



Buffalo Arts Studio

Jump Start Biennial Student Exhibition, *Envision*

May 23–June 14, 2025

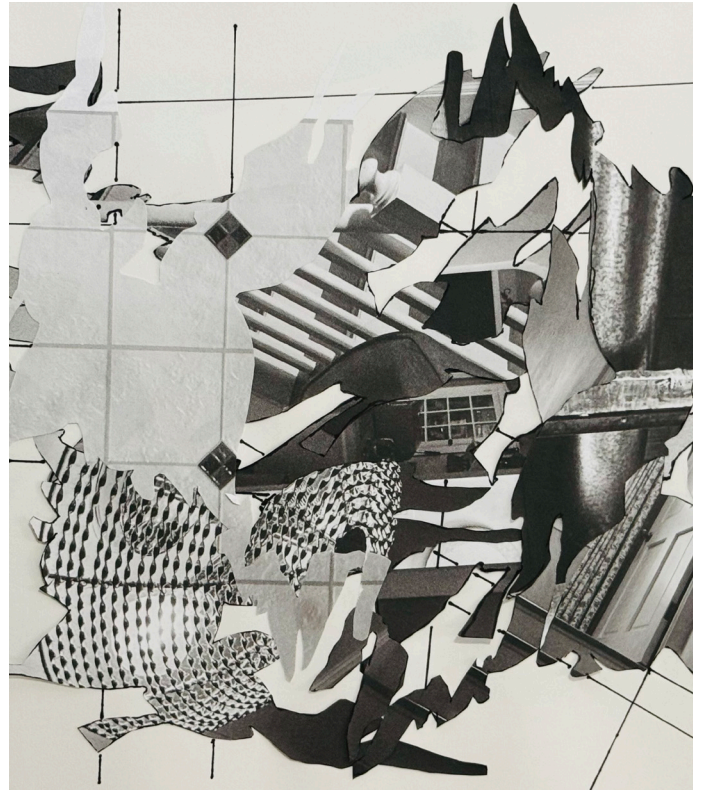


Faith & Iris Barrera, *Untitled*, Recycled Materials with Jozef Bajus, 2025, recycled materials

I am honored to bring together past and present Jump Start students in this biennial exhibition, *Envision*. These young artists come from high school, college, and beyond to participate in this event and celebrate their creative journeys over the past two years.

Jump Start provides students who show a strong ability and interest in the visual arts with advanced instruction and mentorship, helping them navigate their academic and professional goals even after graduation through the Jump Start Extension program. Beyond technical skill, Jump Start nurtures personal growth by encouraging students to explore their identities, build emotional resilience, and find community through the arts.

In the *Young Curators* course, students stepped behind the scenes to learn the vital role of the curator—from conceptualizing an exhibition and arranging artwork to writing interpretive labels and considering marketing strategies. Their thoughtful contributions shaped every element of this show.



Maya Velarde, *Untitled*, Drawing Workshop with B+M+W, 2025, collage

As part of the exhibition planning process, students engaged in deep reflection through writing artist statements and discussing the meaning behind their work. Many spoke candidly about how art has helped them process emotions, express themselves authentically, and find a sense of belonging. They described their art as a form of storytelling and Buffalo Arts Studio as a refuge—a place where they feel safe, seen, and supported.

The students chose the exhibition title *Envision* to express how they see themselves as artists, and share what the future may contain through that lens.

Exhibited work spans Jump Start classes, workshops, college coursework, and even professional practice. *Envision* presents a powerful collective vision from a dynamic and diverse group of young artists—each one finding their voice and boldly sharing it with the world.

-Jayne Hughes, Education Director

Jump Start Artists

We are excited to feature over 150 artworks by 42 talented young artists in this year's exhibition, *Envision*. While a few of the students are new to the Jump Start program, many have been with us for several years, growing their skills and developing their confidence through ongoing mentorship and instruction.

Our high school participants come from across the Western New York region, with nearly a third residing in the city of Buffalo. All students bring a wide range of perspectives, experiences, and creative voices. Our college-level students are currently pursuing degrees at institutions across the country, including Buffalo State University, the Cleveland Institute of Art, Daemen College, Massachusetts College of Art and Design, Pratt Institute, and the Savannah College of Art and Design. Their fields of study are just as broad, ranging from marketing to illustration, animation, graphic design, and more.

Many of our exhibiting students have been involved with Buffalo Arts Studio for over a decade, and it has been a true joy and privilege to witness their artistic and personal growth over time. Please take the time to get to know these amazing young people by reading excerpts from their artist statements.



Mojo Banjo

The intention behind my work is to form a relationship between the beauties and monstrosities of our existence. My creatures are grotesque, but full of life. With an emphasis on dramatic lighting and texture, I aim to capture the sublime in the unsettling.



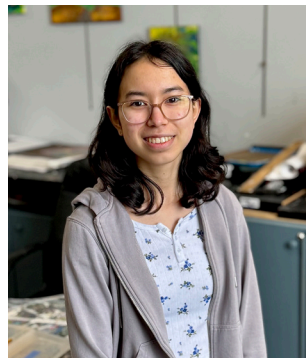
Faith Barrera

To me, art is fluid. It moves continuously within my imagination and allows me to create. There is a sense of wonder when I reach the end of a project and see how my imagination comes to life.



Iris Barrera

There is no exact look or image that art should take. Art is something you create specifically tuned to you. That's what I enjoy most about it: art has no restrictions or set ways; it is free to be whatever it chooses.



Janssen Batai

I especially enjoy clay and pencil. I love throwing—shaping the clay at the wheel is extremely relaxing and satisfying. With a pencil, I can create shapes, shadows, and dimensions that, combined, create an artwork. I feel accomplished every time I finish a piece.



Helen Beckley-Forest

My work explores patterns in nature that resemble bodily forms, creating a strong connection between the two, placing humanity within nature. I focus on sustainable consumption, weighing the efficiency of found materials with the vision of a purely hand-crafted process.



Ella Burns

I sometimes find it easier to tell a story visually instead of with words. When I create characters, I can tell a story with their expressions, outfits, and the colors I use. I love how using different colors, patterns, or shading can completely change a picture.



Elliot Capron

I like capturing unique perspectives and translating them into something others can experience and relate to. Painting my close friends, I attempt to convey the emotions of my subjects, allowing the viewer an understanding of their joy, dullness, or excitement.



Ziabella Cordero

Art helps me express myself and share how I view the world. Using watercolors, alcohol markers, and paint, I create stylized, light-hearted cartoon portraits as well as nature drawings and paintings. I like to set a mood or a vibe within my pieces.



Lucy Detrich

As a drawing major at the Cleveland Institute of Art, I make artwork that explores the fantastical while investigating political narratives. I plan to continue to work with public art programs in my community after college.



Samantha Fernandez

My art focuses on the idea of finding beauty and meaning in everyday concepts and situations. I try not to confine myself to one medium or art form—I use whatever I feel best allows me to articulate what I am trying to express.



Tabitha Fors

When drawing, I see the result of years of practice. I use graphite pencil, charcoal, and fabric to show my personality in my work. Using techniques I've taught myself and learned from classes at BAS, I create work that I am proud of.



Carly Glashauser

Nothing else gives me joy like the process of creating. I like being able to translate my view of the world into art—it helps me express what words cannot. I want my art to make people happy.



Kayley Gust

Art is an expression of where my words end—I love capturing what I can't describe verbally through painting. My mind never stops, and the artwork reflects that. It's experimental and independent, allowing my creativity to truly shine.



Eva Hernandez

A constant throughout my work is a love of bold colors and fonts, as well as addressing political and social issues. Some of my artwork is deeply personal, sharing my own life experiences or offering glimpses into my mind, dreams, and ambitions.



Siddarth Honward

I believe that art is a medium for philosophy and an expression of ideas that compels me to create. The Jump Start program has helped me in skill-building, giving me resources to become a better artist.



Ariana Jimenez-Urena

Connecting with people through my art is one of the reasons I create. I decided to pursue an art career to share my experiences and connect with audiences. To this day, I believe in magic because animation creates stories and worlds where anything is possible.



Za'miah Lipscomb

My artistic expression is a divinely inspired gift from God, offering solace and rejuvenation in both joyous and challenging times. Each piece is a unique manifestation of my inner world. My intention is that viewers connect with the feeling behind my creations.



Shanti Morrissey

My work engages questions of materiality, spatial perception, and embodied experience, employing the formal languages of abstraction and minimalism to examine tensions between permanence and impermanence, structure and collapse.



Isabela Nieves

Art is a powerful tool for me to not only express myself, but also fully be myself. Sculpture gives me a freedom that isn't confined to canvas or a piece of paper—I can envision what it is going to become as I engage with the materials.



Margaret O'Brien

In my work, I like to explore and document observations about myself and the world around me. I like to take ordinary aspects of life that most don't pay attention to and bring them into focus by altering or dramatizing them.



Cameron Osborne

My art explores the deep emotions I've faced, and the strength it took to overcome them. Each piece is a reflection of resilience and a reminder to be still in the midst of chaos—I invite viewers to pause, feel, and reconnect with their own inner strength.



Colin Prawak

Art to me is more than just what you create—it is the friends and connections that you make on the way. The styles that I use the most are cartoon drawing, more realistic art, and animation. I love using graphite because of how simple yet difficult it can be.



Emily Quartley

I am a tattoo artist at Twisted Tiki in Tonawanda. Not only do I love the beauty, variety, and permanence of tattoos, but I also love getting to make a personal connection with my clients and helping them express themselves!



Abigail Rae

Art helps me turn thoughts or feelings into something visual. I like drawing characters and designs that feel creative or have their own mood. I'm drawn to styles that are a little dreamy or bold instead of just realistic.



Allison Reigelman

Art is a vehicle for expression, bringing us closer to people we've never met. I am often inspired by the vibrant colors of nature, especially flowers. I strive to include contrasting colors in the subjects and backgrounds of my pieces.



Cadynn Rice

For me, art is a way to express my creativity and cure my boredom. I usually draw and doodle with paper, though I have also worked with pottery, 3D printing, woodcutting, and painting.



Mikayla Rice

Art continues to inspire me everywhere I look. Despite all the obstacles life has thrown my way, art will always be home. I'm proud to be back at BAS volunteering with the talented young adults in the Jump Start program.



Destiny Robinson

I am most inspired when I reflect on the simple things in life, like when the sunset casts beautiful light against my window, or when I wake up in the morning to birds chirping. Creating is a way for me to release whatever thought or inspiration I have.



Liliana Schmid

I am drawn to art because it allows me to turn thoughts and feelings into something real. It helps me express emotions and connect with others through creativity. I usually start with a small idea or a mood I'm feeling, then build on it as I go.



Hazel Shepard

When I make art, I aim to make people feel. I approach art by taking inspiration from the world around me, especially from nature. I have always felt very inspired by the beauty of nature, and I try to capture this in my artwork.



Ruth Silverschatz

I've had a passion for art for as long as I can remember. I am currently a stage artist at Painting with a Twist and work at public events doing makeup and applying my special effects skills daily to clients.



Cyprus Singer

Art gives me the space to create without limits, whether I'm exploring something dark and deeply meaningful or something light and playful. My art is often a reflection of what I'm feeling or what inspires me at the time.



Ava Valkwitch

I am currently working on a series of paintings focusing on windows and the stories behind them. By exploring this narrative, I aim to capture the essence of the lives behind the glass and give the viewer the impression that their gaze is unnoticed by those within.



Maya Velarde

Art is a way to refresh my brain. It helps me to work with my hands. Art is also a way to see things from a different perspective. It's really interesting to see how you can take something totally random, like a stick or an old container, and turn it into an art piece.



Alyssa Velez-Lopez

Art is a way for me to tell stories and express feelings that can't be shown through words. When making traditional pieces, I like to use graphite, oil pastels, and paints. I challenge myself to capture people's feelings and emotions through realistic portraits.



Kaysie Velez-Lopez

I love creating character art and abstract pieces. I love putting my own little stories onto paper. It's fun to go through designing and building characters and their shapes. I also enjoy creating art with no exact form, and just letting my imagination make the art.



Jordan Willis

To me, being a storyboard artist is synonymous with growth. By exploring and pushing character development and worldbuilding through my scenes, I'm able to grow and create my own exciting, lifelong artistic journey.



Eero Worang-Zizzi

As a non-binary person, I feel a deep responsibility to push for true liberty and equality. I use art to express myself and to advance this message. I am an apprentice in the Art Works program, working to create pieces that do justice to the message I want to share.



Sarah Zakeri

My art is a reflection of my experiences and emotions, helping me learn and express myself. My background is in fine arts and psychology, with my main passion being art therapy. Most of my work is done with the intent of being “Art as Therapy.”



Jayne Hughes

I remember a mentor helping my parents and me navigate the daunting college application process. I am thrilled to extend the same guidance and support to students in WNY, helping them reach their career and professional goals.



Jump Start student creates sculptural piece during the Creating Form Workshop with Jan Dylewski.



Jump Start students have the opportunity to draw live models in Youth Figure Drawing with Nico Galuszka.



Student and teacher discuss proportions while drawing self portraits in Youth Life Drawing with Emmett Bagget.



Zine Exploration with Sarah Chamberlin helps students develop both visual and written skill sets.

About the program

Jump Start is a dynamic program that empowers youth to explore their interest in the visual arts within a creative, safe, and supportive environment. The Jump Start program provides exceptional art instruction, professional development, portfolio preparation, exhibiting experience, exposure to diverse working artists, and much more. It includes a variety of Saturday classes taught by qualified artists, professors, and K-12 art teachers, all of whom demonstrate the willingness and ability to meaningfully connect with young people from diverse backgrounds. Students 13-18 years old can join the program throughout the year with an easy application process, which can be found on our website.



Image courtesy of Laura Roberts

Jump Start artists can stay engaged by participating in exhibitions, professional development, and mentorship opportunities throughout college and beyond.

Individual mentorship, high-grade art supplies, and Professional Development Days are provided at no cost to all our students. There is class tuition; however, any student's family who expresses financial need receives classes and supplies at no cost to them. No student is ever turned away due to inability to pay.

To enroll, contact Education Director Jayne Hughes at education@buffaloartsstudio.org



Image courtesy of Laura Roberts



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