

UPWARD's *Quarterly*

FINE ART | GRAPHIC ARTS | DIGITAL PAINTING | CRAFTS | MIXED MEDIA



JUDITH ROSTON FREILICH
Hidden Morphing



OLGA MCNAMARA
Fusion
Oil on canvas

Foreword

The following issue of our magazine is hereby presented, including interviews and selected works of the artists represented in the exhibitions held in our gallery during the winter 2024-2025.

This issue is incredibly diverse and rich, both in terms of genres and art techniques. As always, it features works by artists who have been partnering with our gallery for a long time, as well as new participants in our thematic exhibitions.

We're also excited to share interviews and works by artists at Decarts, our sister gallery.

It is our hope that the works and opinions of the artists included in this issue will serve as a source of inspiration to colleagues, and that their art will find its way to admirers.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Ollie Basham". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "O" being particularly large and stylized.

Ollie Basham

Editor-in-chief

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OLGA MCNAMARA	ANNE MARIE MORGAN
CARLY ELLIS	AARON KRONE
LAURA'S MUSING	BRIAR ROSE PELLETIER
YULUN LIU	SO YOUN KIM FRSA
NICOLAS CHAVEZ	SHAKIMA JOHNSON
MERYL P. EPSTEIN	RICK SULLIVAN
BRYAN BROMSTRUP	KURT FONDRIEST
PALLAVI BALIJEPALLI	YITONG DU
NICK MAGILL	WILLIAM DENTON RAY
GABRIEL CONTRERAS	NISREEN ART
AMANDA PAIGE	CARINA IMBROGNO
RACHEL LUCAS	

SHAWN SOLUS:

Drawing has since become for me an almost second language



Shawn Solus (Edrington) has maintained a lifelong commitment to artistic practice. Originally from Salt Lake City, he studied music and visual art at Salt Lake Community College before moving to South Eastern Idaho where in 2015 he received a Bachelor of Arts degree from Idaho State University focused in Printmaking, Painting, and Sculpture.

He went on to receive a Master of Fine Arts degree in Visual Art from Boise State University in 2018 with an emphasis in Interdisciplinary Studio Art and Installation. He currently is an Assistant Professor of Art at Idaho State University. He draws from a diverse background embracing craft, invention, abstraction, and experimentation, with a practice including drawing, video, sculpture, and sound. His current work moves between an examination of volatility within and external to infrastructural systems and the entanglements of human and nonhuman ecologies.

UQ: Tell us a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

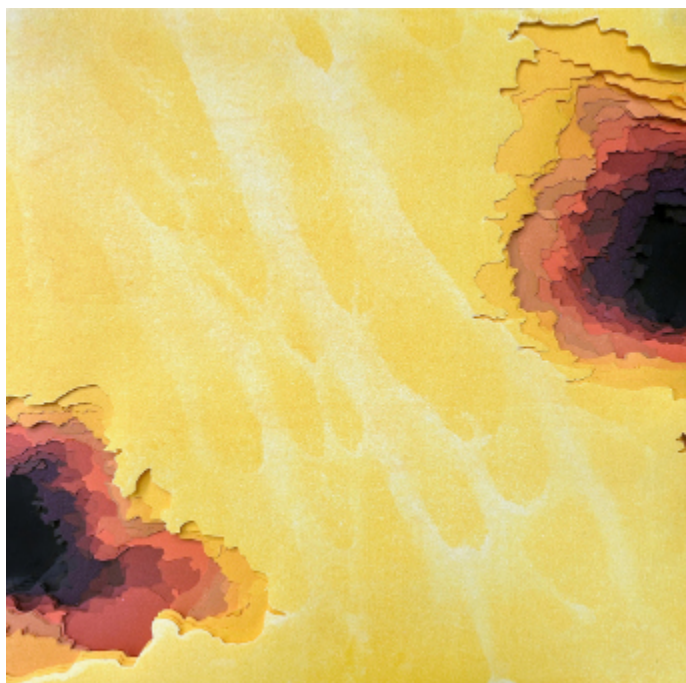
My mother had grown up making art, studied art in college, and was supportive when I was drawn to it early in life. As an only child, drawing was for me, an immediate means for entertaining myself. Creating characters and building worlds. I remember checking out “how to draw” books from the library when I was quite young and drawing has since become for me an almost second language I use to think just as well as to express myself artistically.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

I am influenced by Post Minimalism and Arte Povera. I am continually inspired by the work of artists Vija Celmins and Toba Khedoori.

What is your source of inspiration?

Everything, life, landscape, going to galleries and museums, reading books, listening to music...

Enmeshed IV*Chasmsigh***What themes does your work involve?**

Landscape, land use, infrastructure and the built environment, as well as themes exploring human relationships with non-human animals/ecosystems/and natural resources.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

It varies depending on the project. Hopefully, the experience prompts questions or gets someone to look at or consider something differently.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources?**Describe your creative process.**

All of the above! I always keep a camera around to record ideas and capture images/audio/video as I go through life. I've made many works based on photographs I've taken or derived from files created from 3D models, scanned digitally, but essentially “photographed”.

In learning to use technology for art purposes, there's an inevitable wrestling with the tool to get the desired effect

I often layer imagery with printmaking and digital printing approaches so often a work has gone through many different stages before it's finished.

**What is your favorite art accident?
Did it change your perspective?**

I appreciate the signature of something mechanical or electronic malfunctioning; bad code sent to a plotter or an image being corrupted when scanned. In learning to use technology for art purposes, there's an inevitable

Enmeshed III



Critical Mass

wrestling with the tool to get the desired effect. I've come to respond more to the accidents, mishaps, the results of failed communication, accidental interruption, or misuse than the result produced once all the kinks have been worked out and you get exactly what you expected.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

I continue to look forward to opportunities to share my work with others and aspire to participate in more artist residencies and solo exhibitions. ●

SHAWN SOLUS



Interpreting Wilderness

Serigraph on inkjet color photo print



*You are cordially invited,
mixed media and collage on canvas, 52 x 40 in., 2025*

GREG SINIBALDI:

Improvisation is at the heart of everything I do—both in music and visual art

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I've been making visual art seriously for about twenty years, but I come from a music background—specifically jazz and improvised music. Visual art started as a private practice for me, a way to reconnect with the kind of freedom and spontaneity I wanted to feel in music. I never initially thought of it as something to share publicly, but over time it grew into a parallel creative language—one that feeds and informs my music, and vice versa.



INTERVIEW

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

Visually, I've been deeply influenced by many artists. Recently, I've been looking

at Jasper Johns and Franz Kline a lot. I'm drawn to the physicality of their work, the way they layer gesture, symbol, and surface. There's a kind of emo-

I want the work to feel alive—like it's in conversation with the viewer, or maybe even with itself

Redbull, mixed media and collage on canvas, 46 x 26 in



tional density and improvisational energy in their paintings that really resonates with me. I also find inspiration in artists who work with collage and found materials—those who treat the process as discovery.

Musically, John Coltrane has been a lifelong influence, especially his later work where he was pushing the boundaries of sound, spirit, and form. Pierre Boulez has also had a big impact on the way I think about the structure and complexity—his ability to sculpt dense, expressive sonic worlds continues to influence how I approach sound and even visual composition. Both artists modeled a fearless commitment to exploration, which is something that's important to me.

What is your source of inspiration?

Improvisation is at the heart of everything I do—both in music and visual art. I'm inspired by what happens when you approach a blank surface (or silence) and let things emerge without preconception. My mood, the materials at hand, current events, and subconscious imagery all play a role. I'm also inspired by the act of observation and by looking inward—many of my pieces end up being a kind of self-portrait, even when they're abstract.

What themes does your work involve?

There's a strong undercurrent of introspection and emotional landscape in my work. I often explore identity, perception, and the subconscious, but not in a literal or narrative way. Symbolic forms show up—sometimes repeated, sometimes just once—and I don't try to pin them down. I'm interested in the tension between improvisation and intentionality, and in letting symbols emerge organically through a process. Lately, I've been working on a series about the four elements—earth, air, fire, and water—which gives me a loose structure while still leaving room for intuition.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

I want the work to feel alive—like it's in conversation with the viewer, or maybe even with itself. I'm less interested in delivering a message than in opening a space where people can bring their own interpretations. I hope there's something resonant in the balance between rawness and subtlety, between clarity and ambiguity. If someone feels something they can't quite name when they see the work, I feel like I've done my job.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources?**Describe your creative process.**

My creative process is rooted in improvisation, but I also draw a lot from my sketchbooks. I keep several going at once, and they're full of quick drawings, compositional ideas, and intuitive marks. Sometimes those sketches act as loose blueprints for paintings or mixed media pieces, though I never follow them too strictly. They're more like



Worrisome Thoughts, mixed media on panel 48 x 48 in, 2024

a starting point or a mood reference.

Collage is also a central part of my process. I work with images I find in discarded books—especially ones that feel mysterious or evocative—and

Tell them you love them, mixed media on panel, 48 x 48 in, 2024



I like how collage can disrupt or reframe meaning, and how it brings in layers of time and memory

abstract them, cut them up, or recontextualize them entirely. I like how collage can disrupt or reframe meaning, and how it brings in layers of time and memory. I combine those elements with acrylic paint, oil stick, pastel, pencil, and crayon—usually on found surfaces like cardboard. Everything builds in layers, with some things hidden and others revealed. It's all very tactile and responsive.

What is your favorite art accident? Did it change your perspective?

One that stands out is when I unintentionally scraped through several layers of paint on a piece I thought was finished. It revealed something unexpected underneath—this raw, beautiful interaction between layers. That moment taught me not to treat any part of the

work as too precious. Now I often use that kind of excavation as a technique. It's a reminder that the painting has its own memory and that the “mistakes” often carry the most energy.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

Yes—I'm at a point where I want to bring my visual art further into the world. I've shown in one group exhibition so far, and I'd love to work toward a solo show. I'm also interested in connecting more with the visual arts community in Seattle, where I recently returned after time in New York. Long-term, I'd love to create immersive experiences that bring together my visual work with sound—especially combining acoustic instruments, electronics, and projected imagery in a live setting. ●

Labyrinths, mixed media and collage on paper each panel, 46 x 35 in, 2025



GREG SINIBALDI



My Digits

SOLO EXHIBITION

OLGA MCNAMARA



Olga McNamara is a gifted artist specializing in abstract expressionism, crafting works that explore the complexities of human emotions, particularly our longing for joy and connection. Her art fuses elements of abstraction and expressionism, featuring dynamic brush and palette knife techniques, fluid forms, and vivid colors to weave narratives that bridge the real and the imagined.



Ethereal Equilibrium
Oil on canvas, 80/80 cm
1300 Euro



Fusion
Oil on canvas, 700/100 cm
900 Euro



Enigma in Blue
Oil on canvas, 100/70 cm
700 Euro



Aurora Borealis
Oil on canvas, 80/80 cm
1100 Euro



Ethereal Reverie
Oil on canvas, 80/80 cm
1100 Euro

SOLO EXHIBITION



The Resplendent Journey — The Simurgh's Ascend
Oil on canvas, 100/100 cm
1400 Euro



Wings of Illumination — Simurgh Unbound
Oil on canvas, 100/100 cm
1400 Euro



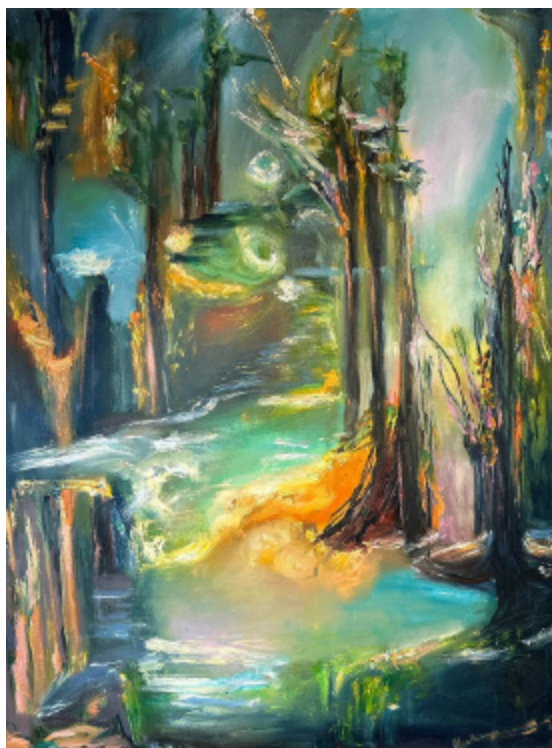
Petra Tou Yapani
Oil on canvas, 100/70 cm
1400 Euro



Awakening
Oil on canvas, 100/70 cm
700 Euro



The Hidden Passage
Oil on canvas, 100/70 cm
700 Euro



Magic Forest, the Roads We Take
Oil on canvas, 122/92 cm
2400 Euro



Shadowed Realms
Oil on canvas, 100/70 cm
700 Euro

CARLY ELLIS:

The urgency I feel to address environmental issues through art



Flipped

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I grew up in a family that fostered creativity and strongly supported my artistic endeavors. My father, a meticulous individual, exclusively uses a ruler in his drawings, emphasizing precision and structure. My mother, on the other hand, is an avid basket weaver and knitter, which has deeply influenced my approach to tactile and intricate work. Their distinct but complementary creative practices have shaped my own art, especially as I have recently immersed myself in weaving. I find great joy in incorporating patterns into my pieces, drawing inspiration from both their techniques and the idea of structure and repetition.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

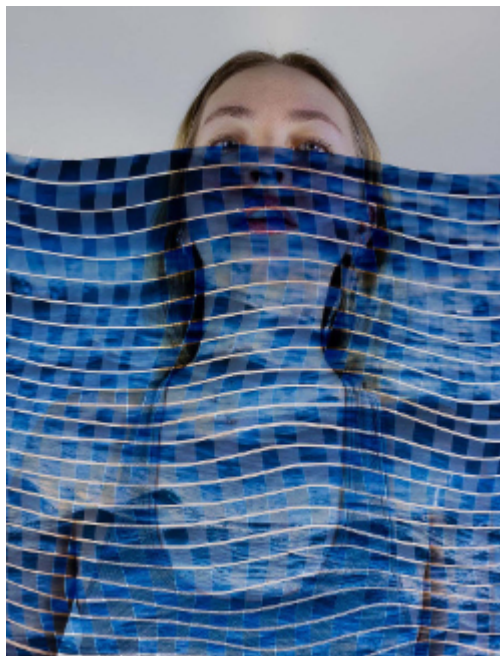
The artists and movements that have had the most significant impact on my

Carly Ellis grew up in Maryland before relocating to Spokane where she received a Bachelor of Fine Art with a minor in Art History from Eastern Washington University. While she primarily works in oil paint, she is a lover of mixed media and works in a diverse range of mediums from photography to sculpture and design. Ellis loves to take on a challenge and recently completed two large murals locally in Spokane. Her work is centered around the idea of the natural world, family, nostalgia and loss. Taking inspiration from nature and her late uncle's work. Through art she explores distortion and the impact it has on memory.



work span a variety of genres and themes, particularly those that explore the intersection of nature, identity, and social advocacy. The Environmental Art movement, with figures like Robert Smithson and Andy Goldsworthy, has influenced my deep connection to nature and the urgency I feel to address

Almost Under



environmental issues through art. The Feminist Art movement, including artists like Judy Chicago and Barbara Kruger, has inspired my exploration of gender and advocacy, encouraging me to use my art to amplify voices and challenge societal norms. These movements align with my desire to create work that advocates for both human rights and environmental preservation.

What is your source of inspiration?

I draw significant inspiration from my late uncle, David Malinsky, and the natural environment. Malinsky, an avid hiker, was particularly captivated by Bristlecone Pine trees, often photographing and writing about them. His deep reverence for these trees has profoundly influenced my practice. I share a similar sense of reciprocity with the natural world and strive to advocate for it through my art, channeling the same passion and respect that my uncle had for these magnificent trees.

INTERVIEW

What themes does your work involve?

The central theme of my work revolves around the environment and the intricate connection between humans and the natural world. I believe we stand at a critical crossroads, where urgent action is needed to redefine how we care for the Earth, the very source of our sustenance. Through my art, I strive to raise awareness of this pressing issue and inspire a deeper, more mindful connection to nature. Recently, I've also been exploring portraiture and

delving into feminist advocacy, seeking to amplify voices and highlight the importance of gender equality in my work.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

Through my work, I aim to advocate for those who may not have a voice, as well as for the environment, which cannot speak for itself. My hope is that viewers connect with my pieces on a personal level and, in doing so, feel seen and heard. Ultimately, I want my

The central theme of my work revolves around the environment and the intricate connection between humans and the natural world



Con

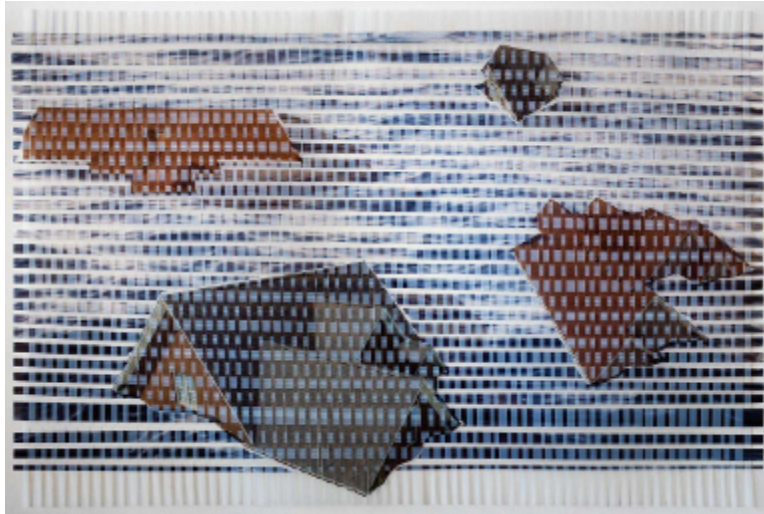
art to inspire reflection and action, fostering a deeper sense of empathy and responsibility towards both humanity and the natural world.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources? Describe your creative process.

Recently, my primary focus has been on photo weavings. In these pieces, I begin by capturing photographs, then edit and cut them into strips, which I weave together. I work with a variety of materials, including matte photo paper and Pictorico, a transparent film, to create unique textures and layers within the artwork. This process allows me to explore the intersection of photography and tactile craftsmanship. ●



CARLY ELLIS



Going Under

CRAFTS / MIXED MEDIA

LAURA'S MUSING



Mermaid Crown

YULUN LIU



The Space Between

FINE ART

NICOLAS CHAVEZ



Saimese Cat



MERYL P. EPSTEIN:

**I am inspired by
nature, music,
dance, color,
reflections, and
movement**

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

At five years old, my father who worked in the fashion industry gave me pre printed pads of paper that included figures with outlined dress shapes. Armed with a set of markers, I spent hours creating dress designs that featured a wide range of color combinations and patterns. My father showed my drawings to a fashion designer who strongly recommended that my parents encourage my artistic abilities and interest. As a result, they provided me with many opportunities to advance my creative skills by sending me to local art classes including art workshops at The Art Institute of Chicago.

quently visited The Art Institute of Chicago during elementary school through college. At a young age, I was attracted to the work of many Surrealists including Yves Tanguy and René Magritte as well as the depiction of the wet road in Paris Street: Rainy Day, by Gustave Caillebotte and the pointillist technique used by Georges Seurat to produce A Sunday on La Grande Jatte.

Magical Realism and Abstract Art

As my interest in art advanced, I became intrigued by the very detailed work of Ivan Albright which inspired me to consider a career in medical illustration. During college, I gained a deeper appreciation of abstract work produced by many artists including

I focus on creating artwork that contains multiple layers of visual interest

From a young age, I was interested in drawing and painting but at age 10, I fell in love with photography. At summer camp, I discovered that images can magically appear on photo paper while working under dramatic red lights in a darkroom. Needless to say, photography was mysterious and really spoke to me! My interest in art-making continued to evolve through high school and then college. I pursued a BFA in Graphic Design at the University of Illinois and then an MFA in Photography at Arizona State University.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

Surrealist and Impressionist

I grew up in the Chicago area and fre-

quently visited The Art Institute of Chicago during elementary school through college. At a young age, I was attracted to the work of many Surrealists including Yves Tanguy and René Magritte as well as the depiction of the wet road in Paris Street: Rainy Day, by Gustave Caillebotte and the pointillist technique used by Georges Seurat to produce A Sunday on La Grande Jatte.

Asian Art and Photography

The University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign had an amazing Asian Art collection that I spent hours exploring. I was inspired by these artists' approach to developing compelling compositions, decisive use of color, and depicting the smallness of humans within nature as illustrated by the work of Katsushika Hokusai. During my undergraduate studies, I took many photography courses which led me to discover the photographic work of Aaron Siskind, Elliott Porter, Harry Callahan,

INTERVIEW

Henri Cartier-Bresson, Imogen Cunningham, Laszlo Moholy-Nagy, Minor White, and Olivia Parker.

Fabricate to Photograph

My passion for photography inspired me to pursue a MFA in Photography. During my graduate studies I explored various approaches to combining painting and photography. I discovered

and large art installations such as the work of James Turrell. When visiting museums and galleries I focus on exploring new and innovative art which helps to expand my perspective on art-making and the creative process. Two of pieces that I find very inspirational are included in the Phoenix Art Museum collection, Yayoi Kusama's infinity mirror room titled, You Who are

There is a difference between capturing an image of something interesting and creating an interesting image that includes something unexpected

the artistic movement of artists that produced objects and scenes to be photographed. I was inspired by the work of Barbara Kasten, Cindy Sherman, Sandy Skoglund, and Judith Golden. Through Arizona State University Collaborative Art Lab, I met and was photographed (with my dog) by William Wegman, whose approach to artmaking was inspirational. He sees art everywhere, even a piece of burnt toast that he hung on his wall during graduate school.

Continue to be inspired!

After graduate school, I was fortunate to be part of creative teams that designed three different museums (Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, Arizona Science Center, and Arizona Historical Museum). The opportunity to work for a contemporary art museum truly expanded my perspective on art including works in glass

Getting Obliterated in Dancing Swarm of Fireflies and Cornelia Parker's Mass (Cold Darker Matter) installation of charred remains of a Texas church that was struck by lightning.

What is your source of inspiration and common themes in your work?

I am inspired by nature, music, dance, color, reflections, and movement. Through painting and photography, I have developed a visual language inspired by moving water, the shapes it creates, layers of information revealed and/or obscured, and reflections of color and light. My artwork frequently includes large gestural and linear marks/elements, as well as objects on or below the surface. I focus on creating artwork that contains multiple layers of visual interest and utilize water as a visual metaphor, a reminder to remain in the moment because what we see can shift quickly.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

I strive to create “happy accidents” as I work. I frequently paint over paintings that just were not there yet. The use of painted canvases provides the opportunity to react to existing marks which leads to a conversation between the old painting and new painting. I also add gesso to enhance the texture of a painting and provide additional lines and marks to respond to. When photographing, I am drawn interesting objects, shadows, color, textures, etc... but that is not enough. In order to create a compelling or intriguing image, it may require me to adjust my point of

view by stepping back, leaning down or in or even looking up. There is a difference between capturing an image of something interesting and creating an interesting image that includes something unexpected.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

I want to continue to exhibit my work and would like to have my work included in a museum collection (or two). Since my artistic journey began in a museum, I would like my work to potentially inspire another artist who is pursuing their own visual journey. ●



MERYL P. EPSTEIN



Charlotte

BRYAN BROMSTRUP



The Whole Sea

PALLAVI BALIJEPALLI:

**There's a quiet story
and a unique kind of
beauty in everything
around us**

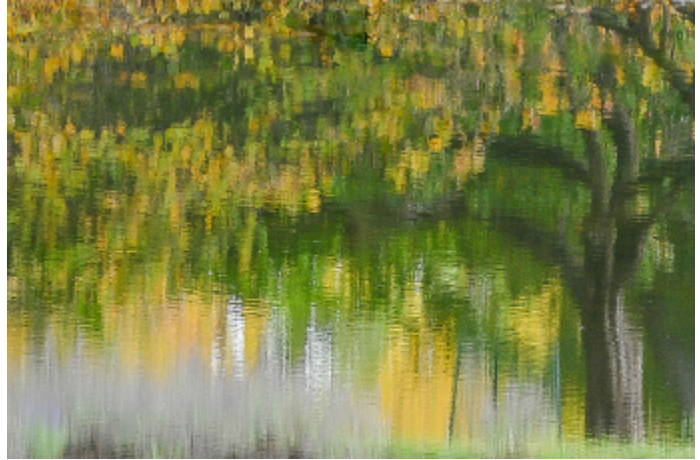


UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I am Pallavi, a portrait photographer based in Vevey, Switzerland. It's been an incredible journey since I first picked up my camera. Discovering the art of photography and realizing the creative possibilities it holds has been nothing short of phenomenal. I began with nature photography, drawn especially to the world of macro. I was fascinated by the tiny details—the way a single drop of water could reflect its surroundings so beautifully. After every rain, I would spend hours photographing droplets on flowers and

leaves, completely immersed in the magic of those small moments. For years, I never left home without my macro lens.

As time went on, I found myself captivated by silhouettes—their unique mood and storytelling power opened up a new dimension of creativity for me. And now, eight years into this journey, I've fallen in love with capturing family portraits. There's something truly special about freezing a moment in time, preserving the stories of today



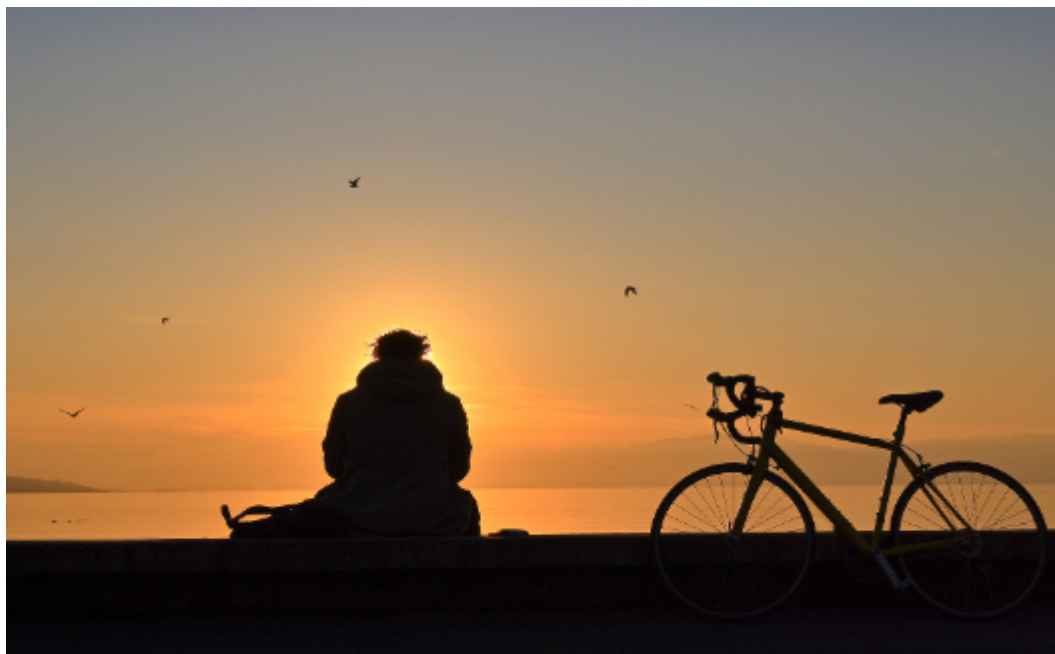
Reflection on a pond

Knowing that a single image can hold memories that last a lifetime continues to inspire me, every time I pick up my camera

for generations to come. It brings me immense joy and a deep sense of privilege to be part of these memories.

What is your source of inspiration?
My inspiration for nature photography comes from the simple, breathtaking

Sunset



INTERVIEW

beauty found in everyday moments. The changing seasons, delicate water droplets, reflections in rain puddles—all the little details that often go unnoticed—hold so much magic. There's a quiet story and a unique kind of beauty in everything around us.

That same perspective now guides me in photographing people. Whether it's capturing the innocence of a newborn or the wisdom and legacy in the wrinkles of the elderly, every milestone is a meaningful chapter—a memory waiting to be preserved.

What brings me the greatest joy is when someone tells me they can feel their child when they look at a photo I've taken. That emotional connection is everything. It reminds me how powerful photography can be and inspires me to keep creating with heart, inten-

tion, and love. Knowing that a single image can hold memories that last a lifetime continues to inspire me, every time I pick up my camera.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

I hope to continue growing and evolving my storytelling through photography—diving even deeper into capturing emotion, connection, and genuine moments in every frame. I'm especially excited to experiment more with different lighting styles, as light has such a powerful way of shaping the mood and atmosphere of a photo. I'm also looking forward to creating timeless fine art portraits with a vintage aesthetic—there's something about that classic, nostalgic feel that I absolutely love and want to explore further. ●

Reflection on rain puddle



PALLAVI BALIJEPALLI



Like Monet

NICK MAGILL:

Most of my art originates from memories of particular moments in my life



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

Growing up in Washington State, I spent a significant amount of time outdoors hiking, climbing, and photographing the Cascades. As a photographer, the difference between seeing a landscape in a photo and actually experiencing it in real life can be a difficult gap to bridge. My goal was to create photographs that approximate a closer feeling to the

real experience of being out in nature. In 2021 I moved to Chicago for medical school. Continuing to get out and explore nature became more challenging logistically, so I picked up painting in order to continue pursuing that original goal of creating art that conveys the grandeur and subjective context of a real experience.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

The paintings of Joshua Shaw have always inspired me in how they convey thematic elements of isolation and natural beauty.

What is your source of inspiration?

There is a strong contrast between the day-to-day of living in a dense city like Chicago and my previous experiences spending significant amounts of time in the wilderness of Washington State. After living in

the city over the last four years, my recollections and nostalgia of having a stronger connection to nature have inspired many of the themes in my paintings.

What themes does your work involve?

Solitude, nature, memory, and the human experience.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

The way that the art makes someone feel when they first look at it. The process of memory has been demonstrated to be more of a reconstruction of events based on context, emotion, and even suggestion rather than an exact recollection of a moment. By painting memories, the art encompasses more than just the details of a scene.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources? Describe your creative process.

Most of my art originates from memories of particular moments in my life. To me, portraying the subjective and emotional context of these memories is more important than recreating the exact details of the scene, and I use lighting, color, and thematic composition to enhance the portrayal of certain themes. I've found the best way to recreate these memories is through iteration. I'll add a small amount of detail at a time and revisit the painting to add additional small layers and detail over a time period of several weeks rather than attempting to recreate the scene all at once. ●



Picture Lake



Boulder Field with Creek



Forest Creek #7

NICK MAGILL



Crossing of the Creek

SHAWN SOLUS



Rift System

Engraving and bleached cyanotype

OLGA MCNAMARA



Urban Mirage

GABRIEL CONTRERAS



Ojo

STUDIO VISIT



AMANDA PAIGE:

My work is an exploration of emotional, spiritual and physical worlds

Welcome to my studio. This space is quite the multi-tasker! Once a simple dining room, it now functions as my workspace as well as the family office and dining room. We met this design challenge by installing cabinets with pocket doors that can shut in the creative mess when entertaining. I love having a large table in the studio where I can lay out all of my stones and pieces of interest to dream, design, and sketch. My shop supervisor (aka Snowball the Pyrenees) is never far. While I enjoy getting lost in my process, she reminds me that frequent cuddle breaks are good for us both. My work is an exploration of emotional, spiritual and physical worlds so my workspace needs to be comfortable, inspiring and adaptable. I take a lot of inspiration from nature, history and science so books are one of my most beloved tools. Having a home



studio does come with challenges and limitations but I appreciate having a place to work that allows me the flexibility to experiment and do what I love. ●

STUDIO VISIT





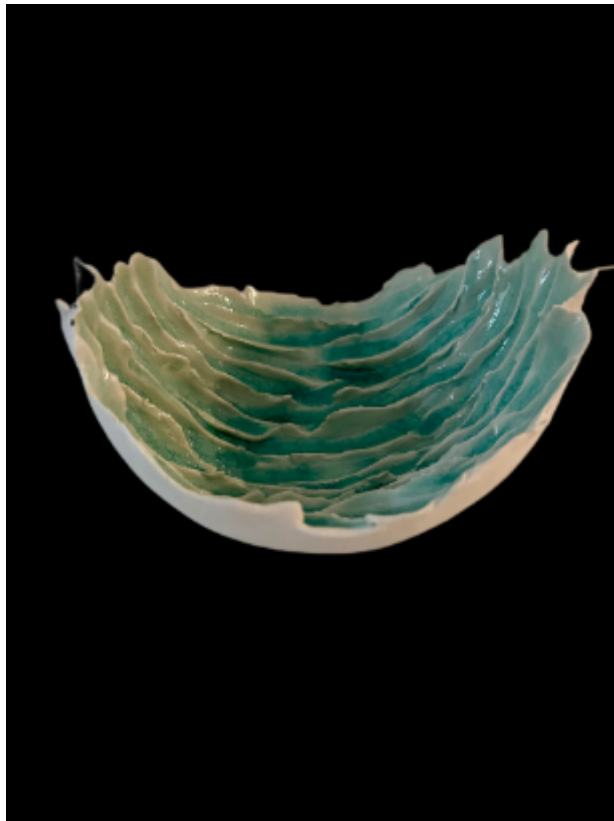
AMANDA PAIGE



Depths

Hand fabricated fine and sterling silver, Larimar, steel pin

RACHEL LUCAS



The wave
Porcelain sculpture

ALEX BERMUDEZ:

You only have to look around to find an inexhaustible source of inspiration



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I've thought of myself as an artist for as long as I can remember. As a child I was always restless and curious. Growing up, I've always been creative, even though I've worked in so many other fields before becoming a professional artist.

I studied graphic design, which is not a fine art degree, but it is related, and I was able to dedicate myself to art direction and creativity for 20 years. During this time I also trained as a comedian, so humor sometimes appears in my paintings to convey a playful message. I felt fulfilled living a creative life; it was the pressures of the advertising world that eventually wore me down.

I decided to go into business for myself in the food industry, where I could use my creativity, humor and experience as a designer, illustrator and communicator. I complemented my knowledge with a short career in culinary arts, although I never stopped creating, whether it was

illustrating, inventing dishes or performing on stage.

My deep connection with art began few years ago. After a very difficult bereavement, my soul found refuge in artistic exploration, and this led me to delve deeper into human possibilities. After that I couldn't stop painting.

I even graduated as an art therapist to better understand what was behind this profound healing process.

What is your source of inspiration?

Without a doubt, what inspires me most is to connect with the sense of 'beauty' of imperfection in all its expressions. The interesting thing is that it's everywhere, it's just that this world is moving very fast. Looking at life as an artist has taught me to pause... and really observe. In this sense, nature offers the greatest possible range of boundless creativity in motion. The branches dance in the wind. The trees bloom to invite birds and insects. The rivers flow. You only have to look around to find an inexhaustible source of inspiration.



Chromatic soul

What inspires me most is to connect with the sense of “beauty” of imperfection in all its expressions

I rethought my life plan when I got married and came to live in Colombia, at the same time as going through my last bereavement. I live in the countryside, my office/studio is a coffee plantation and my art supplies fit into a cup of coffee. Curiosity has led me to try different techniques, including coffee. I find bird-song as an inherent source of inspira-

tion in my creative process, but also the people of the coffee-growing region, the workers and the social aspect enrich my personal and artistic vision.

What themes does your work involve?

Thematically, I prefer not to pigeonhole myself into a single concept; my experi-

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ences mark the path of my artistic exploration according to my spiritual movements. Although the diversity of my work combines some aspects that highlight the sense of (co-)existence. My practice is divided into two languages that celebrate diversity as a creative force: Coffee Line and Acrylic Line.

I work with coffee ink to honor that which the world marginalizes. Each stain comes from beans from distant and ancient cultures, cultivated with local tradition and harvested by anonymous hands.

Coffee is not just a pigment: it is a symbol of diaspora. Its cracks and oxidation



Roots

My experiences mark the path of my artistic exploration according to my spiritual movements

Majestic



trace maps of identities that migrate, mix and resist homogenization. In these pieces, faces of different races and animal species emerge from earthy backgrounds, blurring or reappearing as a reminder that all existence is a temporary loan from the earth.

My vibrant acrylics are a hymn to co-existence without hierarchies. I use colorful tones to construct compositions where people, animals and symbols of different faiths intertwine with emotions that know no boundaries. There are no shadows or forced perspectives: the yellow that embraces urban anxiety and the turquoise that dazzles hope co-exist with the lilac of broken dreams, like a chorus where the intimate and the

*Animal Cowfort*

collective share a single staff.

Both lines, although opposed in method, share a question: How to paint the beauty of diversity without erasing its rough edges?

Coffee, with its fragility, reminds us that even the ephemeral deserves to be archived. Acrylics, with their fierceness, demand that diversity is not tolerated but celebrated.

Together they are my alchemy of belonging: a call to see the world not as a jigsaw puzzle to be put together, but as a forest where roots, branches and fruits grow from the earth itself and eventually return to it, just as water grows from the clouds after completing its cycle and the body fades after its last breath. Everything returns to the earth.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

To answer this question, I would have to go back to coffee. It was an accident that led me to experiment with this ink.

After spilling some coffee in my journal,

I noticed that it adhered incredibly well with the texture of the paper and can create unique sepia tones, using various techniques that give it a peculiar look. This variety of rich tones, textures and shapes allows me to express emotions, ideas and concepts that are reflected in the details: wrinkles on tired faces, hard-working hands or lost gazes. My work is now born from a forced accident, telling a story from the natural chaos formed by drops and splashes as they find their disordered yet perfect path. ●

Ancestral

ALEX BERMUDEZ



Wrinkles from the field
Coffee on paper 50 x 70 cm

ALEX BERMUDEZ



Way to heaven

Acrylic on canvas 60 cm x 45 cm

CATHY JIANG:

Cognition follows instinct



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

As a child, I was always full of energy, so my mother enrolled me in a dance class, thinking it would be the perfect fit. But over time, we both came to realize that dancing wasn't something I truly enjoyed. She respected my feelings, so she transferred me to an art studio instead. To our surprise, I could sit in the same spot for hours, completely absorbed in painting. There was something deeply calming and joyful about immersing myself in colors and patterns. It felt natural—effortless. That sense of quiet focus and creative freedom captivated me then, and it still does today.

What is your source of inspiration?

My inspiration comes from nature. The lines I observe in the natural world often deeply move and motivate me. While most people think that curves represent the softness, I see them as expressions of strength and freedom, and the purest form of natural beauty.

That's why curved lines are an essential element in my paintings; they carry the energy and flow that I find so captivating in nature.

What themes does your work involve?

Starting a couple months ago, I began working on a series called "Mossain" (Drawing from the essence of "màn" (漫), evoking nature's unhurried growth and untamed fluidity) inspired by nature's beauty. By combining ink, oil pastel, charcoal, and pottery glaze, I used abstract techniques on large-format watercolor paper. I allowed the



E Jackson

While most people think that curves represent the softness, I see them as expressions of strength and freedom, and the purest form of natural beauty

materials to interact naturally, letting each mark and falling droplet shape the composition—illustrating the flow of nature, evoking the organic rhythm and flow of nature.

Havakuk



Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources?

Describe your creative process.

Each painting in the "Mossain" series is inspired by the images of trees I collected during my travels in different countries, each named after the name of the location of the subject. These paintings also carry my own emotional color and are a unique way of remembrance to the captivation of curves in nature.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

One of the most memorable turning points in my artistic journey happened during my freshman-year course in

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college. I was excited to share a carefully planned sketch with my professor, and expecting some form of validation or feedback. However, very surpris-

hands think before your head.”

That moment completely shifted my approach. I stopped striving for the “perfect sketch” and started allowing

“Let your hands think before your head”

ingly, he wasn’t impressed at all. He said he wasn’t looking for a perfectly premeditated design but rather he wanted experimentation. He then said something that completely changed the way I approach art today: “Let your

my process to begin with natural instinct without “overthinking.” Cognition follows instinct, as unexpected discoveries along the way help my art feel somewhat alive during this process. ●



CATHY JIANG



Scan

ANNE MARIE MORGAN:

Creativity is a fundamental part of what drives us as human beings



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

Arts and crafts class and the irresistible allure of a fresh box of crayons were childhood highlights for me. But it wasn't until 2022 that I began creating art seriously. It all started with a community-based beginner's oil painting class. The instructor introduced me to the concept of painting what you see, not what you know, and I was instantly hooked. That class became the catalyst for joining a local gallery with monthly theme-based shows—an environment that constantly challenged me to push boundaries, explore new techniques, and grow as an artist.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

As an untrained artist, I'm admittedly only beginning to scratch the surface of the vast world of art history. However, John Singer Sargent is one artist whose work resonates deeply with me. His remarkable skill and style have become an ambitious lifelong pursuit for me, and I dream of one day channeling even a fraction of his mastery in my own creations.

What is your source of inspiration?

I firmly believe that creativity is a fundamental part of what drives us as human beings—the act of bringing something new into existence. Whether it's planting a garden, restoring a vintage muscle car, starting a family, curating



Melatonin, 20x20x1, 2024

As for my own creations, I aim to let the artwork evolve into the best version of itself

thrifed treasures, cooking family meals, or painting, drawing, singing, acting, etc., that universal source of creativity is what fuels my imagination. My "Painted Molecules—A Surreal Expedition" series is another passion

Adrenaline, 16x20x.25, 2024



project born from personal challenges. In 2022, I faced an unimaginable ordeal after developing Complex Regional Pain Syndrome (CRPS), a nerve pain disease often dubbed "the suicide disease" due to its extreme intensity and difficulty to manage. Amid treatments, I began painting the chemical molecule of ketamine—the prescribed treatment credited with bringing my left leg into remission. Forced by my condition to explore new, fast-drying mediums like watercolor, inks, and acrylics, I embarked on a journey to capture loose, expressive backgrounds embellished with figures and characters in oil.

This series expanded to include molecular depictions of other substances be-

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ing studied to treat pain like psilocybin, MDMA, THC, and other molecules—adrenaline, melatonin, oxytocin, caffeine, prolactin, cortisol, norepinephrine, and testosterone—exploring the intersection of art, health, and science.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

What matters most to me is the care and effort poured into each piece. Whether I'm working on a commis-

sioned portrait or creating for myself, I strive for authenticity and quality. I'm a perfectionist when it comes to human or pet portraits—they must capture the essence of the subject in a completely recognizable way. As for my own creations, I aim to let the artwork evolve into the best version of itself.

What is your creative process?

For portraits of people, pets, or figures, I rely on reference photos as the foun-

The first step of my creative process is a lot of ruminating over what I want to create and the best way to create it

Nude Figure no. 1



dation of my work. Surreal pieces, on the other hand, take shape organically—I allow the medium, water, and gravity to interact naturally, letting the spontaneous formations inspire imaginative figures and scenes. The first step of my creative process is a lot of ruminating over what I want to create and the best way to create it.

**What is your favorite art accident?
Did it change your perspective?**

One big happy accident came just last month with a large canvas that had been taunting me during my struggle with CRPS. For over a year, I dreamed of painting a nebula in space but couldn't muster the strength. This spring, I finally felt ready to attempt it using a new technique involving a clear coat underneath oil paint. The galaxy turned out beautifully—at first. To my dismay though, the clear coat was applied too thickly, and overnight, the paint dripped down the canvas, “ruining” it.

Initially devastated, I eventually laughed at the irony: this painting mirrored the unpredictability of my life, my attempts to control it, and my inability to do so. I decided to submit the “ruined” painting, embracing its raw story—and to my surprise, it was accepted for display at the Zhou B Arts Center's “Collective Narratives” exhibition in Chicago, where it is currently on display.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future?

I have so many! As a novice artist accepting commissions, I am learning countless lessons and developing my skills. I plan to keep taking commissions, honing my craft, and embracing

opportunities to grow. One dream is to create an ink-based series dedicated to New Orleans—a city dear to my heart and the place where I was married. This envisioned series would feature the iconic crows, oak trees, and architecture of New Orleans. Another goal is a large-scale Chicago series, inspired by my roots and lifelong connection to the city. I also aim to expand my “Painted Molecules” collection, creating a complete series that chemistry educators can buy for their classrooms. ●

Our Galaxy & Our Gravity



ANNE MARIE MORGAN



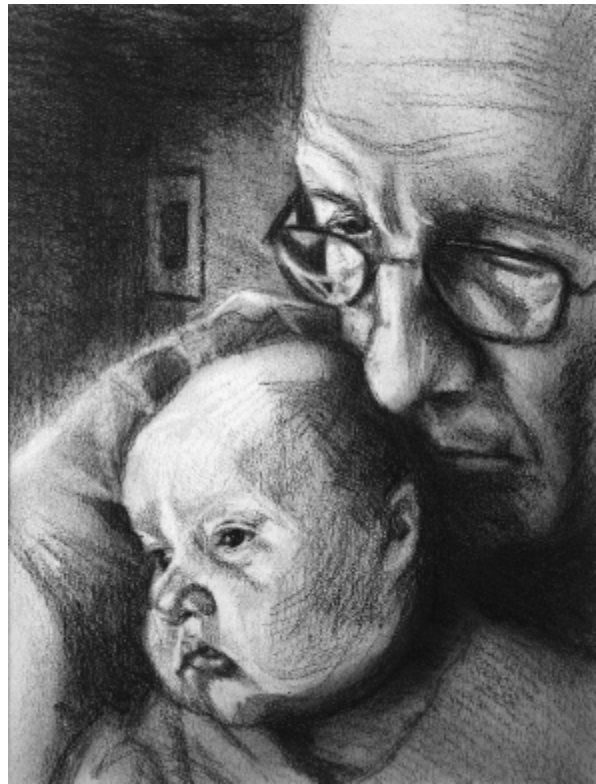
Spring Buds

AARON KRONE



Ana
Drawing, graphite

LIFE EXHIBITION

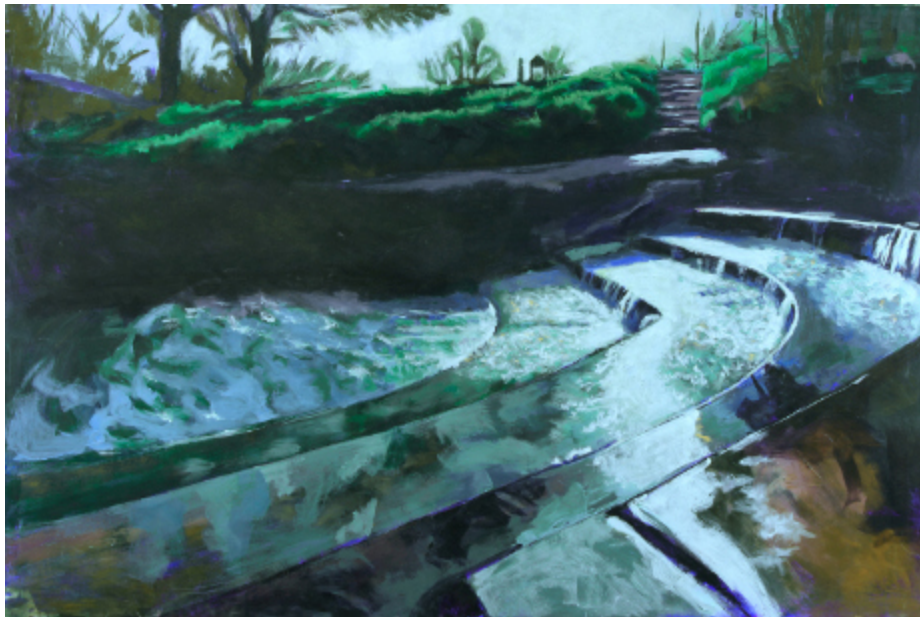


Precious Treasure

SPACE EXHIBITION



Stepping Stones
Acrylic painting



Waterfall Levels
painting, oil



Body in Motion
Charcoal Drawing

BRIAR ROSE PELLETIER:

There is a time and place for everything



Holly

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

It probably started from the same place as many others: at the kitchen table, where I spent a disproportionate amount of my childhood drawing pictures. Drawing was my preferred way of organizing my thoughts, making sense of the world around me, and experimenting with my own visual expression. While I explored other professions and eventually became a researcher, I revisited this intrinsic art practice a few years ago when I picked up embroidery for the first time.

What is your source of inspiration?

I take inspiration from both Japanese koginzashi embroidery and American loom techniques. I am an American, but have been living in Japan for sev-

eral years now. I was introduced to koginzashi embroidery and have practiced it while living in Japan, but I infuse my designs with patterns and motifs from my heritage, particularly through my paternal grandfather, who worked as a textile designer for bedspreads back in Maine. Koginzashi, too, was created for utilitarian and community needs in northern Japan during the Edo-period. Its repetitive patterns are constructed from symbols which carry meaning, and adorned clothes not just for aesthetic value, but to reinforce them and provide protection from the elements. The function of both mediums is to provide protection, safety, comfort, and warmth.



I guess the “tactile experience”, of stitching and touch, is a bit more important to me than the “visual experience”

The stitching process and reconciliation of these cultural motifs, for me, provides a similar function.

separate from them. My work uses Japanese embroidery techniques to thread my life in a foreign place and

What themes does your work involve?

They say “there is a time and place for everything”, that everything has a proper time and place in our world. As an artist who reconciles her work between two places in time, my embroidery takes this notion and runs with it. I would say it is a process of anchoring within displacement: reflecting on or responding to events and moments in time, while grounding myself in the foreign culture in which I live and work and being physically

Fern



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draw connections back home in the United States, in Maine. For example, "Field", the work featured in the juried exhibition, uses koginzashi techniques to depict a personal memory of clover-hunting with my sister in our family yard. "Fern" constructs a memory of my grandfather, a textile designer, by using his preferred midcentury color palette. "Holly" was stitched after the sudden passing of my beloved pet while I was abroad and unable to be with her, using only the colors of her pink nose and sunflower-yellow collar.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

I fear my work is quite selfish, seeing as each embroidery is borne from an introspective process. There is a tacitleness to them, in the process of stitching and the finished product. I always encourage people to run their hands along my embroideries! I guess

the "tactile experience", of stitching and touch, is a bit more important to me than the "visual experience".

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources?

Describe your creative process.

Memory and lived experiences, for sure. I don't have the practice of sketching or planning my work: I stitch in the moment, like writing the first line of a journal entry, and the pattern grows from there.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

Maybe starting Japanese embroidery is my favorite art accident. Being introduced to koginzashi was a happy accident in and of itself, and became a grounding technique for me to both connect with my new community and explore my own heritage. Rather than focusing on depicting something

I stitch in the moment, like writing the first line of a journal entry, and the pattern grows from there

Rose Window



visibly recognizable, with a narrative, stitching became a meditative practice and vessel for me. I think it is important to value art as an everyday practice for one's self, as a way to liase between one's self and the world around them and process life, both the reality of it and the possibilities. It is what we naturally are drawn to do as children with crayons and chalk: in adulthood, my method of choice became stitching. ●

BRIAR ROSE PELLETIER



Field

SO YOUN KIM FRSA:

The visualization of cosmopolitan affairs is a nouvelle perspective



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

My first interest in art is natural and innate. I was born into the Lee family,

where my aunts on my mother's side all have their own styles of fashion, cooking, and artistic tastes. My mother was a textile design professor after graduating from Sungkyunkwan University in Seoul with both her undergraduate and master's degrees in design. My sister was also very talented in art, having taken an AP art class at Trinity College School. This led her to work as a fashion designer in the global fashion district in New York City after she graduated with a BFA in fashion from Parsons School of Design in New York City. My mother's love of art and design exposed her children to art from a young age. She encouraged my Lego creations as a baby and took us to galleries in Seoul, Korea, including a special Picasso exhibition. She recommended novels from around the world, including Korean and Western classics with great illustrations. Her artistic support of her children was exceptional. Her work in textile art and design, including her per-

sonally designed fashionable ties exhibited at the Seoul Arts Center in Korea, shows that artistic talent and visual sense run in our blood.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

I would like to acknowledge the impact that each artist has had on me, similar to the way threads are woven together to make fabric. If my art is original, then the threads woven into the So Youn Kim fabric represent the sequential, spatial, abstract, and tangible memories and influences I learned from each artist. For example, Picasso was one of the first figures in my youth when I visited his special exhibition in Korea. I was grounded by an exceptional memory and visual shock from his exceptional compositions, figures, shapes, and visual representations with colors. After a happy childhood of making art, I took an AP art class at Trinity College School in Canada. I studied Matisse's seated figures on my own time. I got 5 in my AP art class in my grade 11 and grade 12 was relaxing mode and time. Having relocated to Ottawa where I obtained an MA degree from Norman Paterson School of International

Post humanism series #10



Post humanism series #14

Affairs for my job, I restarted my art practices in my on-site time in remote work environment. The collection of artwork was submitted for making its meaning to several galleries and Montreal's renowned gallery on Sherbrooke Street, Gallery Gora accepted me to have a solo exhibition. Since 2022 solo exhibition where I also did videography for my parents and families and friends to watch my exhibition from overseas and long distance, I continued making artwork including exhibition preparation time in studio class in Ottawa with canvas as mediums, where I was exposed to incredible self-taught street artist Basquiat's visually strong colors and figures. Slowly, I started to exhibit my art in Venice Italy, which I described as a turning point in my life to be a cosmopolitan artist with ITS LIQUID GROUP and consequences, London UK, Matera Italy with academic curator Dr. Carmela Loiacono, Paris France, Barcelona Spain, Tokyo Japan and Seoul Korea up to now.

What is your source of inspiration?

My source of inspiration is intellectual curiosity; my fond of reading classics since I was very young in my youth as into literature of world classics and Korean and western contemporary books. My favorite that I recall is Bernard Werber's Encyclopedia of Relative and Absolute Knowl-

ideas. Currently, often non-fiction books due to my academic discipline in international affairs and social science all infuse me into academic research and reading as source of inspiration and stimulation. Even writing the philosophical texts myself brings me to a joy of appreciating the genealogy of intellectual histories and

If my art is original, then the threads woven into the So Youn Kim fabric represent the sequential, spatial, abstract, and tangible memories and influences I learned from each artist

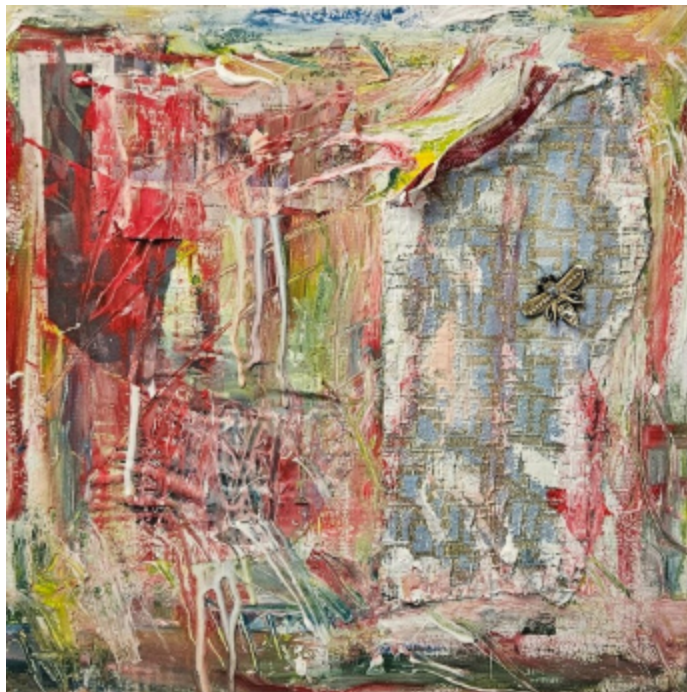
edge, which made me understand the genealogy of knowledge and context for my interest, which is beginning of my passion for research for collecting and analyzing and synthesizing information and knowledge with my original thinking and

contexts; I also enjoy listening to various music of different genres depending on how I feel; this ranges from classical music such Schubert, to Brazilian bossa nova, which is my favorite, hip-hop, city pop, and temporal stage of 90s, 80s, 70s, etc. Also movies are great inspiration too, such as Woody Allen, Wang Kar-wai, Hong Sang Soo, Stanley Kubrick, Alfonso Quaron. For other movies, I like Matrix especially series 2 with fantastic scenes, Blade Runner both new and old ones, esp. liked new one's soundtrack. Today I listened to Bakerman's Laid back. My current favorites are: Paula Moore's Valparaiso, and Pino D'Angio's Ma quale idea and Okay Okay at this moment; I even put them in my pinned posts on Instagram.

What themes does your work involve?

My academic discipline is international affairs; when I become creative in my academic discipline, I can suggest innovative ideas to make it more interesting; so I designate international affairs as

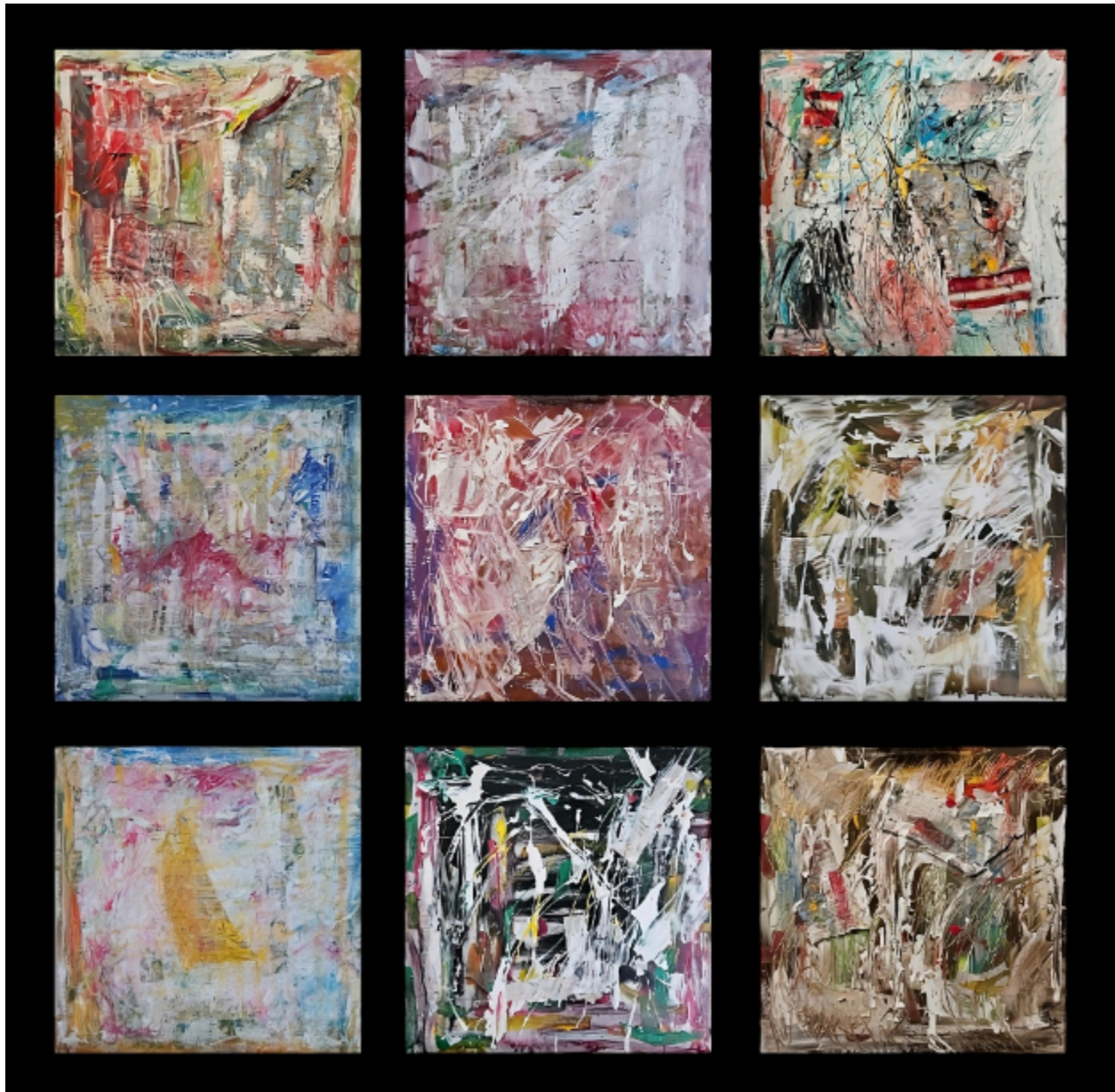
Post humanism series #6



cultural affairs and later making connotation of international affairs to the advanced form, which I say as cosmopolitan affairs. Taking cosmopolitan lenses drawing from my understanding of the world with relationships, subjects, objects, norms, policy, actors, trends, and other various components that shape the world spatially and tem-

porarily with different scales and contexts, this is interesting to take such perspective to draw inspiration and also provide descriptions of the artwork I created. The visualization of cosmopolitan affairs is a nouvelle perspective as well as “raison-etre” in addition to be “savoir-faire” in my art philosophy and practice. ●

Post humanism series



SHAKIMA JOHNSON:

My favorite art accident is learning to circle back



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I have been drawing and painting for as long as I can remember. As a kid, I loved drawing, coloring, making paper dolls and dresses for the dolls with materials I found around the house. My mom used to sew and I loved to imagine and try to create dresses with the material she bought. As I got older, she allowed me to paint on the walls of my bedroom, allowing me to create and express myself.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

I love the African movement Kika Ọnà (African Dot Painting). In Yoruba, “Kika” means “dot,” while “Ọnà” can be interpreted as “way” or “path.”

Therefore, “Kika Ọnà” can be understood as “The Dot Way” or “The Way of Dots”. I Love working with dots. I make drawings in pointillism, at a young age I fell in love with the style and have been doing it since. I have always been drawn to putting dots in my work as a main theme or accents of the work. Discovering this really inspired me, especially as a black woman. Discovering this really made me feel connected to my ancestors and my possible family history.

What is your source of inspiration?

My source of inspiration is all around me. Colors, art, other artist, I see inspiration in everything. I have many artists of different genre in and around my life. Sometimes their art inspires an idea. The world is an inspiration for me.

My other source of inspiration are artists like Silwia Sweet, Jose Cruz, Georgia O'Keefe and Frida Kahlo.

I admire these artists. I love the flowers, the bright colors and the vulnerability they all display in their work.



Blue Fire Flower

Colors, art, other artist, I see inspiration in everything

What themes does your work involve?

A lot of times, my art theme is flowers. I love painting, drawing and taking pictures of flowers. Some-

times, the theme presents itself. It can be fish, water, galaxies. I never really know though it always starts out as a flower, lol. I like to say my paint can be hard headed.

The Green series



What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

That it touches the person observing. I see art all the time that is so beautiful it stirs something in me. I want people

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to feel that when they see my art. I also like to know what they see when they look at it. My art is abstract and everyone has a different point of view. I love to hear it and have it pointed out.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources? Describe your creative process.

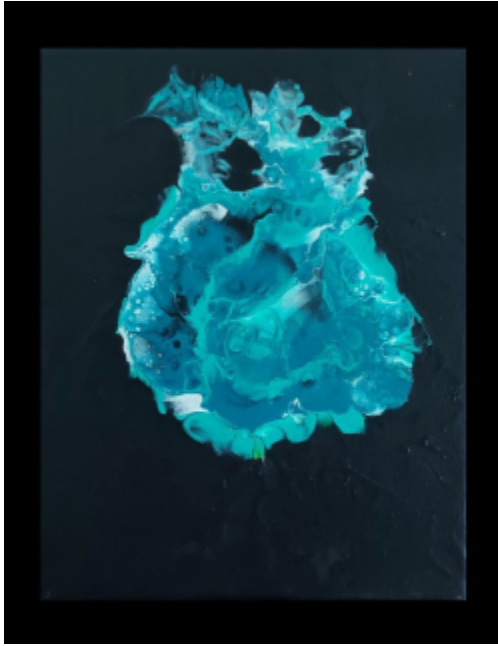
All of it!!!! My process depends on what I am trying to accomplish.

The one thing that is constant with all my painting process is first picking a color, listening to something positive or funny, and taking a moment to meditate to help spark creativity. Once the paint is on the canvas or paper, I put it on the floor and walk around it for a different perspective so to speak. I want to see it from all angles so I can decide how I want to approach it.

I never really know though it always starts out as a flower

Jellyfish W/Kottlefish Vibes



*Blue Fire Rose*

With Pointillism, I find what I want to draw then make a black and white photocopy of it. This helps me see all the shading. Then I map out my shade areas and do a basic outline of the features. Once that is done, I take it to my light board and get to work. I use the light board to draw my outline as well as let me know where my progress is and if my dots are correct. I free hand a lot of it, however, the light box keeps me on track.

**What is your favorite art accident?
Did it change your perspective?**

My favorite art accident is learning to circle back. It changed my perspective by showing me that I can always come back to finish a painting, even years later. I will start a painting, maybe not like it and put it away. However, the seed has been planted. Time and a change in perspective can really bring out something in a painting that I didn't see before. A messy

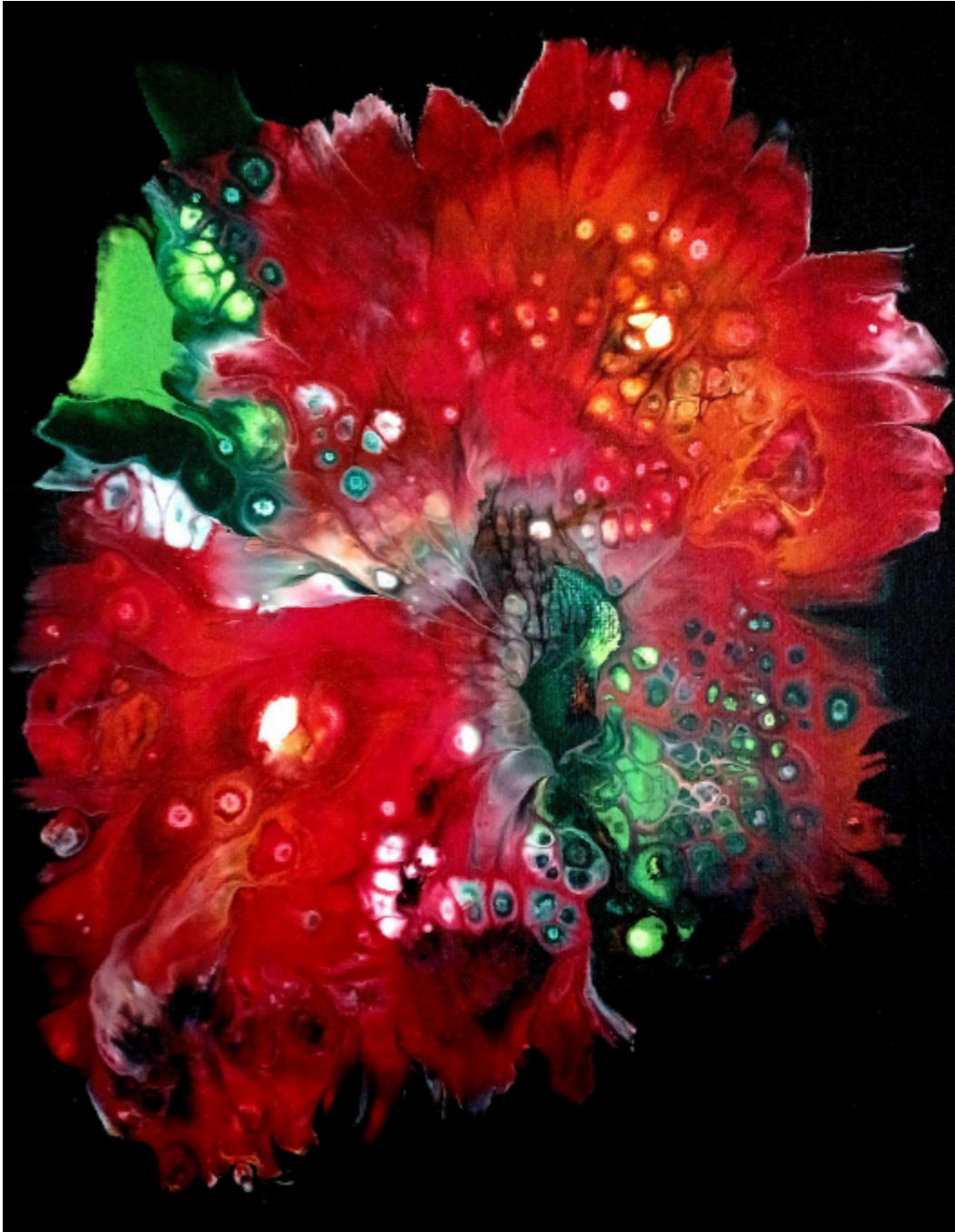
flower can turn into a jellyfish,
a splash of color and random lines
can turn into a beautiful sunset years
later.

I learned to just go with the inspiration, put color on paper, draw a random sketch or paint a quick idea. It will grow and flourish later. My other favorite art accident led me to discovering fan brushes, but that's a longer story. I love them!

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share? My artistic goal is to have an installation at the Newark Museum of Art in Newark, NJ. I have been going to that museum since I was a kid. I have always enjoyed it and can spend hours there. It is a dream of mine to have my art hanging on its walls. I also have goals of having my art all over the world, especially NJ. That's my home town. It would give me so much pleasure to see my art when I ride through town. ●

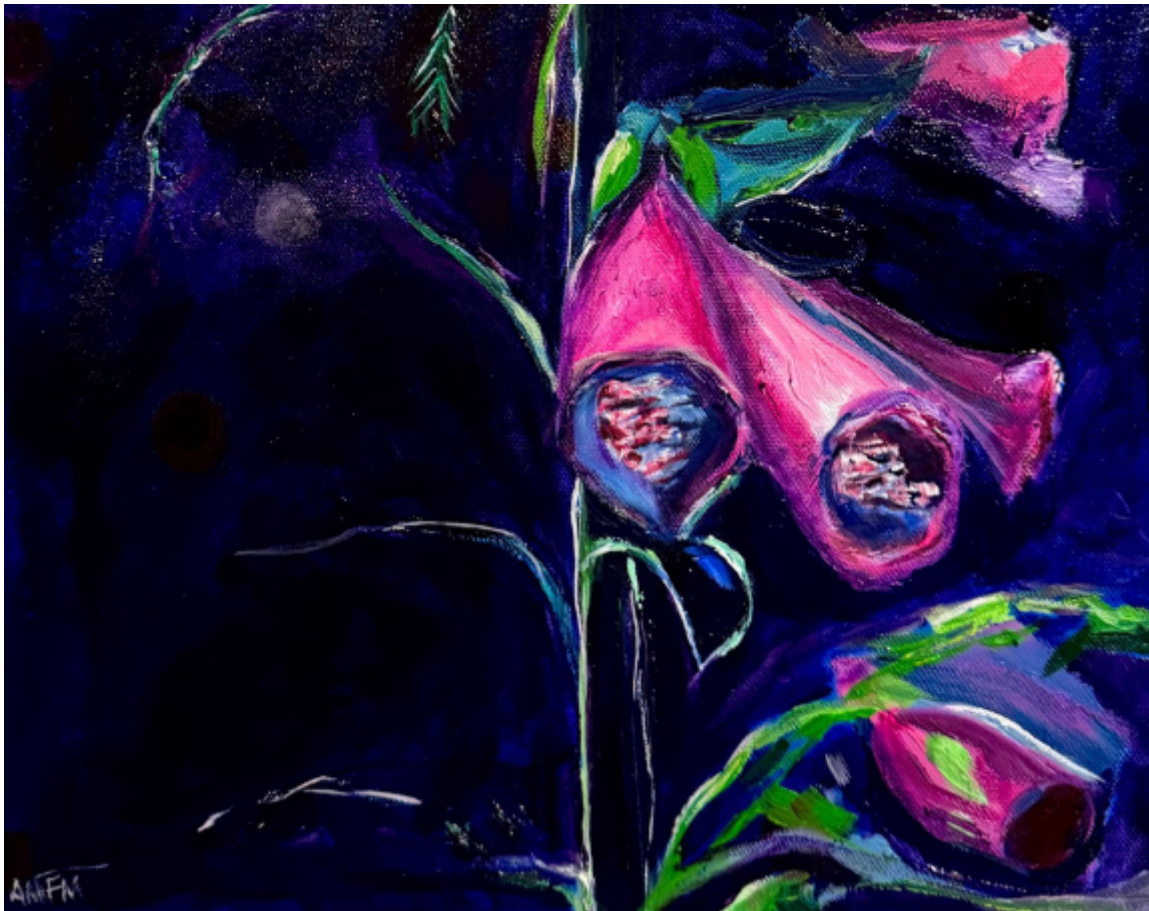
Inner Self

SHAKIMA JOHNSON



Space Flower

ANNE MARIE MORGAN



Study of Foxgloves 1

RICK SULLIVAN:

Inspiration for me largely comes from the subconscious



UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I grew up in a small town in northern Iowa, and I often went to the local art museum. It was a converted Tudor mansion built by a WWI general, and I loved being in that space. It was a sort of refuge for me while growing up in an alcoholic household. I was drawn to all the cool art. Not so much the midwestern landscapes and farm life realism... the other stuff. The weird, oddly composed abstract works. They spoke to me the most and became a sort of imaginary bridge to another place that was far away. The thought of actually picking up brush and paint never even crossed my mind until I was well into adulthood. I think the very idea of it profoundly intimidated me. Anyone pursuing a creative passion has those doubts at some point... be it an artist or musician or poet. Eventually, we just take that first step and create. Put something of ourselves out there and make it real and tangi-

ble. For me, that first step was a chance meeting with an artist and gallery owner who invited me to just “...move some paint around” on a canvas in her studio. Once I started, I didn’t want to stop.

It was like I was now seeing the world from the other side of that imaginary bridge. It’s the language of abstract expressionism—deeply and richly satisfying on many levels.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

The midcentury moderns greatly influence me... especially the spontaneous, erratic gestures of de Kooning, Bluhm and Pollock. I love that energy and lack of constraint... and the emotional depth that can be conveyed. I also find a lot of inspiration in how Edward Hopper used color and created moodi-



JIM

There is a lot of psychology in my work... separation and loss, chaos and calm, damage and resolve

ness and isolation with saturation and shadow and light. Ryan Sullivan (no relation) is a contemporary artist whose work I find very inspiring... rich color palettes and bold compositions that are so harmonious.

What is your source of inspiration?

I am self-taught, and inspiration for me largely comes from the subconscious. I often wake up with the sense of a new painting in my head, and I focus on holding on to it until I can jot down some notes about it. Just enough to capture its essence. Eventually it comes time to paint it... maybe right

away or maybe days or weeks later.

The origin image in my head really only serves as the starting point.

When I get to work, the process isn’t mindful or intentional. It’s more stream of consciousness. I am never all that sure about what a piece is saying until it is done. And then, when I look at it and consider it, I understand where it came from and what piece of me has been captured.

What themes does your work involve?

There is a lot of psychology in my work... separation and loss, chaos and

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calm, damage and resolve. There is often a sense of some tangible thing that is just out of reach and not quite in scope, too... an illusiveness.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

I want viewers to feel like they are suddenly discovering something but can't quite put their finger on it. Rich

color saturations and textural layers blending with marks and lines and gestures that are pleasing to look at while also sparking an inner tension.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

My wife's uncle made our daughter a tap dancing board when she was very young. He attached a handle on

I want viewers to feel like they are suddenly discovering something but can't quite put their finger on it

LUX



the back of it and stenciled in the words "Maddie's Tap Board." It was propped up against a wall near my studio and

I accidentally splashed paint on it. I attempted to rub it off, but instead... it left this oddly distorted orange and red color that set deep into the particle board... it really inspired me. I took some leftover house paint and kind of went Jackson Pollock all over it. The finished piece is titled "Jim", and it marked a turning point in my work. I was no longer interested in attempting to paint figuratively or in realism... I only want to create the unexpected, in the moment, from a place that I've come to think of as limitless abandon.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

I want to eventually paint full-time and one day open my own gallery, ideally with fellow artists in the abstract space. ●

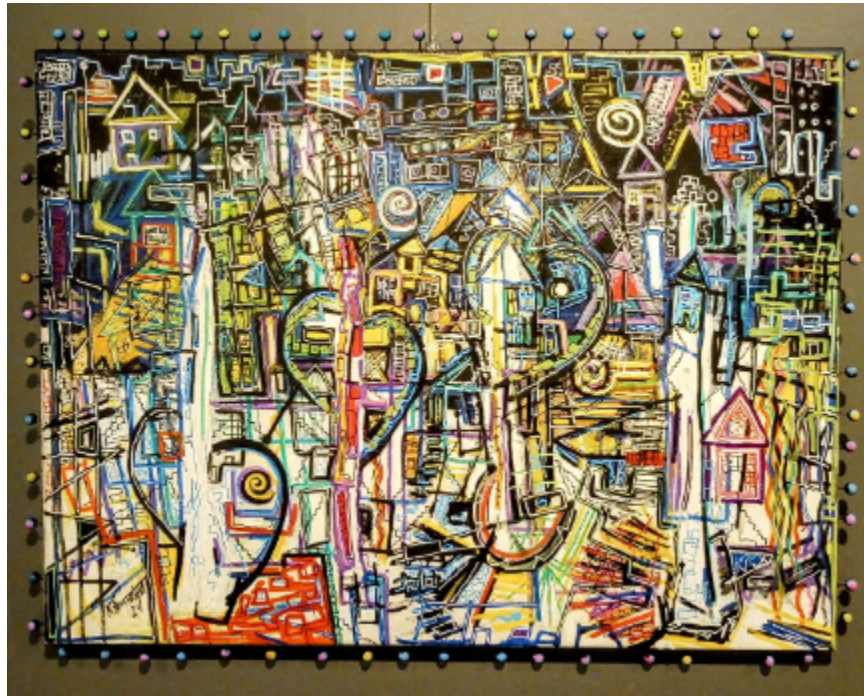


THE SAINTED SPACE

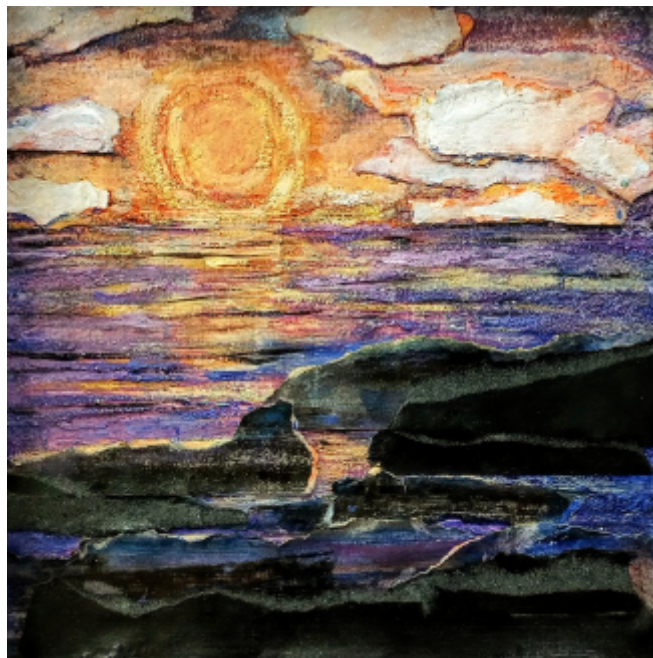
RICK SULLIVAN



Scorched



Kinetic kladieoscopic City



Sunset secrets

Mix media: cardboard, sand, glue, black pastel paper, paint.

YITONG DU:

My inspiration arises from the intersection of nature, urban life, and technology



Yitong Du is a designer and visual artist whose work explores the harmony between technology, human experience, and introspection. With a background in product design, architecture, and AI-driven innovation, he crafts thoughtful, intuitive experiences that balance functionality with aesthetic refinement. His practice is rooted in simplicity and purpose, aiming to create designs that encourage reflection amidst the rapid evolution of technology. Yitong's work has been recognized with prestigious awards, including the Red Dot Award and NY Product Design Award. Beyond digital interfaces, he extends his artistic vision to visual storytelling and spatial design, drawing inspiration from nature, culture, and human behavior. Whether designing AI-powered platforms or immersive environments, his goal remains the same—to create meaningful, elegant solutions that connect deeply with people.

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

My artistic journey began at an early age, growing up in a rural city in China. Surrounded by nature, I became captivated by the subtle beauty of everyday life—the changing light on a riverbank, the patterns in falling leaves. I began sketching these fleeting moments to preserve them. Over time, art transformed from a mere pastime into a language through which I could convey thoughts and emotions that words could not express. As my career expanded into urban design and AI product design, my creative practice evolved. I discovered new ways to blend physical and digital mediums, turning my artistic expression into a tool for connection—linking people to places, communities, and now, through technology, to each other.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

I draw inspiration from both timeless masters and contemporary innovators. The emotional depth and color fields of Mark Rothko, along with the serene minimalism of Agnes Martin, have shaped my approach to abstraction, teaching me that simplicity can evoke profound emotion. I also take influence from the Land Art movement, particularly the works of Andy Goldsworthy, whose ephemeral installations celebrate the beauty of nature's impermanence. On the technological side, artists like Refik Anadol and Ian Cheng have redefined my understanding of digital and generative art, demonstrating how data and AI can serve as raw materials for creative expression. Beyond visual artists, I am inspired by scientists and technologists



Sunset

whose explorations of complexity and form influence how I interpret structure and fluidity in my work.

What is your source of inspiration?

My inspiration arises from the intersection of nature, urban life, and technology. I am captivated by the organic patterns found in the natural world—the veins of a leaf, the flow of water—and how they reflect the data patterns and digital structures evident in AI-generated forms. My experiences as an urban designer also enhance my creativity; the rhythm of cityscapes, evolving infrastructure, and traces of human presence all shape my visual language. Additionally, I draw inspiration from the emotional and societal impacts of emerging technologies. I strive to reflect on how AI is reshaping our lives—sometimes isolating us, sometimes connecting us—and use my art to explore these tensions.

What themes does your work involve?

My work explores themes of connection, memory, and the delicate tension

I strive to reflect on how AI is reshaping our lives—sometimes isolating us, sometimes connecting us—and use my art to explore these tensions

between technology and humanity. I am fascinated by the dualities of modern life: stillness and motion, isolation and togetherness, the organic and the artificial. My pieces often reflect a longing for serenity amid the complexity of the digital age, offering visual spaces where viewers can pause

and reflect. Additionally, my art frequently carries a sense of impermanence, inspired by both natural cycles and the transient nature of digital data. I aim to evoke the fading essence of memory and experience through layered forms, blurred edges, and fragmented compositions.



What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

I strive to create visual experiences that inspire connections among individuals, their surroundings, and the larger world. Whether through physical installations or digital compositions, I want my work to provide viewers with moments of contemplation. I aim to craft pieces that feel immersive and emotionally resonant, inviting people to interpret the work through their own experiences. It is also important to me that my art remains accessible and relatable. With my background in AI product design, I am passionate about empowering the general public to harness the creative potential of artificial intelligence. I want to create experiences where technology serves as a tool for personal expression—something that empowers rather than alienates.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources?

Describe your creative process.

My creative process is fluid and intuitive, drawing from various sources. I often begin with sketches or photographs from my travels—capturing fragments of nature or urban details. These initial references serve as a foundation, yet I allow the process itself to guide me. When working on digital pieces, I utilize generative AI models to introduce unexpected textures and patterns, embracing the machine's randomness as part of the creative dialogue. For physical works, I enjoy mixing mediums—layering ink, collage, and digital prints to create depth and contrast. Throughout, I remain open to improvisation, often letting accidental marks or algorithmic glitches shape the final composition.



Lunar Surface Stage Setup

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

Looking ahead, I am excited to deepen the relationship between art, design, and technology in my practice. I aim to create interactive, generative installations that evolve in real time, offering viewers dynamic, ever-changing visual experiences. I am also passionate about making emerging AI tools more accessible to the general public, helping individuals use technology as a medium for creative self-expression. Beyond my personal practice, I hope to collaborate with other artists, designers, and scientists to explore how creative technology can foster empathy and connection. Ultimately, my goal is to create works that are visually captivating and inspire people to reflect, connect, and engage with their inner worlds as well as the larger collective experience. ●

YITONG DU



South Loop In the Rain

WILLIAM DENTON RAY



Ethereal Heart

Mixed Media on Canvas, 72" x 96"

INTERVIEW



Rhythm Bridge



WILLIAM DENTON RAY:

I guess Mood is the most important of all

UQ: Tell a little bit about how you first got into creating art.

I always drew as a kid and would doodle a lot. My dad had this old magazine called "Mouse" which was a mail order magazine with all these airbrush illustrations of monsters in hot rods created by Stanley Mouse who became famous for the Grateful

Dead Poster Art. At the time in the 70's he was a rival to Ed "Big Daddy" Roth, who became famous for the Monster Hot Rod culture. When I saw that magazine it became my holy grail at the time, I would redraw those character all the time. Sometimes giving them to friends. Then I got into skateboarding, and the Graphics be-

INTERVIEW



William Denton Ray was born in Indianapolis, Indiana in 1974. Ray is a mixed-media painter and designer working with a variety of mediums. In 1992 he received a scholarship from the Columbus College of Art and Design where he majored in Advertising Design. He later transferred to the Herron School of Art and Design where he concentrated on painting and drawing. He has had solo exhibitions in Indianapolis and Boston as well as numerous group exhibitions throughout the country. Ray was a 2009 Stutz Residency Award winner and has been involved with several public art projects in Indianapolis. His artwork is in many private, public and international collections. He maintains studios at his home and at the Harrison Center for the Arts in downtown Indianapolis.

Ray's personal work focuses on mixed media paintings on wood or canvas. He uses primarily brushed-on acrylic paint with additions of spray paint, Chinese marker, paint marker and sometimes collage. The subject matter of William's work rotates from abstraction to whimsical illustrations to small wood sculptures that are character based evoking human emotions to bold and fun graphic pieces influenced by his profession as a graphic designer. Ray's passion and dedication to his craft is ever evolving and he is constantly challenging himself to further his knowledge of art and further develop his skillset.

came the next inspiration along with skateboarding and graffiti culture.

What artists or movements have had an impact on you?

Basquiat is my hero... then Picasso and then a whole slew of others.

What is your source of inspiration?

Human Behavior, Life, Music (All Kinds of Music) fuel creativity.

What themes does your work involve?

I have various series of work, so themes vary since I paint abstractly and then do character work and I'm also a Graphic Designer / Illustrator. Painting abstractly frees me from having a theme or assignment whereas the other areas of discipline require control and more precise decision making.

What is important to you about the visual experiences you create?

I guess Mood is the most important of all, I can tell when a painting is

Truth



I work in a freestyle-manner, I don't know which way is up or what colors I am going to use. I just GO

complete if all the ingredients are working together. It's a feeling.

Do you work from memory, life, photographs, or from other resources? Describe your creative process.

I work in a freestyle-manner, I don't know which way is up or what colors I am going to use. I just GO. The Canvas may change orientation, its layering and layering, erasing and redoing. It's a process that involves several sessions with doubt and then confidence.

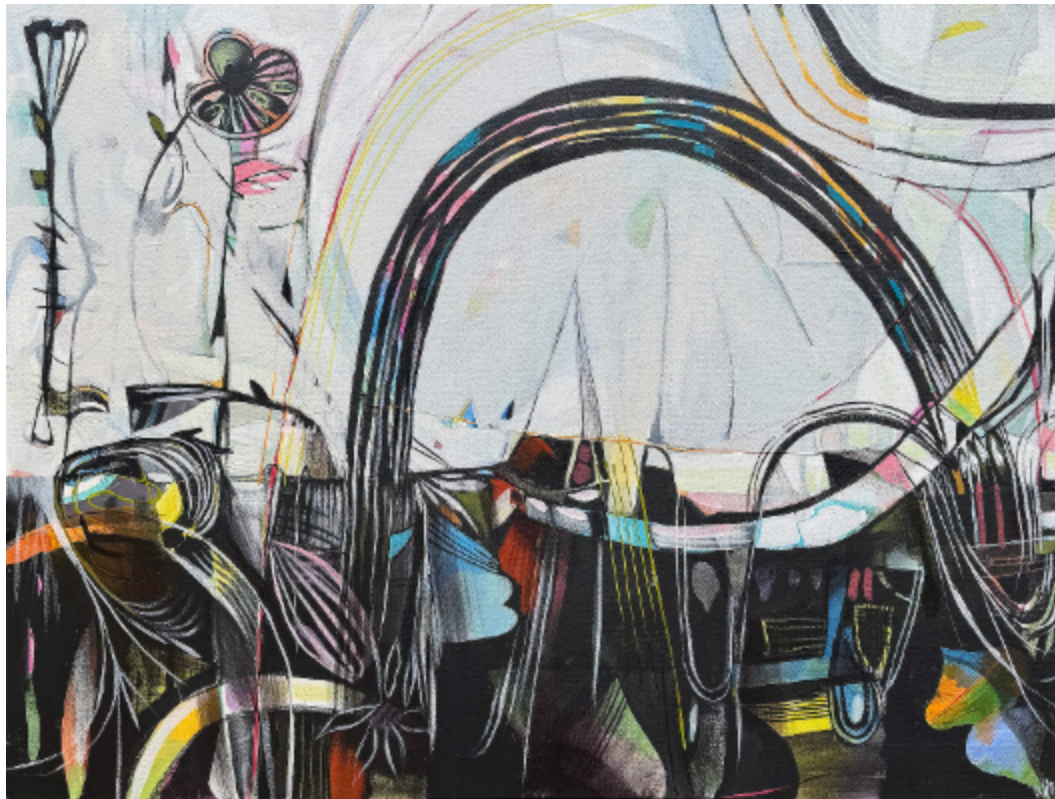
What is your favorite art accident? Did it change your perspective?

My favorite art accident was when I recently painted over an old painting and found a new series by painting subtractive. The series became a series of abstract floral pieces.

Do you have any artistic goals for the future that you would like to share?

My only goal is to paint more, explore new ideas and show my work to new audiences. ●

Archaterra





NISREEN ART

Playing with colors and lines

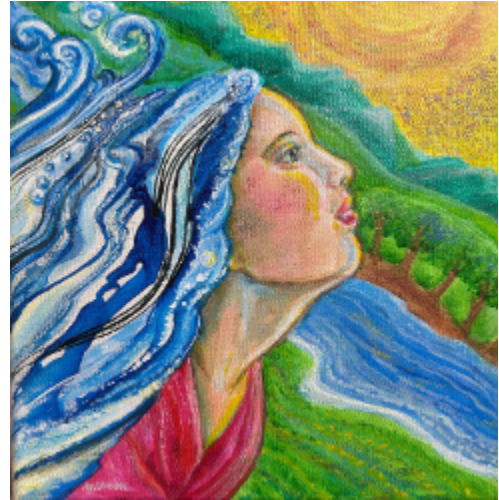
Nisreen earned her bachelor's degree in Graphic Design from Tokyo Zokei University in 2011 and completed an undergraduate certificate in Fundamental Psychology from California Coast University in 2024. Currently based in Indiana, she draws inspiration from human

emotions, connections with animals, cultural intersections, and compelling stories. Her work beautifully captures the depth and complexity of these experiences. Her studio is a cozy corner of her bedroom, where she enjoys playing with colors and lines—always under the watchful eyes of her dogs.



The painting she holds in the picture, Home, expresses the uncertainty of life as a migrant family in the U.S. while also reflecting a deep love for nature and the home they are building together.

In addition to painting, Nisreen hosts Nisreen's Art World, a bilingual podcast where she shares her passion for art and creativity with a global audience. ●



NISREEN ART



Mammalian Bonding



CARINA IMBROGNO
A Grandpa's Love

ALEX BERMUDEZ

Wrinkles from the field

