

Nancy Lewis-Shell

Nancy Lewis-Shell, believes many women artists go unsung as powerful and wise workers in the creation and healers in the larger society.

She is a native Philadelphian. Prior to becoming an artist she was a teacher in the Philadelphia Public School System with a Master's in Education and Bachelors in Communications from Temple University. She is tri-certified in Pre School, Elementary, and Special Education. She has taught in many community based programs such as Temple University's Pan African Studies Community Education Program, teaching GED science and The Art of African American Quilting. She has given lectures on inclusion of the disabled at Moore College of Art in Philadelphia and The Berklee School of Music in Boston with her "Art Heals" lecture series.

Nancy was awarded a Pennsylvania state recognition award for outstanding and innovative teaching for children because of her work on the 1918 flu pandemic that killed over 100 million people worldwide. She is the creator of Freedom Quilt Project that created a fifty foot quilt with the community seamstresses to celebrate freedom. "Freedom Is in the DNA Quilt" celebrating the one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the thirteenth amendment outlawing slavery in the United States. This quilt was presented at the Johnson House Historic Site (an Underground Railroad Site) on Juneteenth 2012 and shown at other venues wanting to celebrate freedom. Nancy was awarded the Leeway Foundation Transformation Award grant and the Art in Change Award Grant for her art work and work with undeserved elderly, disabled and economically challenged communities. She has won first prize at the 120 and 121 in painting at student exhibits at the 125 year old Fleisher Art Memorial, where she now serves on the board of Fleisher Art Memorial. Nancy's work has hung at the Barnes Foundation when she placed in the Let's Connect Contest. Nancy's art work has been hung in various venues and galleries such as West Windsor Arts, Princeton Public Library and Paul Robeson Gallery, Moore College of Art Gallery, and Imperfect Gallery. She has also been featured in Philadelphia Stories, a Literary and Art Magazine and on various podcasts about art and its role in fostering positive mental health outcomes with people who have disabilities.

Wilderness House Literary Review 21/1

Artist Statement

Nancy Lewis-Shell is a senior, female, minority self taught and disabled artist. Her art often portrays themes of: women, science, struggle, history and freedom. Nancy has experienced traumas because of poverty, emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. She uses her personal experiences in her painting, to educate and inspire hope.

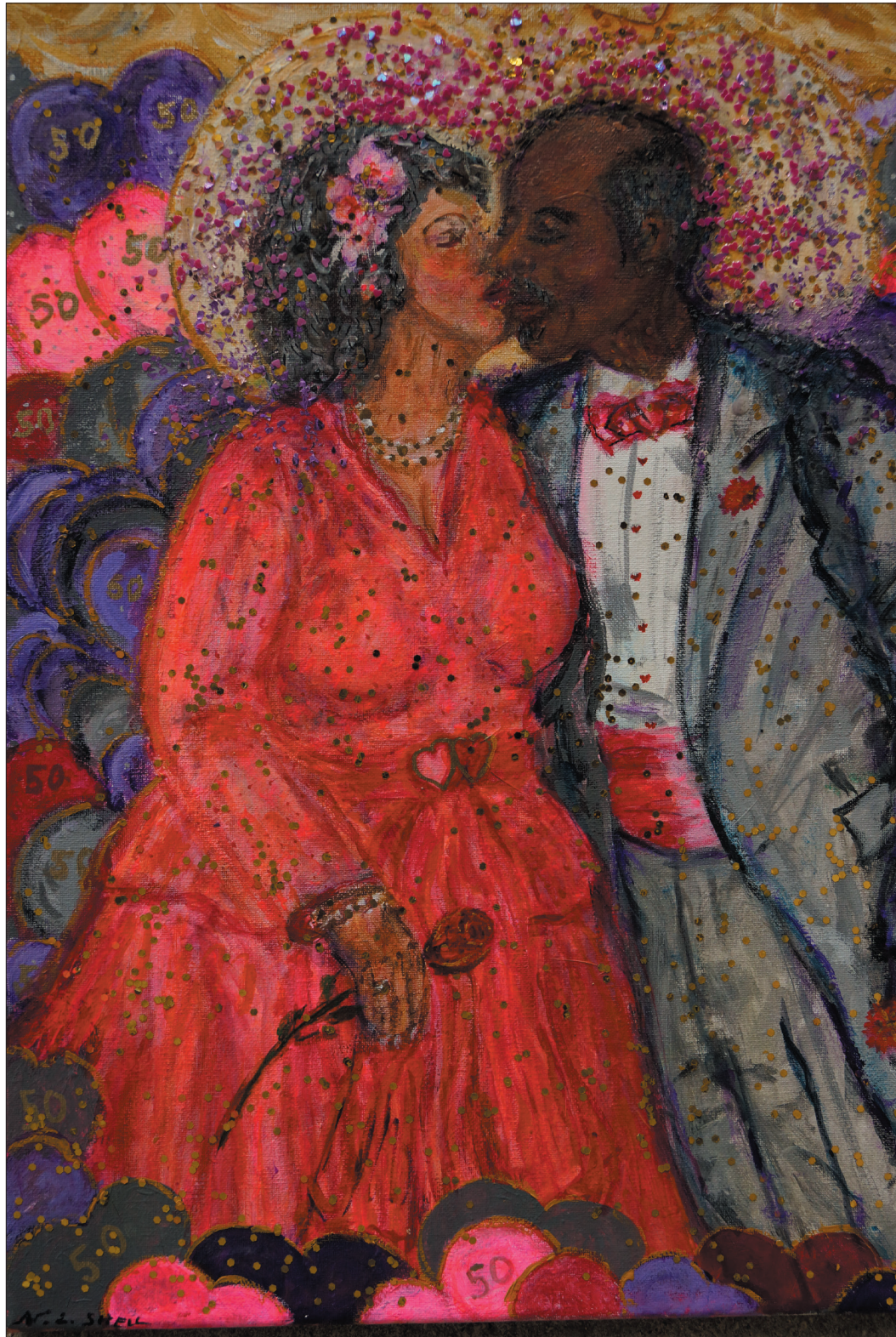
Nancy uses light and color to produce these glowing works. She is fascinated with the illuminated pages of old books and brings in silver and gold paint and sequins to illustrate her work. Nancy's art work is said to capture the essence of things- its inner light, soul and joy.

Her portrait work depicts everyday women and men as heroes and luminous, beings. She believes that art can inspire underserved communities. Nancy also believes that art is a visual form of justice. It can be used to enlighten those unaware of the challenges and triumphs in the lives of others.

She uses mediums across the spectrum, which includes in oil, acrylic and water color. She is adept in filmmaking and photography and quilting textiles.

Nancy started doing her art work when she was fifty-five years old when she became disabled.

Nancy is the mother of two grown sons who have brought her much joy, inspiration and wisdom. She is also a pet parent of an old wise cat named "Tone Bone".



It's Our 50th Anniversary acrylic, multi media 16 x20



Legend of Tarik acrylic

18 x24



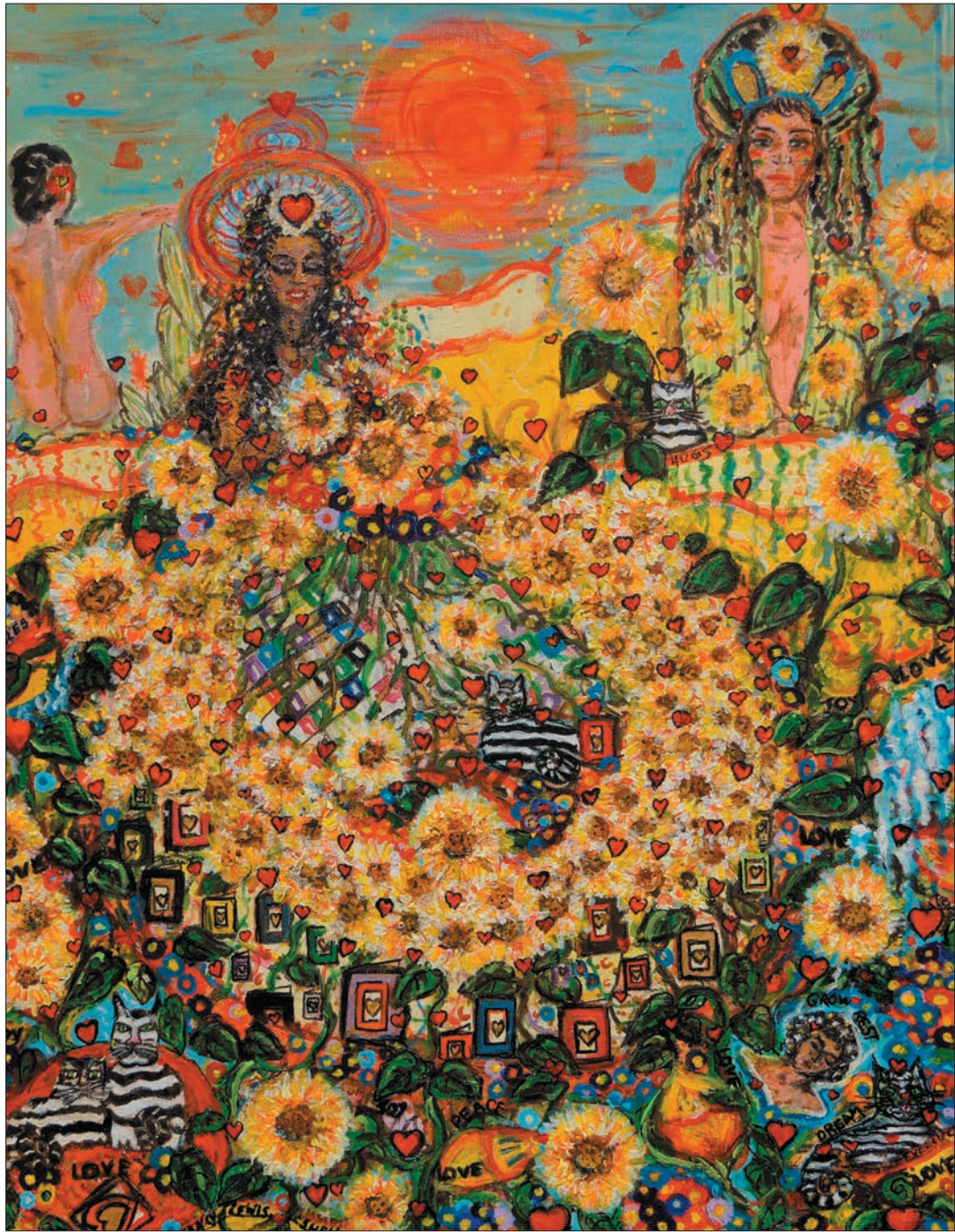
Samileah's Dream acrylic

16 x20



Father Christmas acrylic

18 x24



My Mother's Prayer Garden

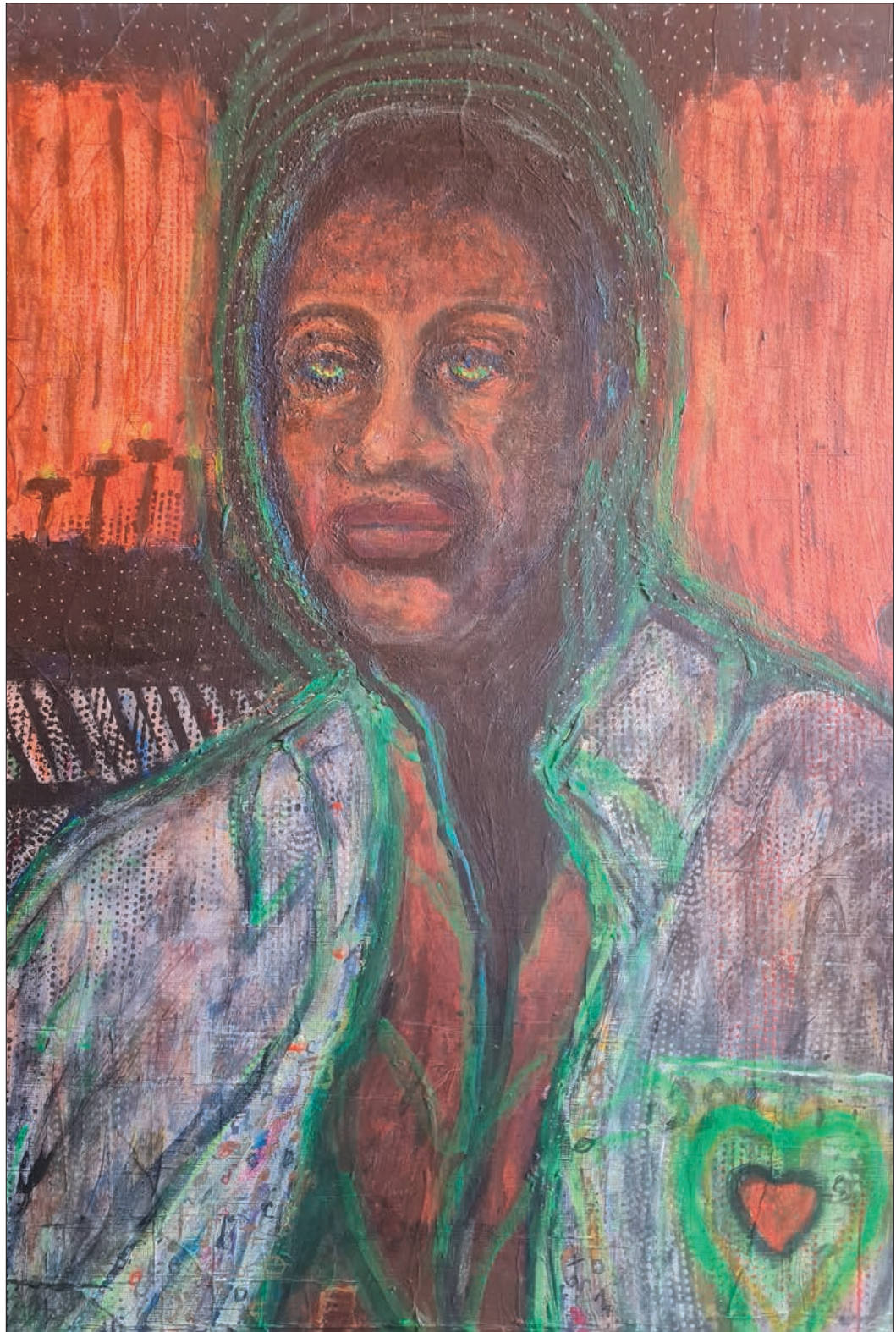
acrylic

22x28



The Missionaries acrylic

14 x17



Enlightened acrylic

18 x24



88 acrylic

14 x17



Vernal Equinox

acrylic

18 x24



Grab Some Sun

acrylic

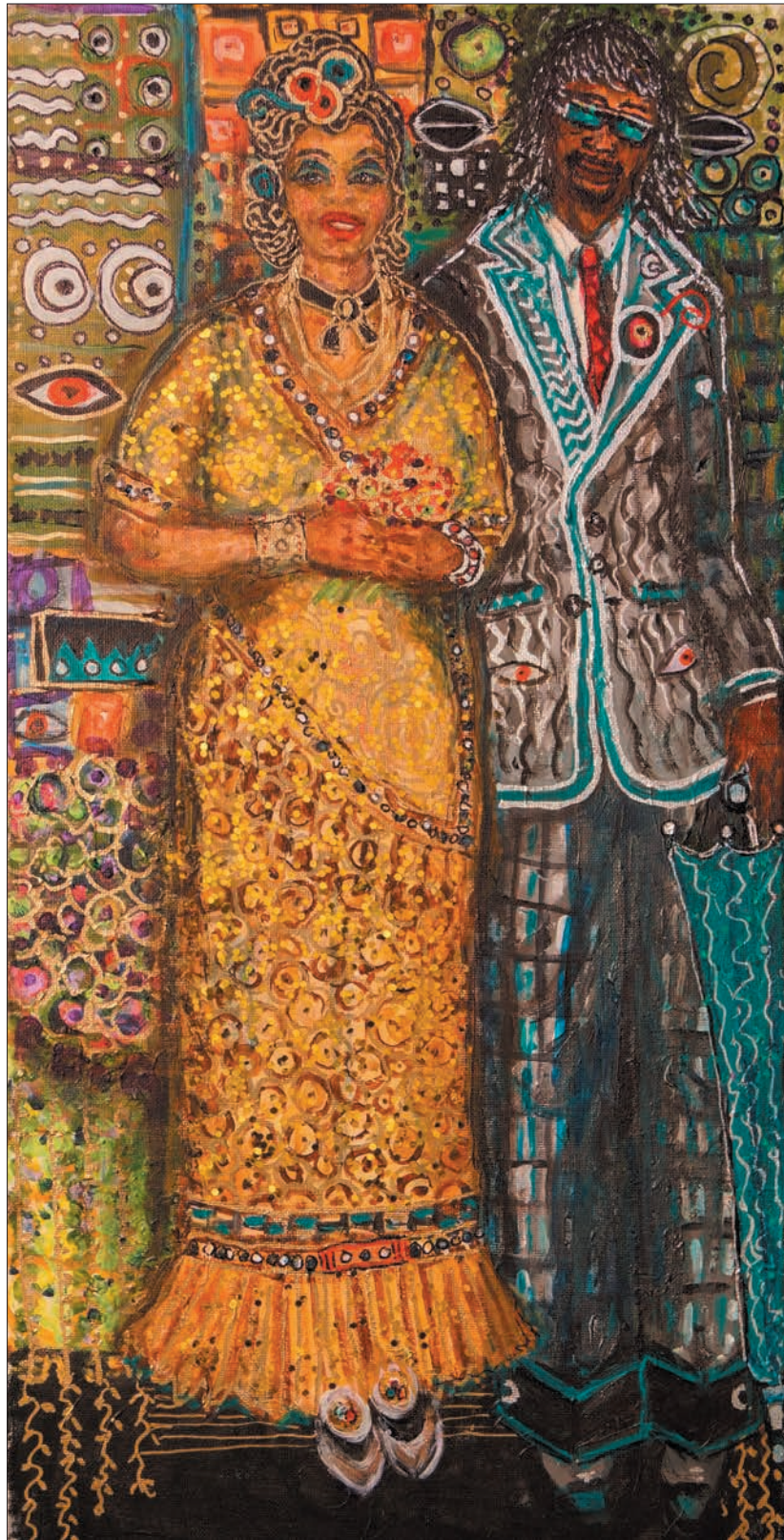
18 x24



DNA Divas

acrylic, multi media

24 x36



Stepping Out On Klimt acrylic, multimedia 12 x18



Glad you Came

acrylic, multimedia

22 x28



Le Jardin De l'amour de ma Granmere acrylic, multi media 8 x10



Self Portrait

acrylic

9x12