



Philadelphia Sculptors

Winter 2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

If I were a painter I would say my recollection of 2020 was that it started as a Shepard Fairey graphic that knocked over a Jean-Michel Basquiat skull painting and evolved into a Jackson Pollock drip painting on life support. In other words, a year that most of us would be only too happy to forget. But even during this time, Philadelphia Sculptors managed to stay engaged and contributed both art and resources to our community and to our artists.

Our first exhibition, just on the cusp of the COVID-19 pandemic, was *Subversion*. Eighteen artists used their art to assert their values and turned the Da Vinci Art Alliance into a hub for alternative views on traditional and nontraditional subjects. We were lucky – our February 26, 2020 opening was a time of innocence and the last time we were able to have a group event before the virus changed everything. (See photos page 3.)

While we were forced to cancel spring events like our annual *5 into 1* show, we found that our creative processes did not need to go into hibernation – they just needed to find alternative forms of expression. The first thing we did was to implement our *Letters from the Studio* initiative on Instagram. (See page 8.) This encouraged artists to visually share how the imposed isolation had an impact on their lives and studio practices. More importantly, COVID had upended the lives and livelihoods of many artists, and since we weren't putting our energies into our exhibitions, we could pivot and focus our efforts on helping artists.



Rebecca Shultz *What Lies Beneath*

We assembled both our financial resources and the inspired efforts of our volunteers and quickly created our *PS We Love Our Members Grant*. We received an influx of applications, and were able to initially award eleven \$1,000 grants to both new and continuing PS members. It was clear that there was so much need and so many talented applicants, so we expanded the program and added six \$500 grants. While our goals were to help the artists financially, we also saw this as an opportunity to give these artists visibility and set up a series of video interviews which were posted to our website. Members Jacintha Clark and Christine McDonald were key to the success of the entire program, and proved to be very professional interviewers and producers. (See page 7.)

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We were fortunate that we had one outdoor exhibition that went as planned. As part of the otherwise predominantly virtual Da Vinci Festival, our *Exquisite Copse* show populated Palumbo Park for the month of October. Twelve artists were able to successfully install their works in a public space, to the delight of a neighborhood desperate for safe outdoor activities. (See photos page 6.)

This past year was also defined by the Black Lives Matter movement, which has motivated us to engage in self-reflection and identify the need for organizational change. As a result, we have been working on diversity and inclusion initiatives towards the goal of expanding our membership, outreach, and programming. We are currently planning an exhibition for the Cherry Street Pier for fall 2021 that will be our first major step in this direction.

We are optimistic that 2021 will unfold without the constant horrors, injustices and traumas that characterized 2020. As artists, we will approach whatever happens with positivity and creativity. We wish everyone a very Happy New Year filled with peace, happiness and renewal.

Leslie Kaufman

MEMBER NEWS

t.a. hahn is exhibiting his work in the *Noyes Artist Member Exhibition: 2020* at the Arts Garage, October 9, 2020 - Sunday January 10, 2021. The Closing Reception will be on Friday January 8, 2021. There is also an Online Exhibition which corresponds with the 'live' exhibit, [Noyes Artist Members Exhibition 2020](#)



t.a. hahn
Violet-green Tree Swallow

Cheryl Harper had her first solo museum exhibition at the Maier Museum in Lynchburg, Virginia. The show, *Passages*, was inspired by the ironic realization that she married into a family that enslaved in America and her own extended family was murdered in the Holocaust. Opening just before the pandemic, it closed to the public after two weeks and reopened in June through July. It lives on through an online format:

<http://maiermuseum.org/passages/>

A version of the installation will take place this summer at the InLiquid gallery in the Crane Building in Philadelphia. The artist Rod Jones II, a descendant of Southern slaves, will share the gallery with Harper and they will intertwine their points of view through the exhibition.

Harper and Jones spoke about their work on December 4th at the Philadelphia Avant-garde Studies Consortium.



Cheryl Harper
Passages

Harold Kalmus had two sculptures in the PS member show *Subversion*, February 26 – March 22. His *Kalmus Culinary Knives* were featured in the *44th Annual Philadelphia Museum of Art Craft Show*. He has been invited to be in a duo show, along with painter Eric van der Vlugt, at the Da Vinci Art Alliance, January 2022. www.haroldkalmus.com

[Kalmus Knives - Hand Crafted Knives Culinary Knives](#)



Harold Kalmus
Kalmus Knives



Collin Mura-smith
I Love America and America Loves Me

VERSION SUB

Subversion was a collaborative exhibition between Da Vinci Art Alliance and Philadelphia Sculptors, February 26 – March 22, 2020. This show highlighted artwork that undermines or challenges social structures, morals, traditions, authority, perceptions, and even human nature.

Juror Alice Oh selected 27 works from 18 artists that addressed, in ways both humorous and dire, the political landscape of our present day. Through formal references such as a pistol, the human form, nature, and President Trump, the work in *Subversion* confronted our corrupt reality and proposed possibilities for a just future.

[Subversion – Philadelphia Sculptors \(philasculptors.org\)](http://philasculptors.org)



Natasha Cheung
Homage



Eleanor Levie
Trumpasaurus Rex



Nicholli Matheny
Breathe



CETA by Virginia Maksymowicz

Nearly everyone has heard of the WPA and its employment of artists in the 1930s, but few have heard about CETA, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, in the 1970s. At least **10,000 artists** — visual artists, actors, musicians, dancers and poets — were employed under this federal program. In addition, CETA provided funds for security guards, administrative positions and other support staff that benefited cultural institutions, performing venues and arts groups.

It's hard to believe but CETA was signed into law by Richard Nixon! It was a bipartisan endeavor that Republicans were able to support because of its structure. Block grants were made to states and redistributed; use of the funds was decided on the local level.

Initially conceived as a training program for unskilled workers, CETA was a response to a deep recession and high unemployment. It was subsequently amended to include trained workers in professions suffering from chronic un-and-under-employment.

Unlike the WPA, CETA was not initially designed with artists in mind. But a man named John Kreidler, an intern at the San Francisco Arts Commission, understood how CETA funds could be used to employ artists. Unlike the NEA, which gave unrestricted grants to artists, CETA artists had to work for the public good. He was able to hire artists as part of the Commission's Neighborhood Arts Program. Many working-class and minority artists, who often didn't have the professional connections to get endowment grants or private funding, especially benefited from CETA. San Francisco became a model for the rest of California, and, ultimately, for the rest of the country. There were large CETA artist programs in Chicago, DC and New York City. Many more artists were hired throughout the country in smaller programs or as individuals. As well, hundreds of arts organizations were kickstarted and/or stabilized through CETA funding, ranging from large museums to artist-run galleries.

At its peak, in 1980, CETA funneled between \$200 and \$300 million (about a billion in 2020 dollars) into the arts. In comparison, the National Endowment for the Arts budget that year was only \$159 million. The impact that CETA had on the cultural sector was enormous, and like the WPA, it set the trajectory for contemporary art continuing to this day. Yet it has largely been forgotten. Why?

First of all, because CETA's structure was decentralized, there is no central, federal depository for records.

Second, CETA was a jobs program, not an artist program. Although museums, artist-run galleries, libraries, schools, and a range of nonprofits employed CETA artists, their contributions took the form of service. While documentation exists, it is buried deep down in organizational files and institutional memory has faded.

Third, CETA artists didn't deposit their artworks into a central archive. The works produced by WPA artists were considered the property of the Federal Government. Even though artworks were also produced under the service component of CETA — a good part of them murals and public sculptures — ownership retention and copyright varies, ranging from states/municipalities to community sponsors to the artists themselves.

I was a participant in NYC's Cultural Council Foundation Artist Project. Five hundred of us accomplished but underemployed artists were given positions in the five programs CCF supervised. There were many more artists hired through Borough President offices and individual nonprofits. Interestingly, the late Cheryl McClenney-Brooker, former external affairs director for the Philadelphia Museum, had been a key figure in implementing the CCF Project when she was Assistant Commissioner of Cultural Affairs in NYC!

Sculptors like Ursula von Rydingsvard and Christy Rupp, and photographers like Dawoud Bey, were part of the CCF Project. Across the country, artists such as the late Ruth Asawa, Peter Alexander, Allen Ruppersberg, Vija Celmins, Judy Baca and Suzanne Lacy worked with other CETA-funded programs.

Philadelphia artists Barbara Bullock, Simone Spicer, Rebecca Rose-Metzger, James Phillips, Blaise Tobia, and Cranston Walker were all employed under CETA. The Painted Bride hired six CETA staffers. The Brandywine Workshop initially hired 18 artists with the number growing to 38 per year by the end of their three-year grant. The Philadelphia Museum hired 38 staffers with CETA money. The Print Club and the Cheltenham Arts Center were also beneficiaries. Imagine if what happened 40 years ago could be implemented today? As we face post-pandemic economic woes, we need not look all the way back to the WPA.

Many former CETA artists, arts administrators and government officials stand ready to contribute their knowledge. Their expertise just needs to be tapped! For more information about this remarkable program, see < www.ceta-arts.com >. If you were a CETA artist yourself, or you know of artists who were, please contact me < virginia.maksymowicz@fandm.edu >.

MEMBER NEWS

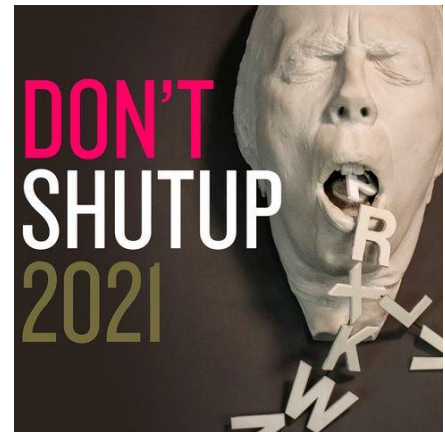
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Jack Knight's painting, *Zako-Bleu* was selected for the *EXPRESSIONS 2020* a virtual online exhibit with Marin Society of Artists, San Rafael, CA, May 14 - June 27. Two paintings from the *Sausalito Series* were included in the juried exhibit at Ocean City, MD Art Center during July. *Sausalito Series #18* was selected for the Juried Painting Show *STORIES* at Media Arts Council, May 8-June 6. Two limited edition prints were in the New Hope Arts Center virtual exhibit in July. His work was included in the *Rehoboth Art League Members Exhibit*, July 3-August 24. His piece, *Make Art Great Again*, is included in the Academy Art Museum's Members Exhibit, *Sign of the Times*, Easton, MD, December 11 - January 17, 2021. The Delaware Division of the Arts awarded him a 2021 Individual Artist Grant for his "combines" or wall sculptures. The award is a monetary amount for supplies and materials with the condition to exhibit these works somewhere in Delaware in 2021. The fellowship is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. His redesigned website is at www.artistjackknight.com



Jack Knight
Andromeda Series #20

Virginia Maksymowicz had a three-page spread in the January issue of Amtrak's *National* magazine, the onboard publication distributed on trains, coast-to-coast. This was a series wherein artists were invited to re-imagine the nationwide route map and this was the second-to-last issue before the pandemic hit and production ceased. In April she received a *P.S. We Love Our Members* Grant, which included an opportunity to be Zoom interviewed by Jacintha Clark and Christine McDonald. She participated in a podcast for the *Art Newspaper*, various conferences, and a webinar for the *Appraisers Association of America*. Last fall she was invited to participate in two "hybrid" opportunities (physical shows with virtual receptions), *MYTHOS* at the Torpedo Factory in Virginia and *Old Myths, New Stories* at the Curtis Art Center in Colorado. One of the twice-postponed-and-yet-to-be-rescheduled shows, *Don't Shut Up*, received funding for a website that has just been posted. In November she received another grant, this time from the Foundation for Contemporary Arts. Her article about the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) was accepted by the online art forum *Hyperallergic*.



Virginia Maksymowicz
Don't Shut Up

Nicole Melnick is currently a MFA student at OCAD University with a focus in Interdisciplinary Art. She was hosted as artist-in-residence at five venues this year: Vermont Studio Center, Toronto Biennial of Art, Otis College of Art and Design, The Ou Gallery, and Studio H Canada. Through her research, painting, and fashion-based practice, she explores the mixed-methodologies of queer utopia, dreamtime, queer time and place, queer futurity, kitsch, camp, and pride. www.nicolemelnick.com

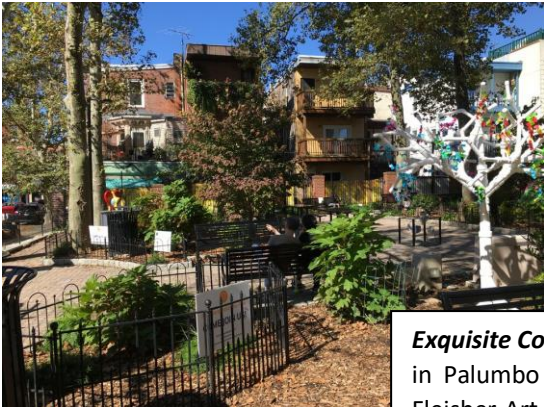


Nicole Melnick
Venus Pufferfish

Member News continued on Page 8

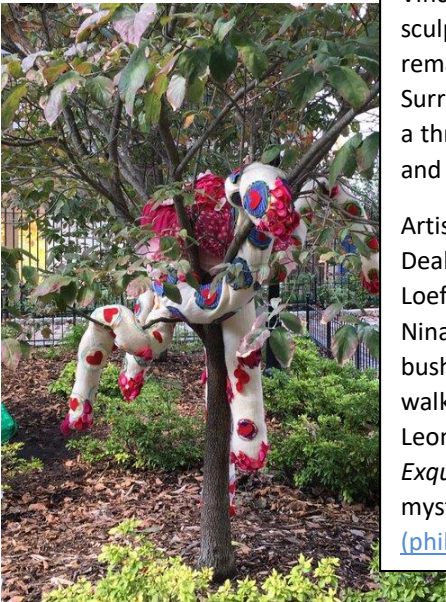


EXQUISITE COPSE



Exquisite Copse was a temporary exhibition of sculptures in Palumbo Park, a small community park adjacent to Fleisher Art Memorial and across the street from the Da Vinci Art Alliance, October 4 – November 6, 2020. The sculptures were in the spirit of da Vinci and some of the remarkable artists who came after him. A play on the Surrealists' game "Exquisite Corpse," *Exquisite Copse* was a three-dimensional version installed in the garden areas and walkways of the park.

Artists Clifford Bailey, Ken Beidler, Patrick Cabry, David Deakin, Karen Izzi, Leslie Kaufman, Gregory Laut, Carole Loeffler, Rebecca Schultz, Bina Shah, Naomi Teppich, and Nina Valdera created artworks that popped out from the bushes, hung from the trees, and crept along the walkways of Palumbo Park. True to the spirit of both Leonardo Da Vinci and the Surrealists, the artworks in *Exquisite Copse* were intended to delight, engage, and mystify. [Exquisite Copse — Philadelphia Sculptors \(philasculptors.org\)](http://philasculptors.org)



Neon Bending Bootcamp

By Lisa Nanni

The discovery of a new tool or technique can enhance a sculptor's artistic practice. After years of having neon benders produce the neon units for my sculptures, I decided it was time to learn the art of neon bending. So, last winter I attended an eight-week course, "Neon Bending Bootcamp" at Brooklyn Glass, in Brooklyn.

I soon realized that bending hot, thin glass tubing was **very difficult** and wondered if I could master this skill. The classes were small and the instructors were very patient, explaining that practicing the simple bending techniques, over and over again, was the key. Even with my experience operating a variety of power tools, bending hot glass tubing relies on a different skill set, using timing and muscle memory.



Eventually I was able to perform simple bends without burning my fingers and melting the glass. Learning the process of bending my own neon unit has given me a new perspective on creating neon sculptures. Brooklyn Glass is not offering class due to Covid restrictions, but hopefully they will have classes in 2021. If you are interested in neon bending or glass blowing, check out their website; <https://brooklynglass.com>

P.S. We Love Our Members Grant



In light of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the artist community, in April 2020 Philadelphia Sculptors (PS) created a new virtual opportunity, *P.S. We Love Our Members*, to help meet the needs of our members and provide additional visibility for their artwork.

Fellow PS members Jacintha Clark and Christine McDonald created this program and conducted video interviews with the recipients. Each artist had a weekly feature on the PS website and on the PS [Instagram](#) and [Facebook page](#).

See interviews with grant recipients Julia Levitina, Hanna Vogel, Caitlin McCormack, Matthew Courtney, Kaitlin Pomerantz, Taylor Pilote, Kristen Neville Taylor, Miguel Horn, Alexander Rosenberg, Virginia Maksymowicz and Lucia Garzón.

[P.S. We Love Our Members Grant — Philadelphia Sculptors \(philasculptors.org\)](https://philasculptors.org)

MEMBER NEWS

(continued)

John Parker's sculpture was included in the *Salisbury Sculpture Show*, Salisbury SC; *The 15th Annual Sculpture on Ford Road*, Canton, MI; *Art 55 in the Open City Springs Art Walk*, City Green, Sandy Springs, GA; *Danville Art Trail*, Danville, VA; *Moross Greenway*, Detroit, MI; and *Sculpture in the Glen II*, Gladwyne, PA.



John Parker
Archaeopteryx

Libbie Soffer's work is in the *Chester County Art Association Duo Virtual Exhibit*, along with her husband, Alan. [Alan & Libbie Duo Show - Google Slides](#)




Libbie Soffer
Unemployment Line

Simone Spicer's work was included in *Subversion*, at The Da Vinci Art Alliance, Philadelphia, PA. Two of her sculptures were in *FEMA: Fear Environmental Mayhem Ahead*, The Icebox at Crane Arts Building, Philadelphia, PA, Oct. 31 to Nov. 8, 2020. She was invited to create the installation *Galactic Plastic* for the Philadelphia International Airport, to be installed March 2021.



Simone Spicer
Galactic Plastic (detail)



#LETTERS 

In response to our quarantine times, last April Jacintha Clark and Christine McDonald invited members to "Write a letter from your 'studio' or the space you perform artistry via photograph, drawings, letters, videos, poems etc." From Reading, to South Philly, to Saint-Ouen, France, artists shared their creativity – or lack thereof – and images, which were posted on Instagram, FB, and the PS website. [Stories • Instagram](#)

FEMA: Fear Environmental Mayhem Ahead

by S.O.S Freelance Art Reviews.

An exhibition mounted at the IceBox Project Space in the Crane Arts Building in Philadelphia, ran from Oct. 31 to Nov. 8, 2020, to coincide with our presidential election. If you were lucky enough to see the show, you encountered an enormous, flooded gallery space and the work of 11 regional artists in a synergistic blend of highly varied artistic styles, held together thematically and screaming in unison, the urgent message that we need to act now on matters of climate change, or find ourselves in a struggle to survive an inhospitable world.

The acronym F.E.M.A, headlines on the Exhibition's website, fematrocities.com repeatedly changing what the letters stand for. *Fear Mayhem Ahead...Federal Enablers Masking the Apocalypse...Fools Expecting Miracles from Above...Fraudulent Experts Missing Accreditation...etc.* The list is long, and cleverly drives home the multitude of angles we can choose to position our attack on climate change from. All of them squarely pointing blame at Corporate America and its tightening grip on our democracy. Yet somehow, in the chill of the topic, warmth and optimism presided at this exhibition.



We were given white rubber boots at the door and the opportunity to press our reset buttons, cool down from the heat of the previous week's social unrest and the present week's presidential election, and to wade through the eight inches of water that the FEMA TEAM had boldly let loose in the 3300 square ft. gallery space.

In order to make this flooding possible, the floor and one foot up the wall had been covered in white rubber roofing material. Then 10,000 gallons were pumped in. It didn't leak. The huge white windowless room, with its 20 ft. ceiling and new white floor and reflective pool, set the stage for an experiential wonderland where large and powerful works of art glistened under gallery lighting and were reflected in the water, giving the already enormous space, a breathlessness. Entering the room, I was reminded of Matisse's series of paintings of his studio where delineations of wall and floor dissolve in favor of the contents of the room, and colorful objects seem to dance in a timeless space without gravity.



Two 8 ft. tall oil paintings by Johnny Everyman anchored the room in technically masterful contemporary surrealism, depicting scenes of the rich and powerful bearing down on average Americans. In high drama and exaggerated linear perspective, these paintings fully capture terrifying strength and muscle, while also portraying with great delicacy the intimate and silenced voices of the masses. The contrast of the forces so strong, it tickled my funny bone.

Overhead in the center of the gallery hung 2 colossal maps of the Philadelphia area painted on sheer fabric and rendering a bleak future of flooded out local neighborhoods; an accurate scientific projection of what will come in just 15 years if we do nothing. Another large map on the wall with a 15-year projection of flooding in our area was accompanied by a roll of red dot stickers which we added to the map, marking the location of our homes. It was surprising to see how many were in flood

zones. A computer at the entrance to the exhibition was available for viewers to see the *FloodFactor* website and type in the location of homes and learn when they will be underwater. In the gallery, images of displacement loomed in the form of pup tents erected on makeshift rafts floating about and contained items like a hot plate running off a car battery, sleeping bags, a cooler. Haunting, yet I wanted to climb in, float, and maybe take a snooze.

Audience participation was part of FEMA's plan; there were at least 30 single use clear plastic bottles floating around the gallery with handwritten messages in them. At the door was a station with paper and pens and bottles, caps and hand sanitizer, and a poster titled 'Message In a Bottle', outlining what every kid knows... that sending or receiving a message in a bottle is a big deal, and we were welcome to send and receive messages. It was a beautifully accurate way to bring personal connection and wishes for the future to this exhibition. A sense of privacy and respect for the individual that our voting system of 'casting' a ballot traditionally has had was present in the writing and casting of the messages.



Virocode's pigmented inkjet print on canvas titled, *Invasive Species*, is a work at once comical and foreboding. The image here is of a young person, judging by the legs, the only part of the body visible, lying on the side of a road and half covered by kudzu vines that blanket a softly lit landscape of kudzu covered trees and phone lines. It has the air of a 19th century painting in the Romantic style, with the hazy trees in the distance and the figure having fled the here and now and gone into nature.

Another article of humor and distress is Simone Spicer's motorized fountain titled, *Life Support System for a Collapsed Economy*. It is a colorful combination of plastic containers spouting water in all directions from inside a shopping cart that appears to have been hit hard by a bus or dropped from a ten-story building. Placed in the center of the watery gallery, this work brought a magnificent sound element to the exhibition.



Marcia Annenberg, an artist working in NYC, presented a work titled, *Hush my Kush*, a mixed media wall installation that literally pulls back the veil on under reported events. She employs news clippings printed on fabric assembled as quilted squares in repeated pattern. She has been focusing on the unreported stories in American media since 9/11. Annenberg says there is currently, "a war on science not seen since the inquisition of Galileo."

Michele Brody, a multidisciplinary artist working in the Bronx, exhibited cast handmade paper maps of the US titled, *Blue and Red*, colored in accordance with the Electoral College in our last two presidential elections. Wheat grass roots are visible where seeds have sprouted along state borders. The artist takes note of the stark contrast and great divide in our nation between Red and Blue, while reminding us of the persistence of life and nature's disregard for borders.



Leslie Kaufman presented playful sculptures from her series titled, *Safe Haven*, holding worlds contained in small suitcases, prophesying a future where cultures blend, life prevails, and water is everywhere. They were keenly displayed on white plastic 50-gallon drums. Leah Harper's installation *Rooted* turned plastic pollution in water into a hybrid nature might accept with her bicycle tire tubes sprouting from the water, waving in the flow, and climbing up the wall.

In *High Tide*, Harper installed ceramic barnacles on one wall of the gallery, reminding us of the tenacity of life and of its mysteries. Isaac Roller's large and intricate watercolors embody the enthusiasm and caricature quality of Red Grooms with their lightheartedness and cacophonous compositions, but Roller's are worlds careening toward disaster.

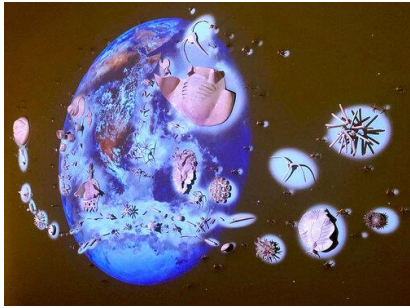
I met up with some friends at the exhibition. We stood in the water, six feet apart, talking through our masks and barely able to hear each other in the echoey space. We laughed at the absurdity of our white boots and the flooded gallery and our inability to read lips. We shared in our dismay that maybe Trump would win the election that we all thought would be a slam dunk for the Democratic party. We were happy to be out of our houses. Happy to be among friends. Happy for the neutralizing effect that water has on us. Happy to stand in an environment that doubled as a call to action as a safe celebratory space. Though the exhibition was warning us of pending disaster and the potential loss of our homes in the future, it was posed to us less as a dark and watery, scary place where things would be lost, but as a sports arena, an Olympic size pool, a basketball court, a place where excitement for the challenge might take place and we were there to celebrate, as fans, these artists whose dedication and skill deserve the same attention the athlete gets. Hooray!! Artists of our time!!



[FEMA: Federal Enablers Masking the Apocalypse | FEMAtrocities](#)



**MICHENER
ART
MUSEUM
TRIFECTA**



Marguerita Hagan



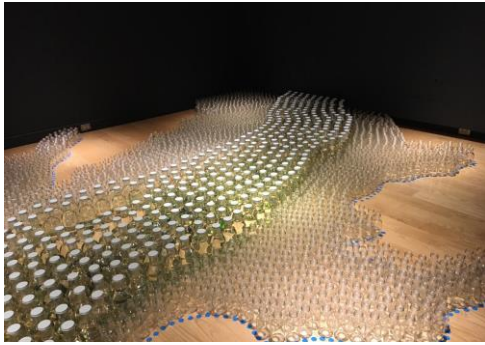
Syd Carpenter

The three current exhibitions at the Michener Art Museum are all curated by Laura Turner Igoe, Ph.D., Curator of American Art. And each one is a winner.

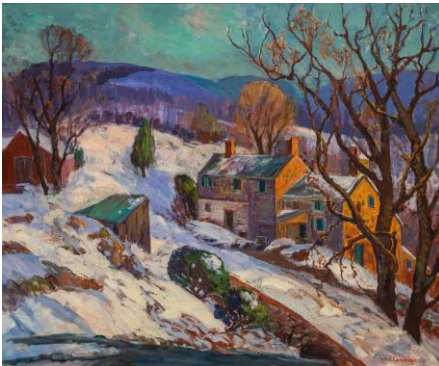
In the Beans Gallery is the solo show [Syd Carpenter: Portraits of Our Places](#). Her eleven large clay sculptures were created as portraits of the African American gardens and farms she visited in Georgia, South Carolina, and the Gullah Islands. These beautifully crafted 3-D collages are an assortment of imagery that evoke memory, history, and a deep respect for the farmers and their land. September 12, 2020 - April 18, 2021

You will likely hear [Rising Tides: Contemporary Art and the Ecology of Water – James A. Michener Art Museum](#) before entering the gallery. Marguerita Hagan's *Rising Up* calls to you with whale song and other sea sounds while moving lights highlight this massive and mesmerizing wall installation. Stacy Levy's *Collected Watershed* installation is not only visually captivating but drives home the need to protect our waterways. The other *Rising Tides* artists are and Emily Brown, Diane Burko, Janet Filomeno, Pat Martin, and Paula Winokur. Hurry to see this as it ends January 10, 2021.

Admirers of the Pennsylvania Impressionists will be happy to see [Fern Coppedge: New Discoveries](#) in the Pfundt Gallery. These four paintings are recent acquisitions of Coppedge's colorful winter landscapes. To quote her, "People used to think me queer when I was a little girl because I saw deep purples and reds and violets in a field of snow. I used to be hurt over it until I gave up trying to understand people and concentrated on my love and understanding of landscapes. Then it didn't make any difference." September 12, 2020 - April 18, 2021



Stacy Levy



Fern Coppedge

Philadelphia Sculptors *Artist Spotlight Series*

We are excited to continue our Artist Spotlight Series on Instagram - featuring images, updates & exhibition information of sculptors in the Philadelphia region! Follow us [@Philasculptors](#) and if you are a sculptor and wanted to be featured as part of our Artist Spotlight Series you can either e-mail us images and info at philasculptorsinstagram@gmail.com or post your work on Instagram and tag [@philasculptors](#) and DM us. Philadelphia Sculptor's mission is to promote contemporary sculpture and find opportunities for artists in the Philadelphia region. #philasculptors

HOLLOGRAMS/Satire for the Cynical

by Holly Smith

HEAD HARPIES

Imagine my shock upon learning I have not one, but TWO amygdalae. No wonder I've felt so extraordinarily emotional this past year. You'd think I'd be pretty relaxed considering I no longer had to commute to my job or lug my paycheck to the bank every week. Whew!

I must admit that, even with the Covid shutdown, it was a fairly nice summer. There was much more time to work in the studio, read a few of the five-foot-high pile of New Yorkers, attack the fecundity of the lawn, pester my cats, and *swim*. The universe has blessed me with two neighborhood pools in which I am always welcome. Like cooling towers for each amygdala, there were many days I jumped into both of them, which prompted a friend to teasingly call me a "pool whore". I considered this a step up from the "potato chip and pinot grigio whore" I'd been since mid-March.

Yet all this pleasantness and extra time didn't seem to bring down the level of my anxiety much. I guess having people in the grocery store get close enough to see if I'd plucked my eyebrows (no) before hacking up a phlegm ball didn't help.

And then there was something about a nail-biting election, which didn't help either.

Or witnessing a black man murdered in front of our eyes while crying for his mother. Or seeing children taken from their parents when seeking legal asylum. Or watching peaceful protestors tear-gassed while the seeds of Fascism sprouted and took root. Or the food bank lines growing longer and longer. Or the daily barrage of propaganda, fearmongering, and lies. All of these gave my amygdalae a good workout.

But the apex of anxiety production was the constant backdrop of Covid illness and death. If we ever needed an example of human fallacy, equating the wearing of a mask with the loss of freedom is a good one. Will such folks allow their surgeons the same freedom if they find themselves in the operating room? The freedom I'm interested in is not having to be intubated by a first-year dermatology resident.

Call me crazy, but I have this fear of gasping for breath and suffocating to death. However, my brain has eased up on the melodrama knowing the vaccines are on their way, and #45 is on the way out. When my turn comes I'd like a syringe of the Pfizer vaccine straight into my right amygdala and the Moderna into the left. *Just kidding....* (That must have been my amygdalae talking.) If it were possible, what would be really spectacular is an injection of plain old peace and quiet. We could all use a big shot of that.

Member Benefits

Here are just a few of the PS member benefits:

Free Page in the Online PS Member Gallery!

Take advantage of this great opportunity to showcase your work and let curators and clients find you. **PS Members have received commissions because their art was on our web site!**

Eligibility - all current PS members are eligible to get their own page in our Member Gallery. To make sure your dues are current, check with Membership Chair Joan Menapace at louella.stella@gmail.com

Check out our simple instructions to get your work on our site at: <https://philasculptors.org/member-gallery#member-gallery-submissions>

Discounted Membership to International Sculpture Center

When you join or renew your ISC membership (www.sculpture.org), under Member/ Profile, scroll down to "Sculpture Groups" and check "Philadelphia Sculptors" to get your \$15 discount.

Contact Us

[About — Philadelphia Sculptors \(philasculptors.org\)](http://philasculptors.org)

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Please keep your contact information current; send any changes to Joan Menapace.

ISC Membership Discount

Go to [International Sculpture Center Member Benefits](#) and check the "Philadelphia Sculptors" box under "Affiliated Sculpture Group List" to get \$15 off the basic membership rate.