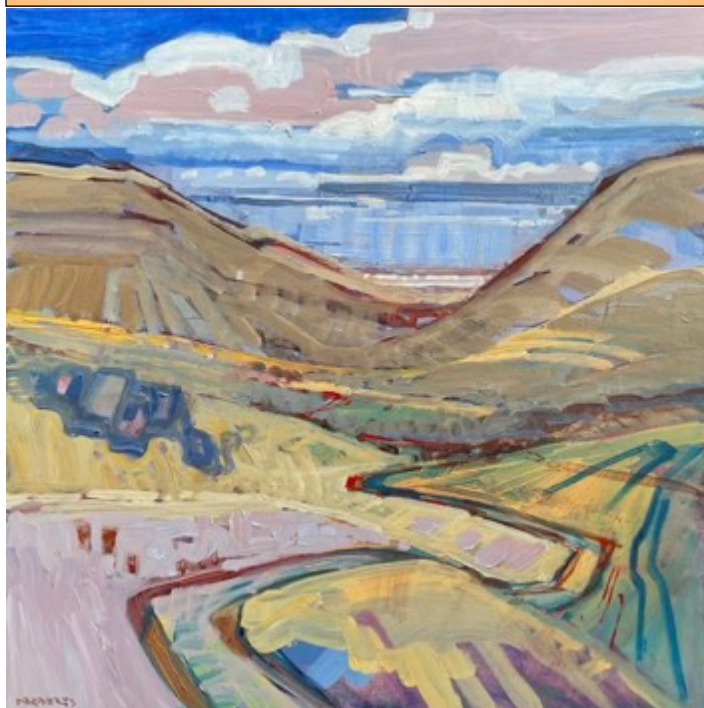


PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



"Cloud Shadows" by Nancy Roberts

In the words of Kate Wolf, "...Here in California, fruit hangs heavy on the vine, and there's no gold, thought I'd warn ya, the hills turn brown in the summertime..." Summer here brings out wide brim hats, sunscreen, careful managing of thermostats, traveling, and numerous art shows and opportunities. Oh, if it were only so easy... lately, we are witness to and affected by unbearable devastation due to natural disasters both here in the US and abroad, and by unfathomable wanton destruction of environments, due to war, political aggression by our own government and other nations' governments against families, civil rights, human rights, and alliances. It's impossible to ignore and I believe it is our responsibility to do whatever we can in our own lives, to affirm the values we hold dear, and to take seriously our role as stewards and to find ways to give and contribute.

We live in a world where we are constantly on the receiving end of so much information and 'news' that it can be stifling. As artists we rely on all our senses. It's challenging to stay informed and not have the news sap us! Personally, I try to carve out a space where I can experience a quiet peace, and both art and nature help me to do that. I do so enjoy those golden rollin' hills and my tilly hat on a bright sunny day and being out with friends painting or seeing the wonderful art being created in our community. I want to thank each of you for continuing to show up, to the creative spirit you bring and share, and to the work you all are doing to make this a better world.

-Lori Larks, LAA President

IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.....	1
"CLOSE ENCOUNTERS" AT MARILYN CITRON O'ROURKE ART GALLERY.....	2
"WHISPER OF COLOR" AT SAN RAMON CITY HALL GALLERY.....	2
JULY & AUGUST AT MAIN STREET ARTS.....	3
LAA VISIT TO HESS PERSSON ESTATES ART GALLERY.....	4
LAA'S MARK COFFEE PUBLISHES ILLUSTRATED CHILDREN'S BOOK!.....	4-5
"COASTAL WATERS" FEATURING LAA'S SAMANTHA McNALLY.....	5-6
WENDA PYMAN WITH OAA AT ORINDA LIBRARY GALLERY.....	6
LAA MEMBER LESLIE GOLDEN: NEWS AND EVENTS.....	6
"WHAT DO YOU PREFER" BY CAROL JENKINS.....	7-8
EDITOR'S NOTES.....	8

"CLOSE ENCOUNTERS" AT MARILYN CITRON O'ROURKE ART GALLERY



"International Peacekeepers" by Ebba Navas

LAA is pleased to announce our member show "Close Encounters" at the Marilyn Citron O'Rourke Art Gallery, Benicia Library from June 30 to July 29. Close Encounters brings together a diverse range of contemporary artists whose works explore the nuances of connection, shared experiences, and the ways we interact with our world – both fleeting and profound.

Please join us at the **artist reception on Saturday, July 18, from 3:30 – 5:30pm.** All are welcome.

The Gallery is located at 150 E L Street, Benicia CA.

Participating Artists: *Karen Baden Thapa, Annette Laurel Batchelor, Amy Bauer, Flora Baumann, Dana Beebe, Karen Girogianni, Marian Sims Harris, Melchia Kutches, Samantha McNally, Judith Mortensen, Ebba Navas, Yumiko Nishizawa, Nancy Roberts, Allison Skidgel, Ruth Stanton, Charlene Steen, Sharon Tama, Nancy Vachani, Elizabeth Verigin, Beth Zelinski*

"WHISPER OF COLOR" AT SAN RAMON CITY HALL GALLERY



Join us for "Whisper of Color," an exhibition celebrating the quiet power of color and the emotions, memories, and moods it can evoke. Featuring works that embrace subtle shifts, delicate layers, and soft transitions, this show invites viewers to slow down and discover meaning in the understated beauty of each piece. This exhibition will run from August 3rd to August 31, 2026

We hope you'll join us for the opening reception on **Friday, August 7, 5- 7 PM** to experience the exhibition, connect with fellow artists and celebrate the creativity of our exhibiting members. We look forward to sharing this inspiring collection with you!

Whisper of Color

This show is about capturing the subtle magic of color in its quietest form. See how our artists explore color not as something loud or dominant, but as a soft, almost hidden element that hints at emotions, memories, or moods. Think of color as a whisper - it doesn't need to be bold to make an impact. It's in those delicate shifts, the soft transitions, and the layered moments where color becomes a quiet conversation between the artist and the viewer.

In this exhibition, our artists experiment with these quiet moments - whether through smooth gradients, barely-there hues, or complex layers that slowly reveal their depth. The goal is to create a sense of intimacy, where color feels like an internal experience, something that is felt more than seen. See how these works convey emotion, memory, or subtle shifts in mood, allowing viewers to engage with the piece slowly and find meaning in its quiet details.

The exhibit runs August 3rd to the 31st

Please join us at our free reception
Friday, August 7th from 5:00 to 7:00 PM

The show will be held at The Gallery at City Hall, San Ramon
7000 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon

Gallery hours are Monday through Friday, 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM
Closed Saturday and Sunday

PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Donna Arganbright
Annette Laurel Batchelor
Jennifer Grant
Elizabeth Kennen
Lori Lark
Carlos Martinez
Marianne McCrancy
Ruth McMillin
Ebba Navas
Tom Quinlan
Jan St Onge
Adrienne Rogers
Allison Skidgel
Ruth Stanton
Charlene Steen
Sharon Tama
Karen Baden Thapa
Elizabeth Verigin
Beth Zelinski

LAMORINDA
ARTS
ALLIANCE

JULY & AUGUST AT MAIN STREET ARTS GALLERY



"Horrific Scout Sconce"
by Steen Kjorlie



"Totem" by Luke
Heimbigner

The Main Street Arts Gallery in downtown Martinez is featuring a group exhibition by local metal artists during July and August. The show highlights a variety of pieces ranging from sculptural and functional works to imaginative creations that demonstrate the versatility of the medium. The metal artists include Nate Holbein, Brady Prisha, Luke Heimbigner and Steen Kjorlie. Visitors can enjoy this unique art form that combines creativity, engineering, and skilled workmanship.

Also featured in July is longtime gallery member Paula Oesterling. Known for her playful and whimsical approach, Oesterling creates imaginative mixed-media works that often surprise viewers with unexpected subjects and storytelling elements. Her artwork reflects a sense of humor and curiosity, inviting visitors to look closely and discover new details. The public is invited to a reception on Friday, July 3, from 6 to 9 p.m., held in conjunction with Martinez First Friday. Guests can meet the artists, enjoy refreshments, and enter a monthly prize drawing. "Legs" by Paula Oesterling is the free drawing prize in July. Come into the gallery and fill out a form for a chance to win!



"Legs" by Paula Oesterling

Now in its tenth year, Main Street Arts Gallery continues to welcome art lovers and collectors alike. The cooperative gallery features the work of local and regional artists in a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, photography, ceramics, jewelry, and mixed media.

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 VISIT TO HESS PERSSON ESTATES ART GALLERY



Sculpture on the grounds of Hess Persson Estates

June 12th proved to be the perfect sunny day to visit the renown Hess Persson Estates Gallery Collection in Napa. The beautifully manicured garden grounds add a contemplative feeling to the magnificent bronze sculptures nestled amongst leafy trees, paths, and pergolas.

Inside the three-story stone gallery, a wide array of contemporary art comprised of paintings, sculpture, fiber art, collage, ceramic pieces, photography, and other mediums can be viewed comfortably at one's own pace and interests. The works of artists such as Rothko, Stella, Goldsworthy, Kiefer, Baselitz, Maler, Rauschenberg, Richter, Motherwell, and many, many others serve as a feast for the eyes of art lovers.



"Homage" by Leopoldo Maler

Attending LAA members thoroughly enjoyed the gallery collection and gardens that day and encourage you to join the next LAA gallery visitation opportunity.



L to R: Sharon Tama, Bill Edelen and Charleen Steen at Hess Persson Estates Gallery

LAA'S MARK COFFEY PUBLISHES ILLUSTRATED CHILDREN'S BOOK!

Mark Coffey announced that he has published his first illustrated children's book – "The Adventures of Bunnzer – Discovery."

For quite some time, Mark has wanted to immortalize his memories of bedtime stories told to him as a young boy by his father. Those stories

were about the adventures of Mark and the stuffed rabbit he loved.



The story initially asks the question, “Did Mark find Bunnzer, or did Bunnzer find Mark?” This is an illustrated story about a curious, adventurous young boy, and an incredibly special rabbit – a rabbit that could speak. But Bunnzer spoke only with Mark.

This introductory story tells how Mark and Bunnzer met, how they became the best of friends, and the adventures and discoveries they shared together. The book is available on Amazon.

Congratulations Mark!



“COASTAL WATERS” FEATURING LAA’S SAMANTHA McNALLY



“West 6th Street View” by Samantha McNally

“Coastal Waters” is featuring Samantha McNally’s Watercolors. July 3 to August 2. Meet the artist during gallery hours, July 17 and July 24.

Samantha McNally is Benicia Plein Air Gallery’s featured artist for the month of July. Samantha McNally is an award-winning, professional watercolor artist, whose works are collected across the country. Known for her realism and delicacy in capturing floral and nature-inspired subjects, Samantha also teaches watercolor to students online and is past President of the California Watercolor Association.



“Commadore Jones Point” by Samantha McNally

In addition to being an artist member of the Benicia Plein Air Gallery, Samantha is also a member of Arts Benicia, Main Street Arts Gallery in Martinez and Valley Art Gallery in Walnut Creek. In July through September, you can also see Samantha's paintings in the Benicia city council chambers as part of an Arts Benicia exhibit and at the Benicia Library in July with a Lamorinda Arts Alliance exhibit.

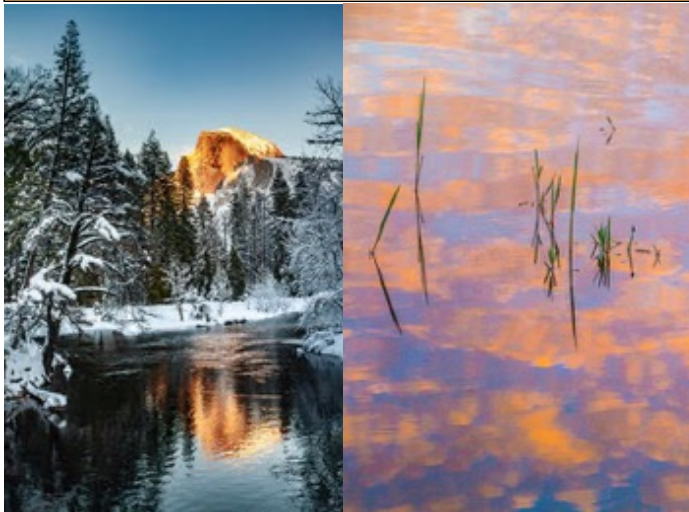
To view more of Samantha's artwork, please visit: www.samanthamcnally.com.

Benicia Plein Air Gallery is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday 11am to 5pm.

[307 First Street](http://307FirstStreet.com), Benicia, CA 94510

www.beniciapleinair.com

WENDA PYMAN WITH OAA AT ORINDA LIBRARY GALLERY



L to R: "Aspen Glow on Half Dome" & "Hush of Dawn"
by Wenda Pyman

Wenda Pyman will be part of an Oakland Art Association Group Show at the Orinda Library Gallery, June 27-August 1. Reception is Saturday, July 11, 2:30-4:30p. She will be showing 3 of her images, Aspen Glow on Half Dome (metal print), Hush of Dawn, Ltd Ed, and Quiet Ecstasy, Ltd Ed. Please stop by the Orinda Library Gallery to see the entire OAA Exhibit. Everyone's invited to the Opening Reception.

LAA MEMBER LESLIE GOLDEN NEWS AND EVENTS



"Ethereal Sunset" by Leslie Golden

I am delighted to be participating in the "People and Places" exhibit at Pappillion in Lafayette and "Whisper of Color" at the Gallery at City Hall, San Ramon. Whether painting the dramatic California coastline, a quiet human connection, or the simple pleasure of gathering with friends, I'm always drawn to moments where light reveals beauty in the everyday. These exhibitions celebrate both the places we cherish and the colors that move us.

I hope you'll stop by and enjoy the shows. As always, my studio is open by appointment every day. Feel free to contact me to arrange a no-pressure tour of the studio or pop into CrossWaterCreek Outfitters at 3574 Mt. Diablo, Lafayette to see my paintings in their second-floor gallery.

www.LeslieGoldenArt.com

www.LeslieGoldenLA.com

510 589 5580

Many Thanks,
Leslie Golden CA LIC #2431
Leslie Wagstaff

“WHAT DO YOU PREFER” BY
CAROL JENKINS



“Purple Haze” by Carol Jenkins

What Do You Prefer?

I recently listened to the science fiction novel, *Project Hail Mary* by Andy Weir. The movie didn't do it for me, but I loved the book on tape. The narrator was terrific and it was exciting to try and follow all the problem solving and hard science necessary to survive in outer space. But most of all I enjoyed seeing, well, more like apprehending Grace, the human astronaut through the mind of an alien being with 6 arms and no face. Grace predictably calls the alien Rocky because of his hard outer shell and 900-year life span. Rocky thinks of Grace as an alien too: a leaky blob with no protective covering and a tragically short life.

Over the course of the story these two characters develop a deep friendship as they work together to save their respective planets. Not only does the term alien quickly lose its relevance despite their enormous differences, but it becomes patently clear that

the word has no legitimate place on earth, either.

Like many words, “alien” means one thing on the surface (extraterrestrial, foreigner) and has hidden connotations underneath. It suggests strangeness, otherness, something threatening, not belonging. When a faceless life form in outer space stops feeling alien, it's easy to see how ridiculous (and terribly harmful) it is to call our fellow human beings aliens just because they are not citizens.

Many other words have connotations that fly below the radar but influence us, nonetheless. For example, the symbolic meaning of white is purity, cleanliness, innocence (as in white lie). We use the term “fine art” to distinguish it from art that is decorative or practical. The not-so-hidden implication is clear: some forms of creativity are “higher” than others, more sophisticated, more refined. Even when we reject these concepts, the emotional subtext of our language has a real impact.

Some words, of course, point to nuanced, and to my mind helpful ideas. Consider the word “absurdity” in a line from the poem “Possibilities” by Wislawa Szymborska. After a long list of things, she prefers—cats, the color green, Dickens (compared to Dostoevsky), she writes:

“I prefer the absurdity of writing poems to the absurdity of not writing poems.”

I love that line! Poetry or any other form of creativity may seem irrational in our tumultuous world, irrelevant at best. Still, not creating is just as absurd. Maybe more so. Whenever I start to take myself too seriously, whenever I start to feel alienated from my work or any other aspect of my life, I try to reach for the irony, the existential humor embedded in that word. I prefer the absurdity of creating a flawed painting to the absurdity of not creating at all. I prefer to laugh at myself

than to lament. I prefer to not believe everything my mind gets up to. It also helps to remember that from some more cosmic point of view; I'm a very short-lived leaky blob!

-Carol Jenkins

In other news, Purple Haze, the painting (above, on page 7), was juried into the show, *Slice* at the [Pence Gallery](#) in Davis. It will be showing from July 10-August 16.

EDITOR'S NOTES



Watercolor Sketch by Jennifer Granat

I don't know about anyone else, but I have been finding it somewhat difficult to concentrate lately due to all the worldly woes, news and information we are constantly being barraged with. It is certainly a challenge to navigate the news of the world without becoming overwhelmed. Creating

art in all forms is, to my mind, the most effective way to digest, process and then transform the myriad of feelings (brought forth by disastrous events, policies, grave misunderstandings and general strife) into productive outlets. I personally find relief in art making, whether it be drawing, painting, writing, and playing music, or even gardening and cooking—none of which I claim to be “expert” at in any way, shape or form. Yet, I do sometimes manage to please myself and hope that somehow, something I've done might relate to others in a pleasing way.

For this reason, I decided to include the image you see to the left of this column. It's but a humble watercolor sketch that I feel embodies the softness of peace and tranquility. It's a small, dreamy piece purely from my imagination that, for me, conjures a sense of the serenity of some Japanese watercolors I like, though I would certainly hesitate to claim any such mastery of the medium!

All in all, I heartily agree with Lori's statement about the role the arts play in keeping us rooted to each other, our world, and ourselves, and of our responsibility to be stewards who seek out new ways to contribute to the collective well-being of all beings. Furthermore, to echo Carol Jenkins piece, (see “What Do You Prefer?” on pg. 7), the biggest disaster would be for us, as creators, to ignore the “absurdity of not creating at all,” or to stop believing in the profoundly healing nature of collective imaginings of possible peaceful coexistence with all life forms, terrestrial, aquatic and otherwise.

With all this in mind, I wish everyone a creative, joy-filled summer full of hope for sane and peaceful resolutions, and for better days to come.

Jennifer Granat
LAA Newsletter Editor
1 July 2026

