

Northern California Society of Botanical Artists
ACTIVITIES ANNUAL REPORT 2017, September 16
Liz Stroh-Coughlin

While our major focus this calendar year as a chapter has been on the ASBA conference, your Regional Reps managed to craft 10 unique and varied offerings (summarized below). We offered several lectures/tours, hosted workshops with 4 of our member artists, will be hosting an internationally re-known artist from India, Mahaveer Swami, in October and have provided several outdoor sketching/hikes and tours – all in keeping with the member's survey requests 2 years ago. Mother Nature forced us to cancel a few attempts at Jasper Ridge but Ruth will try again this coming year.

We are just starting to plan our regional events for the 2018 calendar year. We would love to hear from all of you regarding suggestions or requests for future offerings. Please feel free to contact your regional reps or me with your ideas. I want to applaud our reps on an awesome year!

North Bay – Bernard Halliwell and Kristin Jakob

“Sketching Day at the Russian River Rose Company” held in Healdsburg, on the first weekend of May. The garden was remarkably beautiful at this peak of the rose bloom. Everywhere one looked there were masses of rose blossoms. People sat in the sea of roses and sketched.

The next event to be held will be in the beautiful foliage garden of “Circle Oak Ranch” in Petaluma, on September 23, 2017. Approximately 15 people are expected to attend for a day of sketching, in graphite, colored pencil, pen and ink, or watercolor.

On November 4, 2017, there will be one-day workshop to explore drawing in silverpoint.

San Francisco and Peninsula – Ruth Cox

“Insider Tour of Conservatory of Flowers”. Docent/members Ali Walker and Marguerite Murphy gave us wonderful personalized tours on June 13. We will hope to reschedule a similar event later in the year (post conference) or early 2018!

Members participated in a “public outreach event” in partnership with the Conservatory of Flowers which was held in front of the Conservancy on July 1. We had an enthusiastic response. We provided hands on demonstrations and conversations about the botanical art form. A similar event could be repeated in 2018.

Ruth has been assisting Danny with planning for the Nov. Board meeting.

East Bay – Walter Denn

“Jepson Herbaria Lecture and Tour”, University of California, Berkeley, CA.
On January 23, Assistant Director for Collections and Curator of Cultivated Plants, Andrew Doran, gave us an inspiring tour of the Jepson Herbaria. Research Botanist Ingrid Jordan-Thyden, also gave a lecture on the history of Botanical Illustration. We saw examples from the in-house botanical library collections and original plates of illustrations, curated by archivist Amy

Kasameyer. And finally, Andrew gave a talk on the history of the UC Berkeley Botanical Garden, and his work on the digitized collections.

“Bonsai Garden Tour and Sketching Day”, Lake Merritt, Oakland, CA, On May 26, members of enjoyed a tour of the Bonsai Garden. Bob Gould led us on a docent tour at a relaxed pace to fully appreciate this graceful art form. The life stories of the trees under the care of the many volunteers who support the garden was explained.

South Bay – Celia Bakke and Beatrice Bergemont

“Doing a Plant Study in Graphite and Watercolor,” was presented by Maria Cecelia (Cissy) Freeman and hosted by Danny Swanson on March 28. Most of the attendees had not experimented with ‘water-soluble graphite’ which “forms a suspension in water, so it can be moved while moist.” Cissy initially reviewed the steps of ‘Getting to Know Your Plant’ and later demonstrated the technique of using graphite and watercolor to create a plant study. Everyone had the opportunity to create a study based on the borage specimens that Cissy provided.

“Creating Interesting Textures with Ink and Charcoal Dust” was presented by Ellie Yung Hui Tu on May 11, at Margi Connelly’s residence. Ellie provided handmade bamboo pens of different sizes, make-up sponges, luffas, ink and powdered charcoal for everyone to practice three different textures on Bristol paper: The attendees learned how to create textures for a banana, apple and kale.

“A workshop with Master Indian Miniature/Botanical Painter, Mahaveer Swami”

October 20 & 21, 2017, 10 am to 4 pm, Los Altos Hills Town Hall

Join Mahaveer Swami for an inspirational journey into the world of botanical and decorative arts. The study of plants has always stimulated artists’ imagination to create new naturalistic or decorative paintings representing or sublimating Mother Nature. During this 2-day session Mahaveer will demonstrate a few patterns of decorative paintings drawn during the early Indian history and more specifically during the Mughal period. A variety of patterns and designs will be available for participants to choose to nourish inspiration and eventually opening new doors to future aspiration.