

PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE:
AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE



LAA President Lori Larks (lower right) with Nancy Roberts (top left)

An Honor and a Privilege

Recently, Donna asked me to consider assuming the role of President of LAA. I had to ponder this for a couple of weeks as it seemed quite a jump from being relatively new to LAA. As I met with Donna, I am humbled by the dedication and love she has put into supporting and promoting the arts, both from

IN THIS ISSUE	PAGE
PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE: AN HONOR AND A PRIVILEGE.....	1-2
IN RECOGNITION OF DONNA ARGANBRIGHT.....	2-4
LAA MEMBER SHOW AT MSA WARMLY RECEIVED.....	4
LAA’s “WELLNESS & WELLBEING” SHOW BEAUTIFUL & UPLIFTING.....	5
NOW AT STUDIO 55: “DISLOCATIONS: ARTISTS BOOKS”	5
WELCOME STUDIO 55! LAA’S NEWEST MEMBER GALLERY.....	6-7
“IN THE MIX” OPENS NOVEMBER 4 AT CITY HALL GALLERY, SAN RAMON.....	7
WELCOME NEW LAA MEMBERS!.....	7-8
LAA ANNUAL BOARD LUNCHEON AND CELEBRATION.....	8
MORAGA ART GALLERY’S “OODLES” HOLIDAY EXHIBIT COMING SOON!.....	8
LAA MEMBER MARY LOU CORREIA.....	9
LAA MEMBER CAROL JENKINS.....	9-10
LAA MEMBER MIRA M. WHITE.....	10
INTRODUCING LAA MEMBER KRISTEN OCKERT.....	10
EDITOR’S NOTES.....	11

her beginnings on the East Coast, and here in the Lamorinda area for several decades. What a huge roll to fill! I accepted the position and over the last four months, as a member at large, have a great deal of appreciation for the work of the Board and their depth and commitment as artists.

So, to back up a tad, in the fall of 2021, being 'partially' retired, I wanted to return to painting (after forty decades), and I wanted nothing more than to be outside painting. While I did a great deal of photography for the past twenty years, mostly in service to a gymnastics organization and family camp, still, I had this yearning. I quickly found Contra Costa Plein Air, founded by Nancy Roberts. Nancy introduced me to plein air painting, galleries, paint out events, and my 'entre' into LAA, as well as the other arts organizations here in the Bay Area. (Nancy is pictured above with me at a Locke paint out.)

Nancy Roberts also introduced me to Frogard Schmidt and the Art Cottage in Concord. I volunteered to help hang a show (which I love to do as I have a love of "placement"), and since that intro in 2022, I have been hanging shows at the Art Cottage. With each show, I see the wonderful creative spirit come alive in our community.

Today, October 18th, 2025, as I write this, all around the Country millions of people are both protesting and celebrating 'No Kings Day.'. Our country is in crisis and while for me, art has always been a refuge, I also take heart that at the forefront of freedom movements there are always artists; sculptors, printers, singers, painters, and poets. For this reason, it is an honor and privilege to serve on the Board of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance, to continue to support and promote artists creating, challenging themselves, and each of us in widening our perspective, seeing the world through the eyes of others in our community, and appreciating the difference and richness we are so fortunate to have in our country.

Thank you for this opportunity to serve.

-Lori Larks



IN RECOGNITION OF DONNA ARGANBRIGHT



Donna Arganbright at the potting wheel

Donna Arganbright is Recognized for her Contributions to Contra Costa County

On October 21st, the Contra Costa Board of Supervisors passed a resolution recognizing our own Donna Arganbright. At the ceremony, Lori Larks, LAA's new president, made the following comments:

"Distinguished Board and community members, My name is Lori Larks, and I am the newly appointed president of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance. It is my honor and privilege to introduce to you Donna Arganbright. She has been the President of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance for over

15 years and is currently stepping down from that position and because of her ongoing commitment to support the Arts in our community, has decided to continue as a member at large. Today we are recognizing her for a lifetime of dedication to the Arts.

Our community has truly benefitted from Donna's leadership, not only as the President of Lamorinda Arts Alliance, but also as a promoter and supporter of arts endeavors.



Donna Arganbright at the Podium.

Photo Credit: Contra Costa TV of Today

Today we are honoring her for her lifetime of service to the arts in our county. Prior to her taking on the leadership of LAA, she devoted her life to teaching art in schools and the wider community.

Following art school, after obtaining a master's in public administration and a teaching credential, she began teaching art to children K-8 on the east coast. After moving here to Contra Costa County, she taught art for the Mt. Diablo School District to middle and high school students. In addition,

Donna has contributed to the formerly, Lamorinda Arts and Science Foundation, now the Lafayette Partners in Education, and taught at Civic Arts in Walnut Creek. She continues to be a positive and engaged community leader in the arts, always welcoming and encouraging participation of the young and mature alike.

Those who have met and know Donna are immediately impressed by her graciousness, friendliness, and welcoming attitude.

Now, more than ever, when our country is in crisis, when our vital services built over decades are being threatened and stripped, it is even more important to maintain connection, find inspiration.

We know that in times of crisis, moral crisis, it is often through the arts we are inspired, feel connected, and often subtly, grow in understanding, even irked into a wider perspective. It is because of the dedication and commitment of people like Donna Arganbright who have worked to provide that platform to support the continuation and growth of the arts, that creativity continues, that artists continue to have a place to engage, share their vision, strength, and hope, benefitting us and keeping us all connected. It is with great honor that I introduce Donna Arganbright."

Donna was then presented with the following resolution:

"For over 15 years, Donna Arganbright has served as the President of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance providing leadership supporting the Arts in Contra Costa County. Under her leadership, the Lamorinda Arts Alliance is recognized now as a vital service for artists wanting to grow and contribute to the development of the arts in our communities.

Donna is an experienced artist and now retired art teacher, providing a lifetime of support and encouragement for arts appreciation. Older adults in our county have also greatly benefitted from Donna's leadership as the Lamorinda Arts Alliance also actively involves our seniors in staying

engaged and connected to the arts and the larger community providing greater enrichment to our community as a whole. Under her leadership, the Lamorinda Arts Alliance actively supports other arts organizations in Contra Costa County with donations of time and funds.

Therefore, be it resolved, that the Board of Supervisors of Contra Costa County does hereby declare the day of October 21, 2025 as “Donna Arganbright Day” and urges all residents to celebrate and continue growing the Arts in our County. Be it further resolved that the Board of Supervisors encourages residents to recognize the valuable contribution of leadership of Donna Arganbright for her support of artists and cultural organizations that make Contra Costa County such a special place to live, work, and visit.”

Congratulations Donna and thank you!



Donna Arganbright pictured with newly appointed President, Lori Larks, LAA Board Members and CCC Supervisors, October 21st, 2025.

Photo Credit: Contra Costa TV of Today

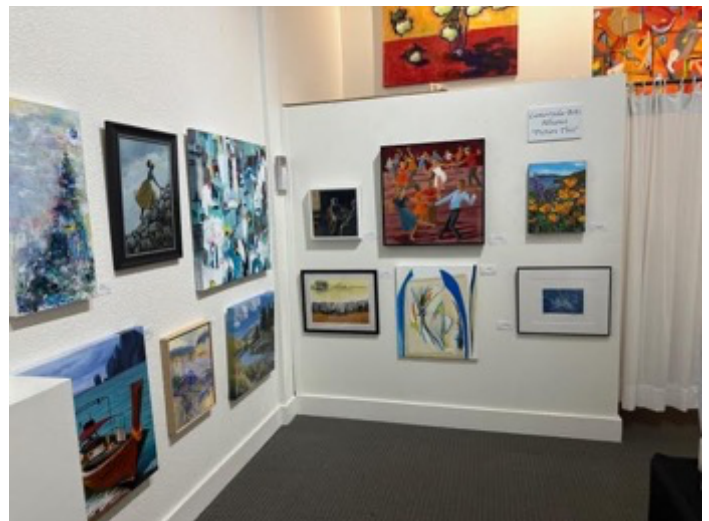


Donna Arganbright with the LAA Board and Supporters

LAA MEMBER SHOW AT MAIN STREET ARTS WARMLY RECEIVED



Picture This, an LAA member show, featured 31 artworks by 28 LAA artists closed on November 1. The show celebrated the power of visual storytelling with artworks that hinted at stories, feelings or moments inviting viewers to imagine the stories within the pieces.



LAA extends its sincere thanks to Main Street Arts for hosting *Picture This* in their Martinez gallery. The exhibition was beautifully presented and warmly received by visitors throughout September and October. This marks the second collaboration between LAA and Main Street Arts, and we are deeply grateful for this ongoing partnership.

LAA's "WELLNESS & WELLBEING" SHOW BEAUTIFUL & UPLIFTING



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Flora Baumann, Marcela Cabrera, Helen Cho-Hirschberg,
Marian Sims Harris, Samia Ithara, Jan Lanooff, Lori Lark, Ruth McMillin,
Jan St Ouge, Wenda Pysman, Adrienne Rogers, Judith Robner,
Allison Skudgel, Karen Baden Thapa, Nancy Vachani,
Marilyn Verducci

LAMORINDA
ARTS
ALLIANCE

LAA's "Wellness & Wellbeing" show at the John Muir Health Aspen Surgery Center closed on October 31. It was a beautiful and uplifting show enjoyed by patients, visitors and medical staff.



"Cowboy Riding the Surf" by Marilyn Verducci

On behalf of participating show members, LAA donated \$190.00 to John Muir Health to support the Auxiliary in providing the Walnut Creek Medical Center with state-of-the-art equipment, and support for programs and services.

Thank you, Rosemary and Pete Therkelsen, Auxiliary's Art Show Co-Chairs, for the invitation to exhibit our work at the Aspen Surgery Center.

NOW AT STUDIO 55: "DISLOCATIONS: ARTISTS BOOKS"

Artists Books are intimate art galleries, personal and portable and accessible to all, allowing a glimpse into creative possibilities. DISLOCATIONS is the umbrella title of our (GAP) Artists' Books series.



EXHIBITING ARTISTS:

ELISE MARSHALL / USA
MIKEL FRANK / USA
KATIE KOROTZER / USA
BRIAN AUERBACH / USA
JULES NELSON GAL / USA
CAROL DALTON / USA
MIA CHAMBERS / USA
HELEN S COHEN / USA
ANDREA D GUERRA / USA
ANGELA DENISE ALLEN SIMMS / USA
DEE TIVENAN / USA
MICHAEL D'AMELIO / USA
JULIE SCHUMER / USA
VERA TCHIKOVANI / USA
LESLIE ALCOTT / USA
PAM PITT / USA
SANDEE JOHNSON / USA
MADELEINE WORIES / USA
SALMA ARASTU INDIA / USA
YASMIN LAMBIE-SIMPSON USA / WALES
DAVID JENOWE / USA
ISABELLE RUIZ PERDIGUERO / SPAIN
ALE FEJO / ARGENTINA
MASSIMO NOTA / ITALY

MARINO ROSSETTI / ITALY
KATE SIMMONS / USA
RENATO DE LA RIVA / MEXICO
CORRIE McCLUSKEY / MEXICO / USA
PEDRO CRUZ PACHECO / MEXICO
VALERIE CORVIN / USA
MACHA MELANIE / FRANCE
SABINE KORTH ITALY / GERMANY
PAT CALABRO / USA
CAROL HEFT / USA
CORINNA ROSTECK / GERMANY
PAT MAYER / USA
USHA SHUKLA INDIA / USA
SIÂN PRICE ITALY / UK
ALVARO SANCHEZ / GUATEMALA
MONICA LISI / ITALY
LINDA COPPENS / SPAIN / BELGIUM
CARL HEYWARD / USA
AKIKO SUZUKI USA / JAPAN
JENNY HYNES / USA

Opening Reception: Sunday September 28th

1-4pm

Closing Reception: Sunday November 22nd

1-4 pm

Curated by Carl Heyward, Akiko Suzuki and Jenny Hynes



STUDIO 55 MARTINEZ
55 Howe Rd Martinez California 94553
707-899-2032



Artist Book by Carol Dalton



Curators and Artists Carl Heyward and Akiko Suzuki

GAP (Global Art Project) is an international mixed-media collaborative collective promoting the creative intelligence of the international arts community through exhibitions, material and resource exchanges, residencies, and ongoing projects that support artist-generated activity within and outside of the traditional gallery-museum system since 2013. GAP consists of more than 90 working artists operating in 20 countries.



Co-Curator, Artist Jenny Hynes

The closing reception for this exhibit is Sunday, November 22, 1-4pm at STUDIO 55 Martinez located at [55 Howe Rd Martinez, CA](https://www.google.com/maps/place/55+Howe+Rd+Martinez,+CA+94588-1000/@37.971441,-122.183744,15z) 707-899-2032. This show was curated by Carl Heyward/Akiko Suzuki/Jenny Hynes.



Artist Book by Jenny Hynes

WELCOME STUDIO 55!
LAA'S NEWEST MEMBER GALLERY



Lamorinda Arts Alliance would like to welcome Studio 55 as a new gallery member! Welcome!! The LAA Board Members have planned some very exciting events, so we hope you will encourage your members to check out our website, www.laa4art.org. We are very glad to have you join!

For LAA members, Studio 55 is an artist-owned and operated fine arts studio and exhibition space located in Martinez, CA. Studio 55 is home to eight artists-in-residence and host a variety of artist-taught workshops and classes in printmaking, painting, jewelry-making, sculpture, mixed-media, and more. Studio 55 is currently accepting exhibition and workshop proposals from artists of all backgrounds.

Email us at gALLERY@studio55martinez.com to connect!

For more information about Studio 55 please visit <https://www.studio55martinez.com/>

"IN THE MIX" OPENS NOVEMBER 4 AT CITY HALL GALLERY, SAN RAMON



LAA is pleased to announce our member show "In the Mix" at the Gallery at City Hall, San Ramon from November 4 to December 18.

In the Mix is a theme that suggests a variety of approaches, media, and subjects coming together to create something new and dynamic.

The collection is a fluid mix of ideas covering themes like past and present, dream and reality, realism and abstraction, and techniques including the mixing of mediums and artistic styles. Each piece is a conversation, influenced by the diverse techniques and perspectives of each LAA artist.

Please join us at the **artist reception** on **Friday, November 7, from 5:00 – 7:00 pm**. All are welcome.



The Gallery at City Hall is located at 7000 Bollinger Canyon Road, San Ramon.

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

WELCOME NEW LAA MEMBERS!

Lamorinda Arts Alliance would like to extend a warm welcome to all our new members from last December and this year:

December 2024: Amy Bauer; Julie Atkinson; Marianne McCraney; Beth Zelinski; Janet Brock; Patrick Dunaway; Dorothy Watson.

This Year, 2025: Andrea Mitroff; Bonnie Bonner; Lisa Lee; Allison Skidgel; Thuy Linh Kang; Grant Kreinberg; Kathryn DeGroot; Irene Needoba; Deborah Lee; Marcela Cabrera; Mary Mark; Diane Oles; Judy Miller; Conor Kavanagh; Sally Salay; Maria Reyes; Juliana Dhond; Yumiko Nishizawa; Kristen Ockert; Annette Fuller.

Welcome New LAA Members!!

Please be sure to check out our website laa4art.org for Exhibition Opportunities, Educational Videos and all

other event information. In addition, you can create your own gallery page, (instructions are on the website), and check out our member galleries. We have many opportunities to show work in 2026!

If you'd like to introduce yourself to our members, please feel free to send a short bio and statement along with one or two labeled jpegs of your work. You can include a link to your website as well. Please send your information to editor@laa4art.org and I will be happy to publish your introduction in a future newsletter.

LAA ANNUAL BOARD LUNCHEON AND CELEBRATION



Clockwise from the left we have LAA's talented Artist Board members: *Mark Coffee (member at large); Marian Harris; Karen Thapa (member at large); LAA President Lori Larks; Cynthia Whitchurch; Samantha McNally; Helen Chu- Hirschberg; Sharon Tama; Donna Arganbright (now, member at large); Ruth Stanton.*

As LAA member and LAA Newsletter Editor, I'd like to thank our board for all the work they do to offer so many opportunities for member artists. It's an honor for me to be able to contribute to this inclusive and vibrant East Bay community of artists and supporters as Newsletter Editor. What a beautiful and well-deserved lunch celebration. Thank you!



MORAGA ART GALLERY'S "OODLES" HOLIDAY EXHIBIT COMING SOON



"Let Loose" by guest artist Deborah Ashley

The Moraga Art Gallery launches the holiday season with a new exhibit, entitled "OODLES," featuring paintings by member artist, Orinda's Kath Balamuth, admired for originality, exacting details and alluring colors — oodles of them, in fact. Captivating color also enlivens the canvases of featured guest artist, Deborah Ashley of Oakland. Her abstract and fanciful still-life and landscape paintings burst with vitality and joyful energy.

Between November 12th and January 4th, art in many genres, by a score of gallery members and guest artists, will fill the gallery's elegant and spacious walls and display cases with a plethora of wonderful holiday gifts, including paintings, jewelry, ceramics, photographs, silk scarves, woodworking, etchings, and much more.

RECEPTION: The public is invited to a free reception from 5 to 7PM on Saturday, November 22nd at 432 Center Street in Moraga's Rheem Valley Shopping Center. Come to meet the artists, see the exhibit, enjoy light snacks, a glass of wine with fellow art lovers and live music performed by Cole Panther, *aka* the "honest, unpretentious troubadour who touches heart and soul with song."

The gallery's hours are Wednesday to Sunday from noon to 5PM. Starting on December 1st, it will be open daily (noon - 5PM) until Christmas.

For more information, call 925-376-5407 or please visit <https://moragaartgallery.com/>

LAA MEMBER MARY LOU CORREIA

Correia will be featured artist at Benicia Plein Air Gallery Show, "Autumn, Joy of Color," this November.



Autumn Los Amigos Rd 18x24, by Mary Lou Correia

Benicia Plein Air Gallery is located at 307 1st St., Benicia. ***A reception will be held on Saturday, November 8 from 2 to 5.***

LAA MEMBER CAROL JENKINS



Lower Deadfall Lake, 16x16 collage & mixed media on panel, framed

What Mysterious Current Flows Through Everything?

by
Carol Jenkins

I recently saw a remarkable play called *Jitney*, written by August Wilson, my favorite playwright. It is set in the 1970s when car services, called jitneys were springing up in the largely Black Hill District of Pittsburgh, an area generally avoided by white taxi drivers. Wilson brings to life the characters surrounding one of these services with startling insight and boundless empathy. I was completely riveted! In one gut-wrenching scene between the owner of the jitney and his estranged son, the heartbreak of each was so excruciating, so palpable, I broke into unexpected sobs. I left the theater stunned... and changed.

The play made me think about the radical power of empathy to burrow beneath our self-absorption to the innate connection we have with others. Empathy opens our hearts as well as our minds, disarming the hostility we all too often feel toward those who seem different from us. Acting, writing, all the arts rely on this ability to feel into lives other than our own.

Actor Meryl Streep once described empathy as the mysterious current that connects her actual pulse to a fictional character, enabling her to experience a whole range of imagined joys and sorrows. A good writer steps into her characters so completely, they feel real, sometimes becoming an integral part of her readers' lives. Other art forms tap into this current too. The dancer's outstretched arms fill us with longing. Our bodies unconsciously sway to the musician's soulful sounds.

I think empathy can open us to the natural world as well. A painter or photographer draws on his enchantment with the landscape to elicit our own enchantment. Joanna Macy, who recently died after a long life of writing and ecological activism, called this shared feeling an inborn reverence for the earth. Buddhist teacher Reverend Daishin Morgan says that we all intuitively sense the undivided nature of existence. We are not separate from

anyone or anything—animals, trees, air, and earth.

Sometimes we are so busy with our lives we forget to really see the people we walk by, the world we inhabit. Sometimes we are too disheartened by the suffering we create when our hostility toward others, toward the earth itself, gains the upper hand. Still, I have hope when a play, a conversation, a painting, the snout of a river otter poking through the water brings me back to that current of empathy. Empathy may be the only thing that can unite us all.

In other news, I am opening my home studio December 13-14 for East Bay Open Studios. Please come by and say hello!

CarollenkinsArt.com
CarollenkinsStudio
[Please stay in touch!](#)

LAA MEMBER MIRA M. WHITE



LAA Member Mira M. White will be hosting her Open Studio Party & Sale on Sunday, December 7, 2025, from 10am – 6pm. For more information about White and her work, please visit:

<https://www.miraMwhite.com>
mira@mirawhitefineart.com
nulifeart@gmail.com

INTRODUCING LAA MEMBER KRISTEN OCKERT



"View from Coit Tower" by Kristen Ockert

Kristen Ockert is a San Francisco based artist who enjoys creating scenes of cities, landscapes, still life and some portraiture.



"Oakland Italianates" by Kristen Ockert

Ockert has been drawing since she was a little girl. She was a photographer, and majored in Graphic Design in college, but they were never her true callings. Painting and drawing were her true passions.

While raising a young family (4 1/2-year-old and almost 1 year old) and working full time, Kristen still manages to make it to her San Francisco art studio to create one to two times a week, and more if time allows. She is excited to be part of this art alliance and be part of the upcoming shows, etc.

EDITOR'S NOTES



"Dianes Heart" by Jennifer Granat

Now more than ever we need brave souls full of compassion and empathy. For this reason, I applaud LAA member Carol Jenkins for not only her lovely paintings, but for her written contributions to this publication. I especially appreciate Jenkins' contribution "What Mysterious Current Flows Through Everything?" for its emphasis on stepping out of ourselves to connect with others.

Jenkins writes (*italics added*):

"The play (Jitney by August Wilson) made me think about the radical power of empathy to burrow beneath our self-absorption to the innate connection we have with others. Empathy opens our hearts as well as our minds, disarming the hostility we all too often feel toward those who seem different from us. Acting, writing, *all the arts rely on this ability to feel into lives other than our own.*"

Brava Carol! Thank you for sharing your work and thoughts with all our LAA members and newsletter subscribers.

As editor, I will conclude this edition of the Lamorinda Arts Alliance Newsletter with this equally lovely poem by Emily Dickinson on the topic of empathy and compassion:

If I Can Stop One Heart from Breaking

If I can stop one Heart from breaking,
I shall not live in vain
If I can ease one Life the Aching,
Or cool one Pain,

Or help one fainting Robin
Unto his Nest again,
I shall not live in vain.

-Emily Dickinson

