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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **First Saturday Arts Market Showcases 48 Artists on April 5**

HOUSTON — The First Saturday Arts Market returns April 5, featuring 48 visual artists in the Historic Houston Heights from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. at 540 W. 19th St. Now in its 21st year, this free outdoor event offers a vibrant showcase of paintings, sculptures, jewelry, and more, with a spotlight on talents like Jimmie Shealy, Miriam Lim O'Brien, Lindsey Johnson, Olga Tarasova, and Ron Martel. Since launching in March 2004, the market has been a trailblazer among outdoor popups, standing out with its focus on visual arts.

"I once heard someone say to expect unintended circumstances from big plans, and the level of talent—not to mention the longevity—at First Saturday Arts Market still astounds me after 21 years," said Mitch Cohen, the market's founder. "Honestly, what I love most is meeting such incredibly talented, creative, and enthusiastic people. The customers share that enthusiasm, making this a truly humbling experience."

Meet five of this month's featured artists:

**Jimmie Shealy**, a self-taught American painter, brings a lifetime of experience to his canvases, having begun painting at age 15. After a 30-year career as a firefighter-paramedic, he turned his profound curiosity about human emotions into a full-time artistic pursuit upon retirement. His work, which captures the quiet tension of life's moments, has earned national and international recognition, including first-place and best-in-show awards in juried art events, as well as exhibitions in prestigious galleries. Influenced by masters like Andrew Wyeth and John Singer Sargent, Shealy invites viewers into the unspoken worlds he creates. This marks his debut at the market.

**Miriam Lim O'Brien**, the creative force behind Papermolas, blends tradition and modernity in her vibrant digital art inspired by the molas of Panama's Guna Indians. Born in Panama to Chinese parents and now a 23-year U.S. resident, O'Brien celebrates her Panamanian roots through designs that fuse labyrinthine patterns with contemporary geometric flair, featuring everyday objects and landmarks. Originally a paper artist, she transitioned to a sustainable digital medium, printing her original works—greeting cards, coasters, and more—in her home office with professional equipment.

**Lindsey Johnson**, founder of Geophilia Studio, crafts jewelry that marries her geoscientist roots with a passion for design. After earning a master's degree in geology and working eight years in the oil industry, she left corporate life to transform her hobby into a business, inspired by rocks, well-cut stones, and geometric simplicity. Johnson's pieces, known for clean lines, subtle textures, and 3D elements, aim

for quiet sophistication while pushing jewelry beyond the body with kinetic forms. She aspires to elevate her work to a high-end artisan brand.

**Olga Tarasova**, a skilled feltmaker and fiber artist based in Houston, transforms raw materials into wearable art with a meticulous hand. Using luxury fibers like Merino wool, silk, and yak, she crafts one-of-a-kind scarves, wraps, hats, and jewelry through the ancient felting process. Originally from Daugavpils, Latvia, Tarasova dyes her own fibers and often works with unprocessed wool from small farmers, infusing her textile designs with a personal touch from her Winter St Studios workspace.

**Ron Martel**, known as The Yankee Woodturner, turns wood into art with a craftsman's precision and an artist's eye. A retired police officer from New London, Connecticut, Martel began woodturning in 2019 after his wife gifted him a lathe, a hobby that grew into a business when his creations overflowed their Kingwood, Texas, home. From bowls and vases to wall hangings and mixed-media pieces, his work balances artistic expression with functional design, appealing to both art lovers and everyday buyers.

Visitors can explore the full lineup of artists, each with their own bios, photos, and contact details available on the Artist Roster at [firstsaturdayartsmarket.com](http://firstsaturdayartsmarket.com). The market may feature a food truck and local singer-songwriters, adding to the relaxed, community vibe. Running September through May on the first Saturday of each month, with a rain date of the second Saturday, this event remains a Houston staple. Connect at [facebook.com/firstsaturdayartsmarket](https://facebook.com/firstsaturdayartsmarket) or [instagram.com/1stsatartmarket](https://instagram.com/1stsatartmarket) for updates.

#### **Event Summary for Online Calendars and Listings:**

- First Saturday Arts Market, April 5, 11 a.m.-6 p.m., 540 W. 19th St., Houston, TX 77008.
- Free outdoor event featuring 48 visual artists with paintings, sculptures, jewelry, and more.
- Highlights include Jimmie Shealy's debut, Miriam Lim O'Brien's Papermolas, Lindsey Johnson's Geophilia Studio, Olga Tarasova's felted art, and Ron Martel's Yankee Woodturner creations.
- Food truck and live music possible. Rain date: April 12. Details at [firstsaturdayartsmarket.com](http://firstsaturdayartsmarket.com).

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