



Eric Frere

Color at the End of the Tunnel

For decades, Boston's public transit stations have been a hive of activity with more than a million daily trips. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic brought all of this to a sudden halt. Ridership declined by 90% virtually overnight. Daily life had been transformed, and even the simple act of taking public transit carried a heavy sadness and sense of hopelessness.

When I photographed in and around the Maverick Square T-Station in East Boston, we were reaching a turning point with the pandemic. Administration of vaccines began rolling out. A sense of hope, a glimmer of color at the end of the tunnel, appeared. Hope was slowly being restored.

This photographic series focuses on the gradual transition through the spring months of 2021. I was particularly interested in the parallel timeline of the change of season and the change in people's disposition as we were slowly returning to a sense of normalcy.

Eric Frere
Winthrop, MA



Jeanne Widmer

The Longing of Silence

With this series, I am exploring some of the feelings of the pandemic: hemmed in with no end in sight, longing for family, for one-on-one contact with friends, for freedom from fear, and for ways I could comfort so many, including children and teenagers, close to me and afar, struggling and losing so much during those long days.

After 11 months of quarantining, I reached out for human connection even if obscured by masks or glass impediments. Like many others I wanted to record this dramatic shutdown, so urgent in its deprivations, isolation and danger. Most of these photos are taken from a distance either through windows or from the end of walkways.

All draw upon light, some through complex reflections, to capture the unnatural multiple barriers of living in fear of the disease and, in other instances, highlighting parts of the portraits representing glimmers of hope and gratitude needed to endure. The losses are great and our stories similar, but different. But in every case, these days have marked us for the rest of our lives.

Jeanne Widmer
Belmont, MA



Christina Shook

As a lifelong professional photographer, I looked to my photographs for meaning, solace and quite simply something to do during Covid.

All the computer work involved in bringing my ideas to life was not working for me. I turned to the physical, emotional and luscious medium of paint to bring my images to life.

I'm now deeply grateful for the time and inspiration to follow a new and exciting creative life.

Christina Shook
Laguna Beach, CA



Charlene F. Carle

Creating quilts and other fabric objects is my hobby. A hobby that has become a full-time daily activity during this pandemic. At the beginning of Covid, I made dozens of masks and gave them all away to friends, family, neighbors and charities. Other items pictured show not only some of the things I made but they also represent the many events that have taken place during the last two years. Events I could only appreciate from afar. In particular, the birth of my daughter's nephew, Ezra. (Grey quilt & floppy dog). The beige and white wedding quilt for my daughter Susan. Wedding photos in Chicago of Susan and Flynn - a wedding we could only attend via Zoom. The masks they wore, were my only way of being present. Orange and red owl costumes are of my granddaughter and her BFF - another Halloween enjoyed via Zoom...

I am very grateful I have not gotten Covid nor has anyone in my immediate family. I do know others that have but for the most part experienced a very bad cold. I pray for those who have suffered and for those who have lost family members. I know I am one of the lucky ones!

Being able to use my hands to create such a variety of items has, indeed, helped get me through these last couple of years. But, now that precautions have eased a bit and knowing that nearly all of my friends and family are fully vaccinated, I'm sewing less and doing what I enjoy even more and that is being (in person) with friends and family.

Charlene F. Carle
Medford, MA

Susan D'Arcy Fuller

The Stars of Our Days



Somewhere near the middle of 2020, I interviewed for a position as a 'farm educator' at a local farm that raises chickens both for eggs and for educational purposes. In the midst of the pandemic when all that is normal was no longer, anything that allowed me to be outside socializing in person was all of a sudden very appealing. I had some experience in organic gardening and outdoor education, but really excelled in 'level of enthusiasm', and so I was hired.

It has been a wonder to spend part of my days with young children, whose vocabulary now includes things like "hybrid remote", "social distancing", "zoom calls" and 'being exposed", yet to be with them when they can be free and run around outdoors like kids are supposed to.

Chickens were often the stars of our days. We learned about them, fed and watered them, picked them up, collected their eggs, named them.

I have a new found love for these beautiful and social birds, partly because of the joy they brought to the children, and partly because my eyes were opened to the lively and sweet beings that they are. A pandemic gift to me.

Susan D'Arcy Fuller
Medford, MA



Christy Miller

One of the ways I survived Covid was to make collage art. I liked cutting up magazine images and putting them together in new ways. It matched what was happening in my life. Cut up. Reconfigured. Strange and yet, beautiful. This piece was inspired by my early journey, discovering both my addiction and salvation through spirituality during the last year. An unexpected "gift" from being locked down all those weeks and weeks and weeks.

C. Miller
Ashland, Oregon



Susan D'Arcy Fuller

Many of us spent a lot of time by ourselves in the past two years. For me, it was no different.

I started to photograph my constant companion, me.

Photographing in nature, I felt as if I were closer to and more connected with what is true in the world. I took my shoes off in the woods, got scratched by brambles, and went into the cold water. It hurt a little bit.

Photographing in my home, I captured how it felt to spend days inside, quietly waiting.

I look at these photos and feel peaceful.

Susan D'Arcy Fuller
Medford, MA

Julie Roberts



I have felt fortunate during these difficult past 2+ years because I've had my immediate family and friends close by, and none of us has caught COVID. Being retired, my husband Paul and I have been able to do two of our most important activities: walking in beautiful places to look for birds, and being entertained by our granddaughters. But like many people, I have experienced some feelings of sadness, fear and uncertainty, unsure what the future will bring for our personal health, for our family, for American society, and for stability and peace worldwide.

As an artist, I've always enjoyed drawing, watercolor painting, print-making, and some simple weaving. Photography had never been a favorite art form for me, except to capture memories of different scenery and cultures when we've travelled. But "during COVID" I discovered the beauty of my own neighborhood while taking walks along the Mystic River. Grabbing my cellphone to try to capture some special images of light, color and textures soon became a habit. Also, during almost weekly "escapes" to Parker River NWR on Plum Island, I rediscovered many seasonal images of natural beauty to photograph. Although we have been going there for c. 50 years to look for birds, meeting birding friends and just enjoying nature, I now appreciate the area even more because of wanting to photograph the wild coastal scenery.

So, I have to be grateful for the confinement and limitations that came with the COVID era and for my cellphone, a sometimes-frustrating tool of communication, for giving me a new avenue for artistic expression and enjoyment. Will the wonders of photography never cease!

Andy Curran

Covid Spring



When Covid hit, and the world shut down, I was living alone in rural Maine. I started taking short hikes around the local preserves to help stave off the loneliness, and fear. I was drawn to these falls in a stream, that feeds into small river, that eventually spills into the North Atlantic.

I started the painting in the early Spring of 2020, when the world was shut down. I visited often, as I was hiking several times a week. I found solace and comfort in the flow of the water, and the unfurling of the woods in Springtime.

The world of humans was in lockdown, but the splendor of nature continued its ordained path.

Throughout the year the seasons played out their scenes, and I continued my walks, and continued to paint, and continued to wait for the world to re-emerge...

I worked on this painting for an entire year, as we all waited and processed, died and mourned.

After a full cycle of the seasons, I finished "Covid Spring". I consider it my homage to the constancy and resilience of nature, and to the fragility and resiliency of humans.

Andy Curran
Buxton, Maine

Jeanne Miller

Couture, Parisian market style



A simple sleeveless floral top purchased years ago at a Parisian street market was the inspiration for the summer tops I created during Covid times. With more time spent at home, there was more time to sew, an activity I enjoy but could rarely find time for during "normal" times. Not that I am an accomplished seamstress like my mother was—I basically sew straight stitches on the sewing machine, useful for curtains and pillow covers like I've made in the past. The inspiration top is threadbare now; I used it to create a pattern for a new one. Finding cheerful colorful cloth was the beginning of the process. Making a paper pattern from brown bags was step two. Piecing and sewing front to back completed the process. Then: more cloth, repeat! Our family still marvels at the magic my mother worked with cloth, scissors, needle and thread, from remodeling a friend's wedding gown to making denim purses from old jeans. Although I may never reach that level of sewing finesse, and no longer need to seek homebound projects, I do hope sewing remains a creative outlet in my life.

Future goal: make and sell these simple shirts on the Parisian market circuit!

Jeanne Miller
Somerville, MA



Jeanne Miller

Decoupage on the half shell

I have always loved the ocean: walking on the beach, collecting shells and sea glass, listening to waves, breathing fresh sea air.

Finding pleasant places to walk during the pandemic was essential, and one place I discovered—replete with large clam shells—is Nahant Beach. Nahant Beach is close to the city, easy to get to, and provided a perfect backdrop of beauty and escape when needed the most. I had seen decoupage oyster shell ornaments at a holiday fair and was inspired to make something similar with the large clam shells I found on my many walks on the beach. Enter mod podge, decorative paper napkins, and gold paint for the edges. I have enjoyed decorating shells as favors for events like a friend reunion weekend and my daughter's engagement party.

Ocean walks, shell collecting, and creating will likely remain in my repertoire of activities, pandemic or not!

Jeanne Miller
Somerville, MA

Molly Froelich

Haiku



I have been writing haiku for about 11 years now, as a sort of walking mediation. It's a sporadic practice, but one that gives me a lot of joy, especially when I share the poems with other people, which I do by posting them on social media or just saying them out loud to friends. During the pandemic my daily walks were so important. They felt like a life-line; and my haiku poems often reflected what I was feeling or noticing as the seasons changed and terrible news just kept coming, locally and from around the world. Even so, some of my poems reflected my occasional feelings of hopefulness and looking to the future.

I love haiku as an art form. I love it's focus on simplicity and clarity and insight. I love that it invites me to focus in on my observations, to really notice things, and to be present in the moment. Since I do it mostly when I'm out walking or sometimes biking, it definitely feels meditative. The experience is one of being very awake and aware as I'm moving, and then naming succinctly what I notice, shaping it into a defined form.

I have always loved poetry as literature but a lot of times I don't understand it and I've struggled to get as much out of it as I really want to. It's like a form of spirituality that has always seemed just out of reach. I used to read a lot of poetry in my younger years and even wrote some, but there was always something missing for me and now writing haiku fills that void. And, while other forms of art-making feel daunting to me, haiku is accessible and a good way to express my creativity.

Molly Froelich
Medford, MA



Wendy Miller Olapade

Back to The Circle

My pandemic experience reflects great privilege—a place to be safe from COVID, access to healthcare, the security of important work that I love. My immediate family and community remained relatively safe and virtually connected by access to the internet and smart tools. All three of us contracted COVID along the way but we were young, healthy, and for me—vaccinated.

Nonetheless, the hours and hours and hours of online effort, the perpetual pivoting that stretched creativity and spirits, and the loss of what had been had deep and longlasting impact. I pushed and pushed and pushed and pulled myself up—as my daddy would say—by the bootstraps. But each and every pivot, each and every push, each and every pull had a cost. The cost was grief but like most I did not have time for that.

Yet, the medicine came – in the work of relationships, in the commitment to partnerships, in blossing love, in an undying faith, and in The Circle Way. In turning to one another we changed the conversation. In changing the conversation we changed the world.

Wendy Miller Olapade
Medford, MA



Adam LoRusso

Reflection to be provided