



On Par

Towson University Art Professor Amanda Burnham shares her fondness for old postcards, her polydactyl cat, and running marathons.

by Cara Ober [@urbanitemdarts](#)



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Short Bio: **Amanda Burnham** makes drawings and installations based on her explorations and encounters with the urban landscape. Burnham has exhibited her work all over the country and is represented by the Dorsch Gallery in Miami, Florida, and Benrison Contemporary in New York City. In Baltimore, Burnham has exhibited at the Creative Alliance, Loyola University Maryland's Julio Gallery, MICA's Pinkard Gallery, and many more.

Age: 32

Occupation: I'm an artist and an assistant professor at Towson University.

Baltimore Neighborhood: Wyman Park/Hampden

Obsessive Collections: I love old, especially weird, postcards. The backs are as good as the fronts, so it's always a jackpot to find one with a lot of writing and a particularly antiquated postmark. I also have a friend with whom I've had an informal ongoing competition over the years to locate and send the most bizarre possible postcard any place we travel. My friend is a lot better traveled than I am, so he wins in terms of volume, but in my experience some of the most insane postcards come from non-"destination" destinations, so it's pretty even.

In addition, I have quite a bit of sports paraphernalia (mostly Miami Dolphins-centric), including an embarrassingly large collection of Starting Lineup style athlete figurines, which I have an inexplicable attraction to. There is a sizable Ricky Williams living next to my television. I am also an ardent admirer of street signs. I don't have too many, but I pick them up whenever I come across them in junk shops or garage sales.

Currently Reading: Recently finished *The Future of Life* by E.O. Wilson and *At Home* by Bill Bryson. Just starting *Outside Lies Magic* by John Stilgoe. I really can't recommend Stilgoe strongly enough.

Coollest Place You've Ever Lived: The first apartment I ever had to myself out of college. The living room had chalkboards for walls and it was right upstairs from a really cheap (and good) laundromat and a polish sausage shop. The neighbors had a hot pepper garden on their roof, which was also an ideal roof for drinking beer on.

Hobbies or Leisure Activities: I'm an avid runner and like competing in road races; I've done several 10Ks and half marathons, and did my first marathon last year.

Favorite Food to Eat at Home: Comfort foods from around the world. I get cozy with my slow cooker a lot. I do corned beef stew, stuffed cabbage, collards, meatballs, cauliflower soup. I recently discovered raw peanuts at the Rotunda Giant, which is awesome because now I can make boiled peanuts all the time.

Favorite Food to Eat Out: Depends on the city. I lived down the street from a burrito place in New Haven, La Carreta (they did most of their business out of a cart). I could smell them smoking their carnitas at 7 o'clock in the morning when I would walk down the street to grab a coffee. This was pure bliss. I have still never found a better burrito anywhere. When I'm visiting family in Ohio, I go to Tiger Bakery for amazing Lebanese food; their meat-stuffed grape leaves and hummus are worth a detour into Toledo. Speaking of detours, I have driven thirty miles out of my way for Skyline Chili. In Baltimore, I'm a big fan of Trinacria picnics, pulled pork BBQ at Harbor-que, beef lemongrass rolls and pho dac biet at Mekong Delta, lamb wot at Dukem, and the all-you-can-eat-and-drink Sunday brunch buffet at the Ambassador Dining Room.

Political Leanings: I'm with science.

Favorite Baltimore Spot to Hang Out: The Dizz, namely at the table between the end of the bar and the fireplace, early afternoon, on a snow day.

Pets: Tycho Brahe, a polydactyl cat (he's six-toed and uses the extra one like a thumb to open doors and such).

Favorite Person in the World: That would be a tie between my dad (Ed), mom (Margaret), and brother (Josh). If I discount family members and friends, Cleveland booth announcer Tom Hamilton.

Movie that Sums Up the Current State of Your Life: I've been in my car a lot lately. Maybe the *Cannonball Run?*

Favorite Place to Travel: Glacier National Park. The Gulf Coast. Anywhere in Spain.

Mantra or Favorite Quote: "Par is whatever I say it is. I've got one hole that's a par 23 and yesterday I damn near birdied the sucker." —Willie Nelson

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