



art
with
elders

Some Exciting News to Share

Art With Elders uses the power of art, creativity, and community to enrich the journey of aging.



Our Voices

Irene "Irish" Higgins

A Message from the Executive Director

Hello beloved friends and family of Art With Elders,

Transitioning to a new Spring and emerging hopefully from our long restrictive hibernation for the moment, let's celebrate fresh opportunities now unfolding before us. Sure, we have recently witnessed similar hope and promise arise, only to see them dashed as new challenges have arisen. Something feels different now, though, whether it's born of real progress or resignation that we will make the best of whatever new obstacles or frustrations may come our way.

Isn't that at the very heart of creativity, really, to take the unexpected in whatever form it manifests, and feel confident in our capacity to transform it into something that works better for us and our community? One essential requirement to maintain this creative confidence is to invite, embrace, and celebrate diversity. If we fall

into habits of exclusion, we falter by not seeing the full portfolio of possibilities each situation presents and thus bring an incomplete set of tools to every endeavor.

Since our last newsletter, our board and staff have been focused on creating a long-term business plan that will lay the tracks for AWE to continue our good work and expand our mission well into the future. As we are now preparing to reify this plan, it's a blessing that we can work in the context of Black History Month. Social justice runs deeply in our organization's lifeblood, and with our new plan we are codifying this institutional faith in the power of inclusion.

While our primary focus remains on the reintegration of elders within our wider community, we appreciate that within the group of people disenfranchised by age are a panoply of others who are even more isolated for a wide variety of other unjustifiable reasons. We will continue to actively seek out these most disenfranchised folks and reconnect them to our wider community through creativity.

I want to thank you all for your support of our program now and over the years and make sure you understand that each of you represents a uniquely beautiful brushstroke, without which the masterpiece that is AWE would be regrettably incomplete.

'Diversity is being invited to the party, inclusion is being asked to dance' - Verna Myers



Gratefully,

Mark Campbell
Executive Director

Exhibit News

Current



Cover art: *"Mother"* by Walter Jordan III
Photo insets: Walter Jordan III, Geraldine McGowan, Carl Stokes, and Orin Solace

Courageous Creativity
Online Exhibit
February 23, 2022 - December 31, 2022

Art With Elders Celebrates Black History with this special exhibit honoring African American Artists. The exhibit spotlights the creativity of African American artists within the AWE program. Laguna Honda Hospital artists are featured along with participants from several other San Francisco Bay Area communities.

The exhibit can be viewed in our [Online Exhibits Gallery](#).

Work from the exhibit by Laguna Honda residents is also on display on the first floor at Laguna Honda Hospital, but public access to Laguna Honda remains restricted due to precautions related to COVID-19.



SAN FRANCISCO
WOMEN ARTISTS

Art With Elders at San Francisco Women Artists



Cover art: A *"Mystifying Walk in Central Park"* by Bess Meek of The Reutlinger Community and *"Messed"* by Nina Ng of Aspen Transitional Healthcare Pacific Heights

AWE at San Francisco Women Artists Gallery
647 Irving Street at 8th Ave., San Francisco, CA 94122
Open 10:30 AM to 5:30 PM, Tuesday through Saturday
Exhibit runs Tues. Jan. 11 – Fri. Mar. 4, 2022

This inspiring exhibit, featuring women of AWE and their artwork, is also viewable online in our [Online Exhibits Gallery](#)



AWE Board of Trustees President, Dan Rosen, enjoys the San Francisco Women Artists exhibit opening with our supporters from Inner Sunset Community Advocates.

Past Events



Cover art: *"Castro Collage"* by Keith Baillie of Openhouse
 Photo insets: Openhouse artists Robert Leone, Kim Ringle, Kered Whitcraft, Keith Baillie, Lourdes Pollard, and LA Campos "Luis" de la Garza

A Visual Story Through Self

Spike's Coffee House, 4117 19th St., San Francisco, CA 94114

This exhibit ran from January 4th to February 1st, but is still viewable in our [Online Exhibit Gallery](#).

Artists from the AWE programs at Openhouse Bob Ross LGBTQ Senior Center and Crescent Park exhibited at Spike's Coffee and Teas (Jan. 4 through Tues. Feb. 1, 2022). The exhibit can be viewed in the AWE Online Exhibits Gallery: www.artwithelders.org/online-exhibits

This exhibit, *"A Visual Story Through Self,"* features art and artists from the AWE program at the Openhouse Bob Ross LGBTQ Senior Center and Crescent Park. Openhouse works to center the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ older adults by providing opportunities to make social connections and build community. These artists encompass the dynamic diversity that enriches San Francisco. Their artworks were made in community art classes with Art With Elders. AWE uses technology and art to bridge the isolating divide of the ever-changing circumstances of the pandemic. This show represents a rich tapestry of varied perspectives woven together through the dynamic language of visual art. These artists' visual stories remind us that connection is an ongoing creative process that results in an ever-evolving community.

Student Artist Spotlight

Irene "Irish" Higgins **On Lok Lifeways Gee Center**

All her friends call her Irish, and she's led an interesting life. A multi-talented performer, she led a blues band (Spoonful of Blues) in San Francisco, composing

some of the songs, playing bass, and singing lead. She has worked with a small local theater group (Ninjaz of Drama) behind the scenes and in performance. With a Mission district crew (A Waking Dream), she constructed fantastical costuming and participated in the local Carnival and Pride parades, as well as Unity celebrations.

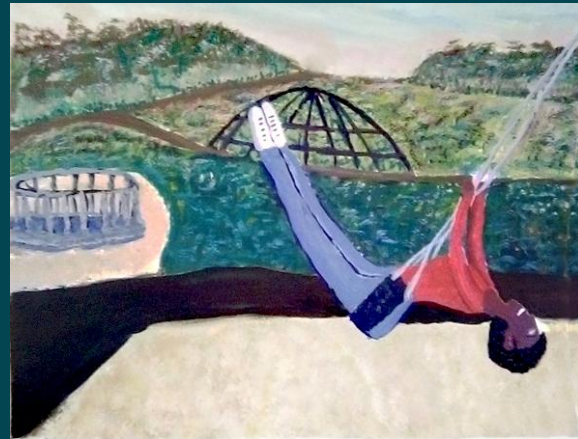
Irish has been dealing with injury issues which have dogged her for years. Though she's had to undergo surgery in 2015 and 2017 with another coming up, she is working on healing what she can through physical therapy, aquatic physical Therapy, and Pilates.

She came to On Lok through a CCSF Older Adult Program art class and continues along the creative path there experimenting with water colors, acrylics, and gouache paints as well as at the San Francisco Senior Center working with oil paints and ceramics.



The Artist's Mind

Irene "Irish" Higgins



The Swing

Irene "Irish" Higgins

Crane by the Shore

Irene "Irish" Higgins





Untitled

Irene "Irish" Higgins

Welcoming our Newest Artist Instructors



Stephanie Vlahov

Stephanie has always engaged in drawing, painting, and photography. As a kid, she used to sell homemade coloring books to her friends for ice cream money. "One must enjoy life!" she says.

Stephanie, a native Californian intent on making a career in Creative Arts Therapy, earned her M.S. in Psychology and Theatre Arts. Over the years she has taught and been a perpetual student. She relishes the idea of continual learning. Additionally, she published a book, *The Active, Creative Child: Parenting In Perpetual Motion*, in 2005 (Hohm Press) on the importance of creativity as an outlet for children.

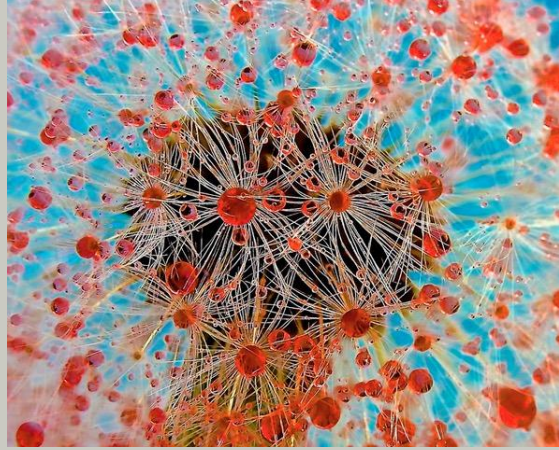
Instagram:

www.instagram.com/gemcreate



Bianca

Stephanie Vlahov



Untitled

Stephanie Vlahov

Dulama LeGrande

Dulama LeGrande is a visual artist born and reared in the Bay Area with a current studio practice in Oakland. He has been making art with professional intent for the past eighteen years and taught art for a total of thirteen consecutive years in the East Bay and San Francisco. When not in his studio, Dulama can be found attaining art lessons from the streets, nature, and life itself.

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/dulamalegrande



Untitled

Dulama LeGrande



Untitled

Dulama LeGrande



Keesje Fischer

Inspired by teaching and facilitating art-making, artist Keesje Fischer has worked with artists as young as 2 and as old as 105 in community organizations, schools, and private lessons. She is currently thrilled to be working with Arts with Elders and The Hummingbird Project in the San Francisco Bay Area. Her community projects have included serving as an artist-in-residence at the New York Presbyterian Hospital in New York City and at Snavelenburg nursing home in Utrecht, The Netherlands, and working with children and adults to paint murals in Oakland, Amsterdam, and New York City.

She has received grants from Northern Manhattan Arts Alliance and from the San Francisco Arts Commission for public art pieces. A graduate of Utrecht School of Arts, Keesje enjoys the surprises in the process of monotype and the challenges in making her distinctive marks in drawing and painting. Keesje's exhibition sites include Hotel Amsterdam, Barrow Theater (NYC), Danica Gallery in St. Croix, and Minna Street Gallery (SF).

Instagram:

www.instagram.com/fishwitzstudio



Oma, Light Blue

Keesje Fischer
Acrylic on Canvas



Megan Majestic

A Bay Area native, Megan lives and makes art in Oakland and spends as much time as she can exploring the Sierra foothills.

Her grandfather, a lifelong printer of California wildflowers, was a big influence on her artistic sensibilities. She grew up surrounded by his distinctive prints, and is currently learning about the fantastic flora of her home state while creating her own vibrant collection of California Natives. Urban walks and hikes in the mountains provide plenty of inspiration, which Megan interprets into unique illustrations. With a focus on line-work and color, she seeks to highlight both the whimsy and elegance of her subjects.

Megan enjoys many mediums, including watercolor, colored pencil, and pen-and-ink. She also loves to collage, create vision boards of inspiration, and capture thoughts in a daily art journal. When not outside noticing potential details to draw, she is likely encouraging others to tap into their creativity.

Website:

www.meganmajestic.com



"Wild Rose"

From "100 Days of Majestic California Natives"

Megan Majestic

Watercolor and ink on paper



"Mahalo, Universe!"

From "100 Days of Majestic Collage"

Megan Majestic

Recycled paper materials, glue.

Please help if you can



AWE Artist Instructors: Santiago Gervasi and Veronica Rojas

Friends and Family of AWE,

I was saddened to learn that Veronica has recently fallen seriously ill with cancer and has needed intensive medical care at Stanford Medical Center. Thank goodness her prognosis is good, and she is expected to eventually make a complete recovery. However, this will require a litany of continued procedures (surgery and reconstruction, radiation therapy, recovery therapy, many doctor visits), and complex medical care lasting at least 6 months.

This medical ordeal comes together with a huge medical bill. Veronica's out of pocket

expense alone for her treatment at Stanford will be \$8,000. Veronica will also have many other expenses such as buying medical supplies not covered by her insurance, traveling to Palo Alto, as well as a diminished income while she is on disability. All this, and the current ubiquitous challenges accompanying COVID, have inspired me to want to help Santiago and Veronica get through this very tough period.

If you as well feel so inspired, please join me, and make a donation so that these two amazing humans can get through this difficult challenge as quickly and painlessly as possible and can get back to doing the good work that continues to improve our community and inspire us!

Click here to make a donation:

[Go Fund Me - Veronica and Santiago](#)

Thank you!

Mark Campbell



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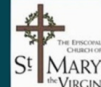
Click the link below to find out how to sign up for AmazonSmile.

www.aboutamazon.com/news/community/how-to-sign-up-for-amazon-smile

Thank you to our Donors!

Art With Elders appreciates all of our supporters. Together we are truly changing the lives of hundreds of Bay Area seniors. We strive to open hearts and minds to new worlds, new discoveries, new joys, and subsequently, fresh meaning in life.

Thanks again to all of our donors for making this work possible!



AWE Staff and Artist Instructors

Left to right: Darcie O'Brien, Mei Mei Everson, Insio Che, Virginia Jourdan, Yvette Brown, Santiago Gervasi, Veronica Rojas, Betty Rothaus, Dmitry Grudsky, Min Lee, Mark Campbell, and Sarah Dwyer. (not pictured - Zoe Hall, Hugh Leeman, Emily Kuenstler, Stephanie Vlahov, Dulama LeGrande, Keesje Fischer, Megan Majestic, and Jason Varner)



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