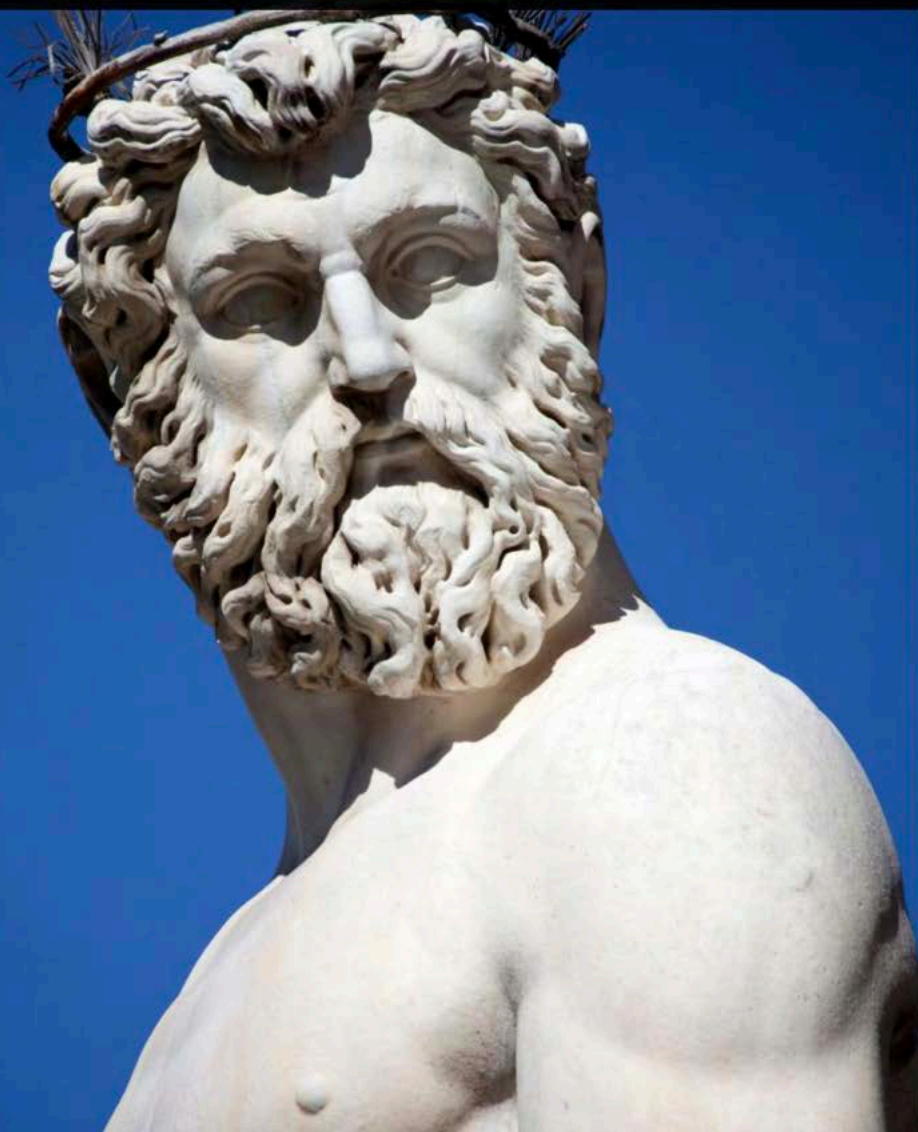




# DESTIG

ISSUE 10 - THE ITALIAN SPECIAL EDITION - JULY 2021



ART - BEST OF 2021 | ITALIAN DESIGN SHOWCASE | SPECIAL ART FEATURES | HOT PICKS



# CARRIE MAKENNA

"I make artwork to remind people of their interconnection with each other, nature and the universe, while creating a respite from the challenges and stresses of life. It's especially rewarding when people tell me they experienced or learned something from viewing my artwork."



PUBLIC ART - WINTER ACTIVITIES



CARRIE MAKENNA

DESTIG BEST OF 2021

Carrie MaKenna is an American professional artist, and the owner of Arts Carrie MaKenna Studio and Gallery, and co-founder of D'art Gallery in Denver Colorado. She brings canvases alive with rich color, deep texture and uplifting meaning. Her subjects are diverse including abstracts, landscapes and portraits alike.

**Please tell us a bit about your background.**

I was fortunate to grow up in an arts-oriented household during the 1970s. I took ceramics, painting, and jewelry-making in public school. Against my family's wishes I snuck into the Art Department at Colorado State University and took graphic design because you could 'make a living at it.' I graduated with a Bachelor of Fine Art (BFA) in graphic design, with minors in painting and ceramics.

Through the mid-80s to mid-90s I pursued a career in graphic design and quickly moved into management, while continuing to create artwork and exhibit in group and solo shows.

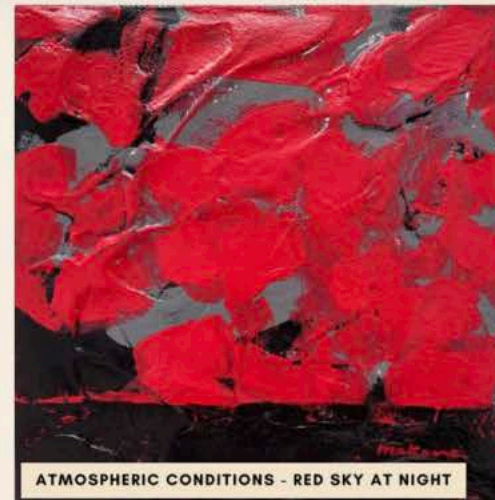
During the 1990s, I studied and taught a variety of world spiritual practices that nourish my art-making to this day. I co-founded a weekly, meditation and personal enrichment group in which I regularly included art-making exercises.

I left the corporate world in the mid-1990s for a Masters Degree in Art Therapy from the Naropa University in Boulder CO. It combined my three greatest interests: psychology, spirituality and art.

I always had my art studio at home until 2008 when my



ENTER THE UNIVERSAL CIRCLE - MOONBOX



ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS - RED SKY AT NIGHT



DAISY PETALS ALOFT

**"Although I have a BFA most of my artistic growth has occurred in my 30+ years of practice while exploring techniques, materials, processes, and style."**

husband, Craig Rouse, and I moved to a block of artist studio/gallery spaces where we stayed for nine years. I was a founding member of Inspire! Arts Week Lakewood, an annual week-long, city-wide, celebration of the arts, which won the Governor's Award for Downtown Excellence in 2016.

In 2017 I was invited to mount a solo exhibition at the Lakewood Cultural Center. I conceived and created my Enter The Universal Circle exhibit. I had already begun incorporating the Circle in my artwork, and this was my chance to fully explore it. I activated the entire space including the center of the room, the walls, ceiling and floor. At the same time I also organized a home studio tour for Artists living and working in the City. My husband and I moved into studio/gallery space the 40 West Arts District in Denver in 2017. And in 2019 I co-founded D'art Gallery, a new Artist-owned contemporary gallery in the Arts District on Santa Fe Dr.

**Share with us some insight into your process, what attracts you to your preferred mediums and what do you feel when you are creating?**

Although I have a BFA most of my artistic growth has occurred in my 30+ years of practice while exploring techniques, materials, processes, and style. I've always leaned toward acrylic paint because it dries quickly. I wanted to get more paint on the canvas at once than I could with paint in tubes. I mentioned this and my husband casually said, "Why don't you use liquid paint?" It was a huge breakthrough.

I developed a specialized palette of twenty colors of liquid acrylics and experimented with a lot of ways to create texture. I use a thick acrylic paste on the canvas then add additional elements like dried paint and found objects before I add layers of paint.

When I'm working I enter a meditative mindset. I lose all sense of time and space, so I've learned to set an alarm every couple of hours. I may have an idea or direction to begin with, but I quiet my thoughts and have a conversation with the artwork. I let each piece have a say in what it becomes. If I'm struggling, I know I'm thinking too much.



ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS - EXHIBIT 02

**How would you describe the unique DNA of your art and how your work relates to your location?**

I was born and live in Denver-metro Colorado. I'm a fourth-generation mountain girl and spent my childhood outdoors. The forests, mountains, streams and lakes provide me sustenance, peace and inspiration. I have loved watching the skies above the high desert plains of Denver my whole life.

**"The forests, mountains, streams and lakes provide me sustenance, peace and inspiration."**



ENTER THE UNIVERSAL CIRCLE - DUW

Art is literally in my DNA. My great-grandfather was a sign painter in the 1900s-1930s. He also went into the mountains west of Denver to paint oil landscapes en plein air. His daughter, my grandmother, as well as my mother were very artistic.

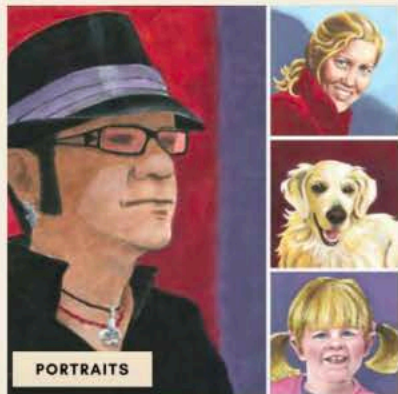
I grew up watching my mother drawing, painting, and doing mosaics, silkscreen and stained glass.

Both my sisters also had careers in graphic design while also making fine art.

Denver and the west have always fostered a pioneering spirit. My family instilled an adventurous spirit in me. My mother always said, "Rise and shine. And keep life interesting."



ENTER THE UNIVERSAL CIRCLE - MOONBOX - CRESCENT QUICKENING



PORTRAITS

**"Art is literally in my DNA. My great-grandfather was a sign painter in the 1900s-1930s. He also went into the mountains west of Denver to paint oil landscapes en plein air."**



ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS - EXHIBIT 01

**"The Universal Circle was one of the most impactful experiences of my career. I created a journey of exploration through time, seasons, elements, moon phases and our solar system."**

**How do you want your art to impact viewers and what do they say when they discover your work?**

I make artwork to remind people of their interconnection with each other, nature and the universe, while creating a respite from the challenges and stresses of life. It's especially rewarding when people tell me they experienced or learned something from viewing my artwork.

**Please tell us about your artwork that has most impacted your career and why?**

The interactive experiential exhibit I put on at the Lakewood Cultural Center titled Enter The Universal Circle was one of the most impactful experiences of my career. I created a journey of exploration through time, seasons, elements, moon phases and our solar system. This exhibit and artwork represented a quantum leap forward for me as an art-maker, curator, exhibition designer, and presenter.

It is a culmination of 30 years of interest, study, practice and teaching about the Circle as a unique Universal Pattern and Spiritual Resource. The Circle is found at the center of many spiritual traditions including the Native American Indian Medicine Wheel, Celtic Stone Circles, Buddhist Tangkas and Hindu Mandalas among others. We experience the Circle through the cycles of a minute, an hour, a day, month, year, decade, a lifetime. These are marked by the rotation and orbit of the Earth around the Sun, and the Moon around the Earth.

**Which artists have inspired you most?**

Throughout my childhood my mother was a significant artistic influence. In college I learned about a few women artists such as Judy Chicago and Georgia O'Keefe. Two of my college art instructors, Richard DeVore (ceramics) and Bruce Cody (drawing and painting), taught me to see deeply and explore a



ENTER THE UNIVERSAL CIRCLE - EXHIBIT



PUBLIC ART - BUTTERFLY BENCH



**"Art has been and always will be essential to human experience. We are creative beings. We seek to create and to experience the creativity of others."**

variety of media and styles. The Abstract Expressionists and Color Field artists of the 40s, 50s and 60s, along with Japanese artists Isamu Noguchi and Kiyoshi Saito are important influences.

In 2016 I experienced the ground-breaking exhibit at the Denver Art Museum called Women of Abstract Expressionism curated by Gwen Chanzit. It was the first exhibit that focused on women like Lee Krasner, Helen Frankenthaler and Joan Mitchell. There was one particular piece that had a bit of aluminum foil tucked into the oils. I thought, "If she can put that in her work, I can do whatever I want!" In 2018 I joined the Women's Caucus for Art Colorado Chapter and my life changed dramatically. I had found a vibrant, active group of women artists who immediately drew me into a new world of artists, exhibits, and activities I hadn't previously known.

**Share with us some themes and concepts that you have explored and what you currently working on?**  
In addition to the Universal Circle I continue to explore several series, including "Bare Trees" focusing on how the unique silhouettes of trees frame the sky and

landscape, and "Atmospheric Conditions" dealing with the constantly changing sky over land and water. My "Couples" series represent all kinds of relationships: parents, siblings, friends, partners, lovers. This series started with seeing two 30 foot tall saguaro cactus standing side-by-side in Arizona. They were more than one hundred years old. I could only imagine the life they had lived there next to each other. They had experienced so much time, change, and growth together. It made me think of the many long-time relationships I've had and how unique and important each one is.

**What are your views on art's role in today's world?**  
Art has been and always will be essential to human experience. We are creative beings. We seek to create and to experience the creativity of others. Art creates meaning in our lives. I agree with the ideas advanced by the Abstract Expressionists that art has the power to convey a physical, emotional and spiritual experience to the viewer.

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## Welcome to DESTIG - Italy

'*Bel paese* (or *Belpaese*, IPA: [bɛl paˈɛːse, -ɛːzɛ]) is the classical poetical appellation for Italy, meaning the "beautiful country" in Italian, due to its mild weather, cultural heritage and natural endowment.' - Wiki

Welcome to D10 - we bring you the best in Italian destinations and creative excellence in design. This is followed by our selection of 10 amazing artists you should know. Finally we delve into the hot topics of the moment... especially that exciting and scary word - NFT.

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ARE YOU READY?