



My Painting Toolbox

by Susan Beebe

Oil paints are expensive. My favorite color, cobalt violet, costs \$37 for a small tube.

I paint in the woods, on an island, from May to October. I see cobalt violet in the shadows under knobs of moss, and under flakes of spruce bark, and when the sun lights up the trunk, cobalt violet plus burnt umber plus titanium white make a perfect sunlit gray. I use a lot of it, and other expensive colors, so when Dick Blick, the art supply company, had a year-end sale, I knew it was time to replace my old, dried-up tubes, from which I've squeezed every speck of paint with a tube-wringer and pliers.

When the delightful package arrived, I cleaned out my paintbox, a large, red plastic toolbox from E.L. Spear hardware I've had for twenty years. I keep the paints I'm currently using in the top lift-out tray, and in the bin underneath, about 25 paintbrushes, four "Bulldog" clamps, a piece of wood shingle to put under my easel's front leg so it doesn't sink in the moss, palette cups, palette knives, a jar of painting medium, and one of "Art Guard" barrier cream, extra paints, and rags torn from old flannel shirts and nightgowns.

Opening the box and seeing my familiar woods-painting colors: cadmium yellow light, sap green, viridian, cobalt violet, and the sienna brown spruce needles permanently stuck to the tray with dried oil or resin, took me right back to that knob of land west of the stone wall, among tall, old spruces and on deep moss, where I've painted twelve paintings over the last two years.

I wonder how all the animals I saw when I was painting are doing with this weird weather and up-and-down temperatures. The white-footed mice, red-backed voles, red squirrels, and white weasels depend on the subnivean layer, the space between snow and the forest floor, which isn't here this year. I'm less worried about the fox, mink and deer that trotted, glided, and walked past me without noticing me, because I was standing so still at my easel. I'm not worried at all about the pileated and hairy woodpeckers, red-breasted nuthatches, chickadees, brown creepers, and kinglets that overwinter on the island. They'll find plenty of grubs in rotten wood, and frozen caterpillars under bark. The great horned and barred owls will have easier hunting of the voles and mice, and the ravens will find carcasses along the shore.

And I will wait for spring and painting in the woods again.

WAVING WRONG

by Phil Crossman

Last week a perfect snow fell. It was perfect for cross country skiing which Elaine and some friends responded enthusiastically and it had just enough togetherness to respond perfectly to an effort by three youngsters to roll it into a big ball, a ball so big that dad had to help move the eventual globe, nearly three feet in diameter, into the place prepared for it, a level piece of ground, swept clear of snow and surrounded by evergreens. This would be the bottom third of a considerable snowman. The kids found the mid-section, about two feet across, much easier to gather together but did need help getting it up and installed atop the base. The head was assembled quickly but they took their time sculpting it into a more authentic oval before securing it in place and then experimenting with the assembled elements they'd brought along to create the components of face and expression. A wide range of opinion revolved around this critical stage of creation, all of it remarkably civil, and so quickly was compromise reached that I was left wondering if they hadn't all ought to be sent to Washington. The snowman's eyebrows were compelling, each a little maple twig, the left arching inquiringly; the

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Six Questions with DJ Dan Kelly

by Ron Staschak

1) What do you do at the radio station?

I host a show named Grey Owl (named after one of my favorite fiddle tunes) on Mondays at 10pm. The show was originally meant to be an ongoing deep-dive into bluegrass and old-time, but, since starting about a year ago, I have found myself far too inconsistent for such a venture. I now stick to a theme every week and play whatever suits my mood that night. Last week was early 1960s Greenwich Village; this week is a tribute to the songs and influence of John Hartford. Next week is—I have no idea.

2) How long have you been volunteering?

I started my show February 2021.

3) Why did you decide to volunteer/why did you want to have a show?

I was involved in college radio and enjoyed the freedom to play more-or-less whatever I wanted to. I have found WRFR, likewise, accepting of all shows. It is an exceptionally laid back environment.

4) Other than the show you host, what is your favorite show?

Random Rules, hosted by Scott Sell on Mondays at 6pm. There are many others that I regularly tune in for, but I can't remember their names off the top of my head.

5) Is there a question should have asked you?

"This all sounds wonderful, and I especially like John Hartford! How do I get involved at WRFR?" Email programming@wrfr.org



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(Waving Wrong, cont. from p. 1)

other contemplative and restrained. The nose, after much experimentation with numerous fruits and vegetables, sticks, a light bulb, several rocks and—I think—a piece of coal, was accomplished to everyone’s satisfaction with a fingerling potato and then a much more considered deliberation was undertaken to settle on a mouth. First a boy installed a pair of twigs, one for the lower lip, the other—twisted downward—for the upper. They stood back to consider and Frosty smirked back at them. The sticks were removed and a bagel took its place. The open round mouth, agape, combined with the inquiring eyebrows to create a startled expression. An open mussel shell, a lobster claw, and something that looked like a piece of stove gasket or maybe rope, were tried and ultimately the bagel prevailed. I watched and wondered why they hadn’t attached arms while they were on their way up and then marveled at their foresight in waiting till the stunned expression was settled and accomplished before they installed arms that gestured in a way that complimented the open mouth and aghast expression. They tried on several hats, a derby, a fedora—top hat—and finally settled on a so’wester but only till later in the day when they all returned and re-fitted him with the derby. Dad produced a corn cob pipe which was poked in at a very jaunty angle. They all stood back to admire their work and well they might. The substantial fellow stood over six feet and was quite a presence. Pedestrians stopped to admire him and drivers slowed to look. The next day it warmed a little and, while not enough for significant melting, did cause him to lean a little to starboard. That and his inquisitive expression combined to make him look more than a little mischievous. The mildness continued and the next day he looked even more so, leaning further to the right. On the third day he’d bent quite far over and seemed to be leaning on his right arm for support. On his last day here with us, a young woman in a skirt walked by on her way to the library. The snowman was bent so far over that he seemed to be trying to see more of her than had been revealed. That effort apparently unsuccessful, he collapsed later that night—no doubt in frustration.



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Chris Whytock, Rockland's Fire Chief, will be our guest next Wednesday, January 26 on the Rockland Metro Show for a discussion about our fire department and fire safety. If you would like to join in the conversation please call in at 593-0013. WRFR radio is 93.3 fm. and online at wrfr.org The Metro show is also broadcast on Maine Coast TV - cable channel 7 and online at mainecoast.tv

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We are open to all and would very much like to have your help! To learn more, go to wrfr.org, or tune in to 93.3 fm!

Your thoughts and art are always welcome at the Buzz

Email Joe: steinberger@gwi.net, or call me: 596-0731

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WEEK NINETY-SEVEN

COVID-19 RANDOM NOTES WHILE SHELTERING IN PLACE

By Phyllis Merriam

Covid Time is something I've thought about these past two years, as we enter the third year and fifth wave of the pandemic. (I should say, this pandemic. It will not be the last one.) During covid, I've noticed time seems to lag, speed up, or result in confusion or forgetfulness.

Our brains need time to process new information. Familiar information takes less time for the brain to process. New information about covid has changed quickly over time as the virus mutated and new variants emerged and may still emerge. Anxiety makes time pass more quickly. So, it's hardly surprising that new information takes time to process at the same time it makes us anxious and speeds up time. How confusing.

Some say time is the fourth dimension of reality. Einstein believed time was an illusion. Dychrometria is a cerebellar dysfunction in which a person can't accurately estimate the amount of time that has passed. Over one year ago now, Trump is still saying his re-election was "stolen" from him. Maybe he's living in a fifth dimension of reality populated by conspiracy theorists? Covid Time.

After an overcast Friday, the brief sunset lit up the sky with neon hot pink, and then reverted back to its steel grey. Maybe the brief brightness was an alert to the frigid weather forecast for Saturday. I made homemade baked beans Saturday that came out kind of mealy. That's never happened before. I soaked them over night and thought I'd timed the six hours baking time. Maybe I miscalculated. Covid Time.

Before Christmas, I only knew one couple that got covid. Now that number is over a dozen and counting. Dr. Fauci says because omicron is so contagious almost everyone will get the virus. The White House is mailing millions of adult K95 masks to pharmacies and federal (rural) health centers by the end of January. Masks for children will arrive at some point in the near future. Covid Time.

Cat food and toilet paper have reappeared on grocery shelves. Who hoards these?

Are they the same people? Is there a new crafting fad employing toilet paper? Cats like to shred toilet paper. Maybe in revenge, owners eat the cat food. Covid Time.

There have been a number of shootings in Wally World's parking lots in Maine and around the country. What is it about Wally World customers? Covid Time.

The federal government has pulled Regeneron's monoclonal antibodies infusions because it was designed to combat delta - not omicron. GlazoSmithKline's sotrovimab - the only monoclonal antibodies that target omicron - remains in short supply and unavailable to the general public. So, why did our doctors recommend my husband and I be given Regeneron's infusions? Covid Time.

There is a small study that seems to indicate middle-aged and the elderly can have functional mobility side effects from the virus. It is not known how long that lasts. I think my husband has this mobility decline after his covid omicron-infection. Today his mobility has improved somewhat. Covid Time.

This frigid, overcast day calls for ABC treats with afternoon tea and coffee. I ordered one of their cakes for my husband's birthday. His party had to be postponed due to the omicron spread. I'm hoping to organize a belated birthday party outdoors when the weather warms. By then, he'll be half a year older. Covid Time.

This morning's sunrise was strange and magnificent. As the sun rose, a low formation of impenetrable clouds, like a grey ceiling over The Head of the Bay, lit up with reflected ruby light. I was reminded of that old mariner's adage, "Red sky at morning, sailor take warning. Red sky at night, sailor's delight." The rest of the day was grey with some spitting snow, as though Mother Nature was saying, "Pitooey!"

Dragon Products (known to locals as Dragon Cement) ended its train deliveries of cement from Thomaston along the South End rail spur to their Rockland marine terminal. The company says its prime waterfront of 8.1 acres is not for sale. Safe Harbors must be standing by, drooling. The assessed value of \$2,783,000 would be a huge bargain. I will miss waving to the engineers as they passed by. Will they find other trains to run in these uncertain times? Will we South Enders ever again hear that melancholy train whistle that tugs at the heart? Maybe someday we can walk out our front door to hop a passenger train to Boston and parts south and west.

