



# THE ACM SCHOOL OF ART



# MFA EXHIBITION 2023



The American College of the Mediterranean (ACM)  
The ACM School of Art  
are pleased to invite you to the MFA Exhibition

**Vernissage: Thursday, 11 May 2023, 18h00-20h00**

Galerie de la Prévôté  
Place des Martyrs de la Résistance (L'Archevêché)  
30, Rue Gaston de Saporta  
13100, Aix-en-Provence

**Exhibition Open: 12-17 May, 10h00-19h00**







*Yumna Masarwa, PhD.*  
Dean, The ACM School of Art

It is with great pleasure that I invite you to the Galerie de la Prévôté in the heart of Aix-en-Provence to explore the artwork of our 2023 MFA graduates, and to celebrate their accomplishments. The MFA Exhibition this year features seven artists connected by their studies at the ACM School of Art, situated in the hometown of Cézanne. These artists have completed a unique, two-year MFA program in painting, which combined studio work and painting en plein air, aesthetic seminars, art history courses, museum studies, field studies, and four incorporated week-long working trips to paint in Annecy and Venice, as well as museum internship and teaching assistant opportunities.

The first-year MFA program is structured around the Marchutz Core Art Program, a “school of vision” led by studio art professors, Pauline Betrancourt and O’Neill Cushman, which develops the students’ capacity to see and paint from the visible world. In addition to the daily discipline of creating art, the students took courses in French, art history and a dedicated ‘Masters Forum.’ In their second year, the MFA candidates enhanced their education in art history, and explored liberal, critical and Mediterranean studies. Independently, they built their individual artistic path from the rich foundation they shared. As this selection of paintings makes clear, each artist has realized their own vision and artistic style, or as we say it in French their own ‘touche.’

On behalf of President Carl Jubran and the whole ACM/IAU community I congratulate the MFA class of 2023, and it is our collective honor to present you with a selection of works produced by this diverse, talented group of artists.



How do you experience nature, the human form, spaces that often go unnoticed? Does your gaze see the pieces or the whole, the vastness, color, light and shade? Take a journey with ACM's MFA students as they share their sight and insight into themselves and the world around them. Notice the use of paint and the emotions it evokes. Contemplate the paintings of these artists, only a sample of which are displayed in the gallery, and in this catalogue.

During their time at ACM, each of these students engaged us in a conversation with a distinct and individual voice. The artworks they created document the ever evolving and unpredictable journeys of individual artists pursuing knowledge, understanding, and fulfillment. What a privilege it was to experience the development of each of ACM's MFA students this semester. I share in the excitement they all feel as they welcome you to their MFA exhibition.

Congratulations to the MFA class of 2023—we look forward to witnessing your future successes!

*Mark Warwick*

Visiting Professor of Fine Arts





# FEATURED ARTISTS

*Perri Funk*

*Justine Collette Garcia*

*Colin Lynch*

*Laura Silverman*

*Marcia Mason Speece*

*John Springer*

*Sarah Willis*

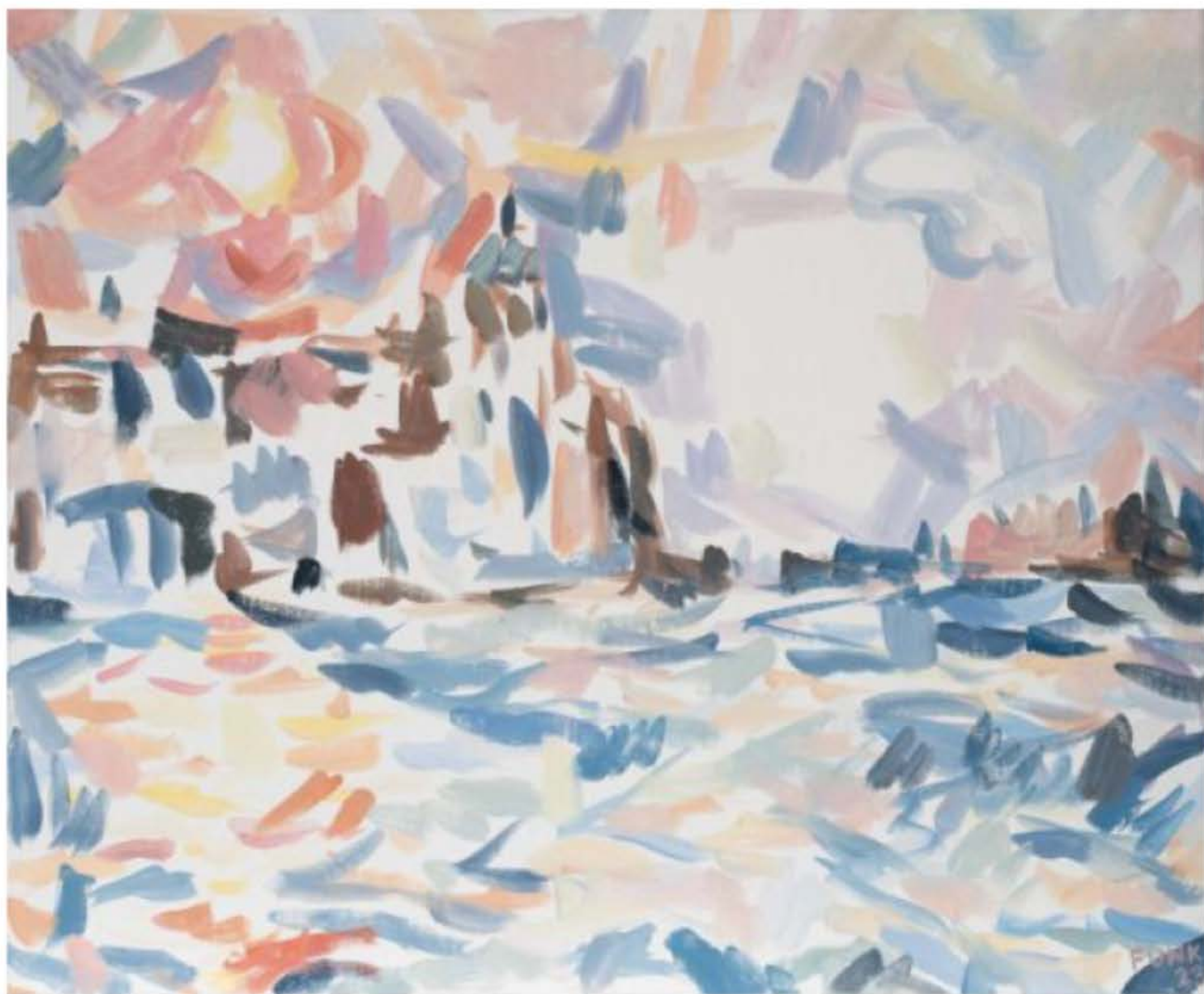






My paintings focus on the dichotomy between the fragility and strength I see in nature. I strive to create clarity and poetic expression while preserving a sense of the classic. Spontaneous fluid brushstrokes, soft colors, and the interaction between positive and negative space are essential techniques I utilize in my painting process to create a sense of light and luminosity. I aspire to capture the essential character of my subject, resulting in something incredibly particular yet approaching the universal.

PERRI  
FUNK



*Sunset from The Giudecca*  
Oil painting on canvas  
46cm x 38cm

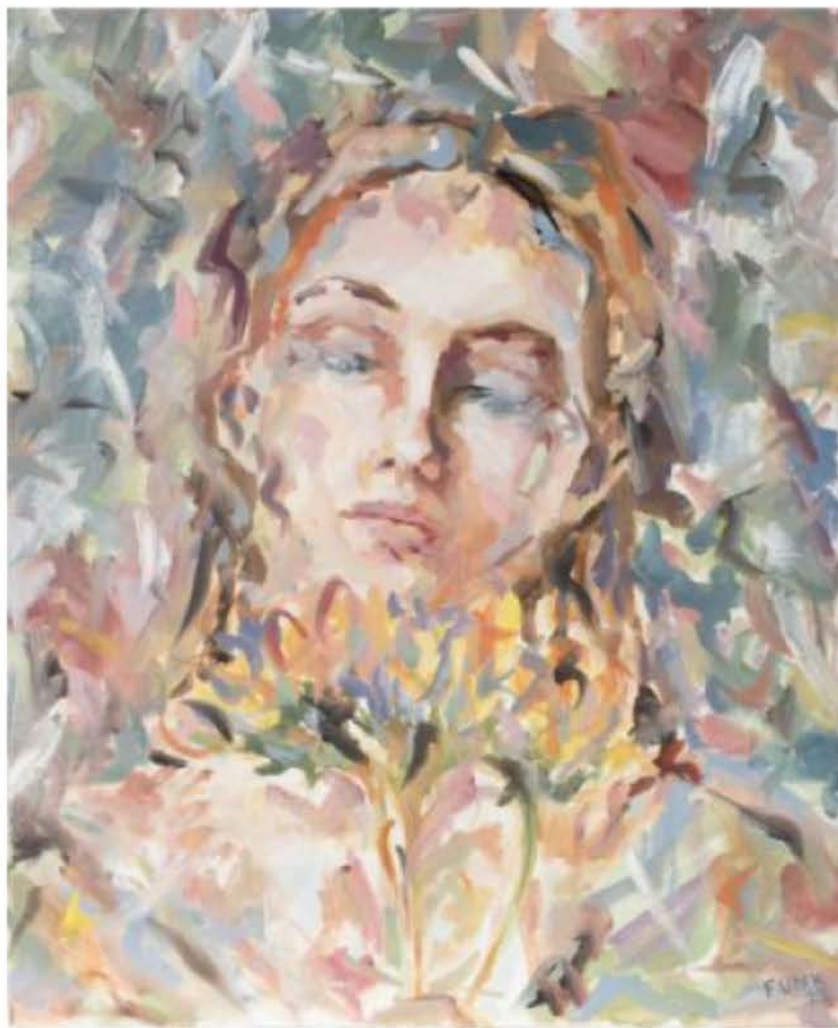




*Still Life with Flowers*  
Oil painting on canvas  
46cm x 55cm



*Self Portrait with Candle*  
Oil painting on canvas  
38cm x 46cm



*Woman with Sunflowers*  
Oil painting on canvas  
38cm x 46cm



*Salute at Sunrise*  
Oil painting on canvas  
46cm x 38cm





**JUSTINE  
COLLETTE  
GARCIA**

I'm interested in exploring ambiguous spaces and atmospheric landscapes in a surreal way. Within the landscape, the intent is for the negative and positive space to be of equal importance, and where the foreground and background in the environment often switch. The ambiguity is intended to cause a sense of imbalance. Light and its sources are also important in my work because they are an aspect of nature that grounds the viewer into a reality they know. I find inspiration from nature as well as from the human body and use real and imaginary subject matter. The viewer is invited to interpret and discover these surreal landscapes in their own way.



*Dreamscape*  
Oil painting on canvas  
50cm x 61cm





*Entheogen*  
Watercolor, gouache and colored pencil on paper  
48cm x 125cm



*Hypnopompic*  
Watercolor painting on paper  
74cm x 166cm





COLIN  
LYNCH

Art should inspire. Art should be beautiful. Art should nourish the human spirit. Good art is a selfless vessel that does not concern itself with the individual artist. I want my art to penetrate to unconscious levels, to reach the emotional denominators of all people, regardless of culture, location or time.

Paintings should look like paintings, and not like photographs. I paint from life to capture the nuances of light and color that disappear with photography. My paintings are rich and bold, and both capture the subject representationally, and give a glimpse into the abstract effects of light and color. I seek to evoke universal responses from the viewer to color, value, light, shape and line.



*Afternoon Tea*  
Oil painting on panel  
22cm x 30cm

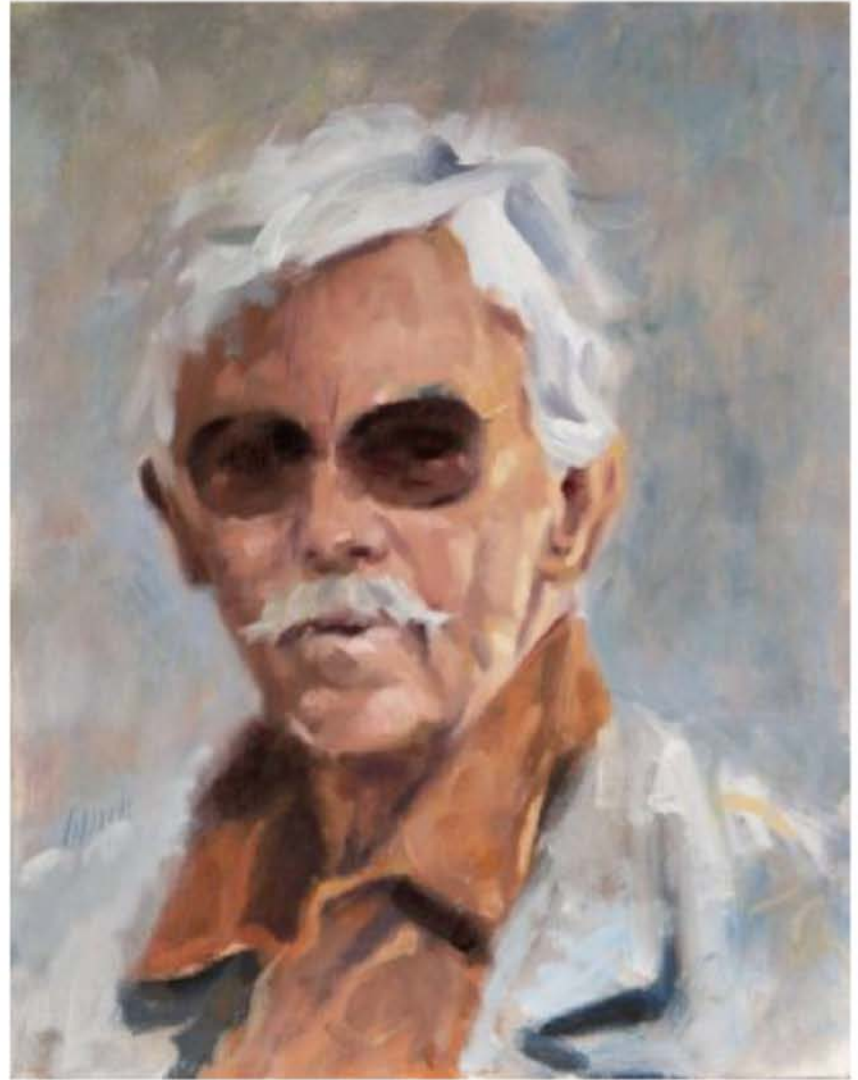


*Apples and Brie*  
Oil painting on panel  
28cm x 35cm





*The Sound of Music*  
Oil painting on panel  
28cm x 36cm



*A Frenchman in Arles*  
Oil painting on panel  
36cm x 28cm



LAURA  
SILVERMAN

My work is a reflection on finding one's place in the world.

My landscape paintings depict scenes often overlooked in everyday life. I am interested in the natural biology of the towns and cities I inhabit. I investigate the ways in which plants, nature and ecology are intertwined within the landscape, and how the local environment shapes one's identity.

My self-portraits explore my corporeality and the self, and I purposefully reclaim traditional feminine iconography to subvert conventional narratives.





*Self-Portrait*  
Oil Painting on canvas  
210cm x 116cm

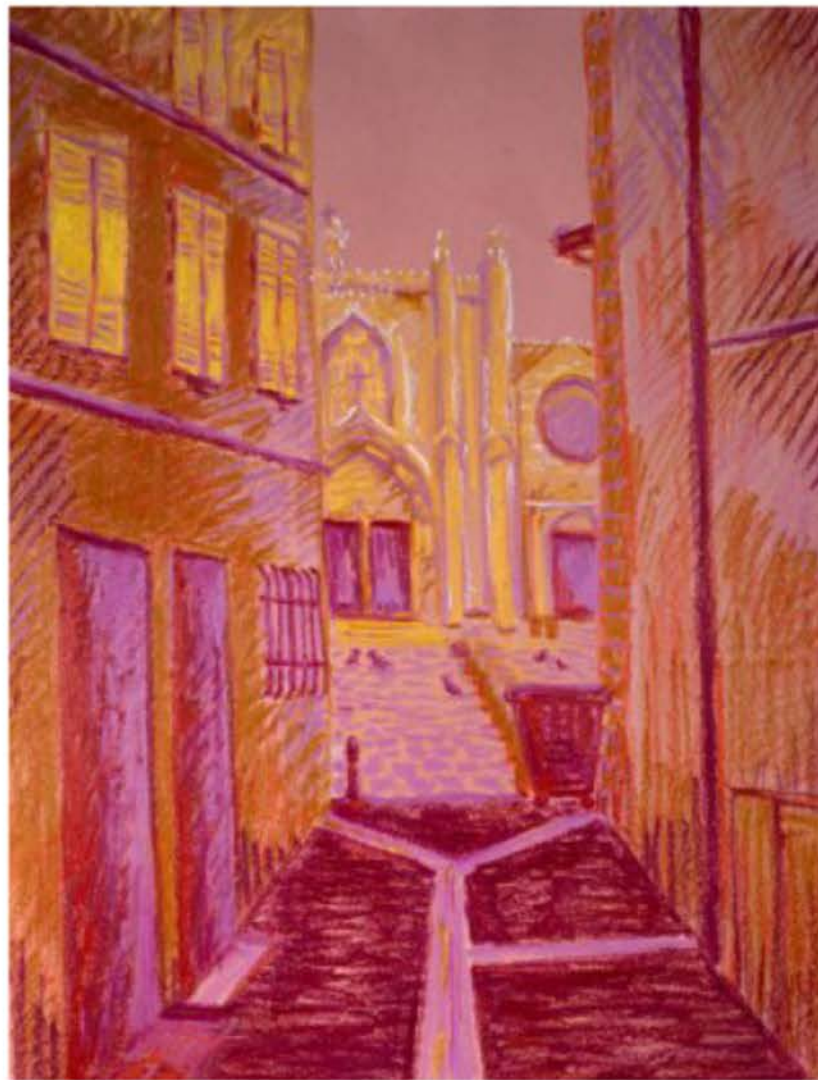


*Hair Dying Oil*  
Painting on canvas  
205cm x 118cm





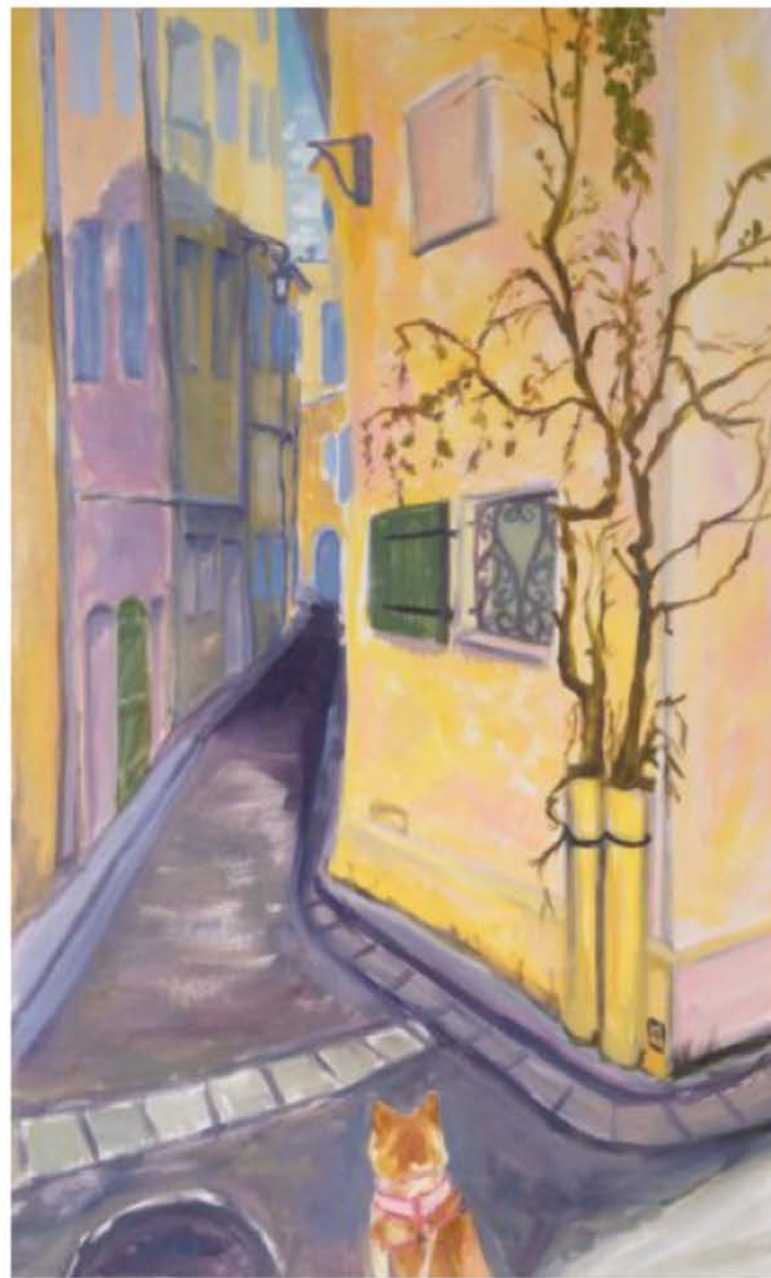
*Rue Constantine*  
Oil pastel on paper  
65cm x 50cm



*La Cathédrale*  
Oil Painting on canvas  
65cm x 50cm



*Rue Esquicho Coude*  
Oil pastel on paper  
65cm x 50cm



*Rue Riquier*  
Oil painting on canvas  
82cm x 50cm





## MARCIA MASON SPEECE

Since cupping my face fully within a springblooming tulip as a toddler, my attention has been on the seasonal rhythms of nature—most specifically flowers and trees. As a gardener, the awareness and anticipation of florescence cycles have become integral to my life. Whether my hands are deep in the dirt or engaged with a brush as a painter, the connection is fully absorbing. Every step that I take outside represents an opportunity to encounter something extraordinary; something that stops me in my tracks and makes me catch my breath. Just like the plants that attract me, I rely on the sun for guidance. Its fluorescence alerts me to color and shape, illuminating intricate structures and backlighting glorious blooms.



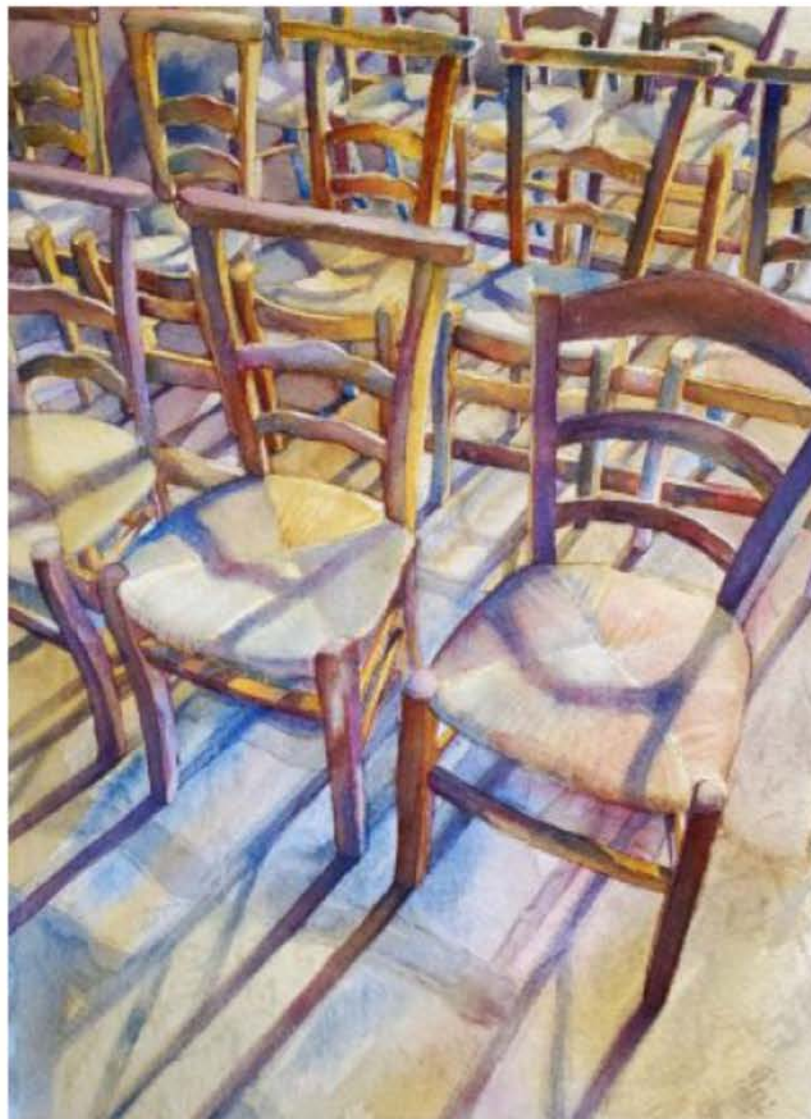


*Jeux d'Ombres*  
Watercolor painting on paper  
39cm x 60cm





*Atteindre le Soleil*  
Watercolor painting on paper  
34cm x 36cm



*Les Chaises de l'Eglise de St. Rémy*  
Watercolor painting on paper  
32cm x 23cm





*Les Plumes d'Annecy*  
Watercolor painting on paper  
35.56cm x 73.66cm





JOHN  
SPRINGER

By observing particular patterns within nature, I seek to render visually through painting and drawing the universal truths of the human-environment relationship. I seek to capture the fleeting and compare it to that which is timeless. My mission is to continue the tradition of landscape art which is grounded in giving meaning to our existence. It is a perpetual development of a keener vision, for it is only through seeing that I can better understand and express an authentic experience with the world through my art.



*Aix-en-Provence*  
Oil painting on canvas  
40cm x 60cm





*Palazzo on the Grand Canal*  
Oil painting on canvas  
30cm x 60cm  
(Far left)

*Irises and Pepper*  
Oil painting on canvas  
30cm x 60cm  
(Near left)





*Almond Blossom*  
Oil painting on canvas  
40cm x 60cm



SARAH  
WILLIS

Painting has become a representation of both my physical self and my subconscious mind. I wanted to explore the freedom of abstract expressionism while finding a sense of control through illustration. My experience with abstraction taught me how to express feeling and passion in my work but I found it to be too ambiguous at times. Discovering harmony between the expression of bold brushstrokes and restraint of details is key in the creation of my works. I find self-portraiture to be the best way to demonstrate this.

Self-portraiture creates an intimate and personal composition, and I continuously create sketches of a single self-portrait to truly understand and reflect on the image before me. I work from photographs rather than real life to remove myself from absolute realism and focus on the atmosphere and unity of the entire painting. This allows my paintings to reflect not my physical self, but my mind as well. My art reveals parts of myself that I cannot do with words.





*Golden Slumbers*  
Oil painting on canvas  
71cm x 12cm





*Let it All Out*  
Oil painting on canvas  
95cm x 95cm

*Self-Portrait Study*  
Oil painting on canvas paper  
25cm x 22cm  
(Upper left)



*Self-Portrait Study*  
Oil painting on canvas paper  
21cm x 28cm  
(Upper right)



*Self-Portrait Study*  
Oil painting on canvas  
paper 29cm x 22cm  
(Lower right)



*Self-Portrait Study*  
Oil painting on canvas  
paper 20cm x 26cm  
(Lower left)











“Félicitations—a beautiful exhibit!”

“What captivating images.  
A beautiful showing.”

“Tout est magnifique!”

“Thank you for such an enriching experience.  
All the best and nothing less.”

“Joie de découvrir une exposition si varié. Joie d’y  
rencontrer la peintre dont les œuvres me touchent le  
plus. Keep on!”





Rebecca Bergren - Congratulations MFA class of 2023!  
Karen Willis you've grown as a young woman +  
Richard Willis artist  
Katie Willis BRAVO!  
Maisy Moan de Kok Congrats! Y'all did an awesome job!  
Catherine Woodruff Congratulations! I'm so proud of y'all! ♥

**"Absolutely beautiful works! Congratulations!"**

**Dr. Carl Jubran, President ACM-IAU**

Thalita Carnot Lampiris Incredible! Congratulations ♥  
Angelina Chacaur AMAZING + INSPIRING ♥ CONGRATS!!!  
Kennedy O'Keefe Congrats! so amazing ♥  
Jackson Averill Incredible work y'all! Well done ♥  
Abigail Natta Slay! You guys are so talented ♥





For information on contacting specific  
artists please address your inquiries to:  
[mark.warwick@iau.edu](mailto:mark.warwick@iau.edu)

All images contained in this catalogue are the property of the respective artists and may not be copied, shared, reproduced, printed or published by others without the express written consent of the artist.

© 2023 All rights reserved



27, place de l'Université, BP 30970, Aix-en-Provence CEDEX 1,  
France TEL: (33/4) 42 23 39 35    FAX: (33/4) 42 21 11 38

Professional photos by Ayman Khoury  
TEL: (33/7) 81 36 64 05    [www.akystudio.fr](http://www.akystudio.fr)