50th Anniversary Alumni Exhibit
June 3-August 19, 2022
NOTE: The pages 3-5 show the exhibit layout and identifies the art and artists for a quick reference. After page 5, each artist has a page and/or artist’s statement, for more information.

**Acknowledgements**

From the conception, to the Call for Art, to collecting the art, artists statements, and loan agreements, to the actual design of the walls, climbing the ladder, and making final touches, much time, thought and organizing goes into art exhibits. During the pandemic, our Art Therapy Gallery went online. It was better than nothing, and it enabled more people to see the artwork, but it was far removed from seeing actual art. It is a pleasure to once again have art on the walls.

Thank you, Alumni, for submitting your work, as without it, we obviously wouldn’t have a show!

*A special thanks goes to alumna Beth Oliver, 2020, current student Mindy Van Wart, and faculty member Jordan Potash for helping to curate and launch the exhibit. Their time and hard work is much appreciated!*
1. Watercolor painting by founder Bernie Levy  NFS
2. Inner Landscapes, Collage, Katherine J. Williams  NFS
3. River Stones, Acrylic, Brenda Barthell  $750
4. The White City, Acrylic, Anne Corson  NFS
5. Shaman Mask, Collage of painted paper, oil pastel, Janet Mathias  $500

6. Paper Play, Handmade paper assemblage, EmmyLou Glassman  NFS
7. Into the Woods, Monotype, ink on paper, Jill Chiciak  NFS
8. Opportunity, Pen & ink, watercolors, Celeste Cantees  $475
9. Rediscovering, Fabric, felt, paper, Jennifer Baldwin  NFS
10. Connection, Fabric, beads, Deborah Bunkley  NFS
11. About Fifty Leaves, Photography, Michael Pretzer  $900
12. Morning Drop Off, Acrylic, Rick Conway  NFS
13. Kaal, Mixed media on antique frame, Bani Malhatra  $300

14. Mirenke, Watercolor, gouache, pastel, Jennifer Dodson  $1500
15. Invisible Wounds, Digital collage on canvas, Carmen Paulson  $125 each
16. Boundary Circles 2, Acrylic, Dorothy Dvorachek Larsen  $700
17. Journey Into the Light, Watercolor & color pencils, Ronny W. Kempenich  $250

18. “And Then I Knew” Mixed media on paper, Deni Brancheau
19. Smoky Mountain Sunset, Oil on canvas, Alanna Betts  $650
20. El Duende (Metanoia), Mixed media process painting, Laura Miles  NFS
21. Flags for Mending and Repair, Fabric, cotton twill tape, embroidery thread, Lori A. Kenepp  NFS
22. Mind Portrait, Acrylic, Crista Kostenko  NFS
23. Big Moon Mama, Mixed media (acrylic, watercolor, fabric), Kelly Jacobs  $250

24. Single Issue Collages (May 2022), Paper, newspaper collage, acrylic, markers, Jordan S. Potash  $500
25. Prayer Flags 2020-2021, Linoleum prints and stencil (acrylic paint), Tracy Councill  $250
26. Where are the Children? Fabric, black light, Beth Oliver  $400
27. Process Painting I, Acrylic, mesh, paper, clay, Kimberly Brammer  NFS
28. Unfinished Classwork #3, Oil, Leslie Milofsky  NFS
29. Jennelle Hallaert
30. Untitled, Fabric & embroidery, Rachael Mecholsky  NFS
31. When Life Makes You Look Older Than You Are, Pastel on paper, Samana Jafri  NFS
32. Hidden in Plain Sight, Mixed media, Tyler Strusowski  NFS

33. Art Therapist Trauma Bag, Wool-knitting and felting, Beth Oliver, Graduate Show, 2020  NFS
34. Untitled, Ceramic, Kiara Stewart  NFS
35. Out of the Woods, Stoneware ceramics, Huyen MacMichael  $500
36. Lexi the Lab, Plaster on wood, Lilla Ohstrom  NFS
37. Bo Hundley
Watercolor painting by founder Bernie Levy  NFS
Inner Landscapes, Collage, Katherine J. Williams  NFS
River Stones, Acrylic, Brenda Barthell  $750
I enjoyed my time in the GW art therapy program, as well as my time there teaching some classes. The program prepared me well for my career working in two psychiatric hospitals for adults over thirty four years. The most recent place was Saint Luke Institute where art therapy became a centerpiece of the program. It was a fascinating and rewarding experience working there.

The day I retired I signed up for a class at The Art League in the Torpedo Factory in Alexandria. Eventually, during the next ten years, I took forty classes there and enjoyed them all. I was lucky enough to be juried into several shows in their art gallery.

Now I live in Goodwin House, a beautiful retirement community in Falls Church. There is a gorgeous, huge art room here, complete with an outstanding artist/director. I had been sick and in hospitals quite a lot before this, and I am fine now. But I wondered if I could even paint still, it had been so long. Recently I painted two pieces and it turned out that they are now my favorites. One of these pieces was critiqued by other residents who were taking a class there given by an art therapy intern from GW as well as by a visitor to the art room. The critiques were spot on and I used every suggestion. I am in the right place!
In 1992, I began the GW Art Therapy Program in the original Building “L”. I completed my practicums at Walter Reed (Pediatric Oncology, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry), Sheppard Pratt (Dissociative Identity Disorders) and My Sister’s Place, a homeless shelter in Baltimore. In my practicum paper I examined and compared the symbolic expressions of trauma among these populations. I went on to practice for several years through a series of grant-funded contracts, bringing art therapy into established community mental health programs, adult day services, and shelters in Maryland, Washington D.C. and New Mexico. At that time, I also taught studio art to high school students and adult lifelong learners.

In 2001 an opportunity arose by happenstance and I took a leap in a new direction as Career Counselor/Grant & Fellowship Advisor at Maryland Institute of Art (MICA). I spent 10 years there, immersed in the world of student artists navigating their futures. I am currently a NCDA Certified Career Services Provider (CCSP), and a Student Development Specialist at Harford Community College in NE Maryland where I advise within the Arts & Humanities division. All the while I’ve tended my parallel career as a visual artist, which is closest to my heart.

Although I left the field of art therapy for another and I have lost touch with many of you, I will always feel rooted in the GW Art Therapy community. My training here was foundational and is infused in every aspect of my life. I learned to bear witness, listen, communicate, and support agency in others; to engage the symbolic voice and healing power of art across disciplines and cultures. I have found the applications and iterations of these themes are broad and reach beyond the therapeutic milieu. In all my roles I have been an advocate for creative transformation in life design, which all began with my experience at GW.

Janet Mathias
Class of 1995
www.janetmathias.com

5/13/2022
Shaman Mask, Collage of painted paper, oil pastel   $500
This piece, with its nod to Andy Warhol, is a collection of small, satisfyingly handmade paper collages. The process, taught to me by one of my inspiring and gifted art therapy student interns, has since been passed on to the numerous artists I’ve worked with for decades.

Who knew that wet paper pulp could be so entertaining, pleasing, gratifying, seductive? I am continually surprised with each reveal in my ongoing artistic journey.

Thank you, GW Art Therapy Program, for teaching me that it is, and always will be, okay to play with the art materials!
Into the Woods, Monotype, Jill Chiciak  NFS

Into the Woods was created by layering various textures, hand drawn shapes, and ink through the process of monotype printing using a printing plate. The process of creating this print was intuitive and unplanned as each layer was built upon one another, much like the process of life. The finished product brought reminders of quiet reflections spent hiking in the woods at my family's mountain home in the Shawangunk Mountains of New York state.

During my time in the Art Therapy Graduate Program of The George Washington University, I focused my studies on how art therapy can support the journey of healing from traumatic stress as an individual and/or family moves from surviving to thriving. Since graduating in 2009, I have worked for over a decade with children, adults, and families in my local communities in Southern New Jersey and Philadelphia who have been impacted by various generational traumas using a combination of Trauma-Informed Art Therapy, Mindfulness-Based-Stress-Reduction, Cognitive-Therapy, and psycho-educational approaches. I am currently focused on learning how to incorporate more body-based therapies into my work, such as Somatic Experiencing, to promote a more holistic level of healing to my clients.
Opportunity, Pen & ink, watercolors, Celeste Cantees  $475
"Rediscovering"

For years the idea of a circle or mandala as an art task has been an important part of my own art process as well as one that I use repeatedly with art therapy clients. Seeking to use a slow stitch technique to create this known, comfortable, predictable sense of calm and grounding that can be experienced through this particular process was a surprising development that resulted in renewed joy, curiosity, and a sense of "what if?" Just like this process of rediscovering something new even among the old, looking back over my years as an art therapist and working in a variety of settings and with a variety of people has been an unexpected gift to myself as a professional art therapist. One that I could not have predicted on that first day in 1994 as walked into my first class in Building L.
Connection
Deborah Bunkley MA, ATR-BC, LCPAT
GWU Alumni 2008, Adjunct Professor since 2014

When creating art, I find myself being attracted to symbols that inspire me spiritually such as the lotus flower, the butterfly and spirals. When working with these symbols, I quickly and easily shift into a state of flow and achieve a feeling of peace and connectedness. For this piece I chose to work with the theme of spirals.

First, the spiral is a symbol of change and development, as all things in this world must change over time.

Spiritually the spiral represents a connectivity with the Divine, spiraling from the outer ego (the outside world) into the inner soul (cosmic awareness and enlightenment). The spiral represents evolution and growth of the Spirit which is a quest that I have been on for most of my life.

The spiral also represents our never-ending journey of knowledge. With each idea we learn and we grow both on a physical level and on a spiritual level. I truly believe in the concepts that from the day we are born until the day we pass on we are a “work in progress” and that we are never too old to learn something new. I am always seeking new avenues to learn and to grow and have been blessed with the experiences that have been presented to me. For this I am truly grateful.
About Fifty Leaves isn’t really about leaves. It’s about light.

When I took the photograph in October 2020 the world’s mood was dark. The planet was quiet. Everything seemed distant and dangerous.

But the sunlight that enlivens the leaves in the photograph challenges our somberness. It comforts. It transports. It makes us want to sway gently and sing softly.

Life on Earth is increasingly threatened. More of the planet is on fire; more is flooding. Worse, in many cultures, including ours, truth has become optional.

Two years ago, we were putting a mask over our nose and mouth; now we are at each other’s throat. A world war rages. The rich rob the poor to become more rich. The righteous cancel the rights of those who are of a different ilk. Adolescents learn to bully from adults who learned to abuse.

Whoa.

That’s enough darkness for one day. Let’s recalibrate. Let’s recall the radiance of Richard Diebenkorn’s Ocean Park series. The enveloping light in Edward Hopper’s Ryder’s House. The entrancing colors that swirl across The Ten Largest paintings of Hilma af Klint. The intensity of the paint slathered by my client on her 10th consecutive image of a sunset.

In the world—and in art—light remains our best friend. Light is an optimist. Light uplifts.

Biography

I have photographed for 50 years and been engaged in art therapy for 10. I am the art therapist at Newport Academy, Rockville MD, which operates a PHP/IOP program for adolescents. In 2011—the year I entered the art therapy graduate program at GW—those between 15 and 24 years of age were committing suicide at the rate of 11 per 100,000 persons. In 2020 the rate was up to 14.24 per 100,000. For people in the age range, suicide ranks third as a cause of death.

About Fifty Leaves, Photography, Michael Pretzer $900
From just before the pandemic, an old friend was posting on social media her conversations with her son while waiting in the car line to drop off at school. The conversations were always funny and indicated a deep curiosity by her very young son. As the pandemic got worse and kids were forced to learn from home, she lamented the loss of that special time and expressed longing for that time to return.

In working with so many young clients at the time, I was seeing the impact of the pandemic on parent/child relationships and her stories were a source of inspiration.

I was doing exploration into the ideas of freedom, safety, and boundaryless existence and whales have always been a source of awe and wonder, so they felt like a wonderful vehicle for expression.
This artwork titled *Kaal* translated from Hindi as period/era/time is an artistic inquiry into time as a witness. This artwork represents paradoxes in the media itself- interwoven on the foundation of an antique frame that found me while I was transitioning into a new chapter of my life. This work is an attempt to embed temporality within many layers-through the media in terms of the foundation itself, layering oil paints, the collage words and phrases, the broken pieces of an outdated compact disc, the covering and the uncovering, the scratching, and the revealing. These interrelated aspects inform my various roles and identities professionally uncovering and covering the psychology foundation I built my education on, layered on with artist identity, the clinician art therapist, and now as a therapist-researcher. Perhaps through all these transition and intersections, time is a witness and an agent to continue exploring these woven paths. *Kaal*, a testament and a humble reminder that art therapy before me and art therapy after me has and will continue fostering knowledge generations! Feel free to magnify these drizzled pasts, presents, and futures.

*Kaal*, Mixed media on antique frame, Bani Malhatra $300

Hi, I am Bani Malhotra. I was a student at GW from 2016-2018. I am currently a PhD Candidate and Research Fellow at Drexel University’s College of Nursing and Health Professions. In the past I have worked in school settings with neurotypical and neurodivergent individuals, in medical, psychiatric, and forensic settings. Currently, you’ll find me cooking up ideas for interdisciplinary research in art therapy especially in developing, implementing, and evaluating art therapy and arts-based interventions for health and wellness. My PhD dissertation is on designing and implementing art therapy intervention with patients hospitalized with burn injuries. I love to use art for my own inquiry into thoughts, ideas, and emotions. Before coming to GWU, I never actually identified myself as an artist, but GW slowly but surely continues to shift that perspective for me! Currently experimenting with encaustic (hot wax) media and fabrics.

Feel free to connect with me at mailto:mail@banim.info/mail@banim.info / Instagram: @banim.art
Mirenke, Watercolor, gouache, pastel, Jennifer Dodson  $1500
Invisible Wounds, Digital collage on canvas, Carmen Paulson $125 each
Boundary Circles 2, 2022, re-envisions my personal and professional boundaries at this stage of my work as an artist, mother, and art therapist.

It builds on a mixed piece that I completed as I developed my boundaries while I attended the GW art therapy program from 2004-2006. I created the original Boundary Circles in my therapeutic work with Dr. Katherine Williams, who at that time was the former director of the GW art therapy program.

Boundary Circles 2 reflects my efforts to recreate and rebuild my personal and professional boundaries as I return to work as an art therapist. After taking about 10 years to focus on being a mother to my 3 children, I went back to working as an art therapist in 2021. This return to art therapy, in balance with ongoing parenting, required me to re-examine and reconstruct my boundaries.

The circles represent: myself alone, connected with that still, small voice, of something bigger; immediate family with my husband and children; extended family and family of origin: close friends and therapists; community friends; colleagues; clients; and neighbors.

I now work at the Center for Creative Arts Therapy in Downers Grove, Illinois, as an outpatient Art Therapist.
Journey into The Light
Ronny W. Kempenich LCPAT, LCPC

For the past three years since I became a licensed Art Therapist, I have been working with survivors of intimate partner violence. First at a Woman’s Shelter and soon after for JCADA. JCADA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to support victims of intimate partner violence to become empowered and live safely; educate the community about intimate partner violence and the appropriate responses; and prevent future generations from experiencing intimate partner violence. My role in the organization is to provide one on one therapy and groups sessions in order to help the survivors, process their trauma, find their voice and sense of self, so that they can begin to recreate their lives.

In March 2021 we were asked by JCADA’s Executive Director to write about our experience during the past pandemic year. She wanted to share with our board and financial backers what it had taken for us to continue to do our work during this difficult time. Being an art therapist, I created the piece “Journey into the Light” as my response to her request. Below is the artist statement that accompanied the piece.

March 2020, I returned from vacation to find the office closed and instructions that we were to work from home on Zoom. As a relatively new therapist the idea of doing tele therapy seemed daunting beyond words. It was like doing therapy with my eyes blindfolded and my hands tied behind my back. I wasn’t sure how I would manage this unfriendly and treacherous road. Yet as months passed the road became less menacing. I began developing new skills to help me move forward and continue the climb. Now almost a year later, the path is still steep, yet it is bathed in light and a lot more manageable than it was when I first started. It’s been a rough year, but I have grown and flourished professionally, accomplished things I never would have thought possible. All while continuing to provide high quality care and support for my clients.
“And Then I Knew” Mixed media on paper, Deni Brancheau $500

I started this piece while working with my students on a lesson in collage building. As is my practice, I look through magazines periodically and pull-out words or images that I’m drawn to and save them in a folder. As I got out my folder to start this one, my intention was to make a collage about gardens and flowers...quickly I realized it was speaking something else to me. I set it aside to work on later.

As I layered the pieces, I saw the paths and the different dwellings emerging. I was still not sure what it was about, but I felt its significance.

I filled all the spaces but felt that something was still missing. When I looked through my pictures, the baby coyote stood out. He knew just where he wanted to go. In looking up the myths and stories of the coyote, sometimes called the “medicine dog,” he is known as the “trickster.” Encountering the coyote might mean there is something you need to let go of, he might be a reminder that you have the ability to manage whatever life holds, or a reminder to lighten up and let go of being too serious.

After reading up on my little friend the coyote, I realized this piece was a reflection of my upcoming retirement in July from my fulltime position. I labored over the decision for several months trying to figure out where I wanted to go and what I would do when I got there. Ultimately, I realized I had to just trust the process and take the leap without knowing all the answers. Once I made the decision, a huge weight was lifted from my mind and my curiosity began to return.

For now I ‘m staying here and while I still don’t have the answers to many of my questions, I know I’m excited and looking forward to seeing what this next chapter in life will reveal to me!

GWU Alumni, 1989
GWU Adjunct Professor, 1995-present
This painting was inspired by memories of evenings spent watching vibrant sunsets over the Smoky Mountains in Tennessee. My nostalgia for these vistas recognizes the space between reality and the ability to describe an experience -- the emotion of the inexpressible.

Since my time at GW, I found it was easy to sacrifice my art therapist identity. Never all at once, but in pieces. I felt the art slip away as I filled social work/counseling positions, or met the demands for case management, and then even more as I stepped into a management position. When I found myself burnt out and exhausted during 2020, I knew I needed to find a way to bring the art back into my therapeutic work and my life itself.

This painting was part of a series of landscapes I created during a transition from a corporate, management position to a small private practice. Leaving my corporate job felt like a breath of fresh air, but I found myself questioning what this meant for my identity. What did the last few years of career-building mean? What would I take with me from my years in management? Could I reweave my artist self into my life?
El Duende (Metanoia), Mixed media process painting, Laura Miles  NFS
Flags for Mending and Repair, 2021, Fabric, cotton twill tape, embroidery thread, Lori A. Kenepp NFS
This portrait from 2020 started as a self-portrait to challenge myself since I had not created a self-portrait in a long time. It evolved into a portrait of a woman with a visual mental load on one side of her head. I wanted to express the mental load that I and so many were feeling during this pandemic. The mental load is not all stress - the collection of colors shows the fullness and complexity of mental loads that not only include feelings of stress but also thoughts, hopes, creativity and desires that have not yet been expressed. Painting this portrait helped me continue to create and explore through the moments of uncertainty and stress.
Big Moon Mama, Mixed media (acrylic, watercolor, fabric), Kelly Jacobs  $250

This piece developed much like my experiences in the almost three years since I graduated from GW: in fits and starts, and layers of missteps, meaning, and mending, with curiosity as my guide. Symbols of the moon and the robin emerged to illuminate themes of cycles, change, hope, and renewal. These themes enriched a personal meditation of identity development as both a new art therapist and a new mother. Embracing these identities has been challenged by many things, but none more than the pandemic. Unsurprisingly, I have found strength through a focus on the process. The process of creating, the processing of growing, and the process of becoming. I know now more than ever the truth of statement: “Trust the process.”
For months, I’ve been simply taking the Sunday paper from the door to the coffee table and then six days later putting it in the recycling bin without every opening it. I read much of the news digitally or see it on TV. By the time the weekend comes, I just need a break – and by the time I would open the paper – even a day later – the news was already old or I saw the stories online.

In an effort to sit with the paper, I read articles to find images across the pages and sections, clipped them, and then re-arranged them. With no preconceived ideas, I just played with layering, shifting, and overlapping. I then added paint and other materials to experiment and spend time creating.

Each artwork resembles the mixed-up images and ideas constantly coming in this time of what seems like impending doom – pandemic receding (sort of), Russian war against Ukraine, U.S. democracy erosions. The layers, the peeling, and the wiping away gives the sense of posters peeling off of outside walls – which indicates the ephemeral. Perhaps there is something here about recognizing the disorientation of this moment of history while attempting to take a larger perspective of what will remain and what will peel away.

*The Washington Post* (1 May 2022)  
*The Washington Post* (8 May 2022)  
*The Washington Post* (15 May 2022)
Prayer Flags 2020-2021, Linoleum prints and stencil (acrylic paint), Tracy Councill $250

During the early months of the pandemic when the Black Lives Matter protests were raging in DC, I wanted to find a way to express my solidarity amidst the turmoil. I have for many years loved the Tibetan/Nepalese tradition of Prayer Flags, in which a prayer is block printed on cotton cloth and hung outdoors. When the ink fades and the cloth disintegrates, the prayer is thought to have been fully expressed.

I printed linocut portraits of Ahmaud Arbery, George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, and my daughter cut a BLM block with a raised fist, on plain muslin cloth.

I displayed my flags at the clinic where I work, to open up a Prayer Flag project for the kids and families I work with in art therapy. Many patients designed their own flags, and we began using stencils to quickly and easily add to our image vocabulary. I wanted patients, families and staff members to have opportunities to express their hopes and fears in a community art piece.

By the end of 2021, my own string of flags included stenciled images expressing broader themes of peace, nature, and the Brood X Cicadas. This set of Prayer Flags has hung on the front porch of my house since Spring 2020.
Where are the Children? Fabric, black light, Beth Oliver  $400  
(There is a hidden message in this cloth which can only be seen with the black light flashlight.)

This piece is a response art to the incarceration of children at the border, leaving me horrified and deep in shame that I am part of a country that took the most vulnerable away from their parents and put them in cages. This unnecessary act is creating a generation of trauma victims. I thought this could not be happening, but it was. The public did not see or hear from the thousands of children, but we know they are there. Where is their voice, I thought; let them speak.

As an observer, the politics surrounding this atrocity came across as a circus. In the center, the Ringmaster draws attention to himself and the more fantastic shows he has to offer, obfuscating the pain and suffering of the children and our growing deprivation of humanity. "See me, watch me," he bellows with a smirk. But where are the children? I don't see or hear them.

The show is loud and imposing, highlighting a significant body of elephants. Trick after trick, they obey their master's commands. Their blinders keep them focused and in step with the group. As I watched them perform, I was surprised their imposing stature came across as feeble and realized, with sadness, that they had lost their sense of agency.

In the third ring is the lion, stunning in his appearance and poised and in control of his performance. Each step is rehearsed, and the Ringmaster guides his actions with a whip as he executes his post, keeping him in line. What a production as he jumps through hoops!

Is it hard to see or hear the children? Do I want to take notice? It may make me uncomfortable, and I am already feeling shameful and sad. If I walk away, it will go away, right?

Instead, I travel toward what it means to be human by being curious and kind and raising my light. Moving toward one another, being vulnerable, and, yes, meeting discomfort head on. As we raise our vibration, we notice new things and become more aware.

Underneath the stage, which looked like balloons, are the remnants of the medication used to quiet the children. On the trodden upon crumpled white paper are the names of the disregarded, lost in a sea of bureaucracy. The spectators behind the wall begin to come into view; they are the children, crying and afraid. Can you hear them now? "Help us," is their collective cry.

Process Painting I, Acrylic, mesh, paper, clay, Kimberly Brammer
Discovering who I am and the different aspects of myself has been imperative to being a good therapist and being a whole person. For years after I graduated from GW, I did not create artwork. I implemented thousands of art directives and I watched other people explore themselves in art therapy. I look back on that time and I realized how much of myself wasn’t alive then. The pandemic happened and I found myself grappling with the same questions my clients were grappling with. Art helped me find answers to questions that I didn’t even know to ask. Art provided me steadiness and an outlet to childhood desires that I was often too “adult” to let myself feel.

Prior to the pandemic I began seeing a therapist. Once I was making art again, I started bringing my art to my talk therapy. My therapist would ask me probing questions, but this was not art therapy. When I was having a particularly hard time during the pandemic, I sought out art therapy as part of my healing process. This piece was created in my art therapy experience. This process painting allowed me time and space to really explore my shadow side. It went into the midst of my depression and self hatred and looked at ways to comfort and self soothe.

One of the most emotional parts of this piece was when I had the desire to cut the canvas. I found myself wanting to hurt the parts of me that were so dark and that I didn’t like. I wept before cutting the canvas. I realized all the ways that I had not been serving myself in a healthy manner. The relief that came after cutting the canvas made me think of individuals that engage in self harm. I felt the need to give nurturing and comfort to those areas of the canvas that were cut. On the backside of the canvas, there’s even sown into the piece a gauze-like fabric used to take care of this wound. Then I wove the softest fabric I could find and sewed it on both sides of the canvas.

Separate from this piece, I worked with clay to make a mother cradling her baby. When I originally made this, I thought this was myself as a mother cradling one of my daughters. However the more I sat with the piece, I realized that this was really my adult self nurturing my little girl self. I cradled the figures with fabric and tied it to the canvas when I realized that the process painting and the figures were the same thing. This was how I was continuing to nurture that younger part. This was a necessary part of my healing. To have acted so harshly as to cut the canvas equaled a deep look at tending to that little girl.

My therapist encourages me to talk to myself as I would to my daughters. I often offer them patience, love, and explanations when they don’t understand something or a feeling becomes too overwhelming. It’s a great task, one that often feels overwhelming to me. It is a greater task when trying to do the same for myself. I’m a work in progress. Ultimately this piece is about love, loving oneself and all my parts.

My work as an art therapist is informed by my own clinical work that I engage in. All of it helps me be more available to handle issues that come up in the therapy room.
Jenelle Hallaert
Untitled, Fabric & embroidery, Rachael Mecholsky  NFS
When Life Makes You Look Older Than You Are, Pastel on paper, Samana Jafri  NFS
I was part of the 2017 graduating class of the George Washington University art therapy program. Shortly after, my first position as an art therapist was in an outpatient day services center where I led art therapy groups mainly in an open studio format. Mid-pandemic I changed positions to an associate within an LGBTQ+ focused private practice where I continue to apply art therapy on an individual basis.

“Hidden in Plain Sight” is part of an experimental series of mixed media art pieces I started years ago when living in Philadelphia. I tend to work exploratively with my art using texture, color combinations, and variety of art materials some of which can be found materials. I was curious about using glass artistically, so I’d bike around the streets of the city to sweep up glass from smashed car windows that had been burglarized with the intention of using it in my art. At first, I felt embarrassed about being seen sweeping up glass off the streets but quickly realized that no one seemed to notice or pay attention to what I was doing. In contrast, children did notice me and stared curiously at what I was doing. I would often wonder at what stage does that change from child to adult when some mental or neurological process takes hold causing us to screen out, filter, and prioritize information thereby ignoring it, or perhaps just not seeing it. “Hidden in Plain Sight” is my illustration of such a process whereby information is filtered out.

Having done this work for some time, I am starting to become more aware of nuanced behaviors and features of dialogue with my clients, or people I know personally, and sometimes even with myself. I am referring to those experiences where there is a change in conversational direction at a certain point or the hint of a reaction that betrays dialogue, like a change in breath, a glance, or a shift... I don’t recall seeing or hearing these things prior to working therapeutically. Though, they must have always been there. Just filtered out of my awareness until now. Perhaps, hidden in plain sight.
Art Therapist Trauma Bag, Wool-knitting and felting, Beth Oliver, Graduate Show, 2020
Untitled, Ceramic, Kiara Stewart  NFS
Out of the Woods, Stoneware ceramics, Huyen MacMichael  $500
Lexi the Lab was commissioned by a friend who lost her beloved husband during the peak of COVID to unexpected heart conditions. After he passed away she got this healing animal, a retired breeding dog who needed a new home. The bond that owner and dog have is profound and the owner has commemorated this through art. Not only did she ask me to sculpt the dog, but she had a painter friend make a portrait as well. Covid enhanced people’s relationships with their dogs and my commissions to sculpt people’s dogs increased. During isolation many dogs were rewarded with the constant company of their human friends and humans became even more deeply appreciative of their canine companions. This art entry is for the love of Dog and the many ways in which art and healing connect.
I have a vested interest in keeping things under control because when I lose my illusion I get very scared and the world is scary enough as it is.

No one asks to be born. What do we know? Everything is just a hole. Deal with the cold, we build our shitty dams.

Bo Hundley
I am arTestimony. A curator of culture, an explorer of creativity and a vessel for healing! I activate a holistic embodiment of self through lines, shapes and colors, as a testament of my existence and experience. I transcend boundaries and invent portals to transform art into a collective healing sacred space in order to elevate wellness in myself and community.

I do all of this through unconventional practices and experimentation derived from an innate need for healing and transformation. In my work you will find texture, layering and rhythm-- an homage to spirituality, indigenous practice, social justice and exploration of process.

This work titled ‘Ariel Lioness of God’ is a part of the Gods and Angels series. The collection showcases a series of mix-media paintings anchored in spiritual vision with the theme of love and loss. In this collection I explore the grief process and my own healing journey. This oil painting was a lot of process; layering and represented the many stages of grief and the dry time reminiscent of the need to heal slowly. The goal was to elicit an emotional response from viewers and the artists, with a focus on healing and understanding the divine immersed in love.