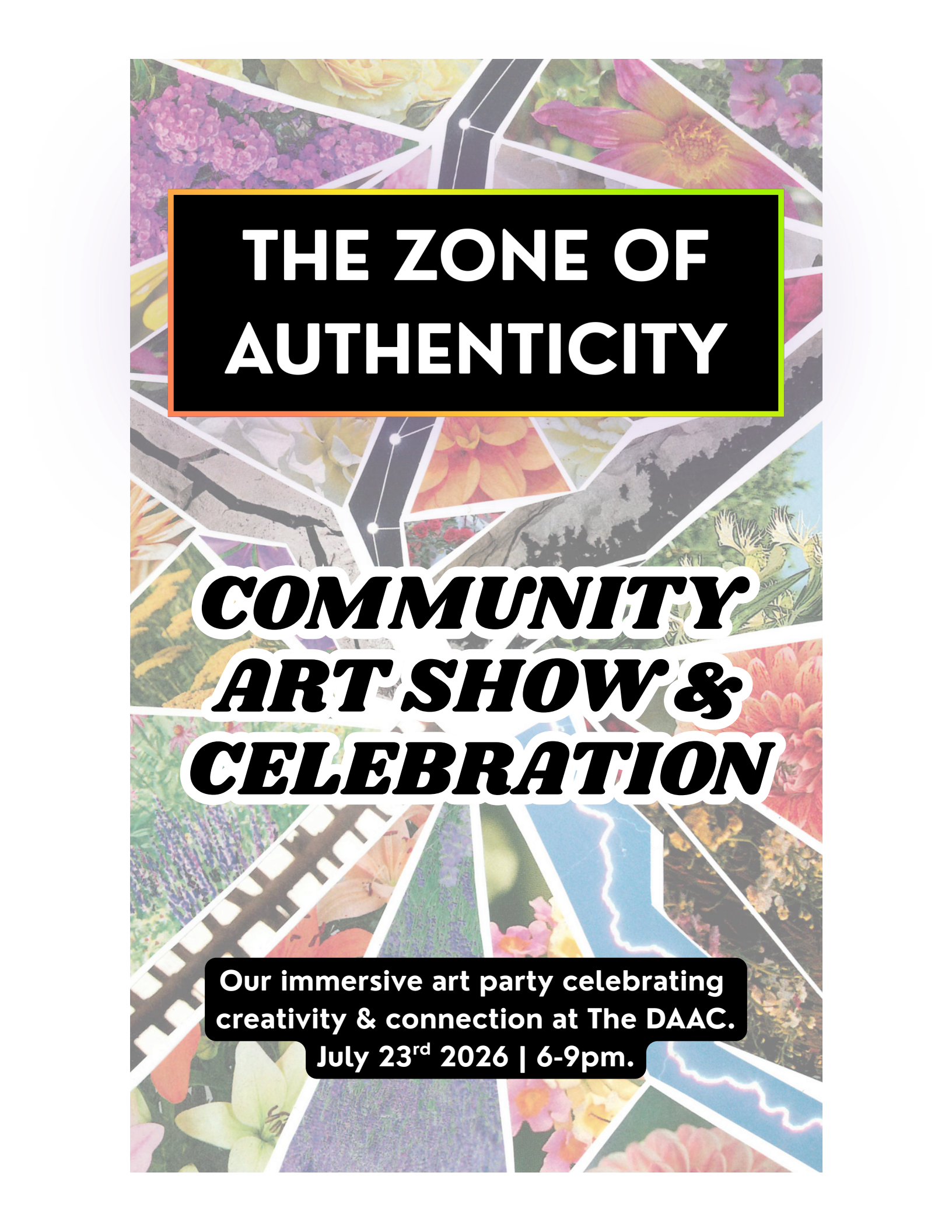




THE ZONE OF AUTHENTICITY

COMMUNITY ART SHOW & CELEBRATION

Our immersive art party celebrating
creativity & connection at The DAAC.

July 23rd 2026 | 6-9pm.

WELCOME TO THE ZONE OF AUTHENTICITY'S IMMERSIVE ART PARTY!

Every piece of art in this show (2D/3D/performance) is inspired by an individual card, shown with a suit icon and number.

Thank you to the DAAC and the Four Star Theatre, to our sponsors Nourishing Wellness Counseling and Global Infusion, to our vendors, to all the participating artists in the show, to WZZM for helping us spread the word, to our friends and families, and to you for celebrating with us!



Matty Moon
"Skeleton Soup"
Mixed media | 2026 | \$565



Rob Patterson
"Supported Silence"
Laser-cut birch plywood
2025 | Auction



Ben Schreiber
"Graellsia isabellae"
Crochet | 2026 | \$800



Dick Buist
"Randy in da Airre"
Spray foam/cloth/mannequin hand/
shoes/red paint | Circa 2007 | \$237



Aria Thomas
"Love Flush"
Bronze, Petina | 2025 | \$155

Upstairs Offerings:

*Sign up at check-in

6:00 - 9:00pm: Authentic Portraiture for Colorful Humans
by **More Joy Studio**

6:00 - 6:20pm, Personal and Small Group Meditations
7:00 - 7:30pm: with **erin brightstar***

8:15 - 8:45pm: Personal and Small Group Sound Baths with **Liberty Glaser***



River Noel
"The Dance Within"
3 Digital Collages | 2026 | \$11 each



Timothy, the Nameless
"Do As We Do"
Pen and ink drawing | 2024 | NFS



Emmett Hein
"Untitled"
Quilt/mixed media | 2026 | NFS



Vivian Nan
"Grace Divided"
Oil on canvas | 2022 | NFS



Jennifer Plyburn
"Americana Celebration 1, 2 & 3"
Quilt, Photograph, Mixed Media
2021, 2010, 2026 | NFS

Schedule

6:00 - 6:40pm: Open Viewing
6:00 - 9:00pm: Food Available from Nourish Kitchen
and Mon Chêri Crêperie @ Long Bar
NA Cocktail Bar from More or Less @ Circle Bar

6:40pm: Live Performances Begin



Whitney Dawn Pyles & the Joyful Disruptors
"We All Deserve Spaces to Be Silly" | Music: Fatboy Slim



erin brightstar
"Seeing Beyond Should" | Meditation/Invitations



Matty Moon and the Moonshine Gang
"Our Guides" | Original Music | feat. Kyle Joe & Asher Lake



Josh Dunigan
"A Perfectly Normal Greeting" | Interactive Drumming



Cosmic Cass
"Full Circle" | Hula Hoop Flow Arts & Spoken Poetry
Music: Free Sound_Community



Sarah Clarissa Mieras
"She Belly" & other poems from Riverbed Treasures



Shannon Underwood
"Untitled"



Katie Venechuk
"Redbud Trees" | Original Music

— Intermission —



Rue Sparks
"Slogans of the Gallows" | Spoken Word



Liberty Glaser
"One Vibration" | Interactive Sound Bath | With Matty Moon



Jes Savino
"Untitled" | Poetry



ElisaMayFlows
"My dreams know not of capitalism" | Dance & Flow
Music: The Gorillaz featuring Little Dragon



River Noel
"Visioning Ecstatic Dance"
Music: Dirtwire, Mbilou, AYA; Irene Cara, SPYZR



Threshold Dance Project
"Ends of the Earth" | Music: Lord Huron
Choreographed by Lindsay Abbott

Please help support our
performers with
tips/donations – more info in
full program with each
artist's bio.



Connect with us!



 **1** Chelsea Freeman Lawrence
"Anatomy of Imagination"
Textiles/Sculpture | 2026 | NFS

 **2** Steven Edelman
"I See Through You, You See Through Me"
Mixed Media | 2026 | \$75

 **4** Nora Faber Overvoorde
"Phoenix Fish (self-portrait)"
Clay bord, Acrylics, Oils
2016, Re-worked 2023 | \$700

 **4** Nora Faber Overvoorde
"Surprising Growth-Precious Resources"
Clay bord, items from nature: pearls, copper, mushrooms, acrylics, inks, nail polish, oils | 2023 | \$700

 **5** Alec Hanson
"untitled"
Oil pastel & acrylic paint | 2026 | \$250

 **5** Manuel Ramirez
"Transcendence"
Acrylic on canvas | 2026 | \$2222

 **2** Carly Richmond
Layers of Dialogue
Oil on Canvas | 2026 | prices vary

 **5** Ashley D'Amico
"Held"
Acrylic on Canvas | 2026 | \$1250

 **4** Anna Bailey
"Reanimating by choice"
Soft sculpture - canvas, paint | 2026 | \$200

 **4** Jes Savino
"Untitled"
chalk marker on paper | 2026 | \$1

 **4** Vivian Nan
"Portrait of Grace", "The Shower"
Oil on canvas | 2022 | NFS

 **3** Emmett Hein
"Look, Touch, Wonder"
Quilt/mixed media | 2026 | \$150



 **2** Luke Venechuk
"Mushrooms of Kent and Barry County"
Photography | 2024 - 2026
\$98 each -- \$588 complete set

 **5** Tehya Leech AKA Tart Creations
"Fertile Ground"
Acrylic, Multi Media, Interactive Painting
2026 | \$300



 **1** Tristan Schafer
"Ongoing Project"
Sharpies and Acrylic on
35 mm film leader | 2017-2026



 **1** Aoife Messinger-Platt
"Clementines & Tan Lines"
Watercolor & Ink | 2026 | \$350

 **3** Alexey Eikenhout
"Don't Touch Me" & "Unicorns Drink Mtn Dew"
Paint pens on cardboard, Mixed media
2026 | \$245, \$45

 **5** Ember Rittenger
"Womb Fruit" & "Galaxy Portal"
mixed media on canvas, print of original
on canvas | 2026, 2022 | \$333, \$66



 **1** Makenna Russell
"Glitch" & "Liquid Gold"
Acrylic on canvas, Mixed media
2024, 2025 | \$150, \$300

 **4** Adrian Dornan
"Infinites" & "Little Self"
Peyote Stitch Pony Beads
2026 | \$175, \$125

 **3** Nicole Coman
"Subversion"
Mixed Media | 2024 | \$1200

 **4** Liberty Glaser
"Full of Color"
Oil on canvas | 2025 | NFS

 **5** Chloe Darby
"Granting Myself permission"
Acrylic on canvas | 2026 | \$150

Table of Contents

The Zone of Authenticity

- **What is it?** **3**
- **The Stewards** **4**
- **The Deck** **5**
- **Using The Deck**
- **The Suits** **6**
- **The Cards & The Artists**
- **Visioning** **7**
 - *Chelsea Freeman Lawrence, Steven Edelman, River Noel, Nora Faber Overvoorde, erin brightstar, Alec Hanson, & Manuel Ramirez*
- **Connecting** **10**
 - *Tristan Schafer, Timothy the Nameless, Emmett Hein, Matty Moon, Rob Patterson, Ben Schreiber, & Jennifer Plyburn*
- **Embodying** **13**
 - *Threshold Dance Project, Aofie Messinger-Platt , Dick Buist, Alexey Eikhout, Josh Dunigan, Elisa May Besteman, Ember Rittenger, & Cosmic Cass*
- **Releasing** **16**
 - *Makenna Russell, Rue Sparks, Sarah Clarissa Mieras, Nicole Coman, Shannon Underwood, Liberty Glaser, Adrian, The Rat Tail King, Liberty Glaser, Chloe Darby, & Katie Venechuk*
- **Attuning** **20**
 - *The Joyful Disruptors, Carly Richmond, Luke Venechuk, Aria Thomas, Emmett Hein, Vivian Nan, Anna Bailey, Jes Savino, Tart Creations, & Ashley D'Amico*
- **The Space** **23**
- **How to Support The Zone of Authenticity**



What is The Zone of Authenticity?

The original “Zone of Authenticity” was an immersive art installation activated by people reflecting, playing, dancing, and connecting through a variety of interactive prompts and objects, including the earliest version of the authentic connection cards. It was originally created for ArtPrize 2023, where it tied for 1st place as a Juried Selection in the Installation category.



Stewards

Whitney Dawn Pyles, ACC (she/her) is a somatic coach and facilitator, dance and movement guide, award-winning artist, and adoptee on a mission to ease the loneliness epidemic. She believes we all deserve spaces to be who we are, that movement, presence, and play are powerful medicines, and that magic happens when we allow ourselves to show up authentically in all of our beautiful complexity.



She initially created The Zone of Authenticity as a 3D found object collage and participatory art installation to convey a moment she was witnessing often in her group and 1 on 1 work - a moment of softening and remembering. The moment when someone realizes, maybe for the first time, that they are worthy of love and empathy as they are. The moment when someone can finally say to themselves, "I am already whole. I always have been.

@whitneydawnpyles / whitneydawn.com



Camille Newsom (she/her) is a poet, artist, educator, and land steward who weaves creative practice, collaboration, and curiosity into her work. She is the author of [This Suffering and Scrumptious World](#) (Galileo Press, 2023) & [Purgatory Junkie](#) (Main Street Rag, 2025), enjoys typing custom poems for strangers on her typewriter, and facilitates Offers and Needs Markets with the intention of supporting local exchange and collective care.

She is the artist/designer on the deck and upcoming Facilitator Guide. She wants to live in a world with more silliness and play, and believes The Zone of Authenticity is an essential tool for uncovering our shared humanity thus bringing us closer to one another and to the many parts within ourselves.

@camelljonescards / camillenewsom.substack.com

The Deck

The Zone of Authenticity: Authentic Connection Cards exist to meet an increasingly essential need for honest, empathetic, human connection. Each card offers a core question, a “go deeper” prompt, and a nourishing affirmation across five unique categories. The cards support individuals, partners, families, groups, and teams in creating space to play, imagine, and soften – loosening the grip of shame and perfectionism, inviting vulnerability, and helping us uncover small, steadying truths that allow us to bloom... together. The core instruction is simple: *Draw a card. Let the rest unfold.*

Using the Deck: Where, How and With Who?

- at the dinner table or coffee table
- for a journaling practice
- for creative or intuitive processes
- with partners, friends, or family
- on travel days, in liminal spaces
- to connect with a stranger
- as a start to a work meeting
- with coaching or therapy clients
- in circles, classrooms, retreats
- for team-building or networking
- to begin a conversation
- as a daily practice before heading into the world

Original Artist Statement:

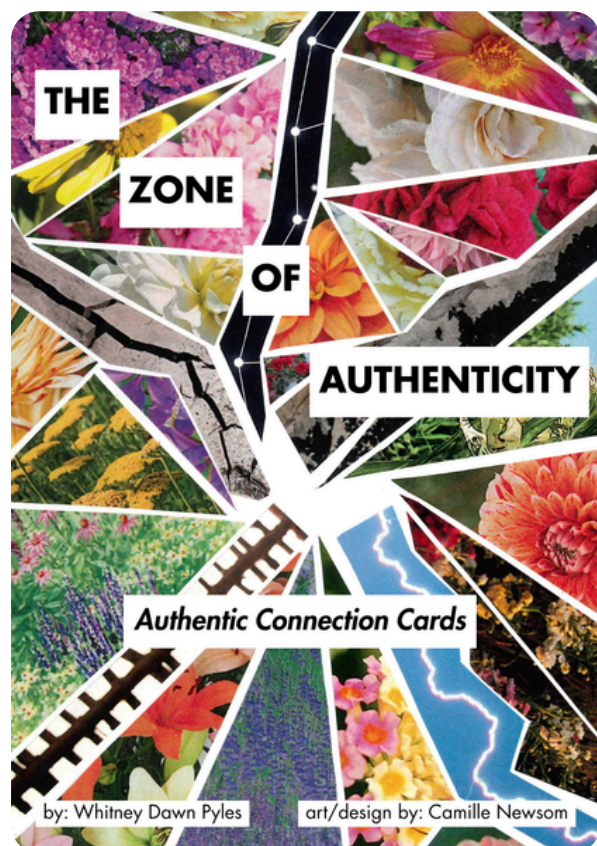
Who we should or shouldn't be is often dictated by our families, religious institutions, schools, social media & society.

We deeply desire to be seen & loved for who we are, but we have learned that it's neither safe nor wise.

The Zone of Authenticity is a space for our truest selves; for small truths & pleasures that can lead to deep self-love.

When we find the courage & community that allow us to dance, speak, sing, emote & be who we are, we unravel perfectionism & deconstruct fear.

When we allow our true selves to be seen, we change the world.



The Suits



Visioning: Connect with dreams of the past and hopes for the future. Notice how they intersect with the season you're in.



Connecting: Notice and explore what you feel connected to within yourself, others, and your environment.



Embodying: Connect with the body through playful questions and non-verbal prompts that invite subtle movement.



Releasing: Explore self-judgement, conditioning, beliefs, and fears that you may be ready to let go of or bring light to.



Attuning: Bring curiosity and compassion to your present season to name what's working or identify the potential for more.

The Cards & The Artists

Our intention is to showcase and celebrate art work inspired by each individual card in the authentic connection deck. The cards are often used in one of three ways: for contemplation, for creation, and/or for connection. Each card has a collage quilt and nourishing statement on one side, two questions and the suit icon on the other. For more information about each art work, please refer to labels, price sheets, map, and schedule of performances.





Visioning



Connect with dreams of the past and hopes for the future. Notice how they intersect with the season you're in.

Featured Artists:

- **Chelsea Freeman Lawrence**
- **Steven Edelman**
- **River Noel**
- **Nora Faber Overvoorde**
- **erin brightstar**
- **Alec Hanson**
- **Manuel Ramirez**



I CAN ACCESS WONDER IN ANY MOMENT.

Chelsea Freeman Lawrence. "I am an artist and maker of things! I love bringing ideas to life whether it's a costume, whimsical product, photoshoot, or art piece. Be sure to follow the fun!" theplayfulhuman@gmail.com | [@theplayfulhuman](https://www.instagram.com/theplayfulhuman) [@capn_chelsea](https://www.instagram.com/capn_chelsea)

"This piece is a reminder that you can access awe and imagination at any moment, it's all around you, and it's within you. Let curiosity light the way to wonder."



I LET MYSELF BE GUIDED BY WHAT IS REAL, TRUE, AND ALIVE FOR ME.

Steven Edelman is a self-taught artist and writer originally from the Great Plains. He is also an Expressive Arts Therapist and LPC. [@depth_arts_and_therapy](https://www.instagram.com/depth_arts_and_therapy)

"I'm compelled by the ritualistic potentials of creativity in the 21st Century."



MY DREAMS ARE STILL POSSIBLE.

River Noel has been creating collages for the last 7+ years with over 600 collages created both digital and in paper form and has found this art form deeply healing, inspiring and versatile. They create with the intention to heal—body, mind and soul, explore emotions, vision, and share. River has also been participating in and hosting Ecstatic Dances for 5+ years. Ecstatic dance offers organic body movement, feeling waves of e-motions and connecting in a space that is supportive and liberating.

amaxd@me.com | FB @AlexaMagsoudi | Venmo: @lexamaxdi

“This collage series was created to highlight the dream I had as a child to be a dancer. Ballet and dancing in general create a sense of ease, joy and facilitate deep healing/transformation. The collages share a progression of this dream from childhood to present.

This free form Ecstatic Dance will facilitate exploration in uncovering your childhood dream and how it’s evolved over time. The experience will begin with a meditation and lead into an Ecstatic Dance where participants can dance their visions and express their dream through their bodies and emotions, while being witnessed in community.”



I CAN LOOSEN MY GRIP AND ALLOW LIFE TO SURPRISE ME.

Nora Faber Overvoorde is an abstract artist creating windows of grace, peace, rest, and magical lands to get lost in. She paints to process thoughts and feelings, dancing during the process to get into her body, attempting to ground herself and touch the heavens simultaneously. There are no limits as to what she can create with this sturdy medium of clay board and she will use anything for texture, whimsy, and delight. She wants the viewer to take their own journey through her works. IG/FB: *Nora Faber Gallery* Tiktok: *Abstractnora* | *www.norafabergallery.com*

Nora started painting on Clay board in 2011. She has won multiple Art Prize awards including the top 100 and best of Calvin Alumni. She is featured in multiple publications and has two books, one magazine and one CD that feature her art on the cover.

erin brightstar is an intuitive guide who's passion is making the otherworldly accessible to all. She has been a practicing reiki master for nearly a decade, which opened up the world of "woo" to her. Embracing sobriety as of November 2021 blew the doors off of what was possible and now she helps others step into the world of spirit in an unpretentious and hopefully easy and comfortable way. Venmo: @theerinjewell | Cashapp: \$colerinja | www.theerinjewell.com | tiktok @erinbrightstar

"I let go of should back in the aughts. The freedom and clarity of self and intention has gotten me where i am today, and i invite you to join me beyond the shoulds."



**I DON'T HAVE TO FORCE CLARITY.
I CAN ALLOW IT TO COME.**

Alec Hanson is a Grand Rapids based illustrator and a senior at Kendall College of art and design. @zzombiehoundd

"Being transgender is the closest you can be to divine. Forging your own path, grasping Adam's rib and taking part in creation, and building yourself from the bottom up."

Manuel Ramirez is a visionary psychedelic expressionist and surrealist live painter channeling energy and consciousness to create interpretations layered in intention. FB: Manuel Ramirez, MannyFest Sourcery | IG: @mannyfest77 manramirez17@gmail.com

"Inspired by the bloom of the lotus that is my own coming into my divine path and artistic journey. The lotus blooms through the deep, dark muck to emerge into it's own vibrant being. Inspiring others through its strength, perseverance and brilliance."

Connecting

Notice and explore what you feel connected to within yourself, others, and your environment.

Featured Artists:

- **Tristan Schafer**
- **Timothy the Nameless**
- **Emmett Hein**
- **Matty Moon**
- **Rob Patterson**
- **Ben Schreiber**
- **Jennifer Plyburn**



I RELEASE PERFECTIONISM. I AM ALLOWED TO BE IN PROCESS.

Tristan Schafer is an experimental filmmaker and amateur film critic based in Grand Rapids, Michigan. His films are inspired by great makers of abstract and improvisational films like Stan Brakhage and Joost Rekveld and aim to capture the free flowing movement of life's experiences. Tristan's film criticism focuses on working class, pro-labor perspectives and can be found in select issues of the Grand Rapids Film Society's newsletter Beam from the Booth, as physical zines available for purchase, and on his letterboxd (@cooliobressane). Venmo: @TristanKSchafer

"This film acts as a living document of the creative process, displaying abstractly both its changes over time and the highs and lows of inspiration. Some sections are more labor intensive and intentionally patterned than others, created at moments of high motivation and deep concentration, while others created at moments of lower motivation are totally freeform, obeying little more than a color scheme. Both are allowed equal validity to exist, with the visually obvious side effect of lopsided representation in time. Each screening is intended to be unique, with a constantly increasing length and complexity as the film approaches, but likely never reaches, completion. Viewers are invited to watch for as long or as briefly as they wish, and to accompany the piece with whichever music or sound they desire, as the film itself is (currently) presented silently."



EACH MOMENT IS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCOVERY.

In 2020, **Timothy, the Nameless** began developing a unique style using delicate pen work to convey the intense mixture of wonder, whimsy, and existential dread that permeates their being. Timothy employs a symbolic language throughout their work, often featuring visionary beings in the midst of discovering something that cannot be forgotten, but must not be remembered. IG @Timisastrangenameforahuman

"All that exists on this plane is only a fantastic swirling toy for a child of cosmic proportions. Won't you join them?"



I HAVE TIME. I CAN SAVOR THIS MOMENT.

Emmett Hein is an artist and educator passionate about fiber arts of all kinds. My work is strongly rooted in art and science integration as well as textile history. Much of my current practice revolves around the history of quilting and community building. IG@silverbee_studio | emhein12@gmail.com

My name is **Matty Moon** and I am a Michigan based multi-media artist with a focus on somatic nature movement, illustrations, photography and film. Venmo @Matty-Moon / Info@MattyMoon.com | IG - @MattyMoonMoon | www.mattymoon.com

"Ever since I could walk, I've been sketching plants, catching wild animals, and glueing together magic little found objects from the landscapes around me."

Dance to me, in part, is about healing the wounds of our past and allowing movement to usher in stillness."



I NOTICE WHICH CONNECTIONS NOURISH ME AND WHICH DEplete ME.

Rob Patterson is a Grand Rapids-based artist, inspired by connection with nature, humans, self, and Spirit. @robpatersonart

"This sculpture represents my connection with friends and community. The way they have shown up for me in support during extremely difficult transformational periods recently has nourished me, allowed me to authentically have my experiences without judgement, and has shown how I can support my friends and community in return."



IG @viridian_velvet_ | bschreiber103.myportfolio.com

A wooden signpost stands on a paved area, surrounded by flowers and greenery. The signpost has the text "Come in and BLOWHOLE" painted on it in white, with "BLOWHOLE" in larger letters. The sign is decorated with colorful flowers and greenery. In the background, there is a blue box with the text "Mentate, respect, write" and a white sign with the text "The World is a Book".

FB: *jennifer.plyburn*

12

Embodying

Connect with the body through playful questions and non-verbal prompts that invite subtle movement.

Featured Artists:

- **Threshold Dance Project**
- **Aofie Messinger-Platt**
- **Dick Buist**
- **Alexey Eikenhout**
- **Josh Dunigan**
- **Elisa May Besteman**
- **Ember Rittenger**
- **Cosmic Cass**



I PUT DOWN THE SHIELD AND CREATE SPACE FOR PLAY.

Threshold Dance Project is a performance group formed at Midwest Movement Collective through a shared love of dance and finding their way back to it as adults.

Featuring: Amber, Audrey, Chelsea, Ella, Emily, Hailey, McKenna, Zenobia.

IG@thresholddanceproject | Venmo: @ThresholdDance

"This piece is inspired by the journey of finding your way back to play and childlike wonder. It's so easy to get lost in the busyness and responsibilities of adult life, that we forget to take care of ourselves, find our joy, and be playful. It is choreographed by Lindsay and performed by Threshold Dance Project, the performance crew from Midwest Movement Collective."



My name is **Aoife Messinger-Platt** (she/her), also known by my artist handle @junky.boots, I am a local GR, trans femme queer artist, model, and cryptid. As a trans artist, and as a figurative artist, my work acts as a meditation on the human body and the beautiful intimately mundane moments, we have with our bodies.

Orange. It immediately invokes nostalgia of warmth, summer, and sun, both present and past for me. Memories of long days, and the light of the sun catching brown hair revealing an orange glow as it catches the light, and of bronzed sun-tanned skin earned from adventures through the days. Of small memories, of my sister and I, as kids, seeing who could peel a clementine in one piece, in a perfect spiral.



2 I LET DELIGHT FIND ME. I WELCOME JOY IN.

Dick Buist. “My artistic endeavors are a sifting process. The unique results and juxtapositions are sifted out by most, but you, the remnant, appreciate them. I think of my art as tasty “cake” and any admiration as “icing”. Icing is nice but still the sweet cake is best! (sounds like a tortured soul, doesn’t it?) dickbuist@mac.com

“The appreciation of my art is not unattainable.

Try a little harder, darlings.” - Chard Bouscht aka Dick Buist



3 I CAN LET MY INNER WEIRDO SHINE THROUGH.

Alexey Eikhout is a trans masc artist from Grand Rapids, Michigan who loves playing around with ephemeral materials to make art pieces focusing on flora, fauna, and trans bodies, with a wide spectrum of emotions. [IG@wigginout.png](https://www.instagram.com/wigginout)
alexeyeikhout@gmail.com

Unicorns have a majestic, whimsical side to them that I’ve always admired. So why not make a silly colorful piece with green insides full of guts and little fairies?

No matter the passage of time, morning or night, if you didn't ask, and if I didn't say yes, don't touch me. Or else I become an American Brahman Bull and launch you out of existence.

Josh Dunigan is a man with a van and a plan to make music with every human he meets.
[Cashapp:\\$dizzyjd](#) | [Venmo: Josh-Dunigan](#)

“I'm sorry you were ever diminished for your weirdness. Be you and be amplified.”



I LET MYSELF REST KNOWING THIS MOMENT IS ENOUGH. IT'S ALSO NOT FOREVER.

Elisa May Besteman is a multi-flow artist using hoops, fans and anything else as flow medium. She is also a teach at the Armentality Arts Center in downtown Grand Rapids. She believes in holistic creative movement and appreciation of a natural world. She is also an avid gardener. *Venmo: Elisa-Besteman*

"If they could harvest our dreams, they would. Your imagination, your dreams, those are YOURS, and it is imperative that you keep them close and special."



I AM CREATIVE, RESOURCEFUL, AND WHOLE.

Ember Rittenger is a mixed-media artist, bodyworker, birth doula and women's wellness guide whose work explores unraveling of societal conditioning, feminine sovereignty, and the sacredness of the female body. She lives in a magical forest with her husband and 3 children and many of her pieces include elements from nature and items gathered from her hikes. *@foxandferndesigns | Etsy: CrabdogsCollection*

"Through my art, I reclaim the female body as sacred rather than shameful. Inspired by my own journey of healing from childhood sexual trauma, each piece is an invitation for women to remember their innate power, creative life force, and infinite capacity for healing, pleasure, and self-expression."

Cosmic Cass has been a poet since she could first talk and a flow artist since she picked up a hula hoop 6 years ago! A mover and maker of all sorts, she is ready to curate some magic with you! *Venmo/Paypal: cassidyriek | Cashapp: \$cashtagcassidy IG @c0smic.cass333*

"I am ecstatic to present my first showcasing of my poetry and flow act combo! I have dreamt of creating this piece and am blessed to present my art! I am thrilled to EMBODY my inspirations through the Zone of Authenticity!"





Releasing



Explore self-judgement, conditioning, beliefs, and fears that you may be ready to let go of or bring light to.

Featured Artists:

- **Makenna Russell**
- **Rue Sparks**
- **Sarah Clarissa Mieras**
- **Nicole Coman**
- **Shannon Underwood**
- **Liberty Glaser**
- **Adrian, The Rat Tail King**
- **Liberty Glaser**
- **Chloe Darby**
- **Katie Venechuk**

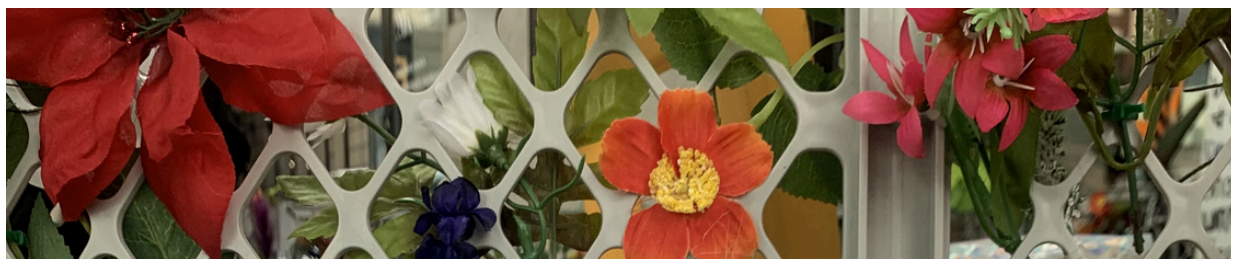


1

I BRING COMPASSION AND CURIOSITY TO THE PARTS OF ME THAT ARE AFRAID.

Makenna Russell. My work often displays vivid colors and imaginative imagery to reflect the inner workings of one's subconscious mind. I am fascinated with connecting human beings with the world around us, often reflecting on our impact on others or nature. Therefore, I attempt to combine common objects and medias together in a new way to highlight our place within the universe. IG @makennarart | makennarart@gmail.com

"I am a self taught mixed-media surrealist and illustration artist from the metro Detroit area. I have been creating art my entire life and have been a part of a variety of exhibitions that have taken place around Detroit some of which have been at the Detroit Contemporary, the Detroit Historical Museum, St. Andrews Hall and the Tangent Gallery."



Rue Sparks is an author and illustrator whose work is a Venn Diagram of visual and written media at the conjunction of queer, disabled, and neurodivergent identities. At times sassy and sarcastic, other times earnest and raw, no matter the genre, world, or plot, every piece is a mirror to the moment in time it was penned.

Venmo: @rue-sparks | Paypal: @sparkythesnarky | CashApp: \$SparkytheSnarky

Slogans in the Gallows is a mix of macabre humor and earnest remembrance. Toeing the line between comedy and spoken word, it is both a reflection of personal evolution and a memorial to loved ones lost.



2

I AM IMPERFECT, SOMETIMES WRONG, AND A LITTLE BIT WEIRD. AND YET I AM LOVED.

Sarah Clarissa Mieras. A 20th century newspaper journalist, photographer and editor, she also pounded the keys as the Director of Communications for a professional opera company and as the Director of Marketing for a historic music venue built by women. A graduate of Aquinas College, she values service and has organized, worked as crew and volunteered at festivals, concerts, Pride events and non profit music venues for more than 30 years. She is a second generation Agent Orange survivor and is part of the spina bifida program for children of Vietnam Veterans. Mieras has performed her poetry since the early 1990s. Her writing has earned awards in multiple genres from graduate research to investigative journalism. An avid gardener, rock hound, volunteer, songwriter, activist, tree hugger and music lover, she currently resides in her hometown of Grand Rapids, Michigan. *Riverbed Treasures* is her first book of poetry.

**3**

I RELEASE SELF-JUDGEMENT AND MISPLACED EXPECTATIONS. I AM WONDERFUL AS I AM.

Nicole Coman is a local west Michigan abstract artist whose work explores sustainability and human emotion through vibrant colors, movement, and the innate rhythm found in the unknown. fussykitty616@gmail.com | IG [@Fussykitty616art](https://www.instagram.com/Fussykitty616art)

This body of work is an act of visual subversion dismantling the heavy weight of self judgment and misplaced expectations. Through a fractured lens these pieces reassemble broken perspectives into a bold, vibrant reality celebrating the raw unapologetic freedom that comes from letting go of perfection.

Shannon Underwood is a writer, intuitive energetic bodyworker and lover of nature and exploration. Venmo: [shannon-underwood-9](https://venmo.com/shannon-underwood-9) | cashapp: [\\$shannonu29](https://cash.app/$shannonu29)
IG [@luminous.divinity](https://www.instagram.com/luminous.divinity)

**4**

ALL OF ME DESERVES TO BE SEEN AND SUPPORTED.

Adrian, the Rat Tail King, is a poet and bead artist from Grand Rapids, Michigan. Their writing often focuses on disability, queerness, and the intersection of the two as it pertains to his life and others'. Along with zines and hand made notebooks they make beaded tapestries, bags, and accessories that capture the joys of a colorful and playful life. IG: [@Rat_Tail_King](https://www.instagram.com/Rat_Tail_King)

These two pieces were created as messages to my younger self by my embodied whole as a reminder that all of me has always had a space here. "Infinities" uses leftover beads from various projects of mine throughout my life and features a quote from one of my poems to create a beautiful rainbow tapestry of the infinite pieces of myself. "Little Self" seeks to reconcile the shame of and the yearning need for acceptance around my trans identity I felt as a young child growing up in a religious home.

Liberty Glaser is an artist and sound facilitator devoted to creating spaces for deep remembrance, healing, and authentic connection. Through sound, creativity, and presence, they invite others to reconnect with the beauty of the heart and the sacredness of the human experience. Her work is rooted in the belief that wholeness is our birthright and that we are already enough as we are. libertyglaser.com
IG @innately_liberty | commissions accepted

"This piece, as well as my work in life, is about remembering that we are full of all the colors light and dark and releasing any thoughts that any of these colors are not beautiful and essential pieces to living our most authentic human lives."

When our nervous system can regulate, our body can release and heal. Listening to soothing vibrations or creating vibrations with our own bodies is one of the quickest ways to regulate."



5

DEEP WITHIN, I ALREADY KNOW THE RIGHT ANSWER.

Hi I'm **Chloe Darby**, an artist from Belding MI, and I put my heart and soul into each creation! I'm very passionate about art and how it breaks barriers and creates communities. IG: @chloe__lemonade

Suddenly a simple thought crossed my mind," This is my life, and I grant myself permission to be me...wild and free! So I am shedding my doubts,insecurities, and everything holding me down, this is a new beginning, a time to grow and shine!

Katie Venechuk is a local nature guide, business owner, and creative whose life and work are rooted in a deep connection to the natural world. A former environmental engineer turned forest therapy guide, foraging instructor, and writer, Katie believes nature invites us to reconnect with what matters most, creating space for emotional healing, personal growth, and a deeper relationship with ourselves and the living world.
www.iyewellness.com | IG @iyewellness | FB: In Your Element

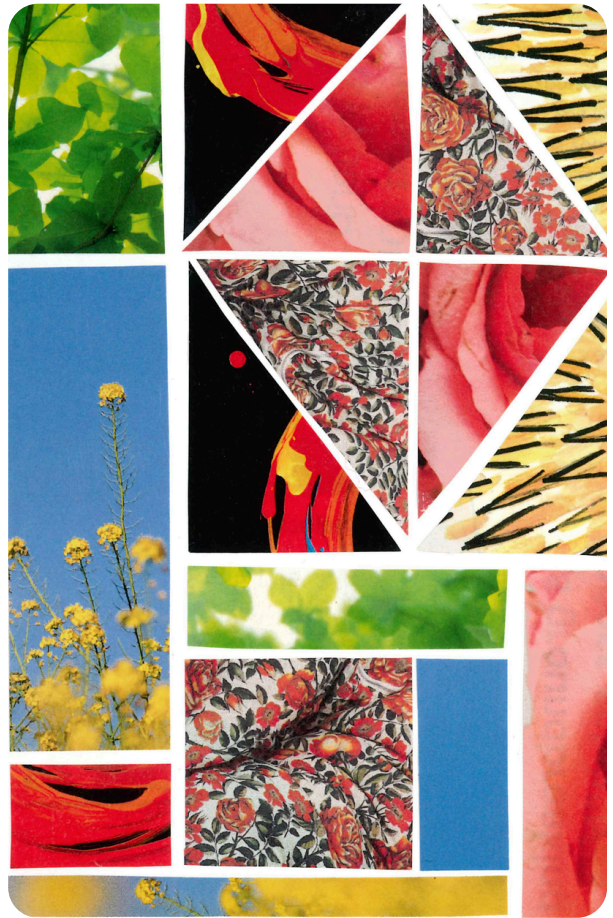
"Redbud Trees is a piece that reflects on living with the anxieties that arise from both personal and societal pressures, and on the ways nature can guide, support, and speak to us as we find our way toward release."

✦ **Attuning** ✦

Bring curiosity and compassion to your present season to name what's working or identify the potential for more.

Featured Artists:

- ***The Joyful Disruptors***
- ***Carly Richmond***
- ***Luke Venechuk***
- ***Aria Thomas***
- ***Emmett Hein***
- ***Vivian Nan***
- ***Anna Bailey***
- ***Jes Savino***
- ***Tart Creations***
- ***Ashley D'Amico***



1

I DESERVE TO FEEL JOY, EXPERIENCE PLEASURE, AND ENJOY MY LIFE.

The Joyful Disruptors. Silliness softens. Dancing alchemizes. Dancing together creates--community, a collective heartbeat, a reminder that if we let our guard down and drop the mask, even for just a moment, joy might creep in and remind us that we're not alone.



2

I LEAN INTO WHAT NOURISHES ME, KNOWING I AM WORTH IT.

Carly Richmond is a painter and multimedia artist based in West Michigan. Her work is expressive, colorful, and tactile, often incorporating layered collage, abstraction, and fragmentation. It often addresses the complexities of identity in relation to societal expectations of gender, sexual orientation and race. Carlynrichmond.com
IG @Carlyrichmond.art | Carlyrichmond.art@gmail.com

"Layers of Dialogue examines gestural portraiture through interviews with individuals from my community. By painting portraits of people I know, I translate dialogue and focus on the authenticity of capturing intimate conversations. As society continues to keep us divided, embracing conversations allows people to connect on a human level and address moments in people's lives that deserve to be heard."

Luke Venechuk is a nature photographer and forager living in the Grand River valley of Lowell MI. Daily nature time is the foundation of his connection to his creator, his world, and himself. Fungi are some of his favorite forest citizens. www.canieatthisforaging.com

"The mushrooms in this piece are growing in the forests of West Michigan. What we see in these portraits are the spore producing organs of the fungus, but the main body of roots lives inside the dead wood year round, which is both their home and food."



3

**I DON'T NEED TO HIDE OR SHRINK.
I AM WELCOME HERE.**

Aria Thomas focuses on metalwork casting and welded fabrications because of an alluring history in outdoor foundations. I computer becomes an environment for the sculpture to be first sketched. Then the process takes online models to life with a character designed to resemble a biological experiment, principle, or process. Consciouscreativeartstudio.com | IG @Thatconsciouscreative_

"Taking from hand drawn sketches of the heart's anatomy, I note the essential organs value. The symbols I represent the heart with connect to pure love. What we base ourselves around performs as a pump, feeding us resources moment by moment. If emotions are synthesized wisely, where can your love remove doubt?"

Emmett Hein (see connecting 3)



4

**I HAVE THE POWER TO BREAK CYCLES, DISRUPT
LOOPS, AND STEP INTO NEW WAYS OF BEING.**

At 84, **Vivian Nan** delights in the freedom to expand the possibilities of creating new and meaningful ways of seeing our world. viviannan.weebly.com | FB: [viviannan.grady](https://www.facebook.com/viviannan.grady)

My mentor once told me "you know how to paint what you see, now paint what you know". Whether realistic or abstraction, I wish to explore the essence and feelings of my subject.

Anna Bailey practices exploration. You'll find her with markers and notecards sketching energetic amoebas to help express emotions and process decisions. Fiber and paint come out for paradigm shift sized projects. annapearlbailey@gmail.com
IG: @amoebaexpressions

Jes Savino is a mother of two teenagers and a seasoned restaurant operator who moonlights as an aspiring psychic. In 2020, Jes was honored as a Super Hero by the Muskegon County Coalition for Safe Seniors. She wonders what life would be if we all looked out for one another. Jes lives in Alger Heights with her children and her parents.

The artist believes that revolutionaries challenge conventional thinking daily; loves words, food, and change.



5

**I CAN PAUSE. I CAN REST. I CAN SLOW
DOWN ENOUGH TO HEAR WHAT I NEED.**

Tart Creations has been generated to provoke mindful healing through the lens of bright, colorful art in the form of multiple mediums. @tart.creations99
tarts.creations@gmail.com

Fertile Ground is a collaborative art installation dedicated to inspiring others to dig deep and express their authentic feelings. This is encouraged by adding your own expression to the canvas itself using the materials at hand.

Ashley D'Amico has been an artist about town for 28 years in the Greater Grand Rapids area. She and her paintings have grown into a more authentic expression of self through play, imperfection, and acceptance. Ashley hopes you find joy, power, and amusement as you witness light dance across her paintings. Invitation to breathe deeply and just enjoy. Permission to take this breather. @ashleyadamico
fineartamerica.com/profiles/ashley-damico

"I am a person on the go, I do big things often all at once. This season I find myself in a pause and while that may seem easy for some, for me it's uncomfortable. My system has battled with ways to fill this time, be productive, earn the rest. What I've discovered is that rest doesn't have to mean being still, that often the ability to rest first comes with a felt sense of safety. What emerged as I painted was a shield in flight. Moveable, reflective, expressive. Before we rest, we often shield. I feel a deep sense of gratitude for these last few months of being on hold AND being held in safety. This is what emerged in my season of rest."

The Space

The DAAC (Division Avenue Arts Collective) is a not-for-profit, volunteer-run, all-ages music venue, art gallery, and DIY project incubator started in 2003 in Grand Rapids, MI.

The DAAC strives to provide a safe & neutral space for artistic expression, available to everyone regardless of age or other circumstance. We believe that everyone has something to contribute, and we strive to create a community based on participatory culture through a DIT (do-it-together) approach.

Currently, the DAAC is taking residency in the Four Star Theatre, a venue in Burton Heights dedicated to generating activity in and for the neighborhood including performances, showcases, weddings, concerts, fundraisers, and neighborhood gatherings.



**Donate to
the DAAC**



**Donate to
the Four Star**

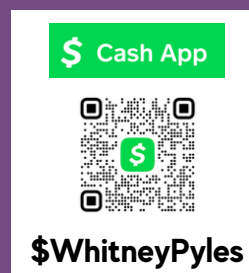
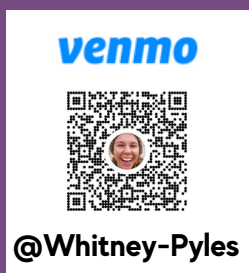
How to Support The Zone of Authenticity

Visit our table in the lobby and buy a deck or a print.
We accept cash, venmo, cashapp, or credit/debit card.

Make a donation to the event coordinators.
25% of all donations made tonight will go back to the DAAC.

Explore more about this project at whitneydawn.com/zoa

Connect with us! We'd love to collaborate.
Visit our table for more information about our offerings.





**MICRO-MOMENTS
OF AUTHENTICITY,
WITH OURSELVES
AND WITH OTHERS,
CAN HAVE A REAL
IMPACT. WHEN WE
CAN MEET ONE
ANOTHER WITH
EMPATHY INSTEAD
OF JUDGMENT,
WHEN WE ARE
BRAVE ENOUGH TO
CONNECT, REAL
CHANGE BECOMES
POSSIBLE.**

Thank you to the DAAC and the Four Star Theatre, to our sponsors Nourishing Wellness Counseling and Global Infusion, to our vendors, to all the participating artists in the show, to WZZM for helping us spread the word, to our friends and families, and to you for celebrating with us!

 @thezoneofauthenticity

 thezoneofauthenticity@gmail.com

 whitneydawn.com/zoa



Connect with us!