

LIVING ART of Montana

Take a moment for yourself... pour a cup of coffee or make some tea
and relax as you read about art, nature and healing.

AUTUMN • WINTER 2007

Using the arts and nature to support healing.

calendar

2007

Wednesday-Thursday, November 7 & 8
Living Art Activity
Community Medical Center Employee
Benefit Fair

"Open Studio" on Saturdays TBA

2008

Tuesday, January 8
Camp-Mak-A-Dream, Young Adults

Wednesday - Friday, January 9, 10 & 11
Living Art winter session UM
Social Work Class

Saturday-Sunday, February 9 & 10
"Bridging the Gap" Conference, Living Art
Professional Education Workshop

Thursday, March 6 - Thursday, April 24
"Cancer, Courage & Creativity" Workshop

Tuesday, April 8
"Healing Through Nature"
Living Art Lecture
St. Patrick Hospital

Saturday, May 31
Fundraiser "The Light Show"

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healing
garden

Gardening for Life

Thanks to the Brondum Foundation, many local business donations and volunteers (see thank you list) Living Art offered its third summer workshop for people with physical limitations to ground level gardening.

Led by Martha Kimmich, a horticultural therapist, this group had a grand time learning to garden according to their individual capabilities and needs.

The six-week program concluded with flower arranging and a wonderful potluck luncheon.

Everyone who attended was able to take home the beautiful arrangement they created in the workshop.

Because so many of our participants are carrying heavy financial burdens due to their illnesses, Living Art is committed to making our service programs free of charge. Your donations make that possible. We need your support.

you're invited



FUNDRAISER
FOR
LIVING ART
**THE
LIGHT
SHOW**

Save the date
**may
31
2008**

The Light Show is the major way Living Art earns funds to support our service programs so we can offer them without charge to the participants.

The Light Show has grown into a unique fundraiser featuring innovative art and a lively, entertaining and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Please make plans to join us and help us celebrate our 15 years of service in the community.

Tickets are \$50/person or \$375/table of 8 and are available at by calling Living Art at 549-5329.

This year, in recognition of Living Art's beginning in 1993, The Light Show is dedicated to the memory of Linda Swab, one of Living Art's founders. There are many ways you can support our 15th year anniversary at this fun event. Come and help us brighten other people's lives, one lamp (or mirror) at a time!

Contact us about how you can be involved at 549-5329.

healing art

Cancer, Courage and Creativity

Last spring, Beth Ferris, MFA and Youpa Stein, MA, RDT, co-founders of Living Art, facilitated a 14th year edition of "Cancer Courage and Creativity" (CCC). Initially the workshop was intended to run for six weeks, but the participants prevailed upon Youpa and Beth to continue for another seven weeks. Then Lori Mitchell, RN, stepped in to facilitate an on-going opportunity for expression and connection. This group is still meeting.



What does Living Art offer in its programs? How does the service it provides make a difference in people's lives?

Our programs help people feel less alone. They give participants ways to express their feelings about their experience and to find positive ways to engage the challenges, trauma, and changes in their lives. Our "Cancer, Courage and Creativity" workshop uses a combination of structured, interactive art experiences and supported group interaction. The art forms include writing, mask making, and movement. Often people are "art scarred or art scared"* (*Patrick Overton, Rebuilding the Front Porch of America). We know they have all the experience they need, regardless of their art experience, and we help them realize it.

One recent "Cancer, Courage and Creativity" workshop participant said, "I have never been artistic and creating the mask was really fun. It also helped me process things I am going through in an unconscious, positive way. I have never shared my poetry before and that helped me see different ways of expression and accept my own more fully. Sharing different aspects of expression with others, hearing other's experiences, and being encouraged to be in touch with my own thoughts was transforming. Thank you for the gentle guidance and creative inspirations. You're a great team."

"The Living Art workshop helped me realize I have more choices about how to face illness and heal and live with hope. I am not alone on this journey."



Often people in our workshops begin to see themselves differently. The poem included in this article shows how one person's work with her mask awakened her to the possibility of a new relationship with herself. Her last line, "But never held gently, so gently" created an opening for a new awareness, which has led her to make more nurturing choices about how she takes care

EXCERPT FROM A POEM WRITTEN BY A CCC WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT

I take my mask home, to study it
more carefully.
Thin, even transparent in places.
It must be held gently
Very gently.

I turn the mask
Trying to feel myself in this face, ...

If I grasp the damp form too firmly,
I distort its shape
So I soften my grasp,
Clinging softly,
Gently
To this little, unfinished
representation of me.

Warm surprise fills my chest
Insight- a strong wine drunk too
quickly –
Making me catch my breath,
Bringing tears.

Disciplined myself
Driven,
Controlled,
Hidden,
Hated,
Shaped,
Rebuked,
and distrusted
But never held gently.
So gently. — J.C.

of herself. She has shared with the workshop group how she is asking herself what she needs. This is an important new experience for her.

Living Art offers an opportunity for people who are facing a challenging and often painful time in their lives to feel support and to explore their unique place in this world. When we acknowledge the truth of people's experience, and support our need for beauty and creative expression, we are supporting our potential as humans to be compassionate and vital members of our communities at every stage of our lives.

great gift idea



Living Art Cards for Sale

Living Art is now selling a set of cards by Seattle photographer Thomas Schworer. His exquisite work will be featured in a poetry book based upon Living Art workshop participants. For more information visit our website at www.livingartofmontana.org.

Cards come eight in a box of four different designs. Each box costs \$12.95 + S&H if mailed. They can be purchased at the Living Art office (off N. Reserve behind Famous Dave's) or by calling 549-5329. We will be moving, so please call first.

reaching children

Living Art gave workshops at...



Camp Mak-A-Dream

Beth Ammons, MD, Cyndy Aten, MD, and Marlayna Bryant, a volunteer, provided workshops to children with cancer, and siblings of cancer survivors at Camp-Mak-A-Dream twice in July.

On July 18, Dr. Beth Ammons and assistant Marlayna Bryant spent a morning with siblings of children with cancer. They explored metaphor, wiggled, laughed, and wrote "Once upon a time..." stories — which might have seemed frivolous, except for the powerful issues of baldness, divorce, worried parents, and death that surfaced — and were openly acted out, and mixed with laughter and a sense of commonality. They are eager to do this again with this wonderful, courageous group of adolescents!

On July 28, Dr. Beth Ammons, assisted by Dr. Cyndy Aten, did a "Sprouts" workshop with childhood cancer survivors at Camp Mak-A-Dream. The session was a fun mix of movement, writing stories about being "sprouts," and planting wildflower seeds. As CMD director Beth said, "Thank you for bringing new,

"Seasons" Bereavement Camp

In July, Beth Ammons, MD, and Cyndy Aten, MD, provided three workshops for children who had lost a relative or close friend. These workshops included movement, writing with metaphor and planting seeds in tiny pots that the children could take home, to watch the seedlings grow.



reaching the community

The Women's Club Welcomes Living Art

Thanks to Cyndy Aten, MD, the Women's Club welcomed the Living Art traveling exhibit, "Expressions for Healing." The display included poetry, art work, masks and photographs from our workshops. It was viewed and enjoyed by Women's Club members for three months. Look for Living Art cards & T-shirts for sale at The Women's Club in December.

Big Bing Theory Sings for Patients

For three years, Big Bing Theory, a talented a cappella group from Gonzaga University has performed their unique and beautiful music in Missoula as a benefit for Living Art. This year they also sang at St. Anthony's, St. Patrick Hospital cafeteria and in some oncology patients' rooms which was moving for staff, patients and the singers.



reaching professionals

AHMA Conference

In June, Beth Ammons, MD, and Lori Mitchell, RN, attended the annual conference of the American Holistic Medical Association in Portland, Oregon.

Beth presented a workshop on "Art, Science and Healing" for two dozen physicians, and Lori led a movement group. These workshops were accredited by the American College for Advancement in Medicine and thus qualified as continuing education for physicians.

Living Art is building an education program for professional healthcare providers. It will be an opportunity for healthcare professionals to fulfill their education requirements and offer a time for self-care and renewal. The income from this program will help Living Art support our no-fee service programs.

The next Living Art professional caregiver workshop opportunity will be at the Bridging the Gap conference in February 2008.

scholarship

Living Art Scholarship at the University of Montana

Thanks to Jim McKusick, Dean of the Davidson Honors College and a Living Art advisor, a \$250 Living Art scholarship to support student research has been established at the University of Montana. This scholarship will support an undergraduate researcher working with Beth Ammons, MD.

Thank You Party

In late August, the Board of Directors of Living Art hosted a "Thank You Garden Party" at the home of Felix Knauth and Barbara Hand for all the artists, sponsors, benefactors and volunteers who have contributed so much to our programs. Our thanks to our wonderful hosts, Felix and Barbara.

Special Thanks...

we couldn't do it without all of you

During our 2007 Fiscal year, thanks to the support of community members like you, over 231 people participated in our workshops free of charge, 325 people experienced our performances, readings and lectures and over 1,500 people viewed our art exhibit.

Gardening for Life Workshop Marshall & Mary Brondum Special Assistance Foundation Inc

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name, please give us a
call and we'll include you
in our next newsletter!*