

25TH
ANNIVERSARY

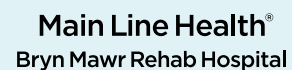
SRIHARSHA
2020

Sriharsha Sukla, *Baby Deaf* ACRYLIC ON CANVAS

SRIHARSHA
2020



a celebration of art by artists with disabilities



Main Line Health®
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

Celebrating 50 years of excellence



Eric Mohn, *Great Falls Tavern*, first Featured Artist and artwork



Art Ability Preview Reception, November 1996

Celebrating 25 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, of which several members continue today to serve on the Art Ability Committee.

“The Art Ability exhibitions are a terrific forum for encouraging, supporting and showcasing works of art from around the world and surely has been an inspiration for disabled artists to continue creating and sharing their talents.” —Ralph Mindicino, Art Ability artist

Twenty-five years later, the show has grown in size and impact. This year’s exhibition features 353 pieces of art from 153 artists. Artists from around the world participate, with our 2020 featured artist hailing from

India. Since inception, 25 countries have been represented, including Austria, France, Guatemala, India, Israel, New Zealand, Scotland and South Africa. 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 1,043 unique artists have participated in the Art Ability Exhibition and Sale. Many are annual participants, with nearly 60 artists joining us for 10 or more years. A few artists have special

reasons to celebrate—Sal Panasci has participated for 24 years, Betsy Clayton for 23, and Victoria Pendragon was in the very first show. This will be her tenth.

Over the 25-year history, sales of art have totaled more than \$1.3 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 like art and music therapy. In just the last three years, the hospital has purchased four new pieces of state-of-the-art therapy equipment and a new van for patient transportation with event proceeds.

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



Betsy Clayton



(L-R) Exhibiting artist with Donna Phillips, Lee and Bill Warden in 2006

The 25th Anniversary of Art Ability Celebration and Exhibition

VIRTUAL CELEBRATION

Saturday, November 7, 2020

6:00–8:00 pm

Visit bidpal.net/artability20 for

- Art for Sale
- Silent Auction
- Call to Give

EXHIBITION AND SALE

November 8, 2020–

January 31, 2021*

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital
414 Paoli Pike, Malvern, PA

** In light of this year’s COVID-19 pandemic, the hospital will be open to the public based on current visitation policies which can be found by visiting mainlinehealth.org or calling 484.596.5400.*



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



(L-R) Tad Sperry, Marilyn Roland, and artist Robert Saphier



Donna M. Phillips
President, Bryn Mawr
Rehabilitation Hospital
Senior Executive, Ambulatory
and Professional Services

Dear Friends,

We are pleased to celebrate Art Ability’s 25th Anniversary. 2020 has been a year unlike most of us have ever experienced. In the wake of the pandemic, we all have had to shift our normal and familiar ways of doing things. Art Ability is no exception. On behalf of our participating artists and the hospital programs and services this annual event helps to sustain, thank you for your strong support.

My congratulations to our artists, and their stories of inspiration. The annual exhibition has grown to hundreds of participating artists, ranging in age from 19 to 102, from 47 states and eight countries. Our generous donors and artists have helped to build our permanent collection to over 500 pieces of artwork. This diverse and amazing collection beautifies our hospital environment and is integral to our work with patients. Art Ability artwork is also displayed and enjoyed throughout Main Line Health.

We are equally proud of what has remained constant over the last 25 years. Art Ability serves as a showcase for and celebration of artists with disabilities. Bryn Mawr Rehab remains committed to helping improve the economic self-sufficiency of adults with disabilities, and changing the perception of the talents of individuals with disabilities. Art Ability does just that.

Funds raised from this year’s event and exhibition will support the livelihoods of our artists, along with top hospital priorities that enable us to provide a highly progressive rehabilitative environment. We thank Stephen Zarrilli for sharing his story, as part of this year’s event. At the top of his game, Steve came to us following an unforeseen stroke when he was just 58. His strong will and positive attitude are shining examples of the power of the human spirit.

Whether you are an ongoing patron or new this year, thank you for joining us. Special thanks to our Art Ability Committee, Bryn Mawr Rehab Foundation Board, sponsors, staff and volunteers for contributing to the success of this milestone silver anniversary, in these most unusual times.

Warm regards,

Diamond Sponsor



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Gold Sponsors

- | | |
|--|---|
| Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Volunteer Association | Shein Law; The Benjamin Shein Family Foundation |
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Exhibition Wall Sponsors

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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.

Art Ability is supported in part by the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency.

Honoring the inspiration and hard work of our founders

Doris Gorden and Lois Levy spearheaded efforts to bring an art show to Bryn Mawr Rehab and set the foundation for the successful program we enjoy today.



Doris and Bill Gorden

“I didn’t know a thing about art when I started all this, but I’m always up for a challenge.” —Doris Gorden

served on the hospital’s Foundation Board, helping to champion hospital priorities and community presence.

Doris, who was wheelchair bound due to polio, was devoted in her efforts to provide dignity for the disabled. Doris never let her disability hold her back, and she often shared her story of how she began her volunteer service. In her 2009 interview with *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, she

DORIS “DEE” GORDEN, 1924–2019

Doris Gorden, a dedicated volunteer at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for more than 60 years, chaired the hospital’s Fine Arts Committee in 1996. She provided creative insight that was instrumental in producing Art Ability’s first exhibition, and continued to serve on the Art Ability Committee for 23 years, chairing another five times. In addition to her pivotal Art Ability role, Doris

described an experience she had with another organization when she called about a volunteer opportunity. Doris inquired about accessibility. “Why?” the woman on the other end of the phone asked. “I’ve been in a wheelchair for 25 years,” Doris replied. “Well, you should have told me that right up front. We only want able-bodied volunteers.” With that, Doris took her volunteer interests and talents elsewhere—to Bryn Mawr Rehab—and dedicated her time to advocating for people with disabilities.

Before becoming disabled, Doris traveled the world as a flight attendant, and later obtained her pilot’s license. Doris and her husband, Bill, regularly attended the Art Ability Preview Reception, and could often be found at the entrance greeting patrons.

Doris treasured the work she collected from Art Ability artists. Her favorite piece was a watercolor, *Old Town, Alexandria* by mouth-painter Eric Mohn. She and Bill often brought friends for a tour of the annual exhibit. In 2019, they also hosted a satellite exhibit at the Art Gallery at The Heritage of Green Hills, where they resided.



(L-R) Karen Gadson, Doris and Bill Gorden and Robert Lang



LOIS LEVY, 1943–2015

Lois Levy, born and raised in Philadelphia, was an innovative people-person who loved her job working with artists. Prior to working at Bryn Mawr Rehab, she had been the director of public relations at

MossRehab, where she helped to initiate the region’s first major art exhibition of works by artists with disabilities. Art Ability Committee member Marilyn Roland remembers, “Lois invented the concept of the exhibition just from the collection of art on her walls, all by disabled artists.”

In 1994, former hospital president Barry Rabner asked Lois to coordinate a similar exhibition. Under her leadership, the hospital established a Fine Arts Committee. The goal was to develop programs which could utilize the visual arts to expand and enhance the lives of people with disabilities. The hospital’s permanent collection of artwork was also established.

In 1996, Lois produced the first Art Ability exhibition at Bryn Mawr Rehab, while working as the hospital’s director of internal communications and community affairs. She worked closely with the Fine Arts Committee to introduce Art Ability to the community. Through art, they hoped to inspire patients to reach beyond their limitations and encourage people with disabilities to explore their own creativity.

Lois helped to bring popular artists Eric Mohn and Tom Lee to Art Ability. She had special relationships with Betsy Clayton and Sal Panasci, and was persistent in encouraging new artists to show their work. As the word got out, Art Ability grew exponentially.

“Lois didn’t just collect art, she collected stories.”

—Susan Christie, physical therapist

Artist Sal Panasci says, “Lois’s love of art, and recognition that art crosses many boundaries and has no limitations, allowed artists with disabilities to flourish.” She worked tirelessly to ensure the exhibits she created helped her artists demonstrate and showcase their creative abilities.

Lois was a strong advocate for the presence of the arts in health care settings, given its healing power. Thanks to her legacy, artists with disabilities receive formal recognition for their work, and the patients, staff and visitors of Bryn Mawr Rehab are able to experience their talents.

In honor of Lois Levy, we have added a new artist award this year, *The Lois Levy People’s Choice* award. This cash prize will be awarded to an artist whose artwork receives the most votes from Art Ability patrons.



Liz Griesser, *Lavender Meadow*

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Karen Meyers	<i>Art Ability Coordinator</i>

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Lists current as of October 15, 2020.



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

The 148-bed, not-for-profit
hospital offers the full continuum
of rehabilitation services, including

acute inpatient care as well as outpatient services for
adults and adolescents. The hospital received Magnet®
designation, the nation's highest distinction for excellence
in nursing care and is accredited by the Joint Commission
and the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation
Facilities (CARF). Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital treats patients
with traumatic and nontraumatic brain injury, stroke and
other neurological disorders, traumatic and nontraumatic
spinal cord injury, amputations, and orthopedic injuries.
Bryn Mawr Rehab Outpatient Network treats individuals
with a wide range of conditions and injuries from brain
injury, spinal cord injury and Parkinson's disease to
concussions, pelvic floor disorders and lymphedema.
Our outpatient rehabilitation services are conveniently
located throughout the western suburbs of Philadelphia.

In 2020 Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital is celebrating 50 Years
of Excellence. In our 50-year history, we have continuously
demonstrated our ongoing commitment to excellent
patient care and to community programs like Art Ability.

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



Sal Panasci, *Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital*



Debra Hope Colligan, *Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital*

Mission

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

Now celebrating 25 years, Art Ability continues to be an integral part of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital since its first exhibition and sale of work by artists with disabilities in 1996. It continues to be a year-round showcase and celebration of artists with disabilities and is the country's largest international, juried exhibition and sale of its kind.

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

In light of this year's COVID-19 pandemic, the hospital will be open to the public based on current visitor policies which can be found by visiting mainlinehealth.org or calling 484.596.5400.

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 a jury of art professionals and the Art Ability curator, and includes reviewing the submitted images and choosing the artwork for the exhibition. The second step includes esteemed judges who are selected based on their expertise and prominence in the Greater Philadelphia fine arts community. They judge the work, selecting the pieces to receive awards in their respective categories.



Carol Spiker, *Respite*

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

SALES

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

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

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

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



Malcolm Corley, *Surprise*

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

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

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



Steve and Carol Zarrilli

Stephen Zarrilli

Life changed in an instant. In July 2019, driving to his shore home, Steve Zarrilli suffered a stroke. A dissection of the carotid artery on the right side of his neck caused a stroke in the right side of his brain. Steve lost control and crashed into a guardrail. “The first miracle was I didn’t kill myself or anyone else.” The second was the good Samaritan who stopped and called 911. Rushed to an area hospital, “it was a life and death situation.”

A month earlier, Steve completed a Philadelphia to Shore charity bike ride and was a picture of good health, living the dream as CEO of the University City Science Center, a position he had taken just nine months earlier.

Following his acute care hospital stay and stabilization, Steve was an inpatient at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for three months, and continues today as an outpatient. “Bryn Mawr Rehab is a world-class facility that has helped me greatly in my recovery process.” Steve is learning to walk again with the help of a brace and advanced equipment, like the robotic exoskeleton device, to enhance strength, mobility and endurance. He also benefits from occupational and cognitive therapy.

Steve made the difficult decision to step down from the Science Center last March and took on intensive rehabilitation as his full-time job. “Every day I tell myself I don’t want this stroke to define me and I want to get elements of that life I had before back in place. I think we have to have the fortitude to not let the current events define us.”

Beginning with his wife Carol, Steve is fortunate to have an incredible support network. He knows his life will now be different and he has made peace with that. “My perspective on life has changed. The biggest reward has been to have more empathy for others with a disability. I now live in a different world, and I appreciate what others go through.”

“Live life as best you can every day,” he says. “You never know what’s going to happen. And stop worrying about the little stuff at the end of the day. It’s not what’s ultimately going to be important.”

Steve Zarrilli’s story will be shared during this year’s Art Ability Virtual Celebration.

High tech therapy thanks to the 2019 call to give

The 2019 Art Ability Dinner and Auction was a great success. Inspired by patient Alexandria Warner and her mother Susan Levy Giles, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation Board Member, guests generously contributed \$122,850 in support of two specialized pieces of therapy equipment, the ReoGo and ArmeoSpring.

The ReoGo is an innovative motorized robotic arm that helps patients with severe limitations to the forearm and hand. It takes patients through movement patterns, utilizing highly repetitive activities and feedback. While traditional treatment methods, such as stacking cups, can be monotonous, causing patients to become disengaged easily, the interactive nature of the ReoGo captures their interest and increases motivation. It is helping patients improve their range of motion, muscle strength and tone as well as movement smoothness and cognitive functioning.

The ArmeoSpring is becoming one of the most widely used shoulder, arm and hand rehabilitation exoskeletons. The equipment enables independent training for patients with returning movement after an injury affecting their upper extremity. An extensive virtual 3D workspace supports simultaneous shoulder, arm and hand therapy. Patients are motivated by the direct feedback on their progress through graphs, exercises and games, which then enables them to carry over these skills into everyday



tasks. It can also be used to address sensory deficits, visual impairment and cognitive abilities.

Our staff members are thrilled to add this equipment to our many treatment options for patients and have been impressed with the outcomes. Tori Snyder, MS, OTR/L, occupational therapist, shared, “Both of these pieces of equipment have served as a huge motivator for patients. With any new technology, patients can be apprehensive at first, but this equipment is so straightforward, patients end up loving it and find therapy fun. This helps to increase their endurance and functional use of their arms, and positively impact their recovery.”

The generosity of donors each year at Art Ability helps to make a lasting impact on the work we do all year long.



Gaby Heit
Art Ability Curator

This year's art was different than I'd normally expect; then again, this isn't a normal year. Most artists expressed themselves through concrete subjects, reality and comfort, rather than abstract concepts. The beautiful depictions of landscapes and beaches are ones we can really imagine going to...if only we could.

Many artists I've spoken with are using this time of quarantine in creative ways and experimenting more at home or in the studio. Many others are not able to access the facilities or art centers that allow them to exercise their creativity and collaborate. People with disabilities are familiar with adapting; the global pandemic is one more challenge to push through.

A common theme in this year's Art Ability is "strength in humanity." We see a diverse mix of faces that could easily be our friends, neighbors, heroes and the people we miss most during this time of social distancing. Art Ability artwork of "heroes" ranges from celebrities like John Wayne and Jimi Hendrix, to veterans and first responders. Wonder Woman appears among "wonder women" of all kinds, including Harriet Tubman and a new mom.

When we see these portraits, we ask, "Who is that person and what is their story?" Whether we view artwork on screens or walls, we naturally look for the story and intention behind the work. It's like connecting with loved ones through Zoom, where we safely reveal our smiles from behind our masks, and talk about our day.

In honor of Art Ability's 25th Anniversary, we've chosen "Celebration" as this year's themed category. Witnessing the tremendous loss in 2020 reminds us to be grateful for what we have, and the optimism at Bryn Mawr Rehab. In our 25 years there have been countless reasons to celebrate, with more to come.

Thank you to the Art Ability Committee, staff, jurors and judges for their hard work in making this exhibition possible, especially in our new virtual experience. A special thanks to our Art Ability Coordinator, Cristine Largoza, whose guidance remains invaluable. I hope to give tours of this outstanding collection, so please keep informed of visitor policy updates at mainlinehealth.org.



Jessica Curtaz

Jessica Curtaz is a Philadelphia-based street artist and arts advocate. She crochets oversized flora and fauna like weeds, insects, and real and imaginary creatures onto the urban landscape, bringing a feminized craft out of the home and onto the streets. She is an advocate for increasing the autonomy of marginalized populations as well as strengthening their voices in the larger community. Curtaz works as a teaching artist, specializing in adaptive teaching methods to special needs populations, including the blind and visually impaired, and adults and children with physical and intellectual disabilities. These classes focus on art both as a creative outlet and a vocation. To these ends she has led several public art projects, including with students at the Pennsylvania School for the Deaf, insecure populations in Kensington, and immigrant and refugee populations in South and Northeast Philadelphia.



Ekaterina Popova

After moving to the United States from Russia, Ekaterina Popova received a bachelor's degree in painting from Kutztown University. Since 2011 she has been painting, exhibiting her art, and learning how to market and make sales. Popova has had the pleasure of curating multiple exhibitions at Paradigm Gallery, Main Line Art Center, Hastings College, and more. Her oil paintings have been exhibited internationally,

including Art Miami Fairs, Affordable Art Fairs, Delaware Contemporary, and AIR Gallery. She has been featured by multiple media outlets including *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, *The Jealous Curator*, *It's Nice That* and *Monocle Magazine*. Popova is the founder of *Create! Magazine*, host of *Art & Cocktails* podcast, co-author of *The Smartist Guide: Essential Art Career Tips For Emerging Artists* and founder of The Art Queens, a mentorship program for female artists.



Jeff Schaller

Jeff Schaller is an artist who describes his work as provocative and whimsical, propelling the viewer into scenes of seemingly unrelated subjects. With encaustic paints, Schaller uses lost and found images, words and language, to paint with a precision and intricacy not normally found in encaustic paintings. Schaller's work has been published and exhibited throughout the United States and can be seen in the TV show *Friends*. As a philanthropic and committed artist, Schaller is on the board of the Chester County Art Association, and the founder of County Studio Tours. Schaller started the Chester County Studio Tour with just 10 artists as a way to collaborate and share his art locally. Now in its tenth year, it has grown to include over 150 artists. He also founded tours in Montgomery and Delaware Counties in southeastern Pennsylvania.

Best In Show

Charles W. Hennessy Artist Award

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

Milton Davis, *Untitled (Black and Shirtless)*



People's Choice

The Lois Levy People's Choice Award

Presented by: Susan Christie and Lane Brown

To be selected by popular vote and announced in December

Judges Choice

JESSICA CURTAZ

The Doris B. Gorden Award

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

William Spiker, *Reefer*

EKATERINA POPOVA

In Honor of Carol Chapman

Presented by: Stephano Slack

Jen Dacota, *Morning Glory*

JEFF SCHALLER

The Nancy Kopecky Memorial Award

Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci

Jan Alice Keeling, *Kelly in Pearls*

Curator's Choice

In Honor of Ralph and Carmen Terrazas

Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones

Meg Quinlisk, *Wave Break*

Drawing and Fine Printmaking

1st Prize

In Memory of Fred Stern

Presented by:

Brian and Peggy Jones

Tim Quinn, *Laney and Tilly*

2nd Prize

Presented by:

The Art Trust Gallery

at Meridian Bank

Larine Chung,

Mercy of Time

3rd Prize

In Appreciation of the

BMRH Staff

Presented by:

Linda W. Heiberger

Jace Laakso,

Under Neon Maple

Honorable Mention

Presented by:

Stephano Slack, LLC

Chelsea Steinberg-Gay,

Einayyim (Eyes)

Jewelry and Fine Craft

1st Prize

The 5 Senses Award

Presented by:

Karen and Bruce Cavin

Joy Raskin,

Zakim Bridge Pendant

2nd Prize

Presented by:

The Art Trust Gallery

at Meridian Bank

Anna Wagner, *Pause*

3rd Prize

The Kozicki Family Award

Presented by:

Jean P. Kozicki

Christine Severson,

Thoughts

Honorable Mention

Presented by:

Stephano Slack, LLC

Jennifer Ingalls,

Steampunk Cufflinks



Tim Quinn, Laney and Tilly



Joy Raskin, Zakim Bridge Pendant



William Spiker, Reefer



Jan Alice Keeling, Kelly in Pearls



Linnie Greenberg, *What's in Your Fridge?*



Leslie A. Zukor, *Screen Shot*



Rosary Solimanto,
Cripple

Mixed Media

1st Prize

In Honor of
Lauren McGowan
Presented by:
Brian and Peggy Jones
Linnie Greenberg,
What's in Your Fridge?

2nd Prize

In Honor of Bryn Mawr
Rehab Physical Therapists
Presented by:
The Sargent Family
Cathleen Casey, Northern
Red-legged Frog

3rd Prize

The Barbara Tournier
Memorial Award
Presented by: Ruth Porritt
Nancy Smith,
Bougainvillea

Honorable Mention

The McTear Family Award
Presented by:
Brian and Allyson McTear
David Terrar,
Chasing the Darkness

Painting

1st Prize

The Celso Primus
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
Jan Alice Keeling,
Mother and Baby Reading

2nd Prize

The Evans Family Award;
Presented by:
Scott and Lara Evans
Victor Mordasov,
Spring Flowers

3rd Prize

The Marjorie Kathleen "Kat"
Ellis Memorial Award
Presented by: Ruth Porritt
Kathryn Noska,
Together As One

Honorable Mention

In memory of
James M. Hamm
Presented by:
The Hamm Family
Rebecca Scheuer,
Golden Gate

Photography

1st Prize

The Carmen Nasuti
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Sal and Linda Panasci
Leslie A. Zukor,
Screen Shot

2nd Prize

The Evans Family Award
Presented by:
Scott and Lara Evans
Mark Wittig, Oklahoma
State University Old
Central, Front View

3rd Prize

In Memory of Gilda Plumari
Presented by:
Rosadele Plumari
Hal Moran, Sounds
of Nature #21666

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
The Art Trust Gallery
at Meridian Bank
Gail Foley, Buckets

Sculpture

1st Prize

The Elliott T. Settle
Memorial Award
Presented by:
The Settle Family
Rosary Solimanto, Cripple

2nd Prize

The Stanley E. Kaimowitz
Memorial Award
Presented by:
Michelle and Jack Guida
William Spiker, Wader

3rd Prize

Debbie M. Corrigan
Memorial Award
Presented by: Gaby Bailey
Carrie Albert, Emily
Dickinson Meets Walt
Whitman on a Strange
and Familiar Animal

Honorable Mention

Presented by:
The Art Trust Gallery
at Meridian Bank
Kathleen McSherry,
Venison DeMilo

Special Theme: Celebration

1st Prize

In Memory of
David E. Tordone
Presented by:
The Tordone Family
Jen Dacota, The Wedding

2nd Prize

In Honor of BMRH's
Dedicated Volunteers
Presented by:
The Bryn Mawr Rehab
Volunteer Association
Linda Goschke,
It's Spring: Red-wings
are Back at the Meadow

3rd Prize

In Honor of Timmie S. Ott
Presented by: The Ott Family
Liz Griesser, Isla Mujeres:
Celebration of the Power
of Water

Honorable Mention

In Honor of the Maple Unit
Presented by: Claire Larson
Amy Smith, Rebirth



Jen Dacota, *Morning Glory*



Meg Quinlisk, *Wave Break*

Sriharsha Sukla

CUTTACK, ODISHA, INDIA

Indian artist Sriharsha Sukla was born deaf and nonverbal, and has been painting since early childhood. He is prolific, successful, and participates in many exhibitions for artists with disabilities.

Sriharsha was trained in Patachitra, a traditional, cloth-based scroll painting, based in the eastern Indian states of Odisha and West Bengal. This artform is known for its intricate details as well as mythological narratives and folktale themes. Sriharsha has a BFA from the Uktal University in India, and has learned to visually

express himself in many mediums, including oil painting, watercolor, photography, and also computer animation used in several Bollywood films. A versatile artist, Sriharsha specializes in landscape and portrait art using a cut paper collage technique, regularly on view at Bryn

Mawr Rehab. His artwork was awarded 1st place in Art Ability's Works on Paper category in 2007. Sriharsha also teaches collage workshops to youth and adults.



Sriharsha Sukla, *Zebra Love*



Sriharsha has been encouraged by his parents, especially his mother, to be a professional artist. In spite of their disabilities, Sriharsha and his brother Siddhartha, also a deaf Art Ability artist, feel abled in every respect. They say that they never feel inferior to others because they are “differently abled.” In recent years, the use of social media and computer-based communication has given Sriharsha new ways to communicate with the deaf community all around the world. In 2017, we had the pleasure to meet Sriharsha at Bryn Mawr Rehab. He attended the Preview Reception and visited the hospital for several days that week. Because he knows American Sign Language, many of our guests were fortunate enough to communicate with him with the assistance of a translator.

A frequent participant in Art Ability, Sriharsha's artworks have developed a strong following. He feels fortunate to have an opportunity like Art Ability that pushes him to be a successful professional, alongside other career artists.

Alex Albert *Abingdon, MD*

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

Carrie Albert *Seattle, WA*

Albert expresses her artistic visions in myriad ways, including collage, poetry, assemblage, drawing and photography. Albert has chemical sensitivities and uses only non-toxic mediums in her art. As a collagist, Albert 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 works with subjects that call to her, relying on subconscious wisdom through dreams, poetry

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

Constance Avery *Utica, NY*

As an artist working with vision and hearing loss, Avery has faced many limitations for the last 30 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 journeys. Creating and selling her artwork, which consists of paintings, pottery and photography, has helped Avery to feel more confident and free, despite her disabilities. The different mediums have also helped Avery to expand her artistic explorations, reaching within the desires of the art community. “As I travel into my images of art, my limitations disappear...letting me feel free and safe.”

MaryGrace Bernard

Denver, CO

Bernard is an interdisciplinary artist living and working in Denver while managing the health challenges of living with cystic fibrosis. She often stays in the confines of her home or hospital. When Bernard does have the ability to travel, which is her favorite pastime, she makes sure to document all the beautiful scenery, objects and architecture she encounters. This way, she can fill her small spaces with the world that exists beyond her everyday reach. Bernard's favorite photographs are those that play with light and shadow,

color and contrast. When looking at her photographs after they are developed, she imagines them as portals into which she can enter. Bernard often asks, “What environment exists beyond the image captured?”



Alex Albert, *The Clown Fish*

Frances Bernhardt-Noll *Paoli, PA*

Bernhardt-Noll prefers painting because it's something she's worked with since she was a child, and she's been able to develop and hone her skills over that time. She often chooses to work with floral and natural themes because she likes to explore the different colors and shapes. Bernhardt-Noll says each step of the process inspires her. From identifying a source image or idea, to sketching, then painting, each step is self-reinforcing as she works to complete a piece. She enjoys the opportunity to share her work

with others. Living with a disability creates barriers for her, but creating art is a way for Bemhardt-Noll to connect and share with others. “When I was in the acute hospital, art and crafts helped me to remember who I was, and the things I enjoyed doing pre-injury.”

“There are days when my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special.”

—Allison Doatch

Shawn Bittenbender

Philadelphia, PA

Bittenbender suffers from advanced asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, which makes breathing difficult. As a result of his breathing difficulties, his hand has a tendency to tremble or shake; however, Bittenbender says that painting helps him control his hand as well as his breathing. Bittenbender believes interesting art is all around us. He likes the challenge of little details.

“I am unable to paint when my symptoms flare up but always look forward to the next idea and putting it on canvas.”

Charles Blackwell

Oakland, CA

Blackwell operates on a note of serendipity, by moving colors on paper or canvas. He says that sometimes he has an image in his mind but it all changes once he approaches the surface. “I use my blindness to execute the final image, allowing for it to take on a course of its own.” Producing pieces related to jazz music enables improvisation for the artist. When Blackwell hears people say his work is inspiring, he knows that he has managed to create a synthesis between his art and his blindness; the two move together, working in harmony. “It all comes together in the end.”

Robert Bohle

Arlington, VA

Painting non-representationally usually is an act of discovery for Bohle. He uses mostly acrylics because he loves how the paint looks after it is dry. The various mediums he can use with acrylics add another dimension, both literally and figuratively. Bohle loves abstracts because he wants the paint itself to communicate viscerally to the viewer. He wants to “say something” to the

reader, sometimes in a whisper, sometimes with a shout. Bohle enjoys working in large sizes with big brushes and bold colors. “I am a bit of an introvert in life; I like my paintings to be loud and extroverted.” Bohle has suffered with Parkinson’s disease for the past 20 years. The jagged edges that appear in many of his paintings represent how he feels about the interface between the universe and himself.

Priscilla Bohlen

Narberth, PA

Bohlen is a professional visual artist who works on canvas using acrylic paint, resin and acrylic mediums. She received her BFA in 1974 and subsequently lived in New York City for 10 years. During this time she designed patterns for sheets and towels for Fieldcrest Cannon as well as continued to study art at the graduate level. Bohlen moved back to the Philadelphia area and began creating landscapes using watercolor, oil, pastel, acrylic and mixed media. Recently, she has focused on large abstracts using acrylics. She shows her work extensively throughout the region and is an active member of multiple professional art groups. Bohlen believes in “bringing the best to life and not holding back; always press on to new horizons

and stay committed to serving the public through your practice.”

Dwayne Boone

Philadelphia, PA

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

Cathleen Casey

Portland, OR

Just before her second birthday, Casey contracted polio which permanently damaged her left leg. She had ten orthopedic corrective surgeries and was among the first group of disabled children to be mainstreamed in Southern Minnesota. Casey showed an early talent for art which helped during the long months spent in bed. She studied art and art history, participating in an early graphic design program at the University of Iowa. She was the National Women’s Slalom



Priscilla Bohlen, *Floral Landscape*

and Giant Slalom champion, on one ski with outriggers, in 1972. “I taught skiing to Vietnam veterans with amputations, at Lake Tahoe for nine years, then went on to teach at the Courage Center in Minnesota.” Casey’s an avid outdoors-woman; most of her botanical drawings are en plain air. She found her favorite medium after taking a bookmaking class and enjoys designing and hand-making artist books, often illustrating them with graphite and colored pencil drawings.

Larine Chung

Bellevue, WA

Chung is an artist living in the Pacific Northwest, who mainly works with dry media and oil. Trained in classical methods based on real life observation, she often blends naturalistic art techniques and her vivid imagination with a unique Eastern point of view. Living with a severe autoimmune disorder, Chung’s daily art practice is a big part of her healing and has become a way of navigating through life. Her art explores the notion of pain, isolation, fear, hope, courage and strength.

Cindy Clark

Eagleville, PA

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

Cathy Cobb

Shreveport, LA

Cobb is an acrylic painter who uses paintbrushes and pallet knives as well as various paints and glazes to convey a subject from many different perspectives. “When viewed from different angles, everyday moments of life can become transfigured, revealing the depth of layers within.” Her brushwork, paints and glazes reveal complexity, and her colors show the delight she takes in momentary glimpses of beauty. Cobb takes inspiration from stained glass and how they transfigure

their subject as light reflects through them. Like these sacred windows, her paintings attempt to reveal both the intended subject and also to open a window toward a deeper story contained within an inner joy. Cobb started painting when she was diagnosed with lupus in 2016. Creating has been her lifeline through flares and long periods of isolation.

Debra Hope Colligan

South Yarmouth, MA

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

Maureen Collins *Wilmington, DE*
Collins received her first camera as a gift when she was eight years old. This began a lifelong passion for the visual arts and changed the way she saw the world. Collins' journey is woven through photography, painting, collage, ceramics, mosaics, silver work and fabric design. It's through this journey that the images in one medium



Paula Crandell, *Poppyfield*

often inspire and flow through others. Guillaine-Barré syndrome slowed life into a much lower speed and allowed her the grace of dimensionally changing her creative perspectives and abilities. Hope became the path of each day through many years.

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

Ginny Conover *Wynnewood, PA*
Conover is a former high school English teacher, licensed couples and family therapist, a professional puppeteer and an inveterate hand-knitter. Living in the suburbs, she loves to hop on the train, go to the city and walk for miles, taking in the sights, smells and sounds of city life. The transformation of raw material to create complex and visually stimulating structures informs her art. Each of these interests can be found in one form or another in Conover's art, which she believes attempts to use color, pattern, texture and mark-making to transform the materials at hand to make a work of art. "I believe that the act of engaging in the creative process brings joy and healing. Constantly striving to create through the exploration of new images, new media and new techniques entralls me."

Elizabeth Core *Sewanee, TN*
Core's art is made from painting colors with a variety of materials

that attract her. Her imagination has always been the most powerful medicine possible. As a result of a forty-five minute seizure, Core's temporal lobe was damaged, and her art is important to her as a means of creating possibilities. For inspiration in her work, Core remembers Albert Einstein's words: "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Core believes art and imagination are about hope. "They help me."

Malcolm Corley *Lancaster, PA*
At the age of three, Corley was diagnosed with autism. At about the same time, he began to draw the sketches from the TV show, *Blues Clues*. Recreations of Dr. Seuss's illustrations came next, some of which he drew from memory. Since then, his work has been published by *Hot Metal Bridge*, *Up the Staircase*, *Fusion Art*, and *Penn Review*. He was the youngest 2019 Kennedy Center VSA Award winner, and the only one without post-secondary training. He feels great pride from creating art. He enjoys tap dancing, singing, and playing the drum set; however, he understands that art is a career path, not a hobby. His favorite medium is watercolor, and his favorite subject is people.

Nicole Cote *Saskatoon, Canada*
Cote is a painter and embroiderer who focuses on mental health themes. She started doing art as therapy and has continued its practice as a type of advocacy.

Paula Crandell *Sioux City, IA*
Crandell is an artist who has enjoyed creating and teaching art for over 50 years. An experimentalist who loves color, she creates in a variety of media including acrylic, alcohol ink and watercolor. Crandell is known by her students as a "treasure hunter" who looks for interesting shapes and textures on a canvas that is covered in an explosion of ink and paint. Using negative and reductive painting, she brings found images to representational life. Not sure if her hearing loss was due to working in a munitions factory during college, or working with middle school students for over four decades, Crandell is thankful for the progress audiology has made over the years, allowing her to better hear nature, people and music.

Jen Dacota *Conshohocken, PA*
Art has helped Dacota fill a void in her life since she suffered a TBI with a hemorrhagic stroke. It has been a tremendous therapy for her and has given her

newfound confidence. Dacota says she is in love with color and the relationships between colors. Just "as in people, when the relationships work, they are fantastic." She believes the combinations one chooses to place together either work well together or they don't. Dacota truly enjoys the creative challenges of color choices and composition. Most of her work is intuitive and unplanned. She lets it flow from her soul and it becomes a work of art over time. Experimentation plays a large role and provides an element of surprise at times. Each piece she begins is a challenge, from beginning to end.

"Art has saved my life. It helps me cope with the symptoms of mental illness. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate what I feel and experience." —Thomas Dillon

Milton Davis *Los Angeles, CA*
Davis lives and works in Los Angeles. He is a painter and illustrator who has been part of the ECF Art Centers since the program's inception in 1968. After having completed high

school at the age of fifteen, Davis' practice has been shaped by his attention to textile-based art, folk art and the African Diaspora. The tight line-work that characterizes his body of work is both the result of a condition that affects the joints of his hands, and his unwavering commitment to creating a perfect balance between formal compositional elements.

Debby Dernberger *South San Francisco, CA*
Dernberger is an accomplished and professional artist with over 30 years of fine art gallery showings, along with running a mural and sign painting business.

She also teaches art to seniors and developmentally disabled adults. She shares her passion for the arts with her local community. Dernberger has been creating arts and crafts all her life. It is true therapy that has saved her life



Gail Foley, *Buckets*

over the years as she strives to make her own personal statement through her paintings. Dernberger says she uses art through painting as therapy for her dual diagnosis, depression and other mental illnesses. She finds relief from her cares and worries by expressing herself through arts and crafts. "I hope to inspire other dual diagnosis people to express themselves and find the same relief and inspiration."

Gerard Di Falco *Philadelphia, PA*
Photography is a strategic element in Di Falco's etching. He employs his own images and photos from digital collections of universities, libraries and

museums. His subject matters include architecture, art history, ancient cultures, sacred geometry, folklore, archaeology, cinema and mythology. Di Falco uses the individualized studio techniques of intaglio, aquatint, drypoint and Chine collé, to create his narrations, which he sometimes enhances with gouache and watercolor. Other media he uses are oil-based French inks and natural printmaking papers. His multiple zinc plate etchings resemble windowpanes and are developed in several baths of nitric acid. "I strive to pull the viewer into scenes that evoke dream and reality; I call this THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF SEEING."

Samuel Dietze *Altoona, PA*
Dietze is a legally blind artist who paints in oils and acrylics. He works on large oil paintings at home and smaller acrylic paintings outside. The oil paintings are mainly abstract or impressionist. The acrylic paintings are mainly impressionist or realist. Dietze likes nature subjects such as landscapes, sunsets, trees, the night sky, astronomy and the ocean. He says he's been a serious artist since about 1990. Words that motivate Dietze artistically: "As a man thinketh so shall it be." With limited mobility due to his blindness, Dietze's art allows him to be doing things outside so that he's not stuck in the house all the time. Dietze is involved with other artists in groups and organizations allowing him to meet new people and to find new ways to share his art.

Thomas Dillon *Stroudsburg, PA*
Dillon first learned the basics of painting from his mother. He uses acrylic, pencil, pen and watercolor. Sketches, with a combination of paint and colored pencils, often germinate ideas for larger paintings. Dillon's subject matter varies from contemporary to surreal and figurative work. Dillon has completed portraits

of his children and colleagues as well as landscapes. His work has been published in books and newspapers, and has been used by for-profit and nonprofit businesses including art galleries. In 2007, Dillon was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident where he sustained many injuries including head trauma. After multiple hospitalizations and corrective surgeries, Dillon was later diagnosed with a mental illness. "Art has saved my life. It helps me cope with the symptoms of mental illness. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate what I feel and experience."

Allison Doatch *Edison, NJ*
Doatch is a formally trained artist who uses a variety of media, including colored pencils and acrylics, and her favorite subject matter is flowers. Doatch likes to create photorealistic artwork. When she looks at a photograph, she is able to create a composition that is very close to the original picture. Doatch also works at a local hospital as a medical information specialist, and is currently working on a mural project at the facility. Art has played a major role in her life, especially living with an autistic

Allison Doatch, *Friends*

spectrum disorder. "There are days when my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special."

Bobby Edmon *Oklahoma City, OK*
Edmon is a self-taught artist who favors peculiar, unconventional scenes in his artwork. Disabled by a stroke at age 58, which affected his speech and balance, preventing him from working, he was able to spend more time drawing and painting. Edmon's motivation to create is the sense of accomplishment from completing a work of art. Sometimes the process is hard work and sometimes it is calming. Creating art is a talent

he can continue to express, despite his disability. He loves the vibrant, rich colors of acrylic on canvas. His style is often campy and offbeat.

Clara Edmon *Oklahoma City, OK*
Edmon says that art is the main source of her identity and self-esteem. She has clinical depression, a learning disability, COPD and chronic pain from rheumatoid arthritis. She believes she has gained much relief by expressing herself through her artwork. Edmon works mostly in oil and starts by sketching, then drawing on canvas, followed by painting the background, then the foreground and finally the highlights. Sometimes it is hard

for her to feel well enough to create due to her illness and disability, but she strives to continue when she can. Edmon feels that the visual artist takes her audience to a new and exciting level of consciousness; into her mind and soul. "When I create a painting, I feel challenged to get my audience's attention and to discover effective ways to share my ideas with them."

Herbert Eilertsen *Coatesville, PA*
After being diagnosed with ankylosing spondylitis, Eilertsen was no longer able to run his framing and art supply business. After many months of regaining strength and finding his new rhythm of function, he was able to focus on his inner passion—painting. Eilertsen feels it is not always strength and stamina that gives rise to a sure success in anything; but weakness or trial that births the comprehension that life is but a short breath, and every day we can celebrate life through what we can create. His current focus is on river paintings, where he believes he has developed his own unique style. Eilertsen believes that painful period of his life still helps him in his painting, as he reaches out to express the beauty and wonder of this world.

Nancy Eilertsen *Coatesville, PA*
After starting a family and living on a farm for 10 years, Eilertsen had a successful career as an artist. She developed a series of pen and ink designs and had them printed. Eilertsen would hand-paint each design with acrylics in different color motifs. Though she had already stopped creating her paintings due to a variety of circumstances, Eilertsen developed macular degeneration in 2000. Her disease progressed to the point where she decided to live with her son. It was Eilertsen's son who convinced her that with a magnifying glass and a drafting table, she could resurrect her art, and she began painting again

in 2016. Eilertsen said, "When watching TV is no longer possible, and hearing aids cannot fully supplement my hearing loss, to have something I can return to that I totally enjoy is incredible."

Matt Emerson *Youngstown, OH*
Emerson began painting when he was a young man. Marriage, work and life came along, pushing his hobby of art to a back burner. He continued to draw and paint as a relaxing pastime. Emerson started having trouble with his hands and while walking in the late 2000s. A trio of surgeries did nothing to help as he sought other answers. He was mistakenly diagnosed with ALS in 2015, retired, and

jumped into his hobbies as he made his peace for the end. A new finding of muscular dystrophy removed the veil and set him on a new course, focused on his art. Emerson started sculpting as well as daily painting. He continues to work out to keep as much mobility as possible, to slow the downhill run. "I will go down fighting."

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

Debbie Huff, *Hound Dog*

Robert Flatt *Houston, TX*

Flatt started his crazy passion to become a photographer in 2004, when he left a successful career in the oil service industry due to the onset of Parkinson's disease. He and his wife love to travel to wild and beautiful places. He uses his camera and Photoshop to create highly saturated pictures, full of color, full of life, with vibrant and surreal backgrounds. Flatt's photography is in the permanent



Gen Farrell, *Cool Front*

collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston and in Rice University. He says, "Parkinson's disease gave me the marvelous gift of time to master the art of photography. It has helped me 'slow down' to see this beauty and has given me the urgency to 'hurry up' and capture as much as I can photographically, while I still can."

Gail Foley *Royersford, PA*

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

"When watching TV is no longer possible, and hearing aids cannot fully supplement my hearing loss, to have something I can return to that I totally enjoy is incredible." —Nancy Eilertsen

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

Emily Forbes *Hopkins, MN*

Forbes is an abstract, intuitive artist working in a variety of mediums such as acrylic, alcohol ink, and mixed media. She loves

to explore new techniques with anything she can get her hands on. Forbes says she is influenced by nature and modern life, color, movement, hope and kindness. It is her goal that these themes come through in her finished works, blended-up with wonder. Art has become a huge source of healing for Forbes following an accident resulting in a traumatic brain injury. She says it helps her uncover emotions and be more

mindful, which has yielded some interesting creations and a better understanding of self. "Those who don't believe in magic will never find it." —Roald Dahl

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."

Ginger Gehres *Chocowinity, NC*

Art is Gehres' passion. It was once her vocation in life and when her health changed dramatically, it became her therapy. Today, it is Gehres' joy to create visual stories and share them with others. Her favorite medium, scratchboard art, is a reductive process where ink is removed from a substrate to produce a positive image. How it is taken off, typically with a knife, can vary and create wonderful textures and tones. She also adds colored inks to her work. Gehres struggles with grand mal seizures, chronic migraines and interstitial cystitis, but she takes advantage of the days she feels well enough



Bunky Givens, *Snow by the Water Wheel*

to work on her art. Her favorite life quote is: "Keep your face to the sunshine and you will not see the shadows" —Helen Keller

Ann Marie Geiger *Ambler, PA*

Geiger believes that hobbies have been both her salvation and great passion in life. She was born with a rare bone condition, osteogenesis imperfecta, also known as brittle bones. This condition caused her to rely on the use of a wheelchair for mobility. While growing up, Geiger had a bird feeder outside her window. Watching the birds along with having pets to nurture, opened Geiger's eyes to a world of unbelievable beauty and brought her peace, regardless of what she

might be going through. Later on, a camera motivated her to show other people what she was seeing. Photography has become Geiger's creative way to capture the beauty of animals and nature. "It is a great challenge for me to get unique photographs that inspire the viewer!"

David Gerbstadt *Berwyn, PA*

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

Bunky Givens *Essington, PA*

Givens is a watercolorist who also enjoys calligraphy, drawing and painting on wood. She loves the beauty of nature and paints

what inspires her. She studied art at Millersville State College and art has provided a focus that she is proud of. In 1973, Givens survived a serious automobile accident resulting in brain trauma, broken femur and jaw, temporary left-side paralysis, and eye displacement that led to bilateral cataracts. She was treated at Riddle Hospital and Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. Givens returned to painting after her accident and now enjoys the opportunity to exhibit her works at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital so people can enjoy and appreciate them. "Bryn Mawr Rehab has provided two important functions in my life!"

Patricia Goodrich

Richlandtown, PA

Goodrich says that process is key to her work. Sometimes a piece begins with an idea, sometimes with the material itself. She enjoys both the physical work and the mental play. Goodrich works with a variety of mediums and creates earthworks and installations. She believes everything connects. Having lost her lower left leg in a motorcycle accident, those few missing inches contribute to a sense of "off balance" and an awareness of what it means physically to connect to earth; to be "grounded." Goodrich says that

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

Linda Goschke *Philadelphia, PA*

Goschke is interested in our sensual experience of the natural world, our expectations of the common and uncommon, and the nature of beauty. Common things have the power to evoke unexpected responses. Her work examines our relationship to the environment and experiments with abstract interpretations of it. Goschke often looks for revealing, unexpected and often challenging views. A brush with death and resulting traumatic brain injury from an auto accident made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretations of reality. Her physical and mental challenges pushed her into the digital realm to help her focus, expand creative outcomes and use fewer hazardous chemicals. "Art helps me to see and study the world. It allows me to share this with others, finding a shared common, discovering what may be uncommon and communicating visually."

Linnie Greenberg *Ardmore, PA*
Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing tinnitus—which resulted in 80% hearing loss—and long after her children were grown and had children of their own. It opened up a wondrous world of sparkle, spin and creativity that brings her great joy and makes her forget the constant high-pitched ringing in her ears. Greenberg is

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

—Gail Foley

mainly self-taught and says she is still exploring and learning about art. Greenberg cuts imaginary creatures and organic shapes from hand-painted paper, along with images from vintage books, magazine advertisements and other ephemera. She then creates a story while making a picture with her cutouts. One of Greenberg’s

favorite quotes comes from Hans Christian Andersen: “Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale.”

Ina Greenstein *Philadelphia, PA*
It wasn’t until her children were grown and she didn’t have to work full time, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on oils, she took a course in watercolor painting and was smitten instantly. Greenstein says, “Capturing the light captivates me—this ability to have the light shine through the painting. It has been a rewarding and engrossing pursuit of self-expression.” She gains inspiration from Albert Einstein: “The most beautiful thing we can experience is the mysterious. It is the source of all true art and all science.” Greenstein’s eye disease necessitates some brief artistic downtime to allow her vision to come back into focus. During this interval, she is forced to stop all activity that requires sharp vision.

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

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

Harold Grimes *Windsor, CT*
Grimes is a disabled Navy veteran who has struggled with daily life since 1988. In 2015 he was encouraged to use a camera to help express himself. Taking trips with like-minded veterans, Grimes



Ina Greenstein, *Dreadfully Beautiful*

began his journey to real recovery. While looking for the best angle for photographs and enjoying his fellow veterans, he slowly grew not only as a person, but also as a fair amateur photographer. When he is feeling stressed, he either takes out his camera or sits at the computer, improving his work. While many of his pictures are fairly normal nature images, Grimes also explores the odd and unconventional, such as a hornet’s nest he found in his yard.

Dick Grodt *Cedar Rapids, IA*
Grodt believes that the objective of his art is to go beyond recording just what he sees, into what he imagines. To create paintings that are not just pleasing visually, but that are also richly evocative. As he describes it, he dances with a brush instead of his feet. Confined to a wheelchair due to a hereditary spinal cord disorder, Dick finds that the gracefulness of watercolor has transformed his life; both painting and teaching watercolor classes cocoons him from his disability and enables him to pursue a rewarding and successful life. Dick is a signature member of the Iowa Watercolor Society and has had many solo shows. His work has received recognition in both national as well as international exhibitions.

Charles Hall *Windsor Locks, CT*
Hall is a Vietnam veteran. Photography is therapeutic for him, helping him to cope with PTSD. He has been creating photographic art for five years. Hall uses photography as his outlet to get out of the house and to enjoy himself, forgetting his issues for the time he is away. His work has been exhibited in over 30 galleries in Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey and New York.

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

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 needed to 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 the mechanism of discerning reality is through the eyes.”

Michael Heitler *Melville, NY*
Dr. Heitler works in gouache, pastel, oil pastel, acrylic and mixed media at his studio in Melville, New York. He has studied at the Brooklyn Museum School of Art, Colgate University and the New School. Dr. Heitler’s work has been widely exhibited in the New York metropolitan area. A pediatrician, Dr. Heitler recently retired from working at the Child Neurology Service at Winthrop University Hospital. Diagnosed with primary progressive aphasia, it is difficult for him to communicate, but he expresses himself by writing, drawing and painting. Dr. Heitler enjoys spending time in his sun-drenched Long Island studio.

Passle Helminski *Erie, PA*
Helminski finds great meaning in her sculptures and textile works. A visually impaired artist, Helminski capitalized on textiles because it is a medium that depends heavily on sense of touch. She uses tubular knitting to create energetic forms and says of her work, “Whether my art is free-standing, wall-hanging or suspended, it is the combination of my deep love of art history with my deep musical, spiritual side.” Helminski graduated from Edinboro University with a master’s degree in Weaving and Textiles and has since exhibited nationally and internationally. She has taught at the Neighborhood Art House, been an adjunct professor at Mercyhurst College and Gannon University, and has been Artist in Residence at the Cathedral Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Helminski has received multiple artist residencies and grants, and her work has been published many times. Helminski says, “Please take the time to be still with my art and maybe you will lucky enough to hear the beat of my art.”

Pat Henriques *Key West, FL*
Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus



Michael Heitler, *Dutch Jar with Flowers*

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

Katelynn Herty *Baltimore, MD*

Herty recalls that her interest in art started in elementary school. After a hiatus in her secondary school years, she jumped back into her art practice fairly recently by focusing on acrylic landscape and seascape paintings. She also enjoys embroidery and knitting and is exploring oil pastels and watercolor. Herty has been an artist at Make Studio in Baltimore, Maryland, since 2017. She is usually seen with headphones at the studio because she fuels her art-making with true-crime podcasts—"I find listening to murder mysteries makes me more focused on my art"—and is often found working in unusual studio spots such as on the floor or on a couch. "I just go with the flow. I ride the boat of life."

Kong Ho *Bradford, PA*

Sumptuously painted in a technique consisting of meandering patterns held in check by subtle glaze and exacting trompe l'oeil florals and shells, Ho's floral-spiral paintings exemplify the theme indicative of his recent "Luminosity Series." He has created an asymmetrical composition by offsetting the spiral of the nautilus shell and floral image, against the squared off canvas. His composition is supported by a spatial field

Kong Ho, *Forever the Fifth Season*

of interpreted interactions of patterns found in nature. These patterns include repetitive clusters of meandering lines and portioned color-filled areas that suggest ambiguous space. Rhythmic movement is created from a simultaneous growth and dissolution of both shell and flora with the background. A sense of fundamental transformation evolves from Ho's work. Contrasting colors add to the feeling of engagement with, rather than separation from, his disability experience.

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

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

Han Huisman *Saint Croix Falls, WI*
Huisman is a neuroscientist and an abstract material artist. He loves working with what he finds at garage sales and thrift stores. Huisman believes that in science today there is no longer much to actually see. It takes place on a subatomic level and the outcomes are expressed in numbers. Huisman says that in his head he follows the reaction steps and visualizes them into images. This is the same process he follows in his artwork. Huisman works primarily with objects, with the paint being secondary but still very important. Huisman says he is, but does not feel, disabled. He very much believes that even with his physical challenges he is still able to concentrate on his goals.

Jennifer Ingalls *Clarksville, TN*
Ingalls has been designing and creating jewelry professionally for over 25 years. She graduated from the Massachusetts College of Art in 1997 with a degree in metalsmithing, working mainly in silver. A customer was the first to describe her work as Steampunk. "I had to look it up." A whole new world of artists and community welcomed her. A steampunk aesthetic and a love for texture now inform her production work as well as her work in precious metals. Officially diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2003, Ingalls is thankful that the scale of her work does not require good balance or brute strength. As long as her vision and her hands hold out, she plans to keep making jewelry and art.

Mimi Barclay Johnson *Haverford, PA*

After a successful career as a stage/scenery/lighting designer for opera companies, and finally for the Orpheus Revels in Philadelphia, Johnson began to paint fine art. Oils at first, then the more difficult transparent watercolor. When she became disabled after two devastating car accidents, Johnson had to overcome frustration and anger before accepting the reality that

she would never paint en plein air again or even stand at an easel. Painting was and still is a struggle for her, but once she learned to paint again from the different perspective of sitting, she began painting from memory. "In my mind I can still see the incredible colors of shadows, see the light dancing on distant water, and see the movement of joyful people. That is what I paint now—memories."

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

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

Mark Kaufman, *Silk Dancer*

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

Mark Kaufman *Wilmington, DE*
Some say art is an illusion—a virtual lie. Some say reality is an illusion, merely perceptual experience. Kaufman says both are wrong. He believes art and experience are each ways that meaning and truth can be revealed. Much of Kaufman's truth emerges from being bipolar. What makes his work unique is that the figures are explorations of mood and emotion rather than landscapes. Often they have an element of the odd or troubling. The figures are exposed and self-contained and unavailable all at the same time. Kaufman is a signature member of the Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Baltimore and Delaware Watercolor Societies and just recently, the New Orleans Art Association. He lives in Wilmington, Delaware, with his wife of 50 years and his cat named Cat.

Jan Alice Keeling *Nashville, TN*
Keeling's passion is painting portraits in watercolor. She paints very slowly, using abundant water and many washes of color. Most of her subjects are human faces and beloved animals, because that's what she loves. Keeling was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis almost forty years ago.

Her disability, which is largely manifested as fatigue, some difficulty walking and occasional blurred vision, played a role in her decision to paint full-time. Keeling finds great pleasure in the way her watercolors allow her to connect with other people. She is grateful for clients who do not impose strict deadlines, but who say, "Take as long as you need to make it wonderful."

Linda Killingsworth *Elverson, PA*
After earning an associate degree in art, Killingsworth chose to explore the little-known medium of colored pencils. Pencils allow the fine detail for out-of-the-ordinary subjects she enjoys creating. She is a member of the Colored Pencil Society of America and an award winner in their international competition. Killingsworth's work can be seen in local shows and colored pencil publications. She is part of two juried, local art groups: Flying Colors Fine Artists and The Artists Circle.

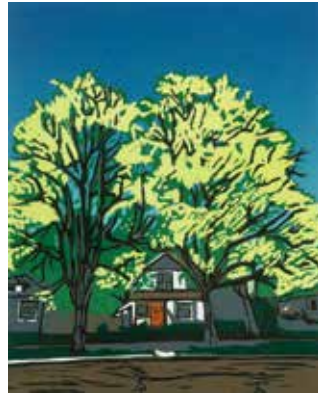
Cheryl Kinderknecht *Bradenton, FL*

Kinderknecht is a mixed media artist and former gallery owner. Regardless of the medium or subject matter, her work is influenced by the colors, patterns

and textures of the Kansas High Plains landscape where she grew up. Emotions, dreams, myths, metaphors, memories and ancestral ties from her interior landscape further anchor and inform her work. Kinderknecht says, “The creative process has always energized me, and continuing to work on art, despite my compromised vision, helps me to feel connected, grounded and relevant, both within my own life and to the world.” Over the past 15 years, her artwork has been increasingly impacted by

when he paints or draws; it is the art and himself, in his own personal world, enabling him to release emotions. This is the definition of expressionism, he says. “I open my mind and allow my memory and imagination to cut through the blindness in order to create the visions that I see.”

Debrah Block Krol *Millburn, NJ*
Block Krol is a diabetic, which over the years, has affected her eyesight. She also has essential tremors in both her hands and feet. Block Krol’s work originates



Jace Laakso, *Under Neon Maple*

“To me, color is powerful and joyful.” Experimentation is a big part of Block Krol’s creative process, and she’s always learning through it.

Jace Laakso *Missoula, MT*
Having contracted polio as an infant, Laakso spent a great deal of time in hospitals. He appreciated the moments when he could see more than the walls of his wardroom. He began to see details, patterns and connections in the world. “Looking at the landscape, there are spaces between, or even under, the dominant features that draw my attention.” Laakso says he focuses on seeing instead of looking. He is currently producing reduction relief prints. This process uses a single linoleum block to carve away a layer at a time as each

successive color ink is applied. Finally, with the last color, most of the block’s surface has disappeared.

Marilyn Lavins *Philadelphia, PA*
Lavins specializes in painting, jewelry and scarves. She is an alumni of Moore College of Art and received her Bachelor of Fine Arts from Tyler School of Art at Temple University in 1984. She has worked as a jewelry designer, freelance sculptor, porcelain decorator and even a flight attendant for American Airlines. Due to a tragic automobile accident, she suffers from chronic double vision and requires prism prescription eyeglasses to see. Despite her disability, Lavins has garnered many awards for her work in mixed media, oils, batik and silk-screening. Her commissioned paintings of homes are located throughout Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and her work can be found in various collections worldwide.

Amy Lewis *Boston, MA*
Lewis’ art falls into two categories: abstract realism and impressionism. She has a visual impairment and had early-onset cataracts, which were surgically addressed. She also has macular traction and lattice degeneration

in both eyes. She has had several operations on both eyes and is legally blind in her right eye. Lewis likes impressionist and ethereal art because it mirrors what she sees visually. She remembers years ago being in an art gallery and learning that Monet had cataracts, too. Suddenly, his art made sense, mimicking what she was seeing with her eyes. “I grew to love impressionist art that way.”

Rachel Malone *Louisville, CO*
Malone is in her thirties and a lifelong paraplegic, born and raised in Minnesota. She obtained a photographic imaging degree from Central Lakes College in 2008. Her photo inspiration is landscapes, travel and still-life imagery. Malone enjoys photography, as she can document special moments and places in the ways with which she views them from her manual wheelchair. Using different photo angles and lens filters, Malone can bring out the best colors and unique areas of a location. Rather than use a tripod, she often uses her legs or her wheelchair to stabilize her images. As a lifelong paraplegic, Malone is very observant and aware of the environment around her, which has made capturing images easier as she has gotten more photographic experience behind the camera.

Alexander Masyk *Brooklyn, NY*
Masyk has been exhibiting his artwork since 1970 and has pieces hanging in numerous museums and private collections around the world. In the late 2000s, Masyk had laser treatment due to the history of bilateral glaucoma, which caused complete loss of vision in his left eye. He has a cataract in his right eye, causing difficulty reading and focusing for a long time. Masyk could not make etchings anymore and even could not find the right spot on the canvas with his brush and oil. Great love for fine art gave Masyk the strength and energy to continue to paint, to become a good artist again, and even

to continue to participate in prestigious, national, juried art exhibitions.

Rose Mavis *Bethlehem, PA*
As a child born deaf, Mavis pursued drawing and painting to express herself. She explored fine arts more seriously with private lessons in her hometown, and has developed a great love for creating artwork. As a lifelong artist, Mavis tries to look upon our world around us with wonderment and appreciation for the subtleties that can be found in many objects of our interests. Ranging from landscapes to intimate settings of still lifes, she finds her muse in the beauty of



Rose Mavis, *Pink Roses*

such views with which to express her own interpretation of those viewpoints. Mavis’ preferred medium is oil painting.

Merritt Maya *Grapevine, TX*
When Maya was about twelve years old, he was diagnosed with an ependymoma, a tumor inside his spinal cord. After surgery, Maya drew mazes to help regain motor control and fight nerve pain. As time passed, he developed a style of his own and moved from pen and paper to acrylics. “When I paint, I try to fulfill my own aesthetic sense and challenge myself; precise, but just shy of mechanical.” Maya believes that art has become a more important factor in his life than he would have ever thought possible, and he plans to continue improving and honing his technique.

Valerie Mayer *Pt. Roberts, WA*
Mayer began painting watercolors more than 30 years ago, not long after she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Living with MS has required her to be flexible and open to the unexpected challenges her disease presents. She finds that the variable and inconstant nature of watercolor aligns with her approach to living adaptively and open to change. The natural wonders of the

“Making art allows me to feel part of society and that I belong.” —David Gerbstadt

her failing eyesight. Her condition limits and skews how objects and colors appear and which tools and techniques remain within her realm of usable vision.

David Kontra *Hartville, MO*
Kontra is a self-taught expressionist artist using acrylics, pens, ink and an assortment of unusual, useful tools. Having retinitis pigmentosa makes it difficult to create his work, for he can only see a quarter inch of the canvas at a time. Art has made Kontra feel more independent

from the desire to explore the relationship between color, form and emotion. She tries to make universal the feelings that art can evoke, through what makes us human, and our connections with the larger world. Her subject matter is nature, whether it is a traditional landscape or an abstraction. In painting, she uses traditional materials to capture movement and depth, making the colors dance and swirl. Everything is captured in the spontaneous, unpredictable interaction between brush, paint and paper.

Pacific Northwest region provide Mayer with her subject matter. Her goal as a watercolor artist is to create paintings inspired by places she has visited, and the life encountered along the way. She considers her lifelong passion for creativity and art to be a key element in living with MS. She says it provides a unique way to transport her focus from living with impairments and pain, to another world. “I become myself again and not my disease.”

Kris McElroy *Eldersburg, MD*
McElroy has a rare disease called complex hereditary spastic paraplegia, characterized by muscle weakness and spasticity that impacts her whole body. Other ways it impacts her are swallowing, speech, different body functions and regulation systems, nerves and cognitive functioning including young onset dementia. Creating art has been a way for McElroy to both cope and manage her life, navigating and managing living with multiple chronic illnesses and disabilities. This creative outlet has helped her find herself, find her voice and communicate, and has been one of her greatest expressive lifelines. “As my rare disease progresses, increasing the impacts on my body, I’m always

challenging myself by pushing the artistic limits and boundaries while trying new techniques and finding a new normal.”

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

Vickie McMillan-Hayes *Katy, TX*
McMillan-Hayes is a full-time artist who creates breathtaking wildlife and nature paintings that advance global conservation causes. Her award-winning paintings, large public installations and photography are exhibited in art museums and fine art galleries throughout the country



Valerie Mayer, *Honu*

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

Terri McNichol *Cranbury, NJ*
Born with chronic ear infection, McNichol lost all her hearing insidiously as a young child and as a result, a solitary world was imposed on her. Painting turned that world into a retreat, enabling her to create the worlds that she was unable to access because of

physical restrictions. Not only was she dealing with severe hearing loss, she was also never allowed to swim, engage in physical activities and the like. The only option in McNichol’s childhood was radical surgery and she remained deaf in her left ear. When a recurrent tumor robbed her of hearing in her good ear a few years ago, scientific advances afforded her a prosthetic middle ear and a bone-anchored hearing aid for the left ear.

Kelly McQuain *Philadelphia, PA*
McQuain’s folklore-inspired paintings feature people and animals in symbolic arrangements, and are influenced by his childhood, growing up among the mountains of West Virginia. His paintings hint at stories and the fantastical world hiding behind the ordinary. Largely self-taught, McQuain has used art as a way of creating order out of chaos, as a coping mechanism against his battle with ADD, genetic neuropathy and depression.

Kathleen McSherry
Doylestown, PA
McSherry used to paint and draw. She kept a drawing diary every day since 1977. Since she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2002, McSherry’s confidence waned, and she stopped drawing and painting. However, once she discovered assemblage art, her confidence came back. One of McSherry’s first pieces contained used needles from her MS medication. “As an artist, I must create.” McSherry no longer compares her technique to before and after MS. She takes objects found from the past that have lost their usefulness, retaining only memory, then combines and alters them in such a way that they rise up, like a phoenix from the ashes, finding a new language, new meaning and a new form. “This has become a metaphor for my work. It is also a metaphor for MS and me.”

Lawrence Meyers *Paoli, PA*
Meyers is an impressionistic watercolorist and invites you to examine each delightful ribbon of color, value and shape. Combining shapes connects the viewer to his vision of God’s design and the excitement in our surroundings. Commonplace surroundings that are overlooked are transformed

into extraordinary beauty that can be cherished with each brushstroke. Meyers is hearing and vision impaired, has tritanope color-blindness, type 2 diabetes and had a stroke that paralyzed his right side, requiring rehabilitation at Bryn Mawr Rehab. He has changed his style to paint more loosely and rely more heavily on value, the depth and darkness of color rather than color itself, to create his artwork. Meyers feels blessed to be able to continue his pursuit of art and share the complexity of nature.

Louis Middleton *Baltimore, MD*
Besides being a devotee of all things retro and 1950s, Middleton often gravitates towards epic landscape and portraiture, or a combination of the two, in his art.



Vickie McMillan-Hayes, *Pinyon Farmer*

His landscapes cover a variety of scenes from tropical beaches to Baltimore City to snowy mountain ranges, and his portraits are often of celebrities he’s most interested in (country singers, U.S. presidents and comedians). He often starts his work with a sketch, which he then transfers to canvas and paints with acrylics. Besides painting, Middleton has long enjoyed taking digital photographs and has worked to advance his computer skills by digitally manipulating photographs and original imagery.

Thomas Miller *Whippany, NJ*
Miller’s interests result from his combat experience in Vietnam, where he was disabled. His primary subject matter is U.S. history and memorials, with series on 9/11, flags of our conflicts, eagles and butterflies—mainly in watercolor and ceramics. His pieces are done so the participants’ families can find solace and comfort in what the subjects have done. In the memorial art, Miller depicts the moods of the various subjects, their pride, shock or whatever their demeanor is, at the time of the piece. He also concentrates on the natural forces of the time—fire, rain, clouds, etc. Color and its intensity come into play as well as the historic storytelling. While his

concentration is usually painting, sculpture and ceramics, a ceramic piece might appear to be a watercolor because of the method he chooses.

Nicole Miritis *Montreal, Canada*
It was in 2012 that a car accident left Miritis with limited physical abilities and chronic back pain. She was faced with finding a way to cope with her condition and lifestyle change, so she started painting. “My painting has been part of a therapeutic process. Sometimes it is challenging to paint, but I continue, as it helps me express my emotions. I just say that I have a conversation with my canvas and am often inspired by music.” Miritis is a self-taught, mixed media artist often working with found paper materials as well as a variety of other mediums. Her style and way of thinking, which is out of the box, is often depicted in her artwork and has a portfolio of varied accomplishments.

Maria Morales *Paoli, PA*
Born in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Morales started painting at an early age with her artist mother. She later received academic training. She is part Taino Indian, and her art reflects her love and respect for the heritage and dignity of Indians of the Americas

and the Caribbean. It is based on extensive research and visits with them. Her primary medium is gouache. Morales' work has been exhibited in local and national shows from the 1970s and she has won many awards. Her work is in private collections throughout the Americas, Puerto Rico, England and Africa. In 2015, she suffered a minor stroke. Intensive therapy and determination has helped her regain her artistic abilities.



Hal Moran, *Sounds of Nature #21666*

Hal Moran *St. Charles, MO*
Moran grew up with and still struggles with Tourette syndrome and other co-occurring disorders. Perhaps this, along with being somewhat of an explorer, spurred his interest in photography. Moran knew he would never

travel the world like some of the photographers he admired at National Geographic, capturing exotic subjects in the wilds of Borneo. So, he decided to search out the extra in the ordinary things in his own backyard. For Moran, the extra involves more than just the aesthetic value of an image. It's the story associated with an image that allows us to connect at the emotional level. Maya Angelou said, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." His aim is to capture those untold stories. Throughout Moran's life, his senses, and more specifically his eyes, have always been attuned to the natural world around him. Whether he's out on a hike or taking a photo walk, little escapes his purview. "And while some of those experiences are captured with my camera, most are just memories to be savored in my mind's eye."

Victor Mordasov *West Chester, PA*
Mordasov, a widely recognized artist whose work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally, has spent many years exploring different mediums and methods of painting. He discovered the joy of painting by following the techniques of the Old Masters in combination

with an impressionist manner of painting. Mordasov paints a wide range of subjects, including landscapes, still life, portraits and marine venues. His paintings, as well as his sculptures, display a commitment to portraying not just the exterior of the subjects but their characters and personality as well. Mordasov's focus is to bring people's attention to the beauty of God's creation, which is around us all. He has had Charcot-Marie-Tooth disease since he was a young teenager, which limits his physical activities. It was not long after this diagnosis that Mordasov started to draw, leading to his education and professional career in art.

Daniel Neufeld *Philadelphia, PA*
As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, a learning disability. But it didn't stop him at all from gaining and sharing as many talents as possible. Neufeld grew fond of art through his mother, who's also an artist. He enjoys drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, comic books and animation. Subjects that he often captures with his pencils and paints include people, still lives and sites that he's seen on his travels; buildings, landscapes, seascapes, and railroads from

both direct observation and photographs he takes. Art has inspired and helped Neufeld see things in the world creatively. Skills that he has to this day not only include fine art, but also playing sports, singing, playing the cello, cooking and making movies.

Thu Nguyen *Kamuela, HI*
Nguyen is inspired by Chinese ancient paintings and Eastern European iconography, which she has combined with her love of self-portraits. "By using myself as the only subject, I intend to go beyond the superficial variety of different models being painted in the same way, and instead, look at how a variety of emotional responses can be generated using the same subject with different poses, lighting and environments."

Kathryn Noska *Phoenixville, PA*
Noska paints animals and objects that symbolize uplifting qualities of human nature. Offering emotional and visual delight, she creates beautiful, highly detailed, accessible imagery, rich in substance that encourages introspection. Influenced by surrealism, Noska combines images using intuition and philosophic whimsy until it "feels right"—even if the combination is

offbeat. Due to multiple chemical sensitivity, she works with walnut oil paint, solvent-free techniques and eco-friendly materials. She loves working in thin layers of finely blended colors without brushstrokes, so the subject matter becomes the focus. After the work is finished, Noska interprets the symbolism, which is how she determines her titles. "Every painting is an opening into my psyche and offers the viewer a place to contemplate dreams, helping imagination soar in harmony with their soul."

Andrew Novis *Medford, MA*
Novis believes that one should do art for art's sake and not attempt to make any kind of grand statement. His style and subject matter have been influenced by the fact that he is mostly self-taught, an accomplished athlete and very interested in Fauvism as well as Latin American art. Novis applies flat, unmixed color in his palette, framed by black outlining, which both separates and enhances the color. Color more so than texture, shading, shadowing or composition is Novis' core strength and he emphasizes color within his painting or woodcarving. Novis was diagnosed with Asperger's in the fall of 2012. Being an "Aspie"



Victor Mordasov, *Old Tree*

artist, he tends to create and conceive his imagery through the left brain, focusing on detail, order, separation and purity of color, and clearly defined lines.

Susanne Dagmar Olsen *Vordingborg, Denmark*
Though she has doubts about her ability to reach a professional level due to challenges in memory, learning and concentration, Olsen knows that she has something valuable to offer the world through

her artwork. Multiple disorders, including tinnitus and paresthesia, mean that Olsen is often tired and has trouble working with fine detail. However, she still draws, paints in a variety of media, prints linocuts and works with clay. She is interested in people and nature as subject matter.

Diana O'Neill *Haverford, PA*
O'Neill spent 25 years as a successful glass etching/carving artist. Though she enjoyed completing various commissions, they lacked color and expression. So, when O'Neill was introduced to watercolor painting, she fell in love with this exciting medium. It freed her creative imagination and she has become passionate about it ever since. Her paintings typically are impressionistic and are inspired by the incredible beauty of nature found in scenic landscapes, birds and animals. It's O'Neill's hope that the bright colors and natural patterns in her work will inspire others to appreciate the natural environment that surrounds us. One of her favorite quotes is: "Every day is a gift, so enjoy and make it count."
Joanne Orth *Downingtown, PA*
Art transcends Orth's physical limitations, making her appreciate how rich her life really is.

Producing a new painting gives her a tremendous sense of accomplishment. It reminds her that there's beauty all around us and that life is good. She works mostly in acrylic and pastel, although she also enjoys other media. Retired from a full-time career in science, Orth has been a lifelong artist who can now indulge her passion for painting nearly full-time. Her work tends to emphasize how contrasting light and shadow define a subject and how they can create a mood. As a longtime resident of Chester County, Orth's focus is often on local sites, sometimes including animals in their natural surroundings, although she's always on the lookout for interesting subjects from other areas.

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

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

“I’ve never had any conception of what role art played in my life as an autistic man, however, neither have I had an idea of how my condition may impact how I create.”

—Christopher Pereto

Bernice Paul *Philadelphia, PA*
Paul has studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Fleisher Art Memorial, the Barnes Foundation and the Philadelphia College of Art. Her work has received many prizes and awards and has been exhibited throughout the

Mid-Atlantic region. She works mostly in oils but has also done silkscreens, watercolors and acrylics. Paul acknowledges that her limited vision has made it more difficult to create her artwork and she’s trying to paint more abstractly now. She feels that her passion for art helps to give her a positive outlook on life. Over 100 years old, Bernice Paul says she still gets great joy from painting and creating.

Victoria Pendragon *Paw Paw, WV*
Despite Pendragon’s diagnosis of scleroderma, which has crippled her hands, she creates paintings and drawings. Pendragon believes her art is the result of a creative resonance set off by her almost constant state of evolution as a person. She can only ever be sure of what sort of art she will be making as she is making it. Most of 2019 was spent on a series of paintings depicting a single fish against a patterned background. Her “Fish Out of Water” are a metaphor for our being. Pendragon says, “I graduated art school in 1969 and it took me almost 50 years to learn to follow paint around, letting it do its thing while I do my best to keep it on track. The crippling of my hands was a blessing in disguise.”

Christopher Pereto *Weymouth, MA*

Pereto has been drawing since before age five. He can’t imagine art not being a part of him. When Pereto first began trying to be “serious” about art, he used colored pencil and aspired to be like illustrator Richard Scarry. It wasn’t until the second half of his college career that Pereto got into marker and pen, thinking more in terms of animation cells. Somewhere along the way he combined the media and began adding watercolor and even paint marker to the mix. Pereto says, “I’ve never had any conception of what role art played in my life as an autistic man; however,



Susanne Dagmar Olsen, *Hugo*

neither have I had an idea of how my condition may impact how I create. Both would seem to be something beyond words, fully coming from intuition and the subconscious.”

Trish Poupard *Celina, TX*

Poupard, a watercolor artist, often paints from photographs she’s taken herself. Watercolor is difficult and gives her a sense of satisfaction, which she discovered later in life. After the diagnosis of multiple sclerosis, Poupard had many problems with spasticity, depression, fatigue and migraine, and had to reset her ambitions. Watercolor enables her to connect with experiences through

the process of planning and executing every painting. Poupard strives toward building a career based on her art.

Cathy Pregmon *Drexel Hill, PA*

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

Christina Profico *Ardmore, PA*

Profico began to make jewelry as a creative outlet and a way of emotional healing after the amputation of her left leg in 2010. Jewelry design was something she had wanted to explore for

many years. After a lifelong battle with a chronic disease, Profico felt in a way that she was beginning life over and the world was now open to trying new things. It was crucial in the process of finding her new life as an amputee. She sees her work as eclectic art objects rather than mass appeal costume jewelry. What Profico loves about making handmade jewelry are the imperfections. “Losing my leg has taught me to appreciate the beauty of flaws. I feel it’s what makes something unique.”

Meg Quinlisk *West Chester, PA*

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

her to view herself as an “abled” person, not a “disabled” person.

Tim Quinn *Wynnewood, PA*

Quinn uses markers, paint markers, pens, ink and watercolor on paper and wood panels. He works at a studio in Philadelphia one day a week, and at the Center for Creative Works four days a week. “On the wall of the warehouse. In my father’s office. Inside my house. I have no clue where. I start with a line that goes all around.”

Joy Raskin *Bedford, NH*

Raskin says she has a restless soul, a need to experiment, a need to keep pushing the limits. She covers a wide range in metalworking, from tiny jewelry pieces to flatware to large-scale welded sculpture. Raskin finds she enjoys knitting and shaping wire to create unexpected metalwork such as knitted wire clothing, metal purses, and knitted jewelry. Her specialty, beside wire-knitting on a large scale, is also spoons and tableware. Raskin doesn’t limit herself to one style or specific technique but employs a wide range of skills to execute the ideas she has in her mind. “I get lost in the pleasure of working with the metal, how it forms or shapes under my hands, and eventually becomes a functional piece of art.”



Joy Raskin, *Sunburst*

Ginette Richard *Rochester, NY*

Richard loves to create art with her hands, using many different mediums but mainly ceramic. She takes from the world around her and places her own spin on things to create something different. “Art helps me to stay a little more grounded for when my disability tries to get the best of me.”

Sally Richards *Media, PA*

With a lifelong desire to be an artist, Richards undertook a four-year program at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts following a successful business career. A painter and printmaker, she has a focused daily studio practice. Richards’ work explores the “nature of place,” the essence and energy we feel when we experience our

world in an intimate way. The places in her art are imaginary, relational or abstract expressions derived from observation and memory. She uses color, form and structure to cause elevation and freedom in mood and thought. Richards has had a severe hearing disability for 25 years, which required enormous energy and accommodation in business. “I have found new freedom, independence and artistic collaborations through art-making and a place to fully give my energy, spirit and heart.”

Lorna Ritz *Amherst, MA*

Ritz sets her easel up deep in a hayfield overlooking trees at their highest color peak in the autumn. She works many hours at a time, several days in a row, to complete each drawing. Ritz has muscle weakness from nerve damage related to a tumor removed from inside her spine, so she uses a ladder to prop her leg up while she draws. Her drawings hold in them emotion, spirit, soul and memory. Colors relate to everything; the color finds the light and creates the shape. Ritz says her drawings become windows peering into space beyond their four edges. “Every painting and drawing begets the ones yet to



Morgan Johnson, *Moon Echo*

come. I seem to be picking up momentum. I keep on because I think I am getting better!”

Vojko Rizvanovic *West Valley City, UT*

“I paint because I want to exist!” After being amazed by how much blind people could do while being trained at the Salt Lake City Blind Center during the year 2000, Rizvanovic decided to pursue a career in art. Although he has been diagnosed with severe bilateral optic atrophy and has permanently lost most of his vision, Rizvanovic earned his BFA in teaching art in 2005 and later his MFA, both from the University of Utah. His work first portrayed images of people like himself with canes and guide dogs. Rizvanovic draws inspiration

from his own life’s trials and experiences. Throughout the years he has exhibited his work in many local and international juried shows, and has received numerous awards.

Rick Ruark *Pittsburgh, PA*

Born in Columbus, Ohio, Ruark is a self-taught, Pittsburgh contemporary acrylics painter. He began painting after a move to South Florida 35 years ago, inspired by the beauty of the landscapes, the cultural diversity and architecture of Miami. This influence is evident in his paintings through his use of color, subjects and geometrics. Ruark changed how he paints in an effort to make certain that his disabilities did not hinder his efforts to create. His paintings have become more calculated and angular while he begins moving away from realism. The brushwork required for realism has become somewhat difficult for him. “I’m working to expand my capabilities, so as my disabilities remain or progress, I can continue to paint.”

Maria Sammartino *Riverton, NJ*
Sammartino has always been drawn to abstract expressionism. While her Italian grandfather painted scenes of a Florence cathedral, she painted scenes,

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

Carla Schaeffer

West Cape May, NJ

Schaeffer’s crocheted jewelry and unique found-object floral bouquets are a visual illustration of many of the things that make her happiest in life. She was forced to leave her business career when chronic arm pain made it too painful for her to make it through the work day. Schaeffer found that losing her ability to be creative made coping with her injuries more difficult. A few years later when she suffered a debilitating brain injury, Schaeffer knew she must find a way to bring creativity back into her life. Rediscovering her love of the artistic process while finding a way to participate

in it, despite her limitations, brought her joy and has allowed her to reclaim her life.

Rebecca Scheuer *Narvon, PA*

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

Christine Severson *Richmond, VA*

Severson, a nurse, suffered a life-changing event in the late 1970s while transferring a quadriplegic patient into a wheelchair. She incurred significant damage to her spinal cord, which continues to limit her mobility and left her with chronic pain. Severson still managed to raise two daughters, and in the meantime creating became her passion, which to this day provides her with a sense of pride and purpose. Severson works on her jewelry during the day and on her

baskets in the evening. Her work is done from a semi-reclining position wearing elbow and wrist splints. The material she works with needs to be lightweight. Weaving jewelry was the perfect fit along with pine needles for her baskets. Severson believes that creating has changed her from viewing herself as a patient to viewing herself as an artisan.

Carol Shannon *Aldan, PA*

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

Amy Smith *North Wales, PA*

In 2009, Smith was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. The first three years of her diagnosis were a whirlwind of relapses that left her mired in fear and uncertainty. She began to view her life differently and decided to make some changes. It took several years, but she was able to leave her career in health care marketing and focus on painting and writing. Smith changed her diet and lifestyle. Most surprisingly, she found a joy in painting she never expected. She always wanted to be an artist, but never thought it possible. Art offers her serenity when she needs it most. Smith paints using water-soluble oils on stretched canvas because she loves to experiment with color and texture, and enjoys painting landscapes, trees, and flowers.

Ken Smith *Riverside, WA*

Smith’s creative life began as a freelance writer and commercial and editorial photographer. Since 1991, he has been concentrating on limited-edition fine art, primarily in the still life genre. Smith prints his work in black and white and color, using traditional photographic processes and archival pigment ink printed on fine cotton printmaking papers.

He also works in mixed media. Smith believes his role as an artist is to be open, curious and available to experience beauty. He then may be able to interpret that beauty into his work, so



Rebecca Scheuer, *Tropical Leaf*

the viewer may be moved by the feeling within. Smith’s work reflects on his walking disability, encouraging patience and the understanding of how to find beauty in the commonplace.

Nancy Smith *Santa Monica, CA*

Smith started sewing when she was 10 years old. She

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

Rosary Solimanto *Kingston, NY*
Solimanto exposes social, political and medical conflicts of ableism and disability through interdisciplinary activist art forms of writing, performance, video, sculpture and wearable works. Her personal is political, having experienced and transcended multiple sclerosis, 10 surgeries, a bone marrow transplant and hypothyroidism. Solimanto

in turn approaches disability identity, health care and medicine from a humanitarian perspective with her art. Her goal is to advocate disability pride and awareness, to facilitate society to imbue health conditions with humanity and empowerment.

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

Carol Spiker *Wilmington, DE*
Spiker's early career began in graphic arts. While raising her two boys, she dove into volunteer projects and started running. Those lonely long-

distance runs brought her clarity, and in the late '80s she returned to school to study painting. She fell in love with the 1950s Bay Area figurative painters, expressionistic and anonymous. Her figures come from memory. She loves the serendipitous

"Art has offered me the gift to pursue my best self, despite my disability, or very possibly as a consequence of it." —Dawn McLaughlin

discovery that comes from painting with oils. In 1998, Spiker was thrown into a creek when her car was hit on I-95. She realized immediately that she was paralyzed. "Thank God, I have my hands. Art had become a driving force in my life before the accident but the accident sharpened this focus and has been a guiding force ever since."

William Spiker *Wilmington, DE*
Spiker says that the process of creating welded art is often serendipitous as the intense heat of the torch can morph the metal in unexpected and wonderful ways. The materials and process of fabricating and welding steel as a sculptural medium can be rough and raw—

or delicate and fragile—mirroring characteristics of subjects from both nature and the artist's imagination. He loves the process of conceiving, designing, forging, cutting, shaping, fusing and finishing subjects in steel, often integrating found objects of iron

and steel or wood. Found objects of cast iron or steel can be the foundation of the design process, and wood often provides a warm contrast to cold steel. "My work can be humorous, solemn, ironic and narrative."

Harry Spilker *Camp Hill, PA*
Spilker is a self-motivated artist, using his digital camera or iPhone to capture images, and different apps to manipulate the colors and other aspects of the pictures, creating an artistic effect. He especially likes to photograph everyday objects and scenes and then create boldly colored abstract pieces that evoke an emotional response. Spilker enjoys photographing nature and the



Susan Straub-Martin, *American Life*, Grizzly

environment. He likes taking pictures of trees and clouds and the Susquehanna River in different light. He also takes lots of pictures of his dad. "My photographs make a statement about how I see the world."

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

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

the other senses, the viewer can experience my work rather than just see it."

Chelsea Steinberg-Gay *New York, NY*
Steinberg-Gay is a fine artist whose works look at how displaced and marginalized communities create, alter or mobilize folklore, legends and the occult as a means of protection and perseverance. Steinberg-Gay's works involve drawing, photography, video, sound and performance, fabricated in a wide range of materials. Diagnosed with ADHD in her teens, Steinberg-Gay struggled to tune in, stay motivated and avoid slipping into hyper-focus. Art provided a way to harness her creativity, spatial thinking and curiosity, helping her embrace her neurodiversity and learn to recognize the benefits that offset the executive dysfunction.

Susan Straub-Martin *Bellevue, WA*
After a long career working in the graphic design industry and most recently, creating a series of children's books and toys, Straub-Martin knew it was time to do something more, and creating art filled that void. After a near-death experience

due to severe septic shock and the amputations of parts of nine fingers, all she wanted to do during recovery was get strong enough to create once again. She knew her body, mind and spirit would be renewed when she could sit down and resume her artwork. Straub-Martin's creativity soared, and new collections started to flourish. Straub-Martin lives in the Pacific Northwest with wonderful flowers, animals and things that inspire her daily. "Joy is at the heart of everything I do. My art is a *CELEBRATION* of gratitude."

Siddhartha Sankar Sukla *Cuttack, India*
Sukla is a formally trained Indian artist who resides in Orissa, India. Born with hearing impairment, he recalls enjoying painting as a young boy. He chooses to think of himself as not disabled at all but rather, as he describes it, "differently abled." His work has been recognized both nationally and internationally and he very much sees this recognition as a blessing to be cherished. Sukla is skilled in computer graphics and has also worked in both oil and watercolors. His focus now is producing collage works and he hopes the people who view his artwork find it engaging.

William Spiker, *Ferrous Filet***Sriharsha Sukla** *Cuttack, India*

Sukla was born with hearing impairment. He says he has not let his disability dampen his desire for a full life. Sukla credits his mother for her encouragement and inspiration to pursue his artwork. He also feels he has received a tremendous amount of support from his community and patrons, both nationally and internationally. Sukla works in both oil and watercolors but his specialty is in collage work. A recent 1st Prize Art Ability winner and 2020 Featured Artist, he hopes his work creates enjoyment for all who view it.

Elizabeth Sullivan *Elgin, TX*

Sullivan has been a professional watercolor artist and mural painter for the past 20 years. Painting is her happy place. "The joy of creating supersedes all else." Being disabled limits her career options, but fortunately she's been

able to make a living doing what she loves. Sullivan's art is inspired by life around her. She is fascinated by cave paintings and Asian brush paintings and ancient art. She says you may see these inspirations reflected in some of her work. Sullivan lives in Elgin, Texas, with a tiny dog, 12 cats and 11 chickens. She also has three grandsons nearby and Sullivan says she shamelessly and repeatedly paints their portraits.

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 struggle to get through the winter was the snow. The sun struggled in the last half hour of the day. All the colors changed, yet the golden sun coming through the trees was a sign of hope. The struggle inspired his work using acrylic and 23K gold leaf. Gold has 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."

Leo Tujak *Floral Park, NY*

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

Diane Veros *Clifton Park, NY*

Veros became disabled about two years ago due to an exceedingly rare disease called amyloidosis. She underwent a grueling stem-cell transplant to hopefully stop the progression of the disease. While she was recovering, Veros tried colored pencils, pastels and acrylics, as those were all new mediums for her. In the end, she went back to watercolor after a 35-year hiatus. Amazingly, the dried-up paints were still good. She has been painting almost every day. "My artwork helps get me through each day without

thinking about my losses." Veros is inspired most by nature and her goal is to get more comfortable painting larger and looser.

Anna Wagner *Cabot, AR*

Wagner's work interprets the effects of taking Adderall and stems from the perspective of someone dealing with ADD/ADHD. The objects are referential of utilitarian functional forms to imply her personal struggles with medications that restrained her appetite. The loose and colorful shapes contrast against the monochrome realism of the portraits. Inspired by comic books and cartoons, the translation results in bright colorful objects that seem to vibrate and hum with potential energy. Much of the forms are from pieced together shapes, sometimes making no sense as separate parts, but finding their place as supports, feet, lids or additions.

Joseph Weber *Berwyn, PA*

Weber is a former banking professional and now self-taught artist who began painting acrylic on canvas in 2016, when he realized he no longer had control over his life. He was so overworked that he missed half of his three daughters' childhoods; he had lost himself.

This led to an emotional and spiritual breakdown/awakening which led him to seek therapy for anxiety and PTSD, among other mental health conditions. As a child, artistic expression was not encouraged and painting finally allowed Weber to express himself. With now 550+ canvases and 6,000 textile designs created from his art, Weber's dream is to bring people together through his art, share his experiences and knowledge with people and help them be who they were meant to be—not who someone else wanted them to be.

Evelyn Weissman *Berwyn, PA*

Weissman is in her seventies and has been a serious artist for more than 60 years. Her artwork has included charcoal, acrylic and watercolors. She taught art in the Philadelphia public schools for 22 years, and has also provided art instruction on a volunteer basis for the past 20 years. Weissman has been painting birds since she had a stroke and was a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab two years ago. Birds represent complete freedom to her and it gives her great pleasure to paint them. Prior to her stroke, Weissman thought she had no

restrictions for her life or her art. "I thought the future stretched unimpeded before me. The stroke convinced me that I needed to examine my life and do those things I valued. In my painting, this meant painting birds."

Kurt Theodore Weston

Mission Viejo, CA

Weston, world-class photographer turned blind visionary, is a resident of Mission Viejo, California. Once a glamour photographer he would jet to Europe with top makeup artists and hair stylists, transforming models to create the ultimate in style and beauty. His life changed in 1996, when Weston became legally blind from uveitis, an inflammatory eye condition which left him totally blind in his left eye and with limited peripheral vision—no central vision in his right eye. Weston's current artwork offerings are his Neo Glam series, which are re-contextualized fashion portraits utilizing the technique of photomontage—combining his highly stylized, color-saturated portraits with graphic designs and paintings. Inspired by such illustrative artists as Erté, Serge Lutens and Patrick Nagel, Weston transforms his portraits into unique contemporary artworks.

Don Whitticar *Stevensville, MT*

Whitticar's passion lies in documenting the beauty of his subject matter, primarily threatened and endangered species of wildlife. His medium, copperplate engraving, is also disappearing. While most people are aware of conservation efforts for wildlife and their habitats, few are aware of the need to preserve vanishing art forms. Whitticar strives to preserve both. *Wildlife Art News*, an international publication with circulation to 110 countries, has cited him as one of only seven or eight wildlife art engravers currently practicing worldwide (*Wildlife Art News, Artists Edition*, 2004.) Whitticar's disabilities, Stills disease and tardive dyskinesia, enable him to devote the focused attention needed to cut each individual line into a copper sheet to produce a printing plate.

Mark Wittig *Little Rock, AR*

As a youth, Wittig attended the Child Study Center for three years, a school in a teaching hospital, where he became intrigued with disabilities research. He is inspired by the larger learning-disabled community to create artworks that comment on the learning disabled experience, and question the prevailing systems of education

Anna Wagner, *Pause*

Richard Wynne, *Cross the Road #1*

and culture which devalue fluencies and skills outside prevailing norms. Wittig has embarked on a long-term project that focuses on providing a platform for students, teachers, educational researchers and community members to consider the challenges and goals of education and how educational structures influence the learning process. He hopes this typological study of education in the United States allows for historical and contemporary thinking about education, and reaches a wider public audience.

Nancy Wood *San Antonio, TX*
Wood is a classically-trained artist currently using photography

and digital painting to explore the aesthetics of the natural landscape. Colors are intensified; forms are abstracted to express the mystical qualities one experiences while absorbed in the beauty of nature. Scientific studies show the healing effects of being in wild and natural areas include stress reduction, increase in immune systems, mental performance, creativity and better mood. Office workers display happier moods when surrounded by visuals of beautiful flowers. Wood hopes her art highlighting the beauty of nature will have similar effects on viewers. In the past, her severe

hearing loss caused employment problems and made it difficult to promote her art. Recently Wood received cochlear implants that enabled her to resume a productive lifestyle.

Richard Wynne *Lake Elsinore, CA*
Wynne is an artist who has lived and painted in many countries for more than 30 years. He returned to the U.S. so his autistic son could receive special education that was not available in his homeland of Thailand. Wynne lectured and taught art in Thailand. He has had exhibitions in the USA, Middle and Far East, and collections of his work reside in many countries. He is a recipient of the “Golden Bear Award” from the State of California. Wynne uses colors, textures and different mediums to convey moods. Old age, arthritis and an ongoing battle with cancer have forced Wynne to reduce production and spend most of his time preparing his son for the future.

Anthony Zaremba *Whiting, NJ*
Zaremba’s art and finished watercolors appear not as finely detailed, but loose and free. He feels he has created a new style of painting that has an abstract look. His subject matter reflects

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

Leslie A. Zukor *Mercer Island, WA*
Zukor has been a photographer since 2005, when she received her first digital camera for the winter holidays. Since then, she has become an avowed photography addict, someone who is attracted to fast motion, street photography and animal and human portraiture. Zukor pursues these passions through the medium of her lens, and the creative process helps form her identity as a disabled person, someone who sees the world in her own unique way. Zukor was born without depth perception and with multiple visual disabilities. Her depth perception inability is referred to as a spatial processing disorder. She continues to seek treatment.

“Art helps me to stay a little more grounded for when my disability tries to get the best of me.”

—Ginette Richard

Ina Greenstein, *Hustle and Bustle*

“I believe that the act of engaging in the creative process brings joy and healing.”

—Ginny Conover

Charles Hall, *Old Timer*Jan Alice Keeling, *Mother and Baby Reading*

“What makes me come alive and forget my disability is challenging my creative ability, and thanks to art, I really like who I am today.”

—Anthony Zaremba

Alexander Masyk,
Autumn in Central Park

“My painting has been part of a therapeutic process. Sometimes it is challenging to paint, but I continue.” —Nicole Miritis



Charles Blackwell, *The Band*



Merritt Maya, *C-IV*

“I’m working to expand my capabilities, so as my disabilities remain or progress, I can continue to paint.” —Rick Ruark



“My art is a CELEBRATION of gratitude.” —Susan Straub-Martin

MaryGrace Bernard, *Texas Windmill*

“Through my art I have created a new state of health for myself.”

—Debra Hope Colligan



Debra Block Krol, *When Life Gives You Lemons*



Thu Nguyen, *Girl from Sapa*

“My arthritis may limit the duration of time I paint but it does not compromise the beauty and joy of what I create.” —Meg Quinlisk

Passle Helminski, *Turquoise*



Kathryn Noska, *Halfway There*



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

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- Unknown

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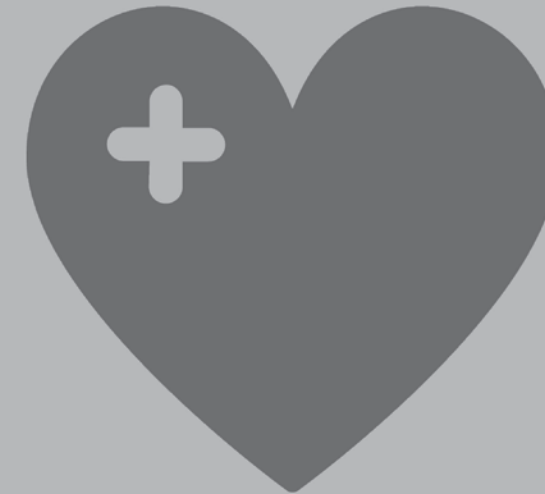


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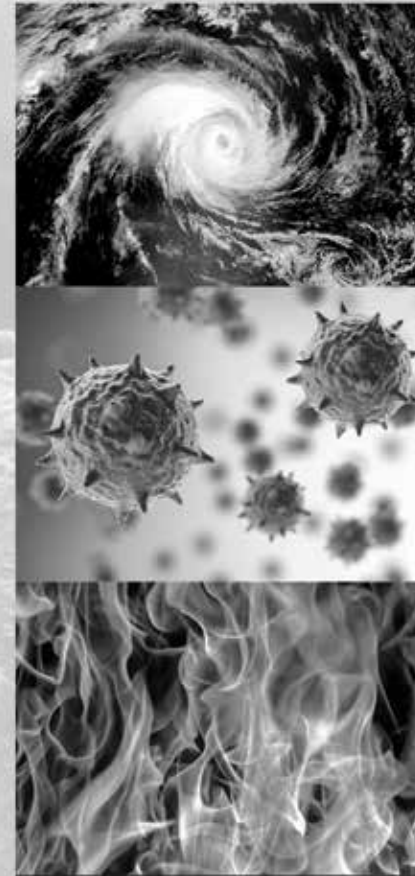
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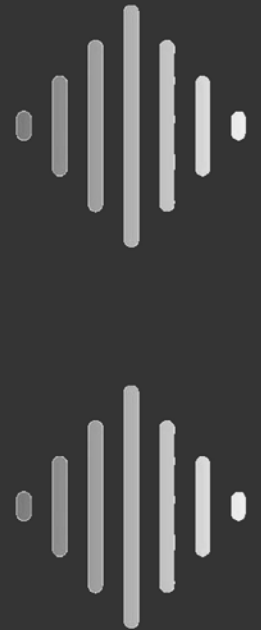
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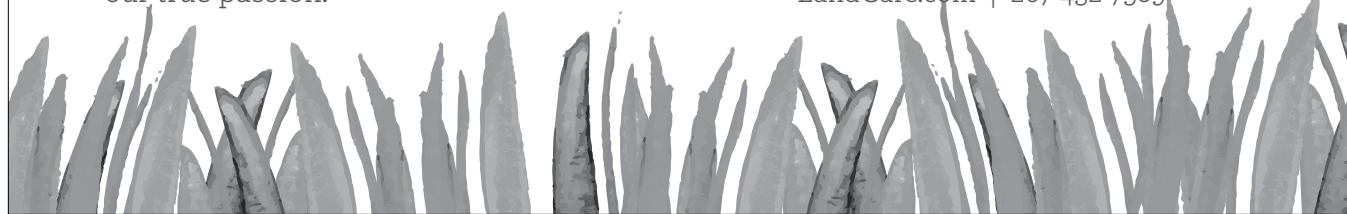
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