

<http://www.examiner.com/examiner/x-39247-DC-Art-Scene-Examiner~y2010m2d23-Touchstone-Gallery-of-Washington-DC-to-open-at-a-new-location-and-new-members>

Touchstone Gallery of Washington DC to open at a new location and new members

February 23, 9:05 PM - [DC Art Scene Examiner](#) - Nataliya Andreyeva

After involuntarily closing in late 2009, [Touchstone](#) – an artist-owned gallery with a thirty plus year history in the District - is ready to re-open at a new location at 901 NY Avenue N.W., in the heart of Chinatown (between the [Museum of Women in the Arts](#); the [Convention Center](#), and the new [Longview Gallery](#)).

During transition, Touchstone has conducted several art juries to attract new members, culminating in a February 20 jury, the third call for new members before their grand opening this summer.

I spoke to Touchstone Secretary and member [Rosemary Luckett](#) about the jury process and the gallery's future:



Is the Gallery driven to find new talent in any specific media?

No, rather than looking for specific types of art, we are always on the lookout for contemporary art expressions from both young and experienced artists living in the metro and outlying areas.

Despite economic challenges, it looks like the Gallery has preserved its solid membership. Is there a number of new members you are looking to fill?

Touchstone needs a lot of energetic hands on deck to assist with launching promotional activities, installing exhibitions, hosting special events, designing invitations, and contributing monthly dues. The transition from one space to another has been a challenge for us.



Do you plan to have another jury soon? Will it be any different from the first one?

This jury on Saturday Feb. 20 was about the third round; while the first two juries made use of digital imagery, we prefer to see actual work. So much more can be understood when you actually stand in front of the piece and respond to it. The size, actual colors, textures and

medium are much clearer. And since several of us are looking at the same time, we can discuss the artwork, tap into the expertise of fellow members in different media, bounce ideas around and come to a clearer understanding of what submitted pieces are about.

That afternoon, I witnessed artwork of about eight local artists who brought their framed landscapes and abstracts, oversized linen canvases and paper mache miniature sculptures. Gale Wallar – a practicing and exhibiting artist with 20 plus years of experience from Virginia, and [Ramon Matheu](#), a Maryland based pop artist, were among those under review. Both of them expected only the best outcome – new membership with Touchstone.



Matheu shared some of his impressions with me:

What has motivated you to submit your artwork for jury at Touchstone?

I really like DC! The political pulse, big business and cultural diversity that this city perpetuates is unlike any place else in this country or the world. I think Touchstone did a fantastic job of selecting their new location!

Would you say the state of the economy today is affecting you as a practicing artist?

Yes. I don't have any formal gallery representation, so I depend on a few shows, art league memberships and my website for most of my marketing. I have only been trying to sell my fine art for about 2 years and feel that I never had a very good start with the economy doing so poorly.

Touchstone, like any other gallery, has its own and specific screening requirements: quality and consistency of artwork, artistic resume, uniqueness. The gallery has received an overwhelming response for membership this year but who will get selected will be known soon based on the majority vote of member owners.

Until then, the work of artists like Matheu and Wallar can be seen at [The Art League](#), Old Town Alexandria, VA.

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