

BASNZinc

Summer Newsletter

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Letter from the editor

Apologies for the missing Spring Newsletter, we will attempt to fit in an extra one before the end of our financial year. I have had two long trips away one to the USA & Canada for 7 weeks and the other to Hong Kong & China for nearly 4 weeks. I spent a great deal of time with my head down and my bum up admiring flowers and plants.

Letter from our President

Dear members,

Another year has nearly finished, and only now do I feel I'm starting to get the hang of being president for the BASNZ. I have been touched by the number of people who have sent good wishes, expressing their belief in my ability to lead the Society for the next few years.

I have just returned from a lovely few days in Hanmer Springs, staying with Elizabeth Yuill Proctor (treasurer) and getting to know the committee members better! What a great bunch of hardworking, inspiring women they are. Between them they have successfully run the society for many years and are, thankfully very happy to continue to do so.

A website is very much on the agenda for BASNZ, and along with a new logo, will increase our standing in the on-line world.

We have lots of exciting plans for growing the society, to spread Botanical Art around the country with help from members in all regions of New Zealand. If you are interested in being a 'Go-to' person for your area, to encourage and promote botanical art, do get in touch. The idea is that people have a 'local' person to contact, perhaps arrange to meet up with, share ideas etc.

Our biggest change is that the annual exhibition will now alternate between the North and South Islands, with it taking place in Auckland in June of 2020. We will be asking for small artworks which will all be matted to a certain size – for those long standing members, think back to 'The Big Show of Little Works', our exhibition in 2015!

The overall mat size will be 280mm x 350 mm with a choice of 2 window (opening) sizes. These will be 120mm x 140mm and the larger one is 180mm x 160mm.

So, time to start thinking about what you will enter, making sure they will fit into those window sizes. Further information will come out in the New Year.

Well, that's all from me, except to wish you all a very happy and peaceful Christmas, doing whatever you do celebrate the holidays.

Travel safely, and don't forget to keep a sketchbook handy to preserve those memories!

Cheers,

Lesley Alexander

Exhibition News

At the latest committee meeting in early December it was decided to alternate our annual exhibition between the North and South Islands. Lesley Alexander will be the point of contact for this years exhibition to be held in Auckland. As she has already mentioned this will be **A Big Exhibition of Small Botanical Works** These will be presented in mats only and with the overall size being the same. Full information on sizing etc will be sent out soon. **But we are looking for expressions of interest please.**

Please contact our email address with how many entries you think you may have:
basnzinc@gmail.com

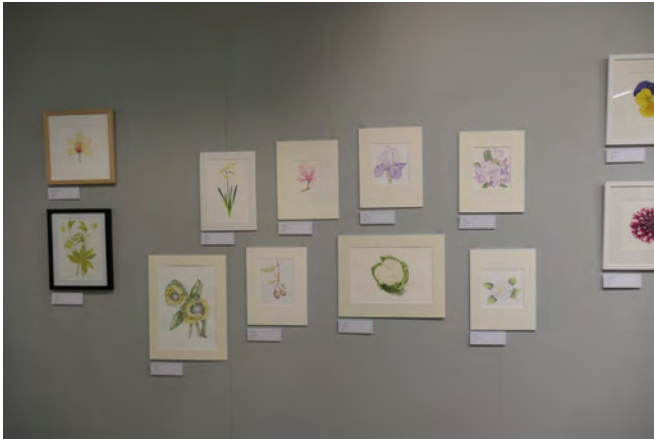
Botanica 2019 Chamber Gallery Rangiora

Held during September/October was a success for the Society. We had 20 artist exhibiting 62 works. Rangiora is a small town, yet this exhibition was well attended with 5 artists selling work. The gallery looked stunning with the work hung.



Jacquie Carran - our exhibition organiser giving her speech

Remember - click on the photos and enlarge for a better view



Member Focus

One of our Members, Gillian Receveur recently had a very special exhibition. Gillian and her Grandson Henk held a joint exhibition of Gillian's beautiful Botanical Art and Henk's amazing photography.

Family Collaboration



In April 2017, I graduated from the Art Workers' Guild Hall in London with a Society of Botanical Artist's Diploma. For two and a half years I studied plants and presented major drawing assignments to London based tutors. Each piece can take up to two months to complete, depending on the size of course, breaking the drawing down to the cellular structure. I have honed my skills of observation and a tight drawing technique. I enjoy the discipline and the attention to detail.

I mainly use Faber-Castell Polychromos coloured pencils. They are oil-based and hold a point well, an essential requirement of fine detailed work. Prismacolor Premier Coloured pencils have an excellent range of colours and they are wax-based, rich and blend well with the Faber-Castell range.

Two pieces of my work were accepted for the World Wide Botanical Art Exhibition in 2018. The exhibition was held in Auckland, Wellington and Blenheim and digitally toured twenty four other participating countries. I have sold work nationally and accept commissions. A piece of my work also features in Botanical Painting by Margaret Stevens.

Gillian Receveur Dip.SBA



Grandson of Gillian Receveur.

Currently I am studying for a Visual Arts degree, majoring in Painting and Printmaking and a minor in Photography.

I gained Cambridge A-levels in Art and Design, Photography and English Literature at King's College.

I have had an interest in art from a young age after being exposed to art galleries, exhibitions and museums whilst traveling with family through New Zealand, Australia, Europe and America.

These works are taken from a series of photographs I took throughout a trip to America. I became interested in capturing depth in infrastructure/environment. To do this I chose a range of elaborate locations I had captured to print - using a tedious but rewarding process. All the work is done by exposing film onto metal-plates, applied with ink, to then be pressed into the paper. The works are presented through a recurring 'vintage-eye' to link the prints visually.

Henk A R Tomkins



Pohutakawa by Gillian Receveur (SOLD)



Trump Towers by Henk Tomkins

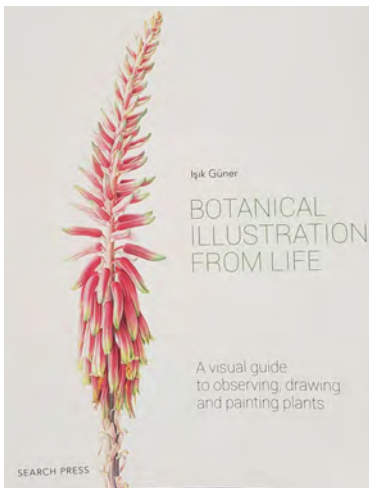


Gillian and her husband Tom viewing
Henk's photographs



Gillian standing by her paintings with husband Tom.

Book Review by Jennifer Duval-Smith.
Botanical Illustration From Life, a book by Isik Guner



One of the most significant botanical publishing events of this year is the launch of Isik Guner's first book *Botanical Illustration from Life - A visual guide to observing drawing and painting plants*. Isik's approach to botanical illustration, as distinct from botanical art, is that the entire point is to communicate as much information about the plant as you possibly can, especially for people who may only ever see your painting and never the actual plant. To her mind beauty is

important but comes second, and will naturally follow. Isik is a youthful and energetic Turkish painter who paints and teaches around the world with enormous enthusiasm and charm and this comes through in her book. I had the very good fortune to attend a small course she ran in Transylvania this year and I learned a great many techniques and approaches which I use every day. All of these are contained in this incredibly useful and comprehensive guide, which comes as close to the only book you'll ever need as any I have seen. The book is structured to lead you through the process of botanical illustration from observation to drawing, to painting, exploring and mastering.

Watch this spot for the new logo!



(right) Jennifer hard at work on her Salvia during Isik Guner's workshop At Pod Art Space Transylvania.

(left) the Salvia Jennifer is working on



Particularly useful are the sections on how to draw accurately and measured drawing, because as we all know, the better the drawing, the better the painting. I also like her emphasis on the botany of each plant. Isik includes glorious pictures of her own work but also the work of others to clearly illustrate her points. Beautiful photos are combined with elegant and explanatory line drawings. Her process is detailed step by step and very methodically presented. One of the parts I enjoyed most was how to avoid common mistakes (all of which I have made). I also appreciated her strategy around how to approach more complex subjects, composition and her thoughts and demonstrations around colour mixing, and representing different plant textures. If you are interested in botanical illustration and improving your practice, I would thoroughly recommend this book. It represents excellent value. If you're anything like me, you'll keep it close to hand and have trouble putting it down.

Jennifer Duval-Smith@jduvalsmithart

Auckland

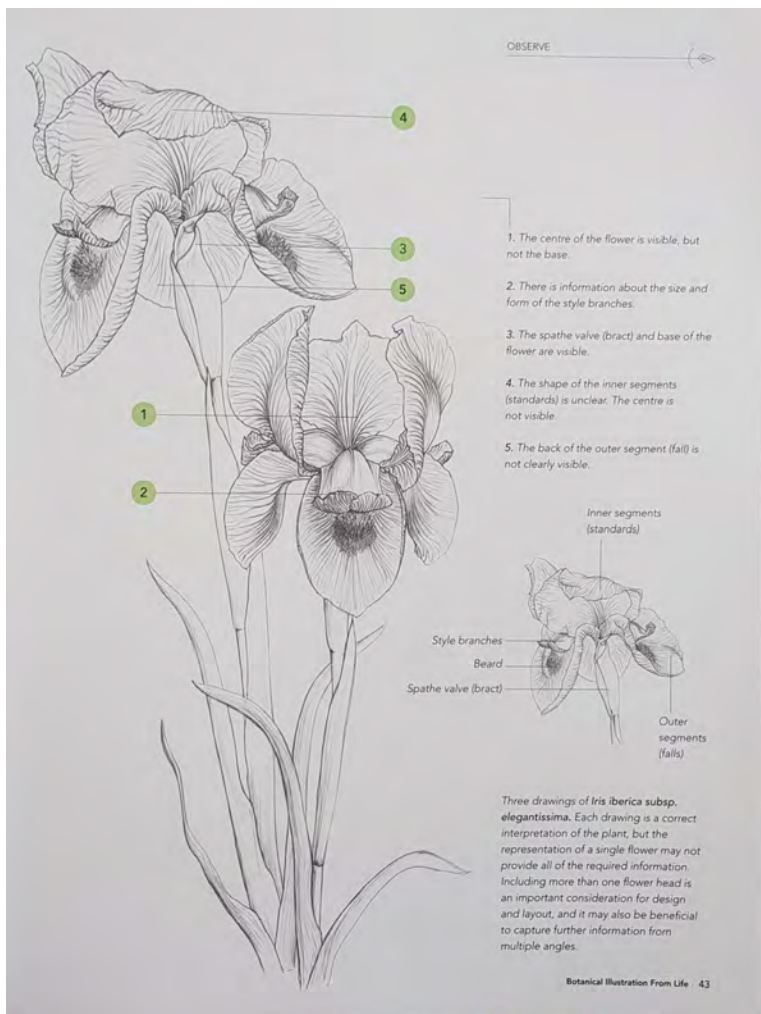


Isik Guner at work

from: Botanical Illustration From Life



Some of Isik Guner's stunning work



Workshop News

Botany Workshop for Botanical Artists - a weekend of cutting up vegetive bits and eating cake!

On the weekend of 30th November, I and a few other BASNZ members attended an amazing two day workshop in Wellington.

The workshop was tacked onto the end of the 2019 conference run jointly by the NZ Plant Conservation Network (NZPCN) and the Australian Systematic Botany Society (ASBS) which fortuitously for us was being held in New Zealand rather than Australia.



Tanya Scharaschkin

Australian botanist and artist, Tanya Scharaschkin was running a session for scientists - how to draw plants and thought why not swap it round a bit and run a workshop on botany for botanical artists!

I am so pleased she did as she, together with local botanical artists Jane Humble and Eleanor Burton organised a brilliantly informative, yet relaxed couple of days dissecting and drawing plants. Of course eating delicious homemade cakes and

meeting like minded people only added to the

enjoyment of the weekend.

The workshop was held at the Leonard Cockayne Centre at Otari Native Botanic Garden and Wilton's Bush Reserve. Only 5kms from downtown Wellington, Otari Reserve is the only public botanic garden in New Zealand dedicated solely to New Zealand native plants. According to their website - <https://www.owbt.nz/index.html>, the reserve boasts -

'half of all New Zealand's plant species within its 5 hectares, and feature 1200 species collected from as far afield as the Subantarctic Islands in the south to Cape Reinga at the northern tip of New Zealand.'



It was lovely to meet up with other BASNZ members, who apart from Wellington based Jane Humble and Eleanor Burton, had travelled from Auckland, Christchurch, Havelock North and Wanganui! Half of the 12 participants were BASNZ members, others included a college student, natural history artists, conservationists among others.

On the first day we arrived not really knowing what to expect, but were warmly welcomed by Jane and Eleanor who introduced us to the delightful and bubbly Tanya, a talented artist herself. I recommend you look at her Redbubble website - <https://www.redbubble.com/people/CraftyTiger> to see what she does with her artwork.



Jennifer working hard

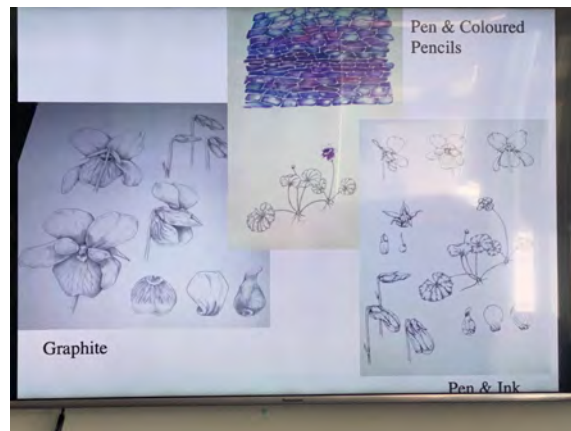
On the first day we looked at plant diversity, floral structure and put the theory in action with a chance to dissect and draw *Linum monogynum* - *Rauhuia* and *Phormium cookianum* - harakeke or mountain flax. Later we got up close and personal with *Pachystegia minor* - the short stem Marlborough Rock Daisy and *Knightia excelsa* - Rewarewa as well as various fruits before looking at leaves, stems, roots on the second day.

We were introduced to floral formula which, according to Wikipedia

are 'a means to represent the structure of a flower using numbers and letters'. Floral diagrams appealed to me more as they comprised various shapes/symbols to represent different plant parts drawn in concentric circles to represent the whorls of the various organs, their arrangement and fusion. The flora formula too closely resembled chemical formulae for my liking, a subject I never got to grips with at school and have avoided ever since!

So over the 2 days we looked at -

- * major features of different groups of land plants (mosses, liverworts, ferns, flowering plants)
- * the structure and function of reproductive structures (flowers and fruits)
- * the structure and function of vegetative structures (leaves, stems and roots)
- * techniques for accurately observing, dissecting and documenting key features of plants
- * an overview of the basic terminology associated with plant descriptions
- * botanical conventions involved in naming plants and why names change



Some of Tanya's work

PHEW - we went at quite a pace, covering lots but leaving us wishing for more! Luckily Tanya gave us very concise illustrated notes so we didn't have to worry about missing something important!

Tanya used a digital microscope as a teaching tool with excellent success! I don't know about you but I've tried a couple and ended up sending them back as they were useless! Mind you, that was a few years ago now, and judging by the one Tanya used, they have definitely improved. What I really liked about it was that you could use it without a computer as it had its own screen. However when the image was up on the large overhead screen, the quality of the image was still extremely good - no fuzzy edges that I could see! For those interested in investing in one, it was an Adonstar ADSM302 - available on various websites at differing prices! http://www.andonstar.com/e_products/Digital-microscope-ADSM302-6.html



BANZ group. Back row L to R Jane Humble, Irene Blair, Elizabeth Yuill Proctor, Jennifer Duval-Smith, Gillian Receveur, front row Lesley Alexander, Sandra Morris, Tanya Scharaschkin

I certainly intend to go back to Otari-Wilton Reserve next time I'm in Wellington (#14 bus from downtown stops outside the main entrance - except we had to Uber to ensure we were there on time as they didn't seem to keep to the timetables!) and explore it more fully and I highly recommend Tanya and wouldn't hesitate to go to another of her workshops. Her enthusiasm for botany and bubbly personality certainly made for a very enjoyable weekend.

When I'm tackling an unknown-to-me plant, aiming to draw it, I have always made a point of trying to understand how it all works and fits together so I can draw it accurately and spending the whole weekend actually looking at plants and learning about them reconfirmed that I need to have actual plant material to work from, photos just don't give me that clarity I'm after!

A huge thank you to those who organised such an enjoyable and educational workshop, to Tanya for inspiring us and Jane and Eleanor who quietly and efficiently made sure everything ran

smoothly and made sure there was delicious homemade cake, slices, and freshly brewed coffee at morning tea and lunch!

Calendar

The next item on our calendar is the **AGM**. This will have another change. Instead of being held during a Christchurch Group meeting, it will be held on a Saturday and hopefully Sunday with workshops (details to follow) one by Lesley Alexander and another with tutor to be announced. The good news is these workshops will be for our membership only and funded by the society!

Remember if you are having an exhibition, running a workshop or have any Botanical Art related news - we would love to hear from you. Just email us at: basnzinc@gmail.com