

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Exhibition Info: theartofalzheimers.net

Downloadable Press Photos: <http://www.theartofalzheimers.net/contact/>

Admission is FREE: Mon-Fri 7am – 6pm; City Hall, 600 Fourth Avenue, Downtown Seattle

The Art of Alzheimer's: *The Artist Within* Seattle City Hall Hosts Exhibition Jan. 8 – Mar 6, 2019

*49 Art Pieces by Vibrant Persons Living with Dementia.
Exhibition on display in City Hall's Lobby & Anne Focke Galleries*

Opening / Press Reception: January 10, 2018 4pm – 6pm.

Meet care providers, artists & their families. Light hors d'oeuvres, Exhibition tour.

SEATTLE, WA –On the heels of a highly successful 2016 exhibition, the **Art of Alzheimer's** presents *The Artist Within* opening January 8, 2019 in Seattle City Hall's Lobby and Anne Focke Galleries. It is free to the public and presented in cooperation with the City of Seattle Office of Arts & Culture, the UW Memory and Brain Wellness Center, 4Culture and Elderwise®. Featuring 49 fascinating artworks created by seven persons living with Alzheimer's and other dementias; these surprising, delightful and inspiring works of art reveal seven distinct views of the world plus more about the artists as creative persons and valuable members of our community. They illuminate a simple truth—while access to language may falter, the imagination can soar.

Exhibition organizer and **Art of Alzheimer's** founder, **Marilyn Raichle**, explains her personal connection. “I was raised in the shadow of Alzheimer's with nearly everyone on my father's side and many on mother's developing the disease. We were taught that when Alzheimer's arrived, it was like a death—actually worse than death. Our parents warned us, 'Don't sacrifice your lives for us. When our time comes, just walk away.' And I believed it. And then, at the age of 89, Mom began to paint. She hadn't painted since grade school, yet these paintings astonished us all—witty, inventive, always interesting and sometimes simply remarkable. And quickly I understood. She may have had a short-term memory of ten seconds, but she was *still here*—loving, creative and joyful. She taught me the first lesson of a caregiver—to let go of the woman who used to be and embrace the remarkable woman who was with me *now*.”

Marilyn began to share her mother's art with others and the reaction was always the same—delight, surprise and gratitude. People wanted to experience a story about Alzheimer's with hope and joy. She believes this exhibition sparks a new perspective on what it means to live with dementia.

The art in this exhibition was created at Elderwise® – creating space to age well. <http://www.elderwise.org/>

Interviews with Marigrace Becker & Cathy Greenblat upon request

Marigrace Becker, MSW, is the Program Manager of Community Education and Impact at the UW Memory and Brain Wellness Center (MBWC). She develops and facilitates education, support, and engagement programs that promote living well with dementia. She produces resources like the MBWC's patient and family handbook, *Living with Memory Loss*. She works closely with community partners to spearhead local initiatives that challenge stigma and build understanding. She is a leader of the Momentia Seattle movement and leads the Dementia-Friendly Communities project team for the Dementia Action Collaborative implementing the Washington State Plan to Address Alzheimer's and Other Dementias.

Cathy Greenblat is Professor Emeritus of Sociology at Rutgers University and is the author of 15 books and more than 100 articles. Currently her energies are focused on photographic projects that challenge the stereotypical conceptions of the aged, infirm, and those in the terminal stages of life. Her book *Alive with Alzheimer's* documented a person-centered approach to Alzheimer's care in the United States. And her book *Love, Loss and Laughter: Seeing Alzheimer's Differently* offers an additional challenge to stereotypes about Alzheimer's disease. Her revealing photographs show that while the losses created by degenerative brain disease are real,

people with Alzheimer's are not, as they are often depicted, "empty shells", completely lost. Her film, WE ARE FAMILY, is an extraordinary and inspiring film about the Butterfly Model and how it is transforming dementia care.

Additional interview opportunities may be made through any of these community partners:

The Alzheimer's Association Washington State Chapter; Elderwise; The Frye Art Museum Creative Aging Program; Full Life Care; UW Medicine, Memory and Brain Wellness Center, NW Center for Creative Aging; Greenwood Senior Center; Seattle Parks Department Dementia Friendly Recreation, SE Seattle Senior Center, Lake City Community Center

Exhibition Sponsors

UW Memory and Brain Wellness Center, ERA Living; Aegis Living; Alzheimer's Association Washington State Chapter; City Office of Arts and Culture; 4Culture; Washington State Arts Commission, Art Works National Endowment for the Arts; Fieldstone Memory Care.