

COLLECT ART

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◀ Sam Haynes | Stellar



*The position of the artist is humble.
He is essentially a channel, Piet Mondrian.*

Through the tall glass doors, the galleries are silent. The light on each painting is focused and gentle and brings the work to life – These paintings with colors like sunsets and colors like water. You sit on a bench and allow yourself to let the world fall away. You allow yourself to look at this painting until you notice how the colors fold into each other, and where the brushstrokes meet until this painting feels like its own small world. In this very moment we tend to think, or at least fear, that creator encourages creativity. Each creative artist is an inner youngster and prone to childish thinking. The heart of it is a mystical universe, some kind of system, which tells us from their creations.

Please, consider reading each line of the magazine, as you can find a writer and a poem of hers as a pause from the universe of creation.

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C O N T E N T

**Sam Heydt
Helen Grundy
Roger Monteiro
Irina Safronova
Dionne Hood
Jes Chatwin
Jenette Coldrick Morrell
Mariken Heijwegen
Zita Vilutyte
Kiki Klimt
Freya Magenta
Josh Hollingshead
Ania Duldiier
Laura Cantor
Joy Miso x Jessica Zug
Andri Iona
Ilia Ramishvili
Lorraine Cleary
Lucrezia Costa
Sam Haynes
Jiageng Lin
Joas Nebe
Lavoslava Benčić
Patrícia Abreu
Jonathan Smith
Dawn Gaietto
Alice Joy Webb
Samira DEBBAH
Sara Twomey
Larry Wolf
Paul Butterworth
Larry Graeber
Cecilia Martinez
Yujie Li
Mouli Paul
Monica Esgueva
Bobbi Matheson**



SAM HEYDT

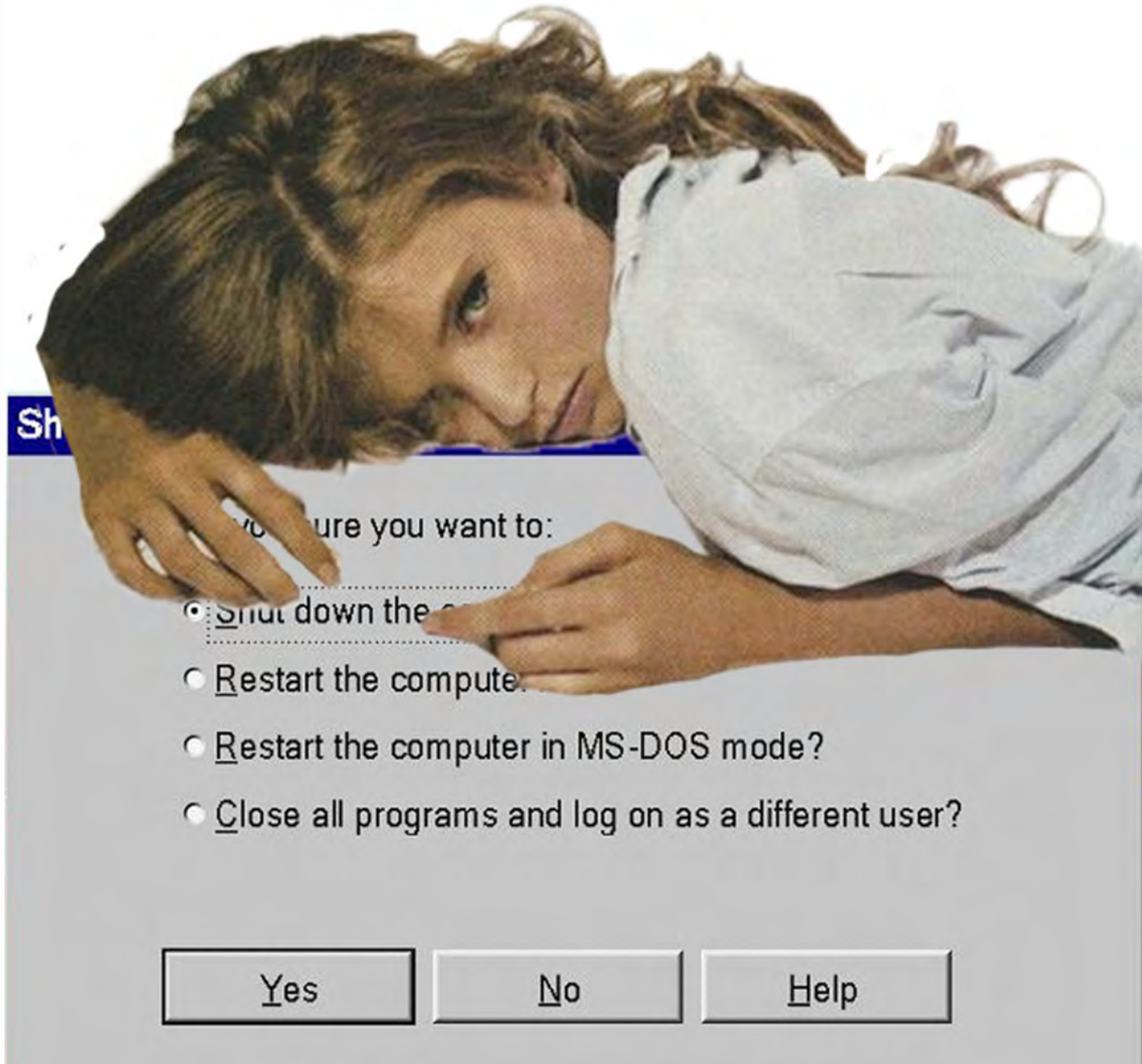
Sam Heydt is an American social practice and recycled media artist born and raised in New York City. Although currently residing in Vienna, Heydt has lived/worked in Paris, Venice, Amsterdam, Athens, Buenos Aires, Sydney, Reykjavík, and Rajasthan. Her academic career traversed Parsons School of Design, The New School, Cooper Union, University of Amsterdam, Universidad of Buenos Aires, and La Sorbonne. In 2012, Heydt launched Jane Street Studio, L.L.C. in Manhattan. Since its establishment, the photo studio has broadened its performance to provide both design and marketing consultation in addition to art direction. Its growing roster of clients spans Europe, North & South America, Asia, and Oceania.

In addition to this entrepreneurial undertaking, Heydt has attended artist residencies in Iceland, Australia, and New Zealand; where she has documented different forms of environmental exploitation.



A published author, producer, and lifelong activist, Heydt has undertaken charitable, non-profit work. Her art, anchored in social advocacy, attempts to give a voice to the veiled, forgotten, exiled, and silenced.

In her practice, she works across a spectrum of different media- film, video, installation, photography, sculpture, sound, merchandising, text — and employs a range of materials often reinventing or trespassing their associative use. Heydts' vision looks beyond the ordinary. Esteemed as one of the pioneers of the recycled media movement, Heydt's work has been shown in galleries, museums, art fairs, and film festivals worldwide.



The edge is closer than we think, but illusion won't free us from reality, even as the sustained narrative of tabloids becomes history and the myth of progress continues to perpetuate inequality. As the natural world is liquidated and substituted with an artificial one, public discourse is being defined by even narrower bandwidths. While social processes defy the logic of individualism in global capitalism, the underbelly of profitability fueling globalization emerges as exploitation. In a time marked by a mass extinction, product fetishism, diminishing resources, and patented seeds, we find ourselves in a world exploited beyond use, a world increasingly reduced to a bottom line. Concerns that are drowned out by the white noise of the media and the empty promises it proposes for the future it truncates. Working across different media- film, video, installation, photography, sculpture, sound, and text, Heydt presents an abstract proposition for a world on the periphery of history, one that not only appears haunted by the ghosts of the past but built on it. Heydt's layered imagery conflate time and place, colliding and merging generations of possibilities, and disrupting logical relationships between occurrences. Combining images of destruction with portrayals of the virtues born from the American Dream, Heydt confronts the disillusionment of our time with the ecological and existential nightmare it is responsible for.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

My interest in art was sparked at an early age by my father, who himself is a painter. Aspects of his influence can be seen in my work, despite the divergence in our subject matter: his watercolors build on the aesthetic tradition of portraiture, whereas my work embraces the satirical and nonsensical aesthetic of Dada underpinning it with conceptual and political discourses.

Who are your biggest influences?

Although a Warholian at heart, as a child I was inspired by Tamara de Lempicka and Egon Schiele, as well as Fauvist painters like Matisse whose bold palette has since informed the way I work with color. Robert Capa's kinetic documentary work and the different approaches taken by Diane Arbus and Richard Avedon to portraiture have definitely made their mark. My friend Edward Burtynsky's monumental depictions of man's intervention in nature have undoubtedly been influential in the direction I've taken my work. Other notable players include Deborah Roberts, Adrian Piper, Urs Fischer, Tom Deininger, Guerrilla girls, John Baldessari, Barbara Kruger Hannah Hoch, Kurt Schwitters, Rauschenberg, Richard Hamilton, Jacques Villeglé, Katrien de Blauwer and John Stezaker.

What inspires you?

Collage and direct animation film both placate my proclivity for fragmentation, amalgamation, diss/association, and up/recycling. I have this urge to destroy, to tear apart ... a kind of transgression I amend through the resuscitation of its residual resurrected with new meaning, context, and intention. The unpredictable construction of images and sequences born out of disorder and spontaneity is of primary interest. Anything with a history attracts me, as though its dated content and visible signs of wear enucleates the passage of time, yielding an unfinished narrative begging to be interpreted, untangled, dilated.



What does your work aim to say?

My work aims to present the problematics of a world exploited beyond use and increasingly reduced to a bottom line, one marked by a mass extinction, diminishing resources, and product fetishism. The layering of imagery definitive of my work aspires to conflate time with the place and disrupt logical relationships between occurrences. Combining images of destruction with portrayals born from the American Dream, the disillusionment of our time is confronted with the ecological and existential nightmare it is responsible for.



What does generosity mean to you as an artist?

There is no divergence in the definition:
gen·er·os·i·ty /,jenərəsədē/

noun

1. The quality of being kind and generous.

That said, 15% of proceeds from the gallery are donated to World Wildlife Foundation. I have engaged in climate activism for decades and have done extensive volunteer work in orphanages throughout India.

What themes do you pursue?

My work often speaks to entropy, the exploitation of nature, and our complacency in the face of catastrophe. Through a myriad of mediums and technical approaches, my work aims to convey the different phenomenologies of our increasingly fractured social landscape. It sheds light on the material inequalities of a world exploited beyond use and increasingly reduced to a bottom line, one marked by mass extinction, product fetishism, diminishing resources, and patented seeds. The uncertainties and inevitabilities of which are drowned out by the white noise of the media and the empty promises it proposes for the future it truncates. Regardless of its form, my work always tells the same story: the story of what it is to be humans. It speaks to lose- in inevitable yet uncertain terms.



What does your art mean to you?

Art is a product of lived experiences, it is a form of socio-political activism and an expression of the human condition. It is both a reaction to and a reflection of society at large.

What is the role of an artist in society?

An artist's role in society is to hold a broken mirror up to it.

How do you work?

I don't have a consistent process per se- I just create and the ideas come, or the ideas come and I create. It's a chicken and egg scenario. I try to amass as much material as possible and take it from there. Also, I tend to work on several pieces at a time jumping from one medium to the next.

What do you like/dislike about the art world?

The art world is not one of gender parity. Making it as an artist is difficult as is, making it as a female artist whose art form isn't shedding her attire is another animal. One has to be resilient in the face of resistance. Significantly under-representation in galleries and art fairs, females make up only a small share of the art market and tend to sell for significantly less. The illusion that this gender bias is bygone is just that- an illusion, with women accounting for only two percent of sales in the art market last year. This disparity is particularly flagrant when one considers the impact women have had on art history. As the Guerrilla Girls famously pointed out, "less than % of the artist in the Modern Art Sections are women, but 85% of the nudes are female". So despite institutional attempts at affirmative action art, as it stands now, a woman's place in the art world still seems predominantly confined to the subject matter rather than a producer of art forms.

What is the hardest part of creating for you?

The hardest part of creating for me is focusing on one piece, as I struggle with maintaining interest in an idea for an extended amount of time.

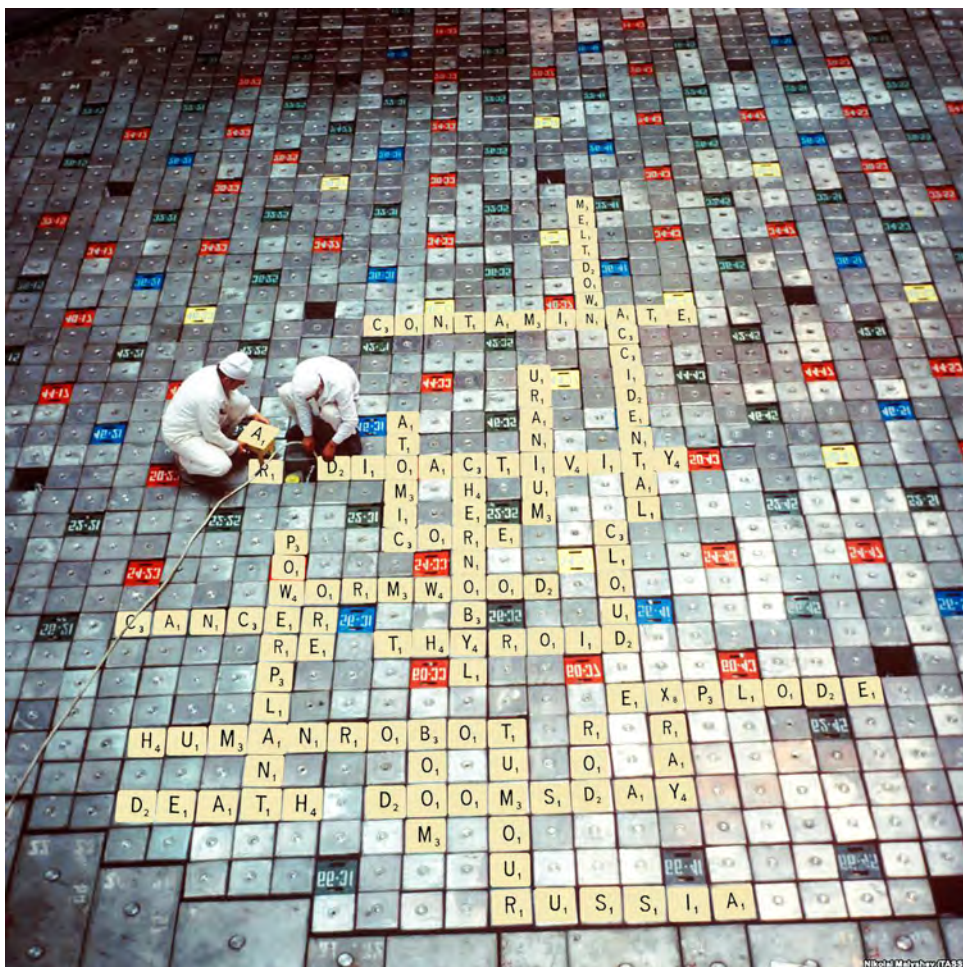
HELEN GRUNDY



Helen is a contemporary fine artist and also works with homeless men and women in her home city of Birmingham, UK.

Helen is an object maker and collage artist. I identify as working class. She works with found objects and collages as she wants her practice to be environmentally sustainable. She thinks of her works as souvenirs from a world that she had created and often uses humor and surreal imagery to explore difficult subjects such as climate change and the relationship between humans and animals.

She exhibits both nationally and internationally. Currently, she has been funded by The Arts Council to develop her practice. She was selected for the CHEAP festival last year and one of her collages was made into a billboard. Helen is currently showing work at New Art Gallery Walsall and has had a piece of work acquired for their permanent collection.



Ditsy Decommission



A series of 3 postcards. The first is of a nuclear power plant and the next 2 show a progression of changes and a simulated decommission. Nuclear power is not safe, toxic waste is produced that has to be disposed of and the landscape and the environment are never the same.

This piece creates a surreal and playful version of a decommission, it is a fantasy. There is a huge need to change the way we generate energy



The Last Can Of Gasoline

The scene was created using an old gasoline can, toy cars, ladders, and barricades that Helen has made and then digitally added collage to the original photograph. The piece shows a vision of a possible future if we do not change our reliance on fossil fuels. Referencing the film, Mad Max and the fight for 'guzzoline', Helen created a scene of people fighting for the last drops of fuel to power the lifestyles they feel cannot live without.



What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

The biggest challenge for me is finding time to make art. I identify as a working-class artist and this means I have to balance work and art. Luckily I have a job that I love. I don't see myself as a commercial artist and I do not put time into selling my work but am always delighted when people buy my pieces. Currently, my pieces are in private and public collections and I am interested in presenting my art to a wider audience, selling more pieces, and becoming a full-time artist in the future.

Professionally, what is your goal?

I want to continue making art for the rest of my life. I want to promote collage as an art form and be experimental. Eventually, I would like to be a full-time artist and I would like to use my practice to promote change in terms of how we relate to the natural world. I would like to see my pieces on billboards used in campaigns for social justice and environmental sustainability. I would like to collaborate with other artists and be selected for interesting residencies. I would like to feel that people who buy my work treasure it.



Planet Of The Cakes

This is a piece made from a second-hand postcard/found object. I have taken the image of a seaside arcade postcard from a beach in the UK and then created a simulated version of the original that shows an abundance and sweetness that is overwhelming. People are being bombarded by sprinkles raining down like a hailstorm. I am referencing the unhealthy aspects of modern culture and how far removed we are from the natural world.

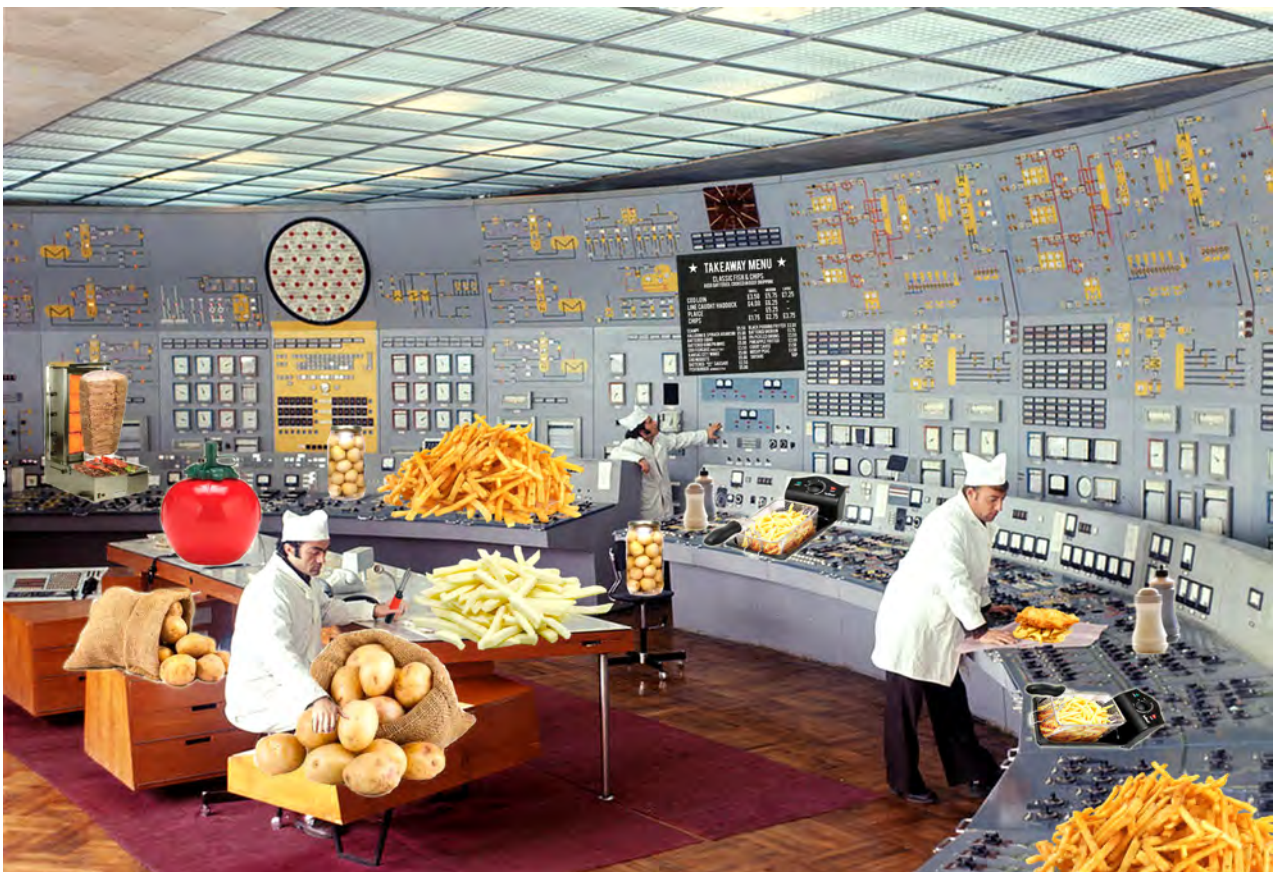
How important are titles for you?

For me, titles are very important and I often have the idea for the title at the very start of the making process. I like to reference popular culture and I like to use humor in my work. I feel the title is a way to draw in an audience. I want my works to be accessible in terms of meaning and intention. I want to break down the barrier that often deters people from going into art galleries or buying a piece of art and having a title that people respond to straight really helps.



What is the role of an artist in society?

For me, being an artist is about having a voice. I want to communicate how I feel about the world and I want to start a discussion. I am passionate about my home city and making it a better place and feel my job and my art practice work side by side to do this. I work with the poorest people in society and often my works are inspired by the conversations I have with them and this grounds my practice. As climate change progresses I do feel artists need to consider the materials they use to make art. Contemporary art should not be exempt from searching questions about environmental sustainability.



ROGER MONTEIRO

Roger Monteiro is a graphic artist born at the end of the 70s in Southern Brazil, where he lives and works. Besides a solid career as an art director and graphic designer in the advertising industry, his story with aesthetical research is deeply attached to the digital means which, besides typography, is his natural habitat.

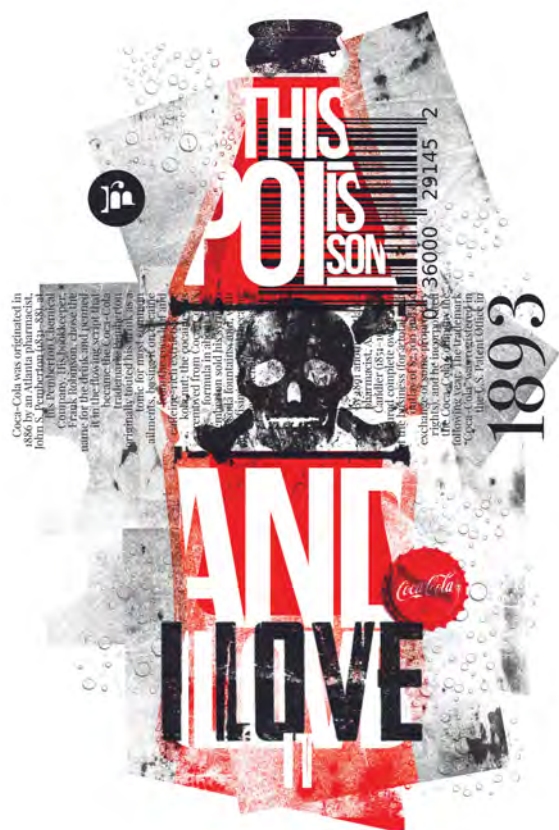
"As an artist, I'm not bounded to aesthetical rules. Pureness of the form bores me. Symmetry makes me sick. I'm an urban soul, therefore, I'm used to distilling beauty from the messy, yet delicate, relations that emerge from chaos. I'm only happy when it's rough. I feel comfortable in the company of the concrete and the asphalt. I see the humanity in the skyscraper that defies gravity and God just to say: we live, therefore we create. The gray areas between our own insignificance and our cocky way to invent a notion of Life interest me very deeply. I like everything that's broken, everything that's fake. Nightmares are just dreams behaving badly. Come bad-dream with me."

Over the last years, Roger had his work published in some magazines and exhibited in Brazil, England, Portugal, and Italy. He's a doubt enthusiast: he believes whenever he's one hundred percent convinced about something, he's not doing his job right.



What does your art represent?

I'm kind of a chaotic poet. I use to say my art is an advocate for everything that's broken, everything that's fake, everything in this everyday jungle fever we live in, we call home. As an artist, I'm not specifically interested in beauty, at least not in the Greek conception of the term. Purenness of form bores me. Symmetry makes me sick. I'm an urban animal, therefore I'm used to distilling beauty from the very messy and delicate relations that emerge from the city. I like the rough, the concrete, the asphalt. I see the humanity in the way a skyscraper defies gravity and God to say: we live, therefore we create. The gray areas between the perception of our insignificance and our cocky way of never surrendering to creating our own misrepresented notion of the world interest me very deeply.



Who are your biggest influences?

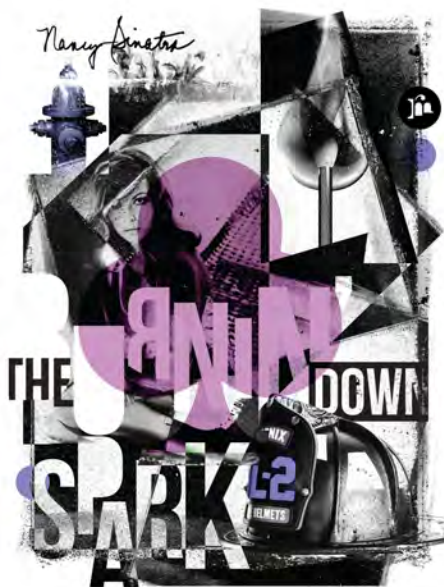
My influences come more from the graphic design universe than from the art one (if you insist on separating one from the other). Having discovered graphics in the middle 90s, I suffered a huge, very deep impact from the work of what I used to call my Holy Trinity: David Carson, Neville Brody, and Stefan Sagmeister. The anarchy, the total despise of any written and non-written rules, the confusion, the freedom, and the power that emerges from their pages let me see, for the first time, that spreading ink over a blank sheet of paper could be like lighting a Molotov, and I always liked to see things burn. That made me want so much to be part of that world, a world where colors and letters matter. Those aesthetics became so ingrained in my vision in such a way that I took a very long time to stop imitating them and finally discover, build, refining my voice to the point I got comfortable presenting myself as an artist.



How do you know when a painting is done?

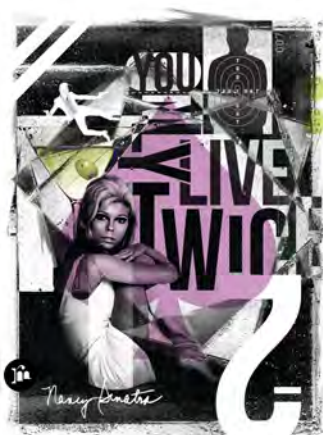
That's a good question. And the answer is very easy: it never is. For the good and for the evil. Especially for a digital artist, like me. On the contrary to paint, a draw, sculpture, or any other analog expression, that results in a physical object that once sold, gets lost in the world, for a digital artist as long as the original editable file is available there's always room for a review. For adding something. For removing something. But, mainly, to re-signify something. Those reviews can happen in a shorter or a longer window of time, but they always get to happen. I have contradictory feelings about that. At the same time, is kinda recomforting the possibility

of turning back the time and adjusting the speech contained in an artwork, sometimes I tend to consider such possibility some kind of cheat, some easy way to deceive your own history, to bamboozle the 'yourself' who wanted to say those things first. It may be complicated, but the artwork is definitely never done.



Nancy

"I've always been a big fan of Nancy Sinatra. Despite the picturesque mood of her songs, everything in her image and her genealogical tree, of course, reminds me of a road trip to Las Vegas to waste all my money on the Black Jack table. Quite thrilling. This series is based on the most popular verses of Mrs. Sinatra's songs. Each poster is linked to a different suit of the playing cards deck. Hearts, diamonds, spades, and clubs".



What is the role of an artist in society?

It's difficult for me to talk about the role of the artist in society because I think he dialogues more with the individual than any large group. Different from communication, art is something that belongs to the universe of the subjective and the variety of interpretations of the same work tends to be inexhaustible, and is very good to be that way. So, the role of the artist - and for extension, the role of the art itself - is multiple and, sometimes, even contradictory since the impact of artwork on each individual may cause or push him to act this or that way, according to his background, cultural context, personal beliefs, and other circumstances. The moment I release a new image, my intentions stop matter, they stop being relevant and I start to have no control over the things that job might trigger on people. The same composition may represent a peaceful place to somebody hiding in as may cause, to some other person, profound restlessness and suffering. And all this comes from the same childhood memories I put on the screen. If art is not collective, its role and the artist's role are also not collective. I see art more like a confession than a lecture.



IRINA SAFRONOVA

Irina Safronova, aka, Palirina is a Belarussian artist whose works are created spontaneously as a way to express the emotions that drive her at that particular moment. Paints from liquid abstractions are later used for a series of other paintings in order to minimize waste and create eco-friendly art.

During her creative process, the artist enters a meditative state in which her hands become an extension of her soul and painting flows freely to become artworks with meanings that remain open for the viewer to feel and find.

Irina creates artworks in mixed media, giving second life to junk materials.

"As a professional aesthetic stylist, I strive for beauty and harmony in my paintings, transferring my emotions and fundamental stylistic knowledge onto canvas."

"As an environmentalist, I strive to minimize paint waste, using so-called waste-free technology. I also use cotton canvases and eco-friendly materials. I give a second life to used materials in mixed media paintings."

"Charity, in my opinion, is very important for the artist, because his art stops being selfish and goes for good. I participate in charity programs to help children and develop creative projects."

"The source of inspiration for me is color per se, mountains, music, and people, definitely!"

"Eyes"

This artwork is from the series "Artificial Intelligence. Why?"

Big Brother is watching you!

In the future, thousands of eyes will be watching us! It will be impossible to hide from surveillance!

The artwork of mixed technology indicates such a negative aspects of artificial intelligence as round-the-clock surveillance and absolute lack of privacy.

Created with silver enamel spray, texture paste, phone parts, and magazine clippings on acrylic canvas.



What does your art represent?

I'm still looking for my unique authorial style and I work more like Picasso in different periods of his creativity.

But as time goes by, I'm getting more and more aware of what my soul is for! For example, it's black backgrounds, texts, textures, and several pieces in one work.

What are you doing except being an artist?

In addition to being an artist, I am a professional aesthetic stylist. A creator in fashion. Fundamental stylistic knowledge such as a sense of color, form, pattern, and understanding of composition helps me a lot in my work as an artist. My stylistic stories were published in the largest glossy magazine in Belarus.

I also have a degree in environmental studies. And as an environmentalist, I try to minimize waste paint, using what I call zero-waste technology. I use cotton canvases and environmentally friendly materials. I give a second life to used materials in mixed media paintings.

Philanthropy, in my opinion, is very important for an artist because his art stops being selfish and goes for good. I participate in charity programs to help sick children and contribute to the development of creative projects.

What themes do you pursue?

I like to create projects that are relevant and modern, reflecting trends in society. If these issues are of concern to humanity, how can I pass them by? I get involved in environmental issues and the problems of ageism. I discuss with the viewer, for example, the negative impact of artificial intelligence on people and nature.

Does your work comment on current social or political issues and how?

I often react sharply with my work to social and political topics. It's important for me to convey that to others. This is how a project about social exclusion during Covid-19 came about. And also a project about political repression after the August 2020 elections in Belarus, filled with grief and pain, and experiences.



"Future"

When, in the future, it may be necessary to try hard to find among the wreckage of the planet at least some remnants of life on Earth!

The artist shows his vision of the future. A life where artificial intelligence will eventually deem living things unnecessarily and destroy Planet Earth.

This mixed media artwork is from the project "Artificial Intelligence. Why?" Materials used here include foil, magazine clippings, stencils, and even dried flowers!



"Online sleep"

The artwork is from the series "Artificial Intelligence. Why?"

This mixed media artwork deals with such a negative aspect of the introduction of artificial intelligence as the constant presence of people in virtual reality. People are not conscious, it is as if they are in an endless dream! And this dream is not a happy one at all...

Created with acrylics, spray enamel, magazine clippings, varnish, and chalk on cotton canvas.



DIONNE HOOD



Dionne lives on the edge of the moors in a village just outside Bradford. She's originally trained as a ceramicist at Loughborough College of Art and Design and pursued ceramic sculpture for a number of years after graduation. In the early 2000s due to a number of life changes, including redundancy from teaching ceramics in college and the birth of her son, Dionne gave up ceramics and started making mixed media works. She puts food on the table by working as a Development Librarian which means bringing literature, culture, and creativity to the people of Bradford. Her work is currently a combination of paintings and mixed media relief pieces that combine embroidery, paper clay, precious metal clay, paper, watercolor, ink, and found objects. Each piece is accompanied by a poem as a response to the physical work.



What does your art represent?

I aim to explore the nature of spontaneity and intuition- bringing together different decisions in the making experience which enable the use of emotions, thoughts, and concerns as well as various materials and colour. A colour will stir an emotion. Other colours are made spontaneously (in paint or embroidery), layering colours and placed with other objects - made or found - until a satisfying relationship occurs. Through varying and sometimes conflicting emotional states and often being involved in a completely 'unthinking' activity or state do we as artists permit ourselves to be uncertain. The artwork and poems offer unconnected or connected answers which may or may not offer the possibility of a coherent 'story' - the use of specific objects and physical actions that don't necessarily provide an accessible narrative. I am always looking to go somewhere unexpected.



What is the biggest challenge to you as an artist and how do you address it?

The biggest challenge to being an artist is usually practical - finding time to really make the art - creating the workaround for other parts of my life - spending time with family and working to put food on the table. All I really want to do is make art all the time but obviously, this is not possible. I do try and carve out great chunks of time to create and thankfully my loved ones know and appreciate my need to do this.

What does generosity mean to you as an artist?

Generosity to me as an artist means letting go of the ego - understanding the privilege you have in that you have had the benefit of time and space to develop your art and acknowledging that not everyone has had that opportunity. As an artist, I think it is important to share and create opportunities for others - to give everyone the chance to pursue creativity in whatever way they choose.

What are you doing except being an artist?

I am a development librarian - a job I love. I work in a very diverse city that has high levels of deprivation and poverty but is also one of the most vibrant and culturally exciting cities. The work I do means I get to work with people and communities who may not have had the opportunity to take part in cultural and creative activities and my job means I can in some way bring exciting literature, art, and learning to areas of Bradford, through libraries - the only free safe space for all.



What do you like/dislike about the art world?

After graduating in 1990 I started my life as an artist - I was in a shared studio, I exhibited, I taught in two local colleges - it was what I wanted - it was my ambition. But I slowly started to fall out with the art world - it started when I was made redundant from teaching - it seemed like suddenly art and design weren't important anymore - departments were shrunk or closed down together. Not just the further and higher education courses but the community courses which were so important. There was a fire in the building where my studio was and around that time my personal life changed and I became a mother - I also became disillusioned with the art world so for several reasons, I turned my back on it. I stopped exhibiting - but was always making, just enjoying the act of creating without thinking of exhibiting or showing an audience. In 2019 I decided to do my Master in Visual art and this has prompted me to start exhibiting more regularly again which I approach much more positive now than I used to. I am much less concerned now with fitting into the 'fashion' of what is popular and I am more confident in myself and my work - I still find some aspects of the art world to be elitist and exclusionary but I am much less bothered by it and just love seeing art and spending time with artists.

JES CHATWIN

Love

Speak. Open your mouth.

I'll help. I'll pull it out of you, a rough, scratchy crinoline rope, choke you and make you gag with love, with nothing but care, with all of my affection.

Let it out, dear. Give me frogs, your toads, your scorpions, your cockroaches, I'll watch them crawl out of the depth of your soul, covered in your blood, their callous carcasses carrying up pieces of organic matter gently torn from your insides with unforced violence, and I'll wash them and nurse them in a little cage. A glass aquarium. I'll stuff them all in together and pet the horrendous vermin. For you. All for you.

And when I come back to you, I'll collect you, sobbing residue, you spread over our living floor in a million thin layers. I'll use a spatula to scrape the particles into spirals, assemble you inside a paper cup, yes, and keep you in the freezer. No need for you to suffer. I am here, to suspend you in your dissipated consciousness.

Your pets and I, my pets and you, us and them... we'll watch them grow white, angel white, pure ivory, milky, innocent, righteously alabastrine. We'll sap them of their power, consume their darkness, erode their intensity, deplete, assuage, drain, until your essence is drawn out of them, until they run out of air and become etiolated, pallid, sickly monsters. Purified, petrified, reformed angels. That's how much I'll do for you.

Through creamy clay, I'll shape you into a ghost of yourself, I'll incorporate you into your new existence with shards of your shattered pieces, scattered over every part of your cold body, and I'll wait for you to wake up.

I'll watch you come back to life.

I'll put beads in your eye sockets, and blow life into them with my tongue. I'll lick them to make them wet, I'll prick a hundred little holes into them to give you irises. Wake up. Time to eat.

With a spoon, I'll feed you the feeble creatures. I've given you teeth of steel, sharpened them with your bones that you left me on the floor when you fell apart. Crunch down on these polished, debilitated, translucent inner demons I have trained for you. I am their Master, they wake only when I demand it. Don't pierce their shell too much, for you need to feel their legs moving as they struggle to slide down your throat of sensitized glazed mud.

Open your eyes now. You are free of yourself. Purified. Let's walk together into a pale sunshine, and be each other's fodder. We shall never be hungry, and you shall never be cold.

As for your spirit, left floating in the living room, we can leave it behind. You don't need it anymore.

This I promise you, my phosphorescent ice queen, for I've heard you beg it in your sleep.

I am here, to leave no trace of the person you see at night, the luminous doom of which your dreams tell you in earnest. The whisperings of a black messiah. Yes, that is what's to come.

You won't be here to see it. This, I promise.

JENETTE COLDRICK MORRELL

Jenette Coldrick Morrell has been an Interdisciplinary Artist for over 50 years. Born in Cornwall in 1952, she was inspired by the artists she met as a child, who encouraged her to watch and participate in the creative process. She is working from her studios in Yorkshire and the Midlands. Jenette uses her work to explore her emotions, memory, and the environment and fills her work with the excitement she feels for life. Over the years she has experimented with and embraced many different mediums. Finding simpler ways of working (Spinal stenosis), has enhanced the character of her work.

Many people take great comfort from their fellow man, friends, and family. There is a connection between them, and an environment of security.



What if it is a place not of comfort but of control? In whatever form it takes, a sense of disorder and distrust is created. A shield needs to be constructed to ward against the unpredictability and lurking chaos of the outside world.

"My work forms this shield and the thinking that lies behind it. I use the human form and abstracts as the common denominators of my mental environment. The creation of my work is a way of addressing my attitudes, fears, and my unwritten rules which have that have helped build my armor."

What is your background?

I studied at the Ulster College of Art and Design in Belfast. Outside, bombings shootings, and riots were the norm. Inside was one of the most progressive art establishments in the 1970s. I was lucky to be tutored in a painting by Niel Shawcross and pottery by David Leech.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

I didn't choose to be an artist, I was born with the need to create. The need to escape. When painting, and working in clay and yarns I am in my special place untouched by outside forces.

What does your art represent?

I am painting memory, actions, and emotion. Split-second actions with long-term repercussions. Feel it.



**What is your biggest challenge in being an artist?
How do you address it?**

The biggest challenge as an artist is not my art but my disability. The time I spend with a piece of work is dictated by how long I am able. I have learned not to fight this and adapt. Preparation these days is lying with a laptop on my chest and a Wacom tablet under my right hand.

**What does your
work aim to say?**

Think. Think about who you are and what made you the way you are. Think about how you see the people around you, especially women. Think about why people do the things they do and say. Do people think before they speak?



MARIKEN HEIJWEGEN



Mariken Heijwegen is an artist based in the Netherlands.

After finishing an art school, fashion, and textiles, She was revealed herself around the world as a stylist. After 10 years she does not like the fashion scene anymore and ended up as a teacher of arts in a high school. What she taught the children is that they can express their feelings by making art. And thereby get to know oneself. The road there is more important than the end goal.

"All my work comes from unknown places in my head"

"My passion for painting is my way of expressing my feelings. My hands help me transform my thoughts on the canvas. I often paint on wood because it is a great hard and matte material. I paint heads. An awful lot happens in the head and no one knows, except you, what's going on there. Sometimes it is dark, scary, filled with fears and doubts, obstacles, and everything that is human and for which man is ashamed. I want to break that taboo by telling about it through my work.

All my paintings are self-portraits. Portraits of my feelings in my head. Questions like: why am I feeling like this. What happened to me. My head is burning, electricity and all the ants are walking in my head. So I explained it in my paintings. It is all me. Slowly the paintings are less capricious and less vague. There is slowly coming a person in front of the painting. That person is me. "



What type of art do you make and why?

I don't know what kind of art I make. It goes without saying. I don't choose it consciously. But it contains unrealistic portraits with a mix of hectic surrealism and a touch of realistic emotions.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

Art chose me. I had to express myself during the valley and my creativity told me to paint. I don't call myself an artist because I paint. What I paint doesn't even have to be pretty. The feeling is not often beautiful. The viewer has to say whether I am an artist. Not me, that's arrogant.

What does your work aim to say?

I want to break taboos and thereby normalize mental illness. Everyone thinks having the flu is normal, but people often find something elusive and invisible like mental illnesses scary. I hope that people recognize something in my portraits themselves and that a dialogue arises.





Do you follow any current art trends?

Oh no, absolutely not. Then art is subject to a kind of fashion? What is now much to see is that artists show a kind of trick by imitating Basquiat. A vague figure with some text. And it sells. I think that's such a shame because, in my view, you have to make something out of yourself. That's authenticity.

How do you work?

Really, on my kitchen table. I sometimes paint for hours on and it can also be that I am cooking and I think of a green eye and walk over to my painting to paint a green eye in 3 minutes. All at the kitchen table where the magic begins.



Professionally, what is your goal?

My greatest goal is for all people on Earth to accept each other as they are without judgment and prejudice. Help each other out and listen to what people have to say. It is a dream that my paintings can contribute to this. And of course, I can live from my art which gives me freedom.

ZITA VILUTYTE



Zita Vilutyte is an award-winning painter and printmaker based in Lithuania whose works have been featured in solo exhibitions nationally, as well as in the Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Denmark, North Macedonia, Georgia, Malta, Serbia, Hungary, the United States, etc. Through her art, she explores the relationship between "the sign", its properties, and narratives, allowing viewers to create or reshape their concepts of truth while remaining in the flow.

"We are going through a very exciting, broad, and fundamental time of transformation, where everything is changing, from lifestyle to technology. Although it is a time of great opportunities, it is still full of dangers. Now is the moment when we have to make a decision and become responsible for our own lives, and not just for our own, but our lives in general. For thoughts, words, every action, and everything we do. To think that changes in the consciousness of all mankind will be easy and fast is a utopia. But those who realize - they must act."

Where is the artist's place in this period of change?

Being an artist in today's world requires a lot of effort. Not only is it the duty of the artist to create an original expression, but the artist must also be able to share what has already been created. A constant threat to the artist's authenticity is commercialism, a consumerist society that can easily defeat the artist's spiritual growth and blur the boundary between true live art and dead, stagnant art.

I live in a special country that, after the collapse of communism, has transformed itself into an era of extinguishing capitalism, torn by crises, and fierce competition for production and consumption. The old period has left us with a degraded environment and a sclerotic political culture enslaved by prejudices and interests. Nevertheless, this new period offers great opportunities. Everything changes, today becomes history tomorrow, and our time is now. "



What type of art do you make and why?

There are just different mediums where is possible to express all the same things. For me always was interesting to see the same reflection of the sign or the system of signs, in different stratum at one time. I could test myself if I said true things with my art. And chance, yes, I can say this chance is a sign which I catch and understand that it is for me because at this moment I am ready to go through this sign and possibly to find connections. Because of this, my art can be considered an art of movement.

I can say that the biggest experience which gave me this flexibility is the movement theatre, which I discovered in me first of all. As I started the experiment with my body and consciousness in the process of creation. I have always been interested in this question and I always have the desire to find the way how does it work. So experiments with body movement allowed me to find so many interesting codes which I could use in the process of improvisation. This improvisation got another quality, I learned to dive very deep. What is the meaning of the code? I can say it comes from a desire to find a way of unification, some dialectic of orderliness and creativity, or a never-ending fight between an order and a game.

Each action arises from the need to look for the answers to the questions and from the endless desire to reveal the greatest secrets of life, which are hiding in each of us.

A spectator and a creator are inseparable parts of such a creative process, participants of the process experiencing transformation in its course.

Metaphors are the components of this process. It describes without any explanation, just repeating life. From the unknown and always new spaces which in interaction draw the only and unique image.



What inspires you?

Metaphors are our experience. We perceive the environment through the interchange of information, events, and energy. With the help of metaphor we can join the known and the unknown, to come nearer to the inexhaustible potentiality of creation, to feel the laws of the Universe and harmony in the process of creation. When the creator becomes a part of the process he changes by the laws of the Universe. In the endless dance of vibrations and colors, the interacting elements join into the undivided volatile whole.

Despite the context in which the process of creation exists our consciousness can join it with something yet not experienced. This is a synergetic process during which the intuition creates new combinations and metaforms - ideas, conceptions, objects, notions, and processes thanks to which a new way of solution is found. If something is lost in the form it can be found in the process. The process is a movement; it is a creative course to the new quality forming some more subtle and perfect one.

..the power yours and mine, which comes from love...



"...we can..."

**...there must be a way.
surely there must be a way we
have not yet
thought of.
who put this brain inside me?
it cries
it demands
it says that there is a chance.
it will not say
"no".
(Ch.Bukowski)**



How do you work?

One thing that I got from this wonderful life is my fantastic brain. In the beginning, I couldn't understand that my thinking, perception, and feelings are a little bit different. Later when I studied and got formation in neuroscience, I understood many things about myself. And I got the key to disclose and explain the process of creation.

Synesthesia was a little secret in my brain that I needed to discover to understand better the creative process in my brain. The process itself and the creative movement reflect me as if moving through interpretations and guesswork in a world of cognition. I feel like I'm meditating on very different systems, even where at first glance it may seem like nothing in common. Traveling along this very narrow path that stretches between these systems, I can recognize that underground net that is born between elements belonging to different fields or layers and combined into a common relational field. That multilayered perception is naturally inherent in my thinking, I think it's because of the synesthetic connections in my brain. As I see connections between words and views in a very specific way, as well as the vibration of sound and color I connect naturally. So, in simple words, I can see the words as signs, hear my pictures and see my music, of course not only mine.

There are a lot of artworks of other artists that I hear perfect and so much music which I can see in colors. I discover this during my studies in music college when I was studying lots of music scores and needed to remember all these themes of classical music. My conspectus was full of pictures and I was remembering music not from notes but from my form visualizations. As later I understood that the sign does two very important things - it says and shows. The sign illuminates the object based on many interpretations, and the semiotic power of the sign is the only means that allows us to truly orient ourselves in this complex world. In creation, when language breaks and silence takes place, a language system - other than silence, takes root, which expresses what is often slipped through the eyes in the language of words. So because of this, my creation has so many layers, and different matrixes that are possible to discover when you see and analyze any kind of art - painting or music, sometimes my music is just another layer of the painting.



KIKI KLIMT

Kiki Klimt is a researcher on life. She experimented with many art media. For the last nine years, she returned to the tradition of painting and has been developing a unique way of painting, "Painting with light". She graduated from painting in 1997, finished her master's degree in sculpture, and in 2009 got a doctorate in art. She was a guest professor at many universities and participated in symposiums and conferences. Today she is pro-dean at Arthouse College for Drawing and Painting in Ljubljana. Her works were present in galleries in New York, Berlin, Zagreb, Ljubljana, etc.

"Love is the key: I love Beauty, I love Life, and I have always tried to understand what is hidden in the intertwining of everything that exists, what is this hidden secret. I have been driven by curiosity all my life; my father gave me this gift, and I am infinitely grateful to him for it. He is a poet and an eternal dreamer, and my mother was a tireless researcher and scientist. So maybe that's why I combined the two in my life and became a researcher of dreams called life and the all-encompassing Beauties of Creation. I discovered it was hidden everywhere. So now I am trying to give some of this experience to everyone else through light, color, and geometry."



8

8

6

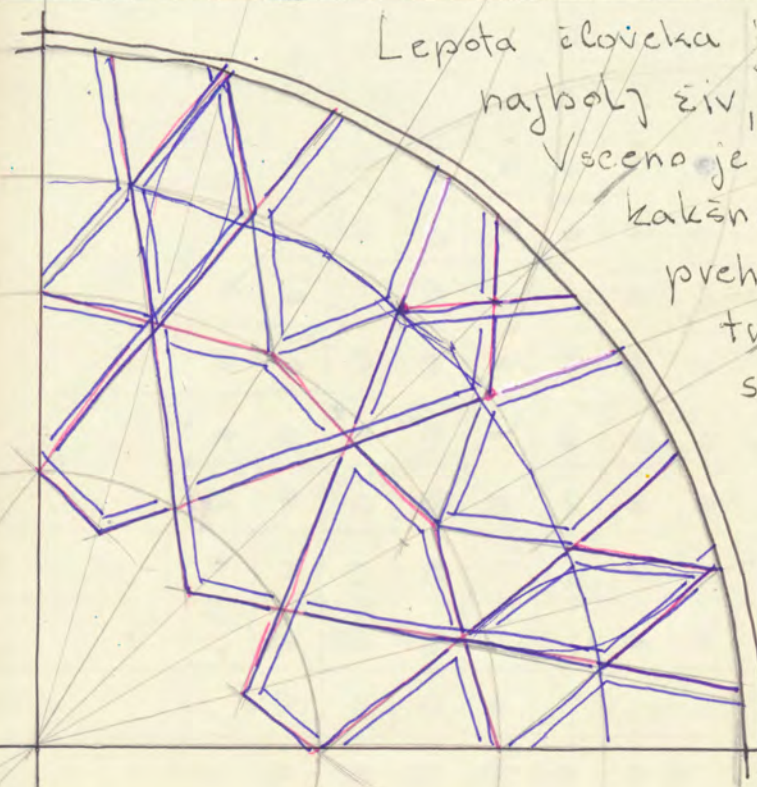
1

ROZG 40 + 2
PO IZBIRI

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Naphth Red							
2	Turner's Yellow							
3	Antique Gold							
4	Ultramarine							
5	Azo Yellow							
6	Titan Bolt							
7	Phthalo Blue							
8	Green Gold							
9	Pyres Green							
10	Turquoise							
11	Purpure							
12	Zink White							
13	Manganese							

Velika slika
7x12 = 84Male slike
7x10 = 70

Vzorec

 4.2 Titan White 4.5 Antique Gold
 4.3 Iridescent W 4.6 Titan W
 4.4 Titan W 4.7 Neaples Yellow


Lepota človeka je v ekstazi. Takrat je najbolj živ, v ekstazi življenja.

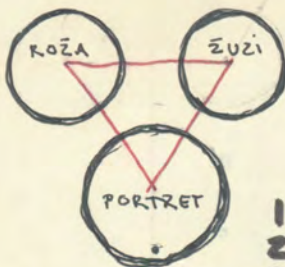
Vseeno je kako je prišel do nje kakšna je bila pot, ki jo je prehodil, da je prišel do trenutka, ko življenje teče skozi njega. Lepota je notranosti njega, v doživljanju življenja v vsej njegovi polnosti in popolnosti. To je edina popolnost, ki jo človek lahko doživi.

DVOJKA

Vsakem portretu zraven še dve slike (cvet in žužek). Nasprotje + in minus, med katerima je človek, ki bi moral biti 0, da bi bil človek.

Temo dobiš z mešanjem barv.

POSTAVITEV



- enakostranični trikotnik
- koti 60°
- ženski na glavo obrnjen trikotnik

PRVA TROJKA

Navedi portret

v treh verzijah.

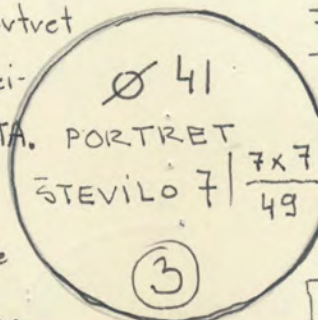
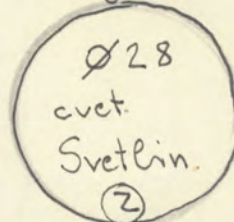
NEŠETA. PORTRET

1) sv-te in nato barve

2) od začetka

gradiš podrobnosti.

3) podrobnosti na začetku in potem megliš.



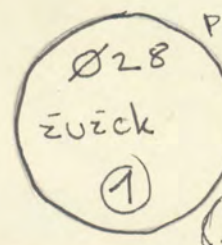
7 RUMENIH

7 x 7

V vsaki seriji se podaja v naslednji številki.

7 x 7

v 4 se ne spremeni

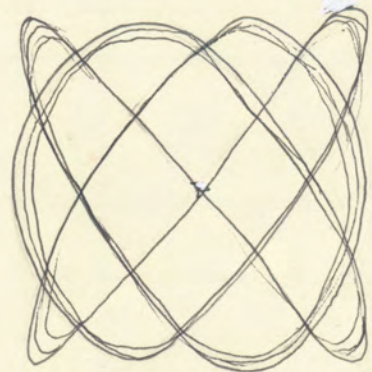
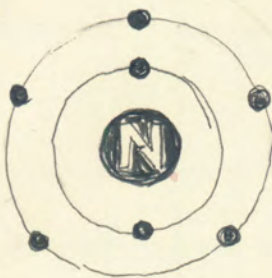
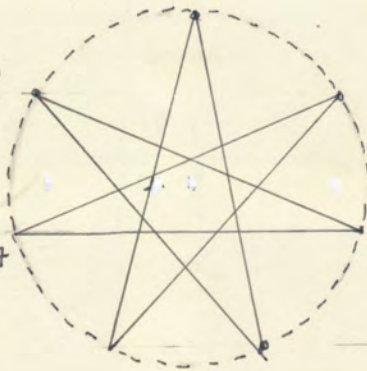
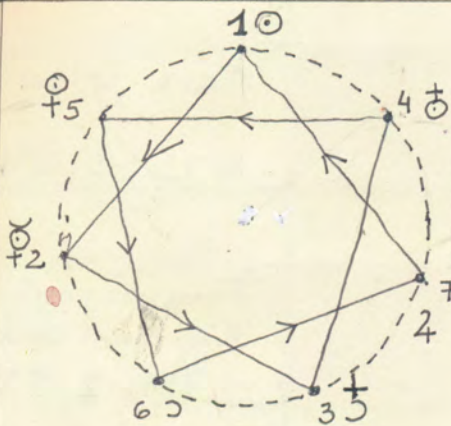
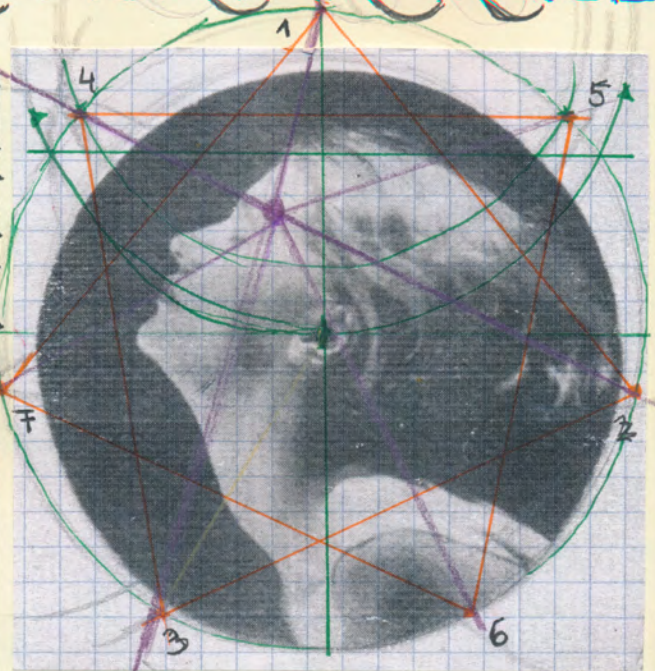


PRESLIKANO Z TEMNO LAZURO (RJAVA + MODRA)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1 Cadmium yellow								Liquitex Cadmium Yellow Light
2 PERL								T. BUFF
3 Titan White Red oxide								
4 Red oxide								
5 Jenkins green								
6 Zink white								
7 Magneze blue								
7 Bizmunt Vanadyl								Liquitex Turner Yellow
6 Titan Buff								Green gold
5 Yellow Ochre								Transparent Y. Iron
4 Raw Siena								Nickel Azoyellow
3 Naples Yellow								
2 Indian Yellow								
1 24 GOLD								

BEAUTY OF THE HUMAN RACE

Svetlin 7	7 kovin	7 planetov
360°:7 = 51'42"	baker.	Venera ♀ 5
Royal cubit 52'37"	zlato	Sonce ☉ 1
52:37:47'63	železo	Mars ♂ 4
UHO V SREDINI	tin	Jupiter ♀ 7
→	svinec	Saturn ♄ 3
ZRELA, ODRASLA	svrebo	Luna ☾ 6
POLNA, ŽENSKA	čisto srebo	Merkur ☿ 2
RAVNOVESJE	BARVE + 7 FRUMENIH	
BALANS	⑥ ZINK WHITE	
Svetloba v zgo-	③ TITAN WHITE	
vrnjem delu,	⑦ MANGANESE BLUE HUE	
spodaj vol,	② PERL	
rdeče, zemeljsko	① NIKEL AZO YELLOW	
	⑤ JENKINS GREEN	
	④ RED OXID ④	



HIMALAJSKI MAK

Modri mak - modra barva

$360^\circ : 12 = 30^\circ$ tri slike maka

sonce

12 barv

4 modre

12
3x4=12

vsakič odzameš

eno barvo

1 modro 1 drugo

1 Naptol Red Light

2 ~~Antique Gold~~

3 Ultramarine Blue

4 Nickel Azo Yellow

5 Titan Buff

6 Phtalo Blue

7 Green Gold

8 Pynce Grey

9 Cobalt Turquoise

10 Dioxazine Purple

11 Zink White

12 Manganese Blue

1 SLIKA

phtalo blue

~~pynce grey~~

2 SLIKA

cobalt Turquoise

~~Red Purple~~

~~pink white~~

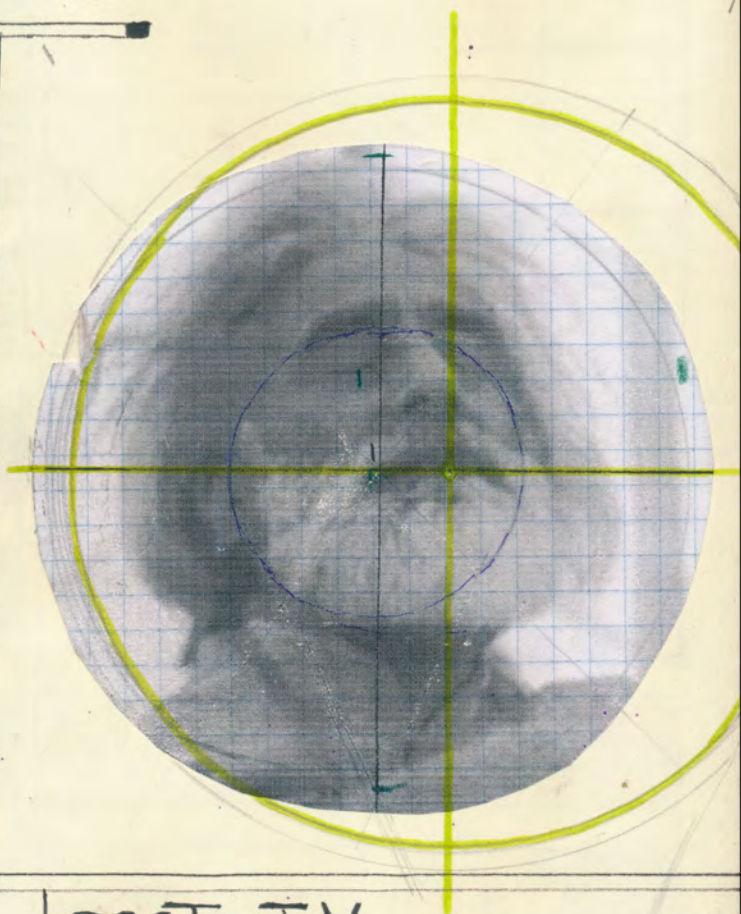
3 SLIKE

Manganese

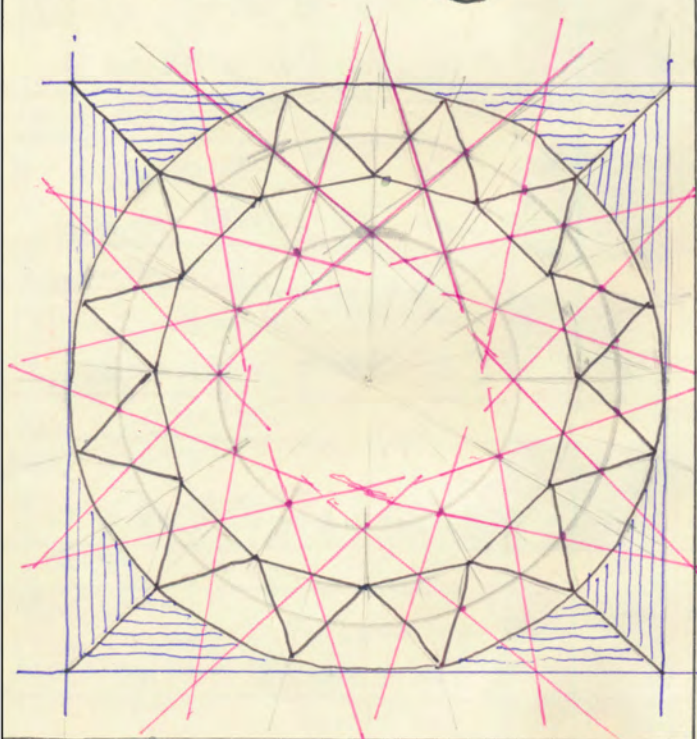
Blue

~~Antique gold~~

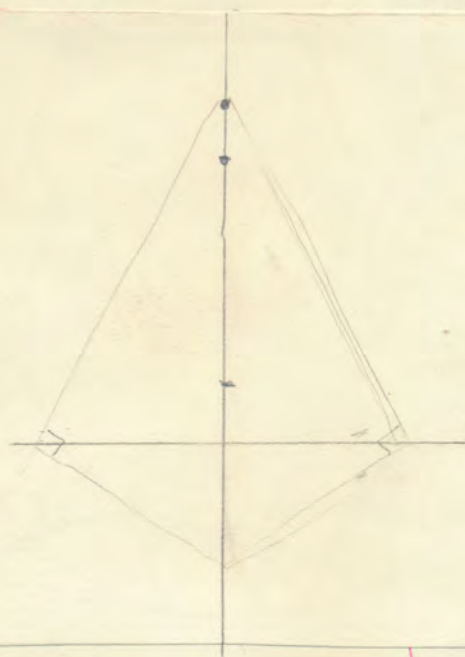
7 Nizov



MAK VZOREC



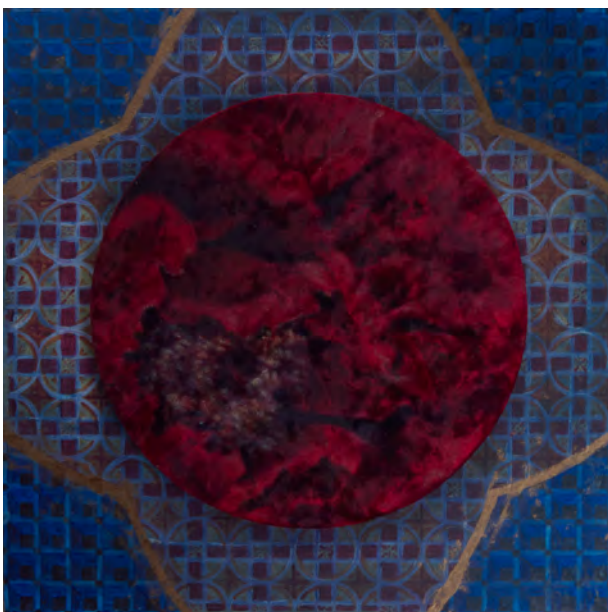
POSTAVITEV



What does your work aim to say?

The beauty of man is in ecstasy. One is most alive in the ecstasy of life. It doesn't matter how one got to it, what was the path walked to get to the point where life flows through one. Beauty is in one's insides, experiencing life in all its fullness. This is the only perfection that man can experience.

My paintings celebrate ecstasy and are painted in the manner of Dionysian art, defined by Nitché, the art that comes from music. This ecstasy art, Dionysianism, and poeticism are eliminated from our lives. Today ecstasy is equated with sin. The truth could not be more opposed. Ecstasy is the opposite of greed or sin. For when the desire for material wealth and experience disappears, ecstasy ensues. All that remains is the Beauty of life.



People today have almost forgotten the spiritual aspect of our existence. This is dangerous. To give the painting a spiritual aspect, I conceive it by considering the sacred geometry and the number seven. Seven harmed a human being. Not only the physical aspect, but we also consider the press and what is hidden in it. Spirit. What we yearn for.



What does your art mean to you?

Art is a journey, not a goal. Painting is a journey, not a destination. Painting is really a game, as each new painting is made in a new way. We can discover the principles of life through images because painting is a game of life - but in the changing game of life, there is only one point of connection with unchanging objectivity. This point is the breath, the dance of air in the body, which triggers the game.

Being an artist means discovering, exploring, and marveling at creation. Every step is entering the unknown. Every time again.

We speak a lot about creativity today. But, to be creative, we must not be afraid. With every step we take, we step into the unknown. On the other hand, there is endless grace here. Discoveries come gradually, like veils that reveal to us the true image of the world.

You never look at things
but behind them - into the void.
You never look at the clouds
but the blue sky behind.
Man sees the sky
only when there are no clouds.
A true artist always sees it,
whether the clouds are here or not.

You never look at an image,
you never watch the vibration,
which it creates
but the emptiness behind them.
Blacklight, emptiness, silence.



The viewer can have the same relationship with the painting, and then the painting tells him about her path to creation. About the path, the artist walked as he discovered, researched, marveled, and understood. Some stories are short, and others never end. We can look at such pictures over and over again, and each time they tell us another, a brand new part of the journey. Therefore, painting is not a goal but a path.



FREYA MAGENTA

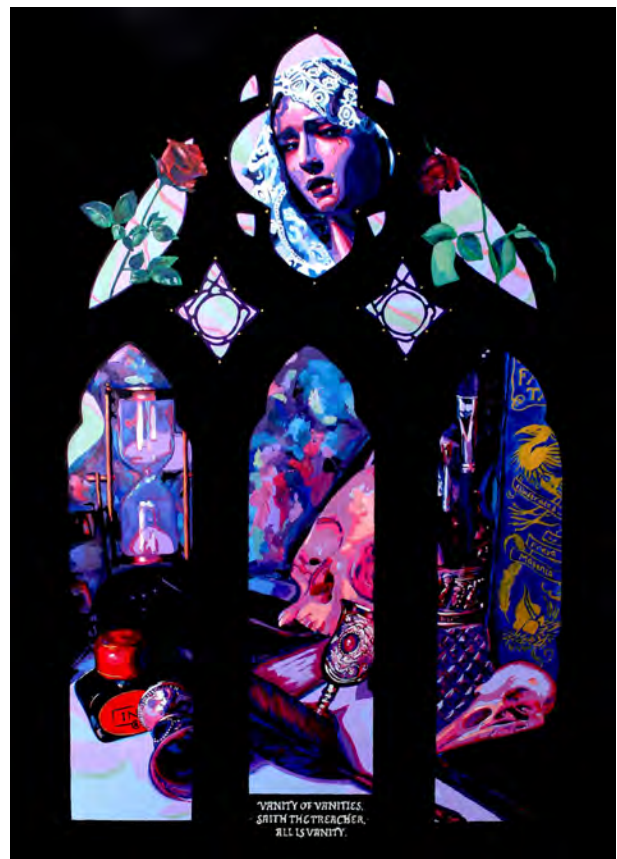


Freya Magenta is a Lancashire-based Fine Artist. Studying a Ba in Fine Art and Professional Practice she has been refining her craft specializing in acrylic painting, exploring the strange and macabre through a vivid palette to create heightened realism within her works.

Magenta's work is heavily influenced by the 17th-century Vanitas movement, which was shaped by Dutch still-life painters like Harmen Steenwijck and Evert Collier, along with contemporary influences from the likes of Andy Warhol and Audrey Flack. With a keen interest in drawing on past traditions and creating works that reflect concerns of modern life.

"Through my art, I want to explore the strange and the macabre through a vivid palette. I am currently researching how the messages of historical Vanitas paintings are still relevant in creative practice today and exploring how practitioners are drawing on the past traditions of the Vanitas to create works that reflect the concerns of modern life. Many inspirations have built up my practice, mainly from my curiosity about history and the macabre.

To my primary school's dismay, I always had a skull or some associated iconography visualizing death since I was little. As I started exploring different kinds of art I became engrossed with the works of H.R Giger, Warhols' Death and Disaster Series (1963), and Audrey Flacks Vanitas Series (1977-78). Flack has been my main inspiration throughout my recent projects, I love how her work incorporates the traditional Vanitas symbolisms but gives a feminine perspective commenting on the excess of consumer culture. Throughout my recent explorations, I have been predominantly inspired by the Postmodern Gothic visualizing anxieties of the day with an emphasis on memento mori.



How do you know when a painting is done?

I find it difficult to know when to finish a painting, I always stand back and see parts I could detail further or add some additional colors to elements.

My imagination can run wild at times so learning how to know when to stop and varnish is a point I am still developing.



What is the hardest part of creating for you?

I would say getting the visualization of the idea in my head onto a piece of paper, as my nerves often get in the way. But you've just got to go for it and experiment! Trial and error are often where I find my best works come from.

What is the role of an artist in society?

I believe the artist's role is vital in society by creating engaging imagery and encouraging people to comment and reflect on the world around us.



JOSH HOLLINGSHEAD



Josh Hollingshead is a self-taught artist from Dorset, England, whose work is sometimes allegorical and informed by his travels. He paints large detailed canvases with an emphatic use of color. Josh has developed several series of paintings on the themes of genre scenes, politics, mortality, religion, landscape and the environment. In 2012 he won the University of Chichester Award in the National Open Art Competition and has exhibited around the UK and in Germany.

"Presented works are narrative paintings where, on close inspection, myriad details reveal themselves, opening each painting up to different interpretations. The vivid colors I have used are often symbolic and emphasize the meaning of each image. The large scale of these works is supposed to convey a sense the viewer could almost walk into each painting. Many of the paintings I have submitted have socio-political connotations."



Ancestors

Ancestors portray the famadihana ceremony in Madagascar, where every 7 years a family disinter the family remains from the tomb, clean them, wrap them in fresh shrouds, and dance with them, having a celebration with musicians and feeling close to the ancestors.



Prodigal Son

This painting is set in Madagascar and shows a returnee coming home after being laid off from his city job. His family gathers on the railway tracks and is split on how to greet him, with his brother angry that he has not yielded much for the family, and his father greeted him warmly.



Man-Made Geysers

The geysers in this painting were formed when the French colonial authorities in Madagascar drilled for oil and fractured the aquifer. The minerals in the water have dyed the ground red and yellow over the years. The water is undrinkable but people with skin diseases use the water like a spa.



Gallery

The gallery shows an imaginary gallery with glass floors, curved walls, and much art history on show. The intent was to show a selection of art history without the clinical white walls and competition of artistic movements.



The Gold Stilts

A man with fame or wealth stands atop gold stilts and a crowd below reacts in multifarious ways. Some try to climb the gold stilts, some try to shake down the stilt walker. One man throws a stone at him. Around the scene window boxes bloom.

ANIA DULDIER



Ania was born in Kyiv, Ukraine, a few months before the collapse of the Soviet Union. She studied political science and then art ceramics.

"My artwork is a constant reflection of the inner child, that's why I use a vibrant palette and is ultimately uncensored and naive. In painting, I work mainly with oil and canvas but also I am fond of computer 3D modeling. I also have experience in managing large-scale art projects as well as local underground art events. I am an artist that is inspired both by creating art and by gathering artists with different backgrounds together for creating new artistic synergy."

Tao Fish

This series of paintings is an expression of pure and passionate love towards life, its fluidity and time passing by so quickly in times of easiness and self-indulging. It was inspired by nature's most perfect creature - The fish.

Fish are swimming, but it seems like they are actually flying or even levitating, unobstructed by weight, social circumstances, or life obstacles.



Temple Antistress

The project is the largest stress-free toy in the world. Unlike the original pop-it, the rainbow cube strokes all senses, not just the fingers. A place to get lost and unwind. The shining gates of boredom. Temple Antistress is a 3-meter high cube that looks like a big pop-it toy from the outside and is an anti-stress environment inside, where people can gather and play with different anti-stress toys stored inside.





Why I don't like spring - I, acrylic paints, newspapers, A3.
 Why I don't like spring- II, acrylic paints, newspapers A1

This is a series of works painted in Switzerland. In Switzerland, spring is safe and beautiful, but the perception of beauty is now distorted by the constant thoughts about the war in Ukraine.

I can't paint war, I hate it so much that I do not want to depict it. But I need to say about it. So I use newspapers with news about Ukraine instead of canvas. On them, I depict the beauty of spring. And also I am using Hanami - the Japanese custom of enjoying the beauty of flowers, as a reference. And on each of the paintings, there is an inscription in Japanese **ウクライナ侵攻をやめよ!** (stop the invasion of Ukraine!).

LAURA CANTOR



"As an artist living in the Bronx, New York City, urban images are central to my work. I am a printmaker, painter, and mixed media artist with a degree in visual art from Empire SUNY and an MFA with a concentration in printmaking from Lehman College CUNY. In 2006 I had a solo show at the N.Y.C. Transit Museum and at the Manhattan campus of Empire College. I have had work purchased by Montefiore Hospital and work in the collections of the N.Y.C. Transit Museum, Lehman College, Empire College, and St. Louis University. I have worked with 2 non-profit art groups in the Bronx, Bronx Printmakers and Studio 889.

I work primarily as a printmaker but I also draw, paint and use collage. I live in the Bronx, New York City and this informs my work. Structures of New York bridges, water towers, and elevated trains- fascinate me. I am drawn to their geometries and patterns. Mechanical parts and their similarities with biological and botanical forms are other themes I am pursuing. I try to approach these subjects with imagination and playfulness. "



Who are your biggest influences?

Growing up I gravitated toward the art of Van Gogh and Degas. In printmaking I really appreciate Hiroshige and the Japanese masters. When I was in graduate school my professors told me to study the work of the Vorticist printmakers in order to learn how they dealt with movement and pattern and because they claimed my work resembled some of theirs. I look at all types of art and it really varies what seeps its way into mine.

What type of art do you make and why?

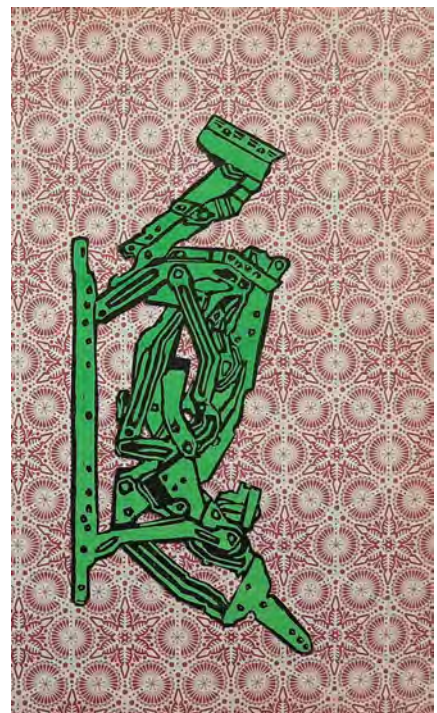
I am a printmaker, painter, and mixed media artist. Primarily I work with linoleum printing and some intaglio printmaking. Often I add collage or sewing to my prints. I live in the Bronx, New York City, U.S.A. and urban images are a big inspiration. My son, Orlando, used to tell me to use more imagination and creativity. He died last year. Since then I have attempted to increase the imaginative elements in my art in part as a sort of tribute to him.

What do you like/ dislike about the art world?

I am very fortunate to feel free as an artist. Clearly in many parts of the world that is not the case. Also, we have access to so much of the visual output from everywhere. This adds to a huge array of choices available - possibilities in media, style, and subject. Long ago I decided not to try to earn my living as a visual artist so I do not have to deal with the business aspect of art. I did not have to hustle as an artist but it was tough finding time to create when I was working and raising my family.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

Such a basic question but at the end of the day, all I can say is that it is a compulsion.



JOY MISU & JESSICA ZUG

Joy Misu is an emerging artist, based in Vienna, Austria. She works with mostly ink on paper. She started to really get into drawing in 2016/2017 when she attended a college drawing class for two semesters while living in Colorado, USA. Ever since she developed a unique art style, inspiring others with her body accepting, sex-positive and feminist work.

Jessica Zug is a culture student with a major in fine arts in Hildesheim, Germany. Her art focuses on charcoal drawings addressing the ways our body expresses our innermost self. It is about celebrating the body in a sex-positive and feminist manner.

Joy Misu and Jessica Zug chose to represent the four seasons/phases of the menstrual cycle on different colored paper to strengthen the moods of the seasons (e.g. black for winter to make it almost look like snow on the branches of the pine). Also, they choose specifically two plants to represent the cycle, which you can see are changing throughout the different seasons. Artists want to celebrate the human body, that every single body is unique in its own ways and they work differently.

"This project consists of the four menstrual phases, I stumbled across an article that describes the menstrual cycle as the four seasons and I liked the idea of it. It gave me the inspiration to make an art project about it and since I am an artist I was really eager to work out a concept. Early on it was really important to us that every single detail has to have a meaning and a place in the art pieces. Jessi suggested using the pine tree because they are cultural symbols all around the world! Going back centuries, these special trees have a role in numerous cultures and folklore tales. Native Americans, represent wisdom and longevity. To other cultures, they represent fertility and life. It was my idea to include peonies though, they symbolize prosperity, good luck, love, and honor.

The menstrual cycle is still something that we as a society don't talk enough about. I feel like a lot of people see it as something rather shameful than natural. I challenge you all to listen to your cycle more and ask yourself: What is it telling you?"

What type of art do you make and why?

I like to approach all my artworks as sketches, to allow them to be fleeting and still impactful, constantly progressing. Not only do I think existence in itself is temporary, but all social structures are. This leads to the belief that the world is not a rigid system we are under, but rather a recent state of life, which aims to be progressed and changed. I do political art in order to speak about the cultural changes society is facing. It is an active way to shape the future to be a place, where everyone is being given equal opportunity, without facing sexism, queerphobia, and more. **Jessica**



I mostly make very emotional art, about the desexualization of the (female) body. **Joy**

Why did you choose to be an artist?

Art gives me the opportunity to express myself and my opinions I haven't been able to otherwise. **Jessica**

I mainly wanted to become an artist because I am able to channel all my emotions and feelings and express them in a very healthy way.

Another reason why is, because my dad's side of the family used to have amazing artists and part of me just wants to reconnect with my ancestors and build on that legacy. **Joy**



Do you follow any current art trends?

I sometimes try to make reels (they mostly turn out to be mediocre) and go viral on tik tok or Instagram, but so far - it has never happened. So I try to, but it is mostly just comedic relief to see my own reels flop. I don't really take it TOO seriously. **Joy**

#FreeTheNipple Movement. **Jessica**

What does your work aim to say?

Everyone has a voice, it is just a matter of being listened to. **Jessica**

My body is my home.. **Joy**



What inspires you?

Listening to people's stories (good and bad), nights of overthinking my own existence, previous art and culture, e.g. a song, a movie or show, or simply the feeling I am given through cultural pieces. **Jessica**

Queer culture. **Joy**



ANDRI IONA



Andri Iona is a visual artist, based in Cyprus. She completed her studies at the Camberwell University of Arts in London and works at her own atelier since the year 2000. Andri Iona exhibited her work with two solo exhibitions at K Gallery in Nicosia and Gallery Kupriaki Gonia in Larnaca, in 2005 and 2009 respectively. She also participated in several group exhibitions at home (Cyprus) and abroad such as in the UK (London), Scotland, Greece(Athens), Malta, and Italy (Sicily). Lastly, she had a six-page interview showing her work in the 59th edition of the Art Reveal Magazine

Andri Iona creates her work inspired by nature's uniqueness and diverges wealth and colors. Her ceramic sculptures are created with stoneware clay. The mystery and beauty of nature are the inspirational force behind her work. Clay becomes a connection between her creative process and the diverse power of nature. Ceramic sculpture often becomes a struggle, not only at the level of the material used but also at the level of an internal need to create an ideal relationship between shape, form, and equilibrium.



Harmonic

A ceramic sculpture that shows the harmony of nature! The colors harmonically relax your soul and your spirit

What type of art do you make and why?

I work mostly with clay. I love the material and what it makes you feel while doing it. Clay is a very responsive material. It's a sort of therapy for me. My passion for ceramics stems from my childhood love for painting



Cherry

Ceramic sculpture that is inspired by nature and the cherries! The red color and the movement shows how blood and nature flow inside of us.

What inspires you?

My sculpture showcases the beautiful bounty of nature, inspired by leaves, birds of paradise, galaxies, and numerous personal encounters with the beauty of nature. This fascination is translated into tiny individually-formed elements that seemingly burst with life.



Night Sky

This ceramic sculpture shows the freedom of the nighttime and the mysteries that the night holds.

What do you like/dislike about the art world?

What I like about the world of art is that it protects people's mental health, elevates their spirituality and it is at the same time an important part of the cultural heritage of civilization. Every human feeling has been expressed through the world of art. Also, people can get to know themselves better through the world of art and discover their limits and potential. For me, it works as an awakening and as redemption. It allows me to acquire a culture of spirit and kindness of soul. What I do not like in the art world are art critics who do not personally affect me. In my opinion, it is a profession that does not serve anything. Art critics do not do anything, do not produce anything, they just comment. I do not believe that art should be criticized and evaluated to calculate its value



What is the most challenging to being an artist? How do you address it?

Art is timeless. It has no beginning and no end as we perceive them linearly. The new generation of people is connected with the older ones, whose history is evolved through time and is defined differently depending on how we perceive the new. The most challenging part of being an artist is contributing to this transformation of history through their work, by building a dual relationship between the past of art and the present of their creation. The artist becomes a means in the future and the evolution of art, inspiring the thought and creation of the coming and present generations. I still personally try to externalize the psyche in my works because I cannot do otherwise. My psyche is channeled back to the world from which I became aware to create. External stimuli are assimilated into the inner psyche and transform into my works. Something even more difficult is to express one's inner state as a flow, a current, and energy.



ILIA RAMISHVILI

"Making pottery started as a hobby for me a while ago, which later turned into what I want to pursue in life and now is my profession. From a young age, I always liked drawing and especially working with clay for fun, coming up with some creative artwork. For as long as I can remember I went to my mother's art school many years and took all sorts of classes such as drawing, ceramics, history of art, photography, architecture, fashion design, book cover illustration, book writing, and creative thinking. Although the one subject that stood out to me the most was pottery. In a way I look at it as therapy, the thing I enjoy most. I try to express my personality with my work, I always come up with a story for my pieces to make them feel alive. Most of my inspiration comes from childhood cartoons and as well as my music taste, I take some of my favorite cartoons and sort of combine them into one with a touch of my style. From a young age, I typically didn't like to fit in as much, and still to this day, in a way that's how I try to portray my art, a bit unearthly and divergent. My main strategy with coming up with pieces is that I never plan an idea, I might be thinking about what to do but I never end up doing what I first had in mind, I add up details as I go and they always turn out to be something else instead of what I planned.

Since I was a kid I was always into creatures and funny-looking cartoon characters. I always used to draw them and I still do to this day, especially weird abstract faces. So I took that concept and started remaking it with clay, over-time I realized I had a lot of fun making them and I got really into it by turning them into a big series of sculptures. I generally make crazy-looking creature faces that are functional, they can be used as an ashtray, keyholder perhaps a bowl for salt. I tend to mainly use big noses, weird mouths, and eyes, those became sort of my style or trademark. Although I've done other sorts of ceramics as well, also with a touch of my style."



What type of art do you make and why?

I make ceramics. From a very age I've always been surrounded by artists and art my whole life. For as long as I remember I loved drawing and still do. Although at one point I discovered ceramics, at first I didn't really get drawn to it but I enjoyed it regardless. It was only two years ago that I cliqued and realized I wanted to give it another chance. When I dug deeper, it blew minds with what could be done. I've always been a fan of weird and goofy-looking creatures or cartoon characters. So realizing that I could transfer those ideas from paper to clay it instantly became my thing. It's kind of a way of bringing these characters to life for me.



What is your background?

I grew up constantly surrounded by mainly art and music. Although music wasn't a big part of my life back then and I had many more open opportunities with art. There wasn't a time in my life when art wasn't in it. For as long as I remember I studied at my mother's art school, and took all sorts of classes that gave me a much wider idea of what I wanted to pursue in life, but mainly taught me a lot of things, like how to perceive art and how I see it today.

What themes do you pursue?

As I mentioned I was also into music, specifically Rock and Roll. Today my style of work is heavily inspired based on my music taste. I might not use any actual Rock and Roll imagery, but I tend to give my pieces a bit of an outcast feeling and a wild look, characters that normally wouldn't fit in the norms of society.



Do you follow any current art trends?

I don't follow any particular trends but I do tend to center my style of work more around the younger generation, meaning that my work mostly catches the eye of the younger people. I myself am young and I try to make my artwork describe me and my surroundings in many ways.

What inspires you?

I've never fully experienced true willpower, so when I see young people like myself achieve things that at a young age that they've always dreamed of, it truly inspires me to get up and do something like that. I've heard a lot of people say that when they see someone their age succeed it demotivates them. Personally, I fully disagree with that kind of statement, that's never been the case for me, it rather motivates me and makes me see a bigger picture of what can be done and achieved through hard work and dedication, towards something you truly enjoy doing.

Professionally, what is your goal?

I'm honestly not quite sure what my main goal is yet, I still have a lot of room to develop and learn much more. Although I want to be recognized for my talents and creativeness. I'd love to hopefully brighten someone's day with my work and spread a bit of joy. When someone gives me a compliment and appreciates my artwork it truly gives me a good chunk of motivation and without a question brightens my day. Even though I'm not the biggest fan of setting a goal, of course, a lot of artists have objectives they want to pursue but I just work for my own satisfaction, hoping that it will pay off someday.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

Because I simply love doing it. Generally, I'm easily distracted but when working on a piece I'm deeply concentrated and everything around me seems to fade away and I end up in a little world of mine. All I can think about is what can I add to my creation. It's a kind of flow-state that I find very exhilarating.



LORAIN CLEARY



Cleary is a fulltime-professional artist, a survivor of domestic abuse, a volunteer at Adapt Women's Refuge & a member of the Tipperary Task Force Arts committee. She received a First-Class Honours MA Degree in 2015 and graduated with a First-Class Honours Degree in Sculpture in 2014. She was highly commended for the 2014 program of the Undergraduate Awards in both the Visual Arts and the Media & Arts categories. She has received numerous grants and awards. Cleary has upcoming solo shows in 2022 in the Ballaí Bana Gallery of Cultúrlann Mc Adam Ó Fiaich, Belfast, and the Excel gallery in Tipperary.

Cleary's practice embraces societal concerns and becomes a symbol of 'the now'; it's a visual response to the strength of the female as she navigates through a misogynistic culture. The concept behind the work derives from trauma and coercion associated with domestic abuse.

Cleary makes work that adapts to the gallery space, and by viewing it in correlation with the space of the home she brings the private out into the public in order to open up a discourse around abuse with a view that cultural change can be implemented to provide a safer living environment.



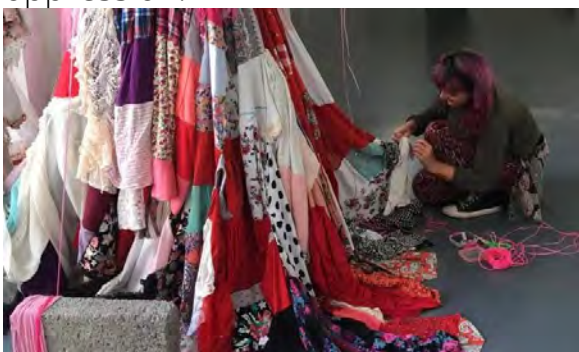
Hush

Hush attempts to consider the secrets hidden within the domestic space and the fate of those women forced into a segregated and isolated existence. The hand-sewn fabric is forced through a small hole in the tabletop; the material is then clamped to the painted floorboard in a visual representation of this.



How do you work?

I engage in a sculptural-based practice that embraces common materials and textiles. Materials are an important aspect of my work and are carefully chosen for each piece. My sculptural approach involves working intuitively with these materials; when an idea presents itself, I assemble materials into piles and assess them to consider the possibilities. As I begin working in earnest with the materials that idea becomes more concrete, then a title comes to mind, at which point the rest of the materials are sourced to complete the work, problem-solving as I go. I recycle & upcycle an array of materials predominantly sourced from the domestic sphere. My sculptural practice attempts to create a thoughtful dialogue through careful re-fashioning of materials, selective use of color, and a combination of light to draw the viewer into a disturbing domestic circumference. My working methodology combines hand-stitched textiles with reconstructed found objects and elements of light to communicate themes of oppression.



Lady Caterpillar



Lady Caterpillar is fashioned from suffocating layers of hand-stitched fabric constructed from up-cycled female clothes; these layers are suspended from two crisscrossed mops emulating a puppeteer's control over its puppet; the puppet acts as a metaphor for the control the abuser has over their victim. Lady Caterpillar reflects on the strength and endurance of a woman as she overcomes oppression on a daily basis, with each layer she gets stronger shedding her patriarchal constraints, the caterpillar symbolizes that journey to freedom, just as the caterpillar leaves its cocoon to become a butterfly so too does the female battling ongoing coercion and control to take ownership over her own life. This journey by her is not an easy one; 'Lady Caterpillar' celebrates the strength and endurance of women as they overcome misogyny and repression. Domestic tropes within the installation are representative of the females' entrapment within the home, kept down by a macho society. The mug is a commentary on how limited women's choices are perceived. The puppet master is used as a metaphor/symbol of this oppression.

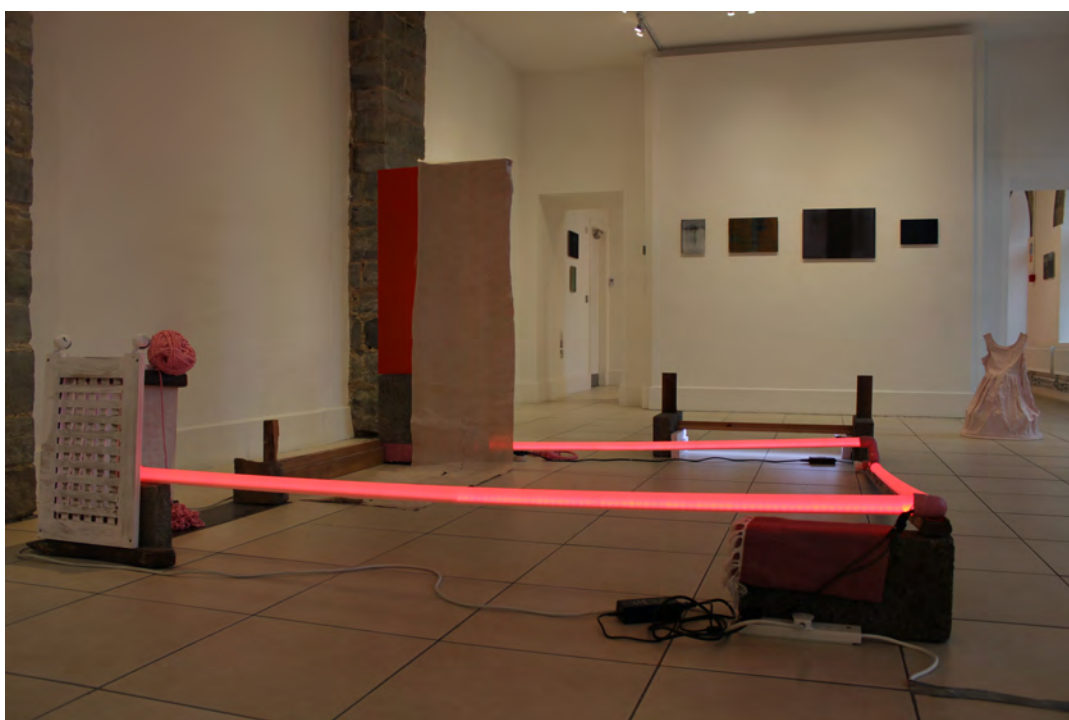
You have been given a second
chance

Seven pink mop heads situated upon stripped & re-wired fluorescent light tubing held upright by molded concrete bases form a neat row. 7 pieces of hand-stitched fabric text accompany the mops.



Room 10x8; circa 1990

Room 10 x 8; circa 1990 is a representation of a small room, with the emphasis on isolation for its inhabitant. Constructed from salvaged domestic objects, refashioned to tell a story. The year is included in the title of this piece to draw attention to a time before mobile technology and social networking. Digital technology was yet to be anticipated, even CDS were in the future. This was a pure analog era of cassette tapes and handwritten letters. The piece is essentially silent, emphasis on loneliness and seclusion. Strwn at various intervals are wood and stone, almost like makeshift markers to point to a place of burial. The entrance is unconnected, separated from the rest of the installation; the room is isolated. Light seeps out from beneath its threshold signifying the boundary between that room and the rest of the house.





Dreamcatcher

Exhibition: Fuzzy Logic - Opened September 3rd, 2020 Collaboration between 126 Galway & Backwater Artists Group. Studio 12, Cork The DreamCatcher is a Native American symbol that absorbs negative dreams. Conversely, in an abusive relationship dreams are stifled by a barrier of suppression and all that remains is the negative consequences of abuse where victims are silenced and paralyzed by shame; it takes immense strength to endure these conditions daily. Chests and Drawers with their fake bottoms are referred to by Gaston Bachelard in 'The Poetics of Space' as 'veritable organs of the secret psychological life. Certainly within the realm of Domestic Abuse secret lives exist. The drawer here exists without its chest, its nakedness vulnerable, its interior exposed and merged with the exterior space of the home. Its mystery is violated and its secrets exposed. Red, a recurring theme within the installation communicates several opposing connotations that create a paradox within the work, red warns of imminent danger but also signals strength and determination, this work serves to remind us of the strength and character it takes for somebody to navigate such a tumultuous environment.

Has your practice changed over time?

In the last few years, I have introduced textiles into my working methodology, these textile pieces incorporate hand-sewn patches representative of a traditional craft typically associated with women. This method of stitching is an arduous process culminating in months of painstaking work and symbolizes the determination of the female as she tirelessly battles against continued patriarchal injustice. Textiles are now an integral part of the work where handstitched textiles are combined with reconstructed found objects and elements of light to communicate themes of oppression.

I have ambitions to expand my practice to become more socially engaged, I am a member of the Tipperary Taskforce Arts Committee and hope to support their endeavors in creating an arts community collective.

LUCREZIA COSTA



Lucrezia Costa is an emerging artist but first of all, she is an uncomfortable crack. She started to crack when she decided to enter inside the “selva Obscura” that Dante faces at the beginning of his journey in the Divina Commedia. The Bachelor's degree in Photography, the Master's degree in Visual Arts and Critical Studies, and the pandemic emergency accelerated the process, like an earthquake that generates fractures in a solid wall. She is exploring the depth and all the crossroads generated inside a rupture that is constantly changing and deepening through nature and the earth's elements. With her practice, she tries to bring on the surface pieces of what she found in the abyss with the aim and hope of creating shock waves.



"Rise into decline" could be defined as a work that focuses on that kind of art where the author triggers the process and after that, it flows by itself. It is an attempt to make visible the entropic process, the irreversibility of every experience we live and so the never-ending rupture of balances that are just apparently solid. After an encounter with a geologist, Lucrezia Costa decided to build a small portion of the wall with hollow bricks and plaster with a square shape, a symbol of firmness. Costa wanted to put this wall in a condition of stress, so she created a small vibrant table that is equipped with a motor that generates oscillators and gasps movements (like an earthquake). She wanted to prove that the wall would have cracked and demonstrated that cracks are signs that don't need to be covered because they represent openings in the matter that reveals something new that was not visible before. But what if the wall doesn't crack? Who decides the necessary amount of time for this process to happen? Costa understood that she had the presumption of taming time. She built, deconstructed, and assembled again, she was an active part because she triggered the process, but when is the work done?

When the time will beat Stonehenge or the Colosseum? When cancer will beat a body? Which variables get in the game? If the wall cracks she would feel relieved because she can embrace the error and its uniqueness or restless because she had to surrender to the idea that eternal perfection can beat time going against her idea?

The project started as a conceptual work that was not satisfying for the author and generated frustration but when she actioned the motor and looked at the process working, she started to feel distressed. The more she observed the wall trembling over the structure she created, the more she felt a hypnotic restlessness. She understood she was a hostage of time. She decided to film the process of monitoring the wall the process to make visible the way she felt.



Why did you choose to be an artist?

I didn't choose to be an artist, art called me I guess. It is a way to communicate messages I can't say with a common written or spoken language. Art gives me the possibility through different media to express the energy I can't express any other way.

What inspires you?

I am constantly inspired by what surrounds me, with a particular interest in earth as a natural element and everything that is bound to "oikos" greek concept, that is the root of "ecology" and that could be translated as "to know how to inhabit this world".

Who are your biggest influences?

I have two big influences in the field of art: Robert Smithson, that is a Land artist and Joseph Beuys. I have a lot of influences from other fields like science, for example, Robin Wall Kimmerer and Robert Macfarlane, and from architecture as well like Aldo Van Eyck.

What does generosity mean to you as an artist?

Generosity is very important to me. Being generous is one of the little things that really matter to me. When you are generous people see it and this creates a mechanism of reciprocity that is very precious.

What themes do you pursue?

As I mentioned before, ecology is intended as "to know how to inhabit this world" is one of the main themes. Then I work on the conception of time, and the third theme of my career is the body's study inside and outside the western conception.



SAM HAYNES

Sam Haynes is a mid-career visual artist based in London, working primarily with sculpture and site-specific installations. She launched her new series of assemblage photo artworks at the beginning of 2021, with online/IRL exhibitions including the Fair Art Fair 'Curated 1' show at Unit 1 Gallery in London, the FLUX exhibition in the Greenwich Design District, and 'Abstract: Contemporary Art Open' at Surface Gallery, Nottingham. The artwork has been featured in 'Art Reveal', 'Heroes of Tomorrow' and 'Artist Talk' magazines, with an artist interview in 2021 for the Ministry of Arts Podcast.

Sam Haynes started her practice over twenty-five years ago creating public art installations, engaging local communities with the belief that art has the power to bridge divides within society. The creative process is still all about making connections, within her practice as an artist facilitator, as well as a collaborator and sculptor. Accessibility lies at the heart of Haynes' work, incorporating found objects and materials, and using low-tech methods of construction to create abstract assemblages that reference domestic and architectural space. The photographic process is a key element of Haynes' sculptural practice, both in its development and display.



Assemblage

Assemblage sculpture - disassembled metal steamer, cooking twine, rubber hosing from exercise straps. Limited edition photo prints on aluminum Dibond are available in varying sizes.



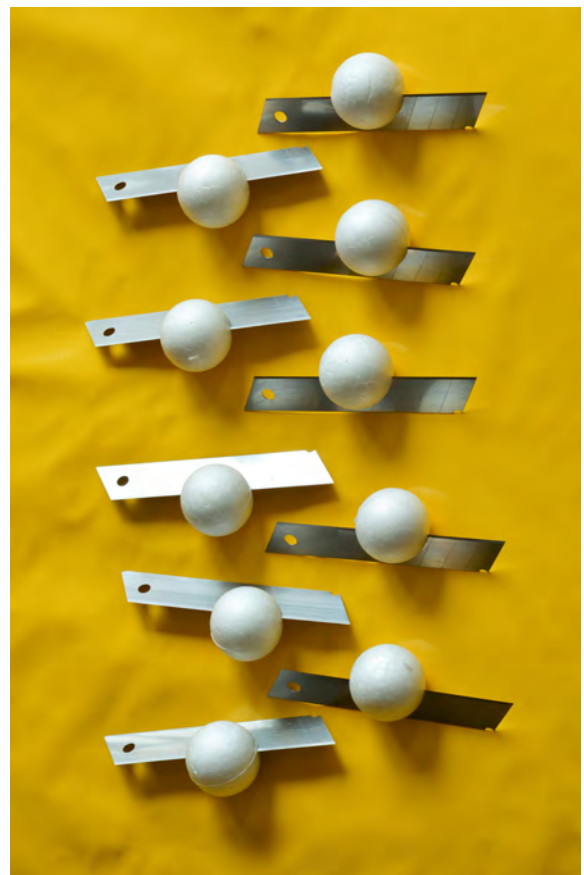
What type of art do you make and why?

Since lockdown 2020 I have been working on a series of small-scale abstract assemblages incorporating found objects and materials, combining a rhythmical, systematic design and geometric structure with softer, flexible elements that take shape more organically. These playful interactions explore the tension created between balance and counterbalance, animated through the use of color, light, and shadow. The physicality and materiality of forms are an important part of my working process, drawing upon my community engagement practice and interdisciplinary background, expressing a dramatic quality through the universal language of abstract form. The photographic process has also become a key element of my work, both in its development and display, presenting a fixed perspective while giving an enlarged perception of scale, allowing the everyday object to be both elevated and celebrated.



Why did you choose to be an artist?

I'm not sure I specifically decided one day to become an artist. I'm more a believer in small steps rather than big decisions, if possible. I think it's been a case of making creative choices that have moved me in the right direction. I can't help but feel that being an artist is more a matter of succumbing to the feeling that there's more to be said, in some way, there's unfinished business, maybe even untapped potential within us, out there, to be discovered and revealed. The attraction has been too strong not to become an artist.

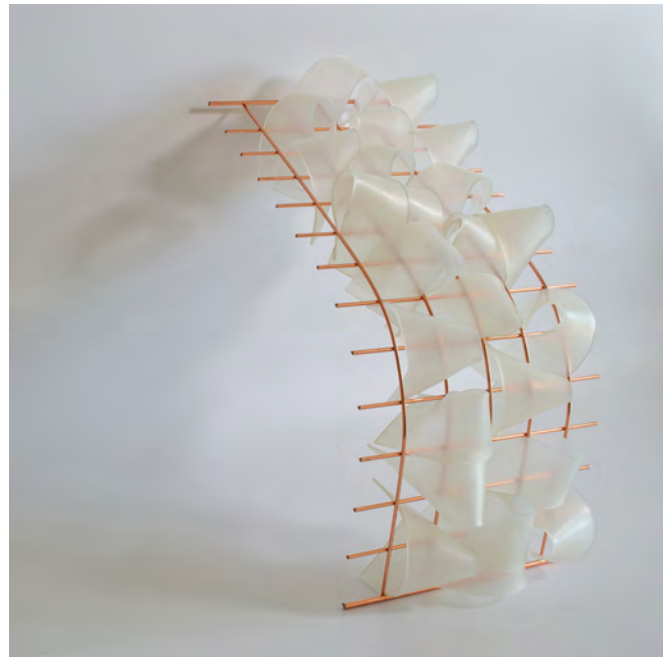


What are you doing except being an artist?

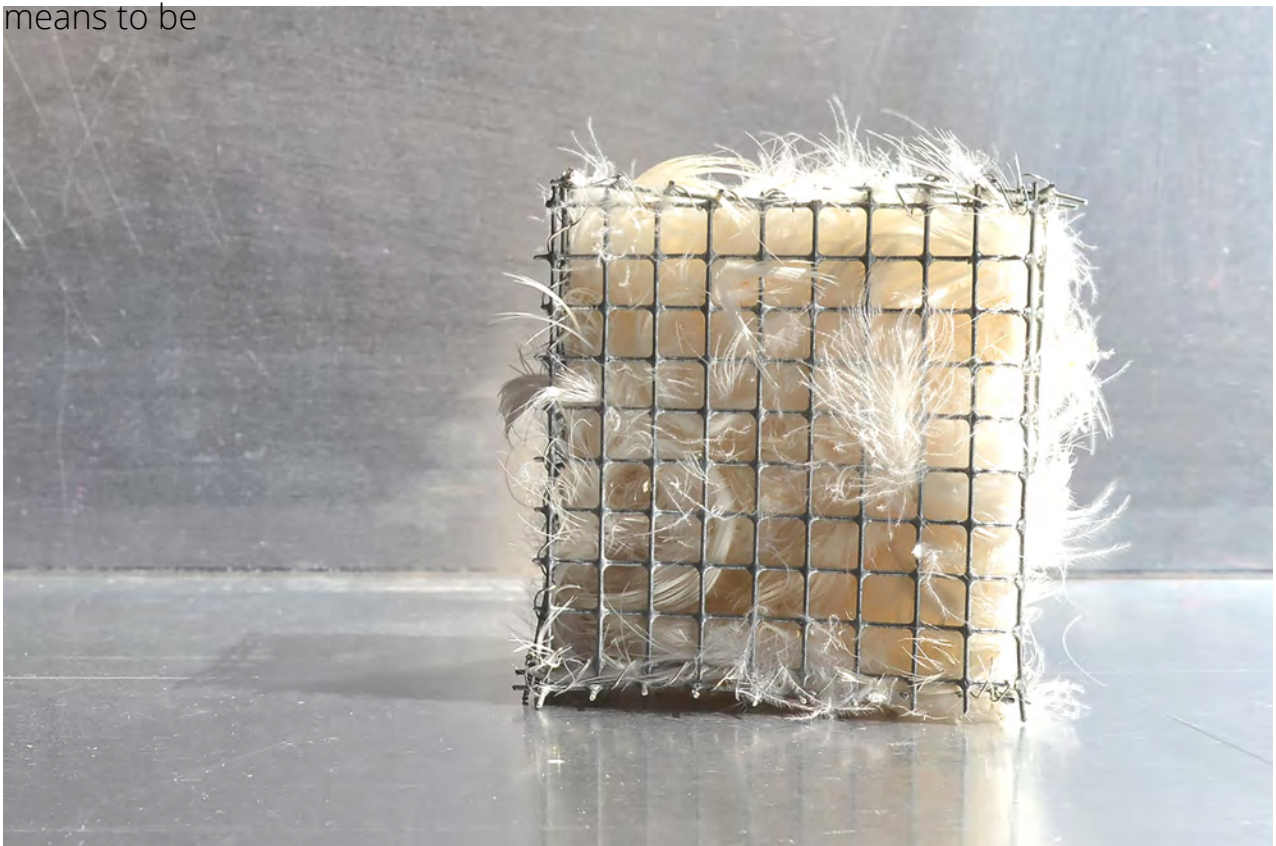
In addition to making art myself, I work as an artist facilitator for a number of charities, supporting marginalized communities, and working with people of all ages and abilities. This work continues to influence my own practice, with a fundamental belief in inaccessibility, reflected in my choice of materials and processed method of development.

What is the role of an artist in society?

For me the artist is able to challenge and question the world around us, they are able to connect the conscious and subconscious, to embody what it means to be



human. In doing so I believe that they have the power to bridge divides, connecting people on a universal level, while speaking to our inner selves. They can give us a fresh perspective on life that can broaden our understanding, with a unique capacity to nurture and nourish.



What inspires you?

Inspiration for me comes in many forms; when art touches my spirit, in the strong women I know, in everyday found objects discovered unexpectedly, in big empty landscapes that remind you how small you are. It lies not just in what we experience outside ourselves but in a moment of connection and awareness that allows us to appreciate life's complexity and simplicity.

Stellar

An assemblage made of found objects, developed through an intuitive process, is presented in photographic form. The fluidity of the netted fabric enveloping the contoured metal orb conveys a dynamic sense of movement as if propelled from on high.



How has your practice changed over time?

I started my practice working on public art commissions designing large-scale, metalwork installations, working alongside a team of specialist fabricators, and responding to a site-specific brief. While I always enjoyed the challenge and opportunity for collaboration, the process I now use is probably the polar opposite, working independently at an entirely different scale using low-tech methods of assembly and nontraditional, low-cost, found materials. The geometric sensibility remains, referencing domestic and architectural space, but I can enjoy a freedom that relies on no one other than myself.



What is the role of an artist in society?

For me the artist is able to challenge and question the world around us, they are able to connect the conscious and subconscious, to embody what it means to be human. In doing so I believe that they have the power to bridge divides, connecting people on a universal level, while speaking to our inner selves. They can give us a fresh perspective on life that can broaden our understanding, with a unique capacity to nurture and nourish.

JIA GENG LIN

Jiageng Lin is a photographer as well as a visual artist currently based in Rochester, NY. After graduation from the MFA program majoring in the photo and related media, he works as a digital archivist at the Cary Graphic Arts Collection at Rochester Institute of Technology.

Jiageng's work asks the question:

How do we see the world?

And, how does photography shape and form our memory and mind?

Integrating different mediums such as photo books, collages, and installations is a way for him to push the boundaries of photography.

Jiageng's work has been exhibited nationally and internationally including Rochester Contemporary Art Center; Gallery Q, Rochester NY; RIT City Art Space, Rochester NY; JKC Gallery, Trento NJ; OFPIX Studio, Beijing China; Modern Art Academy, Shanghai China; Millepiani Gallery, Rome IT; and others. His work has been featured in numerous publications including Vast magazine, Photography of China, AINT-BAD, Gelatin Magazine, Boooooooooom, and Floatmagazine.

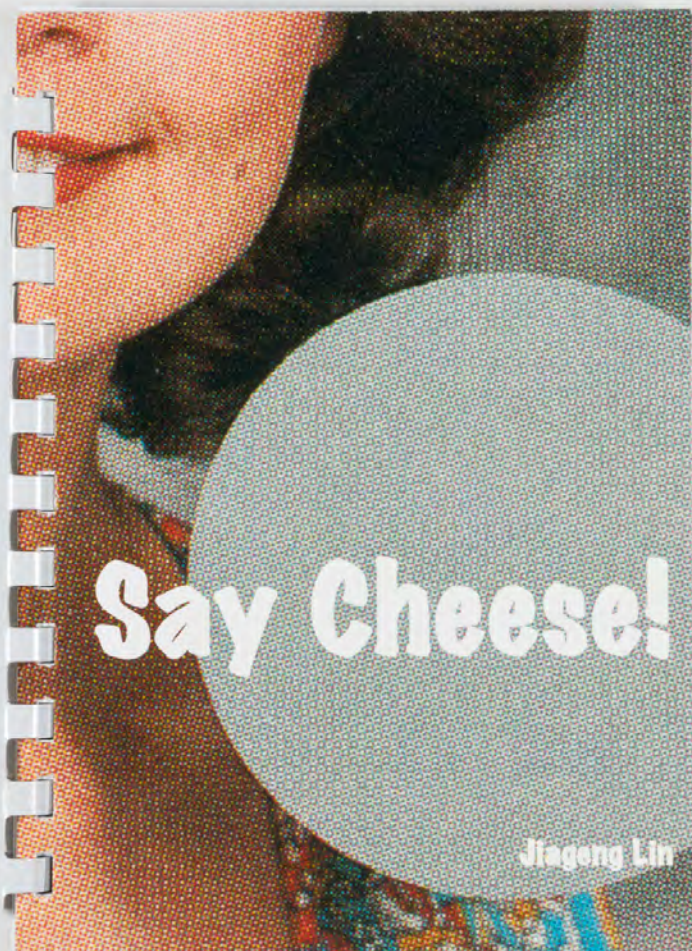




"I've always been interested in how technology changes the way we are living and thinking. 'Say cheese!' is a body of work consisting of images that I've collected from old camera manuals during the past few years. Besides the funny and humorous aspects of those images, a hidden beauty could also be found. By changing their context and presenting them in both book and installation form, I consider the images as a way of looking back into the history of photography and the relationship between humans and photography. When they are rearranged in a carefully considered manner, new relations and meanings could be created."

What type of art do you make and why?

Mostly photography or image-related. Besides photography work, I also make zines, collages, and sometimes installation-based work. I like variations. By integrating other art mediums, I could push my practice further. They also give me a break from photography, helping me see my work clearly when I came back.





What is your background?

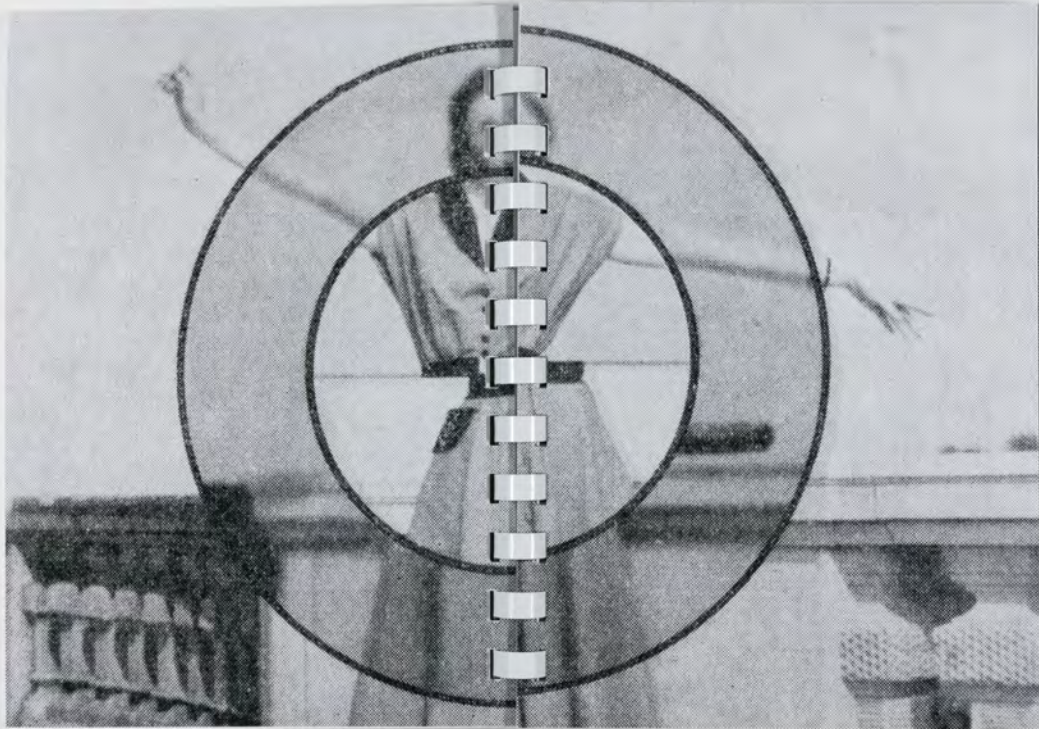
I learned drawing for a long time during my childhood. Learning how to draw influenced me a lot. The desire of drawing begins with the wish to collect memories. I think this background did influence me to choose photography as my main creative medium now. Photography has the ability to quickly document scenes and helps me to recreate memories. I'm very geeking about the technical part of photography while as enjoy experimenting with different photographic materials which leads to my current and ongoing project.

What does your work aim to say?

This is a big question. Broadly speaking, I'm trying to communicate and express my feeling and hope it touches others. Currently, I'm more interested in how people react to the world, How we see the world? How do photography/images shape our minds? What does technology bring us? And Hopefully, people could resonate with my work.

What inspires you?

Library, Internet, Museum and galleries, Broadcast, Nature... Sometimes an idea just pops up when I was running outside.





What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

Try to stay creative and productive at the same time.

It's tough to do it. If I'm not feeling like doing anything, I just give myself a break. I tried not to push myself too hard. You just cannot force creativity. If I'm stuck on a project, I'll just leave and do something else. Maybe watch some videos or just go outside and jog for a while. I found that by doing these, my mind will be fresher when I come back. It's more productive than just sitting there and being upset about myself.



JOAS NEBE

Joas Nebe, who holds degrees in psychology and literature, is a self-taught artist born in Hamburg but now located in South Germany. After a few years in Berlin, he decided to move south, close to the French and Swiss border. Important exhibits include the artist's "Climate Change Cartoons" on display in the exhibition "Letters from the Sky" which accompanied the Durban UN conference on Climate Change 2011 in South Africa and "Machine Fair"- a film about the mechanical side of a metropolis- shown at Museum of Modern Art, Moscow as part of "Now&After" screening in 2012. Other film works have been shown at the 25th Festival Les Instants Video (Biblioteca Alexandrina, Cairo), Videoformes Festival 2014 and 2015, Sustain Our Africa, Madatac 3, 4, 5, 6 Competitive Official International Selection (Madrid), Papy Gyros Nights 2016 Hong Kong/ ART_TECTURE, In 24hours: Future Visions (SHIFT:ibpcpa) 2020, just to name a few. 2021 Joas Nebe received the Audience Award at the 1st International Conceptual Art Biennale in Latvia.



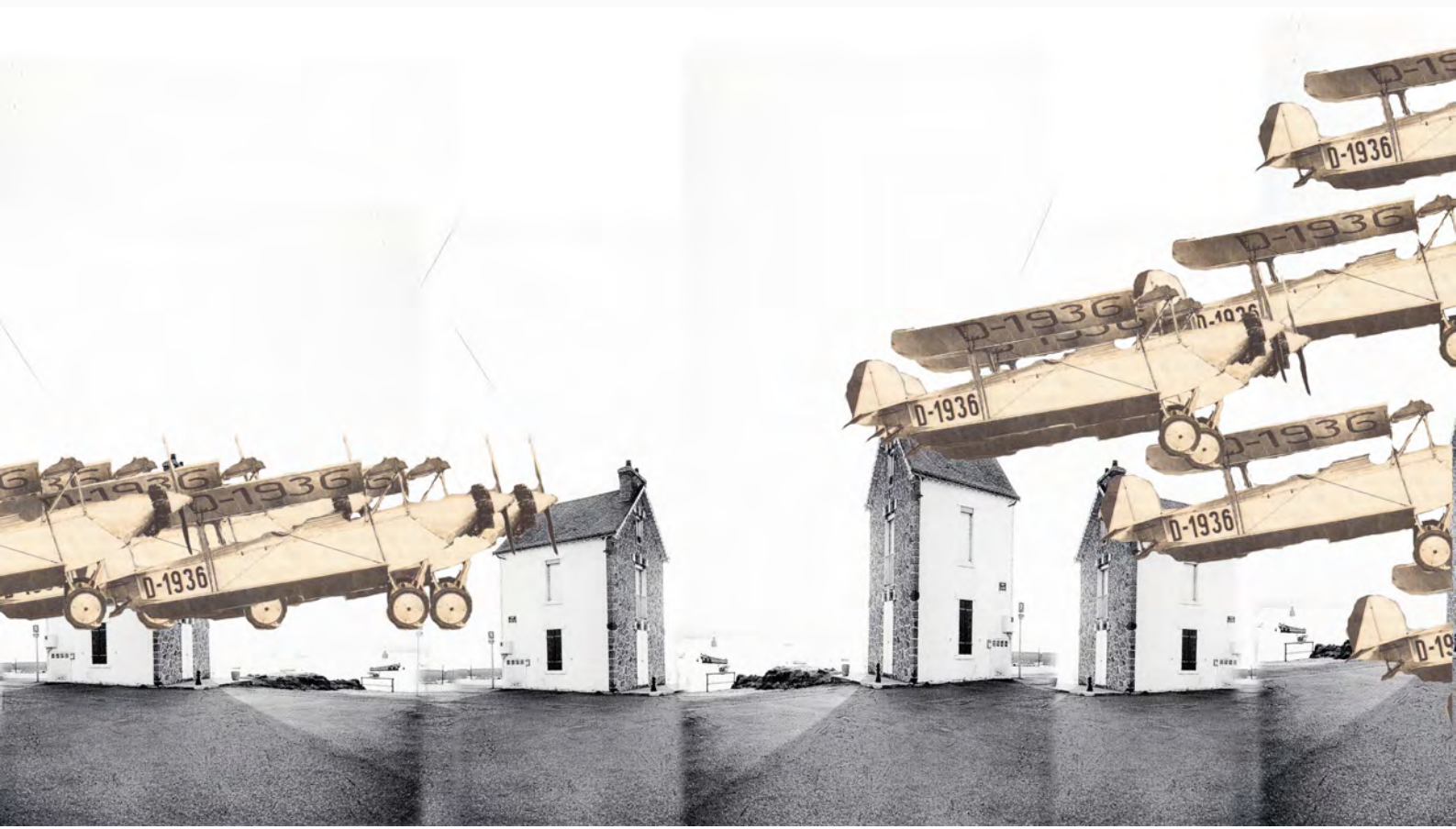


THE DARK PLACES SERIAL

Dark Places are causing fear and hate by being more than obscure. Dark places are letting us down when we leave them. They are energy vampires, in a way. Dark Places are everywhere.

Most of the urban dwellers are exposed at least after dark has fallen and they are forced to pass a dark place without streetlights. But Dark Places are not reduced to urban spaces. They dominate the rural landscape as well when the sunlight has gone. But even they exist in the daytime. They are where lonesome walkways offer the full range of depression to the one who is forced to walk on them alone in order to get to his place.

Next to really dark places, virtual dark places exist. They are in the stories we read in the newspaper in the morning or we watch on TV. Virtual dark places are going to be the resident evil in fake news.



What does your work aim to say?

That understanding and communication between one human and the other are difficult, because the communication takes place in different languages, e.g. verbal, visual, body language, etc., and each language is determined by the limitation of the specific language. You can express yourself using language more abstractly than with your body. The language of your body is more visceral and less thought-dependent for example. Communication between humans is a set of different communication languages even in the everyday-communication. You express yourself with words and you express yourself at the same time through how you act, how your body moves etc...

So trying to understand what the other human means by expressing himself/herself/itself is one of the most difficult endeavors in our world. And that is just the beginning. The human race developed very sophisticated theories in philosophy, theology, and ideology and all of these theories influence how we think and act. The more abstract the theory, the bigger the gap between theory and the real world, between one human to the other, between reality, thought and expression of thoughts, not to forget the problem of communicating thoughts one to another.

A good example of my work on this issue might be the video series *Out Of Sight*.

More than ever the pandemic made us understand how low our knowledge is about the things we see or do not see: the surface of earth and ocean, and the universe. NASA, ESA, and others made us understand what planets, red giants, dwarfs, black holes, and debris in our solar system might look like by putting the information collected into images. Information is taken by ultraviolet, x-ray, and warmth detecting cameras, etc. making visible the part of our world and universe, invisible to our human perception system.

In the first place, these scientific instruments are constructed to explore different kinds of information the human perception system is not made for. In a second step, the information must be made understandable for a human brain, a human eye. This goal is accessed by the translation of the received information into images in many cases.

Otherwise, the signals (and there are only signals, no movie-like pictures) would be only understood by specialized scientists, who are trained to read the information matrix. And even the specialist are not specialized enough to understand every case and every detail.

Moreover, the detected information is as reliable as the tool that collects the information. The tool collecting information is only as good as the human brain of the constructor/researcher is in imaging the unseen and unknown.

The more specialized researchers are, the less they can imagine that there is something else in a different field, which is the issue of other specialized researchers.



What does your art represent?

My art represents the try to make this problem visible and aware. This is a pivotal theme of the human race because if understanding or communication fails, there will be war, destruction, hate, etc.

What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

The biggest challenge is to find the right metaphor for what I try to say. With metaphor, I mean the exact expression of what I see around me. Because art is always speaking in metaphors rather than in clear words.



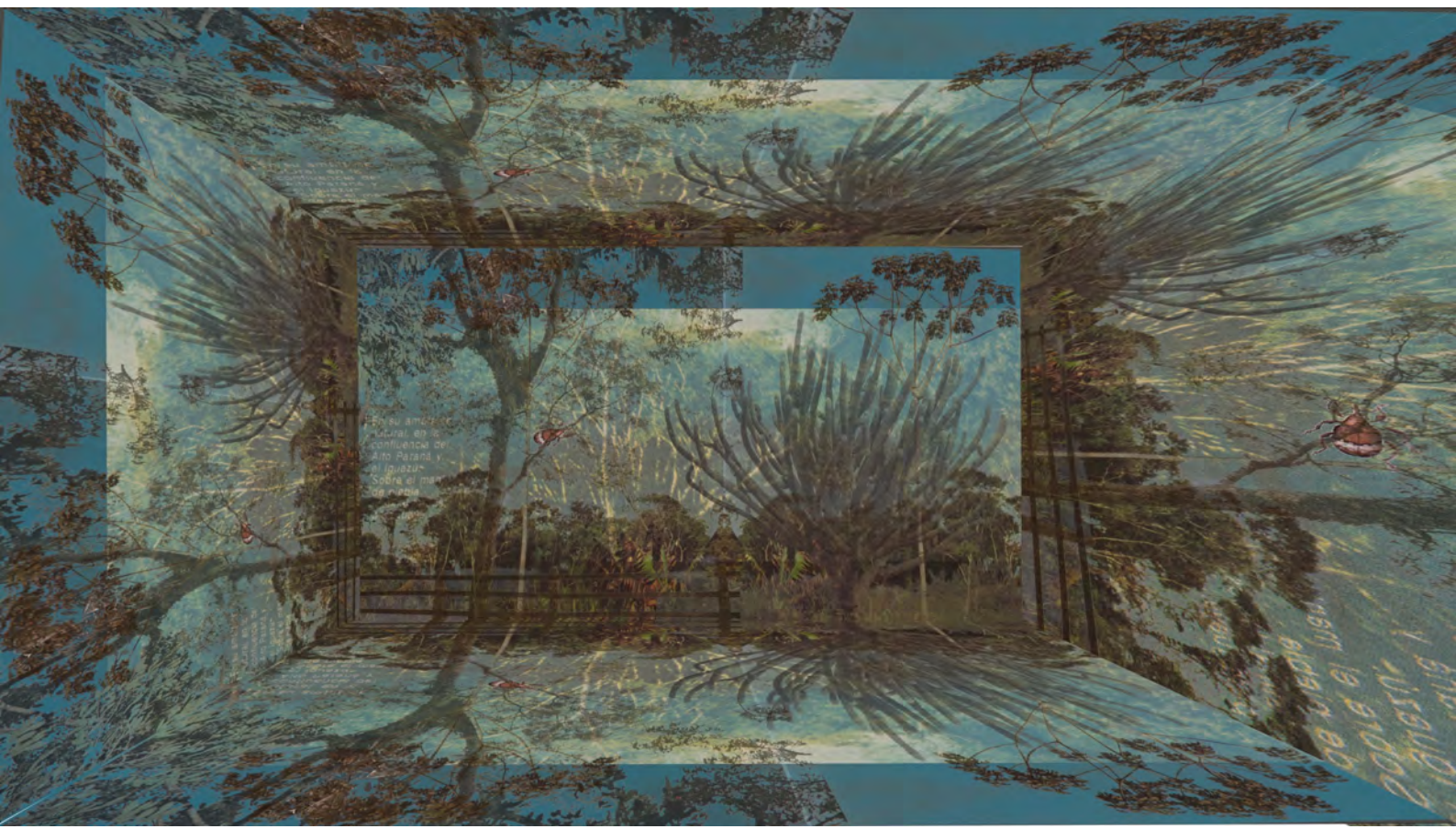
What themes do you pursue?

In addition to the language-communication themes, other themes interest me, for example, climate change and how climate change reshapes the surface of our world, our behavior, and our communication. Another one is urbanity because there are more and more big cities turning into megacities by immigration and rural exodus, which is again connected and propelled by climate change. Connected with this theme is another that interests me: will megacities resist climate change? Will they be vanished from the surface of the earth by rising water lines? Will life turn into something hellish in these big cities of rising temperatures? And how does life in megacities shape our interaction? An example of my work on this issue is the video series called Landmark.

Since I am living-so to speak -in the countryside and my interest has shifted to nature and here, especially to the smallest creatures, insects, and birds.

Later it turned out (to be exact: this year) that insects and birds are facing among other species the greatest extinction since the death of dinosaurs hundred thousands of years ago. I read in a newspaper article the unbelievable number of 1500 species of birds only! That was more than enough reason to continue with my issue. There was another drive to readopt the issue of birds on which I had worked before. During the time I was living in Berlin, I used to be fascinated by the different species and the mass of birds that came year after year to Berlin to stay the summer in the endless streets surrounded by endless multi-story buildings.

Why do birds come to at least for them to such a hostile place like this...?"

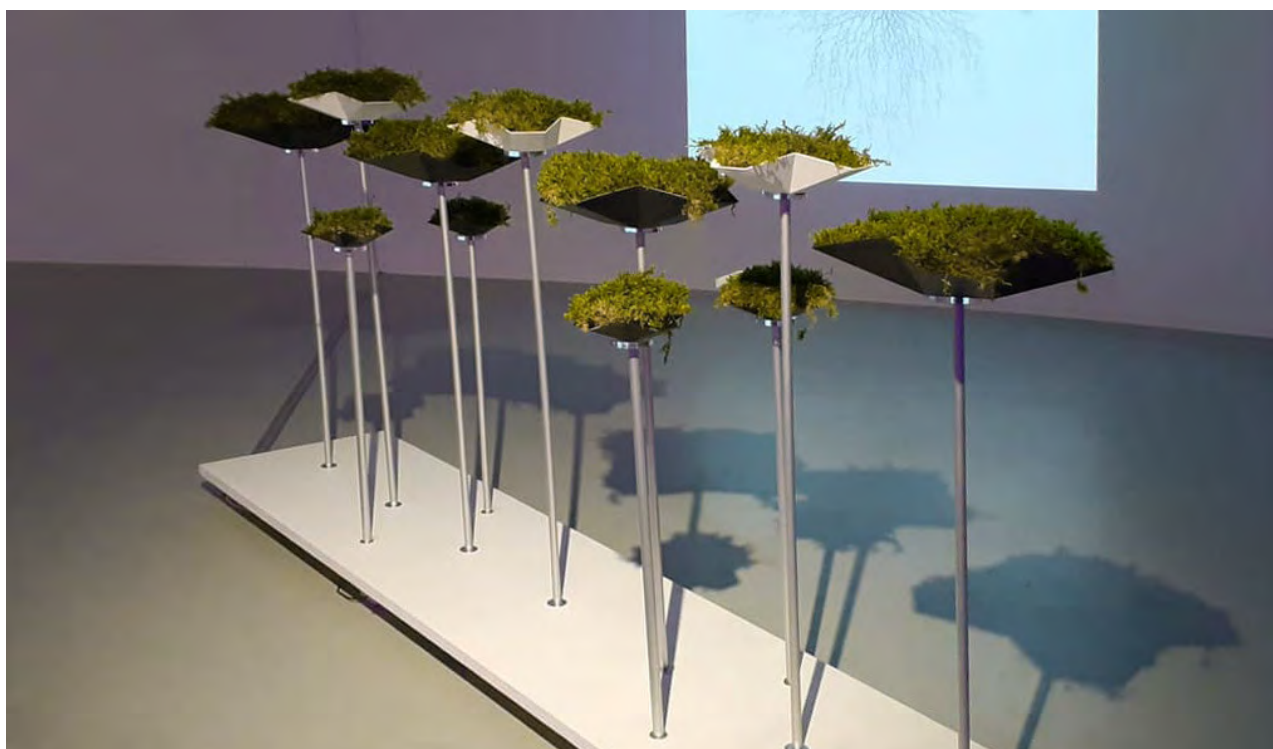


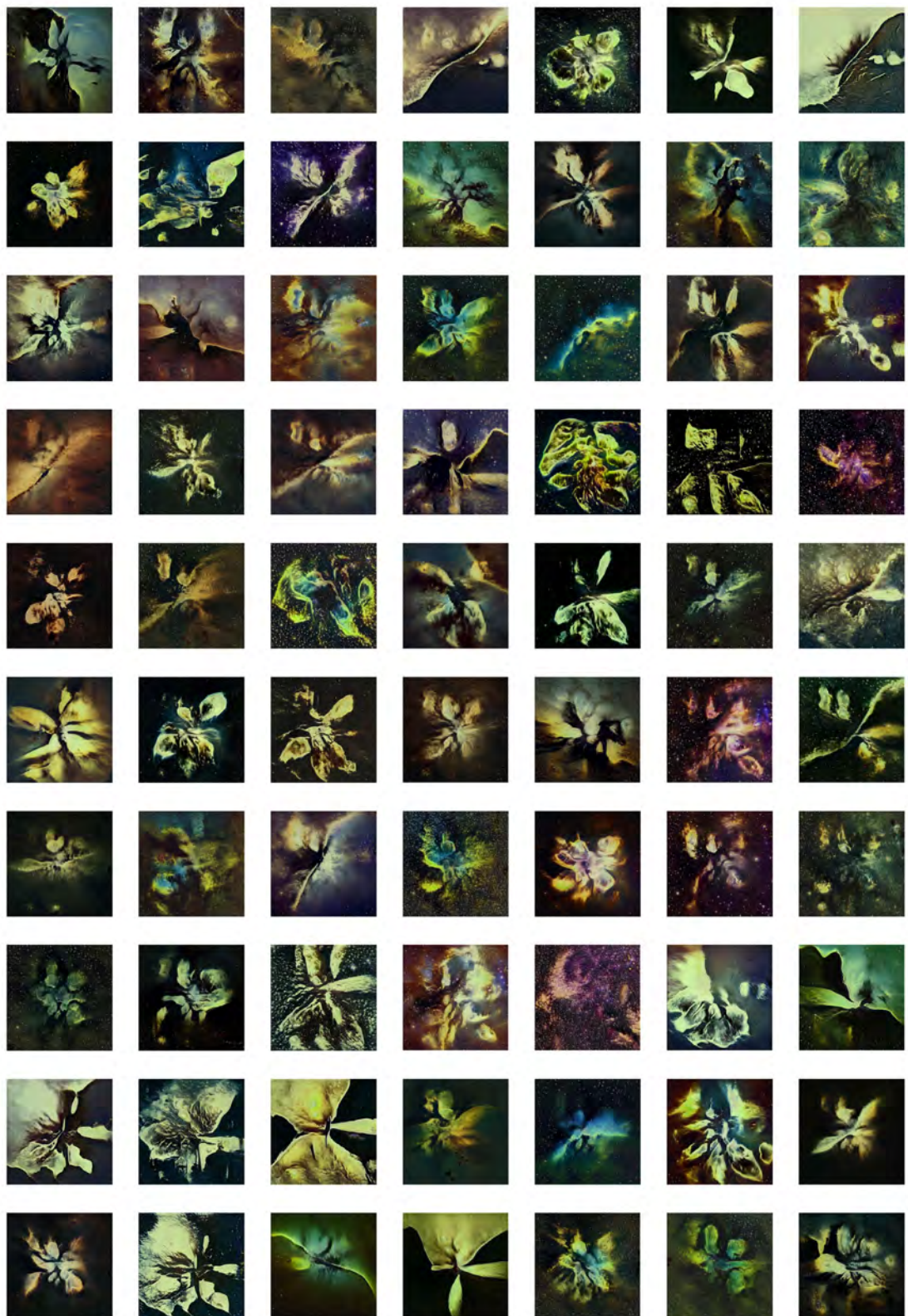
LAVOSLAVA BENČIĆ



Lavoslava Benčič is an Slovenian intermedia artist, curator and pedagogue. Her educational background in media production, and new media art. Her portfolio comprises ML-generated graphics, interactive installations, electronic textiles, graphical sounds, latent videos, and glitch art. The Ministry of Culture of Slovenia ranks her among the authors crucial for Slovene culture. At the IAM Institute in Ljubljana (Slovenia) she works as a qualified lecturer. Her works have been exhibited/displayed/published 98 times in twenty-two countries and awarded fourteen times.

Lavoslava Benčič in her work» Speculative Hybrids« raises questions about the survival of individual plant species and the possibilities of hybridization by combining more resistant and less resistant species and the usefulness of artificial intelligence tools in designing new resistant plants suitable for future fast-changing conditions on Earth. She proceeds from the assumption that human presence and arrogant exploitation of nature have undermined the natural balance of plant species and through her work tries to open and change possible ways of thinking so that we can again approach, feel and preserve nature as a value necessary for human survival.







What inspires you?

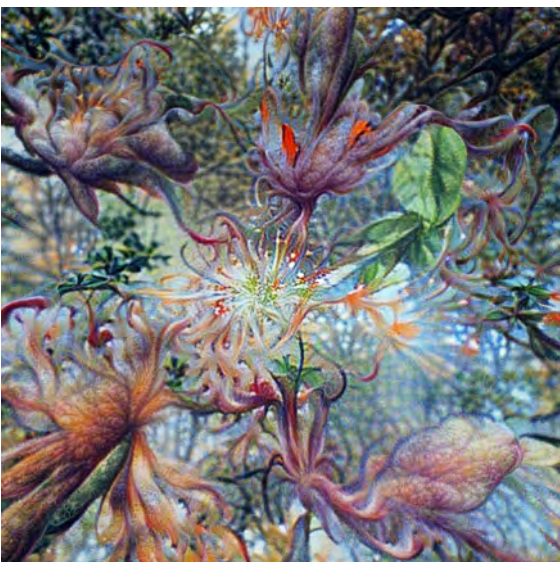
I do what interests me now and I "swim" in a number of directions guided by my soul and my heart. If I wander off these paths, I change my direction and try to do something else. Only by trying and dispersing research is it possible to develop and come up with new ideas and insights.



What does your art aim to say?

Usually, by observing my work, people can understand what I was thinking and what I would like them to ask themselves. Rarely, though, they can find out where I stand on this because I don't want to impose opinions and offer final solutions.

Allow me to explain the example of a collection of works for the project "Speculative Hybrids". The project raises questions on the survival of certain plant species, and the potential for hybridization by combining more resistant and less resistant species. It tests the usefulness of artificial intelligence tools in the design of new hardy plants adapted to future changing conditions on Earth. In the project, I show what hybrid species are expected to look like when they are created through machine learning models. Whether I agree with this manipulation or not, you won't find out.



What are you doing except being an artist?

Let me first explain what being a Slovenian artist is all about. My qualification to practice in the field of culture and art is evaluated by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Slovenia based on the works, curriculum vitae, bibliography, artistic achievements, critiques, and publications in the professional literature. All the above must prove that my work during these five years makes an exceptional contribution to Slovenian culture in terms of quantity and quality. The requirements to achieve this level are very demanding. However, most people are not familiar with the required conditions and only see the benefits that the artist's profession brings (e.g. work from home, flexible working hours, the absence of a superior). But my career as an artist, because of the procedure described above, is not as easy and lazy as it seems. I have created 160 reference units over the last five years, despite measures taken to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g. participation in exhibitions and festivals, articles in professional literature, creative workshops, editorials, curating). Nonetheless, the period of the pandemic, in particular, has shown that artists are among the most vulnerable groups in society in the social and material spheres. However, the pandemic period, in particular, has shown that artists are amongst the most vulnerable groups in society in the social and material spheres. However, as there are few of us, neither perceive nor resolve our problems and distress is the focus of society. In general, since 1985, when I began my professional career, I have been aware of this vulnerability and I have protected my existence in several ways. A very wide range of knowledge, skills, and abilities is crucial in this. Therefore, I participate in a large number of various forms of non-formal education and training in Slovenia and abroad, live or through educational channels (e.g. workshops, seminars, and summer schools). And not just art education - the knowledge gained from project management education also significantly improves time, resources, and money management and indirectly contributes to more effective and fluid communication with all stakeholders in art projects. Just as I accept knowledge with open arms, I also selflessly pass it on to my students and trainees. For the last five years, I have been teaching multimedia production at the Academy and Multimedia Institute in Ljubljana (Slovenia), DIY electronics at the School of Arts, University of Nova Gorica (Slovenia), and for much longer I have been conducting informal workshops about electronic textile, AI in art and graphical sound for children and adults (for about 650 people of all ages) in Slovenia and abroad (about 60 workshops in Croatia, Denmark, Italy, Slovenia, and Serbia). In the photo gallery of the Center for Visual Arts Batana in Rovinj, I am a member of the expert council and curator of photographic exhibitions.

When we cover all the complexity and diversification of the activities of the artistic profession (with all the paths and side paths), it is difficult to say that I also perform some activities that do not fall within the competencies and profession of an independent artist. On the contrary, the mission of the artist could be understood much more broadly.

What is the role of an artist in society?

Today, the artist must be vigilant, listen to problems, and open questions in his works of art. The problem I am tackling in an art project must intrigue me and must be interesting to people in the environment for which it is intended. The more you express a problem in an unusual way in a work of art, (e.g. in an unusual place, at an inappropriate time), the more you encourage the audience to think and dialogue. In a world where more or less everything is already seen, the work of an artist is more and more demanding from moment to moment. And yet, a strong curiosity of the researcher prevails in me, which still drives me to uncover problems and open questions.



PATRÍCIA ABREU



Patrícia Abreu is a Visual Artist who mixes multiple techniques in the realization of her works. With a background in Graphic Design, Photography and professional experience in Art Direction for Dramaturgy, she moves fluently through different languages in her search for original expression. Themes concerning the natural world are constantly present in her work. She is currently focused on Macro Photography of natural environments which are then digitally altered to achieve her artistic purposes. From her unique approach, she transforms her Botanical Macro Photographies into pieces of original imagery.

"During the COVID-19 Quarantine, I started shooting macros of a variety of succulents I have at home, but the "Mother of Thousands" really spoke to me. There is a sense of nostalgia because it reminds me of my daughter, who was away from home, living in Berlin to study music. At a time when everything seemed a little out of control, there was a sense of hope as I saw strength in those tender images that embody motherhood and letting go, themes that were changing my world at that moment".



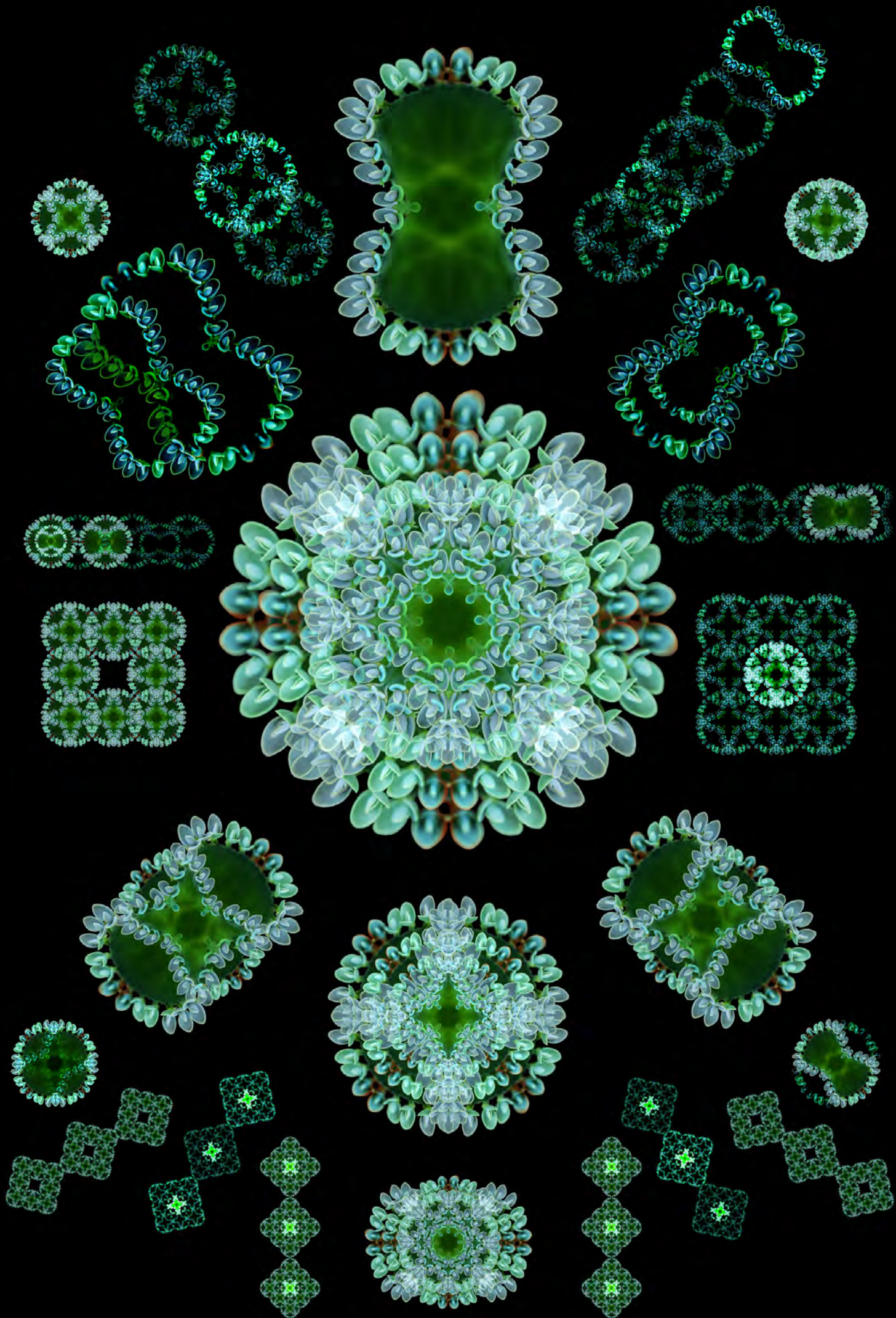
What type of art do you make and why?

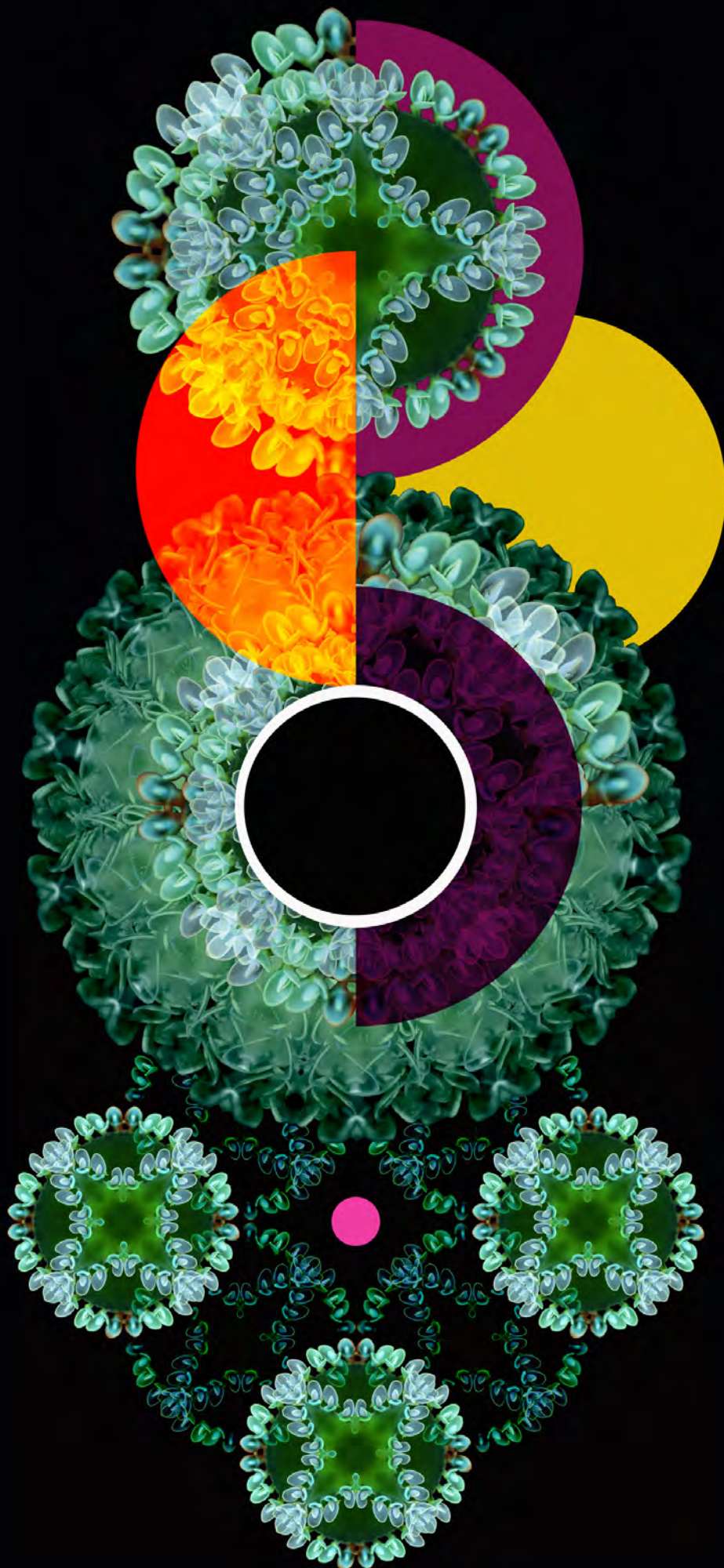
Currently, I classify my works as Mixed Media. I always start from photographic practice as a conceptual, formal, and artistic exercise. After calibrating the images, I carry out the interventions, which, despite being digital, they bring out techniques of Painting, Collage, Drawing, and Watercolor. Besides my involvement with technology, I am also a person with manual skills, who's very fascinated by tactile material production, aiming to pass these sensations in my digital treatment, therefore, prioritizing textures and layers in my compositions. In addition, I investigate the materialization of the image and its virtual presentation, experimenting with sound added on top of my images, thus, originating Video Artworks.

What inspires you?

I always perceive nature as our driving force, seeking, in its aesthetics, to explore and recreate its transformative energy as a whole. Thus, I direct my gaze to this world of deep, sensitive, and ephemeral forms, colors, and textures abundant with life. In my research, I travel through various fields of interest within the world of Literature, Art, and Science. For "Mantras Series", scientists such as Ernest Haeckel and Goethe (who in "The Metamorphosis of Plants" defends "The concept of the archetypal leaf", which considers floral organs as modified leaves...), challenged me while working on creating a system through variations of original organic forms, recreating digital compositions of modern "Naturaliums", aesthetically based on scientific discoveries from the 18th and 19th centuries.







What does generosity mean to you as an artist?

As an artist, generosity to me is in the sensitive gaze, capable of perceiving details and hidden beauties. Giving meaning to contrasts and adding collective memories and experiences to your work, so it can dialogue with others, the spectators, as well. It is also in presenting, through artistic expression, your inner vision of the world and your inspirations. I believe this could touch certain people as they see the world around them in a new light. Generosity is in this flow of exchange.



How has your practice change overtime?

My creative work has crossed many paths. From Graphic Production to Audiovisual, with breaks in Watercolor Painting and Collage. Photography is the only constant in my artistic approach, as I have been doing it for over 30 years. From the practice of analog techniques to contemporary digital techniques, I accumulate images. But in 2020, due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, while restricted in my freedom of movement like everyone else in the world, I was experiencing a decrease in my photographic work, which I carried out mostly outdoors. Unable to travel, I nurtured the practice of Botanical Illustration as a meditative exercise in self-expression and began to practice Macro Photography. This movement triggered a different photographic practice in me. Pointing my Macro Lens at the plants around me, I saw a Microcosm, full of these little wonders that surround us, and that helped me adapt to those days of uncertainty. Those times spent inside also allowed me to experiment with digital interventions on those images captured in my private universe, my home. It brings a new expression to my work and it's definitely a turning point in my artistic career.



JONATHAN SMITH



Jonathan is an oil painter based in Otley in Yorkshire. Self-taught, he synthesizes memories, sketches, and photographs to put down on canvas his concepts of art, light, and landscape. His inspiration lies in the countryside around him and in the shifting light and weather through the seasons. However, he has recently begun to explore the environmental concerns of modern society through the classic forms of landscape painting.

"I have painted landscapes for many years and through this have an intimate knowledge of my surrounding area. It is impossible to ignore the effect that climate change is having on the planet and though we may feel far from the epicenter of these changes, they do affect us as well. I have thus begun to explore themes of climate change, both from a negative and positive outlook."



What inspires you?

I find inspiration in my immediate surroundings. I am a great follower of the work of John Carlson, the American painter. He firmly believed that one should not travel the world looking for inspiration. Rather the artist should look around him at the places he knows and loves to draw out the beauty and the inspiration. This should then be depicted in such a way to try and convey the emotional response of the painter at the moment the scene was noted.

I have a deep love of the Yorkshire Dales and wander its forests, rivers, and moors looking for inspiration in areas that I know intimately. This means that often I am inspired by a change of light, an atmospheric condition, or a sunrise that fundamentally alters the view that I know so well.

Who are your biggest influences?

My biggest influences are English landscape painters such as John Constable, the Barbizon group of painters, in particular Corot and Daubigny, and the 19th-century Itinerant school of Russian painters such as Repin and Shishkin.

What type of art do you make and why?

In a typical landscape, one can be painting ephemera such as clouds, light, and mist and, in the same picture, be depicting rock, trees, and buildings. These very different motifs all require a very different way of painting and yet all those different elements must sit together in the picture plane. Because of this, oil paint is the most wonderful medium – it can be applied loosely, thinly, impasto, etc to create wonderful textures and contrasts.

What does your work aim to say?

It is important to me that my paintings reflect my emotions at the time. It is in this sense that painting differs so much from photography, in that a photograph can show a color-accurate, pinpoint detail of a scene, but only painting can depict a response that reflects the viewer – these emotions can range from joy, elation, even fear and trepidation.



What is the role of an artist in society?

The role of an artist in society depends very much on the nature of the artist and their work. Many artists look to reflect society and its issues back at the viewer, to challenge and provoke. Such work is invaluable but for me, I seek to find beauty and spirituality in the world around us.

One of the unsaid but most challenging issues facing mankind is a brutal disconnect from Nature. We move through our concrete spaces, surrounded by strangers, harried, stressed, and decoupled from the world. Nature, the environment, seems at a distance. The clouds go unnoticed. The trees are ignored. Yet these things are crucial to our well-being, both in a physical sense but also a mental one. For me, my role is to remind people that these places still exist, there is peace and tranquility to be found; there are dark spaces, empty spaces; spaces where the soul can be uplifted and the mind can empty. I would like to think that my work brings these moments into the life of the viewer.



How do you work?

When I find a scene or motif that inspires me, I begin my making sketches and taking photographs. These act as reference material for creating the composition back in my studio. Then I will stand and memorize the scene – I will reflect on the light, the sounds, the wind, noises, sensations, and my feelings as I stand there. I will try to memorize the forms and the general aspect of the scene.

In the studio, once the composition is outlined, the reference material is sidelined and I paint mainly from memory. In this way, I try to put my emotions and feelings into the work in order that the viewer can have a sense of the moment as well.



DAWN GAIETTO



Dawn Gaietto is a lens-based practitioner working and living in London. Her doctoral research, entitled *What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman]* was completed at the Slade School of Fine Art, University College London. Her research is centered on examining small components of nonhuman agency, allowing for momentary lapses in preconceived notions, and exploring the impacts of nonhumans acting upon and influencing humans. Recently she has been in residence at LABVERDE in Manaus, Brazil; and recent publications include *Trace: Journal for Human-Animal Studies*, *Espacio Fronterizo*, and *Time to Waste*. Recent exhibitions include the installation of a functional pigeon loft within a gallery space. This intervention allowed for a potential reconfiguring of viewership — creating new formulations of sustainability — both in the art-making practices and a wider practice of being-in-the-world.

The images in *Unfixed Consciousness/Positive Unconsciousness* are manifestations of the collective agency between the mechanical, technological, and atmospheric elements as well as my own as composer and interpreter. This was done by building an imaging device that triggers the shutter through changes in the temperature and humidity as detected by an SHT11x sensor that queried the environment once a minute. This device was deployed in several archetypical ecosystems throughout Alachua County for an eighteen-hour period. The measurements of temperature and humidity were selected as parameters for this project due to their relevance to the shifting climate in North-Central Florida.



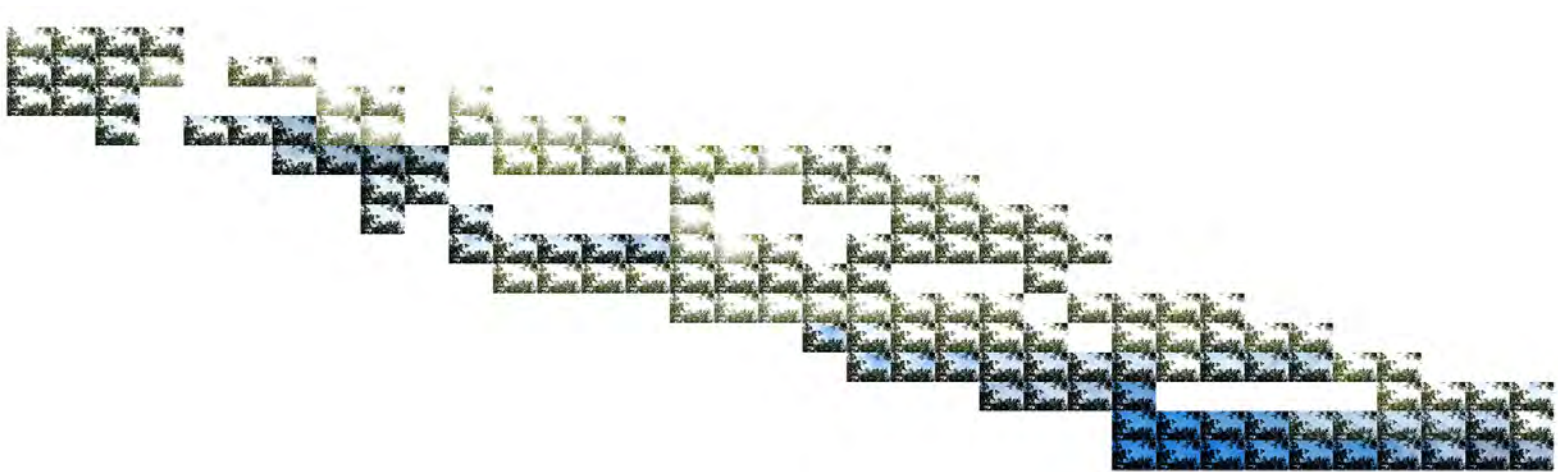


What themes do you pursue?

I make work as a practice of asking questions, not seeking to create nor provide any answers. Largely my work centers on questions of how I as a human am a part of the larger ecological systems in which I exist and how an artistic practice helps me and others to understand these complex and intricate relationships.

What is your background?

I grew up in Ohio before moving around the US quite a bit, and then moved to the UK for school and have been here since. I fell into being an artist. I began studying photography and practiced photography professionally a bit before teaching at a community college. From this teaching position, I realized that I was much more interested in critical theory and the philosophies underpinning artistic practice than I was in photography as a professional activity. I never wanted to be an artist so to speak, I am still reticent to call myself one now as I feel unqualified on multiple levels, but I do have an artistic practice. My earliest memories of making art are centered around asking questions, "What am I doing here?" "What does this mean?" "What do others think when they see this?" The practice of questioning is still a primary undercurrent in my work.



Does your work comment on current social or political issues and how?

Yes, my work is all grounded in the methodology of anthropocentric art. Anthropocentric art at its base is a process of artistic practice which actively works to de-center the human in the production and reception of the artwork. Sometimes this means deploying aspects of making to which I do not have control or it could involve aspects of viewing which create a relational viewing dependent upon the viewer and their approach to the work. For instance, I transformed a historical observatory into a functional pigeon loft on the campus of UCL. The observation of this work would be radically transformed by the approach of a visitor. Would they see a functional loft or a blank architecture? This depended on their physical approach and if they would scare away the residents . . . This aspect of relationality in viewing is essential in the consideration of a work of anthropocentric art.

I developed the concept of anthropocentric art as the basis of my Ph.D. research project, *What is happening here? [exploits of the nonhuman]*. This was a practice-led research project. I proposed anthropocentric art to be a relational logic opening a state of re-enchantment for the viewer, allowing for the emergence of visible nonhuman agencies. My development of anthropocentric art followed two lines of inquiry: 'How can the practice of artwork reveal nonhuman agencies?' and, 'What types of representation are most revealing of nonhuman agency to a human audience?' My practical methodology begins with my working theory, testing variations of representation through experiments, generating diagrammatic arguments, enacting these diagrams in space, and developing analytic tools to understand how works impact viewers. I propose that the resulting art objects are not representations of theory but embodiments, extending beyond representation and generating spaces of function — the revelation of nonhuman agencies. I work through modes of non-Cartesian representation, creating a system of connective tissues, and conceptual fibers of understanding the relational space between the real/represented through a state of re-enchantment — a space where the real and the represented are equally present/erased. The works presented within the project and beyond are works with animate nonhumans as present and active subjects; drawing from social, political, cultural, and ecological histories to seduce the viewer into a state of re-enchantment with the present and past nonhumans. I propose the viewer is key to the entirety of this project, to change perspectives from cultural narcissism to that of a relational and connected existence. The layering of types of representation within each installation of work is intended to destabilize the viewer and allow for new ideas and thoughts to emerge — to generate a space of shifting perspectives.



What does your art mean to you?

My practice is led by research and the formulation of questions, then I develop an approach to transform the questions into artistic acts or works. In these stills from Encountering her presence, I had observed a fox's ongoing and deepening curiosity about my dog and my dog's reciprocal responses. These curiosities extended into a sharing of space which created a long series of video works culminating in this triptych video and poem. My process is about extending questions from thoughts into actions that provoke further questions or possibly proposals, but not answers. In En(act)on I simply put a sign out into the world and then waited for passersby to act upon the object. I waited to see what would happen next. Art to me is about the encounter, the relationality of the encounter, and how that can transform one's perspective.

ALICE JOY WEBB



"I am whomever I choose to be at any given moment. I am energy. I am conscious awareness. I am love. I am joy. I am a powerful creator. I am infinite possibilities. I am a part of the universe and made of stars. Whom are you choosing to be today, in this now moment? I'm an intuitive acrylic artist living in Cambridge with my animal family. I'm inspired every day by nature and I love vibrant colours. I appreciate just how much being around different colours can affect my mood and energy. Some are soothing and peaceful, while others are joyful, energising or uplifting. It is my intention to harness the powerful, positive energies of colour in my work so that they can support you and your energy when you take a piece home. I create for my soul and I hope it speaks to yours. With lots of love and appreciation."



What type of art do you make and why?

I make vibrant, colorful, intuitive acrylic art. I infuse it with supportive energies through the use of colors, messages, symbols, and a whole lot of love. I make art like this as it can talk to your subconscious, help to change your energy, and brighten up your environment.



Why did you choose to be an artist?

Painting makes me feel good. My professional life has changed a few times over the years but I have painted throughout. For a long time, I didn't love myself enough to fully honor this creative gift. Since starting to prioritize my artwork, I have found it to be incredibly healing.



What does your work aim to say?

Each piece has something different to say but all of them aim to encourage you to slow down a little, notice how you feel, and smile

What inspires you?

The natural world inspires me; from the stars above to the dandelions growing in my garden.



'Dandelions Awaken'

Imagine it's that time in the morning before the dandelions wake up. It is Spring and the sun is coming up with all the energy of promise and blessings that a new day brings. All around is peace, the light streams through the long grass, gently warming and caressing the dandelions who are about to awaken. They know what to do; just breathe and open in the light. The soothing and yet refreshing greens in this piece bring harmony, balance, and healing. Green represents our interconnectedness with nature, with abundance and it is the color of the heart chakra. The yellows are cheerful, invigorating, and refreshing and the touch of blue adds a peaceful feeling. This piece will support you to start your day feeling joyful, refreshed, and ready for anything.



SAMIRA DEBBAH



Samira DEBBAH is an artist painter and sculptor based in Morocco. She is an emerging artist, working in various media including fine art, and sculpture. She was always interested in art her entire life. The passion for creation came to her from childhood. She is a self-taught artist. Her last exhibition was at Pocket star gallery in Greece.

"My work is the interpretation of everything I am, what I connect with the most in life, especially my sentimental side. I put everything I have into it and if I am in love with it which is when I stop."

"I like to create art that gives the possibility to the viewer to interpret it according to his perception and his vision. To create a debate between him and his deepest unique interpretation. I don't limit myself to just one style or concept. I like to play with shapes and nuances to create a unique combination."



What does your art represent?

I will say my style is the interpretation of everything I am, and what I connect with the most in life, especially my sentimental side. I focus more on what I want to convey as a message through my work. I think the content of the work conveys the deeper meaning and message behind the artist's artwork.

What does your work aim to say?

I love to create art that gives the possibility to the viewer to interpret it according to his perception and his vision. To create a debate between him and his deepest unique interpretation. Also, I hope my art inspires artists to accept themselves and their art without being afraid to be judged.



What inspires you?

Mostly from anywhere and anything. For example, I get inspired by my environment and emotions. For me, Art is a way to release my feelings and ideas.

How do you work?

I walk into a blank canvas with just putting anything like lines, and colors and I start to follow the process with no plan or strategy other than following my intuition, doing what seems good to me, and adjusting the course as I go. I put everything I have into it and if I am in love with it which is when I stop the painting. About sculpture, I start by sketching the concept. Choose the appropriate materials to present my idea then I start to work on it.



SADEH GEORGE



George grew up in Lebanon, did medical school and specialized in Anesthesiology in Beirut, displaced by the horrors of a savage civil war, been a full-time mother for 14 years, and did a part-time BA in Fine Arts in the UK, then specialized in Psychiatry in London.

All through that time, she practiced visual arts, exhibited, and wrote poetry.

At the moment she is a full-time artist and poet, exhibiting actively, and is a member of Riverside Artists Group.

Fascinated by the human figure in motion, I have used many mediums to express the emotions evoked by dance, sports, and other various human activities.

Having been a doctor, a dancer, and having worked as an anesthetist in a war zone must have informed and inspired my art.



What type of art do you make and why?

I seek poeticism and mysticism in my artwork. As we live in a dystopian world of bigotry and injustices, I feel that we need more poetry and magic.

What does your work aim to say?

My artwork aims to enchant the viewer and lift them to a magical spiritual level, but also provokes them to think and pose questions about the subject matter. It seeks to widen their horizons beyond mundane daily events.

What does your art represent?

My art represents the passion for inseparable suffering, beauty and love in the human soul.



What inspires you?

I Am inspired by beauty but also by suffering, poetry, music, dance, and the human figure in motion and emotion.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

I did not choose to be an artist. Art chose me as its servant and messenger, or maybe I was an artist in a previous life! After high school, I studied medicine at university and specialized in Anaesthetics to please my parents, all the while doing art classes in the evenings and on weekends. After being displaced to the UK, and raising a young family, I did a part-time degree in Fine Arts at Central St Martin's. Art is an obsession rather than a choice for me.



Who are your biggest influences?

Am influenced by Botticelli, Carravaggio, and most Renaissance artists, but also by the Fauvists and the Expressionists.

How do you work?

I tend to work intuitively, letting an idea be explored, germinate, develop and become a finished work, but it may still go on changing, developing, and even becoming part of another work.

What do you do except being an artist?

I dance and write poetry but anything else required for daily life and development.



SARA TWOMEY



Sara Twomey is from East London, now she paints from her spare room studio in South London! In the USA where she completed Trompe-l'oeil Murals, taught her the optical possibilities of painting. She worked at Science Ltd as the Studio assistant Manager to the artist Damien Hirst. She currently works as a Pop Up Painter in London! Has exhibited in group shows including an international group exhibition at the Cork Street Open in London in 2013 & 2014, Rogue Space Gallery NY, and the 2018 Spectrum Miami Art Fair. She is currently in an online exhibition called the Butterfly Effect.

"My Black Paintings are all about the light, black is a spacious color, almost like a void. The paintings are never static as they are interacting with patterns and symbols on the surface of the painting. As the series develops the shapes are too, I started with two dimensions, now I am painting three dimensions and now using a Gold leaf. I feel there are more dimensions to explore. The light causes the structure to appear and disappear. The viewer has the desire to fix the now into an organized pattern, but the light shifts constantly expressing the inevitability of change."



What type of art do you make and why?

I make abstract Paintings because that way I can get passed any kind of narrative or story, that is a block to me and keeps my mind on the surface, I want to paint from my guts and abstract painting does this for me. Also, the paintings are made using Black paint and have an element of geometric form, Black paint is helping me to discover new shapes that enable me to work with a kind of light catcher and I play with the many different dimensions that are revealed through the process of making the work.

What inspires you?

Light inspires me, I am interested in how dark black paint can hold light and absorb light too, the idea that they are opposites, light and dark is what I love to mess around with.



What does your work aim to say?

Black is an end point in colour, it is an absence of any colour. I am painting nothing but a void. However black paint captures light, and can absorb light. So I use Black paint as I am painting 'nothing' but light. It is difficult to see the same painting twice from anything other than a fixed position. There is a conflict between the desire to fix the now into an organised pattern and interpretation and the inevitability of change. The painting asks the viewer to consider the implications of the here and now.

Does your work comment on current social or political issues?

My art doesn't comment on any political or current issues, I am almost using my painting as an escape from the real world! One of the reasons I started painting is because it helps me feel better.



LARRY WOLF



Larry Wolf was born, raised, and still living in Los Angeles, California, he has spent more than 40 years as a criminal defense attorney. Over the past decade and a half, he has slowly and methodically transitioned his hobby, painting, into a successful second career as an abstract artist. His award-winning vibrant, colorful, and textured artwork is collected under the umbrella of "A Brush with the Law." Larry Wolf's pieces have been featured in countless magazines and displayed all over California, in galleries across the United States, and as far away as Germany and China.

"My work utilizes an intriguing and unique process whereby I push acrylic paint through the back of a silkscreen canvas. Traditionally, silkscreens are used for making prints on paper or T-shirts or any number of materials, but then the screens are washed and reused. For me, the silkscreen becomes a permanent host for one-of-a-kind artwork. The process results in strikingly vibrant abstract compositions, layered in eye-catching shapes and textures."



Why did you choose to be an artist?

Four decades as a criminal defense attorney taught me to think creatively and see things differently in finding ways to represent my clients. As the years passed, this part of my brain that brought inspiration to my thinking began shouting ever more loudly to be let out in a way that did not involve legal arguments before a judge and jury.

Slowly, I began to move from courtroom to canvas in expressing my feelings and musings through ever-more-complex abstract art pieces.

I have now retired from my legal practice, but I keep that part of myself alive through my ever-expanding portfolio of abstract artworks that I have collected under the name "A Brush with the Law."



What type of art do you make and why?

I have always created abstract pieces. This open-ended approach to artwork allows me the most freedom and creativity...perhaps more than any other art form. I can apply line, shape, color, and texture in any way that inspires me.

What does your art represent?

My artwork amalgamates many thoughts, emotions, challenges, struggles, and triumphs that I have encountered in my many years on this planet. My experiences guide my hand and brush, expressing most of all the joy I feel in having the freedom to express myself through art.

Indeed, the creation of the art itself, the process I go through in choosing colors and shapes, becomes an integral part of the meaning of the piece. While I certainly create art for the enjoyment of others, each piece remains, at its core, part of my personal journey through life.



What are you doing besides being an artist?

Being a grandfather is perhaps one of the most rewarding gifts that a man can enjoy. Having the luxury of sharing my art with my grandchildren creates a special bond, especially with my young grandson Elliott, who has been developing his own impressive painting style.

Professionally, what is your goal?

My goal is to be able to support my family through the sale of my art. Although it sometimes feels like an unattainable goal, there are so many opportunities that present themselves, such as this very interview, that reassure me that this goal is ultimately achievable.



What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

Sometimes I find I cannot simply “let go” and escape to a place outside my head where I can simply let the artwork flow through me from my spirit into my hand and onto the canvas. Voices fill my brain, analyzing, over-thinking, telling me all of the things I can’t or shouldn’t do. This struggle between conformity and authenticity results in “painter’s block,” temporarily locking my brain into a spiraling prison where true art cannot escape. And when this happens, I find that my only recourse is to take a break—sometimes hours, sometimes days, or even weeks—to meditate, relax, and allow my mind to regenerate itself and once again release its hold on my inner creativity.

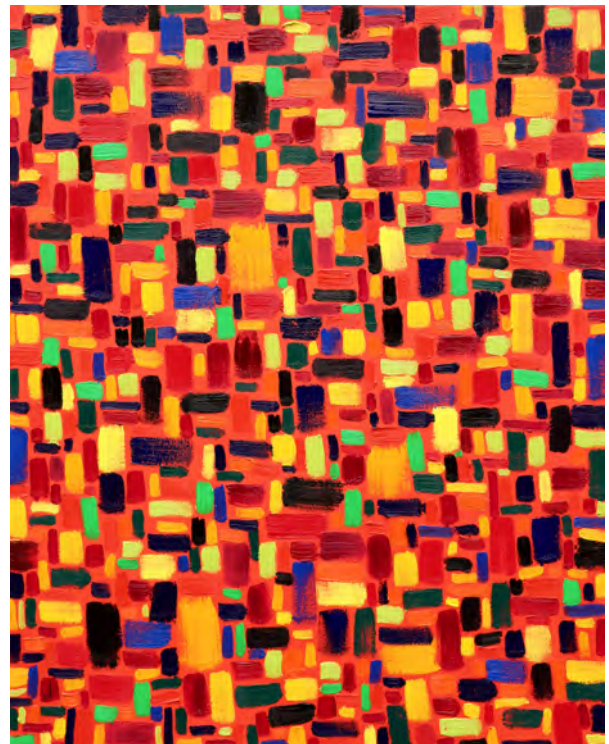


PAUL BUTTERWORTH



"I am an actor and 3rd year BA (Hons) Painting student specializing in abstract expressionism at the University for the Creative Arts - Open College of the Arts campus. I started my painting degree in 2016 when my son went to university and will graduate in 2024. Originally from Yorkshire, I live and work from my home studio in Cambridge."

I act with color for the canvas. As Anthony Hopkins said, acting is all about relaxing, learning your lines so well that you can trust the moment, and letting your subconscious do the work. I believe that the same is true of painting but instead of learning lines you study and practice art. Kirk Varnadoe (MoMA) said that the dream with abstract art is of '... a dream world of point-blank and immediate response.' However, that in-the-moment response always references our life and times, whether on screen or canvas. The abstraction of Mondrian and Pollock describes their life and times as surely as a film by Alfred Hitchcock."

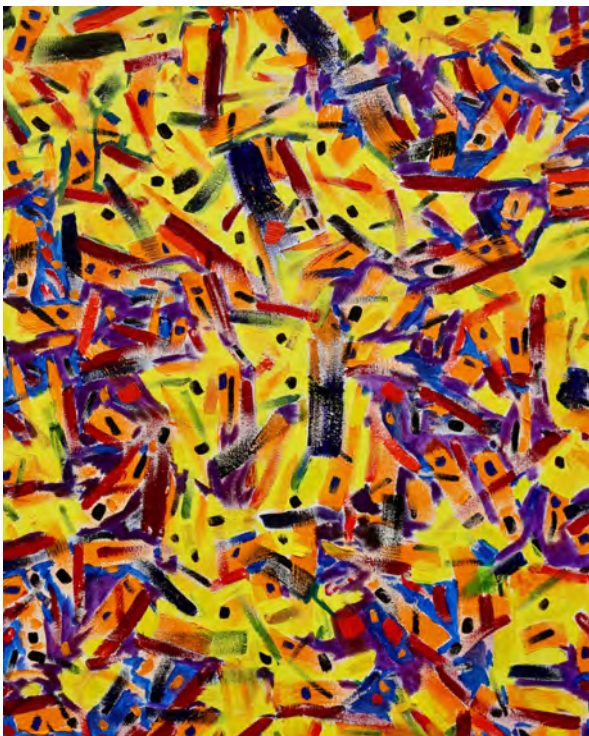


How do you work?

I start a conversation with a canvas by making marks on it and carry on till we've nothing left to say. This can take anything from hours to weeks. I work in oil, and it takes two weeks for the paint to be touched dry... this is a very important part of the process because it means I can live with a painting, it's like getting to know a friend.

What does your work aim to say?

My work isn't conceptual, so I'm not trying to say anything. The meaning is with the viewer. But to steal an idea from Kirk Varnedoe's book 'Pictures of Nothing' – abstract art is a grain of sand in the cultural oyster and society's debate (around it) produces pearls.

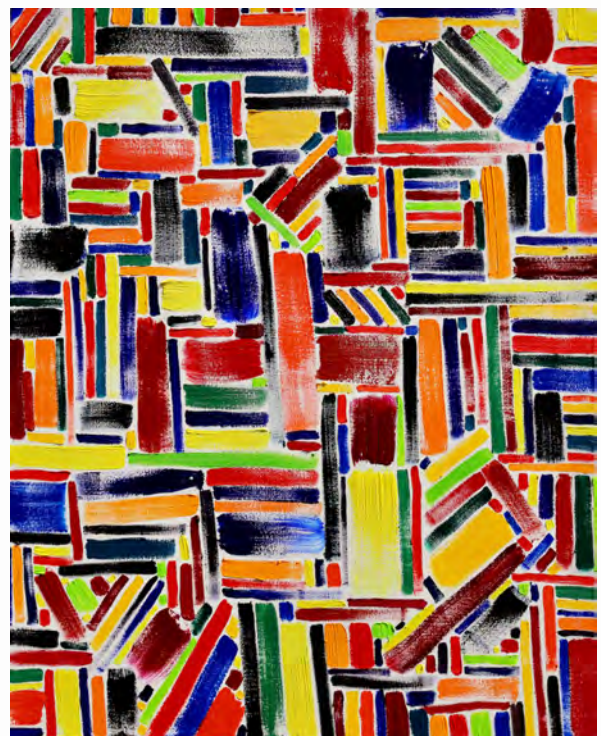


What type of art do you make and why?

Abstraction... because it allows me to be fully in the moment and tune with the canvas. The process is just like acting, you can't remember lines because you wouldn't be natural. You've just got to be fully present and let your subconscious react spontaneously to what's happening around you. With painting, I react to the shapes and colors instead of people. When I was painting figuratively it always felt as if I was referring to something outside myself and this stopped me from being creative.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

Because it's fun. Colors fill me up and transport me – it's a difficult feeling to explain.



What does your art represent?

It represents my life, study, and the times I live in. I think Pollock and Mondrian were as culturally important as Hitchcock. Every abstract artist creates symbols that represent themselves and their society.

What does your art mean to you?

I like people, which is ironic as I live in a little village and spend most of my time working alone. Creating art is like talking to a friend, it's joyous. When my art is complete it stands on its own and goes out into the world so other people can have a conversation with it.

Does your work comment on current social or political issues and how?

Not directly. But every work of art, especially abstraction, is intimately connected to the society it comes from and as such provides a cultural touchpoint for social and political issues.

What is the role of an artist in society?

Multiple roles. To entertain... give pleasure... put forward a point of view... stimulate debate... and be an irritant that lets society see itself with new eyes.

Do you follow any current art trends?

Yes. It's difficult living on the edge of a small town but I try to stay alert to current trends in abstraction. I think abstract art is in dialogue with culture, so as culture changes so does abstract art. I recently discovered JoOne's work... I don't suppose he knows I'm a fan!

What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

As a student I don't have any challenges, I just have fun experimenting... it's very exciting discovering my voice. When I graduate my biggest challenge will be building a career and making connections with the art world.



LARRY GRAEBER



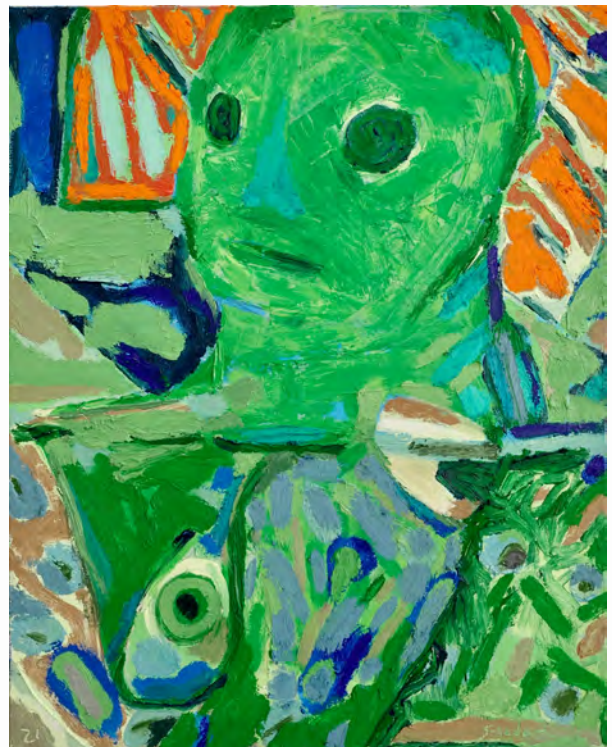
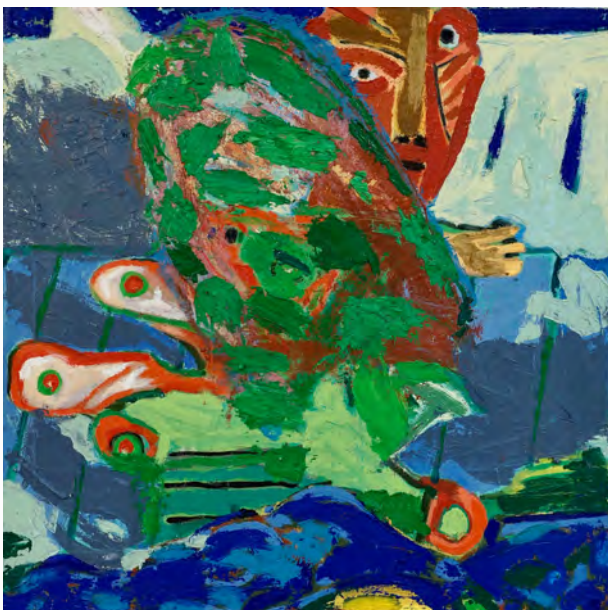
Larry Graeber, a Texas-based artist, considers himself a painter and sculptor. He presently works in San Antonio and Marfa TX studios. He has studied painting, sculpture, printmaking, jewelry, and filmmaking. Today his focus is on painting, sculpture, and works on paper.

Exhibiting began in 1971 with participation in the Texas Painting and Sculpture Exhibition, Dallas Museum of Fine Arts. The first major one-person exhibition was in 1974, Works From a Small Duplex, curated by director John Leeper at the McNay Art Museum, San Antonio Texas.

Published in several regional books, Texas Abstract, Modern/ Contemporary, Art at Our Doorstep, exhibiting regionally, most recent museums exhibit Formal Proof, Blue Star Contemporary 2019.

"After many years of practice, I trust a degree of skill and understanding are inherent in me, conveyed and perceived in my paintings, sculpture, and works on paper.

Intrigued with approximations and the experience of convergences I find myself at the mercy of my medium, my thoughts, and the time at hand. Unfinished work can be revisited and new work can be started. In a given day I may only add to my debris but the engagement has potential and often emerges to fulfill my hope of an intuitive, subjective, coherent product".

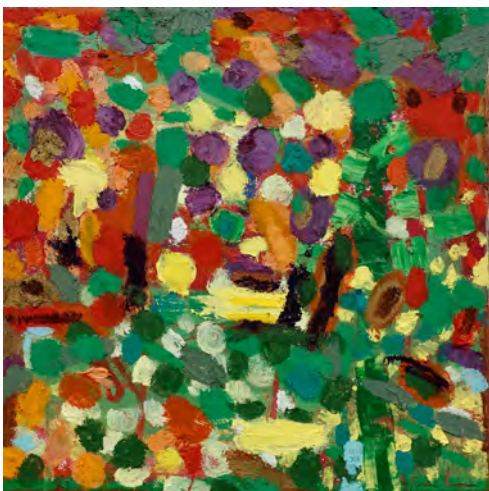


What is your background?

Two years of college with an inquiry into architecture, filmmaking, jewelry making, sculpture, printmaking, and painting. All of which I studied to some degree or another in school, mostly as audited classes. My fieldwork entailed house framing, lumberyard hand, a film grip, waiter and other odd jobs, and a little travel.

What type of art do you make and why?

Today I make moderate scale mixed medium sculptures, moderate size oil paintings, and drawing/collage work on paper. My paintings lend themselves to my social and psychological interest, my sculpture on the other hand tends to be more material and space driven only sometimes taking on references other than themselves. And my works on paper serve as a platform for transitional ideas. I try to keep the three disciplines as exploratory as possible.



What is the role of an artist in society?

It seems to me that trying too hard to be something or another for society resorts to political work that usually becomes irrelevant after a while. But artists who mine their interior realities, and ask questions of themselves and their surroundings usually realize a uniqueness that identifies a consciousness that is a service to society.

How do you know when a painting is done?

Difficult question, I certainly know that mine are not finished after the first approach, at least not my paintings. They can wander around for days, weeks, months, even years and not be finished. Usually though when a painting takes years, it's no longer the painting it was when began. But there is just something about reaching a place where a piece simply sings. Not too much not too little.



How important are titles for you?

I use titles and think of them as a contribution. With the nature of art appealing to the subjective, my titles are either descriptive or subject to my own experience. Providing a title can be a way to furnish a possible entry, or raise questions for the sake of audience appreciation.

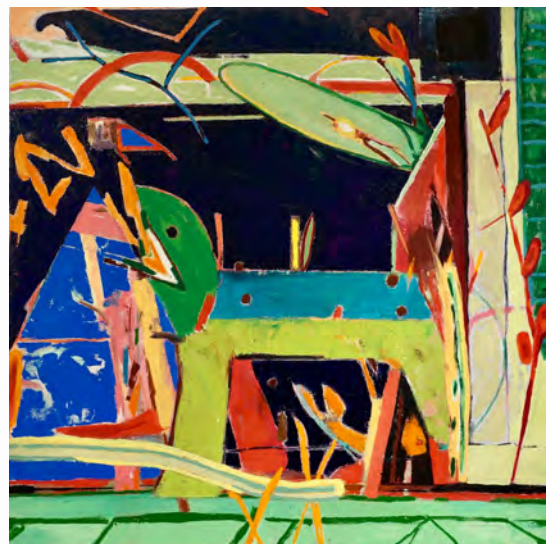
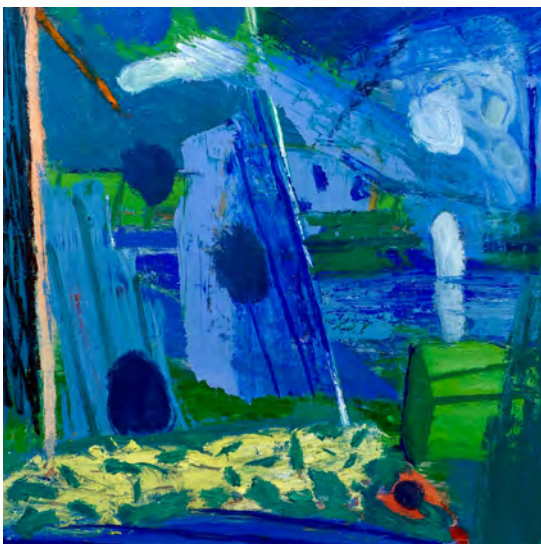
Seldom do my titles come about as a painting is in progress or finished. It might be days or weeks before a piece identifies itself, so I am always on the lookout for titles believing they are part of the same air that my work is when it's being made.

What does your art mean to you?

I don't like the idea of making art as a cathartic experience. However, simply selecting a theme or material to start within and of itself may be cathartic. I'm always intrigued both by the results and implications of a painting; how it visually appears and psychologically resonates. In doing so the work speaks to me as much as it might to someone else and for that reason, I grow a little bit more, maybe understand something a little better, and maybe I've contributed. If so, I'm delighted.

How has your practice changed over time?

I still wish to show as much as I have ever wished, but am less frantic about it. I tried to be at every opening and art community event and made work that was speedy, large in scale, and with audience expectations in mind. Today my work is all that matters, fewer openings more time to myself and more attention to my process and aesthetics, fewer pieces, and less attention to scale.



CECILIA MARTINEZ

Cecilia Martinez is an award-winning, self-taught artist from Jersey City, NJ, USA. She has exhibited in galleries throughout the country, including the National Association of Women Artists Gallery in New York City and the Augusta Savage Gallery at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Her work is also featured frequently in international juried online exhibitions. Additionally, Cecilia's artwork was shown during a segment on Al Jazeera TV, for a piece she created which addressed the issue of gun violence in communities. Cecilia's artwork is also regularly published in art magazines and journals in the United States, United Kingdom, and Europe.



What is your background?

My parents both came from Puerto Rico to the United States early in their lives. I was born in Jersey City NJ USA and have been here ever since. I studied journalism and English literature in college and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts. I've been a writer literally since grammar school and I love it. I love it so much that I made it my career. That is until the visual arts were introduced into my world.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

My journey to becoming a visual artist began quite unexpectedly. My father suffered a severe head injury that left him unable to speak, walk, stand, and even breathe on his own. His injury was so severe that he was admitted into the hospital long-term. Two months later, my father succumbed to his injuries.



He passed away with me by his side, holding his hand, and it is a moment in time I would never forget.

After his death, I searched for an outlet to alleviate the feelings I had developed due to this experience. So I turned to the visual arts as a therapeutic outlet. My father was a visual artist himself, and I thought there would be no better way to be closer to him.

When I first started my artistic endeavors, I created spiritual art. Since then, my style has evolved dramatically as I have become more comfortable with my skills and experimenting with different artistic techniques. I currently work on pop art, collages, and more, yet still focus on the primary reason why I started this journey in the first place – the love of my father.



How do you work?

I don't have an art studio, so most of my work is done either while I sit on my bed with my supplies scattered about and just create, or sprawled out on the living room floor with my tools easily within reach, or on my easel that is transportable so I can work anywhere in my home. It's worked so far, but my hardwood floors have certainly taken a beating for it.



How do you know when a painting is done?

When you begin a painting, you may certainly have an idea in your mind of what the completed piece will look like. But that image is useless. Creating a piece of artwork is never a one-sided task. As you begin and continue working on a piece, other ideas unfold for it and the piece starts to morph and change along with those new ideas until it starts to take on a life of its own. And as an artist, you just have to go with that flow and listen to your heart and creative mind. So the original image you had in your head before you started the piece may work itself throughout the creative process into an entirely different work altogether. And because you go with the flow and listen to your mind and heart, those instincts will let you know when the work is done. A voice in your head will tell you to put the pencil, paintbrush, or whatever down and stop. It is something that just happens automatically.

How important are titles for you?

For me, coming up with titles for my work is extremely difficult. I don't want to give away my thoughts and interpretations about a piece of work through the title. I want to leave my influence out of it so the audience can come up with their own individualized thoughts and feelings about the work. So for my titles, I either try to keep them as generic as possible or as cryptic as possible. I've also changed the titles of certain works several times because I was never really happy with the names I had given the piece in the first place. If I could just name everything "Untitled," I probably would.

YUJIE LI

Yujie Li is an artist based in Guangzhou, China. She completed her Bachelor's degree in Chinese painting from The Guangzhou Academy of fine art in 2020. She studies at the royal college of art.

She is interested in the notion of intimacy in public, and social identity, Yujie Li creates images drawing on her own experiences and memory, as well as thinking about psychology.

She also quite agrees with Stephen Reicher's crowd Theory that human beings shape themselves according to the people around them, Circumstances shape a person. Give her social status. But people who go out in public have the fewest identity constraints. But we can still feel people's chains on themselves. So she wants to capture people's relationships without identifiable material.

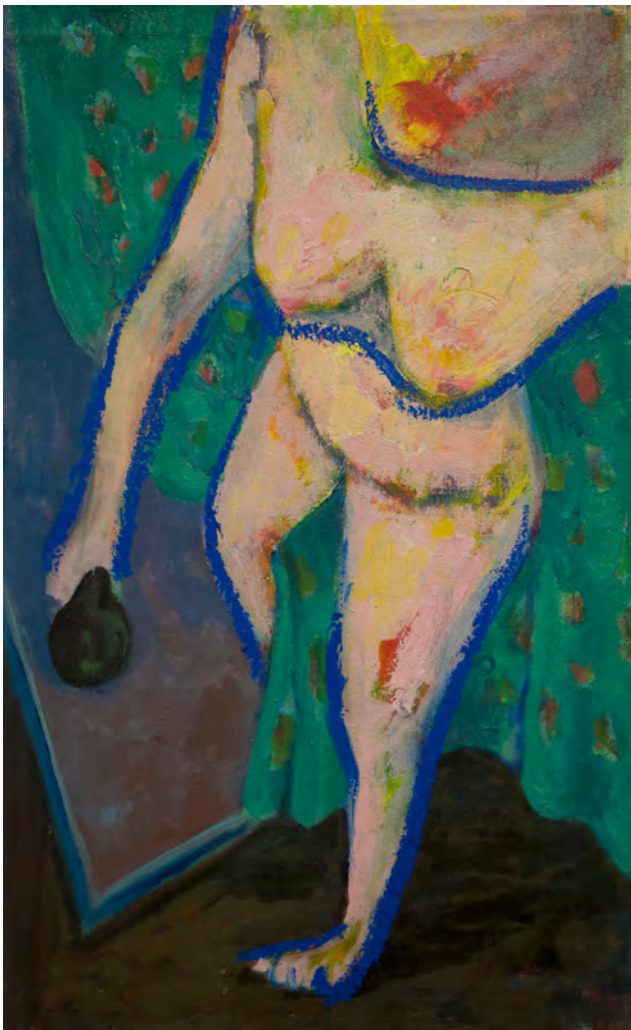


What themes do you pursue?

I am interested in intimacy, social identity, and identity perception. I use my experiences and memories, as well as thinking about psychology, to create images.

What does your art mean to you?

My art for me is the finished work that sees me grow. There is never the most mature work. These works bear witness to my thinking about mankind, society and myself, and such constant thinking is the core of what art should be.



What does your work aim to say?

I depict scenes in public bathrooms to remind people of their perception of self-identity after stripping away their social identity. Because I strongly agree with Stephen Reicher's crowd theory that people shape themselves according to the people around them. The environment will shape a person. It gives her a social identity. But the person who comes to a public place has the least amount of identity bondage. But we can still feel the chains that people put on themselves. So I want to show the social relations of people in an environment where they have taken off the material things that can identify them. People's psychology will change differently when they are used to label themselves with material things and then they are required to completely lose the material things that can be defined.

Why did you choose to be an artist?

My parents spent their lives focused on their profession and were not tempted by anything else. They have always been my role models. From a young age, I knew that I had the same qualities as my parents and that I was very good at sticking to what I loved. Maybe I won't be a great artist, but I will be a painter who keeps on painting. I just keep following my heart.



How do you work?

A year ago, I used to go to public bathrooms to observe people and do some sketches carefully. But now, I am able to remove myself from such an environment and fully examine people. No one cares who you are, so everyone acts more relaxed, everyone is equal, and everyone's differences are only shown in their hearts. I think that's why I never painted my face. I am now becoming more confident and interested in more hidden things and the story behind the painting, rather than showing everything or trying to explain everything. Now I'm more used to being vague



MOULI PAUL



Mouli Paul is a photographer from India and currently doing her Masters in Photography at Plymouth College of Art. Having worked as a commercial photographer for the last 5 years, she moved to the UK six months back to hone her skills and work on her project which she had been aiming to do for years. Her work mostly centers around her own travel experiences and currently, it has taken more of a documentary approach focusing on socially engaged photography.

"My work in this project discusses the notions of home, belonging in a place where I do not belong. Through the exploration of portraiture, inhabited spaces of comfort, and objects which hold memories, I am trying to seek a sense of fulfillment and a feeling of being at home. My current practice is deeply rooted in exploring themes based on liminality and displacement that occur amongst people who inhabit transitional spaces. How do people who experience change and transition build their homes in a place where they don't belong? I am keen to understand the relationship between objects, memory, and what kind of emotions are triggered when you come in contact with old clothing, heirloom objects, and old photographs? "



What type of art do you make and why?

I am a photographer but also occasionally do illustrations. Photography keeps me motivated, and involved and transports me to a meditative state. My practice has kept me grounded and focused throughout the years and this helps me to really make good art.

What is your biggest challenge in being an artist? How do you address it?

Conflict interests when I am working with brands and the aesthetics don't match. I do try to strike a balance and if it doesn't work out at all, I leave the work.



What inspires you?

My surroundings, the colors blue and white, the landscape and socially engaged art

What does your work aim to say?

I am just making art. My aim with my work is to get people thinking. If it's doing that, then I think I am able to create an impact, even if it's in a small way.

What themes do you pursue?

Currently, I am working with the themes based on liminality and displacement. When I am doing commercial work, it's a lot about forms, colors, and textures.



MONICA ESGUEVA



Monica is a Visionary artist now based in Madrid, Spain.

Her art career started as a child, so to speak. Her talent was innate, although later on she took courses at Paris École des Beaux-Arts and studied with renowned painters in France. She started exhibiting her paintings when she was very young, and her artwork has been shown in exhibitions in the United States, Holland, Great Britain, France, Costa Rica, Italy, Greece, and Spain. Several institutions own her artwork as well, such as the Monaco Museum of Modern Art, Latin American Art Museum (Florida, USA), Hewlett-Packard Foundation France, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Zarzuela del Monte (Spain), and Museo Casa Orduña (Spain).

"My art is mostly derived from those visions I have while in a meditative state of mind. My purpose is to transcend the physical world, inspiring the viewer to reach a higher ground and perceive the light that is within us all. As William Blake wrote, "If the doors of perception were cleansed then everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite." I paint to express this beyond words, even beyond the visual senses. I paint vibrations that aspire to transcend the physical world. I create to expand the light, aligned to Robert Schumann's perspective that "the artist's vocation is to send light into the human heart".



Who are you? What is your background?

I was born in Madrid (Spain), but I always had a thirst to see the world, explore, venture into the unknown, to have an interesting life. I have visited 115 countries, including many where I had gone on my own. By being able to let go of my comforts and daring to go into the unknown, I have had so many adventures all over the world. I have slept in the house of a prostitute in Thailand to understand their predicament and write a book about it. Working as a volunteer in an orphanage in Tanzania taught me the value of life, seeing those children that had nothing and yet were full of joy. Spending time with a tribe in the jungle of The Philippines showed me how to appreciate everything we take for granted in the West. Living and studying Buddhism for months at a time in the valley of Kathmandu or the feet of the Indian Himalayas forced me to become more resilient and adaptable. Traveling helps alleviate the monotony of existence and rejuvenates one's soul. In my case, it has also helped me to be more compassionate and open-minded, qualities that I consider essential in art.

What does art mean to you?

Somehow art represents people's collective minds. Art is not a mere amusement, distraction, or fashionable investment. Art can provide evidence of contact with the universal creative force beyond time. Art has a function and a mission to interpret the world, reveal the condition of the soul, encourage our higher nature, and



awaken the spiritual faculties within every individual.

The challenge to artists today is to integrate the history of our human culture with our own deepest and highest personal insights, creating worthy works of art and making a living at it.

What does your work aim to say?

As a multi-faceted creative person, there is an art in which medium I find myself working in. I use both writing and painting to empower each person's capacity to transform their lives and to build bridges to the soul. There is an intense focus on and true presence in each project I undertake. At the same time, there is freedom and flexibility built into my role as an artist because I am not limited to just one art form. I have been drawn to writing books to show how to achieve inner peace and, somehow, I do the same thing with my paintings. I bring a piece of this transcendent world into every artwork I create. Art can guide us to connect with our inner light, illuminating the shadows and pains of our current predicaments. When people are deeply moved by art, they resonate with their spiritual truth, with the essence of who they are. It is my utmost aim that by contemplating my works, one may momentarily have a glimpse of our immortal light, remembering the silent center of the mystery that is our very soul.

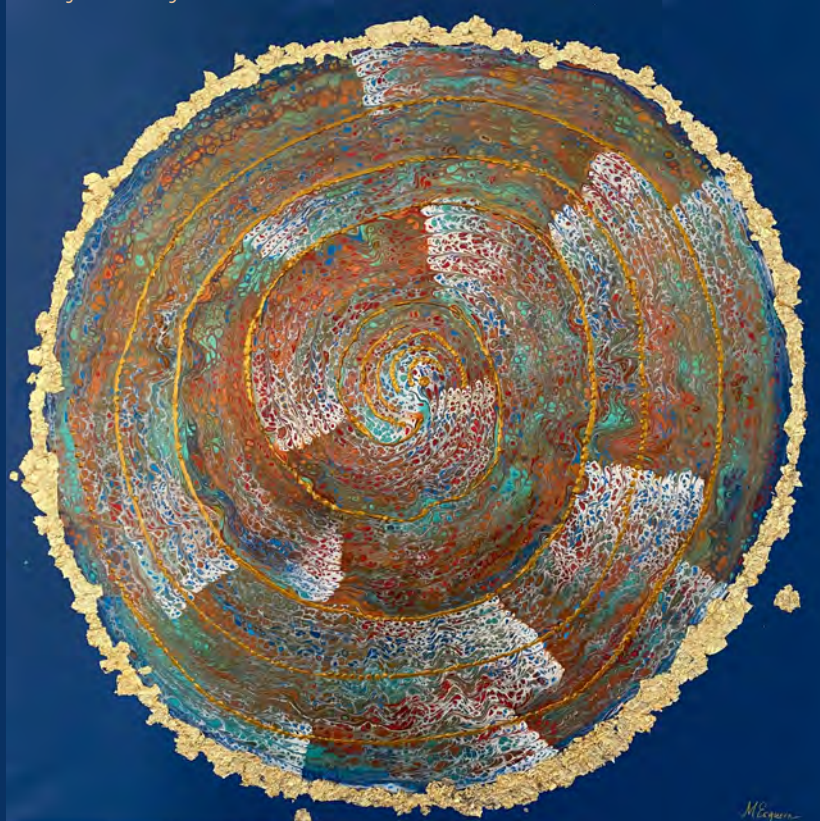
What inspires you?

My writing and painting come from an inner calling. There is a spiritual force that prompts me to express the essence of our being, which is fulfilling, loving, and magnificent beyond measure. Following this inner guidance, I have devoted my life to teaching and sharing ways out of suffering and into the inner peace and joy that is our true nature. Through my paintings, I want the viewer to feel the beauty that surrounds us, aiming at portraying a vision of expanded awareness and the underlying sacredness of all that is. My art is mostly derived from visions I have while in a meditative state of mind. My purpose is to transcend the physical world, inspiring the viewer to reach a higher ground and perceive the light that is within us all. As William Blake wrote, "If the doors of perception were cleansed, then everything would appear to man as it is, Infinite."



What is the role of an artist in society?

I believe the artist's role is to be a leader and a visionary: Not only to think outside the box but to be outside the box, contributing to the change we want to see in the world. Since we are all interconnected, the energy field of each individual has the potential to influence the collective through creative acts. Mystical visions and experiences motivate us to question our assumptions about life and the world, challenging us to live more profoundly. The deeper an artist penetrates into their own infinitude, the more able they are to transmit that state. Making art (and sharing it) is a way for me to integrate those visions of a better world into daily life. Art is a natural expression of each artist's idiosyncrasy. Our most meaningful creative work comes from deep inside, and it is an affirmation of the universal energy. The creativity of artists is actually cosmic creativity manifesting through us. The difficulty for most artists is to get themselves out of the way and let the spirit do its work. When art serves a greater purpose, it seeds the unconscious of both the artist and the viewer with a positive influence. Having the right motivation, art becomes a service to the divine by being an uplifting assistant to a suffering world. Not all artists consider that art can be a spiritual practice. But with the proper motivation and focus, it can be so. For me, it is a daily exercise that enables me to keep developing the qualities of mental clarity, wisdom, service, and access to revelations of higher mystical states of awareness. My work is a contemplative method —as much as creative expression— that allows me to share my spiritual journey.



BOBBI MATHESON



Bobbi Matheson is a digital artist born in Jamaica. She eventually settled down in Florida to start her career as an artist.

"I'm a digital artist who dotes on the formidable yet pacifying allures of femininity. There is power within the feminine as well as the self. This power comes from embracing both its strengths and weaknesses, its perfections and its flaws. I chose digital art as my medium due to its flexibility and ease of use. Perfection isn't a necessity, so it gives me the space to focus on the execution of my ideas rather than the technical process. I believe that digital art is birthing a new age of art and I'm excited to be a part of it."





Who are you?

I'm a digital artist who dotes on the formidable yet pacifying allures of femininity. There is power within the feminine as well as the self. This power comes from embracing both its strengths and weaknesses, its perfections and its flaws.

What is your background?

I lived in Jamaica until I was 10, then I moved to the US. This was in search of a better life. My earliest memory was hiding underneath my bed to avoid possible bullets coming through the walls. Jamaica had gone under martial law due to the people being upset about a US intervention. Thankfully, the war within the capital never reached my home, but many who were closer were affected. I believe this event spurred my parents to take action, and so I moved to the US.

How has your practice changed over time?

Initially, I worked with just a pen (sometimes a 2B pencil) and paper. I remember drawing anime-influenced characters in my notebooks while I zoned out from class lectures. I was also drawn to plants. I loved sitting outside and doodling them on a piece of paper.

Around the age of 17, I got my first drawing tablet (a Huion!) and worked through Photoshop. I loved that through digital art, you're free to backstep and erase as much as possible without any consequences. This allowed me to further explore my art without the fear of permanence.

Eventually, I upgraded to the iPad/Apple pencil duo and have been using that ever since. I still draw with a pen and paper since they are my first love. I love the feeling of a pen running across paper.



What does your work aim to say?

I want to encourage the expression of the vulnerable, the messy, and the ugly. No one likes to admit that they aren't perfect. That they can do wrong, that they go through messy situations, that their life is imperfect. I show the parts of me I don't want to show through my art because I want the world to heal by embracing its faults. I believe that the human condition is to be imperfect, and that's okay! It's freeing when you realize it's not the end of the world when you reveal your imperfections. In fact, you're celebrated for taking that first step.



Who is your biggest influence?

Studio Ghibli. Through art, they tell amazing stories about people, imperfect people. They, however, are never looked down upon because of their faults. If their motivation is non-malicious, they are given sympathy and patience. They are accepted despite those faults.

Studio Ghibli taught me that through art, you can tell the story of the people. You can show imperfections as a result of simply being alive.



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