

# ARTIST SPOTLIGHT

## Cynthia Kath

“There are few artists who work as extensively with pastels as Cynthia Kath,” says Holly Nelson, Adult Program Director. She travels to near and far places that inspire her to keep learning, exploring and growing her own work, and shares these concepts with her students.”

Having just returned from a painting trip to Hawaii, Cynthia is tan, relaxed and filled with enthusiasm for her art. She describes watching master artists in a plein air show in Lahaina, excited about how they interpreted the same island differently in their work and how beautifully they let go of the detail, bringing a single focus to their paintings. She can’t wait to show the photographs to her class and share her experience.

Cynthia started her art very young and received her first awards at age eight. That early recognition was significant to a middle child of a large family and spurred her artistic pursuits. She’s studied at the College of Associated Arts in St. Paul, the University

of Minnesota, Minneapolis College of Art and Design, Parsons The New School for Design in New York, and for a summer in Paris doing plein air work in the Brittany countryside. With a studio and exhibits at the Northrup King Building in the heart of the Minneapolis arts district, Cynthia also exhibits at and is very involved with The Village Gallery, Hawaii’s oldest art gallery in Lahaina, on Maui.

She’s branched out beyond art, studying and working in interior design, historical preservation and architectural engineering. “After a hiatus doing design for several years, I was afraid to go back into art, thinking I’d be worse,” says Cynthia, “but once I got my hand loose, I found that I had gotten better, because I was still thinking like an artist while doing space planning.”

It was a Hawaiian artist that taught her pastels 20 years ago. And while pastels are her current passion, Cynthia has worked in watercolors and her plein air work in France was in acrylic. She’s been playing

with oils again the past five or six years and just recently completed a painting in Hawaii with a loose oil underneath and then went in with her pastels. “I was going to bring it home because I thought it would be fun to do a larger painting from it but the [Village] gallery said, ‘Oh, no! We’re keeping that!’”

It’s this courage to try new things that makes Cynthia such a fascinating artist and teacher. “I want my students to know that you never get there. You need to keep learning because that’s what keeps us alive,” she says. Her student, Karen Brown, says her love for learning is contagious to everyone in the class and that “her class is a bright spot in my week, a mental oasis where I learn to let go and create.”

“From the first day she made me feel welcomed, relaxed and right at home. She works adeptly with students from beginners to experienced artists,” says Eydie Radder, another student. “You will blossom as an artist under her direction.”



If “the true teacher is the learner” (Elbert Hubbard, American writer and philosopher), then Cynthia Kath is a shining example. “I am in constant yearning to learn,” she says. “Even though I’ve studied my whole life, there’s still another half a life to learn.”

*You’ll find Cynthia Kath’s Pastel Landscape class on page 12.*



L-R: *Summer Break, Northern Pines, Majestic Power, River Valley, Stately Palms.*]



## NEW STAFF MEMBER

### **Nancy Fisher** Registrar, Executive Assistant

Nancy Fisher has always been drawn to situations that marry art and technology. As a seamstress and quilter, she studied Textile Science at Iowa State. “Science and fabric together! Can it get any better?” thought the young college-bound Nancy. Most recently, Nancy worked in the Eden Prairie school district helping teachers leverage technology in their programs. Being Registrar here is a perfect fit. Her positive spirit fairly sparkles at the front

desk as do her technical and organizational skills. “I am totally jazzed to be here. It is the friendliest bunch of people I’ve ever been around,” says Nancy. “I’m impressed at the grace with which a complicated program and operation unfolds here.” After hours, Nancy is a fiber artist and avid crafter (see newnanc.etsy.com), sings in two women’s cappella choirs and is an avid perennial gardener.