



PERSPECTIVES

newsletter

September 2025 This newsletter is published by and for the Brandon League of Fine Arts Volume 66 / Issue 9

BLFA has been serving the needs of the Greater Brandon, Florida area art community since 1959.

September MEMBERSHIP MEETING



Guests are always welcome!

Join us on

Monday, September 15, 2025, 6:30 pm

Creative Junk Therapy • 772 W. Lumsden Road

This month's workshop to create a fused glass pendant will be presented by Beth Kaufman, local artist known for her stained glass and jewelry, who will be providing all supplies for the demonstration.

We are asking participants to make a donation to cover Beth's generous offer of supplies. The finished articles will be available for pickup at a time TBA. What an exciting introduction to the kiln and ornamental jewelry! Thanks, Beth!

Letter from the President

You never can tell how high your abilities will reach.

As an artist the ember of creation is there when you're a little kid, and may spark up later when you're in school, or burst into a ball of fire sometime in your later years. No matter when that urge comes running to the front of the line in your life, there's always more to learn, greater ideas just bubbling below the surface, and some amazing project right there over the horizon.

Sometimes I think of a young music star, starting with nothing but a dream of standing in front of thousands of adoring, screaming fans...and then...it really happens...Now what? That roaring, pulsing mob of worshipful humanity calling for more! They must at some point think to themselves - been there, done that...(yawn). The life goal achieved at 19. Poor things...

So maybe some disheartening moments in life are actually what keeps you striving - one more hill to peek



over, a long beautiful road leading to who knows where.

We may never even get where we want, but oh what a magnificent journey!

David Bodo, President
Brandon League of Fine Arts
bodoartworks@gmail.com

SHOW AND TELL

During the September meeting we will have a helpful presentation by Michele Young, who will advise us on **how to pack for an Art Outing event**. The excitement of attending one of these destination art occasions is reason enough to plan what to take so you have materials available when your creative inspiration arrives. Karen Koseck will helpfully (and humorously!) provide her suggestions on what NOT to pack!

Email BLFABrandon@gmail.com to sign up for a **SHOW AND TELL** date in 2026. At every meeting a maximum of two members can present (five minutes + or -) on any current or past artwork, projects or ideas.



BRANDON LEAGUE OF FINE ARTS

Current Board Members & Chairs

Directors

David Bodo	President
Guy Learn	Vice President
Karen Koseck	Treasurer
Carol Stebbins	Secretary

Key Chairpersons

Photography.....	Guy Learn
Membership	Carol Stebbins
Community Outreach.....	Jennifer Milone
Art Outings.....	Michele Young
Website/Newsletter.....	David Bahm
Refreshments.....	Carol Stebbins
BLFA Shows	Guy Learn
Revolving Exhibits.....	Roxanne Tobaison
	Marsha Nelson, back up

A call to any members for your magical talents in helping the League!

Love talking to people? We need more **Community Outreach** volunteers to join Jennifer for regular advertising on social media, website and in-person promotions. Also need a **Munchie Manager** – someone to coordinate the refreshments we all enjoy each meeting.

Have ideas and want to help BLFA grow?
We need your help!

Please contact the board members for info.
BLFABrandon@gmail.com!



Plant City Main Street Art in the Park

is set to blossom
with creativity on
November 22, 2025.

Hours:
10 am to 7 pm

Participants need to sign up to reserve a booth.
They sell out fast, so reserve yours!

For more information:

www.plantcitymainstreet.org/art-in-the-park

Hello BLFA members,

With much regret, I'm announcing that our exhibits at Bay Area Cardiology have come to an end. It has been a very long, productive merger and we have had many sales, comments and great years. Bay Area had also funded each year "From the Heart Awards." They are now under new management and changes happen.

With this venue closing, League efforts are underway to find new exhibit opportunities. So be on the lookout for any location that may have promise and reply to this email. One chapter closes and others – open!

For those who have enjoyed the chance to display your work, thanks for all the participation in the past and now future opportunities.

Roxanne Tobaison
BLFA Rotating Exhibits Chair

Artist Jessica Castrodad

By Guy Learn

Back in November of 1996 Warner Brothers released the movie "Space Jam." The film received mixed reviews from some enigmatic entity called "the critics," and maybe a bit more favorable response from the public. But to an eleven-year-old Jessica, the movie was a magic kit. The charismatic antics of stars like Michael Jordan and Bugs Bunny became a muse of inspiration that just begged Jessica to begin doodling, as she calls it. But I like to call it "art."



Logically speaking, her creations are simply a combination of mediums that result in some two- or three-dimensional images. But "logic" is short-sighted and just doesn't get it. It's all about the human reaction to the work, and ironically, it's her less-than-human characters that invoke that all-important human response in us. As a result, her creations often get more than a passing glance, and like that movie, her art results in charismatic images and objects that invoke a pleasant response from the public. Their lively appearance and expressions seem to conjure up a whimsical connection that can have the viewers' minds wanting to interject some cartoon voice that they might think appropriate to the character or possibly even some magical expectation of interaction with the piece.



Many of us are inspired by various artists who have excelled in our chosen facets of this world. For Jessica, she has a true appreciation for the likes of these for their pleasant, lively creations: comic book artist J. Scott Campbell, pin-up painter Gil Elvgren, and Japanese

artists Shunya Yamashita and Yayoi Kusama (known as the queen of polka-dots).

Now, for those wanting to improve themselves in the more traditional arts, finding instruction in that endeavor isn't really difficult. But with one notable exception, finding instruction for Jessica's style of art isn't readily available. She has taken art classes when she's had the chance, and then in a very resourceful approach to her interests, she's found it most useful watching the cartoons she's admired, with the real focus of the sessions being on the figures as opposed to the story lines. While doing so, she would pause (picture in picture) and do her best to redraw the cartoons. Favorites for such exercises were the likes of Looney Tunes and maybe Roger Rabbit.

I mentioned an exception to available instruction, and it's a very significant one. In instances where she does want to look for assistance or tips in some of her creations, she needs to go no further than her own home, as her husband Noel is a talented artist with a natural gift for assisting others. But we can save any discussion on him for a whole different *Artist Spotlight* article.

I'm guessing that most of us feel that one great thing about being an artist is the enjoyment of seeing that our work is appreciated. And for Jessica, she gets the most satisfaction from folks that are taken in by her work that combines art and function; the pieces that she knows will be used on a day-to-day basis. Then, as far as enjoyment from the actual creative process, Jessica really enjoys combining the convenience of digital drawing with bright and happy colors to portray animals and pretty female faces. Actually, her true favorite is the combination thereof: animals WITH pretty female faces. Then, in addition to delving deep into color in the digital world, she also loves a more monochrome method, and that would be the true hands-on process of working elbow-deep in her clay creations of pottery and such.



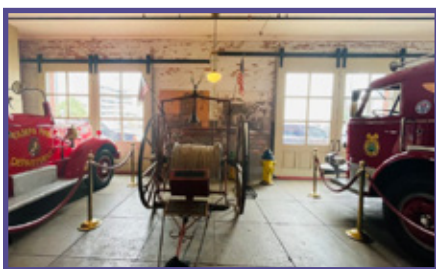
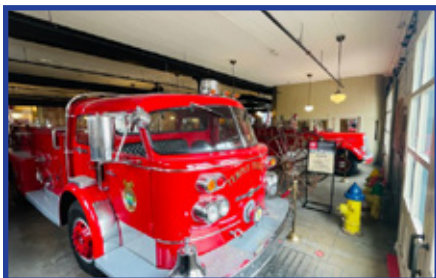
Jessica said that she has always thought that art is like magic. That said, I'm guessing that having a house filled with cartoon collectibles, to the point that it could serve as somewhat of a cartoon museum, creates an appropriate environment to help inspire more of her magic. Even so, she says the magic is still hard to master, but the humble artist keeps practicing. I'm sure we all wish her well on this continuing journey of creation, and look forward to what her next magic act produces.

If you'd like to see her creations in person, her art is on display at Creative Junk Therapy. Then, in case you might have something specific in mind that you would like to see, commission work is certainly in sync with her magic.

WHAT'S COMING UP?

Hello BLFA Creative Friends!

Come join us for sketching/drawing or taking pictures on location. It's a great way to be creative, see the sights and hang out with friends! Hope to see you there!



firefighters past, present, and future. The museum has chairs, air conditioning, and restrooms.

www.tampafirefightersmuseum.org/

The BLFA October Art Outing will be at the USF Botanical Gardens located at 12210 USF Pine Drive

The BLFA September Art Outing will be at the Firefighters Museum, 720 E. Zack Street in Tampa on Tuesday, Sept. 9 at 10 am. We will meet at the museum entrance. A \$5.00 donation is requested, and you may have to pay to park. The two-story building is a restored 1911 historic firehouse with exhibits honoring and paying tribute to

in Tampa on Saturday, Oct. 4 at 10 am. We will meet at the Plant Shop. Admission is \$5.00, parking is free. The botanical gardens have over 16 acres including a one-mile trail. The gardens focus on native Florida plants and also include exotic plants from around the world. There are benches, but you are welcome to bring a chair.

www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/ecore/where-we-are/botanical-gardens/visit.aspx

Looking Ahead... First Saturday of the month:

November – Ybor City Centennial Park

December – University of Tampa grounds (Henry B. Plant Museum Christmas Stroll optional)

January – Oxford Exchange Tampa

February – Tampa Museum of Art – Art on the House (Thursday evening)

March – Tampa Thai Palm River Temple grounds only (Possible Thai brunch)

April – Cypress Point Park/Beach Tampa

All locations subject to change



Remembering Margaret Conte

The League has lost a great talent and devoted friend of many years. Margaret Conte's passing on Thursday, August 28 has left her many League friends sharing their remembrances of friendship.

Roxanne Tobaison provides details of Margaret's artistic career.

I have known Margaret Conte as far back as I can remember. A very LONG-TIME member of the League.

She was a renowned ceramics pottery artist and exhibited in Ybor City Art Festivals for years and years. Her specialty was ceramic faces. She won many awards over her time and was in high demand.

Always the professional and after the festivals she began working with wood and making unique and interesting wood assemblages and sculptures. Always starting with some crazy funky title. In these last years she worked making incredible photo sensitive pieces – Cyanotype, sunprinting. In the previous show Margaret garnered an award – From the Heart, sponsored by Bay Area Cardiology.

In addition, Margaret has had a consigner space in Creative Junk Therapy. I don't know many people who would do such ventures in their 90s. She will be missed.



August Meeting Photos Members Show Reception

Congratulations to winners of our 2025 Members Show at Creative Junk Therapy.



Winners left to right: 1st Place – Michele Young, *Skates*. 2nd Place – Marsha Nelson, *Sandhill Crane Family*. 3rd Place – Guy Learn, *Have An Ice Day*. Honorable Mention – Karen Koseck, *Harmony*, and David Bodo, *Mermaid Cove*.

Photographing Art With Your Cell Phone

Ofentimes we want a quick picture of our art for a number of reasons, and a cell phone is the most convenient choice. So here are some tips for getting a decent image using the camera on your cell phone.

1. When possible, take the photo before the art is placed behind glass to avoid reflections. If the piece is already behind glass, you'll find that the further you are from the art, the easier it is to avoid reflections. Also, having a very dark wall or object to the photographer's back will help in this regard.

2. Pay particular attention to the art's outline in the phones viewfinder. Most pieces are rectangular or square. As such, the image on the screen should be also. If the top or bottom portion appears smaller than other, adjust the position of the camera so that they appear equal. Do the same with left to right. When positioned properly, the image on screen should be a rectangle or square, the same as the art. You may have to compromise a bit if also having to position the camera to avoid reflections.

3. Cameras being too close to the art can create a distortion in the image. If you notice curved lines instead of a rectangular or square image in the viewfinder, back away a bit.

4. Make sure the area is well lit. This doesn't just mean

enough light. Diffused light is best to avoid spots of glare. When possible, photograph the art outdoor on a cloudy day. And if it's sunny out, find a shady spot. If taking the photo indoors, avoid light sources being directly behind the photographer.

5. Try a variety of placements when taking the picture since the color in lighting can vary. After taking several photos, compare and see which final photo best matches the actual color of the art.

6. Find something solid to brace the phone against when taking the photo to avoid movement/blurring.

7. Some phones have an Edit/Cropping feature. You can use this to trim the image and even make up for a less than square image. Sometimes that means trimming just a tiny bit of the art.

8. If the size of the art is significant to where you will be sending or displaying the image, include a ruler or some common object to give some scale to the piece.

I hope this helps. But if you find that you still aren't able to get a quality photo of your art for a particular need, please contact me to see what we can work out.

Guy Learn
ArcherGuy@RocketMail.com

August Meeting Minutes

August 18, 2025

David Bodo (DB) opened the meeting at 6:36 PM and welcomed members and guests. DB reviewed the Art Outing to Armature Works the previous Saturday, when members met at the indoor food court | popular destination to paint and draw, and socialize. All who attended agreed it was a great place to gather and create, and have fun. Michele Young (MY) organized this event, and has announced September's outing at the Fire Fighters Museum Thursday, September 9, which will require a \$5 donation from attendees. Details to follow, check your email.

Beth Kaufman (BK) assisted in distributing the 50/50 tickets, \$16 was divided between the winner and the League. DB then introduced Guy Learn (GL) who organized and conducted the August members exhibit, and announced the awards: DB and Karen Koseck (KK) won Honorable Mentions. GL won Third Place, Marsha Nelson (MN) won Second Place, and MY won First Place. All participants received congratulations for a successful, and exceptional show. KK requested artists leave their art work on display through the end of the show, August 31.

KK introduced the evening's guest speaker, Bryant Martinez, a local community artist, known for Winthrop Arts (recently closed,) and Art Bear, Inc., a 501c3 Nonprofit. He currently maintains his studio, "Factory on Fifth" in Tampa, and among his many projects, teaches underserved students how to weld as a career.) After sharing his artistic journey and passions, he invited members to attend his Art Bear event October 11th, 2710 East 5th Avenue, Tampa, FL 33605.

Members enjoyed the good food and socializing, meeting closed 8:30 PM.

Membership Application

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Email: _____ Website: _____

Medium(s): _____

How did you find BLFA? _____

Membership Type: ☐ Individual \$40 ☐ Family \$50

Cash or Check only please. Make checks payable to BLFA. Please contact BLFA if you would like information about volunteer opportunities. Email us at: BLFABrandon@gmail.com

Classes at Creative Junk Therapy

Each is led by a BLFA member!
For dates and times, visit:
creativejunktherapy.org/our-events

Colored Pencils, Pastels and More
Instructed by Michele Young

Colored Pencil Basics
or Open Studio

4th Saturday 10:30 - 1:00

\$20 Beginner includes supplies OR
\$12 Open Studio BYO Supplies




Watercolor Open Studio
Instructed by Roxanne

\$25 BYO Supplies
\$5 supplies included

Learn watercolor concepts, techniques and develop your skills.




Drawing Beginners and Beyond
Hosted by Chris Klein

4th Saturday 3-6pm
\$25 per session or 4 for \$80

Explore different drawing mediums with new subjects each class




Beyond Basic Watercolor

\$25 Per Person
BYO Supplies

Ongoing class for painters who want to go beyond the basics of watercolor.



Instructed by Roxanne Tobison



Inspired Acrylic Painting

\$25 BYO supplies
\$30 Supplies included

Ongoing class for beginners or more experienced painters wanting to go beyond the basics in acrylic painting.



Instructed by Karen Koseck



Oil Painting

\$15 per session or
\$56 for 4 sessions

Wednesdays, 10:30-1:00

Join other aspiring artists in this self directed group to paint, develop and share oil painting techniques and inspiration.

*supplies not included



Facilitated by Christopher Klein



Kids Drawing Develop Your Vision
Hosted by Chris Klein

3rd Wednesday 5-7pm
\$10 per session or 4 for \$35

Kids learn basic drawing techniques and develop their skill and style

Ages 9-14




Beginner Watercolors

Facilitated by Roxanne Tobison

\$25 per person BYO supplies
+ \$5 supplies included




Art and Soul Collage

\$35 - Supplies included

Tap into your creativity and create a unique dimensional multi layered, multi medium piece of art.



Instructed by Lois Miller



Storytellers Unite
Hosts David Bodo and Carolyn Seibert

FREE

4th Friday Monthly 5-7pm

Storyteller meetup collaborating resources, ideas, stories and images