ARTLINE

March 2024

A publication of the **RAL** Art Center

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Support the RAL Art Center

Call for Entries! 4th Annual Art in Transit Competition

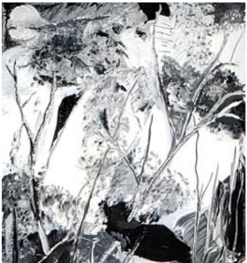
Bay Transit, the public transportation division of Bay Aging, and the RAL Art Center are proud to announce dates for the ***Fourth Annual Art in Transit*** judged competition. Artists throughout the Northern Neck, Middle Peninsula, and Richmond area are invited to participate. “The prizes for the Fourth Annual Art in Transit winners have been increased,” noted Bay Transit Director Ken Pollock. “In 2024, the first prize will be $1,000, with the second-place winner receiving a check for $750, and the third-place winner receiving $500.”

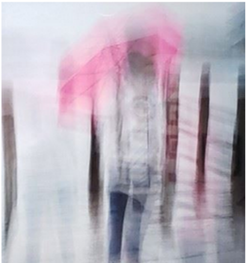
The culmination of the awards ceremony will once again occur when a copy of the first-place entry is unveiled on the side of a Bay Transit bus. The deadline for entries and art submissions to the RAL Art Center in Kilmarnock has been expanded to multiple dates in April to encourage participation.

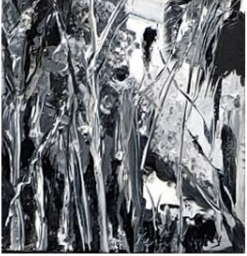
See ***May Exhibits*** below for more information about entering.

Gallery News

RAL Art Center Announces February Exhibit Winners







BWGAO, acrylic, by Karen Kingsley

Dancing in the Rain, photograph, by Annie Barsky

February exhibits, “Black, White, and Grey All Over” and “A Touch of Color” opened January 31, 2024. The two RAL members open exhibits included 59 original art works, including paintings, photography, fiber art, glass, and sculpture.

Dr. Kathyrn (“Kate”) Swanson, the Executive Director of Gloucester Arts on Main, judged both exhibits.

Sharon Stone, the Executive Director of the RAL Art Center, and Juli Schuszler, exhibits team leader, presented the awards and comments on behalf of the shows’ judge at the public reception on February 2 at the RAL Art Center.

For First Place in the exhibit “Black, White, and Grey All Over,” Kate selected “BWGAO,” an acrylic painting by Karen Kingsley. Kate said that the painting had her coming back for multiple looks and that “it is one of those paintings that demands close examination yet always has something more to share no matter how long you study it.” For the show’s Second Place award, she chose the fiber art by Barbara Brecher, “Moonscape.” Third Place went to “All in the Family” by Sammy Anderson, an oil with cold wax painting. For this exhibit, Kate also selected three Honorable Mentions: “Messy Chessie,” an acrylic painting by Sandy Woodson, “Who’s Out There?” an acrylic painting by Debbie Bull, and “Tree of Life,” a photograph by Annie Barsky.

For the exhibition “A Touch of Color,” Kate awarded First Place to Annie Barsky’s photograph “Dancing in the Rain.” Kate said that “the bright pop of color with the diagonal umbrella contrast so nicely with the dark vertical posts and figures – all of which meet the show’s theme.” Second Place went to “A Dash of Red, a Hint of Yellow” an oil painting by Juli Schuszler. Third Place went to “Last Light,” an acrylic painting by Brenda Sylvia. For this show, Kate chose three Honorable Mentions: “Color the Cowboy,” a mixed media acrylic painting by Mary Ellis, “Winter White” an acrylic and cold wax painting by Bonnie-Leigh Jones, and “Dark River,” an encaustic painting by Celeste Johnston.

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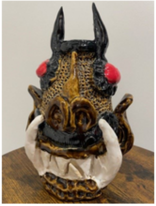
Anniversary Gift of African American Pottery Currently on Display at RAL



Face Jug that Watford donated to RAL.

Ben Alford Watford of New Bern, NC, is a well-known African American potter and creator of highly decorated face jugs. This type of pottery was historically produced by members of the African American enslaved community in the Edgefield district of South Carolina. The vessels are turned stoneware with facial features – wide eyes and bared teeth – made from locally-sourced clay.

Watford has donated one of the many hundreds of face jugs he has created to the RAL Art Center in Kilmarnock, Virginia, to commemorate the 75th anniversary of its founding. His hope is that the sale of his piece will benefit the non-profit artist organization and support its many community outreach programs.

But what is the story behind face jugs? Watford explains, "If you're going to enslave someone, you have to dehumanize them." And so, in South Carolina, slaves were not allowed to put markers over their loved ones' graves. "Like animals," continues Watford, "you don't mark an animal's grave." So, the slaves began setting jugs and trinkets over the graves instead. Eventually, slave artisans added ugly or monstrous faces to those jugs to scare the devil away and allow their loved ones' souls to rise to heaven. Face jugs continue to be highly prized by handmade pottery collectors.

Ben Alford Watford at work in his studio.

Watford, now 91 years young, is an alumnus of Howard University and holds a master's degree in chemistry from Tuskegee University. He taught chemistry for many years, retiring to New Bern in 1986; he says he works harder now as a potter than he did when he taught full time. Besides creating face jugs and other types of pottery to preserve a piece of his own history as the descendent of enslaved Africans, Watford has served his community as a board member and advisor for numerous non-profit organizations.

The face jug Watford donated to RAL Art Center is currently on display and will remain so through the end of March. **All proceeds from its sale will go to support art education for children and senior adults in Lancaster County.**

If you would like to learn more about Mr. Watford, see these videos online:

New Bern potter one of many voices at the 20th annual African American Cultural Celebration | Raleigh News & Observer (newsobserver.com)

Face jug artist keeping unique form of pottery alive (spectrumlocalnews.com)

NC NOW | Ben Watford | UNC-TV - YouTube

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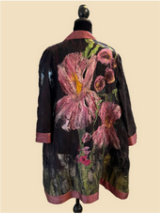
Two RAL Members Exhibit
New Show of Textiles and Photography

Photo by Michael Geissinger


Felted jacket by Barbara Brecher

Tappahannock Art Gallery (TAG) will kick off its new art exhibition "Photos & Fibers" - an exhibit of the work of fiber artist Barb Brecher and photo-journalist Michael Geissinger - on March 1, with an opening reception on March 8. The exhibit juxtaposes the soft florals of Brecher's wearable art with the sometimes jarring images and street scenes of Geissinger's photographs.

Barbara Brecher is an award-winning fiber artist and graphic designer and the owner of I Felt Fine DESIGN, a fiber design studio. Over the last 20 plus years, she has worked to develop a unique felting process. Combining both silk and wool, each piece displays a lively range of vivid color and captivating texture.

"Wearing my clothing is to wrap yourself in a piece of art," says Brecher. "Each of my pieces incorporates a unique fusion of textures, materials and colors. These elements come together as I create the fiber. While I may begin with an idea and color direction for a piece, the flow of the materials guides my process to the finished product."

A onetime White House staff photographer, Michael Geissinger brings a sharp eye to scenes both familiar

Read more . . .

Community Outreach & Activities

2024 Summer Camps are Coming!

Join the smART Program at RAL Art Center this summer for six weeks of summer camp fun! Youth Art Camps will be held beginning June 10th through July 27th. Make the most of your family's summer break with weeklong day camps designed for kids ages 5 to 18. Explore the grounds in a camp all about art and nature or give the budding architect in the family a chance to build their skills!

Whatever your kids' passions, they're sure to find plenty to love at the gallery. And you'll love that they're learning and making memories every step of the way.

Check our website to see dates, full camp descriptions, get tickets, and more.

June
Week 1:
[AM] Art in Nature (Ages 5 to 7)
[PM] Art in Nature (Ages 8 to 10)

Week 2:
[AM] Teen Studio (Ages 14 to 18)
[PM] Fashion, Fun, and Fiber (Ages 8 to 10)

Week 3:
[AM] All Things Architecture (Ages 5 to 7)
[PM] All Things Architecture (Ages 8 to 10)

July
Week 4:
[AM] Sketchbook Club (Ages 5 to 7)
[PM] Sketchbook Club (Ages 8 to 10)

Week 5:
[AM] Fashion, Fun, and Fiber (Ages 5 to 7)
[PM] Rappahannock Adventurers League with the Lancaster Community Library (Ages 12 to 16)

Week 6:
[AM] Ready, Set, PAINT! (Ages 5 to 7)
[PM] S.T.E.A.M (Ages 8 to 10)

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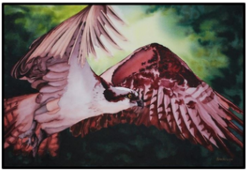
Adult Classes and Workshops

Watercolor Excellence

March Try It Tuesday: Silverpoint

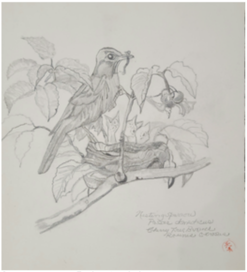


Instructor: Doug Mock
Day: Friday
Dates: February 16 thru May 17
(See registration form available at RAL for exact dates.)

Time: 10:00 am -12:30 pm

Cost: $42 per class; minimum of 6 classes required for a total of $252 minimum

Working from your own reference materials artists will learn to use a variety of tools, techniques, and skills necessary to make every painting the best it can be.



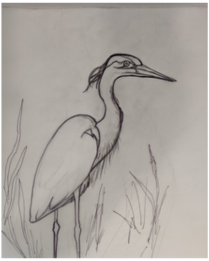
Instructor: Celeste Johnston
Date: Tuesday, March 5, 2024
Time:10:00 am – 12:30 pm

Cost: $40 members, $45 non-members

Come and try an old master technique, Silverpoint. Silverpoint is an old-world master drawing technique where, instead of graphite, silver point is used to draw on prepared ground. The instructor will prepare the paper for

Read more . . .

Drawing: Learning to See 1



Instructor: Gloria Clifford
Day: Thursdays
Dates: March 7 – April 4, 2024

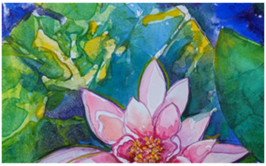
Time: 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Cost: $220 members, $253 non-members

The skill of drawing is a lead into all other art forms. This is a five-week course for beginners and/or for those who may wish to better develop their drawing skills. Instruction begins with

Read more . . .

Watercolor - Mixed Media



Instructor: Gloria Clifford
Day: Thursdays
Dates: March 7 – April 4, 2024

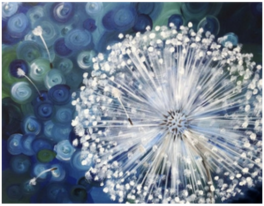
Time: 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Cost: $220 members, $253 non-members

This class is all about how to create beautiful watercolors without always using traditional methods. Some knowledge of watercolor painting and/or acrylic painting is helpful but is NOT required. Although this is not an abstract painting class, abstract ways of thinking and application of materials is encouraged. This class is especially for those who wish to experiment and/or for those who are interested in having an experience with watercolors using “out of the box”

Read more . . .

March Paint Night #1: Wishes on a Dandelion



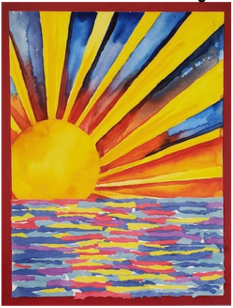
Instructor: Lauren Moye
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2024
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Cost: $35 for Members, $40 for Non-members

Join us for a fun and creative time celebrating the magic of making wishes on a dandelion. All supplies are included to create your own 11” x 14” stretched canvas with acrylics! Make it a date night, a lady's night, or just for

Read more . . .

March Paint Night #2: Mixed Media Watercolor & Collage



Instructor: Doug Mock
Date: Thursday, March 28, 2024
Time: 6:00-8:00 pm

Cost: $35 for Members; $40 for Non-members

Shake off those winter blues and join Doug Mock for a second Paint Night as you create a vibrant and exciting sunrise using both watercolor and

Read more . . .

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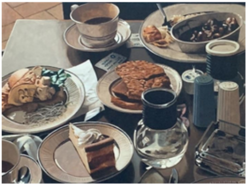
Painting Workshop – Acrylics or Oils

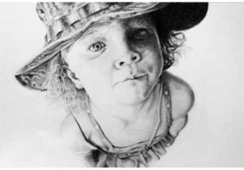


Instructor: James W. Jones
Day: Saturday
Date: April 6

Time: 10 am – 3:30 pm

Cost: $165 members; $190 non-members

Drawing: Learning to See 2



Instructor: Gloria Clifford

Day: Thursdays
Dates: April 11 – May 9, 2024

Time: 1:30 – 4:00 p.m.

Cost: $220 members, $253 non-members

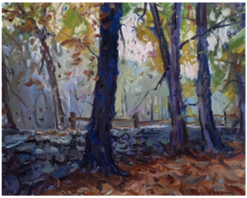
This one-day workshop will focus on selecting personal and original subject matter; composition and design

Read more . . .

This is the second 5-week course with an emphasis on additional, more advanced drawing skills. In this second session, the understanding of perspective and perspective drawing

Read more . . .

Plein Air with Kyle Buckland



Instructor: Kyle Buckland
Days: Friday thru Sunday
Dates: April 19, 20, & 21

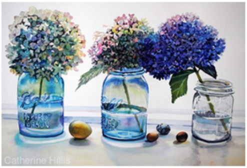
Time: all day, approx. 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Cost: $395 members, $454 non-members

Don't miss this incredible opportunity to join Kyle Buckland, a nationally acclaimed Plein Air artist, for a captivating 3-day

Read more . . .

Flower Power



Instructor: Catherine Hillis
Days: Friday & Saturday
Dates: April 26 and 27

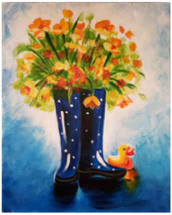
Time: 9:30 am – 3:00 pm

Cost: $238 members; $273 non-members

Paint the beauty of nature with watercolor paint. Learn good technique to last a lifetime. Study and paint the beauty of flowers,

Read more . . .

April Paint Night: Rainy Day Flowers



Instructor: Juli Schuszler
Date: Thursday – April 25
Time: 6:00 – 8:00 pm

Cost: $35 members, $40 non-members

Join us on the evening of Thursday, April 25 to have fun painting a rainy-day arrangement. This class will be completed using acrylic paint on an 11” x 14” stretched canvas. Create a painting of rain boots filled with spring flowers and accompanied by a rubber duck.

Read more . . .

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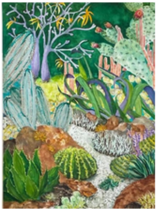
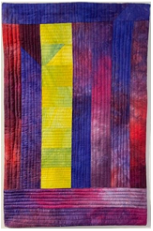
Upcoming Exhibits

March Windows Exhibits



Linda Goldstein has had a love of art since childhood. She has been mentored by various artists who have helped her create her knowledge and proficiency in watercolor painting.

She has been juried into shows at the Torpedo Factory, Alexandria, VA, RAL Art Center, and her painting of George Washington is in the permanent collection of GW University and displayed in their Visitor Center. The natural world and animals are her preferred subjects to paint.



Martha Gilbert is a fiber artist. She says, "My art focuses on shape and visual movement. My color palette tends to be bright and saturated, especially in the blue to green wedge of the color wheel. I want to draw the viewer in and provide surprise on closer inspection. After the piece is collaged, it is layered with a batt and backing, and machine stitched."

In the shelving window, Joan Powell exhibits 3-dimensional work. She describes her artistic journey: "I am a self-taught mosaic artist. My first project was a small birdhouse covered with 'smashed up' plates and figurines. Today, in addition to birdhouses, I create intricate vases, mirrors, frames, tabletops, plant stands, and memory jugs. The process of using found objects for assemblage art is very rewarding and it provides me a fun and creative way to express myself."

ABSOLUTELY ANYTHING

March: Absolutely Anything

Let's make one thing absolutely clear. Your entry can be absolutely anything! (Provided it meets the display restrictions.)

Exhibit Dates: Feb 28 – March 30

Reception: Friday, March 1, 5-7 pm

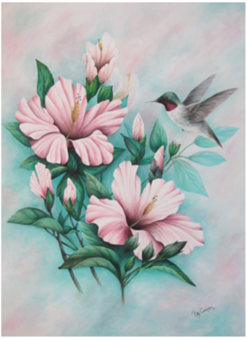
HISTORY MADE
RED SOX
My Favorite Things

March: My Favorite Things

It makes no matter what it is, if it means something to you, then pick your medium and go for it!

Exhibit Dates: Feb 28 – March 30

Reception: Friday, March 1, 5-7 pm



Hummingbird with Hibiscus, oil, Patty Cunningham

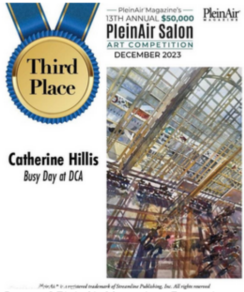
April: From the Garden

Flowers, veggies, bugs, birds, leaves, twigs, trees, pollen? What do you think of when you hear the phrase, “it came from the garden”? Show us what this means to you.

Receiving: Monday, April 1, 10 am to 12 pm

Exhibit Dates: Tuesday, April 2 through Saturday, April 27

Reception: Friday, April 5, 5 to 7 pm



Cover of PleinAir Magazine, December 2023

April: Visiting Artist - Catherine Hillis

Our April exhibit on the MDUs will feature the work of visiting artist, Catherine Hillis. Catherine will also be teaching a water-color workshop during April, details found in the ***Classes*** section of this newsletter.

She writes, “My paintings can be described as traditional landscapes, still lifes and figures, but I try to use my unique perspective to draw the viewer into the world as I see it, incorporating humor or beauty whenever possible in unexpected places."

Catherine was recently awarded Third Place in the PleinAir Salon Competition sponsored by PleinAir Magazine. Don't miss the chance to see the work of this amazing artist!

Exhibit Dates: Tuesday, April 2 through Saturday, April 27

Reception: Friday, April 5, 5 to 7 pm

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April: Art and Flowers

Arrangement by Cathie Elliott;

RAL artists and local floral designers will once again participate in a collaborative exhibit. ***Beginning on Wednesday, March 6th, floral designers will select co-op artists’ work as their inspiration for an original floral arrangement.*** Selection may continue through Thursday, April 4th. At that time, the designers will begin placing or creating their arrangements alongside the inspiration pieces. The exhibit will open on Friday, April 5th and run through Saturday, April 6th. Visitors to the gallery will cast votes for their favorite pairing with ribbons awarded for first, second, and third place. This event has become one of RAL's highlights of the year. Anyone may participate; for more information, please contact Cathie Elliott at 703.304.3960.

Exhibit dates: Friday, April 5 through Saturday, April 6 *painting by Mary Ellis*

May: Art in Transit

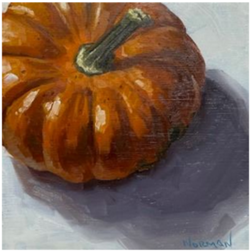
Enter the 4th Annual Art in Transit competition! Works may be in any 2-dimensional medium and portray any subject that is acceptable for all audiences.

Receiving: Saturday, April 27, Sunday, April 28, and Monday, April 29, from 10 AM and 12 PM

Exhibits Dates: Tuesday, April 30 to Saturday, June 1

Awards Reception: Friday, May 31, 5-7 pm

Find the entry form and more information at [AiT 2024 | RAL Art Center]



Miniature Pumpkin, 6"x6", oil by Tam Norman

May: Hip to Be Square

The theme this month is open, but you must keep it in a SQUARE composition no larger than 14"x14." It can also be as small as 2"x2" or anything in between. The important thing to remember is that it must be in a square format! 3-dimensional pieces must also have a square format (cubed) and be no larger than 14" in any direction.

Receiving: Monday, April 29, 10 am - 12 pm

Exhibit Dates: Tuesday, April 30 to Saturday, June 1

Reception: Friday, May 3, 5-7 pm

More 2024 Exhibits:

June: Art Heist, Simplicity

July: Driven to Abstraction, Small Works

August: Critters and Creatures, Tartan Village Students

September: 63rd Labor Day Art Show

October: Water: Above and Below; Robin Caspari

November: Sunrise, Suset, & Nocturnes; From My Travels

December: Holiday Shop, Photography Show

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THE NETTIE LOKEY WILEY and CHARLES L. WILEY FOUNDATION

THE COLE CHARITABLE TRUST

OUR MISSION

The mission of the RAL Art Center is to organize, sponsor and encourage educational and cultural activities in the visual arts and crafts. The RAL Art Center's activities are focused on the lower Northern Neck and Lower Middle Peninsula of Virginia. It is a not-for-profit 501(c)3 organization. The RAL Art Center is a community partner of the Virginia Museum of Fine Arts and is partially supported by grants from the Virginia Commission for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the River Counties Community Foundation.

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