



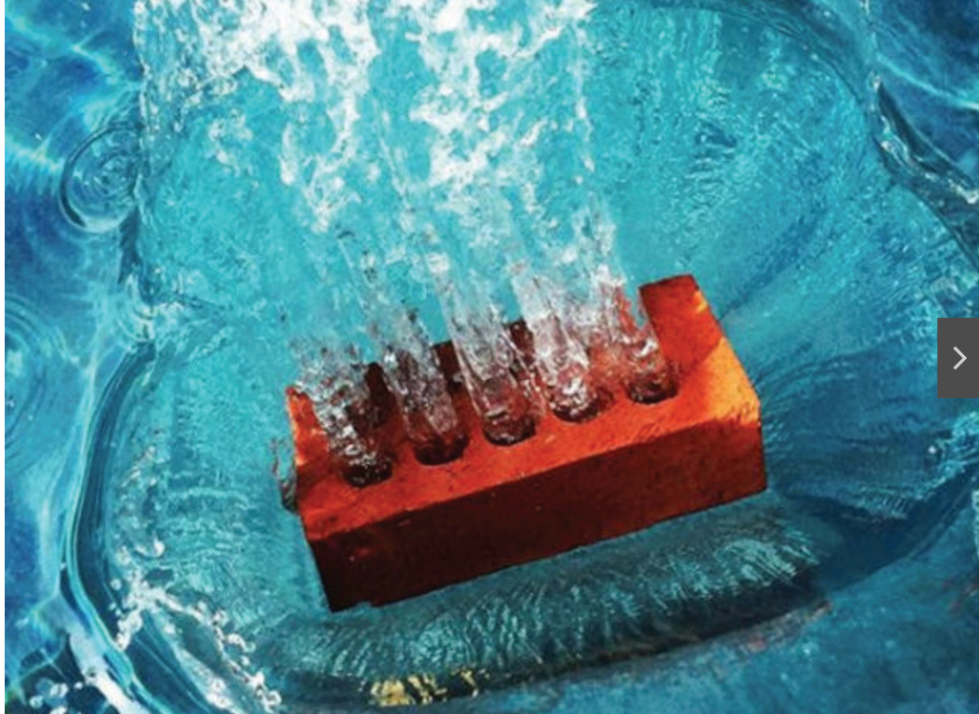
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Springfield Twp. graphic designer, cancer survivor making waves in art world with iPhone photography

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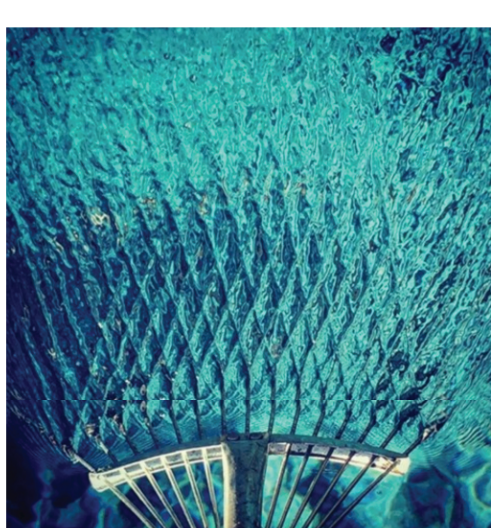
SPRINGFIELD TOWNSHIP, Ohio -- Laura Zazanis is making a splash in the art world.

The Springfield Township resident's hobby of taking pictures in her pool has developed into a photography career that is earning her recognition across the country. Using her smartphone, she captures beauty in the ripples and waves of the water that appear when a variety of props such as watermelons, martini glasses and boxing gloves hit the surface.

"After having completed my cancer treatment, I saw things with a new depth and perspective, both literally and figuratively," Zazanis said. "I started seeing beauty and art in everything, particularly in splashing water. What started as something fun to do while hanging in my pool -- my happy place -- has now become an artful expression of the inner me."

Initially, she shared her photos with friends and family through Facebook, typically posting a new photo each day her pool was open. After several years of encouragement to turn the hobby into a business, she began entering her work into art competitions.

The resulting awards and Zazanis' acceptance into a small showing at the [Los Angeles Center for Digital Art](#) provided the professional validation she needed to begin pursuing the idea of turning her water works into a business venture.



What began as a hobby for Laura Zazanis has turned into a full-fledged career -- though she still continues her "day job" as a graphic designer. Photo provided

Taking a business risk isn't new to Zazanis. In 2016, after years of working as a graphic designer for multiple marketing agencies, she took the risky step of going into business for herself with the opening of [Laura Zazanis Creative](#). A meeting with a local art dealer gave her the push she needed to create a second business to showcase her water art, [HzO Art](#) -- a playful turn of phrase combining the chemical formula of water and her initial.

Litsa Spanos, president of [Art Design Consultants](#) (ADC) and [Blink Art Resource](#) recently began representing Zazanis. She said that the first photographs she laid eyes on "blew her away."

"I always look for creativity, uniqueness and something that hasn't been done before," Spanos said. "Laura has created something special here. She has developed a 'signature style' that many artists strive for and work for years toward. I give her a lot of credit for doing this at such an early stage in her art career."

Zazanis' work will be on display in the ADC gallery, both online and in its quarterly catalog, "Spaces by Blink Art." Spanos will also be exhibiting Zazanis' work in April at [Artexpo](#) in New York, one of the largest art shows in the country, and in December at [Spectrum Miami](#).

Additionally, Zazanis will participate in the [Beverly Hills artSHOW](#) in May.

Locally, her work will be among those featured at the [25th anniversary celebration](#) of ADC on June 10.

A duck to water

While she's always had an eye for art and seeing beauty in the simplest things, Zazanis said, she hasn't been much of a photographer -- after all, she simply uses an iPhone covered with a waterproof case, not fancy camera equipment.

Now that she's combined the two, Zazanis has taken to the art world like ... well, a duck to water.



Laura Zazanis' experience with cancer treatment gave her a new perspective and opened her eyes to the beauty of water. Photo provided

"When you start really paying attention to water, you come to realize how beautiful, powerful, playful and amazing it is," she said. "It's really awe-inspiring to me. It takes on so many forms, its movement is art in and of itself. It's really nature at its best."

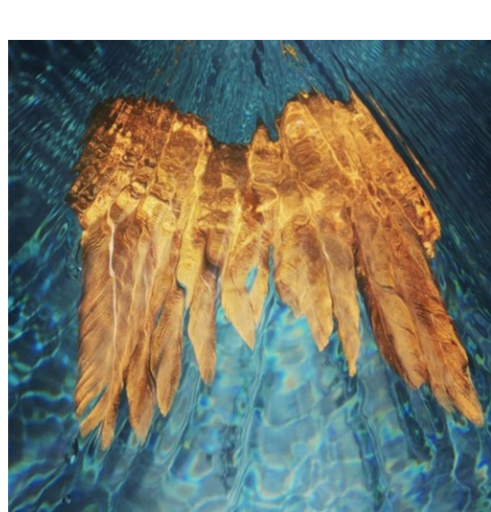
While her early work relied mostly on capturing splashes in her pool, she quickly turned to using props to add more color and dimension.

After maxing out her kitchen utensils, barware and her sons' sports equipment, she began

searching garage sales for unique items that will work well in the water.

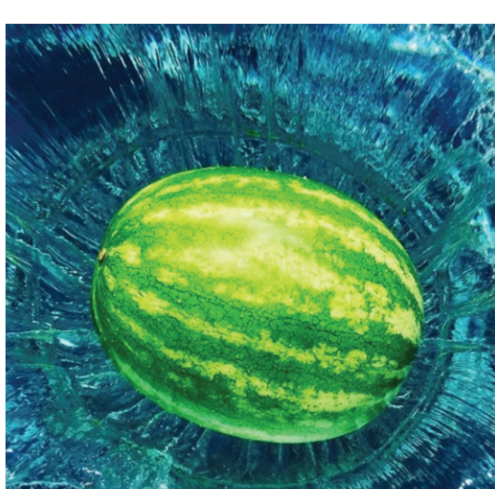
Friends and family, specifically her sons, Liam and Karsten, and her mother, Dee Zazanis, who she credits with motivating and supporting her through this new journey, offered up suggestions.

After years of practicing her work, Zazanis has learned the science of it, understanding at a glance which items will make good splashes or ripples. While many of the props have personal meaning -- including a pair of gold wings given to her during her treatment for breast cancer -- many others are selected to help capture the feeling of current events, like a boxing glove the day Muhammad Ali died or a rainbow scarf after the shooting at Pulse nightclub in Orlando.



Gold wings given to Laura Zazanis during cancer treatment are among the objects she has photographed in her pool. Photo provided

Zazanis, who still continues her "day job" as a graphic designer, finds it impossible to select a single favorite from all her props, but mentions the watermelon and brick among her top shots.



Laura Zazanis' water-based photographs will be displayed in art shows across the country this year. Photo provided

And while most of her efforts have gone swimmingly, a few others were all wet.

"On my birthday, I thought it would be cute to do a blueberry muffin with a candle in it. Though it seemed sturdy, the second it hit the water, it broke into a million pieces," she said with a chuckle. "I was cleaning soggy muffin bits out of my skimmer bucket for days."

Of course, living in the Midwest means her pool can't be open all year. During the off season, she finds beauty -- and photo ops -- in other forms of water including ice, rain and snow.

While she is "beyond thrilled" to take her place among the other artists at this year's shows, Zazanis seems nearly as excited to open her pool for the season.

"With the mild winter we've had, I've been tempted to open it early. But I'd say it'll be opened by late April and the chemicals will have done their job by early May," she said. "My canvas will be ready."

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