

**'A Celebration of Joy: Myron Barnstone's Hidden Art'**  
**Makes NY Debut at Usagi Gallery in Brooklyn April 12 - 17**

Paintings and drawings being unveiled at Usagi Gallery in Brooklyn April 12 through 17, 2019, have been locked away from the world for nearly half of a century. "A Celebration of Joy: Myron Barnstone's Hidden Art" is an immersive journey inside the work of a complicated, many-faceted man who surrendered a promising career as a distinguished painter to devote his life to teaching the next generation of artists. During the reception 6 - 10 p.m. April 12, Barnstone's daughter Catherine 'Cat' Szafran will uncrate a painting never before seen by the public.

In 1967, the late Myron Barnstone was the toast of Paris. "The Survivors" exhibit, with his passionate and haunting anti-war paintings and drawings, was extended several weeks at the Catacombs of the American Church in Paris. His early success was overshadowed by his frustration that contemporary art schools were beginning to abandon classical drawing instruction in favor of just telling students to do what "felt good."

Barnstone started drawing landscapes for his mother when he was still in elementary school, and eagerly threw himself into serious art study and practice. He did the scenery and posters for plays at the Jewish Community Center in his hometown of Portland, Maine, and enrolled in the New England School of Art in Boston after high school. Following several years of studying fine arts in Boston, Barnstone set his sights on the Ruskin School of Art in Oxford, England. First, though, he had to invest a few years in the Air Force, knowing the G.I. Bill would finance his education.

Barnstone became fast friends with Ruskin classmate R.J Kitaj, who would go on to coin the term "School of London" artist. Barnstone has been grouped with that elite group of Britain-based painters who eschewed the soup cans and commercialism of the pop art of the 1960 and 70s to make their mark as modern abstract figurative painters. Members included Francis Bacon, Lucien Freud, Frank Auerbach and Kitaj. Barnstone evolved as a virtuoso draftsman and master anatomist with his forceful and vibrant expressionist style.

While his career was on the rise, Barnstone felt contemporary art school instruction was on the decline. He saw teachers abandoning the classical instruction of geometric design dubbed The Golden Section, and failing to encourage a precise, controlled color palette for painting. Instead, art teachers simply encouraged students to do "what felt good." Barnstone made the decision to devote the rest of his life to teaching others the tools and techniques that were the foundation of his own success. Because he never wanted his work to unduly influence his students' artistic vision, Barnstone destroyed hundreds of his own pieces, and locked away another 500. His work would remain hidden out of sight, packed in crates until after his death.

For the next 35 years, thousands of students of all ages traveled from literally around the globe to Barnstone Studios, a 3<sup>rd</sup>-floor walkup in tiny Coplay, Pennsylvania. Barnstone demanded his students master the basic fundamentals for creating fine art taught in the classical ateliers of the Renaissance. Many alumni have gone on to distinguish themselves in art-related careers. One, Roger Brinker, a Visual Art Instructor at the Lehigh Valley Charter High School for the Arts, traced Barnstone's art lineage directly back to da Vinci and Michelangelo.

Barnstone retired in 2013, and passed away in Frederick, Maryland in 2016 at the age of 83. It wasn't until the following year his daughter assumed the mantle of Director of Barnstone Studios, and started opening the crates her father had sealed nearly half a century earlier.

The Usagi exhibit represents the first NY exhibit of Barnstone's hidden work, and includes an interactive element to bring guests into the dual worlds of Myron Barnstone, Master Painter and Myron Barnstone, Master Teacher. Usagi New York gallery hours are 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. Monday through Friday; 11 a.m. - 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. "Celebration of Joy: Myron Barnstone's Hidden Art" will run through April 17. Usagi is located at 163 Plymouth St., Brooklyn, NY, 11201.

Most of the pieces to be displayed are available for sale through the Barnstone Studios "Home is where the ART Is" installment plan. Patrons select an original Barnstone painting, or a limited-edition print, and interest-free payments are divided into equal monthly installments. Customers have up to a year to pay for their painting or drawing, and take it home when the account is paid in full.

Barnstone Studios at 202 A East Main Street, Thurmont, Maryland, is dedicated to fostering an appreciation of fine art, and helping to make art education accessible to all who desire to develop their talent and enrich their lives. Additional information about Barnstone Method classes, private coaching from Barnstone Master Guides, original works or limited edition prints and other related products are available online at [BarnstoneStudios.com](http://BarnstoneStudios.com), or by calling 301.788.6241.

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