

Open Studios of Washington County, NY

2009 Artist Bios

JOAN DUFF-BOHRER, painter

"The imagery in my paintings is developed by layering drawings of objects selected for their unusual shapes. These layers are built up and scraped away until the image emerges. Color is important. Undoubtedly the unconscious plays a role. My current series involves birds and cages."

Joan Duff-Bohrer's work features strong color and a loose painterly style. Though considered a colorist, Duff-Bohrer favors random drawing which introduces surprises and chance associations in order to discover her subject. Duff-Bohrer's philosophy is mirrored in Georgia O'Keefe's quote: "I paint to know what I think".

Joan Duff-Bohrer's painting career, spanning over 50 years, is influenced by ideas in politics, theater, dance, literature and the New York City galleries and museums. Her work has been displayed through the years at the Hyde, Mohawk Regional, and NY. State Biennial, Munson Williams Proctor Museum, and in Florida at the major tent shows in Tampa and St. Petersburg. Her studies include degrees from Bucknell and Rutgers Universities and study at Skidmore College. Her career has been one of constant searching for ways to express observed experience.

ED HEPP, carver

"My rocking horses and reproductions, sculpted in the tradition of the master carvers of the carousel, are usable heirlooms that can be passed down from generation to generation. It's my small way of perpetuating the romance of the carousel horse."

Inspired by the great Carousel Masters, Ed Hepp creates magnificent hand-carved carousel-style rocking horses that are art sculptures as well as elegant, functional toys for children. Hepp's work is influenced by the legendary carvers who came to this country in the late 1800's and created the beautiful carousels that we all remember and love.

Ed Hepp's first rocking horse was carved for the grandchild of his sister, who had passed. He wanted to do something special in his sister's memory. That was the start. This was an entirely new medium for him. After the first horse was shown there was a lot of interest. So he started up Cambridge Rocking Horses and decided that each horse would be unique, one of a kind and numbered. Some are commissioned and the buyer has particular requests. He says it is very challenging and rewarding when he can take a client's idea and bring it to reality. The rocking horses are inspired by the master carvers of the carousel era. Hepp uses the wood from his property. Basswood, maple, poplar. Takes as long to paint as it does to carve the horses. Traveled to Switzerland to visit the Swiss carvers and purchased most of his carving tools from them. "You gotta have the right tools!" With each horse he is striving to improve his technique and learn from the carousel carvers like Muller, Dentzel, Loeff and many more.

Hepp has sold through out this country and as far as the Philippines. Galleries and shows include: Saratoga Racing Museum, Saratoga, NY, Southern Vermont Art Center, Manchester, VT, V Gallery Arts, Woodstock, VT, Valley Artisan Market, Cambridge, NY, Adirondack Craft Center, Lake Placid, NY, North Eastern Woodworkers Assn. NY.

SERENA KOVALOSKY, organic sculptor

"The pristine wilderness of the Adirondack Mountains provides the inspiration for much of my work. I am most at home in the woods, so I create objects that look as though they might have been found in an ancient forest, and at the same time possess a contemporary sophistication. It's my way of bringing the primal form into everyday life."

Serena Kovalosky's sculptures and vessels are made from heirloom quality organic gourds. Pushing the boundaries of traditional gourdwork, Kovalosky uses detailed carving, unique pyroengraving, and gold alloy gilding to bring these primal forms into the contemporary realm where they can be enjoyed as fine artwork in rustic as well as modern settings.

Serena Kovalosky spent 18 years in the travel industry before retiring her backpack to focus on her artistic talents. Moving to Canada in 1993, she rented a loft in Montreal's art district, and spent the next decade studying with professional artists in a variety of disciplines and researching tribal and traditional folk art. She found herself continually drawn towards three-dimensional work using natural materials, influenced by the lacquered and carved gourd pottery of Ojima, Mexico and African tribal sculpture. Her studies also led her to London, England to learn the intricate art of gilding with gold, which she uses in almost all of her work. In 2004, Kovalosky returned to her native homeland in the foothills of New York's Adirondack Mountains, and began creating a new body of work that reflects the organic forms, natural textures and earthy tones of the woodlands of the Northeast.

Serena Kovalosky has exhibited her work in fine art galleries as well as alternative venues throughout the northeast U.S. & Canada. She was commissioned to create an installation for the *International Festival for Humanity* in Montreal and the New York Farm Bureau's *Agriculture to Art* exhibit at The Egg Performing Art Center in Albany, New York. Kovalosky's artwork and philosophy have been the subject of television documentaries on Canada's Life Channel and Quebec's Canal Vie, as well as numerous articles. In addition to maintaining her studio practice, Kovalosky has recently picked up her backpack once again to work on a book on cultural tourism.

JERI MACDONALD, painter

"As a painter, what I love most is the paint itself, its physicality. My work is not the subject per se, but how the layered transparencies break the space up into light, line, color and areas of paint. I like to come in close on the glass to push the focus more onto the paint and the abstract qualities of the space."

Jeri Macdonald is a native of Cambridge, NY, having been born and residing there much of her life. She received her BFA in 1976 from Windham College in Putney, VT. While at Windham, she spent a semester in Aix en Provence studying Romanesque architecture and concentrating in studio art drawing and painting. After traveling around the country for a few years she started her family and returned to Cambridge in 1980. In 1985 she set up her studio in Varak Park where she painted until moving to her new space in her Center Cambridge home in 2008.

Over the years Macdonald has worked in various media, pastel, watercolor, ceramics and wood. But oil paint has always been her first love. Just as her mediums have changed over the years, so has her subject matter. In the late 80's and early 90's, highways and family photos were her focus and later, glassware and dishes. Over the past year, Macdonald had been painting black-and-white portraits of friends and family on a 12"x12" format. Like her still-lives, these are also done in a close-up and intimate perspective. This same format (close-up and intimate) is one she uses when painting her dog portrait commissions. Whatever the subject matter, her primary focus is always light and the creation of illusion. She has shown her work in many local venues, including the Valley Artisans Market as well as the Albany Center Gallery, Larac, the Southern Vermont Arts Center, and the Mohawk/Hudson Regional Exhibit.

ADRIANO MANOCCHIA, painter

"My paintings are my emotions; I paint what attracts me. While painting places I've observed, I enhance my images through compositional means, bringing them closer to the ideals upheld in a bygone age of painting."

Adriano Manocchia paints in a traditional, realistic method using oil on board. "Manocchia's unique style of contemporary realism takes the viewer vicariously into his 'waterscapes'... He has created a niche all his own in American Sporting Art,... His gift of conveying the water's magic through his art is making a meaningful contribution to today's art scene." - John F. Apgar, J.N. Bartfield Galleries, NYC

Born in New York in 1951, **Adriano Manocchia** received his Bachelors Degree from Pace University in New York City. After graduating, Adriano spent twelve years as a photojournalist traveling the world to cover news events. In 1984, he turned his attention to painting and quickly received the attention of major collectors and art critics worldwide. A number of awards and special projects marked his recognition in the art field as a foremost contemporary artist. He is represented by prestigious galleries from New York City to Colorado. For a number of years he has also enjoyed his role as art professor at Long Island University.

Adriano currently resides in Cambridge, New York, where he and his family have found a most congenial environment, leaving the hectic city life behind, in a picturesque community rich in art history. Now Adriano has only to look outside his studio window or along the private stretch of rivers on his property to find inspiration for his art.

VIRGINIA McNEICE, painter

"I am fascinated by the shape of the landscape: how it changes from moment to moment, the putting of one color against another, the darkness against the light, and then to make it all work together."

Intense light and color, inspired by the seasonal changes of the pastures, croplands and the simple barn shapes of Washington County are the hallmarks of Virginia McNeice's paintings in pastel and oil. Working from her own photographs in the studio or in the fields surrounding her farm, she will often paint the same subject at different times of day or in different seasons.

Virginia McNeice is a landscape painter who works in both Pastels and oils. She has a BFA from Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York and has also studied at the Art Students League in New York City, SUNY Albany and Skidmore College. While at Pratt, she worked in the Art & Exhibition Depart of the Museum of Natural History.

McNeice's work is in numerous private and corporate collections such as Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Pepsi Cola Corporation, The Office of New York State Comptroller and Bellvue Women's Hospital in Schenectady, New York. She is a member of the Guild of Adirondack Artiss and the Valley Artisans Cooperative Gallery in Cambridge, New York. Her work is exhibited at the Valley Artisans Gallery, the Furchgotte/Sourdiffe Gallery in Shelburne, VT, the Wright Gallery in Wilmington, VT, and this summer at the Mimosa Gallery in Saratoga Springs, NY.

WILL MOSES, painter

"My paintings are often times a patchwork of color and activity, woven together to depict scenes of an earlier time when life was simpler and tradition and community were the anchor bolts of society. I have been painting most of my life and it seems these scenes of old time rural life are what I am best known for."

Will Moses creates oil paintings that reflect the beauty of a bygone era with a masterful use of color and detail. His paintings tell stories depicted in delightful miniature worlds, filled with folks who have stepped out of the past to charm us with their simple everyday pastimes and lives.

Will Moses continues to carry on the family tradition made so famous by his great-grandmother, Grandma Moses. Raised in Eagle Bridge, NY, where the Moses family has long made its home, Will was first encouraged to paint by his grandfather, Forrest K. Moses, a well-known painter in his own right and the son of Grandma Moses. As a young boy, working alongside his Grandfather, Will developed his own unique style of folk art, depicting the sights and happenings of days long ago. Continuing to teach himself, Will has developed a sharp-edged focus capturing minute detail with a wonderful and masterful use of color. Wry humor and a story in every painting are all trademarks of Will's work that have gained him an international reputation as one of today's leading folk artists.

Will's art has become a part of many collections including The White House, The Smithsonian Institution, The New York State Museum, The Bob Hope Collection, The Herrick Collection, The Bennington Museum and The J. M. Smucker Collection. He has also recently exhibited at The Everson Museum, The Bennington Museum, North Shore Art Gallery, Mazza Museum and The President Ford and The President Reagan Libraries. Will also has eight wonderfully illustrated children's books to his credit, with a ninth in progress, all of which explains why Will Moses art continues to be enjoyed by collectors the world over.

Will and his wife Sharon live with their three children on the Moses Homestead in Eagle Bridge, NY, where Will's studio and Mt. Nebo Gallery are situated in a restored barn on the property. When not painting, Will tends to the animals on their small farm, where the Moses' also make delicious maple syrup. Will is a Critical Care EMT and volunteers quite a bit of his time to a local rescue squad and also serves on various committees and boards.

ANASTASIA LEE NUTE, textile artist & sculptor

"Color has always been my driving passion in life. I am infinitely intrigued with the myriad complexities of color and pattern with texture. I am often stimulated by what has come before (the previous mark) which might shift me into another, unexpected direction. It is in the discovery of "what if" and the willingness to take risks that magic happens."

Coming from a painter's background, Anastasia Nute is infinitely intrigued with the myriad complexities of color and pattern with texture. Her recent foray into the world of bas-relief sculpture affords her an opportunity for similar observations and explorations.

Self taught fiber artist, sculptor, exhibiting nationally since 1979, **Anastasia Nute** has been exploring color on fabric for more than 30 years. She began weaving in 1995 in search of more texture in her work. It is an evolutionary process, beginning with white yarn (silk). Color has always been her driving passion in life. Coming from a painter's background, Nute is infinitely intrigued with the myriad complexities of color and pattern with texture in a woven textile. Her recent foray into the world of bas-relief sculpture affords her an opportunity for similar observations and explorations. As each piece evolves on a unique journey of its own, she strives for a nourishing aesthetic and spiritual connection.

LESLIE PARKE, painter

"There is an innate pleasure in creating resemblance. Translucence, transparency, reflection are all qualities that add to your bag of tricks. I love the battle that ensues between the concrete surface of the canvas loaded with blobs of paint and the diaphanous effects brought about by illusion."

Leslie Parke is in a relentless pursuit of painting light effects: light reflections, transparencies, translucencies, glitter, sparkle, shimmer. How light affects natural surfaces, such as flowers, shells and water; and artificial surfaces, such as patent leather, foil, Mylar, transparent ribbons, glass, crystal, and silver. "The more elusive and impossible the image is to paint the more it interests me".

Leslie Parke has a BA and MA from Bennington College. She received the Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest grant to be an artist-in-residence at the Claude Monet Foundation in Giverny, France, and the George Sugarman Foundation Grant, among others. She has exhibited at several museums including the Williams College Museum of Art, the Museum of the Southwest, Midland, Texas, the Fernbank Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, Milwaukee Art Museum, Wisconsin and the Museo de Arte Moderno in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Her work is in numerous corporate collections. She is currently exhibiting her paintings in Toronto, Canada and San Diego.

LESLIE ANNE PECK, painter

"The farm animals that dot the luscious landscapes inspire me to no end. I love showcasing the nobleness of each creature and the farmlands that rival any I've seen in Tuscany. My hope is to inspire an appreciation of the often unnoticed physical complexity in animals and the farms that are the jewels of this region. I try to focus a little more deeply on the attitude and expression of the animal's personality."

Leslie Anne Peck began her artistic career as a freelance illustrator for romance book covers. While still enjoying a tremendous success in the publishing field, Peck's love for portraiture of people and animals has found its expression in the oil paintings she now masterfully creates. Her favorite subject for paintings has become the farm animals from the countryside surrounding her studio.

Leslie Anne Peck is a native of Buffalo, New York. She lived there until she moved to New York City to attend the Fashion Institute of Technology where she received her Bachelors degree in fine art. In 1987, Peck spent a year studying art in Italy at the Scuola di Lorenzo De Medici in Florence and subsequently apprenticed in Rome with renowned artist Alessandro Biffignandi. Peck began a freelance career in romance book cover illustration in 1988. Her career took off in romance painting and she has enjoyed more than two decades of success painting in that genre. After marrying and moving to the scenic Saratoga Springs area of New York, Peck has been inspired by her surroundings and has further expanded her repertoire with an intense love and study of farm animals and their environment. Using her extensive background in portrait painting, Peck is able to create classic, yet bold portraits of these beautiful animals which are packed with a stately ambiance. Utilizing strong contrasts in the light and shadow, the results are figures that seem to jump off the canvas.

Peck's work has been shown in solo shows and numerous group shows throughout the region. She has participated in several juried shows this part year and also received an award at the prestigious Mohawk/Hudson Regional Art Exhibit.

GYULA VAROSY, sculptor

"As wood is basic, so is the method of shaping. Carving, with a chisel and mallet, is a deliberate and slow process: its roots are ancient, the method manual. My interest lies in the man-made object, with its tactile and worked surfaces bearing the marks of tools employed in the carving battle."

Born in Hungary, **Gyula Varosy** came to the USA in 1957. He obtained BArch and MArch degrees in Architecture from Pratt Institute and Harvard University. He spent a year in Germany on a Fulbright Fellowship, followed by some travel in Europe and brief teaching afterwards. Settling in New York City, Varosy worked in architecture as an individual practitioner and consultant, but at the same time set up a studio to draw and sculpt. Following his marriage to Hannie and the birth of two daughters, the Varosys moved to the serene, idyllic setting of upstate NY in Greenwich.

The process of renovating an unused and rundown 19th century barn on the newly acquired property into an office/studio/workshop was the initiation to a new artistic involvement. The old barn, in addition to the usual junk, had its share of derelict treasures. Old building materials and components - boards and beams, windows and doors, knobs and latches. Not in sets, not by the dozen, but unique, special items of quality and history. Waiting for a new context. It was this recognition that motivated to design and build one of a kind furniture, utilizing reclaimed material. The board may be cracked, but the color and grain could not be matched, for the tree it came from sprouted over 300 years ago: there may be nail holes and marks on it, but somebody worked it 150 years ago, and the slight sag or warp of an old door is forgiven. The intent at the same time was not historical reproduction in any way, but the creation of unique pieces, built with a personal construction method and aesthetic vocabulary. Like sculptures...

This was the beginning of a new focus on sculpture. With wood as the major material. A block of wood and a chisel. To find out if there is anything inside...Sisyphus was in some, other images and figures from mythology in others. And horses, with riders and without. And just figures.... The rest of the wood turns into chips on the floor, ending up in the stove. Some works are cast in bronze. Some were done in plaster 30 years ago, some small pieces in wax recently. Varosy does all the finishing work on the bronzes, chasing and patinas.

Gyula Varosy's work is exhibited at various New York City and upstate galleries.

HANNIE EISMA VAROSY, mixed media artist

"I am inspired by much, by my family, friends and students. By what they say and think. I am inspired by nature, by inanimate things and shapes, by concepts, by what goes on in the world, by Life. I say: "It is always busy in my head". I try to practice silence, and "distill " my topics, as they surface spontaneously."

Hannie Eisma Varosy works in a variety of media, influenced by her many years of teaching art where looking for possibilities in different materials has become part of her thought process. Inspiration often comes through Varosy's work with developmentally disabled adults and area senior citizens, where she will take an object, some material, a box, an old cup, something that might be worthless to others....and come up with a possibility for a piece of artwork.

Varosy sometimes creates "For Herself " as she calls it, working in pastel and oil on old boards or linen or very often with paper , which gets printed and used in collages or "scenes". Other times, she creates "With others in mind", where she responds to what she sees around her to make a project or plan a class, versus planning a piece beforehand, buying the required materials and then executing it . Very often, Varosy uses supplies that have had another life before the one she is creating.

In this year's Open Studios, visitors to her gallery will enjoy her collection of boxes: Some are created with metal scenes inside from recycled cans and olive oil containers, often depicting whimsical interpretations of how Varosy sees her world. There is also a series of cigar boxes with painted lids, and some very practical unusual candleholders.

Varosy also draws and paints, and pieces of fabric or clothing are often her subject. They bring up associations for her, of another time perhaps, vague memories of fulfillment and nostalgia.

Hannie Varosy is originally from the Netherlands, and now lives in Greenwich with her husband, sculptor Gyula Varosy. She is currently making a trail in the woods behind the new barn her husband Gyula designed, where visitors to the gallery can take a short walk over the creek, past diverse sculptures of branches, serving as markers that point out the trail.