



# STAR ARTS NEWS

December 2025

## Workshops 2026

*Movement: African-Rooted Dance: Movement, Rhythm, and Cultural Connection with Noel Staples-Freeman*

This lively and culturally rich dance class invites participants to explore the roots of African and Diaspora movement traditions through rhythm, song, and storytelling. Guided by Sister Noel, dancers will experience the joy of movement drawn from West African and Afro-Caribbean traditions—focusing on grounded movement, rhythmic patterns, and community connection. No prior dance experience is needed; all levels and abilities are welcome. Come ready to move, learn, and celebrate the power and spirit of African-rooted dance. Participants should plan on wearing comfortable loose clothing to move in.

Noel Staples-Freeman, affectionately known as Sister Noel, is a dedicated educator, performer, and cultural ambassador based in Pittsfield, MA. She earned a B.S. in Children's Theatre, Performing Arts, and Dance from Emerson College, with further training at The Boston Conservatory, Elma Lewis School of Fine Arts, The Art of Black Dance and Music, and Koumpo West African Dance Company. With over 50 years of experience, her work is deeply grounded in African-rooted traditions, emphasizing cultural preservation, healing, and community connection through movement. She is the founder of Uprising Dance Theatre and artistic director of the Berkshire African Dance and Drum Collective, with performance credits including Jacob's Pillow and DanceAfrica. She is currently teaching at Berkshire Pulse, CATA, the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute, Jacob's Pillow. Through her lifelong commitment to dance, education, and community, Noel continues to inspire and uplift across generations.



Noel Staples-Freeman; Noel at a dance event (photos submitted by Peggy White)

Other 2026 Workshops:

- Theater: Pat Your Head & Rub Your Tummy: Theater Improv for All with Richard Kuhlman
- Writing: Deepening the Writing Life with Barbara O'Neil

Read about these workshops here: <https://stararts.org/workshops/> Information on other workshops will be coming soon!

*Star Arts 2026*  
*Sunday June 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday June 28<sup>th</sup>*  
Registration will open in January of 2026



# Passing

Charles Coe

Richard Waring shares: I am heartbroken to share that dear poet and friend, Charles Coe, has died. He'd recently had his cancerous prostate removed. A short time later, he suffered a heart attack. He was the most warm-hearted and humanly accessible poet imaginable, with a gift for singing as well as playing one of his several didgeridoos. We were MCs for Bruce Petschek's Tribute to Leonard Cohen Concert and he led the Writing Workshop at Star Arts in 2022.



Here is the final poem from his *New and Selected Works*:

in the days to come  
when i have gone  
to wherever i am going  
sometimes when you  
walk along the shore  
stop for a moment  
bare toes in warm sand  
gaze at the rainbow sky  
and i'll be there  
the salt spray  
kissing your cheek



Charles Coe photo from his website by Esdras Suarez; Suta Lee and Charles in 2022; Photo by Richard Waring; 2022 Workshop Leader selfie, Tim Van Ness, Alana Phinney, Parrish Dobson and Charles Coe, photo by Parrish Dobson.

You can read his obituary here: [www.legacy.com](http://www.legacy.com)

## Star Island Holiday Auction

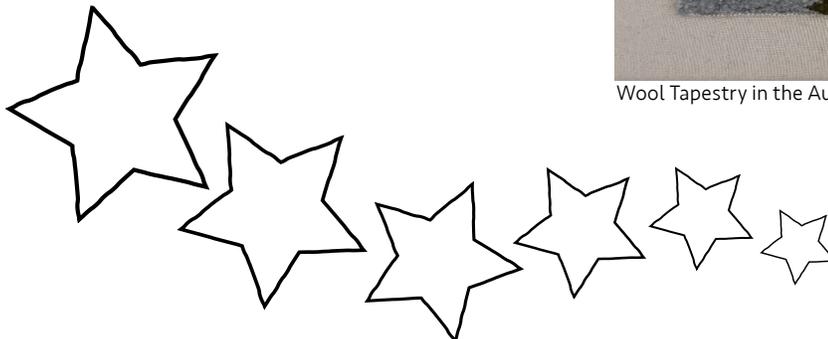
Online Until December 7th

Star Island is running an Auction with many beautiful pieces of art and wonderful experiences up for bid! All funds will go to help Star Island next year.

Check it out here: [www.charityauctions.com](http://www.charityauctions.com)



Wool Tapestry in the Auction by 2026 Arts Chair Elenita Muñiz



## Deadline for Next Newsletter!

The Deadline for the next Newsletter will be January 1<sup>st</sup>!

If you would like to include pictures, art, poetry and/or news please submit items to: [stararts.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:stararts.newsletter@gmail.com)

(Questions about Star Arts you can email Barbara Reynolds at [stararts.registrar@gmail.com](mailto:stararts.registrar@gmail.com))

