

NEMAA MEDIA BACKGROUNDER

30 Artists of Art-A-Whirl Bios

March 31, 2025

30 Artists of Art-A-Whirl

To commemorate 30 years of Art-A-Whirl, NEMAA (Northeast Minneapolis Arts Association) is shining the spotlight on 30 Artists participating in this year's Art-A-Whirl. All the artists are NEMAA members and represent the diverse backgrounds of the organization's 1,400 member artists and showcase the rich variety of Minnesota-created art on view and for sale at Art-A-Whirl, at www.nemaa.org and through studio events held year-round.

A brief overview of each of the 30 artists or artist partnerships is outlined below.

Katayoun Amjadi, she/her/hers
Multimedia Installation, Ceramics
Q.arma Building, Studio B25
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Images: [Katayoun Amjadi](#)

Katayoun Amjadi's work "explores the voices of curios and collectibles, the lost artifact, or forgotten story, the consumable good or souvenir, each with their own history and use, each with their own significance and association, yet each imbued with the potential to say more. My work seeks...to discover the threads that bind local to global, personal to universal, to narrate my small piece of truth and weave it into this map of our making."

"Art has given me a form of soft power, the power to speak my own truth in my quiet manner. I believe when you speak from the heart it touches the ones that are receptive to it."

"If you track the growth of the arts community in Northeast Minneapolis, you can see that it has been a draw for restaurants, brew-pubs, makers of all kinds, and various creative industries, which in turn attracts visitors, and stimulates local spending and in turn, creates more opportunities for artists and entrepreneurs."

Racquel Banaszak she/her/ikwe
Mixed Media, Graphic Design, Illustration, Mural
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www.racquelbanaszak.com
763-234-0450
Images: [Racquel Banaszak](#)

Racquel Banaszak (Bad River Band of Lake Superior Ojibwe) is a visual artist and Indigenous education advocate who has studied at Montana State University, the Minneapolis College of Art and Design and the Ontario College of Art & Design University. Her work focuses on Indigenous histories and contemporary representation. She is interested in how federal Indian laws and policies have influenced personal and community narratives and identities. Her works often combine photographs and illustration while others incorporate beadwork and textiles. Recent works focus on indigenous languages and motherhood.

"I've always been drawn to the creative process as a way of understanding the world ever since I can remember. I am part of a long legacy, as well as a real active present, rooted in Ojibwe thought, history, language, and culture. Visual art allows me to navigate between the past, present, and future simultaneously."

"Art connects us to one another through the messages of joy and hope as well as grief and longing for something more. Art lets us feel life together."

Beatrix*Jar

-Bianca Janine Pettis (Beatrix) she/her

-Jacob Aaron Roske (Jar) he/him

Sound, Art, Video, Public Practice

A-Mill Artists Lofts

beatrixjarstudio@beatrixjar.com

www.beatrixjar.com

651-338-6185 (Jacob)

Images: [Beatrix*Jar](#)

Formed in 2003, Beatrix*Jar explores music and play through festivals, sound art events, murals, set design, videos, live performances, and sound art workshops. The duo's collaboration has produced over 20 years of creativity and play.

Jacob:

"I love being a curious artist and making discoveries and sharing those with the public. Art saves my life and it's very therapeutic."

Bianca:

"We've done Art-A-Whirl for almost 20 years and each year we get to present new versions of ourselves. The scene is really special... like that cool brunch spot that only a few people know about, and you kind of want to keep it a secret because if the world knew you'd have to wait longer."

Eyenga Bokamba she/her

Multidisciplinary abstract paintings and sculptural interventions

California Building

bokamba2024@gmail.com

www.eyengabokambapaintings.com

612-219-4558

Images: [Eyenga Bokamba](#)

Eyenga Bokamba is a visual artist and designer who is most drawn to abstraction as a means of expressing the complexity of identity, politics, relationships, and my understanding of the world. Eyenga produces both small and large scale works on canvas and paper using mixed media, acrylics, watercolors, and calligraphy ink to create layers of translucence and expansive inquiry.

“Art keeps us productive, focused, hopeful, and is perhaps the best vehicle to be, as one of my painting series is named: ‘adjacent to happiness.’”

“I just love thinking about how many families I see year over year, with young ones who remember my early work; some of whom are now adults who collect my work and bring their friends to collect my work. This is the amazing truth about the privilege of being an artist grounded in a specific community, day after day, year over year: getting the opportunity to pass time with people as invested in the arts community as I am.”

Luciana Bongiovanni she/her

Fiber Arts

Guest Artist at Q.Arma Building

lbongiovanni@gmail.com

www.lubongiovanni.com

651-600-1935

Images: [Luciana Bongiovanni](#)

In weavings created by Luciana Bongiovanni, organic shapes play in dialogue with geometric forms, softness with roughness, raw materials with mass-produced fibers, and plain textures with dynamic three-dimensions. They are created with multiple techniques and on multi-sized frame looms with an assorted type of yarn and repurposed materials.

“My fiber art adds a distinct perspective to the community by honoring the timeless and universal act of weaving while also evoking my unique life story as an Argentinian finding her way home 6,000 miles away in Minneapolis. It connects cultural roots and brings warmth and beauty which are usually underappreciated but essential.”

“Art-A-Whirl has become a community celebration, welcoming all kinds of art expressions and local food and drink businesses. The whole neighborhood becomes a set for an experience of the senses.”

Julie Burkhart-Haid she/her/hers
Burkhart Design Studio
Fine Custom Jewelry, Modern Micro Mosaics
Solar Arts Building
julie@burkhartdesignstudio.com
www.burkhartdesignstudio.com
Images: [Julie Burkhart-Haid](#)

As a jeweler with more than 45 years of experience, Julie Burkhart specializes in fine custom jewelry and modern micro mosaics. Her process takes clients from the initial concept to the completed piece. Starting with a sketched idea, she hand carves a wax model for metal casting or fabricates directly from raw materials. The final step involves setting diamonds or gemstones into the finished jewelry. With access to an extensive network of diamond and gemstone dealers, she can repurpose a client's existing gold and gems from unworn jewelry into a new piece that better reflects their personal style. For her modern micro mosaics, she hand fabricates sterling silver or gold bezels, then cuts thin strands of glass, inlays them into the bezel, and grinds and polishes the surface smooth.

"Art is a universal language that transcends barriers and allows us to connect with one another on a deeper level. My artwork truly feeds my soul. It brings me immense joy to offer a service that can bring happiness to others."

"We have an exceptional art scene here. I've explored arts districts in other cities, and nothing truly compares to the vibrancy and creativity of the Northeast Arts District in Minneapolis, and Art-A-Whirl is safe, successful, and full of life."

Mary Castillo she/her/hers
Photography
Holland Arts West
marycastillophotography@gmail.com
www.marycastillophotography.com
651-395-1793
Images: [Mary Castillo](#)

Mary Castillo Photography creates alternative and fun imagery for the open-minded and the non-traditionalists. "Since I am a boudoir-focused photographer, I am inspired by getting to show anybody and everybody that you deserve to have photos taken of you and celebrate the body you are in. I have met and connected with so many clients. Every person can really be captured in such a beautiful way!"

"I think it's easy to assume that Minneapolis is a small midwestern area with not a lot of diversity, but we really are able to showcase just how big we are and how many creatives come

from us. I would love for more people to realize that they don't have to go far to see amazing art. It is all around us here!"

Tim Chapp he/him/his
Ink, Acrylic, and Watercolor Paintings and Drawings
NE Treehouse
tjchapp@gmail.com
www.netreehouse.com
612-619-2812
Images: [Tim Chapp](#)

Tim Chapp makes acrylic, ink and watercolor paintings and drawings. He'll be 3D printing his own designs during Art-A-Whirl. He is also exhibiting his unique house, which includes a 16-foot climbing wall. NE Tree House is a space for artistic collaboration, wellness, empowerment, and innovation. The space is built with green building techniques and serves as a gathering space for ideas, supporting artists, and creative endeavors of all kinds. "At the heart of every project is the goal of strengthening our community through change."

"Creative expression is just so fundamental to the human experience, and art is a tool that helps free our minds. It helps us find connection and inspiration."

"Art is the metaphor that can instantly change a mood, or provoke a thought that changes the way you think forever. The freedom to misinterpret is part of art's power, because it can open a dialogue and reveal how others think. A world without art would be a world without hope."

Kordula Coleman she/her/hers
Clay, Mixed Media
Guest Artist at Grain Belt Bottling House
velvetdoordesign@yahoo.com
www.kordulacolemansculptures.com
612-414-9265
Images: [Kordula Coleman](#)

After immigrating to the US in 2000 from Cologne, Germany, Kordula Coleman rekindled her love for sculpting with clay. "I started sculpting at an early age and am a ceramic journeyman. My biggest challenge and achievement can be seen in the taproom of the local Hispanic brewery La Doña Cerveceria – my piece 'La Doña'. It is a large, almost life size Day of the Dead sculpture, permanently installed since 2018. For all my life I have been fascinated by the shape of the human body, and what it can express. Clay is the perfect medium for me to convey this because of its suppleness, which to me makes it feel alive."

“I want people to realize that committed art making doesn’t just happen in the dedicated studio buildings. It happens in cluttered basements, cramped kitchens and on dining room tables all throughout Northeast Minneapolis, because artists want to create, no matter what their circumstances, and will customize and transform any room into a workplace practical for them.”

“The way art appeals to our senses makes us willing to take in a point of view that we might have shut out if we would have experienced it in a form like a newspaper headline. That way, art really can open doors and sometimes maybe even change hearts.”

Destiny Davison she/her/they

Ink, Acrylic, Digital Art, Mixed Media

Guest Artist at Quincy Hall

hello@destinydavison.com

www.destinydavison.com

612-859-9217

Images: [Destiny Davison](#)

Destiny A. Davison is a writer, cartoonist, animator, designer, and multimedia artist. Her work explores the crossroads of the real, the unreal, and the in-between.

“Being an artist helps me understand and make sense of the world and everything in it a bit better, and hopefully helps the world understand and make sense of me. I love how art can inspire us all to take a breath together, laugh, and reflect on what kind of future it is we really want to build.”

“My favorite thing about Art-A-Whirl is getting lost in floors of open studios and finding my way to art I may never have discovered otherwise.”

Alicia De La Cruz she/her/hers

Waabooz Beading

Beadwork, Textiles: Ribbon Skirts, Regalia

Guest Artist at Quincy Hall

waaboozbeading@outlook.com

www.waaboozbeading.com

763-453-4918

Images: [Alicia De La Cruz](#)

Alicia De La Cruz is a two spirit native artist from Minneapolis, Minnesota and an enrolled member of the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe.

“My work reflects the contemporary native art style and a touch of old style Ojibwe art with my own twist. Especially important to me in my work is the preservation of my culture, through both

language and art. I enjoy using beadwork, painting, mixed media, ink and marker in non-traditional ways to showcase my own identity as a native artist and also as a woman of the 21st century. A lot of my inspiration draws on nature, as the Ojibwe are known for their floral beadwork. Both the tribe I'm enrolled in and my mom's tribe (Leech Lake) draw on floral motifs."

"Truly people travel from all of the states and even the globe for Art-A-Whirl. I've met people who traveled from as far away as Australia! I feel really special having this LITERALLY in my backyard. Northeast is the absolute mecca for arts and I really don't ever want to leave as I feel like this is the best neighborhood for artists and art lovers PERIOD."

"Art-A-Whirl and I are just about the same age. I remember when I was younger, maybe 7 or 8, and seeing some artist studios and thinking HOW COOL WOULD IT BE IF THIS WAS MY JOB WHEN I WAS OLDER?"

Oliver Elias he/him/his
Oliver Elias Pottery
Ceramic
oliver.the.potter@gmail.com
www.olivereliasceramics.com
612-481-6970
Images: [Oliver Elias](#)

Oliver Elias is a functional pottery artist who focuses on creating elegant pottery for everyday use. Using wheel throwing and slip casting techniques, he creates easily accessible, affordable and fully functional pottery. His complex forms and simplistic glazes allow his work to feel welcomed in anyone's home.

"Without art, a community can be stale and boring. Art brings community together through shared experiences. I was born and raised in Northeast Minneapolis. Growing up in the heart of the NE Arts District and having both parents as artists, NE is very special to me."

"Elias Metal Studio was one of the first studios to open its doors for Art-A-Whirl 30 years ago. I was born May 9, 2000 and my first Art-A-Whirl was when I was 10 days old. My mother, Lisa Elias, owner of Elias Metal Studio, wasn't going to let her newborn son stop her from opening her studio. I've had many great memories of the 24 consecutive years I've been a part of the festival. Last year was a highlight cultivating and curating our event. We had 10 guest artists, a community mural, and 15 bands. It was the highest attendance to date."

Carmen Gutierrez-Bolger she/her/hers
Oil on canvas and wood panel, collage, installation
Casket Arts Building
cargubol2@gmail.com

www.carmengb.com

Images: [Carmen Gutierrez-Bolger](#)

Carmen Gutierrez-Bolger is a Spanglish artist whose family immigrated to southern Florida “For most of my career, my motivation was to understand and delve into my story. Using Cuban iconography, I worked hard to decipher my identity and to recapture what I left behind. Recently my work has transformed into abstraction, organic shapes and geometries. I am interested in translating the ubiquitous condition of being from somewhere else, an ‘other,’ than in illustrating my own story. I am learning to talk about displacement, duality, perspective, time and space. Above all, my wish is for the viewer to find a connection with my work – a window, a mirror for understanding what it *feels* like to be from somewhere else.”

“Art brings vibrancy, diversity, inspiration, friendship, loyalty, trust and a sense of belonging to our community. I hope that Northeast Minneapolis remains as funky and unique and cool as we are today.”

“I have always wanted to figure out a way to express the energy level that coalesces when we are all preparing for Art-A-Whirl. The ‘fire’ and concentration that is collectively happening in our artists’ buildings, studios, warehouses, homes, offices, restaurants and bars. We are a hive of activity in the days and weeks leading up to that one weekend in May when we pour out our power and intense concentration and come together to celebrate who we are!”

Kelly and Michael Helsing

Images: [Kelly & Michael Helsing](#)

Kelly: she/her/hers

Messy Ever After

Mixed Media: Acrylic Paint, Inks, Watercolors

Holland Arts East

kelly@messyeverafter.com

www.messyeverafter.com

Michael: he/him/his

Helsing Studio

Wood, Light, Sculpture

Holland Arts West

helsingstudio@gmail.com

Kelly Helsing is a 2D artist focused on abstract expressionism. Her work is defined by a delicate balance of chaos and control, brought to life through vibrant colors, dynamic movement, and organic flowing lines.

Michael Helsing is a woodworker, guitar builder, and drum maker with over 15 years of woodworking experience. His guitars and drums are a dynamic blend of artistic restraint in the

pursuit of creating a blank canvas in which to create art through sound. He has recently delved into the world of sculpture through his unique light fixtures made from wood veneer. He enjoys exploring the intricacies and imaginative possibilities inherent in wood as a sculptural medium. Together, Kelly and Michael Helsing created a commissioned piece in commemoration of Art-A-Whirl's 30th year, entitled "Mississippi Tempest." The 6-foot x 3-foot sculpture interprets the popular Art-A-Whirl tornado and will be unveiled at The Holland Arts East Gallery in conjunction with Art-A-Whirl 2025.

Kelly:

"I am inspired by emotional experiences and a desire to organize chaos. Simple things like light, lines, movement, and nature fill my creative cup. I am constantly in awe of the human experience and my art is my way of processing, making sense of, and communicating what I've learned."

Michael:

"When I think about what inspires me as an artist, I'm reminded of a pivotal memory. Back in 2009 or so, I randomly wandered into the Dallas Museum of Art and saw an exhibit by Olafur Eliasson. I had never seen anything like it or really conceived that there could be anything like it out there. There were installations that used light as a medium in a way that was just brilliant. It absolutely blew me away and it stayed in the periphery of my mind until I started experimenting with building light fixtures a few years ago. Such a cool little memory that blossomed into this incredibly influential thing in my subconscious."

Kelly:

"Art-A-Whirl has been the most beneficial thing I've ever done as an artist. It opens doors to sales, fulfilling customer interactions, connections with other artists, future opportunities, and deeper connections to the arts community. I have never experienced so many dedicated art lovers or buyers in one place."

Lora Hlavsa she/her/hers

Acrylic, acrylic paint, sometimes Mixed Media

Guest Artist at Moth Oddities

lora@shoplora.com

www.lorahlavsa.com

612-237-4171

Images: [Lora Hlavsa](#)

Filipino-American painter and illustrator Lora Hlavsa's bold, colorful and frequently chaotic work explores pop culture, femininity, nature and often references her own identity and experiences. She works both digitally and with traditional mediums, and is primarily interested in layering color, pattern and texture to create compositions that are striking from afar and immersive up close.

“Art is a critical part of building community because it is a means of communicating ideas, experiences, values, and emotions. Without it, our communities would both lack the aesthetic beauty that is created through art, but also they would lack an important means of connection. Through art, we can share our stories and create a more beautiful world.”

“Northeast Minneapolis is a long-time working class community, and I cannot imagine a world without the arts community because art is often a means of resistance for the working class.”

“I think that diversity is one of the most beautiful things about America, and I aspire to tell the stories of the wide range of people who live here. I like to think that my work tells loud stories about quiet moments.”

Heather Humbert she/her/hers

HLH Art

Acrylic Paint

2010 Artblok, Studio 8-106

hlh.art.llc@gmail.com

www.hlhart.com

612-481-0024

Images: [Heather Humbert](#)

HLH Art is a world filled with animals, toys, skulls and interesting characters brought to life in vivid color on wood panels by artist Heather Humbert. Her paintings tell stories, many of which are still unfolding in the imagery, waiting for the viewer to interpret. The viewer is drawn in by the droll humor and eccentric focus of her work.

“Art in community is so multi-faceted, it can be a beautiful mural, a protest, an intimate exhibit, a convening, a class offering, and so many other things. All of these provide an outlet for both artists and community to do everything from learn to laugh to grieve and everything in between.”

“Creativity is infectious and begets energy and electricity, which is yet another reason why communities like the Northeast arts district are so vital. I moved to Minnesota from Chicago because of the arts scene.”

“My art, at its core, brings a mix of humor, sentimentality, whimsy and a bit of cheekiness to the community. I feel like now more than ever we need a bit of levity.”

Andy Jacobs she/her/hers

Fibers, Textiles, Sculpture

Casket Arts Building, Studio 413

andy@andyjacobs.art

www.andyjacobs.art

Images: [Andy Jacobs](#)

Andy Jacobs is an interdisciplinary artist who works with the mediums of fibers/textiles, sculpture, drawing, and installation. Her work contemplates ecology, ephemerality, interconnection, and cyclicity. As a self-taught weaver, she has developed a style of tapestry weaving that pushes against the rectilinear grid of the loom, and she weaves organic forms that resemble shapes found in the natural world. These forms aim to rekindle severed connections between our species and the more-than-human world.

“The work I make is deeply inspired by the study of ecology, investigating the field of intrinsic relations and interconnectedness found in ecological systems. I think a lot about soil, compost, plant life, and other aspects of the more-than-human world.”

“Art allows us to dream a new world into existence. It’s life affirming, it’s healing. It allows us to ask hard questions and mull over the answers. It asks us to investigate, to look deeper. It grants us expansion of the mind and spirit. It’s sacred and it’s integral to the community.”

“I think there is a differentiation between ‘living’ and ‘working’ as an artist. ‘Working’ as an artist invokes the idea of an income tied to making things. ‘Living’ as an artist invokes the idea of a commitment to one’s art practice, a dedication to making and exploring and expanding, to living in accordance with one’s creative callings. I would rather answer the question of how long I have been ‘living’ as an artist, which would probably be since I started my undergrad out in Portland, Oregon, in 2011. Or maybe it has been since I first picked up a drawing tool at age 2, most likely a bright yellow crayon.”

Emily Gray Koehler she/her/hers

Printmaking

Thorp Building (1618 #137)

emily@studioegk.com

www.emilygraykoehler.com

231-590-2274

Images: [Emily Gray Koehler](#)

In every print ever made, there is a history of process, a story told in wood and ink, paper and pressure. These mechanisms of printmaking guide Emily Gray Koehler’s hand, while her heart is inspired by the wonder of nature. The marrying of these two passions has informed her art as she seeks to explore the intersection of humanity and nature in a world where nothing is untouched by humankind..

“Art not only tells us who we are, it dreams about who we could be. In this society so filled with tribalism, otherness and toxicity, art is and will be our way back to ourselves.”

"I love being an artist because art is life! I cannot imagine doing anything else with my time here on this earth. I hope that passion along with the years of practice translate into works of art which bring joy and occasionally encourage the viewer to think about their place in nature."

"Art-A-Whirl is a truly unique animal among all the studio crawls, art fairs and creator's markets that proliferate the region. Art-A-Whirl is our opportunity, as artists, to invite everyone from seasoned art collectors to the art-curious into our workspaces; to peek behind the curtain and see where the magic happens. The vastness and diversity of AAW provides opportunities for artist and viewer alike."

"I wish more folks appreciated how truly unique this arts community is. There are very few cities in this country that can claim such an art scene. I also wish folks knew that the art scene in Northeast Minneapolis is year-round. Artists are always working on new pieces and opening their spaces for special events, appointments and demonstrations."

Reggie LeFlore he/him/his
Spray paint/aerosol, acrylic paint
2010 E Hennepin Ave Building 10
reggieleflore@gmail.com
www.ral86.com
Images: [Reggie LeFlore](#)

Reggie LeFlore is a dynamic visual artist renowned for his celebration of individual and communal narratives through the medium of human portraiture. His work focuses on the essence of everyday life, portraying subjects with a vibrant palette and contemporary flair, capturing the essence and vitality of their stories. Inspired by the ethos of Street art and Illustration, he employs a diverse range of techniques and materials, inducing aerosol, acrylic paint and graphic design elements to craft pieces that resonate with viewers on multiple levels.

"My inspirations have varied over my lifetime, but the cultures surrounding street art have had the biggest impact and inspiration on my art. I enjoy the storytelling aspect and varying perspectives that people have on these kinds of works, as well as the many unique styles and aesthetics that are seen in each of these murals and public art pieces. My early inspirations - which mostly came from video games, comic books and anime - still influence how I make art to this day, despite me switching to aerosol and creating things with more of a street art flair."

"Art is a vital element in our communities because of how it serves as a record of our experiences in Northeast Minneapolis and beyond. In times of pain and hardship, art can either reflect this same energy or act as a form of healing in spite of it. Art can also serve as a means of representation or resilience when our communities seem invisible or ignored."

Genessis Lopez she/her/hers

Acrylic paint, printmaking and digital illustration

Guest Artist at Studio Q on Quincy Street

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[@genlopezart](#)

www.genessislopez.com

507-995-9828

Images: [Genessis Lopez](#)

Genessis Lopez is a multidisciplinary Mexican artist who focuses on painting and illustrating plants and flowers, creating colorful designs that show the joy and peace she finds in nature. Her time in her grandmother's garden in Mexico greatly influences her art.

"I love being able to bring color and life to spaces. Color has always made such an impact in my life and really makes me feel alive."

"I grew up in a community where art wasn't present in public spaces. There were creative people, because creativity exists everywhere, but without support or opportunities, there was no way for them to truly flourish. I can't imagine Northeast without its arts community; it would feel so mundane. Artists and creative minds will always exist, but without opportunities, many might leave or see their passions fade."

"I wish more people realized just how diverse the Minneapolis arts scene is. It's something you can't fully grasp until you step into different creative spaces and connect with people outside your own circle."

Kaitlyn Luhm she/her/hers

Luhm Studios

Polymer Clay, Mixed Media, Jewelry

Studio #445 in Northrup King Building

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www.luhmstudios.com

952-406-0255

Images: [Kaitlyn Luhm](#)

Kaitlyn Luhm has been working on her sculpting skills since elementary school and is well known for her miniature food earrings. Her inspiration is a combination of watching her mother make small accessories for her doll houses and her dad who made and sold jewelry with her at flea markets.

"Art is a communication tool derived from expression. (Through art) you find commonalities and community. When you have community, you have conversations, and those conversations lead to a better understanding of each other, which leads to connections that we all need."

“My work is heavily inspired by the cooking of real people and local restaurants in Minnesota. When working in mostly realism, imperfections are the key to making it look the most real and authentic.”

“I hosted an Art-A-Whirl activity where people could make a realistic polymer clay charm of either a corn dog , hot dog, or ice cream. People that claimed to not be artistic walked away with something they actually liked! There were some very talented kids there that I hope to see selling their own work in a future Art-A-Whirl.”

Kari Maxwell she/her/hers

Painting

Grain Belt Bottling House

karimaxwell@mac.com

<https://campsite.bio/karimaxwell>

612-295-2167

Images: [Kari Maxwell](#)

Kari Maxwell has been painting, exhibiting and selling her work for more than two decades. Animals have become her primary subject. “I have found that observing any animal in its natural environment can be a spiritual experience. What can we learn from this and how can we absorb and apply more of this into our daily living? We, first, must be able to slow down enough, quiet down enough, to observe and listen. My work offers the viewer the opportunity to reflect while forming a surprisingly deeper relationship with each subject.”

“Art is everywhere. It’s so much fun to travel the nooks and crannies of Northeast Minneapolis. If you’ve visited one building, you have only experienced the tiniest percentage of this creative community.”

“Art-A-Whirl is steeped in richness. It is inspiring to be a part of an event where so many people have the opportunity to express themselves. Every time I’ve participated, I’ve met another life long friend or fellow creative. I witnessed one era of Art-A-Whirl, where the event became more about the parties and less about the art. This was a very short stint over the course of the 30 years. I am so grateful to have experienced a return to the art focus.”

“Without sounding at all dramatic, I believe art can and does save lives (or at least souls and spirits).”

Layl McDill she/her/hers

Clay Squared Gallery

Polymer Clay and Found Objects

Flux Art Building

layl@claysquared.com
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612-201-8056
Images: [Layl McDill](#)

Layl McDill is a mixed media artist who uses the sensation of story to help make sense of the world. She uses primarily polymer clay with the ancient technique of millefiore. Tiny images that cover every surface of her sculptures inevitably make the viewer wonder "How did she do that?" Her work usually includes an interactive component to further engage the viewer and the community.

"Art is a key component to all human cultures from the beginning of our existence. It is truly a necessity because it connects us. Art tells our stories and makes people think about things in a new way. Our Northeast Arts District community is like none other in the world! We are full of successful artists creating every day and exploring many different themes. Having this all together in one place means we can be inspired by and learn from one another."

"People don't realize that there is nothing like Art-A-Whirl anywhere else in the country. We are so lucky to have an abundance of artists and art in our community. We have to value it and nurture it so it can keep growing and stick around for generations to come."

"Art-A-Whirl 2011 was especially memorable because that was the year the tornado hit North Minneapolis. Our studio was just across the river. I clearly remember the stormy weather and the sirens going off, but right at that moment Diane Loeffler (our dearly missed state congresswoman) was in my studio buying gifts for her staff members and this was setting off more buying. Or, maybe it was the change in air pressure because the sales were the peak for the weekend! Needless to say we should have taken cover and gone to the basement but how can you turn away customers! We just kept ringing people up."

Mary Schwartz she/her/hers
Friday Designs
Glass
Northrup King Building
Mary@FridayDesignsMN.com
www.instagram.com/fridaydesigns0
651-492-0256
Images: [Mary Schwartz](#)

Mary Schwartz is an autistic artist whose passion for transforming raw materials into breathtaking forms knows no bounds. Specializing in torchwork glass, Mary also showcases her talent through beads and textiles. Her unique perspective allows her to skillfully manipulate molten glass, creating intricate beads, marbles, and small sculptures that captivate the

imagination. Mary's creations are a harmonious blend of quality materials, vibrant colors, and original designs, resulting in elegant and whimsical one-of-a-kind pieces.

"Art is fulfilling. Art breaks down barriers. Art allows people of all walks of life to express themselves and to connect to others. In the Northrup King Building alone, there is art ranging from a few dollars (or less) to tens of thousands of dollars. There is something for everyone."

"Glass is an interesting medium - it can have many lives. When I just can't make a piece work, I break it up into small pieces, re kiln them flat and put a magnet on the back. I also keep a bin of things that aren't perfect - an ornament that had a piece slip in the kiln, a marble with an internal crack. I take those pieces, and the magnets and give them out. The sheer joy that I get in return fulfills me in ways that selling a large piece cannot."

Elana Wolowitz Schwartzman she/her/hers

Fontlove Studio

Letterpress Printing

Casket Arts Carriage House

letterpress@fontlovestudio.com

www.fontlovestudio.com

708-302-7133

Images: [Elana Wolowitz Schwartzman](#)

Fontlove Studio is a small letterpress studio in NE Minneapolis operated by Elana Wolowitz Schwartzman. "Letterpress printing takes a persnickety eye and an inventive drive. I print the old fashioned way, using ink, iron, wood, lead and shoe leather. This is not your grandma's fine stationer. I create prints, cards and paper goods using exclusively hand-set metal and wood type — no computers are used in the process."

"I was working in political organizing in my 20s, and was deeply influenced by the power of words to build movements. For me, letterpress printing from hand-set type combines my interest in using language to connect, challenge, and mobilize people with the physical process of design. To me, art is about play, and letterpress is an unlimited source of play."

"Art-A-Whirl brings people inside my studio where they can see the type, see the presses, sometimes even try their hand at letterpress printing. It's this engagement with the community that I love most about AAW. The best AAW experience involves stumbling on something you never expected and just allowing yourself to be part of it."

Christopher Selleck he/him/his

Photographer, Printmaking, Sculpture, Book Arts, Installation.

Thorp Building

cselleck@gmail.com

www.christopherselleck.com

Images: [Christopher Selleck](#)

Born in Augusta, Georgia, Christopher Selleck has spent the last two decades working in the arts. He received his BFA in Photography from the University of MN-Twin Cities in 2013 and his MFA in Visual Studies and Photography from the Minneapolis College of Art & Design in 2016. Using sports and masculinity as a lens through which to view identity, his various projects of the last few years have focused on this area of identity construction. His current projects address issues of hyper-masculinity, sexuality, and the male body. His work has been exhibited and published nationally.

“Art is an outlet and a way to express or communicate feelings and emotions. I have a very specific focus in my work and recognize that it is not for everyone. I think the people that find my work and see themselves in it feel very seen and making space for folks like that makes me tremendously happy.”

Wone Vang and Youa Vang she/her/hers

Third Daughter, Restless Daughter

Fiber Art with Needlepoint, Mixed Media Installations

Guest Artist at Solar Arts

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www.3drdcrafts.com

612-655-1785

Images: [Wone & Youa Vang](#)

Third Daughter, Restless Daughter creates unique cross stitches that depict progressive work not usually seen in traditional embroidery. The unconventional work allows the two sisters to speak to all who want artwork that voices their thoughts in pretty “x”es. They find beauty in everyday things and draw inspiration from pop culture, anything that makes them laugh and anything they find clever.

Youa: “Our mother taught us both how to cross stitch as young kids. She learned from her mother, a traditional paj ntaub artist which has embroidery and cross stitch elements. Our grandmother was very prolific in her work, and made all of our clothing for Hmong New Year. Although she has passed, we still have all of her pieces she has made for us and store them for future generations.”

Wone: “The arts scene in Northeast is extensive and spans across the streets of the community. Art is not limited to galleries, it’s present everywhere you look: on bridges, the sides of buildings, and in every nook and cranny of the neighborhoods. All you need to do is take a moment to explore, and you’re sure to find something that can be a conversation starter.”

Youa: "With Art-A-Whirl, people attend with the intention of supporting artists. (An art) purchase means a lot. It represents being able to afford groceries, rent, buying a special dinner for hard work, or eventually quitting a day job to become a full time artist."

Sarah Maricha White

Painting, Energetics, Sound, Word

Photography (Including photography of the 30 Artists of Art-A-Whirl)

sarah@neonsoul.co

www.neonsoul.co

952-212-9727

Images: [Sarah Maricha White](#)

Sarah Maricha White is a multidisciplinary artist, hands-on practitioner, meditation coach, mother and dance floor activator. Her process foundationally starts from a trauma-informed approach, dusting away the debris to expose the innate truth that all of us have the ability to heal - and that healing is a lifelong spiral - not a final destination. "My nature and what nurtures me, is the dance and play between each moment and choice we have to be 'here,' belong here and allow all of the parts within us to be seen, heard and exist.

"Art keeps us all connected and it's a resource for our collective healing. It creates a new world, shift paradigms and perceived limitations of the mind. It brings soul to our lives."

"There are tons of blooming Black and Brown creatives in the arts scene in Northeast Minneapolis that are inspiring and healing. I have noticed slowly Art-A-Whirl is becoming more diverse and reflective of the fullness of the community that actually LIVES in NE."

Victor Ramiro Yepez Garcia he/him/his

Victor Yepez Arts

Multimedia, Murals, Sculptures

Solar Arts Building

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Images: [Victor Yepez](#)

Since immigrating to the U.S. in 1997, Victor Ramiro Yepez Garcia has worked as a sculptor, muralist, art teacher and public artist. "My art is inspired by everything around me, made with passion and love, limitless and indestructible."

"I love being an artist because it allows me to contribute to the beauty of cities and public spaces while enriching the lives of so many people. Through my work, I strive to create spaces that feel safe, welcoming, and healing. I also want to give the community a voice—an

opportunity to express themselves and be heard through art. Seeing how art can inspire, connect, and transform a place is what makes this work so meaningful to me.

“My biggest inspirations come from my Ecuadorian heritage, the vibrancy of community life, and the power of public art to transform spaces. I am influenced by history, nature, music, and the stories of the people around me.”

“The best part of Art-A-Whirl is having so many people pass through my studio, engaging with my art and sharing their experiences. One of my favorite memories is stepping outside to grab something from my car and seeing the streets completely alive with people. There was an

Judith Yourman she/her/hers
Ceramic Sculpture, Printmaking
California Building
judithyourman@gmail.com
651-468-7051
Images: [Judith Yourman](#)

Judith Yourman’s work flows between ceramic sculpture, multimedia installation, prints, video and animation. In her current work, she explores the visual and emotional vocabulary of childhood, full of monsters and creatures, exuberance and fears, creating metaphors for the complexities of contemporary life. “It is a loose response to the early drawings of my twin daughters, which have inspired and moved me by their simplicity, humor, beauty, and emotional honesty. This has provided a creative point of departure to make art that is at once both serious and playful, reflecting the complex humanity of our times.”

“I love having a diverse community engaging with my work– from savvy art buyers to local neighbors with young children. One particular Art-A-Whirl I had a surprising number of visitors ask me about the inspiration for my work. Some good conversations followed.”

“Art-A-Whirl generates interest and brings visitors and curious neighbors to Northeast Minneapolis to look at and sometimes purchase art. Art brings people together and revenue to the area.”

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