

## **Jen Bacher, Class of 1994**

Following her time at PCCA, Jen Bacher went on to receive her BFA from Ringling College of Art and Design. Jen has dabbled in a number of professions since then, including everything from working as a Sign Artist at Trader Joe's to serving as a Summer Camp Director. Jen now works in Citrus County, FL where she lives with her dog, Fern.

"I will always value my years in the PCCA program. No matter how winding my career path has been, my technical skills and eye for design have remained a great asset. Artists hold untapped value in our society, and the faculty at PCCA have equipped so many of us to make our impact on the world. I couldn't ask for anything more."

## **Leon Bedore (Tes One), Class of 1996**

Combining traditional and non-traditional techniques, Leon "Tes One" Bedore creates works of art that contrast nature with technology, grime with grace. Allowing himself to find beauty in the mundane, he juxtaposes rejected landscapes with figurative illustrations, all the while identifying what is common between the conversing elements. Tes One creates from the foundation up; incorporating movement within his work brings his energy and message to the viewer. Emotions envelope and hold focus.

Tes One has enjoyed international acclaim in both advertising and editorial capacities, working with some of the largest brands and art organizations in the world. Exhibitions of his fine art have been showcased in Vienna, London, Miami, San Francisco and Berlin, and contribute to the permanent collection of the University of South Florida.

"One of my favorite memories of Mr. Miller:

"While in a classroom full of quiet students, who were concentrating on the day's drawing assignment, a fellow classmate interrupted the tranquility by blurting out 'I'm bored'. Without missing a beat, Mr. Miller calmly replied, "Being bored is an insult to your intelligence.'

"What a short, simple and yet profound response. Within a second, it becomes obvious that the problem of an idle mind lies with one's own negligence. We have the ability to look within, to see and imagine things that no one else can; inspire, invent and express what makes each of us unique.

"It is our responsibility to exercise our creativity and share our ideas with others, just as Mr. Miller shared with us each day."

### **Pamela Bulu, Class of 2015**

After PCCA, Pamela earned a degree in Analytics from the University of South Florida, where she has also worked as an app developer in the IT department since 2018. She is currently back in school for a biology degree, and hopes to eventually move from a desk job to a conservation job. She is a volunteer with the Florida Parks Service and occasionally takes part in prescribed burns. During her time at PCCA, she became a fan of St. Petersburg's Chad Mize, and as an adult she is delighted to have exhibited work in a few shows at his gallery.

"Although I don't have as much time for art as I used to, it remains incredibly special and healing for me. I am so grateful for the teachers that taught me so much in those four years, and who are still willing to teach me and inspire me today: Yoko Nogami showed me it's never too late to get back to the outdoors, Lauren Blackburn introduced me to some of my favorite artists (visual AND musical) and her humor and art still make me smile today, Steven Beverage helps me remain involved in the local art community, and Marty Loftus always challenged me to try my hardest. The friends I made at PCCA are still with me nearly a decade later and we all still create together like old times. There's no place like PCCA."

### **Ashley Burke, Class of 1997**

Drawing inspiration from museum collections, Ashley Burke—a museum professional with 20 years of experience—developed Fieldtrip jewelry. Her designs are rooted in the conviction that objects reveal both our outward stories and our deepest secrets. Among all the items we possess, jewelry best encapsulates this duality, offering a medium for personal and public expression.

Burke's recent focus is on a series of kinetic jewelry which react against, challenge, and subvert notions of fixity. Broadly titled "Time Talismans," this series is comprised of pieces that subtly or overtly move in direct response to the wearer's actions and surroundings. This relative movement serves as a gentle reminder that the only constant in our lives is change.

### **Maria Calandra, Class of 1995**

Maria Calandra was born in London in 1976 and currently lives and works in Brooklyn, New York. In her paintings, Calandra explores natural landscapes with vibrant palettes and gestural shapes. Inspired by her wonderings in the wild, she translates into canvas the colors reflected on water, the twisting of tree trunks and roots, the repeating lines and organic structures of nature. Dense with detail, purposefully

lacking depth, the paintings channel a stream of consciousness, pulling from both the real and imagined. Using a form of automatic painting to guide her mark making, she makes connections between observation and memory.

“PCCA is a major part of why I am where I am now. Reading *ArtNews* and *Art Forum* magazines at PCCA and learning all those magical art skills made me yearn to live in NYC one day as a painter. I ended up in Brooklyn after going to Cornell University for an MFA. I have had solo shows internationally, in places like Italy and Germany, and am currently preparing for a solo show in my hometown of NYC at Fredericks and Freiser Gallery in Chelsea. Thank you, PCCA.”

### **Joey Clay, Class of 1996**

Joey Clay is a freelance commercial photographer specializing in portrait and lifestyle photography. His artistic journey began at PCCA, where his passion for photography was ignited. Continuing his education at The School of Visual Arts NYC, he now engages in diverse commercial assignments and international tours, notably documenting reggae artist Julian Marley. Despite his photographic focus, the acrylic painting titled NO VANITY of reggae artist IBA MAHR holds sentimental value, marking a return to painting after a 20-year hiatus. The image, referenced from a photograph captured in 2015, opened doors to documenting roots and culture globally. Reflecting on formative years, Joey credits PCCA and educators like Mrs. Walker, Mr. Hansen, Mr. Bewley, Mr. Johnson, and Mr. Miller for profoundly shaping his artistic talents. He acknowledges their impact on his life, providing invaluable visions and ideas that remain unforgettable. Explore his portfolio at [JoeyClay.Com](http://JoeyClay.Com) and follow @joeyclaystudio on social media.

### **Indigo Regis Conat-Naar, Class of 2016**

Indigo Regis Conat-Naar (b. 1998) is an interdisciplinary artist whose work highlights the fleeting intersections of being, memory, and place that arise from encountering objects in the world. She grew up in St. Petersburg, Florida, and graduated from Tufts University in 2021 with a BFA in Studio Art and a BA in Philosophy. She currently lives in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

Conat-Naar’s practice begins with rigorous observation and reflection. Using autobiographical fragments as building blocks, Conat-Naar creates new worlds with soft edges, attending to a single point of tension until it fills the room. Replicated, altered, and broken objects become the sculptural bodies that inhabit these worlds; characters entangled with their being and sustained only by a sympathetic viewer.

Conat-Naar’s work ranges across installation, sculpture, video, sound, performance, drawing, text, and photography. Throughout these mediums, she maintains a clear voice of vulnerability and presence, opening up worlds of possibility outside of time.

Within these worlds, her work becomes a language that theory can't refute; a manifestation of the tender specifics of being.

Indigo Regis Conat-Naar was a student at PCCA from 2012 until 2016, where she spent as much time in Marty Loftus's classroom as she could. She credits her sensitivity to materials and their meaning to her time in Marty's sculpture classes. She entered PCCA with a penchant for drawing detailed pen and ink patterns in sketchbooks and left with a portfolio full of installation art and wearables made from a wide range of objects, including but certainly not limited to, receipts, 1,833 plastic dime bags of water, hospital gowns, and sisal rope.

### **Riley Corlett, Class of 2017**

Riley Corlett is an illustrator born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida. Riley's works center around themes of vulnerability, nature, identity and the feelings that come with being alive. While Riley has experimented with a variety of different mediums over the years, using ink to create drawings with intricate and rich linework has been a longtime staple of their work. This, combined with the use of bestial imagery has resulted in a body of work that encompasses the raw emotions that Riley wishes to capture within the artwork.

"I regard my time at PCCA as one of the best experience I've had with schooling thus far. I came in as someone who was admittedly overconfident in their art and learned the hard way that in order to grow, I had to listen to critique and not take it so personally. The following years were spent learning everything from the ground up and then applying those skills to my senior project. The teachings of Yoko Nogami and Steven Beverage were pivotal to my growth as an artist, forcing me to view things from beyond the scope of my own perspective and to apply the skills I had acquired during my time with them. Additionally, the people I met while at PCCA (whether they were in the visual arts department or not) remain some of my closest friends to this day. While I have chosen not to go on to pursue a career with art, it still remains an important part of my life and I am forever grateful to have had the opportunity to be a part of the legacy of PCCA."

### **Mia Culbertson, Class of 2011**

Mia Culbertson is a designer, illustrator and Assistant Professor of Instruction in the Graphic & Interactive Design program at Tyler School of Art & Architecture at Temple University. Mia's academic and creative research focuses on diversity, equity, and inclusion in the creative community and in the classroom. Mia has a love for combining typography and brand identity with modern technologies including 3D design and AR (augmented reality). Clients include ConsenSIS, Philadelphia Contemporary, AIGA, and more, and her work has been exhibited in Graphis, Creative Quarterly, CADA New York, and Graphic Design USA. Currently Vice

President of Strategy with AIGA Philadelphia, Mia spearheads *Locally Sourced*, an annual juried exhibition showcasing student design work in the greater Philadelphia area.

"As a PCCA alum, I can confidently say that the program is the best around. Every single teacher there is entirely dedicated to the students and furthering their education. Having now earned undergraduate and graduate degrees, I realize how lucky the students at PCCA are—a college-level arts education is at their fingertips. I formed strong relationships with all my teachers while there, but became especially close with Yoko Nogami, Lauren Blackburn, and Alan Johnson. They taught me that to be a teacher means so much more than to just teach. Now an educator myself, due in large part to their role in my learning journey, I often think back to this valuable time and look to bring many of their techniques and empathy into my own classroom."

### **Cherry Sara David, Class of 2018**

"I am currently a freelance illustrator doing commission work for clients while I finish my BFA in painting. I often participate in local arts and craft markets selling prints, stickers, and paintings. My day job is in healthcare but I try to make as much time for my artistic practice as possible.

"PCCA changed the trajectory of my life by thoroughly preparing me for the world of art education and professional art practice. The lessons I learned there were so advanced and so valuable for a high school student to learn before going to the broader world of art school. I remember my time there with a yearning fondness—things were so different back then, and I was still so new and still discovering my art practice. Although things have changed so much since then I still carry the inherent knowledge and treasured memories I made in PCCA with me every day and they still influence my artistic practice."

### **Madi Diana, Class of 2014**

Madi Diana is a folk practitioner, artist and maker located in St. Petersburg, FL. They challenge anthropocentric views through queer ecological studies and animistic spirituality. Madi also teaches the process of safely cleaning, and the use of bones in modern witchcraft.

"PCCA developed my foundation as an artist and continues to influence my everyday life."

### **Zachary Endicott, Class of 2016**

"I work as a sculptor and graphic artist. My artwork focuses primarily on the idea of destruction and rebirth; in the last few years, it has also focused on the alternate universe where we reach out to the stars. I went on to study digital video production at PTEC, where I was able to participate in SKILLSUSA and record/produce a one-minute commercial, ranking fifth nationally among fifty other education institutions. In my current role at Amazon as a process assistant I utilize my art skills in assist in developing design logo and creating employee environments to foster a positive work culture.

"PCCA has had a major impact on how I view myself, my artwork and how it can affect the world and people around me. Below are the teachers I feel made the most impact in my art journey.

"Freshman Year - Mrs. Blackburn helped challenge me to branch out and try innovative ideas, approach more adventurous projects, learn how to build off critiques, and paving the ground rules for effective artworks. Sophomore Year - Ms. Nogami taught me how to properly care for and maintain artwork as well as educating us on the technology for digital artwork that professional artists use in careers. She challenged us to be more serious and deliberate with our time and tools. Junior Year - Mr. Beverage taught us how to economize our art, instructing me how to work in reductive mediums such as scratchboard, as well as opening the world of art history to me. He challenged us to find our voices in our art as well as finding joy in the creation process. Senior Year - Mr. Loftus was instrumental in sparking my passions in sculpture and 3D. He encouraged me to submit a portfolio to Scholastic Art & Writing Awards for sculpture, which I was awarded top eight in the nation with a Gold Key portfolio. He challenged us to overcome our egos and fears to be open to different concentrations and mediums. My artwork became possible off page in new ways I have never imagined."

### **Ora Frazee, Class of 2011**

A St. Petersburg native, Ora Frazee is a multi-media artist working in both digital and traditional mediums. Historically a printmaker, they now utilize a digital workflow in order to create vivid and complex images from the subconscious.

In their process, a new work begins in the sketchbook and ends on a digital screen. After the initial idea and concept is decided upon, each piece begins as a small thumbnail sketch. Once the composition is designed and refined, the art is then transferred digitally. From there the artist hand-draws, paints and edits elements until the work is finally deemed finished.

For the past several years, the artist has been in the employ of local spirits producer Big Storm Brewing & Distillery Co. as their head graphic designer. They create

everything from packaging labels to taproom murals, while making time for local art exhibits and market events.

"At PCCA I was given the knowledge and toolset to begin exploring my own creative process. Being exposed to so many different creative people and methods of expression were a huge influence on me; thank you to Mr. Johnson for all the guidance my senior year!"

### **Nicole Gauthier, Class of 2007**

"After PCCA, my goal was to go to college and pursue art in some form, but life had other plans. I married a fellow PCCA graduate and we had our first child soon after graduation. We became a military family and life didn't leave much time for art. Since our children have grown, I have been delving back into painting when I can. This show felt like an opportunity to be a part of the art world that I left so many years ago.

"My proudest moment has to be that my oldest child is now a sophomore in Visual Art. She is incredibly talented and we're so thankful PCCA is still around to nurture her love of art. I love that the teachers are working artists. It's really inspiring to know they're creating pieces while also helping the students to create. I'm incredibly thankful to the teachers I had when I was there. Being in PCCA always made me feel like I was a part of something important and I'm grateful for my four years in the program. I hope it's around for a very long time."

### **Nichole Georgatos, Class of 2009**

"Since graduating from Gibbs in 2009, I have been doing hair and now getting back into art since the passing of my dog, Luna. PCCA aided me through hair school with color theory and set up excellent foundations. High School was a great experience, but high school sucks and I'm glad it's been done for a long time."

### **Theresa Haberkorn, Class of 1994**

Making art since she was very young, Theresa Haberkorn started her formal studies at the Pinellas County Center for the Arts in St. Petersburg, Florida. After receiving her BA from the University of South Florida in 1994, she has exhibited her award-winning woodcut prints in national and international galleries and exhibitions. Her work can be found in museum and corporate collections including The Denver Museum of Art, The Kirkland Museum of Fine and Decorative Art in Denver, Colorado, The Children's Hospital of Denver, and the St. Regis Hotel, Aspen. Theresa has been awarded artist residencies at the Grand Canyon National Park on the North Rim, and the Art District of Breckenridge Colorado. Theresa is also a member of Boston Printmakers, and a

popular printmaking instructor at the Art Students League of Denver and in her studio in Boulder, Colorado.

“My art education at PCCA gave me an incredible and solid foundation for my career that I draw upon every day. I feel so grateful and appreciative to all my teachers and the center for my experience there. What a rare and wonderful place PCCA is for young people to experience such a high-quality art education. Whenever I’m asked how I got started in printmaking, I always say it was at PCCA and how lucky I was to study there. I’m glad it is still open to continue its wonderful legacy for the next generation of young artists.”

### **Rachel Hargrave, Class of 2009**

Rachel Hargrave holds a BA in Studio Art from USF College of the Arts. In recent years she has lived and worked in the city of Detroit, MI as an art educator and illustrator. She is the founder of Stranger Illustrations Detroit.

“After fifteen years of reflection, I can say PCCA was an irreplaceable experience that I will forever be grateful for having the opportunity to participate in. Thank you to my teachers, advisors, and peers for providing inspiration, encouragement, and a place to belong.”

### **Vyolette Hastings, aka 6ER, Class of 2022**

Vyolette Hastings, also known as 6ER, is a mixed media artist with a specialty in large-scale, multidimensional assemblage. Based in St. Petersburg, Florida she began her art journey as a child in the foster care system, utilizing creativity as a means of coping with the turbulent and unpredictable nature of constantly moving and adapting to new realities. Now as a young adult, she uses her work as a means of advocacy, each piece being a vessel of communication and healing. Through the use of vibrant hues, cartoon-esque characters, and nostalgic patterns, Hastings invites the viewer to embrace the excitement of childlike wonder. Upon viewing each painting, you can expect to be immersed in the fantastical character designs and contemplating the deeper meanings behind the whimsical scenery.

### **Chad Jacobs, Class of 2006**

A St. Petersburg native, Chad Jacobs has had a keen interest in the arts ever since he could put crayon to paper. Upon graduating from the PCCA Program at Gibbs High School with a focus on Visual Art, he went on to earn his BFA in Illustration (with a minor in Graphic Design) from the Savannah College of Art and Design.

Currently, Chad is back in St. Pete working as a freelance illustrator and designer. He



has collaborated with a handful of local organizations including American Stage, Fairgrounds St. Pete, Girl Scouts of West Central Florida, The Palladium at St. Petersburg College, the Mayor's Hispanic Advisory Council of the City of Tampa, Sinuous Bourbon, and The James Museum of Western & Wildlife Art. He has also had his work featured in exhibits at Atelier de SoSi Gallery, MIZE Gallery, and SPACE.

Chad's time in the Visual Arts department of the PCCA program was crucial to his development as an artist. Under the tutelage of David Bewley, Myron Hanson, Alan Johnson, Larry Miller, and Joyce Ely-Walker, he learned to expand his horizons in both his thought process and the materials he used to create his art.

### **Carrie Jadus, Class of 1994**

Carrie Jadus (b 1976, Tampa, FL) comes from an artistic lineage and a familial line populated with creatives. Drawn to art at a young age, she was accepted into the Pinellas County Center for the Arts fine and performing arts magnet program at Johnathan G. Gibbs High School where she carefully honed her developing skills. A post-graduation trip to Europe introduced Jadus to the impressionist masters, whose work deeply influenced her budding aesthetic sensibilities.

In many ways a pragmatist, upon her return she earned a degree in electrical engineering, and worked in the field for many years. Ultimately dissatisfied with the lack of creativity her position afforded her, Jadus, by then a newly-single mother of two young sons, abandoned engineering in pursuit of a full-time career as a fine artist. Fueled by the need to provide for her children and suffused with both a love for painting and an unerring drive towards excellence, she threw herself headlong into her new profession, steadily developing a devout collector following and a reputation as both a skilled commission portraitist and muralist.

In recent years she has added sculpture to her repertoire, working closely with MGA Sculpture Studio on a variety of corporate and public commissions. Now a firmly-established mid-career artist, Jadus accepts fewer commissions than she did in her emerging years, preferring the freedom to work in series of her own choosing. Her varied subjects, depicted largely in oils, inhabit the rich and fertile ground between realism and impressionism, at times veering more firmly into one over the other.

Comfortable at any scale, Jadus's work ranges from the diminutive to the monumental, and examples can be found in numerous private and public collections both nationally and internationally.

### **Reid Jenkins, Class of 2001**

Reid Jenkins is a contemporary artist who lives and works in St. Petersburg, Florida and was in SHINE St. Petersburg Mural Festival. He holds a BFA from the Maryland Institute College of Art. Reid has shown in numerous group shows including "Re Group Show" at Redefine Gallery, Orlando, Florida, "Icons" at Mize Gallery, and was a Creative Pinellas Emerging Artist award recipient. Reid Jenkins' current work focuses on the display of the range of human emotion and experience. His art is a reflection of a person or people's status, stature, and relationship within everyday life. The use of the figure, bright colors and patterns combine to evoke the feeling of the human spirit within the abstract reality. Most of his paintings are made through the use of acrylic aerosol and acrylic paint.

"The PCCA program was a big part of me buying into school. It gave me a reason to go to school, and the success I had in the program carried over into my academic classes. I went from being a student at risk of dropping out, to a student who was college bound."

### **Tony Jennings, Class of 1995**

"My artistic journey revolves around a fusion of Mexican folk art and whimsical illustrative styles, a distinctive blend that characterizes my recent creations. I defy conventional canvases, opting instead to paint on eclectic surfaces such as vinyl records, ceiling fan blades, wood, and even mannequins, seeking unconventional mediums to express my artistic vision.

"My artistic roots trace back to my graduation from the PCCA in 1995, where I was profoundly influenced by the guidance of Mr. Myron Hansen and Ms. Joyce Ely Walker. Ms. Walker's impact was particularly profound during my junior and senior years, fostering an environment that allowed me to blossom and evolve as an artist. Mr. Hansen, on the other hand, broadened my perspective on the art world, dispelling the naivety of my freshman years.

"An unforgettable memory with Mr. Hansen is encapsulated in the whimsical term 'Goat cheese.' In a seemingly random encounter, he approached me in class, uttered those two words, and quietly walked away. Despite its peculiarity, it's these small, enigmatic moments that remain etched in my memory, serving as a testament to the transformative power of artistic mentorship."

### **Melissa Jo, Class of 2009**

Melissa Jo (b. 1991) was raised in St. Petersburg, Florida, and received her BFA with a concentration in painting from Florida Atlantic University in 2015. Currently residing in Houston, Texas, she has dedicated the past eight years to enriching young minds as an arts educator.

### **Michelle A. John, Class of 2003**

"I am a Brooklyn-born, St. Pete-raised, citizen of the world, currently living in Maine, USA. As an Artist/Writer, painting and photography are my specialties, acrylic and digital mediums respectively. The bright light and colors of my Florida childhood and Grenadian upbringing have highly influenced my color palette and need for storytelling.

BFA PAINTING. Maine College of Art 2007

Post Bacc. ART CONSERVATION. Studio Art Centers Intl. Florence 2010- 2011

Directed Independent Study. ART REPRODUCTION. SACI Florence, Italy 2011

Internship. PAINTING CONSERVATION. SACI, Gozo, Malta 2011

"Whether it's memories of Mr. Johnson encouraging me to go bolder, Mr. Bewley's in depth crits, or the many, many like-minded friends I made in every discipline— PCCA made a lasting impact on me. It wasn't until much later that I realized how much of a lush foundation it gave me as an artist and thinker. It was my first artistic acceptance and community and I'm glad to have been part of it."

### **Jennifer Kosharek, Class of 1991**

Kosharek Art has been a full time professional artist for the past 14 years. She has owned and operated her own award winning gallery: the eve-N-odd gallery. She was the first female street artist in the City of St. Petersburg, FL and helped build a community of street artists before the art was acceptable and seen as a way for the city to make money on art tourism. Two years ago she moved to Alaska to live out her dream of having mountain access for weekly hikes, skiing and back country painting via airplane drop off. Her art flows between whimsical feminine characters to landscape paintings.

"PCCA was my hub of a classical art education and I am forever thankful for each of my teachers who all made a huge impact on my life and my art: Mrs. Walker, Mr. Johnson, Mr. Miller, Mr. Bede Clark, Mr. Hansen (and Mrs. Hansen for Advanced Literature), I feel like I had the A team of teachers--I feel I got a well rounded classical art education from drawing, painting, printmaking, pottery, sculpture, art history, and photography. My first art show that I won best of show was a photography show and I still take pictures with a pinhole camera. As an adult I had a conversation with Mr. Johnson about how I regretted not accepting full art scholarships and getting a BA in fine arts and he said, "Don't regret it, you pretty much got that in high school." And he was exactly right. At that moment I stopped regretting and moved forward with my life. Thank you so much to all my PCCA art teachers. I was class of 1991's "Artist of the Year" and I sure appreciated that award. Thank you to each and every one of you. RIP Mr. Miller.

## **Sarah (Johnson) Kruck, Class of 2003**

"The last time I submitted artwork for the PCCA Alumni Show (2013), I was newly pregnant with my first child, and still consistently working as a freelance Designer, Illustrator, and Art Director, with years of professional experience and work in my portfolio. Then, I was able to submit recent professional work I created for a national brand.

"Fast forward 10 years, and I am smack in the middle of a very specific season of my nomadic, active-duty military spouse life. Recently I've been focused on being a full-time mother to 3 young children as we are currently stationed in South Korea.

"From 2014-2019, I successfully founded and co-owned a children's clothing company with another PCCA alumni, Heather (Leak) Cardone (VA c/o 2002). The company was called Bear & Bunny Co., and together we set out to meet a gap in the market for ethically-made, grow-with-me baby clothing. Based out of Denver, CO, we employed a handful of stay-at-home moms and military spouses from all over the U.S. who handmade our grow-with-me leggings. As partners we ran the day-to-day, managed our own marketing, creative and branding, and built a 10k+ multi-channel social following. We mainly sold on our eCommerce site, but also sold wholesale to small shops across the country.

"During that same time, I partnered with a health and wellness brand, assisting clients (in-person and online) in achieving goals through accountability, support, and guidance.

"So in the span of 7 years, as my family grew and as we moved between 4 different states (CO, GA, RI, and WA), I simultaneously worked 3 different streams of income as a small business owner and freelance artist/designer. I even became a certified Yoga and Pilates Instructor in 2018.

"Then when the 2020 pandemic hit, and I became pregnant with my 3rd child, it was time to scale back and slow down.

"Although my professional & personal ambitions have shifted for a moment, I'm still able to find outlets and inventive ways to stretch my creative muscles.

"Take Halloween for example ... this past year, despite living overseas, I transformed our family into our favorite hobby and beloved video game: *Mario Kart*. (It's the work that is hanging in this show.)

"Over the last 20 years since graduating from PCCA, I've found that I instinctively have a deep need for creative problem solving, no matter the subject. If I'm not looking to fulfill that professionally, it only funnels into my personal life.

"So even though this might not be the most traditional piece of artwork displayed by PCCA alumni, it's the most recent, creative work I've done. To use my talent in this personal way to create memories for my family brings me joy, and purpose!"

"PCCA has been a part of my life, literally, for my entire life. In fact, the program and I are both nearly 40 years old. My fellow c/o 2003 graduates can say the same thing, but what sets me apart is the fact that my father, Alan Johnson, was one of the founding faculty members back in 1984.

"It was as if PCCA and I grew up together ... growing, maturing, and creating our place in the art community. Not only did my father teach art in the program, but my older brother, and two cousins are also graduates. For me personally, PCCA is definitely a family affair and a program that has been a constant throughout my life.

"Now having worked as a professional designer, art teacher & small business owner, I can look back and appreciate how at a young age, PCCA provided me with a solid background, knowledge, and experience in the fine arts. I often describe the PCCA program as being something of a "pre-college" education that helped to catapult my college career. The program harnessed my creativity and gave me an unforgettable high school experience that taught me the importance of discipline, tenacity, and responsibility, way above any other typical high school experience would have.

"While attending the program, I was able to make lasting friendships with the most fascinating, creative, and talented people who I would have not known otherwise. I still keep in contact with many of my classmates who were not just visual artists, but who were also dancers, performers, singers, musicians, and tech theater geniuses. It brings me such pride to be able to follow their careers and see where their creative passions have taken them in life, whether it's to Broadway, Hollywood, or in the galleries of New York. I truly feel that the unique body of students that PCCA attracts helps young students learn how to cooperate and work alongside others much different than themselves. This interaction through the arts bridges gaps of diversity, and brings together a creative community of students who are better prepared for a diverse world after graduation.

### **Cynthia Lizardi, Class of 2002**

Cynthia holds a BA in Studio Art from the University of South Florida. She paints about cancer and mental health using symbolism, mixed media, acrylics, and digital programs like Corel Painter and Rebelle. From 2015 to 2021, Cynthia served as

Director of Exhibitions for Tampa Regional Artists. In 2018, her art was selected for "Voices & Visions: Standing on the Bridge Between Health and Disease" at the The Art Center Highland Park. In 2019, she created art for Mount Dora Center for the Arts' "Bra-Vo: Breast Cancer Awareness" fundraiser. Later, her painting "Lumpia Lesson" was selected for both the Polk Museum of Art's "Hindsight 2020" exhibition, and their on-site retrospective, "Hindsight: One Year Later" in 2020 and 2021 respectively. Cynthia lives in Tampa with her son and husband, both named Victor, and their dog Baldur where, between painting, she dabbles in glass etching, book binding, and other crafts.

"PCCA was where I felt at home in my creative weirdness. I was taught by David Bewley, Joyce Walker, Alan Johnson, Larry Miller, and Myron Hansen. Each teacher brought their unique expertise to mold a ragtag group of kids into future artists, and I explored media I wouldn't imagine trying at a traditional high school. Tig welding anyone? I could relay a book of tales from PCCA, like painting a 6' sea turtle sculpture, or venturing into the "Bat Cave" (the photo dark room), but there are too many to list. Let's just say that PCCA laid the groundwork for my artistic journey, with life-long friendships, and creating art with ingenuity and honesty."

### **Madeline Lundquist, Class of 2011**

"I attended the University of Florida in Gainesville where I studied Printmaking and minored in Art History. Post graduation, I moved back to my hometown of St. Petersburg, where I discovered how much I loved teaching and sharing my love of art with others, which eventually brought me here to the Education Department at the Morean Arts Center.

"Since PCCA I've taken up new creative adventures like swing dancing, roller skating, sewing, and my favorite adventure so far - being an aunt to the coolest and most creative niece in the world, Amelia Robin.

"I loved my time in PCCA at Gibbs High school. I always knew I wanted to be an artist, and when it was time to look for a high school, the PCCA program was my number one choice. I made lifelong friends, and my art teachers from PCCA became friends and mentors as I graduated college and went into teaching art myself. I am grateful for what PCCA taught me about art and life, and I hope PCCA continues to inspire and help future artists grow for many more years to come!

### **Mallory Lundquist, Class of 2016**

Mallory Lundquist is a mixed-media fine artist, born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida. Growing up in a family involved in the arts, they got their start in performing theatre, but quickly found visual art as their passion. Over the years, they have

exhibited in group shows curated by Chad Mize Galleries around St. Petersburg, as well as group shows in Atlanta at the Savannah College of Art and Design.

"Attending PCCA was a pivotal part of my beginnings as an artist. From the friends that I made there in my visual arts classes, to the teachers and professionals that I met, I'm sure I wouldn't be where I am currently without the program. As of late, I have been working as an Exhibit Technician at Fernbank Museum of Natural Science and History in Atlanta Georgia, where I utilize many skills I earned by attending PCCA. It's amazing getting to flex my creativity in a museum setting! I couldn't be prouder of my alma mater for getting me here."

### **Madeline Macfarlane, Class of 2017**

Hello! My name is Maddy and I'm a graphic designer and illustrator. I recently graduated from UCF with a BFA in Graphic Design. I am currently open to do freelance work of any kind! I have a versatile skill set and can fill whatever is role is necessary for any kind of project. That being said, I really like doing logo work and book covers, along with game concepts!

I have also been running an Etsy shop for a little over 2 years. I sell stickers and other products designed solely by me! I really enjoy making things and I hope one day that it can be my full time job. Go take a look: [StinkyPuppy](#)

### **Trevor Merada, Class of 2011**

"I will cite the words from John Steinbeck's classic *Cannery Row* to help me describe in detail my notion of the time I spent at PCCA at Gibbs High School '[it was] a poem, a stink, a grating noise, a quality of light, a tone, a habit, a nostalgia, a dream.' If it was not for the program's small universe in the fine arts in Pinellas County; I would never have made *Cannery Row* my favorite book.

"For it was the Instructors, Administrators, and Peers that made PCCA a grand community or in rare instances a gut-wrenching chore to which you'd never want to return. For all those far and near to me; I bless you and I will remember you, I wish you all the fruit life can bear, may you create with intuition unchained from the dollar."

### **Timm Mettler, Class of 2000**

Timm Mettler is motivated by materials. His heart calls to Painting. Exploring what a painting is has led him to fold techniques aligned with drawing, printmaking, collage, and bookmaking into his practice. Timm received his BA from Eckerd College, St. Petersburg, Florida, while tirelessly serving Bob Devin Jones at The Studio@620 from 2006-2010. Present day he is an art worker employed in a Noho commercial gallery.

Mettler lives with his wife and daughter in Brooklyn, NY. Mercifully, they allow him to keep a studio.

"For the upcoming PCCA alumni show I wanted to write. It has been 23 years since I graduated. What I saw in the late nineties on my travels through the PCCA program at Gibbs was nothing short of an adjacent universe. The open air campus would seem at home in a Degrassi Junior High, or an episode of My So-Called Life. The six, or in my case seven, perfectly broken class periods with ten minutes to walk to opposing rooms in lines full of teens teeming with gossip would be substantive in any theatrical or psychodramatic long running episodic television show. But even now remembering affects the memory like McCarthy's *The Road* where the main character says, 'He thought each memory recalled must do some violence to its origins.' So to preserve the past I must tread carefully, because the world goes on, and so do the words we share. The school was incredibly effective because it hosted the right combination of the ideal place to learn while being host to the right kids who wanted to be there. It was the perfect place for powerful bonds to happen. The school was the right environment and the teachers were as quizzical as the sphinx.

"In everyone's first year waves of students would have their foundation classes. I was shepherded over this first year by Joyce Ely Walker. She also closed out my time in the PCCA program by hosting me for five periods during my senior year. Joyce was always pleasant. Her skills as a draftsman and painter exhibit her technical prowess within the difficult to master medium of watercolor. And Joyce is a master. I remember her describing an assignment wherein she had to make perfect circles in a sketchbook without the aid of tools or compasses. The child's mind always looks for the backdoor or short cut, but I remember these stories behaving more like a call to action. From my freshman year I fondly have an in class assignment pertaining to primary colors, and geometric composition featuring the notorious handwritten grading of Walker. Joyce's linework is pure beauty. It's complete with a circled 97, and a single serving compliment more conspicuously found in a greeting card. This sentiment isn't mine, per se, but some of the talk recalled from my four plus years at the school. This has stayed with me along with Walker's encouragement to clip coupons from the Michaels newspaper to save money on brushes or paint, which has served me well.

"The sophomore year in the PCCA program was full of energy. I recall Myron Hansen's sketchbook assignments and the little slips of paper he'd place into the books we'd turn in. Here is the first place McCarthy's violent origin emerges: I can't recall the building number Myron's and David Bewley's classes took place. It could be building 2, or 3, but it wasn't building 4, and that's a fact. I made many prints with Myron over the years before he was relocated into building sixteen. I know I returned after graduation to complete five extra curricular prints or suites of prints. I visited more times than that to complete the works solely by the grace of Myron. Beyond a teacher I always considered Myron a friend and a kind man. To this day I carry



something Myron said routinely in class critiques. I am not sure if this was a go to phrase when saying 'nice' was looked at as offensive, but Myron encouraged students to: *loosen up*. This matters less in 2023, but in 1997-1998 the idea to loosen up meant gaining freedom from historical academic stylistic anchors like representation and leaning into that great expressionistic canon of Eisenhower machismo: The New York School of Abstract Expressionism. To that end I hold the gestural mark to be the single most important component of art making. I value this free mark in artists like Chris Martin or Katherine Bradford application of paint. The idea of loosening up lives rent free in my head thanks to the teachings of Myron Hansen.

"When I became a junior I was deep in my skateboard years. I don't think I actually made art outside of school at this point. I just wanted to skate, and I did. Junior year was divided up into the first half of the year, and the second half. In the first half Larry Miller had us for photography where we made pinhole cameras before moving onto SLR cameras. We always hand developed the photos. Mr. Miller also taught us welding. In the end the sculptures we made were to be used to make a drawing where we scaled up our works to make a proposal for a theoretical sculptural placement. The one sustaining lesson Mr. Miller taught is awareness and consequences for misplacing the camera strap. The school didn't have endless coffers and the Minolta, Ricoh, and Pentax cameras we did have felt heavy and substantial if not dated and old. This created a lull of false security in our teenage minds and often it would be the case that a student would place one of the class's cameras down on a desk, step away, and the nylon strap would dangle off the edge. This was an immediate detention. It may seem harsh, but Mr. Miller could not abide student negligence toward the common tools of the photography class. To this day I hold this strict rule. It has served me well as I have multiple times saved my wife's Nikon D800 from gravity.

"The second half of junior year was architecture and painting. For three years at this point the class has painted with tempera, watercolor, and acrylic. In Myron's print class we handled oil based printing inks, but in David's class traditional linseed oil was used in various projects. To this day a few of the lessons are still with me and are folded into my own practice. For example, we had a lesson on making our own strainers, and stretching canvas over them. We were given so much wood, so much canvas, and our goal was to make what we could with what we had. The outcome was an object very much our own, and very handmade. I am able to use these skills to this day in my duties in the gallery setting, and my personal practice.

"David knew when to allow someone to take up space in a corner, and when to provide the push back they needed. David also taught Art History to many of the standard PCCA students, whereas Alan Johnson taught Honors. David makes people comfortable, but being respectable and comfortable didn't exclude the possibility of a recalcitrant student. In a short anecdote, during David's Art History class, my talk back and bad attitude was awarded an exit by the teacher. I expressed my preference

to not do so. Consequently, David Bewley, my teacher of Art History and slide lecturer, bent down and embraced me in what must have been a bear hug, picked me up while I was still in my plastic, metal, and wood desk, only to gently remove me from the classroom by carefully walking me out the door, finally placing me outside, and closing the door on me like a stunned cat. It was catalytic. In that moment I was speechless, sold on David's legendary status, I was an instant convert.

"I see the teachers during my time at the PCCA program at Gibbs High School as priming me for a quest in the Arts. Each one of them has nurtured me beyond what I can repay. I am literally standing on their shoulders. Their guidance forms the largest cluster of my foundational arts education. As time has passed I have returned to the art department on many occasions.

"In the 2000s I asked Mr. Miller for permission to use the building 16 photolab. He said yes. In exchange for the privilege I promised to always advocate for the program. With Myron I would return to make two lithos, forty methyl salicylate photocopy transfers, and at least one monoprint. Hansen's 1997 faculty show submission with its dimensional canvases painted to resemble cuts of fish still lingers in my mind as an example of challenging the painting form. Joyce Ely Walker's graced class of '99 alumni Joseph McCue and myself had the opportunity to teach a workshop on mail art to her students. Much later Joyce reached out and told me I was granted a solo show in the school's gray gallery in 2008. I was encouraged to show my sketchbooks, because I embraced the behavior of carrying it every place I go. So I exhibited over a decade of books on empty Dali museum shipping crates; thank you Justin Duffy.

"These are only a few of my memories of the school and the program. I didn't mention the on campus art shows, the visiting ambassadors for art colleges, or how the teachers encouraged us to apply to art shows, both off and on campus. They did all these positive things to distill how to be an artist and much more. One lesson David taught me was to learn the rules before I choose to break them. For context, I was foolishly painting acrylic over oil paint, or maybe I didn't prime my handmade surface with the minimum required acrylic dispersion gesso layers to appropriately provide a barrier between the paint medium, and fabric substrate. David's words, and those of the other teachers, sparked in me a desire to find out how paint is made, and if there is a way to be an artist without paying the huge tuition fees. Art schools give you time to make work is a maxim commonly understood by any artmaker. The PCCA program gave me time I didn't know I needed. It also imparted an advanced education on the same level as top tier art colleges. In fact, I would argue that the program could be a suitable stand in for a bachelor of fine arts degree. From my perspective, the quality warrants the judgment.

"At roughly 42 years of age I am at my life's meridian. I am able to see the pathway behind me charting my history from my own father's life. I can clearly see the path of

fatherhood in front of me. I hold the crucial position of being present, mentorship, and sharing knowledge. I recognize these qualities as spiritual cousins in forging the stepping stones for the next generation. I am here because the teachers in the art department took a chance on my application and passed my portfolio unconditionally into the Pinellas County Center for the Arts."

### **Holly Rose Moore, Class of 2010**

Holly Rose Moore earned their BFA with a focus in Ceramics from FSU in 2014. Holly Rose's experimentation since has led them down a multidisciplinary path in an attempt to produce objects that engage imaginative playfulness in their audience. They moved back to the St. Petersburg area in the summer of 2020, and have been actively creating and showing work while also maintaining various day jobs to make ends meet.

"During my junior year I took wheel throwing as an elective class from Mr. Alan Johnson. At the time, I was hoping to major in industrial design at university because the opportunity to design objects that would touch people's daily lives really appealed to me, so pottery seemed like a natural choice.

"It was incredible to watch him produce pots so effortlessly on the potter's wheel, explain ceramic chemistry so casually, and even make us all handmade cups for the holidays. That cup is STILL my prized possession. Once the semester was over Mr. Johnson's artist profile was featured in the then *St. Petersburg Times*, and by my graduation about a year later, he had sculptures in the gallery at Florida CraftArt. Mr. Johnson very much changed the trajectory of my art practice by introducing me to clay in all of its material majesty and seemingly endless applications."

### **Orin Noel, Class of 2019**

Orin Noel is a recent graduate of the Maryland Institute College of Art. He was born in Cebu, Philippines and raised in Clearwater, Florida. Focusing mainly in high-detail ink drawings, he illustrates scenes of fantasy and dreamlike sentimentality filled with dancing foliage and strange peoples.

"PCCA was instrumental in my artistic development. I want to especially thank Ms. Nogami for being my mentor and showing me not how to be an artist, but that I was already an artist, and I should trust myself utmost." **Ashley Ortiz Diaz, Class of 2010**

Ashley Ortiz-Diaz (she/her) b. 1991, St. Petersburg, FL. Ashley is a mixed media artist working primarily in paper, powdered charcoal, and themes of death. She is influenced by abstraction, science fiction, historical cemeteries, and poetry. As a mixed race person (Black Puerto Rican father, Brown Puerto Rican mother), Ashley's

recent work emphasizes stories from little known Black and Brown American history. For the past four years, she has made work about historic Black cemeteries in Florida that were developed over and erased from maps. Formally trained in printmaking, Ashley has an MFA from the University of Florida and a BFA from the University of South Florida. She currently works as a legal assistant at an employee side labor law firm in Sacramento, CA.

“At the risk of sounding like a sad nerd, classes with the VA faculty at PCCA were some of the brightest spots of my high school experience. While I cherish each of my teachers, I have to acknowledge Lauren Blackburn, Dara Vance, and Alan Johnson. These three specifically boosted my confidence and challenged my skills in order to make me better. Learning with these professionals made me feel like I could do anything, even. I still reach for the affirmations and lessons learned from my time at PCCA to move through the creative hang-ups. I wouldn't be making work, exhibiting, or teaching art if it weren't for this program.”

### **Rinsha Prophete, Class of 2010**

Rinsha Prophete is a graduate of FSU, where she earned her Bachelor of Science in Retail Merchandising & Product Development and Business Management in 2014. Upon graduation, Rinsha began her retail career in Jacksonville, Florida working for Stein Mart Inc. and was featured in the March 2016 issue of *Florida Trend Magazine* for her role as an Allocation Analyst. Passionate about empowering marginalized populations, Rinsha co-founded the non-profit, Black Women Empower Collective (BWEC) in 2016. Currently, Rinsha is a Planning & Allocation Lead for BJ's Wholesale Club in Massachusetts. Outside of work, she hosts a podcast called *Show Me Your Artist's License* that highlights and celebrates Black art and Black artists around the world. She also gives back to her community as a proud member of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority Incorporated.

“PCCA has made a big impact in my life. Ms. Walker and Mr. Johnson played a large role in my artist development and I am grateful for the skills that I've learned. I was able to challenge myself creatively while developing my natural talent. I've met and made lifelong friends through PCCA and I can't wait to support and give back to the program that has given me so much.”

### **Amber Quimby, Class of 1992**

“I am a second generation native of Florida. I have always been an artist; as a youth I attended PCCA and graduated from Ringling College of Art and Design with a BFA. I went on to receive my MFA from the University of South Florida. I am a painter, printmaker and sculptor, and I have been an arts educator since 2000. I am the

winner of the Janet Turner Print Museum annual competition and my work has been exhibited in galleries and museums throughout Florida.”

### **Christine Renc-Carter, Class of 1993**

Christine Renc-Carter is the Executive Director of the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art (LRMA) at St. Petersburg College (SPC) in Tarpon Springs, Florida. Christine’s career spans 24 years as a museum professional, working with museums and galleries throughout the Baltimore-Washington, D.C. area and Florida. Her mission is to engage and inspire others through the power of art and education. Christine earned a BFA in Printmaking in 1997 from the Maryland Institute, College of Art on scholarship and studied paper preservation at the National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C. She has worked with major collections of the Baltimore Museum of Art, Vero Beach Museum of Art, and the Gulf Coast Museum of Art. At SPC, she established the Foundation’s public art collection and curated major exhibits for the Florida International Museum and the Leepa-Rattner Museum of Art. Prior to LRMA, Christine was the Adult Education Director at the Dunedin Fine Art Center (DFAC) where she managed a robust studio program of 85 faculty, international workshops, and oversaw DFAC’s studio expansion on three campuses. An accomplished artist, Christine shows her mixed-media work alongside her parents, veterans of the outdoor arts festivals, at the Painted Fish Gallery. Christine is also a founding member of the 24 Hands Printmakers Collective, showing frequently throughout the Tampa Bay area. Her work has been exhibited throughout the U.S. and in Japan and included in collections such as the Marriott Corporation, NBC, and the curator of the Fogg Museum at Harvard University.

“At PCCA, I found my tribe not only in the visual arts, but also in the cross-departmental collaboration with students in other programs. The program helped to set me on a trajectory that has led me full circle to come back to our community and support our future artists. From AP studies and summer college programs to scholarships and exhibitions, PCCA opened opportunities and professional/real world experiences that I never thought possible.”

### **George Retkes, Class of 2006**

George Retkes is a Hungarian-American sculptor based in St. Petersburg, Florida. He attended the Pinellas County Center for the Arts at Gibbs High School majoring in Visual Arts and graduating in 2006 with honors. Afterwards George promptly relocated to Sarasota where he earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Ringling College of Art and Design in 2010 with a focus on metal sculpture and metal casting. Following his time at Ringling, George moved back to St. Petersburg and worked in residential construction. While having a hand in all phases of the planning and

execution of high-end residential renovations and new construction, he continued to create personal work and exhibit in group shows in the greater Tampa Bay area. In November of 2014 George began to work with Mark Aeling of MGA Sculpture Studio - engaging in the design, fabrication, and installation of sculptural objects in a variety of mediums. To this day George maintains a full-time position as shop manager and lead fabricator at MGA. Together with his partner Laura Spencer, he continues to seek out new opportunities to engage in creative projects of any caliber through the newly formed ARTONOMY, LLC.

### **Christin Ripley, Class of 2001**

Christin Ripley. BFA Graduate 2005. Studied sculpture & printmaking in NYC. Lived in NYC for 14 years working in: library/museum book & paper conservation, maritime museums, art supply stores, and for artists. Currently resides in the Hudson Valley operating a studio/storefront fabricating a line of hand-printed textile & paper goods distributed to interior designers & independent stores, as well as offering full seamstress & fabrication services in her shop.

"I'm incredibly grateful I got to study with Mr. Miller, Ms. Walker, Mr. Hansen, Mr. Johnson & Mr. Bewley. They are a dream team! The skills they taught us at PCCA were college level, and gave me a head start upon entering art school. I look fondly on my time at PCCA. The deep connection and encouragement I felt from my high school art teachers is more resonant than any of my college professors. My teachers & the facilities at PCCA gave me unbelievable opportunities like how to: weld from Mr. Miller, construct composition/perspective/color from Ms. Walker & Mr. Johnson, photograph our work to create a professional portfolio, and exposure to bookbinding & printmaking from Mr. Hansen - teaching us silkscreen, lithograph, and plaster mold making/clay casting. I didn't know it in high school - but the introduction to printmaking from Mr. Hansen profoundly impacted me, and I've found myself over the years seeking out bookbinding & printmaking internships/residencies/jobs to learn more, and currently informs my studio practice as I use printmaking techniques on fabric. It was incredible to be exposed to all the above techniques & skills as a teenager!

### **Breanne Roberts, Class of 2002**

Breanne went to USF to continue her art studies after graduating from PCCA in 2002. While mostly helping to run her family's business since leaving school, she has continued to work in various media and has sporadically participated in small shows. With no specific favorite media, her work is varied in surface and medium and tends toward fantastical in subject.

"My personal experience at PCCA created lifelong friendships I continue to this day with many former classmates. I have many favorite memories from my time there, and several of my former teachers on Facebook. I suppose of particular impact was Mrs. Walker and her encouragement to try many new media. Without that, I may never have tried to make my own paper or used walnut ink. She built my confidence up enough to continue exploring new styles and media to this day."

### **Gabrielle Roberts, Class of 2002**

Gabrielle Roberts attended PCCA from 1998-2002 before seeking a Fine Arts degree at the University of South Florida. Never pursuing art as a business, Gabrielle has continued to pursue art more casually, showing at small venues on rare occasions. First studying oil painting in Mr. Myron Hansens's class has had a lifelong impact on this artist, creating a passion for creating both still life paintings and portraits in oils. Art History with Mr. Alan Johnson also gave this artist a love of both Roman art and architecture and Baroque painting. This artist made forever friendships with many students while at PCCA, all of whom pursue their art to this day.

Preferring usually to paint with the brown and rust underpainting technique used by many Baroque artists, this piece was painted *alla prima*, using a paintbrush taped to a long stick and without wearing much needed glasses to produce a painting focused mainly on how one's perception of color changes when everything blurs together.

### **Scott Schauer, Class of 1996**

"I graduated from the PCCA in 1996 and moved to NYC in 2002 where I currently live. I work professionally in Visual Display and in my spare time I create art and music.

"I very much appreciate my experience at PCCA, not only for the technical skills I learned, but also for its guidance towards developing a creative and unique thought process."

### **Jay Schmittau, Class of 2012**

Jay Schmittau continued their art education at UCF where they earned a B.A. in Fine Arts. Currently, they are a tattoo apprentice in St. Petersburg, Florida.

"One of my Favorite memories of PCCA was my solo show at Studio@620. My cousin from New York came down to help me set up. Miss Nogami used the bus to help transport my art. It was such a highlight of my high school experience."

### **Cindy Shatto, Class of 1990**

Cindy Shatto is a watercolorist who specializes in painting animal portraits in a realistic and whimsical style. She enjoys painting a variety of animals, from family pets to exotic wildlife. Cindy feels fortunate to have had the opportunity to participate in the PCCA program and is grateful for the skills and experiences that she gained from it.

### **Miss Crit [Laura Spencer], Class of 2007**

Miss Crit [Laura Spencer] is an Illustrator born and raised in St. Petersburg, Florida. With a style that is a little bit spooky and a little bit psychedelic, Miss Crit designs with her third-eye wide open. She brings together traditional fine art techniques, narrative storytelling devices, and digital design technology to craft quaint and quirky illustrations. From drawings, paintings, and murals, to interactive installations and collaborations, Miss Crit aims to enchant and transform her audience - and through their experience, they become the narrators of their own stories.

"Simply put, PCCA was the most formative art experience of my life. I would not be where I am today without the strong foundation PCCA provided. From the faculty and staff, to my fellow peers, (as well as past alumni) we are among an elite group of innovative, cognitive and thoroughbred talent, unmatched by any other art education program in the country. I am so honored to be counted among such powerful and skilled artists. Thank you."

### **Jack Stanley, Class of 2019**

"PCCA taught me many things. I learned to take criticism, I learned discipline, and I learned to take my work seriously. When I look at other artists of my age and education, I realize I was given a great lead by my time at PCCA. It was a defining moment and I won't ever forget the friends I made, the teachers I had, and the experience I went through. Through the pain and happiness, the highs and lows it was all part of the process and I loved all of it."

### **Lillian Stanley, Class of 2023**

Lily Stanley is a mixed media artist from St. Pete, FL. Their work frequently explores themes of gender, sexuality, spirituality, and the avant garde. They are currently working as an artist assistant at the Gulfport Community Arts Center and will be attending St. Petersburg College in 2024.



"I graduated from PCCA in May of this year, as somewhat of a legacy student- both of my older siblings attended before I did (in fact, all three of us are featured in this exhibition!) I was 3 years old when my oldest sibling started at Gibbs, and I have early memories of going to her gallery shows on campus. Funnily enough, I remember thinking her art was odd and scary, but I was nonetheless fascinated with it because it was something I had never seen before. My next sibling attended when I had just started middle school. I was completely blown away by every gallery show- I wanted so badly to be just as skilled as my sibling and their peers. When I saw their senior solo exhibition, I knew for sure that I wanted to attend the same program so that I could have my own serious gallery show one day (this dream came true!) Not only are my siblings the reason I make art in the first place, but they are also the reason I chose to be a part of PCCA."

### **Rowan Starfell, Class of 2014**

"I am a multimedia artist who is fascinated by the tactical nature of art and how different mediums interact. I am currently mostly working in pen and ink and watercolor but I am also drawn to relief printmaking and the process of carving the wood or linoleum blocks to create an edition of prints. My favorite subjects and inspiration in art are stories and nature and the planet we call home. When I am not at work I am drawing or teaching myself how to whittle and carve wood. If I am not making art you can find me riding my bicycle around St. Petersburg, FL.

My time at PCCA taught me the basic principles of drawing, design, 3d form and the benefits of truly putting your time into something you care about. My most important take away after four years in the program was being able to think creatively and not being afraid of being completely awful and awkward at something the first time trying it. Practice is everything in art or anything one tries in life. The deepest thank you to all the wonderful teachers I had while at PCCA but I big thank you for Yoko Nogami always pushing me and making sure I was mostly on time with my assignments senior year. Deadlines are my main nemesis in life and unfortunately they never go away and they always sneak up on you. And to Alan Johnson and his fun art history class and sophomore year drawing."

### **Dara Vance, Class of 1991**

Dara Vance is a 1991 graduate of PCCA's visual art department. She also taught at PCCA from 2007 to 2012. After graduating from PCCA, Dara earned a BFA, MFA, MA Ed., MA, and PhD. Dara currently lives in West Virginia where she directs a federally funded work force development and recovery center for people experiencing opioid addiction.

### **Michael Vasquez, Class of 2001**

Michael Vasquez is an American artist most recognized for his works that explore identity and the cultivation of community amidst an inherent disposition of broken homes inside marginalized neighborhoods. Through figurative painting and portraiture he legitimizes this complex social landscape; narrating neighborhood events, mischief, and the trials and tribulations that come with the territory as his subjects navigate the expectations and pressures of their peers and society at large. Vasquez cites his upbringing as an only child of a single parent mother—growing up without a father figure, and without siblings— as a source of inspiration for the work, and what attracted him to social situations where notions of an “extended family” were prevalent; and where a sense of, or an illusion of, identity, community, and wholeness existed.

Michael Vasquez was born in St. Petersburg, Florida; USA where he currently lives and works. He graduated from New World School of the Arts in Miami, Florida in 2005 and began his career as an artist. His work has been exhibited both nationally and internationally in galleries and institutions such as the Saatchi Gallery, London; the Americas Society, New York City; The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery, Washington D.C.; and in Florida at the Frost Art Museum; MOCA North Miami; the Orlando Museum of Art; the Naples Museum of Art; the Bass Museum, and the Miami Art Museum. In addition, he has mounted solo museum exhibitions at the Kemper Museum of Art, Kansas City, MO; the University of Tennessee, Chattanooga, TN; and the Miami-Dade College Museum of Art + Design, Miami, FL.

Vasquez’s work is a part of many notable collections including MOCA North Miami, the Perez Art Museum Miami, the Nova Southeastern University Museum of Art, The Dean Collection, The Franks-Suss Collection, the Microsoft Art Collection, the Montblanc Cutting Edge Art Collection, and The Rubell Family Collection, among others.

Currently, his work is included in “The Culture: Hip Hop and Contemporary Art in the 21st Century,” which debuted at the Baltimore Museum of Art and will subsequently travel to the Saint Louis Art Museum; Schirn Kunsthalle Frankfurt, Germany; Cincinnati Art Museum, and Art Gallery of Toronto, Canada.

### **Raul Vazquez, Class of 2009**

“Since my time at PCCA I’ve done much traveling around the country, always returning to St. Petersburg. I haven’t taken time to really dive back into being a full time artist but through my travels I have gathered much inspiration for future work that I’m eager to explore. PCCA has and forever will be one of the best parts of my life and without a doubt is one of the best programs in Pinellas county.”

### **Julie (Ferguson) Vo, Class of 2001**

Upon returning from an extended trip abroad, inspired by the historic structures, Julie Vo decided to pursue studies in the field of Architecture. After earning her Master of Architecture degree, she now works for a local firm.

She is constantly making, and practices many crafts in order to keep her hands busy; including: knitting, sewing, and more recently quilting. Despite its age, she is still sewing on the same humble machine she learned on while spending free periods in the Costume shop.

She is married with two darling littles, one of whom is featured in her piece on exhibit.

"I loved learning to paint with Mr. Hansen and Mr. Johnson; however, my current life does not provide the time nor space needed for such adventures. Bolstered by my experience gained in the Costume Shop with Mrs. Kelley, Fiber arts have become more accessible, being able to piece and sew when time permits. I am able to express my color sense learned through paint with techniques of more traditional craft making."

#### **Lauren Watters Hamashima, Class of 2014**

After receiving her BFA at the Maryland Institute College of Art (MICA), Lauren Watters went on to become an Admission Counselor at the very same institution. As an Admission Counselor she helps young artists find their creative pathways and works as an advocate within the college to help provide opportunity to those with potential and passion. Alongside her work in Admissions, Lauren continues her creative practice and exhibits her work.

"I look back at PCCA and see an experience that not only prepared me for a creative career, but I also see a community of peers and professors that continue to push young artists to be their very best, inspire them to find new directions within their work, and most importantly guide them to find their unique visual voices. Every year I'm thrilled to see the amazing students coming from the program."

#### **Rhiannon Wistrand, Class of 2002**

Rhiannon attended and graduated PCCA in 2002. She pursued various media and was very active in creating new work. With no particular passion for one media, she created acrylic paintings, digital painting and manipulations, graphic design, and much more. She worked yearly with the Kachemak Bay Highland Games to create memorable t-shirt designs, with a retrospective of her designs and a memorial to her on the newest shirt. Her work is dearly collected and kept by many friends and family members, and this piece is from the collection of another classmate. It is the last surviving piece from her senior art show.

Rhiannon passed away in December 2022 following a long battle with cancer. Her legacy is of encouragement to seek medical care regularly and take care of your health while being your own best advocate.

### **Brittany Worlinsky, Class of 2004**

Brittany Worlinsky has exhibited with curators from the Huffington Post Arts Blog, Hashimoto Contemporary, Sasse museum, Proxy Place Gallery, bG Gallery, Jamie Brooks Fine arts, and House of Wren, along with exhibiting nationally in Florida, Virginia, Washington, Missouri and California and internationally in Seoul, Korea. Her paintings were featured in "The Party" movie, directed by Julianna Robinson, recently exhibited in Oceanside in Malibu and in Bergamot Station in Santa Monica, CA.

"As a working artist I can now reflect on the experimentation that was encouraged, was at times frustrating but opened up new possibilities of growth and also helped the young artists explore. Mr. Hansen's class was one of my favorites with being true to my art and craft. Mr. Johnson helped me to reflect on where I was going conceptually and pushed my senior project to a depth I'd hoped I would one day find inside of my art.

"I believe that it's up to us, as artists, to lift each other up and encourage the entire world to express themselves through art. The teachers at PCCA helped spread the messages of artistic expression and are true inspirations in this world."

### **Alex Zak, Class of 2007**

Alex Zak makes work that explores the flattening of culture in tourist imaginaries of Florida. Using a wide variety of materials—such as found objects, sand, textiles, clay and wood, among others—they rework images and symbols informed by the desire and decadence in sites of leisure and colonial fantasy. In doing so, Zak creates installations, sculptures, videos, and performances that reflect on the obscured state of local ecologies, history, culture, and labor as a means of interrogating the visual landscape of sites of leisure.

Zak Received both a Bachelor of Fine Arts and a Bachelor of Arts in Visual and Critical Studies from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and recently received their Masters of Fine Arts in Sculpture from Yale School of Art. They have exhibited in Chicago, IL, New Haven, CT, New York, NY, Boston, MA, St. Petersburg and Tampa, FL and Varanasi, India. They are currently a lecturer at the School of The Museum of Fine Arts at Tufts University, Boston.

"PCCA gave me the opportunity to explore making in a way that would have been difficult to access otherwise. With the support of the faculty and program, I could envision a future that focused on rigorous creative endeavors in a way that would not have been possible. My experience there truly shaped my personal and professional trajectory. I feel truly indebted to the program and the faculty for providing the space for me to take the creative risks I could."

### **Madison Zalopany, Class of 2007**

Madison Zalopany is a disabled artist and access worker based in New York City. For over a decade, she has worked with museums, theatres, galleries, and other cultural institutions to eliminate or mitigate socially constructed barriers and foster a more inclusive space for people of diverse backgrounds and abilities.

Select clients include:

- New York Foundation for the Arts
- The National Museum of Women in the Arts
- The Whitney Museum of American Art
- Oral History Association
- United States Artists
- Wexner Center for the Arts
- The Nelson-Atkins Museum of Art
- Playwrights Theater
- Brooklyn Arts Exchange
- Charlotte Street Foundation

### **Stephanie McKee Zielinski, Class of 2007**

"Mr. Miller was my art teacher from 2004-2007. I taught in his classroom from 2019-2021, years after he passed away. I found his old blue toolbox and wrote my name below his. I thought of Mr. Miller every pitch black morning climbing the stairs that he also climbed to the classroom. What he taught me I passed on to the generation of students entrusted to my care. 'Why act like a student artist when you can act like a professional artist?' Sixteen year old me agreed, and thirty year old me asked my students the same question."

Stephanie McKee Zielinski graduated from the Maryland Institute College of Art in 2010. She has worked as a community artist in prisons, schools, and community centers across South Africa, Maryland, Washington, and Florida. From 2013 to 2021, Stephanie taught art in Pinellas County Schools, most recently at PCCA.

Her career has also included presenting electronics live on-air at HSN for the past ten years. Since 2021, she has produced and hosted educational events for tech entrepreneurs. In 2023, she exhibited her work at The Hive St. Pete, and completed a

commission of 500 AI artworks for a tech conference hosted by Google in San Francisco. She maintains her art practice out of her home studio in St. Pete.