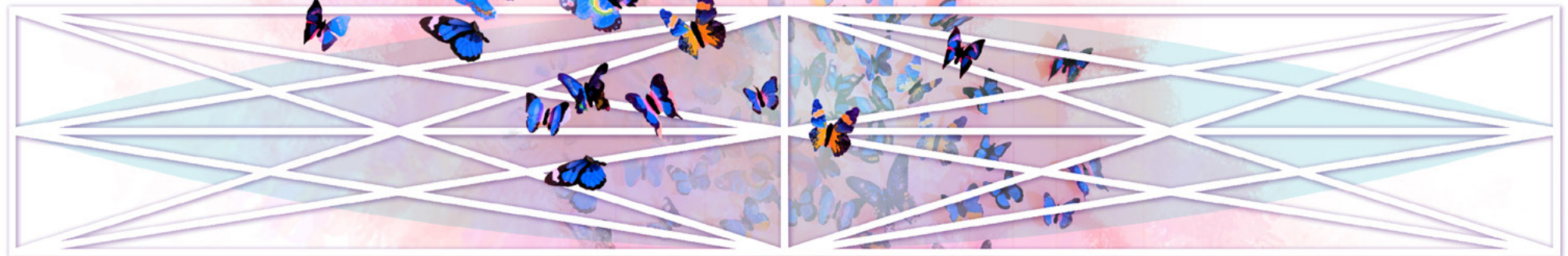


the VIRTUAL ART EXHIBITION & CELEBRATION

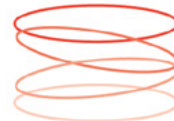
GENERAL MOTORS  
DESIGN CENTER GALLERY



BRUSHES *with* CANCER

20 DETROIT 20

TWIST®  
**OUT**  
CANCER



# TWIST OUT CANCER

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## TWIST OUT CANCER GENERAL MOTORS

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Designer and Chair of Brushes  
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Kara Thomas, *Creative Sculptor  
and Brushes with Cancer Artist,  
Mentor & Collaborator*

August Spree, *Twist Out Cancer  
Board Member and Past Brushes  
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Jenna Benn Shersher, *Founder  
and CEO of Twist Out Cancer*

**Amelia Hanrahan**, *Director of  
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## WHAT IS TWIST OUT CANCER?

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

## THE STORY

When 29-year-old Jenna Benn Shersher was undergoing cancer treatment in 2010 for a rare form of Lymphoma, she felt disconnected from the world. Isolated at home because of a compromised immune system, she longed to do something she hadn't done since she was healthy...dance. And so she did. With Chubby Checker's, "The Twist," blasting in the background, she recorded herself twisting her heart out. When she posted the video on Facebook, she had one simple request, "Please join me on the dance floor!" The response was astounding. Within days, Jenna was flooded with hundreds of videos from thousands of people from across the globe, all doing the Twist!. These videos came from people she knew and from perfect strangers. There were people twisting at work, at home, and even from the hospital. "As they twisted, I was able to tiptoe out of my room and join the world," recalled Jenna. "I no longer felt alone, but instead connected to and supported by a community of twisters." It was then that Jenna made a vow that once she had completed treatment she would give back in a meaningful way. And so, Twist Out Cancer was born.



# TWIST OUT CANCER

"My mom had breast cancer and throughout the process, I was the primary person helping her," said a young woman named Emma. "Most of my friends would ask about my mom, but they didn't think to ask about me. It was difficult because I was struggling to care for her, and I also needed support." Twist Out Cancer creates exactly that - a place of support for everyone who needs it. What began as a light-hearted way for anyone touched by cancer to connect has turned into a global community of support and inspiration. Established in 2011 as a nonprofit organization, Twist Out Cancer (TOC) offers the platform, tools and community - both online and offline - for anyone touched by cancer to feel connected to a community and for many to take action. TOC does this through online platforms, Brushes with Cancer, Twist-Shops and Health and Wellness programs and events in the community.

## BRUSHES WITH CANCER

This unique celebration of survivorship and hope pairs those touched by cancer (previvors, survivors and caregivers) with talented artists working in a variety of mediums. Those touched by cancer share their 'twist on cancer' - their stories, feelings and experiences - with the artist, which serves as the inspiration for the art. The program culminates with a celebratory annual event and fundraiser in which the pairs connect in person and the artwork is revealed for the first time and then auctioned to support TOC. Since its inception in 2012, hundreds of inspirations and artists have been matched, and over 15,000 people have participated in the celebratory art exhibitions and galas. In addition to our Montreal debut, , Brushes with Cancer has expanded to include programs in Tel Aviv and Philadelphia. "Telling my story in this context and through this creative process was better than any kind of therapy," said Amy, who lost her mother to breast cancer and who is herself both a survivor of kidney cancer and a 'previvor' who was diagnosed with the BRCA2 gene.

## TWISTSHOPS

TOC workshops or, "Twistshops" are art therapy focused workshops that promote healing, relaxation and emotional recovery through art therapy based interventions that are designed to reduce symptoms of depression, anxiety and stress related to cancer. Trained TOC facilitators lead groups in meaningful discussions related to the critical importance of psychosocial support and guide exercises that foster creativity and encourage team building. To date, over 10,000 people have engaged in Twist-Shops. TOC workshop community partners include Camp Chi, the University of Illinois, Northwestern University, Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago, and Federation CJA in Montreal.

## THE NEED

"This organization empowers you," said Alana Dugandzic, a two-time cancer survivor. "It gives you a way out and helps you make your situation the best it can be. It allows you to focus on the positive as opposed to being victimized." What makes TOC unique is its multi-tiered approach that gives anyone touched by cancer the support and community they need to no longer feel alone and the tools they crave to take action. TOC provides anyone, anywhere in the world, the platform to create, support and inspire. As such, our reach is limitless, targeting everyone from the person who finds out that a dear friend has just been diagnosed with cancer and doesn't know what to do, to those like Jenna, who feel that because of cancer, they have to sit out the dance. A labor of love, TOC has a network of over 200 active volunteers serving as ambassadors in Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Tel Aviv, Toronto and Montreal.

## GET INVOLVED

Twist Out Cancer is a community that celebrates creativity, encourages engagement, and believes in the importance of giving back. TOC volunteers donate their time, expertise, and passion to help create a network of support and hope. It is thanks to their commitment and hard work that the TOC community continues to grow and thrive. For more information on volunteering, please visit the volunteer section of our website. We hope you will join us.

# A MESSAGE FROM JENNA BENN SHERSHER

*Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Twist Out Cancer*

## GRATITUDE.

It has been quite a journey. A journey measured in moments, markers and finish lines. A journey artistically preserved in hypercolor. A journey that may have started with the three words, "you have cancer," but has continued with, "No Evidence of Disease." I may not be able to choose the cards that I am dealt but my response, my narrative, my journey, is my choice. Over the last few years, with the help of countless people, we have transformed my story into a larger movement. Twist Out Cancer's foundation is built on hope, is stabilized by support, and is secured by the belief that when you share, the world opens up. Twist Out Cancer emerged out of desperation, blossomed out of loneliness and grew from despair. Today this movement continues to grow because of you. To the countless friends, family and strangers that lifted me out of the shadows and into the sunlight, I thank you. And to the legions of tiny twisters who believe in Twist Out Cancer, we would not be here without you. We hope you will continue to... Share. Connect. Heal.



# WELCOME TO BRUSHES WITH CANCER AT GENERAL MOTORS DESIGN CENTER

## AUGUST SPREE

*Executive Board Member,  
Chair of Brushes with Cancer Detroit*



At 27 years old and 8 months pregnant, I was diagnosed with a rare fatty tissue cancer and my journey with cancer began. Years later, I became involved with Twist Out Cancer in Chicago in 2014. I didn't realize until I participated as an inspiration, how much I had never verbalized about my experience with cancer. I was able to share things that I had held onto for so long, and have an artist create something beautiful from the story. It was so healing for me and I saw immediately what TOC can do for people who are suffering alone. As a cancer survivor and former caregiver to my grandmother, I am very passionate about helping to provide the emotional support and care that those dealing with cancer are in need of. The use of creative arts in the healing and connecting process is what drew me to Twist Out Cancer, and I have been involved as a participant, volunteer, and as of 2017, as a board member.

I met my partner through the Brushes with Cancer Chicago program after being paired with him, and we are celebrating six years together now. I moved to Michigan 5 years ago and I'm very excited to finally bring the Brushes with Cancer program to the Detroit area.



# BRUSHES WITH CANCER

Brushes with Cancer is celebration of survivorship and hope through art, music and storytelling. This event is brought to you by Twist Out Cancer with the generous support of the General Motors Design Center.

**ART** Twist Out Cancer paired 25 artists with 25 survivors, previvors, and caregivers, and challenged the artists to create original works of art influenced by their inspirations' unique "twists" on cancer. Over the last six months, our pairs have been working closely together. These unexpected relationships developed into systems of support and a place for healing. The artwork honors the inspirations' experiences with cancer but it also celebrates the new relationship that has since developed. Tonight we honor their journeys and celebrate the importance of storytelling and utilizing the arts as a mechanism for healing. *All proceeds from ticket sales and the art auction will go towards growing Brushes with Cancer in the United States, Canada, Israel and around the world.*

**PROGRAM** Brushes with Cancer program begins at 7:05 pm and runs until 7:45 pm.

## RULES OF THE SILENT AUCTION

To bid on art please register with OneCause/BidPal mobile bidding at <https://one.bidpal.net/brusheswithcancergmdesigncenter/welcome> on your phone. See volunteers at Check-In for assistance.

- A bid is construed as a legal agreement to purchase the listed item(s) at the amount indicated.
- All bidders must be 18 years of age or above.
- All winning bids must be settled before the end of the event by cash, check or credit card.
- The auction will close at 900 p.m., at which time the highest bid on each bid sheet will be declared the winner.
- Twist Out Cancer is acting as a consignee of the art for the purposes of this auction. All sales are final, as is, and are between the artist and the buyer.
- If conflict arises over identifying the last valid bid for an item(s) or in the event there is any confusion over any of the rules or procedures of this auction, Twist Out Cancer reserves the right to determine the winner or to impose an alternate method of closing the item for interested parties, including, but not limited to, canceling the sale or requiring a sealed final bid. All Twist Out Cancer decisions are final and binding on all participants.
- Purchased artwork is available for pick up at the GM Design Center gallery by appointment after October 30th. Shipping can be arranged for an additional cost.

# PARTICIPATING SPEAKERS

## JENNA BENN SHERSHER

*Founder and Executive Director*

Jenna Benn Shersher is a 37 year old cancer survivor, civil rights advocate, world traveler and tiny twister who dreams big. In December 2010, Jenna was diagnosed with a rare blood disorder called Grey Zone Lymphoma that at the time affected fewer than 200 people. Instead of surrendering to cancer, she was determined to find meaning in her suffering. In the course of her fight, Jenna figured out creative ways to leverage social media to process her experience, and in turn create a community that became invested in her fight. In the course of a year, Jenna battled cancer and founded the nonprofit Twist Out Cancer. Jenna's story was selected as a top ten best read by Mashable. She is a blogger for the Huffington Post and has made television appearances on all major media outlets, including the New York Times, Forbes, CNN, NBC5, CBS, ABC7, WGN and Fox32. She has also been featured in the New York Times, the LA Times, Wall Street Journal, the Chicago Tribune and the Chicago Sun Times. Jenna is a mentor angel with Imerman Angels, and was an Honored Hero and advocate for Team in Training and the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

She is an ROI fellow with the Schusterman Foundation and serves on the board of the Anti-Defamation League. Jenna received her Bachelor's degree from McGill University in Montreal, Canada and her Masters in Social Enterprise and Administration from Columbia University. She resides in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania with her husband Dr. David Shersher and their daughter Noa Pearl who is a miracle.



## JEFFREY FROGETT

Jeff has a background stemming from advertising design, attending the College for Creative Studies. Beginning work with GM in 1999, his corporate graphic design solutions strive for the highest level of creativity while maintaining the maximum level of clear messaging for the client.

With his artistic endeavors, Jeff takes inspiration from architecture, patterns in nature and colors in nature. His fine artwork style consists of structure, angles and patterns.

In 2012, Jeff began the Design Center Gallery, with the vision to grow the creative expression at the Tech Center. Through presenting a wide array of programming and talent available at General Motors, the Gallery can become a power house in the community providing mind provoking art experiences.



## KARA THOMAS

Kara began her career working as an automotive sculptor shortly after completing her undergraduate degree from College for Creative Studies in 2013. She is currently creating artwork in her pottery studio located in a refurbished bank in Northwest Detroit.

Kara is a 2 time participant in the Brushes with Cancer program. For the 2020 GM Design Center and Brushes with Cancer partnership she participated as a board member, mentor, and artist.

Inspiration for Kara's art work stems from historic alchemic imagery. Using alchemy as a base for the concept of transformation allows for her to take an experience or material and turn it into something greater than its original state. Inspired by her surroundings, she looks for parallels in life cycles and transitions which are then depicted in her designs. Embracing change and feeling a universal connection, Kara's work aspires to expand perspectives, and uses worldly designs to create a sense of unity.



# PARTICIPATING ARTISTS & THOSE TOUCHED BY CANCER

## Meet the Matches

### INSPIRATIONS ARTISTS

<i>Susan Alessi</i>	Ashley McAllister
<i>Sarah Tonkin</i>	Jenna Grabowski
<i>Suzanne Morse</i>	Travis Campbell
<i>Marge Solak</i>	Jennifer Green
<i>Linda Ludek Brouns</i>	John Demers
<i>Steven Davanzo</i>	Jeffrey Froggett
<i>David Brigolin</i>	Dick Cruger
<i>David Pelkowski</i>	Matt Burke
<i>Jeffrey Froggett</i>	Taurus Burns
<i>Marty Nahtygal</i>	Matt Burke
<i>Andrea Weston</i>	Alyn Gray
<i>Daniel A. Carbary</i>	Kyle Irving
<i>Beth Pierce</i>	Kara Thomas

### INSPIRATIONS ARTISTS

<i>Ruth Bricknell</i>	Tony Warren
<i>Dawn Minch</i>	Tracey Bouchey
<i>Carol Garrett</i>	Kirk Roda
<i>Paul Van Rooyen</i>	Karen Fischer
<i>Sandy Lipscomb</i>	Amber Hendricks
<i>Lynn Krawczyk</i>	Cari Smith-Gammicchia
<i>Jacob Lozier</i>	Karen Bates
<i>Ben Kelly</i>	Rad Murdza
<i>Alexandria Miller</i>	Andrea Micou
<i>Michelle Lachajewski</i>	John Rusanchin
<i>Laura Madison</i>	Marty Blackwell
<i>Danielle Williams</i>	Kara Thomas

# SUSAN D ALESSI & ASHLEY McALLISTER



**Susan D Alessi**

Shelby Township, Michigan  
*Survivor*

**TWIST ON CANCER** Although a scary and fearful experience. The cancer brought many caring people and inspiration into my life. So a beautiful outcome from the worst thing you think may happen.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** This artwork is inspired by the beauty and strength of the vulnerability my mom experienced throughout her journey. Cancer has changed the landscape of our family and when my mom was diagnosed last year, I worried not only for her physical health but also for the emotions and memories that she would relive. As she began her fight, I saw my mom move like I never had before. Always determined, she moved forward to start treatment. Uncertain and afraid, she moved forward. Tearful, she moved forward. In this art piece, I wanted to capture the moves she took in her journey and so I chose to paint a moving body of water. A body of water is ever changing. It is at times turbulent and at others, calm. It possesses enormous power and beauty. My mom possesses enormous power and beauty and never more so than during her fight with cancer. The rocks of the landscape are drawn in pencil, both to accentuate the color of the water and to represent a landscape that has no permanence. I am grateful for the Brushes with Cancer experience with my mom, and I hope that through the creation of this artwork she sees how brave and unwaveringly beautiful she forever is to me.



**Ashley McAllister**

Engineering Group Manager  
Macomb Township, Michigan



## / Unwavering Beauty

*Acrylic and Pencil*

*24 x 36 inches*

**\$225**



# SARAH TONKIN & JENNA GABROWSKI



**Sarah Tonkin**

Lead Designer, Color & Trim  
Ferndale, Michigan  
Survivor and Caregiver

**TWIST ON CANCER** I first became aware of the Brushes with Cancer program by reading an email call for participation sent out to all of us in the GM Design team. The call was simply asking for participants to be either inspirations or artists in a program meant to tell the stories of those touched by cancer. My reaction to it was visceral and unexpected. Reading it made me cry, which is something I don't often do. I had definitely been touched by cancer. But maybe until that moment I thought I had moved past the experience. Reading the call took me right back to all of the feelings and emotions I had experienced in 2016. That year brought a diagnosis of cervical cancer for me and the death of my mother from pancreatic cancer. My reaction to the call helped me realize maybe that I had more to work through and maybe this could help me do it.

So, in the midst of a pandemic and in the age of the ubiquitous Zoom call, the artist who I had been thoughtfully matched with and I made our first

connection. This was the first of many conversations and self-reflection that helped me process my experience in new ways. I realized that there really isn't a time when one is "over" cancer. For me it's about taking the lessons of empathy, acceptance, thankfulness and hope with me for the rest of my life. And remembering that the love and kindness of so many family and friends helped get me through.

Those lessons are once again coming into focus. My dad, who so lovingly and selflessly took care of my mother while she was sick, was diagnosed with lymphoma two months ago. He will be with me watching them on the big night. I so look forward to seeing how Jenna interprets my cancer story, which is intertwined with my parent's cancer story. And I hope this will help him too.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** After my first meeting with Sarah, I felt really inspired to create a special piece that would reflect her journey with cancer, so I wrote down some questions for her to answer concerning that stage of her life; I was hopeful her answers would help spark some ideas for a painting that would tell her unique story. One



**Jenna Grabowski**

Creative Sculptor  
Warren, Michigan

of the most remarkable things I noted through Sarah's written retelling of her experience with cancer was how open, honest, and direct she was in her writing, and it was this that inspired the final direction for the artwork. I chose to capture Sarah in the painting, surrounded by the very words she used to describe her personal story. The word "resilience" was one I chose to highlight in the piece because to me, the noun best describes Sarah's remarkable bravery, recovery and positive outlook throughout all the adversity she faced while undergoing treatment for cancer. The gold rings surrounding her figure in the painting symbolically represent her mother and father, who have also been afflicted by cancer; when trying to decide how to represent them in the painting, Sarah chose their identical gold rings as symbols. I thoroughly enjoyed creating this artwork in response to Sarah's story, and hope to have captured a bit of her amazing spirit for others to see.



## 2 Resilience

Mixed Media

11 x 14 inches

\$250



# SUZANNE MORSE & TRAVIS CAMPBELL



**Suzanne Morse**

Sun City Center Florida

Previvor with colon cancer

**TWIST ON CANCER** I feel honored to participate with my son and to collaborate in an experience that reaches beyond our own; one that connects with others who share similar challenges and hardships that result from such a debilitating disease.



**ARTIST STATEMENT** It felt very poignant for me to participate in the Brushes with Cancer event this year, mainly because my inspiration for this project is my own mother. She's been battling cancer for more than one year now, and this project helped me to connect with the deeply personal experience my mother has been going through on an entirely different level. Throughout the emotional journey of her physical and mental struggles resulting from this crippling disease, her guiding comfort has always been her unwavering faith and spiritual beliefs. That belief is what I focused on when creating this sculpture.



**Travis Campbell**

Group Manager Creative Sculpting

Armada, Michigan

My artistic style and aesthetic typically center around capturing a gesture or movement through the incorporation of traditional materials. In the case of "The Ascending," I used wood, stone, and steel to evoke a feeling of overarching peace and freedom amidst the presence and weight of heavy burden.



**The Ascending**

Stone, Steel, Wood

3 x 2 x 2 feet

\$300





# MARGE SOLAK & JENNIFER GREEN



**Marge Solak**

GM Design Retiree  
Troy, Michigan

**TWIST ON CANCER** As a two-time survivor, and support for my husband, cancer has forever changed my life. Hearing that I was stage 4 with my first cancer diagnosis initially devastated me. Being a planner and task oriented most of my life, the irony wasn't lost on me as you cannot plan your way out of this disease. What I could do was try to stay positive and focus my energy on the treatment plan ahead. Along this journey I was humbled by the support of my immediate family, close friends and medical staff, they showed me nothing but compassion and encouragement.

I am a survivor, and don't take this second chance at life lightly. My journey caused me to reassess my priorities, this is a blessing.

My mantra is

- *Live each day with gratitude.*
- *Live in the moment – I often have to remind myself of this.*
- *Focus on what is really important, relationships with family and friends.*
- *Be adventurous and open.*

**ARTIST STATEMENT** As a two-time cancer survivor, Marge has been blessed twofold in many areas and aspects along life's journey. These double blessings include two children - a son and daughter; two grandchildren; two homes; two guardian angels who assisted during her battle; two degrees; and so many more. And, as an artist and friend, I have had the privilege of working with Marge two times in different capacities during both of our 40-year automotive careers.



**Jennifer Green**

GM Design Retiree  
Shelby Township, Michigan

The artwork depicts the double blessings and realities, yet focuses on the 'afterwards' Marge enjoys every day as a gift from above. Her homes provide a sanctuary, a resting place, the story of who she is, along with her loved ones and the things she cherishes. Her foundation rests upon her faith, family, and friends.

So being refreshed, Marge prepares herself for moving forward, pressing on, now walking far more circumspectly. Having gone a distance, she looks behind both of her recoveries 'afterward'. She reflects knowing they were brought about through a providential means of grace by a healing branch from the tree of life.



## 4 "...afterwards..."

Mixed Media Encaustic

24 x 36 inches Cradle Board

\$450



# LINDA LUDEK BROUNS & JOHN DEMERS



**Linda Ludek Brouns**

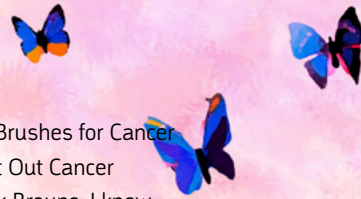
Clarkston, Michigan  
*Survivor - Breast Cancer*

**TWIST ON CANCER** Every person touched by cancer has a different story and a different journey. As a professional engineer and mother of two toddlers at the time, I always had a general life plan to execute; cancer was never a consideration. I am eternally grateful for my faith, family and friends who were there to support me. Now, 15 years later, I am grateful for the wisdom and opportunities to help others since that diagnosis.

I want others to know that accepting the help of others is an act of love. Helping and giving back is a grace. Sometimes it takes courage

to ask for help, or let someone in. It took me a while to accept that physical beauty means little, and if someone is uncomfortable with us, the problem is theirs, not ours. Love unconditionally.

The people of GM are truly wonderful, gifted people. I likely would have never met my artist, John, though our lives have many parallels. This experience, and his friendship, are a gift. Thank you!



**ARTIST STATEMENT** It was truly an honor to participate in this Brushes for Cancer project, sponsored by General Motors in conjunction with the Twist Out Cancer organization. In my initial meeting with my inspiration, Linda Ludek Brouns, I knew immediately she was a warm and personable individual, yet strong and a fighter. Over the months, Linda openly shared her story — from diagnosis to treatment —

with me through a series of three emails. The highs and lows, the challenges and setbacks, and the successes. Through it all, Linda's faith helped her to remain firmly rooted as a wife, a mother and an engineer always vigilant, yet seeking answers.

I envisioned her journey as a maelstrom enveloping not only her, but her entire family and way of life. I chose the Round Island Lighthouse to represent Linda, because of its history in the Straits of Mackinac. During its service, the lighthouse served as a beacon of hope and safety, providing sailors a guiding light for safe passage through the darkness of night and storms. The storm clouds symbolize cancer, while golden sky and smooth water emanate hope of a bright future.



**John Demers**

Training Administrator  
Saint Clair Shores, Michigan



## 5 The Storm Has Passed

*Watercolor*

*29 x 25 inches, framed*

**\$950**





# STEVEN DAVANZO & JEFFREY FROGGETT



**Steven Davanzo**  
GPSC Reporting & Analytics  
Waterford, Michigan  
*Caregiver*

**TWIST ON CANCER** It must have been fate for me to see the last call for participation in this event. The only thing I knew I wanted from taking part was a fitting tribute to Beth; one I knew I could not provide on my own. As wife and mother, her absence is felt by each of us every day. My time interacting and working with Jeff on this project has been a blessing.



**Jeffrey Froggett**  
Senior Creative Designer  
Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** I wanted the artwork to be Steven's voice & to inform the world that "Love" is a verb not a noun per Beth Marie Davanzo. The eulogy within the artwork was written by Steven but he did not get to read the eulogy at Beth's mass. So please take the time to read the beautiful words Steven put together to honor his amazing wife. The two photos used in the illustration are two of the family's favorite photos of Beth.

After my first session with Steven I knew I had to include the eulogy in my artwork. So with that in mind creating a digital illustration was the direction I was going to take. I looked through photos the family had online a number of times and finally selected the smiling photo of Beth. I never met her but this photo speaks to me.

Steven and I have a lot in common we both are grieving but we are at different stages in the grieving process. Steven, you can get through this. Don't ever give up!



## Love is a Verb

*Digital Illustration*  
36 x 24 inches, framed  
\$600

# DAVID BRIGOLIN & DICK CRUGER



**David Brigolin**  
Project Engineer  
Clinton Township, Michigan  
Survivor

**TWIST ON CANCER** It has been a bit over a year since my initial diagnosis and almost a year since going through chemotherapy and a couple of surgeries. Although I can't recommend contracting cancer, I have had the opportunity to interact with many people who have offered incredible support, including a few who have literally been lifesavers. It would be easy to feel sorry for myself, but I have a great job, health insurance, financial resources, close friends, family, and my unbelievably supportive wife, all the while recognizing that many people facing similar (or worse) diagnoses have to cope with far fewer sources of support. As important as having the right medical professionals to attend to the "nuts and bolts" of treatment certainly is, knowing that there are people who care is a great source of healing.



**Dick Cruger**  
GM Design Retiree  
Detroit, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Dave Brigolin, my inspiration, has been through so much last year.  
Could not believe his journey to get well.  
So it's a wonderful opportunity to work together. Dave loves the unusual artist books I make. He suggested I take two of his poems and turn them into books.  
The poems were quite powerful so it was easy to find objects to work with.  
Like weathered tar paper, porcupine quills, pebbles from the street and a cheerio!  
For the 2nd book I had a beat up briefcase from a History Professor at Wayne State University.  
This may sound strange , but read the poems!



## 7 FETISH

Artist book

\$600

## 8 BOOK

Artist book

\$300





# DAVID PELKOWSKI & MATT BURKE



**David Pelowski**  
PSDS Tools Lead  
Bruce Township, Michigan  
Caregiver

**TWIST ON CANCER** It is probably the one diagnosis that can impact you the most emotionally, physically and mentally because of the unknowns with stages, treatments and how your physical body interacts with treatment and mind interprets the data. Your mind is the most powerful part of treatment (and can be the worst part). Every day is a new day. If you have not had cancer, do not pretend or say you understand – You don't! You will feel helpless and confused. What you think is right is wrong and wrong is right. Just listen even if it makes no sense to you, do what you can and ask for help when needed. You (caregiver) are no good to anyone if you cannot function.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** This piece changed every step of the way, as I went back to David's emails and thoughts. I started by building up and putting together the blocks, imagining them as the building blocks of his life and his family's life. The blocks being scattered and not being able to align with all of the constant disruptions and turmoil he continuously has gone through.

The gradient from red to green represents David's and his family's emotions, from the good times to the bad times, from the smallest moments of happiness to the worst of times.

The small squares of splattered art represents the most troubling pockets of time for his family.

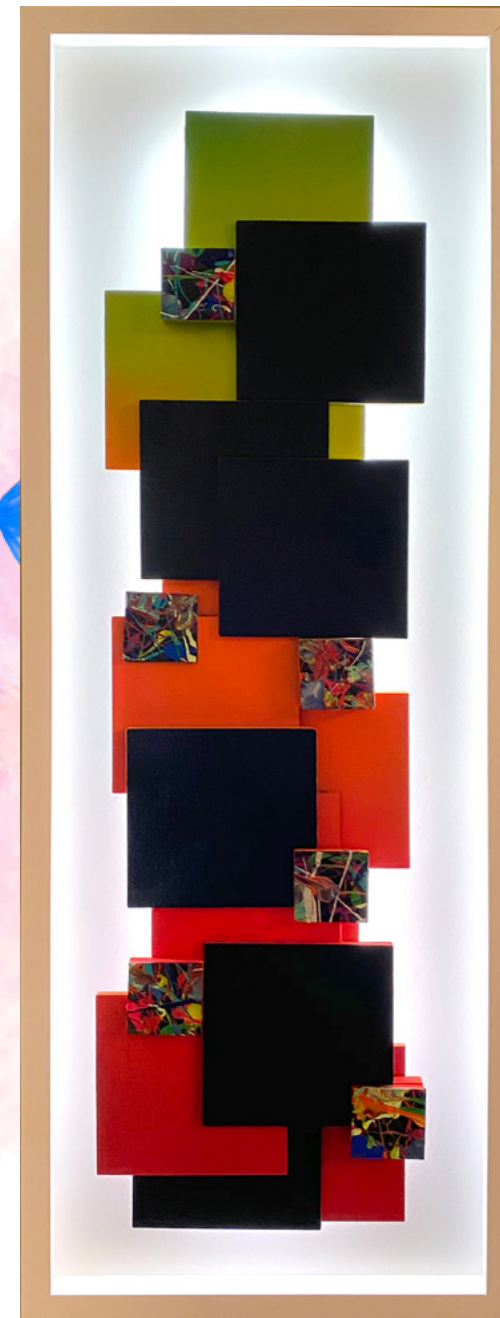


**Matt Burke**  
Senior Creative Designer  
Macomb, Michigan

David's family has been through so much, and these chaotic pieces symbolize the major hardships and emotions he conveyed but I could never imagine going through personally.

The black squares are representative of the times of darkness David and his family have gone through. Symbolizing some of the emotions he conveyed frustration, loneliness, numbness, being torn, hopelessness and confusion.

Finally, to put it all together, I framed out the piece and back lit it with bright white underlighting. The light represents the positivity and support I know David and his family need, and hope he has. It's also a sense of clarity and elevation from all of the dark times he has had to overcome and represents David the caretaker - helping hold everything together and uplifting his family.



## 9 Light in the Chaos

Wood, acrylic paint, spray paint, LED lights  
37 x 13 x 1 inches

\$1900

# JEFFREY FROGGET & TAURUS BURNS



**Jeffrey Froggett**

Senior Creative Designer  
Grosse Pointe Farms, Michigan  
Caregiver

**TWIST ON CANCER** CANCER is a dream buster!!!  
CANCER is the devil!!!! CANCER sucks!!!

Being a caregiver is no easy ride. I questioned myself many times. There's so much information about cancer that's thrown in your lap. From one caregiver to another, my advice is to maintain a positive attitude. I know it's not always easy, especially when you're trying to accommodate every need, and you are "mentally and physically exhausted" but positivity remains the best medicine for the one you love.

Please remember these words from Jim Valvano "laugh, think, and cry each day, and don't give up. Don't ever give up".

I praise all who are fighting this horrid nasty disease, including caregivers.

I have gotten to know Taurus on a much deeper level during the summer. In addition to being one of the most talented artist I know, Taurus has a huge heart and a very profound understanding of how precious life is. I am glad to be able to call Taurus my friend.



**Taurus Burns**

Creative Sculpture  
Oak Park, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** From the very first conversation, Jeff was so gracious and easy to talk to. Every time we spoke, it was clear how radiant and wonderful his wife Julie was. After we had a few encounters, I knew I wanted to make a painting that dealt with loss and strength. I imagined this scene of Jeff being strong for his daughters, as they all deal with the loss of the beautiful light that Julie brought into their lives.



## 10 An Enduring Faith

*Oil on Canvas*  
30 x 40 inches

**\$2000**





# MARTY NAHTYGAL & MATT BURKE



**Marty Nahtygal**

Clinton Township, Michigan  
Survivor

**TWIST ON CANCER** It's been tough! I have had 2 Different Types of cancer in the Last 8 years. The End of 2012 I had Thyroid Cancer and in 2014 Prostate Cancer. My Biggest lesson was *Trust the Oncologist* and their recommendations. On another note, they were very open on listening to me and giving my options and ideas. To this day these doctors see me every quarter for my follow up's. They are actually my PCP now.



**Matt Burke**

Senior Creative Designer  
Macomb, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** This piece symbolizes Marty's journey, as he has battled with numerous altercations with cancer. Marty is an amazing person with such a positive outlook, but has been overtaken with these bouts with cancer. I created this piece to symbolize how I have interpreted his journey. With all of his different battles, it feels like he is constantly under water. That is the basis for the background of the painting. The white lines were done by pendulum painting. A can of paint was set up above the canvas on a string and released to create an organic flow. This is symbolic of Marty's path in life, not knowing where life will take you, not knowing where you will end up.



## 11 Under Water

Acrylic and latex paint, epoxy  
34 x 46 x 3/4 inches

\$1000



# ANDREA WESTON & ALYN GRAY



**Andrea Weston**  
Global Vehicle Engineering  
Operations Manager  
Columbus, Michigan  
*Two Time Breast Cancer Survivor*

The hardest thing for me was telling family and friends who I love that I had cancer, but the BWC experience was different. I was reliving my experience with a complete stranger. After I met Alyn the first time, that evening I was exhausted! Maybe each time you tell someone, you let a little bit more of it go.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Working with Andrea during Brushes with Cancer as my inspiration has been a journey in rediscovering my passion for creating art through the practice of storytelling and vulnerability. From our initial meeting, we have spent multiple hours every Saturday afternoon sharing our life's stories and discovering parts of our story that have influenced who we are today. Although there is a generational gap between us, we share a similar perspective on life that is rooted in mindfulness and tackling the challenges of life head on. Throughout both of Andrea's experiences with breast cancer, she has emerged a stronger woman who is more accepting of who she has become. The focal point of this drawing, a portrait of Andrea, is a representative presentation of her acceptance in who she has become as a result of her story.



**Alyn Gray**  
Turbocharging Materials  
Engineer  
Rochester Hills, Michigan

**TWIST ON CANCER** The nurse led me into a dark room. The radiologist pointed and told me it was cancer. He kept talking. I heard nothing. Everything stopped. How could something so small be so devastating? Then my instincts kicked in. My first question was "Where should I go for my best chance of survival?"

The second time, I knew the drill. I held it together until the nurse reached out with a hug. On the way home, I called a friend in hysterics. I was angry. I had done everything right. Why was it back? Then the survival instincts kicked in again. Get the data. Make a plan. What treatment could I live with?

What have I learned? After 4 surgeries, months of daily radiation and more doctor's visits than I could ever count, I consider myself lucky. Routine tests found both my cancers; I have good health insurance and a doctor who listens; I had skilled medical professionals who answered my many questions with truth and patience; I have amazing friends who were my lifeline to normality when my world was spinning out of control. You don't beat this thing on your own.

Additionally, I was drawn to an experience Andrea described with regard to the challenge of parenting while being diagnosed with cancer for the second time. Specifically, there is the internal struggle with whether or not there is anything you can promise your children. Can you truly promise them that everything will be okay or that you will always be there for them? There is also the concept of how cancer impacts your child and their emotional state. With this in mind, the title represents a statement Andrea's son made while discussing his mother's health with Ken Kelzer. The background and foreground of the drawing displays an experience with her son while hiking.



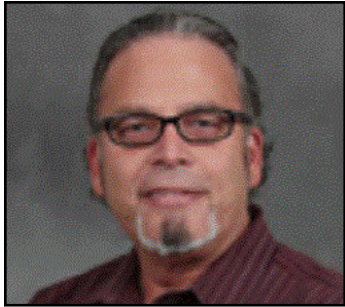
## 12 Just a Bump in the Road

Charcoal  
25 x 25 inches

\$125



# DANIEL A. CARBARY & KYLE IRVING



**Daniel Carbary**

Warren, Michigan  
Survivor - Stage III Malignant  
Melanoma

**TWIST ON CANCER** FAITH! I can only understand and comprehend the peace that I felt throughout the entire process — diagnosis, surgery, recovery — as a reflection of my faith. The knowledge that my God was by my side the entire time gave me complete peace. Even as I contemplated that this could be a 'death sentence' for me, I was totally at peace with the world, myself, and my God. GOT FAITH?



**Kyle RISE Irving**

Brushes with Cancer Artist  
Clinton Township, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** This piece inspires, and speaks to the spirituality that has helped guide the figure through these events. The sun changed a life, but faith has shaped it.



## 13 Struck by Light

Ink and paint on canvas  
36 x 24 inches Cradle Board

\$750



## BETH PIERCE & KARA THOMAS



**Beth Pierce**

Virtual Reality Designer  
Milford, Michigan  
Caregiver

**TWIST ON CANCER** Cancer can take those you love quickly, but you have to be able to see the light. You need to be there for others that were also affected. Sharing and keeping busy helps to get you through, and it is possible for something beautiful to come out of the pain.



**Kara Thomas**

Creative Sculptor  
Detroit, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** "Ashley Gives Life" is a memoir for Ashley Wolfe, daughter in law of Beth Pierce. Ashley was a strong and beautiful woman who found out she had stage four lung cancer while she was pregnant. What Ashley displayed during her pregnancy was something only a mother could understand, valuing the life of her unborn child over her own. Even though Ashley is no longer on this earth, Beth keeps her spirit alive through fond memories, and in the two grandchildren Ashley brought into Beth's life.

This painting on wood is a visual representation of Ashley's spirit in relation to the earth as the mother of all life. Seen

in the imagery is a dogwood tree that symbolizes purity, rebirth, and ancestry. As the tree evolves with the changing of seasons, the woman who resides within the tree also transforms throughout a pregnancy. In the Spring the woman has a flower on her belly to signify she is pregnant and not yet showing. Throughout the Summer and Fall seasons her belly grows with her unborn child. Lastly, as seen in the Winter, the tree mother holding her baby is surrounded by light energy illuminated by the moon, signifying the bonding between mother and child and the triumph Ashley had in giving birth.

Through this piece Ashley's love and strength can be remembered from a place of beauty in relation to the full circle of life. Working with Beth and learning about her daughter-in-law Ashley was an honor, and it was my aim to commemorate who Ashley was through Beth's eyes. I now feel connected to someone who I never had the chance to meet, and am thankful to Beth for bravely opening up about this experience.



### 12 Ashley Gives Life

Acrylic on walnut veneer with walnut  
hardwood frame  
26 x 26 inches, framed  
**\$700**



# RUTH BRICKNELL & TONY WARREN



**Ruth Bricknell**

West Bloomfield, Michigan  
Survivor

**TWIST ON CANCER** The most difficult experience of my life was being diagnosed with Colon Cancer. Having chemo treatments for 6 months and then 5 years later being diagnosed with Ductal Carcinoma breast cancer on the left breast. There was no question in my mind once diagnosed with breast cancer to have a double mastectomy and reconstructive surgery even though it was only on the left side. The first thing I would say to someone that would ask me about my experience is to stay positive the best you can as you go through the diagnosis and then the treatments. Once diagnosed get a second opinion and research so you know what you are facing. If you have a family history push getting tested early so you have a base to go from. Women do not miss a year of mammograms as I saw the current one and the previous year comparisons. The previous year was totally clear and the next year, I had cancer. I'm so very thankful to be a survivor and be here to share these years watching my children becoming adults and living wonderful lives. I'm extremely lucky.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Our life experiences become the defining moments in the quest to reach the inner core of the viewer. The artist's definitive moment becomes the fuel, and the vehicle of self expression, on the road to the viewer's psyche. If I have touched the heart or moved the soul I have accomplished what I have set out to do. I am merely the conduit. For God both creates the subject and stirs the soul to its interpretation.

Ruth Bricknell and I had a great first call a little while ago. I knew right then, we had a lot in common, as we both love the water. We both especially love Harsens Island, Michigan. Ruth sent me a nice PDF file with all the essential info pictures of her family, and a walk through the journey via the photos. Ruth is a survivor, and I knew that in the first few moments of our conversation. She also gets right to the point — I like that. I have had so much cancer in my own family that it was easy to relate to Ruth's story. Cancer is so devastating. It can easily get wrapped into poor-me syndrome. The best part about Ruth's story, especially the photos she provided, was the positive nature she displays and zest for life amid such devastating news. Ruth concentrates on her family, friends and the things she loves. I created "Flip Side" focusing on the positive side of Ruth's outcome via her beautiful smile and the incredibly positive inspiring person that she is. I am so blessed to have this opportunity to share this experience with Ruth and her friends. Thank you Jeff, Ruth, and the Brushes with Cancer program for this experience. Here's to you, Ruth, and your journey. I hope you enjoy "Flip Side," as you are living proof that our spirit can be indomitable. May God Bless you always. Sincerely, Tony Warren



**Tony Warren**

Shelby Township, Michigan  
Senior Creative Designer



## 15 Flip Side

Conte crayon on gesso panel  
16 x 20 inches, framed

\$300



# DAWN MINCH & TRACEY BOUCHEY



**Dawn Minch**  
Legacy & Field Action Warranty  
Performance Lead  
Oakland Township, Michigan  
Survivor - Esophageal Cancer

**TWIST ON CANCER** I came into this program with no expectations and have come away with an exceptional experience. My artist has been very caring and concerned which made it easy to share my experiences. One of the first cancer specific questions she asked was "What does/did you cancer look like to you?" The question took my breath away as many images came flashing back. The first image being, a black mass. I recall knowing that something very dark was growing in my body and it needed to be attacked head on. That was the start of a new friendship and an additional avenue to talk through my cancer challenges, old and new. As we talked she learned, at the time of diagnosis my family was more fearful than I. They wanted to be on the phone or in the office for every doctor visit. Their support and prayers gave me the strength to combat the months that lie ahead. I went through scans, blood work, more scans, chemo, more scans, more blood work, sickness, repeat, repeat, while telling myself STAY POSITIVE! After several months I was approved for my surgery. I knew at that point the perseverance, courage, strength and positive attitude found through prayers and support, was going to keep me on God's earth a while longer.

I have learned to live life very differently with a much smaller stomach and will continue to adapt. I still become anxious when I'm due for CT scans and check-up. However, my love of life has not diminished or my heart hardened from my cancer experience. It's quite the opposite. I want to hug more, visit more, smile more and make those around me know they can be a survivor also. It doesn't matter what challenges you face. Stay positive, loving, strong and caring; what happens next is up to fate but you'll have lived a life that radiates sunshine.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** I first connected with my inspiration through email and we exchanged basic questions to get to know each other. She is a positive person and loves to garden... like me! Before meeting through video, an image came to me exemplifying positivity and beautiful flowers mixed with typography illustrating the progression of feelings through her journey. When we met online, she told me how words of encouragement and always staying positive helped her. She shared with me a gifted statuette that meant so much to her. I was shocked that her statue and the centerpiece of my concept drawing matched! I knew I was on the right track.



**Tracy Bouchey**  
Customer Literature Process  
Development & Support

I immediately envisioned watercolor and torn tissue paper for the medium. I see the journey and recovery from cancer as being fragile and imperfect but yields beautiful results. Exactly like watercolor and torn tissue paper. My inspiration provided me with all the words she felt through her journey from the discovery through recovery. I put them under a veil of tissue as they were her underlying feelings. Vines represent how the tendrils of cancer stay with you even after initial recovery. She continues regular scans that cause her some apprehension; it remains part of her, so the vines remain. She chooses to focus on and look towards the beauty that comes from all of it represented by the blooms at the top.

My inspiration is a strong, positive and beautiful person and I thank her for inspiring me personally and artistically!



## 16 Briars to Blooms

Watercolor & tissue paper  
on canvas  
24 x 30 inches  
\$300



# CAROL GARRETT & KIRK RODA



**Carol Garrett**

Detroit, Michigan

Survivor - Colorectal Cancer

**TWIST ON CANCER** When you get 'the' call, whether you have been expecting it or not, time stands still, then the tears begin to flow. Finally, you take a deep breath and can ask "where do we go from here?" So begins your journey.

A journey where you will find that you are stronger than you believe. Where you can find solace when you thought there was none. There are ups and downs, tears of frustration and tears of joy. Others take similar paths, but their journey is different from yours. And in the end, this has been your journey and you do not think others will ever truly understand.

Being a survivor for over ten years now, I thought my journey was complete and it was one I shared less often with others.

This is when I came across Brushes with Cancer. Being able to

share my journey with a stranger and have that journey transformed into Art is an experience that I never thought I needed, but now has become one I will never forget.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** When I first signed up to be a part of Brushes with Cancer, I expected to be paired with someone whose personal experience with cancer would leave them emotionally fragile or psychologically vulnerable. What I found instead was a woman with incredible inner strength and personal resolve.

I based these assumptions on my own experience with this disease. My father died about thirty years ago from cancer. Knowing the irrational fear I've lived with, dreading that I myself might get cancer, I know I'd be a total mess of emotions, and paralyzed with fear if ever I was given the diagnosis.

From my conversations with Carol, I found a woman who looked cancer in the face and did whatever it took to beat the disease. With a no-nonsense inner strength, she dealt with a litany of complex emotions, but through it all, she never let the experience defeat her.

So, from the cancer's perspective, she's a Tough Nut to Crack.

I sculpted Carol's emotional likeness on the outside of walnuts, each one expressing many of the different states of mind she experienced...fear, sadness, calm, grief, physical pain, resolve, joy. Some other walnuts' expressions are half-formed, like faded feelings or mixed emotions. Some are not formed at all; emotions yet to be had. They collectively represent the mass of feelings Carol had, and still is having, dealing with her illness.

Yet through all of it, she has not cracked...

Well done Carol.



**Kirk Roda**

Creative Sculptor

Oxford, Michigan



## 17 A Tough Nut to Crack

Walnuts, polymer, wood

10 x 10 x 5 inches

\$100





# PAUL VAN ROOYEN & KAREN FISCHER



**Paul Van Rooyen**

Technical Expert

Warren, Michigan

*Brother of two sisters who died from Cancer*

**TWIST ON CANCER** The experience was awesome. Being able to provide the back ground to my two beautiful sisters who passed from cancer was very rewarding. Both of them had a tough go with the cancer and just before they died, they had a look of peace on their face. My older sister looked at everyone in the room and then with a smile, passed away. My other sister who is two years older than me looked at everyone in the room and said "I do not want to go". She then closed her eyes, after 5 minutes or so looked at everyone and with a big smile on her face she said, "I see Jesus". They both passed away seeing Jesus and knowing Jesus was their personal Savior.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** A brother's two sisters, both of which were taken by cancer. I learned of a Dutch family ancestry. I built on a history from WWII Dutch women who created

patchwork skirts out of pieces of cloth associated with a memory of someone taken away from them. The skirts were a means of healing, transformation, renewal and brought comfort to families.

In my piece of artwork are two skirts, one skirt for each sister. I placed symbols of the sister's lives within these two skirts. Weaving a pattern of their life's in the skirts.



**Karen Fischer**

Lead Engineer in Body Exterior

Macomb Township, Michigan

## Some of the symbols

**Orange** – for the Dutch heritage of the sisters, creates the borders of the skirts.

**Blue** – water around the Netherlands, Ontario and Michigan, regions the family immigrated.

**A Windmill** – symbol of continuum and transformation and a family memory.

**A Stain Glass Window** – with light shining upward a sign of a sister's spiritual transformation and continuum.

In front of it all, a piece of Aluminum from a car wheel melted by the worst forest fire in California's history. This represents

the cancer spreading sadness over their life story. Fire, a representation of devastation and cancer yet also renewal and life, is another element of this piece.

The artwork's title "Levenstrok" means "skirt of life" in Dutch. The artwork share's a brother's testimony of his sister's life to others, a life story that continues, a journey that heals and transforms others. In our sorrow we are all connected.



## 18 Levensrock

Guache and Found Object

49-1/2 x 35-1/2 x 3 inches, framed

\$1000



# SANDY LIPSCOMB & AMBER HENDRICKS



**Sandy Lipscomb**

Design Group Manager  
Grosse Pointe Park, Michigan  
*Breast Cancer Survivor*

**TWIST ON CANCER** WORDS ARE POWERFUL. Three words, “you have cancer”, could have knocked me down. The four words you’re looking at now, held me up. Through these words, I transferred cancer’s power to me.

On Valentine’s Day 2017, I was leading a meeting when my phone rang. I stopped mid-sentence, left the room and took the call. My doctor said those shocking three words. They didn’t sink in right away. I rejoined my team and said, “I need to leave. Keep going without me”, hoping they didn’t sense the panic that had just dropped like lead into my gut.

I got into my car and lost it, through the drive home, on the phone with my husband, and for another hour on the floor in my den. And that was it. I decided right there, “I will get through this. I have things to do. I have to live my f’ing life!”.

I chose the most drastic treatment, knowing recovery would be long and painful, but the best chance to put this episode behind me. A few weeks later, I had my first surgery. Today, I’m cancer free.

Since then, LYFL (Live Your F’ing Life) has been my personal mantra. I had those four letters engraved on a ring to remind myself what’s important. I’ve never wanted to be regarded as “the woman who had breast cancer”. And I don’t talk much about that time in my life. But, I’ve realized, LYFL is a mantra worth sharing.

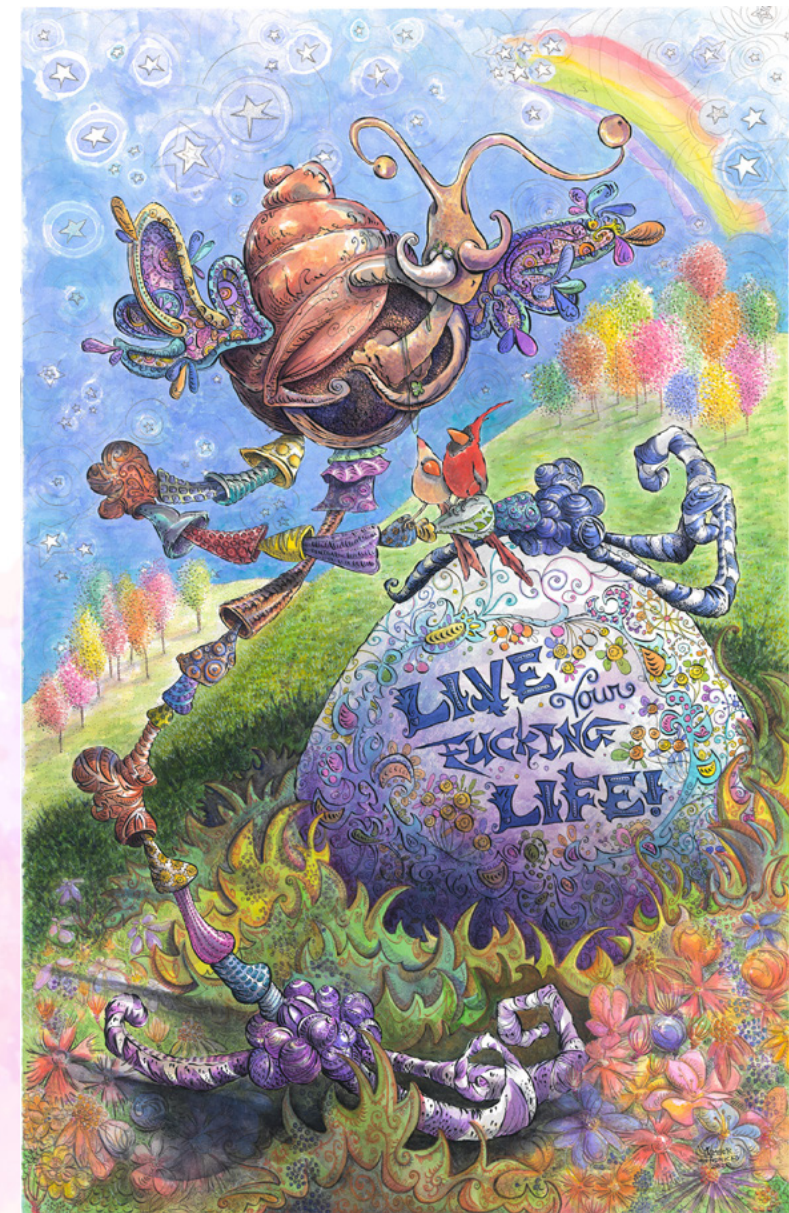


**Amber Hendricks**

Field Actions Communications  
Business Process Lead  
Livonia, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Live Your F\*ing Life! Sandy slayed cancer, and now this is how she lives. Every day. She lives every single one of them to the fullest. She pushes through. She makes the most of all that she’s given. She gives toxicity a free pass to anywhere but here. She takes care of herself, so she can best take care of others. She amplifies her life. She goes out there and she THRIVES. She gets the most out of every one of her days. They are all precious, and she earned them all. She fought. She won. Inspiration? Absolutely! What an incredible person. What a wonderful gift. Ideas for this piece flowed in pretty rapidly after hearing Sandy’s mantra for living. Wanna fly? Go get wings. Wanna race, but you were only dealt one big ol’ slimy foot? Go find your own legs, and then make ‘em fancy! Go knit up some crazy colorful socks, and wear ‘em ‘til they split at the seams! Reach for the stars. Don’t miss the

rainbows. Keep plenty of flowers and other beautiful things close, within reach. Don’t ever forget how you should live. Keep that at the forefront rock solid in your mind and in your heart. And know, even those you’ve lost are still right there, helping you through, cheering you on, every step of the way. By all means, get out there, and Live Your F\*ing Life!



## 19 Thrive!

Watercolor, ink & colored pencil

26 x 40 inches

\$2,400



# LYNN KRAWCZYK & CARI SMITH-GAMMICCHIA



**Lynn Krawczyk**  
Plymouth, Michigan  
Survivor

**TWIST ON CANCER** Cancer is strong in my family, so in a way I wasn't surprised when I got it. Cancer taught me incredible patience and to let go of things that are not worth being upset over. It taught me faith in myself and to love my family stronger.



**Cari Smith-Gammicchia**  
ME IT Business Analyst  
Shelby Township, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** "This girl is DRIVEN!" ... My first thought when Lynn shared her story with me. At the risk of being cliché (because I know all survivors are strong and relentless and persevere just like Lynn), despite fighting a disease out of her control - Lynn is winning. She rose to the challenge choosing each treatment with patience and positivity as a step toward triumph. She's still fighting but still rising. I wanted to show that ascent in our piece, the rise of her colorful spirit.

*"And I'll rise up  
I'll rise like the day  
I'll rise up  
I'll rise unafraid  
I'll rise up  
And I'll do it a thousand times again"*

Boldly written beneath all the colorful layers of paint, are the exclamations "Rise Up!" "Patience," Perseverance," "Hope" and Psalm 1054. I wrote those as God blessed our relationship, my art, and Lynn's journey. These sentiments are the foundation for this colorful elevation.



## 20 Rise Up!

Acrylic paint on canvas  
24 x 36 x 1.5 inches

\$400





## JACOB LOZIER & KAREN BATES



**Jacob Lozier**

Rochester Hills, Michigan  
*Caregiver/Widower, children lost  
mom to Breast Cancer*

**ARTIST STATEMENT** When I signed up for Brushes with Cancer I hoped that I could help my inspiration share their story through my art. My inspiration, I learned, wasn't singular as I was expecting. My "inspirations" were a father and 3 young boys who lost their mom to cancer. I have to admit, this isn't what I expected my inspiration match to be.

After communicating with the boys' dad I learned he wanted the boys to share their thoughts and feelings so that my art piece would be created by their memories, not his. The boys each wrote a memory sheet about their mom. They shared not only memories but feelings. These memories had both happy memories about mom & sad memories about cancer. I was emotionally touched and could not imagine what this young family must feel everyday.



**Karen Bates**

Design Lead Technical  
Commerce Township, MI

**TWIST ON CANCER** Never go it alone. In the fear and pain it is easy to shut down, but we need the support of others to survive and thrive through these trials we face. As hard as it has been to lose my wife and best friend, I had to find strength in family, friends, therapist, pastors, and others in order to keep going, mainly for the sake of our three amazing boys. Surround yourself with children, and let them remind you to see life through the innocence they live everyday with.



While working on my art piece I kept these memory sheets in my workshop. Whenever I create a piece for somebody else it gives me time to reflect on that person. In this case it was 3 boys and I wanted to make sure the memories of their mom were kept alive. I also wanted the boys to know that their mom was an angel and they were always in her heart no matter where she was.

My piece is a stained glass window. I've always loved color and when I discovered the way light shines through different pieces of glass I took up this craft. I look forward to sharing my art with Dad & his boys and hope that I've captured even just a little bit of their mom. When the sun's rays shine through the window I hope they know that this is their "Angel Mom" smiling at them.



### 21 Always in My Heart

Stained Glass  
21 x 25-1/2 inches

**\$400**



# BEN KELLY & RAD MURZA



**Ben Kelly**  
Engineering Group Manager  
Sterling Heights, Michigan  
*Survivor*

**TWIST ON CANCER** My scars have healed. I don't go to the doctor every week. My blood counts have normalized. From the outside, my life looks like it has returned to "ordinary," and sometimes, a whole day passes without me thinking about cancer. But I won't let my life go back to "ordinary" – I want to continue to find joy in waking up healthy, to tap reserves of energy even when I'm exhausted for "one more piggy-back ride," and to fully immerse myself in the things that matter most – rich relationships with those around me.

"It always seems impossible until it's done"  
– Nelson Mandela



**Rad Murza**  
Creative Sculptor  
Clawson, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** At first I was scared by the topic. Cancer. I was afraid that I couldn't bear to hear a really terrible and sad story. But I met Ben and when we talked he made the whole experience pleasant. He is so positive, all the time.

He changed my outlook on cancer and his story has been a game changer. We decided to work together as I created. I wanted to share his story as he wanted it told. I don't think he ever told his story and he seemed excited to have the chance. Ben's excitement fueled me as an artist and a person. We were determined to fit all the parts of his cancer story on one canvas. Each of the images is part of what he shared with me. When he was in bed sick that was his low point, but it is only one part of the story.

Ben is an amazing person.

This was an awesome journey.



**22 Ben Kelly**

*Acrylic on Board*  
24 x 36 inches

**\$600**



## ALEXANDRIA MILLER & ANDREA MICOU



**Alexandria Miller**  
Macomb, Michigan  
*Survivor - Inflammatory Breast Cancer*

**TWIST ON CANCER** I was diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer when I was 22 years old and just about to finish up my last year of my undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan. In hindsight, it's still a shocking diagnosis at that age, but at the same time, it's also hard to believe almost six years have come and gone since my cancer diagnosis. After going through cancer as a young adult, I believe my life has changed for the better; a cancer diagnosis gives you this new appreciation for life. I am lucky to still be here and be able to celebrate conquering cancer with my husband, family, and friends. To those who have and haven't had cancer, I would say celebrate life every day. Celebrate all the little moments as often as you celebrate the big moments. My oncologist always ends my appointments and our phone calls with the phrase "To Life!" and that has always stuck with me. It is a reminder to me of the importance of celebrating everything good in my life and my family and friends' lives, whether it be big or small.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** When I first spoke to Alexandria, I was soon reminded just how fortunate we are to be able to experience every day. When she told me her story about how her diagnosis had come at such an important point in her life, I wanted to create a piece that celebrates every breath that we take.



**Andrea Micou**  
Lighting Designer  
Shelby Township, Michigan

The hourglass form is the representation of the passing of time and ability to reflect on the past, but to also be able to look forward to all the possibilities in the future. The young girl at the top of the hourglass represents the joy, exuberance, and positive spirit that we should have moving forward in life. The woman on the bottom of the hourglass represents the past experiences that we have had. These experiences may not have all been positive, but there is much joy, beauty, and meaning hidden in these experiences. This is symbolized by the shimmering stones around her. The woman is also looking up towards the future, reflecting on her youth, and looking forward to life's joys yet to come. More importantly, this piece Alexandria's positive, "chin up" approach to life that I found so inspiring.



### 23 Skyward Bound Memories

*Mixed Media*  
10 x 7 inches  
**\$250**



# MICHELLE LACHAJEWSKI & JOHN RUSANCHIN



**Michelle Lachajewski**

Warren, Michigan

*11 year Survivor - Breast Cancer*

and friends. I found courage and inner strength in me because I asked God to bless me and He did. I received a card from a family member that I still have in my possession. When I was having a bad day or felt alone, I read it to myself. This is what it said *"Trust in the Lord in your time of need. Allow him to hear your prayers. Share your hopes, your dreams, your fears. He will bless you with the strength, peace and joy His love can bring."*

My journey has made me realize that it's important to slow down and enjoy the big and small moments in life. Stop and smell the flowers and take time to help others.

I encourage everyone to perform their monthly self breast exams.

**TWIST ON CANCER** Early detection saved my life. I noticed a lump in my breast shortly after my 40th birthday while doing a monthly self breast exam.

June 21, 2009. I received a phone call from my surgeon that my biopsy was malignant. I was numb from head to toe, my head was spinning and I couldn't believe what I was hearing. I had cancer. The thought of leaving my 2 young sons without a mother was unbearable. I had to fight for my family. I needed 12 chemotherapy treatments followed by 6 weeks of radiation therapy.

The following 8 months were difficult, but I was blessed to have a wonderful support system of my husband Dave, family



**John Rusanchin**

Visual Communications Lead  
West Branch, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** My inspiration told me she was performing a routine self-examination when she made the frightening discovery a lump.

She said there were 3 parts of her experience that were the most traumatizing Finding out the lump was cancer, the torture of chemo, and losing her hair. Like many of us, my inspiration's hair was a big part of her identity.

She said that her family and her faith helped her through the ordeal.

This painting shows the moment of discovery, with her fingers wrapped in her thick head of hair. There's a sense of vulnerability with the darkness of uncertainty symbolized on the left, but there is also sunlight shining through the window, symbolizing hope.



**24 Oh No**

Acrylic on Masonite  
24 x 36 inches unframed

**\$1000**



# LAURA MADISON & MARTY BLACKWELL



**Laura Madison**

Manager Global Product  
Engineering - Quality Chain

Clarkston, Michigan  
*Survivor - Breast Cancer & Melanoma*

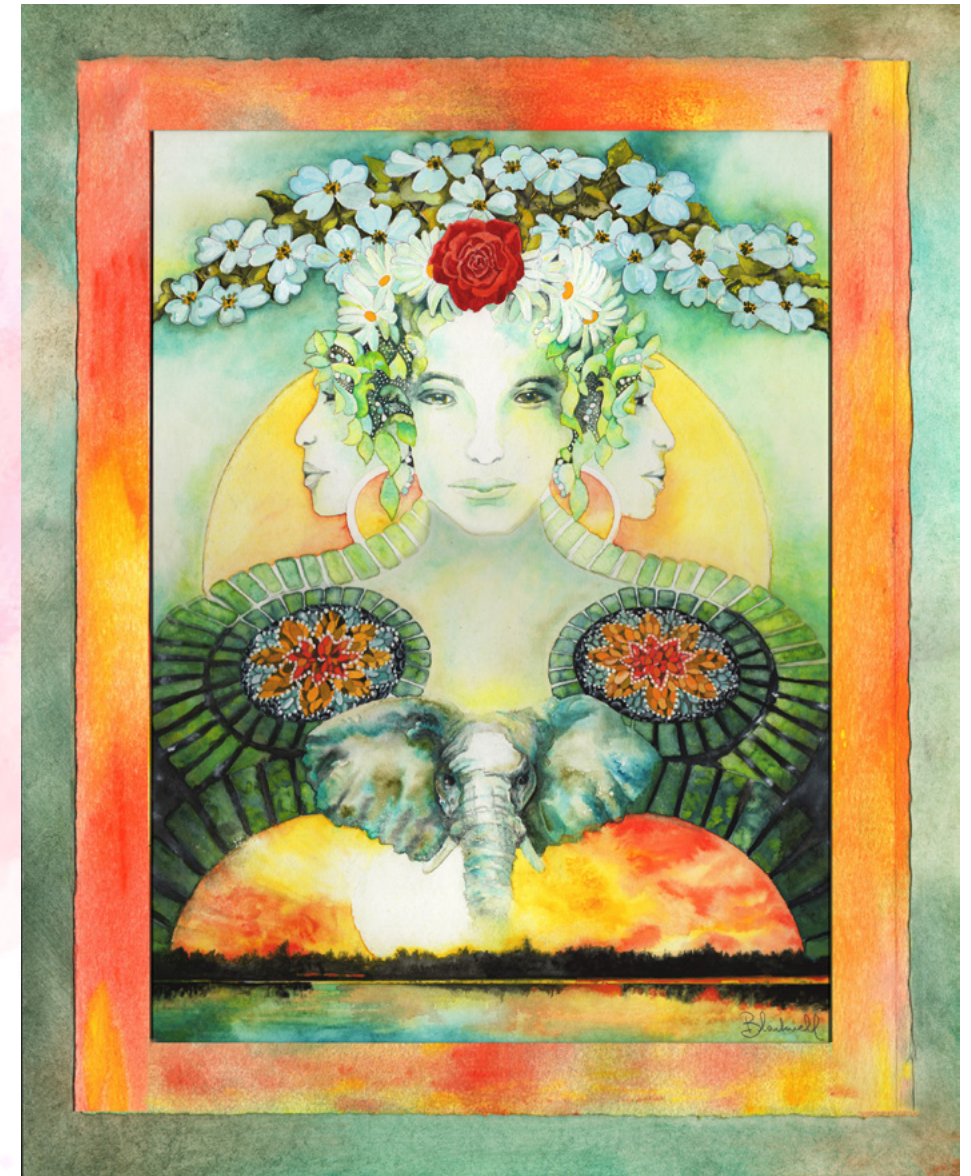
**TWIST ON CANCER** I was diagnosed with breast cancer two months after my husband passed away suddenly. Fourteen years earlier, I had melanoma in 2000. The first diagnosis was full of fear and about me. The second diagnosis was much more serious, but I was not afraid in the same way. The journey has taught me how to put life and its challenges into perspective. I was strengthened by my Faith, shown the power of Hope through many "signs" pointing me in the right direction and that Love is patient and kind. We all have burdens to bear, but I have learned more patience through this experience. I strive to be a fountain, not a drain. Working with Marty, she listened and picked up on every detail. She is a light that shined on me to help me tell my story. I am honored and full of gratitude to be a part of the *GM Design Center Brushes With Cancer!*



**Marty Blackwell**

Brushes with Cancer Artist  
Royal Oak, Michigan

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Laura Madison is the definition of "Inspiration!" Having been diagnosed with breast cancer two months and a day after the sudden death of her husband brought about a realization of "signs" that had been there all along. These "signs" became significant to how new paths were woven bringing her to a greater understanding of life and herself. She and Mike have two daughters who are Laura's strength through all that they together have endured. The imagery in Laura's painting reflects her passion - most importantly the sunset, which was the last one she shared with Mike and is etched on his headstone. As Laura told me, "paths and detours can add to your life. You never know what tomorrow brings!"



**25 Laura**

Watercolor  
19 x 23 inches, framed

**\$750**



# DANIELLE WILLIAMS & KARA THOMAS



**Danielle Williams**

Sealing and Fastening Design  
Responsible Engineer  
Birmingham, Michigan  
*Survivor - Stage 1 Breast Cancer*

**TWIST ON CANCER** I was diagnosed with Stage 1 Breast Cancer in July 2019 at 39 years old. Cancer tested not only my health, but also my perspective on life. Normally such an optimist, I struggled to understand the purpose of this experience. It felt extremely daunting and required so much more of me than anything else I had endured. As I settled into life post-cancer and was able to reflect on what had occurred, I slowly came to the realization that going through something so challenging did, in fact, benefit me. My journey with cancer highlighted aspects of myself and my life that I was aware of, but I saw them in a renewed way and was more able to fully appreciate how special they are. There can be beauty and growth in the hardest of times.

**ARTIST STATEMENT** Danielle had what she described as “a year from hell.” Her life was changing in many ways and, on top of that, she was diagnosed with breast cancer. With not only her health on the line but feeling extra pressure with work and family matters, Danielle aimed to keep her stress level down. She practices yoga regularly and has found that in stressful situations, Ujjayi breath or “victorious breath” used in yoga helps her through challenging times.

To represent the undeniable perseverance Danielle displayed during this time of her life, I asked her to come up with symbols that she felt represented her as a goddess. She chose the hummingbird for freedom and strength, and the lotus flower that blooms in even the darkest of waters. We took



**Kara Thomas**

Creative Sculptor  
Detroit, Michigan

a photo of her in one legged dog, a yoga pose that she feels strong in. The image of her in this pose is also incorporated in the design. The downward pointing triangle historically represents femininity, and all of these symbols are seen dancing throughout three small triangles that make up one larger upside down triangle.

It was my pleasure working with Danielle to create this piece. Not only have I made a new friend that I have so much in common with, but am thankful for our connection that allowed me to creatively express her story. All of life's experiences are to show us who we are, and Danielle truly is a Goddess of Female Strength.



## 26 Goddess of Feminine Strength

Porcelain  
23 x 23 inches  
\$500



# B R U S H E S *with* C A N C E R



## *Special Thanks to*



RYAN ARCHIBALD *Filming & Video editing*

DAVE BRIGOLIN *Assistant to the Director*

CHRISTO DATINI *Historian*

STEVE DAVANZO *Voice over*

SARAH DEMSEY *Graphic Design*

JEFFREY FROGETT *Director*

JENNIFER GREEN *Copywriting support*

JON SCHWEITZER *Filming*

GEORGE WATSON *Music Composition*



Thank you for joining us!

B R U S H E S with C A N C E R

*In Loving Memory*

DARLENE CROW 1962 - 2016

BETH DAVANZO 1971 - 2019

JULIE FROGGETT 1962 - 2018

CARRIE LOZIER 1976 - 2017

ANNETTE MCGREGOR 1959 - 2003

PATRICIA TUCKFIELD 1933 - 2016

ASHLEY WOLFE 1987 - 2019



GENERAL MOTORS



DESIGN CENTER GALLERY

