

You Are Everything! - Artwork from incarcerated & formerly incarcerated women.

Organized by the Community Partners in Action (CPA) Prison Arts Program, this exhibition features a selection of new and old artwork from women whose artistic careers began at York Correctional Institution (CI) in Niantic, Connecticut.

Over the years, Prison Arts has turned various spots at York CI into a vibrant arts workshop, a place for collective endeavors, encouragement, critiques, and a moment in the prison that is not the prison. Artists create murals for the visiting room, gifts for their loved ones, and personal, evolving bodies of artwork for themselves.

As well, artists share their work with the outside world. The 42nd Annual Show, featuring over 1,000 artworks from 183 artists from 12 Connecticut prisons, concluded this past December at The Mark Twain House & Museum in Hartford. Participating artists have recently illustrated *The Washington Post Sunday Magazine* and *Harpers' Magazine*, and their work has been featured in many recent exhibitions locally and nationally, including at the Aldrich Museum, Eastern Connecticut State University, UCONN, and the Museum of Modern Art PS1 in New York.

"Everything inside of me comes alive when I am dwelling in my artwork. No matter the moment, art is my serenity. I am so grateful to be a part of such a great program." - **Natasha Kinion, alumni.**

CPA's **Prison Arts Program**, initiated in 1978, works inside Connecticut prisons to positively and constructively change the lives of the incarcerated and the prison environment by encouraging unique, personal, and evolving artistic pursuits. These pursuits can engender hope in a hopeless place. Participants develop purpose, creativity, self-discipline, work ethic, self-esteem, technical and communication skill development, thoughtfulness, introspection, critical thinking, and calm.

Artists are asked to create work that only exists because they exist – work that is unique, emotive, thoughtful, and thought provoking. Participants are challenged to undertake projects that require rigorous effort, careful consideration, demanding critiques and an open mind. And, while the resulting artwork is often beautiful, the greatest value of the work lies in its ability to build hope, create personal space, provide a widening perspective, foster connection between the incarcerated and loved ones, and elicit empathy – within and between the incarcerated, staff, and the world.

Community Partners in Action (CPA) is a nonprofit agency created in 1875 as the Prisoners' Friend Corporation. CPA focuses on behavioral change and advocates for criminal justice reform. Together, with the help of many partners, CPA's employment, basic needs and recovery services positively impact lives, while helping to reduce recidivism and enhance public safety.

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