

Denmark
Finland
Iceland
Norway
Sweden

Spring 2015

www.nordic5arts.com

incoming co-coordinator **jenny wantuch**

When Helene Sobol steps down after 10 years, Jenny Wantuch will become the next Co-coordinator together with Marc Ellen Hamel who has served during the past 4 years.

Jenny recently visited New Zealand, and filed this report, *"Fishing and Painting in New Zealand."*

On a Monday in February 2015, my husband and I left our house with 23 kilos each of the most essential things needed for a trip to a place where summer was still at its peak. We were on our way to New Zealand, a part of the world we had never before been. We lost Tuesday as we flew over the date line, and landed in Auckland on Wednesday, February 4th. *"What have you packed in this bag, the kitchen sink?"* the owner of our small hotel huffed as he carried my suitcase to the top floor. While my husband's luggage was packed to the limit with fishing gear, mine contained a smaller version of my studio. Fishing and painting were on the agenda for the next seven weeks.

In Rotorua, we hired a fishing guide to go fly fishing and painting on the Rangitaiki River. The boat followed the meandering river downstream where tall columnar basalt rocks created walls on both sides. *"No one ever comes to this river,"* our guide said and added *"That is what I love about coming here; you are completely alone!"* Nature around us was breathtaking, and experiencing this all alone made it extraordinary. Six hours later, my husband had caught - and released - 20 trout, and I had captured the water reflections of rocks and trees with the pencils I had brought in my pocket.

Friendly local "Kiwis" helped us find many places to fish and paint all over the country. For example, in Glenorchy, we were told to go through a certain gate and follow a muddy cow path for a few miles to reach a small lake called Diamond Lake. Accompanied by sheep calling each other from opposite sides of the lake, I set up my easel by the lake and painted while the mountains slowly shifted from cool blue to warm violet. I had limited my palette to six colors and I mixed and mixed to try to capture the saturated turquoise glacial water, the various green hues of the trees I didn't know the name of, and the color of the sky with dramatic grey clouds. The sky was different in New Zealand. It was warmer, bluer and lighter. I added more titanium white and then a touch more ultramarine blue. *"I caught one!"* my husband called from the middle of the lake. I smiled and thought to myself: *"Fishing and painting! What a wonderful way to live!"* and then I looked carefully at the sky again.



Fishing and Painting in New Zealand.

outgoing co-coordinator
thank you, helene sobol

An interview by Helena Tiainen

After ten years of invaluable leadership, Helene Sobol, a Fine Art Photographer and the leader of the Nordic 5 Arts group since 2005, will be handing over her responsibilities to Marc Ellen Hamel and Jenny Wantuch. In honor of this transition I decided to ask Helene some questions in regard to her experience with Nordic 5 Arts.

Q: Helene, how did you first become affiliated with Nordic 5 Arts?

A: I received a mailing from Nordic 5 Arts at my gallery of Inuit art in San Francisco that I had established in 1979, Images of the North. After 25 years of running an art gallery, I was in the process of retiring to explore my long time passion for photography. After I started actively exhibiting my photography, I applied for Nordic 5 Arts membership.

Q: What kind of opportunities have opened up for you since you became a leading member?

A: Joining Nordic 5 Arts offered me an opportunity to be part of a group of professional artists whose exhibitions in the larger SF Bay Area showcase our work in a variety of public settings. Nordic 5 Arts has been to me a welcoming and supportive group of artists, some of whom, like me, were born in the Nordic countries, while others are second and third generation Nordic-Americans. Within a short time of joining, I was showing my photography of the country of my birth, Norway, in a group exhibition. In 2005, I was asked by Kati Casida to take on the leadership of the group. Since I became the Coordinator, I have developed a new structure for our organization with committees such as Membership, Exhibitions, Publicity, Treasurer and Newsletter/Website. Under my leadership and with the invaluable support of the founder of Nordic 5 Arts, Kati Casida, we have also sponsored interesting lectures about two new projects of buildings for the arts currently under construction: the new expansion of SFMOMA by the Norwegian firm Snøhetta and the new BAM/PFA in Berkeley. After 6 years, I recruited Marc Ellen Hamel as my Co-coordinator, and we have shared duties during the past 4 years and collaborated on exhibitions, most



Helene with her photographs at the "Runes Revealed" exhibition at Sanchez Art Center, 2014.

notably *"Runes Revealed,"* our successful group show last year at Sanchez Art Center in Pacifica, CA, an exhibition that generated much interest and will be shown again at the San Pablo Art Gallery in July and August, 2015.

Q: If you were to describe the benefits of leadership in Nordic 5 Arts in ten words or less, what would those words be?

A: Words that come to my mind are collaboration, professionalism, creativity, planning and curating interesting and successful exhibitions.

Q: Share about one peak experience you have had in connection to this group.

A: In 2012, Nordic 5 Arts sponsored a lecture at UC Berkeley by Craig Dykers, the lead architect of Snøhetta. During this lecture, Mr. Dykers shared insights into his world renowned architectural firm and explained the designs for the extensive expansion of SFMOMA to a full auditorium. Kati Casida deserves credit for her vision and follow through in organizing this memorable event proudly sponsored by Nordic 5 Arts.

Q: What is the vision you hold for Nordic 5 Arts future?

A: As I turn the leadership over to Marc Ellen Hamel and Jenny Wantuch, I feel that Nordic 5 Arts is on the right track to continue to present excellent exhibitions and events based on our unique heritage, both in the San Francisco Bay Area and beyond.

Thank you, Helene Sobol, for your wonderful feedback! For those of you interested in learning more about Helene and her work as an artist, take a look at: www.HeleneSobol.com

artist news

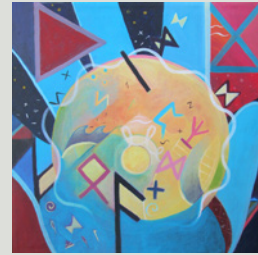


Margareta Bergman participated in "Art in April" at Jessel Gallery, Napa, CA. Colette Crutcher has recently completed two public art projects: mosaics on three sculptures at Taraval and 48th Ave in San Francisco and a tiled fountain and bench at Jardin de Ninos Park in Redwood City, a collaboration with Aileen Barr. **Mark Erickson** is in a summer exhibition "Group Exhibition of American Painters - American Masters" during the months of May and June at Robert Green Fine Arts, 154 Throckmorton Ave, Mill Valley, CA. **Ellen Faris'** rabbit is one of 25 painted rabbits in "Beyond the Rabbit" which will be on exhibit at the Gallery at the Vacaville Museum, Vacaville, CA, April 25 - July 5, 2015. She will participate in the "Summer VIP Studio Show," June 6-7 at the Glashoff Sculpture Park, Fairfield, CA. In April, **Marc Ellen Hamel** donated her work "Lake Leaves" to benefit the Nordic Heritage Museum. She had a solo show at Indian Springs Gallery, Calistoga, CA, April 19 - May 30. In September, Marc Ellen will be in a two-person show at Main Street Artists Gallery in Quincy, CA. **Kristin Lindseth** was in the "50th Anniversary Exhibition" at the Triton Museum of Art, Santa Clara, CA, April-May 2015. In March-April, she was in "Bradley International Print and Drawing Exhibition," Bradley University, Peoria, IL, and "Spring Sculpture Exhibition," Oakwilde Ranch and Sculpture, Valley Springs, CA. In March, **Maj-Britt Mobrand** (weavings) and **Barbara Stevens-Strauss** (ceramics) were in a two person show, "Texture Times Two" at Eddie Rhodes Gallery, Contra Costa College, San Pablo, CA (photo above.) **Anne Oseberg** showed in "Women's View" March - April at Caldwell Gallery, Redwood City Court House, Redwood City, CA. Her work can be seen in "No Limits - Freedom to Create" at Los Altos Hills Town Hall, Los Altos Hills, CA, through August 28, 2015. In May, UCSF procured 3 of **Helene Sobol's** Bark Series photographs. **Elizabeth Stokkebye** and **Ellen Faris** have been juried into the book "American Art Collector" which will be published in October, 2015, alcovebooks.net

East Bay Pro Arts June 6-7 & 13-14, 2015

Mark Erickson - Olivia Eielson - Maj-Britt Mobrand - Lee Williams

upcoming exhibition



RUNES REVEALED

RN+MS RMPMFMX

Paintings, prints, sculpture, photography, ceramics, and textiles by
Pat Bengtson-Jones, Kati Casida, Colette Crutcher, Olivia Eielson, Jason Engelund, Ellen Faris,
Pam Fingado, Marc Ellen Hamel, Russell Herrman, Maj-Britt Hilstrom, Matlena Hourula,
Debra Jewell, Maj-Britt Mobrand, Kristin Lindseth Rivera, Maj-Britt Mobrand,
Loren Rehbock, Diane Rusnak, Helene Sobol, Barbara Stevens-Strauss,
Elisabeth Stokkebye, Helena Tiainen, Jenny Wantuch and Lee Williams

July 25 - August 23, 2015

Reception July 25, 1-3 PM

San Pablo Art Gallery

13831 San Pablo Avenue, Bldg. 4, San Pablo, CA 94806
510-882-8673



Elizabeth Stokkebye, *Wunjo, Raidho, Gebo*, Oil, 19" x 39"
Above: Helena Tiainen, *Inspired*, Acrylic, 18" x 18"

four nordic 5 art sculptors in Greece

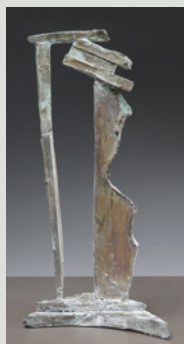


Magic Carpet Ride

San Francisco Bay Area Sculptors
Meet Athenian Sculptors

September 2 - October 17, 2015

ekfrasi-yaanna grammatopoulou gallery
Athens, Greece



The Pacific Rim Sculpture Group in the San Francisco Bay Area is one of three Chapters in the International Sculpture Center. In 2014, our Chapter reorganized and it was decided to expand our exhibition venues and "go global." In view of Greece's rich tradition of ancient art and architecture, we felt that a group exhibition with Athenian sculptors would be a worthwhile exercise in international cooperation



and understanding, expanding our horizons and our appreciation of a great culture half a world away.

Kati Casida
"Magic Carpet Ride" Exhibition catalog

Clockwise from upper left:
Kristin Lindseth, *Tatiana*, Bronze, 12" x 4" x 6"
Pat Bengtson-Jones, *Ancient Ruins III*, Bronze,
7" x 3.5" x 4"
Kati Casida, *Firefly*, Painted aluminum,
19" x 30" x 11"



Maj-Britt Hilstrom, *Woven Wave V*, French red marble and titanium diptych, 8.75" x 17" x 0.75"



writing is so hard! *

By Elizabeth Stokkebye

I've been painting lately. And I love it. For me, it is not as hard as writing. But I like writing. And I want to write. But it seems like such an endless process. With a painting I'm done at some point. With a story, I can go back and revise and revise. I like to write blogs, because they are done when they are done. But right now, I'm writing a novel and that is HARD! I believe there is more thinking involved with writing or perhaps, your critic sits closer to your ear; for me, I always hear the critic. I do think about what to paint before I get started, but to lean in and let form, shape, color, take over is cool! How do I lean in to my writing? I would like to know.

To paint is solitary. To write is solitary. But I have found that I need writing partners more than I need painting partners. I know many artists and we get together socially and we meet at Art Fairs, at exhibits, at art fundraisers and so on, but I don't meet socially with writers - with them I meet professionally. To help each other out. To critique each other. To read each other's work. As a writer you DO NEED a reader. Unmistakably. But as a painter you can manage without the viewer until you're done. You follow what you like and paint it. Then it is up to the viewer whether (s)he likes it. In writing you are faced with more rules: word choice, grammar, syntax, show instead of tell, and so on... it is difficult but very worth while.

My painting above is called "Let it Rain" and the paint brushes raining down symbolize letting art flow through you. The silhouette on the right is the director, the critic, the one that thinks she knows... and the figure to the left is the human swallowed by faith, by belief, that there is only one way...

*Printed with permission. Read this and more blogs on ElizabethStokkebye.com

Illustration: "Let it Rain," Oil and crushed oyster shells on canvas, 36" x 36"

view the "runes revealed" catalog www.blurb.com/b/5384442-runes-revealed

The nordic 5 arts NEWSBRIEF is published in spring and fall. Edited and designed by Helene Sobol.

The publication supports and promotes artists with Nordic heritage in the San Francisco Bay Area. Subscription \$10; membership dues \$25.

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Thank you to those who contributed material and photos to this issue.