

CREATIVE CURE

Find artful self-care at the Grenning Gallery this winter. By Julia Szabo

The therapeutic benefits of art are well documented—they include combating depression, stimulating the imagination and reducing stress, plus improving cognitive function, self-esteem and emotional resilience. Sag Harbor's Grenning Gallery offers an artful Rx with two dynamic new exhibitions that promise all of the above, both certain to delight the town's culture-loving community of artists and art aficionados.

Gems of the Grenning Gallery (through January 5, 2025) showcases an eclectic range of artworks, from valuable paintings by world-renowned artists with a following of seasoned collectors, to works by emerging artists priced under \$1,000—very appealing to those just beginning to build their collections. "We love the Gems show, because we get to pick our absolute favorites," says gallerist Laura Grenning.

Continuing this artful wellness theme, Grenning's first exhibition to ring in the new year will be Self Care (January 18-February 23). This cleverly titled show features recent self-portraits as well as intimate glimpses of studio interiors from 20 different artists. "We sell painters, not paintings," goes Laura Grenning's motto, succinctly expressing her philosophy, which holds that a painting is but a single moment in an artist's oeuvre, so each sale becomes a valuable investment in that artist's ability to continue answering their calling. Grenning has assembled a group of brave contemporary masters who offer viewpoints ranging from the timeless to the poignantly timely.



Maryann Lucas, "Edge of Montauk," 2024



Amy Florence, "Market and Liquor Store," 2024

Consider Tina Orsolic Dalessio's ravishing "Departure," spun from the artist's impressionist web of beautifully assured brushstrokes calling to mind the great Cecilia Beaux. A similarly confident sensibility guides Rachel Personett's ("Untitled"), in which the artist chooses to challenge viewers by turning her back.

Contrast those with Marc Dalessio's "Lockdown Self-Portrait," which reminds us that even a deadly virus has nothing on the creative imagination, in terms of the power to replicate itself and impact the world, for better and worse.

The artist's work space is far from an isolated island, not even during a global pandemic, so densely populated is it with ideas, images, canvases, easels, all accented by a vibrant sliver of sunlight that cuts dramatically across the studio space. The artist's atelier is in fact a curative atmosphere. This notion, as well as the longing to get outside in nature—whether one is held back by fear of viral transmission, or just too much work to do inside—also infuses Melissa Franklin Sanchez's lovely "Snow Fall from the Studio."

"I've been in business for 27 years because I deliver a muchneeded meditative medicine," says Grenning, whose stable of artists eschew working from photographs. "They have to be in front of their subject, and observe from life. I believe that the energy between artist and subject is transmitted into the canvas, so we the viewers can feel that energy vibrating out of the canvas."

PURİST



Kelly Carmody. "End of Season Sailing," 2024

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