life drawing classes r cool
dont know much about art
just like looking @ naked people
need to renew studio membership

HAPPY NEW YEAR — UNLESS the Mayans are to be believed!

Under the cloud of imminent world doom The Art Studio is undaunted in its efforts to make our last year on earth a memorable one.

We’ve got off to a good start with some much needed improvements underway. You will find new fence poles installed thanks to the generosity of Philip Griec and his crew at Tundray-wong. This will match the funding we received to secure the back section of the building and offer better parking for our patrons. We still have funds to get the fence link and caps, clamps and hinges to complete the project. If you are experienced in chain link fence we would love to hear from you. We’d rather do it right the first time than to do it my way. Help!

Along with the fence, restriping of the parking lot and lighting are on our hit list.

Another much needed repair from Ike was the overhead door which will be done by the time you read this. We opted for a Tangerine color and a wind rated roll-up that will withstand the forces of nature and offers relief from hot Southeast Texas nights. The door is a wish granted by the Foundation for Southeast Texas and we are excited about the vote of confidence from a wonderful foundation.

We hope the world still exists in 2013 because there are still more things to do. We are fighting termites at every turn and the next victim is the wall going into the office area. If you notice, the door jam looks like a scratching post for a grizzly bear! Most of that wall is hollow with a very thin paint exterior.

We are currently replacing the dam-aged wall in the dark room thanks to Gabe Sellers, volunteer and student in the Lamar art department.

The strength of an organization is based on it’s volunteers and these days we are very strong. Without people, The Studio is a dusty pile of bricks serving no purpose.

Twenty-five years ago, group of citizens from Silsbee lead by Barbara Pavet decided that the arts are so important that they would like to ensure the children of Silsbee get a healthy dose of visual and performing arts during their formative years. The perform-

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From: @elk
Illuminating Books

FROM SKINS TO CODEX. MEDIEVAL MANUSCRIPTS TOOK TIME, SKILL TO PRODUCE

W H A T W O U L D Y O U U S E to write on if you lived 600 years ago in Medieval Europe, where you didn’t have pen, paper or pencil? I ask my students, visiting the Stark Museum of Art on a field trip where they will see manuscripts from the Middle Ages. They pause together in silence for several long moments before the room echoes with guesses: “Tree bark! Leaves!” — and then, the winning guess from the child of a hunter: “Animal skin.”

Parchment, I explain, is the skin of a cow, sheep, or goat used for pages of medieval books. I pass around a few scraps of vellum, the skin of a calf, and as they study its texture, I explain that parchment was made from the skin of the animal, which was removed and the end was cut to form the writing nib, which held ink and drew it down to the tip. The skull of the quill was cut at a different angle depending on whether the scribe wanted to write with a rounded or angular script.

Medieval scribes made their ink by hand. One of the most common, called iron-gall ink, was created from oak galls. Galls are growths on an oak tree created when an insect lays eggs on its bark. The tree surrounding the eggs to protect itself, and eventually the insects hatch, bore a hole in the gall and fly out. This natural material is rich in tannic acid, which made an ink that darkened over time and was permanent.

The scribe wrote each letter of each word out by hand, erasing mistakes by scraping off a thin layer of parchment in a small area with a knife.

When his task was complete, the pages went to the illuminator, whose job it was to illuminate, or “light up” the parchment with golden and brightly colored illustrations. By the mid-12th century, the book trade was highly organized and employed a large number of people, including women. Many illuminators were fairly wealthy, especially those who worked for rich or royal patrons.

The tasks of manuscript making were increasingly specialized, and a large number of craftsmen might work on a single book, which could take years to complete.

Frequently, illuminators employed apprentices who worked on lesser illustrations in the book, and sometimes several artists would collaborate in a workshop setting to produce illuminations. The junior artists learned by executing the borders or lesser initials, and the important miniatures were saved for the master.

The illuminator first outlined the image in ink. For luxury books, gold leaf was used to light up the pages. The patron would decide upon this expensive material in advance. Gold coins were beaten together with a tree sap called gum arabic to form liquid paint.

Medieval paintmaking was often a dangerous task. While paint was made from white lead, created through a process that often poisoned its producers, lead was also an important source of red. In fact, the Latin word for red lead, minium, is where the word for the illustration of a manuscript comes from. It was only later that minium took on the meaning of “small” that we have for it today, and this was because of a small size of the illustrations the word first described. Mercury and sulfur mixed and reduced with vinegar. This paint source was used to color parchment pages with bone folder, top, and a quill pen held in an exhibition of medieval manuscripts at the Stark Museum of Art in Orange through Feb. 25.

The final step after the glue had dried was to furnish the gold with a smooth tooth or polished stone until it shone. It was important for the gold leaf to be applied before the color because otherwise the burnishing might scratch the paint off the page.

Paints were created by hand from ground minerals, natural dyes from plants, insects, and chemically produced colors. Most of the organic materials used for paint were broken up with a mortar and pestle, crushed into pigment, and then ground further with a little water in pastes from which they were then spread with a quill pen onto vellum and dried. Most of the pigments were manual and the final step was to burnish the gold leaf to bring it out.

Gold leaf was often used in place of the very expensive egg whites, known as gesso, or with a tree sap called gum arabic to form liquid paint.

When freshly glazed was used, medieval painters added a bit of curcuma to break up the bubbles, a fact that fascinates the middle-school boys who visit the museum. Every color of paint required a slightly different method of creation. Part of the medieval painter’s craft was knowing how much grinding each pigment required, which material to use for each color of the rainbow, and which additions could best bring out those colors.

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**Two Russians in the American Southwest**

Over the rounded sides of the Rockies, the aspens of autumn, Like yellow hair of a tigress brindled with pines. Down on my hearth-rug of desert, sage of mesa, An ash-grey pelt Of wolf all hairy and level, a wolf’s wild pelt.

— D.H. Lawrence, *Autumn in Taos*

Nestled at the foot of the Sangre de Cristo Mountains, the picturesque town of Taos, New Mexico, was a Mecca for artists and writers in the 1920s. Its breathtaking views, unique light and a fascinating mix of Hispanic and American Indian cultures had attracted creative people since the end of the 19th century. However, most of them preferred to come for a season and then return to their residences at established art centers on the east coast or in the Midwest. It was not until the decade after World War I that the town became the locale of a formidable arts community, which included newcomers from far-away lands, such as Englishman D.H. Lawrence and John Young-Hunter as well as Russians Nicolai Fechin and Leon Gaspard.

The two Russian artists could not have been more different from each other — in personality, background, artistic sensibilities and the way their life in Taos unfolded. Nicolai Fechin (1881-1955) was a reticent man, for whom his art and family, wife Alexandra and daughter Eya, were the center of his universe. He painted in a variety of genres; however, an important part of his body of work is represented by portraits. His images reveal a profound interest in the sitter’s character which he studied with the intensity of a psychologist prodding into the depth of the human soul. His canvases bear a mark of his own emotional nature, which was hidden from the eyes of outsiders. They typically are interspersed with broad strokes of clashing, height colors energetically applied with a palette knife, which he preferred to a more common brush. His art is a storm that enraptures the viewer by its beauty and drama. At the time of his arrival in Taos, Fechin was a renowned artist of national and international reputation. He studied at the most prestigious art school in Russia, St. Petersburg Academy of Fine Arts, under famous artist Ilya Repin. After his graduation in 1909 and a period of European travel, he enjoyed an illustrious career as a portraitist and also taught at the art school in his native city of Kazan on the Volga River. His works were shown in numerous exhibitions in Russia and in other countries, including the United States. Finding himself unable to adjust to a new way of life in post-revolutionary Russia, Fechin emigrated to the United States coming first to New York and then relocating to Taos in 1927.

In contrast to aloof, introverted Fechin, Leon Gaspard (1882-1956) was an outgoing person, an engaging storyteller and a world traveler with an avid interest in exotic cultures. In the early 1910s and early 1920s, he extensively traveled in Central and Eastern Asia — in Siberia, Mongolia, Tibet and China. In his vibrant, impressionistic paintings he recorded traditions and everyday life of these nations that were virtually unknown to European and American audiences. The stories of his adventures in those wild and mysterious lands, such as Russians Nicolai Fechin and Leon Gaspard.

Nicola Fechin (1881-1955), JOE WITH ORU, undated Oil on canvas, 24 x 20 inches, Stark Museum of Art, 31.38.13

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A R T I S T S  M A K E  A R T . A N D  
when artists make art, good things happen.

Marty Arredondo never stops making art, so when the exhibition scheduled for February at The Studio fell through, Arredondo was a logical choice to fill the gap at short notice.

His brightly-colored paintings are a fixture in the local arts scene, but this is his first show at TASI since ‘Criador Anima’ in 1994. This show, which opens Feb. 4 and runs through Feb. 25, is ‘Criador Anima Dos.’

“I didn’t know what to call it at first — maybe ‘The Short Notice,’” Arredondo said, breaking into a laugh. “It means ‘Creating Spirit.’ It actually has several different meanings in different slang, but that’s what I’m going with.”

The self-taught artist says that he is just a doodler.

“That started when I was just a child, doodling in my room with a pencil and paper on the old school books,” he says.

Arredondo recalls that after he had a piece at a show at Houston’s Lawndale Art Center, a reviewer in glasstire.com said “there’s always one in a crowd — the doodler.”

“He said some other things as well, that I’m visceral, but I got a kick out of that,” Arredondo says.

There is a trend in the art world to recognizing “outsider art” category — artists with no formal training — a label Arredondo is happy to claim.

“When I was young I was pushed toward sports, which I liked,” he says. “But I always knew — knew, but not understanding — that there was something else I wanted to be doing. It was when I got out of high school that I found it as my outlet.”

While he was in school, Arredondo drew on glass with India ink, a process that is reversed from normal, with the outlines going on first. Following high school, Arredondo was on his own and says that led him to begin to explore art more fully.

“It was being bored that did it. I was on my own and poor. I had to make do with what I had. I always had the India ink pens to draw on glass, so any opportunity I had to get a piece of glass…. It’s pretty sad,” he says with a laugh.

“I learned how to stretch canvas and prime wood and I went from there,” he says. Then I started painting cars and when I started spray-painting it didn’t take long before I thought, ‘I can put these together.’

Arredondo works at Vin’s Body Shop in Mid-County painting cars, something he has done for 24 years.

“I had a friend who worked at a body shop and I started out washing cars before a friend taught me how to spray,” he says. “I like it, man. It’s always fast-paced, it’s always different.”

Several years ago he discovered Createx, a water-based car paint. It is meant to be sprayed, but Arredondo also uses a brush with the occasional spray.

“It is similar to the paint that we use on cars, but it’s water based. You can experiment with the colors.”

The paint has to be coated with “clear” to protect it, which gives his paintings their distinctive sheen.

Arredondo’s work is distinctive but he doesn’t work to a particular theme.

“I just pretty much go with scattered emotions,” he says. “It’s always a spur of the moment thing — whatever happens I seldom ever start out knowing what I’m going to do. I would say that 90 percent of them start out by experimenting with colors. Then, if I see some-
A detail from painti...Gaspard, 1964, in the Stark Museum of Art collection.

The exhibition "From Russia: Fechin and Gaspard" marks the boundary between the nave and the altar or iconostasis, which "expresses the two parts of the world that are present in America or in Asia. For example, compare Toiyabe with the ... Bighorn Mountains, and the peoples of Asia whom he encountered during his travels across the Gobi Desert. Sometimes it is hard to tell whether the scene portrayed in his work is taking place in America or in Asia, and the same is true of the Christmas Fireside and Sunrise of Manchuria. Both paintings are characterized by scenes filled with life and a certain amount of color in which people dressed in colorful clothes driving a winding path in the woods. Fechin also found life so colorful that he could not help but make the most of his permanent residence. He personally designed and built his home, which was made of materials from his own ... "Although it probably looked a lot worse than it really was, Gaspard" in 1964, they became the artist’s official biographer. However, they attended the school later, notwithstanding Gaspard’s claims that he and Chagall weren’t French speaking students, practically all artistically-minded youngsters of Russian background who lived close to Vitebsk received their first instruction in art at Piotr’s school, including such famous artists as Marc Chagall, Ossip Zadkine and El Lissitzky. However, they attended the school later, notwithstanding Gaspard’s claims that he and Chagall were classmates. Schulman was one of Piotr’s first students. Piotr was impressed with his artistic talent and financially supported him when Schulman went to Paris to continue his studies.

Young Leiba Schulman came to Paris at the most exciting time. At this same point in time, Nikolai Fechin was being disturbed under energetic attack of modernists. He found it hard to accept the fact that he had neither a real solid idea, but with a lot of plates I start with a real solid idea, but with a lot of ideas. For these organism drawings, she mixed them together to create her own color templates to sculpt individual tiny pieces. On one piece, the individual plates are made from the plastic bottles of a brush that she uses to inlay with.
The LAMAR UNIVERSITY THEATRE DEPARTMENT presents THE BOUVIN QUEEN OF LERNEAN, by Martin McDonagh, in the Deter Auditorium, 2417 Fennell Dr. The play is a new interpretation of the ancient tale of the Boeotian hero Theseus and the Minotaur’s maze which ultimately leads to a devastating climax, asking the question to us if sometimes bodies of hatred between people are stronger than bonds of love.

Don’t apologize, I over reacted. This time a smile across his face accompanied with a nod, I turned to look at her again. Neither knowing what to say. For a while they sat in silence. He must be a poet, dreaming. The moon radioed her sultry signal to earth. The feather bed crinkled as I witnessed history. A cold chill manifest as I witnessed history. A lil’after nine a.m.… frantic as he was. Nearly to sunrise, I’ll dance near to her. I’ll dance with her. I’ll dance with her. I will smoke kinicinic with seizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized in part, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized.

For the People… of America.

Eye. So I wrote the song “People of America,” and now it is published in my first book, The Moon Radiated Her Sultry Signal. The novel radiated her salutary signal to earth. “You’ll always be beautiful to me.” I will smoke kinicinic with seizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized in particular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. I will be seized. Withseizures of solemnity, which mean nothing in particular. I will be seized inparticular. Which mean nothing in particular. I will be ...
yellow on the page, but medieval painters did have yellow paint. Saffron, or the stigma of the crocus flower, was simply mixed with a little water and glaze to make a bright paint. Orpiment, a sulfide of arsenic imported from Asia Minor, was a vivid yellow used to imitate gold in manuscript painting. Orpiment, however, reacted chemically when mixed with verdigris or lead white.

Perhaps the most famous color in medieval book paint- ing is blue, used to represent the Virgin Mary. One of the most expensive sources of color was used to create the most brilliant blue paint: the semi-precious stone lapis lazuli, from Afghanistan. The stone contains impurities of calcium and iron pyrites, which when powdered created only a disappointing gray pigment. The ultramarine blue particles in the stone were separated from these impurities through a complicated technique that involved making powdered lapis lazuli with wax, oil and resin, and then housing this paste under water until the blue separated out. Wealthy medieval patrons hosted the bill for this expensive ultramarine blue, but there were many sources of slightly less dazzling blue available to medieval painters.

The illuminator often painted with thin washes of color, and it was common for the painter to work on several Illustrations at once, using one color at a time. For example, the artist might apply all the greens on a few pages and then move on to adding the reds. This way, he needed only to mix up color once for several illuminations.

Washes were overlaid with shadows and highlights, and sometimes the folds of figures’ garments were defined with gold lines.

The final step of illumination was often to outline large areas of gold leaf with ink. When the scribe had written the text with his pen, and the gold leaf was applied and burnished, and the illuminator had painted the miniatures, borders and initials with his handmade paints, the pages of the manuscript were folded and arranged in gatherings, or nervled groups of four pages. These gatherings were ordered, stacked atop each other and rested on a sewing frame, a tool used to keep them aligned. These gatherings were ordered, stacked atop each other and rested on a sewing frame, a tool used to keep them aligned. These gatherings were ordered, stacked atop each other and rested on a sewing frame, a tool used to keep them aligned. These gatherings were ordered, stacked atop each other and rested on a sewing frame, a tool used to keep them aligned.

Thread was bound between two covers made of wooden boards. The fine cords were laced through channels carved in the boards, and then the book was covered with leather. The book was often decorated with leather tooling, jewels and metals. These sturdy wood and leather covers protected the delicate paintings and gold leaf in these special books for centuries, so that they might continue to be appreciated as precious objects of beauty today by young students and older visitors alike, in collections such as that of the Stark Museum of Art.

The exhibit Medieval Manuscripts, on view through Feb. 25, displays four books from the 10th and 11th cen- turies along with the materials of their making. Stop by to see the beetle bodies, lapis lazuli, gold leaf and calfskin that, to my students’ delight, were the art supplies of choice in the Middle Ages.

Amelia Wiggins is public programs educator at the Stark Museum of Art in Orange.
JOIN US
FOR ART OPENINGS ON
THE FIRST SATURDAY
OF THE MONTH

THIS MONTH:
CRIADOR ANIMA DOS
MARTY ARREDONDO

WITH GUESTS BENSON AUSTIN AND CHRIS COX
FEBRUARY 4
GALLERY RECEPTION IS 7-10 P.M.

This project is funded in part by the Texas Commission on the Arts, Dishtrust, Entergy, HEB, and the Vic Rogers Foundation through the Southeast Texas Arts Council.