

***Art:
The Language of Learning***

Exhibit Catalog

Art Exhibit ~ Events

January 27 - April 25, 2017

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

Art: The Language of Learning

Opening Reception

January 27, 2017, 6 — 10 PM

Closing Reception

April 25, 2017, 7— 9 PM

Free admission to exhibit &
Opening and Closing receptions

Open Gallery Hours

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

LifeForceArts.org
773-327-7224

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

Steven Blaine Adams
Sharon Bechtold
Christopher Bednash
Sarah Braden
Mary Burton
Ladan Ghajar
Dorothy Graden
John Henderson
Kat Kidwell
Colleen Koziara

Jessica Kronika
Alexia Macri
Janine Peltier Macris
Lorraine Moretti
Britt Posmer
Diana Rudaitis
Richard Selby
Jessica Thompson
Sujata Tibrewala

About Art: *The Language of Learning*

Explore the incredible power of the arts to advance learning as Life Force Arts Center presents the art exhibit and multiarts show *Art: The Language of Learning*, running January 27 - April 25, 2017 at Life Force Arts Center, 1609 W. Belmont, Chicago IL 60657. Opening Reception is Friday, January 27, 2017 from 6 - 10 PM. Closing Reception is Tuesday, April 25, 2017 from 7 - 9 PM. Open Gallery Hours are Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30 - 6:30 PM, and by appointment. Admission is free to the exhibit and Opening and Closing Receptions. 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 Learning* is the first in Life Force Arts Center's 2017 series of exhibits, *Art: The Language of...* exploring the incredible power of the Arts in Learning, Healing and Community Building.

Art: *The Language of Learning* explores the myriad ways the arts enhance learning and education. The arts are a bridge between the conscious and unconscious mind, helping us perceive, learn about and express both our inner and outer worlds. People have different "languages" of learning: seeing, hearing or doing. Teachers know that communicating to a student in their native "language" of the visual, literary or performing arts can create remarkable success in education. Children learn math through studying music; people with brain injuries re-learn to speak by singing. Visual art teaches measurement, proportion and dimension. Literary art and theater help students increase vocabulary, understand metaphor and develop social and emotional skills. Join us as we explore the incredible power of the arts to advance learning. 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 healing-teaching artists who explore the connection of the arts, healing and spiritual practice. We focus on the arts as a common ground of human expression, where artists of diverse spiritual traditions present artistically excellent exhibits, events and publications to awaken human potential, create spiritual transformation and connect audiences to the mystical dimension.

Steven Blaine Adams

www.facebook.com/stevenblaine.adams/photos

Ancient Wisdom (2016)

12 x 7

Pyrography & Colored Pencil on Wood

\$350

I chose the name *Ancient Wisdom* as the title because it embodies the spirit of the Dragons. They appear in every culture across the map. Some cultures believe they may have had the ability to speak and actually taught humans language.

When this "mythical" creature appears in your life through meditation or in a dream as a spirit guide, totem or power animal, seek out its meaning. It could be that its time to discover the beauty and magic that lie within you. Dragons represent the supernatural and infinite self, opening the doors to wisdom, knowledge and the intellect. You may experience flashes of illumination or insight, as well as inspiring will, courage and fortitude, fueling your inner fire and imagination or discovering your own potential.

Dragons also represent ancient magic and are connected to the elements, intuition, instinct and survival. *Ancient Wisdom* depicts a horned and bearded creature that can be considered a green Earth Dragon, relating to the guardianship and protectors of Earth itself and all its minerals, crystals and precious gems. In this way, the Earth Dragon is dedicated to preserving the environment.

Other animals connected symbolically to the Dragon are lizards, crocodiles, snakes, bats, lions, eagles, the Komodo dragon, dinosaurs (especially the Pterodactyl) and the mythical Phoenix.

Dragons are feared by some cultures and revered by others. Study the Dragon and its meaning in all cultures to discover the hidden knowledge and magic that lies within you. Fuel your inner fire and spark your own imagination to learn the wisdom of "Dragon Magic".

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.

Sharon Bechtold
sharonbechtold.com

If You Could See What I Hear... (2016)
15 x 7
Pyrography on Wood
\$160

Let all that is hidden now be found.

Blindness is its own reward.

There are times when what is easily seen deceives. Owl understands this. Her eyes are wide, missing nothing. In the darkness no movement or shadow goes unnoticed. Her focus is unwavering. Her gaze steady. And yet. It is her ears that lead her to her prize.

She has learned.

By not relying on the obviousness of sight, she finds her prize in alternative ways.

Alternative.

Her ears positioned at different points on her head. Nothing is as expected, and everything is just as it needs to be. Perfect.

Her hearing is perfect. As perfect as her sight.

Her hearing reveals everything, as much as her sight reveals nothing.

But in the space of everything and nothing, she takes flight.

Soundless flight. Muffled by “extra” feathers that silence the currents of air and her deadly approach. Crashing through the concealment of a motionless moonlit snowbank to grasp her unseen prize.

No longer hidden.

Found.

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.

Christopher Bednash
christopherjosephbednash.net

Angel Martin (2016)

8 x 9

Acrylic on Paper

\$56

Martin holds out scales to weigh what is of true value. He gestures to urge us to think deeply about what choices we must make to protect all life. From sorrow, compassion. From compassion, courage.

Teaching stories bring us wisdom across time and space. Martin Luther King saw that stories from the Bible and other world traditions are not so much to be believed as literal truth, but rather be understood as powerful metaphors for spiritual development and social change. Martin was a man of deep compassion and piercing sorrow, of clear insight and profound wisdom, great faith and abiding doubt. With all the needs, desires, and fears of any human, he still dared to dream of another way. Martin's story of compassion and nonviolence teaches us on into the future.

Angel Berta (2016)

7 x 8

Acrylic on Paper

\$56

Berta beats a drum, waking us from the slumber of indifference, aligning our rhythms with the heartbeat of Mother Earth. Berta needs us to see how everything is connected, and that injustice anywhere becomes injustice everywhere.

Berta Cáceres was an educator and activist in Honduras who organized her Lenca indigenous community to support social justice, small farmers, forests and rivers, and indigenous, women's, and LGBT rights. After a coup brought in a military regime and greater oppression of

activists, a multinational corporation came to dam up their sacred river. So she and her fellow Lencas put boulders and their own bodies in the roads to block the construction companies and boldly asserted their legal rights to the government and the world. Amidst threats, criminal charges, violence, and killings, the visibility of their resistance actually stopped the dam. After, Berta called out Secretary of State Hillary Clinton for not supporting democracy during the coup in Honduras, leading the nation to become so dangerous for activists. Unrelenting in her organizing, Berta was later assassinated. The killings continue still, but so does the activism.

Christopher Bednash is an interdisciplinary artist who works to expand intersections between art, compassionate activism, and non-judgmental spirituality, in devotion to nurturing visions of a more peaceful, just, and ecologically wise world. He is a 2016-2017 Life Force Arts Center Artist in Residence. More of his work can be found at christopherjosephbednash.net.

Sarah Braden

www.bradenfineart.com

Sound (2014)
15 x 17 framed
Colored Ink on Paper
\$150

In the drawing "Sound" I took inspirations from scientific graphs of the human hearing range, the anatomy of the inner ear, sound waves, and charts showing the different sound experiences of human perception. I have integrated these ideas with a myriad of mark making techniques, and a vibrant palette of both synthetic and natural colors to create this composition.

Touch (2015)
15 x 19 Framed
Colored Ink on Paper
\$150

In the drawing "Touch" the colored scalloped shapes represent skin cells muscle tissue and the composition of the dermis and its layers the different colors are significant to the different sensations of pain pleasure temperature and pressure we experience. Using scientific diagrams of how the skin works as inspiration I found there are different receptors for pain, temperature, and pressure and illustrated that through color, line, and shape.

Sight (2014)
16.5 x 12.5 Framed
Colored Ink on Paper
\$150

In the drawing "Sight" I draw inspirations from scientific drawings of optics, the anatomy of the eye, light refractions, and the visible color spectrum. I have Integrated a myriad of mark making techniques with a palette found in natural flora, and the feathers of exotic birds to create this composition. Birds specifically influenced this drawing because they see a much wider spectrum of light than we do, many species can see infrared light for instance a spectrum beyond our field of vision.

Taste (2014)
14.5 x 18.25 Framed
Colored Ink on Paper
\$150

In the drawing "Taste" I took inspirations from scientific diagrams of the taste buds, macro images of the human tongue, and salivary glands. Since smell is such a huge

part of taste, I used a partial shared palette for these two drawings to show the coordination between the two senses. I integrated these ideas with a myriad of mark making techniques, and a vibrant palette of both synthetic and natural colors to create this composition.

Smell (2015)
15 x 19 Framed
Colored Ink on Paper
\$150

In the drawing “Smell” I used distorted and stylized imagery of flora, fire, and the natural world. Smell is more complicated because the nose and throat work as a team to gather information. Tiny molecules that can enter our “olfactory system” in two ways: either through our nostrils or the back of the throat. Again using on scientific drawings and diagrams as inspiration to create abstract imagery of the olfactory bulb. The part of the brain where smell is detected and remembered.

The Sense Series is composed of 5 intricate drawings which depict the human perception of sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch completed by: Sarah Braden between 2014-2015. What unifies the drawings is the inspiration I took from scientific diagrams, graphs, charts, and anatomical drawings. Our perception from the senses is our main source of new information to form opinions or to have the capability to learn. The perception from the information fed to us through our senses seems vast to us but it is extremely limited, in comparison to ranges or of other animals. A humbling realization but also this comparison made me more curious- to learn and to push these concepts further. Integrating these ideas with bright colors,

lines, and organic shapes to create this unique abstract series of drawings.

Sarah Braden was born in Phoenix Az in 1984, and grew up in rural Wisconsin. She graduated with her BFA from the Milwaukee Institute of Art and Design in 2007. From 2007- 2010 Braden exhibited her paintings, and mixed media collages at cafes, galleries, group art exhibitions, and fund raising auctions. In 2012 Braden moved to Chicago and has been compiling a new body of drawings and paintings since. She is inspired and influenced by the action painters of the Abstract Expressionist movement in the mid 20th century, miniature Persian art, and traditional Indian tattooing. Sarah Braden is a designer, and visual artist living in Chicago Illinois.

Mary Burton

www.marybearart.com

Tree (1971)

15 x 15 framed

Black ink collagraph print and colored pencil on paper
\$50

I hand colored this black ink collagraph (a print made from a collaged printing plate) with pencil. The fuzzy dark hole spaces have a sensual appeal for me that I still seek to invoke. Perhaps it is the mysterious, comforting feminine that I still need to honor

In College (1971)

13.5 x 16.75 framed

Pen and pencil on graph paper
\$50

This is an attempt to combine geometric forms with living forms. My classmates are surreptitiously observed and arranged on the diamond graph paper. I was trying to bring dry, geometric forms to life.

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.

Ladan Ghajar

Ghajar.org

The Light of Hope (2016)

30 x 40

Oil on Canvas

\$2200

Poem 1 (2008)

18 x 22 Framed

Water Color, Ink & Pen on Paper

\$600

Loss of faith in human progress in conjunction with modernity, brought me to whole new considerations, and it's shown in my work and ideas as a person. Our collective subconscious mind shapes behavioral patterns in our lives, and aims to unify our culture, religion, and identity into another level.

This recurring phenomena, is leading us to the edge of breaking off from our own existence as unique human beings, and forcing us to see the world in rigid and stubborn ways. Thus, the result was to create a man made reality. Unfortunately, this reality is nothing but an illusion and a fantasy of man's collective and rigid subconscious mind.

However, on the body of my work, I try to use powerful language through symbols and forms, which could be understood by all human beings, regardless of our differences and where we come from. Symbols and images are the most direct sign of our psychic potential, and can form the bridges between all cultures and nations as Western and Eastern civilization. These symbols, forms, signs and colors, are windows to our past & present in order to help us visualize a deeper layer of our understanding, bringing out a wisdom and attention to what we left behind in our journey as human beings, and how we got up to this point in our history. How did we get so lost in our own ways, and create this terrifying dysfunctional world for ourselves?

Social and cultural transformation is vital, and it can be accomplished using this universal language of symbolism to evolve and understand our cultural differences. This achievable understanding, can unify and balance new perspectives in our understanding towards life itself. Otherwise, we will be doomed by our ignorance in the darkness of our times. In the end, we have not much choice, but to dive behind the doors which were left closed to us by our own history and historians.

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

Origin (2016)

18.5 x 22.5 Framed

Giclee Print

\$90

I love watching the sky on a dark summer night. I dream about far away places and try to imagine the the expanse of what I'm seeing. Looking into the past, but seeing everything in the present. What is time? The images in this painting represent the awe that I feel, the galaxies that are millions of light years away that sent out their light in our far distant past. What other planets might hold life and that we might learn some day that we are not alone in the vastness. The ancient people drew symbols on rock walls, interpreting what they saw from a mystical viewpoint. I invite the viewer to tap into his or her inner and outer worlds and think about the depth of true reality and how they might represent their thoughts.

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

www.northsuburbancarvers.org/page/399535696

Shaman Eagle (2013)

16.5 x 5 x 6

Stained Basswood

\$400

Hoot Owl (2012)

15 x 3.5 x 5

Ariba Wood

\$200

Ampersand (2016)

10 x 10 x 1.5

Mahogany

\$300

Dolphin Leaping (2016)

10 x 9 x 2.5

Mahogany

\$200

Alien (2016)

12.5 x 5.5 x 3

Stained Butternut

\$450

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

www.facebook.com/NorthMoonArts

***The Inner Clock Artist* (2016)**

15 x 12 Framed

Pen, Pencil & Watercolor Marker on Paper

\$88

This is an expression of synesthesia in young students and their teacher. (Synesthesia is that thing that happens when different senses get mixed up in your mind, like when you see a certain color every time you see or hear a certain word. Most people I've asked about it experience it in some way.) The inner part of the picture shows what the three see and hear collectively, and the outer part is what one of them is actually experiencing - the vision that helps them learn and stay focused and shouldn't be hindered. Most of the colors, genders and personality traits I matched with each number in this picture were inspired by what numbers looked like in my own experience.

I don't believe it's necessary to "make" math enjoyable for kids. I think we're born with an ability to experience numbers, equations and patterns in some way that makes them artistically and spiritually meaningful, and that society can actually erase motivation when they set a goal like "you need to know this because it will make you better at work." What's more helpful is when numbers are allowed to have personalities and be naturally fun for their own sake.

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

Father Nature (2016)

18 x 18

Acrylic on Canvas

\$600

In all my years, nature has always been my teacher. Its sights and sounds and smells. The way it moves and feels. Its patterns and infinite connections. Its magic. From inspiring my art and soul to the manifestation of what, for me, constitutes my religious/spiritual life, Nature has always been it, and always, for me, the Face of Nature has been balanced as Male and Female. Lord and Lady. God and Goddess. Mother and Father. It is these patient, powerful and enduring aspects of creation which have been, not only my greatest teachers, but that which I have aspired to emulate, as well as that which has been my greatest support and comfort in my darkest hours.

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

Insight Inspiration (2016)

9.5 x 12 Framed

Colored ArtStix on Black Paper

\$50

Concentration Blossoming (2016)

9.5 x 12 Framed

Colored ArtStix on Black Paper

\$50

The distant expanses of space pulse with energy across time and space. The light of stars travels years to dust our tiny planet, with Stardust. From the dust of stars arises *the comet of Insight and Inspiration*, like a super charged electron, speeding through space and time, through the rabbit hole of consciousness. Teasing, tantalizing clues stoke the fire of our Imagination, speeding from the Senses, to Neurons, to the place where art is born, within the Human Mind and Heart.

Elemental sparks make up the DNA, our cells miraculous blueprint, forged in living creatures from the dust of stars. At this double helix, the heart of our physical body, Inspiration delves into the subtle patterns of our Instinct. At the Cosmic level, we are pollinated by Stardust. As the neurons fire and we explore, practice and learn, we write into our bodies DNA the record of these adaptations. What we make of things large and small, is unique to our individual capacity for dreaming, for Imagination. It is through *Concentration* of

all our capacity that we can reach a *Blossoming* of creativity.

These concepts inform my art practice, as well as my teaching practice. Where all students have varying skills and knowledge, all are capable of opening to new lessons and skills. It is like a comet, the source of our inspiration, coming from all we know, all that is, and every subtle nuance of curiosity that we allow to guide our process. So too, are the skeins of all knowledge and art embedded in the kernel of our Art making over time. We can encourage the Blossoming of Art within our culture by Concentrating on revealing our portion, our view of the Whole.

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.

Alexia Macri

inspiritcreations.net

Wisdom Begins in Wonder (2016)

17 x 20

Mixed Media

\$275

The owl is sacred to the Greek Goddess of learning Athena, and the equivalent Roman Goddess Minerva. It is depicted on some Greco-Roman currency as a symbol of status, intelligence, and of course, wealth. It is the bird of prophecy and wisdom in many cultures. It is also one of my favorite animal guides.

"Wisdom begins in wonder", is a popular paraphrase of Socrates from Plato's Theatetus, which focuses on the relationship between philosophy and knowledge. Wisdom comes from experience and learning, wonder is the questions that start the exploration.

Philosophy, means 'love of wisdom', is a study that seeks to understand the mysteries of existence and reality. It tries to discover the nature of truth and knowledge, and to find what is of basic value and importance in life. It also examines the relationships between humanity and nature and between the individuals and society. Philosophy arises out wonder, curiosity, and the desire to know and understand.

Alexia Macri has many passions: she is an artist, crafter, and designs/creates jewelry. She is also offers a variety of services for pets, and is a dancer. She moved to Chicago from Greece 15 years ago. She has been involved in the arts since she was a little girl. Her mother is an artist and a crafter, which encouraged her to follow her dreams. She has been her greatest supporter and mentor. Alexia is very passionate about crafts and everything handmade. She spends many hours drawing, doodling and creating different things in her home studio. She has many favorite mediums that she uses, and mixed media art is her favorite kind of art to create. She has attended several arts & crafts shows and festivals, and she consigns her creations at some boutiques and galleries throughout Chicagoland area. She is also working on starting an online business. Alexia's arts & crafts business name is InSpirit creations.

Janine Peltier Macris

Same Food, Same Fire (2016)

8 x 10

Acrylic on Canvas

\$110

This piece feels like a survival of the fittest kinda thing. It reveres nature for this. Zooming in and out while looking at this piece, as much as my eye will adjust, helps me find perspective in my own life. As well, I now crave diving in an ocean because I love the blues in this particular piece, and in any ocean really.

Wind (2015)

11 x 12

Oil Pastels & Marker on Wood

\$160

Time elapses and there are markers that carry its gift. There is an omniscience that can weigh over a person or one that can lift a person on their shoulders to help them see from higher ground. And there is every day. And there are special days. And this piece asks for one to admire the larger than life presence of all of those days.

Janine Peltier Macris says: I have been pursuing art for many years; sometimes a predator, sometimes its prey. Oil and chalk pastels, acrylic paint, sharpie, and any material that shows potential as a canvas are my favorite go-tos. I have created a style of art I call "Turnable Perspective." As I've always believed, as many do, in the power of perspective, this art form was birthed when I found that my fairly abstract work often housed hidden images and emotions within them and the best way to experience this was through turning the art 90 degrees at a time. I continue to mine my subconscious for varying motifs, birds morphing into one of my favorite. Between teaching, family, and writing, I continue to bring life through art to many symbols. I live in suburban Chicago with my husband, son & bulldog.

Lorraine Moretti

www.facebook.com/lorraine.moretti.7

Demeter's Well of the Beautiful Dances (2016)

12 x 12

Mixed Media—Acrylic & Collage

\$400

I sense. I think. I wonder. I question. Through an art ritual using representations of soil, grain, bone, snake, poppy, moss, root, and emerald and garnet and blood stone and patchouli, I created a physical manifestation of the Earth Goddess Demeter who presides over fertility, birth, harvest, decay & rebirth. Through this emotional, analytical & experiential enrichment I was able to learn about the nature of my existence.

Prayer to Demeter Cthonia & Dea Mystica

Deep, dark soil & its alluvial riches

Are the blessed remnants of Death,

As the green and fruit-bearing seasons of Life

Follow unseeming Decay.

From the ashes of Death

Do You, Cthonia, forge new Life,

So that Being never ceases, but only changes form.

(light the candle)

- *Prayer from Mysteries of Demeter by Jennifer Reif*

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.

Britt Posmer

www.facebook.com/brittposmerpoet

Radiance (2016)

12 x 16

Acrylic on Canvas

\$96

"Radiance" explores the techniques for painting the feminine face and form offered through the Art of Allowing, and was originally conceived and offered as a contribution to AoA's "Seeds of Love," a collection of works from artists of the Global AoA Community gathered as, "a collaboration of soul art dedicated to all sisters and brothers in need of healing at this time, as well as our beloved Mother Earth." Participation in the practice and mastery of these skills helped me to build the beginning of a creative language to act as a springboard for the unconscious and intuitive wisdom of Self to flow. Through repetition, my perception of the feminine and what it means to live life in a female body has been transformed. The invisible limitations normalized through habituated blindness slowly give way, revealing the possibility of continuous reinvention. Again and again, I discover the power of an image to restore a heart to its immensity.

Secret Shakti (2016)

12 x 12

Acrylic & Gold Leaf on Canvas

\$72

"Secret Shakti" was created during AoA's *Sensual Innocence*, a multi-week intensive course exploring women's relationships to sensuality and the body through a variety of painting and writing prompts. Some technical training was included, yet always with the encouragement to use the technique as a support, not substitute, for authentic voice. I found that the images that emerged enabled me to integrate aspects of my consciousness, history, and genuine longing with a stability that had been lacking from other forms of healing and spiritual practice. The containment of the canvas acted as an organic boundary, protecting my mind and body from being flooded and overwhelmed by psychic and emotional material it could not digest. In this way, I was able to learn a great deal about myself, my struggles and gifts, and cultivate trust in my experience as both an artist and fully embodied woman. Because this process was engaged in the community of a women's wisdom circle, it also illuminated the profound interconnections linking the hearts and experiences of women around the world, and the love for and of the deep feminine that resacralizes our existence.

Britt Posmer is a self-taught artist who began spontaneous image-making and writing during a period of critical illness and spiritual awakening. Her work depicts a consciousness and holistic vision that has flowered from a commitment to creative process as both devotional self-emptying and a unique expression of somatic mysticism. Influences that have inspired her recent work include Continuum Movement, the writings of Cynthia Bourgeault, and in particular her insights into the person of Mary Magdalene, Centering Prayer, and the apophatic and kenotic streams as articulated throughout various global spiritual traditions. Originally trained as a classical ballet dancer, Britt has spent a lifetime in deep engagement with the body. This orientation led her to become a nationally certified massage therapist, Reiki Master/Teacher, and energy healer, with additional study in Cranial Sacral Therapy, Zero Balancing,

Advanced Psychosomatic Character Therapy, Hawaiian and Toltec Shamanism, yoga, and bellydance. She is also exceptionally curious about the constructs of gender and how these shape and influence our notions of body, creativity, spirituality and healing. Britt's first book of poetry, "The Angel and the Heretic" was released in 2015 and was the basis of a performance ritual presented at LFAC.

Diana Rudaitis

The Seeker (2013)

20 x 20

Acrylic on Canvas

\$125

The Owl has always been seen as a mysterious bird, and associated with wisdom and learning as in, "The Wise Old Owl."

As a creature of the dark, the owl was associated with occult wisdom and learning. The Greek Goddess, Athena, although a warrior goddess, was also a goddess of higher knowledge, her constant companion Bubo was an owl. Here Bubo seated in the tree of life invites all seekers of learning.

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

The Landing (2016)

32 inch diameter

Pyrography on Upcycled Table Top

\$800

The Landing - an image of a young owl coming in to land next to a larger wiser old owl high up in a dead tree. A range of mountains in the distance, a full moon in the sky above.

Learning to fly is a jump, and there ya go. A leap of faith. Then you will either fly or crash and burn. But the landing, you gotta stick the landing! Evil Knieval the world famous motorcycle jumper had many great jumps, but only a couple great landings...during his career he broke every bone in his body at least twice. Its all about the landing!

The Owl is Wise, but its really all about balance. You won't know until you try, so just leap! The old owl is there, but you're on your own now. You will need strength to stick your landing. You will need to come in slow and steady so you don't get hurt. But most of all you will need hope, and a willingness to try again and again until you make it, and each time, you will learn, until one day you are no longer an amateur or a novice, but are yourself the Wise Old Owl.

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!)

The Landing, on display at LFAC, is Richard's first gallery art showing.

Jessica Thompson
jmthompsonstudios.com

Divine Nature #1 (2016)
30 x 40
Oil on Canvas
\$1200

This painting is the first in a series using subliminal messaging and logo techniques (like those used in advertising) to raise consciousness. If you look closely, you will notice the composition looks a lot like a logo. Each of the 3 rocks depicts a letter that spells the word ONE. All paintings in the series use words with deep spiritual meanings, like "God" "Spirit" or "Eternity". The painting is designed to stimulate spirituality in the subconscious mind.

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

***A Journey to the Sun* (2015)**

12 x 16

Acrylic on Canvas

\$400

You are floating in space, and are being burned by the intense heat from the Sun when a long lost grandma comes and rescues you in a space ship. You can now go close enough to appreciate the sheer beauty of the massive fire, as if millions of volcanoes decided to erupt at once. The fire patterns on the Sun's surface, the millions of little and huge fiery pools present a picture of something scarily alive. You are appreciating the dancing whites, yellows and reds when suddenly you realize what would happen if you were thrown out of your space ship. You would evaporate into thin air, down to the last atom.

And suddenly you are thankful that your permanent address is on the planet earth which is a comfortable 93 million miles from it.

***Breaking the ATOM, Marie Curie* (2017)**

11 x 14

Acrylic on Canvas

\$400

Marie Curie's discovery of radioactivity through Radium suggested for the first time that atoms were not indestructible. Today we know this but at the time her suggestion was not taken seriously. But she never gave up and continued to do research not just to advance the knowledge of science but also to help humanities.

She found application of radioactivity in X-rays Which could save soldiers' lives, she realized, by helping doctors see bullets, shrapnel, and broken bones. She convinced the government to empower her to set up France's first military

radiology centers. Newly named Director of the Red Cross Radiology Service, she wheedled money and cars out of wealthy acquaintances.

She convinced automobile body shops to transform the cars into vans, and begged manufacturers to do their part for their country by donating equipment. By late October 1914, the first of 20 radiology vehicles she would equip was ready. French enlisted men would soon dub these mobile radiology installations, which transported X-ray apparatus to the wounded at the battle front, *petites Curies* (little Curies).

It is ironic that the woman who helped save countless lives could not be helped and died of cancer due to over exposure to radium. She herself fell victim to the little known harmful effects of radioactivity.

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 Wheel, a modern iteration 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 Learning is our 31th 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, 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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Follow us on Twitter

Art: The Language of Learning Exhibit Catalog created
by

Joan Forest Mage, & Jaimie Shepardson

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