

GALLERY **AT** 14 MAPLE

Presents

COMMON GROUND



Common Ground

Each of us is a living system within a greater living system, connected to each other in more ways than we can fathom. – Paul H. Ray and Sherry Ruth Anderson

There are numerous sayings in many cultures that note the importance of the collective. Unfortunately, in difficult times such as now, we tend to focus on the things that divide us. Political affiliations, gender, ethnicity, religion, belief systems - in addition to a variety of other associations – affirm our collective identity and assert our position in this world. These associations are beneficial on many levels and provide a sense of belonging, purpose and community. Certainly it is important to celebrate the variety of ways we are implicated in the human experience, but it is equally important that we recognize and honor the commonality of our existence. In doing so, it is possible to overcome some of our present and future challenges, for there is tremendous strength in the communal. Poet/Artist Diane Walker commented, “In the end, I believe, our survival will depend on our ability to comprehend, not our differences, but how much we are alike.” The human experience is essentially the same. We all have sorrows, triumphs, aspiration, hopes and joys. This group exhibition, **Common Ground**, endeavors to express the interconnectedness of the human experience through a variety of artistic impressions.

The artists in this exhibition articulate our commonalities in a multiplicity of ways. Mel Leipzig and Alex Piccirillo's portraits reflect the nuanced moods of their subjects, creating a platform for empathy between viewer and those depicted. Heejung Kim and Dominant Dansby speak of humanity's desire to understand ourselves from a metaphysical vantage point. Dahlia Elsayed's paintings, while diaristic, reflect upon our private worlds and internal monologues via her conflation of landscape with text drawn from personal experiences. Alaine Becker's highly gestural drawings are on the cusp of abstraction, referential of the human body and the host organisms that comprise us.

In bringing together this particular group of artists and situating them within a discourse of common understanding, it is hoped that viewers will appreciate and participate in a greater community – that of all humanity. It is known that a sense of belonging improves motivation, health and happiness. Having this sense of community brings comfort in the knowledge that we are not alone. We all struggle and have difficult times, but life is so much easier when you do it together as opposed to alone.

Jeanne Brasile, Curator

Alaine Becker

The drawings included in this exhibition, come from two separate bodies of work. The small drawings, “Doubled”, “Spiral” and “The Space Between” are studies from the series, “Seen/Unseen”. They are abstractions of internalized structures within the human body and were produced from 2013-2014. The finished drawings from this series, were executed on oversized paper to emphasize the mark making and human scale of the work. The two large drawings, “I Can’t Get Enough” and “Been There Done That”, are from the current series “Some Things Are Better In Black and White”. This current series is an exploration into abstract drawing while developing a new visual language. I have limited myself to the basic materials of graphite, white pastel, white oil pastel, and white and grey Conte crayon in these works.

Alaine Becker



Been There Done That

2017

Graphite, white soft pastel, white Conte crayon on arches hot press paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$5,000.00



Doubled, Study

2013

Graphite on Arches hot press paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$1,500.00



I Can't Get Enough

2017

Graphite, white soft pastel, white Conte crayon on Arches hot press paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$5,000.00



The Space Between

2014

Graphite on Arches hot press paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$1,500



Spiral, Study

2013

Graphite on Arches hot press paper

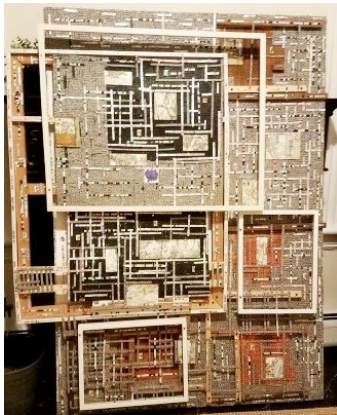
Courtesy of the Artist

\$1,500

Dominant Dansby

My collage series is deeply influenced by my relationship to jazz and the idea of communicating through the exchange of energy. This series was created from a variety of papers and media, including recycled drawings from my studies of drapery and wood. An intense focus on process – combining texture, dimension and energy – lead me to this series, which reflects work that is more physical, natural and raw than my earlier drawings.

I look at these collages as predetermined structures over which some improvisation takes place – much like avant-garde jazz. I create art with the assumption that I'm being directed by much of the same energy that directed the jazz greats who created the complex riffs that fill my studio during my breaks.



Inner Pain / Wavering Hope

2016

Pen and ink, color pencil, gray board, marker, paint, wood, pastel, pencil, paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$8,500



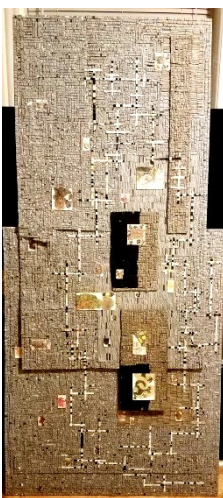
from within

2016

Pen and ink, pencil, paint, collage, paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$7,500



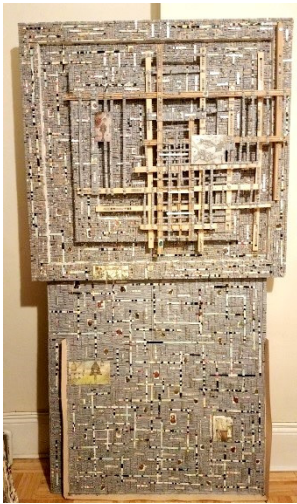
Angular Meditation

2016

Pen and ink, color pencil, paint, blueboard, pencil, on wood

Courtesy of the Artist

\$6,800



Recycling Despair

2016

Pen and ink, pencil, color pencil, paint,
blueboard, paper, wood, paper collage, on
wood

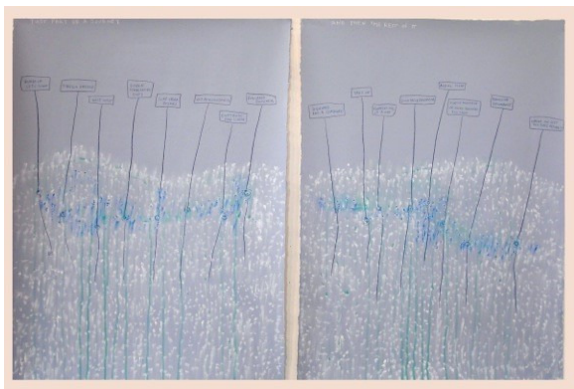
Courtesy of the Artist

\$8,500

Dahlia Elsayed

Writing and painting are close processes for me and language is central to my work, both as formal element and subject matter. For over a decade, I have been making text and image based work that synthesizes an internal and external experience of place, connecting the ephemeral to the concrete.

Visually, the work pulls from conceptual art, comics, cartography and landscape painting. I begin with verse as a starting point of each work and use the edited texts in created landscapes, connecting the psychological with the topographical. Symbols of hard data - flags, signs, borders, geologic forms, terrain plans – are used to frame soft data – wordplay, metaphors, lists, idioms - allowing image and language to continuously modify each other.



First Part of a Journey and Then The Rest of It

2005

Acrylic on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$1,500



Mess Wreck

2008

Acrylic on paper, diptych

Courtesy of the Artist

\$2,500



Some Heavy Indulgences

2009

Acrylic on paper, diptych

Courtesy of the Artist

\$5,000



Some Never Ending Desires

2008

Acrylic on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$3,000



Something Whispered

2009

Acrylic on paper, triptych

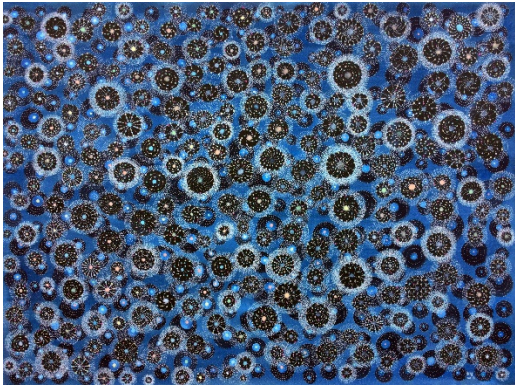
Courtesy of the Artist

\$3,000

Heejung Kim

In the process of making my artwork, I wet the paper with water, pour black ink, and let it dry. I add a little bit of intention to create certain shapes on the paper but usually the shapes change by themselves during drying. I start from the shapes created by the natural force. I consider it as my Karma*. I never wanted to be born as a woman and a Korean. It has been a restriction that I have had to deal with throughout my life. The pen drawing on top is my choice. I control and create anything on top of it. This process is related to my understanding of life. Now I am still a woman but I am a Korean-American.

**The sum of a person's actions in this and previous states of existence, viewed as deciding their fate in future existences.*



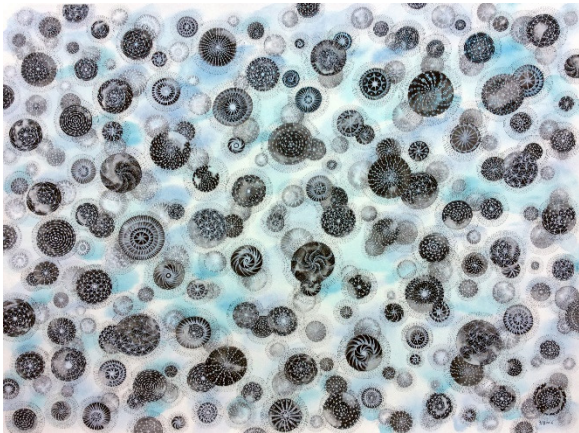
Blue Star Mandala

2016

Watercolor and ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



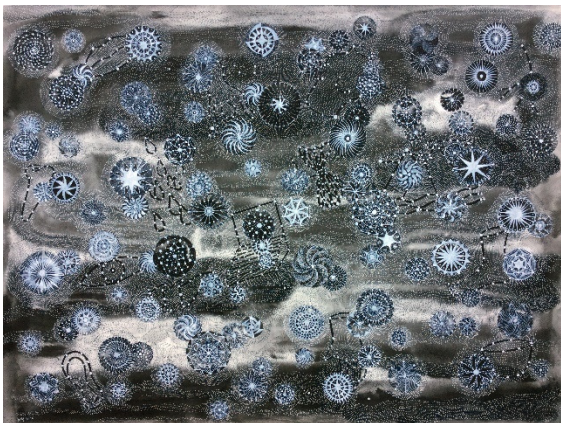
Sky Blue Star Mandala

2016

Watercolor and ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



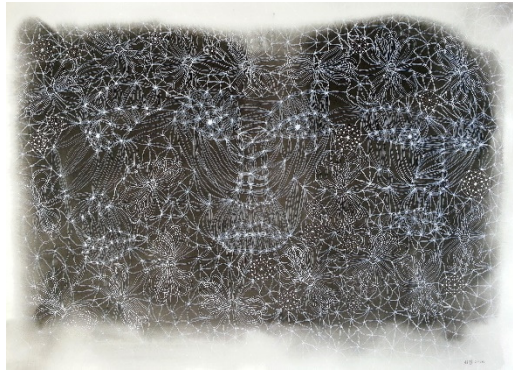
Star Mandala with Constellation

2016

Ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



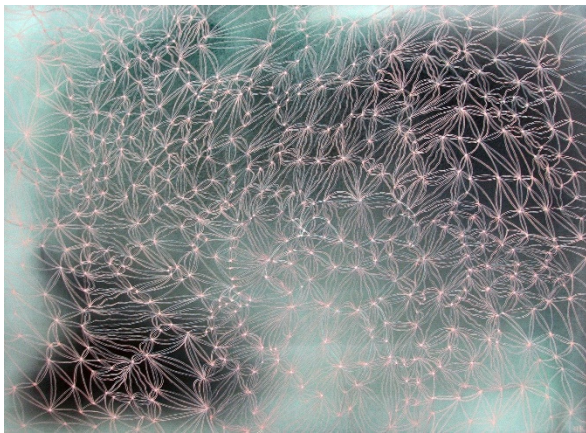
Karma With Faces

2016

Ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



Karma 3

2004

Acrylic paint and ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



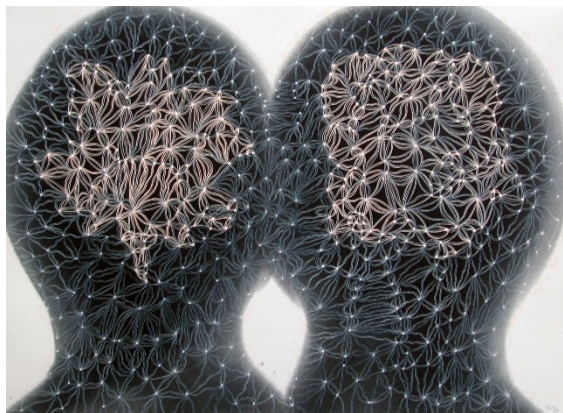
Karma 6

2004

Acrylic paint and ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900



Karma 8

2004

Acrylic paint and ink on paper

Courtesy of the Artist

\$900

Mel Leipzig

For the past 50 years, my paintings have been concerned with the relation of figures, painted directly from life, to their environment. I never paint from photographs. I feel that the use of photography would dilute the intensity of feeling that I am seeking. I have always worked with a limited palette, usually about 8 colors. Starting in 1990 I decided to limit my palette to 4 colors, a dark red, a blue, a yellow and white. In 2014, I added a black and changed my red to a light red. Before 1995, all the people portrayed in my paintings were my students, my friends or members of my family, including my children, Francesca and Joshua. The environments were in or around my home in Trenton or the school where I taught for 45 years, Mercer County Community College.

Starting in 1995, I started painting other people, many of whom are artists (i.e. DIANA KURZ & HER HOLOCAUST PAINTINGS, QIMIN LIU & HIS SON and JUNE WILSON) in their studios. I continue to paint members of my family (i.e. my son, who is a tattoo artist, JOSHUA'S TATTOOS 2, 10 YEARS LATER, and my granddaughter, RAYONA) and my friends (i.e. AMIT & GIRA) all in their environments.

In the past, I did preparatory drawings and painting studies for each painting. Since 2009 I have abandoned that practice and start painting without any preparatory drawings or color sketches.



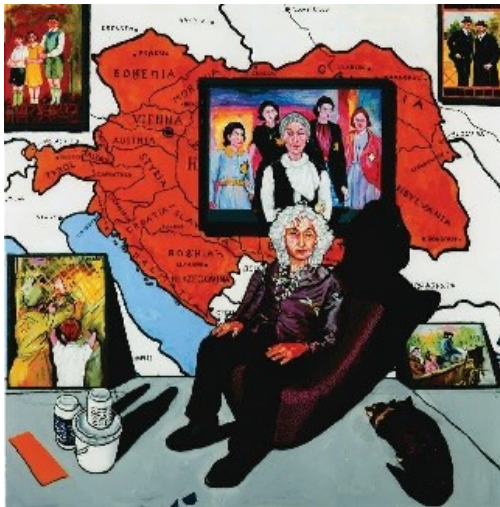
Amit & Gira

2010

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$28,000



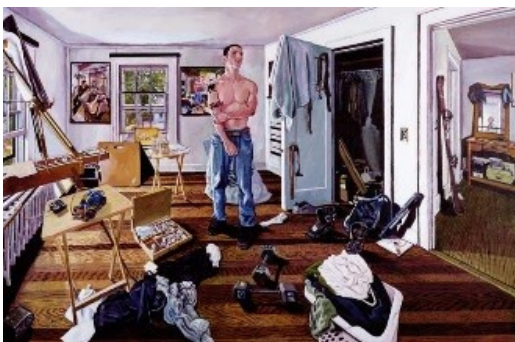
Diana Kurz & Her Holocaust Paintings

2016

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$28,000



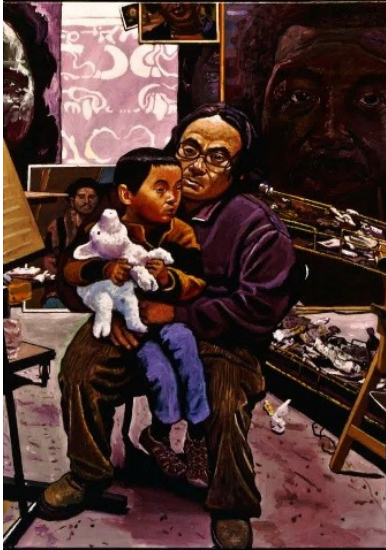
Joshua's Tattoos 2, 10 Years Later

2006

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$35,000



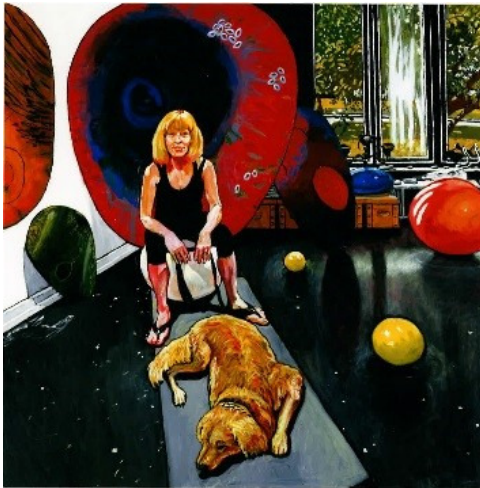
Qimin Liu & His Son

2010

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$24,000



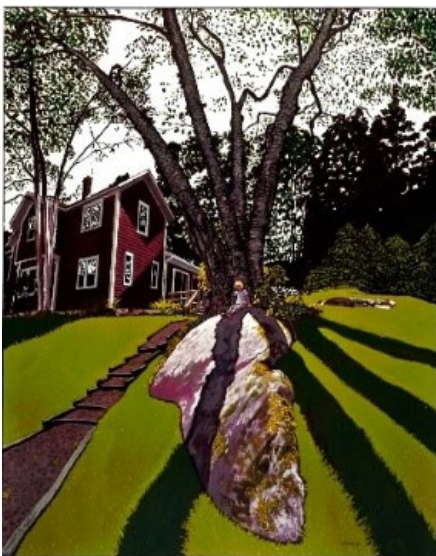
June Wilson

2016

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$18,000



Rayona

2012

Acrylic

Courtesy of the Artist

\$30,000

Alex Piccirillo

Alexander Piccirillo was born in Brooklyn, NY and studied at The Brooklyn Art School under the J. Dura Scholarship. He is also a graduate from The School of Visual Arts, receiving his degree in 1972. Thereafter, he studied with Harvey Dinnerstein and Burton Silverman. Piccirillo is a master Panelist and the recipient of over 40 awards.

His various exhibitions include the Wyckoff Gallery, National Academy of Design, Bergen Museum, Paterson Museum, and the Hammond Museum. Book Publications featuring his work include The Art of Pastel Portraiture by Watson Guphill, The Best of Oil Painting and The Best of Pastel Painting (by Rockport Publications). Piccirillo is a member of the Pastel Society of America. He is currently teaching at the Montclair Art Museum in New Jersey.



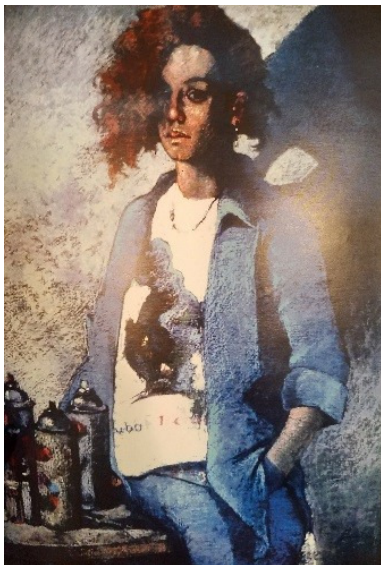
Covering My Losses

1990

Oil study on board

Courtesy of the Artist

NFS



Blue (Janet Darnell)

2000

Pastel on board

Collection of Alexandra and Rosario Vaina

NFS



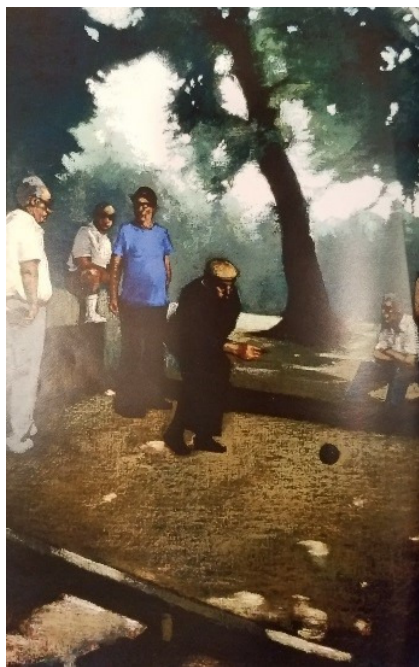
The Gray Cape (Maria Testa)

2000

Pastel on board

Private collection

NFS



Rompere I Coglioni

1998

Pastel on board

Collection of Christine and Anthony Favara

NFS