1990-91
PARALLAX and
Manifesto Green Paper

The International Association for Astronomical Arts
(the proposed) IAAA Manifesto (second draft)

The IAAA was formed as a group of artists whose work focuses on what we define as the Astronomical Arts.
This is any art which is:

- inspired by scientific exploration of space and knowledge of the physical universe around us,
- and/or demonstratively informed by scientific knowledge (for example through content, artist's statements, and/or artist's background, etc.),
- and/or dealing with concerns about humanity's relationship to the physical universe and our cosmic environment.

Unlike many historical art movements, ours is not restricted or defined by styles or techniques. Although primarily a group of realist and representational painters, IAAA encompasses styles which are photo-realist, abstract, conceptual, expressionistic, surrealistic, whimsical, etc.
Our shows to date have included many of these styles, while maintaining realism as the dominant form of expression.
We recognize that few art forms can be strictly defined, and strict definition may even be inimical to creativity.
However, we recognize the following usages, which help clarify some styles and intentions.

**Astronomical Art** is art inspired by the science of astronomy, and the term usually refers to realistic depictions of landscapes and phenomena throughout the universe.

**Space Art**, which deals with human exploration of space in the physical sense, for instance with astronauts and space hardware. In addition to these, a third term, **Cosmological Art** has been coined to describe loosely art which, while including Astronomical and Space Art, is more broadly concerned with the large scale structure of the physical universe, and our human relationship to it.

We conceptualize these three realms of our work in a bulls-eye pattern. Just as a telescope focuses most starlight in the central, brightest core of the image, we visualize most of our work and exhibitions concentrating the majority of our efforts in the Astronomical and related Space Art areas, but with a smaller percentage falling in the broader "Cosmological" area.
In 1990 I was sent one article for PARALLAX, even after running a call for submissions in PULSAR. Last year I didn’t bother running a call for entries, and received no submissions. I didn’t think one article was enough to make up an issue of PARALLAX; however, I have received many letters regarding the proposed Manifesto, so I decided that these would make up PARALLAX for 1990-91. Kara suggested the name ’Green Paper’ which I surmise means the working draft of something which would later have a final version, i.e. the Manifesto.

The idea of doing a ’Green Paper’ came about because I felt all the members of the IAAA should have the opportunity to see the various ideas members have concerning the proposed Manifesto, and there was not enough room to do this in PULSAR.

What follows are the complete letters, for the most part, of everybody who sent one. In some cases I left out parts that didn’t refer to the Manifesto, and I also left out ideas for specific changes, because this would have made very tedious reading, but these were taken into account when Bill and I worked up the revised draft.

It seems appropriate to begin the paper with ideas from trustee and number one founding member, Bill Hartmann:


Background

The IAAA Manifesto published in the Jan/Feb 1991 issue of PULSAR has drawn a lot of comment and debate. This is exactly as it should be! Recall that the Board of Directors asked Beth Avary and me to write this draft, to be circulated to the members for comment. (Sorry the draft Manifesto was included under an article titled Exhibition Update). Some readers of Pulsar have surmised from the debate about the manifesto that the IAAA is about to fall apart, but in fact, this vigorous debate is just what is supposed to be happening. At least it means there’s life in the IAAA!

It’s exaggeration to say that the original ideals of the IAAA, involving Bonestelian, science-based representationalism, have been betrayed. I think that the members who have been less directly active recently for one reason or another, are the ones who most often conclude from Pulsar that the IAAA is about to fly apart from disruptive centrifugal forces. This could always happen, but I think that most of those who have been in the midst of recent workshops and exhibitions recognize a lot of comradely compatibility between the Swirleys and the Rock ’n’ Ballers.1

In co-drafting the Manifesto and submitting it to the members, Beth and I hoped to create something that a broad

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1 For a definition of "Swirleys" and "Rock ’n’ Ballers", see Joel Hagen’s cartoon, and p. 9.--BA
group of diverse artists interested in astronomy could live with. Any organization will be broader than its individual member. Here are some of my more personal reactions.

**Personal Reactions**

*In spite of the consternation of some members, the IAAA has had fantastic success to date, under the leadership of our past and current presidents. Who would have thought in the early '80's that by 1991 we would have already been written up in magazines from *Sky and Telescope* to *Air and Space*; had painting workshops in Hawaii, Death Valley, and Houston; negotiated a program of joint projects with the USSR Union of Artists; travelled with them to Iceland, Moscow, Utah, and the Crimea; had major exhibitions in Pasadena, San Diego, Moscow, Yalta, and Washington D.C., had much of our work showcased in Dave Hardy's book in England, and published a book of our art jointly sponsored by the IAAA, USSR Union of Artists and the Planetary Society? Not a bad decade! This is a track record of an incredibly vigorous, successful group, not a group that lacks purpose.*

*Groups as well as individual painters have to be defined in large part by what they do, not just what they say. It's more important for the IAAA to paint and let our work define us, than to debate.*

*In particular, while we debate the Manifesto, remember this: while some members are afraid that their particular style will be left out or betrayed, our track record so far is good. The collections we have exhibited or published have generally been "filtered" or "juried" by one or a few persons who got involved in that particular project. We have been "represented" (to one degree or another) by varied collections organized by Beth Avary, Mary Henderson and Susan Lawson-Bell at the Air and Space Museum, David A. Hardy in his book, Ron Miller, Andrei Sokolov, Vitalie Myagkov, and me in our book, and yet this has not splintered our movement. Some of us (including me) might grumble that this or that collection includes some paintings that fall outside our definition of what we are about -- but the point is that we have prospered so far by our shows and activities.*

*Personally, though I tend to fall primarily in the Bonestellian representationalist school, I find it surprisingly exciting and refreshing to see my work hung in a show or in a book collection with a broader range of other styles. It is a chance to redefine myself as an artist.*

*I notice in doing interviews with people about *In the Stream of Stars* that, while I might like certain paintings best, others like other paintings best, and most interviewers are fascinated by the variety of results when artists are inspired by exploration of space.*

*Those exhibitions have the broadest appeal that have some variety in style. The fact that Beth Avary's work is probably the most widely reproduced in the reviews of our book in independent newspapers testifies that there is broad public interest in the somewhat lyrical-realist side of Space Art, as opposed to the strict Bonestellian science side. We lose that support and interest if we settle for too Rock-n-Balley.*

*IAAA's unique strong point among art organizations is that we radiate authoritativenss when it comes to

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2 And now New York City, with Art of the Cosmos at the Hayden Planetarium.
knowledge of space, astronomy, the universe, etc. We lose that if we settle for too Swirley.

*The common thread in the IAAA should be our motivation and inspiration (astronomy; the real, physical universe; space exploration), not our specific painting style.

*For myself, I find that after talking to our Russian colleagues I find myself wanting to experiment with less representational or less illustrational painting (see my recent Ad Astra cover), but I don’t feel I’m betraying my astronomical art impulse -- and go on with realist work as well.

*Dave Hardy made an interesting Proposal for IAAA Hardyness at the 1991 Hawaii workshop: "Any member of IAAA ought to be able to pass a simple quiz in astronomy. How are you going to do Astronomical Art if you don't know basic astronomy?" This occasioned considerable debate and focuses the issue. I'd be interested in a poll of the members on this. I kind of agree in principle, but don't think I could go for it in real practice.

*Dave Hardy liked a definition of Space Art I gave in the public talk Mike Carroll and I gave at the Hawaii 1991 workshop -- so I repeat it here. For me, Space Art is taking scientific information about the universe and trying to make something beautiful out of it.

*Minor miscellaneous observation: Dave Hardy comes primarily to workshops held on the islands (Iceland, Hawaii), and lives on one. To paraphrase Field of Dreams, "If you hold it on an island, He will come."

Recommendations (Partly Based on Conversations with Others)

*Carroll's Rule: It should be an honor to be in an IAAA exhibit. This means each exhibit if possible should have a jury. The ideal jury should be 3 board members, and a work needs 2 out of three votes to get in the show. Jury membership should change by at least 1 person with each show. This avoids grudges against individual members. If you don't get in one show, there's always the next one. Jurying can be either by slides in advance, or by an ad hoc 3-person jury at the time of hanging the show, if the artist is willing to bring work on speculation.

(Comment: During our 1991 Hawaii workshop, there was no jurying, and I personally feel there were several out of the ~ 40 pieces that should not have been in the show and were not relevant to IAAA goals. But the artists, having brought their work all that way, did not want to give up the chance to have them hung. So we need to codify this.)

*Avary's Principle: Not all work in any given artist's output is IAAA work. ADOPTING THIS MAY SOLVE MANY OF OUR PROBLEMS.

(Comment: Beth has pioneered this principle by remarking that she realized after joining that only part of her work belongs in IAAA functions, and another part doesn't. This very simple idea avoids the sense of betrayal and argument about IAAA goals. If we are a group that espouses informed astronomical content, then each member can paint whatever he/she likes, submit that part of her/his work that fits this, and keep the rest for other shows. (Bill Hartmann and Don Davis can have their obsessive, anal-retentive realism and Beth Avary can have her crypto-swirlism, and Bill can even paint an occasional abstract; they can submit what fits IAAA guidelines and display what gets through the jurying process. No problem. you can have a life outside the IAAA.)
Manno's Idea: The real filtering of the IAAA should occur during the shows, not during membership acceptance. We need to draft guidelines for what work we want in the shows, and stop trying to define what a member can or can't be.

(Comment: This seems to be a sticking point in the debate. Some members are horrified that due to the non-profit status (as I understand it) we can't restrict membership. R 'n' B'ers don't want too many Swirleys in the group, or worse yet (gasp) art critics and non-painters. But Manno's Idea is the answer, let the group be as large and rich (philosophically and financially) as it can be. Who cares who reads PULSAR? Its not secret cult lore. Maybe we'll shed some light in the world if enough read it. The point is, define the IAAA goals by what we show to the public, and that means draft guidelines for acceptance in shows.)

Hartmann's Half-Baked Speculation: The best and most interesting IAAA shows will allow some, but not too much diversity. Too Bonestellian, a show, with too much obsessive realism and every star in place, is a limited form of expression and would be perceived by the public as somewhat dull (I think we can show this from reviews of In the Stream of Stars -- the critics love the diversity.)

On the other hand, a show that has too large a fraction of uninformed, golly-gosh-like-wow-totally-cosmic flakiness will betray our ideals, cause us to lose our public identity of being scientifically authoritative, and look too much like a show by any bunch of artists. So a balance with most art works identifiably based on realism or scientific knowledge is the best recipe for an IAAA show.

Proposed Augmentation to Manifesto -- Straw Man Draft: "Guidelines forJurors in Exhibitions Identified as IAAA Exhibitions"

1. All Active IAAA Members can submit works for shows.
2. Work in shows shall be voted on by a 3-person jury and must have at least 2 out of 3 votes to be accepted.
3. Jurors of successive shows should change by at least one member, preferably 2 or 3 members, to avoid discrimination and repetitiveness.
4. Jurying can be done in advance by slides. If IAAA members bring unjuried work to shows, it can be accepted in real time by a jury of 3 IAAA members who vote on the work (same rules: minimum of 2 votes).
5. IAAA exhibitions should have at least 80% of the work that can be characterized as realistic, or identifiably based on scientific knowledge of the universe and space exploration. The other 20% can be in other styles, such as non-representational, surrealistic, or abstract but should have some identifiable relationship to astronomy, space exploration, IAAA ventures, or our knowledge of the universe. This may come from the work or from the caption (if the connection is convincing).
6. No work shall appear in an IAAA show that is overtly antiscientific or anti-intellectual, such as works based overtly on superstition, astrology, "astral projection," or similar cult beliefs. Works drawn from historical mythological traditions can be accepted on a case by case basis. Science Fiction illustration is acceptable if plausible, but note that there are other organizations catering to pure SF and Fantasy Art.

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7. These are guidelines and grounds for criticizing a jury's performance—not Laws. The goal of mounting an exciting and vigorous show must come first.

CRITIQUES AND COMMENTS INVITED!

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE I.A.A.A. by Don Davis, Studio City, CA, April 23, 1991

Lately the pages of Pulsar have carried accounts of an 'identity crisis' within the I.A.A.A.
The view of myself and others on this controversy is that we began the group knowing our artistic identity and named ourselves the International Association of Astronomical Artists to formalize it.
For too long many of us (especially myself) have not been able to find the time to assist in steering things along our original track.
During that first Death Valley workshop in 1983, where the conceptual foundations of our group were laid, more often than not I would be sitting and painting my pictures when some of the others were in the next room standing and speaking on organizational matters. Painting is my life, not politics.
But things seem to have started to drift a bit since we lost Kim Poor as president. Something unfortunate has happened to us since the Iceland workshop and our assumption of tax exempt status.
The reviewing of submissions for active membership has ceased, and with it our ability to effectively continue our original astronomical emphasis.
Since then a variety of kindred artistic approaches have appeared under the organization's name, and may unintentionally suggest that the term "Astronomical Art" is being contrived to encompass varied and even non representational artistic approaches.
This is a major mistake, and threatens to introduce confusion as to the very nature of our admittedly specialized school of art. Whatever educational potential we wish to utilize to help justify our tax exempt status may be undermined if the term "Astronomical Art" begins to lose its perceived meaning.
Science Fiction conventions have had as "Astronomical" category in their art shows for at least 20 years. Why should we not apply similar judgements on originality, scholarship, skill, etc. to applicants for our astronomical artists guild as have long been made when outstanding works in that category are honored at Science Fiction conventions?
We seem reticent to officially define what this type of art is, even though applications for active status apparently don't have to live up to its standards anymore.
So, for the purpose of discussion I offer my synopsis of what "Astronomical Art" is:
Such painting is a kind of hand crafted "window" through which the viewer sees a prediction of what an astronomical subject might look like based on current evidence and educated guesswork. Success in such painting (meaning how well the work shows both the perceived beauty and what is known of the subject) requires discipline as well as imagination. Much of this genre thus preserves a kind of conceptual "time capsule" of what humanity (or at least the artist) knew of the subject at the time it was painted. We as astronomical artists owe ourselves and our clients every effort to learn what the things we paint should look like!
We are the ones who mentally place ourselves in exotic places where cameras cannot go. We use our media to convey inner visions of experiences yet to be had, to make real the fantastic sights of places humanity may never reach.

We share with other nature art specialists the giving of tangibility to the inaccessible, such as the many great dinosaur painters and those who reconstruct the buildings of vanished civilizations.

A genre of art which seeks to acquaint its viewers with different realities is of necessity a realistic one. The behavior of light, perspective, etc. is for all practical purposes the same throughout the known universe, and those who wish to portray the wonders of the known universe must have a working knowledge of astronomy as well as realistic portrayal from nature.

The results of past failures to judge applicants for active status by these or any other standards are beginning to haunt us now, with polarization seemingly occurring as non-astronomical painters join and work their way into policy making positions. There are really no villains to be sought among the cast of characters involved, sometimes the negative aspects of a given policy take time to reveal themselves. This is an issue of policy directions and intellectual ideas, not personalities. What is causing our problems are not really individuals, but a fatal flaw in our current organizational structure.

In retrospect, we may have been compassionate to a fault by shrinking from our responsibility to draw boundaries, knowing that some would end up "outside". For the purposes of our group we should have pronounced early on just what Astronomical Art is, and what is not.

Back in the good old days, we didn't seem to need a "Manifesto". The Manifesto draft published in the Jan.-Feb. Pulsar is to me a product of the climate of revisionism of what we were about fostered by our unfortunate name change brought about by our tax exempt status. As such it has become the do or die issue for those of us who still care about what we have been.

A common theme raised by the response letters I have seen is the crying need to reinstate professional standards for jurying active membership applicants.

Whatever organizational impediments exist to such jurying must be swept aside. If we wish to remain an association of astronomical ARTISTS (not "arts") a smaller group dedicated to a clear conceptual framework is preferable to a bigger, all inclusive but meaningless cacophony of stylistic schizophrenia!

If, on the other hand, our past refusal to be more exclusive has irreparably diluted the original artistic approach of the I.A.A.A. and we wish to renounce our astronomical emphasis then we should strike that word from our group's name.

Simply changing our name to an association for SPACE artists would then better describe what we may be in the process of turning into, and we could then serve as an avenue for expression unbound by the rigors of scientific thought and the discipline of realistic portrayal. Beautiful works would emerge, but I suspect many would not qualify as Astronomical Art. If the group changes, the group's name should change with it!

The idea has recently been advanced of forming a "Bonestellian" group within the I.A.A.A. I emphatically reject
the term as well as the idea, first of all the genre is more than the style of any one painter, so "Astronomical Art" will do fine as a term, thanks.

Secondly, and most important, to consider such a council within a group originally established by and for such artists is ridiculous!!

I say let the "Abstractionists", or "Swirley people", if you will, seek a protected refuge in OUR group, not the other way around! That such an idea was even considered reveals how divided we may be becoming.

To summarize, I would support as solutions to the above concerns either the continuation of our original astronomical direction under our original name, or a renaming of ourselves to reflect the wider spectrum of artists we may be turning into.

Whatever we finally decide to be or call ourselves, we will still need to confront the issue of jurying new active members.

The very definition of our group's purpose is being written, and whatever input we provide will supposedly be integrated into its text in a collective fashion. We must understand, however, that so long as an active member does not even have to be an artist at all to join, any "Manifesto" will be little more than a scrap of paper.

This is why any consideration of our group's future must include not only our public declaration of the group's intentions, objectives, etc., but the possible detrimental implications of our tax exempt status as well.

If we must "bite the bullet" and renounce our tax exempt status to preserve our identify so be it. Any of you who also suspect we may have paid too dear a price to court the government's favor, please make your opinions known!!! There will never be a better time than now to write a note to Laurie Ortiz, who has promised to forward them to the manifesto writers and the board members.

Remember, the manifesto writers are the funnel into which our collective responses are poured, and what emerges should reflect our collective desires and express our chosen direction. The leadership must heed our responses if we as a group are to have credibility.

But they must hear from us first. If I, the original procrastinator can muster the effort to jot down my thoughts, anyone can!

Jon Lomberg: December, 1990, Honaunau, Hawaii

I have been following the discussions about the nature of Space Art with great interest. As one of the "founding fathers", of the IAAA, I'd like to share some of my opinions on the matter.

The problem of defining Space Art is definitely compounded by the exponential growth of the IAAA since its inception, indeed, the number of practicing and would-be space artists has grown unbelievably since I entered the field in the early 1970s. At that time there were really only a handful of us in the world, and we all knew each other at least by reputation if not personally. Though Science Fiction Art was a long established genre with its own great names (Emshwiller, Freas, and Powers, for example) and though all of these artists had depicted space in their work, we felt that we were doing something substantially different from what the SF artists were doing. We had a few of our own "great names"-- Pesek, McCall, Helmut Wimmer, and, of course, Bonestell-- who
helped shape the as-yet undefined genre. We were a small group of artists, almost all men and almost all Americans (except for David Hardy and Andrei Sokolov). Definitions of the field seemed superfluous (although even then, I suppose, we could have argued about what Space Art "really" was. Would you include artists who did occasional astronomical illustrations?) When I was organizing the team of artists who created COSMOS, there just weren't that many artists from whom to select. I suppose my criteria then would have served as my own definition of Space Art. Art skills had to be combined with informed knowledge of astronomy resulting in a body of work informed by space as a theme. I recall that at one meeting, when Rick Sternbach, Don Davis, Adolph Schaller, and I were discussing sequences, Carl Sagan quipped, "If someone threw in a hand-grenade right now, Space Art would be almost annihilated." Though we hastened to remind Carl of Don Dixon, Ron Miller, and a few others not present, Carl's point was well taken.

How things have changed! Space Art has become much more prominent in our culture (partially through our work on COSMOS), and the number of artists entering the field has been amazing. It has been many years since I stopped trying to keep track of everybody, and most of the names on the IAAA roster are unfamiliar to me. This is all to the good, but it is natural that the sense of community and shared purpose has been diluted. It might clarify the problem to set some boundary conditions by describing extremes at either end of the genre:

On the one hand we have the realistic schools of space landscapes and hardware, what we might call the "school of Bonestell". I admire Bonestell's work. It's great. On the other hand, I think many artists have contented themselves with merely copying what Bonestell did. Even if the artist changes the surface features of Europa and the banding pattern of Jupiter to conform to new scientific findings, all the many paintings showing Jupiter or Saturn as seen from one of its satellites tend to look the same to me—and almost none of them are painted as well as Bonestell's. I find that I am now completely bored with the endless variations on "Planet Seen From Its Moon", even if it's done by a new artist with slightly different lighting and details, it's still, to me, the same painting. Rocks and Balls, as Mike Carroll humorously, but very perceptively, described this category of painting. Now, this kind of work can still be a bread and butter piece, and each new discovery of planetary science requires, I suppose, a new Rock and Ball painting. And for viewers who have never seen a Rock and Ball painting, there still might be that same thrill. But I find it hard to understand why artists, working in a field that can really expand the mind, settle for a kind of rote repetition of composition and style.

At this extreme, Space Art is hardly more than a specialized branch of technical illustration. The artist is the servant of the astronomer or hardware designer, and little attempt is made to inject individual personality or point of view into the piece.

Of course it is still possible to do a realistic landscape of a planetary vista in some new and exciting way. Pam Lee and Paul Hudson are masters of breathing new life into this type of scene. For me, their work is much more than technical illustration because it makes me feel the subject matter in a way no previous artist has done. Of course, it's much more difficult to do work like this, and I'm not really surprised that so many space artists fall back on the cliches of the genre. But let's at least be honest and recognize that there are cliches in Space Art. I think some of the current dispute over definitions has to do with a reaction of some of the newer members to the
overuse of the Rock and Roll style.

One more remark about literalism and realism in Space Art: I, for one, do not subscribe to the comparison of Space Art with the artists of the last century who brought the vistas of the West back to civilization. The analogy is faulty. The artists whom we remember for their images of the canyons and mountains really went there and painted them. So far, we are all stay-at-homes (except for Alan Bean and Alexei Leonov) who create from out of our heads, not from direct experience. Maybe the worlds we paint will look like our paintings, but I doubt it. The right feeling won't be there. The only ones who will ever know will be the people who really go there, and I suspect that the painters among the Martian and Lunar colonists will find the real feeling of those landscapes. Compared to them, much of contemporary Space Art will probably look like those paintings of Indians done by European salon painters from explorers' written descriptions. Ever seen them? The Indians are all in studio poses and the landscapes of the West look like English gardens. We sometimes take the advice of astronomers too seriously. Don't forget that they haven't been to these distant worlds, either. They told us the Martian sky would be blue and the cloud patterns of Jupiter subdued and very pale! As for photos . . . well, ask Andy Young how much to believe the colors of the Voyager cameras, or try imagining the view from Zabriskie Point if all you'd ever seen of Death Valley was a landsat image.

At the other extreme, there is art that has almost nothing to do with astronomy except in the title and "intention" of the artist. Should we call any piece of art that has a few stars in the sky Space Art? The Russians seem to think so, at least judging by some of the artists represented in the Dialogues show. And I've seen more than a few abstract swirls of mauve and taupe titled "Milky Way". Oh, really? I won't pass judgement on these paintings as art, but I will say that they could as well be called "Milky Way Candy Bar", for all the astronomical connections I can see. Back in the Good Old Days, all space artists were astronomy buffs, the kind of people who get up at 3 a.m. to see a lunar eclipse. I feel that many of the people who have tried to enter the field are either totally devoid of the love of the subject or actively hostile to (what they call) "Scientism". I respect this as a point of view, though I don't agree with it, but wonder why people more interested in psychic astral travel want to belong to a group of artists who like to read "Science News". It would be like an atheist applying for the priesthood. I agree with Michael Carroll in saying that there are plenty of other groups for New Agers, astrologers, astral travelers, and, even, philosophers of science.

(Sometimes it's even worse than that. On two occasions, artists have turned up, uninvited, at my studio asking for advice on Space Art. But they don't want to talk about either space or art. They want to talk about money, and can I please tell them how to get rich quick painting space scenes? I wish I knew. Nothing wrong with wanting to make a living with your art, but when that's the primary motivation for entering the field, I can't imagine any good work is going to come out of it.)

So how are we to define Space Art (or more to the point, judge potential members and artwork)? Anyone who knows my work knows that I have a great tolerance for non-traditional Space Art. It has been my pleasure to introduce both Kara Szathmáry and Ezra Orion to IAAA. Each of these artists, one Canadian and one Israeli, is working in domains quite removed from the styles of anybody else (which is why their work excited me), yet
each is doing something that I, at any rate, have no problem calling Space Art because you can see in the work the role that the universe has played in the inspiration of the piece. We will never succeed in defining Space Art. But there are some things we can do to help our organization.

First, I think we should be more restrictive about membership. I don't think that anyone should be able to join just because they pay dues and like Space Art. It's not a fan club. I don't think it should be an organization for amateur or would-be artists. It's probably no accident that as the organization has grown that many of the best artists in the genre have found the IAAA less relevant to them. If we want to be taken seriously as a professional organization, we need higher standards.

Second, we should apply these standards to selecting work for IAAA exhibitions and publications. We already have an adequate mix of traditionalists and innovators to assure that all quality work will be given an opportunity to be shown.

Third, I think that the genres of environmental sculpture (whether in orbit or on the surface of the Earth) is an interesting and exciting area for new art forms, but I think we should consider keeping the main focus of our organization on painters and graphic artists.

Finally, I don't think the issue is really one of how "democratic" our organization is, and I don't think we are being "undemocratic" by attempting to include and exclude certain kinds of artwork. We are democratic enough in the sense that we have open elections and afford equal opportunity to all members to participate. But surely every professional organization is entitled to set the standards for membership and inclusion in professional activities.

Marilynn Flynn, Mesa, AZ, April 24, 1991

I am faxing in regards to the proposal for an IAAA Manifesto, I must tell you frankly that when I first read it, I tossed it aside. It seemed to be just more of the same sort of thing I had been hearing from the IAAA for so long now. My opinions of what the IAAA should stand for have long fallen on deaf ears, and I figured this time around would be no different. I am not a writer, a campaigner, nor a politician. I am an artist, and I would much rather be painting right now than sitting at my computer. I would have to quit the IAAA, like several of my colleagues, and left it to flounder around in its new form. However there is now a new movement starting to rein in the organization and I feel I should make one last try to help save the IAAA from the oblivion it has fallen into.

I can hardly cut through the "art-speak" in the proposal to understand what most of it really means. I know other organizations use legal-speak, double-talk, artistic bull...whatever you want to call it. That is no excuse for us to follow suit and fall into the trap of using gobbledygook to express ourselves. Therefore my first suggestion is to clean up the language. Say exactly what you mean in clear, concise terms.

The second thing I disagree with is the suggestion to revise the Manifesto to reflect everyone's views. Of course, I immediately put my own opinions at risk by saying that. But trying to please all and offend none is the sort of thing that has ruined the IAAA. No one is going to like to hear this, but I think we need to be dictatorial about
this. And the people who should be doing the dictating are the original core group of founding members. They should decide what the "Manifesto" is, and then TELL everyone else. Anyone who doesn't like it can take their membership money elsewhere.

In the Manifesto proposal itself:

The IAAA was NOT formed as a group of artists whose work is focused on the "astronomical arts". In my opinion there is no such thing as "the astronomical arts". There has not been enough time to cultivate such a thing. Our group is not going to be responsible for deciding what "astronomical art" is, any more than we decided what the definition of "fine arts" is. It is something that will be defined in the course of time and history, and I don't think humans have been focused on arts in an astronomical context long enough for THAT term to be defined yet. I do think the IAAA was formed by a group of artists whose work is focused on ASTRONOMICAL ART, (no "the", no "s")....

As for restricting or defining techniques; the original members all painted in basically the same style. That didn't mean we didn't occasionally want to go off and try something different. But we didn't have to include it in the works of the IAAA. There was a point when we decided that maybe we needed to inject new blood into the group by allowing in artists whose techniques and styles were not realistic. We thought it would somehow "freshen up" our own ideas. I don't think any of us ever intended that those other styles actually be incorporated into our definition of Space Art. By our original definition of Space Art, the style MUST BE REALISTIC.

Yes, that is certainly a restriction on style and technique!

Our shows to date have included all those different styles, because we had no definition for our group. We were afraid of hurting people's feelings by excluding their art. We were afraid of not appearing "artistic" enough by only showing realistic art. We were bowing to pressures from other organizations as to the content of the show, just so we could get our show into a prestigious facility.

I don't think "Space Art" should be the term used to describe human exploration of space. Can someone suggest a more concise word or term that we can use to sum up "art-that-shows-human-beings-exploring-space"? I think "Space Art" should be used to describe the types of artwork we originally decided we were going to include in the group. They were: realistic space "landscapes", realistic hardware art, and art that realistically showed astronauts exploring space. I think we need to stick with these categories, and add one more:

I propose the addition of the word "SPACESCAPE". I think the term "astronomical art" refers to scenes of other planets, nebulae, stars, comets, etc. with nothing else in them. Since many of us include such "incidentals" as astronauts or spaceships in our space landscapes, they do not fall in the category of "Astronomical Art", nor would they be purely "Hardware Art". "Spacescapes" can include "Astronomical Art" and "Astronomical Art" that has other elements in it, such as astronauts or spaceships, as long as the DOMINANT THEME is the SETTING. The word "spacescape" triggers an association with the word "landscape", which is really what we are talking about here. Though some may argue that a view of a nebula from a couple hundred light years has nothing "land" in it, I would still classify that type of painting as a "landscape".

There are people out there who want to use the term "Space Art" to describe a style of art that includes obscure
abstracts, digging tunnels in cinder cones, wrapping islands in saran wrap, plowing designs into fields that are visible only from orbit, or launching sculptures into space. Well, no one can stop them from calling their work "Space Art", if they want to. If the members of a Science Fiction Artist's group wanted to call their work "Space Art" we could not do anything about that either. I don't know if it means we have to use a different term to differentiate ourselves, though. There will always be misunderstandings, no matter what we call ourselves. For instance, I'm at a party and asked what I do. When I say I paint "Astronomical Art", someone always thinks I paint pictures of zodiacal signs. One time I said I am a "Space Artist" and someone thought I did interior decorating. We will always have to explain ourselves to someone. The point is not to worry about what other people might think, or which other people want to use the term, but to decide on OUR definition of the term, and STICK WITH IT.

I would not want to include "Cosmological Art" in the definition under any circumstances.

Fine, ... put "Astronomical Art" - but here I want to substitute the word "Space Art" - at the center of the bulls eye, and get rid of the rest of the rings. Why do we have to be such a general, all encompassing group? Let the people who do Cosmological Art or non-realist art get their own organization together and have their own shows.

Ron Miller, Fredericksburg, VA, 1991

Although the terms "Space Art" and "Astronomical Art" have been and still are used almost interchangeably, there nevertheless are both subtle and specific differences between them. "Astronomical Art" is the simplest to define since it is, by its very nature, virtually self-defining. This benefit is gained from the use of the word "astronomical" which has a very clear and specific meaning. The dictionary definition of the word is that it describes that which deals with astronomy; in turn, astronomy is the scientific study of the stars and planets. When the word "astronomical" is used in conjunction with the other word or phrase it implies a connection with the science of astronomy. For example, an astronomical telescope would be a telescope not only used for astronomical observations, but there is also the implicit suggestion that the instrument is of a higher quality, or more finely calibrated, for example, than one designed for more ordinary use. The use of the word "astronomical" in the phrase "Astronomical Art" likewise implies that some specific standards are being applied that would not be applied to any other genre. Just as the mere presence of lenses or mirrors do not make any telescope an astronomical telescope, the mere presence of planets and moons in a painting or drawing do not necessarily make it an example of Astronomical Art.

On the other hand, and risking sounding contradictory, Astronomical Art is not bound by strict scientific parameters. It is far too often the case that, like Science Fiction of the Gernsbackian variety, Astronomical Art is thought to be a variety of scientific illustration—and in fact, much of it is (although this does not preclude some particular illustrative artwork from being equally successful as fine art—the division between fine art and illustration is artificial and far too often misleading and misguided). Unlike the poor paleontological artists who must work under the dictum, as one paleontologist put it, "the artist must be paleontologically obedient" (!), the
astronomical artist is under no special obligation to be particularly super-accurate, certainly no more so than a terrestrial landscape painter must be geologically or biologically accurate. The astronomical artist, however, in my opinion, is under some obligation to make his or her artwork at least resemble the stated subject. That is, if he or she claims that the painting in question is, say, a Martian landscape, or Jupiter as seen from Io, then that is what it ought to look like to at least the same degree that a portrait is obligated to resemble the sitter. When non-astronomical images and symbology are included, and particularly when they begin to play an increasingly dominant role in the artwork, then that work of art begins to cross the grey area between Astronomical Art and something else.

Some of the confusion concerning the "purpose" of Astronomical Art comes from the dependence of the artist on astronomers and other scientists for the information that the artist works with. Unable to visit and see these alien landscapes with their own eyes, they depend upon the mechanical and electronic eyes of the telescopes and space probes, as well as the educated extrapolations of the scientists. However, this does not, or should not at least, place the artist under any obligation to please the astronomer, no more than an artist recreating a scene on Earth as described in a travel book is under any obligation to please the author—or no more, to use a more sublimely ridiculous example, than the artist observing a landscape through a pair of binoculars is obligated to please Baush and Lomb. The scientists have only extended the eyes of the artist, acting as intermediaries and sources of otherwise unattainable information. Other than a polite "thank you" the artist is free, within the constraints just mentioned, to do as he or she pleases with that information, just as free, in fact, as though they had witnessed the scene with their own eyes.

The astronomical artist seems to have his or her closest counterpart in the representational terrestrial landscape artists. I use here the loosest possible definition of "representational" that I can, since I by no means intend it to describe any sort of high realism. In fact, this is as good a place as any to bring up the matter of style. As has been mentioned in any number of places, Astronomical Art has its roots in traditionally "realistic" representational art: from the Preraphaelites and the Hudson River School through Chesley Bonestell and Co. However, true as this is, Astronomical Art's roots have produced any number of branches. What I have been talking about in the previous paragraphs has dealt with intent, not application. There is no reason that an astronomical artwork cannot be impressionistic, fauvistic, cubistic or even rendered in needlepoint or stone. (There are schools and even, imaginably, media that may perhaps not be as appropriate. Surrealism, for example, would of necessity, I believe, too often involve non-astronomical themes and images.)

According to Michael S. Bell (who has done extensive research on Surrealism), there are three main families of contemporary (Veristic)Surrealist style: Classical Surrealism, Social Surrealism and Visionary Surrealism. He says, "What sets Surrealism apart from the other two major forms of art (Decorative and Abstract) is that whenever two or more wholly different aspects of time or space are placed in the same image, and when this is accomplished by means of naturalistic rendering, and when the classical traditions of perspective and composition are observed, then the only possible result is Surrealism." In this definition
impressionists were, in their attempts to render the effects of light, trying to be as realistic as the most representational of genre painters. No: style, technique and media are not proper criteria for determining what is or is not proper criteria for determining what is or is not Astronomical Art.

"Impressionism", "Hudson River" and the names of the other schools and techniques describe a philosophy or particular working material, not the painter's choice of subject. "Astronomical Art", on the contrary, does not refer to a particular philosophy or technique, but rather to a particular subject. Once again, the word astronomical is the determiner: by definition it does not describe artistic techniques, it describes a choice of subject matter.

I would think that, if there were any limitations as regards subject matter, then it would be that the astronomical artist is self-limited to that which is clearly extraterrestrial. If there is any reason for this it is that there is already clearly a long-established genre of terrestrial landscape (and seascape) art. To include paintings like these within Astronomical Art would be redundant. There has been some argument that art that deals with the Earth as a planet should be included within the embrace of Astronomical Art. I would argue against this on two grounds: first, that by definition astronomy is not the study of the Earth and that "astronomical" therefore does not describe anything solely to the Earth; second, many artists depicting the planetary Earth do so with ecological motives of one kind or another in mind—obviously this is Ecological Art, and not Astronomical Art (and a similar argument would be advanced for those artists who use mythological images, from whatever culture, or images and ideas from astrology).

I realize as I write them that I am making these pronouncements far more hard-edged than they really are. Of course the Earth is a planet and is not distinct from the rest of the universe. There is naturally a more or less broad, grey area (what about a painting of the Earth as seen hovering above some lunar mountains?). What I am arguing is that a painting of the Earth is neither necessarily nor automatically Astronomical Art.

"Space Art" has become a much looser, catch-all sort of phrase in the last decade or so, although originally it was virtually synonymous with Astronomical Art, perhaps just enough broader to include such non-astronomical yet space-related subjects as spaceships, aliens and human beings as major elements. Once again, there was still the implied seriousness of the approach that (normally) kept Space Art clearly distinct from Science Fiction—although this was not always easy to do. However, "Space Art", though coined to describe just this kind of art (the earliest uses that I can find of the phrase, in an admittedly cursory search, are in the early 1950's—which gives this use of it some precedence), has in recent years been usurped and its definition radically altered. A vast amount of confusion has resulted, since the phrase is now used to describe two quite different things: Space Art as intended in the original definition, and Space Art created according to the new, revised and expanded definition. Space art, according to the redefiners now means not only art about space, but art that involves space. This definition, while sounding specific on the surface, has become so broad that in effect it

of Surrealism, the theme is left to the artist, it is the composition of elements, i.e. the juxtaposition of different elements of space or time that makes the work surreal. --BA
describes nothing. It has also opened the door to any number of projects that illustrate, if anything, either the self-aggrandizement of the artist, the artist's sometimes abysmal ignorance of the very subject he or she is working with, or—what is worse—both. To say nothing of what I detect to be a pseudointellectualism that is contemptuous of its audience. I have commented at some length about this in PULSAR, enough so that my opinions need not be repeated here.

What ultimately is pertinent is the place, if any, "Space Art" as defined, or redefined (or even undefined), by Malina, Hartel and others has in the ranks of the IAAA.

When the organization decided to call itself the "International Association for Astronomical Arts" (and I must remind my readers that the original name, "International Association of Astronomical Artists, was only changed to convenience obtaining tax-exempt status) the mere inclusion of the word "astronomical" created an automatic self-limiting definition. Unless we take it upon ourselves to rewrite the meaning of the words astronomy and astronomical (or change the word "astronomical" to the less specific "space") then I believe that we have, in the very name of the organization, most of the definition we have been seeking.

The IAAA simply cannot be all-inclusive, nor should it even try to be. It was founded by astronomical artists to serve the needs of Astronomical Art. If this is limiting, so be it. There are other, well established organizations and groups (such as, for one example, the International Society for the Arts, Science and Technology) under whose aegis the non-astronomical space and "space" artists, and those artists whose works about the Earth reflect either ecological, astrological or New Age principles and philosophies, can locate themselves

CONCLUSION

"Astronomical Art" as used by the IAAA should refer to artwork created with a clear, unambiguous astronomical content. Strict accuracy should not be a strong or even necessary criteria (unless the stated objective of the artist is a scientifically accurate representation). While there is no objection to imagery from other sources, for whatever purpose the artist feels are necessary, whether they be mythological, astrological or whatever, they should not be such a dominant factor that they become the subject of the artwork. There should be no restrictions put upon either style, technique or media.

"Space Art" as used by the IAAA should refer to its traditional and well-established definition of art that concerns itself with peripheral astronomical subjects i.e., manned exploration of space, spacecraft (otherwise known as "hardware art") and human presence on other worlds. Once again, there should be no prejudice concerning styles or techniques.

Anyone who wishes can become an Associate member of the IAAA, but to become an Active Member an artist must present his or her work for review and it must satisfy the criteria set above.

(I have not ignored or forgotten the non-visual arts. Music, for example, has a real place in Astronomical Art. However, it faces the same gauntlet that the visual arts do. Holst's The Planets, because of its stated astrological symbology, would not be admissible, where Jane Ira Bloom's Fire & Imagination is clearly at least Space Art.)

David Hardy, Birmingham, England, May 3, 1991
The Manifesto. I have to agree with much of what Don Davis and Ron Miller say in their responses. We have to define just what the IAAA stands for, and to do so we have to lay down guidelines on what Space/Astronomical Art really is.

Ron's letter is, predictably (sorry Ron), wordy and full of rather academic definitions. But where does it get us practically? At some point, the Board of Trustees is going to have to make a decision and inform its members, and potential members, what kind of art they are expected to produce in order to be considered an 'active' artist. If we just want our numbers to swell, regardless, then of course we shall accept any artist who includes some sort of round object representing a planet or star in his/her work. Personally I think it much better to remain an exclusive group who at least know where we stand! But I do have another suggestion: later.

Let's start with a little historical perspective, as it appears from my own point of view. It seems to me that the IAAA started to change direction in Iceland. First, we discovered that, with the notable exception of Alexei Leonov and, to some extent, Alexander Petrov ('Sacha'), the artists we met there simply were not space artists as we had always understood the term. (How would they fare in a quite simple astronomy test? I wondered.) But meeting them was exciting, and we made lots of allowances in order to include them in our ranks. The other thing that happened was that discussions started on attaining tax-exempt status. I remember protesting that the original name was better (incidentally, I have a letter from Kara in which he says there should be no 'THE' in our name. But no one else seems to use this form; the Planetary Society insists on using our original name, though I for one have pointed it out the change several times).5 but because of some strange U.S. law it had to change, giving more latitude, implicitly, for different forms of art.

At the same time, and for the same reason, the rule that new active members had to submit slides to a jury was abolished; this too, was a bad move in my opinion, but was forced upon us. Our President at that time was Kim Poor, who has unfortunately since left us (this in itself is related to the current state of the IAAA). However, he has suggested that a solution would be to form a separate council within the IAAA for the Bonestellians, as he (and I) call them/us. He says this method is pretty standard within large trade organizations, and that the councils can have their own newsletters, meetings, workshops, leadership, etc.

This is a good idea, and preferable to a complete breakaway organization (which I can foresee, but which would be a great pity since we still have much to offer each other). However, my feeling is that since the IAAA was formed by and for the Realists, it should remain the parent or 'umbrella' group as such, and that there should be a sub-group -- perhaps called the 'Cosmos Group' or similar for those who prefer to explore styles which are impressionistic, expressionistic, surrealistic, or whatever. That way, we can all do our own thing without offending anyone else, yet the IAAA remains big enough to have a meaningful status, and all of its members enjoy its non-profit benefits.

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5 This was pointed out and a change made at our last board meeting, July, 1990. --BA

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Finally, I'd like to make it clear that I am not 'against' the non-realists. I included the work of several in Visions of Space, and the work I chose I did so because I enjoy it. But I don't want the IAAA taken over by it,6 or the public confused as to the nature of Space/Astronomical Art.

P.S. It may be of interest to mention that I have had no such problems when recruiting European/British artists. At least half-a-dozen have joined us as a result of my membership drive, and all are Realists (I'm sure we can all forgive Pesek an asteroid withivy growing on it, or a temple on the Moon!). There are abstract artists who call themselves Space Artists - e.g., Walter Bulander in Germany - but none have applied to join. But I do know that some, like Julian Baum, are not happy with the bickering in our ranks, so the sooner we can announce some sort of solution, the better.

Dennis Davidson, New York City, July, 1991

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE IAAA

I would like to address recent assertions and cross-talk which imply that a small group of individuals are redirecting the course of the IAAA through the name change, adoption of non-profit status, and the attempt to codify the definition of Astronomical Art in the IAAA Manifesto Draft.

In 1987, the officers of the IAAA sought non-profit status because we were entering into joint projects with the USSR Union of Artists and required funds to meet our commitments. The desire to incorporate as a non-profit was there before the Soviet projects existed, however they acted as a prompt to undertake the opinion at that time. Many within the IAAA supported the non-profit status so we could obtain funding from both public and private sources to support exhibitions, workshops, and internal IAAA housekeeping tasks. Who would be against seeking funds to create a new IAAA traveling exhibit? Or to hire an executive director so we, as artists, can return to creating art instead of running an organization? Or to seek funds to develop a magazine about Astronomical Art? These activities cannot be funded with dues at their present low rate with our small membership. They can only be funded if we go to government, corporate, and institutional sources for funds and to obtain grant money an organization must be non-profit. Of course, another option is self-funding through the sale of our work but very few of us are at the point in our careers when philanthropy of this level is an option.

The name change was required to obtain non-profit status. Our motive as IAAA officers was to seek funds to support our current and future activities, not to thwart the intent of the original members. It's that simple. As a non-profit organization we must admit any dues paying person to the general membership but this does not preclude us from limiting membership in a specific category, for example active astronomical artists. We can

6 This final point is specifically addressed in the Manifesto by the metaphor of the bull's eye pattern of the Hubble Space Telescope's light concentration. In other words, according to the final paragraph of the proposed Manifesto, most of the work in the IAAA will fall in the central core of Astronomical and Space Art, and a smaller percentage in the 'Cosmological' area. --BA
differentiate between these categories of membership with our by-laws which can be amended by the Board of Trustees at any time.

VOLUNTEERING & BURN OUT

This brings me to an important point which is volunteer burn out. I know of no artist in this group who would rather be a bureaucrat than a painter. All of us who give our time to the IAAA do so at the expense of time spent on our paintings. Because so few IAAA members volunteer their time to make this organization work, the few members who do volunteer quickly become overloaded with work. Inevitably these members burn out, drop out, and return to their painting. This is one reason why the portfolio review has been put on hold: burn out. There are not enough members volunteering for the tasks required to manage this organization.

Portfolio review was not terminated to allow the IAAA to be folded with non-realists. The review process has always been slow, in part, because of the limited time the reviewers had to devote to the IAAA. There are good reasons why the management of the IAAA takes so much more time than before. The IAAA has grown from a small, informal group of about 25 artists to a world-wide association of over 150 artists and members. Just the growth alone from 20 to 150 would necessitate changes in the organization. How does one stay in touch with everyone else? our workshops rarely number more than 20 artists at a time. Communication becomes more difficult with 150 members. When there were fewer than 20 members, one could conceivably telephone each member in an evening. That's impossible with 150 members, not to say costly as well. We have grown beyond the conveniences of a small group, thus the organization must evolve to meet these changes. This means a minor bureaucracy to some, but how else do we manage a group of this size?

Newsletters must be written, exhibits organized and mounted, and funds raised for our activities. All of this requires a structure or a bureaucracy however small and efficient. I would prefer an informal group, but this is impossible with our size, geographical distribution and international commitments. However, there is nothing in our by-laws, Manifesto, or goals which precludes an individual from organizing small, informal workshops just like the "good old days".

The publication of PULSAR, which is vital for our internal communication, takes more time than any editor realized. Just ask Rick Sternbach, Kim Poor, Gail Szathmáry, or Laurie Ortiz. The organization of workshops takes an exorbitant amount of time, sometimes weeks or months at a part-time level as the organization of the Iceland expedition did for me. The exhibits require an enormous commitment from a few individuals. Kim Poor, Mike Carroll, and Beth Avary have all selflessly contributed weeks of their time for the benefit of many in our group. Pam Lee and others have promoted the idea of a computer network to facilitate communication and collaborations. PARALLAX needs an editor if it is ever to be resurrected and there are at least half a dozen other pressing jobs waiting for volunteers: the by-laws, future exhibits, portfolio reviews, etc.

I am not saying that everything we do in the IAAA is beyond criticism, there is always room for improvement. However, I will state categorically that all of the people I have worked with in the IAAA, both on the Board of Trustees and off, are diligent, committed artists who are giving up limited time to do their best for the benefit of
all.

MANIFESTO et al

A second issue I would like to see discussed more coherently and resolved is the hostility I've seen members of this group direct towards fine art in general and non-objective, non-realist art in particular. I believe it is important to address this issue because it pertains directly to the manifesto debate and the enmity directed towards members who are perceived to be fine artists (read "Swirley people").

There appears to be a very real schism in philosophy within the IAAA. I do not believe this to be unhealthy or should be a threat to our existence. Debate sharpens the mind and should be welcomed in the IAAA as should diversity of expression within the definitions of Astronomical and Space Art. However, uninformed attacks on another member's basic artistic style is both divisive and counterproductive to the cohesion of our group.

Without implying any value judgements I will label the two groups as the Literalists and the Conceptualists. The problems arise not so much out of expression but out of the mindset promulgated by these two approaches to art. The literalists are mostly illustrators by training and are generally goal-oriented, i.e. the realistic depiction of an off-planet spacescape or landscape based upon scientific knowledge. Their focus is on technique, style, and the successful completion of an assignment within given parameters of scientific knowledge. There is little mention of meaning, idea or concept from the literalists when calling for stricter definitions of Astronomical Art.

The Conceptualists, while taking their inspiration from the same rigorous scientific knowledge, are more process and concept oriented. Their work may be realist or even photorealist, but the technique is not paramount. It is the idea examined which takes precedence over composition and style.

Both examples outlined derive their inspiration from space science and astronomy. However, the literal outcome (the look of the art) may vary wildly. My work approaches photo-realism in style but is concept driven. I have chosen to work in the idiom of space because I find space exploration and science-in-general as the most accessible vehicles for the expression of my ideas. My style could change radically in my career from realism to non-representationalism and I would still be examining the same issues using the space sciences as the very core of my inspiration. Will my work be Astronomical Art if the literal image changes to a non-representational form? I believe so.

ILLUSTRATION vs FINE ART

An initial reading of the manifesto debate points to the opposite camps of illustration versus fine art. This appears to be the basis of the primary misunderstandings of the controversy and in my view it is the illustrators of this group who have made the weakest effort to understand fine art. It is easy to be a critic and dismiss a work of art based solely on opinion, anyone can do that. It is far more difficult to constructively criticize or try to understand an artist's intent. It is a common complaint in the IAAA that Space Art is not being taken seriously by the "art world". (The art world has its own set of peculiarities and self-definition is one of them.)

However, the vociferous criticism aimed at whole genres of art (performance and avant-guard to name two) borders on outright derision and strikes me as both immature and ignorant. It is the very same reaction that so
many of us in the IAAA experience when dealing with the fine art world. "That is not art. It's trash..." is the common refrain one encountered. To make such sweeping judgements highlights the lack of knowledge on the part of the critic. Who among us has not had our art immediately dismissed by an art dealer who knew nothing about Astronomical Art? As we all know, when a gallery director cannot distinguish between astronomy and astrology, there is more than ignorance underfoot. Just because the fine art world outside of the IAAA is hypercritical of science-based art does not mean that the fine art people within the IAAA hold this same view.

This lack of tolerance for any art which is not realist or representational is no different than the elitist attitudes exhibited towards our genre by the typical Uptown/Soho New York art dealer. This is ironic because the common IAAA gripe is that outside of a small group of science-informed and space enthusiasts our work is not considered to be valid art. Yet the harsh opinions about most other schools of art come hard and fast among many space artists and are usually based upon little knowledge.

**CONCLUSION**

There is importance, honor, and meaning within both illustration and fine art, as well as the hybrid we are creating within the science-based astronomical arts. By describing the two camps as illustrators and fine artists I am not placing a value judgement on either. (I recognize that there are more than two sides to this issue in the IAAA.) As an artist who does both illustration and fine art I'm over the squabbling between these two fields. However, it is important to acknowledge that there are real differences in education, training, and outlook for these two disciplines of art and these differences can be the basis of misunderstandings such as our manifesto tempest.

I believe that it is time to move beyond this debate. The Manifesto as published is only a draft document and is, by definition, unfinished. It is just one of several tasks which need attention. I urge the IAAA membership to continue to submit their ideas and opinions but be informed. Telephone or write to the principles involved in any issue before firing off those letters to the editor. Get some of the facts from the IAAA members who have worked long and hard on these and other issues, but most of all, get involved. We need all the help we can get to continue to improve this organization and develop this genre for the benefit of all.

*Angela Manno, Crestone, CO, March 18, 1991*

I think it's wonderful (the Manifesto draft)! It's concise yet inclusive. It really examines the essence of what I observe to have developed in the IAAA and that is the movement "is not restricted or defined by styles or techniques...". Although it is true that historically, art movements revolve around a particular style as those mentioned in the Manifesto, it is a current trend to form movements around themes. Take for example "Environmental Art" and "Transformative Art". I am writing an article on a show of Environmental Art for a national magazine presently and I can assure you they are not related by style! This trend exists because it is necessary for our times. Content is more urgent than form, it seems, at this point in history, and in the case of "Transformative Art", intent precedes both content and form as a unifying element. I could go on but that's enough for now.
Even so, you and Bill did a great job defining three aspects of the art by IAAA members. I know I fall within the rarified sphere of "Cosmological Art" by your definition and it suits me just fine. Michael Bell, a curator in San Francisco, calls my work "Visionary Surrealism". I like that too. You’ve been given the difficult task of definition, delineating and I commend you both!

Nick Jacobowsky, Monterey, CA, June, 1991
All in all, I feel that you did a good job on the Manifesto. It is merely my opinion that it should be stricter in defining the area of art that the IAAA covers. And on the subject of opinions, even though you are now being inundated by opinions from all over, the only opinions that you might feel compelled to incorporate into the Manifesto should be those of the founding members and office holders. This is after all their organization, they created it, and if other members feel left out of the Manifesto's definition, then they can leave and maybe start their own group (this isn't a self-serving right-wingism on my part; I'd most likely be one of those leaving). This makes more sense than to have an organization that, in trying to please everyone, is so vague that it supports nothing in particular. Happy manifestoing.

C.F. Yankovich, Phoenix, AZ, February 26, 1991
I appreciate the work that you and Bill Hartmann invested in writing the draft of the IAAA Manifesto. Please accept my compliments on the result; it is exactly what it should be. You presented a definition of the direction of the IAAA art goals without becoming involved in detailed definitions of what constitutes the three areas of art. The current debate over what constitutes Astronomical Art is heated and somewhat divisive, and you will probably receive some criticisms because the draft Manifesto isn't sufficiently specific; I view your generality as an attempt to reconcile all of us, and I feel more comfortable with the future direction of the IAAA because of it.

Barbara Oakley, Reston, VA, November 20, 1991
In response to your call for the membership's (2 cents) input on the Manifesto. I am only an Associate, but I applaud the efforts of those 'leading the charge' to consolidate the definition of the association mission and move forward toward your goals. I also heartily support K. Szathmáry's call to endorse a "Manifesto" and move on with recognition activities, as well as, education in techniques, attitudes, visions and craftsmanship.

R. O. Trapanese, Sugarloaf, PA
All the discourse about the definition of what Space Art and who qualifies will someday be solved. The decision will not be made by this generation of artists. It will be made by art history writers and curators a hundred years from now. I constantly remind other encaustic artists or other women artists that our content will classify us and not our sex or media. We all seem to want to fit into some category but in the long run, the decision will not be ours.
Sarita Southgate, Flagstaff, AZ, September 21, 1991

I personally am drawn to inclusive rather than exclusive dicta; to tolerance and questing rather than boundaries and closures; to experimentation and exploration rather than restriction to particular approaches or conceptualizations; to dialogue, discussion and even disagreement rather than calcified close-mindedness. The discussions about the Manifesto, about the IAAA's mission, about who's work's OK and who's not have been quite eye opening for me. There are obviously no "right" answers to the questions raised, really only the possibility of selecting different definitions and thereby attitudes toward IAAA's future. Whatever final choices are made there will no doubt be artists who really disapprove of other artist's work and also a wide range of expressions which have different appeal to different people. Like a Supreme Court judge the future artistic expression of an individual is usually unpredictable and this growth in quality and depth is perhaps the most valued artistic process-transcending refining technique or more accurate representations.

The only restrictive portion of the current "proposed Manifesto", in my view, is the paragraph that deals with the "bulls-eye" pattern and percentages. Conceivably these percentages might become guides for selection of pieces for an exhibition rather than the quality, excitement and originality of the entries. Over the years to come there may well be times when Cosmological Art is in abundance and of high quality and other times when Space Art has seized the moment.

I am currently fascinated with not only the universe beyond our planet, but also the universe microscopes and electron microscopes have revealed to us. Knowing that fossilized fatty acids have been discovered in meteoritic materials amazes and excites me and prods me along the road that explores life/non-life boundaries. Recently I've done two paintings that relate previously unrelated phenomena - one is a supernova with electron microscope revealed strands of RNA (the double helix spiral). I believe conceptually these paintings are appropriate for IAAA and that their inclusion of RNA & DNA do not make them candidates for exclusion, even though RNA & DNA have obviously not been found in relation to the celestial bodies. I mention this work because it brings a different perspective to IAAA & as I am enriched by the many different perspectives IAAA artists have revealed to me so I hope to enrich in return. I guess I'm saying a diverse, rich panoply of artistic expressions, styles and techniques receives my enthusiastic support; I tire of purist limits rather quickly.

Judy Asbury, Ponderosa, NM, September 11, 1991

I heard about IAAA in 1984 and first received a letter from Rick Sternbach in December, 1984 at which time I applied for membership and sent slides and a statement. I was juried in and my application statement was published in PULSAR, 1985. To quote that article: "I believe my painting is complimentary to other Space Art although I would not call myself a strict realist (more abstract and expressionistic if terms apply)."

I helped elect the next president, Kim Poor, who called me an Expressionist in a slide talk at the Johnson Space Center hardware workshop in Texas. At that time, I stated at a critique I was interested in 3 Dimensional Art but a different 3 Dimensions (to include time). At that time everyone, including Marilynn was very encouraging of my art to me despite the non-realism. I also was very encouraging and complimentary of their realistic work.
though I freely admitted I wasn't into doing it. To quote Joel Hagen re my art "It's nice to see something beside our own tight-ass work." Pat Rawlings stated my kind of art was what he would personally buy and his admiration for Kandinsky.

So that's my history with IAAA and so at this late date it seems ridiculous to consider exclusionary policies - it might also be illegal. ... Maybe a solution is to use instead of a bulls eye, a spiral galaxy, with one arm for the Realists!


I've read the letters in the March/April 1991 issue of PULSAR regarding what is Space Art, the Manifesto, etc. And I've been sent copies regarding the same, from Don Davis, Beth Avary and Kim Poor. All are very interesting and raise many ways of thinking about and defining Space Art - Astronomical Art, etc. One thing is clear to me - most of this big mess could have been avoided, if the original members (in Death Valley), hand-picked and chose only artists that fitted into this core group. They could have invited only those that met the "Bonestellian-School-of-Art" criteria. My own experience from belonging to different art groups in the past, as well as IAAA is, most (not all) "real" (true; impassioned; professional; etc.) artists don't have the desire, skill or time to do the secretary tasks, organizing, and other non-pictorial feats of having an artists' group be successful. What's been done, has been done. IAAA opened itself up to anyone. That's the way it is, for better or worse. The core group can't look back now and scream and holler.

I started doing "Space Art" (how about spacescapes!) back in 1973 (Don Davis can confirm that.). I did large paintings (4 feet by 6 feet and larger, on canvas) of most of the known nebulas and galaxies. (For the "Great Nebula in Orion", I used over 10 different photographs-exposures.) I then began incorporating my imagination into this background and knowledge of real astronomical objects. These paintings led to my one-man show at the Oakland Museum in 1977, titled: THE UNIVERSE. I sold every painting and got many commissions. But in 1980 I began a series called THE INFINITY SERIES, completing 50 paintings in a 6 year span, till 1986. My desire was to be completely original, within my known subject matter: space. I was labelled a "Visionary Artist" and had much success with that, showing in many galleries and selling everything I was painting. But I never thought of myself as a "Visionary Artist". Would I have been invited into what could-have-been the exclusive clan of "real" astronomical artists at the Bonestell-school of elite painters? I don't think so. I sent Kim Poor my 1990 calendar (there was also a calendar for 1991 and one 1992 calendar - "THROUGH THE STARGATE" (not my ideal!) will be out this summer, sold throughout the world) for possible inclusion in his NOVAGRAPHICS catalog. He wrote me back: "The calendar is very nice, but it is a little too Visionary for our needs, although there are some very neat space scenes....we specialize in Bonestellian style space art, that is, based on real science and plausible scenery." How ironic- TIME magazine paid me $3,000.00 to do their cover painting of Supernova 1987A. Even though I know, all the Bonestellian artists probably didn't approve of my cover painting (and that they should have been hired instead), why does a "Visionary" artist get hired by TIME magazine?
Anyway, I personally am a big fan of "Space Art". I can recognize what is good, average and poor "Space Art". But within what I think are great paintings, they certainly are not exclusive to just the Bonestellian style! Adolf Schaller is one of my favorite "Space Artists". He may be known for being of the true-Bonestell-school, but his best work, I think, are what I would call "Cosmological Art". Abstract, visual depictions, showing the grand structures of the Universe (parabolic shapes, worm holes, etc.). These would certainly be rejected by the Bonestellians, because, many liberties are taken here to try and visualize the unknown and imagination is forefront here: implausible scenes describing the unreal science. More important than all this fuss over the Manifesto is what is good art and what is bad art (within the framework of obvious "Space Art"). I've dealt with this myself, having been hired to curate a few shows. This would of course be important in areas of reproducing work and having shows representing IAAA. A reliable committee would have to be formed to decide what is good.

But here again, you open a "can of worms" with personal judgements, opinions, etc. Subjective, or not - there is good "Space Art" and bad "Space Art". One of the main reasons I joined IAAA (I was a member before there was any name), was to share and read about the many different ideas concerning materials and techniques of painting the same subject matter (in whatever style). Unfortunately, no one wants to share their "secrets". But PULSAR could be a useful network for all "space artists", exchanging ideas and information - sharing their experiences that could help certain artists in different ways. (I've written letters telling what I've found regarding the many different brands of acrylic paint, airbrush pigments, inks, etc. Also, I shared what I've learned over 12 years in photographing my paintings, etc.).

I would like to see the definitive, "coffee-table", book of "Space Art": Psychedelic, Visionary, spiritual, etc. And being comprehensive, all artists would be asked to show everything they've done (no one-or-two-paintings-per-artist here!). But I know, (I include myself?) a group can be formed to identify and choose only the good stuff, in whatever style. A great painting, is a great piece of art, Bonestellian and all others!


Spacestronomical Art?

"Painting the New Frontier". It was this brief synopsis of the IAAA which first drew my attention to the ideals of the founder members of the society. Ideals I share and try to convey in my artwork. Having a keen interest in other worlds totally inaccessible to us creates in itself a strong desire to depict them as realistically as possible. The first lunar astronauts, noting the harsh lighting conditions and how color changed, depending upon your line of sight serves to show the challenge in creating good, realistic art. For myself this has to be the first priority. However, the very nature of the subject inevitably leads us into the realms of abstract and philosophical thought, and I have seen some very beautiful paintings done by some of our members along these lines. I feel we should leave our minds open and keep a corner in our hearts for these interpretations so long as we give prominence to the original definition of IAAA art which was, after all the reason why we came into existence.

It is possible we may be saying more about ourselves to later generations than we realize. Our dedicated
enthusiasm for depicting a universe slowly being unveiled, as our infant technology develops may well speak for us as those who follow us compare our results with their improved knowledge.

The changing of the Society's name from "Astronomical Artist's" to "Astronomical Arts" disappointed me a little, I must admit. I felt that the former had a certain cohesion about it suggestive of a group of individuals with a common bond, whereas the latter suggests a more, "all embracing" definition which may be the reason for a higher proportion of disparity within the organization with regards to the terms 'Astronomical Art' and 'Space Art' and their ultimate definitions. However they are defined I feel that either of these terms fits well with the original ideals of the IAAA. But probably the term 'Space Art' will be the one most generally accepted outside of the Society.

With all due respects to Paul Hartel (PULSAR, Nov.-Dec.,1990) I feel his term "Scientific Astronoscapes" far too clumsy, and not one that will catch on at all (sorry Paul!) For me then, the term "Space Art" is fine. It says, simply, what we are about, without the need for too much self analysis.

...While painting in a realistic style myself, I would not like to deny anyone else within the organization an opportunity to express themselves in a different style. As a matter of fact I have an interest in surrealistic artwork and I feel I must explore this sometime.
So, Joel - I hear you want to talk to the Pope about the IAAA?

I thought I knew how to paint astronomical art - but I'm confused...

I have 347 pages of arguments from the rock and roll guys, and 275 pages from the swirly people. Also one Xerox from a van painter who doesn't give a damn.

Personally, I thought astronomical art was supposed to have lions in it - you know, like the Armageddon stuff in "Watch Tower."

I just want an answer...

Soon...

There must be harmony above all else. There is room in the IAAA to embrace all styles and themes, our world is a mere speck in the universe - all that happens is universal, astronomical...

All art, therefore, is astronomical art.

Joel - look! He's reading that from the back of his hand! The swirly people got to him already!

We'll have to take this all the way to the top!
LATER...

So how about it? Swirly stuff, or rocks and balls?

You mean...

I knew it!

Neither one, Poindexter...

Right as rain, Amigo, lions!

Yep, lions, lambs and cherubs.

Cherubs, too? Huh?

Then that Russian angel painting at Huntsville...

Correcto! Very close to the mark. I also like the emerging "horse and ball" school of Soviet space art.

I see... so I can go ahead with my lion and cloud stuff?

Absolutely. But start putting some lambs in.

I'll be damned.

By the way... what about the Cyrano question?
GLAD YOU BROUGHT IT UP. MILLER AND HARTELL HAVE ZEROED IN ON ONE OF THE DEEPEST AND SUBTLEST MYSTERIES OF THE UNIVERSE. UNLOCKING THE "RIDDLE OF CYRANO" WILL HAVE A PROFOUND EFFECT ON THE FUTURE OF THE IRAA.

WHAT ABOUT THIS LAURIE's ODD CENSORSHIP THING?

MY GOD - NOW SHE CONSTRUCTS EVERYTHING WE READ ABOUT CYRANO. SHE SEEMS SO TASTEFUL... IT'S LIKE WHEN I HEARD THAT CLAUDINE, LONGEST SHOT A PROFESSIONAL SKIER...

LAURIE IS ONE OF MILLER'S PAID STOGES. SHE HAS BEEN PUSHING HIS VIEWS ON THE RIDDLE OF CYRANO FOR YEARS, AND NOW HAS MANEUVERED HERSELF INTO A POSITION OF POWER IN THE ORGANIZATION.

IT'S A MYSTERIOUS WORLD, BUB.

WHOA! TOP RIGHT THERE... YOU'D BETTER BELIEVE IT MATTERS. IT'S NO SKIN OFF MY NOSE, BUT TAKE A BIG HINT... SLIDES.

SLIDES...?
SLIDES, YOU AIN'T GONNA LIVE FOREVER, PAL. HOW DO YOU THINK WE DECIDE WHO'S IN AND WHO'S OUT WHEN THEY HIT THE PEARLY GATES?

BINGO!

HMM... SLIDE SET?

AND THE ROCK AND BALL GUYS—THE SWIRL PEOPLE...?

LET'S JUST SAY THEY DON'T NEED TO BRING THEIR MITTENS...

YOU KNOW I THINK THAT AIRBRUSH TECHNIQUE I'VE BEEN USING ON MARS DUST STORMS WOULD BE GREAT FOR DOING FLEECE...
MUTINY? - WHAT MUTINY?

We have received several responses to the proposed IAAA Manifesto Green Paper. Beth Avary and William K. Hartmann took on the task to "feel" the pulse of our membership. Their mandate, from the Board of Trustees, was to formulate in words their observations of the styles, techniques and attitudes used by our membership to interpret astronomical knowledge.

I have repeatedly encouraged our membership to participate in this historical debate. What was important to me and the Board was that our members have an opportunity to share their views and their experiences without prejudice and by working as a team; open tolerant, and receptive to new ideas. I thank all of our participants for their generous time, insights and depth of feelings regarding their personal views, preferences and artistic intentions.

Every now and then however, a number of curiously hostile and accusatory letters cross my desk questioning the direction that the IAAA has pursued as a non-profit, educationally orientated, organization. In particular, a few recent letters have specifically reflected on the nature of some of the articles in PULSAR, the manifesto debate as well as the styles and techniques of some of our new members. Unfortunately, these letters are riddled with a host of misconceptions as to what the direction, the debates, the dialogues and the issues are all about. So, let me back track a bit so that I can put the last three years into perspective.

Prior to incorporating as a non-profit organization, the IAAA had committed itself and set its sails on a course to internationalize, which would establish Astronomical Art as a global interwoven fabric of astronomy and art and in the process define Space Art as a new genre of art in the international arena. The word "astronomical" in our name has always, by its very definition, implied an art form that is inspired by the astronomical sciences and the exploration of space. Once, however, we became aware of the similarities and the differences in the tendencies of styles and approaches of different cultures, as was the case in Iceland in 1988, our delegation initiated a period of self reflection prior to the rendezvous with the Soviet Cosmic Group.

The aim of self reflection was redefinition, renewal, growth and change. An organization undergoing this process did so with the understanding that success required a collective vision, will and effort. We decided to formulate a collective synthesis, a Manifesto, of the common threads of scientific and philosophic approaches that inspire all astronomical artists.

Ten years earlier, in 1978 (SPACE ART, Ron Miller, Starlog Press, 1978) Ron Miller initiated the debate as to what constitutes Space Art and with what tools, skills and astronomical science knowledge an artist must have to paint "believable" astronomical art. "The goal of the artist" he wrote "was to look at reality, to form a personal impression of it, and to develop the skills necessary to render the impressions in objective terms." "The balance", he continues, "between naturalism and imagination often becomes the artist's identifiable style. The artist is normally allowed great latitude in his adherence to reality." "The purpose is to visualize a part of reality which is 'unseeable', and the person who does this is the scientific artist." "When the scientific artist creates an accurate vision of unseen objects, he not only provides inspiration to those working in the field, but he forms a
method of communication to the rest of the world: the non-scientific public." This artistic approach is in fact viewed as illustration.

Nowhere does Ron insist that there is only one approach to Astronomical Art. Rather, he states very clearly that "the artist who practices Space Art must be able to handle a representational painting technique." This does not mean that the work of art must be photographic in style, which of course Bonestell used, partly a result of his experience as a motion picture matte painter. Nor does this mean that a mixture of techniques could not be used to achieve the artist's intentions. "The real test", writes Ron "is 'believability', and photographic realism is only one way to achieve it."

Lucien Rudaux and Ludeck Pesek used an impressionistic style to create works that have all the appearances of having been painted from "life". "Starry Night" by Van Gogh is but one example of his work where Vincent repeatedly attempted to render his belief that the static night sky was as turbulent as the wildflowers in the meadowlands.

Albert Boime, (Van Gogh's STARRY NIGHT: A History of Matter and a Matter of History, ARTS Magazine, Dec. 1984), writing to George O. Abell, pointed out that "Van Gogh, C. Flammarion, and Jules Vernall looked to (astronomical) science for the solution to humanity's pressing problems." He continues, "Van Gogh's STARRY NIGHT incarnates the effort to visualize the reality of Flammarion's observations and speculations. While based on immediate perception, it expands on the reality to include the latest astronomical discoveries of nebulae, the double and multiple star systems rotating around a common center of gravity, and above all, the new insights into the "unfixed" and dynamic universe." "The picture's execution was fraught with the deepest personal meaning for the painter" which "incarcerated both mind and spirit".

Not all Astronomical Art comes from Bonestell lineage! Therefore the style of the artist is not the issue nor the priority. Content, however, is! At least 98% of our membership have a representational realistic style, contrary to the belief that hard working, prompt paying, nonrealists have diluted the aims and aspirations of the founding members.

The notion that nonrealist 'Swirleys' within the IAAA membership and in particular within the administration are steering the IAAA towards a wider and wider audience by admitting anyone to membership is utter nonsense and a lot of poppycock. The IAAA as a broadly supported, public benefit, non-profit organization has indeed attracted a great amount of interest through our collective accomplishments; however, this does not mean that we have perforated the vision that drew the founding members together. It was with foresight that the previous administration recognized that a 'patch work quilt' of art styles was being produced internationally which had as serious practitioners as any in the American groups.

When the Russian space program decided to allow a cultural intermixing of artists and scientists from the United States, the IAAA saw an opportunity to move into the international art arena. In 1987, Kim Poor and the 'Russian 7': Michael Carroll, Don Davis, Pam Lee, Jon Lomberg, Robert McCall, and Ron Miller, sensed a window of opportunity in which cross-pollination would propel the IAAA into a truly global and human network of serious creative artists enamored by the passion for astronomy and art. At the same time, they felt a
sense of purpose with a hunch that their art had all the ingredients for stimulating a peaceful and friendly emergence of planetary consciousness.

When the Moscow trip was reported in PULSAR, (Sept-Oct. 1987: SPACE ARTISTS TO SAVE THE WORLD) with the historical prospect of creating an artist Dialogue with Soviet artists, including Andrei Sokolov and artist-cosmonaut Alexei Leonov, the IAAA as a whole felt the euphoria of a major breakthrough towards establishing space art as a legitimate global art genre.

I was approached by Kim and the newly created Board of Trustees for election as President in the most unusual circumstances while I was preparing to leave Reykjavik to return to Canada. as you can expect, I was stunned and overwhelmed by the proposition. At the time, I didn't know any better. I never considered the amount of work nor the responsibilities when I said "OK" rather naively; but, I did assume the mandate discussed earlier in Iceland. This included the Manifesto, the Dialogue project, the non-profit status and 'internationalizing' the IAAA.

My very first responsibility was to continue the non-profit applications, documentations and classifications as advised by Kim Poor's art attorney. Next, I secured a contract between the IAAA and the Planetary Society to identify our group as the western artists as defined in the Soviet All Artists Union - Planetary Society contract. I also established a direct link with the Soviet All Artists Union so that we were not at the mercy of the Planetary Society for our internal communications with the Soviets. This eventually lead to a separate IAAA agreement with the Russians for the remaining workshops in the Dialogue projects and a joint partnership which would have the exhibition tour Moscow, Pasadena, San Diego, Huntsville, Alabama, and terminate after a year long exhibition at the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum.

Furthermore, I managed to convince the Planetary Society that the $25,000.00 was not a loan to the IAAA, rather, it was their contribution to the five year project. As it was, the IAAA was about to spend $120,000.00 as a group in the lifetime of the contract. I thank my wife, Gail for this insight as it gave us a new role as a major player in the project. All the parties now realized the the IAAA could become a reliable business partner, provided that a track record could be established.

"Visions of Space" by David A.Hardy and "In the Stream of Stars" by William K. Hartmann, Ron Miller et al are marvellous Space Art books commemorating the events and the art of our group in the past three years. They are also valuable historical documentation of this period as well as a valuable bit of advertising for our international cause. The proposed Manifesto is an acknowledgement of the tendencies that make up these two books.

Metaphorically, the Manifesto can be construed as a photographic image of a bright stellar disk which represents Astronomical Art, a faint and narrow sleeve which envelopes the disk represents Space (hardware) Art, and a much fainter trace, the after image of solarization, represents Cosmological Art. The Manifesto should not be viewed as a Venn diagram where Astronomical Art is a subset of Space Art which is a subset of Cosmological Art as some have previously referred.

We may have doubled in size during this time frame, however, never once have I abandoned my mandate to place
the IAAA further along the road to become players in the international art arena. Nor have I surrendered the task of producing a Manifesto. The horror of waking up one morning to see the reflection of the IAAA in the mirror as the American Association of Astronomical Illustrators is one I will not entertain.

Therefore, every effort is being made to process our members insights and viewpoints on the Manifesto so that a true collective vision, will and effort, of global Astronomical Art, can keep the international flavor and character of the IAAA. To stop the process, to return to the good ol' days when only a few dozen astronomical artists can benefit from the public interest, and to return to only a Bonestellian style of painting lineage is most inappropriate, narrow minded and selfishly motivated. Art interprets the visible world; physics charts its unseen workings. Although the two disciplines seem completely opposed, together nonetheless they continue to explore reality through a common imagination. This is our task at hand, as it was just over one hundred years ago.

My suggestion for a Grand Unification of art styles to the IAAA is not so meaningless after all as it springs primarily from the fact that CONTENT is our common bond. If our genre is to have any credence then our paintings must appear inspired rather than engineered, and intellectually full rather than being only technically adequate. To have our paintings viewed as original and imaginative visions of interplanetary destiny, in the art community, we must also show flashes of wit and wisdom, otherwise what's the point of group effort and momentum as a genre of art?

Mutiny? In 1992, the International Space Year? It happened to Columbus but can it happen again 500 years later in art? Fortunately or unfortunately, we are bounded legally as a non-profit, educational oriented association. Now is the time to put our past behind us, stop the bickering in America, endorse the Manifesto and get on to educating not just the non-scientific public but also ourselves as to techniques, attitudes, visions and craftsmanship. Also, we must begin to contribute new articles, exchange ideas, viewpoints, and creative artistic explorations that was the hallmark of PARALLAX. If this is our collective will then our efforts will find success in the international art arena; and, whatever the nomenclature, Space Art will be the genre of art we all aspire it to be.

Ad Astra, Kara. (Lord of the Swirleys)
Carter Emmart, Mountain View, CA, 1991

The Future of the IAAA

The organization is now going through a natural growing pain in its effort to grasp both a focus and a directive for the future. It is a vital necessity to be able to define ourselves to the world in order to be able to court support for activities, sponsor shows, and review future applicants for membership. Regardless of any lack of articulated focus by an original founding group, there developed a name: The International Association of Astronomical Artists.

International; it now truly is, and amazing when one considers it and its reflection on how the inspiration of the Beyond serves to weld us together as we really are, ONE.

Association; and how can one deny the absolute positive and irreversible effects of this group actually getting together and sharing each other's inspiration, thank you Bill, this was a GREAT idea.

Astronomical; we don't need another definition because we all know this means measured space beyond our Home, and each one of us is held in eternal rapture by this; we love it and we depict it for the rest of humanity to join with us.

Artists; we are all, and we are lit by the same flame of common inspiration beyond boundaries of culture, style and form.

The beauty of art is that it can NEVER be defined, but if we are to take our lead from the past, all movements revolve around a central theme and that is a theme of inspiration. Our theme is astronomical and it is worth reflecting on the very nature and philosophical vastness of what this means. A world-wide expression of this inspiration is all that we are about and we should indulge the many wondrous versions that this form takes.

Without this perspective we fall short of what I believe is a proud and most appropriate name. Forever timeless are the worlds, and works of Chesley, Vincent, Leonardo, and the cave painters. Their living inspiration is the torch you and I have chosen to take. Let us come together, far and wide, to celebrate this fact and paint the silence of the heavens.

Beth Avary, Portola Valley, CA, March 23, 1992

So, There You Have It

I think there has been an excellent response to the proposed Manifesto. We may never all agree on everything, but hopefully putting all the letters together like this will help us to formulate opinions with more depth than is possible if only our own ideas are running through our heads! In my case, at least, there has been a progression of thought due to the educational process of reading the letters and thinking about member's viewpoints.

I think Bill Hartmann has gotten to the heart of many of the basic problems we are dealing with, and has suggested workable solutions. His proposed "Guidelines for Jurors in Exhibitions Identified as IAAA Exhibitions" is a good idea, and I think it should be dealt with by the Board in a special mailing. I agree with "Manno's Idea", that the real filtering of the IAAA should be done through shows and not membership. What if
somebody has never done an astronomical painting, but wants to learn? Or doesn't paint, like Mrs Bonestell, but wants to support and keep in touch with the group? I agree that our exhibits should define us, and I especially like Bill's view that "The goal of mounting an exciting and vigorous show must come first."

Also, I think it is a good idea to have themes for shows. The two major exhibits I have been involved with have been very broadly based in the sense of including many styles and concepts, and I feel that some of the people worried about the direction the IAAA has taken have not stopped to consider or understand what we were trying to do with these exhibits.

The first exhibit with the Soviets, "DIALOGUES: Communication Through Art of the Cosmos" was, as its name implied, more concerned with communication with a foreign culture through our art than with the science of our art, although especially on our side, the science content of the art prevailed. That it did not, on the Soviet side, was a plus in my opinion, because many of us were able to learn something new about art from them. In turn, I think they learned something about our science oriented art, and so a communication took place - which after all was one of the main reasons for the exhibit!

The second major exhibit "Art of the Cosmos" is an attempt to take a comprehensive look at how astronomy and space exploration have inspired artists in the discipline of painting. Needless to say, comprehensive meaning what it does, I included as many categories as I could. Still, when everything was added up, Astronomical and Space Art comprised 75% of the exhibit with 25% for everything else; more or less within Hartmann's proposed guidelines. I also have received many favorable comments on the diversity of the exhibit, people like seeing all the different styles and concepts.

The current exhibit in the making is very narrowly defined; Planetary Geology and Planetary Atmospheres. It will be interesting to see how this takes shape. In the future, we might want to do a show of 'Humor and Whimsy in Astronomical Art', or 'Galaxies and Galaxy Formation', or 'Space Hardware of the Nineties' (or of the Future), etc.

Also, it seems to me the fact that Science Fiction and Fantasy artists (or any other kind of artists) have their own organization is totally beside the point, and doesn't necessarily mean that there are no works of Science Fiction or Fantasy that fit into our group. This is like saying that since the Impressionists of America have their own group, no Impressionist work would fit into ours. It should be the subject of the work that is the deciding factor, in my opinion. Michael Whelan's "The Ultimate Sandbox"\(^7\) is an example of a Science Fiction piece that would fit our definition of Space Art. I think Jon Lomberg's "Milky Way Woman"\(^8\) is an example of a kind of Fantasy Art that fits into our definition of Cosmological Art. All work for shows should be judged on a case by case basis in order to avoid becoming overly dogmatic in our definitions.

It is perhaps understandable that someone who joined the IAAA six, seven, or eight years ago, but has been

\(^7\) See Novographics catalog, fall 1991, p.28, this work is also in Art of the Cosmos.--BA

\(^8\) See Visions of Space, David A. Hardy, pp. 148-49.--BA
unable to take an active interest until this past year, may feel that things have not gone exactly as he/she might have wished. I joined the organization because I wanted to go on the Iceland trip, be involved with the Soviet exchange, and learn more about Astronomical Art. I remember asking if I would fit in to the IAAA, since at that time I did not do realism. The response was, "Sure, our members have a lot of different styles." I sent five slides to be reviewed, and was accepted into the group. Later, when the call for entries for the Soviet show went out it read: "Come on you Surrealists, now's your chance!". (I also have been unable to find any evidence all members were Realists from the beginning or from before Kim Poor stepped down in Iceland, contrary to what some believe. Geoff Chandler was a member before the IAAA had a name, for instance.)

From this experience of mine, and from talking to other nonrealists it is obvious that the original group of people in charge are the ones who took in many members whose styles are not realistic. The original founding members reviewed these people's slides\(^9\), took their money and in some cases gave them jobs to do which they have proceeded to do in good faith, while spending large amounts of time, energy and personal funds to do so. For the IAAA to now change its course and dictate that only realism is acceptable is, I believe, unethical.

There is no statement in the Articles of Incorporation or Bylaws of the IAAA that says the members need to remain true to any original intent of founding members. Even so, I question that there was any original intent agreed on by all founding members, since the views of Bill Hartmann, Jon Lomberg, and Ron Miller differ from those of Don Davis and Marilynn Flynn.

Of course I disagree with Marilynn's idea the the IAAA has been ruined. Whether it has or not, I guess depends on your perspective. But one thing is clear to me, you don't take people in, when, as Marilynn says there was; "a point when we decided that maybe we needed to inject new blood into the group by allowing in artists whose techniques and styles were not realistic. We thought it would somehow "freshen up" our own ideas. I don't think any of us ever intended that those other styles actually be incorporated into our definition of space art.", and then decide they don't fit in after all, after letting them do all the work for the past four years!

Also I take issue with the idea that we can't define our terms, that this will only be done by historians. How much time do you need to be able to define terms? Lucien Rudaux, the first genuine astronomical artist in the modern sense, was doing Astronomical Art in the '20s and '30s. That's sixty or seventy years ago! And why shouldn't our group do it? While there have undoubtedly been some artists whose work was never defined by themselves but only later by art historians (Jackson Pollock for instance may not have known he was an Abstract Expressionist), many others formed groups and announced to the world what they were doing so there wouldn't be any confusion about it. Among these groups are the "Pre-Raphaelites" in England, "The Blue Rider" in Germany, and the "Dada" in Zurich, Barcelona, and New York, to name only a few.

When the idea of a "Bonestellian Council" was first introduced I thought it was a good idea. It seemed to me that this could be the 'umbrella group' even though set apart (all the arguing about who should form which group just seems a little silly, like who is going to sit at the 'head' of a table and who on the 'side', which way is up,

\(^9\) See Judy Asbury's statement, p. 26.--BA
after all?). But the more I think about it, the less I like the idea of separating one group from another. It is my feeling that at the very least we should tolerate one another, but the best would be to learn from one another, thereby enriching ourselves and gaining greater depth of understanding for our subjects; astronomy, space exploration and cosmology (which follows on the heels of astronomy like night follows day).

I don't think we have to forgive Pesek his asteroid with ivy10, we can learn from him by seeing things in a new light, not literally, but symbolically. When we contemplate his work, perhaps we think of someday terraforming another planet, or maybe we are simply reminded that space still holds many surprises. There are probably as many interpretations of this work as viewers of it, and this I think, is one of the more profound attributes of fine art, i.e. that it can mean more than one thing, or be viewed on more than one level.

Additionally I feel its important that we confine ourselves to discussing the ideas presented in paintings, and leave member's belief systems alone lest we enter into a kind of "witch hunt" mentality. When Jon Lomberg says: "I feel that many of the people who have tried to enter the field are either totally devoid of the love of the subject or actively hostile to (what they call) "Scientism". I respect this as a point of view, though I don't agree with it, but wonder why people more interested in psychic astral travel want to belong to a group of artists who like to read "Science News". It would be like an atheist applying for the priesthood.", I basically agree with him, but I think we need to be careful here. This is almost like saying that since Christians, Jews and Buddhists are religious people, they shouldn't belong to a group of people who love science. I have talked to a number of people who do very realistic Astronomical and Space paintings, some even quite technical, who keep an open mind about psychic phenomena, and have a keen interest in philosophy. And anyway, we should not be concerned with people's beliefs, religious persuasions, hobbies, reading material, etc., only with their paintings, in my opinion. What does their painting stand for, what is its message?

When I joined the IAAA in 1987, I had taken four popular college level courses in astronomy, and most of my work fell into the Astronomical or Cosmological categories. All of it was painted in a surrealist manner (using Bell's definition of Veristic Surrealism). My "sea shell with galaxy behind, or Galactiscape" was done to illustrate the interesting fact that the same forms seem to appear at different levels in the universe. Some esoteric mystical types have found significance in this, and there is nothing wrong with that. However, there is also an interesting scientific cosmological interpretation called holism, the idea that the universe is basically one interconnected, interrelated organism. In my mind, at least, the same shapes appearing at different levels suggests this idea.

While I still explore cosmological ideas (many of these of necessity must be done in surrealist or conceptual styles - how are you going to show space folding in on itself with realism?), I have become increasingly interested in doing Astronomical and Space Art in a realistic manner. Although Rock and Ball paintings may be overdone, I think there are many other ideas to explore and new compositions to try out. Other members, Bill Hartmann and Arthur Gilbert to name two, have experienced this in the opposite direction; they have come from

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10 See Visions of Space, p144.--BA
Realism to an expressed interest in exploring Surrealism and other nonrealist styles. In other words, we have learned and been inspired by each other!

Far from the idea that the IAAA has somehow been "ruined" by diversity, I hold the opposite view, that it, and by extension ourselves, have been enriched. This is, in my opinion, one of the greatest resources this association can offer its members; technique is the silvery casement of our craft, but inspiration and ideas are the gold.

I think Timothy Ferris, in his new book The Mind's Sky, has elegantly expressed why a bullheaded devotion to realism leads to stagnation. He says, "The enemy of surrealists like Magritte, and of artists generally, is naive realism—the dogged assumption that the human sensory apparatus accurately records the one and only real world, of which the human brain can make but one accurate model. To the naive realist, every view that does not fit the official model is dismissed as imaginary (for those who "know" that they err when they entertain contradictory ideas) or insane (for those who don't). Naive realism is flattering—to set one's self up as the sole judge of what is actual is to taste the delights of godlike power—but it is also stultifying. Once the realist settles on a single representation of reality, the gate slams shut behind him, and he is doomed to live thereafter in the universe to which he has pledged allegiance. This universe may be elegant and adamantine as the Taj Mahal, but it is a prison nonetheless, and the prisoner's spirit, if its still awake, will beat its wings against the bars until it weakens and dies."

Change can be frightening, but it is also a fact of life. Nothing remains the same. Whatever the founding members had in mind, and I think it is obvious from this compilation of letters that their ideas were not identical, as some believe, the IAAA has shed its skin since then. New ideas and fresh blood were infused into the group for reasons that made good sense at the time, and in my mind, at least, make good sense now. But this is not the end, the group will change again and again, moving forward to new workshops, new exchanges, new exhibits and fresh leaders that will lead the IAAA in new directions.

Some of the friends I cherish most I have found within this organization. I have discussed this point with other members and they say the same thing. It is exciting and stimulating to be with people that share the same passion for the workings of the universe, the same love of the night sky, the same thrill of discovering the science behind how things work, the wonder and awe felt while standing face to face with nature's incredible beauty, and at the same time to feel the same need to express themselves with paint and brushes (and sometimes computers!). We may feel various spiritual or religious impulses as we witness the workings of nature, but what binds us together with a common language to speak is the science of astronomy, the technology of space exploration and the science orientated metaphysics of cosmology. These friends are another great resource this organization has to offer its members.

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11 According to Joe Rosen in his book Capricious Cosmos, even the scientific assumptions of the workings of the cosmos are metaphysical since they are completely unverifiable due to the inherent irreproducibility of the universe as a whole. --BA
The obvious place to gain friends and find inspiration are the workshops. New ones are being planed, and there is still plenty of time to sign up. But think about holding one of your own too, maybe something local: contact members who live in your area and go somewhere for a few days to sketch. Or what about somewhere exotic, like Africa? Come on Koos, cook something up for us!

The exhibits we hold are another great resource for us. We are able to exhibit our work as a group in prestigious institutions that would be much more difficult, or impossible, to obtain as individuals. An estimated 250,000 people will view the Art of the Cosmos exhibit at the Hayden Planetarium, and this number will increase as the show moves around the country in the next couple of years. Our shows have a greater appeal because of their diversity, as Bill Hartmann has pointed out.

We are also carving out a niche (which has been facilitated by our books and shows, successful, in part again, because of their diversity) in the History of Art. According to Susan Lawson-Bell, one of the curators of NASM, individual artists often get overlooked or lost in the flow of historical tides, but groups are virtually always remembered.

Well, that's my 2¢ worth. Please write if you have any other comments on the proposed Manifesto. It's time to put it to the vote in a month or so, so again, speak now or forever hold your peace! Send comments to:

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We need scarcely add that the contemplation in natural science of a wider domain than the actual leads to a far better understanding of the actual.

-- A. S. Eddington
This diagram clearly illustrates that all schools of art lead to Rocks & Balls.

- Pierre Cardin
- Space Art
- Rintstone
- Interstate Highways
- 5-Hour Blue Light Special
- Original Oil Paintings
- Unicorns
- Visceral Neo-Nazi Cubism
- Byzantine Madonna Art
- Hudson River School
- Anasazi Cave Moon Paintings

The "K-R" Movies

Science Fiction/Pulp