

Art Matters

Art: Genius artifact or destructive fabrication?



By Janet Sellers

*“Whistler’s 1875 nocturne paintings had subverted the widely-held notion that art should have some moral or didactic purpose; indeed, to some it barely seemed to represent anything at all.”—Tate museum*

0th-century art became a product instead of an inspiration assigned to upliftment, a poetry embodied in art as true creativity, human intelligence, and essence. Now, art is shown and sold without concern for quality of life, a requisite ancient factor necessary in poetry, music, art, and sculpture, known as the genie of daily life in Greco-Roman times. British artist James Whistler (of Whistler’s Mother fame) was sued for his nocturnes that included contemporary English industrial pollution.

“Digital art” is contemporary art that uses the methods of mass production and digital media. Conflict is quieting now regarding art from artificial intelligence—computers and apps. Phone art and photo apps are common practice now, but in the 1980s I was working with scientists at Caltech developing watercolor, oil paint, and other artistic techniques at the dawn of computer modeling. The computer engineers had little understanding of art techniques and the expressive, tactile qualities of painting, and having attempted the aesthetic goals with extremely rudimentary modeling programs trying to imitate art materials, they called

in us artists to help them understand the mediums and to develop the finer aspects of the visual expression on the computer screens.

It was back in the ‘80s when famed computer scientist Jim Blinn computer modeled the JPL Jupiter watch. He was my instructor for computer 3D engineering classes where I stubbornly prevailed to create abstract expressionist computer art. Clearly, it is the artist and not the medium that makes the art as visual communication, the art “experience”!

Refresh your walls, refresh your life using a paint brush or your computer

With the “safer at home” orders, we’re all home a lot more. People are changing things around the house, tidying up, getting rid of clutter and so on. But how about a change of scenery indoors? Art is the window on the wall, creating windows for imagination. My digital photo frame changes images all day long!

I encourage everyone to try that change of view. Art affects how you feel in a place. Original art, as paintings, prints, or sculptures, is profoundly connected to the artist’s creativity as well as to the person who lives with it.

When we can’t go out into nature’s environments, we can affect our inner environment, the walls in our home or workplace. Our homes surround us, and what we put on the walls affects us with a powerful connection—our artful dreams and hopes engage us each day.



**Above:** Digital paintings of local Spirit Trees. Making digital paintings has become wildly popular with cell phone art. Almost any photograph can be manipulated digitally for satisfying artwork that can be commercially printed into small to mural-size artwork. *Images courtesy of Janet Sellers.*

*Janet Sellers is an artist, writer, and speaker, with public art in American cities, towns, and museums using hand-wrought and tech methods. [Janetsellers@ocn.me](mailto:Janetsellers@ocn.me).*

Snapshots of Our Community

Woodmoor chipping day, June 6



**Above and right:** On a stormy June 6, Woodmoor Improvement Association’s Matthew Nelson and Tom Smith oversaw Woodmoor chipping day as community members brought their fire mitigation tree branch refuse to Lewis-Palmer High School. *Photo by Janet Sellers.*

Local artist’s fundraiser dragonfly

**Right:** “A community transformed through dragonflies and butterflies.” The Rotary Club of Colorado Springs selected Palmer Lake artist Jean Kowalski to paint a dragonfly sculpture for the Flight 2020 fundraiser. Kowalski will add top wings in shades of green and the bottom of the wings in shades of red and orange to her sculpture before it goes up for auction. Her creation will join over 60 other butterfly and dragonfly sculptures of all sizes and colors at the fundraiser event in September. See [cs-flight.org](http://cs-flight.org). *Photo courtesy of Jean Kowalski.*



Monument Lake fence, June 8



**Above:** A new green chain-link fence has been installed around the south side of Monument Lake. The Monument Public Works Department installed the fence on June 8. The old fence was damaged in some spots, making it possible for people to climb over or crawl through. It’s hoped that the new fence will stop people from climbing to the top of the dam. *Photo by Michael Weinfeld.*

Black Forest Fire 7th Anniversary



**Left:** The community of Black Forest commemorated the seventh anniversary of the Black Forest Fire in June. It was the most destructive fire in Colorado’s history. The theme for displays on June 20 north of the Black Forest Community Center was Recover, Rebuild, Restore, Regrow. Property destroyed by the fire was cleaned up by hundreds of volunteers. It has literally risen from ashes and is now the home for the Backyard Farmers Market every Saturday and for the annual BFCC Festival on Aug. 15. Please join us to reflect on the ever-present danger of wildfires and specifically the Black

Forest 2013 Fire that will impact this community for generations. *Information courtesy of New Falcon Herald. Photos above and far right by Michael Weinfeld. Photo on the right by Lisa Hatfield.*

