

What a Convention!

Bob and I arrived in Raleigh, NC on Thursday, the day before the convention 's "grand opening". It was the first time I had been to Raleigh, and the first time the International Association of Pastel Societies Convention had been held on the east coast. And, what FUN!

Our "festivities" began right away, as we continuously "bumped into" friends whom we hadn't seen since the last convention two years ago. Bob went off to help at the registration desk while I settled into our room.

At 4:30 I went down to join the crowd watching the Paint Around. Imagine five easels arranged in a circle, with five paintings started by five different artists. During the next hour, each artist rotated every ten minutes to work on the next painting, so that by the end each artist had worked on each piece at least once. Quite a lot of excitement and energy in that room! The paintings came out really well, and were auctioned off on Saturday to raise funds for the IAPS Education Fund.

Later that evening we went to the Welcoming Reception/Dinner and met more "old" and "new" friends. (On our long drive home, Bob and I decided that the very best part of each IAPS Convention is seeing and meeting friends.)

The next day, after a quick stop in the Hospitality Room for coffee, I was one of hundreds of participants who crowded into the ballroom to see Albert Handell's 3-hour demonstration. With two large screens set up at either end of the room, there was no "bad" seat in the house. After the demo I took a stroll through the Exhibit Room where the product booths were set up and offering special buys to IAPS members only. I managed to leave that room with my budget still intact (whew!), and went on to attend a demonstration by Greg Biolchini, and a presentation by Alan Flattmann. That evening we went to a gallery in downtown Raleigh to attend the opening reception of the IAPS Eighth Juried Exhibition. We rounded out the night with a group of friends at the Southend Brewery/Smokehouse (very good food) which we "discovered somewhere" in Raleigh.

The next day, Saturday, I held a "Pastels Made Easy" book signing in the Exhibit Room. Later I gave my Pastels Sull'Oro talk. It was the first time that I had given this presentation, and I enjoyed seeing participants' reactions to this new pastel and gold leaf technique.

Saturday evening we attended the Convention Banquet, and enjoyed Keynote Speaker (Editor-in-Chief of "American Artist" magazine) Steve Doherty's talk. He spoke of the different painting opportunities and trips that American Artist and artist advocates, such as members of the Forbes family, have organized over many years, and his hopes for future collaborations. The IAPS Master Circle Awards and the IAPS Golden Mentor Award were also presented at the Banquet. I am so very honored to be among the first recipients of the IAPS Master Circle Award. And my husband Bob was very pleased to receive the IAPS Golden Mentor Award.

On Sunday morning I offered my Pastels Sull'Oro presentation again, and in the afternoon attended a demonstration by Glenna Hartmann. That evening, we had the honor of representing the Pastel Painters Society of Cape Cod at the IAPS President's Dinner. Early Monday morning found us driving back to Massachusetts (14 hours!). The Convention was over for two more years...