

A STIRRING

Jan 2020 ~ May 2020
4001 N Ravenswood #204c
Awakenings Gallery

This program is partially supported by a CityArts Grant from the city of Chicago Department of Cultural & Special Events, and the Illinois Arts Council Agency



A STIRRING

For ten years, Awakenings has been a home for the hidden becoming visible. We create a space for anger, pain, myth, truth, and for stark details to coexist with joy and renewed life.

Awakenings begins our tenth anniversary with the internal landscape of a survivor. The internal spaces after trauma can feel stuck or frozen and are so often hidden. All of our artists are breaking a silence through visual expression, and by doing so, are moving and shifting their story of survival. Re-remembering the past is about changing your narrative of the events, altering your view of reality, and reshaping your identity. Through photography, paint, film, and mixed media these artists sift through emotions and fragmentations that stir within after trauma.

Each artist has created their own path of healing and shows us how the internal landscape can feel stuck, until eventually, with internal safety and compassion, we observe, feel, accept, and integrate. Through revealing the internal landscape on a canvas, a screen, or etched into wood, something begins to move. What was frozen can begin to stir and change for the artist and the viewer.

We invite each visitor to pause and ask: what is stirring inside and ready for change?

MIGUEL BARROS

Torn People
I, II, III, IV

Four paintings that represent when people are torn down through the terrible act of violence...

Etching
Xylogravure
Painting on
Emergency Blanket
On Paper

It is almost impossible to know, even try to understand those horrible moments, those minutes, those hours, that eternity, that people experience in this kind of horror, the crime a sexual violence...

That's why I've done these four paintings, like the four elements that sustain life, those puzzle pieces falling down, like breaking people from the matrix of their lives, the victims, represented in all those puzzled pieces it works like the metaphoric idea about the broken body and spirit...

This suffering is suspended in an imaginary world as a scenario of a dream, or a fantasy, like if it was the only support that the victim can imagine, like the only way that they can reach and be a part of that unsupportable moment...

Perhaps after that monstrosity of sexual violence, the only thing that rests in their heart and soul is a helping hand that comes throughout this imaginary scenario, and hopefully those hands can put all the torn pieces of the victims in a certain peace and serenity, if that is possible to reach after the terrible experience, ...and at the end of the day the healing happens like a miracle...

Bio

Miguel Barros was born in Lisbon in the year of 1962 and has triple citizenship: Canadian, Portuguese and Angolan.

In 2014, Miguel moved from Luanda, Angola in Africa, to Calgary, Alberta, where he is currently living. Now he is a Permanent Resident in Calgary. The exposure to a whole new Continent has already trigger a new inspirational process that is clearly distinct from his past experiences, though quite complementary.

In 1975, Miguel's family moved to Brazil for a year. This experience made Miguel decide to invest his education in the Arts.

He holds a degree in Interior Architecture and Design, from IADE (Lisbon, Portugal), 1984. He has designed china for Vista Alegre, after winning the National Design Award in Portugal in 1984.

From 1987 till 1999, Miguel has worked in an institution whose goal was to help drug addicts in their recovering process. Miguel was in charge of the Painting and Drawing Atelier where he combined his artistic and human relation skills to create programs to help the recovery of the participants. During this period, India has drawn Miguel imagination and inspiration. Moved to this motivation, Miguel has made several trips to India, spending their long periods of time on each of his trips. As a consequence, the East has become a recurrent subject in his paintings.

In 2008, Miguel decided to move to Angola, Africa, where he has lived 6 years. This African experience, very close to his family roots, created a new cycle in his professional career, again becoming a significant presence in his paintings.

VERONICA WONG

This is me past and present

*Painting
Multi-media*

This is a portrait of girl of past and present. The white side shows her past, her world void of color because it came crushing down when the love she should have experienced turned into a life changing trauma that robs away all the beautiful colors of life. Her world feels like void and the pain and shame she hides within. But there is some semblance of hope that she will fight to survive this abuse, the pain the shame, the uncleanness she fills inside.

On the other side is the present. She is alive, her world is now full with color and she finds herself again, find herself worth and healing. She found her passion, love in her life and in love and in art and God.

Destruction and forgiveness & healing

*Painting
Multi-media*

The fire represents my struggle with unforgiveness and anger not to just the abuser but the people who mean to protect a little girl but did not. It burned inside of me for years, the shame I felt and the pain of betrayal and distrust I felt for years. But I cross the black which was the darkness I was in to the healing water and power of God. It is through Him that I began my process of healing. His purifying water cleanses me and gave me hope to recover and gave me the forgiveness I bestow to the abuser who never was brought to justice.

Bio

Veronica is a self-taught artist based in Austin, Texas. She never attended art school but her unique art form has attracted quite a lot of attention from art galleries in New York, Arizona, California and Texas. She explores details of lines

and dots using a combination of various media. The lines and dots are repeated to create unique flowers, foliage, corals and living creatures that all come together to invoke all five senses that connect us with the colorful, vibrant and complex world we all live in. She uses this technique simply not to paint a landscape or seascape but to describe the enormity of the beauty and the harmony that exists between us and the world that surrounds us. She draws inspiration from her life experiences in the countries she lived in: Australia, Israel, Canada, New Zealand, Denmark and Austin. The vast array of designs, culture, colors, and the stories behind them had great influence on what and how she paints. She is considered a mixed media composite artist who uses mostly acrylic and posca pens. Sometimes also use alcohol ink, resin, textile liner, grog metal paint, art clay and even shoe polish and egg shells to add more depth and emotions to her art form.

Veronica's journey in art actually began in theatre in Singapore where she spent a significant amount of time creating costumes and props in theater and dance. Her art has been showcased in major exhibitions in Texas and participated in group exhibition in Franklin Place TriBeCa, Gallery 104 "Armory Art week in TriBeCa" New York City. One of her art pieces was also featured in the Texas Capitol Hill picked by Rep John Bucy III as the Artist of the Month in March 2019, in conjunction with International Women's days and Women's History.

CHRISTIE PAGE

**The Adventures of
Ghost Girl;
Bee
Ok
Her, us
Fetch
Fire & Ice
Apple a day**

Ghost Girl's original origin is a combination of the sexual assaults of her childhood as well as the rape she faces as an adult.

Ghost Girl learns to adapt to each situation by utilizing the coping skills she has picked up long the way, making her incredibly adaptive.

Ghost Girl has no color, no set form except a black cloak. The black cloak is an homage to the women who were burned at the Salem witch trials, as well as women of tan, brown and black skin who have been marginalized throughout history.

*Watercolor
Painting*

My goal for Ghost Girl is to fight the stigma of mental illness. To finally normalize the way that survivors of sexual trauma are viewed and to give young people everywhere someone to look up to.

Bio Author of A Practical Guide to Forgiveness from an Impractical Survivor, Oh Go Fix Yourself and She was the Stuff of Stars, Christie Page was born in Falmouth, Massachusetts. She lived in the Nobska Point Lighthouse with her mother and father who were stationed there as a result of his service in the Coast Guard. Shortly after, the family made their way to West Palm Beach, Florida where she grew up continuing her love affair with the ocean. She began painting after a sexual assault in September of 2017 and The Adventures of Ghost Girl was born. Ghost Girl is the world's first mental health super hero. Her mission is to end the stigma of mental illness following trauma and be a beacon of hope for others.

SOPHIA ETLING

Insufficient Evidence

*Multi-media
Case evidence
dis-and re-assembled
on canvas*

In "Insufficient Evidence" I recreate the tumult I experienced during my criminal and Title IX investigations for intimate partner violence. The work mixes shredded Title IX and police reports with a collection of love letters, personal artifacts, and witness statements that tell the story of an abusive relationship and its fallout. I reassemble the relationship narrative on canvas in an attempt to regain the control that was stripped of me by sexual/physical violence, as well as institutional harm inflicted by the criminal legal system. The chaotic mood of the work and the lack of direct focal point reflects the chaos and directionlessness of the reporting and investigative processes. It is up to the viewer to draw their own conclusion on whether or not the violence was "real" or the evidence "sufficient."

Bio

Sophia Etling is an interdisciplinary artist and craftswoman based in Chicago, IL.

NICOLE FORAN

The Dray A group of squirrels is called a dray. Squirrels are not social animals so they rarely gather. They are defensive, territorial, and will protect their homes with violence, if necessary. This piece was created with the intention of juxtaposing my youthful fantasies against my experiences. My recollections are framed through a lens of social constructs and emotions. By rendering scenes from my memory without reliance on or obligation to the relative 'truths' of photography, I take ownership and responsibility for my past. Through my work, I navigate societal perception, gender norms, and expectations. This piece is part of a larger narrative framing my journey to forgive, and to find forgiveness.

Woodcut

Bio Nicole Foran (MFA, University of Cincinnati) is a mixed media artist and educator based out of Murfreesboro, Tennessee. Her work investigates memory, moral reasoning, and identity. Nicole's work is exhibited internationally and she has upcoming solo exhibitions in Sheridan, Wyoming and Mt. Pleasant, Michigan. Several of her pieces are also to be included in small group shows in Visalia, California, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin. When she is not in the studio, Nicole is snuggling her two Boston Terriers or going on hikes with her family.

MASHA SZABO

My Turn

Multi-media

My creative work heavily involves collage, as I believe it is one of the most accessible forms of art. It does not require the expensive materials that a lot of art forms do. All of my collages are primarily made with found materials, such as free pamphlets/magazines and product packaging. Thematically, I focus on my personal experiences with mental illness and sexual assault.

"My Turn" juxtaposes the horror inflicted upon those who experience sexual assault with the nonchalance of the assaulter(s). More specifically, my experience with gang rape. The images of horror contrast those that look innocent and infantile. The phrase "My turn," is reminiscent of children fighting over a toy the way that the men were fighting over the use of their "living sex doll."

Bio

Masha Szabo is an Editorial Assistant at Roof Books. She enjoys making art, writing poetry, and ruining car rides by playing music that no one else likes. She lives in Brooklyn. You can find her on Instagram @mash.8107.

APRIL LOVE PHOTOGRAPHY APRIL ADAMS

Medusa 1 This three piece series titled Medusa is a series
Medusa 2 involving fellow sexual assault survivors. My
Medusa 3 inspiration for these pieces came from the tale
of Medusa, and how the story speaks to the
Photography strength and unity survivors share after going
through these experiences.

In Greek mythology, Medusa was a victim of rape who ended up becoming a monster. The myth can be seen as a parallel to the tragic experience that is had by victims of sexual assault and violence. Like Medusa, women who experience this suffer the betrayal, psychological and physical violation, and misplaced blame for the crimes that are committed against them. But also like Medusa, they carry within themselves the ability to rise above these violations and attacks; to draw on their strength and live a life centered on creative renewal instead of destruction.

Bio April Adams of April Love Photography is a portrait and fine arts photographer who lives in Northwest Indiana. Self-taught, she has been a professional photographer for over fifteen years. In her early work she began by photographing concepts in abandoned buildings. April later moved on to photographing weddings and portraits for clients although she has recently returned to focus on photography as a fine art through conceptual work. April finds inspiration through music, current events, and activism. Through photography, she strives to evoke emotion and thought - photos that tell a story and connect with the viewer on a personal level.

ISABELLA SCOTT

Side Effects

1, 2, 3, 4, 5

Photography

These photos were taken because every time I would try to speak I would bite my tongue. These photos were taken because for months I felt like an object. These photos were taken because of the fear and confusion. The side effects of that year just followed me and weighed me down. The artistic expression expressed in these photos helped set me free and learn to love myself again.

Bio

Isabella Scott was born in Winnebago, Illinois. She currently lives and works in Chicago, Illinois. Isabella works in a wide range of mediums. Her primary focus is pen and ink and photography. Isabella is heavily influenced by the surreal. She loves creating a world where she combines fact and fantasy. The photographs are all self portraits. These self portraits demonstrate the beauty, power, and grace that Isabella has grown into through years of self discovery.

TACIE JONES

Burn and Bury This

*Cyanotype
photograph
and etched glass*

Tacie Jones' work explores facets of memory and interconnection in a postdigital world. Her research focuses around impermanence, trauma and memory; ritual and healing; the individual's part in community resilience; and consciousness and spiritual practice in contemporary art. *Burn and Bury This*, is a cyanotype photograph overlaid with engraved glass. The work is from the ongoing ritual performance series *The Ecology of Shame*. The series uses bio-art, text-based art, photography and digital video to attend to trauma-healing and the often-unbridled subconscious shame of unresolved childhood abuse. *The Ecology of Shame* is centered around three seasonal rituals that guide one through transformative elemental immersion. The first iteration of these rituals took place between 2018-19 that were documented through a series of digital photographs.

Burn and Bury This is derived from the first *Bone Ritual*, where after consuming the rib meat of the last animal Tacie and her partner had raised for sustenance, she was overcome by a deep kinship with the female animal that triggered a trauma memory. She kept the bones to contemplate their shared impermanence and the ways in which their lives had been connected. After honoring the bones for some time, Tacie strung them together and burned them in a ceremonial full moon fire performance. This act signified the symbolic release of the residues of trauma, transforming the remnants of the physical body into matter and releasing held karma through a bond of reconciliation.

A cyanotypes series was created during post-ritual photography shoots to mark the transformation of each experience. Each photograph was reflectively constructed from the documentation of the ritual processes. In *Burn and Bury This*, the charred and burnt bones from *Bone Ritual* are strung across the artist's bare back. The ritual objects and materials are symbolically integrated with the body to signify cohesion with nature and acts of ancestral reconciliation. The overlaid glass etchings amplify the gesture of interconnection with the transcendent fragility of nature.

Bio Tacie Jones is an artist working in digital video, media installation, sculpture, and photography. Her recent work centers around women's ancestral trauma, breaking familial cycles of abuse, ritual reconciliation of trauma, and media's potential to provide reflexive self-witness in the healing process.

Tacie holds a BFA in Painting from George Mason University, a Masters of Research in Creative Practices from the Glasgow School of Art, and an MFA from Virginia Tech. She is currently working towards a PhD in Human-Centered Design at Virginia Tech and lives with her foodsmith partner Ashton and their two pups in the mountainous countryside of Blacksburg, Virginia.

ASHLEY GILES

Replay Animation
Replay is a digital 2D animation created in Animate and Photoshop. The film depicts my PTSD flashbacks that I suffer with on a daily basis. My experience in sexual assault gives me flashbacks of violence, the feeling of helplessness, and the descent into self destruction. This film means a lot to me because not only does it communicate a silent struggle within me that I have a difficult time talking about, it also was a creative way to come face to face with my inner demons, and move past them.

Bio
Ashley Giles' urge to create has been there her whole life. From getting in trouble for doodling on tests, to designing the class T-shirts as well as the senior Prom for her senior year. Initially she was a Surrealist painter. However as she went through her teenage years, she increasingly became involved in women's rights, voting inequality, and the effects of climate change. Being born and raised in Maine, she was a witness to the yearly changes in tidal rivers and marshlands that affect our biggest export: shellfish. With this background, she went to the city of Boston for college, and to see why her fellow Americans weren't making our rapidly changing planet a priority. While being shocked by the amount of litter, pollution, and flooding in the coastal city, she also came to learn more intimately of the arguments of voter's rights, racism, economic segregation, and women's rights. Her college at Lesley University was a hub of activism. These topics of humanism populate her art whether intentionally or subconsciously. Animation is a philanthropic art form. It captures not only motion, but a lust for

A Stirring

life distilled on every frame. She tends to combine traditional drawing mediums with modern techniques such as rotoscoping or tweening. In an age of overwhelming access to knowledge, it's difficult to bring attention to a subject. Her art is meant to poise a question or raise awareness to a subject. A slice of life that allows audiences to reflect on reality.

JOYCE CADE - HITCHYE

After Drying my Tears

*Mixed Media
and Audio*

My artwork takes a critical view of cultural, political, and social issues. I find myself continually returning to those aspects that are often hidden or misrepresented in the "official" recordings for posterity. I have always been attracted to the 'common person' who was often represented in the 1930's films with such powerful actors such as Jimmy Stewart, Sidney Poitier and strong willed females like Kathryn Hepburn. This person dared to fight for what was right against insurmountable odds.

The poem I presented "After Drying my Tears". I am hoping to reach the audience by identifying with the narrative of a sexual assault survivor. This survivor likens herself to a Greek hero and the journey they take to heal.

"After Drying my Tears" is part of a new chapbook I am working on as a collaboration to not only enlighten but to teach about sexual assault, its detection, and how to protect your family from human trafficking particularly sexual trafficking. I am currently looking into utilizing multi-media for a conference on human trafficking and sexual assault. If I can reach one person with my bibliotherapy than that is one less person that is taken out of the clutches of suicide. My goal is to help people adapt and heal. Hopefully, they can assist others to heal as well.

Bio

Joyce Cade-Hitchye is an honorably discharged disabled Veteran. Joyce's specialties in writing is poetry, spoken word, and novellas. Joyce's work has been published in local magazines

and Joyce has won local contests. Joyce has a degree in Nuclear Medicine and is working on a degree in applied psychology with an emphasis on neuropsychology and art therapy (bibliotherapy). Joyce has participated in events such as the 2017 Flint Festival of Writers. Joyce is a former member of Toastmasters International Monterey Bay. Joyce is on the Genesee County Human Trafficking Task Force (GCHTTF) committee which focuses on education, events, and training pertaining to human trafficking. Joyce also works with other organizations pertaining to sexual assault.

LINDA NESS

Moonlit Cartwheels

Painting

As a gift and celebration for my inner child, I have created this image which includes children playing, with no fear of the night.

Tightrope Romance

Painting

With a promise of love joining the world of two souls, is it the thread of trust or the courage of the lover that is being tested? It is even more of a challenge when the deep scars serve as protection as well a barrier to intimacy in a relationship.

Bible Reading

Painting

After dinner we would read the Bible while mom would leave or tend to my youngest sisters, leaving us alone with dad. We would take turns read as we stood next to dad. For years, I felt the shame of that experience as if somehow I should have done something to make it NOT happen. As the other kids sat around the table listening, HE chose to fondle the reader and masturbate while the Bible was being read. It took seeing that scene on a canvas for me to witness the truth and release a mountain of shame. I was not to blame. I had no guilt. HE WAS THE JERK! HE WAS THE HYPOCRITE!

Vacation with Dad

Painting

In 1965, Dad and the older kids took a cross-country vacation to California. During this trip, we didn't camp or stay in motels; instead, we all slept curled up in the station wagon. As it turned out, three kids would sleep in the back seat and one unfortunate person would have to sleep in the front with dad. Dad took advantage of that opportunity to fondle the child while he would masturbate. I hated him and how it made me feel. Until that painting I carried the shame of that memory. Again, the painting showed the truth. We were betrayed and he took advantage of us. The disgrace and SHAME lies on his shoulders.

- Father Knows Best** What irony the media brought to our home. Respect and love were never felt for a man who dishonored the role of father, parent or human.
Painting
- Dead Limbs** A monster lived in our home. In violent rage, he attacked and seized what he wanted. The soulless madman was not human. To survive, the child spirit learned to numb and deaden the body during the torturous horrors.
Painting
- Rageaholic** The seeds of hate and anger are symbolically reflected in this image. I inherited the seeds of these hurtful, evil spirited monsters and their slimy, perverted companions from my abusive, tyrannical father. As I became an adult, it was painful to witness these monsters of rage explode from me, hurting those closest to me. The words and emotions that came out of my mouth seemed beyond my control, coming from deep inside, exploding at their will – not mine. By creating and understanding this image, I am able to recognize these ugly parts of myself. I see that although they are inside, they are NOT me. I need not fight, react to them or give them power. By examining these scary parts, I learned to recognize the triggers that give these monsters power and how to pull the plug so they no longer control my emotions or life.
Painting
- The Beat Goes On** The fear of domestic violence was a constant threat. We witnessed Mom get battered many times. This painful image has helped me understand the need for change to abusive patterns of expressing anger and not accepting the role of victim or becoming an abuser myself.
Painting
- Unfinished Nightmare** The haunting feelings and images of recurring nightmares are captured in this image. Examining these frightful memories has helped me to understand and release the energy of that repressed trauma.
Painting

MONIKA PESZEK

Hang In There

Painting

There were periods in my life when I was in a really dark and painful place. I did not want to see or talk to anybody. People can say the most inappropriate things, often with the best possible intentions.

Why can't you just get over it?

It happened so long ago ... let it go.

Stop living in the past and think about your future!

And my personal favorite:

Just hang in there...

Just hang in there?! Really?! Is that all I have to do? Well, I have been hanging in there for quite a while and it is no fun...

I hope when people look at this they'll be reminded not to give advice, but to show love and compassion.

The Monster The anger, the screaming, the monster inside of me. Where did it come from? For years, I didn't want to understand. Denial is protection. I simply wasn't ready to face who I was angry with, and why. And who I wanted to hurt, and why.

Us The little girl inside of me thinks that because I'm an adult I will protect her. But just in case, she wants thicker walls and more locks for her safe little world. So when she gets scared, I have to get bigger and heavier. Because she's scared, I become colder, sarcastic, proud, and aggressive, so that people stay away.

The Mask of Normal I told my story once to someone who knew me—or at least she thought she did. She said, "You don't look like someone who's been abused." I learned to hide my pain. I wear a mask of "normal" because you can't function in our society without one. Nobody wants to look at my pain. I don't blame them. I don't like to look at it either.

TY

Invisible Girl

Painting

Art has always been my safe place.

As a kid, when things got bad, I would sit behind my bed in secret and draw scenic places all over the walls. I had been told not to draw the unpleasant things, but, rather, how I wanted the world to be. Today, I still use painting as a way of escape, but instead of blocking things out with my work, I use it to encourage the release of negativity from my past.

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Upcoming Events

- February** Flash Tattoo Fundraiser
Trauma Informed Yoga
- March** Reading Night
- April** *Gallery of Sounds* performance
Making Visible Fundraiser
- May** *Awakened Voices* Issue #10 launch event
A *Stirring* Closing Reception
- June** New Exhibit Opening

For more details, follows us on social media or check our website.

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