

JCF Arts and Sciences Heritage Fund Recognizing the Art of Janet Ann Tifft

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Daniel M Thomas



I am grateful for having received the grant and it's immediate affect on my ability as an artist.

The grant money was used as follows:

Art supplies, watercolor workshop with Tom Lynch, matting and framing of my paintings and various memberships to watercolor organizations including fees towards botanical illustration clubs and private instruction on Anna Masson's YouTube channel. Anna is a professional illustrator who specializes in botanical illustration.

My immediate inspiration from Janet's body of work came in the form of botanical illustration. Some of her work was very tight. Very illustrative. Plants mostly. A few small animals. Painted when the Tifft's lived in Virginia. It was fun for me to identify those plants as I'm from the east coast. It reminded me of illustrators who specialized in that medium and I was inspired to try my

hand at that art form. I needed to do quite a bit of research before I began. Pinterest was a big help. Youtube was invaluable. I ordered sheets of hot pressed paper so I could work tight and get the details I wanted. But I also used cold pressed Arches and Fabriano papers. I started with something easy. I bought a plant from a succulent nursery I used to work at. *Euonymus pseudocactus*. It has a beautiful variegation and spines reminiscent of cactus. Its just a different genus. Not related. After three tries I ended up with a painting I could tolerate albeit not very good. But it was just a beginning. The idea was that it was a learning process. This is the result:



I was starting to get the hang of it. The second piece I painted was a robin. A bit more complicated.

I studied Anna Mason's painting of the same bird (youtube) and did my best to copy it.



The third illustration I painted was of a rose. This time I followed a different illustrator who used a more 'wet on wet' technique. Some lifting with a wet brush to indicate highlights.



Next I painted another flower. I enjoyed the wet in wet and wanted to continue with it. I used Fabriano cold pressed paper.



For the fifth piece I wanted to paint something with more difficulty and a bit more wow. I had been loving owl portraits by Anna Mason and some beautiful ones on Pinterest so I gathered my photo references and this time I chose a hot pressed paper so I could paint more detailed. This painting took me almost a week to paint and was a bit frustrating but I think it succeeded.



The whole process of painting five pieces with the studying and the trial and error took me five and a half months. I had never painted botanical illustrations before. I'm now confident I can continue on and perhaps sell a few pieces. I find the art form highly marketable. I've learned a lot.

I wait to thank JCC, Mr William Tifft and SAWG for giving me the opportunity and Mrs Janet Tifft for her body of work and the inspiration. I hope you like the illustrations I've done. All five are being matted and sleeved in acetate and I will show them all if I can find space.