

Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2015



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Dear Friends:

If anything, The Arts of Life is diverse. Our artists, staff, volunteers, financial contributors, and community supporters come from many backgrounds and have a multitude of aspirations and goals. Equally diverse are The Arts of Life programs and activities – we are more than an organization striving to provide artists with disabilities a safe place to work. We are also about art, music, health, mentoring and community.

In this year's annual report, we want to share a few of the many programs at The Arts of Life that reflect this diversity:

- The highly successful Mentorship Program that pairs a Studio artist with a community artist.
- Our two rockin' bands that have recorded albums in 2015 and what they learned in the process.
- The brave adventure of one of our artists who planned and executed his first solo exhibition.
- Our expanded wellness program that encourages our artist to take care of their health as they learn and grow their visual talents.

Our diversity is our strength.

Many thanks for your continued support expressed through your commitment, dedication, and guidance.

Warmly,

Denise Fisher

Denise Fisher
Executive Director

Inspiring Artistic Expression

Music

The Arts of Life seeks to create a diverse creative community. In addition to the rich visual practices at both the Chicago and North Shore studios, artists' interest in music led them to form two bands. The groups write songs together, perform live at bars and music venues, and create studio recordings. The artists gain as much self-confidence, independence, and growth from music as they do from their daily visual arts practice.

The pop-punk Arts of Life Band grew up alongside the Chicago Studio and released their first album in 2008. Studio founder Veronica Cuculich was one of the original members of the group. The North Shore studio's Van Go Go is a newer group with a sound infused with reggae, roots rock, and funk. Van Go Go drummer and singer Nikole Heusman says, "Our music makes me feel like I can do something that frees me from my disability. Our music is for your heart and for your soul." Both bands chose to focus on recording studio albums in 2015.

A full album promised to take Van Go Go's sound to the next level. However, the fees to rent recording space and produce an album can quickly add up. Not to be deterred by their limited budget, the group launched an IndieGoGo campaign in March of 2015 to crowd source the cost of studio rental and album production. Fans came out in droves to fully fund the project, so the band got down to work this fall at Experimental Sound Studios, a local non-profit, artist-run recording space.

Playing in a recording studio was a totally new experience for many band members. Nikole noted the differences between the studio's recording environment compared to practice and performance spaces. "It was small, and it didn't have a stage, just a place for the microphone and the headset. Everybody couldn't fit in at once, so we had to take turns. It was much quieter than at the studio. It was kind of weird to hear myself singing, and it sounded different, and loud."

Over at the Chicago studio, The Arts of Life Band was also working towards a new album. Singer Christina Zion, who has been with the group from the beginning, was especially excited to record some of the new songs written since their first album. Band member Ricky Canning provided access to a recording space and equipment, allowing The Arts of Life band to record sessions during their regular Friday morning practices. Week after week, they laid down tracks, reviewed prior recordings, and mixed everything in-house. Most importantly for band member Mike Marino, the space was accessible and comfortable. "It was good to be at Ricky's studio... We had enough space and couches to relax on."



"Our music makes me feel like I can do something that frees me from my disability. Our music is for your heart and for your soul."



Both bands noted that the process of recording in a studio was different than performing live. Listening to bits and pieces of a song over and over again changed the musicians perspectives on their music. Both Van Go Go and The Arts of Life Band singers marveled at their ability to clearly hear vocals during recording sessions. Mike talked about recording his song 'Brookfield Rap.' "It was really cool, how I could hear my own voice in the headphones. It was a lot clearer than at shows, and I could hear what I was saying, all the lyrics." Van Go Go vocalist Pam Robe had similar feedback. "I was so happy that everyone could hear me." Her bandmate and ukulele player Vanessa de Leon expanded on that thought. "Often times, I feel like I am in the background or my instrument is being overshadowed by other instruments. When recording in a studio, everyone had the chance to be heard and it seemed that everyone did better while recording."

Recording presented as many opportunities for creative problem solving as painting or drawing. Arts of Life Band member Taylor Hales emphasized the significance of being present to each recording as a unique experience. "There wasn't one approach to apply to every [musician]. What worked for some artists didn't work for others. We had to develop a unique process for each artist."

When asked what he took away from recording, North Shore Arts Coordinator John Sharp said, "I've been with this band for quite a while now, but it can still surprise me, and that is so refreshing. Even after rehearsing for so long, there's just something that happens when you go into the studio; things happen unexpectedly... It helps us keep growing."

Van Go Go's self-titled album was released on November 20th at a standing-room-only performance at Comfort Station in the Logan Square neighborhood of Chicago. They plan to continue performing and promoting their album in 2016. The Arts of Life Band recorded throughout the summer of 2015, and mixed the final track of their new recording in October. The band plans to master and press their vinyl album during early spring 2016. In the meantime, they just want to rock out! You can find the details for their upcoming gigs on Facebook. Christina offers this invitation: "We like to get people dancing fast and having fun. We want to see some new faces in the crowd."

Building Community

Mentorship

The Arts of Life is committed to integrating artists with disabilities into Chicago's vibrant arts community through a professional experiences and opportunities. To fully engage as valuable members and contributors in the larger Chicago arts community, our artists must build strong visual practices to generate and express their ideas. To this end, The Arts of Life developed a Mentorship Program to partner our studio artists with professional Chicago-based artists. The goal of the Mentorship Program is to enhance individual artist's skills and interests through collaborative and equitable work and dialogue as a team.

The Chicago Studio Arts Coordinator is responsible for matching artists and volunteers based on their interests, dedication to their work, and their artistic styles. With a minimum commitment of six months, The Arts of Life studio artists and volunteers work together about every other week. At first, the teams get to know each other through dialogue and pursuit of their individual work. After the pairs are comfortable and familiar with each other's process, they build bodies of work that speak to their collaborative experience. The program began with a handful of partnerships including Allison Wade and Frances Roberts.

Allison Wade and Frances Roberts are a good example of the benefits of the Mentorship Program. Allison and Frances found their partnership rewarding, though not without challenges. Volunteer Allison is a practicing artist who received her Masters' from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago. Studio Artist Frances is largely self-taught. Frances admits it took some time to get comfortable working with each other, but now she feels differently. "We get along pretty good. Allison teaches me about art and how to draw. I'm teaching her how to draw chairs and she teaches me how to draw people." The two can be seen together planning, sketching, or painting. Through their collaboration, they each gained greater awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

After working together for a few months, Allison and Francis began to conceptualize a joint exhibition. Featuring a new series of drawings, "Everyone Enjoys a Party" opened at Tusk in spring 2015. At the opening, family and friends came out to support and encourage the artist.



"My drawings have become much more colorful and complicated since I started working with Frances."

Their joint experience of creating work and planning the exhibit helped to push their professional careers forward, with both artists recognizing how their perspectives had changed. As Allison noted, "My drawings have become much more colorful and complicated since I started working with Frances. I noticed this happening about 6 months ago. I also started layering colors in pencil because of a technique Frances showed me. I don't think I would have come to that on my own".

Working artists are sometimes isolated and can struggle to find daily motivation and solutions to problems in their work. By linking artists in teams, The Arts of Life Mentorship Program uses collaboration to foster artistic growth. Frances points out that "it's important to work with others because they teach you about your own work and bring out your strong points. Allison and I give each other advice and encouragement to get through the challenges we face both in our personal lives as well as in our art work." Allison most appreciated the openness required for a successful collaboration. "There's a freedom in collaborating and sharing the decisions and direction of the work with Frances. And I am always surprised at where the work goes." As a result of the progress Frances made within her practice this past year and the risks she took in developing this strong mentorship connection, she was honored with the 2015 Artist of the Year Award at the Chicago studio.

Frances and Allison have forged a strong connection. They continue to collaborate regularly and offer each other an outlet to process daily feelings. Outside the studio, the two enjoy going to exhibitions together and being able to learn from and enjoy other people's artwork. Due to the positive outcomes we have seen from this program, we continue to keep our doors open for new mentorships to develop.



Annual Financial Report

Fiscal Year ended June 30, 2015

EXPENSES

	FY Ended June 30, 2015		FY Ended June 30, 2014	
Program Services	\$438,074	64%	\$471,100	82%
Administration & Fundraising	\$242,291	36%	\$101,781	18%
TOTAL	\$680,365	100%	\$572,881	100%

The State of Illinois has not increased its' hourly rate for reimbursement of services in several years. As a result, the Arts of Life is increasingly dependent on funding from grants and contributions. In Fiscal Year 2015 additional expenses were incurred in fundraising to increase grants and contributions.

BEYOND THE LEDGER: An incredible amount of resources and supplies go into making The Arts of Life a success.

902
Canvases

175
Paint Brushes

438
Oil Pastels

101
Gallons of
acrylic paint

SUPPORT AND REVENUE

	FY Ended June 30, 2015		FY Ended June 30, 2014	
State of Illinois	\$439,902	64%	\$433,691	74%
Other Grants & Contributions	\$180,965	26%	\$99,343	17%
Special Events & Other	\$67,207	10%	\$55,740	9%
TOTAL	\$688,074	100%	\$588,774	100%

Total support and revenues increased by 17%. Because the State of Illinois has not increased it's hourly rate for reimbursement of services, the agency is increasingly dependent on funding from grants and contributions.

SUMMARY FINANCIAL POSITION

	FY Ended June 30, 2015	FY Ended June 30, 2014
Change in Net Assets	\$7,709	\$15,893
Net Assets, Beginning of Year	\$104,428	\$88,535
Net Assets, End of Year	\$112,137	\$104,428

500
Sharpie markers

27
Events

300
Crayons

322
Color Pencils

Thank you to all of our wonderful supporters

\$5000+

Amanda Joy Sidell
Annette Towler
David Warn
Illinois Arts Council
New Trier Township
The Lavin Bernick Huber Charitable
Fund
The Coleman Foundation

\$1,500–4,999

Big Stik LLC
Grainger
Jere A. Law
Megan Holmes
Northfield Township
Raj Fernando
Scott Fisher
Steve Nazaran
The Heather Foundation
Todd Beyer

\$500–1,499

City of Highwood
Division Street Crossfit
Law Office of Charles R Fox
LVL 3
Niles Township
Alice Rybak
Anne Kelly
Bronwyn Kelly
Carrie Kennedy
Chris McLaughlin
Cindy Lazard-Hunt
Cindy Shanker
David Booth
David Frownfelter
Elizabeth Tucker

Ellen Kelley
James Perry
Joan Kennedy Kelly
John Borta
Josh Rogers
Josh Shames
Julie Schauer
Kristin Kelley
Lisa Wiersma
Marlene Ahmad
Mary Korb
Melanie Jansen
Michael Schafer
Perry & Rhonda Fisher
Ray Wang

Robert Fisher
Robert Kritt
Tiffany Shimada
Victoria Kim
We Are Lions

\$1–499

Aaron Halstuk
Abigail Satinsky
Access Living
Adeline Winkowski
Agnes Sherry
Albert Gaudyn
Alex Dowson
Alex Menocal
Alexander Scott
Alexander Watkins
Alexandra Baig
Alexandra Hodges
Ali Bagherian
Alina Birlibescu
Alpha Phi Omega/ Alpha Zeta Delta
Alisha Towner
Alison Fyhrie
Alithea Tashey
Aliyah Robinson
Allison Barr
Allison Sturm
Allison Wade
Alyssa Moore
Amalia Townsend
Amanda Bailey
Amanda Burgdorf
Amberly King
Amy Berk
Amy Franco
Amy Yamashiro
Ana Henriques
Ana Olivares
Ana Raba-Michkelson
Andrew Bosco
Andrew D'Arcy
Andrew Daley
Andrew Hicks
Andrew Holmquist
Angee Lennard
Angela Ramas
Angie Renfro
Ann Brunett
Ann Jonaitis
Ann Kelly
Anne Peloquin
Annette Sloan
Annie Kielman
Anthony Anderson
Anthony Galiotto
Anthony Perez Sr.
Apurv Puri
Ariele Ebacher
Ashley Chismark
Ashley Melendez
Ashley Pair
Audrey Spraggins
Avon Township
Barb Kehrein
Barbara Abelson
Barbara Becker
Barbara Chamberlain
Barbara Goldman
Barbara Hanan

Barbara Monier
Bazil Brnard
Ben Marcus
Ben Sanders
Benjamin Taylor
Benjamin Torres
Bethanne Stone
Betsy Baer
Bill Finley
Bluelight
Brad Jones
Brad Knain
Brandy Erwin
Brent Holman
Bret Hoekema
Brian Hall
Bridget Walsh
Bridgette Lytle
Brittany Towers
Brittini Miller
Bruce Handler
Bruce Lamont
Bryan Ward
Caitlin Law
Cara McCanse
Cara Zeller
Carisa Hogberg
Carl Ruzicka
Carol Goodman
Carol Robinson
Carrie Berlacher
Carrie Healy
Carson Hoerz
Catherine Norcott
Cathy Wolowicz
Celestina Sachs
Celia Berdes
Charles Curane Jr.
Charles Ripp
Charna Albert
Chelsea Yang
Chris Hoffman
Chris Sturm
Christina Cerasale
Christine Elston
Christina Korbakis
Christina Parenteau
Christina Pillsbury
Christina Valdes
Christina Waterman
Christine Wykes
Clare Kelly
Clare Stuber
Clarence Carter
Clayton Britnell
Clayton Hasson Kubinski
Colin Eyre
Colleen Keihm
Connie Hamilton
Constance Hernandez
Corinne Heldt
Corrie Thompson
Courtenay Klein

Courtney Penzato
Cristen Chapman
Cynthia Bassuk
Dan Friedman
Daniel Bennett
Daniel Christian
Daniel Christman-Crook
Daniel Hurowitz
Danielle Campbell
David Kubica
David Ruiz
David Shuey
David Sullivan
David Yoon
Dean Thanos
DeAnna Dyhr
Debbie Hall
Debbie Kim
Debbie Kubica
Debbie Zollo
Debora Frost
Decker Phyllis
Delane Heldt
Denise Constantine
Denise Fisher
Dennis Jacobs
Derek Hess
Diana Guzman
Diana Popan
Diane Honeymen
Diane Turner
Dianne McDermott
Dickalon Kehrein
Dolores Connolly
Dom's Concrete
Dongyan Li
Donna Gover
Donna Frownfelter
Doug Cox
Dr. George Wilson
Draw the Button, Inc
Earl Wendel
Ed Boarini
Ed & Ellen McManus
Edward Frindt
Edward Rawski
Elaine Boby
Elan Kennedy
Elena Vasquez
Elisabeth Grzywa
Elisha Preston
Elizabeth Bobskill
Elizabeth Dell
Elizabeth Knowlton
Elizabeth Melchers
Elizabeth Tillar
Elizabeth Zavala
Ellen Wallace
Elysia Lock
Emily Hartman
Emily Tuesday
Emily Whitmer
Eric Broughton

Eric Newmiller
Eric Pierce
Erica Bermudez
Erin Ramirez
Ernesto Borges
Eva Soutsos
Fidelity Charitable
Flo Café and Bar
Frank Solano
Gabriel Zurita
Gail Borgerd
Gail Selleg
Gale Geschkey
Gale Stoffregen
Gerard Kostuk
Gia Devenyi
Ginika Agbim
Gordon Knowlton
Gordon Kummel
Greg Walker
Gregory Brinkman
Gregory Davis
Gretchen Rahm
Haley Atkin
Hanan Van Dril
Hanna Berner
Hannah Barton
Heather Melvin
Helen Ulwa
Hilary Conlisk
Hilary Marshall
Holly Bell
Hope Washinushi
Illinois Tool Works Foundation
Ilyse Mechanic
Inbal Amit
India McQuoid
Info Talk LLC
Ingrid Perlongo
Irene Houlihan
Isa Giallorenzo
Isamu Conners
Ivy Erickson
Jackie Furtado
Jackilyn Delk
Jaclyn Jones
Jacqueline Blanchard-Fentim
Jada Black
Jake Gold
James Berner
James Fitzmaurice
James Hammeke
James Richards
James Rohrbach
James Williams
Jamie Knuth
Jamie Munger
Jamie Sebold
Jan Conley
Jana Shute
Jane Doyle
Jane Gallery
Jane Ward

Janice Tedder
Jared Metzner
Jason Allain
Jason Pickleman
Jason Kalajainen
Jason Nell
Jeanne Mervine
Jeff Boarini
Jeff Granda
Jeff Wendel
Jen Marino
Jenna Baisden
Jennifer Jenkins
Jennifer King
Jennifer Nativi
Jenny Kendler
Jenny Pfafflin
Jeraul Ruggeri
Jerry's Wicker Park
Jessica Bribiesca
Jessica Buhrman
Jessie Yanson
Jill Dunbar
Jill Nyhof
Jim & Mary Ladas
Jo Dee Walsh
Joan Martin
JoAnne Firth
Joe Garcia
Joe Jordan
John Casey
John Cunningham
John Gammal
John Kilner
John Korb
John McWhirter
John Morris
John Ostrowski
John Porterfield
John Tryneski
Jolynn Glosson-Simon
Jon Plotkin
Jonathan Doyle
Jonathan Ruzich
Jonathon Alspach
Joseph Davis
Joseph Harzich
Josh Wykes
Joshua Arends
Joshua Broecker
Joshua Fisch
Joshua Rosenbluh
Joshua Urban
Joshua Zeitler
Juan Espinoza
Judi Pellegrino
Judy Sola
Julie Pawlowicz
Julie Bauer
Julie Bronder
Julie Chez
Julie Galiotto
Julie Gardner

IN KIND

Betsy O'Brien
Cathy Schneider
Cindy Shanker
Ellie Farmer
Etta Sandry
Kathy Luby
Kerry Slickmeyera
Megan Isaacs
Michael Schafer
Pegeen Smith
Shelby Mack
Bend Yoga & Movement
DAVIDsTEA
Deerfield's Bakery
Revolution Brewing Company

Sage Community Health
10 Pin
A.T. Kearney
Argo Tea
Benefit Cosmetics
Birchwood Kitchen
Chicago Brew Bus
Chicago Diner
Coeur Mining, Inc
Constellation Brands
Dimo's Pizza Six Corners
Double Door
Eskell
Finch's Beer Company
Flo Cafe & Bar

Goose Island Beer Company
Heinen's of Glenview
Kurtco Insurance Agency, Inc (State Farm)
Lane Custom Framing Ltd
Letherbee
Logan Theatre
Lula Cafe
Mariano's Supermarkets, Inc
Metropolitan Brewing
Middle East Bakery & Grocery
Other People's Pixels
Peter Mars Gallery
Saint Alfred
Spa Social Side
Stan's Donuts & Coffee

The Fresh Market of Wilmette
The Wormhole
Tom Stringer Design Partners
Two Brothers Brewing Company
Una Mae's
WHISK Restaurant
Windy City Cafe

Julie Kohler
Julie Vincent
Julie Galiotto
Julie Bronder
Julie Fisher
Justin Past
Karen Kraft
Kari Hornfeldt
Kari Bogusz
Karl Mundt
Karolin Mirzakhani
Kasey Mills
Katherine Perryman
Katherine Wehrmann
Kathleen Trujillo
Kathy Marino
Kathy Kiebala
Kathy Kubik
Kathy Konkell
Katie Arnold
Katie Schafer
Katie Schwartz
Katie Davis
Katie Murphy
Katrena Greene
Kay Branz
Kayla Powell
Kayla Martin
Kelli Becker
Kelli Fennell
Kelli Garcia
Kelly Reiss
Kelly Heath
Kelly McCabe
Kelly Joprek
Kendra Scheuerlein
Kendra Hanley
Kennedy Healy
Kenneth Michaels
Kenny Rasmussen
Kent Weber
Kerrie Alloy
Kevin Salvi
Kevin McHugh
Kevin Salvi
Kevin Knight
Kirby Davis
Krissey Wrenners
Krista Kneip
Kristen Connolly
Kristin Peterson
Kristin August
Kristine Mestrirts
Kristine Mueller
Kristine Stalzer
Kyle Backer
Kyle Casey
Lara Mann
Larissa Berringer
Laura Quigley
Laura Douglas
Laura Foster
Lauren Sparrow
Lauren Frownfelter-Viljamaa

Lauren Francisco
Lauren Arends
Lauren Pepper
Lauren Anderson
Laurie Slover
Laurie Cisneros
Layne Zolninger
Leah Fisher
Lee Sussman
Lesia Blanchard
Leslie Dummitt
Leslie Adkins
Lilah Alkaissi
Lilly Allison
Lilly Adams
Lily West
Linda Preston
Linda Schilling
Linda Sandman
Linda Martien
Lindsay Heath
Lindsay Koriath
Lindsey Naughton
Lindsey Reiff
Lindsey Anderson
Lisa Dush
Lisa Shorney
Lori Fox
Lori Greidanus
Lori Keller
Lori Ward
Lucas Tashey
Luis Rico
Lynda Santrella
Lyndsey Rice
Lynn Marie Parson
Madeline Msall
Malcolm Felder
Mana Food Bar
Marc Kjerland
Marci Shames-Yeakel
Marcia Pott
Marcus Duncan
Margaret Dickerson
Margaret Anderson
Margaret Tanenberg
Margaret M. Kullman
Margery Gram
Marguerite Tompkins
Marguerite Judge
Maria Castilla
Maria Ciaccheri
Marie Josephitis
Marilee Cole
Marilyn Samuels
Marilyn Hollander
Marisa Adame
Mark Joly
Mark McCabe
Mark Reed
Mark Hopkins
Mark Supanich
Mark Sparrow
Marlene Stasulas

Martin H
Martin Elam
Marv Pfau
Mary Liniger
Mary Cain
Mary Wallace
Mary Bailey
Mary Sheets
Mary Cait Walthall
Mary Ellen Madden
Mary Pat Dvorak
Mashell Stith
Matt Soper
Matt Dyhr
Matthew Rothwell
Matthew Conzen
Mayra Mateo
Meagan Jones
Meagan Bemer
Megan Menocal
Megan Jones
Megan Marquardt
Megan Christenson
Megan Pryce
Megan Walendzinski
Melanie Freeman
Melanie Valdez
Melissa Cicora
Melissa Ferriter
Mellany Shipton
Melody Cibock
Mercedes Rio
Mercy Odhner
Mia Fornoza Connolly
Michael Schafer
Michael Fisher
Michael Walther
Michael Kanovitz
Michael Reichart
Michael Lucius
Michael Kerrigan
Michael Campagna
Michelle Castle
Michelle Cardozo
Michelle Alba
Miguel Moya
Mike Hartnett
Mike Andrews
Mike Goldman
Mike Harris
Mike Paro
Mike Pocius
Milena Yaneva
Morgan Stanley Annual Appeal
Na Suen
Na Shen
Nancy Neels
Nancy Smidesang
Nancy Stein
Nancy Gardner
Nancy Becker
Nancy Kane
Nancy Sproul
Nancy Lisher

Natalia Cintron
Natalie Millard
Natalie Hansen
Natalie Matwijiszyn
Natasha Adelstein
Nathan Lin
Nicholas Gohl
Nick Baziotes
Nicole Thomas
Nicole Van Haverbeke
Nikki Davis
Nina Kindrick
Noel Morical
Northbrook Chiropractic & Natural Care Center
Olivia Duncan
Pablo Alonzo
Pamela Hochfeld
Pat Garsee
Patricia Law
Patricia Jonikaitis
Patricia Marple
Patricia Miller
Patricia Singer
Paul Gazzolo
Paul Visee
Peggy Miller
Peter Heinz
Peter Ayres
Peter Mars
Philip Spahn
Philip Cordes
Philip Gold
Phillip Gazzolo
Phillip Rahal
Piotr Kuczaj
Preston Lavin
Priscilla Brinkman
Rachael Fliegelman
Rachel Sotelo
Rafael Garcia
Rahel Abraham
Rebecca Rodriguez
Rich Seng
Richard Connors
Richard Renfro
Rick Kraines
Rick Rodriguez
Rick Uribe
Rita Carroll
Robbie Hamilton
Robert Britt
Robert Bell
Robert Henry
Robert Bemer
Robert Puccinelli
Robert Cannon
Robin Blomquist
Rocio Perez
Rocky Kunz
Ron Williams
Ron Walker
Ron Laird
Ronald Schreiber

Ronan Remandaban
Rosemarie Burroughs
Roy Greenia
Ruth Hickman
Ryan Shoemaker
Ryan DuBois
Ryan Delp
Sally Dobroski
Sam Christian
Sandra Connors
Sandro Miller
Sandy Lang
Sandy Frydman
Sara Bemer
Sara Fisher
Sarah Gilbert
Sarah Zimmerman
Sarah Gleisner
Sarah Miles
Sarah Gaynor
Sasha Hodges
Saudia Davis
Selima Hargadon
Seulki Min
Shaaron McCabe
Shanaz Bemer
Shane Naughton
Shane Semmens
Shannon Cullerton
Shannon Stratton
Sharon McMurray
Sharon Cabatan
Shelby Kimbrough
Shelly Howell
Sherrie Lowly
Sherry-Anne Robertson
Sheryl Marshall
Shirley Smith
Socorro Clark
Spunick Press Cooperative
Stacey Thomas
Stefan Harhaj
Stephanie Wong
Stephanie LaBomascus
Stephen Landfear
Stephen Schar
Steve Lytle
Steve Taylor
Steve Gutierrez
Steven Burkholder
Steven Bair
Stuart Greenberg
Susan Zilberstein
Susan Petzold
Susan Fordham
Susan Albrecht
Susan Williger Sidell
Susan Geiger
Suzanne Shore
Suzanne Connor
Sydney Shepland
Tara Noonan
Tara Nulty
Tatyana Shpigel

Taylor Geraghty
Taylor Hales
The Hideout
The Options Clearing Corporation
The Prudential Foundation
The Music Garage
The Whistler LLC
Theresa Schaul
Thomas Bemer
Thomas Kremer
Thomas Bentley
TiAkka Johnson
Tiesha Miller
Tim Sarrantonio
Tim Snelling
Tim Stone
Todd Haney
Todd Pustelnik
Tom Korabik
Tom Flegler
Tomi Obikunle
Toni Campbell
Tonya Kauffman
Township
Tracy Hurst
Tracy Jones
True Nature Foods
Tulu Chavey
Upton's Naturals
Valerie Sullivan
Vanessa Hayes
Vanessa De Leon
Vanessa Vergara
Victoria Bates
Vincent Uribe
Virna Desouza
VMWare Foundation
Walter Reed
Walter Klein
Wayne Wright
Wendy Fraerman
Whitney Jones
Will Steinberg
William Feingold
Willis Cowing
Yali Amit
Yasmin Khoshnood
Yordan Yanev
Young Evanston Artists
Yumi Minamikurosawa
Zane Blanton

Promoting Self-Respect

Wellness

During fiscal year 2015, The Arts of Life has been excited to expand our wellness programming by participating Health Matters, a program that provides organizations such as ours with tools and resources to build diverse and effective wellness programs. Although The Arts of Life is focused on supporting people with disabilities to become professional artists, we feel that wellness programming is equally important. For that reason, we decided as a community to devote a portion of our work week to wellness.

HealthMatters uses a variety of activities to promote wellness. One important component is the physical exercise program that encourages participants to find physical activities and exercises they enjoy. Artist David Kreuger has taken responsibility to lead a short stretching/aerobics workout 3 days per week as well as co-facilitating yoga twice a week. He is great at encouraging many members of our studio to take a break from their artwork and get some exercise.

Health Matters also includes classroom activities focused on learning about healthy foods and the impact exercise and good nutrition have on our bodies. As a result, many artists have started bringing more fruits and vegetables in their daily lunches. David Kreuger frequently announces when he has a “big ol’ freakin’ salad” for lunch.

Our garden project has tied in well with HealthMatters. Artist Kelly Stone, an active member of the Chicago Studio Horticulture Committee, has been an invaluable advocate in keeping the project alive.



"We decided as a community to devote a portion of our work week to wellness."



Every Monday, Kelly walks around the studio with a huge grin on his face, waiting for the Horticulture Committee to leave for the Bon A Petit Community Garden. In the Arts of Life plot, artists grow tomatoes, carrots, green beans, potatoes, lettuce, herbs, and much more.

After reaping their harvest, members of the Horticulture Committee often head over to the kitchen at Rogue Philanthropy, an Arts of Life partner, to cook up some delicious and healthy treats to bring back to the studio. They've prepared hummus, potato salad, baby carrots, eggplant, and more. After a quick poll of the studio, the overall favorite has been wax beans pickled with hot peppers. The community is in agreement -- that particular treat contributes immensely to their overall wellness.



Developing Independence

Solo Exhibitions

Every artist has to start somewhere. Most typically, artists make their entrance into the public art world through juried or group exhibitions. But there comes a time when some artists want to dream bigger, step outside of the box, and make something happen just for themselves. The summer of 2014 proved to be precisely that time for North Shore Artist Quinn Zenner when he decided to have his first solo exhibition.

Zenner began the process by rummaging through dozens of his paintings and drawings as he considered the very best of his work to exhibit. “We pulled the work out before hand and talked about it. Which ones would stand out in a gallery? It’s really all about your preference as an artist.”

But where would such a finely curated body of work be shown? As an active Evanston resident, Quinn was quick to consider the Unicorn Café. “I usually hang out there. And I like the different artist that they show.” With the help of Dylan Sperry, the North Shore studio’s summer arts marketing intern, Quinn reached out to the cafe to propose a solo exhibition at the eclectic venue. Sperry recalls the experience: “We were looking through a list of potential venues in Evanston. When we came across the Unicorn Cafe, Quinn was instantly inspired because he said it was a ‘hippy-ish’ place.”

Exercising his professional muscles, Quinn oversaw each step of the exhibiting process. From curating his work to creating a resume and promotional materials, Quinn was eager to make sure every last detail was covered for his big solo debut. “I handed fliers around to people who might be interested in the show, like my friends and family members. I talked to a lot of people I know.”

On November 8th, 2014 Quinn Zenner hosted his first solo exhibition, rightfully titled “Outside of the Box,”



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at the Unicorn Café in Evanston, IL. "I was happy to see that people were there. I couldn't believe how many showed up. It's kind of interesting your first time doing something like that. You don't know who is going to be there or if people are going to care. It was my first experience showing my art in public. I felt pretty at ease about it. I was used to the environment there. There were a lot of people. I didn't know half of them."

"I'm a local artist and [the exhibition] was a unique experience. It drew out my character as a person. It's like discovering something that I never knew I could do - to accomplish so many things in my life."

Quinn's advice to other artists? "If it is your first time you might be hesitant for a while but I would say sometimes you have to get out of your comfort zone because you never know what amazing things could happen."



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