

# Collect Art

Abstract Art | Special Edition | N 15



George Chaushba | Untitled, Acrylic on paper, 60x40, 2021



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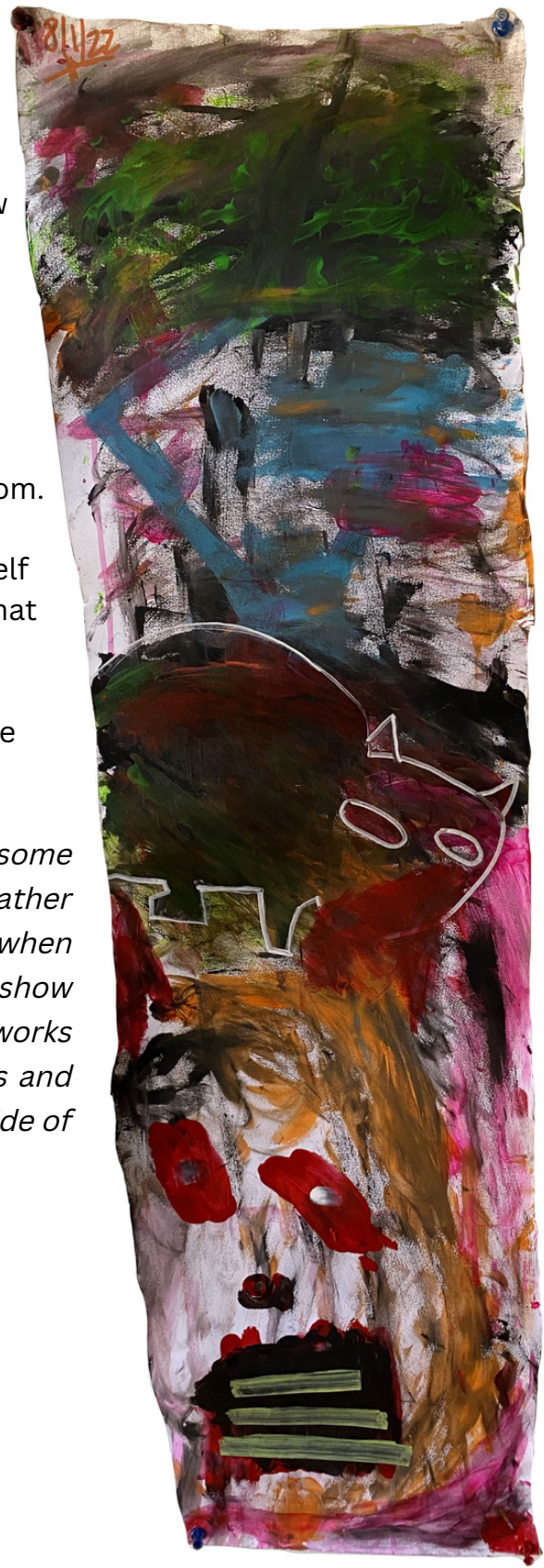
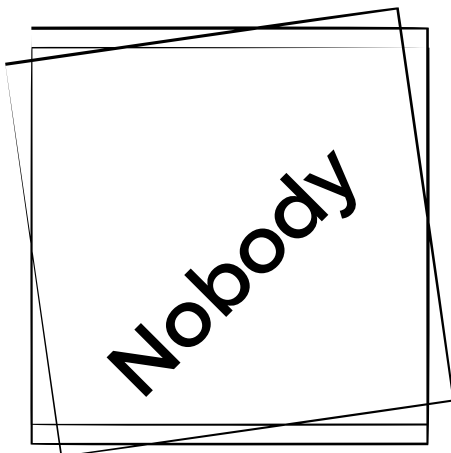
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From feeling alone and lost Nobody picked up a brush to see what he can create. Nobody first started painting in 2021. He did it to find a way to be independent and to find ways to kill time. Nobody didn't know that he was secretly finding a creative way of expressing himself. Nobody completed about 100+ paintings thus far from the awakening of his creative expression in 2021. He doesn't consider himself an artist but rather a person who's trying to find a way to kill time out of boredom. Nobody only creates because he feels like that's the only time he's at peace with himself and the thoughts. Painting has taught him that there are no mistakes that can ever happen on a canvas. So he paints freely without any thought. Thoughts in his painting mode make him irritated and he finds himself in music.

*"I want to show the world that there are some creatives that don't see art as a passion rather than a lifestyle. Where art is literally life when they don't create they feel dead. I want to show the world how that specific creator's mind works in their creations. I want to show the limits and the boundaries that these artists push outside of their artwork".*



Mode  
Acrylic & mixed media on paper, 90x25cm, 2022



**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I was born in the Dominican Republic but I'm from New York City. Being from 2 different parts of the world affects my work by having me see the art world in NYC and then not being able to find one back home. So when I tend to paint sometimes I'll want to create something connected to my roots.

**What is your background?**

Idk how to answer that question honestly, I'm coming from doing many different things. I'm into the fashion world and the food industry. I've done a little bit of everything when it comes to the fashion industry. I always had a passion for food since I found out that it connects people in a language that can't be spoken.

**Why did you choose to be an artist?**

I never did. I actually dispose of that word, I wouldn't call myself an artist since for me an artist is someone who has a vision or an idea to create something. For me I just have to create, there's no vision or ideas only motion in that time and that motion defines and changes the current vision.

**What inspires you?**

Life and my drive inspire me the most. Life simply because it gave me the opportunity to meet all the amazing creatives and people I've met so far. They all have pushed me to go further. My drive keeps me hungry from wanting to outdo myself.

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

The object is more. There's no meaning to my work only if you give it one. To me, it's just a piece of canvas that I add color to.

Equal

Acrylic & mixed media on paper, 121x38cm, 2022



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

I would say a creative block. I don't have much experience with it but for other artists, it's the reason why they stopped creating. I would solve this issue but not making it about yourself and to be dedicated and passionate to your craft. Do it everyday even the days you don't want to, if you can't do that then you don't truly want it.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

I like how there are many different types of artist that uses uncommon canvases and mediums. Where it's just a trip thinking about where and how they got their materials. I dislike that in the art world it would be that you need to be someone to get something done or for people to believe in what you're doing. If your name isn't up there with the rest of the trends then many people feel like they shouldn't speak or look at you since you're not relevant as the other people in that time. For me, that hurts a lot because there are many artists who have amazing artwork but because their name isn't well known in the art world they don't get bigger opportunities.



Ghost  
Acrylic & mixed media on paper, 45x70.2cm, 2022



Ukraine  
Acrylic & mixed media on paper, 44x122cm, 2022

**What is the hardest part of creating for you?**

I don't tend to have this issue. The only time it becomes difficult is when I'm not close to my mediums and canvases, but I still find a way to create. Whether if it's art, styling, or using my DJ controller.

**What is the role of an artist in society?**

It's to make people think differently and feel something out of their expectations.

**Who are your biggest artistic influences?**

My friends.

**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

I don't have a favorite medium since I haven't explored them all. I'm enjoying using acrylic at the moment, I started with watercolor and oil pastels but I didn't feel as much connection to those. Until I met acrylic, once I met acrylic life became smoother. I'm still exploring my mediums so I can't say acrylic is my favorite but it's one that I'm enjoying.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

I find inspiration from observing the world around me and thinking about people close to me. I don't like looking up references for inspiration instead I'll just think of a friend or a situation and go off from there. I just really enjoy looking around the world since my vision isn't the greatest. It lets my mind create so many different possibilities and that pushes me to create. It helps me create by giving me the vision to work on and then expand from there.



Untitled  
Acrylic & mixed media on paper,  
Size 69.5x47cm, 2022

### **Describe how art is important to society.**

Art is important to society by letting everyone have a voice or an opinion about a topic or themselves. It's a way of self-expression without words, you're creating something that has infinite words. Where everyone can connect to it or find something that they like about the work and create a connection. It's a connection between people, we all connect through different arts. It's non-explanatory and an instant click even if you dislike the work you still have it thought and consideration.



An abstract painting featuring a large, vibrant orange rectangular field in the center. This central area is surrounded by various blocks and strokes of color, including bright yellow, muted blue, deep purple, and stark black. The brushwork is visible, with thick, textured applications of paint. The overall composition is dynamic and layered, with the central orange area being the most prominent feature.

George  
Chaushba



George Chaushba is a contemporary artist, based in Georgia, from Batumi, the place and its area are most meaningful for him and his works. Inspiration comes from the perception of beauty in everything, nature, and the characteristics of people. George tries to convey the emotion and the simplicity itself and the biggest challenge for him is Love.



**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

I like simplicity in art and professionalism, I don't like when art is emotionless and only commercial.

**Name the artist or artists you'd like to be compared to, and why?**

I have many favorite artists, in general, I like abstract impressionism, modern artists like the American School of De Kooning, Rothko, Mitchell, and Franz Klein, old artists, impressionism Monet, Cézanne, and of course I would like to mention cubism of Picasso, who showed me the genius of simplicity.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

I find inspiration in the peace of nature, I love to spend time alone.

**What is the role of an artist in society?**

The artist has a difficult role in society, the artist must convey an emotion that will be caught by society, will be accepted, and lived.

**How do you define success as an artist?**

You define success when you reach it and spend yourself completely on the work, and of course, how you deliver it to society is of great importance.

**How has your style changed over time?**

I always loved to work with different techniques, and I kept changing and switching to another, I think it is important for an artist to go a long way to reach your style. I think the style changed due to world events, revolutions, and wars, which brought about changes and changes in stylization.

**How do you know when a work is finished?**

The work should rest, let it go for some time and then see if it needs to be finished or not.

**How useful has social media been for you?**

Social media is very useful for me, it gives me a lot of information, the pandemic has created a separate platform for online exhibitions and I think this is very good for an artist, I am also participating in an online exhibition soon,

**What is the biggest challenge of being an artist?**

I think the biggest challenge for an artist today is to give society a sense of peace and love because we have to live in difficult times...



# Chris Holley



An abstract/figurative graduate artist, DNA, and a strong dance/choreographic background mean my visual art practice is inspired and informed by elements of dance and music. And if a painting of mine doesn't start off being about either of these two vibrant arts, it will certainly end up being about them. After the enforced silencing of all the arts during Covid, I sensed a flowering of the arts, which I wanted to be a part of. This led me to propose and feature, with another artist, in *Feeling the Beat* at a major arts center, South Hill Park – a project which aims to bring all the arts together in art fusion events and workshops. A frequent exhibitor of my art, a painting of mine was notably selected for 2013 *Discerning Eye* by abstract painter Albert Irvin and I later won the international *Art Jazzed Up* competition, selected by Trinity School, Croydon, and associated musicians. My art is also to be found in private collections in the UK, the USA, and Spain. My specialist subject is the huge impact of Ballets Russes on visual art, my writings which you'll find in the National Library of Art at London's V&A and at major arts bodies here and overseas. I now give illustrated talks on this absorbing topic as well as on the flow of inspiration between the arts.

*"Due to a longstanding connection to dance and choreography, my visual art is always trying to squeeze into the space between dance and music and it has been said that my art flows and has lyricism. The synergy between the arts is important to me and I now feature with another artist in *Feeling the Beat* – a project at a major arts center, South Hill Park which aims to bring all the arts together. Painting 'in-the-moment' to live impro music teaches one to respond with immediacy and there is a mesmerizing time when the response becomes circular, with the improvising musicians or dancers responding to what they see and hear the artist painting on the canvas. This has shaken up my visual art practice as I learn to embrace the random and spontaneous, incorporating them with the rigor and considered response of working on my own in the studio. Here I typically listen to recorded music to which I have an emotional connection, internalizing it to make decisions regarding colors, texture, composition, and other elements which I then transfer to paint on canvas. The way forward now is to meld these two very differing yet valid approaches."*





Beethoven Miniatures - Oil & pigment on canvas, 30x30cm each

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I live in the Thames Valley, near London, UK and the big advantage this location affords me is Aladdin's cave of world art just an hour's train ride away in London's many and varied public and private art galleries.

**What inspires you?**

Major inspirations for me are dance and music: listening and experiencing music and being involved in its performance and likewise, observing dance and feeling the physicality and emotional punch of moving and dancing: it's huge. When you hear the music you have an emotional connection to, that's a wow, then you start to move to that music and it's a double wow! Neurologists have found that listening to music inhabits and takes up the entire brain, from its earliest most basic structures to the more nuanced areas that convey delicate subtleties of sound... it's SO powerful. And of course, the two vibrant arts of dance and music are abstract, which feeds into my visual art.

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

You could say survival because it's certainly not a money-spinner. In creative and aesthetic terms I think a

major challenge is keeping logic out of the creative process. And linked to that is staying loose. Once you think "Oh this looks good. I'm getting somewhere here..." the tendency is to tighten up and then creativity goes out the window. I try to stay aware of this pitfall, often limbering, loosening, and dancing before starting work which helps keep movements expansive and relaxed – instead of small and stiff. When you think about it, painting is physical and is about movement and shouldn't habitually start at your wrist.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

Engagement with the art of any kind transcends every day and is life-affirming and stimulating. I love this. I also like the egalitarian nature of the art world and the fact that artists don't retire – we just draw to a close! Historically women – as well as ethnic minorities – have been sidelined but that's changing now and, regardless of age and gender, there are many opportunities out there.

**What are your long-term goals?**

To fail better. Life is short and art is long. And we're never quite good enough!



Rhythmical Horizons  
Mixed media on torn canvas, Size - 20x50cm

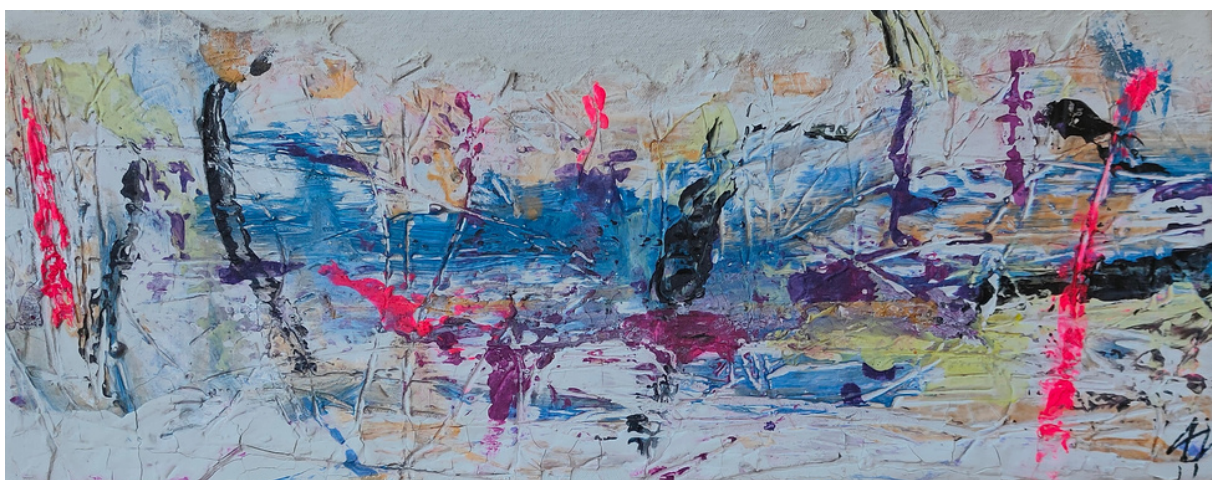
I



II



III



**Who are your biggest artistic influences?**

It can vary but I love the large-scale BIG thinking of the Abstract Expressionists and the connection some of them had to music, the flow of inspiration across the arts being a major area of fascination for me. Jackson Pollock listened to jazz while painting his monumental canvases and there's footage of him moving rhythmically as he makes his paint marks across his canvas on the floor. And Mark Rothko (who didn't regard himself as an Abstract Expressionist) said he became a painter "because I wanted to raise painting to the level of poignancy of music and poetry." Interestingly his major inspiration was the music of Mozart. Meanwhile composer Morton Feldman – his contemporary – aspired to compose music that was like the paintings of the Abstract Expressionists. How fascinating is that?

**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

My favorite medium is the one I'm using at the time. I'm currently drawing with charcoal again and I love its expressive nature – difficult though to sustain that initial creative mark from the first sketch to the finished painting. Equally, I love the nuances and vivid colors of paint and like using both acrylic and oil.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

As mentioned, I find inspiration in my strong connection to dance and music, the two being linked. I also often find inspiration in researching for the art talks I give because, in researching for them, I learn so much about great artists and their art, which then feeds into my art practice. This was how I found more in-depth gems about Mark Rothko for instance.

**When is your favorite time of day to create?**

For me, nothing beats cracking on in the morning with that first energy of the day. This often entails a bit of thought in the studio the night before, setting my materials up, or mixing my paints so that I'm off to a flying start the next day. This is quite a good discipline.

**Does art help you in other areas of your life?**

An interesting question. I feel that involvement in art permeates all areas of life and general outlook, helping us to keep an open mind and heart to new possibilities and ready to see the beauty in all aspects of life.

**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

My favorite medium is the one I'm using at the time.

**Is there a specific environment or material that's integral to your work?**

I sometimes paint at the moment to live impro music - a mesmerizing and rewarding experience teaching immediacy, quick decision-making, and responsiveness to others: no time to ponder – respond in paint NOW to that musical note just played! When the response becomes circular - the musicians responding to what they see and hear the visual artist creating - it's a very special feeling. On the other, (the paint-spattered) hand is the solitude, rigour, and considered decision-making of my home studio where I am in total control. I get a kick out of both these contrasting ways of working.

**How do you know when a work is finished?**

You don't.





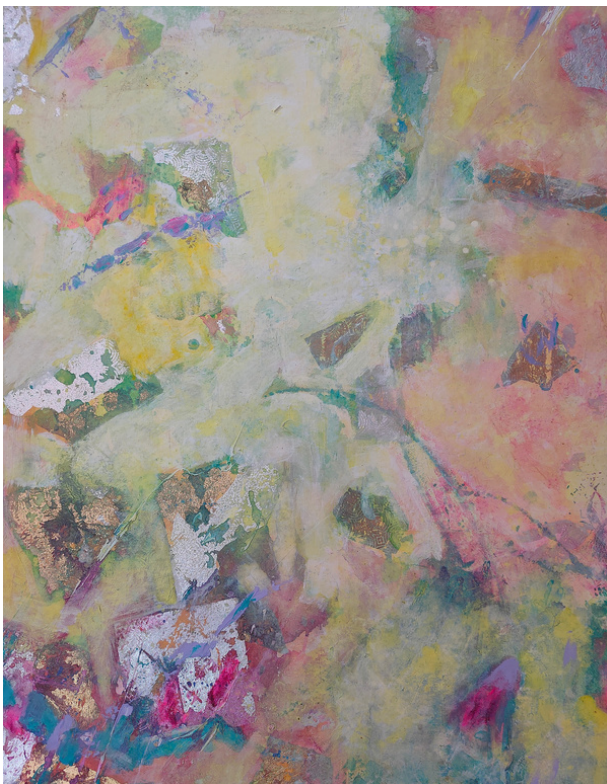
### What are you focussing on right now?

Right now I'm focusing on melding the immediacy and randomness of 'live painting' with the rigour of the studio in my art, both approaches having their creative value. I'm also trying to fuse the abstract with the figurative and it seems that, in developing my own brand of abstraction, the figurative - as in the human figure - is never far away. Because that's how I'm wired.

In the Light of Ravel  
Acrylic and gold/silver leaf on canvas,  
Size I - 50x60cm, II & III - 95x80cm



II



III



# Monique J. DuFour

Monique J. DuFour is a self-taught expressive abstract painter known for creating “Healing Art”. Monique began painting in 2013 after returning from a trip to the South of France. After a lifetime in the corporate world, she passionately pursued her art career, embracing new challenges and spiritual growth. Monique paints with unbridled spontaneity from the heart and enjoys creating customized paintings for her clients that provide personalized healing energies for them. She exudes, “It is indeed a journey and I have chosen to share it through my art.”

She has received several honors and accolades for her art and her collectors span the globe. In November 2018 she relocated from Canada and is now living in Orba, Spain. Monique’s many exhibitions include solo shows at Beach House, Torrevieja, Spain; La Macina di san Cresci, Tuscany, Italy; and Hall of Art, Feltmate, Delibato & Heagle, Burlington, Ontario, Canada; among others. Her several group exhibitions were those held at Galerie Sonia Monti, Paris France, Art Gallery of Burlington, Ontario, Canada, and many more. She was also selected for a juried exhibition by Joshua Creek Heritage Art Centre in Oakville, Ontario, Canada. Recent juried exhibitions (2022) include the Healing Power of Arts, J Mane Gallery, and Camel Back Gallery, in the USA. In addition, Monique participated in a Charity Art Auction to help support Women’s Shelter Burlington, ON, Canada. Upcoming Singulart Charity Art Auction to benefit Doctors of the World (November 2022). Monique has also received many honors and distinctions. Her painting “Dawn” was featured in the “Pantone Colors of the Year: Rose Quartz and Serenity Collection” on the renowned Saatchi Art’s homepage. Her art has been selected several times to be included in Singulart’s Featured Collections. In addition, she is the recipient of Artist Residencies in Italy.



Detachment – 38"x32"x1.5", Acrylic on canvas



Exodus – 42"x36"x1.5", Acrylic on canvas



### **How did you start out as an artist?**

Born in 1957 in Montreal (Canada), I established a career in the corporate world, although I always harbored a secret desire to paint. I spontaneously was guided to pick up a paintbrush for the very first time, in the summer of 2013, upon my return from a trip to St Paul de Vence, in the South of France. Little did I know at the time that I would be channeling energies and light, that would serve to heal and inspire through my art. I have never looked back. I am self-taught and in 2016 I attended an artist residency in Tuscany for 12 weeks, which fueled my passion even more. I love to travel and in 2018, I established a permanent residence in Spain where I exhibit and sell my work internationally. After a lifetime in the corporate world, I left it all behind and began a new career of passion and love with new challenges, life lessons, and spiritual growth. My journey started thousands of years ago, with different lives and different lifetimes. Though I have been a healer in many past lives, a priestess, a nun, and an artist who prayed for talent, I had many lessons to learn to bring me to where I am today. It is indeed a journey that is still unfolding, and I have chosen to share it through my art

### **Does the work introduce a thought, concept, or idea and/or make you think on a higher level?**

I am an intuitive and gestural painter, as well as a storyteller, and I paint without planned concepts or ideas. I don't think about it, I just enter a higher level naturally and let myself be guided. It's a feeling that arises in me and I never know what the outcome will be or who the painting will be for unless I am painting on commission. I paint in a

trance-like state and guided by an unknown hand that is painting through me, I am always surprised when the painting is finished and I look at it and wonder where it came from, as I don't even recall the process.



Emotional Entanglement  
36"x36"x1.5", Acrylic on canvas

### **How do you show yourself tenderness in the midst of your creative process?**

My tenderness to myself is to not judge myself. I focus on my awareness of color and energy and total freedom. I set out my colors and tools and randomly pick them up as I paint, as I never plan the direction or outcome. My paintbrushes and tools "perform a dance" on the canvas with total abandon and freedom of movement. I love to paint with many layers and sometimes texture, as the story unfolds itself on canvas. I have no boundaries as it is all energy and vibration, and I allow myself to go with that flow.

**What do your works reveal about your personality?**

I am an empath, so naturally I “feel” a lot and deeply. I hope that my works reveal tenderness, hope, positivity, and much love. Sometimes the humourist side of me comes out with my more whimsical works. I am multi-faceted and some might notice that I tend to favor blue!

**Where or how do you rediscover inspiration when you’re feeling creatively dry?**

I love a blank canvas because the possibilities are endless, but there are times when the inspiration is not flowing so I focus on music, nature, and everyday sounds. I also build my frames and stretch my canvases because to me, that is part of the creative process and I have a knowing that something beautiful will appear on the canvas, then when I am guided to, I paint!

**Do your artworks bring to mind any of your own life events or memories?**

I paint from the inside out, so what appears on the canvas are often my own feelings, so definitely life events and memories play a big role. The canvas is my safe place to express it all. Often, I find myself exhausted after finishing new work. I feel and know that my paintings carry positive energies and vibrations, and they convey a message to not only the viewer, but also to myself. If I paint from a place of sadness or other emotion, what translates onto the canvas is a transformation of all those energies into something that is always beautiful for the soul.

**How has your opinion changed about this piece from the time you started looking at it until now?**

Each time that I look back at a completed piece, I find something new. I often discover faces or animals. Abstract art is always open to interpretations and that also applies to my own views.

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I come from Canada where I lived most of my life. I always preferred warmer climates and have had the opportunity to travel in Europe, where I repeatedly fall in love with the milder weather and different cultures. I tend to explore villages as they seem to stand still from another era. I have now settled in a beautiful village in Spain, where I find that the peace, the pace of life, and the serenity of nature, greatly influence the flow of my work as the energy, vibration, and creativity are heightened.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

There are more opportunities now for artists to have worldwide audiences and sales. I dislike the art promoters that invite you to show, but at a great financial cost to the artist.



Interpretations  
48"x38"x1.5", Acrylic on canvas



### What inspires you?

When I enter my studio, I move into and become totally lost in the dimension of the vibrancy and energetic frequency field of the colors that I work with. I always paint with music as it brings me into a higher vibration. Very often the music is solfeggio frequencies that open my soul and allow the inspiration to feed me. I am also inspired by the life and beautiful nature all around me.

- *If you want to find the secrets of the universe, think in terms of energy, frequency, and vibration.* Nikola Tesla

### Name the artist or artists you'd like to be compared to, and why?

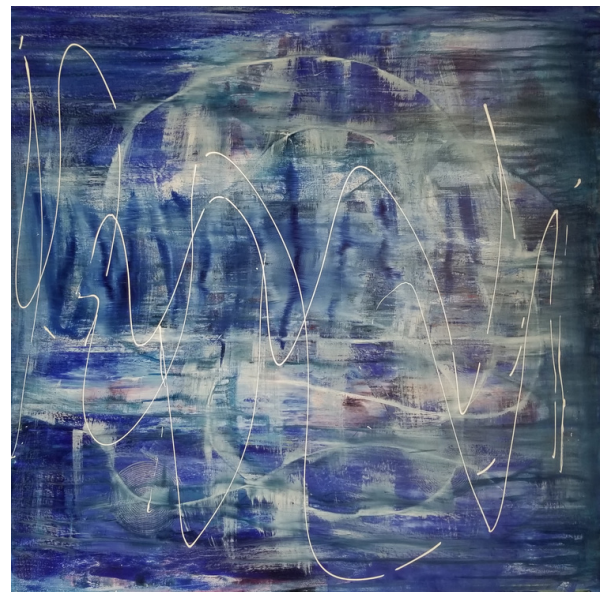
When I began painting, I avoided looking at artworks, as I was intimidated by the talent of so many incredible past and present artists. To this day, I cannot compare myself to another painter. I seek primarily to move others through my artistic practice, and if a viewer has a strong resonance with my work, then I have achieved my goal.



Mediterranean Seaside  
40"x40"x1.5", Acrylic on Canvas



Connected energies  
36"x36"x1.5", Acrylic on Canvas



Can you hear me  
36"x36"x1.5", Acrylic on canvas





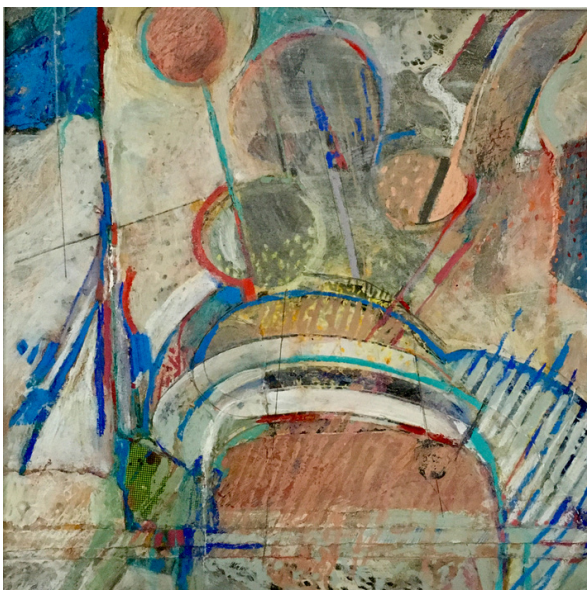
# Michele Noble

Born in London in 1943, Michele has been making and showing artwork since 1970. She has experimented with different subjects and media, but now prefers mixed media to work in. Her work is in private collections in the UK and USA.

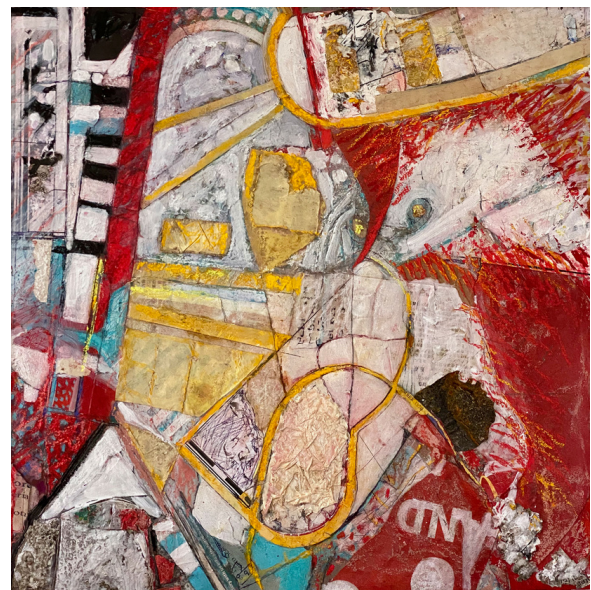
Since the 1990s Michele's work has focused on the endless cycle of birth, growth, death, and transformation. The Japanese art form of Wabi Sabi that appreciates impermanence is the philosophy underpinning much of her work. The images for this submission were made primarily in 2020 with Covid and climate change altering our patterns of perceived living. More than ever, change is the only certainty. Making this work using recycled materials with new ones is a reflection of these unsettled times.



Fake news  
Mixed media, 60x60cm, 2020



Satellite Skies  
Mixed media, 60x60cm, 2020



Ghats Burning in India  
Mixed media, 60x60cm, 2020

**Where are you from and how does that effect your work?**

I was born in North London in 1943. It was a drab black, white and grey world, with bomb sites and very little to buy in shops. The main source of news was the radio which had only two options, the home service, or the light program. I read voraciously and listened to Children's Hour. With the wartime lack of paper, my first drawings were made on a slate with chalk, trying to illustrate songs on a record request program. It was up to me to imagine characters and places. We lived above a newsagent's shop, and I was allowed to spend hours reading comics and fairy stories by the kindly shop owner. This all fed my imagination. Living in London only began to count as I grew older and was able to access the treasury of museums, art galleries, and historical buildings. To be able to see actual artifacts and paintings from all over the world was a privilege.

**What is your background?**

English mother, Irish father. I was educated in convent schools, full of prints of Christian and biblical pictures by old Renaissance masters, so unconsciously picked up art history as I went. I was always drawing and asked for books on artists as presents. I knew a lot about western European artists like Breughel, Bosch, and Grunwald, Rembrandt, English painters like John Piper, early icons, Pre-Raphaelites, but almost nothing about modern movements like Cubism, until a big Picasso exhibition came to London. I was ignorant about modern American artists until introduced to them by my artist husband.

Collapsed House, Beirut  
Mixed media, 50x50cm, 2019

**Why did you choose to become an artist?**

It never occurred to me to do anything else. Going to an art college that gave training as an artist and teacher meant it was paid for by the state. My parents could never have afforded it otherwise. In those days, unless one did commercial art, taught art in schools, or was lucky enough to be taken on by a gallery, running a business as people do now didn't exist. Computers have made that possible.

**What inspires you?**

I find this a very difficult question. It changes according to circumstances. Sometimes it's using different media and pushing it as far as I can. Sometimes, subject matter like the landscapes I'm painting now, studies of boundaries between sky, land, and water. A brief return to more academic work, using soft pastels and other media to capture light and mood through mark-making and color. Claude Monet is my inspiration for this. The abstracts of 2021, were influenced rather than inspired by world events like climate change and the pandemic.





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

Once my aim was to just make satisfying images and share my vision with viewers. It didn't challenge. This is no longer true. When my husband tragically died very suddenly, at the age of 52, I could no longer just make pleasing pictures, there had to be some underlying message. Looking at erosion along the UK's Yorkshire coast, during work for my MA, I tried to represent the cycles of existence, to accept birth, growth, death, and transformation are the natural order of things. Conventional maritime pictures could not express what I was trying to say. I had to think outside the box. This led me to recycle and reuse. It was a way to come to terms with Mel's death.

Moving to suburbia, my images used the concept of a Japanese philosophy called Wabi-Sabi, finding beauty in the imperfect, accepting aging. My pictures speak of memento mori. Nothing stays the same. Like light, life is fleeting. The true reality of life is change. This idea underlies all the work I do now. The pictures made this year are to record a landscape in grave danger of flooding due to global warming.

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

My biggest challenge is age and health. Adapting to this new age of computers and social media has been hard. Most of my former art life was applying to municipal galleries for exhibitions. selling through them. Advertising and publicity were in their hands. They collected and returned pictures. For someone who never learned to drive, this was important. Once that series of images was up and showing, one went home and started a new body of work.

For various personal reasons, I was out of the art world for a time, framing awkwardly shaped paintings not making new stuff. Nursing duties meant visual imagery making was well-nigh impossible, so I focussed on creative writing, the skill that has been useful for the website, and applying for opportunities. When I returned to my art practice in 2016, it was unknown territory, heavily reliant on computers and social media. It has been an enormous learning curve.

**Name the art or artists you'd like to be compared with.**

I don't want to be compared to any artist. I fit most comfortably into the category of a mixed-media artist but I'm also a gardener and a writer. We are all made up of multiple facets. It is nonartists who make up titles so they can file us neatly. Gillian Ayres called herself a painter, no matter how many shows she had, how much her art sold for, or how famous she became.

**What are your biggest artistic influences?**

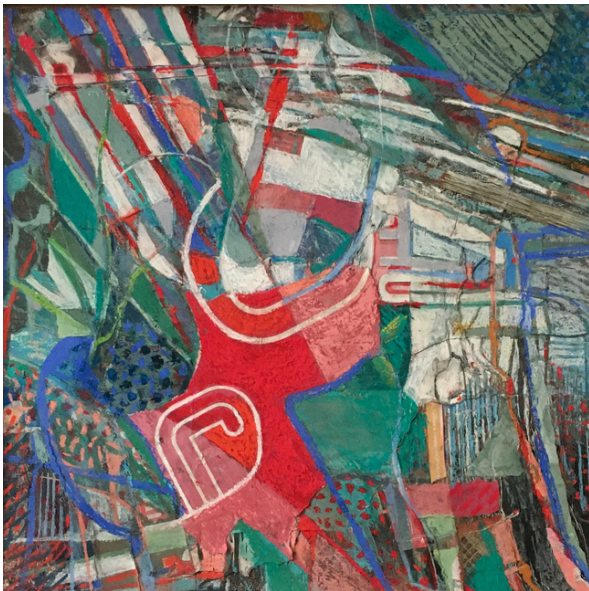
I have had many artistic influences that change as my work changes. The purity of color in fourteenth-century Italian painters like Piero della Francesca and the still perfection of their compositions still resonate. I like Antoni Tàpies, Matisse, Rothko, Diebenkorn, the middle period of Howard Hodgkin's paintings, William Crozier, the later wood prints by Gillian Ayres, to name but a few. Nearly all of them are colourists.

Until he died, my artist husband influenced me into making series of work, developing subject matter, rather than a willy-nilly mix of all sorts and to doggedly keep applying to exhibit new work.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

I like the opportunities the world wide web has opened. To be able to show on online galleries without physically transporting pictures is amazing. Zoom enables global networking with other creatives. Email communications are instant. Knowledge is accessible without specialist libraries. Courses can be attended without leaving home. I love this about the art world now.

I thoroughly dislike the demands of social media to be constantly fed. The threats that if you don't make reels and videos, give online teaching courses - you will sink without a trace, the pressure to become a business. The constant shouting to do this or that gives me headaches. It has taken a while to shake myself and take a good long look at what my aims are, instead of joining the stampede. At the age of 79, do I want to run a business - of course not. I realized I'd been completely brainwashed by that idea.



Last night of the proms  
Mixed media, 60x60cm, 2020

**Tell me about your medium.**

My medium of choice has been mixed media since the 1990s. I began using collage when I went to life drawing, in 1971. I became dissatisfied with the pencil and fished bits of paper out of the rubbish bin to add to the work. I've experimented with many media including enamels and paper clay. It's too easy to get slick always working in one medium. I find the challenge of using new media refreshes me. During the MA, my work became three-dimensional and I utilized found objects like dried seaweed and pebbles, photocopies on gel film, and papier mâché made from all the paper that came into the house during a couple of months. Then I made work using bits of an old plaster ceiling as a base, that could be inlaid with bones, etc. Sadly, that source ran out like my stash of box frames. In the abstract pieces, two-dimensional frames meant my additions had to fit close to the picture surface. Instead, I mixed soft pastels with acrylic paint, ink, and graphite. collage from newspapers, old prints, posters to add textures and surfaces, and even broken plastic from the 2-meter warnings outside shops during the worst of the pandemic. The return to landscape is allowing me to build up my collection of interesting collage material that had run alarmingly low. I can't seem to make abstract work without this resource.

**What are you focussing on right now?**

After an exhausting year of showing pictures in open calls, I made the decision to take a few months off. I want to concentrate on making new work without feeling pressurised to look and apply for new opportunities.

### **Where do you find inspiration?**

In the Abstract work, inspiration came from the original underdrawings and found objects, that some term would term rubbish, picked up from pavements. I worked on them intuitively. Later, to my surprise, I found they had been influenced by the news I was hearing, - world events like bush and wildfires, or Trump accusing the media of fake news.

### **How do you define success as an artist?**

For me, success as an artist is making, showing, and sharing art physically, online in galleries and magazines – that is, as many places as possible, to the widest audience. I ruled myself out of the rat race to become an art business, by virtue of age and health. To achieve steady sales would be nice if only to stop work stockpiling and of course, the odd sale would help cover the cost of frames, materials, and entering exhibitions. Having my work seen, somewhere in the world almost every month in 2022, is my definition of success.

This last year, after several false starts, I got my website up and running. Without the assistance of my computer technician Evie, this would never have happened. She was my luxury and indispensable, I can never thank her enough and I have peace of mind knowing she is on standby if I have a disaster! I knew what I wanted but didn't have the skill to achieve it. For example, I had been advised that working since 1970, it should include an archive. This took an incredible amount of time, as all early work was on slides that had to be converted for computer use. It will of course continue to evolve, as new work is added. I write a newsletter every

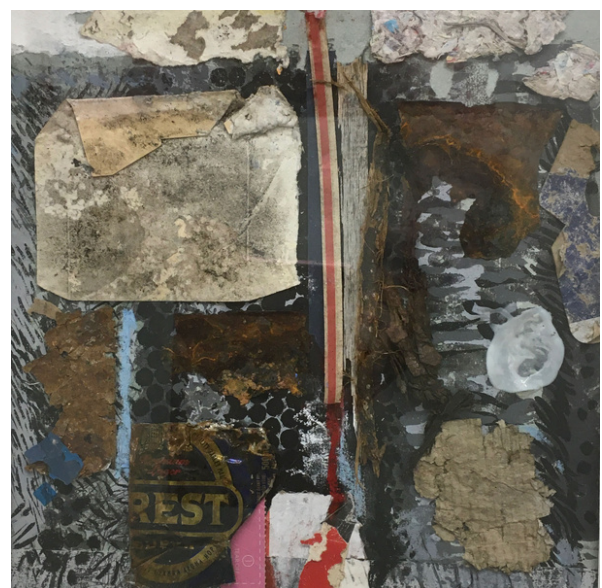
month sharing what I'm doing and thinking. I still need a working email list for it to be completely successful, but the fact it is in existence at all is a great achievement.

### **What is the biggest challenge of being an artist?**

Staying true to one's own vision, in a world overloaded with images and artists. I'm a slow worker. It takes me a long time to finish a new piece of work. I can rework it over and over until it feels right to me. Keeping a presence on Instagram is a challenge. I'm very bad at that. I feel like the white rabbit always running to catch up. It isn't natural for me to wave a flag to attract attention shouting look at me!

### **What are your long terms goals?**

To follow Gillian Ayres example and make artwork till I drop, a celebration of all I have seen. Her last work was so innocent and joyful that it brought instant happiness. My work is sent a copy of the Abstract questionnaire by email joyful but hopefully, it can and will be enjoyed. I can't ask for more than that.



Last Post - Mixed media, 50x50cm, 2019

"I - tomorrow!"

"Life is a gradual birth"- Exupery.

We pass through four stages, from childhood to old age and all of the stages are painful. The most difficult thing to do is to catch that second, that distinguishes you from the millions of other lives ...

## Maka Gotsiridze



was able to do that - she "caught" that second ...

She entered the world on April 25, 1966 ...

She couldn't explain why she just felt, one day, the need to bring out the color, from deep inside her, but this is how it turned out, first at the Iakob Nikoladze Art School and then at the Tbilisi Art Academy ...

Then she started teaching others (and still does), how to "catch" their own, particular, seconds ...

She studied and worked in almost all of the renowned, schools and institutes in Tbilisi where there was a drawing or a painting course ...

This is how she was "born" into the daily adventure of life from color to color and from canvas to canvas ...

Then came 1989, 1995, and 1996 - the new stages of her "birth" -

"Life is ruled by wisdom and destiny" - Cicero ...

This fate brought the artist to Scotland and the Netherlands as well; she also felt the "taste" of selling pictures here ... the money she was sent to Georgia for her two young children had a completely different taste ...

Her "birth" of 1996 turned out to be special - a personal exhibition in Amsterdam ... collaboration with a private gallery in Limburg ...

She painted a lot ... she says, more for commercial necessity, but she was reborn and growing, in stature, on all canvasses ...

There were also 5 solo and numerous group exhibitions along the way.

But she still felt failure ... "I was worried about my failure to express the colors and emotions I had accumulated over the years" .....

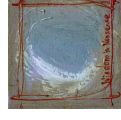
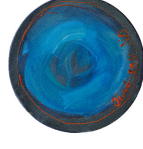
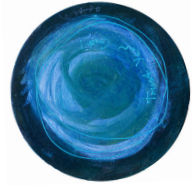
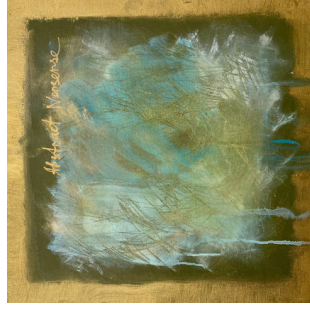
Her thoughts, finally, began to take shape in 2019, which manifested itself in her 2021, solo exhibition - "Wall Records" ...

She talked through the wall ... It seemed as if all the stages, all the main seconds, all the pain appeared on the wall, which in 2022 turned into a new exhibition - "I - Today" ...

"I - tomorrow" will be, of course, then ... because life is a gradual birth and Maka Gotsiridze now knows it well ...



One man's nonsense is another man's sense!



**Who are you?**

I am Maka Gotsiridze, a Georgian artist, 56 years old. Born and raised in Tbilisi.

**What is your background?**

I am from a respectable middle-class family, my mother was a professor of engineering at Georgian Technical University, and my father was head of the biggest construction company in Georgia. They taught me the value of hard work at a very young age.

**What type of art do you make and why?**

Currently, I am focused on creating oil paintings, but previously I have worked with all sorts of materials such as pencil, charcoal, ink, lithography, aquarelle, and acrylic. My work is more abstract, and I connect it closely with the reality of existence. I feel like my art reflects the problems of human existence. This is why I created the series “Neurotransmitter Mutations”.

**What inspires you?**

Once seen with the eye, it sinks (stays, settles) into the brain where it settles until such a mood or emotion wakes the memory (thought?), for example, one phrase on the wall of the underground in France became the title for my personal exhibition “Wall Posts”.

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

My aim is to get people thinking and use my works as symbolism for their own personal experiences.

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

I have a busy, somewhat tense life, thinking about and caring for most and everything takes a lot of energy. Fortunately, in everyday activities, the “quick eye” does not give the mind a break; it always and everywhere notices what needs to be done on the canvas.

**What does generosity mean to you as an artist?**

We have a fantastic Georgian writer Rustaveli and he writes “That which we give makes us richer, that which is hoarded is lost”. This is how I try to live my life.

**How do you work?**

I don’t like to start work straight away on the canvas, it’s my thought process that takes time. I make sketches for the composition, think about the color, and chose an option. Once I am ready with one breath I put my work onto the canvas.

**What themes do you pursue?**

I am constantly observing life and nature's transformations, the metamorphosis of which they are going through.

**How have you developed your career?**

I started by teaching others how to draw when I was 19 years old, and today I am a professor at Georgian Technical University. I traveled around Europe to study at major art universities such as Edinburgh’s College of Art and Amsterdam’s Gerrit Rietveld Academy.

**How has your practice changed over time?**

Personally, I have changed and progressed, so how I used to draw or paint is in the past, I cannot or will not be able to recreate my past.

**What are you doing except being an artist?**

Sometimes I feel like I am everything but an artist, I have many commitments as a wife, and mother, as well as my own personal hobbies: I love gardening, and spend a lot of my time creating a pleasing aesthetic for my garden.



**Name the artist you would like to be compared to and why?**

I don't want to be compared to any other artists, I would like to be like all those artists whose life is about the canvas and brush.

**Professionally, what is your goal?**

My aim is to achieve a result where I can say that I truly like my work and am not obsessed with it.

**How do you know when a painting is done?**

Once you look at the canvas, you know why you are creating this piece, what for and what you want to say about it. That's when you know your work is as complete as can be.

**What is the hardest part of creating for you?**

The hardest part is feeling helpless when I fail to reach my goal, and the emotion and energy put into the work do not show.

**Do you work commitment on current social or political issues and how?**

Previously I have never commented about political issues using my work, the only exception is that I created one canvas about the Russian invasion.

**How important are titles to you?**

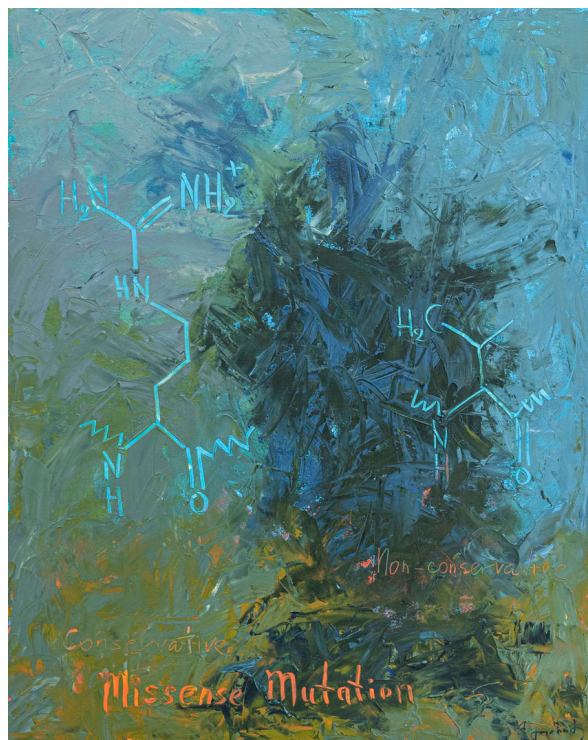
The title is not important to me, the main thing is that my work encourages the viewer to react emotionally and interpret emotions to a degree that they would not be able to achieve without the work that they are viewing.

**What does your art mean to you?**

Each of my new works is a catalyst for new challenges.

**What is the role of an artist in society?**

Artists challenge societies' preconceptions, they help show us a world we could have, peace with nature, the environment, with life itself.



Oil on canvas, Size - 100x80 cm, 2020  
Mutation of emotions

Oil on canvas, Size - 100x70 cm, 2020



# JASACID



*is intrigued by the notion of the artist as a lone self, an isolated 'mad genius. She creates immersive and introspective works that invite the viewer to consider what is often an intimate, but rather lonely, creative process for her personally. The images themselves act as a jumping-off point through which the viewer glimpses into Jas' psychological landscape. She uses a limited palette of primarily purple, violet, and blue hues as a homage to the artists and movements that resonate the most with her: the Romantics, the French Impressionists, and 20th-century European Abstract Expressionism. They, like her, see beauty in madness and find comfort in honoring the legacy of the melancholic artist in contemporary society.*

JASACID (Jasmine Christie) is a multimedia artist from Manchester, UK. After graduating from Edinburgh College of Art with a degree in Painting in 2021, she recently relocated back to Manchester to pursue her career in the artistic sphere. She is currently training as a tattoo artist and working as a freelance artist and illustrator, with her work being featured on various platforms including exhibitions in Manchester, London, and the USA.



CHAK - Acrylic and emulsion on paper, 119x90cm



**How did you start out as an artist?**

I won my first art competition at 7 years old and never looked back! I always knew it was what I wanted to do so I fought for it, much to the despair of teachers who wanted me to pursue a 'proper' career. I made my way to Edinburgh College of Art and, since graduating, have been navigating my way through the freelance art world.

**Does the work introduce a thought, concept, or idea and/or make you think on a higher level?**

Conceptualization and elevated thought are integral components of my practice. The freedom I find in abstract technique helps me to express thought processes that I find difficult to put into words; where I often can't demonstrate tumultuous emotions verbally, I use brushstrokes to create a visual language unique to me, through which the viewer glimpses into what I call my psychological landscape.

**How do you show yourself tenderness in the midst of your creative process?**

Introspection and self-reflection are key. In exploring some of these darker psychological themes it is easy to fall into unhealthy routines and doubt me and my practice. I take regular breaks to cleanse my mind of doubting or self-destructive attitudes and remind myself that the process is not a punishment for my experiences, but rather a form of visual catharsis, and a way of documenting my progress both as an artist and an emotional being.

**What do your works reveal about your personality?**

I hope that they reveal my depth and understanding of the multitudes of the human condition. The person I presented to the world was, for many

years, so far removed from myself, and I saw an acknowledgment of my more destructive feelings about myself as a weakness. These works are part of an ongoing process of reconciling all of these components of myself as contributing factors to my emotional maturity and self-belief.

**How has your opinion changed about this piece from the time you started looking at it until now?**

On DEFIANCE: Another lockdown piece, I initially thought of it as a bright and energetic piece incorporating my interest in graffiti and street art to abstract technique. However, looking back now, I see my discomfort in myself at the time of its creation. Anywhere I could see my reflection in the mirror I painted over, revealing my fragmented sense of identity during the process. Now I see DEFIANCE more as an abstract self-portrait than anything else, and it has since grown to be one of my favorite works.



DEFIANCE - Acrylic on mirror, 119x89cm

**Do your artworks bring to mind any of your own life events or memories?**

I really came into my own in abstraction during the periods of lockdown, in which I had to complete the final year of my degree with no studio access whatsoever. The experience of being cut off physically and mentally from my support networks and situations that brought me solace contributed to an extremely destructive 'downward spiral' attitude that I felt reverted my mind back to some of my darkest times. However, it was in the face of this adversity that I moved beyond the canvas and began to incorporate projection and installation art into my practice, to convey this ever-evolving psychological landscape that I was struggling to understand. I think, therefore, that there are two atmospheres to these works: despair and resilience, each of them beautiful in its own right.

**Where or how do you rediscover inspiration when you're feeling creatively dry?**

Being in a public place and witnessing the plethora of emotions on peoples' faces as they live their individual experiences. It simultaneously grounds me and reminds me of the beauty of our differences. Evocative portraits in museums and galleries are always a helping hand too.

**Who are your biggest artistic influences?**

Fiona Rae for her use of energy and color, Wassily Kandinsky's Improvisation series for my introduction to Abstract Expressionist art, and Caspar David Friedrich for his utilization of the figure of the artist as a melancholic 'mad genius' and Romantic themes of the Divine in his otherworldly landscapes.



1/2

Improvisation

Acrylic & emulsion on acrylic board, 404cm each

2/2



**What is the role of an artist in society?**

To visualize the experiences and voices of those in society that are often pushed out of the cultural sphere. To incite raw emotion, shock, comfort, enlighten, and to educate.



**How do you stay connected and up-to-date with the art world?**

Regular visits to exhibitions across all disciplines – painting, printing, photography, fashion, illustration – there are always new techniques and new ways of thinking that reinvent these mediums for new audiences. In order to be the best artist I can be, I learn from my contemporaries. Social media and art forums are also excellent for meeting like minds and keeping tabs on societal trends.

**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

I have always found acrylic paint to be the most effective medium for executing my works; as I often work with sheer or transparent materials such as shower curtains, glass, and mirrors, acrylic paint's ability to layer and manipulate massively aids in realizing my vision. Furthermore, the intense color that radiates from acrylics emphasizes the importance of the limited palette found in my paintings: without these rich blue and purple hues, much of the psychological meaning found in my works would be lost.



1/2

der Traum - Acrylic on canvas, 30x42cm each

**How do you know when a work is finished?**

When I find my eye wandering to something else in the room, that's the last thing I want from an audience.

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I am from Salford, Manchester UK where I now live and work, and the experience of growing up as a working-class artist is woven into every piece of work that I make. Feelings of inadequacy and imposter syndrome due to perceived social and financial 'inferiority' to my contemporaries contributed to my poor self-image during my artistic development, which, in turn, expressed itself through my practice. This led me to a fascination with psychology and portrayals of mental health conditions in art and inspired me to consider reinventing the historic notion of the melancholic artist through abstract technique. In feeling like I had to prove my worth, I developed an ever-growing sense of self-worth, making my abstract works the first complete 'series' that I feel both cemented my place in the art world, and helped me understand myself as a contemporary abstract artist.



2/2

# Nina Antonakes



Greek-Canadian artist Nina Antonakes' natural and vivid spaces of terrene and elemental wonders are one of a kind. The artist works with acrylic, mixed media, and other materials to produce these immense visions of pristine beauty. Floral vegetation, rocky elevations, and the palettes of winter, autumn, summer, and spring flood her canvases and fuel the impulse to touch and interact with their designs. Her pieces commonly depict the landscapes of Greece and Canada—two places she calls home and is dearest in her identity. Stylistically influenced by Igor Medvedev, Emile Bellet, and Phillipa Hudson, Antonakes then creates her art with the intent and pureness of reminding people, “life is good”. Incited by passion, she developed her hobby of painting into a business, where she now receives numerous sales and commissions.

Antonakes is a retired instructional designer who once developed online courses for the architecture and interior design community. She has a Bachelor of Commerce Honors degree from Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario, and an Advanced Diploma in Interior Design from Georgian College in Barrie Ontario. Her hobbies include traveling, golf, and theatre.

*"As an artist, I strive to capture the beauty that exists in all things through a bold exploration of color, texture, and movement. My work tends to revolve around life in all its forms and the whimsical side of the human experience. Our dreams, journeys, triumphs, and transformations inspire me—the moments that remind us to appreciate the wonders all around us and look beyond the static world. Even the turbulence and messiness of life have beauty to embrace as they drive our spirits in unexpected directions. For me, creating each piece is an adventure that sparks from a single idea and comes to life as I explore it with both my eyes and my fingertips. I am drawn to visual and physical texture, and many of my works incorporate organic materials including real flowers, leaves, and bark in combination with traditional mediums such as acrylics, oils, inks, and resins. I am also moved by bright colors—yellow in particular—and find that experiencing them lifts my mood and immerses me in an energized space. Through my art, I aim to embrace change, bestow joy, and always remember that 'Life is good!'"*

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

My family is originally from Greece, but I have spent most of my life in Canada. I consider both countries home and call upon their unique landscapes for inspiration and subject matter. The colours of Canadian autumn - vibrant yellows, reds and oranges - consume my palette. Meanwhile, the cool blue and turquoise hues of the Mediterranean soothe my soul and call me home.

**What is your background?**

I worked as a professional instructional designer for most of my career, developing on-line, interactive courses for the architecture and interior design community. This profession fed my creative side and became a natural springboard for my current profession as an artist.

**Why did you choose to be an artist?**

Art has always been my passion. As an adolescent, I realized that drawing and painting were not only outlets for self-expression, but they also calmed my mind and eased anxiety. This continued into adulthood, and I've been fortunate enough to turn painting into a career.

**What inspires you?**

Nature is the source of my most powerful inspiration. I draw from the landscapes, colours, and textures of the world. I often incorporate organic materials such as flowers, bark, and leaves into my pieces, adding texture and bringing the outside world in.

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

I end the descriptions of all my pieces with the simple phrase, "Life is Good". I'd like my work to be compared to a piece of chocolate. It isn't going to solve your problems, but it will bring you pleasure at the moment and maybe help

you focus on something uplifting as a gentle reminder that life is good.

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

Oftentimes, my brain is brimming with ideas of what I want to create and new techniques I want to experiment with, and I find it difficult to focus on implementing just one idea at a time. I try to address this by working on several pieces simultaneously, thus allowing me to experiment with each technique or idea individually.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

I love the variety of the art world, the fact that pieces can be so very different but equally beautiful and moving, the fact that there is no right or wrong in art, and the idea that the evolution of art is truly limitless. I dislike the fact that the art world is difficult for many artists to break into, leaving them no choice but to pursue art as a hobby rather than as a career. I believe there are countless masterpieces out there that no one has the opportunity to enjoy because of this.



Before the wind blows  
Mixed media on wood, 24"



**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

I love mixing organic elements such as flowers, bark, and leaves with traditional mediums like acrylics, oils, inks, and resins. This results in textured pieces that draw you in and invite explorations with fingers as well as eyes.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

I've had the privilege of visiting all seven continents of the world, offering me the opportunity to draw on their landscapes, colors, customs, and cultures for inspiration. Every country has its unique characteristics, both in the physical landscape and in the social and political structures of its societies. The artistic interpretations are limitless.

**How do you develop your art skills?**

Most of my techniques are trial and error. An idea comes into my head to try combining different materials or techniques, and I jump right in. Sometimes it produces a wonderful result that I can build on, and other times it's just a hot mess.



Endurance  
acrylic on canvas, 48"x48"

**What's the purpose or goal of your work?**

I want my work to bring pleasure to people. As I stated earlier, I end every description with the simple phrase, "Life is Good". It's a reminder to the audience that even during the darkest days, there is still good in life, a moment of pleasure, a reason to smile.

**How do you balance your time in the studio with other commitments such as a part-time job, family, or admin?**

I've retired from my previous career as an instructional designer and now focus exclusively on my art. My studio is in my house, which affords me the opportunity to create whenever inspiration hits. Additionally, my children are adults and no longer live at home.

**What is the biggest challenge of being an artist?**

My biggest challenge with being an artist is managing the business side of art, specifically getting my art out there and my brand recognized. The art world is a difficult one to break into, and often more time is spent marketing and promoting my work rather than creating



Antarctica  
Acrylic on canvas, , 24"x30"



# Arai Fuzuki

graduated from Tama Art University in Tokyo. His art expresses that the world is all connected. Created artworks are named Galaxy Words. Each word comprises 100,000 galactic guidance. Every time he blows a seashell horn, it purifies our spirit, emotion, and physicality. Everything is all interconnected. Arai held his first solo exhibition in New York in 2014. His dynamic brushstroke is cultivated by his experience of devoting himself as a dancer. In addition, his subjects based on the universe and galaxies will provide dazzling light into the world of jet-black darkness effectively. In 2015, the work pursued the affinity between Islam and Japan and was exhibited at “The Arab Week 2015 Art Exhibition” and received the Japan-Arab Friendship Award from the host country, the Ambassador of Oman / Palestine. The artist has been also active as a book reviewer casting his keen eyes into the cultures of all ages and countries.



Golden Sun, shining in many places  
Washi, acrylic, sumi  
Size 116x80.3cm

**Who are you?**

I am I. My name is Arai Fuzuki. Artist.

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I was born in Japan and live in Tokyo. I grew up in an environment where many believe that nature has its own gods, so I have come to realize that everything in this world is connected.

**What inspires you?**

Art is a subconscious expression of the mind. One of the main influences on my creative work is nature. The simple murmur of a river, the marvelous blue sky, the strong bright sunrise, the magnificent orange sunset. When I think about it, I was able to make use of the dance flow of the dance using the body in the lines of the picture. Skills as a designer fused digital and analog. And when I got rid of my ego by meditating and blowing conch shells, more and more images began to flow from my subconscious mind head.

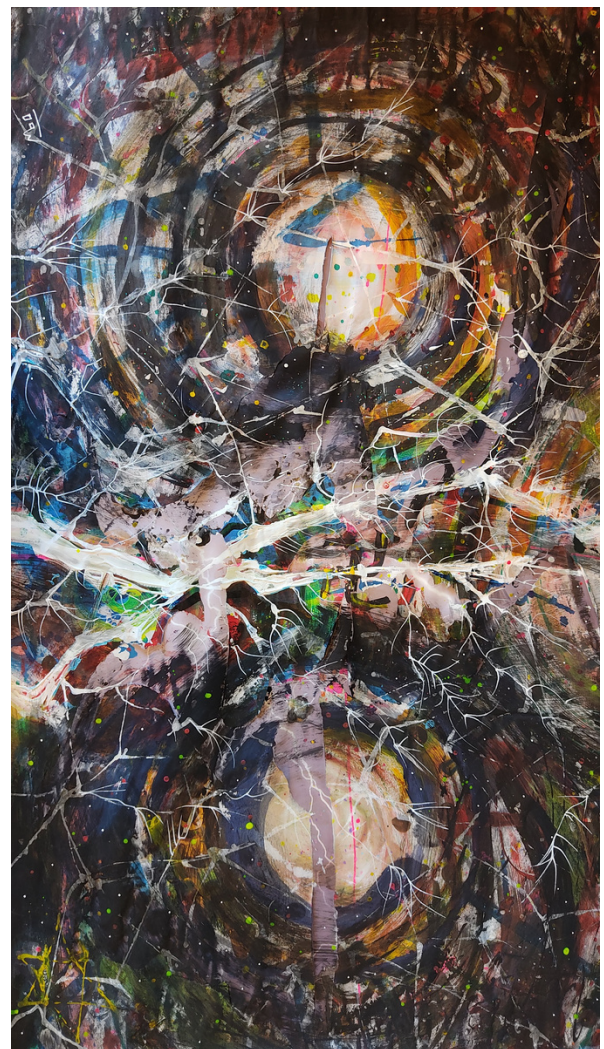
**What does your work aim to say?**

I'd like to convey the concept of I convey "Everything Is Interconnected" through my work. From the point of view of quantum mechanics, the universe consists of only 17 kinds of elementary particles. In astrophysics, about 70% of the rest is unknown, called dark matter. In other words, it can be said that there is no boundary between this vast galaxy and "I". Just like Schrödinger's cat if I exist as an individual just by being conscious, then by expanding my consciousness, it can be said that "everything in this world is me."

A huge flash of lightning that strikes the brain  
Washi, acrylic, sumi  
Size 118.3x82cm

**Name the artist or artists you'd like to be compared to, and why?**

Ancient Egyptian artists. The Hatshepsut Obelisk is located inside Karnak Temple. It was a stone pillar with a height of about 30m, and was a device for receiving energy in the universe in ancient Egypt, like a radio tower today. The Pyramid is also said to have been able to send and receive. The stone was granite and was shipped to Luxor from a quarry in Aswan in the south. How did you make a monolith that is seamless from the root to the top? When I actually touched the obelisk, I felt its enormous power. It was an indescribable sensation, like electricity running through my body.





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

The phenomena that occur in front of us are hints at the growth of all human beings, including artists. I believe that what I need to do is already there. In view of the miraculous harmony of this universe, each person's life, and all perfect circumstances are prepared. On the contrary, if all our desires were fulfilled, there would be no such boring life.

**What do you like/dislike about art world?**

For me, the best thing about art is that when you throw a piece of art that you've made with all your convictions into the world, it becomes the subject of controversy. That includes like and dislikes. Until now, artists such as Picasso, Hokusai, and Leonardo da Vinci have appeared and pioneered



expressions. As an artist living in the present, I will continue to express myself.

**What is the hardest part of creating for you?**

Every artist has an ego. Therefore, we must remember to be understanding and appreciative of those around us, such as family members and partners, in our creative work.

**What is the role of an artist in society?**

I believe that one of the artist's roles is to unravel the artist's role is to unravel artist is responsible for what philosophy and science have not been able to elucidate. Culture enriches the mind in the process of human evolution. For example, when people have enough food, clothing, and shelter, they seek art.

**Who are your biggest artistic influences?**

Katsushika Hokusai. "The Great Wave of Kanagawa" is truly an extraordinary work of art, a very famous work, and this memory seems to be shared not only by Japanese people but also by the whole world. Ever since I was a child, I admired Hokusai. When I researched Hokusai when I was in elementary school, I found that his activities ranged from landscape painting, Manga, woodblock prints, Ukiyo-e, and even live painting. And it wasn't until he was over 80 years old that he was able to draw a picture that he was reasonably satisfied with, and his last painting, "The Dragon of Smoke Escaping From Mount Fuji", was created when he was 90 years old. I felt that an artist spends his life facing his work.

Solar System  
Acrylic, gold leaf  
Size 109x79cm



**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

For example, Japanese paper with a durability of over 1,600 years, gold leaf born of tradition, and digital technology. I was able to make use of the dance flow of the dance using the body in the lines of the picture. Skills as a designer fused digital and analog.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

When I got rid of my ego by meditating and blowing conch shells, more and more images began to flow from my subconscious mind head. Everything was connected.

**Describe how art is important to society.**

Einstein's black hole was unverified by anyone at the time. Like Einstein's theory, no one has been able to unravel it, but art itself may be a universal guide to life.



Wind, water and shine  
Washi, acrylic, canvas, sun-photo, gold leaf  
Size 45.5x38cm

When you want to be kind  
Acrylic, canvas, gold leaf  
Size 40x40cm

**How do you define success as an artist?**

It takes one million years for light from a galaxy one million light years away to reach the earth. Looking at a galaxy also means looking at the distant past. When we speak of galaxies "close" to Earth, we are referring to galaxies within 11.7 million light-years of Earth. Even the closest galaxy to Earth, the Canis Major Dwarf Galaxy, is about 25,000 light years away. When the light was emitted from this galaxy we are looking at now, mankind began to create a symbol system little by little, and now it is finally beginning to unravel. Indeed, everything is interconnected. My various successes that emerged from them are also part of such a network of universality.

**How has your style changed over time?**

When I was a child, I was always alone drawing pictures on the back of advertising leaflets because of an unknown leg disease. I had a very introverted personality and was not the type to speak in public. However, when I went on to art college and learned dancing and encountered dance, my personality began to turn outward. As I expanded my consciousness in this way, my work gradually shifted to intracellular and cosmic themes.

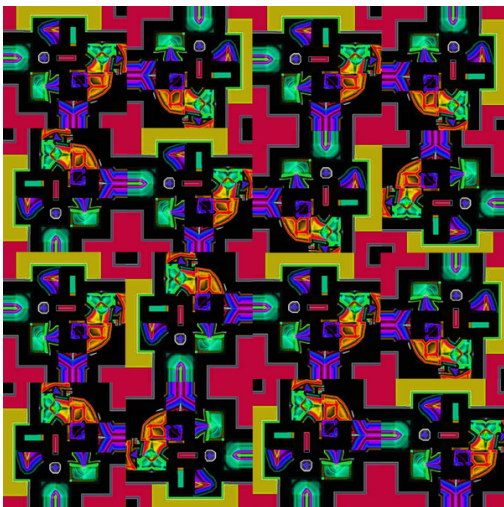
# Michael Wagner

was born in Heidelberg in 1953, used every free minute for artistic studies during his studies at Mannheim University, and then concentrated entirely on the fine arts after completing his degree. Since 1981 he lives and works as a freelance painter, graphic artist, and photo artist (self-taught) in Heidelberg.

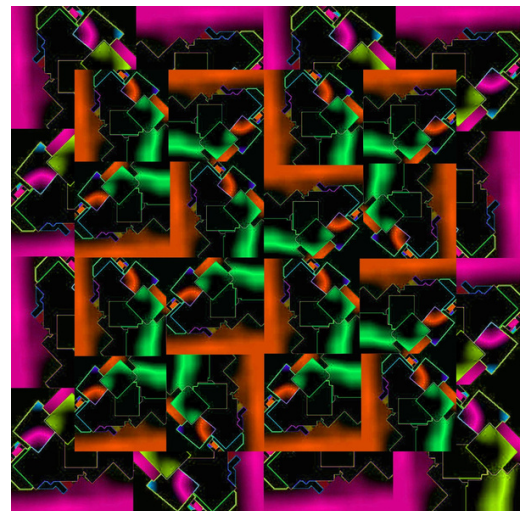
While Michael Wagner initially worked in the representational field, depicting landscapes and people, he gradually developed an artistic conception that focuses on color and its manifold possibilities. On this path, Michael Wagner opened up the world of constructive concrete. Geometry joined color, became an equal partner, and provided stability and continuity. Thus color was not given an expressive quality, but rather a purely visual meaning. It does not "jump" into the space, but it has a high presence, a great impact potential. Michael Wagner designs his works on this basis, trusting in the power of color and geometry.

*"Works of art reflect the world. My works are also mirrored images of today. However, it is not a reflection of the external appearance, not an abstraction of the mimetic world, but a reflection of the inner constitution. My works arise from sensations. They reflect the sense of time, so to speak, and represent ciphers for today."*

*Thinking and feeling, geometry and color - between these poles I explore my artistic possibilities, although with all seriousness playful and poetic components are always involved. In this way, I develop a visual world that has its roots in the strictness of the constructive and concrete, but at the same time is also based on individuality and spontaneous intuition. "*



Dubiose Hierarchie  
Print on canvas, 80x80cm, 2021



Innere Tektonik  
Print on canvas, 80x80cm, 2020

**How did you start out as an artist?**

At the beginning of my artistic activity, I was more oriented toward drawing. At that time I worked with colored pencils on paper, have mainly depicted landscapes with fine strokes. After a while, I transferred this to etching and then to watercolor, whereby watercolor in particular expanded my horizons through its transparency and flowing character. Still, I was faithful to the paper as a picture carrier, but through the acrylic paint then also the canvas and growing abstraction entered my work.

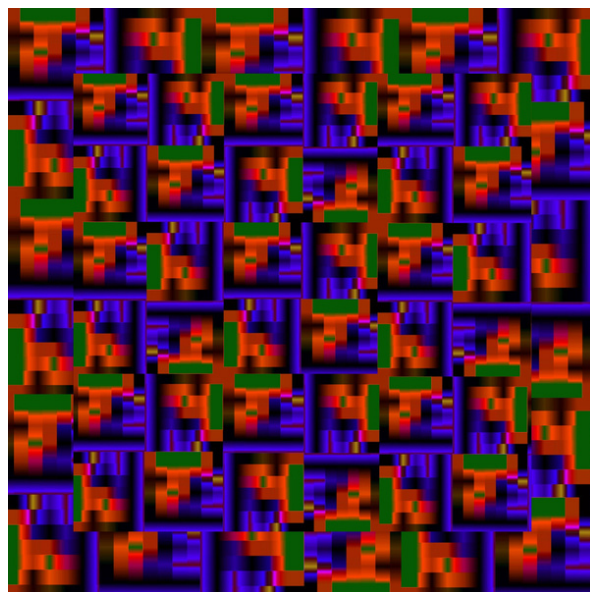
**Does the work introduce a thought, concept, or idea and/or make you think on a higher level?**

My work is based on the principles of Concrete Art. It is essentially non-representational, makes use of geometry and various mathematical principles, and uses color non-expressionism. The goal is a clear, unmistakable pictorial effect, as far as the shape of the image is concerned. This is to facilitate access to the content behind the shape. By content I mean that which underlies every picture, for every picture is an expression of its time, of its creator, of universal connections. These flow together in every serious work, so to speak as a testimony of time. The goal is to give this testimony of time a tangible form.

**How do you show yourself tenderness in the midst of your creative process?**

It's about empathizing with a picture, with an image idea, with a creative process. Most of the time, the basic layout of a work is already clear, but it's about fine-tuning the color-form canon. Here I can clearly say that basically, the color takes over the direction because

as a serious artist, I cannot force color into any corset. Color has its immanent laws by which I must be guided. So you could say, at a certain point, a painting emerges from itself. Getting involved with this immanence is of central importance to me and determines my work.

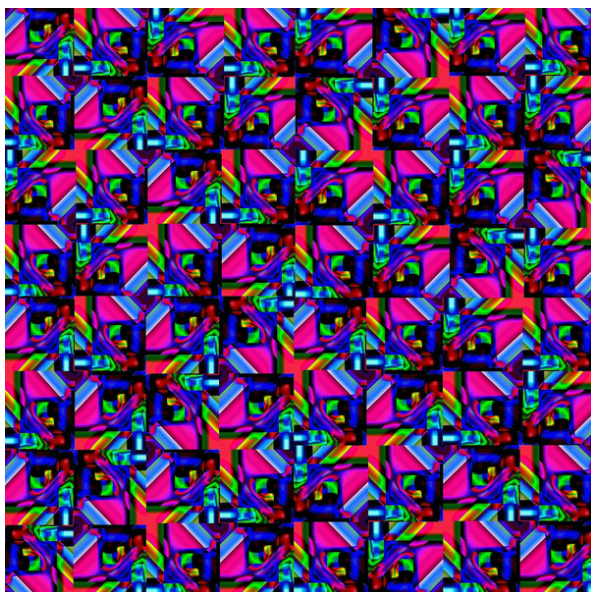


Metropol  
Print on canvas,  
Size - 80x80cm, 2021

**What do your works reveal about your personality?**

My work reveals about me that I approach my life with imagination and that I am a very versatile-oriented person. And that heart and mind play an equally important role in my life. Artistic activity is no longer conceivable for me without a strong rational part (concrete art). At the same time, I love to revel in colors, to play on the keyboard of colors. A melange of the whole I am as a person, and so I affect the art and it affects me.





Curling  
Print on canvas, 80x80cm, 2021

**Where or how do you rediscover inspiration when you're feeling creatively dry?**

Basically, I don't know this situation. I feel more like a creative spring that bubbles incessantly. Perhaps this has something to do with my multipolar way of working: I do painting, digital art, photo art, and collage in parallel, switching between the media again and again and thus also achieving very different results that one would not necessarily attribute to the same artist. I suppose that in this way I avoid the creative desert.

**Do your artworks bring to mind any of your own life events or memories?**

In general, memories from my life are not. However, some memory of special events in the artistic context. Some work reminds me of special exhibitions in which I participated. Or contests in which I was successful. Also, some sale remains because of their circumstances as special in memory.

**How has your opinion changed about this piece from the time you started looking at it until now?**

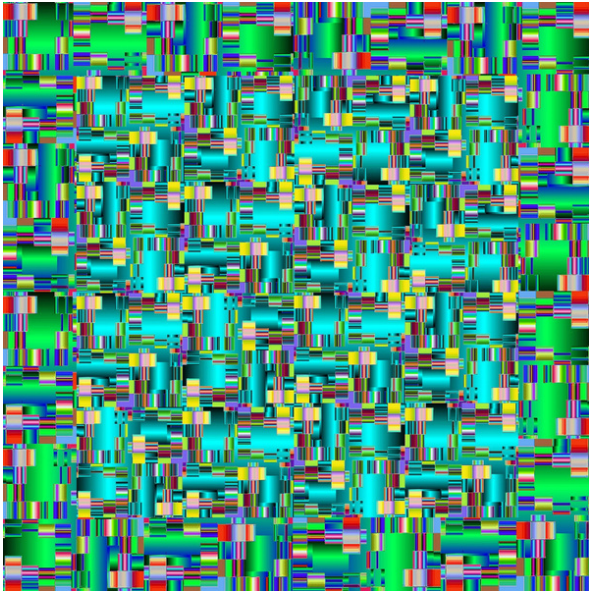
My attitude towards my works has not changed for many years. This may have to do with the fact that I have belonged to the school of concrete for about 25 years. This means designing a work down to the last detail and to realize it only when it is completely and irrevocably developed. Such work is then less dependent on momentary influences and possibly remains consistent in the future. It is a matter here of clear rules and principles that do not change as the basis of the work.

**What is the hardest part of creating for you?**

This is about the right time for the realization of a work. Since I have a very rich creative work, it happens again and again that two or more developed, designed works compete with each other. The decision, which work is to be realized NOW, is then often not easy for me. This can also lead to the fact that one or the other work is put back again and again until it is then possibly at some point completely eliminated. This a difficult point for me.

**What are you working on at the moment?**

On the further development of my painting and my digital art in particular. At the same time, I am working on the development of a new form, meant outer form, of my pictures. So far I preferred the square, also the tondo, and the oval for my image statements. But now I have found a form that convinced me immediately and I will now introduce more. I do not want to describe it here but document it in due course on my homepage.



Bewegliche Statik - Print on canvas, 80x80cm, 2022



### **How do you develop your art skills?**

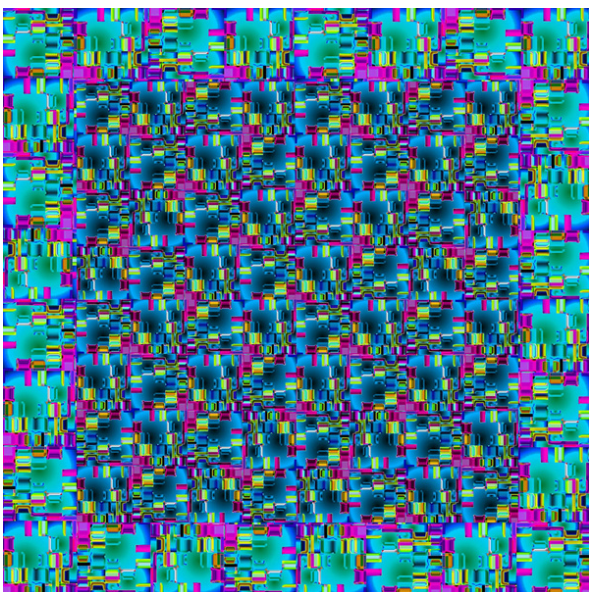
Of course, through practice, through comparative art viewing, and through the aforementioned alternation between work areas. Because painting, digital art, photo art, and collage require different approaches, they awaken and support different skills. This can lead to change in the individual work area. In any case, it keeps the artistic way of working very much alive.

### **What is the role of an artist in society?**

There are many roles. One is that of the designer, who gives our world a lively, colorful coat of paint. Then one of the researchers and enlighteners, questions life and its connections with artistic means. Then there is the founder of the community, as people gather in exhibitions (or concerts) and also gather or connect spiritually behind a work. And finally, the role of an entertainer, enabling fellow human beings to leave their everyday lives for a while and to draw new strength and confidence through contact with a foreign world. I feel at home in these roles.

### **What motivates you to create?**

The possibility to express myself in a way that is only possible with visual art (and also music). And then to share this expression, this statement with people and thus pass on something that can only be passed on in this way. Artistic activity has a very, very high value for me. I hardly ever feel more alive than in the artistic process. And preserve this vitality is also a high motivation.



Integration blau - Print on canvas, 80x80cm, 2021



# Patrícia Abreu

is a Brazilian Visual Artist who mixes multiple techniques in the realization of her works. With a degree in Graphic Design, Photography and professional experience in Art Direction for Audiovisual Dramaturgy, she moves fluently through different languages in search of the original expression. Themes about Time, Memory, and the Natural World are a constant presence in her work. Currently, she practices Macro Photography as a conceptual, formal, and artistic exercise, achieving then, an abstractionism in her image creation process.

The Time Capsules Series, 2022, is an ongoing Collection composed of Macro Photographs that capture otherworldly landscapes. In my personal research on old family belongings, objects that could retain the Past, I found 2 hand-blown glass paperweights that belonged one to my father and the other to my father-in-law, who left us last year. Father figures are represented on blocks of blown glass, objects I carry with me as reminders of their presence in my life. When using them in a Still Photography session, I noticed through the lens, their individual beauty, with several properties that could be investigated through Macro Photography. Then, through my Macro Lens, something beyond was revealed to me. The existence of those small bubbles inside, which, when enlarged, assumed a supernatural aspect, revealing fragments of encapsulated worlds, containing their own atmosphere, their air of the Past. When that became clear to me, I started building this Collection in search of the “magical photospheres” these objects contained. Sensitive images that evoke other Worlds, other Times. Capsules that store air and encapsulated weight memories of the Past. There are no digital manipulations in the composition of these images, just post-production to transform RAW images with a digital darkroom approach to retouch, contrast and better equilibrate the final image. Although I like occasionally to interfere with the images, this Series brought me a new challenge to face the distortions caused by the bubbles inside the glass objects. Seeing abstractions through the Macro Lens is a delightful way to build my images. Let the light trace the lines to follow, direct the gaze and reveal the sensations as we see, allowing the mystery of shadows, colors, contours, and visible shapes of the new image to tell us its path. “Mysteries lie all around us, even in the most familiar things, waiting only to be perceived.” – Wynn Bullock.

Captured with my Canon 5D Mark IV - 100mm Macro Lens. The Time Capsules Series is composed of Macro Photographs that capture otherworldly landscapes.





Time Capsules S1\_03 - Digital Macro Photography, Archival Pigment Inkjet Print, 58X36cm, 2022

**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I'm from Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which is a coastal city full of sea breeze. But considering that my family came from the countryside, my childhood was colored by the land and nature that I carry inside me and usually translates into my works.

**Describe how an artist is important to society.**

Art is a form of self-discovery, and as a form of self-construction, it paves the way for building whole worlds of perspectives and explorations. All these shared experiences can change our present and future environments. In these unstable times, art builds bridges between all these multiple possible realities.

**Where or how do you rediscover inspiration when you're feeling creatively dry?**

Music is always a strong force of restoration. I'm always connected with some intimate soundtrack and I also have a lot of inspiring playlists. But the very practice of Photography, with all the exercise of seeing and equalizing the images, brings back my exhausted energies. Peaceful walks and bird watching are also always natural sources of healing.



**What do your works reveal about your personality?**

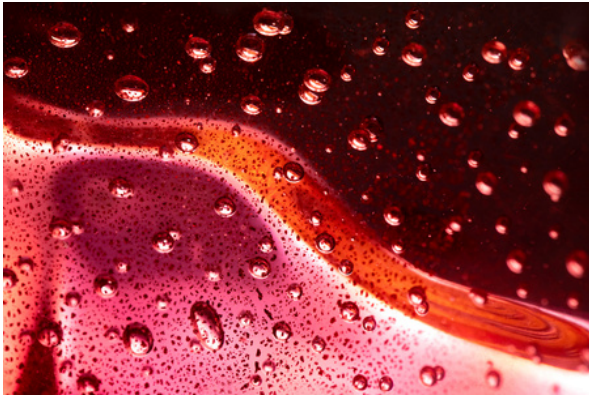
I don't know exactly what I reveal about myself through my works. I know they carry my identity and my visual pursuits, but I don't know how it becomes perceptible to others and that's what makes this kind of opportunity so important for artists, enabling this connection with viewers while taking part in collective publishing. Part of my works is composed of multiple layers that can bring countless interpretations and that seem very close to my personality type. But I also tend to develop a refined approach to image creation that carries minimalism and abstractionism in its results, shaping colors and light, which also speaks to me. Perhaps this flexible way of seeing everything together, instead of separating distant parts, translates my way of thinking. I don't intend to be attached to one style, instead, I keep my eyes fresh to always see far and around.

**What motivates you to create?**

Creating is a life impulse. It gives me a chance to expand on interpretations that bring me back to the present moment. This makes me capable of translating my thoughts and inner perceptions into something that can be shared with others. It is an attempt to connect and share your perception of the world with others.

Time Capsules S14\_05  
2022  
Digital Macro Photography  
Archival Pigment Inkjet Print 62X42cm





**Does the work introduce a thought, concept, or idea and/or make you think on a higher level?**

Certainly! Work always comes with ideas, thoughts, and contexts. But it is something close to a kind of simultaneity and not with pre-established concepts. There will always be discoveries along the way. But I carry with me some recurring research themes that talk about Time, Memory, and the Future. In the Series "Time Capsules", the close look at the subject in the case paper weights hand-blown glasses, allowed the perception of those small bubbles, which, magnified by Macro Photography, gained a supernatural aspect, revealing fragments of encapsulated worlds, which contained its own atmosphere, its air of the Past. This was something really unexpected and the context came to me as a whole truth. Seeing abstractions through Macro Lens is a natural way to build my images. Let the light trace the path to follow, direct the gaze and reveal sensations as we see, allowing the new image's shadow mysteries, color contours, and visible shapes to tell us its way. This constant search for meaning makes me realize certain latent connections that are what matter to me the most.

Time Capsules S5\_63  
Digital Macro Photography, 2022  
Archival Pigment Inkjet Print 60X40cm

**How do you develop your art skills?**

I'm always practicing, I think practice is essential to keep your eyes open and in line with your instincts and mind, and it requires you to be open to various subjects of your craft. So, when the routine becomes automatic and repetitive, pay attention to the details that surround it, it might help you reconnect with yourself. Besides that, I also like to make collages and watercolor illustrations, so I'm always writing and filling journals with some kind of motive that opens new paths for future works.

**What are you working on at the moment?**

I'm working on two parallel modalities of Photography, both involving an Abstract approach. The first are works done in Digital Macro Photography and make up my ongoing series called "Time Capsules". It has several sub-series and the images were a part of this Special Edition of Collect Art Magazine. In addition to this Series, I carry out another project called "Half Lies are Half Truths" which is composed of Photomontages in order to investigate the current algorithmic ways of producing images of the new generation of cellphones, in my case the iPhone 13 Pro Max.



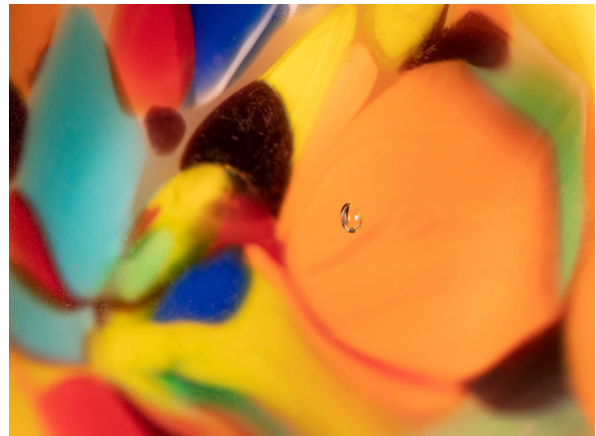
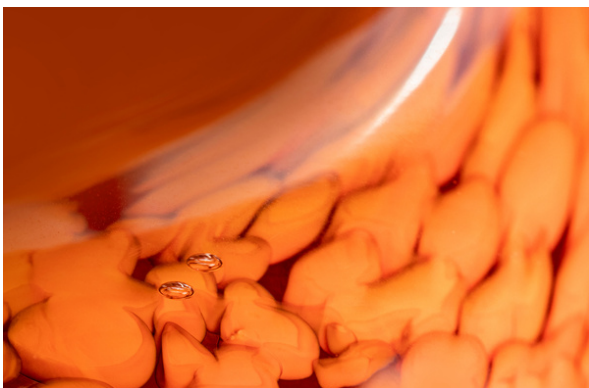


**How do you balance your time in the studio with other commitments such as a part-time job, family, or admin?**

Since I dedicate my time to both work and family and I also work from home, a routine is very important to me. In my professional routine, mornings are a priority, and when the morning is over, I take a break and come back in the late afternoon or early evening. When I have to do a photo session, which happens around 2 times a week, I reserve the whole day for it. However, it is easier to reconcile the demands of this lifestyle at this point in my life, with grown children and a Studio at home.

**How do you stay connected and up-to-date with the art world?**

I think that nowadays it is easy to find volumes of artistic influences due to the possibilities that the world wide web offers us all. The problem with this is becoming information-obsessed and getting lost in the countless discussions that open up to you. So I try to balance my thoughts and direct my focus to the interests that will be in dialogue with the project I'm developing at the moment. At the same time, I am always studying, and subjects such as Philosophy, Botany, Literature, and Design are my main concerns of interest. I also read a lot about Contemporary Art, in an attempt to maintain a connection with the new forms of expression.



Time Capsules S4\_02  
2022

Digital Macro Photography  
Archival Pigment Inkjet Print 58X42cm



Time Capsules S9\_05  
2022

Digital Macro Photography  
Archival Pigment Inkjet Print 40X40cm



Time Capsules S9\_12  
Digital Macro Photography, 2022  
Archival Pigment Inkjet Print 60X40cm





# Cat Simmons



Objet a\_7  
Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"

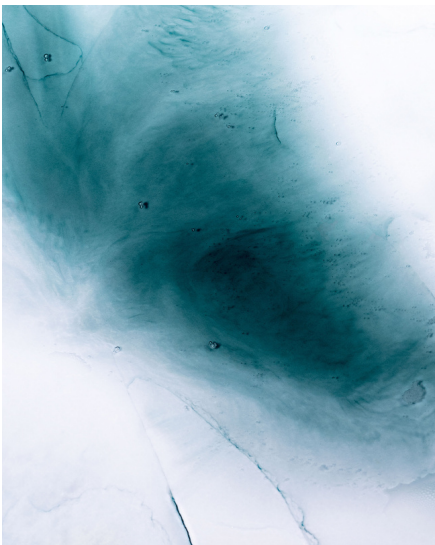


Cat is a DC/Maryland (USA) based photographic artist and educator. Her photography interests include portraiture and a unique process of transformative work centered around themes of memory, identity, and deconstruction. Rooted in her interests concerning theory, philosophy, and poststructuralism, her work focuses on using the photograph as an object which can be altered as a method of rewriting the past. Cat earned her BA in Women's Studies from the University of MD at College Park in 1997. She spent 18 years raising her six children before venturing out to earn a certificate in Photography from Montgomery Community College in Rockville, MD. From there she went on to earn her MFA in Photography from Savannah College of Art and Design in May of 2021.

*"My family album is filled with memories of people, events, and milestones, all collected to preserve the fleeting nature of past experiences. I've stored these photographs in safe places and have cherished them more and more as time has passed. I could never have predicted that one day, some of the same photographs that brought me so much happiness and nostalgia would become objects of pain and function as sobering reminders of the deceit that tainted my marriage. Boxes of pictures that once brought me joy became sources of immeasurable grief and anger. As I looked through my albums and connected certain images with new information, I felt compelled to discard them. Yet, rather than throwing them out, I chose to transform them into objects of healing, by way of rewriting my past through their physical deconstruction and revisualization. In this project, I remake old photographs, rendering them as new adaptations of their originals. Old images grow new wings as their auras transcend from the past into present works of abstract art and receive new attributes through the restructuring of their raw materials. By ruining the print and, by way of metaphor, its associated memory through various methods of destruction such as the dripping of pigment inks, the pulling of emulsion, and the tearing of the fibrous paper, I alter the representation of my past to one which is far from its original state. Tangibly destroying the prints and sculpting those materials into new works of art empowers me to take charge of my own story. I am no longer a slave to the sadness of past experiences, but rather find my story beautifully remade through this transformative process. I have effectively unanchored my painful memory and released it into new transcending realms of reinvention and remembering".*

### Where are you from and how does that affect your work?

I was born in the USA and have lived here for my entire life. I did have the privilege of living in Vienna, Austria for a year in 2017. Living in the States, especially around the Washington, DC area has given me many opportunities to experience life among a diversity of cultures, races, and backgrounds. Living in Europe, though for a short time, only deepened my appreciation for cultures that are different from mine. This exposure to and appreciation for other people groups and cultures has informed my ability to see outside of myself and question my work as it relates to how it might be received by others. Living in America has also offered me freedoms that I know others in the world don't have. Education is mandatory here. Opportunity is something that all people have the right to chase. These are privileges I recognize as having and they create in me a sense of deep gratitude for being able to pursue something I love. My work is the product of my education, privileges, and freedoms.



Objet a\_4  
Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"

### What is your background?

I was born in the mid-70s. As an 80's kid, I grew up playing outside until dark, listening to A-ha and Guns N' Roses, and serving treats at a frozen yogurt shop when I was a teenager. I didn't have the best family life, but I was fortunate to attend private school, play three sports, and grow up with a dog. I earned my undergraduate degree in Women's Studies from the University of MD at College Park in 1997, married and became a mother in 1998, and spent the next 20 years staying home to raise my six beautiful children. When my youngest was a toddler (now 12 years old), I took an interest in photography but realized I had no idea how to use a camera out of "auto" mode. I took a couple of classes, worked hard as a family photographer for a while, and eventually decided that I wanted to teach photography. I earned my MFA in Photography from Savannah College of Art and Design in 2021.

Objet a\_5  
Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"





**Why did you choose to be an artist?**

I don't think I ever made a conscious decision to become an artist. If you had told me as a child that one day, I'd be an artist, I would have told you that you were crazy! My current profession as an artist/photographer is the sole result of an evolution that took place as I made one small decision after another. At first, I simply wanted to take better pictures of my kids and maybe earn a little money on the side as a family photographer. I took a photography class for fun and that led to taking more classes. In those classes, I discovered my love for studio portraiture and realized that I was actually good at what I did. This led me to become a peer mentor and tutor at the college where I was taking classes. Discovering my love for teaching inspired me to earn my MFA in photography so I could teach a class of my own. (In America, many institutions require this kind of degree to teach.) In grad school, I discovered the world of conceptual fine art and created this body of work. Each little step propelled me forward to be the artist I am today.

**What inspires you?**

I am inspired by so many parts of life. I find much inspiration in nature. I also love to read and challenge my brain to understand the theory, philosophy, and other ways of thinking. I love when looking at a perfect stranger and imagining where they are going or what is on their calendar for the day. I'm inspired by the brave women with whom I have traveled some very painful roads. I love looking at the work of other artists and celebrating their accomplishments, taking inspiration from them so I can become a better artist and human. I am

often inspired by my own students who teach me more than I think I teach them sometimes. I think one of the biggest choices I made many years ago was to stop watching television and live life with purpose and intention. TV is so manufactured. It requires little thought and no imagination. I am inspired by anyone who shares a genuine curiosity about life and who is on a mission to learn as much as possible and to generously share what they learn. I'm also inspired by people who are not confined by the structures and expectations that hold so many others captive. I like bending the rules a bit!

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

As an abstract artist, I don't create work that can easily be interpreted. My work doesn't have a universal message that is easy to discern. My images represent a deconstruction of the past, an inflicted assault against the photograph and its memory so that new representations of the past can be created. As abstracts, these new photographs will evoke something different within each of my viewers. It is my goal within my work to empower other people to understand that they, too, are not bound by their own pasts, but have full autonomy and power to change how those pasts are seen, felt, and understood.

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

The biggest challenge I have found in being an artist is balancing my commitment to art and the routine demands of life. Sometimes I imagine what it might be like or where my career as an artist might be if I wasn't also raising kids, working a "normal" job, and taking care of my aging parents. It's hard to make time to create art when so many

other demands take up so much of my time. The way I have addressed this problem is to create deadlines or commitments for myself. What I mean by this is I think of something I'd like to do and then create a deadline or firm commitment so that it becomes a priority. For example, I've been wanting for over a year to begin a new body of work that will eventually take book form. So, I decided to teach a project development class to a handful of students and as part of that class, I am also going to begin this project for feedback from them. They are expecting to see my new work which will force me to carve out time to make it. It might sound crazy, but this works for me.

**What do you like/dislike about the art world?**

I like the fact that as long as a person has the desire to be creative, there is room for them in the art world. Sure, there are some artists that are clearly more talented than others, but in general, with hard work and commitment to their craft, anyone can create art! I also like when I meet artists who are willing to share all their knowledge for the benefit of helping other artists succeed. This doesn't always happen, but when it does, the universe just feels beautiful and in the right order! What I don't like is the fact that an artist can work very, very hard for years and years and potentially not get very far when it comes to making money or earning a spotlight with their work. It's so competitive and sometimes it's not even the most talented artists who "make it" but rather it's the ones who know how to market and run a business. Sometimes success is the result of pure luck or knowing the right

people. There is no formula for success in the art world. For this reason, I think one must be okay with just creating purely for the joy of making art and letting the rest take care of itself.

**Name the artist or artists you'd like to be compared to, and why?**

I'd like to be compared to Banksy or Rineke Dijkstra. Both Banksy and Dijkstra leave very few traces of themselves for public consumption despite their art being very popular and well-known. Neither seems to have any strong need or desire for public affection, yet both are highly regarded. Sometimes I wish I could be so well known and make so much money from my work that I could afford to hide from the public and just keep making art! I realize this contradicts my love for sharing what I know, teaching, and hoping to meet as many beautiful human beings as I can through my art, but if I'm being honest, it's a lot of hard work to do those things. I could be down with an exhibition in MoMA without a website of my own!

**What is the hardest part of creating for you?**

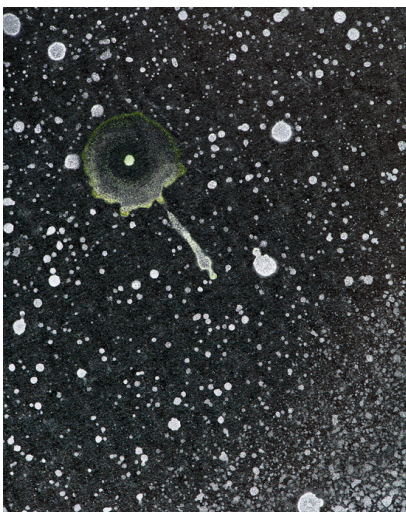
When I'm creating new work for my *Objet an Unremembering* project, the hardest part is trying to create new ways to manipulate and create from the materials from the destroyed photographs. I don't want all my work to look the same. I want to challenge my workflow by thinking of new and innovative ways to create. This most often happens by chance. I work methodically until my creative pathways open and new ideas come as I move along. My best work is very spontaneously created. Sometimes I can think of new starting points, like freezing



emulsion into ice cubes for instance, but usually, I start by looking at my materials, praying that something good comes out of what I'm about to begin, and just begin. Sometimes I'll work for hours and end up with nothing I like. Other times I'll strike gold very early and end up with multiple candidates for an image. I guess, in summary, it's not knowing where I'm headed or what I'll end up with.

### **What is the role of an artist in society?**

An artist can participate in so many roles today. Some are political or social activists. Some seek to confront historical records through their medium. Others try to make the world a brighter and more colorful place. Where one might create work to influence or persuade their viewers to think or feel something specific, others don't care what someone else might think about their work. The role of an artist can be multitudinous. Regardless of which one any particular artist might be, all artists offer other human beings an opportunity to practice using their imaginations and perpetuate a curiosity in life that I think often gets lost somewhere in early adulthood. The world needs us!



Objet a\_9  
Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"

Objet a\_20



Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"

### **Who are your biggest artistic influences?**

Joyce Tenneson is one of my photographic influences. Her Light Warriors project and her book Wise Women have both captured my whole heart. Her creativity and technique are so far beyond anything I have achieved so far. I also love the work of Julia Margaret Cameron. She, too, was a portrait photographer who did not fit into society's expectations of women in the mid-1800s. She utilized a soft-focus aesthetic and was criticized for it, yet she didn't back down from what she wanted in her work. She was a rebel in a way and now she is admired for her tenacity and steadfastness in sticking to her own standards of artistic preference. From an aesthetic standpoint, I love the work of Helen Frankenthaler and her use of the soak and stain process to aid in the spontaneity present in her paintings.

**Tell me about your favorite medium.**

My favorite medium would obviously be photography. Yet, as an artist who works with other mediums within my photographic practice, I'd have to say that I find sculpting to be a fascinating exercise. It's three-dimensional, fragile, and in my case, very forgiving when I am clumsy with the emulsion materials.

**Where do you find inspiration?**

I love to read books about photography. While I am definitely inspired by the work of other artists, I am even more inspired by those who write or speak about the historical or contemporary implications of photography in our culture. I like deep thinkers. I like thinking about photography in ways that most people don't. Understanding how photography functions as a visual language, and then applying a post-structural or deconstructionist paradigm to photographic thought blows my mind! I kind of geek out on that stuff, but for me, it supports the underlying themes within my work giving my work a sense of intellect to support the aesthetics. One of the ways I find interesting reads is to think of a keyword like a language or identity and then go to JSTOR or some online library of journals and search for relevant readings as they relate to photography.

**When is your favorite time of day to create?**

I prefer to create in the morning. The light is so bright coming through my window where I work. I have the option of using my studio lights or natural light on a sunny day. Creating in the morning also gives me the rest of the day to look at my images and edit them without having to lose momentum.

**Describe how art is important to society.**

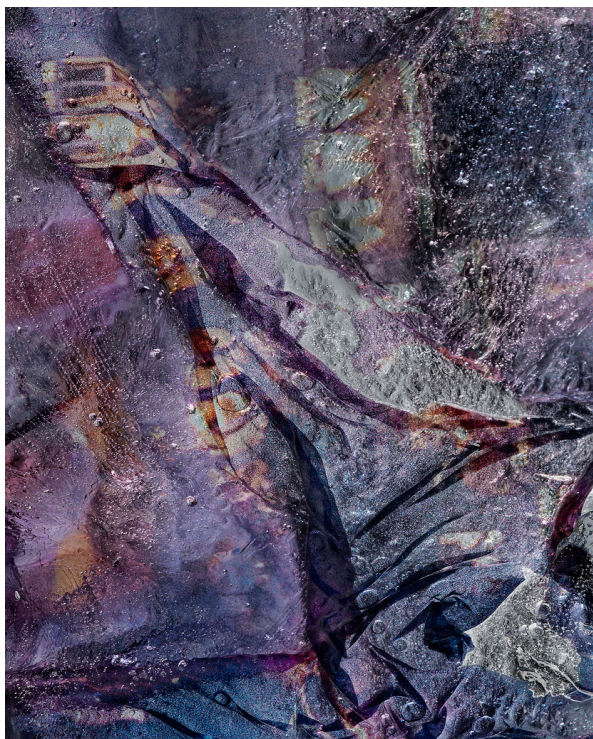
I believe art is one way through which we can all connect and find commonality among our differences. Certainly, thoughts or intent will get lost on those who do not necessarily share or understand a particular culture or custom of the artist, but the idea behind creating something has the potential to move or affect another human being is pure magic. The ability to create lives in all of us and it's a trait that only we as humans share; well, we and the elephants that paint to be fair! Art offers cultures and societies the ability to express their own ways of filtering our world and we celebrate those differences. Art brings people together!

Objet a\_26  
Print on archival paper using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"



### How do you stay connected and up-to-date with the art world?

One of the most important ways I have found to stay connected is through my participation in my artist collective. We are the Silver Water Collective and are a group of ten female photographers who met on Zoom classes in grad school during the pandemic. Each of us is so different. We range in age, race, politics, geography, and photographic style. By being part of the collective, I am part of an ongoing mission to inspire, create, exhibit, and educate through a collaborative effort put forth by all of us. We share the work of other artists with each other. We show up for each other when one of us has an online engagement. We help keep each other focused on our art and encourage each other in our individual goals. Our website is [www.silverwatercollective.com](http://www.silverwatercollective.com). Otherwise, I spend a good amount of time on Instagram looking at the work of other artists. I visit LensCulture and PhotoLucida often to look at the work of contemporary artists who have earned prestigious airtime on those sites. I also make sure that I look up the artists about whom I read when I read books or journals on photography. In the DC area, we have lots of galleries to visit which is a great way to keep up with other artists. I keep a list of YouTube and Vimeo links in which other photographers present their work. Additionally, I am always looking at creative job ads to see what kinds of skills commercial and educational employers are looking for. Lastly, I look at the calls for entry on Artjobs to get a sense of the climate within the art world and gauge the variety of galleries, publications, and social sites.



Objet a\_6  
Print on archival paper  
using pigment inks,  
Size 37.5"x30"





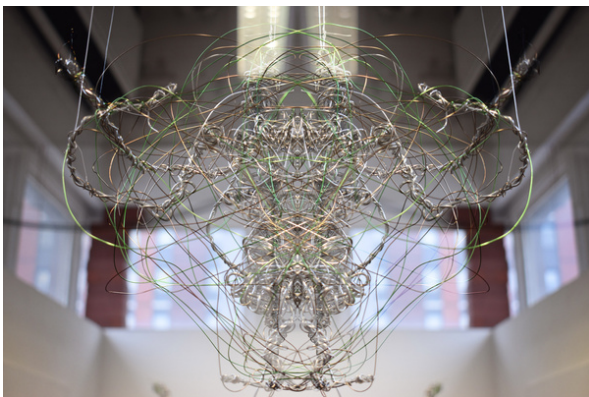
*"As an artist, I enjoy using a variety of media, often experimenting with distinctive styles and tones. I use photographic images as inspiration for my paintings. I use visual images to relate to day-to-day issues that are often hard for people to express and explain, such as mental health, diversity social anxiety, and how people reflect on them in their lives. I create a non-singular vision; each work could relate to a concept or theme, which could equally stand on its own. My ideas are grounded. However, my imagery is dimensional so others may see this as fictional. These ideas could be seen as horror, fantasy, or surrealism. I develop them further using materials, techniques, and skills that can reflect personal life and growth and how people deal with them. The technique used in my latest work gives it a cinematography look, inverting and installing the images to some classic sci-fi and groundwork movies, with imagery from the modern day. My work has a sense of being both finished and unfinished, giving the impression I cannot identify what I am seeing and feeling. I use distinctive colors and light or dark tones to distinguish myself and my surroundings. Limitations, flaws, faith, and uncontrolled emotions are specific interests of mine, as well as my use of a variety of non-conventional media including materials and the process of the art techniques."*

## James Mellor

Pandora -Digital Photography, 42x59cm, 2021



The works are depictions of vibrant light shaping a figurative mystery form. The light could be interpreted as a light source guiding to a specific purpose and can be represented as good and bad as the unknown can attract a participant by admiring or attracting from the light vibrant colors. The figure is shaped to be answered whether good or bad the background is a shade of blackness void that gives a sense of beauty to the light source and yet gives shivering horror imagery is dark and nothingness that can reflect on dreams and nightmare vision not knowing what it could be as visualize as a glimpse. An abstract wire figure depiction of me as an artist and identity based on mental health. Seen a mysterious with dark and good thoughts. clouded in the dark void but being the light, not giving up on people, and staying focused on the good all the time despite being challenged and obstacles in the way. Easy to be consumed by bad thoughts and be a bad person. it is represented in this art piece and my other work shrouded in darkness but being the only light source and you. Modern-day art Visual depict and summarizes in color and light we all should aspire to help others and be better than the bad in our world to protect the innocent and inspire the new generation in a spiritual image and identity. The color of the wire in the process is a projector behind the wire sculpture casting different color light that is reflected in the wire figurative. TH choices made with different colours of connection to different moods and feeling such example is purple being a passionate, loving depiction and to me reflects humanitarian issues. The vibrant colours even give a sort of lift to the figurative-looking wire sculptures as these unique, shaped, distorted creatures in various ones being mythical, more being like moths and insects and even shaped into humanoid. They can be depicted as metamorphosis and change. Metamorphosis is when a creature in its life forms a transformation from an immature form to an adult form in two or more distinct stages which is like how I have been using wire in staging and process. Wire as a material is intriguing to me as a template of sculpture as there are many possible outcomes and forms you can create by hand and editing. The surrounding of the wire can be seen as claustrophobic as the idea of the nothingness of black open spaces is horrifying as the scariest depiction of what in your mind can imagine is scarier than what is in a form of reality. Yet looking at the figures themselves visually is striking and rich with the strange feeling of peace looking darkroom meditation or dark therapy, is a practice of reflection that is often done in a quiet and dark space away from sunlight or artificial light.



Utopia - Digital Photography, Size 42x59cm, 2022 - Dystopia



**Where are you from and how does that affect your work?**

I am from Sheffield, personally not so much does the City of Sheffield affect my work, but more the village of Beighton where I live nice and quiet than the public of the City so creating my work at home is work and a hobby as I love all sorts of art and doing in my village is soothing and peaceful.

**What is your background?**

My Education has always featured studying art, at a young age from secondary school to graduating from University with a Ba hons in Fine Art course.

**Why did you choose to be an artist?**

At a young age, I struggled to socialize and trust people as I was bullied and tormented at school a lot to the end of secondary school. I used art to create pieces based on my childhood action figures and movies I love. I enjoyed art so much in school I wanted to develop my art in new and unique ways such as printmaking, photography, and many more.

**What inspires you?**

I always felt as an artist you should respect and take inspiration from Contemporary artists and historic artists. One of my big inspirations was Vincent Van Gogh's paintings his backstory and his beautiful style of painting I relate as Van Gogh suffered and struggle with depression and sadly took his life but was able to leave a symbol of the beautiful paintings that reflect nature and our world that come to someone that had nothing. Contemporary artists that I have recently been inspired by are Ryan Mosley and Sanya Kantarovsky. They both are painters that use color to

create a story through fictional characters that go into the grounded theme, in reality, growing up with action figures and Yugioh Card Game specifically made of characters and creatures intrigue me.

**Describe how art is important to society.**

Art gives so much to people, for different reasons as art can be anything that can be used in politics, people's health, and enjoyment. There is a bit of art in everyone that a majority don't believe that they can be artists, to me anyone can be an artist they just have to enjoy what they do. For example during the Pandemic people were terrified, bored, and had bad forms of mental health but like Grayson Perry Art Club people started making artwork during that time somehow made people happy, and brought the family closer during struggling times.

**What motivates you to create?**

I create because I want to make a difference and want to give a message that no matter where you come from, or your culture there is a special wonderful person inside everyone and despite my distrust and mental abuse from being bullied, I believe that there is a story of art that anyone can create and is interesting there no such thing perfection it what people do with the gift of life that determine who people are. My motivation for sports, adventure, and love for friends made my college and university activities with the communities like NCS help support me in my art to learn and try anything new while being consistent and being the best human being, I can be.



### **How do you define success as an artist?**

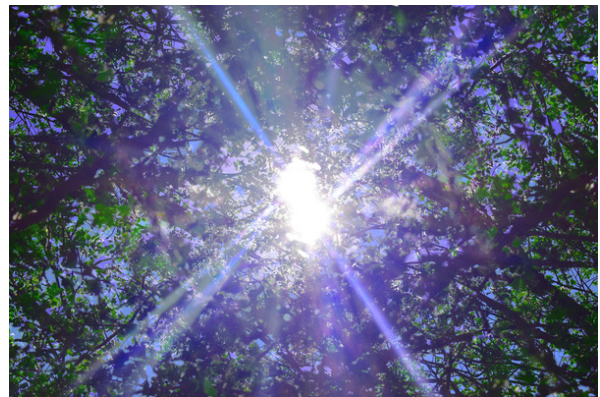
Success is interesting, as I had a lot of exhibitions and program opportunities, shows and yet they been some failures. As much as it can suck or be scary to not want to fail, it is like life failing is ok if you can learn from it. Personally, I was sad and upset with not getting in an opportunity I wanted badly and wasn't happy with my university grade. It's tough time in everyone's life where we have to be steady and adapt and improve on our mistakes, but to remind ourselves that failing doesn't bad, I still feel the effect from the grade but I still making work which is not giving up. Knowing that their people love art as much as I do and want you to be part of their project and magazine is the success I treasure as if feel and is that you making a difference.

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

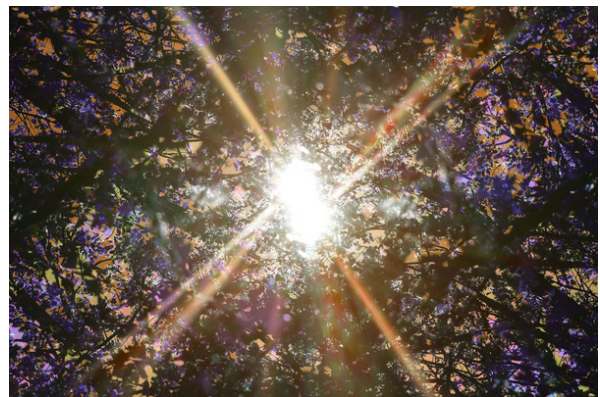
The challenge is time and money as you must look after yourself and keep yourself active to make work but also get material for the work to create. Also doing work outside of something you love doing as well is particularly stressful and feeling the making time of your social life as you are still young yeah, I challenge. To address it you must take chances and keep yourself moving to create the practice, moving forward from the failures and taking any opportunities you can get. Money if can't afford the material I find some waste materials, then adapt and experiment with limited resources and learn you can work better when limited. But money is a big one as not only material but a lot of opportunities and competition do fee show you do have to take a chance and hope it pays off.



Entighten  
Digital Photography, Size 21x29.7cm, 2022



Utopia Beyond  
Digital Photography, Size 29.7x42cm, 2021



Autumn Orion  
Digital Photography, Size 29.7x42cm, 2021

**How has your style changed over time?**

My style does consist of experimenting a lot with different techniques and not sticking with one style as I feel with my mood and lifestyle, I get bored and find it respective I have done a lot of photography, drawing, painting, printmaking, and experiments that have recently consist of figures and abstract pieces based on moods and distorted characters. The sculptures are made from wire to reduce stress from the process and create mystery figures that then get photographed to then change their form from the surroundings and draw from the sculpture as references.

**Do you have a network of other artists, and how do they support you?**

No sadly, I would like to involve myself with other artists the Group Project at university was so much fun, and build a great team dynamic with great artists and long-time friends.

**What are you working on at the moment?**

Now, I am creating more drawings from wire figures with added coffee stains. Also, creating simple abstract nature shots of flowers and the sun I shall be heading to the award ceremony of the NTU Viente Art Prize competition that I enter and see the result of the Luxembourg Art Prize that I also enter finger cross.

**How do you know when a work is finished?**

Hard to say I feel it knowing when to say enough as you can spend so much time working on a piece being able to make the choice of saying that will do it really depends on what you getting at from your piece

**Do you have any exhibitions coming up?**

D31 Doncaster Mental Health is still up



Leak Forest  
Digital Photography, Size 29.7x42cm, 2022



Forest Knight  
Digital Photography, Size 29.7x42cm, 2021



when amazing people in 3 sessions created a personal art piece example a family member in the process to deal with depression have been this month. There is also a Digital Magazine Issue 4 of Artist Responding To Contemporary Art, Culture and Activism.





