



Dahlia Society of California Newsletter



NEXT MEETING

NOVICE ONLY MINI SHOW!!! Bring your blooms and whatever you have to stage them in. Bring official entry forms (or fill them out at our meeting). We want you to know the name, section and class. All categories will be available; AA, A, B, BB, and Min will be amalgamated—no differentiation between A FD and A SC for example, ST, WL, AN, BA, MBA, P, S, COL, O, OQ, MS, PE, NXO, NX. Please submit no more than 2 entries per class. X3 and X5 encouraged! Ca\$h prize\$. You are encouraged to arrive by 7 to be able to stage all your dahlias. (I will bring one case of containers for use but you are encouraged to make some of your own.) We will try for accompanying zoom. Meeting will begin at 7:30.

DRESS REHEARSAL: THE SHOW BEFORE THE SHOW



Deborah hauled in 3 cases of vases, 4 boxes of blooms, and 8 Classification Books. Because we had not held a show for the 3 pandemic years, people needed a reminder on how to read a Show Schedule and how to fill out entry forms. Deborah explained that most dahlias are shown as singles, triples or x5. These would be labeled Section A, Section B and Section C

respectively. Each participant was encouraged to choose a bloom,



match it with an appropriate container, fill out an entry form and place it correctly on the show table.

Deborah stressed “heavy and shallow” when buying containers. Pin frogs can be purchased on line, at craft stores or at the Japanese Hardware store in Japan town.

Aquarium cement permanently affixes the frogs to the containers and holds strong under water. A few brave



souls like Andrea and Sarah staged x3 and x5. Much trickier than it looks. It also takes LONGER to do all this than one would think. Deborah then enticed the group with prize Section G, F and K

including: variegated dahlia, bi-color dahlia, orange dahlia, floating waterlily, dahlia introduced by Washington hybridizer, and especially to be on the lookout for a “nature’s oddity.”

DEBUT: DSC DRAGGED INTO 21ST CENTURY!



A major first for DSC: Laura and Sarah simulcasted our entire meeting via zoom! We were so happy so many people were able to participate remotely. Sarah, Laura and Erik used their laptops to catch some of the mayhem of 20 people dashing around nabbing blooms, shifting through possible containers, finding water and paging through Classification Books. Bedlam! So inspired, Meridith picked several of her own blooms the next

morning and staged them. Thank you, Meridith, for this wonderful encouragement for us to further zoom our meetings!



YOU BE THE JUDGE



Because of the 3-year Covid pall, we face a dearth of competent competition judges. Moreover, ADS used this pandemic break to revise



several parameters. For example, FORM is now worth 30 points and color

only 20 points out of 100. HUGE.



Form is one third more important than even color. Lou painstakingly plucked petals and explained how closely each fit the platonic ideal of form. Nature does not think in our forms; nature thinks in terms of propagation. So not every dahlia falls exactly into DSC definitions.

Formal Decoratives slide into Balls. Formal Decoratives can also veer towards Stellar. Ed debuted his new seedling which



combines colorette and anemone forms. Very unique. Porcelain poorly fits the waterlily perscriptives; but she's so gorgeous, we grow her and win with





her nevertheless. When does yellow become bronze or orange? Color chips (in the color notebook, wrapped tightly and stored in a dark spot to prevent fading) include MORE than 12 colors of white! Lou used great examples to differentiate amongst Bi-colors, two-tones, dark blends and light blends. Warren Vigor explained how things are done DownUnder. In Australia dahlias are exhibited without leaves. Lou's parting words, "The center is the first thing I look for when cutting for a show."

Our venue, a long narrow room alongside the parking lot, afforded many open doors on the outside and 3 inside to maximize air circulation. Everyone except our speaker wore masks. Tables were taken outside for lunch. What splendid hospitality. Lots of fruit for morning snacks and great pizza and salads for lunch.

Members from Dahlia Society of California, Monterey Dahlia Society, South Coast (San Louis Obispo and environs) and, of course, San Leandro Dahlia Society participated.



LADIES LUNCHING AGAIN

The same crew who exhumed the 20-year mega-clump of Red Velvet in the spring, reconvened to celebrate Lucy's spectacular tiered garden under Sutro Tower. What a glorious collection of fuchsias so big they must have been on steroids and fantastic spilling magenta bougainvillea! And Lucy's dahlias! Wow. Ivanetti loomed 7' with 25+ blooms. Fusion out blazed the sun. A massive hedge of Ova Jo, Mary's Jomanda, and Candy Corn



threatened to overwhelm her exquisite Irish Black Hearts. Karen, Sarah, and Jenn promised to return



next March to help Deborah field dress them all.



(Field dressing: removing half or more of a clump and leaving the rest intact in the ground to grow for a second season.)
Bon Appetite!





FIRST IMPRESSIONS: SLDS INAUGURATES SHOW SEASON

San Leandro hosted our first show of the year at Lakeside Park in Oakland. So great to see growers from all over California. Masks were worn except during delicious lunch. Because she could not drive into the Dell, Deborah had to take wagon loads from the Dell to her car. Back and forth. Also, she had to get her cut blooms immediately in water, so she would walk every 2 or 3 snipped





selections directly to her waiting water. When she finally closed her door with 4 tubs of contestants, she noted that she'd spent 3 hours and trugged 3.5 miles! Conversely, Chris and Curtis grew in Lake Merrit Gardens, right out the door from the show. John M set up a lovely example of every form with an understandable



definition for the public. Great idea! Many people tried their hands at



arrangements including Qamrun's wonderful red presentation. Louise artfully constructed her winning Old Fashioned Bouquet in the



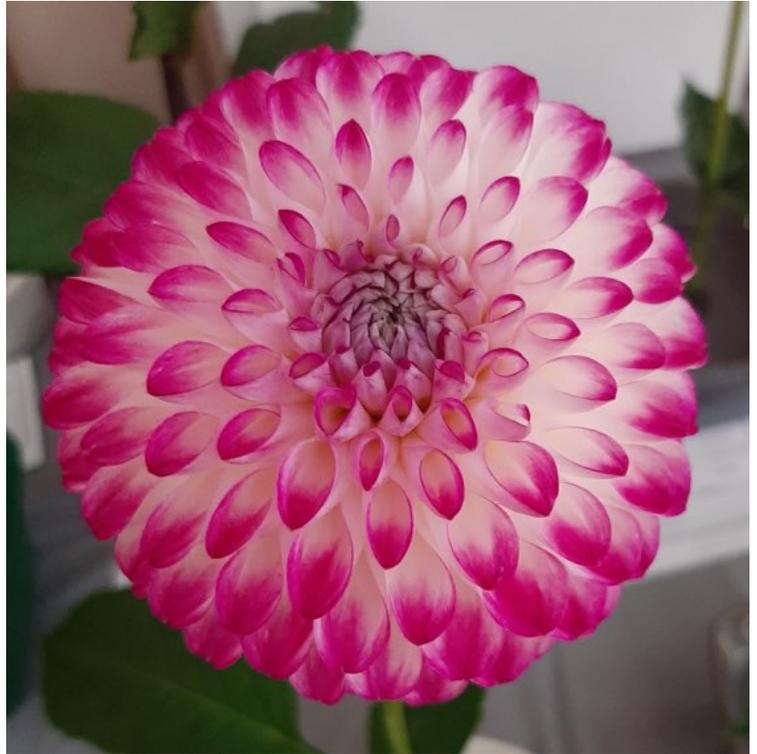
perfectly matching old fashioned vase. Kristi and Ginger computed all day, tabulating results and tinkering with a new program Kristi devised to make compiling all the wins a little simpler and a whole lot faster and more accurate. Thank You! In an unusual progression, Deborah's Best Variegated, Rolf, went on to compete for Best Large Bloom, only to be petaled out by Lou's exquisite Best Open Centered, Verrone's Morning Star triumphing as Best in Show.



Sunday afternoon, Lou conducted a seedling evaluation class in Curtis and Chris's outdoor sections.



NEW AND COOL



The first show of the year delighted with several striking new



blooms. Iris staged her fiery Sol Rise, 3012, which defies



adequate photography. It's petal precision stuns as much as its autumnal colors. What a vision of dainty magenta and pink danced Iris's new seedling, 4010. Both Iris and Kristine exhibited KA's

Grandma Syb, 3005, exhibiting that musky color KA's are prized for. And what a soft delicate pink like the nacre inside a shell, 20th Ave Memory, 6004, won for Kristine. Tossing subtly aside, Kristine's and Curtis's Debs Jowey Hubert, blazed orange with yellow picote.



The Hart's Mak's Kaleidoscope, 2213, caught many eyes. Almost eliminated due to lack of provenance papers, Patricia's amazing Copper Boy, 6111, looking metallic rather than botanical, ascended to Best Novice Bloom.

SURPRISING OLDIES BUT GOODIES

Luscious velvet red density: Sheval Megan, 3007. Julie's triple just nailed us in our tracks. Dr. Karl, 3204, by Iris, needs to be grown by more people. Likewise, Lou's Pink Paradise, 4005; what a sweet MFD. What are we to do with Seabeck's



Hilda, a large steller that looks like a parisian millner's silk



confection. Deep purple substance, mad disarray —like an informal stellar defying category and photography but causing deep envy and covetousness. KA's Papa John certainly lived up to his expensive reputation.

HOW DOES YOUR GARDEN GROW?

Brigid says her Emory Paul is as tall as she is! Wow. Deborah and Steve cruised by Soc's Twin Peaks dahlia garden. Soc prefers the AA's and A's and B's. He grows them in the framework of neatly patterned hedges. There is still a garden at our past VP's home.





Frank Schulkin begs off our meetings because of mobility issues, but says he would love calls from his dahlia friends.

DELL DOINGS

Wolfe Lane Kevin E massive Emory Paul Christine and Karen monster, too. the way from deadhead and Cynthia's new So aghast at the mildew, Phil brought and de-flocked Such a difference.



checked out and Maki. In fact, posed with the pink Christine came all Sacramento to disbud. Her sister favorite form: pom. encroachment of his electric sprayer Deborah's section. His Scott electric

sprayer was so effortless. It should be

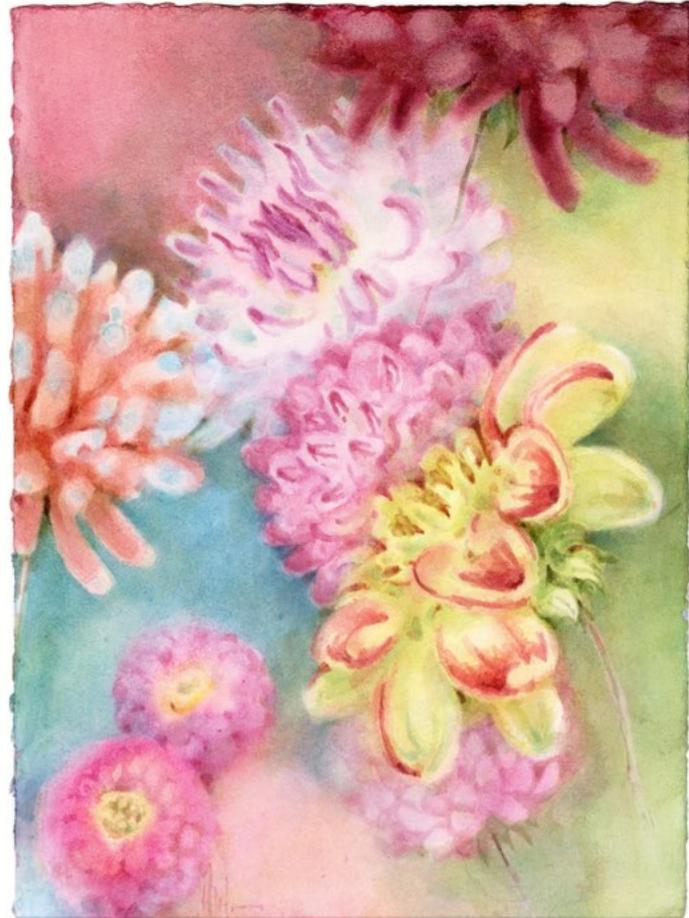




on everyone's holiday wish



list.
Kevin W spent a fleeting



Residency Taiwan: San Francisco Dahlia Dell, Dahlias
Día de la Dalía, 2022



couple hours in the Dell enroute to Taipei resulting in another great watercolor. Michi surprised us with a 2023 Calendar from John Erve which features all Dell beauties. Our SF firefighters practiced maneuvers one Wednesday morning. Thanks to Andrea for disbudding and clearing cruddy leaves. Sarah proudly showed her abundance of Eden Louises. Irish Black Heart and Ketchup and Mustard utterly beguiled Steve. Jenn deadheaded and disbuddded Erik's section before descending into the teardrop to discipline sagging dahlias. Joe joined us on Saturday to tidy up his center isle. Our accordion player serenaded us for



half an hour—AGAIN.

SAN FRANCISCO'S AMAZING FLORIBUNDA!

Our amazingly successful show will live in full color in October's newsletter. But here is an overview to tide us over until then. Please send your favorite pix of our show to dahlia.dietz@gmail.com



SUMPTUOUS SEPTEMBER

Our shows are over and we can simply enjoy the glorious denouement of our garden's color rhapsody. As the days get shorter and our dahlias receive less sun, blooms will grow smaller and take more time to develop. Instead of just disbudding the two wee budlets next to my main flower, I often double disbud, that is, I take out the two sprouts below my main (apical) flower as well. This pumps a little more energy into that single bloom. Also, time to stop fertilizing. The folk wisdom is that fertilizer in the final months of bloom produces poor tubers. Depending on weather, I also cut back on watering. Watch your plants. As long as they are turgid—erect—then they don't need any water. Wait until they just start to wilt, then water them. Aggressively cut back to major new growth when deadheading. A few strong stems are better than many scrawny disappointments. If you do this correctly, you will have Halloween dahlias—or even a Thanksgiving bouquet!

At the Dell, we've been clearing "rags," the old black limp leaves at the bottom of the stalks. This increases air circulation. I'm also snipping off the low branches that soon grow too heavy and break off on their own in a destructive way. These just sap energy from your clump that needs all the energy it can get right now. You might try popping a couple sections of these low branches into a 4x4" pot and placing them under 18 hour lights as a leg up on next season.

ROGUE!!! If you have 2 or more of the same variety, decide which is better. Mark it NOW. This is the one you will want to continue to grow in YOUR garden. Lou usually grows 4-6 of his favorites and regrows each year the Best of his Best. NOW is the time to decide who will make a return appearance in your garden arena next season. I mark this on my label. I also mark S if I'm donating that clump of tubers to our DSC tuber sale. Did you have some unnamed varieties? Have they been good enough to share with your fellow dahlianeers? Remember, we have the bargain

basement \$2 orphan tuber bin for unnamed beauties. Lastly, if you still have a crummy, scraggly, unhappy dahlia clump, it's time to toss it. Do NOT compost it. Just toss it straight into the trash, lest it be virused or diseased. Check that the name and the bloom match each other. Use the ADS Classification Book or go online to confirm. Thedahliaaddict or the ADS website will help. Remember our guru Lou's admonition: a dahlia without a name is just a weed.

Last chance to visit other gardens and invite fellow growers to yours. Find out how other people label their beauties, how do they control water, how do they support their plants, protect them, deal with mildew? I always come away with new ideas and of course, additions to my 2023 Wish List. Share! a single dahlia changes the atmosphere in the room. Everyone responds to beauty.

Yours in dirt,
Deborah

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