440 Gallery

440 6TH AVE, BROOKLYN, NY 11215

440 Gallery, an artist-run space in Park Slope, Brooklyn, showcases diverse works across painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, sculpture, assemblage, and installation. Featuring emerging to midcareer artists, the gallery also hosts seasonal group exhibitions with guest artists and curators. Since 2005, it has fostered cultural exchange within Brooklyn and the broader artistic community.



Yellow Leaf, by Jo-Ann M. Acey

As an artist-run collective, how does 440 Gallery foster collaboration and support among its members?

440 Gallery is a collective of 18 artists who support one another in their work and creative growth. The gallery hosts seven solo exhibits and seven group shows featuring our member artists each year. Each of our artists is scheduled for a solo show approximately every two and a half years and is included in small group exhibits in our Project Space three times in a show cycle.



Pandemic Postcard, by Catherine Orrok

Many of our artists are lona-time members and have formed close bonds and friendships during their time here. We welcome our new members with open arms and support. We hold monthly meetings for all members to discuss gallery operations and to also connect with one another. These meetings are held after the installation of the newest exhibitions, so each of the artists exhibiting that month has the opportunity to talk about their works on view. This helps our members who gallery-sit to interact with visitors meaningfully during each show. The gallery also strongly encourages all artist members to attend opening receptions, artist talks, and other special events to support their fellow members.

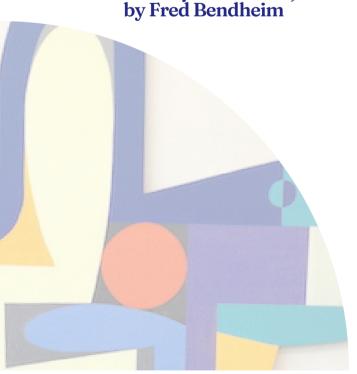
Since the gallery's inception, there has been an understanding that when a member has a solo show, they are the star. All gallery members pitch in to promote and support that solo artist. The goal is to give each artist a chance to shine and be supported by their peers.

Our artists collaborate and advise each other on projects and upcoming exhibits. They inspire one another, both inside and outside the gallery. Last year the artists participated in an exciting project where they worked in groups of two or three on a collaborative piece. Each artist added their signature touch in their preferred mediums to the work. The final results were exhibited in a special group exhibition showcased at one of the member artist's studio. All of our artists found the experience invigorating, challenging, and inspiring and strengthened their bonds with their collaborators.

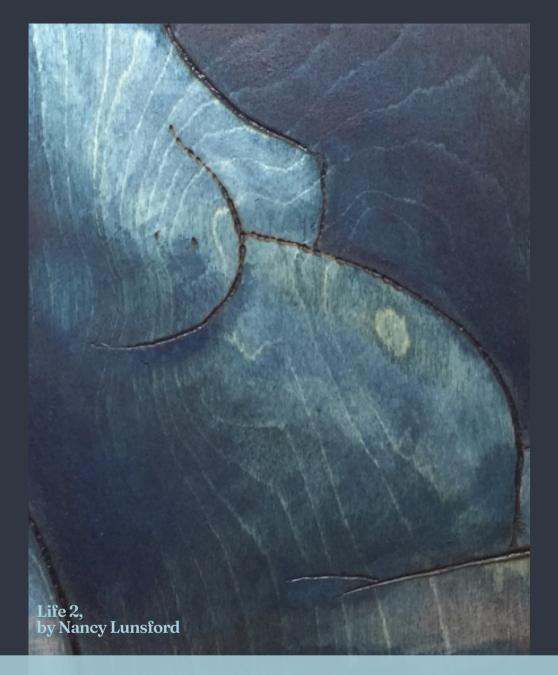
With such a diverse range of artistic styles and media, how does the gallery curate exhibitions that maintain a cohesive yet dynamic experience?

There's a challenge with each group show in the Project Space to find a thread linking the exhibiting artists' work. The chosen artists work together to find a title and theme for their show. Then our installation team works their magic when hanging the show. We often marvel at how seemingly disparate works can come together to create both an engaging and challenging whole.

View Of The Harbor, by Fred Bendheim







What role does the local Brooklyn community play in shaping the gallery's programming and artist selections?

We love our Brooklyn community! Park Slope, Brooklyn is home to a diverse array of young professionals, young families, and longtime residents who have raised their children and grandchildren in this vibrant neighborhood filled with creatives and enthusiastic art lovers. We receive so much support from our neighbors, it's natural for us to want to give back to our amazing community. 440 Gallery is not just a space to exhibit artwork, it is a creative hub that welcomes everyone to enjoy the art on view, participate in events, or just come in and chat. Since opening in 2005, the gallery has offered lively cultural exchange in both its neighborhood and the greater Brooklyn arts community. Currently, we host monthly artist talks and musical performances. Pre pandemic, the gallery also hosted poetry readings and children's art workshops. We hope to continue bringing more multi-generational creative activities to our friends and neighbors.





Garage and Pink Flowers, by Susan Greenstein

How has 440 Gallery evolved over the years, and what are some key milestones that have defined its journey?

440 Gallery is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year. The gallery was founded in 2005 by two local artists and friends, Nancy Lunsford and Shanee Epstein, who wanted a place to show and sell their work. They were offered a storefront space in the Park Slope neighborhood of Brooklyn and they used it to open a cooperative gallery. It began with ten artists who helped cover the costs of rent and expenses and who also helped to run the gallery. Over time the gallery evolved into a more structured organization, however, it remains an artist collaborative. Since the beginning, our members have installed the exhibits, painted the walls, cleaned the space, written the press releases, created social media content, gallery-sat, marketed and promoted the gallery.

The gallery members have learned and adapted over the years. Whenever a crisis or a problem arises, they talk it through during meetings. Usually established committees that oversee specific areas (ie: leadership, installations, press, social media, website) can resolve the issue. When interviewing potential new members, we ask them what practical skills they are able to contribute (ie: graphic design, writing, computer skills, etc.).

The gallery still follows the same guidelines in selecting artists that the founders established at the beginning – the artwork must be high quality and each artist must be a team player. We look for integrity and kindness along with artistic achievement. All are equally important for growing, thriving, and challenging one another. 440 Gallery is a professional exhibition space for artists by artists and maintains a collegial atmosphere.

Over the years, the number of artist members has grown, with a current roster of 18. We offer Full Membership as well as Tandem Membership to enable younger artists and artists with financial challenges to join. Full members have a solo show approximately every 30 months while tandem members will have a two-person show. Otherwise, all expectations for gallery participation are the same. We currently have four new tandem members and we welcome their energy and input.

For most of the gallery's existence, members filled all the roles. Our founders were our leadership and kept us on track. With their departure in 2015, we needed to hire a part time director to keep things flowing. We have had three gallery directors in recent years to oversee operations, sales, and communications and to maintain the gallery's professionalism.

Last year, 440 Gallery participated in an exchange with ep contemporary gallery - an artist run gallery in Berlin. We hosted a group exhibition for the German artists here in Brooklyn and then we mounted a group show of 440 artists in the Berlin space. It was an exciting experience and we hope to have more exchanges in the future.



Hypnagogia, by Amanda Michele Brown

Are there any upcoming exhibitions or special projects that you're particularly excited about?

We are excited for this year's lineup of shows, including:

-Jo-Ann Acey's solo exhibit The Journey Home (March 20 - April 20); -Juliet Martin's solo exhibit The Moment Before You Run (April 24 - May 25); -Ellen Chuse's solo exhibit True to Form (May 29 - June 29);

-and this year's summer theme show, Sacred Space, curated by Ramona Candy (July 10 - August 2).

After our summer break, we'll return in the fall with solo shows by Susan Greenstein and Fred Bendheim.

What advice would you give to emerging artists looking to become involved in a collective like 440 Gallery?

A collective is a wonderful opportunity for emerging artists to find community, support, and mentorship. The more established artists can offer advice and guidance to the younger artists and share their experiences and tips. Being part of a collective provides a behind-the-scenes look into how a gallery is run and offers opportunities for exhibiting your artwork. Having regular opportunities to exhibit work is a great gift for an artist and helps focus their practice.



Catch Your Meaning, by Amanda Michele Brown