

### artist profile

by Helena Tiainen

### ulla de larios Weaver



Ulla de Larios joined Nordic 5 Arts in the early 1990's, after graduating from the San Francisco Art Institute. Her favorite quote is from Wayne Thiebaud who calls himself a *painter* because the title *artist* is for other people to bestow on him. Ulla de Larios calls herself a *weaver*. She was born and raised in a big family on the West Coast of Sweden, where her grandmother taught her how to weave.

At age 24, after studying Math and Physics at the University of Lund, she immigrated to Berkeley, California, and later spent many years in Seeley Lake in the mountains of Montana. It was while in Montana that she got her first big loom. It was only in 1984, when her family moved to Palo Alto, that she started taking classes in art. In 1990 she got her BFA in painting at the San Francisco Art Institute and later her MFA in textile arts at SFSU. Ulla states that her art education widened her viewpoing and gave her some insight into the way the art world works and gave her focus in her work, but didn't change her. She feels

fortunate to have qualified for a studio space in Palo Alto at Cubberley Community Center. This studio gave her the impetus to move from making cloth for practical purposes to expressing her ideas artistically through the weaving process. Ulla's inspiration comes from the yarn and the process of weaving in which the yarn, the structure, the sett, the color and the final size all have to come together, and varying any of these aspects will change the end result. She recently received a large quantity of beautiful linen that she is planning on spending much time admiring and deciding how to use.

In 2015 Ulla moved from a spacious studio in Palo Alto, where she could make and show large 3 dimensional work, to a small cottage in the back of her home in Berkeley. The smaller space has made the scale of her work also smaller and most likely she will primarily make weavings that hang on the wall. The biggest influence on Ulla's art has been being an immigrant. She spent many years comparing Sweden to the United States. She sees the feeling of being in between the two countries and not really belonging to one or the other as the basis for much of her work. She weaves a little man into most of her pieces. This man is a depiction of the huge number of migrants that are so much in the news these days. From time to time she also makes more directly political works. "Transparency?", (photo), was made during the change from the Bush to the Obama administration. The individual pieces in this series have titles, but Ulla de Larios leaves it up to the viewer to decide which piece should have which of the names: *Par for the Course*, *Malfeasance*, *Hope*, *The Last Eight*, and *The Next Eight*.

Cont'd p.4



## artist news

**Patricia Bengtson Jones** recently found that her DNA is 59% Swedish, plus Ireland 13%, Italy/Greece 9%, Eastern Europe 9%, Great Britain 5%, Western Europe 5%, and 6% other European. This has started her on a new series inspired by x-rays of her bones and how many miles they have walked. From that series is "Waiting to Migrate," 9"x12" pastels and drawing pen. She also began a new Runes series, which includes "Journey to Flowing New Friends," 9"x12", pastel on paper, Sharpie pen, pan pastel colors.

One of **Kati Casida's** aluminum sculptures, "Red Jazz," 11' x 9', has been installed in the Orinda Plaza in the city of Orinda, CA, and can be seen there through November 1, 2017 (Photo p. 4).

**Colette Crutcher** is currently creating a mosaic panel for inside the library of Daniel Webster Elementary School in San Francisco as a memorial to a much-loved parent who spearheaded the fundraising effort for the new library, who died shortly thereafter. She is also in the planning stages for a major artistic enhancement of Visitacion Valley Elementary School, working with Aileen Barr to create mosaics for the entrance to the building, and a seating wall and tiled lizard sculpture for the new school garden. In late April, she will participate for the fourth time in "Draw Till You Drop," an art marathon to raise funds for the Arts Council of Mendocino County. She is also working with a professor at SF State Theater Department to create oversized paper maché puppets for use in protest marches in late April and early May.

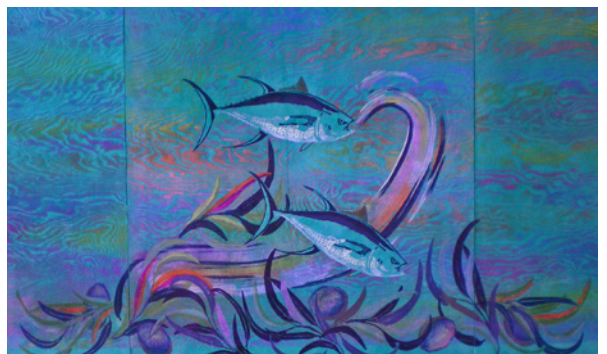
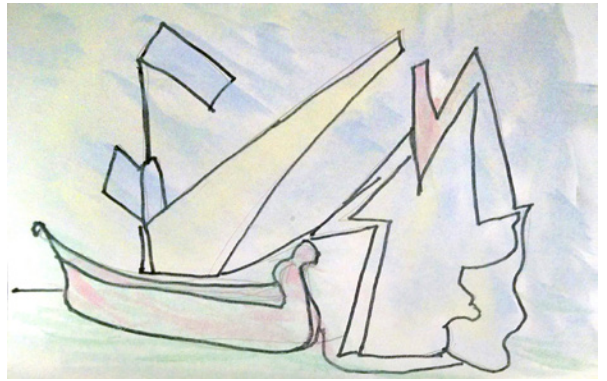
**Jason Englund** was recently appointed the part time position of Studio Director at the Adobe Art Center in Castro Valley where he'll work on supporting art instructors, developing new arts curriculum and opportunities for the public, community engagement and studio maintenance. "After teaching drawing fundamentals and still life class and helping in the gallery at the art center, I proposed they create a Studio Director position to help revitalize the art center. I'm happy to see some changes and help to revitalize this art center as I see lots of potential."

**Mark Erickson** is working on a project he started in 2015, "The Family Photographic Project," which is restoration and colorization of dozens of classic family photos from the late 1800s to the late 1960s. Included are images from Sweden, WW1, WW2, and the Chuck Berry fueled rock and roll cold war of the 1950s, and finally into the sun splashed era of the 1960s. "The colors make so many of these images of my family come alive and many can be seen on the 3rd and 4th row pages of this link <http://www.markerickson.com/home.html>."

**Pam Fingado** is part of a group exhibit at Britt Marie's Café & Wine Bar, 1369 Solano Ave. Albany CA 94706. The exhibit will be on view May 3 - June 30, 2017. Artists include Pam Fingado, Lisa Greenstein and Hershell West. Pam is also part of the Art Exhibit, "BLUE," showing from July 22 - August 20, 2017, at San Pablo Art Gallery, 13831 San Pablo Ave, San Pablo, CA 94806. This group show features artists from Artist Salon of The East Bay. The Reception is on Saturday, July 22, 1-3 pm.

**Marc Ellen Hamel's** nature-inspired abstract oil paintings were exhibited in a two-person show called "House and Garden" in Gallery Sanchez at Noe Valley Ministry, 1021 Sanchez Street, San Francisco, December 2016 - February 2017. In April, she opened her studio for Spring Open Studio at Hunters Point Shipyard. During the month of May, she will have a solo show of paintings and monotypes called "Urban Scenes/Rural Walks" at Think Round Fine Arts, 2140 Bush Street, San Francisco CA 94115. ([www.thinkround.org](http://www.thinkround.org)). Reception will be held Saturday, May 6, 4 to 6 pm. In September, Marc Ellen will exhibit her paintings in a two-person show at Main Street Artists Gallery in Quincy, CA. Reception: Friday, September 1, 5 - 7 pm.

**Maj-Britt Hilstrom** exhibited her artwork called "Waterscapes" in the lobby of 425 California Street in San Francisco, January 17 through March 24. Bonnie Earls-Solari, former curator of the Bank of America art collection, curated it. The media included woodcuts on suede mounted on wood and woodcuts on canvas.



Artists, Top to bottom:

Patricia Bengtson Jones - Loren Rebeck - Maj-Britt Hilstrom



**Matlena Hourula** has been teaching at The Rare Bird Maker's Studio in Oakland since it opened in October 2016. She teaches various classes such as intro to mixed media encaustic wax, intro to printmaking, indigo shibori dyeing, textile printing techniques, mixed media transferring techniques, children's sensory art classes, and new mother and baby art classes. She will be taking a break for the summer when she is expecting her second child, and will return to teaching in the fall. See The Rare Bird Maker's Studio schedule of classes at [www.therarebird.com](http://www.therarebird.com)

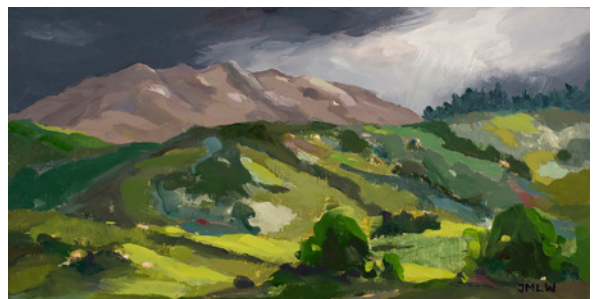
**Kristin Lindseth** had two intaglio prints accepted into "Woven Heritage," International Printmaking Exhibition, Dubai, United Arab Emirates. This Exhibition was organized by Fayed University in Dubai and held in the Al Serkal Arts District under the patronage of her Excellency Sheika Lubna Al Qasimi, March 13-18, 2017. The prints are now included in the permanent collection of Fayed University. "Autun," 16"x20", depicts a wind rising like a veil over a desert mountain. The theme of "Airmail," 16"x20", is about societal freedom. Kristin also had work in the following exhibits: "Beginnings," Gallery Route One, Point Reyes Station, CA January 27-February 19; "The Figure Interpreted Through Contemporary Mediums," National Juried Exhibition, Santa Cruz Art League, Santa Cruz, CA, February- March; the "25th Parkside National Small Print Exhibition," Parkside Art Galleries, University of Wisconsin, Kenosha, WA, February - April; Faculty Exhibition, Vargas Gallery, Mission College, Santa Clara, CA, February-March; "Brushstrokes," A National Painting Exhibition, San Luis Obispo Museum of Art, May 19-July 2, 2017.

50 years ago, **Loren Rehbok** made a poster for Mnasidika, a dress shop in the Haight in San Francisco. Mnasidika was the lover of Sappho, an archaic Greek poet from the island of Lesbos known for her poems about love. The poster is a 20" x 14" offset lithograph on exhibit at the De Young Museum's "The Summer of Love Experience: Art, Fashion and Rock & Roll," April 18 - August 20, 2017. The poster in the show is an original, not a reprint, and the museum is selling reproductions in a variety of sizes, plus postcards and refrigerator magnets.

**Diane Rusnak** reports that she recently sent four portfolios of Ohio Finnish history (her mother's and her own) to the new Finnish Heritage Museum in Fairport Harbor, Ohio. She has donated her Finnish-related artwork "Ancestor Laundry" to this museum and a hand-woven dress made by her Grandmother Jenny Westlund. She will visit the museum when she returns to Ohio in June for a high school class reunion and will also see two of her large paintings installed in Cleveland Hospitals.

**Helena Tiainen** is participating with three painted dust masks in "Yellow Dirt Testimony - a promise in many parts," a collaborative community project by artist Edie Dillon, designed and constructed in Prescott, Arizona. Read about this project and its progress at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1839371369614257/>. Helena's work has been added to more venues offering her art printed on demand: Spoonflower ([http://www.spoonflower.com/profiles/helena\\_tiaien](http://www.spoonflower.com/profiles/helena_tiaien)) work printed on fabrics, wallpaper and giftwrap; Redbubble (<http://www.redbubble.com/people/helenatiainen>) work printed on home décor items, apparel and personal items.

**Jenny Wantuch** is the organizer and a participating artist in "Open Air- Burlingame Plein Air Painters" at Sanchez Art Center, East Gallery, 1220-B Linda Mar Boulevard, Pacifica, CA, July 14- August 13, 2017. Reception Friday, July 14, 7-9 pm. Jenny is currently embarking on some new work: a series of paintings using small studies from Northern Sweden as reference. The studies were made last summer in Jämtland, Northern Sweden, where she found the nature very inspiring. "I worked with gouache on paper as this made traveling a lot easier. In the studio, I use these smaller paintings in gouache as reference to create large interpretations in oil." Jenny is part of a pop-up show curated by ArtlyOwl, called "Colors of the Mission," Star City Mission, 2047 Mission Street, San Francisco, April 27 - June 1. She was also invited to show oil paintings from her series "Urban Landscapes" in a exhibit called "Our House... San Francisco Splendor" at Back to the Picture, 1160 4th Street, San Francisco, July 8 - August 6, 2017; Reception Saturday, July 8, 7-10 PM.



Artworks, Top to bottom Matlena Hourula Shibori Indigo Dyeing; Kristin Lindseth Airmail; Helena Tiainen Yellow Dirt Testimony, 3 masks; Jenny Wantuch Inverness



Kati Casida, *Red Jazz*, Aluminum, 11' x 9'  
On display at the Orinda Plaza, City of Orinda, CA,  
until November 1, 2017.

### Ulla de Larios *Cont'd from p.1*

To the question about what is hardest to her as an artist Ulla de Larios replies: "The hardest thing for me is marketing my art. It does not fit my personality and I always hear in the back of my head my uncle's disdainful words about artists who have no substance but good marketing." To the question about what is easiest to her as an artist, she replies: "The work. I have always been interested in yarns and what to make from them, whether I spin, knit, embroider or crochet. Weaving is the ultimate fiber craft, but it takes a large amount of time and energy just to get set up. But the other processes, knitting for instance, are easy and always available." ulladelarios.com.

## calendar

### Runes Revealed

December 2, 2017 - January 13, 2018

Adobe Art Gallery, 20395 San Miguel Ave, Castro Valley, CA.

Delivery November 16 and 18, Reception December 2, 1-3 PM

Deinstallation/Closing: January 13, 2018, 3- 5 PM.

adobegallery.org

### Nordic 5 Arts Round Table Discussion

A new informal member discussion group

*Gallery Owner Perspective and Expectations* by Pam Fingado

Sunday, July 9, 2017, 2:00 PM

DeSilva Ukulele. Sawtooth Building

2547 8th Street, unit #28, , Berkeley, CA, 94710

Hosted by Barbara Stevens Strauss. Bring light foods and snacks.

### Fall Membership Meeting

Saturday, Oct 21, 2017, 11 AM

Maj-Britt Moberand, 2350 Spaulding Ave, Berkeley, CA

## future exhibitions... to be confirmed...

### Nordic Voyage - A Sense of Place

At the members meeting on April 29, 2017, Pam Fingado reported that there is a good possibility of an exhibit at Harrington Gallery in Pleasanton in March 2018 (or, possibly, January or February 2018). Three jpegs of artwork members would like to display in this show will be due by fall 2017, sent to the Exhibition Committee (Loren Rehbock, Pam Fingado and Ellen Faris.) There are details to be worked out and more information to come.

### Immigration Stories

Ellen Faris has been in contact with Vesterheim Norwegian American Museum and Heritage Center in Decorah, Iowa, regarding an "Immigration Stories" themed exhibit. Marc Ellen Hamel has followed up with information and images of our "Runes Revealed" traveling exhibition so they can see what we have done, and look at our website.

**to see artist pages and the "Runes Revealed" catalog visit [nordic5arts.com](http://nordic5arts.com)**  
*thank you to everyone who contributed copy and photos to this issue of the newsbrief!*

**Nordic 5 Arts Co-coordinators:** Marc Ellen Hamel and Debra Jewell

**Exhibitions Committee:** Loren Rehbock, Pam Fingado, Ellen Faris **Secretary:** Colette Crutcher **Treasurer:** Lee Williams

**Newsbrief Committee:** Marc Ellen Hamel, Editor; Helene Sobol, Associate Editor and Designer

Olivia Eielson, Elizabeth Stokkebye **Website:** Helene Sobol

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