

FIVE TO WATCH

There is a lot of superb art being made these days.
This column by Allison Malafronte shines light on five gifted individuals.



MARC ANDERSON (b. 1987), *Giants of Little America*, 2022, oil on board, 24 x 48 in., Lily Pad | West, Milwaukee

MARC ANDERSON (b. 1987) has called the Midwest home since he was a child, having been born and raised in the Rockwellian town of Wild Rose, Wisconsin. The young artist studied illustration at the University of Wisconsin-Stout and then went to work as a freelancer for several clients and publications. Eventually he decided, however, that fine art was more his speed and spent the next several years teaching himself how to paint through a lot of reading, workshops, and practice.

When the artist discovered plein air painting, he found his true passion. Painting outdoors was a far cry from the commercial illustration life and a welcome reprieve from endless hours in the studio. Right in his native state of Wisconsin, Anderson finds all the inspiration he needs, whether he's painting industrial scenes, local lakes, or sprawling mountain vistas. As he has advanced in his perception and interpretation of his surroundings, the artist has found himself focusing on more conceptual elements. "I've been very interested in how light affects color lately," Anderson shares. "Every scene has unique properties and infinite subtleties that I take great pleasure in trying to capture."

Take, for instance, *Giants of Little America*, illustrated here. The foggy sky casting a misty pall on the structures below certainly took

a lot of attention to subtle value and color transitions, as well as compositional accuracy to convey the street-level, wide-angle view. This painting advertises a signature Anderson motif, in that it is about light and atmosphere but also a statement about a sense of place. "*Giants of Little America* is all about scale and atmosphere," the artist says. "These feed mills are indicative of small, Midwestern towns, and the juxtaposition of these massive structures and rural communities has always piqued my interest."

Today Anderson resides in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, where he runs the M. Anderson Studio as a showroom, studio, and instructional space for workshops. His next solo show is set to open at Charleston's LePrince Fine Art on December 2.

ANDERSON is represented by Bell Street Gallery (La Pointe, Wisconsin), Edgewood Orchard Galleries (Fish Creek, Wisconsin), LePrince Fine Art (Charleston and Naples, Florida), Lily Pad | West (Milwaukee), and Wantoot Gallery (Mineral Point, Wisconsin).

JULIANNE JONKER (b. 1957) was primed from a young age to become the innovative painter, sculptor, and photographer she is today, as she grew up in a family of jazz musicians and creatives who encouraged experimentation, improvisation, and sensitive interpretation. She pursued both classical and contemporary training — first at the Minnesota River School of Fine Art and then with several professional artists in the U.S. and Europe — and today she combines many different disciplines and styles with her own creativity to best honor the subject she is capturing.

“My intention for my art is to serve as a conduit, a visual language for our ability to see and be seen,” the Minnesota-based artist says. “I hope to impart to the work the same beauty I catch a glimpse of when I view a scene or an individual.”

Currently, Jonker is making her works with encaustic, cold wax, and oil paints. This combination of materials allows her to achieve a sculptural quality, creating depth and texture while providing a soft matte patina. “Combining classical and contemporary styles, I use these materials to capture the nuances of each subject’s likeness,” she says. “Working in a rhythm layer by layer, wax and oil combined, I build then excavate, create then destroy, using an array of tools to evoke the history and depth that defines the texture of wax paintings.”

Jonker’s current series, *Gods and Goddesses*, began during the pandemic, when the artist was deep in introspection considering how to bridge the disconnect and invisibility people experienced during that prolonged period of isolation. Within that collection is her reinterpretation of Bouguereau’s masterpiece *Cupid and Psyche* (1889), seen through a new lens of inclusion. “The original painting had two little pink cherubs, probably taken from French models since Bouguereau was French,” the artist explains. “My granddaughters and other little people of color rarely see themselves depicted as cherubs, princesses, heroes, or in this case a butterfly/moth. It’s so important for all children to see their own reflection in the real world around them, as well as in art and media.”

Jonker continues, “I created the little moth/cherub out of my imagination. She represents many ethnicities of brown-skinned little girls. The moth’s symbolist meaning is resurrection and transformation. A moth represents tremendous change, but it also seeks the light. Thus, the spiritual meaning is to trust the changes that are happening, and that freedom and liberation are right around the corner.”

This November Jonker will open a solo exhibition showcasing recent paintings, drawings, etchings, and sculpture, as well as



JULIANNE JONKER (b. 1957), *Cupid and Psyche*, 2022, cold wax and oil on raised birch panel, 36 x 24 in., available through the artist

alternate processes and image transfers, at D Anthony Gallery in Wausau, Wisconsin.

JONKER is represented by D Anthony Gallery (Wausau, Wisconsin), Grande Gallery (Minneapolis), and Jonker Portrait Gallery (Apple Valley, Minnesota).



DANNY GLASS (b. 1991), *Crossing*, 2020, oil on canvas, 38 x 38 in., available through the artist

The diverse compositions, colors, and activities of urban street life and the human condition have held the attention of Florida painter **DANNY GLASS** (b. 1991) for well over 10 years. His portfolio of large-scale multi-figure paintings, individual portraits conveying psychological depth, and drawings in charcoal, graphite, and pen-and-ink tell of his desire to understand and make sense of the world through the work of his hand.

“Each of my paintings begins with my perception of contemporary society and my experience of truths revealed by that perception,” Glass says. “I invite viewers to empathize with my desire to express today’s truths and encourage viewers to recognize and explore their own truths and emotions as they view my work. I deeply believe that expressive, figurative art can clearly and emphatically communicate with viewers emotionally and intellectually.”

In *Crossing*, illustrated here, Glass tells a symbolic story through the eyes of someone who is confined to a chair at a busy city intersection. Her countenance is content and watchful, while the expressions of the others show telltale signs of anxiously being on the move to the next moment of their scheduled days. Color plays a significant role here, although only the artist himself likely knows its true symbolism. All the men are depicted in bright blue while the women,

including the woman watching, are in diluted shades of red. Glass asks the viewer to find and ruminate on just these kinds of subtle clues in his visual narratives.

Relatively new to professional painting, in 2015 Glass completed the dual degree program offered by Brown University and the Rhode Island School of Design (RISD), where he majored in art history and painting. After working as a research intern at the RISD Museum and participating in residency programs, he moved to New York City and earned a Master’s degree in art business from Sotheby’s Institute of Art while maintaining a consistent studio practice.

Today Glass is more committed than ever to using his skills to create images with care and intention that require the viewer to pause and reflect. “In a time when countless images flash before our eyes only to be quickly forgotten, we risk losing touch with the important intuitions and feelings we each have that guide our understanding of the world,” the artist observes. “The choice to commit to images is thus daunting, but for me it is more important than ever.”

GLASS is represented by *Beddington Fine Art* (Bargemon, France) and *Gallery Piquel* (New Hope, Pennsylvania).

ANGIE REDMOND (b. 1987), *Can't Hide, Won't Hide My Black – It Starts Here*, 2020, oil on canvas, 48 x 36 in., collection of Ceata E. Lash

ANGIE REDMOND (b. 1987) has been giving a voice to black experience and cultural individuality in America since long before Black Lives Matter rose to prominence. Her figure paintings and portraits have always celebrated beauty in all forms and championed the strength of self-identity, while calling out injustices and misconceptions with intelligence and positivity.

“I use my art as a means to promote social change, encouragement in oneself, and resilience,” Redmond says. “I use the subject of social justice to insist on change in stereotypes of cultures through the concept of emotions, particularly with the negative way the black body is often viewed and treated in society. I use the psychology of color to emphasize the complexities of human emotions and behaviors.”

Redmond is based in Chicago, and prior to living in the Windy City she earned her B.A. in studio art and oil painting from Michigan’s Albion College, an M.F.A. in painting from Northern Illinois University, and an M.S. in digital art from Knowledge Systems Institute in Illinois. Assimilating the art approaches she encountered during her education, Redmond now uses heavy textural applications of oil paint and bright color to bring to life unseen aspects of her subjects. In *Can't Hide, Won't Hide My Black – It Starts Here*, for instance, the artist’s statement is clear: “This painting is about unapologetically loving yourself and where you came from and not living with the identities placed on you by others.”

Redmond often works in series to convey a cohesive message she feels strongly about, and she is currently developing a body of work titled *Who Do You See?*, which holds a mirror up to long-held



societal perceptions and judgments. “In a society often consumed with negativity based on different political views, racial identities, or financial statuses, my paintings will continue to emphasize the need for peace,” Redmond says. “My work is focused on people and the beauty in just being, released of the identities placed on them by others. It is not limited to the voice of one culture, but is speaking to all within our community, our society, our human race while we respect our differences and honor our similarities.”

REDMOND is self-represented.

VARVÀRA FERN (b. 1999) is a sculptor who grew up in Moscow. She studied classical figuration at the Moscow Academic Art Institute and then bravely embarked on a new life in America when she relocated to study at the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts (PAFA). Today she continues to live and work in Philadelphia, where she maintains a studio and is completing her M.F.A. at PAFA.

Fern has been a world traveler since the age of 13, and those voyages have greatly shaped her life and art. Her work today is inspired by the idea of movement and travel, in particular roadways and railways, as a means of shifting one's life and perspective in a new direction. "Traveling is not only a process of going from one place to another, but also an emotional journey," the artist says. "A person can always find something new in a journey, maybe even happiness. In my work I show people beginning their travel from trauma and unhappiness to finding themselves and reaching harmony."

The artist's most recent series, *Travel*, fully expresses these sentiments. In *Travelers*, shown here, three figures make their way uphill along a winding railroad track, with luggage and hopes for a new horizon in tow. "This work was inspired by my own travel experience and my love of road landscapes," Fern says. "It's also a reference to train-hopping, which I feel is one of the most beautiful, albeit dangerous, ways to travel. It

requires absolute trust and spiritual freedom, as train-hoppers never know exactly where a train is going to bring them. Sometimes a person has to be at a certain level of risk or even despair to make this kind of journey. At the same time, travel always helps one find something new, and maybe this will be harmony and happiness."

Aesthetically, the artist also finds railroads fascinating because of their mesmerizing, sculptural shapes. To create her interpretations of these structures, Fern opts for working in oil-based clay, a medium that she has used since childhood and therefore is second nature to her. "This material is like a language that I can speak fluently," Fern explains, "so it allows me to give full form to all of my ideas and imagination."

FERN is self-represented.



VARVÀRA FERN (b. 1999), *Travelers*, 2022, resin, acrylic, and steel, 23 x 18 x 22 1/2 in., available through the artist