

Twist Out Cancer Annual Report 2021



She Overcame Everything Meant to Destroy Her

By Kathryn Tubbs

Inspired by Bobbie Tiedt Donohew

Artwork is a reinterpretation of a CT Scan showing Stage III Metastatic Squamous Cell Cancer

Twist Out Cancer Celebrates 10 Years!

Since the organization was founded in 2012, it has positively impacted **more than 146,000 people**. This includes 1,170 people who participated in our Brushes with Cancer program as either an Inspiration or Artist, which has led to 580 unique pieces of art that have been created to represent 580 individual journeys with cancer.

Twist Out Cancer is **just getting started**.

What we do:

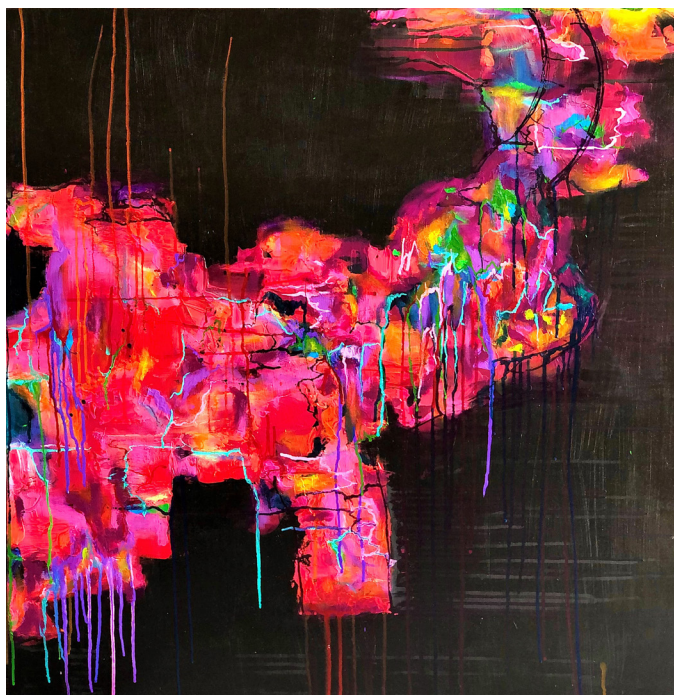
Twist Out Cancer provides psychosocial support to individuals touched by cancer through creative arts programming.

How we do it:

Twist Out Cancer's core program, Brushes with Cancer, improves the quality of life for survivors, previvors, caregivers and loved ones through a unique art experience.

Our impact:

To date, Twist Out Cancer has impacted **over 146,000 people** through our programming and outreach, including our Brushes with Cancer programs, Twistshops, and more.



Elephant by Anna Feneis. Inspired by Abby Match.

When You Share, the World Opens up

"I am grateful and proud to be a part of Twist Out Cancer and, specifically, Brushes With Cancer. The magnitude of your impact runs deeper than what you see on the canvas."

—**Anna Feneis**, a Brushes with Cancer Artist and Twist Out Cancer Board Member

Introduction

Just like many non-profit organizations, Twist Out Cancer adapted programming over the last couple of years to respect the health and safety of its community members as we all face the COVID-19 pandemic. This is even more important, as many participants in the Brushes with Cancer and Twistshop programs are immunocompromised. While the health of Twist Out Cancer's participants has and always will be paramount, the organization has exponentially increased its reach during this time.

By pivoting to virtual and hybrid events, Twist Out Cancer's programs have been able to expand beyond just one location to reach people all over the world. In 2021, our Brushes with Cancer programs and Twistshops touched the lives of **more than 5,539 people in eight countries and 27 states.**

Over the last couple of years, Inspirations and Artists learned that distance - even if they do not live in the same city, state, or even country - does not impact their connection, and still leads to a moment of healing for the Inspiration. The Twist Out Cancer community has seen friendships and bonds grow between Inspirations in the **United States, England, Ireland, and India** with artists in the **United States, Germany, Israel, Canada, and Mexico.**

Despite these great distances and the COVID-19 pandemic, Brushes with Cancer still held in-person celebrations in Philadelphia, Detroit, and Chicago this year. Inspirations and Artists were able to come together to reflect on their personal Brushes With Cancer journey, as well as marvel at all of the artwork created in 2021.

Virtual Twistshops, which are art therapy-focused workshops that promote healing, relaxation and emotional recovery through art-therapy based interventions, have been able to reach people at home and in hospitals who would have been previously unable to travel to the location of the event.

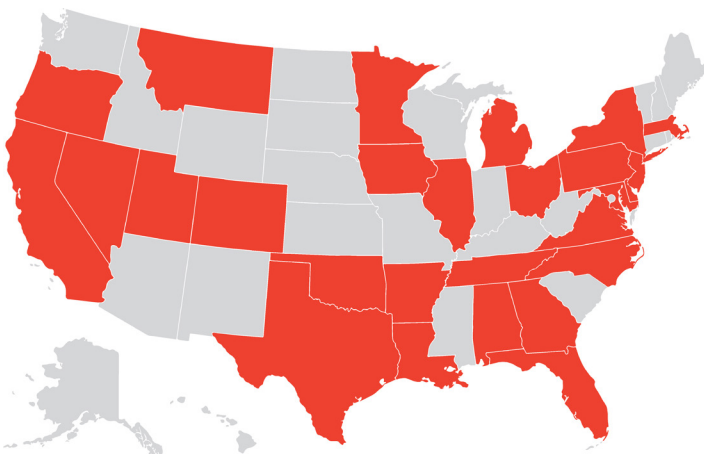
This year, Twistshops have been able to expand beyond art therapy and have brought in new meditation, sound healing, yoga, music, movement, and creative journaling groups to audiences. As the organization looks forward into the 2022 year, virtual events will allow Twist Out Cancer to partner with organizations like Advocate Health Care, Imerman Angels, Teen Cancer America, Jefferson University Hospitals and National Ovarian Cancer Coalition, which has allowed us to bring our events to more people.

In the years ahead, Twist Out Cancer will continue to feature hybrid events that can include Inspirations and Artists from all over the world, with hope to one day return to sold-out events featuring hundreds of people.

The International Reach of the 2021 Brushes With Cancer Programs

"This past year, pairing with Jenna for the Brushes With Cancer program was incredible and we couldn't have done it without modern technology. Being on opposite sides of the world we were able to connect, share stories, grow, and heal together. Regardless of the distance, Jenna and I continue our strong connection and we are both so grateful for the journey we carry on together".

-Kate Van Doren, MA, ATR



In 2021, our Brushes with Cancer programs and Twistshops touched the lives of more than 5,539 people in eight countries and 27 states.

2021 Brushes with Cancer Programs

Northeast, October 10, 2021

25 Inspirations and 24 Artists from 14 states, as well as Mexico, Germany, and Ireland
3,065 Attendees of the in-person art exhibit at the Old City Jewish Art Center in Philadelphia
328 Online ticket sales
12 Host committee members
8 Mentors

Midwest, November 14, 2021

35 Inspirations and 35 Artists, who come from 10 states, Canada, the United Kingdom, and India.
1,283 Attendees of the in-person art exhibits at the Detroit Shipping Company in Detroit and Floating World Gallery in Chicago
444 Online ticket sales
10 Host committee members
10 Mentors

Southern, Concluding May 1, 2022

35 Inspirations and 34 Artists, who come from 23 states, and two countries
9 Host committee members
13 Mentors

Stories from Brushes with Cancer: The Journey as an Inspiration meets an Artist

Inspirations Kristina and Jim Burke and Artist Maura Matthews



Insieme by Maura Matthews. Inspired by Jim and Kristina Burke.

The pairing between Artist Maura Matthews and Inspirations Kristina and Jim Burke kicked off with a picturesque meeting in Philadelphia's Rittenhouse Park, with the Burkes showing Maura their hospitable nature by providing coffee, pastries and cloth napkins to celebrate the meeting.

"I was really taken by how well they balanced each other, and I felt like I had a good sense of 'them,'" Maura said of the meeting. "More than anything, meeting Kristina and Jim showed me how to keep love going."

The Burkes—known for their contributions to Philadelphia's food scene—received healing in many ways throughout the Brushes with Cancer program, with Kristina even finding a surprise benefit through Twist Out Cancer's weekly meditation with Dr. Ruth and Lisa.

"Since finding guided meditation through the programming that is offered through Twist Out Cancer, I'm a full convert," Kristina said. "I am in awe of the peace it provides me. I have learned that it is not about doing it correctly, but rather showing up."



BWC Midwest Inspiration, Pam Oliver and her husband Kelvin Oliver, in front of **Sanctuary for Kristin Arielle**, by artist Sara Zielinski

Inspiration Pam Oliver and Artist Sara Zielinski

When Pam Oliver committed to being a Brushes with Cancer Inspiration as a caregiver, she fully committed. Paired with Artist Sara Zielinski, Pam shared stories about her daughter, Kristin, who was diagnosed with a rare heart cancer and passed away in June, 2020. But stories weren't what helped Sara understand Pam and Kristin—Sara took a virtual trip to Pam's home through many video calls to fully understand her life with Kristin.

"You don't know me until you see my life," Pam said. "Sara has been in my living room and she saw me sitting in my favorite chair. We went on my porch and I showed her the windchimes someone blessed me with when Kristin passed away... Sara could see and feel some of the world I live in, in a very esoteric way."

That backdrop inspired Sara, who centered her piece for Pam around nature, including aspects of nature from Pam's home. The result is a beautiful sanctuary that represents the whole Oliver family, focusing on Pam and Kristin's special relationship with nature.



You are the Song by Michele Kellner. Inspired by Anna Warner Mayes.

Inspiration Anna Warner Mayes and Artist Michele Kellner

Months after her Brushes with Cancer art reveal, Inspiration Anna Warner Mayes is still finding pieces of her journey that Artist Michele Kellner incorporated throughout the artwork.

"I left every conversation more at peace, and by the end, I felt Michele really knew my heart," Anna said "When I saw her piece, I was overwhelmed with emotion. It was beautiful and I am still catching different nuances of the piece."

These details came from Michele truly surrendering herself to Anna's story, allowing her connection with Anna to reveal new aspects of herself.

"Every year I've participated in these events has enlightened me to aspects of myself that are only revealed in deep connection with another," Michele said. "The message is always a reinforcement in the truth of love and connectedness. The truth is always our oneness."

"Mentorship in Brushes with Cancer is so important because the overall health and wellbeing of someone who has been touched by cancer is not fulfilled by treatment alone. Mental, emotional, social, and spiritual support must exist from the moment of diagnosis through treatment and beyond. Mentorship in Brushes with Cancer allows for this support so that one's experience in the program is full of love and hope. It is always an honor and a privilege to be a part of someone's journey."

—Nikki Dicks, LPC, MEd, CADC,
Brushes with Cancer Mentor

The Evolution of Twistshops

In summer of 2018, Twist Out Cancer held the first pilot Twistshop program for Brushes with Cancer participants, who had a need for deeper connection throughout their Brushes with Cancer experience. Twist Out Cancer held an intimate, creative-arts therapy group to help participants process the impact of the program and reflection on their match. The group had amazing outcomes and was an opportunity to see how individuals can come together in the same space, make artwork together, and hold intimate conversations. Since then, Twist Out Cancer has been fortunate to hold Twistshops at kick-off events and other special programs for the Brushes with Cancer community, and has expanded to bring in person, virtual, and hybrid events to international audiences, hospitals and NPO partners.



In 2021, Twist Out Cancer served over 300 individuals and hosted 30 free Twistshops programs, as well as over 10 privately funded programs. Twistshop Director Jacqueline Carmody has developed a unique curriculum and trained a diverse team of eight Twistshop Facilitators. Each facilitator is professionally licensed and competent to address sensitive topics such as grief and loss, intimacy, and loss/gain of

control. Our programs have expanded beyond art therapy and now offer silent and guided meditation, yoga, sound bowl healing, music, and creative journaling.

Within the Twistshop program, the community of survivors, caretakers, and previvors are applauded for their strength and bravery. Each individual's path to wellness and self-expression is unique, and Twist Out Cancer strives to empower its community to achieve growth and balance through integration of various approaches, such as spiritual, physical, emotional, intellectual, professional, environmental, and social directives.

- Weekly Meditation series with Dr. Ruth Mayer & Lisa Kawalec at no cost to participants.
- Sound Bowl Meditation with Jay Taylor
- Spiritual Meditation with Rabbi Lizzi Heydemann of Mishkan
- Music Therapy with Noah Plotkin
- Yoga/movement therapy with Diane Ziegler, RYT

2021 Stats

30

Twistshops

300

Individuals served

9

Partnering organizations

8

Trained licensed clinical art therapists serving as Twistshop Facilitators



Motivation is a multistep process as illustrated here in Abraham Maslow's hierarchy of needs pyramid



Vivid Hope, by Kristin Wenc. Inspired by Bryan Hawkinson.

"The point here is that if you have the resources, the skills and know the rules to move in glorious, synchronized waves alongside thousands and thousands of your species, to create and be part of something far more significant, more exquisite and undeniably more beautiful than anything you could achieve sitting home, on your perch, all alone. Why on earth would you not get involved?"

— **Mignon Dupepe** LCPC, ATR, Twistshop Facilitator



Grandmother and her granddaughter connecting through art making in our January 2021 Virtual Twistshop

"The Twistshops helped me process a lot of difficult thoughts I had after undergoing cancer treatment in a way that other treatments and therapies had failed. The virtual Twistshops are now a wonderful check-in with myself and my art process. I love attending them!"

—**Ashley Wall**, Twistshop participant

"I always knew I'd benefit from meditating, but like many others, felt insecure about my ability to 'meditate correctly.' "Since finding guided meditation through the programming that is offered through Twist Out Cancer, I'm a full convert. I am in awe of the peace it provides me. I have learned that it is not about doing it correctly, but rather showing up. Showing up in this group means being my truest self week to week. Both Ruth and Lisa offer such powerful views on how to connect with your inner, true self and they do it with the kindness and grace of saints."

—**Kristina Burke**, Twistshop Participant and Brushes with Cancer Inspiration



An image created at a Twistshop

"A quote from Oliver Sylvester Bradley's writings that I used during my Twistshop that highlighted murmurations this year captured the sense of awe, wonder, and inspiration that I experience facilitating Twistshops and being surrounded by such an amazing community. Truly, such an exquisite experience to come together as a group and share our stories, our struggles, our joys, and our creative ideas. Knowing that we can each support each other as we navigate the twists, turns, swoop and swirl of life's dance."

—**Mignon Dupepe**, LCPC, ATR, Twistshop Facilitator

"Our programs are designed to support individuals touched by cancer to process and grow from their experiences. The Brushes with Cancer and Twistshop programs utilize art, creative expression, and peer-to-peer connections as a means of facilitating that growth. The results of survey data is used to evaluate the clinical impact of these programs.

Throughout the past several years, the organization has consistently received positive feedback regarding Twistshops. The evaluation of the clinical impact of Brushes with Cancer has emphasized the construct of social connectedness, and early review of our data suggests Inspirations feel heard and understood by their Artists, and that Artists find the experience to be meaningful. Inspirations also appear to have a heightened sense of social connectedness after participating in our programs."

—**Dr. Lauren Rynar**, Psy.D, Director of Clinical Programs at Twist Out Cancer



Members of the Glen Ellyn community sharing an art making experience at our hybrid Twistshop event at Blackberry Market in Glen Ellyn, IL

► **Connecting Rhythms**, by artist Mignon Dupepe, was inspired by Noah Plotkin, as part of the Brushes With Cancer program in the Midwest



New Ways We Connected in 2021

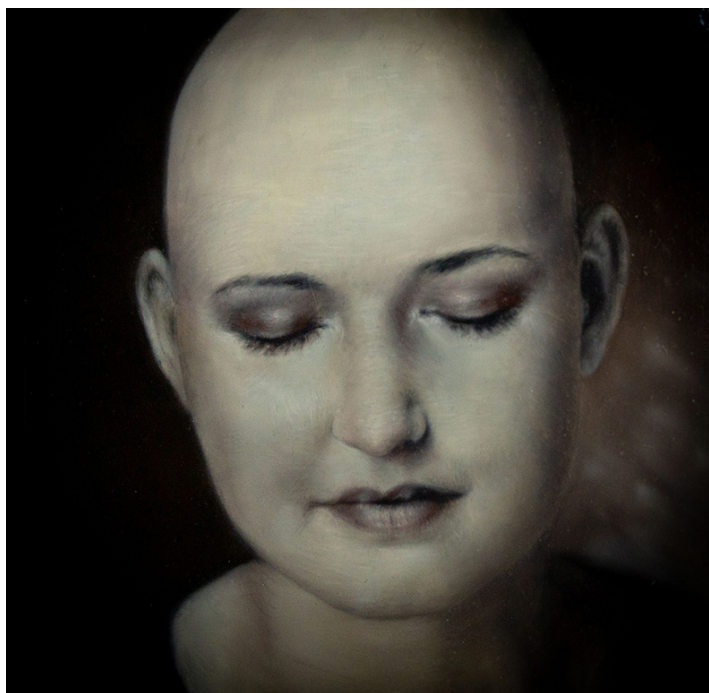
As many people were still unable to get together in-person throughout the year, Twist Out Cancer found new ways to virtually connect in 2021, allowing the organization to increase its reach among existing community members, as well as bring in new participants through virtual programming.

In 2021, Twist Out Cancer launched its Book Club, offering community members access to intimate, virtual discussions with **Kristin Meekhof**, the author of “A Widow’s Guide to Healing: Gentle Support and Advice for the First 5 Years,” and **Dr. Michael Weiner**, who wrote, “Living Cancer: Stories from an Oncologist, Father, and Survivor.”

Twist Out Cancer’s ten-year anniversary celebration kicked off with an Art Contest. Seven artists created an art piece that encapsulates the positive impact of the Twist Out Cancer and after more than 350 votes, **Kate Van Doren’s** painting, “Larisa,” was the clear winner.

On Thursday, November 18, Twist Out Cancer partnered with several organizations and influencers, including **Dream**, **Mishkan**, and **Ethan Zohn**, to host “In My Dreams, I Remember.” This virtual event helped people pay tribute to, and remember loved ones who are no longer physically.

In June, 2021, Twist Out Cancer partnered with **Dr. Shara Cohen**, a breast cancer survivor based in London, who created Cancer Care Parcel. This partnership created the “Touched by Cancer” gift box, which can be sent to anyone touched by cancer.



Artist Kate Van Doren won the Twist Out Cancer Art Contest with her painting, **Larissa**

Key 2021 Social Media and Newsletter Findings

Social Media Impact

Twist Out Cancer’s social media platforms have **over 25,500** supporters that are active and engaged in the organization’s activities. In 2021, Twist Out Cancer gained **278** online followers.

Facebook

Followers: 17,200

Total reach: 55,709

Twitter

Followers: 1,274

Total impressions: 66,500

LinkedIn

Followers: 430

Total reach: N/A

Instagram

Followers: 6,659

Total reach: 14,427

Newsletter Impact

In 2021, Twist Out Cancer increased its newsletter marketing efforts to better communicate with community members. The investment has paid off, with open rates and click rates increasing, as well as a stronger connection to the Twist Out Cancer community.

Newsletters sent in 2021: 51

When staff first organized a strategy at the end of 2020, Twist Out Cancer had an average email open rate of **18 percent**. At the end of 2021, Twist Out Cancer’s newsletter open rate increased by five points to **23 percent**.

Total subscribers: 5,906

Open-rate average: 23%

Average click rate: 0.72%

Highest open rate: 42.6%

Highest click rate: 2.1%

In addition to our growing newsletter list, the community database has reached **over 12,600** organizations and individuals.

Online Store

In 2021, the Twist Out Cancer Store continued to grow, with increased orders, returning customers and higher conversion rates.

Total orders: 96

Conversion rate: 2.62%

Returning customer rate: 17.44%

Media Coverage Highlights

Brushes with Cancer

Goes Digital

The Lancet Haematology

Brushes With Cancer Pairs

Artists And Inspirations

For Healing

Samaritan Magazine

Cancer Survivors Share

Their Stories

Association of Community

Cancer Centers Blog

A podcast with artist

Shefali Khanna and her

inspiration Soraya Fata

Hey Artifact

Midday Fix: Details on

the 10th Anniversary of

Twist Out Cancer

WGN-TV

Twist Out Cancer Turns 10

Jewish Chicago

Organizational Partners

Advocate Health Care

Buddhi

Cactus Cancer Society

Cancer Care Parcel

The Cancer Support Center

Chicago Breast Cancer

Symposium

ClozTalk

ConnectSpace

Creticos & UI Health

Deconstruction

Dreame

Imerman Angels

Mishkan

National Ovarian Cancer

Coalition

Sharshareit

Thomas Jefferson University

Hospital

Wellness House

In-Kind Sponsors

Redwood Arts Group

Big Fat Cookie

Camp Craft Cocktails

Detroit Shipping Company

Floating World Gallery

Old City Jewish Art Center

Dentons

Peter Gahan Art Consultancy

Liska + Associates

Iris B. Communications

Connect Space

Picture Mosaics

Tito's Handmade Vodka

Hart Davis Hart

Grand Kimball Lodge

Matthew Rachman Gallery

Padcaster

Candor Threads

Cancer Wellness Magazine

Swissa Creative

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Dr. Sharon Arffa

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Jeffrey Guerrero

Ella Hawk

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Organizational Benefactors of \$1,250+

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Kelly Murphy Thompson

Caryl Trotta Jaffee

Steven R. & Michelle Monieson

Joseph Rafferty

Annette Rosen

Russ Schnurr

Christian Squillante

Kristin Wenc

Financials

Brushes with Cancer

Northeast Gross Total:

\$36,190

Brushes with Cancer Midwest

Gross Total:

\$124,677

Total 2021 Revenue:

\$357,000

Total In Kind Contributions:

\$97,000

Twist Out Cancer gratefully acknowledges its donors and friends who gave at any level during 2021 and relies on the generosity of our community to grow its programs.

Staff

Jenna Benn Shersher, Founder and CEO

Amelia Hanrahan, COO

Joshua Taustein, Director of Marketing and Communications

Lindsay Patton, Director of Digital Strategy

Jenna Koch, Director of Social Media

August Spree, Director of Programs

Dr. Lauren Rynar, Clinical Director

Jacqueline Carmody, Director of Twistshops

Cai Fasse, Intern

Andrew Zahn, Web Development

Ellie Monieson, Social Media



Navigating the Parameters of Pain & Love, by Jennifer O'Brien.
Inspired by Dr. Michael Weiner.

An Eye to the Future

Over the last 10 years, Twist Out Cancer has built a vibrant and diverse community of support that believes in the power of sharing, connecting and healing and how the expressive arts are a powerful mechanism for healing.

As the organization embarks on its next chapter, Twist Out Cancer is excited to grow the Brushes with Cancer and Twistshop programs internationally, and create new access points for meaningful connections. Twist Out Cancer's mission is to empower thousands of individuals touched by cancer to come forward with their stories, grow our community and aid in healing.

You just never know who your story will impact.

To the next 10 years of Twist!

Join us!

For more information contact
Jenna Benn Shersher,
MSW Founder and CEO at:
jenna@twistoutcancer.org
(847) 802-9183

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twistoutcancer.org

