Pieces in Place
Hot off the cutting press is Jim Mellett’s latest piece of puzzle art, Country Music. “In addition to Country Music coming on the market I have four puzzles now on the shelves at Wal-Mart,” Jim reports. “White Mountain Puzzles has made two different 3-puzzle box sets specifically for Wal-Mart. I have two puzzles in each set of three.” Puzzle fans will be happy to hear that Jim’s next project in the series has him researching the subject of Comedy.

Project Airs
Mark Bender created this piece for Rumor of Blue Sky, a documentary that aired April 23 on WQED-TV. The project, produced by AIP instructor Andrew Maietta and AIP graduate Janet Whitney, records in witnesses’ oral accounts the 1948 smog disaster in Donora. The film covers one of the worst environmental tragedies in U.S. history and the town’s dramatic contribution to clean air legislation. According to Mark, “My original sketches went out the window and I had to pick up my game when I was given that poetic title.” More about the production at: www.artinstitutes.edu/pittsburgh/NewsAndEvents/rumor_of_blue_sky.aspx

On Exhibit
Members have been successful in placing their work in various spring and summer gallery shows in western and central Pennsylvania.

A book created by June Edwards from some of her images of the High Level Bridge was accepted into the 86th Annual Erie Art Museum Spring Show. Wendell Castle was the juror. The exhibit will be on display through June 14.
“Under the High Level Bridge” is 15.5” h x 10” w x 2.5” d and was created out of archival digital prints on paper and mixed media. Each page is double-sided, and is cut through so that parts of the entire book are visible at all times. The binding is cloth, and the spine allows for a flexible arrangement of the seven panels.

Jack Puglisi won First Prize at the Upper St. Clair League for the Arts spring show with “The Flutist.” The picture is 22” x 24” and was drawn in the pointillist method with a #00 sized technical pen. The show was held at the Galleria in Mount Lebanon the last week of April.

John Hinderliter has two paintings included in Think About It, a show at the Fein Gallery, 519 East Ohio Street in Pittsburgh’s North Side, that opened May 8 and runs through June 19.

Nora Thompson had a painting accepted into Images 2009, the Central Pennsylvania Festival of the Arts annual juried show. She also had two paintings accepted into the Westmoreland Art Nationals. This is the third consecutive year that at least one of her paintings or drawings has been accepted into both of these shows. One of her drawings won Images’ William D. Davis Award in Drawing in 2007. “The Song Came and Went” is her 2009 entry. The show will hang from June 10 to July 12 on Penn State’s University Park campus. “Eleven” and “Twelve” are the two pieces accepted into the Westmoreland Art Nationals. They were completed digitally and printed as Giclee prints. The show will hang July 2-5 during the Westmoreland Arts & Heritage Festival in Greensburg.

Watercolor Weekend
Bill Vrscak is teaching a watercolor weekend workshop May 15-17 at the Riverside Inn in Cambridge Springs, PA. The class is geared toward intermediate to advanced painters. Emphasis will be on helping students present the subject matter in a simple, direct way.

Everyone will work from his or her own source material. The Riverside Inn is a 120-year-old country hotel, which still maintains its turn-of-the-20th century charm. Price of the workshop includes a room plus all meals in the Inn’s wonderful dining room. Cambridge Springs is 2-hours north of Pittsburgh. More information about this workshop and the hotel can be found on Bill’s website at www.billvrscak.com or call him direct at 412-761-3759.

Ahoy, Mates!
Open Book Gala: Celebrating 25 Years of Great Books for Great Kids.

Thursday, May 21
Hunt Armory, Shadyside
7–10 pm

A lucky bidder will get his or her doubloons’ worth with John Manders’ lavishly painted pirate theme bookcase at the Beginning with Books 25th Anniversary and Auction, where it will be offered along with 11 more done by other artists. Progressive photos of John’s work can be seen at: www.flickr.com/photos/johnmanders sets/72157617325312983/

The event will offer food, drinks and live and silent auctions along with special surprises and entertainment. Guest emcee is WTAE Anchor Sally Wiggin. Former Allegheny County Chief Executive Jim Roddey will be the guestauctioneer. Proceeds will benefit Beginning with Books Center for Early Literacy programs. For more information or to purchase tickets: www.beginningwithbooks.org/events/open-book-gala-celebrating
Influenced by The Beatles
June Show opportunity

3G Gallery is looking for 2D and 3D art or video that conveys creative ideas Influenced by The Beatles. This could be interpretations of Beatle lyrics, ideas and philosophies generated by one or all of the Beatles or art that creatively shows the impact the Beatles had on youth, music, or pop culture.

The show will hang in 3G Gallery during the month of June. The entry fee is $20 for one or two pieces. The pieces will be chosen by jury selection. The size limitation is 32” on any side and they must be ready to hang. Bring the art for jurying and a check for $20 made out to 3G Gallery on Friday, May 29, 9-11 am. Include an entry form with name, address, email and phone number and a short bio. Give entry title, medium and price. To request a pdf of official entry form, write to: 3ggallery@gmail.com. A best of show award will be presented at the opening night event on June 5, 5-7 pm.

KA-BLAM! A party to benefit the ToonSeum.

Join in the excitement Friday June 5, 7-11 pm, at Verno Studios on the South Side to support the ToonSeum, Pittsburgh’s Museum of Cartoon Art. Enjoy live music by the Whips, DJ Raw-Z, Dr. Sketchy's Anti-Art School, live cartooning, the opportunity to bid on one of a kind cartoon art and unique experiences, free comics and much more! Tickets are $35 online at brownpapertickets.com

One of Kind Auction Items include:
Original art from Dan Piraro (Bizarro), Molly Crabapple, Mike Peters (MotherGoose and Grimm), Wayno, Rob Rogers and many others; production art from popular shows including Sesame Street, Dragon Tales, and Yogi Bear; unique experiences including dinner for six at Gypsy Cafe with filmmaker and Pittsburgh icon Rick Sebak; cartooning workshop for ten people and lots more one of a kind opportunities and items.

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**Personals**

**Nora Thompson** got a new job as a tour guide at Fallingwater. She says, “I’ve lived in Fayette County for most of my life (38 years of it), and I had never given a second thought to our little house in the woods. Now when I tell people what my job is, I’m surprised by how jealous they are. It’s great!”

**Leda Miller** would like to announce the birth of her third grandchild, Lydia Eve Miller, born April 19.

**Jim Mellett** and his wife, Jan, celebrated their 18th wedding anniversary on May 4.

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**Fun Link**

**Museum of Bad Art (MOBA)**
http://www.museumofbadart.org/

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**Volunteer Spotlight**

**Zach Beresh**
Web Guy

PSI has given me great insight over the years. Now, it’s my time to give back through our website.

Many of you might not know who I am. Hopefully within the next few months of taking over the reins of the PSI website, that will change. I have been a member of PSI for over four years, helping in different capacities when I could. When Mark Brewer asked for help with the website, I knew that was something that I could contribute to the club on a monthly basis. My job will be to update the site monthly and be the designated “web master” (I hate that term). All right, let’s just say I’ll be the new “web guy” (that’s better).

Currently, I work for an ad agency in the South Side. It’s a great outlet for an artist because while working there I can design digital forms of art such as websites or flash animations as well as getting to what I really love to do which is illustrate everything from musicians to zombies.

(No, I’m not kidding). It’s that love of what I do during my “daily grind” that I want to extend to you, the members of PSI. The Internet is an amazing outlet for artists. No other time in history could you see someone’s art from a distant land, comment on it, and receive feedback so easily. That is what our website will continue to be, a great tool for people to see the amazing art and artists of Pittsburgh.

Feel free to email me your concerns / suggestions, or if you have that new killer piece of art that you just finished and you want it to be on PSI’s website. I look forward to working with each of you on this. “Creativity is allowing yourself to make mistakes. Art is knowing which ones to keep.” - Scott Adams.
sadhana for a devastating personal experience. I was working at Adobe Systems in Silicon Valley at the time as a graphic designer in the marketing communications department and had become very adept with Adobe software. The images were a vehicle to express my emotions and Photoshop was the most immediate tool at that moment. The work was very guttural and painterly at a time when most illustrators who were using digital technology were working in a tight vector style. As the dust began to settle personally, I realized how excited I was about illustration. I kept cranking out the work and had several pieces printed in Ray Gun magazine by David Carson, who was revolutionizing design and typography in the early 90s. Before I knew it, I was getting calls for editorial illustration projects in the US and abroad. In 1993 I used my life savings to buy a Mac. I quit my job and set up shop in my San Francisco apartment. I have been freelancing since then.

**Q:** What’s the one aspect of illustration that most inspires or motivates you?

**A:** The fun of it! I am still absolutely thrilled that one can be paid handsomely for having fun; solving visual problems and making things that didn’t exist before.

**Q:** What was the most constructive criticism that you ever received?

**A:** “I took a look at your book John and there really isn’t anything remotely professional in it. I suggest you go back to school.” -Don Donoughe (1990) Devastating, but I knew it was true.

**Q:** What advice would you offer to those who admire your work and want to learn from you?

**A:** Focus and make work! You can find your voice through practice. Be honest about who you are and what you are passionate about. The field of contemporary illustration has no rules and there is a place for everyone who is willing to work hard on developing their own unique vision. This was a five year process of sweating blood for me. It was difficult not knowing what to do while still moving forward but it has paid off. Finally, ignore the familiar voices in your head that would question or devalue your journey toward making art.

**Q:** Does the artwork that you do for yourself differ from the artwork that you do for your clients? If so, how?

**A:** Yes, of course, the commercial work solves an existing problem or expresses someone else’s thinking. My personal work is much more elusive and mysterious. It’s built on personal questions and explorations. Occasionally I will revisit a commercial piece that speaks much louder once it is outside the context of its intended purpose.

**Q:** What do art directors like about your work?

**A:** I work quickly and as accurately as possible. Politeness and flexibility goes a long way when art buyers consider who to call again. I also strive to make images that speak on an intellectual level as well as the aesthetic level. It’s a dying art.
Who or what has been the biggest influence on your work?

My major influence has been a combination of all the things that drive me. Skateboarding, speed, insecurity, a serious work ethic, naps, faith, family, punk rock, nature, motorcycles, etc. The list goes on and on. It’s all connected. The things that fill my life find their way into and out of the art. I get into trouble when I look at other people’s work too closely. I start comparing and feeling inadequate which kills the energy in my own process.

What would you do with ten million dollars?

Probably lose all my friends. They say that happens to the big Lotto winners. I kind of like things the way they are.

What do you enjoy reading?

I can’t get enough history, religion, politics. I started reading the New Yorker magazine cover to cover each week when I was 30 years old. I’ll look at ANY editorial publication that I can get my hands on. I’m a media junkie and just fascinated by the concept of news and throwaway culture.

What one thing would you like to learn to do?

Make stronger images.

Share an interesting work related anecdote about a tight deadline, dream assignment, or favorite art director.

I once flew to LA for a “meeting” at the request of my Chinese calligraphy friend Lilly Lee. She neglected to explain what the “meeting” was about and we wound up at Rubin Postaer Design in Santa Monica, CA where there were several studio executives and representatives from the Honda Motor Company present. Some sample pieces that Lilly and I had collaborated on the previous year had been turned into a campaign for the car company and large-scale printouts were adorning the walls of the conference room. As we walked in, Lilly began passing out Girl Scout cookies to everyone! Assuming that I was a bike messenger, one of the studio people told me that I could drop off my package at the front desk. That turned out to be the largest commercial project of my career thus far. Oh, and Lilly was wearing cutoffs, blue hair, cheek sparkles and pigtails.

For a look at John’s work, here’s the link to that cool site: www.ritterillustration.net
The best boost I ever received was from Murray during a critique when he said ‘you’re slicker than snot on a doorknob.’ There’s a guy who can use a metaphor.”

**Mick Opalko:** “This was told to me by my friend and professor Bruce Carter at CMU, concerning the effort put into producing a work of art: ‘You’re the one who has to look into the mirror.’ And, ‘It’s your name on the print. You signed it.’”

**Judy Emerick:** “The instruction that sticks with me all the time is the importance of value.”

**Phil Wilson:** “I remember hearing or reading somewhere early in my career that the best way to succeed in any business is to do the kind of work that you love to do, and sooner or later, success will come to you. If you try to jump onto every fad bandwagon that comes along or try to appeal to what you ‘think’ the public wants you’re doomed to fail. By the time you latch onto a ‘fad’, generally it’s on the downhill slide already and moving on to the next ‘hot’ trend, you can never keep up and are doomed to fail. Do what you want to do, stick with it, and success will find you. In other words, ‘Build it and they will come!’

Also I’m a firm believer that the more you are able to do and be comfortable with, the more work will come your way. It only makes perfect sense… the broader your abilities, the broader your clientele, the greater the rewards. These concepts have served me very well over a 40-year career.

Lastly, one of my favorite pieces of advice comes from an interview with animator Chuck Jones (of Bugs Bunny/Roadrunner fame) that I read many years ago where he says, ‘Every artist has about 200,000 bad drawings in him, and the sooner he gets rid of them the better off he’ll be.’ I think we all know the message here! Practice, practice, practice!!!”

**Taylor Callery:** “Never give up.”

**Rick Antolic:** “I had a great instructor at CMU, Herb Olds, who taught Advanced Drawing. He would often teach in analogies which always had a profound meaning. (I understood his analogies better than I understood what he was saying when he wasn’t speaking in analogies.) I remember one day, while he was critiquing on my drawings, he was telling me about the importance of getting the entire drawing right, and not being satisfied with just getting most of it done right. Herb said, ‘It’s like reading a good book, and then when you get to the climax, you see a misspelled word – and it just takes away the effect of what the story was building up to, and you lose your audience at a critical moment.’ To this day, as I’m working on any drawing or painting, I keep telling myself, ‘Don’t misspell any words, you’ll lose your audience.’”

**Fred Carlson:** “One of my prime influences, Robert Heindel, was a featured speaker/instructor at the 1979 Illustrators Workshop I attended for a week in Tarrytown NY. When he reviewed my two-years-out-of-school portfolio, besides encouragements to freelance, and him being supportive of the studio environment at Pitt Studios where I was learning my craft and business acumen, he gave me advice concerning my use of color that has remained consistently valuable throughout my career, and helps me approach every single assignment I encounter.

In between his chain smoking, he noted that my approach to color was all over the map. I had a very capricious and arbitrary approach to color and wide spectrum shifts within my pieces. This was probably due to both experimentation with technique for technique’s sake, plus being overly influenced in high school by comic book coloration even though by this point in my career I was treading into assignments to satisfy more mature and sophisticated clientele. Within a mere five minutes, he explained a more compressed color scale would be useful to me and make my highlighting that much more effective as a compositional tool. On a scale of 1-10, I was using all color values from 1 to 10 in each piece. Bob suggested working with a 3-7 color scale for most of my work, and only going outside of that value scale in a very singular manner for highlighting or making edges stand apart from each other for compositional intent. This has simplified my approach to color in my work and has enhanced my style ever since.

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**Leda Miller:** “Back in the 90s, I attended a Burton Silverman workshop and came away with one thing that literally changed the way I paint and improved my portraits 100%. Mr. Silverman said to hold the brush with conviction. Never paint without confidence. I found that, even if I’m not quite sure what I’m doing, if I approach the canvas or paper with intent, the result at least looks intentional, which can make all the difference. And when he said it, it did not make any sense to me until I tried it. There are many times I need to remind myself to hold that brush correctly and I secretly thank ol’ Burt.”

**John Hinderliter:** “The best instruction I ever got was from my illustration instructor, Pat Budway, at Ivy: Spend 80 percent of your time designing the illustration and 20 percent rendering it.”

**Mark Bender:** “I’ve been blessed with some incredible instructors. In Pittsburgh, PSI members Dave Bowers and Greg Schooley pushed me in the right direction. The Chair at Syracuse, Murray Tinkelman, really connected me to the field and continues to guide me. Instruction from Murray:

*Draw from life, don’t be limited by reality. Only work for people you love, and find something to love about everybody. Make it show it sell it.*

*You don’t need a Master’s, just learn to squint.*

*Do what you love and you’ll love what you do.*
That particular session in New York, including great crits and encouragement from Bernie Fuchs (“You studied with Tom Ruddy? I know him from Detroit...”), Fred Ottes (“Oh, that is nice”), and Alan Cober (“Come to New York!”) was definitely highlighted by this one five-minute tutorial on color from Bob Heindel. The illustration world is poorer for the losses of Heindel and Cober in the past decade. Bob recalled me so well that he actually gave my name to his former studio employers near Cleveland in case I was interested in a career switch.”

Dave Klug: “Art as a career is very difficult and here is a quote that inspires me to keep working. Sounds like good common sense, I feel like I’ve just gone to a motivational speaker every time I read it: I want to remind you that success in life is based on hard slogging. There will be periods when discouragement is great and upsetting, and the antidote for this is calmness and fortitude and a modest yet firm belief in your competence. Be sure that your priorities are in order so that you can proceed in a logical manner, and be ever mindful that nothing will take the place of persistence.

It was written by publisher and philanthropist Walter Annenberg in a letter to his son.”

Thanks to Rick Antolic for this month’s question. Got a good question for an upcoming issue? Please submit to: annimatsick@mac.com

**Fission of Form**

All is proceeding on schedule! Entries are in from all twenty PSI members participating in PSI’s next group show, Fission of Form, completing the third portion of the collaboration. Shown are three illustrations inspired by the poems written by Pittsburgh Poets members, based on sculptures created by members of the Pittsburgh Society of Sculptors. The triads will be united in early August for installation at the Panza Gallery in Millvale. The opening scheduled for Saturday, September 5 includes poetry readings beginning at 8 pm. Presentations by the artists and poet trios on the sources of artistic inspiration will be scheduled for three afternoons and evenings in September and October. For now, here’s a peek at several of the works.

Kurt Pfaff sent this digital image revealing how he utilized 3D modeling to construct the piece.

Other members participating are Rick Antolic, Michele Bamburak, Fred Carlson, David Coulson, Rose Gauss, Paul “Leroy” Gehres, Yelena Lamm, Judith Lauso, Ilene Lederer, Rhonda Libbey, Anni Matsick, William Panos, Gina Scanlon, George Schill, Christine Swann, Anne Trimble and Bill Vrscak.

Shown is an intriguing portion of Judy Emerick’s 30”x40” oil on canvas.

This mysterious little robed figure is cropped from Leda Miller’s much larger oil painting.

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A Look at What PSI-ers are Working on This Month

Here’s a piece by Mark Brewer for the May issue of Wine & Spirits magazine. The article is about all the wonderful applications you can use on your iPhone to find the best wine at good deals.

Dave Klug created this recent illustration in Illustrator for a magazine for lawyers. The story was about liability and insurance in the new industry of space travel.

For their twentieth anniversary this year, Seton Hill University’s biannual art and literary magazine instead published one large edition, asking for submissions combining words and images. Instructor Nora Thompson came up with a five-page graphic novel, the first page of which is shown here. Nora also had each page printed on individual postcards she is sending out promotionally over a five-month period. On the back is a link to her site where each page can be downloaded as a full-size, printable pdf file: http://www.nora-thompson.com/dead_line/  

Jim Zahniser comments, “Here are a couple of ‘studies’ of a little dog I’ve been drawing over the past year. Just for fun. Learned a few tricks in Photoshop on these to get that crayon shading.”

These two pieces by Fred Carlson are DVD covers for instructional guitar lessons featuring the styles of the regional musicians on the covers. The client is Stefan Grossman’s Guitar Workshop of New Jersey. The jobs were assigned April 21 and after sketches were approved April 29 they were completed/continued on page 9
sent May 6. “The client requested hand lettering which I had featured on numerous assignments for record companies with connections to Stefan over the past two decades,” Fred shares. “I have to say I particularly enjoyed this assignment ‘cause it combined my love of guitar music, maps, and funky type all in one set of jobs!”

This cartoon that ran in newspapers May 1 is the second collaboration for Wayno who wrote the gag for Bizarro creator, Dan Piraro. There are “at least a couple more to come, one of them will be a nice, big Sunday panel,” says Wayno. “It’s a real treat to work with one of my favorite cartoonists.”

Gina Antognoli Scanlon painted this charming portrait of Gabriella to commemorate her first birthday.

This detailed watercolor illustration by Oksana Popovich was done for a children’s story.

“This appealing illustration of an English Springer Spaniel was done by Kurt Pfaff for a job proposal.”

This print by Mick Opalko is titled “Duq Progress”. It’s a photograph he took from behind Duquesne furnace as it was being demolished. It is digitally manipulated, laser cut and hand printed with blind embossing added for the background.

“Cutback” by Taylor Callery was inspired by an article written about salary cutbacks in the automotive industry.