



MAC MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

April 2026



Marlborough Arts Center

Fostering creativity, appreciation, and enjoyment of fine arts, performing arts,
fine crafts and regional history since 2007

Welcome to the MAC Monthly Newsletter

Attend a Class | Enjoy a Performance | View Inspiring Gallery Art

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We value & appreciate your feedback. Please send your questions and suggestions to the editor, Jennifer Chaffee. Email: jenniferchaffeeart@gmail.com

4th FRIDAY @ THE ARTS CAFÉ

The Modern Riffs, April 24th, 2026



The Modern Riffs will be performing at the Marlborough Arts Center at 231 North Main Street, Marlborough, CT on Friday, March 27 at 7:30 PM.

The Modern Riffs is a musical mentoring group where talented high school and college musicians perform alongside older, experienced musicians.

The group was formed in 2008 by Marlborough saxophonist Bruce Phelps with the idea of providing an opportunity for younger musicians to gain confidence by performing in public.

The older musicians in the group serve as mentors, and in turn are energized by the talent and enthusiasm of the younger musicians. Since its inception, the group has fielded over 60 young musicians, many of whom have gone on to pursue music as their career—either teaching or performing.

Performances highlight modern jazz and swing, in combination with 70's and 80's classic rock and funk. This high quality, high

energy group features 4 horns (3 saxophones and a trumpet), a female lead vocal, and a powerhouse rhythm section. More information on the group is available at www.modernriffs.com

Admission is usually \$15 but **this month's program is no charge** due to a generous grant from the Marlborough Greater Together Community Fund of the Greater Hartford Gives Foundation.

Doors open at 7:00 PM and the concert begins at 7:30 PM. Sit where you like among the bistro tables and chairs. BYO beverage (wine, beer, etc) and nibbles to dine on. Other NA beverages and baked sweet treats are often available. There is ample parking, and the Marlborough Arts Center is fully accessible.

For a list of concerts scheduled at the MAC and about the grant go to the [4th Friday @ the Arts Cafe](#) page on the MAC website at www.marlborougharts.org

2026 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

Join or Renew Today!



Thank you to everyone that has joined so far. The response has be great!

If you have been thinking about supporting the MAC, **now is the perfect time** to help us reach our goals. Funds collected for membership are a vital part of keeping the Arts Center operating, and are greatly appreciated!

Memberships are valid from **January through December** each year.

Your support allows us to offer so much, including:

- Monthly 4th Friday live musical performances
- Inspiring creative arts and crafts classes and workshops
- Fine art and photography shows
- Monthly email newsletter

- Annual Winter Tag Sale
- Hosting local school concerts and art shows
- Annual New Year's Eve gathering

Your 2026 membership provides many benefits, including:

- Advance notice/registration of our popular classes that often fill up quickly
- Discounted rates for rental of our beautiful building and spacious classroom
- A chance to have a solo show at our second gallery inside the Marlborough Town Hall
- Opportunity to display and sell your art at the Annual Member's Show
- Make new friends and network with other artists & art collectors
- Enjoy more benefits as they become available

👉 [Click here to Join or renew your membership today!](#)

Mail-in membership is also available by downloading the printable form to send in with your membership check. [Download form here](#)

ART SHOWS & EXHIBITIONS



Members' Spring 2026 Art Show and Sale

Over \$1000 in awards

April 25 - May 31

Gallery Hours: Saturdays and Sundays 1 PM - 4 PM

Reception: Sunday, May 3, 1-4 PM

Join us at the Marlborough Arts Center (MAC) as our talented members showcase a vibrant collection of artwork across various mediums. Experience an inspiring array of paintings, collages, photography, sculpture, ceramics, written pieces, and more created by MAC artists.

Everyone is warmly invited to attend the reception and awards ceremony as we celebrate creativity and community. Mingle with the artists and enjoy delicious finger foods, beverages, and sweet treats while viewing outstanding artwork.

The reception will be held on Sunday, May 3rd, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. There is no admission fee to the show or the public reception. Bring a friend and we'll see you there!

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MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Gabrielle Castle

We're pleased to highlight one of our newest artist members from Maine. Welcome Gabrielle!

Artist Bio

Gabrielle Castle is a 25-year-old figurative and portrait painter from the western mountains of Maine. Her work blends traditional techniques with contemporary flair, marked by masterful use of color, intricate detailing, and striking composition.

Early on, she was introduced to the works of Rembrandt, Da Vinci, Renoir, Sargent, and Degas and found endless inspiration in their mastery. Her vision captures the



interplay of light, shadow, color, and expression, crafting compelling narratives through the faces she paints.

At that time I was pursuing classical ballet with the dream of joining a professional company.

Please describe your past experience, such as your path to becoming an artist. Were you introduced to art at an early age or have you recently started out?

I have always had an affinity for the arts, a love for all things classical. My first love was for classical ballet, beginning classes at the age of 4. I was very lucky as a child, due to the fact that my parents took my siblings and I constantly on trips to museums, musicals, symphonies, the ballet, and every art related event they could.

With my father being a musician, and my mother a tap dancer and auctioneer, it's easy to say the arts run in my blood. We took two trips to Europe in my childhood that really developed my profound love for art. My parents' constant support and drive to expose their children to as much art and culture as possible really impacted my love for the arts as a whole. I didn't begin painting or drawing until I met Russ Cox¹ and began training with him in 2016.

At that time I was pursuing classical ballet with the dream of joining a professional company. As a result I attended an online high school to accommodate the rigorous [ballet] training schedule. The program I attended was nearly two and a half hours one way from my hometown and I was very fortunate that my parents were able to drive me.

My mom and I would spend Friday mornings in the basement of the Pittsfield library, allowing us some time for me to study and her to do some paperwork.



¹ [Ross Cox website](#)

One day we ran into an artist in that basement and within a few minutes of meeting him, my mom convinced Russ Cox to take on a private student. And so, I began taking weekly drawing lessons. At the time when we met Russ we had no idea how accomplished of an artist he was; former professor with Pennsylvania College of Art and Design and children's book author/illustrator with more than forty published books. I remained a student of Russ' for several years.

Are you self taught?

Meeting Russ Cox in 2016 was really the start to my artistic journey but at that time it was just a break from the ballet. Throughout high school I continued studying privately with Russ and his instruction soon took me through everything from basic drawing fundamentals to advanced painting techniques. It wasn't until fall of 2021 that I branched out and I took an online workshop with Studio Escalier based in Paris.

In January of 2022 I was supposed to study in Paris with them for 3 months but unfortunately due to covid restrictions the course was cancelled. We did an alternative online version and I still learned so much from them even though I wasn't able to attend in person.

Meeting Russ Cox in 2016 was really the start to my artistic journey but at that time it was just a break from the ballet.

In April 2025 I took a trip to Ozark, MO to attend a workshop with David Kassan and Shana Levenson hosted by Chelsie Nicole Contemporary. Truly an incredible experience to have a chance to learn from both of them in person painting side by side. Their techniques and approaches once again greatly revolutionized my palette and brush work. My palette went from containing 12 tube colors after Studio Escalier to 19 after the workshop with Kassan and Levenson.

What town are you from?

I was born in 2001 in Minnesota but my family moved to the Rangeley Lakes region of Maine when I was 5. My mom's family had a camp in the rural mountains that she summered at during her childhood. I have a studio set up in Maine with my family. The room that was previously used as a home dance studio

was eventually transformed into an art studio a few years ago.

Recently I started spending a lot of time in Marlborough Connecticut as I have really good friends that live here and were happy to host me when I would come down from Maine to set up for various art festivals. During the summer I participated in the Wickford Art Festival in RI, Mystic Outdoor Art Festival and Old Saybrook Arts and Crafts Festival, in CT.

I began finding more commission work in this area with it being so much closer to Boston and New York. Maine is just so far from everything. I now have a second studio set up in the area here for when I am working on commissions or traveling through.



What medium(s) do you work in?

I started out drawing in pencil and charcoal, and then quickly moved into paint. I primarily work in oils and greatly enjoy the versatility of the medium and how easy it is to layer paint building luminosity, especially when applied to building skin.

Typically my paintings will begin with a loose monochromatic underpainting, drawing directly on the canvas with the brush, the paint thinned with gamsol. After letting that first layer set, I will dive right in with the full palette of color.

Where do you find inspiration for your art?

I find inspiration everywhere I go in both familiar and unfamiliar faces. Many of my models have been friends willing to donate their time. Others are people I find along my way in my travels. I look for people that are unapologetically themselves.

Sometimes I will just find myself drawn to a stranger I pass on the street, the energy and presence they exude. It isn't tied to the conventional way we as a society look at beauty but instead is directly a reflection of their soul and uniqueness and that is where I find beauty in every face. Recently I have also been finding inspiration in my models surroundings. I find the atmosphere of a painting can greatly reflect someone's soul.

"I find inspiration everywhere I go in both familiar and unfamiliar faces."

Some of my subjects shine in just a simple studio setting where there is nothing to focus on but their presence in the space and others the landscape or setting they are in, is their personality and I couldn't possibly capture their essence without it.



Are there any current or past exhibits, shows, or awards you would like to highlight?

My work has received recognition in international competitions including The Almenara Art Prize², Tartget Prize³ and the 18th International ARC Salon Competition⁴. Most notably my painting was featured on the cover of Fine Art Connoisseur magazine's December 2025⁵ issue, as well as highlighted in the "Three to Watch" section.

My work has been displayed at numerous venues, such as the MEAM in Barcelona, Spain and regularly at the prestigious Salmagundi Club⁶ exhibitions in Manhattan.

² [Almenara Art Prize](#)

³ [Tartget Prize](#)

⁴ [18th International ARC Salon Competition](#)

⁵ [Fine Art Connoisseur](#)

⁶ [Salmagundi Club](#)

What do you enjoy most about being an artist?

It's difficult to narrow down the most incredible parts of being an artist. As I mentioned previously I have always been someone who enjoys the arts and creating art regardless of the medium. Oscar Wilde said "Art is the most intense mode of individualism that the world has known. " And that truly is the root of it all.

"I love noticing the smallest details about a person or the way the light interacts with them."

I love noticing the smallest details about a person or the way the light interacts with them. Being able to meet people, learning their stories and then being able to capture their personality on canvas is just magical. Emotions that exist for only a moment can be witnessed in a painting for a lifetime.

Where can people find out more about you and your art?

You can find out more about me and my art through my website which has all of my contact information. Feel free to reach out with any questions, comments or just to say hello! Please check out my instagram where I share lots of content about my process, work, upcoming shows and events.

Website: gcastleart.com

Instagram: [@gcastleart](https://www.instagram.com/gcastleart)

Solo Show at the Marlborough Town Hall | MAC Gallery

Charles McCaughtry Watercolors March - April 30, 2026

Charles McCaughtry paints what he knows - the land, and waters he explores. Drawn to wild areas and nature, quiet places and white water, light and atmosphere, he paints the poetry of a given moment. The relationships of earth, water, air, light and movement motivate his paintings as well as his love of small boats and fly fishing.



He gets much of his inspiration while canoeing, kayaking and hiking. His watercolors have been exhibited widely in galleries, museums, and universities in the United States and Canada, and he has held over fifty one man exhibits. His watercolors have been exhibited widely in galleries, museums, and universities in the United States and Canada, and he has held over fifty one man exhibits.

Honors include commissions from the Liberty Bank, Middletown, Connecticut: The Dodd Center at the University of Connecticut, and the Hartford Life Insurance Company, Hartford, Connecticut as well as many awards from numerous exhibitions.

His paintings can be found in many institutional, corporate, and private collections in the United States, Canada, and Europe.

Charley was born in Niles, Ohio. He graduated from Capital University, Columbus, Ohio, and the Hartford Art School, The University of Hartford, Hartford, Connecticut.

He also studied at the Rangemark Masterclass, Birch Harbor, Maine with Barse Miller, Ed Betts, and Chen Chi. Charles' work can also be seen on his Website:

<https://mccaughtryart.com/>

This exhibit will be open to the public during business hours at the Town Hall: Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, 8 AM - 4:30 PM, Tuesday 8 AM - 7 PM and Fridays from 8 AM to Noon.

Stay tuned for our next Solo Exhibit featuring Linda Gotta in May!

For more information, feel free to call the Marlborough Arts Center at 860-467-6353 or the Marlborough Town Hall Tax Collector's Dept. at (860) 295-6205. The town hall is located at 26 North Main Street, Marlborough, CT.

 **CLASSES**

Drawing I – Beginner & Intermediate
May 15 – June 19

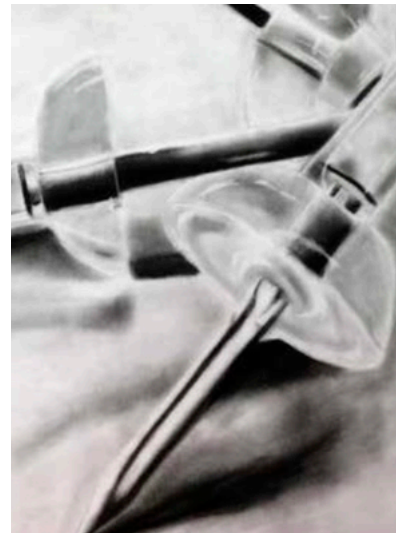
Instructor: Rebecca Moran

Level: Adults - Beginner & Intermediate

When: May 15 - June 19 Fridays 10 am-12 pm

Where: Marlborough Arts Center, Lower Level Classroom

Cost: \$160



This drawing workshop is being offered by popular request! Fundamentals of realistic drawing will be taught and tailored to each individual person's needs. Whether a beginner or intermediate skill level, you will improve your ability to draw in this class.

[More Class & Registration Info](#)

Impressionistic Watercolor – Beginner & Intermediate
May 21 – June 25

Instructor: Alan James
Level: Advanced Beginner- Intermediate
When: May 21 - June 25 Thurs. 10:30 am-1 pm
Where: Marlborough Arts Center, Lower Level
Cost: \$360

This workshop is designed to help you express yourself in watercolors in an impressionistic way, ala prima, that will enable you to complete a painting each day of the workshop.

[More Class & Registration Info](#)



Mixed Abilities - Watercolor

June 6, 2 – 5 pm

Instructor: Marika Hahn
Level: Beginner - Intermediate
When: Saturday, June 6, from 2 – 5 pm
When: Saturday, June 6, from 10 am - 1 pm PM
Where: Marlborough Arts Center, Lower Level
Cost: \$65 for class, \$11.25 for paintbrush (optional)



Participants will learn and practice mixing colors with Liquid Watercolors, supplied by the Marlborough Arts Center. Demonstrations of watercolor techniques including wet on wet, wet on dry, layering, composition and cropping will take place throughout the workshop.

[More Class & Registration Info](#)

Watercolor & Illustration

June 6, 10 am – 1 pm

Instructor: Marika Hahn

Level: Intermediate

When: Saturday, June 6, from 10 am – 1 pm

Where: Marlborough Arts Center, Lower Level

Cost: \$65 for class, \$11.25 for paintbrush (optional)



This workshop uses Liquid Watercolors, provided by The Marlborough Arts Center, and is designed for adults with an understanding of basic watercolor techniques including wet on wet, dry brush and a solid control of brush strokes. The class approaches watercolor using graphic illustration with an emphasis on fun!

[More Class & Registration Info](#)

Expressive Landscapes in Acrylics *April 26*

Instructor: Lori Neumann

Level: Artists of all levels

When: Sunday, April 26, 12:30 -4:00 PM

Where: Marlborough Arts Center, Lower Level
Classroom

Cost: \$75



This all-levels acrylic workshop focuses on developing loose landscape techniques using both brush and palette knife. Step by step demonstrations and guided practice provide a structured yet relaxed learning environment suitable for both beginners and experienced painters who want to “loosen up” and have fun!

This class is currently full but we are accepting waitlist registrations.

[More Class & Registration Info](#)

En Plein Air with Alan James

May 30 - June 27

Instructor: Alan James

Level: Advanced beginner to Intermediate.

When: May 30, (no class June 6) June 13, June 20, June 27 / Saturdays

Time: 11:00 am to 1:30 pm (meet no later than 10:45 am)

Where: Various outdoor locations. Meet at Marlborough Arts Center

Cost: \$60 per class (sign up for 1 or 2 or all 4)



Alan will choose the scene to be painted and do a demonstration of the scene in one go. With Alan's guidance, students will then take this knowledge and create the same painting with hands-on instruction and guidance. At the end of each class, students will have a completed painting!

[More Class & Registration Info](#)



EVENT CALENDAR

Go to the Marlborough Arts Center website [Calendar of Events](#) to see details on our classes, performances, art shows and more.



MAC NEWS & UPDATES

[New Website](#) - We hope you find it faster & easier to use. More content coming in the next few weeks. What else would you like to see on the site - let us know!

Classes - Latest offerings can be found on our Classes page with more to come.
www.marlborougharts.com

Members enjoy receiving advanced notice / access to registration as one of the many benefits. **Consider joining us today.**

Live Music Performances - See the entire line up here

April 24 **The Modern Riffs**

May 22 Nick Cutroneo

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VOLUNTEERING

Volunteer Opportunity: We need to occasionally update our Facebook and Instagram posts. Can you help? Please contact Marc to find out more: **info@marlborougharts.org** or text to: 860-926-7500. Thank you!

We appreciate and thank all our volunteers, past, present & future. You help keep the Marlborough Arts Center a vibrant community resource!

If you are interested in knowing more about helping out at the MAC, we'd love to hear what may fit your interests and available time. Whether it's an hour or two now and then, or investing more time, it all makes a meaningful difference!

Please email us at **info@marlborougharts.org** or **call (860) 467-6353** and leave a message. Or text us: 860-926-7500. Thank you in advance!

Volunteer Opportunities

1. **Gallery Sitting** – during our public exhibit hours, usually from 1:00 – 4:00pm Sat. or Sun. Greet and keep a count of guests; hand out brochures and membership forms; help set-up for any demos; assist with Gallery purchases.

2. **Exhibition Assistance** – prior to or after the event: help with receiving and installing exhibits or dismantling them; assist us with checking-in or logging-out submissions; coordinate labeling, payment, and processing.
3. **Hospitality** – during receptions and Arts Café events: help with food and beverage presentation; handing out membership forms, class brochures, and other event handouts; help with set-up, clean-up or parking.
4. **Building Maintenance** - to keep our building interior and exterior looking its best: help with general clean-up or refurbishing.
5. **Grounds Maintenance** – to keep our gardens & landscaping maintained: help with planting, weeding, or mulching, etc.
6. **Office and Clerical Help**– during flexible hours that don't require public interaction: help prepare mailings; distribute flyers; maintain supplies; oversee our library.
7. **Committees** – Help with or coordinate tasks required by our various committees: Publicity, Membership, Classes, Volunteers, Events, etc.
8. **Computer Assistance** – Provide computer expertise or assist with maintaining lists.
9. **Miscellaneous** – If you have a particular skill or specific knowledge let us know and we'll find opportunities you can choose from.

🌈 In future editions look for more inspiring articles including;

- Spotlight featuring tours of members' art studios
- MAC On The Road - visits to art galleries & museums including New Britain Museum of American Art & Lyme Art Association
- And...your article ideas... send 'em in: info@marlborougharts.org

*“I found I could say things with color and shapes that I couldn't say any other way
– things I had no words for.” ~Georgia O'Keeffe*



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