

April 1, 2002 Issue

Flowers Everywhere!



April is here. The new life of nature has begun again. I am lulled into a sense of security. I yearn to set out the fuchsias and tender geraniums that I so carefully "wintered over". The almanac shows, however, that frost is still possible until May 31. After recent showers I find the weeds have sprung up in the flower beds, and are vigorously blooming. In a matter of days they will set their millions of seeds which will scatter in all directions when brushed by a pant leg or pet's tail. New weeds pop up with just a small hint of sunshine and the cycle begins all over again. So, I want to look on the cheery side. The little sparrows have had a hard scrabble to find food all winter. The new seeds are fresh nourishment for our flighty friends. AND it gives me renewed interest in taking the day off from painting, printing, signing and packaging, to be out in the pale sunshine. To get down on my knees and plunge my hands into the rich, cool, wet earth. This is nourishment for my soul. It is a quiet time to observe the world putting on its Spring garments to the delight of nature lovers everywhere. But, this is April in the Northwest. Here comes another shower. Let the weeds grow another day. This is nature's way, and who am I, to think I can conquer it, after all?

Next Issue: A Career in Oils

How do **you** see flowers? That seems like an odd question to ask, but let me get you to thinking. Everyone "sees" things differently based on their experiences, their preferences and their judgment. A child sees hollyhocks and sunflowers as towers to challenge a "jack-in-the-beanstalk" legend. A handful of dandelions for Mom is a bouquet to enthrone on the dining table in a crystal vase. A young lover sees roses as a symbol of devotion between two people deeply in love. Wives and sisters, grandmothers and widows see gifts of flowers that remind them of loved ones at times when joy or pain cry out to be shared. Some of us just want to enjoy flowers as they bloom in their natural state.

"I see flowers everywhere as subjects to capture on paper or canvas"

I see flowers everywhere as subjects to capture on paper or canvas. I delight in different formats that best convey the essence of the type of flower to be painted. A border of pansies in glowing colors is fun to paint in a long horizontal piece using watercolor to show the fragile petals glowing in the sunlight. Irises, tall and stately are perfect for a vertical spot on a narrow wall. So, too, are sunflowers and dahlias which I paint in gouache to express their sturdy stalks and durable blossoms. I see the vivid colors of spring's primroses as a square format and best suited to the strong, bright, true crayon colors of pastels. Still life bouquets beg to be captured in oil on fine linen canvas. Elegant and mysterious, they can be depicted as the old masters might have done. With flowers everywhere from Hawaii to Texas, from Alaska to Florida, there will always be something new to paint. I long to see the fields of bluebonnets, and the wild prairie flowers growing

wild in the heartland. I have seen poinsettias as tall as the rooftops. I have delighted in the fragrance of white ginger blossoms, and marveled to see hill after golden hill of California poppies. What a wonderful experience it is to visit local growers and see colorful row upon row of tulips or irises. From groomed gardens to random splashes of wildflowers in farmers fields, I want to paint flowers.

"Each season brings new joys"

Each season brings new joys. In Spring, I see splashes of yellow and white amidst the pale yellow-green of new growth. Summer explodes with reds, purples, blues and pinks. Autumn tempts me with its golden-bronze glow. Late fall and early winter start to display the grey-green hues of the season, and suddenly Winter is here with its holly berries, poinsettias and flowering kale. Hardy winter pansies cheer the long dark months. Hydrangeas hold on to bare limbs, slowly fading from blue to green and then golden tan just before the rain and sunshine bring the Spring once more. Are there flowers everywhere to see? Look around you and judge for yourself, and may the artist in all of us appreciate their enduring beauty.

Carol Thompson

Featured Artwork

Daffodils



"As far as the eye can see, a natural setting has been filled with yellow gold, bursting through the ground in an eager anticipation of Spring Daffodils! The very sight of it makes one happy with the longing for warm winds and blue skies!"

Peach And Green



"Tulips come up in a variety of colors, from white to nearly black; but it is difficult to resist the combination of 'Peach And Green'."

Justa



"Early Spring brings lively jewels of color in borders and window boxes everywhere. Is it a new kind of rare hybrid or is it 'just a pansy?'"