

Littleton Independent

Artists pick masters as mentors

Bellows, Van Gogh, O'Keefe, Adams...



"Winter Morning Bike Ride" by Littleton Fine Arts Guild member Fred Bickle, inspired by George Wesley Bellows is "Best of Show" in the Masters as Mentors exhibit at the Depot Art Center in Littleton.

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Step inside the front door at Depot Art Gallery and Fred Bickle's Best of Show painting is just to your left. Along with it comes a bit of information about the master he chose as an influence in the Littleton Fine Arts Guilds annual "Masters as Mentors" exhibit, which runs through Feb. 16.

The painting's technically excellent work and strong composition spoke to juror Pat Rucker, a Denver artist, whose abstract painting hangs just to the left of the winner.

Each Littleton Fine Arts Guild member who entered chose one or more master artists as influences. While a few tried to copy works, as art students did in earlier years, most simply took an idea or style and worked with it. Each work includes a statement and a photo of the image that triggered the new piece, providing a mini-art history lesson.

For instance, "Winter Morning Bike Ride" was inspired by the style of George Wesley Bellows (1882-1925), a member of New York's famed Ashcan School and a student of teacher Robert Henri. Henri taught at the Chicago Art Institute and influenced many other young artists of his day.

Photographer Peggy Dietz won a first-place ribbon with her "Evening Walkers in Laramie," suggested by Louis Anquetin's mellow "Avenue de Clichy" (1887). Second-place winner Cele Bergstrom created an imitation of John Singer Sargent's "Daughters of Edward D. Boit." Photographer Steve Johnson selected Painter Andrew Wyeth's open landscapes as inspiration for his "Get Gas."

The Guild is currently accepting applications from artists for membership, which involves submitting examples of one's work to a jurying committee. Call or stop by for more information. Membership involves some volunteer time hosting the depot's open hours, as well as exhibition opportunities in the ongoing themed shows.

If you go:

"Masters as Mentors" is exhibited at the Depot Art Gallery through Feb. 16. The gallery, at 2069 W. Powers Ave., Littleton, is housed in the former Santa Fe Railroad Depot, est. 1881, which once served Littleton's needs for passenger and freight service. Hours for the member-operated gallery: 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. 303-795-0781.