

CENTRAL ONTARIO ART ASSOCIATION

Spring
Newsletter
 <https://coaart.com/>
**PRESIDENT- ANNE WILLIAMSON**

THE FLOWERS OF LATE WINTER AND
EARLY SPRING OCCUPY PLACES IN
OUR HEARTS WELL OUT OF
PROPORTION TO THEIR SIZE." —
GERTRUDE S. WISTER

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: A SEASON OF NEW BEGINNINGS

When I was growing up my family spent summer holidays at our grandparent's cottage near Minden, Ontario. My grandfather was a character and his favourite poem was...

"Spring has sprung, the grass is risen, I wonder where the boidies isin

The boid is on the wing, but that's absoid, from what I hold,

The wing is on the boid!"

Of course, you had to 'roll your o's so bird became boid with a New York accent and it became pretty hilarious to us kids.

Apparently, this phrase or poem dates to 1940 and is sometimes credited to Ogden Nash.

So, I tell myself, Spring is around the corner despite the seven-foot snow mounds at the end of the driveway this year.

What a traditional winter we've had! We are in our 2025 Spring Show Season with Resonance. This non-juried show at the Link at Innovation Park, Waterloo will run until the end of May. Perceptions, our juried exhibition runs the month of April at the Minto Arts Council, Harriston Ontario.

Crossection, our flagship juried show will run from July 19th to August 17th this summer at Castle Kilbride in Baden.

Based on the significant number of entries to each of last year's shows, you have clearly shown your primary interest is in shows and exhibitions and we continue to broaden our list of potential venues.

to be continued Pg2

In this newsletter
you can expect:

President's Message: "A Season of New Beginnings"

Exhibition Spotlight: "Resonance - The Art of Connection"

Artist's Journey: "Tricia Edgar - Echoes of the Past"

London Artists Studio Tour

Meet new Vice President

Spotlight Artists

Community Canvas: "Celebrating Artistic Contributions"

Member Highlights: "Achievements and Accolades"

Calls to Create: "Opportunities for Artists"

Newsletter Chair's Message: "Let Your Creativity Bloom"

Connect with us



Continued from pg 1

However, we hope we can tease you out to some local Paint Outs this summer in a few different areas. Online demonstrations are another option to explore. Do you have something to share with the group? I haven't received any indication that you are looking for a fall retreat, but if there is interest, please let me know. We may be able to arrange something a bit later in the fall or next spring.

I've heard a few artists say they feel "stuck" lately. . . find preparing new pieces for a show/exhibition tends to get me motivated to pull out the brushes but sometimes I need something different. I found an interesting article on the Winsor Newton website that speaks to feeling stymied and I've paraphrased below:

"Let go of being 'good.'" These are art critic Jerry Saltz's wise words, which I return to when I'm feeling stifled by a preoccupation to produce the "perfect" piece. Let's admit it, perfectionism is synonymous with control and fear of mistakes, neither of which makes a happy marriage for creativity.

"EVERY CHILD IS AN ARTIST. THE PROBLEM IS HOW TO REMAIN AN ARTIST ONCE HE GROWS UP." --
PABLO PICASSO



As artists we are here to try new things, let go and embrace errors. This is how we each find our distinctive voice. So, whether it is the curse of becoming too precious over a composition, or an exhausting creative impasse, here are some tricks to freshen things up.

- Attempt a new medium
- Use the other hand
- Let your imagination respond to sound
- Marry works with your art
- Carry a sketchbook and draw every day

For the full article and even more visit:

<https://www.winsornewton.com/en-ca/blogs/articles/five-ways-to-overcome-perfectionism-in-art>

As we see more sun, longer days and the odd blade of grass poking up, I hope it inspires those creative juices we all have.

Until I see you, all the best to you and yours.

Anne

EXHIBITION SPOTLIGHT: RESONANCE - THE ART OF CONNECTION

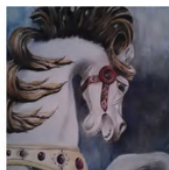
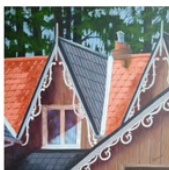


Exhibition Until: 30th
May
Location: The Link at
Innovation Park,
Waterloo

"Art enables us to find ourselves and lose ourselves at the same time."
— Thomas Merton



"Resonance is defined as "the production of a sound as a result of vibration of another object." A piece of music, writing, or art, can resonate with us by invoking a thought, feeling, or memory. Resonance is the theme of this year's non-juried members show at the Link at Innovation Park in Waterloo. The show will run until May 30th, and it looks awesome. For those of you who couldn't make the opening, please look at the Link's online gallery <https://www.waterlooinnovationpark.com/the-link/featured-exhibit>, to view your lovely work.





Resonance: A Deeper Dive into the Exhibition

Forty-six pieces of work are on display in a variety of mediums - oil, acrylic, and watercolour paintings, photography, collage, and mixed medium.

★ Don't Miss:

A Viewer's Choice Award will be presented at the end of the show. Be sure to cast your vote for your favorite piece!

✿ Exhibition Ambiance:

The exhibition also offers a peaceful garden-like setting outside, with food trucks and seating areas—a perfect place to relax after enjoying the artwork! Take in lunch from the visiting food truck or bring your brown bag after enjoying the show.



To further highlight the diversity and impact of the "Resonance" exhibition, let's explore some of the key elements that make this show a must-see:

Medium Diversity: The exhibition truly showcases the breadth of talent within our membership. From the fluid strokes of watercolor to the bold textures of mixed media, each piece offers a unique perspective on the theme of resonance.

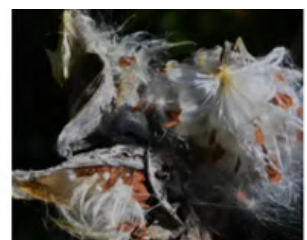
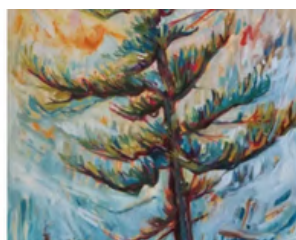
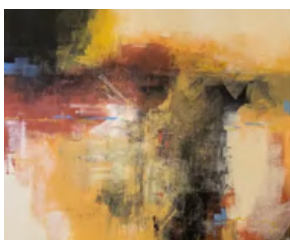
Thematic Interpretation: Artists have explored "resonance" in a multitude of ways. Some works evoke emotional responses, others capture the resonance of nature, and some delve into the connections between people and places. This variety of interpretation makes the exhibition a rich and thought-provoking experience.

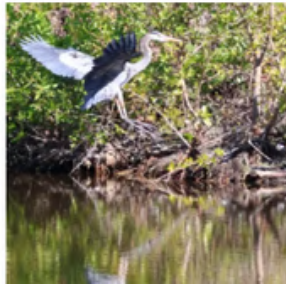
Community Engagement: The Viewer's Choice Award is a fantastic way to involve the community and celebrate the artwork that resonates most strongly with viewers. Be sure to cast your vote!

A Closer Look at Featured Works

To give you a glimpse into the exhibition, here are a few examples of the captivating artwork on display:

- "Echoes of Spring": This vibrant watercolor captures the delicate dance of light through fresh foliage, resonating with the viewer through its luminous quality and sense of renewal.
- "Memory's Harbor": A contemplative oil painting that explores how places can resonate with our past experiences, depicted through layered brushstrokes and a subtle color palette.



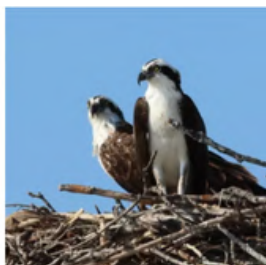


Continued...

- "Harmonic Landscapes": This mixed media piece combines textural elements with painted surfaces to create a visual symphony that speaks to the resonance between human experience and natural environments.

Don't Forget to Visit!

The "Resonance" exhibition is a celebration of our artistic community and the power of art to connect and inspire. Make sure to visit The Link at Innovation Park before May 30th to experience this exceptional show.



"IN ART, THE HAND CAN NEVER EXECUTE ANYTHING HIGHER THAN THE HEART CAN IMAGINE." — RALPH WALDO EMERSON



Artist's Journey: Tricia Edgar - Echoes of the Past



A Retreat into the Past

Tricia Edgar recently embarked on a deeply personal artistic retreat at an 1800s blacksmith shop in Grimsby, Ontario—a place built by her great-great-great-grandfather, Allan Nixon, around 1798-1800. This historic "Stone Shop" setting has inspired her to create a new series of mixed-media pieces, blending heritage, storytelling, and emotion.

The shop, filled with War of 1812 artifacts and area antiques, has been lovingly preserved by its current owners. Tricia found the fireplace to be the most captivating element, easily imagining how this became a gathering spot for friends and shelter for those who needed it during the harsh conditions of 200+ years ago.



From Sketch to Canvas

During her stay, Tricia documented the textures, colors, and artifacts of this historic site through detailed sketches and plans for future paintings. She also worked on her family tree, connecting deeper with her ancestral roots. Each piece she's creating carries echoes of the past, bringing forgotten narratives into the present.

What makes this retreat even more fascinating is learning how her ancestors, along with other area settlers, teamed together as allies with the Mohawks of The Six Nations. As noted in online documentation, Indigenous leaders mentioned in their memoirs that they spent time at the Stone Shop during the War of 1812, sleeping in front of the same fireplace Tricia found so captivating. These included John Brant, Joseph Brant's son, and John Smoke Johnson, who was a Mohawk Warrior.



"The past beats inside me like a second heart." — John Banville

A Story Worth Telling

Tricia shares, "It was a surreal experience to work in a place where my ancestors lived and created. I felt a strong connection to the history embedded in every wall and artifact."

Her brave adventure was tested when, due to a snowstorm, her husband couldn't make it the first night and she needed to stay alone. "I'd never stayed alone at night in such a historic place before," Tricia admits, "but I'm proud to say anxiety did not prevail and there were no ghosts! This little historic place has a truly positive vibe, and I can't wait to return."



"TO KNOW YOUR FUTURE, YOU MUST FIRST KNOW YOUR PAST." — GEORGE SANTAYANA





London Artists Studio Tour

The London Artists Studio Tour offers art enthusiasts a rare opportunity to step into the creative spaces of dozens of local artists. Now in its 31st year, this cherished tradition provides intimate glimpses into the artistic process, with opportunities to speak directly with creators about their inspiration, techniques, and vision.

Our own Tricia Edgar has been an artist on the tour for 5 years and highly recommends this enriching experience. The tour features a diverse range of mediums and styles, from painting and sculpture to ceramics, jewelry, and mixed media works.

Mark your calendars for this celebrated event that connects art lovers directly with the creative process!

When

In its 31st year! Enjoy visiting the working studios of 35 talented and inspiring London artists.

When: Last weekend of April 2025



"EVERY ARTIST WAS FIRST AN AMATEUR." — RALPH WALDO EMERSON



Meet Our New Vice President: Moumita Roychowdhury

Moumita is a self-taught artist and art teacher based out of Kitchener-Waterloo. Nature plays the lead role in her work, captured through the spontaneous flow of watercolors or the vibrant brush strokes of acrylics or the soft subtleness of pastels. She likes to take inspiration from the colours and moods of nature which changes like the myriad shades of human emotions. She has been teaching art courses in a variety of media at the Button Factory Arts, Homer Watson House & Gallery and with the City of Waterloo.

Moumita enjoys the thrill of capturing nature en plein air as well as painting live and has won several live art competitions like the ArtBattle and The Brush Off. She is also enthralled by the impact and joy of creating murals in public spaces and has created some large-scale murals in the Waterloo region.

In 2020, Moumita won the gold award for the Best Local Visual Artist category for the Waterloo Region Records Reader's Choice Awards. She has been a regular winner of the live art competition The Brush Off at The Museum in Kitchener in 2019, 2023, 2024, 2025 as well as ArtBattle live competitions in various cities as well as at the Nationals. Her art has been exhibited and awarded at several juried exhibitions across Ontario and she has won many awards.

Connect with Moumita:

- Website: <https://moumitaroychowdhury.weebly.com/>
- Instagram: [moumita.dg](https://www.instagram.com/moumita.dg)
- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/BurntUmbler123>

Currently she is an art instructor with the City of Waterloo, Button Factory Arts & Homer Watson House & Gallery teaching in a variety of media. Her art is in private collections in Canada and abroad. She is a member of the Grand River Artists Collective (GRACE) and Central Ontario Art Association (COAA).

Upcoming Course: Moumita is teaching a Floral Watercolour course at the Button Factory Arts in April/May. Don't miss this opportunity to learn from her unique approach to capturing nature's beauty!





Spotlight Artists

Deb Taylor-Birr - Capturing Details, Evoking Emotion

Deb Taylor-Birr has been drawing since she can remember, lured by any clean blank piece of paper. Primarily self-taught, she has attended numerous art courses and workshops over the years. Instruction at the Haliburton School of Art, Albert Casson's School of Art, Loyalist Art School, and classes with a variety of local artists have inspired and guided her skill development. She is an online attendee at Art Live conferences.

As a current member of KWSA (Kitchener Waterloo Society of Artists) and COAA (Central Ontario Artists Association), she is enjoying the opportunities to meet with fellow artists and continue with learning opportunities.

Her art has been displayed in the Maple Hollow Studio north of Kingston, the Link Gallery in Waterloo, the Minto Art Gallery in Harriston, and Frames by Verne in Kitchener. She has participated in the juried Cambridge Centre for the Arts show (2022) and the Mary Allen Studio Tour (2023, 2024). Most recently, she enjoyed illustrating a children's book, and while wildlife and birds have been her forte, she always enjoys the call for beloved pet portraits.

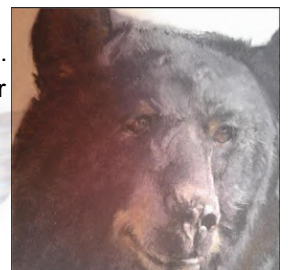
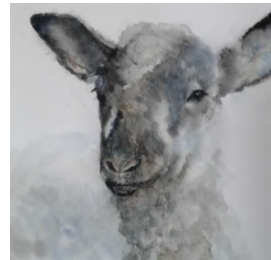
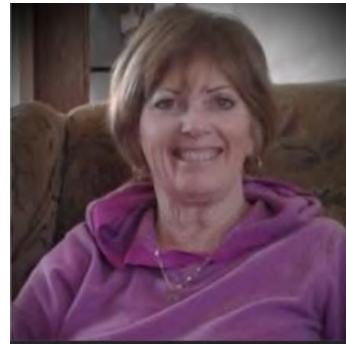
"NATURE ALWAYS WEARS THE
COLORS OF THE SPIRIT." —
RALPH WALDO EMERSON

Artist Statement

Deb uses line, negative space, form, and color as her guides to representing chosen topics. Details capture her eye, and she loves the challenge of exploring elusive details beyond the obvious. As she progresses with her work, she enjoys surprising herself and viewers with the unexpected - be it color or line.

She works primarily with pastels, though also enjoys mixed media, i.e., watercolors, colored pencil, and pen and ink. A favorite technique is eraser work, then building with shadows and highlights. Feathers and fur are wonderful venues for this work. And, of course, detailing eyes to bring life to her critters always brings excitement to her work. Wildlife, birds, and young animals tend to be her main subjects of interest, but she takes pleasure in working from a wide range of topics.

"Eliciting a reaction of interest, joy, or just curiosity brings great satisfaction. To be honest, I simply enjoy my art!" — Deb Taylor-Birr



Spring Inspiration Challenge

As the world awakens with new life, we challenge all COAA members to create a piece inspired by "Renewal and Rebirth." Whether it's a budding flower, melting snow, or a metaphorical interpretation, use this theme to fuel your creativity this season.

Share your work on our social media channels using #COAArenewal for a chance to be featured in our summer newsletter!



"The artist is a receptacle for emotions that come from all over the place: from the sky, from the earth, from a scrap of paper, from a passing shape, from a spider's web." — Pablo Picasso



Community Canvas: Celebrating Artistic Contributions

Barbara McLeod - Preserving Architectural Heritage

Barbara McLeod has provided cover artwork for a five-volume set of books that catalogue the historic buildings of New Hamburg, Ontario.

Marie Voisin, the late Ernie Ritz (former Mayor of New Hamburg), and Kristen Hahn, all passionate historians, have undertaken a labor of love that has morphed into a 5-volume set of books that catalogue the historic buildings of New Hamburg and the people who lived and currently live in them.

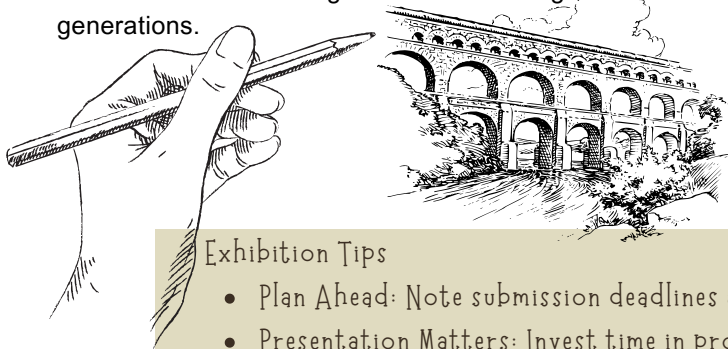
The five-volume covers have been illustrated by Barbara McLeod with beautiful renderings of heritage homes. On this occasion, the three historians were honored to receive The Architectural Conservancy Ontario Stephen A. Otto Award for research and documentation. Barbara is honored to have played a role in this endeavor.

Historic Buildings of New Hamburg and the People Who Lived in Them will be published soon.

This project represents an important intersection of art and historical preservation, showcasing how artists can contribute to maintaining our cultural heritage for future generations.



"ARCHITECTURE IS FROZEN MUSIC." — JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE



Exhibition Tips

- Plan Ahead: Note submission deadlines and plan your creative schedule accordingly.
- Presentation Matters: Invest time in proper framing and presentation of your work.
- Artist Statements: Prepare thoughtful statements that enhance viewers' understanding of your work.
- Engage: Attend openings, talk about your work, and network with fellow artists and patrons.

TIPS

"I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way - things I had no words for." — Georgia O'Keeffe





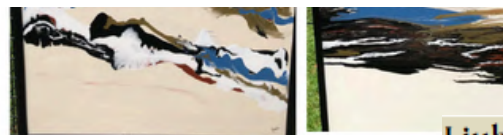
Member Highlights: Achievements and Accolades Ljuba Simovic - International Exhibition

Our member Ljuba Simovic had a six-painting show at the Hilton Garden Inn in Lutz, Florida. The celebration was the 5th Anniversary of the Babel Networking Organization. The 'Margaritas' painting was donated for the raffle.

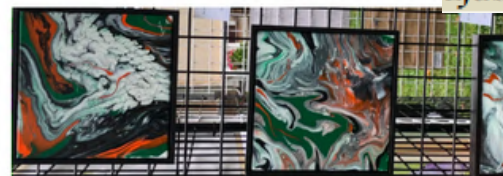
This international showcase highlights the reach of our members' work beyond Canada, bringing our artistic community to global audiences.

"THE PURPOSE OF ART IS WASHING THE DUST
OF DAILY LIFE OFF OUR SOULS." — PABLO
PICASSO

Doreen Renner



Ljuba Simovic



Member Highlights: Achievements and Accolades Doreen Renner - Award-Winning Work

Doreen Renner was thrilled to receive the Michael Harding Award for her painting, "Lost In Translation," which was selected for the CSPWC Open Water Annual Juried Exhibition.

She also has a painting that was selected for the Canadian Society of Painters in Watercolour "100th Anniversary" Juried Members Exhibition, which is taking place at the Roberts Gallery at 631 DuPont St. Toronto and runs from March 15 to 29.

This prestigious recognition reflects the exceptional talent within our association. Doreen's success reminds us of the importance of submitting work to juried exhibitions as a way to gain exposure and recognition in the broader art community.

"Algonquin Park Impressions" — An evocative landscape capturing the essence of one of Ontario's most beloved natural spaces.

Nancy Taves



Member Highlights: Achievements and Accolades

"Nancy Taves' 'Cabin Fever' Selected for McMichael En Plein Air Exhibition"

Nancy Taves' "Cabin Fever" was selected among 32 finalists in the McMichael's 2024 En Plein Air Competition, which featured over 90 artists creating works on the grounds of McMichael and historic Kleinburg. The competition included two categories: Contemporary Landscape and Re-Imagined Landscape, addressing urbanization and climate change impacts. The selected works will be exhibited in the McMichael's Community Gallery starting April 2025, with winners announced at a spring reception. View the shortlisted works and vote for your favorite at:

<https://mcmichael.com/learning/en-plein-air-competition-2024/>





Upcoming COAA Exhibitions



Mark Your Calendars!

Resonance (Current)
Running until May 30, 2025
The Link at Innovation Park, Waterloo
Non-juried member exhibition with Viewer's Choice Award

Perceptions
April 2025
Minto Arts Council, Harriston, Ontario
Juried exhibition showcasing diverse perspectives

Crossection
July 19 - August 17, 2025
Castle Kilbride, Baden
COAA's flagship juried show featuring the best works from our membership

Calls to Create: Opportunities for Artists

Upcoming Events & Submission Opportunities

Elora Plein Air Festival May 14-18, 2025

Experience the joy of outdoor painting in one of Ontario's most picturesque towns. Open to artists of all levels.

More information: [Elora en Plein Air](#)

Hamilton Plein Air Festival June 5-8, 2025

Join fellow artists for four days of outdoor painting in various locations around Hamilton.

More information: [Hamilton Plein Air Festival](#)

London Artists Studio Tour Last weekend in April, 2025

In its 31st year! Enjoy visiting the working studios of 35 talented and inspiring London artists.

More information: [London Studio Tour](#)

100th Open Water, CSPWC

A historic opportunity to submit to this centennial celebration of watercolor painting. More information: [CSPWC/SCPA](#)

Minto Juried Art Show

Discover beautiful masterpieces at the Minto Juried Art Show or submit your own work for consideration.

More information: [Minto Arts Council](#)





From the Newsletter Editor

Dear COAA Artists and Friends,
As the world awakens in vibrant shades of renewal, I find myself reflecting on the extraordinary power of art to mirror the essence of spring itself. Just as the first green shoots push through thawing soil against all odds, your creative spirit continues to emerge and flourish even through the coldest seasons of doubt. Every brushstroke you place, every clay form you shape, every composition you capture is an act of courage and hope—a declaration that beauty matters, that expression matters, that you matter. In a world that often moves too quickly to notice the details, you are the ones who slow down, who see, who translate the whispers of life into visual poetry that invites others to pause and truly experience the world around them.

This spring, I invite you to embrace your artistic journey with the same audacious energy as those first wildflowers that don't wait for perfect conditions to bloom. Your creative voice is needed now more than ever—not because it must be perfect, but because it is authentically yours. Remember that even the most accomplished artists in our community still face blank canvases with both excitement and trepidation. The magic happens when we create anyway.

As you continue to develop your unique artistic voice, know that you are surrounded by a community that celebrates your growth, understands your challenges, and believes in your vision. The COAA isn't just an association—it's a garden where diverse creative expressions thrive together, each enhancing the beauty of the whole. I look forward to seeing how your art blossoms in the coming months. Whether you're experimenting with new techniques, returning to a beloved medium with fresh eyes, or simply allowing yourself the joy of creating without judgment—your artistic journey enriches us all. With boundless enthusiasm for what you'll create next,

Pavitra Parameshwaran
Newsletter Editor, COAA

"The earth laughs in flowers." —Ralph Waldo Emerson

Thank you for reading!



Contact us

Contact Us

For membership inquiries please contact: membership@coaart.com

For Newsletter contributions: ecreationbypavitra@gmail.com

For all other inquiries: info@coaart.com

For new member: <https://coaart.com/membership/>

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