

College of Marin



EMERITUS STUDENTS NEWSLETTER

Lifelong Learning

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Karen Hemmeter (karen@hemmeter.com) &
Marian Mermel, Co-Presidents

Don Polhemus (dondorpol@aol.com), Editor

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Photo by Heather Peitz

Dr. David Coon, COM President, receives a certificate of gratitude for his efforts on behalf of the Newsletter. Representing ESCOM are Marian Mermel, Emeritus College President; Don Polhemus, Newsletter Editor; and Past President Barbara Tarasoff.

JUNE ESCOM COUNCIL MEETING



The Emeritus Center on the Indian Valley Campus was the scene of the Council's meeting on June 16, 2011, with **Co-President Marian Mermel**

presiding. In keeping with earlier discussions concerning leadership in ESCOM, Marian proposed that meetings during the 2011-12 term be chaired by various members of the Council. This proposal was readily accepted by the members, and a list of future chairmanship assignments was distributed.

The past services of retiring **Co-President Karen Hemmeyer** and Council member **Gloria Jones** were duly noted and received the acclaim of the members present.

Art Ravicz presented his Treasurer's report and asked for the Council's approval of several purchase orders, promptly given.

Several new ESCOM-sponsored clubs are in the process of being established, according to **Karen Hemmeyer**, reporting in behalf of **Bill Raffanti**, unable to attend this meeting. "Italian Culture" and "Tell your Story" are among the prospective new offerings. Stay tuned and call Bill for more information.

A Curriculum Committee report submitted by **Dick Park** indicated that four courses presented at the May meeting were approved, these being "Conversational Yiddish", "Functional Fitness", "Zumba Gold" and "Transformational Feldenkrais Movements". Additional courses proposed by previously interviewed instructors for the Fall/Winter semesters were "Introduction to Mark Twain", "Art of Anatolia: From the Hittites to the Ottoman Turks", "Significant Others: Intimacy and Creativity in the World of the Visual Arts", "Boomer Fitness and Wellness" and "Introduction to Jane Austen". Watch for these courses in future Community College Catalogues.

Bev Munyon reported that 30 grants of \$25 each were given to applicants for the Summer semester. This is a sharp drop compared to earlier grants from the C.O.M Foundation, and two of the applicants withdrew their applications as a result of the reduction in their support.

Karen Hemmeyer reported that ESCOM membership remained steady at approximately 500, with new enrollees fairly matching the number of mem-

bers lost during the past year. The ever-present subject of membership recruitment was covered, but no specific actions were taken. **Cole Posard** proposed that membership dues above the base level of \$15 per year should be included in the annual renewal forms sent to the members, and he will work this out with **Karen Hemmeyer**.

Marian Mermel announced that **C.O.M. President David Wain Coon** has offered a significant subsidy towards the ESCOM Newsletter, a most welcome offer as a significant portion of ESCOM's Annual Budget is spent on Newsletter printing and mailing. **Don Polhemus**, Editor, and **Art Ravicz** received well-deserved plaudits from the members for the excellent quality of recent Newsletters, particularly those with full-color pages.

Paul Tandler, Chair of the Nomination and Election Committee, announced the results of the recent election and moved that these results be ratified by a vote of the Council. **Marian Mermel** was elected to a one-year term as President, as was **Dick Park** as Vice President. Elected or re-elected to two-year terms as members of the Council were **Marlene Knox**, **Margot Jasie**, **Len Pullan** and **Bill Raffanti**. Paul commented that only some 10% of the ballots were returned this time, possibly due to no competition to the slate offered by the Council.



Reported by Paul Tandler

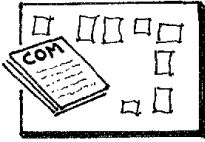
WHAT ARE THE ODDS?

The odds are about thirteen to one. That is, there are about thirteen females for every male in the Chorus Emeritus. We few men need some help. Bass? Baritone? Tenor? Any of these will do. Don't Know? Come join us and find out what you are. Voices range from the untrained, inexperienced to those who could probably sing professionally if they tried. We just enjoy singing together. We meet from 3:00 to 5:00 Thursday afternoons to practice a variety of songs from show tunes to traditional holiday music, and perform at retirement centers/nursing homes at the end of each semester. So, come on guys, help me out. My phone number is 388-8518.



Dick Park

COM IN THE NEWS



Smoking Ban -- College of Marin Trustees have voted 5-0 to make all COM Campuses "Smoke Free" effective August 15, 2011, except for a few designated areas in parking

lots. These new rules bring College of Marin more in line with those non-smoking rules which are in effect for other major private and state universities. According to **COM President David Wain Coon**, "the college is committed to promote good health and wellness for its employees and students alike." Part of this commitment is involved in taking a part in discouraging the use of tobacco and lessening the negative effects of both smoking and second-hand smoke. The new "smoke free" policy applies to all persons on campus including employees, students as well as visitors. A recent U. S. Census Report found that only 7.3% of Marin County residents smoke cigarettes, cigars or pipes, evidencing the lowest smoking rates of any county in California. (I. J. - 7/27/11)

Costly Program Cuts -- Because of state funding cuts, COM officials have agreed to scale back a program for services for students with brain injuries. College of Marin will transfer technology and personnel for this program to the Marin Brain Injury Network which operates a clinic on COM premises. The successful disabilities program serves people with learning disabilities, acquired brain injuries, and stroke survivors. Currently, the predominant focus at College of Marin is on transfer student, career technology and basic skills education, and only 20% of college classes are in "community" education. Since COM relies on local property tax revenue, more flexibility is available, and community members hope to benefit from this tax-dollar funding.

According to **Marian Mermel**, President of ESCOM, seniors are the largest growing population in Marin. In 2010 some Emeritus community-based classes were eliminated and later reinstated but at a higher cost, which angered many senior Emeritus participants. Some popular senior courses, e.g. Aquatic Conditioning, Tai Chi and Yoga, are available at a low cost since COM President Coon is willing to take the "community" into consideration. (I. J. 7/4/11).

IVC Adds New Classes to 2011 Schedule -- New evening and weekend classes have been added to IVC's Fall Schedule, mainly for students who wish to transfer to a Baccalaureate Degree University or earn an Associate Degree in two years. In addition, new students must take an assessment test prior to enrolling in the required transfer-level English and Mathematics Courses. (I. J. - 7/27/11)



Submitted by Alicia Warcholski

THE FORGOTTEN ELDER

We inhabit a culture that worships youth with near religious zeal. And youth - or more accurately, our obsession with achieving an everlastingly youthful adulthood - is sucking the life out of us. Contrary to anti-aging gurus, that flaw is not the biology of aging - it is the way our culture views the structure of the life cycle.

Older people are deemed worthy only to the degree that, in their thoughts and actions, they resemble young adults. What happens to older people who can't still do the things that adults do? For these folks our society operates a vast archipelago of old age institutions. We have more nursing homes (16,100) than Starbucks coffee shops, where nearly 1.6 million people are confined, some against their will, for the crime of frailty. In our society the penalty for failing to act like an adult is a life sentence without parole.

I've learned that we cannot hope to improve the care and living conditions of older adults until we, as a society, accept the fact that there is growth and value in life beyond adulthood. It is called *elderhood*.

Elderhood is real, it is rich, it is deep, it is ancient and it is meaningful.

It is good to live one's adult years with the knowledge that the torrid pace of that life stage is not permanent. We are meant to outgrow adulthood and leave its fevered realm behind.

When we learn this, we will be free, all of us together, to rebalance, redesign and rediscover the exquisite arc of life that stretches from birth to adulthood and beyond to elderhood.

Dr. Bill Thomas, geriatrician

NEWS FROM IVC

Events listed below are held in the Emeritus Meeting Room, COM Indian Valley Campus, Bldg. 10. Call Larry Witter 883-6889, Gloria Kopshever 883-7805, Bill Raffanti 883-4079 (931-6399), Rudy Ramirez 491-0522.

New Signs at COM/IVC: Adding to the new look at IVC is a whole new signage which is part of a comprehensive package designed by Kate Keating Associates, Inc. and matching those at Kentfield. You'll like the new feel.

ESCOM/IVC Volunteers: Several Emeritus members answered Dean Nanda Schorske's call for help to serve as campus guides during "Back to School" week when COM launched the "Two-year, Night and Weekend Degree/Transfer Program" for working adults and high school students seeking advanced degrees. For more details: Page 111, inside back cover of Fall 2011 Credit/Noncredit Schedule.

Monday Afternoon Opera at ESCOM/IVC: Sept. 12, 2 PM. *Carmen*, filmed by Francesco Rosi. Set in the sun-scorched Seville, Bizet's *Carmen* stars Placido Domingo and Julia Mignies-Johnson in possibly the most stunning portrayal of the world's most popular opera. An untamed gypsy, Carmen, captures the heart of straight-laced army corporal Don Jose inspiring him to desert his post, his family, and his honor. Numerous stage and film adaptations were done since 1896, but none had attempted to produce a realistic on-site adaptation of Bizet's work before. 155 min. ESCOM/IVC Meeting Room, Building 10. Free.

Aqua Exercise for Older Adults Update: Mondays thru Thursdays at 9:10 AM, music fills the Olympic pool area when more than 30 men and women begin water exercises developed and led by Russell Robles. The classes resumed on August 1 and will continue until December 8 with registration for two sessions. See page 50 of Community Ed. Schedule.

Global Issues: Sept. 16, 2 PM, *Gasland*, a documentary by Josh Fox. The largest domestic natural gas drilling boom in history has swept across the United States. The Halliburton-developed drilling technology of "fracking" or hydraulic fracturing will make a vast store of natural gas available just beneath us. But is fracking safe? Part verity travelogue, part expose, part mystery, part bluegrass banjo meltdown, and part showdown.

IVC Book Forum: Members decided to begin bringing books they have read as possible titles for

the 2012 reading list. The goal is that by the December 19 meeting the 2012 List will be ready for the New Year.

8/22 *The Warmth of Other Suns*, Isabel Wilkerson.

9/26 *Atlas of the Unknown*, Tania James.

10/24 *The Help*, Kathryn Stockett.

11/28 *Major Pettigrew's Last Stand*, Helen Simonson

Great Books Discussion Group:

8/23: M. L. King, Jr., *Letter From Birmingham Jail*; Nelson Mandela, *The Rinma Trial*.

9/13: Wei Jinshang, *Letter to Deng Xiaoping*; Eduardo Galeano, *We Say No*.

9/27: Moliere, *The Misanthrope*.

IVC Philosophy Club: The new series, *Philosophy of Science*, begun in August, continues with Professor Phillip Cary, Eastern University, PA. Note: COM Fall Credit Schedule, page 76: PHIL 117 History of Philosophy: Wed. PM @ COM/IVC.

IVC Film Noir Theater Club:

9/10 *Chicago '27*. Phyllis Haver, Victor Varconi, Virginia Bradford. Director: Frank Urson.

9/24 *Deadline at Dawn '49*. Susan Hayward, Paul Lukas, Bill Williams. Director: Harold Cluman.

10/08 *Dishonored Lady '47*. Hedy Lamarr, Dennis O'Keefe, John Loder. Director: Robert Stevenson.

10/22 *The Big Heat '53*. Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, Jocelyn Brando. Director: Fritz Lang.

Humanities Club: *Great Pharaohs of Ancient Egypt*, Professor Bob Brier.

8/20 Lecture 9, The Great Nubians--Egypt Restored; Lecture 10, Alexander the Great--Anatomy of a Legend.

9/03 Lecture 11, The First Ptolemies--Greek Greatness.

9/17 Lecture 12, Cleopatra--The Last Pharaoh.

Beginning October 1: *Famous Romans*, Professor J. Rufus Fears. Lessons about statesmanship, politics, liberty and virtue that remain relevant today.



MEETING MY AMERICAN IDOL

When I was about 18 or so, I was a working actress and singer in musical theater. But my heart was at the opera. And in my not so humble opinion, Beverly Sills *was* the heart of the opera. So far as I was concerned, there was no other coloratura in existence.

I had the lucky opportunity to use my theater riches to buy tickets to see Beverly Sills perform the American opera, *The Ballad of Baby Doe*, at the Los Angeles Music Center. Over the prior two years, being the young opera nerd that I was, I had memorized every note on the double vinyl album including the men's parts, the chorus, and the orchestration. For two years I had stood in my parents' living room, twirling around, singing along, trying to mimic the perfect tone and timbre of Baby Doe's soaring voice. Of course my mother thought I matched the quality of those notes, but I knew better.

When it finally came time to see my heroine, my idol, and the superstar of my world, I was on pins and needles. Beverly Sills live! I bought tickets for my father and grandmother, too, and we sat together in the front row mezzanine, center. From the moment the music started to the last note, I was transfixed. There she was: her gorgeous, perfect, stunning voice, and incredible stage presence. As they say, she ate the scenery and outshone every other performer. During her last aria where she sings to her true love at the entrance to the silver mine where he died, I think I sailed through the sparkling ceiling of the Music Center up to heaven where I floated with the angels. I only returned to my seat at the sound of the roaring applause and standing ovation.

I knew I couldn't leave the theater without seeing my idol and telling her how much her singing meant to me. I dragged my father and grandmother with me backstage where we waited in line in an elegantly modern hallway. As the minutes ticked by, I was rocking nervously from foot to foot, my breath caught in my throat. I thought I would jump out of my skin. I was about to meet Beverly Sills! And then, suddenly it was my turn. There she was, standing in front of me, dressed in a pretty suit, blond hair up, skin glowing, an expectant look on her face. I took one step toward

her and burst into tears of emotion! I ran to her, hugged her and could not speak one word. My father and grandmother stood there watching helplessly.

As I sobbed, she hugged me and stroked my hair. I heard her sweet voice say, "No one really died, you know." I was so touched by her kindness. At that moment I realized I appeared to be very young compared to the opera crowd she might have been used to. "No, no, it wasn't the story, it was you," I said, trying unsuccessfully to articulate an adult feeling from a teenaged heart.

I understood then that there are no words to describe the rapture that art can bring, the kind of rapture that touches you and overwhelms your soul. It is the gift of all artists to us, their greatest gift. And that is what Beverly Sills gave me that day.

Jolie Kanat

[Jolie is a member of our Opera Club--Ed.]



EDITOR'S NOTE

The next newsletter staff meeting will be held Thursday, September 1, 10:30 AM, at the home of staff member **Gigi Welch**, 35 Palmer Drive, Novato 94949.

MY ABORTED CAREER AS A TROMBONIST

Because my father made his living as a trombonist in his early years he thought I should learn the instrument also and gave me daily lessons. I became good enough to play in school bands, where they have to take nearly everyone, but that was the limit of my skill. However, I did learn a few useful things along the way.

Fairly often I was part of a marching band, and tramped down Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills and Colorado Boulevard in Pasadena from time to time. Due to the projection of their slides trombonists are always in the front row. This means they are the only musicians who can see clearly where they are going, which is particularly important when there are horses in the parade. Even more important, when there are also trolley tracks, this creates a decidedly slippery combination. And rain was also a problem. Marching musicians have a clip attached to their instruments which holds all the sheets of music they expect to be playing. In wet weather the sheets are held inside a snap down plastic case. One rainy day I was marching along when I needed to change the music. It's a real acrobatic feat to unsnap the case and arrange the sheets in the order they will be needed while carrying the heavy trombone and keeping in line and in step with the others. Unfortunately, while my case was open a gust of wind swept most of the music away. It was out of the question to go after it, but from that point on I continued to hold my instrument high but restrained myself from blowing.

Then there was the day when I was marching in formation at a high school football game. All of us in the band wore white pants. At that time fountain pens held liquid ink, but mine was the only one which leaked. The huge black spot on my right thigh assured me that I was the center of everyone's attention.

Most instruments aren't much fun to practice alone, and to deal with this problem an enterprising but out of work musician who called himself "Colonel" Vesey Walker had organized a boys' band. Here was a real Music Man of his time. Anyone could join the band by paying a monthly fee. We practiced one evening a week, and when the "Colonel" decided that we weren't going to get

any better he scheduled a concert. We all had to sell tickets, and the hall was reasonably full of proud parents and reluctant relatives.

Trombones have mutes, though they're not often used, made of hollow wood about ten inches long which can be inserted into the bell to soften the sound,. During our concert there happened to be a fairly long passage of muted trombone music. We were all doing well when my mute unexpectedly popped out and bounced across the stage making quite a racket. Laughter erupted from the front



rows while I tried to decide if I should ignore the mishap or get out of my chair and retrieve the offender. Finally I let it lie in plain view. That was the evening I concluded that a musician's lot is not a happy one.

Don Polhemus

THE MONKEYS' VIEWPOINT

Three monkeys once sat in a cocoanut tree
Discussing some things as they're rumored to be.
Said one to the others, "Now listen, you two,
There's a nasty assertion that cannot be true.
That the humans descended from our noble race.
Why, the very idea's a total disgrace.
What monkey has ever deserted his wife
Abandoned his babies and ruined her life.
You never have heard of a motherly monk
To leave all her babies with others to bunk.
Or pass them all on from one monk to another
'Til they cannot remember which monk is their
mother.
Another behavior that you'll never see
Is a fence built around a monk's cocoanut tree
Letting all of the cocoanuts rot into waste
While forbidding the other monks even a taste.
Why, if I kept all other monks far from my tree
Starvation might force them to steal nuts from me.
And monkeys would never use pistol or knife
Or even to threaten another monk's life.
Yes, man is descended, the ornery old cuss,
But never from virtuous beings like us."

NANCY POLLOCK AND HER ART



I have received so much from College of Marin that I consider it an honor to exhibit my art in their gallery.

The works on display are made in the encaustic medium. The word "enkastikos" is Greek for to "burn-in". The medium is a blend of beeswax and damar crystals heated together into a medium. Oil paint or dry pigment can be applied to each layer which is fused by heat to the next layer. The concept of fusing is important in encaustic work because it solidifies and color becomes impervious. These panels are braced birch wood which helps to keep the substrate from warping.

The smell of beeswax is so inviting in the studio. The process is tactile and thrilling. Many artists have used the medium including Jasper Johns who

revived it in the 20th century. The history of the medium includes paintings on the hulls of ships which remained waterproof and pigment hues have not been altered because they have been preserved in beeswax. The Fayum Mummy portraits used the medium for preservation.

[See *Redscape* on back cover --Editor.]

IT SEEMED LIKE A GOOD IDEA AT THE TIME



Surely everyone has had the experience of a plan which didn't turn out nearly as well as expected. Send us your tale of woe and we'll print it. No, we can't give a cash award for the saddest story, but we can give you a lot of sympathy. Let's hear from you.

Editor

CLUBS: Participation in all clubs requires an Emeritus Students Activities Card. For further information, call 485-9652.

ADVENTURER'S CLUB: Call Ruth King, 898-5845, for information on next meeting.

BOCCE BALL CLUB: Bocce ball on Tues. at San Rafael courts, 9:30 AM. Call John Kouns, 332-5929 for other activities.

BOOK BANTER CLUB: 2nd Friday September to May, 12:00 - 1:30 PM, Emeritus Center, Kentfield. Len Pullan, 381-6952, lenpullan@comcast.net.

BRIDGE CLUB: Mon. 1:00 - 4:30 PM, Cafeteria, Kentfield. Tom Metzger, 479-8290, trmetzger@comcast.net; Lynn Mason, 456-2508.

CURRENT EVENTS CLUB: 2nd & 4th Thursdays, 10:00 AM - 12 noon, Emeritus Ctr. Jerry Weisman, 383-1831, gweisman@sprintmail.com; and James Kennedy, 388-3939.

FRENCH CLUB: Call Doyleen McMurtry, 472-4738, dmcumrtry@LVHA.net, for information on next meeting.

GLOBAL ISSUES CLUB: 3rd Friday, 2:00 - 4:00 PM, IVC, Room 140, Bldg 10. Colleen Rose, 898-0131, colleenrose@juno.com.

GREAT BOOKS DISCUSSION GROUP: 2nd & 4th Tuesdays, 10:00 AM - 12 noon, IVC, Room 140, Bldg. 10, near Admissions. Don Polhemus, 883-3567, dondorpol@aol.com.

GREAT IDEAS IN PHILOSOPHY CLUB: Thursdays, 1-3 PM, Room 140, Bldg. 10, IVC. Larry Witter, 883-6889, lswitter@sonic.net.

HUMANITIES CLUB: 1st & 3rd Saturdays, 1-3 PM, Room 140, Bldg 10, IVC. Rudy Ramirez, 491-0522, rurmac@mac.com.

ITALIAN CLUB: 4th Tuesday, 2-4 PM, Emeritus Center. Mila Weed, 453-6054, unsarda@mac.com.

IVC BOOK FORUM: 4th Monday, 3-5 PM, IVC, Room 140, Bldg. 10, near Admissions. Louise Kerr, 883-2823, lkerr210@comcast.net.

IVC FILM NOIR DVD CLUB: 2nd & 4th Saturdays, 1-3 PM, Bldg. 10, next to Admissions, Room 140, IVC. Rudy Ramirez, 491-0522, rurmac@mac.com.

MORAL-ETHICAL & LEGAL ISSUES ROUNDTABLE: 1st & 3rd Tuesdays, 10 AM - 12 noon, Emeritus Center, Kentfield. Cole Posard, 491-4118, colemanposard@att.net; Len Pullan, 381-6952.

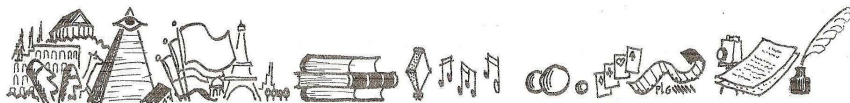
OPERA AND BEYOND: Last Wednesday of month, 1-3 PM, Emeritus Center, Kentfield. Gil Deane, 456-2853, gildeane@aol.com.

SCRABBLE CLUB: Every Thursday, 2:00-4:00 PM, Cafeteria, Kentfield. Marlene Knox, 459-1427, marlsteve@comcast.net.

SHAKESPEARE CLUB: Third Monday. Please call Valda Carter, 388-6335, valdated@sbcglobal.net, for time and place.

SINGALONG CLUB: 2nd Wednesdays, 2:30-3:30 PM, location TBA. Marlene Knox, 459-1427, marlsteve@comcast.net.

WRITERS' WORKSHOP: 1st Tuesday of the month, 1-4 PM, Emeritus Center. Shirley Pullan, shirlmv@comcast.net, or Marlene Knox, 459-1427, marlsteve@comcast.net.

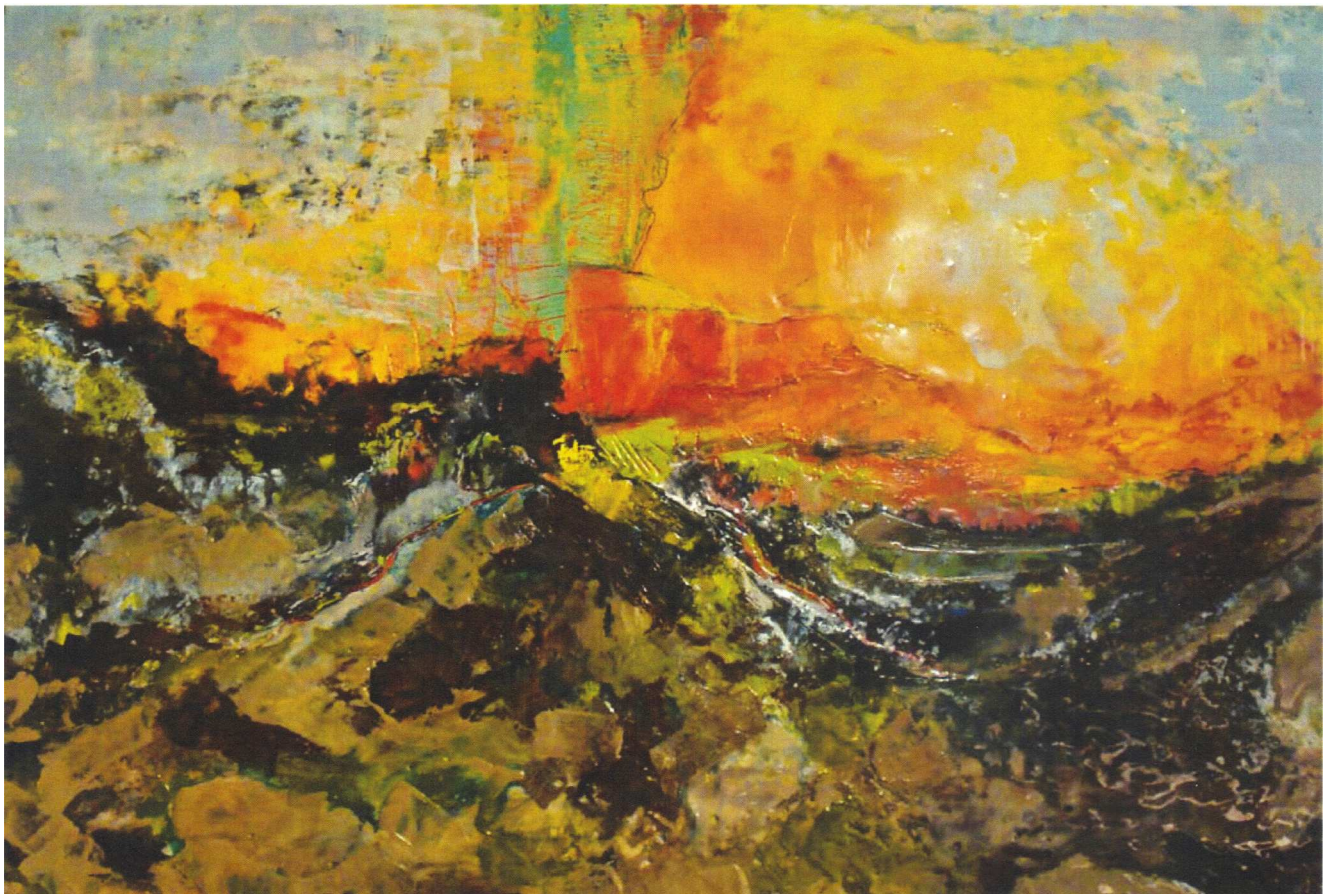


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