



THE GALLERY



The 2024 “Year of Distinction” at all SAMA sites

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art (SAMA) celebrated a remarkable Year of Distinction with a series of achievements that underscored its commitment to bringing world-class art to rural Pennsylvania.

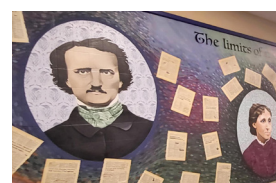
Over the past year, the museum curated twenty-six exhibitions featuring local, regional, and nationally recognized artists. The 2024 Biennial exhibition broke records with 450 artwork submissions, making it the

largest juried exhibition in the museum’s history.

SAMA also played a pivotal role in the community, hosting more than forty events and exhibition celebrations. The museum’s educational outreach was exceptional, with programs like Summer Art Camps, Chalk the Walk in Bedford, Children’s Plein Air in Ligonier, and the Artists of the 21st Century exhibitions at Ligonier, Altoona, and Bedford engaging young minds in art.

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EDUCATION UPDATE



Artist-in-Residence program mural at Hollidaysburg Area High School.

District art teacher Alysia Watt and teaching artist Deb Bunnell truly went above and beyond this year, collaborating to bring two extraordinary murals to life at a residency in Hollidaysburg. Their work exemplifies the power of art and interdisciplinary collaboration, seamlessly merging literature, history, and creativity.

Working alongside English and Literature teachers, Alysia and Deb designed a stunning mural that highlights five important figures from literary history. The mural not only features visual depictions of these influential writers but also incorporates passages from a local 1904 dictionary. To engage students and make the experience more interactive, the mural includes highlighted quotes from these literary figures, inviting viewers

to reflect on their words and contributions. This thought-provoking and visually captivating mural now resides just outside the high school library, where students, staff, and visitors alike can admire and draw inspiration from it.

In addition to the literary mural, the pair also created a second mural honoring the five branches of the United States military. This mural showcases the insignias of the Navy, Marines, Army, Coast Guard, and Air Force, paying tribute to the men and women who have served in these forces.

Through their dedication and creative vision, the students have enriched the school environment and created lasting works of art that will inspire visitors for years to come.



THANK YOU

A special thank you to our Educational Improvement Tax Credit sponsors for your continued support. We utilize funds to create AIR programs for local students, supply art kits for special programming, and bring our permanent collection into classrooms throughout our region at little or no cost to the school districts that want and need arts programming.

To learn more about becoming an EITC Sponsor, please contact Kristin Miller at SAMA Ligonier at (724) 238-6015.

Art Sparks

An extraordinary residency, known as Art Sparks, took place this year at North Somerset Plaza. Inspired by their local culture and heritage, students in grades 9-12 from Shanksville-Stonycreek School District worked with teaching artist Deb Bunnell to create two murals for Somerset County: "Who We Are and Things We Do". The murals showcase the characteristics that make Somerset County what it is and how residents and visitors can have fun all year round.

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Year of Distinction *(cont' from front page)*

Throughout the year, the museum strengthened its ties with community organizations, partnering with groups like Altoona Community Theatre, Arts Altoona, Fort Bedford Museum, Friends of SAMA Ligonier, Penguin Court, and more. These collaborations helped expand the museum's impact and reach across the region.

SAMA also held five major fundraising events, including the Night Fever Gala, Backyard Bash, From Italy with Love, and Art for Your Heart 5K, with Dueling Pianos: Bubblegum Daydreams still to come. These events

provided exciting entertainment while raising critical funds for the museum's programs.

The museum's Board of Trustees grew with the addition of five new members, each bringing valuable expertise and fresh perspectives. SAMA also secured support from 20 foundations, ensuring its mission to bring art to rural Pennsylvania continues to thrive.

Follow our facebook pages for more Year of Distinction highlights.
@SAMAaltoona @SAMAbedford
@SAMAloretto @SAMAligonier



Support SAMA

Renew your membership today and experience art, education, and new ways to make connections in your community.

Engage with SAMA in an intimate and exclusive way in which only members can experience. Support one of the region's cultural treasures bringing art into public and private schools through our education programs.

Connect with other like-minded individuals who support the arts. Joining the Museum and becoming active with its programs or Auxiliary which will introduce you to a wide variety of individuals who share your passion for supporting the arts.

Strengthen the impact of the arts in YOUR community. Your contribution helps us provide quality exhibitions and programming to our communities. With the generous help of members like you, we also are able to keep our doors open to the public free of charge.

Be the first to know about new events and exhibitions, and enjoy discounted rates on programs such as opening receptions and workshops.



THANK YOU

TO ALL OUR AMAZING BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF FOR MANY SUCCESSFUL EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS IN 2024.

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EXHIBITION SUCCESSES

WE THE PEOPLE



Young visitors create postcards reflecting on what democracy means to them.

A dynamic exploration of American democracy, immersing the community in a thought-provoking dialogue on the democratic process.

Through interactive installations and community-based events, visitors were encouraged to reflect on the past, present, and future of democracy in the United States. Featured artworks included those by the artist collective For Freedoms, alongside pieces by local and national artists such as Sandra Bacchi, Matt Conboy, Nicole Czapinski, Christine Holtz, Jameelah Platt, Jonelle Summerfield, and Beth Wheeler. Each artist brought a unique perspective, fostering a rich and engaging conversation. Supported by grants from the Henry Luce Foundation and The Antonia and Vladimir Kulaev Cultural Heritage Fund, Inc., the exhibition encouraged both reflection and participation, creating a powerful, insightful experience for all who attended. It successfully showcased the intersection of art and civic engagement, leaving a lasting impact on the community.



A visitor enjoying the artworks on display at Ligonier this summer.

underscored the long history of pastel use, which can be traced back to the Renaissance, with masters like Michelangelo and Da Vinci favoring the medium for its intense colors and blendable pigments.

The artists in this exhibition employed both soft and oil pastels, showing the medium's capacity to mimic the vibrancy and texture of oil paints. Made from powdered pigments and binders such as gum or resin, pastels allow artists to create works with remarkable depth and texture.

Rendering Radiance

The Pittsburgh Pastel Artists League (PPAL) recently showcased a vibrant and diverse exhibition, highlighting the incredible versatility of soft pastels.

Formed in 2002, PPAL is a member-supported art organization and part of the International Association of Pastel Societies (IAPS). This affiliation aligns PPAL with pastel societies across the globe, united by a shared passion for promoting and advancing the fine art of pastel.

The exhibit featured works from artists of varying experience, ranging from internationally renowned professionals to beginners. Each piece demonstrated the rich possibilities of pastels, a medium often referred to as "dry painting." The display

Overall, PPAL's exhibition celebrated the technical skill and creative talent of its members, showcasing pastel art's enduring appeal. Whether beginner or expert, each artist's contribution added to the rich tapestry of this visually captivating show, leaving visitors inspired by the beauty and versatility of this centuries-old medium. The exhibition not only highlighted the mastery of pastel techniques but also offered a unique insight into the historical and contemporary significance of this medium, leaving a lasting impression on all who attended.

THIS SUMMER AT SAMA

Animal Interpretations

An exhibition of work from Melissa Selcow and Helen Gorsuch hosted at Altoona this summer.

“Animal Interpretations: a two woman show by Melissa Selcow and Helen Gorsuch” was a captivating celebration of the animal kingdom. Melissa Selcow, a self-taught painter and daughter of sculptor Helen Gorsuch, showcased intricate, serene paintings that highlighted the dignity and calmness of natural animals. Meanwhile, Helen Gorsuch’s whimsical sculptures

brought fantastical creatures to life, delighting visitors with their imaginative forms. Together, their works offered a fascinating blend of realism and fantasy, charming art lovers with both the beauty of the natural world and the allure of creative imagination. This exhibition left viewers enchanted by the vast range of interpretations of the animal kingdom.



Photo of the Shirley and Fred A. Pechter Gallery at Altoona.

BIENNIAL 2024

Every two years, SAMA offers emerging artists the chance to exhibit alongside experienced talents.



Exhibiting artists view their work on display at the Biennial 2024 awards ceremony.

The Biennial 2024 exhibition at Bedford was one of the most exciting and rewarding exhibitions in the region providing a platform for emerging artists to gain recognition for their work. Artworks were selected by juror Janice Trusky, an accomplished artist and educator with an MFA from Indiana University of Pennsylvania and a BFA from Kutztown University. Vaughn Clay, who has a Doctorate in Art Education, awarded the top prizes.

The exhibition brought together some of the finest regional artistic talent, enriching the community while sparking meaningful conversations. As guest curator Ehrin Ward stated, “The Biennial exhibit at SAMA Bedford will showcase some of the finest regional artistic talent.” The Best in Show was awarded to Gregory Blue, while First Place went to Linda Noonan, Second Place to Paul Sirofchuck, and Third Place to Candace Greenberg-Thompson. See the winning artworks by scanning the QR code provided.



MOSAICS

“From Darkness to Light: Mosaic Art of Hope from Tragedy” at Johnstown.

On view through December 15, 2024, the exhibition showcases a powerful collaboration between mosaic artists, led by Susan Ribnick of Vintage Mosaic in Austin, Texas. Inspired by the tragic events of the Tree of Life synagogue shooting on Oct. 27, 2018, the exhibit features striking mosaics that address themes of antisemitism, injustice, hope, resilience, and peace. Artists from across the United States and abroad joined forces to create this traveling exhibit. Each piece stands as a testament to the interconnected histories and emotions felt worldwide. This project is supported by the Hope Springs Eternal: the Holocaust Project and was financed [in part] by a grant from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community and Economic Development.

Backyard Bash Fun!

A great time was had by all who attended this year's Backyard Bash at Ligonier Valley.

It was truly a wonderful evening at SAMA Ligonier for the 2024 Backyard Bash! Guests were treated to delicious food, live entertainment, and vigorous competition with axe throwing. To relax, guests could sit by a glowing fire and enjoy delicious smores hand-crafted by our very own, smore artist-extraordinaire, Lee Rummel.

We greatly appreciated all our generous sponsors and donors who helped make this fall festival a smashing success. Special appreciation goes to Somerset Trust Company for their generous

sponsorship. Also, thank you to our Board and staff who worked diligently to help make the evening lovely for our patrons.

If you missed this year, mark your calendars for Saturday, July 12, 2025. Get ready to hang your stockings for next year's Backyard Bash will be a "Christmas in July" fundraiser and is already in the works!

Are you on the Naughty or Nice list? Come celebrate with us and enjoy an unforgettable evening of festive fun!



Board members and staff work together to make SAMA fundraisers a night to remember.

SAMA NIGHT FEVER GALA

We are deeply thankful for your unwavering support in making a difference in the lives of those we serve.

The Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art hosted a fabulous "SAMA Night Fever Gala" on June 15, 2024, bringing a burst of disco flair to the community!

The evening sparkled with retro '70s vibes, as guests arrived dressed in their flashiest attire, ready to enjoy a night filled with



Fundraiser guests dance the night away at the Altoona Grand Hotel.

art, laughter, and excitement. The night was transformed with shimmering lights, groovy decor, and fun photo opportunities that made everyone feel like a disco star.

Attendees mingled over delicious food and cocktails, bid on fantastic live and silent auction items featuring works from talented local artists, and more.

Thank you to everyone who donated, sponsored, attended, worked, and otherwise supported this amazing endeavor for SAMA's largest fundraiser of the year.

It wasn't just a party—it was a celebration of art, culture, and the joy of coming together to support SAMA's mission of enriching the community through creative experiences.

DONATE. SPONSOR. ADVERTISE. SUPPORT.

Attending our signature fundraiser events is not the only way to help with SAMA fundraising.

- Donate items for silent auction like vacations and weekend getaways, tickets to concerts or sporting events, and gift baskets.
- Sponsor a table as a business or as a group of individuals to get reduced price tickets and be recognized as a SAMA supporter.
- Advertise your business with an ad in the program to be seen by the crowd of diverse attendants.
- Donate to SAMA's annual giving campaign to allow for endless opportunities for your dollars to be put to use!

Thank you to all who support us through donations, patronage, volunteering, attendance and committee membership to make our fundraisers such a success!

Find more details about fundraisers and events at sama-art.org



SPCArts RETURNS

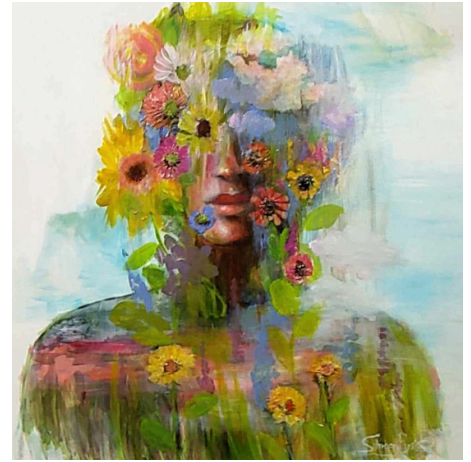
On view at Ligonier Valley from November 15, 2024 through February 2, 2025.

Celebrate the work of local artists with the Southwestern Pennsylvania Council for the Arts 29th Annual Regional Juried Art Exhibition. The exhibition features work by artists from the 19 southwestern counties of Pennsylvania. Featured works will span a variety of media, including acrylic, oil, pastel, photography, watercolor, wood, masonry, and many others.

Since its inception, the exhibition has become known for its freshness and energy in the art of emerging young

artists and for the dazzling presentations of established artists who are developing a new direction with their art. This installment marks the nineteenth consecutive year the exhibition is being hosted by SAMA Ligonier Valley.

Serving as juror this year is Becky Blosser. Becky earned her BFA from Millersville University and her MFA in Visual Arts from Mason Gross School of Art, Rutgers University. She is currently the chair of the Fine Art Department at Pennsylvania College of Art and Design.



Stacey Pydynkowski "Looking Ahead" was displayed in the 2023 SPCAarts exhibition.

Join us at the opening celebration on Saturday, November 16 from 6:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. Reservations can be made at sama-art.org or by calling the Ligonier museum.

Mark Your Calendars



Sat, Nov 9 | Bedford Exhibition Celebration
Val Rossman is excited to share her work with you!

Rossman's career as a professional abstract artist has spanned over 40 years. On Saturday from 2-4pm, enjoy refreshments and hear from the artist on her process. Come out and show your support for local and regional artists.



Fri, Feb 14 | Altoona From Italy with Love
A Valentine's Day culinary experience.

Get struck by cupid's arrow at an enchanting evening of food, entertainment and philanthropy at the Casino. Enjoy a gourmet dinner, exceptional wines from DellaVino Imports Warehouse, and a live performance of "The Frank Sinatra Show" by Rich DeSimone.



WINTER HOURS
Museums will begin winter hours open Fri-Sun, 12-4:30pm starting December 27, 2024 until February 23, 2025.

ALL MUSEUMS CLOSED for the holidays Nov 28, Dec 24 & 25.

JOHNSTOWN open by appointment only. No appointments will be made Nov 28-29, and Dec 16-Jan 16.



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- Sponsor a table as a business or as a group of individuals to get reduced price tickets and be recognized in advertising and at the event as a SAMA supporter.
- Advertise your business with a print ad in the evening program to be seen by the crowd of diverse attendants.
- Donate to SAMA's general operating campaign to allow for endless opportunities for your dollars to be put to use!



DUELING PIANOS

The best party of the year returns on November 4, 2022 at The Blairmont Club.

The classic night of dancing returns with SAMA Altoona's annual fundraiser. The highlight of this year's event is a live musical performance by the Flying Ivories, dueling piano group. Specializing in an all-request, sing-along, interactive dueling piano shows, the Flying Ivories tackle music from any genre. The audience gets involved in the pianist's antics in this combination musical performance and comedy act.

Guests can also purchase incredible artworks as well as unique experiences and gifts



in the silent auction. Enjoy cocktails and hors d'oeuvres throughout the club.

Altoona's 20th annual fundraiser is hosted by chairs, Tiffany & Matt Stuckey and Ehrin & Bill Ward Jr. See what new and exciting plans they have for this traditional event. Register at sama-art.org.

Crystal Soirée

It's back and better than ever! Join us January 28, 2023 at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort for the Roaring 20's!

The Bedford County Humane Society and Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art in Bedford have come together to create a meaningful night of entertainment, dinner, and dancing. Crystal Soirée is the hallmark as one of the regions most important charity events raising funds for two significant community organizations.

Dust off your bow ties, and those dancing shoes! This year's event will be the bees knees with a Roaring 20's theme. It's a party like the prohibition days but with complimentary bottles of wine instead. Reservations also include the live music from the band Uptown Jazz and a delicious menu from the acclaimed chef at the Omni Bedford Springs Resort.

Donations, sponsorships, and event attendance will help to maintain the Museum and the Humane Society's regular operations and sustain programs for both organizations. Register, sponsor or advertise at sama-art.org.



GALA & GARDEN PARTY

Recordbreaking success at this year's Belmont Stakes Gala.

The Belmont Stakes Gala was a grand, sophisticated, and entertaining evening sponsored by the Bruno and Lena DeGol Family Foundation.

Once again, our Gala committee and SAMA staff planned a fabulous evening to include outdoor vistas as

well as indoor fun. Guests wore horse racing attire and uniquely decorated hats to this last of the horse-race-themed Gala series. The evening was filled with music, laughter, amazing hors d'oeuvres, delicious sweets, an open bar, and the Belmont Stakes race shown live on the big screen. The auctions boasted art and sculpture, unique garden features, dream vacations, excursions, and overnight stays such as a Fallingwater private tour and nearby cabin retreat, and more. The Casino was open all evening and players can use their winnings to buy beautiful, bountiful gift baskets; the silent auction offered unique shopping fun.

Thanks to the significant contributions of individuals that evening, SAMA is able to sustain programming through the end of the year.



Bedford Site Director, Christi Draves, painted faces and bodies of guests at Garden Party adding flair to the event.



Under The Stars

Guests enjoyed the “British Invasion” of sounds from the Beatles, Elton John, the Rolling Stones and more at this year’s outdoor concert at the Ligonier Country Club. This collaboration was the second annual event for these two organizations. We, once again, enjoyed a beautiful September evening on the lawn of the golf course with the Westmoreland Symphony.

Garden Party was also a meaning evening for the current exhibiting artists, Rita Haldeman and Nicole Ryan as well as for the guests who enjoyed live music, great food, and fun!

The storm clouds cleared to allow us to appreciate the night with the sounds of jazz from the Pittsburgh group, RML Jazz. Guests also could get painted with gems to glam up the night! Everyone wore something silver to celebrate this amazing evening sponsored by Somerset Trust Company.

We thank all of our fundraiser guests, donors, advertisers, sponsors, staff, and more!

