

February 2026

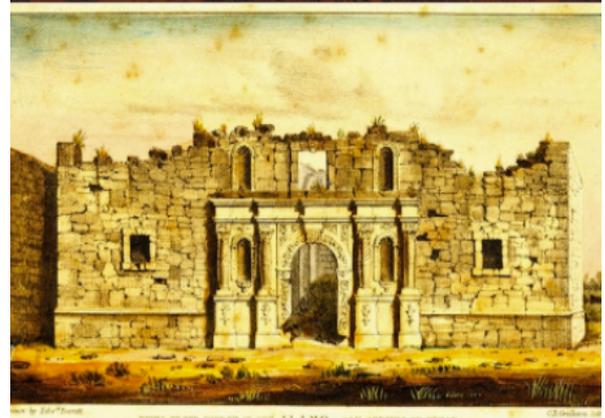
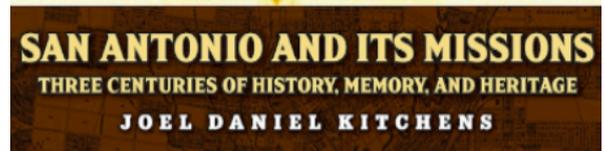
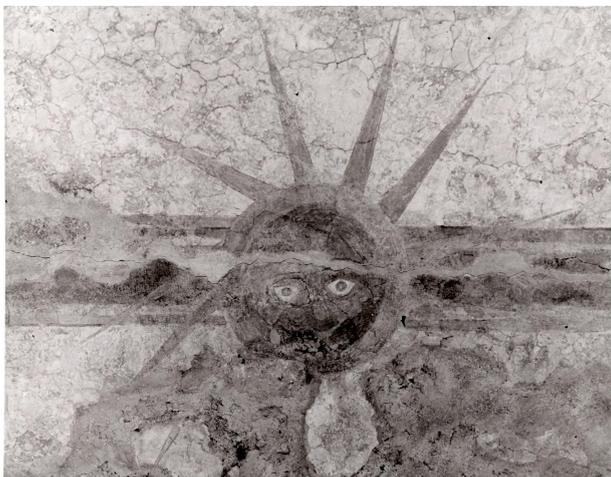
VAS ART SPOTLIGHT

FEATURED ARTIST THIS MONTH IS **Joel Kitchens**

Where will your art take you? For Joel Kitchens, it led to a doctoral degree and a book newly published by Texas A&M University Press. In the early 2000s, Joel had been changing his photographic technique from 35mm color to 4x5 large format black and white, and a return to the traditional wet darkroom. San Antonio's five colonial-era missions became the preferred subjects he photographed as he honed his skills. Because Joel was neither a native Texan

Art journey leads to doctorate and acclaimed missions history book.

nor Catholic, he began to read and research the missions in order to make better informed images. Somewhere along the way, he realized there was a story about the missions that was not being told. The research escalated exponentially and he chose to make these missions the focus for his doctoral



dissertation, and after many revisions, the present book, *San Antonio and Its Missions: Three Centuries of History, Memory, and Heritage*. The missions are "sites of memory," and the book defines this concept and explores how and why Spain built the missions, what happened to the missions after the Spanish colonizers left, and how and why the missions came to weigh so heavily in American imagination and identity, even into the twenty-first century. Now with the book published, Joel can return to the style of photography he loves most, the silver gelatin print, created on film, and made in the traditional wet darkroom.

Author: Joel Kitchens

IN OTHER NEWS....

Spotlight schedule for 2026

Name	Jan	Feb	Mar	April
Speaker	Jacqui M.	Joel K.	Theodora S.	Mark S.
Spotlight	Jacqui M.	Joel K.	Theodora S.	Mark S.

If you would like to get on our list to be a guest speaker and/or on the spotlight, please contact [me](#). When sending us your stories for the spotlight, make sure please, they are **230-240 words**..

2026 Judged Spring Show



The Visual Art Society of Bryan–College Station invites artists to submit work for “America The Beautiful,” the 2026 Spring Judged Show celebrating 250 years of America’s creative spirit. The exhibition will be on view at Degallery from **May 1–29, 2026** with opening reception on May 1 and closing reception on May 29. This show is open to professional, non-professional, and high school artists working in a wide range of media, including a new AI-Mediated Art category. **Online submissions are open now, with an entry deadline of April 20, 2026.** Awards include juried **cash prizes** and People’s Choice awards. Complete guidelines, fees, categories, and submission instructions are available on the [VAS website](#).

Please note that all submitted artwork should reflect this theme. Non-theme pieces may be accepted only if space allows

SHOUT-OUTS!!

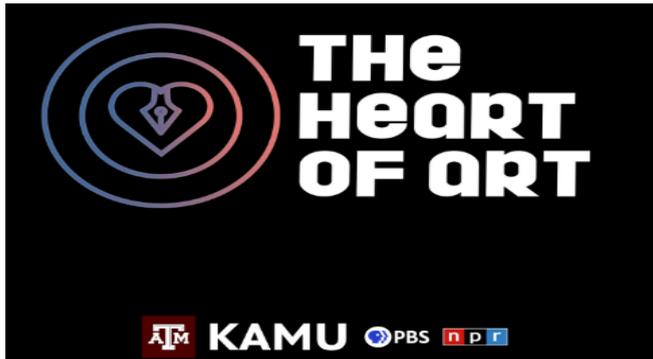
We are proud to have such talented artists as Mark Sadoski, Joel Kitchens, Jamie Speck and David Sites. If you have something to share, please contact us.

Mark Sadoski recently earned *two awards in an international photography competition*. His photograph “Hunt’s Mesa Sunset,” taken in Monument Valley, Arizona, won a Silver Award in the 2025 Epson International Pano Awards, amateur division. His photograph, “Mystery Valley Rainstorm,” taken in Mystery Valley, Arizona, also won a Silver Award in that competition. The Epson International Pano Award Competition is the world’s largest competition devoted to the art and craft of panoramic photography. Silver Awards are given to pictures in the top 10% of the judging. Over 1600 photographs were entered in the 2025 competition.



Jamie Speck and David Sites Both members are having shows at the [Arts Center](#) until March 6. Jamie’s show is [Hausfrau Collections: Mundane to Magical](#) and David’s show is [Luminous Landscapes](#). Take the time to visit and support our members!

Jacqui Miller was recently featured on The Heart of Art, a KAMU original production spotlighting local artists and their passion for all facets of art. Host Hector Nino explores each artist's creative journey and the impact their work has on the Brazos Valley community. New episodes air every Saturday at 2 p.m. Listen to Jacqui's interview [HERE](#). A multimedia artist and lifelong equestrian, Jacqui shares how her work sheds light on issues she cares deeply about—and how decades of horseback riding have strengthened her artistic practice.



Members showcasing their art around town

Brazos Center: Cindy Castillo

Perrine Winery: Joana Rocha and Jacqui Miller

Tavo Coffee Co.: Rene Richards , Liv Langley, and Jacqui Miller

You're Invited: 1st Aggieldand Art Trail Reception

The Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station is hosting the [first Aggieldand Art Trail reception](#) to celebrate the many businesses, museums, and galleries participating in the Aggieldand Art Trail and their shared support of the local arts community.

Date/Time: Thursday, February 12, 2026 | 6:30–8:00 PM; Location: Degallery — 930 N Rosemary Dr, Bryan, TX. This is a come-and-go event with brief remarks at 7:00 PM. Wine and hors d'oeuvres will be served. Attendees are encouraged to connect, meet fellow participants, and celebrate the trail's continued growth. Trail highlights: In 2025, the program distributed 10,000 brochures, expanded its website, and continued growing its app presence through Destination Bryan — helping generate excitement for art across Bryan–College Station.

Add the Aggieldand Art Trail App to your Phone

1. Go to aggieldandartrail.app
2. Sign Up (it's free)
3. Checkout, add your info and complete the order
4. You will receive the link to your mobile pass in the email.
5. Once you are logged into your pass in Chrome on your Android phone and you want to make it an app on your phone, you must be in Chrome browser. You can follow the directions given in FAQs in the top banner.
 - If you see the 3 dots on the top right side of your screen, proceed directly to Step 8.
6. Hold your finger on the 3 horizontal bars at the bottom right on your screen (don't click, hold). Up pops the Chrome info.
7. Pick Open in Chrome Browser
8. tap the 3 dots in the top right corner and look for "Add to Home screen"
9. The app will be installed.

Note that you win awards for visiting the art featured on the Aggieldand Art Trail by accumulating points! !

University Arts Exhibition | Contours and Chaos: Studies in Form, Color, and Movement

The J. Wayne Stark Galleries (on the Aggieldand Art Trail) present *Contours and Chaos: Studies in Form, Color, and Movement*, an exhibition exploring abstraction and non-representational art from the [Texas A&M collections](#). On view January 14–March 8, 2026, the exhibition features two-dimensional works by artists including John O'Neil, Dorothy Hood, Joan Miró, and Alexander Calder, drawn from the J. Wayne Stark Collection. Highlighting abstraction as a powerful mode of artistic inquiry since the mid-twentieth century, the exhibition emphasizes line, shape, color, texture, and space over recognizable subject matter. Through bold experimentation and dynamic compositions, these works invite viewers to experience movement, emotion, and structure in new and compelling ways.

Location: J. Wayne Stark Galleries (MSC 1110)

On View: Jan. 14–March 8, 2026. Gallery Hours: Tues.–Fri. 9.–8 p.m.; Sat.–Sun. Noon–6 p.m.; Closed Mondays. Admission: Free

5th DEGART International Grand Art Event

March 28 – April 3 | 8 AM – 8 PM daily

Join artists from around the world for the [5th DEGART International Grand Art Event](#), a week-long immersive art retreat in Bryan, Texas, organized by DEGALLERY and the DEGA International Art Association. The retreat features plein-air painting sessions, workshops, artist demos, open studios with live models, lectures, community events, and exhibition opportunities. Registration includes multiple event activities, an art fair vendor space, gala ticket, and workshop discounts. Registration: \$45 members | \$65 non-members

Exciting News - Aggieland Art Trail Grant Awarded!

We're thrilled to announce that the Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station has received a \$9,750 Arts & Culture Development Grant from the City of Bryan to support Plaques, Advertising, Web, and App enhancements for the Aggieland Art Trail! This year's award is nearly \$4,000 more than last year's funding — a wonderful recognition of the project's growing impact. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the proposal and continues to support public art in our community!

Fall Plein Air Painting

As the weather cools, it's the perfect time to enjoy the outdoors and capture the scenery around you. If you're interested in participating in future Plein Air painting events, please contact our Publicity Chair, Mindy Austin, at publicity@visualartsociety.org.

Note: Continued interest will help keep these events going—don't miss out!

Local Audience for your Art

Display your art on VAS virtual gallery: If you would like to have your art showcased in our virtual gallery, please fill out this [FORM](#)

Display your art around town: If you would like to have your art displayed in local businesses, fill out this [FORM](#). These local venues are always showing new art; be part of their rotation!

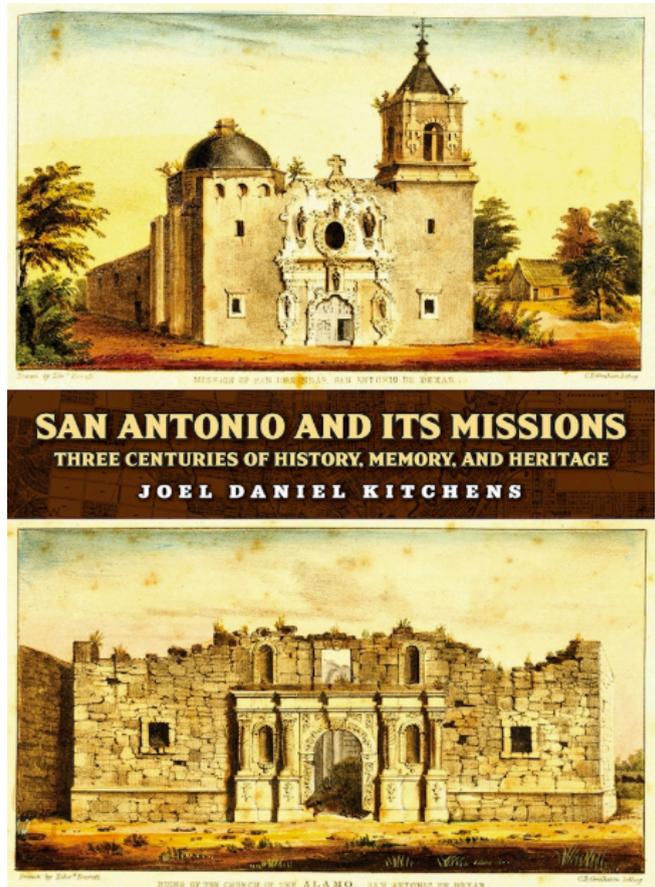
Sell your art: [First Saturday Art Market](#) held @ Degallery from 11am-4pm. If you don't have enough merch to fill up a tent, you can share a VAS tent.

Contact Wendy at president@visualartsociety.org for details.

Join a Local Glass Artisans Group!

Elisa Marchand and Anna Lowary are getting a Glass Artisans group started here in the community! Anyone and everyone is welcome to join. If interested, please contact Anna Lowary email amlowary@yahoo.com | ph. (312) 213-4012

VAS member, Joel Kitchens has published a book



Great news—Joel Kitchens has finished his book! It will be available for purchase this December, but you can preorder now through TAMU Press: [San Antonio and Its Missions. Three Centuries of History, Memory, and Heritage By Joel Daniel Kitchens](#). This book claims San Antonio's five Spanish Colonial-era missions are "sites of memory," as defined by French historian Pierre Nora. By that definition, the missions are an enduring, and deeply-rooted part of the city's heritage. As both sacred spaces, as well as being some of the top tourist attractions in the state, the missions continue to serve some of the original religious and educational functions that began three centuries

ago on what was then a remote site on the frontier. In 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization recognized the missions' importance to Texas and beyond by awarding World Heritage Site status to these buildings. By taking a 'deep dive' into the primary sources, this project explores how and why the Spanish built the missions, what happened to the missions after the Spanish colonizers left, and how and why the missions came to weigh so heavily in the American imagination and identity (particularly after the 1836 Battle of the Alamo, and the arrival of the railroad in 1877 which connected San Antonio to the national web of iron and steel), even into the twenty-first century. The primary sources include Spanish Colonial documents, census data, travel narratives, advertisements by railroad companies, tourist guides, and even the buildings themselves. Visit his new [website!](#)

Live Model Sessions with Tim Vanya



Join us every second Tuesday from 6–9 p.m. at DeGallery for live model drawing and painting. Instruction with Tim Vanya is available for \$15, or attend as an open studio session (without instruction) for \$10. Money will be collected at the door; cash is preferred. More details can be found on the DeGallery website [HERE](#).

First Fridays in Historic Downtown Bryan

There is a new application process; visit <https://www.destinationbryan.com/firstfriday/be-a-part-of-first-friday/> for information. [Love Downtown Local](#) has spaces for tents for \$45. Contact lovedowntownlocal@gmail.com for more info. The event goes on till 10 pm at night and you will need good lighting. Contact [Wendy](#) for questions.

First Saturday Art Market at DeGallery



Every first Saturday, 11 a.m.–4 p.m. at DeGallery Square (930 N Rosemary Dr, Bryan) for a lively outdoor art fair—rain or shine! Enjoy live jazz, kids' art activities, artist demos, and unique works from local art vendors. Artists and musicians are invited to participate in the market. Vendor spaces are \$30/day for a 10'x10' booth (**free for VAS and DEGA International Art Association members - a limited number of free tents are also available. Contact Dary if you need them**). If you do not have enough merchandise to fill a full tent, we encourage you to use one of our shared tents, with tables available (please bring your own chair). In these shared tents, VAS will retain **10% of sales** (for sales taxes). Contact Wendy at president@visualartsociety.org for details or go [HERE](#) to sign up.

Brazos Valley Gives

Brazos Valley Gives is a community day of giving that strengthens nonprofits, empowers donors, and builds community. Since 2019, the Community Foundation's Brazos Valley Gives Day has raised over \$7M for participating nonprofits in the 7-county region of the Brazos Valley. The Visual Art Society of B-CS has been involved with Brazos Valley Gives for the last 6 years. You can visit our [page](#). **We were fortunate to have won for the first time a Golden Ticket - a \$2500 prize sponsored by Tom Light Legacy.** Because of this, VAS will be offering three \$1000 Visual Art Scholarships to High School Students in Bryan-College Station (see below - *Visual Art Scholarships*).

Visual Art Scholarships

The Visual Art Society is offering three \$1,000 scholarships to graduating high school seniors (by August 2026) from Bryan-College Station who plan to pursue a course of study and career in the visual arts. **Applications are due by 5:00 PM on Tuesday, March 31, 2026**, with full details and application instructions available on our [website](#). In addition, high school students from any location are invited to participate in the 2026 Spring Judged Show, America The Beautiful, which includes a dedicated high school division with ribbons and cash awards.

Downtown Bryan Street & Art Fair – April 26!

Join us for the [Downtown Bryan Street & Art Fair](#) on Sunday, April 26, 2026, from 10am–4pm. This juried, free-to-attend event features regional artists, live music, family-friendly activities, and hands-on art demos—rain or shine. Artists: applications are rolling through March 1, 2026; accepted artists enjoy great perks, with booth fees charged only after acceptance. Don't miss this vibrant day of art in downtown Bryan!

Workshops

[DEGALLERY](#) | [Wendy Keeney- Kennicutt Brazos Watercolor Retreats](#) | [Sabra Delyn Wilhelm DeLyn Atelier Fine Art & Teaching Studio](#) | [Lisa Miller Laughing Parrot Studio](#) | [Tim "Pops" Vanya T.W. Vanya Fine Art](#) | [Mary Skow \(watercolor\)](#) | [Chris Wilson](#) (watercolor) | [Jaimie Ladysh](#) Encaustic Photography & Encaustic Arts | [Robyn Glass](#) (drawing, watercolor, paper-cut, colored pencil) | If you teach, we will advertise your business. Contact Wendy at president@visualartsociety.org.

Visual Art Society T-shirts!



Wear Our Story! Interested in telling the world about the Visual Art Society in a [comfy, high-quality t-shirt](#)? We have partnered with a local company, *BCS Print, Signs & Graphics*, to bring you a great selection of colors and styles with our logo and on the back "Nurturing Artists...Enriching Our Community." They come in a variety of sizes, colors, and necklines. You can choose to have your order shipped or you can save that extra cost by picking it up at 3141 Briarcrest Dr, Suite 501B, Bryan TX. Show our community that you support the Visual Art Society of Bryan-College Station!

List of Community Galleries

[Benjamin Knox Gallery & Wine Bar](#)
[Brazos Glassworks](#)
[Cushing Memorial Library & Archives Degallery](#)
[Forsyth Galleries](#)
[INTERSECTIONS \(home of the Brazos Spinners & Weavers Guild\)](#)
[J. Wayne Stark Galleries](#)
[Perrine Winery](#)
[Tavo Coffee Co.](#)
[The Arts Center of Brazos Valley](#)
[The Frame Gallery Downtown](#)
[The Kimball](#)
[The Parker-Astin](#)

If you have something you would like to be depicted in the monthly spotlight please contact me, Joana, secretary@visualartsociety.org.