

ISSA International Society of Scratchboard Artists

In this Issue

Letter from the President P.2

Meet the Board Members P.3

*Diana Lee
Patrick Hedges
Sue Rhodes*

Preparing Reference Material P.6

Feature Artist P.7
Carolyn Henry

Photographing Scratchboards P.9
Cathy Sheeter

Contests P.10

Events P.10

Member News/Opportunities P.11

Classifieds P.11

...and so it begins



** Three Capuchins 11x14 –
Scratchboard by Diana Lee*

All material printed in this magazine, written or depicted, is protected by copyright of this magazine and/or the artist and cannot be reproduced in any form without expressed, written permission.

All letters or contributions to the ISSA Newsletter are subjected to editing with no limits or liability.

We've arrived. From a simple idea, to brainstorming, to combined hours of hard work and cooperation, to this – physical evidence of the new (and only) Society of Scratchboard Artists. As individuals, we have already brought on monumental changes to the medium of scratchboard art. How much more will we be able to do together...

www.scratchboardsociety.com

info@scratchboardsociety.com

A Message from the President

Welcome ISSA members! I am so happy to be saying that! It's been a long journey from concept to being.

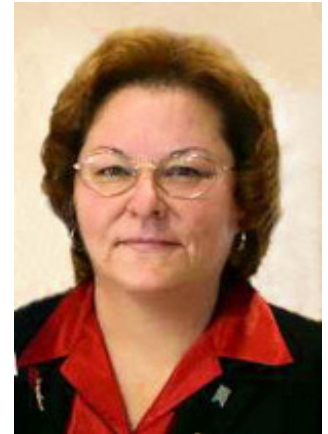
The first thing I would like to do is acknowledge the people who have volunteered an enormous amount of time and work to bring us to this day. While I am one of them, it was a group effort all the way. My many thanks and great appreciation go out to my friends and cohorts Cathy Sheeter, Patrick Hedges, Diana Lee, Sandra Willard, Sue Rhodes and Ken MacFarlane. You guys are the best! You'll learn more about them further in this newsletter or the next.

You should know by now that ISSA's aim is to improve the welfare, recognition and professional standing of scratchboard artists and to educate the public and artists communities that this new, yet very old medium has evolved and deserves the recognition of fine art status. I ask you do your part in your area of the world to help spread the word.

I'd also like to challenge all our new members to take an active part in the Society. The only way we will continue to grow and expand to meet our member's needs is through volunteers. New ideas are always needed and welcomed. We all joined ISSA for personal reasons, whether it was to expand our knowledge and artistic talent, to participate in shows, mentorship and networking or simply getting together on occasion with people who know what you're talking about when you say 'scratchboard'. I firmly believe you get out what you put in, which is one of the reasons I volunteered. If you want to get the most out of being a member, become more active, whether it is on one of the committees or at our shows. Contribute to the newsletter with articles, some tips or new tools you've tried out. We can always use more volunteers, in fact, we can't survive without them. Your feedback will also be more than appreciated!

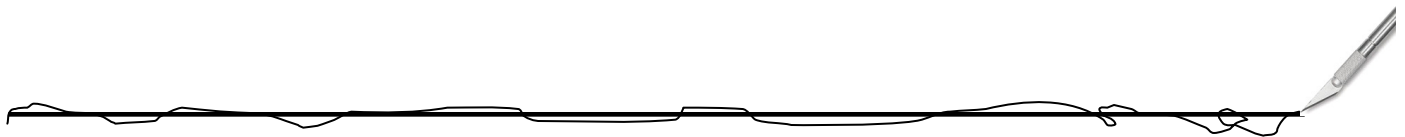
Happy Scratching!

Lorna Hannett MSA



Please make sure you mark the ISSA email address as a safe sender in your inboxes, so we don't end up in your junk mail. Also check our website often for important notices in between quarterly newsletters for updates.

This includes info about the upcoming jury for MSA and SSA.



Note from the Editor



...and so it has befallen me to compile and send out a newsletter for our new, highly esteemed International Society of Scratchboard Artists. As we develop, we may need to make a few adjustments and changes; we are a unique group and want to do what works for us, so bear with us in the meantime as we grow. If there are any suggestions, criticisms, submissions, or ideas please don't hesitate to get in touch with me at scratchboardart@gmail.com.

~ Natalie Langkopf

Meet the new ISSA Board Members

These are the people who have put in countless hours of work behind the scenes to get the ISSA up and running. We so appreciate everything they have done already, and have volunteered to continue to do in their individual capacities as board members. Due to time and space constraints, some individuals' introductions will be published in the next issue. The treasurer's position is currently vacant, and expressions of interest can be forwarded to info@scratchboardsociety.com.

Lorna Hannett, President
Patrick Hedges, Vice President
Vacant - Treasurer
Sandra Willard, Secretary

Cathy Sheeter, Exhibition Director
Diana Lee, Member at Large
Sue Rhodes, Member at Large



** Birdy Bunch 9 x 5 x 7" by Patrick Hedges*

Diana Lee, Member at Large ISSA

My name is Diana Lee and I am a scratchboard artist.



I live in Northern California amongst the redwoods, truly one of the most beautiful spots on earth. I am a mother and a grandmother. Having nine little potential models is the added bonus of having grandchildren.

Though I got my introduction to scratchboard while I was in high school in the early 1960s, I didn't work on it

seriously until thirty-five years ago and I didn't concentrate on it exclusively until eight years ago.

Finding other scratchboard artists and working alongside them has not only been a learning experience but also created a strong feeling of camaraderie. Though I have met only a few of these fellow artists in person, I have had an "e-relationship" with many of them for years, and consider them friends.

Scratchboard can be very diverse. I find I can work in black and white, color on black boards, and color on white boards. I can do portraits, still-lives, and animals. (and even an occasional landscape.) I can work loosely or with pin point accuracy. It is like any other medium in its diversity, but I know of no other medium that can produce such extreme detail. I love scratchboard and I love being a scratchboard artist.

www.dianalee.com



Patrick Hedges MSA, Vice President of ISSA

I was born in Uganda and raised in and around East Africa before leaving for England at the age of 14, and again to Australia in 1990. I have lived in Adelaide for the last 21 years.

My early life saw me on safari most weekends building a love of African animals and my family kept a large assortment of strange creatures as pets, from a zorilla (though not a skunk, it could be thought to be Africa's equivalent), a small antelope, owls and eagles, a heron and a pancake tortoise that was a flat as a – well – pancake, all the way through to snakes, both venomous and harmless, and many frogs. I incorporate these animals into my art but I also have a fascination for people which can be seen

in my many portraits.



I work in a variety of media but mainly scratchboard and soft pastels. I love detail and it's my wish to

communicate the soul of the subject by paying special attention to the eyes and facial features. My goal with my art is to allow the viewer to feel something and for that to happen, I need to feel it first. It may be compassion, pain, love or some other emotion, but if I've created it, it made me feel something in the first place and I hope to convey this to the viewer. I also have a goal of my art being instantly recognisable as a Patrick Hedges.



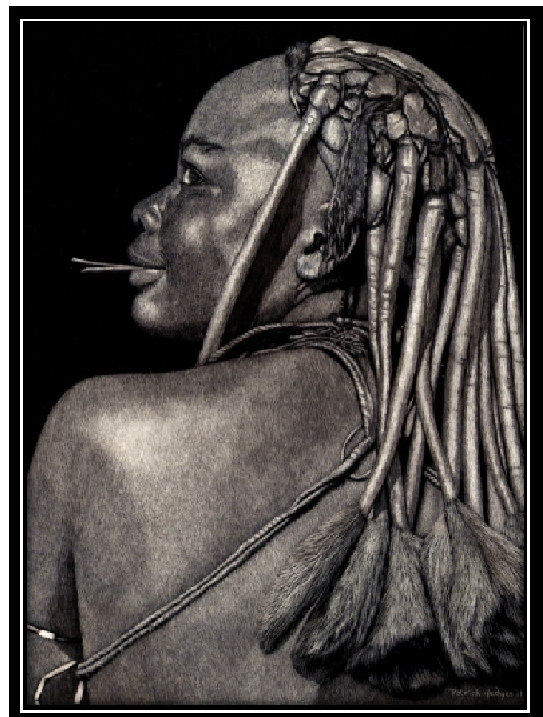
I have managed to pick up a few awards on my journey with a variety of wins and highly commended certificates, culminating in winning the Gold Award at the 2010 Wildlife Art Society of Australasia's major show and the 2011 President's Award for the same society, a massive honour for me.



I have also been published on many occasions in three different national Australian art magazines, mostly with demonstrations on the art of scratchboard.

I was one of the driving forces behind getting ISSA up and running though I am now surrounded by far more capable people where societies are concerned. My fellow board members are not only icons in the world of scratchboard, but hard working and dedicated. Their goal is to provide a platform that elevates scratchboard to its rightful place as one of the truly fine art mediums and I count myself as very privileged to be keeping company with them.

www.patrickhedges.com
patrickhedges@hotmail.com





Sue Rhodes is a Member at Large in on the ISSA Board. She also performs the duties for managing membership and the web updates. Sue started scratchboard in 2008 and is self taught.

www.suer.moonfruit.com



The Product & Technique Corner



Have any great ideas that you want to share with your fellow scratchers? Found some off-the-wall, never-heard-of tool that works great?? Let us know!

The Rubbing Alcohol Technique

Next time you'd like to remove large amounts of black ink from your scratchboard, try using rubbing alcohol. A small amount of rubbing alcohol on the end of a q-tip or paper towel will help dissolve the ink and leave you with a smooth texture. Apply it with a rubbing motion to smear the ink around and obtain a smoky or watery texture.... Great for backgrounds. Try it on a scrap board first so you can experiment with how much to use, how much pressure...it can take a lot off very quickly, so experiment first!

How to Prepare Reference Material

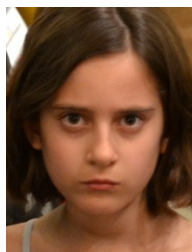
by Diana Lee, MSA, Member at Large ISSA

This is a demonstration of how I prepare reference material and my boards for a scratchboard.

I will start with a photograph taken at a local art show. It was intended to be a crowd shot, but when I saw the little girls face in the crowd and I knew I had to do a scratchboard of her.



- 1) After getting permission from the girl's mother I used the program Paint Shop Pro to crop the image to just the girls face, however there are many programs with the same capabilities that can be used.



- 2) I then gray scaled the image.



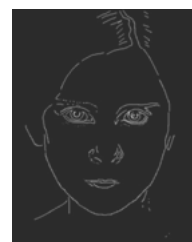
- 3) I brought up the highlights and deepened the darks by playing with the contrast and then I blackened in the background.



- 4) I created a line drawing using the absolute minimum amount of lines I will need to transfer the image to the board. I used green to create my line drawing so when I traced over the lines to transfer the image with a black pen I can be sure I did not miss any of the lines.



- 5) I transferred the image by laying the line drawing on the scratchboard and taping one edge of the paper to the board to prevent it from slipping out of place. I am careful not to let the tape touch the inked part of the board. I placed a piece of white Saral brand transfer paper between the drawing and the board making sure the white side of the transfer paper was down, facing the board. When I no longer need the lines on the board I can just wipe them off with a slightly damp cloth. I usually work the board around the lines first so I can eliminate the Saral lines early on, as the lines can smear quite easily. (Image 6)



- 6) Referring to the image I created in step 4) I scratched the surface using a #11 surgical scalpel blade placed in an X-Acto knife handle. Here is the completed image. (Image 7)



Feature Artist

In each issue we will feature a different member of the ISSA in this section so we get a chance to get to know each other a little better. One member will be randomly selected from the list of active, signature and master members on the ISSA website. However, if you know of someone who has done something exceptional in the last quarter, or won awards, or merits special recognition in any other way, we will always accept suggestions and recommendations for our feature artist.

Carolyn Henry

Carolyn is a 'mature age' artist from Australia who only started drawing and painting 6 years ago. She had never done any art before because she really didn't think she was any good. Within the first year of a TAFE course (tertiary college), she found her art being exhibited in a prestigious Portrait exhibition and winning an Art prize. She found she really enjoyed using pen and ink, so when she discovered scratchboard she felt like she had come home.

Carolyn first worked on a gorilla and then her cats before she realized that this was a great medium for figurative work. So her current project is creating a series of faces. Carolyn has decided to leave her mark making evident and also to leave parts of the portraits unfinished so that the viewer can realize that this is a piece of art rather than a photo. She uses an etching tool with a pin head to create her work. Carolyn has also been approached by people to do commissions.

It's hard to believe Carolyn when she says she only started six years ago! Her soft and accurate touch captures such expression! Watch for her series of faces when they are completed.

In her photo, Carolyn is standing beside her portrait of Morris Gleitzman, an Australian author. She apologized for not having a picture of herself with a scratchboard piece yet, but this photo is evident of her use of all mediums.



www.carolynhenryart.com



Photographing Scratchboard Works

by Cathy Sheeter, MSA, Exhibition Director ISSA

One common problem that people seem to have is getting good photos of their scratchboard art. You will need good photos for submitting to juries and shows. While a moderately poor quality photo might slide by at low levels for jury, usually they will result in rejection from higher level juries and competitive shows, and if they are too bad they can result in a juror or show not even considering your artwork further, even if your work is worthy of being in the show.

Although I own many expensive lenses for my expensive camera (Canon 7D), I actually use a fairly inexpensive lens to photograph my work. I use a canon 50mm f/1.8 lens, which can be purchased for around \$100. It will fit any canon DSLR body.

I will also include a sample taken with my point-and-shoot Canon camera (a Canon Powershot A710AS), which is at least four years old, so don't think you can only take 'good' photos for shows with a high end camera.

I only photograph with natural light and I photograph in shade or on bright overcast days. Photographing in direct sun makes the work look too 'contrasty' (whites look too bright and darks too dark) and brings out any imperfections in your varnish. Works before they are sprayed with varnish will also show fingerprints and shine from various tools and are typically more difficult to get good photos of. Even in the shade sometimes you will get a bit of glare, but it tends to be much worse in bright sunlight. Matte and satin varnishes will be easier to photograph than glossy sprays.

Next step is to change the exposure setting in your camera. I usually underexposing by about 2/3 of a stop to 1 full stop for black scratchboards. Because the majority of the board is black the camera reads all of the dark and tries to lighten everything up too much if left to its own device, so we need to tell it that we want it darker than it would normally shoot it. If you do not know how to change the exposure settings on your camera take a look in your owner's manual. Almost all cameras, even lower end digitals, allow you the ability to change the exposure setting. I then try to shoot at about the same level and angle as the piece, so that it will be almost square within the image. You also want your artwork to mostly fill

the frame with just a little bit of background around the edges. You can achieve this by either getting closer or zooming in. Be careful that you are not chopping off the edges or corners of your work. You can either lay your artwork flat and stand over it and shoot straight down for smaller works, or put your work upright and shoot straight at it.

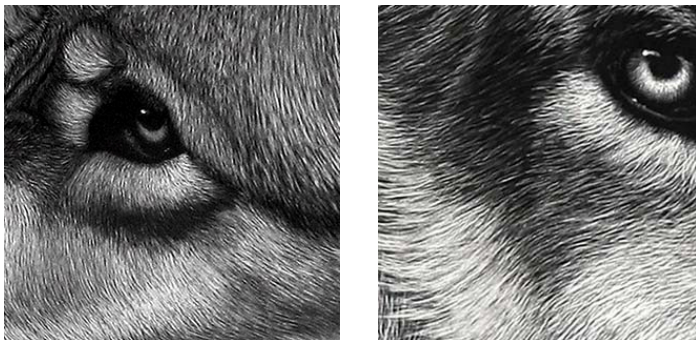
These are two sample images taken on my front porch straight out of the camera. The wolves mouth wrestling was taken with the point and shoot

and the staring wolves was taken with my DSLR. These works are both work in progress and not sprayed with fixative yet.



I generally take several photos so that I can choose which image is the sharpest. To see the sharpness zoom in and look at your images at 100%.

These photos show good sharpness at 100%.



You will need to have a photo editing program to edit your photos from this point forward. Some good programs are adobe photoshop (expensive, but great program), adobe photoshop elements (less expensive, still has many features) or gimp (can be downloaded for free, still has many features). These instructions will be for Photoshop CS3, but I will include links that show how to do the same things in elements and gimp too.

After the file is opened in my editing program I crop the image to the edges of the board. If I did not take my photograph perfectly square (which I usually don't) some things will look too wide/narrow, at a slight angle, etc. So when cropping, have it so that each edge is being touched at the widest point. From here you will adjust the image. Here are details on how to use free transform.



How to free transform with photoshop CS3

1. Hit F7 and it will open your layers palette. Go over to that sub-menu that opened and double click on the little image where it says 'background'. When the new layer screen pops up hit 'ok'.

2. Hit Control+t and it will bring put a little square around the edges of your image. You are in free transform mode at this point.

3. Right click on your image which will bring up the free transform menu and go to "skew"

4. Pull on the corners that you need to move in or out or up or down to make the image square. After you are done adjusting them hit enter and it will take effect.

5. If needed crop it again go ahead and do that.

6. Go into the layer heading and near the bottom in one that says "Flatten Image". Click on that.

From that point I then adjust the contrast with level. I make sure to get the whites back to white and the darks dark. Ampersand scratchboard is not pitch black, but rather a matte black, so sometimes taking that dark slider too far you will lose subtle midtones. Next I desaturate black and white images. This gets rid of any color cast. If the image is color I will adjust the color sliders until I get it close to the right colors. If the image is black and white I go into the color sliders and adjust the yellow in the highlight spectrum to about -4 (toward the yellow) since the clay has a slight warm cast to it. Lastly I sharpen my image using Filter >Sharpen> Unsharp Mask (USM). For USM I usually use settings of Amount 80% and 110% and radius .4 and 1.1 Leave threshold at 0. Adjust until it looks good. Here are my edited images once I am done.

For each image I spend maybe 3-5 minutes working on it to get it square and contrast about right.



Check out this link on how to transform with Gimp. It is called Transform Graphic in this program.

<http://www.designyourownweb.com/gimp/transform-image-gimp.htm>

For instructions on skewing with photoshop elements go to: http://www.ehow.com/how_5931800_skew-photoshop-elements-4.html

Cathy Sheeter, MSA,
Exhibition Director of ISSA
www.aphelionart.com



Contests

Occasionally on the Scratchboard section of the Wetcanvas forum, small contests have been held, sometimes involving different challenges and/or art exchanges. Now that we have a newsletter, we'd like to see these contests featured here along with the resulting winners. Different individuals have facilitated the contests in the past and we'd like to know if any of these individuals (or anybody else) would like to start another one. For sake of ease, they can be hosted on the Wetcanvas forum, but for those that do not subscribe to the forum, the newsletter would be a good way to involve everybody and officially post results. The first official newsletter challenge will be posted in the next quarterly edition. If you have an idea or submission for the challenge or would like to facilitate it, please contact the editor.

Upcoming Events

Plans are underway for a 2012 exhibition with schedule workshops. We plan to have more information to provide you in the next quarterly newsletter.

Applying for Juried Shows



When applying for juried shows it is important for applicants to read the guidelines carefully before submitting their application.

Sizing of artwork samples is important so that jurors can properly view the images to evaluate them.

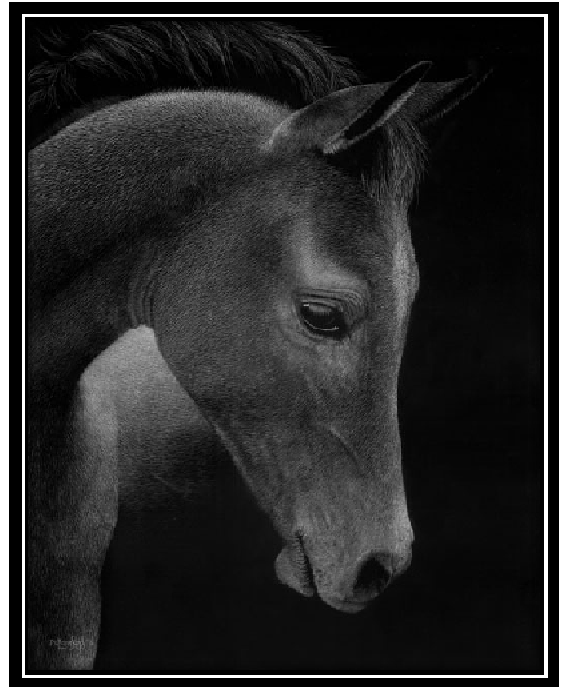
Naming of images in a certain way keeps image titles grouped with the artist.

All applicants are asked to follow these guidelines to make it easier for viewing and storage. Anyone not doing so could very well be turned down when entering a show, just because they didn't take the time to size their images or name them properly.

Member News / Opportunities / Notices

We'd like to hear about your upcoming events, or special opportunities that have come your ways. How about special occasions or successes at shows?...this is the place for it all.

*I had a booth with my artwork at the Canadian Finals Rodeo in November 2011, and while at the 5 day show I demonstrated the scratchboard technique on an 11x14 of a foal I was working on. Three weeks after the show, I received a call from a lady who seen me at the show and wanted to know if my demo board was done. She said it brought tears to her eyes because it reminded her so much of a stallion that she once had. She was thrilled to discover that it was completed and available, and she purchased it over the phone, even though she hadn't even seen the finished product. She also suggested the title 'Black' for the piece along with a little dedication to her horse, which I will post alongside the board when I upload it to my website. It was a wonderful feeling to have such a happy customer!
~ Natalie Langkopf*



Classifieds

Got something you don't use anymore that someone else might love? Looking for something in particular? Looking for a mentor? A great tool or idea that you would like to share with fellow scratch artists? Check out the scratchboard classifieds.

Wanted	For Sale/Give away
<p>Vacant Treasurer Position</p> <p>We are currently seeking a volunteer for the vacant Treasurer's position on the ISSA Board. Those that are interested can please contact info@scratchboardsociety.com.</p>	
<p>Shipping</p> <p>I am looking for someone in the Edmonton/Calgary, Alberta area that would be interested in sharing shipping costs for large scratchboard orders from Dickblick (or other scratchboard suppliers) from the US. I live near Edmonton, but I can easily get anything to Calgary for free. Please contact Natalie at scratchboardart@gmail.com if you are interested.</p>	