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## COPLEY SOCIETY'S CLASS OF 2015

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January/February 2015

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# MYSTICAL, MEDITATIVE, MIRTHFUL

## COSO'S NEW MEMBERS ARE FOR REAL

If you are seeking some good examples of contemporary realism, look no further than the Copley Society of Art's New Members' Show 2015, introducing 18 new Co|So member artists who hail from as near as Brookline and Cambridge, Mass. to as far away as County Kildare, Ireland. They join the Society's roster of over 400 living members.

This exhibition focuses on realism from a variety of approaches including painting, drawing and photography, with only one artist working in abstraction. While traditional genres such as still life, landscape, seascape and rural/townscape are perhaps overly represented, there are some stand-out works that will make this exhibition well worth a visit.

New York painter Nicole Alger's oil paintings, "Talking Woman" and especially "Talking Stick," successfully combine photographic realism with expressive painterly abstraction to create a mystical moment, like an

illustration from a myth or legend that I don't yet know but would love to hear.

Brookline painter David Palmquist's "Green Ranch House," a horizontally blurred glimpse of a simple ranch house and old car, captures the fleeting visions of other lives seen and wondered at briefly as we speed through our lives in America. Palmquist's "Row Houses" is a smaller piece, also in oils, addressing the same topic but in a completely different type of neighborhood.

Toronto-based artist Kate Taylor's two acrylic and resin paintings are luminous and lovely, filled with color and energy. "Weeping Willow Sunset" captures the colors of evening and the vertical droop of willow branches in an abstract sensibility that conveys the feeling of a scene reflected in water without literal representation, while "Tall Cosmos" glimmers with multicolored splashes against a golden-yellow ground, like sparks flying up from a fire or a mass of hummingbirds rising

Louise Arnold, *Farm Road*, 2013, oil on canvas, 12" x 36".



into the air. Though not particularly large, Taylor's paintings claim their space and make themselves heard.

Several of the works in the show are refreshingly amusing. "Workday Revolution" is Quincy-based artist Timothy Rakarich's oil painting from a snapshot of a dissipated-looking

graphite drawing, McCosco gently sends up Chuck Close's iconic "Big Self Portrait" from 1969, borrowing the backward tilt of the head, the horn-rimmed glasses, the wild hair and the upturned cigarette while forgoing the huge scale, the patterns of light and shadow on the subject's face,

## THESE LITTLE PAINTINGS HINT AT UNKNOWN FAIRY TALES OF FAR-AWAY PLACES AND STRANGE ADVENTURES JUST OVER THE HILLS.

man in the costume of an 18th century British Redcoat, clutching a plastic cup, propped in a corner of a train car. There's a whole story here – of a man who has gone perhaps a bit too far celebrating after a Revolutionary War reenactment. Rakarich's other piece in the show, "Neseman," is also a photo-based painting of a man with a drink, but this one is distinctly a portrait, capturing the world-weary and skeptical expression of the subject, a middle-aged man in glasses and a porkpie hat, in the act of lowering his just-emptied shot glass from his lips.

Another portrait that made me smile was "Chuck Close" by Matthew McCosco of Somerville, Mass. In this

and the insistence on the "ugly mug" of the character's visage. McCosco also includes a more straightforward portrait, "Gwen Lu," which again makes use of graphite pencil and graphite powder.

McCosco and Rakarich should make good additions to the Copley Society's stable of portrait artists.

Diane Nelson, of Brighton, Mass., is another painter who conveys a sense of storytelling in her acrylic fantasy landscapes, "Highland Meadows" and "Overpass." At just eight-by-ten inches, these little paintings hint at unknown fairy tales of far-away places and strange adventures just over the hills.

Joe Smith, *Forever Afternoon*, 2013, ink on scratchboard, 24" x 18".



Also in this exhibition of new Copley Society artists are rural landscapes in oils by Louise Arnold of Concord, Mass. ("Farm Road" and "Lumsden Farm") and Johan Bjurman of Johnston, R.I. ("Warren Winter Estuary" and "Farnham Farm") and tightly rendered drawings in ink on scratchboard by Joe Smith of Phillipston, Mass. ("Forever Afternoon" and "Branches").

Loosely rendered city scenes by Jeff Bye of Hershey, Penn. ("Behind the Nickel Lounge" and "Sunday" – both in acrylic) are paired with oil paintings by Patrick Cahill from County Kildare, Ireland ("Red Tram, Prague" and "Ellis Quay, Dublin") and Cambridge, Mass. watercolor artist Steven Foote's "Montmartre Café" and "A Break in the Clouds."

Gloucester's Katherine Coakely's acrylic paintings "Champagne Sail" and "The Lily Pond" offer quiet visions of water, in contrast to the wilder seas in "Tide Coming Up" and "One Day"

Matthew McCosco, *Chuck Close*, graphite pencil and graphite powder, 11" x 14".

**NEW MEMBERS' SHOW 2015**  
**COPLEY SOCIETY OF ART**  
**158 NEWBURY STREET**  
**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS**  
**JANUARY 10 THROUGH FEBRUARY 23**





Jeff Bye, *Behind the Nickel Lounge*, 2012, acrylic, 30" x 24".

Timothy Rakarich, *Workday Revolution*, 2014, oil, 18" x 24".

by encaustic artist Ruth Hamill of Manchester, Mass. and Lunenburg's David Prokowiec's oil paintings of the New England coastline, "Nantucket Surf" and "Crashing on Cape Elizabeth."

Still life is represented by Orr's Island, Maine resident Robert Gibson's colorful depictions of glass balls and bottles against floral fabrics in his acrylic paintings, "Still Life in Red and Green" and "Still Life with Asymmetrical Vase." Worcester's JoEllen Reinhardt follows the traditions of the early Northern Renaissance with simple arrangements of fruit and flowers on tables in her small oil-on-linen paintings "Lacecap Hydrangeas" and "Sliced."

Photographer Acadia Mezzofanti of Swampscott, Mass., uses a sepia tint in her digital photographs, "Passage" and "Discovery (Self Portrait)," giving the works an illusion of timelessness – more than appropriate for display in the gallery of the Copley Society, an organization whose origins date back to 1879.

The show's opening reception takes place on Saturday, January 10 from 3:30-5:30 p.m.

**Marcia Santore**

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