

LIVING ART *of Montana*

Connection Through Expression

AUTUMN 2014



WHAT MAKES ME FEEL SO ALIVE?

From an interview with Living Art workshop participant Barb Dryden

For years I remember wishing I could do the Living Art workshops but thought I needed to experience cancer to participate. I was excited to find out that in 2006 Living Art expanded their programs to include people dealing with any illness or loss—including caregivers.

I am the primary caregiver for my mother who has Alzheimer's disease. It is important to me to be able to help my mom and at the same time I am often exhausted and overwhelmed. I don't have breaks except when I occasionally have someone come in for a couple hours.

Layered on top of my daily tasks I am constantly trying not to push my mom's buttons that trigger an outburst.

Most of the time I don't get enough sleep but I always feel like I need to pretend that I am calm and rested. I know I need to give back to myself—to try to put something into my life. Sometimes when I walk the dog I feel refreshed, but I felt a big difference when I started to go to the Living Art workshops.

When I began attending the workshops I thought most of my positive experience was related to my interactions with the people who come to workshops who are so dear to me. The social connection is part of it. It is comforting to be in the company of others who have some understanding of what I am going through, but perhaps even more significant, is what making art gives me.

One day after a Living Art workshop I was walking across the parking lot and I noticed a sensation in my body. I swear my posture was perfect and I had a spring in my step. I could feel myself smiling and I thought, my gosh, what is this feeling? This is a good feeling.

Afterwards I took it apart in my mind. I needed to know what created that feeling because I wanted it again. What made my legs feel light? What made me feel so alive? I realized that that my creative process in the workshop was a deeply satisfying connection to life and I experienced it as a physical and emotional change in my body.

The Living Art workshops feel like a vacation. The two hours I experience completely take me away. I don't have to think too much, but I do have to engage with what I am doing. The process fully absorbs my attention. I go somewhere deep inside me—a different place in my brain. My troubles are still there, but not at the forefront. I can let go, for a time, of all my many caregiving tasks and worries.



My time at Living Art is such a small time compared to the rest of my life but it doesn't feel like a little bit of time, it feels BIG—what it gives me feels big. It helps me remember who I am.

Because so many of our participants are carrying heavy financial burdens due to their illnesses or losses, Living Art of Montana is committed to making our service programs free of charge. Your donations make that possible. We need your support.

DONATIONS ACCEPTED ONLINE: WWW.LIVINGARTOFMONTANA.ORG

a goal reached!



A letter from Board President
Helen Houlihan

It has been an amazing year for Living Art. This time last year we applied for a grant which would allow us to hire an executive director, a goal we have had for the last four years. We did not receive this grant. At the time it seemed like a set back, but instead, it motivated us to move forward towards our goal without looking back.

Our staff and board of directors regrouped, set forth a plan, and acted on it. We added our Lunch with Living Art educational fundraiser, had a hugely successful Light Show, Community Medical Center came on board as a Community Partner, enjoyed an extremely successful Dive for Five swim fundraiser, added several new board members, and charged forth.

Our efforts were successful! I am very pleased to announce we have hired our first Executive Director of Living Art of Montana, Tracy Pohndorf. Tracy started her new position October 2014. We've also hired co-founder Youpa Stein to fill our new dedicated Program Director position and she will now focus her creative energy on programming. To support our growth and capacity building we have hired Jillian Seaton as an Executive Assistant.

This could not and would not have happened without ALL of YOU who support Living Art, our participants, workshop facilitators, donating artists, volunteers, office staff, board of directors, and previous board members. We are grateful for each and every one of you. I humbly THANK YOU on behalf of Living Art of Montana.

Helen Houlihan

"Living Art is a true joy to me. When I first started coming, I thought it was too good to be true — I felt like a starving dog begging for table scraps, not sure if I fit in or actually deserved to come. It has saved my sense of sanity, my sense of self and place in the All—so in essence I would say it has allowed me to save my soul to joyously come without hesitation or fear of being too different." ~ Jilaine

"Living Art is one place that I feel comfortable. I find the support from the facilitators and participants welcoming and truly addicting. It has opened my eyes to things I can do that I never expected I could do. I feel a sense of satisfaction and solace from the creativity, interaction and exploration of ideas." ~ Lynda

"Finances are tight and I can't just sign up for art classes. I am really grateful Living Art is available to me." ~ Barb

Excerpt from a Cancer, Courage & Creativity Group Mask Poem

I am full of promise and
beauty
yet to be fulfilled

Even in the darkest night,
there
is light reflected...

I am like driftwood
finally
washed upon a beach.
emerging from the
pebbles
eyes open



The support of community members and friends make it possible for Living Art to continue to offer people facing illness and loss opportunities for expression and connection at no charge. We are grateful for your contributions of money, time, skills and arts supplies that help us engage our mission to use the arts and nature to support healing.

Thank you!

a note from executive director tracy larson pohndorf



My name is Tracy Pohndorf and it is an honor to introduce myself to you as the Executive Director of Living Art of Montana.

I grew up in Minnesota and my love of the visual arts led me west to pursue my MFA at Washington State University.

I did a few brief residencies, including one at the Archie Bray Foundation, before realizing I also enjoyed using the other side of my brain in the office realm.

After a seven year tenure as an accounting associate for the fundraising arm of MSU Athletics, I joined Living Art as a Program & Development Assistant, an opportunity that combined my nonprofit experience with my passion for the creative process.

At Living Art we believe that creativity is an inherent resource we can use to help navigate difficult times. In our workshops we see that engaging creativity is not only fun and energizing, it can strengthen resilience and increase flexibility when a life is disrupted by pain and change.

People come to our workshops because they're dealing with illness or loss. There's room to talk about it but they don't have to. Our participants tell me time and time again that the unspoken support they feel because "everybody gets it" is huge.

Transitioning to Executive Director could be overwhelming were it not for the fact that I've had an incredible role model in Youpa Stein, Living Art co-founder and our new Program Director. I am excited that she will be engaging her passion for programs, a focus that will bring vision and strength as we figure out the best way to support the participation growth we are experiencing.

This is an exciting time for Living Art of Montana and we are ready to carry the momentum that you, as donors and supporters, created. Make no mistake: your continued support is *vital* to our success and our ability to serve the Missoula community.

We have a busy few months on the horizon and I look forward to getting to know as many of you as possible and to learn what engages and inspires you as supporters of Living Art of Montana. I hope to see you at *The Light Show* on May 9, 2015 or - if you're really planning ahead (we are!) at the next *Lunch with Living Art* on November 12, 2015.

new ways to support living art

ACH Withdrawal Now Available

- Support Living Art by making monthly automated payments from your checking or savings account. Set up is easy: please contact us at 549-5329 or info@livingartofmontana.org.

Green Ribbon Book Sale to benefit Living Art



- Donate your gently used books to Green Ribbon Books at 800 Kensington Ave, Suite 102 (the building with the blue awning by Baskin Robbins) and *be sure to say they're for the Living Art fundraiser!* Come to the book sale at Green Ribbon Books on **December 12 & 13 from 10 am – 5 pm**

Donate online at
livingartofmontana.org
on Giving Tuesday, December 2, 2014

Donate to Living Art through
Give Local Missoula: the 24-hour online
fundraising event on May 5, 2014

BLACK FRIDAY. CYBER MONDAY.

#GIVINGTUESDAY
DECEMBER 2, 2014



givelocalmissoula.org

We are grateful to Community Medical Center (CMC) for supporting us as a Community Partner. Last spring CMC hosted both our *Cancer, Courage & Creativity* workshop and our First Friday Light Show art preview at their new Cancer Care Center. Living Art also provided art activities at CMC's *Voices of Hope* cancer education summit and Employee Wellness and Safety Fair.



From day one.



Thank you CMC!

reaching community

CAMP MAK-A-DREAM (CMAD)

This summer Living Art had the pleasure of working with the Young Adult and Teen Camps at CMAD. Emily Goodburn facilitated a “Poetic Cartography” and Naomi Kimbell, MFA facilitated “Living Compositions.”

In the workshop with Young Adults the campers explored the writing prompts “where I am lost” and “when I am lost.” In that process many of the participants also explored where they are “found.”

CMAD Group Poem

Where I am lost within myself
I lose my temper
The mirrors are distorted
I am alone in a crowded street
No one can touch me

Where I am lost the wide open seas
meet the stars

I search for home in open spaces
smiling faces
ancestor’s traces

Where I am lost, I cannot be found, yet
I still search,
as if home were behind the next hill

I’m lost
I’m screwed
I don’t know what to do

What the f... happened ?
How come?
Why me?

Lost in fears
am I less of a person?

I found strength where I was lost
I found hope when there was none

By Levi Webb



Living Art Writing Activity at Camp-Mak-A-Dream

reaching community

In August Living Art spent some time with seniors participating in the Missoula Aging Services congregate lunches and facilitated writing with the prompt “I remember.” Here are a few of the memories that were shared:

I remember getting knocked down by a billy goat on our farm and Dad yelling “stay down”

I remember my grandmother said we couldn’t swim in the lake until there was enough blue sky for a Dutch man’s britches

I remember the day JFK died. It was evening in Germany and we were playing poker in the barracks. We all got into uniform because we thought WW III had started.

I remember packing water for everything

new workshop format

Creativity for Life workshops take place from 10:30am-12:30pm on scheduled Saturdays throughout the year. They are open to anyone facing illness or loss including caregivers, free of charge. In response to these workshops being at capacity and our participants’ interest in multiple session workshops, starting in January we will add a series of 3-session workshops each quarter that offer a more in depth exploration. They will still be offered at no cost but will require a registration process.

WISH LIST

Adobe InDesign • 36” Paper Cutter • Paper Storage Rack
Wireless Music System • Watercolor Paint • Watercolor Paper
Canvas Aprons • Broken or Unwanted Jewelry • Herbal Teas



Living Art of Montana ~ FY 14 Year End Report (July 2013 – June 2014)

Note: This year we made a decision to focus our energies on fundraising and educational outreach, to help reach our goal of hiring a new staff person, knowing that we might have some program participation decreases. Even so, we had a 13% increase in participation in our service workshops.

Total Program Summary

Service, Education, & Outreach Workshops: People served FY 14= 558/ FY 13=579

Outreach Exhibits, Performances, & Publications: People served FY 14= 1228 / FY13 =1289

People Served by Program Area

Service Workshops at the Living Art Studio: (FY14=339, FY13=295) = + 44 (13% increase)

- “Creativity for Life” 36 Saturdays is offered 3 Saturdays a month, 10:30am - 12:30pm for anyone facing illness or loss. Coordinator: Odette Grassi. Facilitators: Odette Grassi, Niraja Golightly, Tracy Pohndorf, Bonnie Tarses, Patricia Lawrence, Karl Stein, Bev Glueckert, Tana Ostrowski, Hobie Hare, Loretta Vizzutti, Katie Patten, Amy Kalil.
- “Creativity for Life~Plus” (additional workshops for anyone facing illness or loss as needs, interests and opportunities arise)
 - “Living Compositions” 6 session writing workshop (9 participants). Facilitator: Naomi Kimbell (9/30, 10/7, 10/14, 10/21, 10/28, 11/4)
- “Cancer, Courage and Creativity” is offered 2 times a year Spring and Fall for 8 weeks and “Creative Connections for Cancer Survivors” (46 participants) is offered the 3rd Wednesday of each month from 12- 1:30pm. These workshops are for anyone who has or has had cancer. Facilitators: Susan Israel Benson, Claire Emery, Beth Ferris, Lori Mitchell, Niraja Golightly, Char Houska, Shirley Hummer, Beth Jones, Diana Reetz-Stacey, MSW, Dawn Payne, Nancy Serba, Karl Stein. Youpa Stein, MA RDT, Ann Stevenson, Michelle Weaver-Knowles, RNC and Nathan Zavalney,





**Group Bowl Poem written in the October 4, 2014
Creativity for Life workshop**

Surfing sheer waves of terror,
I rest on the shore.
It's a good place to stop,
Look around,
Perhaps choose the other path.
Love the elephant and the alligator.
Keep them safe.
Pull back on the reins.
This is the time I should be more free, full of glee,
daring to be me.
Learning to grow in joy and peace despite
instability.
Feeling useful, happy, content, grateful for a
being to love.
Begin to accept.
Begin again.
Grace with endings.
Changing, challenging, comforting, conflicting.
Settling into decay, loam, dirt, compost.
My life's pallet.

FY 14 Year End Report (July 2013 – June 2014) Continued

Outreach Workshops (total served FY 14 = 219 /FY 13=284) (decrease because one large activity didn't take place but an increase in several other activities)

- Presentation & activity with Geriatric Mental Health group, Sept 13 at Living Art, Facilitator: Youpa Stein
- Informational table with bookmark project , Women's Health event, St. Patrick Hospital, Sept 14, Tracy Pohndorf
- Bookmark activity with Geriatric Mental Health practitioners, Nov 13, Facilitator: Youpa Stein
- "Whole Person Healing: An Expressive Arts Approach," UM Winter Session course for Social Work students at Living Art studio, Jan 15-Jan 17, Facilitators: Youpa Stein, Lori Mitchell, Beth Ferris, Tracy Pohndorf
- "Using Art & Nature to Support Healing" presentation & discussion hosted by Hospice of Missoula at The Loft, Feb 20, Beth Ferris, Tracy Pohndorf
- Living Art pin/magnet activity at St. Pat's Heart Expo, Feb 22, Tracy Pohndorf, Beth Jaffe
- Hope pin/magnet activity at CMC "Voices of Hope" Oncology Summit, Mar 6, Youpa Stein with Niraja Golightly, Anne Pfeiffer, Anne Kaz, Amber Jackson, Michelle Hettick, Susan Eakins
- "Nothing Feels as Good as Feeling Good" bookmark activity, Village Senior Residence Health Fair, April 19, Youpa Stein with Beth Jaffe, Heidi Brugh, & Lynda Zschaechner
- "Poetic Cartography" writing workshop for Young Adult campers at Camp Mak-A-Dream, June 11, Facilitator: Emily Goodburn with Youpa Stein

Outreach Exhibits, Performances and Publications: (total served FY 14 = 1228/ FY 13= 1289)

- Living Art Newsletter Fall 2013
- Living Art of Montana Facebook page
- "ReNude Imagination" art exhibit, First Friday opening at The Loft, October 4
- "Lunch with Living Art" Education Outreach, Feb. 13 (Arnie Fishbaugh, Michelle Weaver-Knowles, Peter Lethenstrom, Youpa Stein)
- Table at CMC "Voices of Hope" Oncology Summit, March 6, Youpa Stein

healing art



January 2014 winter session course

Living Art of Montana has the great pleasure of teaching a winter session course "Whole Person Healing" which is offered every other year through the University of Montana Graduate Social Work Department.



Quotes from students:

Though I don't consider myself to be very creative, I am really excited about the possibility for self-discovery, relationship building, and healing that this kind of "intervention" can create. Thank you so much for initiating me to this wonderful new world!

Aubrey, Graduate Social Work Student

Thank you so much for a wonderful class. I haven't been that creative in a long time. It fed my soul and reminded me of why holistic practice is so important.

Ashley, Graduate Law Student

I enjoyed the course so much, and realistically see utilizing these goals in a strength based plan. I can't express how grateful I feel for being able to get into the course and gain some tangible skills I can use abroad in my Peace Corps service. Thank you so much for bringing Living Art into my life and sharing the activities we participated in as a group. I hope to see you again before my departure to Botswana.

Jessye, Graduate Student, Interdisciplinary Health

I really enjoyed the class and opportunity for self-reflection and creativity. Thank you for the exceptional learning experience.

Jane, Graduate Social Work Student

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**For Living Art
program calendars
and more information:**

**www.livingartofmontana.org
406-549-5329**

We are very grateful to all the facilitators who donate their time and skills to teaching Living Art workshops. The opportunities we offer to the community would not be possible without them.

A special thanks to our volunteer workshop facilitators for fiscal year 2014 (July 2013–June 2014):

Susan Israel Benson
Claire Emery
Beth Ferris
Bev Glueckert
Niraja Golightly
Emily Goodburn
Hobie Hare
Char Houska
Shirley Hummer
Beth Jones
Amy Kalil
Naomi Kimbell
Lori Mitchell
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Diana Reetz-Stacey
Karl Stein
Ann Stevenson
Michelle Weaver Knowles
Nathan Zavalney

SUPPORT LIVING ART BY VOLUNTEERING



Step Up. Help Out.

Living Art has many volunteer opportunities throughout the year. Please visit www.volunteermisoula.org to view our current postings.

*Special
Thanks...*

we couldn't do it without all of you

**LIVING ART
of Montana**

- | | | | | |
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If we have forgotten anyone please accept our apologies and let us know so we can include you in our next publication.

THE 2014 LIGHT SHOW

Thank You!

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Community Medical Center

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Cedar Mountain Software
Neptune Aviation

Glisten Sponsors (\$500-999)

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Live Auction

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Many volunteers help us with this event (more than we can list). We are so grateful for your support. Thank you!

LIVING ART
of Montana

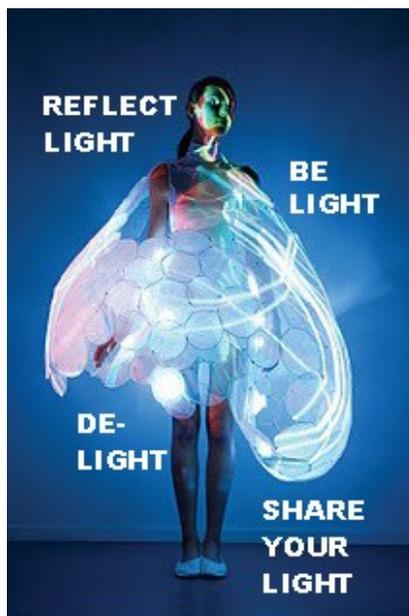
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There are two ways of spreading light — to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it. ~ Edith Wharton

**THE
LIGHT
SHOW**

**MAY
9
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This year's theme is LIGHT!

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