

2018 Artist Statements – Please review instructions on page 1 and confirm on your Call for Entry application if we are reusing your artist statement or if you are choosing to write a new one. If you were not a participating artist in 2018, you need to submit a statement.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR ARTIST STATEMENTS

Please provide an artist statement that will be used on an artwork label, printed on a small placard (3x5) and displayed with your work. Due to the size limitation this statement should be no longer than 125 words and should include the following information:

- A brief description of yourself and your art (mediums, techniques, subjects, etc.)
- Your source of inspiration and motivation to create
- The role art has played in your life in living with your disability or impairment

If your statement is included in the attachment and you feel it is still responsive to the requested information, simply indicate that you want us to use the statement on file.

We no longer request that your resume or professional art biography be submitted with your application.

ARTIST STATEMENTS – SORTED ALPHABELTICALLY BY LAST NAME

Amy Acquaviva

Fallston, MD

Acquaviva focuses on creating functional art, using shapes and forms found in nature. She uses CAD and 3D printing software to enhance these designs in ways that were not possible in previous years, while using earth friendly and fair trade materials whenever possible. “The ideals which have always shone before me and filled me with joy are goodness, beauty, and truth.” Acquaviva believes these ideals inspire her art as they inspired Albert Einstein. EDS is an invisible disability, which comes with its own unique struggles. Acquavia looks young and healthy on the outside, but faces extra hurdles everyday just to complete simple tasks. Her unique struggles have made her strong, and Acquaviva wants the things she creates to make the world around her stronger too.

Carrie Albert

Seattle, WA

Albert expresses her artistic visions through collage, poetry, assemblage, drawing and photographs, as she has chemical sensitivities and only uses non-toxic mediums. As a collagist, Albert searches for healing by gathering fragments, symbols, torn culture, and

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piecing them together in unexpected ways. Through this she creates wholeness and recognizes herself and others. Albert says she works with subjects that call to her, relies on subconscious wisdom through dreams, poetry and closed-eye visions. She seeks peace in the process and always, she finds beauty. A favorite quote of Albert comes from Langston Hughs, “Perhaps the mission of an artist is to interpret beauty to people - the beauty within themselves.”

Brandon Allebach

Albuquerque, NM

Allebach has painted in the medium, acrylic on canvas, for over 13 years. He has focused on abstract art and the style, Cubism. He says he has never let his shorter arms from Holt-Oram Syndrome get in the way of creating art. Allebach does acknowledge the technical challenges he has faced in painting (straight lines and edges, for example), but through the process of problem solving and using his strengths, he has made his art unique in facing those challenges. “Sometimes I just paint to make beautiful things, but I also paint for catharsis and the ability to emotionally heal through art.”

Jo Allebach

Phoenix, AZ

Allebach began painting as therapy in 2000, due to her mental illness. She uses acrylic paint in a similar manner as oil painters with a more impressionistic style use. This gives her more latitude to create illumination ultimately conveying calmness, peace and happiness. Her goal is to create paintings that bring joy to the hearts and minds of the viewer. Allebach had endured deep sadness and the agony of severe anxiety that accompanied her Bi-Polar disorder. “As soon as I started painting I just did not want to stop. The peacefulness and relief I felt was unimaginable. My hope is to impact through art those who see it, so they feel the wonder of the world”.

Nancy Alter

Philadelphia, PA

From 1970 to 1976, Alter was a productive artist showing locally. Later she continued to work at developing her painting skills and techniques, albeit at a slower pace, while pursuing a career in the corporate world. Retiring in 2004, she now works as a fulltime artist. Alter says since her Multiple Sclerosis diagnoses, the need to create outside her physical challenges is even more important than one would think. It allows her to transport

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from the world of uncertainty to one where she has more control. Through the deconstruction and reconstruction of monotype prints and painting, there is great satisfaction on how unrelated pieces fit together to make a whole. It is an expression of push and pull and the physiological rhythm of the body.

Anne Ambrose

Nashville, TN

Though having some formal training, Ambrose considers herself a self-taught artist. Many of her paintings have a psychological story and include fairies, angels, spirits and bright colors. She says her style can best be described as a combination of expressionist and fantasy-based themes. Ambrose's mental illness and degenerative bone disease affect when, how and what she produces on her canvas. She does a lot of stream of consciousness paintings and Ambrose says that her art takes her out of herself to where she is not noticing pain and problems as much. "My art is a little like a child of mine, very unique and loved."

Constance Avery

Utica, NY

Avery is a formally trained artist who is both hearing impaired and legally blind. Painting full time since 2012, she uses acrylic ink and other mediums to explore and create new styles of painting to show her journeys into the limited field of vision. Her current work includes studies in transparency to create a look of stained glass. Avery follows an elaborate, evolving process, where the fragmentation and distortions created reminds her of the different views of nature: in trees, distance, night time, colors and things that people with normal vision may take for granted. Avery says the restrictions in her vision have pushed her to explore even the smallest details up close. She uses her tablet to make the painted image smaller, allowing her to examine and accentuate each and every part of the canvas.

Beth Barsky

Wynnewood, PA

Barsky says she likes to draw houses, people and flowers. She feels they are very beautiful to look at. She also loves to look at rainbows when they appear. Barsky likes using

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watercolors but also works with colored pencils. She enjoys all artwork, especially paintings, and her favorite colors are red and orange. Barsky's work has been shown in multiple exhibitions in the Philadelphia area.

Richard Bauman

Philadelphia, PA

Bauman's passion for photography began at a young age influenced by his father's interest. He had a darkroom in his home growing up, equipped for black and white photography along with several Nikon cameras and lenses. Bauman became the photography editor in high school and continued his pursuit to photograph both people and nature. Photography has been instrumental to Bauman in helping cope with his persistent depressive disorder, as it allows him to completely focus on the present, seeing beauty in many things that most people tend to overlook. As Aaron Siskind expressed, "Photography is a way of feeling, of touching, of loving. What you have caught on film is captured forever... It remembers little things, long after you have forgotten everything."

Kelvin Belt

Los Angeles, CA

Belt works primarily in two-dimensional media, specifically painting and drawing. His artwork can be best understood as a visual negotiation between the impulse to retreat into oneself (immersing the imagination into the realms of the fantastic and mythological) and the desire to find a link between magic and the everyday. Belt's drawings almost exclusively portray young women with large eyes and small facial features, an aesthetic influenced by popular twentieth century character animation design.

Brian Bemisdarfer

Des Moines, IA

Bemisdarfer's passion is in sculpture but he also works in graphic art and computer graphics. He has experience with a wide range of mediums including bronze, stone, plastic, wood, paper and painting. His work has been displayed widely across the US. Bemisdarfer draws inspiration from his life experiences and reflections as well as his keen interest in nature and regional history. Stricken with Polio at a very young age, Bemisdarfer spent many months of his childhood in the hospital, undergoing three separate surgeries.

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Megan Bent

Kailua, HI

Bent uses the alternative photographic processes of chlorophyll prints, which uses UV light to print images onto leaves. She accompanies portraits with printed medical imagery from her recurring visits to doctors to check the progress of her disease. Using a low-tech process to print high-tech imagery, Bent creates a statement that binary opposition does not exist (like healthy vs. sick, weak vs. strong, normal vs. abnormal) Bent says, “I am choosing to use alternative process to highlight the beauty and importance of experience outside of mainstream dialogue.” She prints on leaves to highlight the organic nature of disability while also asking the viewer to confront the bodily impermanence we all share. Bent's work has appeared in both national and international exhibitions.

Jacob Berger

Wynnewood, PA

In his paintings and work on paper, Berger creates distinctive abstract shapes with complex inner workings, reminiscent of machines or space ships. Sometimes pattern-oriented, sometimes more boldly geometric, these compositions continue to evolve daily in the studio, often including written references to some of Berger's favorite movies and television shows. “I want people to see things flying, to feel like they are outside, to say how they like my drawings, to feel happy.” Berger's work has appeared in many exhibits in the Philadelphia area.

Shawn Bittenbender

Philadelphia, PA

Due to his advanced Asthma and COPD, Bittenbender struggles to breathe. His hand has a tendency to tremble or shake during these struggles but he finds painting helps him control his hand and thus his breathing. Bittenbender believes interesting art is all around us. He likes the challenge of little details. “I am unable to paint when my symptoms flare up but always look forward to the next idea and putting it on canvas.”

Charles Blackwell

Oakland, CA

Blackwell has been operating on a note of serendipity, moving colors on paper or canvas. He says that sometimes he has an image in his mind but it all changes once he approaches the surface, “so I use my blindness to execute the final image allowing for it to take on a

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course of its own.” Producing pieces related to jazz music enables improvisation. When Blackwell hears people say the work is inspiring, he knows that he has managed to create a synthesis between his art and his blindness and the two move together, working in harmony. “It all comes together in the end.”

Rora Blue

Sacramento, CA

Rora Blue is a conceptual artist based in Seattle. She actively produces artwork that is defined by color, texture, and interactivity. Her work relies heavily on color to communicate a feeling to the viewer. Participation and documenting the experiences of others is also essential to her artistic process. Blue creates artwork about the things that make her uniquely human, including living with late stage Lyme disease. She is inspired by a quote from Yves Klein that says, “My paintings are only the ashes of my art.”

Robert Bohle

Arlington, VA

Bohle uses mostly acrylics because he loves how the paint looks after it's dry. He loves the various mediums he can use with acrylics. They can add another dimension, both literally and figuratively. Bohle paints mostly abstracts because he wants the painting itself - the color, consistency, value, shapes, etc. - to communicate viscerally to the viewer. Bohle says, “Representational art can rely on responses to the familiar in our world. Rather, I want to say something to the reader, sometimes in a whisper, sometimes with a slap of the face.” Bohle has suffered with Parkinson's Disease since 2000. He has had 4 surgeries trying to hold back the progression. Bohle has the usual tremors and stiff movement. “The jagged edges and bold colors and brushstrokes that appear in my paintings represent the interface now between the universe and me.”

Priscilla Bohlen

Bryn Mawr, PA

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

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

Ann Maria Bonanni

King of Prussia, PA

Bonanni's interest in art started when she was in high school and continued into her college years. Most of her professional career had been in Pharmaceutical Marketing but a diagnosis with Neurological Hereditary Spastic Paraplegia left her walking with assistance and unable to work. Classes at Wayne Art Center rekindled Bonanni's high school and college days when art was more centric. Her media is print and collage. When viewing her art, individuals often find themselves inspired by the colors and textures Bonanni uses. Often the color pallet reflects the time of year or season. Currently, Bonanni finds print and collage the best ways to express her thoughts and feelings.

Dwayne Boone

Philadelphia, PA

Boone is an emerging Philadelphia-based artist and entrepreneur. He began to draw comic-book characters at an early age. As a child he would have a pencil in his hand as soon as he got home from school. His passion for making art has been a common thread throughout his life. Boone creates portraits of pop culture icons, historical figures and moments, and people he admires. His most moving work is often vignettes of the people and happenings from his life, as well as what he sees around him in the city. Boone is inspired by the colorful, lyrical styles of Matisse and Picasso, but perhaps his biggest inspiration is funk, hip-hop, and RandB of the 70s and 80s. “When I am in my creative groove, my previous challenges have no power and I am able to concentrate on my goals.”

Lynne Bowden

Vancouver, WA

Since losing her hearing to an illness, Bowden has found that her other senses of sight, smell, touch and taste have been amplified. Capturing these other senses in a photograph, or painting is invigorating, nurturing and gives Bowden immense joy. One of her favorite quotes comes from Vicki Corona, “Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away.” Bowden believes art can affect a person in such a way.

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Joan Bowers

Seattle, WA

Following Bowers' forty year career in Nursing practice and education, she launched her photography career in 2001 when she immersed herself in film and darkroom study. In order to add more to her art, Bowers began using the lith development process. Now 84 years old, she is preparing a move to an independent living community where she will not have space for a darkroom. Thus, while she must restrict some activities Bowers plans to learn new approaches to creating art. As a first attempt in this direction, she has included several embossments of found objects. "While I am finding myself acceding to my limitations, I will not be inactive. My search for beauty in nature, and in my own and others' art continues."

DoN Brewer

Philadelphia, PA

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

Allan Bryan

Saugerties, NY

Bryan's career includes unique opportunities like being the teacher of art and filmmaking in a public school system, a partner of a fine craft gallery, a jewelry designer/goldsmith and since 1983, a photographer. Recently Bryan is making connections between his early work, quickly taken photographs of oddities or ironic juxtapositions and the slower, contemplative landscape work that followed when he learned that his eyesight was slowly diminishing. Having less than ten degrees of visual field, he sees things differently than most people in discrete sections, with no periphery on the left, the right, up or down.

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Things appear suddenly or not at all. He says “I became a better photographer after I learned that I was losing my eyesight”.

Brian Cagle

Newport News, VA

Cagle is an art educator and sculptor. He focuses on combining a diverse range of media to create works that are both functional and beautiful. His favorite quote comes from Pablo Picasso; “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up.” Cagle suffers from ADHD and Dyslexia. The disabilities make focusing on tasks to completion and rote memory retention extremely difficult. While he has always excelled at conceptual knowledge, things like names and dates are like water through a sieve to his mind. Sculpture has always been the exception. “Through sculpture I find a focus and clarity of mind unlike any other in my life and through my art I found my passion for teaching.”

Anthe Captain-Valais

Flourtown, PA

When Captain-Valais was in her 20's, she was part of a professional dance company in Ohio. Shortly after moving to Pennsylvania, she was hit by a drunk driver which put an end to her dancing career and was the beginning of years of chronic pain and physical therapy. Unfortunately she has been involved in several additional accidents causing tremendous pain and a labral tear to her dominate arm requiring surgery. A lengthy recovery, Post-Traumatic Stress Syndrome and depression with agoraphobia arose. Captain-Valais' ability to create jewelry and art became her only escape. She acquired a service dog who helps her daily and she states “I am grateful to God every day for my ability to cope, create and spread joy!”

Alice Chen

Campbell, CA

Chen usually draws with the assistance of an extremely powerful electronic magnifier simply known as a CCTV and works on a piece of the picture at a time. She also uses computer graphics programs where images can be enlarged. Chen says that she still doesn't know if what she sees is exactly what other people see when they look at her art. She is not sure it's possible for anyone to see exactly what another does. That is, after all, one thing that makes the world amazing. Chen loves the fantastical. She grew up on Chinese folktales,

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Greek mythology, and other such stories where things are often not as they seem. “Some say fantasy has no bearing on real life because it is, by definition, a figment of the imagination, but I think truth may come in many shapes.”

Monica Chulewic

Seaford, NY

Chulewicz is a Polish-American artist working primarily in printmaking and fiber art. Recently, much of her focus has been in cyanotype. In her “The Ache and the Light” series, she uses early 20th-Century photographs, intertwining figures in plants and flowers and drawing with gold leaf. The series began after the death of a close friend and her way of healing and processing grief and loss. Chulewicz is motivated by her experiences with chronic and progressive illnesses, including Mitochondrial Disease, Dysautonomia, Gastroparesis, Esophagogastric Junction Outflow Obstruction, and many more. The unpredictability of her health, the act of grieving over life once had and over friends lost, the seemingly never-ending search for diagnoses, and ableism towards her disabilities all fuel her art practice.

Betsy Clayton

Dresher, PA

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

Lynn Clinger

Blue Bell, PA

Photography has been a hobby of Clinger's for approximately 50 years. She received her first camera at 10 years old and she loved to take pictures of anything. Clinger's passion has never changed and in fact, has grown since the development of digital photography. As a career, Clinger spent many years as a registered nurse until she developed rheumatoid

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arthritis. It became impossible for her to work at such a physical job. Her pain has never gone away. Clinger says she needs help with mobility and has accepted the fact that she cannot work. Her joy of taking pictures has never disappeared and both Clinger and her husband remain active in taking pictures of nature, seascapes, animals, flowers and people.

Juliana Coles

Albuquerque, NM

Since she was diagnosed with Epilepsy, Coles says her reality is altered. It is through her mixed media paintings and drawings that she has sought to piece together fragmented memories. Cole combines words with imagery to create a personal history which she is not always a conscious participant in. Coles says her art form enables her to create new pathways in her brain after a seizure by creating relationships between unknowns; it empowers her to create order, clarity and understanding in the midst of abnormal cerebral functioning. Carl Jung declared, “We do not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.”

Debra Hope Colligan

West Harwich, MA

Hope Colligan says her artwork is her dialogue with the world, each element is a sentence, each stroke on canvas is a paragraph. It's the language of creating oil paintings that connects her to the world and has done so throughout her life. The subjects, objects, seascapes and landscapes she is touched by, are her means of artistic communication to identify the content. When eyes of an animal reach out to her, or a musician's music inspires her, Hope Colligan responds with artwork to express her feelings. She sustained a TBI from a horseback riding accident that significantly changed her life. Hope Colligan believes that art has expanded her life and that healing is essentially a creative process. “Through my art I have created a new state of health for myself, pursuing an artist's life.”

Maureen Collins

Wilmington, DE

Collins was gifted her first camera at eight years old. It began a lifelong passion for the visual arts and changed the way she saw the world. Collin's 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. Guillaine-Barre Syndrome slowed life into a much lower speed, and allowed her the grace of dimensionally

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changing her creative perspectives and abilities. Hope became the path of each day through many years. Collins is so grateful for the arts, their healing qualities and for the creative process. It allows her to express the individuality of each day, to share its beauty, unique imprint, and to appreciate its expression in others.

Brittany Comunale

La Jolla, CA

Photography is Comunale's passion, as it is the medium through which she expresses and portrays her perspective of the world to others. Comunale says it has been such an integral part of her life, but after a car accident in 2014, she was forced to stop her craft. Shortly after the accident, she was diagnosed with chronic pain syndrome and Rheumatoid Arthritis. Initially, Comunale was extremely frustrated by the idea of being limited in her capabilities and by being restricted from doing something that she loved so much. Comunale now has developed more of an appreciation for the subjects that she is able to photograph. In addition, she has found a new driving force to stay optimistic and to relish in the small victories of executing routine daily activities, and perhaps more importantly, continuing to create beautiful photographs.

Virginia Conover

Wynnewood, PA

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

Elizabeth Core

Sewanee, TN

Core's art is made from painting colors with a variety of materials that attract her. Her imagination has always been the most powerful medicine possible. As a result of a forty-five minute seizure, Core's temporal lobe was damaged, and her art is important to her as a

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means of creating possibilities. For inspiration in her work, Core remembers Albert Einstein's words, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Core believes art and imagination are about hope. "They help me."

Paul Cox

Coatesville, PA

Cox was a patient at Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital after suffering a tragic motorcycle accident. Even with significant brain and spinal injuries, he resumed his photography as soon as possible while still a patient at BMRH. His first photographs after his accident were on the hospital grounds. Cox chose the Canadian Geese as his first subjects and continued photographing them through his outpatient therapy as well. Cox's art continues to play a significant role in helping him manage this life changing experience. Communication with other people continues to be a large challenge for Cox. His photography has given him a way to communicate and share emotions with family and friends.

John Craig

Delran, NJ

Craig was born into the Navy, living on military bases during his childhood. He served in Vietnam where he lost his hearing. After his discharge from service, he spent 37 years as an insurance underwriter. In 2015 he decided he had to paint. He is a self-taught abstract artist working in acrylics and occasionally oils. Craig is functionally deaf, and also has Attention Deficit Disorder or ADD. The latter informs his preference for crude, undisciplined abstract painting, not having the patience for traditional forms of painting. Though ADD is associated with the inability to focus, Craig feels in certain situations the opposite occurs. When painting, he actually can intensely focus and get a lot done in a short time, but it's exhausting.

Ben Cricchi

Baltimore, MD

Cricchi was raised in suburban Baltimore. He says his experience as a teenager was that of introversion and alienation from the values of 1980's America. He found sanctuary in art and individual expression through the support and encouragement from certain teachers who were strong advocates of the visual arts and poetry. These formative years still resonate in Cricchi's life today. His medium is photography - digital or analog. Cricchi is a schizophrenic. He says he is in a constant struggle to not have the disease take him under.

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He feels at his best when taking pictures, a portrait, a landscape, or a building. Smith Island, Maryland landscapes and Baltimore streets are his recent projects. “Insanity to art is like salt to an egg.”

Tara Cronin

Captain Cook, HI

Tara Cronin is an artist working in various mediums focusing on alternative photographic methods, works on paper, installation and book-arts. She has pursued an art career that has both helped her solve problems in her own internal space as well as in the space she finds herself situated externally. During her graduate and post-graduate work, Tara explored this interface between the material and the individual by making photographically-based work involving images or prints combined with materials such as reconstituted hemoglobin and chlorophyllin as well as with dust and with liquid metals. She holds various co-patents with partner and scientist Ed Chen including one on a unique polymer made from those materials used in her artwork. Through working with the methods she does, Tara also works entrepreneurially and hopes to promote the idea of Science and Art as being symbiotic.

April Cross

Dallas, PA

Cross attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio, an arts apprenticeship, which taps into the energy of people with special needs. She takes initiative in coming up with fun, new ideas in her creations. Her artwork skills are expanding and evolving very quickly. Cross has created beautiful fabric weaved rugs and weaved bags and has put her unique touch on each with hand dyed fabric. Cross has a love of sunflowers, which has developed into a series of detailed silk batiks. She also has created a line of hand-designed fabric and paper clay mermaids with stories for each doll. Art has given Cross a wonderful sense of pride, empowerment and confidence in herself and has exposed her to meeting new people at the studio art gallery and at other new venues where she sells her artwork. “I am an artist.”

Jen Dacota

Conshohocken, PA

Art was always a part of Dacota's life but more as a hobby than a career. Following a traumatic closed head injury, art took center stage and she began to paint as a therapeutic means to stimulate brain activity. Many of her works were created using her fingers and

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hands rather than brushes. She prefers this method when the subject matter and medium allows. It is very instinctual and “free”. Her paintings contain brilliant vivid color, and expressive form and movement. “I paint the way I see things, and how I feel regarding various personal as well as global events. Since mainly my vision was affected by my stroke, I don't have normal vision any more, and would not be able to reproduce an image as it actually exists. I feel that this 'disability' has served me well as it allows me to be truly self-expressive.”

Hadley Dalton

Phoenix, AZ

Dalton is an emerging artist who enjoys working with all media, specifically drawing media. As a person with ADD, she says she often has difficulty focusing on tests and academic projects and gets discouraged by low grades and scores that she receives. Art is one of the areas of her life where she is very proud of her performance. “When I am working on an art project, my mind can wander freely and my thoughts can race.” Dalton believes her art has helped her to be proud of herself and has increased her self esteem. Oscar Wilde's quote, “Life is too important to be taken seriously”, reminds Dalton that life is too short to do anything but what you love and gives her motivation to keep producing art.

Gerard Di Falco

Philadelphia, PA

Di Flaco began printmaking and painting in 1978. His deformed spine and chronic pain syndrome worsened in the same year and has been an undercurrent in his art as “Life-Therapy”. Etching, which is physically demanding, now constitutes his primary work. Di Flaco goes through a multistep, time consuming process where the image from a drawing he creates, is transferred to a zinc or copper plate. The process is usually repeated multiple times to create the desired result. Areas that inspire him include architecture, history, religion, folklore, ancient cultures, mysticism, archaeology, the cinema, and mythology. Di Flaco says, “I manipulate geometry, light, color, texture, design, and the relationship between spaces to create illusion and reality in both the real and imaginary worlds.”

Jon Diehl

Quakertown, PA

Jon began his path in the art world when, at the age of four and half, he was struck by a car and sustained a Traumatic Brain Injury. Now in his 30s, Jon has maintained a positive

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outlook and his love for art through his support network of family, friends, and the folks at Success Rehab at Rock Ridge. Jon sometimes has difficulty holding his paintbrush, however, he pushes through to express his thoughts and remembrances on canvas. He recently started specializing in animal portraits and has brought joy to many owners with his personal rendition of photos of their pets. Jon's works have been recognized at several local exhibitions. He says his paintings are from his heart and will be enjoyed by any beholders.

Samuel Dietze

Altoona, PA

Dietze is a legally blind artist who paints in oils and acrylics. He works on large oil paintings at home and smaller acrylic paintings outside. The oil paintings are mainly abstract or impressionistic. The acrylic paintings are mainly impressionistic or realism. Dietze likes nature subjects such as landscapes, sunsets, trees, the night sky, astronomy and the ocean. He says he's been a serious artist since about 1990. Words that motivate Dietze artistically, "As a man thinketh so shall it be." Dietze is legally blind which limits his mobility. Art allows him to be doing things outside so that he's not stuck in the house all the time. Dietze is involved with other artists in groups and organizations. Art has allowed him to meet new people and he enjoys getting his work out there for the public to see.

Thomas Dillon

Stroudsburg, PA

Dillon first learned the basics of painting from his mother. He uses acrylic, pencil, pen and watercolor. Sketches with a combination of paint and colored pencils often germinate ideas for larger paintings. Subject matter varies from contemporary, surreal, and figurative work. Dillon has completed portraits of his children, colleagues, as well as surreal nudes and landscapes. His work has been published in books, newspapers, and has been used by for-profit and nonprofit businesses including art galleries. In 2007, Dillon was seriously injured in a motorcycle accident where he sustained many injuries including head trauma. After multiple hospitalizations and corrective surgeries, Thomas was later diagnosed with a mental illness. "Art has saved my life. It helps me cope with the symptoms of mental illness. It also gives me a sense of accomplishment and a way to communicate what I feel and experience."

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Allison Doatch

Edison, NJ

Doatch is a formally trained artist living in Edison, New Jersey. She uses a variety of media, including colored pencils and acrylics, when working on her favorite subject matter, flowers. Doatch likes to create photorealistic artwork. When she looks at a photograph, she is able to create a composition that is very close to the original picture. Doatch also works at a local hospital as a medical information specialist, and is currently working on a mural project at this facility. Art has played a major role in her life, especially living with an autistic spectrum disorder. “There are days where my disability can affect me, but when I draw or paint, I feel very confident in myself that I am doing something special.”

Bobby Edmon

Oklahoma City, OK

Edmon is 73 years old, married, and the father of three grown children. His favorite medium is acrylic paint because it dries quickly and the colors are vibrant and dark. Edmon sketches his drawings on canvas prior to applying the paint. His subjects are usually landscapes, animals and buildings, but sometimes unconventional subjects as well. Edmon says that art has given him a sense of accomplishment and boosted his self-esteem. It's the one thing he can still do well after having a stroke at age 58, caused by atrial fibrillation. His balance and speech are affected, but not his art ability. Unable to work any longer, Edmon creates art fulltime. “I spend hours at a time drawing and painting and I receive joy and serenity in doing so.”

Herbert Eilertsen

Coatesville, PA

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

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Nancy Eilertsen

Coatesville, PA

After starting a family and living on a farm for 10 years, Eilertsen had a successful career as an artist. She developed a series of pen and ink designs and having them printed, would hand paint each design with acrylics in different color motifs. Though she had already stopped creating her paintings due to a variety of circumstances, Eilertsen developed Macular Degeneration in 2000. Her disease progressed to the point where she decided to live with her son. It was Eilertsen's son who convinced her that with a magnifying glass and a drafting table, she could resurrect her art and she began painting again in 2016. Eilertsen said, "When watching TV is not possible any longer, and hearing aids cannot fully supplement my hearing loss, to have something I can return to that I totally enjoy is incredible."

Mary Jo Evans

Dallas, PA

Evans attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio, an arts apprenticeship, which taps into the energy of people with special needs. She is a skilled quilter, and loves to work with fiber art. She has been cross stitching and making quilts for years. Evans loves working with wool and various types of fabric creating unique fiber art in a very innovative way. One of her specialties is creating from colorful textured yarns and fabric. They are unique and whimsical creations, which can be displayed as very large wall art or one can adorn themselves with a shawl. She also loves to batik on muslin or silk. Creating gives Evans confidence, pride in herself, and a sense accomplishment.

Gen Farrell

Burleson, TX

Farrell is currently retired from a 25 year teaching career in high school art. Pursuing her artwork full time, she works in a traditional method, primarily in oil paint. Her images are of the life that she lives with the people and the horses that she knows. Farrell has a benign essential tremor, which she has lived with since she was 20 years old. Her work has always given her a sense of self worth and achievement. Farrell says that people are always amazed that she can do what she does with a tremor. Her handwriting is terrible, but for some reason she can paint. Farrell is inspired by the words spoken in the movie Inception, "You mustn't be afraid to dream a little bigger, darling."

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Robert Flatt

Houston, TX

Flatt started his crazy passion to become a photographer in 2004 when he left a successful career in the oil service industry due to the onset of Parkinson's disease. He and his wife love to travel to wild and beautiful places. He uses his camera and Photoshop to create highly saturated pictures, full of color, full of life, with vibrant, surrealistic 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, and 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 and 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 a native Minnesotan who has always been drawn to the arts. Her art is abstract acrylic painting, which is inspired greatly by nature and her experiences in everyday life. She says she enjoys experimenting with materials and techniques and learning to embrace imperfection. Forbes is inspired by a quote from Roald Dahl; "Those who don't believe in magic will never find it." In 2014, Forbes suffered a traumatic brain injury in a car accident and is now disabled. After a period of great adjustment and still learning everyday, she is finding what works best in her new life. "I use art as a way to release emotions and look at the world through a lens of wonder and optimism."

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Linda Fry Goschke

Philadelphia, PA

Goschke has always been interested in our sensual experience, especially of the natural world, and our expectations related to existing forms, what is considered common and uncommon, and the nature of beauty. Ordinary objects/subjects have power to evoke unexpected responses. Her work allows her to examine our relationship to the natural world, our sensual experiences that make life interesting, an abstract interpretation of it. Goschke looks for revealing unexpected views. A traumatic brush with death and loss of her sense of smell made her more aware of our physical fragility and our interpretation of reality. Goschke's physical challenges pushed her more into the digital realm: precise methodology and multiple creative outcomes, it assists focus, helps keep track of progress, using few hazardous chemicals. "Art is about communicating ideas, no matter the medium."

Robert Gallagher

Berwyn, PA

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

Stanley Garczynski

Philadelphia, PA

Garczynski started out doing arduous work as a rigger at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. He finished his 22-year career there as an industrial technician. At Fleisher Art Memorial Garczynski started painting during evening classes in 1988. Branching out, he studied sculpture and recently started making jewelry. "I love art, making beautiful paintings and jewelry with my hands". At Bryn Mawr Rehab Hospital, Art Ability in 2001, he won the John M. Walsh Juror's Choice Award for his still life painting Fragrant Bouquet. Garczynski says though he continues to suffer from his spine issues generating chronic pain, mental issues, and tinnitus, it hasn't stopped him from doing his artwork.

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Ginger Gehres

Chocowinity, NC

Art is Gehres' passion. It was once her vocation in life and when her health changed dramatically, it became her therapy. Today, it is Gehres' joy to create visual stories and share them with others. Her favorite medium, scratchboard art, is a reductive process where ink is removed from a substrate to produce a positive image. How it is taken off, typically with a knife, can vary and create wonderful textures and tones. She also adds colored inks to her work. Gehres struggles with grand mal seizures, chronic migraines and interstitial cystitis but she take advantage of the days she feels well enough to work on her art. Her favorite life quote is, "Keep your face to the sunshine and you will not see the shadows."

Maria Genovese

Drexel Hill, PA

Born in Gioia Tauro, a small town in Southern Italy, Genovese has been attracted to Art as far back as she can remember. She recalls when she was very young in school and she would draw little animals or faces. Though Genovese did pursue some formal training in both Italy and later in the US, after she immigrated there, she considers herself mostly a self taught artist. She prefers sketching, especially faces and human figures but at present she is learning watercolor technique. In September of 2015, significant complications arose from her cataract surgery resulting in constantly foggy vision and irritation in her right eye. These vision problems have challenged her love for art. Genovese can only work for short periods of time and then needs to stop and discontinue the creative process.

David Gerbstadt

Berwyn, PA

Gerbstadt lives with his three legged female pit mix 'Noel'. Since the early 1990s, he has created and showed his art world-wide, made from found materials. On December 28, 2007 Gerbstadt died in route to the hospital in an ambulance after being run over by a tracker trailer truck. He was riding his bicycle at the time of the accident. Gerbstadt said before expiring, "The truck did not stop me, it just slowed me down." The medical team miraculously brought him back to life after 9 hours of treatment. Gerbstadt has Dyslexia, Asperger's, and PTSD. He acknowledged having struggled with anxiety, frustration, night mares, depression, and thoughts of suicide. Gerbstadt said, "Art is my oxygen so I can continue to live in a world that that is foreign to me. Art helps me overcome life's obstacles."

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Kimberly Gerry-Tucker

Seymour, CT

Gerry-Tucker is a widely recognized author and artist. She loves collage, the feel of the glue. She never uses a brush. Gerry-Tucker says she can cut paper for hours and hours. A favorite subject matter for her is trees. She LOVES trees and is passionate about communicating the environmental awareness and her love for trees. Gerry-Tucker believes art is crucial for her as a person with disabilities, making her world bigger. She says she can express passions, usually unexpressed verbally. Her favorite quote is from Jefferson, “ To get something you've never had, you must do something you've never done.”

Stephen Gibson

Oakland, CA

Gibson is drawn to a variety of subjects and tends to work thematically. Water and people recur in his work. His methods are fluid and depend on his whims. Gibson loves to work in watercolor and pastels, and he has just begun working with water soluble oil paints. Gibson is motivated by a quote from Degas, “Art is not what you see, but what you make others see.” Due to the vagaries of ill health, Gibson acknowledges that his sense of balance and hand tremors affect his work the most. When his hand is shaking he turns to pouring paint and manipulating the paper to create. In terms of the balance issue, Gibson paints in his bed.

Pamela Givens

Essington, PA

Givens is a watercolorist who also enjoys pencil drawing, calligraphy, painting on wood and doing arts and crafts with her granddaughter. She began her art studies at Millersville State College but survived a major automobile accident in 1973 that resulted in a six-week long coma with traumatic brain injury. After recovery and extensive Physical Therapy at the Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital, Givens was thankful her artistic abilities were ultimately not compromised. She now regularly paints and exhibits her artwork. Givens says, “art for her means having a way to manage her vision so that people can enjoy and appreciate it. It is so rewarding to finish a work that captures her vision!”

Patricia Goodrich

Richlandtown, PA

Goodrich is a visual artist and a poet. She says process is key to her work. Sometimes a

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piece begins with an idea, sometimes with the material itself. She enjoys both the physical work and the mental play. Goodrich works with a variety of media, as well as creating earthworks and installations. Having lost her lower left leg in a motorcycle accident, Goodrich says those few missing inches contribute to sense of “off balance” and an awareness of what it means physically to connect to earth, to be “grounded”. That off-kilter, heightened awareness is an asset in the arts, both visual and literary. The sense of connection and, at the same time, freedom is a gift art gives me. I hope to pass it on to those who view what I create.

James Graves

Trumbull, CT

Graves has been diagnosed with a mild Intellectual disability, Impulse Control disorder, and Bipolar disorder. He lives in Bridgeport, Connecticut. Graves started with the Kennedy Center in August of 2006 and now participates in the art therapy program there. Although his work is full of life, blossoming with details, Graves says his inner self is focused, “I am constantly practicing, honing my skills and working towards bettering myself as an artist.” He believes that being an artist is a huge part of his identity. It helps him to express himself and stay calm in the face of many challenges. He is passionate about art and is very talented in drawing and painting.

Linnie Greenberg

Ardmore, PA

Greenberg took her first art workshop in 2011, a short time after developing tinnitus with 80% hearing loss and long after her children were grown and they had children of their own. It opened up a wondrous world of sparkle, spin and creativity that brings her great joy and makes her forget the constant high pitched ringing in her ears. Greenberg is mainly self-taught and she says she is still exploring and learning about art. Greenberg cuts imaginary creatures and organic shapes from hand painted paper along with images from vintage books, magazine advertisements and other ephemera. She then creates a story while making a picture with her cutouts. One of Greenberg's favorite quotes comes from Hans Christian Anderson, “Life itself is the most wonderful fairy tale.”

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Ina Greenstein

Philadelphia, PA

It wasn't until her children were grown and she didn't have to earn a living, that Greenstein was able to rekindle her passion for art. Originally focused on oils, she took a course in watercolor painting and was smitten instantly. Greenstein says, "Capturing the light captivates me - this ability to have the light shine through the painting. It has been a rewarding and engrossing pursuit of self-expression". She gains inspiration from the watercolor artist Richard Schmidt, "...a faint confluence of the tangible and the spiritual is where art comes from. It has no known limits". Greenstein's eye disease occasionally necessitates some brief artistic down times to allow her vision to come back into focus. During this interval, she is forced to stop any activity that requires sharp vision.

Dick Grodt

Cedar Rapids, IA

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

Blythe Gurche

Trumansburg, NY

Art has been one of the only things that makes Gurche feel like he still has control. Painting reminds him that he is so much more than his disability, that he can create beautiful delicate detailed paintings that move people. Even when Gurche is stuck at home for long stretches, painting has been a way for him to connect and share with people. Gurche says he is not particularly interested or invested in the final composition, but more with the experience of painting and perfecting forms he finds satisfying. "The human face, in its infinite variety, further morphed by the application of sweat, spit, oil and tears is such a delightful subject of study. Being completely absorbed by the colors in the shadow of a nose for half an hour is such an extravagance and a privilege."

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Susan Gustafson

Vancouver, WA

Gustafson was diagnosed with Retinitis Pigmentosa over 30 years ago. Retiring from her career in dental hygiene 20 years after her diagnosis, Gustafson's current vision is about the size of a 3X5 card. With the aid of a guide dog she is able to travel independently. Gustafson says she sees the world through this “window” and captures the image on her iPhone. Later she sits and uses dark lines to delineate the space and adds subtle shading using an underpainting and layering transparent pigments. She loves the way watercolors move and mingle; the mystic mingling of pigments which she is then left to accept and find a solution that is beautiful and representative of the image she wishes to preserve.

Lynne Hartman

Phoenixville, PA

Hartman is new to painting. She suffered a concussion-related TBI and it impairs her balance, visual/sensory perception, cognition, short-term memory, stamina and all aspects of her life. Sitting down in a quiet place in front of a canvas takes her to another place where her perception of an image belongs to her. “It is affirming, empowering and makes me smile, and ‘do-overs’ are, not only possible, they are okay.” Hartman continues to work at an executive-level position in the philanthropic sector. While her work is very demanding, Hartman says “The accident, the injury, the rehab and learning new ways to navigate life has changed me. There have been many concessions, and there have been many gifts. For me, my paintings serve as a testament to the enduring human spirit.”

John Hassler

Carlisle, PA

Hassler paints plein air and in studio with watercolors, oils, and acrylics as well as drawing and painting figures. He says that art keeps your mind focused so he doesn't “know any disability” when he is painting. Hassler is a member of Seven Lively Artists and is very active in multiple professional groups supporting watercolor artists. “Keep on Painting” is Hassler's mantra and he says that his hearing loss has not disrupted his artwork and sometimes he thinks it even helps, by shutting out distracting sounds while painting.

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John Haus

Hatboro, PA

In 2002, Haus was 18 on his way to school and was involved in a serious auto accident. He sustained a TBI and lung injuries both requiring several surgeries. The doctors didn't expect him to live and placed him in a coma and on a ventilator for two months. He is paralyzed on the right side, uses a wheelchair, has aphasia and cognitive issues. Haus is unable to read and write and was previously right-handed. He needed to relearn all his life skills. Drawing offered him therapeutic benefits and his artistic abilities continued to improve. Through all of this diversity he has shown incredible strength, determination and humor in his journey to regain his life. Haus always sees the humor on the other side of pain.

Jessica Hays

Bozeman, MT

Hays' work focuses on human relationship, and issues of mental health, trauma, and loss. In addition, she is exploring places of healing in the landscape and their place in contemporary culture. Hays grew up in Montana and is currently pursuing degrees in Photography and Environmental Studies. Her work has been shown both regionally and nationally, and Hays has presented at conferences and events dealing with issues in art and mental health. She has been diagnosed with Anxiety, Depression, and Panic Disorder. Her struggles with mental health serve as inspiration for her work. They drive her to create and share in order to help others with similar struggles.

Michael Heitler

Melville, NY

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

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Pat Henriques

Key West, FL

Henriques became an artist later in life, moving from a corporate office position to fabricating jewelry. Her primary focus is on enameling and making pieces from fine or sterling silver. Henriques' specialty in enameling is cloisonné. Stones are used in her work as well, “nature inspires me and I am amazed by the designs and hues that are found in various stones and flowers”. Henriques has eleven 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”.

Ron Hollingshead

Morgantown, WV

Ron Hollingshead is an artist and teacher at West Virginia University. His work is created as a way to keep him motivated to keep going. He says, “It is therapeutic in that it challenges me to stay physically fit and able to make new work”. Hollingshead lives by his family mantra “Do the Work”. It reminds him that it isn't easy to keep going, but you must do the little things that make you able to do the bigger things someday. He has congenital foraminal malformation, disc degeneration and failed surgery syndrome that creates pain that can only be controlled by an implanted intrathecal morphine drug delivery system and spinal cord stimulators.

Han Huisman

Saint Croix Falls, WI

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

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Jeffrey Iverson

Springfield, IL

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

Mimi Barclay Johnson

Haverford, PA

After a successful career as a stage/scenery/lighting designer for opera companies and finally for the Orpheus Revels in Philadelphia, Johnson began to paint fine art. Oils at first then the more difficult transparent watercolor. When she became disabled after two devastating car accidents, Johnson had to overcome frustration and anger before accepting the reality that she would never paint en plein air again or even stand at an easel. Painting was and still is a struggle for her, but once she learned to paint again from the different perspective of sitting, she began painting from memory. "In my mind I can still see the incredible colors of shadows, see the light dancing on distant water, and see the movement of joyful people. That is what I paint now - memories."

Morgan Johnson

Gold Beach, OR

Johnson is an artist working in oil on canvas. His styles range from realism to abstract. 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, to reproduce what he sees as awe inspiring. Johnson has been disabled officially since 1994 with AIDS. He contracted HIV in 1985. While Johnson has survived long term using the available medications as they came on the market, both the virus and the powerful drugs have limited his eyesight, stamina, mental faculties, and

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perception/understanding. Johnson is motivated by this statement, “Art is long, follow your awe.”

Marie Kelly

Philadelphia, PA

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

Linda Killingsworth

Elverson, PA

Killingsworth was forced to give up her active lifestyle after several surgeries. She became seriously depressed and credits her self-taught pencil art as the activity which saved her. Killingsworth chooses colored pencils because they allow her the fine details she loves. She is intrigued by the awe of ordinary objects and the artistic possibilities they offer. She is a member of the Colored Pencil Society of America, and has been an award winner in their International Exhibition. Her artwork has also been published in colored pencil magazines, and she has illustrated two books. Killingsworth also designs note cards from her work for companies in New York, Chicago and San Francisco. She is also one of the founders of the Historic Yellow Springs Art Show located in Chester Springs, Pennsylvania.

Cheryl Kinderknecht

Bradenton, FL

Kinderknecht is a mixed media artist and former gallery owner. Regardless of the medium or subject matter, her work is influenced by the colors, patterns, and textures of the Kansas High Plains landscape where she grew up. Emotions, dreams, myths, metaphors, memories and ancestral ties from her interior landscape further anchor and inform her work.

Kinderknecht says, “The creative process has always energized me and continuing to work on art, despite my compromised vision, helps me to feel connected, grounded, and relevant, both within my own life and to the world”. Over the past 15 years, her artwork has been increasingly impacted by her failing eyesight. Her condition limits and skews how objects and colors appear and which tools and techniques remain within her realm of usable vision.

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Julie Kitzes

Lakewood, CO

When studying veterinary medicine in college, Kitzes developed a series of neurological problems including Chiari malformation, hydrocephalus, and syringomyelia. This resulted in six brain surgeries and made the physical demands of her former life nearly impossible. Art had always been a hobby, but since developing a chronic illness, it became one thing she could still do and serves as a form of therapy to distract from daily pain. Now Kitzes aims to use her art to inspire and educate others about nature and the captivating world around us. Her watercolor, colored pencil, and ink work is often bold and colorful. A mantra that soothes Kitzes comes from BBC's Sherlock, "You always feel the pain, but you don't have to fear it."

Paul Kline

Coral Gables, FL

After abandoning his first career of painting and photography for almost 30 years, Kline returned to his passion after being diagnosed with Parkinsonism. He works in many different media: encaustic (hot wax), the combination of oil and cold wax, acrylic, mixed media, and photography. Kline says he enjoys working rapidly and spontaneously, incorporating all the "accidents and mistakes" as they occur. His inspiration comes from constantly observing his surroundings and studying lines, shapes, colors, patterns, textures, and shadows. His subject matter is drawn from memories of places and events, topography, historical periods of art and sometimes purely from the visual and tactile sensations of surfaces and objects. "In the end, my goal is to create a work that is expressive, more organic than planned and often emotionally driven and serendipitous."

Ty Klug

Philadelphia, PA

Klug has always been an artist. No matter what form it took, it was always art to him. Whether it was poetry, carpentry, cooking or painting and drawing, there was always some form of creative expression in his work. After his 2005 diagnosis with primary progressive multiple sclerosis, he rededicated himself to his original love of art in all its color, splendor and form. Klug's main concern as an artist has always been to express his unique perspective on life. He is a firm believer that we are souls first, the afflictions of the body are fleeting. Klug says he is interested in creating art that conveys this message. He attempts to capture the feeling through his use of color. He tries to communicate a feeling or sensation through the shape and form.

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Beverly Kohn

Livingston, NJ

Kohn is afflicted with a nervous system condition affecting her entire body due to a devastating accident she experienced just before her 50th birthday. Her art varies from custom made jewelry, to multimedia art. Kohn says art has become a way of life, not just a thing she enjoys. Since her memory has been severely altered, art helps her with the physical and mental challenges of everyday life. “As I create my art, a feeling of calmness comes over me.”

David Kontra

Hartville, MO

Kontra is a self-taught expressionist artist using acrylics, pens, ink and an assortment of unusual useful tools. Having retinitis pigmentosa makes it difficult to create his work for he can only see a quarter of and inch of the canvas at a time. Art has made Kontra feel more independent for when he paints or draws, it is the art and himself, in his own personal world, enabling him to release emotions. This is the definition of expressionism. “I open my mind allowing my memory and imagination to cut through the blindness in order to create the visions that I see.”

Daphne La Croix

Philadelphia, PA

La Croix has been producing fine artwork since the early 2000s. She works with water-soluble oils on paper or canvas. Her subject matter ranges from genres of still life to figuration. Prior to her switch, La Croix worked as a graphic designer. Although, schooled in commercial art, she has always loved the fine arts of drawing, painting and print-making. With the diagnosis of stage-3 breast cancer in 1994, La Croix eventually followed her heart for pursuing a life of painting. Although her left arm is potentially lame and the vision in her left eye is impaired, she overcomes those weaknesses by using whatever tools and equipment available. “Pain and sadness are replaced with a soft smile and an audible sigh that creating art gives to the one who chooses art as the only life to lead.”

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Shaun Lambert

Dallas, PA

Lambert attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio. He does home remodeling, which makes him very handy creating recycled artwork. Lambert enjoys working and creating with his hands. He loves working with found objects repurposing them into interesting artwork. He has designed a piece for EOTC's new building. Lambert is evolving as an artist and has created some wonderful batiks utilizing iron oxide dyes derived from EPCAMR, Eastern Pennsylvania Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation. This is an environmental agency that harvests mine waste from local streams and waterways. Lambert has been creating artwork utilizing mixed media creating 3d pieces. He has created beautiful cement vases of all sizes painted in vibrant colors. Creating is a great express outlet for him.

Marilyn Lavins

Philadelphia, PA

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

Amy Lewis

Boston, MA

Lewis is a woman artist with a visual disability. Her art may be described as eclectic. She paints abstracts, ballet scenes and ocean scenes. Lewis tries to make her art just a bit non-traditional. Her favorite quote comes from Vincent van Gogh, (to paraphrase) "if a voice inside says don't paint, then by all means, go ahead and paint". Lewis's disability has caused her to persevere and paint, even though sometimes it is difficult for her to do so. Such as when she has to look at a scene longer than normal or has to learn techniques to block out scenes in the canvas when she has little visual memory. Lewis feels that these challenges have only served to make her a better artist and to make her appreciate the world around her.

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Jennifer Lipman-Bartel

Philadelphia, PA

Lipman-Bartel's unique jewelry and sculptural work are all original design concepts and hand work incorporating semi-precious stones, metals, rare and unusual glass beads and found objects. As a spinal cord cancer survivor, she has donated her work to many legal aid and non-profit organizations that help people with cancer and disabilities. Both as craftsmen and resin model maker, Lipman-Bartel operates a hobby model manufacturing company with her husband that creates kits and accessories for model ship builders and model train railroaders. Her clients have been SEPTA, Aker Philadelphia Shipyard and Kinkisharyo in Japan. Their ship model work has been featured on the Television Science Channel Program "How It's Made" Oil Tanker Episode for Aker Philadelphia Shipyard 2009.

Richard Love

Valparaiso, IL

Love was born on a farm in Indiana when our nation's horrible Depression was ending and WWII was just beginning. As a child, he drew from illustrations in books using the light of a kerosene lamp and was fortunate to receive drawing instruction from an itinerant art teacher in grade school. In high school Love became the yearbook artist and later joined the army where he painted murals in Germany. Back in America, Love attended several colleges, eventually earning a Master's Degree from Northwestern. He then opened an art gallery which dealt in American art and began writing the first of many books. "Today I am not as tall as I was when medical experts told me that I had Parkinson's Disease, but I refused to let it stop my love of art. I painted in two basic styles and refused to quit as I was certain that God was the dynamic of my life, not my misery."

Arielle Mabsoute

Philadelphia, PA

Mabsoute is a Deaf artist who makes jewelry, drawings, paintings, and American Sign Language bookmarks. She has an intellectual disability but she says she is proud of her Deafness and does not see it as a disability. Despite her seizures every day, Mabsoute pushes herself to make art. She is always wanting a pen and paper to draw anything in front of her. Mabsoute says, "Art makes me feel comfortable and strong. Art is the reason I am able to support myself as a business owner." Mabsoute is currently working on an art show for Deaf artists only, to celebrate and share art with the Philadelphia community.

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Alexander Masyk

Brooklyn, NY

Currently residing in New York since 2011, Masyk was born in the Ukraine in 1947. He has been exhibiting his work since 1970 and has pieces hanging in numerous museums and private collections around the world. Masyk has a special natural gift of vision of his future work's composition. He works quickly, his brush confidently models the form; and his color solutions represent a real solution performance in different genres of which he has perfect command. He works well in oil and tempera painting, pastel drawing, etchings, linocuts and woodcuts. In the late 2000s, he had laser treatment due to his history of bilateral glaucoma, which caused complete loss of vision in his left eye. He has a cataract in his right eye causing difficulty reading and focusing for a long time.

Valerie Mayer

Pt. Roberts, WA

Mayer began painting watercolors over 30 years ago, not long after she was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis. Living with MS has required Mayer to be flexible and open to the unexpected challenges her disease presents. She finds that the variable and inconstant nature of watercolor aligns with her approach to living adaptively, and open to change. The natural wonders of the Pacific Northwest region provide Mayer with her subject matter. Her goal as a watercolor artist is to create paintings inspired by places she has visited and the life encountered along the way. She considers her lifelong passion for creativity and art to be a key element in living with MS. She says it provides a unique way to transport her focus from living with impairments and pain, to another world. "I become myself again and not my disease."

Raymond McAdams

Los Angeles, CA

McAdams' ambitious practice varies between artistic mediums of drawing, painting, and sculpture. With a practice that is ever shifting, he comes into the studio and is focused; his engagement becomes a site of material investigation. With a fastidious approach to art making, it becomes apparent that McAdams is striving to perfect his craft. McAdams' "no play" philosophy illuminates the richness of being engulfed and exudes an ever commitment to the arts. He partakes in both being an artist and advocate for marginal material practices.

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Meghan McCormack

Trumbull, CT

McCormack has been an active participant in Friday morning art classes at The Kennedy Center for about two years. She practices her rendering skills on a weekly basis, often finding inspiration from nature, flowers, and the artwork of Georgia O'Keefe. She can be found socializing with her friends and spending time with her family in her free time. Meghan is also proud of her athletic background, and has competed at the Special Olympics for many years in the track and field events. She is proud to have been featured in a Kennedy Center art show last fall for the first time, and continues to work hard at perfecting her art.

Sarah McDaniel

Newport News, VA

McDaniel's artwork starts out as a clouded idea. She then starts to consider where this idea is coming from. Is it coming from her past experiences, traumas, relationships, or even her subconscious responding to her current experiences? This step is what the artwork is about and shows the story she is trying to tell. When McDaniel is making art, she uses her life experiences to bring awareness to a topic. McDaniel is currently attending Old Dominion University and plans on continuing her education at Eastern Virginia Medical School for Art Therapy. Her main goal in the world is to spread awareness and heal the tormented. "I want to help them become the best version of themselves and help them find a path to recovery."

Emily McGuigan

Malvern, PA

McGuigan plans on pursuing Art Therapy as a career after she completes her senior year at West Chester University. Art has been her own form of therapy as McGuigan has suffered with Generalized Anxiety Disorder and Major Depressive Disorder throughout her life. Her recent series, Serotonin, is a visual representation of experiencing the highs and lows of a serotonin imbalance that causes anxiety and depression. The juxtaposition of the warm and cool colors and the intense contrast in the pieces represent the spectrum of emotions that are associated with the disorders. McGuigan considers her body of work as a looking glass; viewers are given entryway into her states of mind and find a reflection of their own. She aims to use color and mark-making to express moments where she recognizes a powerful emotion in herself that translates to the viewer.

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Colleen McIntyre-Berenotto

Buena, NJ

McIntyre-Berenotto is a freelance photographer who specializes in the transformation of what is often ignored or not seen by others, to be experienced in a new light and creating a new beginning. Currently McIntyre-Berenotto is drawn to the Western lifestyle (being in the company of the diverse spirit and souls of the people, the craftsman, the cowboys and cowgirls, the bulls and the broncs). While not having the traditional training, McIntyre-Berenotto's traumatic brain injury sparked the creative side of her brain. Although she does have her daily struggles, McIntyre-Berenotto says she is grateful that she is able to experience her "new world" through the lens. "With the continued support from those closest to me and the cognitive training I have received, I am able to laugh and enjoy life!"

Dawn McLaughlin

Highland Lakes, NJ

McLaughlin is a mixed media artist. Although primarily a draughtsman and sculptor, she has also worked in collage and assemblage, among other forms. Recently McLaughlin has been creating a series of mixed media portraits, working expressively, and using her drawing skills to reveal her personal "hand" and authenticity to convey emotive content. McLaughlin contracted polio when she was six years old (1958) and has walked with crutches since. Due to significant physical limitations and severe fatigue, she is forced to spend a lot of time indoors. Creating art provides her with purpose, personal satisfaction and a creative psychological outlet. A favorite quote of McLaughlin comes from Agnes de Mille, "The artist never entirely knows. We guess. We may be wrong, but we take leap after leap in the dark."

Terri McNichol

Cranbury, NJ

McNichol has always been drawn to the fluid and transparent nature of watercolor and its "array of infinite possibilities initiated at the mere stroke of the brush." Its affinity with Chinese ink painting is what drew her to the study of the art of China painting (also called porcelain painting). Born with chronic ear infection, McNichol has lost total hearing three times in her life: as a youngster, teenager and in adulthood. McNichol believes that painting has been a retreat especially when separated from the hearing world and a lifesaver during her childhood.

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Kathleen McSherry

Doylestown, PA

McSherry has had a long career in Marketing and Advertising as well as an educator at multiple universities in the Northeast. Throughout her professional career, she was also a cartoonist whose work was exhibited globally. She stopped drawing when she was diagnosed with MS in 2002, losing her confidence in using her hands to draw. At that time, McSherry was taking Avonex which meant self injecting once a week. Initially disposing her used needles at a local hospital, she suddenly viewed them in a different light. Out of nowhere McSherry started working in 3D using her old Avonex needles. She created a series of sculpture called “The Art of Acceptance”. That was the beginning of McSherry's work with found object sculpture. She has also started drawing again.

Allison Merriweather

Houston, TX

Many of Merriweather's paintings are beautiful little worlds inhabited by peaceful creatures and all manner of flora and fauna. Since childhood she has always found comfort and happiness in painting. Merriweather's stories unfold on canvas as she paints. She does not ever plan a painting. In the past few years elephants have been wandering onto her canvases inspired by 6 months in Nepal and Sri Lanka. Merriweather says she was somewhat of an outcast in school because of her learning disabilities and found refuge in her art. “Art has always been my sanctuary.”

Lawrence Meyers

Paoli, PA

Meyers is a watercolorist that paints in the impressionistic style. He invites the viewer to join in his art experience by examining each ribbon of color, value and shape. Combining these shapes connects the viewer to Meyers' vision of God's design and the excitement in our surroundings. Commonplace surroundings that we take for granted and often overlook are transformed into the extraordinary beauty that can be cherished in each brushstroke. Meyers is hearing and vision impaired and has Tritanope color-blindness, which requires him to paint by relying more heavily on value, i.e. depth and darkness of color rather than color itself, to create his artwork. The result allows him to take the complexity of nature and reduce it to a simplicity, while expressing his wonder in the beauty that surrounds us.

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Louis Middleton

Baltimore, MD

Prior to joining Make Studio in its very first year, Middleton had long enjoyed taking photos and had logged many satisfied customers in the work he did in his own photo restoration business. Middleton identifies as having autism, and he has found art and photography to be an invaluable resource for expressing himself and interacting with others. Since joining Make Studio, he first expanded his skills with photo collage and manipulation and has gone on to dramatically expand his creative activities and now excels at painting, working with pastels, and using a wide range of media. “I love entertaining, celebrities, exotic destinations, and city attractions! I like to make art and take photos to show to others!”

Deborah Miller

Norristown, PA

Miller has been creating art for over 15 years. Her work includes printmaking, stenciling greeting cards and creating abstract paintings. She is inspired by the experiences that she has had and the places she has traveled. Nature has been a big influence in Miller's work and she is guided by the changing seasons throughout the year, seen in the color and imagery. “My physical limitations have allowed me to try out many different ways of creating my work. These limitations can be seen and felt in each brush and marker stroke that I lay on the canvas. This energy and force that is required to create my work is visible in the bright and swift flowing sections of color. Creating art has therefore allowed me to release these feelings and emotions and discover the limits that I am able to push my body”.

MaryAnn Miller

Clinton, NJ

Miller has been making and teaching art since childhood and is also a poet. Her recently published book *Cures for Hysteria*, is partly a chronicle of her misdiagnosis and partly an examination of misjudgment in the larger world. Miller has had Hyperkalemic Periodic Paralysis since age three. She now finds that there are some art processes such as intaglio and woodcut that are beyond her endurance. She can manage and innovate making monotypes. Her experiences and research into her condition have certainly influenced the images she creates. These images are often genetic, chemical, and biological. Miller often thinks of what her Italian grandmother used to say, *Forza la battaglia!*

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Thomas Miller

Whippany, NJ

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

Vinetta Miller

Wynnewood, PA

Miller is a Philadelphia native born in 1973. She began creating art right after high school and since 2015, she has been working at the Center for Creative Works. Miller says she likes to paint portraits the most. What she enjoys about it is that the people that model for her are all different. She wants them to have different smiles, different backgrounds, and to be wearing different dresses. Miller says she makes art because it's fun, because she can concentrate, and because she likes working with her hands. Miller describes her process, "First I put down a drawing in pencil, then in pen, and then watercolor paint. When I do all of the lines, it's finished."

Nicole Miritis

St-Laurent, Canada

After spending 25 years working as a technical support specialist, a serious back injury forced Miritis to take a leave of absence. As a way of acknowledging her new physical limitations, she started sketching. Miritis is a self-taught, mixed media artist often working with found paper materials like old maps, sheet music and wallpaper as well as a variety of other mediums. She has a portfolio of varied accomplishments, including a publication, art exhibits, workshops and community projects. "Painting has been a therapeutic process. Even though sometimes it is challenging to paint, I continue to work as it helps me express my emotions. I usually say that I have a conversation with my canvas and I am often inspired by music".

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John Mitchell

Trumbull, CT

Mitchell is a prolific artist, often creating bridges, buildings, or other architectural structures. His intricate line work and attention to detail make his artwork unique and can evoke feelings of surrealism. Mitchell has attended art classes at The Kennedy Center for many years, and has been a long time employee at Teknoware. He enjoys going out in the community and on trips with his peers, as well as participating in the Special Olympics.

Maria Morales

Paoli, PA

Born in 1940 in Ponce, Puerto Rico, Morales started painting at a very early age with her artist mother. Her art reflects her love and respect for the heritage and dignity of Indians of the Americas and the Caribbean. It is based on extensive research and visits with them. Many of her works show loving bonds between mother and child. Her primary medium is gouache. Morales has been in many local and national shows and her work is in private collections throughout the Americas, Puerto Rico, England, and Africa. Morales has long suffered with arthritis in her lower back, hands, and knees, which adversely affects her art productivity. In 2015 she suffered a minor stroke. Intensive therapy and determination has helped her regain her artistic abilities.

Hal Moran

St. Charles, MO

Moran grew up with and still struggles with Tourette Syndrome and other co-occurring disorders. Perhaps this, along with being somewhat of an explorer, spurred his interest in photography. Moran knew he would never travel the world like some of the photographers he admired at National Geographic, capturing exotic subjects in the wilds of Borneo. So, he decided to search out the extra in the ordinary things in his own backyard. For Moran, the extra involves more than just the aesthetic value of an image. It's the story associated with an image that allows us to connect at the emotional level. Maya Angelou said, "There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you." His aim is to capture those untold stories.

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Victor Mordasov

West Chester, PA

Mordasov, a widely recognized artist who's 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 impressionism 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.

Frank Morrone

Coatesville, PA

Creating art came late in Morrone's life; at age 67 he started painting. That next year, he suffered a brain stem stroke and found himself struggling to gain use of the left side of his body. Morrone was treated at Bryn Mawr Rehabilitation Hospital and he says the people there were wonderful and encouraging. It made him realize that this could have been much worse. Morrone paints in the abstract style. Whenever he sits down to paint, his mind becomes attracted to very colorful compositions. Morrone's been told he has a colorful personality and believes his work reflects that. Art has become his go to activity every day due to his limitations from the stroke. Morrone feels fulfilled with each new painting. "I believe anyone can do amazing things as long as they just try."

Daniel Neufeld

Philadelphia, PA

As a little boy, Neufeld was diagnosed with pervasive developmental delay, a learning disability. That did not stop him from gaining skills and pursuing as many activities as possible. He grew fond of art through his mother, who was an artist herself. Neufeld enjoys drawing, painting, ceramics, printmaking, photography, comic books, and animation. Subjects that he likes capturing with his pencils and paints are people, still lives, and sites

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that he's seen on his travels; buildings, landscapes, seascapes, and railroads from direct observation and photographs he's taken. Art has inspired and helped Neufeld see things in the world creatively. In addition to creating art, Neufeld also likes playing sports, singing, playing the cello, cooking, and making movies.

Kathryn Noska

Phoenixville, PA

Noska is an oil painter of mystic still life in mythic landscapes using representational symbolism and philosophic whimsy. She has an AFA from Montgomery County Community College, and is a nationally award winning artist. A favorite quote of Noska comes from Antoine de Saint Exupéry, “A rock pile ceases to be a rock pile the moment a single man contemplates it, bearing within him the image of a cathedral”. Her persistence to use safe art materials is from developing Multiple Chemical Sensitivity, an unusually severe allergy-like reaction to extremely low levels and many different kinds of chemicals and toxicants. This not only greatly impacts her daily life, but influences her artistic journey and choice of media. Through much research, she now uses solvent-free painting techniques, cold-pressed walnut oil paint and eco-friendly panels.

Andrew Novis

Medford, MA

Novis believes that one should do art for art's sake and not attempt to make any kind of grand statement. His style and subject matter have been influenced by the fact that he is mostly self taught, an accomplished athlete, and seriously attracted to the fauve school of painting, as well as Latin American art. Novis applies flat, unmixed color in his palette, framed by black outlining, which both separates and enhances the color. Color more so than texture, shading, shadowing, or composition is Novis's core strength and he emphasizes color within his painting or woodcarving. Novis was diagnosed with Aspergers in the fall of 2012. Being an “Aspie” artist, he tends to create and conceive his imagery through the left brain, focusing on detail, order, separation and purity of color, and clearly defined lines.

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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 and has enjoyed taking hikes and exploring his surrounding in all the places he has lived and visited over the years. O'Donovan says he 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 and has been since birth. He's been independent since the age of 14 and has been a self-advocate for 15 years.

Jon Ohman

Dennis, MA

Ohman is an enthusiastic young man with high-functioning autism, also known as autistic disorder. High-functioning autism involves an impairment of social interaction and communication, restrictions to some activities, and repetitive behaviors. Ohman feels proud when he completes a beautiful drawing or painting in acrylics, knowing that it is a significant accomplishment. It shows his talent for bringing images to life. With high-functioning autism, Ohman believes he does his best work drawing and painting in two dimensions, especially by drawing the sides of people or animals. Horses are his passion. Ohman is also an equestrian, inspired to create self-expressive portraits of horses, people and the beautiful sea/landscapes of the trails he traverses.

Susanne Dagmar Olsen

Vordingborg, Denmark

Though she has doubts about her ability to reach a professional level due to challenges in memory, learning, and concentration, Olsen knows that she has something valuable to offer the world through her artwork. Multiple disorders, including tinnitus and paresthesia, mean that Olsen is often tired and has trouble working with fine detail. However, she still draws, paints in a variety of media, prints linocuts and works with clay. She is interested in people and nature as subject matter.

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Diana O'Neill

Haverford, PA

As a 70+ year old senior citizen, O'Neill spent 25 of those 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 and began watercolor painting, she fell in love with this exciting new 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 the bright colors and natural patterns in her work will inspire others to appreciate the natural environment that surrounds us! One of her favorite quotes is, "Every day is a gift so enjoy and make it count."

Joanne Orth

Downingtown, PA

Orth always loved art, drawing constantly as a child. As an adult, she chose a career in science and medical education and art moved into the background. In later years when her post-polio issues began limiting her physical abilities, she turned back to art as an old friend and creative release. Orth works mostly in acrylic, although she also enjoys pastel and other media. Her work tends to emphasize how contrasting light and shadows define a subject and how they can create a mood. Orth believes art transcends her physical limitations, making her appreciate how rich her life really is, and producing a new painting gives her a tremendous sense of accomplishment. It reminds her that there's beauty all around us and that life is good.

Mindy Orth-Stephens

Philadelphia, PA

Orth-Stephens has lived at Inglis House since 2011 and is involved in several activities including bowling, ceramics, and Exploring Art. She is also an Inglis volunteer who can most often be seen with her husband. Orth-Stephens is an avid sports fan of the Phillies, Flyers and Eagles. She excels at painting, which is her favorite artistic medium. Orth-Stephens came to Inglis after being involved in a car accident and has trouble holding onto a brush or utensil. Using Velcro and a foam football that fits perfectly to the shape of her hand, she is able to stick her paintbrush into the foam and strap it on to her hand so she can paint.

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Sal Panasci

Devon, PA

After 25 years in the Advertising field and receiving numerous awards for his design work, in 1995, Panasci's life took a dramatic turn. He was injured in an accident as a passenger in a taxi, which resulted in him being diagnosed with a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI) and blindness in one eye. Panasci spent 16 months in rehabilitation and continues receiving treatment today. During his initial rehabilitation, he was encouraged to try painting in watercolor, a medium that was new to him. Sal says, "I become emotionally attached to the color palette, the texture of the paint and the composition. Through this, the painting takes on a character of it's own and a specific visual interest, allowing the viewer to recognize a familiar subject in a new fashion".

Bernice Paul

Philadelphia, PA

Paul has studied art at the Pennsylvania Academy of fine Arts, Fleisher Art Memorial, the Barnes Foundation, and the Philadelphia College of Art. Her work has received many prizes and awards and has been exhibited throughout the Mid-Atlantic region. She works mostly in oils but has also done silkscreens, watercolors and acrylics. Paul acknowledges that her limited vision has made it more difficult to create her artwork and she's trying to paint more abstractly now. She feels that her passion for art helps to give her a positive outlook on life. Paul just celebrated her 100th birthday and says she still gets great joy from painting and creating.

Treavor Pence

El Paso, TX

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

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Victoria Pendragon

Paw Paw, WV

Despite Pendragon's diagnosis of scleroderma, which has crippled her hands, she creates mixed media artwork that combines collage, acrylic paint and dyed silk with found, created or natural elements. Pendragon believes her art is the result of a creative resonance set off by her almost constant state of evolution as a person. She can only ever be sure of what she's doing in any given moment. She could wake tomorrow and be off in a whole other direction. Pendragon says, "I graduated art school in 1969; it took me almost 50 years to learn to follow paint around, letting it do its thing while I do my best to keep it on track. The crippled hands were a blessing in disguise."

Christopher Pereto

Weymouth, MA

Pereto has been drawing since before age five. He can't imagine that not being part of him. When Pereto first began trying to actively be "serious" about art, he used colored pencil and aspired to be something like 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."

Cassandra Petruchyk

Philadelphia, PA

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

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Ellie Pfautz

Glenmoore, PA

A graduate of Penn State with a BA in Applied Arts, Pfautz worked in Wanamaker's, GE's and McGraw Hill's art departments before opening a graphic design studio. After a brain aneurysm, she turned to fine arts, which has become therapy and escape. She works in pastels and acrylics striving to capture initial reactions to landscapes, seascapes and still lifes. She is also on the Art Ability Committee.

Sheila Pitt

Tucson, AZ

Before a catastrophic accident in 2008 that left her a quadriplegic, Pitt was an avid equestrian, gardener, world traveler, family person, teacher and artist. Though she was able to get back into the classroom, with limited use of her left hand, she was convinced that she would never create art again. Thankfully use of a Wacom tablet, computer and Photoshop opened the door into Pitt's artistic abilities once again, just in a different way. Her studio assistant manipulates Photoshop for her while Pitt does all the drawing and image making. Her prints since the accident are a visual diary of her slow but steady recovery.

Jessica Preble

Colorado Springs, CO

Born in Greeley, Colorado in 1988, Preble has spent time studying art in California, Texas and Colorado. Although working primarily in oil paint, her artistic experience ranges across all mediums of creation and also includes a background in curating and teaching. She now resides in Colorado Springs, and is available for private commissions or gallery collection proposals. Preble has profound hearing loss in her right ear, which has contributed to her focus on visual communication through the arts. She is inspired by the words of Dan Franck, "A world without art is blind to itself".

Cathy Pregmon

Drexel Hill, PA

Pregmon has had multiple careers including being a school teacher, artistic director for a touring theater company which toured plays of empowerment for children, consultant with the Bureau of Special Education in PA, 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

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organic and come from nature. Many of her pieces feature semi-precious gems but her work also incorporates seeds, horn, bone, shells, and vegetable sources such as tagua and acai nuts. She favors fair trade beads such as Kazuri porcelain beads from Kenya and paper and linen beads from Uganda. Her pieces are “jewels” of chunky and funky with touches of whimsy and creative use of unusual materials.

Christina Profico

Ardmore, PA

Profico began to make jewelry as a creative outlet and a way of emotional healing after the amputation of her left leg in 2010. Jewelry design was something she had wanted to explore for many years. After a life-long battle with a chronic disease, Profico felt that she was beginning life over and the world was now open to trying new things. It was crucial in the process of finding her new life as an amputee. Profico sees her work as eclectic art objects rather than mass appeal costume jewelry. What she loves about making handmade jewelry is the imperfections. Profico says, “Losing my leg has taught me to appreciate the beauty of flaws. I feel that is what makes something unique.”

Meg Quinlisk

West Chester, PA

Quinlisk creates her artwork using mosaic glass on top of acrylic paint. She creates the painting first, then adds the glass on top of the dried painting. Each piece of glass is hand cut. The cut pieces are used to create a mosaic and are adhered to the painting using a heavy gloss medium. Quinlisk says her paintings can look very different throughout the day depending on how the light hits the glass. There are times when Quinlisk is in the throes of painting and the pain of arthritis suddenly interrupts and for a time, the potential and promise of a new picture falls prey to her disease. “My arthritis may limit the duration of time I paint but it does not compromise the beauty and joy of what I create.”

Tim Quinn

Wynnewood, PA

For the past six years, Quinn has developed a specific, line-oriented approach to composition, developing and expanding his range of mark in relation to different materials. Using a combination of calligraphy pen and ink, metallic pen, and watercolor, Quinn creates beds of marks that build inside and expand back out, revealing and obscuring passages through layering. His process is dictated by methodical line application, which remains

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consistent regardless of the media he works with. Focusing on border and edging, Quinn works from the outside-in, dividing space into concentric bands or grid-like structures. The titles for his compositions always reference interior spaces and architectural structures. Quinn says, “On the wall of the warehouse. In my father's office. In side my house. I have no clue where. I start with a line that goes all around.”

Bruce Ramsay

Takoma Park, MD

Ramsay began painting after suffering a traumatic brain injury (TBI) in June of 2004. He spent five weeks in a comma and six months hospitalized with several months of rehab after his release. Unfortunately he was unable to return so his original profession as a physical scientist so he retired and focused on his art. Ramsay uses acrylic on canvas, paper, or wood. Ramsay initially focused on bridges as his main subject, symbolizing the path many people have taken between seriously injured and some level of recovery. He now has chosen to paint birds in their natural environments focusing on endangered or at risk birds. Ramsay says, “Painting makes me happy and makes me feel like I am making a difference in my own and other people's lives.”

Joy Raskin

Bedford, NH

Raskin says she has a restless soul, a need to experiment, a need to keep pushing the limits. She may be a trained silversmith/metalsmith, but she believes she's really a wire tinkerer at heart. Raskin covers a wide range in metalsmithing, from tiny jewelry pieces to flatware to large-scale welded sculpture. She very much enjoys knitting and shaping wire to create unexpected metalwork such as knitted wire clothing, metal purses, and as well as knitted jewelry. Raskin also specializes in spoons and tableware. “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.”

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Desiree Reed

Dallas, PA

Reed attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio. The studio is an arts apprenticeship which taps into the energy of people with special needs. She is an amazing illustrator and painter. Reed is very skilled at detailed artwork and is very focused when she creates. She is inspired by a variety of subjects, from drawing and painting animals, nature, people to unique mandalas and whimsical artwork. Reed enjoys learning new techniques and experimenting with new mediums, which allows her imagination to flow with no limits. She has evolved as an artist and is also now teaching others what she has learned. Reed says, “I am joyful and have a sense of great accomplishment when I complete a piece of artwork. I love being an artist.”

Peraporn Rhys Wynne

Lake Elsinore, CA

Coming to the United States as a teenager from his native Thailand, Rhys Wynne had problems adjusting to the American culture. His paintings reflect his view of the world, of the “norms” through the eyes of autism. His use of a pallet knife on rough sand laced backgrounds creates a turbulent feeling to his work. Rhys Wynne believes art has created a world where his autism is not a drawback but rather a positive force. He can see and feel what others cannot. Rhys Wynne states that he can create in his head where others must spend time to make preliminary drawings and plans. He is motivated by the words of his father; “work through your weakness and make it your strength”.

Deveron Richard

Los Angeles, CA

Richard's work is inspired by fantasy and science-fiction. He draws from both his vast imagination and real-life to create fantastic landscapes populated with hybrid-creatures, mythic architecture and machines. Working primarily in watercolor, Richards paintings are saturated in rich colors and jewel tones. His human-animal hybrids lead elaborate space battles, engage in fantastic stage performances, and simply contemplate the vastness of space. Richards is a professional artist with special needs who has worked from one of the ECF Art Centers for over twenty-five years. ECF Art Centers is an adult program of Exceptional Children's Foundation, a LA based nonprofit organization that provides services to adults and children with developmental disabilities.

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Lorna Ritz

Amherst, MA

Ritz is a recurrent thyroid and spine cancer patient, which has left her with permanent nerve damage in her left leg. Her focus as a painter has always been about creating space through color relationships. Her paintings are earthy, rock-like and weighty, and yet they have in them the rhythm of the sea. She is a nature painter, coupling what she sees with her own internal landscape. "I never give up, no matter how my body behaves. I keep my spirit strong and uplifted. Nature is my inspiration and always teaches me how to see anew. I always look forward to what a new painting is yet to come".

Maxine Rosen

Narberth, PA

Though a preschool teacher throughout her career, art was always Rosen's passion. She originally worked in ceramics. Being mostly self taught, Rosen feels this allowed her a certain freedom of expression from expectation. Many of her ceramic pieces are playful with ideas coming from the "art of living". Often she will add another element combining ceramics with another material. Three years prior to her retirement, Rosen started classes in collage. Her pieces reflect her love of texture and design. Some pieces are abstract and some are images in her imagination or drawn from travels. Paint, found papers, objects or her own painted papers find their way into her pieces. Rosen says that art is her outlet and fills her need to be creative. With her hearing disability, it is something she can do alone and without distraction.

Rick Ruark

Pittsburgh, PA

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

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Maria Sammartino

Riverton, NJ

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

Carla Schaeffer

Phoenixville, PA

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

Alexander Schutt

Princeton, NJ

Schutt is a nonverbal autistic painter. His paintings are acrylic pouring on canvas. Sometimes the paint is a half inch deep and can take a week to dry. He has a vision of texture, of how the paint feels in large quantities, of how to knit color together with his paintbrush. Sometimes Schutt will wipe a canvas clean and start over. Sometimes he selects an old painted canvas to cover with a new palette. The strata of colors on the side of the canvas is a visual history of the work he has done. We no longer see the plain or the beautiful. And both probably exist underneath. We come away seeing hours of work, immersed in the now, immersed in the process of painting. Artist statement provided by Barbara Di Lorenzo

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Erika Schwarz

Watertown, MA

Schwarz has a background involved with natural sciences, especially evolutionary biology. She says no specific art medium matters to her, other than what is necessary to convey a particular idea. The ideas Schwarz wishes to convey involve the dovetailing issues facing the environment and her personal experience of autism spectrum disorder. She believes that very generally speaking, for several decades now, both have been misunderstood, dismissed, not immediately financially justifying their existence. Schwarz feels both require a voice to champion their importance above the invisible and unimportant, gradually.

Jacqueline Scott

Philadelphia, PA

Scott is from North Philadelphia and has lived at Inglis for 20 years. She has always loved art and her favorite medium is pencil drawing. She says "being at Inglis House gives many opportunities to explore and express yourself. Once you're able to do that, you can relate to other people, release your inner feelings and capabilities and find other people you can share common interest with." Scott has been involved with the Exploring Art group for almost 4 years.

Nancy Search

Dallas, PA

Search attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio on Wednesday evenings. The studio is an arts apprenticeship which taps into the energy of people with special needs. Search loves working with color pencils and creates her own unique style of artwork with circles and lines. She is very focused and relaxed when she creates. Search has created bright, unique silk scarves and has a great sense of color and design. She has been exhibiting her work for a few years.

Nora Seekins

Great Falls, MT

In 1968 Seekins was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis. Her prognosis back then was pretty dismal. She says though that by the grace of God, prayer, medication and biofeedback, she now has relapsing/remitting MS at the present time. Seekins works with acrylic, oil, wax, sand and pencil using brushes, towels, her fingers and glue. Her favorite subjects are animals, fish, flowers and humans. Seekins says, "Art swallows all my anxieties and

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sanctions serenity. My influences and inspirations are the benignities and gentleness of the magical human beings God created. The delicate details of animals, fish, plants and earth elements humble and overwhelm me.” Her favorite quote is; “ If you lie down, the coyotes will eat you.”

Christine Severson

Richmond, VA

Severson, a nurse, suffered a life-changing event in the late 1970s while transferring a quadriplegic patient into a wheel chair. She incurred significant damage to her spinal cord, which continues to limit her mobility and left her with chronic pain. Severson still managed to raise two daughters and now creating has become her passion. It provides her with a sense of pride and purpose. Severson works on her jewelry during the day and on her baskets in the evening. Her work is done from a semi-reclining position wearing 2 elbow and a wrist splints. The material she works with needs to be lightweight. Weaving jewelry was the perfect fit along with pine needles for her baskets. Severson believes that creating has changed her from viewing herself as a patient to viewing herself as an artisan.

Amy Smith

North Wales, PA

Smith always wanted to be an artist. In 2016 she began to paint in earnest and has since changed careers. Smith paints using water-soluble oils and acrylics on stretched canvas because she loves to mix color and experiment with texture. Smith tries to express emotion using nature inspired themes, with trees being a favorite subject. In 2009, Smith was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis at age 28. In the ensuing 9 years, she has suffered several relapses that left permanent disabilities impacting her vision and hand strength. Smith believes art offers serenity with she needs it most, helping her navigate a multitude of emotions triggered by the difficulties of living with MS. “An age is called dark not because the light fails to shine, but because people refuse to see it.” - James Michener

Ken Smith

Riverside, WA

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

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papers. Smith also works in mixed-media. Smith says that the study of making art and what he as an artist puts into his art, is an ongoing education. It also reflects on his walking disability, encourages patience, and the understanding of how to find beauty in the commonplace. Smith is inspired by a quote for Anselm Kiefer: “Art is longing. You never arrive, but you keep going in the hope that you will.”

Nancy Smith

Santa Monica, CA

Smith started sewing when she was ten years old. She didn't have the same means of communication as the other kids, the creation of something physical, visual became her voice. She had an innate affinity to the tactile nature of things and a great sense of color. Smith wants materials to be appreciated, as they come with a history and traits of their own. She will combine anything that works. Store-bought fabric or alley trash, it doesn't make a difference to her. In the end, she sees them as all threads and she will use their character to make her world. Ann Bancroft told her, “Talk in a deep voice ... they will listen.”

Eugene Soh

Singapore, Singapore

When Soh was 15 years old he needed to undergo a major operation to remove a blockage in his spinal cord. Thereafter he was using a wheelchair to move around. For Soh, disabled does not mean unable. He completed his BS degree in Mathematics. He is married and enjoys painting during his free time. To Soh, art is everywhere. The depository of his travel memories with his wife and expression of his deep faith in God are the mainstay of his artist inspirations. Soh often challenges himself to create different sizes of oil or acrylic paintings. Though his hands are abled, doing large pieces of art like 18X20, can be quite difficult. He says it is a test of his patience and endurance.

Oranit Solomonov

Philadelphia, PA

Solomonov is an Israeli born artist living and working in Philadelphia. Her work has been featured in regional and national exhibits and is held in private collections around the world. Working on paper and canvas, her colorful art focuses on the things that bring joy to her life and to others, including animals and nature, modes of transportation, different types of people, and her Jewish heritage. Because of Solomonov's disabilities and language

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barrier, she is often reserved, so her artwork allows her to make connections with people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities. When asked why she makes her work, Solomonov beams with pride; “When I draw I'm smiling. Colors make me happy. I like to draw things that move people. I care about people. I like to make them happy with my pictures.”

Carol Spiker

Wilmington, DE

Spiker's early career was in graphic arts. While raising children, she dove into volunteer projects and took up running. Those lonely long distance runs brought her clarity and in the late '80s she returned to school to study painting. She fell in love with the 1950's Bay Area figurative painters, expressionistic and anonymous. Her figures come from memory and she loves the smell and the serendipitous discovery that comes with painting with oils. In 1998, Spiker was thrown into a creek, when her car was hit on I-95. She realized immediately that she was paralyzed. “Thank God, I have my hands.” Art had become a driving force in my life before my accident. The accident sharpened this focus. And through her painting, she found courage.

William Spiker

Wilmington, DE

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

Eric Stampfli

Danville, CA

Stampfli began making photographs more as a necessity than any grand experiment in creating art. He says going back as far as he can remember, he has always seen pictures in his head. At first, ill formed, fragments of a dreams that one tries to remember, motivated him. Photography became the tool he used to give definition to and make real those images. This is how Stampfli learned photography. It was alone in a studio learning to trust and

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ultimately reproduce the images he saw. It was there, while learning his craft, Stampfli discovered how to tell stories with his photographs and discovered that this medium is far from just a visual one. He believes that if he is successful in incorporating the other senses, the viewer can experience his work rather than just see it.

Siddhartha Sankar Sukla

Cuttack, India

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

Sriharsha Sukla

Cuttack, India

Sriharsha Sukla was born with hearing impairment. He says he has not let his disability dampen his desire for a full life. Sukla credits his mother for her encouragement and inspiration to pursue his artwork. He also feels he has received a tremendous amount of support from his community and patrons, both nationally and internationally. Sukla works in both oil and watercolors but his specialty is in collage work. His hope is that his work creates enjoyment for all who view it.

David Terrar

Gaithersburg, MD

Terrar survived a heart attack. The attending medical team politely referred to the phenomenon of the “Golden Hour”, the last hour of life. During the recovery, Terrar observed the mysterious last hour of daylight, “The Golden Hour” color shift. Challenged to imitate the golden glow in his landscapes, Terrar uses metal-leaf, gold leaf, patinas, oil and other mixed media in a unique technique. During the mid-19th century, the Luminist style emerged to address the magical glowing effects of light. Terrar is a Neo-Luminist painter. “I love the various light effects of Maryland's Chesapeake Bay region. I find there is a

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spiritual connection by painting plein air landscapes in the marshes, swamps, wet lands, and watermen's workboats and their struggle to make a living.”

Katerina Theodosiou

Paphos, Greece

Theodosiou defines herself as a multidisciplinary artist who loves working with any form of art. Her work is mainly mixed media illustrations done with markers, pencil, ink and water colors on paper. Theodosiou explores themes of feelings and personal struggles, usually the tension between inner emotions and their outer expression. Mythology and folk tales from around the world also provide inspiration for her to create some of her figurative, detailed, graphic like works. She says that art has always been a way of expression and now with her disability being so present in her life, it is a way of exercising her inner demons and coming to terms with her condition. Theodosiou has always been inspired by a quote from Frida Kahlo, “I don't paint dreams or nightmares, I paint my own reality.”

Max Tzinman

New York, NY

Tzinman's work asks us to contemplate: What drives this willingness to surrender individual truth, this willingness to accept the myth making all around us? Can we hold on to our individual humanity in the face of this drift towards conformity? His images explore groupthink and the dangerous anonymity that accompanies the comfort of merging with the crowd. Tzinman's process starts digitally, in two or three dimensions/dioramas. He then adds layers of mixed media (acrylic, oil, collage, metal) to create still structures, moving images, light and sound. Tzinman was born in Romania and has been hearing impaired since birth.

Michael Vita

Phoenix, MD

In 2016, Vita joined Make Studio, a community-based arts organization located in Baltimore, with the mission of providing multi-modal arts programming to individuals with disabilities. He was initially focused on creating sculptural objects out of recyclable containers and all sorts of tape. Soon he became acquainted with watercolors and acrylics, reaching beyond colored pencils and markers. Vita likes variation in surface choices for his projects, reflecting his easy-going demeanor and curiosity. He identifies as having Down

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Syndrome and uses his art to have fun and be creative. Michael enjoys making art about and quoting some of his favorite movies that inspire him. So “who you gonna call” when you need some good artwork? Definitely Michael!

Andrea Walls

Philadelphia, PA

Walls is a widely recognized poet, photographer and digital artist. She says that photography, in particular, is a reason to move out into the world. To look and see it all: the pain, the beauty, and the complexity. She is inspired by a quote from Frida Kahlo; “... we are headed toward ourselves, through millions of stone beings - of bird beings - of star beings - of microbe beings - of fountain beings towards ourselves.” Walls believes that the pursuit of the next exquisite image is inspiration to solve the problems presented by her physical limitations and to push past the depression that comes from processing a chronic condition. She feels that art is truly the best medicine.

Jimmy Wancowicz

White Hall, MD

Wancowicz joined Make Studio in 2017. He has enjoyed creating art since he was very young and has a particular fondness for drawing aquatic life such as whales, dolphins and sharks. He also uses characters from TV and movies in his work as well. Much of Wancowicz's inspiration is derived from his visits to Sea World in Orlando, San Diego, and San Antonio, as well as weekly visits to the National Aquarium. He likes to experiment with many 2D mediums from watercolors to colored pencils. Art has given Wancowicz a platform to share his interest with others.

Joyce Washington

Philadelphia, PA

Washington came to Inglis House in 2012 and is 64 years old. She enjoys many activities at Inglis House including the Exploring Art group, trivia, music and theater. Washington loves all forms of art but admits that painting is her favorite. She is a wonderful artist and enjoys the use of bright vibrant color.

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Selena Waters

Dallas, PA

Waters attends the Verve Vertu Art Studio one day a week. The studio is an arts apprenticeship which taps into the energy of people with special needs. Waters is a talented woman with Down Syndrome. She has always been artistically driven. She has a great eye for color and design. Creating t-shirts, wool felted wallets, silk scarves and other wearable art is instinctive to her. Waters incorporates her love of horses into her artwork. She enjoys all aspects of the creative process from beginning to end. Photography is a new interest of hers which she is hoping to expand on in the future.

Kurt Weston

Mission Viejo, CA

As a legally blind photographer, Weston has overcome the barriers, obstacles and challenges of producing and exhibiting his art. His experimental photographs and alternative image capture process generates new views and perspectives which recontextualize for both the sighted and the blind the very nature of seeing. In 1991, Weston was diagnosed with AIDS and in 1996 became legally blind due to a related condition. His limited visual acuity permits him to see the world much like it appears in an impressionist painting. Weston's disability has transformed his work and has provided him the opportunity to act as a political and social practitioner. Being disabled in society lends him a perspective on the specific human experiences of marginalization, exclusion and forms of oppression.

Rose Wolfe

Lawton, MI

Though Myotonic Dystrophy may define Wolfe's physical limitations, it does not define her. She believes the struggles integral to life in a wheelchair have helped her to discover her passions; encouraging others to live with hope, expressing herself through the magic of oil painting and writing about her experiences. Wolfe's subjects include all genres with the goal of expressing underlying emotions. Painting helps her feel productive and creative. Wolfe wants to share her art with others, to have them say, "I recognize that feeling." She believes art is the key to finding a way to express the tangled emotions that are part of life, especially a life of the mobility challenged. "When I paint, I am no longer disable, no longer limited, I enter a special place, a time outside of time."

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Robin Wyatt

Winston-Salem, NC

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

Sheryl Yeager

Pittsburgh, PA

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

Kemi Yemi-Ese

Austin, TX

Yemi-Ese is a visual artist that creates using oil paint. She is inspired by the impressionistic approach in the form of portraits and landscapes. Following a car accident in 2006, Yemi-Ese became paralyzed and requires a wheelchair for mobility. Her art reflects the struggles and triumphs that living with a disability entail through imagery that is relatable. Her artwork is also thoughtful and often challenges representations of mobility, beauty, race, and divinity. Yemi-Ese is motivated by the words of Marianne Williamson - "We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us... As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others". These words inspire her art and she hopes to encourage others towards the therapeutic benefits of art.

2018 Artist Statements – Please review instructions on page 1 and confirm on your Call for Entry application if we are reusing your artist statement or if you are choosing to write a new one. If you were not a participating artist in 2018, you need to submit a statement.

Jacquie Young

Philadelphia, PA

Formally a portrait photographer trained in film, a speed bump better known as Multiple Sclerosis changed Young's photographic journey. When returning to photography, she needed to brush up on today's digital technology. Although Young hasn't found one genre that she prefers, photographing in the unseen infrared light spectrum displays the sense of Surrealism, feeling as surreal as her diagnosis of MS. Her fascination of the “left behind” comes from curiosity and depression related to her MS. Young's impressionism photographs are created with the technique ICM- intentional camera movement. The Art of Blur through ICM portrays her emotion instability due to MS. She is inspired by a quote from Kurt Vonnegut, “To practice any art, no matter how well or badly, is a way to make your soul grow. So do it.”

Anthony Zaremba

Whiting, NJ

Zaremba's art and finished watercolors appear not as finely detailed but are loose and free. He feels he has created a new style of painting that has an abstract look. His subject matter reflects the things he loves in life, people, music, sports and dance. Living with Multiple Sclerosis for over 30 years, Zaremba has constantly learned to adapt to change. Naturally right handed, he was able to train his left hand to take over the primary duties when his MS progression significantly limited his right hand's functionality. Zaremba says, “ What makes me come alive and forget my disability is challenging my creative ability and thanks to art, I really like who I am today”.

Leslie Zukor

Mercer Island, WA

A street photographer, Zukor reveals the extraordinary in quotidian scenes. She takes delight in crosswalks, un-posed subjects, city backdrops, and is hyperaware of light and shadow. “Be your own hero,” motivates Zukor. She feels that in today's society, we often expect someone superhuman to save us. Zukor retorts, “Don't wait for anyone to fulfill your dreams or artistic vision.” As a person born with visual disabilities, Zukor was 28 when she was diagnosed with diplopia, exotropia, and almost nonexistent depth perception. Even after 22 months of vision therapy, her depth perception varies by the week, the day, and even by the hour. With her visual disabilities, Zukor's work looks very different at different times. Sometimes, objects appear close together; other times, distance is exaggerated. Nevertheless, she persists.