

## The Longwood Center for the Visual Arts

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### A New Beginning

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to share my work with the Longwood Center for the Visual Arts (LCVA) community as we slowly emerge from a very dark time in history due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The past 18 months have been a time of inner reflection and experimentation. Shuttling between my home and art studio became a routine that provided sanctuary and opportunity. I spent the time trying new and creative ways to reach folks with my artwork.

While my main exhibitions were pushed back about a year due to current events, the thrill of exhibiting in Virginia at LCVA has finally arrived! This show captures my evolution as an artist on a joyful path of self-discovery. I take real world, natural elements such as the earth, sea, sky, flora and fauna, and abstract them through my artistic lens. Informed by my experiences, challenges and triumphs, I transform the real into an imaginary world -- sometimes whimsical, and other times dramatic.

From an abstract interpretation of forests, birds, caterpillars or the beloved Shenandoah River, I build my canvas with various textures and shapes to convey a story or capture a special place. Bowing to the ephemeral quality of our ecosystem, "Shenandoah River" and "Before You" celebrate a world unaffected by global warming and other environmental threats. The trout series honors the beloved fish that thrive in Virginia's great waters -- brook, brown and rainbow trout. "Against All Odds" shows that we can still win the race against a storm above. "A New Sunrise" projects into the future, a life without a pandemic and new beginnings, which is mirrored in "Sunspots" and "Velvet Horizon." "Baby Caterpillars," reminiscent of the large scale "Dance of the Caterpillars," salutes the magnification of imaginary flora and fauna in a fantasy world. These works are all connected as they reflect my interpretation of nature and how it informs my artistic development.

Over the past year, my art practice has been tested and reinvented not only on canvas but with a wide range of virtual and video projects. From virtual exhibitions created from scratch, to "viewing rooms" that charted my artistic journey, to "Painting Storytime" videos that tell the story, process and inspiration of particular paintings or series of paintings -- experimentation has been key. I even launched an Etsy store to not only market my smaller paintings but also to memorialize the transformation of my paintings into wearable art (from scarves to active wear to bedding and more).

My artistic adventure is rooted in hope and exploration. This solo exhibition at the LCVA is an important milestone in that journey.

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