

FEBRUARY LUNCHEON PROGRAM

Public Broadcasting: Programming for Lifelong Learning

Jake Hartvigsen

WEDU Associate Director of Marketing & Community Partnerships

Where do we go to hear great performances, visit Mister Rogers' neighborhood, cook with Julia Child or get the news? PBS, of course! With their mission to educate and inspire, PBS's extensive programming allows its viewers of all ages and interests to connect, grow and be entertained.

WEDU, our local PBS affiliate serving Florida's west coast, has in recent years launched an extensive "At-Home Learning" collection, produced award-winning local storytelling and otherwise greatly expanded its content. Noticing declining standards in commercial television, increasing numbers of viewers are turning to public broadcasting for quality programming they can trust. WEDU, for example, saw its viewership jump an extraordinary 76% over the past few years and is now the nation's 14th largest PBS television station.

As a longtime resident of Sarasota, graduate of Pine View School, with a master's degree from USF and a wife who serves as the arts curriculum specialist for Sarasota County schools, Jake Hartvigsen is well equipped to weave local content into WEDU Arts Plus. These weekly arts and culture programs are devoted to stories of individuals and organizations

that make our area such a vibrant region. It's possible to find shows ranging from pottery, theater, film, photography, dance, music, painting, fiber art – even the art of taxidermy! Something for everyone can be found with schedules provided at WEDU.org.



WEDU  **PBS**

Come hear what Jake has to say at our February luncheon where you can discover what's next on WEDU's horizon.

Date: Thursday, February 15, 2024 | 11am-1pm

Place: Sarasota Yacht Club, 1100 John Ringling Blvd

Cost: \$45 Members, \$50 Nonmembers

[REGISTER HERE.](#)



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FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

As we step into February, I am delighted to share the highlights of a busy January for Arts Advocates. The month witnessed the successful orchestration of nine events, kicking off with the unveiling of Marie-Louise McHugh's exhibit and Art Talk in the Gallery. Notably, this event welcomed two individuals who joined Arts Advocates as new members.

A significant endeavor was our "Learn about your Arts Advocates Art Collection" talk in the Gallery. Our Curator and Historian, Mark Ormond, introduced several paintings formerly displayed at Van Wezel and City Hall. These important pieces have returned to our Gallery, attracting the attention of members, docents and other art enthusiasts keen on exploring our diverse collection.

Our January Luncheon Program featured a presentation by Brian Hersh, CEO of the Arts and Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County. This event provided a platform for engaging discussions and further solidified our commitment to fostering a vibrant arts community.

The Arts Advocates Gallery continued to buzz with activity throughout January, hosting events by the Pen Women, the Book Club, the Players Theatre Opening Night VIP Reception and an Art Talk with the talented artist Viktor Mitic. Other activities included Arts Advocates' public art walking tours and an Art and Backstage Tour at the Van Wezel, allowing members to participate in exploring Sarasota's art and cultural treasures.

In alignment with my 2024 Initiative #2, aiming to "Diversify the range of activities held in the Gallery," we are excited to announce a very special event over two weekends in March: In collaboration with Roger Lightle, our Gallery will display and offer for sale 50 masterpieces

from his esteemed Highwaymen art collection! This is a rare opportunity to view and purchase original Highwaymen art. See page 3 for details.



Bill Rusling, President

Stay updated on the exciting programs and events scheduled for the remainder of 2024 by checking our weekly Eblasts and monthly newsletters, and do not forget to visit our website www.artsadvocates.org to register for events that align with your interests.

I eagerly anticipate building upon the progress we have achieved in promoting Arts Advocates within our community.

With warmest regards to all,
Bill Rusling
President, Arts Advocates



Founded in 1969 as The Fine Arts Society of Sarasota, our organization has continuously supported the arts in Sarasota for 55 years. Happy Anniversary!

Arts Advocates Gallery to Host Rare Highwaymen Display

The Arts Advocates Board of Directors is thrilled to announce the exhibition of fifty Florida Highwaymen paintings in the Arts Advocates Gallery in The Crossings at Siesta Key mall, March 2-3 and March 22-24. The exhibition is being held in collaboration with Roger Lightle, noted Highwaymen art collector, along with Curtis Arnett, an Original Florida Highwayman, and Roy McLendon, Jr., son of an Original Highwayman. All pieces on display will be offered for sale.

The Florida Highwaymen were prolific painters who sold their exquisite landscape paintings on Florida highways from the trunks of their cars, starting in the 1950s. These artists are now widely known and admired, and their artworks are collected and exhibited globally. In fact, five Highwaymen pieces are part of Arts Advocates' permanent collection.

This is a rare opportunity for the public to view and have the opportunity to purchase so many Highwaymen artworks at one time and place. Be sure to come in to see the paintings, even if you don't plan to buy one!

In addition to the exhibition and sale, Roy will demonstrate his painting techniques live in the Gallery. Roger will be on hand to elaborate on his collection.

The exhibition is **free** and open to the public. No registration is necessary.

The Arts Advocates Gallery is located in The Crossings at Siesta Key mall, 3501 South Tamiami Trail (between Bee Ridge and Siesta Drive; enter by Connors Restaurant, turn left, the Gallery is on the right).

Saturday, March 2 | 2-6pm

with Roger Lightle and Roy McLendon, Jr.

Sunday, March 3 | 2-6pm

with Roger and Roy

Friday, March 22 | 2-6pm

with Roger and Roy

Saturday, March 23 | 2-6pm

with Curtis Arnett, Roger and Roy

Sunday, March 24 | 2-6pm

with Roger and Roy



This piece by Original Highwayman Sam Newton will be donated to Arts Advocates for its permanent collection by Roger Lightle



Highwayman Roy McLendon, Jr., will be in attendance for the exhibition at the Arts Advocates Gallery.



This landscape by Original Highwayman Curtis Arnett, entitled "St. John's River," is part of the permanent collection of the Museum of Florida History.

ANNUAL FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Our annual fundraising campaign has raised \$63,422 to support our mission. THANK YOU to our generous donors!

PATRONS

\$10,000 and Up

Joan Endrizzi
Marian Storm Endowment Fund
Donna Maytham

CONTRIBUTORS

\$5,000 TO \$9,999

Designing Women Boutique Groundworks
The Patterson Foundation

PRODUCERS

\$2,500 TO \$4,999

Tonya Eubank
Pat Golemme
Pat Taylor

DIRECTORS

\$1,000 TO \$2,499

Community Foundation
Jim & Barbara Long
Carole Schwartz
Maureen Shea
David & Sandra Williams

CREATORS

\$500 TO \$999

Carol Hirschburg
Evelyn Levin
Susan Rawson

SUPPORTERS

\$200 TO \$499

Priscilla Adams
Jean Allen
Robert & Janet Apfel
Isabel Becker
Cynthia Byce
Rennie Carter
Laura Feder
Elaine Foster
Stephenie Frasher
Josephine Hennelly
Barbara Kerwin
Meg Krakowiak
Donald Lockett
Katherine Martucci
Jeannette Paladino
Dr. Sarah Pappas
Julie Planck
Nancy Roucher
William Rusling
Ed & Mary Schreck
Waddy Thompson

ENTHUSIASTS

UP TO \$199

Beverly Burger
Carol Camiener
Kevin & Helen Collins
Carol Darling
Betty Ferguson
Brenda Giman
Karen Hontz
Robin Klein-Strauss
Judy Levine
Bob & Ann Nickel
Henry Nickel
Sandy Warner



BLACK HISTORY MONTH

AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTISTS IN OUR COLLECTION

In recognition of Black History Month, we are pleased to showcase artworks in our collection by Black artists, including a recent donation from Stephenie Frasher of “Lil Darlin” by Jessica Hartman. Jessica is one of the military veterans featured in our Gallery in November.



Tobacco Barn Shadows at the Ball Farm – Dean Mitchell



Lil Darlin – Jessica Hartman



Purple Rain – Allen Pettigrew



Royal Poinciana Tree Along the St. Lucie River – Al Black



Untitled – Rodney Demps

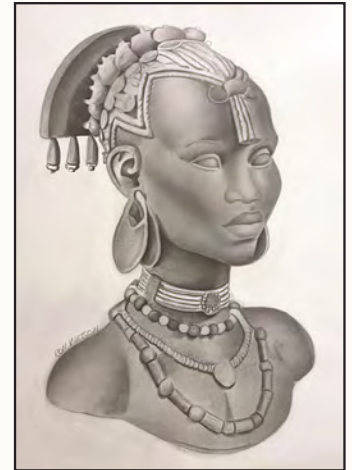
AFRICAN-AMERICAN ARTISTS IN OUR COLLECTION



Harriet Tubman as Peaches –
Gregory Rumph II



Untitled – James Gibson



Regal Nubian Queen –
Ronald Watson



Fireskies – John Maynor



Untitled – Alfred Hair



Morning in the Quarter – Dean Mitchell

FEBRUARY MEMBER ARTIST EXHIBIT

JANA MILLSTONE – “A CROOKED PATH”

Jana Millstone holds a patent for the design of a calculator/ruler! Not the most pertinent item in an artist's resume, but it illustrates her varied background. Her primary practice is painting and fiber work. She uses a variety of stylistic approaches to explore themes of power, inequity and transition, both in the microcosm of family and as metaphor for society at large.

Her work is notable also in its use of humor and poetry. The “Fables for our Times” series is a humorous exploration of themes of family and social dynamics. Using allegory and fiction, she toys with truth.

*“Jana will be there to hold your hand
on this perilous artistic journey!”*

Jana says she makes art to “secure a foothold in time.” Strange then, that she recently added the ephemeral medium of textiles to her art practice. She had a career as a clothing designer, which led to designing jewelry, accessories, writing instruments, calculators, diaries and ceramics, ultimately serving as Design Director for Lenox China. The host of different technologies taught her that there are many ways to achieve a vision.

Jana holds a BFA from Pratt Institute, with additional studies at Parsons School of Design, The Art Students League, and the Fashion Institute of Technology. Winner of the Society of Illustrators scholarship, she has since received numerous awards including the statewide “Florida's Finest” first prize and HALO Arts Project Fellowship 2021. Jana is a member of Women Contemporary Artists, National League of American Pen Women and Petticoat Painters. Her website is <http://www.janamillstone.com>.

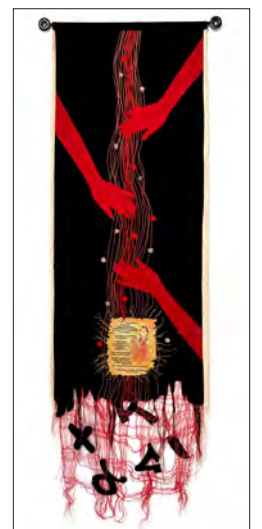
SHOW DATES: Every Saturday in February | 2-4pm
OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday, February 3 | 2-4pm
Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key



Sheila and Me Forever



The Artist's Hand – Front



The Artist's Hand – Back

EDUCATIONAL TOUR

TOUR OF ASOLO REPERTORY THEATRE AND THE KOSKI CENTER

Asolo Rep tours are an opportunity to witness professional-level theatrical design in the making. Through this tour you will learn the history of the Mertz Theatre and get a special behind-the-scenes look at the Koski Center.

The Koski Center includes rehearsal space and provides scenery and properties construction not only for Asolo Rep but also for the Sarasota Opera and Ballet, Tampa's Straz Center, Universal Studios, Broadway, television and film. Join us!

Date: Monday, February 19 | 9:30 – 11am

Place: Meet at Asolo Repertory Theatre Lobby
5555 N. Tamiami Trail.

Koski Center is a 10-minute drive to 1009 Tallevast Road.

Cost: \$20 members/\$25 nonmembers



[REGISTER HERE.](#)



Behind the Curtain:

EXPLORING THE VAN WEZEL FROM THE ART TO THE STAGE



Take a guided tour of the paintings and sculptures owned by Arts Advocates on display at the Van Wezel. After that, step onto the stage where a Van Wezel guide will give you a peek behind the curtain and share stories and anecdotes about the colorful world of show business!

Tours begin in the main lobby and cost \$15 per person. Tickets can be purchased at the Van Wezel box office or by calling (941) 263-6799. Private group tours can be arranged by calling (941) 955-7676. Proceeds benefit Arts Advocates and the Van Wezel's education/outreach programs.

Dates: Monday, February 12
Monday, March 11
1:30-3pm

Place: Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Cost: \$15

ART TALK

"DON'T BREATHE" – JAMIEL LAW FINDS HIS VOICE

Jamiel Law is an illustrator and creative problem solver based in Parrish, FL. He graduated in 2019 with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Illustration from Ringling College of Art and Design. He currently works with BUCK as a designer while freelancing as an editorial and children's book illustrator. Jamiel's clients include *The New York Times*, *The New Yorker*, NBC News, *Slate*, *The Washington Post*, *The Atlantic*, *Bravely Magazine*, Equal Justice Initiative, *The Guardian*, Apple, HBO and Netflix. He is also working on his first children's book with Harper Collins.

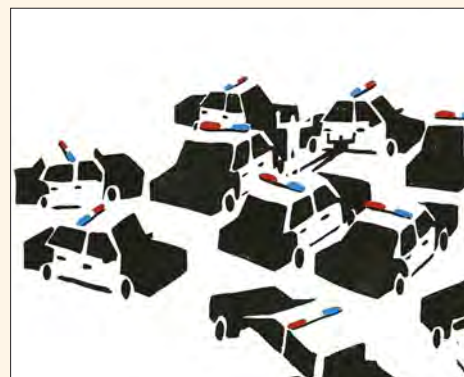
The illustration at right is about the psychological notion of police presence in the African-American community in the USA. It was first published as part of LSESU Amnesty International Society's annual human rights journal, *A Climate of Change*.

Date: Friday, February 23 | 4 – 6pm

Place: Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key

Cost: Free for members/\$5 nonmembers

REGISTER HERE.



EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

COLORED PENCILS BLOOMING ON BLACK PAPER

INSTRUCTOR: Alexandria Lillis

Florida is known for its kaleidoscope of colors and transcendent play of light. Many artists, including the Highwaymen, found their inspiration in the Florida flora.

In this workshop you will learn to combine the stark drama of black paper with the brilliance of colored pencil. Through a detailed presentation of materials and approaches, students will work on their own piece with one-on-one support from the instructor, Alexandria Lillis. By the end of the day each student will have completed a full color work of art, gained an understanding of how to use colored pencils, and increased their awareness of design principles. All skill levels welcome.

The class fee of \$100 includes black paper. Other materials – Prismacolor pencils (set of 12 or more) and white eraser – can be purchased at Michael's, Art & Frame, Hobby Lobby and Amazon. The instructor will provide fresh flowers for drawing inspiration. Students are welcome to bring photos as well.

Date: Saturday, February 24 | 11am – 5pm (please bring brown bag lunch)

Place: Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key

Cost: \$100

REGISTER HERE.



MARCH LUNCHEON PROGRAM

ensembleNEWSRQ

Contemporary Classical Chamber Music

Samantha Bennett and George Nickson
Co-founders and Artistic Directors

Created in 2015 by the husband-and-wife team of violinist Samantha Bennett and percussionist George Nickson, ensembleNEWSRQ is Sarasota's modern chamber music company. Dedicated to playing and supporting the music of contemporary composers, the ensemble performs innovative, thoughtfully curated programs to rave reviews.

Last year the ensembleNEWSRQ company of artists performed at the Sarasota Opera House for the first time. In May of this year, the group takes the stage at The Ringling's Historic Asolo Theater in a four-concert series that explores the works of artists inspired or affected by the city of Paris.

Both Samantha and George are prominent musicians in the Dallas area. They are immensely talented and busy people! Arts Advocates is most fortunate and delighted to welcome them at our March 21st luncheon to learn what ensembleNEWSRQ brings to the Sarasota music scene.

Date: Thursday, March 21 | 11am - 1pm

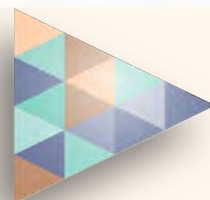
Place: Sarasota Yacht Club, 1100 Ringling Blvd.

Cost: \$45 members/\$50 non-members

REGISTER HERE.



ensemble
NEW
SRQ



MARCH MEMBER ARTIST EXHIBIT

LYNN ARMSTRONG COFFIN: "FULL CIRCLE"

Lynn Armstrong Coffin creates captivating and beautiful large-scale works using recycled and discarded materials. Her work incorporates the circle as a metaphor for the cyclical course of life and serves as a visual reminder that our choices are interconnected and will come *full circle*.

SHOW DATES: Every Saturday in March | 2-4pm

OPENING RECEPTION: March 9 | 2-4 pm
Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key



EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOP

BEADED NECKLACE WORKSHOP

In this workshop, you will design and create your own unique necklace, starting with a strand of gemstone beads. Choose additions from a selection of add-ons. Learn about color, symmetry, balance, visual weight, and pattern. Finish your necklace by learning to attach the clasp using silver findings. Leave with a smile! Beginners welcome. Workshop fee includes all materials.

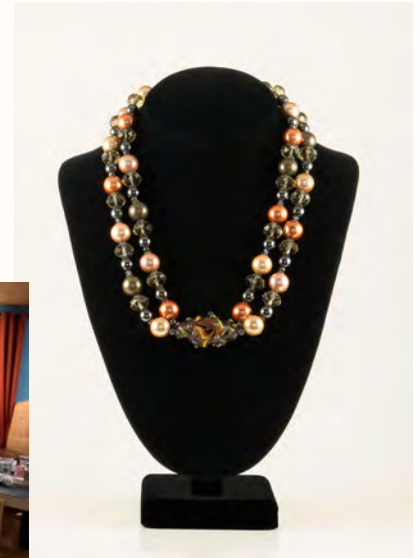
Judy Levine is a lifetime arts educator who has taught art at all levels. Currently, she teaches at OLLI at Ringling College. Judy creates one-of-a-kind jewelry, as well as memory keepers, collage, and photography.

Date: Saturday, March 30 | 12 – 2pm

Place: Arts Advocates Gallery,
The Crossings at Siesta Key
3501 South Tamiami Trail

Cost: \$45 - includes all materials

REGISTER HERE.



BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION RESCHEDULED

KURT VONNEGUT'S *BLUEBEARD*

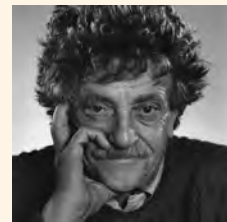
Due to inclement weather, the Book Club discussion has been rescheduled for February 20th.

You are invited to join a lively discussion about a book that was heavily influenced by a prominent member of the Sarasota Artist Colony.

The book is *Bluebeard* by Kurt Vonnegut, who wrote many bestsellers including *Slaughterhouse 5* and *Cat's Cradle*. The Sarasota Colony artist was the abstract painter Syd Solomon.

Vonnegut and Solomon were close friends, and Vonnegut frequently visited Solomon's homes on Siesta Key and Long Island. Vonnegut once wrote, alluding to his indebtedness to Solomon, that *Bluebeard* was "plagiarism on a grand scale." Vonnegut also said that Solomon was one of only two individuals who ever said anything about art that made any sense.

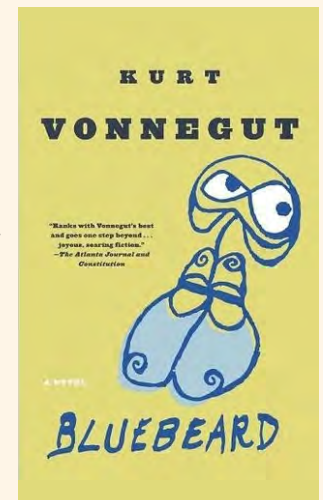
Bluebeard is a charming and engaging book, sure to engender a fascinating discussion on what art and life are all about! This event is free, but registration is appreciated. You do not have to read the book to attend, but you certainly will get a lot more out of the discussion if you do!



Kurt Vonnegut



Syd Solomon



Date: Tuesday, February 20 | 1:30 – 3pm

Place: Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key

Cost: Free

REGISTER HERE.





◀ Van Wezel Master Classes:

Tonya Eubank, Deb Altshul-Stark, Evelyn Levin and Rennie Carter joined Justin Gomlak (center) to learn a fun, easy dance in the style of the musical "The Cher Show." Justin is the Director of Education and Community Engagement at the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall and a veteran of many Broadway shows. Additional master classes will be held showcasing the music and dance styles of each touring Broadway musical being presented this season. Sign up on the Van Wezel website.

February Luncheon Raffle Prize: ▶

This original digital painting by Elisabeth Trostli, part of her "Gallery of Masques" series, will be raffled off at the February luncheon. Sign up for the luncheon for your chance to win!



◀ January Luncheon:

Artist Marie-Louise McHugh (left) presented one of her artworks to raffle winner Beverly Burger at the January Luncheon, which featured CEO Brian Hersh of The Arts & Cultural Alliance of Sarasota County. Brian provided fascinating statistics that demonstrated the vibrancy of our arts community.

Art Talk: ▶

Artist Viktor Mitic discussed his series of bullet paintings, which highlight the absurdity and senselessness of gun violence. Registered attendees of Viktor's Art Talk received a free copy of his book, *The Rain Paintings of Viktor Mitic*.



Local Arts Calendar



As a core element of its mission, Arts Advocates helps raise awareness of local arts organizations. Please support and enjoy these upcoming programs in our community. Click on the links for more information:

Artist Series Concerts

[Lin Ye, piano](#)

Sarasota Jewish Theatre

[Better Late](#)

Sarasota Contemporary Dance

[Dance Makers - 2024](#)

Asolo Rep

[Inherit the Wind](#)

Sarasota Orchestra

[Smoke and Fire](#)

La Musica

[Chamber Music Society of Lincoln Center](#)

save the dates

+ February 3

Jana Millstone Exhibit Opening | 2-4pm

+ February 12

Van Wezel Tour | 1:30-3pm

+ February 15

February Luncheon: WEDU | 11am-1pm

+ February 19

Asolo Rep/Koski Center Tour | 9:30-11am

+ February 20

Book Club: Bluebeard | 1:30-3pm

+ February 23

Jamie Law Art Talk | 4-6pm

+ February 24

Colored Pencils Workshop | 11am-5pm

+ March 2

Lynn Armstrong Coffin Exhibit Opening | 2-4pm

+ March 2-3 and March 22-24

Florida Highwaymen Exhibition | 2-6pm

+ March 9

Lynn Armstrong Coffin Exhibit Reception | 2-4pm

+ March 11

Van Wezel Tour | 1:30-3pm

+ March 21

March Luncheon: ensembleNewSRQ | 11am-1pm

+ March 30

Beaded Necklace Workshop | 12-2pm