

ARTtalk®

Vol. 22/No. 2
December

Welcome to **ARTtalk**, the link between you, the artist, and the manufacturers of art materials.

ARTtalk provides you with information on art materials and equipment—new products, techniques, and tips on using them. Each month you'll find informative articles that deal with subjects ranging from drawing and painting to printmaking and matting/framing to airbrush and arts/crafts. You'll also find information on artists and art history, current events and art world news, competitions and workshops, and a "Kids' Korner." Subjects vary each month.

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Artist Profile

Romare Bearden 1911-1988

Romare Bearden's life encompasses a wide range of endeavors in addition to his huge artistic talent, including music, performing arts, history and literature as well as a strong and lifelong support of emerging artists. Born in Charlotte, NC, he attended Lincoln University, then Boston University and completed his studies at New York University. During these college days, Bearden published several texts on social and artistic issues. His professional career actually started when he became an editorial cartoonist for the *Baltimore Afro-American*, which he continued until 1937.

Once he joined the Harlem Artists Guild, Bearden started a lifelong study of art. He was inspired by a wide range of artists but credited the most influence to Duccio, Cézanne, Picasso and Matisse as well as the African art he saw in the masks and textiles. Some influence and inspiration from Byzantine mosaics, Japanese prints and Chinese landscape paintings can also be seen in his work.

In the early days of his art career, Bearden also worked as a social worker in New York City, painting only at night or on weekends. But in 1940 – at his first public showing – art became the central focus of his life. His works have been shown in the United States and Europe and include collages, watercolors, oils, photomontages (some of his most famous work) and prints. Literature, jazz music and his past experiences in North Carolina and Harlem play heavily in his work.

In the early 1940's Bearden traveled extensively in Europe, living in Paris for a while, and developed his semi-abstract collage style. Back in the U.S., through

the late 40's to the 60's, his style evolved so that he became regarded as the preeminent collagist in the U.S.

Bearden married Nanette Rohan, a Caribbean native, in 1954. They had a second home in the Caribbean and the color and lush island landscapes influenced many of his works after that time. His close association with intellectuals, painters and musicians—such as Joan Miró, Duke Ellington, James Baldwin and Jacob Lawrence—gave him experiences that influenced an entirely different perspective. Because of his intellectual eloquence, Bearden was appointed as the first art director of the Harlem Cultural Council in 1964 – an influential African-American advocacy group. He also was a founding member of the Black Academy of Arts and Letters in 1970.

Romare Bearden is recognized as one of the most creative visual artists of the twentieth century. He experienced a prolific and distinguished career. His experimentation into different art forms and styles helped make him well known, but it is his richly textured collages for which he may be best known. These collages used photography and paint in ways that held the viewer in awe. But art was not his only interest and through working with his wife Nanette, he created theatrical set designs as well as costuming and programming.

Even with all the associates, accomplishments and recognition, Bearden was still a self-conscious person. His works depict a man tied to a larger "community," although he did not seek fame. His painterly depiction involving social issues shows his closeness to that community.

The artwork of Romare Bearden is now featured on a set of four Forever stamps by the U.S Postal Service. Bearden is celebrated for his groundbreaking approach to collage along with his work in watercolors, oils and other media. The four collages depicted on the stamps include *Conjunction* (1971), *Odysseus: Poseidon, The Sea God—Enemy of*



Odysseus (1977), *Prevalence of Ritual: Conjur Woman* (1964) and *Falling Star* (1979).

Exhibition

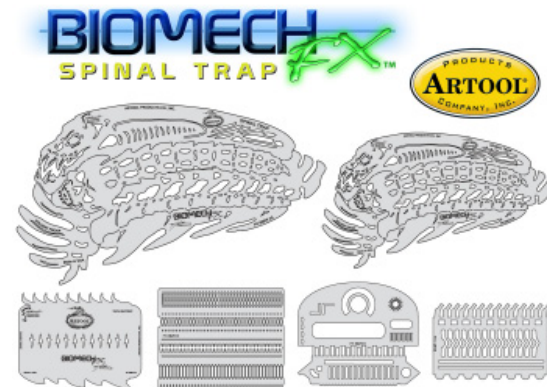
Impressions & Improvisations: The Prints of Romare Bearden includes more than 70 collagraphs, etchings, aquatints, lithographs, screenprints, photo projections and monotypes created during a period of 30 years. It represents his extraordinary versatility and openness to experimentation, which is especially true of the collages for which he is best known, but also applies equally to his prints. **Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO, through Jan. 8.**

The Art Marketplace

Jack Richeson Honored

The Salmagundi Club of New York recently awarded **Jack Richeson, CEO of Jack Richeson & Co, Inc.**, in Kimberly, WI, the prestigious Salmagundi Club Medal at the Annual Dinner coinciding with the 128th Annual Members Exhibition. The medal was designed by Ulysses A. Ricci in 1938 to be awarded to Lay Members for distinguished service to the club. Since then, recipients have

expanded to include non-members whose service to the artist community has been exceptional and who further the ideals espoused by the club. Previous recipients include Norman Rockwell, Ogden Pleissner and Everett Raymond Kinstler. Kinstler was the presenter for Jack's award and regaled the group with humorous anecdotes of his relationship with Jack over the years and of Jack's many contributions to the artist community. In addition to the members and their guests, present at the event were a few of Jack's family.



New Artool BioMech FX Freehand Airbrush Templates

The new **BioMech FX Freehand Airbrush Templates** designed by Mike Lavallee include *Skull Buster* and *Spinal Trap* and were inspired by the 70's and 80's sci-fi cinema with bio-mechanical backgrounds and alien creatures. So you can now experience the biological side of things with alien skulls, spinal columns, bone, teeth and claws and be able to create a plethora of biomechanical



images. Included in this Artool Series is the **Tech Support Template**, containing several repetitive patterns to replicate a myriad of machined textures. See more at http://www.iwata-medea.com/index.php/artool/freehand/biomech_fx.

Holiday Art Events & Exhibitions

Carnegie Museums of Art and Natural History, Pittsburgh, PA – A Season of Celebration

– Bring family and friends for holiday-themed events and activities that are free with museum admission. The **Neapolitan Presepio** has been a holiday tradition since 1957. Handcrafted by artisans between 1700 and 1830, it features lifelike figures and colorful details that re-create the Nativity within a vibrant panorama of 18th century Italian villane life with more than 100 superbly modeled human and angelic figures, along with animals, accessories and architectural elements, **Dec. 1-4 and Dec. 9-Jan. 8.** View the **Holiday Tree Display, Solid Gold: Classics that Endure**, from **Dec. 8 – Jan. 8**, with a **Preview Party** (admission fee) on **Dec. 7**; and enjoy a **Family Holiday Sing-Along** on **Dec. 10.** www.carnegiemnh.org/holidays.

Milwaukee Art Museum, WI – Gallery Talk: A Christmas Story, Dec. 13 at 1:30 p.m.

– Celebrate the art of the season with Chief Educator Barbara Brown Lee, as she shares stories from religious works in the galleries, including the Neapolitan crèche. Free with Museum admission. www.mam.org.

New Mexico Museum of Art, Santa Fe, NM – Annual Holiday Open House, starring the Gustave Baumann

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Marionettes, Dec. 18, Free Admission – Join Freckles, Warts and Santa from 1 – 4 p.m. The afternoon is a round-robin event featuring two short skits by the marionettes, an art-making project for the whole family, holiday music, the “Find Freckles” gallery treasure hunt and more. www.nmartmuseum.org.

Baltimore Museum of Art, MD – Kwanzaa Family Day, Dec. 28, Free – Inspired by *Hand Held: Personal Arts from Africa* (through Feb. 5), this year’s celebration of community and family features a special performance by Keur Khaleyi African Dance Company and fascinating stories brought to life by actress Maria Broom. Come and create your own African textiles and hand-held treasures, 1-5 p.m. www.artbma.org.

Indianapolis Museum of Art, IN – Christmas at Lilly House, Through Dec. 31 – American Christmas decorations demonstrate both continuity and change in delightful combination from colonial times to the present. The American country house setting is used to explore the decorative ideas of the 1930-40’s, offering an opportunity to see the ways that familiar motifs such as trees, wreaths and evergreens were enlivened with refreshing touches of newer fashions. www.imamuseum.org.

Bard Graduate Center, New York, NY – Exhibition: American Christmas Cards, 1900-1960 is the first exhibition to study the images on American Christmas cards of the twentieth century, and it serves as an introduction to a large artifactual and aesthetic field that until now has been largely unexplored. Presented are 20 of the most prominent classes of card imagery, including everything from candles and poinsettias to coaching and travel, the three kings and visiting for the holidays. Organized by Kenneth L. Ames, BGC faculty member and author of the

book by the same name (Yale University Press). **Through Dec. 31.** www.bgc.bard.edu/gallery.

Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC - Annual Christmas Tree and Neapolitan Baroque Crèche, through Jan. 8 – The Museum continues a long-standing holiday tradition with the presentation of its Christmas tree. A vivid 18th Century Neapolitan Nativity scene adorns the candlelit spruce, and recorded music and lighting ceremonies add to the enjoyment of the holiday display. www.metmuseum.org.

Winterthur, Winterthur, DE – The Best of Yuletides Past, through Jan. 8 – Experience the museum’s most beloved holiday displays from past Yuletides and discover holiday traditions of Americans from the colonial period through WW II, including the introduction of the first Christmas trees decorated with goodies for children by Pennsylvania Germans in the 1800’s. A myriad of additional special holiday events are planned. Visit www.winterthur.org.

National Gallery of Art, Washington DC – Seasonal Offerings – The NGA celebrates the holiday season throughout the month of December with festive decorations and an array of free programs including concerts, caroling, gallery talks and a film. All programs are free and available to the public on a first-come, first-served basis. The Sculpture Garden ice rink offers skaters of all ages an opportunity to enjoy the season on the ice, surrounded by large-scale sculpture (through March 11, weather permitting).

Also, visit the website to enjoy a streaming slideshow that explores *The Adoration of the Magi* (c. 1440/1460), a complex and colorful masterpiece from Renaissance Florence: www.nga.gov/magi/. The Gallery and Sculpture Garden are closed on Dec. 25 and Jan. 1. See the calendar at http://www.nga.gov/programs/calendar/cal2011-12_w49.shtm.

Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA – Exhibition: Norman Rockwell and the Ghost of Dickens, through March 4 – This celebration of the 200th anniversary of Charles Dickens’ birth features original Rockwell artworks inspired by the literary giant’s contributions, which were among the artist’s favorite books. www.nrm.org.

Computer Art

Computers as Art Tools

You don’t need a lot of unusual, expensive equipment to make art on a computer, and there are several simple, yet cool things you can do with a basic computer and printer setup. For instance, to jazz up a note, letter, greeting card or invitation, etc., you need only fill the background with color and print in a colored font. It doesn’t get simpler than that and it is a very impressive and elegant look. Just consider ad art and the way colored backgrounds and colored fonts are used to grab attention.

For impact, printing with a colored font on colored paper stock makes a grand correspondence. Sometimes easy and straightforward is best. There are numerous styles and finishes of paper

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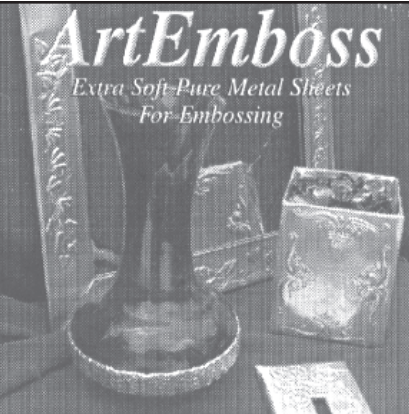
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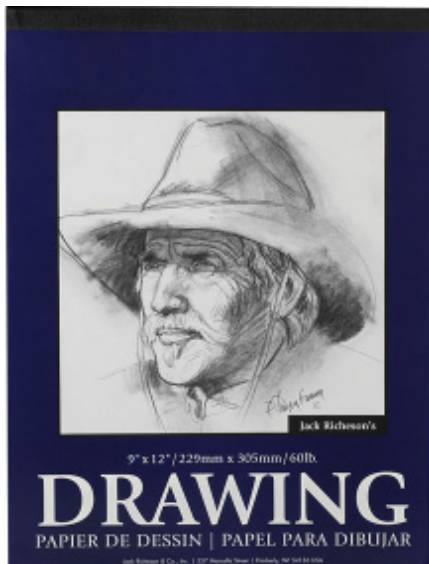
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from which to choose that require only an ink jet printer. Some of the most dramatic (e.g., vellum, metallic surfaces) require a bit of caution, since the ink will sit on the surface and is more easily smeared. But allowing some time between each sheet will yield great results.

When it comes to photography and the manipulation of images, there are some inexpensive programs (and some advanced) that can do remarkable things to the photos you take. Papers for photo printing are offered in a variety of finishes so you can select the surface that is best suited to the image. You can even print onto primed canvas that is ready to receive the photo ink image. Sizes to accommodate any printer can be found at art material dealers. Inks can be archival for important work.



For the daring, the art of collage is quite possible on the computer. With a bit of

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practice, you can “cut and paste” images from one background to another, cut out busy backgrounds altogether, add spots of color to otherwise non-color imagery – you’ll be surprised at what you can do and love every second.

There is a fairly low learning curve on programs designed to get your creative juices flowing! It might take a bit of time to work through the processes, but once you get to work, you’ll forget the curve. After you get an image manipulated the way you want, you can save and then reuse it as often as you wish and it will be exact each time. This opens the door for many artists to create limited editions with ease. On-demand images are a big business, so why not consider it as part of your offering? There is a small start-up expense, but in the long run, if selling is your aim, you can regain your costs very quickly.

Another way to use images is in the creation of greeting cards. Many gift and curio shops have handmade cards that are big sellers, since their cost is low and the images can be collectable. With a line of small image artworks on cards, you might find an entirely new way to market your work.

Using a computer is like any tool—once you grasp the way to use it, there are many applications available. And there is no setup to speak of, no health hazard and it can be done any hour of the day. Not bad!

Kids' Komer

International Children's Museum Exhibitions

The **World Awareness Children's Museum**, located in Glens Falls, NY, has a goal to inspire curiosity and foster understanding and appreciation of worldwide cultural diversity. *Go! where children discover the world* is their interactive exhibition space at 89 Warren St. They offer educator-led tours for groups, off-site interactive educational programming and outreach, the International Youth Art Exchange Program with its extensive collection of international children's art, authentic cultural artifacts and education objects, plus an extensive library of exhibitions for loan. In the exhibit **World Winter Traditions**, through Dec. 31, you can view stunning youth artwork depicting winter scenes and holiday traditions from around the world;

and in **Chinese New Year**, opening Jan. 4 – March 4, Chinese New Year celebrations are depicted in colorful pieces by young artists from Asia and the U.S. 518.793.2773. View their calendar of events at www.worldchildrensmuseum.org/Pages/calendar.html.

Best Illustrated Books

This marks the 59th anniversary of the annual *New York Times* Best Illustrated Children's Books, where the Book Review asks a panel of judges to choose 10 winners from among the thousands of children's books published during the calendar year. The ten favorites for 2011 include (title/author/illustrator or both in italic/publisher/age group):

—**Migrant**, Maxine Trottier, *Isabelle Arsenault*, Groundwood Books/House of Anansi Press, 4-7.

—**A Nation's Hope-The Story of Boxing Legend Joe Louis**, Matt de la Peña, *Kadir Nelson*, Dial, 4-8.

—**Ice**, Arthur Geisert, Enchanted Lion Books, 4-7.

—**A Ball for Daisy**, *Chris Raschka*, Schwartz & Wade Books, 3-7.

—**Along a Long Road**, *Frank Viva*; Little, Brown & Company, 3-6.

—**I Want my Hat Back**, *Jon Klassen*, Candlewick Press, 4-8.

—**Me...Jane**, *Patrick McDonnell*; Little, Brown & Company, 3-6.

—**Grandpa Green**, *Lane Smith*, Roaring Brook Press, 5-9.



Kids' Komer... Airbrush... ArtPourri...

—*Brother Sun, Sister Moon-Saint Francis of Assisi's Canticle of the Creatures*, Katherine Paterson, *Pamela Dalton*, Handprint Books/Chronicle Books, 4-8.

—*A New Year's Reunion*, Yu Li-Qiong, *Zhu Cheng-Liang*, Candlewick Press, 4-8.

You may perhaps consider these books for holiday gifts.

Undersea Exhibition/ Workshop Series

MASS MoCA in North Adams, MA, is featuring *Under the Sea* in Kidspace through May 28. Featured are six internationally acclaimed artists who explore the ocean as habitat, myth and a necessary element of life on earth. Through various themes and innovative materials, the artists examine the mystery and power of the ocean as well as the catastrophic consequences of our abuse of this natural resource. Also, the **Kids at Work! Workshop Series** this month will include fabulous hands-on art workshops led by four creative kids and their MoCA staff parents on Dec. 17, 28, 29 and 30. Call or visit the website for more information. 413.664.4481, X8131. <http://kidspace.massmoca.org>

Airbrush

Tips for the Airbrush Artist

Hang it Up - Anyone who has ever used an airbrush realizes immediately that you

just can't set the airbrush down on a surface when it contains paint. The brush will tip over and the paint will flow onto the work surface. Even with the wide bottle on a bottom feed airbrush, the weight of the hose can cause it to tip. Therefore, it is essential that the artist have an airbrush holder—and this would make an ideal holiday gift for a beginning airbrusher. Several types of holders are available, ranging from the very simple flat metal holder that attaches to a drawing board or easel and comes with some airbrushes to the more elaborate double holders that have air regulators and moisture traps. These attach with a clamp to an easel, the edge of a table or other work surface. Most elaborate is the type that is held in place by powerful magnets and is designed for use in the automotive industry or by artists working in a metal spray booth. The Karajen Air-Port Airbrush Work Station, distributed by Iwata-Medea, is a great example of this holder. Most holders have two hooks between which the airbrush is held, which prevents tipping whether the brush is gravity, side or bottom feed.

Keep it Moving - Globes of paint are created whenever hand movement is hesitated while making a spray pass with an airbrush. Sometimes this results in what is called the "barbell" effect – more paint in one area than another; or in a type of spray that resembles a spider called a "freak drop." Remember that

once you begin to paint you must continue a smooth, consistent hand movement to prevent these effects from occurring. They are the result of too much wet paint on the surface. Splatters, on the other hand, are created by releasing the trigger too quickly. A drop of paint will be carried to the tip of the brush on the needle; when you depress the trigger for the next spray pass, that droplet will inadvertently be blown onto the work surface. So remember to slowly release the trigger, which will eventually become automatic. If you watch a T-shirt painter you will notice that he will constantly blow that droplet of paint onto a paper towel, rag or even his hand between sprays.

New Newsletter - See the latest FREE edition of *AirbrushTalk* at www.airbrush-talk.com, which includes the following articles: *Opportunity Knocks—Stenciling Addresses and Phrases for Fun and Profit* by Thomas Adams; *Baby, It's Cold Outside: Winter Airbrush Projects* by Janean Thompson; and *Combining Brush and Airbrush* by Shen.

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Funds Raised—The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles, recently celebrated its 32-year history as one of the world's leading contemporary art institutions. *An Artist's Life Manifesto*, a special gala envisioned by renowned performance artist Marina Abramovic, raised \$2.5 million for the museum.

New Stamps Celebrate Holidays—The U. S. Postal Service has issued new stamps in a series to celebrate Hanukkah and Kwanzaa. The fourth issuance in commemoration of Hanukkah features bright colors to express the joyful spirit of



the holiday, and the eight shapes behind the letters spelling out "Hanukkah" symbolize the eight days and nights of the Jewish Festival of Lights, which begins on Dec. 20. Art director Ethel Kessler worked with graphic designer Suzanne Kleinwaks of Falls Church, VA, to create the stamp art. Kwanzaa, a non-religious holiday that draws on African traditions, takes place seven days beginning each year on Dec. 26. Art director Derry Noyes worked with artist Daniel Minter to create a festive and highly symbolic design using bold colors of the Kwanzaa flag.

Medal Awarded/Admission Increased—The Institute of Museum and Library Services has selected the Brooklyn

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Children's Museum (WI).—The Brooklyn Museum has also increased its suggested admission fee to \$12 for adults and \$8 for seniors and students with valid I.D.'s. Admission to *Target First Saturdays* will continue to be free from 5-11 p.m., as will general admission for members and children under 12 accompanied by an adult.

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