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Local artist hopes to inspire creativity in others

By Kara Navolio



Ann Marie Quinn Photos provided

Believing in what is next for your life without knowing exactly what that takes courage. That's often what artists must do. It's what 32-year Lafayette resident Ann Marie Quinn did when she transitioned from a full-time career with Wells Fargo to a life of making art.

Even as a vice president handling marketing, communications and branding, Quinn found time to be creative in her free time, doing crafts with her kids, making jewelry and selling it as a San Francisco street artist, and starting Lafayette Elementary School's International Night over 15 years ago.

But in 2016 the time was right for her to take the leap into a more creative life. She didn't know what that would be, but her mantra for the year was "be brave."

She planned a family trip to Tahoe that summer, but everyone ended up having a conflict. So she went to

Michael's craft store to load up on supplies and went to Tahoe alone. She just began to explore with paint. "I believe everyone has a creative side," said Quinn. "So much of art is letting it evolve." And that's what she did while in Tahoe . just let her art evolve.

Those initial color swatches, combined with her background in design, led her to want to explore other materials. She was drawn to high quality handmade paper, which she began making into decorative bowls. She made wooden bracelets, wrapped in Washi tape. Both are now sold at Emerson Grace, a store on Mt. Diablo Boulevard. "I never thought about selling my art," she explained. "It was more about sharing my joy with others. When I put myself out there, hopefully it inspires others to also."

As her process evolved she wondered how she might combine the beautiful handmade papers with paint, and from that she created her multi-media paintings. After working with the owner of White Barn Home on some consulting, she was given the opportunity to sell some of these framed pieces in the store on Lafayette Circle. Ranging in size, all combine the handmade paper with swatches of paint seen through cutout windows offering visually interesting design. Some pieces are also available on her website: amqcreative.com.

But Quinn's goal has always been to share her work in order to inspire others. "I believe everyone can be creative. If I inspire other people, that's what's important to me."

In addition to her art, Quinn has also taken up other new ventures since leaving Wells Fargo. She consults with small businesses on marketing, communications and operations, leveraging her past experience in the corporate world. And she recently became a CASA volunteer. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate) volunteers are trained to advocate for foster youth in the court system and to be a constant adult support during a youth's time in the foster program. "I love having the balance between volunteering, consulting and creative work," added Quinn.

You can follow her journey on Instagram at amqcreative and hopefully be inspired to explore your own creative side too.



Photos provided

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