

# UNIQUE



**ARISE Art & Literary Magazine 2020**  
**20th Anniversary**

## FEATURED ARTIST



Christina Papaleo  
"Be Unapologetically You"

### About the Artwork

The practice of unapologetically being ourselves is one that requires self-acceptance and self-love, which I learned is what giraffes symbolize. Giraffes define what it means to be "unique" because they keep their head above everything they see, thus demonstrating a heightened awareness that there is more to discover within oneself than their physical appearance. I drew Fruit Loops and Cheerios to represent my childhood growing up with a disability. I felt outnumbered by Cheerios, conforming to everyone else with the hope of fitting in, when really I meant to bravely become a Fruit Loop and create an authentic identity.

# UNIQUE

SPECIAL THANKS

## Premier Sponsors

The Drescher Corporation



**Council on  
the Arts**

UNIQUE is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of Governor Andrew M. Cuomo and the New York State Legislature.

## Patrons of the Arts

Tania S. Anderson

Susan and Edward Judge

## Friend of the Arts

Maurie Heins

## Media Sponsor



## Opening Exhibit Partner



EVERSON MUSEUM OF ART



# ARISE

ALL AGES. ALL DISABILITIES. ALWAYS BY YOUR SIDE.

**We work to create a world where all people, regardless of disability, have the power to make their own life choices and achieve their dreams.**

**Since 1979, we have provided opportunities so that people with disabilities can participate in the community and live independently. ARISE is...**

## Community

...a community of advocates, committed to ensuring that every person, regardless of disability, is able to live a full and independent life.

## Independence

...building ramps for families in need so that they can reclaim their freedom and independence.

## Opportunity

...connecting employers with qualified workers who happen to have a disability.

## Empowerment

...empowering children and families through mental health services.

## Adventure

...whether it's flying down the slopes at Toggenburg or horseback riding at ARISE at the Farm, we're providing access to year-round adventure.

## Hope

...from helping families move out of crisis situations to transitioning people out of nursing homes, we're providing security, safety, and hope.

## Choice

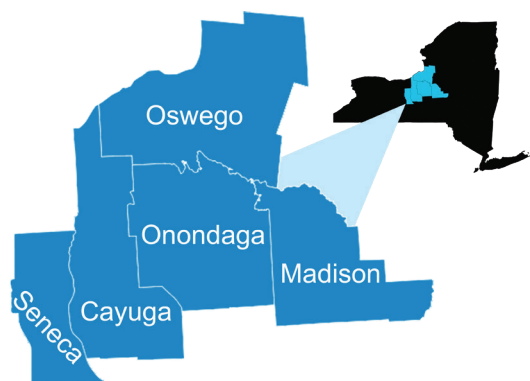
...our person-centered approach maximizes choice and self-determination. Individuals are always at the core of everything we do.

## Change

...by eliminating physical barriers and changing attitudes, we're creating a more inclusive community.

## You

...we couldn't do it without supporters, volunteers, advocates, and friends like you. Together, we can change the world.



## CONNECT WITH US

[ariseinc.org](http://ariseinc.org)



ARISEcny & ARISEattheFarm



@ARISECNYinc & @ARISEattheFarm



youtube.com/ARISEcny



@ARISEcny & @ARISEattheFarm

## WAYS YOU CAN DONATE

### Donate Online

Visit our website at <https://donate.ariseinc.org/>

### Donate by Mail

Send your donation (payable to the ARISE Foundation) to:

ARISE Foundation  
635 James Street  
Syracuse, NY 13203



# PAUSE



Tania Anderson  
CEO, ARISE

Every so often, the Universe speaks to us, individually or collectively, and it demands that we pause. As individuals, we experience illness, death and other losses; we take time to reflect, acknowledge what is gone, appreciate what remains. As a society - as a world even - we experience once-in-a-lifetime upheavals with calls for racial justice, economic security and fundamental good health. The COVID-19 pandemic is teaching us many things and will continue its harsh instruction through 2020. Among its lessons is the value of all life, the sanctity of human connection, the fragility of the “normal,” and the need to pause to appreciate one another.

What does a little art publication have to offer during such unsettled times?

Oh, so much.

ARISE has proudly published UNIQUE art magazines for 20 years. During those two decades, artists who happen to have disabilities have showed the world time and time again the value of all life, the sanctity of human connection, the fragility of the “normal,” and the need to pause and appreciate one another. Our artists and writers know first-hand the value of the “pause,” the moment of reflection and introspection. They know the power of their voices in challenging the conventional wisdom of what is “normal” and what is simply the wonderfully wide range of the human experience. They know that when troubled times give us no words to express our anger, fear and anxiety, art is a universal language.

I have never been more proud of the work of ARISE, an Independent Living Center that recognizes the power of every person, regardless of ability, to inhabit the world. I have never been more proud of ARISE’s place in the continuum of the civil rights movement. I have never been more proud of the strength and bravery of our UNIQUE artists, who are vulnerable in the face of systemic discrimination to beautifully express their experiences with disabilities.

Pause. And look within these pages. Welcome to UNIQUE 2020.

## 2020 UNIQUE EDITORIAL BOARD

Amy E. Bartell  
*SUNY Oswego - School of Communication,  
Media and The Arts*

Steffi Chappell  
*Curatorial Assistant - Everson Museum of Art*

Dan Cummings  
*Local WSYR TV9 Anchor*

Tamara C. Harris  
*ARISE Foundation Board Chair & Parent*

Kate Houck  
*Executive Director - David's Refuge*

Charles Hudson  
*ARISE Advocate*

Dr. Joel Potash  
*Family Medicine Doctor  
Member of the Armory Square Playwrights*

Peter C. Thompson  
*Illustrator, Writer & ARISE Advocate*

Emily Zaengle  
*CEO - Stone Quarry Art Park*

## KEY STAFF

Tania S. Anderson  
*Chief Executive Officer & Parent*

Betty DeFazio  
*Chief Development Officer*

## UNIQUE EDITORIAL STAFF

Bill Pfohl  
*Editor, Community Engagement Coordinator &  
Parent*

Sophie Millar  
*Intern, Development Department*

With special appreciation to  
Sarah Anson and Sue Rogers.

## Betty DeFazio Chief Development Officer



2020 marks the 20th anniversary of UNIQUE and ARISE celebrating the creative spirit shown in works by individuals with disabilities. 2020 is also the 30th anniversary of the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act, a federal law ensuring that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as

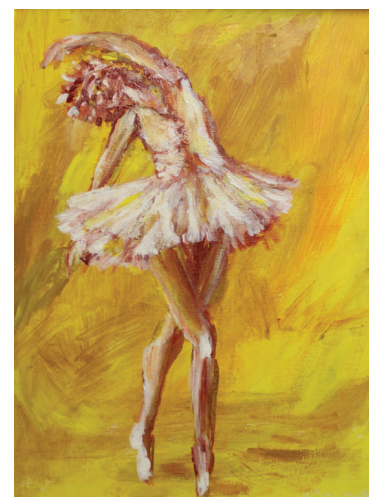
everyone else. Through UNIQUE, ARISE displays to the world that people with disabilities are as talented, imaginative, and insightful as anyone.

The pages of each edition of the UNIQUE magazine showcase the artists' flair for sharing their view of the world we live in. This year, amid the challenges of a COVID-19 pandemic, some of the submissions reflect the isolation suddenly imposed on us. Yet, the art reflects the optimism of the human spirit. These pieces impress and inspire despite the unusual circumstances surrounding the cancellation of so many activities, including the beloved UNIQUE art opening reception. ARISE is grateful that the Everson Museum of Art continues to partner with UNIQUE and that they will host the initial exhibit albeit in a socially-distant setting.

Join with me as we turn these pages and reflect on the awesome record of 20 years of creativity and 30 years of rights for people with disabilities because 2020 will be a year to remember!

- Betty DeFazio

Kirsten Stellato was last year's  
UNIQUE cover artist.



# UNIQUE

## FEATURED ARTISTS

FRONT COVER: **Christina Papaleo**, *Be Unapologetically You*

BACK COVER ARTWORK: **Joseph Rufo**, *The Cam*

BACK COVER POETRY: **Steven Ingerson**, *Alone*

<b>Kafi Ahmad</b> , <i>Women Dancing</i> .....	6	<b>Kanishk Krishnan</b> , <i>Universe Whispers</i> .....	17
<b>Constance Avery</b> , <i>Iridaceae</i> .....	8	<b>Kaushik Krishnan</b> , <i>World Coming Together</i> .....	18
<b>Jessica Bero</b> , <i>My Wonderful Cat Bella</i> .....	13	<b>Anna Marie Kuiper</b> , <i>More Than A Tree</i> .....	19
<b>Sabrina Biggs</b> , <i>Tornado</i> .....	17	<b>Sujit Kurup</b> , <i>Contemplative Gaze of Humanity</i> .....	4
<b>Nicholas Bonacci</b> , <i>King of the Ocean Lionfish</i> ....	11	<b>Marie Martin</b> , <i>The Lost Poem</i> .....	9
<b>Aleksandra Chaberski</b> , <i>Bye Ellie</i> .....	8	<b>Laura Masuicca</b> , <i>Chevron Color Burst</i> .....	16
<b>Justin Charsky</b> , <i>Blooming Love Forever</i> .....	3	<b>Jessica Meicht</b> , <i>Enlightenment</i> .....	3
<b>Mary Coogan</b> , <i>Renewed</i> .....	7	<b>Christina Papaleo</b> , <i>Be Unapologetically You</i> .....	1
<b>Rick DiBianco</b> , <i>Field of Discourse</i> .....	6	<b>Juliana Pata</b> , <i>Sadie's Comfort</i> .....	13
<b>Sue Ellis</b> , <i>The World is Lonely</i> .....	10	<b>Elizabeth Pelletier</b> , <i>United</i> .....	12
<b>Hannah Emerson</b> , <i>One Yes Yes Yes</i> .....	22	<b>Joseph Rufo</b> , <i>The Cam</i> .....	1
<b>James Gelormini</b> , <i>Two Tone Spring Vase</i> .....	9	<b>Christopher Sanchez</b> , <i>Keep Em Flying</i> .....	23
<b>Derek Grindle</b> , <i>Sky Roots</i> .....	14	<b>Katelynn Schultz</b> , <i>Massey Ferguson Tractor Plates</i> ...	15
<b>Marc "Bear" Grindle</b> , <i>Mysteries In My Mind</i> .....	21	<b>Alexandra Speller</b> , <i>Caterpillar</i> .....	19
<b>Kim Harvey</b> , <i>Something Shimmers</i> .....	2	<b>Christina Stoddard</b> , <i>La Jolla Cove San Diego</i> .....	14
<b>Elissa Hyre</b> , <i>Jack</i> .....	18	<b>Robert Szpak</b> , <i>Slight of Hand</i> .....	15
<b>Steven Ingerson</b> , <i>Alone</i> .....	4	<b>Donna Knapp Walrath</b> , <i>Answered Prayer</i> .....	2
<b>Jeff Johnson</b> , <i>If I Could Raise My Kids Again</i> .....	5	<b>Elizabeth Watson</b> , <i>My Blue Angel</i> .....	5
<b>Benjamin K.M. Kellogg</b> , <i>Finding My Way</i> .....	20	<b>Tanisha Wiggins</b> , <i>United We Are</i> .....	11
<b>Karen Anne Koegel</b> , <i>Sadness into Sunshine</i> .....	7	<b>Bernie Wren</b> , <i>Winter Moonglow</i> .....	10



## BE UNAPOLOGETICALLY YOU

Christina Papaleo

Graphite and Colored Pencil | 8" x 10"



## THE CAM

Joseph Rufo

Graphite Drawing | 12" X 16"

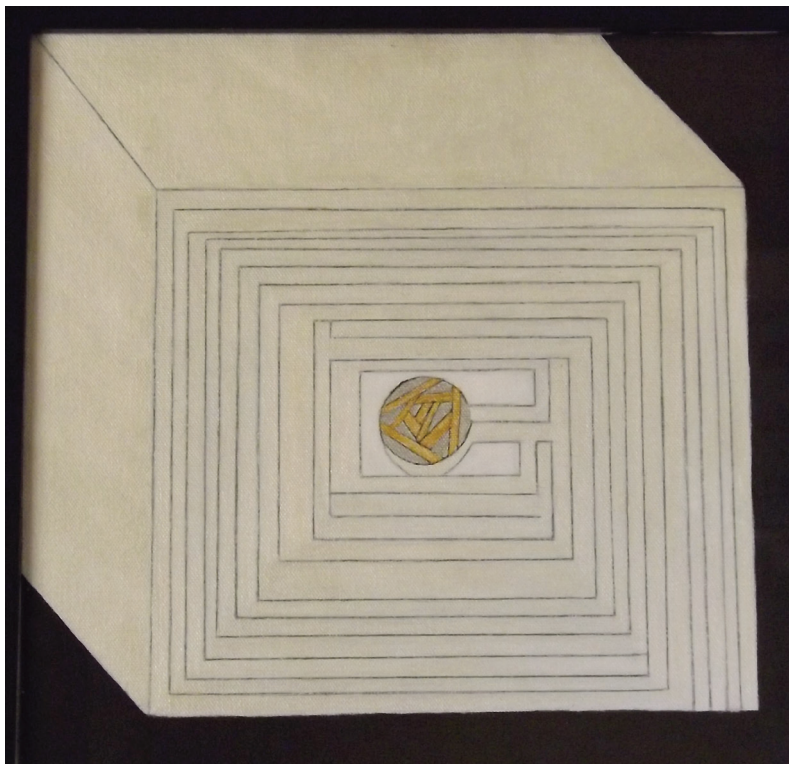


### Christina Papaleo

I have used my visual impairment as a place of empowerment and transformational opportunities to redefine disability. My disabilities are not meant to serve as symbols of tragedy, but stories of transformation. Through my sketchbook, I discover a call within my disability instead of a cure from it.

### Joseph Rufo

I create art to express myself so that others can discover something about me through my work. This is a drawing of my grandmother whose name is Camilla. I tried to capture her kindness and her inner thoughts.



## SOMETHING SHIMMERS IN THE DARK

Kim Harvey

Acrylic on Canvas | 12" x 12"

Why worry what will happen,  
as you go from day to day.  
Birds don't worry and fret.  
They bow their heads and pray.

Soon their answer comes.  
The Lord has heard their prayer.  
So why do you worry?  
God provides and He does care.

## ANSWERED PRAYER

Donna Knapp Walrath

### Kim Harvey

Art helps me defuse the complexity in my mind. The labyrinth of life gives us many paths to explore. Only one path that leads to the inner unique light that shines. There is always a path. One can find a way if holding onto belief, faith and perseverance.

### Donna Knapp Walrath

I like to write and send poems to be published. Writing and prayer, and medication help to control my depression and anxiety. This poem is about the fact that you should not worry because God will take care of you.

## ENLIGHTENMENT

Jessica Meicht

Uniquely me and happy inside.  
Forever I but more energized.  
I'm exactly myself; I will not hide.  
I have both hands on this joy ride.

My thoughts are unified,  
Clean on the underside,  
Ready to be identified,  
Then neatly magnified.

A strong woman to be aside,  
All the love, I can provide.  
Queen of the advancing stride.  
I push even after denied.

And if our egos should ever collide,  
I can set aside my pride,  
Then my effort, I reapply.  
My problems, I conquer and divide.

Intuitively amplified,  
And newly modified.  
All of a sudden qualified  
Yet totally terrified!

## BLOOMING LOVE FOREVER

Justin Charsky

Paint, Mixed Media | 15" x 8.5"



### Jessica Meicht

I take inspiration from situations in my life as well as anyone who has written well, in my own opinion. The rhyme came from the rap artist Eminem. It was certainly a challenge to write.

### Justin Charsky

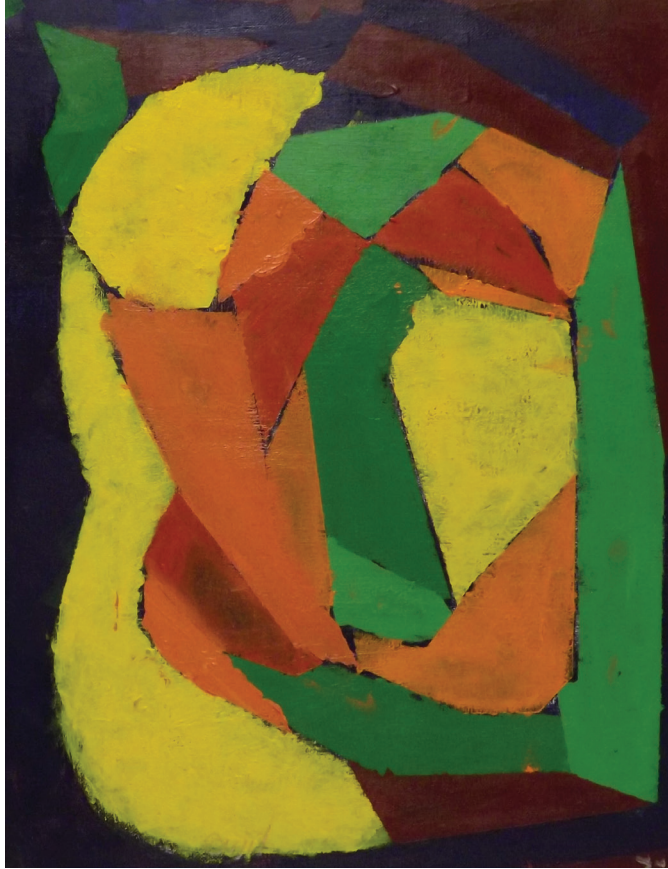
This piece expresses Jesus' eternal love for everyone on earth. This piece of art was created by me first sketching my design with pencil, then I had to etch my design onto the rubber mat to create a "stamp". Then I used my stamp with black ink/paint to imprint it onto a water color background I created.



# CONTEMPLATIVE GAZE OF HUMANITY

Sujit Kurup

Acrylic on Canvas | 16" x 20"



## Part I: Together Alone

shoulder to shoulder  
pictureless pixels moving as one  
yet disconnected;  
loneliness louder than  
the surrounding bustle.  
there is no we -  
only isolated i's  
struggling on  
together alone.

## Part II: Alone Together

sitting home  
forced by circumstance  
to physically separate  
yet bound by common experience.  
care leaps barriers  
compassion binds souls  
love transcends distance;  
alone together.

## ALONE

Steven Ingerson

### Sujit Kurup

Painting is my passion and it goes deep into my thoughts and brings out the real me. This is a release of my pent up emotions as I have few words of speech. I am greatly inspired by Picasso abstract art and lately by Kandinsky Impressionist art. Jackie Adamo has mentored all along.

### Steven Ingerson

A great deal of my inspiration comes from listening to people and trying to put myself in their shoes and incorporate their experiences and emotions. The inspiration for my poem came from the current COVID-19 pandemic and the social distancing it has necessitated.

## MY BLUE ANGEL LOOKING OVER ME FROM HEAVEN

Elizabeth Watson  
Watercolor Painting | 17" x 14"



## IF I COULD RAISE MY KIDS AGAIN

Jeff Johnson

I'd take my eyes off my iPhone,  
and watch them closer.  
I'd jump more on the trampoline,  
and less when my team won a game,  
I'd check my bank account less often,  
and count my blessings more often.  
I'd teach less about the love of power,  
and more about the power of love.  
I'd complain less and compliment more.  
I'd explain how the mistakes I've made,  
could effect them if they did the same.

---

### Elizabeth Watson

When I was creating this piece, I wanted to represent the family and the people that I have lost in my life that I love. I believe the blue dove flying into heaven represents hope that they will be watching over me in my life. My family brings out the support I need to create beautiful meaningful pieces of art.

### Jeff Johnson

I write because it enables me to make better use of a skill I've always had and did not lose due to my brain injury. I created this piece to point out that there are no perfect parents. My greatest influence was having the courage to write a book about the effects of brain injuries upon family members.

## WOMEN DANCING

Kafi Ahmad

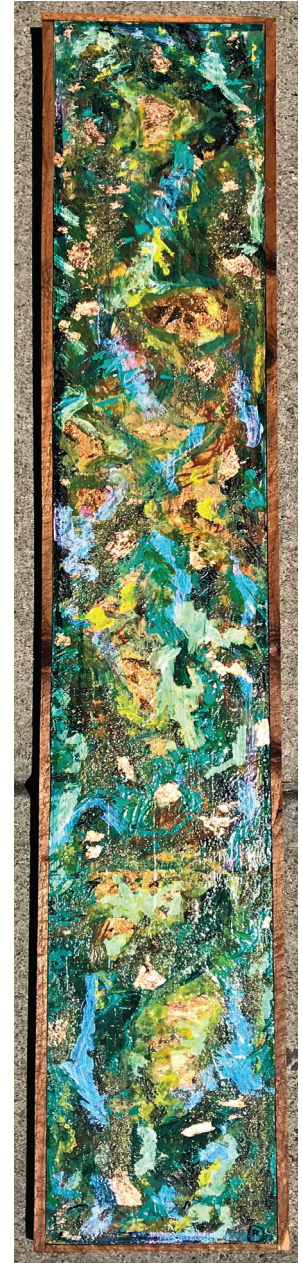
Painting | 7" x 9.5"



## FIELD OF DISCOURSE

Rick DiBianco

Painting, Mixed Media | 6.5" x 49"



---

### **Kafi Ahmad**

I love art. I used to work in the Academy of Fine Arts in Iraq. I am happy to do any art and I feel comfortable doing art. I also volunteer and teach art to groups.

### **Rick DiBianco**

I love Vincent van Gogh, his impressionist paintings have always delighted me. Art has always been a part of my life. It has been an outlet for me to express myself. I think that being an individual with or without disabilities, artwork can help you create if you give it a chance.



## SADNESS INTO SUNSHINE

Karen Anne Koegel  
Painting | 16" x 20"



## RENEWED

Mary Coogan

Restoring belief in the possible –  
giving way to the open sea.  
Set sail with warm breezes  
on a sunlit afternoon.

Laughter blowing through sun-kissed hair  
with reckless abandon while  
miles and miles of smiles  
make ready a handsome dancing duet.

Love cuts through the water effortlessly –  
see happiness in the waves.  
Although not new, the vessel knew  
what a lovely day this would be!

---

### Karen Anne Koegel

The bottom depicts lost and abandoned. The color use of indigo and metallic blue show hope. The middle of the canvas has some hints of red and purple indicating some anger. The middle going up to the upper left hand side shows the sun, hope, and life ever changing.

### Mary Coogan

Acquiring a disability is part of my life experience which is the inspiration for my writing. My first interest in writing began 40 years ago. In their seventies, my friends made the decision to stop sailing and sell their boat. It was a time of loss and grief. I wrote *Renewed* for them.

Elinor dear  
I feel that you are near  
Standing aside or behind  
I didn't say to you  
goodbye  
I loved you always  
That's the truth  
Where are you dear  
You are in heaven  
full of flowers  
Give me a bunch  
One bunch for Alex  
I'll plant them  
on your grave  
It will be a sign  
of my grief

## BYE ELLIE

Aleksandra Chaberski

## IRIDACEAE

Constance Avery

Acrylic on Canvas | 24" x 36"



### Aleksandra Chaberski

I started writing poetry as a teenager in Poland. My artistic role models include my mother who is a poet. Writing poetry helps me process and overcome feelings of sadness after the loss of loved ones. I wrote this poem "Bye Ellie" to process feelings of grief over the sudden loss of my friend, Ellie.

### Constance Avery

I have spent the last 6 years painting, using my visual limitation to create a series of paintings. I use my phone to create images of closeups of flowers and other objects. This painting is from the closeup of the blossom and another blossom that is past its prime.

## THE LOST POEM

Marie Martin

I wrote a poem...  
I placed it somewhere...  
I forgot where I put it...  
This is becoming a problem  
I don't mean it

But...

Will this change anything for me  
Like fame  
Please talk to me  
I need the money  
Somebody does

So...

Suggest something  
Change my mind  
Can you  
Will you  
Am I convincing enough  
Well...

## TWO TONE SPRING VASE

James Gelormini

Clay Coil Vase | 8" x 10.5"



### Marie Martin

I created my poem because I was really looking for that one poem and I really couldn't find it. My poem expresses trying to publish my work but nothing works out. I don't become known, so losing a poem or two can result in this problem.

### James Gelormini

I started creating artwork a few years ago. Art helps me express myself. My piece is a clay coil pot. I made it by rolling long coils out of clay and then placing them on top of each other one at a time. After each coil, I would smooth the clay out so that you could not see the coils.





## WINTER MOONGLOW

Bernie Wren

Oil Painting | 13.5" x 10.5"

## THE WORLD IS LONELY WITHOUT A HAND TO HOLD

Sue Ellis

It's sure been hard on everyone I've seen it for myself the world is lonely without a hand to hold. Pray tomorrow will be a better day the world is lonely without a hand to hold. So many ill we pray they will be alright as we wait for the storm to be over the world is lonely without a hand to hold. As we wait for the storm to be over, we must be strong and have faith as we wait to see loved ones so dear be far away no more as we wait for hands to hold.

### Bernie Wren

I chose to paint this scene because it inspires us to focus on nature's connection with the magical anticipation of the holiday season. As the glow of moonlight reflects on the snow-covered country home, we can reflect on a simpler, more peaceful way of life tucked within the majesty of the great outdoors.

### Sue Ellis

I've been writing poems since I was 13 years old and I write from what I see. I wrote this poem on what is going on now because of this virus and how it must feel to some who can't see their family. I, myself, miss all my friends and family and the things we did every day together.

## UNITED WE ARE

Tanisha Wiggins

Acrylic on Canvas | 18" x 24"



## KING OF THE OCEAN LIONFISH

Nicholas Bonacci

Photograph | 14" x 11"



---

### Tanisha Wiggins

I've been experiencing a lot of anxiety and some depression during this stressful time of COVID-19. One thing that has lifted my spirits is seeing friends and neighbors come together and help one another out. My painting shows the world and the love and strength we have after a crisis we face together.

### Nicholas Bonacci

My artistic inspiration comes from life in general. I create art because I enjoy it, it is therapeutic, and others love my work. My artistic role models are Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and van Gogh. My family and friends are a big influence in my creative process.

We are all here  
In the midst of this plague  
A whole new world  
With rules that seem vague

From a fever  
A cough  
Some chills  
Aches or pain  
No one feels the symptoms  
Exactly the same

We are all afraid  
The young  
The old  
The healthy  
The disabled

But we have to remember  
We are all enabled  
To work as one  
This is a job for everyone

We must work together  
BECOME ONE  
Our lives depend on it  
From each and everyone

We have had to make sacrifices  
This We know  
We need to stay alert  
And on our toes

It is not about you  
Or just me  
It is about our whole world  
Don't you see

Wear the mask  
Keep the distance  
To the doctors  
We must listen

This is our Earth  
We only get one  
So let's stay strong  
And do what needs to be done

We have lost so many people  
From this plague  
The sadness and the shock  
Come in waves

It does not matter  
Who, where, or what we are  
It has to be fought  
As hard as we can

For in this world  
It is now  
More than ever  
UNITED WE MUST STAND.....

## UNITED

Elizabeth Pelletier

---

### Elizabeth Pelletier

I find that writing and drawing give me an outlet for my feelings and points of view. My disability plays a big role in my work as I feel it connects me with other people going through similar issues. I wrote *United* because of this new and frightening way of life we are having to go through. While we are all different in many unique ways, we must all come together to fight this new fear.



## SADIE'S COMFORT

Juliana Pata

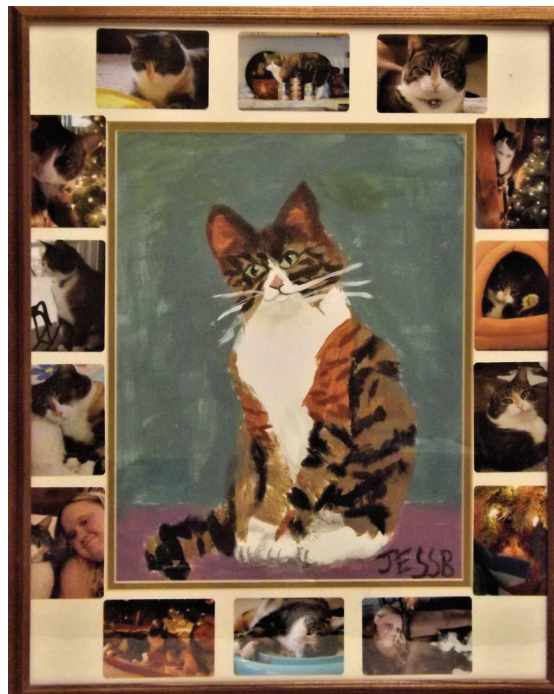
Whenever people suggest that I count my blessings, I conjure up a gratitude list. I always find the following areas in the top tier of the list: I am grateful for my good health, for my loved ones and dear friends and for my comfort critter cat, Sadie!

I rescued her from the cold and cruel winter when she was barely six months old. Sadie is a jet black 10lb feline with golden yellow saucer eyes. The only spot she sports is a little mark of white fur on her belly.

Sadie is considered to be my “service animal.” This means that her presence in my home assists me with the symptoms of my bipolar disorder and other health issues that I face on a daily basis. She is highly intuitive and affectionate. Whenever I get too lonely, down, confused or anxious she is there for me.

Sadie often jumps up on the recliner with me and drapes her furry, warm body across my chest, settles her front paws and head over my shoulder and drifts off to sleep.

This past year I underwent cancer surgery. Sadie kept me company during the long, lonely and frightening nights while I stared at the soft white glow of the nightlight and pondered my fate. The surgery was successful but the recovery was long and arduous. Throughout it all Sadie comforted me. I've been blessed with a wonderful companion animal and I hope that others can enjoy the same privileges.



## MY WONDERFUL CAT BELLA

Jessica Bero

Painting | 20" x 24"

### Juliana Pata

Art is an extension of my inner self. I began keeping a journal at the age of nine and have been a lifelong writer. *Sadie's Comfort* is a reflection of how my cat is incorporated in my daily life. It expresses a love and appreciation of my “service animal” and how one can benefit from having such a companion.

### Jessica Bero

I like to paint from my heart. Painting helps me with my stress. I also love to take pictures. I painted this picture of my cat Bella and then added the pictures. This piece combines my favorite things to do.

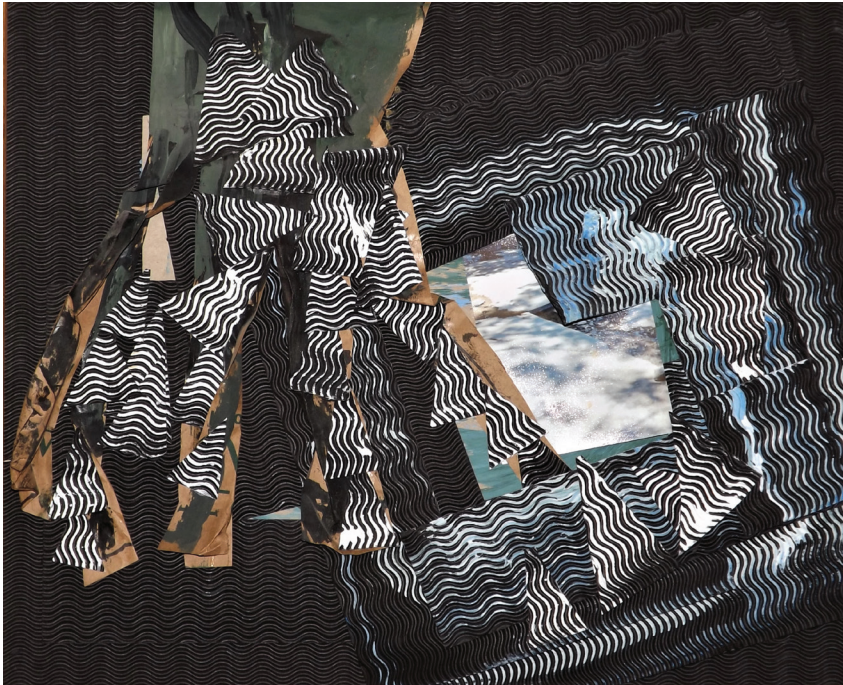




## LA JOLLA COVE SAN DIEGO AT SUNSET

Christina Stoddard

Acrylic on Canvas | 24" x 18"



## SKY ROOTS

Derek Grindle

Film, Cardboard, Watercolors | 20" x 17"

### **Christina Stoddard**

I have created art to help put smiles on people's faces. My son traveled to San Diego and sent this picture to me. The ocean reminds me that through it all, you are bigger than your problems. Thank you to my son for capturing this beautiful space.

### **Derek Grindle**

My interest in art started when my mom took me to a free drawing class at the Pulaski Art Center. My art helps me to express and communicate without any words. I find it easier to use colors, visuals, different textures and materials to express my wants and desires.

## SLIGHT OF HAND

Robert Szpak  
Acrylic on Canvas | 20"x 16"



## MASSEY FERGUSON TRACTOR PLATES

Katelynn Schultz  
Pottery | 11" x 1" & 11.5" x 1"



### Robert Szpak

Matisse is one of my favorite artists and Picasso's creativity amazes me. Disability is a starting point. I just like artwork. It's a challenge. *Slight of Hand* shows how a person can be fooled by another or by their own paranoia.

### Katelynn Schultz

I started creating art when I was in high school and still continue doing so today. I create art because I find joy in what I'm doing. I created this piece because it expresses my love for tractors and being outdoors.





## CHEVRON COLOR BURST

Laura Masuicca

Crochet Cotton & Canvas | 16" x 25"

---

### **Laura Masuicca**

I learned to crochet at the age of 3 and haven't stopped. I love to create stuffed animals, characters and baby clothes. My mom always encouraged me to crochet new and different things. The cotton is each color of the rainbow (almost) so I took that idea and made a chevron table piece. I then decided to attach it to a large canvas and make it into a wall piece.



## UNIVERSE WHISPERS

Kanishk Krishnan

I and you are same  
Sanity escapes when you forget this  
Normalcy is aberration of universality  
What is meaningful for you may not be for me  
Reality says what you do is killing me  
Yet you and I are same

Nothing can stop my newness  
For I am a fiery Phoenix  
I keep you in my heart  
But you are absorbed in you  
Nothing but YOU  
Not knowing you and I are same

Stalling you for a brevity  
My vibrancy reborn  
All dancing in joy  
Singing in divinity  
My eternal dance reverberating  
Dearest won't you partake in my newborn era

I love you  
And you love you Only you just YOU  
I and my all are for you  
Yet O' ignorant man  
You are blind and a blight to all  
Whispering You and I are same  
Waiting for you to wake up  
From your meandering ways

## TORNADO

Sabrina Biggs

Digital Painting | 10.5" x 7"



### Kanishk Krishnan

My artistic inspiration comes from the constant agony my autistic mind puts me through. My mom and my mentor, Austin, are my artistic role models. I wrote this poem because of the current climate of events including the pandemic. It expresses my thoughts on where humanity is heading and what the universe would say to us.

### Sabrina Biggs

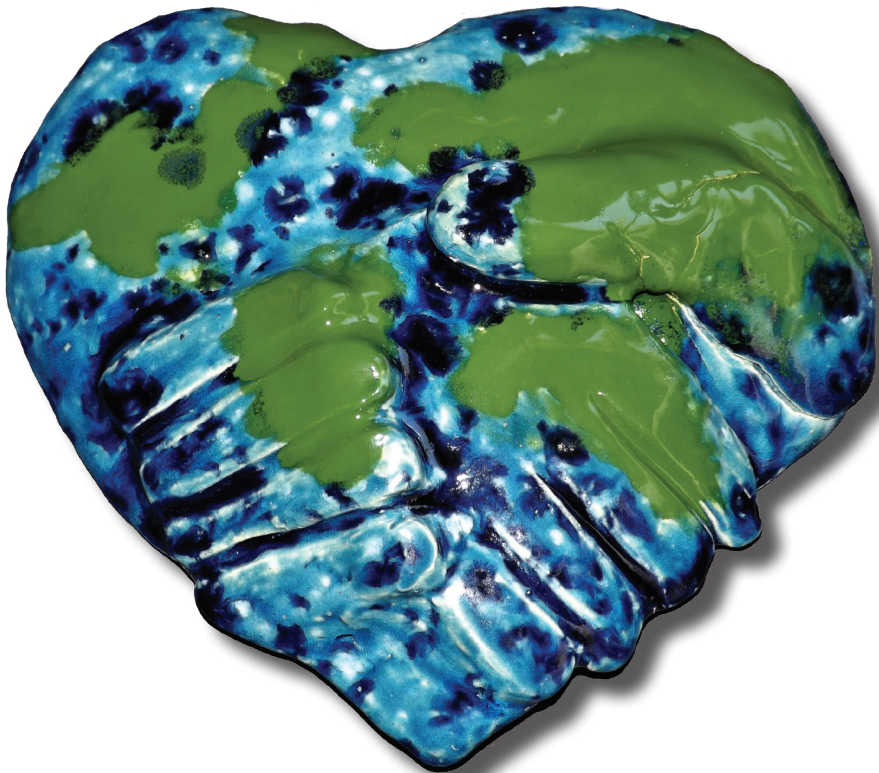
My inspirations and role models are Walt Disney, Don Bluth, and Hayao Miyazaki. My inspiration for this was the twister movie but with Disney-esc art style. I have always had a deep love for weather, especially severe thunderstorms.



## JACK

Elissa Hyre

Ceramic Sculpture | 7" x 3.5" x 10.5"



## WORLD COMING TOGETHER

Kaushik Krishnan

Clay Sculpture | 10" x 2.5" x 9"

### Elissa Hyre

Normally a literary artist, I decided to submit something different this year. Jack Haley's performance as the Tin Man in "The Wizard of Oz" is my favorite musical number in the entire movie. I made this piece out of clay when I entered the Inclusive U program at Syracuse University.

### Kaushik Krishnan

I love creating art because it helps me soothe my mind. My mom and my mentor, Austin, are my artistic role models. Autism, in its own way, gives me a unique perspective on things and helps with my creativity. I am trying to express that, the world leaders coming together in unison, can help solve the problems humanity faces globally.



## CATERPILLAR

Alexandra Speller  
Painting | 18" x 12"



## MORE THAN A TREE

Anna Marie Kuiper  
Fabric Wall Hanging | 37.5" x 23.5"



---

### Alexandra Speller

I think art is beautiful and fun. For this piece I painted the background, branch and caterpillar all separately and then cut out each part and glued them together. My artistic role models are my mother and my sister, Georgia.

### Anna Marie Kuiper

I have always been interested in art. Art is a universal language, everyone can understand it. This piece of art was just for fun. This piece started only as a tree, and then it grew and grew. When you look at this wall hanging, study it, there is a lot to see.



## FINDING MY WAY THROUGH EMOTIONS

Benjamin K. M. Kellogg

It was almost impossible for me  
To navigate through my own emotions  
And process those of others when I was a child.  
Emotional states did not register with me.  
I felt broad sensations without clear origins.  
Understanding happiness was never a problem,  
But seldom did I understand why people were so giddy.  
Sadness, disappointment, anger;  
I knew the sensations, but not where they came from.  
I believe the autism condition deadened the portion of my brain  
That registered facial expressions and associated emotions.  
I could not figure out what other people were feeling  
And how to best respond to them.  
Similarly, I had no words to express my own feelings.  
I was frustrated often because my limited communication skills  
Did not keep pace with my racing thoughts.  
There was always more I wanted to say that I could not get out.  
I always felt like I was going to explode  
If I was not understood soon.  
With help from my patient parents  
And years of practice,  
I have gained a general understanding of emotions,  
I understand my own feelings more clearly and can express them,  
And I have learned how to recognize a wider range of emotions in others  
And respond appropriately.  
I want to keep improving.

---

### **Benjamin K. M. Kellogg**

I use my poetry as a way to express how I feel about my life with autism. I am inspired by the whimsy of Lewis Carroll, the wit of Dr. Seuss, the heart of Rod Serling, and the optimism of Gene Roddenberry. My autism plays a large role in my poetry. I write about how the condition affects every aspect of my life, and I want to help others see the world through my eyes in the most accurate, honest way possible.

## MYSTERIES IN MY MIND

Marc "Bear" Grindle

Do you ever think about the air we breathe?  
Or the water we drink?  
Or your destiny?  
Have you ever tried to go inside  
The deepest part of your mind?

Have you ever felt a sense of deja-vu  
From a place you swore  
You've never been to?  
Have you ever dreamed so real it seemed  
That you traveled back in time?

These are mysteries running through my mind  
I hope someday the answers we will find  
When we go, do we leave this all behind?  
All these mysteries in my mind

Do you believe there's life in outer space?  
Or are we alone in the human race?  
Did we come from far across the stars?  
Or remember why we came?

Does it seem to you, maybe it's just me  
Time moves faster every day it seems  
Should we question why or not think twice  
How much this world has changed

These are mysteries running through my mind  
I hope someday the answers we will find  
When we go, do we leave this all behind?  
All these mysteries in my mind

Do you ever think about the air we breathe?  
Or the water we drink?...or your destiny?

---

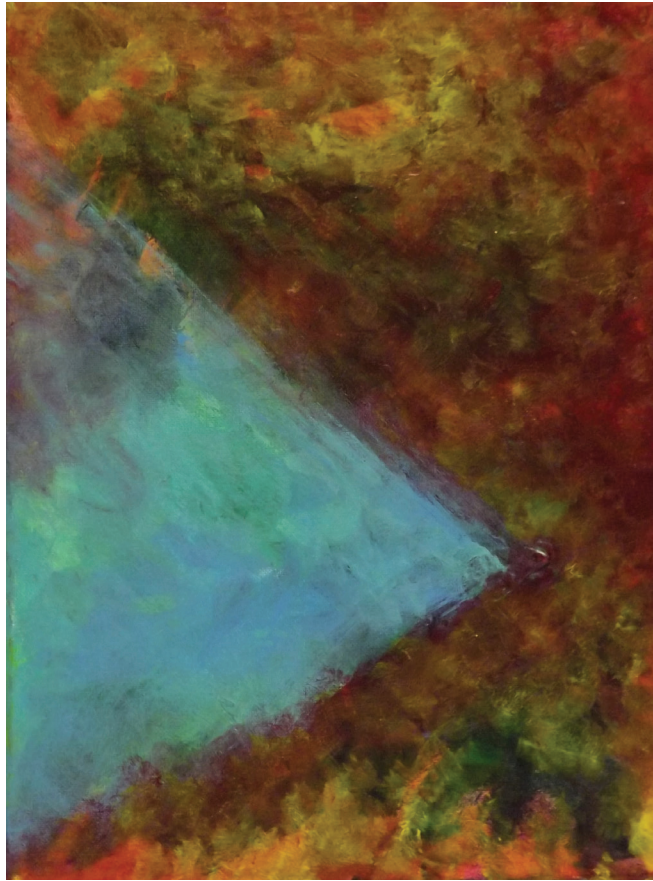
### **Marc "Bear" Grindle**

I enjoy putting my thoughts and feelings into words. My artistic role models are John Lennon, Ronnie Van Zandt and Bob Dylan. I am a seeker, always wondering about the hows, whys and wheres in our world. I think this piece allows one to question and ponder the many mysteries of the universe.

## ONE YES YES YES

Hannah Emerson

Acrylic on Canvas | 12" x 16"



Love you try to go  
to the triangles to get  
the jutting kissing freedom

that is trusting us to get there  
yes yes. Use its yearning to become  
freedom yes yes yes. Kiss it now yes yes.

Love kissing kissing kissing loving us  
together helping us helping us  
together in the world as

one yes yes yes.

Please go to the triangle  
to find please find love there  
yes yes. Kiss the blue of our hearts

yes yes yes. Loving the blue is loving mother  
earth yes yes. Please get that the triangle is  
the world bursting beginning life

together great normals get  
this yes yes yes.

---

### Hannah Emerson

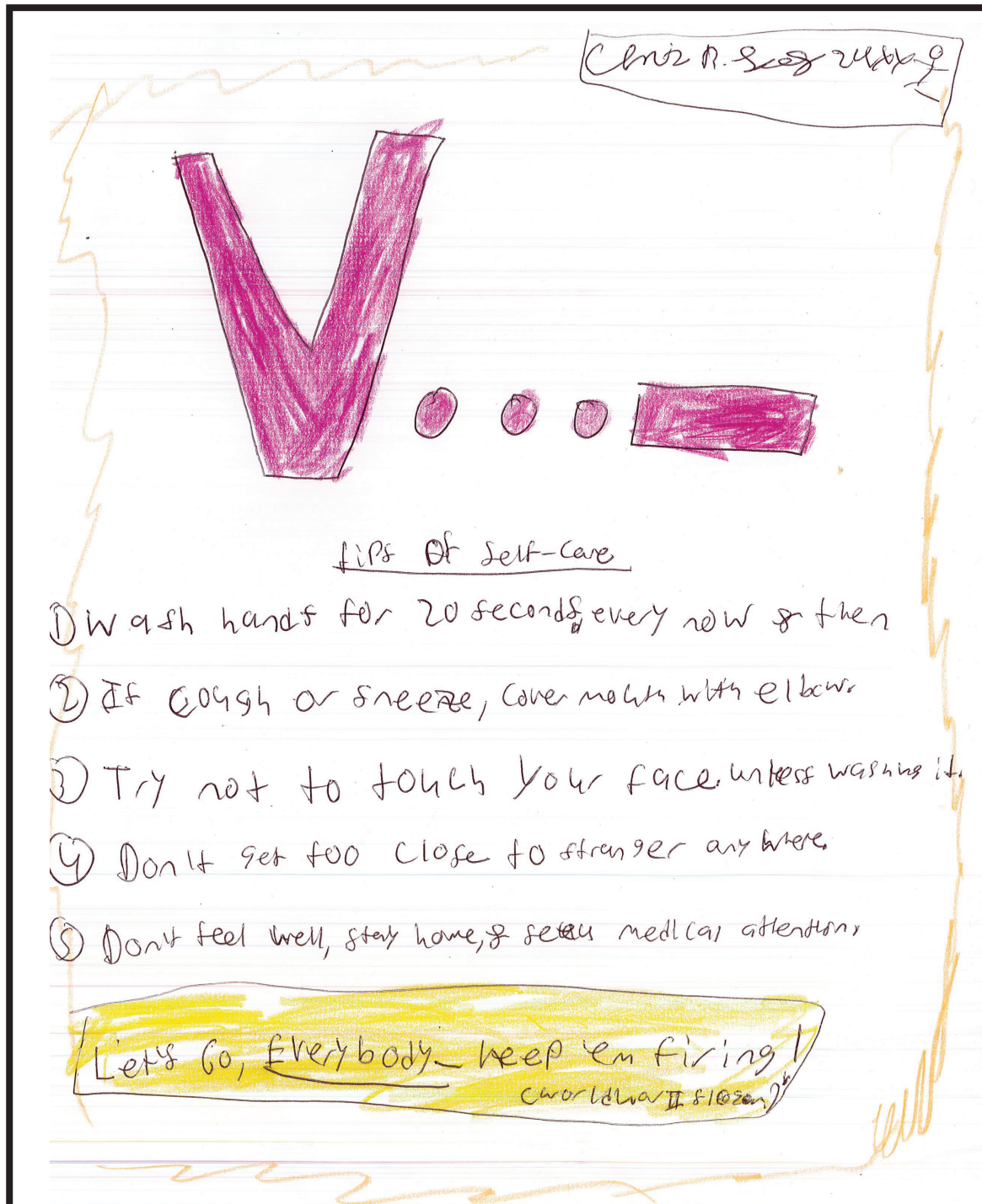
Hannah is a 28-year-old poet and typist who describes poets as "Keeper of the Light." The painting inspired the poem. Together they have become one piece of art.



## KEEP EM FLYING

Christopher Sanchez

Colored Pencils | 8.5" x 11"



### Christopher Sanchez

Comic Books artists are my biggest inspiration in their storytelling. It does play a role in my creative process. COVID-19 stopped many workers from working. I modeled my art after a World War II poster when it needed to boost morale.

## THANK YOU!

The UNIQUE Editorial Board wishes to thank all of the artists who submitted their creations this year. Additionally, we recognize that a number of people were unable to participate due to the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic. It is our hope that none of those restrictions will exist in 2021.

## DO YOU WANT TO SUBMIT TO UNIQUE?

UNIQUE is published annually to display the creative work of people with disabilities living in Central New York. We welcome submissions of written and visual art. Guidelines and deadlines for UNIQUE 2021 will be announced in March 2021 and will be available at [ARISEinc.org](http://ARISEinc.org).

### CONTACT US

UNIQUE Magazine  
c/o ARISE  
635 James Street  
Syracuse, NY 13203  
[ARISEinc.org](http://ARISEinc.org)

### ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

UNIQUE Magazine is available as a PDF  
File upon request. Please contact ARISE at  
(315) 671-2903.

## WAYS TO SUPPORT UNIQUE

### BECOME AN UNDERWRITER

UNIQUE sponsorship celebrates the creative spirit and raises awareness about disabilities by supporting the community exhibitions and printing of the free publication. Sponsorship levels start at \$500. To learn more, call (315) 671-2903 or [development@ariseinc.org](mailto:development@ariseinc.org).

### MAKE A GIFT

Your charitable contribution is a strong statement that you share our commitment to celebrating the artistic expression of people of all abilities. Your donation to UNIQUE or other ARISE programs makes it possible for us to continue to provide a wide array of services for people who have all types of disabilities.

ARISE is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization. To make a donation, use our secure online form at [donate.ariseinc.org](http://donate.ariseinc.org) or mail a check to:

ARISE Foundation  
635 James Street  
Syracuse, NY 13203

### TAKE A PIECE OF UNIQUE HOME!

UNIQUE wall calendars are available for purchase. A portion of the proceeds supports UNIQUE Magazine and ARISE. Some of the original artwork featured in UNIQUE is available for sale by the artists, and all proceeds of these sales benefit the artists. A list of available artwork is available at [ARISEinc.org](http://ARISEinc.org). For information on how to order any of the above, please call (315) 671-2903.



Joseph Rufo  
*The Cam*

About the Artwork

This is a drawing of my grandmother whose name is Camilla. I tried to capture her kindness and her inner thoughts.

Alone

Part I: Together Alone

shoulder to shoulder  
pictureless pixels moving as one  
yet disconnected;  
loneliness louder than  
the surrounding bustle.  
there is no we -  
only isolated i's  
struggling on  
together alone.

Part II: Alone Together

sitting home  
forced by circumstance  
to physically separate  
yet bound by common experience.  
care leaps barriers  
compassion binds souls  
love transcends distance;  
alone together.

Steven Ingerson  
*Alone*

About the Artwork

My submission is a poem in two parts entitled "Alone." The inspiration came from the current COVID-19 pandemic and the social distancing it has necessitated. People are physically separated from each other and, in that sense, alone. But there is also a tremendous sense of community that transcends that separation.