



# FOCUS

FALL 2025



## A Message from the KAL President

*Jim Rojeski*

I always want summer to last forever—long, warm days and sunshine. However, even good things end, and the calendar moves on. Looking around, I see school buses on the move in Kalamazoo and school supply sales in the stores and while in the Porcupine Mountains this week saw the first red maple trees. Fall is coming fast. And with fall we bring you Kalamazoo Art League members and friends a new season of interesting lectures about art, Food as Art receptions, and trips to see art. If you thought last season was great, get ready for an even more exciting season and update your calendars now.

Our first very special presentation of the season is by the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts Director Michelle Hargrave on Wednesday, September 24, at 6:30 pm. Michelle will present “The Buffet Party: Entertaining with American Ingenuity.” Michele traces how buffet-style entertaining rose to prominence during the Great Depression and impacted serving pieces tailored to this new way of gathering. The result was a distinctly American approach to entertaining art—functional, fashionable, and full of ingenuity. You will not want to miss this.

Following shortly on Thursday, October 16, at 6 pm, Dr. Robert Mintz, Chief Curatorial Director

at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco, will guide our exploration of East Asian “bird and flower painting” through the joy of “artistic bird-watching.” Then on November 5 at 10 am we have rescheduled Dr. Abbas Daneshvari to talk about American and European Art in the Crucible of Postmodernism. Abbas’ presentation about how art reflects the political, cultural, scientific, and thought happenings of a time will be relevant in our current very interesting times. We will close out the first half of our season on Wednesday, December 10, at 10:30 am with holiday treats and a docent-led tour. Details on these and scheduled 2026 events are on our website.

Beginning just last season, we were fortunate to have the leadership of Chef Ryne Bisnett, supported by Greenleaf Hospitality and the Kalamazoo Country Club to kickstart Food as Art receptions that reflected each presenter’s lecture. This year with that continued leadership and some new chefs we will continue to bring you great Food as Art receptions and special events. Kalamazoo Art League is delighted to sponsor this year’s Joy Light Lecture in East Asian Art, and will provide a reception before the presentation, starting at 5:30 pm.

If you haven’t yet renewed your Art League Membership, now is a great time to do so, and get your friends, neighbors and family to join in the fun. You must be a member of KIA to join the Art League, so renew that as well. There are amazing things happening at KIA this coming year.

Happy Fall,  
Jim Rojeski

# 2025–26 Lecture Series

Join us for a continuation of our exciting speaker lineup

*All lectures and receptions held at Kalamazoo Institute of Arts are FREE for Art League members, \$10 KIA members, \$12 public, and \$3 students. For more information visit [KalamazooArtLeague.org](http://KalamazooArtLeague.org).*

**September 24, 2025**

**Michelle Hargrave**

*Executive Director Kalamazoo Institute of Arts*

6:30 p.m. | KIA Auditorium

Reception to follow lecture

**The Buffet Party:**

**Entertaining with American Ingenuity**



Michelle shares her expertise with Art League and traces how buffet-style entertaining rose to prominence during the Great Depression as a practical yet stylish alternative to formal dining. Inspired by Eleanor

Roosevelt and fueled by shifting social norms, Americans embraced informal buffets and cocktail parties and companies responded by enlisting designers like Russell Wright and Walter von Nessen to create modern, elegant serving ware tailored to this new way of gathering. The result was a distinctly American approach to entertaining—functional, fashionable, and full of ingenuity.

**October 16, 2025**

**Dr. Robert Mintz**

*Deputy Director at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*

6:00 p.m. | KIA Auditorium

Reception before lecture

**Birding in the Galleries**



Dr. Mintz will guide our exploration of East Asian “bird and flower painting” through the joy of “artistic bird-watching.”

Kalamazoo Art League is delighted to sponsor this year’s Joy Light Lecture in

East Asian Art, and will provide a reception before the presentation, starting at 5:30 pm.

**November 5, 2025**

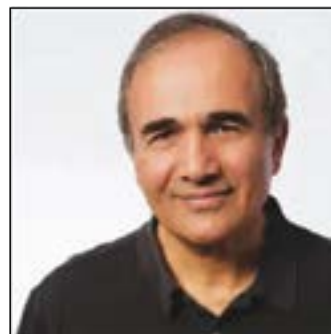
**Dr. Abbas Daneshvari**

*Deputy Director at the Asian Art Museum of San Francisco*

10:00 a.m. | KIA Auditorium

Reception to follow lecture

**American and European Art in the Crucible of Postmodernism**



Dr. Daneshvari will explore the cultural transformations anticipated and reflected in the arts of Europe and the United States from

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the Surrealists to the Postmodernists. Professor Daneshvari is the former Chair of the Department of Art and Professor of Art History at California State University, Los Angeles. He is the author of *Amazingly Original: Contemporary Iranian Art at Crossroads*, as well as numerous publications on various aspects of Islamic art's iconography.

## December 10, 2025

### ***Docent Tour***

10:30 a.m.

Members will receive invitation by email.

### **Holiday Coffee**



## **A Message from the KIA Executive Director**

***Michelle Hargrave***

Dear Art League Members,  
Fall has arrived, and it's an energizing time at the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts and the Kirk Newman Art School. Thank you for the enthusiasm and volunteer spirit you brought all summer—our 74th Arts Fair welcomed more than 17,000 visitors and 130 talented artists in Bronson Park, setting a terrific tone for the year.

If you haven't yet, please catch two summer highlights—Leo Villareal: *Interstellar* and *Ink Rhapsody: The Art of the Lingnan Masters* in Hong Kong—on view through September 21 and October 26, respectively. In October, we open two exhibitions I think you'll love: *Washi Transformed: New Expressions in Japanese Paper* (October 4–January 11) and the *KNAS Faculty Review Exhibition* (October 11–January 25), which showcases the incredible talent right here at the KIA.

It's also been a big summer for KNAS. We hosted art camps for youth from across the state and made significant progress on studio renova-

tions. I hope you'll join us for a class and see the enhancements made possible by the generosity of the Kirk and Georgia Newman Family and the Jim Gilmore, Jr. Foundation. These upgrades will help us deliver even stronger arts education and keep creativity accessible to everyone.

Looking ahead, we can't wait for the return of our beloved gala fundraising event: the UNFRAMED Soiree, honoring Joy and Tim Light! Our dedicated team and wonderful volunteers have put in tremendous effort to bring this celebration back to the KIA. Expect delicious food, great music, refreshing drinks, and thrilling silent and live auctions. Tickets are limited, so I truly hope you can join us for this fantastic evening!

Don't miss the refreshed Gallery Shop. We've added grab-and-go bites from Walnut & Park and coffee from Water Street Coffee, expanded artist-made goods and KIA-branded merchandise, and stocked our new collection handbook, *101 Legendary Selections* from the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts—a wonderful keepsake and an easy way to introduce friends to the breadth of our collection. An ecommerce rollout is planned for later this fall so you can shop from home.

As always, thank you for being such committed ambassadors for the KIA. Your advocacy, attendance, and passion for the arts help us welcome new audiences and deepen the experience for longtime friends. I look forward to seeing you at the museum this season—bring someone new with you if you can.

Warmly,  
Michelle Hargrave  
KIA Executive Director

For more information about events at the KIA visit [kiarts.org](http://kiarts.org)

# Thank you Donors!

The Art League Board of Directors wishes to thank the following members for donations that were made in the past few months to either our Programs Enhancement Fund or our General Operations Fund. Large or small, every contribution makes a difference and helps us to continue offering quality lectures and events for our members and the community at large! We greatly appreciate the generosity and support that has been shown.

**Randall and Diane Eberts**  
**Sharon Gleeson**  
**Bassam and Veronica Harik**  
**Ginnie Hessler**  
**Beth Jarl**  
**Joe and Linda Kanamueller**  
**Mary Klenow**  
**Nelly Kurzmann**  
**Donna Lambert**  
**Elizabeth Upjohn Mason**  
**Karen Matson**  
**David and Rebecca Moffett-Moore**  
**Peggy Napier**  
**Ann Wright Parsons**  
**Stephanie Robinson**  
**Jim Rojas**  
**Ruth Rowe**  
**Elaine Seaman**  
**Paula Shelhamer**  
**Dhera Strauss**  
**Janet Thieme**  
**Doreen Thomas**  
**Anne van Giessen**  
**JoAnn Yochim**



## Annual Membership Sign Up

*Annual memberships are valid from July 1 - June 30*

Date\_\_\_\_\_

I am a \_\_\_\_\_ New Member \_\_\_\_\_Renewing Member \_\_\_\_\_Rejoining former member

Name(s)\_\_\_\_\_

Preferred phone #\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

Address\_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip code\_\_\_\_\_

**Dues are \$45 per person. Your additional gift helps support Art League's outstanding programs.**

\$\_\_\_\_\_ membership enclosed

\$\_\_\_\_\_ additional gift

\$\_\_\_\_\_ total enclosed.

**Make your check payable to Kalamazoo Art League.**

Please check all boxes that apply.

- ☐ I am a member of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts. KIA membership is required to join Art League.
  - Contact the KIA Membership Department at 269.585.9297 if you wish to confirm your KIA membership status.
  - Visit the KIA in person or online at [kiarts.org](http://kiarts.org) to become a KIA member.
- ☐ Yes, you may share my information in an Art League directory.
- ☐ Please contact me to discuss how I may participate in committees or volunteer at events.

**Hand deliver or mail this form with your check to:**

Kalamazoo Art League Membership  
c/o Kalamazoo Institute of Arts  
314 S. Park Street  
Kalamazoo, MI 49007

## Membership Benefits

- Free admission to Art League's dynamic lecture series, showcasing highly regarded artists, curators, and other scholarly speakers from all over North America.
- Invitations to members-only events.
- Advance notice and discounts for depARTures travel opportunities.
- Fun and friendly networking and socializing with members, artists, experts, and an enthusiastic community that appreciates and supports the visual arts.
- Art League's quarterly FOCUS E-newsletter and updates on Art League news and events.