



# HCAA Newsletter

*This newsletter is supported in part by a grant from the Maryland State Arts Council.*

Visit

**HCAAonline.org**

for info on

- Installation/deinstallation day/times
- Exhibit registration
- Receptions
- Artwork by Members
- Join/renew HCAA membership
- & more!

## Denise Brown Reflects On Her Time As HCAA President by Aimee Doyle

Denise Brown has been president of the Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance for over ten years. Members have seen her at the hangs, at the receptions, at the festivals, at HCAA meetings. She oversees the process, supports the artists, and looks for new opportunities. It's been a serious commitment—most of the time, she works 25 hours per week, but the hours increase to become essentially a full-time job when a major event is being planned and executed. Her commitment has paid off. In the time she's been president, HCAA membership has doubled in size to over 60 artists. She says, "I always get excited when we get new members joining."



grants several years in a row to fund HCAA programs.

Of course, anyone who serves ten years as president of any organization experiences some frustrations. For varying reasons, in the last couple of years, HCAA lost the opportunity to exhibit at Old Line Wine and Spirits, Doctors Hospital, and Robert Harper Books. Currently, HCAA artists only exhibit at Franklin's restaurant, the Prince George's Plaza Community Center, and Fleisher's Jewelers. So, right now there's a real need to find new venues.

Another challenge has been getting artists to attend the receptions. Artists might not realize that there are benefits to showing up. Denise said that "guests like to meet the artist, ask about the work. When artists are not there, it's a

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She is proud of the way she developed a process for doing exhibitions, handling installations, and adding venues. HCAA started with two venues and, at the peak, had exhibitions at half a dozen venues. She particularly enjoys curating the exhibitions. "My favorite thing is figuring out what works together and looks good." She also takes pride in the way she organized volunteers into committees for accomplishing the different tasks necessary to keep HCAA going. She adds, "I appreciate the support over the years of volunteers to take on specific tasks to make our group a success." Due to their grant writing savvy, she and Roxanne Ando were able to get Maryland State arts

(Denise Brown—*continued from page 1*)

missed opportunity to talk with a potential buyer.” Sometimes, the queries come from customers (this has happened at Franklin’s, for example), and, sometimes, from invited guests. Being at a reception offers the artist a chance to talk about the inspiration for the art, or their history as an artist. People who buy paintings like to say they met the artist, and they enjoy hearing the backstory.

Denise said that being president of HCAA has also helped her grow as an artist. As the contact point for HCAA, she learned about arts festivals, new places to exhibit, local arts and humanities organizations, and Parks & Planning events. She found she had many more opportunities to exhibit and sell her work, and, as a result, she became more confident as a painter.

Recently, Denise formally stepped down as president of HCAA. She is looking forward to spending more time with her family and friends, taking time for herself, and participating in shows. HCAA needs new leadership, and it is time for someone else to step up. Denise said that “I would love to have HCCA grow and continue to be a success.”

## **Creating During the COVID-19 Pandemic—An Artist’s Experience**

by Delia Mychajluk March 27, 2020 and September 27, 2021

Initially, when shows and events started getting canceled and/or postponed, I viewed it as one more stressor. Not only did I have to worry about my health and that of my family and friends; I also now had the additional financial concern, as, historically, my art sales pay my studio rent plus a little more, supplementing my social security (yes, I am in that age group).

After taking several deep breaths, and lots of long walks with my husband and dogs (the National Arboretum was a great place until it too was shut down this week), I started taking pictures of flowers, reflections, birds, and other things. One of my studio mates refers to photographs and other things we gather as fodder for artists.

I prepared some canvases, thinking that I would paint. I then noticed a piece of wood that I had started to carve (it had been sitting for years) and decided that I would work on that. It had been 30 plus years since I had completed a wood carving. I have missed carving, but, since it can take a lot of time to complete a carving, I had shied away from working in that medium.

I discovered that not having the show and sale opportunities during the pandemic gave me the opportunity to slow down and complete a carving, and rekindled an interest in the medium. In the past, I had found both stone and wood carving to be a rather meditative process, and, during these difficult times, it was good for me.

For me, the process of creating gave me solace for a time from all the stressors we are currently facing during the pandemic. It is my hope that others can have the same experience.

I wrote the above approximately 18 months ago. As a country, we are still struggling with COVID, although progress has been made since the vaccines. Many in-person vending events have continued to be cancelled, although a few opportunities are starting to open. I continued to carve wood and paint throughout the 18 months since I first started this article, and I have participated in several virtual juried shows in addition to several in-person shows on Kent Island. My studio is very full of work right now, and I look forward to having it out in the public arena. During the past year, I have been attending the Artist Gathering Zoom meeting monthly, and it has been a great support. I believe that my art has continued to develop during this time, perhaps as a function, in part, of being out of the marketplace and the focus on making art.

## **Online Selling: Not Easy, But Worth the Effort**

by Pete Pichaske

As founder and principal of Client Raiser, a D.C.-based business dedicated to helping artists increase their visibility and client volume, Danielle Glosser has helped more than 150 artists in more than 20 states sell their work. Probably as much as anyone, Glosser knows the value of using on-line tools to sell art, whether it's an artist's own website, art sale sites like Etsy, or social media sites like Facebook or—the current favorite—Instagram.

"It's taken some artists' careers to a whole different level, regardless of their art," she said of selling online. "The exposure you receive in online platforms is pretty fantastic." Glosser also knows that mastering the art of online sales is difficult, but insists it is not impossible. Or, as she puts it: "It's a science, but it's not a rocket science."

HCAA artists who've dipped their toes into the on-line sales market agree that it's a useful tool for selling art—although some might say it's closer to rocket science than Glosser suggests.

SallyAnn Rogers, for example, a painter, bead artist, and photographer, has sold more than 50 items in her dozen or so years on Etsy, and has praise for the site's free tips, support groups, and relative affordability.

Still, she admits to never having been able to figure out how to become a top seller on the site. "It takes a lot of work, beyond just setting it up," she said. "You have to monitor it all the time, see if anyone else is selling anything like yours, how are they describing it, can I spice up my description, things like that," she said.

Just as time-consuming and even more baffling, she said, is figuring out how to effectively use social media sites to draw in buyers. "I just don't have a good idea how to use social media," she said. "I wouldn't discourage anyone from trying it," she said of online selling. "But if they want to have any kind of success, it is a lot of work."

Outgoing HCAA President Denise Brown said she and her husband and fellow artist Richard Brown used to be on Etsy, but have had more luck selling online through other avenues. Many of her sales, for example, have been to people who first saw her work on her website or through online ads for exhibits, but came to her house to see it live before buying. "People seem to want to see a piece in person, but they first saw it on a website," she said.

Brown also has an Instagram account, which the experts tout as practically essential, but she largely ignores it. A personal website, Brown said, is essential to selling, including online selling.

"People who see my work always ask two things: 'Do you have a card, and do you have a website?'" she said. "It's expected these days that someone can get on a website and browse through your stuff.... I don't get a lot of sales directly online, but (the website) does bring people to me to buy."

Artist consultant Glosser agrees that a personal website is necessary—"the most important marketing tool." Moreover, she said, it should be a "21st century website," with professional photographs, a limited amount of text, the right key words, frequent updates and new postings, contact linking to the artist's social media, and more.

*(continued on page 4)*

(Online Selling—*continued from page 3*)

Some social media sites work better than others, depending on the art itself, Glosser said. But the most important factor is how much effort you put into the platform. “You can sell right off of social media,” Glosser said. “I’ve sold dozens of pieces between Facebook and Instagram for my clients. It’s a matter of taking your time and learning how to maximize these opportunities.”

The challenge of mastering social media, she conceded, can be especially difficult for older artists, who didn’t grow up with the concept. But, she pointed out, all sorts of classes and tutorials—as well as consultants such as her—are available to help. That help is not always (or even often) free, but it can be invaluable.

“Most artists are extremely competent,” Glosser said, arguing that mastering the art of online sales is possible. “It’s about being committed to learning how to do it.” And those who don’t feel up to the challenge, she said, can always hire someone to manage their social media. “It can be expensive, but people do it if they can afford it, and it saves a lot of work.”

While firmly believing most artists are capable of having a solid online presence, Glosser warned repeatedly that having one is not going to help unless the artist, or somebody hired to do the job, puts in the necessary work. “If someone is not willing to commit to it, it’s not worth it,” she said. “But they’re missing an opportunity.”

**Things every artist knows:**

**Wanderer, there is no path,  
The path is made by walking.**

**(Caminante, no hay camino  
Se hace camino al andar.)**

**—Caminante, no hay camino, Antonio Machado, 1912**

**HCAA doesn’t run itself! The more we all join in, the more we all gain. Please consider getting more involved. The following positions are currently open:**

President  
Instagram Manager (including page setup)  
Reception Coordinator  
Flyer Distributors  
Website Assistant (helping with new members' profiles and calendar updates)

If you have other areas of interest, like helping with venue installations or receptions, let us know. If you want to volunteer or want to know more, contact Denise Brown at [denise76marie@gmail.com](mailto:denise76marie@gmail.com).

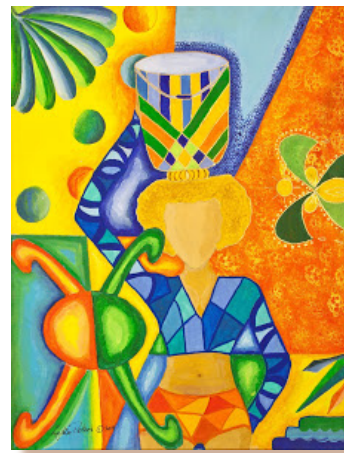
## With Teaching, HCAA, Lydia Peters Finds Herself As an Artist

by Pete Pichaske

(This interview was conducted in March 2020)

What with teaching art at Rockledge Elementary School, in Bowie, exploring different styles of art, and diving in with both feet to her new home at the Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance, Lydia Peters is a busy woman. But she's also a happy woman, because she's doing what she wants to do: making art and, after 30-some years, doing it on her own terms.

"I finally found myself as an artist," she said in a recent social media post. "I was always led to believe that an artist was supposed to fit a particular mold, either a portrait artist or a landscape artist. "Well I am neither of those. I am #lydiapetersartist: I create what I imagine, what I feel, and sometimes I just put an image on the canvas and take it wherever it leads me."



Painting by Lydia Peters

"Lydia's art is colorful, vibrant, and inventive with her use of mixed media," said Delia Mychajluk, a long-time HCAA member. "Many of her images are strong female images and reflective of her country of origin. She is interested in continuing to learn and explore with her art."

Peters was born in Trinidad and Tobago, the dual Caribbean island near Venezuela. She moved to the District of Columbia in the mid 1980s to study art at Howard University. During her time there, Howard ran an experimental studio, in which students were urged to study the array of artistic endeavors: photography, printmaking, ceramics, sculpture, and more. The variety fueled Peters' interest in different aspects of art. At Howard, Peters also was inspired by AfriCOBRA [see box] and Cubism movements, elements of which can be found in much of her work.

Peters earned her bachelors in fine arts in 1988. After graduation, she worked in a gallery, got married, and had a child.

In 1998, she got leukemia and moved to Florida. She spent 13 years in the Sunshine State before moving back to Maryland and getting a job teaching students from pre-K to third grade in the Prince George's County School System.

Four years ago, she shifted to teaching elementary school art, and found her true calling.

"That's going to be what I do until I retire," she said. "Being an art teacher, I have to meet the needs of all my students, create different ways and styles for them. So I've developed a lot of other styles myself.... It makes me more of an all-around artist and painter. I love teaching and sharing art with the children." The teaching has helped get Peters' creative juices flowing, and she plans to do more mixed

media pieces in the near future—adding stones and jewels to her paintings, for example.

"When I create my pieces, I want everyone to see a reflection of themselves, what they want to see," she said. "That's what I want my art to bring. Not what did I do, but what do you see, what does it mean to you."

Peters was a member of an art club in Annapolis for years, but her art didn't do well there, she said. At the start of this year, she joined HCAA. "I like the family spirit here," she said. "Everybody is so appreciative of everything. I feel more at home here, more welcome than I did in the other club." Being around other artists, she added, "stimulates your creative energies. Just being around people producing art is helpful."

The African Commune of Bad Relevant Artists (AfriCOBRA) is a collective of African-American artists. The group was founded in 1968 in Chicago by Jeff Donaldson, Barbara Jones-Hogu, Wadsworth Jarrell, and Gerald Williams. It still exists, and its goal is to create a "Black aesthetic" in the arts, focusing on economic, social, and political aspects of the African-American experience.

HCAA Current Exhibitions

### "Vision Quest"

September 11, 2021–November 6, 2021

Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance

Fleisher's Jewelers  
5200 Baltimore Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20781

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DENISE: 301-699-1148 OR VISIT: WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG

### "New Perspective"

September 11, 2021–November 6, 2021

Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance

Franklins Restaurant and Brewery  
5121 Baltimore Ave., Hyattsville, MD 20781

RECEPTION  
Sunday, October 3, 2021  
3:00 PM—5:00PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DENISE: 301-699-1148 OR VISIT: WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG

### "Heritage Reflections"

September 11, 2021–November 6, 2021  
PRINCE GEORGE'S PLAZA COMMUNITY CENTER  
6600 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance

RECEPTION October 17, 2021, 2 - 4PM  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DENISE: 301-699-1148  
OR VISIT: WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG

### "Still, No Justice, No Peace"

October 2, 2021–November 6, 2021  
PRINCE GEORGE'S PLAZA COMMUNITY CENTER  
6600 Adelphi Road, Hyattsville, MD

Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance

RECEPTION OCTOBER 17, 2021, 2-4PM  
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT DENISE: 301-699-1148  
OR VISIT: WWW.HCAAONLINE.ORG

### **HCAA Board Officers**

**President:** Open

**Vice President:** Sally Ann Rogers

**Vice President:** Delia Mychaljuk

**Vice President Sales:** Monna Kauppinen

**Treasurer:** Richard Brown

**Secretary:** Margot Braswell

**“He who works with his hands is a laborer. He who works with his hands and head is a craftsman. He who works with his hands and his head and his heart is an artist.”**

**–St. Francis of Assisi**

### **Upcoming Events**

- |         |            |   |
|---------|------------|---|
| Oct. 17 | 2:00 PM    | Solo Wall Reception for Marilyn Gates at PGPCC  |
| Nov. 6  | 9:00 AM    | Installation at Franklin’s                      |
|         | 9:45 AM    | Installation at Fleisher’s                      |
|         | Noon       | Installation at PGPCC                           |
| Nov. 14 | 2:00–4:00  | Solo Wall Reception at PGPCC                    |
| Nov. 21 | 3:00–5:00  | Reception at Franklin’s                         |
| Dec. 4  | 10:00–5:00 | Greenbelt Festival of Lights Art and Craft Fair |
|         | Noon       | Solo wall installation at PGPCC                 |
| Dec. 5  | 10:00–4:00 | Greenbelt Festival of Lights Art and Craft Fair |
| Dec. 19 | 2:00–4:00  | Solo Wall Reception at PGPCC                    |

**Hyattsville Community Arts Alliance**

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Co-Editors: Diane Elliott, Aimee Doyle, and Delia Mychajluk



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Bladensburg Waterfront Park  
[outdoors.pgparcs.com/Sites/Bladensburg\\_Waterfront\\_Park.htm](http://outdoors.pgparcs.com/Sites/Bladensburg_Waterfront_Park.htm)

Fleisher's Jewelers  
[fleishersjewelers.com](http://fleishersjewelers.com)  
5200 Baltimore Ave., Ste. 103  
Hyattsville, MD 20781  
301-699-5553

Franklin's Restaurant and Brewery  
[Franklinsbrewery.com](http://Franklinsbrewery.com)  
5123 Baltimore Ave.  
Hyattsville, MD 20781  
301-927-2740

Prince George's Plaza Community Center  
[Pgparcs.com](http://Pgparcs.com)  
6600 Adelphi Rd.  
Hyattsville, MD 20782  
301-454-1400