

# ArtsConnect Award Luncheon – Becky Alley introduction of Helene Steene

Hello, everyone.

It's such a joy to present this year's award for outstanding contribution to the visual arts to someone whose work—and whose presence—has had a lasting impact on the Lexington art community.

Helene Steene is a remarkable artist. Her work is instantly recognizable: rich, layered surfaces built with marble dust, mineral pigments, brushed metal—materials that shimmer with depth and intention. Her paintings feel timeless, like they've always existed, as if they've emerged from the sea air and sunlit stone of the Greek island that so often inspires her.

But it's not just the materials or the glowing colors that make her work so unforgettable—it's the way she brings them together with such clarity and grace. Her sense of balance, of harmony, of visual peace, is profound. You can feel her commitment to beauty and mystery in every surface she creates.

I had the pleasure of getting to know Helene while I worked at the Lexington Art League, where she keeps her studio. And while I've long admired her ambition and vision as an artist, her innovative techniques and exquisite sense of color and form—I've also come to admire her as a person.

She is funny, warm, and generous. She always had time to talk, to ask how I was doing—especially when I was pregnant and she watched me walking up and down that old staircase over and over again. She speaks with such love and pride about her own family. And in a world where it's easy to rush past each other, she is someone who truly notices and cares for people.

Helene, your work slows us down in the best way. It asks us to look closely, to feel more deeply, to find a sense of calm in the midst of the chaos. And your presence in this community has done the same.

It's my great honor to present this award to you today. Congratulations, Helene—you deserve every bit of this recognition.