

Realism on the Hudson

American Artists Professional League presents its annual small works show in a historic landmark

You don't have to drive very far north of New York City before the urban landscape opens up into the Hudson Valley and the charming hamlets where artists, poets and writers have found refuge from the city, and inspiration for centuries.

One of those towns is Beacon, New York. Located 60 miles north of Manhattan on the Hudson River, Beacon is known for its Victorian architecture, boutiques and vibrant arts scene.

A highlight this month is the American Artists Professional League's annual *Realism on the Hudson* exhibition at Beacon's historic Howland Cultural Center, which opens March 2 and continues through April 14.

Occupying two floors of the Howland Cultural Center's Northcutt Hall Gallery, the juried exhibition will feature nearly 100 small works of traditional realism by 80 premier AAPL member artists working in the genre today. Collectors will find paintings in a broad spectrum of mediums and subject matter, including landscapes, still lifes, figures and portraits.

"This exhibition is special for several reasons," says AAPL president Aki Kano.



"Most of the artwork, due to the smaller sizes, will be affordable. They can [also] be easily displayed in different environments, including those with limited display space."

Boston artist Jodie Kain grew up in New York among realist painters, who inspired her to study traditional techniques. She finds that "small format paintings provide

a focused area to explore individual emotions or gestures and challenges me to be succinct and to choose one emotion and get it right."

About her show piece *Study of a Woman Laughing*, she says, "I love spontaneous gestures and outbursts as opposed to static poses. When a person shows sudden





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emotion in their face and body language they expose a beauty unique to humans. When Kain's friend burst into laughter while sitting for her, she "knew it was important to capture the joyous moment."

Artist Christopher Mooney typically paints large-scale oils, often showcasing the architectural landmarks of nearby Portland, Oregon, using smaller studies and sketches for reference. "In this case my painting, *House*, [is] a plain air piece depicting my house as my artist-in-residence," says Mooney. "I made an effort to finish it with careful brush work and [make it] as realistic as possible. When I did this painting one early spring day, I decided to capture the perspective of the shadow from the roof of the house, and I was proud of it as my home."

From North Carolina, Joel Sobelson paints in all sizes but also enjoys the challenges posed by working small. "Not only does it give me a chance to show my pastel 'chops' but really challenges me to create that all-important emotional connection with the viewer," he says. Sobelson's piece *Camellia* is a tribute to his wife, an avid gardener. "Come spring and summer we are surrounded by floral beauty. So, in homage to her I chose to paint one of her favorite blooms so we can enjoy nature's beauty year round."

"I'm thrilled that the AAPL is having an exhibition at Howland Cultural Center for the second consecutive year," says Kano. Due to Howland's rich history and its beautiful architecture, which has so much character, I think it's a perfect venue for

our show. I hope collectors consider supporting our artists in their labor of love by bringing home that perfect 'small work' of art."

Exhibition hours are 1 to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays, and by appointment Monday through Friday. An opening reception for the public will be held on Saturday, March 2, from 1 to 3 p.m. *Realism on the Hudson* can also be viewed online at www.aaplinc.org. ●

REALISM ON THE HUDSON

March 2-April 14, 2024

Howland Cultural Center
477 Main Street, Beacon, NY 12508
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1 Built in 1872 and known as the "Jewel of Beacon", the Howland Cultural Center was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1973.

2 Christopher Mooney, *House*, oil on canvas board, 12 x 16"

3 Jodie Kain, *Study of a Woman Laughing*, soft pastel on sanded paper, 9¼ x 10"

4 Joel Sobelson, *Camellia*, pastel, 12 x 12"