

THE SOURCE FOR PROMOTING ART SINCE 1994

JANUARY 2016

# THE ARTFUL MIND



Jessica and Alexander Sovronsky  
Photographs by Lee Everett



Kris Galli



Pear With Stones, Oil on Canvas, 24x36

Represented by  
**Lauren Clark Fine Art**  
25 Railroad St. Great Barrington

[krisgallifineart.com](http://krisgallifineart.com)

Selected Works by  
**CATA Artists, 30x40x8**



Artistic Realizations Technologies (A.R.T.)

**Jan. 12 – Feb. 16, 2016**

**g** good  
purpose  
gallery

40 Main St. Lee  
[goodpurpose.org](http://goodpurpose.org)

**BLZEN**

The best sushi outside of Japan.  
*The Boston Globe*

Kaiseki, Kyoto's seasonal cuisine of the Japanese Tea Ceremony.  
Nurturing body and soul.

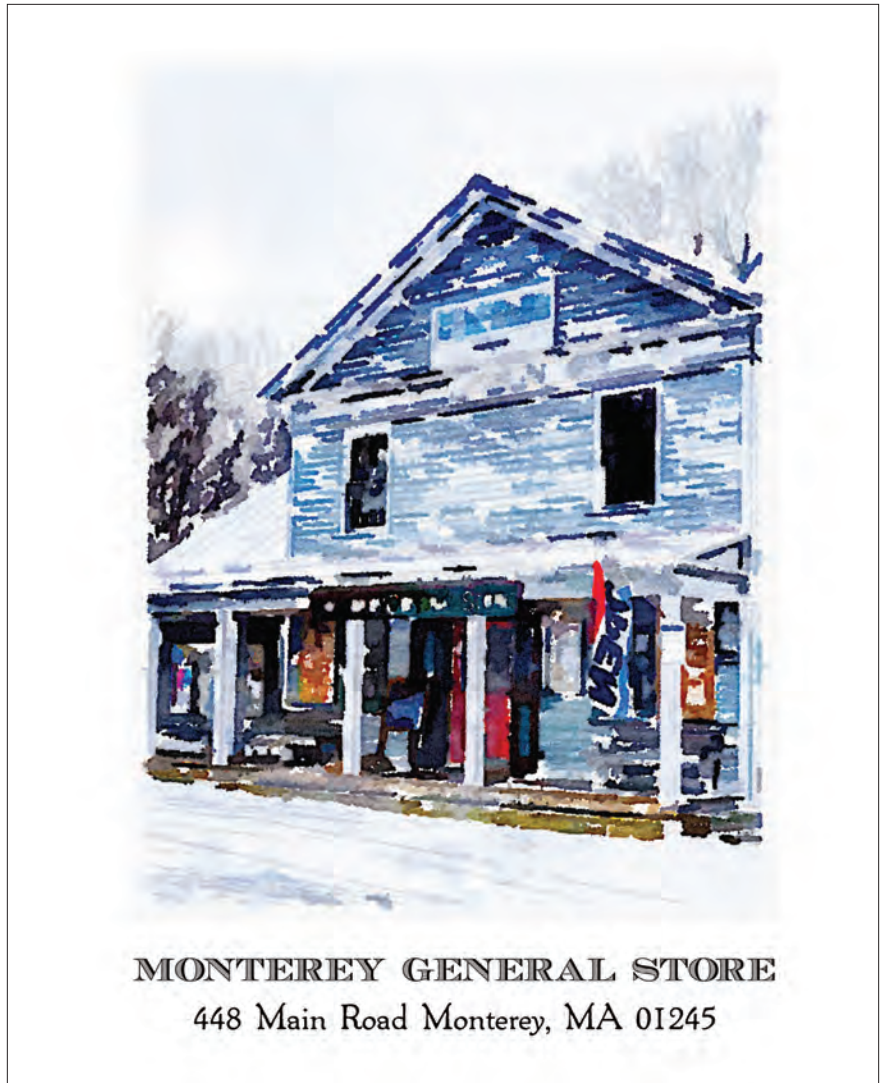
Imagine sipping moonlight on a golden pond.

**KAISEKI**

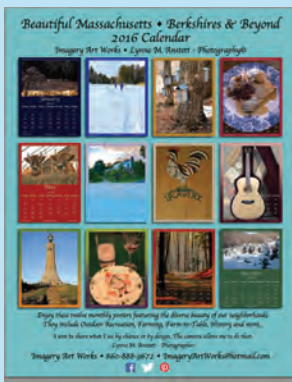
17 Railroad Street, Great Barrington, (413) 528-4343



# Beautiful Massachusetts Berkshires & Beyond 2016 Art Poster Calendars



**Twelve Monthly Posters**  
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They include Outdoor Recreation, Farming,  
Farm-to-Table, History and more...  
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*I aim to share what I see  
by chance or by design,  
that is beautiful to me.  
The camera allows me to do that.*

-Lynne M. Anstett - Photography ©  
Imagery Art Works

**Lynne M. Anstett - Photography © Imagery Art Works  
860-888-3672**

**ImageryArtWorks@hotmail.com • Imagery Art Works Facebook**

**Website for prints:**

<http://www.gicleeone.com/lynne-m-anstett>

**Giclé Fine Art Photographs ~ Lynne M. Anstett**

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**2016 Art Poster Calendar available here and other fine stores:**

Williams & Sons Country Store – Stockbridge, Berkshire Museum – Pittsfield  
The Bookloft – Great Barrington, LOCAL – Lenox, The Bookstore – Lenox,  
Canterbury Farm – Becket, Pleasant & Main – Housatonic,  
The Williams Inn – Williamstown,  
Montage – Millerton, NY and Artisans Guild – Norfolk, CT

## FINE LINE

MULTIMEDIA

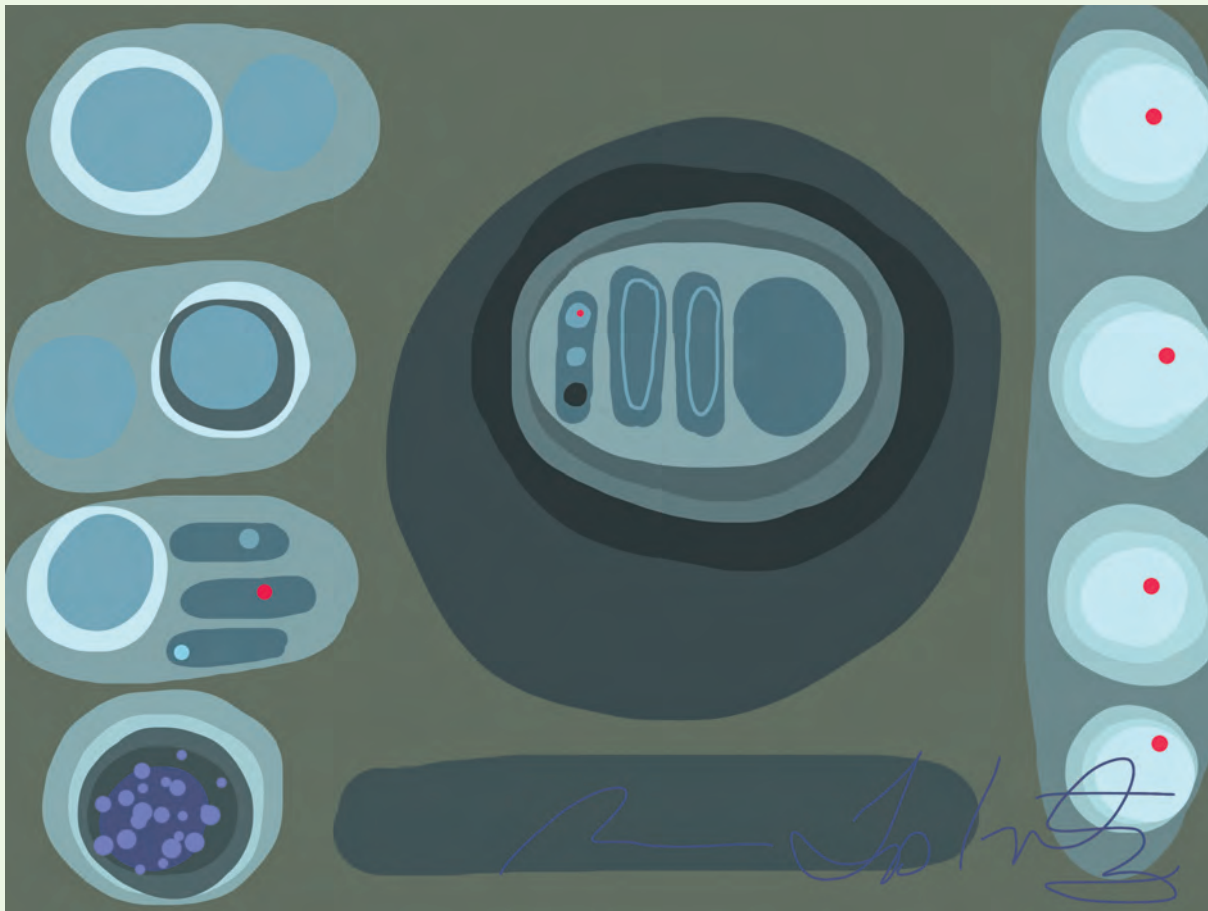
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# nina lipkowitz



Nina Lipkowitz, *Glyphs II*, 31" X 23" limited edition archival pigment print

## Upcoming Shows:

April 1 - May 1, 2016

### **Glyphs & Squiggles**

iPaintings created on an iPad

Artist Reception:

Saturday, April 2, 3-6pm

510 Warren Street Gallery

Hudson, NY

Opening:

Saturday, Oct 15 - Nov 29, 2016

### **iPaintings**

No. Six Depot Roastery

Cafe & Gallery

No. Six Depot Gallery

6 Depot St., West Stockbridge, MA

January & February, 2017

### **John & Nina Lipkowitz**

iPad Paintings by Nina and

iPhone Photography by John

Berkshire School, Sheffield, MA

[ninalipkowitz.com](http://ninalipkowitz.com)

## JOHN LIPKOWITZ

On Exhibit:

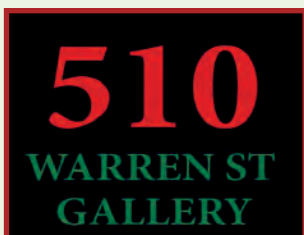
### **Arctic Images**

January 2 - Jan 31, 2016

[JohnLipkowitzImaging.com](http://JohnLipkowitzImaging.com)



*Polar Bear On Blue Ice*, 16 x 21"



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518-822-0510

FRIDAY & SATURDAY, 12-6, SUNDAY 12-5

[510WARRENSTREETGALLERY.COM](http://510WARRENSTREETGALLERY.COM)





# MARILYN KALISH

Vault Gallery Great Barrington, MA. 413.854.7744  
Lilly Clifford Gallery East Sussex, England  
[www.marilynkalishfineart.com](http://www.marilynkalishfineart.com)



# ARTFUL CALENDAR JANUARY 2016

## ART

### 510 WARREN STREET GALLERY

510 WARREN STREET, HUDSON, NY  
• 518-822-0510  
January 2016, Meagan Buratto: "Desde El Cielo"  
Cut paper collage. Reception, Saturday, January 2, 2016, 3-6 pm. Friday & Saturday, 12-6, Sunday 12-5 or by app 510warrenstreetgallery@gmail.com / 510warrenstreetgallery.com

### CARRIE HADDAD GALLERY

622 WARREN ST., HUDSON, NY  
• 518-828-1915  
Thru Dec 27: Radical Inventions; Dec 20 - Feb 7: Photography: David Halliday, Robert Hite, Eric Lindbloom, Jeri Eisenberg, Gail Peachin, Portia Munson, Kahn & Slesnick, Newbold Bohemia and Birgit Blyth

### CLARK ART INSTITUTE

225 SOUTH STREET WILLIAMSTOWN MA  
413.458.2303 / www.clarkart.edu  
An Eye for Excellence, thru Apr 10, 2016

### DENISE B CHANDLER

FINE ART PHOTOGRAPHY  
www.denisebchandler.com  
Exhibiting and represented by Sohn Fine Art, Lenox MA. New member artist at 510 Warren St Gallery, Hudson, NY, view work during gallery hours, Friday & Saturday, 12-6, Sunday 12-5 or by appointment; 510warrenstreetgallery@gmail.com / 510warrenstreetgallery.com

### DIA ART

3 BEEKMAN ST, BEACON, NY • 854-440-0100 / diaart.org  
Robert Irwin: Excursus: Homage to the Square. Thru May 31, 2017

### FRONT STREET GALLERY

129 FRONT ST, HOUSATONIC, MA • 413-274-6607  
Housatonic gallery for students and artists, featuring watercolor and oil paintings by artist Kate Knapp

### GOOD PURPOSE GALLERY

40 MAIN STREET, LEE, MA • 413-394-5045  
upcoming collaboration with Community Access to the Arts (CATA). The show is titled Selected Works by CATA Artists, 30 x 40 x 8 and opens on January 12 and runs through February 16. 9am - 4pm every day;

### JOHN DAVIS GALLERY

362 1/2 WARREN ST, HUDSON, NY • 518-828-5907  
art@johndavisgallery.com  
Elliott Green, It's Never Winter Here: Solo Exhibition thru Jan 31, 2016

### LAUREN CLARK FINE ART

25 RAILRD. ST, GT. BARRINGTON, MA • 413-528-0432  
Lauren@LaurenClarkFineArt.com  
www.LaurenClarkFineArt.com  
www.windowworldart.com  
Fine art and framing.

### MARGUERITE BRIDE

HOME STUDIO AT 46 GLORY DRIVE, PITTSFIELD, MA  
413-841-1659 or 413-442-7718  
MargeBride-Paintings.com

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*The Linley Family, Thomas Gainsborough*

### The Four Nations Ensemble at The Clark, Williamstown, MA

*Three concerts in the Galleries.*

*Andrew Appel, harpsichord and director, Pascale Beaudin, soprano, Olivier Brault & Tatiana Chulochnikova, violin, Loretta O'Sullivan, cello*  
**CONCERT 2 Saturday, April 16, 6pm: Gainsborough's Music**  
*The painter: Thomas Gainsborough The painting: The Linley Family*  
*The music: JC Bach, Abel, Chilcott, Arne & Thomas Linley*

### FB: Marguerite Bride Watercolors

Original watercolors, specializing in custom house and building portraits. Lessons in Watercolor technique. Gift Certificates. Now on exhibit: Winter scenes at Mary's Carrot Cake Shop, Union St., Pittsfield.

### MASSMoCA

1040 MASS MoCA WAY, NORTH ADAMS, MA  
• 413-664-4481  
Clifford Ross: Landscape Seen & Imagined, Thru April 17, 2016. Liz Deschenes: Gallery 4.1.1. Thru April 24, 2016. Artists' Choice: An Expanded Field of Photography, Thru April 24, 2016. Jim Shaw: Entertaining Doubts, Thru January 31, 2016

### MORRISON GALLERY

25 NORTH MAIN ST, KENT, CT • 860-927-4501  
info@morrisongallery.com  
Wolf Kahn, thru Jan 31, 2016. Pastels and oils

### NORMAN ROCKWELL MUSEUM

9 MA-183 STOCKBRIDGE MA  
• 413-298-4100 / www.nrm.org  
Masters of the Golden Age, thru March 13, 2016  
Art Talk: An Evening in the Classroom with Illustrator Harvey Dunn, January 16, 2016, 5:30pm. Illustrator Harvey Dunn (portrayed by painter/interpreter Dan Howe), a larger-than-life artist and teacher who will share his philosophy and extol the virtues of a life in art

### OMI INTERNATIONAL ARTS CENTER

1405 COUNTY ROUTE 22, GHENT, NY • 917-941-2671  
Reframing Nature: Allan Wexler. thru Jan 2016

### SAMUEL DORSKY MUSEUM OF ART

STATE UNIV. OF NEW YORK, NEW PALTZ  
• 845-257-3844  
Among the exciting exhibitions planned for 2016 are:

Made for You: New Directions in Contemporary Design, investigating the ways in which contemporary design objects are customized for the individual whether hand-made or through 3D printing technology.  
Hours: Wednesday-Sunday: 11 am - 5 pm

### SCHANTZ GALLERIES

3 ELM ST, STOCKBRIDGE, MA • 413-298-3044  
schantzgalleries.com  
A destination for those seeking premier artists working in glass

### SOHN FINE ART

69 CHURCH ST, LENOX, MA  
Ormond Gigli, Greg Gorman, Eric Korenman, Hildy Pincus Kronen, Anne Mourier, Pops Peterson, Jack Radcliffe, Kevin Sprague: Thru Jan 2016

### ST. FRANCIS GALLERY

RTE. 102, SOUTH LEE (just 2 miles east from the Red Lion Inn) Friday thru Monday 10-5pm.  
Reopening in spring 2016!

### THE CLARK ART INSTITUTE

225 SOUTH ST, WILLIAMSTOWN, MA  
• 413-458-2303  
An Eye for Excellence/ Twenty Years of Collecting. Clark's permanent collection, thru April 10, 2016

### VAULT GALLERY

322 MAIN ST, GT. BARRINGTON, MA  
• 413-644-0221  
Marilyn Kalish at work and process on view, beautiful gallery with a wonderful collection of paintings

### DEB KOFFMAN'S ARTSPACE

137 FRONT ST, HOUSATONIC, MA • 413-274-1201  
Sat: 10:30-12:45 class meets. No experience in drawing necessary, just a willingness to look deeply and watch your mind. This class is conducted in silence. Adult class. \$10, please call to register.

## MUSIC

### MASSMoCA

1040 MASS MoCA WAY, NORTH ADAMS, MA  
• 413-664-4481  
January 16: Multimedia + Music: Daniel Wohl: Holographic

### SHERMAN CHAMBER ENSEMBLE

**BEST OF BAROQUE**  
ST. ANDREWS CHURCH, 1 NORTH MAIN ST KENT CT  
• 860-927-3486 / www.kentct.com  
January 10, 2016, 3pm. Music for harpsichord, flute and strings by J.S. Bach, Telemann and Handel.

### THE FOUR NATIONS ENSEMBLE

THE CLARK, WILLIAMSTOWN, MA  
• 518-325-3253 / www.fournations.org / andrewsappel@mac.com  
CONCERT 1 Saturday, Jan 30, 6pm. Goddesses and Laundresses.



## THEATRE & ENTERTAINMENT

### COLONIAL THEATRE

111 SOUTH ST, PITTSFIELD, MA • 413-997-4444  
www.berkshiretheatre.org

Berkshire Musicians Tribute to Neil Young, Sat Jan 23, 7:30pm;  
On The Stage Series: The Wanda Houston Band, Sat, Jan 30, 8pm.  
The production from Theater Treibwerk: Moby Dick, Feb 17, 2pm.  
Marc Cohn, Thurs. Feb 25, 8pm. Singer, Songwriter and Pianist;  
Through The Looking Glass: Musings from Pens of Berkshire  
Women Writers, The unicorn theatre, sunday, Apr 17, 3pm

### HELSINKI CAFE

405 COLUMBIA ST, HUDSON, NY • 518-828-4800  
info@helsinkihudson.com  
BULLY with Palehound, Jan 8, 9pm

### THE GHENT PLAYHOUSE

6 TOWN HALL PL, GHENT NY  
518-392-6264 / www.ghentplayhouse.org  
The Weir, Jan 22 - Feb 7, 2016  
Spellbinding stories of ghost lore, Irish Gentle Folk and haunted  
house over a fairy road to Valerie, Ireland.

### THE MOUNT

2 PLUNKETT STREET LENOX MA • 413-551-5111  
www.edithwharton.org  
The Touchstones Series: Featured authors include Darryl Pinckney,  
Meaghan Daum, Jenny Nordberg and Richard Russo. Thru Oct 31,  
2016

### WARNER THEATRE

68 MAIN ST, TORRINGTON, CT • 860-489-7180  
www.warnertheatre.org  
Gordon Lightfoot. *Yes! Gordon Lightfoot!* April 14, 8pm

## FILM

### HOSTED BY FRIENDS OF GREAT BARRINGTON LIBRARIES

231 MAIN ST, GT BARRINGTON, MA  
Inhabit: A Permacultural Perspective, Thurs Feb 4, 7-9pm

### MAHAIWE THEATRE

14 CASTLE ST, GT BARRINGTON, MA • 413-528-0100  
Sat. Feb 6, 1pm: The Kenneth Branagh Theatre Company presents  
in HD their production of William Shakespeare's The Winter Tale,  
starring Sir Kenneth Branagh and Dame Judi Dench, captured live  
from the Garrick Theatre in London.

### OLD CHATHAM, NEW YORK


HTTP://ITVS.ORG/FILMS/BLACK-PANTHERS/PHOTOS-AND-PRESS-KIT  
Jan 15: Indie Lens Pop-Up, presented by the Independent Television  
Service (ITVS), Independent Lens, WMHT Educational  
Telecommunications, and the Old Chatham Quakers are excited to  
offer an advance screening of The Black Panthers: Vanguard of the  
Revolution, a film by award-winning filmmaker Stanley Nelson.

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EACH MONTH PRIOR TO PUBLICATION...

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&

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**TOWN PLAYERS & Pittsfield** **95th Season!**

**Sunday, January 31st**

**"Iphigenia" from "Porch of the Maidens"**  
by Richard Matturo  
**"Hearing Aid" by Pete Barry**  
**"Senior Moments" by Frederick Stroppel**

**Whitney Center for the Arts**  
**Staged Readings ~ 2pm ~ \$5 Admission**

**Friday, February 19th**

**"Mr. Noble Melancholy" by Maryann Sherman**  
**"In Motion Pittsfield Literary Party"**

Berkshire Fringe/Berkshire Music School, Pittsfield Shakespeare in the Park & WAM  
as part of the 5th Annual 10x10 Upstreet Arts Festival

**Dotties Coffee Lounge**  
**7PM ~ FREE**

**Friday-Sunday Feb 19th-21st**

**"Ten Shorts" by Jerry Leventhal**

co-presented with Whitney Center for the Arts  
part of the 5th Annual 10x10 Upstreet Arts Festival

**Whitney Center for the Arts**  
**Fri & Sat 8pm, Sun 2pm \$10-15**

**March 11th-20th**

**"The Shape of Things"**  
by Neil LaBute

**Whitney Center for the Arts**  
**Fri & Sat 8pm, Sun 2pm \$10-15**

**Tickets: 413-443-9279**  
**www.townplayers.org**





# THE ARTFUL MIND ARTZINE

JANUARY 2016

*The winds bring change*



**Laura Didyk**  
page 8

**Planet Waves Astrology January**  
Eric Francis page 14

**Jessica and  
Alexander Sovronsky**

Photo: Lee Everett  
page 16



**Natalia Bystrianyuk**

Photo: Fionna Shea  
page 26

## FICTION:

**Please God Not Van Gogh Part I**  
Richard Britell page 30

**January Poets in Motion**  
Gabriel Squailia page 32

## Contributing Writers and Monthly Columnists

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Eric Francis, Amy Tanner

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**Advertising and Graphic Design**  
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## THE MUSIC STORE

When celebrating anniversaries, we almost always do so with MUSIC! Having begun our sixteenth year serving the Berkshires and beyond, we appreciate the need to celebrate so a rousing CHEER to the Artful Mind: Happy Birthday, A.M., Happy Birthday to YOU!!!

We at The Music Store have a good time serving our community, her musicians and music lovers. Come share some of the fun; we have, among others: Composite Acoustic guitars (the forever guitar!) and their peerless travel guitar, the Cargo, a favorite of our own Dr. Easy, David Reed, made of carbon graphite and impervious to most changes of temperature and humidity. You can see it often in his hands in performance locally and abroad.

Guild Guitars - Light, powerful, affordable

TERRIFIC UKULELES! 60+ DIFFERENT models: Soprano, Concert, Tenor and Baritone, acoustic and acoustic/electric, six string, resonator, the Maccaferri-like Makala Waterman Uke (made all of plastic for easy portability almost anywhere!) the remarkable U-Bass, and the new Solid Body Uke Bass by the Magic Fluke Co.! You might even hear Dr. Easy play a banuke!

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Or a West African Djembe with a SMASHING carry bag?

Or a beautiful set of African Djun Djuns?

Try Takamine for a guitar to suit almost any budget (the Pro Series at DEEP unpublished discounts)! Dr. Easy can tell you about his. And we are SLASHING Tak prices WHILE they last!!

ALVAREZ GUITARS - BEAUTIFUL Limited Editions, great value!

Breedlove - beautiful, American, sustainable. And so many more brands and types, including Luthier Handmade Instruments and Consignments from \$150-\$5000 . . .

Ever heard of Dr. Easy's Drunk Bay Cigar Boxes? Acoustic/electric cigar box guitars, exquisitely made, which bring the past into the present with a delightful punch, acoustically AND plugged in! You can even hear them on the patio and in action Saturday nights at GB's own Aegean Breeze restaurant!

Harmonicas, in (almost) every key (try a Suzuki Hammond 'Mouth Organ').

Picks (exotic, too!), strings (!), sticks and reeds

Violins, Mandolins, Dulcimers, Banjos, and Banjo Ukes!

Handmade and international percussion instruments!

Dreamy Native American and locally made bamboo and wooden flutes and walking stick flutes!

And there is more to delight the eyes, intrigue the ears and bring warm joy to the heart!

We remain your neighborhood music store, where advice and help are free and music is the universal language. Working with local luthiers and repairmen we offer stringed and band instrument repair. And we just may have something you haven't seen before. We often match (or BEAT) on-line prices for the merchandise that we sell, and do so in person, for the most part cheerfully (though we reserve the right to glower a little when asked if we can 'do better' on the price of a pick!)

Come and see us soon and help us celebrate the Winter and music making in general. Your patronage helps the community and makes it a more tuneful, healthy and happy place!

The Music Store, located at 87 Railroad Street in Great Barrington, is open Wednesday through Sunday and by appointment. Call us at 413-528-2460, visit us on line at [www.themusicstoreplus.com](http://www.themusicstoreplus.com) and on Facebook as The Music Store Plus, or see our listings on Reverb.com at <https://reverb.com/shop/TheMusicStorePlus>

The actor is an athlete of the soul.

-- Antonin Artaud  
approx 1940

Unaffiliated outreach and advocacy for the arts in the Berkshires of western Massachusetts and beyond.

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**artsindie.com**  
**info@artsindie.com**



# EUNICE AGAR



Cow, LINOCUT

*Eunice Agar's commissioned oil paintings can be seen in the Town Hall in Great Barrington, MA. during regular business hours. Life long resident and artist of Great Barrington, Eunice has had her work on view in galleries in and around the Berkshires throughout most of her life and continues to paint on a regular basis. Eunice has a deep interest for history and enjoys writing about art in her spare time.*

**Visit [EUNICEAGAR.COM](http://EUNICEAGAR.COM)**



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happy anniversary Artful Mind.  
From **Matt Bialer** Watercolors

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/99845620@N03/>

[Mattbialer@gmail.com](mailto:Mattbialer@gmail.com)



# Matthew Bialer





Geoffrey Moss, Berkshire Morning

## Geoffrey Moss Painting the Barn Over and Over

Whenever Geoffrey Moss assumes the roll of art instructor, he first cautions that his students "... keep their eyes not on what's before them in the flesh, but what is in their memory about that flesh..."

Now, continuing to show his iconic Barns at the Lauren Clark Gallery, the painter aware of his own advise, takes selective liberty to remember that negative spaces can offer the viewer, as well as artist, opportunity to personally imagine what has occurred in shadows and sudden contrasts of light in architecture using not one traditional light source, but several; that is, rearranging spaces, building walls, openings, happily abstracting memory. In this present, more representational Gallery offering, unlike his less representational work, forms replace interaction of colors. In these canvases and works on paper, like his totally abstract works, it seems the artist ignores his past use of primary colors of barns in order to document, to enforce views of massive structure, coming closer to a marriage with his familiar Black Drawing Series begun as an art student at Yale.

Quoting a favorite author, William Faulkner, Moss reiterates, "Knowing remembers..." Choosing to be the "accidental architect," the artist obsessively paints, paints, paints barns, rearranging and moving walls of shadows, making full use of his prerogative to own and reinvent.

Lauren Clark Fine Art - 25 Railroad Street, Great Barrington, 413-528-0432; Lauren@LaurenClarkFineArt.com /

www.LaurenClarkFineArt.com

## Publisher's note.

*I never write Editorial Notes in The Artful Mind like other publications do. However, I say it all in one compact sentence you can find in the Indesia, under the logo, in case you haven't noticed. I don't consider myself to be a writer and for sure would be just spending way too many hours figuring out what to say and how to write it. But— there is a sentence, in every issue; a big thought, in a few words, summarizing a specific energy I feel while the over-all theme for the month emerges. This sentence is created and always includes a 'zap of good luck' to all I add at the very end of putting each issue together. That's my version of an Editorial Note to readers.*

*Some time after the midnight hour, I habitually shout, without fail, every month into my husband's ear, "IT'S a RAP!!!" while he alarmingly wakes from a deep sleep. Then after we HI-Five, I ceremoniously with confidence similar to Maria's in The Sound of Music, press the SEND key which immediately moves the DOCUMENT a million miles away way through cyber space to a wonderful printing company down south. Funny... how we can do things like this now, thanks to the internet world.*

*I started this artzine 23 years ago, and it has been my livelihood all the while. I didn't need any of my college experience to create a magazine, but can't say my years attending the h.s. of M & A, SVA and NYU was a total waste of time. Formal education is never a waste. I had the choice to take the performing arts road or the visual art road. I chose illustration, graphic design and art history. I know it helped me in some big picture way, a know-how, confidence-building, slow-cooker education thing, I think. I may have taken my years at art school for granted at times. But! I do believe it's important to be guided by educators we respect and who teach us the ropes so that we become aware of our intuitiveness and talent so we can use them wisely.*

*What really helped launch and keep this artzine circulating in the forefront of art magazines has been from people's active participation and hard work, feedback and support which sculpted and defined the mission of The Artful Mind over time. It's all been a rewarding experience that will continue to successfully be a main artery for communication and networking in the Berkshires & surrounding locale (Kris? Does a comma go here?) for many years to come.*

*I thank everyone for whom I have become acquainted with over the years, learned from, and so often proudly introduced to each other. One time, I was told the news of two long lost friends found each other via the artzine. They got married a few years later! So I do agree, we should all create art and feel the joy it brings. Share. Communicate. Explore. Be fearless. Playful. Observe. Break for inter-disciplinary arts in order to chance, compare and experience the feeling of self-expression. Get involved. ...because you simply, never know.*

*Take flight into the new year with a burst of inspiration that will leave you utterly exhausted by the end of a winter's day that just happens to fly by, but a day so nourishing and rewarding that it has only left you thirsty for more. That's what keeps us happy and healthy. Thank you. xox, Harryet Candee*



Jennifer PaziENZA, Cropped Image, Oil on Canvas

## Jennifer PaziENZA

It's January and a new year begins. I've never been one for resolutions. Intentions are more my thing. I know what you're thinking: "the road to ... is paved with good intentions." That may be true, but the intention I'm talking about is not concerned with setting goals to be fulfilled in the future. Instead, I'm referring to a path or a practice that is focused on how I'm being in the present moment. This kind of intention is about a commitment to understanding what matters most and aligning worldly actions to inner values and beliefs. It is an ever-renewing process.

As it applies to my painting practice, it means I commit yet again, to the experience of attending to my love and responsibility for applying paint to canvas. This brand of intention focuses on each and every moment and is unattached to the outcome. Each brushstroke guides the next and the next. Thoughts of shows and sales are not in the picture.

I so admire journal writers. I've never been particularly good at it. My paintings are my journals. On reflection however, it occurred to me that these Artful Mind columns are like journal entries. They function as a kind of archive. I'm grateful to Harryet for making space for them and to you for reading them. Happy New Year!

*Jennifer PaziENZA's work is held in public, private and corporate collections in the US, Canada and Italy. Her work is represented by St. Francis Gallery in Lee, Mass., Art + Concepts Gallery in Fredericton, NB and The Jonathan Bancroft-Snell Gallery in London, Ontario Canada.*

*Jennifer PaziENZA -  
jenniferpaziENZA.com, jennpaziENZA@gmail.com*



John Lipkowitz, Shaking Off, 16 x 21"

## John Lipkowitz

### 510 Warren Street Gallery

John Lipkowitz, a photographer now retired to Great Barrington combines his nearly lifelong passions of photography and travel in his artistic work. For the past seventeen years he has been traveling with his wife Nina, a painter, not only to places commonly visited by many, but to often exotic and distant reaches of Planet Earth. For the past five years he and Nina have been exhibiting their work as founding artist members of the 510 Warren Street Gallery in Hudson, New York along with work by its other artist members. The gallery's format requires each artist to rotate one place along its walls and this often enables them to change works on display.

The nature of this gallery allows Lipkowitz to present works from many of his travels over the years and the age of digital photography easily permits storage and retrieval of the select among tens of thousands of images he has shot over the years. When asked to define his style or genre, Lipkowitz describes himself as an opportunist, by which he means that wherever he may travel he finds intriguing places and situations for digital capture.

In truth, it was wildlife in East Africa and a trip aboard a Russian nuclear icebreaker to the North Pole (the place on the pack ice where, more than 5,000 feet below on the Arctic Ocean floor, the geographical pole was located), that whet his appetite for wildlife, polar travel and serious photography. Being an "opportunist" enables him to stretch these interests to comfortably cover possibilities wherever he and Nina find themselves traveling. However, during this particular month, January 2016, his gallery images are from a trip he and Nina took in September of last year to the Canadian Arctic and Western Greenland aboard an expedition travel ship with eighty-two other adventurous souls, retracing, in backwards fashion, part of the waters arduously, sometimes fatally, sailed by explorers primarily during the Nineteenth Century. Images from this part of the Arctic will be on display at the 510 Warren Street Gallery.

*510 Warren Street Gallery, 510 Warren Street, Hudson, New York, 518-822-0510 during gallery hours Friday and Saturday 12-6 and Sunday 12-5 during January and February 2016. 510warrenstreetgallery.com*





MARGUERITE BRIDE, WINTER GOLD, W/C ON CANVAS

## MARGUERITE BRIDE WATERCOLORS

Often winter months in the Berkshires are the busiest time for artists who are preparing for the next “show season”, which always seems to arrive in a hurry. With plans to exhibit new and exciting material, painters view this creative period with great excitement and anticipation. At least that’s how watercolorist Marguerite Bride feels about it.

During these “quiet” months, Bride also gives watercolor technique lessons in her home in Pittsfield. Visit her website for more details about commissioning a painting, purchasing a painting or fine art reproduction, lessons and updated exhibit information; or contact the artist directly.

Over the years Bride has painted many scenes from vacations, special occasions, and favorite settings...all from clients’ own photos. These have included scenes from romantic wedding settings and honeymoon trips, Tuscan villas, vistas from fabulous hikes, exciting canoe trips, scenes from family vacations and reunions, “once in a life-time” adventures, and more. Commissions are always welcome; a gift of art is suitable for any occasion.

Fine art reproductions and note cards of Berkshire images and others by the artist are available at the Red Lion Inn Gift Shop (Stockbridge), Lenox Print & Mercantile (Lenox); and Mary’s Carrot Cake and Gallery (Pittsfield). Seasonal scenes are always on display in the public areas of the Crowne Plaza in Pittsfield. Or visit Bride’s studio by appointment.

Marguerite Bride – Home Studio at 46 Glory Drive, Pittsfield, MA by appt only. Call 413-841-1659 or 413-442-7718; margebride-paintings.com; margebride@aol.com; Facebook: Marguerite Bride Watercolors



DENISE B CHANDLER PHOTOGRAPHY

## DENISE B CHANDLER FINE ART LIMITED EDITION PHOTOGRAPHY

Denise B Chandler is a fine art photographer who has had her work exhibited at The Berkshire Museum, Sohn Fine Art Gallery, Lichtenstein Center for the Arts, IS -183 Art School of the Berkshires, St. Francis Gallery, Chesterwood, The Hudson Opera House, Spencertown Academy Arts Center, and Tivoli Artists Gallery. In 2012, Chandler completed the Photography Residency Program at Maine Media Workshops & College. While in Maine, she was guided, encouraged and her work critiqued by renowned photographers: Michael Wilson, Andrea Monica, Peter Ralston, Arthur Meyerson, David Turner, Brenton Hamilton, David Wells, and Syl Arena. Chandler has continued her formal workshop training with master photographers, Seth Resnick, Greg Gorman, and John Paul Caponigro. Later this month she will once more train with Seth Resnick, John Paul Caponigro and Jay Maisel. Denise B Chandler is represented by Sohn Fine Art Gallery at 69 Church St. in Lenox, Massachusetts where various selections of her work can be seen throughout the year.

Chandler offers private gallery visits at her personal studio/gallery by appointment only...please call either number listed below. A new member of 510 Warren Street Gallery, Hudson, NY., her fine art photography can now be viewed Friday and Saturday 12 - 5, and Sunday 12-5 or by appointment. Denise B Chandler, Studio & Gallery visits by appointment only. 415 New Lenox Rd, Lenox, MA. Please call 413-637-2344 or 413-281-8461 (cell).

Website: denisebchandler.com  
/: info@denisebchandler.com



NINA LIPKOWITZ, GLYPHS & SQUIGGLES

## NINA LIPKOWITZ

I never meant to be a painter. It just happened. I learned about form and color during my years as a sculptor and potter. I carved marble and alabaster, created clay vessels; learned what makes colors sing and drew and drew and drew, slowly learning how lines twist and turn and dance across paper turning into forms, becoming sacred spaces containing endless puddles of color.

Matisse, Van Gogh, O’Keeffe, Calder, Kelly, Klee, Miro, Kandinsky and the Fauves; all inspired me and of course David Hockney who introduced me to the wonders of painting on the iPad.

Whether with paint, on paper or finger painting on an iPad screen my work is always the same; an exploration of line and color, pattern and light, density and transparency. I do not have any preconceived idea of where the painting is going or what it will look like when it is finished.

A blank piece of paper or a backlit iPad screen can be terrifying. Where to begin? Take a breath. Place one mark and then another and another, each building upon the next. Paint or pixels it’s all the same. Layer after layer the painting begins to appear. First it’s not there, then it is. Pure magic!

Nina’s next show entitled “Glyphs & Squiggles”, iPaintings, created on an iPad, will be April 1-May 1 at the 510 Warren Street Gallery, in Hudson, NY. An artist reception is planned for Saturday, April 2, 3-6pm. 510warrenstreet-gallery.com

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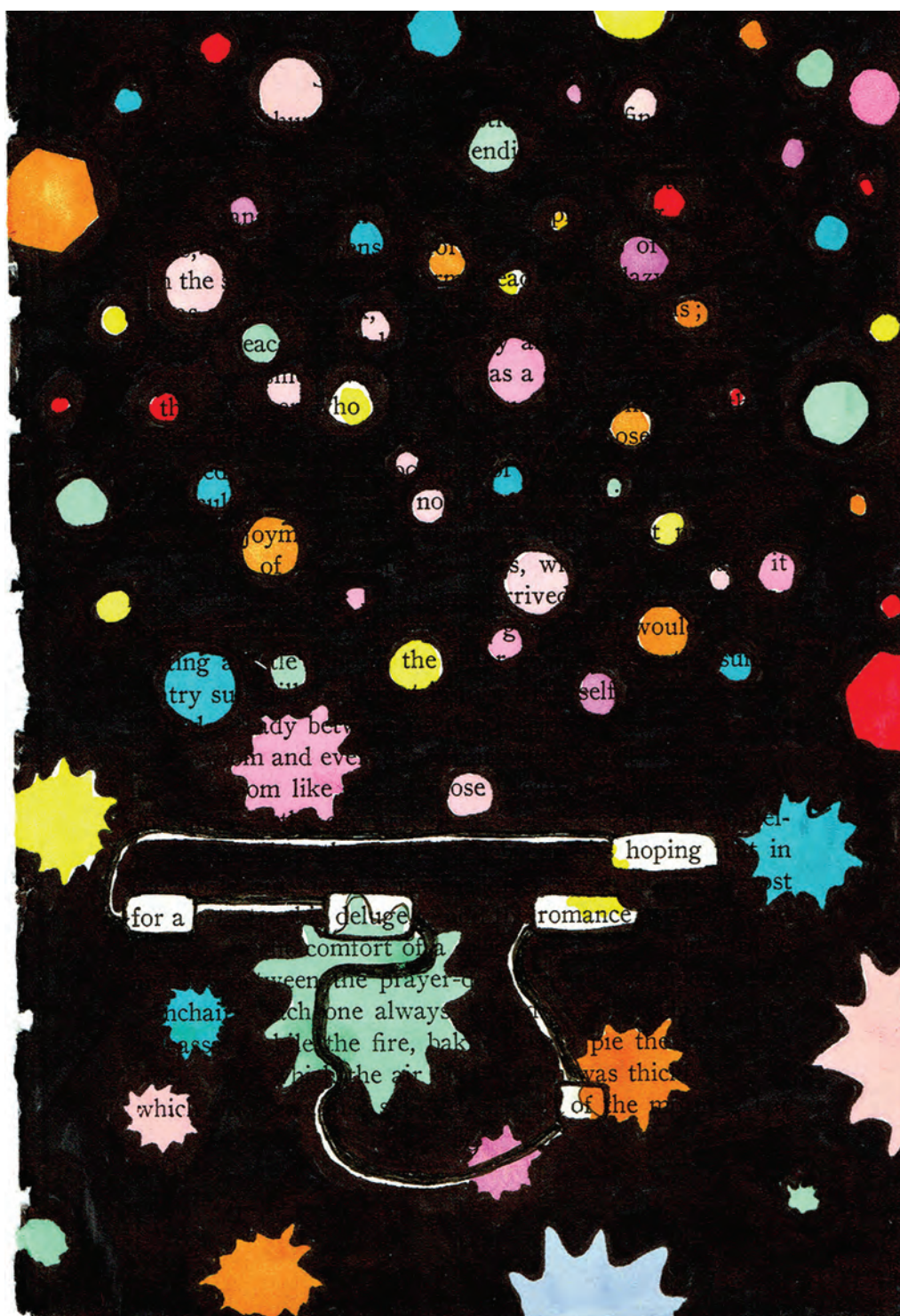
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Five sessions, each focused on a compelling theme, at convenient locations in Pittsfield, Great Barrington & Lenox: Jan. 10, Feb. 7, March 6, April 10, May 15.

Sign up for one or all five! \$60 per session, \$250 for five; some partial scholarships available.

**For full details visit: ButterflyLeadership.org**





Romance, Laura Didyk

# LAURA DIDYK

Interview by Harryet Candee

**Laura, being an artist and a writer, when are you inspired to do one or the other?**

**Laura Didyk:** Well I consider myself much more a writer than an artist—I’ve been writing for most of my life, with two degrees in creative writing, and I’ve only been drawing and doing erasure art for a little under two years. For this reason, the visual stuff is much more of an inspired act for me than writing. I have no baggage around it, no internalized list of shoulds and shouldn’ts, no past teachers’ voices in my head critiquing my work—it’s almost pure delight. All I have to do is look at my Instagram feed, the work of all the artists I follow throughout the world, and I’m ready to go. With writing, on the other hand, I write only after I’ve cleaned my refrigerator, my bathtub, and my car, and done my taxes.

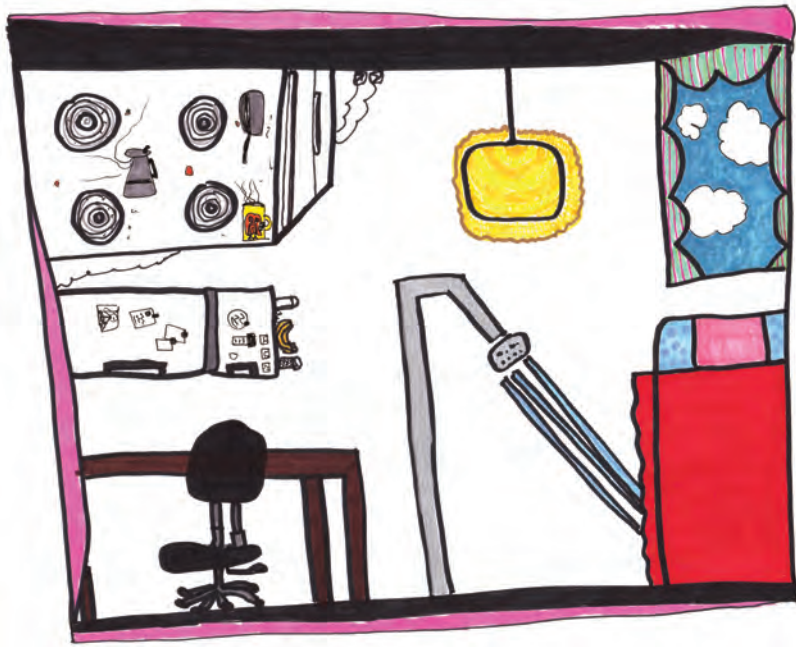
Once I get myself to start, I *sometimes* experience a sense of ease, maybe a fleeting rush of love or gratitude for language and the sentence. But my main overall experience—and I think this must be why I keep doing it—is that the amount of focus and absorption required (at least for me) to write into a project that has weight and substance, almost always results (once I navigate around all the self-doubt and inner questioning) in an indescribable freedom, freedom from my own personality, from all my self-stuff, from my exhausting, daily mental routine. It’s taken me a long while, though, to feel that. It’s the benefit of practicing and studying something for so many years.

**I find it so fascinating that you’ve lived in so many places! Laura, tell us why you lived like a gypsy, and**

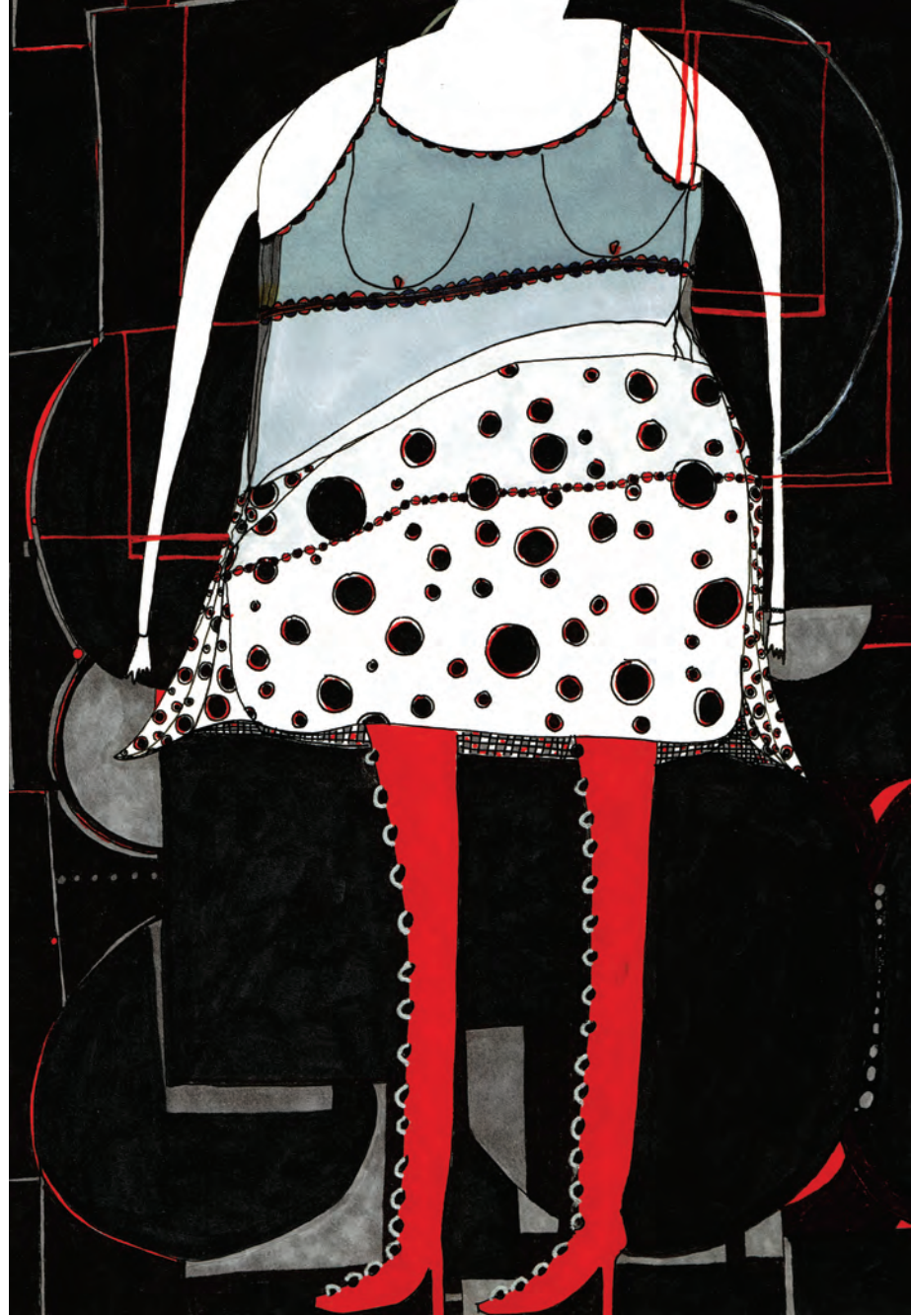
**how did you manage, and why did you manage to call the Berkshires your ‘maybe’ final home, at least for awhile?**

**Laura:** Gypsy sounds more romantic than it’s felt. Yes, I’ve moved a lot. I’ve moved for school, for boyfriends, to get away from home, to try and find a place that feels like home. I’ve been broke and addicted and utterly lost. Not that there hasn’t been fun and magic and love and necessary growth mixed in there. Too long a tale to tell here how I ended up in the Northeast, but I’m thrilled to say that I’ve been here for more than thirteen years—in the Hudson Valley for seven, then the Berkshires for seven, and four of those in Great Barrington (and in the same apartment!). I stay in the Berkshires—for now [smile]—because in addition to the outrageous beauty





*Apartment*, Laura Didyk



*Lady with the Red Boots*

of this place and the surprisingly low overhead it affords me, my life here is incredibly easy. Though it's taken some time, and despite my conflicted relationship with the weather, I've grown roots: wonderful friends, a supportive community of fellow writers and artists, as well as writing students I love. When and if I do leave, it'll have to be for a really great reason.

**And so, how did writing and art seep into your life?**

*Laura:* I wrote my way through my adolescence—it's how I survived it. My notebook was the only place where I felt like I could feel and say anything I wanted. I really haven't stopped writing since. Once I crossed the threshold of my first college creative-writing classroom, I was done with other pursuits. Visual art, and art in general, has always been a part of my life—not making it, but being around people for whom art was not an activity, or an accouterment, or decoration, but evidence of forces and energies bigger than all of us. My parents were key to this early on. They read to me and my two sisters like crazy, and—even when we were in dire straits financially—brought us to museums, concerts of music from all over the world, dance performances, etc.

**Describe a piece of your artwork, from the emotional aspect of creating to the technical aspect of the medium you chose.**

*Laura:* Some of the more powerful drawings for me

(though I don't expect them to be for others) are my female figures. When I drew the first one, I had no real conscious interest in drawing women's bodies, especially with a recurring breast theme—it felt so cliché to me—but they kept happening anyway. The way the Sharpie marker moved on this particular paper and the smallest size Micron pen, teeny tiny, was so pleasing. I drew a slew of figures—all very related—in a short period of time. And I'm still drawing them. Every time, my love for them increases—I love their awkward shapes, and the stories that seem to live in and on them, how they look like they've survived a great distance, but are still here, and strong. (The possibility that these could be permutations of self-portraits is not lost on me.) The emotional aspect has been the most surprising. I've drawn a lot of different creatures now (women, fish, flowers) and continue to feel this growing care for them (I realize how corny this sounds), like they are all alive somewhere in some alternate universe with their complex characters and long, storied lives. I think fiction writers must feel this way with their characters, though I've never sunk into fiction in that way. I've come to call this series of drawings *Creatures of Love* because that's what they are.

**Does your art and writing share any direct relationship?**

*Laura:* No, they don't. At least not yet. Only to the degree that the urge to do both of them lives inside the

same person. Some of my erasure artwork involves text, but the text is in the form of book pages from others' books—it feels related to my writer self, but not to my writing. Some people around me really want this to be the case—that the 'twain shall meet. It would make my artistic endeavor, which until now was almost completely dormant, make so much sense: Just put the two together! But they are such different mindsets for me. Writing poetry and making drawings have some overlap, in terms of emotional experience, though I've not yet felt the desire to combine the two.

**When you sit down to make art, do you have an idea in your mind first, then proceed, like some inspiration or thought, or do you sit down with your drawing tool and let the hand take over?**

*Laura:* I have both experiences. Sometimes, I just want to feel the pen on the paper—Sharpie or Micron on drawing paper—and I don't know what I'm going to draw. Other times, after looking at others' artwork, I'll have an image in my head. A shape usually. And I'll start with that. I draw a lot of flowers, but I don't have a plan for each one before I start. I draw the stem and then... see what happens. A lot of times I draw improvisationally, an abstract line drawing that takes up the whole page. I'll often find something in there—a seahorse, a rearview mirror, whatever—and I'll create the drawing from there.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE....





*Sea Horse, Shark, Sun*, Laura Didyk

**I am wondering what your family life was like when you were growing up. Tell me about your parents, siblings, grandparents, and how they have made an impact on you.**

*Laura:* You'll have to wait for my memoir for that tale. I will say that my family, both nuclear and extended, has provided me with enough rich and raucous material for many books. There was a lot that was difficult about my and my sisters' upbringing in the hills of California, but there was a lot that was remarkable too—and all of it encouraged me toward a creative life. My parents have always been supportive of their daughters being involved in the arts.

**Being self-employed is a great way to go, but can be a feast or famine scenario. Have you ever taken on any other jobs that are just practical money-making ones, that pay the bills?**

*Laura:* Of course I've had all kinds of jobs throughout my life, but since graduate school, knowing early on in that experience that academia was not the way to go for me, I worked for more than a decade at different non-profits, always in writing- or publishing-related jobs. I did well, and enjoyed them for the most part, but it became clear that full-time work, having a boss and a regular schedule, these were not situations in which I thrived. When I was laid off from my last full-time job, I already had a few clients that I was editing and copywriting for, and had started teaching creative writing independently in the Berkshires, so I just turned all my focus onto those things. It was a dream! I've had a couple patches over the last few years when it was scary—but I got through it with a little help and a lot of hustle. This year I committed myself more fully to this lifestyle, where work is necessary but my energy revolves around my creative work. It doesn't necessarily change the external landscape of my life, but it changes

how I feel about it internally. I feel more legitimate somehow. And whatever I have to do, including enduring the scary times, I'm going to do.

**When do you feel life for you has been the bleakest, and the richest? And what have you created from those times?**

*Laura:* The bleakest was a period of about two years just after graduate school (2002–2004). I won't go into too much detail, but it involved coming to terms, necessarily, with some things in myself that I couldn't ignore anymore. In short, I had to make a decision about whether or not I still wanted to be here, doing this whole living thing. The time leading up to and following that decision (obviously I chose well) was beyond bleak. And I couldn't be more grateful for it. The richest time in my life is without question right now, and it's *because* of that bleakness. Darkness offers invaluable gifts, if you survive it. Not everyone does. I'm so fortunate. After that dark time, once I started feeling better, I still couldn't write. Three or four years I floundered around. I was trying to write in the same way that I'd written my whole life, but I wasn't the same person. I'd come through something. When I did finally start to write again, I realized that all I wanted to write about was having come through something. So that's what I've been doing.

**We can draw anything we want, and it could be pleasing to the eye.... There are no boundaries for making art, really, no rules.... But in writing, there are a million rules! If you agree or disagree, can you express your thoughts?**

*Laura:* I hate rules. And formulas. Sometimes it's good, I guess, to learn the rules so you can break them, that's what some people say. This is a very complicated and somewhat controversial subject. I feel very strongly that

writing is a craft, an art, like learning to play an instrument or speak a new language. And that writing as creative expression or personal growth—which I've done a lot of—is not the same thing as apprenticing yourself to the craft of writing. The former is something I believe everyone should do, and I lead people in doing it. I love it. Eventually, a few of these people will feel the urge toward a more serious engagement. They know when they feel it. It's the person who stays after class and breaks down because they don't think they're good enough. Or the person who says, "Tell me what to read. Tell me what to do. Tell me where to go. What's happening to me? Help!" But, getting back to rules, the engagement and the study don't necessarily have to do with rules or boundaries (just the opposite in fact). It has to do with immersion and imitation and practice and surrounding yourself with people who are better at it than you are. It has to do with mettle. Not everyone should do it. Many people will be happier and better off not doing it, and should, instead, enjoy the process of writing and reflecting and expressing, of getting in touch with something new inside of them—it's a wonderful, life-changing thing.

**I heard through the grapevine you will be part of an event in the Berkshire Festival of Women Writers. Can you tell us more about that?**

*Laura:* I'm participating in a three-person reading and panel, with two incredible writers—Joyce Hayden and Emma Smith-Stevens. It's called *Getting into Trouble & Getting Out of It: Writing a Book-Length Memoir*. We'll each read from our memoirs in progress, and discuss how we've gotten into trouble (of all kinds) while writing our books, and how we've gotten out of it.

**What is your solution for the problem of being too afraid to do what you really want?**





**Black Fish**, Laura Didyk

*Laura:* In the blog I wrote on this subject a few years ago, this is my favorite part: “When you meet a person you both admire and hate (just a little), it’s probably because they are doing something you want to be doing but aren’t . . . Breathe in that little bit of hate—there’s information in it for you. Then approach that person, and be sincere in confessing your admiration. When sincerity flies out of you it eventually flies back, like a boomerang.” Once you finally do something that you’ve always wanted to do, or even take a small step in that direction, it’s infectious. You start to see how much possibility there is in your single little life. By being brave and moving toward greatness, you can develop a magical power to help others, really help, in ways you’d never expect. Just by being yourself.

**Laura, what was it like to teach writing in a medium-security prison? Can you paint a picture of your experience?**

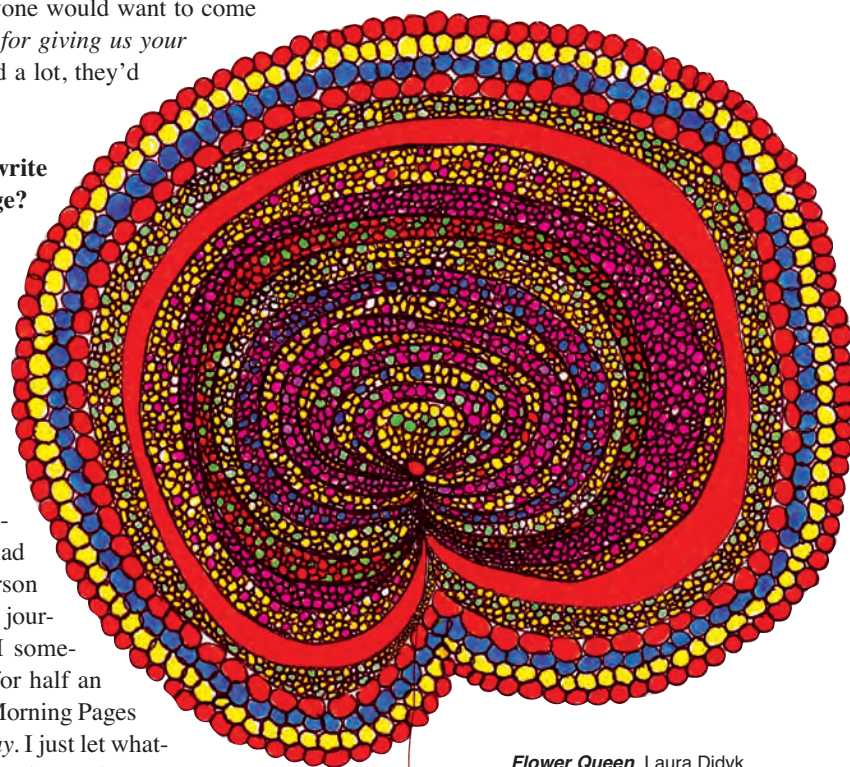
*Laura:* It was for a very short time, but it made a huge and permanent impact on me. The men in the poetry class I helped with wrote from a place of urgency, like I always have. (Not all writers do.) A writing class is a powerful thing to have in prison or out, especially for these guys who were daily trying to survive their experience of prison, as well as recover from everything that led them there. Many of them, with their upbringings and histories, just could not have ended up anywhere else. That was the big humbling, embarrassing realization for me: the mysterious roulette wheel of how I ended up in the life I have, and they ended up with theirs. Before I went, I thought they’d want to know who the hell I thought I was, going there and thinking I had something to teach them. I’m white and a woman, universes more privileged, and the majority of them were men of color who’d had lives and circumstances that had shaped them toward crime. But the only message I got from them about my being there (along with

the main teacher who invited me) was gratitude. They couldn’t understand why anyone would want to come there voluntarily. *Thank you for giving us your time*, they’d say. Always, and a lot, they’d say thank you.

**Did you keep journals or write stories from a very young age? Do you still have them?**

*Laura:* I do still have them—ALL of them—starting with my diary at 10 years old, inside of which there is one entry: *I just listened to Michael Jackson’s Thriller for the first time. It made me feel so powerful.* Most of the time, I find my old journals either boring or sad. But I’m glad I have them. I think a person should journal if they want to journal, if they find it helpful. I sometimes write in the morning for half an hour—like Julia Cameron’s Morning Pages from her book *The Artist’s Way*. I just let whatever’s on my mind come out. It keeps that connection between mind and language, brain and pen, alive and strong, and it also allows me to just have a conversation with a nebulous, loving, invisible listener.

*Laura’s prints and cards can be purchased at her Etsy store: <https://lauradidyk.etsy.com> Customers in the Berkshires, can use coupon code LOCAL2016 upon checkout for free postage; delivery can be arranged.*



**Flower Queen**, Laura Didyk







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Fine Line was established in 1970 by Lee Everett in Lenox, Massachusetts. Everett came to the Berkshires after studying Advertising Design and Visual Communications at Pratt Institute and working for years as an Art Director in New York. He taught Art in local schools and began a full-service multimedia studio in Lenox specializing in the Performing and Visual Arts and other business and industry.

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*Contact: Lee Everett, 413-637-2020, everett@berkshire.rr.com*



## GOOD PURPOSE GALLERY

### COLLABORATES WITH CATA

Good Purpose Gallery is proud to announce an upcoming collaboration with Community Access to the Arts (CATA). The show is titled Selected Works by CATA Artists, 30 x 40 x 8 and opens on January 12 and runs through February 16.

"30 x 40" refers to the size of the paintings and "8" refers to the number of artists in the show. Join us at the gallery on Friday, January 12 from 5:30pm to 7:30pm for the opening reception.

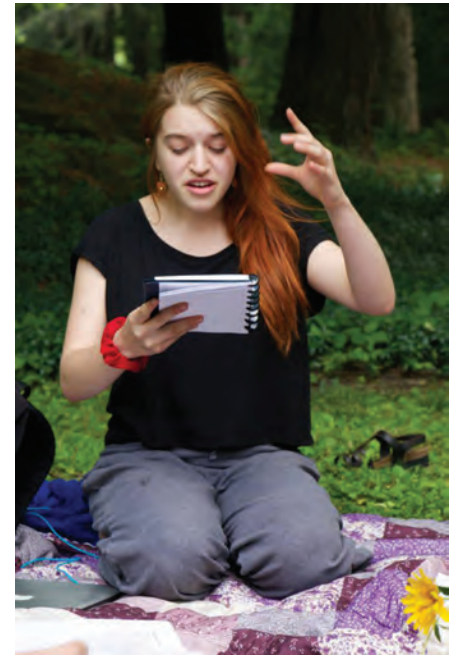
CATA provides visual and performing arts workshops for people with disabilities and then shares their creativity with the public, shining a light on the artistry and ability within disability. CATA serves 600 people with disabilities through 1,000 arts workshops.

All the artwork in this show was created by CATA artists in their Artistic Realizations Technologies (A.R.T.) classes. A.R.T. is an adaptive painting system developed by Tim Lefens that provides people with severe physical disabilities the opportunity to paint with the assistance of laser pointers and trained trackers acting as the hands of the artist.

Lefens says, "When you have no means of expressing yourself, the whole world going on around you, without you, and all of a sudden you can place the exact amount of the exact color you want, where you want it on the canvas, a lifetime of pent up energy comes out through a very concentrated channel. For the individuals we work with, painting is not recreation. It's life."

Good Purpose Gallery and Spectrum Playhouse are professional venues that exist to offer students real-life training, experience and integration with the community. Both venues host professional artists and events on a regular basis throughout the year, including student events such as plays, performances, art exhibits, and more.

*Good Purpose Gallery - 40 Main Street, Lee, Massachusetts. The gallery is open 9am - 4pm every day. For more information on the Gallery, visit our website: Goodpurpose.org*



## BERKSHIRE FESTIVAL OF WOMEN WRITERS

### NEW LEADERSHIP

#### PROGRAM FOR TEEN GIRLS

The Berkshire Festival of Women Writers invites teen girls ages 13 – 18 to join Director Jennifer Browdy and spoken word poet Grace Rossman in an exciting new program, the Butterfly Leadership Circles, aimed at developing young women's potential as writers, public speakers and creative leaders.

The writing-intensive program will meet monthly from January through May, 2016, with three-hour sessions taking place from 2 – 5 p.m. on a series of Sunday afternoons at the Unitarian Universalist Church in Pittsfield and the South Berkshire Friends Meeting House in Great Barrington, with the final session at The Mount on May 15.

"Participants will learn to use writing as a means of self-discovery and self-expression, and also work on building confidence in speaking publicly about issues they care about. Through the monthly sessions, we'll create a collaborative learning community in which we teach and model ways of thoughtfully, respectfully discussing issues of importance to today's young women," says Dr. Browdy, a longtime educator.

Sessions will take place January 10 in Pittsfield, February 7 in Great Barrington, March 6 in Pittsfield, April 10 in Great Barrington, and May 15 in Lenox. Each session will focus on a different topic, including qualities of women's leadership, healthy relationships with self and others, dealing with distraction and stress, taking action on social issues, and more. Details can be found at ButterflyLeadership.org.

Girls can sign up to attend just one Circle meeting, or more; participants who attend and participate productively in at least four out of the five sessions will be awarded a Certificate of Completion. Each meeting is limited to a maximum of 20 participants.

The cost of each three-hour session is \$60, or sign up for all five at the discounted rate of \$250. Some partial scholarships are available.

*Berkshire Festival of Women Writers - Applications and full information available at ButterflyLeadership.org*

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-b.Mac

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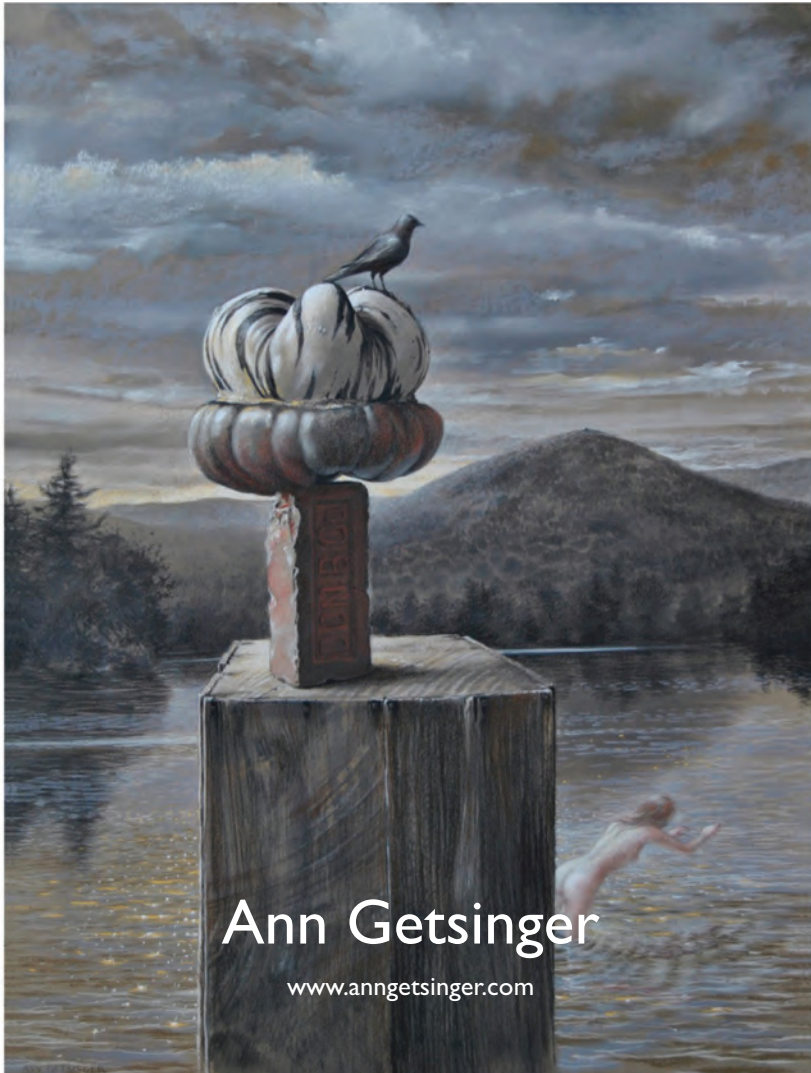
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## Denise B Chandler Fine Art Photography



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EXHIBITING and REPRESENTED by:

- Sohn Fine Art Gallery 69 Church St., Lenox, MA
- 510 Warren Street Gallery 510 Warren St., Hudson, NY

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PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT

MULTI-MEDIA THEATRE ACTOR MUSICIAN

**ALEXANDER**

**&  
JESSICA SOVRONSKY**

TEACHING ARTIST THEATRE MAKER

*Interview Harryet Candee  
Photography Lee Everett*

**Harryet Candee: So, I want to ask you, as a couple, to describe the time from your wedding day up to when you moved into your cute apartment in the Berkshires?**

Our wedding was fantastic and is one of our happiest memories. We had it at the Santarella Gingerbread House in Tyringham. It was really beautiful, and great fun. We had a bouncy, inflatable boxing ring that our guests were able to have fun in, we had a photo booth with tons of silly props and costumes, and we even had coloring stations where people could create art! It was very whimsical and creative. We were both working a full season at Shakespeare & Company that summer (2014) and Alexander had to close two productions in which he was performing (*Henry IV* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*) the day before our wedding, so Jessica was working around the clock to create our gorgeous wedding decor. We were very lucky to have friends and family come up a few days early to help us out during that potentially stressful pre-wedding time. As a friend of ours said regarding weddings, it's a Broadway show with no rehearsal, all of the actors are amateurs, and it has to be perfect. We couldn't have asked for a better day. Everything went off perfectly, without a single hitch. The day after the wedding, we moved into our new home in the Berkshires from NYC, where we had both lived for most of our lives. The move took an entire day, as big moves like that often do, but we were very fortunate to have had the foresight to hire a moving company to do all the heavy lifting. Especially since we lived in a 4th floor walkup! After over a year now as Massachusetts residents, we really love it here, and we wouldn't change it for the world.

**Why do you both prefer living up here, as opposed to the Big Apple, where the opportunity is much greater for theatre and music work? Do you travel back and forth for work? Family?**

While the opportunity for work may be greater in NYC, the quality of life is much better in this area. Things are quieter here, locally-grown produce is readily available, and in our experience, many of the strangers we've met on the streets have been nicer here than many we've met in NYC! When we bought a dresser for our bedroom, a stranger graciously offered to help us carry it upstairs to our 4th floor apartment. When we thanked him and invited him into our home for a proper thank you, he politely declined and said "I've done my good deed for the day." We've had nothing but lovely and warm encounters with strangers in the Berkshires. We can also afford more space here for our work (Alexander has a music studio and Jessica has a craft studio) in our home, and we are closer to nature, which is very important for both of us. We still go down to NYC often for work (the frequency varies depending on the season and the projects), but now it's for work that we want to do and that's worth our time and effort. Not living in Manhattan anymore allows us to make choices about which projects we want to be involved with.

**Have you had any doubts about living here since you moved up this way?**

None at all. If anything, we constantly tell one another how happy we are that we made this move. We look out our





PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT

bedroom window every day to see such a gorgeous view of mountains and rolling hills. It just couldn't be better.

#### **How did you, Alex, and Jessica meet?**

As is often the case with modern couples, we met online! But after we met, it became clear that we already had many friends in common. We had worked at the same theaters, narrowly missing one another by a season or two, and one of my family members was Jessica's employer at a theater in New Jersey! In fact, we both grew up on Long Island, and Jessica went to Queens College, where both of my parents (and her mother) all went to school as well. It's just crazy. We could have met hundreds of times before, but the Internet finally brought us together.

#### **What are your individual goals at this point? How do you see yourselves reaching your separate and common goals, and how challenging do you see them to be?**

Our goals are changing and shifting all the time. We both have multiple interests. Alexander is a musician, composer and actor, as well as being a teacher. Jessica is a props artisan, stage manager and theater educator. We are constantly shifting jobs based on what is available and offered to us at any given time. For instance, Alexander has spent most of the past year doing music composition and sound design for theaters, but this winter he will be doing two major acting jobs in NYC. For the past 10 years, Jessica was a teaching artist in NY and now, after moving to the

Berkshires, she's seen her job market shift to more stage management and props design in the professional theaters in the area. In addition to all the freelance work she does, she is also the Props Master at Williams College. It's always shifting and changing, and that's part of the joy of what we do—it's never the same.

#### **Alexander, you're currently working on the musical end of things for an NYC production of *Cyrano De Bergerac*, a play with a wonderful literary and theatrical history. How are you dividing your time between here and the city? What exactly are your responsibilities in this production? What is the angle to this performance?**

In fact, both Jessica and I are both involved in this project. It's a production of *Cyrano de Bergerac* with the Resonance Ensemble in NYC. Along with Tony-nominated actor/director Gabriel Barre, and Rick Sordelet, the country's most prolific fight director, I have adapted the script for eight actors. In addition to acting in the production, I'm also composing the score and acting as the music director. The entire cast is composed of actor/musicians, and live music will be an important element in the production. Jessica is serving as Props Designer for the production. Performances will be in March at the Theater at St. Clements in NYC. While we are in rehearsals and performances, we will be primarily living in NYC, but we always come home to the Berkshires for a breath of fresh air when we can. Being here helps us recharge our batteries, so to speak.

#### **Alexander, please tell us a little bit about how you compose your music. What are the essentials you need to have under your belt to create music?**

My background is primarily as a musician, but I never actually went to school for music composition. I just know what I like to listen to and what sounds good to my ears. That's the biggest part of the job, I think—having a discerning ear. Each play has a different rhythm and soundscape. I just hear certain sounds in my head that are unique to the production or the characters. When I teach classes on music and sound in Shakespeare, one of the exercises I have my students do on occasion is to create their own songs based on lyrics in Shakespeare's plays. Many students don't have any background in music or singing, but I explain to them that music is just considered "sound." If you have ears and you know what types of sounds you like to hear, you can create music. Music can be playing the piano, singing opera, or even banging on a trash-can lid.

#### **Jessica, can you explain the skills that are needed to do the Props Artisan work you do for various theatrical productions?**

Scenic painting is one of the most useful skills to have as a props artist. Oftentimes, if you are building a prop from scratch, you need to paint wood, foam or other assorted materials to make them look like something else. In addition to painting, I often work with foam, plastics, wood, CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...



## ALEXANDER AND JESSICA SOVRONSKY



Alexander Sovronsky photographer Lee Everett

and many different types of paints, glues, pigments and more. A major aspect of the job is research and shopping for items that are necessary to the production. Some shows require building electronic props. Recently, I worked on a production at a local college in which the director wanted prop cell phones that could flash to simulate taking a photo with the camera on the phone. I got some fake display cell phones, took them apart, and wired up a tactile button that connected to a bright LED light which had been placed where the cell phone's flash would be. One of the coolest things about my job is that every show is different and requires different skills from me. Sometimes I'm able to use skills that I already possess, but I'm always learning about new materials and new ways to make things. It's really fun.

**Alexander, you grew up in Syosset, Long Island. Give us a little picture of what your childhood was like in LI, your family, friends—your artistic life all bright and on**

**the horizon... and how did you work your way up to where you are now?**

I did indeed! My sister and I were raised in Syosset until we left home to go to undergrad. My sister, Kyra, is also a musician. She is a trumpet player who lives out in Utah with her husband, Keith Carrick. Keith is the principal percussionist with the Utah Symphony. When Kyra and I were growing up on Long Island, music and theater were very much a part of our lives. Our parents always took us to the opera, to concerts, to the theater, etc. The arts have always been very important to our family. I never connected to sports and other stuff that my peers were interested in. Once I found that I could combine my love of music with my love of theater and Shakespeare, I was hooked. It's really all because of my high school drama teacher at Syosset High School, Mr. Gene Connor. He really gave me the confidence and extra push to pursue this professionally.

**Do the music and acting stay separate when it comes to most shows you're involved with?**

When I first started out in NYC, they were separate, but as I got more experience and became more well-known for my work in the city, they started to meld together. I have been playing music since I was 3 years old, so it's a very natural expression for me, and I think when people see me play they look for more places to include it in the productions.

**And how did you keep them separate when it came to studying music and theatre? When did you discover they can both work in harmony as one art for you?**

When I was in undergrad, I was taking private music lessons, playing in the orchestra, playing in quartets, and even doing solo recitals. I was also in acting classes and involved in the productions in the school. There was one teacher I had in undergrad that told me that I couldn't do both music & theater—I had to choose. I completely rebelled against this, as they are both my passions. I think that was one of the driving forces when I came to NYC; I had such a strong desire to connect my passions of music and theater. It also helped that I chose classical theater, which frequently features actor/musicians and roaming musicians. I saw the actor/musicians in Shakespeare's plays, and that served as a big inspiration for me. I've always been the most attracted to roles like Feste in *Twelfth Night* and Amiens in *As You Like It*. These are roles that are substantial acting parts but also require a strong musician/singer. That's the kind of stuff that I love.

**Is there a preference as to where your passion lies, or are you equally enthralled with music and acting?**

I love them both equally. What's great though is that my jobs are constantly shifting and changing based on the needs of each project I'm involved with, so it's always been a natural balance. I never get sick of one thing because I'm so often bouncing between so many things at once!

**Jessica, you're originally from the New York area. Tell us a little about your background.**

I lived in Forest Hills most of my life. Forest Hills is a relatively quiet residential area in Queens. It is saturated with restaurants and shops and there is even a major subway and Long Island Railroad stop there. It allows for easy access to Manhattan, Long Island, and other surrounding areas. I also lived on Long Island for ten years growing up. After high school, I moved back to Forest Hills while I attended undergrad at Queens College. I stayed there while attending grad school at CUNY City College, studying Educational Theatre. Right around the time I completed my degree, we got married and moved up here. While I was living in NY, I spent many years directing and designing musicals in middle and high schools on Long Island.

**What skills do you have that helped you to get hired in the theater world? It's very competitive; what do you think made you stand out from the rest? Was it difficult to find work up here? I'm guessing you needed to find work in order for your move to the Berkshire to work out**

So much of the work I've gotten since moving to the Berkshires has been through people that I know, and from recommendations. When you're an actor or performer, you



have to audition to get a job. When you work as a stage manager, props artisan, or other jobs in the technical side of things, it's really about who you know. There are rarely job interviews for these types of positions and people prefer to hire folks that they know or who come recommended to them. It's also important, since we all work so closely to one another in the theatre, that we maintain good working relationships. I think the skill sets that I possess are perfectly suited for the work that I do. However, I actively try to focus on positivity and transparency in all aspects of my work. This aids me especially when difficult situations may arise, and I'm able to stay positive and be diplomatic while working to solve problems.

**Jessica, how would you describe what excites you in the world of theatre? Where do your interests lie?**

I love theatre for many reasons. I started out wanting to be a musical theater performer and realized how much I enjoyed being behind the scenes more than anything else. I like having the ability to directly support a production while going unnoticed to the average theater-going crowd. My work as a props artisan is exciting to me because I am constantly creating something different. I love using new tools and materials and exploring ways to make things work. I fell into stage management because I am really good at organizing people's lives and seeing the big picture. My years spent as a director working on very large musical theater productions gave me the absolute best foundation for this work. When directing musicals, I would often have between sixty and eighty students at a time involved in the production. Not only was I the director, but I would often times also be the stage manager, choreographer, costume designer, and occasionally the set/props designer as well. I quickly learned how to manage many things on my own, often at the same time. The ability to see the big picture is one of the most important qualities that a stage manager needs, and from years of managing many educational productions, I feel that it's a skill that has only grown exponentially for me.

**How did you acquire and develop your aesthetic tastes and artistic values?**

My tastes usually live within a world of bright colors and absurdity. As Peter Pan says, "I'll never grow up!" There is something so unappetizing to me about taking life too seriously. Surrounding myself in darker and muted colors does not fully capture the person that I am. I feel like a bright and lively person so I am drawn to things that emphasize that in me. When I am working on any theater production, I enjoy becoming invested in the personality of the play. That always informs my choices more than anything else. I love helping to materialize the director's vision. As a child, I was constantly making things and creating objects and scenery based on stories. This is something I've been doing my whole life, and it's a major part of who I am.

**Who was your inspiration? And how old were you when you realized you were going to be a professional in theatre?**

My biggest inspiration has always been my mom. She has always been the driving force behind my knowing I have the ability to do anything I set my mind to. Whenever I was un-



AH! LIFE IN THE BERKSHIRES!! YOU GOT THAT RIGHT. PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT







JUST ANOTHER DAY  
JESSICA SOVRONSKY

PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT

sure of myself as a kid she would say, “Just do it!” So I did. My family has always been supportive of me in the arts. I became a “theatre person” while I was in 7th grade, when I played the lion in *The Wizard of Oz*. After that, I was hooked. Not a single year went by without being involved in theatre productions. I also had an incredible music teacher in middle school, Mr. Clifton, who said, “Girl! You can sing!” while I was auditioning for a solo in chorus in the 7th grade. I will never forget the feeling of confidence I had when he said that. I decided to work in Educational Theatre for that reason, to give kids the confidence they need to blossom into the people they want to be. I began working in schools on Long Island as a director, choreographer, and set/props designer when I was 18 years old. When I work in Educational Theater, I listen to every single student and make time in every rehearsal to genuinely get a read on how each student is doing in the process. However many students I have in the room, it is important to me that I address each student as an individual. I value the experience of every student.

**How does seamstress fit into the picture, Jessica—the talent for sewing? Where did you learn these skills?**

I first learned how to sew in undergrad and I continued to sew on my own, working on my own projects such as dresses for myself, curtains for my home, etc. Many times I’ve even built costumes for productions that I have designed. In the summer/fall of 2016, I will be the Costume Shop Manager and Assistant to the Props Master at the American Shakespeare Center in Staunton, VA, where I will be doing a tremendous amount of sewing!

**Congrats! Tell us about a theatrical or musical experience that left a permanent mark on your life. And what has been your grandest, most enjoyable and successful theatre work?**

When I was in elementary school, I would get together with my friends in the neighborhood and work on our own creative projects. One of the most memorable endeavors we took on was an “all kids recital” in which we choreo-

graphed several dances, designed costumes & sets, and performed for all of our neighbors. This creative freedom gave me the confidence to follow my impulses and organize any number of artistic projects. It helped me realize that I had a real passion and skill for creative work. During my time working at a middle school on Long Island, I became a friend and mentor to a group of young performers that were interested in doing more theatrical work outside of the school setting. Their appetite for creating theater resonated deeply and personally with me. I wanted to help and support them beyond the reaches of my job. I started a small theater company with the intent to provide them with a place where they could produce work that interested them. One of the students wrote an original musical, which we developed and eventually produced as a workshop production in NYC. This musical, *Balloon Boy*, has since been done as a full production in the 2015 New York Musical Theatre Festival. I find the most inspiration in watching my own students create work that they are proud of.



**Jessica, do you have any other strong interests?**

Yes. I was originally a music major in undergrad. I chose CUNY Queens College because I wanted to be a music teacher. Though I had been a violin player for ten years, my primary instrument was my voice. After realizing my life outside of school was much more focused on theater, I decided to change my major and pursue that instead, because I could tell it was where my greatest passion truly lived. My passion for education is still a big part of who I am, but it is transferred to theater education rather than music education.

**Alex and Jess, please give me a couple of examples of films, books or artists that you love, and tell me why.**

Honestly, because we work in the Performing Arts, sometimes the best thing for us is to shut off of our brains and relax without any interference. We are always buzzing with creative ideas and projects, so when we have down time, we very rarely watch films or go to the theater. Most often, we cook together, we go on dates together, and we try and spend time with our families.

**Alex, how many hours a day do you study and work on your music? If you don't practice for a week, do you feel a loss?**

I am constantly working on projects and as a result, I tend not to do much practice on my own that isn't directly related to productions that I am involved in. However, I look for a way to learn a new technique or instrument any chance that I get. Currently, I'm taking drum lessons for an upcoming production that I'm doing next summer/fall. This will be welcome addition to the arsenal of instruments that I already perform on. This list includes violin, viola, guitar, mandolin, ukulele, flute, basic piano, basic accordion, melodica, hand percussion and many others.

**And what were the some things your teachers taught you that you will never forget and always remember to put to use?**

My violin teachers, Tal and Jo Schifter, always stressed the importance of going slow and the necessity of repetition. The discipline to move slowly and deliberately has allowed me to teach myself countless techniques and instruments over the years. It's also great when learning lines! I studied the Suzuki method with them for the first 15 years of my time as a violin student, and they are still very close family friends. They even attended our wedding!

**H: Alex, tell me about your teaching style. Are you someone who is always looking to find new and creative ways to challenge your students?**

I believe that anyone can learn music. Everyone wants to express themselves and music is a great tool to do just that. I try and understand how someone has spent their time before coming to me for lessons. Adults are the most interesting to me—for instance, someone who has spent their life in finance doesn't think they'll be able to play music, but I can take their understanding of numbers and translate it to an understanding of rhythm and intervals. Everything can be looked at in different ways. There's always a way into the work if you look hard enough and are interested enough. I love that challenge of making something accessible to everyone.



PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT

**Why has Shakespeare & Company been such a rewarding experience for you? What have you gotten out of the workshops and schooling that you feel you wouldn't find in other schools of theatre?**

Shakespeare & Company has a real focus on the individual, unlike any other company I have ever worked with. It is a company that was founded by and created by actors, so there is a real actor-centered approach to the text, as opposed to focusing on a director's interpretation. In addition to being masters in the work of Shakespeare, they are also masters at connecting personally to the text. It is this more individual approach that is consistently fascinating and challenging for an actor.

**A question for both of you... what has taken the most getting use to while living in the Berkshires?**

Nothing is open late! We were used to being able to walk out of our apt in NYC at 2 a.m. to get a slice of pizza or go to a movie or a concert... but here everyone's in bed at a reasonable hour! All kidding aside, it's quite lovely. While NYC is always more busy and active than here, the peace and quiet here is unparalleled.

**Have you had time to explore the beauty of the Berkshires? What recreational activities do you both engage**

**in? Are you skiers? Hikers? Boaters?**

We've never been skiing together. We really like kayaking and hiking together, though we don't get as much time to do it as we'd both like. We live near a lake so we've had some lovely picnics there together, but one of the things we'd like to do is get out more. It's so silly—we moved to the Berkshires to get out of NYC because we were so busy and overworked, and *now* we're busier and working harder than ever! But at least we have mountains outside our windows... that's lovely.

**But you're working at things you love, and it so happens that those things are very popular in the Berkshires! Theatre, music, stage work, teaching the arts... were you originally thinking of keeping NYC for that work, and the Berkshires for something new?**

We came up here for more personal reasons rather than professional. We were both ready to change our lives and careers to accommodate a different lifestyle. It's been a happy surprise that we have been able to so successfully continue our individual work in this area in the performing arts, not only in the professional realm but also in educational theater. NYC has more people, more venues, and CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE...





PHOTOGRAPHER LEE EVERETT

more opportunity than most places in America for the type of work that we love. However, ultimately we are happier living here and choosing the work that we go back down to NYC for, rather than being tied to the city regardless of what is going on in our professional lives.

**You both may have felt that, in moving up here, you would be disengaging with old friends from the city—and of course making new friends. This is a great community for finding friends, in my opinion. How has this been unfolding for you?**

We have found some wonderful new friends since moving here. It's always hard to find time to be with friends, since our schedules are so unpredictable and consistently packed. The world of the theater is unlike any other in that we rehearse and work during the day and perform at night. What has been a lovely surprise is how often we both get to work together on the same projects. Two years ago, we both went to Milan, Italy for a month to be part of a production of *Hamlet*, in which Alexander played the title role and Jessica was the set designer and stage manager. We have also spent multiple seasons working together at Shakespeare & Company, as guest artists at Bard College at Simon's Rock, and at Williams College. Many other couples we know in the theater world spend a lot of time apart on different projects but we are together constantly, very often working side by side on the same productions.

**Has the Berkshires surprised you with anything? Is there something about being up here that you find different, in terms of adjusting?**

We're both surprised at how good we feel, both emotionally and mentally. The decision to live here is one of the

best moves we've made. We feel better about our lives and our work when we can come home to a community and home that feels so perfect. The one thing we miss is that in NYC, we were used to doing a lot of walking, but here it's a lot of driving. We miss the unavoidable opportunities to exercise our legs.

**Do you both have gypsy blood in you, and might you move on from here? Or do you find yourselves settling down, maybe thinking about raising a family, enjoying life in the Berkshires for as long as you can possibly imagine?**

We can never predict the future, but given the marvelous balance we have been able to achieve recently between working here and in the surrounding cities like Boston, NYC, and Albany, I think it's safe to say we aren't going anywhere anytime soon. This is home. Eventually, we'd both like to raise a family here, but we're in no rush.

**Can either or both of you explain what you think it is that makes an actor successful?**

We both agree that one of the most important things any artist should possess, apart from talent in their particular field, is a positive attitude, always being prepared, and being a team player. Theater is a team sport, and it's most important that you're someone people want to work with. The market is so saturated with people who want to be performers, so it's imperative that you be someone people look forward to working with because you're an enjoyable and helpful member of the team.

**Do you think starting in NY is a good idea, before trying to be a big fish in a small sea up here?**

Nope. It doesn't matter where you start. If you have a passion for the arts, find any outlet and create your art. It doesn't matter where you are. What matters is that you are creating.

**What ideas do you wish to share with young and starry-eyed future artists?**

Talk to everyone that inspires you! Don't be afraid to introduce yourself. Have an elevator conversation. Take time to get to know yourself and figure out what you want, even if it is only for the moment. Don't be afraid to reinvent yourself and don't be afraid of failure—it's the only way to learn and grow.

More info can be found on  
[www.AlexanderSovronsky.com](http://www.AlexanderSovronsky.com)  
and  
[www.JessicaSovronsky.com](http://www.JessicaSovronsky.com)



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# PLANET WAVES BY ERIC FRANCIS

## For JANUARY 2016

### ARIES --

You stand at a branching of the ways in your own life. One road leads toward appearances, glitter and glamour, and the other leads toward self-realization. Life is not normally so black and white, though a great wave of energy is about to come through your life, and its raw power is inherently neutral. It will carry you far and fuel your endeavors, in whatever direction you choose. You are the one who gives it meaning, and who harnesses it for the purpose that you designate. In other words, you choose what to do with the vital force that powers your entire being. And now that vital force is rising, and you will have great surges of energy, as will many around you. Yet the path of least resistance will be to stay on the surface; and many will do that, transfixed by shiny objects. The more challenging path is to go inward. Part of why it's challenging is that 'inward' is such strange territory these days. For many it's entirely alien, and for most it's unfamiliar, intimidating and chaotic. Do not be intimidated by yourself. Leave that to others, if that's how they feel. You are who you are inwardly, and you are being challenged now to go inside and stay with yourself for a while. If you seek understanding, and self-respect, you will indeed find them.

### TAURUS --

Not everything in life is about power over others, though there's currently quite the campaign being waged to convince us that it is. Every time you see a news story, it's about what one person or entity may do to another, just because they can. This is not your way; though, in order to evade and even transcend this, you will need to think clearly and be clever. This you can do. You are currently bestowed with a kind of intelligence that is both deep and unusually perceptive. But now it will be necessary to make decisions and to move faster than you normally want. As the events of the next four seasons emerge, you will need to be flexible and strong. It's also essential that you have some version of a game plan, by which I mean a basic sketch of your strategy. The most meaningful part of that plan is having a direction in which you're headed. You will change and correct this, though you still need a point of orientation: at least one guiding principle to focus around. It would be far better if that principle were not about another person. You need an idea about your life that is yours alone, which you then bring with you into every situation. The theme of this year is learning to trust yourself -- which, like any skill, is gained with practice.

### GEMINI --

Aspire to what has lasting value. Since the future is becoming increasingly difficult to see, you must do this in the present. Yet this does not merely mean going for immediate satisfaction. In material goods, purchase what is of high quality, of real use, and built to last. Yet where you invest your energy must also match the other kind of value -- that which you personally possess. You're being guided as if by cosmic forces to slow down your mind, to see beneath the surface, and to probe deeper into your personal truth. You could say this is about getting real with yourself. Scrupulous honesty with yourself is required, as is acting on authentic goals that match who you know you are. For this you will need to sort out wishful thinking from observing where you actually connect with existence. Which brings us to the most important theme of your year: living every day. The only way to deal with the vast uncertainty of the world is to focus on what you must do, now. As you do, it's essential to notice whether what you're doing is working for you, and whether it serves the 'greatest good for all' factor as well. It is the quality of your individual days, and individual tasks, that amounts to the quality of your life -- and the strength of your foundation for the future.

### CANCER --

Your goal seems to be to feed the world, whether literally or in some symbolic sense. To do that you must be well-nourished, well-rested and well-informed. The pressure that you're feeling to succeed in your mission is not some passing whim or fancy. It's as if the time for a certain level of action has arrived, which comes with a level of dedication and devotion. As a result, you may feel driven like never before. And as a consequence of that, it will be necessary to stir up some chaos, and to deal with things that don't go according to plan. You've been living with that for a while, though now it's time to maximize that factor. Many great successes are adaptations to instability and uncertainty in society. That's another way of saying that necessity is the mother of invention. The rate of change in the world is maddening, and you would do yourself a favor by admitting that it's impossible to keep up. But what is possible is to identify patterns that provide you with opportunities to connect with the world with a viable purpose. As an essential ingredient of that, you will need to bring your vulnerability. Most of the struggle on the planet right now involves coldness and lack of empathy. Your success will depend on calling forth these qualities you possess and, indeed, respect the most about yourself.

### LEO --

Not everything is about money. Money is important, but it's also necessary to remember its inherently symbolic value. In other words, you cannot eat the stuff, and if it has any meaning at all, it's the meaning we give it. Your charts this year are, in many ways, about discussions and negotiations over resources. It may seem that other people are in a better position than you are, yet if you look closely enough you will see the many advantages that you hold. One of them is that you are resourceful, which means inventive. Another is that when you're under pressure, you can be brilliantly creative. Yet you can also be naive, particularly in your business dealings; and it's now essential that you be realistic. This includes in all matters where resources of any kind are exchanged. The deeper the exchange, the more complex this can become -- for example, where both sex and money are involved; where inheritances are involved; where your creative work product is connected to finances and your self-esteem. What you must bring to the table is a mix of your passion, your talent and your stone-cold analysis of who holds what cards. As part of that breakout, make sure you notice who has invested so significantly in you. Someone has -- and they have just as much faith in you now as ever.

### VIRGO --

Looked at one way, your solar charts describe you as being guided by the fates and the winds of fortune, subject to their whims. Yet seen another way, you've never been more firmly grounded in your sense of commitment and your drive to do what is right. How can both exist at the same time? The answer, in a word, is perception. Fate, fortune and purpose may be stories you tell yourself, but they are not equal in value. The closer you get to purpose, the closer you get to a conscious and intentional meeting with the world around you. This is about a relationship, which must be a mutual endeavor. Your charts state strongly that this must be practical before it is mystical. Your mind, your observations and your choices determine the course of your life. Even if there are other forces at work, you are the person guiding yourself among them. This calls for rising to a new level of responsibility. You must also proceed with some confidence, even though you might feel a bit (or more) out of your element, or like you're wearing clothes that are a little too tight. As you grow accustomed to your new level of self-direction and decision-making, that firm, tight cloth will begin to soften and loosen up. As that happens, fate will begin to feel more like warm, caring spiritual guidance.

### LIBRA --

We hear the word 'security' a lot these days. If you were some observer not directly associated with our society, you might think it was a product sold by the pound -- we spend this much, we feel this good. Yet authentic security is nothing of the kind. You know this because for a number of years, you've experienced what seems like every possible challenge to your grounding and stability. Libra is famous for its love of balance. You have been living in an earthquake zone. But what you've learned from living there is that ultimately it is your own choice to feel secure. No amount of lawyers, guns, money or shoes can change that. Often the people of the most impressive means are the ones who feel the most threatened by little changes. You are becoming accustomed to feeling secure in the midst of huge changes. For all your life you've wanted to stand on your own feet. You've wanted to take responsibility for your own decisions, and reap the benefits. And you've wanted to serve the world around you in the way that works for you. That is what you are finally getting to do. And now, as this story develops, you're being called upon to rise to a new level of challenge, and of talent, with a mix of Libra's two best qualities -- elegant finesse and gritty determination.

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## SCORPIO --

What will it take not to be trapped in your insecurities? You want something else. If you tap into that wanting, and cultivate it like a tree, that desire will grow up and bear fruit. The past two years of Saturn in your sign have brought many enforced changes. You've had to rise to occasions that otherwise might have held you down. You've been shaped and tempered, and you've done a lot of growing up. As a wise astrologer once wrote, Saturn always gives more than it takes away. Now Saturn has moved on to Sagittarius, and the emphasis is on your self-esteem. Were I bestowed with magical power to heal one thing on the planet for everyone, self-esteem would be that thing. Now you get to work on this. Do not take respecting yourself for granted. It's easy enough for you to do, though now it seems like you're being tested. You might feel like there's not enough of you to go around, even for yourself. The planets in their courses are guiding you to experiment with this idea: the opposite of depression is expression. You are being squeezed; and from that pressure, you will discover many openings through which beautiful and seemingly new manifestations of yourself may emerge. When you feel the crush -- or feel scarcity in any form -- express, express, express. And in the process, you will gain a rare and beautiful kind of confidence.

## SAGITTARIUS --

Can anyone ever plan to be on top of their game? Preparation and focus can get you pretty far. Ambition and a sense of mission can take you even further. The last and most challenging factor is the emotional piece. Imagine if you could feel good every single day -- you would be unstoppable. One method that's worked for you in the past has been detachment. That, however, now verges on impossible. Your solar chart is so emotionally connected that you have no choice but to get in the water and swim. I think that full immersion in your feelings is the way to get you into that play-to-win mode. It is easier to feel than to resist, because resistance consumes precious energy. There is something else that would help, which is to see all of your motives, desires and aspirations not only as valid but as aspects of the same thing. You are one unified, holistic being. As you gather the seemingly different facets of your-

self, and consider them all valuable assets, you will concentrate your energy. And you will discover how many small things it takes to make a lot. Remember that while the details matter and must be attended to, your overall vision matters a heck of a lot more. Stay in contact with yourself and rise to your own true level.

## CAPRICORN --

For quite some time you've been dealing with undeniable forces of change, which have pushed and stretched you. You've made major adjustments, you've made progress and you've sustained some losses. You know all of this was necessary, because the result has been focusing your life on your evolution. You're now entering a more introspective time, when outer pressures and chaos will be less influential. Your direction of movement is inherently inward. Even if you're the outgoing kind of Capricorn, the chances are that in truth you're an introvert. You are now being pulled deeper in, closer to your spiritual core. You know you're tapping into aspects of existence that many people around you neither notice nor acknowledge. But here is the thing. Ultimately you are being pressed, guided and compelled to a state of clarity. That, your charts suggest, is going to come in the form of language. While it may seem there are realizations too sacred to be spoken, or too difficult to put into words, you simply must make the effort, for your own sanity. Your inward draw is only as helpful as the ideas that you focus -- no matter how challenging, imperfect or imprecise. Leave yourself and others a record of your inner journey, one word or one page at a time, as necessary. As for love, I can sum it up in a sentence: Intimacy is introspection that we share.

## AQUARIUS --

How exactly do you hold onto your ideals in a world where it seems like the whole game is rigged for greed, competition and conformity? I never thought you'd ask! The answer is: it's challenging, but you must. It may be five times harder to reach for your truth as the madness of our society reaches a new peak. And in the end it will get you double your investment, because you are building a strong foundation that will be there when the world is

in calmer times. Before then, you know you're being true to yourself, and you cannot live with yourself any other way. The current struggle of our world translates to energy loss, depression and confusion in most people, and it could easily do so for you -- which is why you must keep your grounding. And your grounding is in your ideals. I would propose that the one that's closest to the core is existing in a way where you see the needs of the many, the needs of the few, and your own personal necessities. If you at least acknowledge that they exist, you will have perspective. The one rapidly disappearing element of the world is that of mutual benefit. Practice and apply this concept in everything you do. And while you do that, notice who cannot see past their own personal hunger, and steer clear of them.

## PISCES --

The emotional details of your relationships are of the essence now. Your success engaging with your fellow humans, and your advancement in the world, are intimately dependent on one another. You must make that delicate move from an orientation on the past to emphasis on the present. Rare and unusual aspects describe the narrow path you must walk in order to be responsive and patient with the sleepy condition of the world. You must tread the way between avoidance, to one side, and cynicism, to the other. If you can do this, you will establish a refuge from some of the worst human failings. You'll also facilitate your own process of building something designed to last. It had better be, given how long it's taken you to get where you are, and to have learned what you've learned. You're going beyond the usual description of spiritual, in that everything you do must accomplish both loving intent and practical use. It's not enough to 'be a better person' or to 'have integrity'. You are here to participate, and to innovate. You have been charged with the responsibility of making actual improvements to your wider environment. And no matter how you may feel about it, this includes exerting actual leadership in a time of profound moral crisis. Yet this is nothing less than what you've prepared for all your days.

-Eric Francis  
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# NATALIA BYSTRYANYK

interview by Harriet Candee  
portrait photograph by Edward Acker

**Natalia, tell me, how and why you stumbled, ran into, realized, discovered—whatever—your love for expressing yourself through visual arts? What are you expressing, in an overall, bird’s-eye view?**

*Natalia:* I have always been a visual person, but as a child I took for granted that everyone was just like me. I think I craved to be “seen” and felt closest to that when I was drawing—or rather when people were looking at my drawings. It has taken me years to learn that even though I believe we are all interconnected and that everyone has the ability to create, perhaps my talents are indeed unique. It has been only within the past few years that I’ve truly embraced being an artist, discovering that when I am creating I am truly in tune with myself, and expressing my deepest authentic spirit.

**Why has the art you create become such an important part of your life? It seems like you are getting more intense as you explore further with your mind’s eye.**

*Natalia:* Creating has become extremely important because I am realizing it is the essence of who I am—it’s the gift I have to share with the world. Art is extremely healing as well, and has helped me grow in many ways

on a very deep level. I have been getting more intense in the past year, really diving into a freedom with my artwork.

**What mediums do you enjoy working with?**

*Natalia:* I am in a mixed-media intuitive phase, painting a lot with acrylics and inks, a far stretch from the more precise pen and ink drawings I was doing. I also do collage work, mainly because I love paper, and it’s just an interesting way to switch it up a bit and be creative in an entirely different way. I love all different art forms; it’s hard to pin me into a certain niche. Cultivating all different kinds of artwork feels like exercise for the brain and soul—helping me stretch in all directions.

**I am interested in discussing your mixed media artwork. Each piece I have seen is full of life, very involved, and with mixed messages. And you fill the entire space with unfolding color and movement! Please explain why you work in this manner—and I’m wondering, do you like the simple line art that you do just as much?**

*Natalia:* I started painting this way about a year and a half ago when my friend Jennifer Currie introduced me

to the work of Flora Bowley and Alena Hennessy, intuitive artists. The idea is to be very playful in painting, making layer upon layer of really whatever comes to mind and not thinking about it too much. I always looked at my art through very perfectionistic eyes and rarely shared anything with anyone unless I deemed it “worthy.” The idea of just playing around and letting art happen was very liberating. There are no mistakes! If you don’t like something, you just paint over it. It has been an amazing awakening for me. Of course, I generally still incorporate my love of detail into most of my pieces as a theme or image eventually emerges, but when I start paintings I generally have no idea where they are going to take me.

**And what if you went in the direction of music as opposed to art? Have you done so?**

*Natalia:* I received a BA with a concentration in theatre when I graduated college. I didn’t click with my art teacher in high school and felt most comfortable doing theatre, so that is the path I took. Again, I liked most everything—from the classics to musicals. I especially enjoyed singing, and I think if I weren’t painting now I would probably focus more on that. Both theatre and music however present a different kind of vulnerability





Wild At Heart, Natalia Bystrianykh

and require a lot of coordination with others. I am a full time single mother, and although I kept performing in my life for a bit after I had children, it was clearly easier and more enjoyable for me to fall back into creating artwork. I could squeeze it in when I had free time, as opposed to fitting my life in and around rehearsal schedules or show times. It took me a while to come to this realization. Now I feel my artwork is really key, and I crave finding more and more time to develop my skills.

**At this point, is the act of creating more or less important to you than starting to show in galleries and sell your work? It may sound like an unfair question, but for artists, there is the inevitable next step of going public and selling. This is where it gets tricky and you may find yourself compromising your talents. Your opinion, please?**

*Natalia:* It is not too tricky a question to answer. Not having a lot of time on my hands, the act of creating is what is key for me right now. Although I think I might have enough pieces to hang my first show, and I look

forward to doing so, I still feel I have so much room to grow. I just have to keep following my path. I am confident that I am going in the right direction. I think if I look too far into the future or too far back into “what could have been,” I get frightened. I am trying to focus—one step at a time. This interview is a wonderful step. I have also been asked to be a featured artist at a theatre in Rhode Island in February of 2016, for what they are calling “First Fridays”—celebrating local art, music and food. I feel 2016 will be a breakthrough year for me.

**I have a feeling it will! Has anyone (or more than one person) been your mentor or given you special attention in your art making, and is this someone you trust while learning the ins and outs of art?**

*Natalia:* I had a hugely transformative experience this past spring when my friend Jennifer encouraged me to go on an art and wellness retreat with artist Alena Hennessey. It was the first time I have ever had copious amounts of time just to paint, multiple days in a row. I had never indulged like this in my life. What emerged

was a painting that seemed to just fall out of me. It felt incredible to be afforded the time to do this, and the experience was immensely comforting and invigorating at the same time. The story gets better from there... as a fellow student watched the painting unfold, the painting began to mean something to her, and at the end of the retreat she offered to buy it. What she paid for the painting nearly covered the cost of the retreat. This seemed proof that following my bliss was pointing me in the right direction. My first patron turned into a new friend/mentor, Lisa Genova. She is the bestselling author of *Still Alice* and has quite a “go for it” story about how she came to write. She has been encouraging me ever since. She recently did a talk for *Inbound.com* that is truly inspirational.

**Tell me what art and what artists, famous or not, speak to you. Who do you admire and respect?**

*Natalia:* It is so hard to narrow down—I love all styles of art, and seeing live works is so inspirational. I am attracted to the art of Mucha, Erte, Lichtenstein, Klimt, Matisse, and Chagall. CONTINUED ON NET PAGE...





Natalia Bystrianyk

I also have a great fondness for picture book art and hope to illustrate someday—Trina Schart Hyman is my very favorite. Watching the twenty-five women paint alongside me during the retreat equally inspired me. These women were at all different levels, and every one of them had such courage to try new things and open their hearts. Whenever I was stuck on my painting, I just took a stroll around the room and was rejuvenated by watching what everyone else was trying. Lastly, I cannot get enough of observing my two daughters (Miranda and Fionna). I am ever surprised, impressed and amazed by what they both have inside them and applaud the sense of self they both seem to have. I am truly fortunate to have them lighting my way.

#### What are you presently working on?

*Natalia:* I want to work on more mixed media pieces. I have a big piece (24 x 36) that has a layer or two on it and I am excited to see where it goes. I am only just now realizing that, intuitively, my goal has been to illicit deep feeling. I am trying to express on paper something you cannot really put into words, either something I am feeling or something I want to feel. Joy seems to be a theme I play with a lot. Love is another big one. The

author Brené Brown is someone I highly admire. She says in her book *The Gifts of Imperfection*, “Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It’s about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen.” This quote says a lot about how I try to approach my work.

#### What are your future aspirations and goals?

*Natalia:* I would like to be a full-time artist, and I also want to inspire others. I do not want to be an artist in solitude. I love people and enjoy working alongside others—children, those older than I am, as well as people with special needs. I would love to find a way to create as well as mentor others. The arts are an integral part of society, and without the artist our lives would be very dim indeed. I believe there is a paradigm shift happening where peoples’ true callings are being put into play and artists are being allowed to flourish—a renaissance as it were. It is no longer necessary for an artist to be starving—we feed the world and ourselves with what we create. I want to help feed peoples souls.

#### Does everyday life and art work mesh together well

#### for you? What does an average day look like?

*Natalia:* My two daughters’ health and wellbeing are my first priority, so on a daily basis their needs come first. I work multiple jobs to be able to support our family. Painting generally fits in wherever I can squeeze it in. It is not ideal at the moment, but I am trying to work with what I have, the best I can.

#### What, for you, is an above-average day?

*Natalia:* A fantastic day for me is one in which I have several hours in a row to paint. It does not happen very often, and the time slips by quickly, but I am always astounded with what happens when I have uninterrupted time.

#### Did you grow up in the Berkshires? How do you look back and reflect upon your years up to now?

*Natalia:* I grew up about an hour south of the Berkshires in Simsbury, CT. Everything that has happened to me has brought me to the person I am today. I might have taken a long road, but I feel like I am at the beginning of a wonderful new chapter in my life.



# NATALIA BYSTRIANYK



Fox and Peacock by Natalia Bystrianyuk

**What do you think the ten commandments for all artists should be?**

*Natalia:* 1. Do it. 2. Make mistakes 3. Be open. 4. Be vulnerable. 5. Push yourself. 6. Move. 7. Breathe. 8. Let go. 9. Try again. 10. Do it. I suppose you could add “Thou shalt” in front of each phrase, but let’s not be too rigid.

**Do you think you can create beautiful art without spending a lot of money?**

*Natalia:* I do believe you can make amazing works of art without spending much money at all. I think this is one of the reasons I leaned toward collage for a long time—I could make art out of leftover magazines, catalogs and a glue stick. I am a firm believer in recycling, and have painted over found canvases and cut my own stencils. That being said, there is nothing like painting on beautiful cold-pressed watercolor paper or my favorite substrate, Aquabond. Professional quality paints such as Golden are also dreamy to work with. I try to find a balance and not spend a lot on art supplies, but I will admit, if I could be let loose in an art supply store I would be giddy with joy!

**What are you thankful for, Natalia? What would you wish for if you could be granted one wish?**

*Natalia:* I am thankful for so much... my friends and family—especially my two daughters. I am so grateful for my health, and to be blessed with so much more than many others in this world. If I were granted one wish? For art to become a more full-time part of my life.

[nataliabystrianyuk.com](http://nataliabystrianyuk.com)

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## Please God Not Van Gogh!

PART I

Richard Britell

The visit of the new interior decorator and the restaurant manager was a very painful experience for the manager. Five years previously, when the restaurant had been constructed, no thought was given to the furnishings of the dining room and the manager had a free hand in selecting everything. The result was a cross between a retirement home and a funeral parlor. It was not a question of a limited budget; it was simply bad taste.

The annual meeting of the principal investors had come and gone, and the result was a consensus that dinner in the resort dining room was an oppressive experience. No one could put their finger on exactly what was wrong except for one gentleman who blamed it all on the very large fake gold frames around the prints on the walls.

"These pictures and these frames are just the sort of thing I see when I visit my aunt that has dementia in her critical care facility. There is nothing more depressing than this sort of art. And why is it that every single thing in this room is some variation of tan or beige? As for these fine art reproductions, Rembrandt may have been a great painter but who wants to look at his sour self-portrait while trying to enjoy one's vacation in the tropics?"

"And look at this thing," he said, pointing to one of the manager's favorite Bouguereau prints. "Don't people realize that this sort of art, this kind of smarmy image, was out of date fifty years ago. The thing to do is to take all this stuff down and replace it with impressionist paintings, full of color and light. My suggestion would be to use only the works of van Gogh." At this point in the meeting the only woman on the board spoke up. "Please God not van Gogh. If you put up all van Gogh's the place will look like a psychiatric hospital. That is all you ever see in those places."

The woman who made this odd comment was named Rose VanDusenber. After she made this comment there was a long silence, and in that silence hung the question of how she knew about the interior decoration of mental hospitals.

Rose did not attempt to answer that unasked question, but feeling the need to offer something by way of explanation she said, "It seems that when prints are put up in mental hospitals the staff thinks that pictures by a psy-

chotic who never sold any paintings, cut off his ear and shot himself in the chest is the sort of thing that will inspire the patients to try to do something creative."

The reason that Rose had opinions about interior decoration was because that was her profession. It was not that she went to college or had a degree in the field, but just like so many creative occupations it came about by accident.

Rose was married to a very rich man who made a living buying and selling space in trans-continental shipping containers. You shouldn't jump to the conclusion that anyone selling space in shipping containers is bound to get rich; Rose's husband could give you the names of several people he knew that lost their shirts and their pants buying and selling empty space (shirts and pants hanging in his closet in a manner of speaking).

Once Rose's children were grown and out of the house her husband started buying houses in various desirable locations to serve as vacation homes depending on the season. Each of these houses was a blank slate in which Rose indulged a newfound desire to experiment with ever newer and more expensive interiors. She became an avid reader of *Architectural Digest*, and *Art And Antiques*. She spent her days looking through books of fabric swatches, collecting paint color samples, and talking at length with the sales people in furniture stores. She purchased so much furniture over a period of two years that the people she dealt with began to assume she was a professional, and so it was a natural step for her to have business cards printed up and get a tax exempt certificate. She was her only client, but by offering her services free to her friends and neighbors she soon had an office, employees, a web site, and so many projects that she seldom finished her workday before eleven at night.

As is so natural with very rich husbands, Mr. VanDusenber began to complain off and on about the steadily increasing cost of his wife's hobby. She pointed out to him that every time they sold one of their investment properties the return was more than he expected. She wanted to take the credit for this, but he was skeptical. To him it was just a matter of the rising market.

One day the swivel chair Mr. VanDusenber had been using for twenty years broke into three pieces and he asked his wife to purchase a replacement for him as soon as possible. Rose replaced the chair, but she also talked her husband into the purchase of a new larger, more modern desk. The desk he had been using for the past twenty years had been purchased in a second-hand store and was made of oak. It had three drawers on the left, three on the right, and one in the middle. You would be familiar with this sort of desk if you like Film Noir movies. His new desk did not have any drawers at all.

Mr. VanDusenber had his wife redecorate his office, and at the same time she redesigned his stationary, his web site, his clothes, and his shoes, and also his haircut and even went so far as to begin to explain to him how to pronounce certain words. Soon after this Mr. VanDusenber saw, to his great amazement, that his income suddenly more than doubled. He had never been to college, but his wife's interest in magazines like *Metropolis*, made the difference.

This occupation of Rose's cost her husband around \$200,000 a year, but he did not mind it at all. Not only that, but he often tried to participate in her projects and could

often be seen on a Sunday afternoon reading a copy of *Better Homes And Gardens*.

Since Rose was on the board of the resort, and since she had so much interior design experience, she was asked to redecorate the dining room, with the understanding that if she was successful she would also be given the task of redecorating all of the time share rooms when the time came. The first step in this process was for her to meet with the dining room manager, whose job it would be to execute all of Rose's ideas.

The meeting between Rose and the hotel manager took place over dinner in the resort dining room. It was Coromo himself who had the honor of waiting on them, and the pleasure of listening to bits and pieces of their long conversation about everything from what sort of chairs and tables to buy, to why reproductions of neo-classical paintings do not belong on restaurant walls. A great many of the considerations touched on by Rose would never have crossed Coromo's mind. For example, original oil paintings and copies on canvas were ruled out simply because you couldn't wash gravy off of them without damaging the surface.

All of Rembrandt's paintings were dismissed out of hand simply because they were brown. "When one puts up a work of art in an interior, one is first of all putting up a spot of color," said Rose. "One may want a spot of red, provided by Matisse, or a big patch of blue provided by Rothko. Monochrome works have their place also to provide balance, but splashes of brown all over the place never work." This sort of talk was very upsetting to the hotel manager because he had never in his life imagined that anyone would write off the entire life's work of a great artist, works were worth tens of millions of dollars, paintings any museum would die to have in their permanent collection, just because they were all somehow too excremental.

It was not just Rembrandt and the other Baroque painters like Caravaggio that Rose wrote off as useless in the restaurant setting. All of the works of Andrew Wyeth went into the same brown excremental trash heap also.

Rose's knowledge of art came from a class she took at the local community college. It was titled "Introduction To Art History," and it used the well known text book, *History of Art*, by Janson. Rose read her copy of Janson's book from cover to cover, and almost all of the text had been highlighted with yellow marker.

Coromo stood next to the table where Rose and the restaurant manager were discussing art. The Janson book was opened to a page on which was a color reproduction of David's "Rape Of The Sabine Women." Rose was saying, "Look at this painting, David knew nothing at all about the Romans and the Sabine Woman except some ideas he may have picked up from reading history texts. David's paintings of ancient Rome are like the movie "Ben Hur." After a period of time they stop being considered seriously, and become something to laugh at."

~ Richard Britell

"Everything you can imagine is real."

-Pablo Picasso





MARY CAROL RUDIN, APPLES

## MARY CAROL RUDIN

My painting is an inner exploration. I try to set a challenge for myself and see how close I can come to a picture that feels successful.

Looking at my website you will find I continue to explore various topics as well as mediums. The still life above represents an effort to capture the qualities of the elements in the picture. My challenge is to convince viewers that they are seeing the diverse textures of glazed pottery, food, a metal knife blade, wooden knife handle, spoon handle and table, as well as cloth.

Sometimes a metaphor, a symbol, a phrase, or a quip provokes an image that I decide I want to try to express. Using identifiable things I add subtext to suggest a story to the viewer. My painting titles are also meant to lead the viewer closer to what I am trying to say.

Travel also supplies images that I want to express. Trips to India left me with images of brilliant color which I decided to capture in a more abstract way; I wanted to put many bright colors on a canvas. That may also be the approach I will take to capture my upcoming trip to Cuba. It will reveal itself as I have that experience.

In Los Angeles I studied drawing and water color at Brentwood Art Center and UCLA Extension. I also studied with landscape painter John Strong, and abstract painter Ilana Bloch. In New York I have studied at the Art Students League and Chelsea Classical Studios in Manhattan.

In 2010 I moved to New York City and in 2011 made a home in Great Barrington.

I want to witness the masters of past and present and I am fortunate to be able to visit many galleries, studios and museums. Studying artists of different historical times is a look into every aspect of a particular era and an opportunity to see the changes, continuity, discord and repeated themes of life. These experiences feel like building blocks that I can use, discard or reassemble in my work.

I continue to paint when I am in Manhattan as well as in the Berkshires. Both places are endlessly rich in inspiration and wonderful talented people.

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KATE KNAPP, WINTER EVENING, 24 X 30", OIL ON CANVAS, 2015

## FRONT STREET GALLERY

### KATE KNAPP

Pastels, oils, acrylics and watercolors....abstract and representational....landscapes, still lifes and portraits...a unique variety of painting technique and styles...you will be transported to another world and see things in a way you never have before.... join us and experience something different.

Painting classes continue on Monday and Wednesday mornings 10-1:30pm at the studio and Thursday mornings out in the field. These classes are open to all...come to one or come again if it works for you. All levels and materials welcome. Private critiques available.

Classes at Front Street are for those wishing to learn, those who just want to be involved in the pure enjoyment of art, and/or those who have some experience under their belt. Perfect if you are seeking fresh insight into watercolors, and other mediums. A teacher for many years, Kate Knapp has a keen sense of each student's artistic needs to take a step beyond. Perfect setting for setting up still lifes; lighting and space are excellent. Peek in to see!

Front Street Gallery - Front Street, Housatonic, MA.  
 Gallery open by appointment or chance anytime.  
 413-528-9546 at home or 413-429-7141 (cell).



## STEPHEN FILMUS COMMISSIONS

This favorite Berkshire hillside, loved by a Boston couple, was commissioned to mark their special anniversary. Giving a gift of art like this ensures that the essence of a special time and place will endure and give pleasure for years to come.

"The commission process is collaboration between artist and client. Whenever possible we visit the site together and discuss the elements of subject, color, form and the "feeling" of the scene. The next step for me is to create a detailed color sketch that reflects the client's vision and gives them a good sense of how the finished artwork will look. At this point the commissioner can give input and suggestions as I work toward the final design.

"Lastly, I simply do what I know how to do - I sit at my easel and paint."

Stephen Filmus is represented by J. Todd Gallery in Wellesley, Ma. He is presently exhibiting several landscapes at the Bennington Center for the Arts and his work can also be seen at his studio in Great Barrington by appointment.

Stephen Filmus - [art.sfilmus@verizon.net](mailto:art.sfilmus@verizon.net) /  
 413-528-1253, [www.stephenfilmus.com](http://www.stephenfilmus.com)



"Egypt" From Women in Shrouds Series

## Peggy Reeves

[peggyreevesphoto.com](http://peggyreevesphoto.com)

As seen in  
 The Artful Mind  
 December 2015

Represented by



Hudson, NY 12534  
[510warrenstreetgallery.com](http://510warrenstreetgallery.com)

### 510 WARREN STREET GALLERY

an artist owned gallery is looking for new artists for our June invitational.

A great opportunity to show your work in a beautiful gallery in fabulous Hudson, NY.

Please email website and or images and contact info to Gallery manager  
[510warrenstgallery@gmail.com](mailto:510warrenstgallery@gmail.com)





# January POETS In Motion

## Rest Area

we've come to a sleepy spot  
at the center of time. not the big one,  
not the spot at the end of everything, not the  
grand hotel where we'll sleep heavily on plush  
coverlets while the clocks implode, but this  
vaguely pleasant roadside grove with the  
benches and the vending machines, the  
Proust Memorial Rest Area, dead in the middle  
of a clock's restless arms. we've all  
ended up here on this slight, sunny day  
because we've completed something  
minor: a masterpiece, perhaps, a labor  
we've spent our lives undertaking;  
or the birth of a child, the second  
or the sixteenth; or the purchase  
of a first home; or the burial  
of a parent. these did not  
feel like minor things, and  
of course we expected more pomp  
than we got, a greater structure to greet us  
than this clean little shack with its  
maps and its pamphlets and its  
gender-appropriate toilets, but  
as soon as we have tidied the remains of our  
inconsequential picnic and stepped once more  
into the sun-warmed seats of our vehicle,  
perspective will be restored. the process  
of merging onto the highway will force us to see  
that these events were so many motes of dust  
in the eye of the infinite, too small even  
to provoke a blink. that's a hell of a thing  
to have to think, so let us delay  
the belittling of all we've achieved: let us  
lay our cheeks on this bench's warm wood, let us  
look closely at the initials carved on its surface  
and imagine the people who once loved enough  
to carve them, let us lose ourselves in the enjoyment  
of the many textures of this processed food, let us  
relish the company of the woodland creatures  
hardy enough to endure the nearness of the highway,  
and above all let us cherish the swift passing  
of this momentary rest. it is not a great thing,  
it is not the thing we wanted, but it is  
the thing we have earned.

## Coffee

The first pot of coffee  
has no coffee in it,  
is only beige water  
steaming its reminder  
of my failure to reliably  
function at this hour.

Any sane man would  
return to his bed,  
but a sane man has no  
cave girl screeching  
from the kitchen table,  
"all done all done all done,"  
then continuing to eat  
her berries and cream.

I used to think a poet  
had to quit his job in order  
to function reliably,  
then I learned to do  
everything at once,  
a trick made easy  
by the tyranny of a child.

The first Sesame Street  
is an act of desperation,  
an admission that a man  
doing everything at once  
is a man who needs saving  
by a bunch of puppets  
who remind him of his own  
infantile reign.

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