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EXHIBITION NEWS

Five of Lynette Cook's paintings have been accepted in the San Francisco Society of Illustrators' big show. She also won two awards: One GOLD and one SILVER in the technical category. Her painting "Yosemite Mist" was a top 100 winner in the San Francisco "Arts for the Parks" competition and will be featured for sale in their traveling show and catalog. That was out of over 2300 in competition!

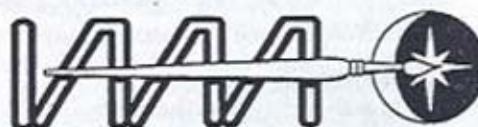
The dates are September 4 - November 27, and the location is University of California, San Francisco, at the Faculty/Alumni House. The opening reception is on Wednesday, September 11 from 5:00 - 7:30 p.m.

The address of the UCSF Faculty/Alumni House is 745 Parnassus Avenue. It's on the fourth block south of Golden Gate Park at 5th Avenue. Parnassus is actually just an extension of Judah Street in that area. Lynette says:

If you're in this area on a Monday - Thursday (but can't attend the reception) let me know and maybe I can go up to UCSF with you. The Morrison Planetarium (where I work) is just a few blocks from there and is a fairly easy walk. Questions? Call me at (415) 750-7132 Mon.-Thurs. day, (415) 564-2757 eve./weekend, or e-mail me at look@calacademy.org.



The Official Newsletter of the



International Association for
Astronomical Arts

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"Distant Shores"
by Pat Rawlings

Editor: David A. Hardy

From Your Editor

omewhat late again, I'm afraid. This time it was my laser printer that let me down and had to go away for repair. It was (of course) just a month out of warranty when it started making a horrific clunking sound; but to give them their due, Texas Instruments did the repair for free even though it was over the time limit.

Once again there has been a lot of e-mail traffic, some of it very useful and valid, some less so! But those of you who have not yet joined the Net community really should think seriously about doing so, as you're missing a lot. All the info that's available on the 'Fossil life from Mars' issue, for instance, and the Galileo images from Europa. The latter can be found on the Galileo home page at <http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/galileo> and the Mars stuff at <http://www.jsc.nasa.gov/pao/flash/> among other sites. There are links from Nova-graphics and other members' pages, too.

Here is an example of an article originally placed only on the Web, reprinted here for the benefit of non-e-members. Other such articles will follow as space allows.

How to sell your art

The Astro Market—worth it? by Kim Poor

When I first started painting space art around 1976, I hoped that being located in Tucson, AZ, the hub of the international astronomy community, would be the ticket to success.

Sadly, I found out that wasn't the case. Although I love Tucson, and there are more astronomy happening here (both amateur and professional) than anywhere in this part of the galaxy, that doesn't necessarily translate into sales.

Tucson is a great place to be if you're a space artist, if only for the scads of astronomers, each with their own specialty and focus, and for the magnificent and extraterrestrial landscapes that are Arizona. The dark, clear skies beckon your attention. If you're in need of subject matter, information, and inspiration, there is no better place on Earth.

That begs the question: Who ARE buyers of space art? In my years of experience, study, sales and marketing, I can definitely tell you who ISN'T:

1. Professional Astronomers
2. Amateur Astronomers
3. Science Fiction Fans
4. New-Agers

Quite a shock, huh? It was to me, and it took me years to accept it. I thought I must be doing something wrong. I spent many hours adding the names and addresses of hundreds of local astronomers to my mailing list, transcribed from the faculty directory of the University of Arizona.

When I would do a local show, I'd send these astronomers a card. I was puzzled why no one ever showed up, until I forgot to send invitations out a couple of times, and met several astronomers by chance at the show. You see, there are so many astronomers in Tucson that the chances of two or three being in a mall or a show at once were very good. Only one conclusion: They were avoiding me.

FAIR TRADE

This was a rude awakening for me, but now I take it for granted. Professional astronomers are absolutely the worst market for space art. However, they are among the most essential contributors to that art. They'll take art if you give it to them, and that's what I did — in exchange for information; a fair trade.

As far as astronomers go, amateurs aren't much better. In fairness, you can green up both markets if you can convince the natives that you're one of them. This is more difficult with professionals, who often have what I call an "ivory tower" mentality, that they are the high priests of Cosmic Knowledge, and to hell with everyone else.

This attitude is not nearly as prevalent as it was in say, 1980, and we have the humbling discoveries of Voyager and Hubble to thank for that. I spent several years working with astronomers who were fairly rigid in their beliefs of what could, and what could not be. Jupiter and Saturn softened them up, but it seemed that after the picture of Miranda came back that they finally threw their hands up and became a lot more open-minded.

Back to amateurs. Another good thing that's happened is the line between professional and amateur astronomer has become blurred. Professionals used to look down their noses at amateurs, but amateurs do all the dirty work: occultations, photometry, variable stars, etc. Amateurs have discovered most of the comets, culminating in

SL9, and supernovae (IAAA member Jerry Armstrong discovered the supernova in M51).

As I said, it helps to convince the astronomers that you have a rationale for your work, that you not just painting your hallucinations. Several of our members showed excellent observational skills, measuring magnitudes, angular length, etc. in their synopses of Comet Hyakutake, compiled by Don Davis. Once you speak the language, talk the talk, the astronomer market softens up somewhat.

STAR PARTIES

Star parties are a decent venue for the space artist, who is beginning to sell his work, needs some recognition, or wants to learn more. There are several major ones in the USA. Riverside Telescope Makers Conference at Big Bear, CA, and the Texas Star Party in Ft. Davis, TX are two that I have attended. Jerry Armstrong reports having attended Riverside, and the Winter Star Party (I'm not sure where that is). Chris Butler has been to Riverside for several years.

Typically star parties last at least a weekend, sometimes more. It is a camp-out, usually held at the highest elevation location in the area. In California that means pine trees and squirrels. In Texas that means scrub oak and scorpions.

Star parties usually have an exhibit area, populated mostly by vendors of telescope equipment and the like. Space artists are usually welcome. The costs are inexpensive, and it is something I highly recommend. At night it is lights-out, and some amazing, ingenious scopes come out. The scope's owner picks out nice objects in the sky, and folks wander from scope to scope to see the sights until dawn. It's really a lot of fun, and a good place to begin, if you're a rookie astronomer. It may take a few visits to gain acceptance, but sales of smaller items, particularly inexpensive works are good. Star parties are also a fertile ground to obtain commissions.

I met a person at Riverside who became one of my all-time largest collectors, and picked up a couple of commissions. The story was similar at the Texas Star Party.

AEROSPACE CONVENTIONS

Aerospace conventions come in all flavors. There are the "space advocate" conventions like the NSS convention, called the Space Development Conference. There are also regional Space Development Conferences.

The Planetary Society sponsors occasional Planetfests, in fact Planetfest 81 was the genesis of the IAAA. There are a couple of space Expos, held yearly in Colorado Springs and Albuquerque. There are engineer-type workshop conventions, like the Case for Mars conference, held in Boulder, CO. Planetfests in particular, and the NSS (National Space Society) conventions are good venues for space art.

Then there are the professional astronomer conferences, like the AAS (American Astronomical Society) which has two meetings a year, and the DPS (Department of Planetary Sciences) which is a subsection of the AAS. DPS meets once a year. The AAS conventions require one to be a member, and there may or may not be exhibit space.

TEACHERS

A word about educators. They are among the most ardent fans of space art, but they are extremely low-budget. Usually they are putting out their own money for educational items. Teachers can make the most use of slides, and that is what they request most.

ENGINEERS

Engineers are by and large good space art buyers. They have the income, and are professionals, but they are only marginally involved with astronomy. It is no accident that they prefer people and hardware in their pictures.

WHAT ABOUT SF FANS AND NEW AGERS?

My take on this angle is that space art is simply not weird enough for them.

In conclusion, then, the astronomy market for space art is disappointing, but at gatherings of astronomy or aerospace people, there is such a high concentration of interest, at a relatively low cost, that it is worth pursuing this market. It appears to me the more professional the astronomer, the worse the sales. At the "space advocate", or what I call the "space buff" gatherings, sales are much better.

Why? Who knows? My theory is that professionals have their fill of astronomy, and don't want to see it hanging on their walls. Amateurs may be jealous that they spent \$3000 on a scope that can't see what we space artists already have in our heads.

PLEASE CHECK: Is your subscription overdue? Send your \$40 to Dale if so!



EUROREPORT

I have now received the promised CD-ROM of the work of Ludek Pesek. Called simply *Space Art*, this is a MUST for all fans of space art, since Ludek has of course been an important influence on space artists for many years.

This CD contains some of his well-known paintings from as far back as the early 70s, but also a whole lot that I for one have never seen before, many done in the 90s. It takes the form of a Kodak Photo CD slide show, with text written by Bruno Stanek (the writer of several of Ludek's books), and narration in either German or English. The English one (with a US accent) is by Madeleine Baumann, and there is some music at the start by Stephan Roos.

It works like a video player, with various buttons. The narration gives plenty of information, including, usually, the date when the scene was created. There are many images of Mars, including a panorama of mountains near the pole. Any members who have attended IAAA workshops in, say, Iceland or Hawaii will realise just how *real* these scenes are, despite the slightly impressionistic technique. I'm convinced that Ludek must have been there!

My only criticism is that some of the images, which are obviously taken from 35mm slides, look a bit like a real slide show where some light is reaching the screen from a window, i.e. there is a slightly hazy effect to them. But don't let that spoil your enjoyment - it's what your brightness and contrast controls are for.

The CD works with both Windows and Mac; when I have details of availability and price I'll pass them on. Or Ludek's address is in the IAAA Directory - I'm sure he'll be pleased to hear from you. And incidentally, Ludek (who has a complimentary membership) has just sent a gift of \$150 to the IAAA - mainly,

he says, because he enjoys reading *Pulsar*. Many thanks, Ludek!

THE TENERIFE WORKSHOP

The Tenerife Workshop is drawing ever closer. Sadly, I heard only today that Jackie Smith (aka Burns) will not after all be joining us due to personal problems at home. Hopefully she may still be able to send some work along to the exhibition which runs parallel with the workshop, at the Science Museum.

And incidentally, if you can find a way to get it there, you may also send a painting or two, even if you're not going yourself. Have a word with one of the attendees in your country.

The workshop runs roughly from 14 September for a week; members arrive and depart on different days according to their flights. The current list of participants on this truly *international* workshop is:

USA:

Dennis Davidson
Bill Hartmann, with Gayle, Amy and friends Kelly and Shizuka

Dana Berry
Betsy Smith

GERMANY:

Andreas von Rátyi
Michael Böhme

FRANCE:

Erik Viktor (actually German)

ITALY:

Italo Rodomonti

UK:

Dave Hardy
Jess Artem (based on Tenerife)

It is probably not too late to join us!

The article I wrote on space art for the UK magazine *Astronomy Now* (August) has produced an unprecedentedly large number of queries from artists wishing to join the IAAA. So far only one, Joan Lee, has confirmed that she is joining, but I hope that others will follow.

Incidentally I should be on BBC-1 television on Friday 23rd August, on the programme *Future Fantastic*, hosted by Gillian Anderson (no, I didn't get to meet her). I'm talking, not about space art, but space tourism; I'm Thomas Cook's UK consultant. Since Thomas Cook introduced the first European and World Tours, they *should* be first in space - right? >

EuroReport continued:

The UK contingent of the IAAA are holding an exhibition in conjunction with **National Astronomy Week**, at the Museum of Science & Industry in Birmingham, 23-29 September. The artists involved are:

Graham Bate, Richard Bizley, Arthur Gilbert, Peter Goodwin, Dave Hardy, Mark Hemsell, Malcolm Johnson, John Lewis, Jackie Smith.

REPORT ON THE WHITE MOUNTAIN WORKSHOP

by Joel Hagen

Dale Darby did a fine job of organizing a workshop in a most unusual setting. It is a pity that more IAAA artists did not attend. The high altitude Barcroft research station could have easily accommodated 10-15 of us. This is one of the best sites I have seen for a workshop with comfortable dorm sleeping arrangements, superb cooking, heat and 110 volt power for slide shows, video, etc. Contrasting with the rather luxurious station is the stark beauty of everything outside the door. The station is located at 12,500 feet altitude in the White Mountains on the east slope of California's Owens Valley. The 30 mile drive to the station from highway 168 took two and a half hours, mostly on dirt roads. (I was only able to get my Dodge off the mountain by removing the air cleaner and propping the carburetor open with a bent paper clip until I got it down to about 9000 feet.)

Well above timber line, the area around the lab is tundra... bleak at first glance, but lush and varied upon close inspection. Those of us who enjoyed the Iceland workshop would notice a great similarity in the landscape. The lab is about 1000 feet above timberline. Timber in that unique area is Bristlecone Pine... the oldest known living organisms on this planet, some specimens dating back over 4500 years. Severely weathered granite constitutes the obvious geology at that elevation. Boulder mounds protrude from the tundra and sand and weathered rubble repose in elegant hyperboloids which interconnect them, smoothly linking them to the chasms and valleys.

Clearly visible about 2 miles from the lab are sterile dolomite ridges which require little imagination to render as lunar terrain, which Joy, Dale, Bob and I all got around to. Beyond this geological analogue, I found myself captivated with the sense of isolation

'Emerald' by Joy Day (Artist's Profile next issue)

this lab conveyed in its remote and stark surroundings. The quonset hut and modular outbuildings and lab units nestled somewhat uncomfortably into the granite rubble of the slope behind a small plateau. The cylindrical hut had been modified and added onto many times. I was reminded of Antarctic bases, and found my imagination running to thoughts of Mars bases. I did several acrylic sketches exploring this analogy and plan to use the photographs of the station as detail resource for Mars base paintings. More important than the literal visual detail of the structure was the feel of the station. To me, tuning in to that "feel" was the most valuable aspect of the workshop as far as anything that directly relates to space art.

I found, however, that I was drawn to quite a different aspect of that landscape as I was there longer. The four of us had hiked down from the station into a series of soft, bowl shaped valleys punctuated with protruding boulder mounds. As we watched Marmots waddle from rock to rock, I noticed the glint of obsidian flakes near me in the sand. On inspection, the area was littered with flakes bearing the distinctive conchoidal pattern of deliberate percussion. This was obviously an area where Piutes had worked obsidian cores making arrow and spear points. The four of us looked around the area for a while and eventually spotted broken finished points as well as abandoned points that had not gone well.



Evenings

In the evenings we watched Bob's slides and my video of the Arches workshop and set up our painting studio in the well-lit dining room. The other lab researchers and staff were asleep by 10:30 each night leaving us the run of the place. Dale and I did quite a bit of work with Prismacolor pencils, both in the field and back at the lab. All of us used acrylics in the evening at the lab painting sessions. Joy concentrated on watercolors in the evening, departing from her usual technique of reverse glass painting with acrylic. Bob Kline worked on a very nice lunar landscape based on his graphite sketch of the Dolomite ridges.

Monday morning, the 4th day of the workshop, Bob left at dawn to rendezvous with his brother for a sail plane ride. Dale and Joy left a few hours later for the long ride back to Sacramento and Joy's plane back to Portland. I stayed on two more days and focussed my attention on the Piute Indian presence in the area.

I shot video and left everything undisturbed. In the evenings, David Lee and I looked at his drawings of Mojave petroglyphs and discussed the possibility of rousing a desert workshop at the facilities of "his" reserve. I think it would be a perfect site considering the abundant planetary analogues of that region.

Kudos for Dale

So, kudos to Dale Darby for organizing a good workshop in an unusual locale. Why weren't more of us there? The facility couldn't have been better. Charlotte's cooking was gourmet, robust and plentiful. At night, at 12500 feet, the stars blazed astonishingly bright. I stood in my Soviet Army coat, relic from the IAAA Crimea trip, as Bob handed me his binoculars and pointed me toward the center of the galaxy. My eyes swam in points of distant fire. I thought back over the 15 years I have known and travelled with you wonderful and quirky colleagues and missed you. More of you should have been with us on that high plateau, thinking of Mars and the universe beyond, surrounded by the highest early human habitation and the oldest living things... in a stillness that hung like a silent heartbeat in the thin air.

Thanks to Joel for an excellent report, and apologies to him for having to edit it for reasons of space (no pun intended). There's much more, especially on the Piute Indians and Bighorn sheep. If you'd like the

full report, please contact Joel, Dale or me. Meanwhile, here's a 'P.S.' from Dale's report, which caused some e-mail interest:

And yes, we all saw a UFO, due east at around 11 PM. Do I think that it was an alien craft from another world! NOT! But I do think that it was some form of secret government craft. The question that I have is where did they acquire the technology and propulsion systems needed to do what it did! It was a very bright white light source at a distance of approximately 70 miles and made some very erratic motions at great speeds. Call me a nut, but that's what we saw. The speed of the craft was about 20 degrees in one second. That's fast.

Aldo Spadoni commented that

"The attendees of the White Mountain workshop apparently saw what is referred to as a 'pulsar'. This is an advanced, high speed-aerospace vehicle incorporating pulse jet technology, reminiscent of the German V-1 buzz-bomb of WW II."

There is more, which again you can obtain by asking, but will already have seen if you're on the net. . .

I now have quite a backlog of 'personal profiles' or biographies, which I really want to print, but more topical items like the White Mountain Workshop crowded them out. Next time I hope to have an issue devoted to several members. Meanwhile, here's one from newcomer Anil Rao, who also sent a review of some interesting software:

ANIL RAO

I lived in England as a kid, in Preston, Lancs. from 1960-1966. It was here, I think, that I first started to do drawings about space and astronauts and such. I recall a lot of *Fireball XL5* influence for heaven's sake!

After moving to the US in 1966, I began a healthy interest in science, astronomy, science fiction and painting. It was, of course, the heyday of the US space program, so my interest in space was pretty high and has continued to the present. At about the same time, I discovered that you could actually buy professional oil paints and canvas from the local store! I'm not sure where I thought they came from before that realization, but it sparked me to try my hand at oil painting. My present interest in astronomical art was triggered by several events. One was

based on a misunderstanding. I had been struggling to duplicate, in oil, some of the effects that I had seen in some of Bonestell's work. A friend of mine told me "You'll never get it work that way. He used an airbrush." I had never heard of such a thing and was intrigued. I later purchased one and it has evolved into my main painting tool. I later found out that Bonestell, did NOT use an airbrush. I find that fact remarkable and a testament to his skill with the brush.

The second event was the discovery of your book *Challenge to the Stars*. Aside from magazine covers (*Analog* and such) and a few articles about Bonestell, I'd never seen a collection of artwork like this. It was truly inspirational. So my influences include Bonestell, yourself, Alan Bean, K. Freas and the Canadian wildlife artist Robert Bateman.

Studying his work has given me ideas about how to compose my paintings. I think of the present state of wildlife art as what astronomical art could become given the right set of circumstances. Wildlife art is also disdained by the "fine arts" establishment. In fact when he came to visit Denver he gave a talk at the Natural History museum not the Art Museum. I'm sure you've noticed similar parallels with astronomical art.

I like to do a variety of subjects: space program and astronomical stuff. I've done some biological work: bones, skulls, muscles etc. (This reflects my occupation as an anatomy and physiology professor). Also, I'm trying to get better at doing figures and portraits. In all I am striving to achieve realistic effects in my work. I am entirely self-taught with the exception of one airbrush class. I have not exhibited, sold nor published any of my work (although I would certainly like to).

Review of *Starry Night*

One of the biggest chores I've had to deal with when doing astronomical paintings was to figure out how big, say, Saturn would look hanging in the sky of one of its moons. I'd pull out the trusty calculator and my trig books and get to work. I've often wished there was a better way. Enter *Starry Night*.

Starry Night, from Sienna Software of Canada, is an astronomical simulator that allows you to wander almost anywhere in the solar system (out to almost 670 au) and view the sky at almost any time. If, for example, you want to do a painting of Saturn as seen from Rhea on December 17, 1989 at 18:37:31 UT, you enter these dates

and times, select Rhea from a list of Saturn moons, press 'Go There' and YOU A THERE! The screen shows an accurate representation of the Saturn as it would appear the sky at that time.

You can even select different locations. Rhea to get that perfect view of Saturn hugging the horizon. Maybe the positions the other moons are not to your liking. Speed up the passage of time and watch the moon orbit Saturn until their placement suits you. *Starry Night* also acts as a "planetarium" the desk top, if you want to do some virtual star gazing.

It is hard to say anything negative about *Starry Night*. It performed better than I expected and is a pleasure to use. However, at risk of being picky I noted the following minor problems. Many of the smaller bodies are missing: asteroids, comets (except Halley, Hale-Bopp and Hyakutake), several moons of Jupiter and Saturn. Some commands, such as turning on a planet surface grid, were buried in a non-obvious dialog box. A few users may find the lack of manual a concern, but considering the program is very easy to use, I thought the separate manual was unnecessary. Ballo help is available if you need it.

The program comes in two flavors: present: 680x0 and PowerMac. I ran *Starry Night* on a PowerMac 8100/80 and it was very fast. Even though the program is a snap to use it is far from simplistic. The program does a lot of its processor time to update the positions of the planets and moons. As a result image quality (rendered at 256 colors) is realistic but adequate. Most of the planets have little surface detail and the surrounding landscape is a featureless plane (except for Earth which shows stylized trees). I find it works just fine since the program leaves where the artist's work begins (we've got to be able to do something after all).

Starry Night is a terrific application and steal at a ridiculously low \$28.00 US. If you have a Mac and InterNet access check out Sienna Software home page at <http://www.siennasoft.com/siennasoft/default.html>.

You can download the 3 MB self-extract file from there. You'll be touring the virtual solar system within an hour. If you are bandwidth challenged (slow or none) call 1 (800) 252-5417 to order the program on floppy disk.

Please turn to the back page for STOP PRESS news of one of our member's successful exhibitions. And please do send me info on your own exhibitions, publications, etc.