

# FUSEDChicago Guest Blog Posts

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Blog posts by Maike van Wijk for the now defunct [www.FUSEDChicago.org](http://www.FUSEDChicago.org) web site:

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# FUSEDChicago Members Teach at EncaustiCamp

*Spring 2012*

If you are looking for a summer retreat and love encaustics, EncaustiCamp may be the place for you. Founded by EncaustiKits and EncaustiCamp developer Patricia Baldwin Seggebruch <http://www.pbsartist.com/>, the camp offers four days of inspirational projects and activities to get creative juices flowing.

“It is an all-inclusive retreat where people from all skill levels are welcome and where they can learn and connect with other people,” says EncaustiCamp instructor and FUSEDChicago member Bridgette Guerzon Mills. The workshops combine encaustic techniques with different media ranging from flat to multi-dimensional projects.

The six available workshops include: Encaustic batik by Susan Stover, Painting from the hot palette by Judy Wise, Bare soul in wax: exploring 2 1/2D by Jessica Greene, Wax+paper by Michelle Belto, The art of wax adornment by Crystal Neubauer, Encaustic journals by Bridgette Guerzon Mills, and Encaustic experimentation! Foundations by Patricia Baldwin Seggebruch. Those new to encaustic can take an introductory class prior to the all-day workshops.

Held at the Mennonite Campus in Salem, Oregon (while students are on summer leave), attendees can select three full day workshops to create, and participate in an all-day gallery and wine country tour. Everyone gathers for lunch to mix and mingle. Evening activities provide additional ways to connect with a movie, candid panel discussions about the artistic life, and a vendor evening.

Last year, a group of complete strangers met in Portland for what is now termed the “Pre-funk field trip” and visited Portland-based art supplies stores while getting acquainted. Due to its success, it is an optional drop-in event this year.

“A lot of people have maintained friendships,” said Bridgette, who made her teaching debut at last year’s EncaustiCamp.

Teaching people about encaustic and see where it takes them has been a gratifying experience for Bridgette: “It opened up this whole new world. You learn so much from people in your class as well.”

Participants include professional artists and teachers seeking to hone their skills as well as people getting away from the daily grind to explore a new way of creating. Several students have since exhibited in galleries. “It is exciting to have been part of that,” Bridgette said.

EncaustiCamp is held from July 11 to July 15, 2012. Registration information is available [here.http://www.encausticamp.com/overview](http://www.encausticamp.com/overview)

# Kim Bernard Artist Talk

Spring 2012

In February, Kim Bernard <http://www.kimbernard.com/> visited Chicago to teach FUSEDChicago members the wax resist technique. At that time, she announced her Maine Encaustic Fall Workshop Retreat <http://kimbernard.com/retreats.html>

Two FUSEDChicago members (Cindy Jevon Hogan and Maike van Wijk) took advantage of this week-long getaway in Kennebunkport, Maine, to immerse themselves in encaustics, be pampered and well-fed by hotel staff, and enjoy the fellowship of 18 other encaustic artists. The instructions were easy: select the workshops you want, decide if you want a roommate or not, book a flight and pack some casual clothes. Kim took care of booking the hotel, preparing our workshop materials for us, and arranging for lunches. She also provided ways for the group (from Canada, Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts and New Jersey) to connect prior to the trip for shared rides from the airport.

Kim's courses included: Yoga (every morning), Encaustic Essentials, DIY Power, Transfers & Drawing on Wax, Transparencies, Layers & See-Throughs, Casting & Texture, Mold Making, Encaustic & Wax Resist, Leaf Stencils & Organic Materials, Wax Pendulum and Cracking into the Gallery Scene.

We gathered on Sunday evening for a tour of the grounds after which the 'overnighters' had a meet and greet during dinner. Breakfast and lunch were included in our registration, and we were treated to wonderful meals and desserts throughout the week, along with baked goods brought in by some of the students. In the evenings most of us gathered in nearby restaurants at which we paid our own way.

In Do-it-Yourself Power, we were instructed on making our own cradled boards, as well as how to mix our own encaustic medium and save money by blending our own encaustic colors. Safety was discussed at length during this session, to ensure that if we do try this at home, we are well-equipped to do so.

Mold-making and casting used similar techniques to create molds out of clay or plaster for embellishments to either be embedded into wax or become sculptural wax pieces. Due to the popularity of this course, next year will include a twist on that workshop with body casting.

The wax pendulum workshop drew a big crowd. Kim developed the pendulum after seeing a sand pendulum at a museum, and after casting aluminum into a funnel for wax, she created a way to drip wax onto prepared backgrounds to make art. Students prepared their own backgrounds, and then watched as the pendulum did its work.

There was ample free time for bonding, sightseeing and relaxing. The Colony Hotel boasts a heated saltwater pool (which several participants enjoyed), and the ocean is a short walk from the hotel, where we gathered organic materials for one session and dipped our toes into the water. Kim's husband Christos provided optional sailing tours.

During open studio times, students were prolific in applying the other techniques taught, and most returned home with at least four new pieces of art. The week concluded with a student show, after which many students registered for next year.

A video of the September retreat is here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4EBqpYIT7JQ&feature=youtu.be>

You can register for the 2013 retreat (Session 1 in August and Session 2 in September) via this link. <http://www.kimbernard.com/retreats.html>

# Art photography with Tom van Eynde

*Summer 2012*

In mid-May, a few FUSEDChicago members met at Tom van Eynde's <http://vaneyndeartsdoc.com/> photo studio for a professional photo shoot.

Tom is a recommended photographer on our resources page, and is highly recommended by various members. Tom went to work right away, arranging art work by size so he could use the same set-up for similarly sized pieces.

Smaller pieces required close-up work, and some rectangular pieces were hung sideways for the best photography.

A hammer, various nails and a drill were at the ready to adjust for the different type and size of work each one of us had brought. The background color was changed from dark to light to provide a better contrast for some pieces.

Tom recommends the "Teach Yourself Visually" book series to learn Photoshop Elements and digital photography.

While Tom swiftly took photograph after photograph, we admired each other's art work and enjoyed catching up. As always, I am so inspired by seeing other encaustic works.

The versatility of encaustics was demonstrated in the wide variety of work created. Not only do the colors and depth of layers vary among encaustic artists, but also the size and shape of the work. I am glad I got a peek at our FUSEDChicago members' most recent creations in person, and look forward to seeing them in future shows.

# Shawna Moore Encaustic Workshop

Summer 2012

*“We are all trying to get to our own place (in art). ... We are all going to bring in things about the painting that is beyond the technique. The act of art making brings my emotions and my experience into play.”*

*~ Shawna Moore*

In May, FUSEDChicago member Jenny Learner

[http://www.jennylearner.com/Jenny\\_Learner/Home.html](http://www.jennylearner.com/Jenny_Learner/Home.html) hosted a 2-day workshop with Shawna Moore at her Studio 303. Shawna’s introductory video <http://vimeo.com/1008094> intrigued me, and the prospect of working alongside other FUSED members prompted me to sign up.

On Saturday we discussed studio safety prior to Shawna’s demonstration on creating smooth surfaces and having transparency in paintings. The transparency is achieved by gradually tinting the beeswax or medium with a pigment stick-which creates tonality as the layers build up.

We also played with mark making and creating texture with oil paint. Shawna demonstrated her famous chain technique, which she said everyone asks about.

We were tasked with using only beeswax, painters’ grey and burnt umber to create a smooth surface and then start mark-making.

On Sunday Shawna recapped her Saturday demonstration for the newbies, and we added collage, color and composition to our palette.

It was a lovely weekend of exploration, experimentation and connecting with other artists. FUSED member Bridgette wrote her take on the workshop here:

<http://bgmartjournal.blogspot.com/2012/05/experimental-encaustic-workshop-with.html>

Jenny will host a Friends of Shawna Moore exhibit

<http://www.artslant.com/chi/events/show/221504-studio-303-with-shawna-moore-and-friends>

June 15 through July 14. Several FUSEDChicago members will have work up, including Jenny Learner, VA de Pintor, Elyse Martin, Barbette Loevy, and Bridgette Guerzon Mills. Opening night will be June 15 from 6 to 10 PM. Studio 303 is located at the Zhou B Art Center

<http://www.zbcenter.org/> at 1029 West 35th Street, which houses more than 50 artists open studios and several Galleries.

*“We live in a world with little control. In the studio I am the queen of the world.”*

*~ Shawna Moore*

# FUSEDChicago Members participate in Chicago Artists Month

*Fall 2012*

Chicago Artists Month is upon us, and our FUSEDChicago members are well represented in exhibits throughout town.

Presented by the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events in collaboration with more than 200 program partners, Chicago Artists Month aims to showcase the extraordinary talent and vibrancy of Chicago's art community. This year's theme of Chicago Artists Month is Art Block by Block <http://www.chicagoartistsmonth.org/>, and it explores the impact of Chicago-based artists on the city's neighborhoods.

Per the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs and Special Events: "Chicago Artists Month 2012 will examine how visual artists enhance Chicago's cultural landscape and make each neighborhood unique. Chicago's artists are active citizens: contributing to civic dialogue; strengthening the fabric of our neighborhoods; inspiring conversations that address the concerns of our communities."

Numerous events will be held in Chicago neighborhoods, and can be perused at this link.<http://www.chicagoartistsmonth.org/complete-schedule>

Tactile Encounters: The Influence and Appearance of Textures was juried by a student committee and its advisor, Professor Jack Snapper. This show opened on October 4 and will be up at the Kemper Gallery in Galvin Library at the Illinois Institute of Technology (IIT) until November 16, 2012. Several FUSEDChicago artists are participating in this show.

The IIT campus is near Bridgeport, and the library is located at 33rd Street just west of State Street in Chicago.

The Buzz with FUSEDChicago is a group show hosted at Gallery 303 in the Zhou B Art Center, which opened during the Bridgeport Block Part on October 5. 25 FUSEDChicago artists are participating, and a few of them will be providing encaustic demonstrations on Saturday, October 20 and Sunday October 21 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m, in conjunction with the Bridgeport Art Walk. A grand opening will be held October 19 from 6 p.m. to 10 p.m. Studio 303 Gallery hours are Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday from noon-6 p.m. or by appointment (773-936-3645). Zhou B Art Center <http://zbcenter.org/is> located at 1029 West 35th Street, Chicago, Illinois.

The Bridgeport Art Walk <http://www.chicagoartistsmonth.org/bridgeport-art-walk-2012> is from noon to 6 p.m. on October 20, and noon to 5 p.m. on Sunday October 21.

More exhibit photos are available at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/FusedChicago/129102510442118>

# Arts and Aging

*February 2013*

Recently the Chicago Painters and Artists Meetup Group hosted a discussion on Arts and Aging. Fabiana Glazer is the owner of GoldMind: Arts and Aging, focused on bringing more arts to more older adults, including arts on dementia treatment.

Fabiana spent 15 years in arts education, including Assistant Director of ArtReach and Director of Community and Business Programs at Lillstreet. She was inspired to form GoldMind at her NEA sponsored training for “Creative Aging” with The Creative Center: Arts in Healthcare in NYC in 2011.

“There is a stigma to working with older adults. No one wants to age,” Fabiana said.

Noting that by 2030 there will be more older adults than school-age children, Fabiana said there is a new initiative to hold off on institutionalized long-term care as long as possible, which can cost up to \$10,000 a day. Aging in place, allowing older people to stay where they are, is far more beneficial, as studies show that those who are placed in long-term care decline rapidly.

However, studies by Dr. Gene Cohen, the first chief of the Center on Aging at the National Institute of Mental Health study, show that older adults engaged in arts activities:

- are happier!
- gain a new sense of identity
- can live at home longer
- use less medication
- fall down less often
- visit the doctor less
- suffer fewer adverse side effects from medications
- score lower on loneliness scale

Fabiana and her associates teach weekly 90-minute classes to promote this positive effect, which also results in more engagement and a sense of mastery in the participants. “One of the things about art is that you can’t be wrong. It is also very personal,” Fabiana said. She pointed out that she is not an art therapist, but an art teacher, her focus is on making art, not on the art as a tool to get to something else. Learning something new makes participants happy, she said.

Noting that Alzheimers Disease affects 5 million Americans and is predicted to rise to 8.5 million in 2016, Fabiana also works with dementia patients. A cause is still elusive, and dementia is detected earlier and earlier, even when people are in their 50s, Fabiana said. “Art is great because it is engaging. It is an opportunity for lifelong learning,” she said. Creating art helps bring memories back. It ‘reactivates’ brain cells to where patients remember who they are,



which can last for up to 24 hours. “There is no reason you can’t be making new parts of your brain as you lose part of your brain,” Fabiana added.

The 10-week classes help participants overcome grief and loss, and gives them a sense of community. Fabiana said that participants will keep in touch after the class has been completed. “Art is a magic cure all for depression and aging,” she said. “You can drive your own learning, It is infinite. Artists have the highest quality of life in older age.”

Goldmind Arts and Aging: <http://www.goldmindartsandaging.com/>

Links to studies on Arts and Aging:

[http://www.goldmindartsandaging.com/goldmindartsandaging.com/News\\_and\\_Resources.html](http://www.goldmindartsandaging.com/goldmindartsandaging.com/News_and_Resources.html)

# Spaces We Inhabit Gathering

May 2014

FUSEDChicago members held an impromptu gathering at the opening of “Spaces We Inhabit: Sculptures and Paintings by Alicia Forestall-Boehm, Emily Rutledge and Mary Zeran” on May 9.

Alicia Forestall-Boehm and Emily Rutledge, nth FUSEDChicago members, are exhibiting with Mary Zeran.

The exhibition explores the influence that the “spaces we inhabit” have on physical and emotional spaces. <http://hairpinartscenter.org/events/event/the-spaces-we-inhabit/>

Knowing how different Alicia and Emily’s styles are. I was curious to see how the group show would work.

Alicia [afboehmnews.blogspot.com/](http://afboehmnews.blogspot.com/) does wonderful sculptural works with lots of texture, and she was quite the ‘cubist’ for this exhibit, creating a mobile-like installation (named “Spaces We Inhabit”) of foam cubes wrapped in cotton and waxed cheesecloth hung by ropes from the ceiling.

Her Infinite Possibilities wall installation explores textures and colors, and garnered much comment from attendees.

Emily [emilyrutledge.com/](http://emilyrutledge.com/) works with spray paint, encaustics and image transfers. With titles like Shades of Whatever, Look At Me and I’ve Got Nothing Left To Say, her work evoked a more introspective reflection on the spaces our mind inhabits.

They were joined by Mary Zeran <http://www.maryzeran.com>, who creates intriguing collages with duralar and acrylic paint. To me, her pieces evoked the spaces we travel to, whether in nature, in the mind, or countries. The striking Irezumi #1 reminded me of Greece’s vibrant blues.

It was fun to see the different forms of expression form a cohesive narrative which left me inspired by the vibrancy and texture of all the pieces.

Here’s to more member shows and more inspiration.

“Spaces We Inhabit: Sculptures and Paintings by Alicia Forestall-Boehm, Emily Rutledge and Mary Zeran” will show at the Hairpin Arts Center in Chicago’s Logan Square from May 9 until June 8, 2014.

<https://plus.google.com/photos/109723451897045755011/albums/6012753792798317665?authkey=CLzTgLqFucacLw>