

# create!

MAGAZINE

*THE*  
**ART  
COLLECTING  
EDITON**



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- Valeri Larko
- Walt Thirion
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# *a letter from the editor*

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Photography by Helena Raju

*Dear Reader,*

If you're an art lover like me, perhaps you're a collector too! I've enjoyed slowly adding to my own personal collection of art over the years as my career developed and I was able to invest in pieces I love from galleries or directly from other artists. Each work holds a special meaning, serves as a reminder of a memory or simply brings me joy when I see it.

These feelings inspired the theme for this issue, which focuses on stories about collecting. You'll hear from gallerists who speak about how they've grown their businesses during uncertain times by honing in on their respective missions and making genuine connections with clients. The interviews in this issue also share what motivates contemporary collectors, as well as provide tips for those new to buying art.

Our curated section was selected by the incredibly talented Dina Brodsky. We were excited to see her picks and what drew her eye as both a curator and accomplished artist. Before you get to the work she found most inspiring, don't miss her exclusive interview to learn how she has built her multifaceted career painting miniatures, teaching workshops and so much more.

Thanks, as always, for picking up a copy of our independent art magazine. Our small but mighty team of writers, editors and designers couldn't have gotten to issue #33 without you and we're so grateful to be celebrating our six-year anniversary with our next issue.

A friendly reminder that you can always access even more of our content by becoming a Create! Magazine subscriber. You'll be able to access the archive of all 32 back issues, as well as join our exclusive online community with additional opportunities for artists. Enjoy our first-ever collector's issue!

Warm regards,

Kat, Alicia and Team

*For more from Create! Magazine, visit [createmagazine.com](http://createmagazine.com), where you can sign up to our free newsletter and listen to interviews with spotlight artists on Create! Podcast.*



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# ArtQueens SOCIETY

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## Our Team

### Issue #33

- 01** Ekaterina Popova  
Founder & Editor in Chief
- 02** Alicia Puig  
Director of Business Operations
- 03** Cee Ng  
Creative Director & Designer
- 04** Christina Nafziger  
Associate Editor & Writer
- 05** Zoë Goetzmann  
Writer & Podcaster
- 06** Sarah Mills  
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# Articles *and* Interviews

In this section, our writers take you on a deep dive into the world of art collecting, whether you are seasoned or just starting. Enjoy exclusive features with Sarah Miller Gelber, Marine Tanguy, Dina Brodsky, BUTTER, Jack Trodd, Cortney Lederer of CNL Projects and Superfine Art Fair.



# ARTIST *as* COLLECTOR



Artwork by Shawna Gilmore

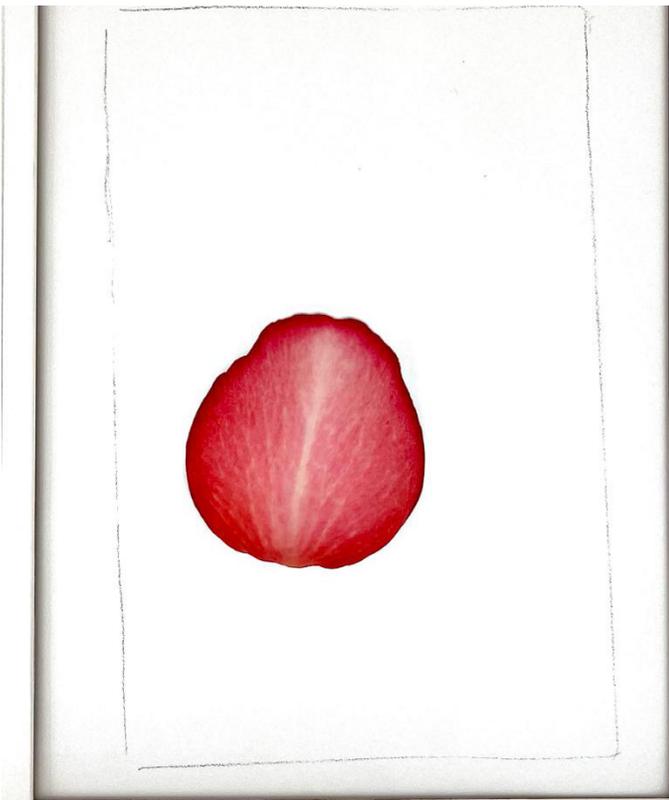
*Each ART PIECE becomes RELICS of  
FRIENDSHIP and SHARED CREATIVITY,  
objects filled with CONVERSATION and IDEAS.*

**T**hroughout life, most of us end up collecting little trinkets—ticket stubs, photos, souvenirs—that remind us of something special. These objects are stand ins for joyful memories, the people we love, or places we never want to forget. As an artist, it often becomes natural to collect other artists' work. Not only because we tend to collect and keep what we value, but because other artists become our friends, our supporters, our mentors and teachers. They become our community, and so it is not surprising that many artists become art collectors themselves, surrounding themselves with pieces of and from their community.

What I find so special about collecting art as someone working in the arts, is that most (if not all) of my collection comes from close friends I've made throughout my life. Each art piece becomes relics of friendship and shared creativity, objects filled with conversation and ideas.

Each piece is full of so much beauty and even more memories. Collecting art is not just about possessing the art that you enjoy, but also about the story behind each piece, who the artist is, and what they offer to us and the world.

For this special collector's issue of Create! Magazine, I reached out to my community of artists, writers, and cultural workers and asked them to speak about a highlight of their own art collection and what it means to them.



This page, top left  
Cortney Herron, "Moody",  
acrylic painting

This page, top right  
James L. Stephens, "Lunch  
Break", 2010, oil on canvas

This page, bottom left  
Sarah Mehoyas, "Cloud Petals",  
archival inkjet print

This page, bottom right  
Kushala Vora, "Rule/ Ruled  
- 4th inquiry", 2022, porcelain

## ALICIA PUIG

WRITER, CO-FOUNDER OF PXP  
CONTEMPORARY, & DIRECTOR OF  
BUSINESS OPERATIONS  
FOR CREATE! MAGAZINE

*Cortney Herron, "Moody", acrylic painting*

## ZOË GOETZMANN

WRITER & PODCASTER

*Sarah Mehoyas, "Cloud Petals", archival inkjet print,  
edition 1 + 1 AP, 17 x 22 inches.*

## EKATERINA POPOVA

ARTIST, WRITER, & FOUNDER OF  
CREATE! MAGAZINE

*Shawna Gimore, "A Quiet Place In The Mirror", 2020,  
24"x30" acrylic on deep cradled wood panel edged  
in a continuation of the background scene.*

## CORTNEY LEDERER

ART ADVISOR, PROJECT MANAGER  
AND EDUCATOR

*Kushala Vora, "Rule/ Ruled - 4th inquiry", 2022,  
porcelain, 14 x 10.5". Whit Forrester, from their  
"Domesticating the Numinous" series. Work by  
Emil Lederer.*

## CHRISTINA NAFZIGER

WRITER, ARTS JOURNALIST, &  
ASSOCIATE EDITOR  
AT CREATE! MAGAZINE

*James L. Stephens, "Lunch Break", 2010, oil on  
canvas, 52" x 37" background scene.*

*Instead of attempting the impossible — choosing a favorite artwork from my collection — I'll talk about one I've been appreciating and thinking about a lot recently. One of the first paintings I saw by LA-based artist Cortney Herron was a small piece that included lines from a popular Lauryn Hill song. I loved it but dragged my feet when it came time to decide if I was ready to make the purchase. So, of course, it sold to someone else! But I kept an eye on her Instagram and waited patiently. When I saw "Moody", I fell in love with it right away. It was exciting to find a subject who looked like me, unlike the vast majority of work I spent my educational career learning about in art history textbooks. This time I didn't hesitate and I'm so pleased that this gem of a piece is part of my personal collection.*

*My favorite piece in my art collection is "Cloud of Petals" (Full Title: "Cloud of Petals Station 08/ Session 02/ NO. 1001". "Cloud Petals" by Sarah Mehoyas is the first 'traditional' piece of contemporary artwork that I have acquired in my art collection. I love the work for so many reasons: I love it for the color (my favorite is pink!), the story behind the work, as well as the process through which the artist took to create this specific piece and series. I also know the artist on a personal level and was fortunate enough to see this original piece (in its entirety) in real-life at Red Bull Arts in New York City in 2017. In my opinion, Sarah Mehoyas is one of the most innovative female artist working in the present-day art world.*

*My favorite piece in my personal collection is a painting by Shawna Gimore. I love all the art in my house, but this piece is especially interesting because when I purchased it, I also got a mirror from Anthropologie that looks exactly like it! I hung the two across from each other and it feels like a magical portal.*

*I have so many favorite pieces—it is so hard for me to choose just one. I love this work in my collection by Whit Forrester from their "Domesticating the Numinous" series. It has this sensibility of beauty, sadness and poetry. It is a still life that feels both fragmented and whole, representing to me what it means to be human. I am also about to purchase this work by artist Kushala Vora called "Ryke/Ruled-4th inquiry". I was moved by the hard and soft qualities of the materials, the colors and notion of printing on ceramic in this way. The work is about an exploration of freedom and colonial rule for the artist who was born in India. There is something about the friction in this work—between hard and soft, freedom and constraint and poetry that drew me to it. Finally, work by my grandfather, Emil Lederer who was a full-time artist from Vienna. It is a mixture of plaster and other mixed media to create this piece that while done in the 70s seems so contemporary. I love having him close to me in this way and wonder what he might share about this work if he were still alive today.*

*My favorite piece of art in my collection continues to change over time, but right now my favorite happens to be my newest piece: a large oil painting by James L Stephens, a talented Chicago artist. The piece shows a wild nature scene filled with gorgeous plant life and sky. It at first appears to be a traditional landscape painting, but towards the bottom there is a stack of hot dogs with an eerie green light shining across. I just love the weird mixture of the natural world, the strange, and the uncanny. The painting reminds me of what I love most about life: nature and the outdoors, but also those little bits that are so unexpected that you can't help but laugh. These unpredictable details are what makes moments in life so memorable—and the same goes for the painting, which is why I love it so much.*





INTERVIEW WITH

*Sarah Miller Gelber*  
of The Miller Gallery

BY ALICIA PUIG

As an extension of my recurring Women Working in The Arts blog series, I was excited to interview gallerist Sarah Miller Gelber for this issue focused on the theme of collecting. The founder and director of her eponymous Charleston-based gallery shared how her business made a lightning-fast pivot at the onset of the pandemic, how she has cultivated lasting client relationships and her insight as an industry expert into art collecting tips and trends.

**What was your first job in the arts? When did you know you wanted to start your own gallery?**

During early college years I worked for a high-end event designer in Charleston. This was my first taste of using creativity in the workplace. I loved building large-scale installations for Charleston Fashion Week and huge arrangements for super-fancy weddings. My senior year I took an internship at an art gallery, which ultimately fueled the idea that I wanted to do this for a living. It was about five years into being the Gallery Director at this job that I decided it was time to create something of my own. My degree in Arts Management fundamentally supported my career path, and it has been fun putting my own spin on curation and artist representation.

**You launched The Miller Gallery in the spring of 2017—congratulations on hitting that five-year milestone! What would you say have been some of your most important achievements during that time? What is the mission behind the gallery?**

Thank you! There are so many things I am proud of when thinking back on the past five years. A few things that stand out are the quantity and quality of curated exhibitions we have been able to produce. We have had over 50 exhibits in our space! I am proud that the business survived COVID 2020/2021 and that we are heading into 2023 in a fiscally healthy position. I have to give credit to a long-time employee (and represented artist), Rachael Nerney, who was on board when I said, “Ok, we need to make changes FAST. We need to build a fully shop-able website within two weeks,” in March 2020. It was one heck of a grind, but it was the best move we could have made. The website has informed our current trajectory to transition to an online + pop-up/art fair-focused gallery this fall.

Our motto is Art for All. This phrase goes beyond the idea that we represent artists working in a wide array of styles. I firmly believe that art should be accessible to everyone. We have cultivated a roster that spans all price points and we offer multiple options for payment plans through the gallery and our affiliates. We have worked hard to become a space for people from all walks of life to feel appreciated as they enjoy the talent on the walls.

**One tip for someone completely new to buying art?**

Don't buy artwork to fill spaces in your home. Buy artwork that fills YOU up. The wall will eventually present itself.

# Art for All



**Having been in business for years is a clear indication that you have established strong relationships with your clients. What have you done to appeal to collectors and position the gallery as a place where they can come for advising and guidance when it comes to acquiring art?**

Honesty has always been important to me. It's easy to get wrapped up in the gallerist mentality that art is an elitist commodity, or to put on the facade that galleries are the best and only way to buy art. I am proud of what I do, who I represent, and grateful for the opportunity to connect people with artwork that resonates with them. As the art world evolves my career evolves ... I know there is still much I need to learn, but being inquisitive and honest are two reasons our clients enjoy working with us—and continue to return for advisory services + acquisitions.

**Are there trends that you've noticed when it comes to collecting over the past several years? Any predictions for the future?**

Over the past two years I have seen an increase in clients paying in installments. This does not apply to just younger collectors. We are seeing older collectors (with large collections) opting to use Art Money, Shop Pay, PayPal installments, etc. so that they can budget more easily. With most of these platforms the client is able to receive the artwork straightaway, so they don't have to wait for the art and they can anticipate their monthly expenses.

Visual trends have included a return to narrative artwork. I am seeing less and less sales of monochromatic, visually minimal artwork and an increase in bold, more daring subject matters.

**Who are some of the artists you've acquired for your personal collection? Is there a theme to the pieces you collect or other criteria that help you select which art to purchase?**

I started collecting artwork when I was pretty young. My first "big girl" paycheck went towards a painting by Charleston artist Nathan Durfee. After living with that purchase for a few months I understood the impact that original artwork has on a space and the psyche. If I can't stop thinking about a piece after 48 hours and it is within my current art budget, I go for it. I have never regretted buying a piece of art if it has checked both of these boxes.

Our collection houses numerous pieces by Kate Hooray Osmond and Laura Dargan, a striking wall

sculpture by Fletcher Williams III, photography by Brown Cannon, Sebastian Smith, and Rosemarie Gelber (my super talented MIL!), and lots of paintings + sculptures by talented woman artists. In many cases I started out buying something small from an artist that I admire and then work my way up to buying or commissioning a larger piece. We also have a fun collection of framed postcards from art museums around the world. I always try to pick one up when we go to a new city.

**What is coming up for The Miller Gallery in terms of exhibitions or other programming?**

We have 11 online artwork releases scheduled between August 2022 and January 2023. As we move into our new headquarters this fall we will simultaneously be preparing for a few East Coast pop-ups in 2023. Our newsletter is the best way to see what's coming up, so I encourage anyone interested to join it. This next year is going to be really fun for us—we hope your readers will want to be a part of it! ♦



Sarah Miller Gelber of [themillergallery.com](http://themillergallery.com)



*Art by  
Emma Hopkins*

*Connecting & Collecting:*

# Thoughts From an Accidental Art Collector

BY EKATERINA POPOVA

If you're an artist who has ever been curious about what motivates the contemporary art buyer, or an art lover who has always been interested in purchasing art but never thought you'd fit the persona of "collector," this short and sweet interview is for you. Learn one anonymous collector's journey as a patron of the arts with advice to perhaps inspire you to start your own!

## When did you start collecting art?

I still don't really think of myself as an art "collector," although it's true that I buy art and have a collection. I'm somewhat of an accidental collector. It started when I was in school and my art student friends would give me pieces because I liked them—lucky me! Or we would trade, but mostly we gifted each other. Some of my favorite pieces are from university days. That evolved to appreciating and encouraging young artists (in their teens and early 20s) when I was in my 30s. More gifts as thanks for simple acts of love. As I was able financially, I purchased work of artist friends and as they landed gallery shows, I bought from these. So, I was becoming an unintentional collector, buying what I loved from lovely people. Then, I branched out, looking beyond my circle of known artists, and I am surrounded by beautiful work.

## How do you discover new work?

I touched on that, I think. But to clarify, I have a lot of artist friends. One, Will Corwin (@william\_corwin), also curates and writes. I go to his shows and events. Then, of course, there's Create! Magazine, an amazing source of talent. (Not just saying that—I religiously buy the print copy and follow on Instagram.) About Instagram: during the pandemic, I cast a much wider net, buying art unseen live with great results (and making connections with amazing humans; since the world reopened, I have had the chance to travel to various studios and gallery openings and have met artists whose work has a home in mine).

## What are your favorite platforms or media outlets for art collecting?

Oops, jumped the gun again. Galleries, Create! Magazine, word of mouth and Instagram.

## What is the most prized possession that you can't live without?

This is nearly impossible to answer. I love the art I have from Emma Hopkins (@emma\_hopkins\_artist), Ekaterina Popova (@katerinaspopova), Cameron Bliss (@cameronblissart), Will Corwin (@william\_corwin), Jamiah Calvin (@miahthecreator), Catya Plate (@catyaplate), Ann Siems (@ann\_siems\_art) it goes on and on ... I love it all.

But David Barthold (@davidfbarthold) did a portrait of my daughter when she was small. It was my first time commissioning work and his first time being commissioned, so it was a turning point. More than that, his technique—oil paint on a gessoed panel over a tempera underpainting using old-fashioned rabbit skin glue gesso that he made himself—produced a beautiful result. Plus, he sat with my child as she read and captured her likeness and essence. So, that's the one. I have other works of his, very different. He is an amazing printmaker, street artist and sculptor (getting lots of deserved recognition; and he continues to teach NYC public high school students!).

## Any advice to someone who is new to buying original art? What would you say to them to encourage them to go for it?

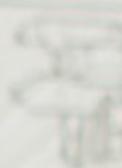
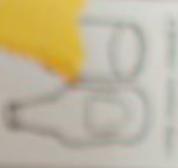
Buy what you love, ideally, if given the chance, from an artist with whom you make a human connection. Know that you will gain pleasure from the work as you see it every day, and your life will be enriched. ♦



MTART

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WILLIAMSON'S  
RECYCLED  
NEW BELLA



INTERVIEW WITH

*Find Your Passion  
(A Guide to Art Collecting,  
Art and Artist Agency):*

Marine Tanguy,  
CEO of MTArt Agency

BY ZOË GOETZMANN

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**Marine Tanguy** managed her first gallery at age 21 under Steve Lazarides, who discovered Banksy and JR, and opened her first art gallery in Los Angeles at age 23, where she was lucky to be mentored by Michael Ovitz—co-founder of Creative Artists Agency (CAA)—himself. In 2015, Marine launched MTArt Agency to build the reputations of the most incredible artists and to inspire everyone with their art. Fast-forward to today—MTArt Agency is the art sector's leading talent agency, representing some of the most talented, forward-thinking artists in the world, working with global organizations and cities and nurturing its international community of art-lovers and collectors.

Marine was awarded Forbes 2018 30 under 30 Europe: Art & Culture, UK entrepreneur of the year for the 2019 NatWest Awards and Woman of the Year 2021 by "Women of the City" (WOTC) magazine. She is a writer and keynote speaker on contemporary art and art investment. Her talks include two TEDx Talks on

how to transform cities with art and how social media visuals affect our minds.

Founded in 2015, MTArt Agency is a certified B Corp® award-winning agency for the most exciting up-and-coming visual artists worldwide, and a creative agency that delivers exciting art-driven projects for brands, public bodies and cultural organizations. While the art industry typically concentrates on selling art on walls, MTArt's visionary approach focuses on investing in and supporting the person behind it.

As a creative agency, MTArt uses its expertise to work with inspiring brands on commissions and partners with cultural organisations and public bodies to deliver public art projects. Its artists have collaborated with Hyundai, FIFA, Rosewood Hotels and brands such as Gucci, Chloé and Method, government bodies including the Mayor of London and Camden Council and with museums, auction houses, festivals and luxury hotels.

By Zoë Goetzmann

On the topic of “Art Collecting,” I sat down with Marine Tanguy (@marinetanguyart), CEO of MTArt Agency (@mtartagency)—the first international artist agency.

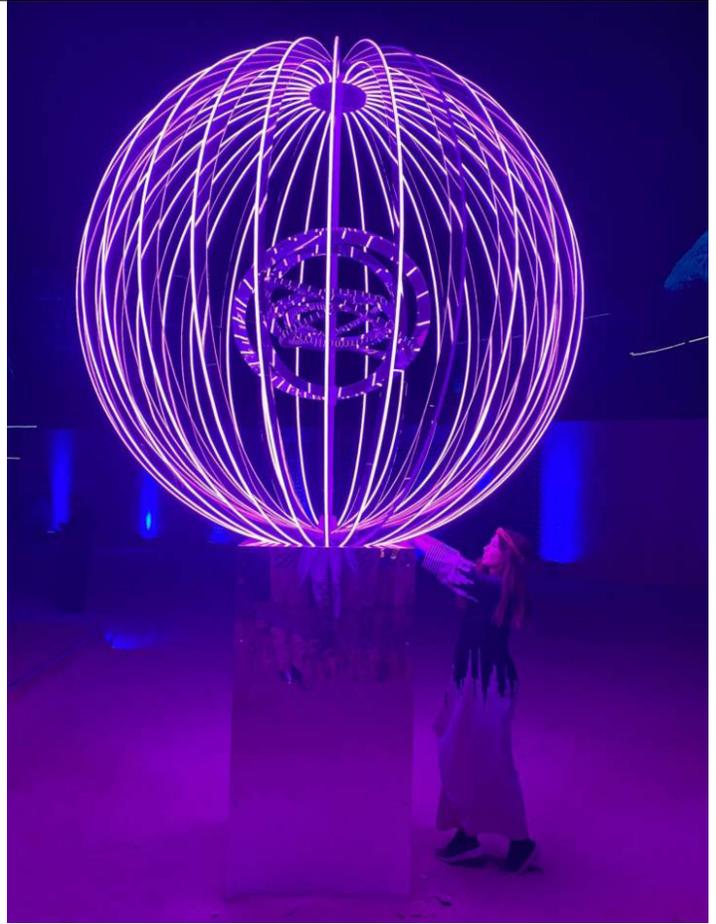
Born on the French island of Île de Ré, Marine Tanguy loved art from an early age. When asked her favorite artistic genre, she notes that she appreciates “19th century Romantics” [Romanticism]. Inspired by the mentorship and vision of Michael Ovitz—co-founder of Creative Artists Agency (CAA)—Marine made the decision to launch her own artist agency. For artists, MTArt Agency covers studio costs, sells artwork, helps establish cultural and commercial partnerships and offers press exposure. For collectors, MTArt Agency works to build relationships with the artists to establish the MTArt Agency community. MTArt Agency offers an “Art Collectors’ Club” and a subscription-based membership, “Rising Star Circle,” in which collectors can cultivate a community and connection with artists. On average, artworks signed to MTArt Agency have seen a 150% year-to-year value growth. MTArt Agency receives commission from each artwork. In return, the artist may give a piece to the agency’s collection. MTArt Agency’s Corporate Collection invests in emerging and blue-chip artists “because we contribute to their studio costs and therefore support them, we receive a work per year going to our corporate collection. To this day, we count 312 works that we own.

The MTArt Team comprises of Marine Tanguy (CEO), Lise Arlot (Head of Strategy), Yann Mathias (Director of Innovation and Impact), Fouad Kanaan (Chief Operating Officer), Blue Gaydon (Executive Director of Partnerships), Rita Alay Del Curto (Art Sales Director), Tara Zadeh (Director of Special Projects), Serra Ataman (Director of Public Art Projects), Zina Wilkins (Social Media Manager), Lucy Clarke (Special Projects), Giulia Almaleh (Content Coordinator), Wayne Fletcher (Director of Ad Campaigns), Serra Ataman (Public Art Director), Estelle Raulot (runner) and Gabriel Shelsky (assistant) and Ana Sofia Almeida (Executive Assistant). Key investors include Saul Klein, Frédéric Jousset, Tracey Brown, David Amsellem, Robert Falzon, Helen Sunderland-Cohen, Nicolas Barnabé, and Nicolas Laurent. Per month, MTArt Agency receives 200 artist portfolio submissions. Each portfolio is evaluated by the selection committee. The agency evaluates portfolios of emerging and established artists based on these attributes: 1) artwork, 2) artist, 3) technique, 4) process. Marine adds that “passion” is a key component. Artwork should be innovative and have “a story,” she explains, “unique” to the artist. Ideally: artists should possess “the complete package.” Passion is key. When it comes to evaluating an artist’s passion, drive or—as Marine says, “resilience”—this latter notion is evident:

“I think you can tell when someone has resilience. Their careers are very long, and they will come with a lot of pressure. Some people have a very clear vision of the kind of work they want to make and [the kinds of] projects [they want to create and/or make],” she says, “and that resilience and drive is very tangible.” MTArt Agency artist Lorenzo Quinn (@lorenzoquinnartist) is an example of this type of “ambition.” Marine notes that she admires him for his “innovation” and practice. Accessibility in the art world is a key topic that was brought up in my discussion with Marine. As she explains: “The biggest struggle in the sector is not really gender; it’s the fact that 90% of the sector comes from an upper middle- or middle-class background. That’s the bigger issue,” Marine says, “lots of internships are unpaid.” She continues: “As a B Corp, we’re much more committed to this [issue] at large if we’re talking about entrepreneurship,” she says, “within our sector; the bigger issue is access to wealth and networks.”

Research is paramount when it comes to dealing with any part of the art world (from artists, buyers, collectors, sellers, curators, dealers, galleries, museums, art fairs, to Biennales—the list goes on). Art agents are able to move a bit more freely through the art world than a gallery or a gallerist—cultivating solid, trustworthy relationships with artists and clients. MTArt Agency was the first in the United Kingdom to become B Corp Certified. B Corp Certification means that the company and its employees have been vetted to the highest standards of performance, accountability, employee benefits and transparency. When asked what advice or insight Marine could provide to early collectors (or those who wish to begin to collect artwork), she explains, “I would say research. I would suggest collecting as [a] couple or with friends because it’s nice,” she says, “[to] exchange [this] research.” In addition to the corporate and statistical analysis that can be executed to predict an artwork’s future investment and long-term value (which MTArt undertakes), collectors should have a passion for the artwork that they hope to acquire. As Marine refers to in our discussion, Lynette Yiadom-Boakye (@lynettesyiadomboakye) is an artist who she explains she was “lucky” to be able to collect before she had a solo exhibition at Tate Britain this year.

Galleries and museums are still key nodes of influence in the art world. Curators and critics determine the tastes of the international art world and the international art market (for those who wish to enter it). Yet agencies such as MTArt are leading a new trend—one that the likes of other small-scale agencies are now following in the art world, such as Brushes with Greatness (BWG), located in London, England. Through their previous professional experiences, agencies are able to cultivate their own community and to inspire artists and early collectors on their own terms. ♦





INTERVIEW WITH

*The Master Miniaturist:*  
Dina Brodsky

BY EKATERINA POPOVA

Dina Brodsky is a contemporary realist miniaturist, painter and curator. She was educated at University of Massachusetts Amherst and the New York Academy of Art, where she received her MFA. She lives and works in New York City. She has taught both privately and for several institutions, including the Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill, the Long Island Academy of Fine Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

**Tell me about your background. When did you decide to become an artist?**

I decided to become an artist at about 3 a.m. on the second week of September in 1999. It was my first year at university; I was completely aimless and ended up in a foundations art class. My homework was a charcoal self-portrait. It was my first time working in charcoal, and my first self-portrait—I was struggling, and staying up later and later to try to finish the drawing. By the time I was done, around 3 in the morning, I was in love. I decided that this is what I want to do, every day, for the rest of my life.

**I love your beautiful miniatures and your gorgeous sketchbooks. What inspires your subject matter. What are you most drawn to?**

At the moment, I am most drawn to beech trees—I've made a few drawings of ancient beech trees that I'm hoping will be the beginning of a new body of work. I love having the chance to spend time with these trees, to observe them closely and to imagine all the time and history that they've witnessed. The trees feel like giant beings that were here long before I was, and will be here long after I'm gone—I feel incredibly fortunate to have the ability to document a bit of their existence.

In truth, I am constantly hopping around between subjects and am fascinated by everything—my sketchbooks are a repository of all the images I hope to paint one day, as well as a record of my life.

**I'm always curious about how artists support themselves when starting out. What were your early jobs, and how did you support yourself?**

I was very fortunate to find a gallery very early on, towards the end of my undergraduate degree—I just walked in with some of my small paintings in a backpack, and the gallery director was gracious enough to give me a chance. For a few years I worked with him, and another local Boston gallery. My work would sell consistently, and I was able to support myself, and pay for my first year of graduate school with painting sales. This continued until the recession of 2008, when all of my work stopped selling at once, the galleries I was working with in Boston and NYC shut down and I was left in a state of complete financial panic.

After that, I took every job I could find. I worked as a studio assistant to another artist for years, taught both

children and adults, painted miniatures for vintage lockets and, during a brief stint, restored antique enamel art. It took years to be able to support myself with art again.

**What were the biggest challenges with visibility and getting your art out there initially?**

Initially, one of the problems I had was that the traditional (Chelsea) art world had gatekeepers with very different tastes than my work, or that of my friends. Around 2010, we decided to take matters into our own hands and began a curatorial collective called Paint Anyway—we would find galleries or spaces willing to exhibit our work, come up with concepts we believed in and curate shows that included the work of people we admired and respected, whose vision of meaningful art aligned with ours. Eventually, the traditional art world became more pluralistic, and we stopped having to struggle so much to get our work shown.

**You mentioned before how Instagram played a big part in helping you grow your art career. What shifted for you and how did it change your art business?**

Honestly, Instagram was a total game changer for me. I discovered the platform early on, when I was struggling to get my miniature paintings exhibited in galleries—because they were so tiny, and gallery rent is so expensive, my paintings weren't a viable financial proposition for most galleries (even if all the work sold, it still wouldn't be enough money to pay the rent). So, I began using Instagram as a way to display the paintings that I was already making—their size became an advantage rather than a disadvantage when viewed on a small screen, where people would see them at actual size. I ended up finding a large audience and creating my own market for the miniatures. I later ended up working with two galleries that found me via Instagram and, because I already had an audience, were happy to work with me.

**Tell us about the workshops you offer. I loved both the Instagram class and the sketchbook class. How did each of these come about?**

Both of my workshops originated organically, although I feel like they are polar opposites to each other. I began to teach "Instagram for Artists" a few years after Instagram became algorithmic and a lot of artists began to struggle with it. I found myself able to reverse engineer the IG algorithm and adapt the presentation of my work in a way that worked for the platform, and, because Instagram was so helpful in my own art career,

and so many artists I admired were having a difficult time with it, I began to help others do the same. It began with informal, individual consultations for artists and galleries, and grew into a structured class in which I break down the algorithm into parts and explain how to control each one. As the algorithm has changed, I've found myself able to understand each version of it, so the live class is basically constantly updating itself as I have more information.

My sketchbook class has been in the making (mostly in the procrastinating phase) for over two years. I've kept consistent sketchbook journals since I was 18 and have been passionate both about my own sketchbook practice and the sketchbooks of others—it feels like it's the closest I can get to seeing inside the thought process of some of my favorite artists. For me personally, sketchbooks have been everything I needed at the time—a way to keep a record of my life, organize my thoughts, clear my head when I was confused and improve my skills as an artist.

I've been playing with the idea of trying to teach others the habit of keeping a sketchbook because it was so important in my own life, but it wasn't until last March that I created a structure and a curriculum for the class. It's been my favorite class to teach by far—it's not nearly as practical as the Instagram class, but rather deals with the creation of a habit and its maintenance, as well as the history of sketchbooks and various techniques to experiment with.

**How do you prioritize creativity while being a parent and juggling multiple projects? What helps you stay committed to your art?**

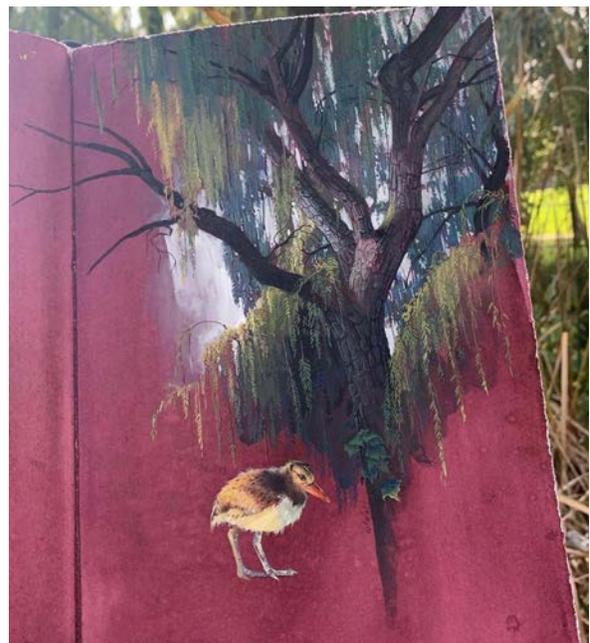
Balancing parenthood and paintings has been next to impossible—it feels like I'm constantly juggling a dozen balls, and at any given moment at least two are about to hit the ground.

Honestly, part of what helps me stay committed to art is that it's my career—I don't really have any hobbies. Making art is part of how I make a living, and exhibition and commission deadlines help keep me on track.

One trick that I've found to maintaining my sketchbook practice, which is something that I do entirely for myself and is easy to drop when life gets hectic, is to do it first thing in the morning. I wake up extremely early, around 5 a.m. and have one to two hours of drawing or writing before my kids wake up. Recently they've both been interested in drawing, so it became something that we can do together, at least for a little bit.

**What's coming up next for you?**

I have several projects I've just begun—one is the series of beech tree drawings I mentioned before, the other is a series of miniature paintings from a trip to Rome I took with a miniaturist colleague, Lorraine Loots. We met in Rome for a week to draw, explore the city, take photos and talk about miniature painting techniques, and are currently working towards a two-person exhibition based on our adventure. ♦





INTERVIEW WITH

*A New Boundary-Pushing  
Art Fair in Indiana:*  
BUTTER Art Fair

BY CHRISTINA NAFZIGER

Growing up in Indianapolis, Indiana, there wasn't a huge art scene—and for the art happenings that did exist, you had to know where to find it. Thankfully, there are dedicated folks in my hometown who are working hard to change this. Folks like Alan Bacon and Mali Simone Jeffers, who founded GANGGANG, a new organization that activates the creative economy to center beauty, equity and culture in cities. By creating events like BUTTER Art Fair, they are taking action to cultivate more opportunities for artists in Indianapolis while also changing the narrative of how Indianapolis is seen. Although a relatively small city, in what is often considered a flyover state, there is immense talent and drive in Indy—a drive that inspires artists to produce the change they want to see in their communities.

Produced by GANGGANG, BUTTER is a multi-day fine art fair in Indianapolis showcasing the work of more than 50 Black visual artists. Creatives of color continue to be underrepresented and underrecognized for their contribution to culture. Through programming like BUTTER, GANGGANG aims to change this. Join me in conversation with the folks at BUTTER as they tell us about this groundbreaking fair.

### **What was the impetus behind creating BUTTER?**

We created BUTTER to be a living art fair that works to care for, accommodate and be intentional about the economic viability of Black visual artists. As such, BUTTER seeks an equitable and reparational process designed to benefit the artists. We believe that people of color have contributed more to the arts and culture sector than they have received. That artists, musicians, makers, and creators continue to be underrepresented and grossly underpaid for their work. GANGGANG aims to change this, finding new ways to appreciate and financially support creatives that impact the culture of cities; all with a reparational slant towards supporting work that's historically been exploited and underfunded.

### **Are all the artists involved in the fair local, or are they from all over?**

Roughly 75% of this year's artists are from Indiana, with regional and national artists from New York, Los Angeles, Detroit, Louisville, Cincinnati and elsewhere. Artists like April Bey, Kiah Celeste, Julian Jamaal Jones, and Will Watson would fall in the regional and national category. While Indiana artists selling work will include Amber Zuri, Amiah Mims, Ashley Nora, Brittany Fukushima, Chris Hill, Courtland Blade, Deonna Craig, ess mckee, FINGERCREATIONS, FITZ, Gary Gee, Gnat Bowden, Haykidd, Israel Solomon, Johnson Simon, Justin Brown, Kaila Austin, Kevin West, Kyng Rhodes, Lyndy Bazile, Malcolm Mobutu Smith, Matthew Cooper, Morgan Robinson-Gay, \$hady The Art Lady, Shamira Wilson, Slim AVRE, Tashema Davis, Terry Flores and Wavy Blayne.

### **How is BUTTER different from other art fairs? What can other art fairs learn from BUTTER?**

BUTTER is building new models for equity by prioritizing direct, non-commissioning partnerships with artists, most of them unrepresented. The GANGGANG team and the BUTTER curatorial team do most of the behind-the-scenes heavy lifting, which means artists receive 100% of proceeds from their sales and don't have to pay a fee to participate. We're building sustainability for the fair that doesn't land on the backs of the artists we're working to support and elevate.

### **Can you talk a bit about the importance of connecting artists with collectors? Do you feel that there aren't enough opportunities**

### **for this connection to happen in Indy (or for individual artists in general)?**

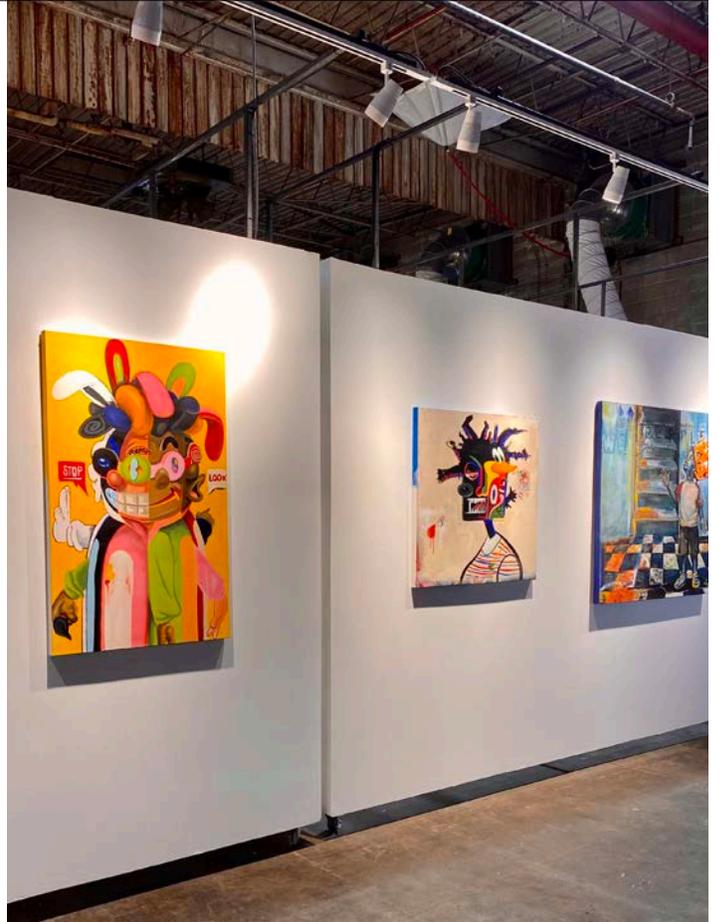
Indy's professional gallery scene is almost nonexistent. And the city's arts institutions don't have a long track record of exhibiting and elevating its own artists. Artists typically feel forced to relocate, or at least invest their energies in other art markets, in order to advance their careers. Hopefully, our work to build a broader local collector base and directly connect Indy's talent with collectors based in other cities will shift that. We hope to see Indy's art scene thrive because of BUTTER, and ultimately, we hope to elevate local Black artists by inserting them in the national conversations that are happening about the much-needed cultural shift in the art world.

### **What can collectors/visitors expect from the fair? Is there any element that you are particularly excited about?**

Open to the public, BUTTER 2 will take place in three locations this year, all along the south side of the Stutz factory building in downtown Indianapolis. This year, we are even bringing the celebration outside by closing off 10th Street between Senate and Capitol Ave so that our guests can enjoy the interactive outdoor art wonderland we are creating. With more than 50 Black artists showing and selling work, visitors can expect access to and information on some beautiful work, in a wide variety of mediums, including a few yet-to-be-announced artworks by top national artists. Because BUTTER is what we'd call an experiential art fair, GANGGANG is also coordinating live performances by top musicians like 81355, a special drum performance by Dorian Phelps and more, in addition to sounds curated by Deckademics and DJ Grapevine and crew at MELT, a multisensory Saturday night dance party. Weekend attendees can expect BUTTER-themed bites and merchandise, as well as artist workshops and historic walking tours of the area with Sampson Levingston on select days. The weekend even concludes with a testimony service led by Ebony Chappel and Sarah Jené.

### **What would you say is your biggest hope/dream for BUTTER—for this year's iteration and for the future of the fair?**

In the new world, I'd like to see more stand-alone fine-art experiences in the Midwest that center Black artists and offer a national platform. GANGGANG exists to push the barriers until there are none, and to rise above the status quo. It's our hope that with this fair that, together, we will elevate the narrative on fine art in Indianapolis and beyond. ♦





INTERVIEW WITH

# *A Guide for Emerging Collectors:*

## A Q&A With Jack Trodd, Founder of Brushes with Greatness

BY ZOË GOETZMANN

Established in 2021, Brushes with Greatness (BWG) is a gallery and agency founded by Jack Trodd. Across the group, Brushes with Greatness works with a broad international network of multidisciplinary artists, providing support to their practices through an ever-growing calendar of London-based public exhibitions, commercial projects, community activations and private opportunities. BWG hosts an annual exhibition programme across a variety of spaces in London, dedicated to growing the careers of the city's most exciting talents, along with a selection of international creatives. Later this year, BWG will be launching its first residency in Scotland.

The artists BWG is currently working with include:

Marina Renee-Cemmick (@marinareneecemmick)  
Joe Grieve (@joebennellgrieve)  
Sam King (@samking\_art)  
Olivia Mansfield (@olivesalchery)  
Suhaylah Hamid (@suhaylah.h)  
Orlando Marosini (@orlandomarosini)  
Jack Hughes (@jackhughesartist)  
Benji Thomas (@benjithomasart)  
Raffael Bader (@raffaelbader)

After nearly a decade of working in the corporate and marketing sphere, Jack Trodd made the decision to turn his passion for art into a full-time career as a gallerist, curator, art dealer and art advisor. His gallery and agency, Brushes with Greatness (BWG), presents an annual program of exhibitions, tailored to the unique artistic talents he represents. A young Gagosian-in-the-making, Jack's natural inclination and savvy entrepreneurship, his DIY and guerilla approach to curation, his innate ability to find "superstar" artists and his dedication to making art as accessible as possible make him "one to watch" in the London art scene and the international art world.

**When did you begin to collect art? What was the first piece you ever bought and/or acquired in your collection?**

As far back as I can remember, my bedroom walls were plastered in “blu-tacked” posters, “magazine rips,” my own sketches and other unique curiosities. As a child, my collections were motivated by a desire to relive experiences, a constant need for sensory experience and a propensity for the eccentric. I liked to provoke wide-eyed reactions and questions from people who walked into my room and saw the collaged walls. I had this ingrained belief that human connection and idea-sharing began with visuals—something that demands attention.

As I grew older but had no cash, I began collecting artwork from charity shops—not looking for works based on recognisable names or high-value, but connection, passion and often the strange or curious. £2 here, £5 there would get me a rendering of a classical nude, a carriage full of clowns or an alpaca with an old woman in front of a church. This continued to the point where I had an “art collection” that could be hung “salon style” throughout every room in each flat I moved into.

This was the golden age of collecting, the lack of financial attachment meant I could easily gift and replace these artworks. If someone loved a specific artwork, they could take it home that evening—and its legacy could live on in someone else’s home. I suppose the desire for “dealing” started here: the need to respond to and share someone’s passion for art. This has, naturally, evolved into my collecting many emerging artists, lots of whom I work with directly, including Sam King, Kris Lamba, Olivia Mansfield, Benji Thomas, Orlando Marosini, Suhaylah H. and Joe Grieve, plus many besides.

To answer your question though: the first piece I purchased at a gallery was a framed photograph by Winston Duke titled “Waltz in the Dark.” I am not a photography enthusiast, but this piece tore down all my barriers and tapped instantly into my love for horror and mystery.

**What made you start Brushes with Greatness (BWG)? What is the mission behind it?**

The BWG Gallery vision was inspired by a fatigue with the white-wall gallery experience. I loved the art displayed in these spaces, but the curation and cold receptions were a “turnoff.” Through BWG, I want to

inspire audiences, rather than reject or condescend their passion for art. Education and wealth should not matter or factor into the enjoyment of the everyday art lover visiting an exhibition.

At BWG, we seek to create inviting exhibition environments which welcome anyone to engage with art and have their voice heard, should they wish to share or discuss the artwork on show. We also seek to inspire people to begin collecting, and break down the invisible barriers of the art world as it stands.

**What do you look for when consigning an artist or an artwork? As a gallerist and/or as a dealer?**

Answering from a gallerist’s perspective, it’s an amalgamation of four things which reflect the values we bring to the gallery and to our artists: passion, dedication, ambition, and application. Underpinned, of course, by visual quality and commercial viability. Ultimately, though, passion comes first in all things.

In short, we hope our artists will live [out] their love for their art as much as we do. If these morals align, we’ll go above and beyond for the artist.

**What makes art “collectible?” What are the attributes that allow an artwork to retain longevity or long-term value?**

Only time can really tell when it comes to financial “long-term value.” There are many factors: supply and demand, contemporary relevance, historical relevance, association, affiliation, originality, story and, of course (though not always), if it looks any good.

I think contemporary relevance is the most interesting aspect when it comes to collectibility. Art responds to shifts in society. For example, the most recent lockdown pushed many to re-examine and reengage their relationship with the natural world, and this is reflected in the art world through a rising interest in making and collecting landscape scenes and naturalistic work. The consistent rise in personal spirituality has prompted an increase in the demand for and showcasing of art which explores occulture and mysticism. Artwork evocative of these societal shifts will retain a significant level of emotional longevity for the collectors of the moment.

Both niches [are] explored in BWG’s exhibitions “Spirit Within” (August 3, 2022–August 28, 2022) and “Visions of Healing” (August 15, 2022–February 15, 2023).

### Who are your current favourite artists at the moment, from your gallery and/or outside of your gallery?

I do, of course, love all the artists I show through BWG and the public seems to agree. It was a joy to see Suhaylah H.'s (@suhaylah.h) and Joe Grieve's (@joebennellgrieve) first solo exhibitions sell out earlier this year.

In keeping with the theme of our upcoming show "Spirit Within," I can't get enough of Georg Wilson. Her phenomenal painting is enriched by her brilliant eye for curation—creating these experiential environments to elevate the spiritualistic storytelling in her work. Her end-of-the-year show at Royal College of Art consisted of a ritualistic den made out of straw, evocative of British-styled paganism and folklore.

The new direction Rebecca Gilpin (@r.l.gilpin) has taken her abstract painting is wonderful. Her inspiring commitment, confidence and passion are mirrored in the pace at which her work is selling. I love the way Lara Cobden (@laracobden) captures the ephemeral memory of nature. We have the pleasure of exhibiting her work for six months in "Visions of Healing" from August 2022. James Dearlove (@jamesdearlove\_art) and Jonathan Schofield (@jonathanschofield\_art) are two of my favourite breaking figurative painters right now, both working through colour, abstraction and form in totally different, vividly captivating, large-scale ways.

### What advice would you give to emerging collectors or those who are looking to start collecting art?

Buy for passion and let [an artist's or an artwork's] "potential" [value] be a future "cherry on top." Don't follow trends or allow others' judgements to influence your decision-making. Ultimately, you are buying something you can cherish and enjoy again and again. Make sure there's a depth to your connection with a piece beyond the financial, be it purely visual, deeply emotional or an amalgamation.

Broaden your horizons. Find a few galleries in your city who show artists you like, and frequent them! Spend a few months going to galleries and museums to view artwork and understand what you enjoy most. Experiment as you would with any newfound passion.

Feed your desire! If you discover an artist you like, but aren't an impulsive buyer, build a relationship with that artist: ask to visit their studio, meet the

artist, forge a close bond before you buy (just try not to waste an artist or gallery's time!—research the price and check it's within your means, or might be six months down the line). BWG always facilitates artist-collector relationships. The bond with your collection is strengthened when you know the artist behind the work. This type of knowledge will unlock a deeper appreciation and allow you more insight to share with peers, friends and family should they see the work on display.

Don't forget about "the bells and whistles." Consider what you're buying and where it's hanging. What's the colour flow of that room? Will it compliment your other pieces? Have you considered the shipping or import duties on international purchases? Framing can be expensive—will your budget extend that far? Sadly, logistics, especially as your collection grows, become a real concern. Think about them now! ♦





INTERVIEW WITH

# *Connecting Artist & Collector in Your Community:*

## Cortney Lederer of CNL Projects

BY CHRISTINA NAFZIGER

In 2016, Chicago art advisor, project manager and educator Cortney Lederer took a leap of faith and started her own business: CNL Projects. Dedicated to serving artists, with a focus on her local arts community, Cortney decided to create a business platform to produce impactful art experiences and advocate for the value of art and culture in our daily lives. With a special interest in working with artists who are community-driven and committed to social justice, CNL Projects provides art advising, program design, professional development for artists and so much more—all through Cortney's unique, collaborative approach.

With a background in managing artistic programming, Cortney combines her passion for deep community change, her dedication for creating resources for artists and her own artistic sensibilities to create new opportunities that connect artist and collector.

In this interview, Cortney tells me about her journey starting her own business, some exciting projects she has coming up and the misconceptions artists and collectors often have.

**What initially compelled you to work in the arts and, more specifically, directly with artists? What inspired you to start CNL Projects?**

My grandfather was a full-time artist and my father has always experimented with art until retirement, when he began practicing full time. I have always been surrounded by art. I grew up playing the piano, saxophone and guitar. I sang and danced. I did musical theater and dabbled in the visual arts. I knew I wanted to make an impact with my work, so I majored in sociology in my undergraduate studies (thinking I would follow a career in social work) and simultaneously minored in photography. I found myself spending most of my time in the darkroom and combined my undergraduate studies with working with youth at alternative schools in the arts.

After graduating, I moved back to Chicago and worked as a director of cultural arts for a few different after-school programs and realized I needed more experience to create deeper impact with the youth I was working with. So, I went back to school and got a BFA at the University of Victoria in British Columbia. It was an incredible experience and I explored so many materials, concepts and ideas. I was welding large sculptures that were political in nature, working in fiberglass and latex and spending a lot of time in the studio. It was there I took my first curatorial practice class and produced my first exhibition. This experience helped me to understand that being in a studio wasn't enough for me—I needed to be around people, around artists. Working with artists was more inspiring to me than the process of making. I realized that my efforts were better served supporting artists and their work than trying to make my own. Being an artist can be so hard and perhaps even lonely. I just wasn't cut out for it. Artists are such creative, imaginative thinkers. Artists challenge our way of thinking about the world and offer creative solutions to imagining something better. They create beauty in the most unexpected of places and capture our emotion in sometimes indescribable ways. The artists I work with are community-driven and committed to social justice. I am inspired by the work of artists and believe they are the real changemakers in the world. I wanted to follow their lead and help them to realize their ideas while making a career of it.

After graduating, I moved back to Chicago, applied and was accepted into the dual masters degree programs in arts administration and policy and art history at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC). I studied there for three years. Following this degree, I managed a dance company (Deeply Rooted), a contemporary puppeteer company (Blair Thomas) and worked at

Links Hall before starting my job at The Chicago Artists Coalition (CAC) as the Director of Exhibitions and Residencies. It was the job at CAC, working with artists, that taught me so much and defined my approach to my practice. I was able to design two artist residency programs and manage our special projects placing local artists' work outside of our programs. I designed a Midwest artist exchange and produced professional development programming for artists. My artist residencies were co-designed with the artists I was working with and were responsive to their needs, which is why I believe the programs were successful at the time. It shaped my approach to developing and designing programs today.

After three years with the organization, I gave birth to my first child. CAC's programs were sustainable and running, but my capacity to maintain the schedule I created with artists' best interests in mind was also becoming challenging for me to keep up with, given I had a small child at home. Despite conflicting feelings to leave an organization that defined me and my community, I decided it was time to take the risk to start my own business. Although it was such a hard choice, it was absolutely the right one. It was time for me to explore what it would be like to freelance and design my own opportunities for artists. I wanted to experiment with new projects while supporting the work of artists creatively and financially. I also wanted the flexibility to make my own hours and manage my family life. When I let folks in the community know I was leaving CAC, I was lucky enough to be offered a few consulting gigs right away, along with a teaching job at SAIC. I let the opportunities that came my way help to define what CNL Projects is today. This has created the strategic vision for the organization—to provide artists and organizations with a platform to creatively produce impactful art experiences and advocate for the value of art and culture in our daily lives.

**I'm a huge fan of CNL's project ART-IN-PLACE. Can you talk a bit about this project and the intention behind it?**

Thank you for the generous words. The first ART-IN-PLACE took place in 2020. It was a response to the pandemic and the ongoing, anti-Black violence committed in this country. It was a rapid response to an immediate need—a need to connect with one another during an incredibly isolating time of uncertainty and fear. A need to look to artists to do what they do best—to provoke thought, stimulate dialogue and to connect with others. Given the pandemic, we wanted to move art outside of the virtual world in a way that was safe—to invite folks in a way that they could walk and experience art in person.

We wanted to create an opportunity for artists to collaborate and connect with one another, despite isolation. Having participated in Terrain Exhibitions in 2019 by curating my residential block in Evanston, I immediately thought of the accessibility and success of their organization's platform for experiencing art. I wrote to the Terrain team and they responded immediately. They had already been in the process of putting together a call to their artists, so we decided to collaborate. The collaboration was fast, easy and seamless. We shared similar goals, were fluid in communication and divided roles in a way that felt manageable for each of us. It was a true collaboration. We just made it happen.

In 2022, I felt overwhelmed and helpless from the relentless, ongoing violence committed in our country—not only overt gun violence, but the continued multifaceted violences of anti-Blackness and racism, transphobia and homophobia, gender-based violence, violence and harm done to Disabled people and the exploitation of the environment. We once again felt that something needed to be done and we realized that we already had a model to work with to amplify artists' voices. We want people to mobilize and look to public art as a tool to engage us in dialogue and conversation to promote change. We are using art as a means to reclaim our human rights.

**What is your relationship to art collecting? When working with collectors, what is your approach?**

I work with several corporations, organizations and individuals who are interested in building an art collection—primarily with local artists in whatever part of the country the project is in. Since the pandemic, I do believe the concept of “local” needs to be reevaluated, as many folks have shifted where they live and/or work and their sense of locality may exist in more than one place.

My work is centered on designing an approachable relationship to art collecting. Art is very subjective, so I like to introduce my clients to a vast range of artists' works first and talk to them about process and aesthetics. I have conversations with them about what they are seeing, share each artist's story and identify what it is they respond to. Once I have an understanding of what resonates with them, when it is possible, I invite them to meet artists in the studio or gallery and see the work in person. To me, this is so critical and impacts their experience and understanding of the work tremendously. Meeting an artist and engaging in the story/process of the work can make someone with little to no experience with art open to reflecting on the complexity of how artists

work, think and imagine. An in-person visit helps to break down the wall of contemporary art which can feel quite distancing, alienating and uncomfortable for the majority of people. I work every day to create a more positive and human experience with art, artists and collectors.

**What do you think is the biggest misconception artists have about art collectors, and vice versa?**

It really depends on the experience of the collector and the artist. Many artists and collectors have long-term, wonderful relationships. Some of the misconceptions artists may have about collectors at the start of a new relationship may be that the collector doesn't really understand them or their work. They may have concerns about a collector being picky or trying to direct them as to what colors and materials to use. Pending the artist, they may have concerns that a collector is looking for art to match their furniture rather than be driven by the work itself. They may experience concerns that the collector is interested in collecting for the sake of an investment rather than for the love of the work. A misconception collectors may have about artists is that they are “out there,” “strange,” pretentious or unlike themselves. They may feel that they won't or don't understand artwork and may feel very intimidated by an artist or a work of art. Again, once you bring folks together, these misconceptions tend to dissipate and positive relationships can form pretty quickly.

**Can you tell us about a recent memorable experience you've had working with a local artist on a commission and/or a project?**

Working on Jacob Hashimoto and Olafur Eliasson at Willis Tower was definitely one of the highlights of my career, but both of those artists are not local to Chicago. There are so many incredible projects I have loved working on that it is hard to choose! Last summer (2021), I worked with artist Damon Reed and artist/fabricator Caroline Robe on a mural for an initiative called Chicago's Comeback. The whole initiative, along with working with Damon, was such a meaningful experience. The project was established as a month-long campaign created by Sport for Good Chicago (an initiative of Laureus USA). They reach more than 80,000 young people throughout the city, using sport as a tool for youth development and social change. We invited Damon to create a large mural that reflected this mission and the work was revealed at Wrigley Field with the intent to travel to other NPO member organizations of Sport for Good Chicago.

Most recently, I was hired to serve as an art advisor to E(art)H Chicago to assist with 11 public art initiatives. Pronounced “Earth Art Chicago,” the program is a citywide community-based art initiative to raise awareness, create dialogue and inspire action on climate change, natural resource use and environmental justice.

E(art)H Chicago will highlight local artists and communities directly impacted by industrially polluted corridors, centering voices typically left out of the climate conversation. Citywide display of nearly \$550,000 in funded artworks across 11 Chicago neighborhoods, including downtown, will start in June 2023 and will create an interconnected experience of art and the environment.

**I love that CNL offers resources for artists, providing a valuable professional resource. Do you feel that often artists are unprepared for the professional side of being an artist?**

It isn't that artists are not prepared for the professional side of being an artist (although a fair number of artists may express this), but rather that so much of what we think of as the “business” side of an art practice is incredibly time-consuming and can drastically interfere with an artist's studio practice.

To promote your practice and get your work out in the world takes so much commitment, time and resources. Artists are often working multiple jobs simultaneously while trying to manage their studio practice.

It can feel overwhelming or next to impossible to manage all of the work outside of the studio. I often try to design professional tools and resources that can help align artists with their professional and personal vision to create a sustainable career, however they define it.

I have often considered how I might start another business focused on supporting artists more directly on their work outside of the studio, but I haven't quite identified the ideal model yet!

**What has been the most rewarding part being an art advisor, project manager and educator?**

The most rewarding part of my job is getting to work with artists and arts workers everyday. Sometimes I still cannot believe this is what I get to do for my job. I initially pushed away from pursuing a career in the arts at the start of my career because I couldn't quite envision what it would look like, what the possibilities

were. But I couldn't escape it—it's who I am, a part of my DNA.

Artists have always been my people, my community, and I have always needed them around me. Artists that I work with are so generous and provide so much care and attention to those around them. That type of care is what is going to continue to get us through the challenges we are living with. And if ever there was a case to be made about the importance of the arts, one can examine the past several years.

During all of the complexity and challenges, people looked to the arts to get them through—music, dance, literature, film, visual arts. Art has kept people going in each and every way.

Teaching at the SAIC also feels like such a privilege. The community of artists and administrators that work there are brilliant and I feel so honored to be able to work alongside them everyday.

My students have so much insight and teach me something new each time I share space with them. They, too, bring so much care and attention to our field. I am also fortunate that my classes have also afforded me the opportunity to work with cultural leaders all over the country who broaden the ways I consider the arts and its impact on other sectors.

Not a day goes by that I don't recognize the very unique and privileged opportunities that I have working in this field, and I am eternally grateful for each and every one.

**If you could purchase a piece of art by any artist for your own art collection, who would be the artist?**

Oh, wow.

There are so many works I would love to have in my collection: Nick Cave, Jacob Hashimoto, Mona Hatoum, Doris Salcedo, Brittany Nelson, Martha Tuttle, one of Studio Herron's vessels, Derrick Adams, Jamal Cyrus, Jenny Kendler, Edra Soto, Melissa Leandro, SaraNoa Mark, Judith Geichman, and the list goes on. ♦





# Sahar Hasan Al-louthai

Yemeni-American artist and  
curator based in New York.



See additional work and learn more about the artist at: [www.saharhasanart.com](http://www.saharhasanart.com)  
Image courtesy of Sahar Hasan Al-louthai



# Sahar Hasan Al-louthai

Image courtesy  
Sahar Hasan  
Al-louthai

**Sahar Hasan Al-louthai** is a Yemeni-American artist and curator based in New York. She has exhibited in four solo art shows and numerous collaborative and group shows as well as biennales internationally.

Sahar had to flee the war that started in her homeland in early 2015, but despite all the obstacles, she was able to continue her career as an artist and studied towards an MFA degree in New York. Some of the art awards that she has received since then include the “People’s Choice Award” from 440 Gallery in December 2015, the “Jury Choice Award” from BWAC Gallery in 2017 and the “Special Merit Award” from Light Space Time in 2020, in addition to a certificate from New York state for her achievements in the field of arts.

Her expertise encompasses various mediums and techniques, but she often uses oil paints with additions of acrylic paints, gold leaf, traditional fabrics and stained glasses as a reference to “Qamaria, the windows of the moon”. She strives to create a harmonious combination of realism and expressionism. She combines the elements from her background as well as Islamic art such as calligraphy, architectural patterns and miniature art in her art. However, the core of most of her works revolves around universal themes discussing psychological issues.

Sahar has established a project called Qamaria for Arts, “Your Art is Your Passport” to produce and curate art exhibitions for artists who are suffering the scourge of wars by supporting, exhibiting and representing them in art shows in the United States and other countries.

She curated the first Yemeni art exhibition in New York “Yemen Art Gallery” in December 2021, which was attended by the Yemeni consul, Ali Obadi, the former Democratic Representative of New York’s 11th district, Max Rose and New York assemblywoman, Nathalia Fernandez, who honored Sahar with a certificate of honor from the state. Assemblywoman Fernandez said of the experience, “There was so much that I didn’t know about Yemen, and to see Yemen through its art I felt the love and connection to the homeland.”

Sahar described her goal from this show saying, “This exhibition is the first step in making an artistic revolution by spreading Yemeni and Arab arts and

encouraging the younger generation to adhere to art in the face of the challenges they encounter in Yemen.”

In June, 2022, Sahar opened her fourth solo show “Sailing”, directed by Gül Rengi Art, and headed by Dr. Saja Jana. The exhibition took place on a 31-meter long cruise ship that sailed on the banks of Marmara Sea and the Bosphorus in Istanbul, Turkey.

The “Sailing” exhibition was the first art exhibition to be held on the cruise ship. It was an actual sailing on the sea, as well as an artistic and cultural sailing, through which the attendees dove into the aesthetic and unique elements of Yemeni audio and visual arts. It was a miniature representation of the Yemeni civilization and identity that the artist is proud of as well as a platform from where she wanted to convey the voice of a nation rich in arts that have been marginalized for years due to war and conflicts. Additionally, she aimed to convey the voices of those who’ve been suffering from wars, especially women.

Thirty-seven of the artist’s recent art works were hung between the windows overlooking an amazing view of the Marmara sea. And like most of Sahar’s exhibitions, “Sailing” was not a mere visual display of art works, but an atmosphere imbued with Yemeni identity by engaging the visitor’s senses. Some dances from the Yemeni folklore were performed by a troupe wearing traditional outfits. Yemeni refreshments and Yemeni coffee were served by girls wearing traditional outfits and the exhibition hall was filled with the scent of the famous Adeni incense. The event was attended by the Yemeni ambassador, Yemeni consul, a member of the Istanbul Council, and many important personalities and media figures from different nationalities who praised the uniqueness and importance of such exhibition that build bridges of communication, love and acquaintance between different nations.

Sahar Hasan is planning to open a new art show soon to feature more artists living abroad. She adds, “We need more art to mend the gap created by the conflicts between the individuals in countries that suffered wars, we need to teach the new generation to hold on to art because it’s a powerful tool to get our voices heard and heal our wounds.” ♦

Learn more  
See additional work  
and learn more about  
the artist at: [www.saharhasanart.com](http://www.saharhasanart.com)



# 7 Ways Showing At An Art Fair Can Boost Your Art Career

with Superfine Art Fair



Learn more about the fair at: [www.superfine.world/sell-your-art](http://www.superfine.world/sell-your-art).

Image courtesy of Superfine LA



# Superfine Art Fair

Image courtesy  
Superfine Art Fair

When it comes to career advice, most of the questions we hear from the artists in the Create! Magazine community typically fall into the categories of how to sell more art, gain exposure, and build your professional network as an artist. But what if there was a simple way to do all three? Enter artist-run art fairs like Superfine. In this article, we've partnered with the team behind Superfine Art Fair to bring you the top reasons why exhibiting at an artist-run fair can benefit you and elevate your career!

## 1. In-person connection and feedback with thousands of art appreciators and collectors

Frustrated with stalled growth and poor reach from social media channels? We've all been there. Whereas artists' posts used to receive hundreds or even thousands of likes or impressions in years past, these days, we're lucky if even ten percent of our actual followers see our newest uploads. Signing up for an art fair allows you to cut through the digital noise and get real eyes on your work in person. Forget chasing a few hundred people online when you can have thousands of interested buyers, excited and primed to buy art, at each event. And they'll be able not just to view your art, but also to experience it with you right there ready to engage with them.

## 2. Actual sales both in-fair and post-fair

Expanding on the previous benefit, you just never know who is looking at your posts online or reading your newsletters. They may simply be fans or followers and while we absolutely appreciate support in any form, one key component of Superfine's mission is to help artists build financially lucrative careers. Art fairs like Superfine specifically market to and organize programming meant for those who are serious about attending to discover new artists and buy art. This is your opportunity to take advantage of the fact that your work will be seen by an audience of potential collectors. A Brooklyn-based artist recently shared with fair co-founder Alex Mitow that he sold over twenty pieces at Superfine NYC, which was more than he'd sold in the preceding few years combined!

And the sales don't stop when the fair ends. People who saw your work may refer you to their friends, and connections you made at the show

may circle back to buy art from you weeks, months or even years down the line, both during the fair and afterwards. In addition to sales of works you bring to display at the show, you could also very likely sell other pieces off your website or book commissions both during the fair and afterwards.

## 3. The chance to show your art in person

If you have not yet had the opportunity to work with a gallery or it's been some time since your last exhibition, participating in a fair gives you the space to present your work professionally. You can practice and hone your own personal curatorial skills, which may be of use to you in the future when it comes to organizing your own shows or if you ever wish to step into the role of curator for other artists or institutions.

Don't forget that this is also an incredible and invaluable opportunity for marketing and content creation! Take as many photos and videos as you can so that you can use them on your website, social media channels, email newsletters and more. Having visual content that shows your work in context can often make the difference in closing a sale, especially when it comes to making sales to online clients.

## 4. Resume item

The Superfine team curates each edition to include top local, national and sometimes even international talent as well. Any artist who is selected to be an exhibitor should absolutely add this achievement to their resume. It demonstrates that you are showing up and proactively working to further your career.

## 5. Press features

Part of the marketing for each art fair always includes mass outreach to an array of media outlets in the arts industry and beyond. Make sure that you send your artwork images to the fair's press and public relations contact by their specified deadline so that they can include your materials in their press pitches. Your work may end up on blogs, in magazines, on virtual billboards and social media feeds that you would have not reached otherwise. Superfine estimates that over 50% of the artists who show at one of their fairs receive at least one major media mention.

Learn more  
To secure your place  
at a future edition of  
Superfine Art Fair, visit  
[www.superfine.world/  
sell-your-art](http://www.superfine.world/sell-your-art).



## 6. Email list building

Your newsletter list is an essential asset for your long-term success as an artist. Grow your subscriber base at an art fair by having a notebook where people can write down their emails (check that you can read them before they walk away!), a bowl where visitors can drop their business cards (consider combining this with a giveaway), an iPad where fairgoers can add their addresses to a landing page (you can easily set one up with your preferred email provider) or a QR code that people can scan which links to that same subscriber landing page.

## 7. Networking and developing relationships with other artists

While you're going to be at the fair to sell artwork and meet clients, don't forget to enjoy your time too!

Chat with the artists showing in the booths near you and take the time to do at least one full walk around the fair to see all of the other amazing artist exhibitors. You could very well meet your new art BFF!

The artists you meet could become the people you turn to when you need support or advice, when you need inspiration and when you need accountability, or they could be the connection to a new professional opportunity.

Give your fellow artists a follow on Instagram and stay in touch. Maybe you'll even partner up and share a bigger booth together at a future fair.

Ready to take the leap and invest in an art fair to boost your career? Created by artists for artists, Superfine Art Fair has spent the past seven years developing the best no-commission art fair model for independent artists who want to take control of their career, build their collector list, and make a real, sustainable income from their art.

Throughout more than 20 fairs in seven cities, founders Alex Mitow and James Miille have focused on breaking down traditional art world barriers to create opportunities for artists to build thriving art careers. They provide valuable business resources, high production standards, and strategic marketing to make each edition a success. ♦

Image courtesy  
Superfine Art Fair



Learn more  
To secure your place  
at a future edition of  
Superfine Art Fair, visit  
[www.superfine.world/  
sell-your-art](http://www.superfine.world/sell-your-art).

# Curated Section

Enjoy a vibrant and diverse selection of artists by guest curator Dina Brodsky for issue #33. Dina Brodsky is a contemporary realist miniaturist, painter and curator. She was educated at University of Massachusetts Amherst and the New York Academy of Art, where she received her MFA. She lives and works in New York City. She has taught both privately and for several institutions, including the Truro Center for the Arts at Castle Hill, the Long Island Academy of Fine Art and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Website: [www.dinabrotsky.com](http://www.dinabrotsky.com)

Instagram: [@dinabrotsky](https://www.instagram.com/dinabrotsky)





ON THE FRONT COVER

## *Nadine Robbins*

### Cover Artist

Nadine Robbins is an internationally known artist who works in a hyperrealist style, painting nudes, portraits, and still lifes of oysters.

Named one of BuzzFeed's "Top 100 Figurative Painters Working Right Now" in 2017 and 2018, Robbins has shown her paintings throughout the country and in Europe. She is represented in prestigious private and museum collections, including the Howard A. & Judith Tullman Collection in Chicago, the Count-Ibex Collection in Germany, and the Meam in Barcelona. Robbins' work has been shown at several premier galleries for hyper-realist art, including Louis K. Meisel Gallery, Anthony Brunelli Fine Art, MADoran, Robert Lange Gallery, and RJD Gallery.

In addition, the Rockwell Museum in Corning, New York (a Smithsonian affiliate) and the European Museum of Modern Art (MEAM) in Barcelona, Spain, have all selected her paintings for exhibition. In 2021, The Arnot Museum, Elmira, NY, invited her to exhibit her entire body of current artwork to be included in their tri-annual exhibit called "3 Americans: Contemporary masters of realism."

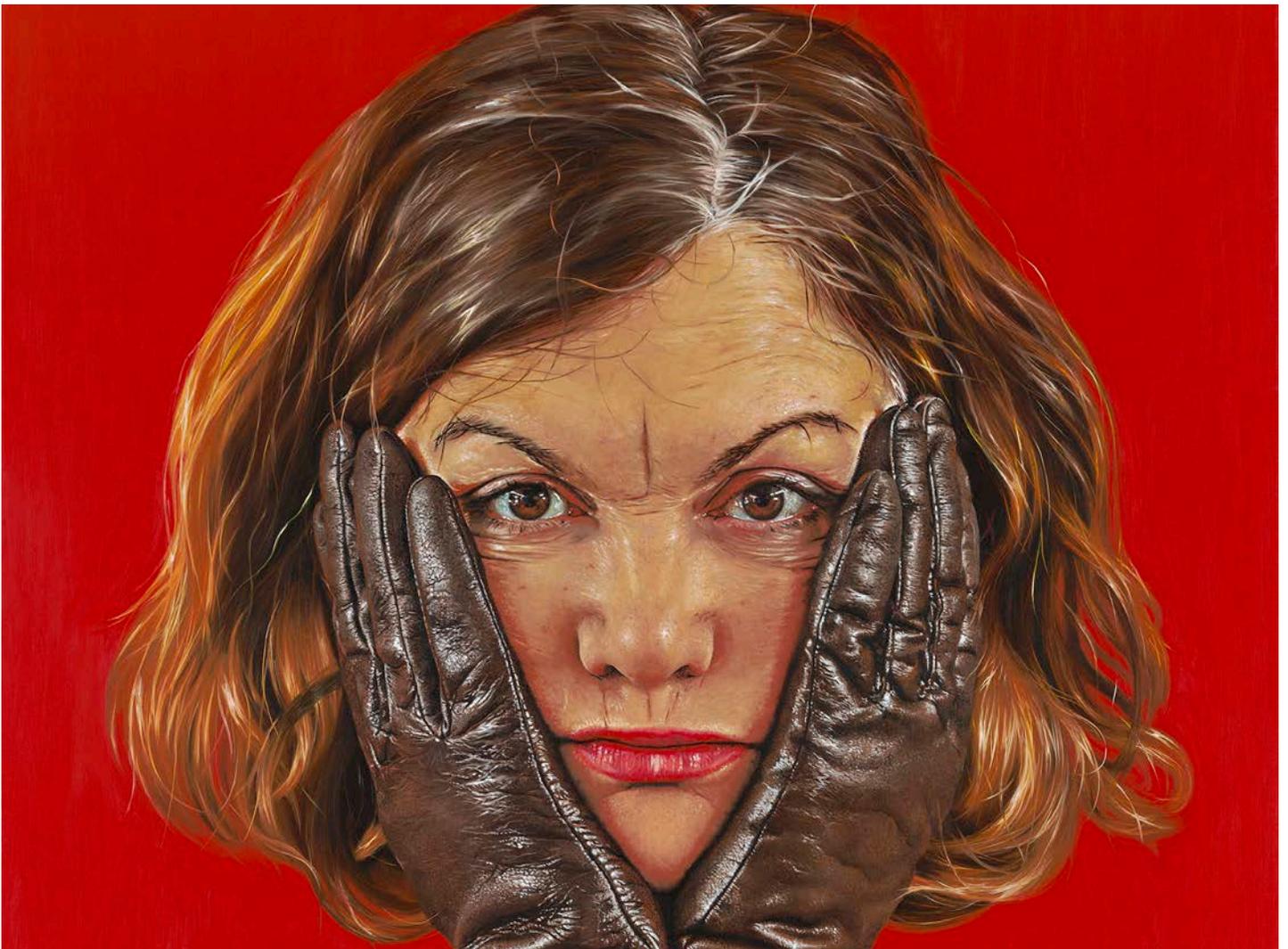
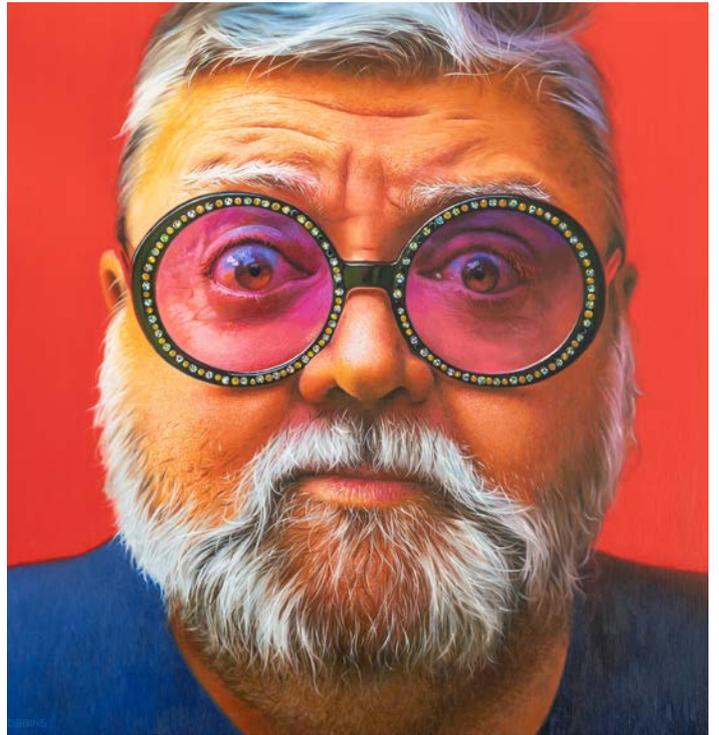
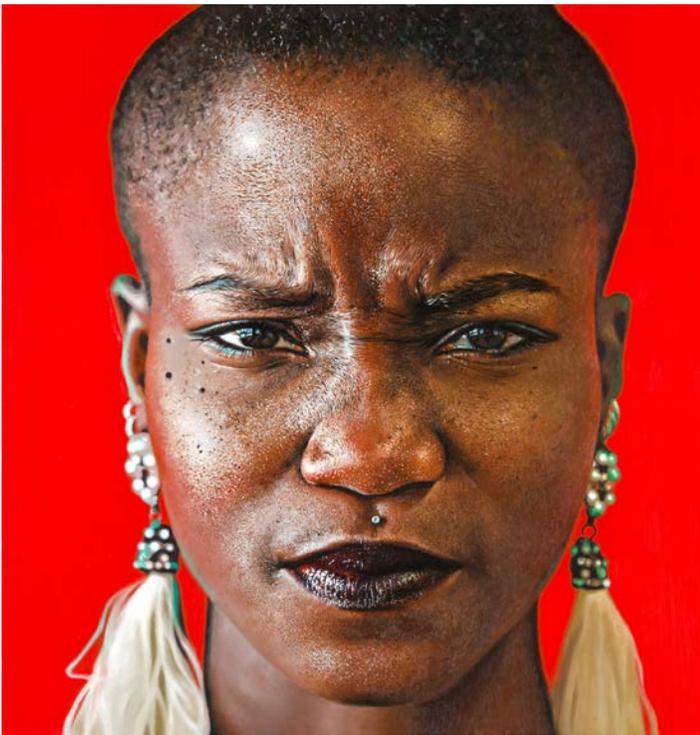
**Website**

**[nadinerobbinsart.com](http://nadinerobbinsart.com)**

**Instagram**

**@nadinerobbinsartist**





# Interview with Nadine Robbins

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

My mother grew up in France, fell in love with Picasso and Renoir, and began creating artwork using oil paints that the artists she admired used in their creations. When I started to paint, I only used oils because my mother was fond of them. However, in college, I experimented with gouache and acrylics. And although I liked the results, I missed the smooth, buttery, and intense colors of oil paint that I loved to spread around a canvas. One of my favorite aspects of the medium is it doesn't naturally dry quickly. As a result, I can create exciting textures using wet-on-wet paint strokes, overlapping them to create something new in the gap. Not to mention, oil paint is fantastic for flesh tones.

## What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

I hope my audience can see my passion for boldly presenting women's strength using defiant conceptual undertones. I want the relationship between the painting and the viewer to produce an emotional dialogue. I want to think that my paintings demand attention whether the viewer wants to accept them or not.

## Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

I draw inspiration from the artists I admire and the people around me. For example, Cindy Sherman and her ability to conceptually create images of people we feel we know, Chuck Close's large photo-realistic heads, or the composition of a Richard Avedon portrait. Further, the people around me provide an enormous

amount of inspiration. Siblings, friends, and artists have always encouraged me. However, my husband's and son's enthusiasm for life is the most inspiring.

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

What keeps me going is the privilege to create on my terms. When I'm having a bad week, I remind myself to be grateful for how lucky I am to be able to paint for a living. This privilege and gratitude, along with a small group of inspiring artists, are my creative force.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

The cultural climate and the strength of women have always been the driving force behind my work. My intention was to express my emotions and opinions through others in my figurative work. However, my goals have shifted. Realizing that I was no longer enjoying my process due to burnout and fear. Something had to change. I decided to take three months away from all artistic endeavors and social media to find new, more satisfying ways to express myself.

My search for a more rewarding artistic practice has led me to create a new body of work that is elevating the strength of women even further while introducing more personal interests such as music and perhaps typography. The return of concepts, the introduction to more context, and the simplification of my process are new goals that will enrich my work. I am rediscovering the fun of creating without fear and experimenting. I'm excited to see what continues to develop in my Hudson Valley studio. ♦

# Amanda Kavanagh

Website: [amandakavanagh.com](http://amandakavanagh.com)

Instagram: [@amanda.kavanagh](https://www.instagram.com/amanda.kavanagh)

Amanda Kavanagh grew up in the Hudson River village of Dobbs Ferry NY. She received a BFA in illustration from Syracuse University. After many years working as a graphic designer in Manhattan, she decided to return to her passion – painting and drawing. She has been exhibiting her work in various east coast galleries since 2006. She currently lives in Brooklyn NY.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

As a landscape oil painter, I am interested in exploring themes of transition and contrast in nature, and capturing often overlooked moments in everyday scenes. For me, painting is a form of meditation and, if I am lucky, an opportunity to witness that fleeting moment between the ordinary and extraordinary.



# Amy Laskin

Website: [amyclaskin.com](http://amyclaskin.com)

Amy Laskin has residency in New Hampshire, but her artistic journey led her to the rural Blue Mountains of Jamaica where she practices her art. After fulfilling a contract as a Peace Corps Volunteer in Jamaica, she found a studio in the rural mountainous area to continue her practice. Laskin's passion is sparked by observing her intimate natural surroundings and building a pictorial archive of images that fascinate her.

“I'm eager to celebrate nature's mysterious wonders as I ponder how to control illusion and describe atmosphere. I assemble disparate images using the visual relationship to create new contexts for the forms. I'm fascinated with decorative abundance, realistic renderings of imaginary compositions and fine detail. I build up fine layers of paint on smooth surfaces exposing clothed fantastical female figures bursting with floral abundance. This brings our focus to our past and present, nature, gender and identity while celebrating women kind/humankind's intersection with the natural world”.





# Interview with Amy Laskin

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## What initially drew you to your medium of choice?

As a child I frequented The Philadelphia Museum of Art and wandered the vast collections, admiring all of it, but the paintings especially drew me in. I wanted to have a career in painting, but when I went to art school for my BFA I was introduced to clay in the ceramics department. They had an exceptional department and as soon as I got my hands into the luscious tactile material...I fell in love. I went on to get my MFA from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and was enrolled in the ceramics department.

Once there however, I was excited by the faculty in the painting and drawing department, so I took extra classes from them in drawing. Immediately upon graduation, I didn't have a job or a kiln so I just started painting. Painting was more immediate and involved less process than I was doing with my clay work. After some years I became more skillful and known as a painter. Eventually, many years later, I did buy a kiln but I was a little rusty by then, however I do still love working with clay from time to time. Paint originally was my medium by default but it is so satisfying and versatile to use, it quickly became my first love.

## What aspect of your art do you hope comes across to your audience?

I want my audience to connect on an emotional as well as a cerebral level. The imagery amalgamates fantastical female forms, floral bursts, and the ambient surroundings; hopefully this brings our focus to gender identity and humankind's intersection with the natural world. I want my audience to experience healing vibes while also feeling like it's an enigma.

I hope I can convey to my audience my fascination with the wondrous mystery of nature. I often incorporate snippets of historical clothing so I'd like my audience to get a sense of our past identities blended with a contemporary present.

## Who inspires you in life whether it be artistic or otherwise?

I am completely inspired by Dr. Irene Pepperberg because of her astonishing and tireless research in animal language and cognition, especially in relation to parrots. Because of her extensive and exhaustive research of Alex the African Grey for 30 years, we learned about the intelligence and cognitive abilities of these birds. She revolutionized our understanding! Alex could understand the differences between sizes, colors, shapes, and could express verbally his preferences in food. He could tell you he didn't want the peanut but did want the banana. He could tell you when he wanted a bath. He had uncanny ability to understand numbers and understood the concept of "zero", something only a 4-year-old human being can grasp. She also is very dedicated to wildlife conservation. I am awestruck by the work she has done.

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

I find that I have to keep my mind open as an observer. I need to carefully observe my natural surroundings, collect artifacts of nature so I can study them later. I hunt for pictorial images of my fascination and archive them. I like to keep abreast of what my peers are doing and visit studios and see their work as much as possible. I try to attend exhibitions and museums when I can. I make a habit of going online to look at work I can't see in person. The creative drive comes when I can experiment with a new material or idea, which needs to happen when my energy starts to wane.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

Aside from doing work that challenges me and continues to grow and change, my goal is to grow and widen my viewing audience. I find it hard to thrive in an environment where I feel I am creating in a vacuum so feedback from others is necessary. As long as I am able to make work that I like, I want to share it as widely as possible. ♦

# Arline Mann

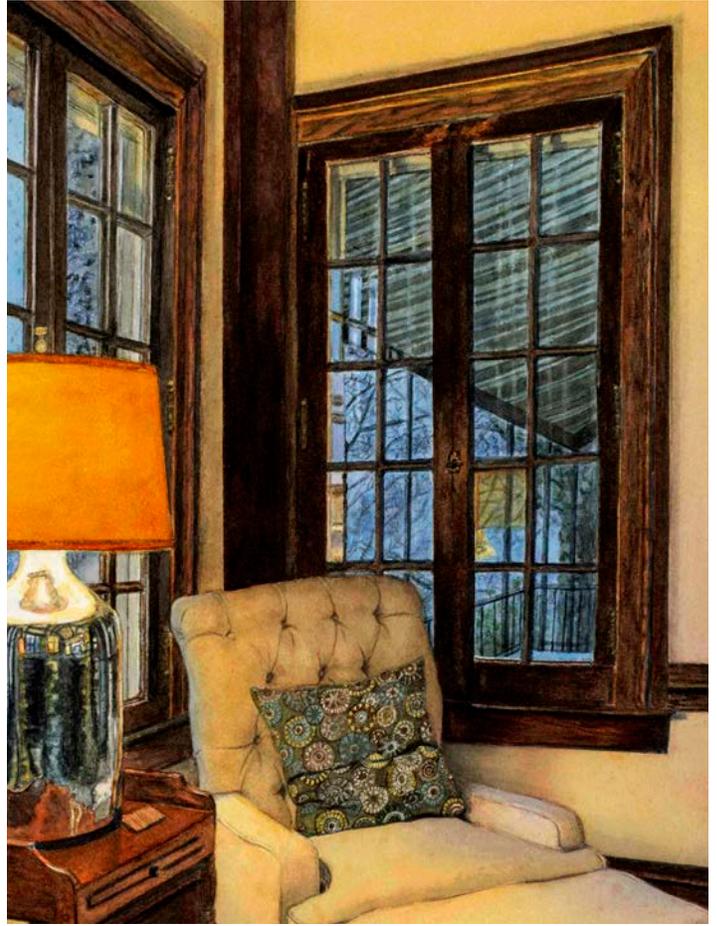
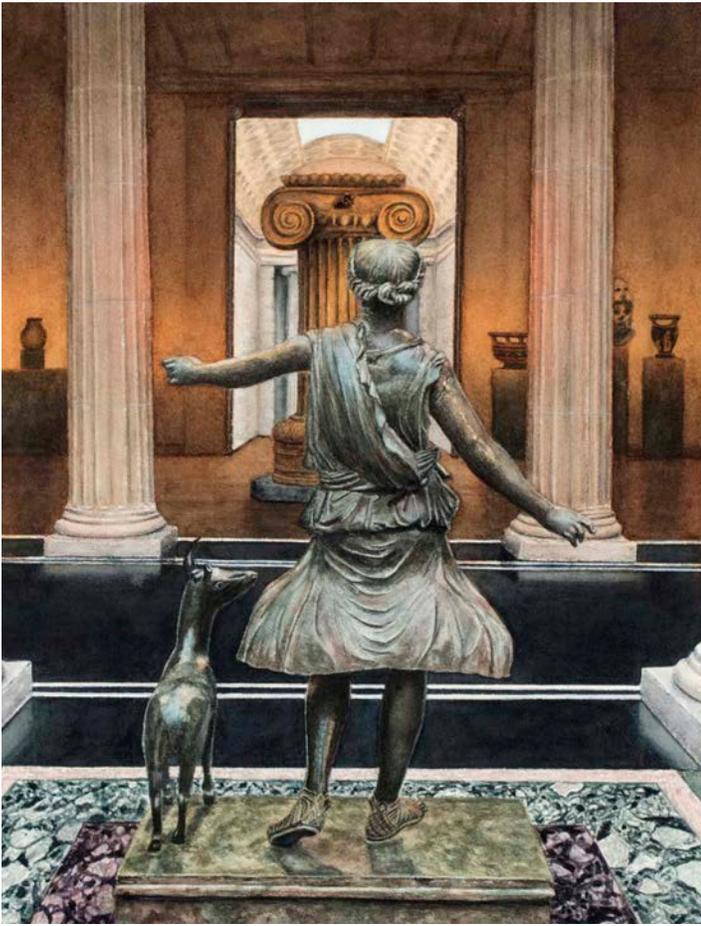
Website: [arlinemann.com](http://arlinemann.com)

Arline Mann began drawing and painting from square one in 2013 at age 65. Deeply serious about her work, Mann has studied primarily in private, with master teachers Frederick Brosen and Costa Vavagiakis.

Mann's work has been included in many group exhibitions (including the 2022 American Watercolor Society annual) in New York and elsewhere, in gallery and museum invitationals and juried art fairs, and is included in the corporate collection of Goldman, Sachs & Co. Mann had a solo exhibition at The Association for Visual Arts (Chattanooga, TN) and her work will be sponsored by a major New York City corporation in the near future. Her work has won a number of awards, including first prize for water media for her submission to the 2020 Catharine Lorillard Wolf Art Club annual exhibition and has been highlighted in Gallery and Studio Arts Journal, Studio Visit Magazine and the Chattanooga Times Free Press.

Mann lives and works both in New York City and on a magical mountaintop in Chattanooga, Tennessee.







#### ARTIST STATEMENT

I am a watercolor artist. My watercolors contemplate light and shadow in personal spaces and on cherished objects.

Building on the traditions of Nineteenth-Century Danish painters such as Christen Kobke and Constantin Hansen, and on watercolorists such as Anders Zorn and John Stuart Ingle, my work seeks clarity, calm and joy, and projects a benevolent world. In my watercolors, exterior light stresses the beauty, comfort and shelter of the interior elements – a distinctive room, familiar objects such as glass, books, and soap – always with a sense of human occupation. With the use of under drawing and multiple paint layers, the work takes a different direction from softer, more flowing watercolor.

# Bryant Portwood

Website: **[bryantportwood.com](http://bryantportwood.com)**

Instagram: **[@bryantportwoodart](https://www.instagram.com/bryantportwoodart)**

Facebook: **[Bryant Portwood Art](https://www.facebook.com/BryantPortwoodArt)**

Bryant Portwood is a contemporary figurative painter living and working out of Charlotte, NC. Bryant received his BA in studio art with an art history minor from Centre College and his MFA in painting with an anatomy minor from the New York Academy of Art. He has exhibited work along the East coast from Sugarlift Gallery in New York City to the Miami Oriental as part of Miami Art Week. He received the Founder's Scholarship at Centre College and the Academy Scholar Award at NYAA.





# Interview with Bryant Portwood

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

I love the physicality of oil paint. It's a very malleable medium where it can be pushed or pulled until you are satisfied. When I tell people that I am an oil painter some of the common responses often revolve around the lengthy dry time or the idea that using oil paint is difficult. I would argue that oil painting is an extremely forgiving medium.

If something is wrong, it can easily be scraped off of the canvas and repainted. To be honest, a lot of my process is trial and error. With oil especially, you have the ability to get some really beautiful and high chroma color mixtures, which is something I haven't been able to mimic with other mediums. The hardest part of painting is practicing and experimenting with your materials until you are familiar with how different colors will interact or how the transparency or opaqueness of a paint can come into play.

## What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

There are two aspects of my work that I would like to come across to the audience. The first is my use of color and the second is the quirky nature of my paintings. I think the combination of the two really serves as an extension of myself and my own interests. At surface value, my paintings can hold a shock value with bright colors and unorthodox subjects. I think there is a quirky sense of humor in my work that can draw the audience in. It is only after that initial shock that the time, technical skill, and other details come into focus.

## Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

I draw inspiration from my own experiences and interests. A bulk of my work revolves around nostalgia for my childhood, and I am very lucky to have a partner who supports these weird interests. For example, I

have eight more Furbies than the average American. Artistically, I wouldn't say I have a list of go-to artists. I am always looking at artists from different periods as well as artists working in different genres and mediums. It is always fresh to take bits and pieces from other creatives and try to implement them into my own work. Some of the artists that I am currently looking at for inspiration include Greg Manchess, Kai Lun Qu, and Julie Beck where I am basically looking into paint application, color, and composition.

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

Creating feels like something I have to do. I paint every day and feel physically ill if I do not. Even my hobbies revolve around creating, where I do everything from building models to making replica helmets. Finding a creative drive has never been difficult for me. Yes, sometimes I may have artist's block or a lack of motivation to work on a particular project, but I always have so many different things in the works that I can shift my focus to something else. While, there may be moments of doubt or instances where I question myself as an artist, I continue to create. Again, I feel like it is something that I have to do.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

My primary goal is to reach a point where I can comfortably paint full time. I currently split my time between painting and teaching college courses. My ultimate goal has stayed constant, but the path to becoming a successful artist is always changing. I think nowadays social media plays a significant role in the arts. While it does not make or break an artist, it can be a useful tool in marketing and gaining exposure. When I first started, my only goal was to get into gallery shows, and now I have been able to extend my reach by being included in art festivals, online shows, publications, and social media features. What I've come to notice is that there is no set path. There are multiple ways to get your art in front of people. ♦

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# Camille Myles

Website: [camillemylesart.com](http://camillemylesart.com)

Instagram: [@camillemylesart](https://www.instagram.com/camillemylesart)

Camille Myles is a French-Canadian multi-disciplinary contemporary artist and conservation activist exploring imagery through portraiture rooted in gender roles, identity, motherhood and the environment. Working in media including collage, encaustic, painting, sculpture, printmaking and installation, she creates art that tells a story linked to childhood, self-reflection and our impact on this world.

Trained classically in fine arts, archaeology and conservation, she received a visual arts diploma from Dawson College (2001) in Montreal, a Bachelor's degree in Fine Arts (2004) from Ottawa University and a Masters Degree in Heritage Conservation from Carleton University (2008).

Constantly re-imagining herself and pushing her own boundaries, she has also pursued an engaging career as an archeologist in England, a conservation professional in Rome and Park Superintendent. She's worked at museums, artist run centres and non-profit advocacy organizations, which has informed her artistic practice. In 2012, Camille was honoured to receive the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal. She was also a finalist of the prestigious RBC Canadian Art New Painting Competition (2002). Being drawn to the power of public art as a social community conversation, the artist has been exploring murals (2022) and large-scale public art sculptural installations in Midland (2021) and in Penetanguishene (2020). Originally from Gatineau, Quebec, she now lives along the shores of Georgian Bay in Ontario with her husband and three young children.

She is currently exhibiting her work at BHA gallery in the international group show "Like a Mother", curated by Erika B Hess. She is planning a residency in June at Studio H Canada in Victoria BC and a solo exhibition with Art Mums United.

She is preparing for a solo show at Quest Art Gallery in Midland Ontario in Spring 2023.



# Interview with Camille Myles

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

I've always been drawn to sculpture, found objects and working with clay, ever since art school and afterwards when working as an archaeologist. I'm attracted to things that have a history, either known to me or something found, where I imagine how they were loved and used.

My recent pieces, derive from garbage, found objects and nature, combining them with materials that speak to me and feel almost uncomfortable. I seek the thrill of finding a perfect object in a vintage shop or on the side of the road, then sit to re-imagine it by questioning why I was attracted to it and what it can become. I find the discomfort of "not knowing" what to do, but trust an idea will come feeds my creativity.

I use reflective materials as a common thread to link my ideas together to bring cohesiveness so I can feel free when I find something new. These objects interact with the viewer, tell a story and seem precarious and precious.

### **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

In my art practice, I'm inspired by the natural world around me and its precarity -- constant change and threats to our environment shape how I see the world. I'm interested in imagery and landscapes that remind us that our time on this Earth is finite, that everything comes back to a natural state of being. We all need to listen a little more closely to the pleas of our natural world.

Whether working with reflective materials in large-scale public art projects in sculptural installations or capturing the essence and complexities of a place through painting and drawing, my work is layered with meaning, history and textures. As a conservation activist and visual artist, art that speaks to its environment and draws the viewer in as an active participant, is of particular interest to me. I use elements that combine an interest in the history of the place and its tie to the environment. I like to challenge the viewer's perspective, incorporating components that appear to defy gravity, trick the eye, and offer elements that are ever-changing. Through reflections and distortions, my work grounds the spectator in the present, encouraging each viewer to see themselves as part of, not separate from, the story it tells. I encourage the viewer to "play" with art.

### **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

One of the first installations I saw at a young age was "Forty Part Motet" by Janet Cardiff and George Bures Miller at the National Gallery of Canada. Speakers were arranged in a chapel space where a choir was singing unison. That work taught me that art is an emotional conversation with the audience, an experience. From then on, I wanted to create freely in my own voice. Another artist that has really inspired my work is Louise Bourgeois. I find her work intriguing, very personal and full of storytelling. I aspire to create monumental and brave work without any fear of how it will be received by others. Recently, I was commissioned to create a public art sculpture with another artist and my work was compared to Louise, which was a highlight of my career.

I also find a lot of comfort and joy to be a part of artist communities either online or in my small town, to work out ideas, share concerns, and fight that constant imposter syndrome. On a personal level, my family, especially my three young kids, inspire me every day. Their curiosity and sense of play is contagious. Recently, I've let go and involved them in my practice as being a mother is part of my creative story.

### **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I get really excited when I share my work and someone comes to me to talk about it, someone feels connected to what I'm saying through my art. Often, through talking about my art, I get more ideas and my creativity explodes. My best strategy to get out of creative block is to feel the healing power of nature during a forest walk. I get my best ideas while hiking in silence and plein air painting in my sketchbook. This year, I had the opportunity to work on my practice at an art residency in on Vancouver Island and it sparked so much in me. I would hike for hours, visit old growth forests and logging sites to collect natural charcoal, then go back to the studio and experiment. Because of this, I was able to present two bodies of work in different exhibitions and have been invited to join the Broken Forest Art Collective.

Giving myself time to think is a must. I've been journaling all my ideas and constantly sketch out concepts in my sketchbook, which is with me everywhere I go. Yoga, meditation, and good sleep also really helps. Recently, I realized that being an artist is also about connecting and learning from others, so I'm also seeking support through mentorship and coaching groups.

### **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My life has been full of twists and turns. All my experiences have shaped how I see the world today. When I was twenty, I was a finalist for the Canadian New Painting Competition, which was fantastic but completely overwhelming. The pressure was on. After art school, I really didn't understand how to become an artist and the myth of the starving artist was real. Most of the successful artists I knew were still struggling financially and were mostly men. Before the advent of social media, I thought I needed an art gallery to "make it" and present my work. But after many rejections, I lost my confidence then switched to work a 9-5 job. My art practice became more of a hobby.

After a side career as a conservation activist, I now know that I'm meant to share my passion for art and my creativity with my family, friends, and community. In order to support my art practice, I'm looking to spark that creative energy with others through art experiences and events in the future.

As for my art, I would enjoy creating conversations with my art through residencies, exhibition opportunities, and public art installations. One day, I would also enjoy sharing what I've learnt with mentees. ♦

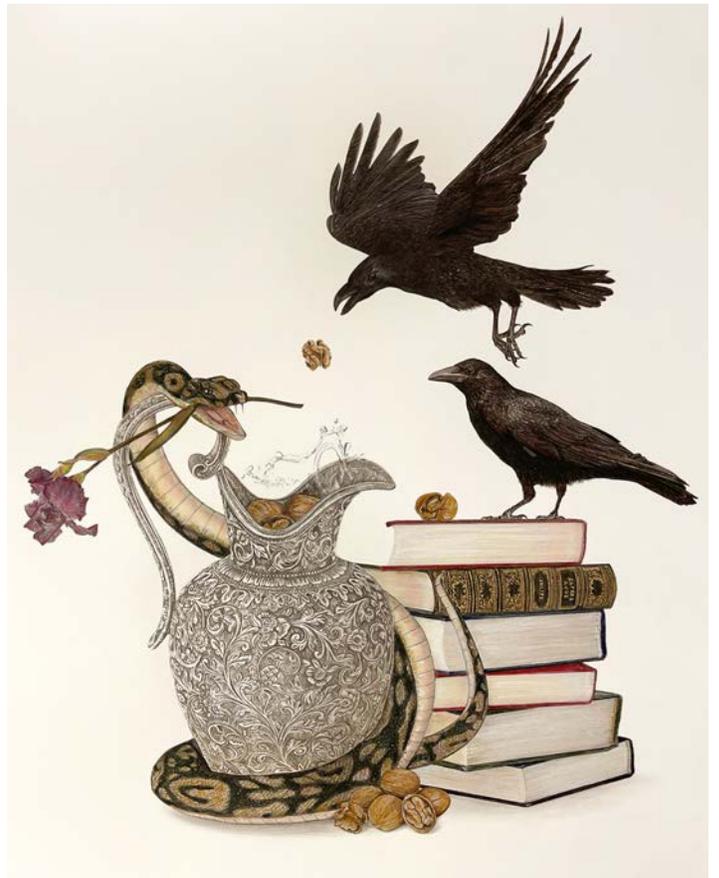
# Charisma Panchapakesan

Website: [charismapanch.com](http://charismapanch.com)

Instagram: [@charismapanch](https://www.instagram.com/charismapanch)

Charisma Panchapakesan's collagelike drawings combine subjects and scales to create narratives playful in tone and highly naturalistic in style. Her curious juxtapositions of animals, objects, and spaces are replete with symbolism and metaphor while remaining understandable and familiar. Holding two professional degrees in the field of Architecture, she combines her knowledge of precise technical drawing with a sensitive hand to create relatable works with quiet humour.





# Interview with Charisma Panchapakesan

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

From my training as an architect, I have learned to use drawing as a tool for communication. Each work begins by organizing the composition, lineweights, and values, and every mark made has a purpose. I enjoy experimenting with lots of different media, but even when I use a paintbrush, I use it as I would a pencil; it is just how I feel most comfortable communicating my ideas.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I try to make art with a narrative that people can connect with. I hope that my audience can enjoy the quiet humor I try to express within my works.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I draw inspiration from many places. My South Asian-Canadian background has influenced my use of wildlife in my works, as animals play such an important role in Indian mythology. As an architect, the urban

environment I live in constantly gives me new ideas. Artistically, I am inspired by the paintings from the Renaissance and Baroque eras and the focus towards naturalism in the works. And lastly, I take inspiration from my children and often try to insert elements of play into my pieces.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I have made a habit of drawing every day, whether it is for work or pleasure. Sometimes, drawing can be an escape and a way to relax; other times it is a way to feel productive and satisfied. I usually work on many pieces at once and try to move through them quickly so that I can constantly feel challenged.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

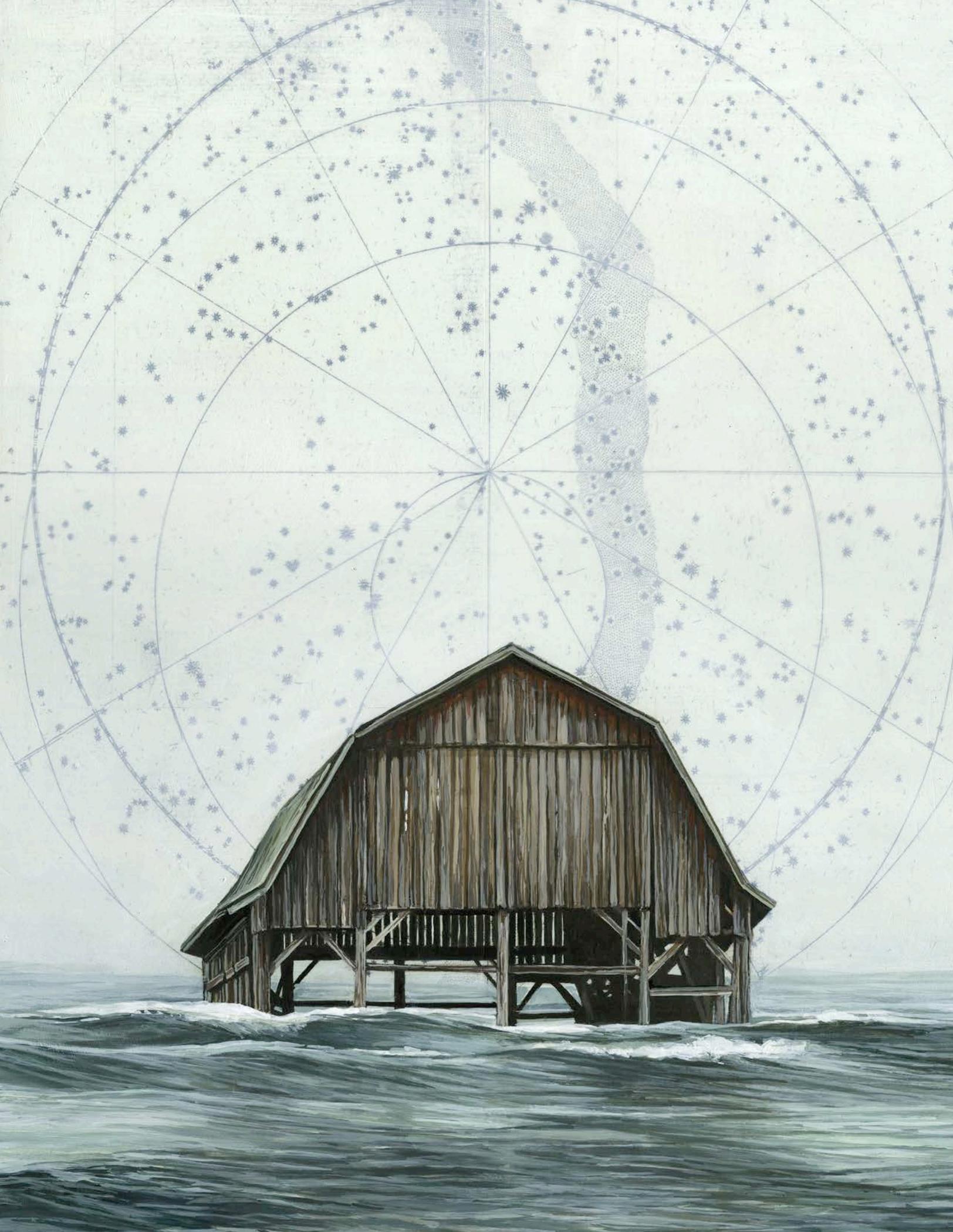
When I was starting my artistic career, I spent a lot of time documenting the world around me through my drawings. Today, however, I am less of a passive observer and seek to create my own narratives in my work. I have always endeavored to create art that I find beautiful, both for its own virtue and to enhance the meanings of the stories I try to tell. ◆

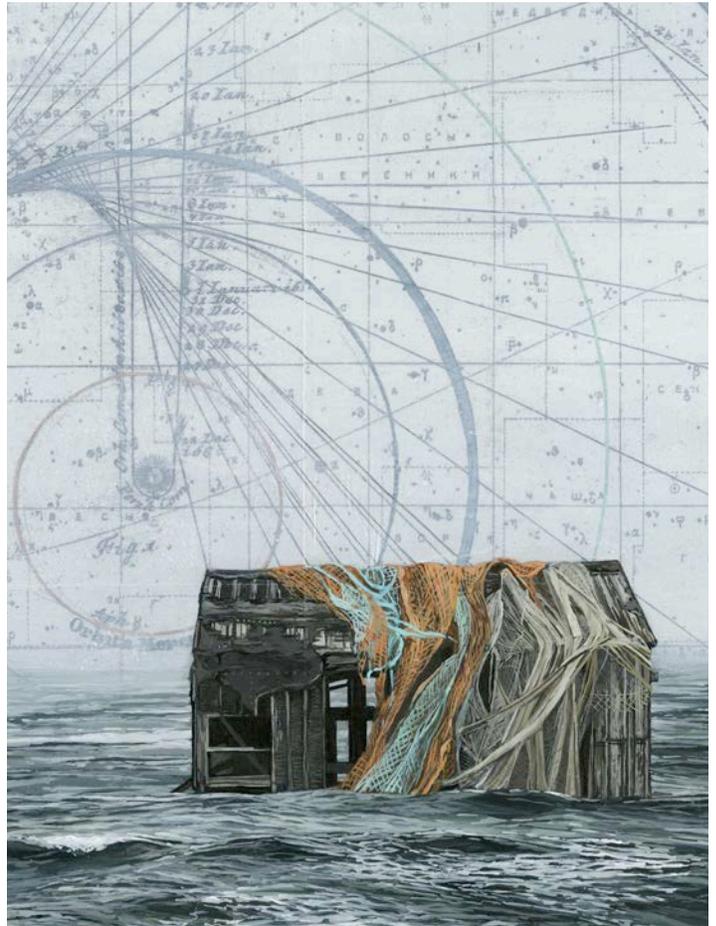
# Christina Keith

Website: [christinakeithstudios.com](http://christinakeithstudios.com)

Christina is a multidisciplinary artist and high school art educator who creates and teaches outside of Minneapolis, Minnesota. Surrounded by woods, wetlands, and lakes, Christina draws visual inspiration from her local surroundings and travels. Within her painting process, Christina uses an image transfer method to embed a wide array of maps, charts, and text, amidst multiple layers of paint.

Christina enjoys creating custom work for both private and corporate clients and has gallery representation in Minnesota, Wisconsin, New Hampshire, Maine, and North Carolina. She has received multiple regional and national awards for her paintings and was one of three recipients of the Sam and Adele Golden Foundation Residency for Art Educators in 2019.





**ARTIST STATEMENT**

My paintings represent the relationships that exist between place, memory, and the passing of time. Within my pieces, I aim to create a meditative space for the viewer to pause and reflect on their connections between location and memory. As a Minnesota native, much of my visual inspiration comes from familiar, local bodies of water as well as my travels to Lake Superior and the east and west coasts.

Across series of work, I am interested in capturing the dualistic qualities of water, ranging from a calming and tranquil element to a humbling, powerful force. I incorporate a variety of regional, celestial, and historical maps and documents within my paintings as a nod to the enduring, permanent presence of water within our individual and collective experiences. I enjoy the challenge associated with pairing calculated, graphic imagery with organic, hand-painted brushstrokes and carefully consider placement and opacity so that one component does not overpower the other.

My artmaking process is methodical and largely introspective, and my hope is that my finished work may act as “portholes” or catalysts of sorts, transporting viewers back to past moments and emotions previously encountered.

# Elizabeth Barick Fall

Website: **[lizbarickfall.com](http://lizbarickfall.com)**

Michigan based mixed media artist, Elizabeth Barick Fall, uses photography, found objects, encaustic wax, and other materials to create layered and nuanced works of art that speak to social and environmental themes.

She holds a BFA from the University of Michigan, and an MFA in Metalsmithing from Cranbrook Academy of Art. In addition to practicing and exhibiting her work, she is the founder and director of trustArt studios and Barickuda Gallery in Ann Arbor. ([trustartstudios.com](http://trustartstudios.com)) She works in large and small scale, incorporating various combinations of found and collected objects, her own photographs, and encaustic painting techniques. The Midwest landscape and lifestyle strongly resonate in her imagery and materials. The content and imagery in Barick Fall's work is often drawn from themes of nature, nostalgia, memory, growth/decay, tension/harmony, the environment and the female experience.

Barick Fall's attention to craft and careful, creative methodology are evident in her subtle manipulations of form, but the power of her work lies in its content. Through her sensitively crafted objects, Elizabeth Barick Fall provokes, connects, and communicates with the viewer. While exploring societal questions, her work remains intuitive and personal, reflecting her life as a maker, a woman, a Midwesterner.



# Interview with Elizabeth Barick Fall

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I started out as an artist with a love of metalwork, sculpture, and photography and I did my MFA in metalsmithing. I love working with so many different materials and I have amassed quite a collection of stuff over the years in addition to thousands of photographic images that I have taken. I've always been a 3D thinker and maker and being able to utilize and learn about the various properties of different materials and how to combine them physically and conceptually is very exciting to me. After learning a bit about encaustic medium a few years ago, I found it offered the opportunity for me to integrate my photo images with 3D materials. It was like the perfect opportunity to combine all of my resources, which ultimately led me to the work I am making now, and to embracing that I am truly a mixed media artist.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I am very purposeful and deliberate with the materials, composition, details, and content of my work. My intent is that those aspects of the pieces will engage the audience so they will take a deeper look and consideration of what they are seeing. I always hope to make enough of a connection with the viewer to offer a new outlook to that which may be familiar, and/or to open the possibility of looking at things in a new way.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Artistically, a few artists whose work I have always admired include Louise Bourgeois, Kiki Smith, Joseph Cornell, Ann Hamilton, Andy Goldsworthy, Anish

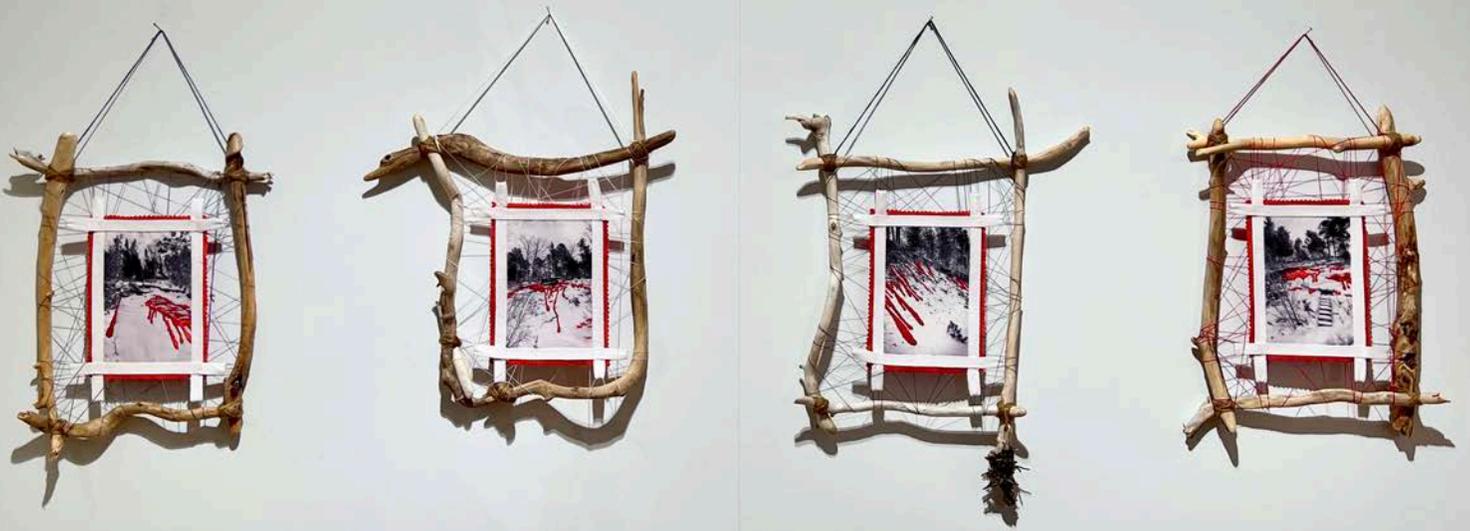
Kapoor, and Yayoi Kusama. I also have a wonderful community of inspiring artist friends whose support and encouragement are truly gifts. Certainly, my family has always been a huge force. My parents were wonderful role models and super supportive of my artistic endeavors, and I always want to be the best version of myself that I can be for my spouse and our four daughters.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I find it really exciting when I am able to turn ideas into reality. I'm sort of a compulsive creative problem solver. I always look at every angle of every challenge, in art as well as in day-to-day issues that arise, whether I want to or not. This is great most of the time, but to be honest, it can also be a problem if I allow myself to get too bogged down in it to be productive. I tend to work in fits and spurts instead of practicing a regular schedule and a deadline is a really great motivator/focusing agent for me. I have not always appreciated that about myself, but that is the way my mind has works, so I've come to accept it and actually embrace it as I've gotten older.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My goals have changed over the years. After grad school, I intended to pursue the teaching/academic art realm, but my path took me elsewhere after I started my family and chose to put my focus on them for several years rather than on my career. Now I am focused on a reboot as a full-time artist with the goal of finding exhibition opportunities and collectors that are a good fit for my work. ♦



#### ARTIST STATEMENT

My work ranges from simple meditations on nature and quiet contemplation of moments in time, to commentary on a range of contemporary social, political and cultural issues. The environment, reproductive freedom and the intersectionality of social justice issues are often the basis for the content driven series of my work.

By utilizing a variety of materials and methods, each piece is fueled by the intrinsic meaning of the materials and methods I choose to create each piece. Though the subjects, imagery and techniques I use are widely variable, the methodology, attention to detail, intentional craftsmanship, a relationship between the materials, form and content, and a deliberate consideration of every element, can be found in all of my work. I work with passion and regard for craftsmanship, and a deep consideration of the context and inspiration within the materials themselves.

# Eva Llorens

Website: [evallorens.cat](http://evallorens.cat)

Eva Llorens is a Catalan artist based in Hamilton (NZ). She's best known for her enigmatic paintings of objects, people and landscapes. There is a dreamlike quality to her paintings of flowers. They offer a sense of the familiar, testaments of daily existence and comfort, exquisitely executed. Llorens encourages a reflective approach and tempts you to your own visual interpretation.

She received a Fine Arts Degree from Barcelona University, Spain. Eva's work has been subjected to solo exhibitions in Spain, France, the US, and recently in NZ.

Utilising the Japanese aesthetic of wabi sabi, Eva Llorens paints the transient beauty and natural aging of glorious blooms. There is a timeless sense of joy and hope these floral portraits evoke. Rather than produce anatomical flower paintings, for Eva Llorens it is far more important to capture the quality, the feeling, and the spirit of the flowers. Her striking paintings symbolize a brief existence of picked plants and their fleeting beauty. The flowers are in glorious, exuberant bloom, or just past. Their furled forms animated by the abstract background of paint behind them. The surface feels still live with the artist's touch.



# Interview with Eva Llorens

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I usually paint with oils on linen canvas attached to panels. I love the oil unctuousness, richness, and also quality of the linen. Working with them on a firm substrate like a board allows me to work hard, scratch, and partially remove the colors as I wish. I love the Pompeia paintings, and with this technique, I am able to explore them.

Nonetheless, I enjoy discovering new mediums and changing the work process completely. For me, what's important is to discover new ways to express myself.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

There are three aspects that I'm always thinking of when I'm painting: Is there beauty? Is there depth? Is there mystery? Beauty is something that always touches me. I really would like my audience to connect with the power of nature in our world. You can find it in stunning landscapes or little and obvious things like flowers, but we must appreciate its unknown complexity.

In-depth I aim to find something important to say, remember, to ask. We desperately need to be aware of all that surrounds us; to be more respectful, thankful, and caring. And the mystery is how you show this idea. Is the work interesting? Is there a why or how? Or simply a feeling inside that you can't explain but rather experience? This can be as deep or as simple as you'd like.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

What inspires me most, is to see other people trying their best. I'm inspired by people who do their job well, with passion and dedication. They can sweep the floor or make bread, but when I see their love for what they are doing, I feel the need to do the same, to strive to be better.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

When I was young, I realized what I enjoyed most was painting. I could spend hours and hours working; this has not changed. I was lucky with my family's support and aid to study Fine Arts at the University of Barcelona.

I know painting is the thing I can do best, and I'm always striving to improve. It's an unstoppable internal drive. Sometimes it can be painful because you can be blocked by self-doubt; when you don't know where you want to go; or when that inner voice keeps telling you that everything is meaningless. It is in these moments that you only have your intuition as a guide. But on the bright side, propelling you, there are people that follow your work, encourage you, and keep you going.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My goal right now is to settle in my new-old country. I've been living in NZ for the last 8 years and I've recently moved back to Spain. I look forward to contacting new galleries, agents, and clients, to have opportunities to present my work.

But my primary and constant objective is to identify what I've learned, and how it influences the evolution of my style. I always want to be honest and pursue what really matters to me. ♦



#### ARTIST STATEMENT

This world that is falling apart, that suffers and crumbles, and yet is so beautiful... that I'm moved by an overriding desire to capture everything I feel and see. To preserve a single fleeting moment of magic. To grasp silence; a certain atmosphere; the air or the wind; emptiness; loneliness; time; tenderness and beauty... Maybe paintings are reminders of the spiritual side in us all that today's busy times made us forget. Sometimes we are surprised by our emotions in front of a landscape. Thoughts flow and link to images, lights and colours, and, just for a few brief seconds, the daily veil vanishes, to let us glimpse one reality beyond. The light that wraps everything can even embellish our leftovers, our derelict buildings .... and becomes a common theme in all my works. It is this very same light that makes me freeze in front of a theme that I had seen one thousand times before. In the end, I no longer know whether it is an external stimulus that makes me stop, or if it is that my thoughts have found one image in which they can dwell.

The theme then becomes the lower priority. flowers, landscapes; rooms or portraits. Everything has the power to move us, and so, subjective reality becomes universal, because we are talking about feelings and not images. And we all, in our loneliness and in faraway places, can feel the same.

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# Francesca Dalla Benetta

Website: [francescadallabenetta.com](http://francescadallabenetta.com)

Francesca Dalla Benetta, an Italian artist living in Mexico, conducted her studies at the Academy of Arts in Milan. Since 2004 she had been dedicated to the realization of special effects and sculpture for the movie industry, and thanks to this profession she learned modeling techniques that she began to transpose into her personal work as an artist.

Francesca arrived in Mexico in 2006 with the production of the film *Apocalypto* by Mel Gibson, and she decided to stay for professional reasons. The surrealist influence of life in Mexico, together with the love for cinema and fantasy literature, determined her style and concept in a decisive way. Her work investigates the fantastic anatomy, dreams, self-identity, transformation and spiritual evolution, the sense of belonging, loneliness, the connection between human beings, with the cosmos and with the divine.

In her career, Francesca has 15 individual exhibitions (Galeria Oscar Roman, Fundación Sebastian, Galeria de la Universidad Iberoamericana, Espacio y Lugar, Aguafuerte, Galeria Malaga etc) and numerous collectives (Galeria Corsica, Galeria Oscar Roman, Ex Teresa among others) and numerous collectives in Mexico and Italy. Her work has been reviewed in specialized art magazines (Horizontalum, Scenari, La Razon, Milenio Diario, El universal, Distrito Global) as well as in numerous cultural programs on radio and television (Milenio TV, Channel 22, Channel Once, El Matutino TV, El financial TV among others).

Part of her career consists of dedicating herself to teaching plastic arts and characterization: for 9 years, she has been training new talents in the artistic and cinematographic field.



# Interview with Francesca Dalla Benetta

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

After my degree in painting, I started to work in scenography and Special Make Up. I worked in the movie industry for 10 years or so, and I learned a lot about materials and sculpture techniques while working on movies. When I decided to switch to more personal projects, sculpture was the more natural medium: I had lots of sketches waiting to be brought to 3-dimensional form, so I did.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I believe the fundamentals of good art are concept, aesthetics, and emotions: a great piece of art needs to fulfill our mind, body, and soul. A great concept needs to be supported by an impeccable technique and needs also to move our sensibility and make us feel and think.

Through my aesthetics, in balance between the classic and the surreal, I study the themes of transformation, sense of belonging and self-perception, the ability to adapt, stereotypes, and categorization. I look for the fine line that separates personal identity from social conventions, sanity from madness, studying the differences between perception and reality.

My figures are a look towards the interior and the lack of control, they are a way of containing the uncontainable. The stories of each character, isolated in an intimate and unreal dimension, are reflections on the identity of misfits and the many facets of being.

As an artist, my most important task is to communicate and stimulate a different way of feeling and thinking. I mainly resort to sculpture because it is an affirmation of solidity in contrast to the volatility of thoughts and emotions: it consolidates and crystallizes them into a permanent and lasting image, it is a perfect tool to stop doubting reality and oneself.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Human behavior and consequent reflections about how and why we act a certain way inspire me. I spend most of my time analyzing people and observing their way of communicate, both with words and body language, and building stories and theories about them. My characters are my perception of that. Fantasy and Psychology play a big role in my art.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

It is just what I always dream to do in my life.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

Goals change all the time, whenever I reach one, I have ten more to pursue. I have a list of concrete goals like make a monumental sculpture or have a book about my art published, but the ultimate goal is the same: I just wanted to be seen when I started to make art, now I want to be seen more and spread my vision more. ◆



#### ARTIST STATEMENT

My work is characterized by mixed anatomies and forms. Human faces and bodies are combined with different textures, skins and elements, giving rise to hybrid beings. Through my aesthetics, in balance between the classic and the surreal, I study the themes of transformation, sense of belonging and self-perception, the ability to adapt, stereotypes and categorization. I look for the fine line that separates personal identity from social conventions, sanity from madness, studying the differences between perception and reality.

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# Glen Gauthier

Website: [glengauthier.com](http://glengauthier.com)

Originally from south Louisiana and currently living in Dallas, I'm a mixed media artist working in collage combined with other media like paint, graphite, ink, and colored pencil. I take these elements and construct a new reality: one that's been living in my mind for most of my life. A lot of the paper ephemera I use in my work is decades old. That weathered, aged quality brings an element of time to my work. I'm constantly exploring non-linear time, a way of looking at the world from a different vantage point and coaxing those elements and ideas into interesting stories. My work has become more personal in the past few years, an exploration of my conscious and subconscious mind as it relates to my personal experiences.

I received my BFA from the University of Louisiana in 1988, with a degree in Advertising Design. I've shown my work in art fairs and galleries here in Dallas, as well as New York, Los Angeles, Fort Worth and Louisiana. My work has also been published in national and international art magazines.



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# Hannah Yata

Website: [hannahyata.com](http://hannahyata.com)

Born in 1989 in Georgia, Hannah Yata was one of three siblings born into a deeply religious family. She spent her early childhood years enjoying nature, dreaming, and painting. This ingrained in her a deep longing to see beyond her strict upbringing into something earthly and more spiritual. As a young adult she disassociated from the religion she grew up in, Jehovah's Witnesses, and went on to study art, psychology, and history and graduated with a degree from the University of Georgia. After vigorously immersing herself in studying art in New York City, she moved with her husband to Pennsylvania where they explore the forests and paint full time.

Best known for her work of female figures and invigorating environments, Yata's work intently focuses on celebrating the life force of the temporal world, the divine feminine, and the cycles of death, decay, and regeneration. Her work seems to meditate both on our neurosis as a species and the magnificence of Nature. Her bodies writhe, push, dance, and rebel against the viewers perspective. Both beautiful and grotesque, her creatures are unapologetic absorbed in the energy of each piece. The use of masks play with characters, emotion, and the drama of rituals. These erotic figures immerse themselves in cascading terrains, at once separate but, cradled by the ever-present terra: the birth and resting place of being.



# Joris Munier

Website: [joris-munier.com](http://joris-munier.com)

Instagram: [@joris\\_munier\\_illustrations](https://www.instagram.com/joris_munier_illustrations)

Joris Munier is a professional illustrator specializing in watercolor technique. Originally from Brittany, France, he has traveled and worked widely in Europe and is currently based in Boston, MA. After completing an illustration degree at École Pivaut in 2013 in Nantes, Joris spent three years teaching drawing and watercolor painting at L'Académie Cultura in Bordeaux and did his first book illustration commission “Légende de la Ville d'Ys” for the popular French publisher Gisserot. Since then, Joris has built up a diverse list of clients, including the theater of the Comédie des Champs-Élysées in Paris, various Breton and French newspapers, advertising companies and tourist boards.

In 2018 he moved to the UK where he worked on several private commissions and a series of studies of English people and architecture which he started publishing on Instagram. He quickly gained many thousands of followers and came to the attention of St Cuthbert's Mill, a historic British paper manufacturer, for whom he has since worked as an ambassador. Joris is also an ambassador for the Italian paint manufacturer Maimeri Blu whose pure pigment watercolors he enjoys using. Having recently relocated to Boston, MA, Joris is very excited about illustrating this new chapter in ‘New England’!



# Interview with Joris Munier

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

My early years in art school in France naturally drew me to watercolor. I studied illustrations and comics and we used a lot watercolor paintings in our different works. I immediately felt in love with it, the way the pigments moved on your paper through water -- it's alive! I remember being frustrated at the beginning because this medium sometimes seems to have its own project on your paper...but I became quickly fascinated by watercolor as an art full of contrasts. It seems indeed easy to begin, you just need some pans and water, but you quickly realize that it requires a lot of rigor and discipline. The transparency doesn't allow for mistakes, it demands precision and letting go at the same time. I find this medium mesmerizing and beautiful.

## What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

What I love the most when I observe and paint people on the street is the ability to imagine their life. It is something I have always done: as a little boy I imagined what the life of strangers I came across could be. What could be their jobs, what are they up to, where are they going, etc. I hope some of my audience is making their own stories about people on my paintings.

## Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

I find everyone absolutely inspiring! Every attitude, every shape, posture, social interaction...it is why I always have a camera on me, to be able to catch these moments. In terms of artistic influences, it's a tough question as the list of inspiring artists is infinite! I would like to make an impossible list of historic painters and contemporary ones, illustrators, authors...but to be honest, my main inspiration is the ninth art. I grew up with a lot of comics in my parents' house, so I built myself as an artist with it. I still read a lot of comics

thus it is probably the main source of inspiration to me. Hugo Pratt, Gipi, Benjamin Flao, Emmanuel Lepage, Andrea Serio, Franquin, Guarnido, Manu Larcenet, Luigi Critone, Nicolas de Crecy and so many others.

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

I have lived in three different countries the past 10 years, and discovering new cultures, architectures, traditions, which was a constant enrichment for me, both personally and artistically. My creative drive is nourished daily, depending on what I see, whom I interact with. I am sensitive to the little everyday things, the wearing of a scarf on someone on the street, the colors given by a particular light, a landscape, an object, a discussion.

I am also inspired by the nature in all its forms, then finally architecture, with a particular affection for old buildings that give me the impression of traveling through time. What I like the most is walking in the streets, when the only goal of the walk is to pay attention to what is happening around you. It completely changes the perspective and a new world suddenly becomes visible. I am systematically impressed by the number of things that take place around us and nobody's paying attention to them, which seems to me to be an inexhaustible source of inspiration.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

I moved to Boston this summer and so far, I love it! My primary goal is to absorb as much as I can from the New England culture and transcribe it into my paintings. Thus, I am hoping to paint a lot of watercolors of the people and places here in Massachusetts. I would love to have an exhibition later. This goal has not changed over time, as I did the same in the UK few years ago: an exhibition of 70 watercolors illustrating the years I lived in Kent. I plan to do the same here in Boston! ◆



#### **ARTIST STATEMENT**

We live in a wonderful world but that is not always what we see. So perhaps as an unconscious movement against the negativity, I try to absorb as much as I can all the good vibes around me. A beautiful light, an impressive landscape or a heart-warming atmosphere... The scenes of life, especially when they are trivial, tell a lot about the happiness and the beauty that surround us. It's about taking the time to look at those daily little things, focusing on stolen precious moments that no one pays attention to. I concentrate on the beauty of everyday life, these public gestures of intimacy that go unnoticed, that I can capture with watercolors to be cherished.

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# Julia Whitney Barnes

Website: [juliawhitneybarnes.com](http://juliawhitneybarnes.com)

Instagram: [@juliawhitneybarnes](https://www.instagram.com/juliawhitneybarnes)

Julia Whitney Barnes is an artist living in Poughkeepsie, NY who works in a variety of media from cyanotypes, watercolor, oil paintings, ceramic sculptures, murals, and site-specific installations. She has exhibited widely in the United States and internationally including the Dorksy Museum, New Paltz, NY; Ely Center of Contemporary Art, New Haven, CT; Woodstock Artists Association & Museum (WAAM), Woodstock, NY; Institute of Contemporary Art, Portland, ME; Carrie Haddad Gallery, Hudson, NY; Kenise Barnes Fine Art, Kent, CT; and Garvey|Simon NY, New York, NY. She was awarded fellowships from New York State Council on the Arts, Lower Manhattan Cultural Council, Arts Mid-Hudson, Abbey Memorial Fund for Mural Painting/National Academy of Fine Arts, and the Gowanus Public Art Initiative, among others.

Born in Newbury, VT, Julia Whitney Barnes spent two decades in Brooklyn, before moving to the Hudson Valley in 2015. She received her BFA from Parsons School of Design and her MFA from Hunter College. Whitney Barnes has created site-specific installations at the Albany International Airport, Albany, NY; Brookfield Place/Winter Garden, New York, NY; Arts Brookfield, Brooklyn, NY; the Wilderstein Sculpture Biennial, Rhinebeck, NY; Shaker Heritage Society, Albany NY; The Trolley Barn/Fall Kill Creative Works, Poughkeepsie, NY; GlenLily Grounds, Newburgh, NY; ArtsWestchester, White Plains, NY; Gowanus Public Arts Initiative, Brooklyn, NY; Space All Over/Fjellerup Bund i Bund & Grund, Fjellerup, Denmark; Lower Manhattan Cultural Council/Sirovitch Senior Center, New York, NY; Brooklyn School of Inquiry, Brooklyn, NY; New York City Department of Transportation, New York, NY; and Figment Sculpture Garden, Governors Island, NY and among other locations.

Whitney Barnes was awarded a glass commission for NYC Public Art for Public Schools/Percent for Art that is slated to be completed in 2023.



# Interview with Julia Whitney Barnes

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## What initially drew you to your medium/media of choice?

Since we moved to the Hudson Valley from Brooklyn seven years ago, my work has been much more focused on the natural world. For the past year I've been focused on making works on paper that combine watercolor, gouache, ink, and cyanotype.

The process feels like a satisfying marriage of painting, printmaking, collage, digital media, and camera-less photography. As I've worked in a myriad of mediums over the past two decades, this current body of work is a culmination of a lot of ideas. Part of my process is growing and pressing plants that I manipulate in the photogram process, and also photograph for source imagery.

I frequently work with the cyanotype process, which is a camera-less photographic printing process invented in 1842 by scientist and astronomer, Sir John Herschel, which produces a cyan-blue print when a non-toxic chemistry-coated surface is exposed to sunlight.

The first artist (who was also a botanist) to use it was Anna Atkins. She is cited as the very first female photographer (though made without the use of a camera). She published the book *Photographs of British Algae* in 1843.



Each selected flower is preserved through a pressing process in which I dissect and shape each form—akin to a specimen from a natural history museum—and then lay everything out in massive flat files in my attic studio. Given that sunlight starts the exposure process with cyanotype chemistry, I carefully arrange elaborate compositions at night and utilize long exposures under natural or UV light to create the final prints.

Once the unique cyan imagery is fused, I meticulously paint the exposed watercolor paper with multiple layers of watercolor, ink and gouache.

### **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

In these works on paper, I approach each growing thing with equal importance regardless of whether it is a weed, rare species, wildflower, or cultivated flower. Most works have several species fused into one composition, often to the point where the exact plants depicted are open to interpretation.

Each composition starts as a blue and white print onto watercolor paper and then I paint in many layers of color pigment. I am most interested in creating objects that feel both beautiful and mysterious.

I want each cyanotype painting to be familiar yet slightly outside of time. Each cyanotype is created by the power of light, inspiring viewers to look at these very recognizable images in new and different ways.

### **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

When I first saw the 19th century Shaker Gift Drawings, I felt an immediate kinship with them. They reminded me of my Pennsylvania Dutch grandmother's Fraktur calligraphy drawings as well as the tulip quilt that has been in my family for many generations and made by my great-great-great-grandmother in the 1850s.

Once I made the connection that the gift drawings originated at the exact same time as the first cyanotypes were being created, I knew I wanted to find a way to bridge these as well as the current Shaker site garden.

It's amazing to think about the (mostly) women who made the gift drawings and how living in a community like the Shakers enabled them time for creative pursuits. Developing this body of work in a non-traditional art viewing site was a huge challenge and I still feel like I could keep adding to these works for many years. Shaker aesthetic rejected any unnecessary ornamentation. The rare exception is artwork produced

during the Era of Manifestations, a spiritual revival which began at the Watervliet South Family in 1837 and spread to other Shaker communities.

Spirit drawings were representations of visions and dreams, and often incorporated both natural and fanciful plants. Shaker herbs can thus be understood to embody both their practical and their spiritual values.

There is a directness to the link between botany and the cyanotype photogram technique because of the physical plant leaving its mark. The Prussian blue created through the cyanotype process is significant to Shaker culture in that it was considered celestial and meeting houses often featured blue to be connected with heaven.

### **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

From 2021-2022, I photographed and collected specimens from over 150 plants in the herb garden at Shaker Heritage Society, in Albany, NY, a brief walk from Albany International Airport.

The Society is located at the site of the Shakers' first settlement in the United States, known as Watervliet. Its herb garden pays homage to the significance of the Shakers' herb cultivation, and seed and medicinal herb industries.

With this collection, I produced "Planting Utopia." This body of work includes two site-responsive installations, one at Albany International Airport, in the first-floor walkway between the south parking garage and ticketing, and one at the nearby Shaker Heritage Society on the interior and exterior of the historic 1856 Drying House.

The installations will remain on view through 2023 and a publication will be available late 2022.

### **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I balance creating intimate studio works with large public art. I am currently working on my first glass piece that will be permanently installed in a school in Brooklyn through Percent For Art/Public Art for Public Schools.

My bucket list project for the past two decades has been to work with a fabricator to make a massive installation for a NYC Subway station. I would also love to work in glass at a larger architectural scale like an airport and create full room environments. ♦

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# JuliAnne Jonker

Website: [juliannejonker.com](http://juliannejonker.com)

JuliAnne was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota in 1957. She studied Classical Realism at the Minnesota River School of Fine Art and has owned a thriving portrait studio in Apple Valley, MN since 1995. Her work has been exhibited and sold broadly, consistently receiving critical acclaim, most recently at Sotheby's New York, The Salmagundi Club, New York, Chaffy Museum, Ca., Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art, Wisc., and Gallery One, Mpls.

One of her encaustic wax portraits is part of the permanent collection of The Museum of Encaustic Art in Santa Fe, New Mexico. JuliAnne lives and works in Apple Valley, Minnesota. A few recent awards and accolades have been granted from the Art Renewal Center, the Portrait Society of America, and the Wausau Museum of Contemporary Art.

Her work has been published in numerous books and publications including the cover of Fine Art Connoisseur magazine in Dec. 2021, and will be included in the Lunar Codex Collection of artwork being sent to the moon.

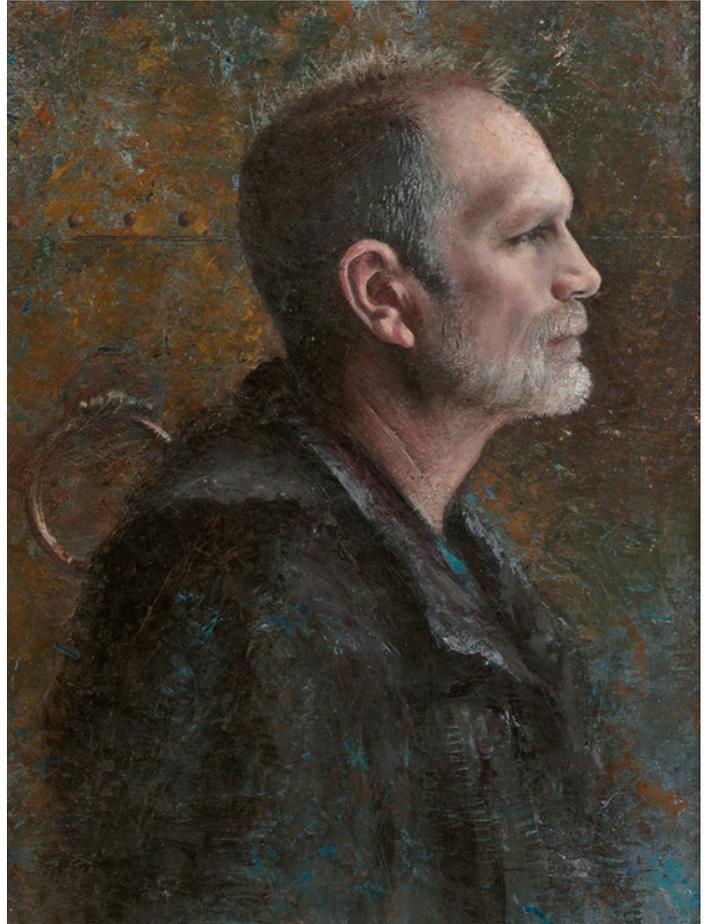
## ARTIST STATEMENT

I am drawn to the human form and nature as subjects for creating my art. Whether a figure study, or a representational portrait, there is something about the spiritual connection between beings that moves and fascinates me as an artist, my art serving as a conduit, a visual language for our ability to see and be seen. I am most drawn to the mystery and sculptural quality of chiaroscuro lighting. I believe it is the light that enhances and reveals the natural beauty inherent in all of creation.

Most recently, my works are created with encaustic wax, cold wax, and oils. Using wax lends a sculptural quality to the pigments, creating depth and texture with a soft matte patina. Working in a rhythm layer by layer, building then excavating, carving, and using a variety of tools until I achieve the texture I want. All the while, I'm ever mindful to carefully execute the nuances of each subject's likeness, combining classical and contemporary style.



jonker



# Interview with JuliAnne Jonker

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I was initially drawn to working with wax through sculpting via the lost wax method. I love carving into the wax and using heat in the process to keep the wax pliable. This led to my interest in working with encaustic wax and, eventually, cold wax and oils.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I hope my work's spiritual aspect comes across to the viewer, whether a portrait, landscape, or sculpture.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I am inspired by all of God's creation. Usually sparked by beautiful light falling on either a person, an object, or a place in nature. I'm also inspired by the work of many old masters (Rembrandt, Degas, Sargent, Waterhouse, and Fetchin to name a few) as well as many current living masters.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

What keeps me going these days is the time of life that I am currently in where I can choose how to spend my days more than I have ever been able to. Raising four children and having a busy portrait studio kept me busy for decades. I plan to continue with more painting time going forward. My creative drive comes from all of the masters I mentioned earlier and many of my contemporary artist friends.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

In the last few years, I have reached a lot of my artistic goals (my bucket list so to speak). Currently, I want to continue teaching and creating work that people connect with and fall in love with. I recently read, but the best part about selling a painting is then we can make two more! ♦

# Kylee Snow

Website: [kyleesnow.com](http://kyleesnow.com)

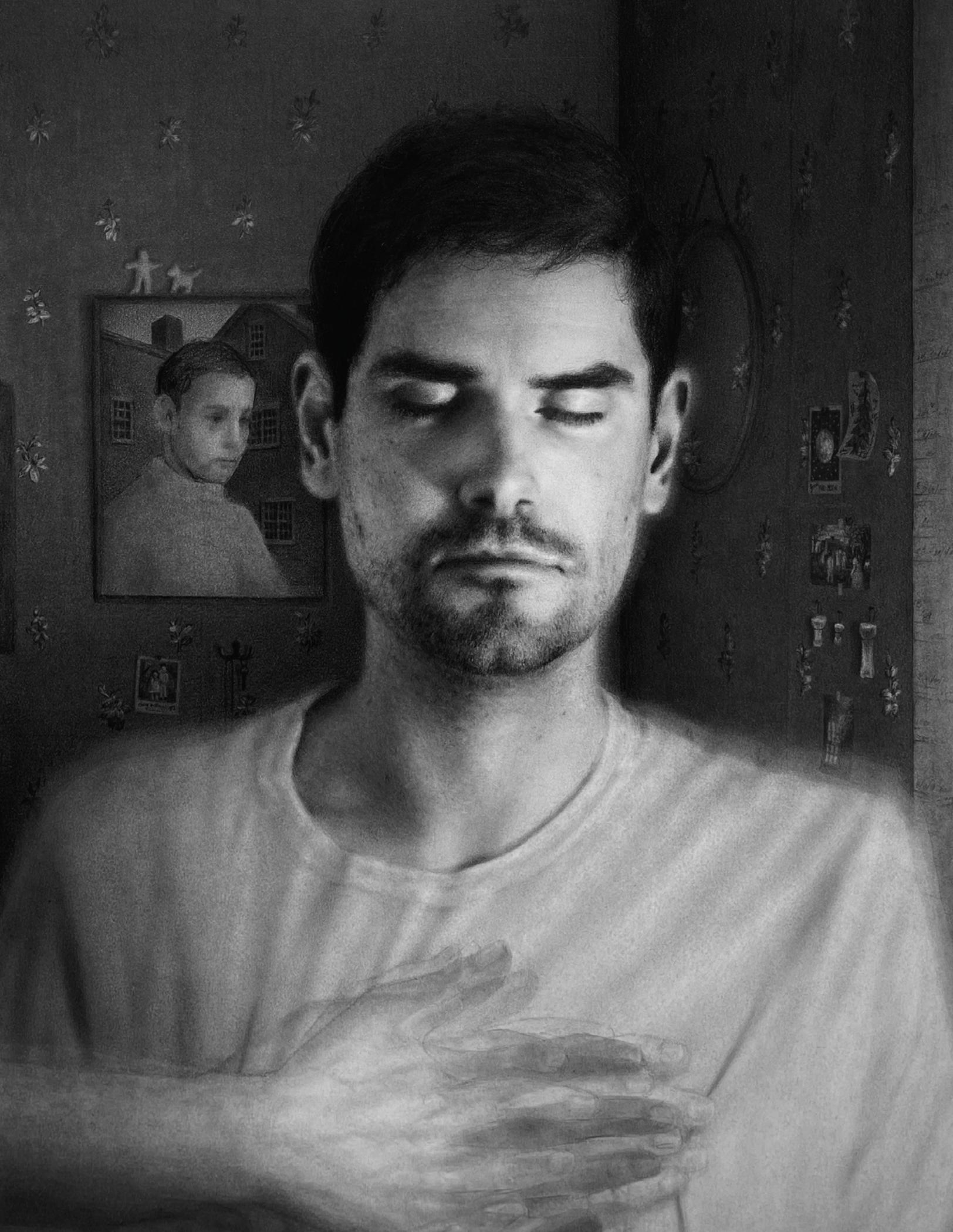
Kylee Snow is a figurative artist working primarily in graphite. Originally from Vermont, she is based in Brooklyn and received her MFA from the New York Academy of Art in 2022.

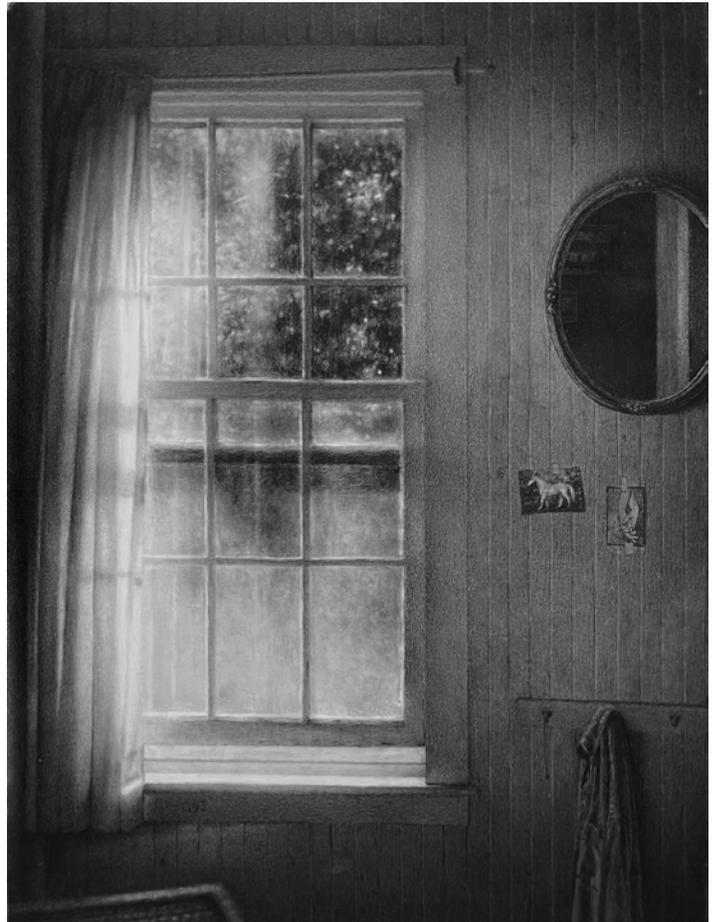
## ARTIST STATEMENT

We live in communication with space, claiming it as an extension of ourselves. We hammer a nail into a wall. We hang a picture as if it's a note. I am here. This space is mine.

Each change leaves a mark—a hole in a wall, a scratch on a door frame, a path on worn floorboards. While not conscious as we know consciousness, a home remembers. It gathers the marks of being into its own timeline, imparting sensations, creating atmospheres, and telling stories, as if having stored the energy of the past and layered it into its own physical being.

I want to tell stories of deep connection to place. I want to visualize homes as inhabitants come and go, how places hold onto feelings and events, and how homes continue on, enveloping what is left behind into their own histories. Graphite's ceaseless fluctuation in value and contrast mirrors the ebb and flow of a house and its inhabitants, never once appearing the same. In my attempt to understand myself, my space, and the passage of time, I organize these tiny particles of carbon into my own notes on being.





# Interview with Kylee Snow

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

Graphite has a magical reflective quality that I love. When I use the full range of value, it feels like I'm creating a mirror. Moving around a piece, the value is constantly shifting, the graphite's materiality enhancing the image's narrative ambiguity. Its simplicity also draws me in. I love using just a simple form of carbon to create something with more complexity.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

In my current body of work, I'm exploring how we live in communication with space, specifically our homes and spaces we know well. Having grown up in Vermont, I feel especially connected to the histories of old New England homes. I'm interested in how we interact with and transform our homes to be ours and how that built space forms us in return and lives in its own timeline beyond ours. Plenty of my own feelings and thoughts and personal histories go into the work but there is rarely anything specific I want viewers to interpret. I always hope that its material nature draws people in, and ideally, I love when the work can connect to something more universal and elicit feelings from a viewer's own life and experiences. Hearing what the work means to others is also often illuminating for my process.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

My parents are very artistic and growing up in a creative household laid a foundation for my work.

They have always been inspiring, both artistically and otherwise (and probably some of the only parents who said "finally" when I decided to pursue an MFA). I get a lot of inspiration from my friends and the artistic community in New York City. There is always a wealth of art to see and openings to attend. I feel like I am always surrounded by an amazing amount of inspirational talent.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

The creative drive feels innate--making art is just what I want to do. Of course, it ebbs and flows and when I feel uninspired, I try to give myself time and focus on other things. I find that reading really good writing will often bring it back.

When writing sparks feelings and creates images, or if it gives me a new perspective related to my work, I will start working again. I often stumble upon certain artworks that will bring it back as well. Overall, I try to block out the noise and just follow my interests and vision. I think that's a really important thing for a healthy practice and it's something I always try to keep in mind.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I think in the past my goal was to spend most of my time doing something that drives and inspires me and makes me feel like myself. Focusing on my art career has done that and my goal for the future is to continue to follow my interests, build a good community, and make work that I'm proud of. ♦

# Lauren Faulkner

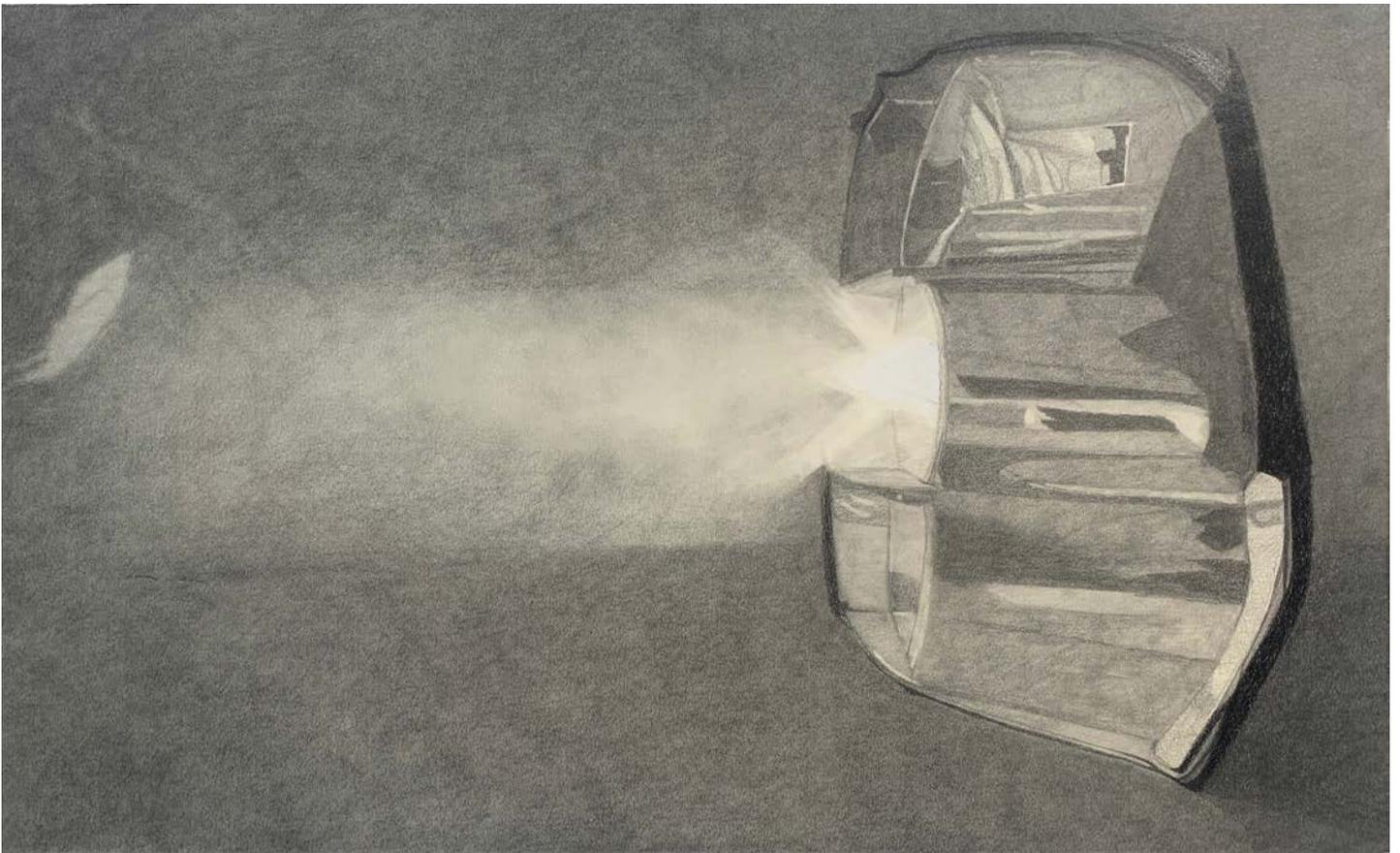
Website: [laurenfaulkner.com](http://laurenfaulkner.com)

Motifs of natural elements, rendered alongside mechanical objects or things displaced from their natural environment, encourage viewers to examine weirdness, magic, memory, and glimpses of a speculative future in Faulkner's work. Objects so ubiquitous they're almost unseeable are elevated and removed from their ordinary context.

At the core of Faulkner's work is a sense of questioning both personal and collective experience. What happens when we see a car's headlight? A woman's braid? A translucent wing? The commonality of these materials, removed from their expected environments, allows for the creation of a unique world - atmospheric, restrained, textural, transparent and desaturated.

The attention to the materiality of natural elements in Faulkner's work is informed by her Pacific Northwest upbringing and professional experience as an award-winning floral designer. Faulkner lives and works in Portland, OR and New York City where she is pursuing her Master's in Fine Art from the New York Academy of Art.





# Interview with Lauren Faulkner

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I've always been drawn to charcoal, graphite, and oil paint as compelling vehicles for storytelling. There exists a distinctive, almost ethereal mix of sense memory that creates a captivating narrative through drawing and painting. I'm especially drawn to the unique specificity of colored paint and the control found in graphite.

More recently, I've explored printmaking, a medium that embodies the opposite qualities in that it takes more planning, and the narrative is revealed in slow, more surprising ways. Much of my work attempts to marry the sensitivity of paint and graphite with the happenstance of printmaking.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

My ultimate goal is for the audience to identify and be moved by the humanity in my work, which explores emotional and physical fragility, vulnerability, and personal memory. There are many opportunities for the audience to connect with their own experiences when examining my work, and to become keen students of the human condition as well.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Currently, I'm a graduate student, and Elle Woods of Legally Blonde is inspiring me. The story of a woman

finding strength in her own voice while pursuing her dreams of academia with great hair and an adorable canine sidekick resonates with me on a cosmic level.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

My relationships with other artists keep me going. Being an artist requires immense personal courage and can often be isolating, but there is nothing more inspirational than watching one of my best friends going through the same process and thriving. I'm fortunate to have lifelong friendships with other visual artists, filmmakers, quilters, beaders, musicians, writers, and so many other creative creatures. The support we're able to offer each other helps all of us move forward. Watching and loving my friends and my artist community at large create amazing work inspires me to keep making my own.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I want to make work that is bigger and more technically complex. I envision work that more thoroughly integrates oil painting and printmaking techniques. As the two-dimensional work becomes more cohesive, I want to introduce installation elements. I've been a floral designer for years, and its high time I bring that level of floral sculpture into my own practice. These goals have certainly changed over time. Not that long ago, I couldn't imagine my work developing beyond the medium of painting. I'm curious and open to developing beyond the confines of canvas. ♦

# Leah Aripotch

Website: [leaharipotch.com](http://leaharipotch.com)

Leah Aripotch is a metal sculptor based in Oakland, California. She was born in 1987 and raised in Montauk, New York. She received her BFA from Academy of Art University in 2012.

In tandem with her graduation, she designed and built a line of jewelry for Mercedes Benz Fashion Week in collaboration with MFA Fashion designer, Teresa Field and Textiles designer, James Thai. Snake Bag, a sculptural handbag made for that collaboration, has since been published in *Metalsmith Magazine* and *CAST*, a coffee table book featuring art and objects made using humanity's most transformational process. Upon graduating, Leah began a paid apprenticeship at a commercial fabrication shop in San Francisco under the mentorship of Brian Martin. Since 2015, she has focused exclusively on fine art sculpture.

Her work has been exhibited across the country at venues such as the National Museum of Metal, the Fuller Craft Museum, Museum of Museums, and the Wayne Art Center. She lives in Oakland with her husband and two cats and builds monsters and aliens out of her metal shop.





*Top left: Photography by Vanessa Bulger*

# Interview with Leah Aripotch

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I started out as a painter, initially. In art school, I was required to take a 3D class as an elective and became enamored with sculpting. As I took more and more sculpture classes, I was eventually put in front of a welder. I loved everything about the process of building sculpture in steel. I ultimately transferred to a different art school and received my BFA in Fine Art Sculpture with an emphasis on Metal Sculpture.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I find myself having to explain a lot to people that my work is not cast. I build my sculptures using various blacksmithing and fabrication techniques, such as forging, welding, and grinding. Metal sculpture is still in the shadows as a fine art medium and is often misunderstood. I want my work to raise awareness about the unique process that goes into building a metal sculpture. I believe that would deepen the appreciation for the work and also, hopefully, inspire others to push boundaries with the media.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Louise Bourgeois is a big one for me. And I've always been a fan of Tim Hawkinson. I remember visiting his show at the Whitney Museum back in 2001 and being so inspired by his work. I'm also really inspired by sculptors like Simon Lee, who sculpts some pretty incredible monsters. I'm inspired by so many Sci-Fi and horror authors and creators. The list goes on and on, really. I suppose I'm drawn to creators working on the dark side.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I think my community keeps me going as an artist. All of the people around me are doing cool things. I'm energized by other people's passions and creativity, and I love having a community to share my work with.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

Recently I've started to think a lot about my desire to be a mentor. This is a new goal for me, and something I've thought more about as I've grown older.

I think it's a pretty important part of growing as a metal artist. My mentor, Brian helped shape me into the fabricator and sculptor I am today. I'd like to be that for someone else. ◆

# Linda Mann

Website: [lindamann.com](http://lindamann.com)

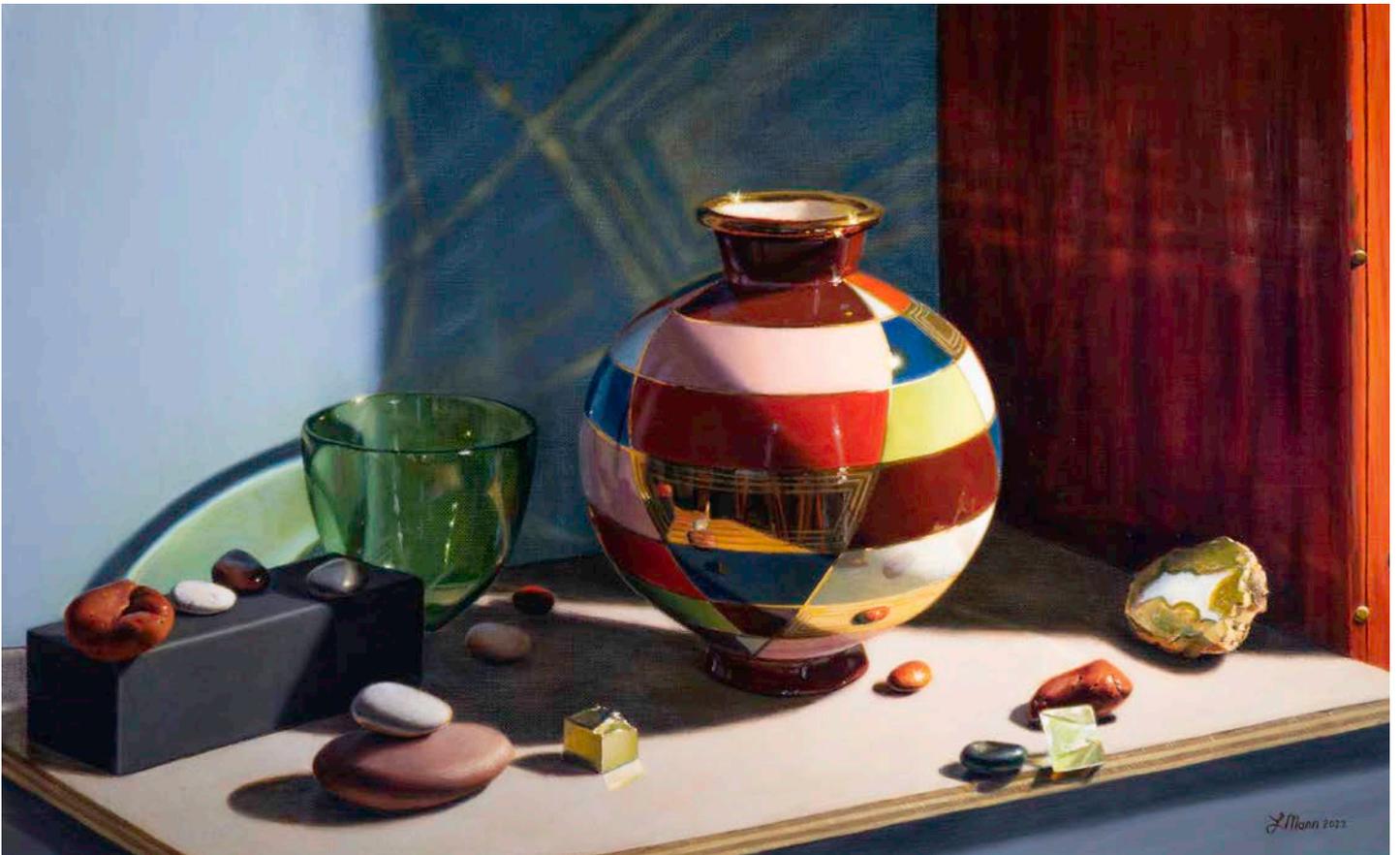
Linda Mann lives and works in Bellevue, WA. Mann studied at the Gage Academy of Art (Seattle, WA) and The Academy of Art College (San Francisco, CA). She has had solo exhibitions at Quent Cordair Fine Art (Jackson, WY) and the Hyatt Regency (Bellevue, WA). Mann has been selected as an Associate Living Master by The Art Renewal Center as well as a Finalist in their 2020, 2021, and 2022 International Salons.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

In unstable times, it is valuable to step back and be reminded that despite chaos, the world is still understandable and beautiful. My still life paintings evoke this ordered, stylized reality. I paint with an understanding of how people see and understand, not by recording every detail, as a camera would, but rather by observing the essential, and editing out the unimportant and distracting.

Working exclusively from life with no reference to photographs, I observe the ephemeral effects of light and how they appear to the human eye, re-creating the experience in oil paint. Through my selective and heightened focus and dramatic lighting, everyday objects are imbued with substance and meaning.





# Interview with Linda Mann

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I choose to work in oil paint because I love the sensuous, buttery feel of it and how it allows me to make such varied brushstrokes, from a tiny, delicate line to a bold stroke of color. With oils, I can paint with a variety of techniques to achieve a transparent glaze, a thin scumble, or a juicy impasto. With oils, I can layer paint using all of these techniques to achieve great subtlety and variety.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I hope that my audience can see that I paint from life, never from photographs. Only from observing life can I see the true form and color of objects, and how the light interacts with them. A photograph flattens out and can distort forms, and can never show how light really looks as it bounces around a set-up. Working from life results in a rich painting with solid, 3-dimensional forms and convincing, glowing light.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I am inspired by the paintings of the great Spanish still life artists of the 17th Century, particularly Juan Sanchez Cotan and Juan van der Hamen. I love their dramatic compositions and lighting, and their compelling realism. I also find inspiration in the music of Beethoven and Mozart, for its drama, complexity, and beauty.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I've always loved being in my studio, creating these little, perfect worlds in my still lifes. In composing and painting them, I mold the world into my own image of order, beauty, and drama.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My primary goal for the future is to improve my work and continue to grow, creating compelling and beautiful still lifes for a wider audience. ◆

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# Marisa Mary Myrah

Website: [marisamarymyrah.com](http://marisamarymyrah.com)

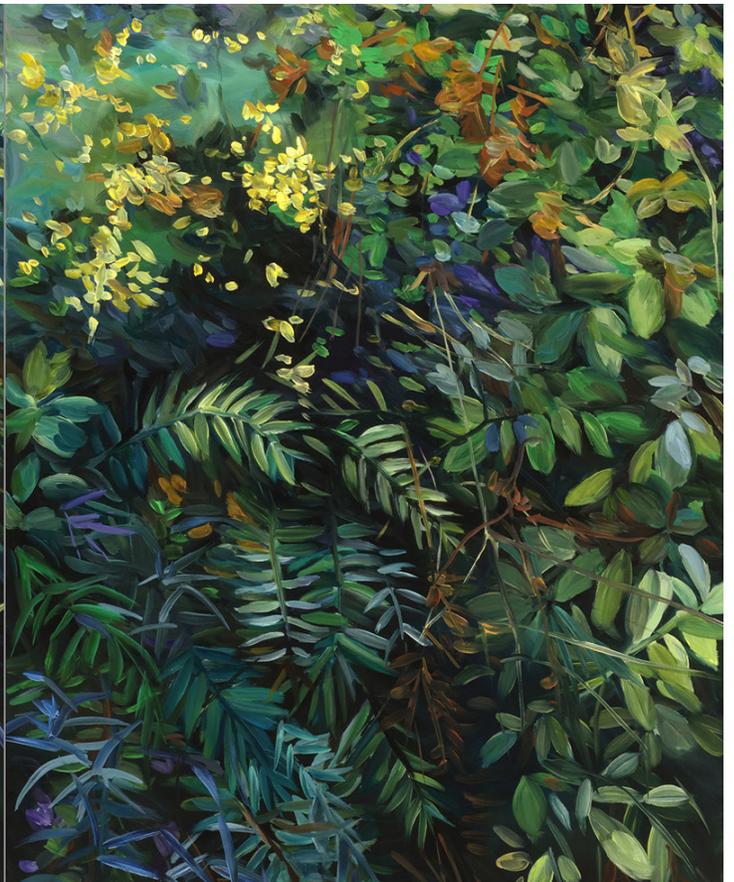
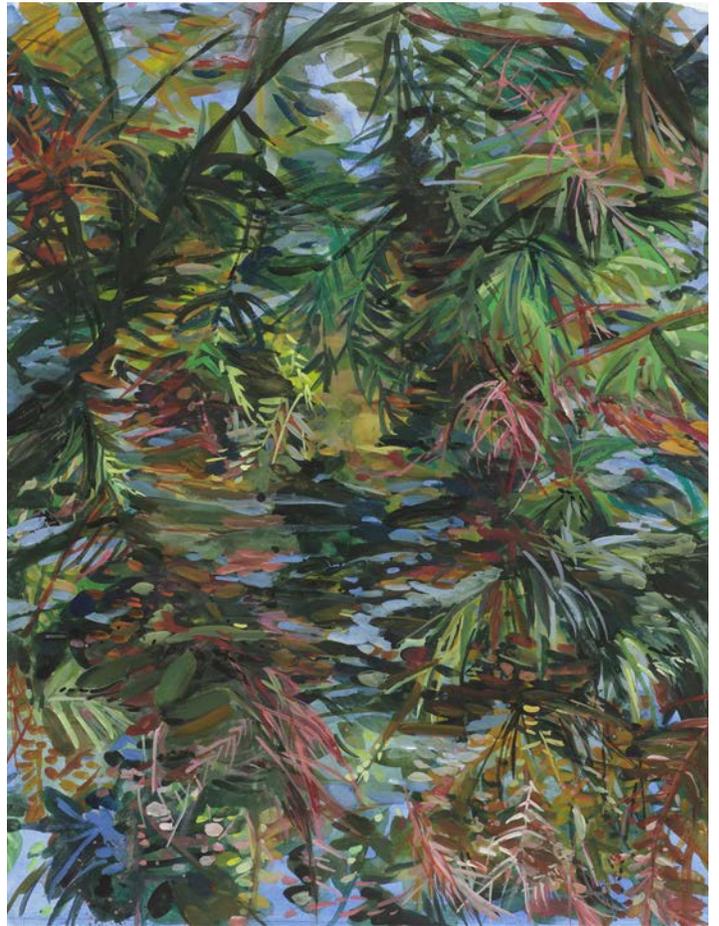
Marisa Mary Myrah was born in Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada and studied Fine Arts at Emily Carr College of Art and Design in Vancouver, graduating in 1990. She completed a Post-Baccalaureate in Painting at the Cyprus College of Art in Paphos, Cyprus in 1994. She has had a number of solo and group exhibitions in Canada and abroad and was an Artist-in-Residence at the Ucross Foundation in Wyoming, USA in 2000 and at the Fundación Valparaíso in Mojácar, Spain in 2002. She works and lives in North Vancouver B.C. with her partner Rob, their two children and their two dogs.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

These artworks are from a series called, “on the edge of where I live” which describes a section of land adjacent to where I live in Lynn Valley that is slated for development. It is a pristine area of old growth forest within a residential area, so unique that I want to document and describe this landscape through my art before it is gone.

As an artist, nature is my refuge and when painting I’m relaying the experience of being in that landscape. Creating a sense of sublime or awe is what we expect historically from the landscape, however there is a desire to move the conversation forward to do something different and challenge what we expect of it. I am interested in a space that is about to fall apart, in varying states of agitation. The overgrown patches of land that are easily overlooked and the idea that the shadows and undergrowth may harbour a hidden menace or other secrets, provide an alternate experience of the landscape than the conventional picturesque viewpoint.





# Interview with Marisa Mary Myrah

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I started out painting with acrylics in my first year at art school. I found the paint dried too fast for me, so I switched to oils. Best decision, as the texture and lushness I get from oils cannot be beat. I also work in watercolors, which is great when I am working out a composition or actually in the forest painting.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

Mood for one thing is important. As well, I'd like the viewer to see the landscape in a different way than say, the conventional picturesque landscape painting. I love looking at areas that are overgrown, the shadows, the ghostly bits even that offer an experience of the landscape that can be easily overlooked.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Family and friends, absolutely.

Support and encouragement from other artists can be very powerful as well.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

The creative drive is just there, always. It's more than a need; it's part of who I am. When you feel let down or are struggling, and a painting isn't going well; these times can be tough. There are lots of hurdles being an artist and we have to keep leaping to the other side and press on.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I think many artists want their work to be seen or be heard and to share with an audience. I'm working towards showing my paintings more and also stay active in the art community. My goal with my work right now is to expand on this body of work I have been creating for the last year, as I honestly feel it's the best work I've made. ♦

# Nanci France-Vaz

Website: [nancifancevaz.com](http://nancifancevaz.com)

Nanci France-Vaz is a modern renaissance artist that uses allegorical symbolism to create visual stories on canvas. France-Vaz draws inspiration from the Pre-Raphaelite and Naturalist periods of art, poetry, and classic literature, and film. She combines her strong foundation in life painting with imaginative backgrounds fusing classical with contemporary realism.

France-Vaz has exhibited at the Museum of Modern European Art for ModPortrait and first round of Figurativas, Abend Gallery, Principle Gallery, Lovetts Gallery, Eisele Gallery, Butler Institute of Fine Art, National Arts Club NYC, and Salmagundi Club NYC. She has had three solo shows. She has also exhibited at Wausau Museum Of Contemporary Art.

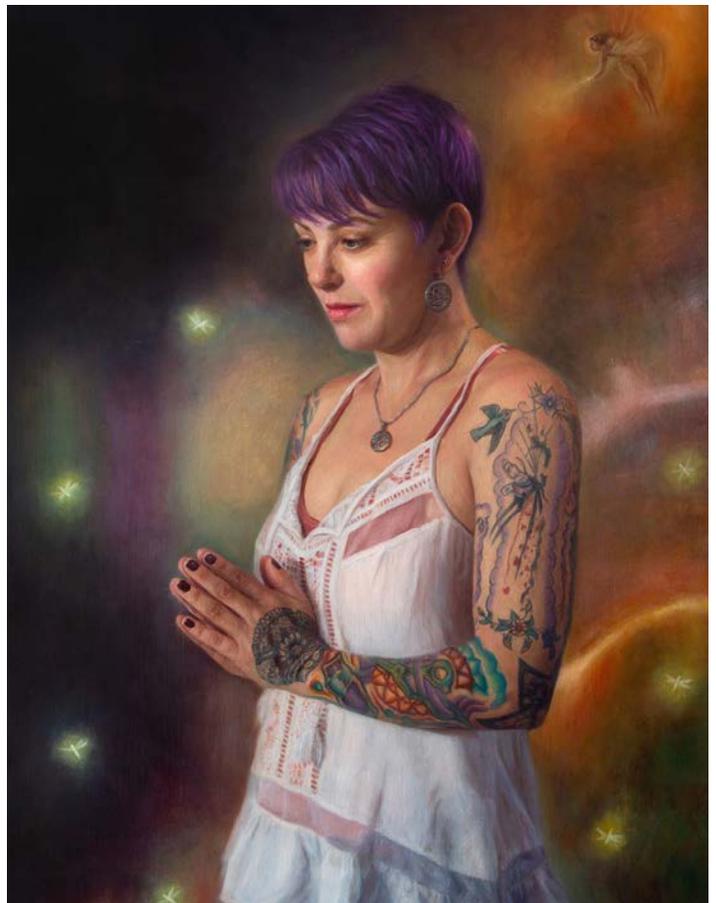
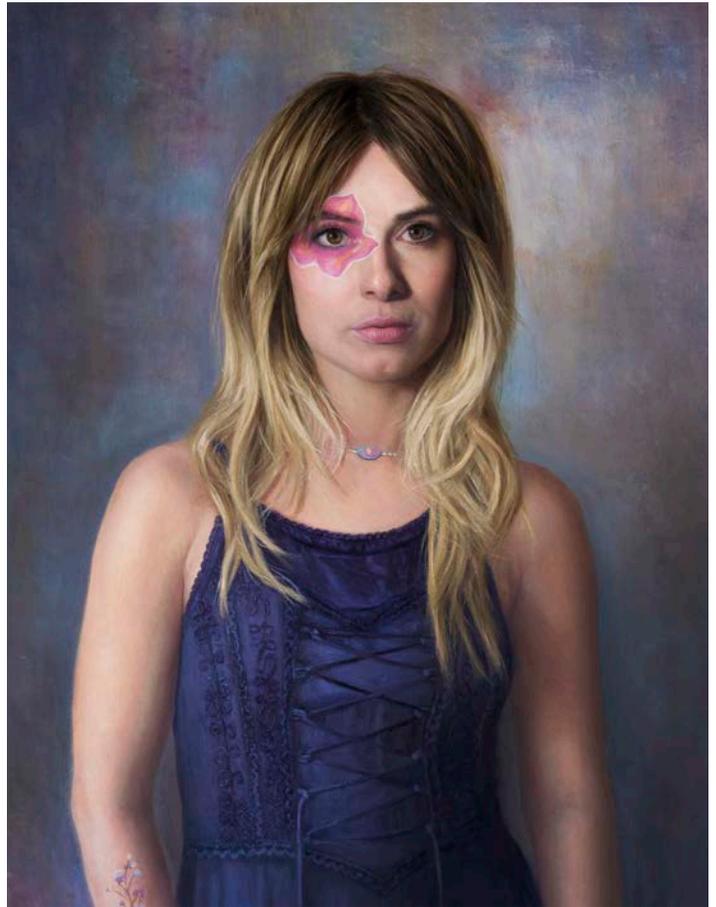
Nanci France-Vaz has won of many notable awards nationally. She is the recipient of the prestigious Len G Everett Memorial Award, Joseph Hartley Memorial Award, John Collins Award, Colonel George J Morales Award, PSOA 3rd Place, ARC Salon, International Artists People & Figures 2021, Best in Show Portrait Award, Petite Gallery, Best in Show at WMOCA and 2nd Place Southwest Art Magazine Artistic Excellence.

France-Vaz has been published in Fine Art Connoisseur Magazine, ModPortrait 2020, International Artists, Realism Today, ARC Salon, Leonardo Guide Artelibre 2021, and Southwest Art Magazine.

Her paintings and commissions hang in private collections.

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# Nick Patten

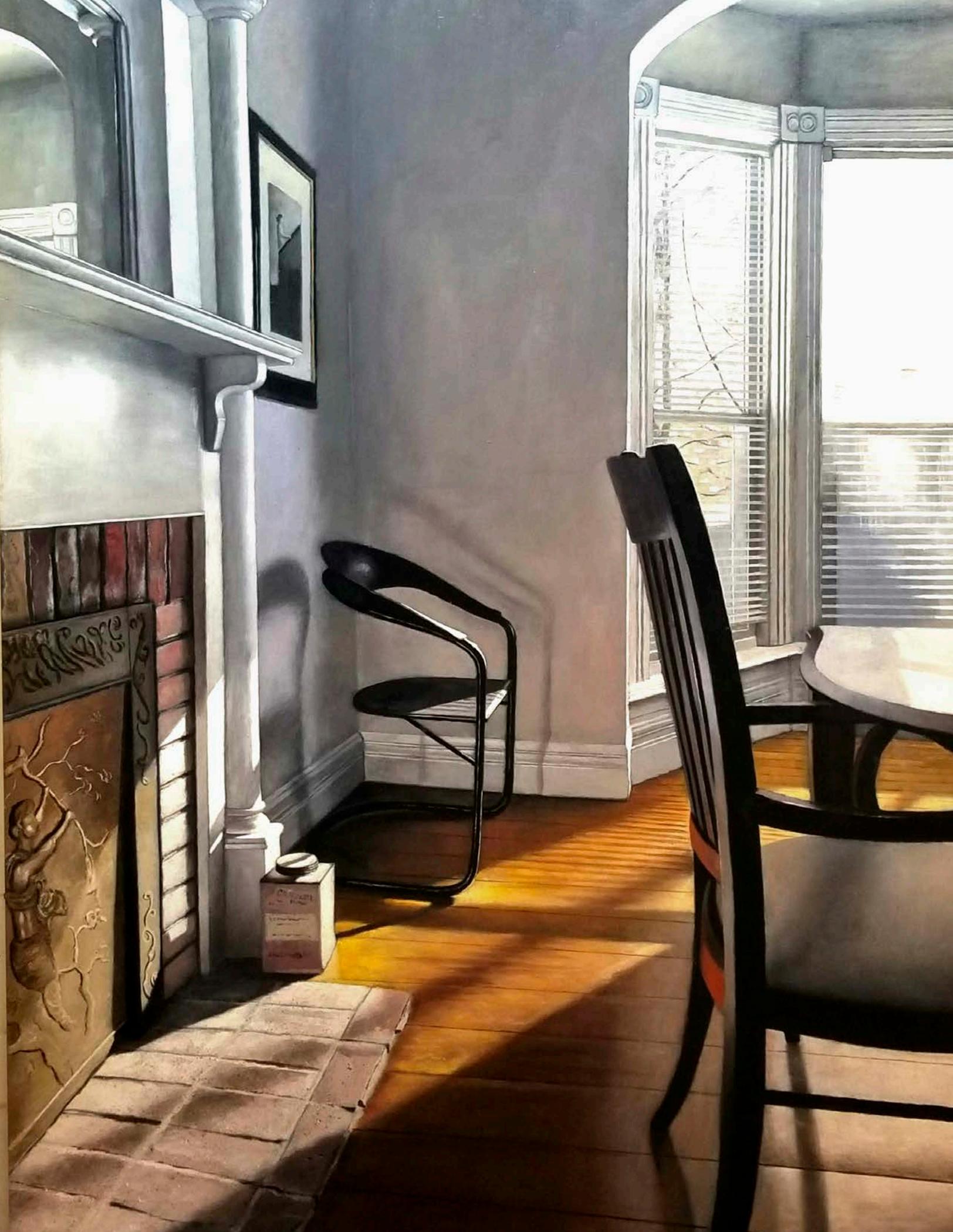
Website: [nickpatten.com](http://nickpatten.com)

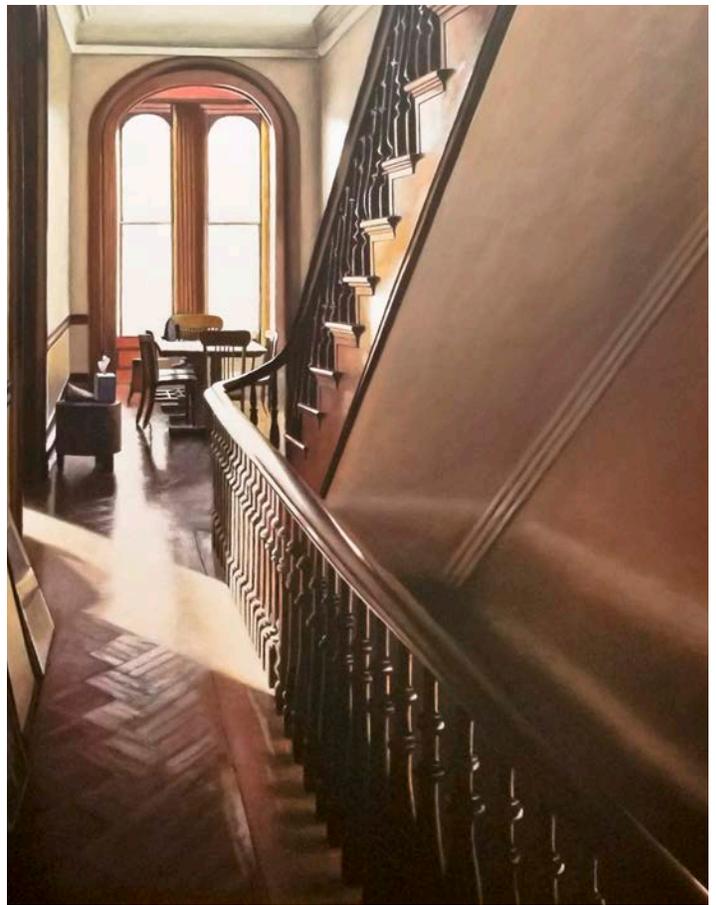
## ARTIST STATEMENT

Settling on a composition for one of my room interior paintings is a progressive process. I pick and choose the most interesting and necessary elements from an array of photographs, often adding items from my imagination.

Light and dark is a primary focus of my painting, with particular attention to brush stroke and gradation in the darkest areas. Through working from photographs with the aim of creating believable paintings, I strive to bring a quiet drama to everyday scenes.

My paintings are never intended to be “photographic”. In part, my aim is to make paintings where the content of the image is most compelling, and how the painting was made is secondary. In a sense, attempting to make the work exceed the medium, my goal is to be able to paint what I want to see.







# Raven Green

Website: [ravengreenstudio.com](http://ravengreenstudio.com)

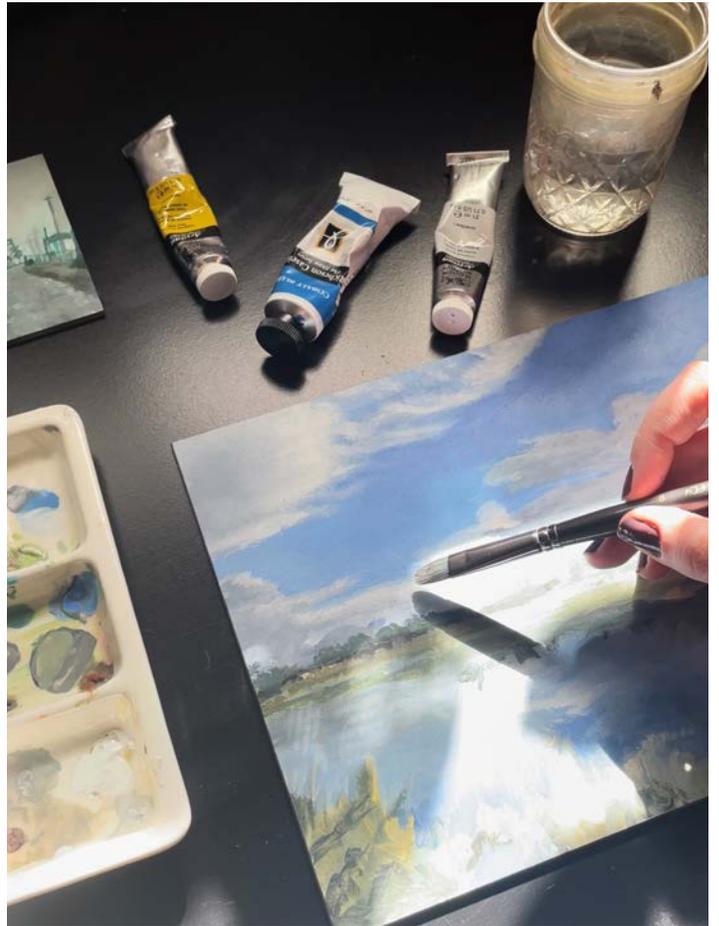
Instagram: [ravengreenstudio](https://www.instagram.com/ravengreenstudio)

Raven Green, born 1992, is an artist based in Southwest Florida and honors that by spending the majority of her time outdoors painting in the pine flats and urban landscapes around her. Practicing professionally since 2014, she enjoys plein air painting in gouache as well as spending time in the studio working with casein, watercolor, oils, and colored pencil. Art is her way of snapshotting the world around her, with the main advantage of being able to shroud any scene with her own sense of nostalgia. Her work intends to evoke a sense of wonder and longing for the seemingly mundane scenes around us. She was primarily inspired with this view by plein air painter and illustrator James Gurney as well as the Russian landscape painter Ivan Shishkin.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

As an artist it is never my goal to “create” but to “capture”. The world around me provides an endless stream of inspiration and I use my emotional experience as a filter to the view in front of me. I have an affinity to winged insects and birds as they are a sort of moving artwork themselves, as well as a wistful approach to capturing my surroundings. From the repeated patterns of nature to the neon-lit corners of a deserted street, my hope is for the viewer to feel the same sense of remembrance for places they may have seen only in a memory or a dream.





# Interview with Raven Green

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

For the first years of my art career, I had been using strictly graphite and colored pencil. When I began to learn to paint, I was immediately drawn to gouache and casein because they were so unique. I had never seen a matte paint before and fell in love with the moody, muted effect they could lend to a scene. Living in Florida everything can be very saturated with color but with gouache and casein I found I could show the scene from a more nostalgic point of view.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

More than anything I hope the viewer can feel as though they're suspended in a moment in time. I hope whoever is looking at that painting can get a glimpse down that path, or onto that street corner, or across that riverbank -- and feel a sense of stillness. Someone once told me a painting of mine reminded them of their childhood home and I thought that was the most beautiful thing.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

Most of my inspiration comes from nature, which I view as a sort of gift. The one person who has helped me to

slow down and to appreciate that gift is my daughter, Gemma. Getting to see the world through the eyes of a child and to experience life alongside her has filled my life with a sense of wonder and adventure. She reminds me to not take anything for granted and that beauty is in the moments all around us.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I definitely fall into slumps here and there but most of the time the desire to get the sentimental locations I have stored up in my head onto paper is enough. It feels like I have more ideas than hours in the day. By the time I'm halfway through with one painting, I'm already planning the next three or four. Being present in the seemingly mundane tasks of daily life is truly the biggest well of inspiration and keeps me excited about creating art.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My main goal right now is to create a larger body of work. For years I did commissioned art and as soon as I finished a drawing or a painting, it was gone. Back then I'd have said my goal was to simply sell art! These days for me it's more about telling a story and being able to capture the moments that are special to me. And being brave enough to share them with others. ♦

# Richard Salvucci

Facebook: **richardsalvuccistudio**

BFA Massachusetts College of Art 1978

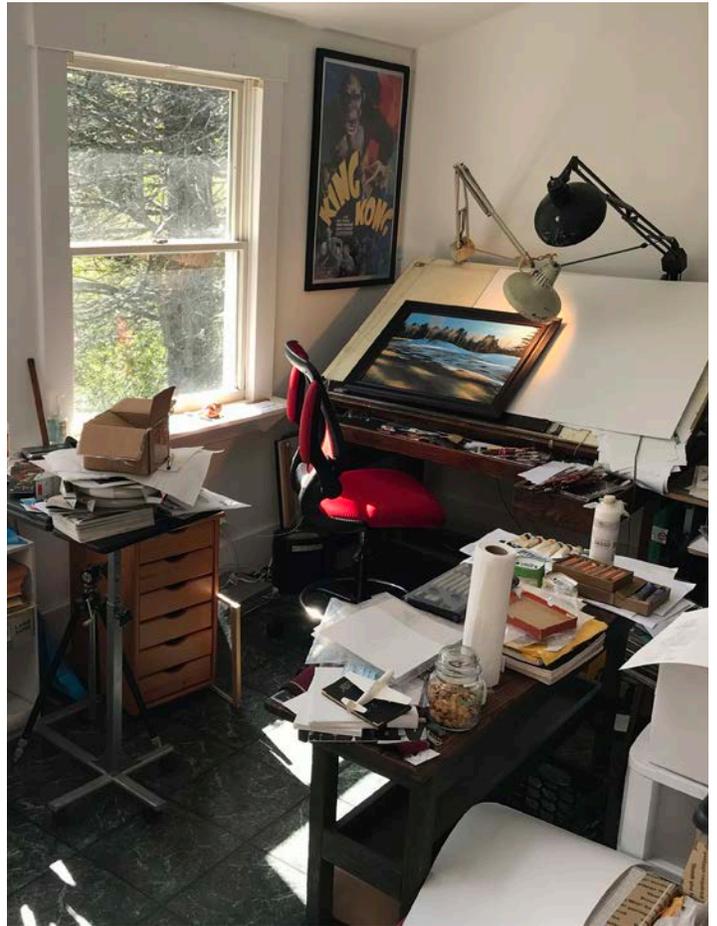
I've worked as both a painter and illustrator, having produced illustrations for book publishers, magazines, newsletters, newspapers, and more. I've also exhibited my paintings and drawings in galleries, institutes, and museums.

In the 1990's I had a strong interest in painting nature with a special interest in birds. I produced work for the Massachusetts Audubon Society and the Manomet Bird Observatory. I also exhibited with such establishments as the Vermont Institute of Natural Science, the Cape Cod Museum of Natural History and the American Birding Association Conference. Also during that time I was commissioned by a Washington DC organization, The National Alliance for Animal Legislation, to produce a work which was given to Dr. Jane Goodall as an award for her conservation work involving Chimpanzees. The next year I produced a painting for the same organization which was given to the author Alice Walker for her sympathetic writing about a horse named Blue.

Today I find working in only one genre to be far too stifling and I have an interest in many subjects.

I tend to work mostly in oils, pencil, pen & ink, and acrylics.





# Interview with Richard Salvucci

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

I've always enjoyed pencil because of its 'immediacy'. Pencils can be picked up and used without any preparation, no mixing colors or using mediums, etc. Sometimes they don't even have to be sharpened. They can be used for a simple sketch or a complicated, highly finished drawing. Oils would be my favorite painting medium. It is very diverse and forgiving when we make a mistake.

## What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

I enjoy looking at many things from a different or perhaps unusual perspective. I also greatly enjoy objects that are lit up by strong angles from the sun or a light source, the shadows can be extreme and I enjoy the abstract shapes they create. Or occasionally I'll find something that is striking, or truly creepy and eye catching, and they're worth drawing then as well. I like working on many subjects, not just one genre. I would also greatly enjoy helping viewers to pause and reflect on what they're looking at.

## Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

Inspiration can come from anyplace, really. Often, other artist's work and ideas can inspire me. However, as many of the fellow artists here might understand, many of us have had to work another job at times to help make ends meet. I've worked as a pottery painter, graphic production artist, and as a temporary waiter at local events. But perhaps the grandest moment was

when I received a call from the 'Temporary Waiter's' office wherein the dispatcher asked if instead of donning the usual Tuxedo if I'd be interested in wearing a 'House Costume' at a Real Estate Sales convention. That's right--an actual, small house. Ah...how could I say no? So, a few hours later I arrived at a local Boston hotel, found the people I had to talk to, put on the 'house', which covered from the top of my head to my waist, and entered a room full of realtors as their mascot "Selly". I was asked to wander around the room giving the 'Queen's Wave' with white gloves like Minnie Mouse. Thankfully, the costume had a small fan in its attic to keep me cool. Now, I ask you all, does it get any better than this? They never told me back in my Art School days life would be that majestic, that amazing! Talk about an experience in which to gather inspiration! Yes sir!

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

My greatest inspiration has been the natural world. Nature is a great vessel of inspiration as well as an energizer. Being a part of and participant in popular culture, I've also been inspired by other artists in many genres.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

Frankly, I just hope to survive the oncoming environmental crises. But besides learning to swim or row a boat, I simply aspire to create a body of work that will have summed up my ideas and abilities. I also plan to continue to produce work that gives the viewer something to think about and perhaps question. ♦

# Rosso Emerald Crimson

Website: [rossoart.net](http://rossoart.net)

In her portraiture, London-based artist Rosso Emerald Crimson renders female subjects who emerge through a haze of pastels and muted tones. She infuses the dreamy oil paintings with responses to current affairs and questions about the future, which often serve as a catalyst for her projects. Issues of racial injustice, gender identity and environmental crisis have all played a major role in her work.

The artist often depicts the women and girls staring forward with unsmiling expressions. Stripped from any temporal/spatial connotation, the female characters in Rosso's paintings are reimagined within timeless landscapes, evoking a sense of transcendental presence that connect with the viewers at different levels of the subconscious mind.

Technically, while the portrayal of the figures is achieved by a meticulous rendering using traditional oil painting techniques, the deconstruction (and reconstruction) of the surrounding is achieved by juxtaposition of different media, including spray paint, vigorous scraping and scratching of the surface and application of metal leafs and gilding. The creative process is deliberately chaotic in the making yet geared towards the achievement of both a sense of harmony and a visually engaging imagery.





# Interview with Rosso Emerald Crimson

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I've been always attracted by oil paint. Indeed, I started out with water-based mediums (watercolor, inks and acrylics, mainly) but once I tried oil paint, there was no return! Mostly, I think I got addicted to the body and density of oils!

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

Painting for me is a highly spiritual practice, which helps me connect with a higher self — I hope the audience too resonates with this level of depth, besides and beyond appreciating the aesthetics.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I get tickled by so many inputs throughout the day: seeing a granddad hugging a grandchild in the park on my way to the studio, or friends laughing, dancers, music, or birds and wild nature. Inspiration is a state

of mind -- if you work on yourself, to become more receptive and “tune-in”, life is so full of very simple wonders that can sparkle our imagination.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I always want to try out new things. In 10 years of practice, under many aspects I still have a 'beginner' feeling. Of course, with efforts and a lot of passion, I managed to master some bits, but there is so much more that I 'know' I still need to learn. And then there is the 'unknown', which is really what gives me the daily drive.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I have some grandiose goals -- a mix of life/career goals that are somehow interdependent. Then I have the short-term goals that keep me focused and help me organize my time efficiently. One is, I would love to create art for charitable projects. ◆

# Sean Delonas

Website: [seandelonas.com](http://seandelonas.com)

Sean Delonas is best known as the former cartoonist for the New York Post's Page Six. An award-winning painter and illustrator, his work has appeared in the nation's largest newspapers, magazines, books, television, and Broadway. Sean created the altar painting for the Church of St. Agnes in NYC and his work is in the permanent collections of many museums.

Together, he and his son are the author of two books.

Sean is a graduate of the New York Academy of Art. He lives with his son, enjoys painting and walks with his dog.



# Sharon Harms

Website: [sharonharmsart.com](http://sharonharmsart.com)

Sharon Harms, began pursuing painting professionally in 2020 after retiring from a 47-year career as an award-winning graphic designer and art director.

Her work is heavily influenced by her time working in the advertising business where she honed her skills as a visual communicator and storyteller. Although she has taken an introductory college painting class, she is basically a self-taught artist. Her paintings have been selected by juries in several regional and national competitions. Sharon currently resides in Nashville, Tennessee.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I create highly realistic paintings of still lifes composed of objects placed together to form a narrative. I approach my work like an explorer looking for meaning in the physical world through the things people interact with. As artifacts of human evolution, objects hold symbolic meaning connected to history, culture, beliefs, and subjective experience. When placed together, the objects take on new more complex meanings that allow me to examine a wide variety of emotions and ideas. To create my still lifes, I first choose an object that intrigues me, then intuitively place other objects around it with the intention of finding a story. I don't force the subject matter or composition and the stories that emerge are often a surprise, even to me.



BIG  
BOY



TESTED SENTENCES THAT SELL PRENTICE HALL

s.j.harms



# Interview with Sharon Harms

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I worked as an art director and graphic designer for over 40 years, meticulously crafting imagery that would engage viewers through two-dimensional surfaces like posters and magazine ads. Painting in oil was a natural extension of that work. Because the drying time is so slow, I'm able to achieve a lot of detail and simulate subtle shifts of light to create a near photographic image.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

People are really drawn to the photorealistic aspect of my paintings but my hope is that they spend time considering the objects I've chosen for the composition. The content in my paintings tell a story through the symbolism of man-made objects. I see my work as an invitation to find personal connections to the narratives.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I'm inspired by artists, makers, and doers. People who have an idea or desire to create something and push through adversity and doubt to achieve their vision.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

The act of painting is meditative for me. It grounds me and provides a means for self discovery. I'm interested in finding out where the next story takes me and how it changes my perspective.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I'm fairly new to professional art making, so honing my painting skills has been a priority and something that will continue to be a major goal. More importantly, I am working toward finding a stronger and more personal artistic voice. I would also like to get representation with a gallery in a top art market. ◆

# Sharry Wright

Website: [sharrywright.com](http://sharrywright.com)

## ARTIST STATEMENT

I am a San Francisco based poet and artist. After earning my MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts, I spent 10 years writing, teaching writing, and working as both a book reviewer and a moderator for mother-daughter book clubs.

My collage making originally started as part of a poetry project; I was playing around with writing poems in a collaged format and thought it would be fun to try some visual collages that translated as poems to go with them—so, poems as collages and collages as poems. I had also recently become keeper of our old family photo albums and found myself pouring over photos of my grandparents and great grandparents, great aunts and uncles, cousins in various categories of removal and my parents in their youth, wondering about their hopes and dreams and all of the “what-ifs” and forks in the road not taken.

With scissors and glue, a mishmash of found images from the public domain and commercial sources, my own photography and the old photos of my relatives, the collages started to tell an entertaining alternative version of my own family history. Instead of poems, they became small visual stories akin to flash fiction but in picture form, animating my ancestors in ways they might never have imagined but hopefully might have enjoyed at least half as much as I have. I've since started incorporating vintage portraits in the public domain, moving beyond my documented family portraits to a broader scope of reimagined lives. I've also taught myself to create digital collages using my iPad Pro.





# Interview with Sharry Phelan Wright

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I inherited a stack of old family photo albums filled with images of great-great grandparents, great aunts and uncles, many long dead before I was born. I had so many questions about the lives these relatives led and couldn't help making up (often a bit fantastical) narratives. At the same time, I had been experimenting with writing a series of collaged poems, many inspired by family history, and wanted to see if I could create images that felt like visual poems to go with them. It turned out to be great fun and very addictive. As soon as I finished one, I wanted to make another. And another. After a while, I realized the images had turned into a kind of visual flash fiction—short, short stories, which I've always loved. I began collecting vintage photos in the public domain, adding new faces and new stories. In the beginning, all my collages were analog—printed images, scissors and glue—but traveling the past few years, I've learned to work digitally on an iPad Pro, opening up many new possibilities for layering and blending.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I hope that both a sense of humor and affection for the subjects of my little visual stories comes across and perhaps gives my audience a brief respite from the many troubles in our world and daily lives.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I am inspired daily by makers of all sorts—poets, bakers, musicians, painters, and more—especially those who obviously love what they do and create for the sheer delight of creating and sharing. It gives me hope in a world where value is too often sadly defined by fame and money. Making art of all kinds feels to me like the opposite of consumerism.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I wouldn't know who I was if I didn't make art. The process nourishes, grounds and defines me. I consider it one of the necessities of staying emotionally alive and engaged.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My goal is to continue making work that feeds, amuses, and delights me, to share it on Instagram and through my card sets in the hopes that it may do the same for other people. ♦

# Sheryl Ruth Kolitsopoulos

Website: [srkartstudio.com](http://srkartstudio.com)

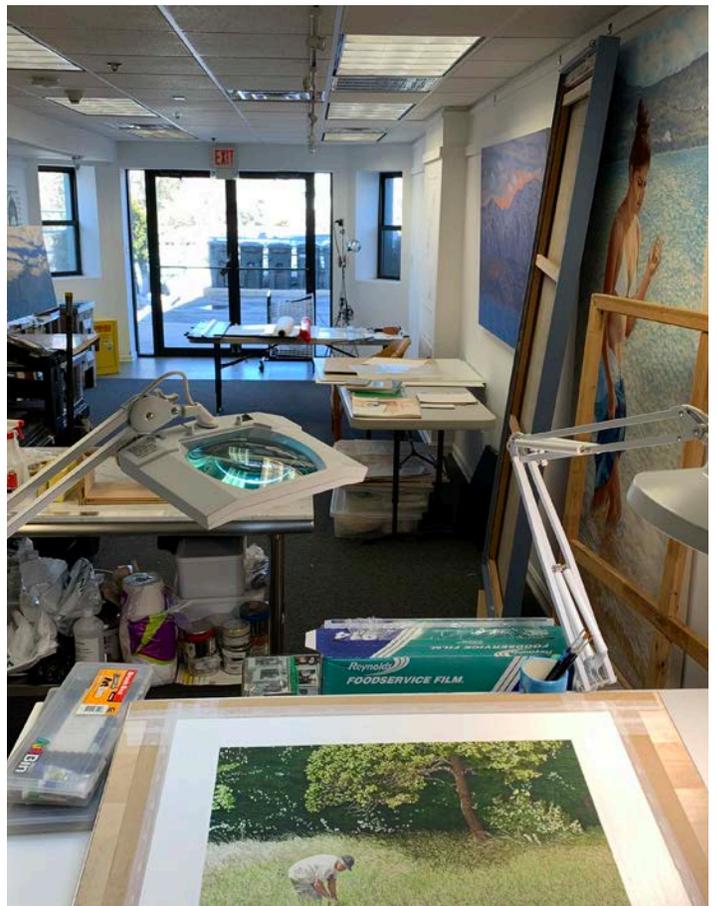
Sheryl Ruth Kolitsopoulos was born in New York and graduated from Parsons School Of Design earning her BFA. While attending Parsons, she studied under the teachings of Jane Wilson, Yvonne Jacquette and Harvey Quaytman. To further her education, Kolitsopoulos enrolled at The Art Students League where she was influenced by teachers Fredrick Brosen, Timothy Clark, Richard Pantell, Ellen Eagle and Master Printer Tomomi Ono. Drawing has always been a passion which she incorporates into the paintings and lithographs of her landscapes, citiscapes and figures.

Kolitsopoulos has had solo shows at Pleiades Gallery and Prince Street Gallery in NYC. She has also shown in numerous group exhibitions in Taiwan, France and the United States. Her work is in the collection of The Hammond Museum, The New York Public Library, The Newark Public Library and The Art Students League. Her art is also in the private collections of Mr. Nion McEvoy and Mr. Micheal Rips as well as in collections in Taiwan, Greece and the United States.

## **ARTIST STATEMENT**

The focus of my work is the beauty that I find within life and nature. Inspired directly from my own personal experiences, it is important for my work to affect the viewer with similar raw emotion. The foundation of my creative process is drawing which I incorporate into the paintings and lithographs of my landscapes, citiscapes and figures. My work deals with the way light interacts and manipulates color, line and texture within its environment. My journey as an artist is one of studying and observing life while experimenting and practicing my craft.





# Interview with Sheryl Ruth Kolitsopoulos

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I have always admired the watercolor paintings of artists such as Winslow Homer, J.M.W. Turner and John Singer Sargent. Eight years ago, I decided to study watercolor painting at The Art Students League in New York, being mentored by renowned watercolorists Timothy J. Clark and Fredrick Brosen.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

The focus of my work is the beauty that I find within life and nature.

Inspired directly from my own personal experiences, it is important for my work to affect the viewer with similar raw emotion.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I am inspired by so many artists that I find it difficult to only name one. From Rick Schaefer, who creates amazing large-scale drawings, to Bisa Butler's extraordinary quilts. There is so much creativity to be inspired by between museums, galleries, and social media.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

My need to create and learn is what keeps me going as an artist. I do not need to find a creative drive because it is always there. I have never had a creative block. I have always had more ideas than I could ever have time to work on. It has always been which project would challenge me intellectually and creatively.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My goal as an artist will always be, to be a better version of myself tomorrow than I am today. ◆

# Sigríður Huld Ingvarsdóttir

Website: [huldfineart.com](https://huldfineart.com)

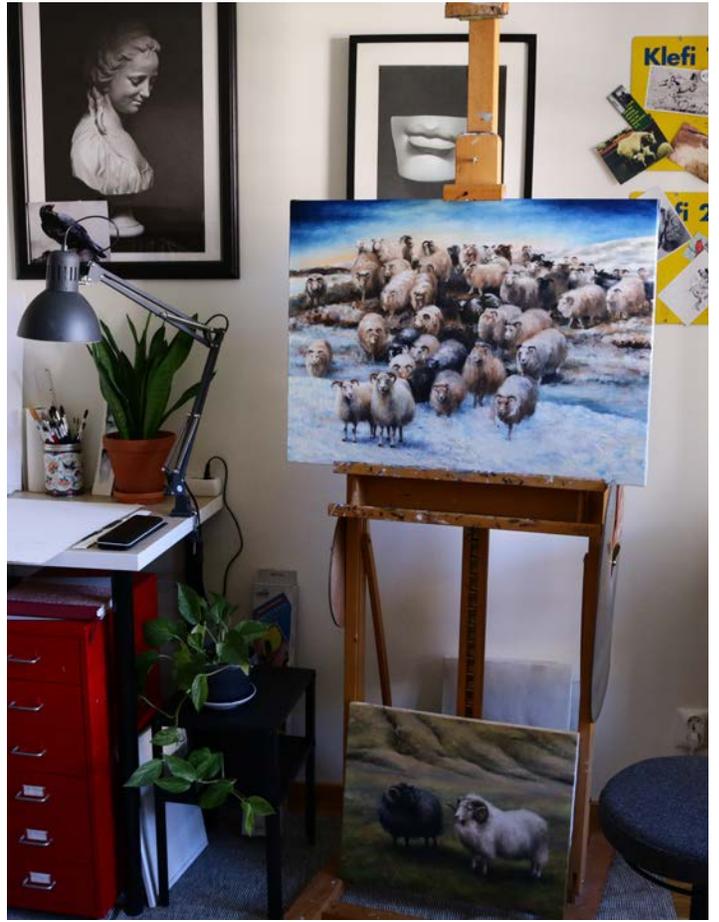
Instagram: [@huldfineart](https://www.instagram.com/huldfineart)

Sigríður Huld Ingvarsdóttir(1987) is an Icelandic visual artist currently based in Uppsala, Sweden. She grew up on a sheep farm in the north of Iceland and her art is highly influenced by her upbringing in such a remote area. She has since childhood dreamed of working in the arts and in 2011 she graduated from Akureyri School of Visual Arts with a degree in Fine Art.

With a desire to learn how to draw and paint realistic she moved to Stockholm, Sweden to study at The Swedish Academy of Realist Art and in 2015 got a degree in Classical painting and drawing. Since then she has been part of many group exhibitions as well as solo-exhibitions, in Iceland, Sweden and Germany and won prizes for outstanding watercolours and animal portraits.

Most recently her work was selected for the Birds in Art 2022 juried exhibition held by The Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum in the USA. Her work can be found in the art collection of the Swedish Medical Products Agency in Uppsala (Läkekonst - Läkemedelsverkets) and she's worked on the committee of Uppsala Konstnärsklubb.





# Interview with Sigríður Huld Ingvarsdóttir

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## What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

Since I was a child, I've always wanted to paint with oils like the old masters, learn how to create this amazing depth and light which can be achieved with oils and that is something I'm still working on achieving. Painting with oil in that way is very time consuming and each painting takes such a long time to create, so a few years ago I decided I needed something that's a bit faster and easier to just pick up and start painting... to bring with me when I'm travelling. I had always been a fan of watercolor paintings, so I slowly started to experiment with them. I find watercolors really tricky and even a bit stressful to use but at the same time I can achieve the results I want so much faster than with oils. Being a trained oil painter, I actually often use watercolors more like an oil painter would, with layering and dry brushing, using way more pigment than water. I also find that watercolors, with their whimsy and unforgivingness, are very fitting when capturing birds. Those fleeting moments when the bird stops for just a second and allows me to observe it. So, after many failures and hours of practicing, watercolors and oils have become my medium of choice.

## What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

That's an easy one! My love for animals, their portrayal as individuals, and how they are a part of our society. I also often include some symbolisms in my work related to life, death, and survival and I love when people spot it. Often it has to do with my color choices or the pose of the subject. So, it can be pretty subtle, which means it's even more special when the viewer spots it.

## Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

Now, that one is trickier. I have so many inspiring people in my life that it feels almost impossible for me to pick just one. Also, I guess whoever inspires me varies a lot from time to time and depending what I'm focusing on. Growing up my great aunt, Ragna Hermannsdóttir, had a huge impact on me and my decision to become an

artist. An artist and photographer herself, she spent many hours painting and drawing with me during summers when she visited and watching her, I could see how it was possible to make a living as an artist. Back then I was both inspired by the old masters such as Rembrandt and Da Vinci, as well as Manga (Japanese comics). But now I find inspiration much closer to home, in the people closest to me, my family, friends and my art colleagues. One in particular is Theodora Daniela Capăt (who was also my teacher at SARA, the Swedish Academy of Realist Art). Her attitude and amazing drawing and painting skills never stop inspiring me as well as her approach to surrealism and incorporating animals and symbolism in her work.

## What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

I have this deep emotion, this crazy need to create, to somehow get the images in my mind down on paper/canvas. If I go for too long without painting, I start to feel restless and my head feels too full...if that makes any sense. Also, the thrill and satisfaction I feel when an exhibition comes together and the emotions I see in people when they look at my art make me want to continue - I need to. Exploring the emotional bond we have with animals has become increasingly more interesting and seeing people get emotional, even starting to cry because of something that I created. It's sometimes hard to believe that my art, my visions and interpretation of animals can bring such strong emotions from people. Knowing that I can create something that has those effects gives me the drive to continue even when I'm at my lowest points and self-doubt has crept in.

## Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

My primary goal is to be able to continue to work full time as an artist with my own art and to choose if I do commissions or not. This has been my goal since graduation and I think it will continue to be so. Also, to create paintings that are timeless but at the same time are relevant to our modern society and show how our life and the life of animals intertwine. ♦

# Tereza Barnard

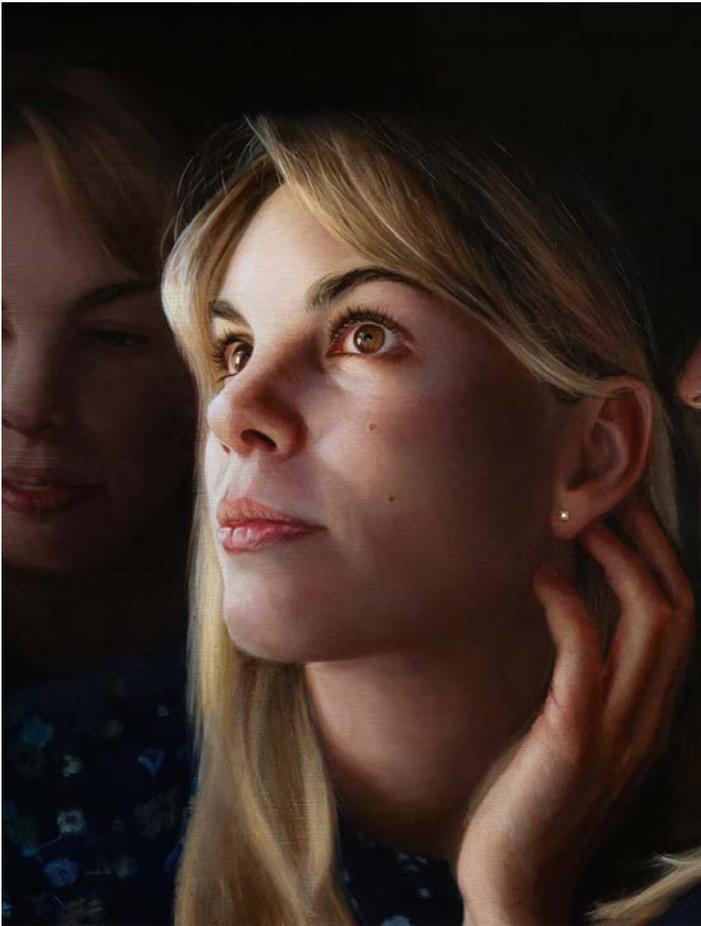
Website: [terezabarnard.com](http://terezabarnard.com)

## ARTIST STATEMENT

The world is speeding up and a lot of things are but a swipe away. However, there are emotions that cannot be read in a split second.

With a graduate degree in psychology, Tereza Barnard (b. 1984) has learnt that hidden but key features take time to be observed and reveal themselves. Barnard uses realism, narrative elements, and sometimes abstract features to allow her viewers to slow down, observe the hidden layers, and enter the inner worlds of her sitters as well as her own. In doing so, she hopes they will find beauty, inspiration, but most notable a time for themselves to think. Barnard is a self taught artist and can take up to three months to finish a painting as she extensively observes the micro expressions of her subjects.





# Interview with Tereza Barnard

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I've always liked the vibrant color choices, the smell, and its history. I was mesmerized by oil paints from an early age.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

It's honesty.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

People-watching and specifically observing my three children. The way they look at stuff, the way they move, the way they express emotions. I note it down, and it comes across in my work. For example, recently, I started paying attention to how the blood vessels become visible under their skin when they're a tiny bit cold and how it's such a telltale sign of a child's skin. I started putting that in my artwork, which adds to its realism.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

There is simply nothing else I'd rather be doing. And that's a huge motivation. I have to make it work because I don't want to spend my life in doing something I enjoy less.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I am working on paintings for the LA Art Show with Arcadia Contemporary Gallery in February 2023. My current goal for the near future is to finish those paintings as I planned them. There is a bit more to it than that. Not all my painting days are equal.

I have times when I'm capable of seeing stuff with raw honesty and translating that onto a painting board, and then I have days where I feel like what I painted was a bit bland. I want to practice more to be capable of translating what I see into the painting with even more honesty, but not without empathy. ◆

# Tim Nighswander

Website: [timnighswander.com](http://timnighswander.com)

Instagram: [@timnighswander](https://www.instagram.com/timnighswander)

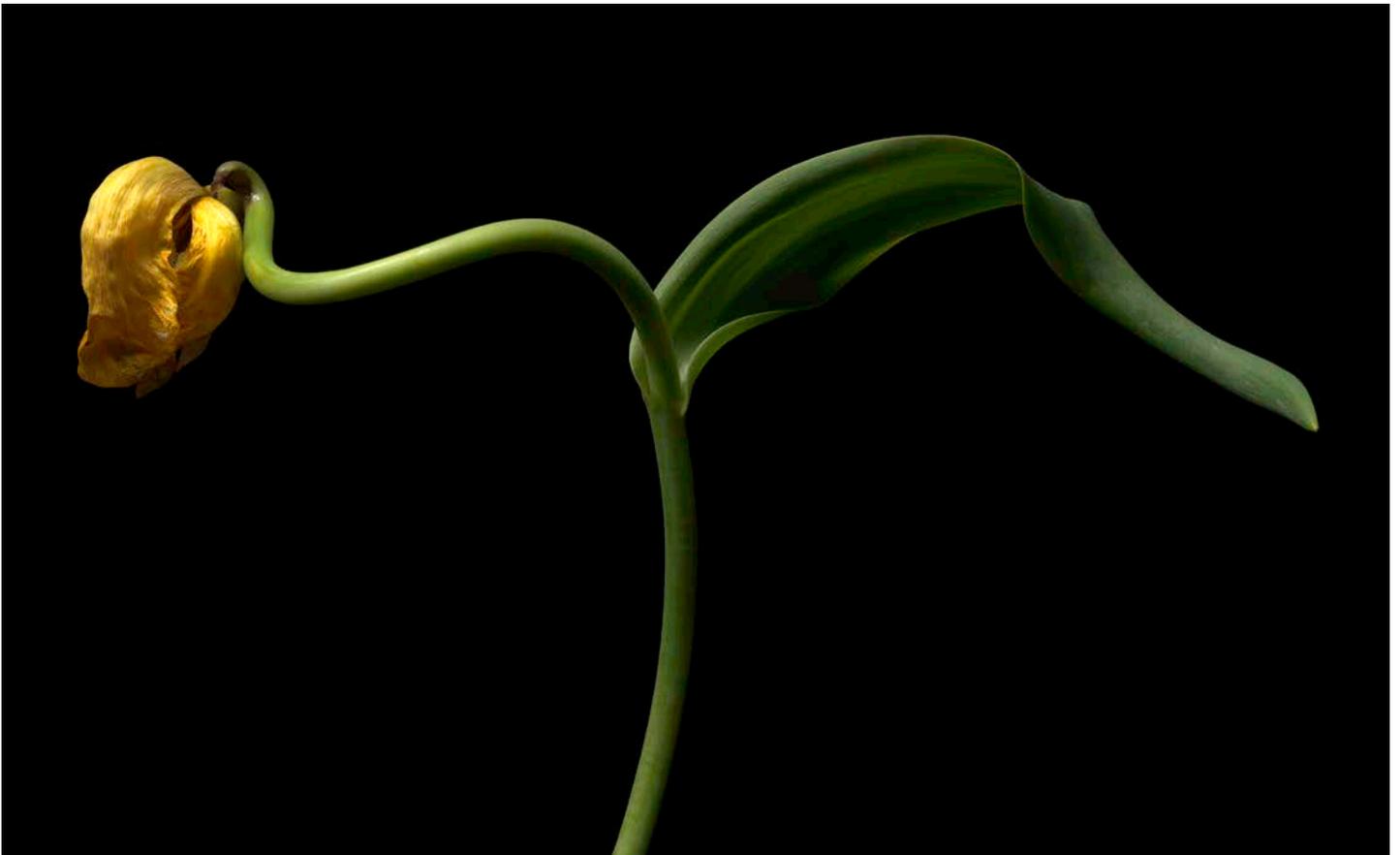
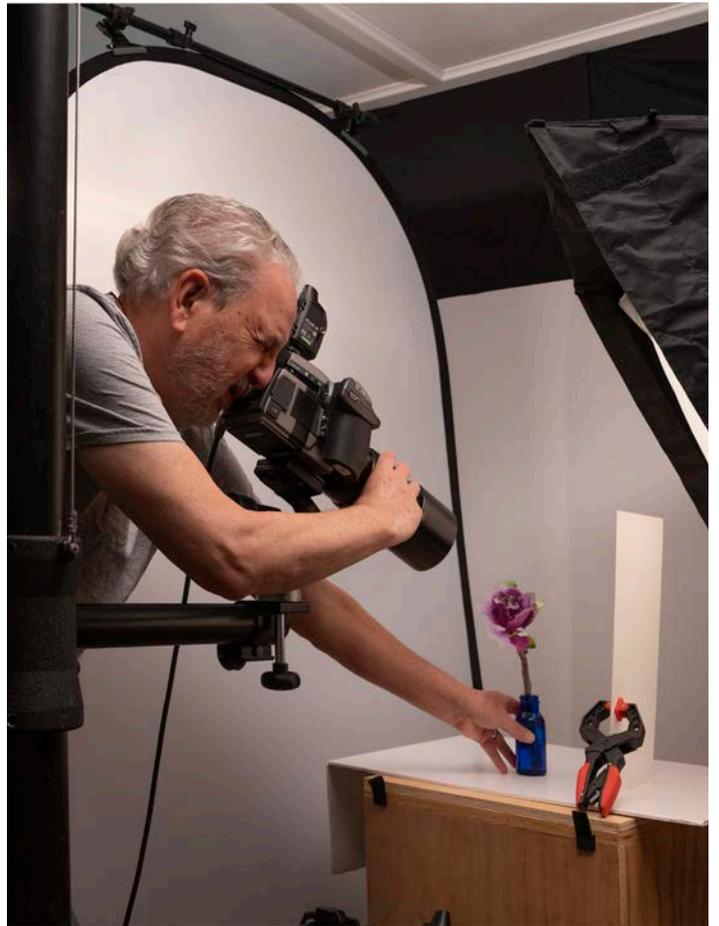
## ARTIST STATEMENT

My career in photography began in college and has led from photojournalism and commercial photography to my current status as a sought after photographer in the highly specialized field of documenting fine art.

Working with major national and international museums and galleries as well as private collectors and individual artists has provided unprecedented behind-the-scenes access to paintings, drawings, photographs and sculpture by many of the world's greatest artists – from Renaissance masters to today's living legends – and the chance to work beside and learn from some of the art world's top curators, art historians, conservators and collectors.

Exposure to this art, expertise and body of knowledge has given me a greater understanding of themes and through lines that have been a consistent part of my personal imagery and have coalesced into new avenues to explore. As a photographer whose business has been dedicated to the work of others it is only recently that I have begun to actively pursue showing personal images to the broader public through virtual and in-person exhibitions, gallery shows and social media (@timnighswander).





# Interview with Tim Nighswander

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

In college my journalism degree had a photography requirement. When I took Photography 101 and learned to use my first 'serious' camera, I was hooked. The ability to visually express a thought or emotion, communicate an idea or tell a story was empowering and watching an image emerge in the darkroom was magical. I went on to pay my way through college working as a reporter and photographer for the local daily newspaper. By the time I graduated my interest in photography outweighed my interest in writing and a camera has been a constant companion and integral part of my life ever since. After serving in the Peace Corps, photographing my way through Europe and returning to graduate school to continue my photographic education, I began working as a commercial photographer – which then became my lifelong career.

In 2008 I formed Imaging4Art with my wife, Diane; a business dedicated to providing high resolution digital photography services to prominent museums, galleries, and art institutions. This has given me unprecedented access to an amazing array of work from that of Renaissance masters to world renown contemporary artists. Working with curators, art historians, and conservators who are among the best in their field has been an irreplaceable art education, giving me a background knowledge that informs my personal work.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

Photography is the closest we can ever come to seeing through someone else's eyes. My work is intended as a way to take the viewer on a journey to see the world in my unique way. I find beauty in the ordinary and overlooked and seek out juxtapositions and abstractions of light, line, form, and gesture that we walk by every day without noticing.

In the end, I see these as metaphors for the human condition: that while life is both fragile and ephemeral, there is beauty to be found at every stage. Through this transition from youth to old age one can read a full range of emotions: from pride, sadness, and pathos to joy, resolve, and grace.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

In my personal life I am most inspired by the love and support of my family – most especially my wife and three sons. Beyond that I am inspired by the people I know who struggle to overcome obstacles, persevere, don't give up hope, and who choose to do the right thing even when it is the more difficult path.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

I suspect that it is true of many artists, but I can't not be creating. It is integral to who I am as a person and how I see the world. As a consummate introvert, it is through my photography that I can express ideas and emotions that are difficult – if not impossible – to verbalize. It is a way of reacting and interacting with the world around me. Although it is gratifying when other people get to see and respond to my work, the creation itself is a selfish act, something I do for my own wellbeing.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

T. S. Eliot wrote "Our beginnings can never know our ends." Not knowing is part of the journey. Going forward, while the possibilities of this current series are endless, I expect my work to evolve. I will let it follow its natural course – one which I cannot force or predict. Beyond that it is my hope to be able to have these images experienced by a broader audience because I believe the work is worthy. What I do know is that I will continue to create - whatever form it may take. ♦

# Valeri Larko

Website: [valerilarko.com](http://valerilarko.com)

Valeri Larko is best known for her densely painted landscapes of the urban fringe, all of which she paints on location. She is attracted to the decaying and abandoned structures that populated the outskirts of America's urban centers and the stories these places tell about contemporary life and culture.

A large painting can take Larko up to three months to complete. The process of painting on location over a long period of time is crucial to her working method because it allows her to form a deeper connection to a particular place through careful observation and personal interaction with the people she meets there. While talking to people in the area, Larko learns a lot about the sites. She finds this interaction, both with people and the environment, makes the method by which she works as important as the final painting.

Valeri Larko's paintings have been exhibited in museums and galleries in the US and Europe. Solo exhibitions include Sugarlift Gallery, NYC, Susquehanna Art Museum, Bronx Museum, NY, Lyons Wier Gallery, NYC, WallWorks NY, Bronx, Hampden Gallery, University of Amherst, MA, Montserrat College of Art, Beverly, MA, The Morris Museum, Morristown, NJ, The Hunterdon Art Museum, Clinton, NJ, The New Jersey State Museum, Trenton, Safe-T-Gallery, Brooklyn, NY, Bronx River Art Center, NY, The College of New Rochelle, NY and the Visual Arts Center of New Jersey, Summit.

# Holiday MOTEL

EXIT 13 E

After you die,  
You will meet God.  
Revelation 1:7



Holiday  
MOTEL

NO  
SMOKE





# Interview with Valeri Larko

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

I took an oil painting class at community college when I was 18 and it was love at first brush stroke. After that, I decided I needed to go to art school, which was the best decision I ever made. I love what oil paint can do, from the rich colors to the textures that can be built up using a palette knife. It's a very forgiving medium and can be used in all kinds of weather, which is important since I paint on location. Unlike other mediums, oils don't dry out if it's very hot outdoors and a little rain won't hurt them either.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

My fascination with the urban fringe and the stories these overlooked places can tell about contemporary life and culture. We're all in a hurry, life can be very stressful, but slowing down and observing life in urban areas has allowed me to learn more and appreciate the little things we often don't give a second glance to, such as urban wildlife. There's so much beauty in the everyday world and this is what I try to capture on a regular basis. A large urban landscape can take me two to three months to complete on location. Spending that much time, and sometimes longer if I'm working on a series of landscapes, means I get to know a place more intimately and discover all these places have to offer. My recent series was painted under the High Bridge in the Bronx. Talk about a place that is overlooked! Hardly anyone but locals hang out there and yet it is a magical place full of urban wildlife and flora, a true urban sanctuary. While I was painting there, I would often see a father and son barbequing along the Harlem River on the weekends. This is their sanctuary in a bustling city, their place to bond and relax. Hopefully my paintings will help people reconnect with the beauty in their everyday lives.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

The people I meet on location when I'm painting.

They are the main reason I paint on location rather than from photographs back in my studio. I have nothing against working from photographs and occasionally I'll use a photo to capture something that doesn't stay still, like a car on a highway. My main interest is to experience the world directly and that includes talking to the people who live and work in the areas I paint in. These encounters make the process by which I paint as important as the finished painting. I learn so much from the people I meet, including the history of these sites. I'm a bit of an urban story teller/explorer and I love sharing these cultural stories and creating my own.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

My love of painting! I find so much joy in putting paint on canvas and painting on location means every day is an adventure. I'm so fortunate I get to do what I love most days, which is painting on site and meeting the people who live and work in these areas. Their stories are often enlightening or entertaining and sometimes both.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

I have two, one is to continue to challenge myself as an artist and also to connect my art to more people. My first goal has been consistent, I've always wanted to continue to grow and challenge myself as an artist. The second goal has changed over time. Back when I went to art school, the internet wasn't a thing yet and no one had a personal computer never mind a cell phone that doubles as a computer and a camera. These technologies gave rise to social media and while there are some dark aspects to the web, one positive is artists can now share their art with a much larger audience. Making art is important, but equally important is being able to share it! Social media has given me so many great opportunities to share my work, find collectors who often turn into good friends, as well as discover exhibitions venues further afield. I've also discovered new artists and reconnected with old friends through social media and that's an extra bonus. ♦

# Walt Thirion

Website: [walthirion.com](http://walthirion.com)

After a successful career as a hi-tech entrepreneur, I am able to focus all of my energy on two of my lifelong passions, remote wilderness areas and photography. While volunteering in the western part of Grand Canyon National Park, I fell in love with the area and moved from Austin, Texas to Kanab in the heart of the southern Utah red rock country where I continue to spend vast amounts of time in the backcountry as a volunteer backcountry ranger and member of search and rescue.

In addition to the landscapes of the American desert southwest, my passion has driven me to make several trips over the past decade to the polar regions, where I developed a deep appreciation of and connection with the frozen landscape and enigmatic icebergs.

Many wonderful words have been written about the profound beauty of these areas but they all fall well short of describing my deep emotional connection. Words can often be an unnecessary and obscuring layer imposing the writer's interpretation on the reader. In my work, I want nature to communicate directly with the viewer revealing deeper truths beyond the undeniably beautiful façade.

In order to achieve my vision, I have spent a lifetime learning the craft of photography. Though my images are 'straight' in the sense the objects are real and I don't generally composite, I have learned to use expressionist techniques to emphasize mood and emotion. Mastery of the craft is also necessary for me to produce large format, fine art prints which, to me, are the culmination of being a photographer.





**ARTIST STATEMENT**

There is something about the power of nature to leave us awestruck. Overwhelmed by its grandeur, the ability of Earth to produce inconceivable colors, and extraordinary organic forms, we are astounded by the majesty of the natural world. As an artist, how do we bring that to a viewer in a photograph?

We show them that reality is not equivalent to fact. It is with this in mind that my work actively subverts the ideas and preconceptions perpetuated by contemporary gallerists today that landscape photography is about creating a 'pretty' scene. In rejecting these notions, my work becomes a conduit for my subjects to find their own voice. I allow myself to become immersed in nature, experiencing it in a way that allows an authentic connection with the earth to translate into my photographs.

Through a combination of aesthetic, scientific, and deeply personal approaches, my photographic practice takes on the act of intensively seeing and exposing us to unforeseen realities that exist within our world.

# Whitney River

Website: [whitneyriver.com](http://whitneyriver.com)

Whitney River's poetic drawings and paintings invite the viewer to share her appreciation for the intricate details found in nature. Through close observation and realistic rendering of organic forms, River creates meditative compositions that evoke the human experience. Since graduating from Yale University in 1995, she has shown extensively throughout New England, and her drawings and paintings are represented in many private and corporate collections.

## ARTIST STATEMENT

In the Beech Leaves series, I present these natural forms as representatives of our human experience. These paintings and drawings grew out of the COVID pandemic, as an exploration into the notion of a "pandemic pod." Many of us spent months isolated, with a just a few select people.

This body of work presents relationships of small, isolated groups, that I hope will resonate as we recognize and process how our own connections may have changed during this time. Some relationships, out of necessity, may have had to drift, while others may have become more intense. Some may be marked by distance and longing, or come into clearer focus, as we have taken a close look at who is with us, both physically and emotionally. The Beech Leaves are ultimately about the relationships that have sustained us, the people with whom we created our protected reality, and with whom we have moved forward.





# Interview with Whitney River

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## **What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?**

My art teacher in high school taught me to draw with graphite, and the fascination with shading and rendering in extreme detail had me hooked! I have been told that I paint the same way I draw, and I believe that's true. I use small, round brushes with my oils, the tips of which are certainly reminiscent of my sharpened pencils! I love the workability of oil paint, and the fact that I can layer, tweak, and manipulate my forms until the perfectionist in me is finally happy.

## **What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?**

I believe people have a strong need to connect with other people, to try to understand our human existence, and to relate to others. I try to convey my experience of being human, and my need to connect with others, though my imagery.

In addition, I have such a profound respect and appreciation for nature, and for the beauty and wonder of natural forms. I hope that by presenting the natural forms in great detail, rendering them with tremendous care, that I will encourage people to slow down, and to look around them, at the marvels that surround us.

## **Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?**

I am inspired by my children. My son, who is thirteen now, is an amazing young musician, who has explored

the world through sound for his entire life. Watching him pick up instruments and play around until a melody emerges has been fascinating, since I am so visual; it's been fantastic to watch someone move through life with sound as their beacon. And my daughter, who is nine, is a wonderful artist, and an incredibly curious, eager, open-minded learner. I am humbled by her ability to sit down and draw absolutely anything that pops into her mind at any given moment. Her imagination and creativity inspire me every day.

## **What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?**

That is such a good question, and one that I am not sure I can truly answer. I have always been driven to make things. Just like my son makes music out of everything from which he can coax sound, and my daughter draws scenes that pop into her mind, just instinctively, almost. I believe it is my way of making sense of the world, and of finding my place in it.

## **Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?**

My goal as an artist is to continue to explore the natural world around me, and to find resonance in the forms I discover, while simultaneously going inward to try to understand why the images resonate...and then to create elegant, poetic imagery that will strike a chord with people. I have been told many times that my work is meditative. I hope to bring people to a place of calm, beauty, a space to pause, breathe, and connect. ♦

# Winternitz

Instagram: [@winternitz\\_](#)

Born in 1993, Winternitz is a New York-based Peruvian painter. He graduated with his Bachelor's of Fine Arts from the School of Visual Arts and received his Master's degree in painting from the New York Academy of Art. Primarily an oil painter, Winternitz explores the often enforced sexual politics of our world and the brittle concept of what we understand as masculinity.





## Interview with Winternitz

### What initially drew you to your medium/ media of choice?

The smell of oil painting. There's nothing else like it. It's intoxicatingly sensuous.

### What aspect of your art do you hope really comes across to your audience?

I am but a Peruvian man who saw his first painting at 18 years of age. Western painting and its depiction of sex, excess and violence became intoxicating to me due to my upbringing in Lima, Peru. A place where violent riots and uncensored animation were openly broadcasted on national television in times of dictatorship. Stumbling upon this adult media at an early age, left a lasting impression on me and became the basis for my visual language. By questioning conventional power dynamics and the sexual politics that dominate our world, I strive to paint with power, instead of shielding myself from this theme behind my cartooning.

### Who inspires you in your life, whether it be artistically or otherwise?

My father, Guillermo Pineda Garcia. Born 1942, he grew up in Peru owning nothing other than his name. Barely a

teenager, he became the father figure for his six siblings after his father's abandonment. Once he was a man, he worked tirelessly achieving financial wealth, then lost almost everything after being betrayed by his business partner. I was born in the midst of this crisis in '93. He is a fighter who never gives up regardless of how dire life can get and he has taught me the meaning of strength and resolve through his perseverance and kindness. I am where I am thanks to him. Te quiero papá.

### What keeps you going as an artist? Where do you find that creative drive?

I find it in the very emotions I get out of painting. The act itself brings me joy like no other. I am self indulgent in this regard; I paint because I want to feel the way painting makes me feel.

### Tell us about your primary goal for the future. Has this goal changed over time?

My objective remains unchanged. I want my next painting to be better than the last. I've been working on these two series of paintings 'The Bark Is Harsher Than The Bite' & 'All The Animals Come Out At Night'. I have never been this excited over a body of work. I can't wait to share it. Something big is coming. ♦

# Wonil Suh

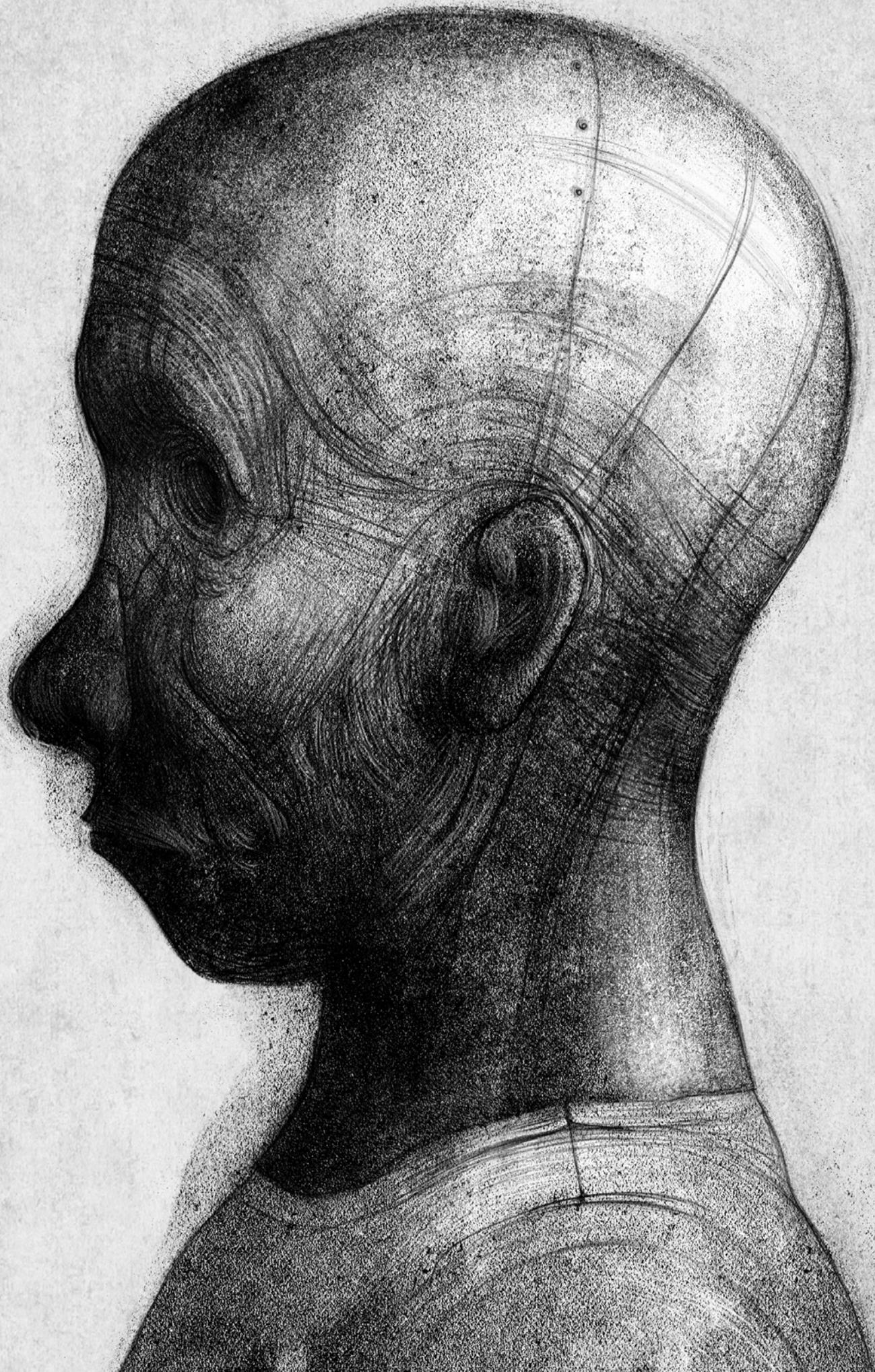
Instagram: [@wonilsuh](#)

Wonil Suh is an artist, illustrator, designer, and creative director. He has lived and worked in St. Louis, Chicago, Seoul, and most recently, New York City.

While working as a designer working for tech and financial firms such as IBM, Bloomberg, producing clean-cut corporate digital designs, his art style is the exact opposite—dark, raw, rough, and surreal, often done in dry media such as pencil, charcoal, and recently digital and mixed media with similar expressive style.

He draws inspirations from the arts of Hieronymus Bosch, Zdzislaw Beksinski, Kiki Smith, Käthe Kollwitz, and Francisco Goya, among many. His mixed media drawings often cover a wide range of subject matters that form a parallel or mirror reality that reflects his view of the world, often told through crystalized personal stories.

His drawings often feature commonly recurring subjects including objects from childhood memories, graphic or typographic symbols, and organomechanic surfaces. He has shown his works in Barcelona, Seoul, Houston, and New York City.



create!

