



Types and Shadows

Journal of the Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts

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Fall 2015



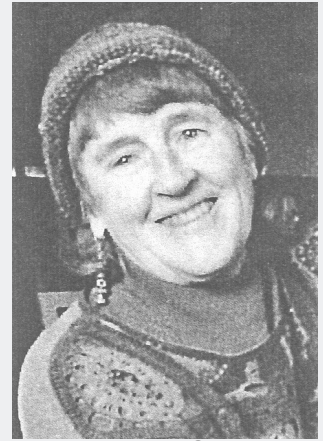
"Siren," collage, acrylic paint, image transfer, 10" X 11.75" © Jonathan Talbot

In this Issue...

Collage art and commentary by Jonathan Talbot, Warwick, NY; Watercolors by Robert Kazmayer, (Sunfire), Greenwich, NY; Art and poetry by Trudy Myrrh Reagan, Palo Alto, CA and an art lesson by Thomas Dareneau, Reading, PA



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Maria Cattell © Seitz

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Our clerk speaks...

Art at the Gathering

Artists had an exciting time of it this year at the FGC Gathering in Cullowhee NC. The art show was in a converted food court. That may not sound exciting, but it was spacious and located in a high traffic area, so there were many visitors. Blair Seitz's slide show featuring the work of FQA artists ran continuously while the gallery was open. The art on display included quilts, knitting, painting, photography, woodworking, kites (yes, kites!) and much else. Kathy Ossman brought the Great Lakes Chapter's "Eyes Wide Open" display, artists' views of the combat boots of Michigan soldiers. It was "beautiful artwork, totally awesome," as one visitor commented. Another said, "They are all very beautiful pieces. If I wasn't broke I'd buy them all."

On Friday afternoon reception in the gallery, Aaron Fowler (former FQA board member) and his wife Laura Dungan sang for us. There were presentations by the leaders of two workshops, Peter West Nutting on photography and Chuck Jones on kite-making. And every artist got a chance to say a few words about their art.

FQA sponsored a reading of Sandra Johnson's play and an interest group discussion of the meaning and role of art (spiritual, practical and other) to artists personally and to their meeting communities.

The 2016 Gathering will be held at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph, Minnesota, 85 miles from the Minneapolis-St. Paul airport. Dates: July 3-9. We hope to see you there!

Other Art Shows

In August FQA sponsored an art show at Mt. Holly Meeting in New Jersey. In addition to the art on display, Marti Rogers and Tom Levy gave a musical performance and Susan Chast read her poetry. But one art show didn't happen: the New Jersey Tri-Quarter Retreat was rained out by the nor-easter which brought nearly a week of rain to the East Coast. We'll hope for sunnier weather for the 2016 retreat!

By the way, you don't have to attend the Gathering to have your work in the slide show of FQA artists. Just get in touch with Blair. Share your art with Quakers from all around the USA.

Yours for the arts,

Maria Cattell

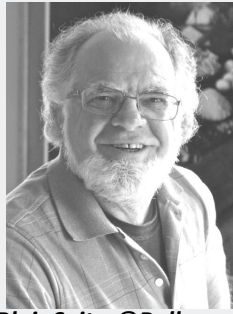
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FQA is an arts ministry for Quakers and others under the care of Trenton MM.

From the Editor...

I like (and often need) to have art explained to me. Often I just don't get it, though just a hint from the artist of what she or he had in mind can open my eyes wide. Of course, some artists would rather let interpretation be entirely with the viewer and that's okay. In this issue, I'm happy that art is interpreted; and an art teacher, **Thomas Dareneau**, even outlines a class exercise. We are privileged to have the remarkable collage art of **Jonathan Talbot**, outstanding art and poetry of **Trudy Myrrh Reagan**, and colorful watercolors of **Robert Kazmayer**—all with some interpretation. Hope you enjoy this issue of *T&S*. Blair



Blair Seitz @Ballinger

Letters to the Editor...

Editor: Your last issue was simply outstanding! Both visual arts and poetry.

By the way, did you know that Maxfield Parrish went to Haverford, and that Grant Wood was raised in a strict Quaker family in Iowa? His father dismissed art as "fiction." He had to leave the faith to exercise his talent. In Paris, he realized the value of Iowa, and began to paint it.

My own father was raised a generation later in a similar milieu in Iowa City. He took art in college (a requirement for field geologists) and used his talent in various ways in geology. —Trudy Myrrh Reagan

Editor: Thank you for another lovely publication. —Caroline Coode, Quaker artist, Great Britain

Cover art and commentary...

This month's **FQA** featured collage art by **Jonathan Talbot**, is excerpted from the remarkable book, *The Collage Art of Jonathan Talbot* published by Royal Fireworks Press. The book, first offered in 2014, is in its fourth printing. An author of the book, Deborah Snider, Assistant Professor of Art Education at Southern Utah University, has an extensive conversation with Talbot, which is included in the book. Each of the collages includes Talbot's commentary about the art. The *T&S* cover

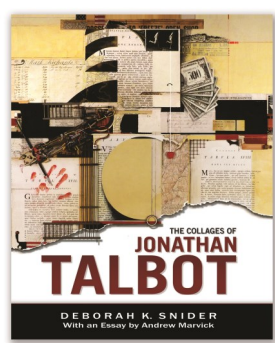


image is titled. "The Siren." Following is Jonathan's essay about the work:

According to Homer, Odysseus, on Circe's advice, had his crew tie him to the mast so that he could listen to the seductive singing of the sirens without steering his ship into the rocks. Rather than being set in Greece, the encounter pictured here takes place at night in the Elizabeth Islands across the sound from Martha's Vineyard.

This siren is not like Homer's. While her breathing fills the mainsail of the gaff-rigged sloop, it is gentle enough to leave the water's surface undisturbed. Instead of luring sailors to their doom, she toys with them as only a goddess can and then benevolently sends them on their way when they no longer amuse her.

If there is any tension in the image, it is the result of the diminutive artist-helmsman's fear that he will fail to measure up to John Lilly's eleventh commandment: "Thou shalt not bore god" and, therefore, be quickly discarded.—Jonathan Talbot

The back cover art by Talbot is titled, "Point of Departure." This is what Jonathan says about it: **Living in a country** founded by serious men in black hats who burned women at the stake and did not like art is less than ideal. Too many of their precepts still prevail. In this social climate, including erotic images in one's work is cause for reflection. "Point of Departure" is the result of observing, in 1989, that my works were trending toward the erotic.



Jonathan Talbot

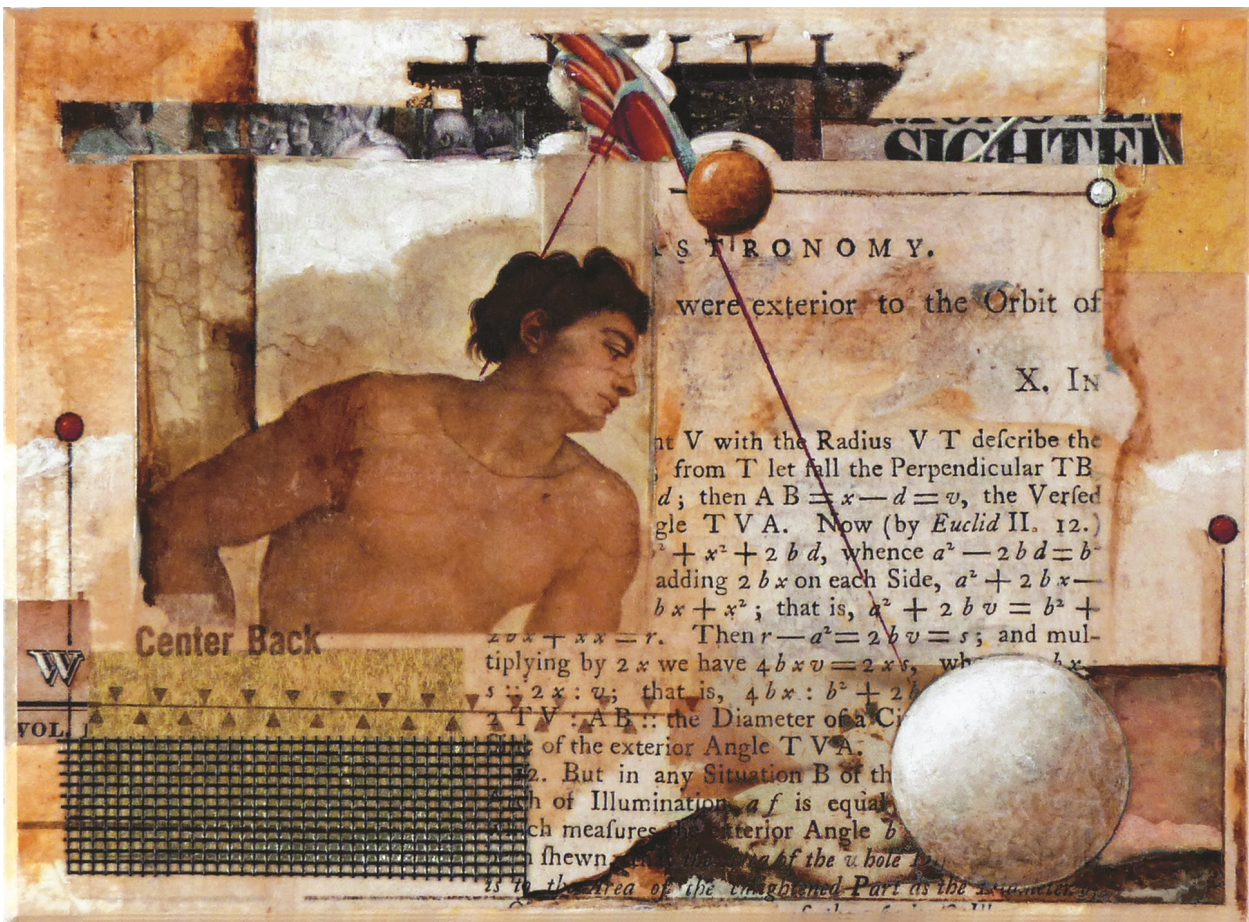
My intention was to make a work that would mark the end of my creating erotically-focused collages. The vehicle for removing eroticism from my work evolved as a surreal railroad car powered by a perpetual motion machine fueled by tobacco and red and blue potatoes.

A picture of a woman in a bikini was collaged into the windows of the car in such a way that it appeared that she was inside. When the train left the station, she would go with it. Instead, when the figure was added to the collage, the work took on a life of its own. That a work must fulfill the artist's intentions in order to be successful is questionable. My works often inform me more than they are informed by me.

Erotic imagery still finds its way into my works.

Jonathan Talbot uncovers the many layers of his famed collage art

“Talbot’s imaginative and provocative works speak eloquently to the human condition in all its iterations. Indeed, his multi-dimensional collages inspire us to think forward, as well as to think outside the box and beyond the paradigms of today and yesterday.”—Richard W. Hull, PhD, Professor of history, N.Y. University



“An Intellectual Approach,” 4.75" X 6.5" collage/painting © Jonathon Talbot

Jonathan’s commentary:

The figure from Michelangelo, placed in the window-like setting and looking at the white sphere, is both the subject of, and an integral part of, this collage. The mathematical text from a 1776 edition of Newton, the inverted “V” echoing the dividers in William Blake’s *The Ancient of Days*, and the other smaller spheres and textual details indicate an image that focuses on intellectual pursuits. A careful examination of the work will, however, reveal that the protagonist’s Apollonian fixation on the sphere causes both him and the viewer to miss what is right before their eyes.



Talbot at work in his studio.

"Cloister"

Some of the biblical gypsum on the wall of the monastic cell depicted in the collage/construction "Cloister" has fallen away, revealing the underlying structure of the building itself. As a result, it can be seen that the walls of the cloister are composed of the very stuff from which the cell's inhabitant seeks to be secluded, in this case a complex historical matrix representing, along with the darker areas above and below the cell, "the world outside."

The cloister which is pictured here overlooks the sea and this particular cell has a window with a view of the water. On and next to the bench upon which the contemplative normally sits are some wrapped cubes symbolic of some of the concerns with which he or she willingly or unwillingly shares the cell: Christian and Jewish theology, man's inhumanity to man, the effects of the stars on our lives, the threat of madness, the physics of color, money, far-away places, and the omnipotence of death. On the floor of the cell is a discarded fragment of a pictorial diary, indicating that the inhabitant is, or once was, an artist.

Perhaps because of what has been revealed by the decaying plaster, perhaps as a result of consideration of the cubed concerns, or perhaps simply inspired by the desire for broader vistas to contemplate, the inhabitant has left the cloister, boarded a small gaff-rigged sloop, and embarked on a voyage for points unknown. —

Jonathan Talbot

"Cloister," 12.5" X 6.5" Collage/painting construction on watercolor paper © Jonathan Talbot



72A in action: The South Jersey Chapter of FQA held an art event at the historic Lower Alloways Creek Friends Meetinghouse on Saturday, October 10. "Encountering the Quaker Muse" included artists in all media who were invited to create their own individual works related to the Meetinghouse and its environs while working in mostly silent community next to other creators. Artists started at 10 am and shared their works at 3 pm. **The Great Lakes Regional Chapter of FQA** will have a two day art retreat, "In the Joining," at Red Cedar Friends Meetinghouse November 6-7. Time for doing art together recognizes that, while art is often a solitary endeavor, it arises in the communal context. The retreat provides times for working together as well as sharing experiences of art and spirituality being joined. **Look for much more chapter news in our next T&S. Do you want to start a chapter or become more active in FQA, just tell our clerk, Maria, mgcattell@aol.com.**



Rather than being post-Copernican, this orrery is post-Suprematist. It also pays homage to Leger, Lichtenstein, and Duchamp. It makes no apologies for the fact that it is stationary and asymmetrical and it would not reject, if it had the ability to do so, the concept that it is somehow related to the Pythagorean theory of The Harmony of the Spheres. It enjoys the fact that its pendulum is not fully at rest, and it celebrates the compositional possibilities of elliptical arcs, circles, spheres, and gravity. — Jonathan Talbot

"Orrery," 28" X 18.5" collage painting on museum board mounted on watercolor paper © Jonathon Talbot

"Orrery"

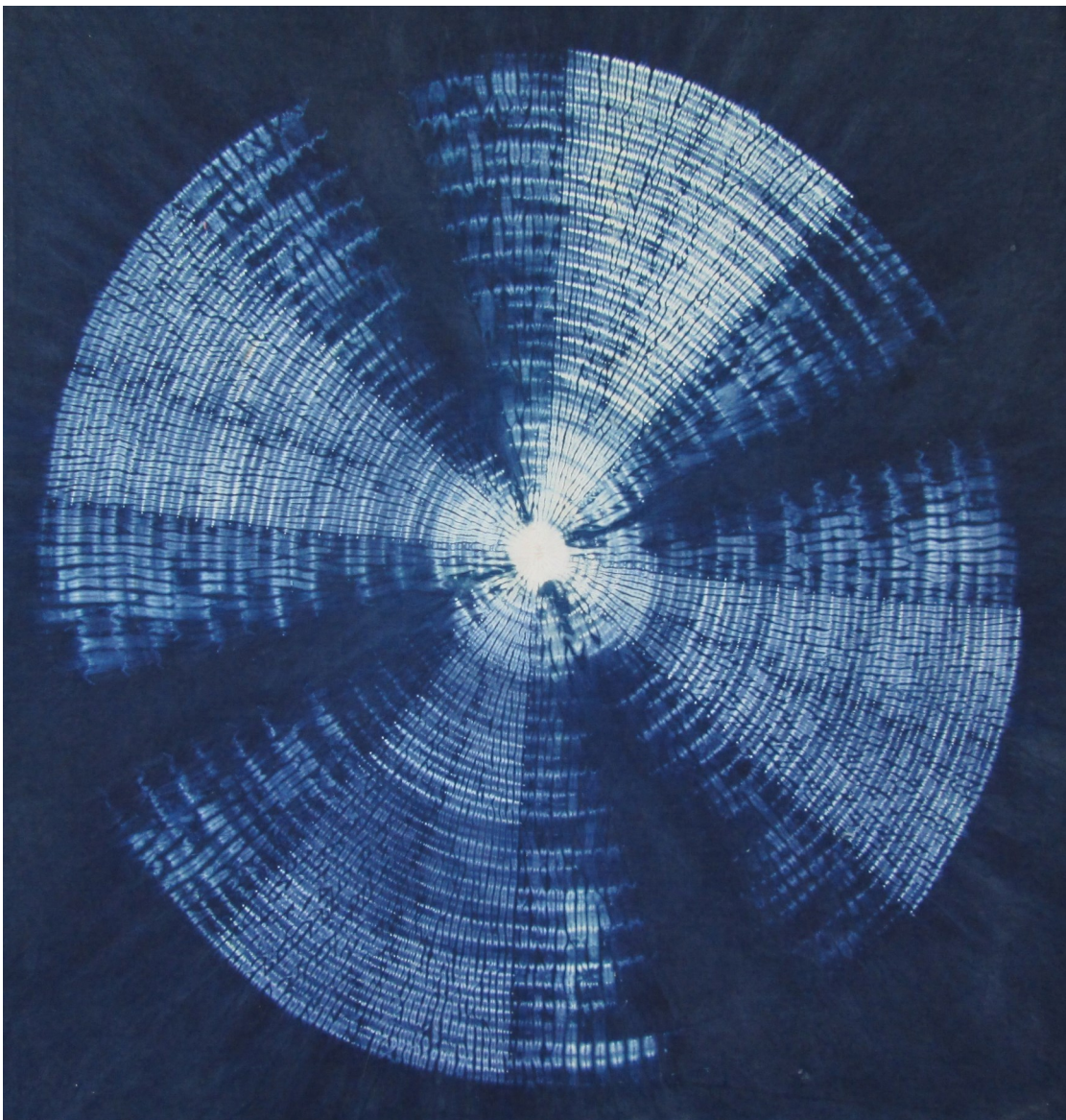
An orrery is a mechanical device that illustrates the relative positions and motions of the planets and moons in the solar system using gear-driven planetary models. The first post-Copernican heliocentric orreries were built circa 1703-1704 based on the calculations of Dutch mathematician and natural philosopher Christiaan Huygens, which were in turn based on the observations of Danish astronomer Tycho Brahe and German mathematician and astronomer Johannes Kepler.

The Spirit Moves by Trudy Myrrh Reagan

The medium of this art piece is *shibori*, Japanese wrinkle-resist dyeing. I was able to sew my design with simple gathering stitches, a *lot* of gathering stitches. Each pair of white dots along the lines circling the white center represents one stitch. Strong thread is used. All the threads are gathered up and tied tightly before dyeing the cloth. It looks like some weird sea creature at this point. The wrinkles that are formed by the gathers receive the dye, and make a radiating pattern of dark lines. The very dark areas had no stitches at all.

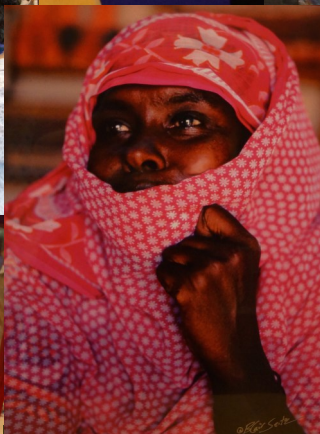
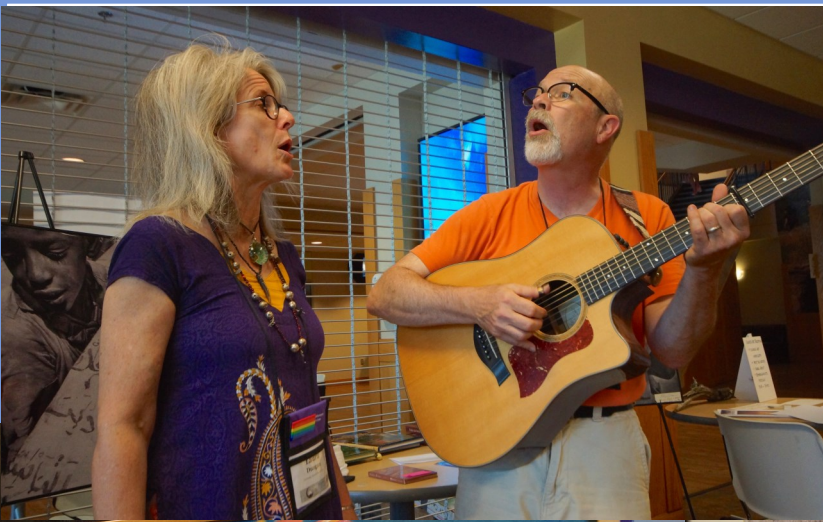
I used indigo dye, like the Japanese. It is an alchemical-like process, for it is yellow-green when it first hits the air, then it turns blue before your eyes. To create the deep blue, it is dyed several times. Then, the knots on the threads are clipped, the thread removed, and it is flattened out. You are never quite sure of just what you are going to get!

In 1981, when I did this piece, I had a set idea of how "Spirit" it should look, and when it was different, I rejected it and put it aside. Thirty years on, my opinion is different! It is not only an art work about the Spirit, but a lesson in acceptance of whatever comes.



*"The Spirit Moves," 30" X
32" cotton © Myrrh*

FQA at FGC, 2015: A smashing success of fine art and many viewers. Left: Laura Dungan and Aaron Fowler provide music. Artists' work in FGC/FQA gallery shown on this page are (below and clockwise) Melissa Rycroft, Denny Webster, Great Lakes FQA "Eyes Wide Open" art, Blair Seitz and Phil Furnas.



Have you wondered how teachers convey art concepts to their students? Or how a Quaker teacher might make connections between peace and art? Here, Reading, PA, Monthly Meeting member and art teacher at Boyertown High School, Thomas Dareneau, shares with us a lesson he uses with his students.

A few years ago I borrowed a lesson from a professor I worked with to help my students learn about composition. The lesson was designed to help students create an abstract expressionist composition. With a void of recognizable content my students would be able to focus on nothing but composition. As I began giving hints and tips as to what made pleasing compositions I began to notice striking similarities between good composition and conflict resolution.

Supplies Needed:

- 12" x 18" charcoal paper (not white)
- Tortillions (if you have some)
- Bar Charcoal
- Vine Charcoal
- Rubber eraser
- Kneaded Eraser
- White Charcoal pencil
- Class time (For those of you who are teachers):
- Two weeks (10 forty minute periods)
- 1 day of introductions
- 1 day of presentations about abstract expressionism
- At least two in-process critiques

To begin:

Step 1: I give no explanation the first day except to say that we are going to learn to use charcoal. Next I give each student a bar charcoal piece and the paper (nothing else). I ask them to make some kind of mark

on the page. After some looking around, one student will make a line then, they all dive in with a line. Then I ask them to make another, and another and another. Then I ask them how many just drew three lines, most raise their hand. Now draw a different mark than a line. Most will draw a circle. Now make a different mark that does not consist of a line. Blank faces everywhere. Hopefully, someone will figure out to hold the charcoal differently. If this doesn't occur after 30 seconds I ask the class if there are other ways to hold the charcoal. Soon students will begin dragging the charcoal, dropping the charcoal, spinning the charcoal, etc. Be sure to tell them they are not to draw anything specific,



Student art composition exercise sample

any houses, smiley faces, initials, etc. They should make many marks on the page before you move on.

Step 2: Tell them to stop and put their charcoal down and look at their project. This is when they freak-out. Up to now they thought this was practice. They have worked themselves into a messy corner and we are going to use the elements of design to help them out of it. Here starts the tie in to conflict resolution.

I start by asking them questions, mostly about composition.

Good composition has elements that cover the whole page and go off all four sides. Do you have objects going off all four sides?

Good composition has elements that interact with each other. Do you have lines that intersect?

Good composition has a wide variety of shapes. Do you have different shapes?

Instruct them from this moment on that every mark they make is designed to make a better composition.

This is a great time to wrap up the first class and let them adjust their compositions.

Day 2: I usually take this day to show them some Jackson Pollock, Cy Twombly and Robert Motherwell artworks. Most students have an adverse reaction to Motherwell and Twombly. We discuss how the lack of harmony causes the work to look random and messy. We discuss how our objective is to get rid of any sense of randomness or messiness.

Day 3: First critique

Have the kids walk around and allow them to “borrow” ideas from one another. Give them a few minutes to re-acquaint themselves with the composition.

Let’s discuss how we can settle this composition. Lots of times when things are messy there is no understanding between objects. Look at one intersection of objects on your page. We want the viewer to recognize that we see the intersection and are responding to it. What are some ways we can let the viewer know that

we recognize the intersection. Maybe you draw stripes between the two. Maybe you introduce vine and let them fill the space with a soft value.



Often times in conflict we just have to recognize and pay attention to

Student art composition exercise sample
“intersections.”

Next I have them look for interesting areas and try to find ways of repeating those areas in other places. Active listening often requires us to repeat what we heard. It’s soon time to highlight and add value to overlapping shapes or interesting points. This can be done with skillful erasing or white charcoal pencil.

FOR MY DEAR OLD MAN

Trudy Myrrh Reagan, CA

He awakens at the break of day.
Arise and go with him to the milking parlor
and relieve him of his heavy diaper pants.
He must be fed—rolled oats and fruit,
calcium and iron,
Then groomed with curry comb and nail clippers.
Sing to him. Clothe him.
With cowbell and keys, he’s ready for pasture.
Shepherd him to day care, now, with a kiss.

Husband husbandry.
It’s not a bad life.

Within a day or two I do another critique and let them talk about whose look successful and why and how can some of the others use techniques to become more successful.

Do they know when they are done? When is conflict ever completely resolved? Never. We want to get to a point where good composition is achieved, when all objects have been paid attention to through repetition, value, mirroring or another mean. When there is obvious rhythm and balance, but also interesting focal points that attract our attention. We want to have the important and interesting components stand out while the weaker less important elements recede into the background.

In the end all students can be successful, they can have a better understanding of composition and hopefully see some similarities in harmonious social structures and abstract art.



Student art composition exercise

Robert Kazmayer, known to New York Quakers as “Sunfire,” speaks of his art path

Art is part of my spiritual path. One of my prize possessions is a facsimile edition of Carl Jung's *Red Book*, with its numerous illuminations and full color plates. Like Jung, I let my art lead me into active imagination and internal dialogue.

"Windows of the Soul" is a series of paintings, the first three of which are included in this 2015 Annual Summer Exhibition, Sarasota, New York. These paintings come out of images that I see during periods of meditation. The images don't come to me fully formed; they evolve while making preliminary drawings and doing the actual painting.

"Windows of the Soul One, Two and Three" (left to below right) 7" X 7" watercolor © "Sunfire" (Robert Kazmayer)





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FQA Statement of Purpose

To nurture and showcase the literary, visual, musical and performing arts within the Religious Society of Friends, for purposes of Quaker expression, ministry, witness and outreach. To these ends we will offer spiritual, practical and financial support as way opens.

Inside: Collage by Jonathon Talbot; art & poetry by Trudy Myrrh Reagan



"Point of Departure." 36" X 60" Collage/painting on wood, materials include leather, gold leaf and printed paper © Jonathon Talbot