WFWPI Virtual Café Introduces Oil Painting for Creativity and Inner Peace

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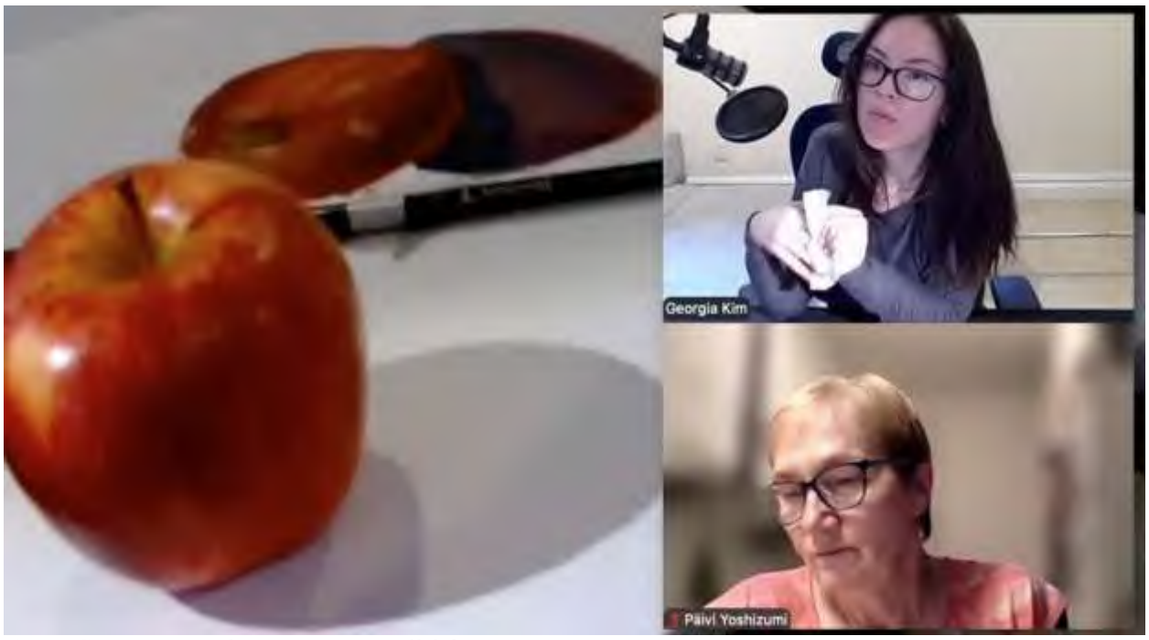

Artist Georgia Kim demonstrating still-life painting.

What can one apple, five colors, and an hour of shared creativity teach us about peace?

On July 31, 2026, WFWPI welcomed 27 participants to "Oil Painting: Start Here," the latest session of the WFWPI Virtual Café: Creative Skills Edition. Led by New Jersey-based artist and educator Georgia-Li Kim, the online workshop transformed an ordinary object into an invitation to observe more carefully, try something unfamiliar, and find one's own creative voice.

The session reflected the spirit of the Virtual Café: making learning approachable while creating space for women to connect across countries, generations, and levels of experience. Some joined with painting supplies ready; others came simply to watch and learn.

Georgia is a self-taught artist and teacher of students in grades 5 through 12. She began by removing one of the biggest barriers to creativity: the belief that we must already be talented before we begin. She introduced a small foundation of materials and showed how a limited palette can produce a remarkable range of tones.

Her central message was to learn the basic principles, then allow yourself to experiment. Participants explored color mixing, light and shadow, brush direction, glazing, scumbling, and impasto. Technique was never presented as an end in itself.

The deeper goal was to help each person move from copying what they see toward interpreting it in a way that feels personal. "After you learn how to paint, it's finding your own voice," Georgia explained. That idea became the quiet thread running through the workshop.

For the live demonstration, Georgia chose a single apple, beginning with its simplest structure before gradually building its form through shadow, reflected light, warmer reds, softer yellows, and touches of green. Participants saw that a convincing image does not appear all at once, but emerges through patient layering, careful observation, and a willingness to adjust.

Georgia openly reconsidered some of her choices, including the color of a shadow, reminding participants that painting is learned through practice and that imperfection is a natural part of the creative process: "Start simply, step back often, be patient, and keep going."

This encouraging approach inspired several participants to follow the demonstration using materials they had at home and proudly share their completed work on screen. For some, it was their first experience painting with oils and the first-ever art lesson, transforming a small online workshop into a meaningful moment of discovery and achievement.

WFWP's work is grounded in the conviction that peace grows through empowered individuals, healthy relationships, and communities where people feel seen and able to contribute. Creative education supports

that work in a deeply human way.

Art invites us to slow down and notice. It gives people a language for experiences that may be difficult to express in words. It can restore calm, strengthen confidence, and create connection among people whose backgrounds may be very different. For women balancing leadership, work, family, and service, even a short creative pause can renew the inner resources needed to care, communicate, and lead with empathy.

The workshop also modeled an important form of empowerment: knowledge shared generously. An artist offered what she had learned; participants brought curiosity and courage; the group created an atmosphere in which a first attempt could be celebrated. This is how capacity grows - not only through formal instruction, but through relationships that make people feel safe enough to try.

The Virtual Café is more than a skills program. It is a global meeting place where practical learning becomes a bridge between women. It reminds us that peacebuilding is not limited to conferences or public initiatives. It also happens in everyday spaces, when someone discovers her voice, when another person encourages it, and when creativity helps a community see possibility together.

By the end of the session, the apple on the screen had become more than a painting exercise. It represented a simple but powerful truth: meaningful growth often begins with what is already in front of us. Through the WFWPI Virtual Café, those small elements came together to create connection, confidence, and inspiration across borders one brushstroke at a time.

Artist Georgia Kim demonstrating still-life painting.