Coachella Valley Watercolor Society

Brush Up
December 2026

General Meeting: December 14, 2026

5:30 PM Social, 6:00 PM General Meeting

Joslyn Center - 73750 Catalina Way, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Presenting a live interactive streamed demonstration at the Joslyn Center

December Demonstrator: Carrie Waller



Carrie Waller is a watercolor artist who works in a realistic, detailed style in her Arkansas studio after recently moving back from Tokyo, Japan where she resided for over 8 years. Her unique works are bold, vibrant and dramatic.

Carrie has won numerous awards and has been published in The Art of Watercolor, Pratique des Arts and many, many others. Her works have been exhibited all over the world, most recently at the Tokyo Metropolitan Museum of Art, The Kyoto Kyocera Museum, and the Hiroshima Prefectural Museum. Carrie won the $10,000 Grand Prize in the American Women Artist's 2020 Museum Competition. She is a signature member of many watercolor organizations throughout the country. She teaches workshops online and in person and is an ambassador for Daniel Smith Watercolors. Carrie is currently the Vice President and Awards Director for the National Watercolor Society.





President's Message



Kathy Weyer, President

CVWS 2026 – 2027 Officers

President: Kathy Weyer
1st VP- Programs: Carrie Bova
2nd VP – Shows: Mary Anne Brower & Ian Cooke
3rd VP – Publicity: Janet Barajas
Treasurer: Cindy Mason
Recording Secretary: Connie Zane
Corresponding Secretary - Newsletter: Jean Grover

2026-2027 Committee Chairs:

DVD Library: Vera Knowles
Grants: Nancy Rizzardi
Membership: Connie Collins
Painter of the Month/Year: Diane Schoenrock
Raffle: Sharon Mabrey
Sunshine: Cindy Green
Workshops: Sue Ober & Traci Davis



December 2026

My, my, my…isn't this year going fast? Time is getting away – too fast! The Holidays are upon us, and I'm wondering how that happened.

Our November meeting was the first in-person meeting of the season, and the demonstrator was fabulous – I honestly didn't know what to expect, but Terry Hastings showed us how AI can help us in so many ways, from helping compose a piece to naming the piece. I went home and did some testing – the piece I was thinking about for the show in March came together quickly with help from Chat GPT. I still have some adjustments to make, but she was a great help. I named her Selma. Why, you ask? No idea.

Have you started your masterpiece for the annual show in March? It will be here before you know it. We are working hard to get the word out to the community and get some media attention. Please spread the word so we will have a good showing, and you can display and maybe sell your masterpieces. Specifics are on the website now. Some rules have changed so please review them carefully. Entry forms will be posted in January.

But before the March show, Sue Ober has scheduled a Drawing for Watercolor workshop with Jessica Schiffman on January 22 & 23. The first day centers on landscapes; the second day on faces. Come learn a new skill! Check the web site for specifics. As of the last meeting, we already had quite a few people signed up, so don't let the opportunity slip by.

Finally, our social media guru Carrie Bova has worked hard to get our social media back up and on track. Check it out and contribute, like, share, friend us, and stay in touch so the rest of the community will see what we are doing. This is a good way to get to get some visibility for CVWS.

Here's to a safe and happy Holiday season,

Kat

November 2026 Painter of the Month

Photos courtesy of Terry Simons

1st Place: Vera Knowles

"What About Bob?"



2nd Place: Suzanne Olsiewski

"Pomegranate"



3rd Place: Judi Coltman

"Serengeti Lullaby"



Honorable Mention: Terry Simons

"Golden Silence"



Continued on next page…

November 2026 Painter of the Month, continued

Demonstrator's Choice: Juli Sexton

"Lemons"





Thoughts from Painter of the Month Chair Diane Schoenrock:

Around my birthday in early November, I read an article about a huge lunar realignment of the planets' energy. The word that caught my attention was "intention." It spoke about setting an intention with the new lunar cycle before change could take place. That word or feeling seems more friendly than resolution, as in New Year' s resolution, which often carries guilt when we don't follow through.

So, what is your intention with this new watercolor season? May it be to spend more time (be specific) each week painting or sketching? Maybe, just once, getting up the courage to enter a Painter of the Month gallery? Two new members of CVWS entered paintings last month. Congratulations to both!

Currently, we have multiple spaces open for our December Painter of the Month gallery. You can enter by signing up at a meeting or by contacting me at: dnschoenrock@yahoo.com or calling/ texting 818-720-6174. What is your art thought?

Membership

Welcome to New CVWS Members:

- Amy Freeland
- Jan Johnson

Getting to know our CVWS Board Members

This month we are featuring 2nd Vice President - Shows Co-Chair, Mary Anne Brower



MaryAnne Brower has loved art her whole life, from the time she was four years old and watched an artist on television.

She was a double major in college: art and mathematics. She taught math for almost 50 years but has always painted for enjoyment.

Many years ago, her husband surprised her with a class in Chinese Brush Painting and she was "hooked". She took classes under a well-known Chinese artist for forty-two years. She uses rice paper, Chinese ink and watercolors for her work. She also works with traditional watercolors.

Mary Anne moved to the desert nine years ago and immediately joined the Watercolor Society. About eighteen months later, she was asked to co-chair the annual show and has done it ever since.

WELCOME to our new 3rd Vice President – Publicity, Janet Barajas!



We are delighted that Janet Barajas is our new Publicity Director.

Janet is drawn to the delicate beauty of flowers, the soulful expressions of animals, and the enchanting world of fantasy, whether working in watercolor, acrylic, or oil.

Beyond her art, she is actively involved in the La Quinta community, participating in city events. Her love for animals also extends beyond the canvas through her volunteer work with the Desert Wildlife Association and the Palm Springs Animal Shelter.

Please note the Membership Directory listing for Janet has an extra "a" in her last name and is incorrect. It should be janetbarajas@mac.com, so please make a note of this.

MEMBER CONTRIBUTIONS

Editor's note: In this edition of our CVWS newsletter, we are fortunate to have not one, but two articles about ideas to improve your painting skills, submitted by Ian Cooke and Connie Zane. So, whether you paint realistically or abstractly or a mix of both, there is sure to be something here for you. Thank you, Ian and Connie!

Submitted by Ian Cooke:

As a realistic painter, I am inspired to present a different perspective than the one offered by Connie Zane in her article, "Loosen Up" in our November Brush - Up issue. Rather than wanting to "Loosen Up", there are those of us who paint successfully in a realistic manner. It's our style and we aim to perfect it.

All artists have their own style which develops as they paint, study other artists and try different techniques. I always tell beginners in my class to just paint what they enjoy, in a way that is rewarding and comfortable to them. An actual personal style may take many months to develop. To emphasize any one style is to put pressure on a fledgling artist.

Many artists will paint in a style that suits their subject matter. So, for me, my florals must be recognizable, and any leaves and fruits must accurately match with the flowers. Botanical art developed in the 19th century before photography, and accuracy was a key element of recording new plant discoveries. Modern botanical art has a rigid set of rules. There are also those who like the challenge of painting in a hyper realistic style, capturing the precise facets of cut glass or the flashes of reflected light on polished silver or a shiny new car. 'Loosening up' is the last thing they want!

On a practical level, there are many ways of helping an artist create a picture that is both pleasant and accurate.

- When working from photos, I often recommend that artists divide the photo into quarters with a vertical and horizontal line. This helps transferring the drawing to larger format and keep it balanced.
- On a bigger scale, using a grid can be useful for larger paintings.
- Many developing artists like to trace from large prints. This is not cheating but simply using a technique to help you concentrate on color and value.
- Some artists have a real 'live' subject to draw and paint, but a photograph helps to 'flatten' the image before painting. The 'camera lucida' was invented in the 17th century and popular through the 19th century, providing accurate images for artists. Modern versions of this are available.

There are lots of ways to create a crisp realistic image! None of these are deception but simply tools we use to build confidence and achieve the finished painting.

Membership, continued

Submitted by Connie Zane:

Loosen Up - Part Two

This is the second part of a brief discussion on painting looser. Last month was about paper and brush size, working at arm's length, and working wetter and faster.

Here are five additional ways to loosen up:

1. Pick a Jarring Color Scheme. A combination of colors that's not only new to you but seems to defy you may jolt you out of your old habits and loosen you up. And you may make some surprising discoveries along the way, mixing hues in ways that hadn't occurred to you before. If you make color swatch samples, be sure to label the colors you use so you can recreate them later.

2. Limit Your Drawing. To get a looser look, limit the amount of drawing prior to painting. Too detailed a drawing may serve as a crutch and, usually a freer look is achieved by doing more brushwork and less drawing. A fluid line of watercolor is generally looser and more painterly than the line created with a pencil or marker. You also avoid the coloring book effect of rigid adherence to drawn outlines.

3. Don't Try for a Finished Painting. One sure way to loosen up is to let yourself experiment without expecting to get a finished painting out of it. Once we start envisioning a great outcome, we set ourselves up for disappointment. So, try to lower your expectations and just let yourself expect an experimental adventure instead. That's when you'll surprise yourself.

4. Think Bolder. The French philosopher, Rene Descartes said, "I think, therefore, I am", and that's an attitude that serves artists as well. Self-talk is a potent tool. Tell yourself, "I AM an artist". Try telling yourself that you are bold, (even if that is not your habit) and it stimulates that response subconsciously. Paint with swifter, stronger strokes. Use bolder color, larger images. Go at the work with a devil-may-care attitude and the results may look more relaxed.

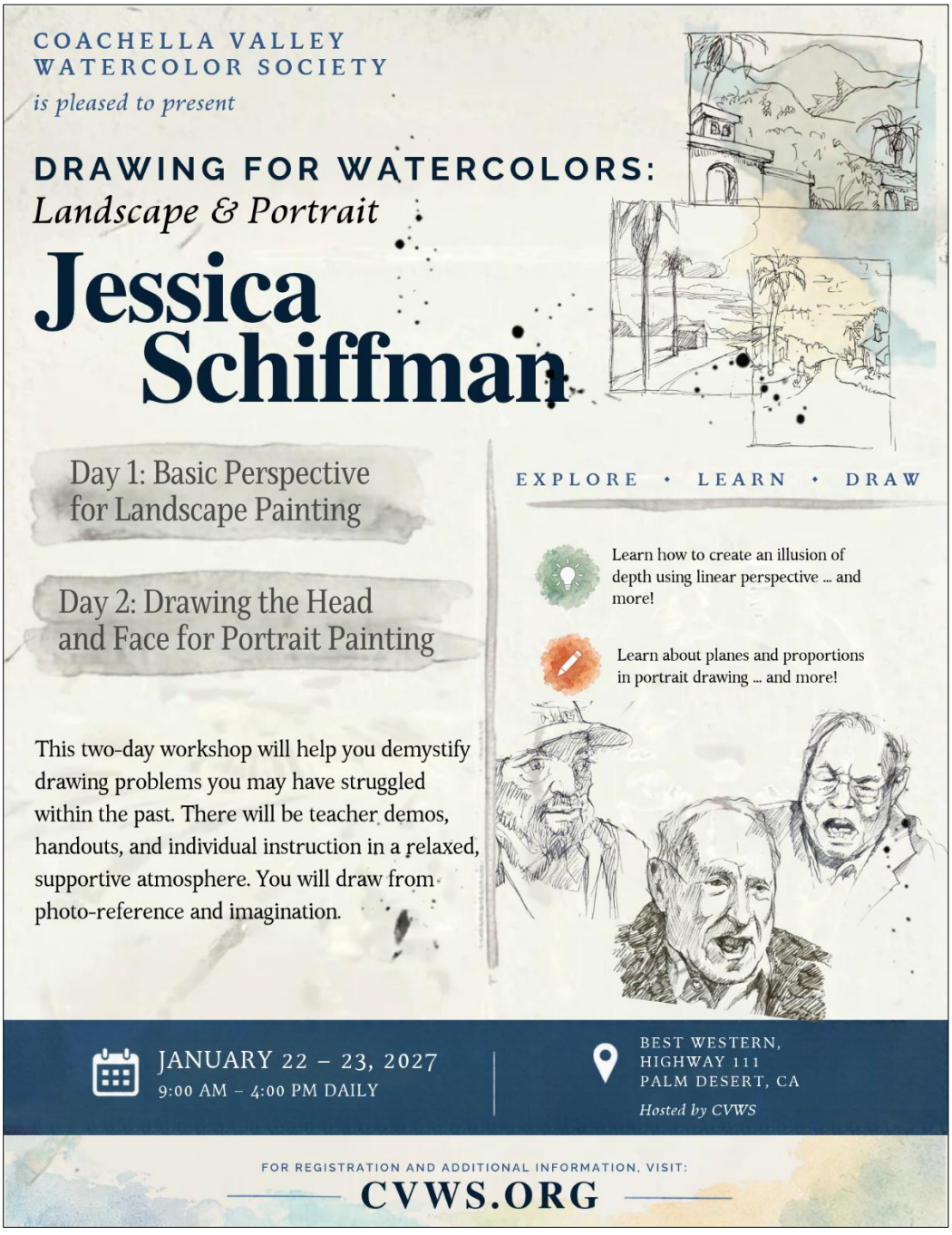
5. You CAN Correct Mistakes. We often assume that watercolor is unforgiving and that once you've made a mark, it's unchangeable. Remind yourself that that's NOT the case. You can, to some degree, back out or fix mistakes with tricks such as lifting, glazing, using gouache or collage. It's easier to be bold when you know that you can retreat. So, relax, knowing that your marks are not set in stone and you can correct missteps later if need be. In the meantime, give perfection the day off and just let yourself enjoy the process.

For those who have not yet paid membership dues, you can pay by credit card or check our next meeting. Or, you can go to our website, cvws.org and pay.

Workshops

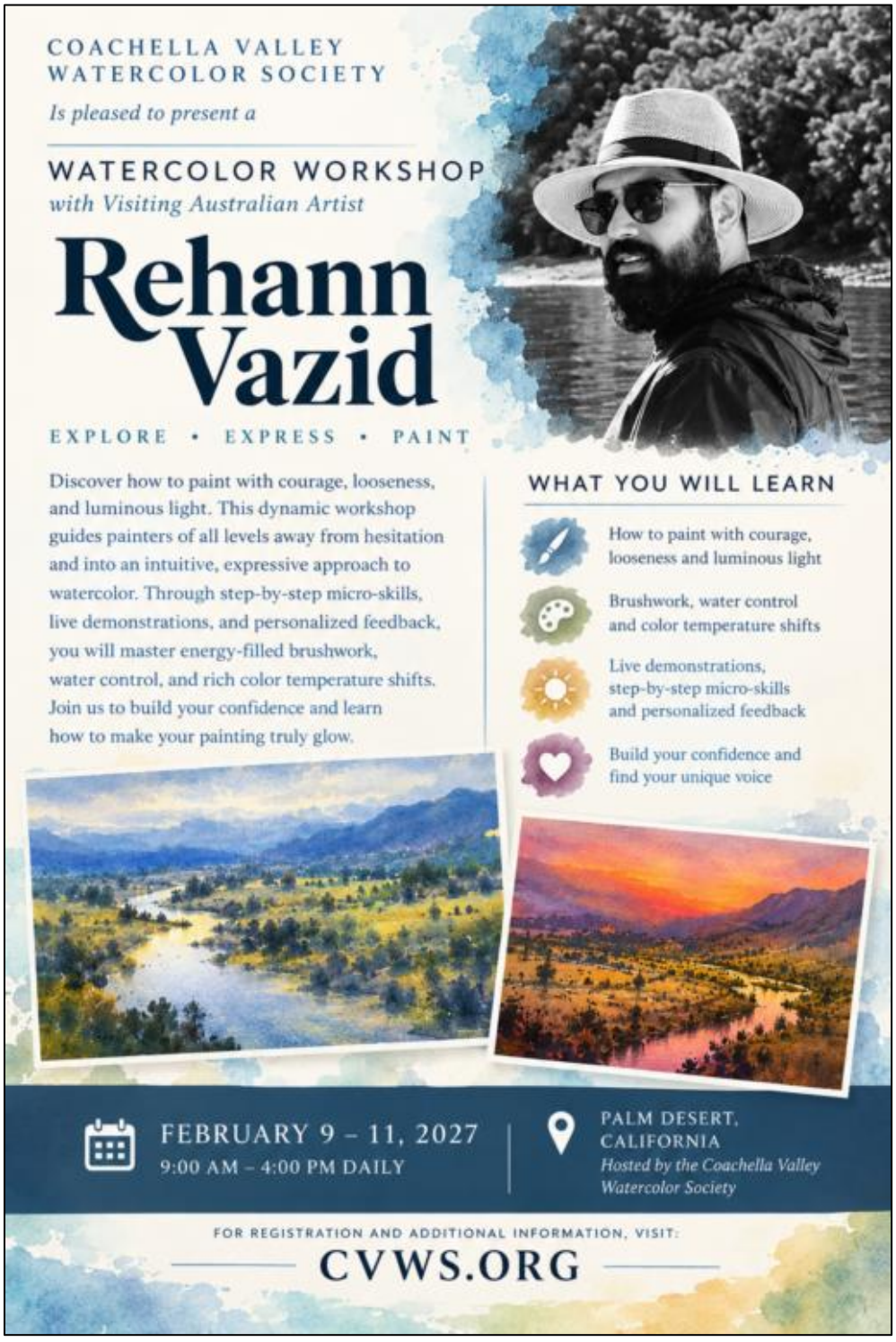
From Sue Ober, Workshop Co-Chair:

Our first workshop of the season is a 2-day event not to be missed!! **Jessica Schiffman**, a local award-winning painter, will help you demystify drawing problems. We will work with basic perspective for landscape painting and with drawing the head and face for portrait painting. The workshop takes place on January 22nd & 23rd and will cost $200 for CVWS members and $235 for non-members. **Places are strictly limited.**



Workshops, continued

The second workshop of the season will take place from February 9th – 11th. The theme is "Bold & Glow in Watercolor" with the workshop being led by Rehann Vazid, the renowned Melbourne-based artist. The workshop is suitable for all levels - beginners to experts - and will cost $400 for CVWS members and $450 for non-members. Places are strictly limited.



News

ANNUAL SHOW

Is it too early to think of the show next March? Maybe, but it's not too early to paint!



Once again, we will have three categories: Traditional, Open and Mini Masterpieces. And our show will again be in the lovely setting of the Artists Center in Palm Desert.
If you paint Plein Air, you can enter your pieces in one of the other categories. And new for this year, *we will have a special award for the best Plein Air picture*. The rules and prospectus have already been posted on our website. Please read them carefully. THERE IS A CHANGE FOR MINI-MASTERS CATEGORY IN THE NEW YEAR. THE OUTSIDE EDGE MAY NOT EXCEED 13 INCHES. The entry forms will be on the website in January.

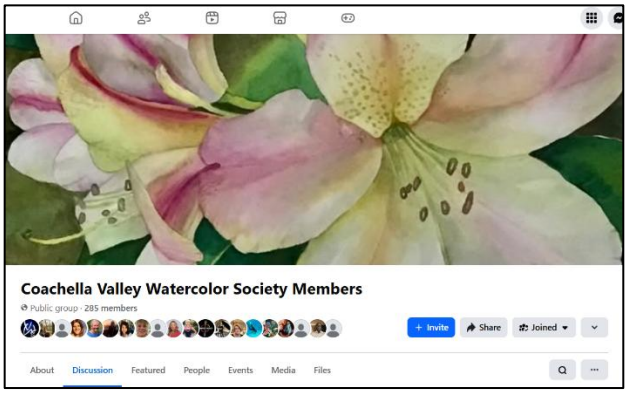
- Mary Anne Brower & Ian Cooke

Coachella Valley Watercolor Society Social Media

Follow CVWS on Social Media to learn more about our events, enjoy our members' water media paintings and stay connected with our community.

Join our Member's only Facebook account:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/114293801332



Instagram





https://www.instagram.com/cvwatercolorsociety/

Odds & Ends

DESERT PLEIN AIR ASSOCIATION PAINT OUTS - NOVEMBER *& DECEMBER 2026*

November 20th, Friday:
Sunnylands Gardens – also 1st Yogo day (9am-10am)
37977 Bob Hope Drive
Rancho Mirage, CA
They Open at 8:30am

November 28th, Saturday
Downtown, Palm Springs at La Plaza
Gps: Use Farm Restaurant address
6 La Plaza Palm Springs, CA 92262

December 08, Tuesday :
La Quinta Civic Center Park
78495 Calle Tampico
La Quinta, CA

December 17th, Thursday:
Wolfson Park (No restroom here.)
70001 Frank Sinatra Dr.
Rancho Mirage, CA

December 28th, Monday:
Shields Date Gardens
80225 Hwy 111
Indio, CA
Gate opens at 8:00am

Please join us… let me know if you plan to attend:

Diane Moore, President
760-485-6798

NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION DATES
Submissions to the newsletter are due on or before the 15th of the month.

If you hear of someone who needs a bit of cheer or support, please contact our Sunshine Chairman, Cindy Green at (425) 765-9509 or cindynwrs@seanet.com



Editor's Note: If you have a topic or feature that you'd like to see included in the CVWS newsletter, or on the CVWS.org website, please send an email to: cvwsnewsletter@gmail.com

Many CVWS members offer excellent painting instruction and classes. Call for information:

Ian Cooke	***760 408 3313***
Ellen Jean Diederich	***701-799-9505***
Bob Hannah	***206-409-9786***
Karin Harris	***808-268-0847***
Dave Howell	***425-319-5858***
Moira Johannessen	***760-322-2523***
Diane Morgan	***760-902-8855***
Alicia Siegler	***650-207-0585***
Suzy Voss	***209-768-7647***
Connie Zane	***775-846-9719***



Follow CVWS on Social Media to learn more about our events, enjoy members' water media paintings and stay connected with our community.

Instagram: CV Watercolor Society link https://www.instagram.com/cvwatercolorsociety/

Members Facebook pagehttps://www.facebook.com/groups/114293801332