



OIL PAINTERS of AMERICA

CREATING COMMUNITY · ADVANCING SKILLS · ELEVATING EXCELLENCE

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

OPA promotes and supports oil painters by providing exhibition opportunities, quality educational programs, and a thriving community. Join your peers: be a part of one of the leading arts organizations championing traditional representational painting. Oil painters of all levels are encouraged to join.

INCLUDED WITH MEMBERSHIP

- Eligibility to enter OPA exhibitions and online Showcases. *See specific eligibility for each membership category.*
- The Lunch & Learn series, free to OPA members. These webinar lectures provide a wealth of information for working artists.
- The OPA *Brushstrokes* Newsletter, which keeps you abreast of community and exhibition news.
- Emailed reminders of show submission deadlines, entry results, and exhibition participation information.
- The National Exhibition Catalog, sent to you in digital format. *Hard copy available to purchase.*
- The OPA Blog, a gold mine of artistic and career information.

ANNUAL EXHIBITION SCHEDULE

We run three major physical exhibitions per year:

- The National Juried Exhibition of Traditional Oils
- The Salon Show: a Small Works Exhibition
- Virtuosos of the OPA

In addition, we run:

- Three seasonal online Showcases. *See specific eligibility for each membership category.*
- The Wet Paint Competition, a paint-from-life exhibition for Convention registrants

EDUCATION

The Lunch & Learn series and The OPA Blog are free to members; we also offer, at minimal cost:

- Critiques by Master Signature members
- Scholarships
- Workshops: list one or take one.

COMMUNITY

We have 3500 Artist Members, including 250 Signature members and 70 Master Signature members.

The annual **National Convention**, in conjunction with the National Exhibition, is an opportunity to socialize, network with fellow artists and vendors, see world-class demos, and celebrate excellence.

The **Community Page** on the OPA website is a place to connect with fellow members.

MEMBER PRICING & DISCOUNTS

- Reduced rates for the National Convention
- Discounts from our sponsors for art materials, shipping supplies, and shipping insurance. Watch your email; these come out several times a year.

CONNECT WITH COLLECTORS

The **Collectors Circle** brings art enthusiasts to OPA and provides special programming and exhibition access to collectors.

Our **Member Directory** enables collectors and artists alike to find artists by subject matter and geographic locale. *Opt in when you join OPA to be listed.*



HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Enter an Exhibition

Our annual slate of exhibitions provides multiple opportunities for artist members to enter and exhibit their work. Acceptance into a juried show is a valuable line on a resume; physical space limitations mean that these shows are highly competitive. OPA awards valued over \$150,000 annually in cash and in-kind prizes. Our online Showcases are open call and all entries are posted; judges choose award winners and finalists.

Attend a Lunch & Learn

One of the greatest benefits of OPA membership is our educational Lunch & Learn lecture series. These Zoom webinars feature a range of relevant topics for working artists. *Lectures are scheduled on Fridays at noon Central Time and are free for OPA members; \$15 for nonmembers.*

Organize or Attend a Paint-out

Plein Air Paint-outs are a tradition at Oil Painters of America since 2005. Any OPA member can organize a paint-out and list it on the Community Page. What better way to experience the joy of painting one of North America's breathtaking vistas than alongside fellow artists? Paint-outs get rave reviews from members and nonmembers alike.

Join us at the National Convention

Once a year we convene for a week of activities including lectures and demonstrations by world-class artists, panel discussions and expert presentations, plus the National Awards Ceremony, the Wet Paint Competition, and the Mystery Mini event. First-timers and art enthusiasts are welcome at this friendly and edifying gathering.

Read the Brushstrokes Newsletter

The newsletter keeps you informed of organizational goings-on and our members' activities. It's published four times a year—watch your email inbox for the latest issue.

Get a Critique

OPA offers critiques by a seasoned professional for a nominal fee. Our Signature or Master Signature members volunteer to provide critiques for artists who seek constructive feedback and expert perspective.

Enjoy the National Exhibition Catalog

The National Exhibition is one of the top collections of representational oil painting. The catalog is sent to all members in a digital format that features images of all the work in the show, plus a list of all exhibiting artists and current members. The catalog is also available for purchase as a bound, hardback book.

Apply for a Scholarship

OPA offers several scholarships to support artists in their artistic and career progress.

The Shirl Smithson Memorial Scholarships are open to all current Associate members. These four \$500 scholarships are named for OPA's founder. One of these is designated specifically for a Student member who is currently enrolled as a full-time student.

The Susanna Aitchison MacSporran Memorial Scholarship is for artists with a desire to pursue or continue a career in portraiture painting. The recipient receives \$500 to further their artistic education.

The Betty Schmidt Memorial Scholarship honors Betty's long-time commitment to OPA. This \$500 scholarship is for artists age 55 and up who are in the early stages of their painting career.

Find or List a Workshop

Our Workshops page is the hub for members looking for a workshop, demonstration or class to attend or fill, and with members nationwide there are many offerings.



MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Associate

This is where most new artist members start. If you're a representational oil painter residing in North America, you are eligible. We require new applicants to provide two samples of their work in order to ascertain that they are indeed representational oil painters.

Signature (OPA)

Artists who consistently demonstrate high quality work may qualify for Signature status and the use of "OPA" after their signature. There are two options to attain Signature status:

Option 1: Automatic. An artist must have exhibited in either a) four National Exhibitions within eight years, or b) three National Exhibitions within eight years and any combination of three of the following two options within five years: one, exhibit in a juried OPA exhibition other than the National, and two, be an award winner or finalist in an online showcase. *Qualified members must still submit an application between June 1 and October 15 for automatic approval.*

Option 2: Committee Review. In order to apply, an artist must have exhibited in either a) three National Exhibitions (no time limit) or b) two Nationals and any combination of three of the following two options within five years: one, exhibit in an OPA juried exhibition other than the National, and two, be an award winner or finalist in an Online Showcase. Applications are due between June 1 and October 15.

Master Signature (OPAM)

Artists who have exhibited exceptional merit in their work and distinguished accomplishment in the field of art may qualify for Master Signature status and the use of "OPAM" after their signature. Signature members may apply. Applications are due September 1 for review and approval by the OPA Board of Directors.

Student Memberships

We offer two options for students aged 14-23 to join OPA. *Student members may not vote or hold office.*

Student Membership is free, because we want to support young artists, and these members may compete in the Student Art Competition and attend Lunch & Learns.

Student Associate Membership allows entry to all OPA exhibitions and online Showcases as well as the Student Art Competition, and have access to the Lunch & Learns.

International Associate

For artists who live outside of North America and wish to be a part of OPA, we offer the **International Associate Membership**. Members in this category receive digital newsletters, catalogs and emails about OPA events and activities; have full access to Lunch & Learns; and may enter the Spring and Summer Online Showcases to compete with all other entering artists. They may attend the Convention and enter the Wet Paint Competition to compete with all other entering artists. Otherwise, they are not eligible to enter any physical OPA exhibitions. *They may vote at general membership meetings but may not hold office.*

Collectors Circle

As a professional organization of oil painters, OPA welcomes those who love art and wish to associate with working artists. Join a growing group of like-minded enthusiasts under the guidance of a Board member who is also a collector. Gain exclusive early access to shows as well as special programs and lectures at exhibition openings.

Gallery Membership

We value our gallery relationships and welcome as members galleries that represent at least one OPA member's work at all times. Many of our member galleries host our physical exhibitions and associated demonstrations and events.