# OPA NATIONAL EXHIBITION

PROSPECTUS




THE ROCKPORT ART ASSOCIATION



Mark Daly, *The Schooner Stephen Taber*, 24x18" oil

OIL PAINTERS OF AMERICA PRESENTS

## THE THIRTY-SIXTH NATIONAL JURIED EXHIBITION OF TRADITIONAL OILS

Oil Painters of America is pleased to be traveling to the Rockport Art Association & Museum in Rockport, Massachusetts, for our Thirty-sixth National Exhibition. The Exhibition runs June 4 through July 3, 2027, with the Convention activities beginning on June 1.

The opening reception for artists, the public, and the press will be held at the Museum on Friday, June 4, from 5:30-7:30 pm, preceded by a private Collectors' Preview Reception from 4:30 to 5:30. The Awards and Recognition Ceremony will begin at 8 pm. OPA is again presenting a wide variety of demos, talks, and activities during the convention and is pleased that a number of our sponsoring vendors will have representatives and displays.

Our goal is to assemble the finest exhibition of representational oil paintings by artists from throughout North America. The focus in the jurying process will be to select paintings that show the highest quality in draftsmanship, color, and composition, emphasizing a diversity in representational style and subject matter.

Total National awards will be approximately $90,000 in cash and merchandise, including a $25,000 Best in Show Gold Medal Award in the Associate/Signature Division.

The National Exhibition Awards Judge is Lori Putnam OPAM.

The Wet Paint Awards Judge is Don Demers.

*Join friends old and new at*

**THE OPA CONVENTION**

**June 1-6, 2027 in Rockport, Massachusetts**

Quality programming • Wet Paint Competition • Mystery Mini Event • Demos by world-class artists • Social events and networking • See the National Exhibition • Attend the Awards & Recognition Ceremony

***Details and registration on the OPA website***

## SHOW-SPECIFIC RULES

SEE PP 4-5 FOR THE **SUBMISSION RULES & POLICIES.**

**CANVAS SIZE** is not to exceed 900 square inches unframed, e.g., 30x30"= 900 square inches.

**ENTRIES.** Each artist may enter up to three (3) paintings; only one (1) may be accepted.

*If you have any questions at all about the eligibility of your work, please contact OPA prior to submitting it to the show.*

## ONLINE ENTRY GUIDELINES

**SUBMISSION WINDOW** November 1, 2026 - March 13, 2027.

**ENTER ONLINE** on the OPA website.

**FILE REQUIREMENTS** File types: JPG, JPEG, PNG, or HEIC
File size: Maximum file size is 5MB. Minimum size is 1400 pixels in the longest dimension. For best results, we recommend the image size be closer to the maximum size of 4000 pixels in the longest dimension.
Filename must contain only alphanumeric characters.

**JURYING FEE** for the first painting is $35.00; second painting, $15.00; third painting, $10.00. Payment may be made by credit card online at the time of submission. *You may enter up to three paintings, but only one can be accepted.*

**MEMBERSHIP** must be current to enter. Annual dues are $80. If you are not a member of OPA, you must apply and be accepted before the system will allow you to enter. Join now or Renew Membership.
Renewing members: the system will not accept your entry if you have not paid your dues for 2027.

**Good luck and good painting!**

## NOTIFICATION AND NEXT STEPS

**NOTIFICATION** Jury results will be posted on the OPA website on March 27, 2027. If your work is accepted, you will receive an email with next steps, including letting us know what kind of box you'll use (see p. 3) and shipping information.

**DELIVERY WINDOW** Ship your work to arrive between May 18 and May 25. Hand-delivery: June 1 (or by arrangement). Plan to ship or drop off your artwork at Rockport Art Association & Museum. *Local artists may pick up their work July 6 - 10.*

### CALENDAR

**SATURDAY, MARCH 13** Deadline for submissions

**FRIDAY, APRIL 2** Acceptance notification posted on the OPA website

**MAY 18 - 25** Shipped artwork to arrive at Rockport Art Association & Museum

**JUNE 1** Hand-delivered artwork to arrive at Rockport Art Association & Museum

**JUNE 1-6** National Convention

**FRIDAY, JUNE 4**
4:30 pm Collectors' Preview Reception
5:30 pm Opening Reception open to the public
8:00 pm Awards & Recognition Ceremony

**JUNE 4 - JULY 3** Exhibition open. *See Museum Hours below*

**JULY 6 - 10** Pick up hand-delivered unsold work. *Storage fee applies after July 13.*

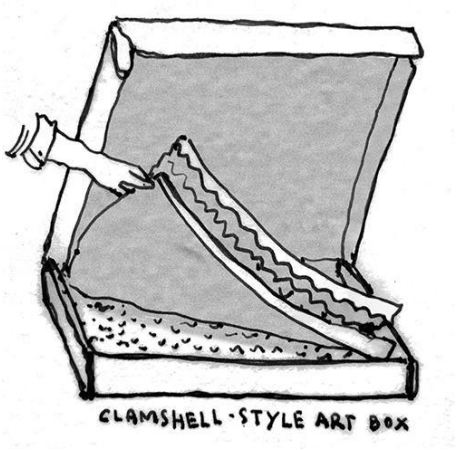
**ROCKPORT ART ASSOCIATION**

### MUSEUM HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday 10 am to 5 pm
Sunday 12 to 5 pm
Closed Mondays

## THE OPA BOX POLICY

OPA charges a $35 handling fee for artwork shipped to physical exhibitions. The fee is waived if artwork is shipped in an OPA-approved box.




**APPROVED BOXES.** Because they are infinitely easier to pack and unpack, we strongly prefer clamshell-style strongbox art shipper boxes and waive the handling fee if you use one of these:

- StrongBox™ by Airfloat Systems
- Titan StrongBox by Masterpak.
- Deluxe Artwork Shipper by Uline
- FedEx Premium Art Box (*not the FedEx Large Frame Box*)

*Note: Home Depot boxes do not qualify for the fee waiver.*
Discount codes from MasterPak and Airfloat are included in the acceptance email.

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**OTHER BOXES.** In consideration of the expense of the approved boxes, OPA also allows artists to ship work in other suitable cardboard boxes with easy-to-manage packaging. The handling fee applies: follow the link in the acceptance email for Shipping Information, select “other box,” and pay the fee. *Do not send a check with your painting.*

**These Packaging Guidelines must be followed, or the gallery may return your work.**

- No Styrofoam packing peanuts.
- No wooden crates.
- Pack for repacking. Paintings will be returned in the boxes used to ship them to the gallery. *If packing materials are inadequate, the gallery may charge you an additional fee to cover the cost of new shipping materials.*
- If you use bubble wrap, minimize the use of packing tape—it is time-consuming to remove and makes it harder to reuse the bubble wrap. Use plastic stretch wrap instead.

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## SHIPPING & LIABILITY

**CARRIERS.** Ship your artwork via FedEx, UPS, or DHL. We consider these carriers more reliable than USPS.

**INTERNATIONAL SHIPMENTS** Shipments from outside the US must be shipped "Free Domicile," or they will not be accepted.

**LIABILITY** Oil Painters of America and our host venues are not responsible for loss or damage to any artwork, no matter what the cause. By submitting artwork to any exhibition, each artist will be deemed to have concurred with this agreement.

**SHIPPING COSTS** Artists pay for shipping both ways and must provide a return shipping label. We suggest PirateShip for lower rates.

**INSURANCE** OPA advises artists to provide insurance to cover the full value of artwork while in transit. We recommend ShipandInsure.com, which also offers lower shipping rates.

# SUBMISSION RULES & POLICIES

The Oil Painters of America upholds the highest standards of integrity in traditional oil painting. Only original oil paintings on traditional substrates are eligible for entry into OPA exhibitions. Working from life is a time-honored, traditional method of painting and is strongly encouraged.

## GENERAL RULES

**I. ORIGINALITY.**

SUMMARY Paintings must be original in concept and execution. Paintings from instructional settings are disqualified. Digital or mechanical transfer to the substrate is not allowed. The use of Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) at any stage is strictly prohibited. Any reference photos used must be shot by the artist; however, third-party images may be consulted for research, and secondary inclusion of copyrighted material is allowed. Digital photo-editing applications may be used to adjust or crop reference images or studies.

**Ia. Class and Shared Studio Work**

Paintings created in an instructional setting—including in-person or online workshops, classes, expert critique, or private tuition—are ineligible for entry. Because these works are strongly influenced or directly altered by an instructor, they fail the standard for originality.

Work created in a studio alongside other artists using a shared model or still-life setup is acceptable, provided there is no instruction or instructor present.

**Ib. Drawing Transfer v Mechanical Image Transfer**

Artists must draw or paint directly on the canvas. Traditional methods to transfer your own drawing, like projection and tracing, are permissible. Digital or mechanical transfer (e.g., giclee printing) of any image, whether it's your own or that of a third party, bypasses the spirit of original draftsmanship and is strictly prohibited.

**Ic. Artificial Intelligence**

The use of A.I. tools or agents at any stage is strictly prohibited, including but not limited to use for generating reference images, designing compositions, or visualizing ideas.

**Id. Reference Images**

Artists may use only their own observation, photography, or studies to develop an original concept for a painting.

**Use of third-party images.** A painting fails the requirement for original concept if it is a literal, close, or 1-to-1 adaptation of a third-party photograph or artwork, regardless of whether that source photo is copyrighted or public domain. The consultation of such images is permitted solely for education or to ensure secondary accuracy (e.g., anatomy or the drape of a historical garment), but not as the primary basis for a painting. Artists are allowed to synthesize multiple separate resources alongside their own imagination and direct observation to create something new. *See FAQ below.*

**Permitted Secondary Inclusion.** Painting an original scene that contains a copyrighted or public domain item (e.g., a famous sculpture or someone else's painting) is permitted, as this is fundamentally different from copying the material itself.

**II. SUBSTRATES.**

One flat substrate only. Diptychs, triptychs, and other multiples are not allowed. *See the Prospectus for size requirements, which change with the venue*.

Traditional primed or gessoed substrates are acceptable, including: canvas or linen (stretched or on panel), wood panel, masonite, dibond or aluminum composite panel, paper archivally adhered to a substrate.

Not acceptable: Carved/textured surfaces, three-dimensional objects, stone, barn wood, or any substrate bearing a printed image or photograph.

**III. MEDIUMS.**

Oil paints, alkyd oil colors, water-soluble oils, and oil sticks/bars are all acceptable. Metal leaf (e.g., gold, silver) is acceptable if it covers less than 20 percent of the surface.

Not acceptable: all non-oil media, including watercolor, gouache, acrylics, mixed media, Genesis paints, and oil pastels.

**IV. FRAMING**

*Physical Shows Only.* Paintings must be framed and wired with D-rings and picture wire. Floater frames are acceptable. Glass is not acceptable.

For deep-edged paintings, the frame must be deep enough that the substrate does not extend more than half an inch beyond the back of the frame.

**V. TIME OF CREATION.**

Paintings must have been created within the last five years.

**VI. SALES & PRICING**

*Physical Shows Only.* All works must be for sale at the artist's current pricing. NFS is not permitted.

**VII. SUBMITTED IMAGES**

Images must represent the artist's final, completed work. Digital editing of images for submission is permissible only insofar as necessary to honestly represent the painting.

**VIII. WITHDRAWAL POST ACCEPTANCE.**

An artist who withdraws an accepted entry is ineligible for any OPA exhibition for the next two years.

**IX. COPYRIGHT.**

Artists retain copyright of their work. Accepted images may be used by OPA for archival and promotional purposes.

**X. AWARDS.**

U.S. award winners must complete a W-9 if the award value is $600 or more. Awards will be sent to winners after the conclusion of the show.

*Continued on page 5*

## SUBMISSION RULES & POLICIES *continued*

**XI. ELIGIBILITY ACROSS SHOWS.**

A painting accepted into an OPA National Exhibition may not be entered into any other subsequent OPA exhibition or Online Showcase.

A painting accepted into a Virtuosos or Salon Show, or which receives an award or Finalist designation in an Online Showcase, may be entered into an OPA National Exhibition.

A painting that has a) been entered but not accepted into a physical OPA exhibition or b) has been in an Online Showcase but has not received an award or Finalist designation, may be resubmitted to any OPA show or Online Showcase.

**XII. NORTH AMERICAN RESIDENCY**

All Associate, Student, Student Associate, Signature and Master Signature members are required to reside in North America; International Associate, and Collectors Circle members may reside anywhere.

Citizens of the United States, Canada, Mexico, or the Dominican Republic qualify. Nonresident aliens also qualify if the address registered with OPA has been their permanent domicile for at least eight of the last twelve months.

OPA may request proof of residency. False residency claims will result in being asked to resign; the Board's decision is final.

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## FAQ

Most questions we receive about originality come down to reference images and instructional context. When you're wondering whether a painting meets the originality standard, ask yourself: *Did I make this painting with my own idea, my own skill, and my own hand?*

If you're unsure, reach out to OPA staff. We're glad to help you figure out where your piece stands.

- *Can I enter a landscape painted from my own photo?* Yes: original in both concept and execution.
- *Can I submit a portrait I painted from an historical photo or from a free, public-domain reference site with my own stylistic interpretation?* No: fails original concept.
- *Can I consult a free, public-domain reference image for a figure that is part of a scene I'm creating?* Yes: meets synthesis concept.
- *Can I enter a copy of a famous painting I made to study technique?* No: Master studies are of course allowed for practice, but excluded from shows.
- *I saw a great photo on Instagram. Can I paint from that?* No: fails original concept.
- *I did a painting in a workshop, and the instructor only fixed one thing for me. Is that ok?* No: fails original execution. Any painting done in a workshop is ineligible.
- *I did a painting in an online class. Can I enter it?* No: fails our originality standard due to instructor influence.
- *I got a critique from an expert and made recommended changes to my painting. Can I enter it?* No: fails due to instructor influence.
- *Can I include a famous artwork as part of a painting—for example, a scene in a museum?* Yes: secondary inclusion is allowed.

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*Any specific questions about eligibility are best addressed by contacting OPA prior to submission.*

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