



AGENDA and MINUTES for the SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PUBLIC ARTS ADVISORY COMMISSION

The Public Arts Advisory Commission will hold a special meeting on **Thursday, April 17, 2025 at 2:00 pm** in ROOM 400, City Hall, 419 Fulton Street

AGENDA

1. Roll Call
2. Review and vote on Boxes Submissions for the Banners and Boxes Beautification Program.
3. Review and vote on Banners Submissions for the Banners and Boxes Beautification Program.
4. Review and vote on alternates for box submissions.
5. Review and vote on alternates for banner submissions.
6. New Business
7. Public Comment
8. Adjournment with Roll Call Vote

Banners and Boxes Beautification Program

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Banners and Boxes Beautification Program
Submissions -- Boxes

Jay Babin

Title: Babin.Space

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic Spray Paint and Inks

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: This artwork is a combination of deliberate shapes and patterns and stream of consciousness based doodles using a variety of techniques that layer spray paint masks and hand drawn ink designs.

Bio: Jay Babin has been an emerging artist in Peoria for nearly 10 years. As an advocate for the maker movement and a supporter of the arts in Peoria from having been a core starting officer of River City Labs to being a board member of Arts Partners the artist has a passion for seeing Peoria Grow by advocating for the Arts in every opportunity. Having been in Austin Texas for 4 years Jay Babin is back and supporting arts again by growing his work through the Babin.Space brand.



Jeremy Berkley

Title: Big Picture

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Silkscreen printmaking

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one banner (“Green Thumb”).

Artist Statement: This print pays tribute to Peoria's past historic theaters and future filmmakers. The silkscreen process is highly technical and requires skills I have refined through years of dedicated practice. Understanding the craftsmanship behind each piece adds to the beauty and creativity of this art form. I begin by creating an original illustration and then break the image down by color. Each color layer is exposed onto a separate screen, and ink is pulled through these screens like a stencil using a squeegee. This process builds the image, one layer of color at a time on the paper.

Bio: Since 2008, I've been a silkscreen printmaker working in Central Illinois. My journey began as a collector of silkscreen prints, but my curiosity about the creation process soon grew. With a graphic design degree from Bradley University, I had a strong artistic foundation, but no formal training in silkscreen printing. Determined to learn, I taught myself through books, DVDs, and online resources.

Over the years, my prints have been showcased in galleries both locally and internationally. I'm also passionate about sharing my knowledge of printmaking. Through ArtPartners' Ignite Peoria events and The Peoria Art Guild's summer youth programs, I've had the privilege of teaching children and adults across Central Illinois.



Brett Brooks

Title: The Wait 01

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Digital Photography

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three box submissions.

Artist Name: Bee Squared

Artist Statement: The Wait is a photographic exploration of patience, beauty, and the quiet stillness of time passing inside a Black hair salon. Captured at Hairadox Loc Shop, this series reflects the experience of waiting—an intimate yet universal moment for Black women as they sit beneath the dryer, anticipating the final reveal of their hair.

Positioned on the right third of the frame, the subject's placement creates a sense of balance and solitude, evoking the quiet lull of the salon as the stylist tends to another client. The empty space around her amplifies the stillness, embodying the ritual of transformation that often requires time—sometimes up to an hour—for hair to dry. Through composition and mood, The Wait pays homage to the beauty, patience, and community found in these sacred spaces.

Bio: Brett Brooks is an award-winning journalist, filmmaker, and content creator based in Chicago. A seasoned storyteller with a background in television news, she seamlessly blends visual composition with narrative depth to capture compelling moments of Black life and culture.

As the owner of Bee Squared Productions, Brett uses photography and film to explore themes of beauty, identity, and community. Her work has been recognized for its artistry and social commentary, including her award-winning investigative reporting and her contributions to digital journalism education.

The Wait is a continuation of her passion for visual storytelling, highlighting the nuanced and intimate experiences of Black womanhood.

Brett Brooks

The Wait 01



Brett Brooks

Title: The Wait 02

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Digital Photography

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: The Wait is a photographic exploration of patience, beauty, and the quiet stillness of time passing inside a Black hair salon. Captured at Hairadox Loc Shop, this series reflects the experience of waiting—an intimate yet universal moment for Black women as they sit beneath the dryer, anticipating the final reveal of their hair.

Positioned on the right third of the frame, the subject's placement creates a sense of balance and solitude, evoking the quiet lull of the salon as the stylist tends to another client. The empty space around her amplifies the stillness, embodying the ritual of transformation that often requires time—sometimes up to an hour—for hair to dry. Through composition and mood, The Wait pays homage to the beauty, patience, and community found in these sacred spaces.



Brett Brooks

Title: The Wait 03

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Digital Photography

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: The Wait is a photographic exploration of patience, beauty, and the quiet stillness of time passing inside a Black hair salon. Captured at Hairadox Loc Shop, this series reflects the experience of waiting—an intimate yet universal moment for Black women as they sit beneath the dryer, anticipating the final reveal of their hair.

Positioned on the left third of the frame, the subject's placement creates a sense of balance and solitude, evoking the quiet lull of the salon as the stylist tends to another client. The empty space around her amplifies the stillness, embodying the ritual of transformation that often requires time—sometimes up to an hour—for hair to dry. Through composition and mood, The Wait pays homage to the beauty, patience, and community found in these sacred spaces.



Melissa Catanag

Title: Recycling

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Graphic Design,
Photoshop

Other Submissions: Yes –
also submitted same piece as
a banner.

Artist Name: Melissa Stone

Artist Statement: For this project, I sought to experiment with a variety of materials and innovative techniques. I found myself particularly drawn to the textures of everyday objects around me, prompting me to capture photographs of various items in my home. These textures would serve as the foundation for my poster design. As I explored, I began to notice the typography hidden in the folds of plastic bags and the unnecessarily complicated recycling instructions that often accompany certain items.



After gathering my images, I carefully recolored them to align with a palette of green, orange, and brown. These colors were chosen intentionally to emphasize the significance of recycling while also raising awareness about the potential environmental consequences of improper disposal. Embedded within the poster are various recycling labels, instructions, statistics, and helpful resources, such as earth911.com, to guide viewers in properly recycling in their own communities.

My aim was to capture the viewer's attention with a striking design, encouraging them to uncover the subtle details woven into the composition that further communicated my concept. I envisioned the poster being displayed in an urban area, where pedestrians and drivers alike could encounter it. By placing the design in such a visible location, I hoped to

spark reflection on personal recycling habits and inspire greater environmental mindfulness within the community.

Bio: Melissa Catanag is a creative graphic designer known for her ability to infuse hidden meanings and subtle storytelling into her designs. With a sharp attention to detail, she crafts visual experiences that invite viewers to look beyond the surface and uncover deeper layers of meaning. Her work is a balance of creativity and precision, where every element is thoughtfully chosen to enhance the overall narrative.

With a passion for innovative design solutions, Melissa approaches each project with fresh ideas and a unique perspective. She enjoys exploring the connections between design and emotion, striving to create visuals that resonate on a personal level. Whether working on digital, print, or other mediums, Melissa's designs are always rich in concept and carefully executed, ensuring they leave a lasting impression on anyone who encounters them.

Danielle Catlett

Title: The Eye

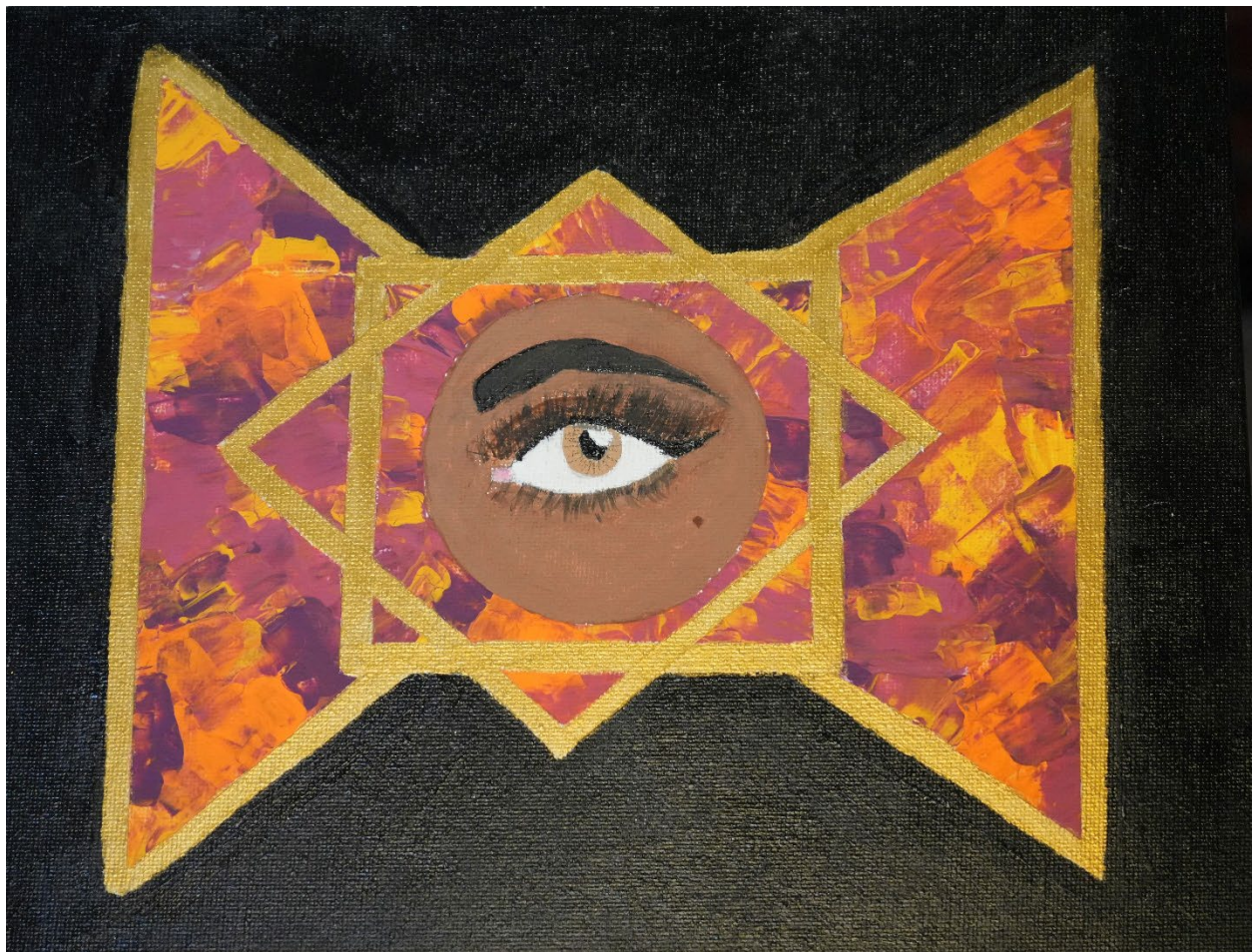
Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic paint on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted this piece as a banner.

Artist Statement: This artwork was originally created as a pencil on paper sketch but recreated on canvas in color using acrylic paints, with vibrant colors meant to be reminiscent of a sunset, with the central focus being the gaze from the singular eye of a woman of color.

Bio: I am originally from Chicago and attended college at the University of Illinois of Urbana-Champaign. I relocated to Peoria for my former job as a news producer. I am currently working towards pursuing my dream of being an artist and entrepreneur with the support of my fiancé. I have always had an aptitude towards the arts and crafting and I am looking for ways to become more involved with Peoria's community of artists.



Danielle Catlett

Title: The Tree

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic paint, glass beads

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("The Eye").

Artist Statement: This work was created using acrylic paint on canvas along with accents of beads and glass to add an additional layer of detail to the work.



Sloan Cranford

Young Artist

Title: Cheesy

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Colored pencil, pen, highlighter

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: I love drawing rats because people think they're scary or evil. I want to show people that they're just little rodents and not something to be afraid of.

Bio: Sloan Cranford is an 8th grader that loves drawing rats and other creatures.



Kendra Edwards

Title: Kill Ken

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three box submissions.

Artist Name: Kvn

Artist Statement: Inspired by kill bill I used procreate to create this art piece.

Bio: I am a 23-year-old who loves art and being able to express my artistic talent with drawing.



Kendra Edwards

Title: I Am Art

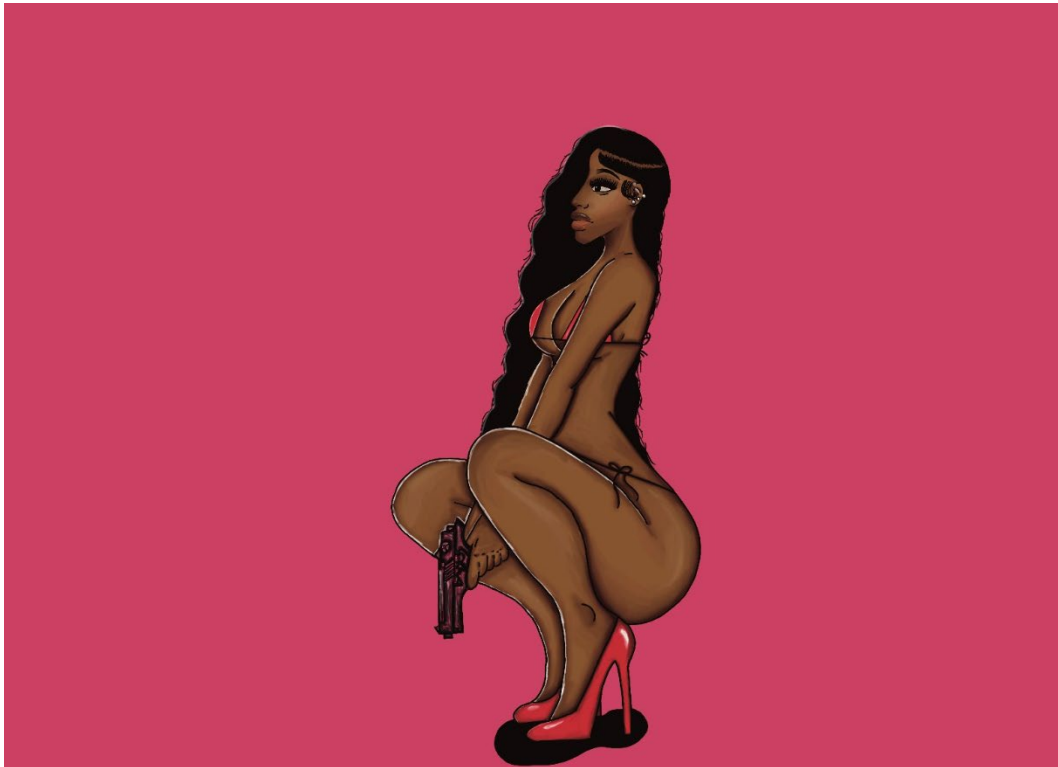
Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three box submissions.

Artist Name: Kvn

Artist Statement: Drawing with procreate to make alter ego self.



Kendra Edwards

Title: Faceless

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three box submissions.

Artist Name: Kvn

Artist Statement: Drawing with procreate to make alter ego self.



Rose Farrell

Title: Sanguine

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Spray paint, acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two boxes; also submitted this piece as a banner.

Artist Name: Feral

Artist Statement: A tree limb is frozen in the midst of transforming into a human hand, wherein lies a glowing bundle of leaves. The word "sanguine" has a dual meaning: hopefully optimistic or, blood red. Created from mixed technique of acrylic and spray paint, this painting set against a dark red background represents how we must listen to nature during uncertain times and remain hopeful. Nature loves courage.

Bio: I am a quiet artist born and raised in Peoria, Illinois. I am a graduate of the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts in Normal, Illinois where I served as an Art Ambassador. I am a founding member of the Peoria Guild of Black Artists and I have been involved in various artistic organizations throughout Central Illinois. I work with a variety of different mediums but primarily work with spray paint, a medium I feel in love with as a teenager due to its versatility. My work is inspired by nature and folklore, with a touch of psychedelia.



Rose Farrell

Title: I Will Follow You Into the Dark

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Spray paint, acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two boxes; also submitted one banner (“Sanguine”).

Artist Name: Feral

Artist Statement: Two figures with their nerves exposed hold hands while walking through an abstract terrain. I created this piece using my special spray paint technique and used acrylic paint to highlight the details. This piece represents finding someone who may be just as anxious about the future as you, but together you can overcome anything. It is dedicated to my fiancé.



Michele Marie Guzman

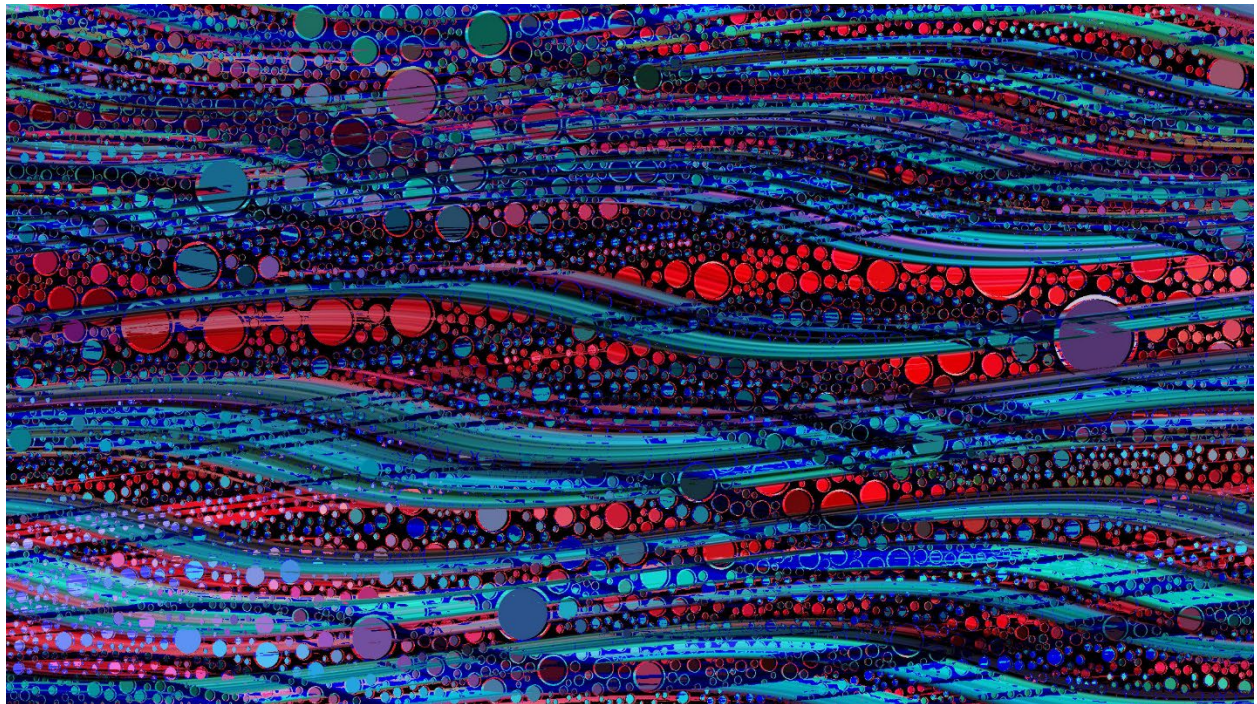
Title: Always Moving Forward

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Photography/Digital Art

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two banners (“Home on the Water” and “Summer Flowers Blue”).

Artist Statement: The name of the piece is a combination of honor for the Illinois River, and our city. The river is a constant, always flowing, carrying our goods, providing recreation, beautiful scenery and is an integral part of the city of Peoria. Our city is not static, our people are always moving forward to become better people. Their dreams are always in motion. I can see this piece wrapped around an electrical box, providing simple beauty without being distracting. This was created using an original photograph and photoshop to alter the piece into this form.



Billie Howd

Title: Destinies End

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic abstract on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“idea on fire”).

Artist Statement: Colorful, eye catching work with interesting composition utilizing shape and line. This is an intuitive work showing history of the creative process. The painting is acrylic painted on canvas using brushes and line making tools such as marker and china marker.

Bio: Billie Howd is a local artist working at the Mill in downtown Peoria. She paints figurative and abstract paintings with strong color and composition. Ceramic sculpture is a new pursuit. She has shown her work in solo and group shows at the Contemporary Art Center and won best in show awards in their member shows. You can find more of her art at Billie Howd Art on Facebook.



Billie Howd

Title: Silos

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic and joint compound on wood panel

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“idea on fire”).

Artist Statement: This work represents my impression of Illinois farmland in an abstract form. It is an image of what I have seen in my environment all of my life. It conveys a sense of atmosphere experienced in the hot summer sun, the abstracted forms of farm buildings, silos, and the strong shadows produced during that time of year.



Qingjun Huang

Title: Steam Locomotive 02

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two banners (“Antarctica” and “Steam Locomotive 01”).

Artist Statement: In early 1997, as a professional photographer, I went to Peony River city in Hei-Long-Jiang province to take photographs. I happened to discover a very old narrow-gauge railway on the left hand side of the highway. I thought the railway was abandoned, however, I was told that this was a small railway used to carry timber from the nearby forest, and all the trains were still hauled by steam train locomotives! This suddenly brought back all my wonderful memories of steam engines. As a result, I set out to capture surviving traces of the steam era with my camera. I was anxious to capture this unusual feeling, therefore, I carried my photography-kit bag and started my strenuous pursuit of the steam experience from one forest to another one, from one locomotive to another. My footprints chasing steam locomotives can be found all over China. Through my camera lens, I have documented the last era of steam locomotives in China.



Natalie Jackson

Title: Acknowledgement

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Digital Photography

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one banner (“the Allure of Ebony”).

Artist Statement: Straight, No Chaser is a Jazz series of photography I’ve created to express my love for the music. I grew up in a home constantly pulsating with many genres of musical rhythms. Jazz has always been a favorite.

I titled this work after the Monk tune, Straight, No Chaser because, like jazz, it’s made up of improvisation and distortion and is anything but straight photography. Like straight ahead jazz, its fluidity is unpredictable. I capture an image with my camera and alter it so that the viewer only sees what I deem important. I eliminate many details, but your mind fills in the gaps and what you finally see on the canvas is only limited by your imagination. As Monk once said, “Don’t play everything;... What you don’t play can be more important than what you do.”

This body of work depicts Jazz, an African American art form that is truly a universal treasure. The work is a vibrant, rhythmically visual expression of music that I hope its viewer will not only see, but also hear.

Bio: Truth, Beauty, and Pride are the themes of photographer, Natalie Jackson's work. They come together to tell gripping stories of Black life, past and present. Having lived in Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta, and Charlotte, she gathered experiences, education, and history and returned to the Midwest. She has worked as a staff photographer for Good News Magazine in Atlanta, Georgia to a medical photographer for Soderstrom Skin Institute in Peoria, Illinois. Years after receiving a Marketing degree she went back to school to study photography, a



lifelong passion. Her long time hobby quickly became a means for expression. Notable projects were a shoot for Art AIDS Africa, Jane Fonda's Lost Boys of Sudan project, and a birthday shoot for jazz artist Freddy Cole. She currently resides in Peoria, Illinois where she sits on the Board of Directors at the Contemporary Art Center of Peoria and the Central Illinois Jazz Society. She has a studio and gallery in her father, artist, Preston Jackson's building, the Contemporary Art Center of Peoria. She shoots, sells, and displays her artwork there. Her most widely known body of work, Crowns of Empowerment, is a love letter to the Black woman who is often neglected and disrespected. It is a series of empowering pieces, highlighting the importance of the Black woman's role throughout history. This exhibition opened in the spring of 2017 and continues to travel and educate today. Solo exhibitions of Crowns of Empowerment in Time Gallery 2017, Contemporary Art Center of Peoria 2017, SAUK Community College 2019, Macomb Art Center 2020, and McLean County Art Center 2020. Solo exhibition, And Still I Rise, highlighted her work's connection to The 1619 Project. Her piece, The Juxtaposition of Ebony, was purchased and presented to Treyvon Martin's mother, Sybrina Fulton, at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon in January 2022, by the City of Peoria's Employees for Community Concerns. She's been awarded several photography awards including the Award of Excellence at the Peoria Fine Art Fair 2018, and First Place Photography in Decatur Fine Art Fair 2019 and 2024. She was a winner of Art Pop in 2019 and Sky Art in 2021 which resulted in billboards of her work displayed throughout the region for an entire year. She was selected as a juror for the Peoria Sculpture Walk in 2018 and Photography Exhibition at Buchanan Center for the Arts in 2020. In 2022 she won the Purchase Award for her piece Triptych Warrior in National Juried Exhibition at Buchanan Art Center. In May 2023, her jazz art body of work, Straight, No Chaser, was a solo exhibit at the Buchanan Center for the Arts in Monmouth, Illinois. In 2024, she exhibited The Boldness of Being on Chicago's Magnificent Mile. She served as juror for the Buchanan Center for the Arts Photography Show. Her work was juried into the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center exhibition Black Joy Social Justice in 2024. She has now produced two photo books of her most noted bodies of work, Crowns of Empowerment and Straight, No Chaser.

Whitney Johnson-Lessard

Title: Rocks Under Water

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Oil, Eggshells, and Iron Oxide on Handmade Paper

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (Chondrules II).

Artist Name: Whitney Johnson

Artist Statement: Rocks Under Water belongs to a body of work, "Held Within the Rocks and Dust," that explores the alchemy of painting through the memories of materials. What are we made of? How are we physically connected to all life and the Earth? There are lives embedded in these materials that extend beyond time. These paintings work towards envisioning the world as past, present and future existing together through material and image.



Whitney Johnson-Lessard

Title: Chondrules (II)

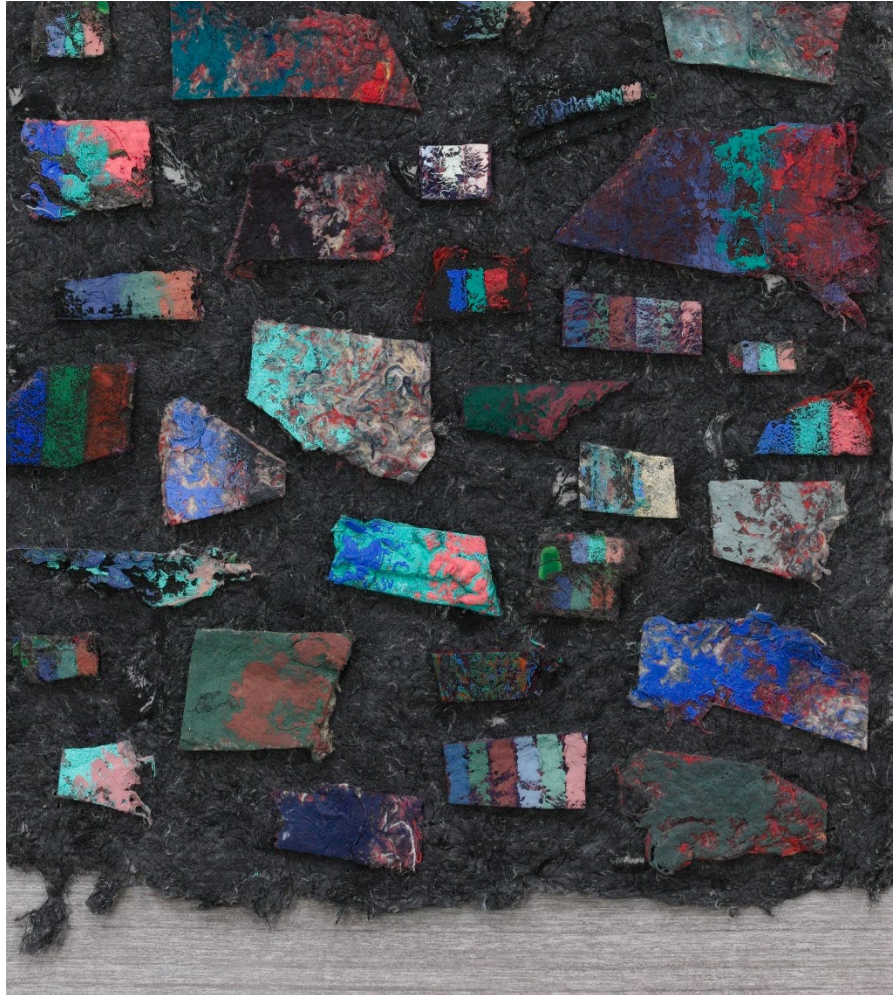
Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Oil, Ashes, and Eggshells on Handmade Paper

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("Chondrules (II)").

Artist Statement: Chondrules (II) belongs to a body of work, "Held Within the Rocks and Dust," that explores the alchemy of painting through the memories of materials. What are we made of? How are we physically connected to all life and the Earth? There are lives embedded in these materials that extend

beyond time. These paintings work towards envisioning the world as past, present and future existing together through material and image.



Sameera Joshi

Young Artist

Title: The Death of an American Engine

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Colored Pencil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: When creating this work, I tried to focus on detailing the car's grill as well as the headlights. I used blue tones, grays, and greens to capture the car's neutral colors as best I could. Additionally, I wanted to really capture the correct perspective and angle of the car. I felt compelled to draw the Cadillac because of its interesting history and influence in American popular culture. I named it "The Death of an American Engine" to convey the car's prior immense fame that has slowly died out into simple recognition rather than the utmost praise for its engine's strength.

Bio: I am an aspiring high school student and am involved with the art program at my school. I work with all mediums from oil paint to colored pencil. I am most influenced by everyday life and other artists such as Norman Rockwell.



Sameera Joshi

Young Artist

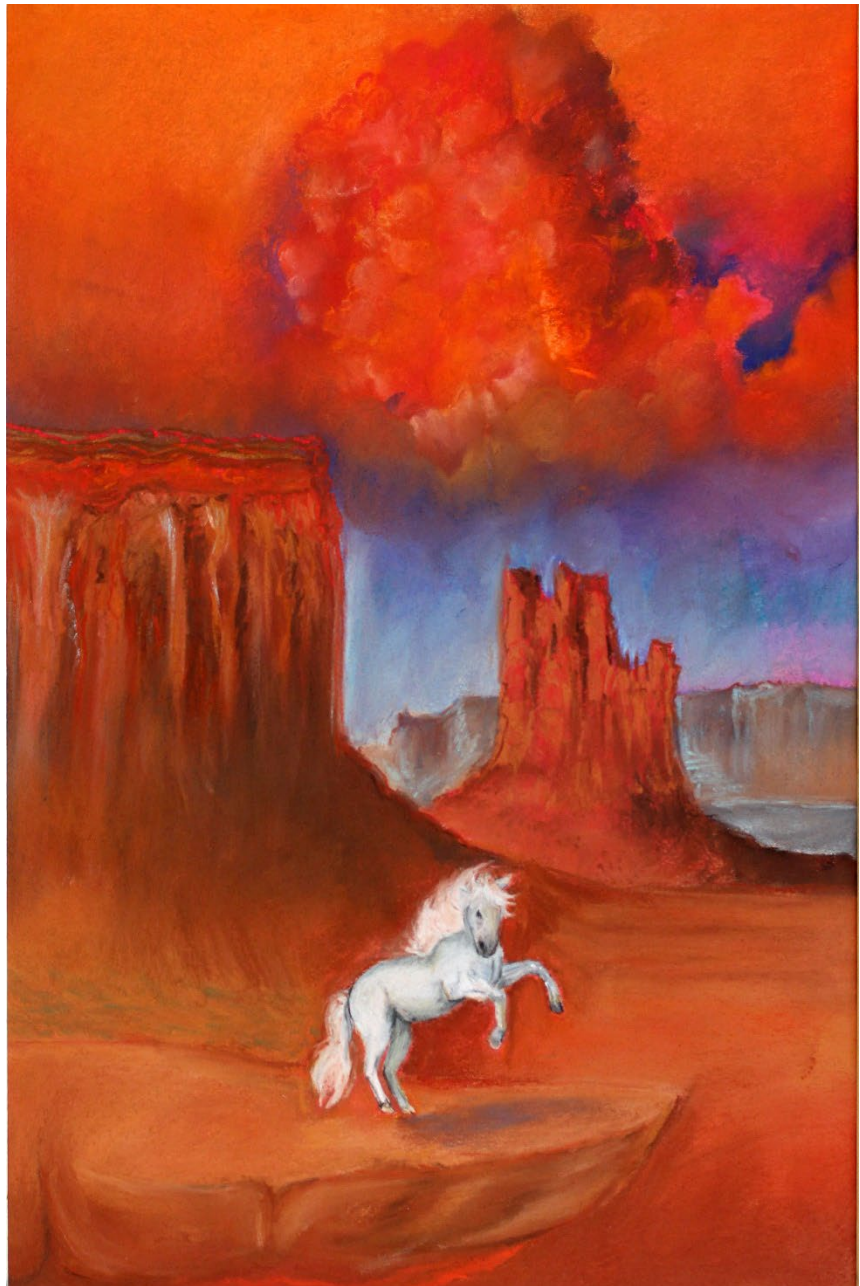
Title: Dark Horse

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Chalk Pastel

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: When creating this work, my inspiration was the history behind westward expansion in the United States. I really wanted to capture the feelings associated with exploring an unfamiliar, vast landscape. Another important factor for me during the creation of the work was the many different forms of physical landforms that are found across America. I incorporated a sunset with large clouds to emphasize the magnitude of the country's landscape. Art, in my opinion, is the same as expressing my feelings. For this work, I wanted to capture the feelings that come along with exploring the unknown.



Sameera Joshi

Young Artist

Title: Reflection

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Mixed Media; ink, gouache, and watercolor.

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: When I created this work, my goal was to capture the feelings associated with finding oneself in a world that greatly values individuality. My primary focus was to really portray how I view myself and my own identity. I did this by incorporating my own eye as the focal point and then developing the surrounding background with things that have inspired me such as nature.



Kelsey Knight

Title: Champagne Poppies

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Blooming Magnolias”).

Artist Statement: I sketched out the flowers using pencil on canvas, then using a hot glue gun to outline the sketch. Afterwards, I used the pour painting method to create a beautiful, metallic gold background for the poppies to stand out. Lastly, I painted the poppies using acrylic, brushed on some mica powder for the sparkles, and sealed it up with epoxy resin.



Kelsey Knight

Title: Rupture

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("Blooming Magnolias").

Artist Statement: I created this painting using "Pour Painting" techniques. With a little bit of satin enamel and a pouring medium, I was able to create large, gorgeous cells in this painting. The color palette used is a mix of warm and cool, which to my surprise, ended up working for this piece.



Olivia Malone

Title: Strike. Spark. Shine.

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate – Digital Art

Other Submissions:
Yes, this is the first of three box submissions.

Artist Statement: This design plays with the dynamic energy of fire—symbolizing both destruction and illumination. "Strike. Spark. Shine" is an ode to the power of ideas: how a single spark can ignite a movement. The warm pinks and oranges radiate warmth, while the vintage-inspired typography and matchbox aesthetics nod to classic craftsmanship and bold ambition.

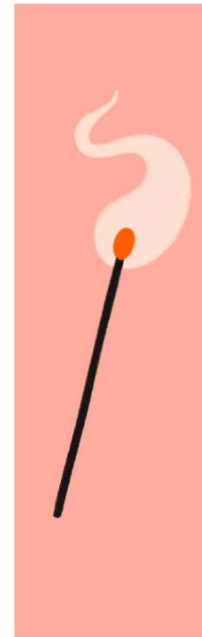
Bio: I'm Olivia, a designer and illustrator based in Peoria, Illinois. I specialize in branding, illustration, and art direction, crafting thoughtful, cohesive visual identities for clients across various industries. My work blends playful, hand-drawn elements with strategic design, driven by my love for storytelling and creativity. Whether developing custom illustrations or designing impactful branding assets, I aim to create work that truly resonates.

Electric Box Design
Olivia Malone

"Strike. Spark. Shine"



Front/back Design



Side Design

@oliviafayeco

hello@oliviafaye.co

oliviafaye.co

Olivia Malone

Title: Salty Sardines

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate -
Digital artwork

Other Submissions:

Yes, this is the second of three box submissions.

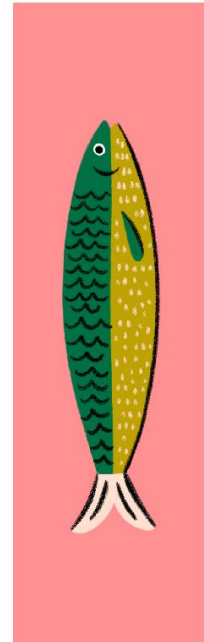
Artist Statement: With "Salty Sardines," I wanted to highlight the beauty in the ordinary. Inspired by vintage tin packaging and the simple joys of everyday objects, this piece reimagines a humble can of sardines as an artful, colorful statement. The rolling textures and rich hues celebrate tradition while adding a whimsical, modern twist.

Electric Box Design Olivia Malone

"Salty Sardines"



Front/back Design



Side Design

@oliviasfayeco

hello@oliviasfaye.co

oliviasfaye.co

Olivia Malone

Title: Creative Juice

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Procreate -
Digital artwork

Other Submissions: Yes,
this is the third of three box
submissions.

Artist Statement:

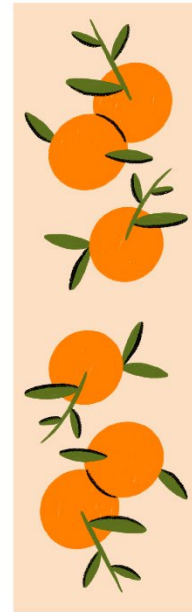
"Creative Juice" is a playful
take on the idea that
inspiration can be bottled
up and consumed like a
refreshing drink. The warm
orange tones and hand-
drawn textures evoke a
sense of energy and
vitality, mirroring the burst
of creativity that fuels
artistic expression.
Through nostalgic
packaging and organic
motifs, this design
captures the essence of
imagination in motion.

Electric Box Design
Olivia Malone

"Creative Juice"



Front/back Design



Side Design

@oliviasfayeco

hello@oliviasfaye.co

oliviasfaye.co

Max Martin

Title: Mullein, New England Prairie Aster, and Common Milkweed

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted same piece as a banner.

Artist Statement: In the middle of the winter I always begin to think of the warmer seasons from the past, this winter I was specifically thinking of the native prairie plants and “weeds” in my backyard. I thought back to their lush greenness and vibrant flowers and desperately wanted a little piece of that back, and so, “Mullein, New England Prairie Aster, and Common Milkweed” was created. I wanted a painting full of color and energy and thought the full leaves and pronounced stalk of a mullein plant bursting from the ground would be perfect. Another aspect I wanted to pay special attention to was the color I incorporated, I wanted complementing colors of red, green, yellow, and purple.



The complementary colors help to enhance the vibrancy of the plant life in the painting and engage viewer's eyes. This project brought me the warmth of summer in a cold winter season and I hope the finished product can imitate that experience for others.

Bio: Max Martin is a local Peoria area artist who focuses on nature related subjects through an abstract-expressionist lens. They went to Eureka College as an undergraduate student and attended Eastern Illinois University to complete a Masters of Art degree. As an Illinois native Max is especially interested in local environments and plant life. Max loves to create beautiful and vibrant scenes that are interesting and inviting to the viewer!

Audrey McLeod

Young Artist

Title: True Colors of Peoria

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement:

In this drawing, I seek to capture the essence of Peoria—a city that reflects both the charm and complexity of urban life in Americans Midwest region. Through my art, I have aimed to explore the layered history, vibrant community, and evolving landscape of Peoria.



Bio: Hi! I'm Audrey McLeod, a 14-year-old student at St. Philomena School. I'm always on the go—whether it's playing sports, participating in extracurricular activities, or finding ways to stay active. I've always had a love for being involved in anything that gets me moving, and I'm passionate about pushing myself to try new things. Sports are a huge part of my life, and I love the challenge and teamwork they bring.

Family, friends, and pets mean everything to me. I'm lucky to have such a close-knit family who supports me in everything I do, and I cherish the time we spend together. My friends are my second family, and I'm always there for them, just as they are for me. I also have a special place in my heart for our pets—they're part of the family, too!

I'm really proud of my hometown, and I feel connected to the community. I enjoy helping out whenever I can, whether it's supporting local events or just being there for the people I care about. I believe in making the most of every opportunity and living life with passion and purpose!

Hattie Lee Mendoza

Title: Sovereign Spring (Purple)

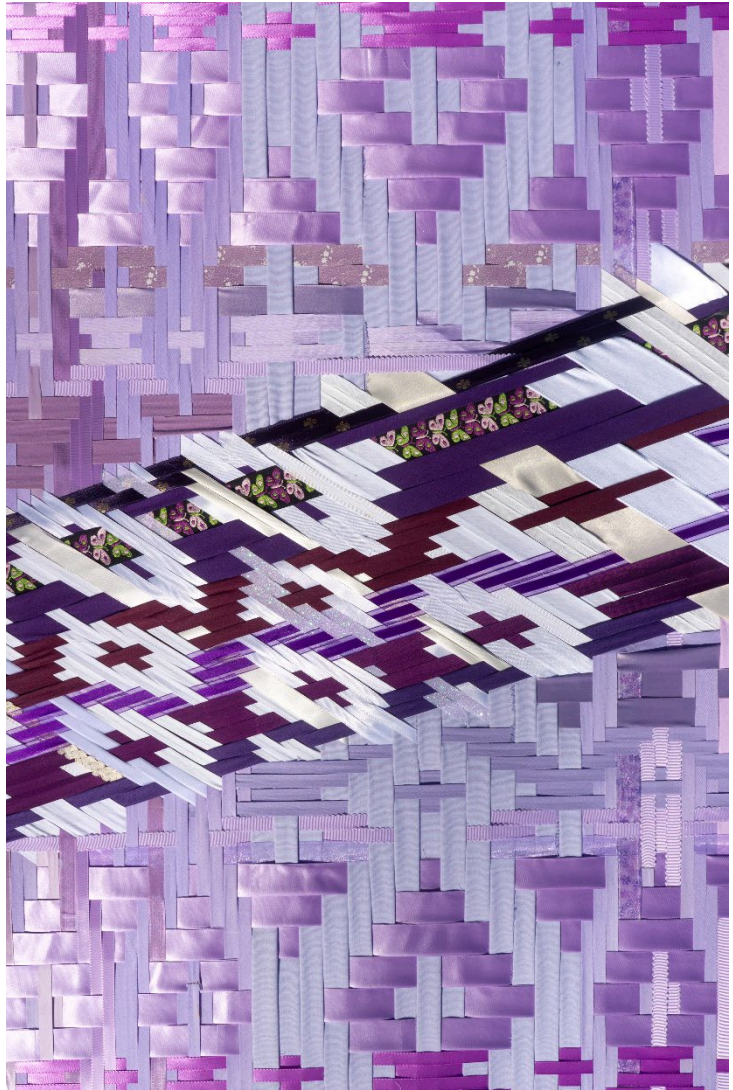
Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Ribbon, Bias Tape, Lace on Stretcher Bars

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Gussied Up”).

Artist Statement: This fiber weaving uses various ribbons and trims to make a bright version of two Cherokee basketry patterns- Chief's Daughter and Unbroken Friendship.

Bio: Hattie Lee Mendoza has an MFA from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, and a BA in graphic design from Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS. She is influenced by her Great Grandmother and namesake's Cherokee heritage and stories, desiring to revive and continue that legacy within her family after generational loss of cultural connection. Her maternal grandmother's frugal values, stemming from a depression era childhood, are also reflected in Mendoza's practice by including repurposed and recycled personal, family and community items, as well as thrifted and found objects.



Hattie Lee Mendoza

Title: Rhythmic Exuberance

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Gouache and Watercolor on Aquabond

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Gussied Up”).

Artist Statement: This painting references stamped patterns on traditional Cherokee, and other indigenous tribes' pottery. The line and dot work incorporated on the larger patterns replicates both beadwork and stitching as well.



Jaci Musec

Title: a place to roam

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Embroidery

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted same piece as a banner.

Artist Statement: This work is an abstracted landscape in thread and fabric. I embroider by hand and do not follow any pattern. I approach my embroidery in the same way I approach my abstract paintings, I just begin.

Bio: Jaci Musec is a Peoria based abstract artist. Jaci found a way to her art through a painful Infertility journey. Painting abstract became a self-healing tool and a catalyst for Musec. Her work conveys an emotional landscape, working with themes of mental health, infertility, self-actualization, female empowerment and more. As she began to find her language and voice as an artist, she explored new mediums. Currently Jaci creates abstract paintings, abstract embroidery and various combinations of those. She also uses her own poetry, letter writing, murals and Instagram to engage with her audience.

Jaci has been creating work since 2015. Having had her work exhibited in both group shows and solo exhibitions throughout central Illinois.

Jaci Musec's is one of the founding members of the North Art Studios, she conducts a monthly workshop entitled PLAY! and is working to launch two more workshops in the coming year. She is an active member of the local art community.



Daniel Nagel

Title: Dial Up

Box or Banner: Box

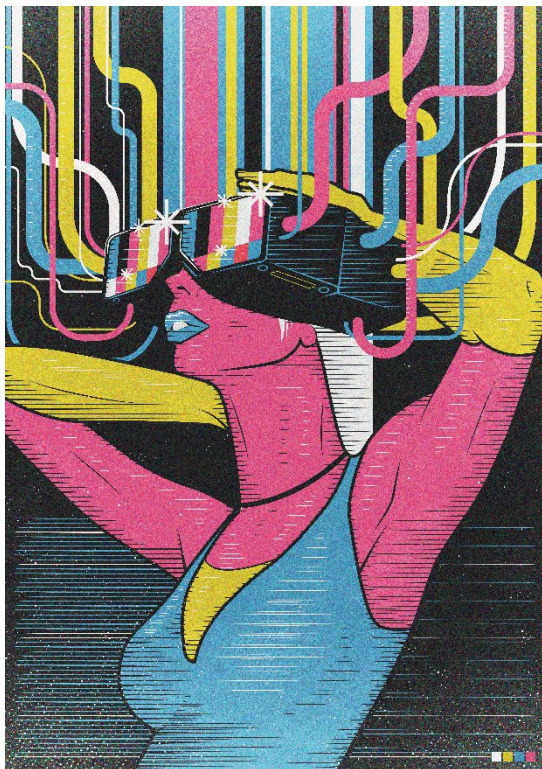
Medium: Digital Illustration

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Spire”).

Artist Name: Dan Nagel

Artist Statement: Digital illustration depicting people connected to the grid, showing the merging of beauty and technology.

Bio: Daniel Nagel is a Graphic Designer and Screen Printer who lives and works in Peoria, Illinois. He attended Western Illinois University where he received his bachelor’s degree in Fine Arts in 2010. Shortly after graduation, Daniel moved to Dubai, UAE, where he was heavily influenced by his travels and the diverse cultural landscape. During his time in the Middle East, he was a resident artist at Tashkeel, an art facility established by Princess Sheika Lateefa bint Maktoum. In 2018, he relocated to Peoria and began creating screen print art for a variety of places, people, and causes. He works at his studio at North Arts Studios here in Peoria.



ELECTRICAL BOXE - SIDE 1



ELECTRICAL BOXE - SIDE 2

Daniel Nagel

Title: Out of The Garden

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("Spire").

Artist Name: Dan Nagel

Artist Statement: Digital illustration depicting people connected to the grid, showing the merging of beauty and technology.



Amanda Nutzman

Title: Dog-Day Cicada

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Gouache Watercolor Paint

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Late Summer”).

Artist Statement: This painting is of a dog-day cicada that I photographed in Peoria on a summer day in 2023. I worked from my photograph to create an 11 x 14 inch, full color painting of the cicada showing, in large scale, all of the amazing detail and vibrant color of the insect. The original has sold and there are prints available to purchase online.

Bio: My artwork and illustrations depict outdoor experiences and the magic of childhood.



When I was young, I lived in a small house on an abandoned orchard in Washburn, IL. I spent my days exploring the boundary between the wild wooded area on the property, and the cultivated garden and orchard that still produced fruit. Those days of being able to observe nature deeply, and use my imagination unhindered, are still at my core.

Today I live with my husband and children in Peoria, IL. We spend our free time hiking and biking all of the area's amazing green spaces.

Over the last fourteen years I have created custom illustrations for clients and sell my work online as well as locally.

Amanda Nutzman

Title: Hollyhock Pollen

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Gouache on Paper

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted a banner (“Late Summer”).

Artist Statement: I photographed this bee while working in my garden last summer! I was watching it clean the incredibly sticky hollyhock pollen from its body and was inspired to learn more about what makes some pollen stickier and how it affects pollinators. Later I used the photo as a reference to create a larger detailed painting. I used gouache, which I love for its ability to be blended while painting and workability even after dry. The entire painting is sealed with wax. This painting is still available to purchase.



Jlynn Parker-Frakes

Young Artist

Title: Bubbles

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic Paint

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("No Signal").

Artist Statement: Yellow and Blue background then a layer of white using a scraping technique then made a bubble effect using an acrylic paint marker.

Bio: Jlynn is a vibrant and talented 16-year-old from Peoria. She enjoys all forms of art from drawing, painting, crocheting and sewing. When she isn't doing art, she is spending time doing homework, reading or spending time with her friends. This is her first time submitting art to a contest.



Jlynn Parker-Frakes

Young Artist

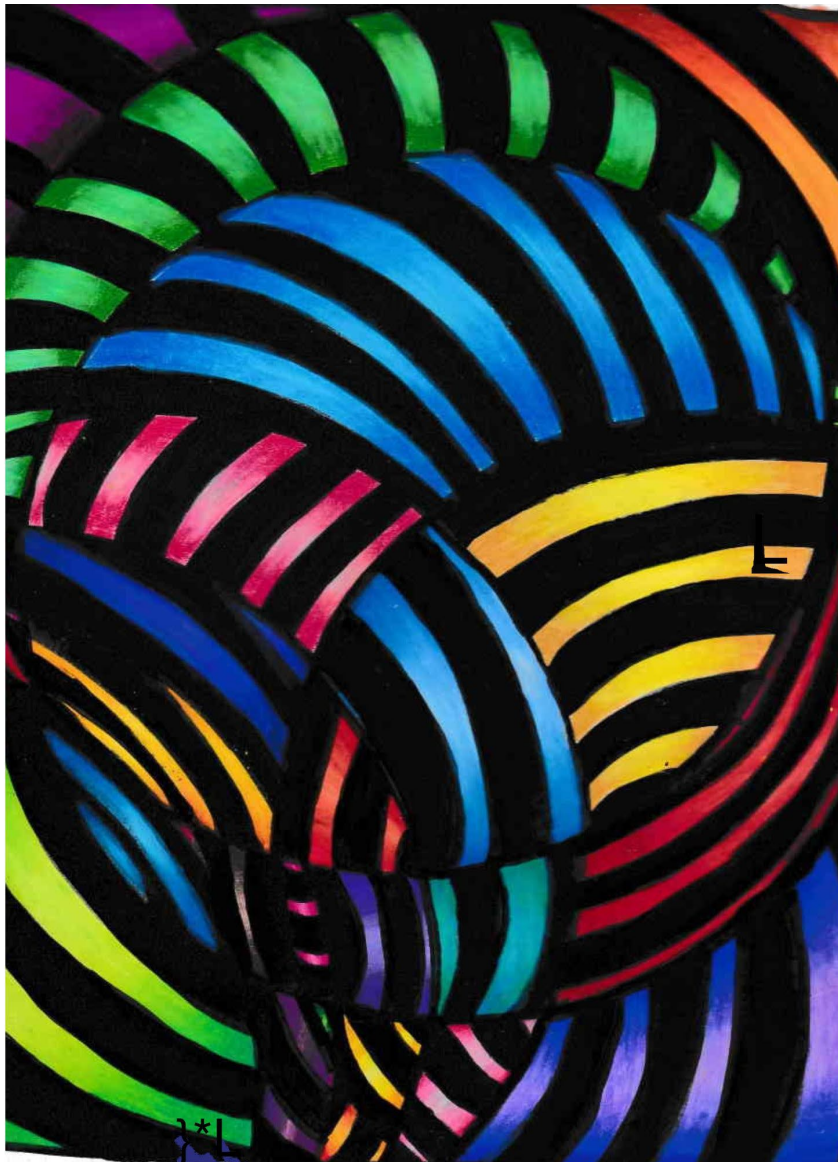
Title: Diversity

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Colored Pencil and Marker

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner ("No Signal").

Artist Statement: Made curved lines using a marker followed by coloring and shadowing with colored pencil



Lori Reed

Title: Southern Exposure

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Mixed Media Collage

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two banners (“Getting the Scoop” and “Star Gazer”).

Artist Statement: Multiple digital alterations of a photo looking up at tall rudbeckia. Additions of handmade paper, colored pencil and ledger paper from 1858. 12”H x 12”W - this piece was accepted into 64 Arts national juried show.

Bio: Lori Reed was raised on a farm in central Illinois. She received her BFA from the University of Illinois and spent most of her adult life running a graphic design business. She’s been making mixed media collages for the past 17 years and has used photos as the basis of her art since 2009. In her current body of work, she cuts her digitally altered photos into quarter-inch strips and combines three versions of the scene to layer up the image. She then embeds vintage postage stamp fragments, maps, text or shredded money in the final layer.



Maggie Ryan

Title: Nike Flowers

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Digital Illustration

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two banners (“Crawling Tiger” and “Ocean Crash”).

Artist Name: Catherine Ryan

Artist Statement: Nike flowers are some of my favorite things wrapped up together. I love sneakers and the art they can convey and wanted to add the softness of the lavender.

Bio: Maggie Ryan is a graphic designer by trade and an artist by heart.



Dominick Shelton

Young Artist

Title: Goat in the Night

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Sharpies, pencil, dry erase marker

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: To show people about the goat tree in Dauphin Island.

Bio: My name is Dominick Shelton and I was born in Colorado but I have lived in Peoria my whole life. I am an artist who loves pottery, painting, drawing, sketching and eyeballs (I like drawing eye balls). I have two best friends name Erik and Suneel. I have 3 dogs and 1 cat so I love pets which often that inspires my art work. :)



Rowan Solana

Title: Laying in Wait

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Soft Chalk Pastel on Paper

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one banner (“Sunlit Creek”).

Artist Name: Rowan Solana (or Rowan Keon)

Artist Statement: "Laying In Wait" was created using soft pastels on sanded paper. The varied looseness of soft pastels echoes the ephemeral nature of childhood. Some memories will be soft, blurry, idyllic. Others are harsh and bright, with a bone-deep sense of knowing. This landscape scene serves to highlight the uncomfortable realities of a romanticized childhood.

Bio: Rowan Solana (b.1995) is a 2D artist favoring soft pastels and oil paints. A transient adolescence between Chicago and its suburbs gave them a healthy appreciation for the freedoms of nature and the excitement of the city, but never quite at home in either. They use narrative landscapes to explore feelings of wonder, longing, and isolation through life stages. They graduated from Northern Illinois University with a BFA in Drawing in 2023 and moved to Peoria soon after.



Darnell Starks Jr.

Title: Fractured

Box or Banner: Box

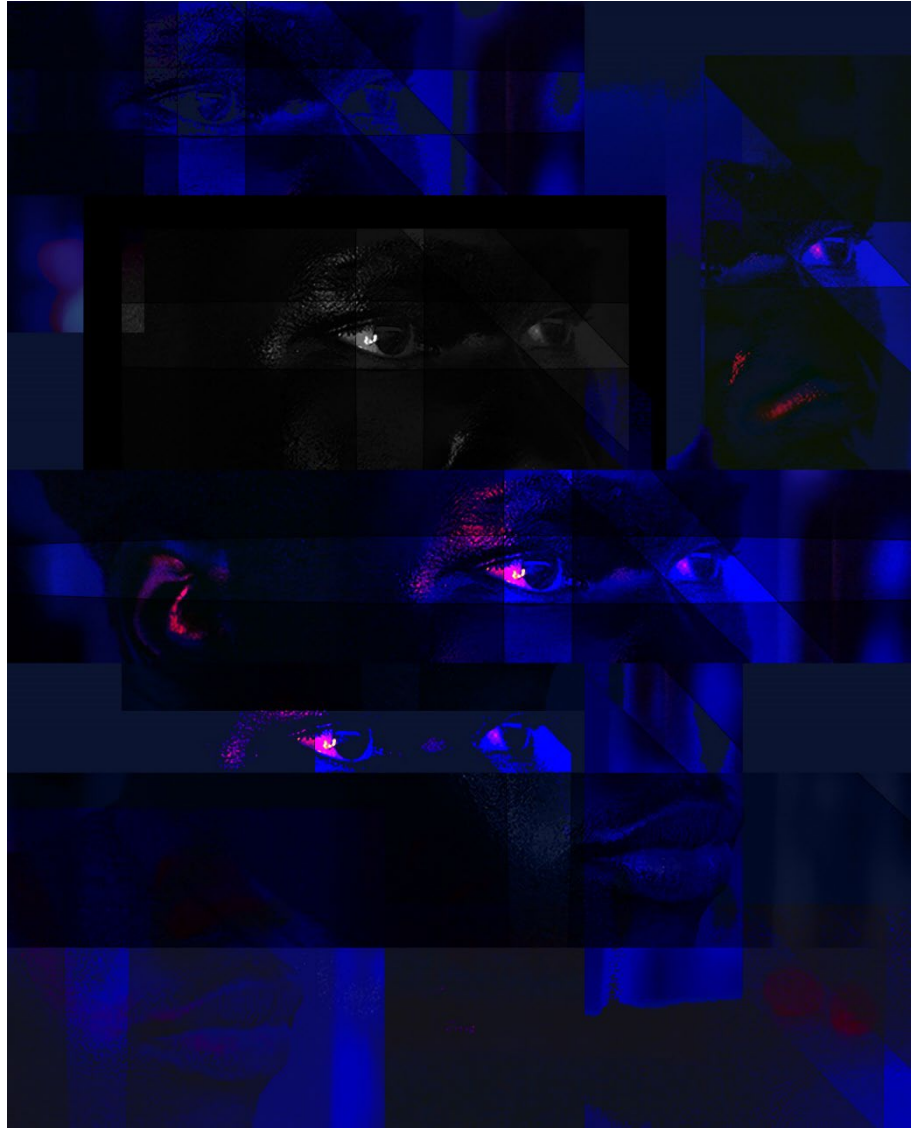
Medium: Digital
Photography

Other Submissions:

Yes – also submitted
one banner (“Peoria
Man”).

Artist Statement:
Photo taken with Nikon
D750 camera, 50mm
lens. Edited in
Photoshop.

Bio: Born in Chicago,
IL. Raised in Glasgow,
Scotland. Moved back
to the States in 2018
and been living in
Peoria since 2023.



Rhea Theru

Young Artist

Title: Heart Emojis

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Marker

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one banner (“Flower Bed”).

Artist Statement: Rhea drew the hearts with the faces first. Then she dipped the marker in a small cup of water and let it stay there for a min. Then took the marker out and she painted the hearts using the colored water.

Bio: Rhea Theru is a 4th grader from Hickory Grove Elementary school. She loves drawing, coloring and painting and wants to become a professional artist when she grows up.



Jody Tockes

Title: Garden Visitor

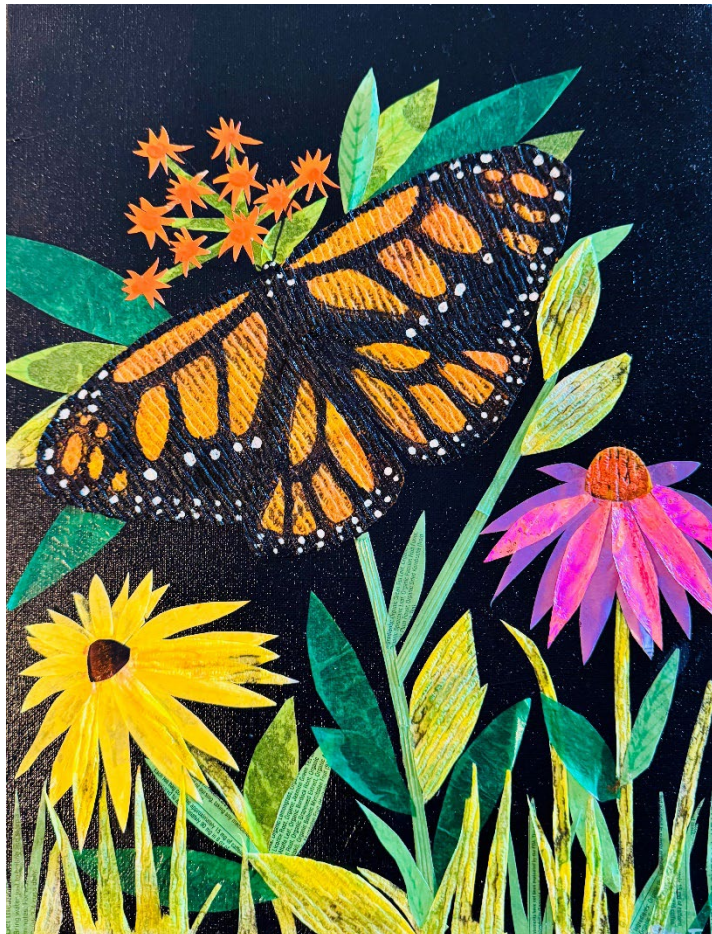
Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic paint and reuse materials on paper towels (collage)

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one banner (“Sunset Over My Hometown”).

Artist Statement: For this piece I used paper towels I painted on with left-over acrylic paint from my classes. I also incorporated bits of scrap paper and paper from tea bag packages. The materials were then glued to a reused canvas that I had painted black.

Bio: I am a native of Central Illinois, having lived in both Peoria and East Peoria. I graduated from Manual High School in 1976, then Bradley University in 1980. I received my Masters in Education from Olivet Nazarene in 2006. I am married to Rick, my high school sweetheart. We have three adult children and seven grand-children. My husband and I own the Hive Art Studio where I offer a variety of classes to all ages. I am currently teaching art part-time at S.t Jude Catholic School. Rick and I also have an intergenerational garden and art program called Beautiful GIFT (Gardens impacting the future today).



Sofia Trubnikov

Title: An Assembled Meadow

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Acrylic Paint

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: As someone who loves vivid and fun colors, I've been trying to incorporate more of that into my artwork as of recently. Going into starting this piece, I wanted to combine that with something I love most in nature, flowers. I typically like to treat my family to flowers on special occasions and make them feel all warm and goody inside. So, for this artwork, I decided to draw a bouquet, combining various flowers into one painting. I used acrylic and carefully made sure to include every detail that would make this idea in my mind come to life.



Bio: I am a senior attending Dunlap High School. I've been making art since I was a little kid and have continued to pursue my interest in the arts up till today. With every piece I make, I get more engrossed by what I do and continue to make more creative artwork. As an artist, I typically like to use mediums such as paint, watercolor, and pencil. I want to continue making more art in the future as an artist and grow in what I do.

Liu Yang

Title: Galaxy

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Unique Analog Chromogenic Photogram

Artist Statement: This artwork "Galaxy" is from my series of "Another Planet". ANOTHER PLANET series were created in dark room, I used photographic paper as the materials, but images were not taken by camera, they are photogram. The productions of the images were to place the objects between photographic paper and lights, then exposure. Outline and color of the objects are well designed by self-modified lights. Some of the creations adopted multi-exposure by different lights, just like to use lights to draw on the photo paper. In ANOTHER PLANET, I poured watercolor on Plexi glass, let them move and mix naturally to create patterns, and then exposed the painting on color light-sensitive photographic paper. The preparation of creation took some days, and then I eventually realized it in a big dark room. The original work is unique piece, size 68inx50in.

Bio: Liu Yang is a freelancer artist, born and raised in China, currently is living and working in Peoria Illinois USA.

Liu began to explore camera-less experimental photography from 2017. Inspired by her dreams, her main series of works are Dream Trilogy, including: DREAM, DREAM INCEPTION, and ANOTHER PLANET.

Her works have exhibited in various galleries in China. When her family moved to Peoria, Liu and her husband Qingjun Huang have been very active in Peoria arts community. In three years, they did four solo shows, some group shows in Peoria, they also exhibited in Chicago and other places in Illinois, Florida, and some other countries internationally.

Liu Yang is included in NIU Art Museum 2025 Spring show "Window to the Subconscious".

Liu Yang

Galaxy



Jenna Zeise

Title: Fruility

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Oil on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two box submissions; also submitted this piece as a banner.

Artist Statement: "Fruility" is a postmodern style depiction of blueberries, raspberries, and cherries with selective pixelation. The pixelation creates a blur effect through 1"x1" color blocking. The pixels are grouped together in abstract forms for blur variation and to offset the geometric squares with organic shapes. Hues for the color blocking are pulled directly from the fruits they represent but maintain an oversaturated, vibrant color palette to emphasize the separation and stylized nature of the individual fruit pieces.



Bio: Jenna Zeise is a senior undergraduate studying photography at Bradley University. She was born and raised in Milwaukee, WI where her love for the arts began, surrounded by the flourishing art scene and family members who shared her affinity for the craft. While concluding her BFA, Jenna has developed her skills in multiple mediums beyond photography, including painting and drawing, to depict themes that merge modern ideologies and classic techniques to question traditional values. Jenna also enjoys creating work in commercial settings; her post-graduation endeavors include pursuing her professional interest in sports photography while continuing her personal conceptual art ventures. Her work has been featured in publications such as Bradley University's literary art journal: Broadside and the student newspaper The Bradley Scout. Forthcoming exhibitions include the BFA undergraduate exhibition, Nothing Twice the Same, at Bradley's Heuser Art Gallery and her photography senior thesis exhibition, Cultivate, at the Peoria Art Guild.

Jenna Zeise

Title: Pins and Needles

Box or Banner: Box

Medium: Oil on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two box submissions; also submitted one banner (“Fruitility”).

Artist Statement: “Pins and Needles” brings a pop art spin to a traditional landscape portrayal. Depicting a flat plane of collaged elements, the scene focuses specifically on a variety of cacti species in a desert setting. Leaning into crisp lines, oversaturation of hues for complementary contrast, and a staged, “backdrop”-like approach, the different cacti overlap but do not interact with each other or the background. Visible and tactile texture is added to the piece through palette knife painting on pink accent flowers, needles, and cacti fur.



**Banners and Boxes Beautification Program
Submissions -- Banners**

Jeremy Berkley

Title: Green Thumb

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Silkscreen printmaking

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one box (“Big Picture”).

Artist Statement: The silkscreen process is highly technical and requires skills I have refined through years of dedicated practice. Understanding the craftsmanship behind each piece adds to the beauty and creativity of this art form. I begin by creating an original illustration and then break the image down by color. Each color layer is exposed onto a separate screen, and ink is pulled through these screens like a stencil using a squeegee. This process builds the image, one layer of color at a time on the paper.

Bio: Since 2008, I’ve been a silkscreen printmaker working in Central Illinois. My journey began as a collector of silkscreen prints, but my curiosity about the creation process soon grew. With a graphic design degree from Bradley University, I had a strong artistic foundation, but no formal training in silkscreen printing. Determined to learn, I taught myself through books, DVDs, and online resources.

Over the years, my prints have been showcased in galleries both locally and internationally. I’m also passionate about sharing my knowledge of printmaking. Through ArtPartners’ Ignite Peoria events and The Peoria Art Guild’s summer youth programs, I’ve had the privilege of teaching children and adults across Central Illinois.



Aaron Boerckel

Title: Red

Box or Banner: Banner

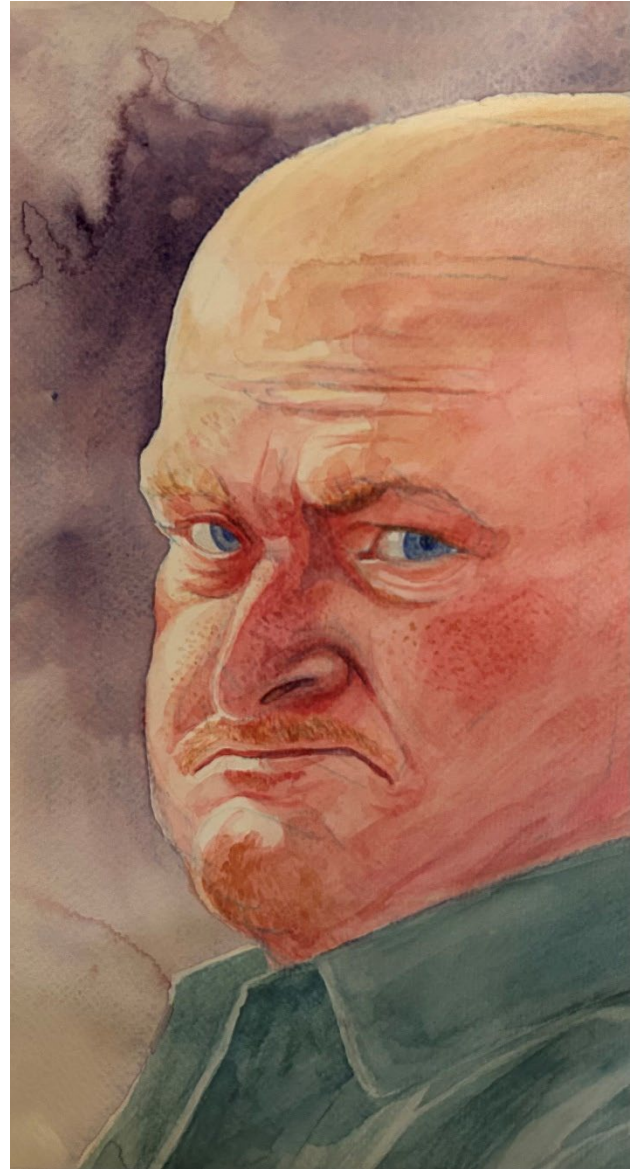
Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This portrait captures the intensity of a man with weathered, sunburned skin and a stern gaze. The natural looseness of watercolor contrasts with the rigidity of his expression, highlighting the tension between softness and strength. His unwavering stare suggests resilience, hardship, and deep contemplation. Through subtle variations in tone and texture, this piece explores presence, emotion, and the silent weight of experience.

Bio: Aaron was born in Peoria, IL, and raised in Austria, California, and Michigan before returning to Peoria, where he now lives with his wife Kayla. Growing up with artistic and adventurous parents, he was constantly drawing—at home, in class, and with friends.

His art practice, includes drawing and painting with focus on portraiture, character design, and illustration. He was inspired by artists like Alex Toth and Norman Rockwell, as well as his father, who taught him to draw.



Aaron Boerckel

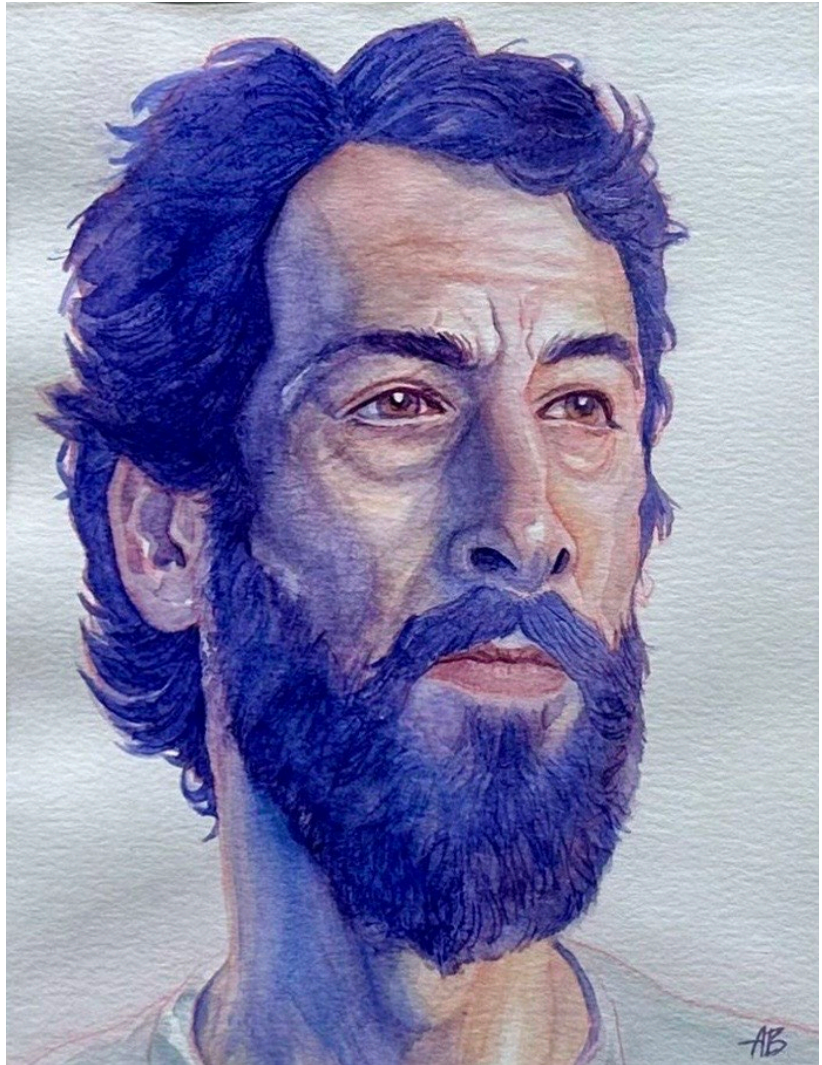
Title: Purple

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This portrait captures a man subtly tinted purple by the light cast upon him. The contextual light allows soft transitions of color and depth, blending realism with a touch of the surreal. This work invites viewers to discover the beauty in transient moments where light redefines what we see.



Aaron Boerckel

Title: Blue

Box or Banner:
Banner

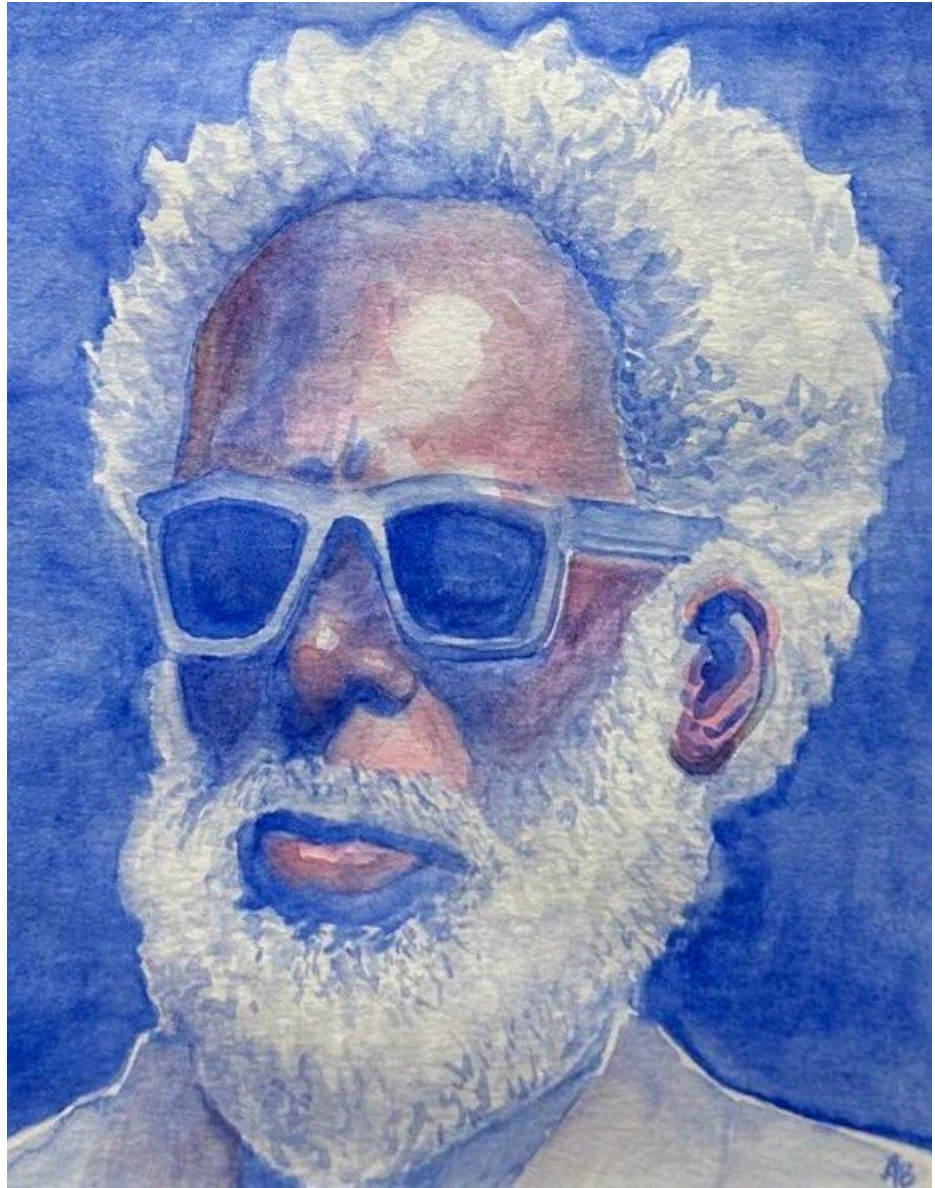
Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions:

Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement:

This portrait captures a man subtly tinted purple by the light cast upon him. The contextual light allows soft transitions of color and depth, blending realism with a touch of the surreal. This work invites viewers to discover the beauty in transient moments where light redefines what we see.



Kayla Phillips Boerckel

Title: Surprise! Daffodils!

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor, Digital

Other Submissions: No

Artist Name: Kayla Boerckel

Artist Statement: As a designer I spend much time aligning my work to the brand of the clients. Over the past few years I've found it important to discover my own style and proclivities, so one day I started playing with watercolor and brushes and slowly but surely these daffodils emerged. I then scanned them into my computer to arrange and experiment with color. In the blink of an eye — surprise — daffodils!

Bio: Kayla Phillips Boerckel is an artist and graphic designer. Twenty-two years ago she took her first college-level design course, learning how to ink and Xerox, cut and paste — the impetus to developing a love for the craft. Her studio, Kayla Phillips Design, has been in existence in Peoria, Illinois since 2014, where she works alongside clients big and small to create compelling visual identities. Along with art and design, she has an affinity for education and has been an affiliate instructor at Bradley University the last three years. Though she has taken a half-decade hiatus from publicly showing her work, she is grateful to return.



DaShawn Brock

Young Artist

Title: Monkey Business

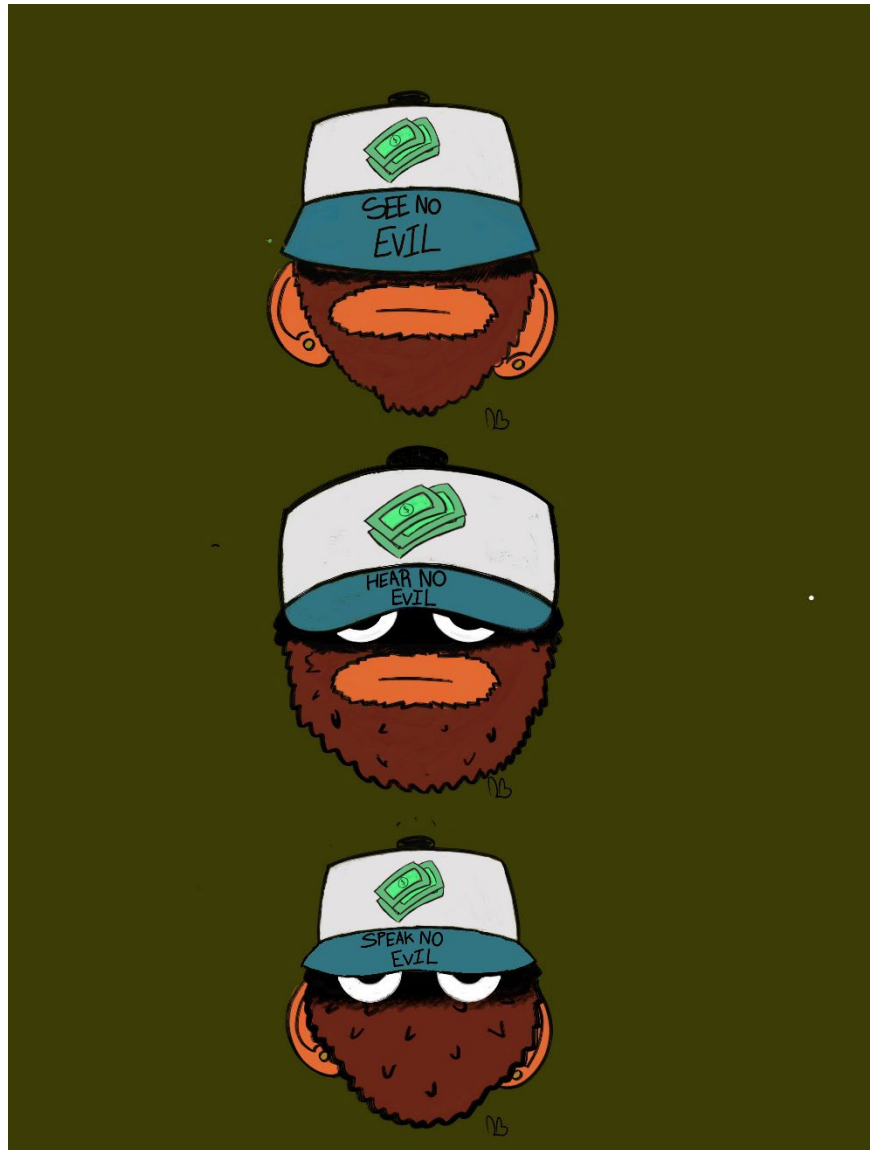
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: I wanted to go for a dry marker type of look. I also wanted to try more of a dark type of palette. The idea behind this piece was see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil.

Bio: DaShawn Brock is a rising senior at Peoria High School. He is active in both sports and the arts. He is a member of the Visual Arts Preparatory School of the Arts as well as the football team. He enjoys both traditional as well as digital media. He comes from an artistic family and enjoys spending time with his girlfriend and friends.



Sherri Burritt

Title: English Rose Duo

Box or Banner: Banner

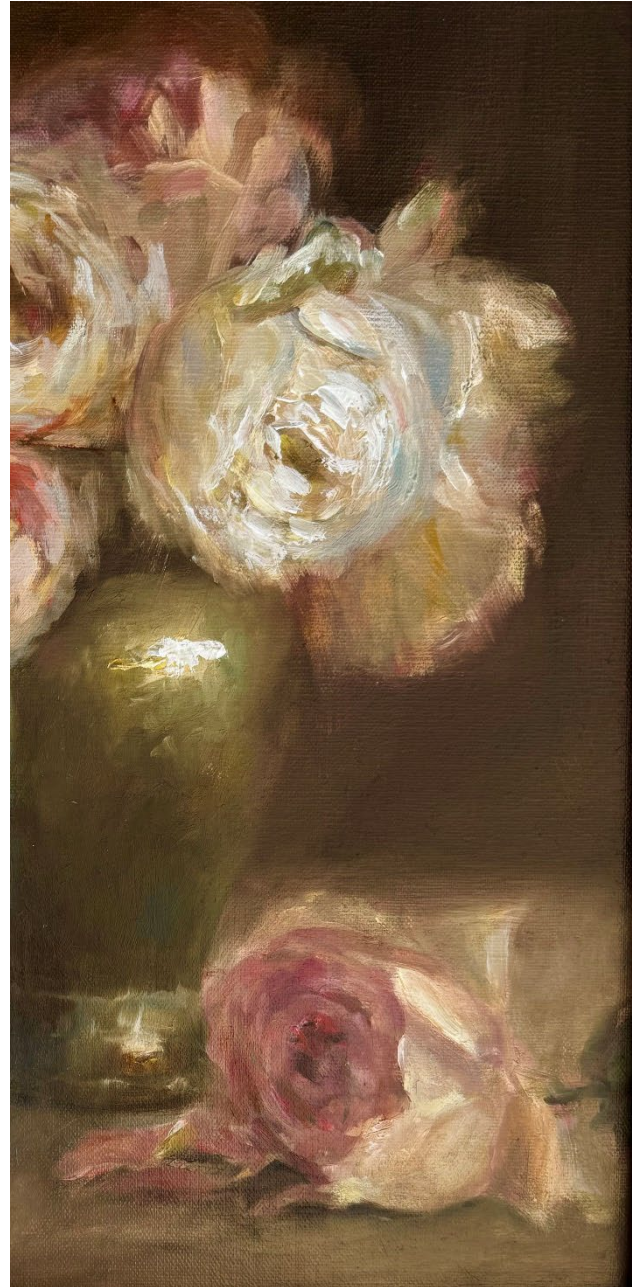
Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: These are my garden roses and my set up. The painting is many layers of thin glazes and impasto oil paint.

Bio: "Creating beauty has always been a part of my life. It may be through painting, design, or decorating. It's what I do, and who I am."

My focus had been mainly in watercolor for 3 decades. Thirteen years ago, I started using oils in my painting and have not looked back. I love the depth I can achieve with oil. When I paint I want my work to convey some type of emotion be it romance, drama, playfulness, or mystery. When painting I use thin and thick, energetic passages of paint. I've been fortunate since beginning oil painting, to study with many living masters. Everyday I either paint or study art. By trade I am a Graphic Designer.



Sherri Burritt

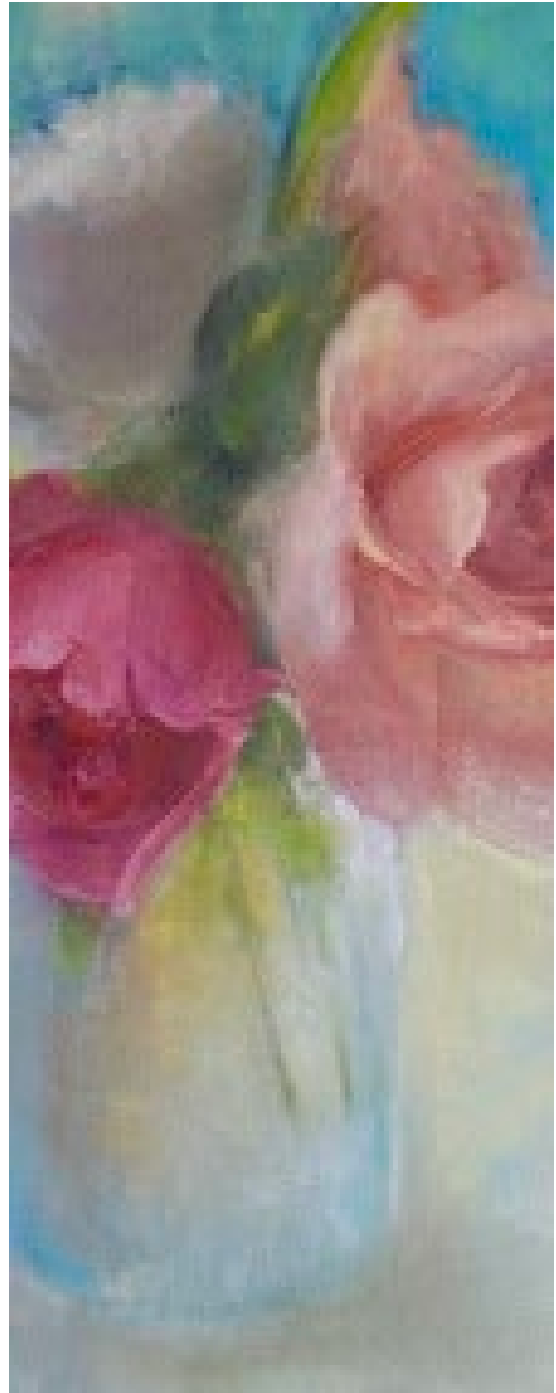
Title: Fragility of Petals

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: The flowers are from my garden. I used very light brush strokes thinking of transparencies and soft edges.



Sherri Burritt

Title: Fruit and Flowers

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This is from a series I called Birds Eye View. I enjoyed finding the objects and styling the composition. I wanted bright light with obvious strong shadows. The drawing was critical. I then layed in light paint building to heavier and then glazes.



Christine Carlson

Title: Wouldn't You Like to Fly

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fiber

Other Submissions:

Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: Cis Carlson

Artist Statement: This is a whimsical piece featuring many colors and the joy of flying. I used needle felting and my fingers to create this piece.

Bio: I have been working with fiber for many years. My work has evolved from knitting to Nuno felting wearables to now doing paintings using wool and other fibers.



Christine Carlson

Title: Field of Dreams

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fiber

Artist Name: Cis Carlson

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Scene inspired by a view while on vacation. Needle felted wool roving onto a larger piece of felted wool.



Christine Carlson

Title: Birds of a Feather

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fiber

Artist Name: Cis Carlson

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Needle felted wool roving onto a piece of felted wool and added glass beads for the birds' eyes.



Melissa Catanag

Title: Recycling

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Graphic Design,
Photoshop

Other Submissions: Yes –
also submitted same piece as
a box.

Artist Name: Melissa Stone

Artist Statement: For this project, I sought to experiment with a variety of materials and innovative techniques. I found myself particularly drawn to the textures of everyday objects around me, prompting me to capture photographs of various items in my home. These textures would serve as the foundation for my poster design. As I explored, I began to notice the typography hidden in the folds of plastic bags and the unnecessarily complicated recycling instructions that often accompany certain items.



After gathering my images, I carefully recolored them to align with a palette of green, orange, and brown. These colors were chosen intentionally to emphasize the significance of recycling while also raising awareness about the potential environmental consequences of improper disposal. Embedded within the poster are various recycling labels, instructions, statistics, and helpful resources, such as earth911.com, to guide viewers in properly recycling in their own communities.

My aim was to capture the viewer's attention with a striking design, encouraging them to uncover the subtle details woven into the composition that further communicated my concept. I envisioned the poster being displayed in an urban area, where pedestrians and drivers alike could encounter it. By placing the design in such a visible location, I hoped to

spark reflection on personal recycling habits and inspire greater environmental mindfulness within the community.

Bio: Melissa Catanag is a creative graphic designer known for her ability to infuse hidden meanings and subtle storytelling into her designs. With a sharp attention to detail, she crafts visual experiences that invite viewers to look beyond the surface and uncover deeper layers of meaning. Her work is a balance of creativity and precision, where every element is thoughtfully chosen to enhance the overall narrative.

With a passion for innovative design solutions, Melissa approaches each project with fresh ideas and a unique perspective. She enjoys exploring the connections between design and emotion, striving to create visuals that resonate on a personal level. Whether working on digital, print, or other mediums, Melissa's designs are always rich in concept and carefully executed, ensuring they leave a lasting impression on anyone who encounters them.

Danielle Catlett

Title: The Eye

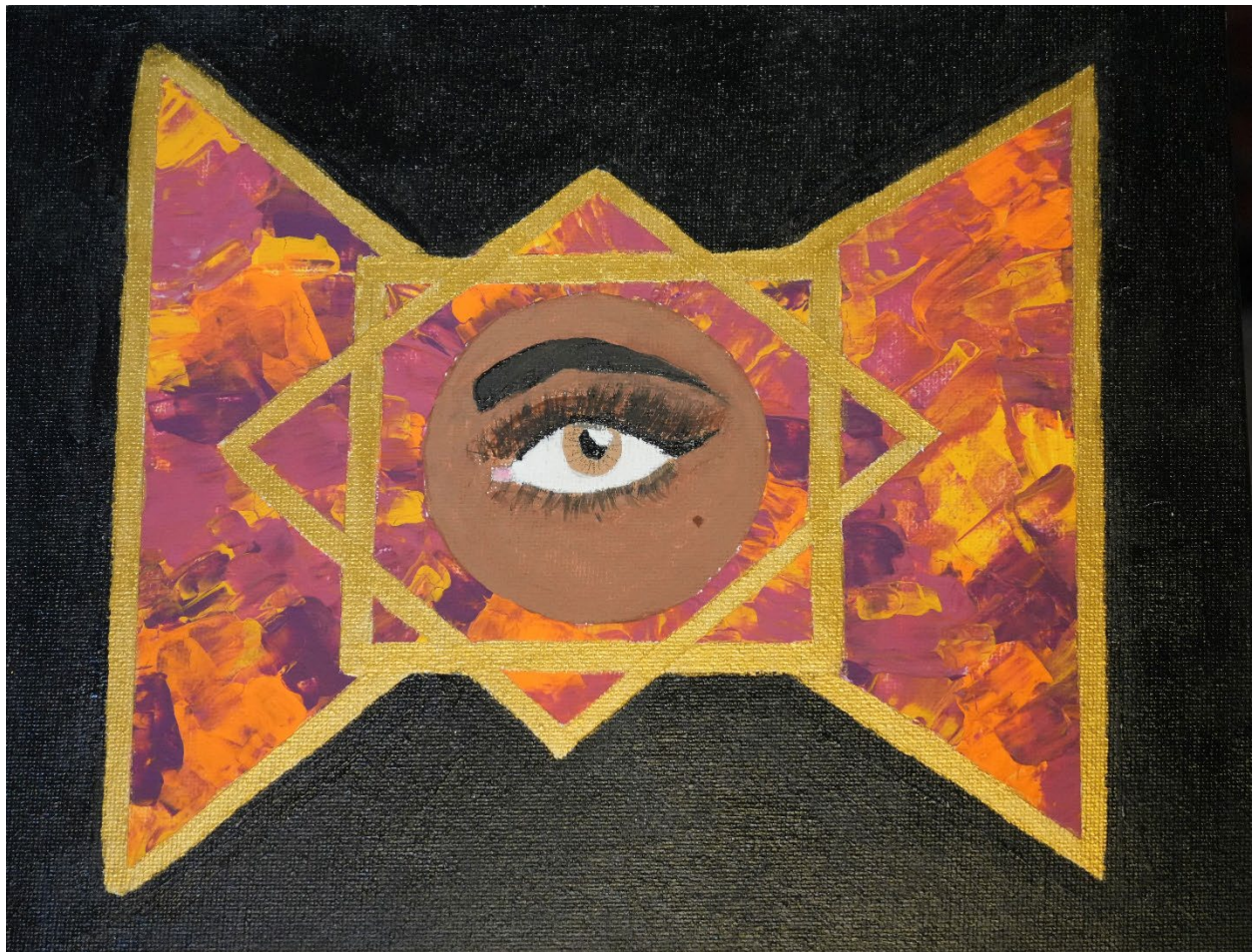
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic paint on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“The Eye” and “The Tree”).

Artist Statement: This artwork was originally created as a pencil on paper sketch but recreated on canvas in color using acrylic paints, with vibrant colors meant to be reminiscent of a sunset, with the central focus being the gaze from the singular eye of a woman of color.

Bio: I am originally from Chicago and attended college at the University of Illinois of Urbana-Champaign. I relocated to Peoria for my former job as a news producer. I am currently working towards pursuing my dream of being an artist and entrepreneur with the support of my fiancé. I have always had an aptitude towards the arts and crafting and I am looking for ways to become more involved with Peoria's community of artists.



Kenton Clubb

Title: A Siren's Song

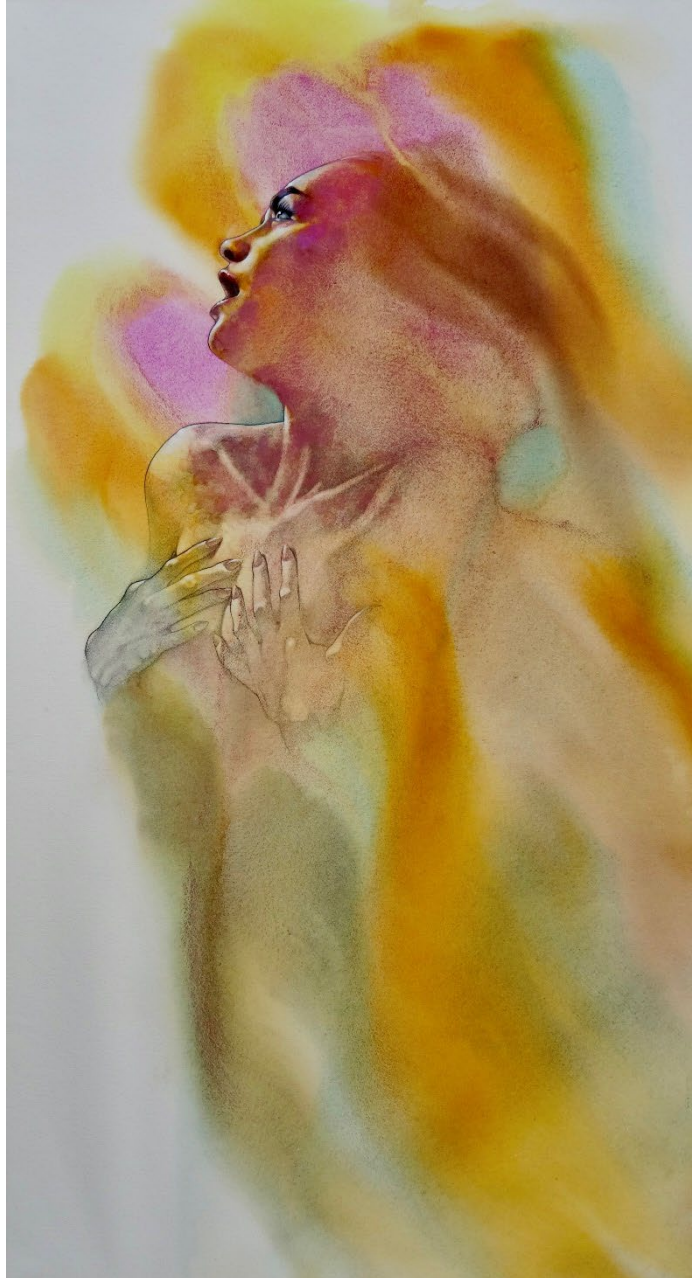
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: This is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: A dreamy watercolor painting of a mythological river siren singing a bewitching song.

Bio: Ken Clubb is a 73-year-old retired commercial illustrator who has lived in, been educated in, married in, raised a family in and worked his entire professional career in, Peoria, IL. He has been married to Froncie Clubb for almost 50 years, has 3 adult children, Philip (Sarah), Cory (Hollie) and Stuart (dating Tiffany) and has 5 wonderful grandchildren (Wesley, Noah, Keaton, Ashlynn & Zola).



Kenton Clubb

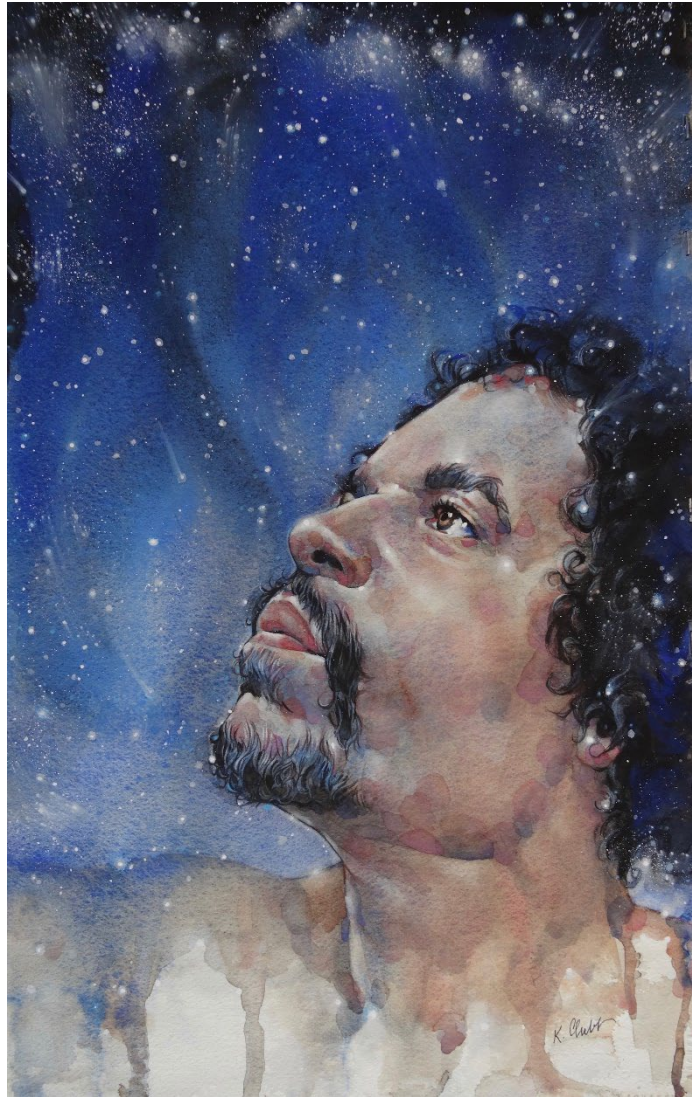
Title: Behold The Night's Blue-Ebon Triumph

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: This is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: In this watercolor portrait, my subject seeks a night sky for inspiration.



Kenton Clubb

Title: River Mermaid

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor/charcoal

Other Submissions: This is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Different media, styles, and techniques were combined to depict the mythical River Mermaid.



Lindsay Cocquit

Title: Blue Floral

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil Paints

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: Lindsay Nicole Cocquit

Artist Statement: Nature has always been my greatest inspiration, especially flowers. Growing up, I watched my mother spend hours tending to her garden, nurturing each plant with care. I was captivated by the way they transformed with the seasons—from delicate buds in spring to full, vibrant blooms in summer. This early connection to nature shaped me, and I often found myself drawing and painting the flowers that surrounded me.

This series is a tribute to those formative moments, a reflection of the flora that left such a lasting impression on my life. I wanted to capture the organic beauty of flowers with expressive, free-flowing brushstrokes, allowing the movement of the paint to echo the natural rhythms of growth and change. These paintings are more than just depictions of nature; they are a feeling—one that brings me back to the warmth and familiarity of home.

Bio: Lindsay Cocquit has been creating art for as long as she can remember. With a deep passion for both artistry and education, she pursued a double major in art and education at Monmouth College and has spent the past 14 years inspiring young artists as a high school art teacher.

Growing up surrounded by the beauty of nature, Lindsay developed a profound connection to flora, a theme that continues to influence her work today. Her mother's love for gardening sparked her fascination with plants, and she spent countless hours observing and capturing



their transformation from seed to bloom. This admiration for organic beauty is evident in her artwork, which often features delicate floral elements and natural forms.

Lindsay's artistic practice is diverse, spanning a variety of 2D mediums, including watercolors, acrylics, oils, charcoal, and colored pencils. She also enjoys working in mixed media collage, layering textures and materials to create depth and emotion. Most recently, she has been exploring the creative practice of art journaling, using it as a space for experimentation and personal expression.

Through her work, Lindsay seeks to celebrate the quiet beauty of nature while continuously evolving as an artist.

Lindsay Cocquit

Title: Pink Floral

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil paints

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: Lindsay Nicole Cocquit

Artist Statement: Nature has always been my greatest inspiration, especially flowers. Growing up, I watched my mother spend hours tending to her garden, nurturing each plant with care. I was captivated by the way they transformed with the seasons—from delicate buds in spring to full, vibrant blooms in summer. This early connection to nature shaped me, and I often found myself drawing and painting the flowers that surrounded me.

This series is a tribute to those formative moments, a reflection of the flora that left such a lasting impression on my life. I wanted to capture the organic beauty of flowers with expressive, free-flowing brushstrokes, allowing the movement of the paint to echo the natural rhythms of growth and change. These paintings are more than just depictions of nature; they are a feeling—one that brings me back to the warmth and familiarity of home.



Lindsay Cocquit

Title: Fuschia Floral

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil paints

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: Lindsay Nicole Cocquit

Artist Statement: Nature has always been my greatest inspiration, especially flowers. Nature has always been my greatest inspiration, especially flowers. Growing up, I watched my mother spend hours tending to her garden, nurturing each plant with care. I was captivated by the way they transformed with the seasons—from delicate buds in spring to full, vibrant blooms in summer. This early connection to nature shaped me, and I often found myself drawing and painting the flowers that surrounded me.

This series is a tribute to those formative moments, a reflection of the flora that left such a lasting impression on my life. I wanted to capture the organic beauty of flowers with expressive, free-flowing brushstrokes, allowing the movement of the paint to echo the natural rhythms of growth and change. These

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Concerned Peoria Citizen

Title: Peori-YEAH!

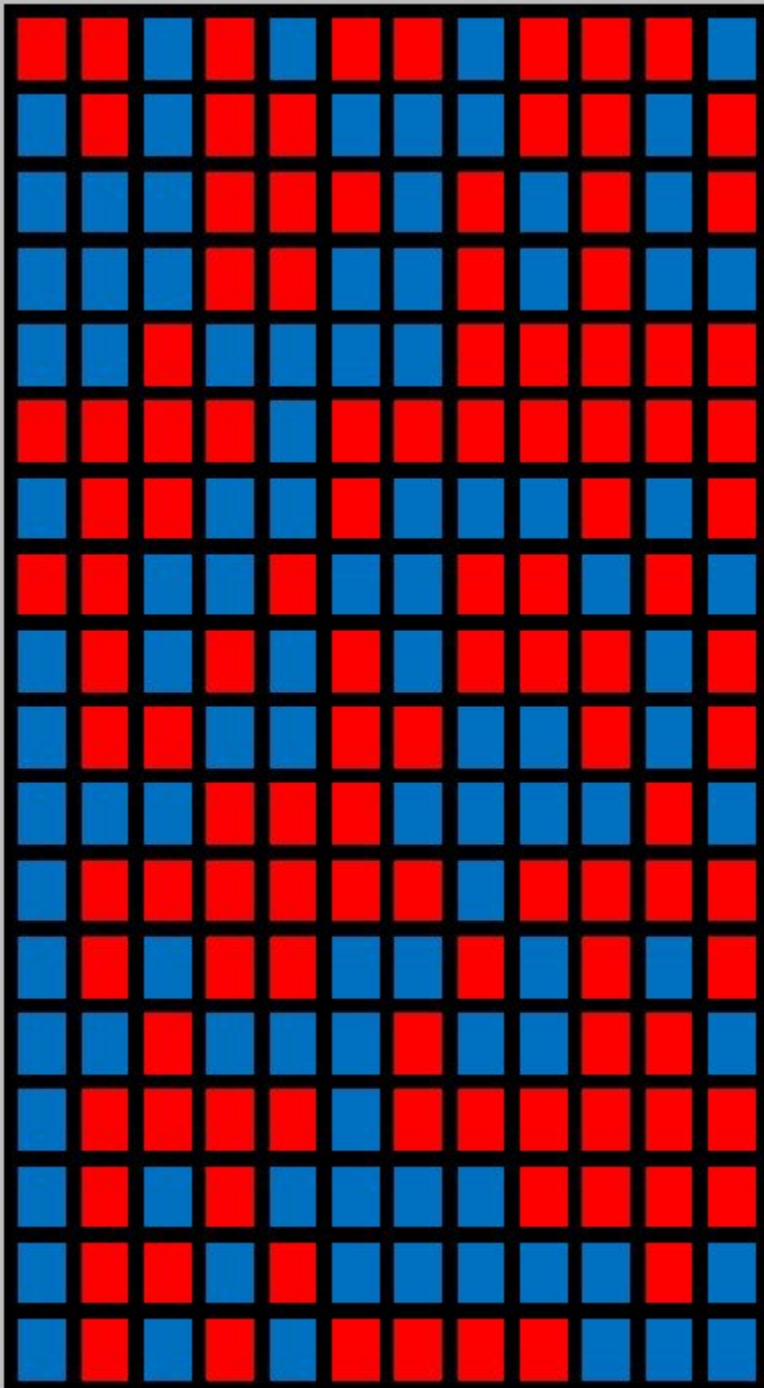
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital, using Microsoft Excel

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: This artwork is a plain text message. The viewer needs to figure out how to read the message.

Bio: Chaotic-Neutral; Civil Muckraker; Waiting Patiently for Sully's to Reopen; Eternally Bothered by all the Businesses at University and Forrest Hill with "King" or "Royal" in their names and always asking myself why no one in the city will respond to the rallying cry: "One if by [the] Land[mark]."



Jack Couri

Young Artist

Title: Into the Amazon!

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Mixed media, spray paint, acrylic, paint markers, and papier-mâché

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: This art piece is put together piece by piece with lots of cut out papier-mâché shapes that have been individually painted. I cut out all of the shapes and then put them together to create this pretty piece of art! My favorite animals are birds!

Bio: Hi, my name is Jack! I am 11 years old and live in Peoria Illinois. I am an artist like my mom, Megan Couri! I really like to build things and put things together. This piece was fun because I got mom and I got to build this artwork piece by piece! I really like fun colors that make your day happy!



Some of the favorite things that I have done in art is paper-mâché, cutting, pasting, and spray painting! I have had one art show already!

Marquavious Ewing

Title: Golden

Box or Banner: Banner

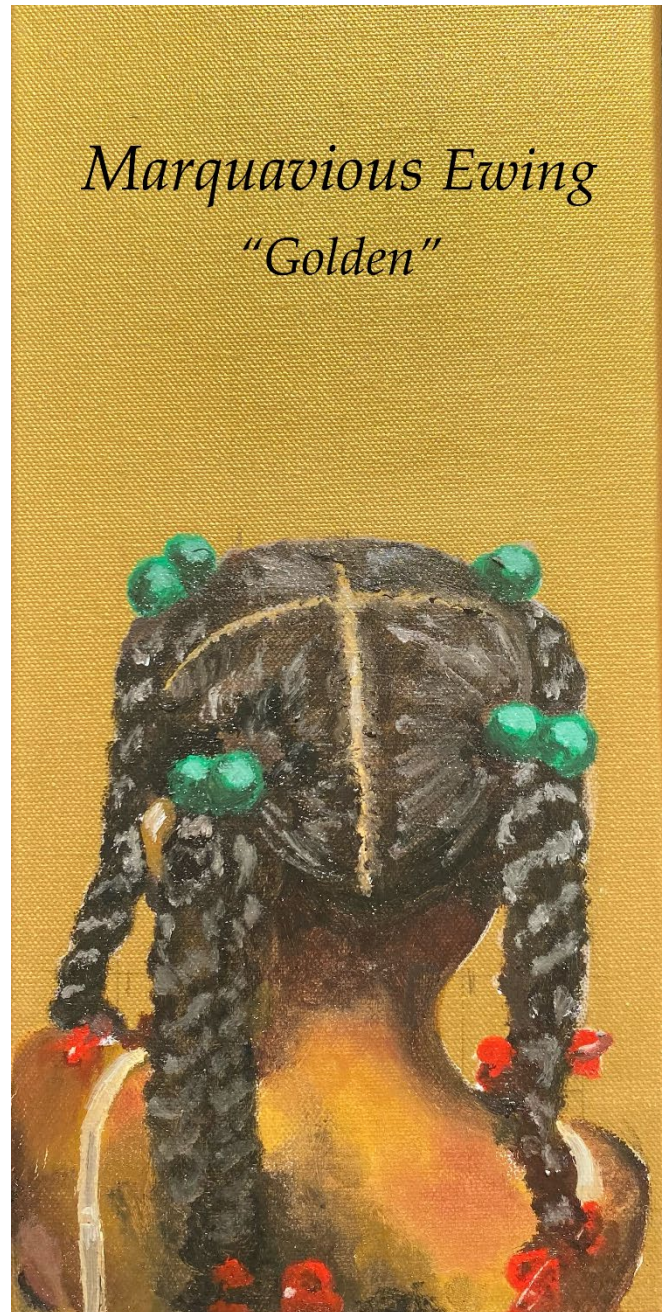
Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two banner submissions.

Artist Name: M Ewing Art

Artist Statement: A traditional painting style often referred to as wet on wet.

Bio: Marquavious Ewing is an artist from Peoria, IL who has been engaged professionally in the Central Illinois area for 2 years. After getting his start as an artist working with charcoal pencil, he now works primarily in oil paint. He gathers inspiration for his art simply as fan of creators before and after him alike.



Marquavious Ewing

Title: Jet Magazine Beauty of the Week

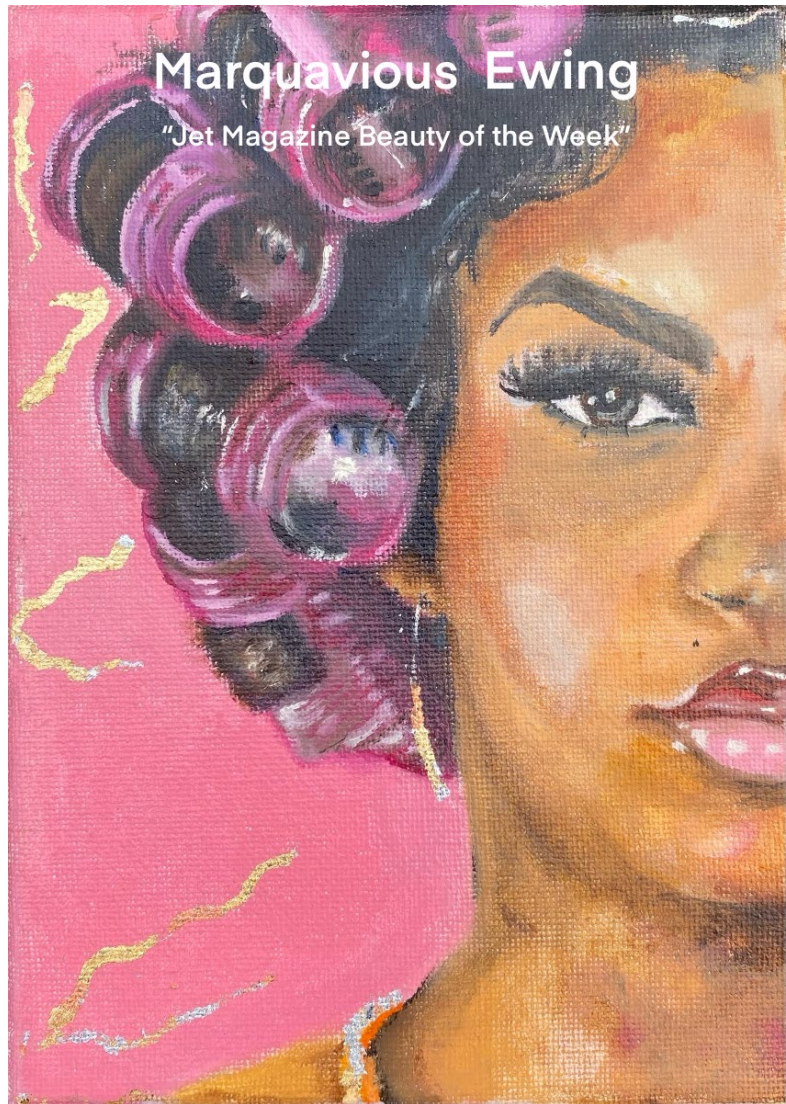
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two banner submissions.

Artist Name: M Ewing Art

Artist Statement: Wet on Wet



Rose Farrell

Title: Sanguine

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Spray paint, acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Sanguine” and “I Will Follow You Into The Dark”).

Artist Name: Feral

Artist Statement: A tree limb is frozen in the midst of transforming into a human hand, wherein lies a glowing bundle of leaves. The word "sanguine" has a dual meaning: hopefully optimistic or, blood red. Created from mixed technique of acrylic and spray paint, this painting set against a dark red background represents how we must listen to nature during uncertain times and remain hopeful. Nature loves courage.



Bio: I am a quiet artist born and raised in Peoria, Illinois. I am a graduate of the Wonsook Kim College of Fine Arts in Normal, Illinois where I served as an Art Ambassador. I am a founding member of the Peoria Guild of Black Artists and I have been involved in various artistic organizations throughout Central Illinois. I work with a variety of different mediums but primarily work with spray paint, a medium I feel in love with as a teenager due to its versatility. My work is inspired by nature and folklore, with a touch of psychedelia.

David Gregory

Title: Poppies

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This is an oil painting of a field of poppies at twilight. I first painted the background in loose brushstrokes then added more detailed renditions of the poppies.

Bio: Peoria artist David Gregory is a representational painter working in watercolors and oils. Born in Canton, Illinois, David studied architecture, painting, and printmaking at the University of Illinois. He has created over 4,500 paintings, most of which hang in public and private collections throughout the USA and abroad. Most of David's painting is done in his Peoria studio, but he also enjoys traveling in search of new inspiration. He finds watercolors ideal for painting on location and then develops these studies into finished paintings in his studio.



David is a signature member of both the Hawaii Watercolor Society and the Transparent Watercolor Society of America. His work has been juried into numerous national and international exhibitions.

David Gregory

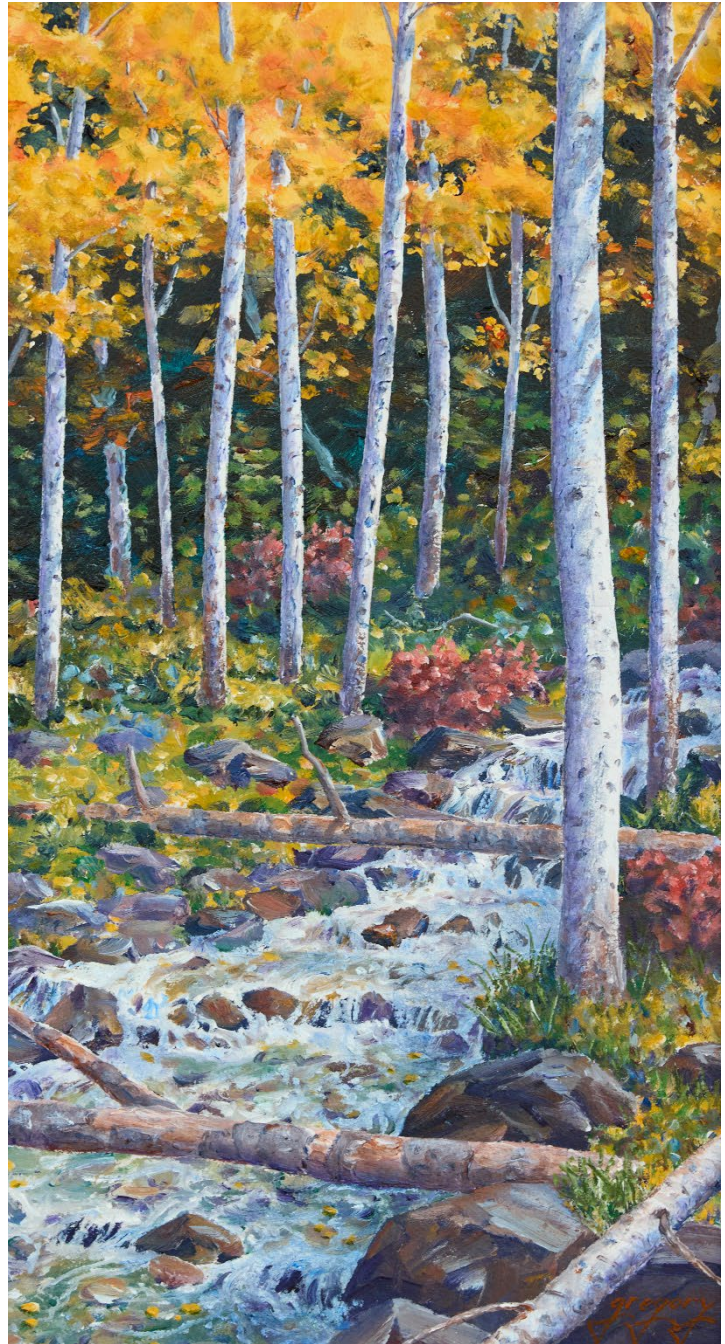
Title: Aspen Grove

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This oil painting of an aspen grove in the Sierra Mountains was created by referring to my photos and a watercolor study. The background was painted first, then the tree trunks and branches were added after.



David Gregory

Title: Gondolas

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This painting of Gondolas along the Grand Canal in Venice, Italy, was created in my studio by referring to photos and watercolor studies I had done while on a painting excursion in Italy.



Michele Marie Guzman

Title: Home on the Water

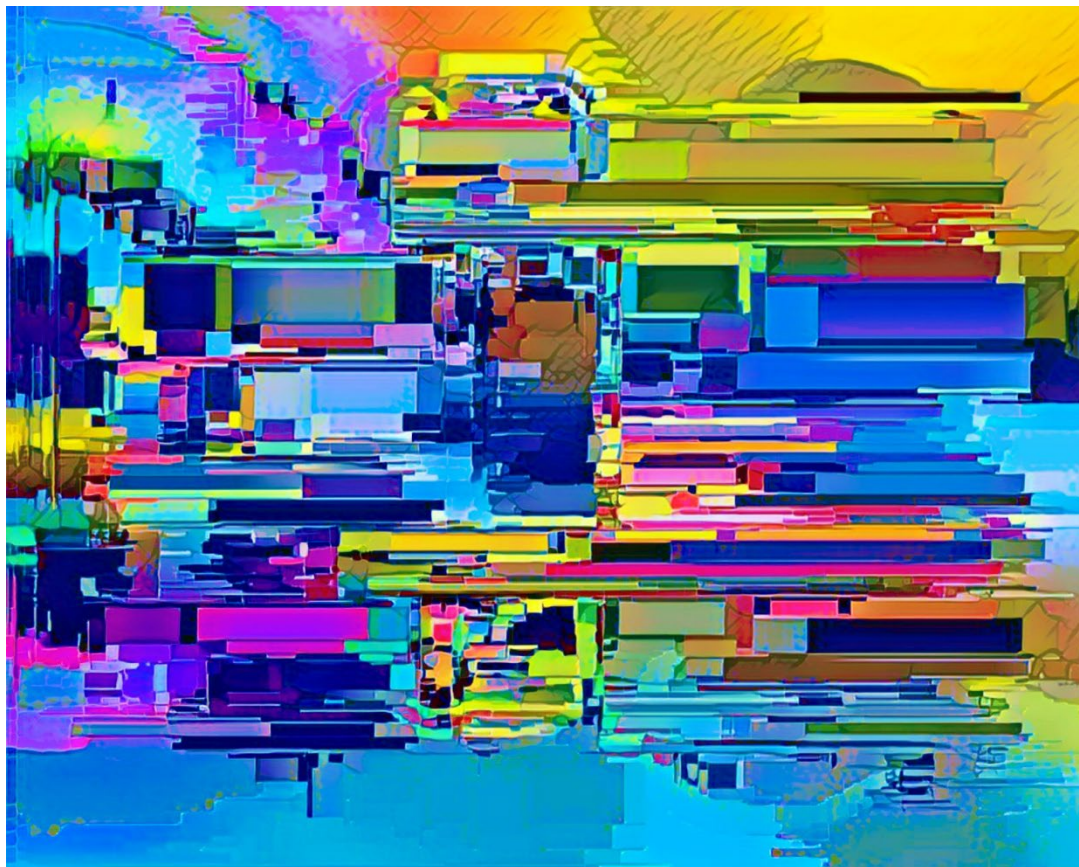
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography/digital art

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two banner submissions; also submitted one box (“Always Moving Forward”).

Artist Statement: Celebrating the beauty of the shores of the Illinois River and the people who live and work around the area. This image is as colorful and diverse as the community it represents. This piece was created from an original photograph that was changed with photoshop and other photo editing programs to create this very abstracted image.

Bio: Michele is a photographer and digital artist that takes pictures in Central Illinois, turning them into fanciful, beautiful works of art. She has been a photographer for over 40 years. Her favorite things to photograph are flowers, landscapes and abstracts. A resident of Peoria Illinois for 30 years, she sells her art in a couple fairs each year, on her website, www.micheleguzmanart.com, and at Artful Journey Gallery in Peoria, Illinois.



Michele Marie Guzman

Title: Summer Flowers Blue

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Mixed Media, Marker, Pen, Pencil and Digital Editing

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two banner submissions; also submitted one box ("Always Moving Forward").

Artist Statement: Peoria is full of the most beautiful gardens! This mixed media piece (hand drawing and digital art combo) celebrates the beauty of Peoria's gardens and the people who care for them. I can see this piece flying as the banner beautifully. All you need to do is split it down the center and put each half on one banner. This a mixed media piece. It started life as a hand drawn garden using gel pen, pencil, ball point pen and marker. It was then photographed and digitally enhanced to create the end result.



Stacy Hall

Title: Tactical Treat Thief

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Today I continue to expand and develop my subject matter which currently features misunderstood animals like the “bully” breeds, as well as other animals that carry stereotypes and stigmas. I aim to show these animals in a different light that connects them to the viewer, and shows off their natural personalities. My goal is for the viewer to stop, slow down, and to witness these moments of curiosity. Using my own sense of humor to add elements of wonder and surprise I play on the toddler like qualities that these animals possess. This hopefully allows pauses for new perspectives to take root and suspend these subconscious prejudices, even if it's for a moment; change starts somewhere.



Bio: She is originally from Darien, IL. She was self-taught for most of her adolescence until she was “gently” nudged into taking her first art class in High School. From there she excelled to the highest levels and continued her studies at Eastern Illinois University, where she studied 2-D Studio Design. She earned her BA in Fine Arts while accumulating minors in Art History and Psychology. She’s won several awards at the college level including 1st place, Best in Show, and Best Amateur Artist. After college she completed her internship with Hostel International Chicago as their Art Curator and Coordinator. She then joined the Oak Park Art League where she was featured in various showcases, and acquired more awards including the People’s Choice award. She currently resides in Peoria, IL, where she is a Special Education Teacher pursuing her M. ED in Social Emotional Learning, and has completed hundreds of commissions for clients all over the United States as a freelance artist.

Stacy Hall

Title: A 1st World Detachment

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Today I continue to expand and develop my subject matter which currently features misunderstood animals like the “bully” breeds, as well as, other animals that carry stereotypes and stigmas. I aim to show these animals in a different light that connects them to the viewer, and shows off their natural personalities. My goal is for the viewer to stop, slow down, and to witness these moments of curiosity. Using my own sense of humor to add elements of wonder and surprise I play on the toddler like qualities that these animals possess. This hopefully allows pauses for new perspectives to take root and suspend these subconscious prejudices, even if it's for a moment; change starts somewhere.



Stacy Hall

Title: Cacophany

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil on Canvas

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Today I continue to expand and develop my subject matter which currently features misunderstood animals like the “bully” breeds, as well as, other animals that carry stereotypes and stigmas. I aim to show these animals in a different light that connects them to the viewer, and shows off their natural personalities. My goal is for the viewer to stop, slow down, and to witness these moments of curiosity. Using my own sense of humor to add elements of wonder and surprise I play on the toddler like qualities that these animals possess. This hopefully allows pauses for new perspectives to take root and suspend these subconscious prejudices, even if it's for a moment; change starts somewhere.



Billie Howd

Title: idea on fire

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic and joint compound on wood panel

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two box submissions (“Destinies End” and “Silos”).

Artist Statement: This work is an abstract work with dramatic color and interesting texture. Its appeal lies in the organic look the texture lends to the surface. I wanted to choose an image that would attract the eye of passers-by with the red hue. I have placed one half of the work on the top of the banner, and the lower part below an area for writing.

Bio: I am a local artist working at The Mill in the warehouse district of Peoria Illinois. My family has lived in this area since the first settlers founded Peoria. Painting, and now sculpture has been my passion and I welcome the opportunity to show my work and meet other artists. Since having started with a wonderful teacher {Preston Jackson} I have thrived in the cities art scene and grown in my ability to produce colorful, interesting and meaningful artwork.



Qingjun Huang

Title: Antarctica

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two banner submissions; also submitted one box (“Steam Locomotive 02”).

Artist Statement: November 2024, I was on a trip to Antarctica, an emperor penguin was there alone in a region outside their normal habitat.

Bio: Qingjun Huang is a freelancer artist. He was born and raised in China, currently based in Peoria, IL.

Qingjun's representative works are from 1997 to 2006, and from 2003 till present. His works have been exhibited worldwide, including Christie's London, International Museum of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Switzerland, Chengdu Art Museum, Hunan Art Museum, Xi'an Art Museum Three Shadows Photography Art Center China, HeadOn Photofestival Australia, Photoquai Photography Biennial France, Singapore International Photography Festival, Helsinki Photo Festival, Benaki Museum Athens Greece, College of Lake County USA, among others. Qingjun is included in exhibition CIVILIZATION-The Way We Live Now, at Kunsthalle München Germany April 2025.

BBC has featured him four times, NY Times, Bloomberg, Wired, Business Insider, Guardian, China Daily also published his works. His works are in books and magazines such as HUMAN.KIND, NatGeo, Harvard Business Review, My House My Room, Family Photography Now, Architecture Boston, Chinese Photography, Grazia etc. His works shown in textbooks Oxford University and National Geographic learning.

Qingjun is very active in participating Peoria arts events and exhibitions, he had solo show twice at Contemporary Art Center for “Family Stuff” series, including the latest 12 works created in Peoria, and he just finished “Steam Locomotive in China” show at Peoria Art Guild. The “Family Stuff” photographs featuring Peorian families have published on several magazines and online, showed in Chengdu Art Museums China, galleries in Chicago, Palm Beach, Tokyo, Shanghai, Beijing, etc. in past two years.

Qingjun won rewards including Fujifilm 2022 GFX Grant Challenge Global Winner, Lishui Photography Festival Best of Show, Tokyo International Foto Award (gold), etc.

Publishments of photobooks are including , 2023. 2019.

Family Stuff works are juried into permanent collection of Louisiana State University Museum of Art, Appleton Museum of Art, College of Lake County.



Qingjun Huang

Title: Steam Locomotive 01

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two banner submissions; also submitted one box (“Steam Locomotive 02”).

Artist Statement: In early 1997, as a professional photographer, I went to Peony River city in Hei-Long-Jiang province to take photographs. I happened to discover a very old narrow-gauge railway on the left hand side of the highway. I thought the railway was abandoned, however, I was told that this was a small railway used to carry timber from the nearby forest, and all the trains were still hauled by steam train locomotives! This suddenly brought back all my wonderful memories of steam engines. As a result, I set out to capture surviving traces of the steam era with my camera. I was anxious to capture this unusual feeling, therefore, I carried my photography-kit bag and started my strenuous

pursuit of the steam experience from one forest to another one, from one locomotive to another. My footprints chasing steam locomotives can be found all over China. Through my camera lens, I have documented the last era of steam locomotives in China.



John Ingles

Title: Red Foxes

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Pencil drawing/digitally colored in Adobe Fresco

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: Research of Red Fox brought be to the pencil rendering of 2 foxes within the great outdoors. The pencil sketch was then turned into an Adobe Fresco illustration where color and line work was applied.

Bio: Illustrator, Photographer/Videographer & Tech Nerd Extraordinaire

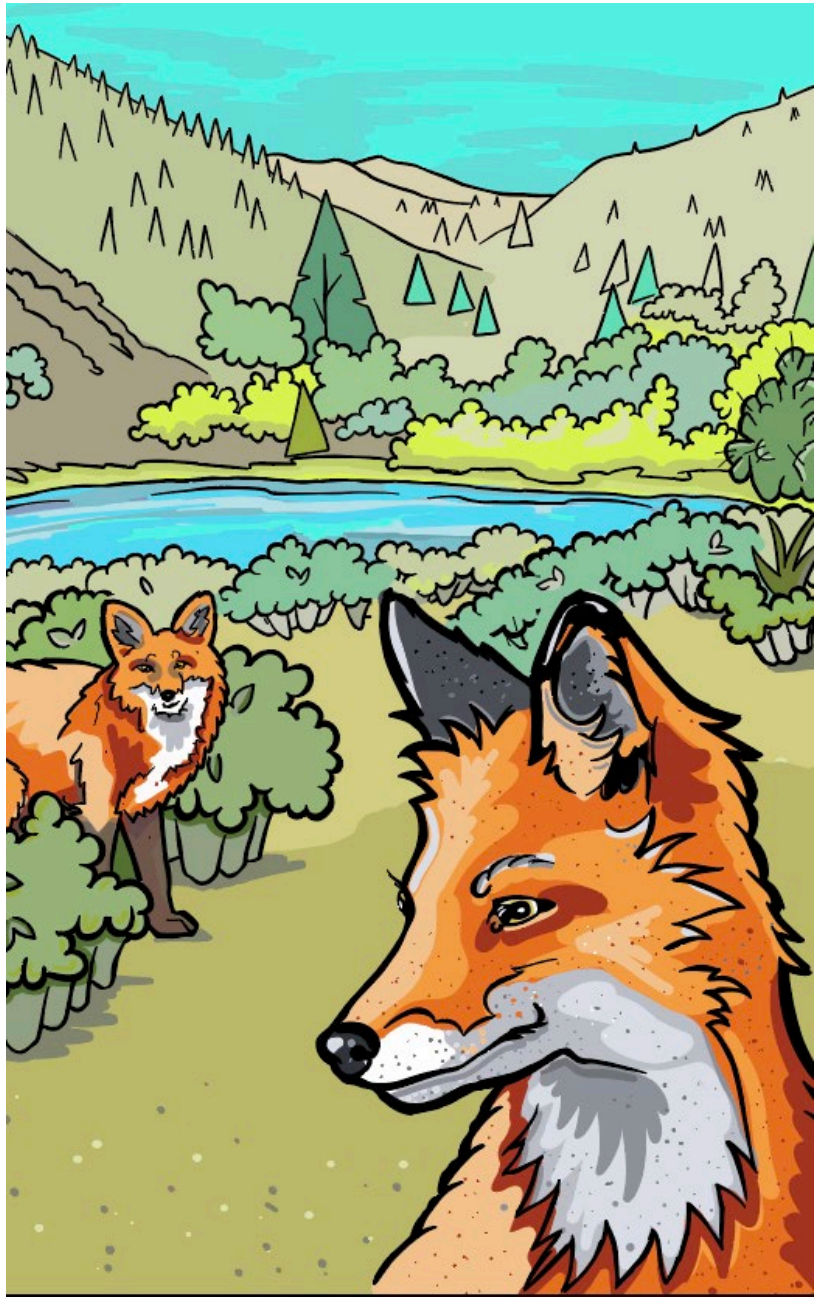
Began my illustration career working as a product illustrator at Multi-Ad Services in Peoria, IL

I now focus on plants, animals and landscapes of National Parks, Monuments and Forests

Lifelong hiker and adventurer. Called by nature to capture the beauty and diversity of our magnificent mountains, forests, deserts, lakes and streams through his unique artistry.

Favorite Park: I love Crater Lake!

Favorite Critters: Chipmunks, Pikas, Prairie Dogs and Sea Turtles



Natalie Jackson

Title: the Allure of Ebony

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital
Photography

Other Submissions: Yes –
also submitted one box
("Acknowledgement").

Artist Statement: I created this body of work to offer a glimpse into timeless beauty—an essence that transcends eras, rooted in dignity, resilience, and light. I use photography and collage to honor the depth and spirit that endures beyond the fleeting moment.

Bio: Truth, Beauty, and Pride are the themes of photographer, Natalie Jackson's work. They come together to tell gripping stories of Black life, past and present. Having lived in Chicago, St. Louis, Atlanta, and Charlotte, she gathered experiences, education, and



history and returned to the Midwest. She has worked as a staff photographer for Good News Magazine in Atlanta, Georgia to a medical photographer for Soderstrom Skin Institute in Peoria, Illinois. Years after receiving a Marketing degree she went back to school to study photography, a lifelong passion. Her long time hobby quickly became a means for expression. Notable projects were a shoot for Art AIDS Africa, Jane Fonda's Lost Boys of Sudan project, and a birthday shoot for jazz artist Freddy Cole. She currently resides in Peoria, Illinois where she sits on the Board of Directors at the Contemporary Art Center of Peoria and the Central Illinois Jazz Society. She has a studio and gallery in her father, artist, Preston Jackson's building, the Contemporary Art Center of Peoria. She shoots, sells, and displays her artwork there. Her most widely known body of work, Crowns of Empowerment,

is a love letter to the Black woman who is often neglected and disrespected. It is a series of empowering pieces, highlighting the importance of the Black woman's role throughout history. This exhibition opened in the spring of 2017 and continues to travel and educate today. Solo exhibitions of Crowns of Empowerment in Time Gallery 2017, Contemporary Art Center of Peoria 2017, SAUK Community College 2019, Macomb Art Center 2020, and McLean County Art Center 2020. Solo exhibition, And Still I Rise, highlighted her work's connection to The 1619 Project. Her piece, The Juxtaposition of Ebony, was purchased and presented to Treyvon Martin's mother, Sybrina Fulton, at the Martin Luther King, Jr. Luncheon in January 2022, by the City of Peoria's Employees for Community Concerns. She's been awarded several photography awards including the Award of Excellence at the Peoria Fine Art Fair 2018, and First Place Photography in Decatur Fine Art Fair 2019 and 2024. She was a winner of Art Pop in 2019 and Sky Art in 2021 which resulted in billboards of her work displayed throughout the region for an entire year. She was selected as a juror for the Peoria Sculpture Walk in 2018 and Photography Exhibition at Buchanan Center for the Arts in 2020. In 2022 she won the Purchase Award for her piece Triptych Warrior in National Juried Exhibition at Buchanan Art Center. In May 2023, her jazz art body of work, Straight, No Chaser, was a solo exhibit at the Buchanan Center for the Arts in Monmouth, Illinois. In 2024, she exhibited The Boldness of Being on Chicago's Magnificent Mile. She served as juror for the Buchanan Center for the Arts Photography Show. Her work was juried into the National Afro-American Museum and Cultural Center exhibition Black Joy Social Justice in 2024. She has now produced two photo books of her most noted bodies of work, Crowns of Empowerment and Straight, No Chaser.

Whitney Johnson-Lessard

Title: Chondrules (II)

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil, Ashes, and Eggshells on Handmade Paper

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Chondrules (II)” and “Rocks Under Water”).

Artist Name: Whitney Johnson

Artist Statement: Chondrules (II) belongs to a body of work, "Held Within the Rocks and Dust," that explores the alchemy of painting through the memories of materials. What are we made of? How are we physically connected to all life and the Earth? There are lives embedded in these materials that extend beyond time. These paintings work towards envisioning the world as past, present and future existing together through material and image.

Bio: Whitney Johnson-Lessard is a Peoria, Illinois-based multidisciplinary artist. Through painting, she experiments in the transformation of provisional materials. She also creates situations that explore and encourage engagements with our more-than-human companions. She received a BFA from Illinois State University, and an MFA in Art Theory and Practice from Northwestern University. She has exhibited in solo and group exhibitions in numerous states. She has been awarded a number of grants, including an Arts Dollars Grant through the Arts Partners of Central Illinois in 2024. Recently, she has participated in a residency program with Project 1612, and exhibited with the artist-run curatorial project Lease Agreement. She is a professor and teaches drawing at Illinois Central College and Bradley University.



Kelsey Knight

Title: Blooming Magnolias

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Champagne Poppies” and “Rupture”).

Artist Statement: I created this piece first sketching out my flowers with a pencil, then using a hot glue gun to go over my sketch. Afterwards, I used a method called 'Pour Painting', which uses fluid acrylic paints to create the background of the painting. Once dry, I paint in the Magnolias using acrylics, then touched it up with some mica powder and poured epoxy resin over the areas that I really wanted to stand out.

Bio: My name is Kelsey Knight. I'm 34 years old and am a local resident of Peoria and have been my whole life. After taking a hiatus from art for about 5 years or so, I've decided to finally branch out and expand my horizons by opening up my own art business called Poured Illusions. While I continue to do pour paintings, I consider myself a mixed media artist, dabbling in colored pencils, markers, acrylics, watercolors, charcoal, and other mediums.



Teresa Kodatt

Title: Spring Birch with Periwinkle

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fused Glass

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This piece is made entirely of fusible glass. It is constructed in layers starting with a clear glass sheet. The basic landscape background colors are painted using glass enamel mixed with fusing medium. The individual elements are then created by adding layers of glass frit. It was then kiln fired to precise temperatures to melt the glass together while preserving the texture of the individual elements. It measurements are 15 1/2" x 10.

Bio: I make jewelry and glasswork as a creative outlet to express my organic style and love of nature. My hope in creating something beautiful is to bring the same joy I feel making it to someone else in viewing or wearing it. I love teaching others to use their creativity in the same way to help them feel happiness and sense of self worth.



Teresa Kodatt

Title: Spring Wooded Forest Path

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fused Glass

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: This piece is made entirely of fusible glass. It is constructed in layers starting with a clear glass sheet. The basic landscape background colors are painted using glass enamel mixed with fusing medium. The individual elements are then created by adding layers of glass frit. It was then kiln fired to precise temperatures to melt the glass together while preserving the texture of the individual elements. It measurements are 15 1/2" x 10.



Teresa Kodatt

Title: Lupines and Pansy

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Fused Glass

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: The pieces pictured are made entirely of fusible glass. Each flower is made with several layers of fusible glass, all hand cut to create one of a kind designs so they have variations as no two are exactly alike. They are kiln fired to melt the glass layers together.



Jonathan David Lange

Title: 2.5.25

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photoshop digital painting and collage

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

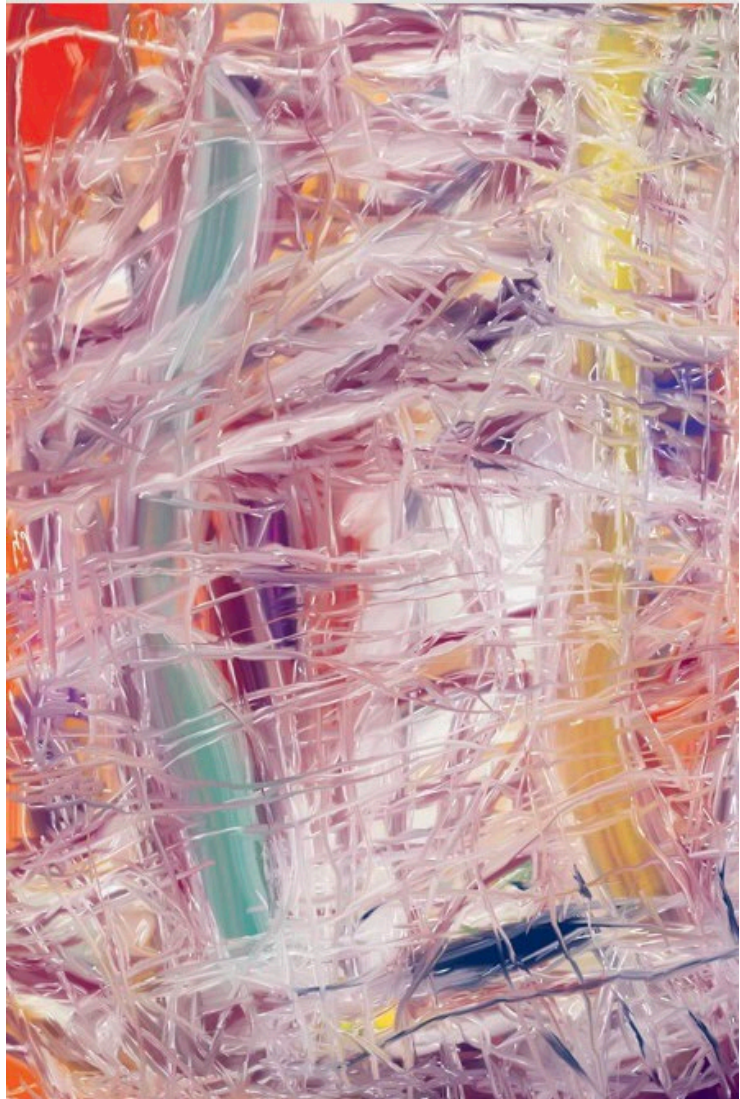
Artist Statement: I am making abstract paintings made entirely on Photoshop using customized brushes with photos off the internet and screenshots from films.

Bio: Jonathan David Lange lives and works in Peoria, IL and has sold art around the world. He has exhibited in a solo exhibition in St. Louis and group exhibitions in New York and New Jersey. His art resides in a Permanent Collection in the Saatchi Art office in Santa Monica, California.

Homeschooled his entire life, Jonathan went to a local community college and then received his Bachelors in Fine Art at Olivet Nazarene University, just outside of Chicago. He then spent a semester at The Art Institute Of Chicago on a Prior Degree Program, but decided not to continue pursuing a Masters Degree in Painting due to money constraints.

Disillusioned with the art scene in Chicago, he poured himself into film, writing a screenplay and working on making a DIY film with his friends. The film was to be abstract and incorporate the filming of paintings he would make. In the process of making these paintings he realized that he didn't actually have to make the film, he could adapt the screenplay into paintings for an abstract graphic novel, thus keeping the story visual with everything being done by his hand.

After six years and 1,400 pages the comic was complete. It was called Ferragosto and chronicled the relationship of a couple making their way through the early 21st century



where their everyday life, dreams, and nightmares mixed to an extent that they could not tell what was real.

Jonathan made several more small abstract graphic novels and then found himself focusing solely on painting again. While pursuing a deep love of abstraction he developed an approach to abstract art where any thought, action, or event could be transmuted into a painting. This essentially created an abstract lexicon that he used to articulate paintings with. He then worked on abstract works on paper that he called Journal Paintings. These are typically large works on paper with cursive sentences, large hand-made text, blocks of texture, color, and sometimes figures mixed together making a fractured abstraction. They emphasize the process of making a painting transparently, as each layer is clearly seen.

He then began focusing on large abstract paintings on paper that often leave negative space, allowing the painting to breathe. These paintings emphasize motion and gesture and, for the artist, capture as much emotional confession and nuance as a word-heavy Journal Painting, but all conveyed wordlessly in abstract acrylic paint.

Currently he is working on making entirely digital abstract art in Photoshop utilizing unique and custom digital brushes along with collaging images found online combined with screenshots of his favorite movies and TV shows.

These different approaches to art, storytelling, and painting show a natural evolution to Jonathan. One artistic idea, story, and painting follows the next, like steps while walking. When looking back, Jonathan is able to use these past techniques and approaches like utensils in a toolbox--adding and removing them whenever necessary. For him it is all connected.

Jonathan David Lange

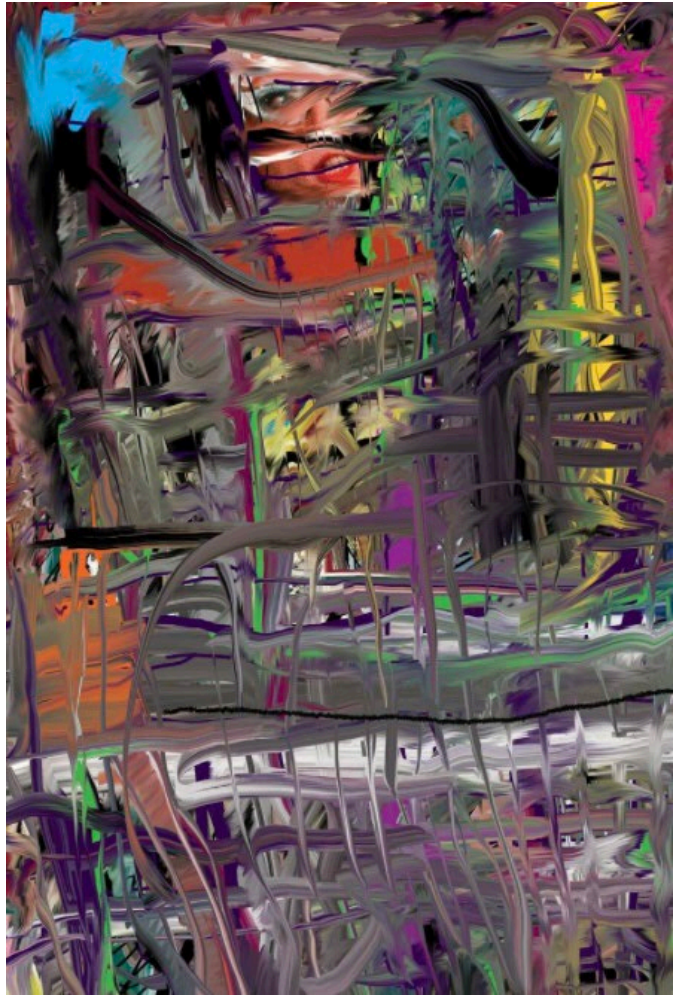
Title: 2.19.25

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital abstract paintings made on Photoshop with collaged elements from images found online

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: I am making abstract paintings made entirely on Photoshop using customized brushes with photos off the internet and screenshots from films.



Jonathan David Lange

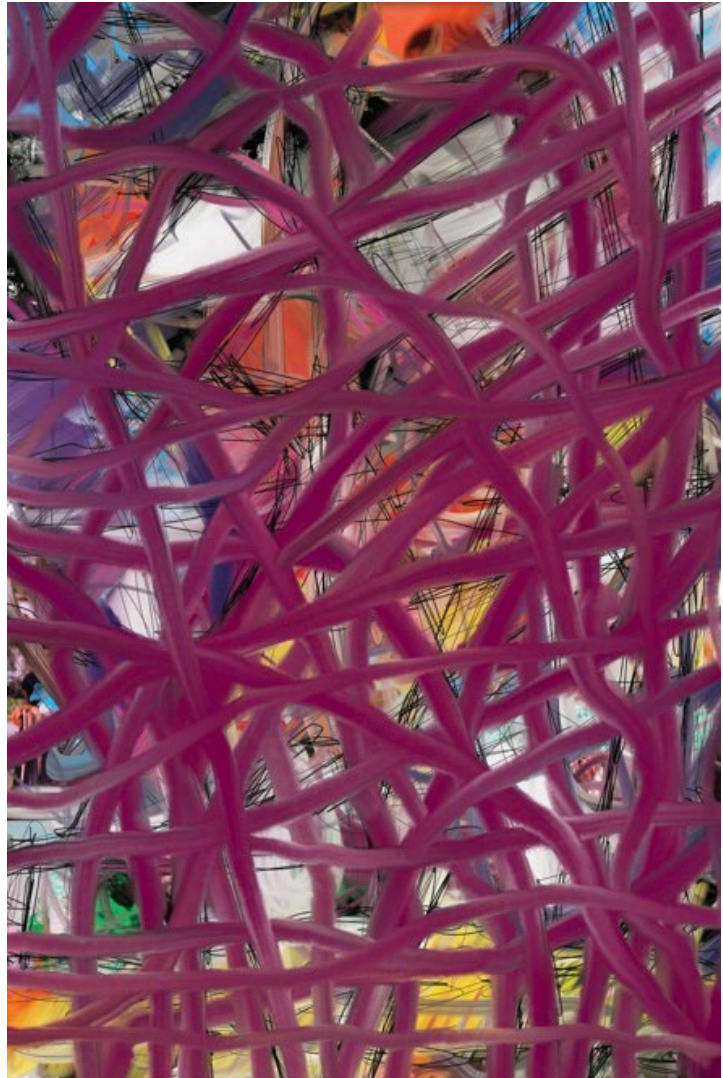
Title: 3.7.25

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital abstract paintings made on Photoshop with collaged elements from images found online.

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: I am making abstract paintings made entirely on Photoshop using customized brushes with photos off the internet and screenshots from films.



Max Martin

Title: Mullein, New England Prairie Aster, and Common Milkweed

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic

Other Submission: Yes – also submitted this piece as a box.

Artist Statement: In the middle of the winter I always begin to think of the warmer seasons from the past, this winter I was specifically thinking of the native prairie plants and “weeds” in my backyard. I thought back to their lush green-ness and vibrant flowers and desperately wanted a little piece of that back, and so, “Mullein, New England Prairie Aster, and Common Milkweed” was created. I wanted a painting full of color and energy and thought the full leaves and pronounced stalk of a mullein plant bursting from the ground would be perfect. Another aspect I wanted to pay special attention



to was the color I incorporated, I wanted complementing colors of red, green, yellow, and purple. The complementary colors help to enhance the vibrancy of the plant life in the painting and engage viewer's eyes. This project brought me the warmth of summer in a cold winter season and I hope the finished product can imitate that experience for others.

Bio: Max Martin is a local Peoria area artist who focuses on nature related subjects through an abstract-expressionist lens. They went to Eureka College as an undergraduate student and attended Eastern Illinois University to complete a Masters of Art degree. As an Illinois native Max is especially interested in local environments and plant life. Max loves to create beautiful and vibrant scenes that are interesting and inviting to the viewer!

Dylan McMurtry

Title: Don't Worry

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: Don't worry - the nicest piece of graffiti in the world.

Bio: Dylan McMurtry is a self-taught local photographer who enjoys exploring the city of Peoria and the surrounding areas. A lifelong local, Dylan captures moments and images that reveal the DNA of the Midwest.



Hattie Lee Mendoza

Title: Gussied Up

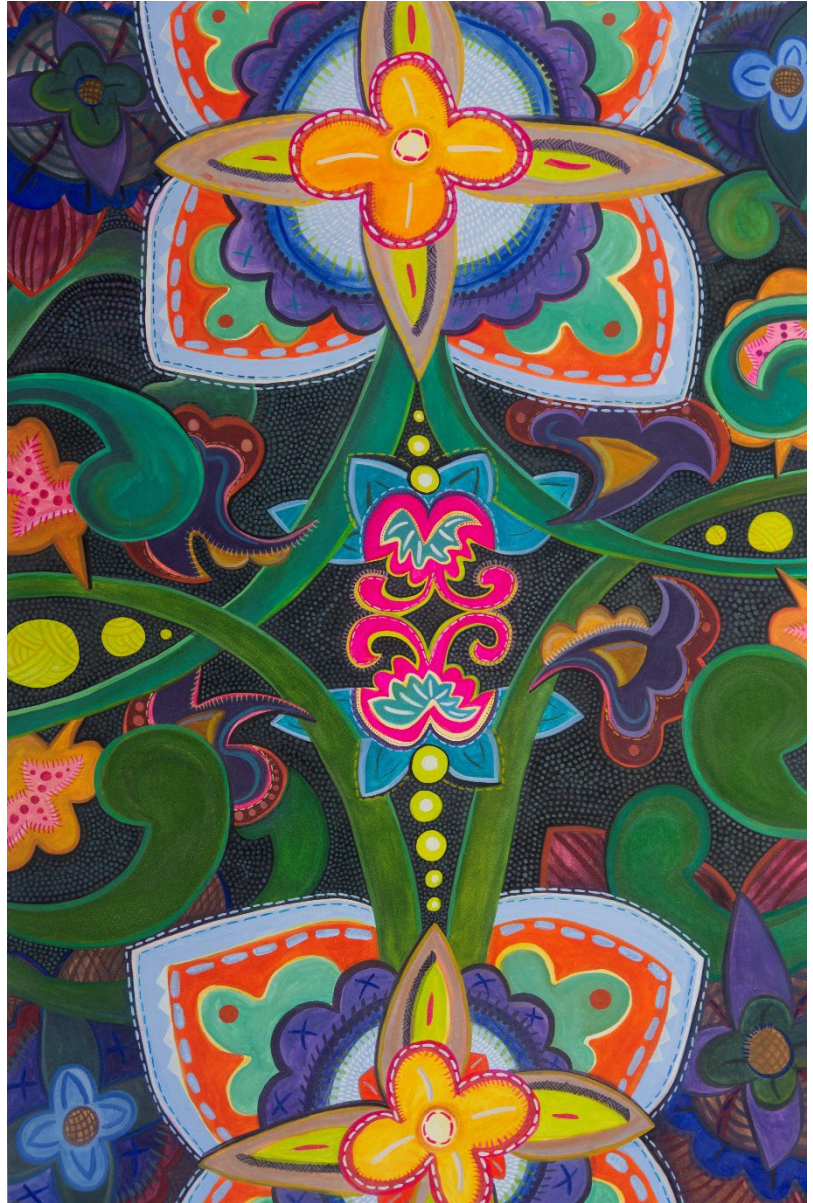
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Gouache, Watercolor, Aquabord

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Sovereign Spring (Purple)” and “Rhythmic Exuberance”).

Artist Statement: This painting is based on Southeastern Native American floral aesthetics and incorporates painted textures referencing beadwork and stitches.

Bio: Hattie Lee Mendoza has an MFA from Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois, and a BA in graphic design from Tabor College, Hillsboro, KS.



Maggie Minton

Title: Native White-tailed Deer

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Art

Other Submissions: No

Artist Name: Maggie Jackson

Artist Statement: I used a Cintiq 16 Wacom tablet to create a digital artwork inspired by the state animal and the native tribe that Peoria derives its name from. I wanted to create a piece that would be clearly readable from far away. So, I chose bold lines and highly contrasted colors. The line work was done with the stabilization settings fairly high to give the piece a clean look. The framing of the horns was also important, given the fact that the piece would go on a vertical banner. The dimensions are based off of standard banner sizes, but I can't say for sure if I got that part right!

Bio: Maggie Minton is currently a local journalist with WMBD News. They grew up in Washington, IL; eventually attending Illinois Central College and Illinois State College. In community college, Maggie received an associate degree in theatre. At ISU, they graduated with a double-major in theatre and film studies and philosophy.

While at university, Maggie was the president of the Philosophy Club and worked in fundraising for the school. Now, Maggie has made Peoria their home and they continue to participate in local theatre productions. They also enjoy reading manga, drawing, and learning Japanese in their free time.



Warith Muhammad

Title: Gods Music

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Art

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: War

Artist Statement: Digital Art creative software.

Bio: Warith Rahim Muhammed aka 'War '

The tough streets of Oakland's bay area is the rich backdrop which sets the tone and script for the artist known as “War”. After relocating to the Midwest, his style in the urban art of hip hop came to full form. The combination of his unique lyrical style and focus on science-mixed with social and political relevance taps listeners with music that he calls “Gods Music”.



War also flips the letters in his name around in his alias to call his production company Raw Hit Entertainment. As his career has gained momentum, he began opening for such acts as Ginuwine and Boyz II Men, as well as being in The Source Magazine's Unsigned Hype Hip Hop Artist Showcase.

Using blazing hot music from his Grammy nominated production team, wrapped around smart sharp lyrical content, War's new project called “War Elements” adds a different twist to the current hip hop establishment.

War's delivery elevates the music far beyond the noisy, busy hip hop sound.

Warith Muhammad

Title: Stop All This Killing

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Art

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: War

Artist Statement: Digital Art creative software.



Warith Muhammad

Title: War Elements Dark Light

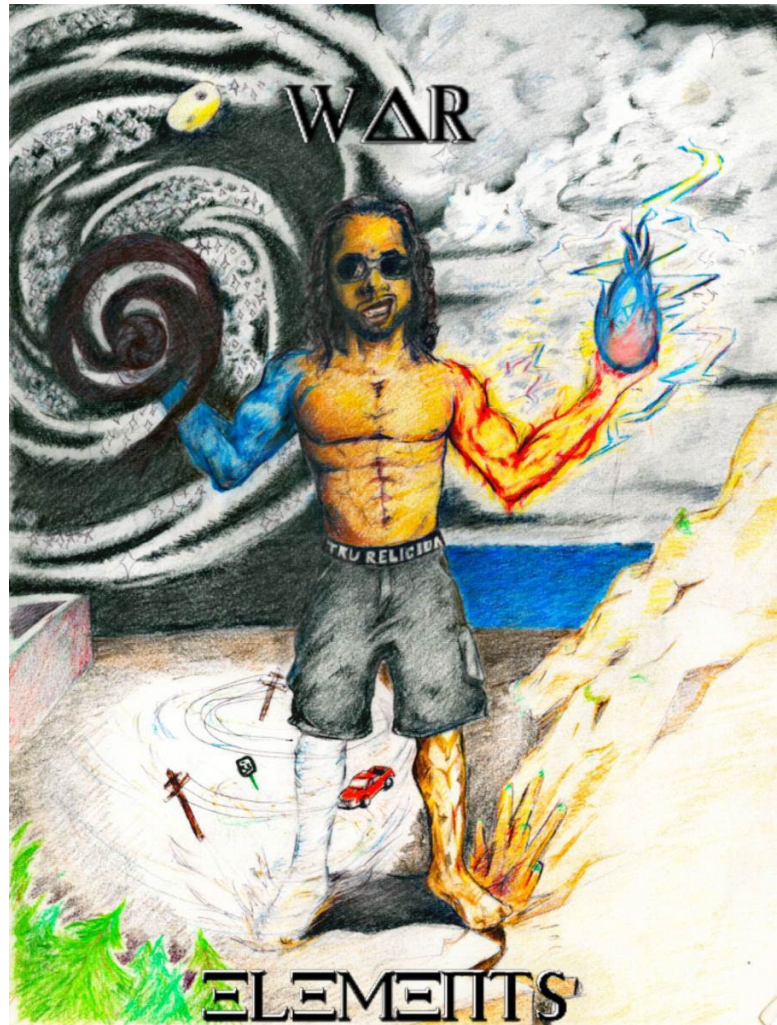
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Art

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Name: War

Artist Statement: Hand Drawn of a cartoon Character of "War" as an Avatar



Sarahi Muñoz

Title: Spring Will Come

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Watercolor and poster paint on paper

Other Submissions: No

Artist Name: Cloudgaze

Artist Statement: With my artwork, I try to explore the beauty of life and optimism for the future. Whether that's through slice of life settings or fantasy settings. This piece explores all of that, "Spring Will Come" is a four-part illustration that shows the seeming end of life of a tree. But amazingly enough, the following spring the tree blossoms. This symbolizes life and the hardships we can go through. But even if we fall over, we can always get back up and blossom.

I get inspiration and ideas from things I see in nature and the world around me. It was no different for this piece, which was referenced from an actual tree and house in West Peoria. I'm glad I was able to capture this beautiful event I witnessed with a detailed watercolor and poster paint illustration.

Bio: Sarahi Muñoz is an illustrator who with her artwork tries to express the wonders of life. She may do this through a slice-of-life setting, or a fantasy setting that is still realistic and possible to achieve in this world.



Jaci Musec

Title: a place to roam

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Embroidery

Other Submissions: Also submitted same piece as a box.

Artist Statement: This work is an abstracted landscape in thread and fabric. I embroider by hand and do not follow any pattern. I approach my embroidery in the same way I approach my abstract paintings, I just begin.

Bio: Jaci Musec is a Peoria based abstract artist. Jaci found a way to her art through a painful Infertility journey. Painting abstract became a self-healing tool and a catalyst for Musec. Her work conveys an emotional landscape, working with themes of mental health, infertility, self-actualization, female empowerment and more. As she began to find her language and voice as an artist, she explored new mediums. Currently Jaci creates abstract paintings, abstract embroidery and various combinations of those. She also uses her own poetry, letter writing, murals and Instagram to engage with her audience.

Jaci has been creating work since 2015. Having had her work exhibited in both group shows and solo exhibitions throughout central Illinois. Jaci Musec's is one of the founding members of the North Art Studios, she conducts a monthly workshop entitled PLAY! and is working to launch two more workshops in the coming year. She is an active member of the local art community.



Daniel Nagel

Title: Spire

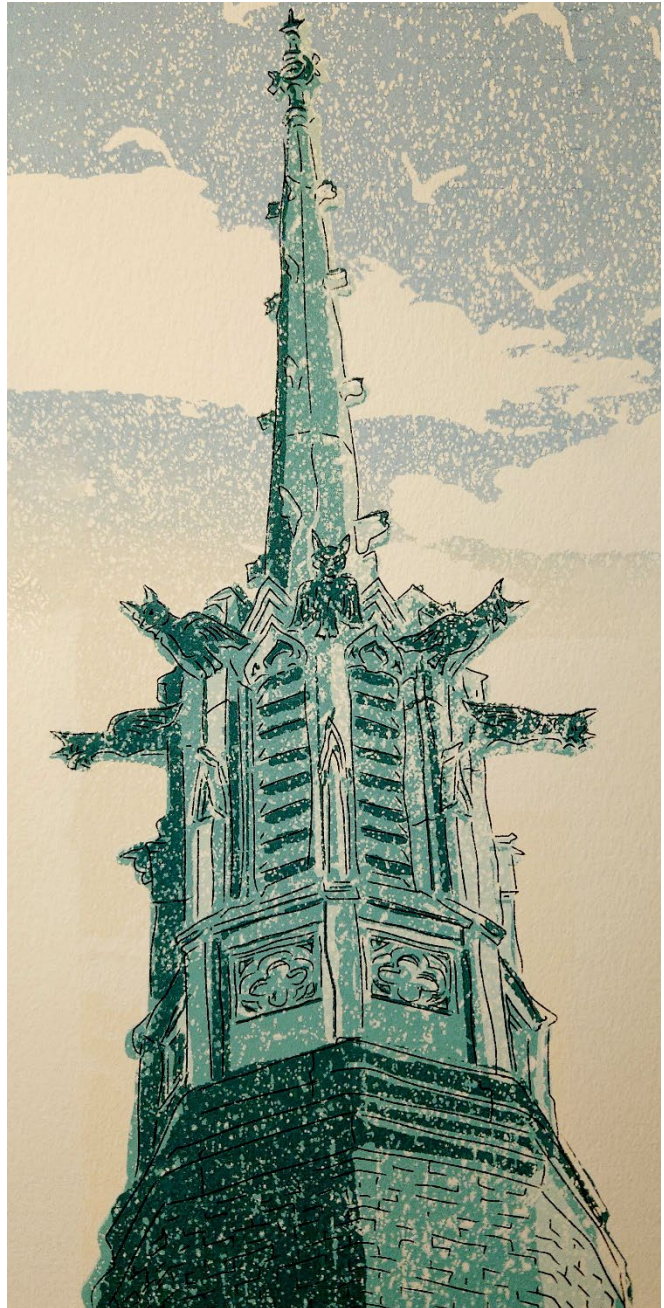
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Screen Print

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Dial Up” and “Out of the Garden”).

Artist Name: Dan Nagel

Artist Statement: 6 layer screen print on paper, depicted the southern most spire of Peoria's Scottish Rite building.



Amanda Nutzman

Title: Late Summer

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Gouache on Paper

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Dog-Day Cicada” and “Hollyhock Pollen”).

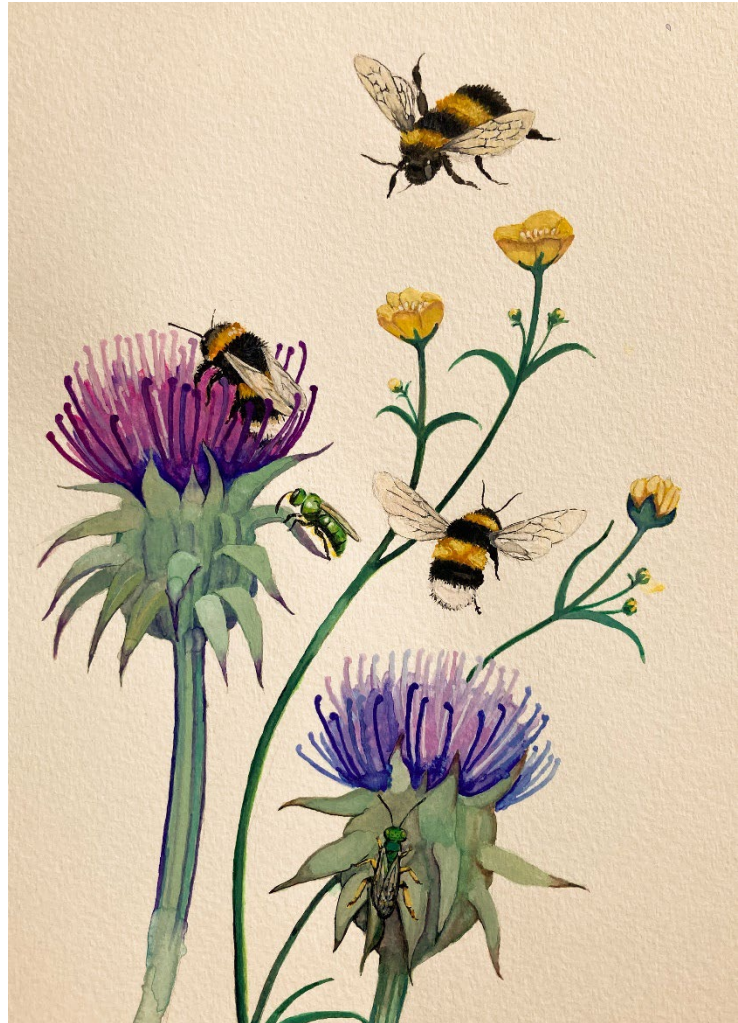
Artist Statement: My illustrations often come from things I observe in nature, and bees are one of my favorites. This whimsical botanical illustration featuring the pollinators was painted with gouache on heavyweight watercolor paper. The original has sold.

Bio: My artwork and illustrations depict outdoor experiences and the magic of childhood.

When I was young, I lived in a small house on an abandoned orchard in Washburn, IL. I spent my days exploring the boundary between the wild wooded area on the property, and the cultivated garden and orchard that still produced fruit. Those days of being able to observe nature deeply, and use my imagination unhindered, are still at my core.

Today I live with my husband and children in Peoria, IL. We spend our free time hiking and biking all of the area's amazing green spaces.

Over the last fourteen years I have created custom illustrations for clients and sell my work online as well as locally.



Jlynn Parker-Frakes

Young Artist

Title: No Signal

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic Paint and Pencil

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two boxes (“Bubbles” and “It’s Gonna Be Okay”).

Artist Statement: My technique included drawing with pencil first and shading then coloring the middle with colored pencil before using paint to create the lettering.

Bio: Jlynn is a vibrant and talented 16-year-old from Peoria. She enjoys all forms of art from drawing, painting, crocheting and sewing. When she isn't doing art, she is spending time doing homework, reading or spending time with her friends. This is her first time submitting art to a contest.



Jessica Peterson

Title: It's Gonna Be Okay

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Mixed Media

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Sometimes the world around us is bright and cheerful, but we don't feel that way, and we get stuck. But it's gonna be okay. This is a mixed media painting - it's one of my earlier paintings from my house series. My houses are crooked because...life is crooked. I also don't like drawing straight lines...I'd rather live in a crooked house.

Bio: Jessica Peterson is a multifaceted artist living in Peoria, Illinois. While her drawings and photos express her darker feelings, her colorful paintings reflect the carefree childhood just beyond her reach. Jessica was a two-time winner of the Sky Art Peoria billboard contest, in 2017 and in 2022. Whether she has a camera in her hand, charcoal, clay, or a paintbrush, her goal is the same: to give people the chance to escape into a world of her own making.



Jessica Peterson

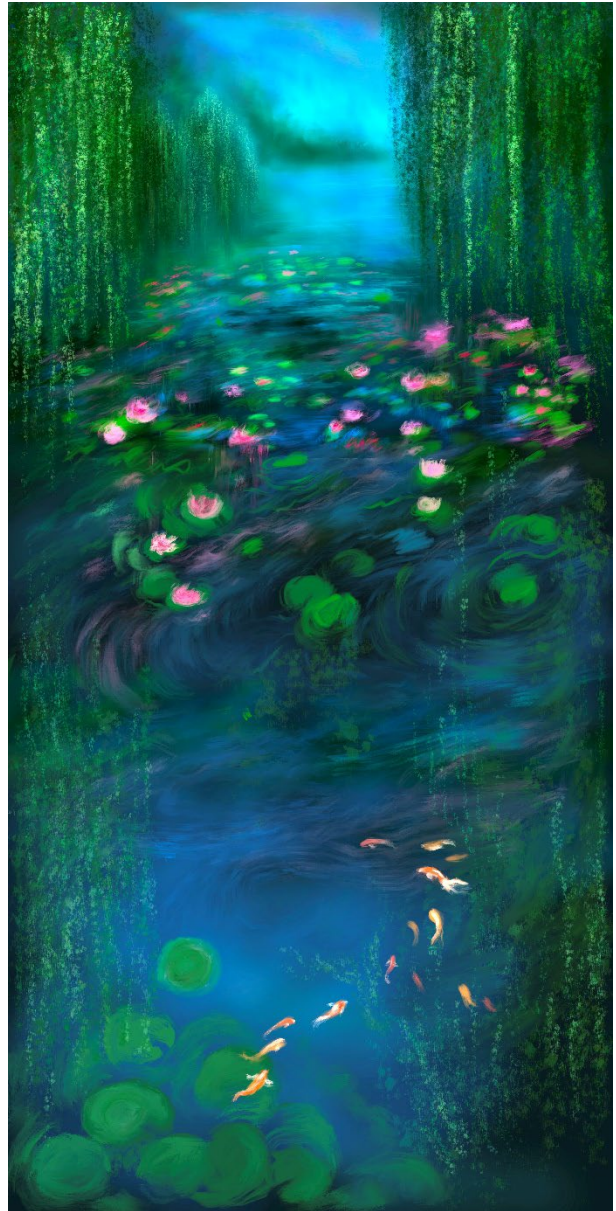
Title: Be Still

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Painting

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Sometimes the hardest thing to do in this fast paced world is slow down. I created this painting digitally with the Apple Pencil on my ipad. I didn't start with a sketch or concrete idea, I wanted to jump in and see where my art takes me. I find this way of painting therapeutic, especially if I'm stressed. I'm free to enter this dream like world, with no rules.



Jessica Peterson

Title: Almost Autumn

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital Painting

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the third of three banner submissions.

Artist Statement: Calendars dictate seasons or days, but sometimes we're not ready...not quite. I created this painting digitally on my ipad with the Apple Pencil. I didn't start with a sketch or concrete idea, I just wanted to jump in and see where my art would take me. I find this way of painting therapeutic, especially if I'm stressed. I'm free to enter this dream like world, with no rules.



Aimee Reatherford

Title: Timeless Journey

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: This photograph is all about my love for vintage cars. There's something special about the way these cars hold onto the past while still looking amazing today. I've always been drawn to their unique designs and the stories they tell. To me, they're not just cars – they're pieces of history that still feel fresh and full of life. Through this image, I wanted to capture that timeless vibe and remind people of the beauty in things that last.

Bio: Aimee Reatherford is a street photographer who is passionate about capturing images in a split second. Her work is driven by a love for timeless beauty and the unique stories that moments and objects can tell. Inspired by classic cars and nature, Aimee seeks to freeze fleeting moments that reflect life's simplicity and complexity, often highlighting the details that people tend to overlook.



Lori Reed

Title: Getting the Scoop

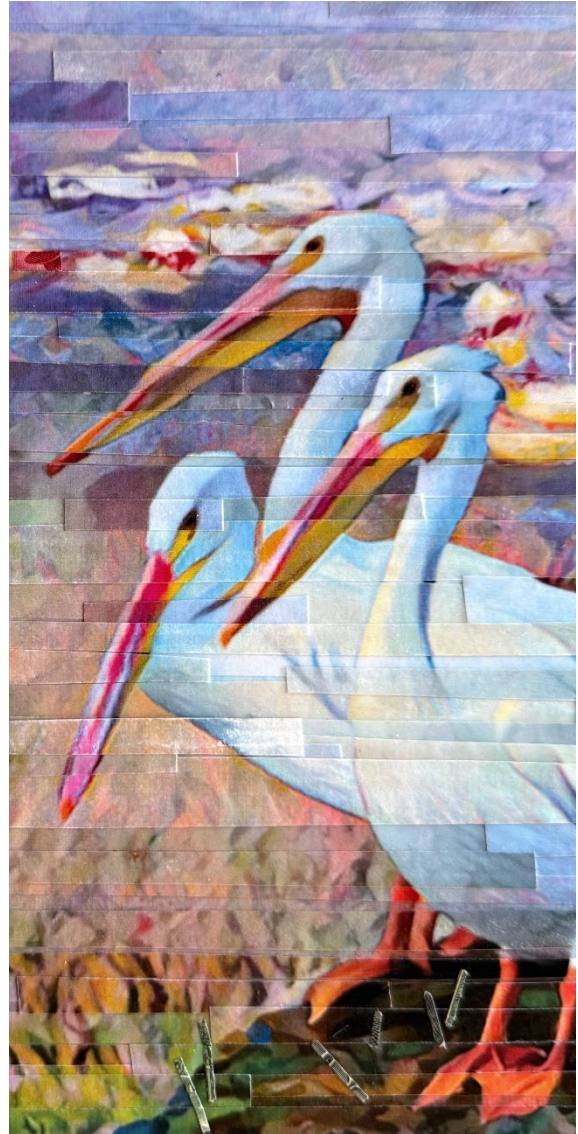
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Mixed Media Collage

Other Submissions: Yes – this is the first of two banners; also submitted one box (“Southern Exposure”).

Artist Statement: Digital alterations were made of a photo composite of 3 pelicans and a Claude Monet painting (Water Lilies). Five of those versions were printed on a laser printer, cut into strips and combined with vintage postage stamps and shredded currency. Claude Monet’s Water Lilies, 1915-26; in the public domain. Joe Couri’s photo of pelicans; used with permission.

Bio: Lori Reed was raised on a farm in central Illinois. She received her BFA from the University of Illinois and spent most of her adult life running a graphic design business. She’s been making mixed media collages for the past 17 years and has used photos as the basis of her art since 2009. In her current body of work, she cuts her digitally altered photos into quarter-inch strips and combines three versions of the scene to layer up the image. She then embeds vintage postage stamp fragments, maps, text or shredded money in the final layer.



Lori Reed

Title: Star Gazer

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Mixed Media Collage

Other Submissions: Yes – this is the second of two banners; also submitted one box (“Southern Exposure”).

Artist Statement: Digital alterations were made of a photo composite of a great horned owl and a Vincent van Gogh painting. Four of those versions were printed on a laser printer, cut into strips and combined with music notes. Vincent van Gogh’s *The Starry Night*, 1889; in the public domain. Jill Lang’s photo of a great horned owl; used with permission. Don Mclean’s song “Vincent” inspired the music note additions in the owl’s body. Original piece is 12”H x 16”W



Gabriel Reyes

Title: Growth

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Digital

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: The work here is dedicated to my parents who've gone through many hurdles to get me where I am today. The rice seed represents myself and the hands my parents. I chose this crop since rice is traditionally a hard crop to farm by hand and is used to symbolize my parent's hardship. The bangus (milkfish) is a popular dish in the Philippines and there are many to describe the potential unlocked for me because of my parent's ability to endure struggle in order to create opportunities for me.

Bio: Gabriel is a Filipino, born and raised in Peoria. Media such as anime and video games inspire him. He currently does art as a hobby but plans on attending university to study animation. He prefers to use digital as his medium, but enjoys experimenting with other tools such as ink and charcoal.



Jay Roach

Title: Galaxy Girl

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Coptic Marker

Other Submissions: No

Artist Name: Roach

Artist Statement: I've always loved space, and enjoy drawing people and flowers, so I decided to mix the three into one picture

Bio: Born and Raised in Troy Grove, Illinois

The birthplace of Wild Bill Hickok, Troy Grove also shaped the early years of an artist whose journey is as dynamic as the town's legendary gunslinger. Growing up in a small town before the internet, his childhood dreams of baseball were cut short when he



discovered he couldn't hit a curveball. Instead, he turned to books, devouring stories, diving into music, and fueling a boundless curiosity about history, lore, and the unknown. These interests became the building blocks of his creative soul and the foundation of the artist he is today.

Life in a Creative Freeze

For 25 years, his artistic pursuits were put on hold. During this time, he focused on raising children, earning a living, and embracing the joys and challenges of everyday life. Even while he wasn't creating, his mind was a sponge for inspiration. The macabre visions of Chet Zar, Rob Liefeld's dynamic comic art, Mark Bagley's iconic superheroes, and Wes Freed's Southern Gothic album covers left an enduring impact. A devoted music lover, he became one of the best wedding DJs outside of Chicago, known not only for his ability to energize the dance floor but also for his deep knowledge of the artists behind the hits.

Unfreezing Creativity

When the creative freeze thawed, his artistic drive surged back with intensity. Armed with Copic markers, colored pencils, and a revitalized imagination, he crafted a bold new style. Inspired by wordplay, unexpected perspectives, and his personal take on media, music, and movies, his work reimagines familiar subjects in ways that challenge perception. His ever-curious nature and short attention span only fuel his versatility, bringing dynamic energy to his creations.

Peoria Life and Artistic Exploration

Now residing in Peoria, Illinois, with his wife, four dogs, three cats, and a judgmental umbrella cockatoo, he continues to explore creative horizons. Peoria's bustling restaurant and art scenes offer endless inspiration and opportunities for growth. From this vibrant community, he channels the wisdom gained from his journey into bold, impactful art that tells his unique story.

Maggie Ryan

Title: Crawling Tiger

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic on Skateboards

Other Submissions:

Yes, this is the first of two banner submissions; also submitted one box ("Nike Flowers").

Artist Name: Catherine Ryan

Artist Statement:
Crawling tiger came to me on a whim. I thought of art I would want to see in a tattoo studio and couldn't stop picturing a massive tiger with a light background. It is bold and simple.

Bio: Maggie Ryan is a graphic designer by trade and an artist by heart.



Maggie Ryan

Title: Ocean Crash

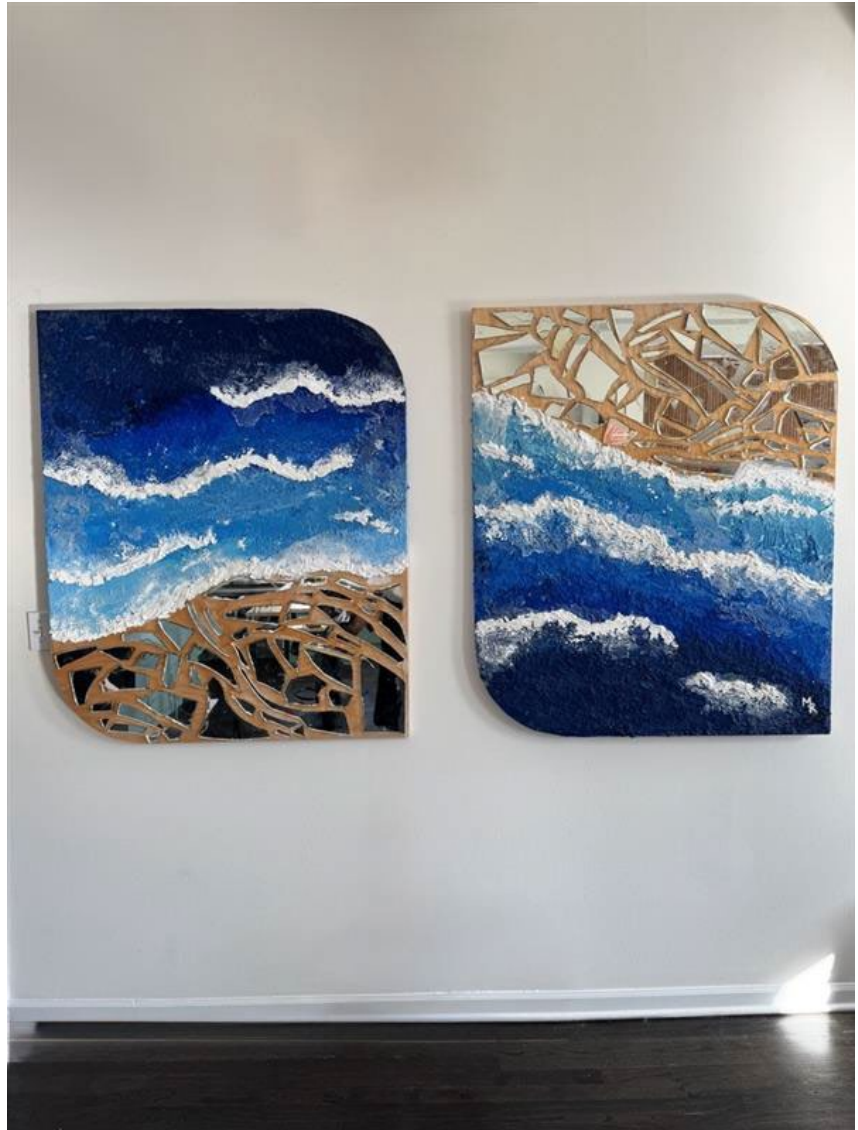
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic paint
mixed with salt on wood

Other Submissions: Yes,
this is the second of two
banner submissions; also
submitted one box ("Nike
Flowers").

Artist Name: Catherine
Ryan

Artist Statement: Ocean
Crash is very dear to me. I
was inspired by some of the
art in my parents home and
became obsessed with a
piece that had the similar
shape to what I created. I
worked with my dad to cut
out two large pieces of
wood. I wanted a peaceful
oceanic scenery but still
showing some "seaglass"
on the shore. The shore is
made up entirely of broken
mirrors.



Rowan Solana

Title: Sunlit Creek

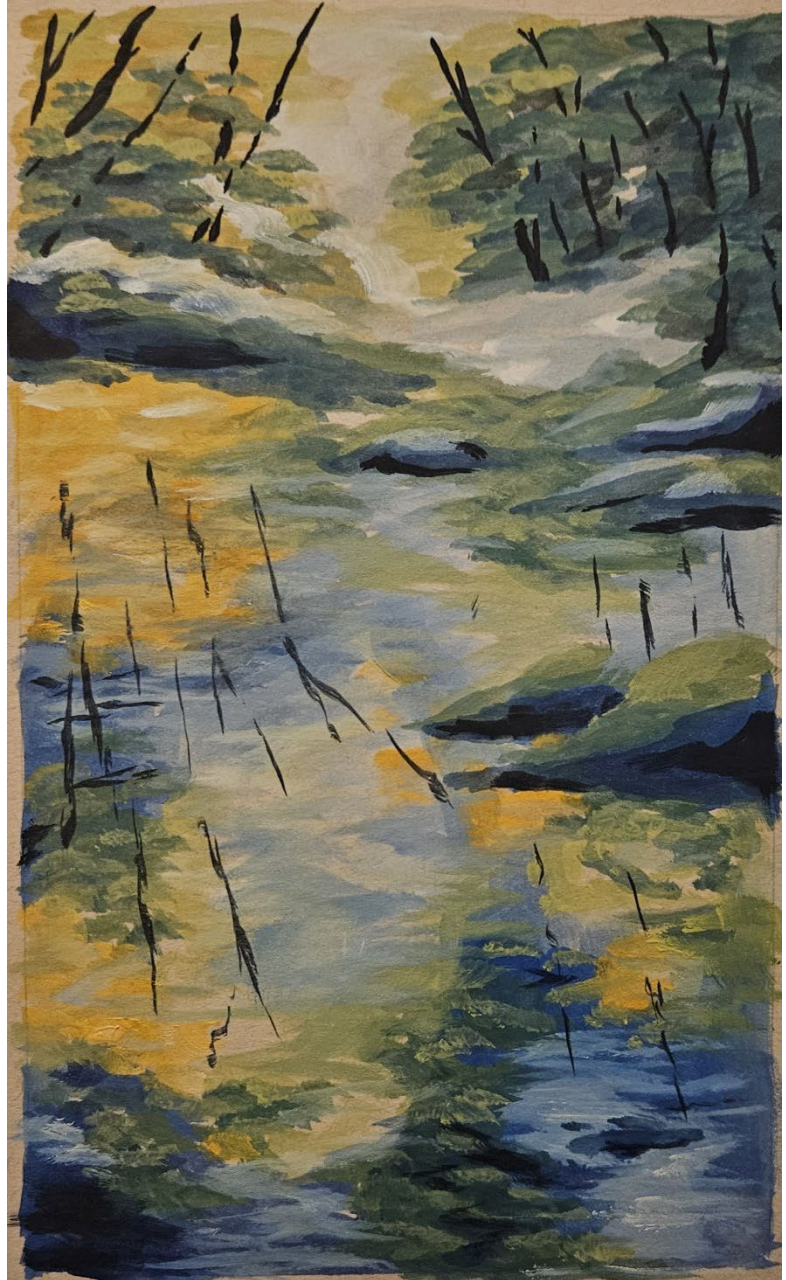
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one box (“Laying in Wait”).

Artist Name: Rowan Solana (or Rowan Keon)

Artist Statement: This work is an abstracted approach to landscape. The vibrancy and looseness of the paint mimics the idealized version of nature through the lens of childhood wonder. The land, water, and sky intermingle and intersect in unexpected ways as it does while meditating on a quiet outing.



Terry Spayer

Title: City Life

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: Abstract acrylic paint

Bio: Terry Spayer is a retired art teacher from PSD #150. Throughout his career, he taught various grades using over 35 different curriculum techniques. His favorite technique is line drawing and painting.



Darnell Starks Jr.

Title: Peoria Man

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Photography

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one box (“Fractured”).

Artist Statement: The photograph was taken outside a local Peoria Venue using a 50mm lens and a speedlite and edited with Photoshop to create a duplicate clone/ghost effect.

Bio: Born in Chicago, IL. Raised in Glasgow, Scotland. Moved back to the States in 2018 and been living in Peoria since 2023.



Rhea Theru

Young Artist

Title: Flower Bed

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Color pencil and Marker

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one box (“Heart Emojis”).

Artist Statement: Rhea first drew the flowers using pencil. Then she outlined using a black marker. Then she used acrylic color markers to high light the insides of the flowers. Then she used colored pencils and colored the flowers.



Jody Tockes

Title: Sunset Over My Hometown

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic paint on paper towels (collage)

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted one box (“Garden Visitor”).

Artist Statement: To create the collage of Peoria's skyline and the Murray Bake Bridge I have used paper towels painted with left-over paint from classes I have given. I spread the paper towels out on a plastic tray and cover them with paint, then allow it to dry completely before cutting the towels into the various shapes needed for the image. I used a colorful photo I took (and enhanced) as my inspiration. The cut shapes are then glued to a boxed canvas for display.

Bio: I am a native of Central Illinois, having lived in both Peoria and East Peoria. I graduated from Manual High School in 1976, then Bradley University in 1980. I received my Masters in Education from Olivet Nazarene in 2006. I am married to Rick, my high school sweetheart. We have three adult children and seven grand-children. My husband and I own the Hive Art Studio where I offer a variety of classes to all ages. I am currently teaching art part-time at S.t Jude Catholic School. Rick and I also have an intergenerational garden and art program called Beautiful GIFT (Gardens impacting the future today).



Haleigh Vicary

Title: The Traveler

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil Paint

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: The Canadian Goose, with its bold, watchful nature, striking plumage, and unmistakable call is a familiar sight to many. Painted in oil, I began with a sienna underpainting and built depth through layered glazes. Framed within a red arch, the goose dominates the composition, standing out against a muted background—emphasizing its prominence not just in our own city, but across the United States.

Bio: I'm Haleigh Vicary, a landscape painter based in Peoria, Illinois. After highschool, I set off to travel the country by van, gradually venturing farther from home over two years. From the eerie bog lands of the South to the towering Rocky Mountains, I discovered the endless well of creative inspiration that nature provides.

When exploring the outdoors we often stumble upon scenes that are so pleasing to the eye that mother nature seemingly sculpted it with artistic intent. Beyond its obvious beauty and intrigue, the natural world has long served as a mirror for the human experience, shaping our beliefs, and inspiring symbolism or mythology across cultures. Portrayed in a realistic style, the subjects of my work often lean on these themes whether personal or universal. Oil painting is my primary medium, though I also experiment with charcoal, printmaking, and colored pencil.



Keith Wilson

Title: Lady Face

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic/spray paint

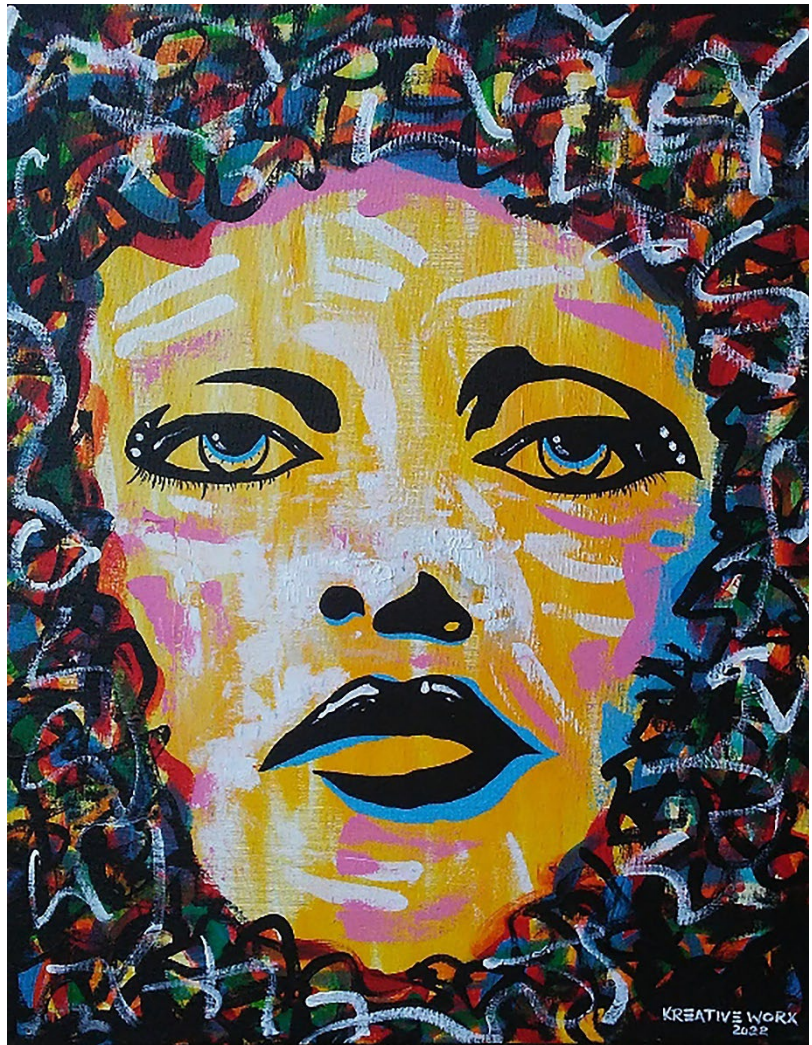
Other Submissions: No

Artist Name: Kreative Worx

Artist Statement: I use a loose abstract style that comes to me as I progress with the artwork.

Bio: Keith Wilson aka Kreative Worx is a local Peoria artist working with spray paint, acrylic, screen print mainly. He uses a very free style with bright colors to excite the eye.

"I love working with bright colors and move freely from the normal stuff... I just make what I want..."



Michael Winters Sr.

Title: Still waters, Strong walls

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Other Submissions: No

Artist Statement: This artwork was created using acrylic paint on canvas with a monochromatic blue palette. I used dry brush and blending techniques to form layers of texture in the foliage, and palette knife strokes to give the waterfall its smooth, cascading motion. The stone wall represents strength and balance, while the water signifies peace and movement. The contrast of nature and structure is meant to evoke a calm yet powerful feeling.

Bio: Michael Winters Sr. is a 65-year-old self-taught artist based in Peoria, Illinois. He has a lifelong passion for painting and finds peace in expressing nature through his brushstrokes. His work often features serene landscapes, waterfalls, and natural elements that reflect his love for the outdoors. With each piece, Michael strives to capture still moments that bring joy, reflection, and connection to viewers of all ages.



Liu Yang

Title: Dream Inception 16

Box or Banner: Banner

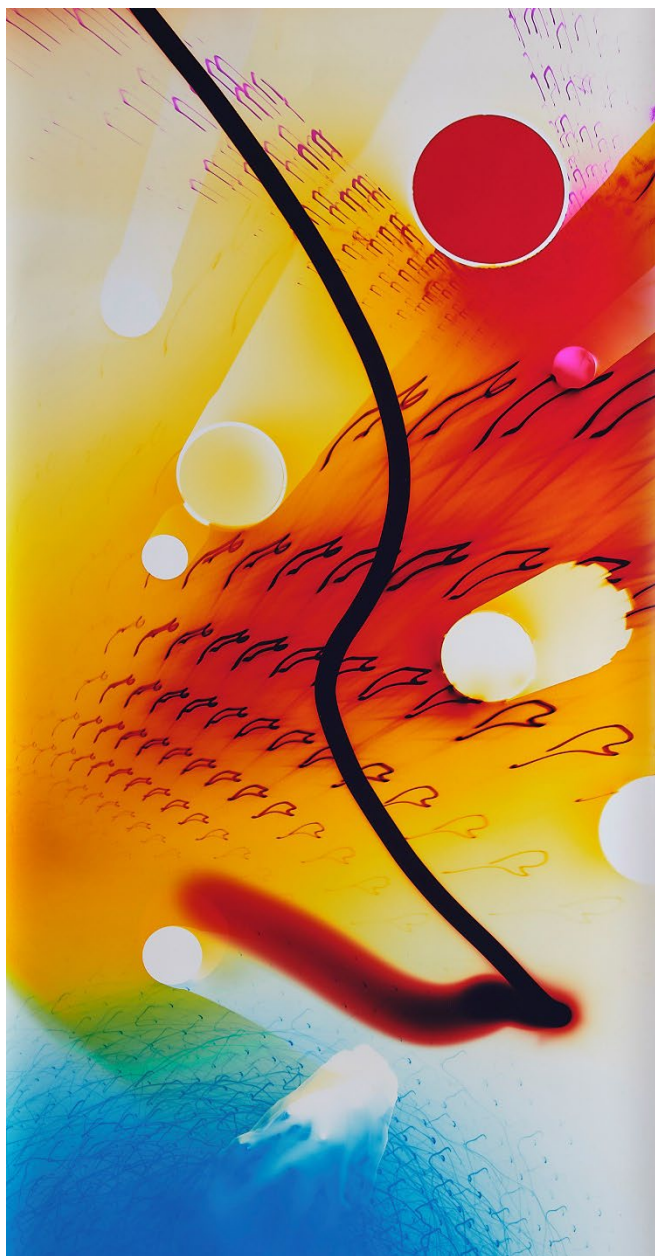
Medium: Unique Analog Chromogenic Photogram

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the first of two banner submissions; also submitted one box (“Galaxy”).

Artist Statement: DREAM INCEPTION: One day in 2020, I realized that I had quite a number of fantastic dreams, but none about the outer space. I thought of the movie 《Inception》, then I decided to spend 3 months to implant information about outer space to my sub consciousness. Everyday I took quite amount of time to get various information about space, for example watching movies & documentaries, reading & listening science fiction novels, playing games with my child, visiting Planetariums and experienced VR (space walk, Mars mission etc.). At last, I did have two space dreams appeared in my dreams!

During the process I created a series of color Photogram. The images were not taken by camera; the productions of the images were to place the objects between color photographic paper and lights, then exposure. Details of the objects are lost, some are deformed, and some are moved. Outline and color of the objects are well designed by self-modified lights. Most of the creations adopted multi-exposure, just like to use lights to draw on the photo paper.

Bio: Liu Yang is a freelancer artist, born and raised in China, currently is living and working in Peoria Illinois USA.



Liu began to explore camera-less experimental photography from 2017. Inspired by her dreams, her main series of works are Dream Trilogy, including: DREAM, DREAM INCEPTION, and ANOTHER PLANET.

Her works have exhibited in various galleries in China. When her family moved to Peoria, Liu and her husband Qingjun Huang have been very active in Peoria arts community. In three years, they did four solo shows, some group shows in Peoria, they also exhibited in Chicago and other places in Illinois, Florida, and some other countries internationally.

Liu Yang is included in NIU Art Museum 2025 Spring show "Window to the Subconscious".

Liu Yang

Title: Dream Inception 17

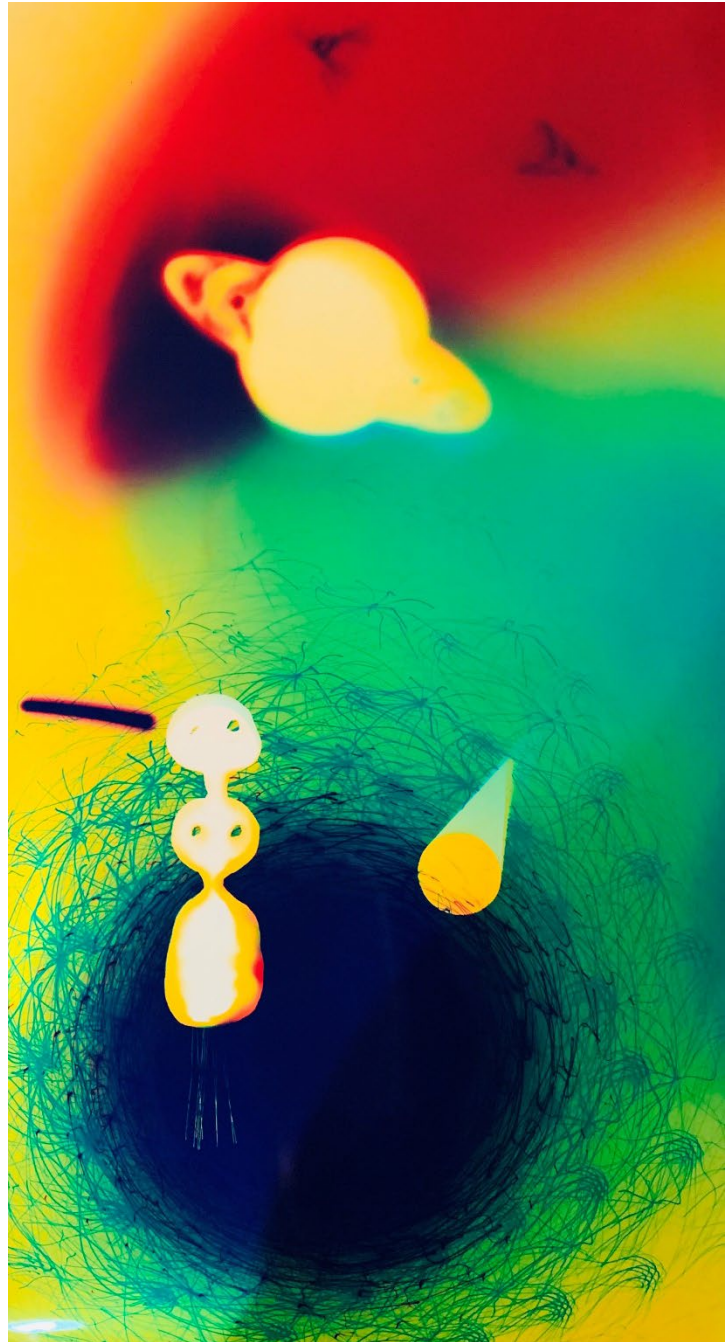
Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Unique Analog
Chromogenic Photogram

Other Submissions: Yes, this is the second of two banner submissions; also submitted one box ("Galaxy").

Artist Statement: DREAM INCEPTION: One day in 2020, I realized that I had quite a number of fantastic dreams, but none about the outer space. I thought of the movie 《Inception》, then I decided to spend 3 months to implant information about outer space to my sub consciousness. Everyday I took quite amount of time to get various information about space, for example watching movies & documentaries, reading & listening science fiction novels, playing games with my child, visiting Planetariums and experienced VR (space walk, Mars mission etc.). At last, I did have two space dreams appeared in my dreams!

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Jenna Zeise

Title: Fruitility

Box or Banner: Banner

Medium: Oil on canvas

Other Submissions: Yes – also submitted two box submissions (“Fruitility” and “Pins and Needles”).

Artist Statement: "Fruitility" is a postmodern style depiction of blueberries, raspberries, and cherries with selective pixelation. The pixelation creates a blur effect through 1"x1" color blocking. The pixels are grouped together in abstract forms for blur variation and to offset the geometric squares with organic shapes. Hues for the color blocking are pulled directly from the fruits they represent but maintain an oversaturated, vibrant color palette to emphasize the separation and stylized nature of the individual fruit pieces.

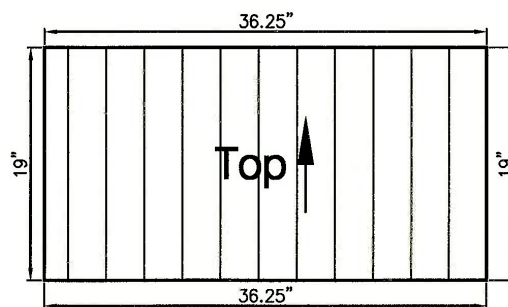
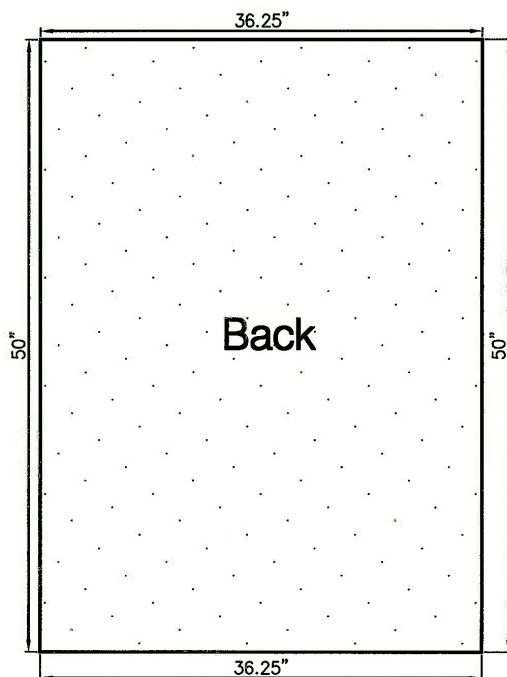
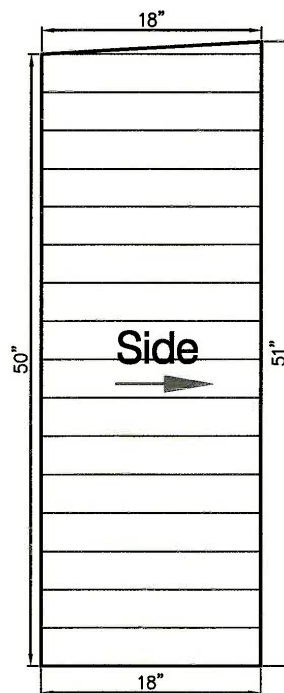
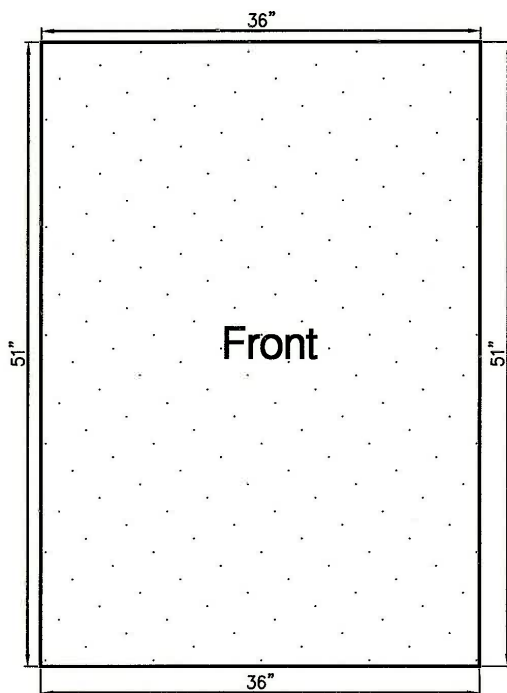


Bio: Jenna Zeise is a senior undergraduate studying photography at Bradley University. She was born and raised in Milwaukee, WI where her love for the arts began, surrounded by the flourishing art scene and family members who shared her affinity for the craft. While concluding her BFA, Jenna has developed her skills in multiple mediums beyond photography, including painting and drawing, to depict themes that merge modern ideologies and classic techniques to question traditional values. Jenna also enjoys creating work in commercial settings; her post-graduation endeavors include pursuing her professional interest in sports photography while continuing her personal conceptual art ventures. Her work has been featured in publications such as Bradley University’s literary art journal: Broadside and the student newspaper The Bradley Scout. Forthcoming exhibitions include the BFA undergraduate exhibition, Nothing Twice the Same, at Bradley’s Heuser Art Gallery and her photography senior thesis exhibition, Cultivate, at the Peoria Art Guild.



BOX SPECIFICATIONS

QUESTIONS? Email speterson@peoriagov.org

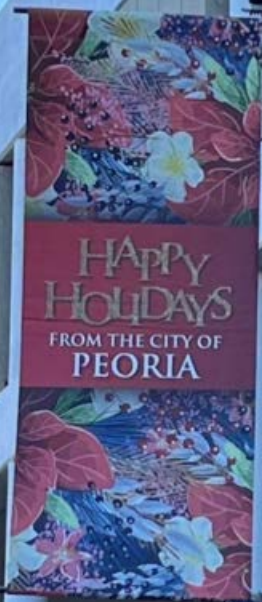


NOTICE: Selected artwork will be revised to accommodate and include City of Peoria insignia

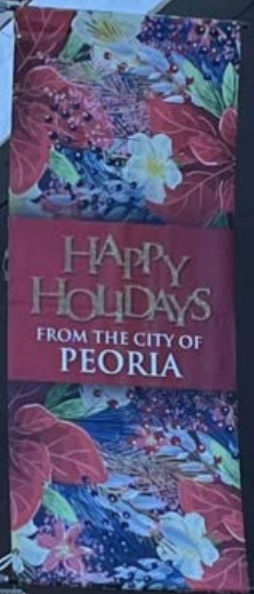


Title: _____

Artist: _____



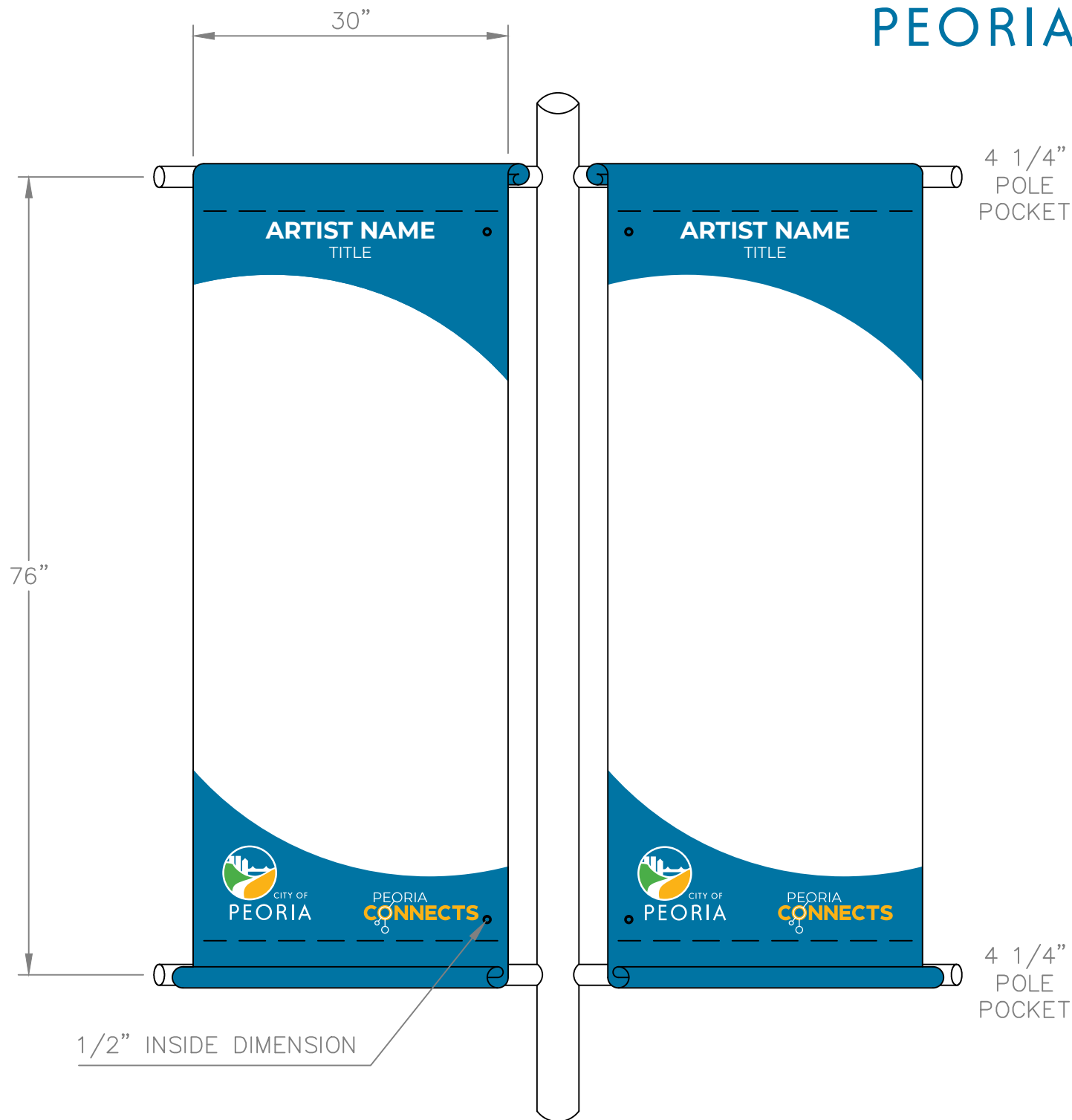
HAPPY
HOLIDAYS
FROM THE CITY OF
PEORIA



HAPPY
HOLIDAYS
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PEORIA

BANNER SPECIFICATIONS

QUESTIONS? Email speterson@peoriagov.org



Title: _____

Artist: _____