


A City of Talent

These thirty artists, specializing in a wide range of studies from sculpting and pottery to painting and mixed media, are shaping Charlotte's fine arts landscape.

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CHARLOTTE'S GROWING FAST. WITH STRUCTURES SPROUTING UP LEFT AND RIGHT, the Charlotte art scene has been given room to blossom, enhancing, beautifying, and challenging the directions in which we grow. Unbound by the conventional, these celebrated Queen City artists are painting the town in an array of colors and forms, vitalizing our city and its people from the inside out—on both sides of gallery walls.

Ever wonder about the artists behind those awe-inducing murals that identify NoDa? Or the hands that infuse our interiors with such beauty and meaning? Well, wonder no more. We've compiled a list of some of the biggest names to know in the Charlotte arts scene, in the hopes that you will not only admire their talent but also truly support their work.



ANDY BRAITMAN

Since he was a young man, Braitman has received accolades for his painting. He is currently the founder and director of Braitman Studio, a beloved school of art where he teaches and encourages young people to find their own joy of painting. Braitman's paintings are sagas of expression and inspiration. His simple subjects cannot mask the real topic of his work, his own interactions with the spaces, and the behind-the-scenes mindset of his time capturing them.

ARTHUR BROUHERS

Arthur Brouthers is a dynamic artist well known for his fluid, cell-like style of painting. Achieved through an unconventional technique that layers resin and acrylic paint, Brouthers produces complex textures and celestial bodies that reflect the abstract imagery of the natural world. Brouthers' studio is located in the basement of the historic Grace A.M.E. Zion Church in Uptown Charlotte.

VERONICA CLARK

The canvases of Veronica Clark are adorned with athletic pups and equine scenes. Her heavy strokes perfectly capture the texture of fur, whether that of a retriever venturing through a river or horses as they graze. Veronica's work can be found in private collections across the country. Her work is inspired by the love she has for animals and for rural life.

MYLOAN DINH

Conceptual art meant as a response to global challenges of migration, displacement, and identity becomes activist art. MyLoan Dinh is a part of the international community of artists known as the Moving Poets, a guild that works to build community and facilitate connection through art. Dinh's work is witty and punchy, making poignant statements through her use of materialism and juxtaposition. For example, one of her pieces is a United States Passport covered in a mosaic of broken egg shells. Her work can be found in private collections in the United States, Germany, and Switzerland.

SHARON DOWELL

The work of Sharon Dowell focuses on the beauty of overlooked structures and spaces, namely by decorating those very structures in which we live via colorful public art pieces. View Sharon's bright and graphic public art pieces at the Light Rail's 25th Street Station, brightening bridges at the 11th Street and 277 overpasses, and spanning the side of The Design Center of the Carolinas.

LITA GATLIN

Landscapes that embrace impressionist brush strokes without losing detail are Lita Gatlin's specialty. She also does portraits on occasion. After a lengthy career in banking, Gatlin decided in 2002 that it was time to fulfill her passion. "The beauty and colors of the natural world around us provide



Veronica Clark



MyLoan Dinh



Arthur Brouthers



the most inspiration for my painting,” she says. “I am always amazed at the colors in nature and how they constantly change with daylight and atmosphere.”

MARCY GREGG

Born in rural East Texas, Marcy Gregg expressed an interest in art at an early age. After graduating from SMU, Marcy married and set her art aside while focusing on her family. They relocated to Charlotte, NC, and in the busyness of family life, Marcy continued to put her art on hold. However, soon after that her life was changed forever when a serious complication arose during the delivery of her third child. Marcy was in a coma from which there was little hope of recovery, and though she regained consciousness, she lost much of her memory. Determined to make the most of the life that had been restored to her, Gregg sold her successful business in 2006 and returned to her true passion: art. Her distinctive palette gives her oil paintings life. Marcy’s art is found in private and corporate collections across the United States and abroad, including Charlotte’s Anne Neilson Gallery.

JULIO GONZALEZ

Currently the McColl Center’s Artist-in-Residence, and not to be confused with the Spanish sculptor of the same name, Julio Gonzalez loves history and color. Taking inspiration from the Mayans, his work borrows both their intriguing lines and themes, as well as the rainbow hues they utilized. That means deep greens, reds, blues, and a whole lot of presence. The mod-

ern interpretations of ancient themes make for a wonderful sensation of culture clash.

HOLLY GRAHAM

Abstract expressionism can also be called action painting. When a person throws herself into the painting, her present emotions and inclinations mix with past experiences to join the motions of the brush. Holly Graham says her paintings are an abstract expression of her daily experiences. Full of cool colors, compact strokes, and energetic movement, the paintings, and Holly, hold the quality of someone impassioned but focused.

MATT HOOKER

Matt Hooker’s paintings embrace realistic representation but usually also feature a flair for the weird and wild. Much of his work can be found in Charlotte, but you can see his work on walls everywhere from Mooresville to Greenville and beyond. As one of the city’s most talented muralists, many of his pieces are full of detail and color, take up entire walls, often multiple stories tall, and can take weeks to complete. Hooker and fellow artist Matt Moore are known for their collaborations on some of Charlotte’s most recognizable murals.

JIM KEFFER

An intelligent, successful businessman, Jim Keffer’s (yes, of the autogroup) true passion lies in the palms of his hands and tips of his fingers. His pottery speaks for itself. The simple, clean



Marcy Gregg

shapes that flow from his hands as he molds the spinning clay are all the more impressive once they've been colored. The bright sheen of mottled blues and greens make Keffer's pottery able to take center stage in any room.

CARMELLA JARVI

Carmella Jarvi's work is meant to be an evocation of water, and her colors flow with the necessary vibrant life. She specializes in glass, and her pieces are the result of multiple firings and layers, giving each of her pieces depth of color, as well as making them a testament to her own passion and personality. You can find some of her glass at the Charlotte Powerhouse building, and her commissioned pieces at Moonlight creative group and Price-waterhouseCoopers' Uptown office. Her art can be freestanding, hung on walls, or displayed as large, public pieces. Jarvi paints with glass, using heat and gravity to move, the same way that water does as its currents trace the contours of the earth.

ROBERT LANGFORD

Clement Greenberg would be smitten with Langford. The compositions of color he employs are mesmerizing: The beautiful scenes become worlds for the viewer to get lost in. The Texas-bred artist has settled in Charlotte, and you can find his art at SOZO gallery.

RICK LAZES

Complex social statements that deal with eroticism and nostalgia, liquid art, a world of bent wood... Rick Lazes' body of work can



Matt Hooker and Matt Moore



Julia Lawing

at times be very literal. “I create vibrant and sensuous sculpture that is a manifestation of my passion for music,” Lazes says, and his forms flow as if from the thrumming strings of a jazz quartet. His work can be found in galleries all across the world, from the Gallerie Du Marais in Paris, France, to the Haen Gallery in Asheville, North Carolina.

JULIA LAWING

A lifelong artist and longtime North Carolinian, Julia Lawing synchronizes color and texture to capture the essence of a moment, and to evoke the emotion and energy of life’s mundane beauty. She began oil painting in 2014, and, with that medium, felt she had found her calling. Today, her paintings are most often impressionistic, loose, gestural, and life-giving. Lawing’s work has been exhibited throughout the Carolinas, and has even been displayed in Charlotte’s own cityscape through ArtPop Street Gallery.

NICK NAPOLETANO

Artist Nick Napoletano has brought movement to the Charlotte mural scene; Napoletano’s interactive public art excites the facade of Solstice Tavern in NoDa, decorates the wall of Southern Tiger Collective, and brought women’s empowerment to Uptown through his mural outside of Aerial CLT. In October, Napoletano will be part of “The Talking Walls” festival; in the meantime, you can see his art around Charlotte or online.

ALEXANDRA LOESSER

Rooted in naturalism and conveying new romanticism, the work of Alexandra Loesser is inspired by the animal kingdom and uses dreamy strokes of warm color to portray Earth’s natural wonders. Selections of Loesser’s work are available for purchase on her Etsy shop and available for view on her website.

RUTH AVA LYONS

Sometimes the artist’s job is to lead the paint, but let it do the work. Ruth Ava Lyons’ forms take a back seat to the composition and application of color. Her control over her process is striking, and her work has the natural quality of something that grew from the earth. You can find her work at Hidell Brooks Gallery.

AMANDA MOODY

A myriad of marbled hues stain the canvases of Amanda Moody’s work. They collide and combine in ways too many too describe. It feels like swimming underneath a wave and looking up as it crashes. Hers are designs of process, naturally occurring like the rainbow pattern that emerges when petrol reacts with water. For more of her work, visit bombshelves.com.

MATT MOORE

Matt Moore’s murals have an astounding amount of color per square inch. His logo, a three-pointed crown with a break in the middle to denote two M’s, can usually be found hidden



Robert Langford

somewhere in his works. From photo-realistic, seven-foot tigers to Disney princesses, Moore's ability to capture intricacies of emotion and imagination elevates the buildings his art calls home. Like a portal directly into the fantastic, Matt Moore and his fellow artist, Matt Hooker, have turned a mirror on the residents of the Carolinas.

KYLE MOSHER

Greatly influenced by the synthetic cubism movement, Kyle Mosher's art is an intersection of traditional fine art and contemporary style. Mosher uses mixed media to creatively comment on timely subjects; his latest series, "Exercise these Demons," uses a juxtaposition of hand and screen painting, and cut paper, to create evocative symbols of sainthood and sin.

WINDY O'CONNOR

Windy's work can, at times, hold the spirit of Willem de Kooning; at other times, they can be mesmerizingly colorful Rorschach blots. O'Connor has the ability to let her work flow like water. The swirls and textures that result could not have been planned, but they began with her inclination and intent.

LAURA PARK

Laura Park's work can be found on a host of different mediums: textiles, wallpapers, bedding, and of course, the canvas. Her style is marked by exciting and unpredictable textures with bright, fascinating colors. The breadth of her work is



Amanda Moody



Mary Elizabeth Peterson

astounding, and the energy for beautiful designs and unique applications can be found across the board. Her work can be found at Shain Gallery, and on her website and Instagram.

TRIP PARK

Originally from New York, Park recalls being told early on by a professor at UNC that the advertisements he was sketching in class “looked better than they were written.” Park took the advice and entered the art-driven side of the advertising world. Today, the acrylic paintings Park creates are a mashup of inspirations, often featuring contemporary, brightly-colored, paint-splattered landscapes and animals that manage to tread a line between true-to-life and a touch of the otherworldly. He has been tapped to help on the animation side of character design for Blue Sky Studios, and to animate commercials for everyone from AT&T to PBS and McDonald’s. You can find his work in a variety of forms, from books to television to canvas, and you can also find his paintings hanging in Charlotte’s Shain Gallery.

TOM STANLEY

Tom Stanley’s silhouettes depict the intimate, ingrained scenes that a person experiences when growing up in the south. Some of his more recent work can be found along the blue line. You can tell which ones they are by the blue glass and black silhouettes of pastoral scenes. Tom, a permanent fixture in the North Carolina art scene over the last thirty years, has public installations all around the Queen City and Winthrop.

MARY ELIZABETH PETERSON

Modern, minimalist, colorful, and airy, Mary Elizabeth Peterson’s paintings emphasize balance and serenity. The NC-based artist produces paintings, pillows, and prints represented by Cotswold Marketplace, Charlotte, and currently on display online at J. Mane Online Art Gallery.

OSIRIS RAIN

Award-winning, post-contemporary representational painter Osiris Rain is surely one of the most talented painters in the city. His realistic, yet whimsical murals line the streets of NoDa. The founder of the North Carolina Academy of Art, Rain also offers training to local practicing painters of all skill levels.

THOMAS SCHMIDT

It’s always an impressive thing when artists are able to make hard materials, like ceramic, appear soft, like crumpled paper. Thomas Schmidt is one such artist, and his ability to create the appearance of malleability in a rigid material is a wonder. His work can be found in the Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, The International Museum of Ceramics, and The Schein-Joseph Museum of Ceramic Art.

MATT STEELE

The well-constructed designs of the extremely talented Queen City sculptor Matt Steele evoke industrialism, minimalism, and the interplay of matter and space. His me-



ticulous constructions appear like a criss-cross of wood, coupled with an excellent use of negative space: The air in between the beautifully placed material is as much a part of his sculptures as the actual material. The viewer is left to judge the arrangement and interact with it, creating a totally captivating experience.

TOM THOUNE

For the last 30 years, Tom Thoune has dedicated himself to paintings, portraits, mosaics, and teaching. A legionnaire of taste, his work is not bound to any one medium, though he does have an inclination for the Roman classics. His mosaics have a vivacious color that distracts from the time-consuming, minuscule detail that makes them all the more impressive and textured. Thoune is not just a master of the classics though; his paintings express his command of color and balance, as well as his love for his one-eyed dog, Ivy.

STEPHEN WILSON

Stephen Wilson is a modern pop artist. He enjoys critiques of luxury brands, celebrity culture, Americana, and the digital age. His work focuses on the juxtaposition of things such as butterflies and skulls, or Marilyn Monroe and shattered glass. Each of his unique pieces have meanings that unfold the longer you look at them. In a sense, the conceptual nature of his work forces the viewer to interact with things they'd normally take for granted in a whole new way.

Thomas Schmidt

