

The Castle Voice

May-August, 2026, WomanKraft Art Center's Newsletter Volume 79



ANA MARIA YANEZ

388 S. Stone Ave. Tucson, Arizona 85701 520-256-7455
www.womankraft.org

Castle Voice

Mysteries of the WomanKraft Castle Center for Art, Education and Culture, Revealed!

WomanKraft is a Non-Profit Arts Organization founded in 1974 to claim, validate, and empower women artists and other under-represented groups.

Directors and Coordinators at WomanKraft

Directors of Exhibits

Tony Russo
Gayle Swanbeck

Directors of School of the Arts and General WomanKraft Business

Gayle Swanbeck
520-256-7455

Executive Directors: Gayle Swanbeck, Tony Russo,
Traci Kelly

Online Class Booking

<https://WomanKraft.scadler.com>
Traci Kelly



Official WomanKraft Website

<https://womankraft.org>
Geno Davis

**For more information, please call 520-256-7455
Thursday-Saturday, 1-5pm**

Castle Voice

Organizing, Keystroking, Proofreading, Editing:
Traci Kelly, Albert Kelly and Gayle Swanbeck
Design and Photography by Jonathan DuHamel



In 1991, WomanKraft purchased the 1918 Queen Anne Victorian that is now the WomanKraft Castle Art Center. It houses our gallery, The School of the Arts, The Sanctuary, an all-natural beauty salon, and the art studio of Gayle Swanbeck Studio #103, Lauralee Simon Studio #102 and Tony Russo Building Studio. WomanKraft is located at 388 S. Stone Avenue, Tucson, AZ, 85701

OFFICERS

Lydia Phillips, President
Darlene Kirk, Vice-President
Gayle Swanbeck, Treasurer

BOARD MEMBERS

Ana Maria Yañez
Gerrie Young
Gwen Moore
Jordana Silvestri
Nicole Young
Terri McGuire
Tony Russo
Caroline Latron
Traci Kelly

Thank You!

WomanKraft thanks Long Realty, our generous members, gallery docents, investors, clients, customers, and all our volunteers.



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Gallery Schedule

Gallery hours: Thursday -Saturday: 1:00-5:00pm

Gallery ONLY is closed August 2026

APRIL 4- MAY 30, 2026 DRAWING DOWN THE MUSE

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, APRIL 4, 7-9pm

It's our 37th annual women artists only show. All mediums and styles included in this decades long WomanKraft tradition. Become a part of our rich and proud history. Deadline for jurying March 21, 2026

JUNE 6- JULY 25, 2026 WITHOUT LIMITS

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, JUNE 6, 7-9pm.

This show celebrates each artist's chosen style, medium and creativity- it will feature local artists from the emerging to the already arrived. With art selected for the quality of that work, its perspective and creative uses of the chosen mediums. It can be a great photo or a photographic collage, a lovely painting on canvas or handpainted clothing, a beautiful ceramic sculpture or a 3-D piece all from recycled materials. Let us see what you have to offer, it's without limits. Deadline for jurying: May 23, 2026, Art delivered on May 30, 2026

Gallery ONLY is closed in August 2026

SEPTEMBER 5-OCTOBER 31, 2026- AUTUMN SPIRIT

RECEPTION SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 7-9pm

From coast to coast USA what does September- October trigger in you? The end of monsoon rains? Fall Colors? Early winter snow? Indian summer? Halloween? Day of the Dead? It's wide open both in mediums and subjects. Deadline for jurying: August 22, 2026, Art delivered on August 29, 2026

NOVEMBER 7- DECEMBER 19, 2026: HOLIDAY BAZAAR

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 7-9pm

It's the 40th annual Holiday Bazaar! This unique show celebrates the work of local artists with a wide range of fine arts and crafts all retailing between \$1 and \$100. We seek art that reflects the holiday season from Winter Solstice to Christmas, from Kwanzaa to Hanukkah; all mediums, all styles considered. Deadline for jurying: October 24, 2026. Art delivered October 31, 2026

Gallery ONLY is closed in January 2027

FEBRUARY 6- MARCH 27, 2026- DESERTS

RECEPTION: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 6, 7-9 pm

Deserts exist around the world, so bring us your images in all mediums and styles: Abstract, photography, Impressionism, Realism, it's as open as the Sahara to the saguaro. Deadline for jurying January 23, 2027. Art delivered January 30, 2027

Are you an artist interested in exhibiting with WomanKraft? Call 520-256-7455 for an appointment with Gayle Swanbeck or Tony Russo, Directors of Exhibits. Artists, please note: Shows are filled from first to respond. Deadlines indicate the last day works will be viewed, not the first. Hence, make contact ASAP. Call Thursday to Saturday from 1-5pm to speak to the docent on duty.

Womankraft School of the Arts



CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Welcome to the Womankraft School of the Arts

Please note: Pre-registration is required for all students. All workshops are open to adults of all ages for listed fees. Your class fees help us offer more classes and pay instructors. Fee students must pre-pay before you will be registered. Please visit www.womankraft.scadlr.com to book your classes today! You can find a link in our website: Womankraft.org or scan the QR code on the inside cover. Hurry while spaces last! Class registration can also be made in person or by calling during business hours Thursday through Saturday 1pm through 5 pm. Please note that because of funding changes and increases in supply costs some workshop fees are higher. Some

scholarships for low income people 50 years and older will be available but you will need to call during business hours Thursday through Saturday 1-5 p.m. to see if you qualify. 520-256-7455

MAY

PHOTOGRAPHY: THE ART OF SEEING 2 Parts *NEW CLASS*

Using your phone's camera and Womankraft's building and grounds, we'll focus on training your eye to capture the best photograph possible, framing areas, objects and lighting.

Part 1: Wednesday, May 6, 8:30 am- 10:30 am

Part 2: Wednesday, May 13, 8:30 am- 10:30 am

Facilitator: Steve Renzi

Fee: \$30- Be sure your batteries are charged

GARDEN STEPPING STONES: 2 PARTS

Learn techniques to make your very own garden stones. Add color and whimsy to your yard or garden. Learn to use glass and tile while having creative fun.

Part 1: Friday, May 8, 1:30-4:30 pm

Part 2: Friday, May 15, 1:30-3:00 pm

Facilitator: Linda K

Fee: \$35 Supplies included

FLAT STAINED GLASS MOSAIC: 2 PARTS

Create an 8"x10" mosaic with an abstract or realistic design while learning to use the tools and tricks of the medium. It's great fun, and stained glass is always beautiful.

Part 1: Saturday, May 9, 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Part 2: Saturday, May 16, 11:00 am-12:30 pm

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$35, supplies included

MAKE YOUR OWN STICKERS

Be part of the movement! Embrace this modern twist on a nostalgic fad. Learn different techniques for creating your own handmade stickers using easily accessible and affordable materials!

Saturday, May 16, 1:00-2:30

Facilitator: Inktuce

Fee: \$20, Supplies Included

POETRY *NEW CLASS*

With their fellow writers, participants will read poetry and respond to writing prompts to craft their own poems. Participants will have the opportunity to experiment with different forms and styles in their work, and explore their poetic voice. Individuals at all experience levels are welcome!

Thursday, May 21, 1:30-3:30 pm

Facilitator: Andromeda Huntington

Fee \$20

CONFIDENT ACRYLICS

In 2.5 hours you'll complete a beautiful painting—even if you've never painted before. 'Talent' is overrated... all it takes is desire! Experienced painter already? Mernie has taught unique techniques to hundreds of students at every level. Everyone walks out amazed.

Friday, May 22, 1:30-4:00 pm

Facilitator: Mernie Buchanan

Fee: \$30, supplies included

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

WISE WOMAN'S WRITING WORKSHOP

Learn to tap your infinite wisdom and playfully connect with your inner writer. We will journal with writing exercises, topics, and creative surprises.

Friday, May 29, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Ingrid Aspromatis

Fee: \$20.

JUNE

BEGINNING WATERCOLORS: 4 PARTS *NEW CLASS*

Learn how to create beautiful watercolor paintings by starting from basic brush on paper techniques, shading, color mixing, blending and more. Each week we'll practice a new technique and create a watercolor study to follow.

Part 1: Thursday, June 4, 9:00-11:00 am

Part 2: Thursday, June 11, 9:00-11:00 am

Part 3: Thursday, June 18, 9:00-11:00 am

Part 4: Thursday, June 25, 9:00-11:00 am

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee \$60 Supplies included

TREAT YOURSELF: THE FACIAL

In the all-natural hair and body salon housed in "The Castle," the Sanctuary is offering a workshop to learn professional techniques and secrets for facials, skincare, aromatherapy, and more.

Wednesday, June 10, 10:00 am- Noon

Facilitator: Jordana Silvestri

Fee: \$20, supplies included.

STAINED GLASS MOSAIC VOTIVES: 2 PARTS

Learn how to create a beautiful stained glass mosaic candle votive. You learn how to cut glass as well as how to glue and grout in this fun colorful class.

Part 1: Friday, June 12, 1:30-3:30 pm

Part 2: Friday, June 19, 1:30-2:30 pm

Facilitator: Linda K

Fee: \$25 Supplies included

DANGLERS AND WINDCHIMES

In this workshop, you will use an abundant selection of repurposed treasures, learn to use copper wire to create durable suspensions for all-weather displays and have a lot of fun while acquiring new skills.

Saturday, June 13, 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$30, supplies included

LEARNING TO DRAW: THE GRID: 2 PARTS

You'll create your own grid sheet, select an image from our samples, learn to enlarge or reduce an image by using this grid method. Supplies will be provided during the first workshop but you'll be given a list to acquire for your continued use.

Part 1: Wednesday, June 17, 10:00 am-Noon

Part 2: Wednesday, June 24, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Tony Russo

Fee \$40

FUN WITH FELTING *NEW CLASS*

Create a mini felted sculpture using colorful wool. You can turn your sculpture into a magnet, pin or hair accessory when you finish. No experience needed. Great class to bring a friend!

Monday, June 22, 9:30 am-Noon

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$20 Supplies included

POETRY *NEW CLASS*

With their fellow writers, participants will read poetry and respond to writing prompts to craft their own poems. Participants will have the opportunity to experiment with different forms and styles in their work, and explore their poetic voice. Individuals at all experience levels are welcome!

Thursday, June 25, 1:30-3:30 pm

Facilitator: Andromeda Huntington

Fee \$20

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

WISE WOMAN'S WRITING WORKSHOP

Learn to tap your infinite wisdom and playfully connect with your inner writer. We will journal with writing exercises, topics, and creative surprises.

Friday, June 26, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Ingrid Aspromatis

Fee: \$20.

CONFIDENT ACRYLICS

In 2.5 hours you'll complete a beautiful painting—even if you've never painted before. 'Talent' is overrated... all it takes is desire! Experienced painter already? Mernie has taught unique techniques to hundreds of students at every level. Everyone walks out amazed.

Friday, June 26, 1:30-4:00 pm

Facilitator: Mernie Buchanan

Fee: \$30, supplies included

JULY

GARDEN STEPPING STONES: 2 PARTS

Learn techniques to make your very own garden stones. Add color and whimsy to your yard or garden. Learn to use glass and tile while having creative fun.

Part 1: Friday, July 10, 1:30-4:30 pm

Part 2: Friday, July 17, 1:30-3:00 pm

Facilitator: Linda K

Fee: \$35 Supplies included

MINI FLOWER MOSAIC: 2 PARTS

Use small bits of stained glass and other found objects to create a mini flower themed mosaic. This class is fun for beginners and experts alike! You'll glue on part one and grout on part two.

Part 1: Saturday, July 11, 10:00 am- 12:30 pm

Part 2: Saturday July 18, 11:00 am- 12:30 pm

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$25 Supplies included

LEARNING TO DRAW: THE GRID: 2 PARTS

You'll create your own grid sheet, select an image from our samples, learn to enlarge or reduce an image by using this grid method. Supplies will be provided during the first workshop but you'll be given a list to acquire for your continued use.

Part 1: Wednesday, July 15, 10:00 am-Noon

Part 2: Wednesday, July 22, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Tony Russo

Fee \$40

ZINE- MINI BOOK MAKING *NEW CLASS*

Learn about the thrilling art of the Zine! Zines are mini magazines that you create yourself using all kinds of 2-d media. We'll have everything from colored pencils to alcohol and acrylic markers as well as collage and more! Think of a theme before you come- any works! Great way to make a mini journal for your poetry, lyrics or sketches too! Perfect way to express yourself!

Saturday, July 18, 1:00-3:00pm

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$20 Supplies included

POETRY *NEW CLASS*

With their fellow writers, participants will read poetry and respond to writing prompts to craft their own poems. Participants will have the opportunity to experiment with different forms and styles in their work, and explore their poetic voice. Individuals at all experience levels are welcome!

Thursday, July 23, 1:30-3:30 pm

Facilitator: Andromeda Huntington

Fee \$20

WISE WOMAN'S WRITING WORKSHOP

Learn to tap your infinite wisdom and playfully connect with your inner writer. We will journal with writing exercises, topics, and creative surprises.

Friday, July 31, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Ingrid Aspromatis

Fee: \$20

CLASSES & WORKSHOPS

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Friday, July 31, 1:30-4:00 pm

Facilitator: Mernie Buchanan

Fee: \$30, supplies included

AUGUST

LEARNING TO DRAW: THE GRID: 2 PARTS

You'll create your own grid sheet, select an image from our samples, learn to enlarge or reduce an image by using this grid method. Supplies will be provided during the first workshop but you'll be given a list to acquire for your continued use.

Part 1: Saturday, August 8, 10:00 am-Noon

Part 2: Saturday, August 15, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Tony Russo

Fee \$40

TREAT YOURSELF: THE MANI-PEDI

In the all-natural hair and body salon housed in "The Castle," the Sanctuary is offering a workshop to learn professional techniques and secrets for manicures, pedicures and more.

Wednesday, August 12, 10:00 am- Noon

Facilitator: Jordana Silvestri

Fee \$20

POETRY *NEW CLASS*

With their fellow writers, participants will read poetry and respond to writing prompts to craft their own poems. Participants will have the opportunity to experiment with different forms and styles in their work, and explore their poetic voice. Individuals at all experience levels are welcome!

Thursday, August 20, 1:30-3:30 pm

Facilitator: Andromeda Huntington

Fee \$20

FLAT STAINED GLASS MOSAIC: 2 PARTS

Create an 8"x10" mosaic with an abstract or realistic design while learning to use the tools and tricks of the medium. It's great fun, and stained glass is always beautiful.

Part 1: Saturday, August 22, 9:30 am-12:30 pm

Part 2: Saturday, August 29, 11:00 am-12:30 pm

Facilitator: Traci Kelly

Fee: \$35, supplies included

WISE WOMAN'S WRITING WORKSHOP

Learn to tap your infinite wisdom and playfully connect with your inner writer. We will journal with writing exercises, topics, and creative surprises.

Friday, August 28, 10:00 am-Noon

Facilitator: Ingrid Aspromatis

Fee: \$20.

CONFIDENT ACRYLICS

In 2.5 hours you'll complete a beautiful painting—even if you've never painted before. 'Talent' is overrated... all it takes is desire! Experienced painter already? Mernie has taught unique techniques to hundreds of students at every level. Everyone walks out amazed.

Friday, August 28, 1:30-4:00 pm

Facilitator: Mernie Buchanan

Fee: \$30, supplies included



UPDATES AND THANKS

Another trimester has passed, and we're shocked just as you are. How can it be true? Yet it is, so I begin my update and thanks. As I wrote in our last Voice, Tony Russo and Steve Renzi are now installing our exhibit and what a fine job they are doing. The show Nature (February through March 2026) looked amazing. And now the women's exhibit Drawing Down the Muse (April through May) is going up. Thanks go out to our reception volunteers: Tony Russo, Traci Kelly, Annick Safken, Steve Renzi, Barbara Kasper and Lydia Phillips. It can't happen without you folks.

Our annual rummage fair and board meeting also came and went, please look to the individual blurb for that information in News and Events. Many thanks, Tony Russo, for the work done in the gallery in January. The usual paint and patch and cleaning was done to prepare the gallery until next August. Thanks also go to Jordana Silvestri for the cleaning and waxing of the floors to a shining beauty.

Tony has also been busy with smaller but necessary repairs. He replaced an upstairs broken window, and I was happy to turn him on to a tool he wasn't familiar with. We use a pistol grip glass cutter in the School of Arts for our stained glass workshops. He was so pleased because for the first time in his life he was effortlessly cutting glass perfectly. He went out and purchased his own tool and cutting oil immediately. It's always a wonderful experience in the classroom when students discover how easy it is to use the tools associated with the workshops we teach and it was delightful to share that same knowledge with such a skilled worker as Tony. He can now use repurposed glass to frame his beautiful drawings for literally a few pennies instead of the staggering prices stores are now charging for panels of glass. Tony has also tackled the resetting of our outdoor security cameras and our parking lot lamps that are motion activated.

Tony climbed up on the roof of studio 103 to clean, reposition and site the security cameras. He trimmed back all the tree branches that were blocking camera

views, and donated a new SIM card and reader that allows the camera's feed to be viewed, an upgrade long overdue. Thank you, Tony!

Jordana Silvestri and Laura Lee Simmons continue to add their time and labor to prune and beautify the grounds. Additionally, one of our board officers, Lydia Phillips, is getting an estimate for a large section of one of the Tamarisk trees on the north side of our property to be cut and removed. It is dangling over the public sidewalk and into the street low enough to touch the roof and obstructs parking for vehicles. Our three parking spaces in front of Womankraft are valuable to our customers. Thanks go out to Traci and Albert Kelly for their major work in getting this Castle Voice to you, Geno Davis for getting it on to our website, and Jonathan Duhamel for the wonderful job he continues to do with his photography and design. You are all magic!

In the School of the Arts we're welcoming a new teacher Andromeda Huntington, she will be teaching a new poetry workshop each month on Thursday afternoons, look for the listing under "Classes and Workshops". Annick Safken will be taking this trimester off from her Rumi class to develop a new writing workshop. We look forward to that development and thank you for connecting us with Andromeda.

Instead of our annual rummage fair, Tony Russo, Lydia Phillips, Steve Renzi and Annick Safken will be holding monthly yard sales. The February sale was a big success; visitors who wanted to see the gallery wound up buying artwork. Please read the blurbs on the rummage fair and monthly yard sale. I'd also like to thank Steve Renzi for taking on the task of posting our events on Craigslist as well as Nicole Young for posting us along with her business events, Caroline Latron for posting us with her women over 50 group and Traci Kelly for posting us on Facebook, Instagram and Tucson Weekly.

If each person connected to Womankraft shared our events online or by word of mouth our growth would

be absolutely stunning. I want to especially thank Traci Kelly who is creating an online presence for future growth for Womankraft (look for that blurb too). She has made many wonderful connections between us and the Sunnyside School District, and organized the March committee meeting. Feedback from attendees has been very positive. She continues to teach workshops, contribute art to many of our exhibits, research funding opportunities, and make online purchases when we can't find supplies locally. Traci is the liaison between so many people via text and email and continues to organize and clean the building. You are a treasure and everyone needs to know that, including you!

In our last issue we notified folks that we had lost a major financial contributor. It is with great delight to welcome those contributions again even if it is less than before. The difference can be balanced by our own generosity. Throughout the years we've received donations from two dollars to thousands. It is the sum of all of us that creates a growing thriving art center of 51 years and counting. Each and every contributor is valued with our deepest gratitude and love. Like many others, you can sustain us with memberships, attend workshops and events, perhaps even with a purchase of a piece of art that catches your eye or tugs at your heartstrings. Yes, special thanks go out to all, be it a grand donation or small. It matters. Bless each and everyone.

Thanks also go out to Robert Villa and Traci Kelly for this Voice's artist interview. Robert is Anna Yáñez's grandson. I first met him when he was 13 years old, he has just recently turned 40. Many people may remember him for his violin playing at many of our receptions and events. Anna, herself, started as a visitor on an Open Studio Tour, became a student, then a displaying artist/member, and a teacher for many decades at our school. Most importantly she became a dear friend. Both age and health have kept her (and myself) from being able to attend events or teach. She does, however, continue to create beautiful art for our exhibits. Anna, I am so proud to share life with you for all these years, and I thank you for

bringing that sweet, young, violin playing grandson into our lives too. We've had such good days. In love and gratitude Gayle

ANNUAL BOARD MEETING

Saturday, January 3rd, 2026, we held our annual board meeting. The financial report was given by board treasurer, Gayle Swanbeck.

It was presented that a second board meeting should be voted in as a permanent, not an optional event. The board in compliance with our bylaws voted "yes," that August would be the best time. It was also agreed that interim committee meetings duties would entail training and promoting a collaborative environment: a social space for our docents, volunteers, and teachers to meet, converse, and utilize their strengths to seek new volunteers or continue the search for future funding opportunities. The first meeting was held on Sunday, March 15th, from 9:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Congratulations and good work one and all. The August board meeting will be held Saturday August 1st, 2026 from 10:00 a.m. to noon.

THE RUMMAGE FAIR 2026

This year's fair brought in many people who connected with us and purchased art! Everyone agreed to reopen for half a day the following Saturday. The rummage Fair brought just over \$900. Thank you Tony Russo, Lydia Phillips, Annick Safken, Steve Renzi, Barbara Kasper and Caroline Latron. Your commitment to WomanKraft is so appreciated.

Tony Russo had the brilliant idea to continue by holding a yard sale on the last Sunday of each month from 9:00am-1:00PM. His February sale was successful and people wanted to tour the gallery and even purchase art. Thanks to the generous time of our volunteers we were able to make several hundred dollars of revenue. As a result we decided to forgo the annual rummage fair in favor of these monthly

outdoor yard sales- weather permitting. This idea will still allow for people to kindly donate clean, gently used items as they downsize. So folks, call us at 520-256-7455 during business hours with questions and delivery dates.

CYBERWORLD 2026

You can find the Castle Voice on our website: www.womankraft.org but you can still receive a hard copy through the mail by requesting it or by becoming a member. You can do this in person, by calling during business hours or email us at WomanKraftaz@gmail.com. To renew or pay your membership online use the scadlr page (scan the QR code on the inside cover) and look for "Memberships" which can be found in the dropdown menu. For your convenience you'll also have the choice to auto renew.

BEING JURIED INTO EXHIBITS

On the page labeled "Gallery Schedule" you can find the exhibit titles, a brief blurb explaining the exhibit's theme and a deadline for being juried into the shows. It's best to call WomenKraft at 520-256-7455 on Saturdays between 1:15 and 5:00 p.m. to talk to Tony Russo, director of exhibits and get approval for your work. If your work is accepted he will explain to you what you will need to bring: inventory list, correct framing, pricing, and tagging your jewelry and non wall hanging art. You will also see the date listed for you to deliver your pieces ready to hang. At this time you will complete your contract.

UPCOMING CHANGES

It has been proposed to have the gallery open Fridays through Sundays and no longer open on Thursdays. Please keep a look out as the official change will happen in our next trimester but you will start hearing about it this summer. Watch our social media and other signage. We hope this will help allow more traffic in the gallery.

POP UP SHOP

You may have noticed some new things happening at WomanKraft including our Pop Up Shop room. So far Brenda Gilbert hosted her Sage Angels second hand shop, Traci Kelly sold antique kitchenware and now Lali Nicole Young has re-opened her Ladyship's Bazaar! Come see her perfectly curated pieces -30% of sales supports WomanKraft and keep an eye out for a new opportunity each show!

SPECIAL THANKS

Thank you to our lovely volunteer Ciline Mercado Gamez who earned her Arizona Fine Arts Diploma Seal volunteer hours (80 of them) exclusively with WomanKraft. Ciline has been profoundly helpful, completing each task with meticulous care. After graduating we hope she continues to be involved at WomanKraft!

Thanks also to Kian Magundayao, Lilly Holley, Eva Morales de Leon, Anissa Montiel, Juliana Dutton and Iris Hernandez for all of your help.

A special thanks to Gene Thiel for advocating for us to Long Reality Cares Foundation! Gene has helped us continue to earn the grant money that keeps us going! It is leaders like you who keep our community enriched by supporting our program. A big shout out to our fabulous workshop teachers! You are inspiring! Welcome to our newest additions: Mernie Buchanan, Inktuce, Wini Quartermaine and Andromeda Huntington. You enrich WomanKraft with the gifts you share!

Let's not forget Jordana Silvestri and her amazing all natural salon, The Sanctuary. There you can book anything from haircuts to pedicures. She also teaches wonderful DIY self-care classes. For more information please call (520)-882-6280

ARTIST INTERVIEW

Interview conducted by Ana's grandson, Robert [Robbie] Villa. [Brackets are his]

Ana María is my maternal grandmother. She was born in Cananea, Sonora, México on December 21st, 1928. The hope that Solstice brings. Her father worked as head of waterworks in the district of La Chivatera (The Goatery), for this company mining town which is considered the birthplace of the Mexican Revolution. Mexican miners struck on grounds of discriminatory wages, as the mine was owned by one American, Cornell William Greene. At the age of ten, she and her family moved from the hill of La Chivatera to downtown, where she eventually worked for the mine. As you can guess, this was fortunate because it came with some benefits such as English lessons and reduced cost of living. After marrying one Carlos Yáñez, they settled in the Westmoreland neighborhood of Tucson in 1957. As a constant nurturer and supporter of my interests and aspirations, Ana (Nana Ana to me) has been one of the greatest, and most constant sources of inspiration and hope in my life. Thank you for being her friend. I hope you enjoy the interview.

1. You've been part of the WomanKraft community for many years. [How long have you been at WK?] What has being here meant to you, both as an artist and as a person?

I joined WK after meeting Gayle Swanbeck during a tour. You were about 14 years old [ca. 1999]. That was about 27 years ago. [Before the turn of the century!] I was delighted. I was as thrilled to be a student as much as an instructor. Gayle was and continues to be a great teacher. I really found a meaningful use of my time, and it means a lot to me to be able to sell my art.

2. Are there parts of your family traditions, cultural roots, or early life experiences that show up in your art?

My mom was very artistic and resourceful, as well as my grandmother who was able to make practical pottery for the household and ranch. As a child, I visited my grandmother and aunts on their ranches, but I grew up and worked in the mining town of

Cananea (near Bisbee). I was a telephone operator for the mine.

3. How do those influences shape the colors, symbols, or themes you're drawn to?

My mom taught us about the natural landscape, such as the names of the plants and animals. She was a prolific reader, teaching herself about many things, including home remedies for people and animals. As you can see, my art is focused on the natural world, especially cacti, rocks, earth tones, etc. As a little girl, I used to make pots from the clay in my neighborhood.

3. Your collages and mini altars are so colorful and delicate. What inspires the themes, colors, and materials you choose?

My collages are freeform, and my altars follow the tradition of small town devotional architecture where there are typically small altars by the road or someplace of reflection. My mind is always filled with images of vibrant flowers, colors, and shapes. I like small animals, and baby animals.

4. You continue creating beautiful work year after year. What keeps you inspired and motivated to keep making art?

I have always had the thrill and desire to make art all the time. I remain inspired by almost everything, from an image in a magazine, to pictures that Robbie shows me on his phone or computer. And from there, I'm inspired to make more art. The itch is always there.

5. Looking back on your creative journey, what advice would you give to younger artists — especially those who may be unsure about sharing their work?

Art may not materialize exactly as you imagined it. And while one strives to make work that one likes, it's not always possible. However, if you don't exactly like something that you made, someone else will. Don't be afraid!

(520) 256-7455
www.womankraft.org



Photo by Jonathan DuHamel

