

METAPHYSICS OF ART MASSART'S 150TH THE CURRENT'S: *IN THE GARDEN* MICHELE JOHNSEN

art

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Emerging Artists Issue



NGOC-TRAN VU DORCHESTER, MA

I was introduced to Tran through a mutual friend. At the time, Tran was contemplating a significant public sculpture. Her immediate impact on me was profound—her thoughtful approach, mastery of scale, and creative use of materials were truly impressive. I admire how her artistic endeavors serve to unite communities, with the added beauty of weaving her Vietnamese heritage into sculptures that are poignant reminders of our shared human experience. Tran's lasting impression on me is undeniable, and I have no doubt that she will emerge as a formidable presence in the Boston art scene.

—Domenic Esposito

Ngoc-Tran Vu is a visual artist and cultural organizer making her mark on the greater Boston community and beyond. Born in Vietnam and raised in the Boston area, the Dorchester, Massachusetts-based artist began her career



working in painting and photography, yet has recently moved into sculpture and public art. Her practice primarily surrounds "socially engaged art embedded in the community," she said. Vu knew she wanted to be an artist from an early age. She recalls that her fourth-grade art teacher, Miss Sally, encouraged her to take classes at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. "I knew early on that my gifts and talents are in the arts, and it was just a matter of, how do I put that into practice?"

Vu approaches art with a community-oriented mindset. She works closely with Vietnamese and Asian American communities and amplifies unheard voices through her art. Her current project, *1975: A Vietnamese Diaspora Healing Memorial*, "is something that is long overdue in the Dorchester community. [There is a] predominantly Vietnamese population here, but there's no permanent marker of our presence," she said. The memorial, set to be installed in 2025, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Vietnam War and the beginning of a significant Vietnamese

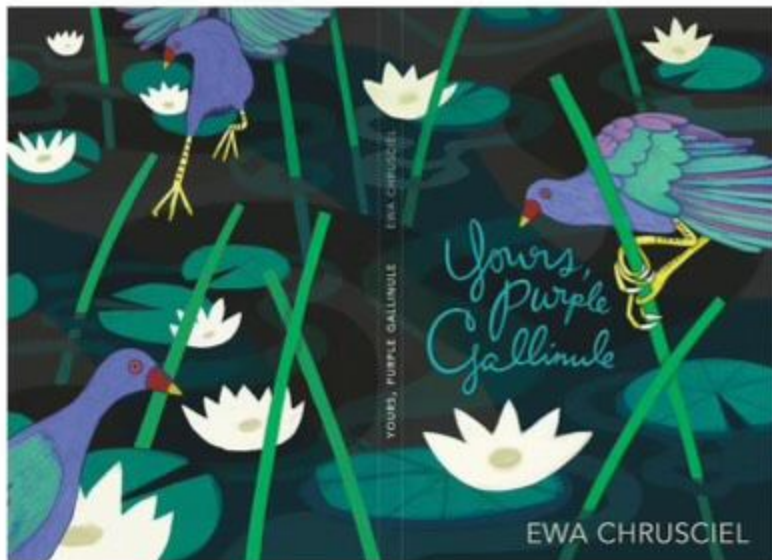


Above, from left: Ngoc-Tran Vu, A poster for A Vietnamese Diaspora Healing Memorial, of the artist. Community in Action Mural for Dorchester, MA. Photo: Linh Pham. Healing located in the Fenway neighborhood temporary mixed media installation, 10 x 10 x 10'. Photo: Below: Ewa Chrusciel's cover art for Yours, Gallinule (Omnidawn, 2022). Courtesy of the

diaspora in the U.S. Vu is still exploring project will look like, and is considering discourse surrounding public monument spatial justice. Vu also hopes to travel this year. She is looking to research material fabrication methods for the memorial, to learn how she can use materials from and Southeast Asia in the installation using the memorial sustainable.

Travel is a big part of Vu's practice. of the Intercultural Leadership Institute which she travels with artists from across country to work and build with each other different communities. In addition to her art work, Vu teaches classes and works. She works with Assets for Artists and is a three-year initiative to share resources through the Artists U curriculum. Vu continues to work in cultural organizing as a free individual consultant and grant writer; also works in climate justice. "[I'm] so is always constantly learning what's happening around me in the world, and I infuse it into my work so that it becomes action-oriented and to inspire and also

— Art



EWA CHRUSCIEL WILMOT, NH

Ewa has taught at Colby-Sawyer for a long time after completing her doctorate in the U.S. She is a very seasoned traveler both for conference grants and now more recently to pursue her passion for bird photography. She has a light-filled studio where she writes and is learning to paint. Having just come back from a writing retreat, she shared many books of essays a



Emerging New England Artists

Art New England's Annual Highlight of Ten Exceptional Emerging Voices

The Emerging Artist feature is one of *Art New England's* most impactful traditions. After reading this year's interviews and nominator statements, it's tempting to change the name of the feature to Soaring Artists. Several actually do soar through dance and movement. Others soar through their brushstrokes, poetry, sculpture, and printmaking. Each year we marvel at how much we learn from these voices and how much bigger the world seems. And when has it ever been more important to soar when we live in a world of such heaviness and grief. Through the eyes and hands and words of these ten artists—as well as through the passion of their nominators—we are offered the gift of fresh perspectives, fascinating thought-processes, and outrageous hopefulness. We are challenged by their questions and demands of themselves and society. And we are relieved to know that there is so much brilliance at work redefining and expanding the definition of “art.”

Art New England is excited to celebrate: Simon Montalvo, currently living on the land of the Massachusetts and Pawtucket peoples; Lydia Kern, lives, works, and receives many of her materials on unceded Abenaki sovereign Territory in Burlington, Vermont; Elise Whittemore, Grand Isle, Maine; 2024 Emerging Artist cover artist Sophie Cangelosi, Rockland, Maine; Elisa Vanelli, Essex, Massachusetts; Ngoc-Tran Vu, Dorchester, Massachusetts; Ewa Chrusciel, Wilmet, New Hampshire; Jenna Gross, Westford, Massachusetts; Jay Stern, Mid-Coast, Maine; and Donald Langosy, Boston, MA. *Art New England* is equally excited to thank this year's nominators. Here we enjoyed a few fun twists and synchronicities. One of last year's Emerging Artist's Laifa Franklin nominated her colleague Montalvo. Jackson Tupper, nominator of Cangelosi and Stern was *Art New England's* Emerging Artist—and cover artist—in 2020. Nominator Patricia Trafton of Soupbox Arts nominated, unknowingly, fellow nominator Jasmine Parsia of Karma Birdhouse Gallery. New as nominators this year, we turned to Betsy Miller, associate professor of dance, Salem State University; David Blair, poet and educator at University of New Hampshire; Domenic Esposito, president of the New England Sculptors Association; and returned to one of the magazine's most esteemed colleagues, Suzanne Lee of the lakes gallery at chi-lin. Thank you for your time, collaboration, and for helping *Art New England* raise these voices higher.