

# Ancestry and Talent: Two Artists Who Have Discovered They Are Cousins Partner for Special Event

*Thanks to genetics testing, artists Tina Cantelmi and Toni McGraw, two newly found cousins, are planning a pop-up paint out to celebrate shared DNA.*

NEW HOPE, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, July 8, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Thanks to genealogical genetics testing, artists Tina Cantelmi and Toni McGraw, two newly found cousins, are planning a pop-up paint out to celebrate shared DNA at Arete Gallery, 122 South Main Street, New Hope, PA, Sunday, July 10, from 2 p.m. to 5 p.m.

"The minute I learned of Toni and that she was an artist, I was excited to meet her. Then similarities of how we paint and other nuances kept multiplying, and it became rather mind-boggling," Cantelmi recalls.

"It will be the first time we paint together, and we plan to have a memorable afternoon," says Cantelmi, a native of Bethlehem, PA. Her abstract paintings are on exhibit at Arete Gallery through August.

The two cousins met for the first time in the summer of 2021, thanks to cousins Mike Burke and Alice George, both of Allentown, and Rita Sassaman, of Milford, Massachusetts. All of whom tested for DNA on 23 and Me and Ancestry.

McGraw paints abstract paintings from her home in Mechanicsburg during her frequent trips to Hawaii and Arizona, where she spent two decades as an interior designer.

"The first time I looked up Tina's work, I said to my daughter, 'Wow, I think our painting styles are very similar,'" recalls McGraw. "I thought the very same thing," recalls Cantelmi.



One of a duo of Millipedes by Toni McGraw take on a fossilized appearance.

For instance, both artists serendipitously happen to upcycle gobs of dried paint from their palettes for use in new projects. For example, Toni upcycles dried paint for an array of wearable accessories, gift cards, and mixed media paintings.

Meanwhile, Tina uses gobs of dried paint to create texture, color, and luminosity in mixed-media collages and paintings. "Toni was first to realize this similarity," says Cantelmi. I explained how I achieved a particular texture. Toni ran out to her car, bringing back a cute straw hat she had accented with dried acrylic paint made into a ring of beautiful florals.

Another familial oddity? Both cousins keep a hula hoop and dumbbells in their respective studios. "It's a fun break, and it gets the blood pumping," observes Toni. Ditto for Tina. In addition, both McGraw and Cantelmi have taught art for youth, art camps, and art programs.

McGraw has exhibited at several galleries, including HiveArtSpace, York, PA. Cantelmi currently also has paintings on view, including a window installation for HOKA Shoes, at Aardvark Sports Shop, 559 Main Street, and a show titled "Levity" at Musselman Jewelers 420 Main Street, both with locations in Bethlehem, PA.

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*Tina Cantelmi*

The artists wish to expand such endeavors to soon include additional creative cousins. They also hope to inspire others who discover siblings, cousins, and even parents to create meaningful ways to celebrate. "I never met a relative I never knew existed, let alone someone that mirrors my painting style," sums Cantelmi.

For more information about Arete Gallery, visit <https://aretegallery.com/about/>.

For more information about paintings by Tina Cantelmi, visit [www.tinacantelmiartist.com](http://www.tinacantelmiartist.com), and for more info about Toni McGraw, visit

<http://www.tonimcgraw.com/gallery.html>

Tina Bradford



The Sky Sent out a Sound, Oil on Canvas Contemporary Painting, by Tina Cantelmi

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