



Artwork by Jennifer Mujezinovic.
Courtesy photo



Celebrating our local Artists

Bloomington is blessed with a myriad of artists working in a wide variety of mediums. In these pages we present the works of 17. There are many more, for sure.

The life of an artist is not an easy one and few are able to make it solely on income from the sale of their art. Almost all have day jobs. We have purposely not included artists who teach art at Indiana University or who have in the past because we assume that they are financially secure. Our hope here is that some readers will purchase the art they see or other works by a favored artist.

Unless you have money to spare, I think you really have to fall in love with a painting or sculpture to buy it. When you do, an original work of art becomes yours alone, a precious possession that serves no worldly function other than to be admired and shared with family and friends.

So, beware. As you turn these pages, you just might fall in love.

—the editor



Larissa Danielle

Mixed Media Artist



(above) Larissa Danielle.
Courtesy photo

It's hard for mixed media artist Larissa Danielle to name her favorite medium. Much of her work combines paint, sculpture, fiber, and an array of recycled materials on canvas. "I was tired of seeing flat paint," says the Silver Springs, Maryland, native. "At museums in Washington, D.C., I'd see paintings with fabric and metal. I dabbled in texture and started using more and more of it. It makes pieces come off the canvas."

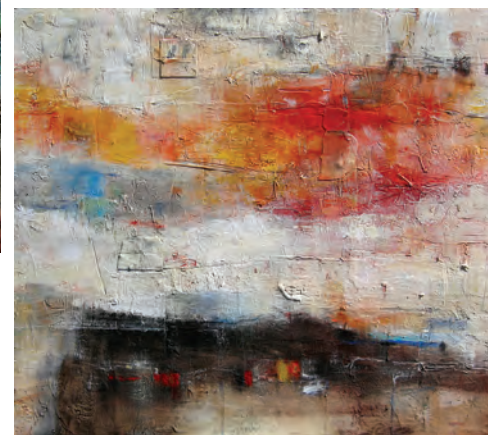
Danielle says her signature work "reflects the everyday life, love, and struggles of the strong Black woman" and tackles topics like racism, discrimination, and genderism in both the Black and LGBTQ+ communities.

Visit [instagram.com/larissadanielleart](https://www.instagram.com/larissadanielleart).





(above) Tamar Kander. Photo by Steve Raymer



Tamar Kander

Renowned Abstract Painter



Tamar Kander's abstract paintings start with a textural layer that might include shopping lists, insulation, or the sweepings from her studio floor. After adding layers of paint and other materials, Kander declares each piece finished only after she has considered it in different settings and upside-down.

"I need to approach the painting with a clear mind," Kander says. "It's like what the Buddhists believe, that if you can get the mind out of the way, the spirit and the body can work together."

Kander's paintings hang in homes from Terre Haute to Johannesburg; in corporate offices in New York and London; and at the Indiana State Museum.

Visit tamarkander.com.



Steve Dawson

An Unlikely Artist



As president of local mechanical contracting firm Harrell-Fish Inc., Steve Dawson might seem an unlikely artist. But after a mountain-biking accident left him with a broken arm and four months of convalescence, he decided to take an art class.

Primarily a landscape painter, Dawson frequently works *alla prima* (spontaneously) and *en plein air* (outdoors).

“There is something deep within us that bonds inseparably with our natural world,” Dawson says. “Bringing that connection to life for others to experience is the essence of landscape painting.”

Visit dawsonoriginals.com.



(above) Steve Dawson.
Photo by Martin Boling



(above) Wyatt LeGrand. Photo by Tom Preston



Wyatt LeGrand

The Pride of Bloomfield

Wyatt LeGrand says he prefers painting “weird, funky things rather than pretty things.” He estimates that he makes more than 1,000 paintings a year.

“I have kind of a blue-collar approach to producing artwork,” he says. “Just make a whole bunch of it, know where to steer yourself, then step back and look at the artwork and go from there.

LeGrand started painting in 2008 while working on a degree in visual arts education at Indiana University. A Bloomfield, Indiana, native, LeGrand now teaches at Bloomfield High School. “I’m thrilled to have established an identity as an artist and teacher in the small town I grew up in,” LeGrand says.

Visit legrandartstudio.com.



Martina Celerin

Tapestries That Tell a Story



Martina Celerin's fiber art combines traditional weaving techniques with felting and reclaimed materials like shells, rocks, and old jewelry to create tapestries that tell a visual story.

Celerin finds inspiration in her own life experiences, such as visits to the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market, or fishing trips with her husband, Jim, and their sons, Tommie and Jacob. During the pandemic, she has found herself creating brighter and more colorful pieces.

"My art is really a statement of who I am and what my experiences in this town have been," she says.

Celerin sells her work online and at local and regional art fairs.

Visit martinacelerin.com.



(above) Martina Celerin. Photo by Rodney Margison





(above) Amy Brier. Courtesy photo

Amy Brier

Stone Carver



In the age of digital modeling and 3-D laser printers, working with a hammer and chisel may seem “kind of archaic,” admits stone carver Amy Brier. But it’s precisely this connection to human origins that makes her craft compelling.

“When you look back at history, we understand a lot of it through the stone architecture that’s left,” she says. “Even those early pictographs were a harder rock on another rock picking out a picture. I think that’s why people respond to stone in such a deep way.”

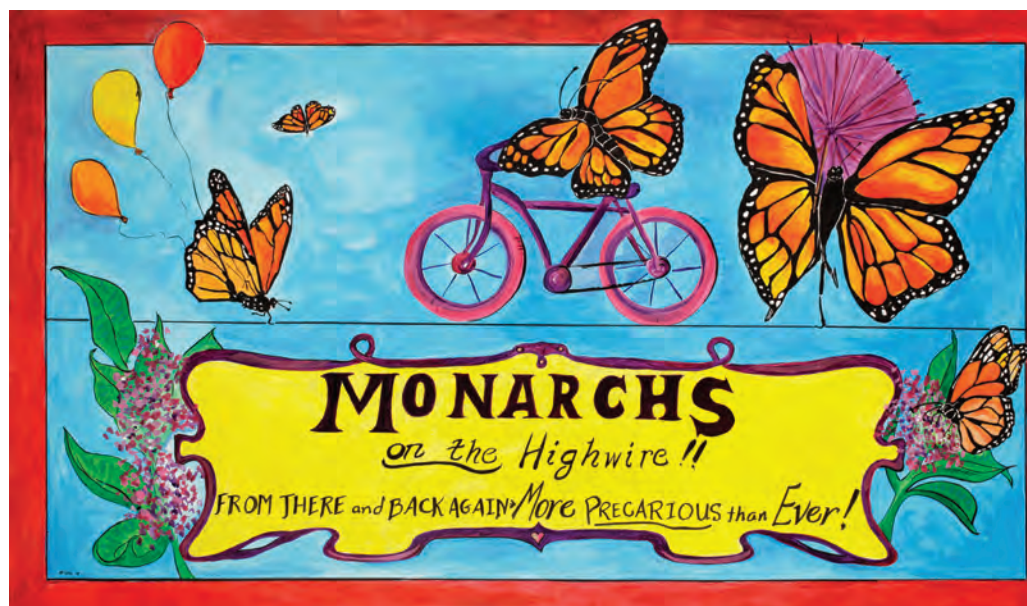
Brier has directed the Indiana Limestone Symposium, a summer workshop she co-founded to offer training and community, since 1996. Visit amybrier.com.





Joe and Bess Lee

Art With a Cause



In 2019, husband-and-wife team Joe and Bess Lee exhibited more than a dozen 2 1/2-by-3-foot acrylic paintings on paper in the style of mid-20th-century circus sideshow banners in a show called *Professor Animalia's Menagerie of Struggling Species* in Bloomington and Indianapolis.

"Circus banners were frequently stylized visual promotions, displaying the awe that risk-performers inspired—the trapeze artists, for example," Bess explains. Each banner featured an endangered species rendered in circus style.

Joe is now writing and illustrating a biography of Holocaust survivor Eva Kor. Bess has worked on broadening her artistic experience through Ivy Tech arts courses and meditative study of museum artwork at the Eskenazi Museum of Art at Indiana University.

Visit joeleeillustrator.com.



(above) Joe and Bess Lee. Photo by Nicole McPheeters

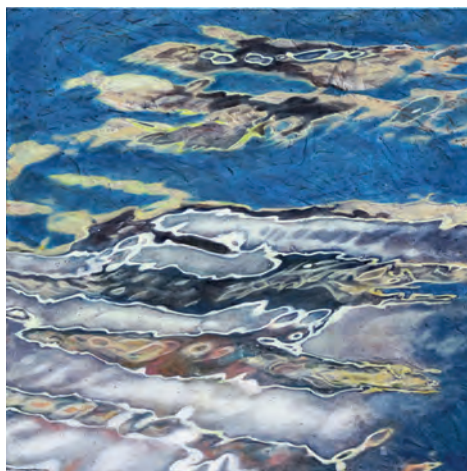


(below) Dawn Adams. Photo by Martin Boling



Dawn Adams

Water Artist

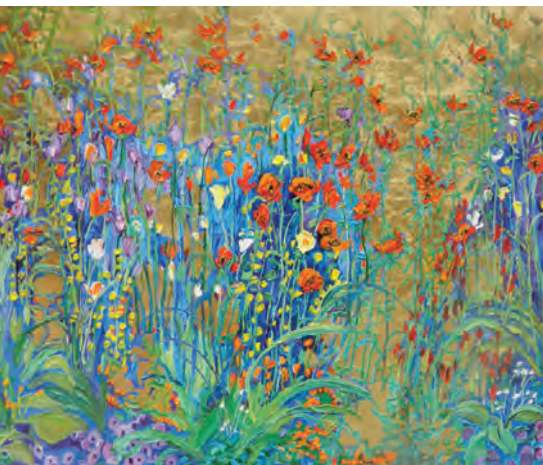


Dawn Adams specializes in water imagery: fresh, salt, still, rippling, melting, frozen.

She focuses on water because the paintings could be both representational and abstract. “Water changes things,” she notes. “Reflections, sparkling water, the light going through. You can hardly believe it exists in reality, it’s so magical.”

The paintings are never dark and stormy. “I want my art to help people feel better and be healthy,” Adams says. “I want the work to be soothing.”

Visit dawnadamspaintings.com.



(above, right) Patricia Rhoden. Photo by John Bailey

Patricia Rhoden

Prolific Artist



After 37 years as an art teacher, Patricia Rhoden retired in 2013 and now spends most days creating oil and acrylic paintings in her Nashville, Indiana, studio. Much of her work is impressionistic, and she's known for her silver and gold leaf floral landscapes.

"I find joy in painting," Rhoden says. "It's my emotional outlet. I can't even say how many paintings I do in a year. I'm a very prolific artist because I'm constantly painting."

Rhoden was named an outstanding landscape artist at Hoosier Salon, a statewide juried art show in Indianapolis, in 2014, 2015, and 2020.

Visit rhodenart.com.





Jerome Harste

Multi-Genre Artist



(above) Jerome Harste. Courtesy photo

Upon retiring from Indiana University as a distinguished professor of literacy, culture, and language in 2006, Jerome Harste began studying with renowned artists in several states. Today, he is a multi-genre artist who also throws pottery, draws in pen and ink, and builds sand sculptures. His diverse collective work features many subjects and styles.

"The motto I live by is 'ruin one piece of paper a day.' It's only by staying actively engaged and taking risks that one grows," Harste says.

Visit jeromeharste.com.



Kevin Pope

Artwork That Tells Stories

Cartoonist Kevin Pope has illustrated for *Playboy* magazine, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Mad Magazine*, the NBC animated show *Sammy*, Pepsi TV commercials, and the comics *Inside Out* and *The Far Side*.

These days, Pope is creating finer art. Applying acrylic paints and found objects on birch planks or vintage stationary, Pope creates vignettes of imagined 1930s' scenes—a railroad station, a jazz group, a farmer and his wife.

"I've continued on artwork that hopefully has the ability to tell stories, with a bit of humor, while embracing vintage Americana," Pope says.

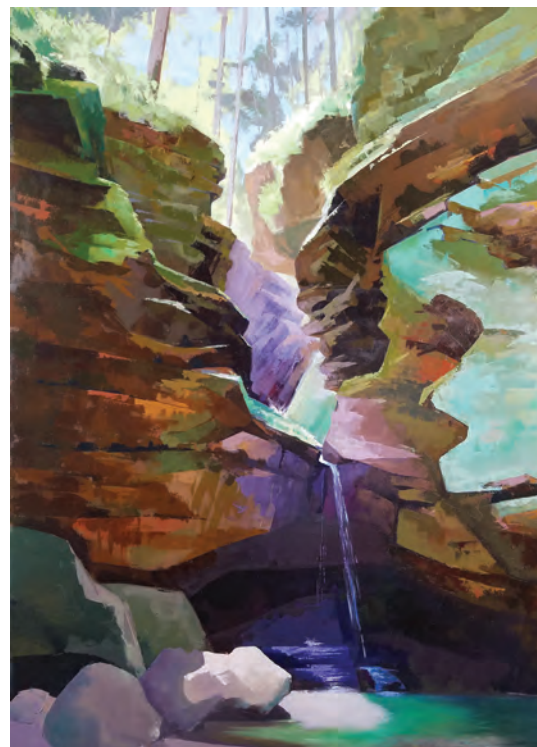
Visit kevinpope.com.



(right) Kevin Pope.
Photo by Martin Boling



(above) Meg Lagodzki. Courtesy photo



Meg Lagodzki

Painting an Unnatural Landscape

After Meg Lagodzki had a serious illness that resulted in the removal of her thyroid, she was entirely unable to speak for two months, and then only in a whisper for a year. Depressed, she coped by returning to oil painting, something she had given up for 10 years to focus on her family.

In particular, she found herself drawn to south-central Indiana's limestone quarries—an interest that stems in part from a concern about human impact on the environment.

"It's a manufactured landscape," she says of the quarries. "They shouldn't exist like that. They're beautiful, and bizarre, but sort of impossible."

Visit meglagodzki-art.com.



Mark Blaney

Versatile Artist



(above) Mark Blaney. Courtesy photo

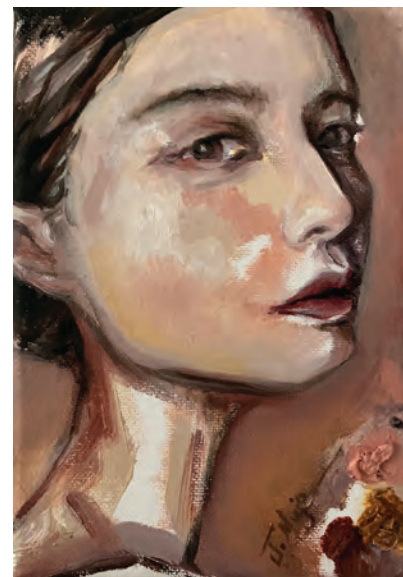
Even before painter and ceramicist Mark Blaney moved to Bloomington in 2010, he had contributed artwork to various local arts endeavors, including albums and publications by local composer Malcolm Dalglish.

Now, he continues to produce work for the Bloomington community. His paintings hang in homes across the city and are available for purchase at Juniper Art Gallery in Spencer, Indiana.

While Blaney's paintings have been described as post-Impressionist, "I don't like to be held to a certain style," he says. He also creates painted ceramic wall sculptures, many of which depict people and street scenes.

Visit markblaneyart.com.





Jennifer Mujezinovic

Portrait Painter



(above) Jennifer Mujezinovic.
Photo by Kendall Reeves

For four years, Bloomington's Jennifer Mujezinovic painted the whimsical portrait covers for the All About children's book series. After 12 total book covers, Mujezinovic has decided to begin taking a new creative direction.

A show in Chicago where half of her work sold on opening night, a move to a new studio "with perfect natural lighting," and a show called "La Vie en Rose Colored Glasses" are part of the process.

"With the pinks and reds that kept popping up in my paintings and [the song 'La Vie en Rose'] lately in the air, it seems we are all looking forward to days with a rosier view," she says.

Visit jmujezinovic.com.





Joel Washington

Music Is His Inspiration



A self-taught artist, Joel Washington's work can be found in Bloomington galleries and restaurants, in departments across Indiana University, and at the Indiana State Museum. In 2018, he travelled to London, England, where eight of his paintings were featured at the Parallax Art Fair.

Many of Washington's works are colorful paintings of famous jazz and rock musicians, such as Billie Holiday, Miles Davis, and the Beatles.

"Music can put you in a time and place," he says. "In my head, I know what imagery I could paint if I'm listening to certain music. When I hear something, I sometimes think, 'I've got to buy this! I've got to paint!'"

Visit joelwashingtonart.com.



(above) Joel Washington.
Photo by Jeff Richardson



Dixie Ferrer

Texture Artist



Brown County resident Dixie Ferrer considers herself an artist of texture, exploring the combined mediums of oil paint and cold wax. “Working in different arts has allowed me to collect and combine techniques,” says Ferrer, whose 40-year art background includes textile, ceramics, and painting. “But I’ve always been a texture artist. I can’t get away from texture.”

Her evolving style speaks of moodiness and tonalism, perhaps matching the times we are living in, she says.

Ferrer’s work can be viewed at the Brown County Art Guild or by appointment at the Ferrer Studio.

Visit ddferrer.wixsite.com/mysite.



(above) Dixie Ferrer. Photo by Rodney Margison



Jerry Smith

En Plein Air Painter



Initially finding it easier to paint in a realist style, Jerry Smith says his work has adapted with time. “I’ve turned toward impressionism,” Smith says. “My direction has been to loosen up, simplify, work with bigger shapes.”

In 1975, four years after he first picked up a paint brush at age 30, Smith was introduced to *en plein air* (outdoor) painting, a hallmark of his portfolio.

“Plein air is just as much about the experience as the results,” he says. “It’s the time I most feel like a painter, like I’m relating to the impressionists and the artists who came before me.”

Currently, Smith’s creative direction lies in watermedia painting. Visit jsmithstudio.com. ✨



(above) Jerry Smith. Courtesy photo