

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. And Arts Advocates has an opportunity to hear a sample of their musical prowess at our March luncheon!

Hailed by the Chicago Tribune as an artist "full of subtlety and poise," Ms. Bennett also performs with the Dallas Opera Orchestra and frequently with the Fort Worth, Dallas and Boston symphonies. She is known for performances of some of the most challenging contemporary pieces.

George Nickson is the principal percussionist of the Dallas Symphony in addition to serving as percussion department chair and professor at Southern Methodist University. He also enjoys unique engagements with orchestras and recording groups across the country.

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 concert

series that explores the works of artists inspired by the city of Paris.

Arts Advocates is delighted to welcome the group's founders and hear a 7-minute piece that will demonstrate why "contemporary classical" is not a contradiction in terms! Sign up now for this exceptional musical experience and opportunity to learn about another outstanding arts organization in our community.

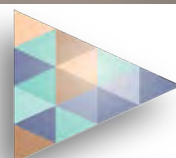
Date: Thursday, March 21 | 11am-1pm

Place: Sarasota Yacht Club, 1100 John Ringling Blvd

Cost: \$45 Members, \$50 Nonmembers



ensemble
NEW
SRQ



REGISTER HERE.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

March Luncheon	1	First Lady of the Highwaymen	8	April Gallery Artist	11
From Your President	2	Beaded Necklace Workshop	8	Art Talk	11
Florida Highwaymen Exhibit	3	Sarasota Film Festival Art Films	9	Floral Mixed Media Workshop	12
March Gallery Artist	4	Giving Challenge	9	Local Arts Calendar	14
Female Artists in Collection	5	April Luncheon	10	Save the Dates	14
Where Are They Now?	7	Van Wezel Tours	10		

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

Dear Arts Advocates Members,

First of all, I want to announce that Chris Butcher has joined our Board of Directors, where she serves as Recording Secretary. Welcome, Chris! And many thanks to Evelyn Levin for her service in that position.

I am pleased to look back on a very exciting February for Arts Advocates. The month included many successful events, kicking off with the opening of Jana Millstone's "A Crooked Path" exhibit and Art Talk in the Gallery. Notably, this event was standing room only, culminating with the sale of three of Jana's artworks.

Our February member's luncheon featured an interesting presentation by Jake Hartvigsen, WEDU's Associate Director of Marketing and Community Partnerships, offering an insightful overview of WEDU's rich history, arts programming, and upcoming initiatives.

The Arts Advocates Gallery buzzed with activity, hosting a Book Club meeting, the Players Theatre Opening Night VIP event, an engaging Art Talk with Jamiel Law, and an enriching workshop led by Alexandria Lillis. Additionally, members enjoyed exclusive experiences such as an Art and Backstage Tour at the Van Wezel, and a tour of the Asolo Repertory Theatre and the Koski Center.

On February 6, the Executive Board unanimously decided to sponsor the Arts section, known as a "sidebar," of the upcoming Sarasota Film Festival. This series will spotlight films centered around visual arts, performing arts and architecture. See page 9 for more information about this exciting collaboration.

This month our Gallery will take center stage as we welcome Roger Lightle, who will be showcasing and selling some of his original Highwaymen art March 2 to 3 and March 22 to 24. Curtis Arnett, one of the original 26 Highwaymen, will grace our Gallery on March 23rd.

Looking ahead, we have an exciting array of programs and events scheduled for the remainder of 2024. Stay updated 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



Bill Rusling, President

Arts Advocates Gallery to Host Rare Highwaymen Exhibit

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. Some prints will also be available.

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 see such a large selection of 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! Those who do purchase an original piece will receive a free copy of Gary Monroe's book, *The Highwaymen: Florida's African-American Landscape Painters*.

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.

MARCH MEMBER ARTIST EXHIBIT

LYNN ARMSTRONG COFFIN – “FULL CIRCLE”

Lynn Armstrong Coffin received her BFA in Illustration and Graphic Design from the University of Georgia and began a diverse career in advertising. She has also worked as an upscale kitchen designer, written and illustrated children's books and sculpted political figures. Now Lynn has turned her skills to the world of contemporary art. She is proud to be exhibiting her most recent large scale works and prints at the Arts Advocates Gallery in March 2024.

The CIRCLE symbol in her latest works is used as a profound metaphor of the cyclical journey of life and our place in it. The circle always returns upon itself and is a strong graphic reminder that our actions today will have repercussions in the future.

With this in mind, and being concerned about the environment, she challenges herself to recycle and use discarded materials whenever possible. Experimenting with everything from cardboard and plaster to cast-off building materials, the resulting artwork is always creative and one of a kind. Using different tools and techniques and drawing upon her graphic design background and love of minimalism, she has discovered her own unique style and a satisfying direction for her work.



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

OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday, March 9 | 2-4pm

Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key

Above Left: Peace
Above Right: Suspended Balance 2

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

FEMALE ARTISTS IN OUR COLLECTION

In recognition of Women's History Month, we proudly salute the female artists included in the Arts Advocates permanent collection.



Seadrift – Carol Baumgartner



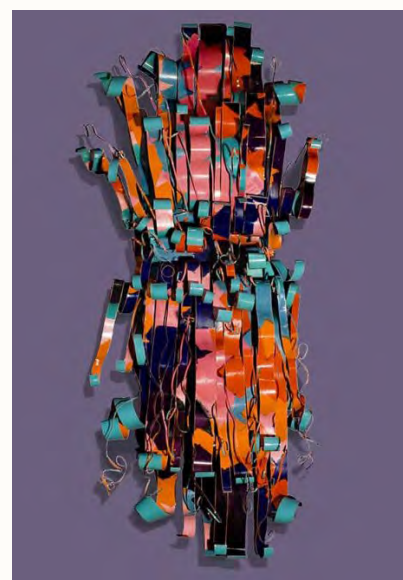
Beach Garden Series – Beth Arthur



Skimmers – Judy Axe



The Third Ring – Martha Hartman



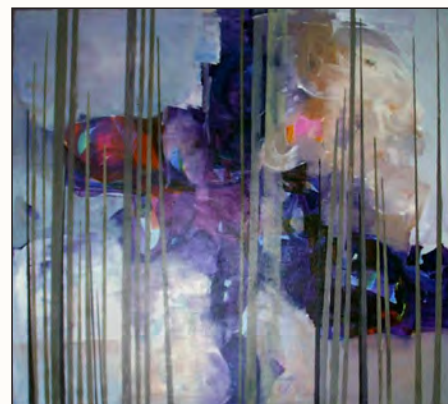
Song of the Rain Dance – Dorothy Gillespie



Pressing Leaves – Lynn Davidson



White Dress – Shirley Clement



Untitled Abstract – Glenna Finch

FEMALE ARTISTS IN OUR COLLECTION



Untitled – Emily Holmes



The Portal –Lois Bartlett Tracy



Marius' Daughter –
Helena Poto



Ryugu-Jo Palace –
Akiko Sugiyama



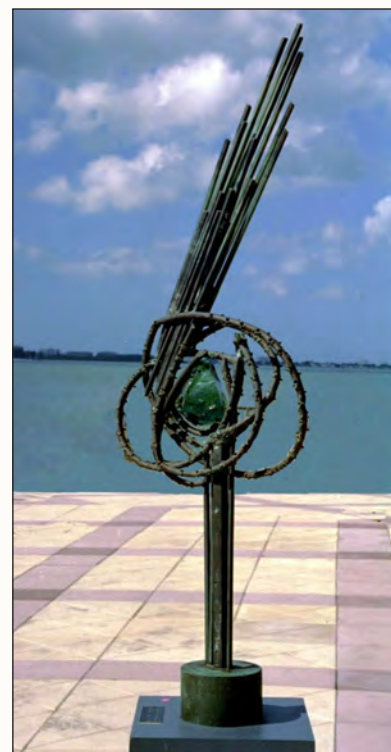
Center Ring – Mary Sarg Murphy



Summer – Helen Sawyer



Lil Darlin – Jessica Hartman



The Secret – Sophie Johnstone

Where Are They Now?

A CONTINUING SERIES ABOUT ARTS ADVOCATES SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

Courtney Smith

2022-23 SARASOTA COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER OF THE YEAR

Recently, our Scholarship Committee co-chairs had the privilege of touring the Visual and Performing Arts (VPA) campus at Booker High School. Courtney Smith, our enthusiastic tour guide, is the current VPA Director as well as Chair of the Dance Department. Courtney, a former VPA Booker student, was a multi-year scholarship recipient from the Fine Arts Society of Sarasota (FASS), receiving her first award in 2001 to attend the University of Florida. Courtney shared that receiving the scholarship allowed her to graduate debt-free. Furthermore, she states, "It confirmed a skill and talent in myself, securing the knowledge that I was, in fact, good enough to pursue my passion."

After graduating with a BFA in Dance, Courtney departed Florida to begin a dance career that took her around the country performing with local and national dance companies. She also performed with a Tampa-based choreographer in Colombia, South America.

"Though I didn't speak Spanish and many didn't speak English, we shared an understanding through movement. We connected in ways that eliminated the barrier of language. It showed the power of dance at its finest!"

Courtney eventually chose to return to the arts community in Sarasota to teach at numerous studios, high schools and colleges in the region. She co-founded Moving Ethos Dance Company and co-directed it until 2015. With her heart clearly in education, she dedicated herself to her alma mater, Booker High School, as their Artistic Director of the Dance Program in 2018. Last year she was named High School Teacher of the Year in Sarasota County. She continues her own education path and this year will complete her Master's in Education.

Courtney states that providing financial support to young adults is so much more than simply paying a bill. "When you understand that someone believes in you so much that they are willing to put their money towards your future, the level of purpose and brilliance rises beyond measure." She believes support of the arts is a necessary component for the morality of our culture, for the connection of our people, and the hope of the future.



WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

THE FIRST LADY OF THE HIGHWAYMEN

In celebration of Women's History Month, Arts Advocates is proud to present a history lecture on the legacy of Mary Ann Carroll, the only woman among a group of 26 African American artists, now called the Florida Highwaymen. The lecture, titled "The First Lady of the Highwaymen," will be presented by her daughter, Dr. Renee Mills. After the lecture, attendees will have the opportunity to "meet and mingle" with Dr. Mills.

Advance registration is required and limited to 50 guests. Click on the link below to register.

Date: Wednesday, March 27 | 2-4:30pm

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

Cost: FREE for members; \$20 for nonmembers



[REGISTER HERE.](#)



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.](#)



COLLABORATION WITH THE SARASOTA FILM FESTIVAL

ARTS ADVOCATES TO SPONSOR ARTS FILMS AT SFF

Arts Advocates is excited to announce our sponsorship of the “Arts Sidebar” of the 2024 Sarasota Film Festival! The sidebar consists of a series of arts-related films that will be screened during the festival, to be held **April 5–24**.

This sponsorship presents a unique opportunity to fulfill our mission of promoting arts organizations in our community, including both the Film Festival and, in this case, Arts Advocates itself. Our logo and graphic ad will be shown on-screen prior to each showing of the art-related films, and there will be an announcement that those screenings are “presented by Arts Advocates.”

In addition, Arts Advocates will be featured in a half-page ad in the festival's 2024 film guide, which is distributed to 50,000 people in the Sarasota-Manatee area, and in a news blast to over 15,000 SFF followers. Our logo and a link to our website will be included on the SFF web page, as well.

Be sure to review the Sarasota Film Festival program guide when it becomes available and select a few films to see!



SAVE THE DATE FOR THE GIVING CHALLENGE

The Community Foundation of Sarasota County is sponsoring its biyearly “Giving Challenge,” an online fundraiser for nonprofit organizations, to be held from noon to noon, **April 9 – 10**. Through the generosity of The Patterson Foundation, individual contributions up to \$100 will be matched. Of course, you can always donate more than \$100.

In addition, an anonymous donor has given \$5,000 to Arts Advocates to match our donations, dollar for dollar, during the Giving Challenge!

Our combined donations will be matched up to \$5,000. Your generosity, coupled with these matching gifts, will make an enormous difference in support of our scholarships, our art collection and our many other programs.

So please give generously to make the most of your contribution. We will be contacting you soon with instructions on how to donate. We hope you will ask your friends, relatives, and business associates to donate to Arts Advocates. Thank you for your continued support of our organization!



Presented by the
Community Foundation of Sarasota County

APRIL LUNCHEON PROGRAM

BANNED BOOKS: WHAT PEOPLE ARE READING

Bookstore 1 Sarasota

Georgia Court, Owner

Bryn Durgin, Assistant Manager & Director of Programming

Thirteen years ago, Georgia Court was dismayed to hear that Sarasota's only downtown bookstore was closing. Not being able to imagine a city without such an important fixture, she opened her own! Bookstore 1 was born.

Today, the highly successful store hosts several of their own book clubs including one with an intriguing focus: banned books. This monthly gathering is "dedicated to reading and protecting the most important and threatened books of our generation." Organizer Bryn Durgin has gathered a selection of these titles and reinforces that these books are always available for purchase, transport and in private libraries. Generally, to ban a book today is to remove it from the shelves of an accessible public location, primarily a library.

Nonetheless, these controversial titles can become renowned, as demonstrated by this book club's popularity! Come hear what interesting content your Sarasota neighbors are reading at our April 18th luncheon.

Date: Thursday, April 18 | 11am - 1pm

Place: Sarasota Yacht Club, 1100 Ringling Blvd.

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

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, March 11

Monday, April 15

1:30-3pm

Place: Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

Cost: \$15

APRIL MEMBER ARTIST EXHIBIT

ELISABETH TROSTLI: *FIERCE AND FABULOUS*

In April, the Arts Advocates Gallery presents Elisabeth Trostli's Fierce and Fabulous exhibit of digital paintings on canvas and paper. Each of Ms. Trostli's diverse, fierce and fabulous women holds the key to the secret wisdom and strength of the Feminine, inviting the viewer to follow their own journey of visual discovery.

ARTIST'S VISION: This new collection, created in 2022, conveys the artist's ideas about the strength and beauty inherent in us all. Ms. Trostli combines her profound understanding of the true nature of the fantastical, and her exceptional skill as a digital artist and surface designer to convey a unique, totally original artistic vision. A closer look is needed to appreciate lovely elements from which the luminous images emerge.

THE INSPIRATION: The paintings in this exhibition are inspired by the artist's own visual references and travels, vintage scientific engravings, Steampunk, Pre-Raphaelite and Baroque sources, Celtic, Asian and African mythology, medieval knights and armor, tribal textiles and Victorian jewelry.

OPENING RECEPTION: Saturday, April 6 | 2-4pm

EXHIBIT DATES: Every Saturday in April | 2-4pm

PLACE: Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key, 3501 S. Tamiami Trail, Sarasota

COST: FREE



APRIL ART TALK AND DEMO

In conjunction with her show, artist Elisabeth Trostli will present "From Digital Painting to AI," when she will discuss and demonstrate her artistic process in the creation of her work on the computer. Surrounded by unique images of intricately detailed fantasy portraits of women warriors, geishas, divas and angels, you will be amazed by the possibilities of digital artistry. This event is FREE, but please reserve a seat by clicking on the link below.

Date: Tuesday, April 9 | 4-6pm

Place: Arts Advocates Gallery, The Crossings at Siesta Key

Cost: Free for members/\$5 nonmembers

REGISTER HERE.



APRIL WORKSHOP

INTRODUCTION TO MIXED MEDIA AND COLLAGE WITH A FLORAL FOCUS

Using floral imagery, this fast-paced workshop introduces students to the basics of combining mixed media techniques with collage. With guidance focused on process and mixed media techniques, students will create one 6x9-inch floral piece on watercolor paper. Instructor Susan Hurwitch will provide hands-on instruction in a supportive environment. All skill levels welcome.

Students should bring paintbrushes, acrylic paint and a plastic tablecloth. All other supplies will be provided by the instructor.

Date: Saturday, April 27 | 12–2:30pm

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

Cost: \$45



REGISTER HERE.



Artist Cecile Moran has donated *Radiant Sunrise* for the raffle prize at our luncheon on March 14th.

The artist employs an acrylic resist technique and adds gold leaf accents. The piece measures 16"x20". Register for the luncheon on our website for your chance to win this beautiful painting!

REGISTER HERE.





◀ **February Luncheon Program:**
Programs Committee Chair Nancy Roucher welcomed speaker Jake Hartvigsen of WEDU/PBS to our February luncheon.

Art Talk: ▶

Beverly Burger, left, presented Elisabeth Trostli's artwork to raffle winner Sharon Saatsoglou at February's luncheon.



◀ **Asolo/Koski Tour:**

Arts Advocates members enjoyed a private tour of AsoloRep's Mertz Theatre as well as the Koski Center, which provides space for rehearsals, set construction and storage of props, costumes and set pieces.



◀ **February Art Talk :**

Jamiel Law captivated his audience of Arts Advocates members with the story of his success as an illustrator.



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

[Fluid Impressions: The Paintings of Syd Solomon](#)

Sarasota Ballet

[Ballet Hispanico](#)

Florida Studio Theatre

[Up on the Roof](#)

Sarasota Opera

[Carmen](#)

Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall

[Hamilton](#)

save the dates

- + **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 Reception | 2-4pm
- + **March 11**
Van Wezel Tour | 1:30-3pm
- + **March 21**
March Luncheon: ensembleNewSRQ | 11am-1pm
- + **March 27**
First Lady of the Highwaymen Lecture | 2-4:30pm
- + **March 30**
Beaded Necklace Workshop | 12-2pm
- + **April 5-24**
Sarasota Film Festival | Various times
- + **April 6**
Elisabeth Trostli Reception | 2-4pm
- + **April 9**
Art Talk: Elisabeth Trostli | 4-6pm
- + **April 9-10**
Giving Challenge | 12n-12n
- + **April 15**
Van Wezel Tour | 1:30-3pm
- + **April 18**
April Luncheon: Banned Books | 11am-1pm
- + **April 19**
Book Club | 5-6pm
- + **April 27**
Floral Collage Workshop | 12-2:30pm