

*The Creative Soul:
Art & The Sentient Being*

Exhibit Catalog

Art Exhibit ~ Events
ArtSpirit Adventures

January 15 - April 26, 2016

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

*The Creative Soul:
Art & The Sentient Being*

Opening Reception

January 15, 2016, 6:30—10 PM

Closing Reception

April 26, 2016, 7—9 PM

Free admission to exhibit &
Opening and Closing receptions

Open Gallery Hours

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

**Artists Featured in
*Art & The Sentient Being***

Steven Blaine Adams	Jessica Kronika
Sharon Bechtold	Beatriz Ledesma
Grace Bromley	Claire Mesesan
Marianna Buchwald	Sharyl Noday
Mary Burton	Britt Posmer
Kurt Fondriest	Diana Rudaitis
Dorothy Graden	Derek Schulze
Amy Hassan	Alessandra Sequeira
John Henderson	Zachary Spaulding
Colleen Koziara	Vivian Zapata

About Art & The Sentient Being

Explore art expressing the soul: the energy that makes one animate rather than inanimate, how art helps us become more alive, feeling and conscious (sentient) and how the senses relate to the arts to improve perception and expression, as Life Force Arts Center presents the art exhibit and multiarts show *The Creative Soul: Art & The Sentient Being*, running January 15 - April 26, 2016 at Life Force Arts Center, 1609 W. Belmont, Chicago IL 60657. Opening Reception is Friday, January 15, 2016 from 6:30 - 10 PM. Closing Reception is Tuesday, April 26, 2016 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, Executive Director, 773-327-7224, joan@LifeForceArts.org.

Life Force Arts Center's 2016 exhibits, *The Creative Soul* series, explores three different meanings of what art is and why it's important: to awaken sentient experience, to create other worlds through art, play and ritual, and to communicate with the many levels of self.

The exhibit *Art & The Sentient Being* explores art expressing the soul: the energy that makes one animate rather than inanimate; how art helps us become more alive, feeling and conscious (sentient). Experience how the senses relate to the arts to improve perception and expression. Art is aesthetic, increasing one's sensibility; the opposite of aesthetic is anesthetic.

The artwork in this 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 the those present."

The mission of **Life Force Arts Center (LFAC)** is to activate the spiritual power of the visual, literary and performing arts to create transformation and community in artists and audiences. 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

Tree of Life (2016)

8 x 10

Wire & Aventurine, Tiger's Eye, Black Agate,
Moss Agate

\$120

Trees are the bridge between the upper & lower worlds. They are what helps me to feel alive. Humans and trees share the desire to reach for the light and be rooted in the Earth plane. Trees are a symbol of growth.

Eye of Horus Pyramid (2016)

8 x 10

Wire, Quartz, Glass

\$120

The Eye of Horus symbolizes the Eye of the person who has achieved enlightenment and has learned the mystery of God. The journey of the soul is represented by a pyramid, the top of it being the final destination. The eye has always meant truth and communication to me and it connects with the soul of Egyptian culture.

Cho Ku Rei (2016)

8 x 10

Crystal Quartz, Fluorite, Tiger's Eye, Copper

\$120

This is the symbol to increase energy in the energy practice of Reiki. It draws energy from around you and focuses it where you need it most. Used in Reiki to clean negative energy and provide spiritual protection., it also aids in manifestation and shifting perception for meditation.

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

***Keeper of Secrets Speaks* (2015)**

12 x 7

Pyrography on Basswood

\$365

My Secrets are not the same as your answers
you think too much
thinking too much adds complexity
complexity adds confusion
and confusion leads to questions
my secrets mean nothing to the one who questions
for the one who questions is caught in the confusion of
his own mind.
and so you seek but you do not find
you do not understand
and that is your answer
but you do not accept this, you desire a different answer.
Nevertheless that is your answer.
You will not know or understand everything.

You do not need to.
Questions take you outside of the moment.
In each moment if you listen you will be inspired
the answer will arise without the question
this is my secret

--Lynx

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.

Grace Bromley

gracebromley.com

Untitled (2014)

34 x 44

Mixed Media on Board

\$800

The subject of this painting is settled comfortably in her seat, her head is positioned stiffly and demeanor

composed, in order to intentionally avoid the gaze of her formidable portraitist. It is a haunting, yet seductive partial portrait that suggests the relationship between audience and portrait is both enticing as well as repelling. This work reproduces a familiar scenario of a nude female subject shamelessly exposed to the viewer, the confidence and drama of the composition are exaggerated by bold colors and line work. These qualities encourage speculation about the woman's identity and relationship to the artist. The work addresses the way the act of looking, or the "Gaze" has created standards of beauty and an element of voyeurism throughout the history of painting.

Throughout her education at The School of the Art Institute of Chicago as well as in her current personal practice, **Grace Bromley** has alternated between the realms of figuration and abstraction. Her most recent works attempt to marry the two, while drawing upon the act of remembrance and the function of collective memory of artists by reaching back into the history of portraiture. She attempts to establish a narrative between contemporary female artists with the predominantly male masters of the past. Integral to Bromley's practice is the reliance on specific memories of events, places, and people, as visual source material. Her methods include constantly formulating and reformulating images, making many drawing, photocopies and watercolors before making a high intensity mixed media work.

Marianna Buchwald

www.internationalartadventures.com

Procession of the Light Dancers (2015)

17 x 21 framed

Crayon on paper

\$400

The Procession of Light Dancers is about the spirits, emerging from the valleys of the shadows, who each carries 5 petals of the symbols of the ancient lands. As they dance across the valleys, they spread the petals into the wild and these petals when they are found become by those who get lost a means of survival and guidance.

Ms. Marianna Buchwald teaches and directs an International ensemble of artists and mimes: International Art Group in Chicago and produces art and multimedia shows. Exhibition: Culture Bridge, 2015, Scharpenberg Gallery, Chicago. Performances last few years: Phantabulanta, 2015, The Magic Maze, 2014 in Hannover, Little Red Riding hood Meets Monsanto, Out of Line Gallery, Chicago, 2013, The Magical Things, Lortzing Gallery Hannover, 2012, "Transformation Travelers, 2011, Street of the Arts at Kreismuseum, Syke, produced in Vahrenwald, Hannover, Germany; ".Dance of Time Fairies" at the North Lakeside Cultural Center, Chicago, July 16 - Aug.14., 2010," Mythological Encounters" at the Lortzing Gallery, Germany, April 2010, The Gift of Elfs at the Glenwoods Art Fair, 2009, Where is Peter Jones?, Mirror Images with Mr. Buchwald, at the Peter Jones Gallery, 2009, Black Birds and Vagabonds, 2008, Color-Form-Dance. Ms. Buchwald also curates exhibitions in Chicago and Germany, including Culture Bridge (2015) and Perspectives (2014) at DANK haus, Chicago, and Wanderlust, Flotte Lotte, Berlin, 2012.

Mary Burton

www.marybearart.com

Eye (1971)

11 x 14 framed

Print (pen on paper original)

\$100

This was inspired by Max Ernst's "Histoire Naturelle" and the idea that the eye is a source of light.

Sky (1971)

13 x 13 framed

Print (pen on paper original)

\$60

The perspective of the sky as seen by the earth, encompassing and nurturing.

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.

Kurt Fondriest

www.healingseedministries.com

The Tree of the Nativity (2015)

22.25 x 30

Pastels & Paint on paper

\$450

This piece is a reflection on our rebirth into nature. How this act of rebirth connects us with the natural elements or nature spirits. The connection enhances the vibration of life itself. This experience is a holy sacred observation of our mental, physical, and spiritual make up.

Kurt Fondriest is an expressive arts therapist at Misericordia home in Chicago, where he has worked for more than 22 years. He is an ordained non-denominational minister and certified pastoral counselor, holding a PhD in Holistic Ministries. His work is based on his life with a chronic pain condition called fibromyalgia. Dr. Kurt sees life as a ministry, a way of expressing one's spiritual connection to others. One of the greatest gifts our creator gives us is the power to love unconditionally; it is through this gift we find ourselves and our work. Let us always remember to not keep the gift of unconditional love but to share this divine blessing with all.

Dorothy Graden

www.dorothygraden.com/home.html

Let Her In (2015)

18 x 22 framed

Giclee Print

\$130

The Jackal waits patiently until humankind is ready for the wisdom and mystery she holds.

Time Suspended (2015)

18 x 22 framed

Giclee Print

\$130

Only the Present exists in the wonders of life and love.

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.

Amy Hassan

amyjamilahhassanartcreations.com

Inward Calm (2015)

11 Diameter

Pyrography on Wood

\$300

Persevere out of the Darkness (2014)

16 x 20

Acrylic on Canvas

\$400

Amy Hassan: I am a self taught artist, who has always loved drawing and painting since I was a young girl. Growing up, I enjoyed drawing pictures from nature, such as landscapes and animals. Many of my art pieces have various textures. This may be influenced by my work as a Special Education teacher. In years past, I have created learning activities, tactile books and recreated stories to fit the needs of my young students with special needs. During the past 2 years, however, my passion for painting has evolved into creating Mandala art. I find the process of creating a mandala, to be a very centering, peaceful and meditative process. I will often incorporate my love of nature and also geometric patterns into my

creations. Each art piece is unique and connects to the emotions that I may be feeling. The choice of colors, patterns or symbols is determined by my intention or purpose.

I use a variety of media including acrylic paint, pencil, marker, non-toxic color and clear lacquer, colored stones, recycled jewelry and beads, wood, paper, or canvas. Creations vary in size from 36 inches down to 1 inch. I also use the same technique while creating my hand painted earrings, pendants, magnets and bracelets.

John Henderson

www.northsuburbancarvers.org/page/399535696

Orca (2011)

3 x 12 x 11

Painted Basswood

\$400

This is taken from a Northwest Native American myth of a man getting his wife back. Traditionally, the man is on the orca, but I did not put him in this piece. I have depicted this legend 100 - 200 times, from about an inch tall to 24 inches, in wood and stone.

Northwest Native American art lends itself well to how I like in carving wood. It allows you to be creative yet keep within the style. I do everything stylized, rather than realistic. I like my pieces to be smooth and well-finished, and this is the style of Northwest Native American. The shape of the Orca barely looks like the original.

Dolphin on Tail (2014)

2 x 18 x 7

Butternut

\$400

I like exploring the many species of dolphins. We are familiar with the bottle nosed dolphin because of the TV show Flipper, but some have rounder heads. It is my mental image of a dolphin leaping out of the water. Maybe I'm a water spirit! I can easily sketch half a dozen poses of dolphins.

Condor (2009)

3 x 18 x 4

Mahogany

\$400

I call it Condor because of the profile: raptor beak, but not as curved as an eagle or hawk. Condors are graceful: they fly for a mile without flapping their wings: they just move the tips of their feathers. I think condors and buzzards are elegant looking birds.

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.

Colleen Koziara

www.mysticalwillow.com

Remember (2016)

16 x 20

Acrylic on Canvas

NFS

On loan from the collection of Florence Edwards-Miller

Remember

Just Remember

Open (2016)
15.5 x 12.5 framed
Pen & Ink on Paper
\$125

The birthing of the new year and visions and hopes held for its content and balance.

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 spiderweb 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.com

A Map of Life Lived (2013)

24.31 x 20.25 framed

Gel Pen on Black Strathmore Paper

\$550

The work, *A Map of Life Lived*, is a hand study of my own two hands as I see them. My perspective is influenced by the techniques of palmistry, which I have studied off and on for over a decade. Other aspects of this work flow out of intuition and inspiration. When this work was completed, I was working with groups of students on a printmaking series that we displayed in several Illinois locations as “A Show of Hands.” (June & July 2014 - Expressions Graphics Printmaking Cooperative and Gallery, Oak Park, IL; October 2014 - Community Arts Council’s Arts Center, Bourbonnais, IL.) Students were using stencils of their traced hands face down to create a color background, and then line work printing plates to create patterns within their hands. It occurred to me that the lines on our hands are a map of both possibilities (the left or non-dominant hand in palmistry) and a map of the life we live accruing in the lines, mounds and configurations of lines upon our dominant hand.

Within my own hands, this story contains markers upon the left for the dominance of solar and lunar influences in my astrological profile, and a personal symbol, for my dominant astrological symbol. This small figure is an amalgam of several symbols which first appeared in my early drawings as a grade schooler. I have spent many years examining symbol systems to find its meaning. It relates to my astrology as the arrow of the archer, but

also to adaptability and flexibility as an early symbol for tin, it carries an angular variant of the symbol from the east for harmony as well as references to several runic blessings. Upon both hands I used linear and organic forms to enhance areas of prominence in the mounds and note sensitivities of the finger pads. Palmistry says that we wear chained lines on our hands lines where we experience struggle and bracelets of our past lives as indelible lines upon our wrists as well. Incorporating the spirit's lessons can sometimes blur or combine these, as is the case in my own... where I have broken bracelets on the left and completed chained bracelets on the right. The story told by the right hand, is one of the potential being harnessed and expanded into its full skill and niche. I have recreated the significant "eyes" of the artist where they appear on my right hand. I have watched these become over the years, watching the map form. Each is the combined effects of linear overlap in the actual folds and lines of the hand, and they correspond to various creative and inspirational devotions that have become a regular part of my practice. I have positioned the main lines and simplified the layers of lesser lines to a potential of where the deepening lines predict I will become more focused. I have also chosen not to depict the chains upon my life line, which run for much of my adult life on a long life line. I choose to see those challenges as part of the continuity of my life rather than a breaking up, and through embracing my health challenges, I have made significant life changes as well.

Through artistic and spiritual decisions like these, utilizing the symbol systems of our combined and cumulative human dialogue, I approach the question of sentience..."knowing oneself" as singular and human, as

well as a thread in the greater fabric of human society and history, a coursing light and energetic being within the greater cosmos living here on our amazing planet of entwined lives, Earth.

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.

Beatriz Ledesma

beatrizledesmastudio.com

Awaiting the Call (2011)

14 x 14

Oil on Canvas

\$400

Awaiting the Call is part of my series "Spiritual Resonances", which seeks to convey the spiritual world as

a creative dimension, and the creative process as a mystical transformation.

Mystical Triangle (2006)

13 x 17

Oil on Canvas

\$400

Mystical Triangle is based on spiritual beliefs of the Diaguita Indians (indigenous people from Argentina).

Beatriz says: I am a surrealist painter, native of Buenos Aires, Argentina, based in Chicago.

I am interested in the manifestation of the individual and collective unconscious and how it manifests in the work I'm doing. The act of painting is meditative and mystical. I embark into each painting aiming to communicate a journey in color and images.

An object becomes symbolic of a dream, a memory, a fiber of my imagination. My attention to painting is that of a focused researcher utilizing my inner dialogue and the connection with the world around me as the library from where to bring forward images. My choice of medium is oils because of their sensual quality, brightness, and warmth that allows me to work on layers from dark to light.

I intend to challenge the viewer into a contemplative dialogue with the painting and be absorbed by its colors, images, and light. In that viewing the painting may evoke a feeling, an emotion, a memory- a connection that takes place beyond the painting itself.

Claire Mesesan

www.flickr.com/photos/61874841@N08

if i was a flower i'd like to be a sunflower (2015)

4 x 6

Photography

\$20

are any of these blues real? (2015)

4 x 6

Photography

\$20

these sweet peas belong to another time, maybe the victorian age (2015)

4 x 6

Photography

\$20

did this used to be a mountain? will it someday be sand? (2015)

4 x 6

Photography

\$20

This series is tied together by hazy, distorted colors. I want my photos to convey more than what can be seen with our eyes. These photos are not documents; they should not be read as facts. They are a perspective made possible by destruction. By destroying the film these photos were taken on (through boiling the film in baking soda and water), more colors could be exposed. I am interested in the idea that destruction can lead to streaky bursts of color, creating an ethereal layer that allows

images to come through underneath. These photos blur reality and show how perception can be manipulated not only in process but also in the viewing experience.

These photos relate to the theme of *The Creative Soul: Art and The Sentient Being* by showing nature and natural objects behind vivid layers that would not appear without first damaging the medium. These images confuse our senses and dismantle our idea of what is - they are haphazardly re-colored according to chance. Photography in the popular sense is used to document reality and to capture memories. Instead, these photos create circumstances. This series asks, is there a sentience to film that is brought out through destruction? There are energies latent in film that can come through in the process of creation.

Claire Mesesan: My work in photography began at 15 when I found my dad's old Pentax KM camera and started using it. I love the accessibility of photography and how much variability exists within film photography, how much opportunity there is for manipulation. Film photography relies so much on chance - will the photo turn out the way I anticipate? Will there be a light leak? Will the colors be true to reality? I embrace this variability and actually increase it through various methods; for instance, boiling film in water and household ingredients to achieve vivid, unnatural colors or opening the back of the camera to let light in.

I am learning to accept the idea of artist as an identity rather than an activity. Up until recently, I considered myself as a person who takes photos, who makes music, who writes, etc. I would like to welcome the role of artist into my life and let go of the self-deprecating insistence on action instead of identity.

Sharyl Noday
www.sharylnoday.com

Echo 1 (2016)
12.25 x 15.25 framed
Giclee Print
\$299

Echo 2 (2016)
12.25 x 15.25 framed
Giclee Print
\$299

In these paintings I am working to express streams of consciousness as they pertain to the Feminine energy. It has been shared with humanity in a variety of ways and for certain through the spoken word of Spirit that our world is changing. Changing to use more of the principles of the Divine Feminine. In this body of works I share the idea of transformation in the first painting which I have titled

Echo #1. In this piece we see a female in red riding on the back of a butterfly holding the essence of the moon in her hand. In order to feel alive, transportation and transformation certainly do play an enormous role. She is guided in a sense by the unseen, yet she wears her earth color on, red. Spirit and physical are now more alive than ever before. It can and does pull us out of an anesthetic state of consciousness into an alive, pulsating state of Being.

Echo #2. The feminine energy is shown not only by the child but also we see a nurturing female. Her hand is on

the butterfly as if to guide the child who is in a sense of joy and wonderment. When we lose sight of our playful nature, apathy can set in. We see our world around us striving to find itself. If only we can establish and regain our playful, child self perhaps our authentic energies will shine through. In both paintings there is the essence of the moon which is a common icon in my work.

Sharyl Noday says: “My work is about exploring mystical and spiritual beliefs and attitudes. It is through this reflection that I strive to tell a story within the art. It is my intention to offer glimpses into other realities beyond our waking consciousness. In a world filled with change and chaos, there is still hope. It is with this desire, I imagine my art can offer moments of relief thereby aiding in personal peace. I have always been involved in healing. In this way I aim to provide a mirror into consciousness.”

Sharyl received a certification in Painting from the Art Institute of Chicago and holds a BFA in photography from Art Center College of Design. She is certified as a Energy Healer and Full Trance Channel and Channeling Teacher, holding a position on the Board for Certification of Trance Channeling in Los Angeles, California.

Britt Posmer

Britt Posmer/Facebook

Halved Pear (2014)

9 x 12

Acrylic on Canvas

\$175

"Halved Pear" shows the encounter of rapt attentiveness with an inanimate object and the liveliness that such a

meeting reveals. It uses a symbol frequently associated with the feminine to convey an entire constellation of related qualities - softness, ripeness, fertility, gentleness - through evoking our feeling and sensing selves.

image of a head in silence (with sensory aliveness)

(2015)

8 x 10

Acrylic on Canvas

\$175

This piece was completed while listening to a recording of Emilie Conrad (Continuum Movement) interviewing Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen on the development of the practice of Body-Mind Centering. It expresses the blossoming of our sensory awareness, through our physical senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch, and their natural extension into the field of subtle perception. Additionally, it is a visual map of these somatic territories, the structures of the eye, ear, nose, throat, cranium, brain, spinal cord, and nervous system, as apprehended with the inner intelligence.

Britt Posmer is a poet, visual artist, and dancer 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. Originally trained as a classical ballerina, she spent nearly two decades performing and touring with various companies based in Chicago, IL, including Ballet Chicago, Ballet Theatre of Chicago/Lexington Ballet, and Chicago

Ballet. Shortly before her illness in 2009, Britt received a scholarship to The School of the Art Institute of Chicago, which she attended with a focus in Performance and Visual and Critical Studies.

In July 2015, Saint Julian Press published her first collection of feminine mystical poetry, *The Angel and the Heretic*, which was recently celebrated in a collaborative art ritual at Life Force Arts Center. This marked not only the release of the book, but a return to dance and performance after a six year absence. During this period, Britt also began study with Flora Aube, exploring the Art of Allowing style of process painting.

Britt is a nationally certified massage therapist and a studied practitioner of shamanic healing and energy medicine. Her education includes training in Reiki, Toltec and Hawaiian shamanism, Zero Balancing, Advanced Psychosomatic Character Therapy, Qigong, and Continuum Movement.

Diana Rudaitis

The Embrace (2015)

11 x 14

Acrylic on Burlap

\$80

"Love makes the world go round," or so the poets say. Love is the energy and vibration of the universe. Love for humans, animals, nature. Love is the very essence of the universe and has been portrayed by artists since the beginning of time.

Who does not want to love, be loved or touched by the

loved one? Psychologists even say that children that are not loved or touched as infants find it difficult to form meaningful relationships as adults.

I always see teal or aqua as the color of love and have portrayed my figures in teal and pink; traditional colors.

Meditative Mind (2015)

16 x 20

Acrylic on Canvas

\$125

In the state of meditation, we are connected to the high self; a channel opening to the universal mind; the source of all art.

When I close my eyes, I see patterns, lines, colors and often see figures that inspire me to create my paintings. The swirls of color represent the energy of art. The hands represent the way we perceive art: through the five senses.

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.

Derek Schulze

www.neuaxiomstudios.com

Self Portrait (2016)

21 x 17

Acrylic on Canvas

\$418

As I travel upward in my astral body, all sense of spatial relevance is lost and movement is nothing more than a meaningless waste of energy. I discover that as I ascended, I reached a higher plane of existence within myself, and only a tiny black dot keeps me from falling into madness, my anchor, I see my way back home.

Self Portrait/Magician (2016)

24 x 36

Acrylic on Canvas

\$512

The pentagrams inscribed about me are the names of God, written in Hebrew. This self-portrait depicts me performing the 'Invocation of the Bornless One' in accordance to receiving knowledge and conversation with my Holy Guardian Angel. Here are the names associated to the pentagrams as follows: Yellow pentagram - YHVH or Yehova (note letters are seen 'backwards' because the pentagram faces the subject not the viewer) Red pentagram - ALHM or Elohim, the Blue pentagram - AL, and the Green pentagram - ADNI or Adonai. The two white inner pentagrams say: front - YHYH or Yeheua; back - AGLA (which is an acronym for 'Ateh Gibor Leolam Adonai' or 'Thou art mighty forever oh Lord').

Lamassu Dam Ki Ag (Derek Schulze) first fell in love with painting when he was fifteen years old. He was born in Georgetown Texas, May 16, 1977. He received his B.F.A. in Painting from Texas State University. In 2005 he was accepted to the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where he studied Historic Preservation.

For many years, Lamassu performed his duties as Art Director for the fraternal order, Aum. Ha. Lodge, O.T.O. He was a founding member and the Director of a cooperative gallery for Aum. Ha. Lodge called Thelemic Hands at Work. He also directed, produced and arranged the Liber Resh videos that can be found on youtube and the latest movie from Aum. Ha. Lodge called Liber CL: Meditations in Light, Life, Love and Liberty which has premiered around the globe including France, Spain and Australia as well as at NOTOCON IX held in Sacramento, CA.

Derek is currently freelancing as painter and graphic designer in the city of Chicago.

Alessandra Sequeira

sinapsisequeira.blogspot.com

Quantum Entanglement III (2015)

30 x 20

China Ink on Stratford Paper

\$1000

The Micro and macro cosmos converge in the Truth that lies in our hearts.... We are One With nature, With the Universe and Among ourselves.

Consciousness is created when we realize the structures in our bodies behave the same way roots, branches and the images of the planets when they are being formed behave, and we start creating bridges and paths of union!

Biospiritual Mycelia VIII (2016)

11 x 14

China Ink on Stratford Paper

\$500

Mycelia structures are structures similar to those of Synapsis, where bridges connect the heart of the structure with its surroundings. With the great wisdom that this structures have no attachments that tie them in any way. They do not 'depend' on anything, they coexist and nurture themselves with All!

Alessandra Sequeira: I am a Costa Rican visual artist who has exhibited in Espace Expression Gallery in Miami, Fla. and also at Upstream Gallery in New York and at the Museum of Design And Decorative Arts in Riga, Letonia and at Colorida Art Gallery, Lisbon and Contextile, the Textile Art Biennial in Portugal. Also at the Calderón Guardia Museum and Klaus Steinmetz Art Gallery and other art galleries, but essentially feel myself as a healer, - because art is enlightenment, wholeness, nothing left out, a miracle in each line, each color. I began my artistic career since I was a child, studying Art at several schools in my country and abroad. But it was through a recent dream that I was introduced to what I feel is my true purpose in life, to represent an exuberant burst of synapse formation between all living things.

I dreamed of sparkling dots that linked other spots through long flexible lines. In the morning, I began drawing what I saw during the night and that noon, investigating the forms I sketched, discovered those were neural pathways. Each night since my first dream, along with sleep images of neurons and their branches that keep extending from the cell body, I realized that nerve cells are not in direct

physical contact, there are microscopic gaps between the axons of one neuron and the dendrites of its neighbors. Communication between neurons takes place across these microscopic gaps or synapses, in the same way every day experience is a projected reality where things only appear to be separated in time and space. In a deeper reality, we are all members of the same body. When one part of the body moves, every other part is instantly affected. -“These metaphors and similes convey the image of infinitely modifiable brains, our minds that can change encompassed by our souls.”

Zachary Spaulding

zspaulding.tumblr.com

Rain (2015)

12 x 10

Graphite

\$200

After a stressful period it's always good to cleanse, not just yourself, but the energy around you. One way that he found most enjoyable was the rain. The sky was cloudy as he sat in the grass to calm his energies and connect himself with the Earth. During these times, all senses are open with a clear mind. He could hear the birds in the trees, the squirrel had found a nut, the wind was ruffling the grass. He could smell the oncoming storm. Slowly drips of water fell from the sky. Each drop holding a pure energy and wiping away stress and negativity. He opened his eyes to the sky and to his excitement, could see the sheet of rain as it drew in, hearing the heavy droplets until he was being showered and drenched within seconds. It was a near immediate cleansing and being refilled with such pure energy can't be described.

Super Moon (2015)

9.75 x 12

Graphite

\$200

It comes to light that it was a sign of many changes. The single butterfly hadn't been his only. Every day he would see more as they would greet him before continuing their travels. With many changes to come, he delving more deeply into this craft definitely was one of the bigger ones. He kept reading and studying and it wasn't long before he became entranced by the moon. How extraordinary that he had started this journey during a year of a supermoon, he had thought. Bathing in the light of her glow, the energy that filled the air that night was one of the highlights and most meaningful in his short journey thus far.

Zachary Spaulding: "Go back to where you began," can say a lot about how I've come to work and live. To take it simply, I've returned to using what many artists start with; a graphite pencil. But if we take the quote metaphorically, historically, my roots lead back to the natives of this land. To a bloodline interwoven with magic, spirituality, and the occult ways where secrets would only be taught through example and word of mouth. This history is deeply fixed within me and begs to be explored. A history of speaking with elements of the Earth, learning from ancestors past and deities, and becoming a child of the Mother and building a relationship with her and her other children once again. I've felt their presence for so long and now I finally hear their call. Symbolizing myself as a poppet, I become childlike as I learn and have these new experiences. I welcome the viewers to learn with me as I'm taught elder stories, practice historic traditions, visit past lives, and, in essence, become whole in myself and go back to where I began.

Vivian Zapata

www.vivianzapata.com

Boulevard (2010)

31 x 44

Acrylic & Marker on Canvas

\$2,500

In the book, *Faces in Clouds: A New Theory of Religion*, author Stewart Guthrie argues that the anthropomorphization of nature is central to human experience and aids in making worldly phenomena intelligible. However, I do not believe that the exchanges between humans and their environments are one-sided. Environments affect people and people affect their environments.

In the painting *Boulevard*, the power tower is a central feature. I enjoyed seeing how these structures interacted with their celestial environment. The graceful towers reflected the colors of the surrounding skies and their imperial geometry made them prominent landmarks within my field of vision. What if I could become like the power tower, floating placidly and nonchalantly above a grounded existence? I literally put myself in the guise of these structures in the paintings.

When I attributed a human-like presence to these towers they took on metaphorical meaning. Cables supplying electricity connect power towers to one another. One could think of this flow of electricity among the towers to be like the flow of energy among humans that is necessary to sustain a society. In *Boulevard*, the figure in the tower is elevated and strong. The vast sky permeates the figure in this landscape. Other drivers are perhaps not aware of the amazing interaction between the sunset and tower ahead.

Breaking Through (2011)

37.5 x 48

Acrylic & Marker on Canvas

\$3,000

Breaking Through is related to the painting *Under the Echo of Bumblebee Wings* because an observed scene in nature inspired the artwork. I was running on a track and stopped to look at a tree that was struggling to grow through a fence. The metallic fence was clearly invading the tree's space and it was fantastic to see the tension there. A few small branches thrust forcefully through the chain-link diamonds as a huge mass of trunk rolled over the top of the fence like a human gut. I had a psychological connection to the tree and recognized in its efforts a symbolic struggle. In the quest for self-fulfillment, one must overcome external factors, represented by the fence, in order to grow. In *Breaking Through*, I insert myself in the tree, making the metaphor between the tree and myself sensible. Interestingly, one could read into this image the more obvious overtones of the struggle between mankind and the natural realm. It is more common to see idealized representations of nature than to see representations that reflect reality. Sometimes the external observable world becomes an extension of our inner life, especially as it is represented through art.

Divine Dreaming (2008)

46 x 96

Acrylic & Oil on Canvas

\$8,000

My painting, *Divine Dreaming*, is inspired by the poem, *Anoche Cuando Dormía*, by Spanish poet Antonio Machado (1875-1939). The narrator dreams that God is in him and he describes this feeling through several metaphors that I interpret visually. What could make one feel more alive and wonderful than to dream of the beauty of God within?

*Anoche Cuando Dormía de
Antonio Machado*

Anoche cuando dormía
soñé ¡bendita ilusión!
que una fontana fluía
dentro de mi corazón.
Dí: ¿por qué acequia
escondida,
agua, vienes hasta mí,
manantial de nueva vida
en donde nunca bebí?

Anoche cuando dormía
soñé ¡bendita ilusión!
que una colmena tenía
dentro de mi corazón;
y las doradas abejas
iban fabricando en él,
con las amarguras viejas,
blanca cera y dulce miel.

Anoche cuando dormía
soñé ¡bendita ilusión!
que un ardiente sol lucía
dentro de mi corazón.
Era ardiente porque daba
calores de rojo hogar,
y era sol porque
alumbraba
y porque hacía llorar.

Anoche cuando dormía
soñé ¡bendita ilusión!
que era Dios lo que tenía
dentro de mi corazón.

Last night as I was Sleeping
by Antonio Machado and
translated by Robert Bly

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt—marvelous error!—
that a spring was breaking
out in my heart.
I said: Along which secret
aqueduct,
Oh water, are you coming to
me,
water of a new life
that I have never drunk?

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt—marvelous error!—
that I had a beehive
here inside my heart.
And the golden bees
were making white combs
and sweet honey
from my old failures.

Last night as I was sleeping,
I dreamt—marvelous error!—
that a fiery sun was giving
light inside my heart.
It was fiery because I felt
warmth as from a hearth,
and sun because it gave light
and brought tears to my eyes.

Last night as I slept,
I dreamt—marvelous error!—
that it was God I had
here inside my heart.

Under the Echo of Bumblebee Wings (2010)

28 x 33

Acrylic & Marker on Canvas

\$2,600

Sometimes the ordinary and mundane seems extraordinary. I had this sensation when I left my house one day and glanced upon the flowers that decorated the front entrance. It was the peak of spring and there was such an abundance of flowers and bumblebees that the metaphor that came to my mind to describe the site was that it was boiling life. It was a spectacle to see Black-eyed Susans beaming alongside magenta-colored New England Asters. The bumblebees joyously pranced on different flowers like fingers on piano keys. This sight inspired the following lines that in turn inspired the painting *Under the Echo of Bumble Bee Wings*. The painting is one more example of how the natural realm gives and inspires life.

I wish I could be young forever
Like the stinking stew of spring
After the blossoms have exploded
Fireworks under the echo of bumble bee wings

Visual artist **Vivian Zapata** creates multi-media, large-scale sculptures. These immersive artworks are made with wood, foam, newspaper, artificial flowers, paint, and frequently incorporate found materials. Her exuberant, fantastic, and eye-catching artworks investigate the ruptured relationship between western culture and the natural realm, and seem to be culled from a dystopian future that reflects this in harmonious relationship. The work incorporates narrative strategies to support nature-endorsing philosophies such as Deep Ecology and Romanticism. The anthropomorphization of nature in her artwork recognizes the interconnectedness

between humans and the natural realm, our spiritual and physical similarities, and works against our cultural assumptions regarding this sphere.

Chicago-born Vivian Zapata holds an MFA in Visual Art from Washington University in St. Louis, and a BFA in Painting and Sculpture from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

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 EVERYONE. 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

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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
Like us on Facebook
Follow us on Twitter

Art & The Sentient Being Exhibit Catalog created by

Joan Forest Mage, Jaimie Shepardson
& Kat Kidwell

Catalog design by Maggie Baker

About Life Force Arts Center

The mission of **Life Force Arts Center (LFAC)** is to activate the spiritual power of the visual, literary and performing arts to create transformation and community in artists and audiences. 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.

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.

The Creative Soul: Art & The Sentient Being is our 28th juried art exhibit as we begin our 8th 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, ArtSpirit Adventures and other programs at Life Force Arts Center.

LFAC Artists in Residence 2015

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