

UPWARD's *Quarterly*

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





RICK SULLIVAN
PALACE INTRIGUES

Foreword

We are pleased to present the tenth issue of our magazine. It includes various publications featuring artists, as well as selected works that were part of our spring exhibitions.

Ten issues of the magazine give us reason to take stock of the magazine's work. We are proud to note that during this time we have published 125 interviews and studio visits with artists, and the works of more than 350 artists have been published in the pages of our magazine.

In the interviews, the artists shared their thoughts on their work, art in general, and its place in modern society.

In some of the interviews in this issue and in personal conversations, we asked the artists what problems they see in the current state of the art market. The most common idea was that the art market needs to be more open and actively engage with the public outside its boundaries.

In our day, with technology encroaching on the world of art, we also see our mission as offering ongoing support for authentic human creativity. This kind of creativity will become more and more valuable with each passing year.

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

Ollie Basham

Editor-in-chief

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First cover: **Las Frogas**, I can't stand you



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Mr. Oliver Basham, Editor-in-chief and Director of the UPWARD gallery.
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FEATURED ARTISTS:

LAS FROGAS	AARON KRONE
RICK SULLIVAN	WENXIN WANG
PAUL MICHAEL GLASER	EMMA CAMP
NESREEN SELIM	SAMANTHA GLOVER
SHAYNE BRANTLEY	MARISA OSTROFF
AARON KRONE	SIOBHAN KEKOA
AMY NEWTON-MCCONNEL	AMANDA CRECELIUS OTT
ANDI RITTER	NICK SULLIVAN
REYNA SUNSHINE	SHELBY HILDEBRAND
PAULA CURRIE	MARYAM FARDINFARD
OLGA MCNAMARA	JUDITH YEO
DANIELLE COWDREY	ROB SNYDER
BRYAN BROMSTRUP	NORMAN ELLIS

LAS FROGAS:

Frogs represent the concepts of metamorphosis, renewal, and beginning anew



UQ: Tell us how you first became interested in creating art.

I began practicing art in my early childhood. I had always been surrounded by art in my life because of my father; he had aspired to be a comic illustrator, and he practiced his craft whenever possible. Naturally, I took interest in what he did, and I started following in his wake to illustrate whatever I could. We would spend time together drawing and doing crafts at the dinner table. That is where my love for the arts started to

unfold. I owe my beginnings as an artist to my father, who always supports my endeavors even now and who served as my first teacher in artistry.

Which artists or art movements have influenced you?

Contemporary, postmodern, and pop art are the subjects that interest me most, especially because of their focus on culture in the present day. Artists such as Takashi Murakami and Keith Haring are creatives that have long been my main “mentors” in my artistic journey. Specifically referring to the world of Murakami, I am heavily influenced by how he hides negative emotions with prominent colorful, cutesy, and “easy” scenery. Symbolic of this idea are his cute, bug-eyed, smiley flowers, where they hide the resentment of post-World War II society. Keith Haring’s work challenged the idea of art being for a certain type of person and pushed for his artwork to



Crows

Colorful, cute, and eye candy-esque graphics are foiled against my “FROGAS,” the frog characters that are recurring in my artwork

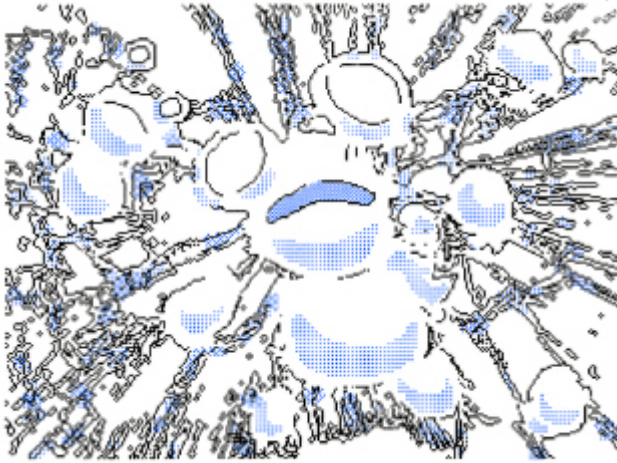
speak for others like him. I linger about how he aimed to bring art to the “common person” in the New York City subways and how active he was in protests with his art. I think of Haring and the care he placed into the people of his community very often.

How would you describe your artistic style? What inspires you?

I embrace a unique illustrative and pixelated style in my work. Colorful,

cute, and eye candy-esque graphics are foiled against my “FROGAS,” the frog characters that are recurring in my artwork. I enjoy playing in a cute “marketable” style because it is eye-catching, fun to look at, and very deceptive. In my practice, I challenge myself to create a visual narrative or depict heavy emotions which are hidden behind layers and blobs of “FROGAS,” colors, and movement. The style itself is directly influenced by the video

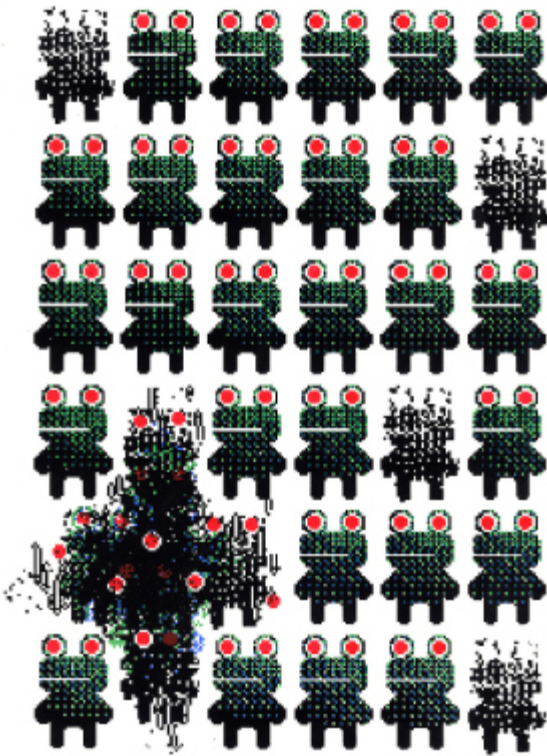
INTERVIEW



Apoptosis

games and internet media I engaged in since I was young. This illustrative style is also unique to my own experience regarding my childhood spent on-

Pathogenesis



line, in which I combine both the nostalgic and distressing aspects of it.

Frogs are always present in your work. Why frogs?

The philosophy that guides me in my personal life is the concept of “metamorphosis”: the ability to grow and change. The concept and acceptance of moving forward rather than remaining stagnant are spiritual to me. I have faced turmoil caused directly by my life online since childhood. I push myself to be more than my traumas, working towards evolving into the best version of myself. Frogs are symbolic of this process. They represent the concepts of metamorphosis, renewal, and beginning anew. To grow, they burst limbs and new structures from their simple tadpole bodies. Like frogs, it feels like my body and mind contort and put themselves back together again in a cycle at times. Sometimes moving past trauma does feel ugly and grotesque, and sometimes the result is not always beautiful or resolved either. Frogs signify the perseverance it takes to grow and accept change, and the changes necessary to be a better person to me.

I am the “FROGAS,” and the “FROGAS” are me.

What is your favorite art accident?

Did it change your perspective?

I work primarily in silkscreen printing. When I first started practicing, I made what felt like infinite amounts of mistakes when it came to layers. One of my earliest print runs had a transparent blue layer on top of a black one because I thought the ink would print opaquely. Little did I know, I bought transparent cyan ink meant for CMYK

In times that I cannot talk about what I am feeling I turn to illustration and creating forms that are representative of myself at the moment

printing. It caught my attention, though, because it glistens if the print is held and moved within the light. At the time, I thought of it as an amateur mistake. I have been thinking back to that edition and how I could utilize transparent inks layering on top of each other as of late. It changed how I think about layers not only being a technical technique but a narrative one as well. I wish to experiment with this soon in my future endeavors.

What is the most important thing about art to you?

Visual art is an exceptionally powerful tool. I believe often that words alone cannot voice the sheer emotion that I experience which color and shape can. In times that I cannot talk about what I am feeling I turn to illustration and creating forms that are representative of myself



Phagocytosis

at the moment. It is my method of journaling and documenting my days, so it is important for me to always draw.

How do you promote your art?

I began tabling and selling my artwork at several different art events this past year. I base myself in Chicago, which is a great bastion of artistry, and so I have started to vend my artwork and submit my work to gallery calls. I also try my best to maintain a social media presence to support myself and other artists to reach further than Chicago.

What are your plans? What are you working on now?

At the moment, I am working towards strengthening my discipline in illustration and fortifying it with stronger visual narrative. It is especially important to me to never “settle” or reduce my artwork down to pure visual stimulation. I am also working towards finding more events to display my artwork and finding more places to engage with artists. ●

LAS FROGAS



I can't stand you

RICK SULLIVAN



PALACE INTRIGUES

PAUL MICHAEL GLASER:

I see myself as a storyteller

Paul Michael Glaser is an internationally acclaimed, award-winning actor, film director, and artist based in California, USA.

In an interview with our magazine, Paul Michael Glaser talked about his definition of creativity, the pros and cons of digital painting, and what he puts into the images he creates.



Paul Michael Glaser at his LagunaArt.Com show in Laguna Beach, CA, 2021

UQ: Tell us how your journey into artistic creation began. What has influenced you the most?

I was raised in a house where my dad was an architect and he collected art, and my mother was very much involved in the arts also. So as children we did a lot of sculpting, painting, drawing... you name it.

How would you describe your artistic style? What inspires you?

What inspires me is the process of discovery when I sit and work.

In addition to your fame as an artist, you are internationally known as a prominent actor and director. How does this affect your artistic

endeavors—when does it help and when does it hinder? In what ways do your work in film, poetry, and visual art intersect?

I look back on my life as an artist, or as a person who is artistically inclined and likes to play around in a lot of areas. I look at the sum of that experience and see myself as a storyteller. When I was a child, my mother read to me constantly. I like stories. I tell a pretty good story. But even the paintings, even the acting, are all storytelling. It's all, "This is me. This is who I am. Do you see yourself in this? Do you discover the things I discover?" It's trying to present the human condition as I experience it, hoping that communicates to others.

You are currently focusing on digital painting. Why digital? What are the advantages and drawbacks of different painting techniques for creating your art?

The way I got back into my drawing and my painting was that I had written



Paul Michael Glaser sketching at his Superfine show in Los Angeles, CA, 2023

...It's trying to present the human condition as I experience it, hoping that communicates to others

two books. The first book was *Chrystallia* and the *Source of Light*, and the second book (*Hookfoot and Peg, A Cautionary Tale*) I haven't published yet because when I was looking for an illustrator, my daughter said to me (and this goes back eleven years), she said, "You illustrate it." I thought about that for a moment, and it made sense to at least try. So, I started sketching and then I was traveling, so I had an iPad

with me, so it was easiest to put the sketches on the iPad and paint them, and it was digital painting. I mistakenly made the decision that the learning curve with brushes and acrylics and watercolors was going to be steeper than the learning curve of Photoshop, which is the app I use on my iPad and on my Cintiq (Wacom tablet). Therein evolved my digital indulgence, if you will.

INTERVIEW



Paul Michael Glaser talking with guests at his Optimist Studio show in Los Angeles, CA, 2022

able to identify a story or a question you are trying to ask and answer, which is what my process is usually about.

Due to the onset of AI, digital painting and illustration are considered the most vulnerable art forms. Are you concerned about the future of human-created digital paintings?

Digital art is just a new canvas, really. It doesn't have the history or the amount of effort, perhaps, that one would put into an oil painting, albeit I've done works that have taken a long, long time. But it doesn't have a great tradition behind it in a sense of history and it's also very easy to duplicate or replicate on the one hand. On the other hand, digital has the opportunity to reach a lot more people, and if you can use it successfully, and realize pieces that will impact other lives, then there is a lot to be said for digital. I do think the amount of time one takes to do a particular work encompasses a lot of living. The more time you take, the more living you do, and the more living you

I reference my careers as an actor and director, and say that each one has to find their own way

One of the drawbacks to digital is that there is not a whole lot of depth. I like motion and I like depth, so it's a bit of a challenge for me to try to put it up there. The other thing is that digital, even though it's available on computers and on screens, it's not an organic piece of art. In other words, it's not paint, it's not pencil. I've been doing a lot of sketching lately. So, it's kind of hard to feel a human connection. Maybe that makes it all the more important to be

do when you look at the canvas, you're going to see a lot greater variety and ideas.

How do you promote your art? What advice would you give to aspiring artists in terms of finding way to their audience?

I wish I had an answer. I reference my careers as an actor and director, and say that each one has to find their own way.

What is missing from the contemporary art market? What problems do you see in contemporary art right now?

I was raised in a house with all kinds of paintings around me; famous artists and others. The thing that I am most concerned about with contemporary art today is the subject matter. I don't think it's enough—sometimes it's enough—but I don't think in the overall impact of art, of imagery, that contemporary art today really tells enough stories. It's not relied on—it sort of is—but people tend to look at images they see on television, or a computer screen, whatever, in terms of information. Interesting, huh? Information—as if life could be all X's and O's. It becomes a greater challenge when we are inundated with so much information to sort through it all and find the human experience.

Paul Michael Glaser and Patric Stillman, Gallerist at the Studio Door, San Diego, CA, 2024



Paul Michael Glaser:

Let me say one last thing about storytelling.

Storytelling is the way in which we communicate with each successive generation our life's experience.

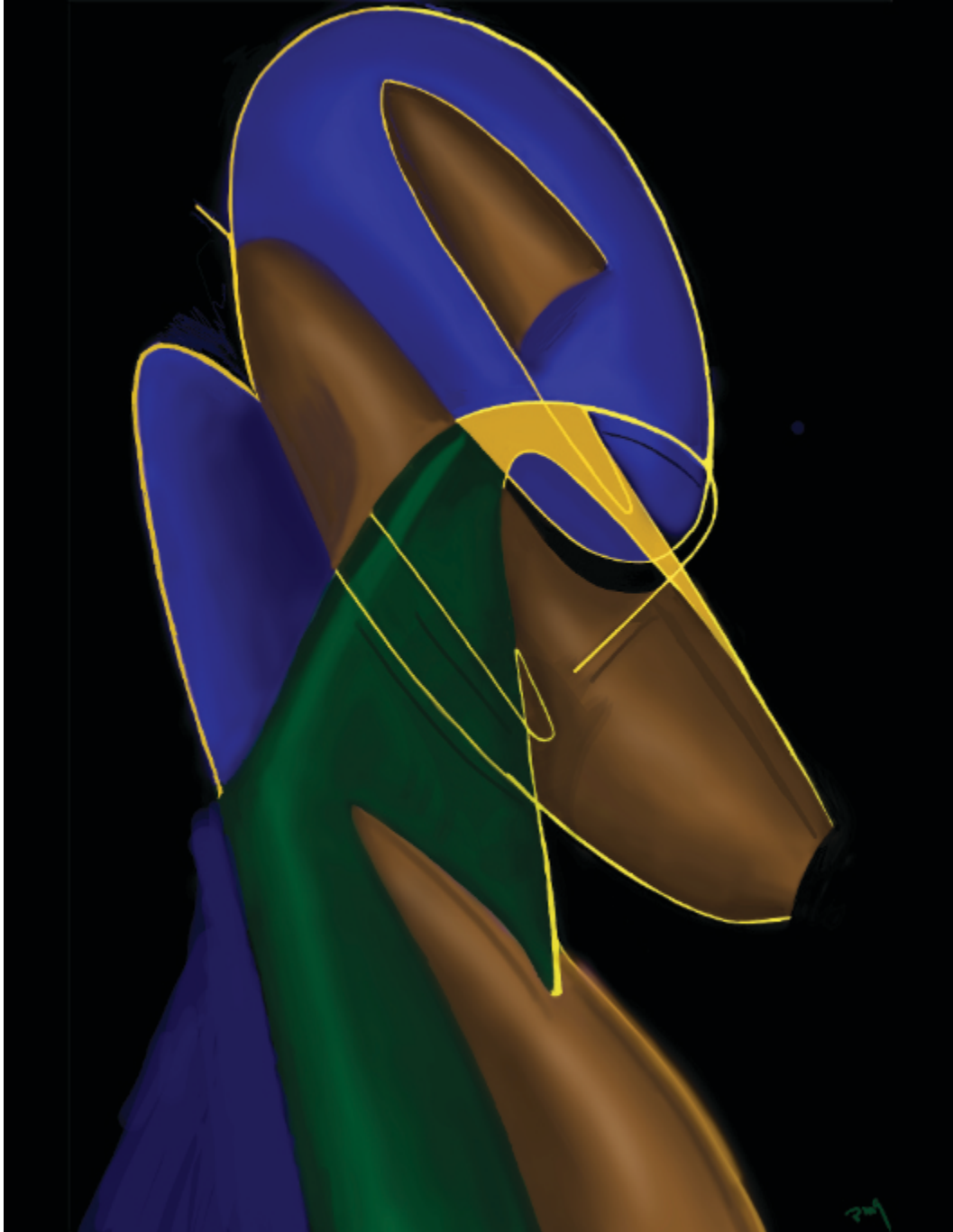
It can be the events and things that happen to us, which is more like a reportage. But also the actual experience of life, the trials and tribulations, successes and failures, the effort it takes to live, and the need to find a way to overcome the fear or to use the fear, that are such important things to communicate to each generation and storytelling has always been the way. Computers right now - what the internet has done is taken all this and made it into information that is readily accessible. That doesn't speak as much to human choice, human need, and human discovery. It's more like shopping.

I think the availability of digital and computers and all of that makes it much easier for anybody and their uncle to attempt to create something, should that be their inclination, which is great. But it's so quick and so fast from an idea to canvas, it's a seduction. "Oh, look what I did. Look at that!" And you can sit and admire it, and other people can admire it, and that feels good, in terms of more instant gratification, if you will, than living with the process of creating an oil or acrylic painting or a lithograph or anything like that that is time-intensive and allows you, as I said before, to have more life's experience in the course of creating a piece.

What are your creative plans? What are you currently working on?

My creative plans are to continue to be creative. I'm working on a volume of sketches and always painting. And finishing up my book. ●

PAUL MICHAEL GLASER



Muttanaut

NESREEN SELIM



Breath Between the Hills

STUDIO VISIT



SHAYNE BRANTLEY:

I'll take my inspiration from the unstructured and the sublime at every turn

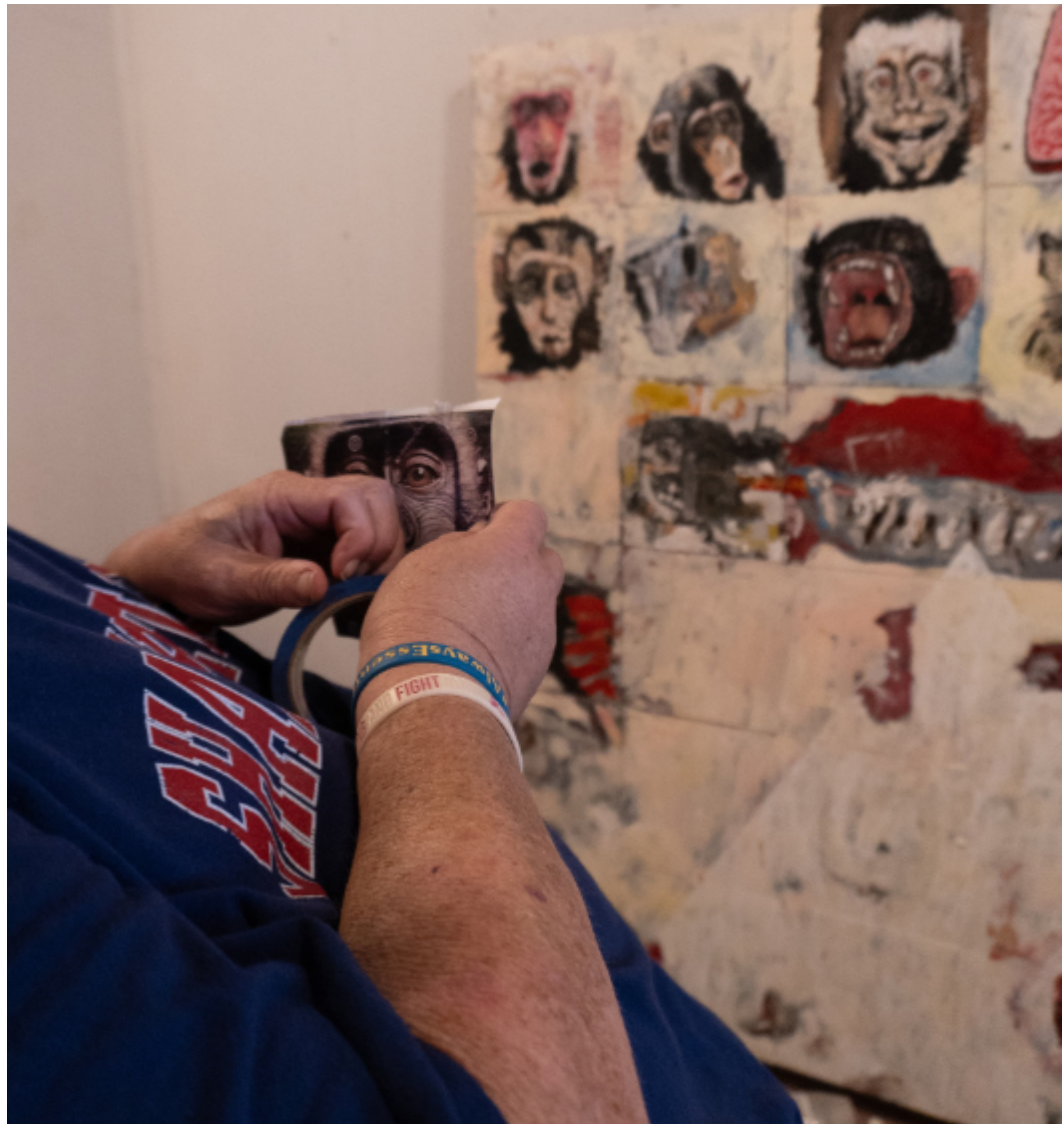
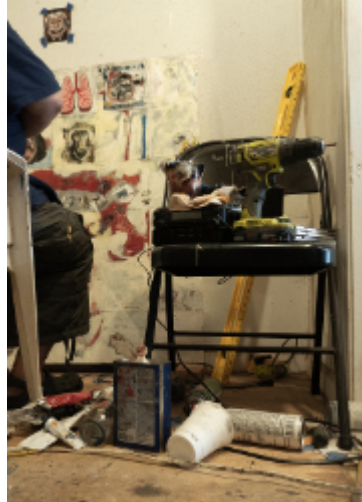
On Galveston Island everything is about location. My studio is located in a 1940s era storefront located in mid-town on 45th street, between Broadway and Seawall Boulevards. The building is simple and unpretentious with a feeling of comfortable decay.

The space accommodates me and my work in a mutually satisfying way. We tolerate each other's eccentricities and temperaments like the island tolerates its inhabitants, "We're here, let's make this work". And we've made some pretty good work. It's not Francis Bacon's studio, but I'll take my inspiration from the unstructured and the sublime at every turn.

The gulf breezes and salty air require that I maintain a storage space in Houston, Texas forty miles inland and for that I have a great team of logistics and installation personnel that are as much a part of my studio as the paints and brushes. Island life has its challenges, but the feeling is choice. ●



STUDIO VISIT



SHAYNE BRANTLEY



Chick

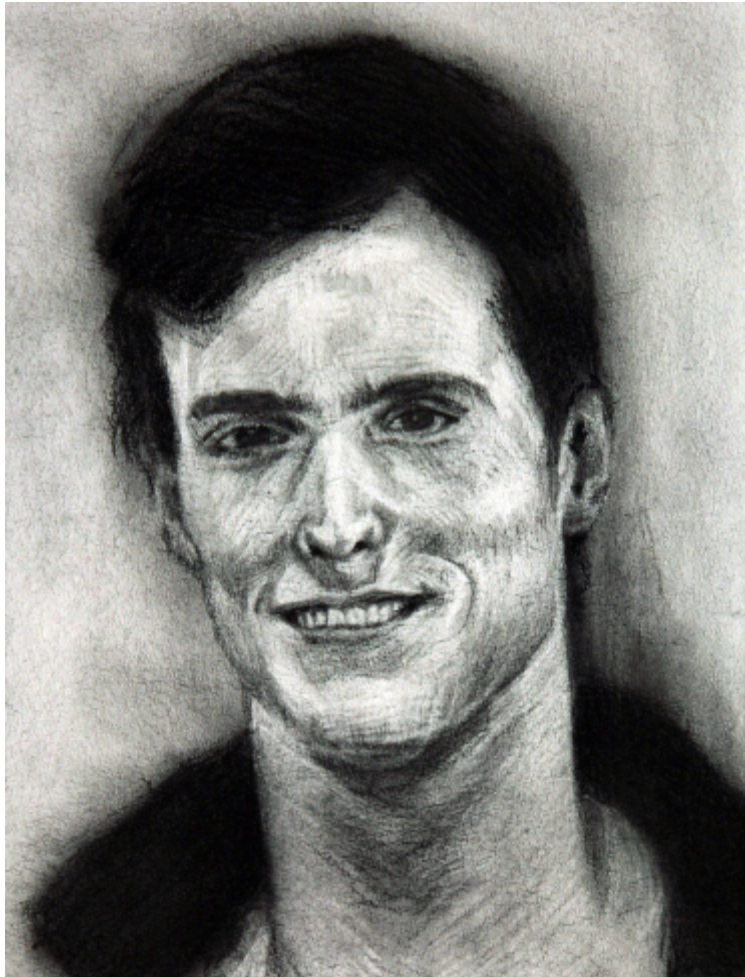
Paint on wood, 60" x 60"

AARON KRONE



Consider
Drawing, graphite

AARON KRONE



Dancer
Drawing, mixed media

AMY NEWTON-MCCONNEL:

The goal is always to create an image that feels alive



UQ: Amy, you recently unveiled a new series of vibrant abstract works called *Circular Reasoning*. Tell us how you worked on this series. Did it include previously unpublished works that resonate thematically with it, or did you first come up with an image that you then dedicated your creative endeavors to?

This series came together through both intention and instinct. I started with the idea of using the circle as a visual anchor to explore ideas of time, rhythm, and continuity. Over time, the work grew into its own kind of rhythm, with each circle connecting to the next, echoing the cycles that inspired it.

As I created new images, I actively sought out circular elements in various environments, drawn to how the shape appears in unexpected ways. I also revisited a few unpublished works that naturally aligned with the mood and language of the series. Their inclusion



Circular Resonance

I'm naturally drawn to circles for their shape, their sense of no beginning or end, and their strong, graphic rhythm

wasn't planned, but it felt like they were always part of the story.

What is the circle, the main element of the series, to you? What meanings does it contain? What emotions are associated with it? Through these images, what would you like to communicate to the audience?

To me, the circle is both a shape and a feeling, something I'm naturally drawn to. It's simple, endless and grounding. With no beginning or end,

it brings a sense of calm and clarity.

The circle holds space, but also feels expansive, like it is always moving and shifting. There is something about it that invites quiet reflection.

I'm naturally drawn to circles for their shape, their sense of no beginning or end, and their strong, graphic rhythm. Seeing them take form in these images brings me a feeling of balance, focus, and quiet strength. With this work, I want to create a moment to pause and think about how everything is con-



Echoes Within The Collective

How did you select the colors for the works in this series? Are they spontaneous color compositions, or are they the result of a carefully considered idea?

Most of the colors come naturally, just as I see them in the environment. I create my compositions by focusing on color, light, and shape, and how they interact at the moment through motion. I'm especially drawn to cold contrasts and vibrant tones. If my composition lacks a certain color dynamic,

I will refine the way the colors relate to reflect the themes of infinity, unity, and cyclical movement. Through the inter-

Through the interplay of color, motion and meaning, everything comes full circle

nected and that nothing stands alone. I hope viewers feel both steady and open, noticing the vastness in what feels familiar. The circle gently reminds us that we're part of something bigger, always moving and changing.

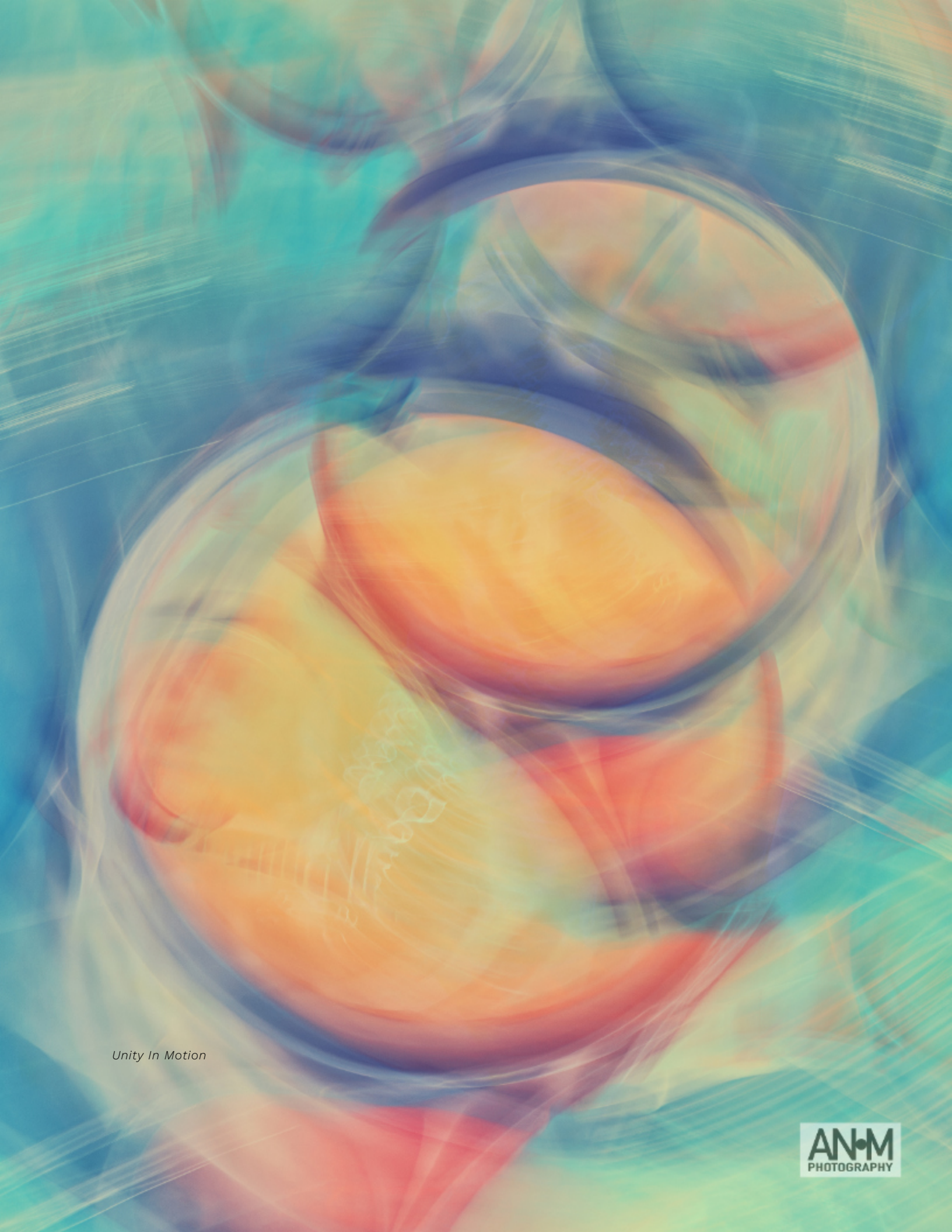
Orbit Of Thought



play of color, motion and meaning, everything comes full circle. The goal is always to create an image that feels alive, drawing the viewer in through rhythm and energy.

You work with the ICM technique, which is inextricably linked to movement and time periods. How did this help or hinder you in creating this series?

Using both intentional camera movement and multiple exposure techniques allows me to capture movement and time in a way that feels alive and fluid. Their unpredictability invites experimentation, pushing me to stay present and open to unexpected results. I welcome these surprises and respond intuitively as I work. Blur and motion create overlapping layers that echo the cyclical nature of the circles and reflect the themes of infinity, continuity, and flow. ●



Unity In Motion

N B



Plastic Passion

AMY NEWTON-MCCONNEL



Lava Blossom
ICM & Multiple Exposure

ANDI RITTER



Gaze

REYNA SUNSHINE



The Harbinger

PAULA CURRIE:

The most important thing about art to me is its ability to transcend time, race, and culture



UQ: Tell us how you first became interested in creating art.

As is the story with many artists, I became interested in creating art at a young age as a way to escape. My childhood was filled with abuse, and I needed an outlet to focus on my pain and emotions. School provided no relief as I was often bullied simply for being different. I was lucky enough to have an excellent middle school art teacher who always made her classroom a safe haven for me. She believed in me when I didn't believe in myself. She showed me that my art could reach others without uttering a word.

Which artists or art movements have influenced you?

I have always loved the Renaissance movement. While I wish that period focused a little more on women artists, the fact is the masters are considered masters for a reason, and no one can

argue with the sheer talent and beauty produced during that time. The Sistine Chapel ceiling, in my opinion, is the pinnacle of artistic genius, and I hope to see it in person someday. Current artists that have been a significant inspiration for my craft include Kara Walker, Jaune Quick-to-See Smith, and the Gorilla Girls. These women are trailblazers and have worked not only to make a name for women artists but also to face issues like racism, colonialism, sexism, and marginalization head-on. Their courage and dedication give me hope that the art world is capable of becoming more inclusive and accepting of artists from different backgrounds who want to make a change and bring awareness to complex topics.

How would you describe your artistic style? What inspires you?

My artistic style varies based on the subject matter; some subjects require a more realistic approach, while others, consisting of topics that are more sensitive, may need to be portrayed in a more abstract/surrealistic manner. One thing that remains the same regardless of stylistic choices is that I want to create art that is relatable



Anxiety

and mother, much of my work has revolved around the trauma faced by military soldiers and their families during deployments. While I can't

I am most inspired by stories of those who have persevered in the face of adversity and want to showcase that in my work

and relevant. I've survived many types of traumas, and I feel it is my responsibility as an artist to bring awareness to these various issues. As a military wife

speak to the experiences of all military families, I can share my experiences in an attempt to bring awareness to issues of anxiety, depression, and PTSD

INTERVIEW

all related to deployments. I am most inspired by stories of those who have persevered in the face of adversity and want to showcase that in my work.

What is the most important thing about art to you?

The most important thing about art to me is its ability to transcend time, race, and culture. Art is a language all its own. It speaks to viewers and inspires emotions. The same piece of art can be viewed differently based solely on each individual's life experiences, thoughts, and opinions. Art acts as a bridge between the viewer and the artist, creating connections that are personal and real.

Plant the Flag



What is missing from the contemporary art market? What problems do you see in contemporary art right now?

In my opinion, the contemporary art market needs more powerful women artists. The art market needs to broaden the range of artists represented and support themes that challenge systems of power and the marginalization of others. One of the problems I see in contemporary art is a lack of conviction towards social issues. Artists have the unique ability to see the world through a lens that few understand. We feel so deeply that it completely saturates our compositions, and those emotions visually affect others. Imagine the change that could happen if every artist took a stand and created work meant to bring awareness to difficult topics.

The other problem that I see taking place in contemporary art is the fact that we are losing public interest.

I work part-time as a middle school and high school art teacher, and I am disappointed in the lack of interest in the arts by students and parents. The number one complaint I hear is that "art is dumb." They don't understand it anymore. They don't understand the message artists are attempting to convey; they feel some modern works are created as a way to contradict previous art periods and artists and, therefore, should not be considered art. It's hard to inspire students to view contemporary art exhibitions when they see art today as a mockery of work that was once considered great. Historically, artists went from being highly regarded for their talent and genius to being laughed at and considered a joke in today's world. That was my experi-

ence, and I am sure it is shared with many other creatives. Students are no longer interested in art because they don't consider it a reputable career.

need a little help sometimes, and there is no shame in that. Topics like medicine and mental illness are too often considered taboo, and that needs to

Today, art is a career path that isn't taken seriously by modern society

Parents once considered it an honor to have their child work as an apprentice, learning skills from a master. Today, art is a career path that isn't taken seriously by modern society. Today's students are the future, and that future is beginning to look bleak where art is concerned. Things need to change if art is going to thrive, and that change needs to start with the work that is being created and how it is being represented.

What are your plans? What are you working on now?

I am currently entering my third and final year of graduate school, and I should complete my MFA in Spring 2026. Much of my focus has revolved around researching intergenerational trauma and the effects on children, specifically children of soldiers. Intergenerational trauma has been linked to depression, anxiety, and even diabetes. Many rely on prescription drugs just to function normally in society, which has inspired my new series of work titled "The Pill People." I work to create art that showcases the effects of trauma in a way that is relatable to anyone, any race, any gender, and any age. My work isn't meant to criticize the pharmaceutical industry, but merely to bring awareness and acceptance that we all

change. I'm hoping my "Pill People" will help start open, nonjudgmental conversations where viewers feel accepted, comfortable, and safe to share their truth. ●

Pharma Fill



PAULA CURRIE



Untitled

OLGA MCNAMARA



The Hidden Passage

OLGA MCNAMARA:

A painting needs space to breathe, to speak



UQ: Olga, our gallery has worked with you for the past few years, and we have watched your art develop with interest. Now, you favor more abstract painting. What does this style offer you? How does it benefit your art? What meanings and emotions do you convey in your latest works?

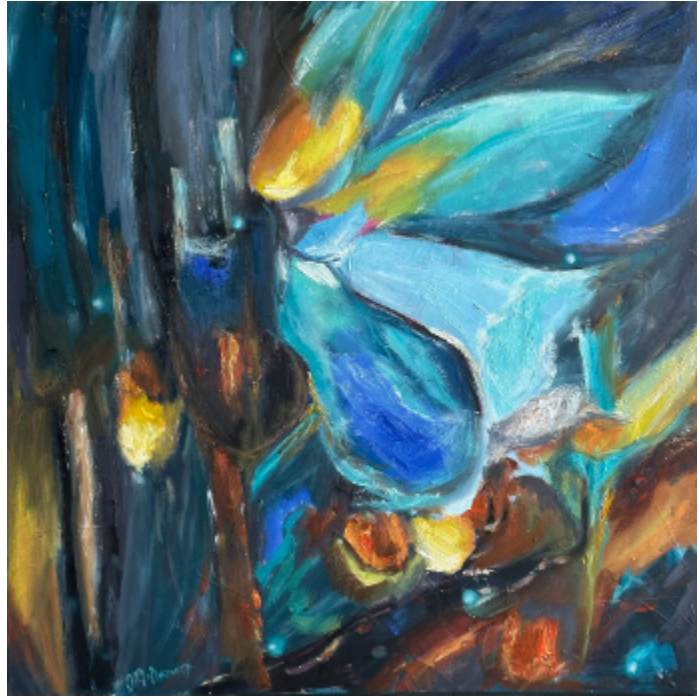
Abstraction allows me to speak the unspeakable—not with symbols or narrative, but with breath, tension, and energy. It’s a language of sensation. Through abstraction, I’m able to go beneath surface reality and reach the deeper emotional undercurrents of a moment, a memory, or even a silence. At this stage of my artistic life, I consciously avoid storytelling. I’m no longer interested in offering clear explanations or linear meanings. What draws me most is the openness of abstraction—there are no fixed interpretations, only felt truths. The viewer is invited to experience, not decode.

Your artistic endeavors span several countries. What does each one contribute to your creativity? What images and emotions are associated with each country?

I carry within me many landscapes and many emotional climates. My work is shaped as much by place as by movement between places.

I was born in Uzbekistan, in a land of desert winds, brilliant textiles, and unspoken depth. There's a rawness to Central Asia that shaped me early: the palette of sunburnt earth, the silence of big skies, and the deep cultural codes of strength, survival, and poetry.

Later I spent seventeen formative years in Russia, which offered both rigor and contradiction. There



Unfold, 80 x 80 cm, oil, canvas

What draws me most is the openness of abstraction—there are no fixed interpretations, only felt truths

I learned the discipline of introspection, the weight of intellectual heritage, and the melancholy of beauty. I was surrounded by a culture where art, poetry, and thought are taken seriously—where feeling isn't rushed, and beauty often hides in the quiet. Russia gave me Dostoevsky and Tarkovsky, long winters, and a way of seeing the world that stays with me in everything I paint. Those years taught me not to be afraid of depth or of stillness.

Then came Cyprus, a land of searing light and timeless presence. I often return here to work in solitude. The heat, the whiteness, the stillness of

ancient stones—they shift my pace.

Cyprus gives me breath. It's where I slow down, peel away noise, and let the gesture lead.

Ireland, where I live and often show my work, has given me something very special. There's a quiet strength in this country—a deep connection to the land, to history, to emotion that isn't always spoken out loud, but is always felt. People here carry things gently, with dignity and a sense of care. I've learned a lot just by being in this place—about honesty, about softness, and about standing your ground without needing to shout. The rhythm of the Atlantic, the changing light, the

INTERVIEW

way everything feels alive and meaningful—it all finds its way into my painting, even when I don't plan it. Each country becomes a layer in my paintings—not as scenery, but as emotional texture. What ties them together is displacement: the in-between, the crossing. That movement is central to how I create.

My ideal is a rhythm between both worlds: online visibility that supports real-world, soulful encounters

Aletheia, 100 x 70 cm, oil, canvas



How do you promote your work? What is your main focus? How do you evaluate your presence on off-line and online platforms?

My main focus is not visibility for its own sake, but resonance—creating moments where the work truly reaches someone.

I exhibit in curated shows and international exhibitions, which allow for deep encounters with audiences and curators. I also use online platforms like Zartista, Singulart, Saatchi Art, and Artfinder, which help collectors find my work across borders. These platforms have expanded my reach—my paintings now live in homes across Europe, US and Australia.

Instagram is more than a portfolio for me—it's a place to share process, fragments, intuition. I don't aim to entertain, but to build a slow, quiet connection with those who are moved by this language.

That said, nothing replaces presence. Seeing a painting in person—its scale, depth, energy—is a different experience altogether. My ideal is a rhythm between both worlds: online visibility that supports real-world, soulful encounters.

What do you miss about the current structure of the art market?

I miss intimacy—the slow-building relationships between artist, curator, and

collector. There's a growing sense that artists must become marketers, constantly explaining, performing, optimizing. But art isn't built for that speed. The most meaningful paintings I've made came from stillness—from time, from not knowing.

I also miss risk in curation. The market often favors what's safe or already popular. But art that truly touches people often arrives as a surprise—unpolished, uncomfortable, new. I hope we can make more space for that again.

Have you placed your work in non-professional venues such as cafes, restaurants, or offices?

In earlier stages, yes. Sometimes the experience was unexpectedly positive—especially when the space respected the art and allowed it to be more than background. But I've also learned that context matters deeply. A painting needs space to breathe, to speak. In the wrong setting, its voice is muffled.

Today I'm more intentional, seeking places where the work can be felt, not just seen.

Do you participate in tenders such as RFPs or RFQs? Could you share your experience?

I've taken part in international open calls, biennales, and juried exhibitions, where submission processes sometimes resemble RFPs. I value opportunities that are transparent, purposeful, and aligned with my vision. When the process feels meaningful—when the curators are truly seeking dialogue—I participate. But I'm selective. I choose presence over performance.

What are your next creative plans?

Right now, I'm immersed in a new series called "NIKOMU. Only Me." It's a return to pure, internal painting—made without an audience in mind. These works are raw, unresolved, and deeply honest. They're not meant to impress—they're meant to release something. Ironically, that's often when the most powerful paintings emerge. At the same time, I continue developing my relationships with collectors and preparing for future exhibitions. I believe in slow growth—in art as a long conversation, not a sprint. My paintings are not just objects—they're containers of experience. I want them to live where they are seen, yes—but more importantly, where they are felt. ●

Triologue, 50 x 40 cm, oil, canvas



OLGA MCNAMARA



Enigma in Blue

OLGA MCNAMARA



Reasoning

DANIELLE COWDREY:

I create to connect— with myself, with others, and with something larger



UQ: Tell us how you first became interested in creating art.

I've always appreciated art in many forms. Growing up, I was involved in choir and theatre—creative spaces where I found joy and expression. But it wasn't until more recently that I ventured into the world of visual art. Painting came into my life during a major transition, after spending more than a decade in a high-pressure corporate role. What began as a way to process the complex emotions of grief, change, and personal growth quickly evolved into something far more meaningful. Art became more than a creative outlet—it became a path back to myself. It offered a space where I could explore who I was beyond job titles, expectations, and routines. In many ways, painting has become one of the truest, most vulnerable ways I express my voice.

Danielle Cowdrey is a visual artist whose work blends elements of the natural world with vibrant, fantastical imagery. Drawing inspiration from the intricacies of nature and the surreal potential of imagination, her paintings explore themes of transformation, resilience, and emotional connection through bold color palettes and dreamlike forms. Based in Houston, TX, Cowdrey's work often features glowing landscapes, reimagined flora and fauna, and mythic creatures that inhabit the space between reality and fantasy. She uses both traditional and contemporary techniques—including vivid neon tones and layered textures—to create immersive environments that invite viewers into alternate ecosystems pulsing with energy and meaning. www.acdcart.com



Neon Peonies

Which artists or art movements have influenced you?

I'm drawn to artists and movements that combine emotion, symbolism, and bold use of color—works that don't just speak to the eye, but to something deeper. Abstract expressionism has been especially influential in my jour-

ful—it just has to be honest. But my artistic influences stretch further back, deeply rooted in a long-standing love for history—especially the Renaissance. I'm captivated by the symbolism, structure, and storytelling of that era, as well as the reverence it gave to the human form and spirit. There's something

For me, it's not just about making something beautiful; it's about creating something real

ney, particularly the works of Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell, whose fearless approaches to scale, gesture, and color continue to resonate with me. I also find immense inspiration in Frida Kahlo's raw vulnerability and her ability to fuse personal pain with universal themes. Her work reminds me that art doesn't have to be loud to be power-

timeless about the way Renaissance artists explored beauty, mortality, and the divine. Even though my work leans contemporary,

I often find myself channeling those classical influences—whether through layered meaning, emotional weight, or the intentional use of color and composition.

Above all, I'm especially inspired by women in art—past and present—who carved out space for themselves in a world that often overlooked or silenced them. From Artemisia Gentileschi painting in the male-dominated courts of 17th-century Europe to modern pioneers like Mickalene Thomas or Jenny Saville, I see a lineage of courage, defiance, and creative power. These women didn't just create art—they claimed agency. Their stories remind me that to make art as a woman is often, in itself, an act of resistance and reclamation.

How would you describe your artistic style? What inspires you?

My artistic style is intuitive, vibrant, and emotionally driven—anchored in a desire to express what words often can't. I gravitate toward abstract

emotional weight they carry—the way a certain shade or brushstroke can evoke memory, energy, or even healing. I often use bold, saturated palettes contrasted with soft transitions or raw textures to create visual tension, inviting the viewer to feel rather than just observe. These choices are rarely planned—they emerge through instinct and emotion, revealing themselves layer by layer.

I'm also deeply interested in duality. My paintings often hold space for contradictions—soft and bold, delicate and messy, structured and wild. Because life is like that. It doesn't fit neatly into categories, and neither does art. I embrace the imperfections, the surprises, the places where control gives way to spontaneity. That's where the soul of the work lives.

...my goal is to build a life where art, writing, and leadership intersect—a space where creativity becomes a tool for growth, both personally and collectively

forms because they allow me the freedom to explore emotion without constraint. I often blend these abstractions with elements inspired by the natural world—botanical motifs, organic shapes, fluid lines—because nature, to me, is the ultimate mirror of the human experience. It evolves, endures, and adapts, and in many ways, so do we.

Color and texture play a central role in my work. I'm fascinated by the

Ultimately, I create to connect—with myself, with others, and with something larger. My hope is that each piece offers not just something beautiful to look at, but something honest to feel.

What is the most important thing about art to you?

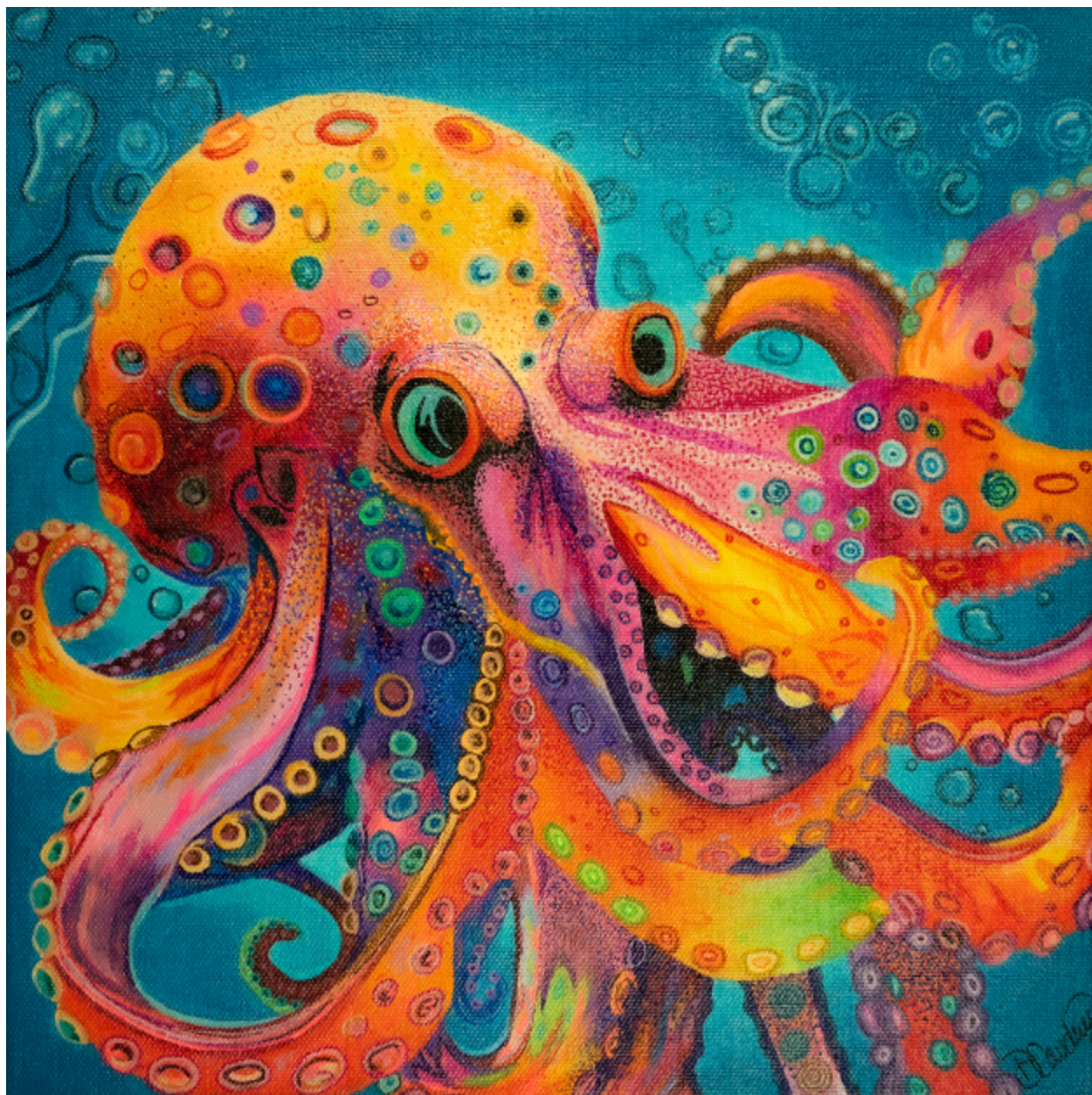
Honesty. Art, to me, is a space where I don't have to edit myself. It's where I can explore emotion, identity, and

imagination without needing permission. I love that art gives people the ability to see themselves in something they didn't create—and maybe feel a little more understood because of it. For me, it's not just about making something beautiful; it's about creating something real.

How do you promote your art?

Right now, I promote my work primarily through social media, my website, newsletters, and local exhibitions. I'm still learning how to navigate the art world as a newer artist, so a lot of it has been trial, error, and storytelling—bringing people along for the journey

Neon Depths



INTERVIEW

of not just the finished pieces, but the process and purpose behind them. I've found that authenticity and community-building go a long way in connecting with collectors and supporters.

What are your plans? What are you working on now?

Right now, I'm deeply immersed in expanding my Alice in Wonderland-inspired series—a body of work that uses abstraction and vibrant color to explore themes of identity, transformation, and the emotional landscape of navigating the unknown. The world of Alice has long fascinated me, not just for its surreal and whimsical aesthetic, but for what it symbolizes: the journey of stepping into unfamiliar territory, questioning reality, and being constantly reshaped by the experience.

This series is especially personal to me because it parallels my own recent reinvention. One of the most formative

chapters of that transformation was my time studying Organizational Leadership at the University of Oxford. Not only was Oxford a place of intellectual challenge and self-discovery, but walking those centuries-old corridors and knowing that Lewis Carroll once did the same added another layer of inspiration. The Alice story—born from that very setting—felt like a mirror of my own experience: falling into a world where nothing looks the way you expected, yet discovering yourself in the process.

Through this series, I use layered textures, symbolic shapes, and emotionally driven color palettes to explore the duality of curiosity and fear, logic and imagination, control and surrender. Much like Alice, the figures and forms in my work navigate shifting realities—sometimes playful, sometimes disorienting, always evolving.

In parallel, I've been developing another abstract, textured series inspired by birds and aviary symbolism. This body of work explores the themes of flight, freedom, and emotional altitude—the moments in life when we lift off from the familiar and try to find our place midair. I'm experimenting with movement, depth, and tactile surfaces to express the tension between fragility and strength, rootedness and release.

Ultimately, my goal is to build a life where art, writing, and leadership intersect—a space where creativity becomes a tool for growth, both personally and collectively. Whether through visual storytelling or the written word, I want to inspire others to embrace the unknown, honor their inner voice, and step into their next chapter with boldness and heart. ●

Quadceratops



DANIELLE COWDREY



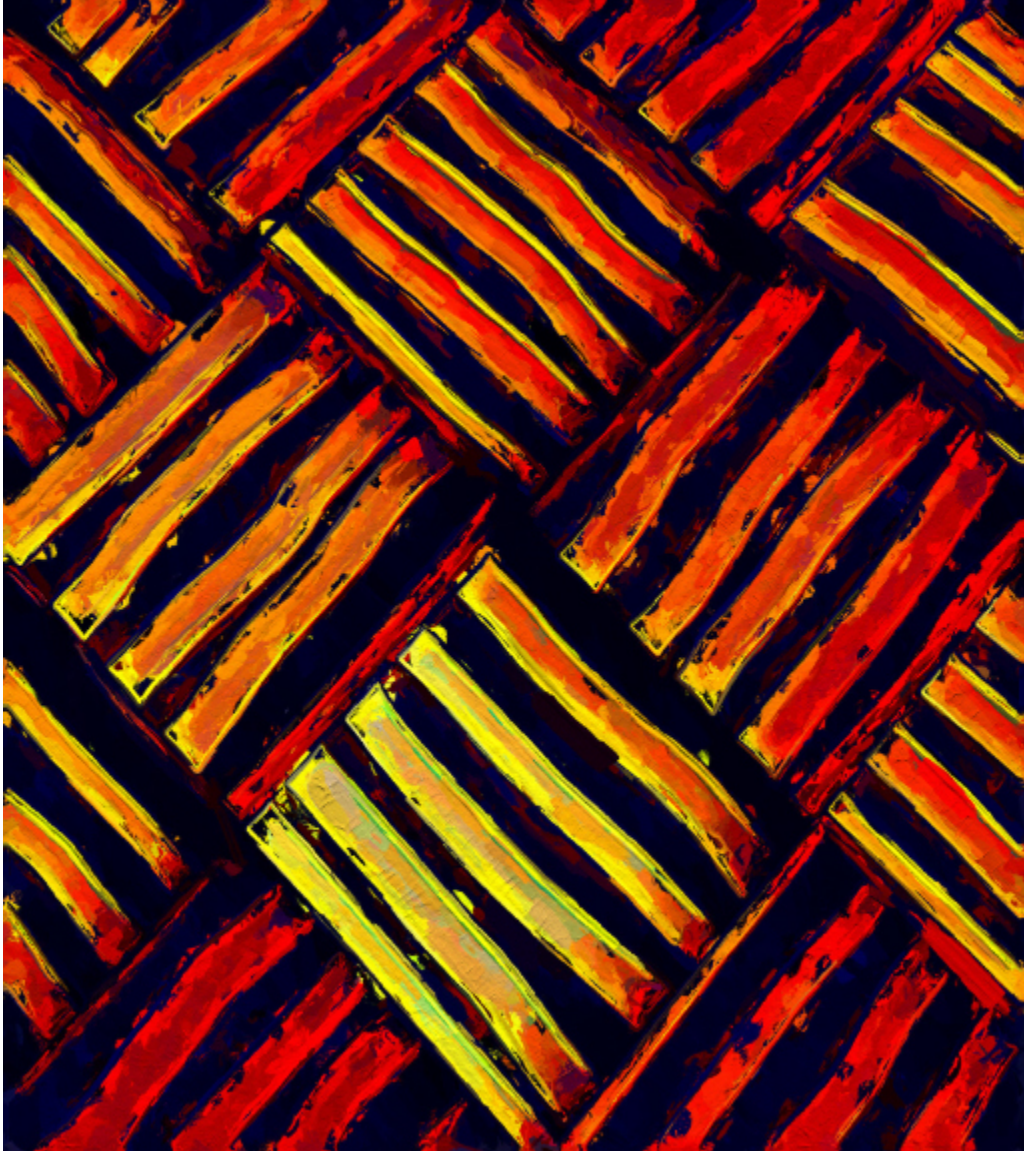
Absolem's Garden

DANIELLE COWDREY



Wooly Mammoth

BRYAN BROMSTRUP



Imminent Rueage

WENXIN WANG:

Art is not just about what you “create,” but what you “leave behind”



UQ: Tell us how you first became interested in creating art.

It was a very organic process. From a young age, I had an almost instinctive love for painting. My family's deep appreciation for the arts created an environment filled with beauty and openness, where I was free to express myself and encouraged to learn from exceptional artists. The path unfolded naturally—I entered the Academy of Fine Arts and eventually earned a Master of Arts degree. Looking back, I realize that art was never merely a choice; it has always been a presence, a constant companion in my life.

Which artists or art movements have influenced you? What inspires you?

My influences are broad and layered. Starting with Impressionism,

followed by Fauvism, German Expressionism, and later Abstract Expressionism in America—each movement shaped my artistic perspective in its own way.

Matisse's color, Richter's intellectual range, and Mitchell's intensity have all left a strong impression on me. I've always been fascinated by the essence of color itself and the intricate, often mysterious relationship between form and color. Inspiration comes from thought, from emotional buildup, from visual impulses and sometimes, from music or poetry.

You primarily work in an abstract style. What is most important to you about it? Is it freedom of self-expression, a field for experimentation, or emotional impact?

To me, abstraction is not an escape from figuration but a transcendence of it. It is a poetic visual expression of emotion and spirit. Abstraction gives me the freedom to express the rhythms, impulses, and fragments of thought that reside in my subconscious. I see abstract painting as a kind of symphony of the spirit—



Echoes of the Soul, acrylic on canvas, 2025, 30×40 in

a dialogue with my inner world,
a process of questioning who I am
and where I come from.

I see abstract painting as a kind of symphony of the spirit—where color is melody, brushstroke is rhythm, and composition is harmony

where color is melody, brushstroke is rhythm, and composition is harmony. It is a channel for deep emotion and a mirror of the self. Each piece is

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

What truly shifted my perspective wasn't a singular event, but the ongoing

INTERVIEW

ing process of deep engagement with my work. When I started to understand why I paint—and for whom—I found my voice becoming more honest and refined. A pivotal moment came during a residency abroad: in unfamiliar surroundings, I confronted my work in silence. That solitude, that struggle, and that rediscovery taught me that art is not just about what you “create,” but what you “leave behind.” It is about presence and continuity.

What is the most important thing about art to you?

At different stages of life, my understanding of art has evolved.

The Cold Wind in the Winter, acrylic on canvas, 2025, 24×31 in



Restless soul, acrylic on canvas, 2024, 27×32 in

As a child, it was pure love—something noble and admirable, with a focus on technique and tradition. During my academic years, art became a way to discover beauty and express personal value—a mark on my soul. Now, it is a spiritual practice—a continuous process of introspection, transcendence, and questioning the essence of existence... art is more of a spiritual vessel—my way of engaging with the world and with myself. It carries my emotions, thoughts, and uncertainties, and bears witness to my growth and struggles.

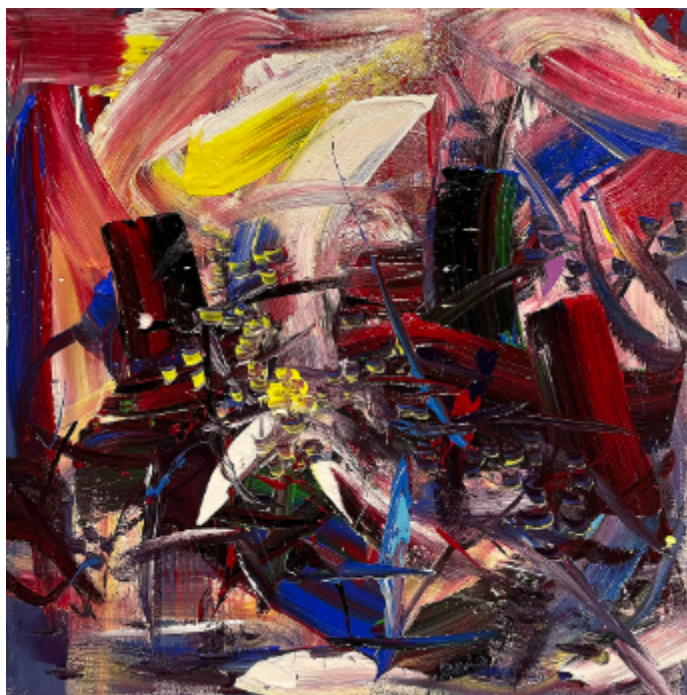
How do you promote your art?

I don't intentionally pursue “promotion,” but I do hope my work reaches those who genuinely love art. Apart from participating in exhibitions and art fairs, I share my creative process and reflections on online platforms. I believe that meaningful communication grows organically through works that speak for themselves. I also value quiet dialogues with collectors, cura-

tors, and peers—those conversations often carry more depth than mass exposure.

What is missing from the contemporary art market? What problems do you see in contemporary art right now?

I don't claim to understand the market well, but I observe art itself deeply. We don't lack great works—we lack curatorial frameworks and systems that truly understand and continuously support them. Art should be about layered content and sustainable growth, not just attention-seeking. What I long to see is a cycle of inheritance, breakthrough, reflection, and renewal. Continuity matters more than fleeting noise.



Winter Light, acrylic on canvas, 2025, 36×36 in

Art should be about layered content and sustainable growth, not just attention-seeking

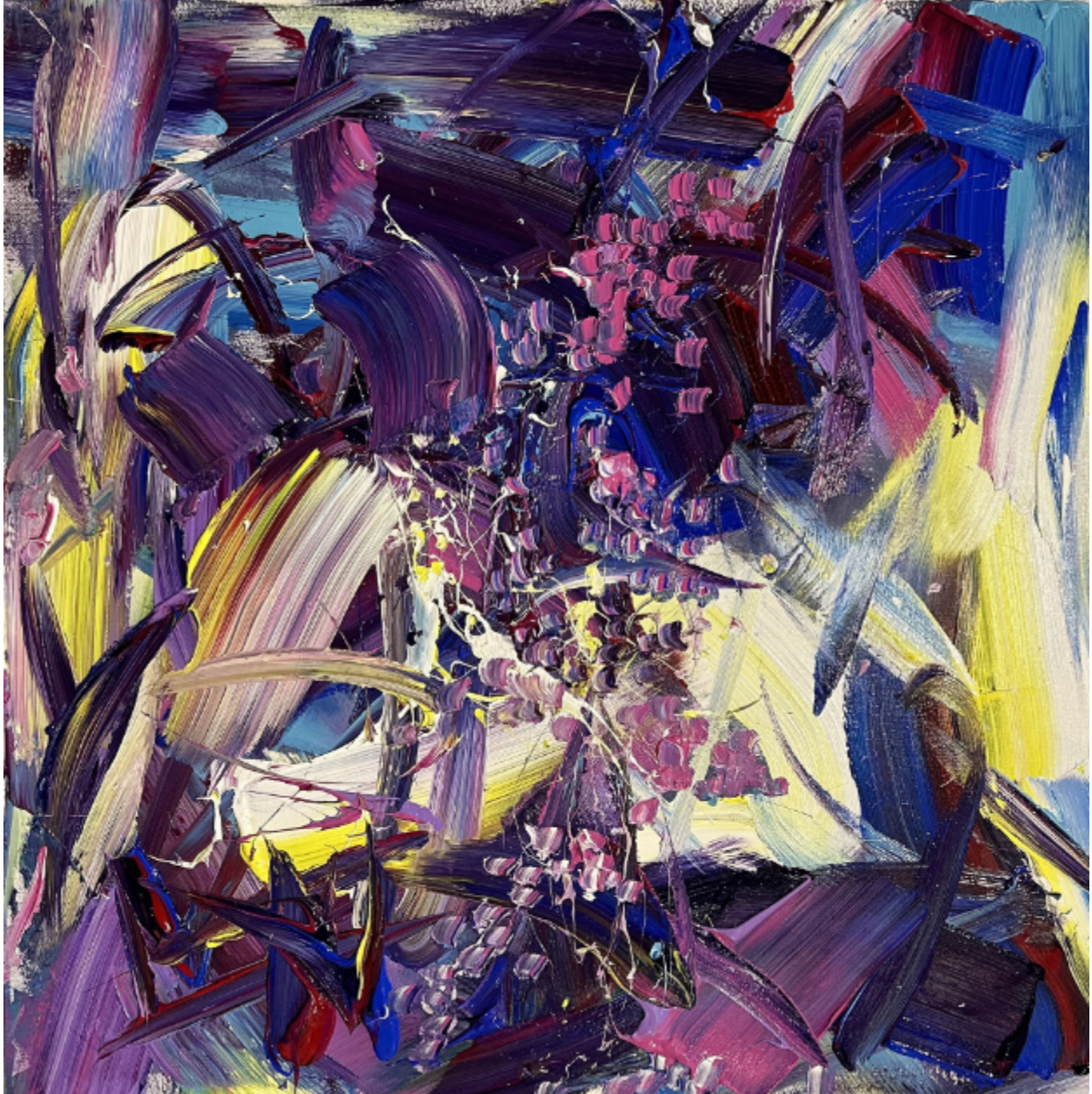
Light Fall, acrylic on canvas, 2025, 30×40 in



What are your plans? What are you working on now?

I am currently preparing a new series centered on “the mind and perception”, which includes experimental explorations in ink painting, as well as an expansion of abstract work in terms of material texture and spatial dimension. I am also working on plans for publication and exhibitions. Through more in-depth series creation, I hope to explore interdisciplinary collaborations with other art forms. I believe art should not be limited to a single medium—it should flow, transform, and grow, just like life itself. ●

WENXIN WANG



Reflection of the Soul

WENXIN WANG



Spring Song

EMMA CAMP



Microscopic Miracle 01

Ceramic, resin, theatrical lighting paper, brass, light

SAMANTHA GLOVER



Celestial Nervous System
3-d pen, acrylic painting

MARISA OSTROFF: Art allows us to see and feel our world differently



UQ: Tell us how you first became interested in creating art.

My interest in art began in childhood, shaped by my father, Lorenzo Mastropasqua, a professional artist in Italy (1990's) who transformed blank canvases into incredible portraits, landscapes, and still lifes. I grew up watching him work; his quiet intensity, the smell of oil paints, the details of realism in his work as if one can touch, and the satisfaction and pride of accomplishment. Our home was a creative space of discipline, reflection, and creation where I engaged into personal exploration with his guidance. He taught me that art wasn't just about what you see, but how you see the world with beauty, patience, and depth. I recall his sitting next to me helping me paint my first apple. Such a loving and bonding experience. I still have the unfinished apple resting comfortably in my favorite elementary school book. His influence remains in my respect for process, form,

*Origins, 2025*

My work aims to demonstrate theories of color, texture, form, and rhythm

and the discipline of daily creation in shaping my artistic journey.

Which artists or art movements have influenced you?

As a youth, because of my father's influence, I was deeply inspired by the great masters (Michelangelo, Caravaggio, Da Vinci) where I learned precision, symbolism, chiaroscuro, and the composition of body and spirit. Later in life, I became fascinated by the Impressionists (Matisse, Renoir, Degas) and Expres-

sionists (Pollock, Kandinsky, de Kooning). Both movements shifted my focus from objective reality to subjective truth seeing the world through 'feeling,' shifting from reality to expressing experience, not merely about what is seen but how it's felt. Later, artists such as Picasso and Rothko showed me the value of transformation and how color can carry profound weight. Movements such as Dadaism (Picasso, Duchamp) and Surrealism (Dali, Miro, Ernst) confirmed that art can disrupt, provoke, and in-

INTERVIEW

vent new ways of seeing. This is the exploration of dreams, the unconscious mind, and imagination beyond rational thought reflecting a deeper reality.

How would you describe your artistic style? What inspires you?

My work aims to demonstrate theories of color, texture, form, and rhythm while creating a composition of subtle and explosive energy in a philosophy of balance. I use mixed media layered with rich, earthy acrylic pigments to build surfaces that are intentionally rough, organic, and deeply tactile.

These textures act as both visual and emotional entry points, offering moments of ambiguity that invite interpretation. The concept blends Realism and Abstract art across various forms of 2D and 3D design.

With a doctorate and a background as a former Art Educator, now working as a practicing Psychotherapist, my inspiration lies in creating psychologically

enigmatic compositions that evoke emotion and invite the viewer to assign personal meaning through visual interpretation.

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

Acrylic paint tends to create a wide variety of visual effects and, at times by trial and error, incredibly unpredictable ambiguous forms and shapes. The technique creates several positive accidents until my frustration takes the best of me; I will cover it up and restart.

What is the most important thing about art to you?

The most important thing is its power to express what words can't do. Art allows us to see and feel our world differently. It's about connecting to our world through emotion, meaning, and shared human experience; making the invisible visible and the internal external.

How do you promote your art?

I aim to promote my work by building an online presence, sharing on social media, and maintaining a professional portfolio. Exhibiting in galleries, networking, collaborating, and selling through galleries or online platforms to expand visibility. Staying active within the art community to develop recognition.

What is missing from the contemporary art market? What problems do you see in contemporary art right now?

I believe more transparency and accessibility opportunities for emerging artists allow them to gain more recognition of their incredible unique talents. More of a connection between the art

Cosmic Encounter, 2025



More of a connection between the art world and the public in support of artistic growth

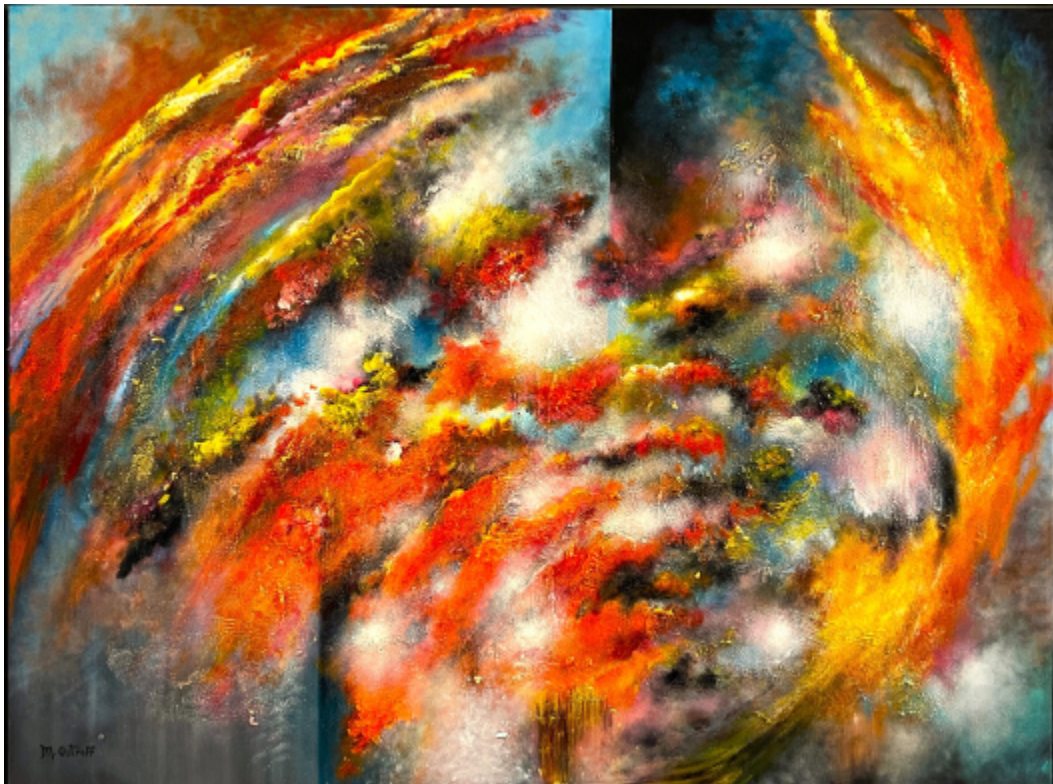
world and the public in support of artistic growth. Infusing the arts in the educational system where programs are underfunded or undervalued. Art education is imperative for the development of creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness.

What are your plans? What are you working on now?

I plan to continue painting regularly while exploring new ideas, emotions, and themes. I'm committed to experimenting with various techniques and materials to expand the depth and range of my work. I'll also continue unveiling new pieces and exhibiting at the South-

ern Arizona Arts Guild (La Encantada), Skyline Country Club, and other venues such as UPWARD Gallery, Herberger Theater Center Gallery, Overlook Community Center in Oro Valley, Elevated Art, CEV Art Gallery, and Gallery 4%. I plan to maintain a strong online presence and stay active within the art community through ongoing exhibitions and engagement. Currently, I'm working on a psychologically enigmatic composition in acrylic and mixed media for an upcoming exhibit. This piece explores layered emotion and abstraction, reflecting my interest in visual storytelling through color, form, and surface tension. ●

Cosmic Dialogue, 2025



SIOBHAN KEKOA



Pantheré
Watercolor on paper

AMANDA CRECELIUS OTT



.130

18 x 24 inch, watercolor, ink, and oil pastel on paper



NICK SULLIVAN:
**It's about
emotion, not
flawless
composition**

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

I turned to art when I needed a break from the noise of everyday life. Photography became my escape, a quiet connection between myself and nature, where I could slow down, explore, and create.

What is your source of inspiration?

Nature really inspires me. There's something about the way the light hits at the end of the day or how a real, unplanned moment happens when no one's watching. I also get a lot of inspiration from emotion, especially the kind that shows up in everyday life with family or when I'm just reflecting alone.

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

For me, the most important thing is that my photos feel real. I want people to connect with what they see like they can step into the scene and feel what was happening. It's about emotion, not flawless composition.

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

One of my favorite "accidents" happened when I took a photo I thought was underexposed and almost deleted it. But after editing, it became one of my favorite moody, emotional shots. It taught me not to overthink in the moment and to give unexpected results a second chance they might be telling a different story. ●



INTERVIEW





SHELBY HILDEBRAND



The Beast

MARYAM FARDINFARD



Lion's Silent Power
Soft pastel on paper

JUDITH YEO

CRAFTS / MIXED MEDIA

BLOOM EXHIBITION



Flower mug with leaf embellishments

GEOMETRY EXHIBITION



Tile tumbler

ROB SNYDER



Spherical



NORMAN ELLIS:

With nature surrounding me, I get into making mad passionate love to my art

The studio I have today was the room I had as a teenager growing up. I was very fortunate to be given the house I grew up in. My drawing board is in the exact same location as it was sixty years ago when I was doing art and listening to my sixties' music. I have come full circle and am now living an artist dream. Looking out of my studio window surrounded by nature. This is a major inspiration for my art, and it creates a very serene environment for me. With nature surrounding me, I get into making mad passionate love to my art. As one art instructor shared with me, become one with the universe. Of course this is what I am attempting. My ventures of cycling by the ocean, flying and when I go wild boar hunting the beauty of nature remains with me long afterward with me while doing my art. At night I get visitors from coyotes, racoons, possums, and other cats. During the day



I have hummingbirds, birds, squirrels, and cats which visit me and give me inspiration.

I have three little cats as my coworkers. One Tabby, aka Ah Shakespeare. One Tux aka Black Tail and one black aka Black Beauty. They keep me company and let me know when it's time to take a break to feed them, or just watch over me. ●



NORMAN ELLIS



Fantasy 52

NORMAN ELLIS



Fantasy 69

PAUL MICHAEL GLASER
Muttanaut

pmg