

community art collection



# becoming + **belonging**

MATC Community Art Collection 2022-23





# becoming + belonging

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**Becoming and Belonging** showcases the third year of development for the Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) Community Art Collection. MATC is thrilled to continue this important work of breaking down barriers that stand between students and their academic and career success, including by providing a safe space where differences are valued and celebrated. The works selected for the third round were designed to be located at the Mequon Campus and the Oak Creek Campus. MATC continues to celebrate and recognize our shared history and diversity in the display of art created by students, alumni, staff and community members. *Becoming and Belonging* offers us a glimpse into the lives, hearts, souls and minds of these artists. Join us in celebrating this community connection.

## MISSION

Education that transforms lives, industry, and community

## VISION

The best choice in education, where everyone can succeed

## VALUES

**Empowerment:** We support our students and employees with the skills, tools, and autonomy to succeed

**Inclusion:** We provide a fair and welcoming environment where all voices are heard and where all students and employees feel a sense of belonging

**Innovation:** We are agile and responsive to changing conditions, while anticipating future needs to best serve our students and communities

**Integrity:** We demonstrate honesty, professionalism, and accountability in all interactions with our students, each other, and our community partners

**Respect:** We approach all interactions with openness and empathy, value different perspectives, and treat each other with civility and kindness

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## 2022-23

**Community Art Committee**  
members

Julie Ashlock  
Darele Bisqueria  
Equan Burrows  
D'Allen Christopher Davis  
Micaela Erickson  
Karen Gaskin  
John Glembin  
Gwendolyn Green  
Melissa Hartley Omholt  
Thomas Haslett  
Kris Johnson  
Kathy Kaesermann  
Laurie Kohel  
Joe Sankey  
Elizabeth Schultz  
Mike Sitte  
Lourdes Stehling  
Gerald Trotter  
Drew Van Wyk  
Carol Voss  
Thay Yang  
Erich Zeimantz

A special thanks goes out to our collaborative partners at the Mequon Campus: Janell Jones, Sandy McInay, Sandra Webster; our partners at the Oak Creek Campus: Margaret Dishaw, Caryn Dreher, Suzanne Goodrich, and Erik Riley; and to the entire Marketing and Communications department, including the Printing Services team, especially Dana Cooper-Davis, and Timothy Evans, as well as the Facilities, Planning, Sustainability & Construction team. None of this would have been possible without your contributions and collaborative energy.

Round three of community arts celebrates two of MATC's regional locations – the **Mequon Campus** and **Oak Creek Campus**. Each of these campuses have distinct program offerings that contribute to unique campus cultures. While these campuses may differ in what they teach, they certainly are united, along with the rest of the MATC district, in the theme of **Becoming and Belonging**.

We often **seek to make meaning of the world**. Becoming reflects a process of rapid and significant change during our lives, moving through phases from one state of being to another. **Our identities, knowledge, understanding, skills and relationships** may change course as we are shaped by the events and circumstances that surround us. Becoming includes the idea of **being present and knowing oneself**, engaging with the joys, complexities and challenges of everyday life.

Experiencing belonging is integral to **healthy human existence**. A feeling of being accepted and knowing where and with whom you belong brings a **sense of connection and defines relationships**. Belonging acknowledges our interdependence with others, with the natural or constructed world, and with various situations. Central to being and becoming, **belonging shapes our identity**.

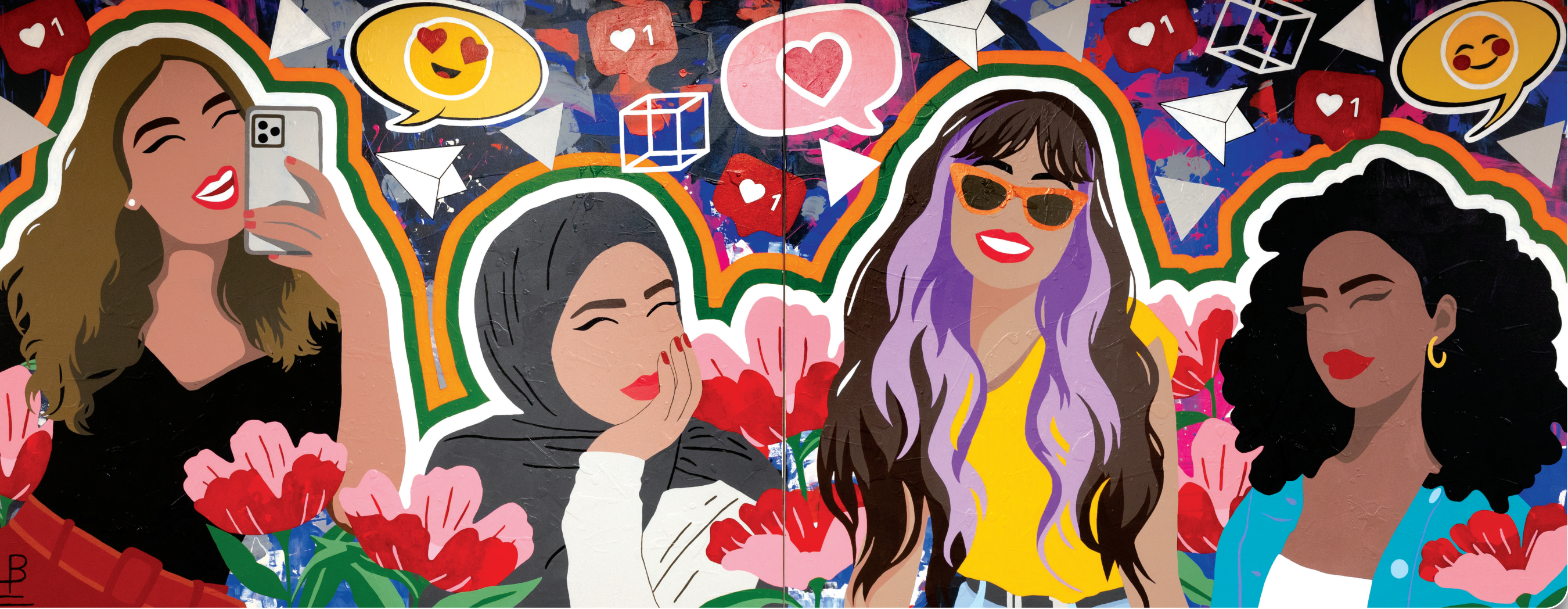
The artists in this third year of the MATC Community Art Collection considered ideas of identity and belonging beyond categorization. Works in this collection were created from the **artists' individual perspectives**, premised in their personal observations, and steeped in concepts of **community and connection**. Join us in reflecting upon their works and celebrating their own visual representations manifest in **Becoming and Belonging**.

**Dr. Julie Ashlock**

*Chair, Community Art Committee;  
Director, Center for Teaching Excellence*

**Melissa Hartley Omholt**

*Co-Chair, Community Art Committee  
Faculty, Art*



## becoming+belonging

### Love Life, 2023

Acrylic on canvas  
Byada (American, born Thailand 1975)  
(pronounced "bee-yad-a")

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.1.1-2

mequon campus

It is easy to forget that who we are now belongs only to us. We have a special right to decide each of our own building blocks in this swift and amazing life of ours. We can keep all the stuff that shows us our connections to one another and the beauty we possess as each alive thing is a unique part of the whole. We can keep our curiosity and wonder and let go of all the things that make us smaller and take the light from all our eyes and hearts. We can let ourselves out of the box life puts us in and let our uniqueness shine like little suns to help each other grow. Respect and love your journey and you will find that same thing for all the ones going on around you.



**BYADA**

Artist



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**Sunrise at the Creek 11-10-2022, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
Kelli Greentree (American, b. 1978)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.4.1

mequon campus



**Sunrise at the Lake 11-10-2022, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
Kelli Greentree (American, b. 1978)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.4.2



**KELLI GREENTREE**

Artist

My paintings are inspired by nature and the great outdoors. For this project, I created two oil paintings of the sunrise over Lake Michigan on the same date, but in two different locations. They represent two humans' perspectives, symbolizing how we are all different but still the same. We should celebrate this diversity and remind ourselves that every day is a new day, a fresh start, and another chance to live our best life.



**KAELYN HART / LEEK**

Artist

Nature serves as a powerful source of inspiration for me as an artist, and I am inspired by its intricate beauty and enigmatic features. I use nature as a symbolic language to communicate the complexity and depth of human emotions and cultural experiences. In my artistic exploration, the human body and hair take on a central role. By merging these elements with the organic forms found in nature, I seek to emphasize the inseparable connection between humans and the natural world.



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**Tangled with Nature, 2023**

Acrylic on masonite  
Kaelyn Hart / Leek (American, born 2001)

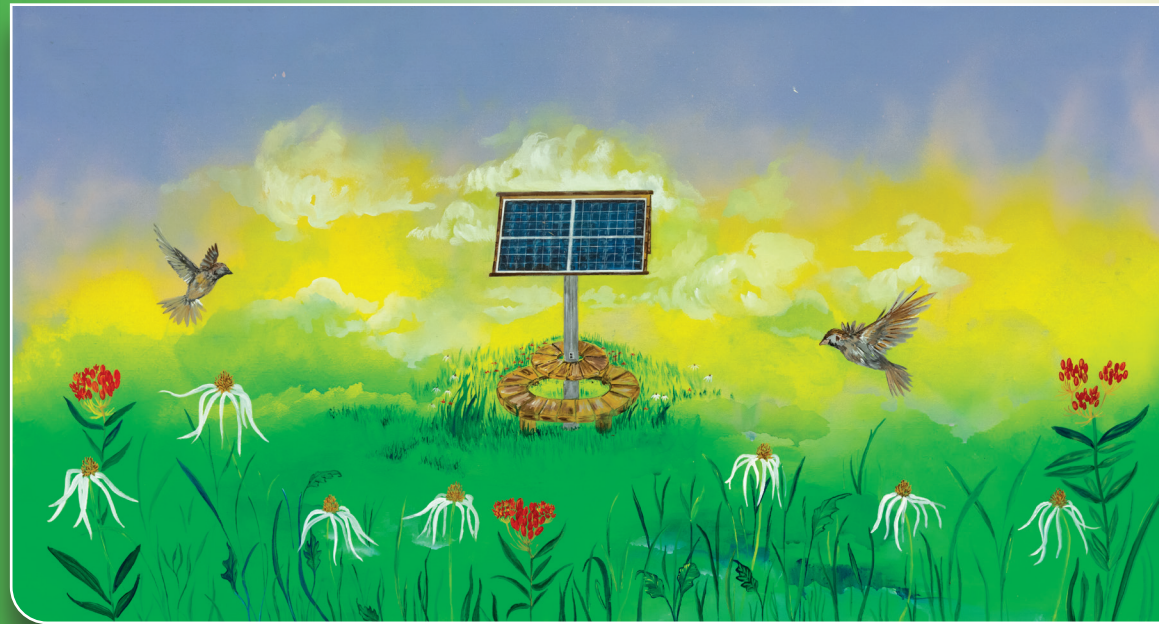
Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.2.1-.4



**MI SALGADO**

Artist

The series of paintings capture the essence of Wisconsin's rivers, lakes, skies, and gardens with a natural color palette showcasing the region's beauty. Each piece portrays structures that support an eco-friendly lifestyle, highlighting the importance of sustainable construction and renovation practices that benefit both people and the environment. By promoting awareness through these paintings, I hope to inspire the continuous mission to create a greener and more sustainable future.



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*mequon campus*

**Greener Future, 2023**  
Acrylic, latex, and spray paint on wood panel  
Mi Salgado (American)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.3.1-.4



**JOHN KOWALCZYK**

Artist

*Wonders of Nature* features the majestic and whimsical creatures that make our environment full of beauty and mystery. The colors and patterns found in our natural world are exaggerated and enlarged. Circles float around the flying birds and camouflage an observant buck. A monarch floats in the scene, reminding us to slow down and enjoy the magnificent natural world.

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**Wonders of Nature, 2023**

Acrylic and fabric on canvas  
John Kowalczyk (American, born 1988)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.5.1-3

*mequon campus*



## JULIE ASHLOCK

Artist

This work depicts the intersection of urban, suburban, and rural life.

*Intersectionality* is about the human struggle; how we move between our different worlds, our different identities of gender, race, age, and ability. As humans, we desire to belong within a larger community. We work to provide for ourselves and others, then we withdraw into our own safe spaces to reenergize, nourish our souls, and care for our families.



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We live in an infinite cycle of risk-taking and self-care that drives our daily actions. My art provides an abstracted look at how we are all connected, yet all have completely different views of the very same experience.

### **Intersectionality, 2022**

Oil on canvas  
Julie Ashlock  
(American, born 1974)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.7





**DENNIS FELBER**

*Artist*

This sculpture acknowledges the connection between land and water. The steel represents the land, and the blue copper represents flowing water.

This piece was inspired by Arda Valles, a large river valley on Mars. The rusty red patina on the piece can be compared to Mars, which is known as the Red Planet, and the river that flows down the middle of the valley.



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**Arda Valles, 2023**  
Steel and copper (with patina)  
Dennis Felber (American, born 1958)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.6



**ROZALIA SINGH**

*Artist*

This mural showcases MATC's numerous specialized career programs. The background shows industrial machinery as an artistic element. Imagery is painted with vibrant color and computerized effects to add visual interest.

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**Start Where You Are, 2023**

Acrylic on hardboard  
Rozalia Singh (American)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.16.1-.6

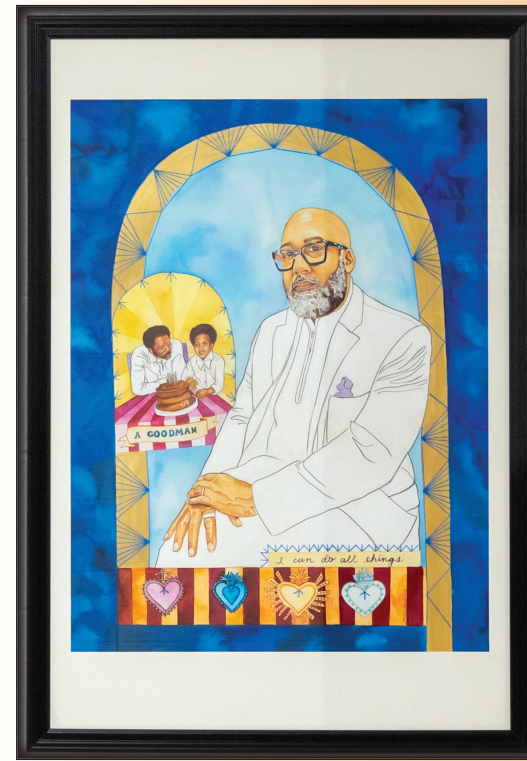
*oak creek campus*



Mitchel Dejno, MATC Alumnus



Bara Omari, MATC Faculty



Alan Goodman, MATC Faculty



Margaret Dishaw, MATC Staff

**Portrait Series, 2023**

Watercolor, pencil, embroidery and cut paper

Madeline Martin (American, born 1984)

Milwaukee Area Technical College, Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee), 2022.17.1-4



**MADLINE MARTIN**

Artist

**These portraits focus on a call and response between time and place. I collaborated with the MATC community by interviewing staff and students, capturing their stories and wisdom. Then, I painted watercolor portraits that include text and design elements unique to their experiences.**

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**Mitchel Dejno**  
Mitchel works at night, so I included a nightlike background. He also creates ball bearings for planes, so I stylized ball bearings in mandalalike patterns. There are five beside him and five above him, a nod to his five siblings. He is from Jacksonville, Florida, the city of bridges, so I included a bridge on the outside border. Having grown up in Florida, Mitchel loves the ocean and especially octopuses, so I included creeping octopus tentacles in the corner. His love of "Star Wars" is referenced in the top and bottom portions of the piece, and the feathers are a nod to his work that enables flight.

**Bara Omari**  
Bara, whose family is from Jordan, is surrounded by arching design motifs borrowed from a Jordanian mosque as well as from the Islamic Society of Milwaukee. Bara's name, which means "innocence" in Arabic, is written in the background. When Bara visited me in my studio, it was only a few days before Ramadan, so she brought dates, rose water candies, and olive oil from her family's olive trees, displaying her generous spirit. I included gold roses and stylized date palm leaves to reference her thoughtfulness. Her spirit is warm and caring, so pink in the background captures her generous heart.

**Alan Goodman**  
Alan, teacher and baker/owner of A Goodman's Desserts, is represented beneath a golden dome, a nod to his church and his spiritual home. An image of Alan as a young boy and his father with a homemade cake is depicted above the words: "A GOODMAN." This is a nod to not only Alan's business and name, but also to the way he has lived his life — inspired by his father to be a good man, father, and husband. Part of Alan's favorite quote is included: "I can do all things [through Christ]." His wife and three children are represented through the hearts at the foundation of the piece. Each heart is the color of a family member's birthstone.

**Margaret Dishaw**  
The purple and lavender flowers throughout the piece reference her late mother's favorite flower and her importance in Margaret's life. The interlocking rings signify her upcoming marriage and her interest in wedding photography. Margaret's initials and her fiancée's initials are drawn within the circles. The red circular design references her land of birth, China, from where she was adopted. The large four leaves surrounding Margaret symbolize her adopted family of origin — her mother, father and brother.



## becoming + belonging

### Of Life and Love, 2023

Paper Sculpture with spray paint and acrylic on wood panels  
Zhie (American, b. 1979)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.12.1-7

Combining the natural beauty of Oak Creek Campus' 40 acres of wetlands with flora and fauna symbolic to the LGBTQIA+ community, this seven-panel piece recalls the changing of the seasons and cycle of life while celebrating the many facets of the human experience. The red, orange, and yellow panels depict winter and autumn. The green, blue, and violet panels showcase scenes of summer and spring. At the center, hand silhouettes of MATC students and alumni form the shape of hearts, with one student rising over a rainbow, displaying the train of a peacock. The feathers are stylized using the colors of a variety of pride flags, both current and historical. Individually, each panel challenges the viewer to search for the deeper meaning of the objects presented. As a whole, it moves from elements of loss and sorrow on the left, segueing to hope and the future on the right, interrupted in the center by the desire for self-expression we all have, and a reminder to have a little bit of fun in life..

ZHIE

Artist

oak creek campus



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**CHRISTIAN SIS**

Artist

One of our highest desires is self-actualization — closing the gap between our dreams and our reality.

Education bestows the skills, tools, and autonomy to create a future that is more compelling than the past.

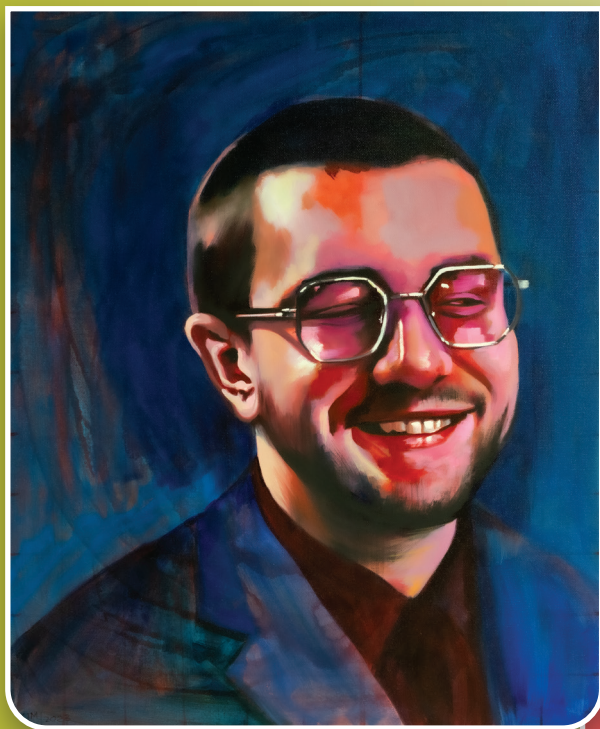
“Your greatest self has been waiting your whole life; don’t make it wait any longer.” — Steve Maraboli

**Empowered, 2023**

Acrylic on canvas  
Christian Sis (American, born 1990)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.15.1-3

oak creek campus



**KIM BURNETT**

Artist

In this series of portraits of MATC students (from left to right: Patrick Casper, Jacqueline Allison, Jordan Burnett, Brisna Alicea, Colin Mitchell), the artist focused on the beauty of the subjects and their goals. Each student is unique yet connected in their choice of education. Color is very important to the artist, so she used color to convey the joy present in the students' faces.

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**Portrait Series, 2023**

Oil on canvas  
Kim Burnett (American, born 1986)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.10.1-5

*oak creek campus*



## MIGUEL CAMACHO

Artist

The painting is a symbolic notion of synergy that builds a vision through collaboration. Trust sets the ground for innovation. People interacting and cooperating towards an initiative are valuable. The face represents the mindset that critical thinking is a skill that enables learners to conceptualize, analyze information, solve problems, and make conscious decisions. Manufacturing is a scientific process, and workers apply logic and reasoning to surpass the expected.



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The glasses symbolize a tool to see a vision, to look clearly into the future. The figures (students) illustrate hands-on training and discipline. In the manufacturing industry, active engagement drives change. Here we see a collaboration. Teamwork and communication are necessary for production efficiency. Two brains are better than one, finding ways to solve a problem together.

### Synergy, 2023

Acrylic on canvas

Miguel Camacho (Nicaraguan, born 1976)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.9.1-2



**JOHN FLEISSNER**

*Artist*

These panels depict an origin story of the working class in Milwaukee. The central figure of a welder constructs an iron sky with stars streaming out of the weld over the city. People from other places aboard steamships come to Milwaukee seeking a better life and to work in the developing industry along Lake Michigan and the city's rivers. Those workers organized for humanity and dignity, demanding the eight-hour workday in 1886. The looming clocks throughout the painting represent the struggle for workers to gain more control over their lives and time.

**The Origin of Milwaukee's Working Class, 2023**

Acrylic on panel  
 John Fleissner (American, b. 1989)  
 Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
 Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
 2022.14.1-2

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**JOHN KOWALCZYK**

Artist

This painting depicts a set of hands creating a flying bird form surrounded by various birds from Wisconsin. These hands represent our connection to nature and our need to be stewards of the environment. The various birds in flight symbolize MATC'S diverse community and their dreams for the future, growing wings and taking flight. The painting includes various collaged elements like fabric to add texture and pattern to the piece.

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**Take Flight, 2023**  
Acrylic and fabric on canvas  
John Kowalczyk (American, born 1988)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.13.1-3

*oak creek campus*



**ROZALIA SINGH**

*Artist*

In this mural, Rozalia uses simplified images of native Wisconsin trees, flowers, and birds. The design has bold, vibrant colors. The mural was inspired by the natural landscape found in our region.

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**Nature's Treasures Surround Us, 2023**

Acrylic on hardboard  
Rozalia Singh (American)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2022 Community Arts Committee),  
2022.8.1-6



**DAVID PEREZ**

Artist

My sculpture includes the inclusive environment that MATC provides for the community. Each of the "M", "A", "T", "C" letters were created with hands made from metal that use American Sign Language (ASL) to sign those letters. In the process of building, cutting, tack welding and heating steel, I found myself observing how my thoughts became physical reality through my hands.



**Wet Paint Chango's Perseverance, 2023**  
1/8 in. metal flat stock over 1/4 in. metal round stock frame,  
5/8 in. base plate  
David Perez III (Wet Paint Chango) (American, b. 1982)

Milwaukee Area Technical College,  
Purchase (2021 Community Arts Committee),  
2021.13

downtown campus

Would you like to collaborate with the MATC Community Art Committee?

To contact us, please email: [communityart@matc.edu](mailto:communityart@matc.edu)

Want to dive deeper into MATC's Community Art Collection?

<https://www.matc.edu/community/index.html>

Milwaukee Area Technical College

700 West State Street, Milwaukee, WI 53233

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