



ART EXHIBITION AND CELEBRATION

Saturday, November 2, 2019

Moonlight Studios

Chicago, Illinois



Brushes with Cancer uses a unique art experience to provide psychosocial support for individuals touched by cancer.

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WHAT IS TWIST OUT CANCER?

Twist Out Cancer uses creative arts programming to provide psychosocial support for individuals touched by cancer.

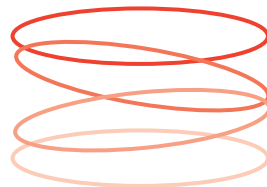
The Story

When 29-year-old Jenna Benn Shersher was undergoing cancer treatment in 2010 for a rare form of lymphoma, she felt disconnected from the world. Isolated at home because of a compromised immune system, she longed to do something she hadn’t done since she was healthy...dance. And so she did. With Chubby Checker’s, “The Twist,” blasting in the background, she recorded herself twisting her heart out. When she posted the video on Facebook, she had one simple request, “Please join me on the dance floor!” The response was astounding. Within days, Jenna was flooded with hundreds of videos from thousands of people from across the globe, all doing the Twist! These videos came from people she knew and from perfect strangers. There were people twisting at work, at home, and even from the hospital. “As they twisted, I was able to tiptoe out of my room and join the world,” recalled Jenna. “I no longer felt alone, but instead connected to and supported by a community of twisters.” It was then that Jenna made a vow that once she had completed treatment she would give back in a meaningful way. And so, Twist Out Cancer was born.

Twist Out Cancer

“My mom had breast cancer and throughout the process, I was the primary person helping her,” said a young woman named Emma. “Most of my friends would ask about my mom, but they didn’t think to ask about me. It was difficult because I was struggling to care for her and I also needed support.”

**TWIST
OUT
CANCER**



Twist Out Cancer creates exactly that - a place of support for everyone who needs it. What began as a light-hearted way for anyone touched by cancer to connect has turned into a global community of support and inspiration. Established in 2011 as a nonprofit organization, Twist Out Cancer (TOC) offers the platform, tools and community – both online and offline – for anyone touched by cancer to feel connected to a community and for many to take action. TOC does this through online platforms, Brushes with Cancer, Twistshops and Health and Wellness programs and events in the community.

The App

The Twist Out Cancer App connects individuals touched by cancer with our dynamic support community as well as resources. The platform allows anyone to create a profile page and a personal call to action. Through videos, photos or essays, those touched by cancer are able to share their unique “twist on cancer.” Sample posts have included everything from “I’m in the midst of chemotherapy and have lost all of my taste buds... host a dinner party, and tell me what it tastes like” to “Help me Kiss Away Cancer. Kiss a friend, a family member or a stranger on the street, and snap a quick selfie and share it on social media.” So far, TOC’s online presence has touched over 300,000 people across the world – and the numbers keep growing.

Brushes with Cancer

This unique celebration of survivorship and hope pairs those touched by cancer (previvors, survivors and caregivers) with talented artists working in a variety of mediums. Those touched by cancer share their ‘twist on cancer’ – their stories, feelings and experiences – with the artist, which serves as the inspiration for the art. The program culminates with a celebratory annual event and fundraiser in which the pairs connect in person and the artwork is revealed for the first time and then auctioned to support TOC. Since its inception in 2012, hundreds of inspirations and artists have been matched, and over 18,000 people have participated in the celebratory art exhibitions and galas. In addition to our annual Chicago program, Brushes with Cancer has expanded to include programs in Toronto, Montreal, Tel Aviv, Philadelphia, Austin, and Detroit. “Telling my story in this context and through this creative process was better than any kind of therapy,” said Amy, who lost her mother to breast cancer and who is herself both a survivor of kidney cancer and a ‘previvor’ who was diagnosed with the BRCA2 gene.

Twistshops

Twistshops are art therapy-focused workshops that promote healing, relaxation and emotional recovery. They are designed to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress related to cancer. Twistshops welcome everyone who has been touched by cancer to engage in workshops that utilize the arts as a mechanism for healing. As a participant, you will be guided by a licensed art therapist through a variety of art-making activities that allow everyone to process their past and current experiences as a patient, caregiver or supporter of someone with a cancer. Through storytelling and mindful art-making, the intention is to help everyone explore different emotions, and in turn revive self, heal and find ways to move forward.

Health and Wellness Third Party Events

Twist Out Cancer understands the importance of health and wellness – particularly mindfulness, strength and resilience – both during and after cancer treatment. Since 2011, over 30,000 people have participated in health and wellness programs run by TOC in partnership with a variety of other health focused organizations. Twist has partnered with Whole Foods and Kitchfix to provide nourishing and healthy cooking classes to help inform participants of how to make healthy choices throughout survivorship.

The Need

“This organization empowers you,” said Alana Dugandzic, a two-time cancer survivor. “It gives you a way out and helps you make your situation the best it can be. It allows you to focus on the positive as opposed to being victimized.” What makes TOC unique is its multi-tiered approach that gives anyone touched by cancer the support and community they need to no longer feel alone and the tools they crave to take action. TOC provides anyone, anywhere in the world, the platform to create, support and inspire. As such, our reach is limitless, targeting everyone from the person who finds out that a dear friend has just been diagnosed with cancer and doesn’t know what to do, to those like Jenna, who feel that because of cancer, they have to sit out of the dance. A labor of love, TOC has a network of over 200 active volunteers serving as ambassadors in Austin, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Tel Aviv, Toronto and Montreal.

Get Involved

Twist Out Cancer is a community that celebrates creativity, encourages engagement and believes in the importance of giving back. TOC volunteers donate their time, expertise and passion to help create a network of support and hope. It is thanks to their commitment and hard work that the TOC community continues to grow and thrive. For more information on volunteering, please visit the volunteer section of our website. We hope you will join us.

Find out more at twistoutcancer.org

A MESSAGE FROM JENNA BENN SHERSHER, FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF TWIST OUT CANCER

Gratitude.

It has been quite a journey. A journey measured in moments, markers and finish lines. A journey artistically preserved in hypercolor. A journey that may have started with the three words, “you have cancer,” but has continued with, “No Evidence of Disease.” I may not be able to choose the cards that I am dealt but my response, my narrative, my journey, is my choice. Over the last few years, with the help of countless people, we have transformed my story into a larger movement. Twist Out Cancer’s foundation is built on hope, is stabilized by support, and is secured by the belief that when you share, the world opens up. Twist Out Cancer emerged out of desperation, blossomed out of loneliness and grew from despair. Today this movement continues to grow because of you. To the countless friends, family and strangers that lifted me out of the shadows and into the sunlight, I thank you. And to the legions of tiny twisters who believe in Twist Out Cancer, we would not be here without you. We hope you will continue to... Share. Connect. Heal.

Welcome to Brushes with Cancer Chicago, from Gudrun Wu Synder and Mardi Kaplan, Brushes with Cancer Co-Chairs



Share.Connect.Heal – the motto for Twist Out Cancer rings loudest tonight. This evening is about the journeys **shared** by our inspirations and artists through unique pieces of art, about **connecting** with others who have been touched by cancer, and about allowing oneself to **heal** from the love and support of those around us. As co-chairs of Brushes with Cancer, and on behalf of the entire Twist Out Cancer family, we would like to thank the participants for opening up and letting us be a part of your story. We hope the connections you have made throughout the program continue to live on through the art and the relationships that have been created. To all those who are attending, thank you for your support in helping us further Brushes with Cancer here in Chicago. We hope you enjoy the evening and all it has to offer. It is a night filled with love, sorrow, inspiration, and light. Regardless of how you participate, we appreciate so much that you are here to celebrate with us. We thank everyone for their support and encourage you to connect with the program participants, find your piece of the experience, and take home with you a sense of hope and inspiration (and maybe a new piece of artwork)!

Mardi Kaplan

Shortly after I was diagnosed with breast cancer, one of my friends told me about an organization called Twist Out Cancer, and how inspired she had been by Jenna's story. I looked into the organization, and I knew that I knew Jenna, but I couldn't place how we were connected. Reading her story really inspired me too, and a few months later, in early 2018, I saw an application online for Brushes with Cancer in Chicago, and I decided to apply to be an Inspiration. I have an incredible support system of family and friends, and I know how powerful relationships can be in the healing process. After a bilateral mastectomy, and while I was in the midst of chemo, I was so excited to be accepted to participate in the program, and to be matched with an artist who quickly became a friend. We met for coffee, meals, a walk around an art museum, and we even had fun making art together in her studio. Now the piece of art she created based on my cancer story hangs in my home. I had wanted to get more involved with a nonprofit organization for a long time, and I found a place with Twist Out Cancer. I've now joined the board and I'm so excited to be one of the chairs for this year's Brushes with Cancer in Chicago, so I can continue to share the support that I felt as an Inspiration.



Gudrun Wu Snyder

My daughter was 17 months old when I was diagnosed with breast cancer. Her music teacher at that time, Lauren Hubert Smoke, encouraged me to apply for Brushes with Cancer. At the time, I was reticent to share my story and reach out to the young adult cancer community at large. But once I did, I realized that Brushes is like no other program out there. Not only did it make me feel positive during a difficult time, but it also gave me an entire community of people going through similar experiences. I want to thank each and every individual for supporting Brushes: the participants, the volunteers, the board, and all of you who are attending this evening!

BRUSHES WITH CANCER

Brushes with Cancer is a celebration of survivorship and hope through art, music and storytelling. This event is brought to you by Twist Out Cancer with the generous support of the sponsors featured throughout this program.

TONIGHT

ART: Twist Out Cancer paired 36 artists with 36 survivors, previvors, and caregivers, and challenged the artists to create original works of art influenced by their inspirations unique “twists” on cancer. Over the last five months, our pairs have been working closely together. These unexpected relationships developed into systems of support and a place for healing. The artwork honors the inspirations’ experiences with cancer but it also celebrates the new relationships that have since developed. Tonight we honor their journeys and celebrate the importance of storytelling and utilizing the arts as a mechanism for healing. *All proceeds from ticket sales and the art auction will go towards growing Brushes with Cancer in the United States, Canada, and around the world.*

RULES OF THE SILENT AUCTION

- To sign up to bid in the silent auction, please register with OneCause/BidPal mobile bidding at <https://one.bidpal.net/brusheschicago/welcome> on your phone. See volunteers at Check In for assistance.
- A bid is construed as a legal agreement to purchase the listed item(s) at the amount indicated.
- All bidders must be 18 years of age or above.
- All winning bids must be settled before the end of the event by cash, check or credit card.
- The auction will close at 9:30 p.m., at which time the highest bid will be declared the winner.
- Twist Out Cancer is acting as a consignee of the art for the purposes of this auction. All sales are final, as is, and are between the organization and the buyer.
- If conflict arises over identifying the last valid bid for an item(s) or in the event there is any confusion over any of the rules or procedures of this auction, Twist Out Cancer reserves the right to determine the winner or to impose an alternate method of closing the item for interested parties, including, but not limited to, cancelling the sale or requiring a sealed final bid. All Twist Out Cancer decisions are final and binding on all participants.
- Winning bidders are expected to take the artwork or items with them from the venue at the conclusion of the evening. All art will be packaged. Shipping can be arranged for a fee.



Program

6:00 PM	Performance by David DaCosta Opening Ceremony for Artists, Inspirations and Their Families
6:30 PM	Welcome and toast by Jenna, Gudrun and Mardi
6:40 PM	Shawn Strong Award Presentation
6:55 PM	Photos of Participants
7:00 PM	General Admission & Art Auction
8:00 PM	General Program Featuring: Anthony Ponce, <i>Emcee</i> Brushes with Cancer Video Jenna Benn Shersher, <i>Founder and Executive Director of Twist Out Cancer</i> Loriana Hernandez Aldama Keynote Address
8:30 PM	Jenny Conlee Presentation The Twist
8:40 PM	Jesse Palter Performance
9:30 PM	Art Auction Closes & Raffle Winners Announced
9:30 PM	DJ John Simmons
11:30 PM	Event Conclusion

PARTICIPATING SPEAKERS

Jenna Benn Shersher, Founder and Executive Director

Jenna Benn Shersher is a 38 year old cancer survivor, civil rights advocate, world traveler and tiny twister who dreams big. In December 2010, Jenna was diagnosed with a rare blood disorder called Grey Zone Lymphoma that at the time affected fewer than 200 people. Instead of surrendering to cancer, she was determined to find meaning in her suffering. In the course of her fight, Jenna figured out creative ways to leverage social media to process her experience, and in turn create a community that became invested in her fight. In the course of a year, Jenna battled cancer and founded the nonprofit organization, Twist Out Cancer. Jenna's story was selected as a top ten best read by Mashable. She is a blogger for the Huffington Post and has made television appearances on all major media outlets, including Forbes, CNN, NBC5, CBS, ABC7, WGN and Fox32. She has also been featured in the New York Times, the LA Times, Wall Street Journal, the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times. Jenna is a mentor angel with Imerman Angels, and was an Honored Hero and advocate for Team in Training and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. She was recently nominated as Health Hero by Philadelphia Magazine. She is an ROI fellow with the Schusterman Foundation and serves on the board of the Anti-Defamation League. Jenna received her Bachelor's degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada and her Masters in Social Enterprise and Administration from Columbia University. She resides in Philadelphia with her husband Dr. David Shersher and their daughter Noa Pearl who is a miracle.



Loriana Hernandez-Aldama



Loriana is a cancer survivor, inspirational speaker and an Emmy award-winning journalist with more than 20 years of on-air television experience, anchoring prime-time and morning news, as well as health/medical reporting on a national and local level. It wasn't until Loriana's own cancer diagnosis (AML Leukemia) and fierce one year battle that she uncovered the biggest story of her career. It was then that she discovered the true medical advantages of leading a healthy life - her doctors told her that the more fit she was, the more aggressively they could treat her and the better her chances of survival. Inspired by this, Loriana founded ArmorUp for LIFE with the core message of "PREhabilitation" meeting the medicine halfway, showing up fit for the fight and becoming an equal partner in your own success.

ENTERTAINMENT

Anthony Ponce

Anthony Ponce is a veteran Chicago journalist who grew up in the northern suburbs.

In July 2016, he gained national attention when he left his job in TV news to become a full-time Lyft driver, launching the podcast Backseat Rider. As a Lyft-driving storyteller, Anthony brings audiences the wide-ranging, hilarious, touching, sometimes bizarre, and always real conversations he has with his passengers.

Anthony joined FOX 32 in 2018 to co-anchor Good Day Chicago and launch Backseat Rider as a news segment. In returning to television, Anthony's goal is to remind Chicagoans that while specific issues can be divisive, we have a lot more in common than is often depicted on the news.

Before joining FOX 32, Anthony spent nearly a decade as a reporter/anchor at NBC Chicago, and spent years as a reporter in Indiana. He has a Master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University and did his undergrad at Indiana University.

Anthony — a Sox fan — lives on the North Side with his wife, Maggie, and son, Theo.



DJ John Simmons



John Simmons is a veteran Chicago DJ with more than twenty years of experience in music. Having a solid foundation in disco/boogie, golden era hip-hop, R&B, & jazz, John caught the house music/techno bug in the early '90s and soon found himself immersed in Chicago's then thriving underground rave scene. John has played alongside many of the industry's greats, including Frankie Knuckles, Farley "Jackmaster" Funk, Juan Atkins, Derrick May, Derrick Carter, Mark Farina, Paul Johnson, Moodymann, Mark de Clive-Lowe, Kaytranada, and many more. His several year stint as a resident DJ at Smartbar in Chicago was a highlight that saw him sharing the stage with some of these giants on a regular basis. John has traveled well, performing in New York, Detroit, Miami, Los Angeles, San Francisco, Seattle, Montreal, Mexico City, Berlin, Cairo, and many more cities. John's work on Future Forward's "Welcome 2 Chicago" EP (Kompute Musik) was a throwback to the heyday of jack, with a sharp electronic edge. John is currently working on projects with Tevo Howard and Paul Johnson to name a few. John Simmons is a purveyor of music that stays true to the soulful sounds of the past while constantly pushing things forward.

David Da Costa

David Da Costa plays the Spanish guitar with high intensity. He is a French native, of Portuguese and Spanish descent and inherited an avid curiosity to explore musical genres and folklores. He lived in various countries and gathered an eclectic musical palette along the way. Without a doubt, his music resonates with images of his travels and encounters. You can hear flamenco strumming fury, feel odd Balkan dance moves, taste bites of rock riffs, and contemplate classical moods. Contemporary, delightful, full of surprises.



Jenny Conlee-Drizos

Jenny is a pianist, organist, and accordionist who performs and records with many bands including The Decemberists, Black Prairie, Paper Bellows, EccoH EccoH EccoH, Casey Neill and the Norway Rats, The Minus 5, Jerry Joseph and the Jackmormons, Calobo, Little Sue, Ashleigh Flynn, and under her own name in the Jenny Conlee Quartet.

As well as performing, Conlee has worked as a composer for commercials, short films (including “The Kid” by Jeff Winograd), and theater (Black Prairie composed the music for Oregon Children’s Theater’s production of “A Storm in the Barn”). Jenny and her husband, Steve Drizos, released their first full-length release of their own music, an instrumental album called “French Kayaking Music” in 2015. The music was written for and inspired by the documentary “Voyagers Without Trace,” a film about 3 French kayakers who boat the Green and Colorado rivers in 1938.

Jenny was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2011 and currently is in remission.



Marjorie Kerr

I am a 40 year-old single mother of four; one son, three daughters. I am a full-time home health aide for Illinois Department of Rehabilitation, and a contracted community health field employee for the South Side Diabetes Project of the University of Chicago. I was introduced to Twist Out Cancer by my cousin, Dana Phipps, who is a second year artist with the foundation. She encouraged me to submit my story of my daughter’s battle with pediatric cancer, and I am so glad I followed her advice!

Jesse Palter

Jesse Palter's blazed a lot of trails in her life. Growing up she performed musical theatre, played piano, trumpet and oboe, and created tracks with legendary musicians Andrew Gold and the Grammy winning Bass Brothers. Establishing herself as a jazz singer, she studied at the University of Michigan School Of Music, won Outstanding Jazz Vocalist at three consecutive Detroit Music Awards, shared the stage with genre legends and headlined at legendary clubs like NYC's Blue Note. Honing her chops as a singer-songwriter, she recorded and toured as half of Palter Ego with keyboardist Sam Barsh. All of these musical trails laid the foundation for her emergence as a solo recording artist in her own right with her full-length debut album on Artistry Music (a division of Mack Avenue Music Group), featuring her most vulnerable, brave and brutally honest songs yet.



Palter comes from a long line of creative genetics. Her great-grandfather invented iconic award-winning shoe designs including the platform, the slingback and the peep-toe. Her great-grandmother was Estée Lauder's interior decorator, and her grandmother was a notable New York opera prodigy. It comes as no surprise that all of the songs on Paper Trail, with ten tracks of aggressive, piano-pounding pop/rock, were written by Palter. Like an open book, she's working out snapshots of her life through song and lyric.

By the time she signed to Artistry Music (a division of Mack Avenue Music Group) as the label's first pop artist, she'd already written an astounding number of songs. Every time she sidles up to the piano to pen a new one, the Detroit born and bred/Los Angeles based multi-instrumentalist, commits to the discipline of perfecting her craft. She focuses on strengthening her creative muscles to explore what melodies, lyrics and chord changes work best to tell the story.

Paper Trail was produced by veteran keyboardist Doug Petty (Céline Dion, Britney Spears), who agreed to produce Palter's music, regardless of whether she had a label deal or not, shortly after they first met. His meticulous, mad scientist approach to production allowed her to keep the integrity of her songs from demo stage through the various layers and textures brought forth to compliment her artistry. Testament to this artistry is the caliber of studio musicians who were invited to play on the project – including bassists Tim Lefebvre (David Bowie's Blackstar) and Alex AI (Michael Jackson) and drummers Matt Chamberlain (Fiona Apple, Pearl Jam) and Aaron Sterling (John Mayer).

Listen to the music: <https://fanlink.to/PaperTrail>

Jesse is available on Instagram/Facebook/Twitter @jessepalter



PARTICIPATING ARTISTS AND INDIVIDUALS TOUCHED BY CANCER

MEET THE MATCHES

INSPIRATIONS

Jamie Bitton
Helen Kornick
Daniella (Darren) Tannenwald
Tracy Ahrens
Karen Tabascio
Rebecca Whitener
Susie Held
Leo Flores
Adriane Fink
Julie Kaschke Rashid
Lil Rel Howery
Rachel Reichblum
Lauren Keppel
Morgan Katz
Vanessa Hood
Angela Thedinga
Joseph LasCola
Analyse Winans
Alice Wasney
Lindsey Matt
Hillary Rikower
Mark Tyler Neil
Dana Stewart
Monica Garcia Norlander
Misty Lichter
Daniela Lakosilova
Megan Connolly
Marjorie Kerr
Nicole Kaiser
Tiffany Horstein
Ninah F Moore
Anne Agostinelli
Sharon Seeder
Amy Belluomini
Roey Kruvi
Dan Hindin

ARTISTS

Jacqueline Carmody
Meg Frazier
Yossi Veissid
Sujata Gazder
Mignon Dupepe
Dr. David Turok
Jen Stumbaugh
John Stumbaugh
Elisha Apilado
Kevin Pullen
Dana Phipps
Jeffrey Guerrero
Michele Kellner
Cole Andersen
Felicia Olin
Jillian Hampshire
Gentry Woodward
Natalie (Shugailo) Dimitropoulos
Amber Kouba
Anna Reed
Ashley D'Amico
David Piper Jr.
Jae Webb
Kenny Lapins
Taylor Lazzara
Queen L. Hibbler
Anna Feneis
Erika Vazzana
Madeline Schultz
Jenny Conlee- Drizos
Stella Bora
Valerie Paige
Joey Tea
Jackie Hilmes
Pearl Plotkin
Erica Moore

Jamie Zeller Bitton & Jacqueline Carmody

Jamie Zeller Bitton

Chicago, Illinois

Survivor

Twist on Cancer: I am a 10 year Breast Cancer survivor and grateful each and every day to be thriving and enjoying life to the fullest! I knew I had a higher chance of getting Breast Cancer since I carry the BRCA gene. When I was diagnosed in October of 2009, I felt shocked, sad and lost. It was the most difficult time of my life, but I got through it with my amazing village of family and friends who surrounded me with love and support. I was delighted to learn about Brushes with Cancer last year and to know I would be considered as an inspiration for the 2nd time this year. My partnering artist, Jacqueline Carmody, has been a pleasure to partner up with. She made it so easy for me to open up to and share my story. Throughout this experience, I was able to relive my story of survival by expressing to Jackie how I felt and what I went through at that difficult time. I was also able to share more about the positive aspects of my life after surviving Breast Cancer: Moving to Israel to teach English, meeting my husband Liad and giving birth to our daughter Maya Gabriela. We focused on my hopes and dreams as I continue to aspire to reach my goals and desires for the future.

Jacqueline Carmody

Chicago, Illinois

Artist Statement: I chose to focus my painting on Jamie's life post breast cancer. This part of her life demonstrates strength, growth, hope, and love. I chose the title "Meant to be here" because each detail, location, and experience within the story seemed as if it were an important ingredient to her life's plan. Jamie did not let breast cancer hold her back. She continued to challenge herself in new countries and build healthy relationships. Whether each experience was negative or positive, it was meant to be in Jamie's narrative.

The vibrant colors within the artwork reflect Jamie's refreshing and confident energy. The triangle on the left represents her home in Tel Aviv, Israel. Jamie lived in Israel for many years throughout her 20's and 30's. Tel Aviv is where she learned to become a strong and independent woman, and also where she met her the love of her life. The middle circle portrays her current family which involves her husband and daughter. From the moment I met Jamie, it was evident that these two people are her whole world. I chose the image of trees to symbolize her family because they have strong roots and are grounded. The triangle on the right represents her current home in Chicago where she was raised, and also resides today. My intention is that this painting will evoke passion and hope within the viewer because after meeting Jamie those emotions were thriving within myself.





1.
"Meant to Be Here"

Acrylic

24x36

\$900

Helen Kornick & Meg Frazier

Helen Kornick
Chicago, Illinois
Caregiver



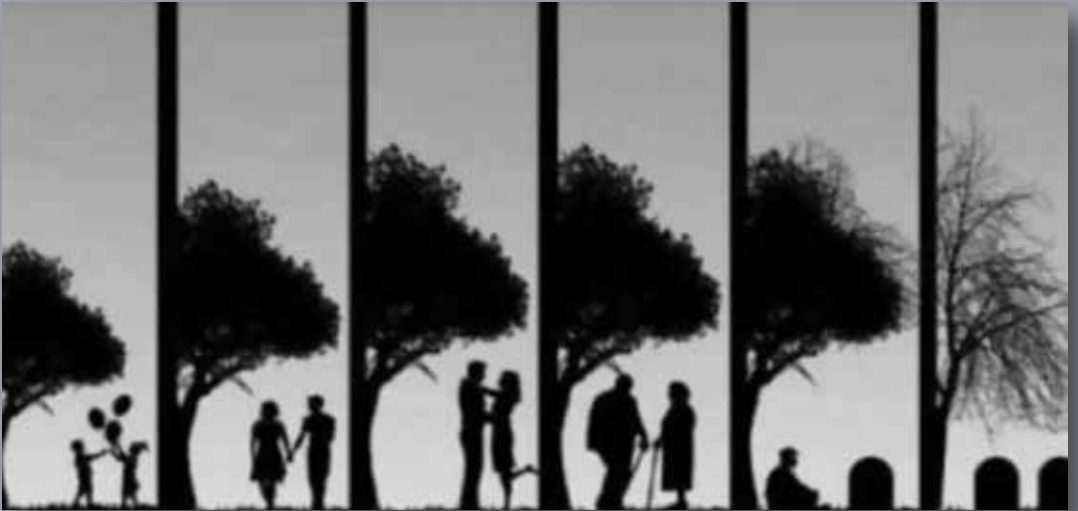
Twist on Cancer: A difficult task to be in search of visualization of such an abstract concept as legacy. One can Chronicle a life's worth of gifts to the world-companionship, talents, love, achievements. Or one could offer photographs of times of triumph and joy overcoming sadness, celebrations and milestones. But legacy is more than the sum of these parts.

Heather's legacy is in the people she impacted just by being kind and welcoming into her world. In her short lifetime of relationships, an army's worth of loving, compassionate, and proactive individuals was nurtured and encouraged to care deeper, believe strongly in the power of what if and know the joy of having a wonderful person in their corner. How do we capture that kind of legacy on one canvas?

Our daughter Heather was a young adult when she heard the diagnosis of Stage IV ultra rare Adrenal cortisol cancer (ACC). She lived to 5 years (7% odds) and lived deeply and thoroughly every day. She had always faced life with a big smile and was passionate about her friendships, her Jewish identity and her family, especially her younger brother. She was actually a big sister to everyone. She taught us all how to step up to challenges and find moments of gratitude on terrible situations. She would always be looking for the lesson in every experience and was intentional in her words and actions. Her life brought our family joy and so much responsibility to continue her legacy and the spirit of her zest for life to our daily existence beyond her 26 years. May we all be blessed to create our own legacy and use Heather's example in that quest.

Meg Frazier
Chicago, Illinois
www.meg2019.com

Artist Statement: This is the 2nd time Helen and I have worked together for Brushes with Cancer, and it was equally fulfilling. Since our experience last time we have developed a strong bond as friends, and I have watched her grow so much as a wife and a mother. She inspires me to continue to stay strong when I am struggling and constantly reminds me the importance of leaving things better than you found them. This piece represents the importance of never forgetting the precious times, remembering the lessons learned along the way, and passing them on to future generations. I wanted this piece to be simple, yet powerful, much like how Helen and I both try to live our lives. We understand the beauty in giving back, and we take great pride in being selected to give back to this great cause that brought us together as lifelong friends.



2.

"Seeking Legacy"

Acrylic on Canvas

36"x48"

\$3600

Daniella Tannenwald & Yossi Veissid

Daniella Tannenwald
Modiin, Israel
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Life is full of choices. Some we make, some we are forced to make. If we are forced to make a choice, is it a choice? I never did ask the question “why me”? I never had the time to ask. Nor the choice. This hurricane in my c cup came on in full force , over and over and over again. Did I learn the lessons? Clearly not the first time, nor the second, maybe the third?still not! But I do have a choice, the choice to decide that there isn’t going to be a fourth time. The pain, anguish, fear....it isn’t going to happen again.

What a mess? So much confusion. Decisions I couldn’t make at the time of fighting for my life, decisions I had made for me. It wasn’t about me. It was about my children, about their mother, about being a wife, a friend , a daughter. But I’m a pin cushion. A ragged doll. A tree that has lost its leaves standing bare for all to see. Exposed in the medical world, for all to examine. I was a test of time.

I fought this hurricane in my c cup....with love, devotion, dedication , the power and strength like no other . My children need their mother. I didn’t have a choice. I had to make the decisions. Today, I live this nightmare in my mind. But in my heart, I’m a flourishing tree. With leaves that blow in the wind. The choice to thrive, not just survive.

Yossi Veissid
Kibbutz HaMa’apil, Israel

Artist Statement: This piece was inspired by my special encounter with Daniella and the story of her courageous battle with cancer.

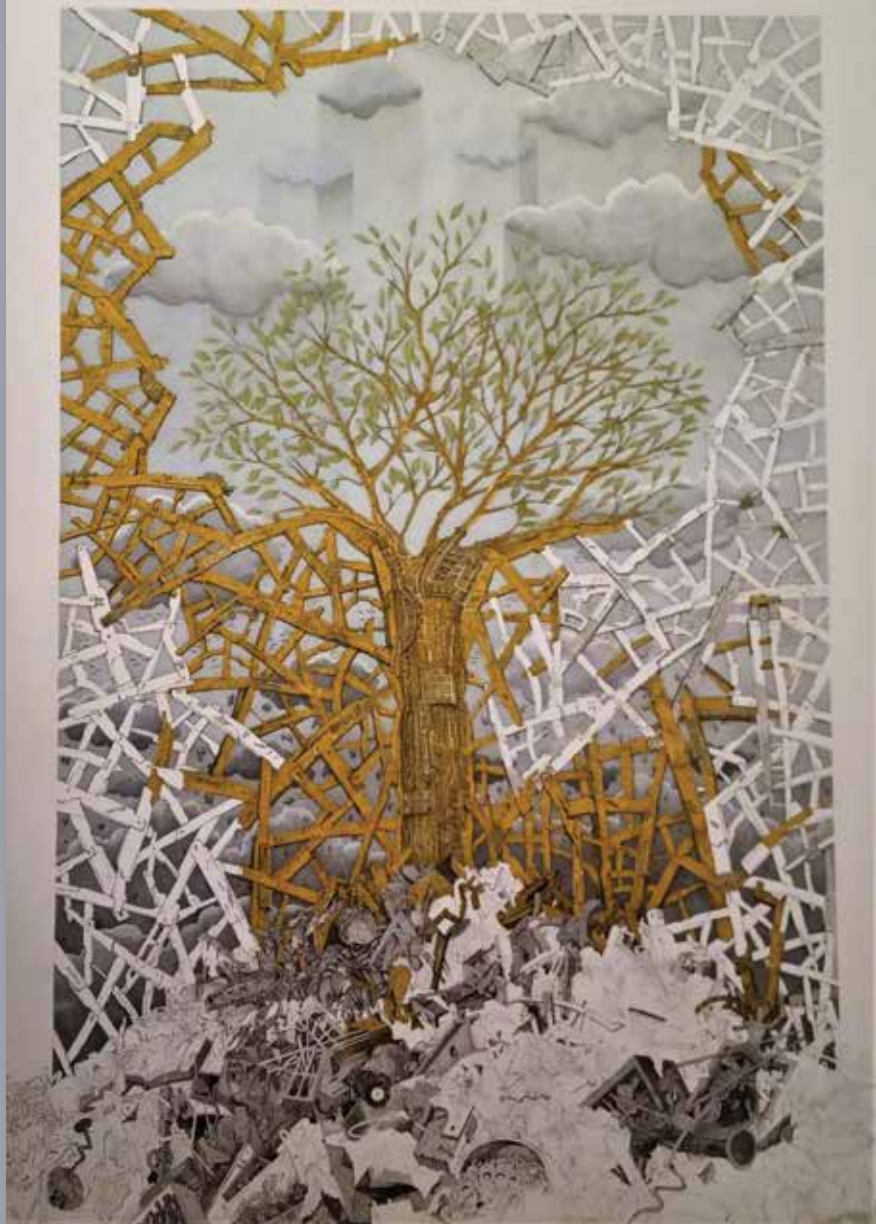
My image is a tree - the tree of life. The work is a tribute to Daniella and to any person struggling with illness and their support system: family, friends, close environment and medicine.

On the front, there is a tree in its first blooming, after having lost its leaves in autumn. It grows out of those leaves and other elements of destruction, which are actually supporting the tree in its renewed growth. This is a description of an uncompromising fight against illness, emphasizing the difficulty and marking hope.

The second layer is the sky in the background. The disease is described by dark clouds that are raining stones instead of water, and are slowly returning to their proper, natural role as providing life-giving rain.

I believe in the energetic power of art to strengthen and heal. I hope this process has been significant and comforting for Daniella as it was for me.

3.
"Blooming"
Ink on paper
100x70 cms
\$1000



Tracy Ahrens & Sujata Gazder

Tracy Ahrens
Momence, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: It is still hard for me to talk about what I have learned in this cancer journey, because that journey has not ended. The unknown hangs like a fog. I'd like to proclaim a profound message for everyone, but my message is only what you see of me today for coming through cancer to this point. I wrote an essay for CURE magazine that noted, "I still am." I watched many people (who I thought valued me) disappear from my life at diagnosis and never return. They wanted to remember me "as I once was." I watched as people, including scarce family members, were indifferent to the battle I fought. I was mostly alone in this war. No family helped me. No partner or children were at my side. The strength that I found to keep moving every day came from God. He kept me here and has shown me many messages I keep receiving. I don't know what He wishes for me by keeping me here. I keep listening and watching and using the talents He has blessed me with. I know others diagnosed with breast cancer who are no longer alive. I hate being alone and fear it will happen again. I ask God to change this setting for me. I wish to love and be loved without hesitation. I aim daily for the smallest of bucket list goals. I cry. I physically hurt. I walk away from negativity without hesitation or regret. I still am.

Sujata Gazder
Chicago, Illinois
www.sujatagazder.com

Artist Statement: TThis Is Sakura. The rear skirt of the gown is hand screen printed and stamped with writing and symbols. The writings are Tracy's poems and essays. The Chinese symbols are "Courage", "Hope", "Love", and "Faith". This is in shades of grey and black representing the past, the struggle, the darkness....the cancer..... and the courage with which this battle has been fought. The layers and ruffles represent the complexity of the disease, as well as the layers of raw emotion and angst experienced.

The front of the dress is straight. The shape represents the strength with which this twist in life has been faced head on. It also symbolizes heading into a new dawn. We see color now. Color signifying renewal, a new start. There is light ahead. The flowers painted on the dress are Cherry blossoms. It is symbolic of the beauty and fragility of life. For those of you who have traveled this difficult road the cherry blossoms are a reminder that life can yet be powerful, glorious and intoxicating. For the rest of us, it makes us pause - marvel at this existence, looking on it with joy and passion. It reminds us to pay attention!



4.
"Sakura"
Fashion
Size 6
\$2700

Karen Tabascio & Mignon Dupepe

Karen Tabascio

Oak Lawn, Illinois

Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Life, as I knew it, all changed one May morning when I was told I had breast cancer. My first thought was how am I going to do this? How do I tell my daughter, a cancer survivor herself? How am I going to be able to take care of my special needs son? Why was this happening to our family AGAIN! I was diagnosed with Stage 3A breast cancer at the age of 49. It took me time to process it all. I underwent a double mastectomy, 5 months of chemo, 33 rounds of radiation. I had a remarkable support system through family & friends. Through the strength of my incredible daughter she taught me how strong I actually am. The everyday smile on my son's face made each day a blessing. It didn't end there. A couple of months after completing treatment I was diagnosed with a benign pituitary macroadenoma. With that surgery came complications. Talk about a twisted couple of years! My faith is strong. Deep down I knew I'd be ok. I have two beautiful children who need me as much as I need them. Life is precious. With it, comes many challenges. It's all in the way you handle these challenges. Life moves at a fast pace. Slow down! Take time for yourself. That's not being selfish. In fact, it's just the opposite. It's healing and you deserve it.

Mignon Dupepe

Wilmette, Illinois

www.creativepossibilitiescounseling.com

Artist Statement: The inspiration is stage 3A breast cancer survivor Karen Tabascio. Cancer has been a common experience within Karen's family as many of the women have been diagnosed with cancer over the years. Karen's daughter, Gina, is a non- Hodgkin's lymphoma survivor and is Karen's personal hero and "rock". Karen describes that it was Gina that encouraged her and supported her throughout her treatment and recovery. Recovery was complicated by surgeries for benign pituitary macro adenoma. Karen shares that it was her daughter, son Anthony, close friends, and her faith that helped her navigate those challenging times in her life. Karen often refers to the symbol/idea of a "rock", strength, resilience, and standing solid with what you value. This theme of rock solid support and her daughter's encouragement to push through each day one day and step at a time during recovery inspired the mountain imagery in the art piece. The three golden mountains represent Karen, Gina, and Anthony. Karen and I created the collaged painted papers on the mountains during lunches together.

The practice of ringing a bell when radiation is completed was very defining and impactful for Karen. This powerful experience combined with her love of gardening and flowers inspired the impetuous to use a bluebell theme for the image. The bluebell flower is enchanting with captivating shape and blue color and is seen as whimsical and

5.

**“Bluebell
Mountain”**

Acrylic paint
and painted
collage papers

24”x36”

\$400



*“The bluebell is the sweetest flower
That waves in summer air
Its blossoms have the mightiest power
to soothe my spirit’s care”*

Emily Bronte

magical. Karen shares those traits of being captivating, whimsical, witty, and colorful. Karen’s memory and personal photographs of clouds in a cross formation outside her backdoor during her recovery was the inspiration for the cross cloud in the painting. Karen was able to find great solace and comfort from that experience—a signal to her that all would be okay.

Karen often speaks of the idea of empowering her children, herself, and others. May this image “have the mightiest power to empower her and soothe her spirit’s care”.

Rebecca Whitener & Dr. David Turok

Rebecca Whitener
Glencoe, Illinois
A Survivor & Previvor



Twist on Cancer: Cancer has been in my life since birth. My paternal grandmother passed away the day before I was born from breast cancer. I grew up thinking that would never affect me. For some reason the presence of breast cancer on your father's side wasn't as concerning to doctors. I know that has since changed. In the midst of my diagnosis tornado, I learned that I have the BRCA2 gene and my family tree can draw a direct line back to my grandmother that I never met. I am thankful to have an answer to the "why," but it doesn't change the fact that being diagnosed with bilateral breast cancer before I had my first mammogram, before I turned 40, any easier to process. My Twist on Cancer is that the real work of healing and processing the insanity of a cancer diagnosis and treatment begins when you give yourself the space to work through the noise inside your head. And that healing and processing may never end. But as long as I am around to heal and process, I am grateful.

Dr. David Turok
Glencoe, Illinois
www.davidthurokart.com

Artist Statement: Rebecca was initially somewhat embarrassed to admit she was an artist as well. But as I learned more about her, and all she has been through, it was apparent how much she used her art and images she liked as therapy and a coping measure. After seeing her sketches, I was the one that was a bit embarrassed to be called the "artist" of the pair. Her stuff is pretty awesome. For the first time as brushes artist, I knew this had to be a true collaborative art piece. Candy (particularly yellow candy- but not Mr. Goodbar!) was her guilty pleasure during treatment. She would teeter between "I shouldn't be doing this-Candy isn't healthy" to "what does it matter anyway?". As a graphic designer, Rebecca quickly got to work on a candy background piece. With so much going on in Rebecca's life in the last few years -moving, motherhood, the C-word!, the re-entry into the graphic design world seemed to give her a spark. A follow up surgery during the process didn't even slow her down. While Cancer has changed Rebecca forever, she is finding her new normal. I am confident that art, graphic design, the number 23 (not for MJ!), VW Beatles, and Candy will help her on her journey.



6.

“The C-Word”

Graphic Design, Acrylic, Resin

36” x 48”

\$2000

Susie Held & Jen Stumbaugh

Susie Held
Minneapolis, Minnesota
Survivor and Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: My family has been affected multiple times and we have determined that we are a very resilient family. Our Dad was only sick for 5 short months and unfortunately he lost his battle in 2015. Both my brother and sister have dealt with Cancer numerous times and due to excellent medical care and their determination to never give up, they have beat the odds.

Jen Stumbaugh
Evanston, Illinois

Artist Statement: I first connected with Susie's family through her daughter, Stephanie, for my first year as an artist for Brushes. We did a piece to honor Susie's father. I've had the privilege of learning a bit more about Susie, her family, and about her own cancer story over the past months. She is unbelievably strong, with a fantastic sense of humor.

For this piece I pictured a family tree with roots that grow deep and hold solid and steady, regardless of what life brings. The two different types of wood represent life before and after a cancer diagnosis. Woven throughout the branches are symbols that stand for her family, as well as symbols of life, abundance, beauty, determination, etc. The gold leaf is the thread of joy that family brings.

Susie came up with the name of the piece, "Resilience." It speaks of the ways cancer has touched her close-knit family; both through multiple diagnoses and through the effect those diagnoses have on their entire family. This piece is a dedication to their resilience.



7.

"Resilience"

Acrylic on canvas, metal leaf

36 X 36

\$400

Leo Flores & John Stumbaugh

Leo Flores
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: I am 61 years old. 10 years ago I went to the hospital because I was really sick and found out I had blood cancer. When the doctors told me that - I said to myself, I am a dead man. This was just the beginning of what was yet to come. I have been falling down slowly and my life will never be the same. I have experienced different side effects from chemotherapy that affects my whole body and mind. The stress and anxiety has been challenging. What I found to be the best therapy of all is Art. Art has saved my life along with chemotherapy. I now am used to it. Thank you Cancer. Cancer keeps me alive.

John Stumbaugh
Chicago, Illinois

Artist Statement: Leo is truly an inspiration. He is an accomplished artist that has been battling leukemia myeloid for over almost 10 years.

One goal was to help create awareness and compassion for what it is like to live with leukemia, a type of cancer of the blood and bone marrow that produces excessive white blood cells.

Leukemia translates as “white blood.”

This collaborative piece features multiple canvases painted by Leo and housed in an interactive structure created by John. The viewer is invited to experience works of Leo’s art that describe his life with leukemia.

“Theatre for One” draws on geometric forms that are a nod to John’s affinity for theatre stage prop design. The piece features thin wood and threaded metal rod elements that speak to exposure and vulnerability. The tidal wave form symbolizes the overwhelming manifestation of emotion. Leo’s encounter with owl feathers found while out on a walk signaled healing to him and inspired the woven surface texture. The single theatre stool portrays the lonely struggle that is the onslaught of cancer.

Leo made clear early in conversations that he wanted to give back. He desired to be part of something bigger than himself, which resonated with John. These are the same reasons for John being a repeat participant in the brushes program as an artist.

This piece is John’s invitation to experience their collaborative work, and to rally behind this wonderful man named Leo, who is no longer alone in this fight.

8.

"Theatre for One"

Wood, metal, feathers,
painted canvas
72"h x 30"w x 38"d

\$1,000



Adriane Fink & Elisha-Rio P. Apilado

Adriane Fink
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: I was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2018. After discovering the cancer had spread to my liver, it was recategorized as Stage IV even before my initial treatment began. Eight rounds of chemotherapy and one year later, my cancer is happily stable, and I've discovered my new normal: targeted therapy drug infusions and other injections to reduce my estrogen levels, strengthen my bones, and keep progression at bay.

My life has long been intertwined with the arts and the Brushes with Cancer experience has provided me with a new perspective of the last year of my life through my artist's eyes.

While cancer is *literally* the worst, my diagnosis has taught this type-A personality to let go and not plan. I have learned to ask for and accept help. I have learned to prioritize my life outside of work. Most importantly, I have learned that nothing is promised and that we have just one opportunity to experience this wild adventure we call life.

Life is uncertain for all of us. We may not be able to control much, but what we can do is throw everything we have at living out what we value most. Building an incredible life, however short or long, that leaves the world a better place than how we found it. Loving, supporting, and accepting others – just as they are and without restrictions – fully and completely. Learn a new language. Take that trip. Say yes to what life offers and be so grateful.

Elisha-Rio P. Apilado

Chicago, Illinois <https://www.dontforgetthehyphen.com/>

Artist Statement: A kite flies around wherever the wind takes it. Although it swoops, skims and swirls around without knowing which direction the wind will take it, the kite knows it will continue to glide freely upward and onward into the sky.

After meeting Adriane for the first time, I was submerged in a journey as she shared with me a story that came from all different directions. Hearing about every trip she took and her endless search for adventure was inspiring. I felt so much positivity while listening to her story and reading about her journey on her online blog. Her positive perspective during a challenging time in her life is admirable. She stayed true to herself and was kind to herself when things didn't go according to plan. Just like the kite, Adriane was pulled into many different directions, some jarring and some gentle; no matter what, she continued to remain unbreakable.

The kite is a collaged assortment of Adriane's souvenirs, photographs and ticket stubs from her travels. The string leads back to a passport you can interact with containing her words off of one of her blog posts, "A few words for future me." Although the sky is full of mixed white and dark clouds, the kite remains strong and continues to move forward, just like my Inspiration, Adriane.

9.
"Upward & Onward,
She remains
unbreakable"

Mixed Media
(collage, graphite,
acrylic, India ink)

24"x36"

\$400



Julie Kaschke Rashid & Kevin Pullen

Julie Kaschke Rashid

Chicagoland area

Survivor



Twist on Cancer: I was diagnosed with Stage III colon cancer as an athletic, energetic 48 year old single mother of four children one year after I separated from an abusive marriage. My husband of 21 years is a financial adviser and controlled all of our money. I was working two jobs making less than 30 grand a year and found myself applying for medicaid and food-stamps when my husband refused to pay any child support or mortgage, or share any of our rental property income. His financial abuse escalated as my life was in crisis.

I drove myself to the ER with severe abdominal pain on October 4, 2016 and entered into emergency surgery and did not come home. I had no family in the area who could help and my children were at home on their own. As I woke from surgery with 42 staples, tubes from every location and a colostomy bag less than 24 hours later, I felt blessed to be alive. Friends and strangers came from all over with food for my children, rides to school and doctor appointments. From friends folding our clothes and washing dishes, to the principal of my school teacher friend who let her use sick time to sit with me through chemo so I would never have to be alone. Other friends lent me their mothers and aunts and even sent their husbands over to assist at times. From my 16-year old daughter having to wash what was left of my hair because I was too weak to raise my arms, my sons who silently witnessed me crawling on the floor to vomit or having colostomy bag accidents never complained or expected more, to friends who sent encouraging texts, slept in my hospital room overnight in their work uniform so they could be at their jobs the next day, sending me Pinterest flops and cute guys with colostomy bags to make me laugh, I had never felt so loved in my entire life.

Dr. Chenglu Liu my surgeon and Dr. Pankaj Kumar, my oncologist are my knights in shining armor, the only men that have advocated for me and have become my heroes. The staff at OSF Streator Hospital, St. Elizabeth Hospital, Home Health and Fox River Cancer Center were the absolutely best care I could ever dreamed of. They taught me how to befriend my diagnosis and not fight it. Their compassion and knowledge and, most of all, their energy kept me alive more than once when I could hardly breathe. In the middle of chemotherapy, I was offered and accepted a job as a caseworker for Public Aid - officially the Department of Human Services, which also gave me health and life insurance after diagnosis. It came with compassionate bosses who worked with my chemo and surgery schedule and accommodated my fatigue by allowing me to nap during lunch in my electric blanket, while I served my community of my brothers and sisters in need. I was touched by the human soul's capacity to love and to give. I learned that God does not promise us an easy life but He promises He will be with us every step of every day.

As I approach my third year of check ups this month, I believe cancer was truly a gift, I feel like my spouse's abuse that terrorized my soul was kept away by an court order of protections - as well as the hospital staff's new visiting policies. The tumor that may have been aggravated by him and had invaded my body was exorcised. Chemo purified me and I was knitted together with a new body and new life - one far stronger and better than I ever believed would be true, I have since been able to get a job promotion, continue to raise my children and get my life back, one day at a time.

A legal divorce has still not happened as my estranged husband continues to manipulate the court system to delay

10.

“It Scrambles Your Life”

\$2600

any financial justice, perpetuating the courts neglect of the women and children under their jurisdiction. However, I am emotionally and spiritually free. If the price I had to pay was poverty and cancer, then it was worth every penny. I love Gilda Radner's - cancer sister's words, "I wanted a perfect ending. Now I've learned, the hard way, that some poems don't rhyme and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it without knowing what is going to happen next, Delicious ambiguity," So it is with all my heart and soul that I say with confidence. "I do not know what the future holds, but I know who holds the future."

Kevin Pullen

St. Simons, Georgia

Artist Statement: A kite flies around wherever the wind takes it. Although it swoops, skims and swirls around without knowing which direction the wind will take it, the kite knows it will continue to glide freely upward and onward into the sky.

After meeting Adriane for the first time, I was submerged in a journey as she shared with me a story that came from all different directions. Hearing about every trip she took and her endless search for adventure was inspiring. I felt so much positivity while listening to her story and reading about her journey on her online blog. Her positive perspective during a challenging time in her life is admirable. She stayed true to herself and was kind to herself when things didn't go according to plan. Just like the kite, Adriane was pulled into many different directions, some jarring and some gentle; no matter what, she continued to remain unbreakable.

The kite is a collaged assortment of Adriane's souvenirs, photographs and ticket stubs from her travels. The string leads back to a passport you can interact with containing her words off of one of her blog posts, "A few words for future me." Although the sky is full of mixed white and dark clouds, the kite remains strong and continues to move forward, just like my Inspiration, Adriane.



Lil Rel Howery & Dana Phipps

Lil Rel Howery
Los Angeles, California
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: I learned that life is short and you should always let the people you love know how you feel about them while they are still here.

Dana Phipps
Chicago, Illinois

Artist Statement: Lil Rel losing his mother and brother to cancer hit close to home. I lost both my mother and sister to the same illness. His story was very relatable. The emotional struggle. The heartache and pain. Our conversations were therapeutic for the both of us. Lil Rel's positive outlook was inspirational. Although his mother and brother are physically gone, their spirits live on forever. He keeps them alive in his heart daily. He finds comfort in knowing they both are watching over him. He is thankful for the memories built, the bond that was shared, and the unconditional love he feels from them both.



11.
"Always Watching"

Acrylic
24×30

\$300

Rachel Reichblum & Jeffrey Guerrero

Rachel Reichblum
Chicago, Illinois
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: Life isn't a guarantee, death is. Live each day with the love you'd give on your last.

Jeffrey Guerrero

Chicago, IL
jeffguerrero.com / IG: @jeffguerrero

Artist Statement: When I first connected with Rachel, I remember leaving our conversation so inspired. Even though we had to do all of our meetings virtually, I felt connected right away to her. Besides being around the same age, we have pretty similar personalities, and of course, love talking. Rachel is an amazing person who's not afraid to be vulnerable if it means connecting people together. To go through such a whirlwind of emotions from loss and still have such a positive outlook is so inspiring. She took her grief and created this great community to remind people they're not alone (@ThatGoodGrief on Instagram), reaching 12,000+ followers daily. Propelling this social conversation is so important and I know she's helped instill love and hope into so many lives because of it. I am honored to have worked with Rachel to create this piece together. I got to learn so much about these wonderful individuals from Rachel and wanted to capture their personalities on canvas. From stories Rachel told me, to looking at family photos, to reading letters from friends—you easily gather how loved these two are and how much of an impact they left on others. Even in their darkest times, her parents were this beaming light that resonates to this day: in Rachel, in loved ones, and more. Thank you Rachel for sharing your story, their story, and for letting me be part of it.



12.

“Sometimes the light...”

Digital painting

18x24

\$400

Lauren Keppel & Michele Kellner

Lauren Keppel
Wheaton, IL
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: Caring for my mom as she battled ovarian cancer, and ultimately watching her body succumb to the disease, was both utterly heart-breaking and completely beautiful. There were many perspectives developed and lessons learned, but the strongest piece of knowledge I've been left with is the understanding that we are all better served when we lower the guard—when we drop the fear, and instead make choices fueled by love and hope, even when knowing that with those things comes risk. I wish it weren't so cliché, but my mom's cancer journey reinforced for me a true understanding of gratitude. It left me with the knowledge that sometimes the things we most wish we could have changed or avoided are the things that leave us with the clearest understanding of who we are and what we're capable of.

Michele Kellner
Chicago, Illinois
oldsoulsnewshoes.blogspot.com

Artist Statement: My inspiration, Lauren Keppel, is the survivor of her mother's ovarian cancer. Lauren was 32, her mom Amy Wagner, was 56 when she died October 5, 2014.

In April, 2014, Lauren and Amy recorded an interview.

Amy said: "I want you to know, We aren't done. I might not be here in a body, but I'm still going to be around, and I know there will be communication because that is just the way things are. And It will be in a way that makes perfect sense for you, just like it will for Trevor and everyone else I will want to communicate with."

When I heard this after completing the image, I knew this image to be that, a communication.



13.

"Wings of Love, A Communication"

Photography

38x28

\$5000

Morgan Katz & Cole Andersen

Morgan Katz
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Not available at press time.

Cole Andersen

Naperville, Illinois
www.coleandersen.squarespace.com

Artist Statement: This painting displays a young girl who is standing in the middle of a yellow lotus flower in full bloom. The lotus flower is positioned just above a heavily blackened area, which resembles the way the lotus flower will naturally appear above water after it grows from the bottom of a lake or swamp. The remaining background of the painting is quite expressive, as it is filled with an aura of swirling blue and green brush strokes. My inspiration and I agreed that this painting should represent a journey or transformation of some kind. The lotus flower does have a rather unique transformation being that they are beautiful things that grow from muddy waters. I reflected on this notion for some time and found that this flower was the best at symbolizing how enlightenment can come from suffering or how people can rise from the darkness of the world. I was very humbled to learn about my inspiration's battle with cancer and I was also very moved by her ability to see the good things throughout her journey. That being said, I wanted this painting to shed as much light on the positive energies that can be found at the end of hardship.

14.
"Emerging
Lotus"
Acrylic
30 x 40
\$85



Vanessa Hood & Felicia Olin

Vanessa Hood

Pewaukee, Wisconsin

Survivor



Twist on Cancer: My twist on cancer arrived at age 25 and healthy. It's propelled me to be more of a philanthropist. A Philadelphia Positive, Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia diagnosis and subsequent Bone Marrow Transplant exposed me to numerous organizations focused on impacting others like me. I truly enjoy giving back to them in multiple facets. My husband joined the National Marrow Donor Program and donated his marrow to save another man's life. My second chance has allowed me to not get hung up on little things that just seem trivial now. It's increased my urgency to travel and experience the world. I overcame my fear of public speaking by standing up and telling my story to groups up to 400. "Kicking cancer's ass" has been my motto from day one and I will continue to do that every day. I'm not grateful I had cancer but grateful for some of the things in my life because of it. Some days I feel chewed up and spit out but always pick myself up and keep going. I feel a profound sense of needing to live my life to the fullest because my donor gave me a second chance. My vision of how my life would play out changed once I heard the words "you have cancer." It's hard to look back and think about the connections I wouldn't have without my diagnosis. Even though cancer tends to be a bigger part than I'd like due to continued chemotherapy I remind myself I am more than my cancer and I will thrive.

Felicia Olin

Springfield, Illinois

Feliciaolin.com

Artist Statement: This piece was inspired by a conversation I had with Vanessa where she spoke so eloquently and beautifully about a time in her life. I knew immediately what I was going to paint after our conversation. The character in the painting is not a portrait based on a photo of her but rather a feeling as she described it. Christmas time and winter have deep meaning to her. At a low point in her life, she was working on a puzzle with a pathway on it. She was waiting for a bone marrow donor and the pathway on the puzzle led off into the distance and she thought about the end of the path being death and the unknown. Winter is also important because it is when she was notified they had found a donor. The white tree patterns represent veins and white blood cells flowing through, healing her. A significant moment for Vanessa was when she was looking out of her window and saw a deer who was so close that she could see the snowflakes resting on its eyelashes. In that moment she was so appreciative of the world, of beauty, and life. I have taken all of these elements and combine them with some of her favorite colors to create this piece.

15.

“Stopping On The
Path To Marvel
At The Beauty Of
It All”

Acrylic
24” x 36”
\$500



Angela Thedinga & Jillian Hampshire

Angela Thedinga
Chicago, Illinois
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: Cancer taught me that life is a journey that we all experience together - and art is a beautiful way to process, honor and savor that journey.

Jillian Hampshire

Chicago, Illinois
www.perrcolate.com

Artist Statement: I met with my inspiration a handful of times over the past year and the experience was remarkable. We instantly connected. It was really beautiful to meet someone completely new and hear first hand, their experience with something so painful in life. At the end of our last meeting, I asked Angela what she thought a good theme might be for the art. She said boundaries. This piece represents the challenge of balancing personal boundaries in life to maintain one's self. Especially when you're determined to give all that you possibly can to those that you love. In this piece, you see a woman, peering through the boundaries. Although chaotic, there is still beauty and even a space of calm. The colors were inspired by her brilliantly blue eyes.



16.
"Boundaries"

Acrylic
36" x 36"

\$1000

Joseph LasCola & Gentry Woodward

Joseph LasCola
Kamas, Utah
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: It's a great way to connect with a complete stranger, become friends and both share your stories (both cancer and non-cancer related).

Gentry Woodward

Denver, Colorado
[instagram.com/gwarrenart](https://www.instagram.com/gwarrenart)

Artist Statement: "The Trip of a Lifetime" is an artistic interpretation of the life of Joseph LasCola. Being paired with Joe came at a time of transition in the artist's life, which helped created a closer bond between the two. Several hours and FaceTimes later, not only did Joe evoke the inspiration for the art on the canvas you see, but also an inspiration on the canvas of the artist's life and soul that can never be forgotten. This painting is the story of the life of a stranger, turned friend. Beginning in Chicago where he spent most of his life, and onto Utah where life would forever change, this work represents major "stops" along the path Joe's life has taken. After receiving his diagnosis of Myeloid Leukemia, Joe's life paused, but never stopped. With drive foreign to most, Joe built a Chicago-inspired popcorn company sure to take Utah by storm. A future still to be trod, the road fades into a play on Joe's mantra- "Good Vibes Only." An artistic ode to the King of Good Vibes, the work sends the viewer off into life with the sentiment that "every little thing is going to be all right." Step back, take a deep breath, and know that regardless of the stops along the way, the journey of any life is beautiful.

17.
"The Trip of a
Lifetime"
Mixed Media
36"X48"X1.5"
\$1750



Analyse Winans & Natalie (Shugailo) Dimitropoulos

Analyse Winans
Chicago
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: My personal experience with cancer has been an anomaly. It can't be described. Cancer took my father from this earth, but created an everlasting memory and fused our loving father-daughter bond even tighter than I imagined it could ever be. Because of cancer, I was ultimately healed from the years my father was absent from my life. Three months of being my father's caregiver allowed a lifetime of peace and memories. A love that can never be touched. A true father-daughter love I've always yearned for.

Natalie Shugailo Dimitropoulos
Chicago
suburbanwarriorart.com

Artist Statement: This artwork is about the constant passage of time, how change is inevitable and also beautiful and transformative. There is a flow in life that never ceases, and even when we experience hardship or loss we must continue to stay in that flow. We can also find the brightest light in the darkest times, as my inspiration taught me. A beautiful relationship emerged from tragedy with her father, and the time she had with him that came from this became precious and life changing. She shared with me that realizing how much time has passed and continues to pass truly amazes her each day, and it was that insight that really inspired me to create a piece that is transcendent and portrays a series of layers, all of which address the others and contribute to a complete visual, much like all of our life experiences. The colors are bright and cheerful, representing both my inspiration and her father's outlook on life. They always stayed positive and upbeat, even in the face of serious circumstances. I felt a deep understanding for the story that was shared with me and the vulnerability it took to share it was also something I put into this piece. It is made with a technique that cannot be undone and takes total trust to achieve. My hope is for it to evoke a sense of calm and levity, as well as hold space for reflection and inner peace.



18.
“The Sun Sets, The Sun Rises”
spray paint on canvas
24x36
\$750

Alice Wasney & Amber Kouba

Alice Wasney
Park Forest, Illinois



Twist on Cancer: I spent last fall doing treatment for breast cancer, and went on with my life. Or so I thought. In the back of my mind, there's still the feeling of what could have been, what still could be, with reminders coming with regular mammograms and checkups. I've recovered well medically, but I'm realizing lately that, as much as I've stayed positive about the whole process, I should have allowed and acknowledged other feelings, too, because they're there, whether I want to see them or not. The fear, the adjustment in self-image, the struggle between "everything's fine" and "Wow! I have cancer." are just as real as the surgical scar, and part of the true picture of the whole journey, even if the journey hasn't been as physically taxing as some. Anyone who knows me wouldn't have seen major changes. I still wear the same clothes. My body doesn't look any different from the outside. It's in my mind and heart, in the memory of kindness and concern from medical caregivers, the knowledge that life can change just that quickly, especially the awareness that everyone has a story that might not be visible but still deserves respect and compassion. It's okay to live your own story, and walk where that path leads. I tell friends, "be gentle with yourself and take time" when they're grieving. It's good advice, even to myself.

Amber Kouba

Chicago, Illinois
www.amberkoubapsychicartist.weebly.com

Artist Statement: As a Psychic Artist I play in the field of energy and I use my ability to visualize energy to inspire my creations.

The Revival is a journey of reconnection. At the center is a blue multi-faceted energy that Alice is reconnecting to and an aspect she desires to be seen by the world. This is who Alice is at the core; it is her true essence. On each side, created from her blue are two powerfully strong aspects of who she is, a loving wife and mother. Flowing from the top and bottom is a healing gold vibration creating space for her to reconnect to her true essence and have it be even more present in her life. In spite of all the chaos that surrounds her, she finds strength in who she is at the core which only empowers her ability to be a loving wife and mother.

My time spent with Alice and getting to know her was one filled with wonder and awe. It was an absolute honor to create a painting inspired by such a vibrant and courageous woman.



19.

"The Revival"

Oil Paint on Canvas

36 x 36

\$1240

Lindsey Matt & Anna Reed

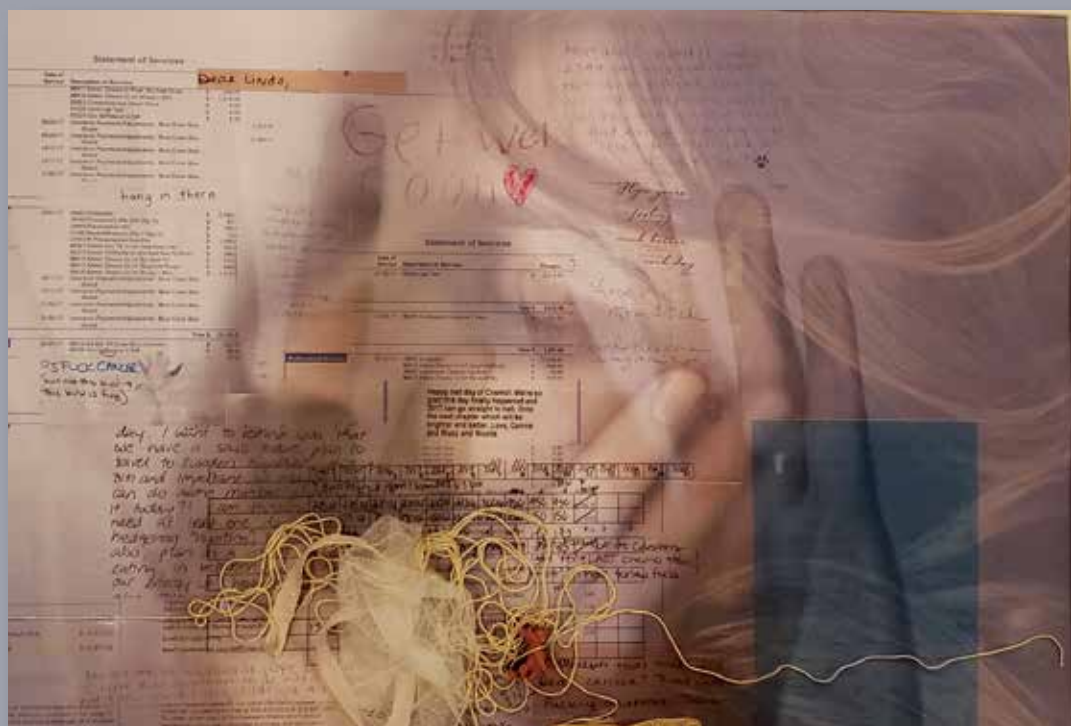
Lindsey Matt
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor

Twist on Cancer: Cancer may be the worst and best thing that has ever happened to me. Being diagnosed at thirty-one years old, in the midst of finishing my professional degree and getting married, challenged me in ways I could have never imagined. While every follow-up scan or appointment still manages to take my breath away - I come out on the other side with more strength, insight, and gratitude each time.



Anna Reed
Chicago, Illinois
Annaoreed.com

Artist Statement: This piece is about journeys. I learned so much from my inspiration and got a very different view of living through the experience of cancer. She had a very specific set of steps for her life and then found herself in twists, turns, loops, back tracking, pauses, and knots. I was impressed by her strength to never stop moving forward and by her incredible support system. She said she was never alone unless she wanted to be. That didn't make the journey easy but she found hope and joy in the simple in sometimes mundane things. I was left with the understanding that the experience of cancer never leaves you. All the pieces become layers in a new version of you. I hoped to represent the beauty that was found in the spaces between sadness and joy.



20.
 “Uncharted”
 Mixed Media
 18 x 24
 \$200

Hillary Rikower & Ashley Damico

Hilary Rikower
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Cancer changes you. It makes you stronger, more empathetic, appreciative and self confident. I will never be the same person I was before Cancer, but now I am a better one.

Ashley D'Amico
Grand Rapids, Michigan

Artist Statement: Everything can look different if you dive deep enough. A second glance, a more involved perspective. We each bring our whole lives into calculating what we are witnessing in that very moment. While Connecting with Hillary she spoke of being viewed as so brave and strong, yet on the inside it felt like chaos. That resonates so deeply with me that immediately these images started popping into place. There is an entire chaotic mess behind most anything great. It's truly the guts of life's masterpiece. This painting is loaded with snippets of Hillary's journey. Look closer for the Lotus flower, blue, purple, red taking on a spiritual meaning of ascension, enlightenment or rebirth. Standing further away the bold colorful blooms could feel like the aftermath of a bombs explosion, or step to the side and more playfully mounds of frosting could be plopping from the top. Only the viewer could feel what this image truly means. Like it's inspiration, 'Capable' is bold, loving, brave, colorful and adventurous.



21.
"Capable"

Acrylic
36x36

\$1100

Mark Tyler Neil & David Piper Jr.

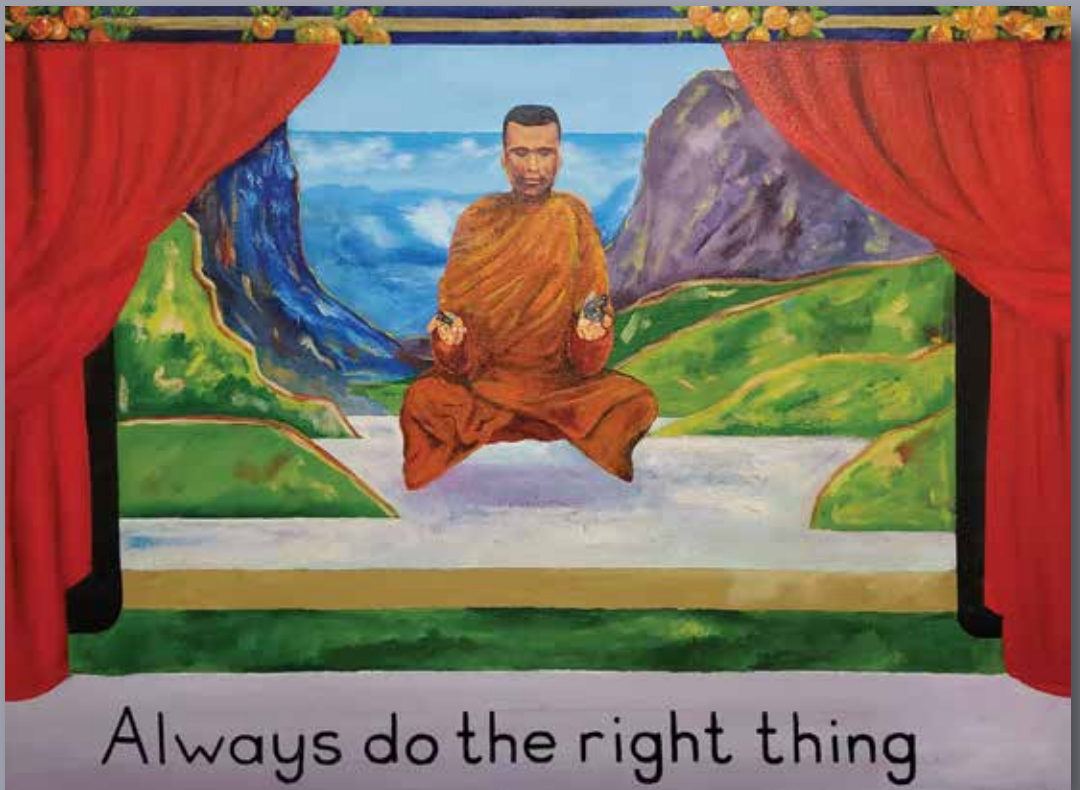
Mark Tyler Neil
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Emphasizes that life is short and can end at any time. I spend less time on matters that I do not think are essential. Never believed for a minute that I would die with the cancer although everyone else thought I would. I described it as “a bump in the road”. Am more focused on making a difference in the world in ways that help other people less fortunate. Since my last surgery, the universe has opened up in ways I never could have imagined. Am enormously grateful for my children, grandchildren and the people who love me and who I love.

David Piper
Chicago, Illinois
mysketchbookweighsaton.com

Artist Statement: Getting to know Mark was a pleasant experience. He has lived a varied and interesting life full of belief in finding the good in the world. I made this painting as an allegory of his ideals. He described cancer as being annoying like a fly, so I balanced that with the butterfly. “Always do the right thing” is a Mark Twain quote that Mark Neil holds as his foundation of decision making.



22.

“Always Do The Right Thing”

acrylic on canvas

42 x 31

\$2500

Dana Stewart & Jae Webb

Dana Stewart
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Cancer gives you time. Time you never knew you had. It opens up your eyes to time you waste and helps you find time for the things you always said you never had time for. When I was first diagnosed with breast cancer, I thought cancer stole time from me because I figured my life would be cut short. In the end, none of us know how much time we have and no one is guaranteed tomorrow. Cancer woke me up to the fact that the most important time I have is each second I get to live today.

Jae Webb
Chicago, Illinois
www.anoriginalpeace.com

Artist Statement: : “Clarity” pulls from the mental experience of my inspiration’s survivor story. Her recollection on how the mental aspect of cancer affected her really stuck with me. She shared how cancer is always treated aggressively in the physical yet passively in the mental. Dragonflies became a symbol of calming assurance amidst her fears and frustrations. Her concept of Time went from being an abundance to a scarcity, pushing her to live fuller and deeper than she had before.



23.
"Clarity"

Acrylic and Gold Leaf on Canvas
26 x 32

\$345

Monica Garcia Norlander & Kenny Lapins

Monica Garcia Norlander

Oak Park, Illinois
Survivor



SO

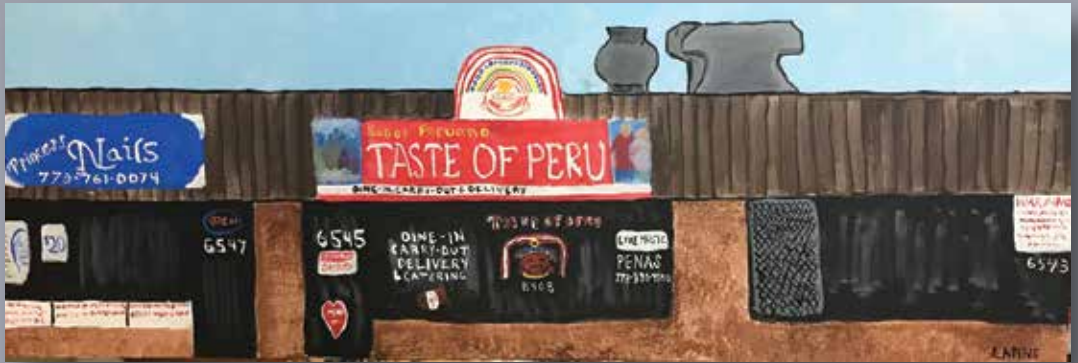
Twist on Cancer: Learned that sharing my story can be healing. Learned that art is one way my story can connect with others. Artists are generous with their time to connect others with heart, empathy, and skill.

Kenny Lapins

Arlington Heights, Illinois

<https://www.coroflot.com/lapinsk/Acrylic-on-Canvas-Paintings>

Artist Statement: I felt an immediate connect with my inspiration, Monica. During our discussion of my style and preference for painting cityscapes, we talked about how Monica's sense of taste was affected by her treatment. One of the only restaurants she wanted to go to during that time was Taste of Peru, a family-owned Peruvian restaurant in an unassuming strip mall on Clark in Chicago. This hidden gem has been featured in the Michelin Guide; Time Out Chicago; Check Please; and Diners, Drive-ins and Dives. Monica and I met there for some authentic food and to discuss the work. The distinctive sign, typography and building elements contributed to the creation of a rich Fauvist work that captures not only the ambiance of the Midwestern urban ethos of the strip mall location but also the emotional connection of my inspiration to the restaurant that represents so much to her. I have enjoyed my Brushes With Cancer experience thoroughly. Knowing that my art will benefit such a worthy cause fills my heart with joy.



24.

“Taste of Peru”

Acrylic on canvas

12 x 36

\$250

Misty Lichter & Taylor Lazzara

Misty Lichter

Cary, Illinois

Caregiver

Twist on Cancer: Since my daughter passed away, I have not told my 'story' to anyone that wasn't a part of it. I know the reality of my life and my daughter's life but having to explain it to a psychiatrist makes it 'real'. When I met Taylor we talked about both our life experiences. Taylor is a true inspiration.

Haley was an old soul who looked at life in the most amazing way. No matter what she faced she had a smile on her face. She took her diagnosis and turned it into a learning experience. She learned medical terms, endured procedures and treatments that no 18-year-old should!

Someone once asked Haley about her situation, she stated: "If my cancer diagnosis brings awareness to Pediatric Cancer then it is totally worth it".

I can't imagine facing the struggles she went through, the thoughts that ran through her mind.

Haley found the love of her life and they remained together till she passed away, she traveled to some amazing places, she had experiences to remember for a lifetime.

Cancer took away the rest of her life... her dream of going to college, getting married, experiencing all the amazing things of life. It took away her voice!

I am here to make sure her voice is heard, to make sure her light shines on. Cancer took my only child away from me but I refuse to let it take away her spirit. I will continue to bring awareness to Pediatric Cancer and honor Haley.

Taylor Lazzara

Berwyn, Illinois

The Alley Fitness Boxing Gym | www.thealleyfitness.com

Artist Statement: My inspiration, Misty, encouraged this piece of her incredibly brave daughter, Haley, who lost her life to pediatric cancer. Every fond memory, tear shed, and laugh shared left me overwhelmed with emotions and on a mission to create a piece that not only represented Haley's beauty, but told the story of how she chose to tackle her remaining life with her best friend (her mom) by her side. To this day Misty honors her daughter through her not for profit Heroes Like Haley and continues to check off the items on Haley's 100 Things to do Before Chemo list. I am forever grateful to have met Misty and will cherish the stories she's shared with me of Haley.



25.
"Heroes
Like Haley"
Acrylic and
collage on
canvas
30x40
\$1500



Daniela Lakosilova & Queen L. Hibbler

Daniela Lakosilov
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: My experience with cancer taught me to live my life to the fullest. I often worry about the small issues that come along, but always remind myself that I have overcome much bigger hurdles, and that this one is nothing compared to it. I am strong.

Queen L. Hibbler

Southwest Chicago suburbs
<https://artbyqueen.bigcartel.com/>

Artist Statement: After meeting with Daniela, it was really humbling to discuss her experience with cancer. As a caretaker of a mother with cancer, this project has been very dear to my heart. I noticed Daniela posted something regarding how sunflowers make her happy and they reassure her in the notion of her being able to create a happy life for herself despite her situation. Sunflowers are known for opening up and being towards the sun. I feel that action in itself represents joy and remaining open to all blessings from the universe.

26.
"The Calm"
Acrylic
16 x 20
\$200



Megan Connolly & Anna Feneis

Megan Connolly
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Cancer has given me a chance to embrace life to the fullest, and not take anything for granted. Cancer has taught me to be vulnerable, and that is when I have connected the most with people. My most meaningful relationships and conversations in life have been the result of being vulnerable and acknowledging the worst experience of my life. I truly believe my cancer journey turned into my greatest blessing to be able to share my story and provide hope for others.

Anna Feneis

Golden, Colorado www.instagram.com/annafeneisart/

Artist Statement: The Camino de Santiago, or the Way of Saint James, is a pilgrimage in Spain that stretches 500 miles. Many follow the Camino for spiritual growth, as it leads to the shrine of the apostle Saint James the Great. Others view the Camino as a turning point in their own personal journey – a place to end one chapter and start a new.

When I first met Megan, I was struck by her gentleness. Her soft voice and demeanor oozed the color pale pink. But the more I learned, the more the colors started filling the canvas. She spoke warmly about her large family, friends, and eventually her cancer journey.

Throughout this process one thing has resonated: gratitude. She talks about how she does not look back with contempt, but rather, with appreciation. How since her diagnosis, she has learned to appreciate life with a new zest. And although her struggles were great, her relationships are stronger and her connection to the world has grown because of them.

So, in a sense, Megan walked her own Camino de Santiago.

As Wordsworth said:

*“And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns
And the round ocean and living air
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things.”*



27.

"Camino"

Oil, Ink & Acrylic on Canvas

36x36

\$1000

Marjorie Kerr & Erika Vazzana

Marjorie Q. Kerr
Chicago, Illinois
Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: “Am I a part of the cure or am I part of the disease?” That is a lyric from “Clocks,” one of my favorite songs by Coldplay. The song is a beautifully painful reminder of how precious and invaluable time is. My personal experience with cancer happened when Acute Lymphoblastic Lymphoma interrupted, and ultimately ended the life of Brooklyn Alexis, my 2 year-old daughter. That journey tested every human emotion I possess, but it taught me infinite patience, gratefulness, and the true meaning of unconditional love. I learned to cry unabashedly and unapologetically. I learned that it is possible to be lonely in a room of a thousand people. However, the most profound lessons I have learned were how to LIVE in spite of, resilience, the difference between someone having a disease, and the disease having them, and that strength is the sum total of every weakness conquered. The answer to my opening question is I am a part of the cure, because I give love unconditionally. Love is the purest form of chemotherapy. Brooklyn assured me of that on her victory lap. In closing, I would just like to say that the medicine of love is not prescribed, is undiluted, has no expiration date, and requires no refills, for it is manufactured in and dispensed from the heart. Most importantly, it is free. Try it, and be amazed at its beauty and healing properties. Peace and love to everyone on this journey with me.

Erika Vazzana
Chicago, Illinois
TheEndDesign.com

Artist Statement: A beautiful little soul described to me in words (and tears) by her dear Mother can only tell me so much, but ultimately there was

something there, a feeling a glimpse to honor her baby, her everything, a part of her. Losing a child is a never ending sense of emptiness, a hole that can never be healed or filled back in. What we can do is remember the joy and love that was left behind. The work encompasses the vibrant energy and life that Brooklyn led, fun loving energetic smart and wise.

28.
"Immortal"
30x 40
Acrylic
\$650



Nicole Kaiser & Madeline Schultz

Nicole Kaiser
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor

Twist on Cancer: I don't like cancer. Who does? But for me having cancer was actually a positive experience. So many great things happened during my journey. I was blessed with too many meals to count, I had a different friend sit with me during my 16 rounds of chemo, I had amazing nurses take care of me, and I get to be a part of this wonderful program. I learned to let the small things go. I learned I am loved by more people than I could have imagined. I learned that I am a warrior and fighter. I learned attitude gets you through. I don't like cancer, but I refused to let it get the best of me.



Madeline Schultz
Detroit, Michigan
https://www.instagram.com/art_by_lilshultz/

Artist Statement: Nicole is an amazing and strong woman. She lifted my spirits every time we talked. She took a situation that can be very negative and looked at the bright side the entire time. Floating lanterns are used to let go of past struggles and worries, and also to send positive wishes and thanks into the universe. She has let go of the pain of the experience, and focused on the support she had, and everything she was grateful for.



29.

“Letting Go”

Acrylic on Canvas

36" x 36"

\$500

Tiffany Horstein & Jenny Conlee-Drizos

Tiffany Horstein
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Although the journey was a difficult one and there are still struggles with the unknowns as I move forward in remission, it has also been very empowering. It has helped me realize the strength within myself and given me a newfound confidence to handle anything that life throws at me. It pushed me to refocus my career, creating a law firm to help families grow through adoption and assisted reproduction. It has also brought about so many unexpected experiences that have resulted in genuine connections with others who have shared this crazy cancer journey. Most importantly, it made me so grateful for the people in my life - my husband, our families, and our friends.

Jenny Conlee-Drizos
Portland, Oregon

Artist Statement: Tiffany Horstein was 31 years old and working as a lawyer when she was diagnosed with ALK negative anaplastic large cell lymphoma, a rare disease in someone as young as Tiffany. The diagnosis was a shock to her and her husband. In “Looking Glass” I try to convey a life upon a gentle flowing path that hits a wall and is stopped in its tracks. Next comes a reflective time when Tiffany and her husband let the news sink in and think about their future, possibly without the children that they were planning on having. Tiffany and her husband collect eggs and create embryos as in insurance policy. In what I consider the “B” section of the piece there is a sense of reflection and sadness. Treatment begins for Tiffany in the form of surgery and chemotherapy: which end up being very difficult in terms of finding the right doctors and tolerating the treatment. This is reflected in the “C” section which has an aggravated pattern in the bass and distorted clusters in the treble.

Once her treatment is done, months later as she is starting to feel better, she finds out that she is pregnant! In the music it is the flowing arpeggios that have a triumphant feel. After her journey, things return somewhat to normal, she has the lingering side effects from chemo but also a new outlook on life. Tiffany has changed her career path and is now practicing law to help low-income people become parents through IVF and adoption, an issue close to her heart. In the music we return to the opening theme but with subtle, darker undertones, to reflect the “new normal” that is now Tiffany’s life.

Jenny Conlee-Drizos is a pianist, organist, accordionist and composer from Portland Oregon. She plays in many music groups in the NW, most notably she is a founding member of the indie-rock band The Decemberists. She is a breast cancer survivor, and is currently in remission after treatment in 2011.



30.

“Looking Glass”

Original Musical Composition

\$500

Ninah F Moore & Stella Bora

Ninah Moore

Chicago, Illinois

Survivor/Conqueror



Twist on Cancer: I was diagnosed with anal cancer in July 2013 at the age of 39. I used to be ashamed to tell others the type of cancer I had, thinking they would judge me BUT now I find strength in sharing my story. I learned that allowing people to see what I overcame gives them strength and proves that my healing was not in vain. From the moment of diagnosis I claimed healing. With my faith and the support of my husband and family I stand here today as a conqueror. My healing started in my heart and through it all I learned to allow others to help me, keep laughing and remain active. Prior to cancer, my life hadn't been easy but I knew if I overcame hardships before, I could overcome cancer. I had six weeks of radiation 5 days a week and everyday I prayed. Every night my husband prayed over me and our marriage grew stronger (I might even say it was saved). 6 years later, I thank God every morning for waking me up and before I go to sleep I thank God for protecting and keeping me. I take a moment everyday for a GRATEFULNESS check, to stop and remind myself that I am still here. I'm not ashamed for I know my story will inspire someone and for that I grateful.

Stella Bora

Detroit, Michigan

Artist Statement: Ninah has such a bright personality. Within moments, during our first conversation, we were both laughing. She was very warm and welcoming. I wanted the painting to reflect the beauty and light that still exists, even during a storm. With faith and positivity, the darkness cannot cover the true light inside. The rainbow is the connection between the light and dark. Without both sun and rain, there wouldn't be rainbows. Ninah has inspired me more than just a direction for a painting. Her story reminded me that with faith and positivity, I can face anything life has dealt with grace and dignity.



31.

"A light darkness will never put out"

Acrylic

24x36

\$250

Anne Agostinelli & Valerie Paige

Anne Agostinelli

Chicago, Illinois

Caregiver



Twist on Cancer: Acute Myeloid Leukemia took my dad on January 13, 2017. My world was turned upside down; from the surreal blur of the diagnosis, to the agony of his treatment, to the day we discovered that treatment had stopped working. I learned about strength, dignity, and what my father was made of through his fight. I was so lucky that he loved me fiercely enough that I have the strength to live without him. My whole life with him was a lesson, simply through watching him live. My perspectives on life and death have become more profound. We had a mantra, “no regrets,” throughout his illness, and that emboldened me to take nothing for granted in any area of my life. We can’t control the things that happen to us, but I hope that I will always accept and make the best of whatever comes my way, just like my beloved dad did. I kept so many emotions inside just to survive while my dad was fighting that I didn’t even realize how badly I was hurting. Brief, private moments for grieving were not enough to undo the numbing effect of the whole experience. Brushes has brought me to others who live this pain, too, and we help each other heal every time we connect. The pain of this loss manifests itself in many ways at many times, but I have learned that the pain can be softened through friendships and sharing with those who understand what you are going through.

Valerie Paige

South Lyon, Michigan

www.creativeprocesstherapy.com

Artist Statement: Lighthouses are a powerful symbol of hope and guidance through adversity. Early on in our communication, Anne shared that lighthouses were an important symbol for her and her father, and after his passing, had become a reminder of the guidance and love he left behind. His love of lighthouses stemmed from Five Mile Point Light, the lighthouse in his hometown of New Haven, Connecticut. Over the summer, Anne and her mother visited this lighthouse to spread her father’s ashes. She sent me a photo of the lighthouse from this trip, and I knew I wanted to incorporate it into my art piece. I used a photo transfer method to integrate this photo into a larger collage. I aimed to convey the darkness of grief and loss, but also hope and healing through memory.

32.

"I am a
Lighthouse"

Collage
24x36

\$150



I am a lighthouse

rather than a lifeboat

I do not rescue

but instead

help others

find their way to shore

Sharon Seeder & Joey Tea

Sharon Seeder
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: After finalizing my divorce, I thought that I was at the end of a long, dark period in my life. Many other family tensions and issues contributed to stress, sadness and grief. Now I just had to get on with my task list: dividing financial assets, selling the house, finding a new place to live, being alone for the first time in my 60+ years. Time for my annual mammogram, but no big deal - no lumps or anything out of the ordinary. Needless to say, I was a little concerned when I was asked to return for ultrasounds/biopsies. Invasive lobular carcinoma. What? Lumpectomy #1 - margins not clear. Lumpectomy #2 - margins are still not clear. A Mastectomy - how could this be?

Being extremely independent and self-reliant, it was difficult for me to accept the reality that I needed help. Yet without the love and support of my family and friends, I'm not sure how I would have worked through the shock, fear and depression that engulfed me.

Throughout this journey, I learned that I had to be less task-driven, more accepting and forgiving. I now strive to live by my two favorite quotes.

"You must do the things you think you cannot do." - Eleanor Roosevelt

"When you come to the end of all the light you know, and it's time to step into the darkness of the unknown, faith is knowing that one of two things shall happen: either you will be given something solid to stand on, or you will be taught to fly." - Edward Teller

Joey Tea

Chicago, Illinois joeytea.com

Artist Statement: Rainbow Lifeline is the way I interpreted Sharon's tragic yet triumphant battle with breast cancer. The storm clouds in her hair and clothes represent her darkest hour. The vibrant rainbow of colors in the rest of the piece represent the wonderful life she found on the other side of her storm. During a meeting over coffee, Sharon told me that while cancer was horrifying, it was also the best thing that ever happened to her. Sharon's cancer more or less forced her to move to Chicago's Andersonville neighborhood, where she would be closer to family that could help her through her most trying times. Among the family members in Chicago is Sharon's sister who owns a local bar named, "Rainbo Club." This is one of the many Chicago landmarks I superimposed into Sharon's portrait and it is one half of the inspiration for the title of my piece. The second half of the title comes from the "Lifeline Theater," one of Sharon's favorite local theaters that is also hidden in her portrait. Still living in Andersonville and now in the full



33.

“Rainbow Lifeline”

mixed media

24 x 24

\$300

swing of remission and retirement, Sharon told me how much she loves her active life in Chicago. She sings in a chorus at Old Town School of Folk Music, takes fitness classes, and sees tons of local theater. She told me if it wasn't for cancer she very well may have been living in the suburbs alone and bored without much to do but watch television.

Amy Belluomini & Jackie Hilmes

Amy Belluomini
Chicago, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Although it intruded on my life, cancer ultimately loses since it has gifted me much more than it took from me. I am finding deep fulfillment in trying to support other patients and families who are courageously fighting cancer, and have a newfound appreciation and gratitude for life. The simple things truly are the best things, and I am profoundly thankful for a second chance to enjoy these wonderful things and moments in life.

Jackie Hilmes

Chicago, Illinois
www.jackiehilmes.com

Artist Statement: Standing In My Own Kitchen” comes from a conversation Amy and I had early on in our friendship. We discussed the many experiences and abilities that were taken away from her while she navigated her diagnosis, like the things she didn’t anticipate she would miss and what she longed for from her hospital room — something as simple as just standing in her own kitchen.

We talked a lot about what wasn’t on the surface of cancer — what it’s like to be reintroduced to a brand new body, how it was hard to see the emotions of everyone who loves her, how to find space for a new normal, how the relationships she built with the nurses who brought her back to life are what sustained her, and still do.

I wanted this painting to encompass all of that: the complex layers — emotional, physical, spiritual, mental — that come into play during such a challenging, life-threatening chapter. There are dark moments of uncertainty, bright moments of hope, and everything in between. In getting to know Amy, I found that while her cancer brought forth challenges across all of those areas, she managed to find light, opportunity, and sweetness through all of them. It is my hope that you see her resilience in this painting.

Amy redefines inspiration for me. She blooms in every circumstance. She fought, survived, was quite literally born again, and today, she’s taking all the moments she wants to stand in her own kitchen.



34.

“Standing In My Own Kitchen”

Oil paint, oil pastel, canvas

48”x36”

\$1750

Roey Kruvi & Pearl Plotkin

Roey Kruvi

Encinitas, California

Survivor



Twist on Cancer: Time is a funny thing. Two years ago, when I first participated in this program, everything about my cancer felt so raw. I was already in recovery, but everything about treatment was still so vivid. Cancer dominated my thoughts. It was the lens through which I experienced my life. I tried to be patient and forgiving with myself, but somewhere in the back of my mind, I kept hoping that feeling would dissipate. And I think in the last year it has begun to fade.

I can feel a palpable lightness of being.

In my fifth and final year of having to see an oncologist, all I want to express gratitude and love. My parents and brothers, who were/are there for me in ways no one knows and understands. I love you and appreciate you. My partner Abby who always knows how and when to get me to open up. You are perfect. My best friends Jamie, Aviva and Arielle who let me cry. My No Bad Days Crew. My Brushes Artists Pearl Plotkin and Danny Cohen who are my guardian angels.

Pearl Plotkin

San Francisco, California

Artist Statement: Roey is an incredibly spirited, warm, goofy, and inspiring human. Meeting him has been a gift, and I'm so honored to have been able to be part of this experience. I honestly feel like I've known him for years. Roey went through cancer treatment in his 20s, and expressed to me that he is in a much lighter, more positive place now. I wanted to convey a feeling of transition through this piece – to show an exit from the vast darkness, and movement into a brighter, illuminated, beautiful space. While the memories and fear of what was will always remain, he has come out of such a scary time on the other side, and has entered a phase of growth, optimism, and joy with a new-found perspective on life. There's a sense of peace when you're with Roey. He's calm, he's curious, he's funny. He's a true example of someone who is grateful for each morning – grateful for the light.



35.

“Lighter Times”

Black Pen on Paper

11 x 14

\$350

Dan Hindin & Erica Moore

Dan Hindin
Glencoe, Illinois
Survivor



Twist on Cancer: My cancer journey began this past May when I was diagnosed with stage 4 pancreatic cancer. I've learned that the fight is much more of a mental struggle than I ever expected, and I've come to realize that the love and support of the people around you is vital to fighting your best fight. I've had a very hard time over the past weeks, but I'm lucky I have such a great support system of friends and family that have my back no matter what. While they can't solve everything for me, they've picked me up when I've been down, and I am indescribably thankful for that. The fight continues, and I'm prepared to continue to give it my all.

Erica Moore
Evanston, Illinois

Artist Statement: Ours was a last minute pairing that occurred not long after Dan was diagnosed. I found myself approaching our discussions tentatively knowing that he had a lot to process and deal with- BIG things, things that I couldn't even begin to comprehend. I did not want to put additional demands on him that would cause stress or discomfort. Selfishly, I wanted to learn more about Dan- what kinds of things excite him, what activities bring him joy, his favorite sounds and smells and colors, songs or bands that he connects with- I wanted to focus on the things that could create a sense of who he is apart from his experience with cancer, since everything was so fresh when we first met. However, it didn't take me long to discover that I needed to give something, somehow. But what could I possibly give him of value during this time? The best answer that I could come up with was to give space, create space, hold space- with him, and for him. I realized that I could contribute energy on another plane so he could focus the energy of his tangible existence on managing the physical and emotional effects of treatment. So I went down a rabbit hole of loosely connected things based on our conversations and text threads- the Japanese legend of a thousand paper cranes, Wilco's song "Love is Everywhere," burnt orange, mandalas, meditation, the time that it takes to make a quilt and the intention of focusing on the recipient while making it, the imperfection of trying to materialize abstract concepts and natural rules of order and patterns, texture, the peace of sitting at the edge of Lake Michigan on a chilly day listening to the waves and wind, and the overwhelming sense that love abounds, in unexpected places, from unexpected people and in unexpected manifestations. I'm so grateful for Dan's vulnerability in allowing me (a stranger) to humbly bear witness in some small way to his story. Every moment that was spent selecting the papers, punching the paper hearts, arranging the design, and gluing them in to place was spent with active, intentional meditation on Dan, his family, his health and his future.



36.
"Love is Everywhere"

Cut paper

24 x 36

\$1000

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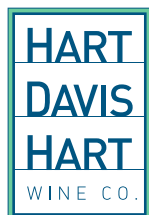
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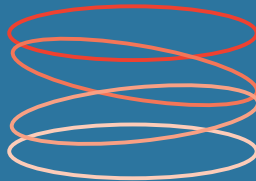
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