

Bottlebrush Gallery & Center for the Arts presents:

artist of the month:



**November Feature: Yelena Kunkel**

**Cranberry Township, PA**

**Medium: Cyanotypes ("sun-prints")**



*Did you know? The cyanotype is a photographic printing process using light that creates cyan-blue images, known as sun-prints.*

## **How long have you been making art?**

I have dabbled with watercolors and oil paints since I was young, but after the pandemic, I realized I needed a creative outlet to keep myself fulfilled and happy. I became more serious about my artwork.

## **Why cyanotypes?**

I like cyanotypes the best because of the way I can honor the beauty of nature through each print. My prints are like snowflakes; no two cyanotypes are the same because of the unique process.

## **Where do you find your inspiration?**

First and foremost, my father, whose love for art and culture has profoundly inspired me since childhood. His belief in my talents and his endless encouragements have always motivated me to follow my passion for art.

Flowers are another source of inspiration! I grow them in my garden, admire their beauty, and carefully dry and preserve them to use for cyanotypes. Claude Monet once wrote, "I must have flowers, always, and always," and I always think about this when I am outside in nature.



## **Tell us about your studio and/or workspace.**

Well, you should probably ask my daughter. I use her (heavy) books to press my flowers before I use them for prints, so they're all over the house! But I do have a corner of my house, in my spare room, where I do most of my art. It's bright and cheerful, with lots of light, and it makes me happy to have a dedicated space to be creative and to call my own.

## **What advice would you give to your younger artist self?**

I would say: enjoy the journey, practice, and let go of your worries. Make art for the sake of making art, to express yourself.



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*The biggest thing is just to show up. Be dedicated to your craft even if you don't feel inspired for that day. It's like learning another language!*

— Yelena Kunkel

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