

**From:** Wickford Art Association info@wickfordart.ccsend.com  
**Subject:** Juried Artist Member Spotlight: Janet Maher  
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**To:**

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**Wickford Art Association**  
36 Beach Street, North Kingstown, RI 02852

## THAT'S OUR JAM

We are delighted to share a recent interview with Juried Artist Member (JAM), Janet Maher.



**Janet Maher**  
*Library Series #4: Primordial Soup*  
Various Papers, Colored Pencil, Linen Cloth

**WAA:** Where do you live?

**Janet:** Westerly

**WAA:** How long have you been a member?

**Janet:** Almost one year.

**WAA:** Do you currently volunteer?

**Janet:** Not yet.

**WAA:** How long have you been a JAM?

**Janet:** Brand new!

**WAA:** How would you describe your artwork?

**Janet:** Using a combination of collage, drawing and book arts techniques I create abstract images that I hope others will find visually and intellectually engaging.

**WAA:** From where do you find your inspiration?

**Janet:** From a long-standing practice of working with saved materials left from my own work, or have otherwise saved due to its personal relevance to me. I go back and forth building an abstract composition, adding, removing, drawing into, letting the results be for a while then looking anew, until a resolution gradually comes into form.

Drawing and printmaking were my foundations, my undergraduate teacher, Anna Held Audette, was an inspiration, as



**Janet Maher**

*Library Series #5: Dissolved Words*  
*Mixed Media Altered Book Collage/Assemblage Drawing*

were the drawing masters (Durer, DaVinci, Rembrandt, Schiele), and early collage artists (Joseph Cornell, Meret Oppenheim). Then, the 70s Feminist Women's Art Movement broke things open more for me, and by the 80s I was doing both large-scale mixed media drawings and making artist books, selling some at Printed Matter in New York.

After many years of teaching, I have come back to the basic things I like best to do now, eliminating much from what I used to be involved with. I have learned from and seen so much artwork over time that I keep challenging myself now to do work that is unlike anything I have done or seen before.

**WAA:** What is the most important thing that you want viewers to take away from your artwork?

**Janet:** A feeling that they want to keep looking at the piece, find a connection that resonates in some personal way to them, and a compositional sense that no more could or should be added or altered and every detail is necessary for the whole piece to work.

**WAA:** What is the best piece of advice you've ever received?

**Janet:** Do whatever comes into your head, don't edit yourself prematurely.

**WAA:** What is the most important skill you should have as an artist?

**Janet:** To know when a work is finished, to not overdo it. And to know when something did not work, be willing to let it go back into the raw material pile or tear it up and move on.

**WAA:** What is your favorite thing about the Wickford Art Association?

**Janet:** Friendly atmosphere, an entirely new area and community to become acquainted with.



**Janet Maher**

*Library Series #1: Song of the Earth #1*  
*Mixed Media Altered Book Collage Drawing*

**WAA:** Favorite thing about being a member/Favorite Beach, Food, Restaurant?

**Janet:** Relatively new to RI, have become more familiar w/South County since the time of COVID. Much to explore in Wickford! Love the lotuses growing by the Hamilton Harbour Condo community.

**WAA:** What do you enjoy most about your artistry/being an artist?

**Janet:** Having a naturally curious mind since childhood and the urge to always be making or doing something, even when I am unable to be in the studio I am able to keep my intellect engaged. Reading, meditating, organizing, baking, for example, can occur when my fingers cannot do fine cutting and gluing or adequately draw or write.

Patience is also a skill that requires practice. I trust that the process of being patient will lead me back to completing partial works left waiting their turn for my healing to complete itself first. I have never appreciated my hands more now that they are not at full capacity. PS: She's at full capacity now!



**Pictured: Janet Maher on exhibit at WAA through March 10th. (credit: John Pitocco)**

**WAA:** Do you have any upcoming shows?

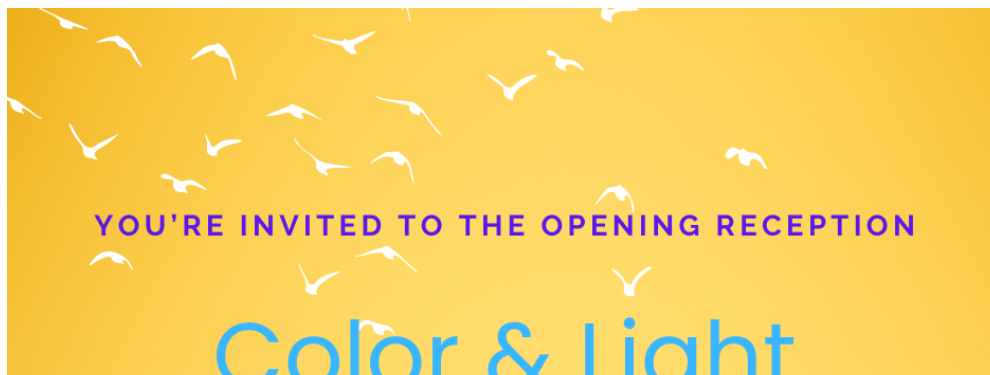
**Janet:** I usually show every month at Artists' Cooperative Gallery of Westerly, where I am also the webmaster, and I often show regionally.

**WAA:** What is your favorite jam?

**Janet:** Music has been huge in my life, so it's hard to pick one song. Like Jeff Tweedy (Wilco), I could write a book about the reasons various songs/musicians transported me, remained as vivid memories, and even partly influenced my identity over all the decades. Hundreds, that I would never tire of hearing again. At this moment the song that resonates is Patti Smith's "Elegie". Still gives me the chills (in a good way)!

[CLICK HERE to see and listen to more of this interview](#)

Join us this FRIDAY for our Opening Reception of Color & Light from 5 - 7 pm.



Color & Light

Friday, February 9 from 5-7pm

Free & open to the public – drop in to view our new exhibit, meet some of the artists, and enjoy light refreshments & beverages.

Wickford Art Association  
36 Beach Street, North Kingstown 02852



## THE COMMUNITY MURAL PROJECT Continues...



Pictured above are artists Betsey MacDonald (L) and Gwen Ruffolo (R) from 2023.

**2024 Theme: "Then & Now"**

Learn about this call for art for an exterior installations on our building!  
**DESIGNS ARE DUE BY MARCH 31.** Want to learn more? Or have Questions?  
Please call us 401-294-6840 or email Marianne our Gallery Coordinator at  
[WAAExhibits@gmail.com](mailto:WAAExhibits@gmail.com)

[Click HERE](#) to learn more about the Community Mural Project

**A Notice to Juried Artist Members** - We are getting ready for the Juried Artist Member Invitational. To be included in this selection process, 2024 memberships must be active by the end of day (2/15/24)

Must be active by the end of day (2/19/21).

[RENEW HERE](#)

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~Thank you for supporting the arts.

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