

About the 2015 Art Tales art and artists



Jacquelyn Cavish (b. 1944)

California Aqueduct, 2000, acrylic on canvas.

"I paint from my observations of the contemporary local scene,

looking for color, irony, drama, and I find it everywhere," says the artist. Originally a watercolorist, Jacquelyn Cavish became impatient with the requisite drawing preparations. She says, "I began to paint alla prima with acrylic on canvas. The immediacy of the process has a great appeal for me, especially in plein air painting." Her artwork has been described as having a vibrant and dynamic sense of spontaneity with a strong emphasis on color and pattern. This extraordinary gift for brilliant color and unique composition springs, she suspects, from the strong influence of Gauguin and Japanese Ukiyo-e on her work.

Jacquelyn Cavish, who earned an M.F.A. degree from UC Santa Barbara, now teaches art history and studio art classes at Oxnard College. She is also a founding member of the California Gold Coast Watercolor Society, past President of the Oxnard Art Association and is Curator of Art for the Ventura County Maritime Museum. Her work has been widely exhibited.



Sally Miller (b. 1923)

Incoming Sea, 2002, watercolor on paper.

Because of an early fascination with shape and color, Sally Miller has enjoyed a lifetime of pleasure and personal achievement through

painting. Miller is known for her ability to take something that is visually complex and distill it into simple, clean shapes, using economical and purposeful brushstrokes. She finds painting on location in oils or watercolors exciting and challenging, capturing the subject as quickly as possible and then returning to her studio to complete the work. After many years of sailing and boating, Miller has developed a strong affinity for the ocean and the natural beauty surrounding it. Her painting, *Incoming Sea*, exemplifies her tender understanding of the coastal environment.

Sally Miller has proven to be a significant member of the local art community through her support of artists and arts organizations. She is an active member of the Buenaventura Art Association, the Santa Paula Society of the Arts, the Ventura County Artists Guild, and The Plein Aire Painters, and is a signature and founding member of the California Gold Coast Watercolor Society. A popular instructor, Sally taught adult art for Ventura Unified School District for many years and now gives classes in plein air painting. She offers demonstrations and critiques and occasionally judges for various art groups in the county. Sally's work can be seen at the Buenaventura Art Association Gallery, and Santa Paula Society of the Arts.



Richard Phelps (b. 1933)

Big Blue, 1993, acrylic on canvas

Richard Phelps' artistic process is patient, allowing impressions and ideas to incubate – often for years. He is stirred by the delicacies of the mood and environment around him, by the flux of nature, the power

of subtle light changes, the repose or tranquility of a setting. He says, "The form an image takes on canvas is dependent upon the palette I mix, the music around me, and the first few unconscious strokes I make. The flow of the paint makes suggestions and I find myself both acting and reacting to what appears." His work evolves as an abstraction of the forces that move him. *Big Blue* is a serene work, a captured moment of light that is about to fade or move.

Born in Montpelier, Idaho, Richard Phelps expressed an early interest in art, and, except for the years he spent in the military, has continuously painted and been active in galleries and competitions. After receiving an MA in art from San Francisco State University he promptly took a position as an art instructor at Ventura Community College. He considers his twenty-eight years of teaching art a cherished period of time, calling it a "selfish job" because he always drew such inspiration from the students.

Now retired, Richard Phelps lives in Tennessee with a view of the Smoky Mountains and a barn for a studio.



Helle Scharling-Todd (b. 1945)

Glacial Melt, 2004, laminated glass.

Instead of exhibiting her art in galleries and museums, most of Helle Scharling-Todd's creations have been permanently installed in public places

throughout Europe and the United States, and, because of that, will be viewed and enjoyed by thousands of people. She says, "Public art is a duet with architecture and an inspiration for the public. I want to add a spiritual dimension to a functional place." With a focus on glass, mosaics and murals, Scharling-Todd studied art in Denmark, Germany, Italy and Mexico. She also earned a degree in art history from the University of Aarhus in Denmark. Locally her extraordinary artwork can be found in numerous places, including the Olivas Adobe, Ventura's Urban Encore, and the Port Hueneme Library as well as part of Ventura's Westside Community Enhancement Project.

The work *Glacial Melt* expresses a unique effect created through a process Scharling-Todd developed and calls "erosion." This process of layering the glass and then selectively eroding back through the layers gives this glass piece a strange, rough and sophisticated beauty reminiscent of deep water or ice.