

TO: Editors, Feature Writers and Event Listings
SUBJECT: Art Related Special Events
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PRESS RELEASE

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The Brush Art Gallery & Studios
256 Market Street, Lowell, MA 01852
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978-459-7819

Exhibit Title: Flora & Fauna

Exhibit Dates: January 7 to February 18, 2023

Artist Reception: January 14, from 2 to 4 PM (Snow Date January 15)

ENCAUSTIC ARTISTS PRESENT AN EXHIBIT OF NATURE

Lowell, MA – Join us for this small group of artists who have come together to interpret Flora & Fauna in unique ways using wax, pigments, and other media.

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

After years of exploring many types of media, Kellie Weeks is now focused on painting with pigment sticks and encaustic. While using encaustics for their insurmountable quality, depth, and brilliancy, she also incorporates dry pigments, metal leaf, shellac, and other mixed media as vehicles to develop a whole lexicon of imagery. She was exclusively an abstract painter until she was confronted with a life changing event that evoked a shift in her work, prompting her to include flowers as part of her creative repertoire. The dynamic compositions in her artwork tend to describe simple relationships and how they relate to human journeys and transformations. Kellie's work has been exhibited nationally in both juried and group shows, and is included in many private and public collections.

Charyl Weissbach explores nature's vastness and the details found within it. These elements emit aesthetic sensations of harmony, expressions of timelessness, and feelings of inspiration that transcend space and time. The imagery of her work does not accurately represent nature; rather, she tries to unveil an abstraction of its character, capturing ethereal beauty to raise awareness for the preservation of our world. Charyl's Baroque series depicts the details found within nature. With the use of hand-made stencils, tjaps, and gilding techniques, these

ornamental arboreal based paintings have an abstract quality to them that aim to capture the beauty and harmony found within nature's varied patterns.

Using paint sticks, encaustic, metal leaf, and disparate materials on various substrates, Patricia Gerkin challenges viewers to note that space where two worlds meet—outer and inner. Her process is intuitive, allowing the materials to lead the way. Forms and lines are organic, and surfaces are deeply textured as if hiding a mystery. Layer upon layer, her works exude a tactile quality and a sense of something beneath the surface. Ms. Gerkin uses the natural world as her metaphor, reflecting the paradox of constancy/change, static/shifting ground, and the unrelenting message of the passage of time. Her environmental concerns include vanishing species, increasingly violent weather patterns, the health of the oceans and their bleached corals and dying kelp forests, and the impact of human behaviors on the health of our planet.

Debra Claffey's experience in horticulture and organic land care has led her to focus on the plant world and the assaults on the soil, biodiversity of plant species, and the protection of native flora. She celebrates plants: their great age and history on the planet, their intelligence and successful adaptations, their beauty of form, shape, and infinite color. Debra marvels in our new knowledge of their ways of communication, of making themselves attractive to us and other species, and the trading of "goods and services" that goes on between plants, fungi, bacteria, insects, birds, and even us mammals.

Images: *Years Gone By*, **Kellie Weeks** 16 x 16" encaustic
Breathe, **Patricia Gerkin** 24 x 24" encaustic, oil sticks, metal leaf on panel
Baroque, Balsam Poplar Series, bleu, **Charyl Weissbach** 16" x 16" encaustic,
12K white gold leaf on Belgian linen on panel with maple floater frame
Aster Bud, **Debra Claffey** 12 x 12 x 1" encaustic, oil, wax, monotype on panel

The Brush Art Gallery and Studios is located in the Lowell National Historical Park across the courtyard from the Visitor Center. This dynamic and captivating place was originally founded by the Lowell Historic Preservation Commission, U.S. Department of the Interior. The Brush presents museum quality exhibitions, educational programs, and has collaborated with many other nonprofit groups. Artists occupy studio spaces to interact with and educate the public on a weekly basis. Studio artists produce paintings, illustration, photography, jewelry, sculpture, ceramics, quilts, and handwoven items. Associate artists display work in the common area. The Brush Art Gallery and Studios is a nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organization. **The Brush is supported by the Lowell National Historical Park.**

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