

## Artists Brighten Bereavement

Metro Denver, CO--As amazing as it sounds, bereavement does have a bright side. It's the "sweet" in the bittersweet journey of grief. A nationwide niche of artists who know how to bring it out and celebrate the life of a loved one can now be found at BereavementArtists.com – a non-profit online directory of artists who specialize in custom bereavement work. From artful urns to radiant ash-embedded pendants, unique clothing art, collages, portraits and more, the immediate mission for the site is to connect anyone, anywhere, to a desired art form and artist that speaks to their taste, need, and budget.

Likewise, the bereavement artists' goal is to convey the joyful memories and essence of a loved one in a lasting, tangible way; via the healing process of custom art creation. *"We are a community of artists who really enjoy working with the bereaved and who have a special gift. It's not grim for us; it's about lifting spirits up,"* says Anita Larson, one of three Colorado artists who put their hearts and energy into launching BereavementArtists.com.

Many bereavement artists were called to their work by experiencing their own loss of a child, parent or close companion. Co-founder Teresa Dunwell conceived her Memorial Icons after the sudden, but intuitively foreseen death of her 4-year-old son.

Many came to bereavement service in other extraordinary ways. *"Some years back I had the honor of making a king-sized bereavement quilt for a mother made from the clothes of her beloved daughter who had been brutally murdered,"* says Rosie Rhine. *"This experience changed me, as I transformed beautiful dresses into a story quilt."* Since then Rosie Rhine made many pictorial bereavement quilts of all sizes and types.

Custom bereavement art has evolved even further with some artists focusing on buoying those facing long term life battles such as cancer. Photographer Katy Tartakoff specializes in bringing these families together, capturing a celebration of life and enduring love at her portrait studio. Angela Canada Hopkins helps clients conquer cancer by embracing it; laying out a colorful, playful, spontaneous conquest of the cellular matter through her brush.

Grief, death, and bereavement have long been a taboo topic in western society. Now, in the new millennium a paradigm shift in processing loss is happening across this country – and bereavement artists are a big part of it. BereavementArtists.com provides a platform to help bring enlightenment and comfort to griever, their extended families and friends, with a fresh new perspective wrought from the artists' unique experience and creative genius. *"Clients smile and hug me when they see their piece. We even have a few laughs along the way,"* says co-founder Gina Klawitter. *"They delight in sharing their loved one's art with others. Tender, joyful stories are relayed."*

For more information on [www.BereavementArtists.com](http://www.BereavementArtists.com) please visit the site or call Teresa Dunwell at [303.666.6460](tel:303.666.6460).

###