TO BE SEEN

ARTISTIC DIALOGUES ABOUT BODY IMAGE ARTWORK CATALOGUE





Beautifully Monica

Artist Bio A visual artist and public art advocate from Barrie Ontario. Commissioned based, she creates one of a kind ink on paper art- no prints; thus guaranteeing a unique piece of intuitive works. Monica is also no stranger to public art and working a scissor lift. You can find her advocating for public art with guided tours as well as through her own large scale pieces and installations located within Simcoe County. Monica is the recipient of the 2022 Emerging Artist Award for the City of Barrie and hopes to continue forward showcasing the powerful benefits of art within the community.

Artwork name(s) & medium Botanical Bodies Collection- A body for every season (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) – Drawing (digitized ink on paper)

Dimensions (inches) 8" x 10" (unframed)

Artist Statement A body for each season, these botanical beauties are an original composition to showcase that every body is beautifully crafted just like flowers in nature. We are all worthy of taking up space and blooming unapologetically.

Beautifully Monica

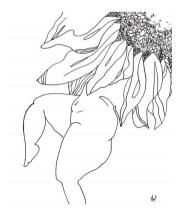
Artist Bio A visual artist and public art advocate from Barrie Ontario. Commissioned based, she creates one of a kind ink on paper art- no prints; thus guaranteeing a unique piece of intuitive works. Monica is also no stranger to public art and working a scissor lift. You can find her advocating for public art with guided tours as well as through her own large scale pieces and installations located within Simcoe County. Monica is the recipient of the 2022 Emerging Artist Award for the City of Barrie and hopes to continue forward showcasing the powerful benefits of art within the community.

Artwork name(s) & medium Botanical Bodies Collection- A body for every season (Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter) – Drawing (digitized ink on paper)

Dimensions (inches) 8" x 10" (unframed)

Artist Statement A body for each season, these botanical beauties are an original composition to showcase that every body is beautifully crafted just like flowers in nature. We are all worthy of taking up space and blooming unapologetically.











Anita Majumdar

Artist Bio Anita Majumdar is an international award-winning film and theatre actor, playwright and classically trained Indian dancer who is best known for her solo performance work The Fish Eyes Trilogy published with Playwrights Canada Press. While illustration was her first artistic medium, she didn't pursue it professionally until 3 years ago. Anita started with portraiture work based on actresses she would see in Hindi films, the only source of South Asian representation in her childhood. Growing up in a small town just outside Vancouver, B.C. and no money for art supplies, Anita used her mother's eyeshadows to create skin colour and set her finished work with hairspray. Eventually Anita learned to work with charcoal and pastels but paused illustrating to focus on her performance arts career. When the pandemic shuttered theatres across the country, Anita returned to illustration and taught herself digital illustration. She posted her work to Instagram once a week and slowly built an audience, which led to several art commissions including a series called Shakespeare's South Asian Ladies commissioned by The Shakespeare Company and Hit n' Myth Productions in Calgary. This led to her first solo art exhibition at the Rose Theatre accompanying their 2023 production of Hamlet. As well, she was recently commissioned to illustrate Geordie Theatre's 2024-25 production season in Montreal. Across all her artistic disciplines, telling stories about women of colour remains at the core of her work. More art can be viewed eanitamakingart on IG.

Artwork name(s) & medium Lavinia - digital illustration on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 12" x 18"

Artist Statement This piece is part of a larger project called "Shakespeare's South Asian Ladies" (commissioned by The Shakespeare Company in Calgary) wherein I reimagined Lavinia from TITUS ANDRONICUS in a brown body. I've illustrated Lavinia in an attempt to offer the "aftermath of survival" vs. "the moment of suffering". In the face of Lavinia's horrific assault (in the play, her father's enemies use her for revenge by gang raping her and then cutting her tongue out and cutting off her hands so she can't communicate what happened to her nor can she eat) what accompanies her is horrific silencing. I wanted to offer the quiet moments of reflection after events occur beyond our control but trick us into thinking that we should feel shame. The attempt to cage oneself in shiny aesthetic armour to distract the external world into thinking everything is fine all the while buying time to recharge a broken spirit and summon back resilience.

I believe this piece relates to the destigmatization of disordered eating in the physical sense, the woman's mouth and nose are obscured by metal jewelry, limiting consumption and also the sensory experience of food consumption. There's a sense of self-imprisonment and at the same time a very real sense that there is an invisible external force in the painting, extenuating factors in this woman's life that compels her to restrict her consumption in this way. The painting is a reflection of her internal response to external stressors.

And while this might seem like a drawback and something to avoid, the act of self-protection is a very real part of the recovery process. Getting really quiet with one's self to radically accept the reality of what has occurred and how to move forward from this present moment. This piece also speaks to the invisible disability of disordered eating. From the outside, people might have no idea a person is struggling (especially struggling with disordered eating or body dysmorphia). Often suffering is masked by culturally appealing aesthetics and beauty (in its own way), which is a dangerous cycle with disordered eating/anorexia in my experience. The unsolicited comments about how great I look in "this shape", the countless suggestions to try intermittent fasting, working out to earn the right eat... all of this can exacerbate and trigger disordered eating/body dysmorphia, which returns back to my earlier point of self imprisonment, but one that is complicatedly both self-imposed and a bar set by society. While this painting explores restriction, I think the point of it is hope is in the woman's eyes. Yes, there's suffering with this these conditions, but I believe there is also a longing and KNOWING that it can be different. The welling tear in her eye that can't help but free itself into the world, I think it's the first step in releasing the other parts of her body and spirit that need freeing. That feeling her feelings, acknowledging them will lead to new choices and ultimately towards action. What I hope I've done is capture the moment before it becomes different.





Michelle Gallacher

Artist Bio I am a 60 year old retired teacher who has two eating disorders. The first one I have been in recovery from for 20 years. The second one is cycular and I have been in recovery since July 2022. I began programming at Sheenas in September 2022 when my psychologist who runs the outpatient Eating Disorder clinic at the Port Colborne hospital suggested it to me for further healing opportunities. I have continued pursuing programming at Sheenas because of the robust offerings, the impactful, kind, caring, empathetic and highly skilled facilitators.

I live with my partner on a creekbed in Niagara on the lake with our 1/2 Great Pyryness, 1/2 Golden Retriever puppy and our 3 year old Torti grandkitten. I have a 19 year old daughter who just completed her first year at TMU in Social Work and a 31 year old son who is working on his Masters in Social Work at Western.

My hobbies are swimming, reading, writing, gardening and creating art. At Sheenas I am currently enrolled in Fat Art, Treasure Box Art, Big Time Body Liberation and Dungeons and Dragons Integrated Art.

Artwork name(s) & medium Finding a way out from what diet culture has stolen from me-Paper Mate Fine tip markers, Prismacolour pencil crayons created on Strathmore no 90 mixed media 11x14 paper

Dimensions (inches) 11" x 14" (unframed)

Artist Statement For decades I believed my success was tied to diet culture bullshit. Playing Dungeons and Dragons from an eating disorder lens has helped me realize my success lies in engaing my brain in thoughtful and meaningful activities that fulfill me creatively, emotionally and spiritually. My ED recovery has nothing to do with food.





Melissa Sherman

Artist Bio I am an artist, wife, mom, grandmother, teacher and dog lover living in Vaughan, Ontario. I grew up in NY in a whirlwind of a family. A powerful mom, a soft and gentle dad, an older sister and brother. Home was chaotic and in constant flux and change. Angry words, angry political views, an unbalance of power. I was always referred to as the "too sensitive" one in the family as I felt every emotion deeply.

When I was 12, 51 years ago, Anorexia wracked my brain and my body. First as an impetus to improve myself physically and as I have come to realize, as my way of coping with the intense emotions I have always felt. As long as I can remember, I have used the Arts to express my inner thoughts, ideas, visions and demons. Especially those that have been too shameful to share.

These pieces, which I have only begun to share, are a reflection of some of my "inner workings." They show the prisoner I have felt within my own mind and body. The sometimes hints of "normalcy", and the daily struggle to survive. The pieces were not originally created to be shared but as a means of coping and reflection....a concrete "place" to put them. I hope they make you think and feel.

Artwork Name (s), Mediums & Dimensions (inches)

- 1. Shame watercolour pencil on paper; 12" x 15" (framed)
- 2. Body as Art- clay/grout; 13" x 20"
- 3. Con Trol Pencil on paper; 13" x 16" (framed)
- 4. In a Box (Trapped) Mixed Media, clay, paper, wood, nails, paint; 8" x 8"
- 5. Octopus Ribs clay, grout; 11" x 14"
- 6. At the Surface acrylic on canvas; 8" x 10"
- 7. Running Man pencil, ink on paper; 12" x 14" (framed)
- 8. The Sentence Pencil on paper; 18" x 24" (framed)
- 9. Morning clay, grout; 8" x 11"
- 10. Bashful Bather mixed media, acrylic, and paper on canvas; 8" x 10"
- 11. To Be Mixed media paper, acrylic paint on canvas; 8" x 8"

Artist Statement My works relate to the theme as each piece shares an emotion of living through an eating disorder. The shame, loss of control/grappling for control, the feelings of entrapment. It is about the body, the non acceptance, the distance I feel from my own body and yet being so intensely involved with my body. So strange. Yet there is a glimmer of hope, sometimes.





























3.









Raechel Wastesicoot

Artist Bio Raechel Wastesicoot (Bonomo) is a mixed Kanyen'kehá:ka beadworker and land-based communications specialist. Her mother's family is from the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, and her father's family immigrated to Tkaronto from Northern Italy in the early 1960s. Her spirit name is Mein-gun Kwe, meaning wolf woman, which was gifted to her by an Ojibway Elder. Following a teaching passed down to her: from the land, for the land, and by the land, her contemporary beadwork style features upcycled, vintage, and harvested materials. The land and sustainability is at the centre of her practice. The pieces Raechel creates aim to have as minimal an impact on the environment as possible, often highlighting gifts from the land, including antler, fur, hides, and porcupine quills. She is also passionate about building and healing community through public art praxis and engagement.

Artwork name(s) & medium love along landlines – beadwork (antler, vintage and new beads, dyed leather, vintage charms), frame: upcycled materials, leather, rabbit fur.

Dimensions (inches) 5" x 7" (framed)

Artist Statement

tender words for a smaller self smaller in age, in size how would you speak to her in a smaller voice or in one of stronger self please pick up, its me

I wrote this poem to add to the narrative of the beaded work. As we grow up, our bodies and the way we think of them change. What we make of these changes, especially as women, can sometimes equalize self-worth. If we could connect with our younger selves, what would we say? And more importantly, what would they tell us? How could we express the love we give so openly to others and instead internalize it within ourselves?





Micah

Artist Bio Micah Kalisch is a multidisciplinary artist and poet who's work exists in the intersections of art and activism. Their work is inspired by intersectional feminist practices and principles. Currently their art projects focus on the body and connect ties themes of surviving gender based violence, exploring gender expression and queer identity, eating disorders, and mental health.

Artwork name(s) & medium Body Folds - photography

Dimensions (inches) 12" x 12" (unframed)

Artist Statement This is an image of my body, it is a body that has been through violence and disordered eating/eating disorders. In this image, it is not intended to be a body or a weight, it is intended to be art, a vessel, flesh, a landscape, it simply exists without good or bad connotations. My artwork takes a critical view of social, political, and cultural issues specific to bodies. Often referencing my own struggles with gender, sexuality, desirability, ability, and reflective of my own struggles with disordered eating, control, and body image. I enjoy photography and often frame it as fragments of reality, both able to highlight and hide, in fact, I often find what's missing in a photo to be of more interest. In this photo missing are a face, an identity, the frame starts and stops below any part of the body that can be hypersexualized, objectified, or misgendered. The photo lacks any explicit tell of humanity at all, often people will ask what this is a photo of, without even recognizing it is human. Despite this, there is a vulnerability present within the folds of the skin, both soft and powerful. The lack of control over the folds of my skin is something I have always feared and felt inferior to. Body Folds aims to disrupt popular discourse surrounding bodies and the immediate essentialist attributions, assumptions, and labels placed in different bodies, while appreciating the ambiguity and fluidity of all humans and bodies.





XZ

Artist Bio XZ is a Hamilton-based artist who primarily creates using ink, mixed media, charcoal, and writing. They have turned to art throughout their life to reconcile their experiences with mental illness, neurodivergence, queerness, and trauma. Their art has been a way to connect to and express feelings that they have otherwise felt at a loss to understand. XZ hopes people will find meaning in and relate to their work through their own feelings and lived experiences.

Artwork name(s) & medium Parts of a Whole - mixed media and charcoal on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 18" x 18" (unframed)

Artist Statement Parts of a Whole is about the feeling of fragmentation and loss. As I fell deeper into my eating disorder, it felt as though I slowly collapsed into pieces and the lines of who I was, and my disorder blurred until I couldn't see myself anymore. This work is about trying to collect those pieces and sort through all the pain. I tried to make something that would evoke the aching of living in a distorted reality when it feels like everyone else is moving through the world clearly. The words, photos, and charcoal are parts of the whole piece, just as the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of struggling with an eating disorder are all parts of a whole. The starting point for this piece was the common experience of standing in the mirror and looking at yourself. For many people, this is a deeply vulnerable and uncomfortable experience, whether they live with an eating disorder or not. This piece is my attempt to share my experience of body image. The photos are old photos that I took during an especially difficult time in my life when I didn't know where to put the pain I was experiencing other than to document it in photos. The purpose of the piece isn't to try and see the photos clearly, or what the body in them looks like. I hope that people will lean into the heaviness, and discomfort that I tried to put into the piece. I want them to view the piece and experience the words, lines, and fragmented photos together as a whole. That is why I called the work Parts of a Whole. Someone I know told me once that we are a sum of our experiences and tried to bring all the parts of my experience of body image together to make this piece.





Maybelainey

Artist Bio Lainey takes inspiration from the characters and quirks of Toronto, and turns them into black and white illustrations. Be it people, moments, or nature, she strives to capture unique moments that are woven into monotonous urban life.

With her background in fine art, specifically working with oil paint, Lainey has recently enjoyed experimenting with digital media. This has allowed her to play with harsh lines, negative space, and bold expressions.

Each of her pieces begin as photographs she has taken. Working in black and white, she enjoys studying the way light highlights different subjects to create high contrast pieces. Her hope is to evoke the feelings of compassion and softness from a piece that at first glance is stark and commanding to the eye.

In the past year, Lainey has begun to pursue art more professionally and share her favourite past-time with others.

Artwork name(s) & medium 1. Recovery I; 2. Recovery II - Digital drawing

Dimensions (inches) 16" x 20" (unframed)

Artist Statement Both pieces, Recovery I and Recovery II, are self-portraits of navigating recovery. Often seen as a capstone to one's experience living with an eating disorder, life in recovery can be an idealized world of opportunity. And yet, even when achieving it, recovery continues to be exhausting. Feeling emotionally and physically drained is a sensation many can empathize with. However, there is something particularly special and affirming to acknowledge the tenacity it takes to continue to strive for and maintain recovery. I hope to convey these feelings, a constant balancing act, through my two pieces.







Poetic Bones of a Girl

Artist Bio Kay is a published Poet, Lyricist, Spinneret of smut & digital collage curator. Kay is the Worker of the word behind, Poetic Bones of a girl. & Erotic Bones of a girl. They reside in T'karonto . Click-clacking old-fashion passion, freeing themself as a dithyrambic doggerelist. They are Queer/Androgynous; & a Survivor of Suicide Loss & Attempts; & if you're thinking about suicide, please know the textline #988 is free & here for you Or call Talk Suicide 1833-456-4566. Their Instagram is poeticbonesofagirl.

Artwork name(s) & medium See To It To Yourself Too - Digital Collage

Dimensions (inches) 14" x 14" (unframed)

Artist Statement This digital collage is an amalgamation of my experiences with disordered eating and a response to myself through the years of not treating myself like a person. I used images of photos I took of lines from a poem I wrote. The lines are typewritten using a typewriter on mulberry paper. I used images that are public domain and altered them via the platform, Canva. I grapple with being on a spectrum of worthiness and panic. The image is an attempt to illustrate the disconnect I have with myself and others because of the stigma around ED's and Body dysmorphia. There is a feeling of experiencing a glitch hit, there is an unreality that envelops me if I get into my head too long. Once you curl up with shame, you've become prey to yourself. The sound of static and the glitch of an old tv is the only sound that comes close to the dissonance of trying to communicate what you cannot translate, even to yourself. The act of creating this digital collage helped me to see the internal stigma I've been carrying. The image of the lego person in pieces is me trying to return to the kid in me and she's a mess, and I'm here to collect her through the process of art making.





Hilary Wyant

Artist Bio Hilary Wyant, b.June 1996 – d.July 2023, produced a number of drawings and mixed-media works. This piece is submitted on Hilary's behalf by her family.

Artwork name(s) & medium Ouch - Pencil, ink, and pencil crayon on paper

Dimensions (inches) 10" x 7 5/8" (framed)

Artist Statement Ouch represents Hilary's feelings and expression of damage done while experiencing the effects of chronic dysmorphia.





G. Eloise

Artist Bio My name is Gabrielle and I am a social worker, sister, aunt, friend, cat parent, and lover of the arts. In my spare time, I enjoy baking, hiking, listening to podcasts, and spending time with the important people in my life. I have a love for free verse poetry that was supported by my high school English teacher years ago. Some of my pieces were published and shared within my school. As a social worker, I believe that everyone has the ability to be creative and create beauty when vulnerability is shared in a safe space. Thank you for taking the time to view my piece and allowing me to share a part of my journey. Recovery is not easy. As noted in my artists' statement, I recognize my privilege regarding my current state of wellness. Creating this piece with words that foster feelings and memories for me along with expired medication from a time long ago was cathartic and I hope it inspired others to the same.

Artwork name(s) & medium Temporary Allusion of Empty – permanent marker, multi-purpose glue, expired over the counter laxative medication on paper

Dimensions (inches) 8.5" x 11" (unframed)

Artist Statement As someone who struggled with the overuse of laxatives as part of the eating disorder, this is something that does not feel as known or discussed as other forms of purging. I think it is important to talk about this aspect of the illness for people, the harm it can do to one's body, the cost, and feelings of shame and isolation. I also want to acknowledge my privilege. I am a cisgender white woman who had access to the resources to receive treatment. This is not the whole picture of who I am as a person, however, I feel it is important to disclose. The system is imperfect to say the least with regards to who can get support and who can not and so on. I wanted to create something that brings together both the mindset of recovery and the mindset of being consumed by an eating disorder. Something that briefly reflects my own experiences of being sick, being able to access treatment, and being in a much better place with regards to the eating disorder. The words/statements are placed randomly on the sheet of paper to demonstrate the conflicting feelings and notions that can come with recovery for a person.





Tk Workman

Artist Bio I often depict the body as seems separated from reality or the actual physical world, as it reflects I guess how I feel, as an outsider even to my own body.

Artwork name(s), Mediums, and Dimensions (inches)

 4 x 4 (x2) -Acrylic paint, use of old stamps, some small pieces of clothing and collage on small canvas stretched on wood, acrylic pens mod podge; 4" x 4"
6 x 4 - Acrylic paint, use of old stamps, some small pieces of clothing and collage on small canvas stretched on wood, acrylic pens mod podge; 6" x 4"
Real Big Shoe - pastel and collage on paper; 2.5' x 3'

Artist Statement I try not to obsess on things having to look realistic or make sense. Real Big Shoe is depicting a brief outline of my journey trying to find clarity of myself in a X chromosome body. The fight to stay afloat in reality, so dark and confusing, but the journey, not the destination is to come alive thru creative steps, in order to neutralize some of the negative feelings therein.















Emiliya Volchenko

Artist Bio Emiliya Volchenko is an OCAD University student, pursuing a bachelor's degree in Graphic Design with a minor in Photography. Having recently completed a program at the New York Academy of Art which emphasized classical teachings, her practice encompasses a broad exploration of diverse mediums, including drawing, painting, and photography. As a means of storytelling and emotional expression, Emiliya's work is guided by an exploratory approach, engaging at the intersection of digital design and traditional mediums.

Drawn from reflections on the world around me, the stories told are often my own. Using my own experiences and emotions as a guiding force in my creativity, I have created a mixedmedia collage which uses images found in popular magazines. Taking these photos reflects on how women are often told they should appear. But by reworking them into a new art piece, with my own new perspective, I challenge this view and showcase the beauty of every woman, as seen through the colourful colours which contrast the black and white found imagery which I manipulated.

Artwork name(s) & medium Blooming Bodies – Collage (acrylic paint, coloured pencil, acrylic gel transfer) on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 16" x 20" (unframed)

Artist Statement "Blooming Bodies" is a mixed-media piece that serves as an intricate exploration of the concepts of beauty and femininity, as depicted in contemporary magazines. It delves deeply into the portrayal within these magazines, shedding light on the potentially harmful beauty standards they perpetuate. One side of the work showcases a collage of print transfers taken from magazines shown in black and white. The other side shows a bunch of flowers atop a black background, which begins to merge on top of the images of women. The merging of the flowers with the images of women symbolizes the ongoing search for self-identity in a world dominated by societal pressures and imposed ideals. The fading images of the women symbolize the loss of identity or the ongoing search for self in a world constantly dictating norms and expectations for women's appearance and behaviour.

The artwork serves as a poignant reflection on the struggle to find one's true identity amidst societal pressures and imposed ideals. Meanwhile, the flowers serve towards a more hopeful note of growth, beauty, and acceptance. If we can see such beauty in flowers and in the natural world, why do these popular perceptions make us unable to see the same beauty in ourselves? By juxtaposing the fading images of women with vibrant flowers, the piece invites viewers to reflect on their own perceptions of beauty and femininity. As a designer, I am acutely aware of the tactics commercial settings employ to market themselves. My younger years were unquestionably impacted by some of the detrimental messages prevalent in popular culture, prompting me to reflect on the design landscape. Reflecting on my past experiences, I'm committed to exploring innovative approaches that challenge conventional art and design norms rather than perpetuate them. This perspective informs my work, allowing me to critically examine contemporary magazine representations without perpetuating harmful beauty standards. The artwork scrutinizes these standards, symbolizing the struggle against societal pressures, and serves as a visual commentary on seeking more empowering and less damaging art approaches.





6-Fingers

Artist Bio Sara Kolomejac is a registered social worker and a passionate eating disorder therapist in British Columbia, Kelowna who has worked in a variety of healthcare settings including: hospital acute care, child & youth community mental health, and in mental health and substance use street outreach.

Artwork name(s) & medium Vines of Gratitude - acrylic on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 35.5" x 18" (unframed)

Artist Statement Our bodies are breathing and living beings that give us the opportunity to dream, create, and build meaningful relationships. We are not images or photographs stuck in time based on trends, societal standards, and patriarchal pressure. Inside, we all share the same internal mechanisms that give us capacity to flourish into our authentic selves – with breath, with digestion, with circulation of oxygen and blood. I honor my body as living and branching just the way it is. Systems and structures in the fashion industry focus on images of body ideals. This art relates to destigmatizing body image to help celebrate what our bodies do for us just the way they are as part of body acceptance. Our bodies are living and meaningful just the way they are. This artwork is a way to celebrate body acceptance and to help us more critically think about how the fashion industry uses perception to question our worth.





Terri Lee

Artist Bio I am a digital and traditional artist based in Toronto and New York, as a current student at Parsons School of Design, pursuing a degree in Design and Technology. As a digital artist, I have 7 years of commission work experience as an illustrator and character concept artist. I have won in the Golden Bell drawing contest, and in a paint-a-thon contest held by Lightbox Expo. In addition, I exhibited at Fanexpo and Comicon Toronto.

Artwork name(s), Mediums, and Dimensions (inches) Unconscious – acrylic on canvas; 24" x 18"

Artist Statement "Revealed": In a furious haze of anger, I turn inwards and cannot help but feel the satisfaction of revealing the horrifying truth inside me. A self-destructive behavior takes over as I try to find a more acceptable form within me. "Revealed" was born from the internalized rage that I had towards the idealized skinny body. I show how destructive these goals are.





Olivia Bill

Artist Bio Olivia Bill is a multidisciplinary artist from St. Thomas, ON., currently practicing in Toronto. She is a student at OCAD University, working towards a BFA in Drawing and Painting. Through her work she explores ideas of the body, femininity, ephemerality and materiality. She expresses her ideas on these topics through painting, film and installation, allowing the medium to direct the themes within the pieces.

Artwork name(s) & medium Three Bodies Joined in Indefinite Dance - oil on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 20" x 16" (unframed)

Artist Statement This piece was inspired by a series of collages I had finished. After exploring with the idea of appropriating other images to create a figure, I became really interested in the idea of the body and the individual's idea of their own bodies. I wanted to create this creature, that shows our everchanging perception of our own bodies. It was heavily inspired by my own experience with body dysmorphia, and hard it is to feel comfortable in my body. This in turn relates it to my feelings towards my own femininity and queerness, which I feel like definitely shines through in the finished work. I didn't want to create a grotesque and 'scary' looking create, as these feelings do not quite occupy this space for me. Its mischievous, and plays with how you think, without being too overt. This idea was pushed further when I considered where I was sourcing images, for the first study, it was made of mostly magazine and newspaper clippings, as well as some found materials (the cut-up fabric and found paper), and for my second collage, it was composed of some of my own photos, but also a lot of Adobe stock photos. This action feels so deeply personal, taking these photos of their and creating a piece of art, yet so detached as these are these very professional photos, of models that I do not know, and they don't know me either, I will likely never learn the names of these models, and this feels quite detached.

The main idea I was trying to explore within this piece was how we perceive our bodies, and how this impacts the way we perceive others as well as the world around us. This was inspired by my own experiences with my relationship with disordered eating and body image. I wanted to stay away from villainizing these topics, depicting the idea of body dysmorphia as more mischievous than evil. I think this is important when it comes to destigmatizing these topics, as continuing to show eating disorders and body image issues as morally wrong can further victimize people effected, even when that's not the intention.





Kat Singer

Artist Bio Kat Singer (they/them) is a multidisciplinary artist who lives and works in Tkaronto. Kat's interests include neurodiversity, self-advocacy, community-building, and healing through the arts. Their work draws on lived experience and spans an ever-expanding range of media, including photography, street art, painting, textile, sculpture, drawing, printmaking and performance.

Artwork name(s), Medium & Dimensions (inches)

- 1. Bon Appetit metal ring, acrylic yarn, string, fabric; 15" x 32"
- 2. Glum Cerebrations acrylic yarn, felt; 11" x 34"

Artist Statement "Bon Appetit" is a mixed-technique textile artwork that reflects the alienation from my body and its needs that I sometimes experience. I portrayed the mysterious workings of my sensitive digestive system using a collection of unusual, "alien" shapes. My eating challenges have accompanied me all my life. My seemingly random and inexplicable food aversions have been a source of frustration for countless people, including myself. Being unable to eat what I am offered without an explanation that is acceptable to others has also had social consequences. The diagnostic label of Avoidant Restrictive Food Intake Disorder (ARFID) empowered me to continue seeking answers and figure out how to best nurture my body.

"Glum Cerebrations" is a hand-hooked rug that features a schematic of the brain riddled with drooping black threads that symbolize rumination. When I am in this heavy, exhausted state, my appetite is muted and performing self-care tasks such as cooking and eating becomes extremely difficult. "Glum Cerebrations" exists to honour the fact that rest is not always pleasant, relaxing, or restorative.









Kira

Artist Bio Kira is a special education teacher, artist, writer, and body politics advocate. What brings her joy is the lessons her students teach her about perseverance, vulnerability, and compassion. What began as a suggestion from her therapist has grown into a business. Folks who stop to talk to Kira about her work say that they feel empowered and most importantly they feel seen, which is the first step to a sense of belonging.

Artwork name(s) & medium From Shame to Worthy Series – Digital Drawings 1. Not Good Enough 2. The Places that Need Healing 3. What my Body Does 4. I Love This Body 5. Any Body Can Dance 6. I Dare you to Talk About my Body

Dimensions (inches) 7" x 11" (unframed)

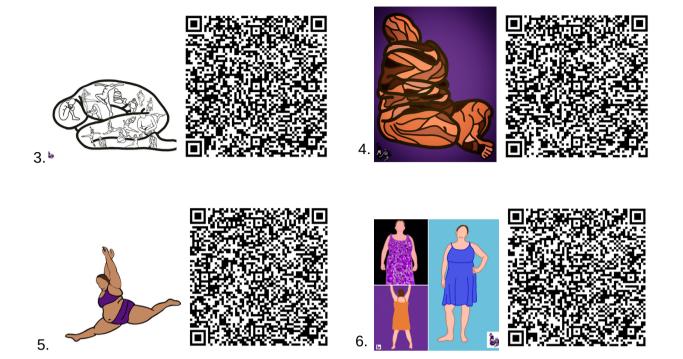
Artist Statement From Shame to Worthy is a series of works exploring how a woman embodies shame and the transformative experience of Recovery through that shame and fear, into acceptance and worthiness of the body she is in.

Weight is still a socially acceptable oppression. This form of oppression and verbal violence can be invisible, deeply ingrained, and ignored. Aside from the obvious media impact and the billion dollar weight-loss industry, folks over a certain size sometimes experience verbal assault by strangers in public spaces. The medicalization of "The Obesity Epidemic" gives perceived authority to the shaming of bodies. Obese bodies are deemed lazy, unmotivated, and are blamed for their size by health practitioners and the general public. Stereotypes of idealized racialized bodies further engrain body shame. Overweight folks are dehumanized. Women's bodies in particular are treated like public property, as though what they look like, and what food goes into them, is a disease cured by shame and deprivation. Family, friends, colleagues, and strangers comment on weight loss and gain and offer unsolicited advice on how to lose weight. For me, the qualifier "fat" is attached to my description and to my identity. The way I navigate the world and the way I am treated is motivated by fat shaming. My artwork explores bodies through an arc of canvas prints that begin with body shame and move through stages of body acceptance and self-love. I delve into how women's body language communicates their feelings about their bodies and their experiences of shaming and oppression. My work explores a range of shapes and sizes of women and is meant to leave people asking themselves, who defines beauty, who defines sensuality, and who defines sexy?









Soren Morgan

Artist Bio I am 20 years old currently studying cultural Anthropology in my Undergrad. I have spent the last few years in Vancouver trying to navigate student life and seek out new opportunities for growth. I grew up in Parkdale, Toronto and will always call the Parkdale neighbourhood home. I always find myself drawn towards experiences that involve creativity, learning, and connection with places and people. Painting, drawing and dance are where I feel most called to. I really aspire to build artistic connections, social connections and engage in social justice work.

Artwork name(s) & medium Yes - Mixed media / painting and crayons on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 12" x 12" (unframed)

Artist Statement I am trying to better understand what recovery means to me, why I continue to say yes despite wanting to avoid and choose no. My art attempts to explore the "yes", the means of recovery or ultimately why working towards achieving a full and authentic life is something worth doing even though it feels so very difficult. I realize that for so long I have suppressed my desires to create, explore and play in fear of doing something wrong and being seen for all the complexities that exist inside me. The "Yes" has empowered me to act with my inner truest values which are to connect, trust, lead with my curiosity, accept and always be compassionate. This artwork demonstrates my struggles to be myself and be seen as I feel the weight of time, judgment and calculations. The chaotic layout and colour demonstrates that I no longer wish to organize my thoughts and creations in a way that is dominantly digestible to others but alternatively in a way most authentic to myself. The juxtaposing themes and imagery in this piece represent aspects of my life being; the quietness and the loud, the vibrant and muted, the playful and serious. I lean in to these different aspects of my life continually and I think that is beautiful. Creating art and embarking on recovery opens me up to the possibility to feel all feelings and learn from them which I channeled in this painting.





Damini Sachdeva

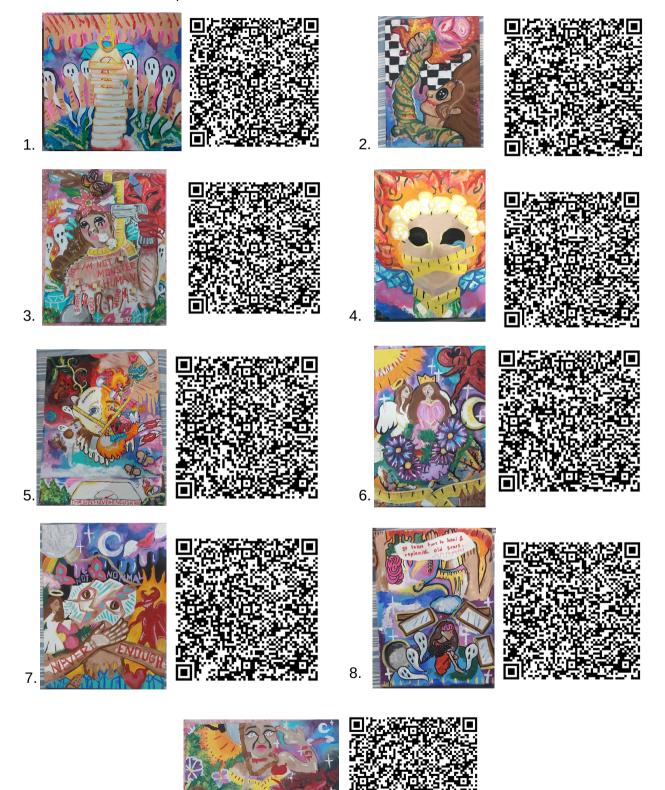
Artist Bio 1, as a vulnerable, empathetic, kind and compassionate young woman, truly believe in miracles, and that there is hope for each and every one of us to find that light across the other side of the universe. My name is Damini, and I love to paint on canvases that express mental health awareness and advocacy. Most of my paintings are very dark and explicit, which can revolve around trauma experienced in childhood and psychological illnesses. I've always painted whatever comes on top of my mind. Most recently, I started a collection of paintings that emphasize healing and recovery for voices who are unable to seek guidance. I want others to know that there's a hand for them to hold. They don't have to suffer with their pain and sorrow alone in the dark. Trauma can engrave deep wounds of relapsing into a spiral and drowning in submerged emotions with thoughts; however, it is also a true fact that scars can heal. While many of us can feel inadequate, unfilled and lack the feeling of "enoughness", I want to emphasize that we humans are flawed. We are beautifully flawed. We are imperfect and vulnerable, and that is what makes us human.

Artwork name(s), Medium, and Dimensions (inches):

- 1. Anorexia is My Noose acrylic on canvas; 10" x10"
- 2. Brainwashed By My Hallucination acrylic on canvas; 9" x 12"
- 3.1 am Not a Monster acrylic on canvas; 20" x 16"
- 4.I Can't Speak When I Burn With Guilt acrylic on canvas; 10" x8"
- 5. The Cruel Imperfect World We Live In acrylic on canvas; 24 x 18
- 6. The Devil Pleads For Forgiveness acrylic on canvas; 9" x 12"
- 7. The Mirror Lies to the Fractured Vulnerable Me acrylic on canvas; 9" x 12"
- 8. The Mirror Reflects Imperfection acrylic on canvas; 9" x 12"
- 9. When I End Myself acrylic on canvas; 11" x 14"

Artist Statement Most of my artwork created revolves around psychological illnesses like eating disorder, depression and anxiety and symptoms like suicidal ideation and self-harm. My artwork acknowledges the experiences of having an eating disorder and recognizes how healing can shape your future to a life you deserve. We have a purpose to contribute a positive change to this world. We have the key to unlock these doors full of opportunities. When you look in the mirror or see childhood pictures on the wall, honour and celebrate the unique and diverse person you were back then and congratulate the person you've become today. This book of life is truly an adventure. We have so many stories to share within these chapters. Despite facing barriers and challenges in your life right now, there are miracles to heal and replenish old scars.

My artwork illustrates perspective of being so vulnerable in a time of recovery. That younger version of yourself you see in your reflection or in every picture, loves how you've grown and changed throughout your life. They have your back when you fall. They hold you in their arms when you feel pain. They are your safety net. One thing they hope is for you to love yourself and feel that compassion the way you do to others. Something I've learned is that the way you treat yourself can be very different from the way you treat others. Those criticizing words you tell yourself can harm your self-esteem, leading to self-destruction and self-sabotage. Sometimes, it is just a way we cope with life's inconveniences. Society can be really cruel. There was nothing "normal" to begin with. No one is given the authority to define what normal looks like because we each are different in our own way. With the struggles of having an eating disorder, we often ruminate on numbers defining our worth. If we are not a perfect weight or size when we measure ourselves on the scale or measure our thigh circumference with a measuring tape, we think our lives are over and that there is no point to live. I want to eliminate that irrational fear of perfectionism because it is so unrealistic and unattainable for human beings to be perfect. It is okay not to feel okay. We can honour those parts of us and learn to love ourselves the way we are.



Lisa MacLellan

Artist Bio Lisa MacLellan is a mixed media artist who resides in Burlington, Ontario with her partner Jon and her cat Elphie. Lisa is thrilled to be a part of this collaboration, it is the first time her work has been presented to the public and she is excited! Lisa has been working with mixed media for 15 years, she originally started taking mixed media classes with Sandra Spagnuolo when she lived in Milton, Ontario. This is where she began to grow her passion for mixing paper, paint, and clay to see what could be made. She creates in her free time and participates in Art therapy and the Big Time Body Liberation open creative space with Sheena's Place. Lisa began her healing journey with her body this last year and is incredibly grateful for the programming Sheena's Place offers. Her work is continually growing and is showing more hints of body autonomy and body acceptance. When Lisa is not creating, she is working her dog walking job or spending time with her partner Jon. Trips to used bookstores and hiking are their favourite things to do together, her other favourite thing to do is cuddle up with her cat, a book and a cup of tea. You can contact Lisa at lisa.mac.1977@gmail.com.

Artwork name(s) & medium Buried - Pencil crayon on mixed media paper

Dimensions (inches) 8" x 10" (unframed)

Artist Statement My piece reflects how I feel about being a bigger body person and the feeling of being buried and unseen. I often feel the pressure to melt in the shadow or ground, to be buried because I am less than. The body in this piece is buried, waiting to feel welcomed into the world. The only comfort in the waiting is the animal friend who passes no judgment. As an animal lover I have always felt most loved and comfortable around animals and nature as I never feel shame or judgment amongst them.





AboJoe

Artist Bio I am an emerging Black artist and through my practice in drawing and painting I traverse in themes of identity, culture, and a deep appreciation for the beauty of the world around us, I aspire to create thought-provoking and visually captivating works of art.

Artwork name(s) & medium The Spiritual Continuum of the Body – charcoal and oil pastels on glossy paper

Dimensions (inches) 15" x15" and 14" x 18" (unframed)

Artist Statement In this series, I explore the complex and multifaceted relationships we have with our bodies. Through a variety of body formations/gestures and charcoal as the only medium, I investigate the ways in which our bodies are shaped and molded by both internal and external forces – societal beauty standards, cultural norms, and personal experiences. I also examine the ways in which we, in turn, shape and mold our bodies to fit these expectations, often at great personal cost. Through this exploration, I seek to honor the beauty and diversity of human form in all its variations, rejecting the narrow and unattainable standards that have been imposed upon us. My work is a call to embrace our unique bodies, to love and accept ourselves as we are, and to find beauty in the imperfections and quirks that make us who we are. Ultimately, the individual pieces in this series combine together to create a world where all bodies are valued, respected, and celebrated – a world where we can live freely, without shame or apology, in the bodies we call home.

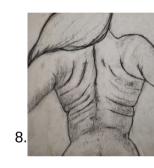




























Aurora Genovese

Artist Bio Aurora first discovered a passion for art in 2018 while hospitalized during which she began painting. Over the last 6 years she has developed her skills in a variety of mediums, most notably acrylic painting, oil pastels, drawing with pencils, sculpting with air dry clay, and most recently she has begun experimenting with the art of collaging. Aurora aims to destigmatize eating disorders, mental health issues, and addiction through the expressive art that she creates and open larger societal dialogues. Aurora is a proud sober and queer woman who draws on her own lived experiences to help those going through similar struggles know that they are not alone and find solace in the face of hardship.

Artwork name(s) & medium Abysmal Appetites – Acrylic Paint on Canvas, Sketching Pencils on Transparent Paper, Magazine clippings and grocery store flyers

Dimensions (inches) 16" x 20" (unframed)

Artist Statement My artwork aims to destigmatize eating disorders by showcasing the beauty of all bodies, especially aspects of bodies that are often shamed by the media, in particular plus sized bodies and bodies with stretch marks. The bra and underwear on the painted side of the piece are filled with clippings from magazines and I aimed to use language that described my own personal experiences and emotions surrounding the struggles of body dysmorphia and disordered eating. The other half of the piece combines the forms of drawing and collage to encapsulate the pain, shame, and isolation associated with binge eating, and the piece as a whole aims to explore the intersections of disordered eating, body dysmorphia, body image, and societal expectations of beauty.





Samantha Claire Durrell

Artist Bio "I have been involved in the arts all of my life; for as long as I can remember. I loved reading books when I was younger and wondering how authors could transport us to an imaginary world conveyed through words. I remember watching movies and being in awe when I left the theatres trying to emulate characters and recite their powerful dialogue. I remember sharpening my pencil crayons so I could draw my vision of the world I wanted. I remember pretending to be other people, because being me was only exciting when I was someone else."

Samantha considers her creative path to fall somewhere under the definition of "conceptualist", which is a term she may or may not have invented. She draws on many different art forms for inspiration, having found art, writing, theatre and music to be of particular importance when it comes to how she navigates her life. Samantha spent the first part of her life performing in theatre, and she later studied musical theatre in New York. Samantha recently graduated from the Creative Industries program at Toronto Metropolitan University (formerly Ryerson). While in university, she took a deep interest in social media studies, creative writing, and visual storytelling. Samantha is currently the COO of Hitmakerz record label and Vice-President of the Creative Industries Alumni Association. Prior to university, Samantha spent nearly a decade working with young kids, particularly preschoolers, and was inspired to return to school to help get children a better future.

Artwork name(s) & medium Therapist Series - Acrylic paint on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 4" x 4" (9 pieces)

Artist Statement This piece was inspired by when I once asked a therapist if she herself went to therapy and she responded with "yes". I think that a majority of the sessions from there on out I spent the time analyzing her and trying to determine her diagnosis, as opposed to resolving my own problems. The conclusion I came to in the end, with no formal education in this area whatsoever, was that she probably had all of the issues that her clients had combined.

Perhaps this piece is entirely satirical. I painted it at a time when my life was falling apart and I was surrounded by broken pieces that resembled my constant tortured thoughts weighing heavily on me and putting me out of balance. I struggled with an eating disorder that nearly took my life. I battled addiction that sanctioned me to live at rock bottom for so long that every day bled hopelessly into the next. I sought therapy, but my therapy sessions felt like reflective ruminations of how ashamed I should be, as opposed to inspiring insights into the gratitude I should have felt just to be alive.

I had so much guilt about the choices I had made in my life, and therapy was just a constant reminder of that for so long. I suppose this piece was born out of anger. The anger that I had for myself was then projected into the sessions I had with my therapist, and thus resulted in my defiance where I analyzed her and all of her potential diagnoses. This piece isn't meant to attack psychologists or psychiatrists. I have seen so many of both of those medical specialists (and to be honest I still have to think twice about which profession of the two it is that can prescribe medication). This piece is more symbolic than anything I put on the canvases. What this piece really represents is letting go. I painted this decades ago at one of the lowest points in my life. That girl was confused and alone and lost. I am now donating this piece at a time in my life when I am in full recovery and I have been for years. This girl is proud and strong and hopeful. If anyone chooses to purchase this piece, they are not really paying to own nine silly canvases. What they are paying for is ownership of the claim that they can see that broken girl from decades ago in this art, and are validating her now on her journey as she moves on with her life and lives in recovery.





Stevie Dee

Artist Bio At 18 years old, I moved to Toronto to pursue my education in Canada when I found Sheena's Place during a hard time. Over a decade later, I find myself I still calling this city home and engaging with Sheena's Place. I am very creative and after years of finding verbal communication wasn't enough for me to "get it all out", I now express myself through fashion and art.

Artwork name(s) & medium My Own Two Hands - Oil on canvas

Dimensions (inches) 24" x 20"

Artist Statement It can be hard for those of us who battle an Eating Disorder to feel seen by loved ones and the world around us. The private moments I hold close, veiled by the shadows of illness, aren't always fairytales and sunshine – they aren't always pretty. I must find ways of polishing my experiences to reduce the impact on others. This piece, "With My Own Two Hands", explores the line between the moments I know too well, that haunt and tempt me every day, and the parts of my journey I choose to show others. I have worked very hard to show up as my whole self while I do still embellish the darkness. There is always something hidden beneath the dazzle. I have done a lot 'with my own two hands', including paint this. Memories from my battle are all through my eyes, and my two hands were the focus. When I see this, it holds so much. In order to share it with you, I had to bathe it in heavenly skies and tie it up with a designer-quality bow. By presenting just enough of two extremes, I create an illusion that the story is yours to tell – I am seen just enough.

"Being seen" is the thing my eating disorder pushed me furthest from. Private, individual and unseen moments are what makes an ED so personal and a lifetime of work. My two hands shaking in front of me is an image I have committed to memory, and this painting shares what I see today when I look down at the only part of my body I love. The same hands, but only I know all the things that are very different from before. Whenever I have needed a place to turn that "gets it", I have always had Sheena's Place. Most recently I found myself in the Art Therapy program, which inspired me to try oil paints at home, and this piece was born! I hope to emphasized how important it is to pull back the curtain in an effort to "shine a light" on Eating Disorders. As unseen as our darkest moments can be, we still want to be seen for who we are beyond those and in-spite of those moments. We still want fo share. I am constantly fighting to cover up all the "bad" things about myself – in this painting I explored the concept of something not being what it appears and how I rest in the safety of ambiguity.





Norina

Artist Bio I'm Norina , I'm 24 years old and find art very cathartic. I've notice I make pieces I deeply connect to. It's a tangible representation of what's going on in my mind or how I'm feeling.

Artwork name(s) & medium 1. Mind Trap; 2. Tea? Coffee, please - ink and pencil on paper

Dimensions (inches) 9" x12" (unframed)

Artist Statement Mind Trap – portrays the mental aspects of having an eating issue. The tv symbolizes how media has played apart in diet culture and the ideal of thin being ideal, the skeleton jaw symbolizes the difficulty of actually consume food and the mushrooms are like a 'safe food' however the heart and the brain displays the internal battle of what the heart 'wants vs whats best for you' and the tree diptychs grounding and how deeply rooted an ED can be.

Tea? Coffee, please – portrays black coffee being a safe option to consume, the scale as tea cup plate and the loose teeth symbolizes the hardships of eating. However, I love when others come up with their own interpretations, meanings / storyline from my pieces. I think thats the beauty of art , everyone has their own interpretations and make their own meanings out of them.









Jillian Claire

Artist Bio Using mostly pencil but occasionally acrylic and watercolour, I draw in a realistic style to depict abstract concepts. My subject matter often surrounds my experiences in depression, anxiety, disordered eating, dissociation, and suicidal thoughts. When my words fail to describe my feelings, I turn to my art.

Artwork name(s) & medium Trapped - pencil on paper

Dimensions (inches) 22" x 18" (unframed)

Artist Statement This piece depicts the feeling of being trapped inside a body that is foreign to you. Your insatiable hunger screams for more while your brain screams for you to stop eating – knowing it might lead you to do something later that you know you will regret. All of it contributes to an overwhelming feeling of being out of control, of being trapped inside of a body that you merely occupy but is not yours. You desperately try to claw yourself out of this unfamiliar body, screaming for help that feels like it will never come.





Evervescent

Artist Bio Alana is landscape architect, urban designer, mental health advocate, and lifelong creator. Her creative pursuits include painting, illustration, crafting, writing, and digital art. Alana upholds the belief that there is an artist in each of us, and that the process of creating is as much about the journey as the destination.

Alana finds inspiration in every day, and especially in the landscapes and waterways she explores with her water dog, Windy.

Artwork name(s), Medium, and Dimensions (inches)

- 1. Abandon acrylic on canvas; 36" x 48"
- 2. Amphitrite mixed media on paper; 19 3/4" x 27 1/2" (framed)
- 3. And What About It marker on art board; 12" x 16" (framed)
- 4. Gratitude marker on art board; 12" x 16" (framed)
- 5 9. All the Same Woman digital art print; 12" x 16" (framed) (in various colours)
- 10. Goddess Watercolour on paper; 12" x 16" (framed)
- 11. Softness #1 by Evervescent Watercolour and oil pastel on paper; 12" x 16" (framed)
- 12. Softness #2 by Evervescent Watercolour on paper; 9" x 12" (unframed)

Artist Statement As a former client of Sheena's Place, the theme of this exhibition is a natural extension of my personal reflections on recovery, body image, the female form, and what it means To Be Seen.

Vulnerability is inescapable in the creation of art, and even more so in the sharing of it. As many in recovery understand, we need to connect with other people in order to heal, and in order to connect, we need to accept the vulnerability that comes with being seen in all our glories and our failings.

It is an act of resistance and resilience to make a mark on a white canvas, and in so doing, to take up space – to say that I exist. I have something to say, and I admit to my striving, my doubts, and all my imperfections. I cannot control how people perceive my art, but I can stand by the value in what I am trying to communicate. I offer my art as an invitation to converse, to connect, and to feel something.

It has been said that the opposite of war is not peace, but creation. The war waged upon the self in the throes of an eating disorder may begin to be quelled, brushstroke by brushstroke, in the creation of a piece of art. Each of the pieces I have created in this collection are a testament to my survival and my will to persist. The work traverses emotional landscapes of despair and resignation to acceptance and unbridled joy.

There are no calories counted, no pounds weighed, no restrictions on the forms that shape these pieces. Instead, there is abundant colour, generous curves, and an exploration of softness and ease.

With this series, I open myself to the possibilities that unfurl as I allow my truest self to be seen. My challenge to all who read this is for you to do the same.





Halle Ward

Artist Bio Halle Ward is a queer cross-medium artist of mixed Indigenous and settler descent, which influences her work, including Algonquin-Anishinaabe, Irish, French, and Métis heritage. Her main forms are beadwork, visual arts (painting/digital drawings), and writing. Ward is pursuing a career in the education field, where she hopes to be able to encourage youth to develop a passion for learning and making connections, as well as support students with neurodevelopmental disabilities like herself.

Artwork name(s) & medium what if it was someone you love?: a reflective series on body image – Prints of digital drawings

Dimensions (inches) 6" x 8" (unframed)

Artist Statement Based on my lived experiences and teachings as an individual of mixed Settler (Irish, French)-Indigenous (Algonquin, Métis) heritage, the "what if it was someone you love?" series approaches the experience of body image and eating disorders from a fourdirectional, community-based lens. This series includes 16 art pieces divided into the four directions of the medicine wheel: the emotional, physical, spiritual, and mental aspects. My artworks relate to body image by depicting different body types and hypothetical negative thoughts of people of different races/ethnicities across the gender-identity spectrum to represent the range of experiences within the eating disorder community. They also touch on the destigmatization of EDs by putting on display some of the various thought distortions that people suffering from disordered eating disorders may experience, which can often be highly distressing and isolating, and striving to show that the viewer is not the only one who may have gone through these experiences. While the text on some of the pieces highlights the struggles and awful thoughts that may be experienced by disordered individuals, others aim to call out some of these distortions through positive and/or affirming messages.









