

Featured Member

AATA National Office
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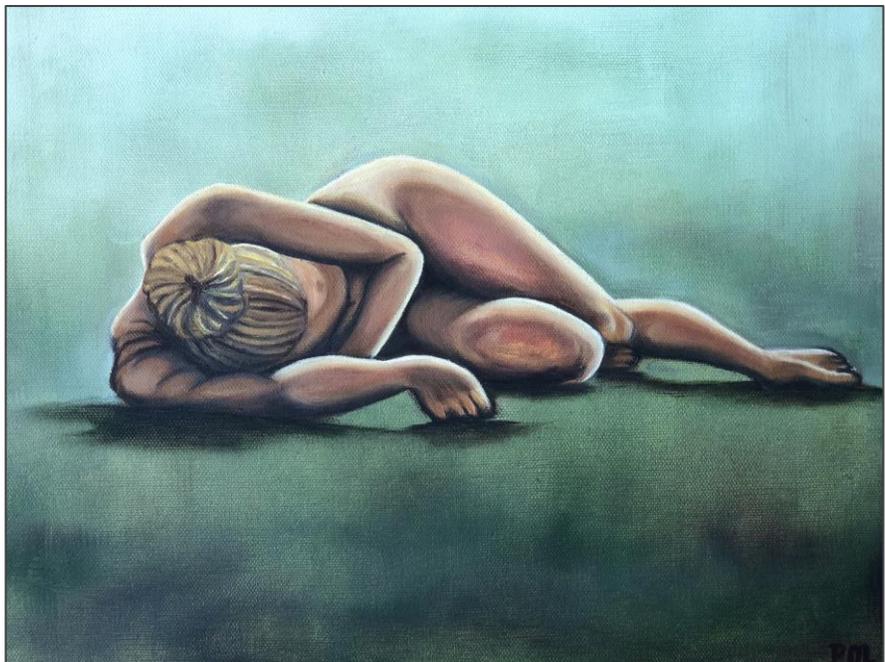
Pinar Matles-Montalvo, MFTI is working toward her ATR and is pursuing her PhD in art therapy at Notre Dame de Namur University. Currently she serves as a mental health clinician in two local public schools. In Turkey, her native country, Matles-Montalvo studied mathematics and business at Bogaziçi Üniversitesi, Istanbul's highest ranked university. She worked for nine years as a TV host for various national television channels before deciding to move to the United States. She started her education from scratch, majoring in psychology and completing Master's degrees in art therapy and marriage and family therapy. She values the connections possible through her AATA membership and shares, "I had a wonderful time at the last conference in Albuquerque, as I not only formed new relationships, which confirmed I chose the right career path, but also learned from others and improved my skills and knowledge about the art therapy field."

"Art therapy helps people to connect with their creative and true selves, which ultimately helps them find ways to improve their well-being," Matles-Montalvo summarizes,

"Communicating through creative expression, in the safe container art provides, we can heal more readily."

She illustrates through her own work: "As an art therapist, I am getting excellent results in the school setting, since art therapy is very effective in increasing self-esteem,

fostering pro-social behaviors, promoting self-awareness, and reducing stress." She continues, "Besides my 30+ clients, I am currently working with two children, with whom I cannot communicate verbally, helping them create meaning in their difficult worlds by using art therapy."



"Vulnerable" by Pinar Matles-Montalvo. 2005. Oil on canvas.

In the future, Matles-Montalvo would like to see art therapy "get more recognition and funding through research published in medical journals." She adds, "As a recent immigrant who is very passionate about social justice, it is very important for me to see art therapy reaching wider populations."

