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**ASIAN-INFLUENCED ART FILLS THE GALLERIES  
OF THE OCEAN CENTER FOR THE ARTS DURING  
APRIL,  
OPENING ON FIRST FRIDAY APRIL 6**

OCEAN CITY, MD — March 26, 2018 — The First Friday opening at the Ocean City Center for the Arts showcases the art of the East with Asian-inspired artwork ranging from the traditional to the contemporary. The public is invited to the free opening reception on April 6 from 5 – 7 p.m. with complementary hors d'oeuvres offered by Liquid Assets.

Works by artist Joan Lok of Columbia, Md. will be on display in the Galleria during April. Entitled “Purrfect,” the exhibit showcases Lok’s technique of Sumi-e East Asian Brush Painting, focusing on the traditional subject matter of the cat.

Born in Hong Kong, Lok came to America in 1983 after winning an international cultural exchange fellowship. She is

listed in Who's Who of American Art and has won many awards including the Best of Show from the Sumi-e Society of America and Sumi-e Artists of Canada Joint Exhibition, the Kyoto Education Council Award in Japan, and the National Cherry Blossom Festival Contest in America. Her book, "Chinese Brush Painting: Flowers," is available in English, Dutch, French, Italian and Spanish.

Lok will be teaching a three-day workshop on Sumi-e Brush Painting on April 26 – 28 at the Arts Center, and registrations are now being accepted at [artleagueofocencity.org](http://artleagueofocencity.org).

Student artwork done in the contemporary Manga and Anime styles will be on display during the opening on First Friday and through the weekend. Anime is a style of [animation](#) originating in Japan characterized by stark colorful graphics depicting vibrant characters in action-filled plots often with fantastic or futuristic themes. The Art League developed this show to promote creativity among students outside formal art programs and to increase community awareness of Anime as an art form.

Students in middle, high school, and higher education in Worcester, Wicomico, Somerset, and Sussex counties submitted entries judged by Brad Hudson, professor at the University of Maryland Eastern Shore. Cash prizes sponsored by Art League board member John Sisson will be awarded.

Hudson will display his own Anime artwork in the Spotlight Gallery alongside the artists of PLB Comics: James Dufendach and Mathew and Josh Shockley. The trio will present a free workshop on Saturday, April 7, from 1 – 3 p.m. on how to create comic books, and Hudson will continue the free workshops on Sunday, April 8, from 1 – 3 p.m., discussing basic storytelling. The workshops are open to ages 12 and up.

To honor the corporate partners of the Art League of Ocean City, a juried show — where the artwork is judged and limited to the best submitted — will be on display in the Thaler Gallery. The juror for the annual show is Anke Van Wagenberg, Ph.D., chief curator at the Academy Art Museum in Easton.

The Art League receives support from more than 50 local businesses that have signed up to be corporate partners.

“Our corporate partnerships are vital to keeping the Ocean City Center for the Arts up and running, and this is our way, once a year, to thank them for their support,” Rina Thaler, executive director, said.

Mary Jane Hastings of Selbyville occupies Studio E in April and will be showing her paintings done primarily with a palette knife.

April's artist-in-residence is jewelry designer Pat Ellison of Princess Anne who will be exhibiting her hand-painted hats, painted and collaged pins and necklaces, and mini oil paintings.

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94<sup>th</sup> Street is the home of the Art League of Ocean City, a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects. Financial support comes primarily through membership dues from individuals and corporate sponsors. Funding for exhibits is also provided by the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment for the Arts, organizations dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.

More information is available at 410-524-9433 or [www.artleagueofoceancity.org](http://www.artleagueofoceancity.org).

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EDITORS: Image attached of Joan Lok.

