

Notable Blind Artists

Eşref Armağan

Eşref Armağan was born blind in 1953 in Turkey. Though his family was poor, and he did not receive formal schooling or training, he taught himself to write and paint. Armağan has been perfecting his art for the past 35 years, and has displayed his work in Turkey, Italy, China, Holland, and the Czech Republic.

His website is: <http://www.armagan.com>

Video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-cmKsWpkRGE&feature=fvwl>

John Bramblitt

John Bramblitt is an American painter born in 1971. After losing his sight at the age of 30, he began painting. His art has been displayed in over 20 nations, and he has been the subject of numerous media stories. A documentary won several short-film awards, and a video about him was voted *Most Inspirational Video of 2008* for YouTube.

His website is: <http://www.bramblitt.net/>

Videos at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KwPzBRRuq3g>

Lisa Fittipaldi

Lisa Fittipaldi, who was a trauma-care nurse, a CPA, and financial advisor before losing her sight, and whom the London Telegraph calls, “a rising star in the art world,” began selling her work in 1996 at local shows, then at art fairs around the country. Her work is now sold in galleries all over the world, and she has appeared on dozens of local and national TV programs, granted radio and print interviews, and given speeches and demonstrations to both blind and sighted audiences. She founded the Mind’s Eye Foundation in 1999 to provide specially equipped computers to vision- and hearing-impaired schoolchildren so they can remain in mainstream schools. Her book, Brush with Darkness: Learning to Paint After Losing My Sight,” tells how she learned to paint after losing her vision and being declared legally blind in 1993.

Her website is: <http://www.lisafittipaldi.com/>

Sargy Mann

The British painter Sargy Mann was diagnosed with cataracts at 36, and went on to lose his sight completely. But, in his mind’s eye, his vision did not fade, and Mann found new ways to keep working. Today, his paintings, collected by Daniel Day-Lewis among others, are more acclaimed than ever.

A website about Mann is: <http://www.visit-sufflokcoast.co.uk/art-artists/sargy-mann-painting-blind-faith>

A portion of a 38-minute film about Mann by his son, Peter, can be seen at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNteWnGXRaU>

Michael Naranjo

Michael Naranjo is a Native American sculptor. In 1968, he lost his sight and the use of his right hand when injured by a hand grenade while serving in Vietnam. Several members of his family are artists, and he grew up in Taos, New Mexico. After attending school for the blind in California, he moved back to New Mexico and became a successful sculptor. He and his wife have established the Touched by Art Fund at the Santa Fe Community Foundation to enable public school students in New Mexico to visit galleries and museums.

See: <http://www.mccormickgallery.com/naranjoarticle1.html>

And: <http://www.chiptaylor.com/ttlmnp0998-.cfm>

A 28-minute video is at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=17zf59iIBms>

Paul Ponchillia

Paul is a retired educator and leader in the field of programming for individuals with visual impairments.

See: http://www.anastonecarving.com/gallery_images.php?ID=3

Keith Salmon

Keith Salmon is a British artist who was born in Essex and moved to Wales in the late 1960s. He originally trained and worked as a sculptor, constructing pieces from steel, wood, and cement. In 1989, Salmon set up a new studio. His sight deteriorated very quickly, and within a few years, he had to stop exhibiting work. He then decided to make the most of the time he still had with sight, and put his efforts into drawing and painting, finding new methods using his very limited sight he had. In 1998, he moved to Scotland, and though registered blind, he had enough confidence in the new paintings and drawings he created to once again start exhibiting them.

His website is: <http://www.keithsalmon.org/>

Video at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VSZin15Ub3Q>