OVER 100 ORIGINAL WORKS OF ART BY 65 LOCAL ARTISTS
FOR THE FAMILY HOUSE AT 241 KENT STREET

HOME IS WHERE
THE ART IS

Find out more at:
www.kentst.org
“HOME IS WHERE WE START FROM, BUT HOME IS ALSO WHERE WE ARE BOUND FOR, THE PLACE WE ALWAYS SEEK.” - DAVID STEINDL-RAST

Webster’s Dictionary defines home as “1 a: one’s place of residence: DOMICILE b: HOUSE; 2: the social unit formed by a family living together” A very basic, and quite open interpretation to what, for each of us, has very specific connotations. While the physical reality of home is a central characteristic of our everyday lives, the meaning of home is not an easy concept to isolate or for all of us to agree on. It seems to encompass a broad spectrum of emotional experience, memory and feelings of nostalgia. Is home the place you live, or is home another place connected to your history, heritage, friends, family or country? Is home a physical place or an emotional one?

For as long as artists have been making work, they have reflected on the idea of home and the myriad associations it brings to mind. They create work that speaks to both a collective human experience of home as well as to our individual notions of what home means. By creating, artists don’t really make a painting or a sculpture, they make a home. They build shelter for us to close out chaos and find peace and comfort. In a world that can be scary, sad, and painful, artists, who give so generously of themselves, construct a refuge where we are loved unconditionally, a place where we feel safe and protected; a place where our heart is most happy.

William Stover
Assistant Curator of Contemporary Art
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston
It is with great pleasure that I introduce this catalog. The images enclosed are a sampling of the 110 original works of art created for patient family housing at Children’s Hospital Boston. Just blocks away from the main campus, the house at Kent Street offers a respite for weary families. The artists who have contributed to this project have, in word and image, their interpretation of home. I’m sure these will be met with many more stories of where comfort was found by the families who visit the house at Kent Street in years to come.

This project has been a real community effort. I am truly grateful and amazed at the generosity of all those who contributed.

Sincerely,

Jessica Finch
Art Coordinator
Children’s Hospital Boston

ABOUT THE PROJECT

In partnership with the Urban Arts Institute at Massachusetts College of Art and Design, a call-for-art went out to local artists in December 2008. Sixty-five artists were invited to create an original work of art on the 18” x18” boards provided, expressing their interpretation on home. In total, 110 artworks were received. The artwork will be on display throughout the community at the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center, Logan Airport and the Brookline Public Library before being installed at the Kent Street House, opening June 2009.

THE HOUSE AT KENT STREET

The “Chateauesque style” house was built in 1889 by Andrew Houghton, the original owner of the A. J. Houghton Company and the Vienna Brewery in Roxbury and Jamaica Plain, MA. Houghton was considered a “visionary” business leader, owning one of the first breweries to use artificial refrigeration. To date, it is the only landmark brewery in Boston protected by the Boston Landmarks Commission. The property was purchased by Phi Gamma Pi, a Northeastern Fraternity, in 1954.

The brothers of Phi Gamma Pi wanted to have a lasting, positive legacy, so they approached Children’s Hospital Boston to probe its interest in the property. Coincidentally, the Hospital was in search of a property nearby to convert into patient family housing. At a significantly reduced price, Children’s was able to purchase the property from the fraternity in 2006.

The renovations began in February of 2008 and the house is scheduled to open in the spring of 2009. The completed home will feature 22 bedrooms, shared bathrooms, common areas, kitchen, dining area, and playroom as well as live-in staff space. Find out more at www.kentst.org
At Children’s Hospital Boston the arts are recognized as a powerful tool to aid children and families through difficult circumstances. Since 1997, the Art for Kool Kidz program has worked to bring quality art to Children’s Hospital Boston. Original artworks, changing exhibits and hands-on programs reduce stress and transform the hospital experience. Our diverse art collection plays an important role in supporting the ideal patient experience. A variety of artworks; sculpture, glass, kinetic and lighted artworks fill the hospital with visual delight. In clinical settings, the art becomes a way to distract and relax patients so that procedures go more smoothly. The Art Program is one of the many ways we strive to provide the best possible patient care, quality and satisfaction to patients and families visiting Children’s Hospital Boston.

To learn more visit: www.childrenshospital.org/art or contact the Art Coordinator, Email: jessica.finck@childrens.harvard.edu, Phone: 617-355-ARTS (2787).
I do not create any preliminary sketches for my artworks. I dive into the unknown path and simply follow where my energy and curiosity take me. I am interested in expressing my spiritual journey of creating art. I want to become one with the universal energy and tap into the unlimited well of imagination.

For this work, I used materials and images that children are familiar with, in hopes that they will make an instant connection to my work. The chicken family represents feelings associated with being at home. People and all the other living beings are surrounded by love, trust and harmony.
I grew up in a sea of immigrants, many of whom were refugees from Europe after World War II. I was keenly aware, from an early age, of how difficult and unimaginable it was to lose one’s home – and to have to rebuild it, re-define it, often through the kindness of strangers. I myself have lived many places in the world, always appreciating the diversities of cultures and people.

For me, the sense of “home” can be re-created whenever we gather in loving understanding and acceptance of each other, whenever we acknowledge our fundamental connection as part of the human family.

My name is “Amore,” the Italian word for love. An open heart is the center of my work and life. The illuminated text behind the images reads “Home, Heart, Love” in twelve languages.
“Home is where the He(ART) is” portrays an African landscape incorporating a traditional painted village in Burkina Faso, West Africa. A young child joyously attempts to capture two giant African swallowtail butterflies. Butterflies in many cultures represent hope, beauty, vitality, and regeneration/renewal of nature and spirit.

For the African Diaspora, home is where the heart is, and the synthesis of art and culture creates a vibrant, loving community regardless of longitude and latitude.

As an African-American artist, I am connected culturally to my origins. I choose to continue my life’s journey as an artist/storyteller, and to share my personal, creative/spiritual explorations within the context of my work.
Often we get stuck on home being a certain building, but to me Home is really where the heart is. Home is where there is love, safety family or friends. If you are a friend, you will find a friend wherever you are. Two friends who did not know each other before they met can become inseparable.

My family and I went to Canada for vacation. At the time I was fascinated with old weathered barns, it’s an artist’s thing. At one barn there was a little boy who when he saw my son and my son saw him played all day long. I got a history lesson on Canada and it’s barns and took many photographs. We stayed in Canada for three weeks and the boys played together two days each week. They were at Home with each other.
When I was a little girl, I was in and out of the hospital, having operations, and always in a body cast or a brace for my back problems (congenital scoliosis). Home is where I wanted to be. I wanted to see flowers, smell something wonderful cooking on the stove, snuggle on the couch, or have hot chocolate served in pretty cups.

I soon discovered that I carried “home” inside of me. I could draw home, I could paint home, I could dream of home. I could take a deep breath and imagine myself at home. I carried home with me.

My belief is that “home” is within us. We can “go” there for comfort and safety at any time, in any situation. We carry home with us wherever we go.
For the lucky among us, home is the safe and comfortable place we look out from when we’re not out with the rest of the world. Traveling away from home, especially for medical reasons, we too often see nothing but interiors.

These pieces are windows out to a peaceful world you may know, or wish to imagine. They offer the shelter of a tree along with the tranquil presence of water and sky, and a good dose of color for spiritual renewal.
I love working in my garden and grow most of my plants from seed. I spend hours combing through seed catalogs, dreaming of lazy afternoons spent dropping seeds into containers of soil and then waiting patiently for them to grow. At the end of each growing season, I gather the seeds into cups and let them dry over the winter. In the Spring I drop the seeds back into the containers of soil—and thus start the process all over again.

Working in my garden is one of the things I like best about being home; it tells the story of what is important to me, how careful I need to be to allow each plant to grow and flourish. That’s what home is to me: a place to grow and flourish.
All of my work contrasts what we see at first glance with what we sense below the surface. On close look you see collage elements of all sorts combined with a range of drawing materials, paint and wax as each image builds to its own truth or reality.

Each painting speaks to human experience and how we are remarkably similar regardless of age or other boundaries. Because families at Kent House are in a home away from home, I wanted these particular paintings to be playful and colorful; sunflowers seemed the perfect way to talk about ‘outside’ and ‘inside’, change of circumstance or location. When they grow in the field, sunflowers are always turning to the light, always in movement and when they are part of a bouquet, they bring their life outside with them—no matter how they are arranged.
The dragonfly is at home in a variety of environments. Dragonfly nymphs live in water for up to three years – growing and changing. At maturity, the nymphs leave the water, climbing a plant stalk to dry. When ready, their husk splits and they are ready to fly. The adult dragonfly stakes out and fiercely defends its territory.

As a parent of a child who resided in a hospital for an extended stay, the dragonfly represents being comfortable in different environments, creating a temporary habitat and defending that home. In addition, dragonflies’ iridescent colors and arresting markings represent light and joy.

Dragonflies give us hope – evolving through stages, rising from the water, emerging delightfully formed and taking flight.
In creating this painting, my goal was to reflect in a broader sense on the nature of what the meaning of “home” might be for those who visit the Kent Street house. Home is relative. We are often in transition—waiting to sail back to home as we once knew it. I worked to have recognizable metaphors and symbolic elements merge and mingle in a well-structured harmony. The painting provides a view, but it also provides the safety of the boat from which we are viewing the sky and the world. My hope is that the results serve as a springboard for both questions and reflections on the very nature of living.

“The Light of Home” is a sister painting I created to complement “The Nature of Home.” It is a simpler, purer expression of the mysteries of light and space.
For me, home is where I park my bicycle. My home is an apartment in the neighborhood. Our community shares parking spaces, sidewalk walls, and the morning sunshine.

“City Morning” evokes the simple fluid movement of life. We all play a part in making the community what it is.
To me, home means many things, but one thing is my sense of ability to control my environment. There’s always a tension between creating an orderly and beautiful environment that is also relaxing. I try to walk that balance. When my husband leaves his shoes on the living room floor, I let them stay for the night, but do clean them up the next day. The flowers in this painting represent my need to create orderly chaos.

For me, food is also an important part of being home. There is nothing more relaxing to me than cooking a dinner while watching television, listening to the radio or talking to friends and family. Food brings friends and family, and a home is really a home when you can share it with friends and family. The apples in this painting are an offering of food to my family and guests.

Finally, the use of bright colors is intended to convey warmth. A warm and relaxed home, with food and friends is a wonderful thing.
Earth is our home. And trees are home to many creatures. Trees endure every season and all kinds of weather. They welcome us, breathe with us, and shelter us.

*May this Kent Street home offer families welcome and comfort in every kind of weather.*

*With love,*

Mary Newell DePalma
Dream Home
Aimee Empey
Boston, Massachusetts
Acrylic, paper, and glitter on board

Home is always near the ocean for me. This is my dream house, set on a sloping hill with a giant prairie of land connecting it to the sea. Someday, when I grow up, I will live here.

Where is your dream home? Does it have a feeling connected to the place it might be? Or, perhaps it’s simply a picture in your head.
The sea of Galilee is the vista of my homeland.
It’s shores bring remembrances of my childhood, of family,
Of adventures on it’s waters,
Sudden storms out of the East
The bright busy mornings centered around her embrace
And the romantic calm of evening spread slowly across her visage.
My Dad has an extreme health challenge at the moment. The other evening, after teaching a painting class, I was in an agitated state. Instead of driving directly home, I parked at a beautiful pond in the center on my town. It is lit in the winter with old fashioned street lamps for ice skaters. I shut the car engine off and breathed, feeling the quiet darkness envelop me. I grew calm in the presence of such beauty—the white snow, the blackness of the night and the sparkles created by the lamps. My eye caught the dark outline of a figure on the ice. He was methodically, rhythmically pushing snow off the ice with his shovel, one row at a time. It was so calming to anonymously witness his reverie. I came home to myself in that moment. I came home to a feeling of well-being.

Painting flowers in a field, to me, gives me the feeling of all is right with the world, something greater than myself is in charge—and it is beautiful.
I am often reminded of how the extraordinary exists within my seemingly mundane and repetitive daily life.

“The kitchen is the place in the house where the ordinary becomes extraordinary. Magic as such might be called a miracle anywhere else. But this is the kitchen a more mundane realm. And although these ordinary transformations may not be the multiplying of loaves and fishes or the chemistry that transmutes water into wine, they maybe as close as most of us are likely to get to the feast of Cana. For if we are able to perform small ordinary miracles day after day, possibly these will remind us of the greater marvels the might occur outside this room.” ~ Akiko Busch, Geography of Home
I’ve lived in several apartments and have redecorated every one. As a budding artist, my room was always my palate. I built walls, tore them down, painted, repainted, spackled and drilled. When painting or sculpting, I still go straight for the hardware store—preferring house paint and wood to oils and canvas. The same rules of color and composition apply, creating a space you can live in for a moment.

When I’m walking in my neighborhood, I love to observe; the shape of a house, the light in the windows, the color of the sky. These little moments are holy.
WHERE THE HEART IS...
Cynthia Fisher
Charlemont, Massachusetts
Mosaic on board

I was working on my HOME mosaic when a severe ice storm hit here in Western Massachusetts and we lost power for 8 days and phone and Internet connections for 12 days. We spent many nights huddled about the woodstove, with candles as our only source of light, trying to not get too discouraged about our situation. It was a good time to reflect on how fortunate we are as a family to have a home in which we could stay warm and comfortable. We are a family of ‘home bodies’ and that includes our 2 teenagers who seem to enjoy just being home.

My mosaic, ‘Where the Heart is...’ represents the warmth, beauty and intimacy I associate with my family and home life.
I have always been fascinated by the “marks” that living things leave behind in the form of fossils, vessels, and handwriting. These elements recur in my artwork and speak to the notions of resilience and continuum.

My paintings and prints often have a narrative quality without spelling out the entire story. I like to create a vantage point or a vignette that is open to the viewers’ own interpretation. For this piece, the writing on the arch is an excerpt from Carl Jung’s Man and His Symbols; this passage is about the importance of dreams.
There are only a few times that I have been away from my home for any length of time. One of those trips was a summer spent working for a traveling circus. Although I had only a small room in a trailer, a few drawings of elephants, a Mexican blanket and some candles made it feel just like my room back home. The coziness made it my place, my “habitat”.

My approach to this project was to depict home as a habitat, a place of safety and nurturing for animals and people. For all of us, home represents a safe place, a place that is ours regardless of whether we are mobile or rooted to one spot.

For children, home is wherever the people they love, and who love them, are located.
The suggested theme of HOME got me thinking about the iconic image of “Home Sweet Home” spelled out in twigs, as one might associate with Adirondack or rustic design. That is what this piece says to me.

Instead of actual letters made of sticks, I am using my own vocabulary of familiar wooden shapes and color. The spur like shapes, combined with random brush strokes, suggest movement and animation to me. It reminds me of an illuminated movie marquee or the electronic moving images we see today. Maybe it’s a spinning, home-spun spoof? Say that three times fast...
Growing up I loved penny candy, days at the beach and flower gardens. At certain times everything seems especially vivid. For me this means summertime. When the outdoors teem with life and congested activity. Days are jam-packed with colors and forms.

These paintings explore the controlled chaos of summer.
Looking out the window from the comfort of one’s place in one’s home or room - one’s personal space. Looking out the window from the calm of within thinking – what’s out there a large unknown or perhaps it’s clear. Looking out the window as my grandmother did so long ago. It gave her comfort inside. It gave me comfort outside when I looked up from the street I saw her sitting looking out the window.
For me struggle is the key ingredient, the fuel that drives the creative impulse. Struggle is a wonderfully invigorating force for the artistic spirit. This sense of dedication has, for all of my creative years, driven me to use images (art) as an agent for change.

However essential struggle is to my work, it is not overwhelming. I wish for my work to engage the viewer in such a way that they are moved to become a better person, to become engaged in the beauty and joy of life that comes through struggle, as opposed, as is too often the case, a sometimes debilitating struggle of life. Yes life is a struggle, but a joyous one.

As an Image-maker, overarching endeavor is to create work that moves people to a better place from where they are when they come upon my work.
FRIENDSHIP – Home Girls
These two collages are portraits of two young girls who are best friends. They live in the same city and on the same street. Each girl is portrayed as an iconic house decorated with patterns and colors evoking each girl’s personality, intellect, and temperament. Though they are different, each is embodied with vibrancy and joie de vivre. That is part of what makes their friendship great. The friends live next door to each other and play together all of time. They grow up together. They cannot think of “HOME” without thinking of each other.

Each one is home to the others hopes and dreams, secrets, adventures and memories. There are no doors for leaving—only one window where each one peeks out to greet the other. They sit comfortably next to each other. A complement.

My first best friend’s name was Tanya. Whenever we saw each other we would run toward each other laughing, knowing that just by being together we were in a valued space of love and tenderness. A place called “home.”
NEW YEAR’S DAY
Liz Mitsuye Horwitz
Newton, Massachusetts
Japanese washi paper on foam core

I grew up in Japan and came to the states 35 years ago. I have been here longer than my “home”. Even though it is not Japan, I have many things that remind me of Japan. I work with Japanese paper all the time. The paper takes me back home when I’m working with it so that part of home doesn’t disappear.

New Year was a very special time at home. The bunnies are all doing an activity related to New Year’s day, which reminds me of where I came from.
The whole world is our home.

In my paintings I celebrate the variety and elegance of the natural world. I truly enjoy painting all of the dots and patterns that enliven the surfaces of my paintings.

I work to create compositions that are colorful, complex and well-balanced, and I hope you will see something new each time you view the work.

In my paintings, the patchwork of color and texture are obsessively patterned, and they are filled with fanciful creatures, strata, microscopic organisms and mysterious places.
For years, I have worked diligently to create a safe space for parents of children with serious disease to cope with the issues facing them. It was an interesting and challenging task to find imagery that might display a positive role. In the end, I chose a hearth-fire burning, to depict a sense of warmth, comfort and safety that could bring people back to an easier time.

There were some technical challenges to making a monotype on wood, but that only made the project especially interesting.

Many thanks to the artists who contributed visual imagery to make the physical environment at Children’s Hospital Boston a better place for healing. As every pediatrician knows, the well-being of parents is one of the most important contributors to the well-being of children.
To me, home is not a building or a place. It is a feeling inside – recognition of something familiar, of something comforting and welcoming. Throughout our lives we all search for those things that bring us back to a place where we feel loved and nurtured, but we may be better off accepting that home is more about our outlook on life and how we spend each moment, living each one fully and deeply.

Savoring a cup of tea sweetened with honey, breathing in its aroma, and truly tasting its flavor – this may be all the home you need.
Living in New England, I have come to love the time I spend in the Barnstable area of Cape Cod. The marshlands near the beaches are particularly peaceful and they always provide a sense of calm. In the spring and summer, the colors are brilliant hues of green and blue, but in the fall and winter season everything turns to a warm gold and the quiet of the season, free of summer's rush, can be truly enjoyed.

When considering this project, I thought of the place that I go to when I need refreshment and resource, to think and to pray. I chose to depict home as the wonderfully restful space that one can wander into when taking the time to explore the lesser known paths in life in a home away from home.
Many elements make a house a home, the main ingredient being love. Love for, and between, the people and creatures we share our “nests” with.

I grew up in a family of many cats but when my husband and I moved to Boston thirty years ago, we were “catless”. Our apartment was beautiful and full of light. We didn’t realize what was lacking until our first Siamese cat arrived; an unexpected gift from an estate where I was painting greenhouse interiors. This affectionate cat provided constant delight and much comic relief.

Years later after much searching I found two Siamese kittens. Their constant antics and affection enrich our lives and our home.

Home is Where The Cats Are…
Growing up, home for me was a complicated, unpredictable and unstable place. As an adult, I have sought, and luckily found, just the opposite. As a result, I have become a homebody; happy amid the simple details and (fairly) predictable routines of the life that I share with my wife and daughter.

“All this, and more” is an attempt to account for some of the everyday details of our home life. Each small item on its own might not be of great significance, but when added together, the whole turns out to be greater than the sum of the parts. What appears on the surface to be just a small, cluttered apartment is revealed to be the home that it truly is.
In times of stress, I retreat to my studio to make sculpture and mosaics with themes of safe havens, meditative places and fantasy. For the Children’s Hospital Parents’ house on Kent Street I have created The Wishing Tree and The Magic Teapot.

Everyone can use the help of a superhero, a prayer or just imagination to navigate through difficult situations. The process of making the ceramic shard mosaics is a metaphor for healing by making broken pieces whole and beautiful again. Mosaics give forgotten objects new life, meaning and value.

With help from over 70 patients, parents and staff at Children’s Hospital Boston, 16 flower mosaics were created for the Farley sleep spaces in the spring of 2008.
Home is a safe place of refuge, a nurturing environment where I am free to be myself. Home is a space where I can create, am able to express my joy, frustrations and successes, knowing I am being heard, or simply delight in the stillness of a quite moment of the soul. Home is the dwelling of my heart, whether I am far or near, it is always the place I want to be. It’s a moment you feel connected with someone or something, knowing you are always accepted and never judged.

Home is where I give and I receive, where I am supported, understood and never alone.
It is summer. You can walk out the door with your rod and reel, cross the street, and find your rock.

You cast out to the sea, imagining all that may lie beneath the surface, while you gaze beyond the horizon. You hope for a bite. Meanwhile you are just where you want to be, alone with your afternoon, or with your family, speaking and laughing about favorite things or staying quiet together. You wait for a fish to complete the picture – even though the picture is already complete.
This painting is the view from my apartment, looking west at sunset. For a few minutes before dark, the windows above the horizon line reflect downtown Boston in the left building, and sunset glow in the right building. But it is the space between that sustains me. That glimpse of trees and sky over Amory Park has endowed me with moments of uplifting beauty for thirty years. Brilliant sunsets, falling snow, crackling lightning, the green rebirth of spring and the golds of autumn. For me, home is as much what is outside my window as what is inside.
Many times we bury our minds to capture a place, a surrounding that we place ourselves in; its context is nothing but of the known. As we sink deeper, every detail we are attempting to recreate becomes a fragment of reality we can almost touch. A single sigh of relief returns us back to our zone of comfort ... a space we find to be home.

As a child, it is part of nature to let our imaginations run; everything can be anything as we were constantly adapting to the changing elements around us. My concept of home is based on the idea of the imagination, where we can wrap ourselves in any place in time we chose to be; it is a moment in time where we can soar and merge with the nature that captures us.
My idea of home has never been one of brick and mortar, even though I did in fact live in the same brick house for most of my childhood. Home has always meant something more to me. Home is the place I felt happy, safe and loved. Sometimes home was summer camp, sometimes it was Grandma’s house. Eventually home meant another city and another state—again and again.

This painting is an abstract map of my childhood happiness and my current life and the refuge found by both of these overlapping ideals. I always choose to work some happy thought or message in my work, this piece is no different.
This painting reminds me of my home because when I was a little girl growing up in London we had two adorable cats called Pickle and Popsy. Here they are, looking all sweet and innocent— but don’t be fooled! They are plotting their next big adventure.
Provincetown is a place dear to my heart and where I had my summer studio for more than 35 years. These paintings are part of a series entitled “Patricia Marie”— homage to coming home.

In early childhood, my father and stepmother encouraged me to make drawings to go with my poems. Like many, my parents pinned my work to the refrigerator, but they also framed many of these mementos. It was a marvelous form of validation for me and influenced my love for painting today.

I hope my work expresses feelings and things that we know or sense, like introspective daydreams of belonging. I am always working toward the hopeful.

Daydream: A dreamlike musing or fantasy while awake, especially of the fulfillment of wishes or hopes.

—American Heritage Dictionary
If you know that you’ll be out at sea, you may as well wrap yourself in an ark, and surround yourself with your loved ones. One day that mountain will come.
We were sitting around the kitchen table on a snow day, sipping tea and hot chocolate, when I asked the neighborhood kids what would make them feel at home if they couldn’t be living at their own. One of them answered, “mugs, not paper cups.” I loved the thought.

Mugs evoke memories of conversations over a cup of something warm, and suggest a more permanent place, where the cups are washed, not thrown away.

There are three mugs in my painting – one for each person in my family who called this apartment home, before my son grew up and moved away.
The geometric structure of these paintings, a circle or square within a square, is designed to offer a center in which to visually and emotionally reside while feeling supported by the surrounding color and energy. As one travels from the center of the painting, out to the edges and back, the movement parallels the experience we all have going from ourselves, our families, our sources of energy out into the world and back to our homes.

In the center, you might catch your breath, feel your own strength restored, your connection to the world again made possible. The layered colors, textures of the surface, the rhythm of the dots and underlying marks offer a variety of paths in which to move in and around the space in the painting.
When my wife Peggy and I come home from work, we find our cat greeting us at the door. Luna’s favorite pastime is sitting and looking off into space. What is she thinking? Sometimes while sleeping, she twitches and makes little sounds. I’m sure she must be dreaming about cat stuff, birds and mice perhaps. She is living the life of Reilly. We have often observed how hard we work to keep her in her lifestyle.

Home is the place where you can relax and dream.
I had so much fun doing this project for Children’s Hospital Boston. As I was creating this painting, it reminded me of the summers my mom, grandma and I have together... bringing me thoughts like the morning sun coming in to visit saying, “Good morning everyone... Wake-up!” ... and birds flying around us as we watch them eat from the bird feeders... the flowers dancing with the breeze to make us happy.

While I am writing this story my mind is getting soft just thinking of all these things. They make me want to dance and celebrate the day... I share this happy dance with my Mom and Grandma. There is more fun waiting for the three of us to have next summer... I will keep thinking and dreaming about them until they come true!
A pigeon has a view of our homes that is completely different from ours. An airplane can fly us even further away, but we still like to call the view home no matter where home is or how far away we are from it. I see people looking at my collage paintings of aerial views, and more often than not, someone will point out where they live. If they don’t have a home on the aerial, they might say they had been here or there on some orange area or green blob that they identify with.

Everyone seems to feel some emotion and a connection to home—as they talk about it with friends or as they seek it on a map, or as they fly overhead. It’s not the altitude, it’s the attitude.
A landscape from my country of origin is home to me. Home is made of the familiar colors, the shapes of the hills, the scent of the air, the noises, and a special light, all that brings childhood memories to me and makes me feel good. One feels at home when surrounded by the familiar countryside, where the clouds in the sky are shaped like the hills of the land and the hills roll like the waves of the ocean.

I wanted to bring those colors and forms indoors through an open window. And by doing so merging both the inside and the outdoors to convey the broader meaning of home.
I have been a beach lover for a long time now. My home is close enough to walk to it. Even with all my painting gear it is no problem. I’m a foster mother and most of the children I have had just love to swim in the ocean. I think they leave me with found memories of my home and a lot of fun in the sun. I look forward to the next summer painting out side and sharing it with the two boys I have now.

When I paint I can see that all the days are different because the paintings are not the same.
What “home” meant to me for this painting was the Holyoke Mountain Range next door to my home in Western MA. The shapes of the mountains and trees, [the ‘constants’], wear the changeable New England weather and seasonal patterns on them. “Ruby Red Mountain” incorporated the deep dark ruby reds that happen in late autumn only for two-three days once a year, glowing even in the dark. A rainfall quickly changed that deep dark red forming the sensuous curves of the mountains quickly to a rustbrown!!! Still I worked with the brown, countering it against tiny pieces of blue sky, coupled with those big physical heavy clouds I so love to draw.”
My Mom had a cast iron trivet in her kitchen that still amuses me when I think of it today. It read; “Come in, sit down, relax, converse. My house doesn’t always look like this, sometimes it is even worse.”

Home is a place to rest, rejuvenate, play, learn, and enjoy with friends and family. Sometimes, those friends we live with become our new family, even though they do not look like us.

My pets were an inspiration to this painting, all are rescues. Pucci, the most recent adoption fits right in and nothing is as wonderful as their big hello and fuss when I return home after a days work.
I often dream about my childhood places, especially the sacred lotus pond. I have heard that the recurrence of childhood places in your dreams reveals that you yearn to re-live those innocent times. With this thought in mind, and with memories of my childhood spent playing in the fields, I created Playground. The base image is a plan view of an idealized childhood outdoor space. It contains a playground, a water garden with the sacred lotus and a vegetable garden. It was in the garden where my siblings, friends and I often got our hands dirty while planting our favorite flowers and vegetables.

The little girl in the foreground carries a sacred lotus with leaf and bud, the aroma and delicate petals arouse a sense of nostalgia.

The brown Chinese character 园 means garden.
Many New England children have their first sailing experiences aboard a Beetle Cat sailboat. They are colorful, sturdy wooden boats with a gaff rigged sail and they are easy to control. When I was a child, I spent many happy hours sailing in my Beetle Cat. There is a sense of being a greater part of the world when you are sailing in one of these little boats. You may be alone on a great sea, but you feel safe and in control. I wish every child could learn to sail in a Beetle Cat and be granted that sense of confidence and wonderment.
One of the “lines of inquiry” I’ve been following recently in my work has had to do with optical illusions and the ways magicians use optical trickery to entertain and mystify their audiences. Now, if I had a kid in the hospital, anything that would simply distract him would be a benefit. If I was taking care of other kids at the same time, a little magic trick would be a fun thing to show them: “Can you see the bird?”

“Blue Heron Window” uses an old trick to make the shining silhouette of a Great Blue Heron, (apparently 18” deep in the solid wall behind the piece) flash past as you walk by the artwork. The sight-angle is very narrow: If you blink, literally, you miss it. And, by the way, the way the sightlines are set up, a kid may have an easier time finding the heron than an adult. “Can you see the bird?”
In this piece, I was inspired to play with the scale of images in relationship to the viewer. The huge tulips, swaying in the breeze and the river of undulating butterflies suggest the awe and majesty of life from a young child’s perspective.

Do you remember the first time in your life that you really noticed a beautiful flower or butterfly? How old were you... what kind of flower was it, what color butterfly ...where were you?
I am a realist painter, but I take my cue from Emily Dickinson who wrote, “tell all the truth but tell it slant.” Although my compositions appear to be traditional and very formal, the still lives reflect my personal point of view, and things aren’t always what they seem to be. The highly reflective subjects are culled from hand-me-downs alive with family history and childhood memory. While referencing a time past, these objects exist very much in the present. I couple the stately and staid with contemporary and alive, fleshy things, creating the suggestion of a dialog with the past. My paintings tease the viewer’s vision with a hint of what is out of sight. By focusing in and cropping, I lose the bigger picture to discover another dimension. But always I am reaching for a richness, mood and ambiguity that will engage, and an energy and beauty to sustain it.

Tell all the truth but tell it slant;  
success in circuit lies,  
too bright for our infirm delight  
the truth’s superb surprise;  
as lightning to the children eased  
with explanation kind,  
the truth must dazzle gradually  
or every man be blind.  
~Emily Dickinson
I spent the first five years of my life playing on my balcony overlooking the Mediterranean Ocean. Coming home meant I could go out on that balcony and breathe in the salty air and taste it right on my tongue if I open my mouth even just slightly.

These days, a single chair, a quiet beach, a place to dream and remember – all bring me back to my childhood. The sound of the surf, interrupted here and there by a calling bird, soothes me and comforts me as much as any warm caress. That, for me, is home.
Small touches can make a house feel like a home — a quilt made with loving hands that’s been passed down for generations, the smell of something sweet and delicious baking in the oven, a favorite pet curled up beside you, a thoughtful listener as you talk about the day’s events. Home is where you feel comfortable to be yourself and share yourself, take shelter from the storm, and where you feel free to love and be loved.

This piece was inspired by several things — a peaceful row of houses I drove by in Vermont, a love of quilts and color, and a quote by an unknown author - “It takes hands to build a house, but only hearts can build a home.”
LOOKLING AT A NEST
Maxine Yalovitz-Blankenship
Brookline, Massachusetts
Oil on panel

The nest, offering protection, is seen as home; it may be felt as a gift, a mysterious key to Nature’s secrets. Nests reveal the fragility of our existence; the egg, our hope. Birds are builders and voyagers - symbols of freedom. I recall the painted bird from childhood. It spins around and whistles in the wind.

Inside the studio, the painting is met by a real bird. It flew around, landed on paint cans and the floor. I raised the window and became a matador forcing it free to fly home with gentle waves of my hand.
The snowy winter of 2009 made me think about the days when I was a child and we had snow days. The schools would be closed and my sister and I would meet our friends to play in the snow. We would build snowmen and forts. After what seemed like hours, we’d come back inside and put our mittens, hats and scarves on the hot radiator. They house would smell like wet wool.

When I was very young, I loved to stare out the window at the soft, fresh snow and I would be amazed at how quiet the world could be. When I got older, our friends would come by and we would play games and enjoy being inside when it was so cold out.
I think “home” is a light in the dark, a fireplace in winter, and a place where we always want to go. Every time I stop by a new place, the warm light inside the house comforts me. I can almost hear the laughter and smell the food on the dining room table. As a girl far away from her home, I understand the meaning of “home”.

Here, in this drawing, I represent a scene of “home”.

HOME IMPRESSION
Mengting Yu
Boston, Massachusetts
Wax oil pastel on board
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