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What's Happening at MOSA



Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

Eco-Artist, Grant Maniér

***In Honor of Autism Awareness Month
The Museum of Special Art (MOSA)
celebrates the work of Artist Grant Maniér!***

"Autism, Cancer, and Courage"

Eco-Artist, Grant Maniér, Fond du Lac, Wisconsin

At a very early age, Grant enjoyed art and the tearing of paper. Diagnosed with Autism by age 5, he displayed many characteristics of autism as social challenges, ritualistic behaviors in the lining up of toys, echolalia as the repetition of speech, and extreme anxiety, which many individuals with autism experience.

In his early years, Grant attended a private school that specialized in autism and then transitioned to public school by age 9. Oftentimes, the public school system is not a good fit for children with autism, which was the case for Grant. He struggled academically and was bullied, his anxieties increased, and he soon began to lose an interest in art. Because of these factors, his mother Julie Coy made the decision to homeschool Grant and it was in that environment where Grant began to excel. Adding art to the homeschool curriculum, Grant began to rediscover art and create paper collages to help himself cope with his anxieties. It was a form of art therapy for him. His mother Julie focused on Grant's strengths and abilities and created an academic home environment that provided him a platform of success!



Grant's Homeschool Art Program - The Early Years

Photos courtesy of Julie Coy.

The obsessive repetitious behavior of tearing paper was encouraged and seen as a positive behavior instead of viewed as a maladaptive behavior that needed to be extinguished. It was within this homeschool environment that Grant's art began to thrive, and he soon created his first eco-art masterpiece at age of 14 called "The Sun God" which sold for \$8400 in 2017. This piece is made up of 4000 pieces of recycled materials carefully placed and meticulously glued on canvas.



"COOLAGES!"



Grant Maniér, a brilliant creative mind!

Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

Each piece Grant creates is simply a masterpiece. The way in which Grant separates his recycled papers and materials and then analyzes them by color, value, tone, and intensity is incredible. He carefully studies these pieces, their textures, and logically affixes the pieces to the canvas in a manner that is simply none other than genius. Up close, you will see an array of colors but from afar, the pieces look more like paintings.

Grant's collages, he calls "coolages" because he uses cool colors, cool shapes, and cool textures. The complexity seen in these assembled pieces are comprised of hours of work and extreme patience. As an eco-impressionistic artist, Grant uses a variety of recycled materials in his work as torn and cut papers, textured materials, recycled calendars, magazines, posters, puzzles, plastics, lids, metals and more. The puzzle pieces are quite intriguing as the puzzle pieces are also the recognized symbol of autism.



DIVOC the Dragon ... Unleashed



©Grant Manitz, *DIVOC the Dragon ... Unleashed* (2020), Eco-Impression Art with Mixed Media, 30 x 40 inches.

Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

"After being quarantined twice and my art shows being canceled, I felt the COVID strain, like everyone else," says Grant. "Because I couldn't search for recycled materials due to the pandemic, I decided to add jewelry to my recycled art," says Grant. "I used over 5,000 pieces of recycled materials including wallpaper, specialty paper, contact lens cases, jewelry, and puzzles to create 'DIVOC Unleashed,'" says Grant. "I named him DIVOC because it spells COVID backward. Get it?" (Grant Maniér)

"My disability does not define me ... I define my disability!"

Grant is quite the success story. He is an award-winning artist, author, motivational speaker, philanthropist, environmentalist, and special needs advocate and his eco-art masterpieces have raised over \$350,000 for great causes. Grant has been featured in several news articles, books, and television programs aired on networks as NBC, PBS, and ABC. He is the author of the award-winning book series called "GRANT the Jigsaw Giraffe and Friends" which shares positive stories of special needs topics, various diagnoses, and the unique abilities and talents of different abled animals portrayed in the stories.



Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

***"Don't focus on what we can't do ...
Focus on what we can do that makes a difference!"***

Grant's message spreads "hope" to our community and to families who have children with autism. For Grant, autism is not a disability! He has definitely shined the light on the abilities and immense gifts of individuals with autism who are often misunderstood by our community. The compulsive behavior of ripping papers not only provided him peace and therapy but through the creation process itself emerged these amazing eco-impresionistic pieces, which illuminates to the world the brilliance of an autistic creative mind.

Grant still lives with some of the behavioral challenges of autism and anxiety, but it does not define him. He faces it all with such strength, dignity, and positivity. Currently, Grant is facing one of the greatest challenges of his life as he was recently diagnosed with Hodgkin Lymphoma Cancer. Now, he juggles two things in his life both autism and cancer. However, as the great warrior he is, Grant continues to be that beacon of light and a great mentor full of courage and inspiration for others in our community. Even though it seems like his career and dreams appear to be on pause, Grant says, "NEVER GIVE UP!"



Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

This Autism Awareness Month, MOSA recognizes the talents and achievements of Grant Maniér and we thank him for his artistic contributions to our community. You are a great inspiration and courageous warrior Grant, and we stand with you and wish you the best in all your treatments and recovery!

If you would like to send Grant a speedy recovery message to offer him support during this time,

please send emails to: JigsawGrant@gmail.com

A Message From Grant Maniér



Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

Dear Friends,

I am honored to help spread the message of the incredible achievements many have accomplished while living with autism and other disabilities and challenges. Disabilities have an Awareness Month, but every month is a challenge for us. We are grateful to organizations that spend endless hours and money, all year long, developing educational resources and events to help others understand our challenges, by giving them a glimpse into our lives and bringing greater thought and sensitivity toward our everyday challenges. I am grateful to everyone who is helping me raise awareness all over the world of the abilities those of us with diversities have and can share.

MOSA Thanks You Grant Maniér!



©Grant Maniér, *Pretty Peacock* (2022). Eco-Impression Art with Mixed Media, 16 x 20 inches.
Photo courtesy of Julie Coy.

MOSA extends a great deal of gratitude to Eco-Artist, Grant Maniér for his recent donation of the eco-impersonism art "*Pretty Peacock*" (2022).

This Eco-Impressionistic piece will be exhibited in Edmonds, WA in January 2023 in MOSA's United Exhibition and will be added to MOSA's permanent collection which reflects artwork created in a variety of mediums by artists with disabilities located within the United States and internationally.

MOSA - Museum of Special Art
will strive for a commitment to excellence with a foundation
in Continuous Quality Improvement



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***"What began as a
Dream is now
becoming a reality!"***



MOSA Mission

MOSA's Mission is to make art accessible to all individuals with disabilities by developing art exhibitions, art programs, and educational opportunities that promote disability awareness and inclusion in our community.

MOSA Vision

The vision of MOSA will be to engage artistically all members of our community of all ages by providing inclusion opportunities in the area of disability arts to bring forth the preservation, recognition, and appreciation of the artwork created by artists with disabilities.



MOSA Museum

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MOSA
Museum of Special Art
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***"Together We
Can
Build MOSA"***

MOSA - Museum of Special Art
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www.MuseumofSpecialArt.org