



# **aA** art Ability

*a celebration of art by artists with disabilities*



Main Line Health®  
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

**2023-2024**

Kelly McQuain, *Meeting the Bird King*,  
ACRYLIC



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Melinda Orth, *Windblown*

## 2023 Art Ability Celebration

### PREVIEW PARTY

Saturday, Oct. 28, 2023 | Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

This event traditionally kicks off the annual art exhibition at the hospital. Art enthusiasts, exhibiting artists and friends of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital are welcomed back to campus this year for an afternoon celebration. Light hors d'oeuvres will be served.

### 28TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION AND SALE

Sunday, Oct. 29, 2023–Sunday, Jan. 28, 2024

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital exhibit will be open daily during visiting hours. Tours will be available upon request.

### ART ABILITY DINNER

Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023 | Phoenixville Foundry

During cocktail hour, you can view and purchase artwork by our talented artists. Then enjoy a wonderful dinner and some friendly competition as we raise funds for our Creative Arts Therapy Program.

### SECOND SATURDAY OPEN HOUSES

Nov. 11, 2023; Dec. 9, 2023; Jan. 13, 2024

We're excited to offer open tours of this year's show. These are great days to bring a group of friends and family to tour the show and truly get to experience Art Ability.



Dick Grodt, *Follow Me*



Rosadele Plumari

Vice President,  
Executive Director  
Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital

Dear Friends,

We are excited to celebrate the 28th annual Art Ability exhibition and sale. It is our pleasure to welcome our patrons back to the Preview Party at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for the first time since 2019. There's something special about the interactive, in-person experience we have with the artists who are showcasing their artwork on display at the hospital. I have missed experiencing the art together and look forward to resuming the tradition this year.

I applaud each of our artists who were selected to exhibit their work for sharing their talents with us. Their courage to triumph over a disability or debilitating life event to tap into their creative talent is a reminder of the strength and resilience of the human spirit.

Since 1996, Art Ability has been integral to Bryn Mawr Rehab's mission and beneficial to the more than 1,000 artists who have featured their artwork. 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 art.

Funds raised through art sales, sponsorships and donations during the exhibition benefit our participating artists and the hospital's highest priority needs to help us best serve our patients. This year, funding will also support the expansion of our Creative Arts Therapy Program. Art and music therapy are valuable adjuncts to conventional therapies. They offer numerous benefits to individuals dealing with physical limitations and depression. Creative arts therapy can help improve cognitive and sensorimotor functions, reduce stress and contribute to a higher quality of life.

This Art Ability exhibition and sale would not be possible without the dedication of our Art Ability Committee and volunteers. Each has my sincere appreciation. I also extend my thanks to the Bryn Mawr Rehab Foundation Board, staff and very generous sponsors, advertisers and donors for contributing to Art Ability's continued success.

Warm regards,

*Rosadele Plumari*

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

List current as of September 15, 2023.





Dave Allen, *Into the Light*

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List current as of September 30, 2023.

**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; is designated as a NICHE facility and is accredited by 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 orthopaedic injuries. Bryn Mawr Rehab Outpatient Network treats individuals with a wide range of conditions and injuries from brain injury, spinal cord injury and Parkinson’s disease to concussions, pelvic floor disorders and lymphedema. Our outpatient rehabilitation services are conveniently located throughout the western suburbs of Philadelphia.

For more information about Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, visit [mainlinehealth.org/rehab](https://mainlinehealth.org/rehab).



Leslie Palmer, *Bermuda Cove*



Rebecca Scheuer, *Scrabble Queen*

## Mission

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

Now celebrating 28 years, Art Ability continues to be an integral part of Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital since its first exhibition and sale of work by artists with disabilities in 1996. It continues to be a year-round showcase and celebration of artists with disabilities and is the country's largest international, juried exhibition and sale of its kind.

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

The exhibit will be open to the public for self-guided tours based on Bryn Mawr Rehab's current visitor policy. If you'd like to schedule a private tour, please email [artability@mlhs.org](mailto:artability@mlhs.org) for more information.

Daniel Kytönen, *Syntactic Transmutation*

## Program

### SELECTION OF THE ART

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



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

### SALES

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

### PROGRAM COMPONENTS

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

- **Satellite exhibitions** Traveling satellite exhibitions of Art Ability artwork are a key component of the program and have been successful in generating enhanced awareness of the talent and skill of our artists.
- **Online sales gallery** Our online sales gallery provides the opportunity to view works for sale from our consignment inventory. Each year, Art Ability retains a number of works from our annual exhibition



Joanne Orth, *Liftoff!*

to allow for more exposure for our artists and their talents. To browse artwork available for purchase, visit [bidpal.net/artability23](https://bidpal.net/artability23).

- **Corporate art acquisition program** Art Ability also serves as a resource for corporations to help meet their needs for artwork for their collections.
- **Permanent collection of work** Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital actively collects art and maintains a permanent collection of over 500 works, which are on display throughout the year. The hospital clinical staff often incorporate utilization of Art Ability work into their daily treatment activities with patients. Staff motivates patients by using the collection as tangible evidence of their potential to return to meaningful, productive lives.

For more information about Art Ability programs, call **484.596.5607** or email [artability@mlhs.org](mailto:artability@mlhs.org)





## Aidan Bradley

In August 2021, Aidan Bradley's life changed forever. During summer break at the University of Delaware, Aidan was walking home by the train tracks and was struck by an oncoming train passing through the campus. He was discovered hours later, unresponsive, and still has no memory of what happened.

Aidan was rushed to the hospital with traumatic injuries, including the amputation of his right arm and right leg, multiple fractured vertebrae, head lacerations, and a severe concussion. His prognosis was grim, but thanks to the first responders, emergency room surgeons and everyone involved, he survived.

Aidan had been excited about his upcoming senior year, including study abroad. Instead, he withdrew from his fall semester and dedicated his mental and physical energy to his recovery. After several weeks in the hospital and countless surgeries and follow-ups, Aidan was transported to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for inpatient therapy.

He was unsure of what the future held, but soon began returning to his old self — determined to make the best of his

situation. Aidan gave 100% during physical, occupational, recreational and music therapy, and began to adjust to his new normal. To the shock of many, after only a few weeks, he was able to go home.

Once Aidan was fitted for his prosthetic leg, he returned to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital for inpatient prosthetic training, where he learned to walk and regain his independence. He returned to school and graduated cum laude with his friends in Spring 2023, with a bachelor's degree in finance. Demonstrating the focus and fortitude he developed at rehab, he proudly walked across the graduation stage and into the next chapter of his life. Aidan accepted a job at J.P. Morgan Private Bank and is an avid CrossFitter.



**“My gratitude to everyone at Bryn Mawr Rehab is impossible to express ... I am thankful for everyone’s dedication to my recovery.”**

— Aidan Bradley

**“Making art brings me joy and happiness and gives me a distraction from the world.”**

—Cathy Godek



Susan Stallsmith, *Midnight*



Vinetta Miller, *A Man and Woman are Kissing on a Horse*

**“Art is a meditative experience that provides distraction from chronic pain while simultaneously allowing me to express myself.”** —Julie Kitzes

Bonnie MacAllister, *Where There Was Water*



Liz Griesser, *Beach House Head in the Clouds*



**“Art provides me an outlet to help me forget about my physical challenges.”**

—Ivy Egger

## Offering the most advanced therapeutic innovations

Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital continues to grow and prosper thanks in large part to our friends and donor community. Charitable gifts impact all areas of the hospital, helping to purchase top-tier equipment and technology, assist our patients with financial need, enhance our alternative therapy programs, support our patient programs, and enable us to provide the best possible treatment and care for our patients.

During last year's Art Ability dinner, we saw the impact of our community at work through the Call to Give. The fundraising push was directed to benefit the hospital's State-of-the-Art Equipment Fund, which plays a major role in elevating the resources available for patient care and recovery. New technology supports our experienced clinical team to offer patients the best outcomes and allows our patients to reach their personal goals and targets.

**Virtualis VR goggles allow for an immersive experience that's not only highly motivating to patients, it's enjoyable, too. The 3D virtual reality environment creates a playful distraction from the physical therapy challenges patients are guided through, as shown in the images on these pages.**



Through the Call to Give, our community raised \$177,270 to support the Virtual Reality Initiative, allowing Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital to purchase seven pairs of Virtualis PhysioVR goggles, a virtual reality assessment and rehabilitation solution to optimize the care of patients with neurological, balance, vestibular, concussion, orthopaedics and sports medicine deficits. These virtual reality goggles benefit diverse patient populations and ensure new opportunities to improve the lives of the patients we serve.

This exciting new therapeutic innovation allows our therapists to add another dimension to the patients' experience here at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital. Patients are motivated in a novel way during this cutting-edge therapy method. Our staff is excited to have this transformative addition to our equipment and technology and we look forward to the endless potentials for treatment utilization.

Our leadership offers a special thanks to all our donors who supported this important initiative at last year's event. Our success and growth would not be possible without generosity such as yours. We look forward to working together to accomplish our vision for this year's important fundraising initiative, the Creative Arts Therapy Program.







**Erin Panner**  
Art Ability Program  
Coordinator

As the artwork for this year's Art Ability exhibition and sale began to arrive from around the country, I was struck by a common sentiment from our artists: gratitude. Many included notes of thanks and encouragement to our Art Ability team and volunteers. Our local artists were full of exuberance and excitement for the return of the preview party, glad for the opportunity to mingle again with patrons and fellow artists. Other artists simply thanked us for keeping the program going throughout the pandemic. To them I say, "If Art Ability can withstand a global pandemic, it can withstand anything!"

The effects of the pandemic are still present, but moving in a different direction. Those with disabilities are no stranger to making adjustments to adapt, and our artists are no different. While recent years showed how our artists overcame difficulties they faced during the pandemic, this year is a return to form and full of hope. Our artists continue to display an inner strength by which I am both awed and impressed.

Our featured artist this year, Kelly McQuain, was chosen with those sentiments in mind. His work is bold and vibrant, with folkloric worlds of whimsy within each painting. He asks the viewer to look closer and uncover

the hidden elements and details, like cats within cats or a hare on the flank of a horse. Each viewing of his paintings brings new segments to the forefront, keeping the viewer engaged and delighted.

It's also evident that our en plein air painters and watercolorists have returned to nature, giving us ethereal light and detailed shadow; the kind of work that can only be captured in person. It all has a sense of the familiar, but through a slightly different lens. Others are producing master classes in color theory, shape and texture. Overall, this year's exhibit features a broad and energetic group of artwork, making for an engaging stroll through our halls.

This show would not be possible without our amazing team of Art Ability volunteers. I'm endlessly thankful for their help and guidance as I enter my second year with the program. Thank you as well to the Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital staff, Project SEARCH interns, jury, judges and our Art Ability intern, Ava McKula. The legacy and importance of Art Ability is evident throughout the hospital, and I look forward to helping it continue to grow.



**Bridget O'Rourke**

O'Rourke was born and raised in Philadelphia, PA. She received her BFA from Moravian College in 2007 and her MFA in painting from the prestigious Parsons: The New School for Design in 2011. She has shown her work nationally and internationally. O'Rourke is also a hospital outreach specialist for Paul Newman's The Hole in The Wall Gang Camp, a nonprofit that provides happiness and healing for chronic and seriously ill children. As a painter, she hopes to bring something to light that hasn't been seen before, to create work with a sense of humanity. She believes an artist's role is to express some sort of frightened emotion that others are afraid to show — to show a world that would otherwise remain invisible to others and connect to people who feel quite alone.



**John Baker**

Baker received his BA and doctorate in fine arts from West Chester University (WCU) and MFA from the University of Delaware. He has taught for 41 years in the Department of Art + Design at WCU, chairing the department for 20 years. His work has been exhibited in numerous private, museum and corporate collections including over 200 international, national and regional exhibitions. He continues to serve on several art boards, commissions and as a University Foundation Trustee. Baker's studio practice includes a

mixed-media approach to canvas and board, influenced and informed through his extensive international travel. He also creates functional ceramic vessels, continuing to investigate the bowl form.



**Samantha Mitchell**

Mitchell is an artist, writer and arts educator based in Philadelphia. Born in New York City, she graduated from Oberlin College in 2008 and earned her MFA from Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA) in 2012. Aside from her studio work, Mitchell is cofounder and director of THIS MUST BE THE PLACE, a publishing and curatorial project that highlights work by neurodivergent artists. She's also the lead curator/production manager at the Center for Creative Works, a studio for adults with developmental disabilities. Mitchell worked as a managing editor for *Title Magazine*, devoted to writing on the arts in Philadelphia, and contributes writing to other publications. She is a member of Tiger Strikes Asteroid Philadelphia, a national collective of artist-run galleries, and her work has been exhibited in numerous galleries and museums, including permanent collections at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Woodmere Museum and PAFA.



## Best in Show

### Charles W. Hennessy Artist Award

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

**Carol Spiker, *Pause***



## Judge's Choice

JOHN BAKER

### The Kozicki Family Award

Presented by: *Jean P. Kozicki*

**Victor Mordasov, *Melted Candle***

SAMANTHA MITCHELL

### The Doris B. Gorden Award

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

**Patricia Goodrich, *Under the Canopy of Constellations: Nazca Lines Peru***

BRIDGET O'ROURKE

Presented by: *The Art Trust Gallery at Meridian Bank*

**David Caron, *Denizens of the Forest***

## Curator's Choice

AVA MCKULA

### The Myra Jean Burke Memorial Award

Presented by: *Donna and Victor Hansen*

**Ian Shearer, *Secret Garden***

## People's Choice

### The Lois Levy People's Choice Award

Winner will be announced in December after a public vote.

## Drawing and Fine Printmaking

### 1st Prize

*The Stephen Panacsi Memorial Award*

Presented by:

*Sal and Linda Panasci*

**Dwayne Boone,**

***Octavia E. Butler***

### 2nd Prize

**Frank Van Curen,**

***Burrito Kitty***

### 3rd Prize

*In honor of Claire Larson*

Presented by:

*Brian and Peggy Jones*

**Megan Meier, *Oceanarium***

### Honorable Mention

**Vinetta Miller,**

***A Man and Woman are***

***Kissing on a Horse***

## Jewelry and Fine Craft

### 1st Prize

*The Isle Wolf*

*Memorial Award*

Presented by:

*Sal and Linda Panasci*

**Judy Quitarano,**

***Fire and Rain***

### 2nd Prize

**Joy Raskin, *Shimmer***

### 3rd Prize

*The Art Ability*

*Committee Award*

Presented by:

*Brian and Peggy Jones*

**Pat Henriques,**

***On A Wing and A Prayer***

### Honorable Mention

**Christine Severson,**

***Copper Crazy***



Ian Shearer, *Secret Garden*



Pat Henriques, *On A Wing and A Prayer*



Dwayne Boone, *Octavia E. Butler*

David Caron, *Denizens of the Forest*





Jim Henry, *Red Trees*

## Mixed-Media and Digital Art

### 1st Prize

*The Elliott T. Settle Memorial Award*  
Presented by:  
The Settle Family  
**Renee Ballard,**  
*Dust in the Wind*

### 2nd Prize

**Timothy O'Donovan,**  
*Full Moon*

### 3rd Prize

*The Janet Rotoli Memorial Award*  
Presented by: Ruth Porritt  
**Susanne Dagmar Olsen,**  
*Tulipaks*

### Honorable Mention

**Ivy Egger,**  
*Reflections in a Waterfall*



Ivy Egger,  
*Reflections in a Waterfall*

## Painting

### 1st Prize

*Drs. A. Victor and Mary Hansen Award*  
Presented by:  
Donna and Victor Hansen  
**Anjali Goodwin, City**

### 2nd Prize

*In memory of Gail P. Panner*  
Presented by:  
The Panner and Rawson Families  
**Jim Henry, Red Trees**

### 3rd Prize

*In memory of Barry and Graham Boose*  
Presented by:  
Brian and Peggy Jones  
**Jen Dacota,**  
*Blooming Ecstasy*

### Honorable Mention

*The David Chatburn Memorial Award*  
Presented by:  
Katrina Van Alstyne  
**Cheryl Kinderknecht,**  
*Transitions*

## Watercolor and Wash

### 1st Prize

*The Beatrice M. Heim Memorial Award*  
Presented by:  
Sal and Linda Panasci  
**Priscilla Bohlen, Cape May**

### 2nd Prize

*In memory of Ralph and Carmen Terrazas*  
Presented by:  
Brian and Peggy Jones  
**Malcolm Corley,**  
*Self-Portrait with Mustache*

### 3rd Prize

*In honor of Lauren McGowan*  
Presented by:  
Brian and Peggy Jones  
**Tina Curtis, Untitled**

### Honorable Mention

**Ina Greenstein,**  
*Boathouse Row*



Ina Greenstein, *Boathouse Row*

## Photography

### 1st Prize

*In memory of David E. Tordone*  
Presented by:  
Tordone Family  
**Allen Bryan, After Leaving Blanding Behind**

### 2nd Prize

*In memory of Fred Stern*  
Presented by:  
Brian and Peggy Jones  
**Harry Spilker, Spectral Flood**

### 3rd Prize

*The Doris and Bill Gorden Memorial Award*  
Presented by: Ruth Porritt  
**Greg Gans, Mt. Mimsi**

### Honorable Mention

*The James M. Hamm Memorial Award*  
Presented by:  
The Hamm Family  
**Robert Winig,**  
*Bob Ross Inspired*

## Sculpture

### 1st Prize

*The Benny Panasci Award*  
Presented by:  
Sal and Linda Panasci  
**David Gerbstadt,**  
*Mr. 350 Degrees*

### 2nd Prize

**William Spiker, Sheryl Crow**

### 3rd Prize

*In appreciation of the BMRH staff*  
Presented by:  
Linda W. Heiberger  
**Barry Blecher,**  
*Balancing Act*

### Honorable Mention

**Maxine Rosen, Textured**  
*White Vase with Lacy Rim*



David Gerbstadt, *Mr. 350 Degrees*



Allen Bryan,  
*After Leaving Blanding Behind*



Robert Winig,  
*Bob Ross Inspired*



# Kelly McQuain

Philadelphia, PA

Kelly McQuain’s jubilant, folklore-inspired paintings feature people and animals in symbolic arrangements. Growing up gay in West Virginia taught him that joy itself is an act of resistance, so he endeavors to create artwork that serves as an antidote to polarizing times. He starts with abstract color washes, out of which he teases the shapes and secrets he embeds in each piece. McQuain’s repeated use of dots, scratches and other mark-making convey the pixelated complexity of living with ADD and a rare genetic neuropathy that affects his hands, forcing him to push past the pain to create each imaginative piece. He considers his paintings “visual poems.”



When McQuain isn’t painting, he focuses on a different creative art: writing, specifically poetry. He recently published a book of poetry, *Scrape the Velvet from Your Antlers*, which explores themes of LGBTQ+ sexuality, homophobia, domestic abuse and racism. In June 2023, McQuain’s book was named one

Kelly McQuain, *Forest Goddess*



Image credit: John Cawley

of the best summer reads by *Philadelphia* magazine. McQuain currently works at the Community College of Philadelphia as a professor of English. His understanding of his own disability has made him attuned to not only what happens in his classroom, but his students’ lives and experiences outside of it. His role is much more than just a teacher; he also serves as a resource and guide to help his students achieve the education they deserve.



Kelly McQuain, *Thoughts in Flight*

**Carrie Albert** *Seattle, WA*  
 Albert expresses her artistic visions in myriad ways, including collage, poetry, assemblage, drawing and photography. Albert has chemical sensitivities and uses only nontoxic mediums in her art. As a collagist, Albert searches for healing by gathering fragments, symbols and torn ephemera, and piecing them together in unexpected ways.

“I was able to visualize what I wanted to create and felt my mind was starting to develop in new ways.” —Elaine Grose

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’s comes from Langston Hughes: “Perhaps the mission of an artist is to interpret beauty to people — the beauty within themselves.”

**Brandon Allebach** *Albuquerque, NM*  
 Allebach has been an Albuquerque artist for over 15 years. Inspired by cubism, catharsis and art of the southwest, he paints abstractions with acrylic on canvas. He uses sharp lines and contrast, focusing on creating depth that interweaves the foreground and background. Allebach also likes to paint birds and sunsets. He is a proud part of Art Lifting, an organization that promotes homeless and disabled artists. His work has been shown extensively throughout New Mexico as well as in various national exhibits.

**Jo Allebach** *Phoenix, AZ*  
 Allebach is a contemporary artist working in acrylic, drawing inspiration from the natural beauty around her. Her goal is to capture the mood of the moment on canvas. Allebach hopes her work reflects her love of color and light. From the beginning of her journey with therapeutic art, it began to be a way to make life worth living. Allebach knew she needed art in her life. She says, “I thank God that I have been given this chance to paint. I really want the viewer to get as much joy looking at my art as I did making it.”

**Dave Allen** *Lancaster, PA*  
 Allen, a retired contract sales manager and pastor, has found inspiration to paint from God, who he believes is the greatest artist. Allen’s hope is for his paint to capture a particular sense of place, peace and atmosphere. He first photographs his subject, then uses his photo as a point of reference to compose the painting. In 2018, Allen was afflicted with a life-threatening strep infection in his right foot and calf, and almost lost his leg. He endured 18 days in the hospital, three major operations, and nine months of wound care. “As I healed, I decided to retire and devote my life to the things that mattered most to me: my God, my family and my art.”

**Jameir Andrews** *Philadelphia, PA*  
 A lifelong resident of Philadelphia, Andrews has developed a diverse body of work that is utilized as a visual communication aid and explores his love of repetitive, iterative patterns and the number 12. Andrews’ artwork is inspired by process. His practice involves the creation of intricate works using paint pens, markers, pencils, pastels, sticks; basically anything nearby. He meditates on dense systems of geometric



Carrie Albert, *A Mouse is Miracle Enough*

shapes and asymmetrical grids and populates the surface of his art with symbols, numbers and other decorative elements evocative of 8-bit, side-scroller adventure video games and word search puzzles — two of his life’s greatest joys after drawing. These mixed-media works are driven by a bold and vibrant use of color and intense, spontaneous layering.

**Dave Aquilante** *Downingtown, PA*  
 Aquilante is a stroke survivor who uses watercolor as a means of recovery. His subject matter includes nature, animals and portraits in both realism and impressionism categories. Aquilante’s inspiration comes from his mother and nature. Aquilante says, “Art speaks for the soul when there are no words strong enough to encapsulate reality.”



**Constance Avery** *Utica, NY*

As an artist with vision and hearing loss, Avery has faced many limitations for the last 30-plus years. Instead of seeing her disabilities in a negative light, Avery uses her restrictions to allow her to take a different and interesting path in her artistic journey. Creating and selling her artwork, which consists of paintings, pottery and photography, has helped Avery to feel confident and free, despite her disabilities. The different mediums have also given Avery the chance to expand her artistic explorations, therefore reaching out to the different desires of the art communities. "As I travel into my images of art, my limitations disappear...letting me feel expressive, free and safe."

**Jess Avery** *Collegeville, PA*

Avery has been into art since she was 12 years old. She started with colored pencils, moved on to acrylic painting and spray paint, and also crafts jewelry. The source of Avery's motivation and inspiration comes from her family and friends, as well as her high school art teacher. Because of her hearing disability, she relies on her visual sense to create art. She believes that art has benefited her thinking and

creative skills. "Art gives me self-determination, self-efficacy and helps me gain confidence."

**Renee Ballard** *Philadelphia, PA*

Ballard says art has had a positive influence on her life. The major inspiration for her artwork comes from nature. "Art has provided a valuable outlet to express my feelings and convey them to others."

**Frances Bernhardt-Noll** *Paoli, PA*

When Bernhardt-Noll is sketching and painting, she feels like she's creating something beautiful. She prefers painting because it's something she's worked with since she was a child. Bernhardt-Noll often chooses to work with floral and natural themes because she likes to explore the different colors and shapes. She gets inspired by each step of the process. Living with a disability, art-making is a way for Bernhardt-Noll to connect and share with others. When she was in the acute hospital, art and crafts helped her to remember who she was and the things she enjoyed doing before her injury. She was then able to refocus on her areas of interest and continue to develop her skills. "Today art is my coping skill."

**Martha Bird** *Minneapolis, MN*

Bird defines herself as an artist, a nurse and a truth teller. She believes her personal history with trauma and disability, coupled with expertise in the physiology of the body, informs her art practice. Bird's back was injured while working as a nurse and living with PTSD. To begin moving off bed rest, she reconnected with her creative self. She identifies as an interdisciplinary artist who practices sculpture, weaving, painting and photography. Committed to community, she has been involved in the arts as a presenter, curator, writer, organizer, teaching artist and advocate. Bird exhibits regionally and nationally and says her work expresses her life's journey. "The merging of my dual careers values the healing aspects of working with one's hands and body."

**Shawn Bittenbender**

*Philadelphia, PA*

Bittenbender says that art has always been a source of joy for him. Although he lost the passion for a long time, it has been brought back to new highs with support of family, friends and the Art Ability staff. They inspired him to go into passionate studies of all painting and drawing styles and techniques. Bittenbender



Jameir Andrews, *Jewels*

says he owes the confidence he found to push past his breathing issues and pain to these kind souls. Bittenbender loves all subjects but prefers the beauty of people and the natural world for inspiration. "Thanks to you all, who inspire the best in others."

**Charles Blackwell**

*San Francisco, CA*

As a young man, Blackwell's visual arts studies were cut short after he fell head first down a steep slope, damaging his eyesight. Blackwell thinks his blindness, in a sense, gives him originality. When painting, he'll strain his eyes to see, until the reality of

being partially blind registers. Then he relies on instinct, sloshing colors between thick lines, serendipitously moving his art along the path to completion. In today's society, Blackwell chooses to embrace the gift of life and create, create, create. He believes art is not to isolate but to build community, and that art is not for mere capitalist gain but to provide inspiration. "I create pieces in order to provoke inspiration and thus give life to the human spirit."

**Barry Blecher** *Conshohocken, PA*

Blecher's world turned upside down in the fall of 1997. He had suffered a stroke that was caused by a dissecting aorta. He spent the next six months in inpatient rehab relearning to speak, walk and regain his independence. Before leaving the hospital, Blecher's doctors and physical therapists advised him to find a hobby that would help stimulate the portion of his brain that had been injured from the stroke. He had always been interested in glass fusion: the cutting and stacking of fusible glass that is put into a kiln. Blecher began taking classes in glass fusion and after learning about the master glass artist, Dale Chihuly, he was overcome with positive emotions and filled with hope for his future.

**Robert Bohle** *Henrico, VA*

Painting usually is an act of discovery for Bohle. He has suffered with Parkinson's disease for 24 years, but he doesn't let it influence his art. Bohle paints mostly abstracts because he wants the paint itself — the color, shapes, texture, value and more — to communicate viscerally. Representational art can rely on responses to the familiar in the world. He agrees with Aristotle, who wrote, "The aim of art is not to represent the outward appearance of things, but their inward significance." Bohle is a bit of an introvert in life, but he likes his paintings to be bold. He tries to give each work something to look at up close as well as from afar.

**Priscilla Bohlen** *Narberth, PA*

Bohlen is a professional visual artist who works on canvas using acrylic paint, resin and acrylic mediums. She received her BFA in 1974 and subsequently lived in New York City for 10 years. During this time, she designed patterns for sheets and towels for Fieldcrest Cannon and continued to study art at the graduate level. Bohlen moved back to the Philadelphia area and began creating landscapes. Recently, she has focused on large abstracts using acrylics. She shows her

work extensively throughout the region and is an active member of multiple professional art groups. Bohlen believes in "bringing the best to life and not holding back, always pressing on to new horizons and staying committed to serving the public through your practice."

**Dwayne Boone** *Philadelphia, PA*

Boone is an emerging Philadelphia-based artist and entrepreneur. Born and raised in Germantown, he began to draw comic book characters at an early age. As a child, Boone would have a pencil in his hand as soon as he got home from school, and his mother would

nag him to finish his homework before drawing. Boone's passion for making art has been a common thread throughout his life. His work has been exhibited internationally in galleries including Arts Project Australia, Space 1026, Fleisher/Ollman, apexart and John Lucas Gallery.

**Ramanda Brockett**

*St. Louis, MO*

Brockett is a multiple chronic illness and mental health warrior who continues to volunteer as a disability access and advocacy educator within their professional community. Brockett draws from her education as a creative arts therapist to use Jungian



Renee Ballard, *Dust in the Wind*



archetypes, astrology, tarot and folk magic to engage visual symbolism within their pieces to cover topics of intersectional feminism, human rights and spirituality. The intricate nature of the complex recycled-material collages invites the viewer to pause and stare while they hold an internal conversation with their own interpretation of the symbols upon their personal experiences.

**“My art takes me to another place and makes me feel calm and serene.”** —Janice Jackson

**Allen Bryan** *Saugerties, NY*  
Bryan has been a visual artist for his entire life. His pictures reexamine and reorganize his photographic life through photo assemblages that question a comfortable reality. These narratives, and his continuing series, “Comforts of Home: Figments of Domestic Tranquility,” ironically grew into a format much wider than Bryan can see in a single glance. “I became a better photographer after I started losing my eyesight.”

**David Caron** *Hyannis, MA*  
Caron is a differently abled young man with autism. A native of Cape Cod, Caron has an innate affinity with the natural environment. He responds joyfully to the ocean, wind and thunderstorms. This is the same enthusiasm that he shows when he expresses himself through art. Art is an act of pure self-expression without regard to the finished work. He loves how the materials feel, how paint is absorbed by the canvas, and how the paint spreads and is diluted by the water. Through painting, Caron expresses himself beyond the limitations of his disability. Edward Hopper



Patrick Kenny, *Dolphins at Dawn (Stone Harbor 4)*

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

**Cindy Clark** *Eagleville, PA*  
Clark uses acrylic painting to spark joy and provide happiness and encouragement to others. Having encephalopathy and ongoing neurologic issues from undiagnosed Lyme disease for more than six years, she learned in cognitive therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital to adapt to her brain’s limitations. Taking up painting as therapy, Clark enrolled in an adult education painting class where she learned to mix her own colors. This gives

her control over the images she tries to convey. Painting provides a sense of accomplishment and helps her focus on the beauty of nature. Clark especially loves skies, water and animals and is drawn to the endless colors in nature, crediting God as the ultimate painter.

**Cathy Cobb** *Shreveport, LA*  
Cobb is an acrylic painter who uses paintbrushes, palette knives and various paints and glazes to convey a subject from many different perspectives. “When viewed from different angles, everyday moments of life can become transfigured, revealing the depth of layers within.” Her techniques reveal complexity and her colors show the delight she takes in momentary glimpses of beauty. Cobb takes inspiration from stained glass and how they transfigure their subject as light reflects through them. Like these sacred windows, her paintings attempt to reveal both the intended subject and also to open a window toward a deeper story contained within an inner joy. Cobb started painting when she was diagnosed with lupus in 2016. Creating has been her lifeline through flares and long periods of isolation.

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

**Maureen Collins** *Wilmington, DE*  
Collins was gifted her first camera at 8 years old. It began a lifelong passion for the visual arts and changed the way she saw the world. Her journey is woven through photography, painting, collage, ceramics, mosaics, silver work and fabric design, with images in one medium often inspiring and flowing through

others. Guillain-Barré syndrome downshifted life into a much lower speed, and allowed Collins the grace of dimensionally shifting her creative perspectives and abilities. Hope became the path of each day, through many years. She says, “I am so grateful for the arts, their healing qualities and for the creative process. It allows me to express the individuality of each day, to share its beauty and unique imprint, and to appreciate its expression by others.”

**Charles Connelly** *Ardmore, PA*  
Connelly was born in Philadelphia, PA and had an early interest in drawing and sketching. Art fed his interest in analyzing how things worked. Connelly became fascinated with Philadelphia’s art museums. This led to classes at the Pennsylvania Academy of Fine Arts, watercolor classes and his pursuit to paint regularly in watercolor. In spite of Connelly’s sight and hearing challenges, art, drawing and painting provide him an oasis of contentment.

**Malcolm Corley** *Lancaster, PA*  
At the age of 3, Corley was diagnosed with autism. Around the same time, he began to draw the sketches from the TV show, “Blue’s Clues.” Since then, in addition to two solo shows



Martha Bird, *New York, New York*

and multiple group shows in his hometown of Lancaster, PA, his work has been published in *Hot Metal Bridge*, *Up the Staircase*, *Fusion Art* and *Penn Review*. He has been included in juried, international exhibitions/sales, where one of his pieces won a prize. “Studies in Brotherly Love,” a book of poems about Corley’s art and reproductions of the works that inspired them, was published by PromptPress in 2021.

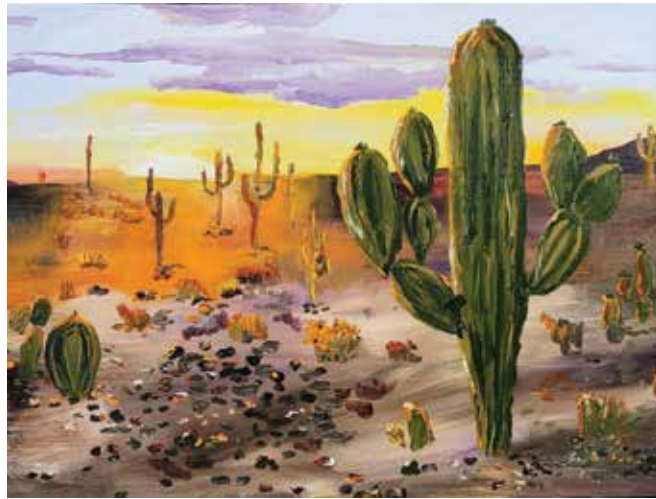
**John Creagh** *Bradenton, FL*  
After receiving extensive formal training, Creagh began his career as an artist in New York City. When an unfortunate experience left him paralyzed, he left the

city and moved north to the countryside. Years later, he moved to Florida. Creagh was captivated by the work of Edward Hopper. He solidified a strong foundation while developing a signature style and a love of painting directly from nature. Creagh’s oil paintings include landscapes and architectural interests, which he often paints directly on-site and completes in his studio. He focuses on capturing the light and vista before him, ultimately producing a piece with a unique perspective and color value. Creagh’s vibrant watercolors of birds, buildings and panoramas are widely acclaimed for their composition and detail.

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

**Tina Curtis** *Wynnewood, PA*  
Curtis likes to draw. She hopes she does it well, but it is hard work. She likes to focus on rainbow flowers, especially with a full spectrum of color and white highlights. She currently makes art at the Center for Creative Works in Philadelphia.

**Jen Dacota** *Conshohocken, PA*  
When Dacota saw her MRI, and the "big black hole" where part of her brain used to be, her jaw dropped. She had just suffered



Jo Allebach, *Cactus Sunset*

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

**Tiffany Daniels** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Daniels was born in New York in 1983. She has multiple sclerosis, and lives at Inglis House. She is a member of a variety of groups at Inglis House, including being a member of the Exploring Art group and expresses that "her art is an extension of her heart." She has a love of fashion, jewelry and people. Daniels is fun-loving, always has a smile on her face and loves meeting new people.

**Lorenzo DiAndrea** *Bound Brook, NJ*  
DiAndrea is a weaver and silkscreen monoprint artist. Color, pattern and movement fill the minutes and hours of each casual

day. These textured elements of daily living present as predictable, as well as surprising interactions that make up the fabric of life. The pieces and layers of DiAndrea's weavings and monoprints offer remembrance that daily living patterns accumulate into life-sustaining relationships and memories. Together, let's look closely, breathe slowly and love continuously; the repetitive pieces and layers within a typical day are sure to bring us toward a joyous, beautiful connection.

**Samuel Dietze** *Altoona, PA*  
Dietze has a lifelong interest in art and astronomy. His interest in both goes back to an early age when he was encouraged by his parents and teachers to pursue a degree in astronomy at Penn State. As an artist, he learned by doing art in oils and acrylics and entering shows and getting accepted or rejected. Learning is a lifelong process. Dietze found he was better at creating art than he was at doing scientific research. He is a member of the International Association of Astronomical Artists. Dietze doesn't make a big deal out of his disability. Rather, he just exhibits, interacts with people in the art field and tries to not let his disability get in the way.

**Thomas Dillon** *Scotrun, PA*  
Dillion started painting with his mother early in life, which established the foundation for his work. He went on to study the works and methods of famous artists such as Escher, da Vinci, Dürer and van Gogh. Thomas shares, "I have no formal training other than my own personal studies and talent." In 2007, Dillon was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident where he sustained many injuries including a traumatic brain injury. After multiple hospitalizations and corrective surgeries, Dillon was later diagnosed with an illness directly related to the head trauma from the accident. "Art has gotten me through the darkest struggles in my life. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate my emotions on canvas."

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

information specialist. Art has played a major role in her life, especially living with an autism spectrum disorder. "There are days when my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special."

**Gwen Duda** *Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, Canada*  
Duda is a visual artist, specifically a painter, working in a variety of mediums but predominately water-based media such as acrylic, gouache and watercolor; oils; and mark-making in charcoal and pastels. She is completely mesmerized by the divinity in and the immense power and beauty of it, which inspires her. Her artwork has been influenced by the Group of Seven, Monet and current-day abstract expressionist painters. Painting keeps Duda balanced, connects her to nature and the divine and heals her body, mind and spirit. If not for art, the act of creating in vibrant colour, line and getting lost in the dreamtime, dealing with the pain and exhaustion would be just too much to bear without it.

**Bobby Edmon** *Oklahoma City, OK*  
Edmon is 78 years old, married and the father of three grown children. His favored medium is acrylic paint,

which he applies to canvas after sketching the subject. Edmon's subjects are often unconventional and whimsical. Art has given him a sense of accomplishment and has boosted his self-esteem; it is the one thing he can still do well after having a stroke at the age of 58 and a second stroke at age 74. Edmon's balance, speech and strength are affected, but not his art ability. "My disability allows me to have more time to paint as I am no longer able to work. I can spend hours at a time drawing and painting and I receive much joy and serenity in doing so."

**Clara Edmon** *Oklahoma City, OK*  
Edmon is an 80-year-old married mother of three. Much of her art derives from her struggle with depression and health issues, and the relief and diversion art provides. She favors working in oil, and sometimes watercolor, and prefers painting landscapes, animals and Native American subjects in the method of realism. Her creations are the main source of her identity and self-esteem. Sometimes it is hard for Edmon to feel well enough to work due to her disabilities; however, she strives to continue her art when she is able.



Dave Aquilante, *Bubba the Rooster*



**Ivy Egger** *Coatesville, PA*  
Egger begins her mixed-media mosaics with a simple acrylic or gouache painting, providing a foundation. Working with mosaics reminds her that she can take broken pieces of glass and make them into something new and beautiful, much like living



Maureen Collins, *An Old Irish Castle Two Ravens And The Moon*

with a disability. She also creates dreamy landscape paintings to create an escape from her daily challenges. She has a rare liver disorder called glycogen storage disease, type 1A. Because of

this, she must monitor her blood sugars to prevent hypoglycemia. Art provides her an outlet to help her forget about her physical challenges.

**Herbert Eilertsen** *Coatesville, PA*  
Eilertsen has been painting in oils for the past 10 years and is primarily interested in nature and landscapes. He is fond of rivers and water-related scenes, and enjoys capturing the effects of light and atmosphere. Living with constant joint pain, Eilertsen finds that his outlook on life is to capture its beauty and celebrate the experience of being alive. He finds joy in other people appreciating his paintings as much as he finds joy in creating them.

**Gen Farrell** *Burleson, TX*  
Farrell is a horse-lover and an artist. She loves creating paintings, which show her the spirit of the horse. She works primarily in oils because she loves the shine and the depth of the color. Farrell also enjoys researching cave paintings and petroglyphs and incorporating them into her artwork.

**Patrick Finucane** *Phoenixville, PA*  
Finucane's art is born from efforts to share his views of his surroundings, trying to bring to light many sights which can

easily and often be taken for granted. After filling photo albums and sketchbooks with pencil and ink drawings of his travels, Finucane moved to acrylic painting, which now adds life to what was previously a monochromatic translation of his journeys. Born with spina bifida myelomeningocele, and more recently undergoing related spinal surgery, Finucane has found creating art is a relaxing way to escape those painful days while expressing his creativity with minimal physical demands. "I find it most satisfying when I create a piece of art which then translates into happy memories for my viewers."

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

disease gave me the marvelous gift of time to master the art of photography. It has helped me 'slow down' to see this beauty and has given me the urgency to 'hurry up' and capture as much as I can photographically, while I still can."

**Gail Foley** *Royersford, PA*  
Foley injured her neck while working as a radiation therapist. Her days became filled with excruciating neck issues, fibromyalgia, chronic migraines and headaches. Her life took a turn for the better when Foley, along with her husband, purchased a farm in Royersford. This allowed her love for photography, an early passion of Foley's, to return to her life. She now spends time capturing and sharing the growth of their crops, as well as the nature and wildlife around their property, with her camera. "Photography has given me purpose again. It has given me strength, control, peace and escape during my times of chronic pain."

**Emily Forbes** *Hopkins, MN*  
Forbes is an abstract intuitive artist working in a variety of mediums, most commonly acrylic, alcohol ink and mixed-media. She loves to explore new techniques



Richard Crumb, *The Invitation*

with anything she can get her hands on. The "rules" are not something she strongly adheres to. A large part of the journey is finding the methods that bring her the most release, and these are the ones she sticks to. Art has become a huge source of healing for her through the tangles of disability. It helps her uncover emotions and be more mindful, which has yielded some interesting creations and a better understanding of herself. She is influenced by nature and modern life, color, movement, sound, hope and all things mystical. It is her goal that these themes come through in her finished works, blended up with wonder.

**Gemma Frost** *Baltimore, MD*  
Frost's art-making is an inner feeling with shapes, colors and patterns. Bright colors bring happiness and joy. She usually works in mixed-media, especially watercolor and watercolor pencils. Her favorite subjects are historical art and faces. She loves showing the inner feeling of the state of mind of the people in her drawings. She draws motivation and support from her family, many of whom are artists as well.

**Dana Gabriel** *Malvern, PA*  
Gabriel has been drawn to painting and art-making since she was a child. At 24 she was in a motorcycle accident. It took

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

**"Art has given me a means to communicate beyond spoken language."** —Nanette Moss

**Vimala Gade** *Kendall Park, NJ*  
Gade is a self-taught artist. As a child, she was always drawn to the fine arts. Starting as a hobby, Gade soon realized that painting was her passion in life. She was inspired by other disabled artists, which gave her courage to continue her interest. Gade creates

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

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

**Gregory Gans** *New Holland, PA*  
When Gans's third-grade art teacher brought in samples of artwork by masters such as Dali, Wyeth, Picasso and Monet, something happened to his 8-year-old soul and imagination. He instantly understood they had a visual language, setting him on a lifelong path as an artist. His college years were interrupted by a major brain operation to

remove a tumor. It saved his life but left him with epileptic seizures, cognitive and mood challenges and a hand tremor. In need of healing, he turned to his photography. Gans photographs landscapes or seascapes showing the relation of sky to the land as the Dutch painters did; some themes are spiritual and poetic. He often uses strong saturation of colors, building a composition inspired by the light of French impressionists, American landscape painters and photographers such as Edward Steichen, Galen Rowel and Elliot Porter. Photography empowers Gans to see and create. It has for more than 40 years. Art enables him to overcome and for the viewer to share this experience of discovery.

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

gift that he is given, and that making art is why he is here. Art has given Gerbstadt a means to cope with several disabilities and brings fulfillment in his life where he never thought possible. "Making art allows me to feel part of society and that I belong."

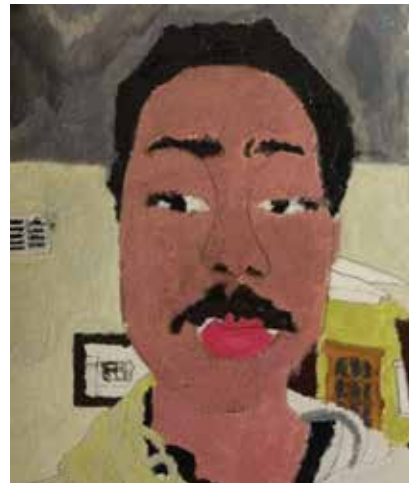
**Bunky Givens** *Essington, PA*  
Givens has always enjoyed expressing herself with a pen, pencil and paint brush. She paints flowers and greenery around wedding invitations to give as gifts that she letters and decorates. She also enjoys painting animals, seascapes and landscapes. She has made her own Christmas cards for many years. In 1973, she was in a major automobile accident. At Riddle Memorial Hospital, she was treated for a broken femur, displaced hip, broken jaw, left-side paralysis and eye displacement with brain seepage resulting in brain trauma. She was treated at Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital with physical therapy. Givens gets much pleasure from showing her artwork at Bryn Mawr Rehab. They have been there for her, both physically and mentally.

**Cathy Godek** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Art is a way for Godek to express herself. Her children are the greatest inspiration in her art.

Godek says, "Art has me look at my disability, not as a disability, but as a friend, because it makes me see things differently. Making art brings me joy and happiness and gives me a distraction from the world."

**Patricia Goodrich** *Quakertown, PA*  
Goodrich works with a variety of media, as well as creating earthworks and installations. She began as a poet, with a sense that everything connects. Having lost her lower left leg in a motorcycle accident, those few missing inches contribute to a sense of being "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. Goodrich feels the arts provide a universal language, a way of communicating at a deeper level.

**Anjali Goodwin** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Goodwin is inspired by both the city and country and looks to images of both to find inspiration. She finds that it is difficult to create her artwork, but the result makes the difficulty worth it. She tries to take her time to really see the small details, so that they are reflected in her work.



M R Corley, *Self-Portrait with Mustache*

**Linda Goschke** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Goschke is interested in our sensual experience of the natural world, our expectations of what is common and uncommon, and the nature of beauty. Her work examines our relationship to the environment and experiments with abstract interpretations of it. Goschke often looks for revealing, unexpected and often challenging views. A brush with death and resulting traumatic brain injury from an auto accident made her more aware of our physical fragility and our individualized interpretations of reality. Her physical and mental challenges pushed her into digital media to help her focus,

expand creative possibilities, and use fewer hazardous chemicals. "Art helps me to see and study the world. It allows me to share this with others, exchange shared experiences, investigate what may be uncommon, and communicate visual ideas."

**Lynne Green** *St. Louis, MO*  
Green is nearly 80 years old and has spent a lifetime in the arts. From copywriter to stage director to video artist, her work has earned awards and grants. When she became disabled, she began using a camera because it was an accessible tool. Her hobby turned professional in 2011 when her work was recognized and published. Green says, "I create because I want to connect with people, nature, concepts; explore life. I am a seeker."

**Ina Greenstein** *Philadelphia, PA*  
It wasn't until her children were grown and she didn't have to work full time, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on oil painting, she took a course in watercolor painting and was instantly smitten. The ability to capture light and have it shine through a painting has been a rewarding and engrossing pursuit of self-expression. Her

eye disease necessitates some downtime in order to allow her vision to come back into focus.

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

**Dick Grodt** *Cedar Rapids, IA*  
Grodt says he finds fulfillment and inspiration through art. It allows him to transport a viewer to a magical place, letting beauty and tranquility surround them. "What a magnificent world I study from." Confined to a wheelchair due to a hereditary neuromuscular

disease, Grodt believes watercolor painting cocoons him from his disability. He dances with a brush instead of his feet.

**Elaine C. Grose** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Grose is a 76-year-old woman who began painting in 2020 after the pandemic grounded everyone. Her spouse suggested she try painting to encourage her injured brain to heal and rewire itself. Grose says, "I had never thought of myself as artistic so this endeavor seemed unreal for me. I started with painting still life as I could see what was in front of me." Eventually she was able to visualize what she wanted to create and felt her mind was

starting to develop in new ways. Painting now brings her peace and centers her. She feels it is a great joy to take her paints and imagination into new realms.

**Gregory Harvey** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Harvey has been painting professionally since 1969. His favorite representational subjects are Black Moshannon State Park, Ricketts Glen State Park, and the Cape May and Avalon beaches. When multiple sclerosis impaired his vision, Harvey realized that if he was to continue in the visual arts, he must find workarounds in many aspects of his representational painting. Fortunately, Harvey



Bobby Edmon, *Retreat*



has been able to find these and continues to paint. “Having visual impairment has helped me to appreciate how fragile is the mechanism of discerning reality through the eyes.”

**Patrick Hatfield** Philadelphia, PA  
“The chance to be creative gives me a chance to go someplace else rather than what we perceive to be the real world.” Hatfield feels that all of the encouragement from individuals involved with the art program

“I started to realize the benefits of how painting calms me down when I am in a lot of physical or emotional pain.”

—Nanette Tarter

at Inglis House is one source of his inspiration. He takes those individual ideas and tailors them to his bizarre interests. It becomes a combination of what his art teacher wants and what he wants to bring to it for individualization and uniqueness.

Hatfield is motivated by his desire to make his mark and to create something that others are going to see, whether they like it or not. He likes to create things that we don't normally see.

**John Haus** Hatboro, PA  
Haus' art is whimsical, inventive and truly his own. His diverse collection of work utilizes multiple mediums. He uses life experiences and creates his own universe. Haus speaks to the viewer through his art. The conversation is fluid and captivating, with a splash of humor, whimsy and personality. In 2002 at the age of 18, Haus sustained a traumatic brain injury, paralyzing the right half of his body, and requiring him to relearn daily living skills with his left side after having been dominant with his right. Haus struggles with aphasia and pain daily, so art has been his saving grace and brought a true purpose to his life.

**Passle Helminski** Erie, PA  
Helminski finds great meaning in her sculptures and textile works. A visually impaired artist, Helminski capitalized on textiles because it is a medium that depends heavily on sense of touch. She uses tubular knitting to create energetic forms and says of her work,



Jen Decota, *Blooming Ecstasy*

“Whether my art is freestanding, wall-hanging or suspended, it is the combination of my deep love of art history with my deep musical, spiritual side.” Helminski graduated from Edinboro University with a master's degree in weaving and textiles and has since exhibited nationally and internationally. She has taught at the Neighborhood Art House, been an adjunct professor at Mercyhurst College and Gannon University, and has been Artist-in-Residence at the Cathedral Center in Erie, Pennsylvania. Helminski has received multiple artist residencies and grants, and her work has been published many

times. Helminski says, “Please take the time to be still with my art and maybe you will be lucky enough to hear the beat of my art.”

**Pat Henriques** Key West, FL  
Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus is on enameling and making pieces from fine or sterling silver. Henriques' specialty in enameling is cloisonné. She uses stones in her work as well. “Nature inspires me and I am amazed by the designs and hues that are found in various stones and flowers.” Henriques has 11 herniated disks

in her spine, causing sciatica. Fabricating jewelry has helped her realize that you can overcome obstacles. Henriques says when she is in pain, she tends to choose darker or more heightened colors in her work. Her personal quote is: “Experiment. You won't know if you can accomplish something if you don't try.”

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

**Chris Hinchey** Philadelphia, PA  
Hinchey is 36 years old and not only paints, but plays music and

works on his digital art. Hinchey also helps out with support groups for neurofibromatosis. He finds that art gives him a way to express himself and enjoys painting farm scenes and covered bridges in watercolor and acrylic.

**Debbie Huff** Landenberg, PA  
Huff finds inspiration in the rolling hills of Southeast Pennsylvania for her alcohol ink and colored pencil paintings and drawings. Her favorite subjects are animals and flowers. In her youth, Huff did a lot of painting and drawing in school, but got away from art as an adult. Several years ago, after an ankle injury, she started to paint and draw again. Now art is a regular hobby of hers along with cycling. Born legally blind in one eye with reduced vision in the other, art helps Huff “see” details she normally wouldn't in real life. Using a computer, she is able to enlarge photographs to the point where she can see the fine details in animals and bring them to life in her art.

**Alonzo Humphrey** Philadelphia, PA  
Humphrey is a visual artist who was born in Chattanooga, TN. His mother, also an artist, shared her love of artmaking with her son at a young age. Humphrey

says they used to sit beside each other at the kitchen table and draw. He moved to Philadelphia in 1980 and continued producing his lyrical renderings of people and landscapes. Humphrey does not draw from visual sources, but from his imagination; people and places that he remembers, historical figures, and scenes from his memories. He says the images form as lines in his head, and putting them on paper is like putting them to sleep.

**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



Constance Avery, *Adirondack Morning*

fractal manipulations and digital photography. “I see the world as a struggle between the ‘thinking’ and ‘feeling’ parts of the mind, each becoming more or less dominant over time, and I endeavor to appeal to both in my work.” Art allows Iverson to express himself in ways that he finds difficult to express otherwise.

**Janice Jackson** Philadelphia, PA  
Jackson is an only child with no children. She has found her family at Inglis House in the other members of her art class. Art relaxes her and makes her feel better. Jackson says, “Having multiple sclerosis is very frustrating, but my art takes me to another place and makes me feel calm and serene.”

**John Johnson Jr** Raleigh, NC  
Johnson's abstract paintings are filled with bright colors that make him happy. He uses broad strokes of acrylic paint on canvas. He never knows how his paintings will end until the colors “pop.” Johnson will only paint when he is in a good mood. He looks at his paints to decide on the main color, but also looks to his backyard for inspiration from nature. He hopes his viewers use their imagination when looking at his paintings.

**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



Patrick Finucane, *Lighthouse Rock*

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

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

**Mark Kaufman** *Wilmington, DE*  
Art seeks connection to write, paint, dance, query, invite an expectant waiting — that moment of connection when artist and viewer both wait for questions to emerge. Kaufman’s images seek to connect. He almost hates to name them for that limits what the viewer sees. Thirty years ago, Kaufman was diagnosed as having bipolar 1 disorder. He has, however, been somewhere on the spectrum of those disorders

since kindergarten. Kaufman began painting as a child, and in his teens studied at the Corcoran Museum’s School of Art. After a decade as a practicing attorney, in his 30s he returned to the study and practice of art. He now lives in Wilmington, DE with his wife of 50 years and his cat named Cat.

**Jan Alice Keeling** *Nashville, TN*  
Keeling’s passion is painting portraits in watercolor. She works unhurriedly, using abundant water and many washes of color. Most of her subjects are human faces or beloved animals. Keeling was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis in 1991. Her disability, which is largely manifested as fatigue, difficulty walking and occasional blurred vision, played a role in her decision to stop office work and paint full time. She loves the way her watercolors (and the internet) allow her to connect with others.

**Patrick Kenny** *Berwyn, PA*  
Kenny has always loved bright colors. He suffered severe head trauma in early childhood. Kenny enjoys creating his masterpieces with crayons and markers. Recently, he began experimenting with acrylics and watercolors. He has a vacation

home in Stone Harbor, NJ, and much of his inspiration comes from the natural beauty found at the beach.

**Cheryl Kinderknecht** *Bradenton, FL*  
Kinderknecht is an abstract artist whose formal educational background includes a degree in art from Fort Hays State University. Regardless of the subject matter portrayed or the medium used, her work is heavily influenced by the colors, patterns, strata and textures of the Kansas High Plains landscape where she grew up. Kinderknecht further relies upon emotions, dreams and memories to anchor and inform her work. Much of her inspiration is from within...an intuitive, stream of consciousness process that expresses a mood or creates a sense of movement, balance, rhythm and tension. Kinderknecht’s work is exhibited in local galleries, juried regional and national shows, and is included in many private collections throughout the United States and abroad. A visually impaired artist, Kinderknecht has been represented since 2019 by ArtLifting, a professional platform that markets the work of artists with disabilities and other underrepresented artists.

**Kaius Kirby** *Chicago, IL*  
Kirby is a disabled, intersex, mixed-media, working artist in Chicago. Currently their work focuses on vessels that can be meaningfully “encountered” by the disabled body. Kirby’s works are brightly colored (for low-vision), textured (for autism stimming) and unmounted (for low mobility). Kirby started experimenting with their signature pointillism style last year during episodes of extreme chronic pain. During these episodes, Kirby would sit down and dot to center themselves, to meditate. “After a week in bed with a ‘flare,’ I look down and my human misery has wrought something jubilant, imaginary. My pain is now bright orange, yellow or blue — and a gift to the world.”

**Chloe Kirkland** *Wynnewood, PA*  
Kirkland loves to make paintings and drawings of animals. She tries to get every detail, first with pencil and then with watercolor. She has created art since she was young and can remember painting and drawing in kindergarten. She considers herself a lifelong learner, which has helped her grow as an artist. She says, “I enjoy making art for other people and hope that other people are happy when they see my work. I love making other people happy.”



Gen Farrell, *Galloping Through the Galaxy*

**Julie Kitzes** *Denver, CO*  
Kitzes is an illustrator and designer residing in Denver, CO. She works in a variety of mediums including colored pencil, acrylic, watercolor, gouache, digital, needlepoint and more. Her subject matter often pertains to animals and nature, but with a touch of whimsy. After enduring several neurosurgeries, she decided to pursue her hobby of art as a full-time job since it allowed her to work on her own schedule and base her hours around her symptoms and capability for that day. Art has played an important role in Kitzes’ life with a disability

as a coping mechanism. It’s a meditative experience that provides distraction from chronic pain while simultaneously allowing her to express herself.

**Dawn Klug** *Floral City, FL*  
In 2023, Klug began to paint again, in addition to her fiber arts. She continues to explore themes of nature and her love for the Cherokee people and their culture within the Smoky Mountains. As a quadriplegic, she is always finding new ways to adapt to her surroundings and situations as a senior citizen. Art is a true equalizer as it can be done by anyone who desires

to create. This has been her goal since childhood when she began drawing, and she hopes to continue for many years to come.

**Tyson Klug** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Klug says that art is a way for him to express what words can’t. “My mind and heart are very full and art gives me the opportunity to express that. Color and form are untethered by rules and restrictions.”

**Debrah Block Krol** *Bloomfield, NJ*  
Krol says, “I am fascinated by the multitudes of colors, shapes and variety found in nature. The ocean and surrounding areas contain a multitude of worlds. Trees strike me as guardians of nature in their stature and complexity. The longer I study them, the more abstract they become, yet still solid and concrete.” Her process begins with observation. She tries to take a “photo” with her mind, then she concentrates on one section — similar to cropping an image, this helps with the composition of the piece.

**Daniel Kytonen** *Seattle, WA*  
For this series, Kytonen investigates the structure of words by deconstructing their parts to make new forms. As someone with dyslexia, he is interested



in translating the experience he has with text, relating to it purely as form and shape while struggling to connect with the literal and phonetic meaning of the text. Kytonen draws influence from graffiti, as it is one of the few universal experiences of relating to text as a visual form, rather than focusing on words to communicate meaning.

**Jace Laakso** *Missoula, MT*

Laakso works with reduction relief printing, which uses a single block for as many as 10 colors. The block is inked, then printed, then carved, for the next color. This continues for each successive color as ink is applied and printed until finally, with the last color, most of the block's surface has been carved away. Much of Laakso's inspiration comes from seeing the landscape and mentally framing how it could best fit into his art. Negative spaces and shadows play a huge part in how he translates these surroundings. Laakso says making art is meditative. He can lose sense of time. "While I don't ever forget that I am disabled, it does not define who I am."

**Cherie Lee** *Cherry Hill, NJ*

"Pause, just a moment longer... Look, just a little closer...and you'll

appreciate everything just a little bit more!" If anything could be said to be a benefit of disability, "slowing down" might be one aspect in which artist Lee could find value. As a former firefighter, first responder and corporate liaison for a multimillion-dollar

**"Sometimes I feel inadequate because I'm unable to do all the things that a 'normal' person can do. Being an artist allows me to do what some other people can't, and that gives me the confidence to overcome my disability."** —Jo Ann Welch

telecommunications firm, "diminished capacity" was a daunting thought...until it became a gift. Here the artist turns her camera's eye toward the easily overlooked, and invites you to look again, in hopes that you too might rediscover the beauty and wonder which you already know surrounds us always.

**Abigail Levy** *Philadelphia, PA*

In the summer of 2021, Levy was a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehab due to a new onset of multiple sclerosis that left her unable to walk or move the left side of her body. Her grandparents were both photographers, and her first

camera was her grandfather's Nikon D70, which she used throughout high school. Art therapy allowed her to express herself while relearning how to use her arm and hand. These photos are physical representations of what she has overcome. Levy

says, "MS has been called a 'butterfly' disease due to its unique presentation, so when I saw all of the butterflies at BMRH, I knew I had to capture one."

**Katie Lickfield**

*Kennett Square, PA*

Lickfield is an oil/acrylic painter. She just graduated from West Chester University this past summer with a BS in interdisciplinary studies with a minor in studio art. She currently works as a paraprofessional at Hillendale Elementary School and St. Cornelius, both located in Chadds Ford. Lickfield has been painting since 2019, as she took

a lot of painting and art classes during college. She not only likes to paint, she also enjoys staying involved in Bible study, hanging out with friends, traveling and making earrings for seasonal occasions. She is excited to take part in Art Ability and make others smile.

**Mark Liu** *Bryn Mawr, PA*

Liu loves to draw pets, cars and landscapes in his neighborhood. He prefers to use colored pencil and crayons to create his art. Drawing makes him calm and happy.

**Bonnie MacAllister**

*Philadelphia, PA*

MacAllister's portraits on handmade felt are crafted through embroidery, created from an original figure drawing. She transforms it into needlepoint, a quilt of pores, threaded with 20+ colors, bounded and knotted with each perforation, a performative puncture onto self-healing felt. After learning to spin and weave as part of her Fulbright Hays to Ethiopia, MacAllister became determined to continue her story through textiles. As she describes her practice, "The muscle memory of sewing is guided by recollections, stringing the grit and tooth of obstacles...pounded



Samuel Dietze, *Moonlight Bay*

out in coarse intermingling of fibers, torn out and restitched, a forgiving medium where every loop can be redone and undone, tacked and basted anew."

**DaNice D. Marshall** *Boston, MA*

In 2016, Marshall became gravely ill with granulomatosis with polyangiitis, an incurable disease. She has hearing loss and is unable to concentrate to write. She started painting abstracts, mostly to watch the paint dry. Eventually her struggles led to narrative art, and she found her voice in painting the stories she could no longer write. In 2022,

14 of her paintings were featured in "Naomi," a television show streaming on HBO Max. In 2023, she received the Mass Cultural Council visual art grant and had her first solo exhibition. Her work has shown in venues like Abigail Ogilvy Gallery in Boston, and Northern Illinois University Art Museum in Dekalb. She says, "I'm living my ordinary life most extraordinarily, that is I have a disability, but I'm making 'art ability.'"

**Rose Mavis** *Bethlehem, PA*

Mavis is a lifelong artist with a hearing disability. She has

pursued the arts both in her formal education as well as the fine arts in her current efforts. Currently, Mavis paints in oils with an occasional effort in colored pencils. She loves botanical art and has recently made a series on florals that sparked her interest.

**Jeffrey McCredie** *West Chester, PA*

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

**Megan Meier** *Fort Worth, TX*

Meier is an illustrator and printmaker from Fort Worth, TX. Printmaking has been a transformative journey for her, born out of a dark, difficult time in her life, and continues to evolve. After being permanently disabled

in tragic circumstances, her art therapy appointments evolved into a lifelong passion. One of the purposes of her printmaking art is to connect with people and share her journey in hopes that it can be an example of what happens when you choose to see the beauty in all aspects of life, even in the darkest moments. Meier primarily does so with traditional linocut and woodblock printmaking techniques, but she is also open to more experimental printmaking methodologies.

**Lawrence Meyers** *Paoli, PA*

Meyers is an impressionistic watercolorist who connects the viewer to his vision of God's design and the excitement with our commonplace surroundings that are often overlooked. He transforms these into extraordinary beauty, to be cherished with each brushstroke. Meyers is hearing- and vision-impaired, has tritanopia colorblindness, type 2 diabetes and residual stroke paralysis of speech, fine motor skills and walk that required occupational, physical and speech rehabilitation therapy at Bryn Mawr Rehab. This changed his style to paint more loosely and rely more heavily on value, depth and darkness of color rather than color itself, to create

Herbert Eilertsen, *Moonrise*

his artwork. Meyers feels blessed to be able to continue his pursuit of art and share his view of the complexity in nature.

**Vinetta Miller** *Drexel Hill, PA*

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

**Nicole Miritis**

*Montreal, Quebec, Canada*

Miritis started painting as part of a therapeutic process following a back injury from a car accident. Her journey has redefined her and permitted her to progress as an artist. She describes her painting style as fearless and feels her expression is limitless. She applies a strong sense of forward-thinking and out-of-the-box techniques that are consistently displayed across all her artworks. Miritis is grateful for Art Ability and honored for the opportunity to exhibit and share her passion.

**Victor Mordasov** *West Chester, PA*

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

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

**Nanette Moss** *Nanaimo, British Columbia, Canada*

Moss is a mixed-media artist living on Vancouver Island, Canada. Her paintings are layered, textural abstractions of botanicals and landscapes, using acrylics and found materials. Themes include transformation, the power of reframing, and healing. After years of bold performance art where her body and background were the canvases, she experienced severe hearing loss. This led her back to 2D art with a heightened focus on the visual and tactile senses. Moss believes it is critical to reach across perceived boundaries to form connections; yet it is a struggle not to withdraw, due to the challenges of hearing loss. Art has given her a means to communicate beyond spoken language, which can be so easily misunderstood. At the same time, the meaning behind her work sparks deeper conversation.

**Daniel Neufeld** *Philadelphia, PA*

As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, a learning disability. But it didn't stop him at all from gaining and sharing as many talents as possible. He grew fond of art through his mother, also an artist. Neufeld is into drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, comic books and animation. Subjects that he enjoys capturing with his pencils, pastels, pens, inks and paints include people, still lifes and sites that he sees on his travels. Art has inspired and helped Neufeld see things in the world creatively. His skills include not only fine art, but also playing sports, singing, playing the cello, cooking and making and editing his own movies.

**Thu Nguyen** *Peppeekeo, HI*

Nguyen was born in Saigon, Vietnam. In 1975, Saigon fell and in the confusion, she was separated from her parents. She was in a refugee camp near Hong Kong for a year prior to immigrating to the United States as an orphan. After getting her art degree, Nguyen decided to pursue her art career in Los Angeles, Seattle and finally Hawaii. Her portraits use elements of traditional Chinese art

combined with Eastern European iconography, interpreted through a contemporary lens to explore new ideas in portraiture. Her work has been exhibited and collected in private and public art collections in the U.S., China, Mexico, Canada, Hong Kong, Singapore and Eastern Europe. In 2016, one of her portrait paintings was exhibited at the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery.

**Lauren Nicholson**

*West Chester, PA*

Nicholson is a local artist in the Greater Philadelphia area. She is not only an artist, but is also the art therapist at Bryn Mawr Rehab. Inspired by the act of art-making as a creative medium, Nicholson encourages herself and the patients she works with to express themselves through art. She sustained a hip injury from horseback riding and experiences chronic pain — the experience has helped her empathize with the populations she's worked with who face chronic pain on a daily basis.

**Timothy O'Donovan**

*Wynnewood, PA*

O'Donovan likes the idea of seeing nature by itself in its own form. He feels very comfortable with nature when he takes hikes

and walks. O'Donovan feels more in control of his life and his emotions when he makes a piece of artwork. If there is too much tension, he paints and draws while listening to natural music, sounds of the ocean, and Enya. O'Donovan is a learning-disabled individual since birth. He's been independent since age 14, a self-advocate for 26 years, and an artist at the Center for Creative Works for 13 years.

**Diana O'Neill** *Haverford, PA*

O'Neill spent 25 years as a successful glass etching/carving artist. Though she enjoyed completing various commissions, they lacked color and expression. So, when O'Neill was introduced

to watercolor painting, she fell in love with this exciting medium. It freed her creative imagination and she has become passionate about it ever since. Her paintings typically are impressionistic and are inspired by the incredible beauty of nature found in scenic landscapes, birds and animals. It's O'Neill's hope that the bright colors and natural patterns in her work will inspire others to appreciate the natural environment that surrounds us. One of her favorite quotes is: "Every day is a gift, so enjoy and make it count."

**Jon Ohman** *Dennis, MA*

Ohman is an enthusiastic young man with high-functioning

autism, a cognitive disability involving an impairment of social interaction and communication, and repetitive behaviors. He draws and paints images with colored pencils, markers, oil pastels, acrylics and watercolor. When drawing or painting, he does best at two-dimensional art in both side view and front view angles. Ohman's artwork is mainly inspired by animals. It makes him feel proud to have the talent to bring his images to life and considers it one of his most significant accomplishments. His creation of artwork makes his family and friends proud.

**Patrick Ohman** *Dennis, MA*

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

**Susanne Dagmar Olsen**

*Vordingborg, Denmark*

Olsen thinks art reflects the person you are. She works in a broad range of media, but her favorite is linocut. Her subject

Bunky Givens, *Sunny Winter Mornings*



matter consists of flowers, animals and people. Olsen believes that if you do what you like most, you get the best results.

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

**Melinda Orth** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Orth has a spinal cord injury and uses a strap to help her paint. Art inspires her to explore different media. She looks forward to Tuesdays, when she has her class. Making art makes Orth happy and relaxes her.

**Leslie Palmer** *Audubon, PA*  
Palmer enjoyed a 30-year career as a scientist, but always found time for her other passion, art. A bicycle accident ended Palmer's career after she suffered a traumatic brain injury. Art became part of her therapy. She enjoys an experimental approach to her art, choosing the medium and technique that best convey the subject or mood. Taking part in the Art Ability show holds great meaning for Palmer. "I found so much needed hope looking at the work of disabled artists on the walls of Moss Rehab Hospital, where I was treated. I'm excited to now be able to exhibit my paintings at Bryn Mawr Rehab in



Ina Greenstein, *Grin and Bear It*

the hopes of giving other patients the hope that meant so much for my recovery."

**Sal Panasci** *Devon, PA*  
Panasci is a 1971 graduate of the Philadelphia College of Art, with a BFA in graphic design. He began his career in advertising in New York City, but soon moved to the Philadelphia area. Over a 25-year career, his work was well respected and highly recognized with many national and local awards. His career came to an abrupt halt in November 1995. He was a passenger in a taxi accident, which resulted in his being diagnosed with a traumatic brain injury and blindness in one

eye. Panasci spent 16 months in rehabilitation. He makes his home in Devon, PA, with his wife, Linda.

**Vern Pearl** *West Chester, PA*  
At 80 years old, Pearl investigated additional areas of interest to replace physical activities like tennis and golf. After a severe wrist fracture and peripheral neuropathy, these previously enjoyable activities came to a screeching halt. On a whim, Pearl took an art course, which introduced him to watercolor. The more he learned, the more fascinated he became. Now, when he looks around, he sees the world in a much different light. Scenery, buildings, flowers and people, things he never paid much attention to, now intrigue and delight him. His thought process now centers on how he can paint so people see what he sees. His world at 87 years old has really blossomed. Regarding style, he is drawn to realism and impressionism. He has found that the main thing is to challenge yourself and have fun regardless of your age.

**Victoria Pendragon** *Paw Paw, WV*  
Pendragon's fingers rest, permanently curled, almost on the palms of her hands — the only remnant of diffuse

progressive systemic sclerosis (aka scleroderma). While it was slated to end her life, thanks to a clinical trial, the disease only left her with viciously crippled fingers. She paints on canvas laid flat on a high table, as she has limited flexibility. The daughter of two pathologists, in her youth she illustrated many "microscopic landscapes" for her famous mother's textbooks and became enchanted with pattern...that enchantment has only grown, as her recent work attests.

**"Art lets me express myself in a healthy way and it makes me forget that I am living with a disability for a while."**

—Stephanie Shea

**Treavor Stinson Pence** *El Paso, TX*  
Pence was born in West Texas and raised right by the Mexican border. He learned to blend the cultures he grew up with in his work, especially with the landscapes of the area. Among his favorite subjects to paint are trees, mountains and the desert.

Pence also loves to paint plein air, work at art bazaars, and teach his middle school students the fine arts and encourage them to develop their own technique and styles.

**Christopher Pereto** *Weymouth, MA*  
Pereto has been drawing since before age 5. He can't imagine art not being a part of him. When Pereto first began trying to be "serious" about art, he used colored pencil and aspired to be like illustrator Richard Scarry. It wasn't until the second half of his college career that Pereto got into marker and pen, thinking more in terms of animation cells. Somewhere along the way he combined the media and began adding watercolor and even paint marker to the mix. Pereto says, "I've never had any conception of what role art played in my life as an autistic man; however, neither have I had an idea of how my condition may impact how I create. Both would seem to be something beyond words, fully coming from intuition and the subconscious."

**Tracee Perkins** *Philadelphia, PA*  
A native of Philadelphia, Perkins likes music and art, and is very independent and helpful to others.

She has epilepsy, but enjoys creating art and finds it to be a good pastime. She is inspired by nature, flowers and gardens.

**Cassandra Petruchyk** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Petruchyk's art has been with her from day one. It seems the one thing almost untouched by a disorder she was diagnosed with at age 14, obsessive compulsive disorder — best described as the disease of doubt. With OCD, passing thoughts don't pass and worries consume her time as constant thoughts or rituals devised to control them. The one activity where she finds herself least plagued by this is drawing. Petruchyk uses drawing to communicate and advocate for animals, wild and domestic. With this intimate art form, line made by pencil, pen, Prismacolor,\* and sometimes emphasized using dabs of oil pastel, expresses emotional intention. Her intention is to show the viewer that these are emotional beings and should be treated as such, with respect and honor.

**Cathy Pregmon** *Media, PA*  
Pregmon has had multiple careers, including schoolteacher, artistic director for a theater company that toured plays of



Mark Kaufman, *Boardwalk Bethany Beach*

empowerment for children, consultant with the Bureau of Special Education in Pennsylvania, and now as a designer of handcrafted, one-of-a-kind jewelry. Pregmon never makes the same piece of jewelry twice. She favors beads that are organic and come from nature. Many of her pieces feature semiprecious gems but her work also incorporates seeds, horn, bone, shells and vegetable sources such as tagua and açai nuts. She favors fair trade beads

such as Kazuri porcelain beads from Kenya and paper and linen beads from Uganda. Her pieces are chunky and funky “jewels” with touches of whimsy, and creative use of unusual materials. Pregmon is currently experiencing symptoms from long COVID, making life much more difficult. The flow and concentration that the creation of art demands help control the chaos and pain of the many disabilities with which she deals.

**Elizabeth Quigley** *Adrian, MI*  
Quigley is a self-taught, late-in-life art bloomer playing with acrylics, oil, and pen and ink. Her subjects include florals, seascapes and dancers which may be rendered in realism and/or abstract. She’s inspired by the miracle that is herself. Quigley had just begun her art journey when an injury left her unable to do anything but breathe. After many years of rehab she is now returning somewhat to where she was at the beginning of her journey.

**Tim Quinn** *Narberth, PA*  
Quinn says that he never knows where he’ll create his next piece of art. It may be on the wall of the warehouse, his father’s office, inside his house; he has



Cheryl Kinderknecht, *Wednesday*

no clue. He starts with a line that goes all around. He makes dots with paint markers. Quinn names each of his works after dogs and family friends.

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

which she has designed herself. “It is my hope to encourage others who have experienced disability to never give up.”

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

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

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

**Vojko Rizvanovic** *West Valley City, UT*  
Rizvanovic is a legally blind fine arts major, with bilateral optic atrophy and permanent vision loss that doesn’t improve with refraction. A few years ago, he was diagnosed with photophobia, which added to the challenges he faces every day. Rizvanovic says, “What else left is there to do for a guy with so many shortcomings like me? Art is what gives meaning to my life. After over a year-long break, I’m still adjusting to my new reality. It takes forever to complete something; it is a struggle. I just hope that my efforts add more meaning and merit to my work.”

**Holly Robbins** *Edinboro, PA*  
Robbins is a mixed-media artist with a flair for colorful, high-intensity imagery. Disabled most of her adult life from reflex sympathetic dystrophy/complex regional pain syndrome, she has been forced to adapt her art to her ever-changing medical conditions. Once solely a landscape/nature photographer, she now seeks out art in other localities, as the weight of the camera becomes too heavy. Robbins has learned many lessons through her disability, but flexibility in her thinking has been

her greatest lesson of all. Being able to adapt her art to meet her abilities at the moment, has put her on artistic paths previously undiscovered. Her favorite saying is, “Nature is my religion, outside is my church.”

**Maxine Rosen** *Penn Valley, PA*  
Rosen is a ceramic artist who is currently working with porcelain paper clay. Many of her pieces are sculptural in nature, but many also are functional. She enjoys taking a topic and exploring various ways to complete it. Each piece created is one-of-a-kind. She continues to work at home while meeting other artists in a class on Zoom. “My desire to self-express in clay

is paramount to my well-being, and provides me with personal space to grow.”

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



Lawrence Meyers, *First Snow*

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

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

**Ian Shearer** *Seattle, WA*  
Shearer soaks his sketches with water, creating rivers of pigment. He paints between these dripped lines, manipulating perspective, creating a jumble of flat and rendered imagery. Low- and high-contrasting values help tell the story of



neurological disorientation. Paint spatters mimic the jarring euphoria of sensory processing disorders. The chaotic drippings are symbolic of the “static” of aphasia and the lack of muscle control of dysarthria and apraxia while simultaneously creating



Victor Mordasov, *Melted Candle*

sensations of vertigo, common to traumatic brain injury. Patterns within the drips are highlighted or darkened to resemble MRIs and angiograms. Bits of medical records are decoupled into Shearer’s paintings, backwards or upside down, hidden in signage or shadows, almost indiscernible — reflecting the experience of millions of people, like himself, living with invisible disabilities.

**Matthew Slattery** *Baltimore, MD*  
Slattery has recently chosen to pursue visual art as part of his professional life. He joined the progressive art studio center, Make Studio, in 2020, inspired by an interest in exploring materials that he had never used before, based on a longtime passion for drawing and his desire to capture his personal perspective of the world. Slattery wasted no time getting into a studio routine when he first attended Make Studio, always making it very clear when a piece was done. He quickly expanded on an affinity for permanent markers to exploring layering effects with softer media like chalk and oil pastels, and has more recently dabbled in watercolor and acrylic paint. He is known for his unique, dry and witty sense of humor. He says that he is “realistic” about how cerebral palsy has

impacted his life as a whole and his approach to art. Making art regularly, in his view, allows him to push the bounds of what his mind and body can do “in sync,” and he relishes selling his artwork. Most recently, he had work on display with fellow Make Studio artists at Baltimore Clayworks.

**Ken Smith** *Riverside, WA*  
Smith specializes in limited-edition fine art, with a primary focus on still life. He prints his work in black and white and color, using both traditional photographic processes and archival pigment ink on fine

**“Art speaks for the soul when there are no words strong enough to encapsulate reality.”**

—Dave Aquilante

cotton printmaking papers. Smith feels his role as an artist is to be open, curious and available to observe and report back. He looks for something to move him, so he might pass that on to the work. The process of observing leaves one open to a mystery beyond thought or the so-called coincidence. This reverence for the unexpected is key. His work reflects on his walking disability,

encouraging patience and the understanding of how to find beauty in the commonplace.

**Nancy Cook Smith** *Santa Monica, CA*

Smith is a fabric collage artist who takes found fabrics and cuts them up to put them back together in a new composition. Her approach is simple yet effective: she repurposes, reorganizes, refreshes and redefines elements from the initial items. Conceptually, her collages follow two paths. Most pieces center on a formalist concern where a “chaotic” composition

is grown over an often obscured geometric skeleton. Order (or lack of), movement, color, shape and mood are the main focus. In others, she constructs a surrealist narrative where items create a dynamic but unclear story. Sometimes these two paths merge. Smith’s work is unplanned. The act itself of putting items together suggests connections, direction, cohesion. These hover

and bob around in one’s mind. Seizing the right hint and letting it carry the day regularly brings her to the finish line.

**Kari Souders** *Villanova, PA*

Having been born with vision in only one eye, Souders has always seen the world through a monocular lens. This more narrow window has made her hyperaware of fine details. It has given her a deep appreciation for experiencing our world not only visually, but also tactilely. As a result, she gravitated toward a career that relied on her unique vision through creating artworks that are densely layered and richly textured. These floral and fauna mixed-media paintings aim to express love and loss. They are meant to convey a romantic nostalgia for the natural world as it transforms due to climate change. Nature’s wonder and beauty is enchanting even as it breaks down and adapts. As our sacred world evolves, these paintings depict the artist’s fantasy of how nature will flourish regardless of new climate realities.

**Carol Spiker** *Wilmington, DE*  
Spiker has been making art as long as she can remember — albeit with lots of stops and starts. After a career in graphic



Thu Nguyen, *Princess Marie Claire*

art, she returned to school to study painting. She found special inspiration in the San Francisco Bay figurative artists painting during the 1950s and ‘60s. Her subject is always the figure — sometimes within a broad environment but usually placed within a minimal space. She likes to focus on painting the psychology of the figure. After

being paralyzed in 1998, painting became a reason to move forward. Two years ago, she was diagnosed with rheumatoid arthritis. Her biggest obstacle today is fatigue. Making art has become more precious for her each day.

**William Spiker** *Wilmington, DE*  
As a bilateral below-knee amputee since 2011, Spiker

has found making art his most important activity. Whereas a left hand that also suffered partial finger amputations presents a challenge, art provides an opportunity to create and accomplish objectives. He is primarily a sculptor, cutting and welding steel, but also paints in oil and acrylics. Occasionally, he combines painted backgrounds with welded steel pieces and found objects. Most subjects are inspired by and derived from nature and can take on both realistic and abstract forms. It is more important for Spiker to produce pieces to be enjoyed as opposed to making social commentary.

**Harry Spilker** *Camp Hill, PA*

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

lots of pictures of his dad. “My photographs make a statement about how I see the world.”

**Susan Stallsmith** *Philadelphia, PA*  
Stallsmith has always loved the arts and would describe herself as an “artsy” person. Her motivation to create is her desire to express herself. Stallsmith says that both art and music give her a great outlet for self-expression.

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

**Sal Strom** *Newport, OR*  
Strom grew up in Oregon, painting in the back booth of a bar, making art until 2:30 a.m. Since then, he has always painted at night. Like the darkness, his art investigates and exposes what we try to keep hidden. Danger and beauty were all part of his childhood “living theater.” From his home harbor of brine and surf came his love for figurative drawing, gestural and quick

as waves. The shift toward abstraction was organic: a map of visceral, pulsing possibilities like the coastline. Strom is eternally inspired by movement and gesture — the swirling of



Jon Ohman, *A Horse of Many Colors and Leaves*

wind, the blur of people all around, the passion of dance, the resistance to containment. He paints with layers, experimenting with texture using razor blades, stencils, collage and cutting up paintings to reappropriate into new ones. Strom’s recent focus is art as ecology. After a second brain tumor and other health complications, he has

been considering his afterlife. Driven by his fascination with mushroom coffins as a way to sustainably compost bodies, his mushroom painting series explores how mycelium can

be used as a way to battle the climate crisis. Through his art and impact, he hopes to leave a healthier environment for his grandchildren.

**Elizabeth Sullivan** *Elgin, TX*  
Sullivan has been a professional watercolor artist and mural painter for the past 20 years. Painting is her happy place. “The joy of creating supersedes all

else.” Being disabled limits her career options, but fortunately she’s been able to make a living doing what she loves. Sullivan’s art is inspired by life around her. She is fascinated by cave paintings, Asian brush paintings and ancient art, which also serve as inspirations reflected in some of her work. Sullivan lives in Elgin, TX with a tiny dog, 12 cats and 11 chickens. She also has three grandsons nearby and she shamelessly and repeatedly paints their portraits.

**Nanette Tarter** *Bricktown, NJ*  
Tarter initially began painting out of necessity. Needing to strengthen her hands, she began painting on the advice of an occupational therapist. In the beginning, she hated it. Then she started to realize the benefits of how it calms her down when she is in a lot of physical or emotional pain. Tarter expresses her mood through color and movement. She tries different techniques of pouring and marbling, as well as experimental methods and materials to explore her art process. She uses an intuitive approach and although it’s abstract, it takes a lot of her time and physical energy, but ultimately helps her to process her thoughts.

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

“I create because I want to connect with people, nature, concepts; explore life. I am a seeker.”

—Lynne Green

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

**Emily Tironi** *Cambridge, NY*  
Tironi’s works are a celebration of the disabled experience and the disabled body. She often uses surrealism, bright colors

and humor in her work to challenge societal norms and stereotypes regarding disability. Bringing this perspective to the general public and society is important, and her experience as a disabled person and knowledge of disability studies serves to enhance and inform her work. Tironi uses a variety of materials, such as gel prints, tissue paper, books and magazine images, to create contrast while still uniting the work through color and layering. Recently, she has begun working with assemblage and

found objects, including medical devices, to create sculptures. Her hope is to continue to explore three-dimensionality and viewer interaction in her work. The process of using different mediums and putting separate parts together to create a new whole strengthens the messages of the work.

**Leo Tujak** *Floral Park, NY*  
Tujak thinks that photography is great. It allows him to see

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

**Max Tzinman** *New York, NY*  
“If you could say it in words, there would be no reason to paint.” (Edward Hopper) Like Hopper, Tzinman finds it difficult to explain his work, because it does not come necessarily from a logical place...it emerges from a maelstrom of concerns, fascinations and experiences. He is exploring the disconnect between reality and the pervasive myths that surround us. He is questioning our purpose in these turbulent times and how we can avoid the emptiness of an unthinking existence. Tzinman’s creative process varies. It starts with an idea, then

working digitally in two or three dimensions. He enjoys using a variety of media, such as acrylics, oil, plastic, collage and metal, to construct still pieces and dioramas. For some projects, he works with video and animation, incorporating light and sound to communicate the desired effect.



Sal Panasci, *Red Arrangement*

**Frank Van Curen** *Fort Bragg, CA*  
Van Curen loves to make and sell his art, and with the help of many people that care deeply for him, he has created a rich life for himself. His approach



to making artwork is bold, and he dives into each new piece without hesitation or self-doubt. His images often incorporate lighthearted, funny elements and

his delightful sense of humor always brightens the studio. He is a prolific linoleum printmaker and mainly enjoys drawing animals, making up stories to go along with

each illustration. Van Curen has written and illustrated two books featuring horses, "Wild Thunder" and "Misty and Danny at the Fair."

**Shelley Van Scoyoc** Philadelphia, PA

Van Scoyoc was previously a social worker and is now a writer. She enjoys every group Inglis House has to offer, with the exception of sports. She loves to write poems and paint landscapes. She spends the majority of her days creating art and writing about it. It takes her mind off anything that she has done wrong. She is inspired by passing time.

**Joyce Washington** Philadelphia, PA

Washington came to Inglis House in 2012 and is 74 years old. She enjoys many activities, including the exploring art group, trivia, music and theater. Washington loves all forms of art, but painting is her favorite. She is a wonderful artist and enjoys the use of bright, vibrant color.

**J.P. Weber** Berwyn, PA

Weber is a self-taught artist who turned to painting in 2016 when he found himself observing self-destructive,

internal patterns leftover from childhood. After an emotional and spiritual awakening, Weber began therapy for anxiety and post-traumatic stress disorder, among other mental health conditions. He had discovered his truth. Without words to express what he was experiencing, Weber began painting the essence of his discoveries. Driven by an untamed curiosity, he uses vibrant colors and various techniques to excavate the truth within. Through art, he aims to rekindle the curiosity in all of us. His hope is to inspire people to be who they were meant to be, and to share the healing power of art with others.

**Natalie Weidner** Philadelphia, PA

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

**Jo Ann Welch** Hendersonville, NC

When Welch was 18, she was diagnosed with a vascular malformation located in the cervical spinal cord. This affected the right side of her body, which is now partially paralyzed. This presents a challenge to her, but it is one of many she has learned



Ian Shearer, *Blue Midnight*

to manage since becoming disabled. She is incredibly grateful for the role artwork has played in her life. Sometimes Welch feels inadequate because she is unable to do all the things that a "normal" person can do. Being an artist, she is able to do what some other people can't, and that gives her the confidence to overcome her disability. Welch creates using many mediums, including printmaking, photography, collage, assemblage, as well as painting in oil, watercolor and acrylics. Her current body of work includes seascapes and landscapes that are simplified and explore the possibility in the unknown.

**Debra Westdorp** Langley, British Columbia, Canada

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

**Kurt Theodore Weston** Mission Viejo, CA

Weston is a legally blind fine art photographer. He enjoys photographing natural beauty. Weston is currently creating stunning portraits of beautiful flowers, emphasizing their color and pattern. Although he has limited visual acuity, he is able to sensitively arrange and carefully light his unique bouquets and focus on the singular beauty within. Weston is a resident of Mission Viejo, CA, and received

his Master of Fine Arts degree from California State University, Fullerton. His luminous color photographs, created after his sight loss, are truly breakthrough images. In 2010, he was recognized by Arts Orange County with the Outstanding Artist Achievement Award for his solo exhibition, "Seasons in a Prayer Garden," and in 2012 he was featured in an interview on CNN, highlighting his photographs and advocacy. Weston's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally and is in both private and public collections.

**Don Whittecar** Stevensville, MT

Whittecar's passion lies in documenting the beauty of his subject matter, primarily threatened and endangered species of wildlife. His medium, copperplate engraving, is also disappearing. While most people are aware of conservation efforts for wildlife and their habitats, few are aware of the need to preserve vanishing art forms. Whittecar strives to preserve both. *Wildlife Art News*, an international publication with circulation to 110 countries, has cited him as one of only seven or eight wildlife art engravers currently practicing worldwide (*Wildlife Art News*, Artists Edition, 2004.) Whittecar's

disabilities, Stills disease and tardive dyskinesia, enable him to devote the focused attention needed to cut each individual line into a copper sheet to produce a printing plate.

**Jeremiah Wilson** Coatesville, PA

Wilson started painting in 2019 at age 32, completely changing his life and healing his personality. In mid-2020, he was in a car accident, leaving him with an incomplete C4 spinal cord injury. He is inspired to create because art has been such a powerful force in his life. It helped him process and release a lifetime of emotional trauma, and also helped with the physical trauma from his accident. Wilson will often gift a 7x5 canvas painting to people he connects with as a way to say, "I appreciate you."

**Robert Winig**

Rancho Palos Verdes, CA Winig was introduced to the art community at a very young age, growing up the son of an artist. He tried many disciplines of artwork in his youth and always enjoyed photography, and after retiring from a long career in engineering, he found his way back to it. In his photography, Winig now combines his passion

**"Art gives me self-determination, self-efficacy, and helps me gain confidence."** —Jess Avery



Ken Smith, *In The Garden 2*

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

**Bob Woltanski** Philadelphia, PA  
Woltanski is a 66-year-old disabled artist from Philadelphia. He has been paralyzed for 49 years due to a spinal cord injury. He made art when he was younger, but never received any formal education. He has greatly benefitted from the art classes at Inglis House. He paints with acrylics, usually on canvasboard, as well as mixed-media and wooden assemblages.

His physical disability does have an impact on his creativity. With limited arm function and little or no feeling in his hands, Woltanski's work might take him longer than he would prefer, but he perseveres through the challenges to create his art.

**Nancy Wood** San Antonio, TX  
Wood is a classically trained artist currently using photography and digital media to explore the aesthetics of the natural landscape. She received her BA and MFA degrees from the University of California, Los Angeles. As Wood describes, "During the 1990s, I bought a computer and began to teach

myself digital media because I believed it would be the future of visual arts." She was right, and this led her to become a successful digital artist. Wood experienced severe hearing loss and mental illness during a difficult period in her life. Her digital artworks are included in private and corporate collections and have received many awards.

**Clara Woods** Huntington Beach, CA  
Woods is a 17-year-old stroke survivor. Unable to speak, write or read, she can understand English, Italian and Portuguese. Painting changed her life and continues to give her a reason to believe in herself and fight for her future, despite her disability. When she paints, she is fully herself and doesn't need to worry about communication barriers. She loves to paint big canvases and uses lots of paint and colors.

**Jacquie O. Young** Lewes, DE  
Young believes we live in a world that is complex and a constantly changing puzzle, in a time when people need creative visual energy to excite the mind. She says a "speed bump," better known as multiple sclerosis, has averted her photographic



Thomas Dillon, Vaporwave Maine Coon

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



Harry Spilker, Spectral Flood

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

The many ways to make a gift to Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital include:

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Call us at **484.565.1385** to speak to a staff member and make a gift using a credit card. We accept Visa, MasterCard, Discover and American Express.



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For more information on donations, please contact the Development Office at **484.565.1385**.

The Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital  
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Congratulations to the amazing Art  
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## Supporting **our community**

Capital One is proud to support the **Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital** at the **28<sup>th</sup> Annual Art Ability Exhibition and Sale**. We are honored to work with a pillar of the community and highlight Bryn Mawr's wonderful work delivering advanced rehabilitation services for over 40 years.

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support Bryn Mawr  
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Stradley Ronon is proud to support Bryn Mawr Rehab and the annual Art Ability Exhibition

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2 cups of flour

Pinch of salt

8 tbsps. of cold butter

Cut the butter into the flour mixture, and add 8-10 tbsps of ice-cold water. Make the dough into a ball and refrigerate for an hour. With 6-10 peaches cut up, add a cup of sugar and 3/4 cup of flour. Add a teaspoon of cinnamon and mix it all together to cover the peaches. Let sit.

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

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

Bake for 25 to 35 minutes and let cool. Yum!

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**Congratulations to all of the amazing Art Ability Artists. You continue to inspire us.**

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