

### A New Research Assistant

Some people have to be dragged kicking and screaming into the future! So was my experience in the late 1980's when my job as a graphic designer went from the drafting table to the computer, and subsequently in the 2000's when I was encouraged to try Facebook as a social media solution to getting my artwork seen by more people. In the first case, after a hellish on-job introduction to digital technology, computer layout and design applications, plus unfortunately, a stress prescription for Prozac... the computer became my generally reliable but somewhat unstable friend. In the latter case, I eventually made the decision to end my experiment with Facebook as a waste of time; more intrusive and transitory than helpful.

Today, social media and the apps available on a smart phone or my computer seem unbelievable... literally millions of little icons, each representing someone's great idea to help or entertain anyone with a need. Just looking through the app store on my mac in hopes of finding something I can substitute for an "out of date application" is a needle in a haystack exercise. However, although searching for specific information on the computer can be frustrating without a keyword or name, it sure beats the limited information culled from a set of encyclopedias, or library books, that I used for research in the "old days".

Lately, as my life returns to normalcy after some bitter months of family tragedy, I have made another leap into the future at the suggestion of my friend and painting guru, Peter Roos. While sitting in on his oil painting class at Keene State, he suggested trying an app that most young people are aware of already. It could be added to my iPhone and/or computer and used as a source for pictorial information that might prove useful to my specific needs as an artist. Unlike browsing the web for pictures of or by a particular artist, **Pinterest** provides a means to involve others who are interested in the same subject, and can connect them to you, unlike Facebook, through related pictures or sources only. You can then select from those that come to you, and create a *private or public* bulletin board to "Pin" them to. The beauty of this is that you can build a very specific personal "board" of images that support your work in process or provide inspiration or technical reinforcement.

Below in my expanded newsletter I have copied of a number of small sections from interesting "Pins" I found when searching for *Contemporary Drawings & Paintings*. Each choice I made connects to related works by artists all over the world... and therefore more resources than I could have thought to search for.

At this time I watch three boards that I share with the Pinterest community: *Contemporary Drawings and Paintings*, *Artists Reference*, and *Art Reference Drawings* plus three that I keep to myself. There are many ways to set up these boards for use. From my *Artists Reference* board to the right is a pin I found worth studying because it gave me closeups of a Rembrandt self-portrait in all it's painterly & abstract glory! (Interesting because I have been exploring oil painting anew, in past months).

In the pins below, I selected some other portrait paintings that are more contemporary. Below that... some contemporary drawings.

The image displays a Pinterest board titled "Contemporary Drawings & ..." by Bruce Blanchette. The board is filled with various contemporary artworks, including portraits and drawings. The artworks are arranged in a grid-like fashion, with some overlapping. The background is a light yellow color. On the right side, there is a vertical strip of four Rembrandt self-portraits. The bottom of the page features a URL: [www.bruceblanchette.com](http://www.bruceblanchette.com).