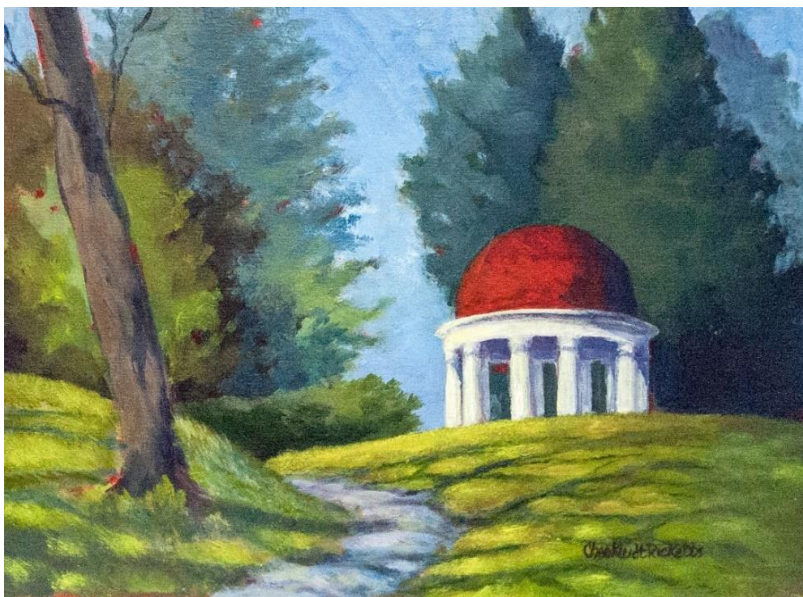


We the Artists

Firnew Farm Artists' Circle
Group Art Exhibition
August 29 - September 30, 2021



*Chee Kludt Ricketts, featured artist **Path to Posterity***

Opening Reception
Sunday, August 29, 2021
4:00 - 7:00

The Grand Salon
James Madison's Montpelier
11350 Constitution Highway
Montpelier Station, VA. 22957

"We the Artists" Art and Artists Catalog, August 15, 2021

The Firnew Farm Artists' Circle exhibition at James Madison's Montpelier will be open August 29 - September 30 in the Grand Salon in the Visitors Center. Sunday, August 29 the Reception will be open to the public from 4:00 - 7:00. At 5:30 the artists will be introduced and available to talk about their work. The extraordinary experience of creating this work on the grounds of Montpelier during the pandemic is the power of place. We will also be open Constitution Day September 17.

Formed in 2003 the Circle found its home in the rural landscape that is the Piedmont. Even then, they had their muse, the land. At Montpelier, their muse was Montpelier's whole history. The 45 artists from over 9 counties in Virginia and 2 states, California and Florida, work in varied mediums: watercolor, acrylic, oil, photography, mixed media, pottery, jewelry making and fiber arts. Art Critique is the core of the group experience. They took that to Montpelier.

When the pandemic precluded the artists from working together in the Firnew Studio, a new door opened in the summer of 2020. Roy Young, President of James Madison's Montpelier, invited the Firnew artists to create Plein Air Art at Montpelier. Typical of this group, they did not limit themselves to plein air. The photographers turned to tintypes, assemblages and the mixed media artists turned to weavings and basketry. Here they confronted not only a new landscape but the real story of Montpelier. They faced the restored home of James Madison behind the reassembled homes of the enslaved persons.

In the artists' own words, they share their experience the best.

Chee Kludt Ricketts, the featured artist, shares her thoughts and feelings about the experience of painting at Montpelier:

"Grounded for many years in a style of traditional realism, today my paintings navigate between reality and interpreted vision. My approach is varied – both spontaneous and controlled – where quick brushwork and manipulated light are countered by passages of precise rendering. Watercolors and acrylics are the media by which I convey my enchantment with the beautiful world we inhabit. It is my goal to express my feelings—to interpret, rather than record; to inspire, rather than simply remind. Evoking the essence of the familiar, I seek to transport the viewer to a heightened appreciation of ephemeral moments in time.

My collection of acrylic paintings was created almost exclusively on site on the grounds of Montpelier during the spring, summer and fall of 2020. Typically, I would set up my easel beneath one of the majestic English oaks on the grounds and, as I painted, I would become enveloped in a sense of reverence for my surroundings. Often groups of visitors would stop to see my work and to engage me with questions about Montpelier and its history. As one who paints in isolation, I found the interactions with interested visitors to be energizing.

My paintings do not tell the story of "how", they simply record what existed on a given day in the year 2020. As a plein air painter, my goals were to capture the light and to communicate the freshness of being "in the moment" in this beautiful, historic location. The challenge with this method of painting is to paint quickly without sacrificing accuracy, necessitating the use of a small format and a limited palette. I cherish every moment that I painted here last year and have continued to be inspired by these pristine surroundings throughout the warm months of 2021."

All of the paintings in Chee's collection are framed. The frames are identical to the sample image on page 55.

Two ways to purchase artwork

1. If you are on site at Montpelier, please go to the Museum Shop in the Visitor Center with the name of the work(s) you wish to purchase. The Museum Shop will accept payments by credit card. You will be asked to fill out a purchase form so that the Firnew Farm Artists Circle can contact you to arrange for pickup or delivery of your artwork and to discuss additional charges for shipping, if applicable. All artwork will remain on site through September 30.

2. If you are not on-site at Montpelier and you are viewing the exhibit virtually, email FirnewFarmArtistsCircle@gmail.com with the name of the work(s) you wish to purchase along with your preferred contact information (email or telephone). You will be contacted to arrange for payment and pickup or delivery of your artwork and to discuss additional charges for shipping, if applicable.

View the Exhibition Video in early September at
<https://firnewfarmartistscircle.com/exhibits/>

Learn more about the Firnew artists and view additional works at
<https://www.firnewfarmartistscircle.com/current-artists/>

Featured Artist

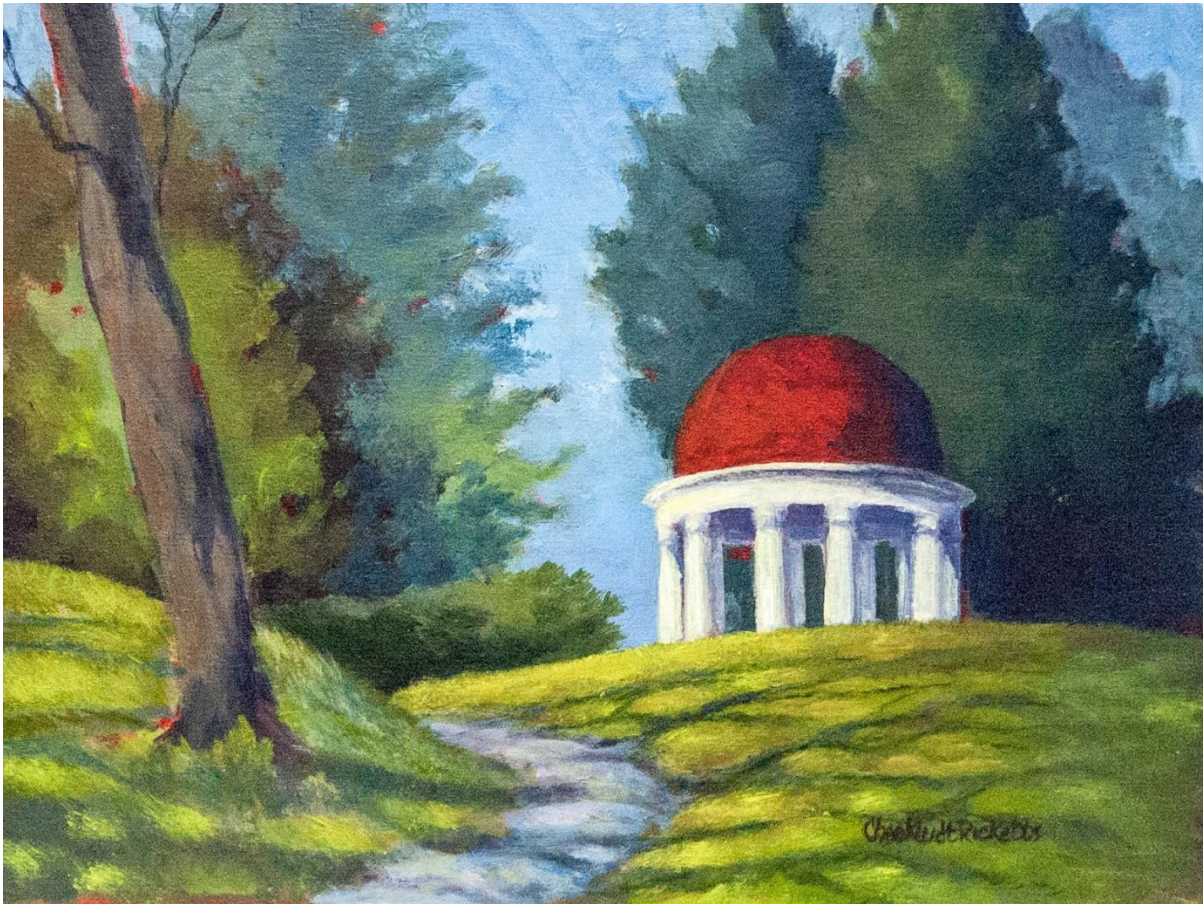
Chee Kludt Ricketts

Path to Posterity

Acrylic on wood panel

9 x 12

\$425



Additional paintings by Chee Kludt Ricketts are on pages 45 - 54



Mary B. Allen
CAUTION! Lions in DuPont's Garden
Watercolor
19.25 x 19.25
\$ 725

Barbie Babcock
Mrs. Dupont's Garden

Acrylic
20 x 16
\$350

"I've always found something magical about the grounds surrounding the Montpelier Estate. We often walk our dogs here, and no matter what time of year we go, something special invariably reveals itself. One day last summer on one of our rambles through Mrs. DuPont's gardens I was quite taken with the day lilies surrounding the wooden bridges and felt compelled to paint them. This painting is my attempt at memorializing that special moment in this very special place."





Leslie Barham
Garden Sentinels

Acrylic & colored pencil

15 x 11

\$525

"When given the opportunity to create an original work inspired by Montpelier, my love of all things botanical led me through the portal of the Annie du Pont Formal Garden. Each stroll within the garden walls revealed a new enchanted space, some sunny and open, others shady and mysterious, but all peacefully guarded through time by ever-vigilant garden sentinels."

John Berry
Mere Distinction

Photography

9 x 33 x 2.5

\$795

"Four 8" x 8" ambrotypes; wet plate collodion positive images
exposed directly on glass."





Maria Festa Carter
Eyes in the Garden

Acrylic
20 x 20
\$300

Trish Crowe
Montpelier's Temple

Watercolor

30 x 22

\$2,200

"As a member of Montpelier's Board of Directors for the past 8 years, I have had the distinct honor of experiencing and supporting Montpelier's grounds, its history, and its politics. In my watercolor, I captured every living thing I witnessed from the cultivated tobacco plant to the fawn that peeped out to look at me. The symbol of the temple, both reverent and reminiscent of James Madison's legacy, has a tree slashed across it without any leaves. All living things need to be protected."





Anne Dean
Quiet Time in the Garden
Watercolor
14 by 11
\$430

"Montpelier was kind enough to allow us to visit the property and paint or sketch. Moments of solitude were enjoyed in the beautiful gardens of this historic landmark."

Bonnie Dixon
2020 Montpelier

Oil on canvas

12 x 24

\$750

"A single dark photo, under a black walnut planted while James Madison lived at Montpelier had potential for story telling about our own moment in American history. The tree itself seems to be growing from a divided trunk. I made up features from my own imagination to push the story elements. Adding clouds that look like the weather could be either sunny or stormy was a way to express a feeling of uncertainty. Captured on the edge of the photo an artist who later introduced himself to our artist group worked on a painting of the mansion. In my painting I gave him a mask. This canvas has a coarse texture which makes the wall around the garden look like masonry because of the scale--impossible for me to actually paint brick by brick! A lucky accident. The title refers not only to the year but also to perfect vision."





Kitty Dodd
Top Dog Race Master

Color pencil

14 x 14

\$555

"Both adults and children have such fun cheering on their favorite terrier and the little dogs have the best time of all."

Patty Hudson
Reclaiming History

Acrylic
24 x 36
\$600

"My most recent visits to Montpelier included hiking past this sight of the 1820's blacksmith shop. After conversations with the surveyor, I learned the metal detector surveys were being done to locate the blacksmiths boundaries as well as the anvil and forge locations. The blue flags mark a ten-foot grid, red flags are indicators of metal hits and yellow flags indicate where samples are to be taken."





Frances Kloker Lacy
George Gilmore Home

Watercolor
10.5 x 13.5
\$400

Sue Linthicum
Racing Day

Acrylic
11 x 14
\$600

"Wonderful day at the races enjoying the beautiful grounds at Montpelier, decorative hats, tailgate displays. The races are always held on the first Saturday of November. Beautiful horses and beautiful people."





Larry Patterson
We the Artists

Photography
 12 x 18
 \$325

"The few hours I had available during the Firnew Farm Artists' Circle's many visits to Montpelier were devoted to photographing many of our members as they worked. I even managed a reflection of myself in a semi-circle window."

Jon Perry
An Enslaved Perspective

Acrylic
13.25 x 18.5
\$750

"The South Yard of Montpelier, recently restored, is composed of kitchen worker's quarters, the summer kitchen and storage sheds. I chose to darken the Madison mansion to express the oppression the workers experienced as they served their masters."





Carole Pivarnik
Song of Summer

Gouache

15 x 11

\$375

"Zinnias are, to me, the quintessential summer flower with their riot of color and abundant blossoms. My process involves painting with a palette knife and using water liberally to create interesting drips, runs, and color blends."

Justine Platt

Weaving Past and Future Together

Foraged vines, rushes, grasses, akebia, and honeysuckle from Montpelier. Also, cordage made from nettle fiber from my herb garden.

26 x 13 x 2
\$350





Terrence Pratt
Montpelier Blue Atlas Cedar
Conte crayon on blue paper
10 x 18
\$275

"I love the beautiful old trees on the Montpelier grounds. This "Blue Atlas" cedar really stands out, so this is its "portrait" in a sense. But I tried to capture the individual character of each tree in this scene, making it a "group portrait" in truth. The technique used is the classic "trois crayons" method, using only three chalk tones - sanguine (a brown-red), black, white, and the tone of the paper. This restricted palette made it a wonderful exercise in drawing."

Cheryl Ragland

Tribute to Montpelier's Trees

Sterling Silver/Copper wire with crystal/seed bead
embellishments

Left to right:

One: 3" x 2.5" \$150

Two: 2.5" x 2" \$125

Three: 3" x 2.5" \$95

All are on 19" chains

"While spending time on the grounds of Montpelier, I was looking for ideas for jewelry. It soon became apparent that the trees are a key feature in the Montpelier experience. These pendants are an attempt to honor the beauty of those grand old specimens."





Janice Rosenberg
The Gilmore Cabin

Oil (water based)

18 x 24

\$1,200

"How remarkable, two men, George Gilmore and James Madison, both born at Montpelier one a slave, and the other the father of the Constitution and Bill of Rights, which sowed the seeds of freedom for the other.

I was inspired to paint George Gilmore's beautifully restored cabin in the snow. The red fox turns, witnesses our presence and engages us with the scene."

Mack Rowe
Madison House

Watercolor and Black India Ink

8.5 x 12

\$350

"New Light for a new age."





Parida Saennam
Mr. and Mrs. Madison

Oil
48 x 36
\$5,000

Sara Schneidman
Sensemaking

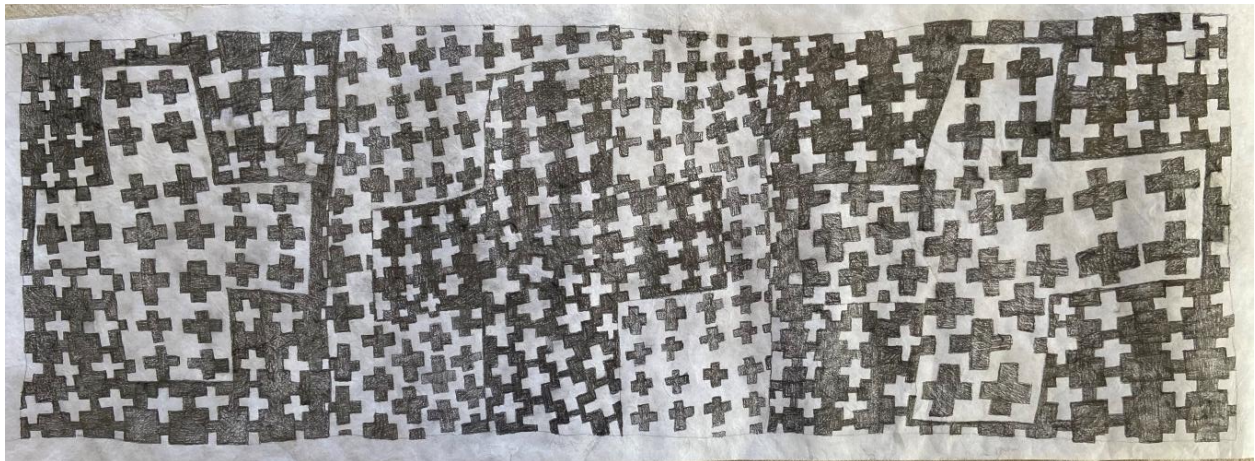
Pencil on rice paper

11 x 32

\$900

"George Floyd was murdered on May 25, 2020. On June 4, 2020, the Firnew Farm Artists' Circle began meeting here at Montpelier, and continued meeting through the summer and most of the fall. I drove down from Rappahannock watching the seasons unfold and listening to podcasts about systemic racism and what it is to be black.

Arriving at Montpelier I am always struck by the dissonance of the beauty and the history of the place. The fact that enslaved people were being treated as less than human at the same time that their master was writing our Constitution is something I have been struggling to make sense of for all these many months."





Bertha Scholten
Montpelier Afternoon

Oil
9 x 12
\$250

"This is the early evening scene that James and Dolley Madison enjoyed from their front porch. Sunset over the Blue Ridge is special to those of us who can view it daily, as I can from the porch of my house."

Cecilia Schultz

Iris

Watercolor

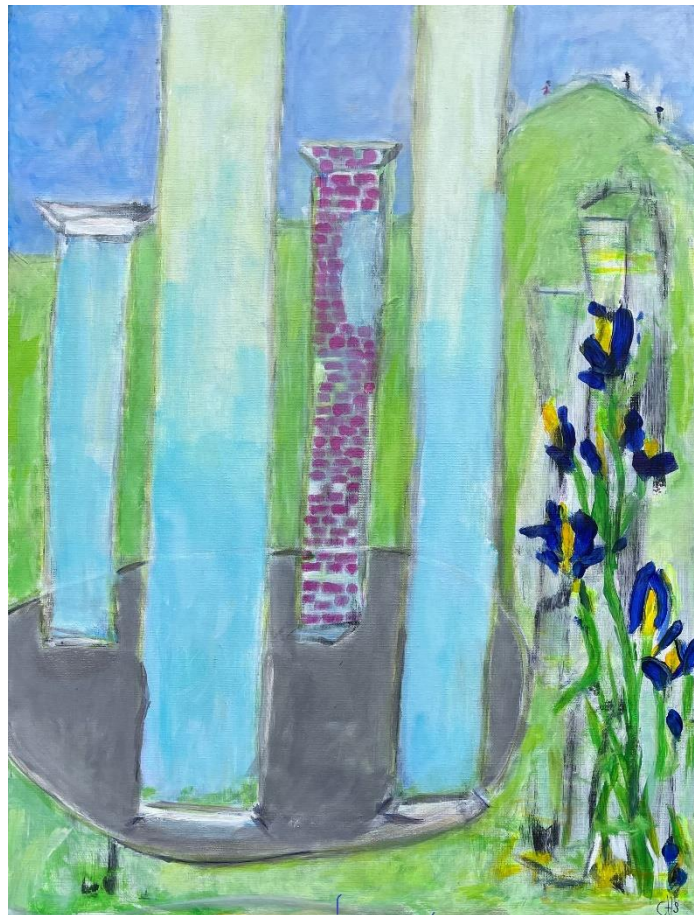
Acrylic

26.5 x 20.5

\$350

"In Greek mythology Iris was the goddess of the rainbow. She was the messenger for Zeus and Hera and rode the rainbow as a multicolored bridge from heaven to earth.

The iris is one of the original flowers at Montpelier. If you look closely at this painting, you will see people at the top of the mountains and at the bottom of the sky, looking for that rainbow.... still looking today."





Jan Settle
Morning in the Annie DuPont Formal Garden

Alcohol Ink
13.25 x 16
\$450

"I found alcohol ink the only medium I could use to adequately represent the intense colors of the beautiful formal garden. The pinks and reds of the flowers were so striking they seemed to vibrate in the summer heat. Capturing this moment in time was a blessing - the following week the blooms were gone for the season."

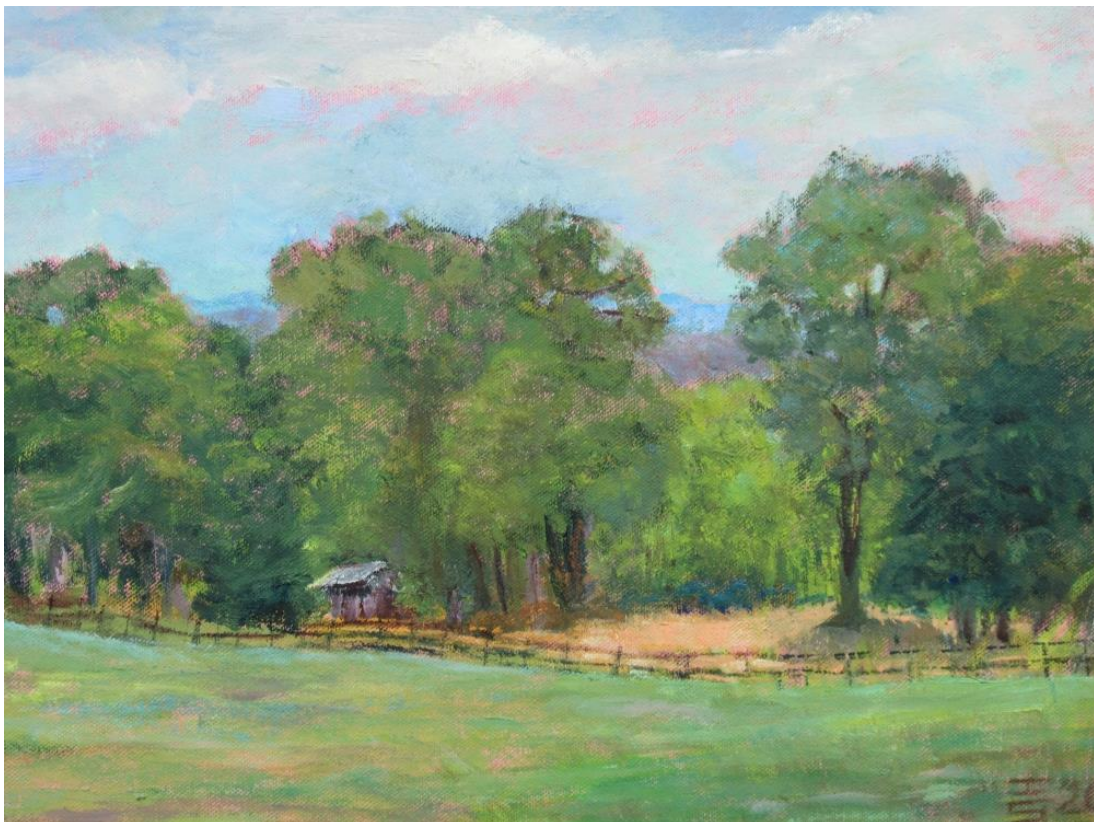
Ida Simmons
2020 (*Montpelier*)

Oil on canvas-covered board

12 x 16

\$250

"This past year of COVID has given us time to examine subjects we might have passed over in busier times. This tiny house, surrounded by huge mountains and great trees and spreading acres, standing immovable on the Montpelier property, is one such subject. What led the members of this family to make their home in a place that reminded them of their insignificance? Even more, where people had been enslaved? Surely, there must have been hesitations and conflicts in the making of this decision. William Faulkner, in his Nobel Prize for Literature acceptance speech, said "the problems of the human heart in conflict with itself....alone can make good writing." When I see this house, I see that pull of opposites."





Cindy Stegmeier
The Mystery of Sweet William
Photography
10 x 10
\$200

Susan Stover
Resting Lion

Watercolor on Aquabond

17.75 x 14.25

\$210

"The soft roses with their hidden thorns echoed the resting lion with his flowing mane and soft fur but ferocious teeth and claws."





Patricia Temples
Through a Montpelier Window

Photography

27 x 34

\$450

"This window was formerly on one of the green Sears barns at Montpelier. I found it at a local antique store and the owner described salvaging it from the property. I decided to use the DuPont era of this barn window for a theme of horses. The top row of images are from the Montpelier Races, the first two on the bottom row are random scenes I found as I roamed the grounds. The last image on the bottom right was from a Liberty Ride event. Because this is an authentic window from Montpelier, there are definite imperfections in the glazing and painting of the window from multiple applications over the years. I made very few changes to it to prepare it for this presentation."

Gail Trimmer-Unterman
Dolley's Fancy

Watercolor

16 x 12

\$400

"Spending time in the Dolley Madison garden is inspirational. The terracing, the sculptures and the variety of plant life encourage you to stop, breathe, and enjoy the peaceful atmosphere. A great pleasure to view Dolley's Garden – Something blooming every season."





Tina Wade
Hidden Urn

Oil
9 x 12
\$500

"Wandering around the gardens of Montpelier in the early morning fog, I stumbled upon this urn hidden in the trees."

Barb Wallace
The Homeplace

Oil
9 x 12
\$325

"For many years, I have been bringing out-of-town friends and family to Montpelier to tour this historic building. Like many visitors, I am now increasingly aware that Montpelier is much more than the trappings of a famous man. It was a village - the residence of hundreds of enslaved people who lived and worked on site, often through generations of families. As I painted, the building became secondary to me. My thoughts focused on the people in the foreground, searching for their cultural history. Thanks to Montpelier's research and field excavations, much of it is finally coming to light."





Vickie Watts
For Harriet

Local wool dyed with black walnut. Handspun and hand woven
100% wool and 5 synthetic threads.

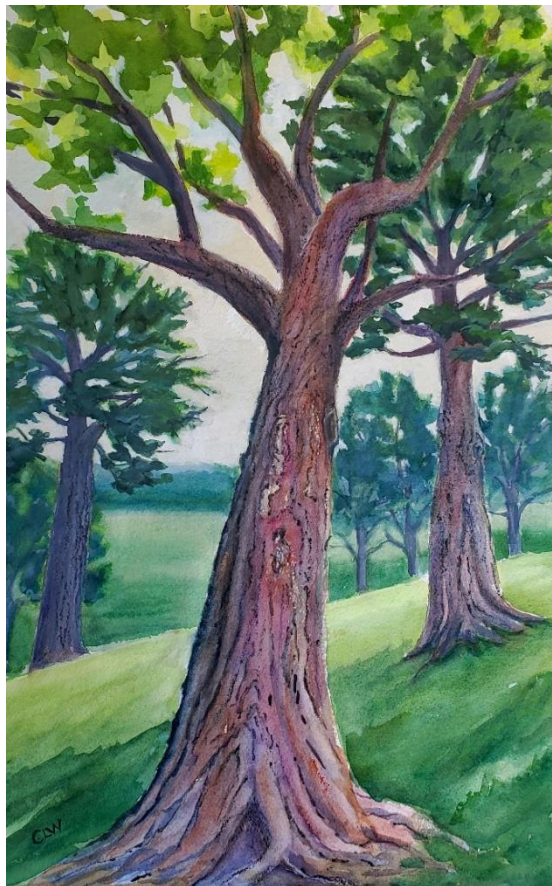
20.5 x 60.5 (measurement without fringe)

\$320

"As I thought about Montpelier and its people, I decided I wanted to create something to honor the many enslaved people who lived there. I discovered The Naming Project on the Montpelier website and the story of Harriet, an enslaved woman and accomplished weaver. I read what the historians know about her life, and I was deeply moved. I decided immediately to weave something in her honor. Since we met each week under the walnut trees of Montpelier, I decided black walnut would be an appropriate dye to use. Using local wool, I dyed the fleece, spun the yarn and wove this shawl "For Harriet". Alongside the shawl, I am displaying a copy of Harriet's story by Hilarie Hicks, Historian. If you visit the show, I encourage you to take the time to read about Harriet. If you cannot visit, I have included the link to her story - <https://digitaldoorway.montpelier.org/2020/10/28/the-naming-project-harriet/>."

Carol Weiss
Still Standing Strong
Watercolor and gouache
21 x 28
\$350

"I have wonderful memories of gathering with the Firnew Studio artists on the grounds of Montpelier on Thursdays during the summer and fall of 2020. We met on the top of a hill behind the visitor center and on even the hottest of days, the shade of very old trees and the unfailing breeze on the hilltop guaranteed a delightful day of painting. Never far from my thoughts was the knowledge that some of those trees were as old as the Constitution James Madison so greatly influenced. This piece was created entirely from my imagination during the winter of 2021, after our nation had experienced a very stressful electoral test. The tree front and center in the foreground is my metaphor for our Constitution – old, but still standing strong."





Nan Mahone Wellborn
Shadows Lead to Bright South Yard

Oil on linen

16 x 20

\$850

"View was painted looking into the bright area of the South Yard at Montpelier in June. The contrast of the cool tree shadows, "under the tree skirts", against the warmth of the cabins in the South Yard, is what attracted my eye."

Patricia Williams
Irony

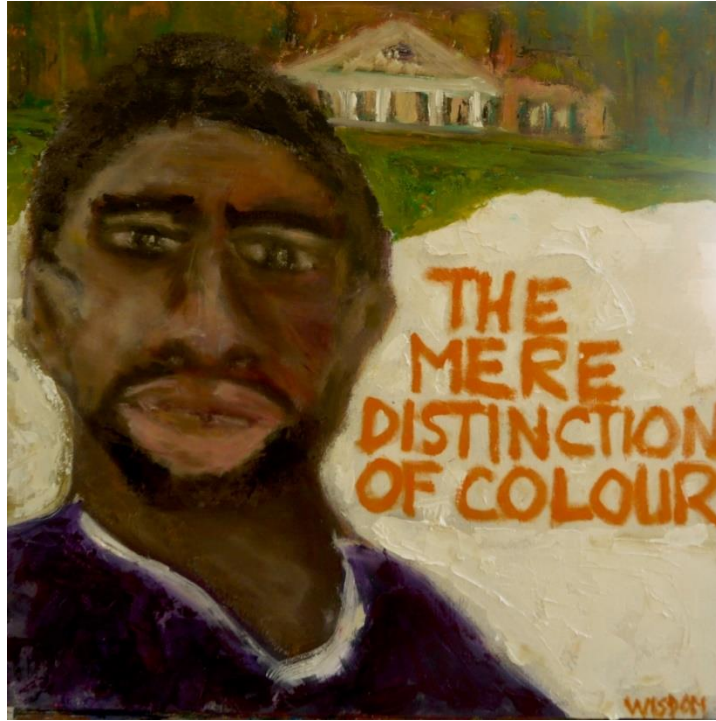
Watercolor and Water-Soluble Graphite on Multimedia Artboard™

20 x 16

\$500

"James and Dolley Madison were people of their time. Each made significant, important contributions to the creation of our nation. And both seem to have been oblivious to the irony of fighting for liberty for themselves while actively engaging in and benefitting from the oppression of others. I do not believe that their shortcomings negate their positive achievements. I do, however, hope that their example will lead us all to examine our own hearts and ask ourselves, have we learned? Is liberty today only for some people, or is it for all?"





Claudia Wisdom-Good

THIS

Oil and cold wax, palette knife, on cradled board

12 x 12

\$575

"On June 6, 1787, President James Madison said **"We have seen the mere distinction of colour made in the most enlightened period of time, a ground of the most oppressive dominion ever exercised by man over man."**

THIS is a painting from my heart. My heart that is sadly accepting that we still have such a long way to go on this journey, and in this conversation. Living in our country for more than three decades, I want to be more like my Canadian roots; and I struggle with this on a daily basis. I painted this last spring on the grounds of beautiful Montpelier, on a glorious spring day, very close to the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020. Although right in the middle of Covid-19, ***THIS*** - more importantly during this horrific time in America, 233 years later."

Richard Wyvill
Afternoon Garden

Oil
20 x 12
\$500

"The formal garden at Montpelier is such a beautiful place, it is difficult to select one scene to paint. This urn shaped planter was highlighted by the sun and cried out to be painted."





Richard Young
Montpelier June
Oil paints on canvas
8 x 10
\$300

"This plein air painting is of the huge rhododendron blooming on the front lawn at Montpelier in June 2020."

Additional Plein Air Paintings by Chee Kludt Ricketts

Chee Kludt Ricketts

Checking the Wind

Acrylic on wood panel

6 x 6

\$225





Chee Kludt Ricketts
A New Day is Dawning

Acrylic on panel

10 x 8

\$350

Chee Kludt Ricketts
Horse Barns in the Montpelier Fields

Acrylic on panel

8 x 10

\$350





Chee Kludt Ricketts
Classically Beautiful

Acrylic on panel

10 x 8

\$350

Chee Kludt Ricketts
Home is Where the Heart Is

Acrylic on panel

10 x 8

\$350





Chee Kludt Ricketts
History Lesson
Acrylic on panel
9 x 12
\$425

Chee Kludt Ricketts
Deep Roots

Acrylic on canvas

12 x 9

\$425





Chee Kludt Ricketts
Gateway to Enchantment

Acrylic on wood panel

6 x 6

\$225

Chee Kludt Ricketts
October Morning in the Annie DuPont Garden

Acrylic on panel

9 x 12

\$425





Chee Kludt Ricketts
Madison's "Tempietto"

Acrylic on panel

12 x 9

\$425

All of Chee's paintings are framed and identical to this sample image.



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Learn more about the Firnew artists and view additional works at <https://www.firnewfarmartistscircle.com/current-artists/>

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