



# Langhorne Council for the Arts

*Fostering Creativity and Appreciation  
for the Arts in the Langhorne Community*

Quarterly Newsletter  
Fall 2008, Volume 2, Issue 3

**ARTISTS-AT-THE-FARM \* MUSIC \* DANCE \* WRITING \* CHILDREN'S PROGRAMS**

## *Give the Gift of the Arts*

Whether it's a trip downtown to take in the Philadelphia Orchestra, watch sugarplums dance in *The Nutcracker*, or settle in with some hot chocolate and Dickens, the holidays are a favorite time of year to celebrate and enjoy the arts.

Why not continue that spirit all year long with a gift of the arts?

Tickets to a show or a beautiful work of art from one of our local artists always make for a good gift. This year, however, think about giving your family and friends the gift of creating their own art and let this be a holiday they'll never forget.

Give your favorite air guitarist a gift certificate for lessons to play the real thing at R&M Music, 107 North Bellevue Avenue in Langhorne Borough.. Lessons in voice, piano, bass guitar, drums and brass are also available. Consider adding a rent-to-own instrument along with the gift certificate for something extra special under the tree. If you'd like to record your own Christmas carol or Hannukah memory, R&M can help you with that, too. And if you're tired of your kids or spouse practicing in the basement, consider giving yourself a gift - rehearsal space for the band.

If a weekend oil painting workshop would be just the thing to paint your sweetie's happy holiday, check out <http://www.buckscountyartworkshops.com/weekend.htm>. Or if a Sunday afternoon ceramics class at the Mercer Museum in Doylestown sounds more up your loved one's alley, check out [http://www.kharaflint.com/art\\_classes.html](http://www.kharaflint.com/art_classes.html).

For a beautiful and thoughtful teacher or hostess gift, consider giving Langhorne Council for the Arts notecards, featuring a dozen beautiful prints by our member artists for just \$16. You might also consider giving the gift of membership to the Langhorne Council for the Arts to help expand LCA programs and events, stay informed about local art shows and concerts through our quarterly newsletter, and contribute to arts scholarships for local students. For more information, see the enclosed flyer or visit [www.langhornearts.org](http://www.langhornearts.org).

-Diane Prokop

### *LCA Gives a Gift of the Arts to Local Children in Need*

*This holiday season Langhorne Council for the Arts will donate art supplies to the Bucks County Intermediate Unit's Homeless Initiative so that children of all ages can exercise their imagination, explore a positive means of self-expression, and experience the joy of creativity. Gifts include sets of water colors, pastels, oil paints, and paint brushes.*

*LCA extends sincere thanks to members of the community who contributed toward this effort at Harvest Day.*

**For more info, call 215-752-0854 or visit [www.langhornearts.org](http://www.langhornearts.org)**

# Thank you, 2008 LCA Members!

## Corporate Friend

Thomas Baker, P.C.  
Bryson Biomedical Illustrations, artist  
Langhorne Tax & Bookkeeping

## Sustaining Member

Donna Gruber  
Lance and Pat Mervine  
Larry & Carol Zetterberg, artist & writer

## Friend

Bryson Family, artists & musicians  
Kim & Karl Krelove, musicians  
Jim & Ann Marie McAneney  
Jonathan & Elizabeth Newell  
Brenda Palmer  
Paul & Joanne Schneider, dancer  
Bernadette West & Barry Truchil

## Patron

Anonymous  
Pat & Betsy Carr  
Joan Douglas  
Gary & Mary Ellen McCaffery  
Chris & Diane Prokop, writer  
Edward Toland

## Family

Barbara Anderson & Family  
Laura Lee Bearss Family  
Mary & Chris Blaydon  
Jack & Shirley Blumenstock  
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Gigi & Scott Cowan  
John & Karen Fulton  
Tom & Julie Fuoco  
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Sharon & Dennis Kane  
Jerry & Maryjane McHugh  
Phil & Debbie Miele  
Clem & Liz Piscitelli  
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Sangillo  
Bob & Florence Wharton

## Supporter

Nicole Addeo, artist  
Evelyn Aicher  
Noreen & Robert Bell  
Lyn Bleiler, writer & artist  
Selma Bortner, artist  
Colleen Boyle, artist

## Supporter

Michael Bykov, artist  
Beth Delaney  
Karen Demaio  
Nelson Evans, artist  
Anita Fair, artist  
John Forsyth  
Frederick & Tammy Hasney, artist  
Bob Henderson  
Helga Kogut  
Andrea Lamberth  
Larry Langhans  
Sally Marrington  
Connie McHugh, artist  
Jennifer Richardson  
John & Tonia Sabatini, artist  
Susan Schiff  
Jennie Smith, artist  
Karen Smith, artist  
Sharon Spraw, artist  
Sylvia Tach  
Mary Worth  
Forrest & Anarissa Zetterberg, artist  
Christian & Kristen Zetterberg

**Become a member today!**

[www.langhornearts.org/membership.asp](http://www.langhornearts.org/membership.asp)

Langhorne Council  
for the Arts

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### On the Web:

[langhornearts.org](http://langhornearts.org)



## ***Mural Brightens Langhorne Intersection*** ***It's always sunny in Langhorne Borough....***

Thanks to a new mural painted by the local artists, the once charcoal gray, dark and dreary old Texaco building at the corner of Pine Street and Maple Avenue has been transformed into an artist's vision of the historic hamlet.

The idea for the mural came from borough solicitor Anne Porter, who has handled legal wranglings over the property. The borough council approved the eyesore's extreme makeover at its October meeting and the Artists-at-the-Farm with LCA board members Michael and Nina Wommack jumped into action. Ideas for the project were solicited by Carol Zetterberg during last month's Paint-Out.

The borough's historic landmarks - the Hicks House, Richardson House, the Langhorne Hotel and Langhorne Open Space Inc. (LOSI) properties, including the Heritage Farm, the Orthodox Meeting House and the Merrick House - are all represented under a bright blue sky. Even Langhorne son Edward Hicks can be seen painting one of his many renditions of the *Peaceable Kingdom*. Drivers heading south on Rt. 413 can enjoy a stable full of horses poking their heads out of their stalls.

Muralist Mary Walsh handled the design concept while Michael Wommack was in charge of the sky and clouds. Artists Tonia Sabatini, Sharon Spraw, Nina Wommack, Connie McHugh, and Mike Bykov all pitched in. John Sabatini handled the site prep, including fixing up the broken windows. "It's a wonderful improvement," Carol said.

Be sure to keep an eye out for finishing touches still to come, and when you see one of the artists or Anne Porter, thank them for our sunny corner of the borough.

## Spotlight on.....LCA member SELMA BORTNER

Selma Bortner has had a long artistic career and a fascinating life journey. Her career has spanned 8 decades, having started painting at the early age of three. She was born in Cleveland, Ohio, where her parents owned a grocery store. They were progressive for their time, and belonged to a group called "The Radical Library." When the Great Depression caused them to close the store, the group acquired a farm in Michigan and started a cooperative commune. It was there that Selma was exposed to art and creative thought. She helped paint a mural as a three year old, painting the grass foreground because that was all she could reach. It was her time at the commune that got her hooked on art.

The farm closed after jobs became available in the nearby Ford plant. Selma's family moved to Philadelphia, where they ran a succession of groceries and finally a restaurant. She attended the Settlement Music School at the age of 7, where she met other young artists. This followed a stint at the Graphic Sketch Club on Saturdays, then eventually studying art at the Gratz High School in Philadelphia.

She received two degrees from Tyler School of Art during the tenure of its founder Boris Bly. During this time she assisted teaching GIs returning from WWII at Temple University, where she met her future husband Oscar Bortner, now a retired Bucks County judge, then studying law. They were married soon after her graduation, and she started a five-year period teaching art at Akiba Hebrew Academy in Elkins Park, then the most progressive school for bright children in the Philadelphia area. The give-and-take at the Academy was such that she feels she learned as much from her young students as she taught them.

As Selma and Oscar started their family that would eventually include 3 daughters, they moved to Levittown into the first section completed in 1952. She would illustrate children's books as she raised her daughters, but found herself yearning for immersion in her art. At an alumni exhibition at Gratz High School, she was inspired by a collagraph done by Sam Maitin. This was a relatively new printmaking technique involving building a "plate" of all sorts of materials, including cardboard, paper, and found objects, using texture to create an image, inked, then hand run through a press to achieve a print. She was so excited she created a plate, which she inked up and, lacking a printing press, she ran over the work with her car. This did not work, so she pursued classes at the Philadelphia Museum of Art with Sam Maitin, where she fell in love with the process of printmaking in all its forms, but she had a special infinity for the collagraph. Later she studied printmaking at the Cheltenham Center for the Arts with Hitoshi Nagasato.

When her daughters were a little bigger, she began a long career teaching at the Bucks County Community College, where she taught printmaking. During this time she explored the possibilities of the medium, exploring subjects that have always had social meaning, while not being overtly political. "My sister was the political radical in my family, and there was only room for one," she says while describing her early work. During this time she immersed herself in the endless possibilities of working with all kinds of materials, including fabric which to her was symbolic of her frugal youth spent sewing to save money, creating images both abstract and representational. The prints ranged in subject matter from Japanese inspired collages, to landscapes of New Mexico after a trip, to hard-edged color abstractions, to an etching celebrating the life of Malcolm X.

She feels she found her true voice in 1986 - 87, when she was diagnosed with breast cancer. "Up until that time I was a kid in my heart," she says of this time. "I knew in my head that I would not die, but if I pulled through this, I would not waste time anymore." Her work became more intensely personal and introspective. "As I am working on a plate, it's as if I am watching myself." She let images come to her on a more subconscious level, describing how the image of three women running came to her, then images of wolves nipping at their heels, which became "Women Running with Wolves." Later a viewer recognized her 3 daughters, not her intention, but there they were. She created a series of "Aida" images. "After my radical mastectomy, I was experiencing feelings of loss and pain. 'Aida and the Mirror' was a direct expression of those feelings." When seeing these works, one is struck by the intensely personal emotions portrayed. These works figured prominently in her retrospective at The Michener Museum in Doylestown several years ago.

Two years ago she began working on a series depicting life in the Middle East called the "Car Bomb Series," her reaction to the horrors of events there. When interviewed she was working on a piece depicting Afghani women lining up to vote behind a wall of barbed wire.

When asked what is the value or purpose of living the creative life, she simply laughed and said "I can't live any other way!"

-Michael Wommack



Selma Bortner's *Aida and the Mirror*,  
linoleum print, 1992.

## Mark Your Calendar for these Special Events!

**November 14 - 16** The Rose Bank Winery, as part of the 2008 Nouveau Art Festival, will host the Art Fest 2008, an Exhibition of art works by local Bucks County Artists. Featured Artists include: Mary Bryson, Jennifer Campbell, Jan Duckett, Jane Kane, Florence Schadler, Karen Smith, Pat Smith, Sharon Spraw, Mary Walsh, and Don Watts. Opening is Friday, November 14th, 5 to 8 pm. The exhibition continues on Saturday, 15th, 11 am to 6 pm, and Sunday 16th, 11 am to 5 pm. Meet the artists, see them at work, and enjoy entertainment and refreshments during the exhibition. For directions go to: [www.rosebankwinery.com](http://www.rosebankwinery.com). To ask questions about the exhibition, call Flo Schadler at 267-560-5225. Admission is free.

**First Friday** of every month: *Arts on the Avenue* art show at the Langhorne Coffee House, 6 - 9 pm.

### **How to SPARK CREATIVITY in your children & grandchildren**

Expose the children in your life to art, music, dance, and theater. How lucky we are to have so many cultural opportunities within a short drive or train ride that are designed just for children! Bristol Riverside Theatre hosts children's plays, the Michener Art Museum and Bucks County Community College offer a wide range of art, music, dance, and other creative classes, Longwood Gardens recently unveiled its new indoor Children's Garden, and there are many interesting museums, theatres, libraries, and concert halls in the Greater Philadelphia area, all wonderful alternatives to TV, movies, and video games. Enjoy..... and make memories!

Langhorne Council for the Arts  
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