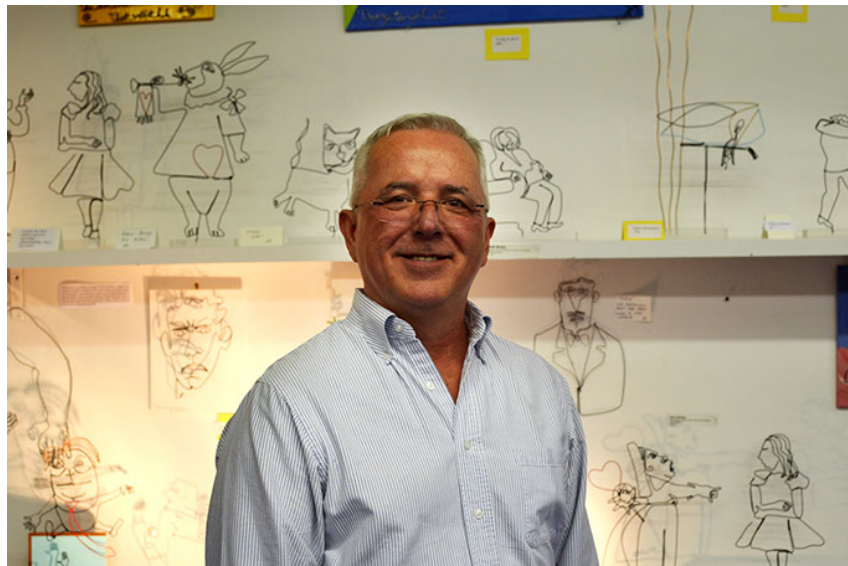


Squinch

Featured Artist

Brian Murphy: The Happiness Sculptor

by Anna Spier
December 19th, 2017



Brian Murphy says his studio reminds him of a clubhouse. The white walls are covered from floor to ceiling with stylized, minimalistic wire sculptures. The four off-white walls are like the inside of a sketchbook, covered with black line drawings with occasional outlines in yellow, red, blue, and green. The room reflects the fun and childlike sculptures that Murphy creates so expertly.

Wire sculpting was not originally a part of Murphy's plan. Murphy is also a child therapist, working specifically with children exposed to trauma. Murphy would often use art as a tool to help children become more expressive. He started by making magic wands out of wire and jewels to help kids suffering from night fears defend themselves from monsters in the middle of the night. The wands were just the beginning. Soon he was making wire robots on the floor and bird mobiles that hung from the ceiling.

"Pretty soon it took off and became a full-time art thing," Murphy said.

Murphy moved to a studio in the South End and began to create the pieces that embodied the same whimsicality as the pieces he had made with the children he worked with. Bright yellow labels beneath the sculptures read amusing and witty titles like "Hunchback of Notre Dame Horrified by the Price of Milk" and "Trumpian Queen."



"I feel like there's a lot of serious art out there and this is kind of an antidote to that. It's an attempt to be more lighthearted and happy," Murphy said.

Murphy has also used his sculptures as a way of pointing out social and political issues that he believes warrant discussion. These satirical and wonderfully clever pieces provide social commentary on hot topics ranging from Donald Trump to mansplaining. Murphy hopes that people will see ideas in his work that they can relate to whether they be, gender issues, gay straight issues, or political issues.

While some pieces may seem like they would be easy to make, this is far from true. When using a single piece of steel wire, it can be difficult to capture all of the "charm and childlikeness" that sets Murphy's work apart. Not only does Murphy have to find a way to use the single wire to create a powerful image, he also gives his images additional life by incorporating elements of light and movement. Shadows can be cast on the wall behind a piece to add a sense of ominousness. Sculptures are also placed on wooden platforms that pick up vibrations from the floor and move as people approach them.

"The pieces become enlivened and become moving so it's almost like you're interacting with them," Murphy said.

Murphy believes that his imaginative wire sculptures are for both the young and the old, as long as they are open-minded and responsive to humor. When making his pieces, Murphy likes to consider how the world will be in the future.

"Especially when you work with children it's important to think about the future and the way you want the world to be," Murphy said. "The whole thing with making art is the idea that you're trying to make life better and more livable."

Photos and video courtesy of Anna Spier

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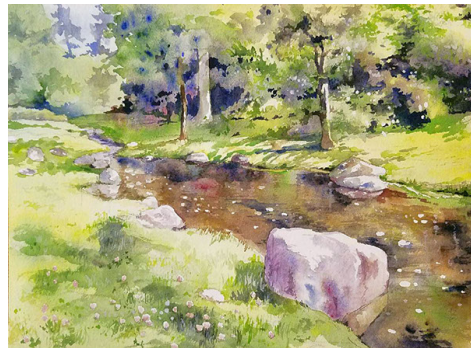
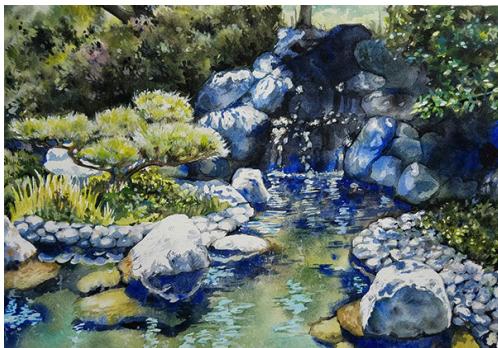
Submissions



Xian Boles

Xian Boles, CFA '20, majoring in painting, wishes to make art that can trigger emotional responses from viewers. Many of her works are observational studies, of which she is currently exploring the quickest, most efficient methods to paint. Though the pictured works are made with watercolor, Xian has a keen interest in oil painting. Outside of class, she is currently developing concepts for pieces which concern her personal experiences. After undergrad, she is interested in pursuing a career in biomedical illustration and communication.

[@xianboles](https://www.instagram.com/xianboles)



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Submissions



Barbara Kang

Barbara Kang, BU CFA/COM '20, creates abstract landscape and portrait paintings, and installations which focus on religious motifs. She aims to achieve a constant dialogue with art which permits the exploration of content and expression in her work. Interested in the societal perceptions of what art can be, Barbara hopes to broaden her perspectives and develop a stronger ability for art criticism on contemporary work through her studies.

[@bkangggg](https://www.instagram.com/bkangggg)



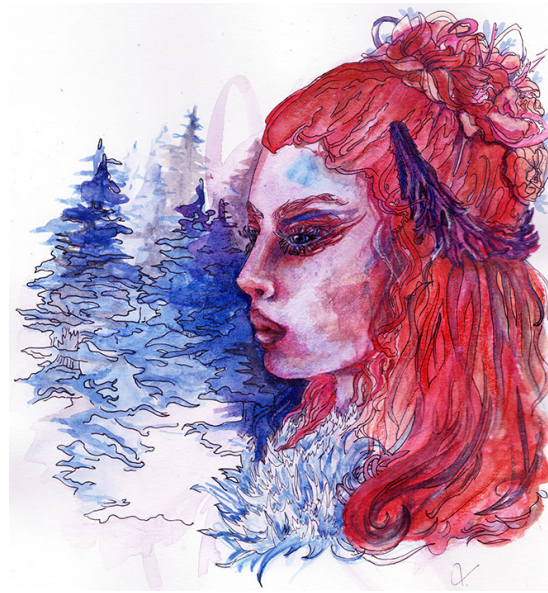
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Submissions

Beyza Sahin Gun

Beyza Sahin Gun, CAS (Psychology) '18, paints loosely with watercolor and then traces the details with black ink. She studies anatomy and nature, but avoids limiting herself with rules when painting. Most interested in studies of bodily motion and abstract colors, she studies the work of contemporary artists Agnes Cecile and Alphonse Mucha. Beyza aims to combine her interest of psychology in her artwork.

[@bruepap](#)



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Submissions

Samuel Powers

Samuel Powers' paintings, made with spray paint and oil sticks, are a way for him to navigate what seems to be a very chaotic time in the world. He tries to convey that chaos complemented by peaceful stillness. A sophomore at BU majoring in Philosophy and minoring in Visual Arts, he hopes to be content with whatever path life chooses for him.

[@samsuperpowers](https://www.instagram.com/samsuperpowers)



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Submissions



Sofija Chronos

Sofija Chronos, CFA '20/21, is in a five-year BFA/MA program in Sculpture and Studio Art Education. Her sculptures are often based on themes of time, growth, and self-reflection: with a variety of materials such as wood, styrofoam, and plaster. Her recent piece, *Ask Me What Time Is Made Of*, Fall '17, incorporates instant coffee dissolved within plaster, to capture both an aroma and an atmosphere of change. The piece mirrors itself through leveled planes, both reflecting itself and providing a window to the spaces surrounding it. In the future, Sofija hopes to create work that is evocative of both introspection and awareness of the surrounding world.

[@sofijasart](https://www.instagram.com/sofijasart)



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Submissions



Kai Medina

Kai Medina, BU '21, studies Biology, specializing in Ecology & Conservation. He focuses on photography that captures an overall variety of life, observing details of his surroundings that often go unnoticed. Using a Canon EOS Rebel T6, usually with a Macro 100mm lense, he wishes his photographs to accurately show what he sees in the world, capturing day to day changes and the consistent stream of new stories being told. His family introduced him to photography several summers ago, and he has been practicing ever since. Photography changed his life by giving him the chance to become more outgoing through experiencing more than he ever thought he would.

[@KaiMedina](#)



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Submissions



Nina Miller

Nina Miller, CFA '20, is a Sculpture major in the BU College of Fine Arts from Long Beach, New York. She is interested in making art to raise awareness, interact with viewers, and bring people together to discuss larger ideas. Her goal is to bring emotion and energy into her work to in turn receive the same response from viewers. She works in a variety of mediums and is always open to new ones. She is also learning graphic design along the way to combine 2D ideas with three dimensional sculptures she creates. She is excited to have her own studio next semester to create more work and to explore different mediums and concepts.

[@ninamillart](https://www.instagram.com/ninamillart)
ninamillerart.com

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Submissions

Eleftheria Horiatis

Eleftheria Horatis, COM '20, is interested in capturing the extraordinary in the ordinary things, people, and places she sees. She was introduced to photography in high school, when she took a black and white film course. Eleftheria loves to travel, recently having gone to Greece. Her goal is to travel to at least four more countries before she graduates, to get immersed in different cultures.

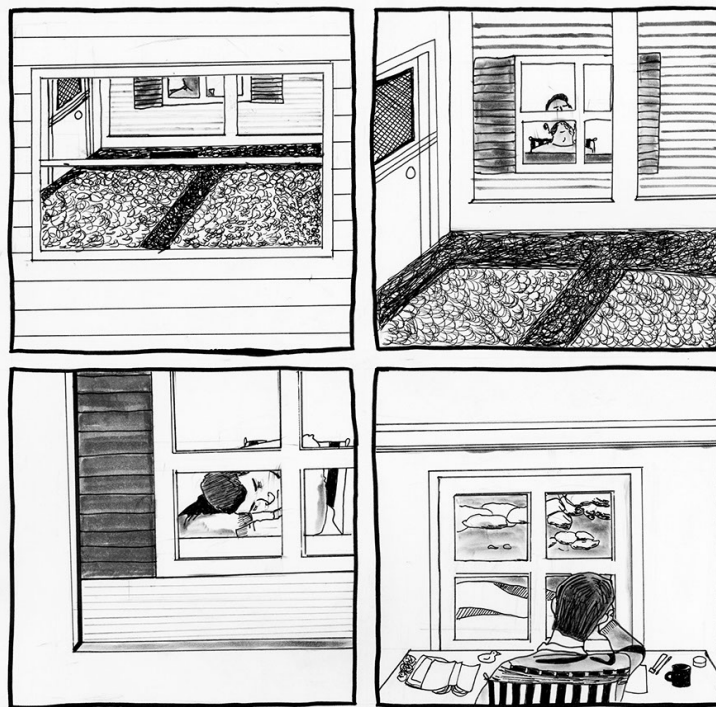
[@ellie_horiatis](https://www.instagram.com/ellie_horiatis)



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The Comic

illustrated by Carina Imbornone



Carina Imbornone is a sophomore English and Economics major at Boston University. Her comic *Out the Window* began with an interest in lines and perspective, but evolved to a complex depiction of movement through several windows serving as “frames” of reference within a house. Carina creates repetition and three-dimensional space within the constraints of a comic book, treating the panels like a film storyboard. The arrangement of the comic evokes the frame of a window pane itself. Within the window is an artist at work, who the viewer sees at different moments in time.