



# *The Power of Resilience*

**August 25, 2023–April 1, 2024**

*The Power of Resilience* features works by more than eighty adult artists with disabilities who are served by five social service agencies in Middle Tennessee. These creations were inspired by the notion of resilience—the ability to withstand, adjust to, or recover from life’s difficulties, often by overcoming fear, isolation, and insecurity. By focusing on the artists’ unique abilities and boundless creativity, this exhibition promotes growth, healing, and empathy among all people.

This exhibition comprises individual and collaborative art made by participants from AbleVoices, led by Jen Vogus; Borderless Arts, led by Lauren Rudd; Friends Life Community, led by Jim Sherraden; Healing Arts Project, Inc., led by Jan Batts; and Metro Parks disABILITIES, led by Stephenie Bailey.

All works appear in this exhibition courtesy of the artists.

## About the Organizations

### AbleVoices

AbleVoices is a nonprofit arts organization whose mission is to amplify the voices of people with disabilities through the powerful medium of photography and, in doing so, foster more inclusive communities. They teach photography to youth and adults with disabilities as a means for self-expression, a creative outlet, and for disability advocacy. Their flagship program, Photography for Self-Expression, is offered in schools, community organizations, and virtually. To learn more about AbleVoices, visit [AbleVoices.org](http://AbleVoices.org) or follow them on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn (@ablevoices).

**Jen Vogus** is a teaching artist and the executive director of AbleVoices. Vogus founded AbleVoices by combining her professional expertise as a teacher and photographer with her personal experience and passionate advocacy for her son, who has a disability and does not communicate verbally.

### Healing Arts Project

Healing Arts Project, Inc. (HAPI) provides artistic opportunities for persons in mental health and addiction recovery to promote healing, community awareness, and inclusion. HAPI exists to fill a gap in recovery and rehabilitation services by providing free art classes taught by professional artists, art exhibition and publication opportunities, and outreach events. These opportunities help participants express and externalize their personal struggles as they create art to tell their stories. HAPI serves approximately five hundred individuals in mental health and addiction recovery each year.

**Tennessee-born Jan Batts** studied art at Memphis State University and continues to study under prominent artists throughout the country and abroad. She is an award-winning artist who has been painting professionally for over twenty years. She is a past president of the Tennessee Art League and Tennessee Watercolor Society. Batts is also a past president and current treasurer of the Nashville Artist Guild. She owns her own business, Bats Beaux-arts, which promotes the visual arts.

### Metro Parks disABILITIES

The Metro Parks disABILITIES Programs provides individuals with Intellectual and Developmental disABILITIES (IDD) and their families and caregivers opportunities for sports, arts, outdoor activities, cultural experiences, and social interactions. It is the mission of the Metro Parks disABILITIES Programs to provide every citizen of Nashville and Davidson County with IDs with an equal opportunity for safe recreational and cultural activities.

**Stephenie (Stevie) Bailey** is an artist, mom, advocate, and caregiver to her adult child with special needs. Stephenie worked in the service sector and took night classes at Nashville State Community College, where she studied American Sign Language. She attended Watkins College of Art, where she received merit scholarships and earned her bachelor of fine arts degree cum laude in 2018. She has collaborated with the Nashville Dolphins, the Metropolitan Development and Housing Agency, Metro Arts, and others. She and her daughter are advocating for the parents-as-certified-nursing-assistants program and basic support for adults with complex caregiving needs. You can follow their art and advocacy on social media (@baileystephanie).

## Friends Life Community

The mission of Friends Life Community is to provide opportunities for teenagers and adults with developmental disabilities to grow personally, develop socially, and be active members of the community. Their Immersive Weekday Program provides person-driven support through group learning and community-based classes. Participants choose classes in life skills, service learning and employment, and visual and performing arts. The process of self-expression and discovery is a way for these artists to communicate who they are and what is important to them. They connect with others through sharing their artwork in exhibitions and working collaboratively. Friends Life artists are professional artists and inspire others who work alongside them.

**Jim Sherraden** has been an active and popular printmaker since 1980, and his work is collected by individuals and institutions worldwide. His art has toured with a Smithsonian exhibition and has been shown at the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts. He is also an award-winning author and lyricist. Since 1984, Sherraden's name has been synonymous with Hatch Show Print, the iconic letterpress poster and design shop in Nashville, Tennessee. For his work at Hatch, Sherraden was a recipient of the 2013 Distinguished Artist Award for the state of Tennessee, was the American Advertising Nashville 2013 Silver Medalist, and was awarded the Krider Prize for Creativity by the University and College Designers Association in the fall of 2014.

## Borderless Arts Tennessee

Borderless Arts Tennessee (formerly VSA Tennessee), established in 2001, is a nonprofit organization committed to inclusive and accessible arts programs for people with disabilities, enhancing educational curriculum, enriching creative expression, empowering career development, and encouraging community engagement. The organization works with people of all ages with any form of disability. Borderless Arts Tennessee is the current Governor's Arts Award recipient for arts leadership. To learn more, visit [BorderlessArtsTN.org](http://BorderlessArtsTN.org).

**Lauren E. Rudd** is a quilter, fiber artist, and professor in the Textiles, Merchandising, and Design program at Middle Tennessee State University. She earned a bachelor of fine arts degree in art, a masters of science in computer-aided design, and a doctorate in education. Lauren works with Borderless Arts Tennessee, enabling people with disabilities to develop their creative expression using various fiber arts methods. Their collaborative fiber art pieces are included in the US State Department Arts in Embassies Program and have been featured at the United Nations, several national parks, and the Mote Marine Laboratory and Aquarium in Florida. Dr. Rudd creates traditional and art quilts focusing on color, textures, and patterns. She has also published illustrations for a textiles textbook and presented a gallery talk at the Frist Art Museum on Frida Kahlo's clothing.



Hope McKee. *Nashville Devastation*, 2023. Fabric collage. Courtesy of the artist

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**Front (Top Left):** Galo, Graham, Grant, Isabel, Liz, and Mary Margaret. *Powerful As I Am Group Portrait 2*, 2023. Courtesy of the artists

**Front (Bottom Left):** Andy, Destine, Jon, Rani, and Stormy. *Powerful As I Am Group Portrait 4*, 2023. Courtesy of the artists

**Front (Top Right):** Bradley, Harry, Katie, Sam, Sean, and Stormy. *Powerful As I Am Group Portrait 3*, 2023. Courtesy of the artists

**Front (Bottom Right):** Nic, Randle, Sean, Rebekah, Amy, and Sarah. *Powerful As I Am Group Portrait 1*, 2023. Courtesy of the artists



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