

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:



"Reservoir of Peace" Photo by Lori Larks

2025! What a year that was! For those of us who grew up in the "Kennedy Era," we could not have imagined an even greater time of turmoil and strife. Yet, as with artists of that time and throughout the ages, visual and performing artists have fearlessly stepped up to critique and respond in counterpoint to all the noise and confusion we are now facing. Indeed, 2025 has gifted us with artists who inspire, widen the lens and who, thankfully, also provide us with refuge and solace. In my own effort to counter all the news that 'shouts' at us daily, I would like to give a huge 'shout out' to all the folks at LAA who work to keep the wheels on this big, beautiful bus moving forward.

Despite it all, or perhaps because of it all, 2025 was a banner year for LAA. Major kudos and thanks go out to **Ruth Stanton**, VP of Exhibitions, whose gargantuan efforts allowed LAA to successfully sponsor *nine* well attended shows! With the help of **Karen Thapa**, who manages the seasonal Papillon Gallery exhibits, (and who Judged the City Hall show), **Chelsea Pickslay**, who managed the 2025 member show at Main Street Arts, and

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Marilou Correia, who curated the City Hall show, Ruth was able to coordinate and implement all the shows she had planned for LAA last year.

Due to all the collective, collaborative efforts Stanton coordinated, LAA's partner and affiliated

galleries welcomed member artwork into a variety of shows in 2025. Papillon Café in Lafayette (managed by Karen Thapa) hosted four seasonal themed shows in 2025 and will continue to do so for 2026. Main Street Arts hosted "Picture This," John Muir Pavilion hosted "Wellness and Wellbeing," aRt Cottage hosted "the Neighborhood," Moraga Art Gallery hosted "Winter Lights," and most recently, San Ramon City Hall Gallery hosted LAA's "In the Mix" member show.

Behind the scenes of each show is **Mark Coffey** who designs the postcards, promotes and judges art contests for the young artists of Lamorinda and serves as vital support in many other areas of LAA's operations. Then, there is **Jennifer Granat** who keeps members informed of LAA activities and events such as calls for art, LAA exhibits, tours and educational opportunities, and who publishes LAA's bi-monthly newsletter. **Samantha McNally**, our tireless webmaster, keeps the LAA website up to date, informative and user friendly. Many thanks go out to these three amazing, magical LAA "elves!"

In addition, ever so many thanks go to LAA's cordial outreach coordinator, **Sharon Tama**, who arranged several engaging tours for LAA members last year. The first was a delightful tour of the Mary Cassatt exhibit at the SF Legion of Honor, then a tour of the Sonoma based di Rosa Center for Contemporary Art where members appreciated the vibrant and dynamic works by Frances McCormack, the featured artist, and this last fall, members enjoyed a tour of Bedford Gallery's, thought provoking exhibit "Observations of a Still Life" that included works by 22 spectacular artists.

Thanks for sure go out to LAA's Membership Coordinator, **Marian Harris**, who warmly welcomes new members, several of whom were added just last year to LAA's diverse and vibrant community of artists. It is no small task to organize and keep track of such a large number of members!

Last, but most certainly not least, shout outs and thanks to LAA treasurer, **Cynthia Whitchurch**, who ensures that we are fiscally sound, a critical function of any non-profit, to **Helen Chu**

Hirschberg, our secretary, who keeps meticulous records of meetings and other goings on, and of course, to **Donna Arganbright**, now member at large, who continues to provide her leadership, experience and connections for our larger East Bay arts community-none of this would be possible without you!

Finally, sincerest thanks go to all **LAA artists and supporting members** for providing the inspiration, hope, and creativity that nourishes not only this arts organization but our souls as well. May this year bring peace, good health, and greater connection through art!

-Lori Larks

"FOUR AMAZING ARTISTS" NOW SHOWING AT ART COTTAGE



The best little Gallery in Concord, (Best of the East Bay 2021 & 2023!), aRt Cottage, is currently featuring "Four Amazing Artists" from January 7th to February 10th with an **opening reception to be held on January 10th from 2 - 4 pm**. This new exhibit features paintings by our own LAA president Lori Larks along with Timothy Aguino, Lee Von Rackel and Thomas Freeman. For more information regarding this show, aRt Cottage and the featured artists, please visit <https://artscottage.blogspot.com/>

"LET THE LIGHT IN" NOW SHOWING AT MORAGA ART GALLERY



"The Uni and Womb" by Irene Needoba

Located at 432 Center Street in the Rheem Valley Shopping Center, Moraga Art Gallery is hosting a new exhibit for the New Year, "Let the Light In."

On view from January 7th until March 15th, artwork will fill the gallery's elegant space with an enticing display of creativity, featuring landscape paintings by two member artists -- Irene Needoba and Elizabeth Kennen -- each gifted with unique and thoughtful visions of the natural world.

The exhibit also contains striking creations by a score of gallery members and guest artists, including painters, ceramicists, printmakers, wood workers, jewelry makers and more, including a celebrated guest artist, photographer Edgar Tumbaga, whose camera captures nature's wonders in jaw-dropping color.



"Asilomar Beach Pathway" by Elizabeth Kennen

SAVE THE DATE : On Saturday, January 17th from 5:00 to 7:00 pm the gallery will host a free reception for the public to view the exhibit, meet the artists and chat with fellow art lovers while enjoying light snacks, wine, and congenial live music.

The gallery is open Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5:00 pm. For more information visit moragaartgallery.com or call (925)376-5407.

AN INSPIRING EXHIBIT AT THE SAN RAMON CITY HALL GALLERY

LAA's exhibit, "In the Mix, came to a close on December 18 at The Gallery at City Hall, San Ramon.



Marian Harris with Karen Thapa with guest

It was a wonderful show filled with lots of interesting artwork covering themes like past and present, dream and reality, realism and abstraction, and techniques including the mixing of mediums and artistic styles.

Decorated for the holidays, the reception was held in the beautifully uplifting and grand-scale rotunda space adjacent to the artwork. It was a festive evening with everyone feeling relaxed, enjoying the artwork and the company of each other.



Grand Rotunda reception at the San Ramon City Hall Gallery

I want to extend my thanks to The City of San Ramon for hosting the Lamorinda Arts Alliance. A big thank you to Karen Baden Thapa who juried the show, to Mary Lou Correia who curated the show, as well as the various volunteers needed to install and de-install the show. It was successful team effort.

Participating Artists: Donna Arganbright, Karen Baden Thapa, Annette Laurel Batchelor, Flora Baumann, Alys Briggs, Marylou Correia, Sarah Gopher, Marian Sims Harris, Elizabeth Kennen, Nora Krauss, Jan Lainoff, Deborah Lee, Ruth McMillin, Samantha McNally, Connie Millholland, Anne Morrison Rabe, Maria Reyes, Jan St Onge, Ruth Stanton, Charlene Steen, Sharon Tama, Rosemary Therkelsen, Linda Yoshizawa, Beth Zelinski

PORTRAIT ARTIST LORRAINE CURTIS NOW SHOWING AT MAIN STREET ARTS



"Sometimes" by Lorraine Curtis

Main Street Arts Gallery, home to 12 local artists, is excited to welcome guest artist **Lorraine Curtis** to kick off 2026. Curtis, a portrait artist with more than 20 years of experience as a teaching artist, fine artist, graphic designer, and illustrator, brings a deep passion for capturing the human spirit in her work.

Her series of paintings, titled *Beautiful People*, will be featured at the gallery through the end of February. Curtis explains, "Portraits tell a story, hold memories, and share the truth that is in a person's eyes. My love of music motivates me to ask, *What is your favorite song and lyric?* The answer becomes part of the portrait." All of the paintings in the exhibition incorporate hand-written lyrics.

Now approaching its tenth year in downtown Martinez, Main Street Arts Gallery continues to be a welcoming destination for art lovers and

collectors. Founded in 2016, Main Street Arts Gallery is a cooperative gallery in downtown Martinez featuring twelve local artists. The cooperative is dedicated to promoting creativity, supporting local artists, and engaging the community through exhibitions, events, and educational programs.

Learn more at www.mainstreetarts.net

Main Street Arts is located at 613 Main Street, Martinez, CA 94553

Open Wednesday-Saturday 11-4, Sunday 10-3 and Martinez First Fridays 6-9

LAA EXHIBIT SCHEDULE FOR 2026

Below is a list of scheduled LAA member exhibits for 2026:

2026 LAA MEMBER SHOW at Moraga Art Gallery

Theme: There is no theme for the exhibit

Exhibit Dates: March 18 – May 31

Entry Period: January 3 – 15, 2026

Reception: TBD

2026 LAA MEMBER SHOW AT Marilyn Citron O'Rourke Gallery, Benicia Library

Theme: "Close Encounters"

Exhibit Timeframe: June 30 – July 28

Entry Period: April

Reception: July 18

2025 LAA MEMBER Quarterly SHOWS AT Papillon Café Gallery

January – April: "Wintertime"

April – July: "Spring into Summer"

July – October: "People & Places"

October to January 2026: Theme TBA

2026 LAA MEMBER SHOW AT aRt Cottage

Theme: TBD

Exhibit Timeframe: TBD

Entry Period: TBD

This information will reside on LAA's website under the Exhibitions tab and will be updated as more information is available.

"WHAT A SURPRISE!" BY CAROL JENKINS



"A Tremble of Goldfinch" by Carol Jenkins

What a Surprise!

I recently read an essay by Annie Dillard about a moment in which, as she put it, the world dismantled. She was sitting next to a pond, watching the lily pads dance at her feet, when a bird caught her eye. She turned to watch its flight and in the next instant she was looking down at the pointed face of a weasel who was looking up at her. Here's how she describes it:

"Our eyes locked, and someone threw away the key. Our look was as if two lovers, or deadly enemies, met unexpectedly on an overgrown path when each had been thinking of something else: a clearing blow to the gut...a bright blow to the brain."

Many people have described the way encounters with wild creatures produce a sharp-edged sense of wonder. I will never forget the time several years ago when my dog chased a bear cub and the mother bear, nose down chased him back to me. The bear stood still, watching as I grabbed my dog and slowly backed away. Our eyes met and my heart skipped a beat. I was frightened but also

stunned by this fundamental exchange--this seeing and being seen by a wild, though clearly conscious, decision-making being. Thankfully, she decided to let us retreat. Thinking about it now, I still feel a sense of awe.

One of my favorite writers, Anthony Doerr, proclaimed in an interview, "I believe in awe." He wasn't just referring to dramatic experiences like these, but to the way a story can show us the world in a new light. I think writing, music, painting, all the arts help us cultivate this kind of receptivity. I love feeling that jolt of recognition when I come upon a word or phrase that surprises me, that opens up a sliver of reality I hadn't seen before. Music can do this too, stirring feelings I forgot I had. And the way light emanates from a painting always quickens my heart, reminding me to look more closely at everything around me. George Saunders calls this experience being "pleasantly stunned."

I've been thinking a lot about what it means to be moved, to be surprised, to be pleasantly stunned. I think we all have this capacity, but to strengthen it we have to be less self-protective, less certain, more porous. Most of us share a powerful human urge to seek order and security. We move away from uncertainty even if it means giving up a little of our own creativity, some part of our own agency. In very troubled times, we are tempted to turn toward any kind of order, even the most rigid, destructive kind. Maybe the willingness to occasionally let "the world dismantle," whether sitting by a pond or reading a poem, is one antidote to this tendency. Perhaps we could think of awe, not only as a sense of wonder, but as a practice, a vow—to push back cynicism and fear of the unknown, to let in a larger slice of reality. As Doerr suggested in the title of one of his novels, we are all diminished by the light we cannot see.

In other news, I am working on a series of paintings for a two-person show at the Siskiyou Art Museum in Dunsmuir, California, May-July, 2026.

-Carol Jenkins

LORNA STROTZ IN "ABSTRACTING NATURE"



"Mountain Moonrise" by Lorna Strotz

LAA Member Lorna Strotz was accepted for the Belvedere Tiburon Library Show which opens January 15th, 2026. Her painting, titled "Mountain Moonrise" (above), was created using encaustic and cold wax on board.

This exhibit will be up until mid-March with an opening reception on Thursday, January 15th. For more information about this exhibit and Strotz' work, please visit:

<https://www.beltiblibrary.org/event?id=15454728>
<https://strotzart.com/>

CONGRATULATIONS TO LAA MEMBER LESLIE GOLDEN!



"Tracks Over Mt. Diablo" by Leslie Golden

Leslie Golden recently sold her 24" x 24" oil painting Tracks over Mt. Diablo to a private collector in Berkeley. ***Congratulations Leslie!***

Golden is currently working on two larger commissioned paintings in her Lafayette studio where she also maintains a gallery space. Golden welcomes visitors by appointment most days. Contact her via email at: Lgolden@comcast.net Or visit her website: www.LeslieGoldenArt.com

Her work is represented by the Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek: <https://valleyartgallery.org/>

MARY LOU CORREIA'S SOLO SHOW "COLORS OF JOY" COMING SOON TO VALLEY ART GALLERY

LAA member Mary Lou Correia's paintings will be featured in her solo show at Valley Art Gallery from Tuesday, January 13th – Saturday, February 21st 2026.

The gallery is located at 661 Botelho Dr. #110 in Walnut Creek, CA. There will be a reception on Saturday, January 31st from 1pm – 3pm. Correia will demonstrate her compact UGO easel for Gouache painting during the reception.

For more information about this exhibit and Correia's work, please visit: valleyartgallery.org



"Cambria" by Mary Lou Correia

LAA TOUR OF BEDFORD GALLERY'S "OBSERVATIONS OF A STILL LIFE"



LAA member tour participants with lovely familiar faces!

LAA members enjoyed an enticing and extremely informative guided tour of the Bedford Art Gallery exhibit, ***Observations of a Still Life*** on November 7th. The title of the exhibit lent itself to beautiful,

artistic interpretations in a variety of mediums of what constitutes a still life. The subject matter was creatively approached by artists some representational and some abstract with sly humor as an added element of surprise. This well-curated show was diverse, both capturing our interest and provoking comments.

Ge sure to sign up early for the next LAA member tour scheduled for Friday, February 6th 2026! Please see the following article for more details...

SAVE THE DATE:
ANOTHER LAA ART ADVENTURE
AWAITS!



Watercolor by Pat Moseuk

Join your art-loving LAA colleagues on **Friday, February 6, 2026, at 11:00 AM** as we tour the Historic Benicia Arsenal for the upcoming Arts Benicia exhibition: **California Watercolor Association 56th International Exhibition.**

Pat Moseuk, Juror of Selection, has chosen 85 paintings from 549 submissions worldwide for this very special exhibit. Artists who demonstrated "extraordinary talent and artistic vision" will have been awarded additional recognition by Awards Juror Dongfend Li.

Contact Sharon Tama, Vice-President of Outreach and Education, **to sign up for this experience by January 28, 2026.** Please send an email to twotamas@gmail.com using the subject heading "Benicia Tour." Be sure to include your name and cell phone number. Directions and parking information will be forthcoming.

This special exhibit tour is available to LAA members only. For more information regarding the Historic Benicia Arsenal and this exhibit, please visit: <https://artsbenicia.org/>

TWO LAA CALLS FOR ART ARE
NOW OPEN!

The entry period for the 2026 LAA MEMBER Exhibit AT Moraga Art Gallery is NOW OPEN

The Lamorinda Arts alliance is pleased to invite members to submit their entry for the 10-week show at Moraga Art Gallery. There is no theme for this show.

Exhibit Dates: **March 18 – May 31, 2026**

Entry Period: **January 3 – 15, 2026**

Reception: **TBD**

Registration Fee is \$20.00 for LAA members

The entry period for LAA's "Wintertime" Exhibit at Papillon Cafe is NOW OPEN

Exhibit Dates: **Thursday, January 16th, 2025 to Thursday April 9th, 2026**

Entry Period: **Monday, January 4th to Sunday January 11th, 2026**

In lieu of a reception, a **Coffee Klatch** will be held on **Saturday, January 17th 2026** 2pm at the Papillon Cafe Gallery. Please join us to discuss the current show and art in general. Everyone is welcome!

To learn more about the requirements for both shows, please go to laa4art.org to view the prospectus.

EDITOR'S NOTES

I must say, I second our new president's message concerning the vital role the arts and artists play during times such as these. Yet, for myself, 2025 was a year of practicing *not responding* or *reacting*. Rather than painting, drawing, writing, submitting or entering because I felt I should "do something," or "say something," (about what's going on, though, I did, a little), I "let it be" as it were, to practice simply *being*.

However, the one thing I did allow time for (on social media) was to follow the 19 Buddhist Monks on their "Walk for Peace." (I still follow them). Their ongoing (since October of last year) 2,300-mile pilgrimage from Texas to Washington has not only filled me with hope (along with well over half a million others, and probably more), it has also served to validate my own year-long "time out" or extended "sabbatical," if you will. "Just being" (peaceful) is a radical form of resistance to the dire circumstances we are faced with now.



"Resistance" Plaster figure by Jennifer Granat

As I write this, I'm thinking of a small plaster sculpture I created many years ago after I graduated from college. I named it "Resistance," and I've always wondered how it would look on a large-scale cast in bronze. However, when I look at it now, I don't see the need to have it reproduced on a grand scale as I once did. It's fine as it is, but still...

Thinking back on my work, and now as I move forward into the new year following the venerable Monks, I can see that every struggle really does begin with a single step but, with a step *inward*.

While ultimately, cultivating peace in the world is an "inside job," art can catapult us there, whether we like it or not. After all, no doing or being in this world is without risk or sacrifice. I'm pretty sure there is no need for (historic) examples here, but I will mention the Monk who recently lost his leg while walking for peace with his group (Sangha). Thankfully he is recovering.

That all said, I'm grateful for LAA and this diverse community of artists, for the opportunities offered (to participate in shows when I'm not busy being), and to have my voice heard both here, on the written page, and in the language of paint, graphite and charcoal, etc. Thanks in advance to our amazing new President Lori Larks who is already "knocking it out of the park," to our past president Donna Arganbright for her outstanding leadership, and to all the other board members who graciously listen as I ramble on, like now. Peace in. Peace out.

-Jennifer Granat January 8, 2025



"Peace Walk," day 68. Monks with Aloka their canine mascot!