

# Arts & Culture

EPOCH TIMES

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Reynolds learned that great artists were made, not born.



“Reraise, Deuce!” a self portrait by Timothy Reynolds. Charcoal and pastel, 10 by 11 inches.

COURTESY OF ANI ART ACADEMIES

## The Nuts and Bolts of Representational Art

*Ani Art Academies offer free, but rigorous, art instruction*

BY CHRISTINE LIN  
EPOCH TIMES STAFF

Imagine a place where a master will teach you to draw and paint like a pro, bend light onto canvas, and give you the tools to create impossible worlds in charcoal and oils. What’s more, you’d get free room, board, and tuition so you can focus on the art.

Here’s the best part: this place exists. But here’s the catch: only 10 exceptionally dedicated students get accepted each year.

Ani Art Academies look like ordinary realist ateliers from the outside—rigorous training, strict adherence to representational standards—but their mode of operating and larger purpose are unexpected. Ani takes the most crucial fundamentals of creating fine art—something many consider rarefied or mysterious—

and just gives it away.

“A big part of our philosophy is that art education should be made available to anyone who wants to partake of it regardless of their station or resources,” said Anthony Waichulis, a towering and boisterous man whose warm casualness belies his long resumé, which includes nearly three pages of exhibitions and awards.

SEE ANI ART ON B2

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“Boney Brawler” by instructor Timothy Jahn. Oil, 18 by 34 inches.



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# Representational Art

ANI ART CONTINUED FROM B1

In 1998, Waichulis founded the atelier that sparked the creation of Ani Art Academies.

### The Saga Begins

Waichulis began training aspiring representational artists using his own curriculum, which treats mastering drafts-manship, anatomy, and percep-tion with as much methodology and seriousness as music acad-emies treat the learning of scales and chords. This method allows budding artists to quickly gain and solidify the basic tools they need to create life-like images.

“It’s a very step-by-step kind of process that has concrete goals and easily quantifiable variables that can be easily measured,” he said. To demonstrate, he scrib-bled a gradation on a sticky note—a student can either get the requisite number of values in that specified space or he cannot.

The efficacy of Waichulis’ way of teaching caught the eye of Timothy Jahn, an art instructor teaching in New Jersey. At the time, one of Jahn’s pupils was Tim Reynolds, a trader who made his fortune on Wall Street. A lover of art all his life, Reyn-olds, now 47, had just begun to learn to draw.

“Nobody said I had any skill whatsoever for drawing,” he said. “I was just like everybody else, marveling at those kids in fifth grade who could just pick up a pencil and draw something. I could never do that.”

Since then, Reynolds learned that great artists were made, not born, and became intrigued with arts education. Since his early 20s he had wanted to build schools in developing

countries, and always assumed they’d be primary schools. But when he learned about Waichu-lis through his instructor, he found his calling.

With permission from Waichu-lis to use his curriculum, Reyn-olds began building Ani in 2010. He chose the name “Ani” as a play on the Swahili word “And-jani,” meaning the “road” or the “path ahead.”

The original school, Waichulis Studio, became incorporated as Ani Art Academy Waichulis and is located in the forests of north-eastern Pennsylvania.

So far, Reynolds has founded an Ani Academy in Anguilla and the Dominican Republic. Both schools are situated in peaceful

scenic natural environs.

To give the talents access to a market, Reynolds builds lux-ury villas close by for tourists. Student work is displayed inside, giving visitors the opportunity to buy. All proceeds go directly to the artist. Reynolds bankrolls all of this via the Tim Reynolds Foundation and Ani Village International. He is ready to open the doors to Ani Sri Lanka and Ani Thailand next year.

If it all seems a misstep away from promoting a certain style or type of artist, Reynolds and Waichulis want everyone to rest assured that the curricu-lum only takes students as far as acquiring hard skills, and is hands-free when it comes to per-

sonal style or artistic mission.

“A lot of people say, ‘Your stu-dents’ early work all look the same—it all looks like a camera did it.’ I tell people, well, we have to do that first,” said Waichulis.

“We have to be able to mimic what is around us so we can communicate effectively. And when they reach a certain point of skill development, they begin their first creative project and compose something of them-selves... We have no say in this, and this polices us to stay out of their aesthetic development.”

From Reynolds’ perspective, the point is to develop “lots of new artists with very diverse backgrounds, united only by know-how and not by aes-

COURTESY OF ANI ART ACADEMIES



“High Steaks” by Emily Garlick. Charcoal and pastel, 8 by 10 inches.

Unlike most art schools that encourage play in various media, Ani Art Academies force the stu-dent to become proficient by limiting their materials to char-coal and pastel, and then oils.

“There are a great many char-acteristics of the charcoal and pastel (the manner is which is it applied, combined, layered, manipulated, refined, etc...) that is closely akin to our wet-media material of choice—oil paint,” Waichulis wrote in a follow-up email.

The studio curriculum is divided into seven sections: introduction to drawing, gov-erning the material, anatomy of form, natural forms, introduc-tion to painting, painting tech-niques, and endgame.

“The ‘endgame’ covers every-thing from painting surface fin-ishes, to varnishes, framing, and representation dynamics (gal-leries, agents, etc...),” Waichulis explained. “We like to make sure that the artists not only have the ability to create the highest qual-ity works with the best possible presentation, but that they also have the ability to navigate the industry that these works will eventually be submitted to.”

The first major exhibition of student and instructor work from the Ani Art Academy Waichulis is being held at Rehs Contemporary Galleries at 5 East 57th St. in Manhattan until May 3. The theme of the exhibition is “The Big Gamble,” alluding to the gamble that representa-tional artists take in the contem-porary art market. Each student took the theme in a different direction.

For more information, visit [www.anartacademies.org](http://www.anartacademies.org)

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## Vienna’s Cabinet of Curiosities Reopens

BY SUSAN HALLETT

Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna is home to one of the most incredible and utterly fabu-lous collections of valuable items in the world, the result of hun-dreds of years of judicious buy-ing by Hapsburg emperors and archdukes.

On March 1, the world-class museum reopened its Kunst-kammer, or “cabinet,” of objets d’art to the public after being closed for a 10-year renovation.

A few hundred years ago, col-lecting was the fashion among princes, the nobility, and the wealthy. Glass-encased cabinet-s full of treasures graced many homes around the world and still do.

Collecting such treasures goes back a long way. The Roman Emperor Augustus had houses “embellished not only with statues and pictures but also with objects which were curious by reason of their age or rarity,” according to Suetonius, who died in A.D. 122.

Russia has a Kunstkammer as well, established by Peter the Great and completed in 1727. But Peter the Great was interested in natural history, and his collec-tion has some pretty macabre items, such as a skeleton of Sia-mese twins. The Viennese Kunst-kammer should not be confused with the Russian one.

Not to be outdone by the Vien-nese or the Russians, in 1723 Augustus the Strong founded what is known as the Green Vault, a treasure house of pre-cious items on view in Dresden, Germany.

The Historic Green Vault, restored after the war, is famous for its treasure chamber, known as the Green Vault because of

what was once the malachite-colored paint used on the col-umns and decorative capitals in the viewing rooms. There are two rooms that hold what is cer-tainly the largest collection of treasures in Europe.

However, from my experience, there are no treasures as beauti-ful or as finely crafted as those in Vienna.

I will never forget the first time I saw the Cellini Salt Cel-lar (called the Saliera in Vienna), crafted by Benvenuto Cellini in the mid-16th century. It is prob-ably the most exquisite objet d’art I’ve ever laid eyes on. I look forward to seeing it again in the newly renovated and enhanced rooms of the Kunsthistorisches Museum, along with some of the other fabulous items—and there are over 2,200 of them.

This collection, although not the largest, is certainly the most important of its kind. It evolved from Hapsburg treasures that

were assembled during the Mid-dle Ages, the Renaissance, and the Baroque. The task of this col-lection is to transmit knowledge as well as amaze all who see it as a fascinating dip into the realm of fantasy, imagination, and enchantment.

The collection is ready to engage visitors with curiosities, legendary creatures such as the unicorn, incredible autom-ations and rare scientific instru-ments, and statues and orna-ments of magical splendor and undreamed-of beauty.

*Advance tickets are necessary and may be obtained by visit-ing [www.khm.at/en](http://www.khm.at/en).*

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COURTESY KUNSTHISTORISCHES MUSEUM, WIEN



Hunting Bear (1580–1581), wearing rubies, pearls, and emeralds and hoisting a golden gun.