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**JANUARY FIRST FRIDAY AT OCEAN CITY CENTER FOR THE  
ARTS  
FEATURES 10<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL COLLABORATION  
BETWEEN ARTISTS AND WRITERS**

OCEAN CITY, MD —*Dec. 30, 2022* — First Friday, Jan. 6, 2023, celebrates a collaboration between visual artists and writers during the 10<sup>th</sup> annual “Shared Visions” exhibit at the Ocean City Center for the Arts. All are welcome to the free event that runs from 5-7 p.m.

“Shared Visions” is the annual partnership between the artists of the Art League of Ocean City and the writers who meet monthly at the Arts Center for the Writers Group headed by Ruth Wanberg-Alcorn. The artists submitted artwork — paintings, photographs, fiber art, mosaics, and mixed media — they hoped would inspire the writers, and the writers selected their inspirations and created accompanying literary works. Both sides will be on exhibit in the Thaler Gallery until Jan. 29.

“This is the 10th year for the collaboration,” Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. “It is an inspired coming-together of words and images and demonstrates the different forms of self-expression.”

On Tuesday, Jan. 17 from 6-8 p.m., the writers will read their work and discuss what inspired them about the art during a free event at the Arts Center, and the public is invited.

In January, the Galleria will feature an exhibit entitled “Force of Nature,” an all-media group show that explores the power and beauty of weather. With the rise in extreme weather events, this exhibit seeks to highlight the effects of climate change. The show judge is Raymond Ewing of Lewes, De., noted plein air artist and instructor.

Sarah Hancock exhibits in Studio E in January. Born and raised in Ocean City, Md., she is a former Art League scholarship winner and is completing her BFA degree at Salisbury University with a focus in painting, new media, and ceramics. “My limited exploration of art history, and philosophical beliefs of artists through the centuries, has sparked an aspiration to depict the presumably intangible,” Hancock said. “By bridging the influence and aesthetics of the past into today's reality, I want the beholder to walk away from my work with a new sense that the physicality and materiality of the imagination is attainable, and hopefully view everyday reality with a new perception of whimsy, individuality, and curiosity.”

Cindy Strouse of Frankford, De. is the Spotlight Gallery artist for January. Originally from New Jersey, she graduated Cum Laude from Rutgers College of Pharmacy and worked in retail pharmacy where she designed artistic store windows. “I strive to capture emotion and serenity in my paintings and drawings of landscape, people and wildlife,” Strouse said. “Living by the ocean and on a lake, I focus my art on the subjects around where I live now.” Her recent interest is writing and illustrating children’s books.

The staff of the Art League of Ocean City occupies the Artisan Showcase in January. The "Staff Selections" include handmade pottery, locally-made miniature paintings, handcrafted jewelry, photography, and more. Featured artists include Elaine Bean, Katie Brown, Kerry Doran, Katrin Huber, Robert Johnson, Megan Burak Lowe, Kacie Neeb, Aubrey Sizemore, and Rina Thaler.

The Art League's satellite galleries also open new shows on First Friday, with the artists present to greet guests and talk about their work. Dale Ashera-Davis of Berlin, Md. opens at the Coffee Beanery on 94<sup>th</sup> St. and Coastal Highway for a three-month show. A fiber artist who uses unusual materials in her work, she incorporates commercial cottons, silks, dryer lint, copper roofing sheets, and found items such as acorns and shells. "My studio is named Red Crow Studio," Ashera-Davis said. "What would you do if you saw a red crow? You'd want to take a second look because that is not something usually seen in nature. Just like a red crow, my work is intended to invite the viewer to step closer and take a second look."

Don Hartman of Ocean Pines opens a three-month show in the Princess Royale lobby, 9100 Coastal Hwy. Born in Baltimore, Md., Don studied fine arts and photography at The Maryland Institute College of Art, and a construction job led to a career developing affordable housing. His show at the Princess Royale is entitled "On Vacation with the Boys and Girls." "My inspiration for this series was a simple thought: In today's photo sharing world through social media and cell phones, I wondered what would happen if I transposed other worldly critters doing vacation 'stuff' and then sharing their own vacation snapshots ... Wherever the inspiration comes from, I always paint to delight the eye and tease the mind."

The Ocean City Center for the Arts at 502 94<sup>th</sup> St. is open daily until 4 p.m., and admission is always free. More information is available at [OCart.org](http://OCart.org) or by calling 410-524-9433.

*The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to bringing the visual arts to the community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs and community art projects. Funding for this event is in part provided by the Worcester County Arts Council, Maryland State Arts Council and the National Endowment of the Arts, organizations dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive.*

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EDITORS: Photo attached of Sarah Hancock of Ocean City, Md., January's Studio E artist.

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