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ArtAscent

Art & Literature Journal 56 October 2022



FEATURE:
Summer



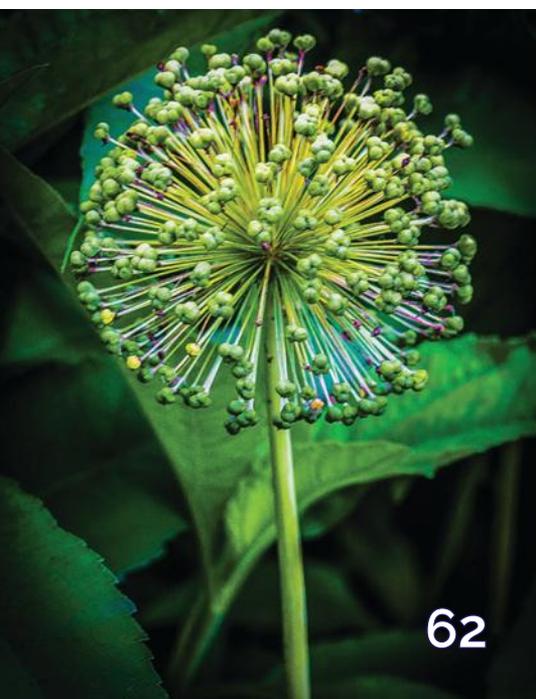
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Summer

Explore this theme via a collection of inspiring pieces by international artists and writers.





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Foreword and Artist Profiles

Cinzia Franceschini is an Italian Art Historian specializing in History of Art Criticism, with a second degree in Communication and Sociology. She works in museum education departments and as a freelance writer. She writes about contemporary arts and social sciences, mostly about them at the same time.

Magdalena Riegler holds a bachelor's degree in Theater, Film, and Media Studies. In 2019/20, she did an exchange year in Berlin, Germany, at the Freie Universität where she focused on film studies. Magdalena is currently living in the Netherlands, working on her master thesis, and obtaining a second Bachelor in Circus and Performance Arts at the Fontys University in Tilburg (NL).

Oleksandra Osadcha is a freelance art historian, art critic and art exhibition curator living in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She earned her Master of Art degree in art history at Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, where she is also currently researching her doctoral thesis.



On the Front Cover

A Sunflower for Ukraine 1
by Kate Greenway



On the Back Cover

Entangled
by Leanne Trivett S.

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ArtAscent
Art & Literature Journal

Showcasing outstanding
artists and writers from around the world

A stylized sunburst graphic consisting of several white lines radiating from the top-left corner of the letter 'S'.

Summe

Foreword

The inevitable passing of the seasons is an endless motif of inspiration for artists, involving poets, painters, and musicians since ancient times. However, there is one season that, more than others, carries a suggestive symbolic load: summer. Summer represents a moment of suspension when the carousel of the world seems to stop and listen to the chattering of cicadas. But it is also the time for adventures and freedom, like a blank page to be filled with new memories.

When one in October remembers the past months, summer appears like a hazy vision, and the long lazy hours seem like a dream with blurred outlines. Summer bursts with energy, but it can feed a period of rethinking, silent as a sultry afternoon.

Artists have been introjecting the different facets of summer into their works for centuries. In the Middle Ages, palaces housed frescoes of the cycles of the months, in which summer was depicted through its work and leisure activities. The Impressionists painted stormy summer evenings or landscapes crawling with heated people. Vincent Van Gogh captured the yellow and sunny fields of the Provençal afternoons. In the 20th century, the summer inspired David Hockney's dips in the swimming pool and Edward Hopper's suspended atmospheres. Even contemporary artists cannot escape the allure of summer days and their contradictions.

In the 56th volume of *ArtAscent Art & Literature Journal*, artists and writers bring to life various interpretations of summer. The selected works are rich in diverse metaphors and life experiences. They encapsulate the energy but also the fears, aware that it has not been a joyous season for everyone. The summer of 2022 was a bright burst of light, but it inevitably incorporated the concerns of the present times. The Post-pandemic period, the ongoing conflicts, and the climate crisis cast shadows that darken even the best memories. These creative works accompany us into the coming months, like postcards to look back on, displaying hope for transformation and better days.

By Cinzia Franceschini

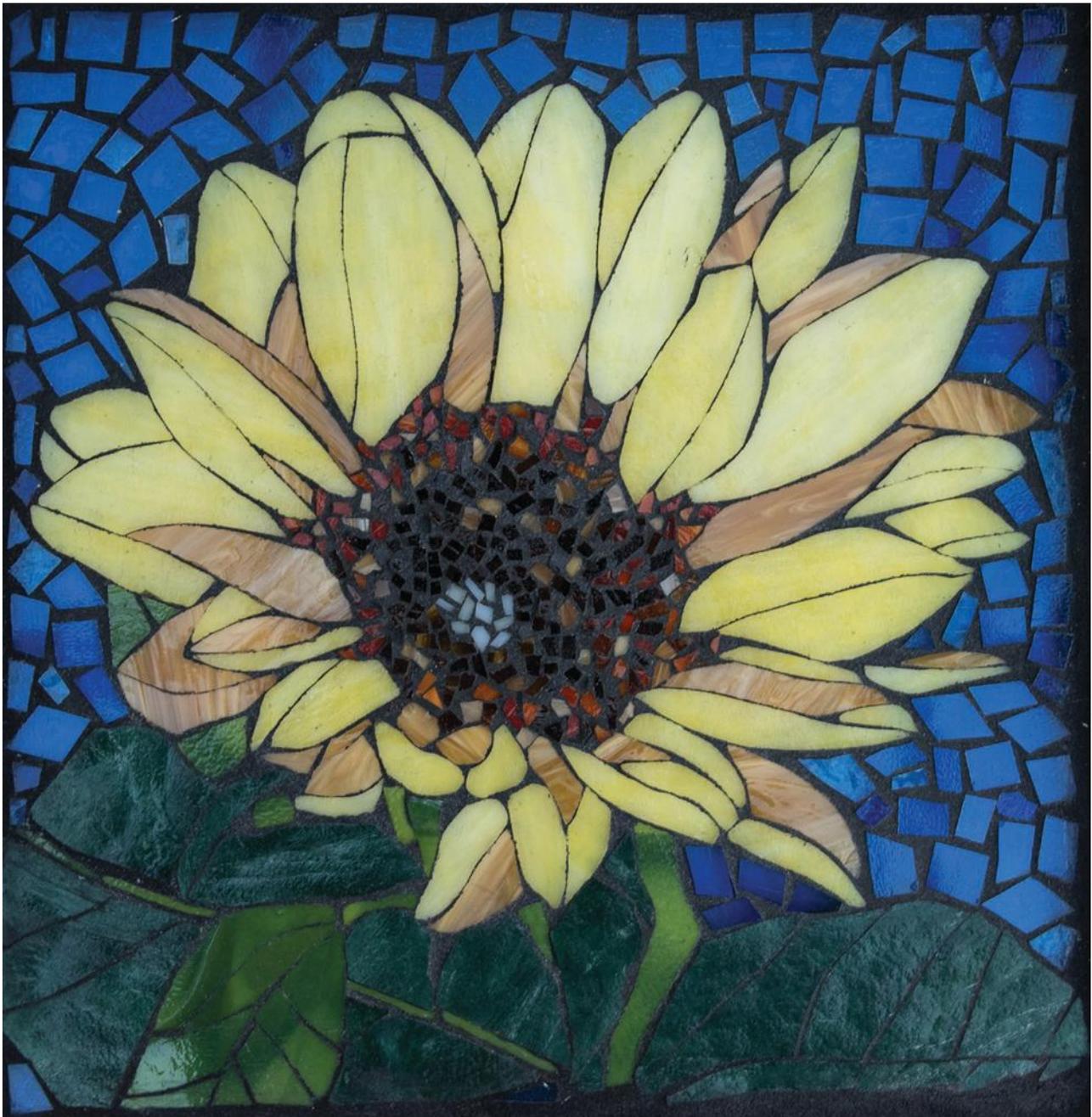
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Kate Greenway

A Sunflower for Ukraine 3

Glass on glass mosaic | 43 x 46 cm | \$450



Artist

The sunflower, the quintessential representation of summer, becomes a symbol of strength at the hands of artist Kate Greenway. Her artworks depict a fragile and ephemeral plant, dependent on sun and heat but capable of acts of resistance and self-determination.

Looking at Kate's artworks, expertly crafted with mixed media techniques, the mind immediately flies to the iconic sunflowers painted by Vincent Van Gogh. But if this flower represented the search for light in times of darkness for the Dutch master, for the Canadian artist, it acquires contemporary meanings. In Kate's works, sunflowers are charged with new metaphors: it is the flower that stands for summer vibrancy, but it also fades with the passage to Autumn. But there is more. It is the national symbol of Ukraine, currently ravaged by war, but which, like a sunflower, remains fiercely standing. What at first glance appears to be a classic still life thus becomes a symbol of pride and hope for a nation. Kate's images are strong works that tell of a contemporary tragedy and fight for democracy.

Moreover, Kate concretely supports the Ukrainian cause with her art. The series is part of the Sunflower Project, an artist initiative that aims to raise funds for humanitarian relief, donating a percentage of proceeds to Ukraine. The attempt to break this loop of suffering and negativity is one of the most important goals of Kate's creative practice. The artist showcases a variety of media and techniques that reflect the feeling that art could be a tool of true enlightening.

Kate works with watercolours—a medium in which colours are diluted—playing with reflections, transparencies, and layers of hues as delicate as a flower.

Her skillful use of glass techniques is delightful. Some of Kate's works are glass on glass mosaics, where she achieves saturated and crisp images through transparent and opaque pieces of glass.

Watercolours and glass works have one aspect in common: the suggestive use of light. Light passes through the glass and shines on the watercolours, infusing warmth and luminosity. Kate's artistic technique thus becomes a metaphor for this quest for light. It is no accident that Kate's work, particularly in its use of glass, is comparable to that of master Marc Chagall. Like Chagall, who, in addition to paintings, made spectacular religiously themed stained-glass windows, Kate also silhouetted synthetic and impressive images that use light and matter to create visions.

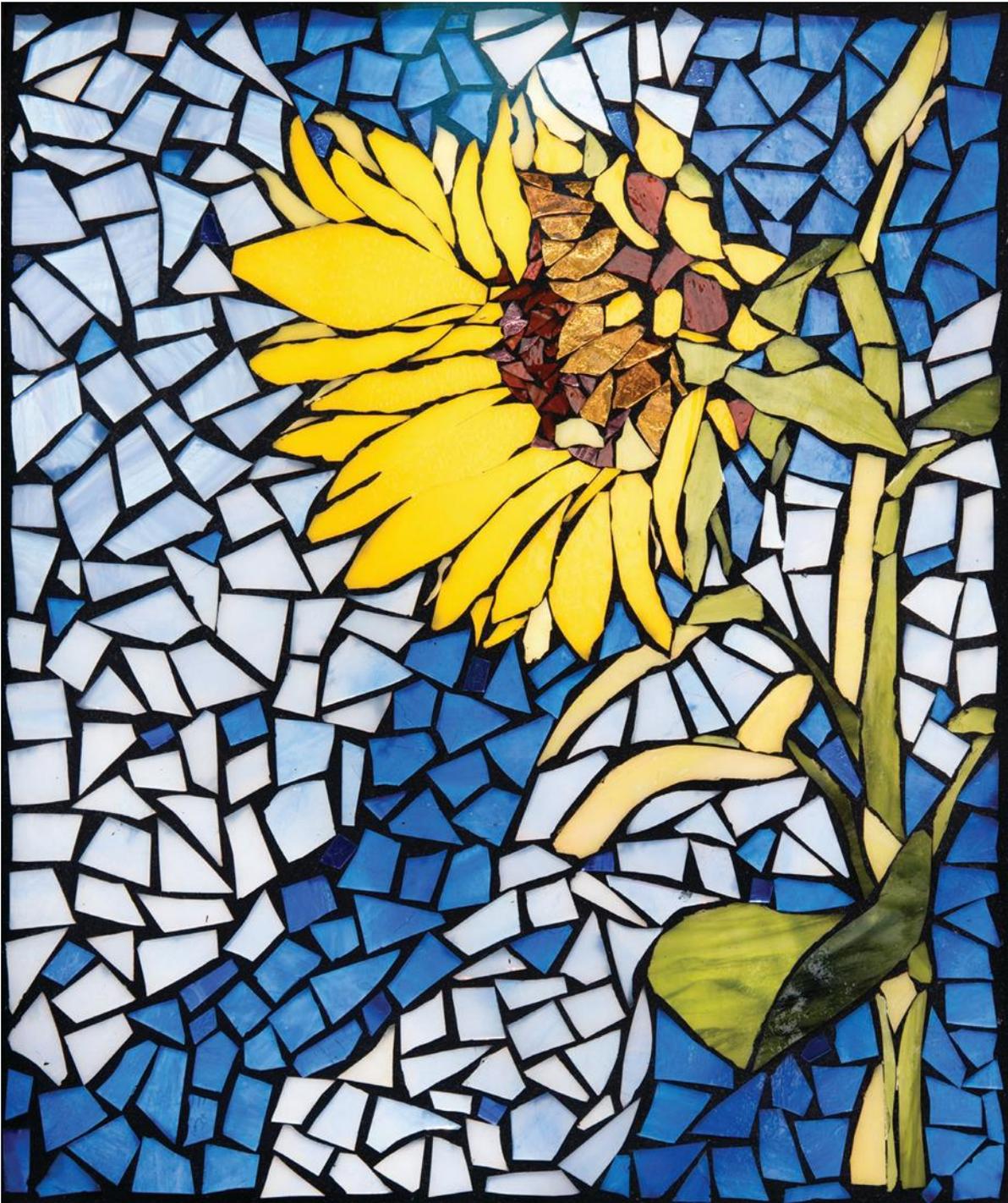
Kate Greenway is a Canadian artist who manages to reconcile technical skills and the symbolism of flora, fauna, and landscapes. She completed a Masters and Ph.D. in Arts Education, honing glass techniques, including fused, stained and mosaic. She exhibited across Ontario and recently in a solo exhibition in Toronto. Her mixed media pieces always carry metaphorical weight in their ability to be transparent or opaque, inviting viewers to go beyond the surface.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Kate Greenway

Sunflower Sunshine

Glass on glass mosaic | 28 x 33 cm



Artist

A Sunflower for Ukraine 2
Glass on glass mosaic | 53 x 61 cm | \$750



Gold

Kate Greenway

Song of Ukraine

Acrylic, photo transfer, and modelling paste on board | 30.5 x 30.5 cm



Artist

The Height of Summer
Watercolour on canvas | 30.5 x 30.5 cm | \$150

NEXT SPREAD: *Stop and Smell the Flowers*
Watercolour | 23 x 30.5 cm







GOLD

How often do human beings search for answers in nature? Sometimes, we see mysterious messages in vegetation, the sky, and animals. Clever writer Joyce Fox transports us into this forest of symbols through powerful poetic images.

The Summer Warning is a piece that reaches the reader on an implicit and subconscious level. Like the symbolism it deals with, it does not speak explicitly. Joyce selects every word to evoke sensations without telling too much. In the summer of 2019, according to the author, her roses were shivering even without a breath of air. Chills ran through them, even though the air was disturbingly still. Through this cinematic image, Joyce conveys the foreboding that something terrible is about to happen after the end of summer. She tells of her fear, her trembling, inspired by what was the 2020 pre-pandemic period: a time in which we were all still oblivious to the soon-to-unfold frightening, collective crisis.

Since ancient times, humans have been investigating nature by trying to predict the future. From the omens brought by snakes and birds, seen as messengers of rebirth or misfortune, to the formation of clouds or the study of trees, nature and its transformations have always revealed underlying messages in popular culture. Joyce instinctively taps into this tradition, using nature as a symbolic, poetic, and unsettling element.

Roses—that Joyce watered, fed, and kept healthy—became as delicate as the human bodies, revealing their fragilities. The text presents metaphors related to breathing and lack of air which bring the reader's mind to the pandemic's terrible respiratory effects.

From the stylistic and technical point of view, *The Summer Warning* astonishes with a great sense of rhythm. The rhythmicity makes the text somewhere between prose and poetic composition. Joyce developed a style in which repetition plays a relevant part. The formal repetition of words and constructs emphasizes the writing, contributing to creating attention and pathos. Joyce's vocabulary is simple and immediate and fits into the pattern of literature that uses words to portray, not to show off.

The strength of her text lies in the images she creates: as powerful as photographs and metaphorical as lines of poetry. Joyce finds inspiration in authors such as Kent Haruf, the novelist who paints life in small towns of the United States through accurate descriptions. Likewise, her scenes become intimate, silent, and symbolic.

Joyce Fox is an 89-year-old writer who embodies elements of every day in her texts: the velvet petals and palest shades of pink of her roses. Her texts have been read on BBC radio, and she recently had an hour-long two-act musical broadcast on different local radio stations. The stories written by Joyce Fox transfigure reality. They give vent to fears, emotions, and human forebodings.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Writer

Joyce Fox



The Summer Warning

I knew something was coming, and I waited. Throughout the Summer of 2019, I waited. I didn't know what was coming - all I knew for certain was that it wasn't anything good. That much I knew. When I tell you my roses gave me the message, you will imagine it a strange thing to say. But they did. They shivered when there was no breeze and their shivering conveyed itself to me and, eventually, made me tremble. I should add that I was not a fanciful person.

The weather was close that Summer, and there were thunderstorms. They didn't bother me. I loved a good sound and light show, especially if it happened at night. I would draw back the curtains and stand at the window to watch and listen. On those mornings after a good storm, it was easier to breathe. It wasn't as airless, but even on those cooler days, there was no breeze. Yet my roses shivered.

I took good care of my roses—watered them, fed them, and kept them free from disease. Neighbours probably said they were my substitute for children. A few other flowers grew in my garden. They, also, were looked after, but I never really loved them—not in the way I loved my roses. I never spoke to them—only to my roses. Nor did I touch the others, but hardly a day went by without me stroking and talking to my roses. Mostly I told them how beautiful they were. I love the feel of their velvety petals, and to stroke them gives me pleasure. I miss this in the winter and long for that touch.

My lovely Peace was the first rose that I noticed, but soon after, I saw that they all shivered when there was no breeze.

The Summer Warning (continued)

I questioned them. "Why are you shivering when there is no breeze, and nor is it cold," I asked. "There is no need. Is there?" Of course, they didn't reply. I was not out of my mind and hadn't thought they would become verbal, but they continued to shiver, and I began to tremble.

I confess to loving Peace the most, with her petals of delicate cream, edged in the palest shade of pink, but even to say this makes me feel guilty. One should not have a favourite. It cultivates jealousy, and I loved them all. However, perhaps it was significant that it was Peace who attempted to warn me before others did that something bad was on its way and shivered when there was no breeze.

To be honest, there was one variety that did not shiver. It was a while before I noticed because, dare I say it out loud, I *almost* disliked her. Her name was Ena—Ena Harkness was her full title. I would never have chosen her. She was a resident here long before I came, and although she didn't appeal to me, I felt it would be wrong to uproot her. So I let her stay, and she grew against an old fence at the bottom of the garden. I found her blousy and vulgar: her crimson red colour was gaudy. She was altogether too lush for my taste. She was always thirsty and gulped down whatever she was given. However, although I never deprived her of nourishment, she did lack the affection I showed the others, so it would have been only fair if she felt the same way about me, and Ena Harkness did not shiver

Winter

I was not fond of Autumn. Some of my roses were hardier than others, but by the end of Autumn, all had faded and most had died. Although it happened annually, it always saddened me to see them go. I disliked the Winter of 2019 even more than the Autumn. In addition to sadness at the loss of my roses, it carried with it a dread of the future—whatever it was that had made my roses shiver when there was no breeze.

When nothing happened, I relaxed. The menace of something bad coming faded for days at a time, and, therefore, it took me by surprise when, in late December, it did arrive. The virus crept out of China but swiftly gave up all pretense of stealth and began to race—spreading across the world, killing people on a biblical scale. A vaccine was made with which to fight it. But it was terrifyingly clever and changed its form to avoid

being destroyed by that vaccine. It was evil and deadly. And I was wrong to say it took me by surprise. The word surprise is nowhere near strong enough. I should have said it overcame me with shock and terror.

My roses must have known the Summer of 2019 would be the last Summer I would be there to look after them. It was obvious to me now why they shivered when there was no breeze.



Vasu Tolia

www.vasutolia.com

Summer Blooms

Mixed media on wood | 91 x 91 x 6 cm



Artist

In summer, the days get longer, and the nights get warmer. Being outdoors lets us appreciate the vitality of nature. Artist Vasu Tolia captures this energy in her works, painting bold and ephemeral natural elements through passionate strokes.

Flowers with vibrant hues, fluttering butterflies, and human figures mingle in Vasu's paintings. They create a synergy between different elements that need each other to flourish. The beautiful blooms could not happen without the presence of insects, so humans wait for summer to live to its fullest. In Vasu's works, each element—human, plant, or animal—claims its unique beauty while fully dependent on the others. However, in her works with impressionistic and abstract features, her subjects' fragility and transient aspects emerge. Vasu's art conveys her love for nature but also for humanity, inspiring a balanced and non-hierarchical relationship between them. Her works dedicated to flowers and plants, luxuriantly summery, embody the importance of environmental preservation. The fragile monarch butterflies she portrays are not only of rare beauty, but they also invite us to know and protect these animals in peril. Inspired by nature and travel, Vasu pushes viewers to love what surrounds us.

From a stylistic perspective, Vasu is a contemporary artist who draws on reality but abstracts it. Her language veers toward semi-abstract forms, achieved by blurring some of the details and creating art that is subject to the viewer's sensations. Her representations of nature are vibrant and impressionistic, preferring to evoke rather than represent subjects in a literal way.

Vasu uses various techniques and media: acrylic paints, chalk, fine quality charcoal, oil pastels, sand, and ink. She spreads colour through brushes, palette knives, and even direct application of paint from a tube. The painter often works through layers, scraping between them. She moves skillfully through different art styles and genres.

Vasu's works bring to mind the paintings of Monet's late career, in which nature and its iconic water lilies lost their realistic connotations and became increasingly abstract. The painter's flowers are forwards akin to the iconic ones of the modernist artist Georgia O'Keeffe, characterized by close-up and symbolism.

Vasu Tolia paints humanity and nature, strongly believing in the healing power of art. Originally from India, she migrated to the United States to further a medical career. After retirement, she devoted herself to visual arts carving out a personal niche and honing a singular style. She exhibited in group exhibitions and had three solo shows in the United States. She contributed with her art to projects to raise funds for healthcare, children's and women's causes. Impressionistic yet abstract, her artworks tell unique stories in which the ordinary is transformed into something special.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Silver

Vasu Tolia

Enchanting Evening

Mixed media on canvas | 122 x 91 x 2 cm



Artist

Bevy of Butterflies
Acrylic on canvas | 61 x 61 x 3 cm





Irene Sirko

www.irenesirko.com

Bronze

Sunshine

Calcite and aluminum | 28 x 40.5 x 10 cm | \$1,200



Artist

Some antique or Renaissance pieces likely come to mind when thinking about sculpture, and abstract sculpture confronts stereotypes about this art. As Irene Sirko's works demonstrate, abstract sculpture doesn't reject lifelikeness but forces viewers to employ a subtler perceptive mechanism.

The central tension born in abstract sculpture is between the absence of references to a particular familiar object and the concreteness and substantiality of the sculptural work itself. Unlike paintings or graphic pieces isolated from our space by a frame, sculpture operates through spatial dimensions and is inevitably co-present with us. Thus, it prompts us to relate its size and haptic qualities to our bodies and grasp its materiality. The latter, emancipated from the burden of an image, is celebrated in abstract sculpture. This possibility of dialogue with the material has attracted Irene in her experiments within this realm.

The sculptor has chosen stone as her primary medium. Being probably, the most traditional, rigid and challenging to treat, it still has some room for improvisation, in which author and material become partners in the creative process. Classical sculpture rarely addresses such a means of expression as colour, while it became the central part of the artist's vision. Irene rarely comes up with a forethought idea for a final result but instead draws inspiration from the shape and texture of each particular stone. This going-with-the-flow aspect points to one of the artists Irene admires—Barbara Hepworth, an English sculptor famous for her biomorphic abstract compositions. Sirko quotes Hepworth's words that resonate with her own method: "I rarely draw what I see. I draw what I feel in my body."

The associations, evoked through touch and sight by volumes, lines and colours of stone, are finally shaped and defined through the sculptures' titles. The featured pieces hint at the small, transient ingredients that compose the rhythms of summertime: *Sunshine*, *Light Breeze*, *Cotton Candy*, and *Tangerine*. Stone's solidity melts through the attentive gaze of the artist, who reveals its potential for lightness and dynamism.

Irene Sirko is a Canadian artist of Ukrainian origin. She received her training from Toronto School of Art, Wilfrid Laurier University, Haliburton School of Arts, and private classes. In 2013, Sirko was elected into the Sculptors Society of Canada and a member of the Ukrainian Association of Visual Artists of Canada, as well as Artists In Canada and Toronto West Arts Collaborative. Her works have been extensively exhibited throughout the country, included in international private collections and received several awards, like the People's Choice Award at Artworks Oakville Juried Show and the Show Sculpture Award at the Colour & Form Society Juried Exhibition. The highlights of her career also include Special Recognition and Special Merit awards by Light, Space & Time Art Gallery.

By Oleksandra Osadcha

Bronze

Irene Sirko

Cotton Candy

Soapstone | 27 x 26 x 13 cm | \$1,075



Artist

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ArtAscent

Tangerine

Calcite and alabaster | 13 x 10 x 7.5 cm | \$350



Bronze

Irene Sirko

Kobe

Alabaster and slate | 30.5 x 17 x 12 cm | \$550



Artist

Light Breeze 2

Soapstone and serpentine | 49.5 x 24 x 10 cm | \$1,200





Karla Linn Merrifield

www.karalinnmerrifield.org

Diptych: Summer Thirst

1. Web of Downstream Draught

Obeisance to soul-scouring river gods, to the gods
of granite, to piñon, juniper and sage gods—
what will it be this time? Must I say something
dutiful to wind and cloud, to wind-mountain
and cloud-mountain, mountain on high of snow?
How do you pray to both magpie and Audubon warbler?
Or do I simply let changing western landscapes take me
to the desert from glacial altitudes to alluvial silt
to the lowest water in measured years all across
the massive Colorado Plateau—and then let go?
On that great migration of gravity I become
a lowly creature of the bottomlands, a spider, say,
of red-brown grains purled off the Navajo sandstone
formations, washed up just shy of "Lake Mead," willing
to spin rain. I try to, writing: May there be, o,
may there be cottonwood trees here yet again.

2. Water Is the Organizing Principle

Mother of Mountain Dew, I long for you
in canyon desert country, land of red rock citadels.
This time of year, June just before summer's first monsoon,
what moisture there is in cumulous clouds
remains in those occasional ephemeral white battlements.
Rain shred away into pure empyrean, floating by,
not down to Earth's dry skin, her long-dry rivers.

Mother of Mountain Dew, do you remember?
It took three years, just before the turn
of the 20th century, to build Tropic Ditch,
fifteen miles down a tough terrain of hoodoos,
a diversion downstream from the snow-fed Sevier—
stolen—so that farmers could grow hay
and water their livestock in the dry Paria valley
down below, a place inhospitable to humans
until that manly pick-axe task was through.

Mother of Mountain Dew, o high morning droplets
among lupines and ponderosas, sweet but brief,
just before the glare of sun in this Epoch of Drought—
kiss me—just before it's too late; kiss me
in this season of bonedry grief.



Alison Galvan

www.theartofalisongalvan.com

Memories

Mixed media and acrylics | 91.44 x 76.2 cm | \$3,995



Sue Barrasi

www.suebarrasi.com



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ArtAscent

Sun Kissed

Oil on archival gessoboard | 5 x 7 x 1 cm





Alex Steiner

Just Desserts

Twas the summer of my life's desserts—only this time they'd be just. Parenting is a plum job, and just like any other fool, I was delighted to tuck right in. As an inexperienced savant, I prided myself on passion's fruits over any *real* practice. After all, I was well-stocked in all the *don'ts*, even if I'd never paid my *do's*.

With the right ingredients, preparation and method, I'd be hard-pressed to render *this* mother's sauce, the mess of menus past. We would delicately decorate our delectable dishes, never leaving them to stew. There would never be too much food on *my child's* plate, for they'd only be overfed with life's delicacies. All but a distant dusting of my life's desiccated past would remain. This food was for thought.

I had read all the recipes. I'd prepped and proofed my practices for perfected parenting. All those blind-baked cases of yesterday would be raised to new glistening peeks. I would watch that pot they swore never boiled. I'd skirt the stakes deemed too delicate. No one could spoil the Isle Flotant upon which I'd anchored my heavy hopes. No pangs of hunger would accompany my just desserts. No, *my munchkin* would be Michelin-made; no measuring required. We were cooking on fire now.

There would be no scarring embrace with a car cigarette lighter, seared into infamy. No amuse to *my* bouche if my toddler accompanied the wrong dishy

blond home from the market. I'd layer those sheets with every short straw I'd ever buried. I'd knead those negatives into new nonpareils, rest and raise them, without ever bruising the fruits of our labour.

My plan for perfection was foolproof. With enough tempering, we would avoid any weeping altogether. Sure, we might muddle the occasional meal. But without coddling, we'd take stock of our inventory and renew our methods, all the while never losing our zest for life. No one would ever feel reduced without fragrant redemption accompanying as the aperitif. Each week we would cap off our success with a celebration meal and plan our new due delights.

On one such occasion, out to lunch, I met my munchkin at one of our favourite haunts that lives up to the name. With self-service drinks and desserts, subtly flavouring my three-year-old's independence to come, we tuck into our weekly celebration.

I bisque in the satisfaction of the salacious symphony before me, savouring every bite as my daughter sways side-to-side with a serenity for which I only searched as a child. Plumped with the power of my parenting prowess, I signal for the check, avoiding all traces of painful parental signals past. The waitress acknowledges my request just in time for me to squeeze in one last life lesson.

"Now, what do we say to this lovely young lady?" I non-embarrassingly prompt the precious prunella de mes yeux.

"We also helped ourselves to some of your delicious ice cream special." I encouragingly nod to showcase *just* how it's done. Properly, of course.

Only, before I can field too many compliments to appear greedy, our waitress's face turns, eyes widening, "Which one?!?!"

My little lady's finger drew a collective gasp from all the other baby tenders at the bar.

A young man dressed to kill (dreams and delusions) approaches tentatively. "I'm terribly sorry, Mam," he addresses my absent mother. "Our ice cream of the day is Melon Martini."

"What?!" my imitation chill dissolves like a high school façade double dipper in denial, like a flash in the pan.

Yesterday's aftertaste acidulating my putrid pallet of promises past. We ran to rescue our baked fiasca. To substitute proprietorship of this palpably poor parenting, before it was post-date. New questions and ideas began decorating my farm-to-table, organic parenting.

Could she pipe the pathway through the park without reconstituting herself and rendering my parenting a sham? Should we leave her to rest, deglaze, and then move her a la carte? And just how would I manage to settle this tab and curry any favour, now?

I rouxed the day I had guaranteed better for my drunken monkey.

Cooking, like parenting, is an acquired skill with little to do with one's taste. Perfect produce, diligent directions, and all the measuring a mother can muster still might never master this chef's creations. No matter how delicious our intentions might be. No matter how much I try to bubble my squeak.

Whoever said parenting is a plum job is a sacrined tart with few (if any) hours in life's testing parent kitchens. And so, I'm learning the art of cooking without any fire or gas (within igniting distance). I remind myself that these summers are everything I ever craved. And, I'm learning to take this (sometimes) sweet job less seriously. After all, they're just desserts.



Deborah McLachlan

www.deborahmclachlan.com

Beneath the Surface

Watercolour | 19.5 x 25.75 cm | \$2,400





Pluvia

Sculpture: Ink Stained Obeche | 20 x 20 x 10 cm | \$449



Average Annual Rainfall in the UK
in millimeters.
2001-2021





Roger Gottlieb

<https://www.rogergottlieb.com>

Upper Rio Dam

Archival pigment inkjet print | 38 x 33 cm | \$400





The Forest is Another Skeleton
Photography





Santford Overton

Raudasandur Beach

Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS



Approaching Isafjordur
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS



NEXT SPREAD: *Holt Inn*
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS

FOLLOWING SPREAD: *Dynjandi Overlook*
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS









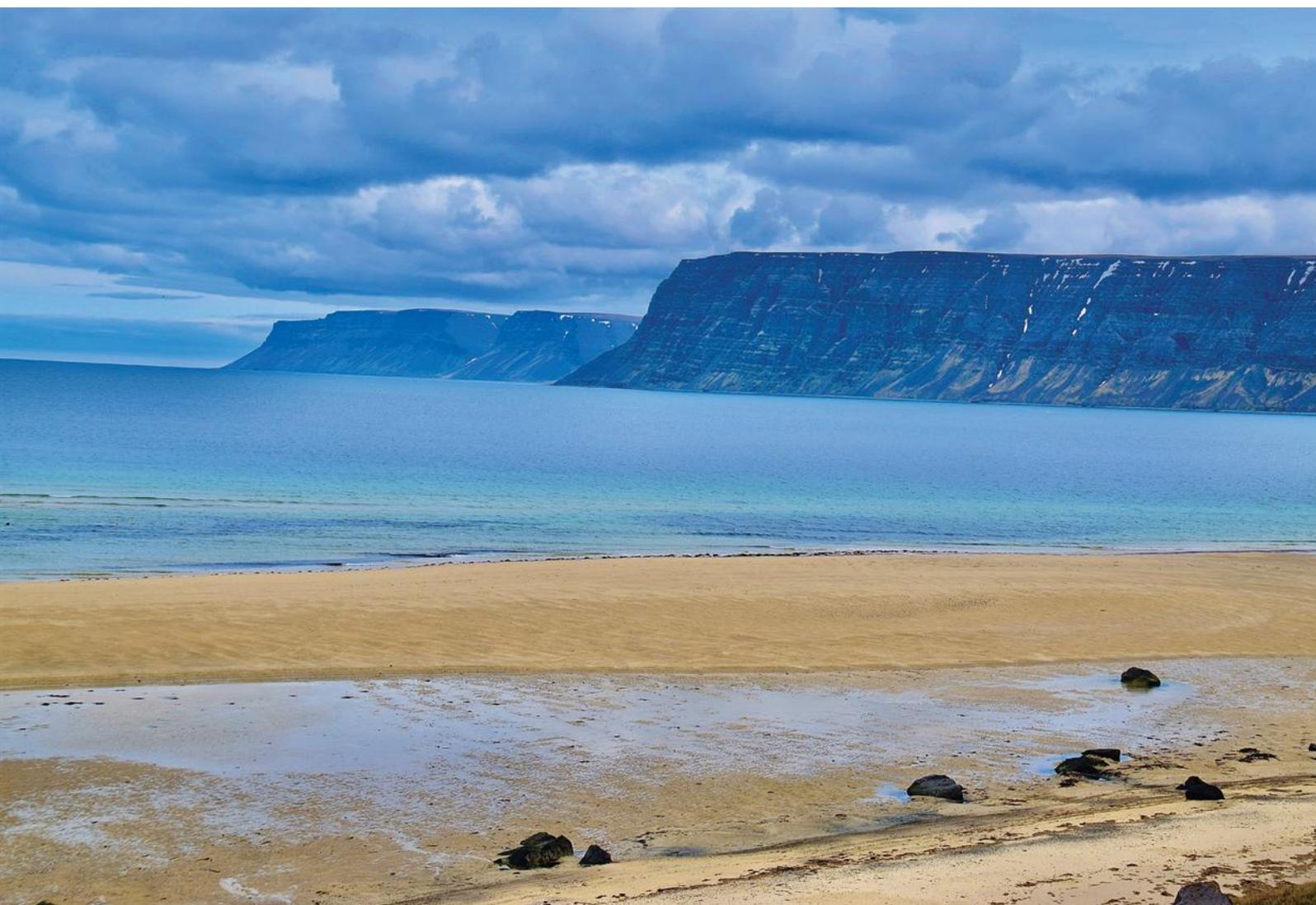
Santford Overton

Isafjordur

Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS



Latrabjarg Cliffs
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS



NEXT SPREAD: *Latrabjarg Overlook*
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS

FOLLOWING SPREAD: *Triangles*
Photography | 18 x 22 x 1 cm | NFS











Susan Nickerson

Beach Day

"Come on, Suzie! Hurry up!" Mary whined from downstairs. I grabbed my transistor radio off the nightstand, checked the batteries, and rolled it up in my towel. No sense heading to the beach with a dead radio. I wriggled out of my pants and stepped into my bathing suit. I squeezed and willed my bulging body into the boring one piece until I thought it would burst. I climbed up on my bed to look in the dresser mirror to see what Mount Vesuvius looked like in red. There was no way I was going out in public looking like a giant, lumpy tomato.

"Mary! Get up here!" She would know what to do.
 "I'm not wearing this stupid bathing suit. I'm not going."
 When in doubt, chicken out.

"So, just wear a tee-shirt and cut-offs, Mary yelled up the stairwell.

I walked to my dresser and pulled open the third drawer from the top. I rummaged through the mess of clothes, not happy with my prospects. The stairs squeaked out Mary's arrival.

"But I'll feel funny with you prancing around in your skimpy bikini." Guilt was a powerful tool.

"All right, if it would make you feel better, I won't wear it. I'll go in my tee-shirt and leave my cut-offs on." She reached up under her shirt, undid the back of her bikini top, and pulled it out through her shirt sleeve. A female magic trick. "Make sure you don't wear your bra, the salt water will ruin it," she said.

Not wear a bra? Impossible.

"What about, you know, RNs?" I didn't want my rigid nipples to show through. Talk about a human thermometer. "Everyone will know the water temperature!"

Mary sighed a little. "I'll be right back," she said and ran downstairs. It never failed to impress me that Mary knew all the helpful hints a young woman-in-training needed in life. How to slip a boy your chewing gum while kissing. How to get rid of greasy hair using baby powder. How to pee outside without any backsplash on your ankles. So when she came back with the tin of Johnson and Johnson Band-aids, I paid close attention.

"If you put Band-aids over your nipples, Suzie, they won't poke through." The solution was brilliant, just as I expected. I dumped the box out on my unmade bed and picked out a matching pair. Mary took two of the larger ones for her personal use.

Equipped with the radio, towels, and our newly protected breasts, we walked the few blocks to Collins Cove. We put down roots behind Vick's Variety store, away from the main beach with its screaming kids and lifeguards. The best Popsicles in town lay deep inside Vick's freezer, and it was best if you didn't have to walk too far to get them. Many a good Popsicle had lost the race when made to go the distance.

We stretched out an old army blanket, holding the corners down with our flip-flops. I couldn't wait to surprise Mary with the small piece of hash my brother's girlfriend had given me. She gave it up willingly when I asked her for a piece, and she even showed me how she made pipes out of tin foil and cardboard rolls from toilet paper. Mary would be impressed. It would be our first time getting stoned.

The deep voice of Joel Cash on WRKO (only RKO plays three in a row) announced that "the summer of love" was in full swing, especially in San Francisco, and if you were the eleventh caller, you'd win a "Make Love, Not War" bumper sticker. I daydreamed of being a hippie and paid close attention to the peculiar lyrics in the Beatle's song, Lucy in the Sky With Diamonds, now blaring from the radio. I closed my eyes and let the words soothe me. I longed to be a girl with kaleidoscope eyes. I locked my fingers behind my head and looked at the boring blue horizon. I'd never find marmalade skies in Massachusetts.

"We should run away," I told Mary. "We could hitch to Haight-Ashbury and live in Golden Gate Park where they had that Human Be-In. We could sell flowers." If Mary heard me, she refused to reply.

As we settled in for the day, she urgently nudged my arm. "Don't look yet," she whispered. "The two guys over there on the rocks. Don't look! Do you know them?"

I was careful not to look at them directly, opting to slide my eyes to the right while I checked them out. It was hard to tell if they were cute from a distance, but both were bare-chested, and that just might be enough for us.

"Nope. Never saw them."

And just as those words left my mouth, they stood up and headed our way. I didn't know what to do. Stand up? Roll over? Lay on my tummy, prop myself up on my elbows and bat my eyelashes like Mary just did? Instead, I sat up, pulled my tee-shirt down over my knees, and hugged them close to my chest.

"You got a light?" Come on baby, light my fire. The sexy voice rained down on me as if from Heaven. His features, like his voice, could've passed for Jim Morrison. Well, sort of. If I squinted and tilted my head to the left, I could almost believe the lead singer for the Doors had just asked for a light.

"We have a light if you've got a smoke," Mary said as she fished a book of matches out of the back pocket of her cut-offs, while still belly down. Total female prowess.

"Thanks," said the taller one. "I'm Eddie, and this is Phil."

It was Mary who spoke since I'd become deaf, dumb, blind, and invisible.

"Nice to meet you. I'm Saffron and this is Moon Beam." She shoved my leg with hers as if to say talk. "Pull up a piece of blanket," she said, motioning with her hand as she flipped over, right side up, like Olga Korbut going for Gold. Eddie sat down next to Saffron Mary. He tapped a pack of Lucky Strikes against the palm of his hand and passed them out. Great. No filters. I knew I'd choke. Eddie seemed a little nervous. He pulled the threads of his frayed shorts, then ran his hand through his dirty blond hair. His jumpy feet were vibrating. His eyes were fixed on Saffron Mary's two biggest attributes.

Phil sat down next to me, not quite on our blanket, but close enough. I did a quick once over and noted the things I liked in addition to his bare chest and the white tee-shirt that hung from his back pocket. Round smoky-blue eyes. Dark brown locks that were long and wild. Clean yet unkempt. Crying to be touched.

I picked up my transistor radio and slid the battery cover off. I lifted the 9 Volt, took out the small piece of tin foil, then dug the pitiful pipe out of my rolled-up beach towel. I did this nonchalantly as if it were a common occurrence.

"Smoke some hash?" I asked the wide-eyed boys. Saffron Mary sat up right away. Suddenly, I was important. Moon Beam, cool, hippie-chick, flower-child wannabe. I dropped it in my tin-foil pipe and hoped for the best.

"Light it up," Phil answered and struck the match. He held the flame over the hash until I was able to suck in a good amount of smoke. Burn-burn-choke-choke. I held it in and passed him the pipe. He took his first hit and coughed, but went right back to it, passing it off to Eddie when he was done. Eddie coughed and handed it to Saffron Mary. She retched and passed it back to me. I took the second toke nice and smooth as the burning dissipated. I handed it back to Phil.

I'd never felt so well-respected and powerful as I did when I sucked on that hot pipe. We coughed and hacked and shared our spit. We were happy. At least until the glowing ember died.

Watching Saffron Mary flirt was as much fun as smoking hash. She tossed her hair back with a quick flick of her wrist and rolled back over onto her stomach. While she flirted, Phil and I talked, and it surprised me how at ease I felt with him. We discussed the Beatles versus the Rolling Stones, and why one was better than the other. Phil thought the Stones were better musicians. I thought the Beatles were better songwriters. In the end, the Beatles won. We shared a cigarette and some more saliva. The filter was soaked with his spit. When he smiled, he had bits of tobacco on his teeth. I wanted to lick them off.

"Let's go for a swim," Saffron Mary suggested, and the four of us headed to the water. The tide was receding, so we'd have to hurry.

The proper way to enter the icy ocean waters of New England in June is to dive right in, which is what we did. If you tried to warm up by sticking your big toe in, then your ankle, it would take all day and by that time it would be low tide. When I surfaced, I was only in waist-deep water. The sting of the frigid sea had taken my breath away, so I stood up quickly to fill my lungs with air.

The boys' grins should've been a clue. I smiled back thinking, *Yes, Phil, I like you too.* Then Saffron Mary surfaced, and I gasped in horror.

Mary's tee-shirt clung to her, making the huge Band-aids visible. I looked down at my chest and almost lost consciousness. We'd used large, rectangular, Band-aids for extra coverage. We never thought to use the small, round ones. Both of us stood there, tee shirts clinging to our rectangular breasts, not sure what to do. Seductively, Saffron Mary reached up under her shirt and removed hers, showing off what God had originally bestowed upon her. She sauntered out of the water in all her splendid glory. I wandered a little deeper into the water, where I planned to stay until the sun went down.

"Mar, I mean, Saffron!" I yelled through chattering teeth. "Bring me my towel!" She just stood there, hands on her hips, smiling. "Please?" I begged. She finally came to my rescue and brought my towel to the shoreline. I walked out with arms crossed, inadvertently dislodging my adhesive protection.

"Hey, Moon Beam," Phil said. "I'll see you later."

I uncrossed my arms and crossed my fingers instead, hoping he meant it. I stood there, frozen and in love, watching my wrinkled Band-aids lap the shore.



Barb Carr

barbecarr.com

We Three

Oil on canvas | 41 x 51 x 2 cm | NFS





Summer in New Zealand
Acrylics | 76 x 102 x 4 cm | \$1,000





Sarah E. Rieser

sarah-rieser.tumblr.com

Drought Summer 1988

Oil on canvas board | 27.9 x 35.6 x 0.5 cm | NFS





Summer of the Bear

On a muggy, August summer day—the kind of weather that clings to your clothes like the claws of a frightened cat—my family and I escaped to the coolness of the Cascade Mountains. We had been on the road a couple of hours, and the city drifted away. Giant evergreen trees towered over us as we entered the pass. A waterfall tumbled down some rocks and splashed the road. Clouds skirted the hem of the ice-blue mountains. A hawk spread its wings wide and pierced the air with its cry as it circled above the peak.

After many miles and songs of, *The Bear Went Over the Mountain*, Mom pulled our Chevy station wagon into a gravel parking lot of a local restaurant.

"Stay in the car. I'll be right back." Mom carried our baby sister into the restaurant.

As soon as Mom was out of sight, my six-year-old brother, Jerry, opened the door. "We were told to stay in the car," I said. *Of course, he didn't listen. Did he ever?*

Jerry ran across the parking lot and climbed over the log barrier. He ran into the woods.

I climbed out of the car and chased after him.
"Come back!"

"I want to pet the bear." Jerry pointed and rushed on.

I followed Jerry's red windbreaker through the brush. Up ahead, I saw a black baby bear nibbling on blackberries. As Jerry neared the animal, I heard a roar. Mama bear lumbered towards him. Adrenaline kicked me in the butt, and I hastened to my brother's side.

I grabbed his hand. "Run!"

We hurried to the car. I slammed the door behind us. Mama bear stood on her hind legs and rocked the station wagon. We screamed and held each other.

Mom raced out of the restaurant. She shoved our sister into the arms of our aunt, who had met us there. Mom picked up a long stick and put her coat over it. She raised it above her head and waved it around. Mom and Aunt Dee shouted together. The bear ran into the woods. I sighed. I gazed at my brother and an impish grin spread on his face.

We survived. It's a day I'll never forget.

But if you ask my brother, he'll laugh as if it was the funniest thing that ever happened. Instead of a punishment for disobeying Mom, our aunt gave him a box of Cracker Jacks. We left the area and followed Aunt Dee to her cabin a few miles away.



Yvette Young

Across the Universe

Watercolour and gouache on paper | 30 x 42 cm | NFS



Hot Daffodils
Acrylic on paper | 30 x 42 cm | NFS





Leanne Trivett S.
www.LeanneTrivettSphotography.com

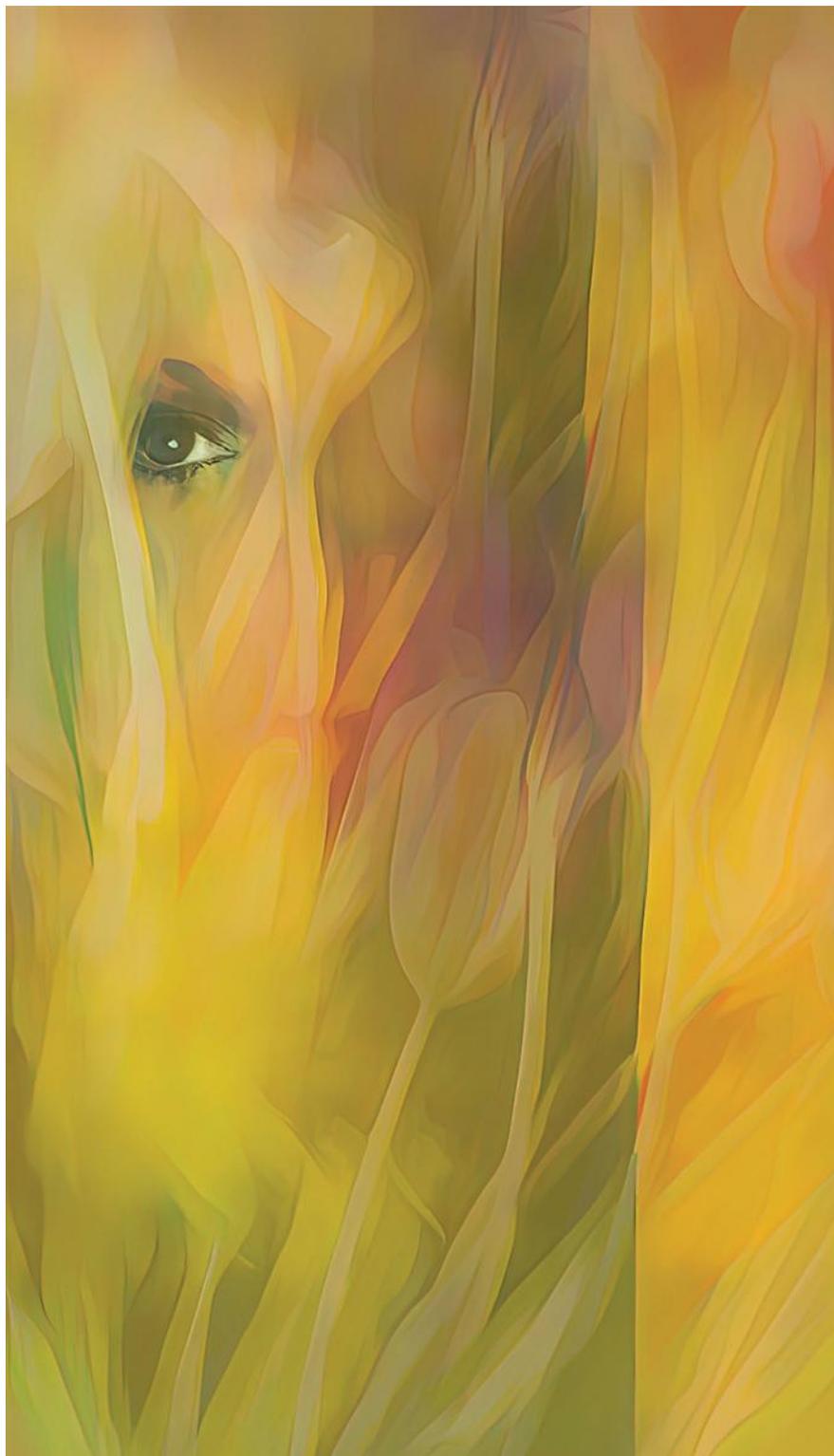
Blooming
Photography | \$500



Floral Fortress
Photography | \$500

NEXT SPREAD: *Piered*
Photography | \$500

FOLLOWING SPREAD: *Day Breaking*
Photography | \$500













Larry Wolf
www.abrushwiththelaw.com

California Dream
Acrylic on silkscreen | 56 x 48 x 2 cm | \$1,250





Summer's

sweet
smell of star clang
of sun-
rise riddle of lilypads
a yesness of raspberry pie. Topaz

moon rising. Inch
by stellar inch we learn why
we need horizon: To weigh

the whatness of lake
the whoness of mountain

the whenness of
sky.



Zhisheng Wu
www.wuzhisheng.art

Isolation

Installation, wax and steel | 206 x 87 x 100 cm | \$3,000



Roopa Rizvi Dudley

www.facebook.com/Roopa.Dudley.Paintings



Tranquil Forest Tiger (The Year of the Tiger 2022)
Acrylic and mixed media on canvas board | 35.5 x 28 cm | \$1,200



JT Thompson

Become acquainted with perhaps a few unknown dimensions – thoughts, ambitions, wisdoms, life changing moments – of this inspiring artist.

When it comes to your art, explain what you do.
My work employs multiple views of spaces and corridors, simplified and abstracted to produce a contemporary composition of geometric shapes and

planes with graphic over-tones. Varied light sources are added to create an intriguing sense of spatial depth. Perspective is played with through overlapping layers, scale, and foreshortening, helping to create an illusion of spatial extent, and then breaking it.

This challenging framework offers the viewer a suggestion of space and perspective that seems dignified or distorted. The shifting physical spaces mirror the shifting psychological perspectives of the viewer's mind.

What project are you working on now?

I have shows coming up in the new year in Chicago and in Ohio. In the New Year I have a mural project in the works in Columbus, Ohio.



How has your practice changed over time?

I still work every day in the studio, some days longer than others. My technique has changed. I used to use heavy brushwork but now in this new body of work, I have gotten away from brush work.

Describe a real-life experience that inspired you.

In my early years in college, my art teacher had us students copy the "isms" styles like the masters. I stayed in the "ism" style but made them my own. My teacher pointed this out in my review. This observation by my teacher was inspiring to me.

What superpower would you like to have?

The power to relieve pain and suffering. To help my fellow beings.



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Kate Starnichuk

Become acquainted with perhaps a few unknown dimensions – thoughts, ambitions, wisdoms, life changing moments – of this inspiring artist.

When it comes to your art/writing, explain what you do in 100 words:

I am superstitious about what I do. Art is not just the work I love to do, it's magic that lets people feel or imagine something invisible and hidden that I'm trying to show. Every art piece done by me has a special meaning. Even when it's a portrait, I write the whole story without words. And only if you look at the details carefully, can you reveal the secret. You might think I

only do abstract art. No, I'm a realist artist. But who said that reality is not magic?

I hate being the same, that's why I like to challenge myself and choose different themes. I do believe that we attract what we think about or what we do, so I'm very careful with my choices. Of course, it doesn't mean that all my artworks are bright and cheerful, because sometimes art is just a mirror of your soul.



What project are you working on now?

I'm working on a new solo exhibition. Can't say a lot about it because it's a secret project for now. But it's going to be a new level of my work.

Why do you do what you do?

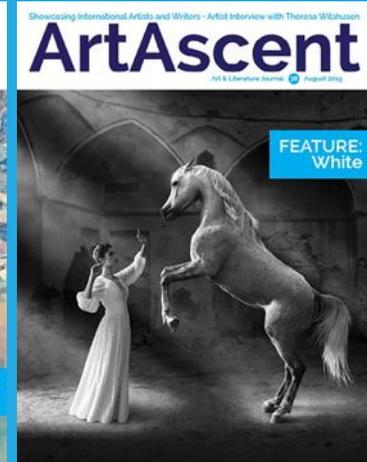
I've been drawing as far back as I can remember, my works were exhibited many times, but I never thought it would be my job. That's why I never studied art. I'm not from a rich family originally, so my parents wanted me to have a stable, good-paying job. But I kept fighting for what I do now. And then it just happened. I remember being in the last years of school, I started to earn money from my art. I became completely immersed in it and couldn't imagine doing anything else but art.

I believe in destiny, that what is meant to be will always happen. I always wanted to know my mission in life. Maybe I haven't found it yet, and one day I will change my ways. But for now, art is my life.

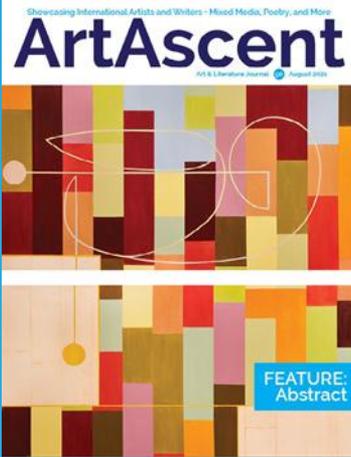
How has your practice changed over time?

I became more daring and confident as I did my art. I'm using new techniques and styles, and my life experience greatly influenced my art.





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