

GALLERY GUIDE



June 27–November 8, 2026

FLORENCE GRISWOLD MUSEUM

*So you see, at first the artists adopted Lyme, then
Lyme adopted the artists, and now... Lyme and art
are synonymous.*

— Florence Ann Griswold (1850–1937)

JURORS' STATEMENT

When considering the best way to celebrate America's 250th birthday at the Florence Griswold Museum, it felt natural to stay true to our history and what we do best—showcase Connecticut's artists and provide a place for them to come together in community. The idea of a juried show to mark this moment sprang from conversations between Museum staff members who wished to provide an opportunity to continue the ethos of our namesake by growing our friendships with regional artists and welcoming their perspectives.

We are thrilled with the response! From our hearts, **thank you to all the artists who submitted your meaningful work.** We were deeply impressed by the quality of the nearly 300 submissions from talented Connecticut artists. There were many difficult decisions, and we wished we had additional gallery space to include all the worthy contributions.

Each jury member first carefully studied the submissions on their own. Next, we met together to discuss our choices. In addition to the technical, aesthetic, and expressive quality of the work, we prioritized how effectively each piece spoke to *Patchwork's* themes. The 97 works on view represent the artists' courageous and inspiring efforts to reflect on America at this anniversary with optimism and a re-commitment to ideals first framed 250 years ago.

We are grateful for the generous support of the Samuel Freeman Charitable Trust, the David T. Langrock Foundation, HSB, Department of Economic and Community Development, Connecticut Office of the Arts, Bouvier Insurance (a HUB International Company), CT Humanities as part of its America 250 | CT program, as well as donors to the Exhibition Fund and the Annual Fund. Media sponsor: WSHU Public Radio.

Our country needs artists now more than ever. We hope you enjoy the exhibition and return to the Museum often during this celebratory year and beyond.

Sincerely,

Jenny Parsons, Ph.D., Senior Curator and curator of *Patchwork*

Amy Kurtz Lansing, Curator

David D.J. Rau, Senior Director, Education and Visitor Engagement

INDEX

Artist (artwork number)

Andria Alex (19)	Laurel Friedmann (13)	Hilary Opperman (26)
Emily Barresi (44 + 45)	Guido Garaycochea (59)	Rieta Park (25)
Karen Bartone (61)	Nancy Gladwell (87)	Judith Peritz (83)
Mary Ann Rumney Besier (11)	Georgiana Goodwin (58)	Nancy Babcock Perlin (75)
Lucretia Bingham (35)	Jeni GrayRoberts (2)	Graciela Perrone (62)
Dawn Bisharat (21)	Sarah Grote (20)	Pam Peters (14)
Lori Blados (71)	Rita Hannafin (27)	Hannah Petrikovsky (74)
Arthur Bogen (53)	Diane Holtzworth (12)	Liane Philpotts (76)
Marsha Borden (10 + 46)	Sunil Howlader (22)	Nancy Pinney (55)
Janine Brown (64)	Azra Hussain (6)	Jeanne Carol Potter (51)
Peter Brown (47)	Alyssa Johnson (80)	Linda Reynolds (70)
Helen Cantrell (54)	Sara Kelly (32)	Lizzy Rockwell (23)
Brenda Cartmel (33)	Lisa Kereszi (92 + 93)	Polly Seip (66)
Susan Chamberland (48)	Gail Laferriere (84)	Meghan Shanley Waskowitz (43)
Catherine Christiano (1)	Jac Lahav (16)	John Simboli (72)
Katherine Clark-Nilsson (69)	Edward Lent (18)	Hannah Lee Smith (38)
Maura Cochran (81)	Linda Lindroth (41)	Joe Standart (94 + 95 + 96 + 97)
Gaia Cornwall (42)	Gigi Liverant (52)	Carol Stanland (36)
Jeanne Davies (91)	David Madacsi (15)	Suzanne Starr (73)
Robert Louis Del Russo (77 + 78)	Frances Malcolm (63)	John Tenney (8)
Kathleen DeMeo (90)	Andrea Lawl Manning (17)	Martin Trehub (31)
Mally DeSomma (68)	Ken Masslon (88)	Edith Twining (82)
Benjamin Donaldson (29 + 30)	Kat Murphy (57)	Connie van Rhyn (50)
Jim Doran (9)	Kevin Murphy (40)	Jill Vaughn (4+ 67)
Barbara Eaglesham (60)	Clara Nartey (24)	Frederick Verillo (49)
Eileen Eder (85)	Leif Nilsson (86)	Carol Vinick (3)
Jacquelyn Etling (65)	Peter Nuhn (89)	Irene Watson (34)
William Evertson (28)	John O’Donnell (7)	Alexandria Wong (5 + 39)
Angie Falstrom (56 + 79)	Nancy Oates (37)	

INTRODUCTION

Following the legacy of Florence Griswold (1850–1937), who invited contemporary artists to her home and grounds, the Museum honors the 250th anniversary of the founding of the United States by showcasing the perspective of today’s Connecticut artists. The work in these galleries was submitted in response to our call for art that reflects themes of American identity and history established by The America 250 | CT Commission. The four themes—*Telling Inclusive Stories*, *Power of Place*, *Doing History*, and *For the Common Good*—ask American citizens to consider the nation’s founding ideals and how we continue to realize them today. The themes incorporate a range of ideas, from community building, civic engagement, and democracy, to how Connecticut’s diverse populations, sites, and events are remembered and represented. Works on display demonstrate how Connecticut artists play a significant role in fostering this dialogue in our communities.

The Museum’s Bicentennial Quilt (on view in the Collection Highlights Gallery) served as an inspiration and metaphor for this exhibition’s concept—history is patched together, preserved, and reinterpreted by each generation. *Patchwork* offers an opportunity for Connecticut’s artistic community to contribute their own observations, mend absences, and uniquely engage with the United States’ Semiquincentennial.

This gallery guide foregrounds the voices of the 86 remarkable artists who contributed to *Patchwork*.

This exhibition was juried by Amy Kurtz Lansing, Curator; Jenny Parsons, Senior Curator; and David D.J. Rau, Senior Director, Education and Visitor Engagement, Florence Griswold Museum

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FOR THE COMMON GOOD

The founders of the United States were devoted to the ideal of “the common good,” in which citizens prioritize collective well-being and advantageous engagement with the community. Rooted in ancient philosophy, it rejects the pursuit of narrow self-interest. Artists in this section reflect on the country’s founding ideals and provide visual responses to the current political climate and national current events. Using a variety of media, including materials gathered from everyday life, these works consider how Americans have come together to protect our environment, to grieve during national tragedy, and to assert their voices as citizens through protest. For example, artist Jeni GrayRoberts describes that her contribution “reflects how individual actions extend outward into a connected whole, where what is carried, altered, or discarded continues to shape environments in unintended ways.” Each work offers a poignant reflection on the complexity of our democracy and how our participation in American life has evolved over time.



1 Catherine Christiano | Old Lyme *Seasons / Interesting Times, 2019* Oil, acrylic, and transfers from *The New York Times*

“My work, rooted in everyday life, combines representational painting, graphics, and conceptual elements. *Seasons / Interesting Times* chronicles a year in both nature and society. The monthly panels feature local seasonal flora painted on a patchwork of material from *The New York Times* in 2016.

That year, marked by the Clinton-Trump presidential election, was pivotal and tumultuous. So much was happening, not just politically, but technologically and socially. My paintings are, in part, a response to that climate. I chose material from *The Times* as it is a significant national newspaper of record and represents free press. Within the panels, the mundane and everyday appear alongside historic or catastrophic events, reflecting collective societal concerns. The painted flora, including the State’s mountain laurel, serves as a counterpoint to the surrounding news. The four seasonal panels feature local flora painted on a patchwork of material from *The New York Times* in 2016.” –Catherine Christiano

2 Jeni GrayRoberts | Deep River *Caught in the Current, 2025* Recycled kiln-formed glass and reclaimed wood



“*Caught in the Current* is made from discarded framing glass reshaped over handmade forms from used kiln materials and mounted on wood recovered from the Connecticut River.

The materials are not neutral. They have moved through use, disposal, and return. I am not replacing that history; I am redirecting it. The glass is stretched by heat; the wood carries marks of water and time. Together they reflect a cycle: what is carried, left behind, and what returns to affect more than its origin.

Within *Patchwork’s For the Common Good*, the piece reflects how individual actions extend outward into a connected whole, where what is carried, altered, or discarded continues to shape environments in unintended ways.” –Jeni GrayRoberts

3 Carol Vinick | West Hartford *The Bethany Land Trust Volunteers, 2024* Fabric collage



“In honor of the 250th anniversary of our country, I wish to honor our history of land conservation. *The Bethany Land Trust Volunteers* was made to honor the dedicated folks who blaze and maintain trails, place stepping stones at stream crossings, build bridges, remove invasives, build stone steps up steep trails to make them more accessible, clear trails after storms, and much more to preserve this precious land.

The land-trust movement started in the US in Massachusetts in the 1850’s to preserve land for public use. Currently there are more than 1700 local and regional land trusts nation-wide. Land trusts in Connecticut were first established in the 1960’s, and currently there are at least 120 in our state. The Bethany Land Trust was created in 1968 with an initial donation of 27 acres. That number has grown to the 728 acres they own or manage today! The figure in the green pants is me! These are true stewards of the land!” –Carol Vinick



4 Jill Vaughn | Ivoryton
White Lies Matter, 2020
Collage, pencil, paint on paper mounted on
foamboard with wooden stick

"I weave political, personal, and environmental concerns together to draw attention to our actions and our planet. *White Lies Matter* was created during the pandemic as a form of protest. Although we are no longer challenged by Covid, the threat of fascism persists. The excessive lies told by an administration keen on gaining personal power motivated me to make this piece. I found it interesting that our culture often considers the 'white lie' to be less of a detriment, yet these white lies led us into dangerous territory that continue to threaten our very democracy today. In a world surrounded by violence towards the other, it is important for me to make and use art that serves as a statement defending democratic values." –*Jill Vaughn*



5 Alexandria Wong | Shelton
No Kings on the Milford Green, 2026
Acrylic

"In early autumn 2025, No Kings protesters rallied on the Milford Connecticut Green, denouncing the present-day autocratic efforts of the current administration. This image is a protester resting on a bench before hundreds of people fill the Green. It echoes the sentiments of 1776, 250 years later." –*Alexandria Wong*

6 Azra Hussain | Higganum
Light in the Dark, 2026
Pastel frosted glass, midnight-blue sunstar stone,
gold wire

"As the Constitution State of America prepares to celebrate the 250th anniversary of our nation, the Second Amendment comes to mind. Has the intended balance between public safety and personal freedom been achieved since we created it? Tragedies like Sandy Hook keep repeating. What has changed? Have we made a safer environment for our kids? Are we doing enough for our collective mental health? I hope we move in the direction of a safer America.



This jewelry piece represents this duality. Fear and loss, but also hope for a better tomorrow. The pastel beads show innocence as an homage, as if we let a bunch of balloons we couldn't keep safe fly away to somewhere beyond. On the other side, we see our children become eternal, lifted by a dove in a blanket of stars. The twenty-six beads (lives from Sandy Hook), seem dark, almost dormant. But looking closer, we see these midnight-blue stones shine, because they are our guiding light." –*Azra Hussain*

7 John O'Donnell | West Hartford
United States (Priority Mail): 250 Years in Circulation, 2026
Cardboard

"This work engages the theme of Patchwork by approaching American identity as an assembled and distributed structure rather than a unified whole. The use of Priority Mail boxes emphasizes circulation, repetition, and modular construction, where each unit contributes to a larger but unstable form.

The sculpture functions as a temporary monument built from materials associated with movement and exchange. It reflects a national identity formed through accumulation, fragmentation, and redistribution over time. The structure suggests that the United States is not a fixed image but an ongoing process of assembly shaped by systems that connect distant places into a shared, yet uneven, cultural framework." –*John O'Donnell*



8 John Tenney | Litchfield
John Brown, 2026
Fired clay

Born in Torrington, CT, John Brown (1800–1859) was a radical abolitionist known for leading a raid on the federal arsenal at Harper's Ferry, WV, for which he was hanged.

"This work embraces Brown's complexity as a figure both revered and contested. His life resists simple interpretation, and rather than resolve these tensions, the sculpture makes space for them. In capturing his intensity, conviction, and moral urgency, the piece invites viewers to engage with the ambiguities that define both the man and the history he helped shape. By highlighting this complexity, the work contributes to a broader understanding of the American





past, one that acknowledges multiple perspectives, and encourages reflection on justice, citizenship, and national identity as the United States approaches its 250th anniversary.” —*John Tenney*

9 Jim Doran | Waterford
American Tall Tales—John Henry, 2026
Bloodwood, canary wood, wenge wood

“John Henry is the ultimate symbol of human grit. A post-Civil War ‘steel-driving man,’ his legend is rooted in the construction of the Big Bend Tunnel. When a steam drill threatened to replace manual labor, Henry challenged the machine to a race.

Wielding a 14-pound hammer, he drove steel faster and deeper than the mechanical beast, proving human spirit could outmatch cold iron. Though he won the contest, the legend says his heart gave out from the exertion. Today, Henry remains a powerful icon of labor, resilience, and the timeless, bittersweet struggle of man versus machine.” —*Jim Doran*

10 Marsha Borden | Guilford
Fortune Teller’s Guessing Game—1776 or 2026?, 2026
Paper and acrylic paint

“A close reading of the Declaration of Independence written 250 years ago reveals many commonalities between past and present understandings of how a democracy can function for the good of the people. Recognizing these commonalities provides opportunities for mutual understanding as we navigate a pathway forward that is meaningful, respectful and for all. This piece provides a playful way to reflect on what has changed—and what has not changed—in the last 250 years.

How to Play—The folded paper triangle (some call it a Fortune Teller) is a child’s game originating in seventh century Japan and passed down through generations around the world. This version contains statements from The Declaration of Independence written in 1776 and from current national newspapers. To play, select an outer color first, and then an inner number. Spell the color by manipulating the flaps one time for each letter and number until the inner message or “fortune” is revealed. You have to correctly guess the year the message was written—either 1776 or 2026—to win.”
 — *Marsha Borden*



11 Mary Ann Rumney Besier | Old Lyme
Give me your tired..., 2024
Mixed media; painted wood box, ceramic figures

“I have always loved the work of the American Impressionists. I always wanted to paint as they did, but I found I just couldn’t pick up a brush—it frightened me. I felt I could never be that ‘good.’ What I seemed to be very good at was foraging for treasures on the local antiques and collectibles scene—mostly small objects. That passion combined with a lifelong interest in the arts, as well as a career in graphic design, lead me on a mission to collect boxes. Nothing particularly large, but each one of a different origin, each one a unique design. One day I picked up one of my little objects, set it on top of a box and a name for the creation popped into my head. I haven’t been able to stop since.

‘Give me your tired’ comes from the 1883 poem by Emma Lazarus, who composed it to raise funds to erect the Statue of Liberty, which was installed in 1886. The sonnet is engraved on a plaque located inside the national monument’s pedestal. The plaque, installed in 1903, extended the statue’s global identity from a monument of Franco-American friendship into a universal symbol of hope, refuge, and immigration.”
 —*Mary Ann Rumney Besier*



TELLING INCLUSIVE STORIES

As artist Edward Lent puts it, “America is a patchwork.” The 250th is an opportunity to share stories that represent Connecticut’s full population—past and present. Through much of United States’ history, different groups experienced discrimination, including Indigenous people, women, free and enslaved African Americans, immigrants, the impoverished, disabled people, and members of the LGBTQ community. In this section, artists reflect on these omissions and express their unique American experiences creating a more inclusive picture of our society.



12 Diane Holtzworth | Norwich
Misty Morning, 2024
Pastel

“*Misty Morning* depicts a hushed daybreak on Pautipaug Hill in Sprague, Connecticut, just before the rising sun burns away the mist around a pond bordered by tall reeds.

Centuries earlier, this land served as a hunting and fishing ground for Native Americans, who named it for its ‘boggy meadow’ long before European settlers arrived. Over time, colonists claimed the area, building homes, a church, and farms. Eventually, a 20th-century developer transformed the landscape into a golf course that he owned for nearly five decades. However, in 2007 the Mohegan Tribe reclaimed the property. The land their ancestors once named returned to its original stewards—a meaningful and fitting full-circle moment. Today, no longer pushed from their homeland but restored to it, they once again determine how best to care for what is rightfully theirs, this time working in cooperation with local town leaders as part of a diverse community of neighbors who regard each other with mutual respect.” –*Diane Holtzworth*

13 Laurel Friedmann | Old Saybrook
Counterpoint, 2022
Pastel

“Before the advent of electronic communications, the US postal service delivered news from family and friends. Handwritten letters shared the joyous news of marriages and births, the sad news of deaths and the stories of everyday life. The mailman was essential to town life. *Counterpoint* is a portrait of Clyde George. Clyde lived in Old Lyme and worked for the post office in Old Saybrook for over 35 years. He was full of grace, charming and greeted everyone with a smile. He is warmly remembered by this artist.” –*Laurel Friedmann*



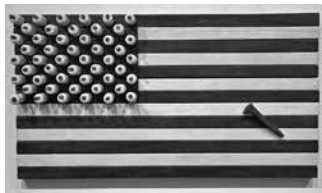
14 Pam Peters | Essex
Solitary Garden at FloGris, 2024
Oil

“The *Solitary Garden* project is designed to remind us of the history of slavery, its role in developing confinement, and the foundation of our prison system.

I was drawn to this view wandering the grounds of The FloGris during a *plein air* outing. The *Solitary Garden* with the museum in the background spoke to me as an unexpected comparison of modern building construct with hard lines against plant life and nature, static vs growth. For me, it spoke to the artist’s search for juxtaposition to create visual interest (e.g. light vs shadow, complementary colors, hard and soft edges).

As I started my first sketch, I was moved thinking about the significance of the solitary gardens that have been created to bring to light the link between slavery and the design of the 6' x 9' solitary confinement cells of our prison system. Here I was standing in a beautiful landscape, enjoying the freedom to paint and express my impressions of a garden designed to bring healing and awareness of the meaning of confinement. May nature ultimately soften all our hard edges.” –*Pam Peters*





15 David Madacsi | Middle Haddam
E Pluribus...Pluribus, 2016
 Found-object assemblage

"The first official motto of the United States, "*E Pluribus Unum*," "Out of many, one," was adopted by an act of Congress in 1782, six years after the founding of the nation with the signing of the Declaration of Independence. I used the motto as the title for my first American flag assemblage, which preceded this one by several years. The stars in the piece were represented by 50 vintage doorknobs of various shape, size and color—evoking the idea of diversity, and for me, the meaning behind the motto.

Later, when a friend gave me a box of salvaged white porcelain insulator knobs, I used them as the stars in this starker black and white flag assemblage. While working through the final stages of this piece, I tentatively added the railroad spike across the field of 13 stripes. That unplanned addition served as the work's defining element, while inspiring the title *E pluribus . . . pluribus*, 'Out of many . . . many.' The piece is an acknowledgment that the ideals embodied in our traditional national motto have yet to be realized." —David Madacsi

16 Jac Lahav | Old Lyme
Apple Of My Eye, 2019
 Oil and gold leaf on canvas

"A side project of my *Great Americans* portrait series, this is one of 25 ancillary George Washington paintings. My process collages history, personal experience, and contemporary culture to create new visual narratives in oil painting.

The iconic founding father, Washington raised questions for me of 'fatherhood'. As a new parent, and reflecting relationships with my mother's parents, a father passing away in my 20s and my mother's early Alzheimer's. How do we view historical figures, especially using language like 'fathers'.

Unlike the flawless hero or a simple villain, this painting invites viewers to consider Washington, the complex human. This Washington hides a secret self portrait of myself within the eye. Additionally, the golden line references Kintsugi pottery, ideas of breaking and repair and hope for a better future. Much as we come to understand our own parents



as imperfect adults, this work encourages a deeper and more nuanced examination of American history, memory, and identity." —Jac Lahav

17 Andrea Lawl Manning | New London
Spangler, 2026
 Acrylic on canvas

"*Spangler* is a painting that peels apart familiar American symbols and visual cues, recontextualizing them through a language that draws from quilting traditions and maritime forms. Four white spangles reach toward one another, weaving through entangled red structures, while concentric bands of color radiate outward to connect into a semi-transparent scrim. This tapestry at once unifies and obscures. The viewer must look through this shifting surface to perceive what lies beneath. Rather than offering a fixed image, the painting holds space for contradiction and multiplicity, inviting interpretations shaped by individual experience and perspective.

From my own conflicted American heart, I ask 'What is Americana? What could it be? What is the Americana that lives in me and how might it reflect the experience of the contemporary American woman?'" —Andrea Lawl Manning



18 Edward Lent | Lyme
Libertas Enlightening the World, 2026
 Acrylic, oil paint stick

"As the United States approaches its 250th year, *Libertas Enlightening the World* asks a fundamental question: what exactly are we celebrating? I am a 69-year-old gay male abstract artist working in Lyme, Connecticut, and in this painting, I reimagine the Statue of Liberty as a fractured, Greco-Roman goddess rendered in saturated blues and verdigris from her copper sheath. She is both icon and inquiry. Her crown radiates outward, her torch dissolves into gesture, and fragments of broken chains and shackles hover within the composition, suggesting liberation not as a completed act, but as an ongoing struggle.

America is a patchwork—still being fitted, still being stitched. But here, the pieces are not cleanly cut or neatly aligned. They are torn, layered, pressed together under tension. Colors collide rather than resolve, forming something closer to a quilt in progress than a finished design. It reflects a nation shaped



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as much by rupture as by intention—its institutions and systems inherited, altered, and at times, strained.

The current political landscape resists harmony, and I am not interested in disguising that fracture. And yet, like any quilt, the composition holds. However unevenly, however imperfectly, we remain part of a shared surface—a single, contested canvas.

Embedded within the work are local Connecticut references: the Hadlyme Ferry, in operation since 1769 just down the road from my studio, and the Old Lyme Congregational Church, familiar and emblematic. These forms act as markers of continuity and place, symbols for me that endure even as the meaning around them shifts.”

—Edward Lent



19 Andria Alex | Old Saybrook
Armenia to America, 2026
Acrylic on canvas

“This work relates to my grandmother’s journey to the United States and my family’s immersion. We have since been patriots, loyal and devoted veterans, and business owners. Our faith lies here, in the United States. As Armenians, we were persecuted for being Christians. My grandparents came here for a better life, and we have that. We are the lucky ones. My painting attempts to follow the path from desert, Persia, across the ocean, to the great Ellis Island, and beyond to Connecticut.” —Andria Alex



20 Sarah Grote | Cromwell
Celebrating the Fourth, Essex, 2025
Photograph

“*Celebrating the Fourth, Essex* was created during Essex’s annual Independence Day boat parade, a tradition that transforms the Connecticut River into a gathering place filled with energy, color, and a sense of belonging. I hope viewers see a reflection of community, connection, and the enduring value of gathering together. In a nation approaching its 250th anniversary, I believe that American identity is continually shaped not only by history but by the people who come together to create it every day.”

—Sarah Grote

21 Dawn Bisharat | Madison
American Royalty, 2025
Acrylic

“*American Royalty*. Two slices. Two stories. One enduring union. Each panel stands on its own; the earthy peanut butter and the jewel-toned jelly. Humble individually, but unmistakably destined for each other. A quintessential American ideal that diversity is strength. The knife is not a symbol of division but a unifier that builds and brings things together.” —Dawn Bisharat



22 Sunil Howlader | Mystic
New Destination, 2026
Acrylic on canvas

“*New Destination* reflects my journey from Bangladesh to America. I grew up in a village in Bangladesh where Hindu festivals were common. The elephant was the main attraction decorated with traditional saree patterns and colorful drapery. Folk music and food was also present. I was invited to come to the United States to exhibit my work and decided to stay here, in the land of freedom, hope and opportunity as symbolized by the Statue of Liberty.

This work expresses my belief that the United States is exceptional because it allows people to preserve their own cultural identities while embracing and learning from other cultures. *New Destination* honors the immigrant experience and celebrates 250 years of a nation built through diversity, freedom, creativity, and cultural exchange.” —Sunil Howlader



23 Lizzy Rockwell | Bridgeport
The Liberty and Justice Quilt, 2026
Cotton fabric, cotton thread and acrylic paint

“I designed and fabricated this quilt in response to a commission from the Fairfield University Art Museum to coordinate with a 2025 exhibit at the Walsh Gallery called, *Stitching Time: The Social Justice Collaborative Quilts Project*. Twelve quilts on display there were created by incarcerated artists in Angola Prison in Louisiana. The FUAM executive director, Carey Mack Weber, asked me to create a quilt on the theme of social justice which would



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involve the community and university students and activate connection to the exhibit.

I chose the motif of the American flag and highlighted the last words of the pledge, “Indivisible with Liberty and Justice for All.” My assistant, Khalaf Jerry and I ran workshops on the Fairfield University campus and at a civics engagement program in Bridgeport, CT. We gave out printed quotes, stacks of colored patches of cotton, and acrylic markers. We invited participants to say something about Liberty and Justice. We also ran this workshop with boys residing at the Bridgeport Juvenile Residential Center/REGIONS Secure BPT and the staff there.

The pieced and layered quilt was then hand-quilted on a frame at weekly Peace by Piece community quilting meetings in Norwalk, at my home, and at pop-up quilting bees in public places. Over 200 individuals contributed to this quilt. After its first-ever presentation here at the Florence Griswold Museum, the Liberty and Justice Quilt will hang permanently in the Bridgeport Juvenile Residential Center.”
–Lizzy Rockwell



24 Clara Nartey | West Haven
Feeling Good, 2024
Cotton, polyester, digitally designed and printed fabrics, felt

“*Feeling Good* connects to the 250th anniversary of the United States by sharing a more inclusive story of Connecticut. African presence in the state spans from the *Amistad* revolt—when captives fought for freedom in New Haven, one moment that shaped ideas of freedom and belonging—to today’s growing African immigrant communities. These stories are not always fully centered in dominant narratives.

I am an African immigrant artist and have lived in the New Haven area for over 20 years. My work is shaped by my experience of building a life here and finding a sense of belonging. The figure in *Feeling Good* reflects Black women and immigrant communities who are an important part of this ongoing American story. Instead of showing only struggle, this piece focuses on joy (using African symbols) as part of everyday freedom. It shows that American history is still being shaped by the lives and experiences of different people and cultures in Connecticut today.” –Clara Nartey

DOING HISTORY

Revising and understanding American history is an ongoing project that inspired the artworks in this section. Many artists here acknowledge the role of family, the circumstances of their ancestors, and their immigrant experience. American symbols, like the flag and the national colors red, white, and blue, are utilized in ways that express optimism, pride, as well as melancholy. Artist Susan Chamberland imagines her photographic portrait of the American flag “as both witness and question,” for “Democracy is fragile, imperfect, and still in the making.” A few artists here find personal and historical symbolism in everyday objects and landscapes. Others aim to fill historical absences by commemorating Connecticut figures and events deserving of greater acknowledgment, such as educator Prudence Crandall, pharmacist Anna Louise James, and the plight of the *Amistad*. The relationship between the past and present, and the role of memory is held in tension through these artists’ carefully considered compositions.

25 Rieta Park | East Lyme
A Botanical Celebration of America, 2026
Gouache

“Honoring the 250th anniversary of America, I designed this illustration to highlight some of the nation’s patriotic flowers:

Red Geranium – Independence

White Cosmos – Liberty

Blue Verbena – Freedom

Rose – National Unity

Mountain Laurel – Connecticut State Flower

Fireworks Flowers

Queen Anne’s Lace – Sanctuary, Safety, and Refuge

Spider Lily – Rebirth and Reincarnation

Globe Thistle – Independence, Resilience, and Strength”

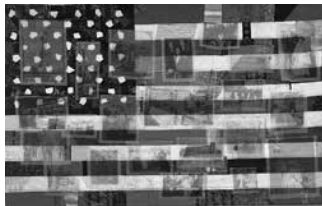
– Rieta Park





26 Hilary Opperman | New Haven
America Unstitched, 2019
Mixed media, collage

"*America Unstitched* has no fabric whatsoever, but I honor the many fabrics artists have woven through time. Quilting may date back to ancient Egypt. In America, quilting popularized between 1750-1850. Applique quilts involved applying smaller pieces of cloth to larger pieces. Similarly, I've created decorative layers in my collage. All the pieces of paper create an intricate pattern, along with the vibrancy of golden paint. Three silhouettes of young boys allude to both joy and violence—part of America's greater tapestry. There's a colonial flag to the lower right and contemporary flags towards the left. Primary colors are juxtaposed among the textural 'patchwork.' Butterflies symbolize hope in these charged political times. Geometric patterns symbolize historical patterns." —Hilary Opperman



27 Rita Hannafin | Bridgeport
American Texture, 2017
Pieced cotton fabrics and digital images on organza

"Having been an art quilter most of my adult life, I love telling stories. For instance, in *American Texture*, there is a picture of my grandparents who left the ravages of the potato famine behind in Ireland, in the upper right corner. My grandmother, aged 16 and one of ten children, was sent to America with one older sister because the family could not feed them. She became a seamstress for the upper classes in New York City.

The first two non-native settlers in Windham County in the late 1600's were an undocumented refugee seeking sanctuary and an enslaved African as recounted in the newsletter of the Windham Textile and History Museum of Spring, 2017. Windham County, CT has been home to refugees seeking opportunity and liberty for 325 years. The newsletter recounts the influx of immigrants who came to work in the American Thread Company Mill on the Willimantic River, from

the 1840's into the 20th century. Each family had the privilege of living in housing provided by the Mill. In 1910 there were immigrants from 15 countries working in the mill, fleeing war, starvation, pogroms, and joblessness. At this time the mill was considered the largest manufacturer of thread in the world! The images include families disembarking from the ships in New York Harbor first seeing the beloved Statue of Lady Liberty and the mill itself with these new Americans working the machines. These pictures are printed on gauzy organza fabric to suggest the ethereal memories of ghosts' past. These overlay an actual flag pieced with hundreds of various cotton fabrics to represent our rich and varied culture." —Rita Hannafin

28 William Evertson | Lyme
Consumed by the Never Was, 2022
Woodblock print

"This woodcut assembles a world of vintage television sets, their screens broadcasting the midcentury American dream back at itself: the happy family, the polished statesman, the suburban idyll that promised everything and delivered it selectively. The figures are simultaneously viewers and viewed, unable to locate the boundary between lived experience and its mediated image. The television was the first algorithm, learning what we responded to and feeding it back in an endless loop of manufactured desire and curated identity. The title names what the image shows: a past that never was, shaped by broadcast signals and sponsored programming into mythology that excluded as much as it celebrated.

Connecticut's own history is full of such omissions, communities edited out of the official picture. Today, our social media algorithms have grown more precise, more divisive. This print asks us to examine that construction, and to understand that what we are told is never the whole story." —William Evertson





- 29 Benjamin Donaldson | Branford**
Leete's Island, Rock where Simeon Leete was Killed,
 2016
 Gelatin silver contact print

- 30 Benjamin Donaldson | Branford**
Leete's Island, Melissa in Great-grandmother's dress,
 2012
 Gelatin silver contact print

"My mother and grandmother spent summers on Leetes Island in their youths. It was a place of the old family tales, with a landscape that existed only in my imagination. That was before I came to live in Connecticut, one town away from a place my ancestors had seen and known for 400 years. I now think of it as home myself.

When I drive past fields and salt marshes that my family farmed, I wonder if there is any residual memory across generations for things like the view of a landscape seen and known over lifetimes. I try to photograph this sense of belonging and not belonging by combining my experience of this place, and that of the land of the imagined past together.

I am not interested in a retelling, or a showing of "this happened here," but more of the feeling of the moment before the fog rolls in over the salt marsh, or great-grandmother's dress almost fitting my sister as she tries it on, or the sight of the stone behind which an ancestor was killed by the British, behind being swept off on Memorial Day."
 –Benjamin Donaldson

- 31 Martin Trehub | Waterford**
Snow Day, Bloomfield Farmhouse, 1976, 2021
 Oil on canvas

"In this series I paint what I remember seeing through a window from my past to contrast with what I see in real time. The painting's vitality comes from tension between grey and color, living flowers and winters stillness, landscape and still life, past and present. I have pursued this theme since 1974 and continue to this day.

I hope that my view of a time and place which is now gone will create a memory that resonates with the viewer and an appreciation of things gone by." –Martin Trehub



- 32 Sara Kelly | Glastonbury**
A New England Family History, 2025
 Oil on canvas

"A New England Family History is a still life painting of objects depicting my ancestor's lives in 19th and 20th century New England. The quilt that they sit upon belonged to my great grandmother. It's scattered with objects from my ancestors: a pink luster teacup, an earthenware crock, silver, a lacquered snuff box, my great grandmother's dollhouse and grandmother's locket. The book is a history of the Civil War Regiment that my great-great-grandfather captained. Also included is his daguerreotype photo and Civil War currency. In the foreground are my mother's WWII food rations and a letter from my Rear Admiral grandfather who was away at war. Sitting in the blue dish are his gold uniform buttons and his photo. In summary, this painting represents five generations of American and New England history." –Sara Kelly



- 33 Brenda Cartmel | Lyme**
The Burr House, 2023
 Hooked rug, wool on linen

"I am a rug hooker whose work is rooted in place, memory, and the tactile history of traditional craft. I began rug hooking ten years ago, inspired by an elderly rug hooker from Lyme who each year auctioned a handmade rug—often depicting a local structure—and donated the proceeds to her church. Her dedication and generosity shaped my understanding of rug hooking as both an art form and a way of contributing to community.

This piece depicts my 1720s center chimney colonial home in Lyme, Connecticut—a structure long recognized as a local landmark and featured in the 1976 Bicentennial Quilt. Translating its form into wool allows me to honor both the house and the generations connected to it through a different medium." –Brenda Cartmel



- 34 Irene Watson | Colchester**
Colchester Town Green, 2023
 Mixed media

"My artwork of the Colchester Town Green relates to the themes of a place that has uniquely shaped its community and



institutions. The Green is the heart of Colchester and contains a gazebo, a flagpole, and memorials, and provides a place for those from the past to be remembered. It contributes to building our community year after year in the areas of history, education, business, sports/recreation, and celebrations of various kinds.

The house of early founder Nathaniel Foote is near the Green, as is the Congregational (now Federated) Church which also served as a meeting place. Colchester fought for independence during the Revolutionary War. Later in 1803, Bacon Academy was built as an educational institution, as was a School for Colored Children. Our Civil War Monument has an Honor Roll of the dead that includes two African American soldiers, and war memorials have since been erected for veterans of WWI, WWII, and Vietnam.”

–Irene Watson



35 Lucretia Bingham | Westbrook
Family Graveyard, 2025
 Oil

“My family has lived nearby the Connecticut River for 285 years. Its stone walls gave me backbone; its fields taught me about golden light; its trees, beaches, clouds, houses and deep woods gave me an appreciation of color in all its glorious aspects. My father was an artist, studied with the American Impressionists in Old Lyme; he was my first teacher. He plunked me down in a field with colored pencils and pens and said draw what you see.

This graveyard has buried members of my family for 280 years. I visit often, sometimes with my grandchildren. I plan to have my ashes there. My roots are buried deep into Connecticut history. History inspires my art.”

–Lucretia Bingham



36 Carol Stanland | Old Lyme
Nehantic Stamped Pottery at Watch Rock, 2026
 Gouache

“This gouache painting shows a member of the First Nation Peoples decorating a pot at Watch Rock, now a preserve owned by the Old Lyme Conservation Trust. Archaeological study of the site by historian John Pfeiffer and local Schaghticoke, Mohegan, and Nehantic tribes shows evidence

of over 4500 years of occupation. The location is ideal for fishing and collecting shellfish. As its name suggests, it also provides excellent visibility over a broad area of the tidal wetlands at the Connecticut River’s mouth.

According to ‘Evidence of the Nehantic Indians in the Archaeological Record’ (Puniello, Anthony J. [1993], Northeast Historical Archaeology), women were the assumed manufacturers of the round-bottomed shell-stamped pottery characteristic of what is known as Nehantic stamped pottery, found extensively in Southern New England between the Connecticut River and the Rhode Island border. Parallel diagonal impressed lines stamped at opposing angles were characteristic of the Nehantic style.”

–Carol Stanland

37 Nancy Oates | Old Lyme
Narragansett Teachings, 2026
 Archival photograph

Artist Nancy Oates often visits Mystic Seaport to study seafaring history and participate in their colonial cooking programs. This photograph depicts a demonstration at the Seaport’s Buckingham-Hall House led by Silvermoon Mars LaRose (Narragansett) of the Tomaquag Museum in Exeter, Rhode Island.

“This cooking demonstration celebrates the flavors of the season, primarily wuttáhimineash (heart berries)–strawberries. These delicious summer treats are a seasonal gift, reminding us of our love, forgiveness, and friendship with one another. Collaborations like this help to advance diverse perspectives in museum education and, like the strawberry, create opportunities for friendships to bloom between organizations, reminding us we are all stronger together.” –Silvermoon Mars LaRose (Narragansett)



38 Hannah Lee Smith | New London
Jamey Elliot, 2021
 Stickers

“The inspiration for creating this sticker portrait of Jamey Elliot hit me during a Black Lives Matter protest during the COVID pandemic of 2020. Jamey Elliot attended my high school as a man as they were slowly figuring out their



personal identity. They spoke at the protest to share their experience as a now fully-transitioned Black woman. I was wholly moved and instantly knew this was why I had been saving my childhood stickers all these years. A woman as bold and bright and brave as Jamey Elliot, who was willing to explore their world in new and potentially scary ways, deserved to be represented in a media so bold, bright, and exploratorily brave as a patchwork of stickers. I had never tried to 'paint' like this before but found the challenge worthy and exciting." –Hannah Lee Smith



39 Alexandria Wong | Shelton
Self-Portrait, Volunteer Sewist, 2020
Fabric and glue

"Early in the pandemic, volunteer sewists made thousands of face masks and head coverings to make up for the sudden shortage of disposable masks. This is the self-portrait of a Connecticut volunteer sewist made out of scraps from the masks." –Alexandria Wong



40 Kevin Murphy | Lyme
Art Has No Sex, 2026
Collage

"Theodate Pope (who practiced as an architect under that name and did not use her married surname, 'Riddle' professionally) contributed importantly to Connecticut architecture, at Hill-Stead in Farmington, her family home, and designed Avon Old Farms school. This work is a tribute to Pope and superimposes her own account of her marginalization for explicitly sexist reasons by the compiler of a list of contemporary architects on her photograph. The medium of collage seems an appropriate one in which to suggest the fragmentary, layered, and vulnerable nature of the archive.

My interest in Theodate Pope results from having studied her work as part of a larger examination of women in twentieth-century architecture which culminated in a book, co-authored with Mary Anne Hunting, entitled *Women Architects at Work: Making American Modernism* (Princeton University Press, 2025)." –Kevin Murphy

41 Linda Lindroth | New Haven
Portrait (Nathaniel Freeman), 1995
Polaroid photograph

"In 1994 Michael Rush (an actor and a priest), Craig Newick (an architect) and I were inspired by the discovery of an African American Burial Ground in NYC while excavating for a government office building in Foley Square. We created a theatrical installation work where large Polaroid 20x24 photographs were surrogates for the actors. The dramatic reading in front of an audience at the John Slade Ely House in New Haven included drawings and studies for a stage set. The source for our dramatic work was the 1985 historical study *A Rumor of Revolt: The 'Great Negro Plot' in Colonial New York* by the Harvard historian TJ Davis and the historical record of Daniel Horsmanden, a chief justice of the Supreme Court of the Province of New York in 1744. Michael Rush was the founding Director of the New Haven Artists Theater and Nathaniel Freeman was an actor based in NY who portrayed a modern ancestor of a Black slave. Craig Newick and I went on to use our considerable research to design an entry to the *African Burial Ground Memorial Competition* in New York City. The entry earned one of four 2nd Place distinctions." –Linda Lindroth



42 Gaia Cornwall | Old Lyme
Miss James, 2026
Pencil, vintage paper, watercolor on pine and cherry wood

"Anna Louise James's life, while locally remembered, remains relatively unknown to the general public. She was the first Black woman to graduate from the Brooklyn College of Pharmacy, the first Black female pharmacist in Connecticut, and for more than sixty years, the heart of a community in Old Saybrook. When she took over James Pharmacy in 1917, she did not simply fill prescriptions—she filled a role that the town would come to depend on, one ice cream cone, one soda glass filled, one quiet act of service at a time. When she finally closed those doors in 1967, she walked upstairs and continued to live above the place she had given her life to, until her death in 1977.

History has a habit of elevating certain stories and letting



others quietly disappear. I am drawn to the woman, the child, the voice that did extraordinary things without being handed a spotlight for it. My work as an illustrator and author of children's books has always been rooted in the conviction that children deserve to see themselves mirrored, and that women, in particular, have carried whole communities on their shoulders without ever being asked to take a bow.

To paint Anna James is to insist that a pharmacist in a small Connecticut town who served her neighbors for six decades is as worthy of our attention as anyone whose name fills a textbook. It is to honor her tremendous accomplishments. It is an act of admiration—and of gratitude." –Gaia Cornwall



43 Meghan Shanley Waskowitz | Avon
Freedom Schooner Amistad, 2024
Oil

"The Freedom Schooner *Amistad* was anchored near Duck Island off the Westbrook coast a few years ago. The brilliant setting sun silhouetted her unique and historic importance. With no other boats in view, I felt transported in time. The dark ship in contrast to the sky of fiery beauty truly represented the *Amistad* and the plight of the captives. In support of justice and freedom for all people, the courts of Connecticut played a pivotal role in the abolition movement.

I was compelled to create this scene for its beauty and importance. The time spent painting in oil allowed me to reflect and remember the colors of the evening and how I had felt. I was in awe of the way in which the schooner was dark and majestic against that brilliant background, while the sail lines nearly disappeared in the glow of the sunset. My interest in *Amistad*'s history grew during these reflections while painting." –Meghan Shanley Waskowitz



44 Emily Barresi | New London
Flag Bearers, 2025
Archival pigment print



45 Emily Barresi | New London
Christmas, New London, 2025
Archival pigment print

"I feel poised for this moment of American reflection because my work often focuses on the seams of hollow

façades and performance. Whether reenacting memories with family or capturing the absurdity of suburban rituals, I've always been drawn to our attempts to make sense of chaos and to reorder the past.

Now, I spend my time trying to slow down the stimulation of the present. To notice in a world where the game is to brush past decay, to see what's ahead and not what's beneath. To a fault, this makes me see symbolism in everything. And just my luck, the United States is the land of symbols." –Emily Barresi

46 Marsha Borden | Guilford
Under the Circumstances: Prudence Crandall, 2026
Textile

"Great women throughout history are often overlooked. My piece honors a woman who was ahead of her time when she challenged the patriarchy in mid-nineteenth century Connecticut. Prudence Crandall opened Canterbury Female Boarding School in 1831. By the fall of that year, there were more than 20 young women enrolled at the school. At the end of the school's first year, the daughter of a local Black farmer, Sarah Harris, asked to attend the school. Prudence agreed. Townspeople were critical of this action and pressured Prudence to reverse her decision. She would not. Prudence was determined to keep Sarah as a student. Faced with mounting pressure from parents who would withdraw their daughter and effectively close her school, Prudence decided to remake the school and teach only Black women. More than 30 Black women attended her school during its existence between April 1833 and September 1834. Later, Prudence was quoted as saying, 'Under the circumstances, I made up my mind that if it were possible, I would teach colored girls exclusively.'

Garments in their many forms recur throughout my work. As an artist and writer, I return again and again to textiles, exploring how social constraints, political pressure, and messages about the female body are layered in cloth throughout history. Using an antique dress and hand embroidery to get Prudence's message across is my way of honoring the unseen labor of women's work in all its forms." –Marsha Borden





47 Peter Riggs Brown | Pine Meadow
State of The Union Under Glass MMXXVI, 2026
 Photographic image captured on a flatbed scanner

"These images form a visceral, layered critique of American power, violence, and spectacle as this series interrogates the mythology of American authority through the language of toys, decay, and domestic objects. Action figures—designed to make violence playable—become stand-ins for the militarized state: riot police, soldiers, ICE agents. Posed against vintage flags and pressed under decorative glass, they are simultaneously heroic and absurd, trapped in dioramas of their own menace.

State of The Union Under Glass MMXXVI places armed figures beneath a glass serving tray, framing state violence as something consumed, packaged, served up on the family table.

My photographs ask: What happens when we miniaturize brutality? When we display it under glass, frame it on a wall, hand it to children as play? ICE killings and raids become collectible scenes, gun violence aestheticized into something you could hang in a living room. The discomfort is the point. The flag is always there—worn, faded, never neutral." —Peter Riggs Brown



48 Susan Chamberland | Essex
Hold Firm, 2025
 Photograph

"A small flag—frayed, faded, and barely holding closed a worn wooden door—becomes my subject. The hasp has been recently relocated, a quiet adjustment that reveals more than it conceals. In this image, I see Connecticut's founding ideals: improvised, resilient, and incomplete. The founding fathers and mothers imagined self-governance, yet the door they built did not open for all.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the U.S., this flag stands as both witness and question. For much of our history, many were held outside. Their stories, like the worn paint, remain present if we choose to look closely. CT counties, towns, cities, and recognized tribes hold countless voices. Through community spaces we can share them more fully.

The flag does not secure the door forever. It suggests

what has been closed can open again. Democracy is fragile, imperfect, and still in the making." —Susan Chamberland

49 Frederick Verillo | Old Lyme
Reflecting Absence, 2024
 Photograph

"*Reflecting Absence* is a somber patriotic remembrance of loss. I captured the makeshift shrine to 9/11 and the Civil War in an abandoned building in Old Lyme. This is emotional for me. I witnessed the attack that reduced a symbol of America's power to rubble. I saw fire and smoke spewing from a gash in the tower and people falling to their deaths.

Long rectangular shapes mimic the tower's shape, the mirror's silver border recall their silvery skin and pull-down steps reflected in the mirror recalls narrow stairwells, the only escape route for thousands. Thousands more were gone without a trace. A strip of yellowed paper looks as if it was singed by fire. Its words are from Abraham Lincoln's 1863 Gettysburg Address. While a lamentation for a civil war that still divides us, it also serves to honor the sacrifices of all America's unsung heroes. Finally, the flag reassures us because, 'the flag is still there'. We celebrate 250 here by remembering the price paid to get there." —Frederick Verillo



50 Connie van Rhyn | Riverside
Carey On!, 2014
 Oil

"My portrait is of my father, Neil Carey, the son of Irish parents who immigrated to New York in the early 1900s.

My father attended Kings Point (USMMA) and served in the WWII convoys with a Naval Commission in 1943–44 and graduated at the end of 1944. After the war, he sailed for US Lines and Grace Lines and then spent a long career in maritime management in NYC.

In 1963, he and his expanding family moved to Stamford, CT. The 1960s was a period of rapid growth in lower Fairfield County, CT. Many commuters sought the quality of life in CT, with access to rail transportation to NYC. The economic prosperity resulted in dramatic changes to the area.

My father was a Stamford resident for his remaining 45 years. He was very involved in the local community, as were



many of his peers, and was a founding member of the CT Maritime Association.

In 2008, three months after my father's death, the CT Maritime Association elected their first female President. In her acceptance speech she attributed pursuing the role because of my father's encouragement and endorsement of her as a candidate; hearing her speech made me very proud of my father.

As I painted his portrait I reflected on my three sons and how I would feel with young sons going to serve in a war. I admire the courage, resilience and comradery he and his fellow mates engaged to survive many extremely challenging months at sea." –*Connie van Rhyn*



51 **Jeanne Carol Potter | Old Lyme**
Hopper on the 4th of July, 2026
Watercolor on archival paper

"The Golden Retriever is widely and affectionately known as America's Dog. President Gerald Ford popularized the breed in the 1970s with his Golden Retriever Liberty, further cementing their status in American culture. For many, the Golden Retriever, although originating in Scotland, has become the classic "all American" dog for its intelligence and friendly, trustworthy nature making it a beloved pet across the United States.

We named our Golden Retriever Hopper, who was born in Maine, and also after the American painter Edward Hopper whose urban scenes and coastal landscapes of Maine captured unique images of America's people and places.

Golden Retrievers are often depicted with American flags for 4th of July, Memorial Day, or veterans' celebrations. I painted my beloved Hopper as a symbol of American culture and pride, posing him with an American flag to also connect him to our history and our country's spirit of liberty as our nation looks forward to its 250th anniversary."

–*Jeanne Carol Potter*

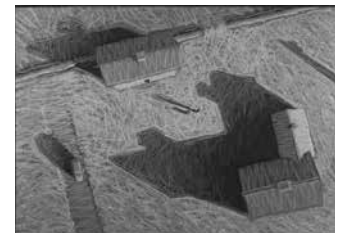
POWER OF PLACE

The Florence Griswold Museum was founded by artists of the Lyme Art Colony (1900–1937) who were drawn to these grounds by its extraordinary power of place. Artists in this exhibition continue that tradition by responding to the local landscape, documenting its change over time, and investing their representations with a sense of subjective, momentary immersion—such as by painting *en plein air* (outdoors). Examples here take a variety of approaches, from birds'-eye-view perspectives to intimate portraits of places imbued with personal memory, including the beloved family-owned Hawk's Nest Beach in Old Lyme. These works comment on the evolving development of the region, our responsibility for caring for and preserving landscapes and, as artist Frances Malcom expresses, the Indigenous "histories of cultivation, stewardship, and belonging that are layered into the land itself." Each artwork provides a unique perspective on how Connecticut's communities have conveyed a sense of place over 250 years.

52 **Gigi Liverant | Colchester**
Drone View, 2022
Pastel

"*Drone View* offers the juxtaposition of a colonial and modern experience. Cutting-edge drone imagery captured a unique vantage point of our 18th-century property and inspired the painting that celebrates its structure and environment. The geometry and simplicity of the Azariah Loomis house casts a cool early morning shadow on the sun-drenched resilient lawn that stretches over the landscape. The drone's aerial perspective revealed shadow patterns on the landscape, inspiring the painting's composition and color.

As occupants of a home that was built in 1725, 50 years before our country became independent, we embrace our role as stewards of this historic property to ensure that it will continue to provide comfort and a sense of place in our community for many more generations." –*Gigi Liverant*





53 Arthur Bogen | Essex
Almost Connecticut, 2007
 Found objects

"In 2007, I had rented a condo on the beach in Milford, CT. I was given to long walks. The trash on the shore upset me so I brought bags with me to cleanup stuff. Then I started to make pieces from some of the stuff. The underlying piece of faded blue plywood reminded me of the state. I attached other found items to represent major cities and my impression of the land. There is a plastic heart for the capitol. Industrial flotsam locates Waterbury, Bridgeport and New Haven. Rusted pipes and plastic straws mark I-95, 91 and 84. Green plastic overlay reflects the northwest corner with a blue plastic lake. At the time I was working on the remediation of abandoned industrial sites across the state. Turning the remnants into something new helped me to cope with the challenges of the work of bringing our industrial past into a repurposed present and future. This work is ongoing for us all." –Arthur Bogen



54 Helen Cantrell | Old Lyme
Dad, Hawk's Nest Beach, 2025
 Oil on canvas

"The light, the huge skies over the sea, the golden summers and deep blue clouds of autumn, all have been here for thousands of years, well before the United States was founded. Yet we can only experience them in our own time, in our own way. So *Dad, Hawk's Nest Beach* is a portrait of my father, a lifelong sailor, working on his Zodiac on the beach, with the Old Saybrook lighthouse on the far left horizon, where we put his ashes into the sea." –Helen Cantrell



55 Nancy Pinney | Chester
Springtime, Hawk's Nest Beach, 2026
 Oil on maple panel

"Hawk's Nest Beach Resort is an Old Lyme six-generation community run by the hardworking Garvin family since 1895. It is one of those rare places that inspires hundreds of people to return each year for the beautiful atmosphere and memorable experiences." –Nancy Pinney

56 Angie Falstrom | Lyme
Hawk's Nest Beach, 2011
 Watercolor

"For over 30 years I have found inspiration in the natural landscapes and historic views of the area. My images often depict locations that haven't changed in generations, but at times they've also captured scenes that have since been altered or destroyed. In that way, my work has chronicled life and the evolving landscape here along the Connecticut River.

These waterfront cottages at Old Lyme's Hawk's Nest Beach were washed away by Hurricane Sandy the year after this was painted. Our landscapes are constantly changing, either slowly or abruptly, as a result of the forces of nature." –Angie Falstrom



57 Kat Murphy | New London
The Lazy Eight, 2026
 Encaustic and mixed media on panel

"This work draws from the Eight Mile River and Hamburg Cove in Connecticut. It brings together a few different references: a native heron, an imported Delft-patterned cage, and a canary held within but not contained, while a flock moves freely across the sky.

The Lazy Eight burgee, a local marker tied to the shape of the cove, appears on the ground here, worn and slightly buried, no longer attached to anything.

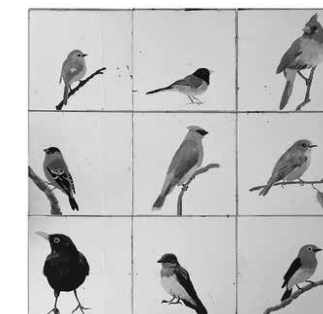
I was thinking about how things carry meaning over time, and how that can shift depending on where they end up. Some references are local, others come in from elsewhere, and they sit together without fully settling.

With the 250-year mark in mind, the painting connects to how place is shaped over time, through use, movement, and what gets carried forward or left behind." –Kat Murphy



58 Georgiana Goodwin | Old Lyme
Verre églomisé grid of 9 bird mirrors, 2026
 Reverse glass painting and gilding

"When I discovered the medium of Verre Églomisé (reverse glass painting and gilding which creates a mirror finish) I



realized that the viewer would become part of the image through their reflection. That concept has fueled my interest in continuing to experiment with the expressive possibilities of glass, gold, pigment, and light. While honoring the traditions of this very old medium, I am bringing a contemporary interpretation.

Outside my studio in Lyme, CT, birds are all around, and inspiring. They are glorious and we want to see them up close. Because I paint them roughly life sized, the interaction with the viewer's reflection feels real and intimate.

Verre Églomisé is mostly seen installed in public buildings or luxury dwellings commissioned by architects and designers. By making works portable, they become accessible and less formal." –*Georgiana Goodwin*



59 **Guido Garaycochea | Groton**
Ephemeral II, 2024
Oil on canvas

"This work relates to Patchwork through its construction as layered, composite environments. Each of my paintings is built from fragments—gestural marks, translucent washes, and shifting structural forms—that accumulate, collide, and reconfigure over time. Rather than merging into a seamless whole, these elements remain partially distinct, creating a surface where different visual 'pieces' coexist in tension and dialogue. This mirrors how memory and identity form: not as unified stories, but as overlapping experiences that never fully settle. The seams—areas of erasure, opacity, or transition—become markers of change, revealing the work's evolution and acknowledging that meaning is always provisional. By embracing fragmentation as a generative force, the paintings invite viewers to navigate them as shifting terrains rather than fixed narratives, where meaning emerges through connection, layering, and continual transformation." –*Guido Garaycochea*



60 **Barbara Eaglesham | Niantic**
Bird View, New London Harbor, 2026
Paper mosaic, acrylic gel prints, cold wax

"The idea for this piece came to me while looking out at the harbor in New London from my favorite café. I was musing about how, during the early days of the Colony, no means

of seeing places from above existed. No drones, no hot air balloons, no airplanes. How fortunate we are, and what a unique perspective we're afforded, by being able to view our environment from above, like a bird's view, using these methods, or even more easily by logging on to Google Earth. This led to my wondering what interesting patterns I might see from the air of this very historic harbor.

Once burned by Benedict Arnold, an event commemorated once a year by a burning at the harbor of Arnold's effigy, it was also the arrival point of the ship *Amistad*, which carried a cargo of enslaved people who, out of desperation, wrested control and commandeered the ship until it was seized and processed at the Custom House on Bank Street in New London." –*Barbara Eaglesham*

61 **Karen Bartone | Clinton**
Beneath the Canopy, 2019
Oil on canvas

"Painted from direct observation at the edge of a pond in Southern Connecticut, *Beneath the Canopy* reflects sustained engagement with a familiar place. Returning over time, the work is developed through a perceptual approach—layered observation built through repeated looking—combined with direct, on-site painting. Overhanging branches create a natural enclosure, framing shifting reflections and drawing attention to subtle changes across the water's surface.

This painting reflects the exhibition's theme of Power of Place by emphasizing how the natural environment shapes lived experience. In Connecticut's cultural history, wooded landscapes have long served as sites of memory and meaning, where identity is formed through an ongoing relationship with place." –*Karen Bartone*

62 **Graciela Perrone | North Stonington**
La Historia, 2026
Oil on canvas

Graciela Perrone is a multidisciplinary artist who explores visual art, flamenco dance, and singing. She was born in Montevideo, Uruguay, and since she was little has been surrounded by pencils and colors and music. She says, "When I dance I paint, when I paint I dance."



"My piece *La Historia* represents the meeting point of the forest and our place woven among it. Every day I walk among stone walls and look up at the trees and wonder at those that have done so before me. I also feel connected to the local history and my community when standing in front of my local library, the Wheeler Library in North Stonington. To know it carries all the stories and histories within is the most powerful symbol for me." – *Graciela Perrone*



63 Frances Malcolm | West Hartford
Three Sisters 1, 2026
 Watercolor, ink, and acrylic on paper

"This work is inspired by the sacred Three Sisters—corn, beans, and squash—and the intercropping methods used by Indigenous communities in the Americas. Each plant supports the others: corn provides a structure for climbing beans, beans enrich the soil with nitrogen, squash shades the ground. Still used today in home and community gardens, this approach is an antidote to industrialized monocultures.

Reimagined in watercolor and ink, the 'mound' planting layout is arranged in a pattern that recalls textile design. This repetition is a metaphor for how ecological knowledge is conveyed and sustained, and how the land serves as the very 'fabric' of our lives and cultures. Woven throughout is mountain laurel, Connecticut's state flower, which thrives only in healthy conditions, signaling balance. In relation to *Patchwork*, the work brings together Indigenous practices and regional identity, reflecting how histories of cultivation, stewardship, and belonging are layered into the land itself." – *Frances Malcolm*



64 Janine Brown | Westport
Strong Foundation, 2025
 Cinder blocks, bioplastic composite with red rose petals, shredded U.S. currency, crochet thread, food coloring

"Informed by my experiences growing up in the rural Midwest, I employ cooking, sewing, and traditional craft to examine societal stereotypes concerning women and the home. Utilizing kitchen chemistry, I create all-natural, bioplastic composites that substitute for fabric. These

'home-cooked' materials encapsulate layers of personal and cultural significance, incorporating elements such as expired and leftover food, family financial statements, shredded U.S. currency, and the language of flowers. I stitch and craft the symbolic composites into objects and quilt patterns that examine the domestic constraints, pervasive myths, and capitalist demands placed on women, in effect making the invisible labor of the household visible. The biodegradable quality of the pieces introduces a critical tension: their survival depends on the keeper's attentive care, paralleling the ephemeral yet demanding nature of the domestic labor the work critiques.

Strong Foundation uses Log Cabin quilt blocks made out of bioplastic with red rose petals (love) and shredded US currency (money). The 'quilt' is draped over cinder blocks, a building material, to give the essence of a home. It explores the home as a place where love and money are necessary for a strong foundation." – *Janine Brown*

65 Jacquelyn Etling | Trumbull
Uncle Sam, 2025
 Color photo

"When I was a child growing up in Connecticut in the 1970s and 80s, I always looked forward to going to the Danbury Fair. It is one of my favorite childhood memories. Each year my family and I would be greeted by the giant Uncle Sam statue located at the entrance to the fair. He stood there from 1971–81 until the fair closed to the public. This iconic figure of Uncle Sam is the largest in the world. He was eventually purchased by the Danbury Railway Museum. They restored him and returned him to his original home in Danbury. He is now back greeting people as they visit the museum." – *Jacquelyn Etling*



66 Polly Seip | Uncasville
American Glory, 2022
 Oil on cradled panel

"*American Glory* was inspired by a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity when OpSail came to visit New London in 2012. The US Eagle proudly led the parade of international vessels up the Thames River to her home port of New London, CT. It was a moment that was exceptionally local



and quintessentially American. The collective energy of coming together through the crowds both on shore and from the hundreds of vessels on the water there to greet the international fleet, full sails, flags, and burgess waving in the summer breeze, all gave the palpable sense of unity and celebration up and down the Thames River. Seeing the garrison flag flying high above the water, at her stern, felt like a crowning moment to behold.” –Polly Seip



67 Jill Vaughn | Ivoryton
River Divided Urban Sprawl, 2019
Pencil, paint, street maps, blue painters' tape, collage

“The combination of living near the Connecticut River and the impacts of suburbia on our environment led me to create *River Divided Urban Sprawl*. Everyone plays a role in how our planet is touched. I live in a relatively new development, carved out of the woods, with wide streets and properties with green lawns made possible by pesticides. Our river and waterfronts have become populated by extravagant homes with clearcut trees that create spectacular views. Yet, all the while, the blue water of the Connecticut River continues to unite us, from its source in the Fourth Connecticut Lake of northern New Hampshire near the Canadian border, to its mouth in Old Lyme and Old Saybrook.” –Jill Vaughn

68 Mally DeSomma | Waterbury
More Freedom, 2017
Pastel

“Growing up in Waterbury, CT, I saw the last of the huge manufacturing era. One by one they all but disappeared. People out of work, finding other jobs to fulfill their obligations. *More Freedom* depicts the loss of factories in Waterbury. I think my painting reflects a vision of a time gone by.” –Mally DeSomma



69 Katherine Clark-Nilsson | Old Lyme
New London Harbor, 2020
Watercolor

“Watercolor is the medium I am most comfortable working with, as it was the first medium in which I painted a large body of work in while traveling in Europe in 1988. It was in France in 1992 that I developed my signature style, represented here by *New London Harbor*, leaving white lines around painted shapes, without using a mask. This was to prevent bleeding of various colors. This gives an airy, batik-like structure to the painting.

A sense of place weaves through all of my work. Connecticut's sea-faring history is represented by *New London Harbor*, an homage to the 19th-century whaling port.” –Katherine Clark-Nilsson

70 Linda Reynolds | Farmington
The American Dream, 2018
Acrylic

“My painting, *The American Dream*, reimagines the post WW2 housing and suburbanization of America to be inclusive of all. The GI Bill of 1944 provided financial benefits to white veterans returning home after WW2. Special low-cost loans, unemployment insurance and tuition costs were all granted to them. Construction was at an all-time high post WW2 and suburban America began to form where white families could live. Blacks, Hispanics, Indians and Asian Americans who had served their country were not entitled to these benefits.

In my painting I re-imagine a newly formed suburban setting where a family consisting of people from different ethnicities has come together to be a contributing member in their neighborhood. It corrects a systemic neglect of housing, education choices and wealth gap that still has not come into law to this day.” –Linda Reynolds





71 Lori Blados | Mystic
The Basement, 2017
Acrylic

"After reading a book of poetry by Charles Bukowski, I was taken by how he can tell a story in one short poem. You hear his voice, you see his imagery, and understand his story. I wanted to do that. I have many memories from the late 60s and early 70s that I like to explore. They are from a feminine point of view and uniquely 'American'. This painting explores a place and a moment in time in the USA."
 –Lori Blados



72 John Simboli | Branford
Shoe Service; Derby CT, 2026
Photograph

"Having grown up near a post-industrial city in Pennsylvania, I feel a connection to people and land in manufacturing towns in Connecticut, where I now live. Invention and precision manufacturing brought prosperity to Connecticut's cities during the 19th and 20th centuries. There is something familiar and haunting, for me, about these landscapes.

This photograph comes from a body of work called AFTERLIFE, in which I explore how the industrial underpinnings in "places of power" have evolved. My interest is in documentation and abstraction, recording clues about the passage of time while engaging with light, shadow and shape.

The mystery of each image is meant to remain. I invite each viewer to create a story based on what they see."
 –John Simboli



73 Suzanne Starr | North Stonington
Drive for Messina, 2026
Mixed newspaper and charcoal

"My recent works have centered on our society and the relation to people of their times. For the image *Drive for Messina*, I created a series of works using vintage newspapers and charcoal to illustrate the turn-of-the-century time when news both local and that of around the

world was learned from the newspaper. The kids are reading the news that they deliver. At this time when children held jobs as newsies many families were struggling financially and the children brought in what money they could."

–Suzanne Starr

74 Hannah Petrikovsky | Hamden
Smokebreak, 2023
Ink, paint and collage on paper



"I developed this work from my regular commute between New Haven and Willimantic, a drive that takes me between dense urban space and the quieter, rolling landscape of inland Connecticut. During one of these drives, I experienced a moment where the sky seemed to erupt in red, the trees flattening into black silhouettes. The landscape felt both familiar and completely transformed.

This work holds that tension between the ordinary and the apocalyptic. The road, the car, and the surrounding terrain are grounded in a specific place, but the atmosphere suggests something unresolved, something breaking open. I was thinking about how violence, conflict, and human history do not disappear, but remain present, even in landscapes that appear calm or pastoral.

I am also thinking about the long tradition of representing New England as a site of spiritual clarity and quiet reflection, from Transcendentalist writing to landscape painting rooted in places like New Haven's East Rock and West Rock. While those traditions frame nature as restorative and stable, my experience of the landscape feels more unstable, charged, and contradictory.

At the same time, the scene felt intensely beautiful. That contradiction, between destruction and beauty, is central to how I understand both the American landscape and my own experience moving through it. As a Jewish artist working in Connecticut, I am interested in how histories that are often unseen or unspoken can exist within, and subtly alter, the spaces we think we know." –Hannah Petrikovsky



75 Nancy Babcock Perlin | Fairfield
Fox Crossing, 2025
 Gouache, pastel and pen on Fabriano watercolor paper

"Connecticut residents have the privilege of living in and amongst historic structures of our country's past. I myself live in a 200-year-old house surrounded by trees almost as old. As I go up and down the floors I feel the presence of the women before me who lifted their long skirts to climb the stairs. The attic displays the hand-hewn beams and iron nails used to build the house by the neighbors and tradesmen in town. Unbelievably some of the windows still have the rippled glass of the original windows with the poetic views of the surrounding fields. No laws protect many of these precious structures. It is in the spirit of pride in our country and its history that individual owners make the effort to maintain and protect our architectural heritage for future generations." –Nancy Babcock Perlin



76 Liane Philpotts | Madison
Brownstone Quarries at Rest, 2021
 Oil

"In the 1800s the Portland Brownstone Quarries were an important source of building stone, much of which was shipped by barges down the Connecticut River to New York City, where it was used to construct the famous brownstone buildings. While quarrying ceased over 80 years ago, the site has now been transformed into an adventure park in the warm months, permitting new generations of residents to enjoy this unique historic place. My painting, *Brownstone Quarries at Rest*, done in mid-winter, shows the quarry in peaceful quiet. The beauty of the site is enhanced by the blanket of snow and the long winter shadows."

–Liane Philpotts

77 Robert Louis Del Russo | Middle Haddam
Northwest Lot, Storm Hill, 2024
 Oil on panel

"As a steward of historic Connecticut architecture set upon open working farmland and extensive gardens, the American Impressionist movement has always resonated with me.

Connecticut faces an alarming rate of open farmland lost to development. Recording these places motivates my practice as a landscape painter. Many of the landscape paintings I have rendered represent locations that no longer exist in unspoiled form. *Northwest Lot, Storm Hill* documents land that once served as working hay meadows for my beloved Storm Hill.

The included black and white photograph documents the profound change of place that is occurring across Connecticut's open farmland lost. Now dotted with large McMansions, the meadow exists only in my memory and as represented through my landscape paintings."

–Robert Louis Del Russo



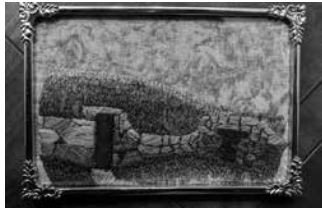
78 Robert Louis Del Russo | Middle Haddam
Remains of the Day, 2026
 Digital photograph

79 Angie Falstrom | Lyme
H. L. Reynolds Company, 2007
 Watercolor

"The H. L. Reynolds General Store sits perched above Hamburg Cove in Lyme, on Route 156, where it has stood since 1859. Boaters who dock in the Cove and residents of the town have relied on it for generations as the only place in Lyme to purchase provisions.

Sadly, since the proprietor passed away in 2019, it has been closed and its future is uncertain. It stands as a witness to history and it reminds us of how our towns are ever changing." –Angie Falstrom





80 Alyssa Johnson | Groton
Where Kids Play, 2026
Embroidery

"I embroidered a particular area of Fort Griswold, the tunnel and the door nearby. I chose this spot because it's where children like to play, and I find that to be quite a stark contrast given its history as a battlefield. I think it's just interesting how it's a spot with such gruesome memory, yet we look at it now as a nice park, especially when the weather is fair." –Alyssa Johnson



81 Maura Cochran | Essex
Baldwin Bridge from the Boat Launch, Old Saybrook
Egg tempera

"I am a *plein-air* painter, which leads to 'looser' art than studio art. Starting with multiple sketches on location, including the creation of a paint diary that memorializes the light and colors at that point in time, I go back to the studio to fine tune the composition, values, and size. There are usually a few back-and-forths as the painting proceeds to completion. This picture of the Baldwin Bridge had multiple on-site studies, then a large oil painting that I sold on site, which led to this egg tempera.

Connecticut has 4,365 bridges, so having art that celebrates one of them seems appropriate. The I-95 Baldwin Bridge connects Old Saybrook to Old Lyme. CTDOT reports there are over 30 million vehicles that cross the bridge annually." –Maura Cochran



82 Edith Twining | Old Lyme
Old Bridge, New Bridge, 1990
Colored pencil

"This drawing is one from a series that preserves the intensity, complexity, and quiet choreography of building. It documents the construction of the third bridge crossing at the mouth of the Connecticut River (1989-1991), a major infrastructure project completed ahead of schedule and under budget. Executed *en plein air*, with hardhat and beach chair, it is based on sustained, on-site observation during active construction.

The work emphasizes transitional conditions—exposed structural systems, temporary supports, and evolving work zones—through which the bridge is understood as a dynamic process rather than a fixed object. Layered colored pencil is used to register both material presence and the temporal aspects of the site, including labor, movement, and environmental change.

Now integrated into the daily landscape, the Raymond E. Baldwin Bridge conceals the complexity of its construction. The series serves as a visual record of that process, preserving a limited interval during which the full scale and coordination of the project remained visible." –Edith Twining

83 Judith Peritz | Old Saybrook
The Wreck, 2023
Oil

"My earliest years were spent on a chicken farm in East Haddam, Connecticut. I did not experience trips to art museums and there was not much thought given to artistic creativity. It is thanks to my mother that I learned that I could draw. When I was about ten years old, she gave me a book on how to draw horses and I would spend hours in my bedroom with my pencils creating images of my favorite animal. As I got older, I set my hobby aside and got involved with school, then making a living and raising a family. It was not until I turned 70 that I once again thought about drawing. Working as a docent at the Florence Griswold Museum got me thinking about painting.

The old apple barn and the dilapidated truck are a nostalgic reminder of a simpler life experienced by the majority of Americans in times past. What could be more American than apples? The Coca Cola sign represents a quintessentially American product." –Judith Peritz



84 Gail Laferriere | Old Saybrook
Alumni Gate, 2000
Soft pastel

"*Alumni Gate* offers an intimate exploration of form and color. I use a blend of broad, soft strokes and precise, detailed linear marks to define the subject, highlighting the purity of the pigment. With a muted color palette that replicates the color of Connecticut brownstone, accented



by bold, intentional strokes, this work creates a delicate yet expressive academic atmosphere. The medium was chosen to convey the stone's texture. This piece is a tribute to Avon Old Farms School's founder and architect, Theodate Pope Riddle, who opened the profession to women in Connecticut during the early twentieth century." – *Gail Laferriere*



85 Eileen Eder | Guilford
Church on the Hill, 2024
 Oil

"*Church on the Hill* draws inspiration from Guy Wiggins' renowned painting of the same title, created in 1900 and housed in the Lyman Allyn Museum in New London. The setting is located on Grassy Hill Road in Old Lyme. While I was mindful of the Wiggins painting, the beauty of the location was a significant influence as well. Notably, with the exception of the contemporary paved road, the landscape has remained largely unchanged over the past 125 years since Wiggins' completion of the painting. The field, rock wall, church built in 1810, and barns across the road retain their original appearance. I positioned myself in a similar location to that depicted in Wiggins' painting, at the bend in the road overlooking the hill towards the Grassy Hill Church. My painting was completed over several spring mornings on-site." – *Eileen Eder*



86 Leif Nilsson | Chester
Ganesh and Dink on Selden Creek, 2023
 Oil paint

"The beautiful granite ledges, trees and marshes around Selden Creek and Selden Island in Lyme, CT, are a favorite subject for me to paint from life aboard my sailing catboat over many afternoon sessions. The rich historical and primordial marshes provide a sanctuary for wildlife, and for a time were productive cog in the creation of New York City.

In 1889, a New York firm established the Connecticut Valley Granite and Mining Company to exploit the island's red granite schist. By 1891, the quarry was producing approximately 3,500 paving stones daily, which were shipped via schooners to New York City for street paving. The site included a 300-foot boardinghouse for workers (many from Italy), five wharves, blacksmith forges, and

a narrow-gauge railroad to transport stone from the quarries, mainly on the southeastern end. The quarries were largely abandoned by the early 20th century, and the island is now uninhabited." – *Leif Nilsson*

87 Nancy Gladwell | Old Lyme
Rest Stop, 2017
 Oil on panel

"I am smitten by the human condition as manifest by the unique features and mannerisms as witnessed in human diversity. My love of drawing and painting figures is my effort to comprehend and decipher this rich phenomenon. I am interested in our nations past and present in issues like race relationships, tolerance for all, and the climate of hate we are steeped in. My painting world is much like physical world as it is snippets of life I try to recreate onto my painting surface. My practice mimics the title of this exhibition: patchwork. The art process is piecing together bits of memories, sketches and some direct observation. It begins with a fuzzy idea or a very clear one, either way figures, objects and/or settings are added, scraped away and replaced. This process for all its faults seems to mimic the evolution of our country. Some gallant starts and stops, wrong turns, re-starts, erasures, triumphs, best plans, better plans and so forth . . . Some call it a dream in the making. I paint because I don't know what else to do.

This work speaks to the theme of Patchwork being an origin story for our country. It is symbolic as much as it is actual. Our original group of founders was as diverse in skin color and gender as we are today. Our national history is not only a patchwork, but a checkered one at that. It's a patchwork of peoples elevated and alienated, applauded and ignored, freedoms celebrated and withdrawn. Colors that harmonize and those that repel. Painted images that seek a context and and those which isolate."

– *Nancy Gladwell*

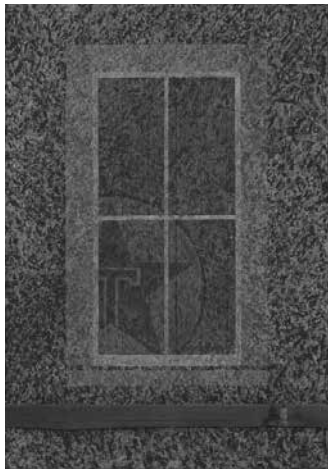
88 Ken Masslon | Torrington
Midway at the Goshen Fair, 2024
 Oil on linen

"My art is about capturing the world as I see it. While imperfection exists all around us, I choose to focus on the



beauty that emerges from the chaos. Landscapes and the rich history embedded in everyday surroundings are at the heart of my work. It is my desire to bring a feeling of familiarity to each place I paint along with a sense of joy.

This is the image of the Goshen Fair. This historic fair happens every Labor Day. CT town fairs are a tradition. The Goshen Fair is one of the older fairs and attracts people from throughout the state. The midways are similar, attracting people to the food and rides.” –*Ken Masslon*



89 Peter Nuhn | New Haven
Tex, 2011
Acrylic, oil and objects on linen

“Whether I paint landscapes, objects or faces, I’m absorbed by the immediate architectural structure of the being, the bones, if you will. This reading is expressed by the application of glazes or organically thick paint, which is another architecture. How these various architectures connect and mix, from moment to moment, question what I think I know about the familiar.

This painting, a frame within a frame composition, resides in a dark purple, modern tonal space that alludes to a summer night and the purple haze that sometimes cloaks the Connecticut River Valley. Looking out the window, I painted a youthful memory of passing a barn on Route 1 in Old Lyme where the Texaco name and logo were painted on its side. This memorable window image defines a sense of landscape from the mid 20th-century, when America’s commercial life was literally applied to the farm buildings of the River Valley creating a unique visual joint between the States’ commercial and agrarian natures. Above, we look out through the window and space moves backwards, but at the bottom of the painting, the barn board and faucet face us, thus flipping our view in the opposite direction to create a reversing yet harmonic space.” –*Peter Nuhn*



90 Kathleen DeMeo | Old Lyme
A Flag for My Mother, 2026
Mixed media

“My practice as a printmaker focuses on the monotype process, where each image emerges through experimentation and the interplay of chance and control.

Each piece begins with a single plate and a sense of possibility.

My father served in the U.S. Navy during World War II, while my mother remained in Middletown, CT, working in a factory to support the war effort. Together, they held a deep belief in American ideals. My mother, in particular, cherished the U.S. flag, displaying it as a symbol of pride and unity. In the past decade, the flag has shifted from a shared national emblem to a polarized marker of political identity. It is no longer universally seen as a symbol of collective pride. My parents are gone now but would be saddened by this change. I created this work to honor them, both children of Italian immigrants, and their place in the American story. The piece is composed of a patchwork of inherited World War II-era ephemera: letters my father wrote from overseas, draft notices, vintage postage stamps, and excerpts from our nation’s founding documents. It also incorporates an early map of Old Lyme, where I now live. This work is an attempt to reclaim the flag as a symbol for all Americans.” –*Kathleen DeMeo*

91 Jeanne Davies | Chester
Four on the 4th, 2026
Watercolor

“My art reflects my decades-long career in community land use and the love of building sustainable relationships between people and the landscape and the built environment. While portraits and landscapes captivated me in my early art education at the Lyme Academy of Fine Arts, today *plein-air* studies, the spontaneity of watercolor and observation of people in places of gathering or reflection is important to me. I work to capture the magic of neighbors, friends, and community.

New England thrived from colonial days and democracy was built on the ability of people in small towns to gather, debate and celebrate. Connecticut’s 169 unique home-rule-oriented towns and cities continue to inspire the need for community and places of gathering. The ‘Four on the 4th’ and the small towns of the Lower CT River Valley continue the tradition of community gathering for events, drawing in people to witness the power of community and neighborhoods. This painting was inspired by history and watching and sketching the event from my front porch.”
 –*Jeanne Davies*





92 Lisa Kereszi | Branford
Shell casings on the ground at shooting range,
Wallingford, Conn., 2008
 Archival inkjet print

"These pictures were made over the almost two decades I have lived in Connecticut that are part of a bigger body of work that points to the rituals, beliefs, and spectacles we as human beings create to make sense of—and make meaning in—the world we live in, whether it be via escapism or faith of some sort.

The image of the shotgun shells was taken at an outdoor shooting range for long guns in Wallingford. I was struck by the ugly beauty of the garish spent shells carpeting the ground, with weeds still able to find a way to grow through them. I wondered if they would ever be cleaned up, or just left to disintegrate and create a toxic mulch underfoot. They look so much like candy, but are in reality the byproduct of the deep history of the gun industry here in Connecticut. A picture like this calls to mind to me the influence of Robert Adams, the mid-late 20th century photographer, whose beautiful, jewel-like black-and-white prints of clear-cut trees and litter-strewn parking lots could seductively draw a viewer in, then hit them with an ugly environmental reality once they got there." —Lisa Kereszi



93 Lisa Kereszi | Branford
4th of July at Lime Rock Park, Salisbury, Conn. 1999
 Archival inkjet print

"My work has circled around the themes of recreation and fantasy, including in a series titled 'Fun and Games,' that looks to describe the surfaces of those places people are driven to in search of escape from reality.

The fireworks image was made during the crucial summer in between my first and second years of graduate study, when I was a teaching assistant at Yale's Summer School of Art and Music in Norfolk. Several carloads of us artists trekked over to see the fireworks for the last 4th of July of the 20th century, and I brought my medium-format camera, tripod, and color film. Rather than focus on the display way up in the sky, where others

trained their eyes, I decided to focus on the legendary racetrack below, where the explosion on the ground caught my eye. Usually not able to view the behind-the-scenes pyrotechnics, I was fascinated by the smaller explosions on the ground before each display in the air. They eerily recalled to me not only a race car crash, but also the somewhat recent Oklahoma City bombings in 1995, a site I had visited a year or so before.

I chose to take the risk to keep my shutter open for over a minute to give a tableau-like view of the passage of time from the ground explosion to the sky-high display just out of reach, then persist through the ephemeral fall of the sparks raining down." —Lisa Kereszi

THE EXHIBITION CONTINUES OUTDOORS

"I am driven to create portraits at the intersection of Art, community engagement, social justice, and personal realization; Portraits that invite awareness and understanding of otherness, and challenge community perceptions. My success comes when the viewer is challenged to be open to otherness, and the person photographed feels more empowered, recognized and more self-aware. My mission is realized when the installation of a single image or a collection of photographs brings the community together and becomes a catalyst for dialogue and understanding. These portraits from the WE ARE series, which was first shown in New Haven, strive to shift the conversation concerning immigrants from one of fear, ignorance, and abuse to one of understanding, justified appreciation, legal and social support. Since the founding of our country, every new arrival has been rejected as an outsider, a refugee and has had to stake a claim, and earn recognition. The process repeats itself as the arrivals gain acceptance and try to close the door behind themselves. How quickly we forget." —Joe Standart



94 Joe Standart | Old Lyme
Sisters, Gladys and RuKiya Mwilelo, Grace Over Adversity, 2018
 Giclée print

"My family fled the Democratic Republic of the Congo in 2013 because of the war that was taking place in our hometown. Our home was burned to the ground, and we wanted to be some place safe. My job is always just to look forward instead of looking back because I'm trying to move on. We cannot go back to the DRC. People are still dying there because of the conflict going on right now. What my family is doing is just looking for a place that maybe we can start again to call a home. I believe that a home is the place we lose the most as refugees and immigrants. I hope the United States will be our new forever home."

—Gladys Mwilelo

95 Joe Standart | Old Lyme
Paulina with Child, 2018
 Giclée print



"It took me three weeks to get to the United States from Guatemala. My nine-year-old son and I traveled by bus and the 'Train of the Beast' to get here. It was called the 'Train of the Beast' because you have to ride on the top of the train, not inside, and sometimes people fall off because it is traveling at such a high speed. I am very thankful that we arrived safely."

I left Guatemala because I could not sustain myself there and because there is a lot of conflict—gun fights, houses set on fire—as a result of conflict between my town and another town from which we wanted independence. It is very different here. It is much more expensive than I realized but now I have a job, I live a good life with my son. I can go on with my life. I am not afraid." —Paulina

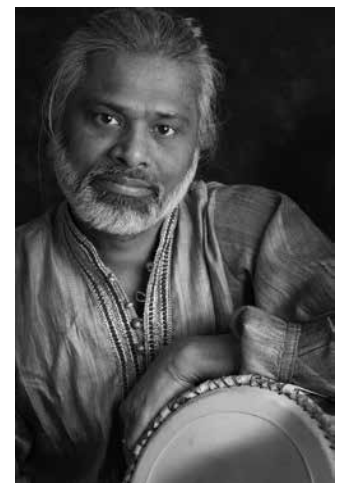
96 Joe Standart | Old Lyme
Mahmood Mahmood, 2018
 Giclée print



"My name is Mahmood Mahmood. I'm 18 years old. I'm from Iraq, Baghdad. I was born in Baghdad, 1999. In 2012, my brother became 18 years old, and he decided to work with the U.S. military as a contractor. We thought that is an amazing job. Everybody wanted to be like that. So, my brother starts working with the U.S. military for 9 months. And during those 9 months, he started to get bothered a lot. They said like, 'Why you are working with these people? These people are bad. Are you maybe a spy on us? Because they ruin our country. This is not good. Be careful. Be careful. Be careful.' After that, we started receiving billets in the mail, in the front of the doors of the house. After almost 11 months, my father was going out from his job and then another car get close to his car and they just shoot the whole car. And who is those people? We didn't know. Who are they? He came back home and he said, 'I was almost died,' because of my brother. That would happen and all this stuff."

—Mahmood Mahmood

97 Joe Standart | Old Lyme
Das Ranendra, 2018
 Giclée print



"I was growing up in Bangladesh, I learned about Manhattan, the skyscrapers, World Trade Center, and Empire State Building. And I tried to see them by going to the roof—to see if I could see the Empire State Building. But it never happened, until I won a lottery visa, and here I am."

Home was like the Andy Griffith show? So, it's like that. I grew up with people. They know each other, but also when something goes on they all come together and help each other. And if anybody have something, everybody share. It doesn't matter what religion you are, or whatever, it's all we're the same, just helping each other. Shocking part was here, like cultural shock. It's like nobody cares even when their apartment is next door, they don't even look at each other at all. So, it's just kind of you're on your own. It's kind of troubling [laughter] at first. But I got used to it." —Das Ranendra



The Museum's **Bicentennial Quilt** serves as an inspiration and metaphor for the *Patchwork* concept.

Josephine Brown, Suzanne "Suzy" Carrell Cole, Patricia Deming Collins, Carolyn Cone, Mary Machnik Connors, Anne H. Desnoyers, Mary Gordon, Aleta Griswold, Sylvia Daniels Harding, Johanna Kooij, Nancy Kriebel, Winifred T. Laubach, Denise Lettvin, Ruby McClernon, Joy Molloy, Dorothy Smith, Margaret "Marge" Smith, Shirley Whitney Talcott, Ann Speirs Traver

Bicentennial Quilt, 1976

Cotton, dacron

**Florence Griswold Museum, Gift of the makers
1989.4**

In April 1976, the Florence Griswold Museum (then known as the Lyme Historical Society) sponsored a contest for residents of Lyme and Old Lyme to create a quilt celebrating America's 200th birthday. The announcement in the organization's newsletter stated, "Quilts traditionally express community solidarity and we hope this one will be a lasting tribute to the people of our town during this Bicentennial year."

Planning for the Bicentennial began two years earlier amid Vietnam War protests and the Watergate scandal that led to President Richard Nixon's resignation. Inspired by the National Bicentennial Commission's motto "A past to remember, a future to mold," the local commission approached commemorations as a prompt to recommit to "the historic values placed on rules of law by men of integrity."

Nineteen women, including participants as young as eighteen, answered the call. They pieced together quilt blocks depicting historical events and geographic locales associated with the region's industries from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. The makers included civic officials and volunteers, educators, and artists. Their contributions were assembled at a festive town quilting day. Five participants were awarded \$10 prizes for squares chosen on the basis of "needlework, authenticity, neatness, artistry, and color sense." The completed quilt became part of the Museum's permanent collection.

DIRECTOR’S AFTERWORD

Happy Birthday America!

What a momentous opportunity to think about the state of the nation, the role of artists, and the Florence Griswold Museum’s unique place in history and the arts.

Patchwork opens at a pivotal time for the Museum. What began as a gathering of creative souls at Miss Florence’s boardinghouse in 1900 has blossomed in 2026 into a rich exhibition featuring the work of 86 local contemporary artists. The tradition of inspiration and artistic support at the Museum is alive and well.

I want to thank our curators and professional staff for taking on this new initiative with such joy and energy in order to bring this ambitious exhibition to fruition. Thanks go out as well to our Board of Trustees for their ongoing support and enthusiasm for the future of the Museum. Likewise, our volunteers and Members continue to nourish the ethos of Miss Florence with every donated hour and cherished visit. Thanks to you all.

Importantly, I thank and commend the artists who applied to this juried art experience. Your talent and unique perspectives relative to this national celebration are greatly appreciated. We could not have done this without each and every one of you. We’re fortunate to have you in our community and look forward to our ongoing friendship.

Sincerely,



Peter Steere, Executive Director
Florence Griwold Museum

Thank you for visiting the Florence Griswold Museum!
We hope you are inspired by our history and the ways we continue to foster Miss Florence’s legacy.

Would you like to share your feedback?
Please use this QR code for a quick survey:



We’d love to stay in touch with you to share news of upcoming exhibitions, special events, educational programming for all ages, and exciting news about the future of the Museum.

Please scan this QR code
to receive email updates:



We look forward to seeing you again soon!

EXPLORE

The Museum offers a full slate of exhibitions, programs, virtual tours, and online resources.

Visit → FloGris.org

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Florence Griswold Museum
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Old Lyme, CT 06371



← For Museum hours, admission rates, and directions, please scan the QR code.