



30TH
ANNIVERSARY

artAbility

a celebration of art by artists with disabilities



Main Line Health®
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

2025-2026

With sincere gratitude,
The W.A. Speakman Family Foundation
thanks the incredible staff of
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital



Leslie Palmer, *The Sky Remembers*



Afi Ese, *Uncertain*

2025 Art Ability Celebration

30TH
ANNIVERSARY

30TH ANNUAL EXHIBIT AND SALE

Sunday, November 9, 2025 – Sunday, February 1, 2026

The exhibit will be open daily during visiting hours
at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital.

Tours will be available upon request.

Please email artability@mlhs.org to schedule a tour.



Jamie Owens, *Driftwood Bay*

ON THE COVER

Featured Artist: Rachel Coleman, *Blue Bloom*



Donna Phillips, Eric Mohn, Deb and Jack Lynch



Clifton Anderson and Pat Richardson



Barry Rabner and Helen Carmine



Sal Panasci, Susan Shiber and Marilyn Roland

Celebrating 30 years of Art Ability!

The Art Ability Patrons Reception began in the mid-1990s as a “friend-raising” vehicle to enhance Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s mission. Consisting of an eight-week exhibit, the first show in 1996 included approximately 200 pieces of art by 71 artists. Volunteer assistance was provided by a hospital Fine Arts Committee, the predecessor to the current Art Ability Committee.

Thirty years later, the show has grown in size and impact. This year’s exhibition features 398 pieces of art from 170 artists. Artists from around the globe participate. Since inception, 26 countries have been represented, including Belgium, Colombia, Denmark, Ghana, Italy, Nepal, Norway and Singapore. Representation from the United States is even more impressive, with artists from almost all 50 states (just three missing!) participating over the years.

A total of 1,476 unique artists have participated in the Art Ability Exhibition and Sale. Many are annual participants, with nearly 75 artists joining us for 10 or more years. A few artists have special reasons to celebrate — Sal Panasci has participated for 29 years, Joy Raskin for 23 and Clifton Anderson was in the very first show. This will be his tenth.



1996 Art Ability Committee Members, (L-R) Amy Rabner, Paula Hian, Cindy Westgate, Doris Gorden, Linda Lemmon

“Art Ability empowers me to transform the challenges I face into creativity. It permits me to demonstrate that my disability does not limit my voice, but in fact, amplifies it.”

—Sal Panasci, Art Ability artist

Over the 30-year history, sales of art have totaled more than \$1.7 million. While commercial art galleries and dealers typically take up to 60% of the retail sale of artwork, Art Ability retains only 20% of art sold during the annual exhibition. This high rate of return for our artists is central to the program’s mission of contributing to the financial stability and independence of our artists.

Art Ability not only provides countless artists with disabilities an avenue to display and sell their works, it also advances the hospital’s mission. Each year, revenue raised at the event contributes to hospital funding priorities, such as advanced technology and program enrichments. In recent years, the hospital has purchased new state-of-the-art therapy equipment, including Virtualis goggles, a virtual reality simulator designed to help patients regain motor function and improve their ability to perform tasks in real-world environments. Proceeds from the event have also established the Creative Arts Therapy Endowment, which allows more patients to access alternative therapies like art, music and horticulture, and the Patient Assistance Fund, which provides financial support to patients in need.

We are proud and humbled by Art Ability’s growth and impact over the years and look forward to celebrating and honoring the abilities of our artists for years to come.



Patrons Preview Reception Nov 8, 2008



DEAR FRIENDS,

Thirty years. When Art Ability first began in 1996, I don't think any of us could have imagined we'd be celebrating this special anniversary. As a new employee that year, I know I didn't. But three decades later, we continue to celebrate artists whose work continues to amaze and move us.

Tonight, as you walk through this exhibition and experience the creativity of over 170 artists from 30 states and four countries, I hope you'll feel what I feel every year: pure wonder. These 400+ pieces aren't just art — they're stories and glimpses into perspectives that make our world richer.

Every purchase, every donation, every moment you spend here tonight matters deeply. You're not just supporting individual artists (though that means everything to them). You're also helping us provide Creative Arts Therapy — art therapy, music therapy, horticultural therapy — to patients. Insurance doesn't cover these therapies, but we've seen firsthand how they transform recovery. Your generosity makes that possible.

During the dinner and auction program, we celebrate the triumph of the human spirit, and this year, we are honored to share Christy Lazer's inspiring journey. One ordinary morning, she was cheering for her son

at a baseball game. By afternoon, she was fighting for her life after a ruptured brain aneurysm. The doctors painted a grim picture, but her husband Preston wouldn't accept it. Through a childhood friend, Kate Turner, who works here at Bryn Mawr Rehab, Christy found her way to Dr. Mithra Maneyapanda and our team.

Here, Christy received compassionate, innovative care that reignited hope — from writing full sentences on a whiteboard to drawing heartfelt symbols of love for her family. Through therapy, resilience and the uplifting environment of the Art Ability exhibit, Christy's remarkable recovery defied expectations. Her story reminds us all of the incredible power of belief, perseverance and the healing potential of art.

None of this happens without our incredible Art Ability Committee volunteers, our Foundation Board, our staff and sponsors like you who believe in this mission. You see what I see — that art doesn't just decorate walls; it heals souls.

Thank you for being here. Thank you for seeing these artists for who they truly are: not people defined by disability, but creators whose work deserves to be celebrated.

With gratitude and excitement for the evening ahead,

Rosadele Plumari

Rosadele Plumari
Vice President, Executive Director
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

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Kenneth B. Mumma



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In addition to these leadership sponsors, we extend our special thanks to the many others who demonstrated their support through ads.

List current as of September 15, 2025.



Ken Smith, *Circle with Shadows*

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*List current as of
September 30, 2025.*

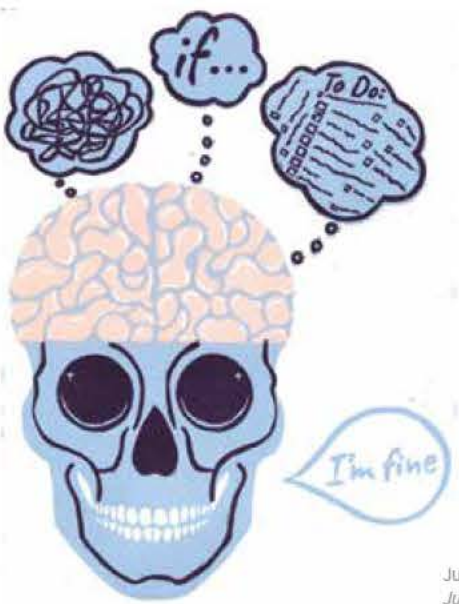
**BRYN MAWR REHAB HOSPITAL, PART OF MAIN LINE
HEALTH, IS A LEADER IN THE FIELD OF PHYSICAL
MEDICINE AND REHABILITATION.**

The 148-bed, not-for-profit hospital offers the full continuum of rehabilitation services, including acute inpatient care, as well as outpatient services for adults and adolescents. The hospital is accredited by The Joint Commission and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) and is designated by the American Nurses Credentialing Center (ANCC) as a Pathway to Excellence® organization. Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital treats patients with traumatic and nontraumatic brain injury, stroke and other neurological disorders, traumatic and nontraumatic spinal cord injury, amputations and orthopaedic injuries. Bryn Mawr Rehab Outpatient Network treats individuals with a wide range of conditions and injuries from brain injury, spinal cord injury and Parkinson's disease to concussions, pelvic floor disorders and lymphedema. Our outpatient rehabilitation services are conveniently located throughout the western suburbs of Philadelphia.

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



David Terrar, *Shadows and Gold*



Juliana Scheopner,
Just the TIP of the Iceberg

Mission

Art Ability is dedicated to creating community awareness of cognitive and physical disabilities, encouraging people with disabilities to reach beyond their limitations and find fulfillment and inspiration through art. Art Ability is a showcase of artwork by artists with disabilities. The program successfully develops new markets for artists with disabilities where they can gain recognition for their technical skill and artistic vision.

Now celebrating 30 years, Art Ability continues to be an integral part of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital since its first exhibition and sale of work by artists with disabilities in 1996. It continues to be a year-round showcase and celebration of artists with disabilities and is the country's largest international, juried exhibition and sale of its kind.

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

The exhibit will be open to the public for self-guided tours during Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital's visiting hours. If you'd like to schedule a private tour, please email artability@mlhs.org for more information.

Larine Chung, *Empty Room*

Program

SELECTION OF THE ART

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



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

SALES

Artists earn 80% of the sales of exhibited work and those commissioned during the 12-week show. Unsold works are returned after the exhibit closes. Select artists may be invited to take part in Art Ability's ongoing sales and traveling exhibitions throughout the remainder of the year.

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

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

- **Satellite exhibitions** — Traveling satellite exhibitions of Art Ability artwork are a key component of the program and have been successful in generating enhanced awareness of the talent and skill of our artists.
- **Online sales gallery** — Our online sales gallery provides the opportunity to view works for sale from our consignment inventory. Each year, Art Ability retains a number of works from our annual exhibition to allow for more exposure for our artists and their talents. To browse artwork available for purchase, visit ibid.org/v/artabilitygala25.



Rebecca Scheuer,
Colorful Charlie the Chimp

- **Corporate art acquisition program** — Art Ability also serves as a resource for corporations to help meet their needs for artwork for their collections.
- **Permanent collection of work** — Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital actively collects art and maintains a permanent collection of over 700 works, which are on display throughout the year. The hospital clinical staff often incorporate Art Ability work into their daily treatment activities with patients. Staff motivate patients by using the collection as tangible evidence of their potential to return to meaningful, productive lives.

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



Christy Lazer found comfort in Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital's greenhouse.

Christy Lazer

“8 AM game, 59 degrees, windy and rainy. This is love.” Christy Lazer posted those words on Facebook while watching her son’s baseball doubleheader in Fauquier County, Va., on October 7, 2023. It was a peaceful, chilly morning — but hours later, her life changed forever.

While waiting in the car, Christy was struck by a severe headache. Her husband, Preston, noticed the left side of her face drooping and called 911. Doctors found a ruptured brain aneurysm and airlifted her to a trauma center, where she underwent emergency surgery and multiple procedures. Weeks later, she remained minimally conscious. Not progressing as they had hoped, her doctors planned to discharge Christy to a long-term care facility, implying she was beyond recovery.

Preston could not accept that and began researching top-tier brain injury rehabilitation centers, ultimately finding Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. As fate would have it, Christy’s childhood friend, Kate Turner, is an employee. Turner connected the Lazer family with Mithra Maneyapanda, MD, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s brain injury specialist. While reviewing the case, Dr. Maneyapanda discovered a secondary, treatable complication, offering new hope to Christy and her loved ones.

Christy was transferred to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital in November 2023. Though 160 miles from home, her care was immediate and personalized, her days filled with intensive therapies. She worked with physical, occupational and speech therapists who adapted their approaches if something wasn’t working. During one early session, a speech therapist sensed that Christy might have an easier time expressing herself through writing and handed her a whiteboard. Christy began

writing full sentences. It was the first real glimpse that she was still very present and aware. Soon after, when her family came to visit, Christy began drawing hearts to express her love for them. These small, emotional breakthroughs were powerful signs of her spirit returning.

The hospital’s environment also helped Christy heal. She found peace and inspiration in the hospital’s greenhouse and Art Ability exhibit. “I would admire the beautiful artwork in the hallways and think to myself, ‘Some of these people were once in my condition, and now they are well enough to create that,’” she said. These alternative therapies helped illuminate a path forward.

“I would admire the beautiful artwork in the hallways and think to myself, ‘Some of these people were once in my condition, and now they are well enough to create that.’” — Christy Lazer

Step by step, Christy improved — from puréed meals to grilled cheese, silence to conversation, bedrest to walking. In March 2024, she returned home to her husband, sons and beagle, Pumpkin. She’s celebrated birthdays, shared family dinners and even given a speech at her former school, her strength and spirit leading the way.



Preston and Christy Lazer, at home with their sons.

Christy’s local doctors credit Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for making her healing journey possible. Though far from over, her story is a shining testament to the power of having the right team believing in your potential and doing everything they can to support your success.

“The staff at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital never gave up on me,” Christy said.

Philanthropic Gifts at Work

Gifts to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital touch every corner of our work — enhancing patient safety, expanding access to innovative therapies, advancing staff education and enriching the overall patient experience. The generosity of our donors in 2024–2025 played a vital role in helping us deliver exceptional rehabilitative care and invest in programs that support healing, independence and hope.

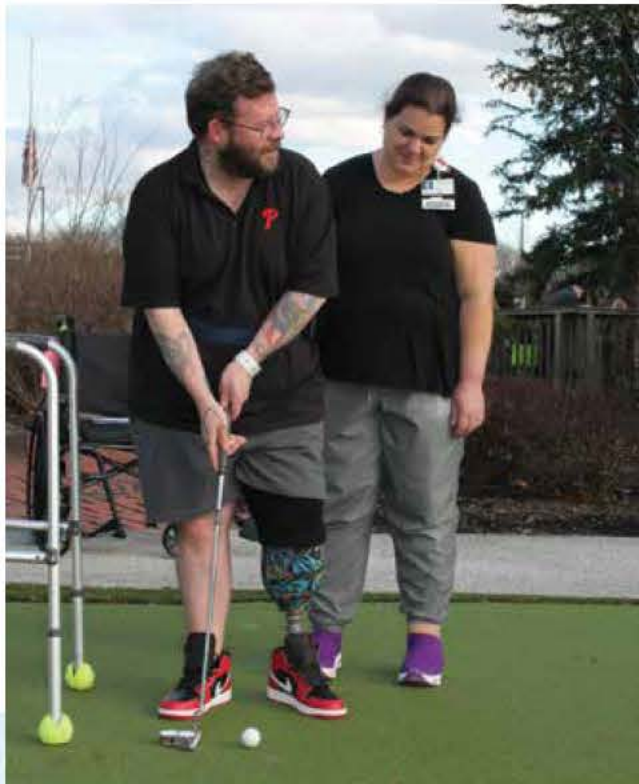
ACCESS

The Bryn Mawr Rehab Patient Assistance Fund was created to remove financial barriers that stand in the way of independence after a life-altering illness or injury. In fiscal year 2025, the fund provided more than \$28,000 in support to help patients access essential resources. These included adaptive driving equipment and vehicle modifications, as well as wheelchairs, prosthetics and home accessibility upgrades. This year, the fund also helped cover the cost of medications, driving evaluations and driving lessons. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, patients are reclaiming freedom, mobility and the confidence to rebuild their lives.

A patient works with a therapist on his golf swing

PATIENT AND EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE

Thanks to the benevolence of our donors, the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation funded the installation of a brand-new audiovisual system in the patient dining room. This project was supported through the President's Strategic Initiative Fund, one of the key areas bolstered by donations from last year's Art Ability event. The upgraded A/V system will enhance group therapies, wellness programs and our patient and caregiver education series — creating a more engaging, accessible and therapeutic environment. Donor support continues to transform everyday spaces into opportunities for healing, learning and connection.



NEW TECHNOLOGY

Thanks to generous donor support, the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation recently funded the purchase of the new Bertec system, a cutting-edge advancement in the treatment of balance, mobility and vestibular conditions. This state-of-the-art technology offers enhanced capabilities for both assessment and rehabilitation. With immersive virtual reality, wireless head tracking and objective testing backed by normative data, the Bertec system sets a new standard in care for patients recovering from concussion, vestibular disorders and other neurological conditions. This investment ensures our clinical teams can continue providing the most effective, evidence-based therapies — made possible entirely through the power of philanthropy.

EMPLOYEE EXCELLENCE

Through the support of the Edward Dillon, MD, Nursing Excellence Fund, the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation proudly provided funding for six nurses to attend professional conferences throughout the fiscal year. These opportunities allow our nursing staff to stay at the forefront of clinical best practices, bring new knowledge back to their teams and continue delivering exceptional care to our patients. Through the generosity of our donors, we're able to invest in our staff — which is an investment in the future of rehabilitation.



The Bertec system in action

**DEAR FRIENDS,**

I am so excited to celebrate the 30th Annual Art Ability Exhibition and Sale with all our patrons, patients, staff and visitors. We have a beautiful, inspirational exhibition that highlights

each artist's extraordinary abilities, including a nod to Art Ability's rich history via our anniversary display.

Our featured artist, Rachel Coleman, sets an elegant tone as we celebrate our "pearl" anniversary. Her fluid art dances across the canvas and moves in unpredictable ways. While other forms of painting or drawing put the control in the hands of the artist, Rachel's work requires her to give herself over to the paint and see what emerges. Every spin of the canvas, swipe with a palette knife or even a strong breeze changes the paint, making each piece truly one of a kind.

Many of our other artists are also exploring new methods and mediums this year. Artist Brandon Allebach took on an additional challenge by choosing to paint with his non-dominant hand. While this was very difficult for him, it also proved cathartic, allowing him to find perspective even within his own disability. Though others may be

forced to adapt, Brandon took on this challenge willingly, a testament to his (and all disabled artists') inner strength and toughness in the face of adversity.

Throughout Art Ability's 30 years, nearly 1,500 artists have exhibited. Clifton Anderson, who participated in our very first Art Ability exhibit in 1996, is back this year for his first show since 2009. Sal Panasci celebrates his 29th year as an Art Ability artist, only missing the inaugural show. Trevor Frampton joins us for his first year, after being a patient during last year's exhibit. As he woke from intubation, his first goal was to be able to hold a paintbrush. Under the guidance of our excellent team of therapists, he was able to achieve that goal and much more.

Thank you, as always, to my incredible team of volunteers on the Art Ability Committee. Each one of you plays such an important part in this exhibition and it could not happen without all of you. Thank you, as well, to our staff, patients and visitors, who interact with the artwork every day and never fail to make it known how important Art Ability is to them. I am thrilled to be a tiny piece of Art Ability's history, and I cannot wait to see how the program continues to grow and inspire others in the future.

Erin Panner*Art Ability Program Coordinator***Michele Greco**

Greco is an illustrator and designer who is passionate about creating engaging and immersive storytelling experiences that go beyond traditional image-making. Her work is influenced by a global perspective, and she draws inspiration from the diverse cultures and experiences that surround us. Whether she is working on a children's book illustration or designing a digital interactive experience, her goal is to create designs that are both aesthetically pleasing and emotionally resonant. Greco recently joined the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation as a new board member.

**David Jones**

Jones is an associate professor and chair of the Art Department at West Chester University, as well as an acclaimed graphic designer. He received both his Bachelor and Master of Fine Arts from Temple University's Tyler School of Art. Jones has held senior design positions at studios in Philadelphia, Pa., and Secaucus, NJ, and published work for clients such as W Hotels, Yards Brewing Company, HBO, Motorola, American Psychological Association and many others. He recently developed a series of traveling installations with Speaking for Ourselves, a self-advocacy organization run by people with disabilities.

**Colleen King**

King is the owner of Sugartown Art and Antiques, an art gallery featuring antique, vintage and contemporary artwork. After years of sourcing artwork for private clients, she decided to open an art gallery that would offer interesting, original work from all genres and periods, at down-to-earth pricing. With King's keen eye and engaging social media presence, Sugartown Art and Antiques took off online, and is opening a brick-and-mortar location on King Street in Malvern, Pa., this fall.

Best in Show

Charles W. Hennessy Artist Award
Presented by: The Charles W. Hennessy
Art Ability Endowment Fund
Victor Mordasov, *Magic Wave*



Judge's Choice

COLLEEN KING

The Kozicki Family Award
Presented by: Jean P. Kozicki
Joan Lesikin, *Above It All*

DAVID JONES

The Harry A. Sweeney, Jr. and Stephen H. Bennett
Memorial Award
Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci
Jane Gerus, *Hitchhiker*

MICHELE GRECO

The Doris B. Gorden Award
Presented by: The Doris B. Gorden Art Ability
Endowment Fund
David Caron, *Abstract Cat*

Curator's Choice

ERIN PANNER

The Marilyn S. Roland Memorial Award
Presented by: The Family and Friends of Marilyn S. Roland
Brandon Allebach, *Melody Maker*

People's Choice

The Lois Levy People's Choice Award
Winner will be announced in December after a public vote.

Drawing and Fine Printmaking

1st Prize

The Myra Jean Burke
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Donna and Victor Hansen
Sydnee Hoffman, *Lila*

2nd Prize

Presented by:
The Art Trust
**Sal Panasci,
*Beach Umbrella***

3rd Prize

Presented by:
Ken and Moira Mumma
Lydia Watson, *Navigators*

Honorable Mention

In Memory of Colleen
McKernan Schuler
Presented by: Nora Liero
**Jace Laakso,
*Blue Landscape Cat***

Sculpture, Jewelry and Fine Craft

1st Prize

The Francesca Toscani
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
**Kathleen Montes,
*Blue Phase***

2nd Prize

Presented by:
The Panzo Family
**Jennifer Lipman-Bartel,
*Longevity***

3rd Prize

Presented by:
Ruth Porritt
**Clifton Anderson,
*Gypsy Gardener***

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
Ken and Moira Mumma
**Jennifer Ingalls,
*Steampunk Long
Heart Pendant***



Sydnee Hoffman, *Lila*



Jennifer Lipman-Bartel, *Longevity*



Lydia Watson, *Navigators*



Jane Gerus, *Hitchhiker*



Kathleen Montes,
Blue Phase

Amuri Morris, *Where Red and Green Lines Meet*Greg Harvey, *Cape May*Hilda Volkin, *Light Spectrum*

Mixed-Media and Digital Art

1st Prize

In Honor of
Marilyn S. Roland
Presented by:
Art Goes to School Group
Amuri Morris,
Where Red and Green
Lines Meet

2nd Prize

Presented by: The Art Trust
Jen Dacota, You Can't
Get There From Here

3rd Prize

Presented by:
Ken and Moira Mumma
Kari Souders,
Shards Number 2

Honorable Mention

The James M. Hamm
Memorial Award
Presented by:
The Hamm Family
Hilda Volkin,
Light Spectrum

Painting

1st Prize

In Memory of
David E. Tordone
Presented by:
The Tordone Family
Gregory Harvey,
Cape May

2nd Prize

In Memory of
Gail P. Panner
Presented by:
The Panner and Rawson
Families
Cheryl Kinderknecht,
Flow

3rd Prize

Presented by:
The Art Ability Committee
Michael Thomas,
Pretty Bone Machine

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
The Art Trust
Meg Quinlisk,
Pippa's Poppies
Purple Vase

Watercolor and Wash

1st Prize

The Kenneth Peterson
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
Lawrence Meyers,
Cathedral des Invalides

2nd Prize

The Elliott T. Settle
Memorial Award
Presented by:
The Settle Family
Jan Alice Keeling,
This Face

3rd Prize

Presented by:
Linda Heiberger
Kathryn Noska,
Take A Stand

Honorable Mention

The Fischer Family Award
Presented by:
Jeannie Fischer
Dave Aquilante,
Evening Chores

Photography

1st Prize

In Honor of
Alexandria Noel
Presented by:
The Giles Family
Rona Golfen, Leopard

2nd Prize

In Honor of the incredible
staff at Bryn Mawr Rehab
Hospital
Presented by: Anonymous
Ken Smith,
Circle With Shadows

3rd Prize

Presented by: Ruth Porritt
Richard Crumb,
Bridge of Sighs

Honorable Mention

In Memory of Emerson
Mae "Emmy" Lueking
Presented by: Katrina &
Leslie Van Alstyne
Robert Winig,
The White Daisy

Lawrence Meyers, *Cathedral des Invalides*Cheryl Kinderknecht, *Flow*Rona Golfen, *Leopard*Robert Winig,
The White Daisy

Rachel Coleman

West Chester, PA

Rachel Coleman is a fluid artist living in Chester County, Pa. with her husband and their dogs. Originally from Allentown, Pa., Rachel grew up in her mom's ceramic shop cleaning greenware and glazing ceramics. She dabbled in a few of mom's painting classes, but after becoming a rebellious teenager, never looked back at painting ceramics again. Growing up, Rachel played the violin, danced, sang and later became a hairstylist, but never considered herself a real artist.

In November 2015, Rachel lost her mom to illness and 20 days later, lost her father to suicide. This left her in shock, and as an only child, it took a few years to pick up the pieces with the help of her significant other, Tom.



After things settled down, she realized it was time to take care of her mental health, so she found a therapist who suggested using the right side of the brain by doing something creative. She figured she'd try painting again and see if some of mom's teachings were still in there. She went to a hobby store and bought wooden nutcrackers to paint. While painting, she lost all sense of time, anxiety and stress and got a much needed (although temporary) reprieve from her trauma. The next day, Rachel returned to the hobby store for more painting projects. After a while, she found fluid art. The way the colors moved across the canvas and created organic shapes intrigued her. Rachel tried a few different mediums, but kept coming back to fluid art. She was hooked! "I am a control freak at times, and this medium has really helped me let go. I never have complete control. I can pick my colors and the technique that I want to use, but ultimately the paint is going to do what it wants. After a piece is dry, I will go in and play up what stands out to me."

Lux

Over the last four years, the therapy of practicing fluid art has turned into a full-time job. Knowing she either had to dial back making and selling art or jump in full-time, in March 2023, she decided to leave her job of 10 years and go for it. Doing so has opened the door to many more opportunities. Rachel has started a local artist support group that meets twice a month to network, get advice and connect. Rachel says, "I never felt like I quite fit in anywhere growing up, but art has led me to my people. My local art community inspires me and lifts me up. I'm so grateful!"

"Being an artist living with this eye disease can be stressful, so I try to remember to be grateful for every day that I have my sight."

Rachel has a rare degenerative eye disease called retinitis pigmentosa (RP). Her symptoms, which began in childhood and increased with age, include decreased night vision, trouble seeing in low light and loss of some peripheral vision. Rachel can no longer drive at night or when it's overcast, but her husband and artist friends help her out when needed. Rachel says, "Being an artist living with this eye disease can be stressful, so I try to remember to be grateful for every day that I have my sight. Things could always be worse." There is no cure at this time for RP, but Rachel and her specialist closely monitor its progression.



Take Me Away

Rachel's biggest inspirations are color, biology and the elements of nature, which are reflected in her work. "When I get a color in my head, I have to get it out on canvas a couple times until it's out of my system. It's like an obsession that needs to be released."



Dragonfly

She says, "Making art has helped me come out of the dark. It is still hard at times, but being able to create helps immensely. I am beyond grateful for finding my passion and being able to make it full-time. The biggest gift is the people I meet and being able to share my work with others. Today, I can say with confidence that I am an artist. I have a lot of people tell me that they don't have an artistic bone in their body, but I always say that you never know if you don't try. That's why I started teaching workshops. People are amazed at what they can do!"

Carrie Albert *Seattle, WA*
Albert expresses her artistic visions in myriad ways, including collage, poetry, assemblage, drawing and photography. She has chemical sensitivities and must use nontoxic mediums in her art. As a collagist, Albert



Kate Butler, *Lost in the Crowd*

searches for healing by gathering fragments, symbols and torn ephemera, and piecing them together in unexpected ways. Through this methodology, she creates wholeness and recognizes herself and others. Albert says she collaborates with subjects that call to her,

relying on subconscious wisdom through dreams, poetry and closed-eye visions. She seeks peace in the process, and she always finds beauty. A favorite quote of Albert's comes from Langston Hughes: "Perhaps the mission of an artist is to interpret beauty to people — the beauty within themselves."

Brandon Allebach *Albuquerque, NM*
Allebach has been an Albuquerque artist for over 16 years. Inspired by Cubism, catharsis and art of the Southwest, Allebach paints abstractions with acrylic on canvas. Using sharp lines and contrast, he focuses on creating depth that interweaves the foreground and background. He also likes feeding birds, making bee homes and spoiling his cats.

Dave Allen *Lancaster, PA*
Allen is a retired contract sales manager and pastor. He says his inspiration to paint comes from God, the greatest artist. "I seek to capture a sense of time and place in my painting." He first takes photographs, then uses those as a point of reference to start painting. He employs larger brushes first to put in all the values and smaller brushes to refine the work.

Clifton Anderson *Broomall, PA*
Anderson is a multimedia artist. Since 1987, he has been using CelluClay®, a form of papier-mâché, to create whimsical masks. The material is used to cover armatures constructed from found objects. He says he "fell in love" with the medium

"As I travel into my images of art, my limitations disappear ... letting me feel expressive, free, and safe." —Constance Avery

and continues to use it to this day. His latest mask, *Gypsy Gardner*, uses gourds in its construction. Anderson's current paintings utilize an intuitive abstract approach that was always incorporated in his sculpted masks, echoing his passage from realism to the abstract. "The shift has been transformative, freeing me from the limitations of portraiture, and allowing my creative impulses to flourish unrestrained."

Dave Aquilante *Downingtown, PA*
Aquilante is a stroke survivor who uses drawing and painting with watercolors as a means of recovery, therapy and meditation. His works have been recognized with awards. He enjoys visiting beaches, hiking and reading.

Kathryn Ashleigh *Pottstown, PA*
Ashleigh describes herself as a multi-juried, symbolic, landscape and anatomy painter. She uses a variety of mediums, primarily oil and watercolor, ink and acrylics. "My work is evolving and I am currently finding great joy in the earth and its beauty."

Constance Avery *Utica, NY*
As an artist with vision and hearing loss, Avery has faced many limitations for the past 30-plus years. Instead of seeing her disabilities in a negative light, Avery uses her restrictions to allow her to take a different and interesting path in her artistic journey. Creating and selling her artwork, including paintings, pottery and photography, has helped Avery feel confident and free, despite her disabilities. Different mediums have also allowed

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

Renee Ballard *Philadelphia, PA*
Ballard says that art has had a positive influence on her life. The major inspiration for her artwork is found in nature. "Art has provided a valuable outlet to express my feelings and convey them to others."

Carrie Bertschy *Cincinnati, OH*
Bertschy has been an artist for over 20 years. She works in several media: painting, drawing, ceramics and collages. With her love for art, she keeps working on her abilities and says she has become better each time she puts together a new work of art. Avery has exhibited nationwide. She says her disabilities have not stopped her from expressing herself through art. "Art is therapy, mental and physical. I encourage people to continue art, whether they are a beginner or a professional."

Martha Bird *Minneapolis, MN*
Bird was born in upstate New York, raised outside of Milwaukee, and has now made

Minnesota her home for most of her adult life. She is an adventurer at heart: she has traveled to many countries, loved skydiving and explored pitch dark caves crawling on her belly. Bird learned basketry to "get back to life" after injuring her back and being on bed rest for two years. She alternates between creating woven willow sculptures with specialty willow she grows and harvests, and using other mediums to express herself. Bird exhibits regionally and nationally, and says her work expresses her life's journey.

Shawn Bittenbender *Philadelphia, PA*
Bittenbender says that art has always been a source of joy for him. Though he lost the passion for a long time, it has returned to new heights with support of his family, friends and the Art Ability staff. They inspired him to study all styles and techniques of painting and drawing. Bittenbender believes the confidence he found to push past his breathing issues and pain is owed to these kind souls. He loves all subjects, but prefers the beauty of people and the natural world for inspiration. "Thanks to you all who inspire the best in others."

Joyce Brommer *Philadelphia, PA*
Brommer is a retired teacher who spends most of her time managing doctors' appointments and singing with the Wayne Oratorio Society and the Delaware Valley Opera Company. For the latter, she serves as an officer on the board of directors, stage director, props mistress, set designer and painter. Despite holding several degrees, none of which is in art, "creative" is the word one would use to describe her. She has no

particular style or medium and can only go so long before her soul cries out for an opportunity to create.

Aimee Bungard *Clinton, PA*
"Over the past few years, my art has become a statement of the present." Through the collective trauma of COVID-19, her involvement in birth work as a doula and increasingly frequent migraines, Bungard feels she is being reminded that our point of power, personal and collective, is held within the honesty of our moments, our



Heather Carey, *Where Make-Believe Was Safe*

“now.” We leave breadcrumbs for those who are following. Bungard’s art is an authentic statement of her ever-changing “now,” filled with fears (real and imagined), pain (chronic and seasonal), repressions and unimaginable growth.

Kate Butler *Mattapoisett, MA*
Butler’s artistic practice is rooted in inquiry — she uses art to explore questions, process thoughts and reflect on personal experiences. “Resilience deeply inspires both my subject matter and creative process,” she says. About 12 years ago, she began to lose her hearing. The cause was idiopathic, and she experienced two distinct episodes of profound hearing loss. Without her cochlear implant and hearing aid, she cannot understand speech. Butler must rely on her other senses — especially sight — for visual cues, and she says she has found peace in not always knowing or hearing everything. These experiences shape the way she engages with the world, inform her layered techniques and emphasizes light in her work. “As I dedicate more time to my creative journey, my emerging practice

continues to grow, shaped by curiosity, reflection and a desire to connect.”

Ronaldo Byrd *Burlington, NJ*
Byrd is a contemporary “Hip Pop Artist.” He has been painting and drawing since the age of three, and it was then that he began developing his 200-plus original characters that are subjects for his unique acrylic scenes on foam board. Byrd gets his inspiration from people. He believes there is beauty in everything he sees, and that everyone has something to offer. “My art and I represent differences, and my hope is that the world can see beauty and acceptance through my eyes.”



Jen Decota, *You Can't Get There From Here*

Jamie Campbell

Philadelphia, PA
As an artist with mental illness, Campbell is often caught up with what’s on the horizon. Those thoughts can become cyclic. Each nebula has many layers of hand-cut recycled paper, each background has many layers painted over several days. “These give ruminations a space and form to exist in outside my head,” she says.

Duncan Campling

Philadelphia, PA
In 2018, Campling survived two brain stem strokes at age 47, leaving him with a condition called locked-in syndrome. It left him completely paralyzed, apart from his eyelids, but fully

aware. Significant recovery from locked-in syndrome is one in 500, but thankfully Campling has surpassed those odds. He remains mentally unscathed, scoring 30/30 on a medical cognition test. Physical progress has been relatively slow, but in 2023, Campling was approved to drink regular water and was able to walk 260 feet with a walker and physical therapist in tow. Many more milestones await him.

Heather Carey *West Chester, PA*

Carey is a mixed-media printmaker working with gel plates and collage to create emotionally layered art. Growing up with undiagnosed learning disabilities and depression, she often felt unseen and unsupported. Art became her sanctuary — as a child, it was a way to express what she couldn’t put into words. After finally being diagnosed, her path shifted, she says. Carey received the help she needed and was able to go to college. Later, working with adults with disabilities at Melmark, she found deep connection and purpose. Their joy in creating art reminded Carey that expression can heal and uplift.

“My work draws from childhood memories — moments of joy and imagination — blended with the complexity of adult understanding. I create to remind myself and others that even in struggle, beauty and strength live within us.”

David Caron *Hyannis, MA*

Caron is a disabled young man with autism. A native of Cape Cod, he has an innate affinity with the natural environment. Caron responds

disability. Edward Hopper best described Caron’s passion for painting: “If you could say it in words, then there would be no reason to paint.”

Patricia Caulfield *York, PA*

A visually impaired abstract artist, Caulfield works primarily in mixed media on cradleboard with acrylic paint, vine charcoal, Conté crayon, pencil, collage, sanding and distressing. Clouds have always been a source of inspiration for her. By constantly



Richard Crumb, *Bridge of Sighs*

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

joyfully to the ocean, wind and thunderstorms. This is the same enthusiasm that he shows when he expresses himself through art. Art is an act of pure self-expression without regard to the finished work. Caron loves how the materials feel, how paint is absorbed by the canvas, and how the paint spreads and is diluted by the water. Through painting he expresses himself beyond the limitations of his

studying form, movement and light, she creates atmospheric paintings — land and seascapes without using photographic reference. Drawing from the motivational power of nature, her vision of depth and space is brought to the forefront. Moving from realistic to abstract painting due to vision loss from glaucoma, Caulfield sees her role as an artist in a new way. Her work is a product of her own

thinking, her soul, her heart. It is an authentic expression of a created world that you can see and experience. It is intangible. It is abstract.

Dana Ailer Chron *Staunton, VA*

Before the onset of her disability, Chron created large rag rugs. The process is simple, handed down through generations of women in her family, and the results are functional pieces of art. When her disability began, with the help of her occupational therapist, she eventually realized that she could still create using this technique. She says she is no longer making area rugs, but she is still using her ancestors’ legacy knowledge to create. “Retaining

access to this simple hobby has made a huge difference in my view of the world because, for a while, I felt like my disability had robbed me of everything I enjoyed.” Chron is inspired by nature and enjoys trying to recreate the vibe of colors found in a landscape or water.

Larine Chung *Seattle, WA*

Chung paints in the tradition of contemporary realism, creating works rooted in everyday life and fueled by her unyielding curiosity. Her mixed cultural background informs her art, weaving an Eastern sensibility into the depiction of Western motifs and presenting an underlying tension where dualities merge into oneness. Chung has an autoimmune

disorder that flares at times, affecting her daily life. Art has been her lifelong friend who accompanies her “through the thick and thin.”

Debra Hope Colligan

South Yarmouth, MA

Colligan’s art is made with a great deal of texture, colors and



Patricia Caulfield, *Twilight Tide*

mixed mediums. The creation of portraits of animals, people, seascapes and landscapes gives her a “soulful impression” that inspires her to capture the colorful world in enduring images that say more than words ever could. Twenty-one years ago, Colligan suffered a traumatic brain injury in a horseback riding accident.

Her TBI has caused excessive tremors, forcing her to become a left-handed artist. The accident and her recovery at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital significantly changed her life. Exhibiting in Art Ability 2025 is a meaningful expression to celebrate her continued recovery, she says. “Art has expanded my life; healing is essentially a creative process. Through my art, I’ve created a new state of health, pursuing an artist’s life. As far as my art goes, I’m back in the saddle again!”

Charles Connelly

Ardmore, PA

Connelly was born in Philadelphia and showed an early interest in drawing and sketching. Art fed his desire for analyzing how things worked. Fascinated with Philadelphia’s art museums, Connelly took classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts and watercolor classes, encouraging his pursuit of watercolor painting. Despite his vision and hearing challenges, drawing and painting provide him an oasis of contentment.

Virginia Conover

Wynnewood, PA

Conover has been disabled for over two decades, diagnosed with bipolar disorder, and

hospitalized for one week. In 2024, she was diagnosed with lung cancer is now under palliative care. She feels blessed with strong support systems and is managing to remain stable. “As a licensed former therapist, I believe my disabilities allow me to empathize and help others.”

Richard Crumb

Stillwater, MN

Crumb grew up on a family Century Farm in southern Minnesota. He was severely injured in a car accident over 40 years ago and has been propelling himself in a wheelchair ever since. He loves to travel. As part of his travel experience, he enjoys capturing some of the delightful scenes of God’s wondrous creation through his camera lens. Crumb’s rural upbringing often expresses itself in the pastoral scenes he photographs with his trusty camera. He believes his disability allows him to see things slightly differently through his camera lens, with an eye toward the freedom that nature suggests, rather than the physical limitations that he deals with every day.

Jen Dacota

Conshohocken, PA

When Dacota saw her MRI and the “big black hole” where part of her brain used to be, her jaw

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

Tiffany Daniels

Philadelphia, PA

Born in New York in 1983, Daniels has multiple sclerosis and lives at Inglis House in Philadelphia. She is a member of a variety of groups at Inglis House including the Exploring Art group. She says that her art is “an extension of my heart.” She has a love of fashion, jewelry and people. Daniels is fun-loving, always has a smile on her face and loves meeting new people.

Lori Davis

Philadelphia, PA

Davis was born and raised in Philadelphia with one sister and three brothers. She enjoys art, theater, music, family and friends. Her favorite color is purple. In her free time, she loves to be outside soaking up the sun. Davis enjoys being surrounded by nature. More recently, she has found art, drawing inspiration from her brother. She likes using big, bold colors and prints in her work. Her artwork is a way for her to express her feelings and emotions and share them with others.

Aaron Deede

Philadelphia, PA

Deede is originally from New York and is an avid Mets,

Islanders and New York Giants fan. He has been active in all types of art, especially in theatre. Deede has been acting his entire life and aspires to be a playwright. He likes to use colors streaked with a brush and a scraper while painting. Deede says that he puts color on the canvas until he likes the outcome, and then he repeats the process. He says, “Art has given me a voice to speak when words can’t find a way.”

Samuel Dietze

Altoona, PA

Dietze is a visually impaired artist whose inspiration arises from nature’s different colors and seasons. He likes to paint outdoors, particularly scenes



Samuel Dietze, *Houses*

in his neighborhood and local parks. He prefers acrylics because they are fast drying. One challenge of his disability is being unable to drive; he must walk or bike or get a ride with someone. This is difficult when he exhibits in shows that require his attendance, Dietze says. “Art Ability makes it possible to exhibit without worrying about getting there.”

Helena Domenic

Exton, PA

Domenic’s artwork explores liminal and transformative realms, the “in between places” where the veil between this world and unseen worlds is thin. She has had a lifelong interest in mythology and folklore, but her focus on transformative realms sparked in June 2024, when she suffered a severe spinal column injury. Nearly dying, she underwent spinal fusion from the C2 to T5 vertebrae. Though her neurosurgeon predicted she would never walk again, Domenic says she decided not to believe him. Two months of physical and occupational therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital followed. “Those thin, liminal spaces that I had always been so fascinated with were suddenly within

my understanding. I realized that dying in and of itself is painless and that choosing to live and fight were painful, but worth the battle.” As she recovered, she enjoyed art therapy and began to look at themes and symbols of healing. Domenic works with many media: acrylics, watercolors, pastel, colored pencil, graphite, ink, clay, found objects and semi-precious gems. “I feel great empathy for all those who suffer throughout the world. Art helps us to speak the unspeakable, to heal the wounds of individuals and cultures. Art is essential.”

Marilyn Dommel

Downingtown, PA

Dommel says that creating art has fascinated her since childhood. Her approach is an impressionistic one, employing oil and pastel to diverse subjects including animals, nature and flowers.

Clara Edmon

Oklahoma City, OK

Edmon is an 83-year-old married mother of three. Much of her art derives from her struggle with depression and other health issues, and the relief and diversion she experiences from art. She favors working in oil and watercolor,

and painting landscapes, animals and Native American subjects in the method of realism. Edmon says her creations are the main source of her identity and self-esteem. Sometimes she does not feel well enough to work due to her disabilities. She strives to practice her art when she is able.

Ivy Egger Coatesville, PA
Egger begins her mixed-media mosaics with a simple acrylic or gouache painting serving as a foundation. Working with mosaics reminds her that she can take broken pieces of glass and make them into something new and beautiful, much like living with a disability. She also paints dreamy landscapes to create an escape from her daily challenges. She has a rare liver disorder called glycogen storage disease, type 1A. The condition requires that she monitor her blood sugars to prevent hypoglycemia. Art provides her an outlet to help her forget about her physical challenges.

Jonathan Egger Coatesville, PA
Egger is a photographer, focusing on landscapes, places and other subjects to capture whatever mood or emotion he is feeling. "A vibrant sunset might have sad undertones



Ivy Egger, *Cascades of Silver*

since it's the end of a day, but I feel a sense of hope for an even greater day tomorrow." His photos are a visual memoir of everything he has seen and done over the course of his life. He employs photography as a means of escaping the daily struggles associated with his almost lifelong struggle with type 1 diabetes.

Herbert Eilertsen Coatesville, PA
Eilertsen is an oil painter who focuses on creating realistic paintings in a sometimes impressionistic way. The onset of his health challenges forced him to sell his gallery and picture framing business and go on disability. After several years' transition, he moved to Pennsylvania and began

painting full-time. "My illness provided me the opportunity to dig into my art fully!" Eilertsen says suffering and pain can certainly elevate one's appreciation of life and mobility. "It has given me a deeper appreciation of nature and life."

Matt Emerson Youngstown, OH
Emerson has painted since he was a child. A misdiagnosis of amyotrophic lateral sclerosis was later discovered to be muscular dystrophy. Muscular dystrophy affects the movements of his arms and legs. Physical therapy exercises and some adaptations to his painting technique have offset the loss in his range of motion. Through all of this, art has been a rock for him. Emerson uses a variety of media,

including watercolors, acrylics and inks. He loves to paint a variety of subjects; a new idea challenges him to determine how to complete them. Emerson uses art to give him something to do to pass the time. "Each morning I smile for another day on earth. It's time to work."

Afi Ese Houston, TX
Ese is a Houston-based narrative portrait artist working primarily in oil, soft pastel and charcoal. Her work reimagines Black history through fashion, adornment and symbolism, centering denim, lace, gold teeth and natural hair as revolutionary tools of resistance and identity. Drawing inspiration from ancestral memory, Southern life, and her own lived experience, she explores beauty, grief and power in Blackness. Living with aggressive rheumatoid arthritis since age 16 and working from a wheelchair, Ese says that her art has been both therapy and defiance. It is a means to honor her physical limitations while transcending them — each brushstroke an act of perseverance, each portrait a testament to the dignity of survival. Her art is not just created; it is lived.

Gen Farrell Burleson, TX
Farrell is a horse lover and an artist. She loves to create paintings that express the spirit of the horse. She prefers to work primarily in oils because

facilities. Now he says he is in a position where his joyful hobby is part of Art Ability. "I hope my artwork increases awareness of Guillain-Barré syndrome as we work toward a cure."

"Art is an act of pure self-expression without regard to the finished work." —David Caron

of their shine and depth of color. Farrell also enjoys researching cave paintings and petroglyphs and incorporating them into her artwork.

Adam Feinberg Conshohocken, PA
Before an attack of Guillain-Barré syndrome sidelined his active lifestyle that embraced Spartan mud run racing and CrossFit, Feinberg worked at various occupations. At times a product designer, landscaper, HVAC technician and bathroom remodeler, Feinberg found time to indulge his interest in photography, "always trying to find the perfect shot or angle, or the best background or lighting," he says. His recovery from Guillain-Barré entailed seven months in Main Line Health

Patrick Finucane Phoenixville, PA
Finucane is a self-taught artist who was born with spina bifida myelomeningocele. A stay at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital after a related spinal surgery introduced him to art therapy. He discovered that filling sketchbooks with pencil drawings, painting with watercolors and creating works on canvas with acrylics helped take his mind off the physical limitations he might be experiencing. "I find it very enjoyable and rewarding to be able to create and share pieces which others find visually pleasing."

Chuck Fischer Towson, MD
In 2013, Fischer joined Make Studio, a community-based arts organization in Baltimore that aims to empower artists

with disabilities to grow as professionals. He enjoys sculpting, painting with acrylics and oils, drawing with charcoal and pastels, embroidery and other explorations with textiles.

and her husband purchased a farm. This allowed her love for photography, an early passion of Foley's, to return to her life. She now spends time capturing and sharing the growth of their



Clara Edmon, *Feeding Time*

His work has been shown in various venues, including Studio 659 (Whiting, Ind.), OCA Mocha (Arbutus, Md.), and Maryland Art Place (Baltimore, Md.).

Gail Foley Chester Springs, PA
Foley injured her neck while working as a radiation therapist. Her days became filled with excruciating neck issues, fibromyalgia, chronic migraines and headaches. Her life took a turn for the better when Foley

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

Trevor Frampton Exton, PA
As a child, Frampton always enjoyed drawing, coloring and creating things with his hands. A love for the outdoors and exploring life led him away

from creating art until this year. After being diagnosed with Guillain-Barré syndrome in December 2024, he was numb and paralyzed from his feet to his eyes; his life paused completely. Waking from intubation in the hospital, something changed. All he could think about was painting. Although still paralyzed, his first goal was to be able to hold a

his drawings and paintings. He focuses on making tactile art so blind people can enjoy it by touch. Gabry particularly enjoys when colors and textures come together. He says, "Art is more than a job to me. It is a way to express myself and communicate with the hearing/sighted world. I hope people find lots of details and appreciate the emotions in my art."

"Art has given me a voice to speak when words can't find a way." —Aaron Deede

paintbrush. The desire to paint took root and eventually began through art and recreational therapies at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. Frampton says, "When I paint, it's colorful, it's dramatic, it's emotion. Packed with symbolism, vibrant hues and contrasting tonal relationships, each of my paintings tells a story about this unfinished life."

Jon Gabry *Kearny, NJ*
Gabry is a deaf and blind artist who creates 2D and 3D art through touch. He adds 3D media such as sand, fabric paint, gloss and more to create

Vimala Gade *Kendall Park, NJ*
Gade is a self-taught artist. As a child, she was always drawn to the fine arts. Starting as a hobby, Gade soon realized that painting was her passion in life. She was inspired by other disabled artists, which gave her courage to continue her interest. Gade creates her art from her vivid imagination and from photographs. Her work varies by medium and inspiration, and each piece holds different emotions visible through the style and hue. Gade believes painting can help people to overcome

their difficulties and find peace within, which she puts to practice every day, dealing with her limited mobility. She has accepted her physical condition, and the enjoyment she receives from painting allows her to continue her work. "Art is a divine gift to me."

Joan Gallagher *Philadelphia, PA*
Joan Gallagher enjoys life fully! She loves being with her family and has five sisters, two brothers and a twin. Having cerebral palsy, Joan loves using bright colors, and her favorite media are markers and colored pencils. Creating art helps her to find inspiration.

Ginger Gehres *Chocowinity, NC*
Gehres considers herself to be a wildlife artist. She likes to portray animals in diverse ways, some in their natural state of being, to highlight the importance and value of their lives. She wants her art to bring awareness to the animals in danger of extinction so that we may help to stop it in time. Gehres uses scratchboard as her art form of choice, using a knife and other reductive tools to scratch the images on a clay-covered surface.



Ginger Gehres, *Tides of Change*

Dr. James George *Woodbury, NJ*
In 2016, George suffered a brain and spinal cord injury due to a fall. He began art therapy during his stay at a rehabilitation hospital and realized how impactful art was for his own physical and emotional healing. "It is powerful beyond words in connecting with people," he says. George paints in bright and contrasting colors, experimenting with different textures and techniques that lead to bold and colorful patterns. "It is my core belief that art heals the mind, body and spirit," he says. "It is the gift that was given to me, and the one I want to share and make accessible to everyone."

Jean George *Philadelphia, PA*
George has always enjoyed art. After visiting the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Louvre Museum, she began to appreciate it even more. She also takes an art history class at Inglis House, where she learns about different artists and their work. A friend suggested she attend the Joy of Art program at Inglis House. Although she is quadriplegic, she is able to convey her vision to whomever is assisting her. She thanks her friend for getting her involved and is grateful for all the opportunities that art has created for her.

David Gerbstadt *Berwyn, PA*
Creating has been a part of Gerbstadt's life ever since he stood on a kitchen chair to reach the counter to help his mom make cakes and cookies from scratch. "She would always let me lick the mixer beaters." His inspiration comes from his mother, who showed him that he was able to make something with his hands. Gerbstadt says his motivation comes from knowing that each moment of life is a gift that he is given, and that making art is why he is here. Art has given Gerbstadt a means to cope with several disabilities.

It brings a fulfillment to his life that he never thought possible. "Making art allows me to feel part of society and that I belong."

Jane Gerus *Saint Paul, MN*
Gerus sees herself as "a Spirit-fueled acrylic painter and multimedia artist living with schizophrenia." She was hospitalized for a year in 1980, when she says she was gifted with a blow to her senses that illuminated her life with color. "Color breathes and moves. Life seems more than just existing. It is the unbounded energy and inspiration of Holy Spirit. This is how I live. This is why I live."

Phyllis Gholston *Philadelphia, PA*
Gholston is an animal lover who enjoys attending Inglis House's pet therapy program, community outings and art classes. Her younger brother was a good artist and inspired her to explore her own artwork. She enjoys painting nature, specifically trees, flowers, birds and oceans. Art motivates her to continue living even though some things are incredibly challenging in life. Art helps her to keep going and to not give up. Gholston's daily life inspires her to be creative and motivates her to paint.

Rona Golfen *Upper Darby, PA*
After being accepted to Moore College of Art in Philadelphia, Golfen became ill. This left her feeling uncoordinated, prompting her to change course. She studied psychology and special education instead, which led to a satisfying career working with disabled adults. Golfen's interest in art remained, but she received diagnoses of essential tremor and multiple sclerosis, which explained why using a pencil or brush had become so difficult. She turned to photography to express herself, often adding textures and emphasizing blur. Since retiring in 2006, Golfen has

devoted herself to photography. She says, "It absorbs me, helping me to focus my attention on a small piece of reality, separated from the other visual stimuli that normally surround and obscure it. Its inherent beauty then has a chance to be viewed and appreciated."

Linda Goschke *Philadelphia, PA*
Goschke is a lifelong artist, currently working in photography. A brush with death from an automobile accident and the resulting traumatic brain injury made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretation of reality.



Dave Aquilante, *Autumn Drift*

Goschke's physical and mental challenges pushed her more into the digital realm. The precise methodology assisted with her focus, multiple outcomes aided creative exploration and it used few hazardous chemicals. Recently retired as a high school and college educator in fine, commercial and performing arts, Goschke works as a photographer now, exploring the natural world through her camera lens and computer.

“Continuing to create art despite my vision challenges makes me feel connected, grounded and relevant in my own life.”

—Cheryl Kinderknecht

Linnie Greenberg Ardmore, PA
Greenberg describes herself as “a self-taught teaching artist whose art-play is all about fun.” Her inspiration for her art arose from many years of study and a love of children's picture book art. “Stumbling upon this path

in later life helps me through the roar and painful moments,” she says.

Jessica Greene Abington, PA
Greene is an applied visual artist whose work transforms the overlooked features of life into uncommon, interpretive images that speak to the spaces they inhabit and the people who experience them. Inspired by the unexpected, her practice brings luxury, depth and metaphor into any environment. Combining mediums like acrylics and inks, Greene's abstract works reimagine what is seen and unseen. Her pieces invite reflection and connection, forging uncommon moments of engagement between art, place and audience. Greene began art lessons at age nine at The Zakarian Art Center and she studied art at Villanova University. She has exhibited at Cheltenham Center for the Arts, Villanova University, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and national conferences.

Patrick Greenlee Norristown, PA
In September 2019, Greenlee experienced a stroke that led to hospitalization at Einstein and later at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, where he relearned how to walk and talk. The



Linnie Greenberg, *Awakened*

journey was challenging, but it got him to a place where he could work with his hands again, a skill he had relied on daily as a diesel mechanic before his stroke. In 2022, Greenlee discovered woodworking as a meaningful outlet for creativity and self-expression. It allows him to reconnect with his mechanical roots while exploring new ways to interpret the world around him. His inspiration comes from people, objects and events in his life, and each piece he creates reflects a part of his recovery and personal growth.

Ina Greenstein Philadelphia, PA
It wasn't until her children were grown, and she did not have to work full-time, that Greenstein

was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on oil painting, she took a course in watercolor painting and was instantly smitten. The ability to capture light and have it shine through a painting has been a rewarding and engrossing pursuit of self-expression. Her eye disease necessitates some downtime to allow her vision to come back into focus.

Liz Griesser Elverson, PA
Griesser says that painting saved her life. When it had seemed most bleak, painting gave her hope and purpose for another day. Using familiar landscapes, animals and surrounding life, Griesser creates an earthy and emotive interpretation of her world.

Oil paint is her main love. The visceral texture and colors make what she is trying to convey so much easier. She likes to say that animals paint themselves. “I just hold the brush as they come to life. Their emotion is there on the surface and their story is all in their eyes.” Griesser believes that *en plein air* painting is both a challenge and the best teacher ever. Competing in *plein air* events has taught her so much about patience, values, color mixing and capturing the moment.

Tara Groenewold West Chester, PA
Groenewold credits the practice of art in her own healing journey. Her work is inspired by fantasy and dreams; her images depict a sense of spirituality and faith — whether through the representation of a figure, portrait or landscape. “Feeling emotions through art is a way of finding balance, beauty, peace and freedom within the edges of the image and beyond,” she says. Groenewold's paintings range in scale from small to medium, using wood or canvas panels, oil and acrylics. She particularly likes sanding down the surface to achieve smooth textures, which enhances her

photographic painting style. She sometimes employs metallic colors to highlight decorative elements of a portrait.

John Hagel Linwood, PA
Hagel, 64 years old, says that a stroke has motivated him to work hard and stay healthy so he can enjoy his family, art and music. His art encompasses many genres: landscape, still life, portrait, figure and abstract. Working mainly in oils and acrylics, Hagel says he is inspired by nature, beauty in things that catch his eye and achieving a good likeness in a portrait. He and his wife have four children.

Lynn Hartman Phoenixville, PA
After a car accident and brain injury, Hartman discovered “a new ability to put paint to canvas that took me to a place of peace and fulfillment.” She has worked with acrylics but recently wanted to expand her skills to include watercolor. She says she has struggled with the difference between the acrylic and watercolor mediums, but found with each class she was becoming more comfortable and spontaneous. After much practice, she took the leap and started to create, realizing how much she liked this new medium.

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

Patrick Hatfield Philadelphia, PA
“The chance to be creative gives me a chance to go someplace else rather than what we perceive to be the real world.” Hatfield feels that all the encouragement from individuals involved with the art program at Inglis House is one source of his inspiration. He takes those individual ideas and tailors them to his bizarre interests. It becomes a combination of what his art teacher wants and what he wants to bring to it for individualization and uniqueness. Hatfield is motivated by his desire to make his mark and to create something that others are



Liz Griesser, *Pine Grove*

going to see, whether they like it or not. He likes to create things that we do not normally see.

John Haus *Hatboro, PA*
Haus' art is whimsical, inventive and truly his own. His diverse collection of work utilizes multiple mediums. He uses life experiences and creates his own universe. Haus speaks to the viewer through his art. The conversation is fluid and captivating, with a splash of humor, whimsy and personality. In 2002, at the age of 18, Haus sustained a traumatic brain injury, paralyzing the right half of his body, which required



John Haus, *Waterfall Snowdonia, Wales*

relearning daily living skills with his left side after having been dominant with his right. Haus struggles with aphasia and pain daily, so art has been his saving grace and brought a true purpose to his life.

Passle Helminski *Erie, PA*
Helminski is a visually impaired artist who earned a master's degree in weaving and textiles from Edinboro University. Her art, she says, is a combination of her deep love of art history and her deep musical and spiritual side. To address her right hand's fine motor control problem, Helminski plays the flute, guitar and viola to build strength in her hand and to increase her visualization of forms and colors. "The result of pushing the combination of art and music became the instrumental composition of irregular forms you see here."

Pat Henriques *Key West, FL*
Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus is on enameling and making pieces from fine or sterling silver. Henriques' specialty in enameling is cloisonné. She uses stones in her work as well. "Nature inspires me, and

I am amazed by the designs and hues that are found in various stones and flowers." Henriques has 11 herniated disks in her spine, causing sciatica. Fabricating jewelry has helped her realize that you can overcome obstacles. Henriques says when she is in pain, she tends to choose darker or more heightened colors in her work. Her personal quote is: "Experiment. You won't know if you can accomplish something if you don't try."

Twilah Hiari *Mountain View, MO*
Hiari always wanted to make art, but life circumstances didn't support learning how. Growing up with autism and an auditory processing disorder in the 1980s, she struggled in school. Then, at age 38, Hiari was struck by autoimmune encephalitis that seemed like the end to her life. It turned out to be the beginning to making art. Though her lifelong sensory challenges became more severe, she found online art courses where she didn't feel left out. "I don't need to process speech or speak to create. Even on the toughest brain days, I can make art." She's guided by her favorite motto: Better late than never. Now, at age 49, she has been

diagnosed with a hereditary disorder that likely underlies all her impairments, yet she is still learning different media.

Sydnee Hoffman *Mount Pleasant Mills, PA*
Hoffman, 24, began drawing as a teenager while bedridden with a neurological disability called dysautonomia. She works with a variety of subjects and mediums, but she prefers doing charcoal portraits. She finds that disability is inherently isolating, so she draws portraits in the hopes that she can capture the beauty and complexity of the people in her life. "My portraits inspire me to continue striving for connection with others, despite our differences. I hope they will inspire curiosity and compassion in their audiences." This series follows "Lila," an extremely intelligent young girl filled with creativity and brilliant ideas. The abundance of flowers within her portraits represents the constant growth of her character through the beautiful thoughts within her mind.

Debbie Huff *Landenberg, PA*
Huff was born legally blind in one eye, and with reduced vision in the other eye. As a child, Huff did a lot of painting and drawing in school, and then put it aside

as she grew older. Several years ago, after an ankle injury, she returned to making art, finding inspiration in the rolling hills of Southeastern Pennsylvania for her alcohol ink and watercolor paintings. She enjoys using bright and vibrant colors when painting her favorite subjects: animals, landscapes and flowers. "Art helps me 'see' details I normally wouldn't in real life. With the use of a computer, I am able to enlarge photographs to the point where I can see the fine details in animals and bring them to life in my art." Huff counts creating art and cycling as her favorite hobbies in retirement.

Jennifer Ingalls *Clarksville, TN*
Ingalls has been a professional jewelry designer for over 25 years. She holds a degree in art history from the University of Rochester in Rochester, N.Y., and a degree in metalsmithing from the Massachusetts

College of Art in Boston, Mass. Working many years in sterling silver, Ingalls fell in love with the steampunk genre more than a decade ago. Multiple sclerosis has slowed her down, she says, but it hasn't affected her creativity. Her jewelry has been featured in professional magazines and at some of the largest steampunk conventions in the country. She offers a line of jewelry and accessories for humans of all kinds, meticulously built from recycled watch parts.

Mimi Barclay Johnson *Ardmore, PA*
After a successful career as a stage, scenery and lighting designer for opera companies and the Orpheus Club Revels in Philadelphia, Johnson began to paint. She painted oils at first, then began using the more difficult transparent watercolors. When she became



Gregory Harvey, *Lake Jean, Winter*

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

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

came on the market, both the virus and the powerful drugs have limited his eyesight, stamina, mental faculties and perception or understanding. Johnson is motivated by the statement: "Art is long, follow your awe."

Patricia Jonsen *Broomall, PA*
California native Jonsen enjoys painting still life and landscapes from her own photos, using water-mixable oil paints. She is intrigued by the play of light illuminating objects. Being dyslexic gives her a unique way of seeing the world, she says, sometimes upside down, backwards or sideways. Jonsen began drawing and painting as a child. She studied at the College of San Mateo and earned a bachelor's degree in art from San Francisco State University. She experiences a sense of joy interpreting her subjects by painting light and using beautiful colors. "Doing art gives me freedom to create, challenge and express myself."

Mark Kaufman *Wilmington, DE*
Kaufman describes himself as a champion of gender equality. He paints the female figure in sometimes absurd, sometimes haunting locations. "Far from creating emotionless family

portraits, I blend color and imagery to explore themes of mythology, literature, philosophy and emotion.” After a decade as a practicing attorney, Kaufman returned to the study and practice of art. He prefers working in watercolor because it is fluid and sometimes serendipitous, he says. He also does woodcuts, prints and carvings in wood. He has studied at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, and his work has been shown in galleries across the nation. Kaufman was diagnosed with bipolar disorder 30 years ago. “This disorder helps shape my work, more so in some collections than in others,” says Kaufman. He is very active in his community, providing support and advocacy for all who suffer from mental illness.

Jan Alice Keeling *Nashville, TN*
Keeling paints intimate watercolor portraits, often infused with a dreamy atmosphere and accompanied by a “daimon”—a gentle animal spirit representing the subject’s inner life. Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1991, she left editorial work to pursue art full-time as her MS necessitates a flexible,

self-directed lifestyle. In 2020, she was also diagnosed with autism, a discovery that clarified longstanding challenges with social navigation and a tendency toward hyperfocus. These traits, while disabling in some contexts, enhance her artistic process through sustained attention to visual detail and a preference for solitary, immersive work. Painting has become both refuge and revelation, allowing her to explore emotion, identity and connection in ways that transform her limitations into strengths.

Patrick Kenny *Exton, PA*
Kenny experienced serious head trauma in early childhood. That never stopped him from developing to his full potential and he now enjoys art. He is especially inspired by the beauty of the seashore. He spends part of the year in Stone Harbor, N.J.

Cheryl Kinderknecht *Bradenton, FL*
Kinderknecht is an abstract and mixed-media artist whose formal educational background includes a bachelor’s degree in art, along with advanced degrees in the behavioral sciences. Over the years,



Cherie Lee, *Clarence's VW*

Kinderknecht’s vision and artwork have been increasingly impacted by retinitis pigmentosa, a degenerative retinal condition which results in tunnel vision. Kinderknecht relies upon emotions, dreams and memories to anchor and inform her work. Much of her inspiration is from within ... an intuitive, stream-of-consciousness process that expresses a mood or creates a sense of movement, balance, rhythm and tension. Kinderknecht’s work is exhibited in local galleries and juried regional and national shows, and is included in many private and corporate

collections. Kinderknecht says, “The creative process has always energized me, and continuing to create art despite my vision challenges makes me feel connected, grounded and relevant in my own life and within the world.”

Chloe Kirkland *Philadelphia, PA*
Kirkland loves to make paintings and drawings of animals. She tries to get every detail, first with pencil and then with watercolor. She has created art since she was young and can remember painting and drawing in kindergarten. She considers herself a lifelong learner, which has helped her grow as an artist.

Kirkland says, “I enjoy making art for other people and hope that other people are happy when they see my work. I love making other people happy.”

Dawn Klug *Tampa, FL*

Klug returned to painting in 2023, in addition to her fiber arts. She continues to explore themes of nature and her love for the Cherokee people and their culture within the Smoky Mountains. As a quadriplegic, she is always finding new ways to adapt to her surroundings and situations as a senior citizen. Art is a true equalizer, as it can be done by anyone who desires to create. This has been her goal since childhood, when she began drawing, and she hopes to continue for many years to come.

Emily Knabb *Phoenixville, PA*
Knabb is a watercolor artist exploring the interplay between strength and vulnerability. Living with multiple autoimmune conditions has deepened her understanding of the resilience it takes to live in a body that often feels at odds with itself. Her work focuses on hands, because hers are frequently in pain; yet they remain the tools through which she nurtures, creates and connects. Knabb says she often

surrounds her subjects with botanicals to honor the quiet healing properties of plants and the comfort they have offered her in managing her chronic pain.

in Turkey, and graduated in 2020. He moved to Carrara, Italy to work on his master’s degree. This is where he now lives, studies and produces his

“Art helps us to speak the unspeakable,
to heal the wounds of individuals and cultures.
Art is essential.” —Helena Domenic

“Art is my therapy, my teacher and my voice. Through painting, I’ve found a platform to share my story and connect with others navigating invisible struggles.”

Ege Kolcu *Carrara, Italy*
Kolcu studied art at Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University



Debbie Huff, *Windmill at Sunset*

artwork. Kolcu chose to work as a sculptor, because he found that it’s the most expressive way to communicate and coexist. As a deaf artist, he believes his sculpture speaks to him and others about the awareness of sign language. Rich communication doesn’t have to be verbal. With his recent artworks, Kolcu tries to bring life to a long-forgotten deaf culture. “There is more to a human than he can or cannot hear. When you’re deaf, it’s human to feel like having the inner awareness of seeing the world differently.”

Jace Laakso *Missoula, MT*
Laakso works with reduction relief printing, which uses a single block for as many as 10 colors. The block is inked and

printed and then carved for the next color. This continues for each successive color until, finally, with the last color, most of the block’s surface has been carved away. Much of Laakso’s inspiration comes from seeing the landscape and mentally framing how it could best fit into his art. Negative spaces and shadows play a huge part in how he translates the surroundings. Laakso says making art is meditative. He can lose sense of time. “While I don’t ever forget that I am disabled, it does not define who I am.”

Mary Alice Landry *New Britain, CT*

Landry is an expressive artist who utilizes bright colors in paint and collage to show animals on an intimate level. She believes she has a wonderful relationship with all wild creatures and aims to show their souls through their eyes and expressions. Landry says she also creates healing art, telling her stories through visual art by using archetypal energies with animals or Goddess forms.

Cherie Lee *Cherry Hill, NJ*
If anything could be said to be a benefit of disability, slowing down might be one aspect in which artist Lee could find

value. As a former firefighter, first responder and corporate liaison for a multimillion-dollar telecommunications firm, “diminished capacity” was a daunting thought — until it became a gift. Here the artist turns her camera’s eye toward the easily overlooked and invites you to look again in hopes you, too, might



Morgan Burton Johnson,
Shadow of a Former Self

rediscover the beauty and wonder which you already know surrounds us, always. The camera allows her to savor what otherwise goes by too fast. It is a slice of time that

she can sit within, where there is nowhere else to go, and nothing else to do; a paper-thin attempt to hold on to the fleeting and to hold fast to the ever-changing.

Joan Lesikin *Hendersonville, NC*

Lesikin is an oil painter hailing from the mountains of North Carolina. As a child, her safe place was her bed. In her Bodyscapes series, she explores the human body in bed, draped in striped blankets, contrasting it with sky and clouds moving overhead. Her love of color is evident in her work, drawing on her art school course in color taught by a student of Josef Albers. Being hearing-impaired, Lesikin finds solace in repeatedly listening to familiar music in her studio, but can struggle in larger groups.

Jake Liberman *Chatham, NJ*

Liberman is on the autism spectrum, and he likes to paint abstract designs with acrylics on canvas and draw designs on paper. He was inspired to paint after viewing art at the Museum of Modern Art, where he realized art does not have to be realistic. He says, “Painting gives me confidence and pride, and helps me get my feelings out if I am upset.”

Katie Lickfield

Kennett Square, PA

As a local artist in Kennett Square, Lickfield focuses on the mediums of pastels, acrylics and oil paints. Last summer, she was featured in West Chester’s *Daily Local News* for the portrait she painted of West Chester University President Chris Fiorentino, on his retirement in summer 2024. She also became a first-year artist in the 75th Annual Chadds Ford Art Show, reflecting on the art of the Wyeths.

Jennifer Lipman-Bartel

Wynnewood, PA

Lipman-Bartel has created unique sculptures and elaborate necklaces using beads, gemstones and vintage and unusual objects. Her health issues, including a spinal malignancy, laminectomy, breast cancer, chemotherapy and lymphedema, caused excessive scar tissue, nerve damage and circulation problems. For years, she says, she lost all motivation to create. But after years of superior care from amazing healthcare professionals, family and friends, Lipman-Bartel’s health improved and her motivation returned. She has found that the process

of creating art allows her to transmute her thoughts to create unique fantasy worlds with beads and found objects.

Natasha Mona Lorick

Philadelphia, PA

Lorick is one of many creative women in her family. Growing up, she learned arts and crafts from her grandmother. Now she inspires her younger sister with her many talents, including painting, knitting and jewelry-making. She finds inspiration by studying the work of other artists and creates new pieces using her personal interpretations. Lorick remarks on the power of art to help with depression and stress. She finds calm by focusing on creating something new.

Claire Lynch *Burke, VA*

Lynch’s sculptures are beautiful and delicate, though made by the violent deformation of materials. They are shiny and alluring, yet twisted, imbalanced and sharp. They capture the fragile balance she strives to maintain during her mixed- state bipolar episodes, which are the simultaneous experience of depression and mania that manifests as intense aggression and intrusive thoughts. They are terrible, disruptive and

uncontrollable, Lynch says, but they force her to think about how she wants to live her life and what she needs to do to care for herself so she can be who she wants to be. “I believe that in my madness there is also beauty that gives me clarity.”

DaNice D. Marshall *Boston, MA*

Marshall calls herself a “born writer” who, in 2016, became gravely ill with granulomatosis with polyangiitis, an incurable disease. She suffers from hearing loss and is unable to concentrate to write. She started painting abstracts, “mostly to watch the paint dry.” Eventually, her struggles led

to exploring narrative art, and she found her voice in painting the stories that she could no longer write. In 2021, Marshall’s art was selected for a billboard in Boston, and in 2022, 14 of her paintings were featured in *Naomi*, a television show streaming on HBO Max. In 2023, she received the MCC Visual Art Grant and had her first solo exhibition. Marshall’s work has exhibited in the Abigail Ogilvy Gallery in Boston, Mass., and the Northern Illinois University Art Museum in Dekalb, Ill. “I’m living my ordinary life most extraordinarily; that is, I have a disability, but I’m making ‘art ability.’”



Patricia Jonsen, *A Day on the Loch Ness*

Jeffrey McCredie

West Chester, PA

McCredie paints primarily with oils, but also watercolor. He has painted for over 50 years and is inspired by the beauty of nature. He was influenced by the *plein air* painters of the late 19th century, when he studied art in Europe many years ago. Art has been a catharsis with respect to his multiple disabilities. Without art, he is certain he would not face the chronic pain and physical problems that he has with endurance. Although it does influence his ability to paint from time to time, he uses his disability as a catalyst to create art that is beautiful and warm and friendly.

Kelly McQuain *Philadelphia, PA*

McQuain’s jubilant paintings feature people and animals in symbolic arrangements that hint at mysteries of the imagination. His work in acrylics, mixed media and watercolor start with abstract color washes and random patterns over which he teases out shapes in the manner of a daydreaming child imagining animals in the clouds. Recent works are inspired by his ADHD, which he likens to trying to focus on three radio broadcasts at once. McQuain harnesses his neurodivergence

as a source of inspiration, channeling overlapping stimuli into innovative ideas as unusual connectomes wire together inside his head. He often paints “in reverse” — the abstract initial layers of his paintings emerge as the foreground as he pushes the negative space around his subjects toward the back, teasing new imagery and order from the chaos of his initial start. This approach stems in large part from McQuain’s love of literature and work as an English professor and poet. He also draws on the folk art of his native West Virginia, as well as his outsider status as a gay man living with a genetic demyelination disease (HNPP). This neuropathy affects his hands, sometimes causing his paintbrush to fly from his fingers and mar his canvas. He calls such marks “happy accidents” and often incorporates them into his patterns and shapes.

Kelly Meiners *Kansas City, MO*

Meiners says her artwork serves as a communication method to express emotions otherwise inaccessible because of her brain injury. Before sustaining brain and multi-organ damage from COVID-19, she was a busy mom, physical therapist, college professor and academic

department chair. Overnight, the virus damaged her body so severely that, almost four years later, she is still homebound and bedridden and unable to care for herself. Meiners' abstract painting helps her process and accept her new place in this world. When painting, she forgets that she is disabled and finds herself filled with a profound sense of peace. She creates in short bursts — seven minutes, at most, of focused creative energy while lying on the floor, using tools to minimize the physical tremors. Her usual mediums include acrylic, watercolor, oil pastels and graphite on canvas or paper. Meiners describes herself as an intuitive painter who depicts harmonious chaos to represent her current emotions and physical challenges.

Lawrence Meyers *Paoli, PA*
Meyers is an impressionistic watercolorist who connects the viewer to his vision of God's design and the excitement over our commonplace surroundings that are often overlooked. He transforms these into extraordinary beauty, cherished with each brushstroke. He invites you to examine each delightful ribbon of color,

value and shape. Meyers is hearing- and vision-impaired; has tritanope color blindness, type 2 diabetes and residual stroke paralysis, affecting speech, fine motor skills and the ability to walk. These required occupational, physical and speech therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. Meyers changed his style to paint more loosely and rely more heavily on value, depth and darkness of color, rather than on color itself. He says he is blessed to be able to continue his pursuit of art and share the complexity of nature through simplification; thereby expressing wonder in the beauty that surrounds us.

Susan Miiller *Sparrowbush, NY*
In her oil-on-canvas paintings, Miiller has the unique opportunity to share the

expression of her thoughts and feelings about the transformative aspect of visual art. She has always believed that her paintings support positive change and can have healing power. Rather than having a negative impact, her disability offers her the unique ability to distill emotion, expression and the essence of hope onto her canvases. She says, "I see my work as an expression of rising hope for humanity, hope for the future and hope for positive change."

Christopher Miller *Phoenixville, PA*
Miller is a survivor of a traumatic brain injury sustained in a bicycling accident in 2020. He credits his care at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital as critical to his recovery. Since

retiring from a 25-year career in pharmaceutical research and development in 2022, Miller has focused on enjoying life and exploring creative pursuits that combat depression. Photography has been a major outlet for him. There's so much to learn, he says, and it has changed the way he sees the world. Miller is fascinated by the beauty and wonder of the natural world. "Photography has awakened a creative part of me that had been dormant for most of my adult life. I take great pleasure in creating something beautiful and sharing it with others."

Kathleen Montes *Firestone, CO*
Montes, a crochet fiber artist, suffers from multiple sclerosis. In 2020, she taught herself how to crochet to cope with depression and anxiety. "It has helped me manage destructive habits, and to do something constructive and creative."

Victor Mordasov *West Chester, PA*
Mordasov, a widely recognized artist whose work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, has spent many years exploring different mediums and methods of

Mark Kaufman, *Jazz Club*

painting. He discovered the joy of painting by following the techniques of the Old Masters in combination with an impressionistic manner of painting. Mordasov paints a wide range of subjects, including landscapes, still life, portraits and marine venues. His paintings, as well

**"Each morning I smile
for another day on
earth. It's time to
work." —Matt Emerson**

as his sculptures, display a commitment to portraying not only the exterior of his subject, but its character and personality as well. Mordasov's focus is to bring people's attention to the beauty of God's creation, which is around us all. He has had Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease since he was a young teenager, which limits his physical activities. It was not long after this diagnosis that Mordasov started to draw, leading to his education and professional career in art.

Amuri Morris *Richmond, VA*
Morris is an artist based in Richmond, Va. She has a BFA in fine arts from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she studied painting and printmaking. Throughout the years, she has received several artistic accolades such as a Virginia Museum of Fine Arts Fellowship. She aims to promote diversity in the art canon, specifically focusing on the Black experience.

Daniel Neufeld *Philadelphia, PA*
As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, a learning disability. But it didn't stop him from garnering and sharing his many talents. He grew fond of art through his mother, also an artist. Neufeld is into drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, comic books and animation. He enjoys capturing subjects such as people, still life and places that he sees on his travels with his pencils, pastels, pens, inks and paints. Art has inspired and helped Neufeld to see things in the world creatively. His other talents include singing, cooking, playing the cello and making and editing his own movies. He also enjoys playing sports.

Kathryn Noska *Phoenixville, PA*
Noska has chemical sensitivity, affected by tiny amounts of many different chemicals. She had to stop using oils and acrylics due to debilitating off-gassing. She now uses blackberry honey watercolor. Noska says her art highlights choices to courageously break through what holds her back, to do what's in her heart and to go her own way, "even if I don't know where I'll end up." With belief in herself, she knows she will get to the place she needs to be, find her way when she feels lost and confidently choose her path knowing she can do it. "When taking chances and trusting the unknown, there's always a way forward."

Timothy O'Donovan *Philadelphia, PA*
O'Donovan likes the idea of seeing nature by itself in its own form. He feels wonderfully comfortable with nature when he walks and hikes. He also feels more in control of his life and his emotions when he creates an artwork. If he feels too much tension, he paints and draws while listening to natural music, sounds of the ocean and Enya. O'Donovan has been learning-disabled since birth. He has



Jan Alice Keeling, *Girl, Midair*

been independent since age 14, a self-advocate for 26 years, and an artist at the Center for Creative Works for 13 years.

Jon Ohman *Dennis, MA*
Ohman is an enthusiastic young man with high-functioning autism, which is a cognitive disability involving an impairment of social interaction, communication and repetitive behaviors. He draws and paints images with colored pencils, markers, oil pastels, acrylics and watercolor. When drawing or painting, he does best at two-dimensional art in both side-view and front-view angles.



Ohman's artwork is inspired by animals. He is proud of his talent to bring his images to life and considers it one of his most significant accomplishments. His family and friends are also proud of his work.

Patrick Ohman *Dennis, MA*
Ohman has been diagnosed with the classic form of autism. His favorite subject matter for his art is animals, and he likes to use mixed media for his creations. Much of the artwork he has made was inspired by some of the beautiful images he has seen of animals. Ohman says that creating art helps him cope with his autism.

Diana O'Neill *Haverford, PA*
O'Neill spent 25 years as a successful glass etching/carving artist. Though she enjoyed completing various commissions, they lacked color and expression. When O'Neill was introduced to watercolor painting, she fell in love with this exciting medium. It freed her creative imagination, and she has become passionate about it ever since. Her paintings typically are impressionistic and inspired by the incredible beauty of nature found in scenic landscapes, birds and animals. It is O'Neill's hope that



Cheryl Kinderknecht, *Finding Home*

the bright colors and natural patterns in her work will inspire others to appreciate the natural environment that surrounds us. One of her favorite quotes is: "Every day is a gift, so enjoy and make it count."

Joanne Orth *Phoenixville, PA*
Orth is a lifelong artist whose work emphasizes how contrasting light and shadow define a subject and how color can add to the emotional feeling of a painting. She works mostly in acrylic and pastels, tending towards subjects that appeal to her love of color and nature.

Orth often focuses on local Chester County subjects, but she is always on the lookout for that special light or mood. As an animal lover, she enjoys portraying animals in their natural surroundings. Orth is a member of the Delaware Valley Art League and the Chester County Art Association, exhibiting in their shows as well as the Yellow Springs Art Show, Daylesford Abbey Art Show and other local and regional exhibits.

Mindy Orth *Philadelphia, PA*
Orth has a spinal cord injury and uses a strap to help her

paint. Art inspires her to explore different media. She looks forward to Tuesdays, when she has her class. Making art makes Orth happy and relaxes her.

Jamie Owens *Maxton, NC*
Raised in upstate New York, Owens earned a BFA in Visual Arts from SUNY New Paltz, and an MFA from the New York Academy of Art. Her studio practice encompasses painting, drawing, sculpture and various craft techniques. Owens says that her professional path lies at the intersection of art education and mental health, drawing on her academic background to inform her work. Her art explores themes of embodiment, transformation and our profound connection to the environment, using light, conceptually and symbolically, to infuse her works with an ethereal quality. Art is an intrinsic part of her life, a steadfast companion through life's highest and lowest moments, she says. It serves as a vital conduit for processing emotions when words fall short, and it provides a powerful means to connect with others through shared human experiences.

Leslie Palmer *Audubon, PA*
After a life-changing brain injury, Palmer could no

longer continue working as a scientist who had been drawn to discovery and the natural world. She turned to painting full-time: "Art has always been a part of who I am, and it played a big role in my healing." Palmer works primarily in oil, using brushes, palette knives and other tools to build texture and atmosphere. Inspired by the landscape, open skies and sea, her paintings are shaped by observation, memory and emotion. "Through adversity, I have found strength, resilience and hope. That theme now runs through my work. I hope others find both beauty and meaning in what I create."

Sal Panasci *Devon, PA*
Panasci describes the style in which he paints as traditional contemporary. His interest is concentrated on capturing the mood of the subject, rather than the tiny details contained within it. "Its specific individuality is what interests me, and what I concentrate upon." Through the painting process, Panasci becomes emotionally attached to the color palette, the texture of the paint and the individual composition. "My goal is to develop a painting which

presents its own mood, character and specific visual interest, allowing the viewer to recognize a familiar subject in a different way."

Treavor Pence *El Paso, TX*
Pence was born in West Texas and raised by the Mexican border. He learned to blend the cultures he grew up with in his work, especially with the landscapes of the area. Some of his favorite subjects to paint are trees, mountains and the desert. Pence also loves to paint *plein air*, work at art bazaars, and teach his middle school students the fine arts, encouraging them to develop their own techniques and styles.

Christopher Pereto *Weymouth, MA*
Pereto began drawing before age five. He cannot imagine art not being a part of him. When he began trying to be "serious" about art, he used colored pencil and aspired to be like illustrator, Richard Scarry. It wasn't until the second half of his college career that Pereto began using marker and pen, using the concept of animation cels. His art evolved

"Art is my therapy,
my teacher, and my
voice." —Emily Knabb



Claire Lynch, *Fallen*

when he added watercolor and paint marker to the mix. Pereto says, "I've never had any conception of what role art played in my life as an autistic man. Nor have I had any idea of how my condition may impact how I create. Both would seem to be something beyond words, fully coming from intuition and the subconscious."

Cathy Pregmon *Media, PA*
Pregmon has had multiple careers: schoolteacher, artistic director for a theater company that toured plays of empowerment for children and consultant with the Pennsylvania Bureau of Special Education. Now she is a designer of handcrafted, one-of-a-kind jewelry. Pregmon never makes the same piece of jewelry twice. She favors beads that are organic and come from nature. Many of her pieces feature semiprecious gems, but her work also incorporates seeds, horn, bone, shells and vegetable sources such as tagua and açai nuts. She favors fair trade beads such as Kazuri porcelain beads from Kenya and paper and linen beads from Uganda. Her pieces are chunky and funky "jewels" with touches of whimsy and a creative use

of unusual materials. Pregmon is currently experiencing symptoms from long-COVID, making life much more difficult. The flow and concentration demanded in the creation of art help control the chaos and pain of her many disabilities.

Meg Quinlisk *West Chester, PA*
Quinlisk is a 45-year survivor of rheumatoid arthritis, which has resulted in chronic pain and numerous surgeries to repair or replace damaged joints. She has had to learn to accept her disability while not allowing arthritis to define her. She defines herself as a wife, mother of three, a professional



Jace Laakso, *Blue Landscape Cat*

artist and an art instructor. Her art is created from oils, acrylics, gouache paints and glass mosaics. Quinlisk says, “I wanted to create a connection between my life with chronic pain and my art. The pain from arthritis feels like glass shards are surrounding your joints. I decided to use mosaics to take my brokenness and create something beautiful. Mosaics perfectly capture that.” Her mosaic pieces evoke the beauty that can emerge from brokenness. “When you live with arthritis, the pain and destruction leave you feeling broken and damaged. We are all broken in some way. The choice is what we make from those broken pieces.”

Judy Quitorian *Pacifica, CA*
After Quitorian’s stroke, she could not even count the stitches to make a granny square. She simply wanted to resume her crocheting, which she had learned at age 15. Now, Quitorian is happy to create wearable art of her own design. “It is my hope to encourage others who have experienced disability to never give up.”

Joy Raskin *Bedford, NH*
Raskin, a New Hampshire native, calls herself a New Englander. She grew up deeply

immersed in the arts and took a jewelry making class in high school that started her career. Two years later, she was one of the youngest craftspeople to be accepted into the League of NH Craftsmen. She earned a BFA from the Rhode Island School of Design, and an MFA from UMass Dartmouth, focusing on flatware, earning her the nickname, “Spoon Lady.” Raskin worked as a bench jeweler in fine jewelry stores, and after winning a fellowship from the NH Council of the Arts, she returned to making flatware and began selling her work

“Photography has given me purpose again. It has given me strength, control, peace, and escape during my times of chronic pain.” —Gail Foley

at fine craft shows across the country. Since 1996, Raskin has taught jewelry making and metalsmithing in N.H., Mass., and Conn. She has grown into a creative metalsmith, producing everything from a tiny gold ring to six-foot-tall welded steel sculptures.

Lillian Rhinecker

Boonsboro, MD

Rhinecker has been painting for more than 25 years. She often paints *en plein air* so that others can observe her process. She paints in a variety of themes, including landscapes. Rhinecker says that art is her ability to express herself without using words. It has also enhanced her social life.

Vojko Rizvanovic

West Valley City, UT

Rizvanovic is a legally blind fine arts major, with bilateral eye nerve atrophy and permanent vision loss that doesn’t improve

with refraction. About four years ago, he was also diagnosed with photophobia as well, which “couldn’t make painting any more fun than it already was,” he quips. “What is left for a guy to do with so many shortcomings like me?” He says it is a paradox, considering his eyesight, that his



Joan Lesikin, *Above It All*

attention is often drawn to some interesting shapes, even details, in everyday objects that an average person would perhaps miss. He is still adjusting to his new reality: “My process is painstaking. Sometimes it’s a pure struggle for it takes forever to complete something. But I get great satisfaction when I manage to depict what others may have not noticed, through my lines and colors. After all, art is what gives meaning to my life. I just hope that my efforts add some merit to my work.”

Holly Robbins

Edinboro, PA

Robbins defines her work as bold, with high-intensity imagery, and vividly colored — expressive escape from the gray reality of living with complex regional pain syndrome. This invisible illness has shaped not only how she lives, but how she creates, changing her process as her condition dictates. “Flexibility — once a survival skill — is my most vital tool and now defines my artistic approach.” When she could no longer manage a camera at the peak

of her photographic career, Robbins pivoted to fluid art. Paint pouring allowed her to reclaim the motion her body has lost. Through color, texture and movement, she expresses emotions too complex for words. “My work, like my life, flows with uncertainty — anchored by resilience — and a commitment to creating within shifting limits.”

Addie Rodriguez

Largo, FL

Rodriguez is an emerging visual artist with a formal background in fashion design. Despite limitations in strength and stamina from her disability, she purposefully chooses to work with materials that she can touch, cut and place in a particular order, versus using a computer. The tactile aspect of her collages, assemblages and mixed-media pieces are considered paramount to any art she chooses to create. This enables her to include occupational therapy exercises into her artmaking. Rodriguez approaches each project from the perspective that shapes and colors will highly influence the final creation.

Finn Rodriguez

Largo, FL

Rodriguez is an emerging disabled, LGBTQ+ and Latinx visual artist. Despite the chronic pain they experience daily

due to medical conditions of dysautonomia and hypermobile Ehlers-Danlos syndrome, Rodriguez has been able to find much joy in creating original digital artworks. Their creations express themes of community, positivity and pride in who you are.

Debby Ryan

Kailua-Kona, HI

Ryan is an accomplished professional artist who studied at Foothill College in Los Altos, Calif., and De Anza College in Cupertino, Calif. She has shared her passion for the arts with her local community in a variety of ways. She has exhibited her work in fine art galleries for over 30 years, operated a mural and sign painting business and taught art classes for seniors and developmentally disabled adults. Ryan feels her inspiration is limitless, painting images that capture the essence of life itself. She fell in love with Hawaii as soon as she arrived. Her current series of paintings convey this new-found joy, she says. Ryan’s favorite phrase: “Truth is always stranger than fiction.”

Kristina Salamone

Philadelphia, PA

Salamone fills the surface of her artwork with words, illustrations, shapes and

Ian Shearer, *Symptom Recital*

abstract strokes. She creates depth by layering different media, including acrylic paint, ink, marker and colored pencil. The color, thickness and texture of her mark-making show a unique depth in her compositions. Within the details are personal motifs, including her favorite animals (monkeys) and the name of her dog (Freddy). Salamone enjoys the creation process and values being among community at the Center for Creative Works.

James Sanders *Philadelphia, PA*
By layering strokes of different widths and textures, Sanders composes enthralling dreamscapes of color. He

combines a variety of media in his work, including watercolor, oil pastel, and colored pencil; however, he enjoys painting the most because of how the colors blend and interact. Sanders also dabbles in pointillism; his inspiration comes from wherever his imagination leads him.

Juliana Scheopner *Omaha, NE*
Scheopner works across several mediums to explore themes of identity, mental health, resilience, emotion and her lived experience as a disabled woman. Her work speaks to the nuance of these ideas, holding space for the positive, negative and neutral aspects of life with a complex, dynamic disability. Through her artwork and communities, she relentlessly strives to create a more accessible and welcoming world. She is currently pursuing dual degrees — a BFA in Studio Art and a BS in Psychology at the University of Nebraska in Omaha, and finding great satisfaction in the intersection of art, science and the pursuit of hope.

Rebecca Scheuer *Narvon, PA*
Scheuer is a retired high school counselor and artist living in Lancaster County, Pa., with her husband, two dogs and Felix the cat. She began her oil painting journey in 2015,

after a serious car accident left her with a concussion, hemorrhage behind her right eye and months spent in a fog with severe double vision. Her visual therapist suggested painting as an exercise in hand/eye coordination. Having never dabbled in anything more than a few craft projects, Scheuer immediately took to painting and devoted herself to her practice. She began taking painting lessons with Bruce Becker at The Warehouse Studios in Reading, Pa., who helped her hone her style and technique. Despite her challenges, Scheuer has maintained a cheerful, positive outlook on life and her sense of humor is often reflected in her colorful, whimsical paintings. She enjoys painting animals and cocktails, two of her favorite things.

Robert Schmus *Bryn Mawr, PA*
Schmus began painting in 2018. He puts his paintings in two categories: grounded and intense. His grounded pieces are landscapes from places he's traveled like Salisbury Cathedral, Winchester Palace and the Benjamin Franklin Parkway. His intense work is based on anxiety he experiences when he cannot

find the words to express himself. He works primarily with acrylic paint, focusing on creating texture and tactility. Not only has painting become an outlet for Schmus, it has also led him to new opportunities within the local art scene of Philadelphia. He is a member of the Autistic Art Coalition of Philadelphia. He says, "Being an artist has been truly essential in my life. It is a passion that I have, and I wish to continue to share my work with you."

Christine Severson *Richmond, VA*
If not for a life-altering accident while working as a nurse, "Severson the artist" would not have emerged and blossomed. Artmaking allows her to transcend her physical self — a body in chronic pain with limited mobility. Severson has reinvented herself as an artist. The media she uses must be lightweight and able to be worked from a reclining position. Working in different mediums alters the demands on her body. Each creation, she says, is unique and contains a piece of her spirit.

Michael Shane *Drexel Hill, PA*
Shane, 65 years old, loves to work with acrylic paints on canvas. He started painting in 2015 as therapy to recover his speech

after brain surgery. His abstract paintings prompted his right brain to stimulate the damaged left brain, and he subsequently regained his speech and motor skills. But the switch was on, he

"Making art allows me to feel part of society and that I belong."

—David Gerbstadt

says, and art became his being. An artist of textures and colors, each piece is a victory and bleeds with his soul.

Stephanie Shea *Philadelphia, PA*
To Shea, art means the ability to express herself. Her source of inspiration and motivation to create can be anything that piques her interest. She says, "Art lets me express myself in a healthy way, and it makes me forget that I am living with a disability for a while."

Ian Shearer *Seattle, WA*
Shearer sketches in paint, soaking his canvases with water to create rivers of pigment. He manipulates perspective and creates a jumble of flat and rendered imagery. Using

low and high contrasting values helps tell his story of confusion and disorientation, he says. Bright paint spatters recreate the euphoria of synesthesia experienced with sensory processing disorders. Shearer describes the chaotic drippings as symbolic of the "static" of aphasia and the lack of muscle control of dysarthria and apraxia: These conditions simultaneously create sensations of vertigo, common to traumatic brain injury. Medical records are often decoupled into his paintings, often backwards or upside down, a reference to neurological language disorders and a metaphor for medical gaslighting. Hidden in signage or shadows, almost indiscernible, his art reflects the experience of millions of people living with invisible disabilities.

Kimberly Showers *West Chester, PA*
Showers calls herself "a world builder." Fueled by her imagination and curiosity, she explores human connection with the natural world. Combining the fluidity of watercolor paint with a variety of mediums, layering and deconstructing shapes and colors, Showers

renders whimsical landscapes and creatures both real and imaginary. These expressions are manifestations of her daydreams and unconscious thought; safe places she chooses to share and occupy. "Painting empowers me to puzzle out and process the way I move through this world as a neurodivergent woman. Creating art is an essential complement to the other tools and therapies I employ to thrive with a disability."

Athina Skevi *Philadelphia, PA*
Skevi is a figurative artist who works primarily with drawing and painting media. Her work explores themes of identity, womanhood, disability, healing and her Greek heritage. "Since

getting hurt two years ago, I felt like I received a wake-up call for what is important in my life: I am meant to create and not just consume." Being secluded in a dark room for weeks on end with only pain for company was the catalyst for her creativity to surge, she says. She couldn't watch television, couldn't read a book, couldn't hold a conversation at times. "And now that I am able to live a somewhat normal life, art allows me to escape a world that feels at odds with my brain, and to just be myself."

Malcolm Slade *Perry Hall, MD*
A self-described fan of the "hip 70s look," Slade usually sports a headband and at least one

Jeffrey McCredie, *Oarsman Near Columbia Bridge*

tie-dye garment. After working “semi-realistically” for years — creating images based in reality, but containing unusual, imagined elements — Slade recently transitioned to working in abstract acrylic collage. His bold collages are reminiscent of landforms like islands, maps or plants, which encourage the viewer to travel over their textured surfaces with curiosity. His art was shown recently in the “Imaginary Worlds: Invented Spaces and Places,” exhibit at Annmarie Sculpture Garden & Arts Center in Solomons, Md., and “Liberation,” at Moonlight Center of Art in Baltimore. He is a Community College of Baltimore County graduate and a member of Make Studio in Baltimore.

Ken Smith *Riverside, WA*
Smith specializes in limited-edition fine art, with a primary focus on still life. He prints his work in black and white and color, using both traditional photographic processes and archival pigment ink on fine cotton printmaking papers. Smith feels his role as an artist is to be open, curious and available to observe and report back. He looks for something to move him so he might pass that onto the work. “The process

of observing leaves one open to a mystery beyond thought or the so-called coincidence,” he says. This reverence for the unexpected is key. His work reflects on his walking disability, encouraging patience and the understanding of how to find beauty in the commonplace.

Eugene Soh

Bishan Springs, Singapore
Soh began painting when he was 11 years old. Although he had art training in primary school, he did not touch brushes for more than 10 years after his major spinal cord surgery in 1981, which resulted in him being paraplegic and needing a wheelchair. Soh is a self-trained artist with a BA in Mathematics from the National University of Singapore. He admires the artistic style of Van Gogh and Pierre-Auguste Renoir. To him, art is everywhere; from his memories of traveling with his wife to the expression of his deep faith in God that is the mainstay of his artistic inspiration. “Art has accompanied me through many lonely nights and brought solace to my soul.”

Kari Souders *Villanova, PA*
Having been born with vision in only one eye, Souders has always seen the world through a monocular lens. This

narrower window has made her hyperaware of fine detail. It has given her a deep appreciation for experiencing our world visually and tactilely. As a result, she gravitated toward a career that relied on her unique vision. She creates artworks that are densely layered and richly

textured. These floral and fauna mixed-media paintings aim to express love and loss, she says. They are meant to convey a romantic nostalgia for the natural world as it transforms due to climate change. Nature’s wonder and beauty is enchanting, even as it breaks

“Feeling emotions through art is a way of finding balance, beauty, peace, and freedom within the edges of the image and beyond.” —Tara Groenewold



Kelly Meiners, *Day Dream*

down and adapts. As our sacred world evolves, these paintings depict the artist’s fantasy of how nature will flourish regardless of new climate realities.

Craig Stephens

Philadelphia, PA
Stephens prefers painting landscapes and abstract art. His father drew cartoon characters, thus beginning his enjoyment and appreciation of art. He views a variety of videos on YouTube to find inspiration. He is always willing to try new things and has recently been exploring more abstract works.

Susan Straub-Martin

Woodinville, WA
In every child’s heart, there lives a pocketful of stardust and a trail of breadcrumbs leading to hidden worlds, where anything is possible. Straub-Martin is a whimsical children’s book author, illustrator and joyful explorer who dips her brushes into these magical places to bring them to life. Her journey didn’t begin in a bustling city studio, she says, but in the whispery woods and glimmering lakes of her childhood; places where the trees and her grandfather told enchanting stories. These gentle beginnings stitched themselves into her art, where animals speak

in kindness, stars twinkle with delight and every illustration feels like a hug wrapped in wonder. Straub-Martin’s art and stories welcome little readers to tiptoe through tales of opposites and adventure, while quietly learning the big-hearted lessons of empathy, courage and connection.

Siddhartha Sukla

Cuttack, Odisha, India
Sukla has enjoyed painting since childhood. Though hearing-impaired, he doesn’t feel inferior to others, just differently abled. A graduate of Utkal University, with a degree in fine arts, Sukla uses watercolor, oils and collage. He has received national and international awards for his work, yet he attributes his success to the blessings of his mentors and well-wishers. He says he feels fortunate if he can satisfy his supporters through art. Sukla continues to focus on being a professional artist and finding more opportunities. “I stand similar to abled people through my art. Disability does not affect my work.”

Sriharsha Sukla

Cuttack Odisha, India
Sriharsha Sukla was born with a hearing impairment. But in spite of his disability, he feels

able in every respect. He has been inspired by his parents, especially by his mother, to pursue art. “Whatever the position I have reached it is due to the blessing of all my mentors and well-wishers.” Sukla has been awarded a number of prizes by different organizations, national as well as international. He has worked in oil painting and watercolor and his specialty is collage work. Sukla has a degree in Fine Arts, and he continues to concentrate on his work as a professional artist and looking for more opportunities.

Han Swoish

Philadelphia, PA
“My art stands as a celebration of the messy, vulnerable and resilient parts of ourselves — the parts that are so often hidden, but deserve to be seen.” Living with ADHD and major depressive disorder, Swoish says she often feels lost in her own mind, struggling to express what’s happening internally. Art helps her translate that chaos or numbness into something tangible and validating. “I use my work to open space for emotions often silenced by the shame surrounding neurodivergence and unseen mental health struggles. I hope



Susan Milller, *Transcending Spirit*

viewers feel less alone when engaging with my art and find comfort in shared vulnerability.”

David Terrar

Gaithersburg, MD
Terrar survived a major heart attack. His life changed suddenly, and a long, depressing struggle followed. Terrar needed stability and hope to get through it. On a wintry walk through the woods, he saw his struggle played out in nature. The snow represented the struggle to get through the winter. The sun struggled in the last half hour of the day. All the colors changed, yet the golden sun coming through the trees was a sign of hope. The struggle inspired his work using acrylic and 23-karat gold leaf. The color gold has been an artistic symbol for hope and heaven

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

Michael Thomas

Philadelphia, PA

Thomas is a painter, designer and mixed-media artist originally from Queens, N.Y. Raised in a multicultural household by an Ecuadorian mother and a free-spirited American father, he found early inspiration in the city’s rhythm, color and complexity. Now based in Philadelphia, Thomas studied at the Art Institute of Philadelphia and private ateliers, developing a deeply expressive, textured style rooted in abstract expressionism. Growing up in the 80s and 90s, his work draws influence from post-punk music, graffiti and Nuyorican poetry. His art is a reflection of life — layered, raw and poetic. Learning disabilities and battles with addiction became unlikely muses, teaching him resilience and deepening his emotional connection to the creative process. Art became both a sanctuary and a voice. Thomas now creates from TigerHorseArt Studio in Philadelphia. His works

are held in private collections nationwide. Through each piece, he explores how art, culture and personal history intertwine.

Leo Tujak

Floral Park, NY

Tujak thinks that photography is great. It allows him to see something and transfer it to a photograph, but with some input from him as he takes the picture. By controlling the composition, lighting and angle at which the photo is taken, one can alter many things. But the outcome all photographers are looking for is a “good” photo. Due to a retinal eye problem,

Tujak can no longer use his right eye when taking pictures. He had to retrain himself to use his left eye to look through the camera’s viewfinder. Tujak hopes that everyone enjoys looking at the photos as much as he enjoyed taking them.

Max Tzinman

New York, NY

“If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint.” — Edward Hopper. Like Hopper, Tzinman finds it difficult to explain his work, because it is not necessarily from a logical place. It emerges from a maelstrom of concerns,

fascinations and experiences. He says he is exploring the disconnect between reality and the pervasive myths that surround us, questioning our purpose in these turbulent times and determining how we can avoid the emptiness of an unthinking existence. Tzinman’s creative process varies. It starts with an idea, then he works digitally in two or three dimensions. He enjoys using a variety of media, such as acrylics, oil, plastic, collage and metal to construct still pieces and dioramas. For some projects, he works with video and animation to incorporate light and sound to communicate the desired effect.

Selina Valentin

Philadelphia, PA

Valentin is a happy and fun girl who tries to bring that same energy to her painting. She says that painting is fun. Tie-dye is one of her favorite forms of art. Valentin paints “sandwich art” on canvases by selecting many assorted colors of paint and then sandwiching the two canvases together. She uses her arms to “smoosh” the paint and move it around. Valentin says she is inspired by her Aunt Frances.

Christopher Miller, *Pink Pale Dahlia*



Hilda Volkin

Albuquerque, NM

Volkin describes her art as combining art and science. “I am inspired by the light of New Mexico.” Her work combines colored plexiglass

observation and curiosity. She works mostly in ink but is exploring other mediums such as chalk pastel and paint. She considers humans’ relationships to one another and to nature,

“My portraits inspire me to continue striving for connection with others despite our differences. I hope they will inspire curiosity and compassion in their audiences” —Sydnee Hoffman

with dichroic and holographic films, which reveal the spectrum and wavelengths of light. The films split a beam of light into two beams with different wavelengths. As a result, new colors appear. Volkin is exploring the effects of reflective light: As she spaces several layers of colored plexiglass, new layers of color are revealed. The colors are constantly changing when seen from different angles. The viewer becomes involved as new colors are revealed.

Doris Washington

Owings Mills, MD

Washington’s art is playful and gentle, with a depth of

sometimes in a comic or narrative format. In her art, as well as her conversation, she has many a story to tell! Her work has been shown most recently in “Liberation,” at Moonlight Center of Art in Baltimore, Md.

Joyce Washington

Philadelphia, PA

Washington came to Inglis House in 2012 and is 76 years old. She enjoys many activities, including the exploring art group, trivia, music and theater. Washington loves all forms of art, but painting is her favorite. She is a wonderful artist and enjoys the use of bright, vibrant color.



Joanne Orth, *Highland Lassies*

Lydia Watson

Plainfield, NJ

Watson is a lifelong creative whose journey began with childhood doodles and evolved into award-winning, purpose-driven art rooted in culture, emotion and faith. Through her work, she transforms life’s experiences into powerful visual stories that inspire, heal and connect.

Natalie Weidner

Philadelphia, PA

Art helps Weidner to express herself. It makes her feel relaxed and takes her to her happy place. Her art hints at what she feels inside, reflected by her choice of colors.

Debra Westdorp

Langley, British Columbia, Canada

Westdorp comes from a creative family. She was diagnosed with complex regional pain syndrome (CRPS) at age 26, forcing her to adapt her creative style. She took watercolor lessons, but soon moved on to acrylics because of the vivid color palette. She began to create jewelry and started working in resin a few years ago. She is inspired by nature and tries to recreate it in her jewelry and paintings. Westdorp is also fascinated by the artists and creators on YouTube and tries to figure out how to adapt their techniques to work within her limitations.

Creating has given her a lifelong love of art and a distraction from the pain of CRPS.

Kurt Weston *Mission Viejo, CA*
Weston is an award-winning, legally blind photographer whose work has been exhibited internationally and is in the permanent collection of the Houston Museum of Fine Arts and Chicago's Museum of Contemporary Photography. He received his MFA from California State University, Fullerton in 2008. His new photographs focus on the sublime aspects of nature, emphasizing the shapes and colors he discovers around Southern California. His photographs highlight the emotional richness of composition, geometry and color which create impactful artistic narratives. Utilizing screen magnification software and a telescopic monocular, Weston is thrilled to be able to photograph these transformative portraits of nature.

Rebecca White *Philadelphia, PA*
White depicts subjects from nature and outer space in her striking pointillist style. Not only do her dotted textures stand out on the page, but she also incorporates mixed media, such



Eugene Soh, *Blossoms and Bounty*

as buttons, pressed flowers and tissue paper, that add three-dimensionality to her work. On the side, she creates original characters inspired by her favorite animated shows and graphic novels. In the future, White aspires to intertwine her artistic talents with storytelling by developing a comic series.

Jonathan Whitlock *Lancaster, PA*
Whitlock started painting with oils at age 15, with a strong interest in Cubism. In college, he majored in studio arts and ended his first year with a gallery show. During his summer break in June 1999, Whitlock sustained a traumatic brain injury in a car accident that resulted in a five-month coma. Upon waking, he had a weakened left side, blindness in one eye, spasticity and inability to walk. Ten months later, he picked up a paintbrush and began adapting to being

right-handed. Whitlock now paints with broad brush strokes and focuses on a wide variety of subject matter. It is 26 years after the car accident, and he is truly grateful for all the opportunities he's had to share his story, his artwork and his upbeat outlook on life with a disability.

Don Whittecar *Stevensville, MT*
As a victim of child abuse, Whittecar decided to "pay it forward" by studying psychology and then conducting research on the topic. The stress of that effort, coupled with adult-onset Still's disease, prompted his doctors to advise him to pursue a new occupation. Fortunately, says Whittecar, he also had a graduate degree in fine arts. He employs photography, 4x5 large-format, printmaking and copperplate engraving. Whittecar recalls the words of Carl Young, "Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes a

human being and makes him its instrument. To perform this difficult office it is sometimes necessary to sacrifice happiness and everything that makes life worth living ... for the ordinary human being." Whittecar says he is inspired by, and seeks to express his love for, the Almighty's creation.

"Painting gives me confidence and pride and helps me get my feelings out if I am upset" —Jake Liberman

Lydia Wickham *Circleville, OH*
Exploring the beauty found in vulnerability and impermanence, Wickham says she encourages viewers to rethink how they perceive strength and weakness. Living with chronic conditions has taught her to question reality and examine how perception creates our world. "I am attracted to transformative moments where boundaries blur, bringing the hidden into focus, and revealing resplendent, mysterious undertones. I create spaces that

shift perception." This prompts viewers to reconsider with bold colors, light and tactile materials like embroidery, neon vinyl and reflective surfaces. "My work balances fragility and resilience by transforming overlooked, everyday materials into powerful expressions."

Robert Winig *Rancho Palos Verdes, CA*
As the son of an artist, Winig was introduced to the art community at an early age. He tried many disciplines of artwork in his youth and always enjoyed photography. Upon retiring from a lengthy career as an engineer, he found his way back to it. In his photography, Winig now combines his passion for experiencing the great outdoors

with capturing the beauty that nature has to offer. With limited range of motion in his shoulders, he is still able to enjoy taking shots in nature.

Nina Yocom *West Chester, PA*
Yocom was diagnosed with bipolar disorder in her early twenties. Over the years, she has searched for a way to give expression to an acceptance of her condition. The fluid nature of alcohol inks as they move along nonporous surfaces is highly meditative and soothes her mind. She can express such joy and happiness with bright blues and purples and can dig deeper into the scars of her life with darker shades of greens, yellows and reds. Yocom uses these vibrant hues to express emotion,

whether it is the highs of mania or the lows of depression. Using this medium gives her permission to articulate what cannot be put into words. She says, "My head and heart connect, and I am at peace within myself."

Sheri Youens-Un *Silver Spring, MD*
Youens-Un grew up defending American Sign Language, especially during her years in oralist school, when she was young. (Oralist school teaches deaf persons to use speech and lip-reading to communicate, rather than sign language.) She thrived when she was allowed to sign. Her love for ASL deepened when she attended the Texas School for the Deaf and Gallaudet University. After graduation, Youens-Un taught ASL and trained in the use of technology for years, prior to launching her business specializing in ASL language learning resources, ASL personalization products and creating wood art.

Catherine Zhao *Newton, MA*
Catherine is an autistic and aspiring young artist at Gateway Arts studio in Brookline, Mass. She communicates with people in a very elegant manner, using expressions and simple dialogue

Han Swolish, *Merging of Emotions*

as the main medium. Her passion for the arts began with using Perler beads to create 3D décor that expressed her fundamental interest in colors, shapes and patterns. Later, she expanded her work to include more representative images of real-world observations. She would take photos of animals and flowers on her hiking trips and neighborhood walks and convert them into acrylic paintings and crafts. Zhao also enjoys making scarves with colorful patterns that represent her love of the seasons and candy. In all of her works, she conveys her simple, yet complex, perceptions to others.

William Zimmerman *Philadelphia, PA*
Zimmerman loves big, bright fashion. He often likes to match his outfit to how he feels that day. He is inspired by many things, including sport teams, fast cars and music videos. His favorite music to listen to is hip-hop or rap. He recently became interested in art and uses bold, bright colors to express himself. Zimmerman pulls inspiration from his favorite things and conveys them into his artwork. Art has given him another outlet for expression.



Charitable gifts play an essential role in helping Bryn Mawr Rehab to serve individuals with disabilities and our hospital community. Philanthropy directly supports our alternative therapy programs such as Creative Arts Therapy, enhances our equipment and technology, provides critical funds for patient assistance, endorses our community programs such as Art Ability, and overall enhances the hospital's ability to provide the top level of service and care to our patient community.

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2 cups of flour

Pinch of salt

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Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Roll out enough of the dough into a circle to cover the pie plate and put it in your pie pan. Crimp around the edges, and fill the pie with the peach mixture. Roll the remaining dough out in a circle and cover the pie. Crimp the edges.

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