



RockvilleArtLeague.org

Vol. XXVI No. 1

September 2016

**NEXT MEETING: September 1, 6:30PM  
Karen Norman: Speaker**

## **Message from the President, Pat Sieg**

Greetings members of the Rockville Art League,



September is the start of my service as President of RAL and I much appreciate your trust and support. Serving with you will be an honor.

Heartfelt thanks to Fred Ruckdeschel for his work and leadership as my predecessor. Fortunately Fred will continue to work with RAL as an artist and supporting member of RAL and he has agreed to make himself readily available for my questions and to provide guidance based on his experience.

Special thanks go to Emily Pearce for arranging a talented group of speakers to join

us each month. There is a listing of the speakers and other events planned for each month from now through the May 2017, member show. Your work, Emily, in scheduling these speakers is simply outstanding and much appreciated.

A special shout out goes to September's speaker, teacher, watercolor artist and RAL member Karen Norman. She will share her deep knowledge, tips and the techniques used to create her award winning watercolor art. Most of you have seen Karen's work as she has won prizes in the watercolor category of our last number of member shows.

Since this is my first article in the RAL newsletter it is appropriate for me to briefly share a bit about myself...

I grew up in Olney, Maryland, and attended Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. I graduated with a B.S. in business and finance and also studied art history and minored in studio art. This study of art in college led to my lifelong interest in painting, artists and the creative process.

After graduation I pursued a finance career with Marriott International and Marriott afforded me the opportunity to travel

extensively and live in many different cities in the US, Europe, the Middle and Far East. While traveling I took time to absorb local culture, attend art exhibitions and visit museums in different places in the world, and that has influenced my art.

After taking an early retirement from Marriott, I decided to embrace this love of art and to focus on oil painting. My studio practice is focused on representational portrait and landscape paintings. I have been fortunate to have several of my pieces accepted in the Rockville Art League Glenview Mansion member art shows.

My family, all talented artists, supports me in my artistic pursuit. My lovely wife Lisa is a photographer, colorist and home chef. Oldest son Robert is studying Industrial Design at the California College of Art. Daughter Erica is a creative writer and is studying law at Washington and Lee University Law School. Younger son Stephan received degrees last May from Dickinson College where he was an Art History and Studio Art major (he enjoys three-dimensional artwork).

Thank you and I look forward to working with all of you and the Rockville Art League.

Pat Sieg  
RAL President

### Rockville Art League 2016-2017 Speaker Series

*All events in this series occur from 6:30-8:00 pm at Glenview Mansion 603 Edmonston Drive, Rockville MD 20851. Events are open to RAL Members and the General Public.*

**September 1, 2016:** Award-winning watercolor artist **Karen Norman** will conduct a demonstration and provide tips and techniques for creating amazing watercolor art. Karen is a member of the Baltimore Watercolor Society and Potomac Valley Watercolorists.



She is also a member of the Washington Watercolor Association, and other art organizations in the metropolitan DC area. She is the past president

of the Olney Art Association. Find out more about Karen and see some examples of her work here: <http://karennorman.net/about-the-artist/>

**October 6, 2016:** Art historian and art critic **Dr. Claudia Rousseau** will speak about trends in contemporary art in this region and developing a constructively critical eye.



Dr. Rousseau is a professor of Art History in the Department of Visual and Performing Arts at Montgomery College Takoma Park/Silver Spring Campus. She is also a professional art critic and writes regular reviews for local publications. Her specializations include Italian Renaissance Art, Modern European Art, and American Contemporary Art.

**November 3, 2016:** Chief Executive Officer of the Montgomery County Arts and Humanities Council **Suzan Jenkins** will speak about the Arts and Humanities Council, its mandate, resources and programs for artists.



Suzan has over 20 years of experience in the non-profit arts and culture sector from organizations such as the Rhythm and Blues Foundation, the Smithsonian Institution and the Recording Industry Association of America. For more on

the Arts & Humanities Council:  
<http://creativemoco.com/>

**December:** Walk-Through of RAL Winter Members Show

**January:** No Meeting

**February 2, 2017:** Artist, Anthropologist, former RAL juror, and current Representative on the Maryland State Arts Council **Dr. Jack Rasmussen** will speak about the Arts Council, its mandate, and programs it runs to support artists in Maryland.



Dr. Rasmussen is currently the Director and Curator of the American University Museum at the Katzen Arts Center. He previously held Executive Director positions at di Rosa Preserve: Art & Nature, Maryland Art Place,

and Rockville Arts Place. For more on the Maryland State Arts Council see:  
<https://www.msac.org/>

**March 2, 2017:** Shanthi Chandra-Sekar will talk about the Indian tradition of Kolam drawing. Shanthi is an artist and former RAL member.



To learn more about Shanthi and the art of Kolam drawing, please visit:

<http://www.shanthic.com/kolam.html>

**April 6, 2017:** Guided Peer Critique

**May 4, 2017:** Walk-Through of RAL Spring Members Show/Nominations

**June 2, 2017:** Open-Membership Meeting/Elections



## Membership Note:

Welcome back RAL members new and old! If you have already joined or renewed for the 2016-2017 season, thank you for your continued participation. As a reminder, membership is \$40 a year (\$35 if paid *before* Oct. 31). Student Membership is \$20 a year for full-time students aged 18 - 26. The RAL Membership year is from September - August. Memberships renewed after the hanging of our Spring Members' Exhibit will apply to the next RAL year.

All members are encouraged to volunteer for RAL. Volunteer options include helping with Exhibits, Monthly Workshops, Newsletter contributions, Marketing, Refreshments, Communications (phone and/or email) and more. Specific volunteer opportunities will be available on our website and will be sent through email. Please let us know how you can help ([ekepearce@gmail.com](mailto:ekepearce@gmail.com)). I look forward to seeing you!

Emily Pearce, Membership Chair

## Call for Art!

### Attention RAL members: Get your sketch published in our new coloring book!

We are hoping YOU will answer the call! We are putting together a coloring book that celebrates the 'Jewel of Rockville': the Rockville Civic Center Park!

Deadline for Submission: Oct. 3, 2016

What we are looking for:

- Rich and detailed original works that depict architecture, nature or
  - scenes that take place in Rockville Civic Center Park (Glenview Mansion, F. Scott Fitzgerald Theatre, Croydon Creek Nature Center, trails, paths, trees, flowers,

- sledding, picnics, etc.)
- Sketches only-preferably pen and ink line art only – please, no colored scenes
- Images submitted must be a maximum size of 8" x 10" and in landscape orientation only

To submit:

- Email a digital copy (jpg preferred) of your sketch (or sketches to:
  - [jfarrell@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:jfarrell@rockvillemd.gov) no later than October 3
- Be sure to include your name, physical address and email address in the body of your email
- Include the name of the location your sketch depicts in the body of your email
- You may submit as many sketches for consideration as you would like
- There is NO SUBMISSION/ ENTRY FEE

About the selection Process:

A team of Civic Center staff will review all qualified submissions to choose the sketches that will be included in the Coloring Book.

If your work is selected:

- You will have to sign a *Permission to Publish* form
- Your name will appear in the Coloring Book as a contributor
- You will receive a free copy of the final book

If you have questions, please email me: [jfarrell@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:jfarrell@rockvillemd.gov).

Julie Farrell

## Critique by Penny Kritt

### No More Boring Landscapes!

There are many subjects I like to paint, but landscapes were probably my least favorite. I gave it some serious thought since I've got so many wonderful reference photos from my travels around Maryland. It turns out that there were three reasons why I seldom did this kind of a composition.

First, I just don't care for green! Except for autumn when the tree canopies are warm reds and oranges, or during a snow storm, Maryland has a very green countryside.

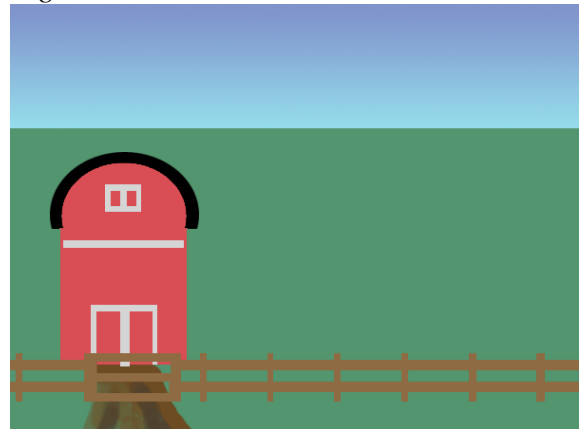
Second, most greens are mid-tone in value (neither particularly dark or light if converted into shades of gray as below). Since value contrast is the most effective tool in an artist's bag of tricks, you just can't get a lot of contrast if the bulk of the painting is a mid-tone. It's made even worse since most skies and water in landscapes are also cool colors that are mid-tones. Sure, you can put a dark or a light next to a mid-tone, but you don't get as much impact as putting lights and darks right next to each other. That one fact alone explains why there are so many boring landscapes out there that have no discernable center of interest.

And third, most landscape compositions just have too many shapes for my taste. The field, the fence, the barn, the road, the scattered horses, the sky, the trees in the background, it's just too much. It can become even more boring when most of the shapes, like the sky, the field, and the fence tend to run horizontally all the way across from the left side to the right, sometimes without any other shape interrupting them.

Let's look at some typical compositions and then spice them up a little.

In this first example, I've simplified the composition to better illustrate comparisons. We'll add more shapes later.

*Figure 1*

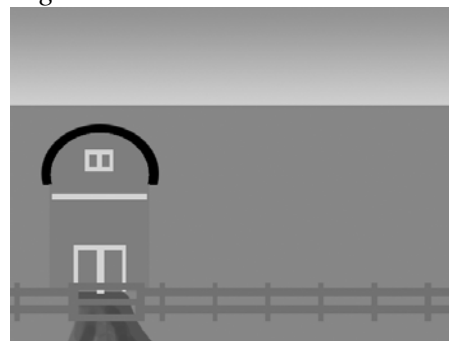


*Prairie Barn/Digital Image 1*

Everything in *Figure 1* above is designed to lead the viewer out of the picture space as fast as possible! The rectangles of the sky and green field whisk you away to the right margin. While the red barn will delay your exit, the fence in the foreground then hurries you away.

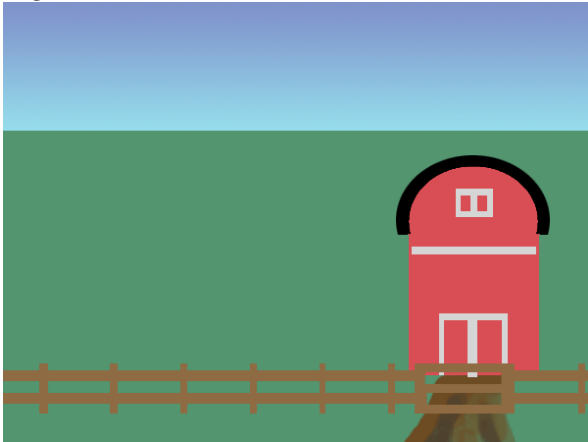
*Figure 2* below is a grayscale version and it shows even more strongly how boring these shapes and their placement are. Another problem is that since there's only one dark shape, it looks out of place. Beginners will remove that shape. More experienced artists will add more dark shapes to balance it and *keep the viewer moving around the picture space*.

*Figure 2*



*Prairie Barn/Digital Image 2*

Figure 3



Prairie Barn /Digital Image

If we do nothing more than just flip the image as in *Figure 3* above, now the boring rectangles speed us to the right, but the red barn now stops the viewer immediately! As you design the shapes in your composition – and by now you know I always nag you to *plan the design before you start* – you can save yourself a lot of grief.

Figure 4



Prairie Barn/Digital Image 4

*Figure 4* above uses a number of techniques to modify a trite composition.

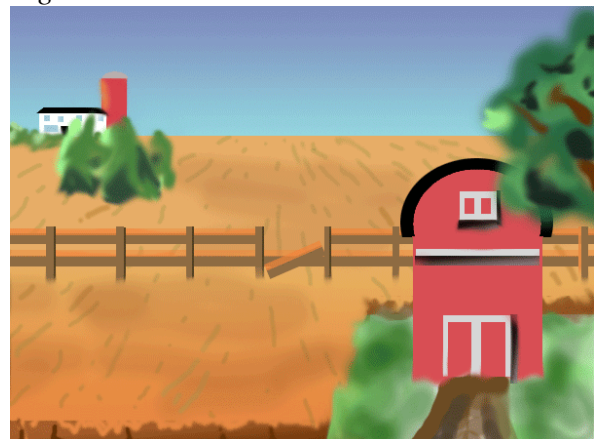
1. Make sure that no two corners of the picture space are the same. The sky rectangle has the distant buildings on the

left and the foreground tree on the right.

The golden grain rectangle has a clump of trees in the upper left and the barn on the right. And the fence is now *behind* the barn so it brings the viewer to the barn. When the fence was in front of the barn, it sped you past it without stopping.

2. Substitute a crop with a warm color (i.e., golden grain) for a cool color. Note that the grain color in the foreground is slightly redder and gets paler as it recedes. That's what gives the sense of vastness and distance. It also uses the concept that warm colors are usually more welcoming to the viewer.
3. The foreground tree and complex shape of trees and buildings in the upper left cross into both rectangles. That breaks up static straight horizontal lines that whisk the viewer across the painting instead of letting him wander slowly to enjoy the various parts of the composition.
4. Notice that objects overlap to make larger, more complex shapes. If the trees were by themselves and the barn not connected with the fence, there would just be too many little shapes floating and anchored by nothing. By overlapping, there's more sense of continuity and depth to the image.

Figure 5



Prairie Barn/Digital Image 5

*Figure 5* above gives you a chance to consider whether my changes work. Note that the fence has been raised so it's almost in the middle of

the painting. Usually, putting a strong horizontal line, like a horizon, in the middle divides the painting in an uncomfortable manner. To overcome that, I put a break in the fence! That prevents the viewer from seeing “fence” and speeding past it. But notice that the break is in the exact middle of the painting, both on the horizontal and vertical axes. That prime location might make that small detail overwhelm the rest of the composition since it’s so unexpected, especially since *it breaks a pattern*.

And that’s how – and why! – it helps to consider shapes and their locations in the composition before you start painting!

Happy painting!

*If you’d like a gentle critique of your work, email me a photo at [pennykritt@aol.com](mailto:pennykritt@aol.com).*

**For classes or private lessons, contact Penny at: 301/989-1799**

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## MEMBER NEWS

Chris Luckman will show a selection of her oil paintings in an exhibit entitled, “From the Corners of the Earth,” at the River Road Unitarian Universalist Congregation, 6301 River Road, Bethesda, MD, from October 21 to November 21.



## Kritt Studio Classes

**Beginning Drawing** classes start September 12, daytime & evening

**Beginning Painting** classes start September 13, daytime & evening

**Advanced Groups and Private Lessons**

**Call Penny at 301/989-1799**



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***GLENVIEW MANSION CONFERENCE ROOM SHOWS***

You can show your artwork in Glenview Mansion for one month if you have received a 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or honorable mention award in an RAL juried show. Artists may have both rooms to exhibit in if a second artist doesn't sign up for the same month within two months of the show's start date. The receptions at Glenview mansion are 1:30-3:30 PM on the **Sunday** after hanging. Preferred drop off and pick up times for Glenview Shows are from 9 am to 12 noon. Drop off/pickups are Mondays (unless a holiday). If you are unavailable on the date for pickup, please arrange for someone to pick up for you. There is no room to store your artwork at the Mansion. If you are unable to drop off/pick up on the assigned dates and you can't find someone else to drop off/pick up for you, please choose a month in which you can make those dates.

For artwork delivery, please unwrap your work and take the wrappings with you. Please bring pliers (needle nose are easy to work with). You may use the hand truck that is at the Mansion to move your artwork from your vehicle. There is no staff at the mansion available to help you move your artwork into the conference rooms. You are responsible for hanging your own artwork, with help from the Mansion staff. If you don't have labels for your work, please fill out the RAL cards that will be available. If you print your own, print them on card stock. Do not use the sticky Avery labels, unless you adhere them to foam core or card stock. **Contact Diane Jeang, Glenview Member Show Coordinator, (301) 871-1589 or [swinedoc@yahoo.com](mailto:swinedoc@yahoo.com) with questions.** If you need to contact Julie Farrell, please send an email [tojfarrell@rockvillemd.gov](mailto:tojfarrell@rockvillemd.gov).

Monday delivery and hanging: 9AM–12PM / Sunday Gallery Opening: 1:30—3:30PM  
 Monday Pick up: 9AM—11AM

<b>2016</b>	<b>Member(s)</b>	Monday (generally) Deliver and Hang Before 12 noon	Sunday Gallery Opening 1:30 – 3:30 pm	Monday Pick up Before 11 am
<b>AUG</b>	<b>Han-Yin Shen (2)</b>	Aug. 1	Aug. 7	Aug. 29
<b>SEP</b>		Aug. 29	Sept. 11	Oct. 3
<b>OCT</b>	<b>Linda Greigg + Suzie Weiss (2)</b>	Oct. 3	Oct. 9	Oct. 31
<b>NOV</b>	<b>Philip Bennet (2)</b>	Oct. 31	Nov. 6	Nov. 28
<b>DEC</b>	<b>RAL Winter Show</b>	11/28&29	Dec. 4	Dec. 30

For additional information for members hanging in the conference rooms, please refer to the RAL web page: <http://www.rockvilleartleague.org/glenview.pdf>

At least one platter of finger foods (cookies, crackers/cheese, veggies/dip) should be supplied by the RAL artist on the day of the opening reception. Cups/napkins/water is provided by the City of Rockville for opening receptions. The Mansion will be open at 1 pm for the artist on the day of the opening reception.

**Glenview/Open Show Coordinator:** Diane Jeang, (301) 871-1589 E-mail: [swinedoc@yahoo.com](mailto:swinedoc@yahoo.com)



***RAL ONGOING SHOW LIST***

**Twinbrook Library - 202 Meadow Hall Drive, Rockville, Maryland**

Shows are now 1 month in length. 5 medium to large paintings, Contact person:  
Chris Lindy (240)-777-0240, [christinelundy@montgomerycountymd.gov](mailto:christinelundy@montgomerycountymd.gov)

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Open	Aug. 15, 2016	Oct. 15, 2016

**Thomas Farm Community Center – 700 Falls Grove Drive, Rockville, Maryland**

12-16 medium to large paintings, Contact person: Martha Coester (240) 314-8842

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Valthea Fry	June 15, 2016	Oct. 15, 2016

**Marilyn J. Praisner Library – 14910 Old Columbia Road, Burtonsville, Maryland**

10 small to medium or 5-6 large paintings (10 hanging chains), Contact person: (240) 773-9455, Vera Ramaty.

<u>Name</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
Open	Aug. 15, 2016	Oct. 15, 2016

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**RAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
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<i>Program Coordinator</i>	VACANT		
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<i>Glenview Member Shows</i>	Diane Jeang	301-871-1589	<a href="mailto:swinedoc@yahoo.com">swinedoc@yahoo.com</a>
<i>Historian</i>	Patria Baranski	301-424-6193	<a href="mailto:geowell7@hotmail.com">geowell7@hotmail.com</a>
<i>Hospitality</i>	Martha Campos	301-251-0643	<a href="mailto:ximenace@verizon.net">ximenace@verizon.net</a>
<i>Webmaster</i>	Michael Auger	202-670-2789	<a href="mailto:RAL@arty4ever.com">RAL@arty4ever.com</a>
<i>Founder, Honorary Lifetime Member</i>	Eileen Mader	301-762-6458	

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