

"My art is about art... [it] describes the processes and situations that all artists find themselves in."

Abraham Ferraro

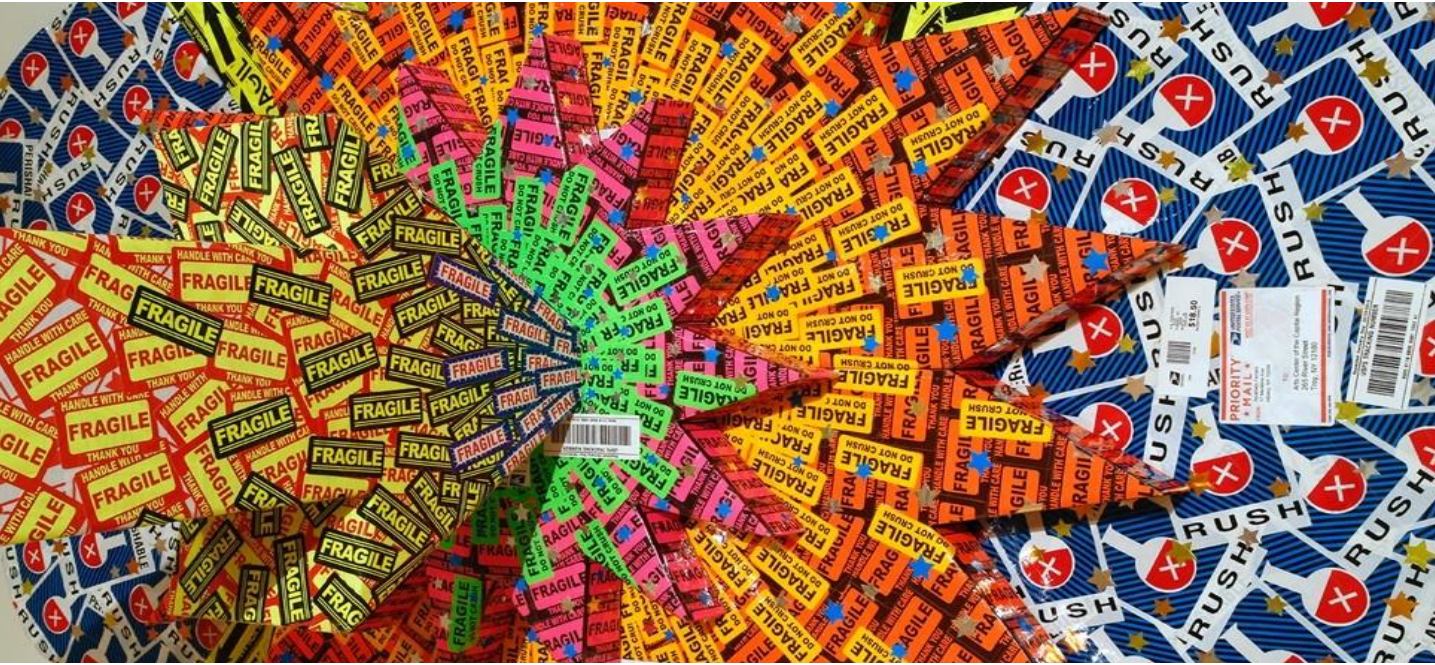


Artist Statement

My art is about art and the processes behind the artwork. My performance works, through real sweat, detail the struggles, trials, and tribulations that artists undergo by creating an art object during a strenuous performance. My recent installations are about the processes behind and within that art making.

Moreover, my work is autobiographical while also referencing the processes and situations that all artists find themselves in. Humor, irony, and sarcasm are frequent strategies. Each piece seeks to depict, critique and/or challenge conventions of art that artists face when making art.

Abraham Ferraro, 2024



Abbreviated Artist Biography

Abraham Ferraro is a multidisciplinary artist with degrees from the State University of New York at Fredonia (BFA) and the State University of New York at Albany (MA & MFA). He has exhibited extensively, with 22 solo shows at venues including Artists Space, New York, New York; Rochester Contemporary Arts Center, New York; and The Gallery at Penn College, Williamsport, Pennsylvania.

In addition to many private collections, Ferraro's work is included in notable museum and university collections, including the Albany Institute of History & Art, New York; Washington & Jefferson College, Pennsylvania; SUNY Fredonia University Art Museum, New York; and Monroe Community College, Rochester, New York.

His art has been published in magazines such as *Climbing Magazine*, *Climb*, *Hyperdrawing*, *Beyond the Lines of Contemporary Art*; and *Gambling the Isle*, *365 Artists 365 Days*, *Contemporary Performance Almanac*. Ferraro's video documentaries have also been featured on YouTube.

Ferraro has received many awards for his artistic efforts including "Best in Show" at the Made in New York exhibitions (2010, 2012) and was a 2006 resident at Sculpture Space in Utica, NY. Currently, Ferraro is the Fabrication Shop Manager at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, NY.

More information is available at abezart.com or on his YouTube Channel [@abeZart](https://www.youtube.com/@abeZart).

Exhibited Artworks

As If.../NOT, part 3 (Sisyphus's Neurotransmission), 2025, interactive installation, extension cords, vinyl cord, split wire loom, electrical lights, and power, variable sizes

Directions, (2011-2025), recycled cardboard, tape, mailing stickers, postal service labels, variable sizes (800 - 1500 sq. ft.)

Mailable #1, 2008, cardboard, foam, postal service, tape, 10 x 8 1/2 x 10 in.

Six Ways from Sunday, 2015, cardboard, foam, postal service, tape, 51 x 49 x 38 in.

The following artworks are Castellani Art Museum of Niagara University Collection, unless otherwise noted.

Christo (Vladimirov Javacheff) (American, born in Bulgaria, 1935-2020), *Wrapped Painting*, 1969, serigraph, double-sided and die-cut, edition of 100, 30 3/4 x 23 in. Gift of the Anne and Thomas Incorvia Family, 2011

Charles Clough/Robert Longo (American, b. 1951/American b. 1953), *Prototype for a Fundraiser for Hallwalls*, 1976/2013, cast aluminum, ed. 9/25, 39 x 5 x 1 in. Promised Bequest Gift of Dr. Gerald C. Mead, Jr.

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930-1998), *The Bead Game*, 1978, color lithograph on Arches, collaged wire, cables, and wood, ed. 25/50, 22 1/2 x 33 1/4 x 5 1/2 in. Gift of Dr. Gerald C. Mead, Jr.

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930-1998), *June Moon*, 1971 screenprint on paper, ed. 72/125, 14 1/4 x 11 3/4 in. Promised Bequest Gift of Dr. Gerald C. Mead, Jr.

Allan D'Arcangelo (American, 1930-1998), *Composition*, 1968, serigraph, ed. 31/100, 291, 29 1/2 x 23 1/2 in., Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Armand J. Castellani, 1987

Jim Dine (American, b. 1935), Untitled from the *Homage to Picasso* portfolio, 1973, lithograph, ed. VI/XXX, 30 1/8 x 22 3/8 in. Gift of the Castellani Family, 2013

Hollis Frampton (American, 1936-1984), *Spaghetti*, 1964 (printed 1984), Ektachrome photograph, 11 x 14 in. Promised Bequest Gift of Dr. Gerald C. Mead, Jr.

Betty Gold (American, b. 1935), *Communication* from the *Arrows* portfolio, c. 1970, serigraph, ed. 32/75, 22 x 28 in. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ken Carey, 1979

Betty Gold (American, b. 1935), *You have Highs only if you have Lows* from the *Arrows* portfolio, c. 1970, serigraph, ed. 36/75, 22 x 28 in. Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Ken Carey, 1979

Nicholas Krushenick (American, 1929-1999), Untitled from the *Homage to Picasso* portfolio, 1973, serigraph, ed. VI/XXX, 29 7/8 x 22 in. Gift of the Castellani Family, 2013

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-1997), *As I Opened Fire*, 1966, lithograph, three panels, ed. of 3000, 25 1/2 x 21 in. each, Gift of the Castellani Family, 2013

Roy Lichtenstein (American, 1923-1997), Untitled from the *Homage to Picasso* portfolio, 1973, lithograph, ed. VI/XXX, 30 1/8 x 22 3/8 in. Gift of the Castellani Family, 2013

Claes Oldenburg (American born Sweden, 1929-2022), *Flying Pizza* from the *New York TEN* portfolio, 1964, lithograph, ed. 153/200, 17 x 22 1/4 in. Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Armand J. Castellani, 1978

Robert Rauschenberg (American, 1925-2008), *General Delivery*, 1971, lithograph with collage, ed. 207/300, 30 x 40 in. Gift of Mr. Savino Nanula, 1981

Tim Rollins & K.O.S. (Kids of Survival), (American, 1955-2017) *Red Badge of Courage*, 1995-96, tempera, watercolor, acrylic collage & book pages, 31 x 40 1/4 in. Museum Purchase, 1999

James Rosenquist (American, 1933-2017), *Spaghetti*, 1970, lithograph, ed. 41/100, 30 1/8 x 36 1/8 in. Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Armand J. Castellani, 1989

James Rosenquist (American, 1933-2017), *Sight-Seeing*, 1972, lithograph, ed. 51/75, 30 3/4 x 37 in. Gift of Dr. and Mrs. Armand J. Castellani, 1989

Andy Warhol (American, 1928-1987), *Campbell's Tomato Soup*, 1968, acrylic silkscreened on painted paper, 15 x 10 in. Gift of the Castellani Family, 2000

Andy Warhol (American, 1928-1987), *Flowers*, 1970, screenprint on paper, 36 x 36 in. Gift of the Andy Warhol Foundation, 2014

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Gerald Mead, whose invaluable guidance and personal dedication in introducing me to Buffalo's gallery landscape in 2012. His extensive knowledge of the Western New York arts community, persistent encouragement through multiple application processes, and advocacy for my work among critical circles were foundational to this show's development.

My deepest appreciation goes to Michael Beam and his colleagues at the Castellani Art Museum for their extraordinary commitment, time, and unwavering enthusiasm. His faith in my artistic vision helped me successfully adapt my work to the unique demands of this space, even during moments of personal uncertainty. Thank you Chris Kameck for your expert support and thorough work on this exhibition. Your insights and detailed approach were invaluable.

I am particularly grateful to Ellen Owens for her strategic insight in suggesting the NYSCA grant opportunity and her expertise in crafting a compelling application. Finally, I extend my appreciation to the New York State Council on the Arts, whose generous support made possible the ambitious scale of this exhibition.

Image Credits: (cover) *New Directions » Going Up*, gallery installation, 2025 – 2026

Abraham Ferraro: New Directions » Going Up is made possible by the New York State Council on the Arts with the support of the Office of the Governor and the New York State Legislature. The artwork and installation for this exhibition was also supported by a NYSCA Artist Grant.



Council on the Arts



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The Castellani Art Museum is a free admission art museum. Donations welcome.

Abraham Ferraro

New Directions » Going Up

February 20, 2025 – January 12, 2026



CASTELLANI
ART MUSEUM
OF NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

"These pieces [*Directions*] trace my artistic journey through mail art, showing how my use of form, color, and concepts evolved over time through the dated postmarks and addresses."

Abraham Ferraro



"These pieces trace my artistic journey through mail art, showing how my use of form, color, and concepts evolved over time through the dated postmarks and addresses."
Abraham Ferraro

Multimedia artist Abraham Ferraro's work explores the creative processes and struggles of artists. His site-specific installations delve into the joys, misconceptions, and hidden dimensions of the artistic practice.

New Directions > *Going Up* represents a complete reimagining of Ferraro's installation style, embracing the verticality of the gallery walls and the ceiling rather than its floors. For two weeks, Ferraro and installers carefully transformed this space, literally elevating his work to a new immersive level.

Ferraro's work is deeply autobiographical, yet also broadly relatable to the experiences shared by many artists. He employs humor, irony, and sarcasm as strategies to critique and challenge the conventions, expectations, and uncertainties that artists face. Each piece aims to expose, critique, or subvert the norms of art making. Heavily influenced by Pop Art, Ferraro draws from masters of this movement such as Betty Gold, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg, Robert Rauschenberg, and Andy Warhol. Examples of these artistic inspirations from CAM's collection will be featured alongside Ferraro's innovative new works.

Image Credits: (from left to right) (detail) *New Directions* > *Going Up*, CAM gallery installation; (detail) *Directions*, (2011-2025); (detail) *As If.../NOT, part 3 (Sisyphus's Neurotransmission)*, 2025



Directions

Directions (2011–present) is an evolving series of mailable sculptures, each meticulously crafted to meet United States Postal Service size regulations while maximizing visual impact. Every piece arrives complete with postage, shipping labels, and installation instructions.

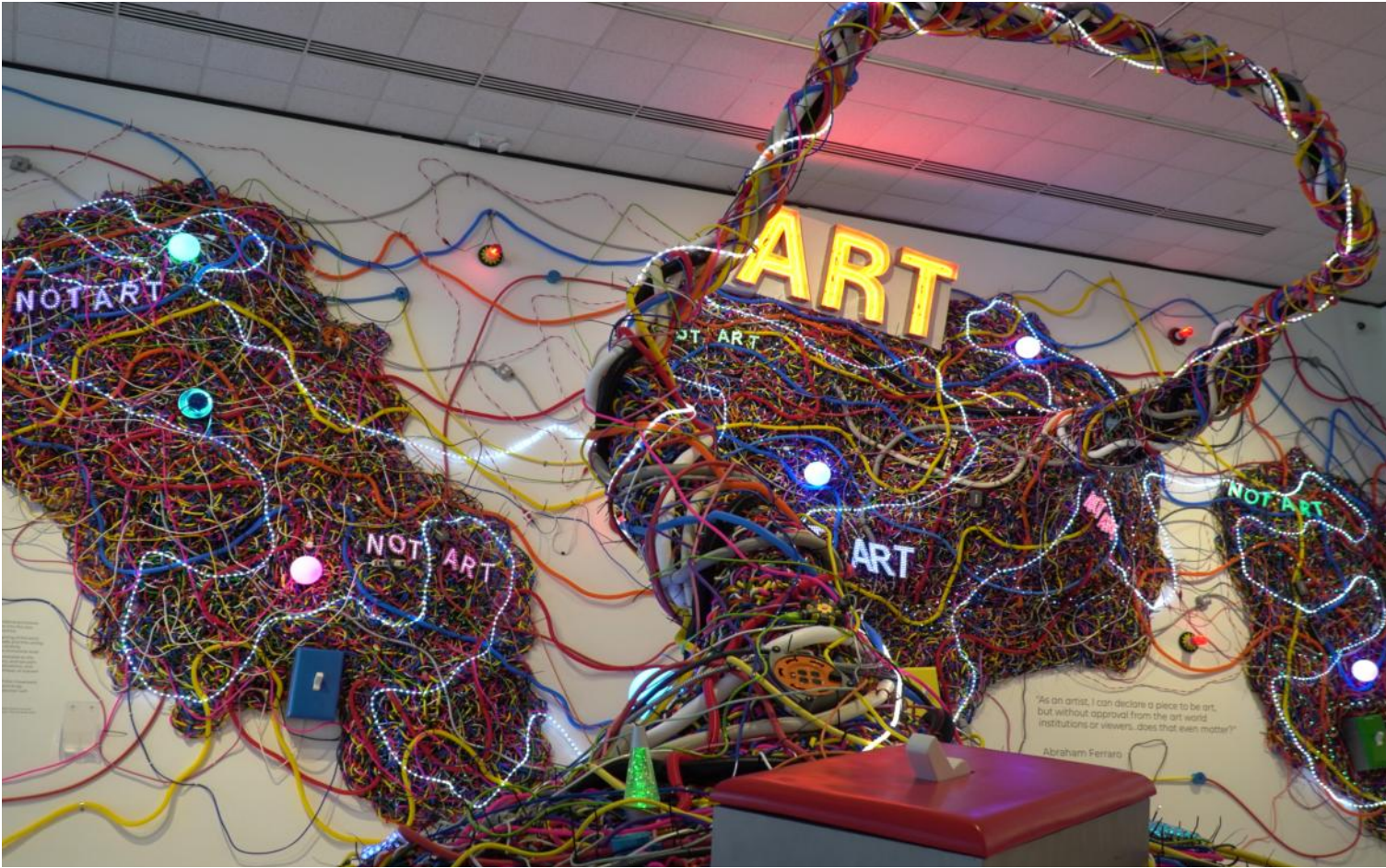
The sculptures are constructed from recycled cardboard boxes that have already completed one postal journey. These boxes are transformed through a process of structural engineering, foam filling, and meticulous surface treatment with packing stickers and protective tape. With every exhibition, the series grows through several new works, which are mailed individually to each venue. Now comprising over two hundred pieces spanning 14 years, the collection continues to evolve.

At Castellani Art Museum, the installation takes an unprecedented form: sculptures are predominantly suspended overhead in the central gallery, responding to both the architectural constraints and the space's multi-purpose nature. This adaptation represents a significant departure from previous presentations, demonstrating the series' ability to respond to and transform within new environments.

Each work preserves its original shipping labels, allowing viewers to trace its journey through time and space. This transparency of process and preservation of history is integral to the series concept, bridging the gap between a functional shipping object and sculptural art piece.

"As an artist, I can declare a piece to be art, but without approval from the art world institutions or viewers...does that even matter?!?"

Abraham Ferraro



As If.../NOT, part 3 (Sisyphus's Neurotransmission) from the *Light Switch* series

The *Light Switch* series playfully challenges the mythology of artistic creation. Its latest iteration, *As If / NOT, part 3 (Sisyphus's Neurotransmission)*, invites viewer participation through a monumental interactive sculpture. Participants can either make "ART" by flipping an oversized light switch or declare "NOT ART" by pressing an oversized red button—the latter triggering a display of flashing lights and buzzing sounds that signify a wrong answer response.

The installation creates an immersive environment, drowning viewers in a sea of brightly colored extension cords, wire looms, vinyl tubing, and electrical components. This visual abundance serves the work's central irony: while art-making is far more complex than flipping a switch, here, that's exactly what it becomes. The piece poses a critical question: If an artist declares something art, does this declaration hold meaning without audience validation? Who truly holds the power to define art?

The work's subtitle references the myth of Sisyphus, who was condemned by the Greek gods to eternally roll a boulder up a mountain, only to watch it tumble down again—a potent metaphor for the perpetual struggle of artistic creation and recreation. In Castellani Art Museum's Central Gallery, this mythological mountain has been reimagined as Sisyphus's neural landscape, visualizing what the artist describes as "a neuro-field of Dopamine (creating feelings of pleasure and motivation) and Cortisol (a chemical in the body that produces adrenaline and is essential for life) in action during the struggle."

Viewed together, *Directions* and *As If.../NOT, part 3 (Sisyphus's Neurotransmission)* transcend their physical presence as gallery installations. They embody the broader journey of artistic development, capturing not only the literal transportation of artwork to venues but also the evolution of Ferraro's mercurial creative vision. This transformation reflects a universal aspect of artistic practice: the continuous evolution of an artist's work and process over time.

Michael J. Beam
Curator of Exhibitions and Special Projects