

# *Gallery & Studio*

*arts journal*

Winter 2023

galleryand.studio

Vol. 5, No.2



# Gallery&Studio arts journal

## Thank You!

The Arts are created by artists but need the appreciation of an audience to thrive. The Arts are a complex form of communication in which we all play a vital role. By reading, watching and listening, we appreciate the creativity of artists and in return we receive comfort, inspiration, understanding and joy.

During difficult moments, the arts can provide an antidote, a little escape. And yet it is in these times that the arts are often marginalized, ignored and at worst, cut. Even with the accessibility of the internet and social media, noise will often drown out the gems of artistic genius.

In the last four years the *Gallery&Studio arts journal's* writers have introduced us to 255 individual artists and 63 organizations. This has only been possible due to the generous donations by you, the art lovers from around the world.

We thank you for Keeping the Arts Alive and Making the Unknown Known!

—The Editors

Front Cover:

## Gallery&Studio arts journal

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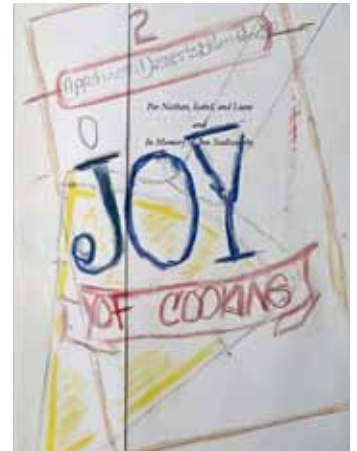
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# Wally Gilbert

## Creativity, Choice and the Science of Art

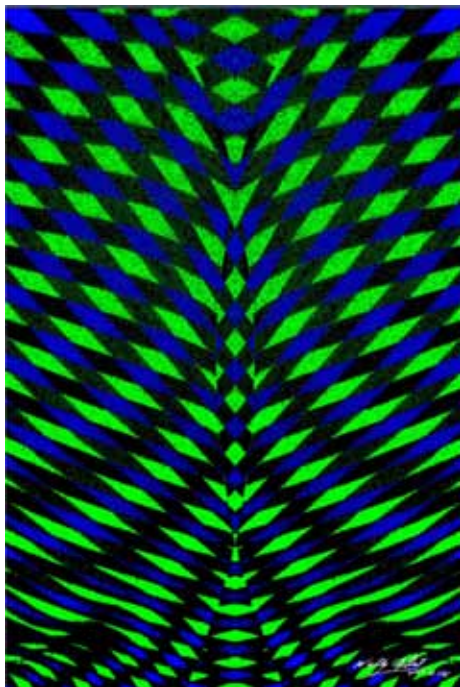
by Marina Hadley

Wally Gilbert has been a photographer for much of his life. One of those real photographers who developed their own negatives, a skill that many professional photographers today have never experienced. He was originally a journalistic photographer, recording the world, capturing landscapes, architecture, flora and fauna, people and much more. He became an early convert to digital photography around 2000, starting with a 2-megapixel camera and then discovered Photoshop which gave him the ability to add pixels and play with his images. This was the pivotal point at which Gilbert became more than a photographer, he became an artist.

“First came the pretty pictures, then they became fragments of the world, with a focus on the forms and colors. Then I started blowing up the images and distorting them.” Creativity was the new ingredient in



*"Blue Tree"*



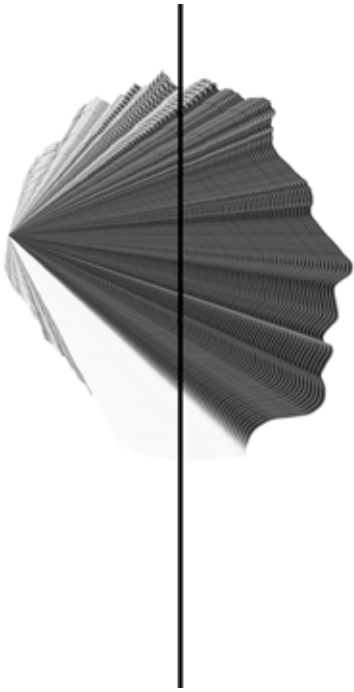
*"Stripes, Blue Green"*

his photography. He was no longer just a recorder.

At this point creativity itself was not new to Gilbert, having relied upon it for decades in the forefront of science, which led to his discovering the secrets of DNA sequencing for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Chemistry. “There is great commonality underlying my life as an artist and as a scientist. The underlying impulse in science is, can I find something new? Is there

an idea that no-one else has yet discovered? Is there a fact about the world that nobody else knows yet. In art, the impulse is also about making something new.”

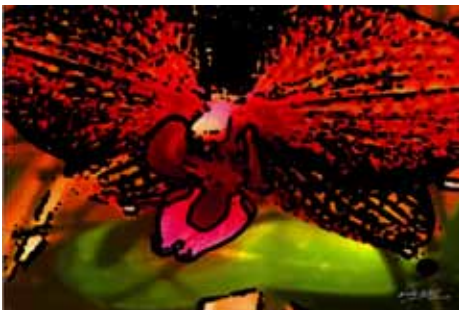
ChatGPT 3.5 (a form of A.I.) suggests that Creativity can be defined as the ability to combine or reorganize existing ideas, concepts or elements in a new and original way to produce something novel and valuable. It involves thinking “outside the box” and transcending established patterns of thought.



*"Vanishing," 72" x 48"*

These novel ideas are fueled in part by human curiosity, a trait that Gilbert has in abundance and which he uses to choreograph his work. His inspiration is curiosity. His underlying aim is to create original images of beauty, orchestrating shapes and colors on a 2-dimensional surface that resonate with the human psyche. He "uses the computer as an experimental tool...and twists the dials." The results are Wally Gilbert's art.

He often takes a photograph and then starts to play with the components of the image. At first, he would just add colors. Today he expands images, duplicates lines and shapes, and then adds colors until he finds the results satisfying. He enjoys using biological curves and playing with geometric forms.



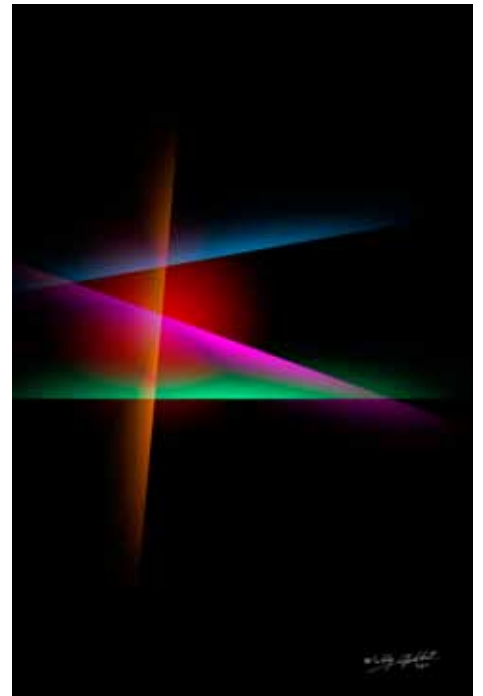
*"Wings"*

Winter 2023

He has also created original digital designs, drawn from scratch on the computer.

He works with both representational images and abstract designs, moving between the two effortlessly and on a modulating scale. Some of his works are easily discernible. He has photographed graffiti on the streets, grease covered machines, buildings and doorways, sugary confections, ballerinas, matadors and wire cables.

At other times, he can greatly expand these photographs, zoom into the minutiae, repeat and juxtapose patterns, change the colors, distort scales and thereby birthing unique variations. In these cases, the results are so different that they appear to have no correlation to the original images at all, until that is, Gilbert explains his process for the viewer and shares his secrets. He is happy to be a tour guide through his artistic journey and his years of teaching allow him to easily keep his audience enthralled and animated. *Vanishing* started as a profile of a woman. Duplicating and overlapping the outline manually, the image resulted in a clamshell-like black and white 3-dimensional design. Further adjusting colors and twisting the outlines resulted in the "Colorbands" series, which is totally different, and yet started with the same image as *Vanishing*. Similarly, a photograph of his wife's black and white striped blouse morphed into the "Difference" and "Stripes" series. His "Blue Tree" series on the other hand are easily identified as trees. *Wings* is obviously a flower, probably an orchid. They may be different, but all of Gilbert's work has a central focus with an accompanying sense of movement,



*"Four Lines Colors," 18" x 12"*

texture and undulating perspective that makes them mesmerizing.

How does he know when the creative manipulation, distortion, additions are done? When is the art complete? His answer is "choice." Novelty does not make it art. It is the human element of choice that makes it art.

At his recent solo show "Patterns of Reality" at Viridian Artists in Chelsea, New York, viewers were overheard describing Gilbert's work as spiritual and immersive and many were easily finding personal and intimate connections with his art. It can sometimes be difficult for abstract work to connect with a large and diverse audience and yet here, Wally Gilbert's individual innovations of beauty and emotional satisfaction are hitting the mark. G&S

Viridian Artists Inc  
[viridianartist.com](http://viridianartist.com)  
[wallygilbert.artspan.com](http://wallygilbert.artspan.com)

# Valerie Patterson Recollecting Darkness

by Anne Rudder



*"Ghost In The Machine," watercolor painting, 27" x 35"*

"For there is nothing heavier than compassion. Not even one's own pain weighs so heavy as the pain one feels with someone, for someone, a pain intensified by the imagination and prolonged by a hundred echoes."

—Milan Kundera

This quote by author Milan Kundera could describe the work of painter, Valerie Patterson who creates from the well of her own feelings, personal knowledge, and that of others. This empathic artist makes hyper-realistic paintings, intense while sympathetic, underscoring the grave difficulties of our modern life. Some images result from her personal experiences, but many more have evolved from the emotions of others, a coalescence of feelings she senses as helping her to have "a fervent set of ethical

principles" guiding her artwork.

This sense of rightness in the world was nurtured by her minister father and educator mother, their ethos informing their daughter's life views, her current detailed watercolors of limpid paint giving viewers a visceral accessibility, the visual confrontations stripping away the medium's perfect veneer for dramatic, sobering outcomes. The pieces urge viewers to think and feel through Patterson's painting technique based upon her past in-depth familiarity with oils so the present layering of water pigment and glazing in her paintings create "flawless surface illusion(s)" cloaking the instinctual underlying surrealistic stories of the works.

But, beneath the translucent surfaces, there is formidable angst;

sometimes subjects are depicted with sardonic humor and at other times are ensconced in shadowy, isolated sadness. Her spectral nudes with paper bags over faces, one entitled *Ghost in The Machine* in a depressing city setting, conjures up not only feelings of urban anonymity, but also reminds me of a "capiroted" penitent in Torquemada's Inquisition. Her renderings of solitary children are infused with trauma, devastatingly evident in paintings, such as *Survivors*, her interpretation of the wreckage of 9/11 aftermath or *Response*, a rosy little girl's pleading for release from dismal city life along with another watercolor of a child intently writing "HELP!" in chalk on a sidewalk next to a ghostly American flag, perhaps signifying the artist's worries for our future. These are



*"Our Grateful Dead," watercolor painting, 27" x 35"*

just some of the many depictions of concern Patterson paints, graphic expressions almost crushing viewers from the weight of bruised human psyches.

The works, too, might be colored by allusions to the mythic "dark tower" as the artist appreciates Stephen King's writings and has been influenced intuitively by them. Patterson says she has read nearly all King's works and views his youthful characters having profound friendships with one another as bonds against darkness. This provides impetus for so many of the artist's emotionally charged images where her portrayals of children, like King's profiles of them, symbolize, in Patterson's own words, "purity and innocence in the face of predatory antagonists." Too, I envision all these children almost as virtual refugees from a gloomy scene by Thomas Moran.

Like the author, Patterson repeatedly calls out evil and her

artistic renderings elicit viewer discomfort. This can be seen in the painter's recurrent employ of images of baby dolls, present in so many of the pieces such as in the disturbing watercolor, *Our Grateful Dead*, where disconcerting, sweet countenances on two dolls exude horror as they are propped up against a mother's gravestone, dispelling our ennui about cognizance of the corruption of innocence, shaking our sensibilities to the inconvenient and tragic awareness of death's finality.

The artist's absorption of empathetic politics arising from her family history and personal experiences is bedrock for her paintings as virtual antidotes to any encroaching totalitarianism that might be encountered in our day. Her emotionally intelligent watercolors support the quest for human freedom and accountability with an artistic plea that memories need to be tempered by all of us and universal suffering must be soothed

by a caring social balm devoid of petty culture wars. However, the struggle for this ideal is both joyous and painful and recognition of the dilemmas created by these yearnings ripple continuously throughout these paintings' visual currents.

This artist's use of graphic commentary to address the struggles of our fraught present is a vital addition to our formulations of perceptions of society's well-being, now and in the future. Valerie Patterson endeavors to spark the very necessary urgent dialogs we must have to reduce the weight of the issues we confront daily as we balance precariously on this finite, small, life-sustaining planet. G&S

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

# “A Terror to the Household” Historic Political Cartoons

by Mary F. Holahan, Ph.D.

Around the turn of the 20th century, political cartoons were an entertaining and influential presence in American journalism. As printing technology became more advanced and less expensive, readers of news weeklies and humor magazines delighted in the visual editorials that skewered public figures with satire, comedy, and caricature.

Whether they were laugh-out-loud funny or sent a chill up the spine, cartoons brought attention to critical issues and helped shape popular opinion.

Cartoonists Thomas Nast (1840-1902) and Charles Nelan (1859-1904) embodied the art form's power. In the 1860s and 70s, William M. (“Boss”) Tweed, the leader of Tammany Hall, the New York city and state Democratic party machine, was fed up with Nast's cartoons, primarily in *Harper's Weekly*, that personified him as the predatory Tammany Tiger, and the bloated, dissolute “moneybags” who embezzled millions in taxpayers' dollars. He railed at the press in a comment typically quoted as “I don't care a straw for your newspaper articles. My constituents don't know how to read, but they can't help seeing them damned pictures.”

When *New York Times* exposés caused Tweed's downfall, the public praised Nast. Twenty years later, Pennsylvania Governor Samuel Pennypacker, infuriated by Charles Nelan's drawings of him as a parrot, for the mindless echoing of his Republican bosses, declared such cartoons and the journals that published them “a terror to the household.” He forced through the 1903 Anti-Cartooning Law, which forbade “any cartoon or caricature or picture portraying...any person as beast, bird, fish, insect, or other inhuman animal, thereby tending to expose such person to public hatred, contempt, or ridicule.” Nelan promptly devised other Pennypacker stand-ins, including a turnip and a beer stein. Voters' objections prevailed, and the law was repealed.

In 1877 the new weekly satirical magazine *Puck* appeared. It was named for the mischievous character from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, best remembered for his comment “What fools these mortals be!” *Puck* offered humorous poetry, short fiction, and character sketches, but its cartoons drew the most attention. They appeared in color on the cover and on two-page spreads, and in black-and-white throughout the magazine. At ten cents an issue (*Harper's Weekly* was thirty-five cents), *Puck* had both affluent and working-class readers. Its cartoonists primarily targeted political corruption and social injustice.

Cartoonist Bernhard Gillam (1856-1896), a colleague of Thomas Nast at *Harper's Weekly*, joined *Puck's* staff in



Bernhard Gillam (1856-1896), “Kelly Strikes his Great Historical Attitude,” *Puck*, September 20, 1882. Ink on wove paper. Composition: 5 5/8" x 6 11/16"; sheet: 8 1/4" x 8 7/16". Delaware Art Museum. Gift of Helen Farr Sloan, 1979

1880. His *Kelly Strikes his Great Historical Attitude* (1882) highlights Tweed's successor in Tammany Hall: John Kelly, sardonically nicknamed “Honest John.” The party boss grins at us with a combination of guile and glee. Although Kelly seems weighed down by his girth, Gilliam does not particularly distort his features. Instead, the wide-eyed, determined expression and pugilistic stance convey the cartoon's “plot.”

Kelly has just put down his carpet bag and top hat after arriving by train at the 1882 Democratic state convention in Syracuse, where Democrats would nominate their candidate for governor. The party was highly factionalized; there were threats that the Tammany delegates would not even be seated. Kelly is ready for battle, galvanized by a boisterous crowd under the banner of “Yammany,” reflecting their famously loud and raucous yammering. One wields a shillelagh, an allusion to the Irish immigrant supporters and main beneficiaries of Tammany's patronage. (The name “Tammany” was derived from “Tamanend,” the Lenape leader who signed a peace treaty with William Penn and was revered as a model of political amity). Casual viewers might have simply inferred that “Honest John” and his coterie were up to their usual antics. Savvy news junkies, who followed recent press summaries of Tammany's strategy meetings, and even the you-are-there reports of





Louis Glackens (1866-1933). "Hard Times, The Pie Line," *Puck*, April 8, 1908, centerfold. Commercial relief process with hand-coloring. Composition: 10 7/8" x 17 15/16"; sheet: 13 13/16" x 21 1/8". Delaware Art Museum. Gift of Helen Farr Sloan, 1978

delegates boarding the Syracuse train at Grand Central Terminal, would have quickly grasped the full context of the cartoon.

A cartoon by Louis Glackens (1866-1933) make derisive fun of industrial capitalism in the Gilded Age. In a scene that today might be titled "corporate welfare," a friendly Uncle Sam hands out free pies to a horde of already-overfed men. Although a few have donned tattered coats, others do not disguise their wealth. Several sport shirtfront diamonds. One is already gorging himself; another in a tam o' shanter cap gestures back mockingly to the generous Uncle Sam. Glackens labels the men and their pies with various forms of corruption: Long Term Franchise, Graft/Tariff, Land Grant, Special Privilege, Public Service Corporation, Infant Industry, Trust, Public Land Thief, Predatory Wealth. To many Americans, the scene evoked a government that favored the fortunes of rapacious magnates over the welfare of the working class.

Although Gilded Age industrialization produced many economic benefits, they came at the expense of over-worked, under-paid, and bleakly-housed laborers, including very young children. By the 1890s, the Progressive movement was calling for reform. The 1912 cartoon *Next! From the cradle to the mill* by Art Young (1866-1943) refers to the factories, mines, mills, and sweatshops that used school-age poor, immigrant, and orphaned boys and girls for hardly any wages and in dangerous conditions, often for 12 or more hours, six days a week.

Young depicts a macabre, hollow-eyed specter clothed in spiky shreds bearing the word "Necessity" and holding a whip. Light falls on its diminutive victim, who has dropped an open book and clutches a doll. The apparition

drags the child toward the smoky factory labeled "Machinery operated by children / Men need not apply." An infant sibling looks on and awaits its eventual fate. The parent slumps from exhaustion or hopelessness over a littered desk. A miasma of foul air enters the window and pervades the room. The child and the specter—the antithesis of an angel—will pass through a door with the inscription "Lead kindly light."

Young's minimal words add layers of meaning. "Necessity" may refer to industrialists' cynical insistence that child labor was needed to ensure production, and to poverty-stricken parents' desperate need for even a child's minuscule wages. The religious quotation may be a bitter indictment of society's hypocrisy, or a sign of a family's faith. It was not until the late 1930s that strong laws restricted child labor, although recent investigations continue to expose the practice in the United States.

No one paid a higher price for his cartoon fame than "Boss" Tweed. In 1875, after he escaped from jail and fled to Spain, he was captured and deported by police who recognized him from Nast's cartoons. He died in jail in 1878. Nast worked until 1890. A *New York Times* commentary on his talent could serve for all the artists of political cartooning: "A man who can appeal powerfully to millions of people with a few strokes of the pencil must be admitted to be a great power in the land." G&S

© Mary F. Holahan 2023



Art Young (1866-1943). *Next!* 1912. *Puck*, April 20, 1912. Commercial relief process with hand-coloring. Composition: 11 5/16" x 17 1/2"; sheet: 14 1/4" x 21". Delaware Art Museum. Gift of Helen Farr Sloan, 1978

delart.org

# Vivian O'Shaughnessy: the subtlety of a polymorph artist

by Sébastien Aurillon

Almost two decades ago, in the heart of Chelsea where I worked managing a gallery space, I crossed paths with Vivian O'Shaughnessy, a native Texan who had migrated to New York in the eighties. Having recently retired from the Academic world, she was not ready to retire from life itself. With no particular creative background experience other than a robust interest in the arts, Vivian decided to plunge into the art world by enrolling in drawing classes at the Art Student's League.

With the humility and discretion that characterizes Vivian, coupled with assertiveness, she had come a few times to the gallery to casually strike-up conversations, like any other New York artist would have done in those days, in hope of advice, and ideally, representation. Intrigued by her character, I was immediately impressed by the energy that emanated from her, as well as her unwavering commitment to her new newfound artistic pursuits. Vivian attended drawing sessions, all over town, sometimes late into the evening, in addition to her classes at the League.

Like many artists confronted by the intricate maze of the art world, Vivian started to realize that external help might be needed to navigate it. Our chats became more regular and friendly, and one day she caught me off guard, asking if I could work with her to help her promote her creations. I hesitated for a moment, taken aback by the unexpected proposal. Managing a gallery was already a demanding job, and representing an artist required a level of commitment I wasn't sure I could afford. Yet, there was something about Vivian's sincerity and passion that resonated with me.

After careful consideration, I agreed to take on the challenge. We started small, integrating some of her work into an incoming group show at



*Homage to Simon Hantai*

the gallery, at the gallery, meanwhile widely submitting her diverse range of oil crayon nude drawings and paintings she had produced.

Our routine was consistent.

Every Sunday, we would meet at Vivian's Manhattan apartment. We would start our work session with a casual bite and a drink, setting the stage for the tasks ahead. Vivian,

always the meticulous planner, had prepared a detailed to-do list for the day. Our agenda variably included taking photographs of new artwork and engaging in discussions about potential venues worldwide that Vivian had spotted during her weeklong internet perusal. Regardless of the weather, scorching heat or snowstorm alike, we always dedicated ourselves to our work, often extending our sessions late into the evening.

As Vivian's confidence in her work grew, so did our collaboration. We began attending art fairs and gallery openings together, networking with other artists, including Louise Bourgeois's renowned salons, and exploring different avenues to showcase her talent. The art world was a tough terrain, but Vivian faced it with the same determination she brought to her drawing sessions.

A pivotal moment arrived a year into our collaboration, as I was going back to Paris for a personal show, I asked Vivian if she would come with me. Vivian's late mother being French, we both intuitively felt that reconnecting with her roots could elevate her work to new heights, while simultaneously opening new doors.

Vivian was instantly in her element the minute we arrived in France. She immediately got involved with "The Friends of Arthur Rimbaud" organization, forging a lasting friendship with Jean-Luc Steinmetz, Rimbaud's official biographer and France's Grand Prize of Poetry recipient. Trips to Verlaine's museum and retracing Rimbaud's footsteps led Vivian to connect with personalities in Paris' intellectual and literary circles, and numerous artistic collaborations followed suit.

Vivian's annual pilgrimages to the city of lights spanned almost a decade. She honed art techniques at the prestigious École des Beaux Arts of Paris, and her hand-made artist



*Snowdonia, a project inspired by Karen Kukil upon a visit to Wales*



*Hand-illustrated book of Mary Ventura and the Ninth Kingdom story by Sylvia Plath (Smith College Collection)*

books were selected to be part of the collections of the Kandinsky Library at the Pompidou Center, the Bibliothèque Nationale François Mitterrand and the Institut du Monde Arabe.

Over the years, our partnership deepened beyond a professional relationship. Vivian became more than just an artist I represented; she became a close friend. As Vivian's reputation flourished, so did her artistic exploration. From intricate Matisse-like crayon drawings to illustrating poetry books and translating literary poetry into French and Spanish, Vivian fearlessly embraced diverse creative outlets. She taught herself Braille to create artist books for the visually impaired, she became a resident artist at a prominent New York art space, drawing live performances, and heavily invested in illustrating Sylvia Plath's extensive anthology while collaborating with international authorities such as Karen Kukil at Smith College and James Underwood at the Ted Hughes Society.

While Vivian poured her heart



*Edwin Morgan Art Activity Handout.*



*Hand illustrated copy of Red Comet by Heather Clark in the Lily Collection*

into creating a collection that would showcase her evolution as an artist, she expressed a desire to give back to the artistic community that had supported her. Vivian created art activity workshops that we submitted to local museums and art venues, aiming to inspire other artists and younger generations to embrace their creative potential.

Together, Vivian and I explored the ever-evolving realm of the art world, nurturing friendships, inspiring creativity, and demonstrating the transformational power of art on the journey through life.

Many others have found inspiration in the Texan woman who started an artistic adventure in her later years. Vivian O'Shaughnessy, with the subtlety of a polymorph artist, showed us how experience can become an example of the strength of desire, perseverance, and the conviction that one can follow one's aspirations at any stage of life. G&S

www.vivianoshaughnessy.com  
IG: vivianoshaughnessy

# Discovering Edward Henrion (1928-2016)

by Bobbie Leigh



*Motherwell-Frankenthaler*

Although Marilyn Henrion lived with her artist husband, Edward, for 64 years, it was only after his death that she discovered some of his most acerbic, satirical art.

Edward Henrion was that rare artist who never sought public approval. In today's world where artists have press representatives, media accounts, and gallerists eager for publicity, Henrion was quintessentially private. Marilyn Henrion, also an artist, describes him as deeply philosophical, with a keen eye for the hypocracies of his

day. She says, "I often had no idea what was in his mind.... He was fond of saying, "All artists should be born with tape over their mouths."

After her husband died, Marilyn Henrion found a hand-made latched box. Within it, individual drawings were enclosed in a hand-made folder with a cover page, all carefully wrapped in tissue paper. The discovery led to the publication of *mickey rat, a not-for-children book*. The drawings are characteristic of Henrion's work — meticulous pen and ink drawings, some with watercolor, mightily

inventive and packed with detail. At the end of this sad story, Mickey, a good-for-nothing rat always dressed in tie, jacket and Panama hat, meets up with an angry-faced Angel of Justice who clobbers him. Justice prevails.

Because Henrion did not seek widespread recognition, he had total freedom to comment on the human condition — whether it be politics, art, or literature — in a way that went well beyond what a publication might approve. In the tradition of William Hogarth (1697-1746) and more recently George

Grosz (1893-1959) who shamed the shameless with his drawings of Berlin in the twenties and thirties, Henrion had a dark vision and razor-sharp insight of popular culture. His work is as far from a Saturday Evening Post cover as you could imagine. No Norman Rockwell families around the Christmas tree. In fact, Henrion's marvelous sketch of Santa depicts an old disheveled man, hugely overweight with his pants drooping below his navel. We know this Santa is beyond tipsy by his facial expression and the bottle he grasps with



*Santa*

his left hand.

One of Henrion's most arresting drawings, *Stars*, depicts three men seated on a bench with stars above their heads. The drawing is enigmatic. What is striking is the stylishness of Henrion's drawing, the mixture of wildness and control, and the overall atmosphere of tragedy about to erupt.

*Sundays with Joe*, is a



*Star*

portrait of artist Joseph Cornell (1903-1972) seated in a lounge chair next to a bird feeder. But Cornell is not watching birds. He led a reclusive life caring for his mother and disabled brother. Henrion depicts his old friend immaculately dressed in a green shirt, red tie, and purple jacket. The watercolors are bright and cheerful, but not enough to dispel the dark thoughts that appear to have overcome Cornell.

Henrion was a regular member of the 8th Street Artists Club and was immersed in the art and literary scene of his time.

Although many of his contemporaries were abstract expressionists, Henrion preferred working in the figurative tradition.

His nude drawings are true to life. Both the fluid, supple men and women's bodies are lovingly executed, with no hint of the harsh human drama played out in his satirical drawings. The complexity and breadth of his vision is evidenced by this dichotomy.

Originally from Detroit, Michigan, Henrion taught art at Erasmus High School in Brooklyn for 25



*male nude*



*female nude*

years before retiring in 1987. From his studio in Greenwich Village he created a body of work that spanned from graceful nudes and intimate portraits to satirical drawings that skewered his cultural surroundings as well more broadly, human nature. Henrion's extensive website ensures that his work will endure and enjoy the proper appreciation it deserves: [shop.edwardhenrion.com](http://shop.edwardhenrion.com). All of Henrion's publications including *MICKEY RAT* are available on Amazon. G&S

[shop.edwardhenrion.com](http://shop.edwardhenrion.com)

# “Double Shot” Jean Marc Calvet & Dario Posada

by Marina Hadley



“Colour senses Portrait” mixed media on canvas, and gold leaf, 84x72, year 2023

**D**ario Posada and Jean Marc Calvet are in a two man show, “Double Shot” at the Colour Senses Project in Allapattah, Miami. These two men are spiritual brothers. One was born in Colombia, the other in France but they met in Miami. They have both lived through unbelievable challenges but found painting as a lifeline. Their art is at opposite ends of the spectrum, one classical portraiture, the other outsider, yet they understand each other perfectly.

Dario Posada grew up in Medellín, Colombia. Not the fabulous current day location that is called “City of the Eternal Spring,” with great weather, epicurean restaurants, fantastic metro and cable car systems, and abundant parks. He was there in the days when it was considered one of the most dangerous cities in the world, filled with violence caused by Pablo Escobar’s drug-cartel

fueled urban wars. This is where Posada experienced the traumatizing execution of a friend.

Posada was fortunate enough to have found art as a child and drew his first mural at 12 years of age. He took refuge in his art and school studies to escape from the impoverished childhood neighborhood, which eventually led him to the University of Colombia where he graduated with a Master’s in fine arts. He finally left his home country to travel the world, receiving awards and recognition for his art. He continued working abroad, leveraging his art for commercial and non-profit organizations, until he finally arrived in Miami in 2007.

Posada’s work is classical portraiture with a very healthy dose of satire and genuine humor. He reproduces formal paintings and inserts himself and other personalities such as Fidel Castro, Queen Elizabeth II, the Pope, Mickey



“The View” mixed media on Canvas, 48x36, year 2023

Mouse and Snow White. He expertly disassembles other artists’ work and makes them blatantly his own. He has riffed on Pablo Picasso, Frida Kahlo, Francis Bacon, Grant Wood and Rembrandt amongst others. The paintings are instantly recognizable but are totally owned by the Posada vibe. In one fell swoop he cleverly mocks the artworld, religion, politics, the famous and infamous.



*Soupir, Chuchotement et Crème brûlée 80x116cm Acrylique*

A few years earlier, on the other side of the world, Jean Marc Calvet grew up in Nice, France, home of the romantic and glamorous French Riviera, the Côte d'Azur. Here he managed to find self-destructive experiences from an early age. Five years in the French Foreign Legion as a sniper did nothing to alleviate the problems and left him with traumatic memories. He ended up in Miami and became embroiled with criminal elements and was forced to flee to Costa Rica, but his troubles continued, until he found himself at the lowest point of his life and decided to end it all.

Miraculously, instead of finding death, he accidentally plunged his arm into a left-over vat of commercial house paint. As he desperately tried to wipe off the paint from his hand on the nearby wall, he recognized the visual manifestation of his internalized pain. This was his first attempt at art, which continued with crude, brute, expressions of his inner turmoil exploding on any surface, with any materials that would leave a trace.

Art, which had never been a part of his life, suddenly filled every spare hour he had. Totally self-taught, perhaps more self-explored, he absorbed the bright color palettes and vibrant culture of Central America into his work, which with his natural



*See You On the Other Side 92x73cm Acrylique 2023, acrylic*

positivity spilled onto his canvases, taming the violence that vomited from his inner demons. He found a new identity and a new life. He became an artist, traveling around the world including Miami and New York, finding recognition wherever he went.

However, in 2018 he had to leave Nicaragua, where he had been living, to shield his daughters from the violence that was erupting in the country, and he finally returned to France. He found becoming reacquainted with his homeland profoundly affected his work, deeply

feeling the impact of the history and culture with which he had grown up.

Today his art is a complex mix of the exuberance of Central America and the maturity of France giving depth and meaning to his turbulent experiences of his youth. The eyes of his targets as a sniper, the demons that haunted him, and the violence that he lived through, are still there, but now there is even more profundity to his work.

~\*~

Both men have benefitted from the Miami spirit, the wealth of the broad range of Latino cultures nurtured in the determination and opportunity that is the United States. The strength of the art scene in the city is inspirational and supportive. It is here in Miami at the Colour Senses Project that Calvet and Posada have come together again to show that despite the obvious differences in their styles, both have found salvation from the monsters in their past lives. Rather than wreaking havoc on their current lives, their demons are now released and allowed to live on canvas for others to experience in the safety of a gallery. G&S

Context Art Miami Dec 5-10 2023  
 coloursensesproject.com  
 IG @jeanmarccalvet  
 IG @darioposada

# The Other Sides of the Brontës

by Dr. Bill Thierfelder

When I say the name Brontë to you, what do you think of? Well, if you ever took a high school or college British Literature class, you would probably respond with Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* or Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre*. And if you were in a class more recently, you might even mention "the other sister" Anne Brontë and her novel *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*. And even if you've never read any of the books—thanks to Turner Classic Movies and Amazon Prime among other venues—you might be familiar with the numerous film versions of Emily and Charlotte's novels and the Masterpiece Theater rendition of Anne's.

But when you dig a little deeper you discover more: There was the drunken brother Branwell (1817-1848) who never quite made it either as a painter or poet—and both Anne (1820-1849) and Charlotte (1816-1855) wrote other novels that are now being re-evaluated as classics of the Romantic Period: *Agnes Gray* by Anne and three more by Charlotte: *Villette*, *Shirley*, and *The Professor*. To top that, the poetry of Emily (1818-1848) is now considered some of the finest of the mid-19th century and is included in most major literature anthologies.

Yet there are two other sides to the three sisters and the errant brother that most people aren't aware of. From the time the four siblings were little children, they began creating fantasy worlds that they wrote about—and illustrated—in copious detail. The stories about these mythological kingdoms—Gondal, Angria, and Glass Town—were written down in miniature notebooks of their own making. Today, many of these tales are available in lovely editions—and the original notebooks are museum pieces and collector treasures garnering auction prices near or above a million dollars.

The other side is their artwork. From the 1820s until their premature



Patrick Branwell Brontë, "The Lonely Shepherd," 1839

deaths from tuberculosis (Anne at 29, Emily at 30, and Branwell at 31) and severe complications during pregnancy (Charlotte at 38), the four siblings—especially the three sisters—produced some truly remarkable drawings, watercolors, and (in Branwell's case) paintings.

Branwell's work never went very far—his alcohol and drug addiction made consistent work nearly impossible. Yet some early pieces are quite fine. For example, the nighttime setting of *The Lonely Shepherd* from 1839 is both mysterious and gothic. Further, its nearly impressionistic brushstrokes invoke a decidedly Turner-esque appearance. Critics and scholars alike lament the "could-have-been" talent of this young man whose demons he was never able to overcome.

On the other hand, all three sisters developed wonderfully as artists. If they had been men and if they had chosen not to write—both implausible hypotheticals—all three would have

most likely been able to hone fine careers as artists. But women artists like women writers had huge hurdles to overcome during the 19th century. Even the few exceptions—Rosa Bonheur, Elizabeth Jane Gardner Bouguereau, and Virginie Demont-Breton, for example—struggled against rampant chauvinist prejudice. So, although the three Brontë women eventually saw themselves primarily as writers, they also produced wonderful art, which became for them a second language—another way to express their feelings and ideas.

Anne's medium was primarily pencil or charcoal. Her *Country Lane* drawing from 1836 is an excellent example. The attention to detail is remarkable; indeed, a close examination reveals that she rendered almost every single leaf on the vegetation both individually and with precision. And her *Sunrise over Sea* from 1839 shows her ongoing love for the ocean. This piece was possibly copied from—or inspired by—a





Charlotte Brontë, "Lycidas," 1832

contemporary print although there are certain aspects of the drawing that suggest she added imaginative touches. The details of the bird and sailboat shadows, for example, show her keen eye.

Charlotte's work was done in several media. One of her most highly regarded is her 1832 pastel drawing of the shepherd Lycidas, the focus of John Milton's famous poem. What's remarkable for many viewers is how easily one could see it as an Art Deco drawing from one hundred years later. The subtle blending of color, the rounded muscle forms, and the stylized facial features are beautifully rendered, and the body of the young shepherd is both lithe and sensual.

Emily also used pastels and charcoal, but her watercolor pieces—especially of the family dogs—are masterful. Her 1843 portrait of her sister Anne's dog Flossy running across a field is full of life, and her 1838 watercolor and pencil rendering of her own dog named Keeper is detailed down to the individual hairs on the animal's body. Anyone who knows about using watercolors

knows that the execution of such fine detail—even with specially crafted brushes—is extremely difficult and time-consuming.

As the three sisters moved more and more into writing their novels by the mid-1840s, they kept producing art concurrently with that writing, and I submit that the on-going process of creating artwork informed the creation of their novels. The mindful way in which they noticed the world around them as artists became the equally mindful way in which they translated that world into words. Indeed, one picture was worth a thousand words—and those thousand words became pictures we can't forget.

Sadly, Branwell's all too brief forays into art and writing never took off because of the sledgehammer of addiction—and what we do have of his written and visual work is merely a tease. Thankfully we have the three sisters—and to read their fantasy juvenilia and—especially—to learn about and study their hundreds of drawings, pastels, and watercolors is to learn to read their seven novels in new ways with enlightened eyes. G&S



Anne Brontë, "Sunrise Over Sea," 1839



Emily Brontë, "Flossy," 1843



Emily Brontë, "Keeper," 1838



Miniature drawing of Glass Town from the Brontë siblings' notebooks

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# Ruthie Windsor-Mann

## A Timeless Sketchbook

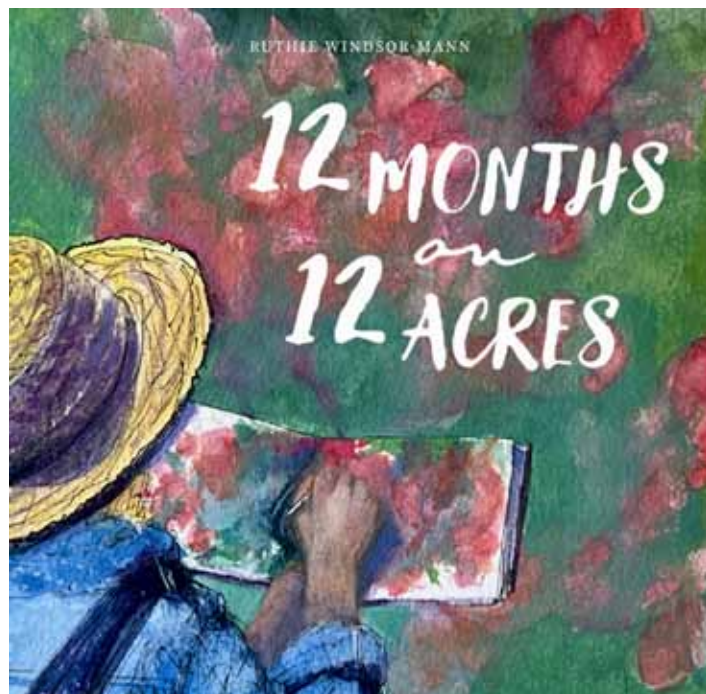
by Jeannie McCormack

In her spontaneous approach to watercolor and ink artwork, artist Ruthie Windsor-Mann takes us through the 12 months of the calendar in the beautiful State of Virginia, with her book “12 Months on 12 Acres.”

She transports us in time and space to the atmosphere and the unique quality of each season experienced from her studio and house that sit on twelve acres in the rustic world of Rappahannock County. We see the year expressed through her many images of the natural world which cannot be duplicated by digital photos taken with even the latest cell phones. Windsor-Mann says she “shifted from painting European buildings to painting the unvarnished world of her 12 acres in a hayfield in Virginia” where she gives us a glimpse of life in nature and of the spirit of the seasons.

Windsor-Mann invites the viewer to ‘tag along’ with her “from those cold, biting January winds, to an exuberant spring, through a late sultry summer, into a crisp and inviting fall, and finally to unwind in the glow and warmth of a December fire.” She shows us a world that is full of a multitude of creatures and growth—tiny colorful bugs, a lazy cow, bursts of yellow flowers, blue skies, butterflies, and autumn pumpkins to name a few. For each season, she hand-writes, in the tradition of literary scholars, about her impressions in pen and ink, adding to the timeless quality that her pictures convey.

For July she writes, “*July’s deep green sun-kissed fields bloom with bright wildflowers,*” and for December, “*A cozy crackling fire makes December’s reintroduction to cold worthwhile.*” Not only does she share her work, thoughts, and appreciation



for nature with her reader, but she also gives them a chance to participate in the creative process by providing detailed descriptions of her process in her book and includes the color swatches she uses.

She challenged herself to sketch and paint in an actual sketchbook, forgoing the luxury of discarding substandard work on single sheets of paper that later would be pieced together to form a faux sketchbook. She wanted those tagging along to sense the rawness of sketching. Mistakes made with ink and transparent watercolor were corrected with gouache; splotches of paint fell in unwanted places; images dropped off the edges of the page—all making the sketch book appear much used, loved, and alive. This isn’t a contrived book of lovely illustrations, but a glimpse of the process of what a painter feels and senses of the world around her.

Of her approach to her book, Windsor-Mann says, “It doesn’t matter that the bugs and the birds aren’t accurately rendered. Doing so, would have made this a chore rather than a relaxed, spontaneous adventure. What does matter is that we get to escape for a year to a small county in rural Virginia. We get to itch a little as we see bugs and wispy grass in a meadow. We get to feel a little wobbly as we see a newly born fawn gain courage to take that first step in a field. We get to see crops, insects, flowers, a tractor mowing hay, critters, vines, rock walls, and an uninhibited and unsophisticated world.”

A fan of the painter notes, “An unhurried existence is open to us all if only we would just pause and allow it to embrace us just as Windsor-Mann is demonstrating in her sketchbook. There’s always something new to see, and to feel—an undiscovered kitten cameo here, a ladybug tucked away there—to show how deeply the artist feels that the true world is open to all of us if only we would really see it and allow it to embrace us. Which is just what Ruthie Windsor-Mann teaches us to do with this book that is so much more than a sketchbook. G&S





12 Months on 12 Acres  
made possible by a grant from the Rappahannock Association for Arts and Community (RAAC)

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

# New York State of Mind

curated by Marilyn Stevenson



Ron Buchter, "Don't Answer the Phone"



Keith Manning, "Swing'n With the Bass—Central Park"



Mark Testa, "New York City Fog #1"



Cynthia DiGiacomo, "Amphitrite II"



Alan Weinschel, "In and Out Time Warner"

**E**ast End Photographers Group is a long-standing organization of Fine Art Photographers who live and work on Long Island and New York City. Based in the town of East Hampton where they meet, discuss photography, show their work and have some fun, the mission of this non-profit is to promote photography and the visual arts in a community setting.

Their latest group exhibition at the Salmagundi Club at 47 Fifth Ave., NY, NY is titled "New York State of Mind." This will be the group's

first exhibit in New York City. The photographic artists in the exhibit are Joseph Barretto, Ron Buchter, Anne Brandeis, Jody Cukier, Cynthia DiGiacomo, Gerry Giliberti, Dave Johns, Richard Law, Joel Lefkowitz, Keith Manning, Joanna McCarthy, Joan Santos, Jim Slezak, Kerry Sharkey-Miller, Marilyn Stevenson, Mark Testa, Alan Weinschel, Mia Wisnoski, all members of the group.

The artists have captured this true spirit of New York. The old and the new, the crowds and the solitude, the skyscrapers and the subway, the

city and the countryside, the speed and calm, the fruits of the sea and the farms, the hip and the classic. It is a delicious tour of New York that reminds you of the best that the state has to offer. G&S

info@eastendphotogroup.org  
info@salmagundi.org  
December 11-23, 2023.  
For artists statements, see  
galleryand.studio



Joan Santos, "Springs Gas Pump"



Joanna McCarthy, "American Barn"



Jody Cukier, "Mussels On Tray"



Mia Wisnoski, "Before the Storm"

Winter 2023



Marilyn Stevenson, "5th Avenue Snow Storm"



Gerry Giliberti, "Mulford House"



Joel Lefkowitz, "South Street Seaport, Pete Seeger, 1966"



Richard Law, "Man In Phone Booth"



Dave Johns, "Dancer NYC"



Jim Slezak, "From the Ashes"



Joseph Barretto, "With Purpose"

# Ajene Washington

## Cultural Worker Extraordinaire

by Roger Parris

If we were transported back to the heady days of the Black Renaissance, we may have seen Ajene Washington in the cast of a Langston Hughes play or directing a Zora Neale Hurston play or building the set for a Jessie Fauset play or heard his mellow percussion accompanying the poet Claude McKay at one of A'Leila Walker's Salon readings.

Fortunately, Ajene Washington is with us today practicing his multi-talented artistic skills which he learned from academia and working in various theatrical venues. He has a Bachelor's Degree in Speech and Drama from Lincoln University and a Master's of Arts Degree from Northern Illinois University. He has honed his theatrical and musical skills in Kansas City, Chicago, Atlanta, Los Angeles and New York where he presently resides. Ajene is an excellent example of an artist who has utilized his academic theater training with his various on-the-job theater experiences. These are edited excerpts from our conversation in a Harlem restaurant.

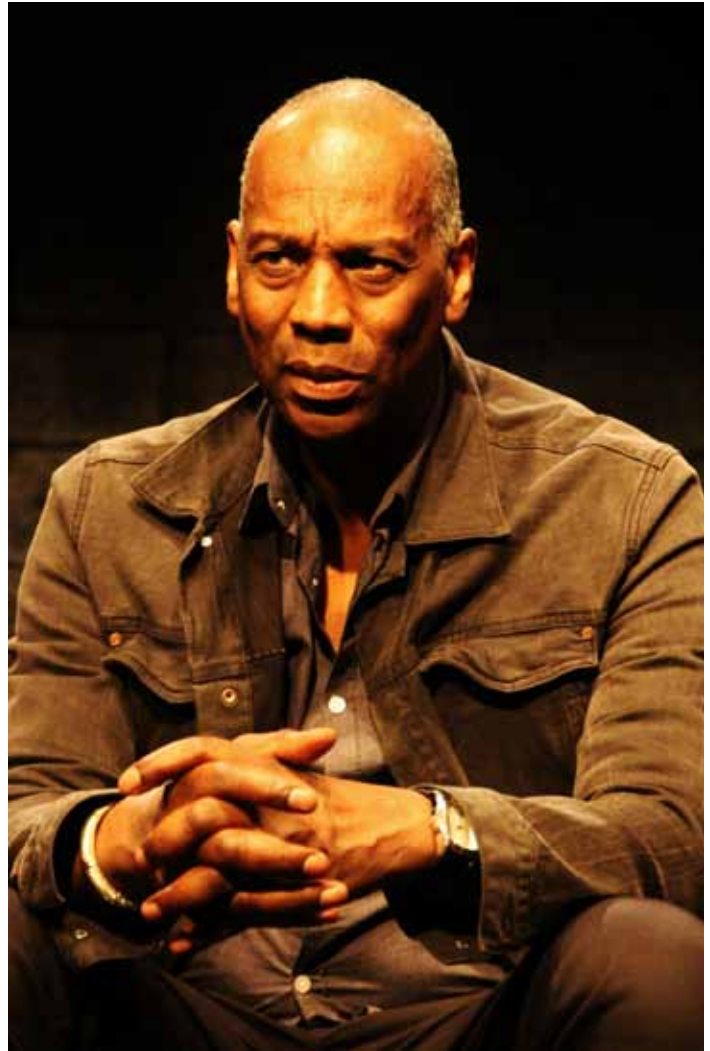
**Roger:** You were born and raised in Kansas City, known for its rich Jazz tradition. How did the city influence your career in theater?

**Ajene:** My mother listened to Jazz. She had a collection. I started playing chess. The chess instructor was also into Jazz and then in college I met other students who were into Jazz and it seemed that people into Jazz were also into theater. In high school I had an assignment to write a commercial and a classmate read it. He had a great voice like an actor's voice. Then I joined Karn's Children Theater Summer Program. I was 15 or 16. My first role was a soldier in *Lady and the Tiger*. My 6th grade teacher saw me playing a pirate with a hook when I was 16 or 17. Said she was so proud of me.

**Roger:** You began acting with the Children's Theater. Talk about your introduction to the other aspects of performing arts.

**Ajene:** In high school, I started learning sound, did lights. At Lincoln University, I continued to act. I had a part in *The Blacks*. My minor was art and painting. In my senior year, I did the set for a production of *Macbeth*. In grad school I asked some white students for assistance. Got no response. Decided to do the set myself. Learned from finding a way of doing. In undergrad, I heard some students who were from Chicago playing the drums and Michael, a student, taught me. In grad school, I started directing.

**Roger:** Besides Kansas City, you lived in Chicago, New York and Atlanta. How has living in those various cities influenced you as an artist?



*Ajene Washington directing a reading of the play, "Family Night" Photo by Chandra Grosvenor*

**Ajene:** Each city has its own vibration and pull. You can utilize the different energy in your art. With Performance Art I have learned more in New York.

**Roger:** Which aspect of theater do you enjoy doing the most?

**Ajene:** Enjoy it all. Acting, directing... I enjoy it all. It all makes the world a better place.

**Roger:** What artists have inspired you the most?

**Ajene:** Phillip Hayes Dean (playwright), James Baldwin (author), Etheridge Knight (poet), Bob Kaufman (poet), Mbembe Milton Smith (poet). I'm a child of the Black Arts Movement. I consider myself a cultural worker.

**Roger:** You just returned from Los Angeles and Albany,

New York where you had stage readings of your plays (*A Shadow In Time*—The Road Theater Company, Los Angeles and *Three Mothers*—Capital Rep, Albany, New York). What are the advantages and disadvantages of having readings and mounted stage productions outside of New York?

**Ajene:** New York actors and L.A. actors are different. Theater requires a different kind of sensibility than film. A veteran actor once told me, “New York actors work on the internal as opposed to L.A. actors doing pushups.” In New York the caliber of actors is far superior and you have a larger selection of actors in New York. Working outside of New York you reach a wider audience. The world is our community.

**Roger:** You are a talented percussionist and over the years have amassed an interesting collection of percussion instruments. Talk about that facet of your life.

**Ajene:** Just trying to expand my musical conversation (laughs). I’m a constant student. In elementary school, I took Music Appreciation. My parents didn’t have the money to buy me an instrument. Had music in me trying to get out. Also heard the kalimba in college. Recently saw a brother playing a hand pan drum and I bought one.

**Roger:** As the Coordinator of Workshops at Woodie King’s New Federal Theater are you seeing more younger people interested in acting and playwriting?

**Ajene:** If you mean my age, yes (laughs). In the acting workshops there are younger people. In the playwriting



Ajene Washington and Roger Parris Photo: D Fayeanda

workshop, middle age and up.

**Roger:** What’s the future of theater?

**Ajene:** As long as there are people here, there will be theater.

**Roger:** What’s your next project?

**Ajene:** The Capital Rep in Albany where I recently had a reading of my play, *Three Mothers*, are mounting a stage production in April 2024. G&S

ajenewashington.com

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# The Art of Philanthropy

by Julia Szabo



international charity gala circuit. In each post, wherever her travels take her—whether attending a NYC formal event in her signature opera-length gloves, or navigating an airport escalator in casual-chic sneakers—Shafiroff is always reliably dressed to the nines: a soignée Sargent portrait come to life.

At MSeum, the world's first museum to be built by women, for women artists, we are greatly inspired by Shafiroff's giving track record, and regard her book as essential reading. Our motto: Everything women do, they raise to art! Ms. Jean Shafiroff raises philanthropy to art, dedicating her time to worthy cultural causes as well as charities that empower women, advance social justice, and protect animals. Shafiroff — proud daughter of a woman artist, and mother to two philanthropist daughters — “paints” with wardrobe, accessories, and jewelry. Supporting emerging women designers such as Ese Azenabor alongside more established labels (Carolina Herrera, Zimmermann, Ulla Johnson, among others), Shafiroff creates a daily performance art spectacle fashion followers love.

With a keen eye for conceiving photo shoots, she



Portrait of Jean Shafiroff by Abigail Chang

Jean Shafiroff

Fashioned by Sargent,” which was recently featured at Boston’s Museum of Fine Arts, highlighted how the portrait maestro’s wardrobe styling skills, and expertise at capturing textiles, made his well-heeled subjects more than models: they are immortal role models, as strong and confident as they are divinely chic. One gets the distinct impression that conversing with these impeccably dressed beauties would be a memorable experience.

Today, thanks to Instagram, we have the opportunity to dialogue with a charismatic contemporary woman whom Sargent would surely have liked to paint—an elegant role model who is an artist in her own right. She is Jean Shafiroff, a philanthropist with a sublime, Sargent-worthy sense of style. The author of *Successful Philanthropy: How to Make a Life by What You Give*, Shafiroff invites Instagrammers to follow her along the





*Poppa - Drawdy - oil on canvas 40"x30"*



*Drawdy - Rosemary Run - 12x9, oil on panel*

selects and models outfits by Victor de Souza, Oscar de la Renta, or Alex Vinash, pairing each with the event she's attending like a sommelier of style. Shafiroff has a seat on the Fashion Institute of Technology's Couture Council, and maintains her own lovingly curated closet of wearable art. "Over the years, I have collected couture, no doubt I have a passion for it," says the internet influencer who is at once collector, artist, curator, and connoisseur—a true aesthetic polymath. "Fashion is art, and art is fashion," she astutely concludes, and the New York Times legend Bill Cunningham (who photographed her often) would surely agree.

It is addictively uplifting to watch Instagram videos of Shafiroff making a queenly trek from her Park Avenue lobby to a waiting SUV, the train of her dress floating along the gritty city sidewalk like vivid oil paint masterfully brushed across gessoed linen. She's regularly seen alongside

celebrities ranging from Gloria Steinem to Marc Anthony, yet dog lovers most enjoy seeing Shafiroff with a cherished canine companion, whether her own sweet dogs, Rosita and Henry, or pups offered for adoption by one of the many animal welfare charities she proudly supports.

On the opposite side of the canvas is another creative polymath with an abiding love of dogs: artist Stephanie Drawdy, who was inspired to immortalize Jean Shafiroff in the medium of Sargent and his contemporaries: oil paint. Drawdy, an attorney, produces and hosts the "Warfare of Art and Law" podcast, while working on her first novel. An avid admirer of Sargent and Cecilia Beaux, the artist "described as Sargent's female equivalent, [whose] gender relegated her to near obscurity," Drawdy has a trio of faithful studio assistants, Affenpinschers named after her favorite painters: Beaux, Sargent,

and Marc Chagall. Cecilia Beaux is one of the many great Unknowns it is MSeum's mission to re-visibility, and Drawdy is proud to be her sister portraitist's champion. With the painting on this issue's cover, Drawdy aimed "To highlight Jean Shafiroff's elegant, humanitarian essence."

Abigail Chang is another artist inspired by Shafiroff's online presence. The high school senior plans to study art and computer science at college—and her charming digital painting, titled "Artist of Philanthropy," indicates that Chang is a rising talent to watch, an emissary from art's ever-higher high-tech future, whose work reassuringly suggests that AI might also stand for Artistic Inspiration. Says Chang, recipient of MSeum's inaugural Promising Future Unknown Award, "It is definitely an honor to have my work published in Gallery & Studio and recognized by MSeum. Jean Shafiroff is a very beautiful, ethereal subject." G&S

StephanieDrawdyFineArt.com Instagram: @drawdyatelier

AbigailChang.com

JeanShafiroff.com Instagram: @jeanshafiroff and @jeanshafiroffatwork

# Who is Buried in Grant's Tomb?

by Norman A. Ross



*Pyramids at Giza, Egypt*

Anyone old enough to remember Groucho Marx's TV show "You Bet Your Life" knows this question, and also, of course, the answer. Tombs, whether in cemeteries, churches or museums, often constitute works of art that also convey historical information. Above all, they inform us usually of the wealth (or lack thereof) of the deceased.

History and excavations of prehistoric sites reveal that societies around the world have had different approaches to death, and each society was convinced its approach was "correct." Some societies buried their dead in the dirt while others cremated them and added their ashes to the dirt. Some encased the ashes in small vaults. Some societies first removed vital organs and then buried them separately from the rest of the body, perhaps a month later. In India, Parsis do not cremate or bury corpses; they leave them for vultures to feed on in a "Tower of Silence."

In the Western world today coffins are commonplace, but we only get to see them briefly at funerals, and never again. Around the world, however, old sarcophagi are often beautiful, built as testimonials to the deceased, who sometimes arrange for them in advance of their own deaths, just as many people today plan their own funerals. Ancient Egyptians built small stone receptacles for the bodies of their dead. Over time the structures grew larger and larger until several pharaohs, starting ca. 2600 BCE, ordered pyramids for themselves, inside which they were later buried in simple tombs. The procedures for preparing their dead bodies were complicated and gruesome, including mummification and encasing the bodies in elaborate wooden sarcophagi, examples of which are in museums around the world, from Brooklyn to Turin, while we gaze in awe at the pyramids. In the late sixth century BCE, the Etruscans cremated their dead and entombed them in urns inside elaborate sarcophagi, two of which, in

the Louvre and in the Villa Giulia Museum in Rome, show a couple side by side—on equal footing.

Sixtus V, whose predecessor Pope Sixtus IV was responsible for the creation of the Sistine Chapel (hence its name), pressed Michelangelo to create a crypt for his later burial, but Michelangelo was busy working on the tombs of Lorenzo and Giuliano de' Medici, who may have been more powerful. Their Renaissance tombs and the chapel that houses them are perhaps the most elaborate of Michelangelo's sculptural ensembles. The powerful statues are symbols of human life, where competing forces interact to free the soul after death, a philosophical concept closely linked to Michelangelo's own spirituality. He himself is in a tomb designed by Vasari in the Basilica of Santa Croce in Florence, while Raphael, at his own request, ended up in a simple tomb in the Pantheon (the oldest extant building in the world), with the inscription: "While he was alive, the mother of all things [Nature] feared she would be surpassed by him; when he died, she feared that she too would die."

Portugal's King Pedro I and his mistress, Inês de Castro, who was assassinated in 1355 by order of Pedro's father, King Afonso IV, are buried in the Alcobaça Monastery. The pair of tombs are among the best works of Gothic sculpture in Portugal. Both support the effigies of the deceased surrounded by angels. The sides of the tombs are magnificently decorated with reliefs showing scenes from Saint Bartholomew's life, as well as scenes from Pedro and Inês' lives and with scenes from the life of Christ.

Almost all of the past queens and kings of Spain are in elaborate sarcophagi in the Monasterio del Escorial just outside Madrid, the largest Renaissance building in the world. The main exceptions are Ferdinand and Isabella, who lie in The Royal Chapel of Granada, while their favorite explorer is in the magnificent cathedral in Seville, where, since 1899, his tomb is held aloft by figures representing the four kingdoms of Spain during Columbus' life, Castille, Aragon, Navarre and Leon.

Most of the French monarchs' tombs can be found in the Basilica of Saint-Denis, just north of Paris. St. Denis himself is famous for having walked there carrying his own head after being decapitated in Paris. (Louis XVI was unable to emulate him.) Napoleon lies in repose under The Dôme des Invalides, the tallest church in Paris. Louis Visconti, after a competition, created a circular hollow, or open crypt, beneath the soaring dome, with an inscription above recalling Napoleon's wish to be buried in Paris. At its center is a massive sarcophagus which has often been described as made of red porphyry, but is actually a purple Shoksha quartzite mined, ironically, in Russian Karelia. The sarcophagus rests upon green granite from France, which rests, in turn, upon a slab of black marble. The effect is to confirm that Napoleon was the most important Frenchman ever.

Sarcophagi, and the crypts and chapels that hold them, are tourist attractions all over the world, as are some cemeteries, such as the Composer's Corner in Vienna's Zentralfriedhof Cemetery, with the graves of Beethoven, Brahms, Schubert and Franz and Josef Strauss, and a monument to Mozart, who is buried elsewhere in an unmarked grave. Père-Lachaise in Paris, and Eva Peron's tomb in the Cementerio de la Recoleta in Buenos Aires, are high on most tourists' sightseeing lists, whether or not one likes the surroundings.



*Beethoven's Grave in Vienna, Austria*

In response to the enigma of death, societies have adopted a wide array of beliefs and practices regarding their dead. Ancient beliefs and burial practices intrigue and inform us, especially when the dead were provided with the accouterments of the living. Provisions for reincarnation give us an ironic window into ancient life. G&S

Photos by Norman A. Ross



*Paris, France. Napoleon's Tomb at the Dome des Invalides*



*Buenos Aires, Argentina. A plaque outside the crypt where Eva Peron is buried*



*Isabella and Ferdinand in Granada*



*Florence, Italy. Tomb of Lorenzo Medici by Michelangelo in the Basilica of San Lorenzo*



*Rome, Italy. Sarcophagus of the Married Couple in the Etruscan Museum at the Villa Giulia*



*Rome, Italy. Tomb of Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino (Raphael) in the Pantheon*



*Portugal, Marble Tomb of King Pedro I, 14th c in the Alcobaca Monastery.*



*Spain, Tomb of Christopher Columbus in Seville Cathedral*



*Austria, Memorial to Mozart in Vienna*

# Tree

by Celia Gilbert

The seed, the shoot, the being halfway between  
the world of earth it came from, the world of sky  
it learns to know, this creature of dark and light  
that drinks and weeps and counts the years,  
ring upon ring recording wet and dry  
until it falls, or is felled, refashioned,  
or returned to forest floor,

This wood, which has a life of its own  
expands, contracts, breathes,  
and carpenters give it a thwack  
as horse breeders do or lovers  
the ass of those they love a whack  
to set in motion on the air  
vibrations such as glass can give  
to say that what flesh is there does live  
and feel: companion, muse, creations,  
that we make of the solid . . .

Wood that has, after all, a heart  
that first, like any fool's, is green,  
then left to ripen and to dry  
can make a ship, a temple roof, a violin;  
if given time enough, whittled  
to a leg a man could stand on  
if his own were gone, or be a puppet  
like a man in all but soul and blood  
and like Pinocchio, bad wood of pine,  
can only act to hurt and run and hide.

The halfway houses of dryads  
and women seeking refuge  
from a world of rape like Daphne.  
Recall Joan who died fettered to the stake,  
and witches numberless who, one with forests,  
the fires made a thing of ash.

Cradle and coffin the answer  
to the riddle: what thing will be  
its beginning and ending, both?

G&S



*Celia Gilbert is a poet, printmaker, and a painter. She has published four books of poetry. Her work has appeared in The New Yorker, Atlantic Monthly and she has been frequently anthologized.*

# Kara Jackson — Songs of Love

by D. T. Alexander

**W**hy Does the Earth Give Us People to Love? is a beautiful yet gut-wrenching piece of work. It is as reflective as it is unforgettable. The album is the latest from 23-year-old Kara Jackson, tackling matters of the heart with masterful storytelling, while weighing with precision the costs of love and the price of losing it. Throughout these thirteen songs, the artist explores her own self-worth by employing intricately arranged melodies blended with sparse yet compelling instruments.

The debut LP, released in April 2023 via September Records, follows Jackson's 2019 EP, *A Song for Every Chamber of the Heart*. That same year the Oak Park, Illinois native was named the U.S. National Poet Laureate and published a book of poems, *Bloodstone Cowboy*.

On *Why Does the Earth Give Us People to Love?*, Jackson shows off her poetic bona fides. She dives heart first into “no fun/party,” as she imagines what love is in the current era of constant distractions. With this deceptive lullaby, backed by a banjo, a weepy violin, and the gentle pluck of an acoustic guitar, Jackson decides, ‘It’s hard to have patience when you’re waiting on luck / Like a postal truck, like a postal truck / To bring you a love as tough as elephant tusks.’ She further complains about being ‘taken for granted’ by every person she has dated.

“dickhead blues” is a stark rendering of the love-loss continuum. She sighs knowingly, ‘Damn the dickhead blues,’ a palpable melancholy dripping from Jackson’s lonesome guitar. Later, ‘thinking Cupid calls for you’ is juxtaposed with the reality of ‘End up (being) gum on someone’s shoe.’ The poet then discards ‘losers who find themselves losing me,’ as she repeats again and again, her mantra, ‘I am pretty top-notch,’ Convinced of this, she declares, ‘I’m useful!’

Amid a lush arrangement of organ, percussion, electric and slide guitars, Jackson’s husky voice is a witness that ‘sleep isn’t cheap’ and ‘love is no currency’ on the ephemeral “brain.” On “free,” a breakup hymn, she stretches her wide vocal range almost to its breaking point as she questions an ex-lover directly, ‘can’t you see I’m free?!,’ before warning, ‘Don’t bother me!’

The title track is an ominously arranged memorial to Maya, a friend of Jackson’s who died of cancer in 2016. The artist’s vocals soar here, as if searching the skies for an answer, ‘Why does the earth give us people to love / then take them away from our reach?’ She then recalls, ‘I’ve buried old, and young / I’ve watched them lower a saint.’ ‘We’re only waiting our turn / Call that living?,’ she questions existentially.

These are songs about love, but none are love



photo by Lawrence Agyei

songs. Other tracks that complete the opus include “pawnshop,” in which Jackson describes herself as an item, ‘used, but good as new,’ then transposes the shininess of a party balloon with the permanence of a tattoo; and “lily,” where the singer’s voice falls to its deepest low in a duet with her guitar. “liquor” is the record’s closer, where Jackson laments being ‘sick of cures’ that make her even sicker.

The near hour-long album is a constant tug-of-war between love and heartbreak, but in these matters, Jackson plants her flag firmly on the side that suggests that it is better to have loved and lost, than to have never loved at all.

Jackson received production help from fellow Chicagoans KAINA, NNAMDĪ, and Sen Morimoto throughout the record. No doubt challenging her to explore the highs and lows of her main instrument, her assured, husky voice. Jackson and company construct a rousing and indelible debut, where the lyrics linger on long after listening and whose minimalist instrumentation transcends the indie-folk genre. *GES*

IG: @KaraKara

# WALLY GILBERT



"Red Building Diptych Wing Out"  
Dye sublimation print on aluminum  
48" x 24"



"Red Building Diptych True V."  
Dye sublimation print on aluminum  
48" x 24"

Virtual Galleries of Wally Gilbert work are available at [kunstmatrix.com/en/wally-gilbert](https://kunstmatrix.com/en/wally-gilbert)