art Ability

a celebration of art by artists with disabilities

Carol Spiker, Up, Up and Away (detail), OIL ON CANVAS
Carol Spiker
Wilmington, Delaware

Carol Spiker, a former patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, has always had a passion for graphic arts. As a busy mom who raised two boys, Carol worked for an ad agency, did a great deal of volunteer work, ran a couple of marathons, and started a lacrosse program that ran for 26 seasons. She returned to school in the late eighties to study painting, as she wanted to begin creating art that was inside-out versus outside-in. This journey continues today after a few big twists and turns along the way.

In 1998, Carol was thrown into a creek when her car was hit on I-95. She realized immediately that she was paralyzed, and her only words were: “Thank God I have my hands.” Yes, being paralyzed makes painting more difficult, and she can no longer tackle that 8’x10’ canvas. But, she can still paint. She is one of the lucky ones, and art has become a driving force in her life, a focus that has sharpened even more after her accident. Painting is her passion—no matter how often she has explored other directions, the figure continues to pull her back to a brush and a canvas. Carol has found that color choices are an important part of her creative process. Her decisions involving colors have evolved over time and reveal evidence of her feelings, while at the same time grow into beautiful passages that empower the picture’s surface. Carol says, “I would have loved to hang out with Richard Diebenkorn and the Bay Area Figurative painters in the 50s or Milton Avery in NYC in the 40s!”

Making art exposes oneself and for Carol it can be scary. Over time, she has learned that it takes courage to put your creations out there to be seen by the world and for others to judge. Somehow, this understanding—that she must be brave—has helped her through her 20-year journey as a paraplegic.

When Feathers Fall,
Oil on paper

It’s Not Working,
Oil and pencil on paper

The 24th Annual Art Ability Exhibition Preview Party
Saturday, November 2, 2019
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

Preview Reception
5:00–8:00 pm

“Art to Life”
7:10 pm—Patient Dining Room
Our speakers will share their perspective on the impact of art and Art Ability.

Dinner & Auction
7:00–10:00 pm

Closing Reception:
Art and the Patient Experience
Sunday, January 12, 2020 | 1:00–3:00 pm

Exhibit is free and open to the public from November 3, 2019 to January 26, 2020
Dear Friends,

Welcome to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital and the 24th annual Art Ability Preview Party. This evening’s event includes the exhibition and sale of artwork as well as the dinner and auction. As the largest program of its kind, Art Ability provides a special opportunity for artists with disabilities—from around the world—to showcase and sell their work. Since the program’s beginning in 1996, over 850 artists have displayed their work and have personally benefited from sales in excess of $1.2 million. Thank you for being part of this success.

My congratulations to our artists, and appreciation for the examples of courage and triumph they model for each and every one of us. Art has the power to heal and transform lives. We see this every day, as our clinicians incorporate Art Ability into their treatment plans, challenging and inspiring our patients to stretch beyond their present limitations and achieve their goals.

During the Dinner & Auction program we also celebrate the triumph of the human spirit. Special thanks to Alexandria Warner and her parents Susan and Darrell Giles for joining us and sharing their journey of recovery following Alexandria’s life-threatening auto accident while a student at Spelman College.

Funds raised this evening benefit the livelihoods of our participating artists and the Art Ability program as well as support other hospital priorities that enable us to provide the most progressive rehabilitation environment for our patients, like Alexandria.

Thank you for joining us, and a very special thank you to our Art Ability Committee, Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital Foundation Board, sponsors and volunteers for contributing to a remarkable event!

Warm regards,

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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 was 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.
Our Committee & Boards

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

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Lists current as of September 30, 2019.
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.

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital's Art Ability has been an integral part of the 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. Tonight's event is the kick-off of the exhibit. Proceeds from this evening help support Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital's patient and community programs. The exhibit is then 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.

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.

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

Sales

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

Program components

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

• Satellite exhibitions Traveling satellite exhibitions of Art Ability artwork are a key component of the program and have been successful in generating enhanced awareness of the talent and skill of our artists; in addition to communicating that disability is as personally limiting as you make it.
• Online sales gallery Our online sales gallery provides the opportunity to view works for sale from our consignment inventory. Each year, with the permission of the artist, Art Ability retains a number of works from our annual exhibition to allow for more exposure for our artists and their talents. To browse artwork available for purchase, visit bidpal.net/artwork.  • Corporate art acquisition program Art Ability also serves as a resource for corporations to help meet their need for art for their corporate art collections.
• Permanent collection of work Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital is an actively collecting institution whose permanent collection of over 400 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 or email: 484.596.5607 | artability@mlhs.org
Alexandria Warner

A high-speed police chase of a stolen car ended in a horrific fiery crash and marked a watershed moment for the Warner Giles family. Their then 20-year-old daughter, Alexandria Warner—who was a passenger in the rear-ended car crushed in the collision—suffered multiple life-threatening injuries, a traumatic brain injury, and the loss of both of her kidneys. Alexandria, a junior honors pre-medicine major, had taken a break from an on-campus study group to get dinner with two girlfriends. During their return trip and only a couple of blocks from the Spelman College campus, the car she was riding in was struck by the stolen vehicle estimated to be traveling 80-100 mph. The force of the impact propelled the car into a utility pole striking the right rear side, where Alexandria was sitting buckled into her seat. Fire ignited in the rear of the car. Emergency responders arrived, the fire was extinguished, and the arduous work of extricating Alexandria from the mangled wreck was quickly accomplished. Due to the severity of Alexandria’s injuries, she was put in a medically induced coma and placed on a ventilator. Alexandria spent nearly two months in intensive care before being transferred to a rehab hospital where she received subpar care resulting in almost another full month in intensive care. Finally, after more than nine surgeries and more than three months of hospitalization, Alexandria came to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital as both inpatient and outpatient as part of her long journey of healing and recovery. As a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, Alexandria relearned many daily activities that are often taken for granted. She has made extraordinary progress due to the talented and compassionate staff, the state-of-the-art therapy equipment, and her strong determination and hard work. Alexandria and her family learned first-hand the impact acute rehabilitation hospitals have on patient recovery—and, the importance of actively evaluating and advocating for the right rehabilitation care. Alexandria’s miraculous story and road to recovery will be shared during this year’s Art Ability Dinner & Auction.

New van for patient transportation and RightEye tracking system

Thanks to last year’s Dinner & Auction Call to Give, we purchased both a new patient van and a specialized piece of therapy equipment. The van enables patients to participate in community outings—to the grocery store, town park and mall—with the assistance of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s recreation therapy team. This is a crucial piece in the physical rehabilitation process as it allows for patients to not only work on their physical functioning in a common public setting outside of the hospital, but also provides the emotional and social support in building their comfort and confidence as they prepare for discharge. Using advanced eye-tracking technology, the RightEye system uncovers issues that an observation-only exam cannot. The system pinpoints vision and brain health issues. We are very excited to have this advanced equipment as part of our treatment options.
I recently repaired *A Little Girl’s Trip* (2005) by Judy Miller, an artwork in Art Ability’s permanent collection. It is now out of storage and has a new life on display. Every time I pass this artwork (a naïve mixed media piece of a girl with her arms outstretched, in the cab of a colorful hot air balloon) I feel so much joy and it makes me smile. It speaks to me. I feel like I must be sharing the artist’s joy and excitement, and I want to jump in and join the ride. Small doses of positive energy like this are contagious, and necessary. Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital cultivates an environment of positive energy and moving forward in so many ways. Like the hospital, Art Ability celebrates both process and progress.

With Energy, the special category for 2019, in its obvious form, we have several works of horses running with the wind through their manes, birds flying, and bees buzzing. But Energy also has a quieter, individual presence, as growth and renewal. With fuel from the sun, every single blossom blooms. With this internal positive energy, movement isn’t always noticed. Still, it aims to reach its full potential. This year we get a close-up, new perspective on viewing flowers. The tightly-cropped focus, and abstract beauty of the single bloom, in the style of Georgia O’Keefe, is a dominant visual theme across all media. The diverse animals we feature span from the Serengeti plains to the farms of Lancaster County. And they, too, pose for their close-up.

I have curated the hallways in a way that transitions between style and groups similar pieces together. This format provides a nice comprehensive flow, allowing each viewer to find an area that speaks to them. The only thing more inspiring than the artwork you will see throughout the hospital are the artists behind them.

We are so grateful to the Art Ability Committee, staff, jurors and judges for all their hard work in making this exhibition possible. A special thank you goes to our Art Ability Coordinator, Cristine Largoza, whose guidance continues to be invaluable. It is clear that the positive energy collected in the hallways full of art, is an extension of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital’s achievements in rehabilitation therapy.

**Alex Conner**

Alex Conner is an artist, educator, entrepreneur and art collector living in Philadelphia. Alex’s artistic practice is focused on showing the social construction of everyday life through dismantling its coded visual language. He is a K-12 gallery educator at The Barnes Foundation, where his teaching combines an irreverent approach to art objects with factual knowledge of their history, in order to allow art which is separated from students by geography and time to become relatable to their everyday life. Alex is co-owner of a ceramic design company based in Philadelphia and runs Philly Stewards, an arts organization dedicated to the collection, support and promotion of Philadelphia’s art and artists.

**Genevieve Coutroubis**

Genevieve Coutroubis is a documentary photographer and ethnographer. She has exhibited extensively, and her work appears in numerous national and international collections including SEI’s West Collection. Her photography was recognized by the National Museum for Women in the Arts when she was invited to participate in Women to Watch: Photography in Philadelphia. Genevieve joined The Center for Emerging Visual Artists (CFEVA) staff in 2001 as the Director of Programming. She heads CFEVA’s Visual Artist Fellowship and has mounted numerous exhibitions throughout the region. She also established CFEVA’s Regional Community Arts Program (RCAP)—a vehicle to bring substantial career development opportunities to Philadelphia’s visual artists. In May 2018 Genevieve accepted the role of executive artistic director and president of CFEVA, and currently co-directs the organization.

**Katie Samson**

Katie Samson is the Director of Programs for Art-Reach, an organization that creates, advocates for, and expands accessible opportunities in arts and culture in greater Philadelphia. Katie previously taught Disability Studies at West Chester University and was formerly the assistant director of museum education at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA). She assisted in launching the Art of Observation program to Jefferson, Cooper and Drexel University Medical Schools’ for students to learn and build observational skills through visual art prior to their clinical work. Katie is also the spokesperson for the Katie Samson Foundation, a non-profit organization that provides funding for research and quality of life programs for people with disabilities.
**Best In Show**

**Charles W. Hennessy Artist Award**
Presented by: The Charles W. Hennessy Art Ability Endowment Fund
Thu Nguyen, *The Dream*

**Judges Choice**

**ALEX CONNER**

**The Doris B. Gorden Award**
Presented by: The Doris B. Gorden Art Ability Endowment Fund
Carol Spiker, *It’s Not Working*

**GENEVIEVE COUTROBIS**

**John Schwartz, Jr. Family Memorial Award**
Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci
Jessica Hays, *In These Places Called Home*

**KATIE SAMSON**

**In Honor of Carol Chapman**
Presented by: Stephano Slack
Yoland Skeete, *Stepping Out, Ancestors 6*

**Curator’s Choice**

**Jones Family Award**
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Nancy Nalbandian, *Love in A Mist*

**Jewelry, Fine Craft & Functional Art**

**1st Prize**
Presented by: *The Senses*
Joy Raskin, *Pod Pendant*

**2nd Prize**
In Honor of Claire Larson
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Pat Heniques, *Karma*

**3rd Prize**
Jones Family Award
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Brian Cagle, *Capped*

**Honorable Mention**
In Honor of Lauren McGowan
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Nicole Cote, *Floral Ballad*

**Mixed Media**

**1st Prize**
The James Panasci Family Memorial Award
Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci
Bill Porter, *Father Nature*

**2nd Prize**
In Memory of Pennie Marx-Bellard
Presented by: Jeanne B. Fisher
Thu Nguyen, *Determination*

**3rd Prize**
The Kozicki Family Award
Presented by: Jean Kozicki
Shoaib Wazir, *Messengers*

**Honorable Mention**
The McTear Family Award
Presented by: Brian and Allyson McTear
David Terrar, *The Fox Waits*
Photography

1st Prize
The Bernadette Schwab Clark Memorial Award
Presented by: Sal and Linda Panasci
Allen Bryan, On The Trail in Sonora

2nd Prize
Presented by: Scott and Lara Evans
Ken Smith, Petals in Japanese Bowl

3rd Prize
In Appreciation of the BMRH Staff
Presented by: Linda W. Heiberger
Mark Wittig, Pleasant Valley School

Honorable Mention
Presented by: Stephano Slack, LLC
Leslie Zukor, Skate Day 2018

Sculpture and 3D Work

1st Prize
The Bob and Joan Constable Memorial Award
Presented by: The Constable Family
Carrie Albert, Buddha Bunny

2nd Prize
Presented by: Scott and Lara Evans
Bernice Paul, Face Vase with Flowers

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Honorable Mention
Presented by: Stephano Slack, LLC
Leslie Zukor, Skate Day 2018

Special Category: Energy

1st Prize
In Memory of Jacqueline Van Handel
Presented by: Jeanne B. Fisher
David Neufeld, Drumroll Please

2nd Prize
In Memory of Ralph and Carmen Ternazas
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Linnie Greenberg, Play!

3rd Prize
Jones Family Award
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Thomas Miller, Battalion Fire Chief Inspection on 9/14/2001

Honorable Mention
Presented by: Janet Rotoli
In Honor of CJC
Joanne Orth, Secret Garden

Painting

1st Prize
The Thomas and Harriet Blank Award
Presented by: Jeanne B. Fisher
Sal Panasci, Snowy White

2nd Prize
In Memory of Fred Stern
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Ginger Gehres, Umami

3rd Prize
Jones Family Award
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones
Susanne Dagmar Olsen, Alfred

Honorable Mention
In Honor of Sally Hess
Presented by: Douglas Hess
Malcolm Corley, Lancaster Farm

Drawing & Fine Print Making

1st Prize
The Elliott T. Settle Memorial Award
Presented by: The Settle Family
Monica Chulewicz, Good Times or Bad, It’s Always There

2nd Prize
In Memory of Barry and Graham and Boose
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones

3rd Prize
Jones Family Award
Presented by: Brian and Peggy Jones

Honorable Mention
In Honor of Sally Hess
Presented by: Douglas Hess

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Painting and Drawing

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

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

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

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

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

Oil: a type of paint developed in the sixteenth century. Pigment is found objects are used in conjunction with traditional artist media, such as paint and graphite giving the artist more flexibility.

Pastel/Conte Crayon: a type of drawing or painting material made of pigment mixed with a non-drying oil and a wax binder.

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

Tempura: a water-based opaque paint usually applied on paper.

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

Printmaking

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

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

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

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Engraving: a physical process using sharp, pointed tools called gravers, to carve lines directly into a surface, usually metal. The metal is then inked and pressed onto paper for a reverse image. Some metal engravings are the artwork and are not used for printing.

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

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

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

Polygraphy: a work made from several printing plates.

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

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

Photography and New Media

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

Digital Photography: a form of photography that utilizes digital technology to make digital images of subjects. Digital images can be displayed, printed, stored, manipulated, transmitted and archived using digital and computer techniques without chemical processing.
Mosaic  small pieces of colored stone, tile or glass (tesserae), arranged and affixed to a hard surface to create an image.

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

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

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

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

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

Sculpture and 3D Work

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

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

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

Dura Stone  a product made of a limestone composite base.

Carrie Albert  Seattle, WA
Albert expresses her artistic visions in myriad ways, including collage, poetry, assemblage, drawing and photographs. Albert has chemical sensitivities and uses only non-toxic mediums in her art. As a collageist, Albert searches for healing by gathering fragments, symbols and torn ephemera, and pieces 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, 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.”

Jo Allebach  Phoenix, AZ
Allebach resides in Phoenix, Arizona, and has been painting as therapy for more than 18 years. She has used her art as a therapeutic mechanism to address her mental illness. Allebach uses acrylic paint in a similar manner as oil painters with a more impressionistic style. This gives her more latitude to create illumination, ultimately conveying calmness, peace and happiness. Her goal is to create paintings that bring joy to the hearts and minds of the viewer. In her life, Allebach has endured deep sadness and the agony of severe anxiety. She also suffers from bipolar disorder. “As soon as I started painting, I just did not want to stop. The peacefulness and relief I felt was unimaginable. My hope is to impact, through art, those who see it, so they feel the wonder of the world.”

Jess Avery  Collegeville, PA
Avery was born in 2000 and was introduced to paints. Today Avery uses acrylic paint, colored pencil, and crayon in creating her artwork. Avery says that her inspiration comes from the supportive people around her regularly acknowledging her artistic talent and creativity.

Jack Beverland  San Antonio, FL
Beverland, better known as “Mr. B.” is a self-taught Southern folk artist who finds peace of mind in creating art. Starting at the bottom of the corporate ladder, his work ethic later placed him at the top of one of America’s largest chain stores. After being forced into retirement after 32 years of loyal service, he felt betrayed of loyal service, he felt betrayed and helpless and his emotions turned to anger and rage. In 1987, Beverland sustained significant injuries in an auto accident, she was introduced to paints. Today Avery uses acrylic paint, colored pencil, and crayon in creating her artwork. Avery says that her inspiration comes from the supportive people around her regularly acknowledging her artistic talent and creativity.

Linda Kinningworth, Pick One

Debby Dernberger, Yellow Hibiscus

Leslie Zukor, Moof Behind The Wheel
He was ultimately diagnosed with uncinaire seizures and spina bifida. Beverland says, “The sun comes up in the east and sets in the west. You pray to God that everything will happen good in between, but sometimes it doesn’t.” Beverland conquered his “angry beast within” through his art. His works portray the simple life—the life he wants to live, the days of childhood, the dreams he once had and most importantly, the way he would like life to be.

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. “I am unable to paint when my hand is wet,” Bittenbender says, “but sometimes it doesn’t.” Bittenbender believed interesting hand as well as his breathing. However, Bittenbender says that he has complications with his breathing which makes breathing difficult. “I am unable to paint when my hand is wet,” Bittenbender says, “but sometimes it doesn’t.” Bittenbender believed interesting hand as well as his breathing. However, Bittenbender says that he has complications with his breathing which makes breathing difficult.

Robert Bohle Arlington, VA

Bolle uses mostly acrylics because he loves how the paint looks after it dries. He loves the various mediums he can use with acrylics. They can add another dimension, both literally and figuratively. Bohle paints mostly abstracts because he wants the painting itself—the color, consistency, value, shapes and so on—to communicate visually to the viewer. Bohle says, “Representational art can rely on responses to the familiar in our world. Rather, I want to say something to the reader, something in a whisper, sometimes with a slap of the face.” Bohle has suffered with Parkinson’s disease for the past 18 years. He has had four surgeries trying to hold back the progression. Bohle has the usual tremors and stiff movement. “The jagged edges and the colors and brushstrokes that appear in my paintings represent the interface now between me and the universe.”

Bohle believes in “keeping the best to life and not holding back; always press on to new horizons and stay committed to serving the public through your practice.”

Don Brewer Philadelphia, PA

Brewer is dedicated to making art every day. This includes his passion for drawing, painting, writing, blogging, photography, video, web design and search engine optimization. Brewer sees multimedia as a means to incorporate visual and communication skills, as well as drawing and writing, with computer technologies such as video, photography and internet experience design. Whether it’s making a mark with charcoal on paper or writing computer code, both provide Brewer with an outward expression of his visions of the world. Living with Crohn’s disease has both positive and negative effects on his artwork. “On the one hand, Brewer stays home on the computer a lot and has created an online persona that reaches a wide audience. On the other hand, sometimes he doesn’t feel well enough to travel to art shows and events, attend art workshops or write his art blog. “My fans don’t know me as a disabled person; they support me for who I am, as an artist.”

Shelby Brown Hawai’i

Brown’s work is forged from her own technicolor daydreamed world which is then translated onto a surface. It is a compilation of featureless figures and loud vivid colors. He works extensively throughout the mid-Atlantic region in galleries including Space 126, Flisler/ Olmstead, and John Lucas Gallery.

Bryan has been a visual artist and his varied careers include being an art teacher, filmmaker, a partner of a fine craft gallery, a jewelry designer/goldsmith, and a photographer (since 1983). Retinitis pigmentosa has gradually narrowed his visual field, reduced color perception, caused night blindness, and slowed down adapting to bright and dim light. Bryan’s pictures continue to remain engaging and reorganize his photographic life through photo assemblages that question a comfortable reality. He says “I became a better photographer after I learned that I was losing my eyesight.” Bryan’s work has been in exhibitions at The Smithsonian Institute, the Kennedy Center, Bryan Maw Rehab Hospital and numerous other museums and galleries.
Mary Ellen Caby. Philadelphia, PA
Caby is a native of West Philadelphia who is inspired by art. She enjoys using bright colors in her creations and is excited to exhibit her work. She lives and takes art classes at Inglis House, a specialty nursing care facility that provides long-term, residential care for adults with physical disabilities. “Art inspires me. I enjoy our classes and I’m always learning something new. It makes me feel happy.”

Brian Cagle. Newport News, VA
Brian Cagle is an art educator, sculptor and craftsman. He focuses on tasks to completion and rote memory retention extremely difficult. While he has always excelled at conceptual knowledge, things like names and dates are like water through a sieve to his mind. Sculpture and wood working have always been the attraction. “Through sculpture and wood working I find a focus and clarity of mind unlike any other in my life and through my art I found my passion for teaching.”

Anthe Capitan-Valas. Flourtown, PA
Capitan-Valas’ mission is to create interesting and distinctive art that spreads joy to those who admire and own it. A former dancer, she has survived several car accidents and is currently overcoming post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Capitan-Valas’ current muse is motion, dance, music and life. “I like to create and do not matter the circumstances.”

Monica Chulewicz. Snapdragon, NY
Chulewicz primarily works as a printmaker and fiber artist, often working in monotype and cyanotypes. Themes she addresses in her art practice convey the daily struggles she deals with living with several chronic and progressive illnesses, both known and undiagnosed. Chulewicz often focuses on pain, grief/fear, the unknown, alienation, and more. Her artwork has been a great outlet for her to convey what words come short in short description. When new symptoms arise or existing ones worsen tenfold, Chulewicz often very quickly thinks of how she could convey this on paper. “In many ways, it’s my voice and how I deal with the turmoil of profound and declining health.”

Betsy Clayton. Zebreth, PA
Art has always been a part of Clayton’s life. When her eight children were young, she taught art classes, experimented in costuming and set design, and provided artwork for their school events. Since becoming blind due to macular degeneration, she has focused her focus from two-dimensional works to sculpture and paper mâché. Following her diagnosis, Clayton’s strong will and determination inspired her to continuously improve her art’s quality. As a mother, grandmother, and daycare provider for 25 years, Clayton’s love of children is apparent in her work. She has exhibited work in the National Exhibits of Blind Artists, the Wills Eye Hospital and the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

Cathy Cobb. Shrewsbury, PA
Cobb’s acrylic painting journey began in 2016 after a life-altering diagnosis of lupus nephritis. She picked up some supplies and something inside her took off. Everyday experiences became abstracted hundreds of different angles throughout her initial adjustment and recovery. Fear, determination, despair, and hope were daily companions. Painting helped Cobb explore and express these emotions safely and fully. A forced slower pace gave her a greater appreciation for daily blessings, a consistent artistic theme. Cobb’s artwork helps her focus on the joy of now and the hope of the future. “Painting has opened up an exciting new chapter in my life that, despite my condition, makes me feel strong and resilient.”

Debra Hope Colliang. West Harwich, MA
Colliang says her artwork is her “dialogue with the world,” where she draws a sentence or each stroke on canvas a paragraph. It’s the language of creating oil paintings that connects her to the world and has done so throughout her life. The subjects, objects, scenes and landscapes she is touched by are her means of artistic communication to identify the content. When eyes of an animal reach out to her, or a musician’s music inspires her, Colliang responds with artwork to express her feelings. She sustained a traumatic brain injury (TBI) from a horseback riding accident that significantly changed her life. Colliang 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 art.”

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, mosaic, silver work and fabric design. It’s through this journey that the images in one medium often inspire and flow through others. Guilian-Bauri syndrome slowed life into a much slower 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, and for her 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.

Malcolm Corley. Lancaster, PA
Corley, born in 1999, was diagnosed with autism at the age of three. He has had three solo art shows, and his drawings and paintings have been published in Hot Metal Bridge, Up the Staircase, Fusion, and The Pen Review. Corley says he wants his art to make people happy.

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

Mike Coury. Fort Bragg, CA
Coury likes to draw animals and people. He also enjoys painting the ocean and the sunsets. Coury says he loves his sisters very much and he loves making art and selling it.

Paul Cox. Coatesville, PA
Cox was a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital after suffering a tragic motorcycle accident. Even with significant brain and spinal injuries, he resumed his photography as soon as possible while still a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab. His first photographs after his accident were on the hospital grounds. Cox chose the Canadian Geese as his first subjects and continued photographing them through his outpatient therapy as well. Cox’s art continues to play a significant role in helping him manage his life-changing experience.

Communication with other people continues to be a large challenge for Cox. His photographs have given him a way to communicate and share emotions with family and friends.

Jen Dacota. Conshohocken, PA
Art was always a part of Dacota’s life but more as a hobby than a career. Following a traumatic closed head injury, art took center stage and she began to paint as a therapeutic means to stimulate brain activity. Many of her works were created using her fingers and hands rather than brushes. She prefers this method when the subject matter and medium allow it. It is very instinctual and “free.” Her paintings contain brilliant vivid color, and expressive form and movement. “I paint the way I see things, and how I feel regarding various personal as well as global events. Since my vision was once again affected by a traumatic brain injury, I no longer has normal vision, and would no longer be able to reproduce an image as it actually exists. I feel that this “disability” has served me well as it allows me to truly be self-expressive.”

Monique Dennis. Dallas, PA
Dennis attends the Verve Virtu Art Studio in Dallas, Pennsylvania. Having cerebral palsy, she has limited dexterity and mobility.
in her arms and hands. Dennis does not let any limitations get in her way of creating unique, fun and whimsical creations. She enjoys creating and writing button sculptures such as angels, trees and more. She also creates beautiful earrings, bracelets and necklaces utilizing a variety of beads and buttons. Dennis also enjoys creating with guava or wax batiks on muslin where she uses fabric dyes in bright colors. Her imagination is limitless, as she comes up with very unique ideas and inspirations. Dennis is very generous and loves to create gifts for others. She fulfills her joy from creating and it enhances her life.

Debby Dernberger
San Francisco, CA

Dernberger is an accomplished professional artist who studied in California. With more than 25 years of fine art showing in murals and sign painting business, and teaching art to seniors and developmentally disabled adults, she shares her passion for the arts with her local community. Dernberger has completed more than 100 of her paintings in the last few years, and her inspiration seems limitless. She paints vibrant images that capture the essence of life itself with a sincere and inimitable vision in every paint stroke. She finds truth to always be stranger than fiction. Although Dernberger has been creating art all her life, it is the therapy that has saved her life over the years when she was unable to get to a doctor’s office. She celebrates 20+ years of sobriety and makes time to paint almost every day.

Samuel Dietze
Albion, 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. Art has allowed him to meet new people and he enjoys getting his work out there for the public to see.

Thomas Dillon
Stroudsburg, PA

Dillon first learned the basics 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 spectrum disorder. “There are days where my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special.”

Gwen Duda
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

With a firm foundation in impressionism, Duda’s work is now best described as abstract expressionism. She uses primarily acrylics, watercolors, charcoal, and oils to create nature-inspired paintings. Her artwork strives to communicate the power, intensity and beauty, and healing magic of nature. In all of its seasons and moods, Duda finds solace and strength in nature, from the night skies to the day’s sunlight, the winds, trees and more. She also creates wearable art utilizing a variety of media, 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 intense mental illness. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate what I feel and experience.”

Allison Doach
Edison, NJ

Doach is a formally trained artist living in Edison, New Jersey. She uses a variety of media, including colored pencils and acrylics, and her favorite subject matter is flowers. Doach likes to create photorealistic artwork. When she looks at a photograph, she is able to create a composition that is hand-paint each design with numbers printed, Eilersen would frame pen and ink designs and had a successful career as an artist. She developed a series of pen and ink designs and had them printed. Eilersen would hand-paint each design with acrylics in different color mottos. Though she had already stopped creating her paintings due to a variety of circumstances, Eilersen developed macular degeneration in 2000. Her disease progressed to the point where she decided to live with her son. It was Eilersen’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. Eilersen 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 in his teens while watching The Magic of Oil Painting, an instructional television show hosted by PBS. He saved money from various jobs to purchase paint and drawing supplies. Art was always pushed in the back burner until he was forced to retire after his diagnosis with muscular dystrophy in 2013. His arms and legs were affected, and he realized he might lose his ability to paint. Emerson faced depression but realized the key to overcoming his feelings was to push himself to create new art. After identifying a new perspective, he says colors were different, and he found himself looking at simple things, studying different light sources and finding the colors buried in shadows.
hidden in bright light, Emerson doesn’t know how much longer he’ll be able to hold a brush, but for now, will continue to create art. Gen Farrell, Burkles, TX Farrell is currently retired from a 25-year teaching career in high school art. Pursuing her artwork full-time, she works in a traditional method, primarily in oil paint. Her images are of the life that she lives with and the people and the horses that she knows. Farrell has a benign essential tremor, which she has lived with since she was 20 years old. Her work has always given her a sense of self-worth and achievement. Farrell says that people are always amazed that she can do what she does with a tremor. Her handwriting is terrible, but for some reason she can paint. Farrell is inspired by the words spoken in the movie Inception, “You mustn’t be afraid to dream a little bigger, darling.” —Debra Hope Colligan

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

Gail Foley, Royerford, PA Foley has been an avid 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. Foley 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 Foley following an accident resulting in a traumatic brain injury. She says it helps her uncork the inarticulate, the unspoken, the mindless, 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

Robert Gallagher, Berwyn, PA Gallagher also started painting regularly since the retirement from his law practice in 2001 due to his disability. He is entirely self-taught and he finds it cathartic to paint. Gallagher’s paintings, acrylic on canvas, are full of vivid color. “I paint what is there, not what I saw,” is his explanation of the many abstract paintings he has completed in the last several years. Gallagher says that because his disability severely limits the use of his hands, he has had to adapt over the years and innovate, in order to create the images he envisions. He says it takes time and patience for him to finish a painting, but fortunately Gallagher has plenty of both. “I recognize the therapeutic power of art. It helps transcend daily life and reach into the creative side of my brain.”

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 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 bone. This condition caused her to rely on the use of a wheelchair for mobility. While growing up, Geiger had a birdfinder 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!”

Maria Genovese, Drexel Hill, PA Genovese was born in Southern Italy and began drawing as a youngster when she took a sketching course at Rome’s Fine Art Institute. She is passionate about creating art and using her God-given talent! Genovese continues to learn watercolor techniques and prefers sketching faces and human figures. In September of 2015, during a routine cataract surgery, a cataract broke inside her eye, while being extracted. Her vision is constantly blurry and irritated which prevents her from living a normal life. When Genovese sketches or paints, her eye gets blurry and irritated to the extent that she has to stop for a long time. The only way she can adjust to this is to pray, follow her doctor’s advice and wait for her vision to return.

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.” Gerbstadt’s life ever since he was able to make something from scratch. “His inspiration comes from his mom, who showed him that he was able to make something with his hands. Gerbstadt says that his motivation comes from knowing that each moment of life is a gift that is given to him, 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 makes me feel part of society and that I belong.”

Bunky Ginsburg, Essington, PA Ginsburg receives a great deal of satisfaction expressing herself artistically. Her pursuit was interrupted in 1973 from a serious automobile accident resulting in a broken femur, broken jaw, temporary left-side paralysis, eye displacement and brain trauma. She was treated at Riddle Hospital and Bynum Mae Rehabilitation Hospital. Ginsburg says it gives her pleasure to have the opportunity to show her artwork at the Art Ability exhibit. “They have helped me physically, mentally and emotionally!” She enjoys Paul Klee, Claude Monet, the Wyeths, Thomas Kincaid and Berthe Morisot. “After being a wife and mother, I feel genuinely fortunate to have had an art environment all my life. I never having art back in my life again has given me something beautiful to work with!”

Patricia Goodrich, Richlandtown, PA Goodrich is a visual artist and a poet. She says 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

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Robert Geiger, Hopewell, NJ Geiger is currently retired from a 25-year teaching career in high school art. Pursuing his artwork full-time, he works in a traditional method, primarily in oil paint. 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 is photographing in the permanent collection of the Museum of Fine Arts Houston and in Rice University. He says, “Parkinson’s disease gave me the marvellous 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.”

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Patricia Goodrich, Richlandtown, PA Goodrich is a visual artist and a poet. She says 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
and the mental play. Goodrich works with a variety of media, as well as creating earthworks and installations. Having lost her lower left leg in a motorcycle accident, Goodrich says 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.” That off-kilter, heightened awareness is an asset in the arts, both visual and literary. “The sense of connection and, at the same time, freedom is a gift art gives me. I hope to pass it on to those who view what I create.”

Linda Goschke. Philadelphia, PA. Goschke is interested in our sensual experience, especially of the natural world, in other words, our expectations related to sensual experience, especially of beauty. Common objects have power to evoke unexpected responses. Her work allows her to examine our relationship to the environment and experiment with abstract interpretations of it. Goschke looks for revealing, unexpected, and often challenging views. A brush with death from an automobile accident and the resulting traumatic brain injury made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretation of reality. Goschke’s physical challenges pushed her more into the digital realm: process, methodology and multiple creative outcomes, assisting with focus, and using few hazardous chemicals. “Art is about communicating ideas, no matter the medium.”

Linnie Greenberg. Ardmore, PA. Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing retinitis pigmentosa (which resulted in 80% hearing loss) and long after her children were grown and she didn’t have to earn a living, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on sinks, 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 the watercolor artist Richard Schmidt, “[...] a faint confluence of the tangible and the spiritual is where art comes from. It has no known limits.” Greenstein’s eye disease occasionally necessitates some brief artistic down times to allow her vision to come back into focus. During this interval, she is forced to stop any activity that requires sharp vision. “Window” and captures the image on her iPhone. Later she sits and layering transparent pigments. She loves the way watercolors move and mingle; the mystic mingling of pigments which she is then left to accept, and find a solution that is beautiful and representative of the image she wishes to preserve.

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

Jessica Hays. Blooms, MT. Hays is a conceptual photographer, alternative process printmaker, and curator from Blooms, Montana. Her work focuses on human relationships, mental health, trauma, loss, and places of healing. She works in a variety of processes including pigment printing, historic photo processes, and handmade artist books. Hays struggles with mental illness, which serves as inspiration for her work, and drives her to create and share in order to help others with similar struggles. 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 pedestrian Dr. Heitler recently retired from working at the Child Neurology Service at Winthrop University Hospital. Diagnosed with 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.

Pat Henriques. Key West, FL. Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus is on enameling and making pieces from fine or sterling silver. Henriques’ specialty in enameling is cloisonné. Stones are used in her work as well. Nature inspires me and I am amazed by the designs and hues that are found in various stones and flowers.” Henriques has traveled and the resulting traumatic brain injury made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretation of reality. Goschke’s physical challenges pushed her more into the digital realm: process, methodology and multiple creative outcomes, assisting with focus, and using few hazardous chemicals. “Art is about communicating ideas, no matter the medium.”

Linnie Greenberg. Ardmore, PA. Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing retinitis pigmentosa (which resulted in 80% hearing loss) and long after her children were grown and she didn’t have to earn a living, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on sinks, 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 the watercolor artist Richard Schmidt, “[...] a faint confluence of the tangible and the spiritual is where art comes from. It has no known limits.” Greenstein’s eye disease occasionally necessitates some brief artistic down times to allow her vision to come back into focus. During this interval, she is forced to stop any activity that requires sharp vision. “Window” and captures the image on her iPhone. Later she sits and layering transparent pigments. She loves the way watercolors move and mingle; the mystic mingling of pigments which she is then left to accept, and find a solution that is beautiful and representative of the image she wishes to preserve.

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

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Linnie Greenberg. Ardmore, PA. Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing retinitis pigmentosa (which resulted in 80% hearing loss) and long after her children were grown and they 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 mainly self-taught and she says she is still exploring and learning about art. Greenberg cuts 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.”

Chris Hinchee. Philadelphia, PA. Hinchee moved to Ingham House about one year ago and says he enjoys participating in the art program because he likes to learn new things. In addition to developing his painting skills, Hinchee is continuing to flex his artistic muscles by learning to play the piano. Kong Ho. Bradfordin, PA. Using a technique consisting of free-flowing, wave-like patterns with subtly controlled washes of glaze, Ho’s flores-spirals paintings exemplify the theme and style of her ongoing body of work, the “Luminosity Series.” She feels her color and disability strengths combine to enhance her personality and sensibility in art-making. He’s art enables her to express her feelings about the limitations of her physical capacity through the symbolic imagery of transformation and change. He says that to a certain extent, her disability affects her in pursuing the spiritual freedom in her work. “The symbolic
the outcomes are expressed in place on a subatomic level and much to actually see. It takes science today there is no longer finds at garage sales and thrift and an abstract material artist.

versus the background. Limited to on the subject in her paintings different than full-sighted people.

peripheral and distance vision is in one eye and has limited vision 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.

Johnson is an artist working in oil and cold wax, acrylic, mixed media, and photography. Kline says he enjoys working rapidly and spontaneously, incorporating all the “accidents and mistakes” as they occur. His inspiration comes from constantly observing his surroundings and studying lines, shapes, color, patterns, textures and shadows. His subject matter is drawn from memories of places and events, topography, historical periods of art, and sometimes purely from the visual and tactile sensations of surfaces and objects. “In the end, my goal is to create a work that is expressive, more organic than planned and often emotionally driven and serendipitous.”

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Debbie Huff

Landenberg, PA

Huff is an emerging artist who has been painting with alcohol ink for two years, enjoying how bright and vibrant this medium is. She started to paint after an ankle injury, which stopped her from her previous hobbies of cycling and hiking. Huff has a personal interest in painting wildlife and flowers from her local area or bright-colored animals she has seen in the zoo. Born with visual impairments, she is legally blind in one eye and has limited vision in her “good” eye. Huff’s depth, peripheral and distance vision is different than full-sighted people, which causes her to focus more on the subject in her paintings versus the background. Limited to just two hours a day, she feels the still life art forms to create a need to be in.

Han Huisman

Saint Croix Falls, WI

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

Alonzo Humphrey

Philadelphia, PA

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

Jeffrey Iverson

Springfield, IL

Iverson’s work is a synthesis of the intricate, chaotic, and unpredictable. He works primarily in digital media, focusing on colorful abstracts, complex fractal manipulations, and digital photography, with brief incursions into traditional media such as acrylic on various supports. Iverson works with shapes, colors and textures in an attempt to reach something greater than the sum of those parts. “Art makes it possible for me to share the way I see the world, both two- and negatively, and engage the larger philosophical questions of what is beauty or art, and how can it be used to communicate an inner world to the broader world.” Iverson’s physical and mental issues make it challenging to produce work of high quality, but he judges the quality of his own work, and open himself up for judgment.

Mimi Barclay Johnson

Newfield, PA

After a successful career as a stage/scenery/lighting designer for opera companies and finally for the Orpheus Revives in Philadelphia, Johnson began to paint the 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 plein air again or even stand at an easel. Painfully, she was still 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 perceptions/understanding. Johnson is motivated by the statement: “Art is long, follow your awe.”

Mark Kaufman

Wilmington, DE

Kaufman says our humanity grants us only partial access to the truth. Much of his truth emerges from being biolar. He works in watercolors, layering washes. The figures are explorations of mood and emotion rather than landscapes. Kaufman is a signature member of the Philadelphia, Baltimore and Delaware Watercolor Societies. He has appeared in exhibitions across the country including the New Orleans National Show, Focus Project International Gallery, Gallery 311, Nude Nite in Orlando and Tampa, Florida, Au Natural in Portland Oregon and the annual exhibitions of Works on Paper at the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pennsylvania and Houston Watercolor Societies. Kaufman now lives in Wilmington, Delaware, with his wife of 50 years and his cat named Cat.

Mark Kelly

Philadelphia, PA

Living at Ingle’s House for more 24 years, Kelly loves to read and has a great sense of humor. She is one of the original members of the Exploring Art group and loves to paint. Kelly lives with painting and vision impairments and is a talented artist who loves to paint flowers and work on colored pencil drawings.

Linda Killingsworth

Ephrata, PA

Killingsworth was forced to give up her active lifestyle after several surgeries. She became seriously depressed and credentials her self-taught painting art as the activity which saved her. Killingsworth chooses colored pencils because they allow her the fine details she loves. She is intrigued by the awe of ordinary objects and the artistic possibilities they offer. She is a member of the Colored Pencil Society of America, and has been an award winner in their International Exhibition. Her artwork has also been published in colored pencil magazines, and she has illustrated two books. Killingsworth also designs note cards from her work for colored pencil drawings.

Cheryl Kinderknecht

Rhodenton, 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 Kansal High Plains landscape where she grew up. Emotions, dreams, myths, metaphors, memories and ancestral lands 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 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.

Paul Kline

Coral Gables, FL

After abandoning his first career of painting and photography for almost 50 years, Kline returned to his passion after being diagnosed with parkinsonism. He works in many different media: encaustic (hot wax), the combination of oil and cold wax, acrylic, mixed media, and photography. Kline enjoys working rapidly and spontaneously, incorporating all the “accidents and mistakes” as they occur. His inspiration comes from constantly observing his surroundings and studying lines, shapes, color, patterns, textures and shadows. His subject matter is drawn from memories of places and events, topography, historical periods of art, and sometimes purely from the visual and tactile sensations of surfaces and objects. “In the end, my goal is to create a work that is expressive, more organic than planned and often emotionally driven and serendipitous.”

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Amanda Klinges
Beach Haven Gardens, NJ
Though born with normal hearing, at age 25, Klinges began to lose this capability and was deaf within 18 months. She feels her artwork has been enhanced by her deafness. Klinges says her deafness has been a “silent” piece that stands alone in a noisy world that does not listen. “Sometimes you listen better with your eyes and hands.” Using acrylic, Klinges paints heavily, with a chaos of colors to create different textures, movements and emotions throughout the canvas, which have brought her frustrations of ignorance to the surface. Klinges says that people think she’s missing something. They do not realize that she’s not sad by her deafness. “Have you ever thought what you may be missing from all the noise of ignorance? See my deaf voice within my paintings. I hear what you cannot see.”

Eamon Klinges
Dallastown, PA
Klinges attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio once a week. He enjoys painting with acrylic paint, paint blocking, and experimenting with fabric dyes on wood or rice paper. Art is her doctor for her developments in art. “Sometimes you listen better with your eyes and hands.”

The “sense of connection and, at the same time, freedom is a gift art gives me. I hope it pass on to those who view what I create.” —Patricia Goodrich

“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 involves using a single incombustible block to carve away a layer at a time as each successive color is ink applied. Finally with the last color, most of the block’s surface has disappeared.”

Daphne Lacroix
Phiadelphia, PA
Lacroix’s professional training was in graphic design, but she says her heart always loved the fine art of painting. She began taking continuous education classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA), and never looked back. Lacroix paints with water-soluble oils on paper and canvas, and her primary subject matter is figures in space. “They are realistically portrayed with a touch of the surreal.” Lacroix says her first art history course laid the groundwork for her intense interest in painting and all visual arts. “This spurred her on to sculpture and museum-hopping.” In 1994, the diagnosis of stage-three breast cancer led Lacroix to making works of art her primary goal. She says a hand-made work of art enhances her sense of well-being.

Cindy Lally
Bensalem, PA
Lally has lived in various states due to her husband being transferred frequently in his sales career. She always landed jobs in the graphic arts field. While her two boys were young and in school, she worked for a temporary agency part-time. Lally suffered a traumatic brain injury from falling off a motorized scooter in 2001. Unfortunately she wasn’t wearing a helmet. While a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab, she continued art displayed left a big impact on her since she loves creating art.

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 jewelry designer, decorative painter, 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.

Cheerie Lee
Philadelphia, PA
“Even though my disability would define me...so I let it.” Lee says her work stresses the boundaries of ordinary matter and substance, questioning, “How far” before strength must succumb to its weakness. Her art takes the form of life, asking life, “How strong are we of mind, body or spirit?” It silently poses the same question our universe shouts every day. “How far, before you break?” Lee wishes to provoke contemplative conversations of the tensions and compressions that bridge and anchor us all. Her current direction is propelled by rigorous and impenetrable personal struggles at hand.

Koun Lee
Los Angeles, CA
Lee has a synesthetic response to visual stimuli. Her instructor describes her as, “responding to the color yellow by holding her nose or an electric blue makes her fan her face as if the color itself causes a physical reaction.” She has worked in a variety of mediums but she prefers painting and mixed media on paper. Her finished works are often textured and appear thick after building.
up many semi-transparent layers. After spending the first years adapting to his new life, he took classes in composition, design, drawing and painting. Mann started doing landscape photography and B&W art photography. Wanting to improve his work, he began using software that allowed him to manipulate images, and change composition and colors. In 2004 Mann was diagnosed with Parkinson’s. There was a place where he could no longer create but after undergoing DBS surgery, he’s back to his images. Mann is inspired by the Kurdish artist Toshi Barzanji. “I have six small grandchildren now and I hope when they grow up and look at the images their granddad has created, they will look at the world through my eyes.”

Mackie, Samuel. Baltimore, MD

Mackie joined Make Studio in 2012. He has a right eye, causing difficulty reading and focusing for long periods. After spending the first years adapting to his new life, he took classes in composition, design, drawing and painting. Mann started doing landscape photography and B&W art photography. Wanting to improve his work, he began using software that allowed him to manipulate images, and change composition and colors. In 2004 Mann was diagnosed with Parkinson’s. There was a place where he could no longer create but after undergoing DBS surgery, he’s back to his images. Mann is inspired by the Kurdish artist Toshi Barzanji. “I have six small grandchildren now and I hope when they grow up and look at the images their granddad has created, they will look at the world through my eyes.”

McDaniel, Alexander. New York, NY

McDaniel is currently attending Old Dominion University and plans on continuing her education at Eastern Virginia Medical School for Art Therapy. Her main goal is to spread awareness and heal the tormented. “I want to help them become the best version of themselves and help them find a path to recovery.”

McGuigan, Merritt. Dallas, TX

McKenna came to the U.S. from Mexico at 30 years ago, as a widower with two small kids. After spending the first years adapting to his new life, he took classes in composition, design, drawing and painting. Mann started doing landscape photography and B&W art photography. Wanting to improve his work, he began using software that allowed him to manipulate images, and change composition and colors. In 2004 Mann was diagnosed with Parkinson’s. There was a place where he could no longer create but after undergoing DBS surgery, he’s back to his images. Mann is inspired by the Kurdish artist Toshi Barzanji. “I have six small grandchildren now and I hope when they grow up and look at the images their granddad has created, they will look at the world through my eyes.”

Merrick,15

McDowell, Harold, MD

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Mckenzie, Benjamin. Seattle, WA

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Vickie McMillan-Hayes  Katy, TX

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

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 had lost their usefulness, retaining only memory, and combines them in a such a way that the use, like a phoenix from the ashes finds 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 for me.”

Lawrence Meyers Pooll, PA

Meyers is a watercolorist and singer. “Art provides an opportunity to develop my creativity and express vision of the surrounding world’s beauty.” Meyers is hearing, and vision-impaired and most significantly, has tritanope colorblindness, which requires him to paint by relying more heavily on value (depth/darkness of color) rather than color itself, to create his artwork. The result allows him to take the complexity of nature and reduce it to simplicity, while expressing his wonder in the beauty that surrounds us. He is grateful that it has connected him to God’s design and allows him to share with others through his painting, teaching and the resulting social connection and experience.

Thomas Miller Whippany, NJ

Miller grew up in Milwaukee and served in Vietnam with the Marines. He returned from the war severely wounded and finally gained a Master of Fine Arts degree in 1974. Miller’s current “Flags of Our Conflicts” series consists of drawings, paintings and ceramics and deals with different conflicts (20 wars) involving the United States. He also dabbles in butterflies and eagles. The quote that encouraged Miller is from Georgia O’Keeffe, “I decided that the only thing I could do was to make what nobody else’s business was to paint. I could do as I choose because no one would care.” Miller’s disability is a result of the war where he lost an eye, but he says that he has learned to compensate for that. Miller believes he has made the most of his life by assisting veterans and their families.

Nicole Mittis St. Laurent, Canada

After spending 25 years working as a technical support specialist, a situation that back in Saigon and Mittis to take a leave of absence. As a way of acknowledging her new physical limitations, she started sketching. Mittis is a self-taught, mixed media artist often working with found paper materials like old maps, sheet music and wallpaper as well as a variety of other mediums. She has a portfolio of varied accomplishments, including a publication, an art exhibit, workshops and community projects. “Painting has been a masterful process. Even though sometimes it is challenging to paint, I continue to work with oils and other mediums.”

Victor Mordasov West Chester, PA

Mordasov is 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 his instincts. “It helps me express my emotions. I usually say that I have a conversation with my canvas and I am often inspired by music.”

Hal Moran St. Charles, MO

Moran grew up with and still struggles with Tourette syndrome and other co-occurring disorders. Perhaps this, along with having somewhat of an explorer, spurred his interest in photography.

Morgan 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 Morgan, 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 to 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.

Frank Morrone Coaltown, PA

Morrone says that the good side to his stroke was that it got him involved in art through art therapy. He is a firm believer that art therapy does work. “Art Ability gives me something to look forward to each year. It gives me a challenge to produce something new and better along with the goal of Best in Show.” Morrone has a workspace dedicated to his art. Every day he can go down, put on his music, paint, and create. Morrone says that it takes him mind away from the things he can no longer do such as bicycling and swimming in the ocean, or any activity requiring good balance and stamina. Photography has also given him another way of expressing his creative self.

Nancy Nabbandan Wynnewood, PA

Nabbandan believes the synthesis of the arts—music, fine art and craft, and literature—reflects a universal appeal to a deeper aesthetic language which can be satisfied in any number of ways. Jewels, drawn from nature, has become her creative outlet. Her work focuses on abstracting nature’s beauties into wearable art forms. Using freshwater pearls, semi-precious stones, preserved flowers and handmade polymer clay seed pods and flowers, Nabbandan creates pieces of art to connect us back to nature.

Daniel Neufeld Philadelphia, PA

As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, but it didn’t stop him from gaining and sharing as many talents as possible. Neufeld grew fond of art through his mother, who’s also an artist. He likes drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, books and animation. Neufeld says that Neufeld enjoys capturing with his pencils and paints include people, still lifes, sites that he sees on his travels; buildings, landscapes, seascapes, and railroads from both direct observation and photographs he takes. “Art has inspired and helped me see things in the world creatively.” In addition to art, Neufeld also enjoys playing sports, singing, playing the cello, cooking, and making movies.

Thu Nguyen Kamuela, HI

Nguyen was born in Vietnam. “Being very shy,” she says, “I spent much of my childhood hiding away upstairs painting, instead of playing with other children.” In 1975 when Saigon fell, and in the resulting confusion, she became separated from her family. She ended up in a refugee camp near Hong Kong for a year prior to immigrating to the United States as an orphan. After one very snowy and cold winter in Pennsylvania, she went to Los Angeles to stay with some relatives. Nguyen went on to get an art degree before settling down to pursue her art career in Los Angeles, and later Seattle and finally Hawaii, “with the big excitement being adopt my American name.”

Debra Noah Soap Lake, WA

Artist all of her life, Noah has extensive formal training in painting and glassblowing. In 2015 she became permanently
disabled with rheumatoid arthritis and for a period could no longer pursue art. She was fiercely determined to someday blow glass again and build a hot glass studio. This required relearning, working solo and smaller. Corning Glass Studio in New York accepted her for a winter intensive and the

“I open my mind and allow my memory and imagination to cut through the blindness in order to create the visions that I see.” —David Kontro

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

Alexander Hoyos, Energy—The Rainbow Umbrella

Susanne Dagmar Olsen

Ingrid Bergmark, Germany

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 to 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.

Joanne Orth

Chester Springs, PA

Art transcends Orth’s physical limitations, making her appreciate how rich her life really is, and giving a new painting gives her a tremendous sense of accomplishment. “It reminds me that there’s beauty all around us and that life is good.” Orth tends to create self-expressive portraits of herself, focusing on body and details. 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.

Mary Paschos

Philadelphia, PA

Paschos is drawn to the process of creating and the release that follows. Her medium is typically watercolor or acrylic paint, as she brings to life images in her head of objects or places that inspire her. Life after injury is just that—it’s a new unknown state of mind. “I fluctuate between rich gratitude and appreciation for the colors of life, to a mundane irritancy at my inability to do small tasks well.” Paschos artwork is her reflection of these extremes that meets in the middle. She feels art doesn’t owe anything to anyone, and her recovery continues, this thought keeps her sane. She can create and not compare her current self to her pre-injury self. “Drawing and painting have kept me grounded during this post-injury lifestyle.”

Bernice Paul

Philadelphia, PA

Paul has studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, Flesher Art Memorial, the Barnes Foundation, and the Philadelphia Art League. 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. Paul just celebrated her 100th birthday and says she still gets great joy from painting and creating.

Treaver Pence

Pence has been an educator for 20 years, teaching art at the high school and college level. He also paints landscapes and has sold more than 350 of his works to clients across the United States, Canada and Australia. Pence is motivated by a quote from the famous El Piso artist, Bill Raczkay. “You have to paint a mile of paintings before you can call yourself a master.” As a person with scoliosis, Pence says, “I have learned to overcome the pain with art as my therapy.”

Christopher Pereto

A graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a BA in Applied Arts, Pfautz worked in the arts departments of Wanamaker’s, GE and McGraw-Hill before opening a graphic design studio. After a brain aneurysm, she turned to fine arts, which has become her therapy and escape. She works in pastel and acrylics striving to capture internal reactions to landscapes, seascapes and still lifes. Pfautz also serves on the Art Ability Committees.

Bill Porter

Pfautz believes that in many ways her artwork contradicts her disorder. “Obsessive compulsive disorder has the tendency to control my life; the choices I make, the actions I take, my interactions with others, the way I live my life, and the life that I am able to have. In contrast, the lines I make in my drawings are loose and wild, not rigid and restrictive.” Pfautz uses drawing to communicate and advocate for animals, wild and domestic. She sees these creatures undervalued and abused by human society. With this intimate art form of pencil line, pen, prismacolor, and oil pastel, Pfautz can express her intention to show the viewer that animals have feelings too and should be treated with respect and honor.

Ellie Pfautz

A graduate of Pennsylvania State University with a BA in Applied Arts, Pfautz worked in the arts departments of Wanamaker’s, GE and McGraw-Hill before opening a graphic design studio. After a brain aneurysm, she turned to fine arts, which has become her therapy and escape. She works in pastel and acrylics striving to capture internal reactions to landscapes, seascapes and still lifes. Pfautz also serves on the Art Ability Committees.

Bill Porter

In his art practice, Porter engages with influential imagery from his childhood, from comic strips to illustrated books. “This serves as an investigation into the labyrinthine narratives that influenced his formative understanding of heritage, identity and the mysteries of life. Working with house paint, book pages and reclaimed wood, Porter re-contextualizes forms, culled from then space of memory, fostering dialogue between images, text and materials. He is legally blind and was born with an incurable, progressive retinal disorder (retinitis pigmentosa). “Despite encouragement from medical experts to give up on visual art, I instead followed my passion, which serves as both a source of therapeutic escape and a unique avenue in which I can express and explore complex concepts and unconventional narratives.”

Cassandra Petrychuk

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Sinhara Sivakumar, Brookfield Dancer

ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES

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SUNY, College at Brockport. She works mainly with ceramics but also uses some mixed media. Richard says she loves creating with her hands. She observes what goes on in the world and places her own spin on what she sees. Creating art helps Richard to keep grounded and helps in easing the issues she faces from her disability. “I think life would be a little more difficult if I could not create art.” Sally Richards Media, PA With a lifelong desire to be a painter, 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. Richard’s work explores the “nature of place,” the essence and energy we feel when we experience our world in an intimate way. In 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.”

Kasey Riley Dallas, PA Riley attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio, a community-based art studio, which focuses on tapping into the creative energy of people with diverse abilities in Dallas, Pennsylvania. Due to Riley having cerebral palsy, she has limited dexterity and mobility in her arms and hands. Modified art brushes are utilized. She enjoys painting with acrylic paint, watercolor and fabric dyes. Whether painting on canvass, wood, or fabric, creating brings Riley relaxation and fulfillment. She loves painting with spring-like colors of flowers and nature scenes. Riley’s world is a rainbow of colors.

Maxine Rosen Penn Valley, PA Though a preschool teacher throughout her career, art was always Rosen’s passion. She is currently working in ceramics. Being mostly self-taught, Rosen feels this allows her a certain freedom of expression from expectation. Many of her ceramic pieces are playful with ideas coming from the “art of living.” She enjoys thinking in the narrative which has a story attached to each of her sculptural pieces. Often she will add another element combining ceramics with another material. Rosen says that art is her outlet and fills her need to be creative and express her hearing disability; it is something she can do alone without distraction.

Daniel Rothenberg Rochester, NY Rothenberg says his art is about the connection between abstraction and realism. His abstract work has elements of symbolism, while his realistic work has an abstract nature to it. He wants viewers to interpret the art for themselves while connecting it to their own lives. Rothenberg hopes every time that they look at his work, they see something new in it. He usually selects ideas that he is fascinated by and then tries to give the viewer that same feeling. The process is also important to him because each stroke reflects his expressive spirit; rough and impulsive while also being contemplative. “To me art is about adventure and pushing the limit. It is saying, ‘What if I can do this?’ and then doing it.”

Rick Ruark Pittsburgh, PA Ruark is a self-taught, Pittsburgh contemporary artist. He says “When I was 17, I began painting 35 years ago. The scope of his work spans realistic to geometrical pieces and represents over three decades of personal experimentation. His love of the arts can be best described as stated by George Bernard Shaw, “Without art, the crudeness of reality would make the world unbearable.” In recent years, he was diagnosed with peripheral neuropathy on the left side of his body which continues to progress. Around the same time he was wait-listed for a dual organ transplant. Ruark believes he has been his good fortune to be able to adapt painting to new methods and techniques to continue to be creatively productive.

Maria Sammartino Riverton, NJ Sammartino was born into a family of artists, and has spent many years creating art alongside her grandfather and brother. After being diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 2009, she found herself immersed in painting on a daily basis in order to help alleviate the physical pain that MS can cause. She has been a featured artist in local South Jersey juried exhibitions, and currently has paintings hanging in many virtual venues across the Midwest-Atlantic region. Sammartino has always been drawn to and intrigued by abstract art in landscape scenes and everyday life, and thus presents the viewer with a challenge in self-described “imagined landscapes” and abstract art that often deal with perspective and dimension. Each painting is different from the next, and not easily described.

Diane Savino Hatfield, MA As a young child, Savino’s Italian grandfather built small shrines in his garden as a means of protecting his crops. Small birdhouses were perched on poles like little temples. As a child, she was draughted by saints of Italy and the Virgin Mary dwelled in their interiors. This memory, along with her Italian heritage and love of the rural land, has influenced her art-making. Savino considers herself to be a visual storyteller who paints narratives and small tableaux. She has drawn inspiration from such Renaissance masters of narrative as Botticelli, Corello and Giotto. “Living with a neurological disability has led me to find refuge in my imagination and the peaceful place of my panels.”

Joseph Saxon Philadelphia, PA Saxon, born in Philadelphia, is an artist who draws from points in time and conceptual themes. He showed a persistent passion for drawing as a youth and was taken to his first formal art class at a Farmount Park arts program. His work brings to life his love of aesthetics. Watercolors, acrylics, oils, airbrushing and pastels are the tools that have canvassed Saxon’s work in a wide scale of subjects. He has participated in several art shows and has sold work in galleries and to private collectors in the Tri-State area. His use of space demands and invites the viewer to respond. Joseph Saxon’s work has a motif of dominant champions, that he engages the viewer to welcome and receive joy into their lives.

Jeremy Schack Arlington, TX Schack suffered a traumatic brain injury in a motorcycle accident when he was nine. Up until then he had a desire to become a sports athlete. Those experiences taught him to never give up and always push yourself. Schack began playing music after his injury to regain his coordination. That was his first experience with any art medium. He always had an interest in photography, and on a trip to Germany with his dad, he decided to take along an old digital camera. Schack’s artistic passion allowed him to master videography as well as different genres of music. Soon after, he was in his first traveling art exhibit. Schack’s artworks have been recognized nationally as well as in Switzerland and Russia.

Carla Schaeffer Phoenixville, PA 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 turning her hands to creating art allowed her to cope with the pain she was experiencing due to her medical condition. She was his first experience with any art medium. She always had an interest in photography, and on a trip to Germany with his dad, he decided to take along an old digital camera. Schack’s artistic passion allowed him to master videography as well as different genres of music. Soon after, he was in his first traveling art exhibit. Schack’s artworks have been recognized nationally as well as in Switzerland and Russia.

Molly Schappert Dallas, PA Schappert attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio, a community-based art studio which focuses on tapping into the creative energy of people with diverse abilities. She is developing her artistic skills through drawing, painting and batiks. Schappert is encouraged to experiment with different dyes and colors as she paints nature and flower scenes. Schappert also enjoys various subject matter such as creating mandalas. When

Joy Stasiak Dancing Triangles pendant

Amie Marie Sargis Staying Centered with a Fox

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House gives many opportunities drawing. She says, “Being at Inglis and her favorite medium is pencil 20 years. She has always loved art.

Scott is from North Philadelphia Philadelphia, PA Jacqueline Scott

we must honor and work with petty. Today these varied abilities decades now both have been opposed to any specific medium.

Schwarz resides in the Boston Watertown, MA

and painting and enjoying her time in the studio.

Debbie Huff, Eye of the Tiger

you can relate to other people, release your inner feelings and capabilities and find other people you can share common interest with." Scott has been involved with the Exploring Art Group for almost four years.

Christine Severson Richmond, VA Severson, a nurse, suffered a life-changing event in the late 1970s while transferring a quadriplegic while in a wheelchair. Shannon would have never considered herself an artist. However, art has provided with her that activity with 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 on photographs and incorporates various techniques, such as drawing to abstraction.

Shannon is drawn to abstract paintings and designs with bold colors and textures as well as black-and-white and landscape photography. Shannon combines mixed mediums of photography and digital painting as well. Her artistry provides a space for spiritual renewal and peace.

Craig Shelly Littleton, PA Shelly is quadriplegic attributed to a spinal cord injury he received in a car accident. In the mid-1980s he became interested in photography and has used various techniques, including gum dichromate printing, film, and digital manipulation of original images. In recent years, Shelly has begun experimenting with a technique some call scanography. His inspiration for photographing nude scenes began in college, where he was exposed to the artistic aspects of this subject. Shelly enjoys photographing other subjects, but being in a wheelchair presents a challenge regarding accessibility. Art has always been a major part of his life. “Before my accident I was a musician. My disability left me unable to perform, but it also presented a new and more gratifying means of creating art.”

Yoland Skeete Newark, NJ Skeete has made art and taken photographs since she was a child. Coming from a time and country where there were no ready-made clothes, prayers, sewing, and embroidery were needed. She learned what she learned at school. As a child, Skeete lost her hearing and then later developed alopica. Being different made her mother keep her near, and Skeete focused on art. “Because of the silence inside me, visible as well as invisible forms and textures, made up feelings. These are delicately entwined to a memory I seek to redevelop in my mixed media works, where memory and tactile forms converge.” Skeete says her work is a spiritual communion that allows her experiences to convey a sense of dance, in and out of a place that has no name, form or presence.

Amy Smith North Wales, PA Smith began her career as a marketing writer and editor. In 2015 she began taking art lessons while also teaching herself to paint. She left corporate life in 2016 and now focuses entirely on writing fiction and painting. Smith paints using water-soluble oils on stretched canvas because she loves to experiment with color and texture. In 2009, she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Smith was 28 at the time and the diagnosis was a major blow. In the ensuing 10 years, she suffered several relapses that left permanent disabilities impacting her vision and hand strength. Painting provides a creative outlet that helps Smith when she needs it most: navigating difficult emotions and working through mood swings.

Ken Smith Riverside, WI Smith's creative life began painting with oils. In 1998, Spiker's early career was in graphic arts. While raising children, she dove into volunteer projects and running. Those lonely, long-distance runs brought her clarity and in the late ’90s she returned to school to study painting. She fell in love with 1950s Bay Area figurative painting—expressionistic and anonymous. Her figures come from memory and she loves the smell and the serendipitous discovery that comes with painting with oils. In 1998, Spiker was thrown into a crock when her car was hit on I-95. She realized immediately that she was paralyzed but thought, “Thank God, I have my hands.” Art had become a driving force in her life before her accident. The accident sharpened this focus and through her painting, she found courage.

William Spiker Wilmington, DE Spiker has been a bilateral, below-the-knee amputee since 2011. While recovering from surgery and before mastering prosthetics, he was consumed with a desire to return to making art, specifically welded steel sculpture. Spiker soon discovered that working with power tools and welding equipment, while confined to a wheelchair, proved to be quite challenging. He worked on small pieces that later became parts of larger pieces. Spiker says, “The process demonstrated for me that making art was an essential part of recovering an enjoyable life in the face of considerable loss.” Producing welded sculpture for more than 15 years, Spiker has shown his work widely in both Pennsylvania and Delaware.

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 to 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. Store-bought fabric or alley trash, it doesn’t make a difference to her. In the view, the viewer may be moved by all as threads and she will use their character to make his work. Ann Bancroft told her, “Talk in a deep voice…they will listen.”

Carol Spiker Wilmington, DE
Elizabeth Sullivan, Watching You

I n 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.” —Mimi Barclay Johnson

Oni Strether East Orange, NJ

Strether is a photographer with a diagnosis as being on the autism spectrum. She does not see this as a disability, rather that it is more of a challenge with advantages and disadvantages. Strether has always been very aware of the sights and sounds around her, often noticing things that others may not. She frequently notices something beautiful and is moved to take a picture of it. She enjoys modifying images with Photoshop or Topaz. These programs help her create powerful images.

Siddhartha Sukla Cuttack, India

Siddhartha Sukla is a formally trained Indian artist who was born with hearing impairment. 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. Sukla works in both oil and watercolors but his specialty is in collage work. He hopes that his work creates enjoyment for all when people look at it in wonderment.

Billy Sukus Dallas, PA

Sukus is an artist with autism, who attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio a community-based art studio which focuses on tapping into the creative energy of people with diverse abilities. He enjoys painting and utilizes acrylic paint, watercolors, wet dyes, batiking, block printing and felting. Geometric shapes appear in much of Billy’s creations. He loves the creative outlet art gives him. His artwork “Squares” is part of the permanent collection at Misericordia University in the Speech Pathology Building. Billy enjoys every aspect of being an artist from creating to selling his artwork.

Sriharsha Sukla Cuttack, India

Sriharsha Sukla was born with hearing impairment. He says he has not lost his disability, rather that it is more of a challenge with advantages and disadvantages. Strether has always been very aware of the sights and sounds around her, often noticing things that others may not. She frequently notices something beautiful and is moved to take a picture of it. She enjoys modifying images with Photoshop or Topaz. These programs help her create powerful images.

Tracy Tribendis Dallas, PA

Tribendis attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio, a community-based studio, which focuses on tapping into the creative energy of people with diverse abilities. She enjoys painting utilizing fabric dyes, acrylic paint and watercolor. Tribendis creates bright-colored gutta batiks on muslin with fabric dyes. She is open to creating a variety of unique themed artwork. Creating art is relaxing for her and she takes pride in her completed pieces. Tribendis participates in local exhibits and her work can be found in private collections as well as public venues. She enjoys learning the use of new mediums and techniques.

Terrar survived a major heart attack. His life changed suddenly 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 focused 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 who sees the photos as much as he did in taking them.

Jerry Turner Fort Bragg, CA

Turner has been making art for more than 20 years. He creates paintings with colored pencils or he makes prints. He says art helps him escape to other places. “Art makes me feel that I’m going into another world. Sometimes it’s tough in this life.”
Lynne Walding  
Philadelphia, PA  
Walding loves to paint using digital media with adapted devices because it is difficult for her to use art tools in a traditional manner. She uses different mediums and enjoys blending them. Walding lives at Inglis House, a specialty facility providing long-term, residential care for adults with physical disabilities. She says, “I get an idea in my head and try to make it on the canvas. I’m always learning something new.” Art has allowed her to express herself when it is hard to find a voice. It brings Walding relaxation, decreases pain and allows her to escape stress. She doesn’t let her disability limit her from expressing herself.

Joyce Washington  
Philadelphia, PA  
Washington came to Inglis House in 2012. She enjoys many activities at Inglis House including the Exploring Art group, trivia, music and theater. Washington loves all forms of art but admits that painting is her favorite. She is a wonderful artist and enjoys the use of bright vibrant colors.

Shabai Wazir  
Fairfield, CT  
Transcending pain and beauty through his art, Wazir creates art with a unique technique that is particularly empowering because it enables him to not only portray new life but also meaning to a traumatic surface. Wazir’s art practice is inspired by the upheaval and displacement he experienced as a member of a minority population while growing up. His work relates to the migrants and refugees around the world, who must flee war and upheaval, and seek new lands to pursue peace and stability. Wazir uses art to try to communicate the pain he has felt and hopes to demonstrate how a traumatized soul emerging from a burned and wounded past, is still able to seek new hope and new life.

Joseph Weber  
Barreton, PA  
Weber is a former bank 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. This led to an emotional and spiritual breakdown/awakening, which led him to seek therapy for anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder; among other mental health conditions. As a child, artistic expression was not encouraged. Painting finally allowed Weber to express himself. Now with 40+ canvases and 3500 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. He wants them to be who they want to be. Weber’s art tells a story—an unfolding, and the origin of a new beginning.

Christopher Welgoss  
Dallas, PA  
Welgoss attends the Verve Verum Art Studio one day a week. He is extremely focused and skilled at utilizing quite resist on acrylic or fabric. He creates intricate symbols and images on these batiks, which then are transformed into framed artwork or wall hangings, or sewed into decorative pillows. The finished pieces look very ancient and mysterious. Welgoss enjoys creating and it makes him happy and proud to create such beautiful work. He also creates beautiful handmade fabrics, which turn into dream catchers and whimsical mobile artwork. Welgoss loves music, and this is a theme that has inspired him to create many beautiful guitar batiks and greeting cards. Creating art is fulfilling for him.

Kurt Weston  
Mission Viejo, CA  
Weston, a world-class photographer-turned-blind- visionary earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from California College, Chicago and an Master of Fine Arts degree from California State University, Fullerton. As a legally blind artist, Weston offers alternative views and perspectives—interpreting the world as he perceives it. Currently, he has been creating stunning micro-textural landscapes inspired by string theory, dark matter, and black holes. His photographic silkscreen prints are a glimpse of the observable universe as well as inner space reflections. In 2010 Weston was recognized by Arts Orange County with the Outstanding Artist Achievement Award and in 2012 he appeared on CNN’s Fredrick Whitfield show; highlighting his art and advance his message. His work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is in private and public collections.

Nancy Nalbandian  
North Little Rock, AR  
Nancy Nalbandian uses  the medium watercolors, she is the dreamer of dreams. She believes art is therapeutic; the key to finding a way to express and heal emotional feelings that are part of her. Wolfs wants to share her art with others, to have them say, “I recognize that feeling.” She says, “When I paint, I am no longer disabled, no longer limited; I enter a magical place, a time outside of time.”

Robin Wyatt  
Winston-Salem, NC  
Wyatt was a 20-year-old art student when she was thrown from a car, crushing her right arm and shoulder. Because of this accident, she developed a chronic pain disorder called CRPS. She thought she could no longer paint in any traditional way. She eventually realized she could still create and her secret weapon became collage. Through collage Wyatt could put together small pieces and create large finished works. She says it’s frustratingly slow and there are times when she worries that the pain will make it her last piece, but then she finishes and all that’s left is joy. Over time Wyatt has regained some painting skills but still employs the collage techniques by cutting out the small images she creates. Her favorite quote is from Shakespeare, “I love the stars too fondly to fear the night.”

Persephon (Rhyne) Wyne  
Lake Elsinore, CA  
Wyne is a child of two cultures. He was born in Thailand and studied there with Khun Odi, a well-known Thai cartoonist. He is currently attending Riverside City and Moreno Valley Colleges in California focusing on an educational goal of storyboard writing. He also studies at American Ceramic Museum in Pomona, California. Wyne is autistic and has a visual handicap. He considers his autism an advantage as he can concentrate better than most people in the spectrum. Wyne is very gifted in the arts. He has published five books and has won national writing and international art competitions. He writes children’s books, paints, and sculpts in a contemporary style, and creates ceramic critters. Wyne says he loves and lives the life of an artist.

Richard Wyne  
Lake Elsinore, CA  
Wyne is an artist who has lived 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. Wyne 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.

Sheryl Yeager, Pittsburgh, PA
Yeager is an autistic artist who has been creating art for more than 15 years. She struggled through her teens and twenties trying to find self-worth. In her early thirties, Yeager was enlightened to take an art class. She found it gave great meaning to her life. Working in many different mediums at first, Yeager settled on pastels because of their bright colors. She believes that art has allowed her to be one with God and nature, so she can express herself freely. Her primary subject matter is animals because she feels they are humble and meek and not judgmental. Yeager extracts and enhances patterns and colors in her work. Her marks are immediate and fresh. She believes that art has taken away the emotional pain of her childhood and allows her to cope with everyday stresses.

Jacquie O. Young, Lewes, DE
Formally a portrait photographer, a speed bump better known as multiple sclerosis changed Young’s life. When she returned to photography, she took a few classes as her professional training was in film. Technology has given Young a path of therapy, creating with graphics. Capturing images in the unseen infrared light spectrum displays the sense of surrealism, a feeling as surreal as a diagnosis of MS. Using other in-camera techniques, such as specialized art lenses, also lends to her creative visions.

Anthony Zaremba, Whiting, NJ
Zaremba’s art and finished watercolors appear not as finely detailed but are 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 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.

Ina Greenstein, When the Bough Breaks
Ginger Gehres, Umami
Mark Wittig, Pleasant Valley School
Linnie Greenberg, Prestige

“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

“When I paint, I am no longer disabled, no longer limited; I enter a magical place, a time outside of time.”
—Rose Wolfe

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- Henry Matisse

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We salute the artists of Art Ability

Joni, California

Leaves, Oil (original medium)

Joni learned to draw when she was a little girl sitting at the feet of her father, watching him while he worked at his easel. She enjoyed experimenting with paints all the way through high school. After a driving accident when she was 17, her therapist encouraged her to keep painting by learning how to hold the paintbrushes between her teeth. She’s been painting ever since!

Painting featured in the Raynes Lawn Hehmeyer lobby
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