



Art & Colors

Celebrating Art and Artists | 2026 Spring Vol. 4 No. 2

**2026 REALISM AND
2026 ABSTRACTS COMPETITIONS
WINNERS AND EXHIBITIONS**

**FELICIA FELDMAN • VITALY GUNAZA • CAROLYN MORRIS BACH
THE MODERN STILL LIFE: FRUIT REIMAGINED**

CONTENTS



Julian Merrow-Smith, *Clementines Feuille*, oil

ART & ARTISTS

- 6 **Felicia Feldman**
Allegorical and Symbolic Contemporary Realism
- 66 **Vitaly Gunaza**
Everyday Subjects Become Emotion-Driven Paintings
- 74 **Carolyn Morris Bach**
Nature, Myth, and Symbolism in Jewelry

COLLECTIONS

- 14 **Special Feature: The Modern Still Life: Fruit Reimagined**
- 17 Dennis Wojtkiewicz
- 19 Erika Lee Sears
- 21 Julian Merrow-Smith
- 23 Leah Gardner
- 24 Susan Trudinger
- 25 Gabriela Elgaafary
- 26 Vita Kobylkina
- 27 Sarah Maffeis
- 28 Colin Wilson
- 29 Liz Shippam
- 30 Stephen Zhang
- 31 Louisa Lorenz

ART COMPETITIONS

- Realism**
- 33 **Barbara Hack**
1st Place
- 40 **Catherine Kuzma**
2nd Place
- 44 **Jean Pritchard**
3rd Place
- 48 **Exhibition**
- Abstracts**
- 78 **Ute Laum**
1st Place
- 84 **Larisa Sterkhova**
2nd Place
- 88 **Paula Borsetti**
3rd Place
- 92 **Exhibition**



COVER ART: Dennis Wojtkiewicz, *Rosette Series #15*, oil on canvas. See our feature story about his artwork on page 17.



The Modern Still Life: **FRUIT REIMAGINED**

Fruit has long offered artists a familiar subject through which to explore color, form, and the quiet drama of everyday life. From early still life traditions to contemporary interpretations, fruit has served as both a study in observation and a vehicle for symbolic meaning. Its surfaces, structures, and imperfections give

painters and illustrators a way to examine light, texture, and the subtle shifts that occur when an ordinary object is seen with sustained attention.

Historically, depictions of fruit carried cultural and moral associations. In Renaissance allegories fruit represented abundance and prosperity. Fruit found in



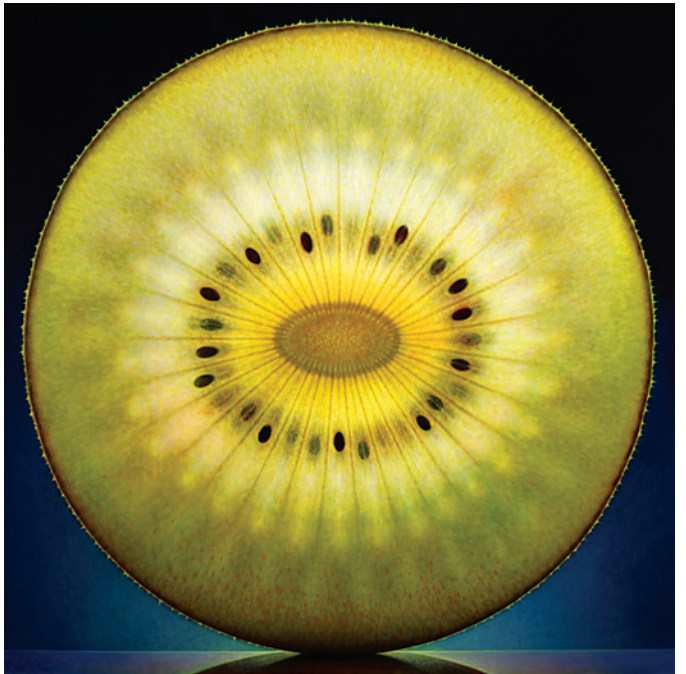
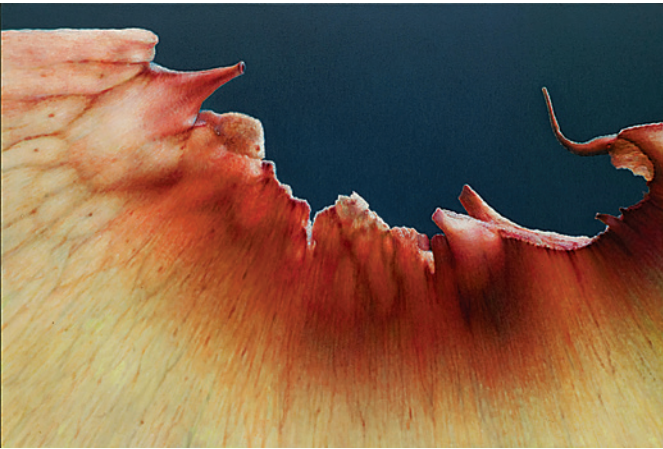
Dennis Wojtkiewicz, *Peach Series #4*, oil on canvas

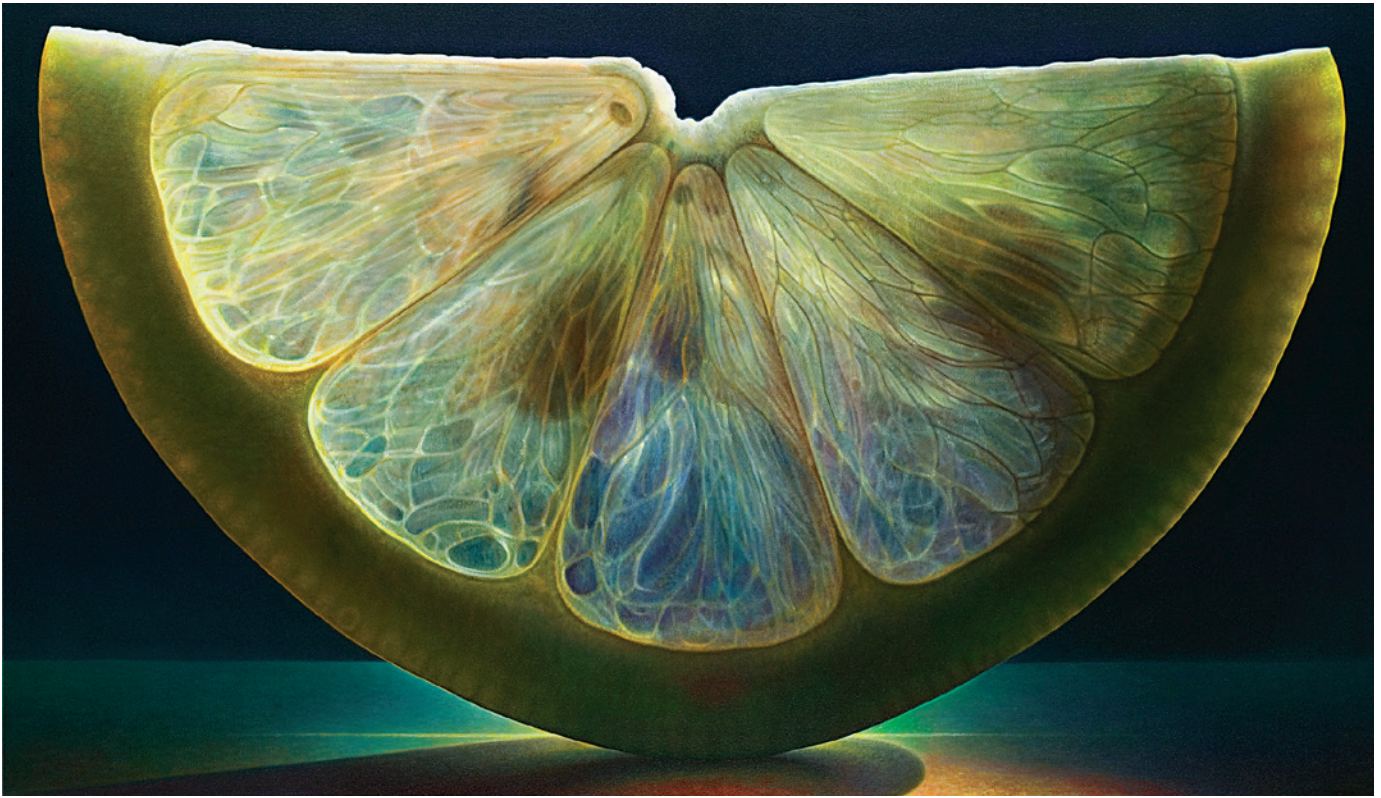
Dutch vanitas paintings suggested mortality and impermanence. The meticulous studies of botanical artists reflected a cultural shift toward discovery and the pursuit of knowledge. And in nineteenth-century still lifes fruit often symbolized home life, seasonal harvests, and hospitality.

Today's artists depict fruit not only for its

visual appeal but also as a means to explore narrative, mood, and personal sensibility. Each talented artist featured here brings a distinct perspective to this enduring theme. Their work demonstrates how a simple subject can inspire experimentation and reflection, revealing the endless possibilities still life painting continues to inspire.

The Modern Still Life:
FRUIT REIMAGINED





Citrus Series #15, oil on canvas

Dennis Wojtkiewicz

Instagram: [@dwojtki](https://www.instagram.com/dwojtki)

Website: www.wojtkiewiczart.com

Dennis Wojtkiewicz [voit-KEV-itch] is a Professor Emeritus at Bowling Green State University in Utah where he began teaching painting and drawing in 1988. He has built a distinguished career around his distinctive large-scale hyperrealist paintings of fruit and flowers.

He understands the challenge facing artists committed to traditional realism as opposed to the easier path offered by digital image-making. Rather than treating that tension as a negative, he uses it as a framework for understanding why slow, deliberate painting still matters.

For Wojtkiewicz, the value of realism lies not only in the finished image but in the discipline of constructing it – layer by layer, hour by hour – until time itself becomes part of the surface. That process, he suggests, is as integral to the work as the subject it depicts.

His paintings focus on natural forms – fruit, flowers, and other organic structures – observed at close range. By isolating these subjects and studying how light moves across their varied surfaces, he

pushes them beyond straightforward depiction. The compositions often verge on abstraction, emphasizing rhythm, pattern, and texture while still holding onto the tactile presence of the object. This makes for imagery that feels both intimate and expansive.

Influences such as Bonnard, Vermeer, and Titian inform his approach to color, light, and craft, but he treats technique as a means rather than an endpoint. What matters is the moment of discovery: the unexpected shift in a petal's hue, the luminous interior of a sliced kiwi, the way vitality and decay coexist in a single form.

His work draws on the tradition of vanitas painting, reminding viewers that beauty is always fleeting. Ultimately, these paintings ask for attention and presence – inviting viewers to slow down, look closely, and rediscover the quiet wonder embedded in the everyday.

Wojtkiewicz is represented by **Plus One Gallery**, London; **Rosenthal Fine Art**, Chicago; **M A Doran Gallery**, Tulsa; and **Moberg Gallery**, Des Moines.

Facing page, clockwise from top left: *Rosette Series #16*, oil on canvas; *Peach Series #10*, pastel; *Rosette Series #37*, oil on canvas; *Twins #4*, oil on canvas; *Peach Series #8*, oil on canvas.