

***Art:
The Language of Healing***

Exhibit Catalog

Art Exhibit ~ Events

May 13 - August 22, 2017

Life Force Arts Center
1609 W Belmont, Chicago
LifeForceArts.org 773-327-7224

Art: The Language of Healing

Opening Reception

Saturday, May 13, 2017, 7— 10 PM

Free admission to exhibit & Opening Reception

Open Gallery Hours

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 1:30 - 6:30 PM
& by appointment

LifeForceArts.org
773-327-7224

**Artists Featured in
*Art: The Language of Healing***

Steven Blaine Adams	Jessica Kronika
Anna Applegate	Allegra Larson
Sharon Bechtold	Thom Lausch
Mary Burton	Lorraine Moretti
Milagro Quiroa Fernandez	Lisa Nomikos
Ladan Ghajar	Diana Rudaitis
Dorothy Graden	Richard Selby
John Henderson	Szmeralda Shanel
Kat Kidwell	Jessica Thompson
Colleen Koziara	Sujata Tibrewala

About Art: *The Language of Healing*

Explore the incredible healing power of the arts as Life Force Arts Center presents the art exhibit and multiarts show *Art: The Language of Healing*, running May 13 - August 22, 2017 at Life Force Arts Center, 1609 W. Belmont, Chicago IL 60657. Opening Reception is Saturday, May 13, 2017 from 7 - 10 PM. Gallery Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30 - 6:30 PM, and by appointment. Admission is free to the exhibit and Opening Reception. Workshops, performances and other events related to the theme will be held as part of the show. For more information, please contact Joan Forest Mage, Artistic Director, [773-327-7224](tel:773-327-7224), joan@LifeForceArts.org.

Art: *The Language of Healing* is the second in Life Force Arts Center's 2017 series of exhibits, *Art: The Language of...* exploring the power of the Arts in Learning, Healing and Community Building.

Art: *The Language of Healing* explores the incredible healing power of the arts. Visual, literary and performing arts help us perceive thoughts, feelings and energies below the surface of our conscious mind. The arts are an ancient and effective form of shifting energy and increasing physical, emotional, spiritual and social well being. If your spirit has been encouraged by a rousing song, if your body has felt energized by lively dancing, if you have released emotion by laughing or crying during a movie, been soothed by harmonious colors in artwork or gained insight about your own life through the story of characters in a novel, you know in your bones that art is the language of healing.

The exhibit features a wide variety of media including painting, photography, sculpture, mixed media and installation. Life Force Arts Center Artistic Director Joan Forest Mage says, "It's fascinating to see the interpretations

artists have about the theme. At LFAC, our art exhibits create sacred space in which events become healing rituals: performances, concerts, poetry readings, workshops, lectures are all infused with transformative power to heal and enlighten those present."

Life Force Arts Center (LFAC) is a community of teaching -healing artists who explore the connection of the arts, healing and spiritual practice based in the Life Force Arts Method, a modern version of perennial wisdom teachings that value love and creativity. LFAC presents visual, literary and performing art exhibits, events and publications that awaken human potential, deepen mystical experience and create spiritual transformation.

Steven Blaine Adams

www.facebook.com/stevenblaine.adams/photos

Crystal Healing (2017)

11 x 14

Stones & Crystal on Mylar

\$400

I chose stones as the theme for the healing show. Stones are an integral part of my healing. I want to show the energy and connection of crystals to the human spirit. The crystals' chemistry connects with our own chemistry to create healing. The stone hand seems to be a healing element with someone holding a smoky quartz crystal up to the sky. Hundreds of individual stones make up this hand. I hope this piece inspires you to make your own connection with crystals.

Steven Blaine Adams, LFAC Artist in Residence, is an artist and designer who works with natural materials like stones and crystals to create artwork and jewelry with symbolic and spiritual resonance. He is LFAC's Associate Artistic Director and also LFAC's store designer. The son of an astrologer and Tarot reader, Steve has been doing readings professionally for over 30 years, combining the wisdom of Tarot with the healing properties of stones. Steve attributes meditation, art, ritual and spiritual connection as instrumental catalysts in his path towards healing.

Anna Applegate

amoretmortem.wordpress.com

An Homage to Sylvia Plath's "The Moon and the Yew Tree" (2017)

11.75 x 8.75

Acrylics & Cement on Canvas

\$120

This painting arose as one of my class projects in an acrylics painting class that I took in February and March of this year. My teacher was instructing us in new techniques of using a palette knife in lieu of a brush for painting as well as mixing cement into our paints. I had initially started with the intention of creating an abstract piece, more an exercise in blending different colors and textures with my palette knife than anything else, but it wasn't long after I'd begun working that I started to "space out" and I entered a light-to-medium trance state. In that Void-like conscious state, the verses from American poet Sylvia Plath's 1961 poem "The Moon and the Yew Tree" began to ring loudly in my head, starting with the first verse: "This is the light of the mind, cold and planetary."

I used to teach this poem as well as other works by Plath and Anne Sexton when I taught Literature courses at the college level. The somber tone and the speaker's existential crisis, which gets resolved at the end of the poem through accepting cosmic energies that I term as "Dark Goddess" ones, mirrored my own "Dark Night of the Soul" experience I was (and still am) going through when I took this weekly painting class. Just as the speaker of Plath's poem empties herself out emotionally before a "bald and wild" moon and a yew tree known for its "blackness and silence," I found myself achieving a unanticipated level of catharsis in painting this piece. It has become yet another milestone marker in my personal journey of the Dark Night of the Soul.

Orgonite Owl for Healing & Promoting Self Love (2017)

5.5 x 4.25 x 1

Orgonite, copper, brass, rhodonite, quartz crystal, kyanite, steel, iron

\$90

I created this orgonite sculpture in the context of a religious ritual to promote personal, and, by extension, planetary healing. The main function of orgonite is to remove stagnant and negative energy. In this sculpted piece, the owl transmits the wisdom of learning to love and value one's self, and to facilitate healing from trauma. Added to the orgonite are crystals and metals to achieve these goals, chiefly rhodonite (a heart chakra stone), kyanite (a calming stone), quartz crystal (an amplifier of high vibrational energies), and copper (sacred to Aphrodite, Goddess of Love). The owl is my tribute to the mechanized owl, Bubo, from the 1981 film *Clash of the Titans*, one of my favorite movies from early childhood. Hence this orgonite sculpture features gears and other mechanical components, mostly brass. The level of whimsy from Bubo's endearing personality contributes to the overall healing intention.

Chicago native and **LFAC Artist in Residence, Anna Applegate** is a Gardnerian witch, a Master Mason in Co-Freemasonry, and a legally ordained Priestess in the worldwide Fellowship of Isis (FOI)—an organization that honors the cultural and religious expressions of all goddesses from all pantheons throughout human history. She has a strong Will to be Wyrd and she stands at the crossroads of Art and Spirit often, infusing her paintings, sculptures, photographs, and rituals with the phantasmagoria that she finds lurking behind the veil of the mundane. Her polytheistic Pagan religious sensibility is the lens through which she interprets many worlds.

Anna holds an M.A. degree in English Literature from Loyola University Chicago. She writes for her daily bread (as an advertising copywriter) as well as for pleasure: her poetry appears in the Scarlet Imprint anthologies *Datura* (2010) and *Mandragora* (2012). Anna is an avid blogger and encourages all lovers of the outré to follow her blog: www.amoretmortem.wordpress.com. Additionally, Anna serves as the Executive Editor of *Isis-Seshat*, a quarterly journal of the Fellowship of Isis.

Sharon Bechtold

sharonbechtold.com

***Last Voyage* (2017)**

17.75 x 15.5 framed

Print with acrylic

\$40

Battered by incessant crushing waves of liquid ice
The storm, relentless and pounding offered no end in sight
The sails torn and ragged would no longer serve their
purpose
No mending could restore missing fabric
Wood splintered, heaving and cracking as the sea infiltrated
the vessel one leak at a time
In was coming in too fast to bail
The clouds, mist, and constant disorienting movement
blurred all separation of sky and water
Color faded and only the grey of nonexistence remained
Life and death became concepts to ponder
Constant struggle or blessed surrender
A simple decision, really.
I welcomed the cold baptism of salted water
And embraced her deathly promise of peace
At the calm bottom of the sea
nestled,
forever motionless,
in soft, still, silent, sand.

Sharon Bechtold, LFAC Artist in Residence, is a Shamanic Practitioner, Artist, Bard, and Teacher. She studied shamanism with Joan Forest Mage in the Life Force Arts Shamanic Training Program, holds the Bardic Grade from the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids, and is well versed in elemental energy work and reiki. She is a professional award winning pyrographer who has published 5 books on wood burning techniques. A columnist and writer for numerous international print magazines, she also teaches art as energy work throughout North America, has been certified as an Illinois State Artisan and is represented by numerous galleries and collections throughout the world.

Mary Burton

www.marybearart.com

Hathors (2017)

18 x 22 framed

Pencil & Prismacolor Marker on paper

\$80

This image is a meditation on the Goddess Hathor as two maidens and a milky white cow representing stars of the milky way. Hathor heals as she dances in a red dress, an aspect of Sekhmet. Red is the color of life, passion and blood. As a cow, she provides pure white milk, beauty and nourishment. She is the original mother.

Blue Cow Hathor (2016)

15.75 x 12 framed

Colored pencil on paper

\$50

I grew up on a dairy farm. We had Holsteins and other types of cows. Here, Hathor is a blue cow with white eyes. I am drawn to the Egyptian Goddess Hathor because she

reminds me that I need to heal and be healed, to connect with ancient power to bring it into the now. How can Hathor help us now, living in Chicago, far away from grassy fields? How can we nurture and heal ourselves and others with the challenges we all face, keep ourselves healthy and sane with good food and habits? We can ask Hathor for guidance.

Mary Burton (B.A., SUNY Albany; M.F.A., School of the Art Institute of Chicago) the child of diverse parents (Northern European and Russian Jewish) grew up on a farm in upstate New York where she was blessed to be immersed in the beauty of nature and life forms. Observations of light and dark, trees, the seasons and natural phenomena as well as an ongoing quest for meaning inspired explorations of form and line in drawing, printmaking, painting, videography and video image processing. She has exhibited with the Chicago Artists Month, School of the Art Institute BareWalls, School of the Art Institute Fellowship Exhibition and others. A lifelong searcher and student of mysticism and spiritual sciences, her studies include comparative religion, mysticism, symbolism, yoga philosophy, spiritual astrology at the Temple of Kriya Yoga, A Course in Miracles at Unity Church in Chicago, music studies at Old Town School of Folk Music and New Tuners music theater workshop under John Sparks, as well as working for the Urantia Foundation (publisher of The Urantia Book.) She graduated from Life Force Arts Shamanic Training program. Mary's family has been in what is now the U. S. since the 1600's. Her ancestor, Mary Bliss Parsons, was accused and acquitted twice for witchcraft in Cambridge and Boston, Massachusetts.

Milagro Quiroa Fernandez

www.milagroquiroa.com

In a time when human beings are suffering from a host of illnesses caused by stress and modern-day living, the need for ancient wisdom has never been more important. In fact, many people have become tired of the side effects caused by pharmaceutical medicines and the lack of care shown in mainstream medical facilities and are turning to traditional treatments. The Mayan civilization also developed healing systems that have influenced holistic healthcare to this day.

The Mayan civilization originated in Guatemala around 2600 BC and rose to prominence around 250 AD in present-day southern Mexico, Guatemala, northern Belize and western Honduras. The Mayans excelled at agriculture, pottery, hieroglyph writing, calendar making and mathematics, and left behind an astonishing amount of impressive architecture and symbolic artwork. The Mesoamerican civilization may not have survived, but many of their secrets to good health, healing and living well are still alive to this day.

The nawals are my main theme as a Guatemalan artist, because they are powerful Mayan spirits or totems assigned by the Tzolkin calendar to each day of the Mayan year. Your nawal is assigned to you at birth and has a heavy influence on your character and demeanor, much the same way the zodiac does. Each nawal is associated with an animal of importance to the Maya as well as associated traits, qualities and tendencies.

TIJAX (2016)

13.5 x 10

Mixed Media on Paper

\$700

Tijax means blade and rock of obsidian. It is the day where suffering is cut. Sword of wisdom and purification, sacred knife, this nawal is represented by the swordfish. People born in Tijax can be good healers.

T'Z'IKIN (2016)

13.5 x 10

Mixed Media on Paper

\$700

Tz'ikin is the intermediary between God and man. It is the intermediary between Mother Tz'aqol, Father B'itol, and human beings. It is the intermediary between Ajaw, the Great Father, and human beings, represented by everything that exists in space: air, clouds, cold, and heat-powers that Heart of Sky created to help us. It represents the sacred vision.

This sign brings good relationships. Tz'ikin provides magnetism and is the perfect day to negotiate, particularly in love and business. It is a special day for increasing intuition and vision. Eagle, condor, quetzal and butterfly are its symbols.

E'E (2016)

13.5 x 10

Mixed Media on Paper

\$700

E'E symbolizes the path of destiny, travel, the road of life, the guide, and the means. The how and what of the journey called life is the energy of action; that which moves us toward a precise objective, it is the part of life that searches for realization in every situation and aspect in life.

E'E provides action. It is intermediation, it is the search for

what is new yet similar between different visions, and it brings an innate, innovative strength. Its symbol is the Wildcat.

K'AT (2016)

13.5 x 10

Mixed Media on Paper

\$700

K'at represents instinct and originality, but also the tangle of life, the things that trap us. It's a force that connects people or elements to get things done and a filter that separates the bad from the good. The seed symbolizes the possibility of new life. At its essence, it is a fire that consumes, the absence of physical, mental, emotional or spiritual freedom. It's a day to untangle, to untie the knots that tie us to our vices. A day to ask for abundance and to pray for a woman's fertility. A day to get away from negative energy and bad influences, to fix problems of love and soothe one's emotions. Its symbolic animals may be the lizard and the spider.

B'ATZ' (2016)

13.5 x 10

Mixed Media on Paper

\$700

B'atz' is the start of life, infinite time, and unity. Spiritual connections are history interwoven with time. This sign symbolizes cosmic phenomena and original wisdom. B'atz' is the deity that created Earth and Sky, the Creator of life and wisdom.

This sign symbolizes time unraveled, evolution, and human life. The Maya depict time as a thread wound around a giant reed underneath the Earth. This thread is unraveled as time goes by. History is woven from time. Its symbolic animal is the monkey.

Milagro Quiroa Fernandez creates art as a healing medium, a way to heal the spirit, the mind and the body. She holds a degree in Visual Arts from the University of San Carlos, Guatemala, and studied Graphic Design and Architecture at the Rafael Landivar University and Anthropology at the University of San Carlos, in Guatemala.

Milagro's career as an artist began in 1979 with an individual exhibition at the School of Plastic Arts. She has had 32 individual exhibitions and participated in more than 43 collective exhibitions of painting and drawing in Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico, United States and China. She illustrates books, literary magazines and posters; her artwork was the image of the V Latin American Congress on Sexual and Reproductive Rights in May 2010. In 2008, she published a book with her artworks, *The Daughter of the Nawales*. She is a Postgraduate of the Velázquez Prize of the Plastic Arts in Madrid (2006); also awarded the artist of the year Medal in fine arts (2007) by that organization.

Ladan Ghajar

Ghajar.org

Underworld (2016)

40 x 40

Acrylic & Oil on Canvas

\$1800

Living Stars (2009)

40 x 40

Acrylic on Canvas

\$1800

My deep curiosity and desire to understand the purpose of life became strong motivations for me to dig into many different subjects such as philosophy, psychology and art throughout my life.

The starting point of my writing and poetry were in my early years. But my calling for ART began in 1998 through a powerful and introspective dream. Since then, my world transformed to another level of understanding about myself and the world around me. Since then, I became as visionary artist in the manner of surrealism and symbolism: into the surreal realm of beauty, forms and colors forever.

Underworld is mainly base on my childhood curiosity and the strong imagination that I always carried with me through my life. I grew up by the ocean and I always wants to know what is under water. This strong image of those memories stayed with me until one day without any thinking or plan, it started showing up on the white canvas, amusing me with the colorful and playful images. Thus, I can call it, my childhood gift.

Living Stars has a different story. It is based on my adulthood feeling and observation about what I've learned through my journey in life. So it has a different, profound meaning to me. Those forms and shapes which are binding with orange colors are indeed the dancing stars in the happy and shiny atmospheric landscapes, to show the liveness of hope. I look at Stars with the same eyes and feeling as I look at my painting. Like Stars also, they are dancing into the darkness of the sky with beauty, life and spirit to tell us, "I am alive". Each one of those billions of stars die and are reborn again and again as "the lights of hope" to the darkness of our world.

Ladan Ghajar says: "Some artists' names are familiar to the public, while others are not. Whatever the case may happen to be, I think the important point is, the majority of artists portray what cannot be seen with naked eyes, and the dimensions which only artists, can imagine. However, for me personally, I believe my creative experience is not a

unilateral one because I did not choose the world of art by myself, art found me in my dreams, and gave me the mission which I followed ever after.

When I create my art work, my art also shapes my thought, feelings and my belief system, thus, as an artist I am and continue to be, my own alternative vision of reality.

When I stand in front of a white canvas, initially I have no idea about the forms and colors which will come to life. The first and defining step of my artistic process is, waiting and listening for the guidance to take me into the realms of unknown beauty, simplicity and peace. I mostly choose oil and acrylic for my paintings, while using all water-based colors along with many different pens for my drawings. Many of my works are narrative, others symbolically surreal, while some are simply abstract expressions via warm and cold colors.

I think, there is neither struggle nor horror in my paintings and drawings, since I stand counter to the presence of tremendous challenges and suffering in life. The world of my artwork offers a visual experience of peaceful backgrounds in which, like certain types of music, can immerse the soul. Maybe in such a world, soul can live in peace, or perhaps, this is the way I wish “reality” could be. Whatever meaning and explanation is behind it, my art is not defiant, offering a depiction of truth in our everyday world of voices & visions because it arises from another source of truth.

Dorothy Graden

www.dorothygraden.com

The Gatekeeper (2016)

20 x 23 framed

Giclee Print

\$90

This painting was inspired by a sacred art panel I saw in a remote area in the Arizona desert. My interpretation is that she is a shamanic Healer and the panel she is carved on is the healing portal from which she draws her power. She carries with her pouches that contain healing stones, minerals, bones, seeds and animal elements. She has an interior spirit that guides her and star images that travel with her for universal power. She also has dogs, which are companion animals that have intuitive gifts of healing and protection. The colors in the painting represent pure and untainted beauty.

Dorothy Graden is an award winning contemporary artist whose art is inspired by Ancient Visions. For over 25 years, Dorothy has traveled through the American West to photograph and draw prehistoric rock art. These rock art images were incised, pecked, abraded and painted on cave and canyon walls and boulders. Rock Art has been found on every continent except Antarctica. Some sites are 30,000 years old. Many of these sites hold spiritual powers, and many are shamanic.

Dorothy has presented her field work on rock art at the Russian Academy of Science in Moscow and at University College Cork, Ireland. Her photographs have been published in the Theosophical Society's journal, *Quest*. She presents, lectures and exhibits her drawings and ceramic sculptures throughout the Midwest. She draws with great admiration, respect and humility for the ancients who inspire her work.

John Henderson

Mermaid (2014)

3 x 20 x 3.5

Mahogany

\$500

Stone Goddess (2008)

2.5 x 9.5 x 2.5

Soapstone

\$500

African Fertility Goddess (2015)

2 x 9.5 x 2

Vermillion

\$250

Celtic Fertility Goddess (2015)

2.5 x 8.5 x 3

Butternut

\$250

Celtic Goddess (2014)

2 x 9.5 x 2

Vermillion

\$300

Tall African Goddess (2015)

4.5 x 15 x 10.5

Walnut

\$300

Tall Celtic Goddess (2009)

3 x 13.5 x 2

Mahogany

\$300

Shaman-Eagle Mask (2013)

9.5 x 7 x 2.25

Basswood

\$300

Flying Eagle (2010)

5 x 16 x 10

Walnut

\$500

The sculptures chosen for this show include fertility goddesses inspired by the artwork of African, Celtic and other cultures. John says that he has had several instances where women desiring to have babies held his fertility goddess figurines, and soon after got pregnant! It was a healing of infertility. *Shaman-Eagle Mask* is based on masks used by shamanic practitioners in their healing ceremonies.

John Henderson is a retired firefighter. He comes from Pascagoula, Mississippi where he learned whittling by watching his grandfather and father. According to family legend, he is part Cherokee, descended from members of the tribe who escaped to the Smoky Mountains when the rest of the tribe was sent on forced march to Oklahoma on the Trail of Tears.

John Henderson says: I say that I study ancient art. What I mean is that I look at a lot of pictures in books, watch Discovery and History channels and browse on line. When I find an image I like, I design my images in the style I have chosen, not to copy anything, but to create a piece of art that is recognizable in origin of style. Some pieces, especially Egyptian, can not vary too much from the original, in order for it to be recognizable as the intended subject. North West Native American styles allow much more artistic interpretations. I enjoy creating pieces in this style. I do not claim them to be Native American Art; instead, they demonstrate my appreciation of this art. I have also done work in ancient Celtic, Greek, and African styles as well as some Central and South American styles. Abstract shapes and designs pop into my mind often. I grab a pencil and pad and start doodling. At times, images come to me faster than I can sketch, and from one will come another. I see these images in three dimensions, and sometimes have to sketch two or three sketches to put on paper what my mind sees. It's somewhat like a being a writer: you have to put it on paper as soon as possible, so you don't forget the details.

Kat Kidwell

Katkidwell.com

The Tamer & the Healer (2017)

12 x 15

Ink & Watercolor Marker on Paper

\$88

In this picture, to get the best effect from the snake's healing power, the human needs to be a tamer. The tamer courageously lets the healer know how much of its strength is needed and protects himself against becoming too dependent on or influenced by such a strong outside force.

Kat Kidwell is a guitarist, songwriter, recording engineer, and Life Force Arts Center's bookkeeper living in Chicago since 2008 via East Lyme/Niantic, Connecticut. Kat enjoys doodling as a meditative activity and privately studies comic art. She has previously exhibited her handmade hemp guitar straps and wolf watercolors at LFAC.

Colleen Koziara

www.mysticalwillow.com

Mother Earth *Plant Your Own Garden (2017)

24 x 24

Acrylic on Canvas

\$800

Comes The Dawn

by Veronica Shoffstall

After a while you learn the subtle difference
Between holding a hand and chaining a soul,
And you learn that love doesn't mean leaning

And company doesn't mean security,
And you begin to learn that kisses aren't contracts
And presents aren't promises,
And you begin to accept your defeats
With your head up and your eyes open
With the grace of a woman, not the grief of a child,
And you learn to build all your roads on today,
Because tomorrow's ground is too uncertain for plans,
And futures have a way of falling down in mid-flight.
After a while you learn
That even sunshine burns if you get too much.
So you plant your own garden and decorate your own soul,
Instead of waiting for someone to bring you flowers.
And you learn that you really can endure...
That you really are strong,
And you really do have worth.
And you learn and learn...
With every goodbye you learn.

Colleen says: I grew up in nature with a love the stories in myths, legends and songs. The area was peaceful, gentle and beautiful. Woods, fields, wildflowers, and views of the lake from rosy sunrise to golden sunset. What most amazed me were the intricacies of nature, like the sight of a setting sunbeam, shining through the branches of a tree, illuminating a delicate spider web and transforming that web to a magical world formed of liquid silver. I lived my most formative years immersed in these images and I came to see a personality in nature. It is the years I spent seeing this "secret" face and magic of nature and the stories that it told, that filled me with a desire to make art.

I create images which portray the spirit and humanity of nature and thereby the nature of humanity and spirit. With my work I intend to capture a moment of magic. That moment where the infinite and the finite merge and it is

possible to see the magic once again in all things. I strive to make each of my works a window. I think my best works give the viewer a feeling of this deeper magic being mirrored within themselves.

Colleen Koziara attended the American Academy of Art in Chicago, and currently splits her time working with our Elders and the Arts. Colleen gives workshops and seminars on a variety of topics; Body Art; Custom Tattoo Designs; Visionary Art; and Commissioned pieces manifest from the visions and dreams of her clients.

She has illustrated more than 20 books and has been presenting, writing and providing art for Circle Sanctuary since 2002. She is an award winning designer of programming for seniors, and author of Taking Flight! A Senior Whole Life Wellness Handbook for seniors and caregivers.

Colleen has been an active member of the Pagan community for almost 30 years, is an Ovate member of OBOD, and a Reiki Master. Her work pulls its symbolism, hidden images, flow and color patterns from her experiences and studies. Colleen describes each of her works as “Doorways to the Center”, through which she hopes the viewer will travel to seek that which is hidden deeper within the image, and possibly on their visual journey, find doorways of their own to mysteries hidden deeper within themselves. Colleen’s pieces give voice to the connection between the natural world and the magical realms, helping to reaffirm the magic within, that we all knew so well as children, and tend to lose touch with in our daily lives.

Jessica Kronika

flyngypsyarts.wordpress.com

By the Light of a Lamp (2014)

5 x 5 each

Terra Cotta Clay & LED Candles

\$50 each

Empowerments (2012)

2 x 4 each

Brass & Resin

\$75 each

These latter day oil lamps are my response to a desire for gentle healing light in the face of overwhelming darkness in our society today. We grope for the warmth of the Great Mother, our Earth, and fight to protect her resources of fresh water, clean air and earth, and the right of all our fellow creatures to life, breed and maintain the deeply linked mutual benefit of the natural system.

Light and the natural feel of terra cotta clay in the form of a tiny hand held lamp can be a healing tool. These petite reimagined oil lamps are finger smoothed and incised with small natural tools. Originally created to be carried through my installation work, *Symbolic Immerison: Painted Cavern*, as a small light in the darkened space, these lamps proved to be a delightful addition to the low light experience of the re-imagined prehistoric cave, with its led and etched metal light boxes creating forms and patterns on the walls, ceiling and floor. Additionally, when larger groups made processions through the installation, their tiny lights allowed rare video footage to be taken. Video has otherwise been very difficult, as there are very few cameras that can adapt as the human eye does to low light.

A surprising aspect of the inclusion of the hand held lamps in this October 2014 event, was uncovered by the participation of the youth of the local autistic spectrum.

They came in good numbers seeking an alternative to the overly stimulating haunted houses. Many commented that the lamps were warm and were comforted by the way they sit in a cupped hand. The soft light of the safe led candles lent them the boon of being not only light in the darkness, but without the threat of fire. The deep knowing that often accompanies the introversion and sensitivity to stimuli in autistic persons allowed these young people to form a direct connection and to feel healing and comfort from the lamps.

Each is formed to sit in the hand, solely or with a led candle, as well as part of a nesting set. The forms are based on genuine examples from the archaeological record, and my own inspirations while working the clay. With the companion Goddess and Tiny Goddess amulets, the Mother set, features the Cosmic Mother, Mother Earth, and the Womb. The Cosmos Set features the Cosmic Serpent, Arrow, Labyrinth, Solar Disc and Stardust. The Birds-A-Nesting set, features the Egg, Nest, Bird 1, Henna Pattern Nest and Bird 2. Alternate groupings are possible, with a variety of symbolic and sensory configurations. Ideal for individual or group meditations, these lamps glow with the warmth of natural earth, are lit by the increasingly efficient use of light emitting diode technology, and are fueled by simple watch batteries.

By The Light of a Lamp and the *Empowerments* come from an on-going series of site-specific installations created by Jessica Kronika entitled *Symbolic Immersion: Prints and Installation Art*. Evoking a journey of discovery, the artist takes us into a contemporary experience of visiting prehistoric cave and early stone temples. Working with mixed media, the artist turns everyday materials into glowing crystalline and substantial spaces, inspired by such

ancient sites as the temple of Gigantia at Malta. Using printmaking, bookmaking, sculpture and photographic processes, the evolving series of two-dimensional art works and documentation capture the strangely universal yet undecipherable symbols that illuminate the exhibit.

The *Symbolic Immersion* installation has been presented at the following venues: May 2009 at Columbia College Chicago; May-June 2009 at Fly'n Gypsy Art Studio in Oak Park; May 2010 at Bridgeport Art Center of Chicago; March 2011 at Life Force Arts Center of Chicago; July 2011 RAW Artists Chicago at Evil Olive of Chicago; September 2011 at Next Wave in Elgin, IL. and October 2014 at the Community Arts Council of Kankakee County's Arts Center.

Jessica Kronika: My art stems from a dialogue between my spiritual connection to the world of nature and the concepts of goddess mythology. I practice a non-denominational variety of private pagan spirituality, heavily influenced by the ways of meditation, multiple cultural connections to the empowering female divinity and a sense of finding the sacred within Nature. My artistic style incorporates elements of realism and surrealism, in concept, approach and rendering. I utilize many media, striving for the best tools to depict the images I see within. I hold a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in printmaking and installation, as well as an Associate of Fine Arts degree in painting and drawing. My works draw on the tangible and spectacular aspects of nature, incorporating study *en plein aire* of my subjects as well as research into the lesser known elements of the lives of mythic women, and historical depictions for inspiration.

Allegra Larson
inspiritcreations.net

The Rod of Asclepius (2017)

18 x 24

Acrylic on Canvas

\$150

The Rod of Asclepius is an ancient symbol of medicine and healing. Asclepius, the Greek god of healing, medicine, and physicians, is associated with snakes. He is often depicted holding a rod or staff with a single snake coiled around it. In this painting, the seven chakras of the subtle body are placed at different points on the Rod. The snake is coiled around them in a healing and protective way. Radiating from the chakras are the Flower of Life (overlapping circles symbolizing interconnection) and the Star of Life (a white six-pointed star used as symbol of healers and physicians). Beneath the Rod, there is lavender and yarrow as well as two quartz crystal clusters, all of which are associated with healing.

Allegra Larson says: I am a witch and I create paintings as spells. My artwork reflects my spirituality and deeply held respect for nature as an expression of the Divine. Sacred geometry, animal totems, mandalas, the sun, stars, and full moon are all recurring themes in my artwork. Visionary art at pagan gatherings and transformational festivals has undeniably shaped who I am as an artist.

I love to use crystals, herbs, and essential oils in my paint water. This way, I infuse my paintings with my own magic. With every brush stroke, I use the power of intention to heal myself and the world around me.

Thom Lausch

www.facebook.com/staineddreams

Light of Isis (2016)

17 x 25

Stained Glass & Metal

\$500

Isis reconnects us with our innate healing powers. She supports everyone's quest to reclaim their individual power. She empowers you to use the healing powers of love and gratitude and to use the energy level of the physical body by connecting to the source.

Rhaegal (2017)

16 x 13

Stained Glass

\$115

The Norwegian style earth dragon keeps the energy in balance between the sun and the planets for all living things to tap into the energy for wellness of being and to heal the earth. Earth Dragons travel along the energy of leylines (hence the name dragon lines). The crystals Green Moss Agate and Bloodstone can help you access the energies of Earth Dragons.

Rhaegal is an ouroboros (serpent or dragon with its tail in its mouth). The Ouroboros represents the perpetual cyclic renewal of life and infinity, the concept of eternity and the eternal return, and represents the cycle of life, death and rebirth, leading to immortality. The image has been seen in ancient Egypt, Japan, India, utilized in Greek alchemical texts, European woodcuts, Native American Indian tribes, and by the Aztecs. The current mathematical symbol for infinity may be derived from a variant on the classic Ouroboros with the snake looped once before eating its own tail.

Thom Lausch is originally from Pennsylvania and transplanted to Kansas where he has been living for the past 16 years. A self taught artist in stained glass work, he started in May 2013 in his dining room making gifts for friends and neighbors. They suggested that he should make items and sell them professionally. Thom creates designs that he hopes others will enjoy as much as he enjoys making them.

Lorraine Moretti

www.facebook.com/lorraine.moretti.7

Iris's Movement of Colours (2017)

12 x 16

Acrylic & Stone

\$400

This is a bejeweled manifestation of the air goddess Iris, the rainbow of colours and the divine bridge between heaven and earth who brings healing sustenance from the depths of the soul into the world and connects the mundane with the spiritual parts of the self and its ascent into consciousness.

A journey through our seven chakras is an expedition through the rainbow. When the chakras are balanced with breaths of fresh healing air, energy flows into and out of these seven centers harmoniously, having an impact on our overall mental, physical and emotional health. And like Donovan sang: Wear your love like heaven.

Lorraine Moretti received her M.A. in Inter-Arts Education from Columbia College with a thesis in Performance Poetry and has been a teacher for many years. She participated in the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics at Naropa University in Boulder, Co. and has read her writing at many venues over the years, her favorite being Club Lower Links back in the 80's. In 2014 she completed Shamanic Training

Certification under Joan Forest Mage and as an LFAC Artist In Residence has exhibited work in several shows. Lorraine, AKA Lolo, Gypsy Beatnik Priestess of Poetry often holds poetry workshops at LFAC that ritually utilize Tarot, Full Moon and Willow energies.

Lisa Nomikos
gatheringvisions.com

Angel Hands (2015)
21 x 27 framed
Chalk Pastels on Paper
\$800

Angel Hands depicts the hands of angel children blessing the Earth with love and reiki flowing from an endless well. It represents the strength of prayer and love to heal all.

Phoenix Gathering (2016)
21.5 x 27.5 framed
Chalk Pastels on Paper
\$800

Phoenix Gathering shows a spiritual gathering of the three doves representing the trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The wise owl is the keeper of the sacred knowledge, while the phoenix is the ultimate symbol of transformation of human consciousness and creative spirit. *Phoenix Gathering* contains the tree of life, energetic waves of wind and a sacred temple reminding us to look within our own temple to find healing, to transform and heal ourselves on all levels, mental, physical, spiritual and emotional.

Life Force (2015)
27 x 33 framed
Chalk Pastels on Paper
\$1000

Life Force shows a spiritual gathering of birds of the sea of life. The inner energy of the divine flows through the vortex, the energy wave in the center, as the sea birds flow into life. It is the *Life Force*, the divine, that flows through all the birds in the drawing, representing people as we too flow from and are healed by the divine.

Lisa Nomikos is a fine artist creating surreal, intuitive energy art reflecting positive and uplifting inner visions. She is also a graphic designer with 25 years experience.

Diana Rudaitis

Glory & Praise (2013)

11 x 14

Acrylic on Canvas

\$125

Glory & Praise shows the healing aspects of color theory. We know that each color vibrates at a certain level and different colors are used to raise a person's energy. Researchers have studied the effects of color energy on places like schools, hospitals and even prisons.

Let us not forget the benefit of gratitude for all we have to help us heal.

Bird of Peace (2010)

16 x 20

Acrylic on Canvas

\$150

Birds have been used as symbols among cultures as far back as 17,000 years. The dove has always been seen as a symbol of love, peace and healing, and carries the traditional olive branch. The golden hands represent the loving universal energy releasing healing into a deeply divided and disturbed world.

Journey From the Center of the Earth (2014)

11 x 14

Acrylic on Canvas

\$75

When we are trapped in the dark cavern of the subconscious mind filled with the fears, anxieties and prejudices we carry, we can feel lost in dark energy. But as we mature, we ascend up into the healing light of the conscious mind and our dark journey is over. I have used encaustic paint to create a cavern-like, textured feel to the painting.

Diana Rudaitis was born in Chicago in 1947 and has lived there all her life. She started drawing and painting when she was a small girl and when she was 11 years old, she won a scholarship for young students at the Art Institute of Chicago. She later took various art classes but is mainly a self taught artist. She has worked in pastel chalks and watercolor pencils, but now paints in acrylics, oil pastels and uses paper and sequins in her work.

Diana recently started painting seriously after retiring for 28 years of service as a Chicago Police Officer, and paints under the name “Danusha” to honor her grandmother who came from Poland. Diana likes to paint human and animal portraits in bright, bold colors and textures, with whimsy and humor. She also paints fantasy and visionary works.

Richard Selby

Moondance (2017)

36 inch diameter

Pyrography on Upcycled Table Top

\$800

Richard Selby says: I am a Dragon in Chinese astrology. If you find your inner Dragon and become that, then everything is pretty much well and whole in your life; all other problems will be addressed and fade away.

Richard Selby was born in Waukegan in 1964, and now lives in Itasca, but it was his time living in Alaska, Montana, and Idaho that inspires his art. Richard's education was in Forestry, and his main forms of art for more than 30 years have been as a Bodyman, restoring classic cars and motorcycles, and as a tattoo artist. Richard has always drawn and created custom tattoo art for his clients. Years ago, using just an old soldering iron, he began creating woodburned images of the mountains and wildlife of the pacific northwest. In 2015, Richard upgraded from his 1960s soldering iron to an actual set of pyrography tools! (Though that ancient soldering iron still makes an occasional appearance!)

Szmeralda Shanel

www.asacredart.com

Amara (2017)

18 x 9.5

Mixed Media

\$223

In African American culture traditional healers are known by various names including Rootworkers, Treaters, Granny Midwives and Conjure Doctors. These spiritual workers use herbs, prayer, ritual, divination and laying on of hands spiritual healing to meet the various physical, emotional and spiritual needs of the people.

"Amara" represents the archetypal energy of the Black woman healer. She is an ancestral force that watches over the daughters who continue to do the Sacred Work. I see Amara as the spirit of the first black women healers who were brought unwillingly from Africa across great waters to this country. These women survived the harsh realities of slavery and their spiritual gifts, wisdom and intelligence

ensured the survival of their people. I see this ancestral force/archetypal energy as the same spirit that guides, protects and inspires Black women healers of today.

Rev Szmeralda Shanel MA is a visual, performance and ritual artist. She is a Registered Expressive Arts Therapist and works with individuals and communities focusing on the healing aspects of the creative process. Szmeralda is a priestess with the Fellowship of Isis and the founder of the Iseum of Black Isis, a temple dedicated to Goddess Spirituality and Sacred arts.

Jessica Thompson
jmthompsonstudios.com

Finity's Edge (2014)
24 x 30
Oil on Canvas
\$1000

Luminous Night (2017)
30 x 24
Oil on Canvas
\$1000

Starlit Horizon (2017)
24 x 30
Oil on Canvas
\$1000

Finity's Edge depicts sand dunes under the milky way. It portrays the comfort found in knowing that our problems, even our lives are only temporary in the scale of the universe, the uncountable stars that outnumber even the grains of sand on Earth.

Luminous Night depicts trees reaching upward to the milky way, inviting the viewer to lift their gaze upward and find hope and purpose amidst even the most trying times.

Starlit Horizon depicts the milky way as it reflects on still, placid water, so that the water and sky mirror each other. Just as the Earth and the Heavens reflect each other with a still, calm beauty, so does nature reflect the still, calm beauty found within.

These paintings are part of my Eternity Collection, a series of paintings of the stars and the milky way galaxy. Each painting invites the viewer to return to nature and to think in longer time scales, to return to our roots and also to reach our fullest potential. The healing power of nature is fundamentally necessary to curing many of our chronic ills both as individuals and as a society. My intention is to recreate that feeling of awe and deep relaxation that people feel when they sit beside the ocean or when they reach the top of a mountain or when they glance upward and see more stars than they have ever seen in their lives. The paintings recreate a moment of healing felt in the soul.

Jessica Thompson says: I grew up in South Texas, where I studied art for many years under Ruth Ann Taylor. I went to college at Tulane University in New Orleans where I got a bachelor of arts, focusing on studio art. I have lived in the Chicago area for 8 years. While I still struggle to define my own style, one of the overarching themes of all my works is the interaction of light and shadow, particularly unconventional light, shine, and glow. Some of my favorite themes are the sanctity of nature, the sanctity within, and the struggle with darkness, difficulty, and doubt. I also like to paint abstract work, partly as personal therapy and partly as a pure study of composition, itself.

Sujata Tibrewala

pratibimba.info

Music Within (2011)

24 x 36

Acrylic on Canvas

\$1000

The myriad textures of nature, fall, winter, summer, spring, all singing to us, resonating with our frequencies to find the music inherent in all of us...

Sujata Tibrewala, LFAC Artist in Residence, is a self taught artist who in 2009 gave up her electrical engineering career for her first love, art. She now uses her knowledge of science to spread art and issues close to her heart. Born in India, Sujata had successful solo exhibits and conducted many art workshops, some of which resulted in student exhibitions. Sujata moved to the U.S. in 2010. Her works are currently on display at many reputed galleries including the Regional Commission of Arts, St Louis and Marine Foundation, California. Her noted exhibitions from the past include Life Force Arts Center, Chicago IL; Gateway gallery, St Louis MO; Lalit Kala Academy, New Delhi; and Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur, India. She is an artist member of many artistic organizations including the St. Louis Artists' Guild, Women's Caucus for the Arts, and Art Concoctions. Starting from her school days, Sujata won many awards, and her art has received rave reviews in leading print and electronic media of India and USA. Presently, Sujata resides in San Jose, California. She is a member of the Naperville Art League, FIRE Arts Studio & Gallery, and Woman Made Gallery, Chicago.

Life Force Arts Manifesto by Joan Forest Mage

- 1) We call for a community of artists and audiences to boldly acknowledge, explore and activate The Spiritual Power of Art.
- 2) The Spiritual Power of Art affects EVEYRONE. By spiritual we mean the non-material, including the human spirit, universal energy and mystical experience. Every culture and human being ever known has been powerfully affected by the arts. It is a huge disadvantage to lack awareness of the spiritual dimension of the arts. Everyone can benefit by understanding and utilizing The Spiritual Power of Art, including what we call the Art Continuum (from perception to expression to art) to be aware of how they are affected by The Spiritual Power of Art, and to take charge of consciously activating this power for the highest good of themselves and the planet.
- 3) The Spiritual Power of Art is the elephant in the living room for modern people. All art is inherently spiritual. Yet, modern people, including many in the art world, shy away from discussing the spiritual dimension of both art and human experience.
- 4) The arts are 100,000 years of the technology of consciousness that help us process our perception, expression and communication. The arts already have methods in place for how to perceive, express and communicate anything we need to ourselves, our fellow humans or the larger world.
- 5) The arts affect people so deeply because they have perfected the craft of the 3 Modes of Perception and Expression: the senses of hearing, seeing, feeling (auditory, visual and kinesthetic).
- 6) The Art Continuum is a continuum of experience that begins as basic perception (both of the internal self and the outer world) to expression, communication and interaction with both fellow humans and the larger community of all beings. Art, the craft of perception, expression and communication, is the highest development of this Continuum.
- 7) There are 4 Fields of human life that art greatly impacts:

Communication, Learning, Healing and Community. There has been a tendency for these fields – education, psychology, cultural events – when they are the locus of art activity, to define the spiritual power of art for their own purposes. Vice versa, arts organizations tend to focus on the methodology of creating the art itself, though being aware (often on a subconscious level) of art's powerful influence on learning, healing and community. We propose to stand that on its head: to ask, "What spiritual effect (human spirit, universal energy and mystical experience) does art have?"

8) In the modern world, people have looked to other fields such as psychology and education to define art's power to affect consciousness. It is time for artists themselves to fully understand and claim the power inherent in their work, and to bring it fully into the 4 Fields (Communication, Learning, Healing and Community). The Art Continuum helps us understand the connection of basic experience, the 4 Fields and the arts, providing the missing link to allow the arts to truly blossom.

- **3 Levels of spiritual power of art: human spirit, universal energy and mystical experience**
- **The Art Continuum – the 3 Perceptual Modes (auditory, visual, kinesthetic) that are the basis of human perception, communication, healing modalities, learning styles and cultural expression, and that at their highest level of development are called "the arts"**
- **4 Fields of human life that the spiritual power of the arts impacts: Communication, Learning, Healing and Community**
- **4 Types of spiritual art: Informational, Instructional, Transformational and Cultural**

"Other worlds [are] invented in play, invoked in ritual, or fabricated in the arts." Ellen Dissanayake

About Life Force Arts Center

Life Force Arts Center (LFAC) is a community of teaching -healing artists who explore the connection of the arts, healing and spiritual practice based in the Life Force Arts Method, a modern version of perennial wisdom teachings that value love and creativity. LFAC presents visual, literary and performing art exhibits, events and publications that awaken human potential, deepen mystical experience and create spiritual transformation.

Life Force Arts Center was founded in 1988 as a nonprofit, tax exempt 501 (c) 3 organization to present the modern dance and performance work of Joan Forest Mage. The organization grew to support the broader exploration of art and spirituality, opening our own Center in Chicago in 2008.

Life Force Arts Center presents an average of 20 events each month, including performances, workshops, lectures and ceremonies: a total of over 1000 life-transforming events since we opened, with 250 presenters.

Art: The Language of Healing is our 32nd juried art exhibit in our 9th year of operation. Our shows are based on themes related to the connection of art and spiritual practice, and run from 2 - 4 months each. Our Art Gallery has featured the work of over 150 artists from throughout the U.S. and the world, including Canada, Costa Rica, England, Egypt, France, Guatemala, Ireland and South Africa.

LFAC Artists in Residence are the core artistic staff of Life Force Arts Center. Representing a variety of visual, literary and performing arts disciplines, they lead the production of the Art Rituals and other programs at Life Force Arts Center.

LFAC Artists in Residence 2016 – 2017

Steven Blaine Adams
Anna Applegate
Sharon Bechtold
Christopher Bednash
Amy Christensen
Sally Cooper
Kat Kidwell
Joan Forest Mage
Cathy McManamon
Lorraine Moretti
Kao Ra Zen
Szmeralda Shanel
Sujata Tibrewala
Sojourner Zenobia

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Life Force Arts Center has over twenty events a month focusing on the connection of the arts and spiritual practice. Please check our calendar & sign up for our e-mail list

Visit PANTHEON,
our online journal of Spiritual Art

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Art: The Language of Healing Exhibit Catalog created by

Kat Kidwell, Joan Forest Mage & Jaimie Shepardson

Catalog design by Maggie Baker