

# Community Sponsored Awards Show 2025

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## Juror Statement

In a cultural and political moment marked by escalating division and uncertainty, how vital it feels to gather in a space shaped by generosity, curiosity, and the radical act of welcoming one another. Every member artist who chose to submit was accepted into this exhibition. Tall, white gallery walls—long used, since modernism or earlier, to separate art from the world outside—have here become a space of invitation, celebrating abundance and embracing difference. In selecting the “winners,” it felt important to mark some of those differences: in medium, technique, voice, focus. And differences in interpretations of “local.” How wildly different our perceptions of our world can be! And that’s kind of cool.



I put the word “*winners*” in quotes because I see every entry here as a win—not just for the artist, but for our broader artistic, regional, and cultural communities. In a world increasingly shaped by efficiency and isolationism, the very act of making and sharing art is a victory. Art is not efficient. It’s not “useful” in the conventional sense. It doesn’t make cars go or put food on the table. If someone tried to analyze the making and presenting of art through the lens of profit and loss, the outcome would be absurd. And yet – somehow – it is essential. To insist on art is to insist on shared humanity, on the possibility of connection, and on the fragile wonder of our broken world. You don’t need long in this small gallery to find windows into breathtaking complexity, unexpected relationships, and the dazzling range of what humans can create.

So, I want to congratulate all of the participating artists. You are all winners. Whatever it took for you to carve out time, to make space—mental, emotional, financial, physical—to make art, you did it. Whatever it took to say what you needed to say, to decide to participate, to push through self-doubt or burnout or physical limitations, to prepare and deliver the work...you did that too. You’ve defied incredible odds. You’ve insisted on humanity and connection. You’ve been generous with yourselves. What an achievement. Thank you.

And I also want to congratulate the community at large. You too are winners here. Congratulations on helping to cultivate and nurture a space that expands our idea of what’s essential—beyond utility, beyond a bottom line. Congratulations on securing a place for a small, regional art center with an educational mission on a main street in Fairfield County. Congratulations for honoring and welcoming the multiplicity of voices within your community.

Art is never going to “math.” But that doesn’t mean it doesn’t make sense—or that it doesn’t belong in our world. In a moment when so much around us urges disconnection, this exhibition offers a quiet, defiant reminder: that making matters, that seeing matters, that coming together to witness each other’s creativity is a profound act of care. Let this show be a marker—not just of artistic talent, but of shared investment in a more humane, more curious, more open world. May we carry that spirit with us, beyond these white walls and back into our communities.

## Judge's Bio

Lizzy De Vita is an interdisciplinary artist, writer and educator. Their research focuses on human interdependence through sculpture in the expanded field. First studying English and Art History with a Visual Arts Concentration at Barnard College, Lizzy later advanced to Yale for a Masters in Fine Arts. Currently an Adjunct Associate Professor at Columbia University's Graduate School of the Arts, and a Lecturer at SUNY Old Westbury, Lizzy has also held visiting critic positions at Cornell, RISD, Cooper Union, SVA, Barnard, Yale and others. Lizzy's work has been exhibited internationally, most notably at the The National Museum of the Moving Image, The Connelly Theater, The Chimney NYC, The Andy Warhol Museum and the Carnegie Museum. Their writing has been published in art journals including *Frieze* and *The Brooklyn Rail*.