

2014

BREAKING BARRIERS

Abuse
Disability
poverty
mental health
Addiction
unemployment
hope shelter
communication
education
TRUST
social
inclusion

Welcome to Breaking Barriers

About the Breaking Barriers Art Exhibition - 2014 Breaking Barriers Through Art

Breaking Barriers is a special initiative which aims to use creativity to bring the community together. The goal of Breaking Barriers is to create a greater understanding of lived experiences. The exhibition facilitates creative expression that empowers, builds awareness, and facilitates partnerships and collaborations within our community. The Call for Submissions theme is broad for a purpose. In broadening the intervention scope we can include broader aspects of poverty such as resilience, resourcefulness, addictions, disability will serve to allow for greater participation and awareness. This year along with the planning committee, the community partners helping to make this event happen are Family Service Kent and The Cultural Centre.

Poverty is complex and interconnected and exists in every aspect of daily life and thus, initiatives must be comprehensive and dynamic. Barriers need to be acknowledged and addressed. It is important to understand and then create actions to address barriers to service and participation in community life. Barriers can include accessing resources for participation, poverty, transportation, stereotypes and stigma. Breaking Barriers looks to foster valuable connections and networks, provide a platform for expression and empowerment, build awareness about community issues, and to be inclusive.

Studio Sessions were developed in 2013 as part of the Prosperity Roundtable's Breaking Barriers Through Art Exhibition. These sessions were meant to address some of the barriers to participation in the Exhibition; such as, limited access to art resources, transportation and having no experience with art or the art places in our community. The sessions also provide the opportunity to create art for individuals who may be new to artistic experiences. There is no screening process and registration is open to ALL Chatham Kent community members. Participating in the studio sessions does not require submission to the exhibition, it is an option for those who wish to participate. Individuals are unique and are welcome to participate according to their comfort level.

The publication of a Booklet provides souvenirs for artist participants, planning committee members, partners, sponsors and other community members. It is a good way to document the artwork, artist statements, in which to reflect upon and share with others.

The Public Reception offers the opportunity for community-based relationship building and combines expression of lived experience with networking. The Breaking Barriers Art Exhibition seeks to begin a



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conversation about stereotypes and stigma. Awareness is built through myth busting and critical analysis of stigma and discrimination associated with poverty. Through the collaboration and sponsorship of all members of the community awareness is facilitated within a safe supportive space for creative expression

Breaking Barriers is a strengths based initiative. It is important to acknowledge the courage it takes to create something, write a statement about it and go a step further to make it public. Through relationship building the stigma begins to change first within the individual and then within the community. Positive interactions and connections inspire new hope. As knowledge of the human experience is transferred through creative art and artist statements, neighbours begin to understand experiences in new ways that strengthen community togetherness and belonging.

The Breaking Barriers initiative is one of the ways that community partners, United Way of Chatham Kent, The Municipality of Chatham Kent and Ontario Trillium

Foundation support the Prosperity Roundtable project aimed at reducing poverty in Chatham Kent. Services and goods for Breaking Barriers are purchased locally and from locally owned businesses which to help build prosperity within our local community. Through community engagement and promotion of the events, community members are able to advocate for themselves and others while rallying community support. Community involvement with poverty initiatives is enhanced along with knowledge of resources within the community.

This collaboration, relationship-building and advocacy serve to connect Artists to the local art scene and foster opportunities for relationship building, networking and economic opportunities. The artwork and artist statements work to create a local dialogue and build awareness of local poverty issues while highlighting the strengths and talents of people living within our community.

“The Breaking Barriers exhibition creates an understanding of lived experiences. A barrier can be anything that one must overcome to reach a goal, even if the goal is simply to survive.”



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Krista French

① Secrets

This painting represents good and bad secrets and how we lock them inside us. Some use it has a security to protect them from hurt and pain. And others do it because that was how they were raised and told not to tell a soul. For I kept secrets good and bad just like anyone else and if you don't talk about the bad ones, you never know what will happen. So trust yourself and talk to who you feel safe with.

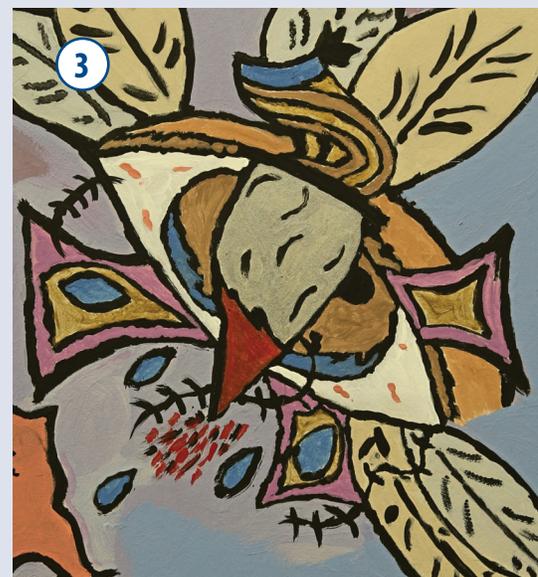
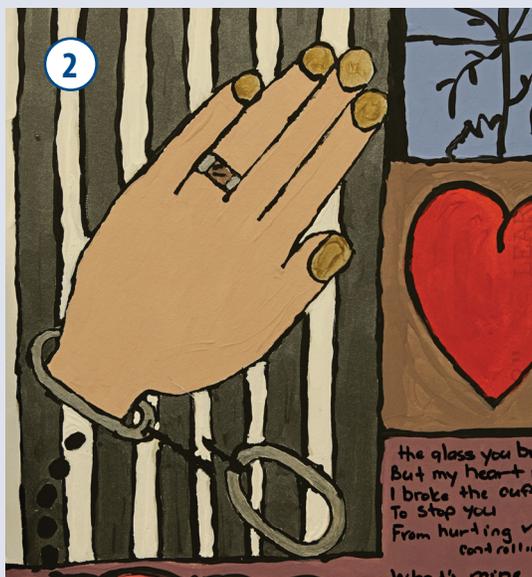
② Breaking Free

This painting represents how someone who is under control in an abusive cycle, is their own person and allowed to break free to live how they feel. For breaking free and living free is best way to be. No pain, hurt, control, and being told what you can do. For no one has the right to boss you around when you are your own person. And no one has the right to hurt anyone male or female.

③ Survivors Blade

This painting represents a major event that occurred in my life. For each symbol from the knife, eye, cross and right down to tears and stitches and a reminder of how something so horrible hurt me at one point but now I have half way overcome that night and growing stronger each day. For I am a person with lots of reasons to be here always and forever. For also this shows how much stronger I am now even as each paint stroke brought back memories. But I kept going and won't stop till the one I can fully heal. For I am one person.

Mixed Medium



Bryan S. Halls

Struggle in the Abyss: The Mind of a Schizophrenic

When I was in my early twenties I was out of control, and refused responsibility for my actions. I was delusional of what was going on around me, and of what I perceived was around me. Irritable, aggressive, and violent are a few words that would describe me. I did not care for my fellow man, or how my actions would affect them, all I knew was that I was right and that was the bottom line. Unannounced to me I had fallen under control of schizophrenia, and it became very difficult to be myself.

I felt the evil upon me and was engulfed in it, yet all the while knowing that there was much good left in me. I did not want to do wrong but my misplaced thoughts drew me away from the good in life and I relished in the wrong. It was like I was possessed by demons, watching what was going on around me but having no control of my actions.



The painting *Struggle in the Abyss: The Mind of the Schizophrenic* depicts an angel struggling in a downward spiral fighting for the good in me with a demon trying to corrupt my soul, lost in the abyss of mental insanity. This depicts the feeling within my heart during the period in my life before medication.

In the end, after years of struggle, the angel won myself a soul to be proud of, and the pain and suffering of deep depression over the events that took place during my dark years eventually faded away. I cannot say I am fully rehabilitated at this point but I can say I am a better man and a wiser soul.

Acrylic Painting

Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Aaron Hinks

Brightness Breaking Through Darkness

The sky will speak to any soul; its verse is not bound to any tongue or dialect. That endless stretch welcomes any gaze and judges none. If ever there is darkness within you cast your eyes upon the night's sky. For it is infinitely deep but wholly unafraid to show its colours; points of light shine proudly and waves of hue brush themselves across its face.

Photography



Robb North

Whispering Wind

The wind comes to her as she gazes down her lane of tiny memories.

Gently flowing through her hair and fluttering her dress to wrap her in the comfort of knowing everything will be as beautiful as she imagined it.

Photography



Michael Ondrovicik

Salvation

Salvation is a sculptural representation of man's ability and aptitude for barbarous cruelty in his almost constant persecution of other men for any perceived reasons.

The middle ages often witnessed innocent victims being charged with heretical crimes including sorcery or witchcraft, crimes against nature, which included homosexuality, transvestism or cross dressing, as well as long list of other sexual aberrations including fellatio. In addition to these was the crime of thinking differently, expounding opinions contrary to the orthodox beliefs and opinions of the Roman Catholic Church.

If you were found guilty of these crimes - either singularly or more often in combination - using cruel and systematic torture the accused were forced into a confession and made to repent their grievous sins. Their sentence was to be "burned alive at the stake", where the fire would purify their souls and they would receive "SALVATION".

It is estimated that over 200,000 victims were murdered by "being burned at the stake." The victims were of all sexes, different religious or political beliefs and backgrounds and from different races. Women were a common target with 40,000 to 50,000 burned as witches.

Persecution and victimization of a wide variety of populations has never stopped.

Target groups past and present are peoples of different sexual orientations (GLBTQ), women, different religious beliefs, and various racial and social groups.

Today we are witness to new laws being brought in around the globe in countries like Russia, Nigeria, and Uganda where persecution of GLBTQ peoples is widespread and condoned.

The barriers of inequality around the world and on all levels must be fought and broken.

www.mkocreative.com

Acrylic Painting



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Joanne Morris

B.A., R.E.C.E., O.A.T.R., OCT. School Specialist in Trauma and Loss artplay.ca

Exploring the Inner Cave of the Self by Breaking Barriers with Art Therapy

In the last couple of years, a documentary was released by Werner Herzog called the Cave of Forgotten Dreams. The focus of this film was an exploration of the cave paintings found in the Chauvet Cave in Southern France. As a response to this film and a book entitled, *The Dawn of Art; the Chauvet Cave; the oldest known paintings in the world*, I started painting cave art imagery.

As an art therapy student in 1993, one premise I recall in my art therapy training was to resist the urge to interpret when a client completed a drawing for me. Recalling the lectures of my professor, Irene Dewdney, who was a pioneer in the field of Art Therapy in Canada and the research of her husband Selwyn Dewdney, an art therapist at Westminister Hospital in London, Ontario, I have arrived at some insight into my own art.

During his appointment as the first art therapist at Westminister Hospital in London, Selwyn also worked as a research associate for the Royal Ontario museum in Toronto. He spent years studying and recording the birch bark scrolls of the Ojibwa. He and Irene spent many hours in a canoe looking for petroglyphs and pictographs in Ontario and Michigan. He eventually became known as the “Father of Rock Art in Canada”, by writing a book called, “*The Sacred Scrolls of the Southern Ojibwa*” and then co-authoring a book entitled, “*Indian Rock Art Paintings of the Great Lakes*”.

Selwyn was interested in the similarity and the relationship between the art of his patients, the rock art markings and the birch bark scrolls. Selwyn resisted interpretation. He felt that the shapes and signs in the drawings of both rock art and his patients should be valued for what they are, private and personal graphic expressions of an individual. The affinity may lie in their significance as personal symbols of the artist. Images can hold many meanings at many different levels and it would take away from their importance if we were to conjecture. Some of the symbols are stereotypes and recognizable, but most will remain a mystery. The Dewdneys believed that only the patient was competent to read his own drawing and that was reinforced by the therapist in the form of taking notes on the side of the drawing as the patient talked.

Symbolically, “The cave is thought to be closely related to the symbolic “heart”, and is often a place where the self and ego unite. Caves can be a secret passageway to an underworld, a place in which to make contact with the powers and forces which will eventually make their way into the world of light.” Carl Jung felt that “the cave represents the security and the impregnability of the unconscious and a symbol of containment.”



Joanne Morris

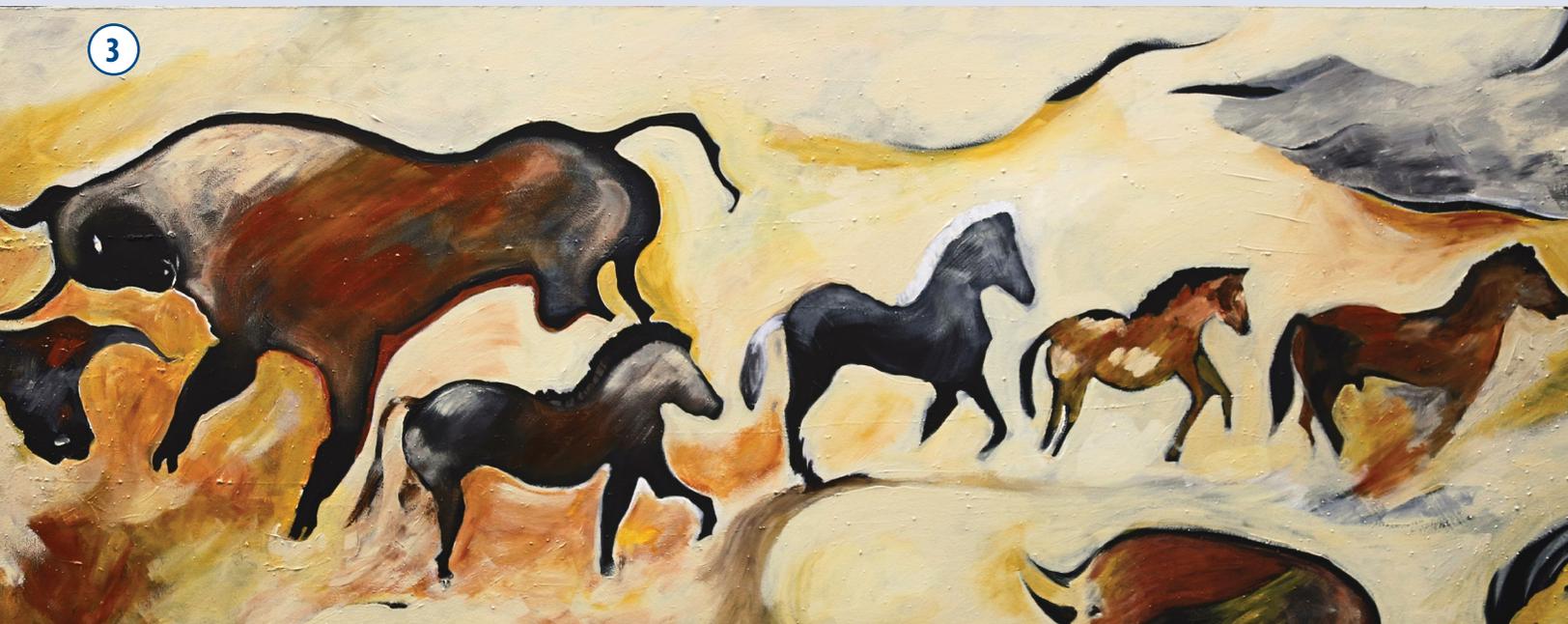
① Cave Art #1

② Cave Art- Female With Spear

③ Cave Art- Horses & Bulls

For myself, I realized that my cave paintings were an expression of venturing into the unknown, breaking barriers and searching -for meaning as I take a new direction in my career as a registered art therapist and a child psychotherapist for the new College of Psychotherapists.

Acrylic



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Heather Cooper

Flow of Feelings

The artwork I draw or paint is reflected on my past experiences. I am a survivor of many things that has caused me pain. I have gotten through it by drawing or painting my feelings or pain down on canvas or paper. My life experiences have made me a better person today because of the choice of breaking my boundary with past pain. I am sharing my paintings with people to let them know they are not alone and I strive to be a thriven to help other people instead of just being a survivor.

Mixed Media

Inside/Outside Story



Etching on Glass Studio Session



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Chad Riley

My Dearly Departed

“Death leaves a heartache no one can heal, love leaves a memory no one can steal.” From a tombstone in Ireland.

In Memory of my sister, Danielle Connie Riley, Sept. 17, 1980 - Jan. 7, 2001

Digital Photography

FATHER'S HANDS - Tree

Father's Hands explores the mystified and the unsolved presence of a creator; the vastness and the void of answers for the natural existence and humankind's desire to understand the natural world and our place within it.

The work illustrates the relation between humans as both the created and the creator; the dual role of humankind as a creature of the natural world yet also the engineer of a synthetic one.

Father's Hands was inspired by my double lung transplant when in 2002 after Cystic Fibrosis ravished my natural born lungs, the hands of new 'creator' entered my body and replaced them with those of another human.

Innovation and modern day medicine have created for me a second life. When I was 25, I met my second father.

Digital Photography on VersaFabric



Jacquelyn Prince Kennedy

School Me

Want to keep a people or a gender helpless? Deny them education. It prevents the individual from understanding laws, comprehending ideas, and stifles independent thought. It is difficult to fathom that in some countries, in this modern day, a woman wanting to be educated puts her life in jeopardy.

Although books are the most obvious representation of learning, one must remember that education comes in many forms. Exposure to other cultures or sometimes just access to social groups will open a mind to new possibilities. Deny anyone access to books and outside knowledge, is akin to locking the soul in a closet.

Words

Words can be a powerful weapon and a soothing comfort. Used negatively, words can destroy, isolate and denigrate. Used positively, words uplift, encourage, and inspire. Choose carefully and thoughtfully. Use your words to wrap others in reassurance, encouragement and praise; it may be the one thing that is preventing someone from stepping into their greatness.

info@fragmentsbyjacquelyn.com

Stained Glass Mosaic



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Nathalie Miller

My Way

When life gets busy and overwhelming I can look at this and envision myself walking there, listening to the breeze rustle the leaves on the trees. The birds chirping as you walk along making you feel welcome. In the distance, the rays of the sun peek through reassuring me of guidance. My mind becomes quiet. My heart feels calm. This is my way of dealing with day to day.

Freedom

“Life has its own hidden forces which you can only discover by living.”
Soren Kierkegaard

Stained Glass Mosaic

natsfinishing@hotmail.com



Hailey Poole

① Turmoil

This drawing represents how hectic society is these days, and how overwhelming it can become. I hope it can serve as a reminder to take time for ourselves once in a while. Relax.

Charcoal

② Darkness Before the Dawn

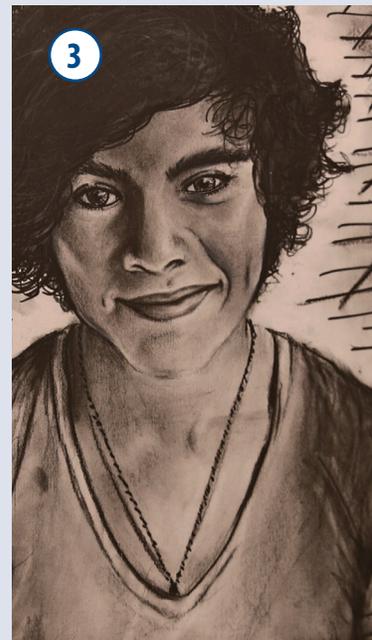
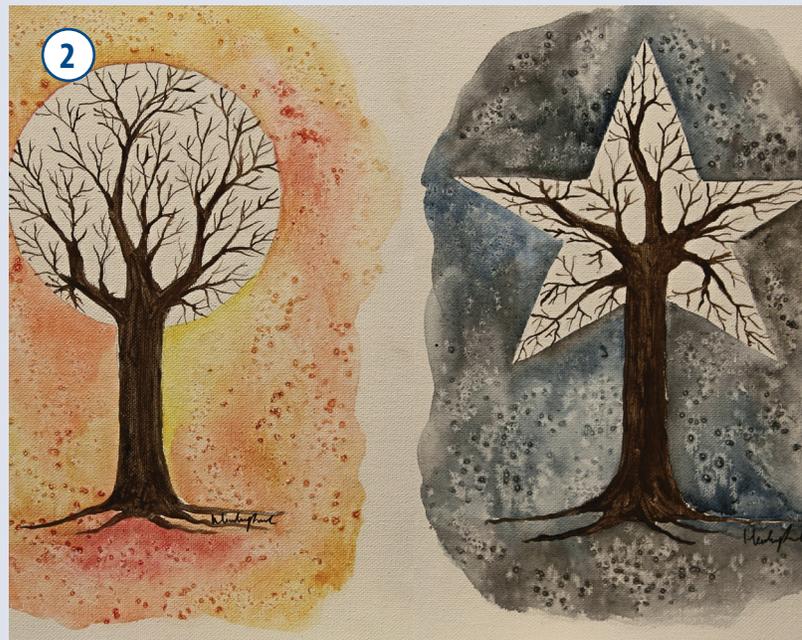
This pair of paintings represents the hardships that come with life, how we sometimes feel like we're in a world of darkness, but that there is always hope and things can always get better. Without dark there is no light.

Water Colour

③ Harry Styles

This piece represents how society puts celebrities on an unrealistic pedestal. The media portrays celebrities as beings of absolute perfection which can cause extreme low self-esteem and disorders like bulimia, anorexia and depression because so many teens strive to be this perfect image that isn't obtainable.

Charcoal



Laban Smith

As I pondered the “Barrier” question, I realized the barrier was myself to all.
So in letting go of my ego I found freedom in all.

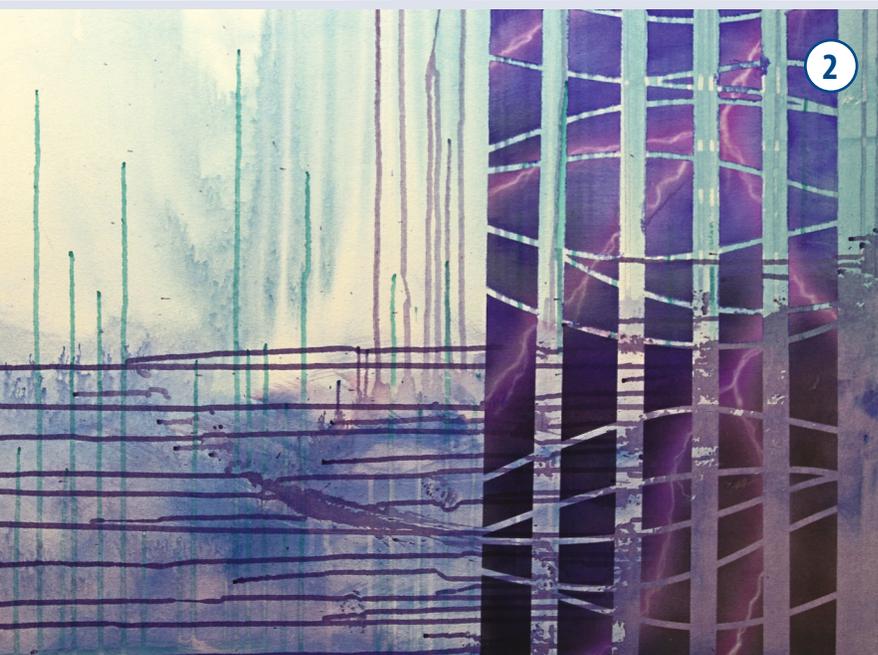
① Humming Bird

Acrylic/Pastel



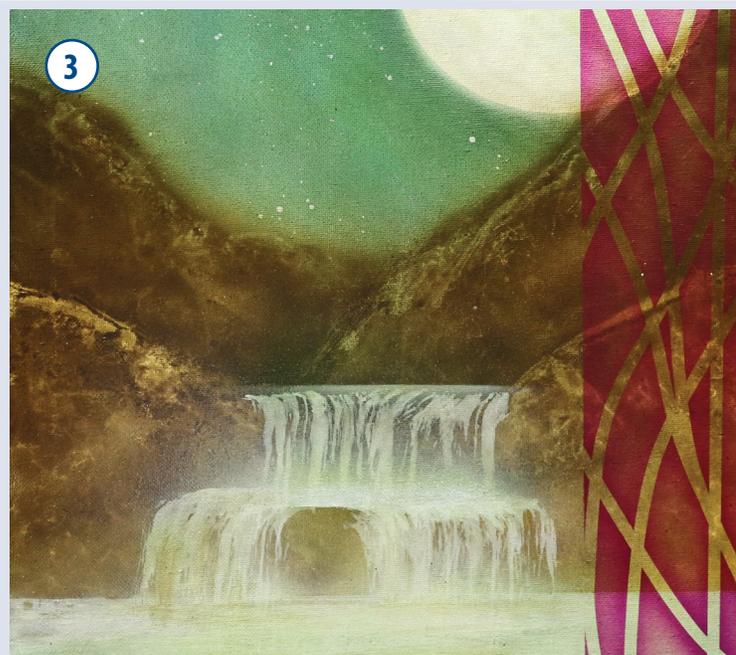
② Lightning

Acrylic



③ Reflections — Moon

Acrylic



Catch 22

There is a standoff between what society deems as acceptable, and what it finds as despicable. We tend to hold those who are able to find steady, well-paying jobs as the high watermark, a symbol of what it is to be successful in this society.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, we have the citizens which society deems unacceptable, unsavory: criminals.

For those who have been rehabilitated and released from imprisonment, there is a constant struggle with finding gainful employment. The stigma of their incarceration is always present, regardless of how they have changed as a person. They are judged, and withheld from being able to improve their lives. And people wonder why there end up being so many repeat offenders.

For some people, this stigma is present from the outset, even without committing a crime. The way they look, the way they dress. Their manner of speaking, or the colour of their skin. They are automatically stereotyped.

They might as well go into a job interview with handcuffs on their wrists.

Charcoal on paper



Georgina Toulouse

① A Hole in My Heart

The barriers I have faced are dealing with the mental distress from the loss of my mother who died fighting cancer. I am a victim of mental distress as I faced the absence of a strong role model in my life. I faced loneliness and emptiness. There was a void, emptiness and a hole in my heart. The emptiness held me hostage mentally, emotionally, dealing with grief, abandonment, hurt and pain of my aching heart. I have been on my healing journey so I can be at peace with myself, so I can be free. So I can paint, create, draw, sew and express myself through my art and love and enjoy life with my family and friends around me.

Monoprint Watercolour on Paper

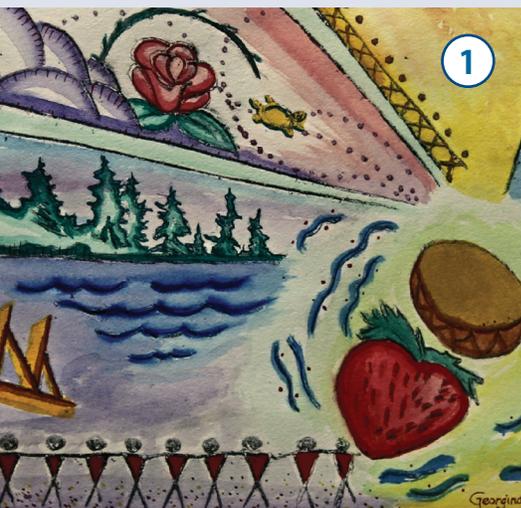
② Who is Going to Fill His Shoes

My Dad was a big part of my life; he helped with my business whenever I needed welding done. He made my metal work. He would say "Just draw it up with dimensions and bring the material. He was my role model. I remember his words: "If you do it right the first time, you don't have to do it again." I miss my dad. Who is going to fill his shoes?

③ Unconditional Love

What it meant to lose my brother. I lost my big brother. He took care of me; he was there whenever I needed help around the shop. My brother was a big part of my creativity. We share our birthdays. I was his birthday present. I miss him dearly. He was committed, dedicated to my well-being. He gave me unconditional love.

Acrylic on Canvas



Raven Kroon

① Free Spirit

This work celebrates and encourages a letting go to enable a more open, beautiful & bold emergence of one's own self. With grace and confidence it accepts the pool that it is placed in & shines beautifully in negation of circumstance.

Acrylic on Panel

② In Silence – my inner self unfolds

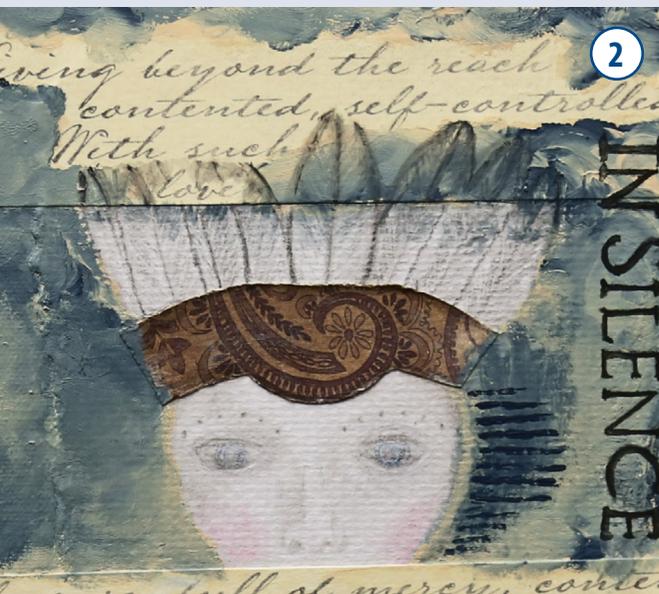
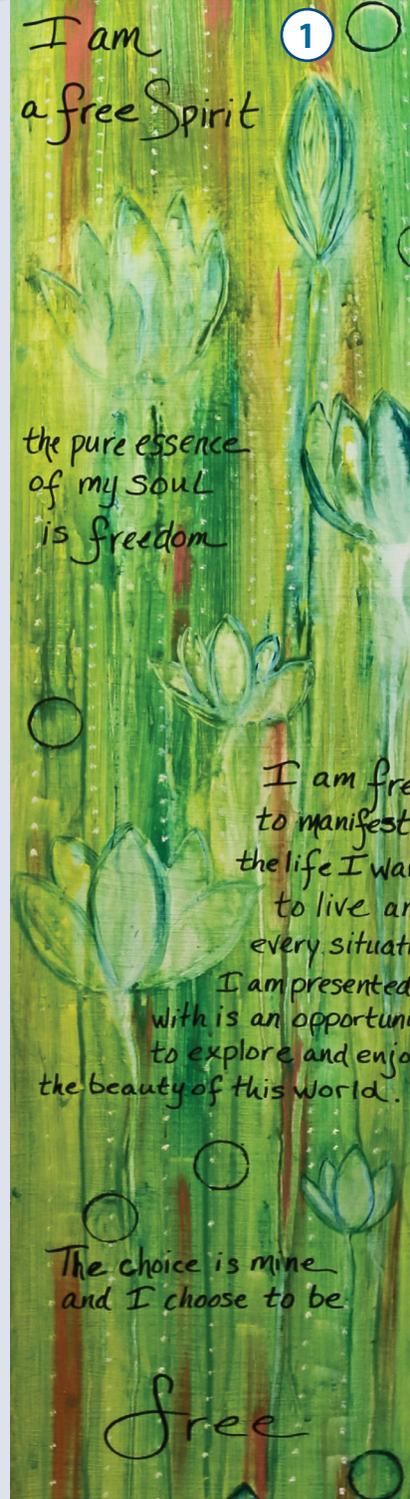
This work deals with the juxtaposition of healthy vs. unhealthy silence. When one is able to overcome the mental and societal barriers associated with solitude & silence, peace, in its purest form, washes through us and opens a heightened sense of awareness.

③ In Silence – I breathe deeply

Keeping silent in crucial situations is often viewed as being weak; however, there is an inner-strength and empowerment that can come from sitting in one's own silence for a time. It is a time for reflection, for boundary setting, and for decision-making.

www.ravenkroon.com

Mixed Medium



Jon-Erik Kroon

Porcelain Flowers in the Blue Room #2

This piece of art visually speaks about violence towards “women”.

The blue hues of the room are a representation of a human body with bruises; physical evidence of abuse. The porcelain plates represent the sacred fragility of Female, yet the broken shards of pottery embody the energy of anger. The assembled, broken shards of smashed dishes, represents the silent frustration of an abused victim.

Violence towards women is a metaphor, like smashing a bouquet of flowers in a beautiful vase. The painting itself silently tells the viewer that by breaking the barrier of violence in any form towards women, would be the act of giving flowers, not giving anger.

Found Objects with Paint

Spirits

“Spirits” is a sculpture, about substance abuse, in its many forms. The Whiskey bottle broken, upon a surface of razor blade cuts, speaks silently of “substance abuse”.

The figure in silver, is the body/soul “high” or drunk, feeling numbed out, trying to stay within the “high state of mind”. The figure is almost melding inside the bottle, whereby the bottle becomes the five feet of personal space. The solid silver coin represents the wasting of financial responsibilities for the pursuit of the substance abuse – state of mind.

Found Object Sculpture



Pauline Moss

① Floating

② Coffee Rings

③ Pretty in Pink

These works represent the pattern and texture I am drawn to in life. Water drops, patterns of light through trees, an old barn, a stormy sky, the list is endless. As a child growing up in several foster homes, nature became my solace and teacher. I try to represent the positive energy I feel as I experience the wonder of something beautiful created.

Pinterest - Little Bandit Design

Acrylic on Canvas



Dominique May

Tree Top

Being a young artist can be challenging at times. Sometimes things don't always work out to be how you planned. Often I find myself struggling to please people without thinking about what I want. The reactions I get are not always good, and not always bad.

While painting Tree Top, I found myself growing and learning as an artist. I faced challenges that I have never faced before, and with the support of my friends and family I overcame them.

Tree Top is a painting where I allowed myself to express my thoughts and feelings. The colors express who I am as an artist and how I think. The tree is my family, who will always be there for me... standing tall through all the good and bad times...

Acrylic on Canvas



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Susan Pettit

Time Worn Thread of Sanity

This painting is the result of a dream sequence that I had after a recent, dark time of depression.

In my dreams, there is often a bay horse and here, it symbolizes my spirit or “heart.” Nate is the model here, situated around the colours of the St. George Subway station in Toronto, a stinking, crushingly busy intersection of underground traffic.

In this dream, I was leading my spirit away from a deep dark Subway where strange things had happened to us. It was not a nice place & we were glad to have found our way out by looking obversely for the way in, though my spirit couldn't resist a look back at the trials we'd been through.

We are connected by a frail, oft re-knotted, silver thread. This represents my tenuous hold on sanity over the years.

Mixed Medium



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

Art Resources in Chatham-Kent

Thames Art Gallery

www.chatham-kent.ca/thamesartgallery

The Cultural Centre

www.chatham-kent.ca/CulturalCentre

ArtSpace

www.facebook.com/ARTspaceCK

St. Clair College

Art Programs and Courses - www.stclaircollege.ca

Sign up for the arts E-BLAST

Contact sonyab@chatham-kent.ca to subscribe.

The Paper Pickle Co.

Art Supplies for; scrapbooking, stamping, invitations

44 Fourth Street, Chatham

Phone: 519-351-5220

thepaperpickle@gmail.com

A.L.L. For Kids

Helps with the cost of registering children into recreational activities in Chatham-Kent. The A.L.L. stands for Activities, Lessons, and Leisure.

www.chatham-kent.ca/ChildrensServices

Phone: 519-351-8573

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smARTstudio

Fine art classes for adults & children

55 Forest St, Unit C., Chatham ON

Phone: 519-365-2472

smartstudiochathamkent@gmail.com

Art & Play Therapy

For children with special needs

www.artplay.ca

Phone: 519-627-2720

artplay@sympatico.ca

Active Lifestyle Centre

Art Classes and programs for senior members 50 and over

20 Merritt Ave., Chatham ON

www.activelifestylecentre.org/arts.htm

suewilliams.alc@ciaccess.com

Mental Health Network

Art With Brian

www.mhnck.com/calendar.html

Phone: 519-351-3100



Highlighting lived experience... building an inclusive Chatham-Kent

What We Heard in 2013



*"Amazing show.
I loved every moment"*

*"What a great way to
break down stereotypes"*

"There is so much diversity in the art"

"Breaking Barriers felt like home"



*"There are very few places as
welcoming as Breaking Barriers"*



Breaking Barriers Planning Committee

Chair - Polly Smith, Program Manager; MOCK: Employment and Social Services

Secretary & Treasurer - Danielle Shaw, Co-ordinator; Prosperity Roundtable of Chatham-Kent

Member - T.J. Brown, Artist Instructor & Curator; Prosperity Roundtable

Member - Beth Kominek, Health Promoter; Chatham-Kent Community Health Centre

Member - Sarah Fraleigh, Youth Violence Prevention Worker; Chatham-Kent Women's Centre

Member - Julie Hinks-North, Child Protection Case Worker; Chatham-Kent Integrated Children's Services

Member - Grayson Lenover, Artist; Today Not Tomorrow

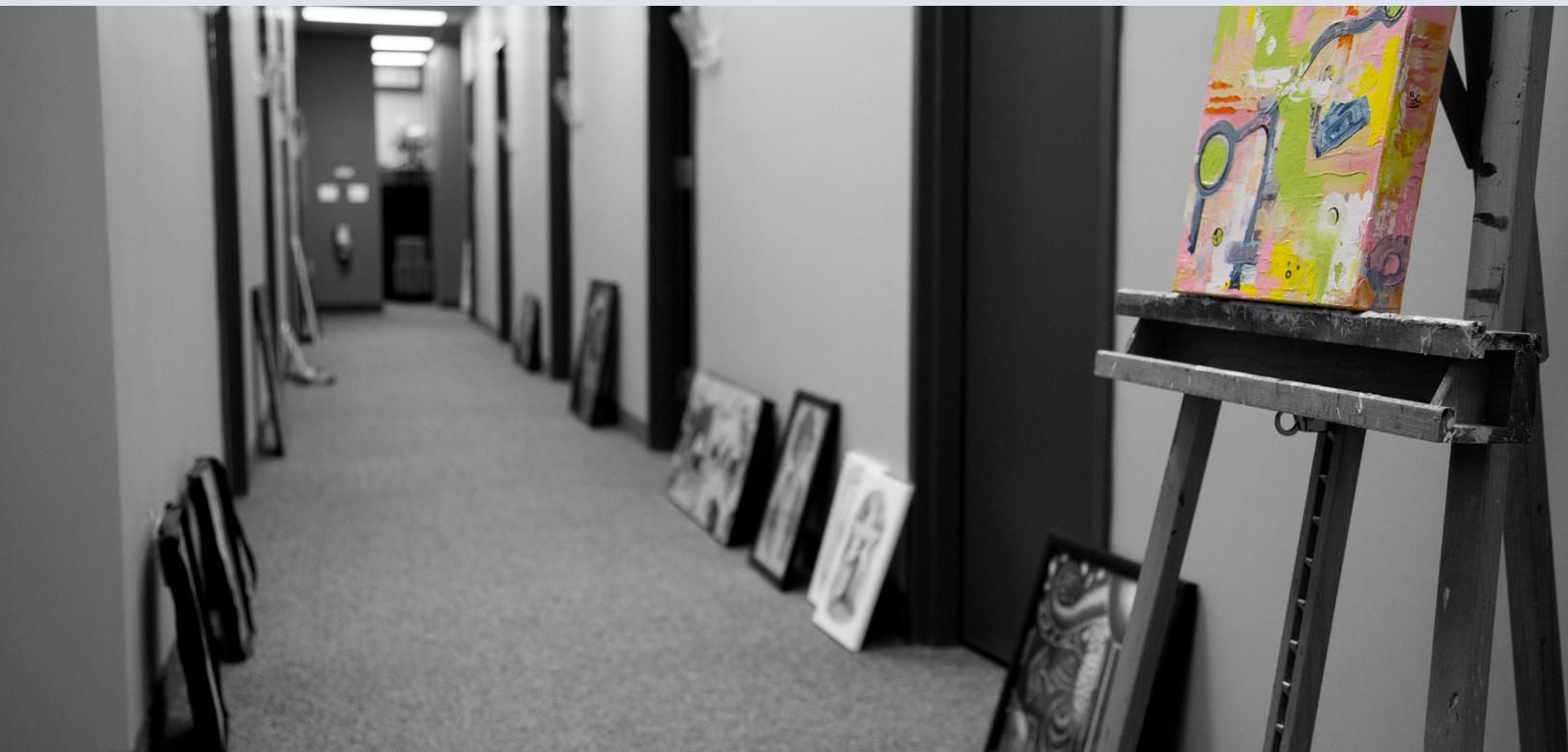
Member - Nicole Lucier, Occupational Therapist; Chatham-Kent Health Alliance

Member - Melanie Prince, Co-ordinator; Chatham-Kent Drug Awareness Council

Member - Laban Smith, Artist Instructor; The Cultural Centre; Breaking Barriers Studio Sessions

Member - Alysson Storey, Manager of Culture; Municipality of Chatham-Kent

Member - Andrew Tompsett, PR & Marketing; Tompsett Marketing Consulting



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Empower
Friends

collaboration

HOPE

employment

Believe

communication

honesty

TRUST

social

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