

STAR ARTS NEWS

January 2026

Note from the Chair

Hello all and Happy New Year!

In just a few days, we will be able to register for our next week of Star Arts fun, and if that doesn't get us through the dark, snowy days ahead, I don't know what will!

The Program sub-committee is doing amazing work in pulling together an intriguing array of workshop leaders for us. With six workshops to choose from, it's exciting to look forward to June. I'm wondering if my old bones can support a week of African dance – and still know I have so many other options, including not taking a workshop at all. We all have those choices. No pressure, but such a wealth of options for a creative week on Star Island.

The Steering Committee made the decision, on the recommendation of the Finance sub-committee, to increase our Program Fee this year to allow more flexibility in workshop planning and to reduce the daily requests for cash contributions. With this increase, we can include the social hour food and beverages as well as being able to support six workshops. Yes, we still encourage conferees to bring some cash – for gift and book shop purchases, late night ice cream and those afternoon lime rickeys! Workshops often want to give their leader some memento of Star as a thank-you, too. And the auctions will feature examples of our conferees' own work, from watercolors to woodworking to beadwork, all donated to support our scholarship fund.

We are delighted to welcome Rev. Kate Wilkinson as our Minister of the Week. Read on for more updates on Star Arts happenings. And mark your calendars for January 15th when registration opens! Keep dreaming on the Star...

Elenita, 2026 Chair for the Steering Committee



Chairs on the East Porch waiting for us to return.
Photo by Parrish Dobson 2025.

2026 Minister of the Week

Our minister of the week this year will be Rev. Kate Wilkinson. Kate is delighted to return to Arts, a conference she has attended many times as a conferee and twice as minister of the week.

Kate is in her 14th year as minister of the UU Meeting House of Provincetown, which is a little bit like a year-round Arts conference on the tip of Cape Cod! She lives in Wellfleet with her wife, Lisa, who will also be attending Arts this year. Kate's also excited to share the island experience with her mother, Lynne Wilkinson, whom many of you know. When she is not in the pulpit you can find Kate in her vegetable garden, kayaking, reading and working on her father's oyster grant.

Star Arts 2026
Sunday June 21st to Sunday June 28th
Registration will open Thursday, January, 15th 2026



Workshops 2026

Photography: Photographic Storytelling with Amy Lovera

About the Workshop: Looking at photographs instantly conjures stories in the mind - but how do we tell a story in still images? In this class, we will explore narrative strategies including pacing, sequencing, linear vs. non linear storytelling and how text functions with image. We will take the landscape of the island as a point of departure and will be inspired by existing narratives like fairy tales and poems. We will also examine photography's relationship to painting and cinema. While we will hone photographic technique, emphasis will be placed on developing personal vision and content.

Read more about Amy on our website here: <https://stararts.org/photography/>



Amy Lovera (Photo submitted by Parrish Dobson)

Don't forget our other 2026 Workshops:

- *Movement*: African-Rooted Dance: Movement, Rhythm, and Cultural Connection with Noel Staples-Freeman
- *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 about Visual Arts and Music will be coming soon!



Correction

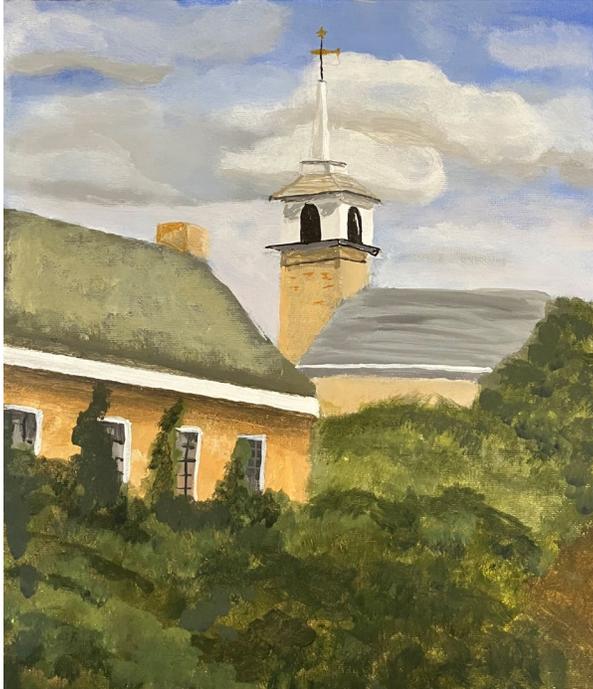
Photos of Noel Staples-Freeman from the December Newsletter should be attributed to the following: The first to Christopher Duggan at Jacob's Pillow. The second photo of her dancing to Kulton McCall at Blackshires Leadership Accelerator Program Completion Grant Ceremony.



Looking Ahead to 2027!

The Summer of 2027, Arts will celebrate its 50th Anniversary! Please send interesting and noteworthy historic news to stararts.newsletter@gmail.com

Evening Chapel



Painting of the Chapel by Robin Bossert, 2025

In just over 160 days, we will be standing in line to board Tippy Tommy, greeting old friends with hugs, and welcoming New Shoalers with introductions and smiles. Later, we will collect our lanterns at the end of the porch, listen for the bells, and begin the silent walk up the path to the chapel. Finding our place on the old wooden pews, we'll wait to join in one of the highlights of Star Arts...a worship service provided by our friends. To continue this tradition...my very favorite part of the Arts week...we need folks like you and me to volunteer to craft a complete service or offer to present a five to seven-minute segment of a Star Soup evening. Star Arts is a safe place in which to step out of your comfort zone and try something new. Crafting worship is indeed an art, and it is just as satisfying as painting, poetry, dance, or drama.

EVERYONE has a unique voice, a story to tell, or a message to share. You have the option of being a solo presenter or grabbing some of your friends to join you. There were four of us working together the first time I was part of an evening service. I'm willing to help in any way I can. Neither you nor I need to know your topic at this time. Just let me know...ASAP... if you are willing to take on a role. I promise, you'll be glad you did.

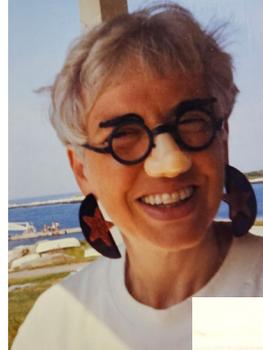
Thanks and smiles,
Sally Armstrong (sjdaab@hotmail.com or text at 802.477.3275)

Passings

A note from Alison Hyder

Skippy Gurau, who attended the first Arts Conference in 1977, died in Tucson November 2025. She was 95. Skippy was born Ursel Mosheim in Hannover, Germany. Along with her parents Herman and Louise (Liesel), and her sister Inge, she escaped to Luxembourg in 1939 and to Kew Garden in Queens, NY, by the skin of their teeth, in 1941. Nicknamed Skippy at a summer camp, she eventually went to Queens College, where she first met her second cousin, Peter Gurau. They married, and moved to Springfield MA, where she developed her talents as an artist and sculptor.

Friends from their UU church told them about Star Island, and they registered for the brand new Arts Conference. They attended every year, where each served as the chair, contributed to the general creativity and fun, and eventually invited their niece Alison Hyder, and Skippy's mother Liesel Mosheim, who added their own talents to Star Island. Peter died in 1985, and Skippy moved to Tucson, where she continued to be a successful artist (amending her birth name to Ursela). Ursela suffered a stroke in 2023, but still managed to produce art until sometime in 2025, when her condition worsened. You can still find some of her work online by googling "Ursela Gurau art."



Skippy with a Groucho nose on Star Island, 1991. Peter and Skippy on Star in 1987. Photos submitted by Alison Hyder

Deadline for Next Newsletter!

The Deadline for the next Newsletter will be February 1st!

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

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

