ABOUT THE EXHIBITION

The Banana Factory Arts Center is ArtsQuest’s hub of visual arts and education programming, serving as a convening space for the community to create and appreciate the arts. Visitors to the Banana Factory are encouraged to experience art through exhibitions, classes, tours and events. The arts center, however, is more than just a collection of galleries and classrooms - it is an ecosystem of creativity and collaboration fueled by a community of Resident Artists. The Resident Artists are teachers, entrepreneurs, mentors, innovators and community leaders. Their individual talents are nurtured in this unique environment through peer-to-peer feedback and support. Their work, from conception to exhibition, is represented at the Banana Factory. The ArtsQuest Annual Resident Exhibition showcases the tremendous work of these talented individuals. The pieces in this exhibition speak to the breadth of talent in the Banana Factory, as well as the diversity. A variety of styles, materials and presentations are on view. We ask you to experience the works in this exhibition through observation and reflection, encourage you to purchase original works of art for your own collection and we invite you to engage in a dialogue with the artists in their studios.

HISTORY OF THE BANANA FACTORY ARTS CENTER & RESIDENT ARTISTS

In early 1996 The Bethlehem Musikfest Association (which would become the non-profit ArtsQuest in 2000) sought to support the City’s revitalization by creating a cultural center for arts and education, especially for young people in the community. Mayor Kenneth Smith recommended a former banana distribution warehouse at the western gateway to the SouthSide as a location that the City wanted to develop. With the strong support of local philanthropist Marlene “Linny” Fowler, The Bethlehem Musikfest Association purchased the former Theodoredis Banana distribution warehouse in September 1996. Renovations commenced and in January 1998, the Banana Factory Arts Center opened.

In 2000, the Bethlehem Musikfest Association formally changed its name to ArtsQuest and purchased a former auto parts store adjacent to the Banana Factory, thus extending the facility and parking lot for a strategic city block. Two years later, the nonprofit completed the expansion of the Banana Factory to incorporate the large new Crayola Gallery, the R.K. Laros Ceramics Classroom, the general arts classroom and the Banko Family Community Room. Since 2003, the Banana Factory has added the Olympus Digital Imaging Center (which was updated in 2018 with all new Mac desktop computers and iPads with Apple Pencil for digital illustration and design), the ArtsQuest Glass Studio (the region’s only teaching hot glass studio), and additional artist studios, raising the total to thirty resident artists.

The Resident Artists at the Banana Factory Arts Center hold a significant role within the building and the mission of ArtsQuest to make the artistic community accessible. All studio spaces have subsidized rent, and Resident Artists can participate in a number of annual programs; such as the Resident Artist Annual Exhibition and multiple First Friday open houses throughout the year. Each month, a rotating set of resident artists are featured and display their work in the main lobby and have a digital feature on the Banana Factory’s Instagram page.

To date, over one hundred artists have used the Banana Factory Art’s center studio spaces as a place to create their art and share with the surrounding community during the twenty three years since the official opening of the building. The artists span a variety of different mediums, covering everything from painting to printmaking, fashion design to glass sculpture.

Lisa Harms
Senior Director, Visual Arts & Education

Elena Ostock
Manager of Visual Arts

Nicole Gencarelli
Visual Arts Specialist

Alyssa Ascher
Visual Arts Coordinator

Joanne Garcia
Education Coordinator

SHOP LOCAL: SUPPORT ARTISTS & SMALL BUSINESS

WHEN YOU PURCHASE A PIECE OF ARTWORK BY AN ARTIST WITHIN YOUR COMMUNITY, YOU ARE HELPING TO SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL CREATIVE ECONOMY!
Khalil Allaik | Studio 342
Conceptual Gate
Ink on paper

Rachael Bell | Studio 248A
The Flowers are Too Tall for the Table (Again)
Mixed media on wood panel

Doug Boehm | Studio 218A
MMXXIAF
Acrylic on canvas

Valerie Breaux Haaf | Studio 351
Mask Series #3
Copper on canvas

Kim Hogan | Studio 350
The Houseplant
Glass mosaic

Katie Hovencamp | Studio 254
Venus Fly Trap Flasher
Pen & ink

Al Johnson | Studio 347
Ninety Six In the Shade
Mixed media on canvas

Lauren Kuhn | Studio 345
Show-offs and One-uppers
Acrylic on canvas

Deb Slahta | Studio 247
Hexad Victor #1
Raku fired ceramic

Anthony Smith, Jr., | Studio 242
When Ken-Ken Whistled Sweetly At Me
Mixed media

David Sommers | Studio 255
Venus Abstracted
Oil on canvas

Olaf Starorypinski | Studio 233
Marie B #92
Archival pigment print
Devyn Briggs | Studio 253
Sueña con un carnaval de momentos y olvido (She dreams a carnival of moments and forgetting)
Acrylic and hand-painted collage on canvas

Keith Garubba | Studio 343
Auto Amulet for Companionship
Auto Amulet for the Wanderer
Auto Amulet to Ward Off Envy
Silkscreened enamels fused on glass

Kevin Haaf | Studio 351
Egyptian Blue Opal
5 Gold rings

Jeffery Ludwig-Dicus | Studio 249
Drip Drop
Plywood, MDF, paint, yarn, polyfill

Ramon Peralta | Studio 244
Violin
Oil on canvas

Graham Lucks | Studio 2
Stainless steel and brass, 17 x 15 x 3

Bruce Ward | Studio 350
Valley of Fire II
Digital photograph

Dr. Lee Riley | Studio 337
Halfmoon Pose

Robert Tucher | Studio 243
World Trade Towers from Tug Piers, Jersey City, NJ
B&W 4x5 film

Tyrone Webb | Studio 218
Psychic Pollulation
Spray paint on wooden board

Artists with artwork not pictured:
Erin Anderson | Studio 346
Amy Blair | Studio 340
Sherelle Cook | Studio 250
Octavio Pena | Studio 330

Marie Haba | Studio 245
Emerald Habaism
Stained glass: glass on glass technique