



# rochester art club

January/February 2026 newsletter

established 1877



## a message from the president

Hello Rochester Art Club Members and Friends,

Now that the holiday hustle and bustle is behind us, I hope you are enjoying the start to a creative and productive 2026!

On January 31st, we will have a fun art challenge sharing community event. Create a piece of art with the theme of "White" to bring with you to our studio at Railroad Street Artworks on January 31 st , 2-4 p.m. We will have snacks, drinks and a special drawing for a Rochester Art Supply gift certificate for participants. Bring a friend who might be a prospective member! It is also the last opportunity to make a donation of non-toxic art supplies for Rochesterr City School District students.

Our Annual Signature Members' exhibit will be held at Railroad Street Artworks this year. The opening reception and awards ceremony will be held on March 5, 5-7 p.m. Artists' talks will be held on Third Thursday, 5-7 p.m. Signature Members will receive details for artist talks sign up upon acceptance into the show.

Also in March, we are fortunate to offer a workshop taught by nationally recognized contemporary still life painter, Trish Coonrod. Her resume is impressive including her work experience with Jeff Koons in NYC. See the article in this issue and check your email for registration and supply list details.

Please join me in welcoming new board member, Rebecca Hatch, Esq. She comes to us with an extensive background in family law, legal research, and publishing. She will be assisting us in grant writing, as well as legal and business matters for RAC.

The board is currently searching for new officers to be elected this May. If you are interested in supporting the continuation of the Rochester Art Club, please contact me or any board member. My term as President concludes this June, so please carefully and thoughtfully consider volunteering for a leadership position in our historic club!

As always, I welcome your suggestions for the growth and vitality of The Rochester Art Club. Send your thoughts to [melanierinnmartinek@gmail.com](mailto:melanierinnmartinek@gmail.com).

Take care,

*Melanie*

Melanie Rinn Martinek

*President, Rochester Art Club*

*Masthead: Alina Stepaniuk, Rivne, Ukraine.*





## recent RAC events

On December 3rd, members and guests enjoyed our **Holiday Party** complete with delicious hors d'oeuvres and special Nazareth students' live music. Our art exchange was a huge success with many smiles from members as they opened their surprise gifts! Special thanks goes out to Marleen van Aardt, Karlene and John VanDeusen, Kelly White, and friends at Railroad Street Artworks for their help in coordinating and setting up the event space.





## upcoming RAC events

### A Winter White Challenge

Step into the world of pure imagination and explore the power of a single word—**WHITE**. This art challenge invites painters of all styles and backgrounds to interpret “white” in their own unique way—whether it’s light, silence, purity, emptiness, or the chaos hidden beneath calm. Submit one original painting that captures your vision of what white means to you. From minimalism to bold abstraction, let your creativity turn this simple word into a powerful visual story. Don’t miss your chance to showcase your art and redefine the meaning of white!



Paintings will be shared at a winter social at Railroad Street Artworks Saturday, **January 31st** from 2-4p. Participants will be entered into a drawing for a gift certificate to Rochester Art Supply!

### The Rochester Art Club

is collecting art supply donations for the K-12 art students of Rochester City School District through January. Please consider donating to the young artists of the RCSD K-12 art program.

The drop-off time for donations is January 31, noon-2:00pm at Railroad Street Artworks, 3 Railroad Street, Suite G, Fairport. Contact [info@rochesterartclub.org](mailto:info@rochesterartclub.org)

if you have questions. *Thank you!*

#### Here is the wishlist for RCSD:

Elmer’s glue sticks • Masking tape  
Drawing pencils • Erasers  
Any Crayola products  
Sketchbooks



## more upcoming RAC events

### A Trunkful of Art History

Presented by local art historian, Sarah Hart, this lecture will focus on the discovery of Brockport artist **Helen Hastings'** work. This circa 1898 find is an educational time capsule which includes 105 paintings, 138 drawings, and seven notebooks. The artwork was discovered in a trunk in the

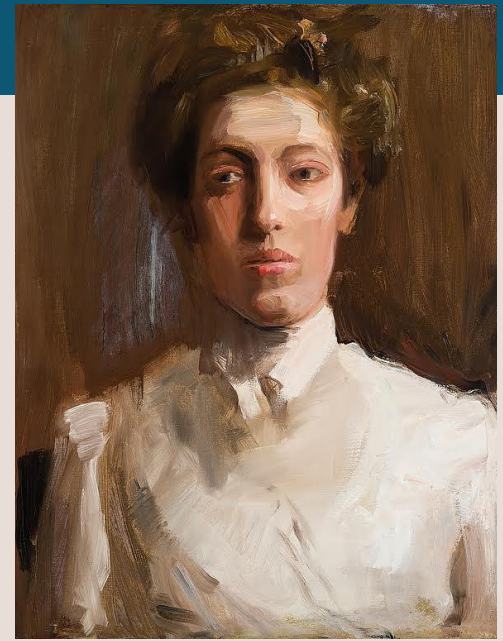
Sunday, February 15, 2026, 2 - 4:00pm  
Railroad Street Artworks, 3 Railroad St,  
Suite G, Fairport, NY 14450

Brockport Museum of History and Library in 2016 after existing in its hiding place for *more than 100 years*.

Come hear about Helen's education at The Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and her famous teachers William Merritt Chase, Howard Pyle, and Cecelia Beaux. Uncover the reasons why this find is so notable in the art world and for women. The talk will also highlight the mysterious three figures and Helen's ties to Rochester and the **Rochester Art Club**.

*Sarah Hart, a fine artist from Brockport, NY, teaches at the University of Rochester's Creative Workshop. She is also the Town of Sweden Historian and the Art Historian of the Village of Brockport. In 2019 Sarah and her husband purchased and renovated an old Erie Canal building (circa 1840), home to Hart Gallery 27 and nine working artist studios.*

**Join us for this fascinating peek into the past!** Light refreshments. Free for RAC members.



*Helen Hastings, self portrait*



2025 Best of Show winner:  
*Lately I've Been Dressing for Revenge*  
by Laurie Maddalina



### 2026 SPRING SIGNATURE MEMBER SHOW

The Rochester Art Club 2026 Signature Members Spring Art Exhibition will open at Railroad Street Artworks, 3 Railroad St Suite G, Fairport, NY, on Sunday, March 1, 2026. The show will continue through March 27. Juror for selection and awards is Diana Buitrago. Diana is a classically trained realist painter working on landscapes and portraits from life. She is from Colombia, living and working in New York City and Jersey City. You can see her work and read more about her at [dianabuitrago.com](http://dianabuitrago.com)

#### Important dates:

**Show Submit registration deadline:** Monday, February 2, 2026, Midnight

**Notification of acceptance:** Thursday, February 12, 2026

**Drop off:** Saturday, February 28, 2026, 10am-noon

**Hanging:** February 28, 2026, noon-2 pm

**Opening Reception:** March 5, 2026, 5-7 pm

**Signature Artists' Talks:** 10 minute slots, info to follow after acceptance notifications.  
March 19, 2026- 5-7 pm

**Take down:** Saturday, March 28, 2026-10-noon

#### Show Committee:

**RAC Art Show Committee:** Nancy Lane, Anne McCune, Kelly White, Rebecca Hatch, Jeff Tokarz, Melanie Martinek; **Webmaster:** Victoria Brzustowicz;

**Publicity:** Galen Silver



## more upcoming RAC events

### Are you ready to paint something lively and fun?

If you are up for the challenge, register for **Trish Torkildsen Coonrod's** two-day oil painting workshop. Trish is a nationally recognized artist who lives in Ithaca. Her experience as a professional artist is impressive!



**March 21-22, 2026**

**9:00am - 4:00pm**

**Railroad Street Artworks**

**3 Railroad Street, Suite G**

**Fairport, NY 14450**

**Tuition includes continental breakfast, lunch and snacks.**

**Members: \$250,  
Non-members: \$275.**

**Checks or Paypal to  
Rochester Art Club**

Trish will give pre-workshop prep instructions so that our time with her is used most efficiently. Demonstrating with oil paint on ACM panels, her instruction will include color mixing decisions, paint application, and blending. Bring your oil paints, brushes and surface of choice. RAC will supply easels, lamps and side tables or bring your own easel set up. Specific prep directions will be available upon registration.

You can see Trish's contemporary still life paintings locally at the West End Gallery in Corning or at [trishcoonrod.com](http://trishcoonrod.com)



**Watch your email for registration info or register at [rochesterartclub.org](http://rochesterartclub.org)**



## signature spotlight: Debra Becks Cooper

*"Creating a piece of art is a way to express the beauty in the everyday things that I see."*

I have been an artist my whole life. I started drawing as a child, and art continues to be my main interest to this day. I am mostly self taught, and feel I am still learning all the time. I love to experiment and create on my own, and take an occasional workshop to expand my abilities. Over the years I have loved to work with many different media, oil, watercolor, pastel, and colored pencil continue to be favorites of mine. I was a stay at home mom, and during those years I stayed busy with various artistic pursuits, including illustration, tattooing, airbrushing, interior murals and faux finishing. About 20 years ago, inspired by the growing internet presence of artists all over the world who were creating, posting, and selling their work online, I began to focus on still life oil painting. I started a blog, and began to sell my small paintings online in 2008. I paint from life, in my home studio, where I like to arrange contrasting objects into a pleasing composition that

may suggest a theme, narrative, or emotion. I like my paintings to have a pleasant feeling...calm, quiet, or thoughtful...because that's how I'm usually feeling while I'm painting. For me, creating a piece of art is a way to connect with, and express the beauty in the everyday things that I see, and the resulting artwork captures a moment that will last forever.

My artwork can be seen on my website, or at [DailyPaintworks.com](http://DailyPaintworks.com). I am a member of Railroad Street Artworks, where I have framed paintings, and prints available.

**Facebook & Instagram: [debrabeckSCOOPERart](https://www.facebook.com/debrabeckSCOOPERart)**  
**[dbcfineart.com](http://dbcfineart.com)**





## member news



Victoria Brzustowicz

**Victoria Brzustowicz's** painting, *Field's Edge*, was a finalist in the *Plein Air Magazine* Plein AirSalon Art Competition, November 2025.

Victoria has a full slate of classes at Flower City Arts Center and The Art Stop, as well as some fun pop ups at 20 Deep Winery. For more information, visit [victoriabcreative.com](http://victoriabcreative.com).



Fran Bliek

*Rain Approaching*, a watercolor painting by **Fran Bliek**, won a Merit Award at the 21st Annual Genesee Valley Plein Air Painters Juried Show on display at Barnes & Noble in Pittsford Plaza's Community Room on the second floor. Stop by during the month of January and see all the beautiful paintings in this show.



Rosemary Pergolizzi

**Rosemary Pergolizzi's** oil painting, *A Walk in the Park*, is currently on exhibit in the *Every Picture Tells a Story* show at The Mill Gallery in Honeoye Falls. A reception and silent auction will take place on February 7th from 3- 5pm.



Christy Vitale

**Christy Vitale** won *Best In Show* in the Webster Art Club Fall show which was held at the Webster Library in December. The watercolor painting was titled *The View From Here*. The judge was for the show was RAC member, Marleen van Aardt.

**Looking for a little exposure?** We need Signature Members for our *Spotlight* series! Send your name, short bio/artist statement, website, social media contacts, and 3-6 photos of your work to: [galanlori@gmail.com](mailto:galanlori@gmail.com) with **ARTIST SPOTLIGHT** in the subject line. Featured artists will be chosen at random.



## member news



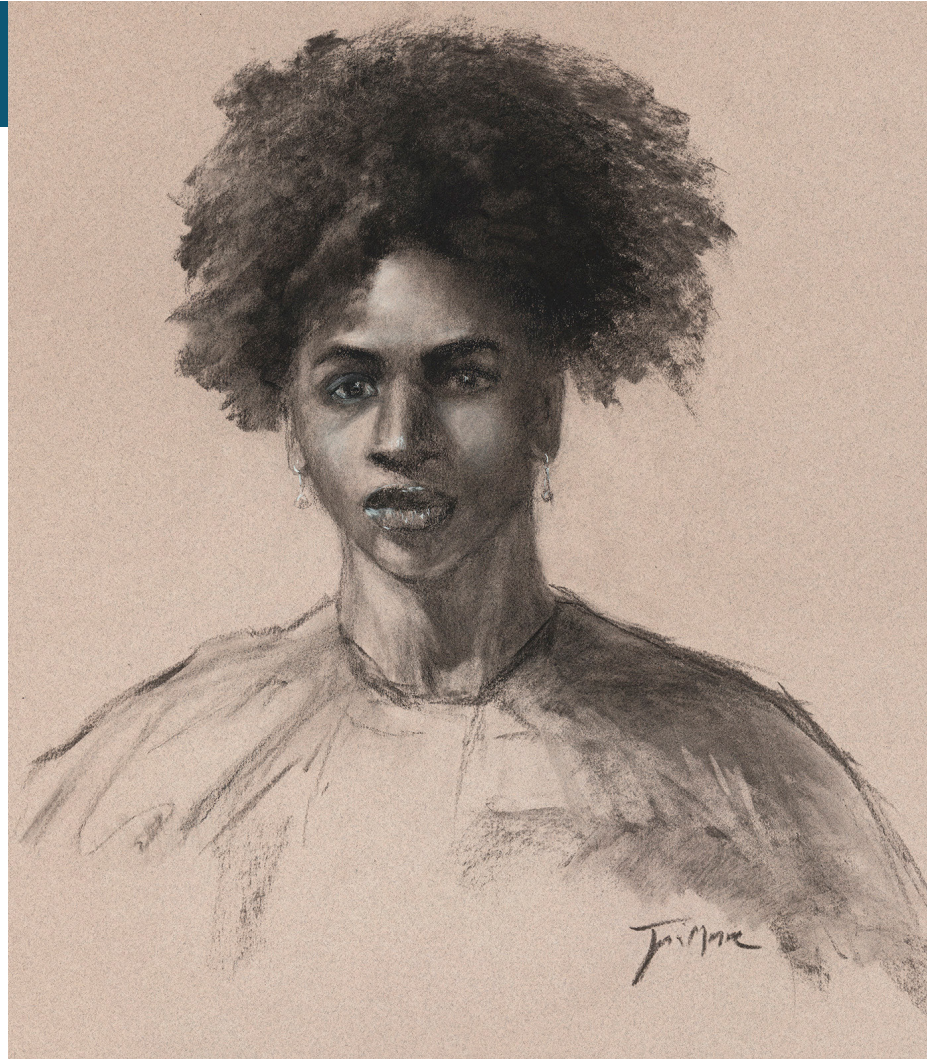
Karlene VanDeusen

**Karlene VanDeusen** has three soft pastels in the 21st Annual Genesee Valley Plein Air Art Show including *Lunch at the Lake*. The juried art show will be exhibited in Barnes & Noble, Monroe Avenue, Pittsford through the month of January.



Laurie Maddalina

The Art Renewal Center, announced the results of their 18th International Salon, the largest and most prestigious competition in the world for realist artists. **Laurie Maddalina's** work was one of nine purchase awards chosen from approximately 3,500 entries from 72 countries. Her painting, *Lately I've Been Dressing for Revenge* will become part of ARC's permanent collection.



Joni Mack Monroe

**Joni Mack Monroe** is exhibiting in the ROCO Annual Members' Show where she was awarded the Richmond Futch Award for Art and Justice for the charcoal/graphite portrait titled *Anticipation*. Joni also has six paintings in the GVPAP show, including an oil painting titled *Braddock's Bay*. Her work can also be seen at Pittsford Fine Art as well as Rochester Fine Art Market.



Joni Mack Monroe



**REMINDER:** When shopping at **Rochester Art Supply**, let the cashier know that you are a member of Rochester Art Club. The owners donate a percentage of your purchase toward gift certificates used for show awards!