

EXHIBIT 302.0

A commentary by
individuals who have
experienced the stigma
of being labeled, as
well as the stress and
pain of illness.

DECEMBER 4TH, 2020
THROUGH
JANUARY 31ST, 2021

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954.746.2055 ▲ 9MusesArtCenter.org

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INTRODUCTION

Since the DSM's first iteration in 1952 which categorized homosexuality as a mental illness, Mental Health and LGBTQ+ identities have been inextricably linked. Due to the trauma that LGBTQ+ persons are exposed to through abuse and discrimination in a homophobic society, we cannot divorce the conversation of LGBTQ+ integration without a conversation on mental health. This is especially imperative considering "compared to people that identify as straight, LGBT individuals are 3 times more likely to experience a mental health condition" ("LGBTQ," nami.org).

We know that there are mental tolls to being an LGBTQ+ person in a homophobic or intolerant society. That these traumas can create life-long mental health issues that can be difficult to overcome. As The Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion reports: "Discrimination against LGBT persons has been associated with high rates of psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, and suicide" ("Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender health"). As a mental health and wellness organization, we have seen the effects of this trauma first hand among some of our LGBTQ+ members.

The substantial barriers to care already faced by LGBTQ+ people has continued long-standing health disparities. "Approximately 8% of LGBT individuals and nearly 27% of transgender individuals report being denied needed health care outright" ("Health Care Refusals Harm Patients," National Women's Law Center). When combined with the paucity of free/low cost and available mental health resources, this discrimination becomes part of a larger mental health crisis for LGBTQ+ individuals.

9MusesArtCenter has a documented history in community mental health engagement. Members benefit from the education, support groups, group activities, art courses, and sense of comradery. Members who were isolated, become integrated. They develop confidence and gain a sense of empowerment.

While 9MusesArtCenter is already an inclusive space, 9muses: Iris Year sets a precedent that will vocally reaffirm its commitment to all members of the community, but especially to LGBTQ+ who have already faced barriers to support. By providing LGBTQ+ programming, we have been able to engage people who may be weary of seeking public aid due to this history of discrimination. It also engages our existing population in a more accepting and tolerant dialog to spark change and encourage integration.

9 MUSES ART CENTER
would like to
SINCERELY THANK
all of the
ARTISTS
who shared their
EXPERIENCE
in the form of art

EXHIBIT 302.0 PARTICIPANTS:

RICH ALDRET
CHRISTIAN DOERING
KEITH MORRIS
CHRIS NERVI
NICOLE STORRS
KATIE LEONARD
JORGE ALARCON
AXEL MARTINEZ
JILLIAN BLAKE
MARK FLANDERS
DARREN THOMPSON
CHRIS YOCULAN

RICH ALDRET

GROWING BY DEFYING

Paper/Watercolor

20X30

\$125.00

This piece reflects my growth throughout my life despite many setbacks, mental health issues and their consequences, struggling with my identity in the LGBTQ community, and pushing back on a world that wants to pin me down and demand that I conform to what society wants me to be.

There will always be opposing forces to people who are different. Those forces leave shadows of labeling, discrimination, hypocrisy, and prejudice. History shows that despite attempts to marginalize and destroy us we keep rising. I want to celebrate that I am here, that something always wants me to be bold and fearless.

I see it as the continuum of history, where we have been and where we might go. The path of time.

I wanted to express the constancy of forces that may cause me to feel pain, and at times, loss. I have pushed back and continue to make the best life I can.



CHRISTIAN DOERING

YOUR BEAUTY INSIDE

Ceramic Sculpture

6X6X18

\$45.00



This sculpture expresses what we show the world and our true selves inside our heads and our hearts. The fish, and birds, and butterfly inside this piece are colorful in contrast to the gray outside. The blue interior represents the water and air that all things need to support life. The animals inside the piece change form as they grow, sometimes drastically, like the crawling caterpillar compared to the flight of the monarch butterfly. The male and female forms emerging from the top show how we are all connected to each other and our world. Life is always changing and growing.

If growth stops, then we are in death. I have been afraid to show my true self to the world. I know there are others like me who hide their beauty, their truth, and the gift of who they really are, afraid of Judgment. For a long time, I struggled with accepting that I am disabled. I told people that I retired "early" or that I am self-employed. I have this choice because my disability can be invisible. When I am functioning well, I can keep my illness a secret. Using Service Dog, most of the public think that I am a trainer. When I want to avoid disclosing personal health information, I let them think whatever they want. On more challenging days, I ignore them altogether. I do prefer to educate about Service Dogs and invisible disabilities. It makes the daily lives of the disabled who use Service Dogs easier. I welcome all questions via email: traumafreetraining@gmail.com

Another part of my identity that I have kept hidden is being Transgender. Now, as I transition to show the world who I truly am inside, life is becoming more beautiful each day. Living out the truth of who I REALLY am is freeing and wonderful and empowering.

I encourage everyone to search out and express the beauty they have hidden inside.

KEITH MORRIS

THE LUNAR PHASES AS RELATING TO BEING GAY

Ceramic Wind Chime

8.5X7X.5

\$40.00

I used the phases of the moon to describe being gay in my life. The new moon with no rainbow because I wasn't proud yet. I couldn't admit I was gay even to myself. No rainbow, because I was ashamed.

I was raised on the South side of Chicago and suburbs where being gay was considered taboo. Most people there downright hated gays. They would threaten to beat you up if they just thought you were gay. It was considered somehow subhuman and such bullshit would fly there.

The crescent moon represents when I admitted to myself I might be gay and celebrated it yet I was still in the closet.

The quarter moon represents

when I came out of the closet to just friends and myself, just starting to be proud of myself being gay and fully admitting to myself that I am gay.

The full moon represents when I moved to LA and fully came out of the closet. In a climate not hating homosexuality. I got involved in the community. Everywhere in the world there is discrimination against the L.G.B.T.Q. Community, often by people who were gay themselves yet don't acknowledge it. They are afraid of it as I was.

The waning quarter moon represents when I got into a long term relationship and participated actively in the gay rites movement as I did when I came out of the closet.

The waning crescent moon represents when I got married to a great guy I love and continued to stay involved in the L.G.B.T.Q.. Community. I am still attending gay rites events.

The new moon represents when I die. The moon is still there. You just can't see it. I won't be there yet my footprint as my art will remain.



CHRIS NERVI

AUBURN TRANS

Ceramic Sculpture

12X6X10

\$80.00



Auburn Trans is for anyone who admires both female and male. This piece is about having feminine and male traits and depicts both. At the time of creation, I was uncomfortable with masculinity, but conceptualized the achievement of femininity. The GLCE Bisexual and Transgender support groups were an inspiration for this piece and provided support. Being male, one possesses both X and Y chromosomes. However, masculine society represses the feminine. I chose to suppress the "Y" and allow the "X" to flourish more (Females have two "X" chromosomes). Being Bisexual means one has a sexual attraction to both males and females. This is not as common as one might think, but having attraction to both may be. The differences are in the mediums of the attraction. Since all human beings are sexual it only stands to reason that it could be a universal medium. Wondering what causes this sexual attraction causes one to question ones role in the sexual acts one partakes in. Thus, the inspiration to be both feminine and/or masculine in this role. To do so one must be attractive to either and/or both. Thus the inspiration to "be" both. However, one terms this state of being, it seems appropriate to use the term Bi-Gendered rather than Transgendered, in some cases Transgendered, Transsexual, Bi-Gendered Bi-Sexual? There one must discriminate the differences. To lump them all into one title such as "Drag" or "Tranny" is to be bigoted. But like everybody else I am entitled to an opinion.

NICOLE STORRS

www.nicolehatesyou.com

HERE/THERE

Acrylic/Cardboard

18X18 (Dyptic)

\$300.00



The purpose of Here/There is to simplistically capture the incredibly complex situation of becoming comfortable in one's own skin. Through words, colors, and textures, I tried to express the moments of an individual's journey as they are coming to terms with who they really are out in the open and the moments after these declarations have been made.

'Here' represents the inhale. The moments of anxiety, anticipation, and fear that an individual often experiences before they allow themselves to be who they are meant to be. This takes practice and follies often ensue. These teachable moments we have with ourselves eventually lead us 'There,' my representation of everything after...

It is the exhale our souls experience when we are free from the restrictions of our fears. Acceptance of ourselves allows us to ignore others who may judge us. The text here is mirrored but still quite legible. All humans build up ideas of what our futures may look like before taking scary leaps. Often, the result is different from what we expected. It is not a terrible thing when our futures do not look like what we imagined. That does not mean they are not exactly as they should be.

KATIE LEONARD

UNTITLED

Mixed Media
13X12.5X15.75
\$50.00



Hello, my name is Katie Leonard. I am a long-time member of 9MusesArtCenter and currently working as a peer mentor and advocate for mental health awareness. I have personally experienced the impact that stigma has had on my self-worth and identity. I have also experienced the limitations and maze-like structure of our healthcare system that left me feeling hopeless. I have witnessed how people of color and how those living in poverty are less likely to get the help they really need due to socioeconomic challenges, systematic racism and discrimination. I believe it is my purpose in life to be a part of the growing movement to breakdown these invisible barriers and create opportunity for anyone who is in need of help and support regardless of race, creed, religion or age.

This piece is about the marginalized individuals in poor, rural, or urban communities striving to break through barriers that prevent access to the limited mental health care available. The 'Hello my name is' stickers reflect how labels and biases can impact a person's desire and ability to seek treatment and the deeply embedded stigmatization in our communities. These labels can seriously impact people of color and their desire to seek treatment. The hand represents multiple races and ethnicities that are impacted by cultural stigma. I believe the dangling carrot adequately symbolizes the limited, and difficult-to-access treatment available to those seeking mental health services.

JORGE 'COCO' ALARCON

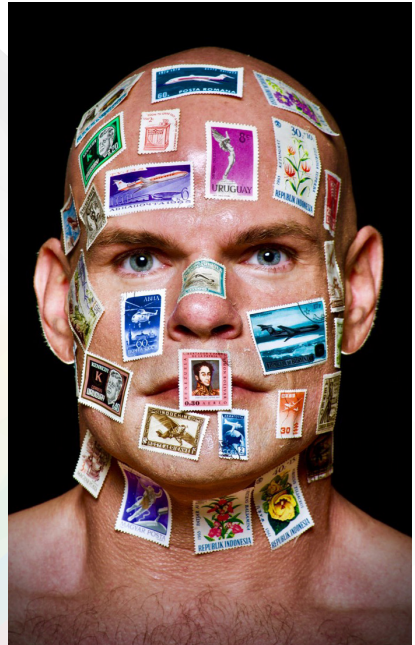
www.behance.net/CocoAFotografia

OF LOVE AND OTHER DEMONS

Photography

45X38

\$1000.00/EACH



We are made of pieces, but no, do not get me wrong. It is not that we build ourselves based on pieces, incorporating experiences, accumulating ideas. No. Those pieces are the least important.

The important pieces, those that make us be as we are, are the ones that life is taking away from us. As if he were carving us. The changes of house, neighborhood and work. The friends that we lose. The people we love and who one day is no longer. The loves that we break or break. The dreams that are fulfilled and stop being dreams. The dreams that one day we discover that they will never be. They are pieces that are left behind, leaving gaps. Gaps that it is almost always stupid to try to fill, because those holes draw us.

These are the gaps, in addition, the place where we feel the

absences that define us, the place where the memories are based, the memories that tell us who we were and, therefore, who we are.

-We are made of lost pieces.

We are made of scraps. Pieces of stories lived in the first person and stories heard from third parties. Pieces of mixed feelings, complex, contradictory, pure and crazy. We are made of memories, of mental photos and smells, but also of dreams and projects.

We are made of impossible oblivions and possible remembrances.

We are made of what we want to be as children, of what others wanted us to be, of the frustrated plans and the twists and turns of looking for alternative ways. We are made of disobedience to sanity and devotion to madness.

We are made of affection and rancor in equal parts. Of lust and tenderness. Materialism and altruism in different proportions, depending on the case. Of pride and pride, of good intentions and generosity. We are made of each of the kisses received. Of the ears you heard and of the pronounced ones. Of the disappointments, the spite and the reconciliations. We are made of the love we lost, of what could be and was not, of the mea culpa toned and life lessons, better or worse learned. Of broken friendships, duels, intense feelings and salt water. We are made of sex without anything of love and a lot of love with sex. From the traces that those pieces of stories have left us until today and here.

We are made of the brands of those who influenced us, loved us, provoked us, alienated us to the limit and nailed us the dagger. Of those who interfered and aborted our happiness. Of those who take us by the hand and collect the crystals, and also from those who receive us already recomposed, predisposed, infinite. We are made of those who make our hearts shine and those who inhabit us. We are made of those who dazzle us. We are, then, puzzles of a thousand pieces in which each one fits with synchronic perfection with the adjoining one.

I am made up of pieces of stories, ... my stories, of my feelings in full boiling, of what I did not know fit and of what I solved effectively ...
I am made of me. Without dressings.

We are made of pieces of other people that in a certain time we broke with them. "- Benjamín Griss.

Of love and other demons. is the new series of portraits where the artist takes us on a journey through a personal and intimate project embodying an emotional healing process reflected in each of his photos using photography as a tool to manifest everything that we are sometimes unable to express.

AXEL MARTINEZ

www.axelmartinez.com

CROSS CULTURAL CONTAMINATION

Mixed Media/Collage

30X40

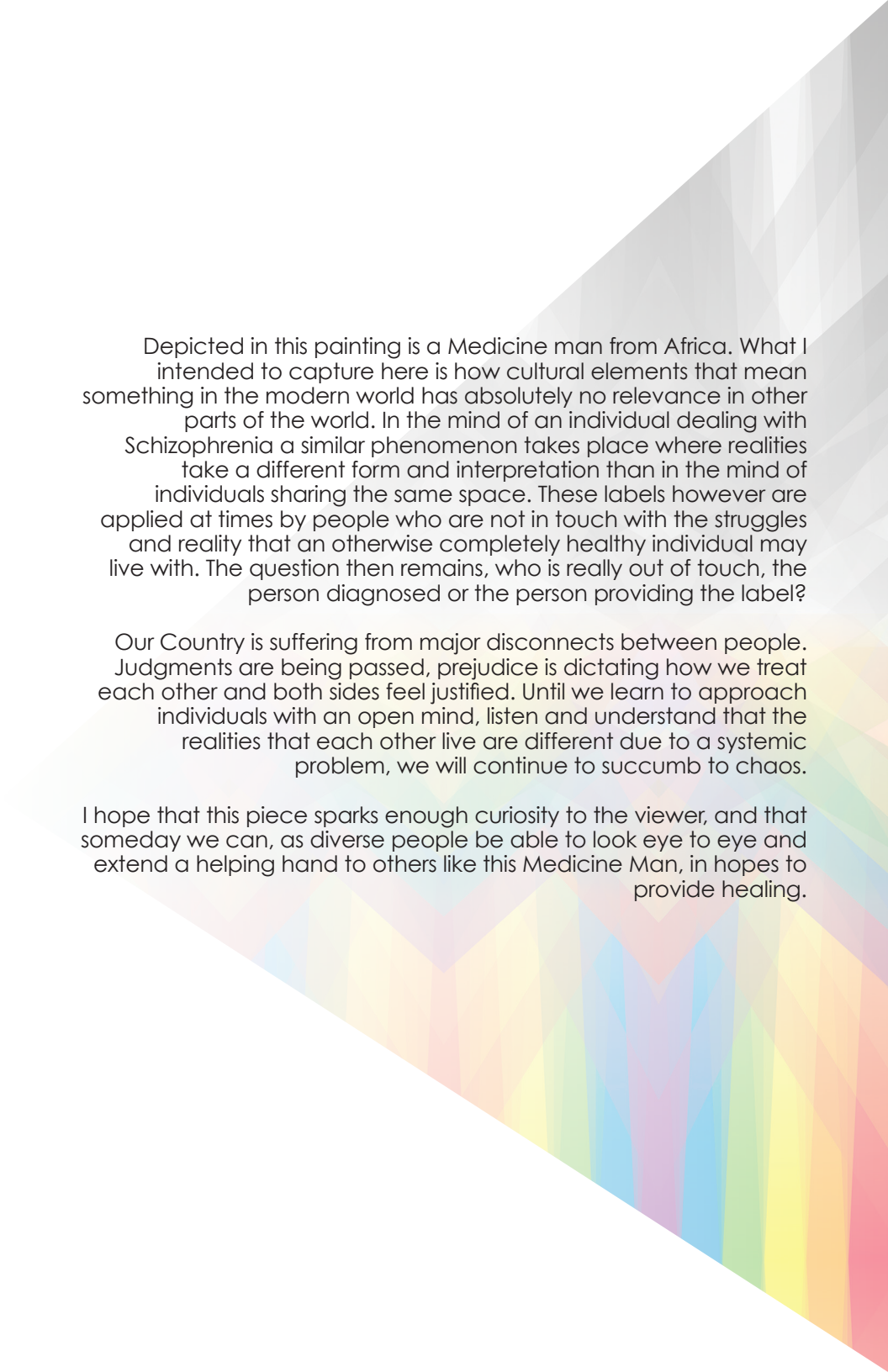
NFS

I am Axel Martinez a local health care provider for a large Gay population in Broward County. I have served the gay community by providing Dental care to individuals of a wide range of socioeconomic groups.

As Dentists we are not trained on managing the mental and social issues that patients might bring. However, it has always been my goal to not offer judgment to an individual presenting challenging behavior,

because I understand the various factors that can influence it. Working in this environment can however, be extremely stressful. I have found that Art is an extremely therapeutic activity that can help with coping with the daily exposure to stress. For a few years I engaged in the art of pottery, but due to Pandemic issues I was forced out of my studio and took up painting since I can do this safely at home.





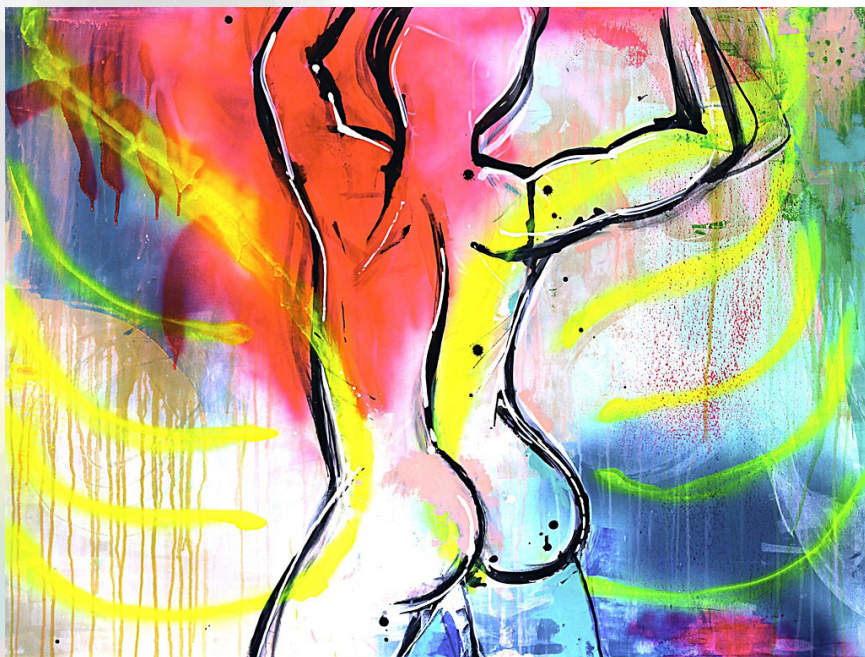
Depicted in this painting is a Medicine man from Africa. What I intended to capture here is how cultural elements that mean something in the modern world has absolutely no relevance in other parts of the world. In the mind of an individual dealing with Schizophrenia a similar phenomenon takes place where realities take a different form and interpretation than in the mind of individuals sharing the same space. These labels however are applied at times by people who are not in touch with the struggles and reality that an otherwise completely healthy individual may live with. The question then remains, who is really out of touch, the person diagnosed or the person providing the label?

Our Country is suffering from major disconnects between people. Judgments are being passed, prejudice is dictating how we treat each other and both sides feel justified. Until we learn to approach individuals with an open mind, listen and understand that the realities that each other live are different due to a systemic problem, we will continue to succumb to chaos.

I hope that this piece sparks enough curiosity to the viewer, and that someday we can, as diverse people be able to look eye to eye and extend a helping hand to others like this Medicine Man, in hopes to provide healing.

JILLIAN BLAKE
www.jillianblakefineart.com

NEUTRAL NUDE
Acrylic/Ink/Spray Paint
48X36
\$1200.00



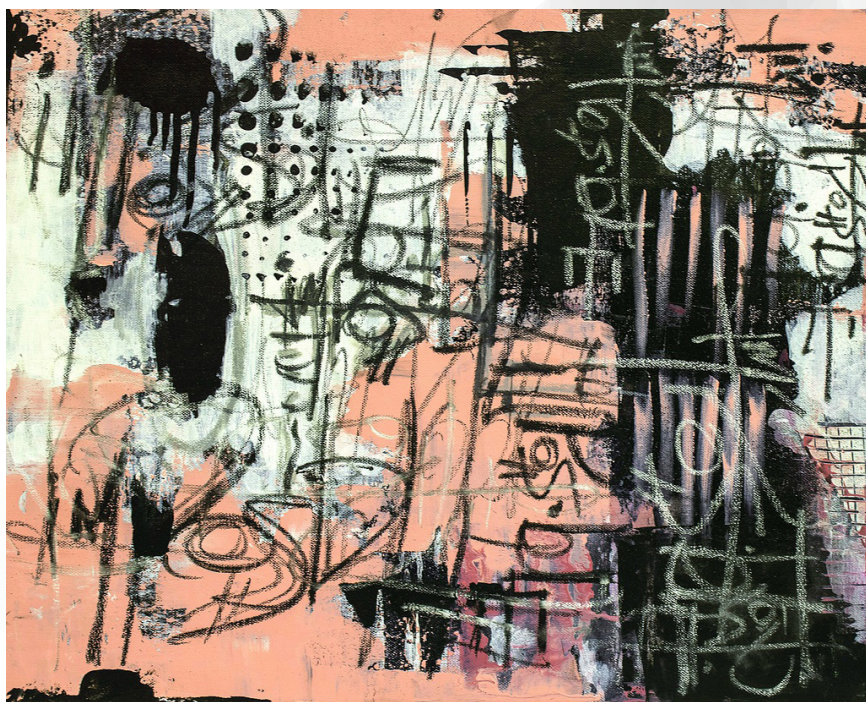
The main idea of this piece is to understand and love yourself no matter what. I want to encourage the viewer to fly with the wings you were given because you are you. This is a depiction of both the male and female form together as one. I chose the male/female form to show how each is beautiful. I chose to have the subject face away from the viewer to express how one cannot tell from behind the subject's gender, thus removing gender from the composition all together. The wings represent the freedom everyone should feel as their basic human rights regardless of how they identify. Everyone is born with their own individual wings. This moment is abstract in time and space: Future of acceptance; Present waking up to acceptance; Past for all those hidden in the shadows to one day fly free.

I'M POSSIBLE

Acrylic/Ink/Spray Paint

16X20

\$200.00



Anyone suffering with feelings of not being good enough or self-doubt would benefit from the piece. The concept is a play on words. The word "impossible" seems to have a negative connotation. The definition at face value being "not desirable" or "not optimistic". However, when taking a deeper look at the word one notices the words "I'm Possible," thus turning a negative into a positive mindset. Suffering from PTSD and panic and anxiety disorder, at times I feel life is impossible. Throughout my personal journey of self-love, I have fostered a love for meditation, a quieting of the mind. Realizing how looking at things from a different perspective (view) can make all the difference.

MARK FLANDERS

UNCONDITIONAL LOVE

Crocheted Afghan
48X48
NFS

When I was a teenager, my grandmother taught me how to crochet. She knew that I was "different" even though we never spoke of it. She passed away thirty years ago. I still miss her, and her unconditional love which saved me. There was never any doubt in my mind that she loved me - no matter what.

Not only did she save me, she showed me that I was worthy of being saved. She taught me that even if there was no one else around, I could also save myself, and that I could comfort myself. An afghan is a very comforting thing to wrap around yourself, and feel the love that went into creating it. Thirty years after she left us, I'm still feeling the ripples of her love.

This afghan recaptures the past - the times I spent with my Grandmother. It is also a manifestation of the present - as I remember her love and the things she taught me. It is also something that I will carry with me into the future, to comfort myself and to remind me of her. When I wrap this around me, it's almost like she's sitting next to me.

No matter where I am, no matter how old I am, this always brings me back to the same place and time - sitting with my Grandmother on her couch in her little house way out in the country.

I chose the rainbow colors for this afghan as an expression of my sexuality. It was a way of me coming out to my Grandmother - even though I knew I didn't need to tell her because I "know" she knew. This is a way for me to symbolically communicate with her and with myself, and to carry forward her Unconditional Love.



THE HUNT

Acrylic
16X20
NFS



This is a self-portrait of me as a Silver-Daddy-Leather-Muscle-Bear. The setting is inside the Ramrod (a gay, leather-bar in Wilton Manors, FL). I'm leaning against the pool table, and the large galvanized steel tub which hangs upside down above the pool table as a lamp shade is in the background, with the name of the bar spelled out with holes pierced through the metal. This captures a time when I exist purely as a sexual being; when my ego retreats into the shadows and my sexuality comes to the forefront, encouraged to fulfill its wildest desires.

The focus is intended to be on my muscles, the leather, my body and beard. My face is intentionally left undefined and shadowy to create a sense of mystery, of anonymity and of fantasy. I am confident - I can fulfill your fantasies. This is my own personal expression of that moment in time that anyone can experience - when you allow yourself to "check-out" of being your every-day self, and "check-in" to being that mystery person who exists solely for sexual pleasure - to exist within the primal "hunt". Whether you're hunting for prey or predator - to eat or to be eaten - to fuck or to be fucked. The imagery is of light and darkness, as color tends to fade away in the shadows of a dark bar. You can't tell whether he is looking at you or not, his eyes are hidden in shadow, are you brave enough to come closer? Do you want to be his prey tonight? Hunting. On the prowl, lurking in the shadows, and waiting to pounce on a willing victim.

DARREN THOMPSON

MAJESTIC CONSTRAINS

Acrylic/Mixed Media

24X36

NFS

Majestic Constrains is intended to enlighten the viewer of the limitations that religion and government place on the LGBTQ community and freedom of expression. The straight jacket represents the government. It has the number 302 with the Nazi pink triangle to represent our history of shame. The golden crown of thorns represents religious dogma and the cover up of religious persecutions and sins of organized religion. The majestic unicorn with a rainbow mane represents individuality. I mean for these images to symbolically challenge the viewer to recognize the ongoing challenges that alter the authentic spirit of LGBTQ

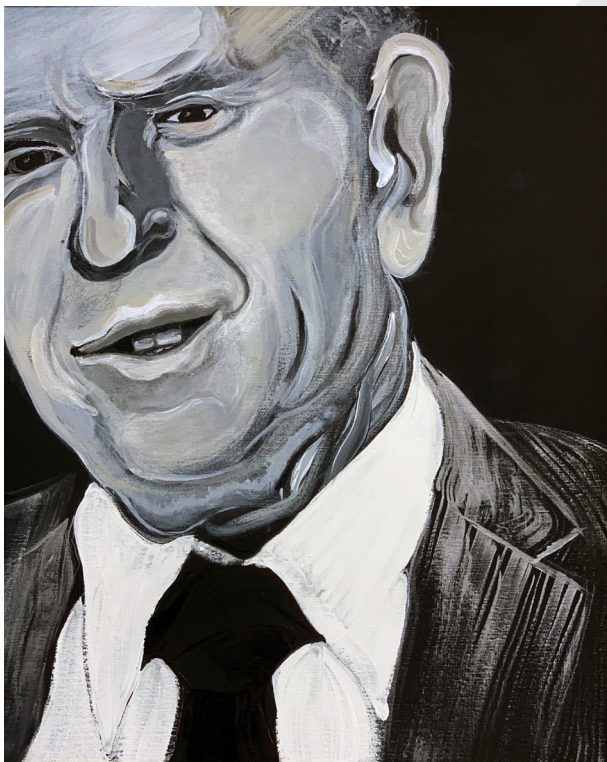
individuals. 302 is to remind our youth that expression of your love has had a very dark past and equality was achieved by activism, death, and not being silent. Government, religion, and social stigma are a constant force suppressing the LGBTQ community.

I would like to thank 9Muses for being the location in time and space to reflect and come together around our history. 2020 is an inflection point of change that could have gone in either direction. We need to constantly remember our past to appreciate the pride we have suffered to achieve.



MAY I BE 'FRANK'

Acrylic
16X20
NFS



Frank Kameny,
May 21, 1925 –
October 11, 2011,
was dismissed
from the army
for being gay.
Considered the
first man of
activism, in 1972
he began his fight
to have the
APA remove
“homosexuality”
from the DSM.

On December
15, 1973, the
APA removed
“homosexuality”
(302) from the
DSM, thus
changing
history.

I wanted to honor
Frank Kameny for
his lifetime of
activism for civil

and federal acceptance of the LGBTQ community. I chose to do
a more mature portrait to represent his full lifetime of working for
individual rights and his recognition of giving the LGBTQ community
a positive voice in the fight for equality.

Frank was an ordinary man that did an extraordinary service for the
LGBTQ movement. He made today possible by turning the page in
history and tearing out the page of the DSM manual that labeled
the code 302/homosexuality and persecuted your love as a
mental disorder.

CHRIS YOCULAN

www.yoculan.com

EDGE OF COMPLACENCY

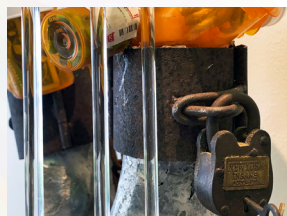
Sculpture/Metal, Wood, Found Objects

9.75X11.5X18

NFS

This piece is a symbolic representation of how institutional and societal gains in mental health and LGBTQ+ rights remain in the limbus between progress and regression. The artist's feet, cast in aluminum, teeter over the edge of its foundation, which includes photos of the artist's history of protest and a collage of the German bible. One indicates the very real fight for rights and recognition. The other how religious interpretation has a layered impact on the struggle for expanded human rights. The feet are shackled in iron and secured with an actual lock from the New York Insane Asylum. The shackles are packed with the artists own prescription bottles filled with symbolic representations of the freedoms the artist has fought for. It illustrates how easily those rights can be taken away. These items include the artist's marriage license, pressed boutonnières from his own wedding, his medication labels, shredded credit cards, insurance cards, plaster religious icons and some of his actual medications. Altogether, the sculpture is imprisoned by thin, clear glass bars illuminated in colors of the rainbow; an abstracted barrier capable of boxing you in with limited opportunities in which to escape. Likewise, the material use of glass serves to indicate that a fragile material can be shattered with continued community efforts.

"Edge of Complacency" communicates the layered societal gains and losses, but most importantly serves as a call to action for the oppressed.

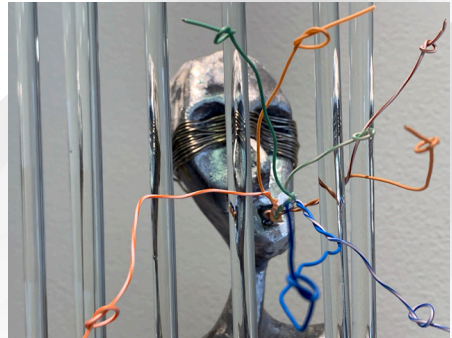
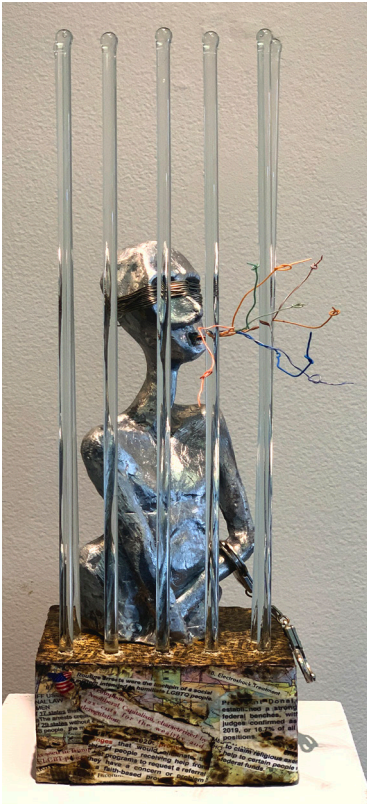


ILLUSION OF FREEDOM

Sculpture/Metal, Wood, Found Objects

5X5X18

NFS



"Illusion of Freedom" invites the viewer to interrogate the frailty of pride in a system that can easily take hard-won rights away from individuals. The central figure is blindfolded to illustrate the importance of seeing before blindsided. Communication wires protrude from a screaming square mouth showcasing the power of one's collective voice. It sits atop a square base plastered with Trump Administration decisions that roll back many rights and protections for LGBTQ+ persons. It displays the ways in which what once was progress, can be easily taken by the stroke of a pen. The figure in encased in a "prison" of glass rods that glow in a spectrum of colors symbolic of our own pride. The invisibility of the barrier gives the illusion of freedom, but that "prison" is ultimately capable of being shattered when realized with the power of collective action.



EXHIBIT 302.0

THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER

When we conceived of IRIS year, we created it with the idea that it would aid in combatting social stigma and celebrating the progress we had made in the LGBTQ+ community. These past few months have proven that progress is not a steady, linear rise towards equality, but it continues to be something we must fight to maintain and move forward.

USA Today's recent report noted that the current administration has pushed back LGBTQ+ rights to an untenable degree. They have removed protections for LGBTQ+ individuals and jeopardized the health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ youth through executive action. They have also stacked the federal courts with homophobic and anti-LGBTQ+ judges, which will take generations to correct.

On October 5th, Justices Alito and Thomas signaled that they would like to re-examine the landmark decision in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, which established the right for same-sex couples to marry. With the court poised to gain a very conservative majority, it is not out of the realm that our self-assured progress can easily be swept away.

302 is shaping up to be so much more than the intersection of mental health and LGBTQ+ identities. It is expressive of the determination to carve ourselves out of pathologization and discrimination. "302" now demonstrates the necessary, activist artwork that reasserts our presence and importance.

We hope to invite you to submit your artwork in these last few weeks before submission ends. We hope you will send in your anger, your histories, your Queer-centered art, and most importantly, your resilience.

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Founded in 1984, the Community Foundation of Broward helps families, individuals and corporations create personalized charitable Funds that deliver game-changing philanthropic impact. 473 charitable Funds represent more than \$212 million in assets, distributing \$119 million in grants over the past 35 years. The Community Foundation provides bold leadership on community solutions and fosters philanthropy that connects people who care with causes that matter. The Foundation empowers visionaries, innovators and doers to create the change they want to see in the community – and to BE BOLD.
www.cfbroward.org

ADDITIONAL SUPPORT PROVIDED BY:



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PLEASE CONTACT US TO SCHEDULE A PRIVATE VIEWING
9MUSES@MHASEFL.ORG



WWW.9MUSESARTCENTER.ORG