

Dreams Become Reality Through Tierra's Careers in the Arts



Helen Rae has achieved every artist's dream, a solo show held this Fall in New York City, presented by White Columns, the Big Apple's oldest alternative art space.

Celebrating her 79th birthday during the exhibition, Helen Rae has definitely put in the work to deserve such a momentous accomplishment. She joined Tierra's First Street Gallery, now Claremont Art Center, in 1990, at a time when few people recognized the tremendous potential of artists with developmental disabilities. Society has evolved and so has Helen's work. Through focus, dedication and a creative vision that is completely unique, Helen has been able to develop a rigorous practice, a professional career,

and a reputation as one of the most compelling visual artists of her time.

Although she has participated in nearly 200 exhibitions around the globe since 1990, the past three years have truly been remarkable with the support



Critic David Pagel wrote in Gallery Magazine,
"Every square inch of her meticulously composed
and vigorously colored-in surfaces is unique, distinct,
singular. To look at her works is to know that you are
in the presence of someone who sees the world anew
every split second."

of The Good Luck Gallery in Los Angeles, beginning with her sell-out debut solo show in 2015. Helen's work then traveled to the Outsider Art Fairs in New York City and Paris, where her drawings were discovered by the likes of leading fashion designer Cynthia Rowley.

Helen couldn't have asked for a better ambassador to

introduce her work to the New York art scene than White Columns Director and Chief Curator, Matthew Higgs. Higgs is not just one of the world's most respected curators, he has also proven to be one of the most influential champions of artists with disabilities. The show was named by *TimeOut* as one of the "Top Five New York Art Shows This Week", and was praised by Jerry Saltz in *New York Magazine*. As a sign that Helen's career will only continue to rise, Saltz challenged curators to include Helen's work in the next set of biennials. So, stay tuned!



"I really didn't know anything about her, but it was just the sheer beauty of what she was making. It hit me over the head like a frying pan." Cynthia Rowley, Fashion Designer, West Village, New York City.



Message From Rebecca Lienhard, CEO

"A strong and vibrant community is one in which all of its members contribute to the strengths and assets for the common good."

This is a strong vision. It is a clear vision. It is also transforming if we take each word in its truest form. Today, more so than any other in our history, we must stand firm in our mission to 'empower people with disabilities to fulfill their potential and desire to become productive citizens who are accepted, included and valued for the contributions they make to the economic, civic and cultural vitality of the community.'

In the next page, you will meet Felicita, Julio, and Jose, who once spent every day, all day, on our Sunland Campus, apart from their larger community. Now, they are leading lives of value and acceptance for the daily contributions they make to the Alicia Duncan Broadous Center (ABD) and the Valley Interfaith Council (VIC) in Pacoima. They begin their daily journey with other ABD staff and volunteers, preparing themselves for a full shift – embraced for their strengths and their gifts of service.

To achieve these lifestyles, we must be a part of our larger community. And, we must plan carefully. To help create customized lifestyles that incorporate individual strengths, dreams and safety considerations, Tierra has elevated Julie Snyder to the role of Individualized Life Planner. Julie has served at our organization for almost 27 years. She brings to her new role many strengths, including relationship development, PATH training, and a rich history of transition planning, both at an individual, as well as programmatic level. Along with the array of other quality of life resources here at Tierra, such as our Volunteer Partner Developer, our Discovery and PATH coordinators, and our gifted Client Services Managers, we are letting you know that we are committed partners to making customized lifestyles a reality for all we serve, even those with the most pervasive challenges.

One day, I believe deep in my soul that we will see 'a day when all people with any type of disability are fully recognized as an integral part of our community – as neighbors, co-workers, and contributors.'

Believe in these words. Believe in us.

Greetings from the Board!



L to R: Front Row: Elisabeth Stimson, Chloe Houghton, Pat Moore, Jan Maseda, Karren McClenahan Middle Row: Kyle Stoutland, Stephen Maseda, Dan Taay, Back Row: Dave Gilman, Marc Littman, Matt Chase, Peter Koettters. Not shown: Michael Blumenfield, MD, Kelly Bruno, Andrew Kugler, Elizabeth Likes, Ellen Stein, Bill Van Laningham, Michelle Vega, Jonathan Wu.

There is so much happening at Tierra del Sol, it's hard to keep track!

First, on behalf of our entire Board, I want to thank each of you who have supported Tierra by attending events, making a financial contribution, and volunteering your time and talents. We appreciate each and every one of you, and thank you for acknowledging the great work that Tierra provides to our families and the community.

This September, we welcomed Threefold Village Enrichment Services to our campus as a Waldorf inspired community of K-6th graders. We are excited about this new partnership and the energy it brings to our campus.

If you haven't visited our Saturday Farmers Market, please make an effort to do so. You won't be disappointed, as it's a great way to spend a Saturday morning, and all proceeds go directly back to Tierra del Sol.

Our final note of gratitude goes to the amazing staff and leadership at Tierra, who work tirelessly, day in and day out, to ensure that our sons, daughters, brothers, sisters and family members have a full and vital life.

Thank you for all you do...you are greatly appreciated!

Jan Maseda,
Parent and Chair of the Board

Farewell, Sister Harriet

On June 22nd, Board members and senior leadership bid a fond, but tearful, farewell to Sister Harriet Stellern, SSND, who retired after 18 years as an active member of Tierra's Board of Directors. Sister Harriet, a School Sister of Notre Dame, played a significant role in Tierra's history, was loved by all and, in turn, loved Tierra and its mission. Despite a vow of poverty, Sister Harriet gave generously of her time and treasures and was instrumental in helping support Tierra through the SSND Foundation. Her full-time role as Registrar at Bishop Conaty Our Lady of Loretto High School, was never an excuse for missing an opportunity to volunteer at a Tierra Spaghetti Dinner, Gala, Golf Tournament or Fall Festival. Sister Harriet, we will miss you and wish you all the best as you begin your well-deserved years of retirement in St. Louis, Missouri. Thank you for your many years of service to Tierra del Sol!



A Partnership of Perfect Sense

Alicia Broadous Duncan Center
and Tierra del Sol



Felicita Hernandez

Felicita Hernandez, Jose Ayon, and Julio Rodriguez are three individuals who truly go above and beyond for those THEY serve. These three men and women are Professional Volunteers from Tierra's Workforce Development Program who work five days a week at the Alicia Broadous Duncan Center (ABD) in Pacoima, a program of the Valley Interfaith Council (VIC). Between serving hundreds of hot meals daily, to providing a wide of array of activities to grateful seniors in the San Fernando Valley, the volunteer needs at ABD are more than helpful, they are a necessity.



L to R: Linda Sims, Jose Ayon, Julio Rodriguez, Rene Ledesma, and Felicity Hernandez

Nutritional Director, Tammy Reese Williams shares, "We rely heavily on our volunteers to keep this place running. That is a fact. As the Nutritional Director for ABD, I can tell you that our partnership with Tierra allows us to continue to serve our seniors everyday; I see it firsthand. Tierra volunteers do it all, and they keep the whole operation going."

Tammy's sentiments are synonymous with Tierra's mission to continue to empower individuals with developmental disabilities through Workforce Development, College to Career, and Careers in the Arts. And, while their level of dedication exudes professionalism, it took hard work and

a new level of commitment to be the best. "When we started coming here, the clients only worked a few days a week, and spent the rest of their time at Tierra's Campus. Beginning and ending their days at ABD initially proved a challenge. But now, they love it! Not only do they enjoy what they do, but they have become friends with both the staff and the seniors," tells Tierra Instructor, Linda Sims.

The relationships these three individuals have developed while at ABD, is profound. While Felicity, Jose, and Julio are learning and mastering something new every day, they are also becoming teachers. Homebound Meals Coordinator, Rene Ledesma, explains, "They are much more than volunteers. They are a part of our organization and all we do here to serve seniors. In all my years here, I've learned a lot working with people and providing meals. But, it is Tierra volunteers that have truly taught me how to treat people with dignity. When they come to work, they go above and beyond and do so much more than expected. They have changed me, and everyone at ABD wants them to know they are valued and included."



Jose Ayon and Jessie Dupree

Thank You to those who believe in the values, vision and mission of Tierra del Sol. commitment to empowering all individuals with developmental disabilities to be

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Julie Snyder — Bringing Care and Compassion to Tierra



For the family members of those Tierra serves, the well-being, safety and happiness of their loved ones, is a daily priority. But, for many parents and caregivers, the thought of who will manage those priorities once they are gone, weighs heavy on their minds. So much so, that it is often put off, until it is too late.

The growing concerns of our families has prompted Tierra to take action, and resulted in a new and comprehensive program, known as, “Late Life Planning.” Guided by the care and expertise of 26-year Tierra veteran and National Task Group on Aging member, Julie Snyder, family members

can now be proactive in establishing a plan for their loved one(s) with disabilities. “Having seen firsthand the chaos and disruption that can result when a parent or caregiver suddenly falls ill or passes, and there is no plan in place, is something you don’t want any family member to experience. By creating a plan, so much of this can be avoided,” tells Julie, who has been instrumental in seeing numerous Tierra families through these very difficult times.

“By creating a Letter of Intent, a detailed series of questions are answered that can prove invaluable in communicating the family’s future hopes and

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wishes for their son, daughter, brother or sister. Families can even request that Tierra serve as an advocate for their loved one's living arrangements or financial wellbeing as it relates to a Special Needs Trust, thus ensuring that their intentions are met to the fullest extent."

"At Tierra, we have a saying, *Nothing about me, without me,*" tells Julie. "By taking advantage of Late Life Planning now, we are giving both our clients and their parents/family members a voice in a transition that can turn a difficult process into a positive outcome."

Watch your mail for more information on Tierra's six-week Late Life Planning Program, scheduled to begin in Spring 2018, or contact Julie at jsnyder@tierradelsol.org.



Rest in Peace, Vito Cannella

October 27, 1928 – September 1, 2017

A beloved member of the Tierra family, we are grateful for your 43 years of support and generosity. You will be greatly missed.

Artist Spotlight: JULIA HAGEN-BRENNER

Julia Hagen-Brenner is a dedicated fine artist who enjoys exploring different media. Her works on paper include marker, acrylic paint, watercolor, colored pencil and pastel. She is currently exploring and developing a body of work in clay. Julia is inspired by Japanese culture and craft, and she has a vast knowledge of crystals, stones, and glass, which inspire her sculptures and jewelry. She is also drawn to the outdoors where she may sketch from life, or incorporate natural objects into her art.

Coming from a creative family, Julia has always been encouraged to express herself artistically. She is enthusiastic about sharing her passion for creating and has a strong sense of color, pattern, and line in her dynamic and imaginative compositions. Her paintings are highly illustrative and consistently stylized, depicting a large variety of subject matter, while still maintaining a distinct, decorative visual language. Whether drawing mythical creatures, scenes from stories, imagined settings or real life, she finds a powerful, balanced color palette to draw the viewer into the piece.



In Julia's words, "I am very passionate about the art I create and what I stand for. I don't know where my life would be without my artistic abilities and skillsets. What I do as an autistic artist is amazing and fun. I paint, I draw, I craft handmade jewelry, I write, and I just started getting into sculpting, this year! Many great and wonderful skills! The arts are truly my passion and I love them - may it be job related or just to have a good time. I will always identify as an artist no matter what. I love my autism too! Autism, plus being different, is who I am. Being autistic, for me, is a gift and a true identity for me to be who I am. Autism makes me feel very special and quite gifted in my own eyes. I wouldn't be who I am today if I didn't know I was autistic in the first place. I thank my mother and my father very much for choosing to let me know over the years about what autism is. I'm very smart, talented, caring, open, and have so much potential to do things that I want to do in my life."

Technology Transcends Borders

Joe Zaldivar teamed up with colleague and collaborator Ramak Fazel in *Unmap Me*, an exhibition presented by Studio CCRZ as part of *The Biennial of the Image* in Switzerland. Both artists explore the city of Chicago; Fazel in person, peering through his camera lens and Zaldivar, virtually, via his iPad and the imagery of Google Maps Street View. The result is an exhibition that engages intimately with the viewer through Zaldivar's tactile approach to drawing and Fazel's first-person perspective, as a photographer. Their diverse approaches combine to explore the border blurring theme of the biennial which is entitled *Borderlines. City Divided/City Plural*.

Although Zaldivar wasn't able to attend the event in person, technology offered him the chance to still get a virtual tour of the exhibition from Fazel and meet the CCRZ team by using the Facetime app on his iPad. This video conference also gave the visitors to the *Unmap Me* exhibition a chance to watch Zaldivar work on one of his drawings live during the VIP preview.



Exciting News for our Artists' Careers!

You will notice some exciting changes as Tierra del Sol's award-winning First Street Gallery expands its professional representation to include artists from both progressive studios, Sunland Studio Arts (SSA) and Claremont Art Center (CAC). CAC is the new name for the progressive studio in Claremont. Watch our website for more information!

ART EVENTS COMING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON:

FSG Vicente Siso and A Holiday Show Dinner Party,
December 2nd - January 6th, 2018

Holiday Boutique Sunland - December 4th - 22nd

You Have the Right to Make Work, ULV School of Law,
now through April 15, 2018



TIERRA'S CASINO ROYALE

A Perfect Royal Flush!

Saturday, October 14th marked the date for Tierra's First Annual Casino Royale. Guests dressed to the nines and enjoyed an evening of delicious food, an abundance of gaming options, and the sounds of Retrofit! Many thanks to all of the sponsors, guests and donors who made this fun-filled evening possible, and to our volunteers who kept the night running smoothly. Proceeds raised support for the programs and services that Tierra provides to over 700 clients each day, allowing Tierra to continue empowering individuals with developmental disabilities through Workforce Development, College to Career, and Careers in the Arts.

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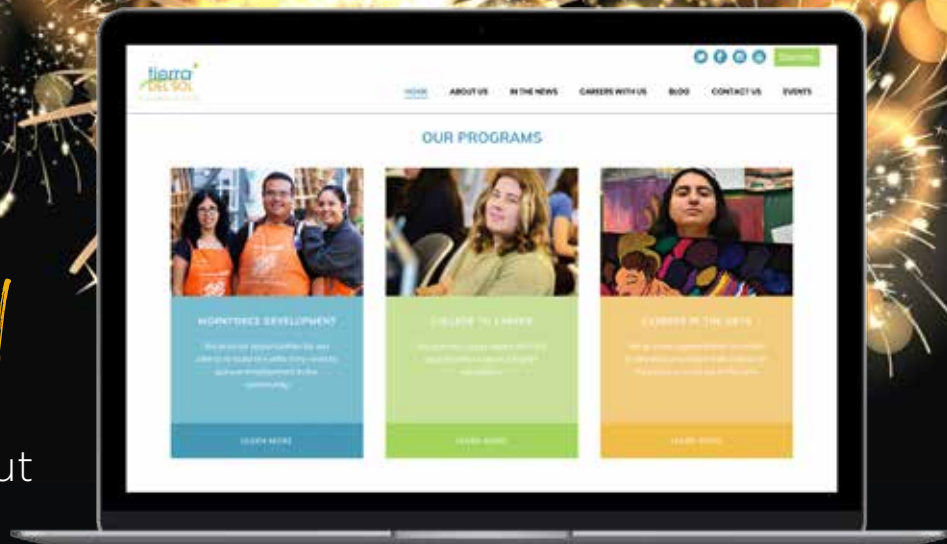


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www.tierradelsol.org



Warmest Wishes and Many Thanks:

On behalf of the men and women we serve, Tierra's Board of Directors and staff, we wish you a wonderful Holiday season filled with warmth and good cheer. Thank you for supporting our mission and making 2017 a tremendous year.