

OUR NEXT MEETING IS...
Tuesday, February 3rd, 2026

Starting promptly at **7:00 p.m**



📍 **Mahany/Meininger Community Center**
3500 Marias, Royal Oak - Room's 8 & 9
(North at the light off 13 Mile between
Main and Crooks)

Meetings are the first Tuesday of each Month unless otherwise noted.

Updates & Highlights

REMINDER

- **Royal Oak Symphony Partnership:** SOAA will showcase and sell artwork at select concerts—next up March 13 at 7:30 PM at Royal Oak Middle School, featuring a live painting by John Nagridge.
- **New Chamber Membership:** SOAA has joined the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce, expanding promotional opportunities year-round.
- **Future Exhibit Talks:** Discussions are underway with the Royal Oak Community Center about hosting a future show.
- **Media Coverage:** An upcoming article in Royal Oak Today magazine is in the works thanks to Melissa Wilson, with outreach to Royal Oak City Lifestyle ongoing.
- **Current Exhibition:** Detroit Zoo Camouflage runs through February 28, 2026.
- **McNamara Terminal Update:** Final language is being finalized for a four-month display alongside Pewabic Pottery—interested artists should email SOAA@gmail.com.

“Hello!



My name is Andrea Slomczenski, local artist and muralist, and I'm excited to continue bringing you the latest news and updates as your newsletter editor! As we dive into our second newsletter of the year, I want to thank you all for the warm welcome. Stepping into this role after Carol Card's amazing work has been an honor, and I'm eager to continue building on the foundation she set.

I hope you're enjoying the new design and format of the newsletter. If you'd like to know more about me and my work, feel free to visit Andreaajs.com and check out the "About" section.

I look forward to keeping you informed and inspired with all the happenings at SOAA throughout the year. Happy reading!



Mini-Masters - An SOAA Fundraiser

Now's the time - to refresh our stock for mini-masters. Those small 5"x7" masterpieces you, our members and friends, donate to the Mini-Master Program, really do make a difference. We would like to request everyone take a bit of time and create for the cause. Blank Canvas Boards are usually available at our meetings and if Watercolor or other mediums are more your specialty, we can arrange to have pre-cut paper available too.

Current Exhibitions

Detroit Zoo Camouflage running November 1, 2025 -February 28th 2026.

Art in the McNamara Terminal Update

We should have the final language to sign sometime soon to display along with Pewabic Pottery. It will be a 4 month run. Please make sure to email SOAA@gmail.com if you are interested in displaying some work for this.

Currently these artists have expressed interest, but we know there is more:

Winnie Chrzanowski
Kathy Pare
Melissa Wilson
Noah Ford
Joyce Coyne
Andrea Slomczenski
Cynthia Gould
John Nagridge
Jean Garrett



For more details -
southoaklandart.com

Member Feature -

SHOW YOUR ARTWORK ON OUR WEBSITE

Another advantage of membership – our member artwork section on our SOAA website – southoaklandart.com. It's easy to do and allows us to show off the talents of our membership. Take a photo of each artwork you would like to display and send along with a short bio and possibly a photo of yourself to be used in your section. Photos should be in jpeg format – 8 or fewer photos.



Send to Webmaster
John Rash (rash.john1@gmail.com)
with your contact information.

President's Report

Dear Members of the South Oakland Art Association,



Hello all you wonderful artists!!

We have a LOT going on and some great opportunities coming up!!

We are partnering with the Royal Oak Symphony Orchestra and are invited to show/sell artwork at their concerts!! The next concert is March 13th at 7:30pm at the Royal Oak middle school, formerly Dondero high school, 709 N Washington Ave.

Our own John Nagridge will be doing a live painting during the show! How awesome is that?

We also joined the Royal Oak Chamber of Commerce and they will be advertising for us I think once a month plus whenever we have a show going on.

I'll be talking to the Royal Oak community center and seeing if we can arrange a show at that location.

My goal over the next couple years is to create a place where all metro Detroit artists can go to find out when and where to sell their art and connect with other like minded artists.

Also Melissa has worked with Royal Oak Today magazine and they will have an article coming out in the near future about S.O.A.A so that's super awesome!! Thanks Melissa!!

I have contacted Royal Oak city lifestyle magazine about doing another article for us and I'm waiting to hear back from them.

Last but not least... This Organization runs on VOLUNTEERS... So please consider volunteering in some capacity. If you have a heart for helping out we would greatly appreciate you!!! Helping out doesn't take a lot of time and it's rewarding to know you played a part 😊

Thank you John Nagridge for volunteering to handle the Membership position!!

Noah Ford - President
South Oakland Art Association

February Speaker

Leigh Wright



Automatic Drawing and Memory

Leigh Wright earned her BFA from MSU in printmaking and Drawing and her MA in painting from EMU.

She was an art educator for 34 years at the high school level for 34 years and an adjunct professor at Kendall College of Art and Design.

She served on the board of the Southeastern Michigan Scholastic Art Awards . Her work has been included in group shows in Traverse City,MI, Concord,Ma, Clifton Springs, NY,&the Scarab Club in Detroit, Michigan.

Her art is an exploration of automatic drawing and abstraction with a focus on color, and organic and botanical forms.



2025-2026 SOAA Board Members

Noah Ford - President

Melissa Wilson - Programs & Exhibits

Rachel Kaltner - Vice President, Outreach Lead, & Membership

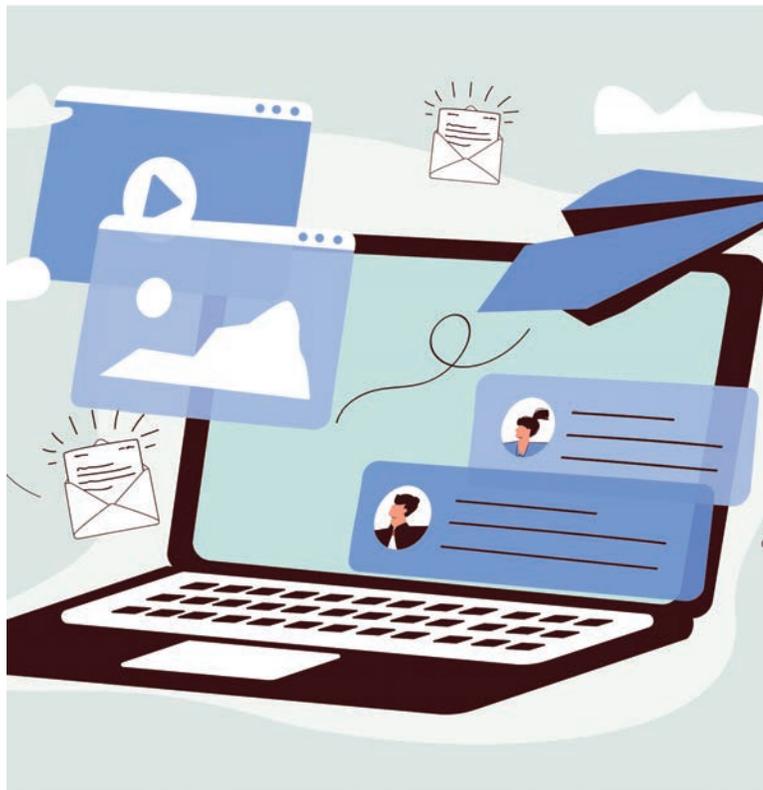
Susan Donnellon - Treasurer, Corresponding Secretary, Hospitality

Joyce Knight-Coyne - Recording Secretary, Artist of The Month & Awards

John Rash - Webmaster (rash.john1@gmail.com)

Andrea Slomczenski - Newsletter Editor (Andreajs.illustrations@gmail.com)

To unsubscribe, send an email with subject "Unsubscribe to Newsletter" to Andrea S. above.



It's Time!

For Facebook Fame.

We would like to start a new feature on our Facebook page where we feature the art and a short bio of each of our artists. Only one artist will be featured at a time. Once it's posted, feel free to share it on your FB page or anywhere you like. Let's promote the fine artists we have here in the South Oakland Art Association.

If you'd like to participate, please go to
<http://nagridge.com/soaa>.

There will be a pdf for you to download with the instructions.

My hope is to feature an artist once or twice a week. I look forward to featuring you. Let me know if you have any questions or problems submitting the art or the form.

-John Nagridge

2026-2027 Calendar of Events

Feb. 3, 2026	Leigh Wright Painter
March 3, 2026	Melissa Wilson - Empty Bowls
April 7, 2026	Laurie Tennent Botanical Photographer
May 5, 2026	Cynthia Gould Painting Demo on different additives & paint mediums.
June 2, 2026	Ice Cream Social/ Artist of The Year
Sep. 8, 2026	
Oct. 6, 2026	
Nov. 10, 2026	
Dec. 1, 2026	

At Our Meeting...

Please Be On Time

1. Please sign in and take a name tag.
2. If you bring a guest, have them sign in and introduce them to some of our members :)
3. Place your snack item in the provided space.
4. **DON'T FORGET** - Members, set up your artwork for our Artist of the Month Competition.

Membership

We hope you will consider joining us as a member.

Annual Dues are \$30 individual or \$35 to include a second adult family member at the same address. Your dues go for programs, shows, awards and supplies. Payments can be made by cash or check made out to South Oakland Art Assn. OR by Credit Card - (*using a credit card will incur a 4% added service charge.*) We would love to have you join us! Bring a friend to any meeting for \$5.



Painting Classes... WITH JOHN RASH

Painting - All Media
Thursdays, 9:15 a.m - 11:45 a.m

Painting - Watercolor
Fridays, 9:15 a.m - 11:45 a.m
Wednesdays, 6:15 p.m - 8:45 p.m

Generally, 8 Classes = \$65. These classes are held at the Mahany/Meininger Community Ctr. 3500 Marias, Royal Oak.



Information: 248-246-3900

Unlock Your Artistic Potential with Private Lessons by Melissa Wilson

Are you interested in private art lessons? Look no further! Melissa Wilson, an award-winning art teacher, is here to guide you on your artistic journey. Melissa specializes in a variety of mediums, including Oil, Watercolor, Encaustic, Ceramics, Photography, and so much more. Whether you're a beginner eager to learn or an experienced artist looking to refine your skills, Melissa offers private lessons tailored to your needs.

- Each private session lasts 2.5 hours and is just \$50 per session.

Contact Melissa today to schedule your private art lesson and "unleash your creativity!"



melissawilson192@gmail.com

Bringing Walls to Life: Got walls?

Muralists and Artist's Andrea Slomczenski and Juliana Rabban are always on the lookout for new mural projects and creative collaborations in the Metro Detroit/ Detroit Area. With a shared passion for transforming spaces through vibrant, large-scale artwork, we're excited to bring our unique styles and experiences to both outdoor and indoor spaces.

From community projects to commercial or residential spaces, each mural either of us create is designed to reflect the spirit of the community and the vision of our clients. Recent projects always remind us how powerful art can be in shaping and uplifting spaces. If you have a friend, friend of a friend, family member, or other who is looking for a muralist - we can help bring it to life!

You can view Andrea's work at andreajs.com or visit her instagram [@AndreaSztuka](https://www.instagram.com/AndreaSztuka).
Andreajs.illustrations@gmail.com

You can view Juliana's work at justbyjuliana.com or visit her instagram [@justbyjuliana](https://www.instagram.com/justbyjuliana)
justbyjuliana@gmail.com

Do you know who else paints murals? SOAA member **Joyce Coyne!** sandybeadsllc@gmail.com
Check out the SOAA Member Updates and Happenings page of the newsletter to see some of her latest projects!



SOAA - South Oakland Art Association Group



@SouthOaklandArt



@South.Oakland.Art

Artists of The Month

SOAA Artist of The Month Contest Rules

1. You must be an SOAA member in attendance to enter artwork in the monthly contest.
2. All artwork must be submitted by **7:00 p.m.**
Voting ends at **7:15 p.m**
3. Artists may enter two pieces of art each month. They do not need to be entered in the same category.
4. First & Second Place Awards will be given in each category. In the event of a tie, both winners will receive an award.
5. Anyone attending the meeting may vote for the Artists of The Month.
6. Winners are announced at the end of the meeting and will have their photo taken for our newsletter.
7. Once a piece of art has been entered in the Artist of The Month contest, it cannot be entered again.
8. When a piece of art borders on two categories, the Awards Chair may assist with category selection with artist agreement. Some art would fit in multiple categories.

January Artist's Of The Month

Portrait Category



1st Place; Melissa Wilson
Title; Cat Portrait



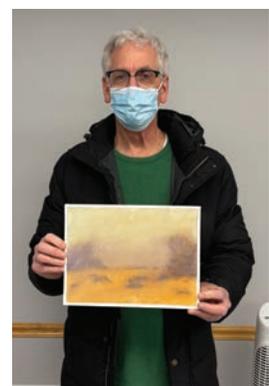
2nd Place; Susan Donnellon
Title; Cardinal

3-D Category



1st Place; Jean Garrett
Title; 2 Felt Purses

Abstract Category



1st Place; John Rash
Title; Abstract #1

Representational Category



1st Place; John Nagridge
Title; Octobers Offerings



1st Place; Paul Stema
Title; Meadow



1st Place; Melissa Ringey
Title; South Pond Sunset



2nd Place; Adam Bigham
Title; Blame



2nd Place; Saron Moehr
Title; Lunch Break

What's in your Nature?

Plein Air Painting: John Nagridge

It's no secret I'm a big fan of plein air art and enjoy advocating the making of it. I'm sure you also know I also like to post artwork from SOAA members on Facebook. During our summer break, I'd love to do both.

If anyone of you do a plein air sketch, drawing, or painting and are willing to share it on Facebook, please email your piece to me at johnnagridge@gmail.com. make sure it's a nice jpg, png, or tif file. Also let me know its title, size, and medium your piece is. I also encourage you to let me know the location you painted it and add any type of story about what inspired you to do this particular scene.

Please don't be intimidated by the term "plein air." It's just a fancy term for doing a drawing or painting of an outdoor scene in front of you. It could be done on a vacation scene, a local park, or even in your own yard.



Photo taken by: Sandi Cook-Poirier

On a separate, but related, note, I've also been posting about **plein air events throughout metro Detroit on Facebook**. If you don't go on Facebook but would like to know about some of these events, *feel free to ask me by email and I'll reply with links to the events.*

If you want to get better at landscape drawing or painting, there's no better way than to do it from life instead of from photos. *Take your pencils, pens, and paints outside and have a good time capturing Nature as only you can see it.*



INDEPENDENT ART STUDIO FOR PAINTERS

Wednesday afternoons 1-3:30 p.m.

Fee: \$2 residents

\$2.50 non-residents

Drop-in painting space at

Royal Oak Sr. Community Center

3500 Marais, Royal Oak

Adults of all ages welcome

**Bring your painting supplies and join
a fun group of artists who love to
work alongside others while enjoying
conversation and friendship.**