

Brush to canvas: Large-scale art and other news

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The 2025 Embracing Our Differences exhibit is in Poynter Park through the end of the month. Photo provided.

The Sarasota nonprofit Embracing Our Differences has installed its seasonal art exhibition in St. Petersburg's Poynter Park, 1000 3rd Street S. – between the University of South Florida campus and the Poynter Institute.

Consisting of 50 billboard-sized works of art, submitted by amateur artists, educators, students and young children from around the world, it will remain through March 31.

The paintings, and the inspirational quotes each is paired with, were juried by separate committees.

It's the nonprofit's second year in St. Petersburg, although the juried outdoor exhibition has been an annual event in Sarasota since 2004. It's currently on view in that city's Bayfront Park.

According to President and CEO Sarah Wertheimer, 10,124 entries were received this year from 122 countries and 46 states; more than 65 percent were from students, from 511 schools.

Awards for artwork are given for "Best-in-Show Adult," "Best-in-Show Student," and "People's Choice" categories, with the last chosen by visitors to the exhibit. Student winners receive \$2,000, which they split with their school's art program. Awards are also given for the inspirational quotations.

Embracing Our Differences is holding a free community celebration Saturday (March 8) from noon until 3 p.m., with live music, food trucks and information booths from local organizations including Mi Gente, Mi Pueblo, The City of St Pete, Race Withoutism, the Florida Holocaust Museum, USF St. Petersburg, Pinellas Diaspora Arts and Project FREE.

[Visit the website for more information.](#)

Klassika performs Friday at the Imagine Museum. Image: Thee Photo Ninja.

Friday (5-8 p.m.) at the Imagine Museum: The vocal harmony quartet **Klassika**, four classically-trained singers who perform music from that genre, along with standards and contemporary pop tunes. The group includes tenor Chris Romero, a longtime member of the St. Petersburg Opera Company (the others are Stephanie McCranie, Derek Roura and Jolanda Nel). Tickets are [here](#).

More than 140 works from Pinellas County students grade K-8 are at the Middle Gallery at Creative Pinellas through March 30. The **Youth Art Month** show is on view during regular gallery hours, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Wednesdays through Sundays. Coming in April: Artistic “Discovery 2025: The 13th Congressional District High School Exhibit.”

At DRV Gallery: “Evening Crescendo at Crescent Lake,” by Amy Howell.

Singer/songwriter John Kelly, who owned and operated the city’s much-missed Hideaway Café, joins fellow player Jim Gilmour at Gulfport’s **DRV Gallery** Friday (5-8 p.m.). The occasion is a reception for the new exhibit, abstract expressionist Amy Howell’s *New Horizons*.

Saturday (March 8) is D-Day for the St. Petersburg Arts Alliance’s monthly **Second Saturday ArtWalk**. The handy March map ([click here](#)) will let you know which studios and galleries will be open for your perusal from 5 to 9 p.m.

Kimono: The Triumph of Japanese Dress opens Saturday at the **Museum of Fine Arts St. Petersburg**. On view through June 8, the exhibit includes more than over 150 objects, including kimono dating from the late Edo period (1603–1867) through the Shōwa era (1926–1989).

Excavating Self: Retrieving and Reinventing, a solo show from artist Latonya Hicks, opened March 1 at FloridaRAMA. There’s a reception 6-8 p.m. Saturday, during the Second Saturday ArtWalk. Hicks creates wall mounted mixed media assemblages exploring memory, identity and transformation.

Another opening and reception: **Dakota-Joan Parkinson: trans / clay / body** (Saturday 5-9 p.m. at the Morean Center for Clay). More than 60 trans or gender nonconforming youths received free ceramics courses from educator Parkinson, as well as a traditional anagama wood-firing workshop. Here is the resulting artwork (runs through April 27).

Christopher Meindl, director of the University of South Florida’s graduate Florida Studies Program, will speak Saturday (6 p.m.) at **Wild Spaces Gallery**, inside The Factory St. Pete. He will discuss his book, *Florida Springs: From Geography to Politics and Restoration*, as part of the closing reception for the exhibit *Natural Selection: Graphicstudio*.

Clearwater Artist Studio Tour: "Reaching Out," by Heather Rippert.

Three Clearwater artists are opening their workspaces for an **Artist Studio Tour** March 16. Patricia Kluwe Derderian, Heather Rippert and Richard Logan will work, talk and answer questions from 12 to 5 p.m. Find out more and RSVP [at this link](#).

Zero Empty Spaces, the South Florida company that turned vacant Tyrone Square Mall storefronts into affordable artist studios in 2022 ([read that story here](#)), is doing it again. There'll be an open house Feb. 22 at 5 p.m. in an empty space in a corridor adjacent to the "Dillard's Wing," on the western side of the mall (across the parking lot from the movie theaters). The month-to-month partitioned studios are available at \$2.50 per square foot, including water and electricity, with spaces averaging 120 sq. ft. and 80 sq. ft. options also available. An Open House event is planned for Saturday, March 29 at noon.