



aA art Ability

a celebration of art by artists with disabilities



Main Line Health®
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

2021-2022



Jen Decota, *Back to School*, MIXED MEDIA

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Constance Avery, *Gardenias*

Art Ability: A benefit celebration for Bryn Mawr Rehab and artists with disabilities

VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

Saturday, November 6, 2021 | 6:00–8:00 pm EST

6:00 pm EST—Exhibition Preview and Sale

- Catch a glimpse of our exhibit walls
- View and purchase artwork
- Hear messages from our artists, supporters and sponsors

7:00 pm EST—LIVE from Bryn Mawr Rehab

- Meet our hosts and featured artist
- Learn how Project SEARCH changes lives
- Opportunities to give

Art Sales will begin on Wednesday, November 3.

bidpal.net/artability21



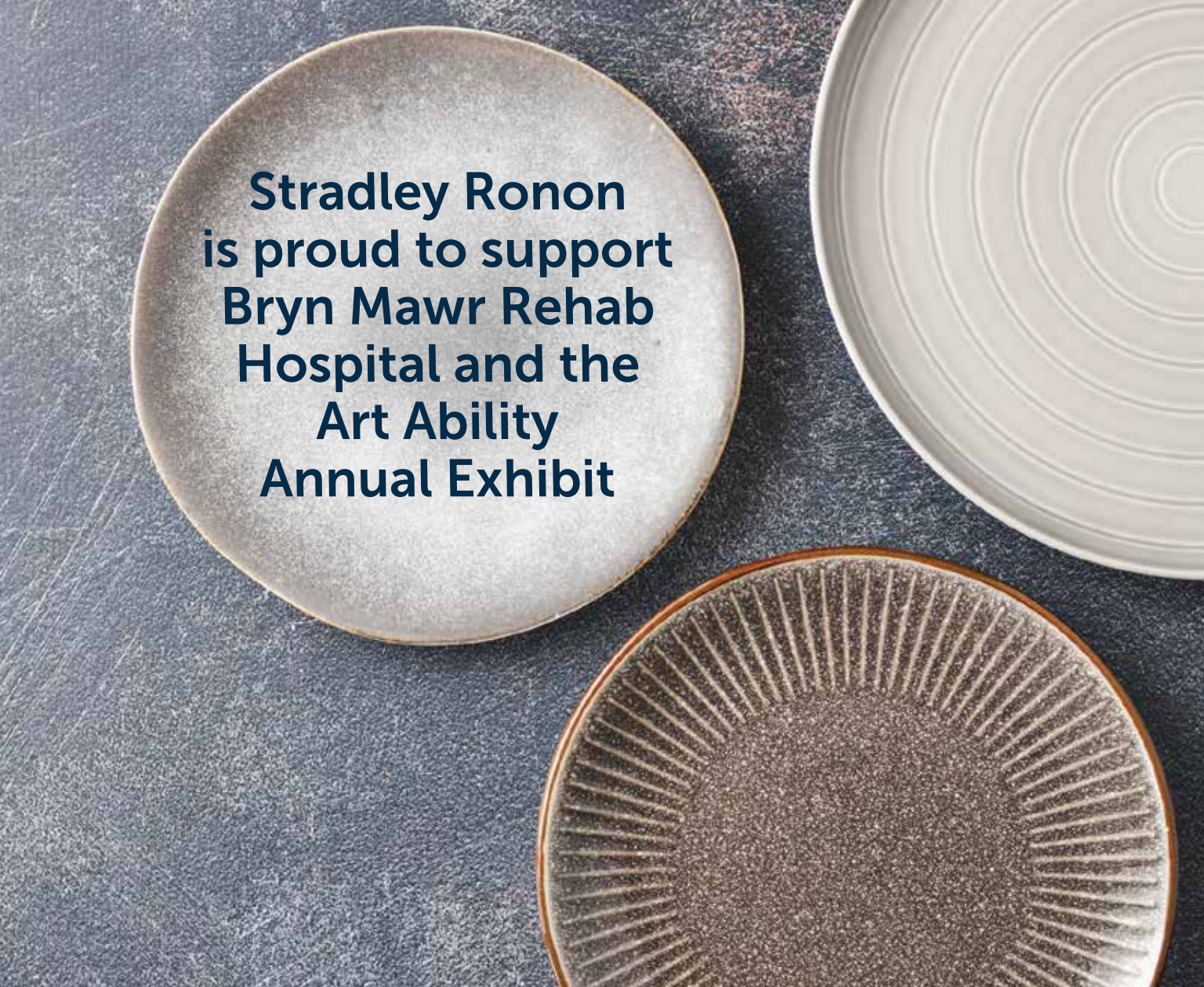
David Terrar, *Spring Time of Hope*

26TH ANNUAL ART EXHIBITION AND SALE*

Sunday, November 7, 2021–Sunday, January 30, 2022

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital | 414 Paoli Pike | Malvern, PA

* *Tours of the exhibit will be available by appointment only. For more information email artability@mlhs.org.*



**Stradley Ronon
is proud to support
Bryn Mawr Rehab
Hospital and the
Art Ability
Annual Exhibit**



For more than 90 years, Stradley Ronon has helped private and public companies — from small businesses to Fortune 500 corporations — achieve their goals. While we're proud of our many client achievements, we're just as dedicated to the communities in which we work and live. Through our financial contributions and volunteer efforts, we're pleased to support hundreds of nonprofit and charitable organizations.

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Donna M. Phillips

President, Bryn Mawr
Rehabilitation Hospital

Senior Executive, Ambulatory
and Professional Services

Dear Friends,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to our 26th annual Art Ability event. While we continue in our new and evolving hybrid world, we are grateful for the resources that allow us to offer this event in a virtual format. Tonight's guests will join us from around the world and just around the corner. Thank you all for participating from wherever you may be!

I would like to congratulate our artists and extend our gratitude to them for sharing their creativity, passion and gifts with us. The annual exhibition has grown to hundreds of participating artists from diverse backgrounds, ages, states and countries. Thanks to our talented artists and generous donors, Bryn Mawr Rehab's permanent collection has grown to over 500 pieces of artwork. This collection is an integral part of our culture, and we thank everyone who has played a part in building it.

Tonight and throughout the year, Art Ability serves as a showcase and celebration of artists with disabilities. In addition, this event and year-round program provides artists with the opportunity to strengthen their economic independence and bring their work to new audiences. Funds raised this

evening will not only support the livelihoods of our artists, but benefit another important community program focused on career development for individuals with disabilities, Project SEARCH.

Project SEARCH is Bryn Mawr Rehab's educational and work transition program for those with cognitive and/or physical disabilities. The program was significantly impacted during the pandemic and a portion of funds raised this evening will support Bryn Mawr Rehab's work to return Project SEARCH to full operations. You will hear more about this program this evening from past participants!

This evening promises to inspire. Thank you to the Art Ability Committee, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation Board, our sponsors, staff and volunteers for making this event possible.

Thank you again for joining us.

Warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donna M. Phillips". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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Capital One Commercial Banking is thrilled to honor the great work of the **26th Annual Art Ability Exhibition**. We're proud to support an organization that shares our goal of stronger, more vibrant communities.

[capitalone/commercial](https://capitalone.commercial)

Michael T. Prendergast

Senior Vice President
Regional Commercial Banking PA/NJ/DE
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In addition to these leadership sponsors, we extend our special thanks to the many others who demonstrated their support through ads.

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The W.A. Speakman Family Foundation

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Sal Panasci, *Still Life with Three Blossoms*

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and congratulates them
on their 26th year
of the exhibition!



ABOUT BRYN MAWR REHAB HOSPITAL

BRYN MAWR REHAB HOSPITAL, PART OF MAIN LINE HEALTH, IS A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF PHYSICAL MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION.

The 148-bed, not-for-profit hospital offers the full continuum of rehabilitation services, including acute inpatient care as well as outpatient services for adults and adolescents. The hospital received Magnet® designation, the nation's highest distinction for excellence in nursing care and is accredited by the Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF). Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital treats patients with traumatic and nontraumatic brain injury, stroke and other neurological disorders, traumatic and nontraumatic spinal cord injury, amputations, and orthopedic injuries. Bryn Mawr Rehab Outpatient Network treats individuals with a wide range of conditions and injuries from brain injury, spinal cord injury and Parkinson's disease to concussions, pelvic floor disorders, lymphedema and post-COVID recovery. Our outpatient rehabilitation services are conveniently located throughout the western suburbs of Philadelphia.

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital is ranked #1 in Pennsylvania for America's "Best Physical Rehabilitation Centers 2020" by *Newsweek* magazine. Rankings were based on quality of care, quality of service, quality of follow-up care, and accommodations and amenities.

For more information about Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, visit mainlinehealth.org/rehab.



Timothy O'Donovan, *Canyon Lands*



Charles Blackwell, *The Sun & The Song After Meeting Sunra*

*We are proud to support
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital
and the wonderful artists
who share their talents
at Art Ability.*

ANN AND RICHARD FRANKEL

Mission

Art Ability is dedicated to creating community awareness of cognitive and physical disabilities, encouraging people with disabilities to reach beyond their limitations and find fulfillment and inspiration through art. Art Ability provides positive role models for people with disabilities while increasing their access to the arts. The program successfully develops new markets for artists with disabilities where they can gain recognition for their technical skill and artistic vision.

Now celebrating 26 years, Art Ability continues to be an integral part of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital since its first exhibition and sale of work by artists with disabilities in 1996. It continues to be a year-round showcase and celebration of artists with disabilities and is the country's largest international, juried exhibition and sale of its kind.

Proceeds from sales of artwork help support Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital's patient and community programs. The exhibit is free and open to the public and enjoyed by more than 3,500 people annually, including the hospital's patients and families, hospital staff, friends and visitors.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, tours of the exhibit will be available by appointment only. For more information email artability@mlhs.org.

Program

SELECTION OF THE ART

A stringent, two-step process ensures that Art Ability presents highly professional artwork, demonstrating the strength of artistic talent within the disabled community. The first step is conducted by the Art Ability Committee jurors and the Art Ability curator, and includes reviewing the submitted images and choosing the artwork for the exhibition. The second step includes esteemed judges who are selected based on their expertise and prominence in the Greater Philadelphia fine arts community. They judge the work, selecting the pieces to receive awards in their respective categories.



Michael Heitler, *Lake Como IV*



Diane Veros, *Cosmo*

Participating artists express their creativity through many mediums including painting, photography, sculpture, fiber arts, jewelry and fine crafts. Through these creative modes of expression, artists are able to convey their talent and receive recognition for their work, and in many cases are able to further recover from a life-altering illness or injury.

SALES

Artists earn 80 percent of the sales of exhibited work and those commissioned during the 12-week show. Unsold works are returned after the exhibit closes. Artists may be invited to take part in Art Ability's ongoing sales and exhibition programs, receiving 60 percent of the sales for work sold during this time.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

While the annual exhibition is the highlight of the program, Art Ability has many other components which include:

- **Satellite exhibitions** Traveling satellite exhibitions of Art Ability artwork are a key component of the program and have been successful in generating enhanced awareness of the talent and skill of our artists, in addition to communicating that disability is as personally limiting as you make it.
- **Online sales gallery** Our online sales gallery provides the opportunity to view works for sale from our

consignment inventory. Each year, with the permission of the artist, Art Ability retains a number of works from our annual exhibition to allow for more exposure for our artists and their talents. To browse artwork available for purchase, visit bidpal.net/aa.

- **Corporate art acquisition program** Art Ability also serves as a resource for corporations to help meet their needs for artwork for their collections.
- **Permanent collection of work** Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital is an actively collecting institution whose permanent collection of over 500 objects is on rotational display throughout the year. Clinicians at the hospital often use the art as a tool to motivate and treat their patients.

For more information about Art Ability programs, call **484.596.5607** or email artability@mlhs.org

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Newfound freedom for patients thanks to your generosity

During last year's virtual Call to Give, our generous supporters contributed over \$130,500 for the purchase of two Ekso devices. The Ekso is a wearable, battery-operated bionic exoskeleton that enables patients with lower extremity weakness or partial paralysis to stand and walk on level surfaces. Because the device is not mounted or otherwise fixed, it allows patients to practice more dynamic activities such as forward stepping, sit to stand transfers, squats, and side stepping.

Originally the device was designated solely for stroke and incomplete spinal cord injury rehabilitation. However, in 2020, the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approved the use of the Esko with patients who have experienced both traumatic brain injuries (TBI) and non-traumatic brain injuries (n-TBI). With this clearance, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital has been able to expand the use of the device to a broader group of patients.

Our therapists individually assess each patient to ensure appropriate treatment based on their injuries and goals. Each session focuses on specific gait training goals the patient, physician and therapist establish together. With the help of our highly trained therapists and support staff, over 54,000 steps have been taken using the Ekso device since August 2020.



Thanks to the support of our Art Ability donors each year, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital continues to grow and provide the best quality patient care.

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Project SEARCH at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, an educational and work transition program for those with cognitive and/or physical disabilities, is customized to the needs of each intern to help them gain and sustain employment and greater independence. Project SEARCH works with the business community to match their needs with the intern's talents and abilities.

Project SEARCH was founded at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center and has expanded to a network of sites. Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital launched its program in October 2010, integrating real-life work experience with classroom instruction. The cornerstone of the program is immersion in the community and partnering with local businesses and corporations to offer our interns on-the-job training, job coaching and mentoring. This provides the skills and experience that allow interns to compete for jobs on an equal footing with other candidates.



Our goal is for Project SEARCH interns to learn, grow, build, support and celebrate their successes on the journey towards competitive employment. Here's how we do that:

CLASSROOM SUPPORT Work Readiness Training

- Professionalism
- Communication
- Disability disclosure
- Workplace etiquette
- Conflict resolution
- Understanding and navigating the workplace
- Technology training
- And much more



“Project SEARCH
takes the word ability
from disability and
lets it shine”

—Ashley

Ashley Dero

Ashley has been part of Project SEARCH for six months and is currently in her third internship, working as a clerical assistant for Patient Access at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. Through Project SEARCH, she has learned valuable skills such as professionalism, how to utilize downtime, and how to disclose her disability for accommodations that help her succeed. Ashley has a passion for working with people and enjoyed her internship as a Member Services Associate at the YMCA. Ashley loves Project SEARCH for giving her the opportunity to learn job skills through internships and classroom experience that assist her in navigating her own career path.



Brady Drummond

Brady attended Neumann University, which had a support system for students with disabilities. With the encouragement of his professors, he graduated with a degree in Liberal Arts and a double minor in Communications/Media Arts and Criminal Justice. Brady tried five disability support organizations before finding the perfect fit with Project SEARCH. Our staff helped Brady identify his strengths and find roles that complemented his interests. He attributes his success to the supportive peer mentors and job coaches who guided his on-the-job training. With each internship, as he applied his classroom knowledge to real-world situations, Brady's confidence and self-esteem grew. He currently works as a Therapy Aide at Riddle Hospital.

“Project SEARCH is an opportunity for individuals who have disabilities and who have struggled to find their place in the work world. There is nothing like that. Their lives change immediately because they can be like everybody else.”

—Roseanne Drummond, Brady's Mother

INTERNSHIPS

Real-Life Work Experiences

- High expectations
- Skill building
- Career exploration
- Networking and references
- Resume building
- On the job feedback from staff members within internship
- Following department policies and procedures

JOB DEVELOPMENT

Supported Job Searching

- Job searching
- Submitting job applications
- Follow-up calls
- Interview prep
- Supported interviews
- Writing thank you emails

Job coaching support is provided for interviewing and transitioning into employment.



“Project SEARCH has given me so much confidence. I am able to communicate better and be myself. I’ve learned so much, and if it weren’t for Project SEARCH I would never have a job that I love to do.” —Geri

Geraldine (Geri) D’Alonzo

Geri used to struggle preparing for job interviews and identifying positions suited to her interests. At Project SEARCH, she acquired the skills to stay organized, draft professional emails, and become more self-sufficient on the computer. The staff helped Geri build a LinkedIn profile, research job opportunities, and write cover letters and resumes. Geri’s favorite Project SEARCH internship was Therapy Aide at Main Line Health’s Outpatient Rehab Center in Wynnewood. Her hard work and perseverance paid off; Geri was thrilled to accept a job offer there almost a year later. She has been in her position for two years and especially enjoys interacting with patients and encouraging their progress.



“My life was taken away by brain cancer. Project SEARCH gave it back to me.”

—Dean

Dean Moran

Eight years ago, after completing an internship at the YMCA through Project SEARCH, Dean was offered a permanent job as a Member Services Associate and has worked there since. It’s a position that allows him to interact with people on a daily basis, which he enjoys. Project SEARCH gave Dean the tools for a successful career, including job coaching, which increased his comfort level and helped him establish a support system within his department. Dean appreciates the independence of having a job, and believes it’s the perfect steppingstone for achieving future milestones.

EMPLOYMENT | Supported Employment

- Orientation
- Transitioning into employment
- Modeling relationships
- Building natural supports
- Development of strategies
- On-site support
- Off-site debriefing

We also offer two levels of support on the job:

- Peer Mentor, an employee of the business partner
 - Identify natural support for the intern within the department
 - Assist the intern with initial training and onboarding
- Job Coach, a Project SEARCH employee
 - Help interns identify and foster supportive relationships in the workplace
 - Ensure that each intern completes initial onboarding and training tasks by the assigned deadline
 - Facilitate communication
 - Develop strategies
 - GOAL: To fade out, leaving intern independent in their new career

A woman with curly hair is shown in profile, focused on painting a wall. She is holding a paintbrush with blue paint on it. The wall is white with some blue and green paint already applied. The lighting is soft and natural.

“ART CAN PERMEATE THE VERY DEEPEST PART OF US,
WHERE NO WORDS EXIST.”

—EILEEN MILLER

USLI proudly supports the arts and mission of
The Art Ability Program At Bryn Mawr Rehab.



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The Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Nursing Leadership team wishes continued success to both Art Ability and Project SEARCH

Christina Barber
Coleen Brennan
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Susan Decker
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Christine McIntyre

Barbara Merges
Monalisa Molinaro
Maiyeadeh Roberts-Seville
Turker Sumo



Lankenau Medical Center | Bryn Mawr Hospital | Paoli Hospital | Riddle Hospital

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Gaby Heit
Art Ability Curator

Is it coincidence or meant-to-be that our Art Ability 2021 featured artwork by Jen Dakota is titled *Back to School*? We selected this happy artwork without knowing the title or whether we'd be back again with a virtual event, or *really back* to celebrating in person at Bryn Mawr Rehab. The Art Ability staff came back to work on-site and prepared a virtual event, with hopes to also celebrate in person.

Although far from ideal, working off-site has had its silver linings. It was easy to meet with artists from across the country and around the globe in our scheduled Artist Socials on Zoom. For the first time, we could put (unmasked) faces to names, and artists could share tips and experiences with other artists they've admired for years. Many artists reported that they were able to experiment and try new techniques with their extra time at home. Others, unfortunately, who depend on the art centers and studio spaces that were closed, couldn't work on art projects. While some of our regular Art Ability artists decided to take the year off from submitting to shows, we also had an unexpected surge in first-time applicants. Twenty-five percent of the exhibiting artists are new to Art Ability!

Experimental or not, the subject matter is clearly home-grown. Photographers focus on local wildlife and personal gardens. The comforts of home, including pets, domestic scenes and both traditional and creative still lifes, dominate the painting categories. Unsurprisingly, there are many depictions of quiet solitude and isolation—an empty field, a single figure on a beach, a mountain peak, a lone tree, a distant moon. Some artists, looking forward to when they might travel again, created vacation landscape dreams of the future, based on the past. We may not get 100 percent back to pre-pandemic times, but we're optimistic and eager to get *back*.

Thank you to the Art Ability Committee, staff, jurors and judges for their hard work in making this exhibition possible in such uncertain times. A special thanks to our Art Ability Coordinator, Cristine Largoza, whose guidance remains invaluable. Stay connected to the Art Ability community by following [@artabilitycurator](https://www.instagram.com/artabilitycurator) and [#artabilitymlh](https://www.instagram.com/artabilitymlh) on Instagram.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Gaby Heit', written in a cursive style.



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The 2021 Art Ability Exhibition

Celebrating Artists with Disabilities

Chris N. Phillips, President
e-mail: c2corp1@verizon.net



Ariel Edwards

Edwards has dedicated her career to developing arts programming in under-resourced communities including schools, community centers, social service agencies and housing authorities. This work brings hands-on art education to students of all ages and abilities who would otherwise not have access to the arts. Working at art institutions in Baltimore, New York City and Philadelphia, Edwards initiated public art programming resulting in more than 17 community-made mosaics in the last 10 years. At Main Line Art Center since 2017, she collaborates with teaching artists and students to create stimulating classes and grows the Center's long-standing Accessible Art program providing free and funded art education to more than 20 community partners. This year the Center will offer its first *Residency for Artists with Disabilities* that will provide an artist with the space, supplies and funds to create their own public artwork and exhibit at the Center.



Ryan Strand Greenberg

Greenberg is an independent curator and photographer living and working in Philadelphia. Over the last decade, he has created dynamic public art projects and programs exploring the intersections of art, ecology, history and time. These programs combine the power of creative expression, community collaboration and institutional partnerships to amplify and preserve the stories of people and places. His current project

with interdisciplinary artist, Nathan Young, is a sound installation rooted in Native American cultural heritage and embedded in the landscape of historic Pennsbury Manor. Greenberg has received numerous awards and grants, and has lectured and led workshops at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, Tulsa Artist Fellowship, Halide Project, Barnes Foundation, American Institute of Graphic Artists, American Society of Media Photographers, University of Pennsylvania, University of the Arts and Art Institute of Philadelphia.



Rebecca O'Leary

O'Leary is an art consultant with 20 years of experience developing art programs for the public and private sector, with an emphasis on site-specific installations for architecturally designed spaces. After a decade of working in the arts in Los Angeles, she established the Rebecca O'Leary Art Advisory in Philadelphia. Recent projects include permanent art installations at Temple University and Capital One corporate offices in Wilmington, DE. Prior to establishing the Advisory, O'Leary toured the *Andy Warhol Athletes* exhibition across the U.S., consulted for Creative Partners West and helped launch the CONTEXT art fair with Art Miami. As Director of Exhibitions at Curatorial Assistance, she facilitated projects with the Annenberg Space for Photography and placed exhibitions at the San Antonio Museum of Art, Museum of Glass, Nevada Museum of Art, Fundacion MAPFRE and others. O'Leary is currently the Interim Executive Director at Fleisher Art Memorial.

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AND THE 26TH ANNIVERSARY
OF ART ABILITY.

RANDI AND BARRY BERKOWITZ
LESLIE AND ARTHUR FRANKEL

Best In Show

Charles W. Hennessy Artist Award

Presented by: The Charles W. Hennessy Art Ability Endowment Fund

Thu Nguyen, *A Homeless Lady*



People's Choice

The Lois Levy People's Choice Award

Presented by: Susan Christie and Lane Brown

Diane Veros, *Magenta Flower Weave*

Judge's Choice

ARIEL EDWARDS

The Doris B. Gorden Award

Presented by: The Doris B. Gorden Art Ability Endowment Fund

Susan Bruce-Feinsod, *Cats*

RYAN STRAND GREENBERG

The Benny Panasci Award

Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci

Kareem Samuels, *Two Friends*

REBECCA O'LEARY

In Honor of Carol Chapman

Presented by: Stephano Slack, LLC

Brigitte Benzakin, *Hallelujah*

Curator's Choice

Presented by: The Art Trust Gallery at Meridian Bank

Kelly McQuain, *Electric Birdsong*

Drawing and Fine Printmaking

1st Prize

In Honor of BMRH's Dedicated Volunteers
Presented by:
The Bryn Mawr Rehab Volunteer Association
Carol Foerster, Pelican

2nd Prize

In Memory of Ralph and Carmen Terrazas
Presented by:
Brian and Peggy Jones
Susanne Dagmar Olsen, French Bulldog

3rd Prize

The Doris and Bill Gorden Memorial Award
Presented by: *Ruth Porritt*
Timothy O'Donovan, Sandstone National Park

Honorable Mention

The Catherine "Kitty" Van Alstyne Award
Presented by:
Katrina Van Alstyne and Jeremy Stansbeary
Ted "Otter" Gilliland, Mary Poppins

Sculpture, Jewelry and Fine Craft

1st Prize

The Kozicki Family Award
Presented by:
Jean P. Kozicki
Ege Kolcu, Clinging

2nd Prize

The Evans Family Award
Presented by:
Scott and Lara Evans
Joy Raskin, Shades of Blue Pendant

3rd Prize

In Honor of Claire Larson
Presented by:
Brian and Peggy Jones
Nicole Cote, Tropixx



Susan Bruce-Feinsod, *Cats*



Ege Kolcu, *Clinging*



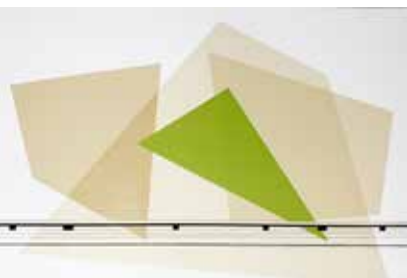
Diane Veros, *Magenta Flower Weave*

Honorable Mention

The Art Ability Committee Award
Presented by:
Brian and Peggy Jones
David Gerbstadt, Wooden Spirit Rooster



Ann Roth, *Untitled (Over/Under)*



Rick Ruark, *The Fence*



Linnie Greenberg,
Architectura Colouria

Mixed Media

1st Prize

*The Elliott T. Settle
Memorial Award*

Presented by:

The Settle Family

Ann Roth,
Untitled (Over/Under)

2nd Prize

In Memory of Fred Stern

Presented by:

Brian and Peggy Jones

Emily Lane, *Gotcha*

3rd Prize

In Honor of Lauren

McGowan

Presented by:

Brian and Peggy Jones

Linnie Greenberg,
Architectura Colouria

Honorable Mention

*The Art Ability Committee
Award*

Presented by:

Brian and Peggy Jones

Nancy Cook Smith,
Bio Dome

Painting

1st Prize

*In Memory of David E.
Tordone*

Presented by:

The Tordone Family

Rick Ruark, *The Fence*

2nd Prize

In Honor of Timmie S. Ott

Presented by: The Ott Family

Victor Mordasov,
Strawberries

3rd Prize

*The Janet Rotoli Memorial
Award*

Presented by: Ruth Porritt

Jen Dacota,
Rumor Has It

Honorable Mention

*The Art Ability Committee
Award*

Presented by:

Brian and Peggy Jones

Patrick Ohman,
Service Dog

Watercolor and Wash

1st Prize

The Schwartz Family Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
Diane Veros, Weave Landscape

2nd Prize

The Mrs. Susan R. Kaimowitz Memorial Award
Presented by:
Michelle and Jack Guida
Ina Greenstein, Rainy Night

3rd Prize

In Appreciation of the BMRH Staff
Presented by:
Linda W. Heiberger
Elizabeth Sullivan, The Wanderers

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
Stephano Slack, LLC
Christopher Ketz, Sphere No. 11

Photography

1st Prize

The Myra Jean Burke Memorial Award
Presented by:
Donna and Victor Hansen
Jessica Hays, Murmuration

2nd Prize

The Evans Family Award
Presented by:
Scott and Lara Evans
Ed Hille, Photo Fence

3rd Prize

Debbie M. Corrigan Memorial Award
Presented by: *Gaby Bailey*
Amy Lewis, Ocean View from Bearskin Neck

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
Stephano Slack, LLC
Ken Smith, Rhyme 3



Emerging Theme: Solitude

1st Prize

The Panasci Family Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
Herbert Eilertsen, Century Old Barn

2nd Prize

The Stanley E. Kaimowitz Memorial Award
Presented by:
Michelle and Jack Guida
Morgan Johnson, Life of Leisure

3rd Prize

In Memory of Barry and Graham Boose
Presented by:
Brian and Peggy Jones
Allen Bryan, Ruthie Sits by the Pantry

Herbert Eilertsen,
Century Old Barn



Ina Greenstein, *Rainy Night*



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Honorable Mention

The James M. Hamm Memorial Award
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Jen Dacota

Conshohocken, PA

When Jen Dacota saw her MRI and the “big black hole” where part of her brain used to be, her jaw dropped. What had happened to her was truly horrific. Dacota had just suffered a bilateral hemorrhagic occipital stroke and was very lucky to have survived.

While home recovering with reduced vision and comprehension difficulties, Dacota knew right away that life would be different, and she couldn’t continue to pursue her rewarding career as a physical therapy assistant in a hospital. Her experience working in physical therapy sparked an idea—why not try to paint as a *form of therapy*? She had always been artistically inclined, but had never tried painting.



Jen Dacota, *Rumor Has It*

Starting over as a visual artist with a disability, Dacota began with what she knew. Her first artworks were attempts at copying realistic images she found. Active in her new creative outlet, she ultimately found herself dissatisfied with the outcome, and felt she was failing. Dacota finally realized that her kind of brain injury was hindering the process.



All of Dacota’s emotions that were built up from the stroke and her inability to connect with her art, were clamoring to escape. She put away the books and magazines filled with images, turned on some lively music and simply began to paint. All her frustrations and disappointments melted away. Painting has put her in touch with her true self and feelings. Through painting, Dacota can express herself without using words. She finds “the gift of creativity” to be a valuable gift received from her stroke.

Dacota knows that creating a painting is far more involved than dancing around and flinging paint. She says a good painter has a cohesive understanding of color theory and composition, and these are elements of design that she learned a lifetime ago, having received a B.A. in Arts Education.

Dacota challenges herself with every painting she creates. She knows a painting is a success when she feels every problem before her is solved, and all the elements of design work together beautifully.



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ART TERMS

Painting and Drawing

Acrylic a fast-drying synthetic paint containing pigments suspended in an acrylic polymer emulsion. Acrylic paints can be diluted with water but become water-resistant when dry. Acrylic painting can resemble a watercolor or an oil painting, or have its own unique characteristics not attainable with the other media. Acrylic paint can be applied to paper as well as to canvas and other surfaces.

Alcohol Ink the counterpart to water in watercolor painting, alcohol ink is a fluid painting technique using isopropyl alcohol mixed with color pigments. The colors dry very quickly due to the evaporation of the alcohol.

Chinese/India Ink an opaque black ink that is commonly applied with a brush, rather than a pen, due to its density. This ink is also used for Chinese calligraphy. Rooted in centuries of scholarship and practice, Chinese calligraphy is executed with an aesthetic combination of speed, the pressure of a brush and the responsiveness of rice paper.

Collage an art form that began with the invention of paper in China around 200 BC. Today, the name collage (derived from a French verb “to glue”) refers to an assemblage of different media that may include newspaper clippings, ribbons, bits of colored paper or hand-made portions of other artwork, photographs, etc. glued to a piece of paper or canvas.

Gouache a form of watercolor paint where pigments are made opaque by adding zinc, in contrast to pure watercolor paint which is transparent.



Mark Kaufman, *Woman in Window 2*

Mixed Media the use of different materials, methods or techniques to create a single work of art. When working in mixed media it is important to choose the layers carefully and allow enough drying time between the layers to ensure the final work will have integrity. Often, found objects are used in conjunction with traditional artist media, such as paint and graphite giving the artist more flexibility.

Oil a type of paint developed in the sixteenth century. Pigment is combined with oil as its binder. Oil can be applied to many different surfaces: linen, cotton canvas or board.

Oil Stick/Cray Pas/Artstix similar to crayons, a kind of oil pastel that is used for painting and drawing. Oil pastel sticks are made of pigment mixed with a non-drying oil and a wax binder.

Pastel/Conte Crayon a combination of dried pigment and a binder forming a colored chalk stick.

Scratchboard is a two-dimensional, subtractive medium that involves the use of abrasive tools to directly remove a surface layer of one value (typically dark) to expose a secondary layer of a contrasting value (typically white).

Tempera a water-based opaque paint, with a water-soluble glutinous binder, usually applied on paper.

Watercolor any paint that uses water as a medium. Generally applied to paint formed of pigments mixed with a gum binder and diluted with water to form a transparent film, as opposed to gouache, which is opaque.

Printmaking

Original/Fine Print a work of art created by hand and printed from a plate, block, stone or stencil. In most print media, the image on the plate, block or stencil is a mirror image, or backwards, from how the finished work will appear. Each print produced is technically a unique work, although produced as a multiple in a limited edition. Original prints are traditionally signed by the artist and are numbered to indicate how many prints there are in the edition and how to identify the individual print.

Chine Collé a special technique in intaglio printmaking where the image is printed on very thin paper or on a delicate surface and then bonded to a heavier backing surface.

Digital Print a method of printing from a digital-based or electronic image file, onto any surface. An inkjet printer is most commonly used.

Engraving a physical process using sharp, pointed tools called gravers, to carve lines directly into a surface, usually metal. The metal is then inked and pressed onto paper for

a reverse image. Some metal engravings are the artwork and are not used for printing.

Etching an intaglio process where an image is created by scratching, burning or cutting into a coated metal plate and then dipping the plate in acid. The exposed areas are eaten away by the acid, making depressed lines. Ink is pressed into the depressed lines, the surface of plate is wiped clean, and the plate is pressed onto paper. The resulting image is the reverse of the design as seen on the plate.

Intaglio Process a printing process where paper is pushed onto depressed or recessed lines made in a metal plate and filled with ink. The image can be made on the plate by acid or a sharp tool. There is often a visible imprint of the plate itself. Etching, aquatint, mezzotint and dry point all use the intaglio process.

Monoprint a single print created as a unique work. The plate is then destroyed.

Polygraveur a work made from several printing plates.

Relief Process/Woodcut/Linocut a printmaking technique where the image is printed from a surface of wood or linoleum, after non-image areas are cut away.

Silk Screen/Serigraph a printmaking technique that creates a sharp-edged image using a stencil or screen usually made of silk. A separate stencil is cut for each color. The areas of the stencil that are cut out accept the color, and each color is applied as a separate layer.

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Photography and New Media

Digital Illustration the use of digital tools to produce images under the direct manipulation of the artist, usually through a pointing device such as a tablet or a mouse.

Digital Photography a form of photography that utilizes digital technology to make digital images of subjects. Digital images can be displayed, printed, stored, manipulated, transmitted and archived using digital and computer techniques without chemical processing.



Ed Hille, *Photo Fence*

Film Photography any film photography relies on chemical processing of negatives and exposure for printing. Analog negatives can also be printed digitally. Polaroid, actually a brand-name, is an example of film photography.

Gelatin Silver Print a photographic process that consists of suspending metallic silver salts embedded into a gelatin coating onto acetate film or fiber-based or resin-coated paper and allowed to dry. This photographic process is used with black and white films and printing papers.

Giclee Print a digital print produced on an Iris Printer, or any inkjet process. The image has all the tonalities and hues of the original painting or photograph.

Photo/Digital Manipulation the application of image editing techniques to create an illusion or deception. Image-editing software is used to apply filters and effects, and warp an image until the desired result is achieved. The resulting image may have little or no resemblance to the photo from which it originated.

Wraparound an image is printed directly on canvas, then stretched over a wood frame.

Fine Crafts

Batik a method of dyeing cloth using wax to resist the dye on specific parts of the design.

Blown or Cast Glass two ways of forming glass. In one process molten glass is handblown and shaped. In the other process, hot glass is poured into a mold and cooled.

Enamel a method of applying ground glass to metal and fusing it with heat for a shiny, colored surface.

Fiber Art art using any textiles, thread or yarn.

Fused Glass an ancient technique describing glass that has been fired in a kiln at various ranges of high temperatures.

Glaze a liquid suspension of finely ground materials applied by brushing, pouring or spraying on the surface of bisque-fired ceramic ware. After drying the ware is fired to the temperature at which the glaze ingredients will melt together to form a glassy surface coating.

Iris Folding a form of origami or folded paper originated in Holland. The folded strips of paper are layered to create a pattern similar to the iris of a camera or an eye. The pattern is created on card stock; each section is numbered and cut out into individual sections to use as a pattern to indicate where to place each strip of paper.

Mosaic small pieces of colored stone, tile or glass (tesserae), arranged and affixed to a hard surface to create an image.

Polymer Clay a sculpture material made of polymer polyvinyl chloride (PVC).

Papier Maché is French for “chewed-up paper;” this technique is constructed of material that consists of pieces of paper, sometimes reinforced with textiles, stuck together. The paper is cut into strips and soaked in a paste of water and flour until saturated. The saturated pieces are then placed onto a surface, or an armature or skeleton and allowed to dry slowly until becoming solid. Once dried, the material can be cut, sanded and/or painted.

Stoneware a high-fire pottery with slight or no absorbency. It is usually gray in color but may be tan or slightly red. Stoneware is similar in many respects to porcelain; the chief difference is the color, because of iron and other impurities in the clay.

Terracotta clay that is fired. It tends to be more brittle and rough in texture.

Throwing forming pottery in clay by using a potter’s wheel.

Sculpture and 3D Work

3D Printing any of various processes in which material is joined or solidified under computer control to create a three-dimensional object, with material being added together (such as liquid molecules or powder grains being fused together).

Alabaster a fine-grained gypsum stone widely used for indoor sculpture.

Assemblage three-dimensional compositions of different media and/or selected materials, often of found objects.

Bas Relief a sculpture technique in which figures and/or other design elements are just barely more prominent than the overall flat background.

Dura Stone a product made of a limestone composite base.

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Elisabeth Aggarwal

Fort Worth, TX

After becoming disabled during a career in nursing, Aggarwal decided to paint like her grandmother, who has always been her inspiration. Painting became Aggarwal's oasis, and she paints what she loves—vibrant colors, blossoming flowers, complex shapes, delicate beauty and engaging abstracts. She's been influenced by artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Monet, and Frida Kahlo. Aggarwal strives to show passion in her work and bring joy to those who see it. "Art has been my awakening and has provided me a safe space and opportunity to grow in ways I would never have expected."

Alex Albert *Abingdon, MD*

For many years, Albert primarily enjoyed drawing—usually exclusively in Sharpie that was densely layered. He later joined Make Studio, a program supporting the growth of artists with disabilities, within the first few years of its founding in 2010. Albert gradually increased his studio time and now attends weekly to focus on painting. He particularly enjoys depicting family members, friends, favorite places and animals. He expresses his distinctive style through his choice

of T-shirts. Albert is a graduate of St. Elizabeth School and resides in Harford County, Maryland.

Brandon Allebach

Albuquerque, NM

Allebach, a painter for more than 13 years, uses acrylic on canvas for his creations. He has focused on abstract art and his style, cubism. Allebach has Holt-Oram syndrome, a condition which gave him shorter limbs. He says he has never let his shorter arms get in the way of creating art. Allebach does acknowledge the technical challenges he has faced in painting (straight lines and edges, for example), but through the process of problem-solving and using his strengths, he has made his art unique in facing those challenges. "Sometimes I just paint to make beautiful things, but I also paint for catharsis and the ability to emotionally heal through art."

Constance Avery *Utica, NY*

As an artist with vision and hearing loss, Avery has faced many limitations for the last 30 plus years. Instead of seeing her disabilities in a negative light, Avery uses her restrictions to allow her to take a different and interesting path in her artistic journey. Creating and selling her artwork, which consists

of paintings, pottery and photography, has helped Avery to feel confident and free, despite her disabilities. The different mediums have also given Avery the chance to expand her artistic explorations, therefore reaching



Daniel Neufeld, *Rainbow Row in Charleston*

out to the different desires of the art communities. "As I travel into my images of art, my limitations disappear...letting me feel expressive, free and safe."

Richard Bauman *Philadelphia, PA*

Bauman says that art is a motivating factor in his life. He photographs, rain or shine, as it helps him deal with the pressures of the week. Bauman enjoys nature and finds that being able to create beautiful photographs is always rewarding. He especially loves taking photos of Philadelphia and gardens throughout the area.

Brigitte Benzakin *Pennsburg, PA*

Art has always played a consistent role in Benzakin's life. Old, decrepit buildings and flowing fields became her muse. Benzaken's love of mysterious and whirling movements are depicted in each

of her art pieces. Due to a life-altering brachial plexus injury and complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS), Benzaken now lives with chronic debilitating pain. She says that still being physically able to create art has been her greatest artistic accomplishment. "I have had to push myself to adapt to these physical and emotional hurdles and have achieved a new artistic process that has given me a piece of myself back."

Frances Bernhardt-Noll *Paoli, PA*

Bernhardt-Noll prefers painting because it's something she's worked with since she was a child,

and she's been able to develop and hone her skills over that time. She often chooses to work with floral and natural themes because she likes to explore the different colors and shapes. Bemhardt-Noll says each step of the process inspires her. From identifying a source image or idea, to sketching, then painting, each step is self-reinforcing as she works to complete a piece. She enjoys the opportunity to share her work with others. Living with a disability creates barriers for her, but creating art is a way for Bemhardt-Noll to connect and share with others. "When I was in the acute hospital, art and crafts helped me to remember who I was, and the things I enjoyed doing pre-injury."

Martha Bird *Minneapolis, MN*

Bird defines herself as an artist, a nurse and a truth teller. She believes her personal history with trauma and disability, coupled with expertise in the physiology of the body, informs her art practice. Bird's back was injured while working as a nurse and living with PTSD. To begin moving off bed rest, she reconnected with her creative self. She identifies as an interdisciplinary artist who practices sculpture, weaving, painting and photography. Committed to community, she

has been involved in the arts as a presenter, curator, writer, organizer, teaching artist and advocate. Bird exhibits regionally and nationally and says her work expresses her life's journey. "The merging of my dual careers values the healing aspects of working with one's hands and body."

"Art has been my awakening and has provided me a safe space and opportunity to grow in ways I would never have expected."

—Elisabeth Aggarwal

Shawn Bittenbender

Philadelphia, PA

Bittenbender says that art has always been a source of joy for him. Though he lost the passion for a long time, it has been brought back to new highs with support of family, friends and the Art Ability staff. They inspired him to go into passionate studies of all painting and drawing styles and techniques. Bittenbender believes the confidence he found to push past his breathing issues and pain he owes to these kind souls.

Bittenbender loves all subjects but prefers the beauty of people and the natural world for inspiration. "Thanks to you all, who inspire the best in others."

Charles Blackwell *Oakland, CA*

As a young man, Blackwell's visual arts studies were cut short after he fell head first down a steep slope, damaging his eyesight. Blackwell thinks his blindness, in a sense, gives him originality. When painting, he'll strain his eyes to see, until the reality of being partially blind registers. Then he relies on instinct, sloshing colors between thick lines, serendipitously moving his art along the path to completion. In today's society, Blackwell chooses to embrace the gift of life and create, create, create. He believes art is not to isolate but to build community, and that art is not for mere capitalist gain but to provide inspiration. "I create pieces in order to provoke inspiration and thus give life to the human spirit."

Priscilla Bohlen *Narberth, PA*

Bohlen is a professional visual artist who works on canvas using acrylic paint, resin and acrylic mediums. She received her BFA in 1974 and subsequently lived in New York City for 10 years.

During this time she designed patterns for sheets and towels for Fieldcrest Cannon as well as continued to study art at the graduate level. Bohlen moved back to the Philadelphia area and began creating landscapes. Recently, she has focused on large abstracts using acrylics. She shows her work extensively throughout the region and is an active member of multiple professional art groups. Bohlen believes in "bringing the best to life and not holding back; always press on to new horizons and stay committed to serving the public through your practice."

Dwayne Boone *Philadelphia, PA*

Boone is an emerging Philadelphia-based artist and entrepreneur. Born and raised in Germantown, he began to draw comic book characters at an early age. As a child, Boone would have a pencil in his hand as soon as he got home from school, and his mother would nag him to finish his homework before drawing. Boone's passion for making art has been a common thread throughout his life. His work has been exhibited internationally in galleries including Arts Project Australia, Space 1026, Fleisher/Ollman, apexart and John Lucas Gallery.



Priscilla Bohlen, *Great Outdoors #14*

Jack Bordnick *Santa Fe, NM*
Bordnick believes his works represent what he has accomplished with this art form. He calls it his quantum and metaphoric moment, the changing from one form to another. The artwork expresses and implements Bordnick's thoughts and feelings regarding taking risks, without any guarantee of their success—and for that to be reflected in these present works is his goal. The predominate imagery deals mostly with faces of both living and non-living beings and things. They are expressed in these many forms and images and speak to us in their own languages. His present sculptural images incorporate both

surrealistic and mythological and magical imagery, fabricated in mixed media assemblages. They are assembled, disassembled and reassembled.

Jane Bouchard *Saratoga Springs, NY*
Bouchard suffers from depression, which has sometimes kept her from moving forward. While she always wanted to do artwork, an art teacher in junior high school told her that she had no talent because she could not draw figures. Of course, her teacher never suggested another art form. It wasn't until 40 years later when someone said that she was a natural for assemblage,

that Bouchard could begin doing just that. It has not only been satisfying work, but helps her lose a depressive mood. "When I am engrossed in making assemblage, pottery or mosaics, I can relax and it changes me."

Don Brewer *Plant City, FL*
When Brewer was in second grade, he announced to his family at the dinner table that when he grew up, he would be an abstract artist. His parents were appalled. Brewer had seen artwork by Picasso in *Life* magazine and felt he had realized his greatest desire, to be an artist. Brewer has spent his whole life pursuing his childhood dream from winning 'Most Artistic' upon graduating high school, to being featured on the cover of *Edge* magazine for being the oldest student at University of the Arts, to a full scholarship to study arts and aesthetics at the Barnes Foundation, all while dealing with Crohn's disease, cancer and mental illness. "Making art is transformative and healing for the mind and body."

Ramanda Brockett *Kansas City, MO*
As a medically disabled woman, Brockett stands for DEI advocacy and acceptance of all forms of disability in the professional and community art space. The

inspiration behind her pieces draw from issues of intersectionality, advocacy and personal traumatic experiences through the lens of her unique vintage/pop style. Her motivation to create springs from the original use of the cut-and-paste collage form as a way to journal without words and personally process complex feelings about her conditions, how they affect her way of being in the world, and how the invisible parts of her conditions affect other social issues in her life. After the first three years of making art privately, Brockett felt that part of being faithful to this journey would be to share her art with the world.

Joyce Brommer *Philadelphia, PA*
Brommer is a retired music educator living with multiple sclerosis (MS). The past four years she has been recovering from two major surgeries on her spine. The Arts are a major source of joy in her life. Besides singing with the Wayne Oratorio Society, she is on the Board of the Delaware Valley Opera Company, where she sings in and directs operas.

Shelby Brown *Clarksville, IN*
Brown's work reflects on her childhood as a young autistic girl and as someone who has experienced CPTSD due to

childhood trauma. Her art emulates the intensity of the world that she remembers around her, through bright colors, patterns and various types of papers and media. This amplifies the senses of the viewer, showing the world through her lens, with snippets of the way she remembers seeing life through the imagination of her inner child. The works are meant to show a different perspective on autism and PTSD and to create opportunities for healing for those



Richard Crumb,
Solitary Story

who relate to her experience. Brown paints from her childhood photographs.

Susan Bruce-Feinsod

Las Cruces, NM

Numerous brain operations to remove cancer have left Bruce-Feinsod unable to use her dominant hand. She has taught herself to use her left hand to paint acrylic and do many other things. As an artist, Bruce-Feinsod has no choice but to create.

Allen Bryan *Saugerties, NY*

After setting up an easel at the age of four to paint next to his aunt, Bryan has been a visual artist for his entire life. His pictures reexamine and reorganize his photographic life through photo assemblages that question a comfortable reality. These narratives, and his continuing series *Comforts of Home: Fignents of Domestic Tranquility*, ironically grew into a format much wider than Bryan can see in a single glance. “I became a better photographer after I started losing my eyesight.”

Ronaldo Byrd *Burlington, NJ*

Byrd is a contemporary “Hip Pop Artist.” He has been painting and drawing since the age of three, and it was at three years old that

Byrd began developing his now over 200 original characters, which are used in his original acrylic scenes on foam board. Byrd gets his inspiration from people. He believes there is beauty in everything he sees, and everyone has something to offer. “My art and I represent differences and my hope is that the world can see beauty and acceptance through my eyes.”

Nancy Capizzi *Philadelphia, PA*

Capizzi was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease in 2007. Her local Parkinson’s Council provided access to some art instruction through the Philadelphia Art Museum, with the hope that this therapy would lessen her micrographia (tiny handwriting). That was a major issue for Capizzi, because she could no longer read her own handwriting. Capizzi never thought of herself as an artist, but enjoyed the experience so much she sought out formal training to explore her newly found passion. Capizzi finds inspiration in the beauty of her neighborhood. “When I am drawing and painting, I am in another world. I do not notice any of my Parkinson symptoms such as tremor and stiffness.”

David Caron *Hyannis, MA*

Caron is a differently-abled young man with autism. A native of Cape Cod, David has an innate affinity with the natural environment. He responds joyfully to the ocean, wind and thunderstorms. This is the same enthusiasm that he shows when he expresses himself through art. Art is an act of pure self-expression without regard to the finished work. He loves how the materials feel, how paint is absorbed by the canvas, and how the paint spreads and is diluted by the water. Through painting, David expresses himself beyond the limitations of his disability. Edward Hopper best described David’s passion for painting, “If you could say it in words then there would be no reason to paint.”

Patricia Caulfield *York, PA*

Ten years ago, Caulfield was diagnosed with glaucoma. Even with treatment and six surgeries, she has lost over half of her vision. Forced to retire from her successful career as a kitchen and bath designer, Patricia found solace in her first love—her art. An abstract artist, she works primarily in mixed media on cradle board including acrylic paint, collage, sanding and distressing. Clouds are her inspiration—studying form,

movement and light, she creates atmospheric paintings without using photographic references. The motivational power of nature is evident in her work. Currently she shows in galleries and won the 2021 Rottler Award of Excellence at the York Art Association in PA. She was named Chair for the Glaucoma Research Foundation's 2022 fundraiser for visually impaired artists.

Larine Chung *Bellevue, WA*

Chung is an artist living in the Pacific Northwest, who mainly works with dry media and oil. Trained in classical methods based on real life observation, she often blends naturalistic art techniques and her vivid imagination with a unique Eastern point of view.

“As I travel into my images of art, my limitations disappear...letting me feel expressive, free and safe.”

—Constance Avery

Living with a severe autoimmune disorder, Chung's daily art practice is a big part of her healing and has become a way of navigating through life. Her art explores the notion of pain, isolation, fear, hope, courage and strength.

Cindy Clark *Eagleville, PA*

Clark uses acrylic painting to spark joy and provide encouragement to others. Having encephalopathy from undiagnosed Lyme disease for more than six years, she learned in cognitive therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital to adapt to her brain limitations. Taking up painting as therapy, Clark enrolled in an adult education class where she learned to mix her own colors. This gives her control over the images she tries to convey. Painting provides a sense of accomplishment and helps her focus on the beauty of the outdoors. Clark especially loves beaches, skies and water, and is drawn to the endless colors in nature, looking at God as the ultimate painter.

Cathy Cobb *Shreveport, LA*

Cobb is an acrylic painter who uses paintbrushes, pallet knives and various paints and glazes to convey a subject from many different perspectives. “When viewed from different angles, everyday moments of life can



Eugene Soh, *Charging Forwards*

become transfigured, revealing the depth of layers within.” Her techniques reveal complexity and her colors show the delight she takes in momentary glimpses of beauty. Cobb takes inspiration from stained glass and how they transfigure their subject as light reflects through them. Like these sacred windows, her paintings attempt to reveal both the intended subject and also to open a window toward a deeper story contained within an inner joy. Cobb started painting when she was diagnosed with lupus in 2016. Creating has been her lifeline through flares and long periods of isolation.

Ebony Malaika Collier

Philadelphia, PA

Collier began painting a little over ten years ago, after she found herself in a slump with her original creative outlet: writing. Collier prefers using acrylic paint, calling her work “abstract free form.” This work does not represent any one thing, and it's not about anything other than exploring color and texture, with which she is fascinated. Collier says she chose exactly what she wanted to say and how to say it, she would just write it. She is open to allowing the process to direct the outcome. Collier suffers from anxiety and depression, in addition to

narcolepsy. “I feel that my abstract artistic practice helps me deal with my internal chaos and also the external.”

Debra Hope Colligan

South Yarmouth, MA

Colligan creates paintings in oils, using a variety of palette knives, brushes and mediums, enhancing her artwork with a great deal of texture and color. Creating sea and landscapes on Cape Cod and Nantucket, along with portraits of animals and people, gives her a “soulful impression” to look past the obvious and see beyond the distraction of the conspicuous; to capture its unique self, to inspire folks to look more carefully at the beautiful world and people around them. Colligan sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI) from a horseback riding accident that significantly changed her life. She believes that art has expanded her life, and healing is essentially a creative process. “Through my art I have created a new state of health for myself, pursuing an artist’s life.”

Maureen Collins

Wilmington, DE

Collins received her first camera as a gift when she was eight years old. This began a lifelong passion for the visual arts and changed

the way she saw the world.

Collins’ journey is woven through photography, painting, collage, ceramics, mosaics, silver work and fabric design. It’s through this journey that the images in one medium often inspire and flow through others. Guillaine-Barré syndrome slowed life into a much lower speed and allowed her the grace of dimensionally changing her creative perspectives and abilities. Hope became the path of each day through many years.

Collins is so grateful for the arts, their healing qualities and for the creative process. It allows her to express the individuality of each day, to share its beauty and unique imprint, and to appreciate its expression in others.

Ginny Conover

Wynnewood, PA

Conover is a former high school English teacher, licensed couples and family therapist, a professional puppeteer and an inveterate hand-knitter. Living in the suburbs,

she loves to hop on the train, go to the city and walk for miles, taking in the sights, smells and sounds of city life. The transformation of raw material to create complex and visually stimulating structures informs her art. Each of these interests can be found in one form or another in Conover’s art, which she believes attempts to use color, pattern, texture and mark-making to transform the materials at hand to make a work of art. “I believe that the act of engaging in the creative process brings joy and healing. Constantly striving to create through the exploration of new images, new media and new techniques entralls me.”

Nicole Cote

Saskatoon, Canada

Cote is an artist working in Canada, who works primarily in watercolor and embroidery. She loves working with traditional media and creating something unexpected. With a focus on mental health themes, Cote started making art as therapy and has continued its practice as a type of advocacy. “Art helps me to stop and breathe and quiet my head.”

Paula Crandell

Sioux City, IA

Crandell is an artist who has enjoyed creating and teaching art for over 50 years. An experimentalist who loves color,



Gerard Di Falco, *Black Madonna of Greenwood*

she creates in a variety of media including acrylic, alcohol ink and watercolor. Crandell is known by her students as a “treasure hunter” who looks for interesting shapes and textures on a canvas that is covered in an explosion of ink and paint. Using negative and reductive painting, she brings found images to representational life. Not sure if her hearing loss was due to working in a munitions factory during college, or working with middle school students for over four decades, Crandell is thankful for the progress audiology has made over the years, allowing her to better hear nature, people and music.

John Creagh *Bradenton, FL*
Creagh’s artwork has been showcased across the country in many fine galleries, museums and numerous private collections. Born in Limerick City, Ireland and growing up in the Bronx, NY, he received fine arts degrees from Herbert H. Lehman College, CUNY, while also attending the prestigious Arts Students League in New York City. Creagh has taught classes at the Pelham Art Center and Rockland Center for the Arts, and worked as an adjunct professor at the Westchester Community College Art Workshop in New York. His oil



Ginny Conover, *A Little Bird Told Me*

paintings include landscapes and architectural interests, which he often paints on-site and completes in the studio. He focuses on capturing the light and vista before him, ultimately producing a piece with a unique perspective and color value.

Richard Crumb *Stillwater, MN*
Crumb grew up on a family Century Farm in southern Minnesota. He was severely injured in a car accident over forty years ago and has been propelling himself in a wheelchair ever since. Crumb loves to travel and as part of his travel experiences, he enjoys capturing some of the delightful

scenes of God’s wondrous creation through his camera lens. Crumb’s rural upbringing often expresses itself in the pastoral scenes he captures with his trusty camera. Crumb’s disability allows him to perhaps see things slightly differently through his camera lens, with an eye towards the freedom nature suggests, rather than the physical limitations that he deals with every day.

Jen Dacota *Conshohocken, PA*
When Dacota saw her MRI, and the “big black hole” where part of her brain used to be, her jaw dropped! She had just suffered a bilateral hemorrhagic occipital stroke.

While home recovering with reduced vision and comprehension difficulties, she knew right away that life would be different. Having worked in physical therapy, a most useful idea sparked – why not try to paint as a *form of therapy*? She had always been artistically inclined, but had never tried painting. Starting over with a disability, painting has put her in touch with her true self and feelings. She can express herself without using words. Dacota finds “the gift of creativity” to be a valuable gift received from her stroke, and she challenges herself with every painting she creates.

Reve de Papillon *Seattle, WA*
“It is the dream of the butterfly to be free. And when he discovers his wings, his dreams become real. As a man in captivity, I too, dream of freedom. And when, in the dark loneliness of a prison cell, I discovered art, my dreams took flight.” A Navy veteran and stage actor prior to his incarceration, de Papillon works primarily in watercolors, acrylic and chalk, taking inspiration from the dramatic arts, and more recently, his work training service dogs for the community. Struggling with both physical and mental decline after decades of incarceration-related health

complications, de Papillon's commitment to creating art provides him a means of spiritual encouragement and a reason to continue on despite the physical and psychological impacts of long-term incarceration.

Gerard Di Falco *Philadelphia, PA*

Di Falco has worked full-time in visual art since 1979, despite his physical disabilities. As a printmaker in etching, he uses



Eric Stampfli, *The Dance*

intaglio, aquatint and Chine collé. His subjects include architecture, history, comparative religion and archaeology. Di Falco's spinal disabilities include advanced scoliosis, stenosis and arthritis. He also has RSDS (Chronic Pain Syndrome). His rheumatoid arthritis has spread to his feet, knees, hands and hips. Di Falco continues to work as an artist's

mentor at Fleisher Art Memorial within their Open Studio in Printmaking and also as a studio monitor. It's difficult for him to make art but without that, he says he feels dead. "Creating art is like breathing oxygen to me."

Samuel Dietze *Altoona, PA*

Dietze is a legally blind artist who is inspired by nature and the outdoors. He likes to paint in acrylics outside and in oils at home. He is inspired by very colorful scenes with lots of trees of different colors and types. Dietze also gets inspired by the way color and light change with the time of day and sky conditions. Other inspirations come from painting imaginary space scenes and extrasolar landscapes on other worlds. Dietze has memberships in both the International Association of Astronomical Artists (IAAA), and Art In Common (AIC) of Central Pennsylvania. "My art gives me something to do, working independently on my own."

Thomas Dillon *Stroudsburg, PA*

Dillon started painting with his mother early in life, which established the foundation for his work. He went on to study the works and methods of famous artists such as Escher, Da Vinci, Durer and Van Gogh. Thomas

shares, "I have no formal training other than my own personal studies and talent." In 2007, Dillon was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident where he sustained many injuries including a traumatic brain injury. After multiple hospitalizations and corrective surgeries, Dillon was later diagnosed with an illness directly related to the

also works at a local hospital as a medical information specialist, and is a member of the Edison Arts Society. Art has played a major role in her life, especially living with an autism spectrum disorder. "There are days when my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special."

"I choose to embrace the gift of life and create, create, create. Art is not to isolate, but to build community." —Charles Blackwell

head trauma from the accident. "Art has gotten me through the darkest struggles in my life. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate my emotions on canvas."

Allison Doatch *Edison, NJ*

Doatch is a formally trained artist who uses a variety of media, including colored pencils and acrylics, and her favorite subject matter is flowers. Doatch likes to create photorealistic artwork. When she looks at a photograph, she is able to create a composition that is very close to the original picture. Doatch

Clara Edmon *Oklahoma City, OK*
Edmon was born in Oklahoma City in 1942 and is a member of the Citizen Potawatomi Nation. Art provided an escape from suffering caused by poverty and abuse as a child, and has continued to provide relief and diversion from continued poverty and disability. Her creations are the main source of her identity and self-esteem. Edmon favors working in oil (sometimes watercolor) and paints landscapes, animals and Native Americans. She feels challenged to grab the audience's attention and to discover effective ways to share ideas with them. The visual artist takes her audience to a new and



Martha Bird, *Succumb*

exciting level of consciousness, into her mind and soul. Edmon has clinical depression, a learning disability and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease that was caused by rheumatoid arthritis.

Ivy Egger *Coatesville, PA*

Egger lives and works in Chester County, PA with her husband and young son. She has a rare liver disorder called glycogen storage disease, type 1A. Egger has to monitor her blood sugars to prevent hypoglycemia and is unable eat foods with a lot of sugar. Her current media of choice are gouache and watercolor. When Egger starts a new piece of artwork, she often derives her inspiration from her emotions. She then thinks how she can interpret

that into a piece using bold colors. Painting provides an outlet to Egger to help her forget about her physical challenges. “I often take art supplies with me to my overnight doctors’ appointments. It helps me to not think about the tests I undergo.”

Herbert Eilertsen *Coatesville, PA*

Eilertsen enjoys oil painting in a realism style, whether it be landscapes or flowers or rivers. He ran his own custom framing business and gallery until suddenly coming down with ankylosing spondylitis, which changed his career. Suffering from muscle inflammation and excruciating joint pain Eilertsen was unable to work. As things calmed down, he began to return to painting and

exploring his passion. Eilertsen experiments with styles and techniques in his oil painting and often paints the same scene in different ways, looking for a better result in color or depth. “The joy of creating and seeing things that many people do not have the time to see themselves, is part of opening up this incredible world we live in!”

Matt Emerson *Youngstown, OH*

Emerson has painted since he was a child. A misdiagnosis of ALS was later discovered to be muscular dystrophy. Through all of this, art has been a rock for him. Emerson uses a variety of media, from watercolor, to acrylic and inks. He loves to paint a variety of subjects; any new ideas are a challenge on how to complete them. Emerson uses art to give him something to do and pass the time. The disease he has affects his arms and legs. Movement through physical therapy exercises and some adaptations to his painting technique works to offset loss in his range of motion. “Each morning I smile for another day on earth. It’s time to work.”

Afi Ese *Houston, TX*

Ese says that art is arguably the most universal language. Her work explores an artistic juxtaposition

of good and bad, soft and hard, beautiful and ugly—in relation to the African American cultural tendency to use positivity as a tool of resilience during times of abuse, tragedy and assimilation. Each piece is an invitation for the viewer to find the joy and pain within the piece’s composition and, hopefully, themselves.

Gen Farrell *Burleson, TX*

In 2013, Farrell retired from teaching public school art after 27 years, due to a benign essential tremor. She lives outside of Burleson, Texas with her husband, her daughter, two horses and two Great Pyrenees. Through the years, she competed in a wide variety of horse-related events, and this is where Farrell met many of the people and animals that are the subjects of her artworks. She does oil and watercolor paintings, and she applies computer techniques to some of her paintings to create linographic looks, which become digital prints. Farrell says her work gives her confidence that even though she has physical challenges, she can still deliver strong visual images. “I love painting and love my horses, and thankfully, I am still able to do both.” Farrell believes that painting a reflection of life around her creates a sense of peace.

Patrick Finucane *Phoenixville, PA*

Finucane's art is born from efforts to share his views of his surroundings, trying to bring to light many sights which can easily and often be taken for granted. After filling photo albums and sketchbooks with pencil and ink drawings of his travels, Finucane moved to acrylic painting, which now adds life to what was previously a

“When I am engrossed in making assemblage, pottery or mosaics I can relax and it changes me.”

—Jane Bouchard

monochromatic translation of his journeys. Born with spina bifida myelomeningocele, and more recently undergoing related spinal surgery, Finucane has found creating art is a relaxing way to escape those painful days while expressing his creativity with minimal physical demands. “I find it most satisfying when I create a piece of art which then translates into happy memories for my viewers.”

Robert Flatt *Houston, TX*

Flatt started his crazy passion to become a photographer in 2004, when he left a successful career in the oil service industry due to the onset of Parkinson's disease. He and his wife love to travel to wild and beautiful places. He uses his camera and Photoshop to create highly saturated pictures, full of color, full of life, with vibrant and surreal backgrounds. Flatt's photography is in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston and in Rice University. He says, “Parkinson's disease gave me the marvelous gift of time to master the art of photography. It has helped me ‘slow down’ to see this beauty and has given me the urgency to ‘hurry up’ and capture as much as I can photographically, while I still can.”

Carol Foerster *Littlestown, PA*

Foerster is a pencil artist. As a child she enjoyed the pencil art of illustrators like C.W. Anderson and Sam Savitt. Inspired by the life around her, Foerster has drawn family and friends, pets, and plants from her garden. She experienced a debilitating arm injury in the 1990s but fortunately could still do pencil art because of the gentle movement. Later, a bout with cancer created more challenges for Foerster, but if she takes a

lot of breaks and days off, she can complete drawing projects. Being able to create her art helps Foerster feel productive and a participant in life. “I was depressed about my limitations at first, but now I have a positive attitude about adapting to the life I have been given.”

Gail Foley *Royersford, PA*

Foley injured her neck while working as a radiation therapist. Her days became filled with excruciating neck issues, fibromyalgia, chronic migraines and headaches. Her life took a turn for the better when Foley, along with her husband, purchased a farm in Royersford. This allowed her love for photography, an early passion of Foley's, to return to her life. She now spends time

capturing and sharing the growth of their crops, as well as the nature and wildlife around their property, with her camera. “Photography has given me purpose again. It has given me strength, control, peace and escape during my times of chronic pain.”

Dana Gabriel *Paoli, PA*

Gabriel has been drawn to painting and art-making since she was a child. At 24 she was in a motorcycle accident. It took years for her to heal and talk again. Gabriel moved to a ReMed home in 2018 and tries very hard to keep going and never stop. As an artist and musician, she enjoys painting and clay. Gabriel uses these as strategies to express herself and stay engaged in meaningful activities. Her daughter is a large source of inspiration and motivation to always better herself and Gabriel's artwork is a way for her to express and connect with others. “It's not always as easy for me to express myself now as it was before my injury, and so art-making is another way to do so.”

Vimala Gade *Kendall Park, NJ*

Gade is a self-taught artist. As a child she was always drawn to the fine arts. Starting as a hobby, Gade soon realized that painting was her passion in life. She was inspired



Richard Bauman, *Shadows on the Square*

by other disabled artists, which gave her courage to continue her interest. Gade creates her art from her vivid imagination and from photographs. Her work varies by medium and inspiration, and each piece holds different emotions visible through the style and hue. Gade believes painting can help people to overcome their difficulties and find peace within, which she puts to practice every day, dealing with her limited mobility. She has accepted her physical condition, and the enjoyment she receives from painting allows her to continue her work. “Art is a divine gift to me.”

Ginger Gehres *Chocowinity, NC*
Art is Gehres’ passion. It was once her vocation in life and when her health changed dramatically, it became her therapy. Today, it is Gehres’ joy to create visual stories and share them with others. Her favorite medium is scratchboard art and she has also gained a love for photography while taking reference work for her art. Gehres struggles with grand mal seizures, chronic migraines and interstitial cystitis, but she takes advantage of the days she feels well enough to work on her art. Her favorite life quote is “Keep your face to the sunshine and you will not see the shadows.” —*Helen Keller*

David Gerbstadt *Berwyn, PA*
Creating has been a part of Gerbstadt’s life ever since he stood on a kitchen chair to reach the counter in order to help his mom make cakes and cookies from scratch. “She would always let me lick the mixer beaters.” His inspiration comes from his mother, who showed him that he was able to make something with his hands. Gerbstadt says his motivation comes from knowing that each moment of life is a gift that he is given, and that making art is why he is here. Art has given Gerbstadt a means to cope with several disabilities and brings fulfillment in his life where he never thought possible. “Making art allows me to feel part of society and that I belong.”

Sean-Michael Gettys *Oceanside, CA*
Gettys’ art is about resilience and hope. It’s about overcoming obstacles life and others put upon us, feeling emotions and then picking ourselves up and continuing forward. He tries to focus on how hope shines through the cracks, surviving and trying to thrive despite the various challenges faced through the years. Gettys’ current artwork is mixed media, painted and collaged on wood panels.

He usually starts with a word or thought in mind, and uses various mark-making tools in a kind of moving meditation. He layers paint and paper and either adds or removes areas intuitively. Gettys primarily uses watercolor, graphite, collage, ink, gouache and some acrylic paints. Recently he has also experimented with mixed media sculpting.

Ted “Otter” Gilliland *Seattle, WA*
Gilliland is an incarcerated self-taught artist who has been drawing since the age of six. Proficient in watercolors, acrylics and colored pencils, he prefers the classic Ticonderoga #2 pencil for most of his work. Incarcerated for nearly 18 years, Gilliland has become particularly adept at a stippling-type technique which he calls “analog pixelation,” a highly detailed and time-consuming process that yields a small handful of works each year. His art is often inspired by architecture, artistic pieces from ancient cultures, and portraiture. The opportunity for artistic expression allows Gilliland to maintain his connection to his family and community beyond the walls, providing a means of therapeutic mitigation for the cognitive impacts of long-term incarceration.



Reve de Papillon, *Just Take the Picture*

Christina Goldstein *Harmony, FL*
Goldstein’s journey through cervical spinal cord injuries, loss of some mobility, advanced neurosurgeries, and an incurable muscle and movement disorder, continues to be fraught with intense pain and challenges in accomplishing basic daily tasks. The process of creating art gives Goldstein a purpose to therapy required for mobility, changes her focus in the pain, and effectively assists in her larger journey of managing her mental health and learning to be present in every moment. Goldstein creates tangible evidence of both the struggles and the successes of living with a movement disorder.

Patricia Goodrich

Richlandtown, PA

Goodrich says that process is key to her work. Sometimes a piece begins with an idea, sometimes with the material itself. She enjoys both the physical work and the mental play. Goodrich works with a variety of mediums and creates



Cathy Cobb, *When Time Stood Still*

earthworks and installations. She believes everything connects. Having lost her lower left leg in a motorcycle accident, those few missing inches contribute to a sense of “off balance” and an awareness of what it means physically to connect to earth; to

be “grounded.” Goodrich says that off-kilter heightened awareness is an asset. “Art is a universal language, a way to communicate at a deeper level. The sense of connection and freedom are gifts art gives me and which I hope to pass on to viewers.”

Linda Goschke *Philadelphia, PA*

Goschke is interested in our sensual experience of the natural world, our expectations of what is common and uncommon, and the nature of beauty. Her work examines our relationship to the environment and experiments with abstract interpretations of it. Goschke often looks for revealing, unexpected and often challenging views. A brush with death and resulting traumatic brain injury from an auto accident made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretations of reality. Her physical and mental challenges pushed her into digital media to help her focus, expand creative possibilities, and use fewer hazardous chemicals. “Art helps me to see and study the world. It allows me to share this with others, exchange shared experiences, investigate what may be uncommon, and communicate visual ideas.”

“During all the times I felt I had nobody to talk to, making art was my way of being heard.”

—Evan Tate

Michael Graham *Monroe, NJ*

Graham’s experience includes service in the Air Force, sales, laboratory work and teaching dance. He studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and La Salle University, and in private studies with J. Hanes and P. Gorka. Graham usually works in oil on canvas, evoking visual immediacy with a color forward use of paint, and just enough detail to focus attention for maximum impact. He moves the viewer’s eye in a pattern that culminates at the most important point. Graham depicts subjects from landscapes to dancers. His profound deafness has driven him to pay extra attention to the visual world. “My art contains the rhythm and melody that I do not experience in the auditory world without assistance.”

Linnie Greenberg *Ardmore, PA*

Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing tinnitus—which resulted in 80% hearing loss. It opened up a wondrous world of sparkle, spin and creativity that brings her great joy and

makes her forget the constant high-pitched ringing in her ears. Greenberg is mainly self-taught and says she is still exploring and learning about art. Greenberg cuts imaginary creatures and organic shapes from hand-painted paper, along with images from vintage books, magazine advertisements and other ephemera. She then creates a story while making a picture with her cutouts. One of Greenberg’s favorite quotes comes from Hans Christian Andersen: “Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale.”

Ina Greenstein *Philadelphia, PA*

It wasn’t until her children were grown and she didn’t have to work full time, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on oil painting, she took a course in watercolor painting and was instantly smitten. The ability to capture light and have it shine through a painting has been a rewarding and engrossing pursuit of self-expression. Her eye disease necessitates some downtime in order to allow her vision to come back into focus.

Liz Griesser *Elverson, PA*

Griesser says that painting has saved her life. When it had seemed most bleak, painting gave her hope and purpose for another day. Using the familiar landscapes, animals and surrounding life, Griesser creates an earthy and emotive interpretation of her world. Oil paint is her main love. The visceral texture and colors make what she is trying to convey so much easier. She likes to say that animals paint themselves. “I just hold the brush as they come to life. Their emotion is there on the surface and their story is all in their eyes.” Griesser believes that en plein air painting is both a challenge and the best teacher ever. Competing in plein air events has taught her so much about patience, values, color mixing and capturing the moment.

Dick Grodt *Cedar Rapids, IA*

Grodt believes that the objective of his art is to go beyond recording just what he sees, into what he imagines. To create paintings that are not just pleasing visually, but that are also richly evocative. As he describes it, he dances with a brush instead of his feet. Confined to a wheelchair due to a hereditary spinal cord disorder, Grodt finds that the gracefulness



Siddhartha Sankar Sukla,
Night New York City

of watercolor has transformed his life; both painting and teaching watercolor classes cocoons him from his disability and enables him to pursue a rewarding and successful life. Grodt is a signature member of the Iowa Watercolor Society and has had many solo shows. His work has received recognition in both national as well as international exhibitions.

Susan Gustafson *Vancouver, WA*

Gustafson was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa more than 30 years ago. Retiring from her career in dental hygiene 20 years after her diagnosis, Gustafson’s current visual capacity is about the size of a 3x5 card. With the aid of a guide dog she is able to travel independently. Gustafson says

she sees the world through this “window” and captures the image on her iPhone. Later she sits and uses dark lines to delineate the space and adds subtle shading by using an underpainting and then layering transparent pigments. She loves the way watercolors move and mingle; the mystic mingling of pigments which she is then left to accept, and find a solution that is beautiful and representative of the image she wishes to preserve.

Carrie Hanna *Spring, TX*

Hanna has always felt called to create work that shares a larger message. It’s not only been a means to communicate with the world at large, but a constant source of comfort when illness takes hold and she is coping with chronic pain. Hanna’s disability has helped her to develop resilience, which has also helped her stick to her personal goals for her art. She has been recently focused on honoring the memory of women from historical moments, incorporating traditionally female materials like embroidery and gold leaf.

Lynn Hartman *Phoenixville, PA*

Hartman has experienced a car accident, brain injury, rehab and learning new ways to navigate life. She says there have been many

concessions, and there have been many gifts. One of the gifts was the discovery of a new ability to put paint to canvas. Hartman’s paintings serve as a testament to the enduring human spirit.

Gregory Harvey *Philadelphia, PA*

Harvey has been painting professionally since 1969. His favorite representational subjects are Black Moshannon State Park, Ricketts Glen State Park, and the Cape May and Avalon beaches. When multiple sclerosis impaired his vision, Harvey realized that if he was to continue in the visual arts, he must find workarounds in many aspects of his representational painting. Fortunately, Harvey has been able to find these and continues to paint. “Having visual impairment has helped me to appreciate how fragile is the mechanism of discerning reality through the eyes.”

John Haus *Hatboro, PA*

Haus’ art is whimsical, inventive and truly his own. His diverse collection of work utilizes multiple mediums. He uses life experiences and creates his own universe. Haus speaks to the viewer through his art. The conversation is fluid and captivating, with a splash of humor, whimsy and personality. In 2002 at the age of 18, Haus

“My art and I represent differences, and my hope is that the world can see beauty and acceptance through my eyes.” —Ronaldo Byrd

sustained a traumatic brain injury, paralyzing the right half of his body, and requiring him to relearn daily living skills with his left side after having been dominant with his right. Haus struggles with aphasia and pain daily, so art has been his saving grace and brought a true purpose to his life.

Jessica Hays *Bozeman, MT*

Hays is a conceptual photographer, alternative process printmaker, and curator. Her work focuses on human relationships, mental health, trauma, loss and places of healing. She works in a variety of processes including pigment printing, historic photo processes, and handmade artist books. Hays' current body of work documents the wildfires raging across the western United States, burning up increasingly large swaths of land every year. Her photographs examine the immediate aftermath of megafires on surrounding communities, and what the experience of local fires are like, interweaving narratives of personal struggle, climate change and collective trauma.

Michael Heitler *Melville, NY*

Dr. Heitler works in gouache, pastel, oil pastel, acrylic and mixed media at his studio in Melville, New York. He has studied at the Brooklyn Museum School of Art, Colgate University and the New School. Dr. Heitler's work has been widely exhibited in the New York metropolitan area. A pediatrician, Dr. Heitler retired from working at the Child Neurology Service at Winthrop University Hospital. Diagnosed with primary progressive

aphasia, it is difficult for him to communicate, but he expresses himself by writing, drawing and painting. Dr. Heitler enjoys spending time in his sun-drenched Long Island studio.

Passle Helminski *Erie, PA*

Helminski finds great meaning in her sculptures and textile works. A visually impaired artist, Helminski capitalized on textiles because it is a medium that depends heavily on sense of touch. She uses tubular knitting to create energetic forms and says of her work, “Whether my art is free-standing, wall-hanging or suspended, it is the combination of my deep love of art history with my deep musical, spiritual side.” Helminski graduated

from Edinboro University with a master's degree in weaving and textiles and has since exhibited nationally and internationally. She has taught at the Neighborhood Art House, been an adjunct professor at Mercyhurst College and Gannon University, and has been Artist in Residence at the Cathedral Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Helminski has received multiple artist residencies and grants, and her work has been published many times. Helminski says, “Please take the time to be still with my art and maybe you will be lucky enough to hear the beat of my art.”

Pat Henriques *Key West, FL*

Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus is on enameling and making pieces from fine or sterling silver. Henriques' specialty in enameling is cloisonné. Stones are used in her work as well. “Nature inspires me and I am amazed by the designs and hues that are found in various stones and flowers.” Henriques has 11 herniated disks in her spine, causing sciatica. Fabricating jewelry has helped her realize that you can overcome obstacles. Henriques says when she is in pain, she tends to choose darker



Michael Heitler, *Shack on Canal*

or more heightened colors in her work. Her personal quote is: “Experiment. You won’t know if you can accomplish something if you don’t try.”

J.M. Henry *Lawrenceville, VA*

Henry is a lung transplant recipient whose lungs have been gradually failing since early 2017, in a process called chronic rejection. In his paintings, he tries to evoke an emotional response to the mood of the image through layered color and texture. Henry is grateful to be able to continue working in his studio, even as he recognizes that the large canvasses are becoming too difficult to manage and he must scale down the paintings. The acrylic paints Henry uses are handmade, from pure dry pigments and various other materials. “I seek a luminosity that defies the camera and must be seen in person, and that shifts with the changing light conditions.”

Ed Hille *Media, PA*

Hille, 71, spent more than four decades as a working photojournalist, striving to capture moments that have helped to shape our lives. He criss-crossed America and the globe, completing assignments on five continents while covering a spectrum of news, features and



Paula Crandell, *Sunflower Fields Forever*

sporting events. In November 2016 Hille was diagnosed with Parkinson’s disease; a year later he retired from the Philadelphia Inquirer, ending his 40-year career as a photojournalist. Inspired by a quote from Muhammad Ali, “Don’t count the days, make the days count,” Hille picked up his cameras and immediately went to work shooting a book project as a way to pass on his inspiration to others.

Debbie Huff *Landenberg, PA*

Huff finds inspiration in the rolling hills of Southeast Pennsylvania for her alcohol ink and colored pencil paintings and drawings. Her favorite subjects are animals and flowers. In her youth, Huff did a lot of painting and drawing in school, but got away from art as an adult.

Several years ago, after an ankle injury, she started to paint and draw again. Now art is a regular hobby of hers along with cycling and volunteering with her pet therapy dog. Born legally blind in one eye with reduced vision in the other, art helps Huff “see” details she normally wouldn’t in real life. Using a computer, she is able to enlarge photographs to the point where she can see the fine details in animals and bring them to life in her art.

Han Huisman *Saint Croix Falls, WI*

Huisman is a neuroscientist and an abstract material artist. He loves working with what he finds at garage sales and thrift stores. Huisman believes that in science today there is no longer much to

actually see. It takes place on a subatomic level and the outcomes are expressed in numbers. Huisman says that in his head he follows the reaction steps and visualizes them into images. This is the same process he follows in his artwork. Huisman works primarily with objects, with the paint being secondary but still very important. Huisman says he is, but does not feel, disabled. He very much believes that even with his physical challenges he is still able to concentrate on his goals.

Alonzo Humphrey

Philadelphia, PA

Humphrey is a visual artist who was born in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His mother, also an artist, shared her love of art-making with her son at a young age. Alonzo says they used to sit beside each other at the kitchen table and draw. He moved to Philadelphia in 1980 and there he continued producing his lyrical renderings of people and landscapes. Alonzo does not draw from visual sources, but from his imagination, people and places that he remembers, historical figures, and scenes from his memories. He says the images form as lines in his head, and putting them on paper is like putting them to sleep.

Jennifer Ingalls *Clarksville, TN*
Ingalls has been designing and creating jewelry professionally for over 25 years. She graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art in 1997 with a degree in metalsmithing, working mainly in silver. A customer was the first to describe her work as steampunk. “I had to look it up.” A whole new world of artists and community welcomed her. A steampunk aesthetic and a love for texture now inform her production work as well as her work in precious

sometimes he paints recycled materials. Johnson doesn’t like the smell of oil paint, and he prefers the way that acrylic paint flows off his brushes. He wants viewers to use their imagination when they look at his paintings. Johnson is inspired and motivated to paint because it makes him happy and gives him something to do when he’s alone. He says his paint and canvas do not judge him, and he loves to make colors pop. Johnson has always been isolated and unable to hold a traditional job; however,

“Being physically able to create art has been my greatest artistic accomplishment.”

—Brigitte Benzakin

metals. Officially diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2003, Ingalls is thankful that the scale of her work does not require good balance or brute strength. As long as her vision and her hands hold out, she plans to keep making jewelry and art.

John “Wiley” Johnson, Jr.
Raleigh, NC

Johnson has autism spectrum disorder. He paints acrylic on canvas, abstract style, but

art has connected him with his community. “It has made me so happy to hear people say that they love my art.”

Mimi Barclay Johnson
Haverford, PA

After a successful career as a stage/scenery/lighting designer for opera companies, and finally for the Orpheus Revels in Philadelphia, Johnson began to paint. Oils at first, then the more difficult transparent



Brandon Allebach, *94 Hours*

watercolor. When she became disabled after two devastating car accidents, Johnson had to overcome frustration and anger before accepting the reality that she would never paint en plein air again or even stand at an easel. Painting was and still is a struggle for her, but once she learned to paint again from the different perspective of sitting, she began painting from memory. “In my mind I can still see the incredible colors of shadows, see the light dancing on distant water, and see the movement of joyful people. That is what I paint now—memories.”

Morgan Johnson *Gold Beach, OR*
Johnson is an artist working in oil on canvas. His styles range from realism to abstraction. Currently he is working in his own style, which he calls fractionalism. This is a melding of all recognized “isms,” with a heavy emphasis on color theory and cubism. Johnson attempts to capture beauty, by reproducing what he sees as awe-inspiring. Johnson has been disabled officially since 1994 with AIDS. He contracted HIV in 1985. While Johnson has survived long-term using the available medications as they came on the market, both the virus and the

powerful drugs have limited his eyesight, stamina, mental faculties and perception/understanding. Johnson is motivated by the statement: “Art is long, follow your awe.”



Meg Quinlisk, *California Coast Flowers*

Kate Johnston *Bellevue, WA*
Johnston says her work will expose you to ears. She uses ears to express her life and feelings as a person with a lifetime of hearing loss. Along with other topics, she also likes to communicate the importance and her lifelong belief of having color in her life. Inspiration for Johnston’s art comes from family,

friends and living in the unique area of the Pacific Northwest. She uses printmaking, colored pencils, watercolors and mixed media to communicate with the world. When you see her art, Johnston hopes you will see life a little differently and understand her more than you might have otherwise.

Tina Kabage *Oak Grove, MN*
Kabage has been creating art since her childhood, and painting for most of her adult life. She does not have a single early childhood memory when she is not creating. She earned her degree in Art & Design, receiving Presidential Commendation for Academic Excellence. In 2007, Kabage was infected with Lyme disease but was undiagnosed for an extended period of time. Although treated aggressively, the repercussions became a diagnosis of Reflex Sympatric Dystrophy/CRPS, and a traumatic brain injury. Art is more than a hobby; art is her life, a necessity for survival. Kabage’s talents cross multiple mediums including watercolor, photography, resin, and pastels, and she has an extreme passion for painting. The ability to create, display, donate and sell her work has given her a new identity in life as an artist.

David Karasow *Levittown, PA*
Karasow is a digital photography collage artist, who is on the autism spectrum. He loves to joke that he has “Artism.” His art is influenced by nature, comic books, science fiction and comedy, and he loves to take nature walks and look for turtles. Karasow has a BFA from Temple University’s Tyler School of Art, and he painted a mural of Noah’s Ark on the front wall of Temple University’s Jewish social organization, Hillel. To thank him, they gave him a room to use for an art studio for five years.

Mark Kaufman *Wilmington, DE*
Art seeks connection to write, paint, dance, query, invite an expectant waiting—that moment of connection when artist and viewer both wait for questions to emerge. Kaufman’s images seek to connect. He almost hates to name them for that limits what the viewer sees. Thirty years ago, Kaufman was diagnosed as having bipolar 1 disorder. He has, however, been somewhere on the spectrum of those disorders since kindergarten. Kaufman began painting as a child, and in his teens studied at the Corcoran Museum’s School of Art. After a decade as a practicing attorney, in his 30s he returned to the study and practice of art. He now lives in Wilmington,

Delaware with his wife of fifty years and his cat named Cat.

Jan Alice Keeling *Nashville, TN*
Keeling’s passion is painting portraits in watercolor. She takes her time when painting, using abundant water and many washes of color. Most of her subjects are human faces or beloved animals. Keeling was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis 40 years ago. Her disability, which is largely manifested as extreme fatigue, difficulty walking and occasional blurred vision, played a role in her decision to paint full-time. Keeling enjoys turning a client’s photograph into a work of art. She finds great pleasure in the way her watercolors allow her to connect with other people.

Christopher Ketz *Reading, PA*
Ketz is a professional Reading-based contemporary artist and entrepreneur. Having a BFA from Shippensburg University, he now primarily works in pen and ink drawings and alcohol ink paintings. Suffering a severe accident in fall of 2020 that left him temporarily blind and with a fixed pupil, Ketz continues to push the limits within his alcohol ink paintings. He uses art as therapy to his disability, as he continues to share his passion

for the arts and hopes to inspire others to push forward. “We are always in search of something or someone, but most importantly, we are looking for ourselves. Through trial and error, we explore our preferences and look for something that brings us joy and happiness!”

Linda Killingsworth *Elverson, PA*
After earning an associate degree in art, Killingsworth chose to explore the little-known medium of colored pencils.

Pencils allow the fine detail for out-of-the-ordinary subjects she enjoys creating. She is a member of the Colored Pencil Society of America and an award winner in their international competition. Killingsworth’s work can be seen in local shows and colored pencil publications. She is part of two juried, local art groups: Flying Colors Fine Artists and The Artists Circle.

Cheryl Kinderknecht *Bradenton, FL*
Kinderknecht is a mixed media artist and former gallery owner. Regardless of the medium or subject matter, her work is influenced by the colors, patterns and textures of the Kansas High Plains landscape where she grew up. Emotions, dreams,

myths, metaphors, memories and ancestral ties, further anchor and inform her work. Over the years, her artwork has been increasingly impacted by her failing eyesight. Her condition limits and skews how objects and colors appear, and which tools and techniques remain within her realm of usable vision. Kinderknecht says, “I was an artist before my vision started failing; I’ll still be an artist when my vision is gone.”

Viktoria King *North Attleboro, MA*

In May 1991, King graduated with a BFA in Illustration from MassArt. The following August, she participated in a women’s world record attempt that became close to fatal. Art was interrupted for almost twenty years. Now with a traumatic brain injury that affects the area of reason, she has struggled as a portrait artist for the last ten years. King’s disability lies not in making art, but in making and maintaining a business. Her reasoning, decision-making, and complex planning seem to be gone. A part-time job and social service programs help immensely. King still dreams, though, and prays. Her medium of choice is colored pencil. She



Susanne Dagmar Olsen, *French Bulldog*

“Through my art I have created a new state of health for myself, pursuing an artist’s life.”

—Debra Hope Colligan

began oil painting in 2020, and specializes in portraiture. “I want to reflect people the way God sees them.”

Dawn Klug *Floral City, FL*
Klug’s tapestries reflect the love she has for the Great Smoky Mountains and the cultures hidden within its many valleys. Using wool, cotton, linen and Spanish moss, the timeless beauty that

lies within the Appalachian Mountains is revealed in each new work produced. Klug uses the Cherokee language as her inspiration in naming her works and creating “Name Drafts” for fabric design that enhance a tapestry or stand alone. As a quadriplegic of 40 years, Klug has physical limitations but has found no boundaries in her life as an artist.

Ege Kolcu *Bodrum, Turkey*

Kolcu studied art at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University's sculpture department, Istanbul Turkey, and graduated in 2020. Right after, he moved to Carrara, Italy to work on his master's degree. This is where he now lives, studies and produces his artwork. Kolcu chose to work as a sculptor because he found that it's the most expressive way to communicate and coexist. As a deaf artist, he believes his sculpture speaks to him and others about the awareness of sign language. Rich communication doesn't have to be verbal. With his recent art works, Kolcu tries to bring life to a long-forgotten deaf culture. As a social individual, he portrays ideas, innovations and a unique lifestyle through his art.

David Kontra *Hartville, MO*

Kontra is a self-taught expressionist artist using acrylics, pens, ink and an assortment of unusual, useful tools. Having retinitis pigmentosa makes it difficult to create his work, for he can only see a quarter-inch of the canvas at a time. Art has made Kontra feel more independent when he paints or draws; it is the art and himself, in his own personal world, enabling him to release emotions. This is the definition of expressionism, he says. "I open my



John "Wiley" Johnson, Jr., *Imagination in Front of Pink*

mind and allow my memory and imagination to cut through the blindness in order to create the visions that I see."

Daniel Kytonen *Seattle, WA*

Because of his learning differences with dyslexia and ADHD, Kytonen investigates the symbol of books as bearers of information, communication and meaning. This information feels inaccessible to him, often at the expense of his ability to feel valuable in society. Kytonen's project, *Funlexia* was

an exploration of letting himself become intimately involved with the bookmaking process, reconciling and confronting the complicated relationship he has with the written word, while also wrestling with aspects of his own story that are not yet healed. Kytonen navigates both what is worth exposing and hiding. In constructing the book, he intentionally exposes glue and seams and has left the creative process clearly visible. It is a reflection of him grappling with these differences.

Jace Laakso *Missoula, MT*

Having contracted polio as an infant, Laakso spent a great deal of time in hospitals. He appreciated the moments when he could see more than the walls of his wardroom. He began to see details, patterns and connections in the world. "Looking at the landscape, there are spaces between, or even under, the dominant features that draw my attention." Laakso says he focuses on seeing instead of looking. He is currently producing reduction relief prints. This process uses a single linoleum block to carve away a layer at a time as each successive color ink is applied. Finally, with the last color, most of the block's surface has disappeared.

Cindy Lally *Fairless Hills, PA*

Lally suffered a traumatic brain injury from falling off a motorized scooter in 2000, while not wearing the proper PPE (helmet). As a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab, the art on display in the hallways left a big impact on her. She has always loved drawing, painting and creating art. Mixed media, combining drawing, painting, wood burning, and more has become Lally's chosen medium due to the fact that she never knows what she'll come up with.

Emily Lane *Philadelphia, PA*
Lane has always been fascinated by the way people visually express their realities. This influences her creative process and art, which grapples with

“Art has gotten me through the darkest struggles in my life. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate my emotions on canvas.” —Thomas Dillon

the link between perceiving and being perceived. Digital art has become Lane’s most used medium in frequent years when her disability required a more accessible means of expression. The ability to create digitally has been critical to maintaining a sense of self during incredibly isolating and despairing times when the outer, physical world is unavailable to her. “My work is a product of visually translating the exploration and growth of inner

worlds confined to a physical body, and navigates tension between society’s imaginary and arbitrary line between chronic illness and disability.”

Amy Lewis *Boston, MA*
Photography has always been part of Lewis’ life. It is where she first started her working career and it was part of her creative process until an eyesight impairment forced a change and painting became her work. Cameras have improved greatly from what she used in the 1970s. Autofocus systems, a necessary feature for her, are more sophisticated than ever. Lewis still strives for the artistic in photography, using contrast, color

and focus to produce outstanding results. Lewis finds herself at a crossroads, blending art and photography and using her visual disability as a positive thing for producing art. “I have to pay attention to light, shape and form in photography to produce depth, without having 3-D vision myself, due to only sight in one eye.”

Bonnie MacAllister *Philadelphia, PA*
MacAllister’s portraits on handmade felt are crafted through embroidery, created from an original figure drawing. She transforms it into needlepoint, a quilt of pores, threaded with twenty plus colors, bounded and knotted with each perforation,

a performative puncture onto self-healing felt. After learning to spin and weave as part of her Fulbright Hays to Ethiopia, MacAllister became determined to continue her story through textiles. As she describes her practice, “the muscle memory of sewing is guided by recollections, stringing the grit and tooth of obstacles...pounded out in coarse intermingling of fibers, torn out and restitched, a forgiving medium where every loop can be redone and undone, tacked and basted anew.”

Olivia Mangion *Attleboro, MA*
Mangion has posterior uveitis, an eye condition which causes her to have strange optical effects due to bleeding in the back of her eyes. This is where she gets her inspiration. Light is key to Mangion’s art, and she tries to incorporate it by having the works play with light with a range of subjects like the moon, prisms, fire and more. Mangion says she creates her art to express what she can see to the world. While visual afflictions can be a burden, they have helped expand the scope of her practice. “I can show others that having this disease does cause me hardships, but it has also added so much to my life.”



Ted “Otter” Gilliland, *Awkwaflection*

Taylor Mars *Gainesville, FL*

“Being autistic results in constant stress and anxiety. Escaping into nature serves to remove the stress of overstimulation, bringing peace.” Mars perceives things differently from his neurotypical peers and can share that through a camera lens. His photographs most often capture the flow of water, reflecting light, or the minutest of details, not intentionally but rather because

express herself. She explored fine arts more seriously with private lessons in her hometown of Bethlehem, PA. As a lifelong artist Mavis tries to look upon our world around us with wonderment and appreciation for the subtleties that can be found in many objects of our interests. Ranging from landscapes to intimate settings of still lifes, Mavis finds her muse in the beauty of what she sees and makes her own interpretation of

“The joy of creating and seeing things that many people do not have the time to see themselves, is part of opening up this incredible world we live in!”

—Herbert Eilertsen

these micro-scenes draw him into them. This is Mars’ unique perception of nature, something he is unable to communicate verbally. Conservation is his passion. This concern for the environment has pushed Mars out of his comfort zone in hopes that by sharing his work, others will be motivated to join in the effort to conserve, recycle and protect our natural resources.

Rose Mavis *Bethlehem, PA*

As a child born deaf, Mavis pursued drawing and painting to

those viewpoints. Her preferred medium is oil but has also expanded into colored pencils.

Merritt Maya *Dallas/Fort Worth, TX*

When Maya was about twelve years old, he was diagnosed with an ependymoma, a tumor inside his spinal cord. After surgery, he began drawing mazes to help regain motor control and fight nerve pain. As time passed, he moved from pen and paper to acrylics and began to develop his own style. “When I paint I try to fulfill my own aesthetic



Joy Raskin, *Fiery Eye Ring*

sense and challenge myself. My paintings are less about depicting a concept or message and more about showing that despite my physical challenges, I can produce interesting and technically difficult artwork for others to enjoy.” In addition to having his work shown across the country, Maya is represented by the Holder Dane gallery in Grapevine, TX.

Colleen McIntyre *Buena, NJ*

When McIntyre first started her journey into the world of photography, she didn’t know

what direction or road to follow, until one day she followed a dirt trail. It was the rodeo! She could not put into words the energy she felt from both the two- and four-legged athletes, but she immediately felt alive. McIntyre set a goal for herself to become part of the Professional Rodeo Cowboy Association (PRCA) as a photographer. After many hoops of fire, she has achieved that goal. Now, anytime McIntyre has her boots in the dirt, she says she is one happy gal, happy to be a part of the greatest show on dirt.

Dawn McLaughlin

Highland Lakes, NJ

Although often mixed media obsessed, McLaughlin has an abiding love of drawing, and it is through drawing that her personal expression best reveals itself. Charcoal, pastel and graphite are her preferred mediums. Since she is particularly captivated by the power of the portrait to evoke and communicate the human condition, faces and figures are the primary focus of her work. Through practice, study, experimentation, evolution and reinvention, McLaughlin strives to develop an authentic artistic voice. “Art has offered me the gift to pursue my best self, despite my disability, or very possibly as a consequence of it.”

Vickie McMillan-Hayes *Katy, TX*

McMillan-Hayes is a full-time artist who creates breathtaking wildlife and nature paintings that advance global conservation causes. Her award-winning paintings, large public installations and photography are exhibited in art museums and fine art galleries throughout the country and abroad. Her unique style of impasto painting was developed over time to accommodate her essential tremors disability. Her disability causes aggressive



Sriharsha Sukla, *U.S. Eagle*

tremors throughout her body and are active only when her muscles are active. To disguise her inability to paint extreme detail throughout the whole painting, she applies numerous layers of paint with large, loose brush strokes. These layers create a rich depth to her paintings that mimic abstract textures seen in nature. In order to create fine brush strokes, she has to hold her breath while embracing her hand with the other for steadiness.

Kelsey McNamara *Wausau, WI*

McNamara is a watercolor artist living with autism, GAD, ID and dyslexia. As part of her autism, she has a visual processing disorder, which contributes to a writing impairment. Painting is completely different for McNamara, though.

“The paint doesn’t care if I stay in the lines or if I can move my hand and eyes with coordination. Paint doesn’t judge; it works with my abilities.” McNamara works with 300-lb. cold press paper that allows her to use a scrubbing technique that gives her landscape paintings a lot of “movement” while also being peaceful. She enjoys painting water, sky, grass, flowers and trees, and sometimes she adds in an architectural feature like a fence or a pier that draws the observer right into the painting.

Kelly McQuain *Philadelphia, PA*

McQuain’s folklore-inspired paintings feature animals in symbolic and surreal arrangements and are influenced by his childhood growing up among the mountains of West

Virginia. His paintings hint at stories and the mythical world intertwined with the ordinary. Largely self-taught, he has used art as a way of creating order out of chaos as a coping mechanism against his struggle with ADD, genetic neuropathy and depression.

Lawrence Meyers *Paoli, PA*

Meyers is an impressionistic watercolorist and offers an invitation to examine each delightful ribbon of color, value and shape. Combining shapes connects the viewer to his vision of God’s design and the excitement in our surroundings. Commonplace surroundings that are overlooked are transformed into extraordinary beauty that can be cherished with each brushstroke. Meyers is hearing and vision impaired and had a stroke that paralyzed his right side, requiring extensive rehabilitation therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab. Consequently, he has changed his style to paint more loosely and rely more heavily on value, the depth and darkness of color rather than color itself, to create his artwork. Meyers feels blessed to be able to continue his pursuit of art and share his view of the complexity of nature.



Jonathan Whitlock, *U.S. 222 South*

Joanna Michell-Kayiaros
Wilmington, DE

As a Johns Hopkins University student, Michell-Kayiaros studied the history of art, the lives of artists, their artistic techniques and the meaning behind their works. Years later, she finds herself empowered through the practice of art, the ability to create and to open the imagination of others. Michell-Kayiaros' drawings range in style, as her art reflects her journey to discover. She invites the viewer to join her on this journey. Art

has enabled her to find herself in ways she never thought possible. Michell-Kayiaros hopes her work inspires others to believe the impossible is possible. "Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world." —*Albert Einstein*

Vinetta Miller *Philadelphia, PA*
Miller likes to paint portraits the most. The people that model for her are all different. She wants them to have different smiles, different backgrounds, different dresses that they're wearing. Miller creates art because it's fun, because she can concentrate, and because she likes working with her hands. First she puts down a drawing in pencil, then in pen, and then watercolor paint. It's finished when she does all of the lines. "I want people to know that I made this, that this is the work I made."

Nicole Miritis *Montreal, Canada*
It was in 2012 that a car accident left Miritis with limited physical abilities and chronic back pain. She was faced with finding a way to cope with her condition and lifestyle change, so she started painting. "My painting has been part of a therapeutic process. Sometimes it is challenging to paint, but I continue, as it helps

me express my emotions. I have a conversation with my canvas and am often inspired by music." Miritis is a self-taught, mixed media artist often working with found paper materials as well as a variety of other mediums. Her style and way of thinking, which is out of the box, is often depicted in her artwork and she has a portfolio of varied accomplishments.

**"Art helps me to stop
and breathe and quiet
my head."** —*Nicole Cote*

Hal Moran *St. Charles, MO*
Moran grew up with and still struggles with Tourette syndrome and other co-occurring disorders. Perhaps this, along with being somewhat of an explorer, spurred his interest in photography. Moran knew he would never travel the world like some of the photographers he admired at National Geographic, capturing exotic subjects in the wilds of Borneo. So, he decided to search out the extra in the ordinary things in his own backyard. For Moran, the extra involves more than just the aesthetic value of an image. It's the story associated

with an image that allows us to connect at the emotional level. Maya Angelou said, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." His aim is to capture those untold stories. Throughout Moran's life, his senses, and more specifically his eyes, have always been attuned to the natural world around him. Whether he's out on a hike or taking a photo walk, little escapes his purview. "And while some of those experiences are captured with my camera, most are just memories to be savored in my mind's eye."

Victor Mordasov *West Chester, PA*
Mordasov, a widely recognized artist whose work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, has spent many years exploring different mediums and methods of painting. He discovered the joy of painting by following the techniques of the Old Masters in combination with an impressionist manner of painting. Mordasov paints a wide range of subjects, including landscapes, still life, portraits and marine venues. His paintings, as well as his sculptures, display a commitment to portraying not just the exterior of the subjects but their characters and personality as well. Mordasov's focus is to bring people's attention

to the beauty of God's creation, which is around us all. He has had Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease since he was a young teenager, which limits his physical activities. It was not long after this diagnosis that Mordasov started to draw, leading to his education and professional career in art.

Daniel Neufeld *Philadelphia, PA*

As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, a learning disability. But it didn't stop him at all from gaining and sharing as many talents as possible. Neufeld grew fond of art through his mother, who's also an artist. The kinds of art that he likes to do are drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, comic books and animation. Subjects that Neufeld enjoys capturing with his pencils and paints include people, still lifes and sites that he sees on his travels. Art has inspired and helped Neufeld see things in the world creatively. In addition to fine arts, his other skills and talents include playing sports, playing the cello, singing, cooking and making movies.

Thu Nguyen *Pepeekeo, HI*

Nguyen's self-portraits use elements in traditional Chinese art, which are interpreted through

a contemporary lens, to explore identity issues. By using herself as the only subject, she intentionally goes beyond the superficial variety of different models being painted in the same way, and instead, looks at how a variety of emotional responses can be generated using the same subject with different poses, lighting and environments.

Lauren Nicholson

West Chester, PA

Nicholson is a local artist in the Greater Philadelphia area working mostly in photography and oil painting. She is not only an artist but is also the art therapist at Bryn Mawr Rehab. Inspired by the act of art-making as a creative medium, Nicholson encourages herself and the patients she works with to express themselves through art. Her photography is often carefully



Christopher Pereto, *Fiddle Hero*

calculated, capturing the right angle and light to evoke a quiet and contained feeling. Nicholson sustained a hip injury from horseback riding and experiences chronic pain. While she's grateful the injury was non-life-threatening, the experience has helped her empathize with the people she works with who face chronic pain on a daily basis from a variety of conditions, including sickle cell, stroke, TBI and other injuries.

Timothy O'Donovan

Wynnewood, PA

O'Donovan likes the idea of seeing nature by itself in its own form. He feels very comfortable with nature when he takes hikes and walks. O'Donovan feels more in control of his life and his emotions when he makes a piece of artwork. If there is too much tension, he paints and draws while listening to natural music, sounds of the ocean, and Enya. O'Donovan is a learning disabled individual since birth. He's been independent since age 14, a self-advocate for 25 years, and an artist at the Center for Creative Works for 12 years.

Patrick Ohman *Dennis, MA*

Ohman is a young man diagnosed with the classic form of autism, a cognitive disability involving an impairment of social interaction

and communication, and repetitive behaviors. Ohman creates artwork with a variety of mediums such as colored pencils, acrylic paint, markers and watercolors. He is best at painting horses and dogs. Artwork is a wonderful skill that keeps him going. Ohman also collaborates on his artwork with his older brother, Jon Ohman. "We inspire each other for our artwork."

Jon Ohman *Dennis, MA*

Ohman is an enthusiastic young man with high-functioning autism, a cognitive disability involving an impairment of social interaction and communication, and repetitive behaviors. Ohman creates his artwork in mixed media, using watercolor pencils, crayons, markers, acrylics, oil pastels and watercolors. When drawing or painting, he is best at two-dimensional art in both side-view and front-view angles. Ohman's artwork is mainly inspired by horses, his greatest passion, and creating portraits of women. The beauty of the ocean inspires his seascape paintings. It makes Ohman feel proud to have the talent of bringing his images to life. It is one of his most significant accomplishments. "Creating art makes my family, friends and my art teacher, Deb Colligan, feel proud of me and my finished masterpieces."

Susanne Dagmar Olsen

Vordingborg, Denmark

Olsen thinks art reflects the person you are. She works in a broad range of media, but her favorite is linocut. She has no press, so her work is all made by hand. Olsen can't perform a protected job anymore, so she's made art her job. Olsen says she can work on her art when she feels well and believes everyone wants to contribute to society. Creating art helps her feel like she is making a valuable contribution. Her inspiration for her art comes from the garden.

“Every human being is creative. We simply use different skills.”

—Marilyn Pollick

Diana O'Neill

Haverford, PA
O'Neill spent 25 years as a successful glass etching/carving artist. Though she enjoyed completing various commissions, they lacked color and expression. So, when O'Neill was introduced to watercolor painting, she fell in love with this exciting medium. It freed her creative imagination and she has become passionate

about it ever since. Her paintings typically are impressionistic and are inspired by the incredible beauty of nature found in scenic landscapes, birds and animals. It's O'Neill's hope that the bright colors and natural patterns in her work will inspire others to appreciate the natural environment that surrounds us. One of her favorite quotes is: “Every day is a gift, so enjoy and make it count.”

Joanne Orth

Phoenixville, PA
Orth is a lifelong artist, and in recent years, art has helped her appreciate how rich her life really is as her physical limitations have increased. Producing a new painting gives Orth a tremendous sense of accomplishment, and reminds her that there's beauty all around us and that life is good. She works mostly in acrylic and pastel, although she also enjoys other media. Retired from a full-time career in science, she can now indulge her passion for painting nearly full-time. Orth's work tends to emphasize how contrasting light and shadow define a subject and how they can create a mood. As a longtime resident of Chester County, PA, she often focuses on local sites, sometimes including animals in their natural surroundings.

Chris Palm

Ayampe, Ecuador
Palm is a forest photographer working in the tropical forests of Ecuador. Tropical forests behave as regenerative and intelligent living systems, yet they are being decimated at the hand of

traumatic brain injury. Art became part of her therapy. She enjoys an experimental approach to her art, choosing the medium and technique that best convey the subject or mood. Taking part in the Art Ability show holds great



Samuel Dietze, *Oak Tree and Utility Pole*

man. Palm relates to the ability of the forest to go through cycles of regeneration, as he must do the same.

Leslie Palmer

Audubon, PA
Palmer enjoyed a 30-year career as a scientist, but always found time for her other passion, art. A bicycle accident ended Palmer's career after she suffered a

meaning for Palmer. “I found so much needed hope looking at the work of disabled artists on the walls of Moss Rehab Hospital where I was treated. I'm excited to now be able to exhibit my paintings at Bryn Mawr Rehab in the hopes of giving other patients the hope that meant so much for my recovery.”



Jack Bordnick, *A Place in the Universe*

Sal Panasci *Devon, PA*

Panasci spent 25 years in the advertising field, where he received numerous awards for his design work. In 1995, Panasci's life took a dramatic turn. He was injured in an accident as a passenger in a taxi, which resulted in him being diagnosed with a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI) and blindness in one eye. Panasci spent 16 months in rehabilitation and continues receiving treatment today. During his initial rehabilitation, he was encouraged to try painting in watercolor,

a medium that was new to him. Panasci says, "I become emotionally attached to the color palette, the texture of the paint and the composition. Through this, the painting takes on a character of its own and a specific visual interest, allowing the viewer to recognize a familiar subject in a new fashion."

Treavor Pence *El Paso, TX*

Pence is an artist and educator teaching for over 25 years. He loves painting oil landscapes, and charcoal portraits. He has sold

more than 350 of his works to clients across the United States, Canada and Australia. Pence is motivated by a quote from the famous El Paso artist, Bill Rakocy, "You have to paint a mile of paintings before you can call yourself a master." As a person with scoliosis, Pence says, "I have learned to overcome the pain with art as my therapy."

Victoria Pendragon

Paw Paw, WV

Pendragon works mostly in acrylics, following the inspirations that have unfailingly made themselves known to her throughout her life. There is little she creates that strives to simulate what most folks term "reality." Most of her work mentions reality and may have its roots there, but generally it has more to do with what some might term "spirit." Pendragon began her study of art as a young girl. In 1988 she was crippled by scleroderma. Although the disease vanished, it left her with fingers that are permanently curled in towards her palms and very little flexibility in her wrists. Consequently, Pendragon works on a horizontal surface, turning the canvas around as she needs to access wherever it is she wishes to paint.

Christopher Pereto

Weymouth, MA

Pereto has been drawing since before age five. He can't imagine art not being a part of him. When Pereto first began trying to be "serious" about art, he used colored pencil and aspired to be like illustrator Richard Scarry. It wasn't until the second half of his college career that Pereto got into marker and pen, thinking more in terms of animation cells. Somewhere along the way he combined the media and began adding watercolor and even paint marker to the mix. Pereto says, "I've never had any conception of what role art played in my life as an autistic man; however, neither have I had an idea of how my condition may impact how I create. Both would seem to be something beyond words, fully coming from intuition and the subconscious."

Marilyn Pollick *Philadelphia, PA*

Pollick sketched, etched and painted in oils and acrylics throughout her teens and 20s. Watercolors seemed too hard. After working in the corporate sector, her focus switched to fundraising for the arts. Pollick earned her accreditation, served on several boards, and realized how critical the third sector is to the American

way of life. While working, she attended and graduated from the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania. There was no time for painting. After retiring in 2013, Pollick decided it was time to tackle watercolors. In June 2020, she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer. Painting enables her to focus on something other than cancer. “Every human being is creative. We simply use different skills.”

Cathy Pregmon *Drexel Hill, PA*
Pregmon has had multiple careers including being a school teacher, artistic director for a touring theater company that toured plays of empowerment for children, consultant with the Bureau of Special Education in Pennsylvania, and now as a designer of handcrafted, one-of-a-kind jewelry. Pregmon never makes the same piece of jewelry twice. She favors beads that are organic and come from nature. Many of her pieces feature semiprecious gems but her work also incorporates seeds, horn, bone, shells and vegetable sources such as tagua and acai nuts. She favors fair trade beads such as Kazuri porcelain beads from Kenya and paper and linen beads from Uganda. Her pieces are chunky and funky “jewels” with touches of whimsy, and creative use of unusual materials.

Meg Quinlisk *West Chester, PA*
Quinlisk is a professional artist and art instructor living in Chester County. Diagnosed with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis at 13, the pain and deformity caused by her JRA left her very depressed. Quinlisk taught herself to paint, giving her life new purpose and meaning. She paints landscapes and floral still lifes using acrylic paint. Mosaic art has become a new passion for her. She uses mosaic glass to capture the fragility and brilliance of life. The broken glass is a reminder that we are all broken yet what matters is what we do with our broken pieces. Quinlisk felt like a prisoner in her body, constantly held back

by deformity and pain. Painting helped her forget this and allowed her to view herself as an “abled” person, not a “disabled” person.

Judy Quitoriano *Pacificca, CA*
After Quitoriano’s stroke, she could not even count the stitches to make a granny square. She simply wanted to resume doing her crocheting, which she had learned at age 15. Now, Quitoriano is happy to create wearable art which she has designed herself.

“It is my hope to encourage others who have experienced disability to never give up.”

Joy Raskin *Bedford, NH*
Raskin says she has a restless soul, a need to experiment, a need to keep pushing the limits. She covers a wide range in metalworking, from tiny jewelry pieces to flatware to large-scale welded sculpture. Raskin finds she enjoys knitting and shaping wire to create

“It’s not always as easy for me to express myself now as it was before my injury, and so art-making is another way to do so.” —Dana Gabriel



Martha Bird, *Thriving*

unexpected metalwork such as knitted wire clothing, metal purses, and knitted jewelry. Her specialty, beside wire-knitting on a large scale, is also spoons and tableware. Raskin doesn’t limit herself to one style or specific technique but employs a wide range of skills to execute the ideas she has in her mind. “I get lost in the pleasure of working with the metal, how it forms or shapes under my hands, and eventually becomes a functional piece of art.”

Ginette Richard Rochester, NY

In dealing with mental health disabilities, art is a way Richard can escape those issues and feel more grounded. She loves creating things with her hands, using her own sense of style on the world around her. Richard uses all sorts of materials in her art, but tends to gravitate towards clay, terracotta and stoneware.

Dave Richards Seattle, WA

Growing up, Richards loved to go hiking, camping and fishing. Being incarcerated for the last ten years, his love for the outdoors has led him to accumulate many books on landscapes and outdoor photography. About four years ago, he started teaching himself how to paint and his collection of books led him to focus on landscape paintings. His preferred medium is acrylics on canvas. Even at his early artistic development, Richards' landscapes evoke an almost Monet-esque quality and he says that he "lets the canvas tell him what it wants to become." His goal is to support his family through his art and to further his artistic education. The opportunity to paint provides a means of therapeutic mitigation for the cognitive impacts of long-term incarceration.



Hans Huisman, *Sunset at the Village*

Sally Richards Media, PA

With a lifelong desire to be an artist, Richards undertook a four-year program at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts following a successful business career. A painter and printmaker, she has a focused daily studio practice. Richards' work explores the "nature of place," the essence and energy we feel when we experience our world in an intimate way. The places in her art are imaginary, relational or abstract expressions derived from observation and memory. She uses color, form and structure to cause elevation and freedom in

mood and thought. Richards has had a severe hearing disability for 25 years, which required enormous energy and accommodation in business. "I have found new freedom, independence and artistic collaborations through artmaking and a place to fully give my energy, spirit and heart."

Holly Robbins Edinboro, PA

Born and raised in the city of Philadelphia, Robbins is a seasoned, self-taught photographer, specializing in landscape and nature subjects. With her legal career path deterred by a

permanent disability, Robbins turned to photography as a distraction from the pain of reflex sympathetic dystrophy/complex regional pain syndrome (RSD/CRPS). Sometimes the disabled are looked at as unable. With camera in hand, Robbins feels whole and happy. Her photography allows her to convey to others the beauty all around us that many do not see. Robbins' inspiration comes from her love of all things nature. Sunrises and sunsets bring promise of future possibilities. She is known for saying "Nature is my religion and outdoors is my church."

Ann Roth Raleigh, NC

Beauty in the world around her and life's quirks, mysteries and capacity to change directions unexpectedly, inspire Roth's creative process. She plays with subtleties, complexities, illusions and the interaction of colors. Roth was a weaver when she was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease in 2004. By 2018, the physical demands of the dyeing and weaving processes caused her to look for other ways of interpreting her thoughts and observations. Now Roth paints sheets of paper or Tyvek with color and patterns, cuts them into expressively curved or angled lengths and intuitively interlaces them to form new compositions.

Roth is convinced her art making practice has been an essential part of managing her PD. It keeps her moving ahead as the disease slows her down.

Rick Ruark *Pittsburgh, PA*

Ruark is a self-taught contemporary acrylics painter and digital artist. He began painting after a move to South Florida 35 years ago, where he was inspired by the beauty of the landscapes, cultural diversity and architecture

“My paintings serve as a testament to the enduring human spirit.” —Lynn Hartman

of Miami. This influence is evident in his paintings through his use of color, subjects and geometrics. As Ruark’s disabilities developed, he changed how he paints in an effort to make certain that his disabilities did not hinder his efforts to create. Ruark’s paintings became more calculated and angular, while he began moving away from realism. This change is because the brush work required for realism has become so difficult. Humor, satire and beauty are all focuses of Ruark’s art. While some of his works are very conventional, others are quite edgy.

Courtney Russo *Willow Grove, PA*

Russo is a digital painter with more than 20 years of experience, and she lives happily with her husband, cat and seeing eye dog. She was born at 24 weeks gestation and has mild cerebral palsy and retinopathy of prematurity. Russo works as a federal employee, but painting is her favorite pastime. She loves to paint animals and the occasional dragon. Russo’s digital art seems to fall into a “painterly realism”

style. She painted in Adobe Photoshop for 15 years, but has recently switched to Procreate on the iPad. Digital art has allowed her to continue to paint after she lost most of her vision as a teenager. The technology allows her to zoom and not worry about casting a shadow on her canvas, as the screen is backlit.

Maria Sammartino *Riverton, NJ*

Sammartino has always been drawn to abstract expressionism. While her Italian grandfather painted scenes of a Florence cathedral, she painted scenes, intuitively, of imagined landscapes

and things unseen. Sammartino has continued this path and now has a collection of work that reflects who she is as an abstract expressionist. Large-scale and abstract works of art inspire her. In spite of having multiple sclerosis, painting allows Sammartino time to be free of her pain. “My lifelong work is one continuous body that has no bounds. I feel that I have amassed an ongoing cohesive collection that is ready for the world to see and reflect upon.”

Kareem Samuels *Baltimore, MD*

After having made art at home and at St. Peter’s Adult Learning Center for some time, Samuels joined

Make Studio in Baltimore in 2011, within the first few programming years. When he began working in the studio regularly, he experimented with watercolor, acrylic and more, to colorfully share the positive and spiritual messages of his heroic alter ego, “Bible Boy.” Since then he has become an expert in making portraits of himself, friends and family, celebrities and superheroes, both of his own creation and otherwise. Kareem also is a budding food blogger, documenting his many colorful meals in photographs and drawings. He says that being part of an art studio community is “my dream come true.”



David Karasow, *Bok City*



Herbert Eilertsen, Poppies

Carla Schaeffer

West Cape May, NJ

Schaeffer's unique mosaics are a visual illustration of the things that make her happiest in life. Nature, travel and the beauty in the world inspire her to share these interests through her art. Forced to leave her business career when chronic arm pain made it too painful for her to make it through the work day, Schaeffer found that losing her ability to be creative made coping with her injuries unbearable. When she later suffered a debilitating brain injury, she knew she must find a way to bring creativity back into

her life. Rediscovering her love of the artistic process while finding a way to participate in it despite her limitations, both brought her joy and has allowed her to reclaim her life.

Rebecca Scheuer *Narvon, PA*

Scheuer is a wife, mother and high school counselor. After a serious car accident in 2015, she started taking oil painting lessons as part of her vision therapy. She realized early on that painting brought her joy. Learning about color, value and composition has helped her to see the world in a different way. Scheuer says that painting has provided an opportunity for her to be creative and relieve stress. She plans to continue learning and painting and enjoying her time in the studio.

Francine Renée Schneider

West Chester, PA

Schneider was a formally trained fine artist painter exhibiting in Paris and New York City galleries. While preparing for her first big one-woman show in a gallery in SoHo, a multiple sclerosis attack numbed her hands. Schneider accepted the painful reality that her art career was over, and that she would never paint again. She returned to school and received a master's degree

in clinical social work from Bryn Mawr College Graduate School. As a psychotherapist, Schneider explored mind-body-spirit interventions, creating art with her clients. She surprised herself with some of the work that emerged, which ultimately led her back to study art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts. "My life and creating art are one and the same."

"I seek to test the strength of my own limitations through my art. The emotions and stories that I paint are inspired by resiliency."

—Kemi Yemi-Ese

Erika Schwarz *Watertown, MA*

Schwarz was diagnosed with Asperger's and nonverbal learning disorder (NVLD) in her late 30s. Her background is in evolutionary biology, so expectedly, she finds greatest inspiration in the dynamics of the natural living world. Promoting environmental health persists as her primary objective. Working with what

is often "waste" is a method to somewhat circumvent Schwarz's OCD behaviors that occur when she uses more precious traditional mediums. Often she assembles botanical scans into works and edits them digitally. Schwarz feels a personal redemption from her psychological state by showing beauty and use in these materials.

Christine Severson

Richmond, VA

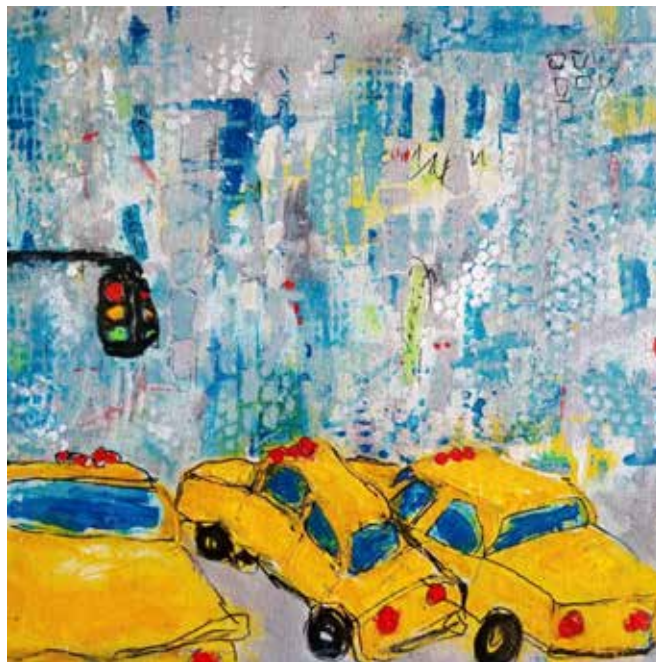
Severson, a nurse, suffered a life-changing event in the late 1970s while transferring a quadriplegic patient into a wheelchair. She incurred significant damage to her spinal cord, which continues to limit her mobility and left her with chronic pain. Severson still managed to raise two daughters, and in the meantime creating became her passion, which to this day provides her with a sense of pride and purpose. Severson works on her jewelry during the day and on her baskets in the evening. Her work is done from a semi-reclining position wearing elbow and wrist splints. The material she works with needs to be lightweight. Weaving jewelry was the perfect fit along with pine needles for her baskets. Severson believes that creating has changed her from viewing herself as a patient to viewing herself as an artisan.

Carol Shannon *Aldan, PA*

Before being diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis in 2007, Shannon would have never considered herself an artist. However, art has provided her with an activity that exercises her hands, wrists and arms, and provides an escape from the physical pain and limitation caused by arthritis. Sometimes she needs to make a modification to her process, such as using extra-long paintbrushes, a stylus, a hand-vice to hold the brush, or a tripod or monopod to stabilize her camera. She continues to work and try new techniques. Shannon is drawn to abstract paintings and designs with bold colors and textures, as well as black and white and landscape photography. She mixes photography and digital painting as well. Her artistry provides a space for spiritual renewal and peace.

Ken Smith *Riverside, WA*

Smith's creative life began as a freelance writer and commercial and editorial photographer. Since 1991, he has been concentrating on limited-edition fine art, primarily in the still life genre. Smith prints his work in black and white and color, using traditional



Cheryl Kinderknecht, *Cabs on Lex*

“It has made me so happy to hear people say that they love my art.” —John “Wiley” Johnson, Jr.

photographic processes and archival pigment ink printed on fine cotton printmaking papers. He also works in mixed media. Smith believes his role as an artist is to be open, curious and available to experience beauty. He then may be able to interpret that beauty into his work, so the viewer may be moved by

the feeling within. Smith's work reflects on his walking disability, encouraging patience and the understanding of how to find beauty in the commonplace.

Nancy Cook Smith

Santa Monica, CA
Smith started sewing when she was ten years old. She

didn't have the same means of communication as the other kids, so through the creation of something physical, the visual became her voice. She had an innate affinity for the tactile nature of things and a great sense of color. Smith wants materials to be appreciated, as they come with a history and traits of their own. She will combine anything that works. Materials that Smith uses are alley findings and fabrics that she has been collecting for years. These reused materials are cut up and composed. “I am a seamstress giving attitude and body to the cloth in front of me. Confident enough to follow what I see, the subjects are ideas on order and freedom.”

Eugene Soh *Singapore*

Soh is a Singaporean spinal cord injury disabled artist. He picked up painting again after rehabilitation in 1981. Soh says that art has accompanied him through many lonely nights and brought solace to his soul. Though his hands are abled, creating his largest paintings in oil or acrylic at 18”x20” still poses a challenge. Soh works on one corner at a time, and says it is often a test of his patience and endurance.

Oranit Solomonov

Philadelphia, PA

Solomonov is a self-taught artist from Tel Aviv, Israel. She immigrated to Philadelphia with her family when she was a teenager. Her work depicts vibrant, playful scenes that express a variety of interests including animals and airplanes, as well as elements of her strong Jewish identity. Because English is not her first language, Solomonov uses her artwork to make connections and communicate with a larger audience. Her work has been featured in exhibitions both regionally and nationally, and is held in private collections around the world. She is also an uncertified pilot and loves to fly.

Kari Souders *Villanova, PA*

Souders is an abstract painter with a BFA and MFA. Having been born with vision in only one eye, she has always seen the world through a monocular lens. This more narrow window has made her hyper aware of fine details and has given her a deep appreciation for experiencing our world not only visually but also tacitly. As a result, Souders gravitated towards becoming an artist who creates textured art using her unique lens. Her work is created through a ritualistic physical and structural

approach. Souders' process involves mapping, exploring organic constraints and seeking the possibilities of continuous systems. She works to harmonize mixed media through layering beeswax, paint and collage elements that evolve to a mutual resolution over time.

Harry Spilker *Camp Hill, PA*

Spilker is a self-motivated artist, using his digital camera or iPhone to capture images, and different apps to manipulate the colors and other aspects of the pictures, creating an artistic effect. He especially likes to photograph everyday objects and scenes and then create boldly colored abstract pieces that evoke an emotional response. Spilker enjoys photographing nature and the environment. He likes taking pictures of trees and clouds and the Susquehanna River in different light. He also takes lots of pictures of his dad. "My photographs make a statement about how I see the world."

Eric Stampfli *Danville, CA*

As long as Stampfli can remember, he has always had pictures in his head. At first ill-formed like the fragments of a dream that one is trying to remember, this became

the experience used to define and make the images real. It wasn't about trying to capture a pretty sunset, it was being alone in a studio learning to trust and ultimately reproduce the images he saw. It was there, while learning his craft, Stampfli discovered how to tell stories with his photographs and discovered that this medium is far from just a visual one. "Like memory itself, a good photograph is so very much more than just the picture; if I am successful in incorporating the other senses, the viewer can experience my work rather than just see it."

Siddhartha Sankar Sukla

Cuttack, India

Sukla has liked painting since childhood. Though hearing impaired, he doesn't feel inferior to others, just differently-abled. Sukla has been awarded a number of prizes by different organizations, both national as well as international. He attributes his success to the blessings of all his mentors and well-wishers. With a fine arts degree from Utkal University, Sukla works in various mediums like watercolor, oils and collage. He says he feels fortunate if he can satisfy his supporters through art. Sukla continues to focus on his work



Christina Goldstein, *John*

as a professional artist and to find more opportunities. "I stand similar to abled people through my art. Disability does not affect my work."

Sriharsha Sukla *Cuttack, India*

Sukla was born with a hearing impairment. But in spite of his disability, he feels able in every respect. He has been inspired by his parents, especially by his mother, to pursue art. "Whatever position I have reached, it is due to the blessing of all my mentors and well-wishers." Sukla has been awarded a number of prizes by different organizations, national as well as international. He has worked in oil painting and

watercolor and his specialty is collage work. Sukla has a degree in fine arts, and he continues to concentrate on his work as a professional artist and to look for more opportunities.

Elizabeth Sullivan *Elgin, TX*

Sullivan has been a professional watercolor artist and mural painter for the past 20 years. Painting is her happy place. “The joy of creating supersedes all else.” Being disabled limits her career options, but fortunately she’s been able to make a living doing what she loves. Sullivan’s art is inspired

by life around her. She is fascinated by cave paintings, Asian brush paintings and ancient art, which also serve as inspirations reflected in some of her work. Sullivan lives in Elgin, Texas, with a tiny dog, 12 cats and 11 chickens. She also has three grandsons nearby and she shamelessly and repeatedly paints their portraits.

Evan Tate *Newtown Square, PA*

Tate is currently an art therapy graduate student in Philadelphia. His paintings illustrate an abstraction of what it feels like to reach out for help and receive an

empathetic response, and each canvas illustrates its own part of the journey. Tate believes it can be scary and burdening to share dark thoughts, but oftentimes the sharing alone relieves a lot of the pressure. The initial disclosure is the scariest; the emotional connection that follows is not only hopeful, but allows for curiosity and self-discovery. “During all the times I felt I had nobody to talk to, making art was my way of being heard.”

David Terrar *Gaithersburg, MD*

Terrar survived a major heart

been an artistic symbol for hope and heaven for thousands of years, and the trees in his paintings are a symbol of strength and stability. “When my mind is not fixed on worry and anxiety, I know my healing is happening.”

Emily Tironi *Cambridge, NY*

As a woman with a disability, Tironi likes to focus on disability through a societal and cultural lens in her work. Collage is a fitting medium for this subject. She also likes to focus on other cultural themes and issues she finds important, such as feminism.



Michael Graham, *Michael's Hat*

“My profound deafness has driven me to pay extra attention to the visual world.” —Michael Graham

attack. His life changed suddenly and a long depressing struggle followed. Terrar needed stability and hope to get through it. On a wintry walk through the woods, he saw his struggle played out in nature. The struggle to get through the winter was the snow. The sun struggled in the last half hour of the day. All the colors changed, yet the golden sun coming through the trees was a sign of hope. The struggle inspired his work using acrylic and 23K gold leaf. Gold has

Tironi collects images relating to a specific topic, from a variety of sources, and then adds and layers them into a composition, often adding color throughout the process. She combines bold bright colors with graphic images to immerse the viewer in her concept. Tironi uses her personal experiences as a disabled person and her education in disability studies to inform her work. By doing this, she hopes to challenge societal norms and stereotypes.

Leo Tujak *Floral Park, NY*

Tujak thinks that photography is great. It allows him to see something and transfer it to a photograph, but with some input from him as he takes the picture. By controlling the composition, lighting and angle at which the photo is taken, one can alter many things. But the outcome all photographers are looking for is a “good” photo. Due to a retinal eye problem, Tujak could no longer use his right eye when taking pictures. This required him to retrain himself to use his left eye to look through the camera’s viewfinder. Tujak hopes that everyone enjoys looking at the



Brigitte Benzakin, *Hallelujah*

photos as much as he enjoyed taking them.

Max Tzinman *New York, NY*

Tzinman’s images explore mob mentality. He is fascinated and disturbed by the hypnotizing appeal of the mob and its link to the desire to escape from the complexities of life and individual responsibility. Is groupthink the inevitable, irreversible result? Can we hold on to our individual humanity in the face of this drift towards the seductive comfort of merging with the mob? Tzinman’s works start digitally, in two or three dimensions, adding layers of mixed media (acrylic, oil, collage, metal) to create still structures and moving images, light and sound. Each project is based on a specific vision which may be realized, changed or extended during the creative process. “You don’t buy an art object, you buy a state of mind.”

Diane Veros *Clifton Park, NY*

Veros was diagnosed about four years ago with a rare disease that damaged her peripheral and autonomic nerves and has caused her to spend her days in a wheelchair. While she was cooped up at home recovering from a stem cell transplant, Veros decided to try painting after a

35-year hiatus. Amazingly, the dried-up watercolors came back to life as soon as she wet them. Her biggest motivation to create is probably the therapeutic effect of creating art. Planning and creating paintings helps to get her through each day so she doesn’t dwell on her losses. Veros loves experimenting with new techniques and products and is always striving to find that perfect color combination.

“Art is more than a hobby, art IS my life, a necessity for survival.”

—Tina Kabage

Joseph Weber *Berwyn, PA*

Weber is a former banking professional and now self-taught artist who began painting acrylic on canvas in 2016, when he realized he no longer had control over his life. He was so overworked that he missed half of his three daughters’ childhoods; he had lost himself. This led to an emotional and spiritual breakdown/awakening which led him to seek therapy for anxiety and PTSD, among other mental health conditions. As a child, artistic

expression was not encouraged and painting finally allowed Weber to express himself. With now 550+ canvases and 6,000 textile designs created from his art, Weber’s dream is to bring people together through his art, share his experiences and knowledge with people and help them be who they were meant to be—not who someone else wanted them to be.

Kurt Theodore Weston

Mission Viejo, CA

Weston is legally blind and photographs natural beauty, interpreting the world as he now sees it. For the past several years, Weston has been experimenting with unusual and altered photographic “views and perspectives,” redefining and recontextualizing the very nature of seeing. Weston is a resident of Mission Viejo and has a master of fine arts degree from California State University, Fullerton. He photographs detailed, color-saturated, luminous images of hillsides and parks experienced in fleeting moments of mesmerizing tapestries of color. His luminous color photographs, created after his sight loss, are truly breakthrough images. In 2010, Weston was recognized by Arts Orange County with the Outstanding Artist

Achievement Award and in 2012 he was interviewed by CNN's Fredricka Whitfield, featuring his photographs and advocacy.

Jonathan Whitlock *Lancaster, PA*
Art has always connected Whitlock with life. Before he was in a car accident in 1999, he focused on abstract subjects, but afterwards he went back to the basics of realism. His style has changed but Whitlock still prefers oils and now he makes broader strokes, being less deliberate. He continues to paint pictures of subjects he is trying to understand more fully. Whitlock feels blessed that his artistic mindset never went away despite the physical disabilities he had to overcome. "I have learned to work with them rather than becoming discouraged. Now art connects me to others. My work helps others see me beyond the disability."

Jed Williams *Philadelphia, PA*
Williams, a graduate of the University of the Arts and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, has exhibited and sold work in many venues across the country. He says his disability has led him to art. He believes one can't exist without the other. Art plays a key role in centering him and providing an emotional outlet. Painting objects and schematically



Ina Greenstein, *By the Sea*

depicted figures whirling around almost absurdly, he works in different kinds of media: oil paint, acrylic, mixed media. Williams' art stems from a wish to blend a more formalist, expressionistic abstract tradition with a conceptual quest nourished by his interest in the human figure, pop and mythological culture, and different forms of spirituality, along with a dose of whimsy.

Robert Winig *Rancho Palos Verdes, CA*
Winig was introduced to the art community at a very young age, growing up the son of an artist. He tried many disciplines of artwork in his youth and always enjoyed photography, and after retiring from a long career in engineering,

he found his way back to it. In his photography, Winig now combines his passion for experiencing the great outdoors with capturing the beauty that nature has to offer. With limited range of motion in his shoulders, he is still able to enjoy taking shots in nature.

Mark Wittig *Little Rock, AR*
The lived experience of learning differences is the primary subject matter for Wittig's creative research. As a youth, he attended the Child Study Center for three years, a school in a teaching hospital, where he became intrigued with educational research. Wittig is inspired to create artwork that comments on the history of education and questions the prevailing culture

"The ability to create digitally has been critical to maintaining a sense of self during incredibly isolating and despairing times when the outer, physical world is unavailable to me." —Emily Lane

which devalues fluencies and skills outside prevailing norms. He is using his abilities to build a long-term creative practice that allows a free and open conversation about education and the lived experience of learning.

Nancy Wood *San Antonio, TX*
Wood is a classically trained artist currently using photography and digital media to explore the aesthetics of the natural landscape. She received her BA and MFA degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles. As Wood describes, "During the 1990s I bought a computer and began to teach myself digital media because I believed it would be the future of visual arts." She was right and this led her to become a successful digital artist. Wood experienced severe hearing loss and mental illness during a difficult period in her life. Nancy's digital artworks are included in private and corporate collections and have received many awards.

Kemi Yemi-Ese *Austin, TX*
"It is the human condition to explore, to seek excellence, and to create. When you acknowledge the presence of the infinite within you, you then become drawn to the things that reflect and echo

those boundless circumstances.” Being an artist with a physical disability has taught Yemi-Ese much about inner strength and has given her a deeper insight regarding limitations. Every living thing has limits whether they are physical, mental or emotional. In

a Master of Arts degree from Lamar University. After teaching language and technology for more than 15 years, she is now CEO of her own business where she sells language resources and art. Youens-Un lives with her husband, Peter Un, and their two

“My paintings are less about depicting a concept or message and more about showing that despite my physical challenges I can produce interesting and technically difficult artwork for others to enjoy.”

—Merritt Maya

her experience, these limitations are not as indomitable as they appear, and Yemi-Ese seeks to test the strength of her own limitations through her art. The emotions and stories that she paints are inspired by resiliency.

Sheri Youens-Un *Silver Spring, MD*

Youens-Un learned to draw at an early age to communicate her needs with her family, when they forbade the use of sign language. After she graduated from Texas School for the Deaf with honors, she went to Gallaudet University, where she earned a bachelor’s degree in history and

kids. In her artwork, Youens-Un enjoys exploring different ways to use wood as a medium, and she desires to capture the beauty and authenticity of American Sign Language while highlighting many forgotten deaf leaders.

Jacquie O. Young *Lewes, DE*
Young believes we live in a world that is complex and a constantly changing puzzle, in a time when people need creative visual energy to excite the mind. She says a “speed bump,” better known as multiple sclerosis, has averted her photographic career into the fine arts of photography. It is through her lens that she captures visions



Thu Nguyen, *Behind Bars*

that portray uniqueness. Some through a different spectrum of light, the unseen surreal spectrum of infrared. Others through art lenses, seeing in a new way, capturing creative visions. The surreal or dreamy sense of Young’s imagery feels as surreal as her diagnosis of MS. Creating art becomes a therapeutic healing process for her, an escape from MS. The once acquired images from her camera become visual interpretations of her imagination.

Anthony Zaremba *Whiting, NJ*
Zaremba’s art and finished watercolors appear not as finely detailed, but loose and free. He

feels he has created a new style of painting that has an abstract look. His subject matter reflects the things he loves in life: people, music, sports and dance. Living with multiple sclerosis for more than 30 years, Zaremba has constantly learned to adapt to change. Naturally right-handed, he was able to train his left hand to take over the primary duties when his multiple sclerosis progression significantly limited his right hand’s functionality. Zaremba says, “What makes me come alive and forget my disability is challenging my creative ability, and thanks to art, I really like who I am today.”

Charitable gifts play an essential role in the life of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, making possible specialized therapy equipment for the best quality patient care, advanced training for our staff of dedicated professionals, and community programs like Art Ability.

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