brush work, then airbrush, and so on. Right now I’m concentrating on a better use of value and color, and I’m looking to increase the apparent depth of my paintings. I’m also really excited by the use of light in helping to compose a painting.

As for my influences, aside from many of you out there, I would have to list Dalí, da Vinci, Rembrandt, Michael Whelan, Ralph McQuarrie, Stephen Youll and Roma\nKukalis, among many others.

The Death Valley Workshop having, so to speak, ‘bitten the dust’, we are open to suggestions for an IAAA workshop later this year. Please do send in your ideas, by e-mail or small. Also, a lot of members expressed interest in the Caribbean Total Eclipse of 26 February 1998. This has great potential, but we need someone to research the best site, prices, etc. Any offers?

Below Comet Hale-Bopp over Hedon, Yorkshire, by Peter G. Goodwin.

Peter took this photograph at 3.44am on 1st April 1997, when the comet was at its closest to the Sun. In colour, the houses are strongly orange, due to the sodium street lighting (the bane of astronomers); even so, the comet shows up strongly behind the old beacon.

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The Official Newsletter of the
International Association for Astronomical Arts

Cover illustration (untitled, but perhaps “Picnic?”) by John Platt, who was born in England but now lives in Canada. Profile next issue.

Editor: David A. Hardy
IAAA Website: http://www.rovaspace.com/
IAAA/IAAA.shtml
IAAA News

How to sell your art... part of an occasional series by Kim Poor

CHEAP STUFF: Bread and Butter

(NOTE: this series is, obviously, written with the US market in mind. However, most of its points are equally valid in Europe and elsewhere.)

I have spent many years doing indoor and outdoor art shows. Typically, these consist of hundreds of artisans, though only a few are really "fine artists," or painters. Although you may not know what you're looking for, it's still a good idea to use a rule of thumb: it is a decent general market for people to buy art, and a lot of artists are considered for these people's dollars.

Some fairs' art budgets come at different levels, and since there will always be fewer "high rollers" than those of lesser means, the artist must have a matching hierarchy of prices in his inventory. All artists need "bread and butter" items for sale, but in the business of buying, artists who have done, "crates," those scours of low-priced, durable knock-knacks are often the high sellers, simply because they have inexpensive items that make up for their low prices with high volume sales.

These crafts put even more pressure on the fine artists to have some low-priced inventory in order to compete. This is where the art community, that has been working for the same "high rollers" and the "low rollers" has become a force, simply because they have inexpensive items that make up for their low prices with high volume sales.

Ludlum

Now, while I admit that being something of a Ludlum is the use of computers in art is considered (I think I should have been born about 300 years ago), I feel that their particular strengths will only become apparent when it is possible to create for example, convincing animations in three dimensions to illustrate events distant in time or space which would be impossible by other means.

This offers the potential of educating the mind, beyond anything that could be accomplished by traditional media. Ludlums can get even more exciting as the human imagination is the latest state-of-the-art Titan Graphics workstation doozle seem like a Sinclair ZX81 where the visualization is very convincing. Yes, that's right, try using the old grey matter between your ears. The facility to use our imagination is something that we seem to be losing sight of, and it is imagination and real substance that is sadly lacking today in an age of virtual reality this or multi-media that.

But that's another story. Just remember there really is no such thing as a free lunch. Now I've got that off my chest. I'll go and take care. I think I can hear the sound of knives being sharpened.

Jeff Ward

I first became interested in art and astronomy when I was very young, as I'm sure you did. I grew up drawing all sorts of things and reading books on space, but I wasn't until '95 that I really started painting seriously. Up until that point I guess I had done odd and end (at least suburban) art, but the permuting myth that one could not make a living in art. When I was younger, I had three main choices of careers: astronomy, art, and electrical engineering. Well, unfortunately for me I ended up going with engineering. Let me put this way: I had a whole semester - too much math for me, I found out.

So eventually after a couple more semesters, I finally came full circle back to what I really wanted to be when I was a kid - an artist. The thing is, it took me a lot longer to realize that I want to concentrate on astronomical and SF art. But here I am, and I couldn't be happier to be in company of such wonderful artists.

Once I made the decision earlier this year to concentrate on this realm of art, there's been no looking back. In September I moved from Denver to Memphis to major in illustration at the Rocky Mountain College of Art and Design. Then in October I had a Mars painting juried into a show at the Planetarium in Boulder, where I met one of my influences, Michael Carroll (which is how I became an IAAA member - thanks Mike!).

In December I realized my goal of getting published in a semi-pro magazine by Charles Adams. The surprising thing was, not only was I assigned an interior illustration, but also the magazine's first color cover as well. In addition, I've also won first place in Portland's OrCon 18 art show for best amateur artist, as well as placing third in Calgary's Star Con and third in the new magazine Boise nooga. My goal for next Christmas is to get published in a professional magazine, be it a SF, astronomy, or other type of science magazine.

I work primarily in acrylics, using both brushes and airbrush, mostly relegating the airbrush for large areas of color, but sometimes using a layering technique of
kends, and so it may take many months to complete a small panel. As for my first attempts at space art, it is my goal on a purely technical level, to utilize the same procedures and materials (I work only in oils or egg tempera), while exploring the new challenges and opportunities to experiment offered by this very different subject matter.

So, how did I get to hear about the IAAA? Well, I first have a confession to make. While passing a street newspaper stall my eye was caught by the cover of the August '96 issue of Astronomy Now—a magazine I don't normally take (at least of disapproval from the Brits), with a feature article on the history of space art by David A. Hardy. As a direct result of reading that article I contacted Dave, who forwarded a complimentary edition of Pulsar and therein was a call for members to join the workshop about to be held on Tenerife.

My curiosity was suitably aroused and several frantic phone calls and a few faxes later everything had fallen into place and I was ready to go. It was a real pleasure to meet and exchange ideas with others who, while having very different viewpoints as to the 'function' or 'purpose' of space art, all share the same underlying concerns and a common vision of our place in the cosmos. I hope that this has marked the start of a long and fruitful association with my friends and colleagues in the IAAA.

And the future? With luck I'll eventually learn how to use a brush properly. It only took 37 years, the discovery of the IAAA, and the realization that two important parts of my life really need not run on separate paths to renew some of the sense of awe I had as a kid whenever I looked up at the heavens, and I'm sure I will continue to draw inspiration from the beauty of the night sky and the world around me for many years to come.

Garry also wished to contribute to the discussions which filled the last Pulsar. Oddly, he is the only non-e-member to do so. Is this because of the 'ease of e-mail, or are online members really more vociferous? Answers on a postcard...

The IAAA Is Dead! Long Live the IAAA!

Right, now that I have your attention (I hope), I'd just like to add a few comments (at the risk of repeating what may already have been expressed) in the spirit of the recent discussion in these pages regarding the future evolution of the IAAA.

While I have no doubt that part of the apparent decline of interest in space art can be traced to the fact that space seems to have lost its hold on the public imagination, (it's face it, most people have more pressing concerns in their everyday lives), I feel that this is only part of the story, and in fact, may even be something of a red herring. I think the problem lies at a much more fundamental level.

First and foremost the 'Art' in space art.

Do we wish to be taken seriously as artists? No artistic movement exists in isolation. I assume that one of the main aims of the IAAA is to help this rather specialized genre be accepted and enjoyed by a wider audience, but so far I haven't seen much evidence to suggest that this is being done outside of a minority of specialist magazines.

Surely if we want to be taken seriously and generate some real interest in what we are trying to accomplish then we need to get into some mainstream art publications and be very conscious as to the quality of submitted work. I suspect that the resistance of the general art community to accept this type of work as a legitimate art form is due in part to the fact that popular culture has become saturated with images of often mediocre quality or content, and unfortunately, we all get tarred with the same brush if we do not convince otherwise.

COLOR XEROX, DIGITAL PRINTS

I have an artist friend that has been doing color xeroxes of his paintings since the inception of the color copier over ten years ago. They look great, and it's been a great bread and butter item for him. Those of you who have seen our catalog or website may have noticed our digital prints. These are simple color xeroxes; however, these are done from a digital file, which allows more manipulation and fine color adjustment. It also allows a place that was originally larger than the copy machine's surface, to be printed.

If you have a bread & butter plate that seems to sell well, do a real nice version of it 11x17 or smaller (to fit on the copy machine) and take it to your local color copier store. Check around first and there are several to choose from. Call them up to see if they have ever done fine artwork.

Now you can print very inexpensively, as much as you want. You can make a limited edition, open edition, business cards, bookmarks, whatever. Price them low, and if they sell well, you can raise the price to whatever the market will bear.

* One perk with color xeroxes: They won't fade in the light.

Bill Hartmann, who lives here in Tucson had a work recently published in the Planetarium Report. At least one raving buyer wanted a print, and wrote to TPS and Bill about it. Bill asked me if I'd like to make a print, but it would be far too hard to do a run of 50-100 lithos based on one call. The collector couldn't afford the original at $1,000, and didn't want a color xerox, which is less than $100. Depending on the venue, $50-100 is a respectable price range for small originals by a beginning artist. Try not to spend more than a few hours on them.

This will accomplish many things:

* It will give you some bread and butter items to make some cash
* It will protect your larger, more elaborate pieces from de-laterization, (patina, acid, or other spoilage)

It will earn you a collector base: consider the GM catalog, "get in a Chevy and work them up to a Cadillac later."

* And finally, you'll find out what sells.

You'll be surprised at how your repertoire grows once in a while, you'll produce a classic beauty. The looseness and pressureless spontaneity of working small will let your talents shine through.

After you find out what motif(s) sell the best, it's time to think about a print. Prices are the greatest, because you just print a bunch, sign em and sell em. Of course getting to that point is an arduous and costly process.

Offset printing is expensive, but there are new alternatives.

LIMITED EDITION PRINTING

There are several companies in the U.S. that specialize in short-run (less than 1000) "gang runs" of postcards, greeting cards, small prints, etc. The cost per piece ranges from $200-$500 for a limited edition of 500. This is done from a digital file, which allows for more manipulation and fine color adjustment. This allows a place that was originally larger than the copy machine's surface, to be printed.

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Digital print.

At a cost of about $45-$75, you get a high-resolution "drum scan" made from a 4x5 or slide. It is archived on a Zip or Syquest disk, capable of holding a 10MB file. Once the scan is done, you can output it on one of several devices, ad nauseum, on almost any kind of backers, watercolor paper, etc. These are wonderful results, and acceptable as a proof. The size for LaserMaster prints is 3 feet by any length. The size for Iris prints is 30x40 or so.

The cost for LaserMaster is about $25/sq ft. It is more expensive for the Iris print, but the Iris is ultimate quality. LaserMaster is good quality, though. Both of these devices are ink-jet printer/painters, with a very high resolution.

You can sell these prints in the $200-$300 price range, in a small edition (50 or less), and make them up as you need them. You can do them in different sizes, even, depending on your buyer's budget and needs. And the great thing is you still have a digital scan on disk, which can be used for future cards, offset lithos, or any other reproduction purposes.

OFFSET GANG PRINTING

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The way they do this inexpensively is to "gang" your item up on a press run with others. It's also possible to order a press run with a lot of white space on the paper. If you're paying for pre-press and prepress, you should fill the sheet with image. The penalty is the lack of color control for individual images. That is why it is important to have a good color separation to avoid any press adjustments. Most of the volume print companies do a good job at getting your color right.

PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS

The age-old process for doing prints is to have photo prints made of the original. This is very expensive and time consuming, and photos fade. Although it is more cost effective in small-format sizes, the color xeroxes are a better deal, and don't require a negative, and don't fade.

In conclusion, having bread and butter items with an artist to release some of the price pressures, and will allow you to take more time on your high-end pieces. Having prints of an original often makes the original even more desirable and more unique, and therefore command an even higher price. Promise the buyer of the original some of free prints to pass out to his more plebian friends. If the 'big one' doesn't sell right away, so what?

This article also assumes you will be in a high-
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On a disk or by e-mail if possible, please, or at least typed so that I can scan it. Re-typing takes time!

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My hope for the near future is to be able to give inspiration to the general public and to show them the beauty of the Cosmos.

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