

CherryArts

# Cherry Creek Arts Festival

Presented by  TOYOTA JULY 4-6, 2025

*Rachel Meyers Hefferan makes weavings and lives in Fennville, Michigan.*

**CherryArts:** Thanks for talking with us today, Rachel. Let's begin with this: what's one of your earliest memories of experiencing art?

**Rachel:** That depends on how we define "art!" My first memory of it is playing with my mom's acrylic paints that were on a table in our basement. My grandpa made a small business out of his hobby of making wooden toys and tchotchkes, and my mom would paint them for him. I wasn't old enough really to help, but I remember being enamoured with all the sweet little faces on the bunnies and marveling at my mom's steady hands while I made an absolute mess. I don't think I was ever allowed to touch "mom's paints" and "mom's brushes," but I'm not sure if I am remembering that correctly. I was very young!



**CherryArts:** We love that! Did you have any teachers who encouraged you to explore art, or to appreciate art?

**Rachel:** Yes, I've been lucky to be encouraged creatively both at home and in school throughout my life. There has always been someone pushing me forward or cheering me on at every stage.

**CherryArts:** We love to hear that. When you were eight years old, what did you want to be when you grew up?

**Rachel:** A veterinarian or an artist. I'm an artist and a farmer now, so that's pretty close!

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**CherryArts:** Nice! As a farmer, do you have any pets?

**Rachel:** Yes! I coexist with a lot of animals! In the pet category, I have three dogs, an axolotl, and a donkey. I also have livestock: twenty sheep, two goats, fifteen chickens, nine ducks, and three turkeys.

**CherryArts:** Tell us about one source of artistic inspiration for you.

**Rachel:** Pellicles — microbial communities, specifically the ones that facilitate the processes of fermentation. I'm interested in the physical forms they take, as well as the metaphorical value in their ability to break down and transform the parts and pieces of their source.

**CherryArts:** Beautiful. What's your favorite museum?

**Rachel:** I've always had a soft spot for the Field Museum in Chicago. I love all the taxidermy and the way the museum cases are designed. It's just so beautiful.

**CherryArts:** Agreed. If you could visit the studio of one artist from history who's no longer with us, what artist would you pick, and why?

**Rachel:** Leanore Tawney. She surrounded herself with her collections of both objects and artworks by other artists in her studio space. Her weavings and collages changed so much through her career. It seems like she never lost the ability to play in her practice which is something that I aspire to.



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**CherryArts:** Who's a living artist you admire?

**Rachel:** Jovencio de la Paz. I really love their work aesthetically speaking, but it's compounded by my appreciation of it in both a technical sense, as a weaver, and by the way Jovencio speaks about the work they create. I'm always inspired by them.

**CherryArts:** Nice. What's your favorite breakfast?

**Rachel:** Leftover pie or cake, especially if it is rhubarb.

**CherryArts:** Love that. What's your favorite color?

**Rachel:** Turquoise, the kind that leans green.



**CherryArts:** Do you listen to music when you're working?

**Rachel:** I'm all over the place in terms of what I listen to in the studio. Sometimes it's an audiobook or a movie I've seen a thousand times and don't need to actively be watching. But lately, if it's music, it's been Dolly Parton or Avril Lavigne.



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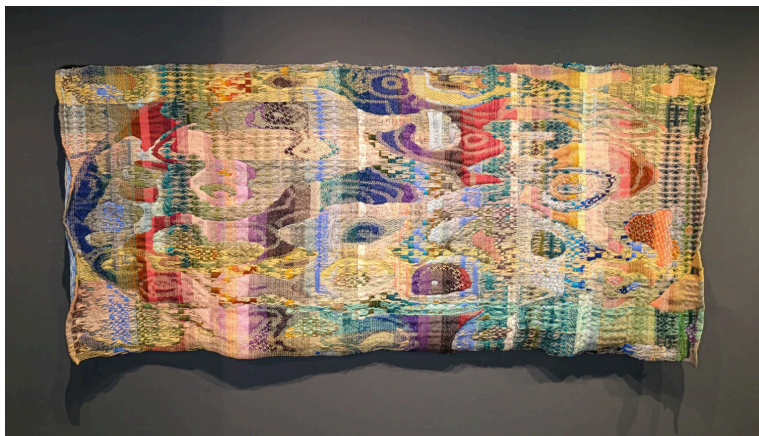
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**CherryArts:** If you had to switch artistic mediums today, what would you pick and why?

**Rachel:** Woodworking. My dad is a woodworker and I sometimes wish I understood all the pragmatic thoughts and how he arrives at the best way to make things that are built to last and hold their shape in that material. My dad likes to make clocks and furniture, mostly. I grew up appreciating woodworking as both a pragmatic craft and an art form.



**CherryArts:** If you're ever feeling stuck creatively, what helps you get unstuck?

**Rachel:** I always say to myself, "Step number one, show up!" Just getting myself in the studio helps. If I am really stuck I will ask another artist or close friend to come visit the studio. I think talking about work that I have already made helps me remember all of the potentials that pop into my mind as I'm making a work. You can't do everything, every time! Walking someone else through my process refreshes those feelings of excitement and potential for the next thing. It's really important to me to invite other creative people in so that I can keep moving forward.

**CherryArts:** In that case, we think you'll love being surrounded by artists at our festival!

**Rachel:** Yes! I'm most excited to meet other artists and make new connections that allow me to share my work with more people who are outside my current community.

**CherryArts:** Thanks for talking with us today, Rachel! What's the best place online for people to follow your work?

**Rachel:** Thank you! I'm on Instagram at [@michiganbean](https://www.instagram.com/michiganbean), and my website is [www.rachelhefferan.com](http://www.rachelhefferan.com).

*We look forward to seeing Rachel — and our four other 2025 emerging artists — at the 2025 Cherry Creek Arts Festival in July!*

