

Journey Artist Statements

FRANCESCA AZZARA

Leaving Certainty Behind

As traditional values shift and morph in the new millennium, an unfamiliar social landscape is emerging. While my work continues to be rooted in the landscape, this narrative series examines the concept of being confronted with a new public terrain. The woman walking through my imagined landscapes encounters obstacles set in her path. These obstacles create the perception of foreboding and menacing threats. This is a metaphor for the collective psyche of many who fear change and the unknown. Visually, the match sticks and scorched paper help to establish this unfounded reality. Illusion creates perception...perception creates reality. There is nothing to fear but fear itself.

KATHLEEN BEAUSOLEIL

Flash Mob

My work, primarily oil on canvas or panel, explores human social interaction and the territorial behaviors that operate in crowds. Following in the tradition of social realism my suburban series captures the crowds I encounter in my life, on my journey as an artist and mother in Monmouth County, being on the sidelines watching at a swim meet, ski hill, or PNC Art Center. What fascinates me is how people organize. Often it is the spaces between people that define their relationships. One observation my work shows is that social distancing in pods existed prior to the pandemic. This provides me comfort as I move forward and try to make sense of the pandemic. We like to think of ourselves as having conspicuously unique personalities. Yet, if we take a closer look, it's pretty clear that we are deeply social pack animals, biologically programmed for social interaction, and territorial behavior. There is a sense of liberty in anonymity, a safety in getting lost in the crowd. How people behave in public is very telling about the culture they live in. Observing these groups can help give us a better understanding of our place in our culture. Even our individual expressions only appear acceptable or distasteful within the context of a larger community of organized and accepted social norms. I find it important to observe how and with whom people interact. My personal observation is that people need other people, their own people, to be happy, accepted, and fulfilled. We also need other people to project our grievances and, at times, rally around a common enemy. It is a sense of belonging that people seek both in our microcosmic home lives and within our macrocosmic social lives.

SHAY BLUM

Resolute

The subject of my painting is on a journey not traveled by many although emotionally his journey is like my own journey as an artist. Every painting I create comes with a struggle to achieve my very best, to be accepted by my peers and to feel some satisfaction with a job well-done. The subject of my painting lost his father who was his mentor and best friend when he was a young man. His ability to carry forward his father's business, legacy and devotion to racing

is due to his strong character. I attempted to capture his determination in my depiction of him and that is why the painting is named "Resolute."

PHILIP BOOK

A New Direction

My piece reflects my recent journey into figurative art. This piece is an oil painting I did from my own photograph. The figures in the painting are sorting out their own differences and the one is considering a major change turning away from his beloved.

MARIA CHAMRA

Louvre

Journey can mean many different things. Our lives are a journey. One of the most influential journeys I've embarked on was my trip to Paris while I was studying at Brookdale. It was unreal to be able to see all of the famous pieces of art work that had inspired me throughout my whole life up close. I felt one with the artists of the past as I was engulfed in the Parisian lifestyle. It was a raw and emotional experience. I created this miniature painting based on 35 mm photographs I took on my trip to Paris.

JUSTIN DEMATTICO

Jellyfish Dreams

This work is about acceptance. Accepting those different than yourself, those with different views, understanding that everyone has a unique perspective. Through this work, I create worlds in which everyone is accepted - on my road to acceptance as well.

DAWN DICICCO

The Warmth of the Sun

As a child I was always drawing; I lived half in the real world and half in a world of my own creation. It was filled with animals and flowers and scenes of nature and I wanted so desperately to be able to perfect all of it. I majored in art in college and I worked as a graphic designer before my husband and I started our family. The day I left on maternity leave, however, was the day my office got a computer. Being technologically left out in the cold, I became a stay-at-home mom and my Created World became one of dioramas, puppets, classroom murals, and homemade Halloween costumes. But I was left out in the cold again when my girls went off to high school and college; I again found solace in my World. Then my whole life changed – I took a class in abstract painting. What a revelation! After living in a world of the literal and striving always for utter perfection I was no longer a prisoner to perspective. There were no rules (except don't use too many colors or you'll get mud) and so I dove in. My work became organic; intuitive; bold – I felt free. Over time I began incorporating collage, using a more limited palette, and experimenting with different tools and techniques. Lately, my work has become quieter, softer – I can't wait to see what comes next!

KATE EGGLESTON

Motley Greek Chorus

This work is a tribute to finding humor and light amidst chaos. It reflects my joyful moments and high anxieties as a mother, wife, teacher, and artist while struggling to maintain my sense of self during the pandemic. The repetitive stitch-like marks are encapsulated by playfully hued, amorphous mounds. These whimsical forms resemble earthen protrusions, the female bosom, patient vessels, and myself.

ARTHUR FAMA

My Friend Richard

I have always been intrigued by the notion that although we share the common thread of humanity, how we experience human existence varies significantly based on life circumstances. I am captivated by the way individual experience is reflected through expression, gesture, movement and personal interaction. These observations are what drive my art. In my painting I seek to capture the immediacy of the moment in a way that invites the viewer to an intimate experience with the subject. The expression of the form conveys the feeling of the moment, which triggers an emotional response from the viewer. That response, in turn, is informed by the viewer's own personal perceptions, beliefs and preferences. For me, this relationship is what brings art to life and life to art.

LISA FICARELLI-HALPERN

The Garden, after Bosch

The Garden, after Bosch began as a rollicking homage to the "Garden of Earthly Delights," by Hieronymus Bosch. The work began in late 2019 and my initial intent was to re-contextualize Bosch's original work by describing an ornate and whimsical world where technology and trends rule supreme. As its primary motif, I envisioned a ribbon and USB connection as an irreverent center of this world. However, as I continued to develop the piece during and throughout pandemic lockdown of 2020, its imagery and symbolic significance shifted as I experienced and observed how technology became a true lifeline for humankind. This artwork, which is both a drawing and a painting, describes a pastoral and serene natural environment, unaffected by COVID-19, with a superimposed layer of chaotic performative and reactive human figures. I believe this work has led me to a new trajectory of expression, using more immediate, water-based materials rather than oil paint, which is typically my medium. It has helped me re-discover drawing as part of my studio practice.

EMILY GILMAN BEEZLEY

Roadside Glory III

One of my favorite themes to explore is the 'Road less Traveled' which I liken to my journey as an artist evolving from photorealistic portraits to representational abstracts. My mixed media works on paper reflect this evolution. As an artist the journey really is as important as the

destination or as Martin Buber stated: "All journeys have secret destinations of which the traveler is unaware".

GWYNNETH GREEN

steppingstones

My photos are reconstructed to create a captivating visual that allows expression of the underlying feeling, including the addition of my poetry in the form of haikus, 6-word poems or short poetic flows. These words are subtly melded into the photo allowing the viewer a moment of discovery when the narrative reveals itself. All the photo/musings are printed on metallic paper adding another depth of uniqueness.

GARY STEVEN GROVES

Pyramid 3

I have a minimal approach to painting. I use the surface, color, shapes, symbols and the use of geometry to express the mysteries of the natural world, it's environment, the science and the physics. As an example, anyone familiar with the physics experiment "the double slit experiment" has been a mystery in physics for years with various interpretations about the nature of reality as a wave or particle on a micro scale without any definitive conclusions. This fascinates me and is the subject of a few of my works titled as such. The world is a mystery and there are many symbols of this mystery to be found. An example are the pyramids of Egypt with debates about their history and how they were constructed, and today, still no solid conclusions. Also, water as a subject in some of my paintings which may be rare in the Universe and so integral to our survival and how we manage it. It can symbolize are existence. If we choose to investigate the possibilities in science and expand our horizons we can further celebrate and share the experiences in Art. In my case share the joy with painting. I have many interests and want to explore these interests in my work with ideas, concepts, thought and with determination. I want to share my fascination with the mysteries of the universe and explore the foundations that science and history can teach us about the nature of our world.

ANNETTE JULIANO

My Dream Journey

My journey as an artist has not been easy for I'm deaf and depend solely on lip reading which created a barrier to learning in the classroom. I speak well due to my mother persistence in making me take years of speech therapy. However, this caused my teachers to be confused as to how well I understood what was going on. Having a loss of hearing is an unseen disability. Some teachers were cruel and I have spent days crying over my humiliation. I spent many days so frustrated at not knowing what's going on when the teacher gave a demo and spoke about art. I learned from reading, doing research and studying anatomy. I learned from watching other artis paint and trying to figure out what they were doing. My love and fascination for art kept me going. *My Dream Journey* was created after one day sitting on the beach, I was dreaming of Venice and three women came and blocked my view of the sea. This gave me the idea to paint those women with one being an artist painting a mural of the "Grand Canal" in Venice. I believe

I have come a long way since I first started painting. I'm still learning and I will continue to learn till I turn to dust.

JILL KERWICK

Leaving Home Again

My favorite stories are often about journeys, a memorable book for me is *Watership Down*. My artworks deal with me and my animals and how my life is always on the move.

SYLVIA KEUSCH

Denali, Alaska

Sylvia Keusch's interest in art surfaced while vacationing two months at a golf club in Sarasota, Florida, when asked to attend a watercolor painting class. She has always desired to paint as she has a creative talent which is her vehicle of self-expression and enjoys painting florals which are one of the many subjects that she is spellbound by the myriad of forms, colors and textures and is challenged to recreate the illusion of their dimensionality by the use of acrylic paint. Her creative talent helps to bring out color tone, sensitivity and mood that one is looking to express on their canvas. She attended classes and workshops at Mercer College, where she found acrylic medium to be the most satisfying expression in painting. The Plein aire landscape class experience with artists at Art Council of Princeton focused on composition and atmosphere. Her painting interests cover a wide spectrum of subjects such as landscapes, lakes, woodlands and still life.

Mary L Klawetter

Ancestors 1

This piece is made with wool and silk. The three pictures show the everyday journeys and the end journey.

Louise Krasniewicz

The Ride Home

As we age, some of us look backwards to trace the events in our lives that got us to the point where we are. My first entry depicts one of those journeys. To my surprise, this story of a lost childhood toy has been part of my adventures for years as I tracked down the one element needed to visualize and share this story. In addition to an enlarged and quilted photograph of the lost toy, the work contains wild west fabric from curtains I created while living in Santa Fe (the closest I ever got to cowgirl country). The story quilt is framed by red fabric from a costume I created for a musical, a reminder of the fantasy worlds we share on our journeys to create meaning.

KATH KRISINSKI

Holland Tunnel Night Before Lockdown

This photograph was taken just before lockdown and the world changing.

BART LENTINI

Solitude

This images gives a glimpse into the eyes of an explorer, an individual watching the world change on a journey from paved roads of great cities to forgotten structures reclaimed by time. This structure reflects the fragility of life and in turn, how society and its structures are transient. While much of the world is focused on the progress and the future of humanity, I choose to turn that attention on the futility of great achievements of the past. The physical manifestations of human success are always subject to the face of time. Those structures that society deems unimportant are then reclaimed by nature and are transformed. Through the years, I've explored multitudes of abandoned structures. The remnants of these places hint at their history. Angular lines of structure lead to breaks of natural sky and allude to the location's unique progression. They were once bustling with life and full of energy, but now stand as monuments of the progression of time. Each place is distinct but shares a sense of vapid abandonment. This harsh reality is enveloped in the subtle beauty of decay as sunlight cascades through the once artificially lit scenes. The scenery I capture sparks questions of what society values over time and why successes are often left to rot. Does this mean that these successes are all ultimately to become humanity's failures? This photograph reflects my view on society. Often these landscapes evoke questions of location, why it was neglected, and shame on the people that let it happen. We are reminded of the fragility of our creations and in turn, our own existence. People often want to know where these places are, but I want the viewer to ask why these places are. Looking at humanity and all its achievements as fleeting structures in the face of time makes me question: Why do we continue to build when there is so much forgotten? My unique experiences exploring over the past several years has amassed a collection of images from my adventures. I hope that viewers can reflect on this selection and be reminded of life's temporality and take comfort in nature's reclamation of humankind's neglect. While there may not be an answer or solution of what to do with these spaces or why they exist, my intent is to create a catalyst of questioning of their permeance and reason for existence.

AMY LEPPING

The Wind and the Waves Remember Him Still

I grew up on the water. I can spend hours watching water move by me, carrying things in and out of my view. It is where I go when I need to rest my thoughts. I lost my father last spring. I struggled with this loss because he was my go-to person in so many ways. He was a clinical psychologist who believed in the power of meditation and our ability to heal ourselves. He was also an artist who found all forms of art a way to process your thoughts and emotions. I started this painting thinking of the peace I feel watching leaves moving in water. I also enjoyed the

calm of my paintbrush moving on canvas. These are the same soothing feelings I would have when talking with my father. It was my journey through this difficult time. I found out later that there is a technique called “Leaves on a Stream” that helps people create distance from troubling thoughts and feelings as a way to reduce the power they have over us. The idea is that you can free yourself from unnecessary emotional suffering with your willingness to look at your thoughts in a new way. I think he would have loved the way psychology and art united on this piece.

COLLEEN LINEBERRY

Refraction

Journey Art making for me is an expression of spirit. While I sheltered in place and slowed the moments during the challenges of 2020 and 2021, I spent more time in the natural world and more time painting. I’m always inspired by renewal in the cycles of nature and how light brings out warmth and color in landscape. Nature and my internal landscapes offer solace and fuel my process, and, in turn, my work. I make paintings to honor both. My creative process is intuitive as I express the feeling of a moment or place by layering colors, shapes, and textures. It’s meditative, and once I begin painting, time disappears as I experience the stillness and strength of an inner guide, which has become a source of hope and resilience. These oil and cold wax paintings have emerged during my personal journey these past two years as I searched for light, both outside, along New Jersey beaches and North Carolina mountains, and inside myself, wherever I could find it. I wanted to explore the phenomenon of light-soaked color in nature and, also, the light within us as a fundamental life force. I’m excited to continue this work.

LAURA MANDILE

Healing

The biggest challenge I have ever faced in my life arose early in the pandemic, but it had little to do with COVID. I began having seizures and bradycardia, which resulted in a brain tumor diagnosis and two surgeries, all of which I endured alone in the hospital. Somehow, I finished the 2020 school year remotely, with lots of help, and began my long recovery. I have not returned to the classroom. If not for drawing and painting, I'm not sure I could have coped. Oddly, my creative abilities seem to have improved after brain surgery...I believe it relates to the right brain taking over for my damaged left brain. Whatever the case, I hope you enjoy my work.

KAREN MARTIN

Self Determination

Self Determination explores the moment of decision, to “step out” into the world, spiritually, emotionally, physically, and mentally. It’s a bold move to live life outside a comfort zone.

VANDANA NITTOOR

Being Witness

Working during the pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 has been a challenge. Apart from the constant anxiety inducing fear that I have lived with, enduring consistent losses of friends and

family, bearing witness to social upheavals that made me question my place in the world and significant changes to my own lifestyle made me doubt the relevance of my work and the value I bring to the world. The answers to my questions, the solutions to my doubts and my healing has come through painting. It is through my art that I have kept the story of my life and my experiences relevant.

LORI DESMOND OAKES

Path to Brooklyn

I have created canvases for a book called *The Dress Maker*, about an immigrant's journey

Mary Pardovich

Beauty in Decay

The world has been difficult lately and it's good to remind people to see the beauty behind the barriers. This photograph struck me as showing beauty shining through even though surrounded by fences, wires and decay.

Vaune Peck

Journey

I painted "Journey" at the beginning of a long arduous process of healing and soul searching with the help of Carol Vizer at the New Jersey Center for the Healing Arts in Red Bank, NJ. Utilizing group therapy one-on-one therapy, art therapy, psycho-drama and other amazing therapies I was able to leave a past of abuse behind and begin living the life I was meant to. My painting represents all the issues I had to address during the process. I had a black and white photo of a rock wall (metaphor) that I used to draw the shapes. I crumpled that up and went into the shapes with color. Its abstract and challenges people who see it. Somehow they think they are supposed to know what it means, or they start looking for animals or other things in it. Its not a Rorchack Test. Just take it in. You either you like it or you don't. It's that simple.

EILEEN PETRUCH

Soaring

As an artist, I feel like I am constantly on a journey to improve my skills, push my limits and experiment with different styles, media, and subject matter. Beginning as a primarily equestrian artist, I still enjoy painting nature but continued to study to include portraits to expand my skills. I believe the pieces I have submitted for this exhibit demonstrate both my journey as an artist and the real sense of going on a journey with various means of travel to explore our surroundings.

BILL PIERCE

Warning for Earth

The Portal Weather series is an ongoing meditation of what is beyond our immediate vision. It takes time to lay bricks and within that mediation is the journey of life sprinkled into each painting. Cities and towns across the world may have architectural similarities and differences, but what is behind each wall is unique to local cultures. This incarnation explores the renewal of ideas blended with life experiences going back into the world post lockdown.

STACEY PRITCHARD

American Holly

My work explores various archetypes and characters within my ongoing narrative work. The characters are inspired by folklore, history, and personal history.

CHETNA SINGH

Frontline

"Frontline" was painted last year at the height of COVID. As an ER physician, I sometimes felt like we were on the battlefield, battling an unknown enemy. This picture was painted after a particularly harrowing shift in the ER and depicts a frontline worker with the caduceus the symbol of medicine. (disclaimer: the rod of Aesculapius, with the single snake is the true symbol). Below is an accompanying poem that was written to go with the painting. Who saw this coming? The invisible invader from realms unknown, Marching through continent, Ravaging lives and souls. With Its intangible touch it composes, An orchestra of frenzy and fear, With notes of anger and ignorance, Conspiracy theories commence. A battle ground emerges, Picture a vent and a bed, A loved one struggling for breath, Or lying alone, dead. The soldiers, we stand guard, When the onslaught comes, we fight hard. The staff and the snake strike the veiled foe, striving to save just a few more. Will you remember this moment in time? Will it shift your paradigm? When we cared not what was yours or what was mine, As we fought for all in the frontline.

LOU STOREY

Nocturnal Voyage

Based on the mandala, a narrative captured within a circle, *Nocturnal Voyage* is both journey and life passages -- the boat representing the self-moving through life.

JUDI TAVILL

Sinu (Violet)

I observe and experience duality in nearly all relationships I find myself part of: internal, interpersonal, societal. This work is an extension of my current series titled "Entanglements" addressing an awareness of self and society. Humanity is inextricably connected biologically, environmentally, societally —forcing us to contend with the truth that if we cannot find a way to

"come together," we break apart. My visual abstraction is intended to reflect on these complexities. I am interested in traversing both synergy and tension as I explore the conversation of these opposing energies. This work addresses both protection and possession as I abstract from the light or shadow side of human experience. I make work that often cradles or defends while inviting investigation into the complexity of form. I am expressing both connection and entanglement through process. I feel that I travel through my artistic Journey much as I have through the twists and turns of my life. I manipulate clay, hand building smaller parts and attaching them to build the sculpture while traveling the path of continual or interrupted line. Adding a blush and glow through the application of paint to the fired clay, I continue to activate the surface drawing with graphite line to enliven the form from the inner structure through to the outer skin. Each individual mark that flows, intersects, meanders or invades adds to the collective energy that forms the whole.

CHRISTOPHER TAYLOR

Ginger's World

The journey I have taken artistically started with landscapes, then added children in landscapes and finally has evolved into thematic works in the historical vanitas vein.

GINA TORELLO

After the Storm

This painting was painted from a photo taken after a storm on Avon surfers beach. The storm not only a physical event, but also an emotional encounter. The glorious light in this interpretation of this day in my life offers me hope and the promise of unconditional love and faith to remain in our hearts for eternity. This has been a life-long journey for me. So at peace I will remain now.

CARLA VALENTINO

Brighter Days Ahead

My work reflects different emotional responses to my immediate environment at different times using the ocean as a metaphor. Sometimes there is great turbulence, chaos and drama, other times there is passive acceptance to what cannot be changed, and yet at other times, colorful optimism about what could be, as reflected in this piece *Brighter Days Ahead*.

KAREN WALLER

One Night on Route 46

I celebrate highway architecture, painting the remains of the days when Americans could afford to be whimsical in their plans, individual in their pursuits, and optimistic about their prospects. These buildings serve as my own personal metaphor of aging. They are also a dual legacy of the painted and the painting as I race against the effects of time, taste, and sprawl to capture the tangible remnants of my youth and leave behind a record of myself as a visual artist. Wasn't the future great then? Those heady days following World War II when newfound pride, wealth and consumerism fueled highways and launched architecture that was meant to entertain, entice,

and enthrall. Riding down a timeworn New Jersey roadway, when cars were still made of metal and sported wings, was like a trip through an amusement park. There were shiny slices of Mom-and-Pop shops served up with neon, ice cream stands glowing through steamy, summer nights, and a vast network of animated signs that spun, pulsed, and pantomimed. No matter what side of the highway we find ourselves on nowadays, we steadfastly share these bittersweet backdrops of all our kindred American lives lived, loved and lost.

BARBARA WITHERS

Which Way?

An opportunity to sit a beautiful place in the natural world and contemplate where I have been and what the future may bring is a special experience. I contrast it with the somewhat chaotic choices of the urban environment.