

## ***THE BIRMINGHAM ART ASSOCIATION***

The Birmingham Art Association (BAA) is an independent association of visual artists and art enthusiasts. BAA is a federally recognized 501(c)(3) non-profit all volunteer organization and is the oldest arts organization in the region, now in their 102<sup>nd</sup> year of operation.

The mission of the Birmingham Art Association is to support and promote artists in our community while contributing to a culturally enriched arts environment. BAA accomplishes their mission by providing a setting that fosters creativity, education, quality art and interaction between artists and the public. The Association concentrates on assisting emerging artists in a highly competitive and diverse regional art world. The Birmingham Art Association, founded in 1908 as the Birmingham art Club, was one of the city's earliest organizations led by, both, artist and art patrons. Birmingham artists Debra Dryer Willie McLaughlin, Alice Rumph and Mamie Holifield formed a group primarily to promote the arts of the city. They drew together 57 charter members and soon were entertaining such celebrities as G E. Moretti. Sculptor of the world's largest cast-iron statue, ("Vulcan"), a Birmingham landmark for 100 years. Famed landscape and portrait painter Nicholas R. Brewer lectured to the members in the 1920s. The famed Frank Flemming fountain on Birmingham's Southside was purchased by the Birmingham Art Association.

The Birmingham Art Club's first Sidewalk Art Show was held in Woodrow Wilson Park (now Linn Park) in 1938. In 1940, a committee was created to raise funds for the creation of a Museum for Birmingham. With a trust left to the Club by Mamie Fogarty, support by the Junior League of Birmingham and the City Commission, the Birmingham Museum of Art finally came to being in 1951. A new Building was erected with funding from Helen Jacobs Wells in 1959. Later, BAA started the Festival of Arts and established annual juried and non-juried memberships shows that continue to this day.