



Do you know where this picture was taken? Answer next issue...

Upcoming in the PULSAR:

3rd Quarter: Planet X and Beyond.

With the discovery of a large frozen body - possibly larger than Pluto - in a distant orbit around the Sun, can we imagine other worlds still to be found in our own solar system?

4th Quarter: High Energy

Environments. There are places in this universe where energy rules - rippling, crackling, sparkling energy. High energy environments can also make some of the most aesthetically pleasing pictures....

1st Quarter 2007: Nebula. Whether it blows up or squishes down, a star always ends in some way that makes for good art.

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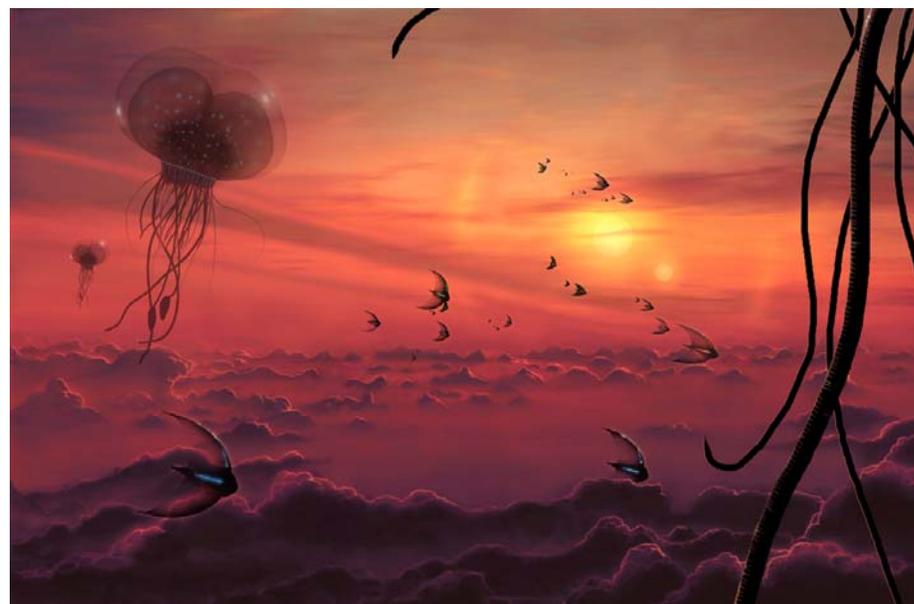


2nd Quarter 2006

The Official Newsletter of the



International Association of
**Astronomical
Artists**



"Aquarium Cloudscape" by Mark Garlick

Editor: Jon Ramer

IAAA Website: <http://www.iaaa.org>

From the Editor:

Hi Gang!

Okay, we're almost back on track now, next issue will come out in September, then December, making our four quarters complete. This issue we've got a neat article by none other than El Presidente himself, Kara Szathmàry, about the jury process in art exhibitions, plus profiles of the new Board of Directors. And, of course, some nice member art! Enjoy....

Jon!

IN THIS ISSUE:

- A NEW BOARD TAKES CHARGE
- WORKSHOP REMINDER
- THE JURY PROCESS
- ASTRO FEATURE: OPHIUCHI NOVA



*“Gas Giant
Life”
by
Dave Hardy*

A NEW BOARD TAKES CHARGE

Every two years a new Board of Trustees is elected to guide the IAAA into the future. This year a new Board has taken charge and is diligently working to better the IAAA and the genre of astronomical art in general. Below are short bios for the new Board members.



CHAIRMAN. Kara Bela Antal Szathmàry de Kovend was born January 1946 in the Hartz Mountains of West Germany, of Hungarian parents, immigrated to Canada in 1951 and later pursued physics, mathematics, astrophysics and art at university. As an artist, Kara writes that in his paintings "many of my themes are metaphors of the interaction of scientific knowledge, philosophic intuition, and emotional reflection. The inspirations often spill over into spiritual and religious impacts on the human condition at the threshold of space travel." After teaching college and university mathematics for 30 years in Montreal, Quebec, Canada, Kara retired in 2005 and immigrated to the USA to join his wife, Judith Broome-Riviere, an American artist, in Panama City, Florida. Introduced to the IAAA in 1984, by 1988, Kara was elected as the first international president of the IAAA. He is currently serving his third term as president, 2004-2008, and has been the chairman of the IAAA Board of Trustees since 1997.

Dan Durda has more than a dozen years of experience researching the collisional and dynamical evolution of the small bodies of the Solar System. He is the president of the B612 Foundation and serves as the program coordinator for the Planetary Society's Gene Shoemaker Near-Earth Object Grant Program. Dr. Durda is an active pilot and serves as



flight astronomer for the SWUIS-A airborne astronomical imaging system flown aboard NASA and military high-performance, high-altitude aircraft. He has co-authored a book and published dozens of articles popularizing planetary science and human exploration of space. Dan is a self-taught artist and Fellow of the IAAA. This is his first term on the Board.



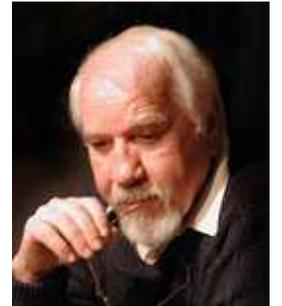
Garry L. Harwood was born in 1959 in London, England and studied for a career as a marine biologist and physical oceanographer. He is entirely self-taught as a painter. When not getting lost in remote parts of the globe, he divides his time between London and his studio in the far west of Cornwall. A lifetime artist member he was recently elected an IAAA Fellow. This is his first term on the Board.

BE Johnson. Born in Rochester, New York, and making his home in Carmel-by-the-Sea, California, BJ has done almost too many things to list here. He's built and fielded Indy cars, built two state-of-the-art racing trimarans in cold-molded wood, flies small aircraft, participated on several Space Shuttle ground crews and has three paintings in the Smithsonian collection. He builds his own computers, illustrates book and magazine covers, and has served as production designer for the National Air and Space Museum and Strassenburgh Planetaria. In his spare time BJ does wildlife photography, paints landscapes, blows glass, collects and restores large antique music boxes, and, of course, continues with his art and his appreciation for life on planet Earth. BJ has been on the IAAA Board several times.



Jon Ramer is a 20-year career officer in the US Air Force and a lifetime artist member. A self-taught astronomical artist, Jon prefers to paint in an abstract "swirly" style with acrylics on loose canvas or realistic images with oils on stretched canvas. He has been very active in the IAAA, having edited the Pulsar for several years, hosted a workshop, and arranged a very large space art exhibition. This is his first term on the Board.

Roy Scarfo was Creative Art Director of General Electric's Space Technology Center from 1957 to 1971, and a consultant and space art illustrator for "The New York Times" for over ten years. His 35-painting exhibit opened the International Space Hall of Fame in Alamogordo, NM. He is presently retired and cataloging his art and space memorabilia. Roy and his wife Carol, also an artist, live in a home built in 1791. He is a Marine Corps veteran of both WWII and Korea. This is his first term on the Board.



Dirk Terrell is a stellar astrophysicist at Southwest Research Institute in Boulder, Colorado and serves as the manager of the Computer and Mission Systems section. His research deals primarily with close binary stars. He is a Fellow of the IAAA and has served on the Board of Trustees and as Vice President since 1998. He has also served as Membership Secretary and has negotiated the placement of the IAAA's Artist's Universe exhibition at several venues. Although he does like to work with acrylics occasionally, most of his artwork these days is done digitally. He also likes cats.

WORKSHOP FEB 2007!

It's coming soon... Workshop 2007, in Grenada, Nicaragua, hosted by Erik Viktor! The planned window for the event will be the second half of February 2007. The hotel of choice will be a colonial hacienda with inside garden. Single rooms go for 45 USD a night. It is preferable and much cheaper to use minibus services to shuttle to and from events instead of renting a car. We'll be guests of the prestigious "Art Foundation of Grenada." Note that the rooms of this institution are booked by artists and exhibits from all over the world and well in advance.



Here's an opportunity for us to meet again, in a new landscape, to continue the camaraderie and the experience of discovery and of potential new astronomical renderings to inspire our creativity. Let's meet and share our commitment to the genre of astronomical art and laud the goodwill of our hosts! All interested members please reply via the list server or to the contact addresses on the back page. See you in Nicaragua!



"Pondering Alien"
by Michael Carroll

JUDGING ART FOR COMPETITION

By Kara Szathmàry, FIAAA

If an artist is to communicate ideas successfully through the artwork's theme, then is this solely achieved by selectively choosing which principles of design would be present in its underlying structure – unity, variety, emphasis, scale, proportion, balance, and/or rhythm? Are they the underlying structure of the artwork that makes the entire art form work successfully in the visual context? Perhaps, in addition, are the tangible tools, the elements of art – value, color, light, line, space, shape, texture, time and/or motion which can be seen and used in such a way as to enhance the underlying principles, the most subjective factors of the judge's criteria?

Although most judges do indeed look for form and content, there are certainly incidences where the artist might not be interested in the analysis of the work in terms of formal aspects but remains aware of their inherent presence in the work. This was the case with Picasso, with his view and adverse reaction to analyzing – "What's so important to analyze the song of a bird?"

Aside from design, color, technique and content, what else might the judge look for? Are there also non-subjective criteria such as parameters, the instructions given to the judge or jury by the organizers of the competition? Perhaps the number of entries (the stiffness of competition) and the quality of the submitted images likewise play a significant role.

Let's examine in a little more detail what these objective criteria might encompass.

The guidelines may place limitations or qualifiers on the contest! Certainly the sizes of the paintings affect the number of pieces that can be hung. Trying to accommodate and provide opportunity to as many artists as possible may lead to undesirable locations for certain artists. The number of entries submitted, such as 500 slides and/or digital images of 2D work and room for only 30, 40 or perhaps 50, depends on the space allotted. The show can be compounded further should the exhibition travel to additional venues with differing space

allotment. A judge or jury may be asked occasionally, why was an obviously good painting rejected? It may simply have come down to a judge's personal choice between two very good paintings! Ultimately, the selection jury committee method seems to be the most democratic one. However, being the show curator, a show committee member, a fellow of the association, a workshop leader, and/or an officer does NOT guarantee acceptance to any show!

The image of the submitted work plays an important role in determining success. It is quite possible to get slides that enhance ones work. It is for this reason almost every juried show features a few pieces that make people wonder, "How did they get in?" In most shows the selection by slide is final. However, there are some contests, which still reserve the "right" to reject any painting that does not compare reasonably with the slide. This "final judging" should be clearly stated in the prospectus. With regard to the quality of the slide, background should contain only a clear, neutral surface and no picket fences, furniture, textured walls, elaborate framing or matting to distract from the image of the artwork that is being judged. For example, the judges viewing slides for a previous competition noticed a painting propped against an interesting bedspread. They quipped humorously, "Let's accept the bedspread for the contest but the painting is rejected!" Empty noncompetitive backgrounds are a must.

The jury selection process is a challenging and subjective responsibility. It is accepted that all jury processes are subjective in nature. Jurors are valued for their "individual" professional perspectives. The jury process ought to be a silent vote designed to minimize personal, non-objective beliefs from creating undue influence on other jurors. This is done to allow each juror to make judgments based upon personal experience and NOT upon the experience of others. To assure a lack of interference, no artists, outside staff or members of the general public should be allowed to observe the jury process.

What standard norm can the jurors use for making their selection? All art work MAY be evaluated with the following criteria using a measurable score, say 0-5, for each subsection of every category; these being:

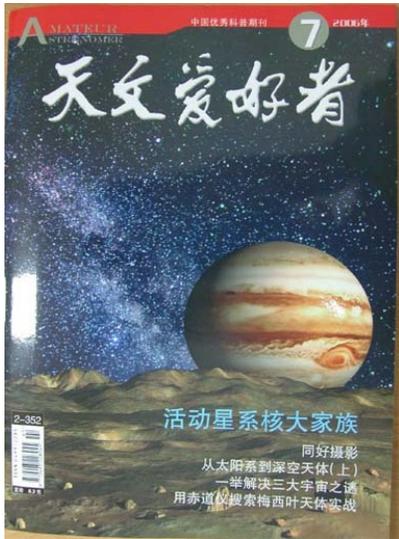
- (a) Technical proficiency which includes i) use of materials, ii) craftsmanship and, iii) professional presentation
- (b) Creative originality
- (c) Design and composition which includes the formal aspects: the awareness of the design elements and principles of art
- (d) Over all impact, holistic quality and aesthetic design

Who will be involved in the jury of the entries? Will the screening be done by a rotating panel comprised of current members of the organization, outside artists, and/or connoisseurs of art? However the jury is selected, to maintain the most objective scoring as possible, all submissions ought to be juried anonymously where the jurors are not told the artist of the work they are to jury.

In closing, acceptance and rejection are part of the process of art competitions and may be used as a measure by artists to chart progress as well. Some of the greatest artists of the past were considered "rejects" when they were still alive. What an irony that, years later, their works are worth millions and are part of the collections of the foremost galleries in the world. This should take the sting out of being rejected! In the event a work is rejected, the artist is strongly discouraged from questioning the process, contacting the jury team individually, or voicing any complaint that will be perceived as unprofessional. Elimination is disappointing but personal growth comes from the manner in which the situation is handled. In the competitive world of art, where there are increasing examples of excellence and creativity as well as a wider interpretation of what "art" actually is, it is most important that assessments be based on measurable criteria and objectives that are understood by all.

Kara Szathmàry, author of this article, has participated in all aspects of the art jury selection process for over thirty years.

SPACE ART NEWS



Our Chinese member Jingchuan Yu has been doing his part to raise awareness of the IAAA in China. He introduced the IAAA to the Chinese readers with an article in the magazine "Amateur Astronomer" which is published by the Beijing Planetarium. Well done Jingchuan!



Here's a sample of Jingchuan's work, and a photo of him meeting cosmonaut Alexei Leonov.



And speaking of Leonov... here's a photo of Alexei accepting his 2005 Rudaux Award from Art Dula.



ARTISTS UNIVERSE SHOW UPDATE

Five large pieces had to be pulled from the AU, so we need to fill out the show with new works. Joy Day will be putting together a jury to finish filling out the show. If you have pieces you would like to submit, there is no fee for this. We are in need of medium to smaller pieces. They need to be framed, not intrinsically delicate, preferably protected with plex - NO glass, however we have several framed canvases and that's fine. They can be originals or prints. Sorry, we're not set up as of yet to accept sculpture, unless it is fairly flat and not outrageously heavy.

If you would like to submit pieces, please email Joy Day at "joy@glassnebula.com" with a jpeg, the full-framed size, medium, price (they can be NFS), original or print, and any additional information you'd like to add. We will not "drive around" to websites to "pick something out," so if you'd like to have your work in a internationally traveling exhibit, send in an entry! Especially all you new members out there.....

PROFILE: JEAN-PIERRE NORMAND

Hi, my name is Jean-Pierre Normand, I am a member since 2005 and I would like to give a short introduction to the other members of IAAA. It is an honor to be a member of the IAAA. I live in Montreal, Canada and do paintings for the past 25 years specializing in Science Fiction images for books and magazines covers. I've loved astronomy since childhood as I grew up with the space program. I have made illustrations for books that try to interest young readers in sciences as well as scientific illustrations for different customers. Discovering you all and seeing your wonderful works is a big stimulation for me. I hope I can meet all of you some day at one of our workshops. JPN

www.jeanpierreormand.com

SHOWCASE: JEAN-PIERRE NORMAND

Here's a couple of nice works from Jean-Pierre Normand.



"Blue World"



"Ruins"

SHOWCASE: MARK GARLICH

I love Mark's stuff, but showcasing his work is difficult - too many great images to choose from!



“Aquefungoids”



“Protecting the Crop”

ASTRONOMICAL FEATURE OF THE QUARTER: OPHIUCHI NOVA



Spectacular explosions keep occurring in the binary star system named RS Ophiuchi. Every 20 years or so, the red giant star dumps enough hydrogen gas onto its companion white dwarf star to set off a brilliant thermonuclear explosion on the white dwarf's surface. At about 2,000 light years distant, the resulting nova explosions cause the RS Oph system to brighten up by a huge factor and become visible to the unaided eye. The red giant star is depicted on the right of the above drawing, while the white dwarf is at the center of the bright accretion disk on the left. As the stars orbit each other, a stream of gas moves from the giant star to the white dwarf. Astronomers speculate that at some time in the next 100,000 years, enough matter will have accumulated on the white dwarf to push it over the Chandrasekhar Limit, causing a much more powerful supernova. *Text from the APOD website, image: Dave Hardy.*