

JEANNE BURRIS JOHNSON

Contemporary Visual Artist

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Biography

Born in Flint, Michigan—a city defined by resilience and reinvention—Jeanne Burris Johnson grew up in Grand Blanc, where art quickly became both escape and outlet. Surrounded by creative influences, she developed an early eye for detail, humor, and narrative. Largely self-taught, Jeanne refined her skills through hands-on experimentation and an instinctive approach to storytelling through form.

As an Army wife, her early adult years were shaped by constant change. Each move added to her creative vocabulary—from painted landscapes to restored furniture, functional design, and home-grown studios. This period of adaptability gave her a distinctive voice that celebrates transformation and life's unscripted moments.

Back in Michigan, Jeanne shifted into the professional art world, eventually becoming Director of Programs and Operations at a nonprofit gallery in Port Huron. Later, she co-founded New Century Art Gallery in Marine City, where she introduced virtual exhibitions and digital engagement strategies long before they became industry standards. In 2023, her gallery was recognized as one of only 25 businesses in the U.S. to receive a \$30,000 grant through Main Street America and American Express's *Backing Small Businesses Program*, a testament to her ability to merge artistic vision with sustainable business strategy.

For the past six years, Jeanne's focus has been on shaping the art world from the inside—running galleries, curating exhibitions, and elevating fellow artists. This deep immersion refined her understanding of the art market and strengthened her own artistic direction. She created the Young Artist Mentorship Program, guiding 10 emerging artists through the business of art, and was featured in *ArtSpeak*, the American Watercolor Society's newsletter, discussing strategies for pricing artwork. Additionally, she collaborated with her local community to develop impactful art events, reinforcing her role as both an artist and an advocate for the arts. Now, after years of championing other creatives, she is fully focused on expanding her own body of work and bringing her vision to collectors and exhibitions on a larger scale.

Influenced by Chuck Close, Audrey Flack, Andy Warhol, Hannah Höch, John Baldessari, Barbara Kruger, and Robert Rauschenberg, Jeanne's work bridges photorealism, pop art, and mixed media. Her paintings often transform mundane or overlooked moments into bold visual statements. In *The Cold*, a sneeze becomes a frozen moment of raw vulnerability; in *Teenage Negativity*, adolescent defiance is rendered with irony and affection. Her mixed-media and glass pieces continue this narrative thread, combining technical skill with emotional sharpness.

Her aesthetic is also shaped by a deep admiration for silent films, where emotion had to be conveyed through expression and gesture alone. That same dramatic clarity influences the faces, postures, and visual tension in her own compositions—turning everyday stillness into something cinematic.

Her work has been exhibited at Manifest Gallery, Detroit Artist Market, and other venues. In 2016, her painting *Kate* was selected for *Photoreal: A FotoFocus Biennial Project* at Manifest Gallery in Cincinnati, OH, and later published in *MEA S13 Annual Retrospective*, a publication by Manifest Gallery. The same painting has continued to gain recognition as a standout piece. Jeanne was also the People's Choice Award winner for *Art Of Our Women* at Art Studio 1219 in Port Huron, MI, and was selected to participate in the Eastside Art Show in 2016, among many other shows.

Since 2010, half of her paintings have been acquired by collectors, a testament to the resonance and quality of her work. Jeanne's art invites viewers to look again—not just at the subject, but at the story behind it. It's realism, reimagined with wit, contrast, and conceptual clarity.

Today, Jeanne combines fine art with forward-thinking technology to make her work accessible across borders. Through curated virtual exhibitions and the use of augmented reality, collectors can experience how a painting will look in their space—true to scale and color—directly from their phone or tablet. This seamless, immersive access reflects her commitment to meaningful, modern engagement between art and viewer.