

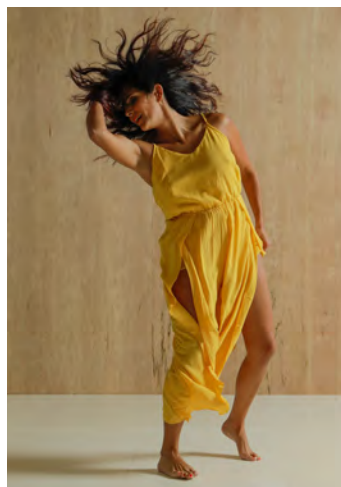
# LOOKING BACK

## ...A Year of Highlights

Arts Advocates is dedicated to promoting all the arts and supporting local artists and art organizations. Our members have enriched their lives with a wide variety of experiences available to them, like the ones shown in this special feature. There's something for everyone! Take full advantage of your membership and join us!

### Luncheon Programs

Luncheon programs featured live performances and presentations, including EnsembleNewSRQ and Sarasota Contemporary Dance (pictured), the Sarasota Arts & Cultural Alliance, WEDU/PBS arts programming, plans for the Sarasota Performing Arts Hall, and a discussion on banned books with Bookstore1Sarasota.



### LOOKING AHEAD

*Mark Your Calendars!*  
You won't want to miss a single one of the luncheon programs in our upcoming season! Enter these dates in your calendar TODAY:

- October 17, 2024
- November 21, 2024
- January 16, 2025
- February 20, 2025\*
- March 20, 2025
- April 17, 2025
- May 15, 2025

*\*Please note! Our February event will take place in the Arts Advocates Gallery in The Crossings at Siesta Key mall. All others will take place at the Sarasota Yacht Club.*

**Our exciting lineup of guest speakers will be announced in the September newsletter!**

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

A Year of Highlights	1	Scholarship Luncheon Sponsors	10
From Your President	6	In the Gallery	11
July Art Talk – Florida Highwaymen	7	September Gallery Artist – JC Wayne	11
August Art Talk – Late Bloomers	8	Literati Book Club	12
September Art Talk – An Artistic Life	9	Local Arts Calendar	13
Van Wezel Tours	9	Save the Dates	13

# LOOKING BACK

## ...A Year of Highlights

### Art Talks

Monthly Art Talk subjects ranged from artwork created with X-Acto knives to artwork examining social issues, such as Viktor Mitic's "Art or War" (pictured lower right), Patricia Anderson Turner's "Visualizing Social Issues," Nanette Crist's "Reimagining Famous Works of Art," and Jamiel Law's "Don't Breathe." Other topics included Acquired Art Savant Syndrome with Diana DeAvila, Veterans pursuing arts careers (pictured below), digital painting and AI with Elisabeth Trostli (pictured right), and Jess Pope on the power of movement.



### Florida Highwaymen Exhibition



Arts Advocates hosted a rare exhibition of 50+ Florida Highwaymen paintings in our Gallery in March. The Florida Highwaymen were prolific painters who sold their landscape paintings on Florida highways from the trunks of their cars, starting in the 1950s. Now their artwork is collected and exhibited globally, including six pieces in our own collection. Original Highwayman Curtis Arnett and Roy McClendon, Jr. (the son of an Original Highwayman, pictured) were on hand to demonstrate their techniques.



# LOOKING BACK

## ...A Year of Highlights



### Exhibits by Member Artists

Arts Advocates members include many highly talented artists. Each month, a selection of works by one of our artists is featured in our Gallery. This past year we have showcased artwork by Lorraine Robertson, Lynn Coppinger, Veterans John Quigley, Jessica Hartman and Mark Wiseman, Cecile Moran (gold leaf-embellished painting, pictured), Marie-Louise McHugh, Jana Millstone, Lynn Armstrong Coffin, Elisabeth Trostli, Michael Cohen (black and white photograph, pictured), and Suzanne Havens.



### Scholarships

The annual Scholarship Luncheon, showcasing the talents of the recipients of Arts Advocates Scholarship Awards, is always one of the most highly anticipated and heartwarming events of the year.



# LOOKING BACK

## ...A Year of Highlights

### Art Walks

In January, our own trio of dynamic docents – Nanette Crist, Judy Levine and Stephenie Frasher – led Art Walk tours in the Florida Studio Theatre area, the City Hall area, and the Rosemary District.



### Sarasota Film Festival Arts Sidebar Sponsorship

This year Arts Advocates sponsored 8 arts-related films at the Sarasota Film Festival, including an international premiere and the winner of the U.S. Grand Jury Prize at the Sundance Film Festival. Arts Advocates President Bill Rusling, SFF Director of Marketing & Development Petra Ratner and Arts Advocates Board member Jeannette Paladino are pictured at the SFF Kickoff Party.



### Holiday Bazaar

The Arts Advocates Holiday Bazaar offered a wide variety of fun, colorful, one-of-a-kind merchandise created by our members.





# LOOKING BACK

...A Year of Highlights

## Tours, Workshops, Book Clubs, and a special Salon

Arts Advocates members enjoyed many other events throughout the year: hands-on workshops to create personal art pieces; monthly "Behind the Curtain" tours of the Van Wezel Arts Hall, including docent-led tours of the Arts Advocates art collection; a private tour of Asolo Repertory Theatre and the Koski Center, which houses Asolo's scenery, props and costume shops; and book club discussions of arts-related books. Another special event was a sold-out Salon at member Leslie Butterfield's home, which was designed by renowned architect Carl Abbott. Mr. Abbott was on hand to discuss the creative process of designing the home.



**Reach out to a friend!** Do you have friends who would also enjoy Arts Advocates events and might like to join? Forward this newsletter to them and ask them to visit our website, <https://www.artsadvocates.org>, and click on "JOIN." Then come to an event together!

**Become involved!** Find out how you can volunteer your time, as little or as much as you like, doing something that brings you joy ... and new friends! Send an email to Arts Advocates Vice President Carol Darling at [darlingcj@yahoo.com](mailto:darlingcj@yahoo.com).

# FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Members of Arts Advocates,

June began with the art show “Images with Imagination” at the Gallery on June 1st, showcasing Suzanne Havens’ incredible digital floral photography. Her opening included a presentation about the vision and inspiration for her fantastic artwork. Over the remaining Saturdays of her exhibit, she presented four additional talks: Close-ups from Marie Selby Botanical Gardens, Layers upon Layers, Gardens, and Large Prints.

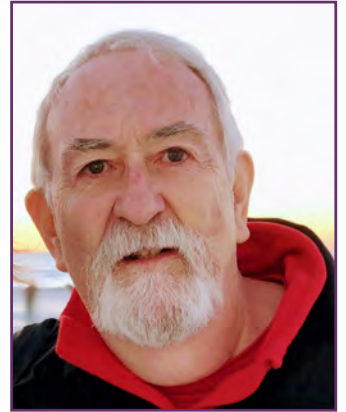
On June 4th, Jess Pope presented an enlightening Art Talk on “The Transformative Power of Movement and Human Connection.” This subject offered fascinating insight into her belief in everyone’s need for human connection and community and the ability of dance and movement to manifest that connection. Her Art Talk included videos of some of her performances.

Carol Hirschburg and Donna Maytham recently hosted a social event for the Board of Directors to welcome their newest members. It was also an opportunity to work on my #1 New Year Initiative of enhancing transparency between Board members and Team Leaders.

Looking forward to July, we have a highly anticipated Art Talk on the 16th: “6 of 26: Florida Highwaymen Paintings in the Arts Advocates Collection.” Stephenie Frasher, our Arts Advocates lead docent and Arts Engagement Director, will present an in-depth look at the Original Florida Highwaymen who painted the artwork in our collection: Alfred Hair, Al Black,

Rodney Demps, James Gibson, John Maynor and Sam Newton.

Stay informed by checking our weekly eblasts and monthly newsletters, and remember to visit our website [www.artsadvocates.org](http://www.artsadvocates.org) to register for events aligned with your interests.



Bill Rusling, President

With warmest regards to all,

*Bill Rusling*  
President, Arts Advocates

## ARTS ADVOCATES IN THE NEWS

The Sarasota Herald Tribune published a full article about our 2024 scholarship recipients with a group photo on June 18th! Here is a link to the online version of the article:

<https://www.heraldtribune.com/story/news/local/2024/06/17/arts-advocates-awards-scholarships-to-10-sarasota-manatee-students/73905108007/>





# 6 OF 26:

## FLORIDA HIGHWAYMEN PAINTINGS IN THE ARTS ADVOCATES COLLECTION

In 2004, the 26 Florida Highwaymen artists were inducted into the Florida Artists Hall of Fame. These self-taught artists – 25 men and one woman – share the Hall of Fame limelight with Ernest Hemingway, John Ringling, Tennessee Williams, Ray Charles, and Jimmy Buffett.

The Highwaymen, who began painting in the mid-1950s, were not a formal movement and represented no official group, yet they thrived as artists and entrepreneurs through their sheer determination to succeed as painters. Unable to sell their works in galleries, they sold their paintings from the trunks of their cars along Highway A1A on the east coast of Florida. Their story is one of African Americans who carved out unique economic opportunities despite the social conditions of the Jim Crow South.



*Royal Poinciana Tree Along the  
St. Lucie River by Alfred Hair*

Join Stephenie Frasher, lead docent at the Arts Advocates Gallery, for an in-depth look at Alfred Hair, Al Black, Rodney Demps, James Gibson, John Maynor, and Sam Newton.

Maria Cecilia Conder and her husband Richard donated five of the works and Cecilia was instrumental in acquiring the donation of the sixth Highwaymen painting from Roger Lightle of Highwaymen Art Specialists.

The Art Talk will feature video clips of the artists demonstrating their painting style and their personal tales of being part of the Highwaymen.

**Date:** Tuesday, July 16 | 4 – 6pm

**Place:** Arts Advocates Gallery  
The Crossings at Siesta Key  
3501 S. Tamiami Trail

**Cost:** Free for members/\$5 nonmembers

[REGISTER HERE.](#)



## AUGUST ART TALK

# JUDY LEVINE

## LATE BLOOMERS: CONTEMPORARY WOMEN ARTISTS WHO ACHIEVED FAME IN THEIR SENIOR YEARS

When we consider late bloomers in the field of art, we immediately think of Grandma Moses, who achieved greatness in her 80s. Creativity does not turn off later in life!

Judy Levine will present influential women artists still working into their 80s, 90s and 100s. She will discuss what keeps them creating and what impediments stalled their artistic recognition.

Judy has a bachelor's degree in art and art education and a master's degree in visual arts from Montclair State University (NJ), where she was on the art education faculty.

A docent at the Sarasota Art Museum, she is also an exhibiting artist at Creative Liberties and has her own studio, Phoenix Art Workshops, where she creates limited-edition jewelry and amazing memory boxes.



**Date:** Tuesday, August 20 | 4 – 6pm

**Place:** Arts Advocates Gallery  
The Crossings at Siesta Key  
3501 S. Tamiami Trail

**Cost:** Free for members/\$5 nonmembers

[REGISTER HERE.](#)



*Self Portrait by Yayoi Kusama*



# 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, August 19  
Tuesday, September 17  
1:30-3pm

**Place:** Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

**Cost:** \$15

### SEPTEMBER ART TALK

## KATHERINE MICHELLE TANNER: AN ARTISTIC LIFE

Best known for her multi-award-winning performance (Off-Broadway and U.S. tour) of the one-woman play, "The Amish Project," Katherine Michelle Tanner works as an actor, playwright, singer, director, filmmaker, choreographer, photographer, and teaching artist.

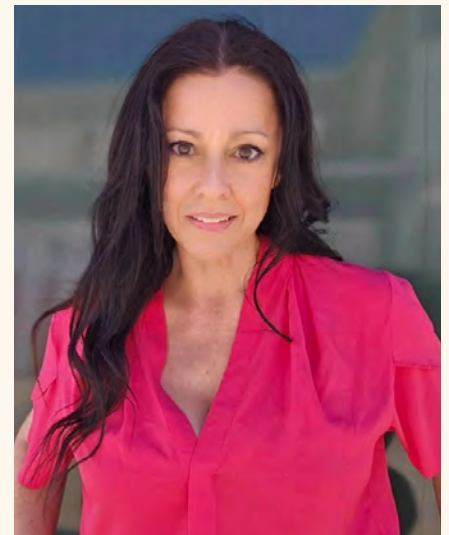
In addition, she is the owner and artistic director of Tree Fort Productions Projects, a not-for-profit production company in Sarasota specializing in classes for youth, teens, adults, and ongoing education. Tree Fort offers quality training in acting, singing, dancing, film, and photography.

In her Art Talk, Katherine will discuss her career, inspirations, and dreams.

**Date:** Tuesday, September 17 | 4 – 6pm

**Place:** Arts Advocates Gallery  
The Crossings at Siesta Key, 3501 S. Tamiami Trail

**Cost:** Free for members/\$5 nonmembers



[REGISTER HERE.](#) 

# SCHOLARSHIP LUNCHEON SPONSORS

## THANK YOU!

We deeply appreciate the sponsorship donations given to support and celebrate our amazing scholars at our annual Scholarship Luncheon.

### PROMOTER

Donna Maytham

### PATRONS

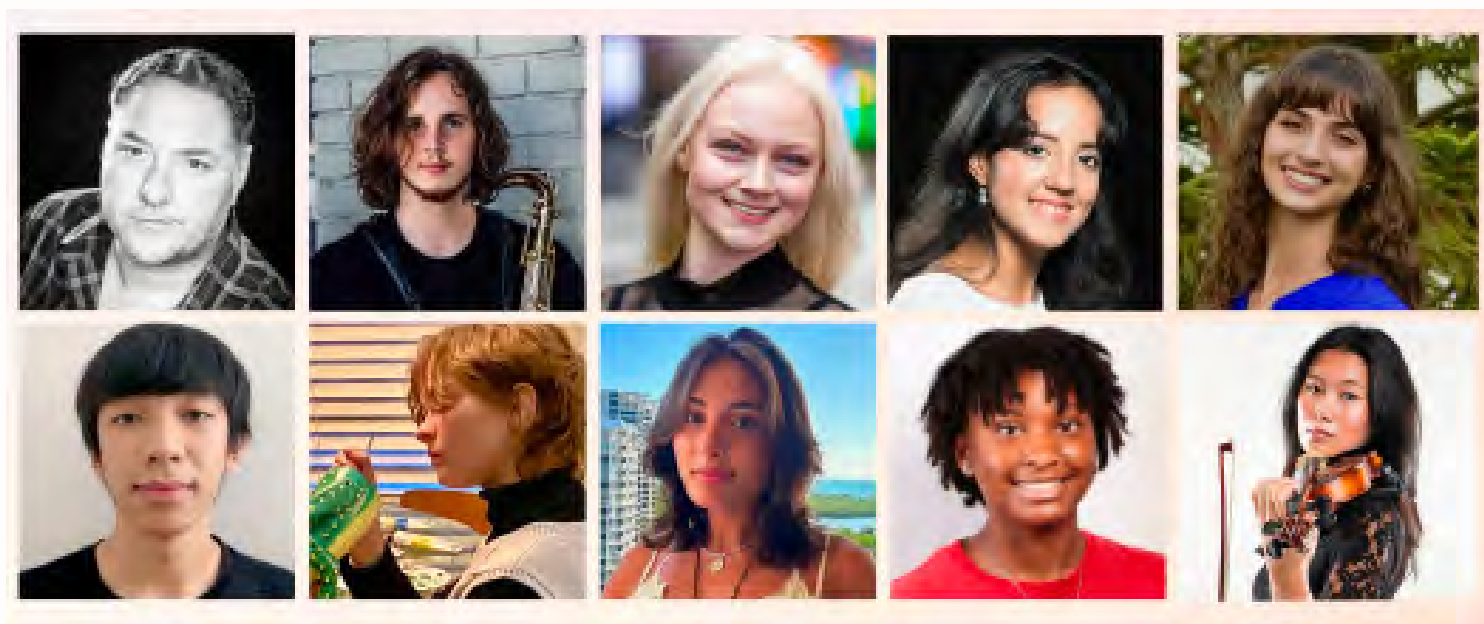
Beverly Burger  
Laura Feder  
Mark Ormond  
Nancy Roucher  
Jane Sheridan

### BENEFACTORS

Debra Altshul-Stark  
Maryann Armour  
Laima Nainys  
Bill Rusling  
Pat Taylor  
Liz Trostli

### SUPPORTERS

Nancy Bushnell  
Carol Darling  
Jeannette Paladino  
Mary Schreck



2024 scholarship winners (Top, L-R): John Quigley, Colin Leonard, Emmalee Bunnell, Maria Medina Almaguer, Lillian Fox.  
(Bottom, L-R): Hong Nguyen, Noelle Prouty, Samantha Tanelli, Miracle Deveaux, Danae Tran



## IN THE GALLERY

# SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS AND MIDDLE SCHOOL ART SHOW WINNERS

We are pleased to showcase the artwork of talented young people recognized this year by Arts Advocates.

Pieces by Arts Advocates 2024 scholarship recipients who specialize in visual art will be on display in the windows of the Arts Advocates Gallery throughout July and August. Videos of performing artists will be shown Saturdays in July and August from 2pm to 4pm. In addition, the middle school winners of the Sarasota County Schools Art Show will be featured through July 25th.

Stop by our “Museum in the Mall” and have a look!

The Crossings at Siesta Key, 3501 S. Tamiami Trail (enter by Connors Restaurant)

## SEPTEMBER MEMBER ARTIST EXHIBIT

# JC WAYNE | CREATIVE FOR GOOD WONDROUS WORLD:

## ILLUMINATING SACRED SPACES OF MEMORY

JC Wayne | Creative for Good is a sustainable existential artist and wisdom word-worker, weaving together her eco-responsible visual art and her original poetry to create a revelatory “cartography of the unseen” as a path into universal wisdom and spiritual understanding. Her paintings, poetry and writings reveal the beauty of our seen and unseen worlds and inner and outer landscapes to illuminate the wonder of life’s deeper magic, mystery and meaning.

**Opening Reception:** Saturday, September 7 | 2-4pm

**Exhibit Dates:** Every Saturday in September | 2-4pm

**Place:** Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key  
3501 S. Tamiami Trail

**Cost:** Free



*Cloud studies itself in blues & greys*

# Book Club

The books to be discussed this summer at the Ringling Museum's Literati Book Club are:

**July 12** - *The Keeper of Hidden Books* by Madeline Martin

**August 2** - *The Color Storm: A Novel of Renaissance Venice* by Damian Dibben

**Place:** Online via Zoom or in the Ringling Museum Library, 5401 Bay Shore Road

**Time:** 10:30 via Zoom, or 2:30 in the museum library

**Cost:** Free

**Register** by contacting Elisa Hansen, Head of Ringling Museum Library Services, at (941) 358-2701 or [elisahansen@ringling.org](mailto:elisahansen@ringling.org).



◀ June's Art Talk featured Jess Pope, a dancer with Moving Ethos Dance Company and a dance/movement teacher at Ringling College and Booker High School.



Our June Gallery artist was Suzanne Havens (R), shown with Gallery Director Liz Trostli. ▶  
Suzanne gave several art talks during her show. Some of her pieces will remain in the Gallery through the summer months.



# 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:

## Ringling College, Stulberg Gallery

[Jack Dowd: Last Call](#)

## Venice Theatre

[My Way: A Musical Tribute to Frank Sinatra](#)

## Florida Studio Theatre

[Sarasota Improv Festival](#)

## Ringling Museum

[Embodied – Highlights from the collections](#)

## The Sarasota Players

[American Idiot](#)

## Sarasota Art Museum

[Art on Film | Summer Film Series - Sarasota Art Museum](#)

# save the dates

## + July 16

Art Talk – Stephenie Frasher  
6 of 26: Florida Highwaymen Paintings  
in the Arts Advocates Collection  
4-6pm

## + August 19

Van Wezel Tour  
1:30-3pm

## + August 20

Art Talk – Judy Levine  
“Late Bloomers”  
4-6pm

## + September 7

JC Wayne Reception  
2-4pm

## + September 17

Van Wezel Tour  
1:30-3pm

## + September 17

Art Talk – Katherine Michelle Tanner  
“An Artistic Life”  
4-6pm

**PLEASE NOTE:** The next Arts Advocates Member Luncheon will be held October 17, 2024.