

PROFILE

# Artist Way

BEHIND EACH PIECE ON DISPLAY AT GREENWICH'S ART TO THE AVENUE, THERE'S AN ARTIST WITH A FASCINATING STORY TO TELL. LEARN WHAT INSPIRED THEIR INCREDIBLE WORKS.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY LINSAY MADDEN



GET A CLOSER LOOK:  
Greenwich Orchids Fine  
Flowers, 106 Mason St.

If Greenwich seems especially beautiful this May, it's all thanks to The Greenwich Arts Council's 22nd annual Art to the Avenue show, in which 75 retailers and 125 artists are participating. "Arts to the Avenue encompasses all the qualities of what the Greenwich Arts Council does best," says Tatiana Mori, Executive Director. The artists, who come from Fairfield, Westchester and beyond, receive 70 percent of the sale price of their work. These exciting examples from the exhibit, all by leading area artists, are just a small fraction of the amazing creations you'll see.

## ALMUDENA FERNANDEZ VICENS

Riverside, CT

Vicens was born and raised in Madrid—"I grew up in a family of architects, interior designers, engineers and patrons of the arts. I was always surrounded by beautiful art and design," she says. Shortly after she gave up a career on Wall Street to raise her family, she took a class at the Greenwich Art Society and discovered a love of painting. "Many other classes followed, at different local schools such as GAS and Silvermine School of Art."

**The piece:** "Accidental Landscape I," a monotype, came out of a trip to Machu Picchu and the Sacred Valley in Peru. "The beauty of the nature in the Sacred Valley, the grandiosity of the Machu Picchu and its archeological sites, made a deep impression on me," Vicens explains. "Through the printmaking process I was able to layer colors and textures until the final piece came together. I had hoped to transform that view into an abstraction that each person who sees it can feel and understand in different ways."

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GET A CLOSER LOOK:  
C Parker Gallery, 409  
Greenwich Ave.

### MARY DELL'ABATE

Greenwich, CT

Dell'Abate studied fine art at SUNY New Paltz, and then transferred to the Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City to focus on fashion illustration. Later she learned graphic design at the School of Visual Arts. "I stopped doing anything creative for a very long time, raising kids, etcetera," she says. "Then when my boys became a little more independent I started taking classes at Silvermine and never stopped." She has shown her work at shows at Silvermine for the last several years.

**The piece:** A trip to a farmers market in Sonoma, CA, and a photograph she took of the beautiful fruits and vegetables on display, started her on the creative path to painting "White Onions." Explains Dell'Abate: "I love painting still lifes of fruit and vegetables and have done baskets of peppers, tomatoes, and other produce. They make good subjects because they don't have to be perfect."

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GET A CLOSER  
LOOK: Oliver Peoples,  
236 Greenwich Ave.



### CATHRINE WHITE

Rye, NY

In addition to being cherished images in her clients' homes, Cathrine White's body of work has appeared on television and in the pages of national magazines and best-selling books, and as well as on the walls of art galleries and at fundraisers both in New York and Los Angeles. "It has always been about the journey for me, and connecting to what I love and the lessons that come while creating art," she says.

**The piece:** "Mr. Brainwash A Hollywood Illusion" took shape when White was with her family, and her daughter was captivated by an image in a large window. "It took my breath away the way she just stood there and looked up at it," she recalls. "It was so special to be able to capture that moment. It reminded me of how powerful illusions can truly be. For me, I feel that the image has so many layers of meaning."

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GET A CLOSER LOOK:  
Marmot, 165  
Greenwich Ave.



### JOYCE GRASSO

Stamford, CT

Grasso was raised in Portland, Maine, “surrounded by lakes, oceans, and estuaries,” she says. “The simple beauty saturated my soul, is part of who I am, and is expressed in all of my artwork.” She settled in Fairfield County, where she taught art in the Stamford and Greenwich Public Schools for over 35 years. Her work has been exhibited in many juried shows throughout Fairfield County, and her paintings and photos are collected from Maine to California.

**The piece:** “Spring Thaw,” crafted from acrylic on canvas, was inspired by Grasso’s celebration of life and the obstacles she has overcome. “Every spring, the earth and waters thaw and start anew. After a life-threatening illness and life-changing surgery eight years ago I have had the opportunity for a second chance,” she says. “With this gift I have pursued a second career and resumed painting with the joy and energy of my former students!”

## EXTENDING THE ARTS’ REACH

Arts to the Avenue may be one of The Greenwich Arts Council’s most visible events, but this nonprofit organization, which was founded in 1973, does so much more besides. “It is our mission to promote the visual, performing, and literary arts in our community by encouraging artists, promoting their work and building audiences for the arts,” explains Tatiana Mori, Executive Director.

To that end GAC sponsors a number of initiatives and local events, such as its Youth@Art program, which brings elementary-aged students from the Greenwich public schools to GAC’s galleries and trains a number of them to become docents. “In this way the students themselves engage their peers in innovative discussions about art, with an emphasis on particular personal interpretations,” Mori says. “In addition to this, our Traveling Art program increases our outreach in the Greenwich Public Schools.”

The organization also recently expanded its musical arts offerings to include a Soirees by Moonlight series, the Angel Choir, as well as a partnership with Young Artists Philharmonic. “Plus, we are looking to launch World Music Day in Greenwich for the first time this summer,” Mori shares. And in the fall, GAC will host Arts Alive! 2019, an annual event which offers a curated evening of music, food, art and live theater performances. To find out how you can become more involved in GAC, visit [greenwichartscouncil.org](http://greenwichartscouncil.org)





## SHILO RATNER

Bethany, CT

“My career in the arts has been an evolution over the last 15 years and has taken many twists and turns across the United States,” says Ratner, who holds a degree in design from Curry College in Milton, MA and an MFA in painting from the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. She teaches painting at the Creative Arts Workshop in New Haven, CT.

**The piece:** “Open Spaces” is about open awareness—awareness to our environment and how it connects to our collective humanity. “I start each session in the studio with meditation,” Ratner says. “It’s part of my process with painting and translates to my works’ design, which is an exploration of color and harmony.”

**GET A CLOSER LOOK:**  
Putnam & Mason, 34 East  
Putnam Ave.

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GET A CLOSER LOOK:  
Velvet by Graham  
& Spencer, 271  
Greenwich Ave.



### KYLE HICKS HEALY

Stamford, CT

Healy is essentially self-taught, although she has also done course work in illustration at Manhattan's School of Visual Arts.

**The piece:** "The Liminal Space #1" is the first of a triptych inspired by the natural world, especially the life and society that exists in and around water sources. "I have also seized on the idea that existence is really a duality between a sense of solitary individualism, juxtaposed with a series of repetitive patterns and forms. My seahorse pieces are representative of that—each seahorse is sketched onto the canvas spontaneously so that no two are exactly alike, and yet they are in a school, off on some collective adventure."