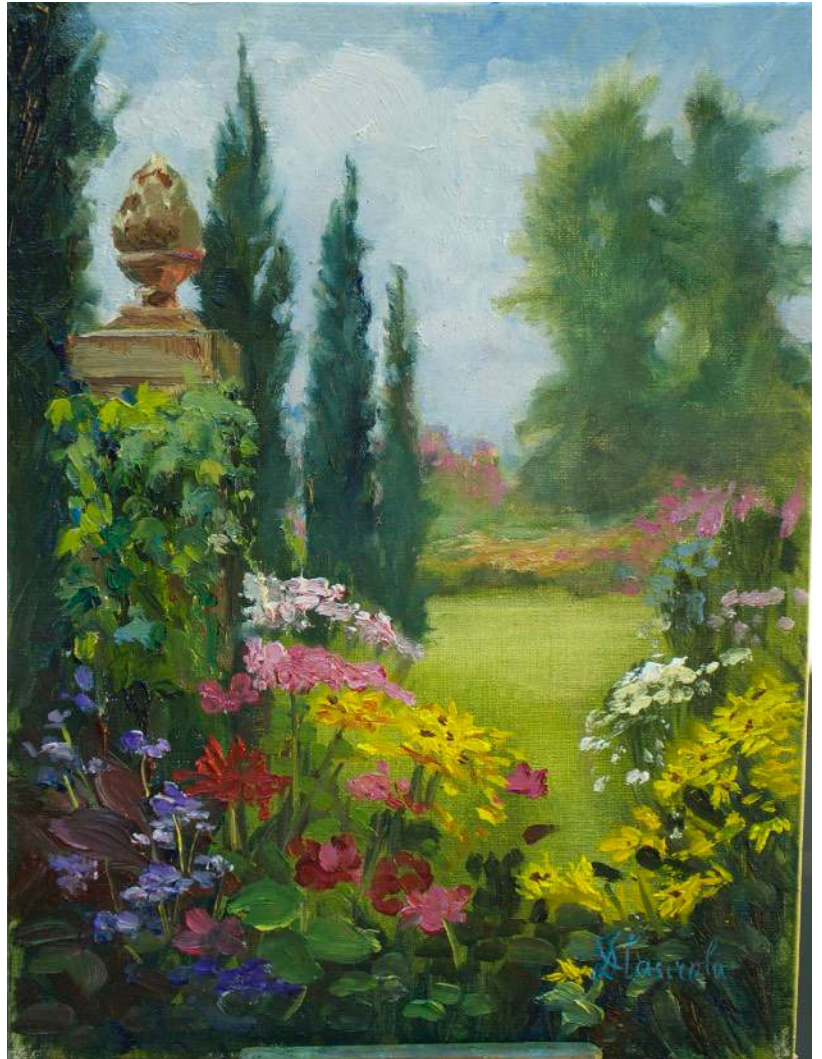
Donatella Casirola Bocchieri painting on a November day at Round Valley Reservoir.

Donatella Casirola Bocchieri

Donatella Casirola Bocchieri has been a local painter for over a quarter century. She was born and raised in Italy, where she completed most of her artistic studies. After an approach to architectural drawing under Giorgio Diegoli, she studied dry media and oils in the atelier of Ezio Carboni, where she was exposed to the Lombard Luminism tradition.

In New Jersey she took classes in plein air painting with Edward Sprafkin and then continued her studies at the Cambridge Studio School, Cambridge, Mass., with Brett Gamache, for five years. She is now back painting in her beloved New Jersey.

“My paintings are inspired by the world that surrounds me,” she says. “It is a beautiful world, full of light and color, truly a constant source of inspiration. I paint in a representational, approachable style, trying to convey the excitement of



“Garden by the Old Mansion,” an oil by Donatella Casirola Bocchieri.

being immersed in nature. There is joy in trying to capture it all and joy in the sharing!”

Donatella is a member of the Morris County Art Association, as well as the NJPAP and the ALC.

See more of Donatella’s comments on plein air painting on the preceding pages.



“Auntie and Flowers,” an oil by Donatella Casirola Bocchieri.

Debora Thedinga

Growing up between the Watchung Reservation and the Great Swamp, Debora Thedinga has always been inspired by the surroundings of her native New Jersey. And since she has become a plein air painter, she appreciates even more what many out-of-staters don't realize: the Garden State has a wide variety of impressive landscapes. She is drawn to scenes with water: ocean beaches, and inlets, lakes, streams, and ponds with beautiful reflections and ripples.

When Debora ventures beyond New Jersey, she often brings along her paints and an easel. Last year she took a mini pochade box to Italy and made small oil paintings of the view from her hotels in Venice, Florence, and Positano. She has also painted on her trips to Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.

Debora studied art at Rowan University, has taken classes at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey and has participated in workshops around the country. Her work has been selected for numerous juried shows and exhibitions. Her awards include third place at the 2020 Lebanon/Califon Juried Art Show, Best in Show at the 2017 Cranford Paint Out in Cranford, N.J., and honorable mentions at the 2020 Medford Arts Great Outdoors Juried Exhibition and the 2016 Pascack Tri-State Juried Exhibition.

Debora is represented by Swain's Gallery in Plainfield, N.J. She is an active member of the National Oil and Acrylic Painters' Society (NOAPS), the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, and the National Association of Women Artists, as well as the NJPAP and the ALC. See more of Debora's paintings on her [website](#).



"Manasquan Beach," an oil painting by Debora Thedinga.



"Beechwood Farm," an oil painting by Debora Thedinga.

P.J. Aduskevicz

P.J. Aduskevicz is a landscape painter. What excites her most about landscapes is the versatility of the subject matter, which allows her to paint a range of images, from realistic to abstract. “I am intrigued by taking a landscape scene and simplifying it to the point that it is abstract but, at the same time, still reads as realism because of its basic shapes,” she said.

Playing with color is her favorite part of the painting process. She experiments with hue, value, and saturation to make colors harmonize. The results can be colors that sing next to each other, support the tone, and even sparkle.

P.J. also loves to create moods and mystery through the use of color, line work, and bold marks.

Perhaps most satisfying, she said, is a finished artwork that makes the viewer linger and go hmm.

P.J. works in pastel and oil. She is a member of the New Jersey Pastel Society, as well as the NJPAP and the ALC.

She takes classes with Julie Friedman at ArtSpace Studio in Morristown and has studied with John Traynor, Barbara Jaenicke, and Jacob Aguiar.



“Glowing,” a pastel by P.J. Aduskevicz.



“Cape Cod Marsh,” a pastel by P.J. Aduskevicz.

Rita Riekstins Feeney

Rita Riekstins Feeney's artwork is largely inspired by the exciting colors she finds in florals and other vivid displays of shapes in nature. In her loose abstract florals and landscapes, bold colors are complemented by the use of texture in different media. Rita often references photos for shapes, but relies on her inherent sense of color to illustrate emotion. Splashy watercolors or acrylics form her underpaintings, which begin abstractly. Then, through the use of pastel, acrylic or more watercolor, her floral shapes are found. She also enjoys plein air painting, which allows her to fully immerse herself in her artwork. Rita has always striven to maintain a balance between the use of striking color and quiet sensitivity in her still lifes, florals, and landscapes.

Rita received a BFA degree from



"Summertime," a watercolor by Rita Riekstins Feeney.



"Ecstasy," a watercolor by Rita Riekstins Feeney.

Syracuse University, majoring in textile design. This led her to a 22-year creative career designing for the wall covering, home fashion, and apparel industries. Since then, she has focused on the fine arts of watercolor, acrylic and pastel, gaining membership into several local art societies, where she has won numerous awards.

Rita is an Award Winning Signature Member of the New Jersey Pastel Society, an Exhibiting Member of the Essex Water Color Club, an Elected Member of the New Jersey Water Color Society, and an Associate Member of the Garden State Watercolor Society, as well as a member of the Livingston Art Association, the New Jersey Art Association, the NJPAP and the ALC. She has had numerous solo shows, and has also exhibited in group exhibitions locally and in the surrounding areas. Various collectors have added her artwork to their private collections. See more of Rita's artwork on her [Facebook page](#): Rita Riekstins-Feeney Art.

Nancy Kingman

Nancy Kingman enjoys being outdoors and finds inspiration for her paintings in nearby parks and nature preserves. Many of her landscapes were started en plein air at places like Jockey Hollow and the Frelinghuysen Arboretum and then finished in the studio. Other scenes are from some of her favorite places in Cape Cod and along the Delaware River. In all of them, she tries to capture the light and atmosphere, and some of the magic of being in that spot at that particular moment.

Nancy has studied plein air painting with Edward Sprafkin and Anne Kullaf. She has gone on plein air watercolor trips with Anne Kullaf to the Tuscany



"July Morning at the Pond," an oil painting by Nancy Kingman.



"Summer Market," an oil painting by Nancy Kingman.

region of Italy, including Florence, Siena and small villages; Paso Robles, Calif.; and Philadelphia and New Hope, Pa. She paints in oil and watercolor, and currently takes classes with Julie Friedman at ArtSpace Studio in Morristown.

Nancy is a member of the Morris County Art Association and the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, as well as the NJPAP and the ALC.

See more of Nancy's paintings on her [website](#) and her [page on the ALC website](#).

Betsy Mirabelli

Watercolor is Betsy Mirabelli's chosen medium, and landscapes are her major focus and inspiration.

Betsy studied watercolor with Elizabeth O'Reilly at Parsons and the New School in New York City, where she was first introduced to plein air painting. She later took classes at the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey in Summit with Nancy Korde, Anne Kullaf, and Fernando Catague. She has gone on plein air watercolor workshops with Kullaf to Aspen, Colo., and to Siena, Italy.

Betsy likes the unpredictable nature of watercolors, and always enjoys "when a painting just flows. It's like a meditative state," she says.



"Bookstore," a watercolor by Betsy Mirabelli.



"Morning Walk," a watercolor by Betsy Mirabelli.

While she is comfortable working with abstract forms, Betsy prefers a reference — something to start from. And usually that something is nature. "I like organic shapes: trees, waves, and especially clouds," she said.

Betsy is a member of the NJPAP and the ALC.

See more of Betsy's paintings on her [page on the ALC website](#).

This is Part I of the Summer Newsletter. Part II is available.