

# Inside the Zlamany Studio: A Photo Essay by Robert Banat

[David Cohen](#)

Pictures within pictures, measure for measure. An artist bares herself to another who, in turn, exposes her working process to a critic who is caught in the act of drawing by a photographer who spies himself in a mirror. It is Robert Banat's shoot. His friend Marie Peter-Toltz, who recently staged a solo show of paintings in Australia, is the model, soon to be #193 in the project, *A Watercolor Portrait a Day*, of artist Brenda Zlamany, in whose studio this drama unfolds. David Cohen, perched above the two women, is sketching artist and model and photographer. Zlamany peers through a camera lucida, to which instrument David Hockney introduced her. Peter-Toltz returns her an equally crystalline gaze. Cohen holds out his pencil and squints – adjusting the built-in view finder, so to speak – struggling to include a glimpse in the distance of Zlamany's fast progressing commission for Yale: a group portrait of the Ivy League school's first graduating class of female students, a picture with a telescope at its center. Looking towards and from an opposite direction, Banat catches Zlamany's portrait of Chuck Close peeking over Cohen's shoulder. Optics ricochet around the room. *Las Meninas* meets Jeff Wall meets Escher. A camera full of cameras.







Photographs (c) Robert Banat, 2015



Brenda Zlamany, A Watercolor Portrait a Day, #193 – with Marie Peter-Toltz. Photo: Brenda Zlamany

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