

# Community

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## Gilbert student makes cut for GCU album

BY DIANA QUINTERA  
GSN Contributor

A young Gilbert man is one of the featured artists on the fifth album produced by Grand Canyon University's worship arts program.

The school's fifth student album, "Canyon Worship 2020," is the first that Chandler Kruse, a senior at GCU, sings on, but he is no stranger to GCU.

He recorded at GCU while he was in high school and said he that helped him find a great fit in the school's worship arts program.

"This is a really cool opportunity that I don't think a lot of people get – to be part of something like this," said Kruse, who sings "All We Need" with Chris Calderon.

Kruse is a business management major but added worship arts as a minor because of what he saw in the program.

"It's such a high caliber of talent but



Gilbert resident Chandler Kruse teamed up with another student-musician to cut a song that made Grand Canyon University's worship arts program's fifth annual album. (Special to GSN)

it's also so extremely personal," he told GCU's campus news service. "I feel like I know half the people here, which is real-

ly cool. It doesn't feel like a huge corporate thing."

Kruse met his Calderon at Likewise

Worship, a collective of worship leaders. They were paired up to work on a song and wrote "All We Need" after discussing how they believe we are all "clueless, and the Lord is faithful in taking care of us."

Kruse also recorded the foundation of the song before the shutdown, but had to return for two sessions. He said that amid the chaos of the pandemic, recording the album was uncomfortable because of social distancing concerns.

"On the other hand, in a time of craziness, it was relaxing because it was music," he said. "It was something we were passionate about, something we were excited about and something that we loved." Despite the obstacles COVID-19 brought to the album's production, students were able to write and perform all 10 original songs.

The greater part of the album was re-

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## Gilbert artist appeared in Grand Canyon show

BY DAVID M. BROWN  
GSN Contributor

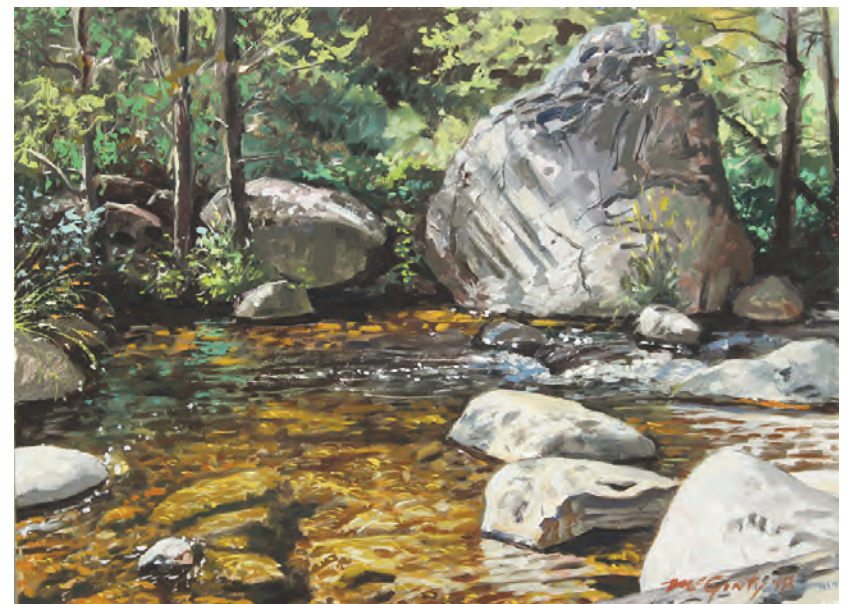
Gilbert artist Mick McGinty participated in the 12th annual Grand Canyon Celebration of Art at Grand Canyon National Park last month, joining others whose work can be purchased online through Jan. 18.

The show attracts professional artists nationwide, who paint "en plein air" – or on location – at various South Rim locations.

"The artists that I've come to know at the event have been very generous with advice on how to get things done. It's been like a free workshop from all the best plein air painters around," said McGinty, who is in his third event.

"After painting at the Grand Canyon

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Gilbert artist Mick McGinty frequently paints Grand Canyon scenes, like this one from Walnut Creek. (Special to GSN)

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for two years, I've painted nearly 30 plein airs or so, and I feel like I need to go back to my favorite spots to tackle a scene again and try to find new scenes so that my work has some variety."

"Art played a crucial role in the formation of our national parks and continues to do so in our appreciation of them, and the Celebration of Fine Art helps to keep the artistic tradition part of the Grand Canyon experience," said Mindy Riesenber, spokeswoman for Grand Canyon Conservancy, the official nonprofit partner of Grand Canyon National Park.

Among its many supportive activities, the nonprofit organization operates retail shops in the park, provides educational programs, maintains trails and historic buildings and protects wildlife.

In this case, the money raised from the online and onsite arts sale will raise funds to build an art venue at the Grand Canyon, she explained.

The artists' work will be on sale for four months at [shop.grandcanyon.org](http://shop.grandcanyon.org).

McGinty was born and raised in South Sioux City, just across the Missouri River in northeast Nebraska.

"From my earliest memories, I looked

for any chance to use my drawing talents. I used magic markers, tempera paint and pencils of any kind to draw portraits of my friends, horses, and cars, for whoever wanted them," he recalled.


After he and wife Kerry, a Nebraska native, raised their children in California, they returned to their home state for 15 years in Dakota Dunes, about 10 miles north of South Sioux City. They moved to Gilbert in 2007.

While living in California, he started painting landscapes of the Midwest, reacquainting himself with his love of

brush painting oil.

After his move to Arizona, painting the Grand Canyon became a priority, with Monument Valley and the Superstition Mountains here in the East Valley.

His style continues to evolve from an illustrator's concern for detail to just letting his mind take him to where it goes, just what happens when he's working at one of the seven natural wonders of the world.

"In the process," he said, "I've learned that I can create a style that's unique to me -- instead of a look that I might have stolen from someone else." 

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corded in GCU's state-of-the-art recording studio before the pandemic forced a campus shut-down.

Students still had to adjust to the changes that the pandemic brought to the completion of the album.

Recording studio manager Eric Johnson said that working with the students was beneficial as it allowed them to work more closely in comparison to the stu-

dents who had to leave the state.

Every year students submit around 130-135 songs, hoping that theirs will be selected to be featured in the annual album.

"I've grown musically, spiritually, crazily just by the people I've been around," Kruse said. "Even just writing that song with Chris, he was showing me things that I was like, 'Oh, that was awesome, I

never would have thought to do that.' It's affected how I play the piano and how I sing."


Kruse was one of two East Valley students to make the album cut.

Travis Hathaway of Chandler submitted two songs, and to his disbelief, the one that he wrote "in five minutes" was selected.

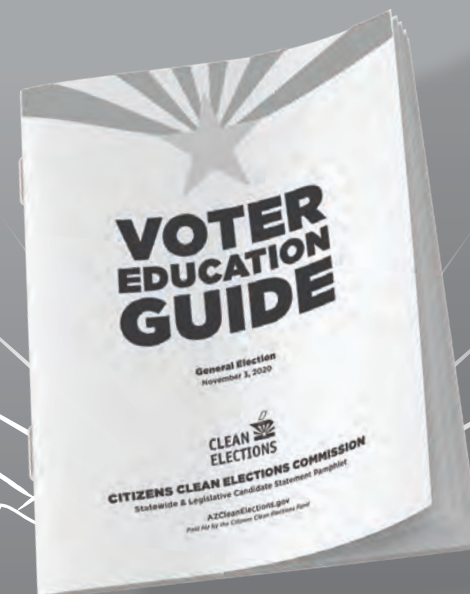
Hathaway shared his inspiration to

write his song "The Garden."

Hathaway was able to get the majority of the recording completed before GCU's campus closed in March, but he had to return to get some things finalized.

The album is available for streaming on iTunes, Google Play, Spotify and Shazam and can be purchased in the Lope Shop and at other locations for \$9.90. 

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