



# The rainbow lining of quarantine

## Rye Brook woman inspired by COVID-19 darkness to turn painting hobby into a business

By Sarah Wolpoff

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As an at-home mother, Marla Enowitz tends to get caught up in the frenzied "soccer mom" life.

Every day, her schedule revolves around her 11-year-old son Liam and 13-year-old stepson Seth—getting them to Blind Brook schools and different practices, activities and appointments.

When COVID-19 struck, Enowitz's perfectly organized life became chaos. Being a systematic person makes her a great mom, but then she suddenly had to simultaneously take on the roles of teacher, counselor, cook and nurse, all while coping with a new scary, uncertain world.

More than ever, in the last few months Enowitz felt as though she had lost her identity. But ultimately, "the misery of quarantine" inspired her, giving her time and purpose to take it back while shining a needed light of happiness on herself, her family, her friends and now, her customers.

"There were no more support teams for the kids, no more tutors or therapists. Everything they needed I became. I just didn't have anything for myself anymore," Enowitz explained, while noting it's a feeling many Rye Brook at-home mothers are familiar with. "So, I went back to my roots: painting. Just to get away from being something for everyone else all the time. I lost myself in the paint, it's been the stress reliever that I needed during all of this."

After her new invigorated hobby received positive feedback on social media, she decided to take it a step further to benefit her own personal development and the community. Since then, she's started selling her vivid, sparkly acrylic paintings to brighten up the homes of anyone who needs it during these grim times.

"I just wanted to create a little beauty for a world that turned scary and dark for so many people," Enowitz said. "And I wanted my kids to see me doing something positive. Because I would just sit and worry about school and Zoom and how they wanted to eat mac and cheese three times a day. I didn't want that to be the takeaway for my family. This is going to be a page in history and one day COVID will be over. I just wanted to do something where my family and friends can look back and see something positive about it."

Now 42 years old, Enowitz has been painting her whole life. Born and raised in Rye Brook, some of her most profound childhood memories are collecting her art supplies and easel and setting up camp in front of the television to watch Bob Ross—the famed "happy little trees" artist of the 80s and 90s who taught her how to use art as meditation, who made videos her children look at now and think they're from a century ago, she laughed.

At summer camp, she always took painting lessons. While getting prepared for a career in advertising at Ithaca College, her art classes consistently served as her favorite part of the day. Enowitz then lived in New York City for a few years before returning to Rye Brook, in the BelleFair community, to come full circle in finding a permanent home.



Marla Enowitz stands in her Legendary Circle home on July 20 to showcase the paintings she was inspired to create during the COVID-19 induced quarantine. Sarah Wolpoff|Westmore News

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**The rainbow lining of quarantine**  
Rye Brook woman inspired by COVID-19 darkness to turn painting hobby into a business. Marla Enowitz shares how she turned her hobby into a business during quarantine.

"I feel very settled and at peace with everything I tried to do with my life. And now I can put that on a canvas," Enowitz said. "And other people can see my personality, which is really trying to always be positive and look for something beautiful."

Enowitz is a put together, planned out and organized person. That's made her a successful at-home mother and also explains why COVID-19 quarantines and the associated lack of order made her so anxious.

It's also why a lot of her work incorporates rainbow drip art. The walls of her Legendary Circle home are covered by her paintings. Most of them are samples, she explained, to show people what she can do. Customers can view the general patterns and request specific colors and a canvas size.

Over the last three months, she's made around 30 pieces. Half of them are currently hanging in her clients' homes. Seven of the commissioned works are large, five-foot canvases, but Enowitz wants to go bigger. Soon, she plans to bring a ladder into her garage turned studio safe haven—her she shed—to work on masterpieces even taller than herself.

Through drip art, Enowitz drops acrylic paints onto the canvas at different angles and sometimes rotates it to make various designs.

"It's very organizing for me, for my brain, to have these straight drips. I really like the linear way it looks," she explained. "And then in the background I do blurred colors and lines and there's just something about it. I find it peaceful to look at. Then you have the little sparkles in there and that's just my little touch of smile."

The therapeutic benefits Enowitz defines with her art is two-dimensional—it's helped her stay sane in this scary world, and she thinks her pieces bring medicinal peace to her customers.

Most of her paintings utilize an array of bright, complimentary colors; it matches her lively personality. Enowitz is always laughing and constantly smiling—though nowadays it's hard to tell behind the face masks, she laughed.

The colors, she explained, are beneficial for the soul by creating an atmosphere of positive vibes.

"People like art, no matter what their personality, and people can appreciate bright colors. It's like color therapy, certain colors give you positive endorphins," she said. "I also add sparkle glitter to every work, it's like my signature thing. It's always going to have some glitter whether you like it or not. But I use acrylic glitter paint, so it'll never fall off."

Enowitz is motivated by helping the community through these dark times with art—to make people smile with beauty. Keeping with the theme, she has other artistic ventures in mind. In the future, she plans to donate pieces for fundraisers, such as giving Congregation KTI some art to auction off. When the COVID-19 chaos dies down, she'd like to donate her time to teach art classes at children's hospitals. Enowitz loves children.

This summer, she's taken great joy in hosting paint parties for kids in the BelleFair community.

"That's been so much fun. There's no camp, no one knows what to do, and it's a socially distanced activity for the neighbors," she said. "They get their kids together, I give them little canvases and easels, and it's the sweetest thing in the world. We all do rainbows."

"I try to spin it with the message of what a rainbow can bring," she added, "that tomorrow is a better day."

At this point, Enowitz said her pieces range from \$200 to \$700; however, she's flexible about prices. To her, the most important thing is making her art affordable to whomever it speaks to.

Check out her work at marlabethdesigns.com or through the marlabeth\_designs Instagram page. The artist says anyone interested in her work can contact her there.

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