



Photo: Courtesy of Montage Health

Local Health System Inspires Healing Through Art

BY RENEE BRINCKS

Carol Hatton Breast Care Center Lobby. Artwork pictured: Patricia M. Pierce-Atkinson (1942 – 1994), *Untitled (Purple and Blue Swirl)*, 1986. Acrylic on linen. Gift of Kevin Causey and Cydney Payton. ©Estate of Patricia M. Pierce-Atkinson.

One might expect to see a striking photograph, seascape painting or sculpture while visiting a local art museum. In Monterey, that experience also happens at the hospital.

Elizabeth Denholm, art collections manager at Montage Health, helps curate a collection meant to ease stress, inspire reflection, and improve health outcomes across more than 25 facilities.

"When you're undergoing a cancer treatment, for example, and you're returning to the facility many times, your mental state is so important for the healing process. Artwork can really aid that," she says.

Endowment funds and donations helped the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula establish its art collection in the 1960s. Now under the Montage Health Foundation, it includes

approximately 7,000 California landscape paintings, photographs, modern and abstract pieces, and more. With the late 2023 opening of Montage Health's Ohana campus, a center for adolescent mental health programs, the collection will expand to include murals and street wear-inspired art.

Art graces public areas, clinical spaces, staff facilities and even the hospital's crisis stabilization unit.

"Evidence-based research shows that this reduces anxiety for patients and for staff. After the last few pandemic years, we want to do anything we can to help create a soothing environment," says Carrie Creasy, Montage Health community engagement officer.

To learn more or to support the Montage Health art program, visit www.montagehealth.org.