

Gregory Van Maanen



(b. 1947)

Gregory Van Maanen was born in 1947 in Paterson, New Jersey. He received a **Purple Heart** after serving in the Vietnam War between June 1968 and January 1970. His art making offers an escape from his upsetting memories from the war. He described it as “**self-preservation** sometimes shared with others.”

Gregory Van Maanen believes in the healing power of art for veterans and nonveterans. Today, his body of work includes several thousand paintings, drawings, sculptures, and found objects featuring skulls, all-seeing eyes, open palms, glowing hearts, and a range of personalized symbols of protection and “good magic.”

Van Maanen continues to create art and resides in upstate New York. His work has been widely shown in group exhibitions and is in several **permanent collections**.



Artist Overview

Purple Heart

A military decoration for those wounded or killed in action, established in 1782 and re-established in 1932.

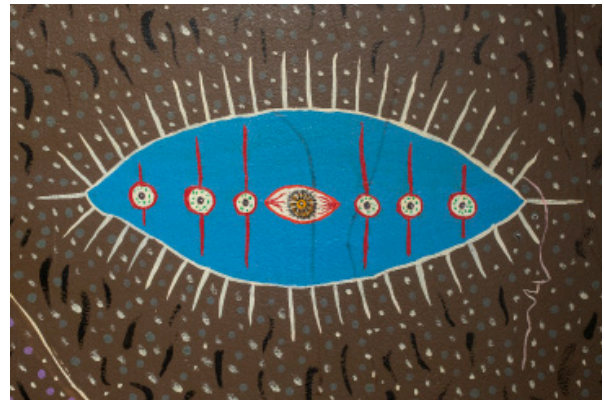
Self-preservation

The basic instinct in human beings and animals to protect oneself from harm or death.

Permanent collection

The artwork that a museum owns; the museum either purchases or is given the work.

When a museum decides to keep a work or purchase a work, it is called accessioning.



Gregory Van Maanen, *the devil's after your ass*, 1989; paint on wood; 64 x 48 in. John Michael Kohler Arts Center Collection, gift of Kohler Foundation Inc.

Gregory Van Maanen, untitled (detail), c. 1983; paint on wood; 72 x 36 in. John Michael Kohler Arts Center Collection, gift of Kohler Foundation Inc.



Processing through Creating

Connect to Gregory Van Maanen's work by creating your own artwork to process trauma or express ideas about caring for your mental health by participating in Vividly: The Beauty of Consciousness, a project created by Sheboygan high school student Sara Vang.

Sara was inspired to create a project about mental health because she sees it as a crucial focus in an age of overwhelming information and limitless connection through technology. She shares that "we become lost in seas of media, and when we are lost, we fail to reach out. The purpose of this project is to counter this by reaching out to the community and encouraging connection. It offers an outlet for those who wish to share about their lives." Sara hopes that Vividly will help us find connections we have never thought of before. Follow @projvividly on Instagram to see updates about Sara's project.

How to participate:

1. Use a 5x7 - inch surface to design a two-dimensional artwork about your experience with mental health. You can use any media that can be two-dimensional, for example, paint, collage, and photography.
2. Consider these questions when designing your artwork:
 - How has your life been affected by mental health, either personally or through someone you know?
 - How has your life affected your mental health?
 - How did it make you feel?
 - Are there any moments in your life that you feel fundamentally changed who you are?
3. Create your art! You can be abstract, simple, whimsical, wild. You can even write a poem! Be yourself and put your experience down on paper.
4. Drop off your art at the Social STUDIO at JMKAC by February 14, 2021, to be a part of the community display in the Social STUDIO May 2021 and the Project Vividly Zine. The submitted artworks and the zine will be used to raise funds for Sheboygan's Mental Health America.

Would you rather write a poem? Visit socialstudio.space to find more information and a form to submit your poem.

If you are in need of paint supplies, pick up a kit of paint and brushes generously sponsored by Sheboygan Visual Artists (SVA) at JMKAC's Social STUDIO! Supplies are limited and are first come, first served. If you are still in need of paint or other supplies, visit the Hello Happiness Creativity Center to find low cost supplies. The center will host open studios and other events this fall and winter. Visit its Facebook page for more information.

Additional Information

View more of Gregory Van Maanen's artworks at <https://artpreserve.org/artists/gregory-van-maanen/>

Explore mindfulness resources at <https://mhasheboygan.org/>