

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**August's First Friday opening Aug. 1  
at Ocean City Center for the Arts  
is free to the public**

**OCEAN CITY, MD — July 25, 2025** — The Art League of Ocean City invites the public to a free opening reception on First Friday, August 1, 2025, 5-7 p.m., at the Ocean City Center for the Arts, 94<sup>th</sup> St. bayside.

The Thaler Gallery hosts “Out and About,” a collaboration between married painters Kirk McBride and Lynne Lockhart of Berlin, Md. “Our facts may be the same, but our truths are different,” Lockhart said.

“An exhibit like this shows what extraordinary, national talent we have on the Eastern Shore,” Rina Thaler, executive director of the Art League, said. “Lynne’s and Kirk’s artwork is of a very high caliber, a testament to their dedication and constant practice of their craft as well as to their very individual and unique visions.”

McBride developed an interest in American painting as a young man when he first saw the work of Edward Hopper, Winslow Homer, and N.C. Wyeth. After college at the University of Maryland, he won Best in Show at the first local art show he entered, encouraging him to make painting a lifelong pursuit. McBride is known for the interaction of light and shadow in his images. Travels beyond the East Coast to the deserts and mountains have inspired his paintings of aspen trees, rock formations, and rusty trucks.

Lockhart is a signature member of the Society of Animal Artists. Her quiet observation of the natural world, both wild and tame, provides her with endless painting possibilities. “No matter the subject, the application of paint to canvas is the easy part,” Lockhart said. “The real challenge for me is the interpretation of what I see. That is the translation from subject to canvas. It is this translation through the artist that makes the difference in painters.”

The annual Beverly Bassford Memorial Juried Group Show continues on the walls of the Sisson Galleria through August 15, showcasing 60 pieces of art juried by Christy Cox, Operations Coordinator at Salisbury University Art Galleries.

Studio E features two special installations by Bethany Resort Furnishings, transforming the space into design examples using the Pantone Color of the Year: Mocha Mousse. Visitors can walk through the space, chat with designers for inspiration, and receive a coupon for furnishings.

Wall sculpture by John Kovach hangs in the Schwab Spotlight Gallery during August. “My work reflects my belief that sculpture should engage some magic,” he said. “It does so by encouraging the viewer to

look beneath the surface appearance of a piece and experience the social relationships and human connections embodied in an abstract piece of steel.”

Alicia Rappold exhibits her felting creations in the Artisan Showcase in the Felber Gift Shop in August. A lifelong crafter, her love of felting began with making wet felting soaps for her grandchildren’s school fair, then making 2D animal spirit badges for the kindergartners, and progressing to 3D figures. Rappold often teaches classes on felting at the Ocean City Arts Center.

The artwork of Aria Islam continues showing in the Burbage Staircase Gallery at the Arts Center. Islam is a 21-year-old artist born and raised in Ocean City. Inspired by her coastal hometown, her work reflects the textures, colors, and quiet magic of life by the sea, and blends natural elements with whimsical storytelling. As a young emerging artist, Islam continues to develop a voice rooted in authenticity, curiosity, and her deep connection to the world around her.

Art shows at the Art League’s satellite galleries continue in August. Sally Miller exhibits her work at the Coffee Beanery on 94<sup>th</sup> St. and Coastal Hwy. Jessica Schlegel shows her artwork in the Princess Royale lobby, 9100 Coastal Hwy.

Complimentary beverages for the First Friday reception are sponsored by PKS Investments.

Exhibits at the Arts Center run through August 30, with the exception of the Beverly Bassford Show that ends on August 15 for the installation of the “Artists Paint OC Festival” paintings. More information is available at OCart.org or by calling 410-524-9433.

*The Art League of Ocean City is a non-profit organization dedicated to artistic expression and appreciation for the creative arts in our community through education, exhibits, scholarship, programs, and community art projects. Funding is provided in part 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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