My First Months

On the first day of 8th grade social studies class, my teacher, notorious for her severity, strode to the front of the classroom and wrote the word “ASSUME” on the chalkboard. Underlining the word in three sections, starting with the first 3 letters, followed by “U” and then “ME,” she then looked over her purple-rimmed glasses at us imperiously.

“When you assume,” she declared, tapping each underlined portion of the world with her long nails, “You make THIS out of both YOU and ME.” Good advice for young writers and a valuable life lesson: don’t assume anything about your experiences—or others’ reactions.

My First Few Months as Program Manager have already taught me to leave assumptions at the door. I love my job of helping agency staff and clients to come to consensus while paring a portfolio of around 300 available artworks down to 25 selections.

Tempted as I might be to expect a group of seniors at an affordable housing facility to select serene images of still lives for their walls, I’d be wrong. On the contrary, this group chose unique, 3-D mixed media pieces and a quilt documenting Iraq war casualties precisely in order to stimulate discussion. Similarly, juvenile justice involved youth and their case managers at ABCD Changing Tracks Initiative chose several nuanced black and white scenes over the zippy, abstract art I might have anticipated.

One of the highlights of my role is witnessing recipients make meaning and form strong bonds with artwork that I could never guess. This has been encapsulated perfectly by an elderly gentleman at Nuestra Communidad singing out, “That’s my girl!” as a drawing of a pleasant woman by artist Faith Hyde made it through subsequent rounds into the final selection or when a Jamaican woman made an impassioned plea that “we have” a photo of a weather-worn door “because it explains how your life will change when you walk through this program door!”

Best of all, I can never assume I “get” our donated art fully, because sharing it with selection committees imbues the work with new meaning often befitting the mission of its new home. Take for example the artworks selected by Just-A-Start, a biomedical training program that helps low-income participants find employment.

continued on back...

The masthead features “Abstract Landscape #2” by Jessica Liggero. This oil on canvas, a gift from the artist, was selected by Homeowner’s Rehab, Inc. (HRI) on Memorial Drive. Their primary mission is to provide safe, affordable, decent, and sustainable housing in Cambridge.
Finding Fay in the Fay Chandler Giving Circle and Beyond

More than 70 Greater Boston arts, cultural, and advocacy organizations gathered at Finding Fay, a free family festival inspired by the creative spirit of artist and The Art Connection’s founder, Fay Chandler. The festival was held at the Cyclorama in September 2015. Photo credit Sarah B. Shallbetter.

THE ART CONNECTION has helped families establish a deceased parent’s legacy when an artist leaves the next generation with a studio full of art. Daughters and sons often find that donating a parent’s work through The Art Connection both fulfills their desire to find a home for original familial art and makes a permanent impact on the community as a legacy gift. With Fay Chandler, it is no different, except The Art Connection is her legacy! The recent Finding Fay Festival was her children’s special gift to Boston and those who knew her.

The celebration honored Fay’s memory and helped us all find her spirit in what we see and do and how we live our daily lives. We were delighted that several of The Art Connection expansion sites were able to join us at the Cyclorama on September 12, 2015 for this special celebration, along with dozens of Boston-based nonprofits that benefited from Fay’s philanthropy.

Last year, as it approached its 20th year, The Art Connection created The Fay Chandler Giving Circle (FCGC) as a way to honor and thank Fay while providing sustainable support. If you join this giving circle by the end of the 2015 calendar year you have the special distinction of becoming a founding member of this group. To date, 41 founding members have stepped up to carry on Fay Chandler’s important legacy by supporting The Art Connection. This represents a 41% increase over the number of donors giving at this level just a year earlier. We hope more of our donors and fans rise to this level of commitment on an annual basis, as The Art Connection endeavors to replace Fay’s personal giving with broader support.

In addition to seeking ongoing financial support, through the FCGC, The Art Connection loved participating with Fay’s family, Boston’s artistic and greater nonprofit community to “find Fay” at the Boston Center for the Arts, in Sanders Theatre and in our daily lives. The Fay Chandler New Works show of 68 paintings not only generated $10,000 in donations but still left a painting available for each represented nonprofit to take home during the art giveaway. Thank you, FAY!

Please take a minute in your busy life today and every day to find Fay. I have found her at agency receptions, sitting in her seat at Symphony Hall, and daily while at my computer. She is out there smiling and enjoying the generosity we all exemplify when we think of others first.

Susan Collings
Executive Director

The Art Connection relies on individual donations.
Please donate now at…
www.theartconnection.org
Man with Many Irons in the Fire

WE’VE HAD THE PLEASURE of working with Joe Deignan, Resident Service Coordinator at Homeowner’s Rehab, Inc. since its first application in November 2011. Since then, HRI has received 172 original artworks at seven Cambridge sites. Deignan has also been a donating artist since May 2014, and his photographs are now placed at Harvard Street Neighborhood Health Center, Irish International Immigrant Center, and Devine Recovery Center. Most recently, he joined our Program Committee this September. Read on to learn more about this multi-faceted art donor and recipient.

SS: Can you tell us what a perfect Sunday is for you?
JD: Me, my wife and my dog on a kayak or at the deCordova.

SS: What inspired you to work on behalf of affordable housing in the city of Cambridge?
JD: Making quality, affordable housing available in a city like Cambridge where rents are rising dramatically as development increases is huge. Part of what makes this city so unique are the people that live here, and if low and middle income families aren’t able to put roots down and maintain the legitimate sense of community that exists, we’ll lose that.

SS: What most excites you about your position as Resident Service Coordinator?
JD: A big part of my job is figuring out what and where needs exist. I’m not able to do that without interacting with folks on the ground. I spend a lot of my time getting to know people and their families, hearing what’s good, what needs tweaking, what kind of things would make a difference, and then I get to go back to my office and figure out a way to make it happen. I love it.

SS: What motivated you to donate your photography?
JD: I saw the residents at our sites really appreciated having artwork on display. I had a few photos I took that I really enjoyed, so I reached out and donated them. I’d encourage anyone out there thinking about donating or receiving to do it.

SS: What inspired you to join the Program Committee?
JD: I really believe in what The Art Connection is doing. HRI has partnered with you all many times. When the offer was extended to get more involved it was hard to turn down.

Sarah Shallbetter
Program & Volunteer Coordinator

Recent Art Selections . . .

Jack Lillis, P-IJ-13, acrylic on paper, placed at Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center in Worcester. EMKCHC believes that everyone has the right to accessible, high quality, comprehensive, integrated and compassionate health care.

Timothy Wilson, Old Montreal, photograph, placed at Unquity House in Milton. Unquity House provides the option for independent living in one-bedroom and studio apartments to 139 seniors. Low-income residents are able to afford living at the facility thanks to financing through MassHousing.

Sarah Sutro, Night Fan, watercolor, placed at Homeowner’s Rehab, Inc. (Memorial Dr) in Cambridge whose main goal is the development of affordable housing in this city.
Work by New Art Donors!

Catherine Carter, *Undersea Tendrils*, acrylic on canvas, placed at Riverside Outpatient Center at Newton.


Jim Kociuba, *Dawn*, oil on canvas, placed at ABCD (Changing Tracks Initiative) in Boston.

This group chose an array of abstract artworks which, in their eyes, evoked biological subjects like red blood cells and plant cellulose—instilling a new narrative in the art that neither I nor the artists had foreseen.

**EACH ART PLACEMENT** bestows an utterly unique experience I could never imagine. I look forward to many more—and as I make my way around Greater Boston, I’ll remember never to assume minimum travel time in city traffic!

Amanda Bell
Program Manager
The Art Connection gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the following donors over the past fiscal year (July 1st 2014 - June 30th 2015)

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The Art Connection gratefully acknowledges the donors of art to our recipient agencies over the past fiscal year (July 1st 2014 - June 30th 2015)


The Art Connection


| Current Assets | $169,646 |
| Net Property and Equipment | 62 |
| Total Assets | $169,708 |
| Total Liabilities | $532 |
| Total Net Assets | $169,176 |

The Art Connection

Financial Summary

Statement of Activities for the Year Ended June 30, 2015

| Total Revenue & Support | $263,755 |
| Total Operating Expenses | $266,378 |
| Change in Net Assets | ($2,623) |
| Net Assets, Beginning of Year | $171,799 |
| Net Assets, End of Year | $169,176 |