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Artists from the Marchutz School of Fine Arts

Celebrating 60 Years: 1957 - 2017

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A native of Wilmington, Delaware, Grace Anderson studied drawing and painting before making her first trip to Europe in the 1970s--an event which would lead her to settle permanently in France at Aix-en-Provence.

Using an aesthetic palette whose materials, marks, and colors are rooted in the tradition of abstract expressionism, Anderson’s work attempts to explore and describe the emotional and cultural landscape of her life in a visual poetry of paint, charcoal, ink, graphite, and pastel. Grace has participated in many exhibitions in Aix-en-Provence and beyond.
Born in Washington, DC, O’Neill Cushman has lived and worked in Aix-en-Provence for several years. His painting practice is centered around his belief that a work of art is structurally parallel to Nature, and his primary form of self expression is through a phenomenological investigation of these natural structures and their relationship to him. His methodical and continual search for poetic truth and perceptive meaning, both in Nature and in his work, guides his rapid, intuitive style, which he calls Phenomenological Expressionism. O’Neill holds a BA in philosophy from Kenyon College and an MFA from Plymouth University’s TransArt Institute.
A native of Seattle, Washington, John Gasparach first came to Aix-en-Provence and the Marchutz School of Fine Arts in the Summer of 1972. He returned to Aix-en-Provence soon after to work with and learn from Leo Marchutz, Billy Weyman, and Sam Bjorklund, among others. John earned his Master of Arts in Liberal Arts from St. John’s College in Santa Fe, New Mexico in the early 2000s. He has been a professor at the Marchutz school for over 35 years, and is now the Assistant Dean of Marchutz. He continues to paint and exhibit his works in Aix-en-Provence and beyond.
Michèle Hénot was a student at the Marchutz School of Fine Arts in 1978 and 1979. She has shown work in many exhibitions, including a group show in Palm Beach and one in Washington. Hénot has also exhibited at the Royal Albert Museum in London and at the Musée Granet here in Aix-en-Provence.

When asked “Why does she paint?” Michèle responds: “To see the energy of life contained in everything dancing with the space.”
Fi Katzler was born in Malta and grew up on the coast in Hampshire. Having studied art in the UK, she moved to Aix-en-Provence in 2008. There she continued to paint, studying with the Gardanne Art School and the Leo Marchutz School of Art.

Fi has always been interested in the landscapes around her and never tires of the stunning scenery in Provence and the intense luminosity of the light that has inspired so many in the past, notably Cezanne and Van Gogh.

Predominantly a 'plein air' artist, Fi loves to paint the local landscape and to be immersed in nature, feeling the heat of the sun on her shoulders, hearing the chirping of the cicadas and smelling the wild thyme and rosemary. She assimilates all these senses and lets them flow onto the canvas in an attempt to capture the unique moment.

She likes to paint energetically, with bold strokes and vibrant colour in an effort to bring the painting together as a whole. "The first of all principles is the need to make sacrifices," a statement by Delacroix that she never forgets, when she stands before a blank canvas and starts on her creative adventure.

Fi is always trying to not state the obvious, and rather than painting what she sees in front of her, tries to suggest - building a sense of mystery and involvement between artist and viewer.

Au cours des années trente, il renonce peu à peu à la peinture à l'huile pour se consacrer au dessin et, par le suite, à la lithographie. Pendant les années noires de l'occupation nazie, il doit se cacher et survit grâce à l'entretien d'une ferme à volaille aidé par son épouse Barbara. Dès la fin de la guerre, se dévouant à la maîtrise de la technique lithographique, il reprend son activité artistique qui sera consacrée, en 1949, par la parution du premier grand ouvrage, l'Evangile selon Saint Luc. Met son savoir-faire à disposition de différents artistes, dont Tal Coat, André Masson, Pierre Jean Jouve et Fernand Pouillon, qui deviendra son mécène. Réalise plusieurs séries d'albums lithographiques autour des thèmes religieux, des paysages d'Aix et d'Italie notamment.

Il est missionné par la Ville d'Aix pour la réalisation de plusieurs expositions dans cette ville, en particulier deux expositions d'œuvres de Paul Cézanne. À partir de 1959, il dispense un enseignement de la peinture dans le cadre de l'Institut Américain Universitaire d'Aix, créant en 1972 sa propre structure d'enseignement de la peinture. Partant de dessins agrandis, il revient, à partir de 1964, à la peinture pour créer de grandes toiles : le trait lithographique original peut alors se retrouver et être travaillé à l'échelle de la peinture de chevalet.

Début 1976, Léo Marchutz décède à Aix-en-Provence.
Born and raised in North Carolina and South Carolina, Alan Roberts traveled to Europe for a one-month visit in 1974. First astonished by the beauty of the European architecture and its unity with the surrounding landscape, he then serendipitously met the former director of the Marchutz School, William Weyman, whose unique teaching methods inspired Roberts to enroll in the art school in Aix-en-Provence as a novice painter. There he met Leo Marchutz as well as Sam Bjorklund, John Gasparach, Christopher Coffey, and François de Asis - artists and colleagues instrumental in the artistic development of Roberts. He was taught that an intensive study of the laws of organic wholeness and their repeated affirmation in the works all great art could lead him towards his own unique vision.

Director of the Marchutz School of Art since 1990, Alan Roberts has a BS in Psychology from the University of South Carolina and an MFA from Vermont College. His studio is located at the renowned Chateaunoir, situated on the Route de Cézanne in Aix-en-Provence.

Mr. Roberts’ international exhibition record includes the Musée Granet in Aix-en-Provence as well as private galleries in the U.S. and France. He has exhibited with such artists as Romare Bearden, Paul Cezanne, Sam Francis, Helen Frankenthaler, Wolfe Kahn, Roy Lichtenstein, and Robert Motherwell. He has also collaborated on several important books concerning the art of Leo Marchutz and his students.
Jill Steenhuis, an Atlanta native with Alabama roots, has been living in the south of France for the past 35 years. Jill earned her Bachelor of Fine Arts at Sweet Briar College in 1980. Following graduation, she enrolled in The Leo Marchutz School of Painting and Drawing in Aix-en-Provence, which follows in the tradition of Cézanne.

Cézanne’s Mt. Ste. Victoire paintings are what inspired Jill to go to France in 1980. As one of only a few artists in the world with access to the privately-owned Chateau Noir (where Cézanne painted from 1865-1898), Jill works directly from nature en plein-air from many of the same scenes as the great Master. Jill, who has appeared on “Good Morning America” and served as the Cézanne specialist for the Smithsonian Institute at the 100th anniversary of this Master’s death, has sold more than 2500 works to private collectors and museums, including the Huntsville Museum of Art. In 1997 Jill was selected as Artist of the Year for the Huntsville Museum of Art Gala.

Her book *Art, Soul & Destiny*, with an introduction by Michael Shapiro, the former Director and Curator of the High Museum in Atlanta, GA is a retrospective of 30 years of painting and includes, her poetry, proses and letters about the creative process and her spiritual journey. Jill has exhibited solo shows in New York City, Greenwich, Atlanta, Chicago, Washington DC, Dallas, Aix-en-Provence, Paris and Melbourne, Australia.

The artist resides in an old, country house in Aix-en-Provence with her husband and their three sons.