

Modern and Traditional

More than 25 classically trained realist painters will display traditional and contemporary still lifes in the 12th annual *Still Life Invitational* at Susan Powell Fine Art in Madison, Connecticut. The show, which features 75 paintings, highlights everything from florals and fruits to unique vessels, newspapers and more. Included will be works by **Kathy Anderson, Julie Beck, Kelly Birkenruth, Todd Casey, Grace DeVito, Larry Preston, Cindy Precious, Carlo Russo** and more.

Among the contemporary compositions are Beck's *Ashes and Embers* and Birkenruth's *Laughing Limes*.

Beck's work is an exploration of life and death. "The lantern is an obvious symbol of light and life, and yet it is

not lit. The bird statue suggests a permanence and yet the skunk fur suggests mortality," she explains. "The shape of the African animal-themed plate echoes the circle/cycle of life. Where we began and where we will end. Embers are the beginning of a fire, while ashes are the end."

Laughing Limes, by Birkenruth, is a painting depicting a newspaper crumbled up around limes. In describing the work, the artist says, "The bright, juicy colors of fruit always make the best subjects for my still life paintings. Adding the comics allows me to push color even further, yet always being mindful of the values and chroma of the painting. The comics also offer the added bonus of allowing my own personal interpretation to tell little stories through characters

1
Julie Beck, *Ashes and Embers*, oil on canvas panel, 20 x 12"

2
Larry Preston, *Porcelain with Lemons*, oil on panel, 12 x 16"

3
Kelly Birkenruth, *Laughing Limes*, oil on panel, 16 x 20"

4
Carlo Russo, *Aerie*, oil on linen, 22 x 24"



1



2



3



4

and text. All of these things made this painting a lot of fun to create.”

More traditionally themed artworks include Preston’s *Porcelain and Lemons*, which shows china and lemons in a contemporary design; while Russo’s *Aerie*

is a more traditional setup but with unique items such as birds and eggs.

Of his painting, Preston says, “I have used the blue willow china and lemons in many variations in my paintings for many years. I like the blue and yellow together,

the juiciness of the lemons and the shine of the porcelain.” ●

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