

The Power of Words

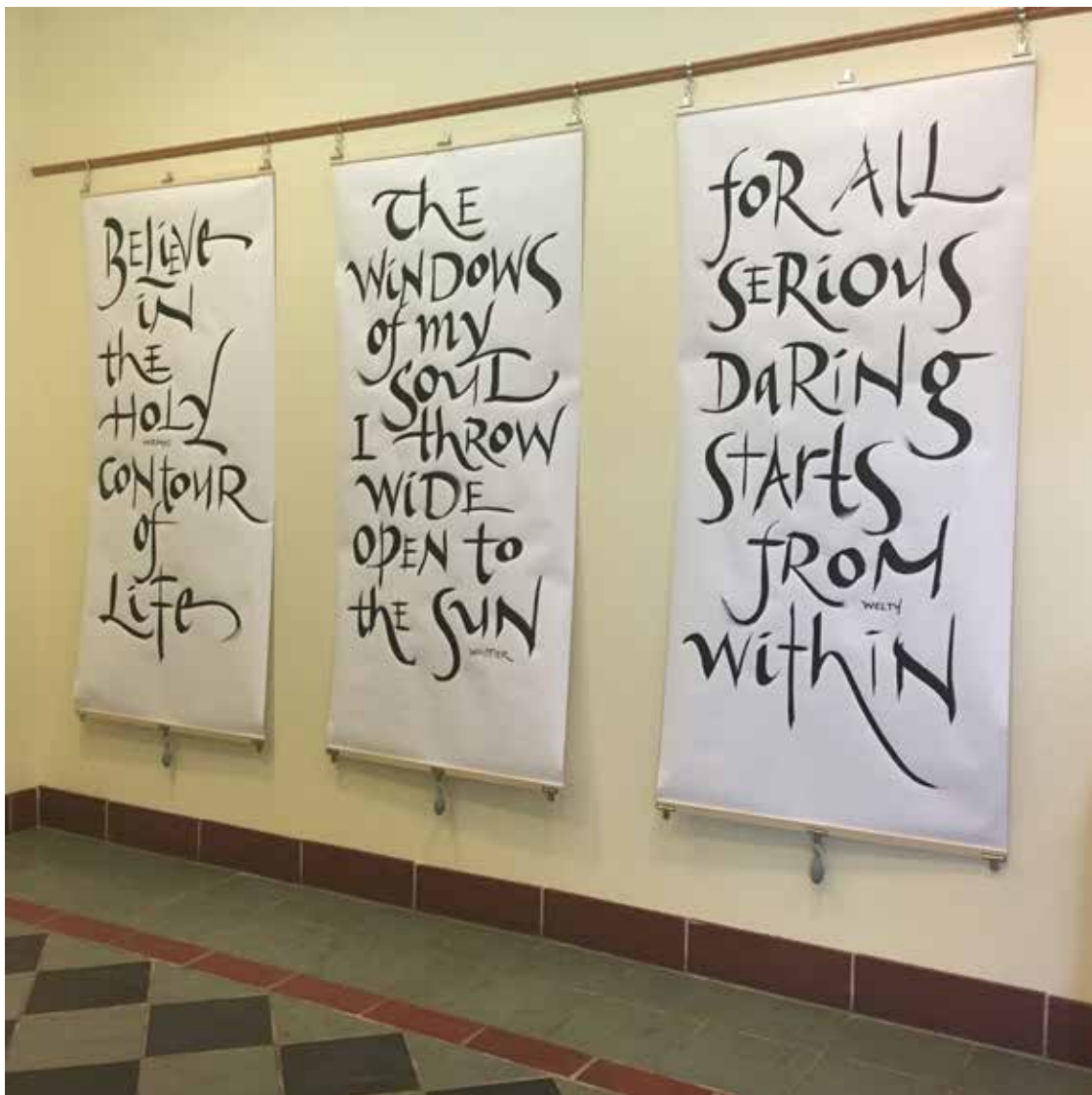
Word drawings by
Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord

January 15–March 10, 2017

CLARE
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Art & Architecture Center for the Community

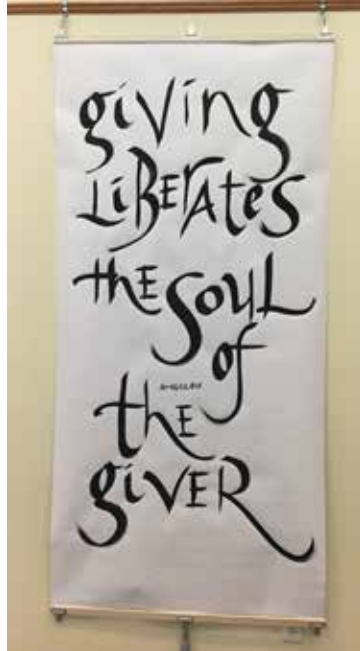
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Clare Gallery
Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry
Hartford, CT
January 15-March 10, 2017

I believe that words have power—to inspire and comfort us and to increase our awareness and affect both personal and communal change. In the late 16th century, Michel de Montaigne wrote, “I quote others to better express myself.” Here in the early 21st century, I take great sustenance from a beautifully phrased expression of a universal truth. I feel a deep connection across time and space with my fellow inhabitants of this earth. I have chosen quotes that are a continuing source of renewal for me. Each time I read them, they speak to me with fresh energy. I hope their immediacy and power will speak to you as well.

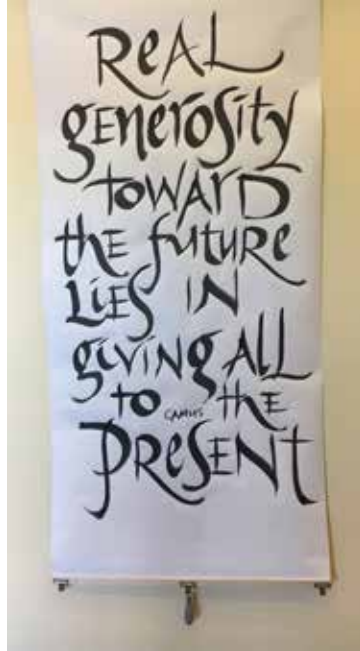


Maya Angelou
1928-2014

from *Wouldn't Take Nothing for My Journey Now*, 1993

“The New Testament informs the reader that it is more blessed to give than to receive. I have found that among its other benefits, giving liberates the soul of the giver. The size and substance of the gift should be important to the recipient, but not to the donor save that the best thing one can give is that which is appreciated. The giver is as enriched as is the recipient, and more important, that intangible but very real psychic force of good in the world is increased.”

When I think of Maya Angelou, I think of her voice almost as much as her words. Even if I've never heard her speak these particular words, I can hear her voice reading them. This quote expresses so well the deep effect of giving on the giver.

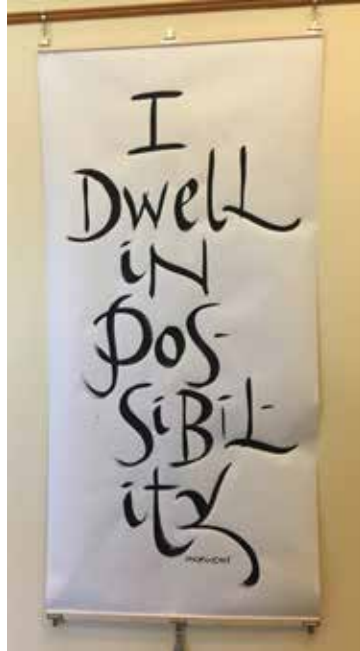


Albert Camus
1928-2014

from *The Rebel*, 1951

“La vraie générosité envers l’avenir consiste à tout donner au présent.”

I read Camus in French Literature classes in high school and college and always loved his philosophy and language. He expressed an earthy humility and tenderness as he grappled with existential questions.



Emily Dickinson
1830-1886

Poem 466

“I dwell in Possibility –
A fairer House than Prose –
More numerous of Windows –
Superior – for Doors –

Of Chambers as the Cedars –
Impregnable of eye –
And for an everlasting Roof
The Gambrels of the Sky –

Of Visitors – the fairest –
For Occupation – This –
The spreading wide my narrow Hands
To gather Paradise –”

I love the poetry of Emily Dickinson—the crystalline ambiguity of her language and her connection to nature. I take to heart her call to “dwell in possibility.”



Ralph Waldo Emerson
1803-1882

from *Lectures and Biographical Sketches: Education*

“Now the correction of this quack practice is to import into Education the wisdom of life. Leave this military hurry and adopt the pace of Nature. Her secret is patience. Do you know how the naturalist learns all the secrets of the forest, of plants, of birds, of beasts, of reptiles, of fishes, of the rivers and the sea? When he goes into the woods the birds fly before him and he finds none; when he goes to the river-bank, the fish and the reptile swim away and leave him alone. His secret is patience; he sits down, and sits still; he is a statue; he is a log. These creatures have no value for their time, and he must put as low a rate on his. “

Emerson was referring to the education of children when he wrote this, but I think this quote speaks to us all. My other favorite quote on patience comes from *Letters to a Young Poet* by Rainer Maria Rilke. The passage ends with “Patience is all,” which was too short for this project and best understood in context with the rest of the paragraph.

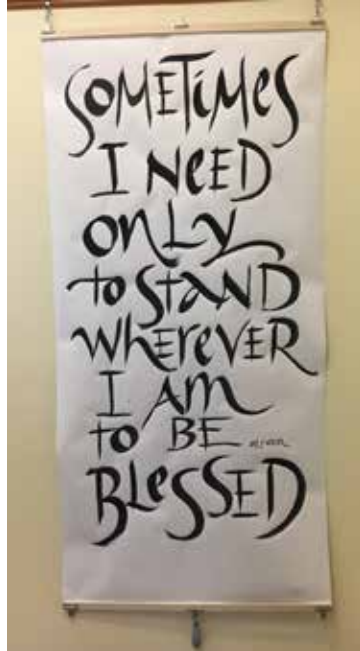


Jack Kerouac
1922-1969

from *30 Beliefs and Techniques for Writing Modern Prose*

- I. Scribbled secret notebooks, and wild typewritten pages, for yr own joy
2. Submissive to everything, open, listening ...
15. Telling the true story of the world in interior monolog
16. The jewel center of interest is the eye within the eye
17. Write in recollection and amazement for yourself
18. Work from pithy middle eye out, swimming in language sea
- 19. Accept loss forever**
20. Believe in the holy contour of life ...

I had read and loved *On The Road* in college but when I moved to the Lowell area in 1978, I became immersed in his books, especially the ones set in Lowell. I felt his spirit in the streets and canals of the mill city. What makes his work so powerful to me is the tender and spiritual soul at the core of his driving prose.



Mary Oliver
1935-

from Evidence: Poems, 2010

It Was Early

“It was early, which has always been my hour to begin looking at the world and of course, even in the darkness, to begin listening into it, especially under the pines where the owl lives and sometimes calls out as I walk by, as he did on this morning. So many gifts!

What do they mean? In the marshes where the pink light was just arriving the mink with his bristle tail was stalking the soft-eared mice, and in the pines the cones were heavy, each one ordained to open.

Sometimes I need only to stand wherever I am to be blessed.

Little mink, let me watch you.

Little mice, run and run.

Dear pine cone, let me hold you as you open.”

While Mary Oliver wrote these words about her experience in nature, I like to think of this as my super-market line quote. We can be blessed anywhere and everywhere.



Eleanor Roosevelt 1884-1962

This quote was first attributed to Eleanor Roosevelt in an issue of Reader's Digest in 1940. No evidence of it has been found in her writings or speeches. However, the Quote Investigator has written this:

The Secretary of Labor in the Roosevelt administration was invited to give a speech at the University of California, Berkeley on the Charter Day of the school. The customary host of the event was unhappy because she felt that the chosen speaker should not have been a political figure. She refused to serve as the host and several newspaper commentators viewed her action as a rebuff and an insult.

Eleanor Roosevelt was asked at a White House press conference whether the Secretary had been snubbed, and her response was widely disseminated in newspapers. Here is an excerpt from an Associated Press article [ERNC]:

"A snub" defined the first lady, "is the effort of a person who feels superior to make someone else feel inferior. To do so, he has to find someone who can be made to feel inferior."

I included it because I think it is an expression of her thoughts and it has been inspirational to me. Quote Investigator is an excellent place to check the authenticity of quotations.



Henry David Thoreau
1817-1862

Walden, last lines, 1854

“Only that day dawns to which we are awake. There is more day to dawn. The sun is but a morning star.”

Thoreau is one of the most quotable writers. He says profound things with great economy. It would be easy to have a similar exhibition with only quotes from the Concord Transcendentalist.



Eudora Welty
1909-2001

One Writer's Beginnings, 1983, last paragraph

"As you have seen, I am a writer who came of a sheltered life. A sheltered life can be a daring life as well. For all serious daring starts from within."

I read *One Writer's Beginnings* when I was just beginning to feel comfortable calling myself an artist. I took strength from her deep commitment to writing and her reflections on her childhood.



John Greenleaf Whittier
1807-1892

My Psalm, 1859

I MOURN no more my vanished years:
 Beneath a tender rain,
An April rain of smiles and tears,
 My heart is young again.

The west-winds blow, and, singing low,
 I hear the glad streams run;
The windows of my soul I throw
 Wide open to the sun.

No longer forward nor behind
 I look in hope or fear;
But, grateful, take the good I find,
 The best of now and here. ...

I am a latecomer to the poetry of John Greenleaf Whittier which I discovered I did an outdoor piece at Outdoor Sculpture at Maudslay State Park where he had spent time when it was an estate. Through a visit to and membership in the Whittier Home Association in Amesbury, I have come to learn more about his poetry, both political (abolitionist) and lyrical (nature).

The Clare Gallery is pleased to present *The Power of Words*. This exhibition will begin with a performance by Artist Susan Kapuscinski Gaylord on January 14, 2017. During the performance, large-scale calligraphic words will be written on paper with fluid acrylic paint. These drawings (or artifacts of the performance) will be attached to the gallery walls. The artifacts produced during the performance will be exhibited from January 15– March 10, 2017. An opening reception and artist talk will be held on Sunday, January 15, 1–3 p.m. Gaylord will speak about her performance, her creative process, and her belief in the power of words to inspire, comfort, connect, and create personal and communal change. The performance, exhibition, and opening reception/artist talk are free and open to the public.

Gaylord has a long history of working with words. Sometimes her words are visible and legible. In other cases, they're more hidden and metaphorical. Gaylord creates works in both two and three-dimensional formats. In previous two-dimensional artwork, she uses traditional Japanese sumi ink and a brush to create rhythmic lines against energetic colors. In her three-dimensional *Spirit Books*, she uses natural materials (driftwood, thread, handmade paper) to create works meant to be “read” as books holding faith and belief—for use in meditation. Instead of actual words in the books, there's a sense of knowledge and an embedded “universal truth.” This concept of a universal truth can be expressed in many ways. Gaylord likes to quote the 16th century French Renaissance philosopher, Michel Eyquem de Montaigne: “I quote others to better express myself.” In this exhibition, she will write quotes on large-scale hanging paper. The quotes are a source of renewal for her. Each time she reads them, they speak to her with fresh energy. She believes in the communal nature of things and feels a deep connection across time and space with others on this earth. By utilizing quotes in this exhibition, she hopes others will also be affected by the power of words.

Gaylord's love of words led her to the study of English Literature, which in turn brought her to calligraphy. Ten years of calligraphic work were followed by a deep involvement in book art, both as a maker and a teacher. In recent years, she has returned to calligraphy with a more relaxed spirit and takes great joy in the writing.

Susan Gaylord's work is in the library collections of the Museum of Modern Art, Bowdoin College, Wellesley College, Yale University, and the Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County. It has been featured in many magazines and books. Additionally, her work has been shown nationally and internationally in Korea. More information can be found at her website: susangaylord.com

The Clare Gallery primarily features exhibitions that emphasize world religions or interfaith themes, as well as social justice themes, on either a global or local level. The Gallery is housed in the Franciscan Center for Urban Ministry at 285 Church Street, Hartford, CT. The Center is part of St. Patrick – St. Anthony Church, a vibrant and active downtown faith community.

The Clare Gallery's hours are from 8:30 a.m. to 7 p.m., Mondays through Thursdays; 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Fridays; 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays; and 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Sundays.

The Gallery and all related events are open to the public. Free parking is available directly across from the church in the Saints Lot. The facility is handicapped accessible.