



The Creative Edge

VALLEY ARTISTS GUILD

Volume II

Issue 4

April 2012

Culture into Art: Norland Téllez and Mayan Mythology

by John Paul Thornton

Art, mythology, philosophy, and desire.... We all dream of our art being able to express something of ourselves, to express our own personal stories. But artist Norland Téllez dreams of expressing something beyond himself: stories and mythologies of the ancient Mayans. Stories and mythology have always played some role in the visual arts worldwide, with personal stories often reflections of greater archetypal tales. Téllez is making his dream into a reality, one compelling painting after another.



Nicaraguan-born Téllez emigrated to the U.S. as a teenager, and his artistic talents blossomed. His life changed forever when his father (also a painter) tossed him a copy of the Quiché-Mayan *Popol Vuh*. While reading it, Téllez was awakened to a sense of connectedness to incredible worlds of imagination, psychology, and cultural definition. His response to this awakening is creating paintings that express characters and ideas in the ancient text.

Téllez studied film, animation, classical drawing, and painting at Cal Arts. He worked in the entertainment industry as an animator and concept designer, and as a teacher. His artistic life took a turn as he became drawn more and more into art and education.



Yet his greatest achievement thus far is to have become an authority on one of the most fantastically profound books of epic mythology in human history. Fascinated by philosophy, depth psychology, and Mayan

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Calendar

Gold Medal Exhibition

ClosesFriday, April 6
Venice Arts Gallery, 1702 Lincoln Blvd., Venice

Gold Medal Exhibition

Artwork Pick-upSaturday, April 7
10 a.m.-12 noon, Venice Arts Gallery

Board MeetingWednesday, April 11
7 p.m., home of Marie Thomas

Museum TripSunday, April 22
LACMA, 5905 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles

Summer Exhibition

Entry DeadlineFriday, May 4

General MeetingTuesday, May 22
7 p.m., \$5 members, \$8 guests; Encino
Community Ctr., 4935 Balboa Blvd., Encino
Presentation: Norland Téllez

Summer Exhibition at Whites Gallery

OpensSunday, June 3

Small Works Exhibit at Modest Fly Gallery

Entry DeadlineFriday, October 12

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Newsletter

Karen Robbins

President's Message

Popular Trends in Artistic Culture

In 1928, Warner Brothers released the first all-dialog film with sound titled *Lights of New York*, and the talkies were born. In 2012, the Oscar for Best Picture went to a silent film about an actor in the silent-film era. The Academy found *The Artist* novel and refreshing, as well as a charming story about early Hollywood. Devoid of all the special effects that modern cinema is capable of, and not even a dialog track throughout, *The Artist* managed to win five Oscars at the Academy Awards this year.

The exhibition at the Weisman Museum of Art, The Epic and the Exotic, has on display works by Sir Lawrence Alma-Tadema. He was known for paintings of Classical antiquity with Oriental themes. During his lifetime (1836-1912) he was admired for his superb draftsmanship and elaborate sets. His work was very popular and he was considered the most successful painter of the Victorian era.

After Alma-Tadema died, and the Victorian era ended, his marketability collapsed. Paintings that once would have sold for £10,000 were practically impossible to sell at all. Some of his paintings could have been purchased for as little as £20. He was declared by the art critic John Ruskin as the worst painter of the 19th century. His work was consigned to relative obscurity for many years.

In May 2011, Alma-Tadema's work reached prices normally seen only for Picasso or Van Gogh. *The Finding of Moses* sold at Sotheby's New York for \$35 million.

I find these two stories interesting because they demonstrate how the value of art is determined by the popular trends of culture. We live in a post-modern era where modern galleries value innovation.

The Artist demonstrates that what has been done before can eventually be considered new again and fresh. We artists can borrow from the past and recycle what we like and give it our own interpretation. We don't always have to be making a new invention to be considered relevant or excellent.



—Teri Starkweather

Membership Roster to go Online

Valley Artists Guild wants to allow all members to communicate more easily. The entire VAG membership roster will be put on the VAG website, with password protection for access by members only. The roster will be a PDF file, which can be downloaded and printed out. The access password will be sent to only those members whose 2012 dues are paid. Members' name, address, phone number, and e-mail address will be listed. Members without e-mail will receive a copy by postal mail.

OPT-OUT OPTION

If you do not want all or part of your contact information listed, let Membership Chair Ken Ronney know; and either your entire listing or selected information will be deleted from the published roster. Send your opt-out request by May 1, 2012, to kronney@aol.com, or to the address or phone number below.

If you have not renewed your membership for 2012, your name will not be on the roster. Renewal can still be made by sending your check for \$45.00 to Ken Ronney, VAG Membership Chair, 7357 Hesperia Ave, Reseda, CA 91335. If you are not sure whether or not you have renewed, call Ken at 818-996-1630.

Donors Acknowledged for Generosity to VAG

Valley Artists Guild wishes to thank all of our generous donors for our Gold Medal and Summer exhibitions, and encourages all of our members to support them.

Carter Sexton Artist's Materials	www.cartersexton.com
Advanced Photo Lab	www.advancedphotolab.com
Canvas Peddler	818-985-8830
Golden Artist Colors, Inc.	www.goldenpaints.com
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Monarch Art & Frame, Inc.	818-373-6180
Ampersand Art Supply	www.ampersandart.com
RayMar Art, Inc.	www.raymarart.com
Canson, Inc.	www.cansonstudio.com
Creative Alliance	ccpvideos.com

Kathi Flood Makes Social Commentary with Guerilla Art

by Joy Rotblatt

Members of VAG and guests were treated to a talk, slide show, methods, techniques, materials, and the unique points of view of Kathi Flood. My head is still swimming. Kathi's guerilla-style art is sociological, putting together room-sized installations, series of wall pieces, and stuffed mannequins to make statements about our lives. Her sense of humor and her ability to communicate with her audience boggles the mind. She incorporates layers of complex meaning in each of the pieces in her series, often from differing points of view. A sense of randomness permeates her art—humorous, cynical, dry comments on our complex world. Kathi holds up a mirror to her audience so that they may be able to comprehend their own life and culture.

The use of discarded materials, junk or detritus to so many of us, is often a beginning point for Kathi. Her comments on consumerism, war, gender, and prosthetics for those persons disfigured in some way are both biting and funny. She utilizes the drawing capabilities of the printmaking process often in repetition on these images. The prints appear multiple times alongside the cast-off junk she finds in streets and gutters. Her intention is to draw our attention to our lives, to make some sense out of the complexity of our world, and to help us let go of our pretensions.



Gold Medal Exhibition Winners Chosen

by Terry Romero Paul

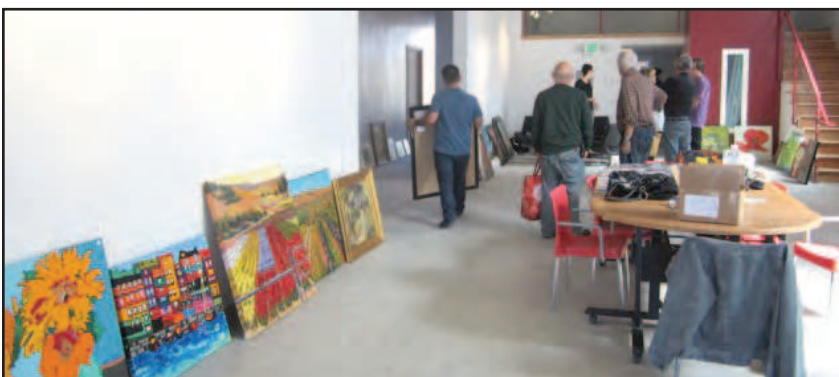
Take-in for the 2012 Gold Medal Exhibition began at 10 a.m. on a beautiful Sunday morning in Venice. The newly expanding rental gallery of the Venice Arts Gallery shimmered beautifully with sunlight flowing in. The take-in was quite remarkable and all the volunteers who stepped up to help, board and non-board members, were a great help. The juror, Mark Wood, loved the entire body of artwork and saw merit in all levels of our members. He patiently studied all the artwork and had the extreme difficulty of scaling down the exhibition for the gallery. Congratulations to all who participated, as well as the lucky winners.

Top award winners are: Gold Medal: Debra Hintz for *Dead of Winter*; 1st Place: Otto Sturcke for *The Little Things*; 2nd Place: Trice Tolle for *Rows Upon Rows*; and 3rd Place: Irina Dzhalyants for *Joy to the World*.

Valley Artists Guild wishes to thank our wonderful sponsors for their generous donations that enabled us to have merchandise awards. The merchandise award recipients chosen by the juror were: Beth Summers for *Fantasy Forest*, Gregory Radionov for *Venice Dervish*, Cheryl Goettmoeller for *Evanescences of Song*, Terry Romero Paul for *Oranges and Wine*, Laurie Plevin for *Street Games*, and Antonio Pelayo for *La Villa*. Please see the list of donors who have generously given us merchandise for our Gold Medal and Summer exhibitions.

The reception for this fabulous exhibition was Saturday, March 10 from 5 to 8 p.m. There was an exciting buzz throughout the gallery. The event was very well attended. All through the evening there were groups of people coming and going. The artwork looked lovely and the guests were enthralled with the gallery. There was an enticing spread of food and drink, thanks to the diligent work of Barbara Schwartz, who also sold the first art piece. Congratulations Barbara! The award ceremony commenced at 7 p.m. It was a team effort and we are grateful to all the people that made this event a huge success.





Page 4, top: Gold Medal winner *Dead of Winter* by Debra Hintz; bottom: 1st Place winner *The Little Things* by Otto Sturcke. This page, from top, left to right: Second Place winner *Rows Upon Rows* by Trice Tolle; 3rd Place winner *Joy to the World* by Irina Dzhalyants; award winners, left to right: Gregory Radionov, Ilsa Dattinger, Otto Sturcke, Debra Hintz, Cheryl Goettemoeller, Laurie Plevin, Antonio Pelayo, Beth Summers, Trice Tolle, and Irina Dzhalyants (not shown: Terry Romero Paul and Harriette Kahn); artworks set out for jurying on take-in day at Venice Arts Gallery.

The Digital Art of Photographing Your Artwork

by Donna Geist Buch

Photographing your artwork is a must for today's artists. It is not only a record of your artwork, but it is crucial for submission to galleries and exhibitions. Your artwork is your calling card. Many galleries only look at digital images, they do not look at actual artwork.

Basic guidelines for your photographed artwork are:

1. Images should have proper representation of actual color.
2. Proper light exposure is critical when photographing.
3. Images should be lined up properly, so that square or rectangular artwork remains square or rectangular in the image.
4. Insignificant background behind the artwork should be cropped out.

Many upcoming exhibitions will require either photographs or .jpeg images, especially because of travel distance to galleries. It is important to be prepared ahead of time. If you are looking for a photographer, feel free to call a board member who may be able to assist you in finding a photographer. If you have a digital image but are unable to burn a disc, there are several cost-effective places that will burn a disc for you, such as Costco or Walgreens.

Please contact one of the board members if you are interested in having a class. If enough members are interested in having a class organized to learn the process of burning a disc, we will create a workshop for that purpose.

Art Studio Secrets Taking Care of #1

by Marjorie Sarnat

In a painting, it's composition that grabs attention first. It's more powerful than content for attracting the eye, so the overall design of your surface can make or break your painting. When the composition works—color, subject matter, and craftsmanship are well showcased.



PATTERNS

The overall pattern of light and dark shapes is the underpinning of your painting. To make a subject eye-catching create an exciting light and dark pattern with a focal point. Do small sketches of light-dark patterns as explorations and keep them as reference for future artworks.

UNITY WITH VARIETY

Good design is achieved through a balance of unity with variety. Unity is achieved through repetition; variety is achieved through differences. A painting with too much repetition is boring; a painting teeming with different elements is overwhelming.

THUMBNAIL TEMPLATES

Cut rectangular templates from card stock in reduced proportion to your canvas. For example, if your canvas is 16" x 20" cut a 2" x 2½" template. To determine dimensions look online or use a proportion wheel. Make separate templates labeled with corresponding canvas sizes. These are handy when creating thumbnails proportionate to your final painting.

FINDING HIDDEN MASTERPIECES

Make a "discovery" viewfinder by cutting a tiny rectangle in the center of an index card. Place the opening over photos, prints, and more to find amazing hidden compositions for new paintings, both abstract and representational.

Sometimes a single rule of thumb or a good tool is just what you need to get your creativity flowing.

Adapted from Marjorie Sarnat's book, 151 Effective and Extraordinary Art Studio Secrets to be published in 2012. Marjorie's current book, 151 Uncommon and Amazing Art Studio Secrets, is available in paperback on amazon.com and barnesandnoble.com. For artists not afraid to drip paint on their e-book readers, look for it on the Kindle, Nook, and iTunes bookstores.

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Reach over 150 VAG member artists, and their colleagues, friends, and associates, by promoting your creative products and services here! It's easy and inexpensive. Contact Trice Tolle at 818-345-1671 or tricetolle@aol.com.

Meeting Fees Reduced

The VAG Board of Directors has approved a reduction in the suggested donation fee for members at the General Membership meetings. The new suggested donation is \$5.00 for members, reduced from \$7.00. Guest donations remain \$8.00.

The Creative Edge Wants Your Ideas

Do you know a great quote about art or a quote by an artist? Where do you find artistic inspiration? Has a VAG member inspired you? Can you review an art book or exhibit, or write a how-to article about an art technique, method, or material? Tell us! The **deadline is May 8** for the June issue. Send submissions to VAG newsletter liaison Cat van der Heiden at cvanderheiden@att.net.

Mini-Show Winners



Congratulations to the winners of the February mini-show. Left to right: Antonio Pelayo, second place; Yona Rapoport, first place; Norm Beal, third place.

Norland Téllez, continued from page 1

mythology, he earned a master's degree in mythology. Recipient of a Joseph Campbell grant, he began doctoral study of the *Popol Vuh* and focused all his artistic and intellectual energy on the shamanic or depth-mythological elucidation of this great epic work of the Maya imagination.

Be prepared for a mind-expanding evening as Norland Téllez shares his vibrant paintings, opens our consciousness to the remarkable Mayan text that inspired them, and challenges us to consider how we too might tap into the stories of our own cultural ancestry that call us from within.

Karen Robbins also contributed to this article.

*It is often genius that spoils
a work of art.*

—Oscar Wilde

Summer Exhibition Set for Whites Gallery

by Donna Geist Buch

Valley Artists Guild holds its Summer Exhibition at Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery throughout the month of June. The gallery, located at 2414 Honolulu Avenue in Montrose, features exhibitions spotlighting the creative works of local and international artists. Nestled in the charming town of Montrose, Whites offers the most complete and comprehensive fine art framing and restoration services in the San Gabriel Valley. Whites has been serving the community since 1944; and now, with Miguel Perez as proprietor, it continues to be at the heart of what makes Montrose an enchanting and vibrant place to visit.

The juror for this exhibition is Gerald Brommer, a distinguished artist, instructor, and mentor to many artists. Gerald has exhibited in more than 300 solo and group exhibitions throughout the United States and abroad during his illustrious fine art career. His work is represented in over 300 private and corporate collections worldwide. He is a life member and past president of the National Watercolor Society, and a member of the West Coast Watercolor Society and National Arts Club. His biography is included in *Who's Who in American Art*, *Who's Who in the West*, *Contemporary Authors*, and the *International Who's Who of Contemporary Achievement*.

Entry and jurying for this exhibition will be by photograph. Submission deadline is May 4, 2012. Prospectus and take-in forms are attached to this newsletter.

The Valley Artists Guild

Summer Exhibition at Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery

RULES OF ENTRY

ELIGIBILITY: Open to all VAG Exhibiting members, whose dues are current. All media are eligible except video, film, photography and giclees.

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY: A maximum of two entries per artist. Entries must be recent original works. No class or critique work done under the guidance of an instructor is eligible.

1. Entries must not have been exhibited in a previous VAG show and must be suitable for viewers of all ages.
2. Maximum size acceptable is 30" x 30" including frame. Work must be dry, appropriately framed and ready to hang. Screw-eyes and wire must be attached for hanging with the wire peaking at approximately 2 inches below the top of the frame. Works using hanging brackets will not be accepted if over 14". Sculptures have their own self-supporting pedestals. All two dimensional work must be properly framed and under Plexiglas. Glass is acceptable for pastels only. Unframed canvas must have edges painted.
3. Entries must have name, title, size, prices and medium printed legibly on the back top corner of the work. Entry forms should be completed prior to take-in.
4. Entries **cannot** be removed from a show prior to its closing. Early removal of any work may result in the artist's disqualification from subsequent shows.

LIABILITY: The Valley Artists Guild and Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery assume no responsibility for loss, theft, damage or destruction of entries during exhibition. All entries will be handled with the utmost of care.

SALES: No changes in price from entry form will be allowed. All art must be available for purchase. A 35% commission will be retained by Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery on sales.

FEES: \$30 for one or two entries. Checks must be made out to the Valley Artists Guild and presented with your work. All entry fees are non-refundable regardless of acceptance into exhibition.

AWARDS: 1st Place \$200, 2nd Place \$150, 3rd Place \$100 and Merchandise awards

ENTRY PROCEDURE:

*Selections will be made by photographs.

*Submit up to 2 artworks.

*Enclose a color photo of each entry on a 8.5" by 11" letter size paper. One entry per page.

*On back of Photo, include entry letter (A,B), title, media, size and price. **(No Names on photos or back)**

*2 photos may be included for each 3 dimensional work.

*Photos will not be mailed back, but can be picked up if desired, at the next VAG general meeting.

JUROR: **Gerald Brommer** is a professional artist, teacher and mentor. He has exhibited throughout the United States and abroad.

Entry Check List:

- \$30 check payable to VAG
- Photos with entry information on back
- Completed entry and notification form
- Self Addressed Stamped Envelope
if no email address (for notification card)

SEND ENTRIES TO:

VAG Summer Exhibition
% Marian Fortunati, Exhibit Chair
3944 Rock Hampton Dr.
Tarzana, CA 91356

	May 4, 2012	Deadline for Images
	May 18, 2012	Notification of accepted work
	June 1, 2012 3 pm to 6 pm	Delivery of Accepted Artwork
	June 3, 2012	Show opens
	June 9, 2012	Reception: 2pm to 5pm
	June 29, 2012 2pm to 5pm	Show closes; Pick up works

DELIVER ACCEPTED ARTWORK TO: Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery
2414 Honolulu Ave., Montrose, CA 91020

PICK-UP: Friday, June 29, 2012, 2 – 5 pm. Works left beyond the scheduled time will be subject to storage fees.



Summer Exhibition at Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery

Entry and Notification Form

Agreement: Submission of these artworks if accepted by the Juror, shall constitute an agreement on the part of the artist to comply with the conditions in this prospectus.

Artist _____ Artist's Signature _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ E-mail address _____

Artwork Title: _____ HxW(xD): _____

A _____ Medium _____ Size _____ Price _____

B _____ Medium _____ Size _____ Price _____

-----Do Not Cut Here-----

NOTIFICATION CARD –

Valley Artists Guild Summer Exhibition at Whites Art, Framing & Restoration Gallery: June 3–June 29, 2012

Artist _____

Artwork Title:

A _____ Selected Not Selected

B _____ Selected Not Selected

SEND ENTRIES TO:
VAG Summer Exhibition
% Marian Fortunati, Exhibit Chair
3944 Rock Hampton Dr.
Tarzana, CA 91356

Attach to left upper back of painting

Valley Artists Guild

Artist _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Price _____

Title _____

Media _____ Size _____
(HxW)

do not separate - take in committee cut here

Valley Artists Guild Entry (Index)

Artist _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Price _____

Title _____

Media _____ Size _____

Liability: By signing the entry form, the artist agrees to release VAG, its officers, members, and all organizations, agents and personnel from liability for loss, theft or damage to art works the artist have entered into VAG shows

Signature _____

Attach to left upper back of painting

Valley Artists Guild

Artist _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Price _____

Title _____

Media _____ Size _____
(HxW)

do not separate - take in committee cut here

Valley Artists Guild Entry (Index)

Artist _____

Address _____

City _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Price _____

Title _____

Media _____ Size _____

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Signature _____