

**Inside the Artist -
Anna Belongia
Mitch Siegel Award
July 2016**



Tell us about your journey in art / as an artist.

I've been interested in art as long as I can remember. When I was little, my mom would set up projects for me to do and she'd help get me started. And I've never gone a semester without art classes. I've taken a variety of classes at both Seminary Art and the Helen Day Art Centers including silk-screening, stained glass, painting, pottery, wool felting, drawing and painting. Plein Air painting at the Stowe Bike path with Helen Day was really challenging and fun.

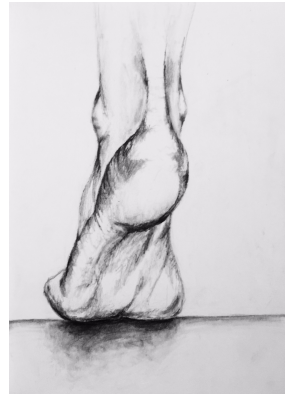
At Harwood, I took a variety of classes with (retired teacher) Gar, painting and drawing with Krista, pottery and intro to crafts classes with Wendy and photography and digital media with Sam. My favorite class was advanced art with Gar and Krista during my Sophomore, Junior and Senior years. I even got to take basketry classes with Gar and not a lot of schools have that!



I'm headed to UVM in the fall and I'll be double-majoring in Biology and Studio Art. I want my focus to be on two dimensional arts, painting and drawing. I'll be picking out classes at orientation in a couple of days!

What is the medium you most like to work with/in? What draws you to this medium? What do you like about your materials?

Painting and drawing! I really like to work in pencil and acrylic paint. I've also enjoyed using oil paint and chalk. I tried pastels for the first time this year and really liked them. I like to make things look real, and work at making the realism accurate and scientifically correct. I took human physiology in science along with figure drawing and I really liked how they were tied together.



I've loved science for a while and I really like nature. I think it's cool how things work and the science behind it. I did a Governor's Institute at UVM where I focused on Environmental Science and Technology (we tested lead in the soil). For a while, I thought I'd keep art just as a hobby. I've discovered now that there are so many different ways for me to tie them together (like in scientific illustration). During my junior year college tours, several students were talking about how they combined their interests in a double major and I was so excited. It was the first time I really realized I could find a way to combine both the things I am interested in and love to do.

I like working in 2D. I enjoyed oil painting for all the textures that can be created with it. I love pencil because it is easy to do and there are so many ways to use shading to create realism. I just started using pastels and I love the way they smudge.

What most inspires your work - Has there been anything that has been life changing or that has influenced your practice?

This year I concentrated a lot on flowers and have created lots of pieces from plants and nature. I do keep a sketchbook, although I don't carry it around (and I should!). I do use it more to

brainstorm and sketch out ideas of pieces I am interested in creating.



What blogs or books are you reading or would recommend?

Currently I'm reading *Deep Down Dark* by Hector Tobar about the 33 men that survived the mining accident in Chile. It's different than what I usually read and I'm finding it to be an interesting story of their journey of survival.

What is next for you after graduation?

My family is taking a trip to Spain and Portugal this summer for two weeks and we plan on exploring the different cities and towns along the way, including all the beautiful architecture! I'll be looking for a job when I return and then I'll start UVM in August.

I'm really happy I went to Harwood Union High School. The art program is amazing and it really helped me improve my skills. My parents always encouraged me to continue art and I'm excited that I'll get the chance to do this at UVM.

