

# The Stiles Gallery at City Hall

The Stiles Gallery is dedicated to the memory of Art Coordinator Shirley Stiles. For almost ten years Ms. Stiles arranged for a monthly display of works by a different artist to hang in our gallery. Ms. Stiles was an accomplished artist and each Friday would meet at City Hall to paint and share techniques with a circle of fellow artists and friends. The City of Westwood and the arts community lost a remarkable person when Ms. Stiles passed away in 2006 following a brief illness. Her memory lives on in her art, the gallery, and the remembrances of her family, friends and fellow artists.

Kathy Butler, Ms. Stiles' daughter, continues her mother's work of showcasing local area artists. Thank you Kathy for your dedication to the Gallery and helping make Westwood beautiful!

If you have any questions about these or upcoming artists please contact City Hall [abby.schneweis \[at\] westwoodks.org](mailto:abby.schneweis@westwoodks.org) (by email) or at 913.362.1550.



## **Matt Iverson - February 2023**

Matt Iverson grew up in Prairie Village, Kansas. He spent most of his youth drawing and playing soccer. After studying at the Illustration Academy in Richmond, Virginia and working as a studio apprentice for famed artist Mark English, he attended Graceland University in Lamoni, Iowa. He graduated from there with a degree in Fine Arts. Matthew continues to pursue his two passions in life: working as a Director of Coaching for the Kansas City Legends Soccer Club, and painting at his studio every day. In addition to being a painter and illustrator, Matt has recently added Digital Art as a medium.

## **Catherine Kirkland - March 2023**

### Artist Reception

A reception for Catherine Kirkland will be held on Thursday, March 2nd from 5 p. m. to 7 p.m. in the Stiles Gallery at Westwood City Hall, located at 4700 Rainbow Boulevard. A 30% discount will be offered on all works displayed during the reception only.

## About the Artist

Born in Kansas City, Missouri, Catherine Kirkland has spent the majority of her life as a Kansas resident, moving to Lenexa, Kansas in 2008. Since 2013, she has been actively exhibiting her paintings in Lenexa and the surrounding regional arts community. In 2017, she made creating and showing art her full-time business.

Ms. Kirkland's current body of work is comprised of three collections: her space series, hard-edge abstracts and her Zorn palette paintings. Inspiration for her space series pointillist works include internationally known pointillist painter, Vance Kirkland (no known relation), Seurat, Van Gogh and Signac, as well as contemporary painter David S. Parker. The hard-edged abstracts, some with pointillist details, are achieved through the use alternative tools and techniques and are inspired by works of mid-century artists such as Lorser Feitelson and Karl Benjamin. The color palette Catherine employed in her Zorn collection is attributed to Anders Zorn, a 19th century Swedish painter; the subject matter is inspired by Art Deco designs and mid-century abstracts.

Since embarking on her visual arts career, Catherine has exhibited her works in a juried regional exhibition at the Albrecht-Kemper Museum of Art in St. Joseph and also at an invitational solo exhibition in the Regional Gallery of the George A. Spiva Center for the Arts in Joplin, Missouri. Additionally, she has mounted solo exhibits in the metro through ArtsKC Now Showing, as well as at the Lenexa City Hall Gallery, Lee's Summit City Hall Gallery, Tim Murphy Gallery in Merriam, Open Spaces, the metro-wide art festival and the Johnson County Arts and Heritage Center. Her artwork has been accepted into numerous juried group exhibitions in the Kansas City metro and has been recognized with several awards.

In 2019, a large collection of her space series was purchased and installed in The Lofts at City Center in Lenexa. It is in this multi-use property, that she opened a studio-gallery in January 2021, and works as the "resident" artist.

Prior working full-time in visual arts, Ms. Kirkland enjoyed a 35+ year career in advertising and publishing, as an award-winning art director, illustrator, graphic designer and production manager.

During her career at Andrews McMeel Publishing and Universal Press Syndicate as Creative Director and Technical Production Director, she had the privilege of working with internationally known creators and authors such as Bill Watterson (Calvin & Hobbes), Gary Larson (The Far Side), Jim Davis (Garfield), Garry Trudeau (Doonesbury), Abigail Van Buren (Dear Abby), Cathy Guisewite (Cathy) and many more.

While at Andrews McMeel, she was invited by the Library of Congress, to participate in the Preserving Creative America, a project component of the National Digital Infrastructure and Information Preservation Program (NDIIPP) strategic Initiative. This initiative was

established to define standards and methods for preserving digital creative works for 50 years or more. She worked alongside and presented to executives, creatives and technical professionals from The Recording Academy (Grammy), Motion Picture Association of America (MPAA), Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences (Oscars), Walt Disney Company, Getty Images, Warner Bros Studio, Universal Studios, 20th Century Fox, Sony Pictures and many more.

Her formal art education was as a Studio Art major at the University of Missouri - Kansas City, where she gained experience and knowledge of illustration, painting in oil and acrylic, ceramic and metal sculpture. She continued adding skills in photography, film and video production, airbrush illustration through on-the-job experiences and post-college classes and workshops.

Her latest “art-venture” is an expansion of her business to an online store, selling custom-printed products that feature her artwork. In collaboration with Felipe Roberson-Torrech, a Capoeira instructor at the Brazil Academy in Olathe, she designed the Freedom Collection, comprised of three sizes of mugs offered at the online shop. At the inception of the project, she and Felipe made the decision to donate 50% of the profits to the local Stop Trafficking Project, an organization working to end domestic minor sex trafficking.

For more information about exhibits, events and samples of her work, visit her [website](#)



### **Shirley Stiles Memorial Show - April 2023**

We like for the community to get to know Shirley Stiles, the local artist and patron of the arts for whom the Shirley Stiles Gallery in Westwood City Hall is named. Shirley was a 55-year resident of Westwood, where she moved with her husband and young family in 1952. After the new Westwood City Hall was built, she was the driving force behind the establishment of a gallery dedicated to showcasing the work of local area artists that formed the basis for the city’s well-deserved reputation as a unique venue for local artists to show without having to pay high commissions charged by commercial galleries. With her work in scheduling artists for monthly shows in Westwood, she became the city’s first Art Coordinator, a volunteer position that she held for a decade before her passing in 2006.

Over the years as an active member of the Kansas City art community, Shirley served on boards and held office in art organizations such as the Kansas City Art Association and the Senior Arts Council. She was instrumental in setting up links between artists and local businesses and community organizations - from banks to medical centers and nursing homes - making art part of the daily life of all who passed through their doors. She was also more often than not the main team member who framed, transported, labeled and hung the work, whatever it took move art out of elite settings and into the mainstream.

Shirley's creativity and artistic ability blossomed at a very early age when, as a young girl growing up in Depression-era Kansas City, she would use whatever materials were at hand to create pencil drawings of friends, family, and the movie stars of the day. Some of that art is still in existence; the paper is crude, akin to paper bags, but the drawings are beautifully detailed and executed in subtle strokes and modeling. As a child of the Depression, she was self-taught and, in fact, never considered herself a "real" artist!

Raising five children in Westwood, her creativity found other outlets. She sewed with a designer's eye, making clothing for her four daughters,



Often adapting patterns and utilizing unique fabric and structural combinations, and was even asked to make church vestments. As a Girl Scout leader, she found ways to bring art into the lives of her charges, developing projects from printmaking to puppetry.

As time passed, her own art matured and she began experimenting with other media: pen and ink, oil pastel, watercolors, acrylics, monotype and block and serigraph printmaking. In later years, she was able to work with other local artists, who were struck by her ability to master and create in diverse media. Her subject matter was also diverse. While she can be described as a regional artist because she recorded the people and places, farmhouses, bridges,

roads, rivers and bridges of her beloved Kansas City, and the trains her engineer-husband drove, she also responded deeply to nature in all its forms, so found inspiration in the mountains of Colorado and the Sierra Nevada, the California coast, and in animals who never failed to touch her heart.

The sheer volume and the variety of Shirley's artwork are all the more remarkable because for the last decade of her life she was nearly blind. She had battled macular degeneration for two decades. This disease, which she shared with artist Georgia O'Keeffe, steals central vision, which means that the viewer cannot see what they look at directly. She painted using only her peripheral vision holding the paintings to the side of her head to try to see without really looking directly. It is difficult to believe she worked under such heart wrenching obstacles when one views the beauty and power of some of her last paintings. Shirley continued to draw and paint right up until her passing. She and her fellow artists of the Westwood Friday Painters Group would meet nearly every Friday in the Community Room at Westwood City Hall to paint and critique each other's work. It was her art and the camaraderie of her fellow artists that kept her spirit alive.

Her daughter Kathy Butler, now of Parkville, MO, is keeping her artistic legacy alive by serving as the current Westwood Art Coordinator. Each April, her daughters share her artwork with the

local community. Please stop by and get to know Shirley.

## **Stephen Phillips - May 2023**

Stephen Phillips was widely known for his performance art as lead guitarist and songwriter for the iconic Kansas City bands The Rainmakers and The Elders. While Steve was recognized for his musicianship, it may be a surprise to find that he had a passion and creative expression through visual arts as well. At his music production studio, he assisted many a singer/songwriter/band in the design and implementation of their album cover designs. This skill was preceded by his interest in drawing and his true love, oil painting.

In his teens, Steve won first place with his 1978 Scholastic Arts entry of The Boiler Room at Oak Park High School (acrylic). He was awarded a scholarship to the Kansas City Art Institute but chose to prioritize his music career. He reasoned that with youth on his side, he should opt for the music lifestyle with the intention of returning to painting in his later years.

In art, as well as music, Steve had a natural talent. Encouraged by his high school teachers Jeanne Lawing and Barry Kennedy, he elected to take art classes. He would play guitar in the hallways of the art department between classes.

His style was more realist in his early years of painting still lives, landscapes, and portraits. When he took time off from touring, he would often paint during the family vacation. He took painting classes at Anderson Ranch Arts in Snowmass Village, Colorado studying under the auspices of Charles Slovek and Kim English. His aim was to become looser and more abstract, leaning toward a more impressionistic style of painting. Steve valued the use of warm and cold color spectrums to create affective and dynamic compositions. The catching of light is evident in his work.

Many of the paintings in this show are subject studies rather than refined works. Thus, you will notice some of the paintings are not signed. Like his musicianship, Stephen was a perfectionist, and he would not have considered these show-worthy.

In his retirement, Steve never returned to his own works. Instead, he spent time sharing his artistic skills with his grandchildren, helping them to create their own paintings. May his talents live on through the legacy of his descendants.

## **Emma Arnold - June 2023**

Emma Arnold is a 25 year old Kansas City native. She grew up in Lenexa and spent most of her time at Shawnee Mission West taking as many painting electives as would fit into her schedule. Introduced to art by her mother at a very young age, she focused on two-dimensional art.

Her favorite mediums are oil and watercolor paintings. Most of her subjects tend to be nature landscapes, However she also experimented in portraits based off of comics using watercolor. Many of her paintings are based off of photos her mother had taken.

Nowadays, Emma has expanded her range into watercolor illustrations and florals when she has free-time.

## **Keaton Nelson - July 2023**

This show is a very special one at the Shirley Stiles Gallery. Keaton Nelson is the great grandson of Shirley! We are celebrating Shirley's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday during August 2019 so we wanted to do a special show for that month. We chose Keaton as our featured artist because both Keaton and Shirley had a need to draw and express themselves through their art at a young age. Both had the creativity and curiosity to experiment with many media to keep their art moving in new directions. We are very proud that Keaton is following in his great-grandmother's footsteps. We know that Shirley is smiling down on this budding young artist!

Keaton Nelson is a 15 year old, self-taught, young artist who specializes in acrylic pours and digital art. He's been dabbling in mixed media, block printing, and murals for his school in Ouray, CO. Keaton began sketching when he was two years old and developed a love of all art forms. His original passion is pencil and charcoal work-cartooning and still life.

Keaton is originally from Kansas City, Kansas and he and his family of seven now reside in Ouray, Colorado. In Ouray, Keaton has expanded his art knowledge by taking sculpting lessons and meeting weekly with his Art Partner to expose him to different mediums.

Keaton was the student artist for The Ouray International Film Festival in June 2022. He produced a mixed media piece inspired by Spirit of the Peaks by director Conno Ryan. He titled it, The Spirit of the Peaks, in homage to the documentary about the Utes and the indigenous connections to the land and its uses. You can watch the documentary for free on YouTube.

Keaton has entered his acrylic pours and mixed media in four local art shows and has won first place ribbons in both shows for his work titled Paramecium and second place and the Student Achievement Award for The Spirit of the Peaks.

Keaton's future plans include continuing his art journey in different mediums. He would like to attend the Kansas City Art Institute or California Institute of the Arts to become a Disney Animator.

## **Jill Sullivan - August 2023**

Photography has been a part of my live over the past 40 years. I use art it to tell my story. My

photography brings my AWE to life. My conceptual view on photography reflect my positive point of view on beauty. In late June, 2021 a story on NPR came titled, "Awe appears to be Awfully Beneficial" This story spoke to me and helped me focus. Just a few AWE moments can change you and the focus of others as you share.

I urge you to try this out in my photos. Do you catch yourself reflecting on AWE or the wow factor in beauty. Look at it closely and at a distance at a glance some AWE is subtle and fleeting in your thoughts. Not every picture will give you AWE! Everyone's AWE is different.

When you live in AWE. you search every object to find more awe. Awe can be that ray of sunshine flashing a wash of light filled with color. In a flower look closely and you can see parts that glitter and sparkly calling you to wonder wow. In my conceptual view I am attempting to share my Awe. All of these photos were taken in the City of Westwood with a camera, most came from my cellphone.

Through covid 19 I found myself living more and more inside finding the negative energy, with awe I was able to get back my positive view on life and beauty. Check out NPR "Awe appears to be Awfully Beneficial. Find your AWE!

## **Lawrence Zhang - September 2023**

Lawrence Zhang came from Beijing, China. He is a senior artist who loves painting, photography and graphic design.

He began to paint under the study of a great artist, Mr. Lee Mer when he was only seven years old, giving him a good foundation. He was apprenticed to five famous painters to learn the art of painting.

He is good at sketch, watercolor, gouache and oil painting, especially Chinese Water color painting.

He has received numerous national and international awards held by National Art Museum of China, International Painting art Exhibition of Kobe, Japan.

After he immigrated to the States, he studied photography in the Photo Academy of Los Angeles for four years and worked as a professional photographer for five years. He is a member of PPA (Professional Photographers of America).

His has more than forty photographic works selected by the international photography show. Some of them are award-winning works.

Lawrence loves art. He has been a professional photographer and graphic designer Working in the United States for over twenty years.

## **Penelope Sharp - November 2023**

Penny Sharp is a native of Kansas City, MO and currently resides in Parkville, MO. Her interest in photography began at age 7 when her parents gave her a Kodak Brownie camera for Christmas. Her father, an “avid hobbyist” photographer, was her first of many teachers.

Penny spent many years following in her father’s footsteps learning to “see” light and composition in the physical world. In her 20s she took several Communiversity photography classes at the University of Missouri – Kansas City, learning how to develop her own black & white images while enhancing her technical skills using 35mm film.

She halted her photography for a few decades after all her photos and albums were destroyed in a flood and responsibilities of single parenting took priority. Finally, when she was 68 years old, she purchased a new digital camera and joined the Northland Photography Club in Kansas City and rekindled her passion for photography.

Penny is most interested in landscape, scenic, wildlife and Milky Way photography. Thanks to the freedom of time, continuous learning and travel opportunities, she has become an “avid hobbyist” always on the lookout for that next great image.

## **Senior Arts Council - November 2023**

The Senior Arts Council of Kansas City was founded in 1977 is an organization of Artist over 50 years of age. There are some 60 members. The group holds meeting the last Monday of each month at the Roeland Park community Center. Election of officers is done annually. The artist in the group include oil, acrylic and watercolor artist, along with photographers and various other art mediums. The group puts on a number of exhibits each year and have had exhibits at the Tim Murphy Art Gallery at the Merriam Community Center, The Endres Art Gallery in Prairie Village, The Johnson County Libraries, Wyandotte County Libraries, Unity Spot Light Gallery, and many other locations in the Kansas City area. For those wanting further information on joining the group they can contact Bryce Moore at 913- 642-1447.

## **Bob Walkenhorst - December 2023**

Bob Walkenhorst has been drawing and painting for as long as he can remember, and as long as he's not interrupted.

After receiving a BFA from Northwest Missouri State University in 1978, he exhibited in national competitions at the Nelson Art Museum in Kansas City, the Albrecht Art Museum in St. Joseph, and in juried exhibitions in Cincinnati and Little Rock.



But his efforts in painting were interrupted in 1983 by a detour into the world of rock n' roll. As lead singer and songwriter for the rock group The Rainmakers, Bob released five critically acclaimed albums, and toured extensively in the U.S., Canada, and Europe. After getting that out of his system, and finding a real life with his wife and daughters, Bob rediscovered his love for painting in 2007.

An unapologetic traditionalist, Bob says his watercolors are "a moment, a place, a sharing of an observation that is, hopefully, also the sharing of a meditation on the beauty around us."