



# Cara Hanley

Cara Hanley is an Albany-based artist and illustrator whose work encourages introspection, mindfulness, and emotional connection. Combining watercolor and gouache with classic techniques, she creates symbolic and abstract imagery that explores inner experience and resilience. Her artwork appears throughout Albany in community-based projects including the Albany Visitors Guide, community arts projects, public murals, galleries, and window illustrations. At the heart of her work is a commitment to destigmatizing mental health by portraying it as a natural, multifaceted part of human experience. Rooted in collaboration, Cara works with local organizations to create accessible art that invites reflection, care, and shared meaning. Cara has a B.A. in art history and psychology from McGill University in Montreal, Quebec, and an M.S.W. in social work from the University at Albany.

[carahanley.com](http://carahanley.com)



Cara Hanley "Home Discovery,"  
watercolor, gouache, and graphite

The Office of Mental Health stands at the forefront of providing hope and recovery through its extensive network of psychiatric centers, community programs, and prevention and awareness efforts.

This fellowship offers a profound opportunity for Hanley to humanize mental health experiences by engaging with individuals in rural inpatient facilities from diverse populations and backgrounds. Through storytelling and artistic interpretation, Hanley will create works (or support the artistic work of the individual) to reflect the resilience and individuality of those navigating mental health challenges, fostering a deeper understanding of their journeys.

Cara Hanley's work will be a cornerstone of OMH's mission to destigmatize mental health care, showcasing how expanded resources make recovery more accessible than ever. By inspiring and empowering participants and portraying them in a manner that highlights their strengths, this project will also serve as a healing intervention, motivating individuals toward recovery and social reintegration while sparking empathy and acceptance within broader communities.

