

Intersections: The Street Portrait Series Easton, Pennsylvania

A joint project by artists:
Lauren Kindle and Kate Brandes



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The story behind the Intersections Project:

Intersections are formed when paths cross. It can be a street corner or a river confluence. It can be the lives of two strangers who pause in their daily journey to talk and listen to one another. Sometimes, it's an intersection between two artists.

Lauren Kindle and Kate Brandes began work on their Intersections Project with the Street Portrait Series from fall of 2015 through early 2016. For this series, they painted strangers in Easton, Pennsylvania. Every week, Kate and Lauren visited ordinary streets, often overlooked, and met people that they might not have otherwise. Lauren and Kate painted their portraits and talked to them about their lives.

During this project, they found that art can break down the walls that keep us separate.

They also painted some street scenes, and, in addition to the personal portraits, Kate created "interview portraits," which represents her visual sense of what people had to say about themselves.

Proceeds from this project were donated to the Easton Library, a central hub for community intersections and stories.



Kate Brandes



Lauren Kindle

Nelson

At the intersection of 10th and Northampton Streets, outside of Noto's Deli, we met Noslen, who prefers to be called Nelson. He's an artist and showed us some of his artwork on his phone.

He was born in Puerto Rico, but at the age of 14, left because his family felt he was in danger. He was put on a plane to the United States. A woman was paid to accompany him on the plane, but abandoned him at the airport when they arrived. Nelson has lived in Easton ever since, and has struggled on his own, without any support. "Nobody helps me," he said more than once. "I have to help myself."



Lauren's Portrait of Nelson



Kate's Portrait of Nelson



Kate's Interview Portrait of Nelson, an artist trying to find his way through life.



Painting a scene in front of Noto's Deli

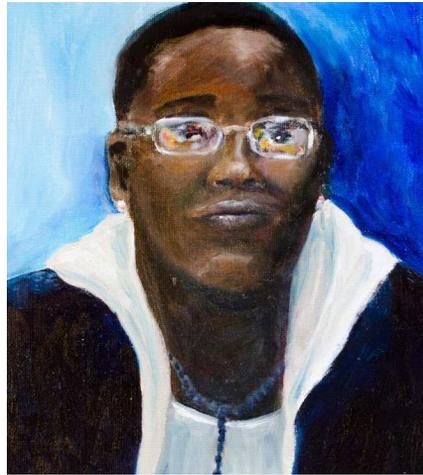
Gena

Outside of the Quadrant Book Store on 3rd St., Gena talked to us about parts of her life which were filled with sadness and violence. And yet Gena radiated gratitude and joy for being alive.

"I still have love." -- Gena



Kate's interview portrait of Gena, who "still has love."



Lauren's Portrait of Gena



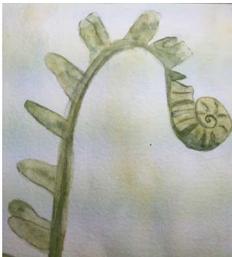
Kate's Portrait of Gena

Ana

On South Side at the Coin Laundry, near the intersection of Berwick and Valley Streets, we met a man and a woman and their granddaughter, Ana.

Ana's grandparents told us that their three grandchildren (Ana and her two school-aged siblings) live in their house just down the block from the laundromat. Ana agreed to sit for our portrait and her grandparents gave permission. She didn't say a word the whole time, but sat calmly, gazing at us, and smiling every once in awhile.

"Abuela!" was the only thing we heard her say, after we finished painting, as she rushed to sit on her grandmother's lap. The older woman spent a long time fussing over her granddaughter, brushing and braiding her pretty dark hair.



Kate's interview portrait of a girl emerging within the spiral of family.



Lauren's Portrait of Ana

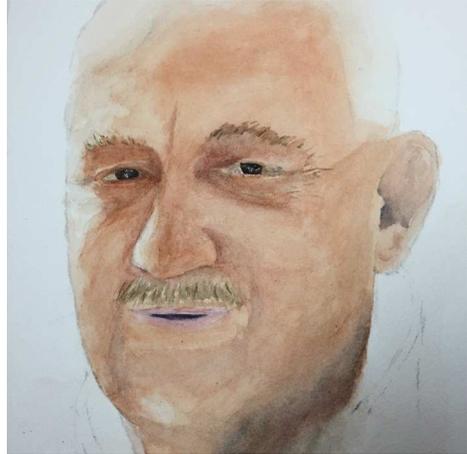


Kate's Portrait of Ana

Audy

In the Center Square, near the fountain, we met Audy, who seemed to know everyone that passed by. He was born in Lebanon and came to Easton in his late twenties. He's been single all his life, but never alone, since he's surrounded by family and friends. He takes special pride in his family and community.

When asked if he had anything important he wanted to share with the world, he said, "Life is short. *Gamble* in every single second of it!"



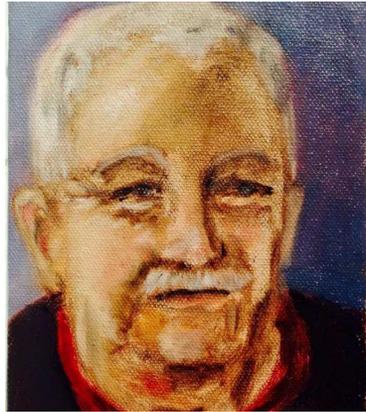
Kate's Portrait of Audy



Kate's interview portrait of Audy, who is deeply rooted into the community.



Lauren, painting Audy



Lauren's Portrait of Audy

Albert

We met Albert at Wawa on College Hill at the Intersection of High and Cattell Streets.

Albert, who works at Wawa and holds another job as a cook, is also an artist. "If you're a college drop-out like me," he said, "you usually end up in the food service industry." He was born and raised in Easton. Although he's lived a couple other places, including Austin, TX, he came home to Easton to try to find his way.

Albert has the phrase, "C'est La Vie" tattooed in cursive across his neck. "It was one of the things my grandfather always used to say," he explained. "After he died, me and my brother got it tattooed on ourselves."

"Tomorrow is another day. *I live by that.*"



Lauren's Portrait of Albert



Kate's Portrait of Albert



Kate's interview portrait. A painted topographic map of Easton, since Albert described coming home to Easton, but still finding his way.



Lauren's painting of Scully's (across the street from Wawa.)

Marge

On a rainy day, at the laundromat near Northampton and 14th streets, we met Marge, an employee at the laundromat. "I'll be 83 next month!" she announced. "On Christmas day!"

Marge has lived her whole life in Stockertown, and has worked for nearly 60 years: 20 at the laundromat, 34 at Tatamy Sportswear, and 4 at Dunkin' Donuts.

She comes from a large family. "I had seven brothers and two sisters, but four brothers have passed. They all had cancer."

She lives alone with no children or pets. She enjoys making personal connections with people who come into the laundromat. Her other life pleasures include the game show channel on television and listening to music. Her smile lights the room.



Kate's Portrait of Marge



Lauren's Portrait of Marge



Kate's interview portrait - Winter Light. For a woman, born on Christmas Day, who described herself as fiery.

Jason

In Center Square, we met Jason from Alabama, who has beautiful eyes that crinkle when he smiles.

Although Jason is homeless, he's planted roses outside of the tent, where he lives by the river.

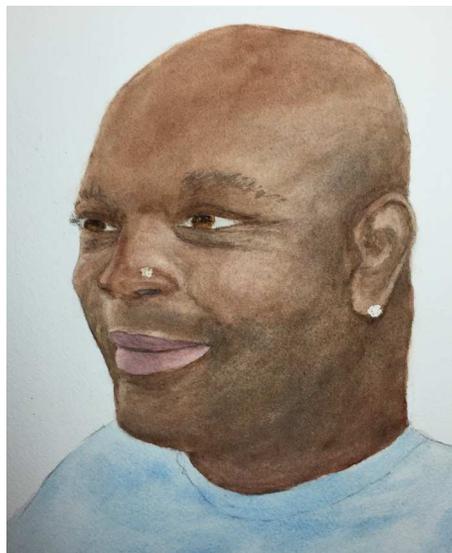
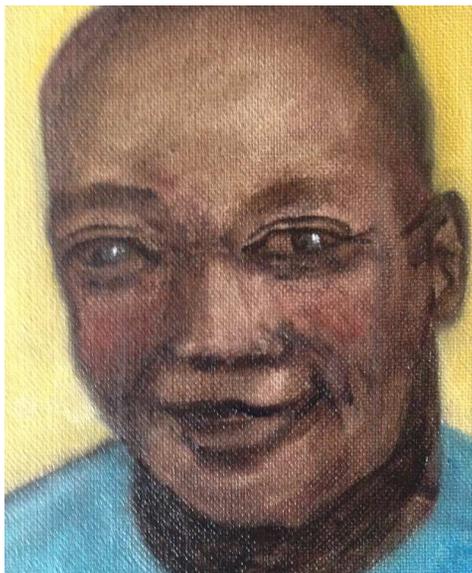
People driving by wave and call out to Jason.

He comes to the Circle everyday, rain or shine, and tells everyone who passes by to "have a blessed day." He wants to make people happy and bring them out of sadness. "God is love," Jason said. "God kept me alive."



Kate's interview portrait
of the Angel of the
Circle.

Lauren's Portrait
of Jason



Kate's Portrait of Jason

Robin

We met Robin at the Post Office on Ferry Street. "I enjoy my life. When I wake up in the morning, I appreciate every moment I have. Every second of every moment. It's a gift."

Robin is drawn to mountains and water and loves trees. She'd like to live in a treehouse. She's partially blind and can't see well enough to drive, but misses driving because she'd like to visit the mountains. She also doesn't like to depend on people.

She sees herself as the listening ears of people on the street. Robin likes to attend church and is still looking for one that represents all cultures.

She's always loved pearls and shawls (chiffon). She's been a vegan for 3 years, for health and spiritual reasons. Morning is her sacred time. She wakes up at 3 or 4. "There's a freshness at that time. In the quiet, God can talk to you."

"Don't rush through life. You'll miss so many things."

Robin's Interview Portrait – she described herself as the Pearl Lady. She wore them on her ears and around her neck. Part of her beauty formed from adversity – just like a pearl.





Kate's Portrait of Robin



Lauren's Portrait of Robin

Santos

We met Santos at the laundromat on College Hill, near the intersection of Monroe and Cattell streets.

Santos is a friendly man, not afraid to strike up a conversation.

He's an immigrant from Costa Rica, who prefers rolling hills and farms to downtown. Perhaps because he grew up in the jungle, with snakes and coffee trees.

"What wine is to the Italians, coffee is to us in Costa Rica."

He said he's, "homesick every day, every year. For every single immigrant in this country, it's true. We all left something behind."

"Your job doesn't define your person, as a human being. My experience—being Hispanic and an immigrant--- you see how they treat you. People should respect each other, as human beings, no matter what you do for a living."



Lauren's Portrait of Santos



Kate's Portrait of Santos



Kate's interview portrait of Santos. As an immigrant from Costa Rica, he spoke about isolation, amalgamation, and assimilation.

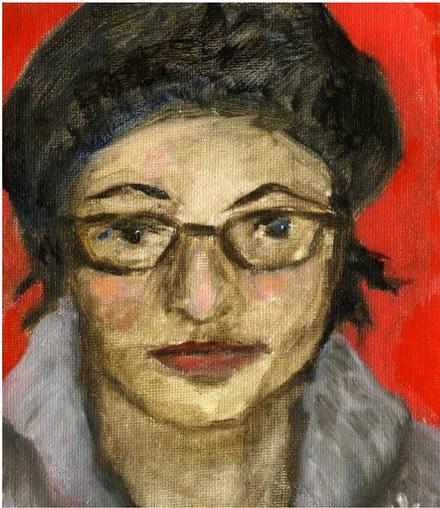
Kathlene

We met Kathlene in the library. She has two sons, ages 16 and 19. She and her husband are both New York City natives, but moved to Easton more than ten years ago, attracted to its culture, affordability, and proximity to New York. They both used to work in the film industry, but after moving to Easton, Kathlene started her own business to help people develop their wellness goals. She speaks passionately about flavor. Kathleen also loves birds and the color red.

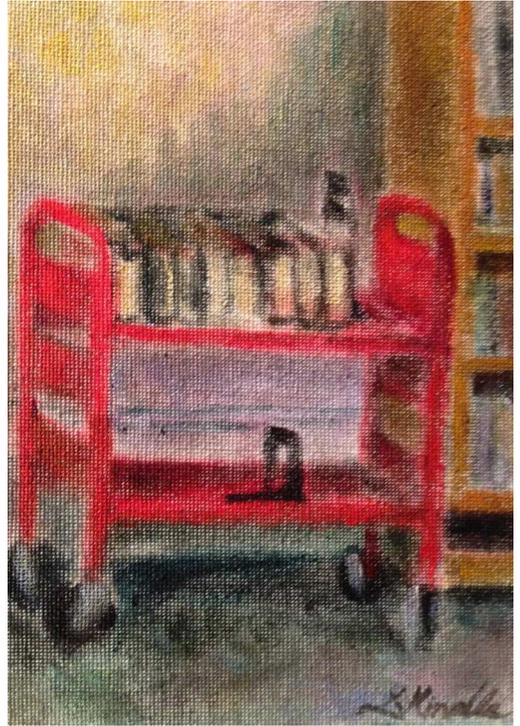
“Living in the moment is the most important thing. Life is fleeting and changes moment to moment. Having something like this (sitting for our portrait) is one side of the spectrum. Who knows what happens when I leave here.”

Kathlene's Interview
Portrait - an abstract
painting of flavor.





Lauren's Portrait of Kathlene



Lauren's Painting of a cart in the library.



Kate's Portrait of Kathlene

Kate Brandes is a writer and watercolor artist interested in the confluence of stories and visual art, often through the lens of the natural world. She's drawn to the idea of how place shapes a person's world view. The Street Portrait Series of the Intersections Project allowed connections between artists and strangers, an experience that, for Kate, accentuated our shared human experience.

Lauren Kindle is an oil painter deeply immersed in the process of learning her craft and seeking to develop her own voice. She often paints in the chiaroscuro style of the Old Masters that she admires, but also dabbles in other methods of painting, as the inspiration strikes. She is drawn to the idea of trying to grasp the intangible desires that arise between two people, or for certain beloved objects and places. For Lauren, “Intersections” has been a way to experience Art as Collaboration, as a catalyst for connecting with other people.



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