

Let's Get Creative Together

A Fresh Canvas for 2026 Welcome to a New Year of Color and Community

As we step into a new year, the first two months have already brought a welcome sense of momentum to our guild. The January regular meeting gave us time to reconnect after the holidays, spark new ideas, and ease back into the rhythm of creating together. From shared inspiration to hands-on exploration, these early days set a thoughtful and energizing tone for the year.

Our Guild officers for the new year are:

President: Deborah Stroud

Vice President: Kari Cornwell

Treasurer: Karen Kohlmayer

Secretary: Barclay Sharon

Board Member: Venaye McGlashan

Board Member: Angela Tucciarone

January Oil Painting Workshop with Deborah Stroud



Everyone had a wonderful time, and Deborah's students shared that she was an outstanding instructor. April Hawkins served as an assistant in her role as Artist in Residence.

The monthly meeting of the Fripp Island Art Guild for February was something extra! Our guest artist and speaker, Sonja Giffin Evans, dazzled with both her artwork and her outstanding talent for storytelling. Our audience was literally on the edge of their seats while Sonja, a self-taught artist, told of her Gullah heritage, her early years in the US Army and how she came to paint her first renowned piece entitled “Freedom’s Door,” which is now held in the collection of late civil rights leader John Lewis.

The Gullah people, decedents of enslaved Central and West Africans targeted for their expertise in growing rice, indigo, and Sea Island cotton, speak their truth from every painting by Evans. Their faith, resilience, and grace shine through every canvas.



The painting above, titled “First Decoration Day,” is a personal favorite. Sonja delivered a compelling account of the events that took place on May 1, 1865, in Charleston. This occasion was primarily organized by black residents and the Gullah community as a patriotic tribute to the 257 Union soldiers who perished in a Confederate prisoner of war camp. More than 3,000 children participated by bringing flowers to adorn the graves. Evans highlighted how the South Carolina landscape transforms into the American flag, symbolizing the moment when enslaved communities began to recognize that the country which once oppressed them now belonged to them as well.



“High Cotton,” created following a visit to the McLeod Plantation—a Charleston Gullah/Geechee heritage site—taught Evans that Sea Island cotton can reach heights of 6 to 8 feet and must be harvested every 10 days. She related that her subjects wonder why they would bring this stuff back after seeds were discovered in a Department of Agriculture vault and that they won’t be pickin’.



Gullah
Shrimper
a proud
member of the
community
able to provide
for his family



Gullah Gold
a series
showcasing the
grass baskets that
are such a part of
the Gullah culture



The evening ended with Sonja fielding questions from the audience, continuing with stories and wisdom from her career, travels, and her time spent growing up around the Beaufort area. The Art Guild is grateful for her time and passion for sharing her amazing story.

We are also thankful for the lovely Lynn Russell who provided Gullah goodies and refreshments for the event.

Mosaic Workshop

The Introduction to Mosaics hosted by Tatiana Tatum on February 7 found the participants stating, "We are just piecing things together."
Thank you, Tatiana, for sharing your skills and talent!



Reminders



Monthly Meeting
March 3
7 pm
Community Center

Creative Writing: Where to find inspiration for content and illustration with Mary Jacobs and Robin Prince Monroe

The Guild will be serving wine - bring your favorite snack to share!

Not on the island? Join by Zoom. Just register and include that you will join via Zoom, and a link will be sent to you

Rsvp



Beginner Metal Clay Jewelry Workshop with Janet Berkeley
March 7
10am to 4pm



Curious about metal clay jewelry but not sure where to start? This beginner friendly class is the perfect introduction. You will learn the basics of working with metal clay--from shaping, texturing, and refining your design to firing and polishing your finished piece. No experience is necessary.

\$115 for Members / \$130 for Non-Members
Firing of finished piece will be done off site and mailed.
Fee includes the shipping. Register Here:

RSVP

Community Dinner/March 11

The Art Guild will sponsor the Community dinner in March, and members will be donating handmade door prizes. Please consider donating something special to lend a touch of artistic flair to the evening.

We would love to have you as a member of the Guild!

Go to the new website:

frippislandartguild.org

You can explore the levels of membership available to both hobbyists and professional artists. Be sure to check out the Evergreen memberships for exceptional participation fees and extra VIP access to Guild related gallery events.

