

5 to Watch

Exceptional Graduates from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

MARIEL CAPANNA, NICOLE MICHAUD, CHARLES NEWMAN, MADELINE PECKENPAUGH, AND JENN WARPOLE

MARCH 17–APRIL 15, 2016

Avery Galleries is pleased to present *5 to Watch*, our fourth annual special exhibition that showcases the artwork of five exceptional graduates from the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. In keeping with the show's established theme, the work of these contemporary artists is set in dialogue with Avery Galleries' exceptional collection of historic American art.

Part of our mission statement for *5 to Watch* is to choose a diverse group of artists not only to highlight the range of artwork that PAFA alumni create but also to facilitate how their work corresponds to our current collection. We always pay close attention to the individual strength and distinctive artistic style of each artist's work, while bearing in mind how the artists present as a group.

This year the landscape played an important role for four of the five artists. Nicole Michaud and Madeline Peckenpaugh use the natural world as their starting point, but incorporate memory, experience, and sensation into their work to transform their landscapes into glorious abstractions. Mariel Capanna also takes nature as her principle subject, but she approaches it with the mind of an archeologist, digging down to the smallest details in the landscape and magnifying them for her viewer. Charles Newman also uses keen powers of observation in his plein-air landscapes to capture the myriad effects of light and the emotions they can evoke. And while Jenn Warpole is not a landscape painter, her works of acrobats, dancers and performers are intended to evoke mystery, magic and transcendence from everyday life.

As the artists themselves state, they greatly valued their time at PAFA and appreciated the importance tradition played in their education there. We look to them as the future of American art as we contemplate and appreciate the historic artists who came before them.

VERY GALLERIES

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MARIEL CAPANNA (born 1988)

Overalls, Traffic Light, Grassy Hill, Cattle, 2015; Oil on panel, 18 x 21 inches (45.7 x 53.3 cm)

2013, Bachelor of Fine Arts, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

2013, Certificate in Painting, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- 2016
- Fresh stART, Arena 1 Gallery, Santa Monica, CA

Shades, The Bedfellows Club, Little Rock, AR
- 2015
- Con/Safos, Clockshop at the Bowtie Project, Los Angeles

Gazing Inward, COOP Gallery, Nashville, TN

Tiny Masters, Egyptian Art & Antiques, Los Angeles

74th Annual Juried Exhibition, Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia

Richard Said, Fjord Gallery, Philadelphia

Privacy Made Public, New Hope Arts Center, New Hope, PA

Shelf Life, 1748 Adams, Los Angeles
- 2014
- Should I Stay Or Should I Go?, Gross McCleaf Gallery, Philadelphia

73rd Annual Juried Exhibition, Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia
- 2013
- Recess (solo show), Crane Arts and the Last Drop Coffee House, Philadelphia

The 112th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Sampler: Small Works by 30 Artists, Cerulean Arts Gallery and Studio, Philadelphia
- 2012
- The 111th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

A ladder leaned up against an apple tree in Michigan; a woven picnic blanket laid out on prairie grass in Kansas; a Sprite bottle – its cap pricked with a pin – used by a Navajo teenager in a plaid flannel shirt to squirt water on dry red earth, making dinosaur tracks visible to passing tourists in Arizona. These are a few of the images I collected to take into my studio when, in 2013, I drove 30,000 miles worth of curlicues across and around the country for the sake of painting the American landscape.

The western tradition of landscape painting tends to take nature as its object, admiring its wild beauty from a civilized distance. My approach to landscape painting is different, perhaps more archeological. I might hike to a peak to see a landscape from a distance, but then I hike back down and enter it, find a home built within it, invite myself in as a houseguest, and closely study the accidental still lifes inside: the intimate objects used daily by people who have made a home in this particular nature. Like piling all the images of a film into a single frame, I like for my paintings to collapse near and far, outside and inside, grown and built, past and present.

At the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, I learned to walk around a nude model (or a still life with pitcher, fruit, drapery and animal skull) before making a mark on my canvas. I wanted to get close to it first, to look from a distance first. I learned at PAFA that it is less important to take one’s time to paint, and more important to take one’s time to see. It was with this in mind that I, with an impulse to paint the American landscape, chose not to paint for a year, but rather to wander around and through the country, treating it as my model. My foundation years at PAFA also instilled in me a deep, unshakable regard for the past. It’s not nostalgia, but rather an awareness that every painting I make has its roots in art history.



NICOLE MICHAUD (born 1975)

Seventy Two, 2015; Oil pastel on paper, 10 ½ x 10 inches (26.7 x 25.4 cm)

2012, Certificate in Painting, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- 2016 *A Leap of Faith*, Stanek Gallery, Philadelphia
- 2015 *Beck, Bielen, and Michaud*, Alumni Gallery, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Pop-Up: On and Off the Wall, First Street Gallery, New York
- 2014 *The 115th Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Annual Juried Exhibition*,
 Alumni Gallery, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Group Exhibition, Artists’ House Gallery, Philadelphia
2nd Annual Juried Exhibition, Cerulean Arts Gallery and Studio, Philadelphia
Small Works Exhibition, National Association of Women Artists, New York
Traditions of Excellence: Selected Artwork by the Faculty and Alumni of the Pennsylvania
 Academy of the Fine Arts, Governor’s Residence, Harrisburg, PA
Artists Against Hunger 2nd Annual Juried Exhibition, DaVinci Art Alliance, Philadelphia
The 151st Annual Juried Exhibition of Small Oil Paintings, Philadelphia Sketch Club
Twelve x Twelve Juried Exhibition, Alumni Gallery, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
- 2013 *Absolutely Abstract Exhibition*, Philadelphia Sketch Club
The 114th Fellowship of the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts Annual Juried Exhibition,
 Alumni Gallery, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Nicole Michaud (solo show), Artists’ House Gallery, Philadelphia
Art of the Flower, Philadelphia Sketch Club
- 2012 *71st Annual Juried Exhibition*, Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia
The 111th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

The creation of my work is personal and a reflection of where I am emotionally at the time. My artistic process sometimes begins with sketches of actual landscapes, but the majority of these works are pure inventions. Most often, the landscape is accidental; these works begin as color and become landscapes over time. The images emerge from memory and are altered by things that I am thinking about while I work, such as shadows, dreams, the objects around me, and my environment. The results are sometimes vast, serene, and empty vistas, and other times more dreamlike. They assist in my healing process and resolve my need for control, order, and safety, while allowing for the beauty of chance. The images remind me of real places, but are never quite real, like postcards that have been worn, modified, or tinted.

Studying at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts prompted me to explore different technical methods; it also allowed me to think about materials and the creation of my work in a new way. I learned not to be constrained by the methods that work for others, but rather to have the freedom of discovering a process that resonates with me personally. I returned to using oil pastels after completing my studies, because I needed a completely flexible medium that I could work with at any time. Oil pastels have great color density, and since they do not dry, they allow me to repeatedly return to and rework a piece, sometimes scraping the entire surface away to reveal only the ghost of the image. As I work, I cover, blend, scrape, and scratch, and through a process of constant revision, my work emerges into a final image.



CHARLES NEWMAN (born 1976)

Leopold’s House, 2015; Oil on panel, 11 x 14 inches (27.9 x 35.6 cm)

2008, Master of Fine Arts, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

2002, Bachelor of Fine Arts, Rowan University, Glassboro, NJ

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- 2015
- Charles Newman (solo show), F.A.N. Gallery, Philadelphia
Burlington County Plein Air Festival, Burlington, NJ
Mountain Maryland Plein Art Festival, Cumberland, MD
Camphill Plein Air Festival, Camphill, PA
The 152nd Annual Juried Exhibition of Small Oil Paintings, Philadelphia Sketch Club
- 2014
- Charles Newman (solo show), F.A.N. Gallery, Philadelphia
Easels of Frederick Plein Air Festival, Frederick, MD
Alla Prima Paint Out, Burlington, NJ
A Question of Scale, Alumni Gallery, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
Group Show, F.A.N. Gallery, Philadelphia
- 2013
- Points of View, The Community Arts Center, Wallingford, PA
En Plein Air, The Drawing Room Gallery, Cos Cob, CT
Wayne Plein Air Festival, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA
The 150th Annual Juried Exhibition of Small Oil Paintings, Philadelphia Sketch Club
Group Show, F.A.N. Gallery, Philadelphia
- 2012
- Charles Newman (solo show), F.A.N. Gallery, Philadelphia
Plein Air Painting, Devon Horse Show and Country Fair, Devon, PA
Plein Air for Camphill, The Rosenfeld Gallery, Philadelphia

I am an experiential painter. I seek to capture an experience or sensation in my work, so that the painting is felt. Painting on site, *en plein air* (outdoors), I strive to understand the effects of light and the moods and emotions it evokes from my surroundings. Many of my works are done *alla prima*, which means wet into wet, mostly completed in one session in order to achieve a fresh and harmonious representation of light.

My studies at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts fueled my inspiration to be an experiential painter focusing on outdoor painting. As a masters student I was given a studio, but I barely picked up a paintbrush in that room. I found little inspiration there; rather I felt compelled to go outside and onto the streets of Philadelphia. A colleague in the MFA program introduced me to painting *en plein air*. I also studied under Scott Noel, who instilled in me an enthusiasm for the intricacies of the painting process and inspired me to paint even the most overlooked or ordinary subject matter. At PAFA I found a focus and direction with my work and learned to be true and honest with myself.

The subject matter of my paintings ranges from the overlooked industrial neighborhoods of Philadelphia to the privacy of the home. Whether painting a landscape, an interior, or a still life, I strive to express the integrity of my personal touch, as I bear witness to the moment and the changing conditions of my surroundings. Translating these elements onto the surface makes the painting process both challenging and exciting.



MADELINE PECKENPAUGH (born 1991)

Fairer, 2015; Oil on canvas, 54 x 57 inches (137.2 x 144.8 cm)

All artwork courtesy of Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia

2015, Bachelor of Fine Arts, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

2015, Certificate in Painting, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- 2015 *Madeline Peckenpaugh: Recent Works* (solo show), Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia
 Emerging Talent Exhibition, Seraphin Gallery, Philadelphia
 The 114th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
 Emerging Artists Exhibition from PAFA, Oxford Art Alliance, Oxford, PA
 Unabashed: Nine Emerging Artists, Wayne Art Center, Wayne, PA
- 2014 *Should I Stay Or Should I Go?*, Gross McCleaf Gallery, Philadelphia
 The 113th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
 Fellowship Student Exhibition, Gallery 128, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
- 2013 *Student Exhibition*, Gallery 128, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
 Returning Student Exhibition, Gallery 128, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
 Sidework Series, Metropolitan Gallery 250, Philadelphia
 The 112th Annual Student Exhibition, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

My paintings are intuitive and memory based. They often represent places I have stayed in or passed through. In re-creating my memories of these places, my physical experience in them becomes very important, as I can only recall certain shapes and colors from the environment. Each painting is a landscape comprised of these quiet recollections. I want the viewer to feel welcome and safe but also to feel a sense of struggle. I implement distance in my work and create barriers through the addition and subtraction of paint in order to block the viewer’s passage into the deepest areas of my paintings.

My process involves a direct painting approach that starts in a feverish manner. The marks that I put down on the canvas differ from one another. They are put on with different tools, and each tool makes a different mark and shape. I use these shapes and marks to build the composition of my paintings, and I try to create a sense of uniformity within the chaos. After this first layer has dried, I pick and choose different shapes to keep or cover up. My decision about which shapes to keep depends on their size and color, where they sit in the landscape of the painting, and how they act within the space of the painting. These shapes guide me into composing the image I am trying to create. I repeat this process of addition and subtraction and allow the painting to take its own journey.

One of the most beneficial things I learned at PAFA was the direct connection between making representational and abstract artwork. Once I understood this relationship better, it became very important to me to be able to represent the natural world and use that representation as the foundation for developing my abstract paintings.



JENN WARPOLE (born 1978)

Untitled, 2015; Oil on panel, 18 x 18 inches (45.7 x 45.7 cm)

2009, Master of Fine Arts, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts
2007, Certificate in Painting, The Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts

Selected Recent Exhibitions

- 2015 *Privacy Made Public*, New Hope Arts Center, New Hope, PA
- 2014 *Catching the Big Fish*, Pterodactyl Gallery, Philadelphia
Art at Kings Oaks, Newtown, PA
On the Edge: Looking with New Eyes, Artists’ House Gallery, Philadelphia
- 2013 *Off the Wall/Coupling*, Dirty Franks, Philadelphia
Night Vision, Gross McCleaf Gallery, Philadelphia
Timon of Athens, The Philadelphia Artists’ Collective, PA
- 2012 *Trust Us*, Trust Gallery, Philadelphia
The Woman Represented, The International House, Philadelphia
71st Annual Juried Exhibition, Woodmere Art Museum, Philadelphia
The 149th Annual Juried Exhibition of Small Oil Paintings, Philadelphia Sketch Club

Over the past few years, my work has focused on dancers, acrobats and other types of performers. I’m not sure where or why the attraction began. Perhaps I wanted to be a dancer. Perhaps the movements and positions of the performers, which are so unique and beautiful, enabled me to transcend everyday life to somewhere magical. Where else does one see human beings leaping, sprawling, looking ethereal, looking ridiculous? Moreover, I am deeply attracted to the mystical element underlying this art form. When I watch performers, I almost feel like I am no longer watching mere people, but rather gods, or even unicorns. As an artist, it is important to me to be moved in such ways whenever possible.

My time at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts gave me the training and the skills that I needed to become the kind of artist that I wanted to be. Because of this foundation, I can now render form and space in a believable manner. I am not a classical realist, and I am more concerned with evoking a feeling rather than representing the world exactly as I see it; nevertheless, I want my paintings to feel right, so that my viewers aren’t distracted by inaccurate drawing or bad technique. In addition to providing me with these important skills, PAFA treated art-making seriously, elevating it from just a hobby. It’s important that I value what I create and all of my peers at PAFA treated their practice with respect.

