

Issue No.5

May 2026

T H E
LAWRENCE HOUSE
C E N T R E F O R T H E A R T S





the lawrence house.

MISSION STATEMENT

The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts is a community based, independent, not-for-profit, charitable organization committed to encouraging the creation and appreciation of the visual, performing and literary arts in Sarnia Lambton.

OPPOSITE

William Frederick Lawrence, a prominent lumber businessman, built the Lawrence House in 1892.

editorial

*"TO BE AN ARTIST IS TO BELIEVE IN LIFE."
- HENRY MOORE*

On a recent Sunday, I ventured to the Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) to take in the Paul McCartney photography exhibit "Eyes of the Storm". As a photographer who fondly remembers her analog photography years, this wonderfully curated exhibit of the early years of Beatlemania inspires me to get out and create - and hit "play" on a new Beatles and Wings playlist. Exploring the AGO made for a full day of beauty, learning, and reflection that took me back to my "art life" at St. Clair and Central high schools.

As the morning stretched into afternoon, grey skies broke into passing rain showers, and the gallery became quite busy. Artwork aside, what struck me most was the number of students, groups of teens led by docents, studying and discussing works of art. What a great way to learn and experience art, across centuries and techniques, discovering how "the story" has been told across time.

For the month of May, the Lawrence House welcomes students from a number of local high schools to showcase their creativity, with the support and guidance of their respective art teachers. Our Concerts on the Lawn season is just around the corner, and the gardens of the Lawrence House will soon burst into a riot of blooms.

In July and August, The Art House will host Summer Art Camps for young artists ages 6-12, marking a return to art programming at the Lawrence House.

Full circle, indeed!

Stay creative,

Leann Cotton
Editor in Chief

in this issue

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ON THE COVER

Title - "I Learned to Leave it Here" (in Private Collection)

Artist - Wilma Mehl

Date - January 2026

Pastel on Sanded Paper

See our coverage on Pages 19-30



contributors

Editor in Chief

Leann Cotton

Creative Director/Designer

Adrien McKechnie

Board Chairman

Leonard Segall

Vice Chairman

Pierre Houle

Art Committee

John Williams

Literary Reps

Ryan Gibbs

Rhonda Melanson

Performing Arts

Anne Stoesser

John Pilat

Treasurer

Andrew Bovell

Gift Shop Committee

Peg Kivi

City Of Sarnia Rep

Claudio Montanaro

Volunteer Coordinator

Tbd

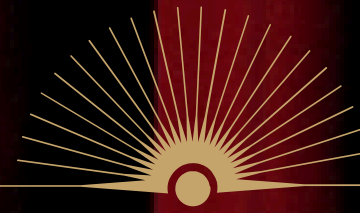
Dedication

To all of the artists who show up every day to create something beautiful.

Calendar 2026

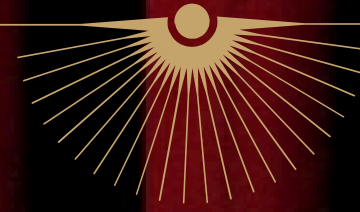
- ART THAT MAKES YOU FEEL GOOD -

JANUARY 01	FEBRUARY 02	MARCH 03	APRIL 04
Gift Shop Sale (Ends January 18th)	Floyd Gibson Annual Members Juried Exhibition	Main Gallery - Fibre Art Turret Room - Members Show	Lambton College Arts Collective Photography & Pottery Show
MAY 05	JUNE 06	JULY 07	AUGUST 08
High School Art Show	Three Fires by the Water (Intake May 30 - May 31)	Main Gallery - Rabia Rizvi Turret Room - Sydney McKichan	"The Art Life" Texture & Colour Members Show (Intake August 1 - August 2)
SEPTEMBER 09	OCTOBER 10	NOVEMBER 11	DECEMBER 12
The Lawrence House Volunteers Show (Intake August 29 - August 30)	Main Gallery - Sarnia Artists Workshop Turret Room - Peg Kivi (Intake September 25 - September 26)	"Wrap it Up & Put a Bow on It" Members Extended Gift Shop (Intake October 31 - November 1)	"Wrap it Up & Put a Bow on It" Members Extended Gift Shop (Intake October 31 - November 1)



Starring

**Northern Collegiate
North Lambton
St. Pat's
St. Francis-Xavier**



Teachers (left to right)

- Kelly Gordon, St. Pat's HS
- Madelyn Epps - Northern HS
- Trevor Jamieson - Northern HS
- Susan VanVeldhuisen - North Lambton HS
- Roy Gouveia - St. Pat's HS

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE CENTRE FOR THE
ARTS PRESENTS

**HIGH SCHOOL
ART
SHOW**



OPENS FIRST FRIDAY, MAY 1ST

**CLOSING RECEPTION:
THURSDAY, MAY 28TH**

127 CHRISTINA ST., SARNIA
LAWRENCEHOUSE.CA

Northern Collegiate



"Web of Squares" by Sarah Chile GR 10



"Oxygen for the Soul" by Payton Murray Gr 11



"Calm" by Ellyott Hargrove GR 9



"Peace is Freedom" by Meloday Farhangian GR 12



"Jazz" by Gwenn Wettges Gr 11



"Awakening" by Aya Al-Hussaini GR 10



"Camouflage" by Dylan Liska-Thompson GR 10



"Radiance" by Eli Miller GR 10



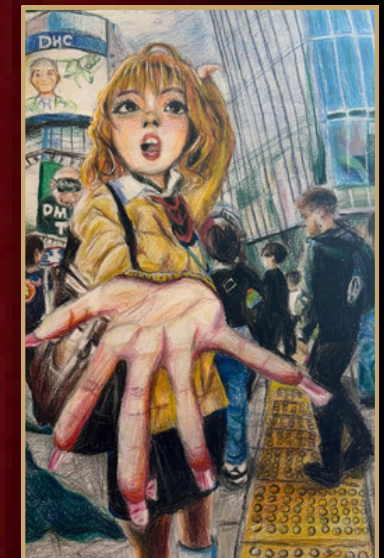
"Frankie" by Gracie Egan GR 11



"The Fabric of Infinite Possibility" by Grace Hockin GR 12



"A Stitch in the Garden" by Serena Lin GR 10



"Gimme" by Selena Ton GR 10

North Lambton



"Fruit Mosaic" by Cicada George GR 9



"Lyric Painting" by Kayden DeWilde GR 12



"Penguin" by Zoey Bourgeois GR 12

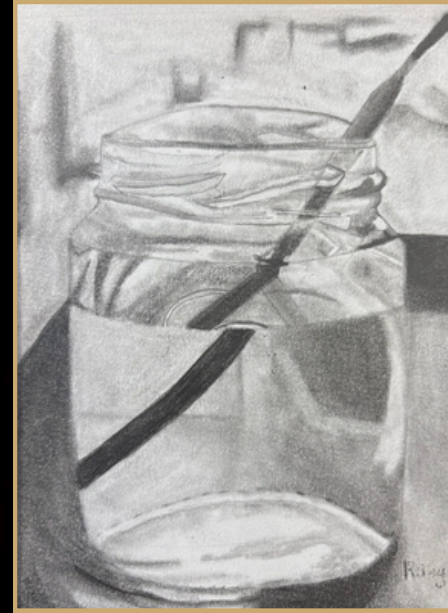


"Culminating" by Quinn McBain GR 10

St. Pat's



"After" by Zoe Gaelle-Gonzales GR 9



"Refraction" by Riley Goulais GR 10



"The Mind of Me" by Lyla Dumond GR 10



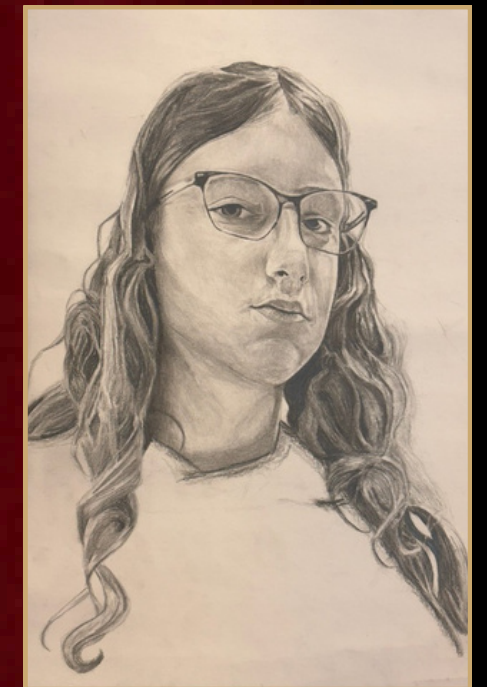
"Still Life" by Sophia Verheyden GR 9



"She Rests in Thought" by Darian Belanger GR 10



"Walk With Me" by Amberlynn Johnston GR 11



"Self Portrait" by Sophia Verheyden GR 9

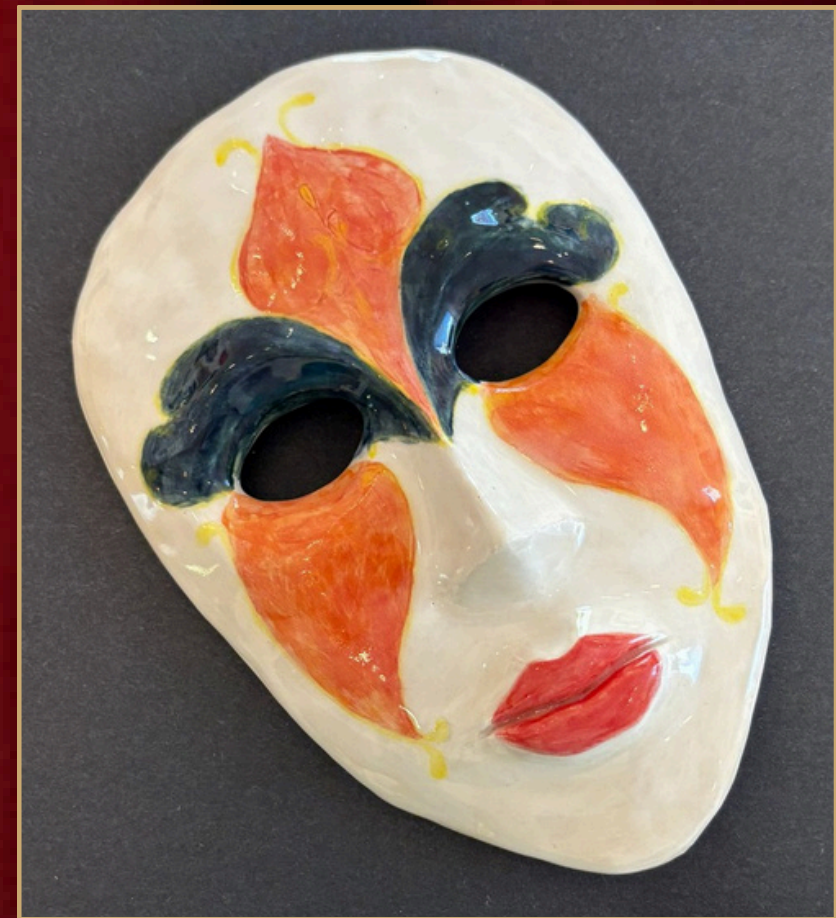
St. Francis-Xavier



"Cameleon" by Charlie Potevin GR 11

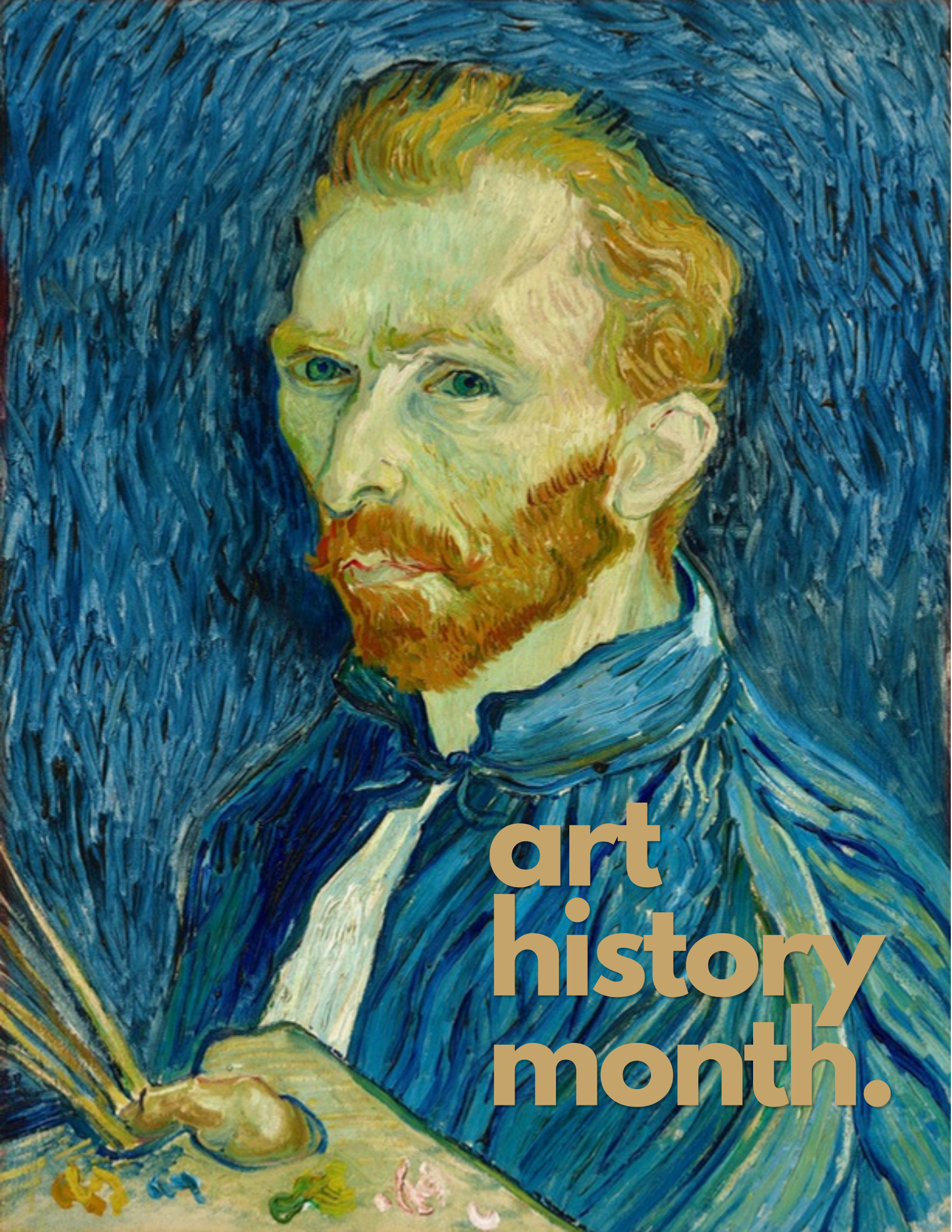


"Extinction" by Nicole Legere GR 10



"Masquerade" by Evelyn Denis GR 11

this month in art history



art history month.

The Louvre Opens to the Public (May 1793)

While officially opened in August, 1793, key developments and organization phases occurred in May during the French Revolution. The Louvre Museum became the model for public access to art worldwide.

Louvre Museum, Paris, France 1700's



Salvador Dali (born May 11, 1904)

Salvador Dali was a leading figure in Surrealism, and famous for his dreamlike, bizarre imagery. He helped push art into the psychological and symbolic realms.

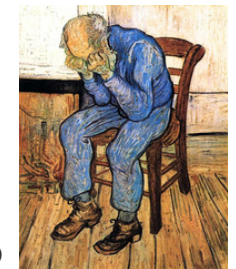
The Persistence of Memory. 1931 Salvador Dali (1904-1989)



Vincent van Gogh (May 1890 - final months)

While Vincent van Gogh died in July 1890, May marks the creation of some of his final masterpieces, including intense wheatfield scenes that would later define Post-Impressionism.

Old Man in Sorrow (At Eternity's Gate). April-May 1890



Group of Seven Spring Exhibitions (1920s-30s)



The Group of Seven held their first exhibition in May 1920 at what is now the Art Gallery of Ontario. This show helped define a distinct Canadian artistic identity, emphasizing rugged landscapes, and northern wilderness.

Lake and Mountains. 1928 Lawren Harris (1885-1970)



Emily Carr's Late Recognition



In May 1927, Emily Carr participated in the landmark exhibition "Canadian West Coast Art: Native and Modern at the National Gallery in Ottawa". This exhibition helped revive her career after years of obscurity.

Indian Village, Alert Bay. 1909 Emily Carr (1871-1945)



ARTIST SPOTLIGHT



"I am drawn to the blue color palette and the movement of waves."

WILMA MEHL

artist spotlight



wilma mehl

In our artist spotlight this month, the Lawrence House presents the pastel artist, **Wilma Mehl**. To say there is something quietly compelling about her work, you might be right.



"Juist" by Wilma Mehl 2025

Pastel to Paper



"Golden Tempest" by Wilma Mehl 2025

Her pastel work has the kind of presence that doesn't just demand attention, it earns it - gently, and persistently, the longer you stand in front of it.



“I absorb colors, patterns, and the way light interacts with different landscapes.”

Wilma Mehl is a Canadian pastel artist whose practice feels rooted in observation, patience, and a deep sensitivity to the natural world.

Based here in Lambton County, Ontario, Mehl works primarily in soft pastel, where she has developed a style that balances precision with atmosphere—capturing not just what a place looks like, but how it feels to stand within it.

Her landscapes, seascapes, and florals, often carry a quiet luminosity, as though lit from within rather than by any external source.

Her journey as an artist has been one of steady dedication. Like many pastelists, she has had to master a medium that is both immediate and unforgiving. Pastel does not easily allow for correction; it asks for confidence and clarity of vision.

Over time, Mehl has developed a nuanced handling of the medium—layering color with restraint, building depth without losing freshness. The result is work that feels both spontaneous and carefully considered.



“Golden Tempest” by Wilma Mehl 2025

Over the course of her career, Mehl has participated in numerous exhibitions, including juried shows and group exhibitions within local, regional, national, and international art communities. In September 2023, she reached a major milestone by winning the Panel's Choice Award at the ART COMP in London, Ontario, marking a turning point in her career. This success was followed by several more awards and her first solo exhibition in 2025, right here at The Lawrence House!

Beyond her busy studio practice, Mehl is also known for her commitment to artistic growth and community engagement. Aside from taking workshops, she has actively and continually shared her knowledge with other artists, reflecting a collaborative spirit and passion for the arts as a whole.

Wilma Mehl's work stands as a testament to the enduring appeal of pastel as a medium and to the power of observation in art. Through her paintings, she offers viewers a quiet invitation—to notice, to feel, and to appreciate the beauty in ordinary moments. A counterpoint - to a world that often seems to move far too quickly.

Q/A with Wilma Mehl

What was your first significant piece of artwork?

WM - My first meaningful piece was an illustration of a Scottish street scene. I created it during COVID, while spending crafting time with my son. I hadn't drawn in a long time, and when I shared it with family and friends, their response was incredibly encouraging. Their support gave me the confidence to pursue art more seriously and turn it into more than just a hobby.

How do you reflect on your early pieces compared to your current work?

WM - I still appreciate my earlier pieces, but I can clearly see how much I've grown since then. Art is a continuous learning process, and I don't think that journey ever truly ends.



"Familiar Roads" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Sunkissed" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Heart of the Sea" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Sweet Summertime" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Lake Huron" by Wilma Mehl 2025

Q/A with Wilma Mehl

How do you know when a piece is finished and fully expresses its meaning?

WM - Working with pastels has taught me a lot about restraint. It's very easy to overwork a piece – too many layers can dull the vibrancy, and the pigment may stop adhering to the sanded surface. That's happened to me many times and still does. Now I have a rule: when I think I'm almost finished, I step away. After a few hours, I return with fresh eyes to see if the piece really needs any final touches.

Has travel or exposure to other cultures influenced your art?

WM - Absolutely. I absorb colours, patterns, and the way light interacts with different landscapes. I love visiting art museums in other countries and exploring local art scenes. Traveling also clears my mind – I usually come back inspired, with my phone full of reference photos.



"Soft Rebellion" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Childhood Memories" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"The Mists of Windermere" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Abundance" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"The Old Cottage" by Wilma Mehl 2025

Q/A with Wilma Mehl

What role does patience play in becoming a successful artist?

WM - Patience is essential. You have to be gentle with yourself and allow time for growth. There were moments when I struggled with painter's block and couldn't even draw a simple stick figure. But creativity always returns – your talent doesn't disappear, it just needs rest. Finding your own style takes time, and as an artist, you also have to work consistently to gain exposure.

Wilma Mehl can be reached at:
travelartbywilmamehl
@yahoo.com

www.travelartbywilmamehl.com





"Suburban Winter" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Club Tropicana" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Saltwater" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Echoes in Blue" by Wilma Mehl 2025



"Force of Nature" by Wilma Mehl 2025

art



what are the 7 visual elements of art?

art

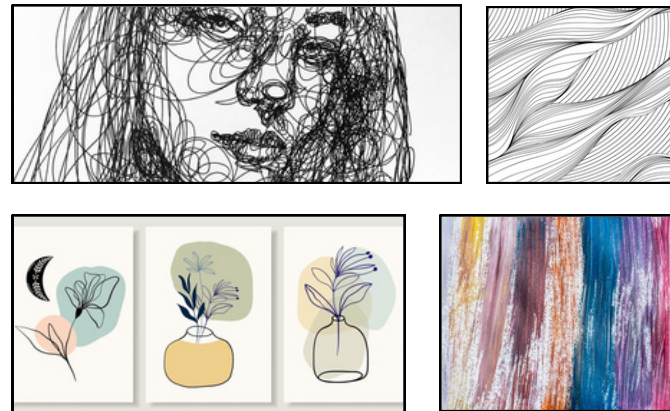


what are the 7 visual elements of art?

1. line

A line is a path made by a moving point. It can be straight, curved, thick, thin, dashed, or zigzag.

- Used to outline shapes, create patterns, or show movement.
- Can express emotion (e.g. jagged lines feel tense, smooth lines feel calm).



2. shape

A shape is a flat (2D) area enclosed by lines.

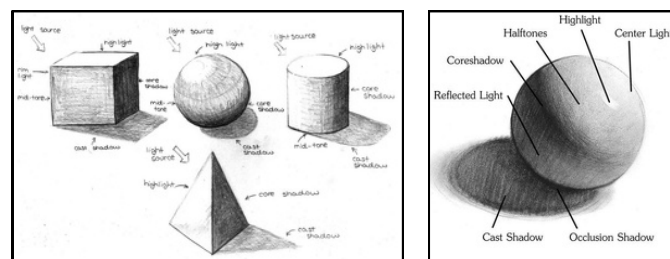
- Geometric shapes: circles, squares, triangles.
- Organic shapes: natural, irregular forms like leaves or clouds.



3. form

Form is a 3D version of shape - it has depth, width, and height.

- Examples: spheres, cubes, cylinders.
- Artists create form using shading and perspective.

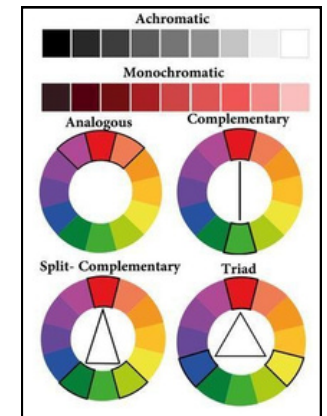
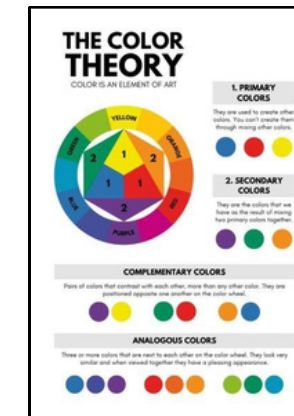


4. color

Color comes from light and includes three main properties:

- Hue (the color itself, like red or blue)
- Value (lightness or darkness)
- Intensity (brightness or dullness)

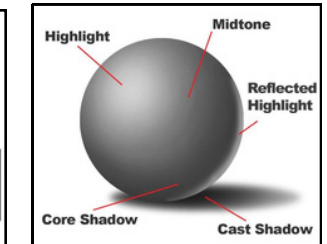
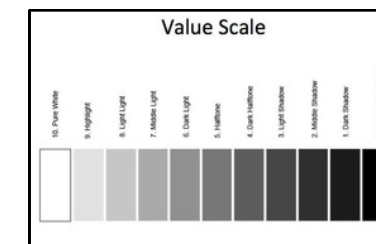
Color can create mood, contrast, and emphasis.



5. value

Value refers to how light or dark something is.

- Important for creating depth and realism.
- Helps show light and shadow.



6. texture

Texture is how something feels - or looks like it feels.

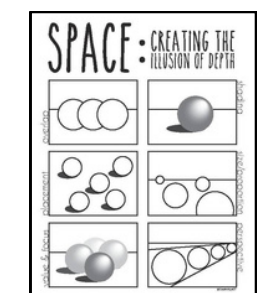
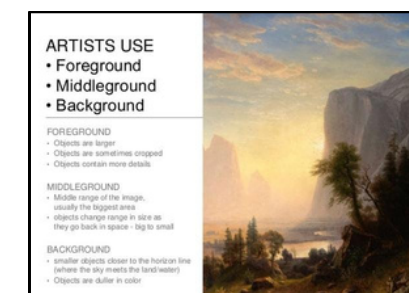
- Actual texture: physically touchable (e.g. rough paint).
- Visual texture: looks textured but is smooth.



7. space

Space refers to the area around, between, or within objects.

- Positive space: the subject.
- Negative space: the background.
- Artists use perspective, overlap, and size to create depth.





1. HOUSE CONCERTS IN THE TURRET ROOM



PRESENTING **SANDRA MOGENSEN**

Sunday May 31, 2PM

As a performer, pianist **Sandra Mogensen** is equally at home in two worlds: performing as a solo pianist and co-performing with singers in recital.

She has played in concert in both capacities in Canada, the United States, and throughout Europe.

In early 2019, Ms. Mogensen's focus turned to the music of female composers. Her first recording in the series of albums, *en pleine lumière*, was released in December 2019, spotlighting composers born in the mid-1800s. These recordings feature solo piano music composed by women who were undeservedly overlooked, with each album focusing on a different generation of composers.

The Lawrence House concert features selections from her next release of two more albums in 2027.

When asked what the title was for this concert, Sandra replied "Sandra Mogensen in concert" or "Women who composed: neglected no longer."

Join our **House Concerts in the Turret Room**, with great acoustics and a seating capacity of 40 people!

Tickets are \$12.39 (\$14 including HST).

<https://shop.lawrencehouse.ca/collections/house-concerts>

Held on Sunday afternoons at 2 PM or Friday evenings at 7 PM.

These two hour concerts feature talented local musicians with a focus on original compositions, jazz and classical music performing for an appreciative audience.

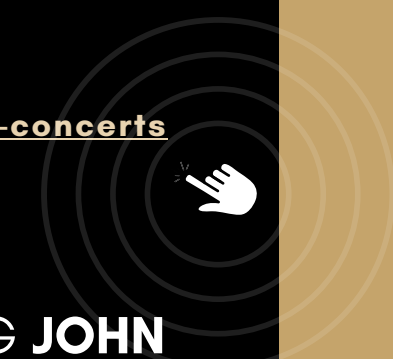


PRESENTING **JOHN PILAT & ADAM KILNER**

Friday, May 22nd, 7PM

From Franz to Elton -

John Pilat will be performing classical piano pieces by Franz Schubert, Franz Liszt, and Frederick Chopin. **Adam Kilner** will be performing piano and vocal favourite pop and rock songs from the 70s and 80s including Elton John, and Tears for Fears. One piano, two totally different styles of music, all in one evening! Your receipt is your ticket.



MAY EVENTS SCHEDULE

2. TOASTMASTERS INTERNATIONAL RIVERSPEAK

Meeting Times: **Thursdays 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

Phone: **519.466.2512**

Location: **Lawrence House Centre for the Arts
127 Christina St. South Sarnia, ON N7T 2M8**

3. THE SARNIA PHOTOGRAPHIC CLUB

The Sarnia Photographic Club is a non-profit organization dedicated to excellence in photography. We come together to share our work, listen to speakers, and go on outings, all with the goal of making impactful images. Visitors are welcome to attend two meetings to find out more about the club and its activities before joining.

Main Meeting

We meet in the Turret Room of the Lawrence House on the 1st Tuesday of each month, September through June at 7:00 PM. (Note - some meetings are on Zoom only)

Mid-Month Meeting

A second meeting is held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month.

4. CALL FOR ARTISTS & MUSICIANS

Interested in a 5 Questions segment? Artist Spotlight? Contact us for your spot in an upcoming issue!

This is a great way to introduce yourself to fellow artists & musicians, in addition to giving our readers an insight into you and your art!

Contact **Leann** at leanncottonphotography@gmail.com

5. SUNDAY YOGA

Hi, my name is **Monica Gillis**. My yoga journey began over 20 years ago when I first came to the mat to manage arthritis and support recovery from running injuries. What started as a physical practice quickly became a passion. During a life transition, I was inspired to deepen my practice and completed my 200-hour teacher training in 2020, becoming a Registered Yoga Teacher. We would love you to join us Sunday mornings.

If you have any questions or want more information, please reach out to

[**butterflyrisingyogaandwellness@gmail.com**](mailto:butterflyrisingyogaandwellness@gmail.com)

6. WELCOME TO THE LAWRENCE HOUSE LIBRARY

With a wide range of topics available, books can be enjoyed in The Heritage Room. All current Lawrence House members have generous sign-out privileges. This library has been developed with the generous donations of pre-loved books on art, technique, and many more relevant subjects. Of note, we are also growing our local interest/history section in order to offer these specialized books to people looking for Sarnia-Lambton historical information. Book donations are always welcome, thank you to all who've donated books over the years.

Canadian Art - History - Art History - Art techniques - Local Interest - Artist Specific Books

[Visit our Online Library.](#)



MAY EVENTS SCHEDULE



Sarnia Photographic Club Presents

member Gerry Levesque



“TIGERS AND MUCH MORE....”



*Tuesday, May 5th, Lawrence House 127 Christina St.
7 pm live and on Zoom. Guests welcome*



Boat Making Tools
by Lynn Tait
Second Place in March 2026
Still Life Photography



Canadian Association for Photographic Art
L'Association canadienne d'art photographique

3rd Place Merit Award
Theme: Man Made Structure



'Venetian Washday'
by Lynn Tait

Sarnia Photographic Club

2026 Colour 'Club' Competition

Congratulations Lynn!

You may renew it in person at the House Wednesday to Sunday 11:00–4:00 or you may renew online at the link below. The memberships run from December to December.

The Lawrence House is an all volunteer run Art Centre. Membership fees help with the cost of running the House, covering office supplies, computers, security, First Friday Events, concerts and so much more.

The benefits of being a Member are many regardless of which Membership level you purchase.

Join or Renew for 2026



We are looking for a volunteer coordinator! If interested, please contact - The Lawrence House
Attn: Karen Schaw for details!

2026 MEMBERSHIP

BASIC

As a Basic Member you are included in our mailing list which keeps you up to date on our House Concerts, First Friday events and our Exhibitions. You are able to rent a room at the House if you are having a special event and you have access to our online library.

PRICE: \$17.70 PLUS TAX

BRONZE

The Bronze Membership is for artists who wish to show and sell their art at the Lawrence House either in the Gift Shop or in one of our five Member Shows through the year. Bronze members also may apply to have a solo exhibition. All the benefits of being a Friend Member also applies to the Bronze Members.

PRICE: \$44.25 PLUS TAX

SILVER

The Silver Membership is for artists or anyone who wishes to volunteer their time at the House. It is a great way to meet other artists and art lovers and to keep in touch with local art events. If we didn't have Volunteers, the Lawrence House would not be able to stay open. There are many different ways to volunteer; the day to day running of the gift shop, special events, hanging exhibitions, computer work, Shopify updating, greeting customers and giving them information on the House, the Library and more. ***Requirement for the Silver is that you commit to 3 shifts a month - especially if you are in the Gift Shop so that you are comfortable with sales and the Shopify system.**

PRICE: \$17.70 PLUS TAX

2026 MEMBER SERVICES

The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts (LHCA) invites submissions to exhibit in the Turret Room (Gallery) to its members.

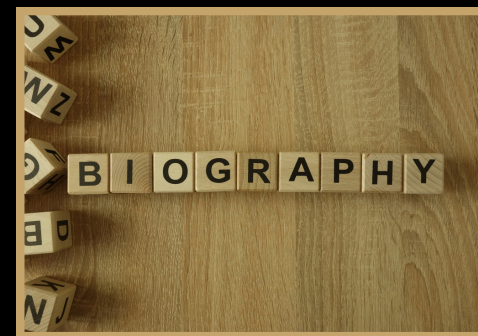
Exhibition opportunities of one month in duration are available. The LHCA welcomes proposals from artists of all disciplines and career levels. The call is open to all LHCA members who reside or work in Lambton County and who have not had a solo show at the gallery in the past 3 years.

Consideration is extended to both solo or two-person proposals.

Artist's creations are juried for their workmanship and creativity. We accept only high quality items that we feel will be received well by the public.

It is important to us that your items sell.

[Gallery Standards for The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts – The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts](#)



[Check out our Artist Bio page here!](#)



[Upload your Artist Bio today!](#)



[Upload your product submission form here!](#)



[Submission to Exhibit at The Lawrence House](#)

RENTALS

EVENT & WORKSHOP SPACES



STUDIO A



\$25.00 (3 hour block)

THE TURRET ROOM



\$25.00 (3 hour block)

Hi Everyone!

I'm Wilma Mehl, a pastel artist from the Sarnia area.

The Lambton County region is full of creative and artistic talent, and we're here to help showcase your art, and connect you with art-centric businesses.

I'm pleased to announce this newly-launched Instagram account, dedicated to supporting local artists, art-allied businesses, and art galleries. Featured artists will enjoy increased exposure and gallery opportunities.

We welcome all 2D media, including digital art and photography.

Feel free to reach out to us - simply click on our logo above to join our artistic community!

Don't forget to share, so we can give local artists a bigger platform!

ARTISTS OF LAMBTON COUNTY



Room Rental After Hours



Room Rental Entire House

THE LAWRENCE HOUSE AMENITIES INCLUDE:



- Accessible access with elevator
- Kitchenette
- Special Event Permits
- Wi-Fi/AV Equipment

The Lawrence House has a wide range of options for event rental.
Please contact us for all the details!



next month...



**NISWI
ISHKODEN
NIIBIING**

**THREE
FIRES
by the WATER**



AN EXHIBITION OF FIRST NATIONS ART FROM
THE COMMUNITIES OF AAMJIWNAANG,
WALPOLE ISLAND AND KETTLE AND STONY
POINT FIRST NATIONS

June 5, 2026



The Lawrence House Centre for the Arts
127 Christina St. S., Sarnia, ON N7T 2M8
lawrencehouse.ca



logo by
Moses Lunham