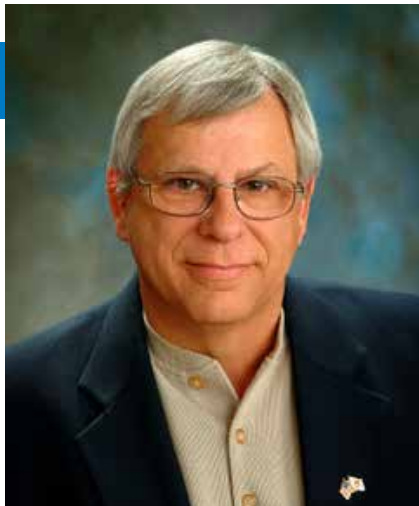


MAY 2026

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AWA - AZ Watercolor Association



President's Message

Welcome to the Arizona Watercolor Association!

Celebrating 66 Years (1960–2026)

I would like to thank all the members who supported our 65-year publication some of our member works. If you couldn't for some reason enter your work in this publication, we hope you can purchase a copy of the booklet when it is published. All book proceeds will go to the scholarship fund. This is the last newsletter and member meeting until September. We all need to find a place to stay cool over our hot summer. It's a great time to stay in your cool

studio and get some new works done for our fall show. Keep your eyes peeled for the Fall Prospectus. Our fall show went very well at Fountain Hills Community Center Gallery, and we had a great turnout. Karen and Betsy, as usual, did a great job, look in the newsletter for more on the exhibition.

One of my more important jobs is to recruit volunteers for our many committee and board positions. Positions are available and we are in need for some of our members who have never held a volunteer position with AWA to consider stepping up and helping out your association. Just corner me or any board member and we can point you in the right direction. We are successful only because of our volunteers. Most of the positions only require a few hours a week and attendance at the board meetings. We only have 7 board meetings a year, and all of us miss one once in a-while. If you would like AWA to continue to grow and provide workshops and programs and student scholarships, we need your help. We have been around for 66 years now because of our dedicated volunteers. You can ever assist and learn the position before you take it on full time.

Also a reminder, keep working towards your signature status with AWA by entering our Fall and Spring shows. Our AWA member artists keep successfully being juried into local, regional and national exhibitions. As they say "you can't win if you don't play".

Remember, take time out of your busy life to help your association. VOLUNTEER! Have a great summer.

Ron Peters

President

Keep on laying down that creative water media.

Next Meeting

***Our Programs start at 4 pm.
Social Time at 3:30 pm.***

Next Program: **Thursday, May 14.**

At the AAG Building- In Person - 4:00pm

The program is photography. See page 6.

AWA Spring Exhibition

AWARDS

By Karen Donmoyer and Betsy Aguirre

The Awards Reception for the Spring 2026 Members' Exhibition was held Thursday, April 23rd at the Fountain Hills Community Center and the following artists/ paintings were recognized with awards:

Best in Show	Carol McSweeney	Glamour in Green
Oman Award (2nd Place)	Marion Droge	Desert Thorns
Award of Distinction (3rd Place)	Teri Wilson-Williams	A Study in Grey
President's Award	Nancy Maine	Hanafubuki
Award of Merit	Karen Donmoyer	Faraway Thoughts
Award of Merit	Deb Sullivan	Dragon's Breath
Award of Merit	Elizabeth Pfeiffer	Round Red Barn with Sheep
Award of Merit	Cindy Welch	Pink Splendor
Merchant's Award	Tom Herbert	Memory
Merchant's Award	Sherry Whitney	A Certain Presence
Merchant's Award	Kimberly Harris	Site Plan 1
Merchant's Award	Linda Sherman	Rim to River
Merchant's Award	Trish Mayberry	Fractured Fables: Wolf

Our juror, Kristi Grussendorf, kindly provided a brief critique as to why she chose each of the awarded paintings.

1 – (Glamour in Green, Carol McSweeney) Since I tend to be more of a full value range painter, the fact that I chose this painting speaks volumes about how special it is. The application of paint reminds me of Charles Reid and has the same effect of honoring and exploiting the medium to its fullest. The unusual palette along with the attitude of the subject is unique. The hand beneath the sheer material is delightful.



2 – (Desert Thorns, Marion Droge) Love the graphic quality of this piece! The diagonal composition within the square format was a good choice. It's fresh and expertly done.

3 – (Study in Grey, Teri Wilson-Williams) Had to examine this little gem with my nose almost pressed up against the glass. Despite the subtle delicacy, it has unusual visual weight. The introduction of the small amount of warm color amidst the grey is stunning.

4 – (Faraway Thoughts, Karen Donmoyer) The photo of this painting does not give it justice. The drips & runs convey the artists' embrace of the watercolor medium and the subtle treatment of light goes perfectly with the mood and attitude of the subject. The paint is fresh and clean and the artist has been judicious about where to include detail and where it has been important NOT to.



5 – (Dragon's Breath, Deb Sullivan) I wonder if this non-objective piece was inspired by the slot canyons of Arizona (or Utah!) The diagonal movement and the full value range is dramatic. Its variety of shapes are well balanced and the viewer gets the added gift of delicate line details up close.

6 – (Round Red Barn With Sheep, Elizabeth Pfeiffer) As a juror, I see a lot of barns...but none like this one! The watercolor is vibrant & expertly handled. This delightful fresh approach made me smile!

7 – (Pink Splendor, Cindy Welch) This is a lovely example of a fresh transparent watercolor. The artist has allowed the color to mix magically on the paper surface. The composition is balanced and the pictorial space has been divided into pleasing shapes.

8 – (Memory, Tom Herbert) I get the feeling there's a lot behind this painting. Instead of being perceived as two separate paintings, the two sides work together to create a haunting image. Despite the intricacy of the line work on the right, the viewer continues to be drawn to the left...what's beyond that opening? Thus, the painting holds the viewer's attention longer than most. This is a unique and compelling piece.

9 – (A Certain Presence, Sherry Whitney) The title seems perfect for this painting. The woman depicted certainly does have presence and makes me want to meet her. Some very thoughtful artistic choices have been made, from the red/green complimentary palette to the way the space has been divided. Even amongst an exhibition with a higher than usual number of amazing portraits, this is a standout.

10- (Site Plan 1, Kimberly Harris) This geometric vertical piece is delightful. The patterns, shapes and colors are well balanced & rhythmic.

11- (Rim to River, Linda Sherman) I'm in the middle of a Grand Canyon series and personally know how difficult it is to convey this massive and overwhelming landscape on a flat painting surface. The artist has done an amazing job of conveying not just the unique & complicated rock formations but the effect of atmosphere on color. Well done.

12 – (Fractured Fables: Wolf, Trish Mayberry) - This is a delightful, textural and whimsical (acrylic on board?) piece. The pictorial surface has been divided thoughtfully; both positive and negative areas are interesting. The image is creative, unique and illustrative.

Please note that the President's Award is chosen by the AWA President and therefore does not have a juror comment.

Images of all the beautiful artwork from the exhibition will be featured on the AWA website.

Our next exhibition will be in the fall at Surprise City Hall and run from late September through early December. We expect to have a prospectus shared by eblast and on the website in late May or early June with details for that show.

Awards and Honors

Karen Gray - Member Workshops



When Karen's grandmother retired, she did oil painting. She taught Karen the basics of art, and they did some plein air painting together. This was the beginning of Karen's PASSION FOR ART!

She took art classes throughout high school. Twice she entered collage art pieces at Glendale Annual Art Festivals. (She won Best of Show for youth division and received a trophy, a small cash award, and her picture in the Glendale Star Newspaper.)

While attending ASU, she majored in Microbiology and Clinical Lab Science. She became a Certified Medical Laboratory Scientist and worked in a supervisory capacity for over forty years in the medical field.

Her passion for art remained, however. While a student at ASU, she also took art classes. Following years dedicated to career and family, she resumed taking art classes at community colleges, with particular emphasis in watercolor painting. Time was spent during most weekends developing her skills in watercolor.

Karen became a member of AWA in 2012, and entered her first exhibition in 2014.

In 2020, Karen became the AWA Member Workshop Chairperson, and for the last six years she has done an outstanding job.

Western Federation of Watercolor Societies

WFWS #51 is in Denver Colorado

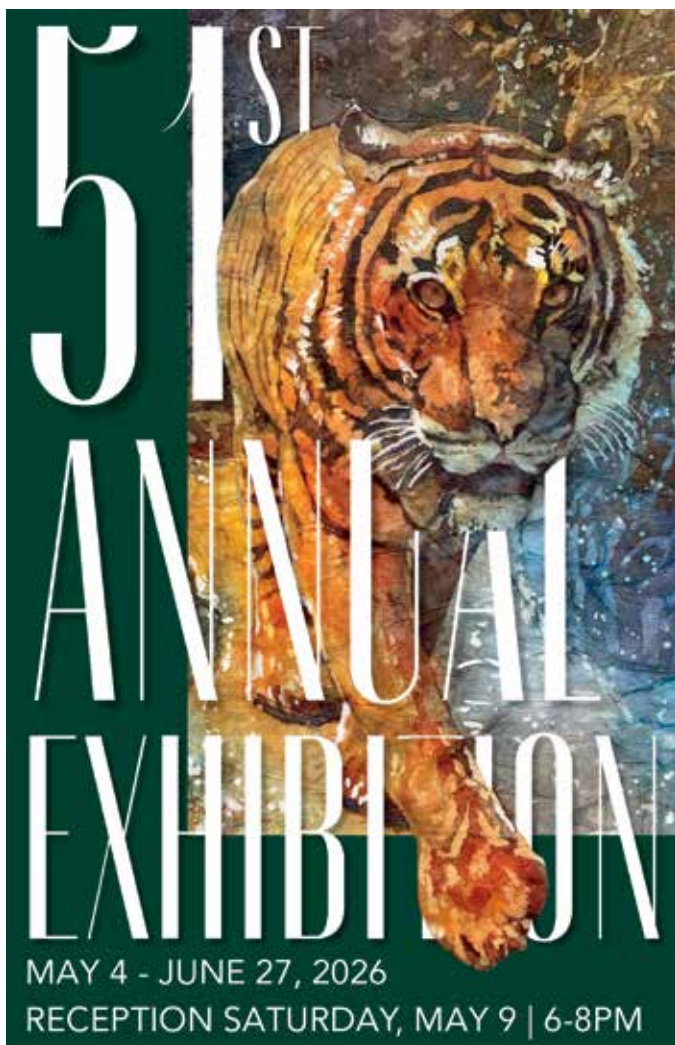
WFWS#51 Events

May 5-7, 2026 – Xi Guo Workshop at Curtis Center

May 8, 2026 | 6-9 PM – Awards Dinner, Hilton Garden Inn, Denver Tech Center

May 9, 2026 – Exhibit Opening Reception

David and Tanya will be representing our club at the meetings for Western Federation #51. Many of you are in Denver for the events listed below. We'll see you there!! We will have a full presentation in September. Hope to see you then.



WFWS

Western Federation of Watercolor Societies

The Camera is a Space Age Sketchbook!

The May 14 AWA meeting is the last meeting till September.

The program topic will be Photography by a Professional, Darrell Pierson, now retired.

This will give the membership an opportunity to get answers to their questions related to everything from lighting, angles, best photos for entering an exhibition to adding photos to your reference library.

Approximately 60% of a painting comes from a reference photograph.

Come with questions because Darrell loves them and he wants to help everyone reach their photographic goals.

Juror Workshop News

Workshop was a Great Success

By Marion Droge

April's three day Juror Workshop with Kristi Grussendorf was a great success. Kristi's demonstration at our April program was recorded and is now available to view. <https://azwatercolor.com/demos/>

I would like to thank our Spring Exhibition Juror, Kristi Grussendorf for coming to Phoenix and spending time with us at AWA. Our 3 day workshop with Kristi had many of us experimenting with new colors and different techniques as we painted the same subject matter all of the days but with very different styles each day. Kristi was very generous, sharing all her knowledge, tips and tricks with us. Students both beginner and advanced enjoyed painting and learning together.



Juror Workshop News

Fall 2026 Juror Workshop – October 8, 9 & 10, 2026

Artist Carl Purcell <https://carlpurcell.com/>

Carl Purcell taught painting and drawing at Snow College in Utah for 30 years. He is currently retired from the college but is a popular painting and drawing workshop instructor, having conducted workshops throughout the West, from Alaska to Arizona, and in Great Britain.

Carl is the author of the North Light publications, *Painting With Your Artist's Brain* (a watercolor book) and *Drawing With Your Artist's Brain*. In addition his art has been featured in numerous articles published in *The Artist's Magazine* and in *Splash I*. He has been invited to jury exhibits in Colorado, New Mexico, Wyoming, Utah, Nevada, Michigan and California.

Carl has achieved signature member status in the National Watercolor Society and was given honor member status in the Utah Watercolor Society for his contributions to watercolor in the state. He has won numerous awards, including a purchase award in the 2008 National Watercolor Society's international exhibition. In 2009 Carl was chosen as one of the panel of three judges for the National Watercolor Society Annual Exhibition.



Virgin River Bend

Member Workshop News

MEMBER WORKSHOPS FOR 2026

By Karen Gray

AWA Member Workshop Chair

The AWA member workshop in November will feature Agustin Vargas as the artist instructor. With an architectural background, Agustin will illustrate abstraction with a contemporary flare.

Agustin Vargas, an architect by UNAM (National Autonomous University of Mexico), has a deep-rooted interest in art. He honed his artistic skills by taking lessons at the Art Academy of San Carlos and the National Fine Arts Institute of Mexico City, Mexico. His extraordinary abilities are reflected in his work, which spans various techniques such as drawing, painting, lithography, printmaking, and muralism.

Since 1985, Agustin Vargas has showcased his work in numerous exhibitions in Mexico and the United States. His art reflects his deep fascination with nature, proportions, philosophy, and life, which has earned him honorable mentions.

Agustin Vargas's work transports us to alternate realities, where we get captivated by the subtleties of colors, forms, brush strokes, and the artist's imagination. Architectural designs underline his paintings' compositions.

As a dedicated instructor, Agustin shares his knowledge of techniques and composition. He is a National Watercolor Society, Arizona watercolor Association and Honorary Member honorary of the Watercolor Association of Morelos State, Mexico (President, 1998). He is a Former Lead Instructor at Mesa Arts Center.

You can find the registration opportunity for all workshops on the AWA website under Member Workshops. You will be able to complete the registration conveniently online with your credit card.



Balcony



Della Salute III

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We want you to know that AWA will be providing emails to these art companies in return for their wonderful awards.

What a great way for us as artists to find out about the newest and best products available!

If you do not want to receive these emails, you can unsubscribe when you receive them.



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 E-Blast Publisher: Rupali Holmes

Welcome New Members

Tonnie McBroom
 Sandra Parker

Our membership is invited to contact the editor with ideas and articles for this newsletter. Please contact the editor, Janice Wittwer at: janwittwer@icloud.com.

News for the newsletter will be due by the 20th, for publication by the 1st of the following month.