

LAURIE TRAKS KAY

Artist • Educator • Founder, Monsters Made with Love

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Lovingly known as "The Monster Lady," Laurie Kay is a fiber artist, educator, and founder of Monsters Made with Love. For over a decade, she has taught sewing with a self-love twist to students of all ages and backgrounds, using the act of making as a vehicle for connection, confidence, and creative growth. Her practice has recently expanded into professional puppet and creature work, with commissioned pieces for productions at the Center for Puppetry Arts in Atlanta and the Tennessee Theater in Knoxville.

EXHIBITIONS

- 2025 – **10 Year Anniversary: The Maker City**, The Red Gallery, Knoxville, TN
- 2025 – **Gaudy Gold Frame**, Broadway Gallery, Knoxville, TN
- 2024 – **Gaudy Gold Frame — Juror's Choice Award**, Broadway Gallery, Knoxville, TN
- 2021, 2022, 2023 – **Synergy**, Dogwood Arts, Clayton Center, Maryville, TN
- 2023 – **Gaudy Gold Frame — Best in Show**, Broadway Gallery, Knoxville, TN
- 2020 – **Monsters Made with Love**, Dogwood Arts, Knoxville, TN
- 2018 – **Gaudy Gold Frame — Honorable Mention**, Broadway Gallery, Knoxville, TN

CURATORIAL & JURYING

- 2024 – **Juror**, Synergy, Dogwood Arts, Clayton Center, Maryville, TN
- 2020 – **Monsters Made with Love (Curator)**, Dogwood Arts, Knoxville, TN
Organized and curated a group exhibition featuring 30 local artists and makers, each interpreting the monster form in their own medium. Included a fiber-arts monster charity auction benefiting the local community. The exhibit highlighted the intersection of fine art, fiber arts, and folk craft, bringing together a broad cross-section of the Knoxville creative community.

COMMISSIONED WORKS & SPECIAL PROJECTS

- 2026 – **"Flo" (Commissioned Puppet)**, The Cycle, XPT, Center for Puppetry Arts, Atlanta, GA
- 2026 – **"Theresa's Metamorphosis" (Monster, Film)**, All Grandma's Biscuits, Center for Puppetry Arts, Atlanta, GA
- 2025 – **"Blue Monster" (Commissioned Monster)**, Beyond Dreams, Tennessee Theater, Knoxville, TN
- 2025 – **"Angry Black Sheep"**, Art Auction, East Tennessee Community Design Center, Knoxville, TN
- 2024 – **"Estrella" (Commissioned Monster)**, The Muse, Knoxville, TN
- 2022 – **"Cosmo" (Commissioned Monster)**, The Muse, Knoxville, TN
- 2020 – **PechaKucha Knoxville Poster**, PechaKucha Knoxville, Knoxville, TN
- 2020 – **"Frank Guggenheim"**, Art Auction, East Tennessee Community Design Center, Knoxville, TN

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- 2024 – Juror's Choice**, Gaudy Gold Frame, Broadway Gallery
- 2023 – Best in Show**, Gaudy Gold Frame, Broadway Gallery
- 2021 – Top 20 in 2020**, PechaKucha International
- 2021 – Honorable Mention**, Dogwood Arts, Synergy
- 2018 – Honorable Mention**, Gaudy Gold Frame, Broadway Gallery

SELECT TEACHING EXPERIENCE

Higher Education & Professional Development

- 2025–2026 – ARTcation Instructor**, Knox County Schools (Art Teachers Professional Development)
- 2023 – Mindfulness Monsters — Guest Instructor**, University of Tennessee, Graphic Design Department
- 2022 – Art Teachers Professional Development Day**, Knox County Schools
- 2020–Present – Sculpture Guest Instructor**, Maryville College

Community & Social Impact

- 2025–Present – Fiber Arts Instructor**, Street Hope, Knoxville, TN (Teens)
- 2023–Present – Weekly Art Classes**, Tennessee Valley Recovery Center (Adults)
- 2023–Present – Workshop Instructor**, Boys and Girls Club Tennessee Valley (Ages 5–12)
- 2023–Present – Fiber Arts Instructor**, Ijams Nature Center (Adults and Children)
- 2019–Present – Workshop Instructor**, Emerald Youth, Multiple Locations (Ages 5–18)
- 2018–Present – Workshop Instructor**, YMCA Series, Multiple Locations (Ages 5–12)
- 2018–Present – Workshop Instructor**, Middle Path, Multiple Locations (Teens and Adults)
- 2018–Present – Workshop Instructor**, CLO at Public Defenders Office (Ages 5–18)
- 2018–2025 – Fiber Arts Instructor**, SPARK, Special Needs
- 2018–2023 – Weekly Fiber Arts Classes**, Oak Grove Homeschool Co-op (Ages 4–14)
- 2018–2023 – Workshop Instructor — AP Art & Special Needs**, Bearden High School, Knoxville, TN
- 2016 – Workshop Instructor**, Orlando Maker Faire, Orlando, FL
- 2014–2017 – Instructor**, Chocachatti Elementary School, Brooksville, FL (Ages 8–12)

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- Arts & Culture Alliance of Greater Knoxville** — Member
- Tennesseans for the Arts** — Member
- Mayor's Maker Council, Knoxville** — Member, 2019–2022
- Knox Makers** — Member; Board Member (2018–2019); Peace Keeper (2019–Present)
- Maker USA** — Community Member