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RVCC Projects Presents: "Brenda Phillips: Nature Abstract"

Exhibit Dates: February 2 – May 29, 2026

Gallery Hours: M-F, 9am-4pm

[Claremont, NH] — RVCC Projects at River Valley Community College is proud to announce its upcoming exhibition, "Brenda Phillips: Nature Abstract" featuring the evocative paintings of the late Plainfield, NH artist Brenda Phillips (1956-2018). The exhibition opens on February 2, 2026, with a gallery reception On Tuesday, March 3 at 12pm. Free and open to the public—all are welcome!

Brenda Phillips was deeply connected with the regions' art community, and this exhibit celebrates the joyous, expressive "Nature Abstract" paintings that she made toward the end of her life. In 2005, Phillips was diagnosed with a neurodegenerative disease which resulted in progressive memory loss. In response, she turned to poetry and painting. In a remarkable feat of cognitive defiance, she committed herself to memorizing the complex poetic verses of William Butler Yeats. This exercise sparked a wave of creative output; after memorizing a selection of Yeats' poetry, Phillips translated each poem's unique essence into a series of paintings characterized by her signature bold color palette, dynamic composition and striking figures.

"I find the process of making beautiful images is a powerful, joyful technique for bringing revelation into my life. This revelation can sometimes feel like a message of universal truth and at other times it is more a conversation with hidden portions of my own self." This statement appeared in a Valley News article on the occasion of a 2017 retrospective which was organized by Phillips's friends and family.

In the "Nature Abstract" series, currently on view in the gallery, Phillips turned to a more intuitive formal vocabulary where bold organic and geometric shapes intermingle with botanical and biological forms. These glittering, jewel-like works, created in her studio along the Connecticut River, blend spirituality, poetry, and her love for the New England landscape. These visionary works often incorporate feathers, seashells and collage elements which lend the paintings an experimental, sculptural quality—each painting a celebration of the creative act. Brenda Phillips was a dedicated artist and a singular force, and this exhibit is an opportunity to honor her legacy and, above all, to experience her inventive, joyful work.

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