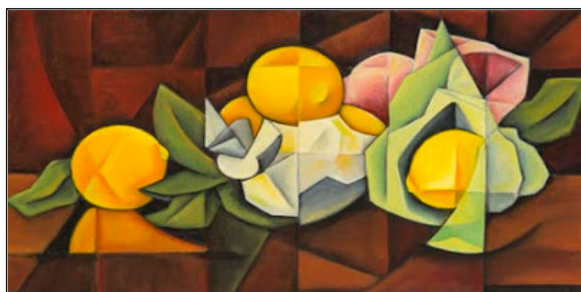


THE BLUE LANTERN

Arts Journalism For The Love Of It

08 November 2015

Wrapped Lemons: Angela Perko & W.J. McCloskey



I had never heard of Angela Perko until recently when I saw *Wrapped Lemons* *apres* W.J. McCloskey (above); I had heard of William McCloskey, but couldn't remember how although I did remember why. The elusive artist painted strangely captivating wrapped fruits, a genre he may well have invented.

The artist Angela Perko, also turns out to admire the Canadian artists known collectively as the [Group of Seven](#), artists I've mentioned recently. Perko cites the group, especially its lone female member Emily Carr, as influencing her use of color. She arranges colors fearlessly, as comfortable with dissonance as she is with delicacy. Like the Seven, Perko explored painting through landscape; like McCloskey she was born elsewhere but eventually moved to California.

I think Perko's *Wrapped Lemons* refers to McCloskey's *Florida Lemons* (below). Perko's painting lets us imagine a world where our eyes can separate planes of vision. This feature, along with her use of depthless color achieved through barely visible brushwork, makes this a true cubist artwork. There is a sad story about the McCloskey painting. According to *The City Review* (May 21, 2014), it was offered for sale at auction in New York City but "It failed to sell."



We are spoiled; we take the year-round availability for granted of any fruit we desire. Historically speaking, this state of things began just yesterday but there are artists whose works remind us of the magical properties of fruit, especially citrus fruit, with its contrasts of sweetness and tartness in seductively tactile containers.

Wrapped Oranges, painted in 1889 by the little known William J. McCloskey, brought me up short when I first saw it (see below). These arrangements of fruits in tissue on what appear to be tabletops evoke a mysterious sense of place out of time, much as the Danish painter [Vilhelm Hammershoi](#)'s empty rooms do. Tissue was the preferred method for packing these precious fruits for shipping before the days of refrigerated trucks..

The story of American still life painting begins with the Peales (Charles Wilson Peale, Rembrandt Peale, Raphaelle Peale, Titian Peale, and Margarett Peale to name just five of the prolific and

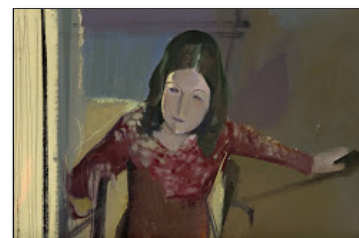
Total Pageviews



Why The Blue Lantern ?

A blue-shaded lamp served as the starboard light for writer Sidonie-Gabrielle Colette's imaginary journeys after she became too frail to leave her bedroom at the Palais Royale. Her invitation, extended to all, was "Regarde!" Look, see, wonder.

"I think of myself as being in a line of work that goes back about twenty-five thousand years. My job has been finding the cave and holding the torch. Somebody has to be around to hold the flaming branch, and make sure there are enough pigments." - Calvin Tompkins



Jane Librizzi - painting by Jerome Witkin

- [Kind Words for The Blue Lantern](#)

About Me



Jane Librizzi

Upstate, New York, United States

Broadcasting: Jazz, classical, and spoken word on NPR affiliates. Studied classical piano for ten years. Education: Syracuse University & State University of New York. Internship at American Demographics Magazine (Cornell University). Internship at Syracuse University Press. Freelance arts journalism for alternative publications and art galleries. NOTE:Audio clip posted 03/17/14.

[View my complete profile](#)

Subscribe To The Blue Lantern

- Posts
- Comments

Translate The Blue Lantern

close-knit family). Their paintings were among the best that a new nation produced during its early decades. The Peales were also known as experimenters in *tromp l'oeil*, a technique used to deceive the eye into seeing relationships between planes and dimensions that are not there in ostensibly realistic spating.



Like the Peales, Willma McCloskey and his wife Alberta Binford, painted works of great technical virtuosity; William excelled in portraits and fruit, Alberta in portraits and floral still lifes. It was while staying in Los Angeles during the 1880s that the young couple established their artistic reputations. Already southern California had begun to promote itself as the garden state of the west, home to plentiful orange groves. An unusual couple in many respects, the McCloskeys did not stay put, making their whereabouts at any given moment hard to pin down; but they lived in New York City (on 23rd Street near the Art Students League), London, and Paris and exhibited their works in Atlanta, Buffalo, and Providence, at least. Neglected after their deaths, McCloskey's wrapped fruits again attracted public interest beginning in the 1990s. Both artists bring to the table, so to speak, an enthusiasm for paint that makes *joie de vivre* tactile.

Angela Perko is represented by Sullivan Goss: An American Gallery, Santa Barbara.

For further reading about William McCloskey: *Partners In Illusion: Alberta Binford and William J. McCloskey* by Nancy D.W. Moure, Santa Ana, Bowers Museum of Art: 1996.

Images:

1. Angela Perko - *Wrapped Lemons apres W. J. McCloskey*, 2015, Sullivan Goss: An American Art Gallery, Santa Barbara.
2. William J. McCloskey - *Florida Lemons*, 1919, Sotheby's, NYC.
3. William J. McCloskey - *Wrapped Oranges*, 1889, Amon Carter Museum, Fort Worth.

Posted by [Jane Librizzi](#) at [12:37 PM](#)



6 comments:



Frank Goss said...

I regularly find some of the most in depth comments in this blog. Thank you Jane. I would love the taste of a Perko or McClosky orange, but I could not touch anything without ruining their thoughtful arrangements

[November 10, 2015 at 12:29 PM](#)

Jane said...

Frank, thank you for your very kind words. I try to write about the arts without jargon; it's opaque and nothing dates faster. As for the arrangements, they are just as visionary as the painting of them.

[November 11, 2015 at 7:22 AM](#)



Frank Goss said...

There is a sense of 'ease' in McClosky's and Perkp's work. As if they were done without effort. The same is true of The Blue Lantern.

[November 11, 2015 at 8:44 AM](#)

Jane said...

Nothing worth doing is ever easy but it's still fun.

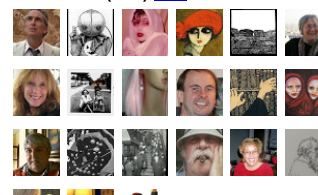
[November 11, 2015 at 12:23 PM](#)

Select Language

Powered by [Google Translate](#)

Follow The Blue Lantern

Followers (919) [Next](#)



Blog Archive

- ▶ [2018](#) (26)
- ▶ [2017](#) (32)
- ▶ [2016](#) (55)
- ▼ [2015](#) (44)
 - [December](#) (5)
 - [November](#) (3)
 - [October](#) (4)
 - [September](#) (3)
 - [August](#) (5)
 - [July](#) (3)
 - [June](#) (5)
 - [May](#) (3)
 - [April](#) (2)
 - [March](#) (5)
 - [February](#) (2)
 - [January](#) (4)
- ▶ [2014](#) (56)
- ▶ [2013](#) (55)
- ▶ [2012](#) (52)
- ▶ [2011](#) (41)
- ▶ [2010](#) (17)
- ▶ [2009](#) (4)
- ▶ [2008](#) (1)

Websites You'll Enjoy

- [28 Moons - Photography](#)
- [Adventures In The Print Trade \(Great Britain\)](#)
- [Apollo: The International Art Magazine](#)
- [Art Conservator](#)
- [Art Daily](#)
- [Bibliodyssey \(Australia\)](#)
- [Cinetourist \(Great Britain\)](#)
- [Connaissance des Arts](#)
- [Curated Object](#)
- [Errant Aesthete](#)
- [Funfingerplatze \(Five Finger Play\)](#)
- [Human Flower Project](#)
- [Linosaurus](#)
- [Museum of Political Corruption](#)
- [Reading Like A Victorian](#)
- [Textes et Pretextes \(Belgium\)](#)
- [The Art Newspaper](#)
- [The Audrey Munson Project](#)
- [Three Per Cent: Literature In Translation - NEW](#)

Under The Blue Lantern



Timothy Cahill said...

You've done it again, Jane! The McCloskey paintings, especially the oranges, are exquisite. What a discovery.

November 12, 2015 at 9:15 PM

Jane said...

Tim, I would trade Renoir's "Onions" for McCloskey's "Oranges" in a heartbeat. And I cannot believe that his "Lemons" went unsold.

November 13, 2015 at 10:15 AM

[Post a Comment](#)

Links to this post

[Create a Link](#)

[Newer Post](#)

[Home](#)

[Older Post](#)

Subscribe to: [Post Comments \(Atom\)](#)



...And Off the Beaten Path

- [Hammershoi's Shades Of White](#)
- [The Renaissance Art of Marcia Marcus](#)
- [Patricia Chidlaw: Space.Time](#)
- [Bacchus In Autumn: Alain Baraton - Gardener at Versailles](#)
- [The Georgics: Daubigny & Hassam](#)
- [Anne Enright: Write Like An Irishwoman](#)
- [Disturbing the Universe: Guido Gozzano](#)
- [Stage Doom: A Caprice by Bob Thompson](#)
- [Rice Is Life](#)
- [Love In The Red Desert](#)
- [The Pyramid Of Capital !](#)
- [Alice Coltrane's Spirit Eternal](#)
- [Alexandr Sokurov's Russian Ark](#)
- [Dexter Gordon: The Peacocks](#)
- [Mary Hiester Reid: Can A Working Girl Ever Win](#)
- [Flyover Season: Aerial Photography](#)
- [Ethel Sands: Not So Cozy After All](#)
- [Anne Vallayer-Coster](#)
- [Utica New York: Hope Lives Here](#)
- [Francoise Gilot: The Artist When Young](#)
- [Alma Thomas: A Most Painterly Brush](#)
- [A Big Wave Knocked Her Over](#)
- [The Breton Stripe \(La rayure bretonne\)](#)
- [Mario Fortuny & Henriette Negrin](#)
- [Green Dragon Cocktail](#)
- [Virago Made Me](#)
- [Clara Sipprell, Pictorialist Photographer](#)
- [Alison Saar](#)
- [Andrei Makine](#)
- [Ludmilla Petrushevskaya](#)
- [Tashima Etsuko & Maurice Maeterlinck](#)
- [Niki de Saint-Phalle](#)
- [Werner Bischof](#)
- [Wanda Wulz & Trieste](#)
- [Jane Berry Judson From Castile](#)
- [Madeleine de Scudery's Map Of Love](#)
- [Pierre de Ronsard](#)
- [The Poetry Of Gottfried Benn](#)
- [The Popular Poplar](#)
- [John Pfahl: Photographer](#)
- [Edouard-Marcel Sandoz](#)
- [Janet Lewis & Nell Brooker Mayhew](#)
- [Michal Iwanowski & Pawel Pawlikowski](#)
- [Mary Hunter Austin In The Land Of Little Rain](#)
- [Jan Toorop And Java](#)
- [Gerard de Nerval](#)
- [Giacomo Leopardi & Giovanni Fattori](#)
- [Asta Nielsen: The Woman Who Played Hamlet](#)
- [Louvre City: A Film By Nicolas Philibert](#)
- [Vera Chytilova: Daisies!](#)
- [Sadakichi Hartmann: The Book On Whistler](#)
- [Colette & The White Roads Of Provence](#)
- [Angelo Morbelli: For Eighty Cents!](#)
- [Angela Perko & W.J. McCloskey](#)
- [Olafur Eliasson In Hammershoi's Chrisitanhavn](#)
- [Lubin Baugin - Still Life](#)

- [Albertine Reading Room - NYC](#)
- [Jean-Leon Gerome](#)
- [Juliana Force & Guy Pene du Bois](#)

And while you're there...read something!

- The Devil I Know - Claire Kilroy
- Montpelier Parade - Karl Geary
- The Hour Between Dog and Wolf - Laure-Anne Bosselaar
- Nine Island - Jane Alison
- Fox - Dubravka Ugresic
- Misere - Linda Nochlin
- In Certain Circles- Elizabeth Harrower
- Revservor 13 - Jon McGregor
- Dear Committee Members - Julie Schumacher
- Ziggurat - Peter Balakian (811.54)
- Memoirs of a Polar Bear - Yoko Tawada
- The Birds - Tarjei Vasaas
- Distant Light - Antonio Moresco
- Poems - Cyprian Norwid trans. by Danuta Borchardt
- Prehistoric Times - Eric Chevillard
- The Safe House - Christophe Boltanski
- The Vanishing Princess: Stories - Jenny Diski
- Everything You Know About Indians is Wrong - Paul Chaat Smith (323.11)
- The Kites - Romain Gary
- Testosterone Rex - Cordelia Fine (155.3)
- Traces of Vermeer - Jane Jelley (759.94)
- Improvement - Joan Silber
- American Housewife: Stories - Helen Ellis
- Rain: Poems - Don Paterson (823.91)
- The Woman Next Door - Yewande Omotosa
- Pearl - Anonymous, translated by Simon Armitage (821.1)
- Falling Awake: Poems - Alice Oswald (821.91)
- Mountains Painted with Turmeric - Lil Bahadur Chettri - trans. from the Nepali
- Grief is the Thing With Feathers - Max Parker
- Look: Poems - Solmaz Shariff (811.6)
- La Divine - Marie NDiaye
- Complete Stories - Clarice Lispector (869.3)
- Monopolizing the Master: Henry James & the Politics of Modern Literary Scholarship (813.4)
- Bento's Sketchbook - John Berger (741.94)
- The Allure of the Archives - Arlette Farge (944.04)

Popular Posts



[Sonja Knips: A Patron And Her Collection](#)

This is the face of the woman who stares guardedly from Gustav Klimt's Whistlerian Portrait Of Sonia Knips (1898, Belvedere ...



[Paradise For A Dime](#)

"You, wild foam. You, good-for-nothing snail, you who don't love me." - excerpt from "Still?" by Wass...



[Clara Sipprell: From Vermont to The Balkans](#)

I. My parents bought a print of White Birches In Vermont when we lived in Massachusetts and, years later, it moved...



Dahlia: A Flower Of Late Summer

When they appear in August, dahlias are like many-petaled suns: large, round, and radiating fructiferous color. This is no flight of fa...



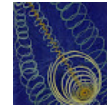
Ruby Sky Stiler: Holding Up The Sky

"When the skies are going to fall, fall they will..." - excerpt from "The Revolutionary" by David Herbert Lawre...



Clarice Lispector Interrogates The World

"Be careful with Clarice. It's not literature. It's witchcraft." - anonymous Clarice Lispector (1920-1977) was ...



Hilma af Klint: Immaterial Girl

Nothing unprecedented about an artist painting on commission unless the artist is Hilma af Klint. Af Klint and four like-minded frien...



Phrasikleia: An Unmarried Woman

"I would not touch the sky with both hands." - Sappho, as translated from the Greek by Anne Carson in If Not, Winter: Fr...



Hammershoi's Many Shades Of White

They've started a discussion: What is it to be Danish? I must admit the question Has almost turned me Spanish. How could I e...



The Peacocks: Dexter Gordon

"The window looked out onto a pattern never-ending A flower and trees and little pathways far descending To the...