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## Gerry Florida



vintage, recycled, contemporary materials

*I am a recycle assemblage artist born from a reality of pain and educated by despair....a "Queen of Re-invention" and the "Master of Imperfection". My art work is reflection of my imagination and whimsical mental places I visit in my dreams. I resurrect spirit and excitement from the lifeless discards that I employ in my work, which in a sense, it is very magical...and all an illusion, but an acceptance of an internal spirit that ignites passion and defines my beliefs to create my very private and personal reality. I am the ultimate dreamer and this life is all my delusion.... and my aspiration is to continue living this way. Maybe it's really all about nothing, but I don't need to know that, do I?... since I have made peace living in dual harmony with "the real world" and with the one I can create. It has now become my religion so to speak and exemplified through my work and way of life. Finally, I am happy and flourishing in a mindset of artistic possibilities... and to arrive here, I had to humbly learn the power of imperfection, self acceptance and forgiveness. You see, once you appreciate that these are potent ingredients of emotional freedom, the kind of freedom required to live in a state of continual creation, than you can understand that life is born from joy and despair and that forgiveness is the key to "walking on air" somewhere in between.*

Gerry Florida is a self-taught assemblage artist from Pittsburgh who suffers from an inherent lifelong passion for "bling and jewelry." A self-proclaimed "master of imperfection," her whimsical work combines vintage, contemporary and recycled materials to create an eclectic, mixed-media style to create unique art to wear pieces she describes as "painting with beads." Following a life altering accident in 1999, that left her homebound for 6 years, she transitioned from life as the Corporate Director of United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania to a less disciplined life an artist. In 2006 she emerged with her first gallery representation with Gallerie Chiz and has since exhibited in art galleries, museums and boutiques both in and out of state to include local galleries such as; The Westmoreland Museum, The Society for Contemporary Craft, Morgan Glass Gallery including her home base of *Gerry Florida Studios* in Forest Hills, which she owns and operates. She has received numerous recognitions, awards as well as nominations for her innovative use of materials and their introduction into the jewelry genre. As a jewelry designer, Gerry has been invited to participate in numerous Pittsburgh fashion events representing her avant-garde jewelry lines. Her work has appeared in newspapers, magazines and television. She is an award winning member of The Associated Artists of Pittsburgh, The Pittsburgh Society of Artists as well as the Pittsburgh Craftsmen's Guild. .

Gerry's foremost passion involves sharing her recovery experiences, insights and jewelry skills while inspiring others to confidently challenge the adversity faced in their lives. She specializes in teaching at-risk populations, seniors, autistic and disabled individuals as well as the remaining "regular people." Most recently, Gerry was honored as one of Pittsburgh's "Women Champions 2013" for her community involvement with at-risk youth through her year round involvement with Shuman Juvenile Detention Center as an art teacher as well as artist volunteer. Currently, she teaches adult and youth programs through The Society for Contemporary Craft, Pittsburgh Public Schools Residency Programs, Artist & Kids and Museum School Partnership through Society for Contemporary Craft, Carnegie Mellon University Osher Programs, Spectrum Charter School, Shuman Juvenile Detention Center Title I Programs and has worked with organizations locally such as Community College of Allegheny County, Citizen Care, Pittsburgh Center for the Arts, Propel Charter Schools, Family Resources as well as numerous other teaching and volunteer venues throughout the area. Nationally, she is represented by Bead Mercantile Shows, Intergalactic Shows and has taught in and out of state with The International Jewelry Gem Show.

**Gerry Florida**

Patty Gallagher  
Judith Gentile  
Frank Harris  
Tony Havrilla  
Joshua Hogan  
Lori Hornell  
Beth Hovanec  
Richard Jennings  
Gina Judy  
Aleksei Kaminski  
Maura Keeney  
Patricia Kelly  
LaVerne Kemp  
Paula Garrick Klein  
Ron Korczynski  
Joel Kranich  
Tina Lake  
Deborah Lieberman  
Kira Lugo  
Mary B. Mason  
Ben Matthews  
Tom Megalis  
Brian McDermott  
John McGinley  
Constance Merriman  
Mike McSorley  
Bill Miller  
Sandra Moore  
Elaine Morris  
Karl Mullen  
Alice Mulvehill  
Judith Musser  
Ron Nigro  
Tom Norulak  
Kevin O'Toole  
Jane Ogren  
Adalberto Ortiz  
Mark Panza  
Pastilla  
William Pfahl  
Michelle Pilecki  
Bruce Pipman  
Shawn Quinlan  
Tom Sarver  
Janice Schuler  
Sheila Cuellar-Shaffer  
Kurt Shaw  
Martha Skarlinski  
Nina Sowiski  
David Sparks  
Susan Sparks  
Eileen Stoner  
Richard Stoner  
Andy Sujdak  
Benjamin Thomas  
Dirk VandenBerg  
Francine VandenBerg  
William D. Wade  
Linda Wallen  
Frank Webb  
Mary Weidner  
Sharon Wilcox  
Hanna Wilford  
Carole Wray

Gerry began her work with delinquent populations in 2009, piloting a volunteer jewelry arts program to Shuman Juvenile Detention Center, the first of its kind state wide involving the use of otherwise prohibitive tools in a detention setting. The program was immediately succesful and followed with an invite to join the Title I Program as the art teacher presenting her jewelry arts program year round. As a result of her successful track record and incident free program, she was invited to introduce the work of her students at the Juvenile Detention Centers Association of Pennsylvania State Conference. Most recently, thirty of Gerry's student works from Shuman Juvenile Detention Center were featured along with with fourteen international artists in the world premier exhibition at The Society for Contemporary Craft titled "*Enough Violence; Artist's Speak Out.*" The student exhibition was the result of her five year continual effort to externalize the work of detention youth while protecting anonymity in order to bring public awareness to the problems faced by this population and their rehabilitative needs. The response was overwhelming resulting in a traveling exhibit scheduled next in the City County Building in downtown Pittsburgh from July 14 to July 8, 2014 and an invite to the "*The 2014 Women Working in Corrections and Juvenile Justice National Conference*" where she will again present her jewelry arts program as well as the traveling student exhibition of "*Enough Violence*".

**Note from Gerry:**

*Important to my bio are the many family, friends, galleries, colleagues, students and fans who supported me through my difficulties, recovery, transition and awaikinging....a special thanks to my Mom who taught me everything I did not already know...and forgiveness to all those who did not understand. Without the experiences, encounters and impact of all of these individuals, these creations most likely would not exist.*

Jacob Wright  
Bob Ziller  
P.J. Zimmerlink

**Jo-Anne Bates**  
**Tina Williams Brewer**  
**Bill Brunken**  
**Laura DeFazio**  
**Michael Jacques**  
**Maritza Mosquera**  
**Randie Snow**  
**Alison Zapata**

**5**  
days since  
**New Show Opening**

### Sunday, October 6th

OPENING PARTY  
**Sunday, October 6th**  
2-5 p.m.

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**Gary Jurysta**  
**William Karaffa**  
**Joyce Werwie Perry**

**Also:**  
Works by Eastside artists

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**Continuing until**  
**November 16th**

*Visit individual artist pages for more info. Stop back for updates. Call or email to schedule an appointment for viewing after opening.*

### Hours

Opening Receptions:  
2:00 pm - 5:00 pm

After openings, showings are by appointment or during special events

Franklin Center  
4240 Greensburg Pike  
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

For information or appointment contact us:

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[Adrienne - 724-327-0547](tel:724-327-0547)

