

## The Gallery

One year from when it began, the community art mural finally stands ready to be seen, shared, and enjoyed. Over 30 artists took the creative plunge to join in this artistic effort, each selecting their favorite chunk from the originally blank 50-foot canvas. Many of these artists initially thought they had nothing to contribute, but we believe the wall tells a different story. The unique vision of each artist was given free rein to grow in any direction, and the beauty of the individual segments can only be surpassed when considering the work as a shared and unifying whole.

Contributing artists: Scott Van Domelen, Matthew Carmichael, Jesse Tubb, Richard Lafosse, Rachel Pearl, Anne Simpson, Jessie DeJesus, Brianne Kalach, Chris Branagan, Vanessa Spring-Frank, Gary Covington, Chris Reynolds, Jenn & Lorenzo Trujillo, Troy McKay, Lauren Geist, Kate Spinello, Kristi Meacham, Adrienne & Sarah Doctor, Nate Lafosse, Richard Viglucci, Grace Chin, Sidonie Wade, Josie Dell'Omo, Rachel Whelan, Ray Zenobia, Holly Santillo, Paige Fremder, Tracy Wilkerson, Troy Paolantonio, & Scott Keen.

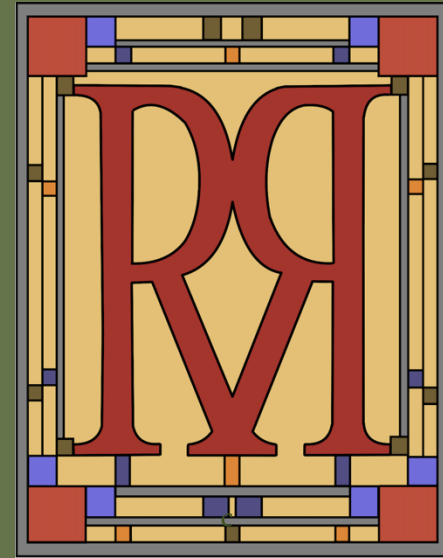
### Contact Us

We'd love to hear what you thought about The Gallery! If you have comments for a specific artist just send those our direction and we will be sure to pass your words along.

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**"The Gallery" at Rainbow Ridge**  
*Opening Gala & Artist Reception*

**March 26<sup>th</sup> 2023**

*New logo designed by Scott Van Domelen*

# The Gallery: Works



## (1) Anne Simpson

The picture primarily shows a rainbow, but superimposed on it are cherry blossoms. The cherry blossoms start with just a few on the left, where it is cold, increase their numbers through the green and the yellow areas with more and more blossoms, but then they start to shrivel and die in the heat of the orange and red.

## (2) Ray Zenobia

My rainbow person is very proud of who they are and are above the clouds happy for who they are. So you see them jumping with joy because they are unstoppable and proud.



## (3) Nate Lafosse

It looks cool. It's a guy holding up the wall.

## (4) Adrienne & Sarah Doctor

At some point between childhood and adulthood, many individuals find barriers when asked to freely create visual art. There seems to be a point where many individuals become self-conscious about their artwork and more hesitant to unabashedly create. My daughter Sarah was born in 2019, and during the pandemic in 2020 when she was 14 months old, we started creating lots of art together. She started with scribbling. She then started asking ME to draw specific things, most frequently cats. I never recall having much of a talent for visual arts so I remember thinking, "oh no. I can't draw." But then I saw her carefully watching me. She wasn't too concerned with what my cat looked like but she was watching how I approached the challenge. I realized that the best thing I could do for her was to model confidence. I would put aside my self-doubts and deliver her a masterpiece. I would never say I couldn't do something and just go for it! Sarah is now 4 and we still enjoy drawing and painting together. I admire her ability to create art without any hesitations. She really goes for it. When Leigh put out the call for artists for a mural, my initial reaction was

that I didn't have anything to contribute. It then occurred to me that I do. We all do. The painting is of mountain ridges with many different colors as a nod to the "Rainbow Ridge." Sarah added a few colors herself. May we all have the confidence of a young child and preserve that for as long as possible.

## (5) Sidonie McCray

This minimalist work was inspired by Leigh and Kevin's love of theater as one of the many threads binding together their beautiful partnership. Muted colors and blank sections were designed as a contrast to its vibrant surroundings for days where we feel overstimulated and need space.

## (6) Troy Paolantonio (IG: ARTroyPaolantonio)

Troy has been a flutist for over 30 years and has just recently entered the realm of painting. Beginning in June 2021 with a homemade pendulum, leftover paint samples from Lowes, and an initial interest in just making a few pieces to decorate his new home, 60+ works later, this is now an unstoppable force of expression.

At Rainbow Ridge I was honored to be able to create for "Space #19" at the request of Leigh Lafosse and Kevin Simpson. My medium is the pendulum, abstract color and geometry. The shape of space 19, with its notch in the middle of the lower edge immediately spoke to me that this point would be its "center of gravity." The choice of colors, very simple. I am a Blue obsessed person and artist. My eyes are blue, and even my house is blue, along with how I decided to decorate on the inside. As stated before, the paint I had left over from my new home's interior constituted three specific shades of blue, one light, one medium, and one dark. The choice in using these three blues was to act as my personal calling card, a piece of my blue heart 💙. The taping off of tiles across the space, contrasted by white lines, edges and the pendulum spiral 🌀 create a form to draw an observer's eye, and then look even closer to see the details of broken lines in the spiral and the subtleties of the shades and phasings of my personal blues underneath. Blue for many conveys or indicates sadness. I too am a sad person, but for me, blue is my joy, and to give it in any form, especially art, whether specific or abstract, is to give that same joy as well! Love 💙

Troy is excited to announce his first gallery showing, running from March 31-July 1<sup>st</sup> at the Arete Gallery in New Hope, PA.

(7) Richard Lafosse (Leigh's Dad)

NASA Shuttle Mission Patches: I furnished weather support for 66 shuttle missions from December 1993 - April 2009. Lead Meteorologist for 11 missions. Most of those mission patches are included on the piece. Patches were designed by each astronaut crew and their last names are listed on the patch. STS - 68 September 1994; STS - 69 September 1995; STS - 77 May 1996; STS - 83 April 1997; STS - 87 November 1997; STS - 96 May 1999; STS - 92 October 2000; STS - 104 July 2001; STS - 111 June 2002; STS - 121 July 2006; STS - 122 February 2008; STS - 107 patch on the far left was the Columbia mission that was lost on reentry over Texas in February 2003. (Note: I don't consider this an art piece but Leigh insisted I participate.)

(8) Gary Covington

The circle section got its inspiration from floating dandelions. The other is sun rising or setting over rainbow ridge, with downed trees in the forefront. Medium wood. Wood in its natural state and colors.

(9) Holly Santillo

Hello, I'm Holly Santillo and I love to paint. This lovely lady was born from the challenge of how to work with the funky shape and air vent in my chosen spot. Don't let the fact that it's an air IN-take vent bother you. When I saw it, I could only think of the feeling of breath and delight in a dandelion captured by a closeup photo my new boyfriend (now husband) took of me ages ago. It was fun to explore how a swirling paint brush can make the effect of swollen pixels, and how black hair is full of different colors.

(10) Chris Branagan

I started taking photography seriously in 2009. One of the first (and coolest) upgrades to my gear was a 105mm f/1.4 lens, commonly called a macro lens. It's got a minimum focal distance of one inch, so you can get super close to the subject, and the detail is amazing. One evening I had a fire going in my living room, and on a whim, grabbed my camera and pointed the 105mm at the flames. I was still new to photography and was trying to get a more thorough handle on depth of field by experimenting with different aperture settings. I was also trying out different shutter speeds to find the perfect amount of softness or blur as the flames danced inside the fireplace. I use that metaphor intentionally, because the end results were images in which the flames took on a very graceful look, and I think, presented a sense of movement reminiscent of an elegant dancer. Oh, and I didn't actually *need* to get one inch from the flames, so I finished the session with my eyebrows fully intact.

(11) Rachel Whelan

"Sunsets and sunrises over the Colorado Front Range were my daily view growing up in the Denver suburbs. I wanted to capture in color and texture the range of views seen over a childhood. Almost cartoon-ish and thick at close range, the work opens up and softens from a distance, much like the time and distance of my adult life as a mere visitor to the splendor of a Colorado mountain sun-show."

(12) Troy McKay

"The Near Escape" is a unique Lego creation encapsulating the best of three-panel storytelling combined with the youthful delights of Kevin Simpson. The artist enjoyed the challenge of superimposing the cubical world of Lego into the unique shape of this 2-dimensional mural while maximizing the Batman theme... plus he just likes playing with toys.

(13) Jesse Tubb

I've been striving to find more whimsy and joy in my life lately and when I thought about how to capture that, this idea immediately came to mind. When the initial request to secure a spot on the wall was sent out, this area wasn't given a number or identified as a possible location for someone to choose and that was really intriguing to me. This image of me checking out the amazing art work from this neutral space was like me looking at the project as a whole; in awe of other's creativity and curious about what other people's passions are. [PQ Coach](#), [ACC ICF certified](#), [Life and Engagement Coach](#) 301-325-6466- [JesseTubb.com](#)

(14) Scotty Van Domelen: "Blue Betsy"

I chose Betsy as the subject for my contribution to Rainbow Ridge's shared mural because Leigh and Kevin's wonderful home has ever been a place where I feel welcome and my work is appreciated. They have created opportunities for me and other artists/musicians/creative people and provided a great place to express ourselves. There have also been many times when I arrived to a Rainbow Ridge event late after playing a gig, was able to shed the worries of the day, and blissfully fall asleep in a corner, much the way Betsy did the first night we brought her home.

The size and location of the mural segments was a new challenge for me (and my fellow collaborators, I presume) and the space is higher than it looks! I did entertain thoughts of painting directly on the wall, imagining a bit of what Michelangelo went through with his Last Judgement in the Sistine Chapel but, ultimately, solved the problems of size and space by painting digitally and printing out Blue Betsy in segments, assembling them like a puzzle. While the real Betsy is very strong and sometimes prone to bursts of energy, I chose a cool palette to express her usual mood, calm and sweet, with her red collar hinting at her physical power.

(15) Vanessa Spring-Frank

I was inspired by the prompt, Rainbow Ridge, and wanted to go in what direction that meant to me with each color representing a different color and texture for each outline. The gold outline of the colors signify a representation of the sun rising up itself in its own abstract way. Part of my style is all about childlike wonder popping out of book illustrations and wanted to give that stylistically in a bright and bold way.

(16) Kristi Meacham

I have been wanting to make a mixed media piece using old sheet music for years. When I saw that my piece would be adjacent to the sunrise piece I knew this was it! I pulled out every piece of music I've sung in the past twenty years dedicated to the sun or light (think Whitacre's "Lux Aurumque", Gjeilo's "Sunrise Mass", Arnesen's "Even When He Is Silent", and especially Corigliano's "Fern Hill".) I wanted to carry on the pastoral feeling of a sunrise gently kissing the rolling fields evoked by Dylan Thomas's words (excerpt)

*So it must have been after the birth of the simple light  
In the first, spinning place, the spellbound horses walking warm  
Out of the whinnying green stable  
On to the fields of praise.*

(17) Chris Reynolds

Kansas, in the winter, can get brutal. Out of the desire for warmth, convenience, and pacing purposes, I tend to run on the treadmill when the windchill dips low. One day, I noticed that my treadmill maps were not at all stationary in combination with my Apple watch and the Couch to 5K tracking GPS. No two maps were ever the same. My imagination started to see different pictures in my daily runs. Using the edit function on my iPhone to bring my map cartoons to life, thus began the medium of "Treadmill Art". Rock Chalk Jayhawk!!

(18) Kate Spinello: "Under the Rainbow"

We dream so much about what is out there, somewhere over the rainbow. This piece, however, is dedicated to the vibrancy, joy and promise of the life we get to live in the here and now - Under the Rainbow.

(19) Matthew Carmichael

An exercise in persistence.

(20) Rachel Pearl

I brought you a custom micro version of the original installation. <https://www.salvatorepirrone.com/#/string-room/> String Room is an interactive installation commissioned by CulturalDC's Space4: Art initiative by Salvatore Pirrone. Using a 40' shipping container, Pirrone created an immersive environment composed of string filled, plaster panels.

(21) Lauren Geist

Improvisation #1: As with many things in life, it's all about the process. After I picked a triangle on the wall, I knew I wanted to use bright colors with different shapes, but I had no idea what the final product would look like. Since I am walking distance to Leigh and Kevin, I stopped by several times to paint, let a coat dry, take a picture of what I have to decide what the piece needed next. As a classically trained musician, it is out of my comfort zone to go "off script" or "riff," so this was a really exciting opportunity to allow me to only go as far as I can see, reflect, then take it from there!

(22) Grace Chin

This small artwork represents a woman's dream to achieve greatness, embody servant leadership and make a positive impact in a world that can often belittle the hopes and ambitions of the marginalized. Women. LGBTQ. Trans. Minorities. I want to see more underdogs wear the rank of CSM.

(23) Tracy Wilkerson

Art is not limited by the frame or borders of the artwork. I like making art that makes you wonder what is past the border, using recycled materials and found objects. RecycledWorksArt.com

(24) Josie Dell'Omo

My favorite things to draw are eyes. I liked the idea that the piece would be situated on the end of the installation and that it played on the other uses of eyes which were all closed. I drew some initial inspiration from the stained glass "Yes" In the window- the idea of the light being caught in it and transferred up to the wall through the eye.

Inspiration comes in. We say "yes" and open our eyes to see what we can all make together.

(25) Jenn & Lorenzo Trujillo

Breaking our boundaries by inviting others into our intimate space through the lens of art.

(26) Paige Fremder

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(27) Scott Keen- (*yiddish: "The first but not the last"*):  
**Multimedia, Digital Transfer**

**The first but not the last** represents my first foray into music composition, a short song for unchanged voices, "Never Shall I forget." Based on the poem of the same title by Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel, the worldwide premier occurred during Rosh Hashanah of the Hebrew Year 5783 at Hasten Hebrew Academy in Indianapolis.

The design features a photo of Elie Wiesel transposed onto a picture of concentration camp victims, as well as my early notes adapting the poem to the lyrics of the composition. A portion of the final composition appears as well.

The triangular shape of the design refers to the identification badges used in concentration camps during the Holocaust. The verse on the left side of the triangle is excerpted from sculptor Jim Buonaccorsi. His sculpture ("Fuel for the Fire") of steel, cast iron, bronze, coal, and electricity evokes images of a Nazi-era incinerator; inscribed inside the incinerator is the full passage:

*Great Claims Of Progress Continues To Be Made  
A Failed Attempt To Learn From History  
The Same Mistakes Are Being Made Efficiently  
There Will Always Be Fuel For The Fire*

This sculpture was briefly on display at Louisiana State University during my years as a student there. I frequently visited the sculpture and had a different reaction and interpretation nearly every time.

(28) Richard Viglucci: "**April's Bluebonnets**"

Bluebonnet season was my favorite time of year while living in Killeen Texas. With a full thermos of coffee I would take an early Saturday

morning drive through the dusty country roads near west Austin's Balcones Canyonland National Wildlife Refuge. Sprinkled throughout the twists and turns were the bright Texas bluebonnets; colors developing continuously as the morning light changed to afternoon. For the Rainbow Ridge mural I wanted to paint something that would blend into the artful home of two wonderfully artful people and represent Leigh's home state. Utilizing a colorful rainbow palette that would arrange well in their home, I aimed to capture the defused morning sun as it set on a cattle field's Texas bluebonnets.

(29) Leigh Lafosse "**Escape**"

When asked if I'd be contributing anything to the mural, my answer was always 'We'll see!' And here we are, the day before the opening with a segment that needs to be filled due to some last minutes changes to where pieces looked best hanging. My lucky day! I love the problem-solving facet of art and creation: here's the need, here are your materials, GO! We as adults tend to forget how to play- fear and exhaustion really build up in our psyches as we age- but play and imagination are like hidden secrets to unlocking human happiness. Escape the doubt. Escape the no's. Be curious and take the leap.

(30) Jessie DeJesus

This is one of Leigh's favorite acrylic pours by Jessie, even if it isn't one of Jessie's favorites. :) Art speaks to us in different ways and at different times. There's no wrong way to love or experience it!

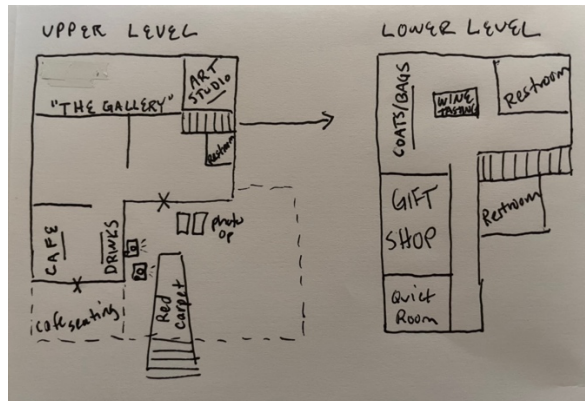
(31) Brianne Kalach: "**Gestalt**"

"There are contexts in which what is happening in the whole cannot be deduced from the characteristics of the separate pieces." *Max Wertheimer*

(32) The Art Man

An older Fort Washington artist gifted this piece to me at our community farmer's market last summer, and even though it was not created with this project in mind, I felt the sentiment of the work and the generosity of the artist merited inclusion.

## Opening Gala Details



- Three restrooms are available for use: upper level, wine tasting room, and across from the gift shop.
- Ongoing craft projects available in the upper-level art studio and all are welcome to participate.
- Many of our artists have included works in the gift shop- get a head start on your 2023 gift purchases!
- There is a 'quiet room' on the lower-level next to the gift shop for anyone who might benefit from a sensory break. Please be respectful and keep conversation to a minimum in this space.

**Our gallery has a donation collection station by the main entrance- DO NOT FEEL PRESSURED TO DONATE! We've never seen a gallery that didn't have one and felt it was an important inclusion for authenticity.**

*Any funds raised will be used to support future visual and performing art opportunities for this shared RR community.*

## Origins of "The Gallery" By Leigh Lafosse

Similar to other iconic Rainbow Ridge events, this entire project started as a joke before shifting into an actionable reality. I almost pulled the plug immediately when it became apparent that the difficult nature of the height itself would pose a challenge just for taping off segments, much less actually having artists measure and work on the uppermost pieces. But Kevin jumped into the fray, waltzing directly to the extension ladder, telling me to point wherever I wanted the tape to land and he would make it happen. (This was also an excellent exercise in communication through a marriage- Ikea has nothing on the experience.)

And so "The Gallery" began.

On the opposite side of the main room, "The Yes Beast" hangs in the large transom window. That piece is built upon a storm door and covered with mosaic glass and hidden trinkets. "The Gallery" is intended to represent a macro version of this work, as though the light was shining through the glass and projecting images across the room. The mosaic style is represented through the varied seams between Gallery pieces, the variety of textures and colors, and the inclusion of hidden elements between selected segments.

Watching "The Gallery" come to life has been a treasured part of this year. I saw young artists paint without fear in a way that few adults can mirror, and it reminded me of how crucial imagination is for generating happiness. I was able to observe friends overcome doubts about not being capable; a powerful reminder that struggle is inherent when venturing into new creative territories, but we should never let that discomfort stop us from exploring the world within.

At Rainbow Ridge ALL are welcome to be, to try, to play, and to say "Yes" to who they are today and who they want to be tomorrow. "The Gallery" is visual proof of the power we hold as individuals, and how that power is amplified when shared and combined with others working towards the same end. Trust in your creative value.

