

NYC HEALTH+ HOSPITALS | Correctional Health Services | 2025 2026

Enlivened Arts as Resistence

NYC Health + Hospitals/Correctional Health Services (CHS) Creative Arts Therapy program is proud to present its annual art exhibition in the pages of this catalog. Our 2025 – 2026 exhibition showcases original art, music, and written compositions by program participants. It contains art created by individuals that are housed in jail facilities on Rikers Island and in the Outposted Therapeutic Housing Unit at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue.

The creative arts therapy program on Rikers is the oldest and largest jail-based arts therapy program in the nation. Our art, dance, drama, music, and poetry therapists offer daily therapeutic sessions in housing units designed for patients with greater mental health needs. Engagement in these sessions promotes narrative identity development, self-advocacy, self-knowledge, and a sense of agency among the patients who attend them. Research on similar programs in carceral settings has shown that creative arts therapy can improve participants' self-esteem, emotional stability, and well-being, which may have been negatively impacted by the jail environment and/or other adverse experiences.

This year's exhibition represents the spirited, expressed imaginations, artistic skills, and cultural values of our patients, who use art to resist stigma and marginalization. *Enlivened Arts as Resistance* reveals the profound beauty, the pure joy, and the vital healing implicit in the act of making art.

The exhibition continues on the Bloomberg Connect app, where viewers can find an array of additional artwork, songs, photos, orated plays, and poetry created by CHS patients.

Enjoy in joy!
Dr. Barbara



Ashley A., Naomi B., Kiasia D., Nellie G., Christine H., Quantá J.,
Stephanie L., Andriana L., Latrisha L., Stephanie M., Stacey N., Natalie N.,
Stephanie P., Anuri R., Sabrina S., Valerie T., Christina T., Latasha V.

As this mural was coming to life over the course of many weeks, the Creative Arts Therapies department championed as its theme "Enlivened Arts as Resistance" – in other words, using the act of making art, poetry, dance, music, and drama as a tool to push back on whatever may be a personal barrier.

This mural is a true embodiment of enlivened art as resistance. Look at all the color, and movement, and creativity, and life in resistance to what was there: grey walls.

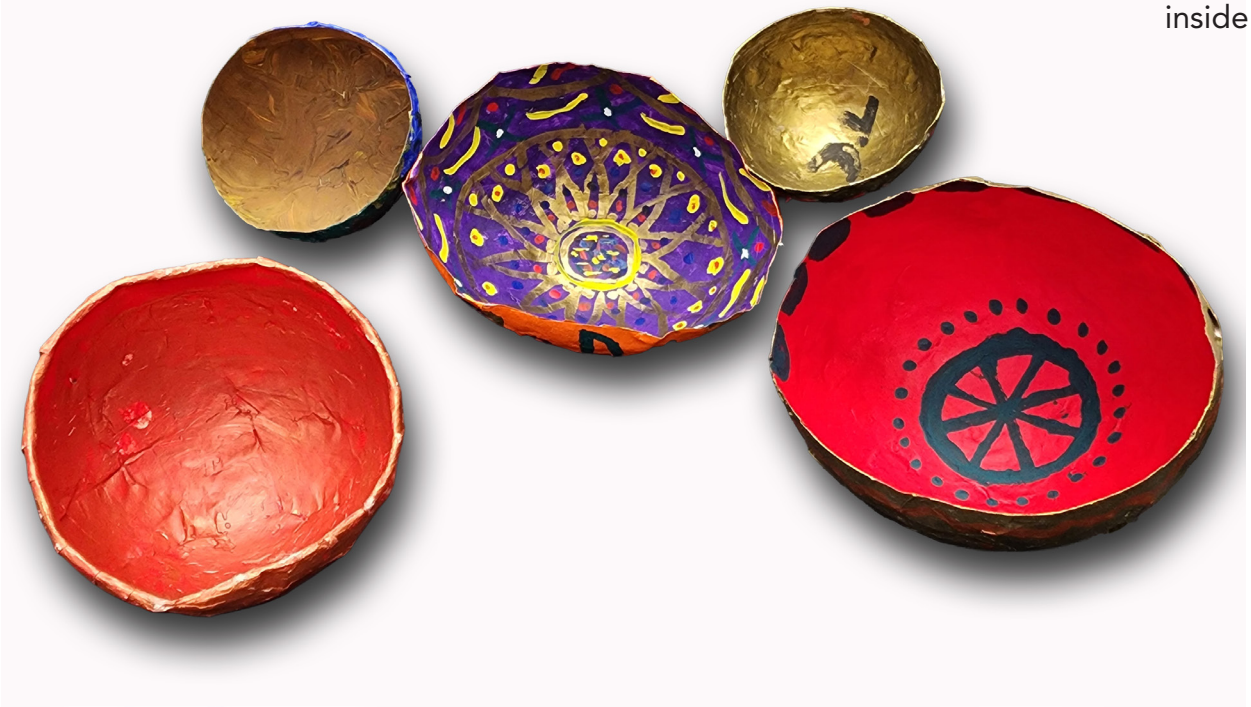
Despite each person's inner trials and tribulations, while they were also dealing with actual trials, court dates, and the occasional inevitable interpersonal issues, this mural was still possible. The creation of this mural required collective buy-in. It required setting aside differences to achieve a common goal. It required honoring one's own unique strengths and identifying what role to own in the process, as well as appreciating and accepting where other people's strengths and roles lie. This mural's creation constituted resistance against lifelessness, hopelessness, isolation, and self-doubt.

Throughout this process, I witnessed, slowly but surely, individual growth in participants and cohesive growth as a group. I witnessed new levels of willingness to accept and overcome obstacles and adversities in the creative process, to become a part of something larger than oneself. I witnessed each participant identify themselves as a creative, generative being, and trust in the process – despite not knowing at first that it could end up like…. this!

- Merrill C., Art Therapist



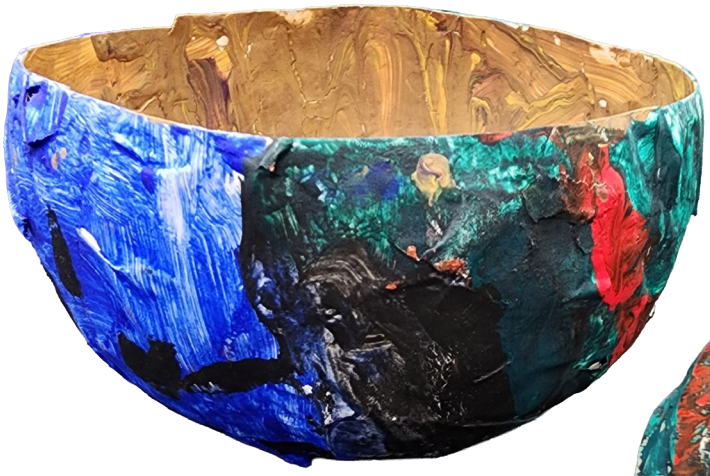
inside



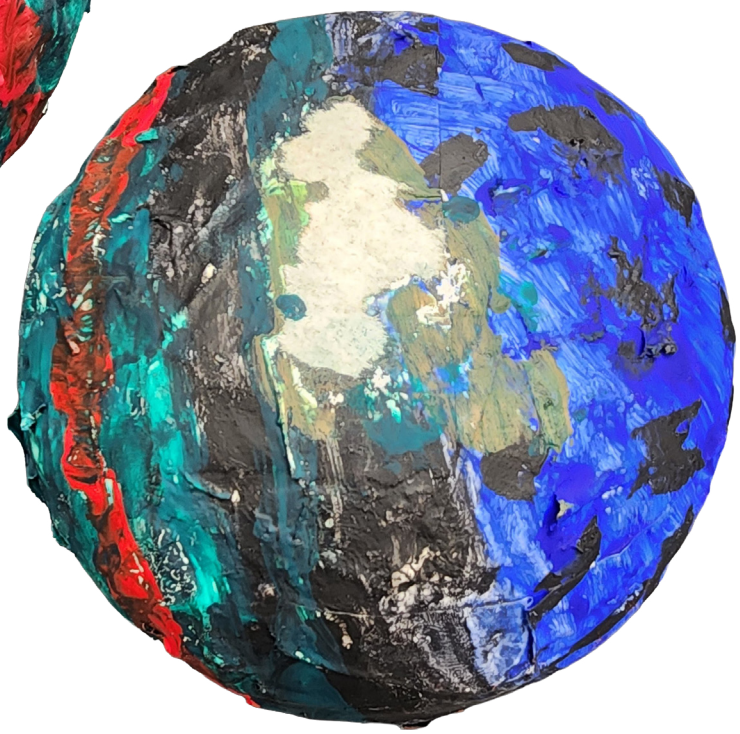
Tim C.
Kareem J.
Steven R.
Roberto S.
Vitale T.



outside



Kareem J.



PAPER MACHE BOWLS

Bowls are powerful metaphors and sensory tools. They symbolize the self—representing our capacity to hold experiences, emotions, and vulnerabilities. Therapists use them in structured directives to help clients process trauma, grief, and personal transformation through the process of making objects with their hands.

- Annemarie W., Art Therapist





Roberto S.

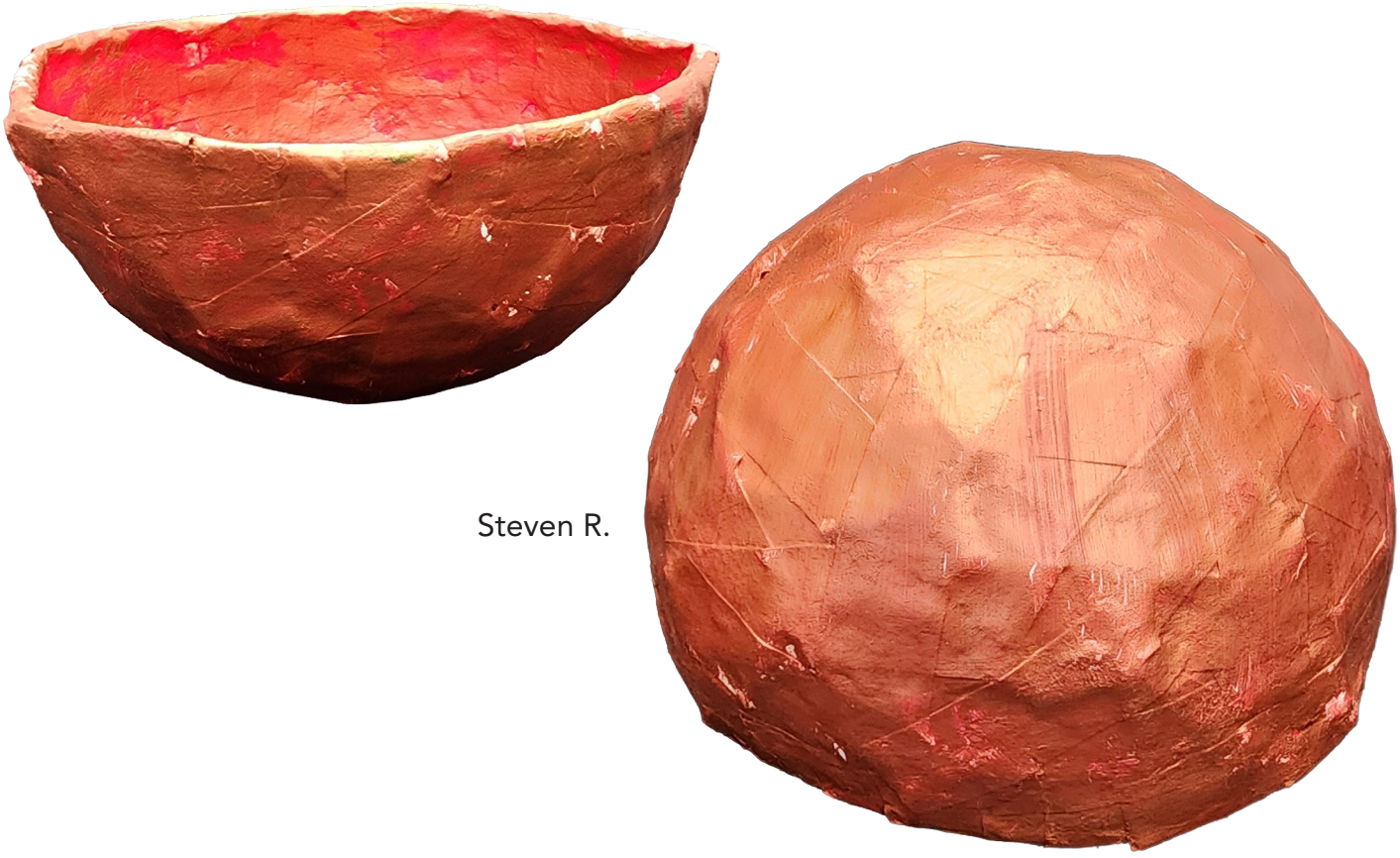




Tim C.



Vitale T.



Steven R.

2025

by Lord Danick

Full





New York





New York is Full of streets
The streets are Full of buildings
The buildings are Full of lights
The lights are Full of electricity
The electricity Fills the people
And, The people are Full of dreams
Their dreams are Full of Hope
And, their Hope encourages them
To WORK!!!
Their work is Full of stress
And, the stress is Full of itself.
The Fool drinks it away
while the Wise sips it at bay
meanwhile, the poor seeks the bread of the day
And, the rich drifts where-ever they may.





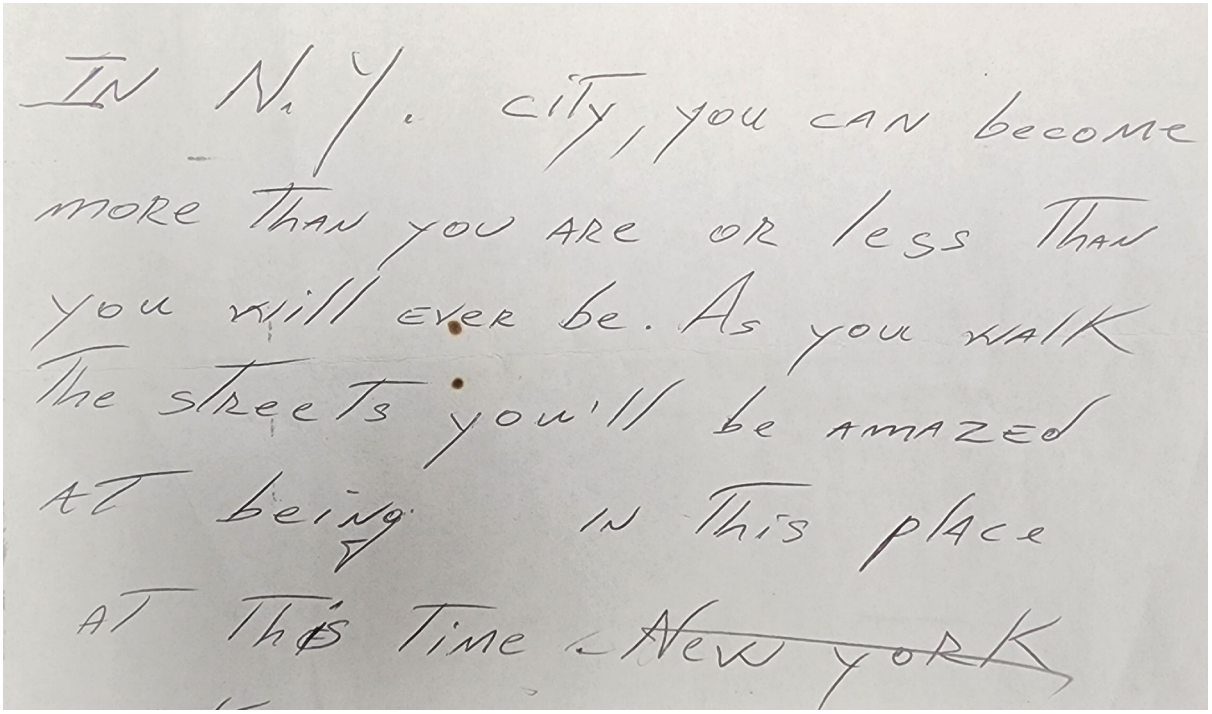
New York is new everyday
yet, New York never sleeps it away
it is Full of sweet
And, it is Full of melancholy
it is a widow's joy
And, a grooms Last ploy
New York is where all warriors deploy
All New York is Missing is its Fullness... The Fullness of You!!





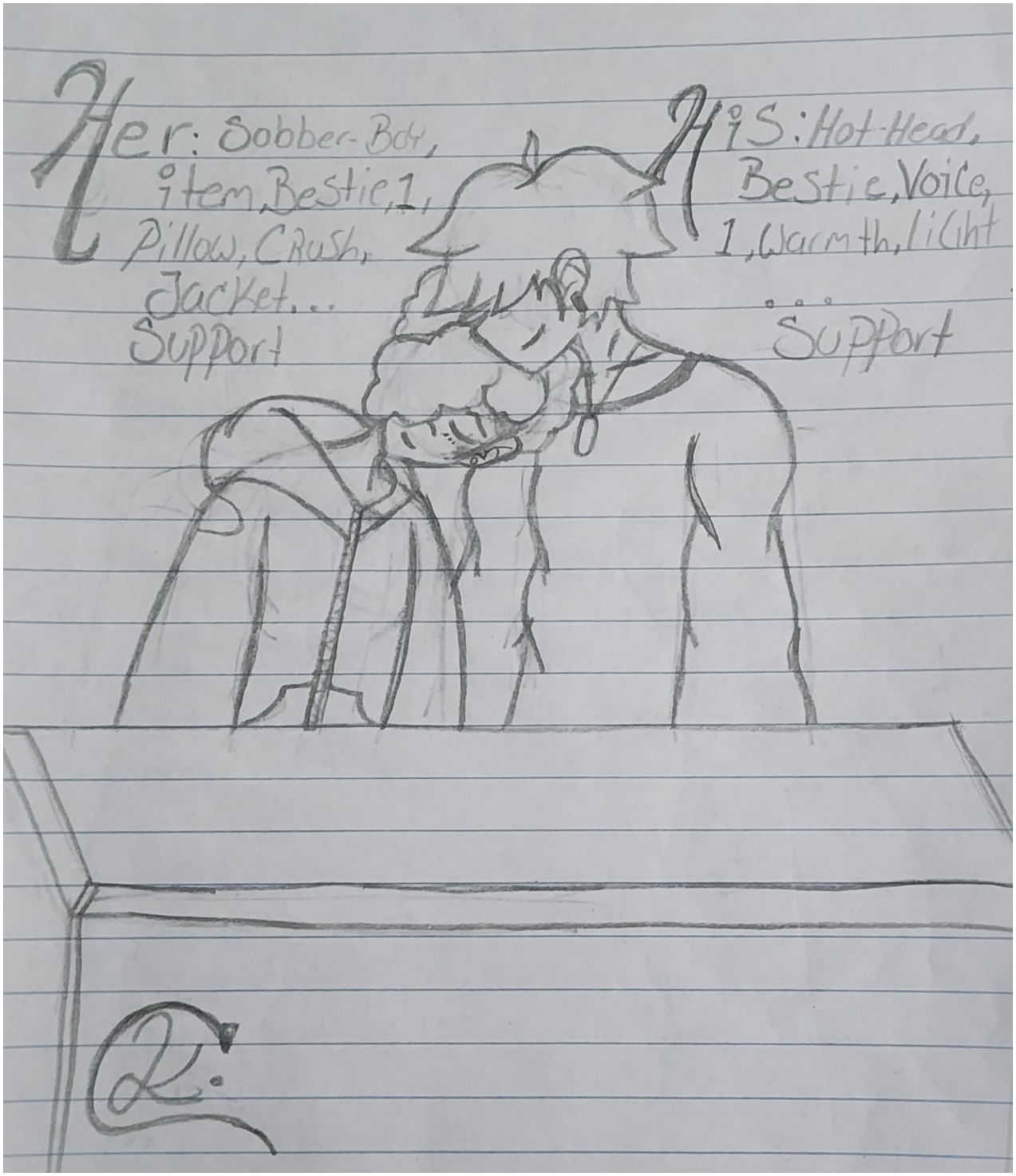
New York is **full** of streets
The streets are **full** of buildings
The buildings are **full** of lights
The lights are **full** of electricity
The electricity **fills** the people
And, the people are **full** of dreams
Their dreams are **full** of hope
And, their hope encourages them
TO WORK!!!
Their work is **full** of stress
And, the stress is **full** of itself.
The Fool drinks it away
while The Wise sips it at bay
Meanwhile, the poor seeks the bread of the day
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New York is new every day
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It is **full** of sweet
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New York is where all warriors deploy
All New York is missing is it's **Fullness**...
The **Fullness** of You!!!

- Daniel J-P.





Art is about Friendship and Bondage, art Show So Many Memories in both good and Bad Ways.


Her: Sobber-Bot, item, Bestie, 1, Pillow, Crush, Jacket... Support
His: Hot-Head, Bestie, Voice, 1, Warmth, Light ... Support

Haylif C.

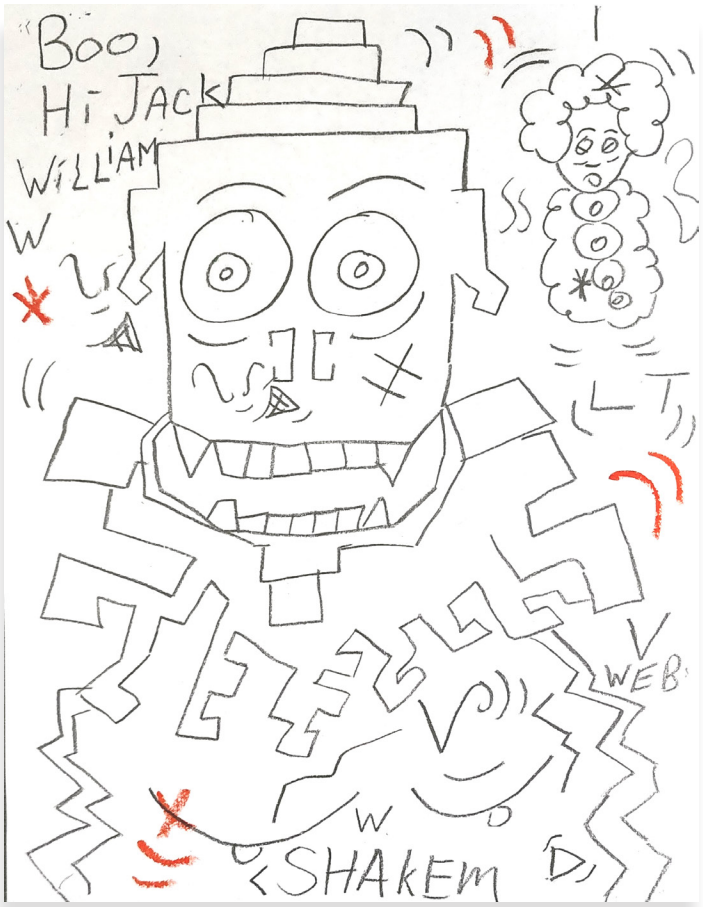
Broken But Strong

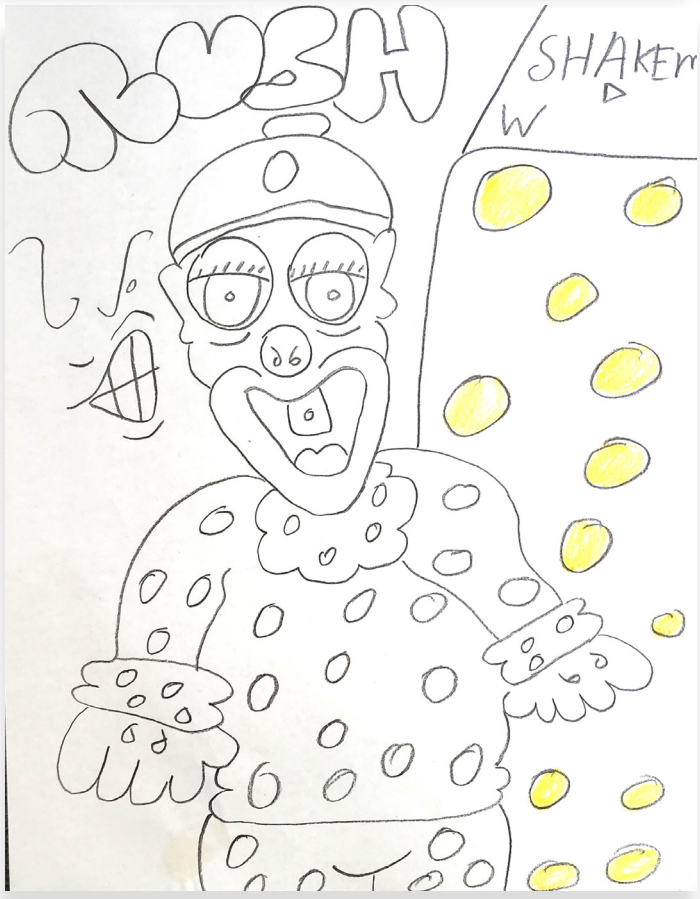
I was Born to be broken
in life There are Trials
like heartache and pain
Troubling events
love lost and shame
Me: I was born to be broken
So I gotta stay strong

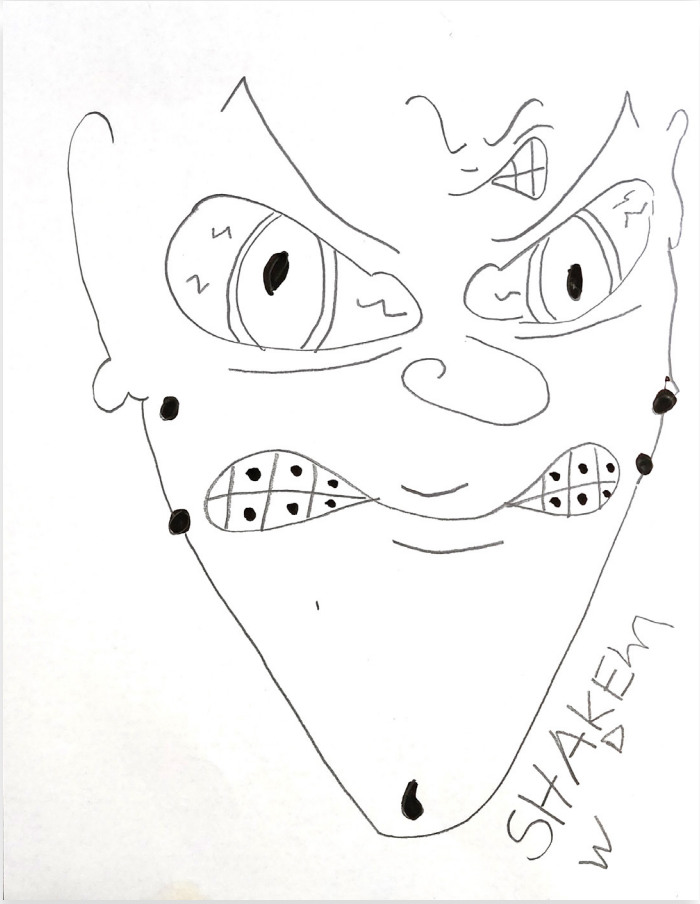
When life does me wrong
Putting walls in my way
I Remember I'm Human
With time yet to grow
and strenthen My Mind
Body and soul
I was born to be broken
Truth to be told. Those
Trials are just lessons
lifes beauty behold

By Tyrell R









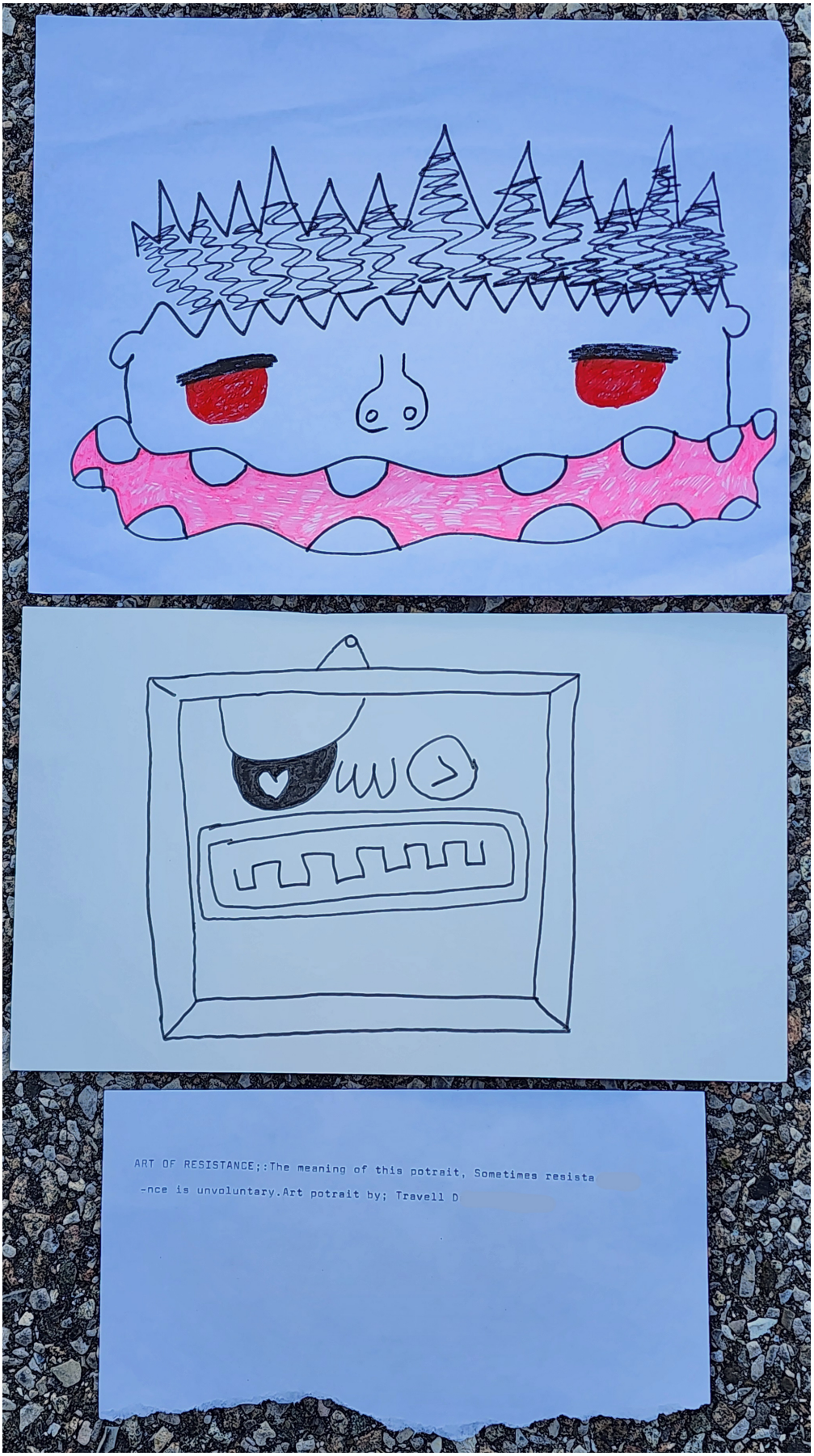
Shakem W.



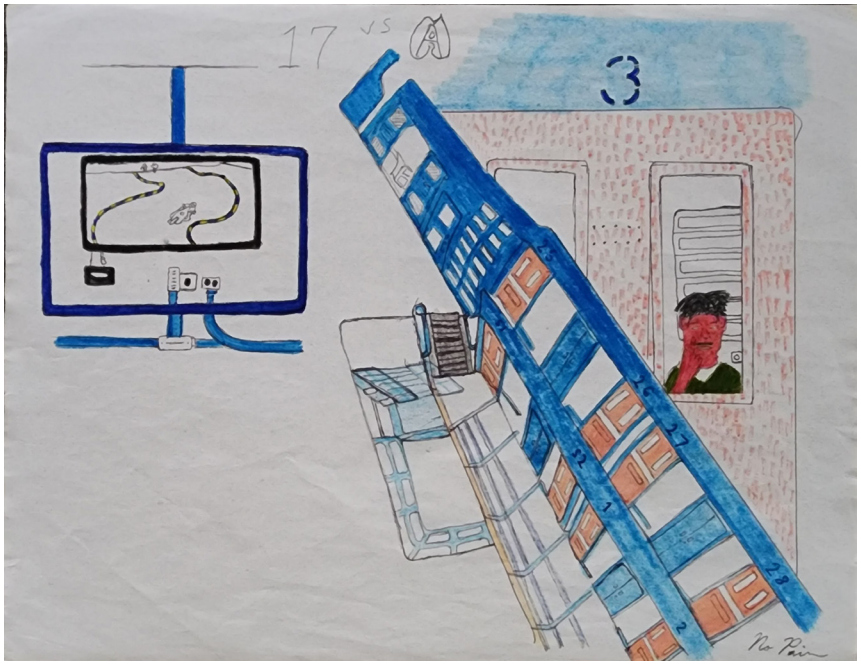
DeSean F.



Shakem W.



ART OF RESISTANCE;: The meaning of this portrait, sometimes resista --nce is unvoluntary. Art potrait by; Travell D.



Andrew S.

DRAMA THERAPY PLAYWRITING AND PERFORMANCE ENSEMBLE

This catalogue includes three plays and one story written and performed by group members in the performing collective on the GATE (Groups for Addiction Treatment Enhancement) unit. Group participants were invited to be active members of a collective aimed at supporting their commitment to personal growth, building trust, increasing communication skills, and prosocial behavior through dramatic artistry. Additional goals included emotional and physical integration, personal growth through emotional expression, embodiment, improvisation, and role play. Initially, participants worked with a template to help inspire budding playwrights to contextualize an idea for a play. Script ideas were improvised by group members and feedback was provided to the playwrights. Then scripts were typed by the drama therapist to help facilitate in-group readings and support continued development. Plays were then performed by the collective and the recordings of these performances are available here. The first page of each script written by the GATE unit group members is printed below so viewers can see a writing sample and the character list of performers.

- Barbara B., Drama Therapist

Listen to patients read their plays on Soundcloud.

Take 'Em to Church

by Nathaniel G.

Characters:
Shane.....Nathaniel G.
Jackson .....Bo C.
Bernard .....Roberto L.
Danny .....Harvey W.

Shane has invited his friends to church. Jackson lives with Shane, Bernard lives nearby & Danny is visiting. Shane tells Jackson, Bernard & Danny about good experiences of church life & also the woman he has met there. They are in mid-conversation about church & how good the experience has been to him & how much it has changed his life for the better.

Scene One
(Scene One starts in Shane's apartment in Bronx, New York.)

Shane:	Yeah bro, its different. I ain't ever think I'd be feeling church like that. Word. And the shawty's! Sheesh!!!
Jackson:	Word!? Its like that? I gotta pull up.
Bernard:	Word is bond. I've been there a couple times with him. Sum nice women in there bro.
Shane:	Word.
Jackson:	Aight bet, Imma pull up on Sunday
Bernard:	Word, me too
Danny:	I ain't going.
Shane:	Why not? We all going.
Danny:	So?
Shane:	You never know what could happen. Come and get your blessing
Danny:	Blessings are everywhere.
Bernard & Jackson:	True!!!
Shane:	True, but we all going you might as well pull up.

(End of Sample. Please listen to the full version of this play by scanning the QR code.)

Shifter

by Roberto L.

Characters:
Narrator.....Roberto L.
De Weir.....Reavis L
Hinsdale.....Christopher L.
Officers.....Clayton B.

Narrator: In 2024, 53-year old David Hinsdale was a happy, healthy bachelor enjoying teaching 8th grade high school students at Medford High School in Medford, Mass. Through an unbelievable series of events Hindsdale now finds himself in Los Angeles in 1947 and was living his worst nightmare. Bandaged, handcuffed and shackled Hinsdale sits alone in the LAPD's interrogation room, he awaits the arrival of Paul DeWeir the head of the LAPD's psychiatric department. Hinsdale was booked as John Doe and during his arrest for car theft he inadvertently implicated himself in the worst homicide in the history of Los Angeles. By speaking to DeWeir, Hinsdale believes the best his fate could offer would be life in a sanitorium, however if he spoke to detectives he was guaranteed a one-way trip to the gas chamber.

Scene One

Place: Los Angeles January 21, 1947, 7:05 AM, the LAPD Central Booking

DeWeir: Good morning John.
Hinsdale: Good morning
DeWeir: John, I'm glad you agreed to speak to me first rather than the detectives – as you know this morning you will be transferred over to the detention center, so we don't have much time. First of all, I want to talk about your injuries, you were just brought in from the clinic – how do you feel?
Hinsdale: I feel ok.
DeWeir: I understand your injuries have nothing to do with the car crash you were involved in on the afternoon of January the 9th.
Hinsdale: That's correct.

(End of Sample. Please listen to the full version of this play by scanning the QR code.)

Pete's Story

by Anthony C.

Characters:
Pete.....Anthony C.
Director.....Nathaniel G.

Hello everyone, my name is Peter, but I go by Pete, and there are those who call me uncle Pete.

I am what's called by the prison system a recidivist, someone who continues to break the law and keeps coming back to jail and prison. I have served at least 32 years in jail and state prison. I have at least 5 state prison identification numbers and at present as of 6-18-25, I was released from state prison after serving a 12 to life sentence that started in 2013.

I have also served 10 years before this 12 to life and another 9 ½ years before the 10-flat making it a total of 31 ½ years in a state and city jail. I have also served city time, juvenile time and state juvenile time making it a total of 41 years out of 56 years old that I am now making me about 14 or 15 years old of my somewhat normal life.

The reason I'm sharing a part of my life is because I pray and hope that my story will help my fellow brothers and sisters serving some form of city or state time. My story goes back to my present 12 to life which was for burglary in the 2nd degree, under the three strikes law as a persistent violent felony offender. I came home and was released at my 1st parole board since there has been overcrowding, protest by CO's, firing, and quitting the job by CO's, and murder by CO's tours inmates, closings of prisons. I was released, oh and the fact that I have never been more have any form of history of weapons, assaults, or threats of violence, I was released at my 1st Board.

When I got to the bus station at Syracuse and went to buy me a burger, fries, and soda I was being charged $15.20 and I was shocked so I told them I could not pay that much for such a small order and they knew I was from prison so they gave me a deal of about $7.00 for the entire meal.

They I got three candy bars and a small bag of chips and that cost me $10.00 and I had no choice but to pay for these items because I had eaten almost all the items before I paid for them. Then people were talking all around me and I couldn't understand what they were talking about or what they meant on the phone or with each other and when I got off at 31st St in NYC I was overwhelmed by all the people, all the sky scrapers, all of the homeless people, people on drugs, selling pot on the streets with police there doing nothing, people on K-2, the prices through the roof, and I felt it was too much for me to take in and I started to panic and my anxiety took over my thoughts and I relapsed on K-2, then I must have fainted because when I woke up I was robbed of the bag I had with all my documents, money, pictures, of me and my wife, and many other important documents.

(End of Sample. Please listen to the full version of this play by scanning the QR code.)

Hiding the Grey

by Timothy C.

Characters:
Ship.....Roberto S.
Zenoch.....Vincent L.
Jack.....Timothy C.
Officer Williams.....Clayton B.
Mike.....Khaleel
Sergeant Narsh IGP.....Jean B.
Vladimir.....Daniel C.
Jack's Mom.....Timothy C.
Cory.....Anthony C.
IGP Captain.....Clayton B.
Narrator.....Jessie Y.

Scene One

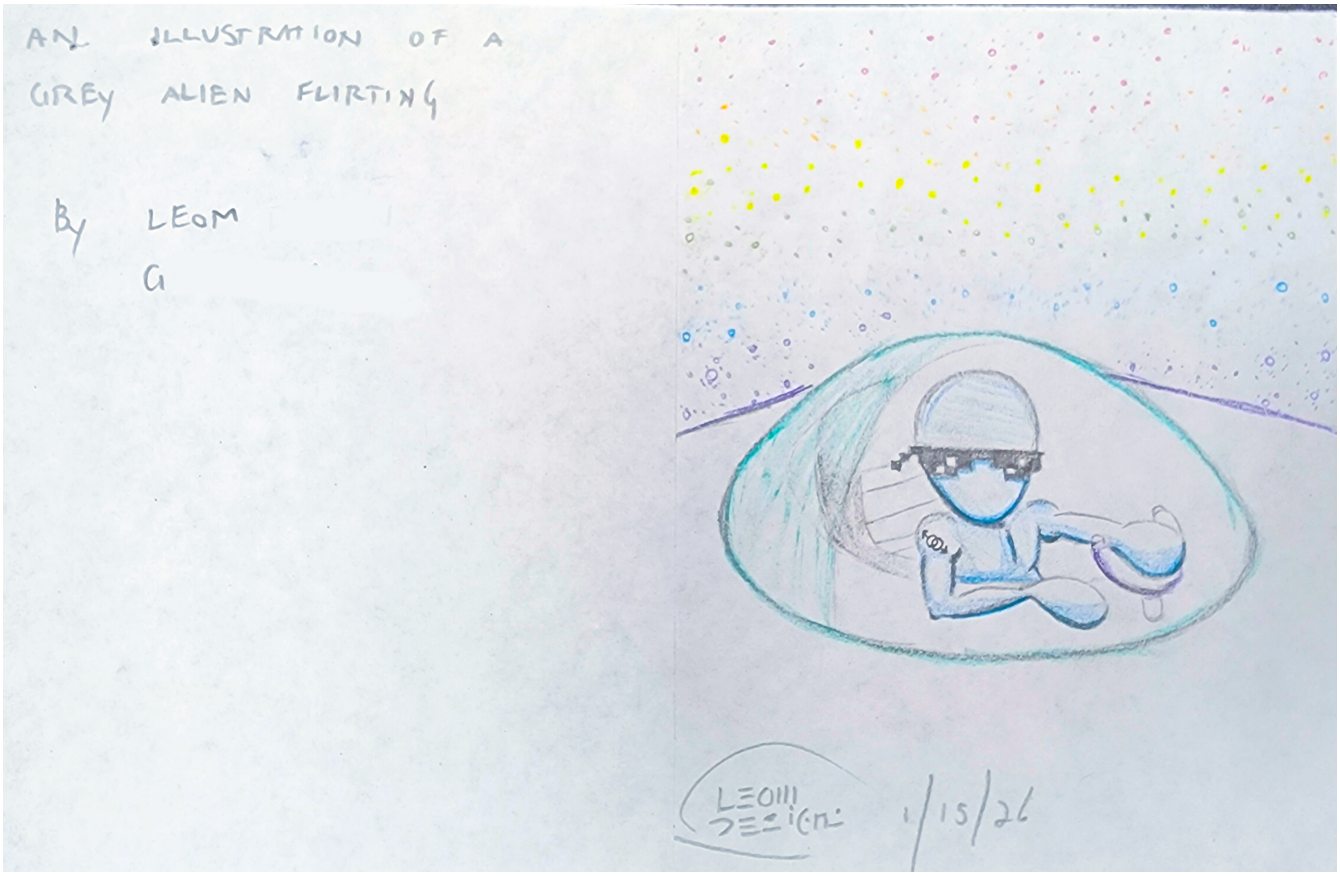
Ship: Incoming, IGP space craft in bound
Zenoch: How long
Ship: Less than 2 minutes
Zenoch: Prepare to jump to hyperspace
Ship: Calculating route…there they are!
Zenoch: Are we hit?!
Ship: A laser has hit our left antigravity thruster, we can't jump to hyperspace
Zenoch: Take us through that asteroid field, we can lose them in there, I'm gonna try to fix what I can on the thruster
Ship: Copy

(Zenoch gets outside the ship in space suit but can't fix engine)

Ship: We can land on earth but almost all our fuel has leaked out.
Zenoch: OK, I guess that's our only option
Ship: Mayday, mayday, we are coming in too hot!

(Ship crashes)

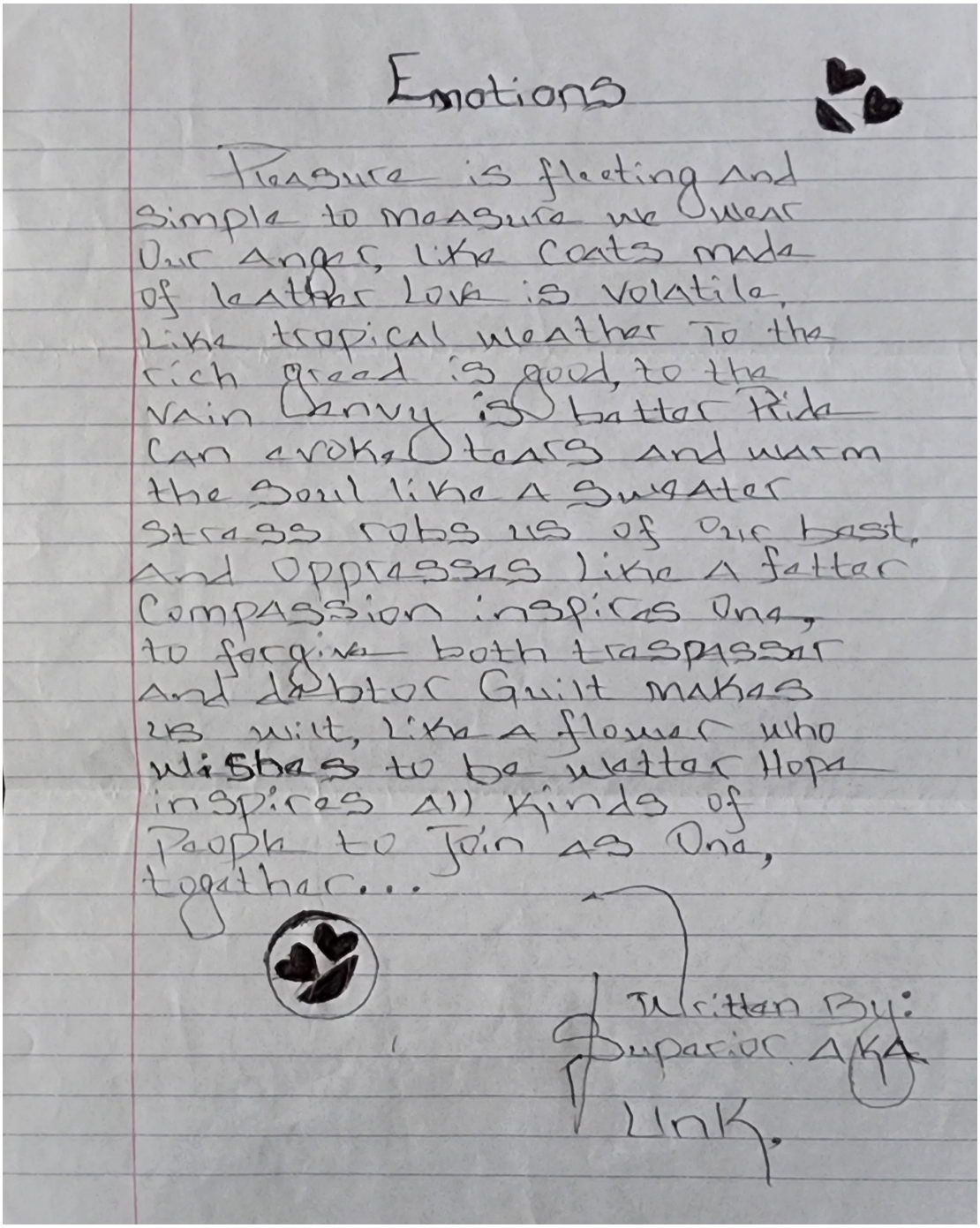
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Leom G.



2RUSH T.S.U.



EMOTIONS

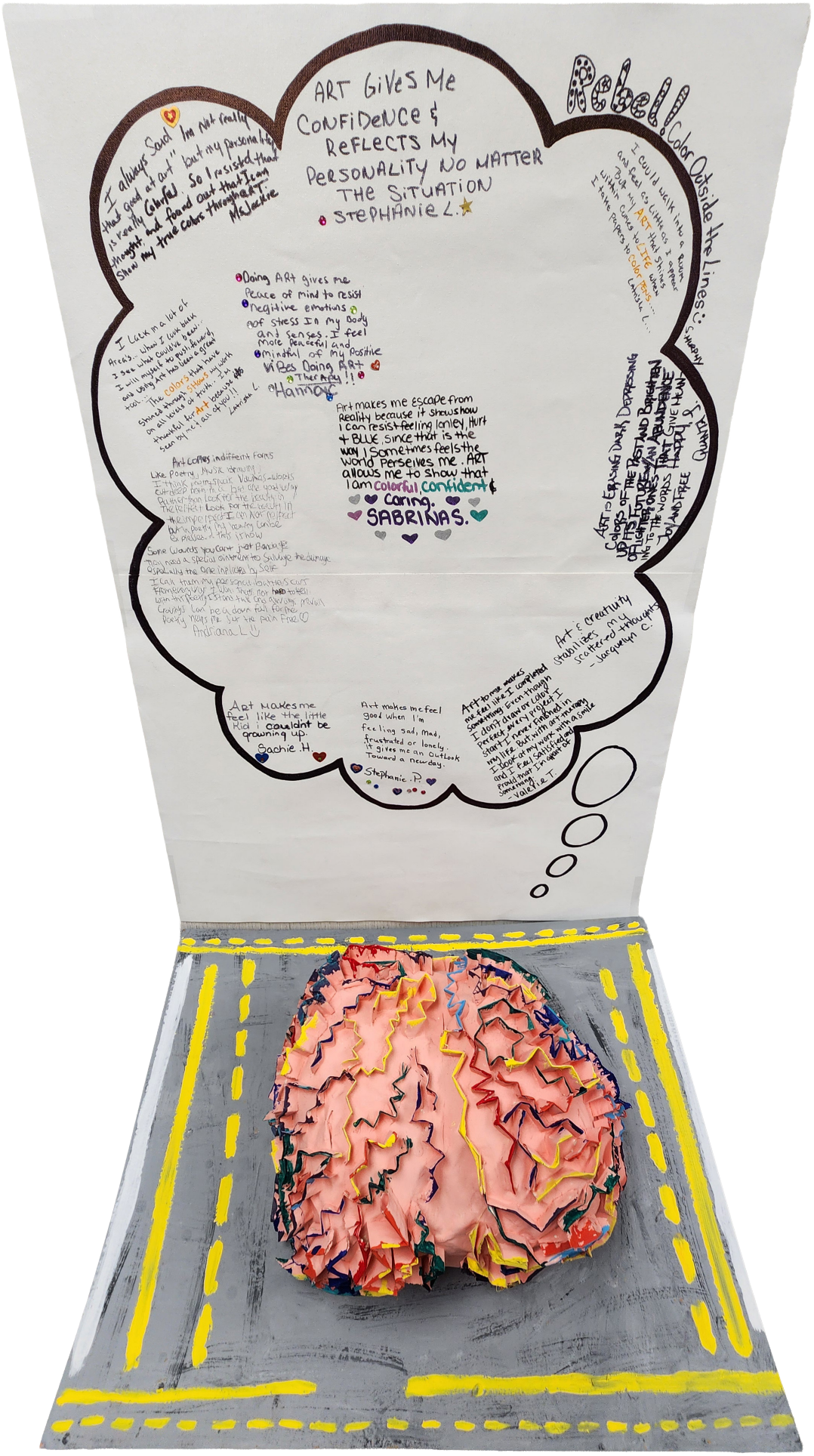
Pleasure is fleeting and simple to measure
We wear our anger like coats made of leather
Love is volatile, like tropical weather
To the rich greed is good, to the vain envy is better
Pride can evoke tears, and warm the soul like a sweater
Stress robs us of our best, and oppresses like a fetter
Compassion inspires one to forgive both trespasser and debtor
Guilt makes us wilt, like a flower who wishes to be wetter
Hope inspires all kinds of people to join as one, together...

- Terrence M. (Superior, AKA Unk)

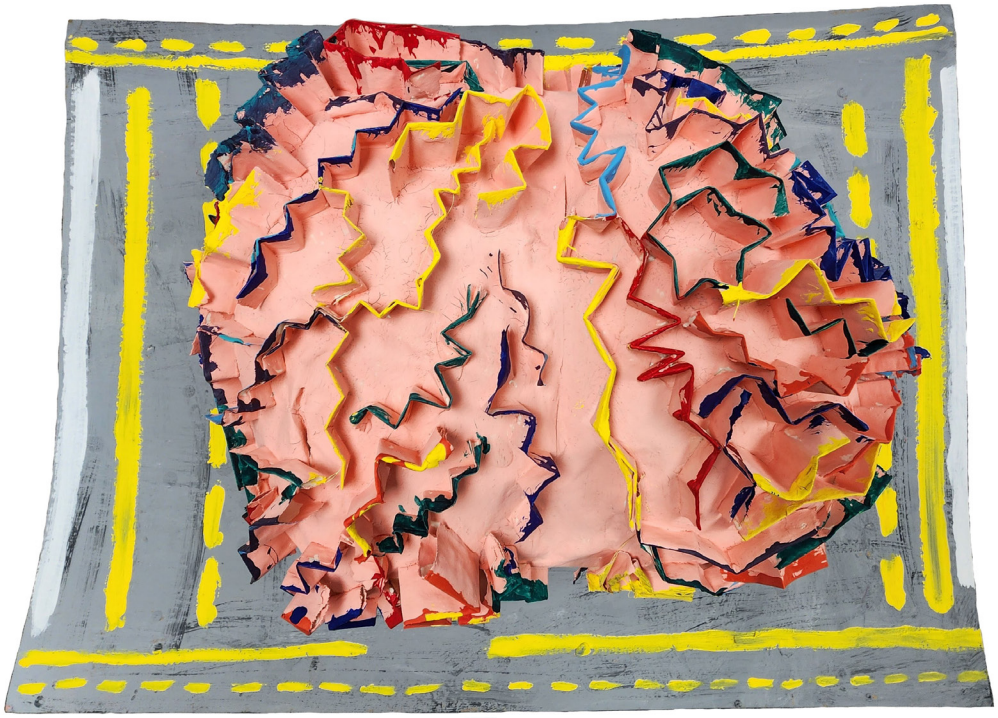


Vitale T.

Terrence M. (Superior, AKA Unk) was a wordsman who would often use Creative Arts Therapy groups to write and recite his poetry, lyrics, and heartfelt letters. Through the act of writing these poems down on paper he has left a part of himself behind to be remembered as a creative and thoughtful person. Rest in peace.



Tania C.
Jacqueline C.
Janice C.
Lauren Ann F.
Christine H.
Sachie H.
Quantá J.
Keysean K.
Marie L.
Erica L.
Stephanie L.
Adriana L.
Latrisha L.
Stephanie M.
Stephanie P.
Jacqueline R.
Gailann S.
Sabrina S.
Valerie T.

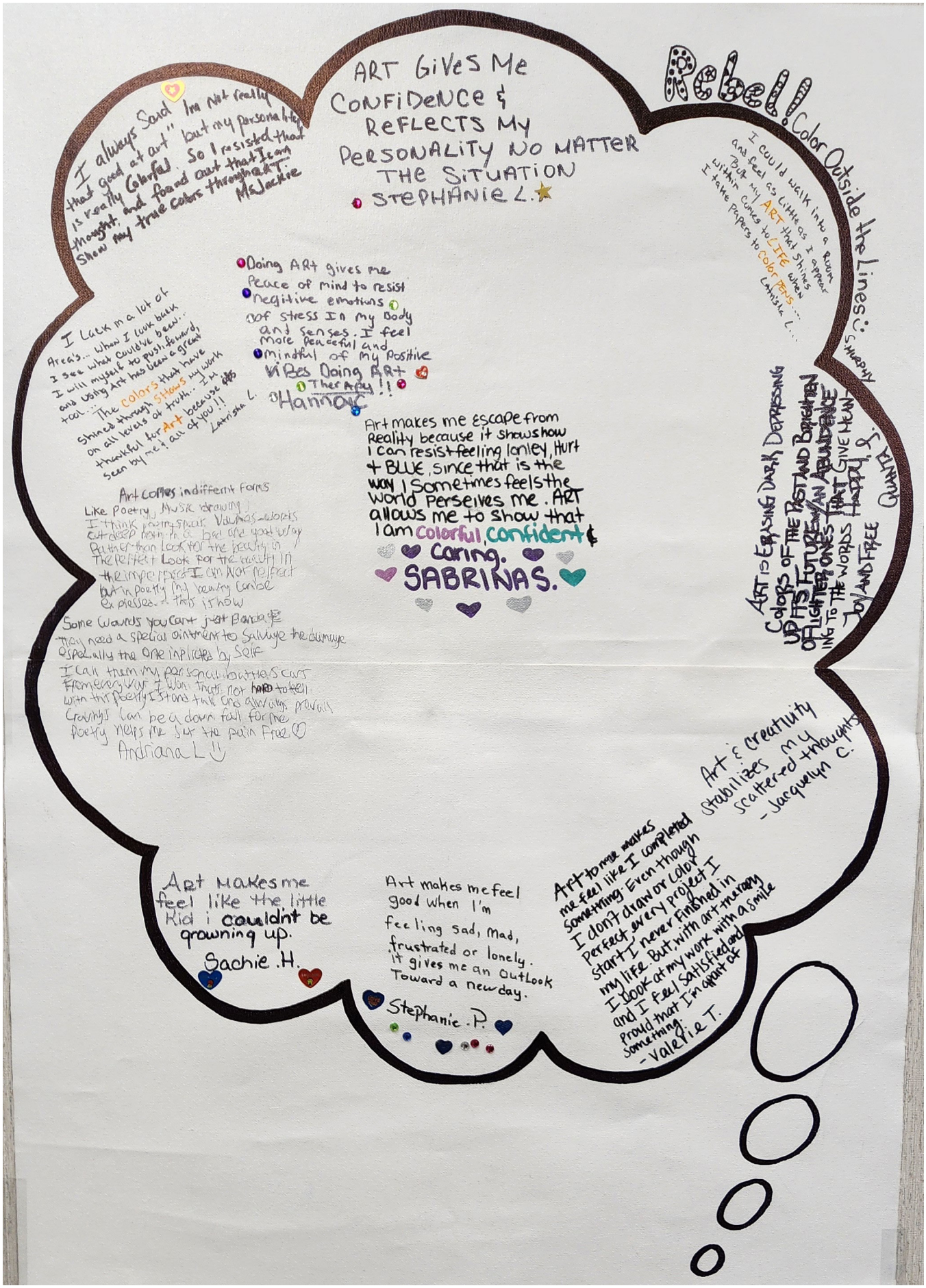


BRAIN STREET

What does resistance mean to you? What comes to mind? How do you define it personally?

These were questions that were asked at the beginning of the creation of "Brain Street" during the brainstorming process. Some answers were: "Protesting, with signs or silently," "Changing how I think about something," "Pushing back, or saying no!" From this brainstorming session, participants concluded that they could use their minds and creativity to protest, change, or "say no" to feeling stagnant, unproductive, or disconnected while they are incarcerated. Collectively, they decided to represent this brainstorming session and amalgamation of thoughts as one large brain, lit up with ideas of all kinds from many perspectives represented by tie-dye colors. They also wanted to resist being "lost in the crowd" and devised a way to have their individual thoughts about creative resistance represented in statements emerging from a thought bubble, rising from their collective think tank. (See the following pages.) As the therapist guiding and witnessing this project unfold over the course of three months, I saw firsthand the many layers of resistance and resilience required to bring it to completion. Participants were housed in units across the building and required a special location and logistics to convene, which was often difficult or impossible. Yet, everyone remained committed to the process – despite the length of time between sessions, waiting on materials, slow (but steady) progress while building, and not knowing at times exactly how everything was going to work or what the final artwork would look like! As the participants said goodbye to some and welcomed others into the group, everyone had to work through the deeply human response to resist change. The common ground of "Brain Street" became a space to practice radical acceptance, compassion, and healthy transition.

- Merrill C., Art Therapist


I always Said Im Not really that good at art" but my personality is Really Colorful. So I resisted that thought. and found out that I can Show my true colors through ART.
-MsJackie
ART GiVeS Me CONFiDeNCE & REFLECTS MY PERSONALITY NO MATTER THE SITUATION
STEPHANIE L.
Rebel! Color Outside the lines:)
I could walk into a room and feel as Little as I appear But my ART that shines within Comes to LIFE when I take Papers to Color PENS...
Latrisha L...
I Look in a lot of Area's... When I look back I see what Could've been.. I will myself to push forward and Using Art has been a great tool... The Colors that have Shined through SHows my work on all levels of truth... I'm thankful for Art because it's Seen by me & all of you!!!
Latrisha L.
Doing ART gives me Peace of mind to resist Negitive emotions & of stress In my Body and senses. I feel more peaceful and mindful of my Positive VIBES Doing ART Therapy!!
-Hannah
Art makes me escape from Reality because it shows how I can resist feeling lonley, Hurt & BLUE, since that is the way I Sometimes feels the World perseives me. ART allows me to show that I am colorful, confident & Caring.
SABRINAS.
ART is ERASING DARK DEPRESSING Colors OF THE PAST AND BRIGHTEN UP ITS FUTURE WITH LIGHTER ONES THAT GIVE HEART ING TO THE WORDS HAPPY, JOY AND FREE
QUANTEL
Art Comes in different Forms
Like Poetry, MUSIC drawing, I think poetry speaks Volumes - words Cut deep Pain in it but are you by Both or than Look for the beauty in The Reflect Look for the beauty in the imperfect I can NOT reflect but in poetry (my) reality can be expressed - this is how
Some Wounds you Can't just Bandage they need a special ointment to Salvage the damage Especially the ONE inflicted by Self
I call them my personal battles can't Fromeverywhere I won't truth not HARD to tell with the poetry I store talk Ones always prevail Cravings can be a down fall for me Poetry helps me live the pain Free
Andriana L
Art & creativity Stabilizes my scattered thoughts
-Jacquelyn C.
Art makes me feel like the little Kid i couldn't be growning up.
Sachie .H.
Art makes me feel good when I'm feeling sad, mad, frustrated or lonely. It gives me an Outlook Toward a new day.
Stephanie .P.
Art to me makes me feel like I completed Something. Even though I don't draw or color Perfect every project I Start I never finished in my life. But, with art therapy I look at my work with a Smile and I feel SATISFIED and proud that I'm apart of Something.
-Valerie T.

I always said, "I'm not really that good at art" but my personality is really colorful. So, I resisted that thought, and found out that I can show my true colors through art.
– "Ms. Jackie" (Jacqueline R.)

Art gives me confidence and reflects my personality no matter the situation.
– Stephanie L.

I could walk into a room and feel as little as I appear but my ART that shines within comes to LIFE when I take paper to color pens…
– Latrisha L.

I lack in a lot of areas…when I look back I see what could've been…I will myself to push forward and using art has been a great tool…The colors that have shined through shows my work on all levels of truth. I'm thankful for art because it's seen by me and all of you!!
– Latrisha L.

Doing art gives me peace of mind to resist negative emotions of stress in my body and senses. I feel more peaceful and mindful of my positive vibes doing art therapy.
– Christine H.

Art comes in different forms like poetry, music, drawing. I think poetry speaks volumes – words cut deep both in a bad or good way. Rather than look for beauty in the perfect, look for the beauty in the imperfect. I am not perfect, but in my poetry my beauty can be expressed… this is how:

Some wounds you can't just bandage
They need a special ointment to salvage the damage
Especially the ones inflicted by self
I call them my personal battle scars
from every war I won - that's not hard to tell
with this poetry I stand tall and always prevail
cravings can be a downfall for me
poetry helps me set the pain free.
– Adriana L.

Art makes me escape from reality because it shows how I can resist feeling lonely, hurt, and blue, since that is the way I sometimes feel the world perceives me. Art allows me to show that I am colorful, confident and caring.
– Sabrina S.

Art is erasing dark depressing colors of the past and brightens up it's future with an abundance of lighter ones that gives meaning to the words happy, joy, and free.
– Quantá J.

Art makes me feel good when I am feeling sad, mad, frustrated or lonely. It gives me an outlook toward a new day.
– Stephanie P.

Art and creativity stabilizes my scattered thoughts.
– Jacqueline C.

Art makes me feel like the little kid I couldn't be growing up.
– Sachie H.

Art to me makes me feel like I completed something. Even though I don't draw or color perfect, every project I start I never finished in my life. But, with art therapy I look at my work with a smile and I feel satisfied and proud that I am a part of something.
– Valerie T.

WHO AM I?

I am poetry, devoted to words and meaning making. I imagine the power of spoken and written word as storytelling.

When the GATE unit was disbanded due to a shortage of space in the summer months of 2025, the women were housed on units throughout the jail and their creative art therapy treatment was disrupted. Correctional Health Services, including the Creative Arts Therapy department, and DOC made a collective effort to bring services back to a small group of women that were previously housed on the unit. During these sessions, held in the gymnasium and classrooms in the school, a project began with the question, "Who am I?" The Brain Street project was created originally with signs on the Tuesday before my group. I prompted my group to write a "Who Am I?" poetic statement that related to their part of the Brain Street project (seen on the previous four pages). Each participant wrote a statement that reflected on their thoughts and feelings about their lives at that moment. After the writing prompt, the participants read their statements aloud and chose one line in their statement to elaborate on. As a result, the participants connected their writings to the Brain Street project to support how they wanted to be viewed by others. This process allowed the group to listen, encourage one another, and express their voices and choices. Again, it created a space to welcome and practice radical acceptance, empathy, and wellness towards recovery.

- Dr. Barbara B., Poetry Therapist

I am funny. I have always been very funny,
I have tendencies to always make people laugh
& brighten their days, when their days are going blue.
I like the fact that I can make people have better days.
It makes me feel good inside to brighten another person's day.
When people are sad they...

- Esmeralda

If I can define myself with a word, my word would be knowledge.
When I say knowledge I mean reading, writing, and learning.
Reading inspires me to work on myself – growth and self-healing.
I read about other people's lives and what they've been through.
When I read I can forget everything around me and enter my mind
without everything or everyone disturbing me.
I am also a day dreamer. I daydream most of the day.
Especially when I am reading a book.
I've always dreamt about being an author
and inspiring other people with my story.

- Valerie T.

I am someone that loves to fight for the rights of people that cops beat up on.
Someone who never walks with her head down. Someone who believes in the rights of mankind.
Someone who thinks that black people should stand up for themselves when wrong is coming their way.
Who am I? A black sister that never gives up on myself and on good people.
As a black sister, I believe that communication is the key to success. So people use their brain not guns!!

- Gailann S.



I am a woman
who seeks to be centered.
A woman that is a little girl
who should have boundaries as an adult.
I should be recovering everyday with resilience.
How can I be more aware of God's doings.
As information comes to me,
will make me self-educated.
I need self-sufficiency. I
need to figure out what this looks like.
I AM A WOMAN who seeks to be centered.
A woman that is a little girl who should have…

- Latisha L.

Stability

Stability has always been something I have struggled with obtaining, having, and keeping.
When I have stability, I have a sense of comfort. I am able to do things better myself.
I am able to create a routine which keeps me grounded.
Being grounded, being stable, having a routine helps me stay on a positive, successful path.

- Jacqueline C.

When it comes to art and poetry it makes me feel free and like I'm at home. Also, doing art and poetry you can express what you feel and think.
I'm the type of person that can sit all day drawing and coloring about how I'm feeling and I will be okay with a lil bit of music.

Sincerely,
- Nani

I am Elizabeth, I am a warrior;
I am a young woman who's full of wisdom but guided in the wrong direction.
I am a loveable and honest person.

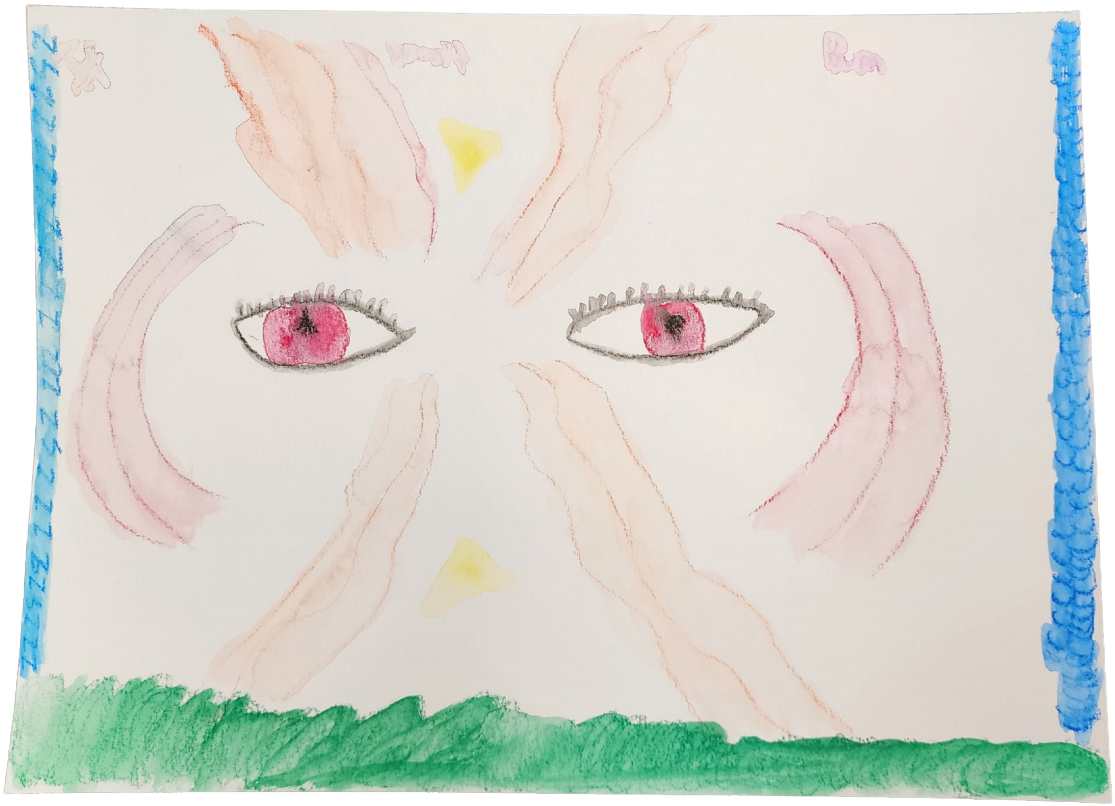
- Elizabeth S.

Who am i?
Free is me
My mind can think clearly
These bars do not restrict me
I can close my eyes and be
Even more Free, Free to see
All that's meant for me
This world can be judgmental, but I tell
You they do not define me
Nor describe me
They place me in a cage and dictate orders to me
They're trying to take my control away
But I tell you my FREEDOM lays
In my special place, mind, body, and soul is where it stays.

- Latisha L.



James F.

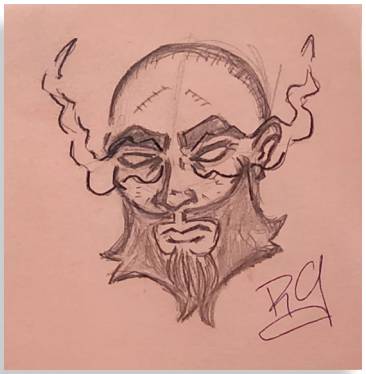


The outside looking in sees the words on the front. On the top there are also words for looking out from inside.

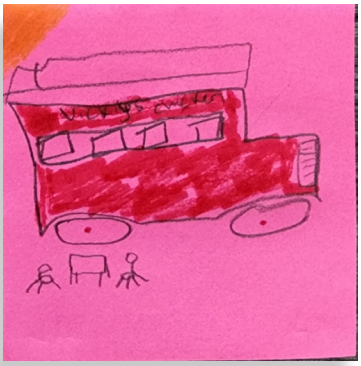
Lenue M.


Guidance
Reaching out for my guiding light. That light can be anything: goals, dreams... hope.
J

Justin J.









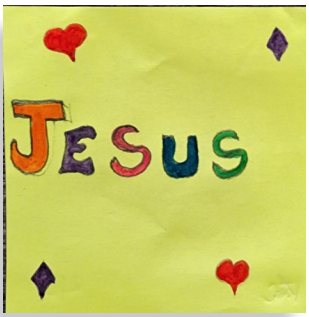


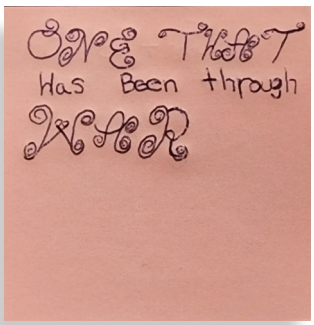
STICKY NOTES PROJECT

Sticky notes in art therapy serve as an accessible, low-stakes medium for emotional regulation, a quick grounding exercise, and portable art. Their small, removable nature allows for easy expression of feelings. They can be arranged, moved, or displayed, helping to reduce anxiety and increase feelings of control. They reduce the fear of a "blank page." The small space allows individuals to complete a piece of art quickly, providing a sense of accomplishment and reducing anxiety.

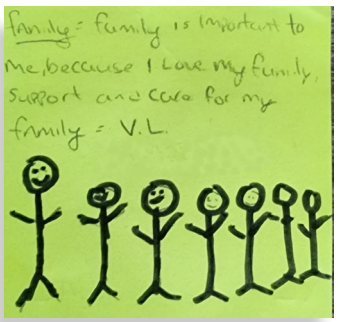
Using sticky notes, the Creative Arts Therapy team attempted to resist some of the environmental boundaries of working as a team across Rikers Island in many different jail facilities, with many different individuals. In promoting this never-before-attempted project to our patients, we explained that it would provide an opportunity to become a part of something larger than oneself and find common ground – despite perhaps never meeting or sharing the same physical space – with other artists.

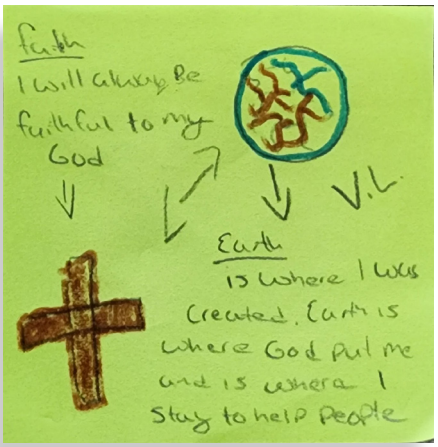
- Rikers Island Creative Arts Therapists



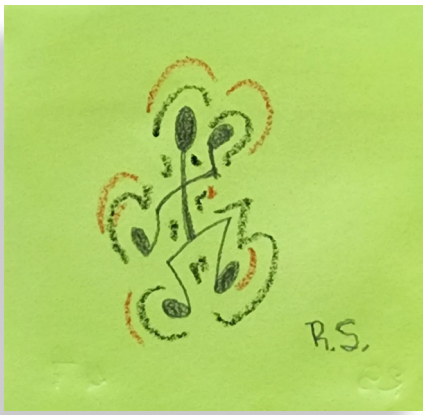




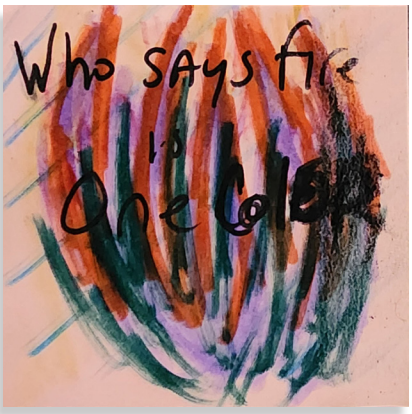






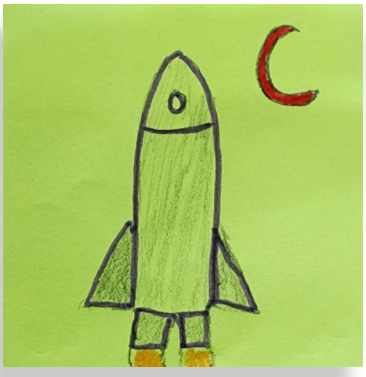


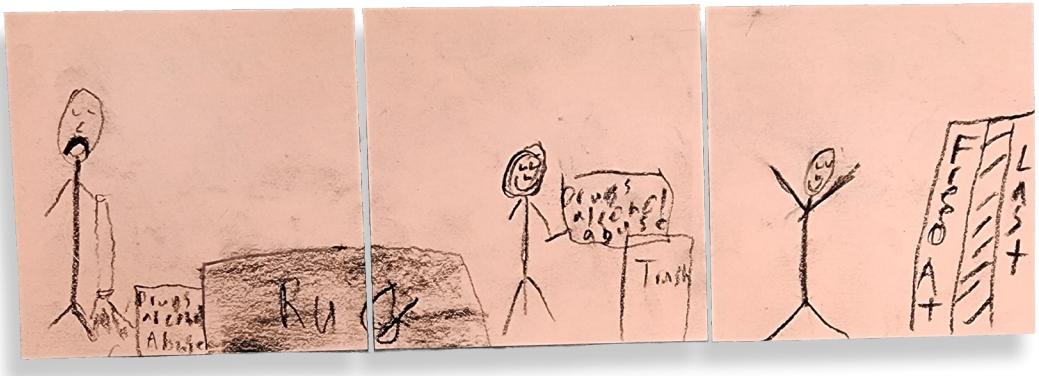
Andre A., Daquan A., Kyle A., Nosher A., Thomas A., Jacqueline C., Khaleel C., Marcus C., Matthew C., Tim C., Danuel D., Eric F., Keith G., Reinaldo G., Paul H., Kareem J., Leonddis J., Vincent L., Desean M., Lenue M., Stephanie M., Steven M., David O., Marcin P., Shawn Q., Jose R., Gerardo S., Roberto S., Jose V., Shakem W., Travis W., Yuri W.












Kyle A
$340,000
for Bail @
$20,000
Brooklyn College Academy
2008
Alumni
HOPE
Breast Cancer
G R V C
32
PRAY
Happy Birthday
SW SHA


Be Brave
Be Kind
Be Courageous
Be Beautiful
TIMOTHY...
FJ
3AV
NO!
RUN
FUCK
Big Day Birtday

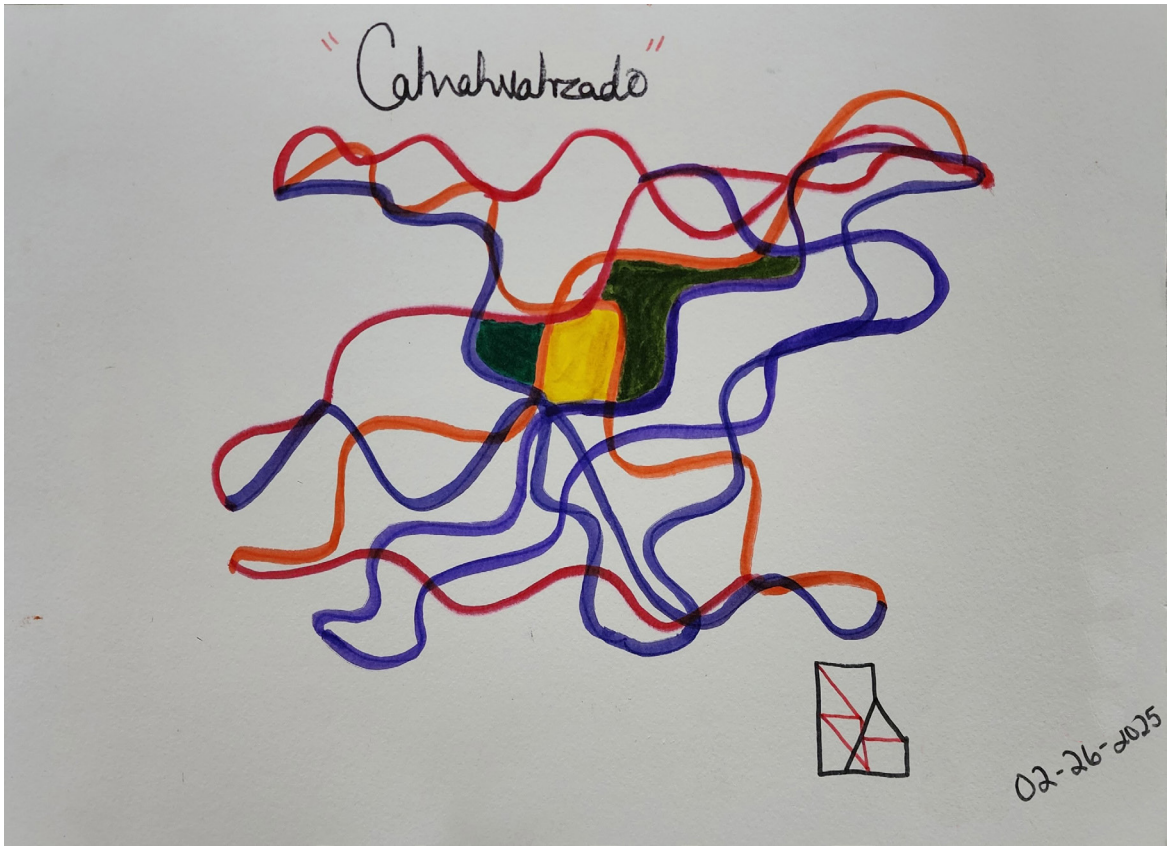
LYRIC SUBSTITUTION

Sabrina was highly engaged throughout the lyric substitution intervention, writing her own replacement lyrics and requesting an additional opportunity to perform the song using her revised version. Following the activity, she asked the therapist to write down the song with her substituted lyrics for future reference.

At a later date, Sabrina reflected on the experience and reported that the lyric substitution process "made [her] feel empowered" and "gave [her] clarity and awareness of the process and where [she is] now." She further stated that she realized she was repaired, that drugs were no longer helpful, that the program works and she has grown, and that she was determined to stay clean because of the song. "I still love [Jelly Roll's song,]" Sabrina shared, "but I love my version more now. It reminds me how strong I am."

The intervention appeared to facilitate self-reflection, increased insight into recovery progress, reinforcement of personal strengths, and expression of hope and commitment to continued sobriety.

- Makaria P., Music Therapist



L. S.

SAVE ME
Song by Jelly Roll
Lyric substitution by Sabrina S.

I will save me, me from myself
I no longer live in Hell
I say my recovery is good for my health
It's no longer the only thing that seems to help

All of this drinkin' and smokin' is hopeless
It's no longer the only thing I need
Somethin' is still broken inside me
But I'll hold on to anything that helps.

I'm a warrior]
I'm no longer a waste of time] x2
I'm no longer damaged I have repaired]
My addiction has shattered my dreams]

What if the night sky was missin' the moon?
There were no shootin' stars to use wishin' on you
This drug addiction will always be washed away
It's the only peace, I've ever found

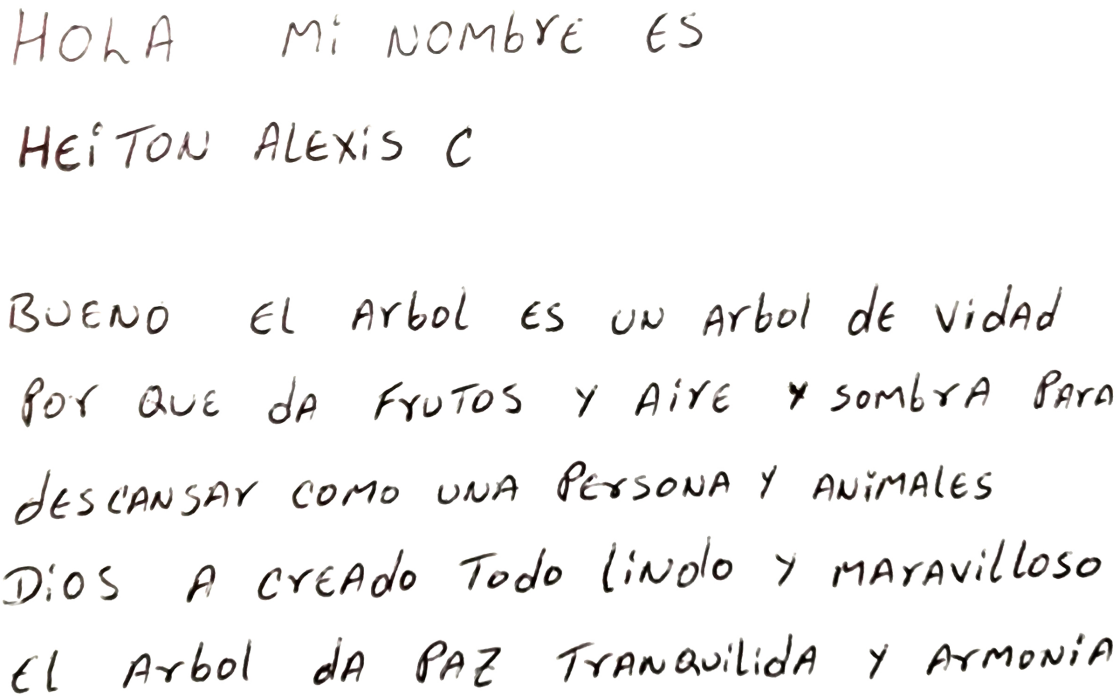
All of this drinkin' and smokin' is hopeless
It's no longer the only thing I need
Somethin' is still broken inside me
But I'll hold on to anything that helps.

I'm a survivor]
I'm no longer a waste of time] x2
I'm no longer damaged I have repaired]
My addiction has shattered my dreams]

STORY TREES

This drama therapy group offered participants an opportunity to consider and reflect on their roots and family history, their current state, and their hopes for the future. The image of the "story tree" is designed to help patients who may find sequential reasoning difficult and who may have family-associated trauma, to orient themselves toward the future. By mastering the materials in this exercise, patients can achieve the goals of self-acceptance, improved communication, and self-expression.

- Barbara B., Drama Therapist


HOLA Mi NOMBRE ES
HEiTON ALEXiS C

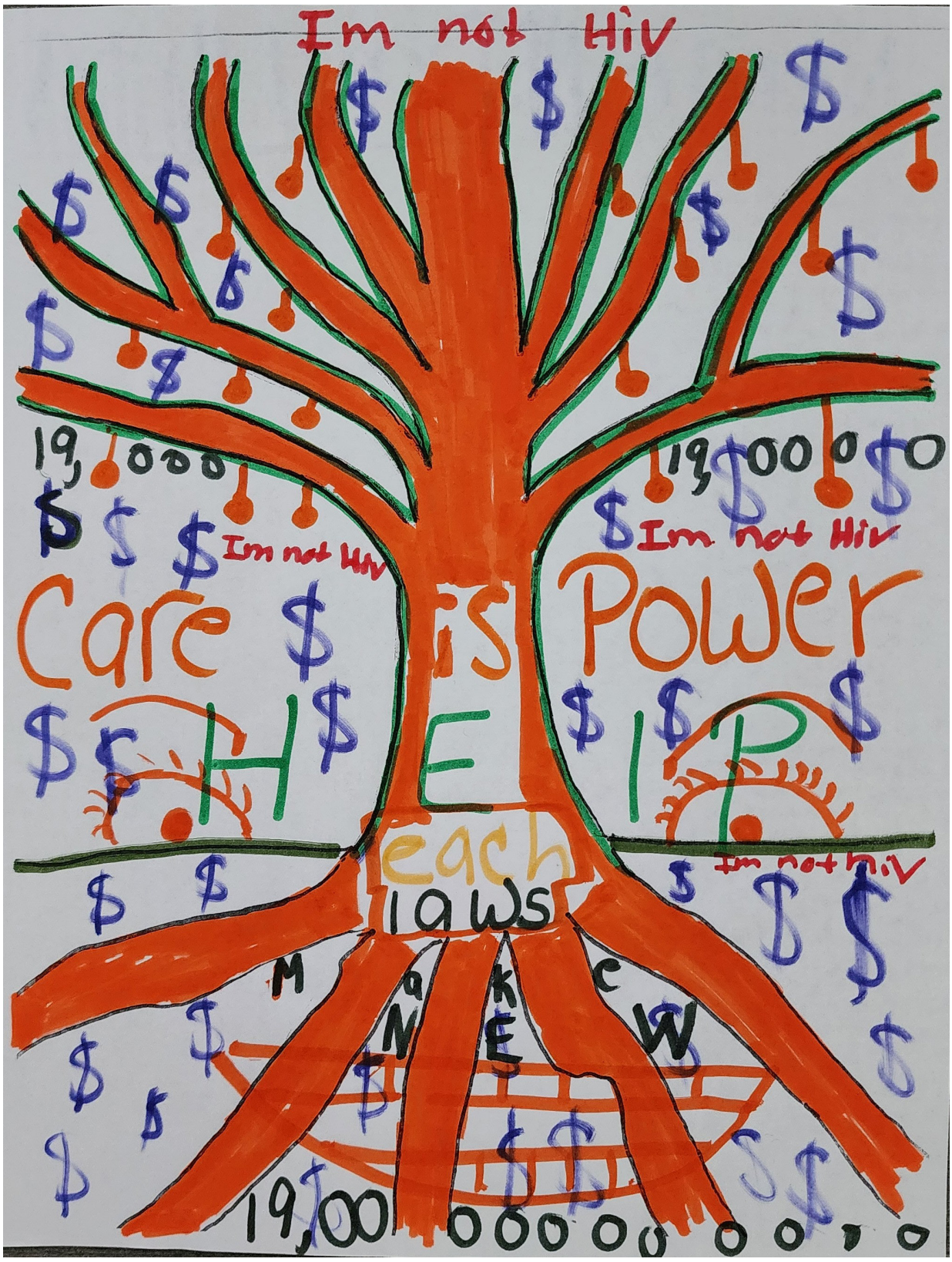
BUENO EL Arbol ES UN Arbol de VidAd
POR QUE DA FRUTOS Y AiRE Y SOMBRA PARA
DESCANSAR COMO UNA PERSONA Y ANiMALES
DiOS A CREADO Todo LiNDO Y MARAVILLOSO
EL Arbol dA PAZ TRANQUILIDA Y ARMONiA

Hello my name is
Heiton Alexis C.

Well, the tree is a tree of life
because it provides fruit, air, and shade
for resting—for both people and animals.
God created everything beautiful and wonderful;
the tree brings peace, tranquility, and harmony.


PASO
SIEMPRE
CON EL AMOR DE DIOS
LOVE
AMO MI FAMILIA
LATINO AMERICA
PAZ
TRABAJAR POR UN FUTURO
BUSCAR EL CAMINO DE DIOS

Heiton C.



Paul H.

Say thanks
I'm about changing the laws
Help the world again 19,000,000
I'm only talk only womens here
I miss you love is care
Make better bodys shots
From the doctor all over the world



Doing this project was very nice
and taught me that it might be the
same face controlling everything.

Anthony C.

TRAGEDY IN SPECTRE:
WATER COLORS OF SACRED GEOMETRY..



Floods & landslides kill over 1,300 in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BATANG TORU, Indonesia — Emergency crews raced to reach survivors and recover more bodies Tuesday as the death toll from last week's catastrophic floods and landslides surged past 1,300 in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and Thailand, with nearly 900 people missing.

Days of heavy monsoon rains inundated vast areas, leaving thousands stranded and many clinging to rooftops and trees waiting for help. The flooding and landslides killed at least 1,338 people: 744 in Indonesia, 410 in Sri Lanka, 181 in Thailand and three in Malaysia, authorities ... Sri Lanka's president, Anura ...ayake, said it's too early to ...t number of dead in his ...

...hardest-hit nation, ...access villages ...e roads have ...bridges collapsed. ... people remain missing, ... to the country's National Disaster Management Agency. Helicopters and boats have been deployed, but officials warn that worsening weather and damaged infrastructure are slowing operations.

Floods and landslides in North Sumatra carried away millions of cubic yards of felled timber, officials said, sparking public concern that illegal logging may have contributed to the disaster.

Batang Toru, the lush forested area, has turned into a wasteland of broken logs and shattered homes. Roads have vanished, replaced by rivers of sludge.

"This is not just a natural disaster, it's a manmade crisis," said Rianda Purba of the Indonesian Environmental Forum, an activist group. "Deforestation and unchecked development have stripped Batang Toru of its resilience. Without urgent restoration and stricter protections, these floods will become the new normal."

A week after flash floods and landslides swept through West Sumatra, survivors were still awaiting news of their loved ones.

Zahari Sutra held photos of his missing wife and two daughters, aged 4 and 2, as he pleaded for help with rescuers in Sikumbang village in Agam district.

The 38-year-old farmer said rising waters blocked his path to home last Thursday. He said the raging current swallowed his home.

He waded through the water shouting for his wife and daughters, but there was only silence.

As darkness fell, he found his eldest, a 5-year-old girl, covered in mud, but safe. Fearing more floods, Sutra clung to a lychee tree with his daughter until dawn, when the full scope of the disaster was revealed: all homes were gone or buried under tons of mud.

"I carried my daughter and went for help," he said, his voice breaking. "My only prayer is to find my wife and children."

UN Secretary-General António Guterres said the UN is "in close contact with authorities in all four countries and stands ready to support relief and response efforts," according to spokesperson Stéphane Dujarric.

Military-led rescue teams in Sri Lanka scoured flood-devastated areas for 356 people still missing in the aftermath of Cyclone Ditwah, the Disaster Management Center said Tuesday. Roads were blocked by landslides and bridges have collapsed, making access difficult.

In the central city of Kandy, residents struggled without running water, relying instead on bottled water collected from natural springs. Authorities warned that conditions could worsen as more rain is forecast in the coming days.

President Dissanayake, speaking in a meeting with government officials, described the disaster as the worst to strike the country in recent history, saying it remains impossible to determine the full scale of casualties.

He said that government agencies were working to reach isolated communities ...

In southern Thailand, cleanup has begun on streets and in buildings ... massive floods affected more than 1 million households and 2.3 million people. Authorities are working to restore infrastructure, including water and electricity

DIMENSIONS OF CHAOS:
PERFORMING ART...

Millennial "X" odus

on #Black & White Velvet Canvas



A Brief Poem...

"XENOX"

Just like any other candy Bar I've ever eaten...

READy...

SET...

BABy...

Flower Beom!!!

"OM MANi PAD-MEi Hummm..."

MICAH
7:18

(Union Sqr., Astor Pl, St. Mark Pl)

Edition.

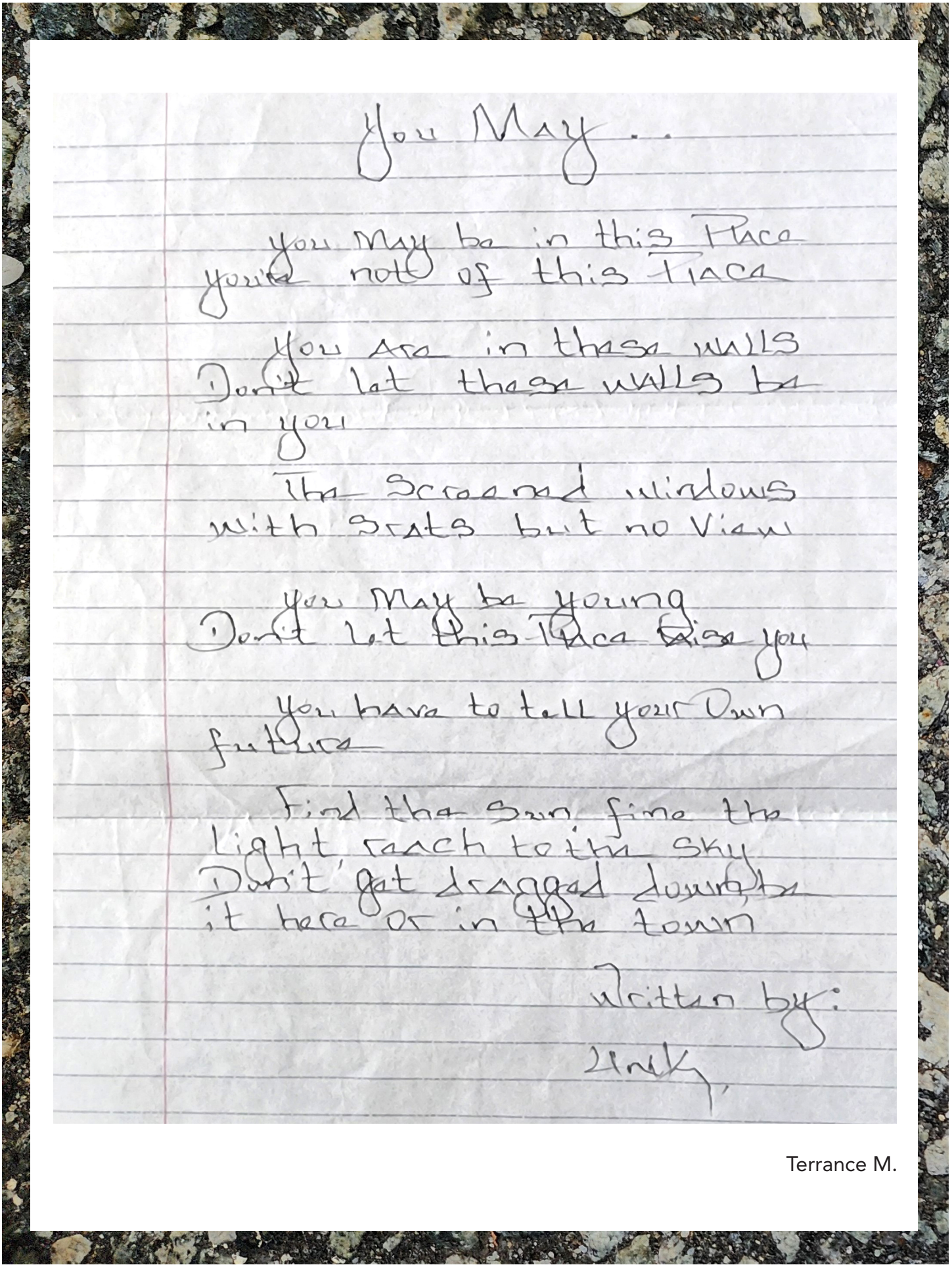
THE NEOEASTGREENWICH DiSporia ~~Novel~~...

NOT ANOTHER Flower Child Movement Revolution

Carter M.



L.S.



You May . . .

You May be in this Place
you're not of this Place

You Are in these WALLS
Don't let these WALLS be
in you

The Screened windows
with Seats but no View

You May be young
Don't let this Place Miss you

You have to tell your Own
futures

Find the Sun, fire the
light, reach to the Sky
Don't get dragged down by
it here or in the town

Written by:
Nicky

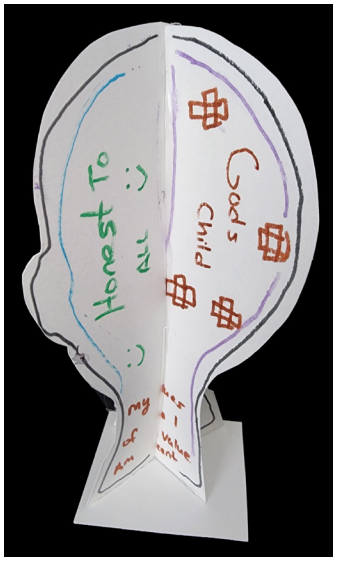
Terrance M.

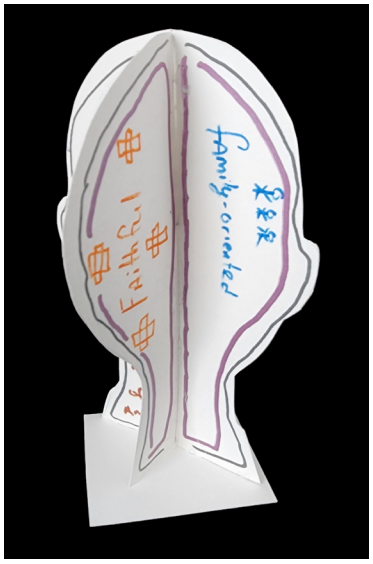


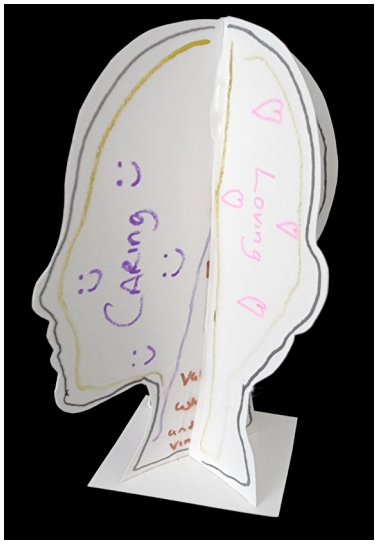
WHAT'S IN THEIR HEADS?

Heads in art therapy are powerful symbols used to explore identity, self-perception, and inner thoughts, through techniques like self-portraits, mask-making, or "inside-out" silhouettes. These techniques help clients externalize, visualize, and process complex emotions, trauma, or cognitive changes.

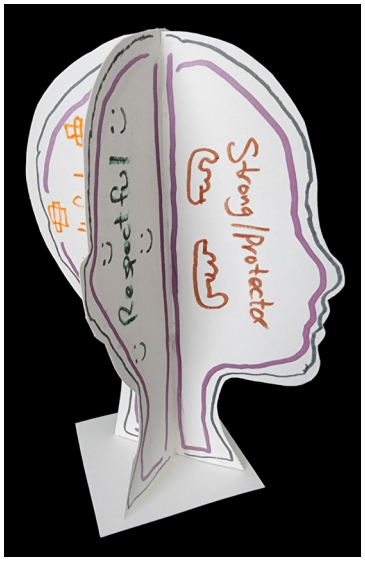
- Annemarie W., Art Therapist

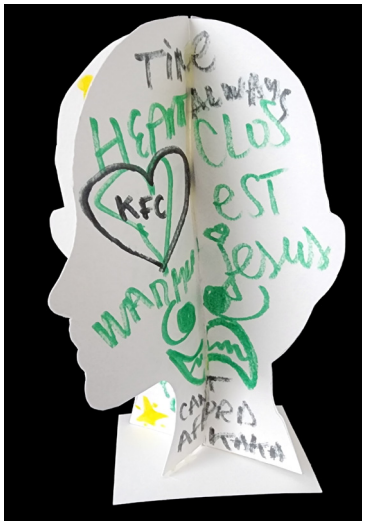


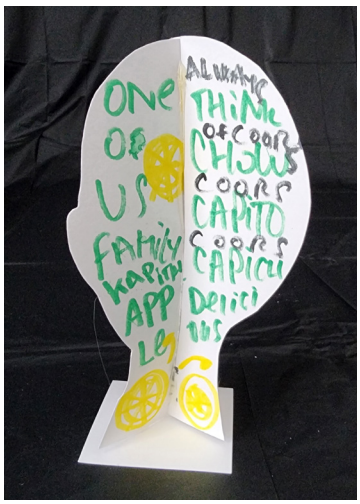


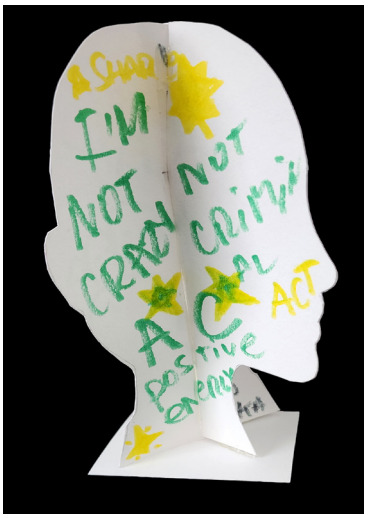


Vincent L.

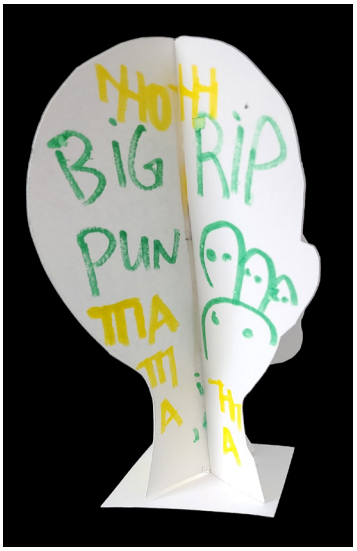








Judge V.



I PREFER

This poem was a part of a compilation of poetry sent to me from the American Academy of Poets. As I read the poem a few times to myself, I was inspired to share it with the women on the GATE unit where I facilitate groups on Thursdays. The theme of choice and voice arose from the words, and I felt they would be able to openly, without restraint, respond in a written manner. As always, the women shared and encouraged one another, creating an atmosphere of support and listening that can support the early stages of recovery, especially in a carceral setting.

As a facilitator, the act of witnessing the women's reactions to the writing prompts, sharing, and responding to themselves and each other's writings affirmed, validated, and empowered me to continue this work. As a poetry therapist, I can witness how and why the creative arts therapies work well with all of the populations we serve. We are a community, and in this space our words breathe life, one breath at a time…

- Dr. Barbara B., Poetry Therapist

I prefer to be free, in my mind and with my body
I prefer to hold the key that has these doors locked on me
I prefer to hug & see my daughters
I prefer to always be called their mother
I prefer to live a healthy & sober life, no need for headaches and unwanted strife
I prefer to be at peace, so if your listening please understand my peace.

- Latisha J.

I prefer asking questions rather than assuming
I prefer God over evil
I prefer my time well spent rather than any more of my time wasted
I prefer being near water rather than being in a city
I prefer sleep and relaxation
I prefer frappes and milkshakes over regular drinks
I prefer comfortability

- Jacquelyn C.

I prefer saying what I want to say than being quiet
I prefer the color Black
I prefer my lashes on than mascara
I prefer music than movies
I prefer to be with my family than around these women
I prefer seafood
I prefer my clothes than these jail cloths
I prefer being mentally free
I prefer her which is me than that gurl.

- Nani B.



I prefer being with a man instead of a woman because a man is trustworthy and a woman is not.
Instead a woman will try to be a man but it will never be successful
because she become full of lies not true to herself,
being something that she is not which is a man.
However, a woman become someone who would lie and cheat where as a man know who he is…

- Keysean K.

I prefer the truth to a lie
I prefer to ask why
I prefer the simple things
I prefer there not to be strings
I prefer my own bed
I prefer something unsaid
I prefer whiskey to wine
and cutting in line

- Stephanie M

I prefer to be alright all the time
I prefer to have no sickness in my body
I prefer for my mother not to be sick
I prefer not to go to bed at night
I prefer to stay up and dream about new realities
I prefer to do all bad all by myself
I prefer to be not skeptical about decisions
I prefer to live and not die for me
I prefer to be alright all the time.

- Tania C.

I prefer getting out of jail to strive for success
I prefer staying sober and fighting the thoughts of using
I prefer going to beauty school, I also prefer going to med school
I prefer having a baby and a family. I prefer a girl with the man I love
I prefer doing things I was afraid to do
I prefer learning how to swim,
I prefer riding a roller coaster
I prefer going back to school even though I am not 18
I prefer helping others and being there for people who need me
Lastly, I prefer being the best I can be

- Valerie T.

I prefer to stay sober and be a stay at home mom to my 9-year old so I can catch up on my time missed.
I prefer to be an honest + real person than a phony + fake.
I prefer going back to school and finish my education
than being in the streets wasting my life away.
I prefer being a daugter than someone else's punching bag.

- Eliana S.

Listen to the collection of patients' songs on Soundcloud.

The music presented here is an aural snapshot of the mental health therapeutic housing units on Rikers Island. The music was created and recorded in the dayrooms during weekly music therapy groups. Represented here is a small portion of the music's broad collage of genres, from hip-hop to doo-wop, reggaeton to eclectic and beyond. It includes original lyrics, melodies, rhymes, and instrumental music, as well as well-known classics. Music therapy groups have such therapeutic objectives as socialization, self-expression, appropriate release of anger and frustration, building community, increasing empathy, and instilling hope. The music therapist is the facilitator and co-collaborator in beat production, guitar playing, singing, and audio engineering.

- Jeff A., Music Therapist

1. **Lost Boy** by Jayden R.
   (Original lyrics, instrumental music from DOC-issued tablet)
2. **Runaround Sue** by Chris M.
   (Group sing-along)
3. **Jeff's Sessions** by Sovvi GXSXZ & John W.
   (Original beat and lyrics)
4. **Samanthita** by Good Bunny, with additional music production by Tony E.
   (Original beat and lyrics)
5. **Good Morning** by Byg Deel, with additional music production by Aka Askill
   (Original beat and lyrics)
6. **The Lion Sleeps Tonight** by Chris M. & Unit Chorus
   (Group sing-along)
7. **Dreamz** by Prada AL & Brian G.
   (Original lyrics, instrumental music from DOC-issued tablet)
8. **Under the Boardwalk** by Chris M. & Unit Chorus
   (Group sing-along)
9. **Playboy** by Jared N.
   (Original beat-box and piano)
10. **Old Hungry** by ViLLain
    (Original beat and lyrics)

The tracks featured in this art show emerged during music therapy sessions prioritizing the creative process over the end result. Within this framework, music-making serves as a potential space for engagement, co-constituted by individual and collective motivations to create. This naturally unfolding environment offers a possibility for active creative involvement, through which participants might discover their own pathways toward growth and a sense of belonging extending beyond the session. Additionally, the music therapist becomes part of a community as their musical skills become accessible for navigating creative processes. The therapist removes their own personal interpretation as much as possible so that ownership of the music belongs to the group, not the therapist.

When participants are totally focused on playing and listening, distracting internal or external stressors are increasingly distant from present-moment awareness, potentially opening the door to traditional therapeutic goals. Following a creative agenda enriches immediate experiences with opportunities for growth and potential achievement. This feeling expands within a group activity, bringing collective awareness to creation. Acting on pure creativity offers participants increased opportunities to bring meaning into experiences. This can serve as an escape, build self-confidence, or affirm identity in an exciting way that does not have to be explicitly connected to the content of a song.

Discussions held at the close of the session extend an open invitation to reflect further and more directly on what happened for individuals and between patients. This creative material naturally welcomes self-directed dialogue around carceral experiences, self-identity, and shared themes through which participants choose to exercise their autonomy. Some topics end up running parallel to treatment protocols, life events, and emotional shifts during the session. From there, participants can seek out personal, skill-based approaches for crisis management, emotional regulation, and acceptance.

Ultimately, creating, completing, and re-listening offers opportunities for participants and staff to deepen mutual understanding that can inform patient care, validate lived experiences, and strengthen the collaborative therapeutic community.

- Eric G., Music Therapist

1. **Sacrifice** by GetsPlentyGuap
   (Original beat and lyrics)

2. **Get Down Get Up** by GetsPlentyGuap
   (Original beat and lyrics inspired by the film "Walk the Line")

3. **Babyyyy Grrrllll** by GetsPlentyGuap
   (Original beat and lyrics)

4. **Sobriety** by Tweak the Artist and Anonymous
   (Piano played by Anonymous, original beat and lyrics)

5. **Dagger Knife** by WM
   (Original beat and lyrics)

Listen to the collection of patients' songs on Soundcloud.

Clouds, rainbow, raining and the sea. People need help in the ocean. They're asking for help. Birds will land on people's heads. It's bad. They're frozen. This is not a quiet place, to speak about your issues. Don't trust because things don't happen.

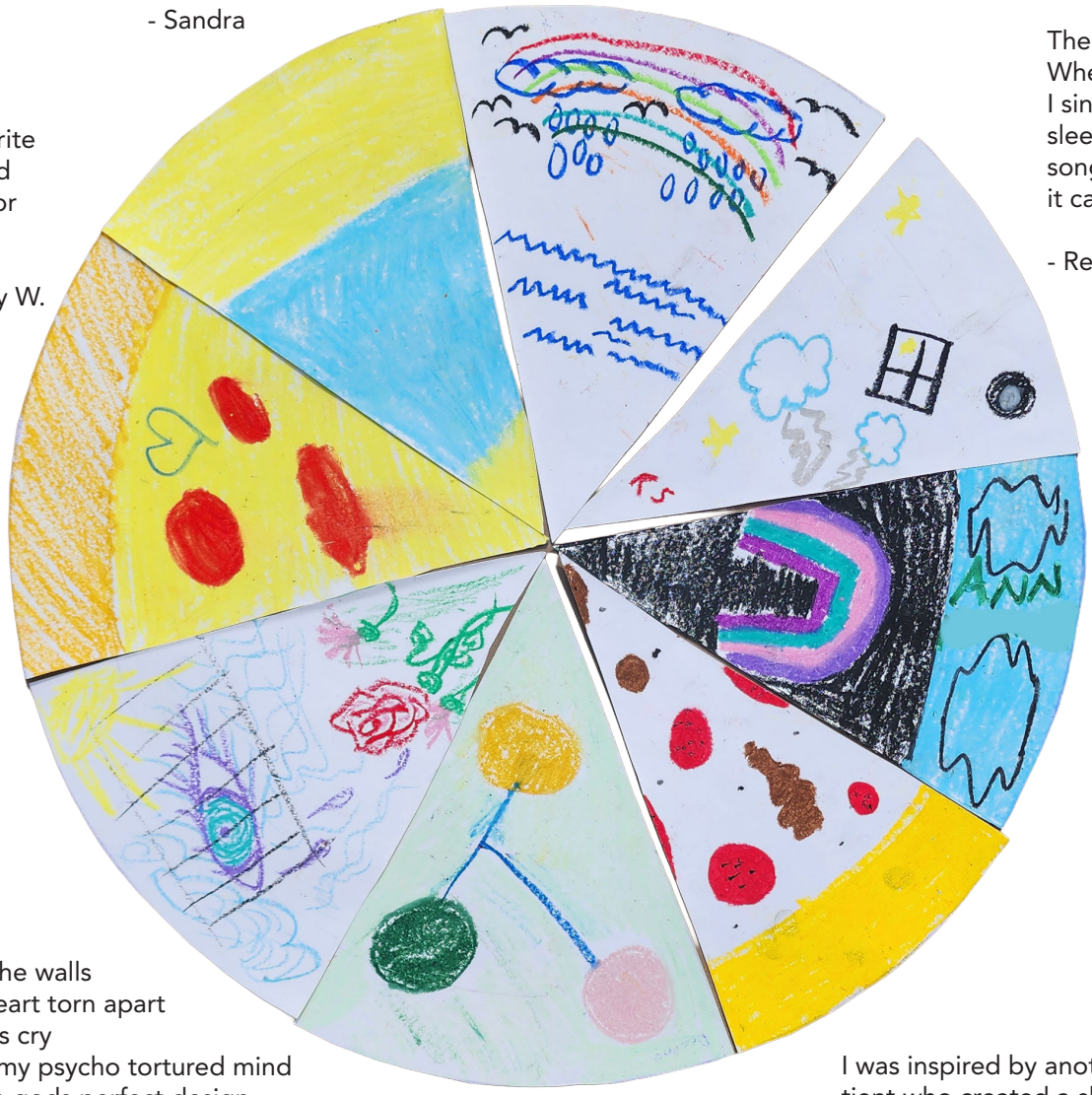
- Stephanie F.

Peace.

- Sandra

Pizza,
my favorite
food and
hearts for
love.

- Destiny W.



The sky, the night.
When I feel lonely,
I sing a song to go to
sleep. Even when the
song is ecstatic,
it calms me down.

- Renessa B.

A rainbow – calming. Black – representing my mood fluctuations from bipolar disorder. The sky – brightness. The imagery reminds me of my children. Kids make me happy. It was enjoyable working with children in the past.

- Ann S.

Within the walls
of my heart torn apart
The eyes cry
Behind my psycho tortured mind
Was it in gods perfect design
to give me a Rocky Road.
To be a solo rose
only concrete grown and alone
to have dust as rain and wind alone.
Well, only, only, only the essence knows
So it seems it is, as it seems
My through the crack existence
is the miracle
that the world is missing.

- Jennifer P.

Green, yellow, calmness, happy, exciting overall contempt.

- Deepmala P.

I was inspired by another patient who created a slice of pizza. My artwork represents peaceful, fulfilling, hungry eating.

- Vanessa E.

GROUP MANDALA

This directive invited patients to create individual sections of a larger mandala that would later be assembled into a unified, collaborative piece. Therapists encouraged participants to express emotions, thoughts, and recurring themes present in the moment through their artwork. Upon completion of their individual mandala sections, the partisipants engaged in reflective processing with the therapists, discussing the meaning, symbolism, and emotional content of their images.

Through the act of making individual pieces of the mandala, participants facilitated emotional awareness, encouraged creative expression, supported emotional release, and fostered social connection. Consistent with the milieu structure of the mental health therapeutic housing unit, participants entered and exited the group on an individual basis. While some patients remained for extended participation, most completed their artwork, processed their experience with the therapists, and transitioned out of the session, reflecting the fluid nature of group engagement typical on this unit at that time.

During the following group session, returning participants collaboratively rearranged and completed the final mandala structure. They also participated in music-making through clinical improvisation, using sound and spontaneous musical expression to explore and reflect upon their emotional experiences, creative processes, and responses to both the individual and collective artwork. The integration of visual art and music facilitated opportunities for interpersonal connection, emotional processing, and shared meaning-making within the group setting and assisted in a more unified processing of the creative experience.

- Susana V., Art Therapist, and Makaria P., Music Therapist

EXPRESSIVE MASKS

In this mask-making intervention, the therapist encouraged group members to explore aspects of identity through creating their individual masks with art materials. Once the masks were completed, the therapist then invited group members to use their masks to interact with each other to create dialogue and share story through metaphor. Some individuals wrote or performed poetry to allow the mask to speak. Group members worked collectively on a background mural (not shown here) to contain the play space to support their individual poetry and interpersonal communications with the masks.

- Barbara B., Drama Therapist



ADMONISHING THE CIRCUS

For the ring leader is gone
What have you to say for yourselves
For your lions are tired
And your tigers are weak
And appears sloth
And your elephants meek
You fall off your bikes
While you're giving a show
Your performance was great
But only for crown.

- O.A.



BEYOND

Hang universe awake
women and men bright raw
dream thousand three hundred
and twenty sunsets
window of soul it
our holiday.

- Herk E.



Raymond E. O.A.

Raymond E.: I am an isolated monk in the woods, mountains I would talk to them if they want to find out about things in the Himalayas. I want to be up there to find myself. Whoever you are when you go up to the wilderness they are the same when they come back.

O.A.: I think the monks go to the Himalayas so they can run to themselves not away.



Desean F. Kavon M.

When the Tribe of Quest Meets Death

Desean F.: I meet death and death welcomes me.

Kavon M.: And the quest of death begins.

Desean F.: For this journey of life entails trials.

Kavon M.: Depending on your life dictates the next step.

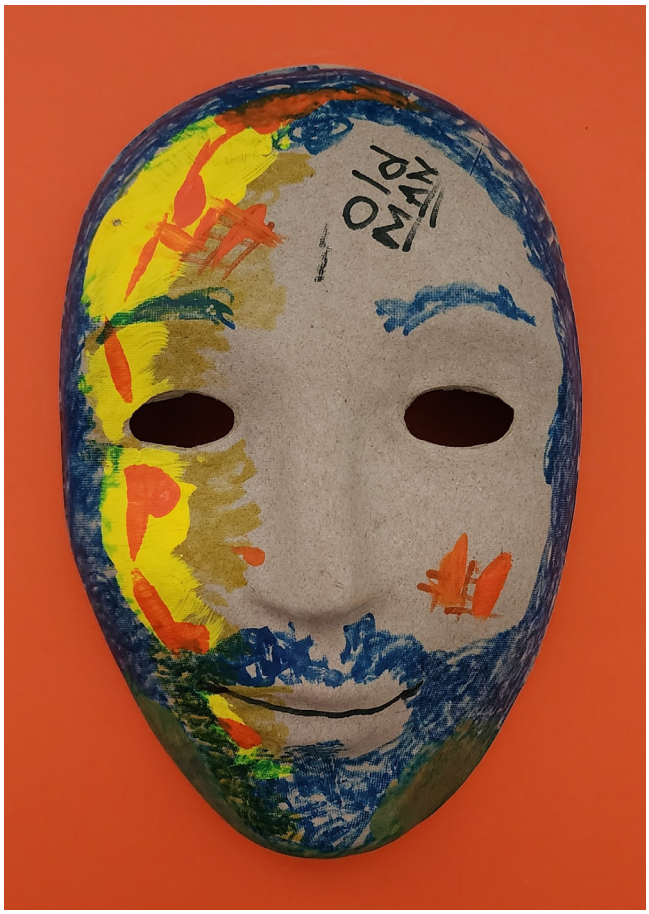
Desean F.: It doesn't have to be a death of life, it could be a death of a lifestyle living through habits, former self. People adopt religion to change their lifestyle. Adorn your quest to be sure to pack mercy or death will end your quest.

Kavon M.: Cause when we find the sun is gone a new dawn appears.

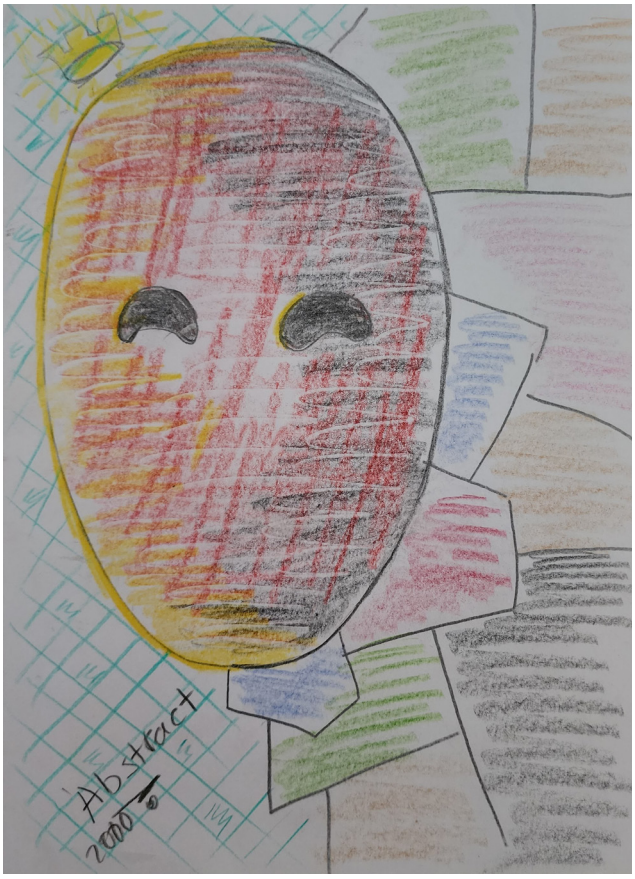
Raymond E.



mask template



mask



abstract image inspired by mask



mask template

HOLA SOY HEITON ALEXIS C

EL DIBUJO ES MI YEFLEJO

MI ARTE LO TYATO DE A SEY CON MUCHO

AMOY Y TYASMITIY MI BUENA

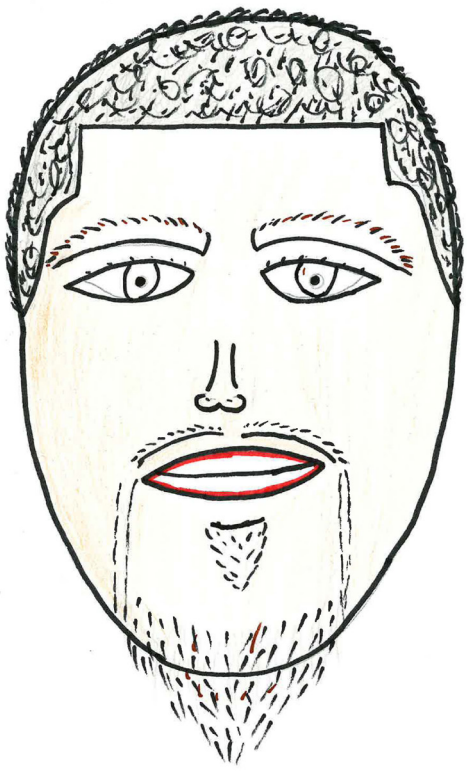
ENERGIA

CON DIOS CON PAZ Y TYANQUILidad

bENdiCiONES



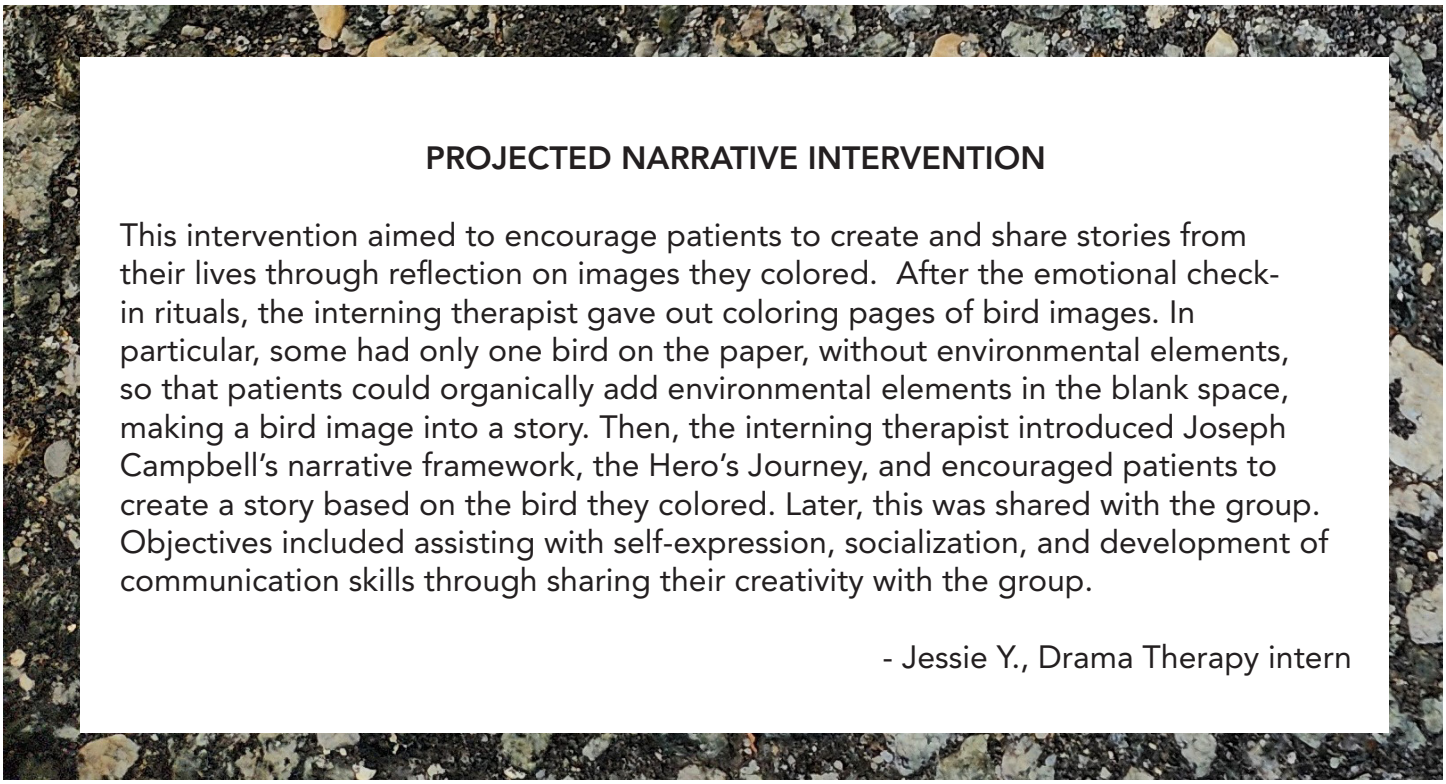
mask



abstract image inspired by mask

The drawing is my reflection, my art I try to make with a lot of love and to transmit my good energy with God, with peace and tranquility, blessings.

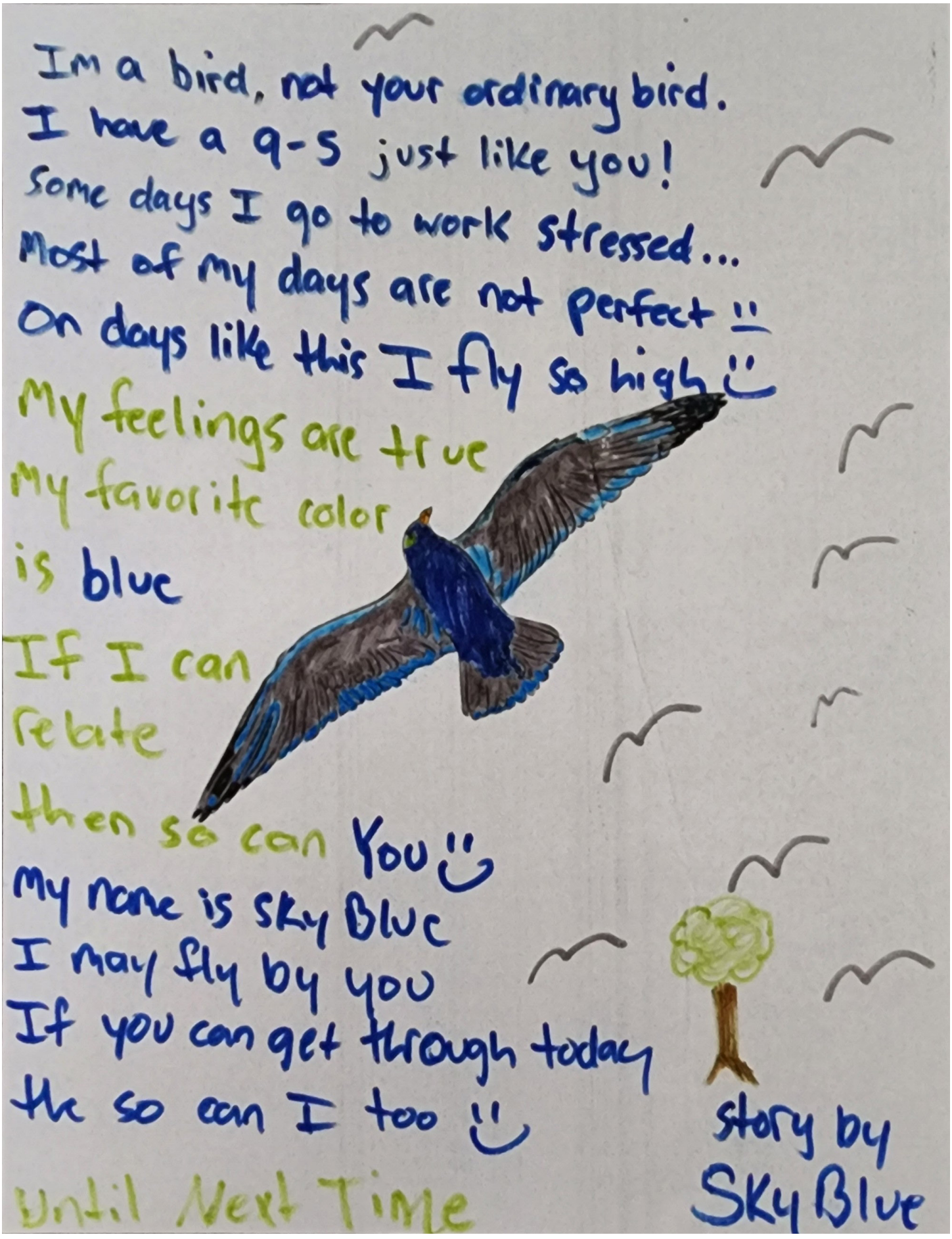
- Heiton C.



PROJECTED NARRATIVE INTERVENTION

This intervention aimed to encourage patients to create and share stories from their lives through reflection on images they colored. After the emotional check-in rituals, the interning therapist gave out coloring pages of bird images. In particular, some had only one bird on the paper, without environmental elements, so that patients could organically add environmental elements in the blank space, making a bird image into a story. Then, the interning therapist introduced Joseph Campbell's narrative framework, the Hero's Journey, and encouraged patients to create a story based on the bird they colored. Later, this was shared with the group. Objectives included assisting with self-expression, socialization, and development of communication skills through sharing their creativity with the group.

- Jessie Y., Drama Therapy intern


Im a bird, not your ordinary bird.
I have a 9-5 just like you!
Some days I go to work stressed...
Most of my days are not perfect ::
On days like this I fly so high :)
My feelings are true
My favorite color
is blue
If I can
relate
then so can You :)
My name is Sky Blue
I may fly by you
If you can get through today
the so can I too ::
Until Next Time
story by
Sky Blue

Darion M.

HOW

I was introduced to the "How" poem by Heid E. Erdrich through the American Academy of Poet's annual poetry program, "Poetry and the Creative Mind." I was immediately smitten with the words. I wanted to share it with the women on the GATE unit. The women wrote the following in response to the poem, which depicts their challenges, uncertainties, and processing of the things they grapple with in their lives. One of the male correction officers, a regular on the unit, also wrote a response to the poem. After writing their responses, they read them aloud to the peers who supported and cheered them on.

Enjoy, in Joy,
- Dr. Barbara B., Poetry Therapist

How did I not see?
How did I forget about me?
How did I get here?
Was it the fact that I truly didn't care?
How did I let that night be?
How did I think the liquor was setting me free?
How did I let that night destroy my life?
How's the question I ask myself?
Truth is I know all my answers and
That's gonna get me back on track
So, let's get ready to fix my greatest comeback

- Latrisha L.

How did i make it this far?
How did i make it to this bar?
How i manage to stand strong?
How Beautiful my skin is?
How many chances will i get?
How i have mental health problems?
How will i get out this situation?

- Kiasia D.

How?
How did I get here
How?
How did wanting to feel
a rush and high run through
my veins to hide my hurt and pain
How did wanting to
run away from reality
run me to this reality
How?
How did I get here
How did a quick inhale
of smoke to forget reality
exhaled me here
How?
How can I wake up
from this reality
How can we live in a world
with so much cruelty
How?
How can I hurt this much
but smile
How?

- Stephanie D.



How did I go from there to here?
How did I let myself & the man I thought love me sell my most prize possession for sex & drugs
How did I let a man take my strengths into my weakness?
How did sex change me?
How did I become a drug addict?
How did I go from being a mom?
Of 4 Beautiful children to losing them
Tell me How
How did I lose myself?
Remember how I got here through
How did I become an inmate?
How did my recovery grow strong?
How but How How
Heart shattered break
How did I lose my heart sparkling
How did my Crown broke?
How but How I went from
Suicidal drug addict to a Queen
How
But so much How
How will I fix my crown?
Now my recovery is Here
And now my soul is
Finally, free
That's How

- Sabrina S.

How can I afford all this?
How great life can be?
How full life can be
How Beautiful Life can be
How Blessed I am
How Lucky I am to have You,
How I could not have made it without You?
How can I live without You?
How do I continue on without You?
How Happy I am with Who I Am?

- Correction Officer Rossi

The most important question of my life!
HOW?
How do I go on living a "normal" life?
Better yet, what is a normal life? How can I Ensure that I'm accepted by people?
I'll do you one better,
Who cares if I'm accepted by other people?

I'm accepting me
How can I live my best life?

- Cheryl S.

How we living this lifestyle
How we still not getting right
How we still coming to Rikers Island
How we we're in the criminal justice system
How we still have a corrupt president who's leading the nation
How we are in the R.E.A.L. program
and still not keeping it real
how we still calling our loved ones
and we are actors and actresses
pretending…

- Stephanie P.

How do I get better
How do I get thinner
How do I love without concern
How do I let others concern what I love
How do I become a better mother
The mother sister aunt daughter
How did I get this way
Will I ever get this to go away
How we love and to no avail
The curtains pulled back and I'm
Naked like an unshelled snail
How do I get the curtains to fall
And when they do not feel small
How do I get out painless windows
To look out and see the world
without rose-colored glasses
how pretty the world would be
if I could find the way to just be me

- Cathleen M.

How the hell I'm gonna write this poem
when I don't want to tap into
my feelings and emotions and thoughts
I CAN'T
That's How!

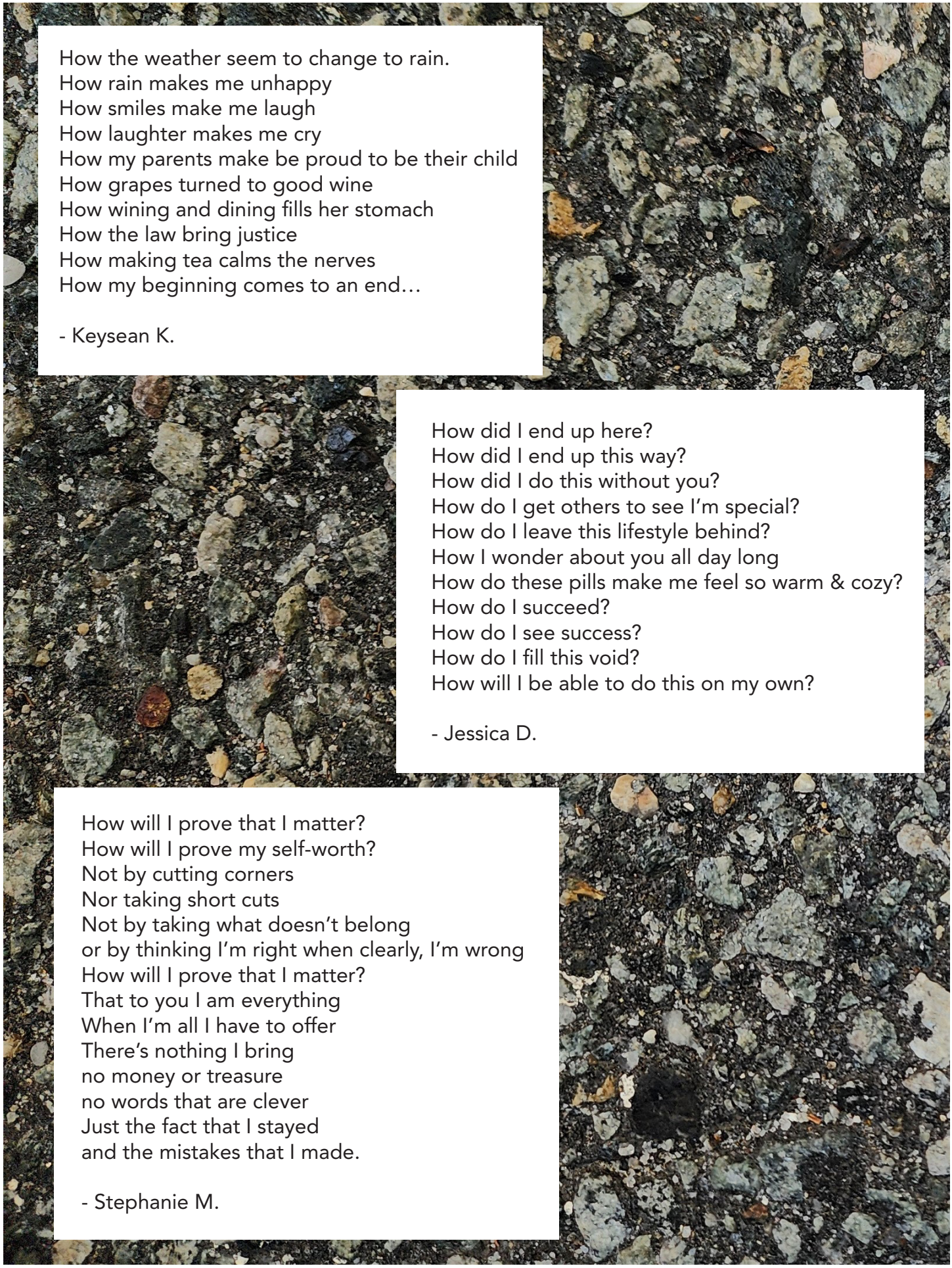
- Naomi B.

How did I end up in this situation?
How did I get so lucky?
How did I get this far?
How did I make it here?

- Joanna M.

How can we always say the world is big?
Yet so small but still treat others like they just don't matter
It seems personal relationships, intimate relationships between
man and woman, all relationships, friendships, and others
how come they just don't matter any more
or is it just me
how come I don't get to have or feel those things
that once I once did
Did I change
Did the world
How is it that people are just not what it seem?
To understand any more
how is it that I spent so much of my younger years
trying to be comfortable with myself
with others and I thought
I found me
I thought I figured it out
How come it's all changed
How come everything is so very different
How do I get back to my comfortable place?
How when I am still in this terrible place
How, how, how, how…

- Merryann D.



How the weather seem to change to rain.
How rain makes me unhappy
How smiles make me laugh
How laughter makes me cry
How my parents make be proud to be their child
How grapes turned to good wine
How wining and dining fills her stomach
How the law bring justice
How making tea calms the nerves
How my beginning comes to an end…

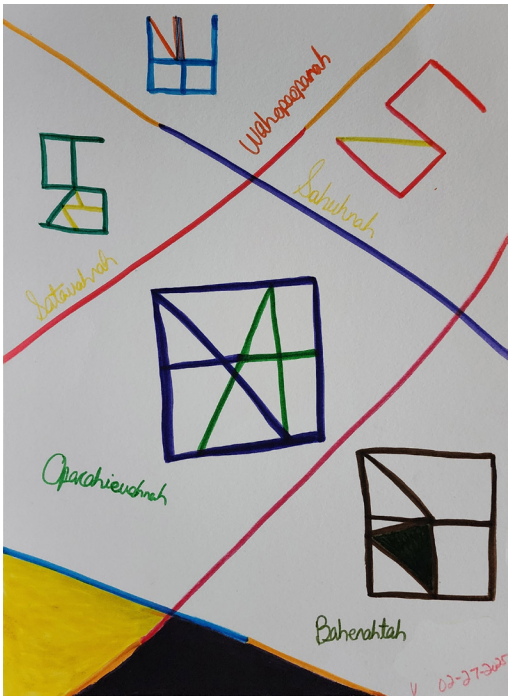
- Keysean K.

How did I end up here?
How did I end up this way?
How did I do this without you?
How do I get others to see I'm special?
How do I leave this lifestyle behind?
How I wonder about you all day long
How do these pills make me feel so warm & cozy?
How do I succeed?
How do I see success?
How do I fill this void?
How will I be able to do this on my own?

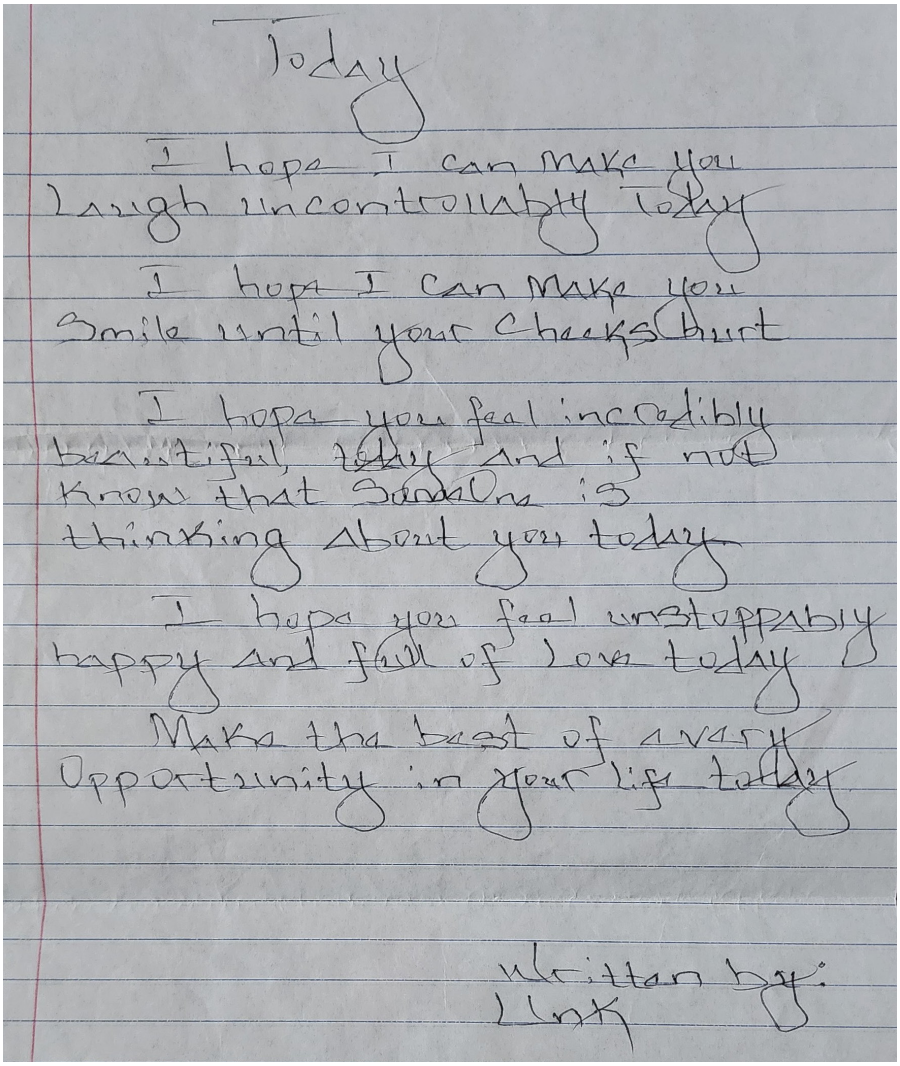
- Jessica D.

How will I prove that I matter?
How will I prove my self-worth?
Not by cutting corners
Nor taking short cuts
Not by taking what doesn't belong
or by thinking I'm right when clearly, I'm wrong
How will I prove that I matter?
That to you I am everything
When I'm all I have to offer
There's nothing I bring
no money or treasure
no words that are clever
Just the fact that I stayed
and the mistakes that I made.

- Stephanie M.



L. S.


Today

I hope I can make you laugh uncontrollably today

I hope I can make you smile until your cheeks hurt

I hope you feel incredibly beautiful today and if not know that Sandra is thinking about you today

I hope you feel unstoppably happy and full of love today

Make the best of every opportunity in your life today

Written by:
Lindy

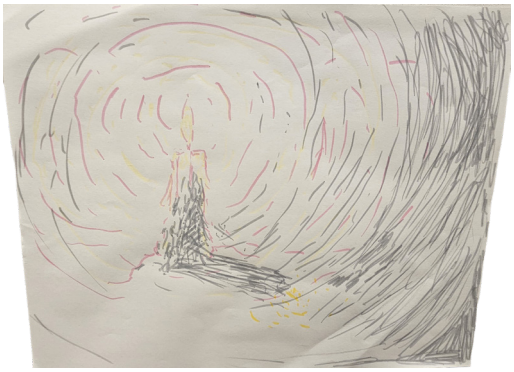
Terrance M.

On the following pages is a collection of artworks that were made as patients adjusted from being housed on Rikers Island, to being house on the Outposted Therapeutic Housing Unit at NYC Health + Hospitals/Bellevue. These images were posted on dayroom walls – evident on pages 72, 73, 76 and 77 – as part of an art show in June of 2026, and continue to enliven the space currently.

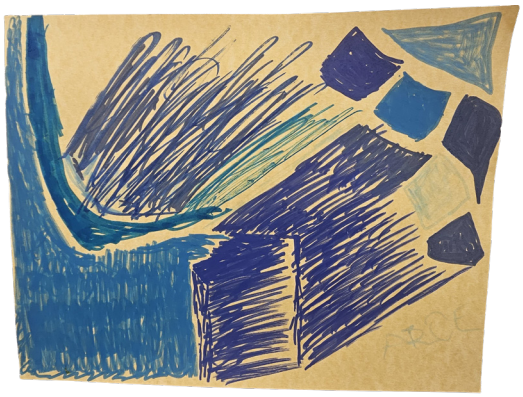
For the last four months, patients have expressed themselves in daily art therapy groups. The opportunity to process changes in group helped patients adjust to the new setting throughout the transitional period. Hanging their own artwork amongst others, and admiring others' creativity promoted a sense of community on the PACE unit. As new patients entered the housing area, the group served as a space that anchored each individual to the setting. Group sizes fluctuated, but the essence of the group remained the same. It was (and is) a space for patients to experience autonomy, agency, and remember their identities as soulful, creative beings.

Ingenuity and innovation abounded as patients found ways to incorporate their new environment into their work, such as using gauze, marker-based dye, and other found materials. Their interpretations of themselves as artists, describing their processes and aspirations can be found alongside their bodies of artwork.

- Victoria K., Art Therapist, and Susana V., Art Therapist



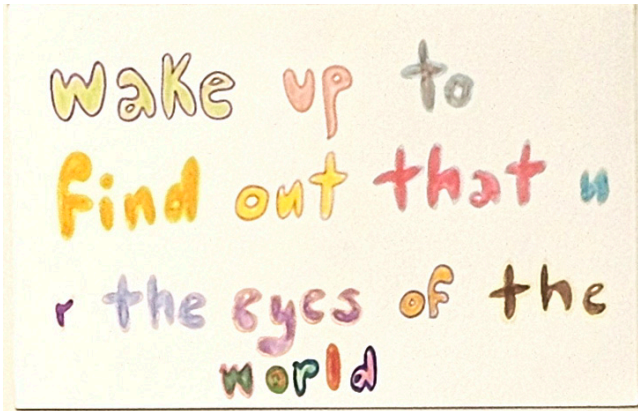




The multitalented Jose and the art he's made during art therapy groups. My father is his own creative artist and he is amazing.

- Jose A.

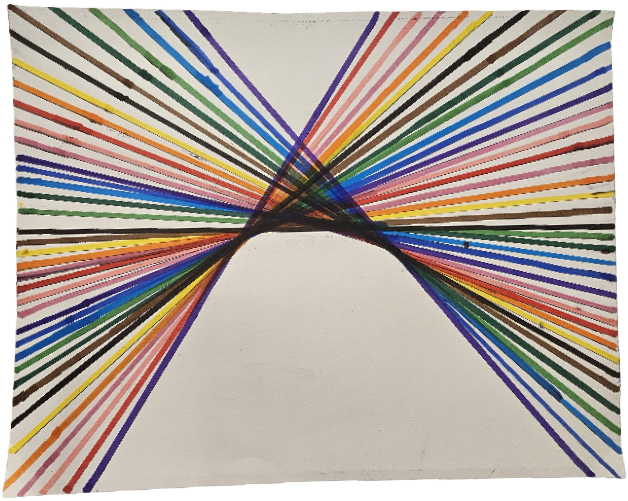


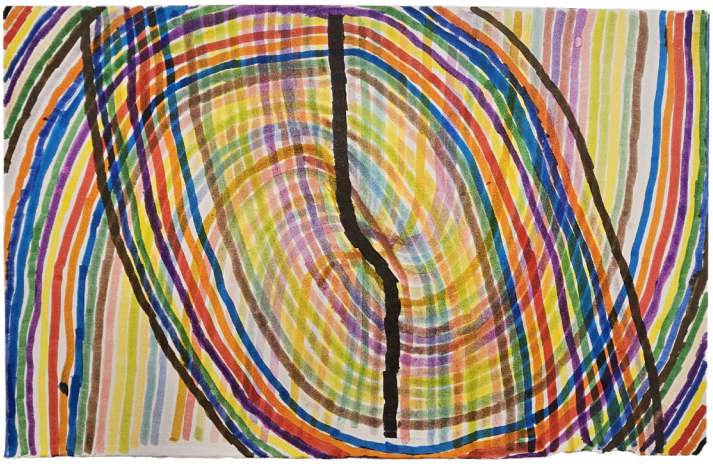












Mel believes that art is a lot of work. He used to sell his paintings. Making art has been an escape for Mel.

- Mel S.





Art is passion.
Perfectly displayed.
It's love and real.
It can't be faked,
so be ART!

- Darnell F.

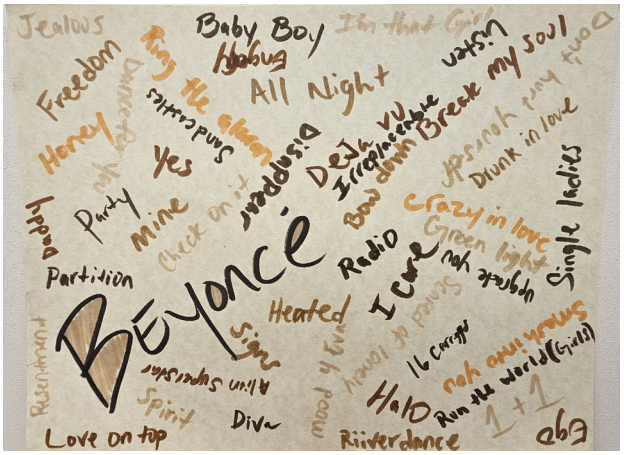


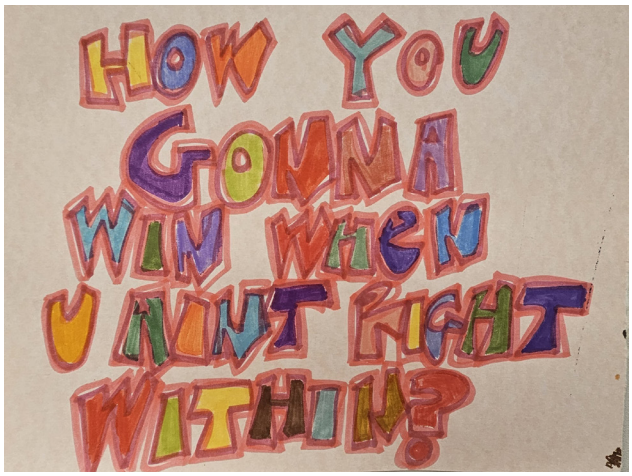




Tyriek M.

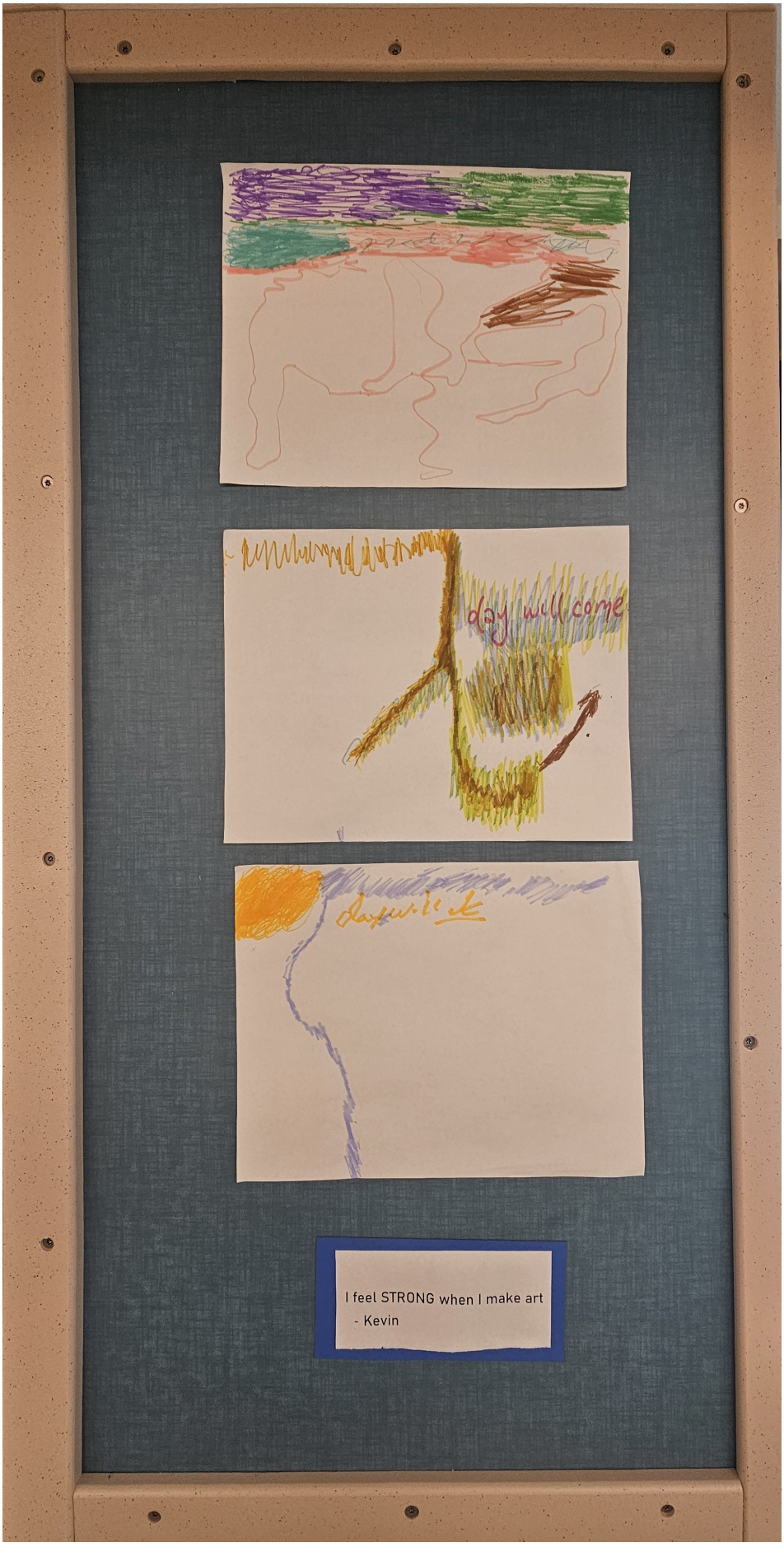






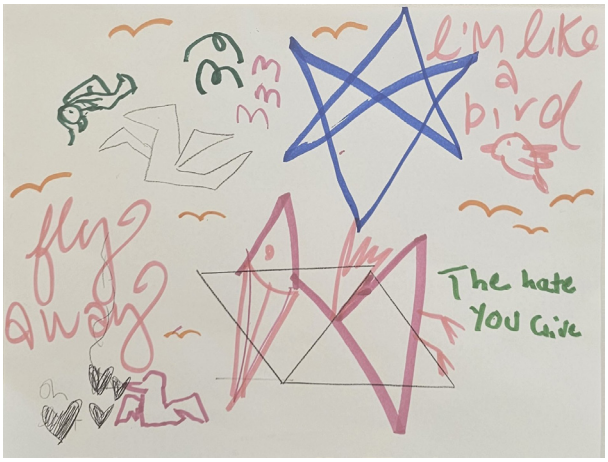


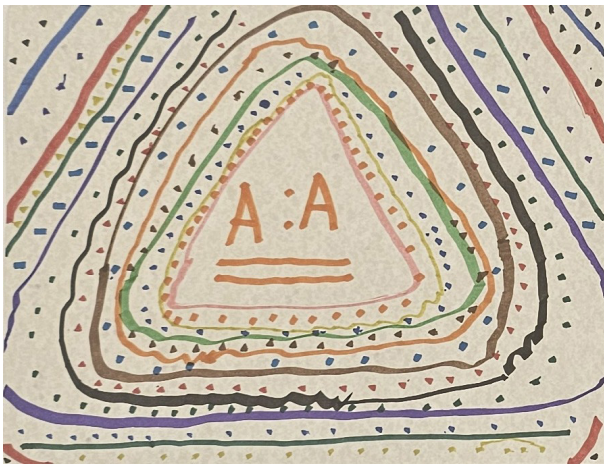
Company isn't always a bad thing. - Ari O.



I feel STRONG when I make art. - Kevin S.

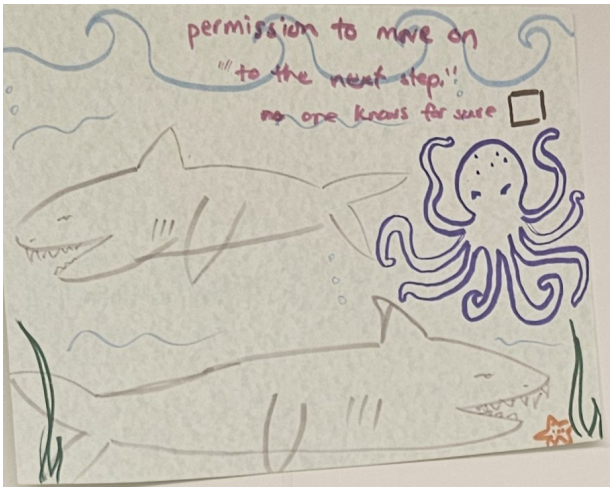


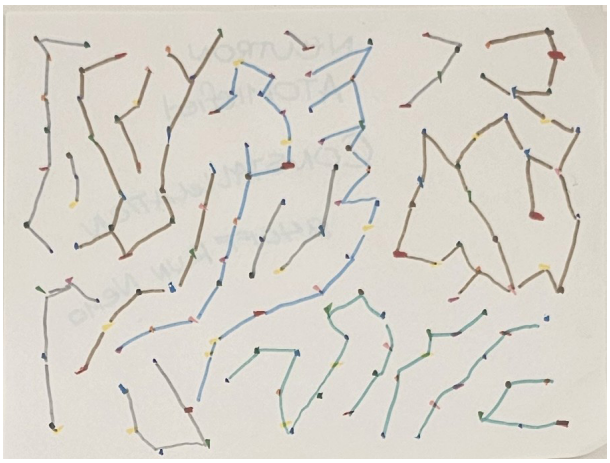




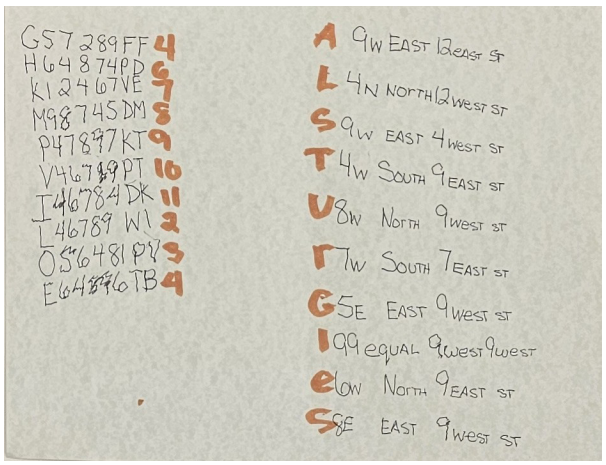
Thinking of ways to improve myself through cleansing the mind and body... who I associate with both here and in the community.

- Al S.



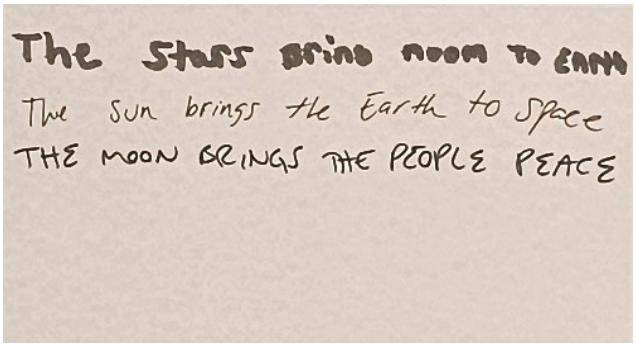


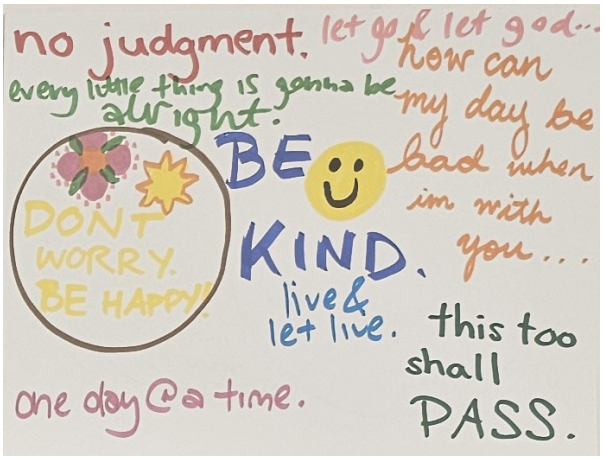


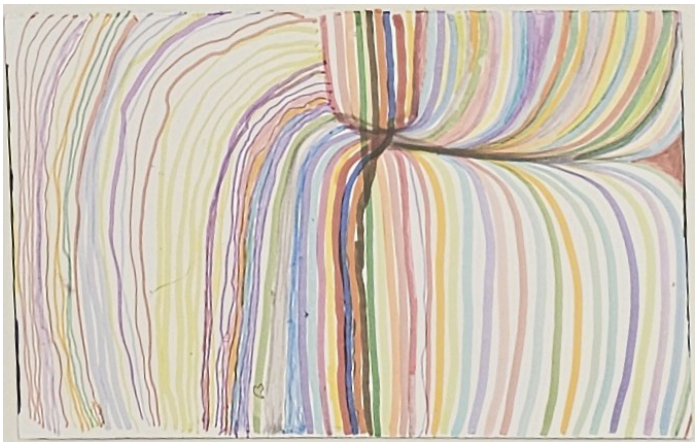


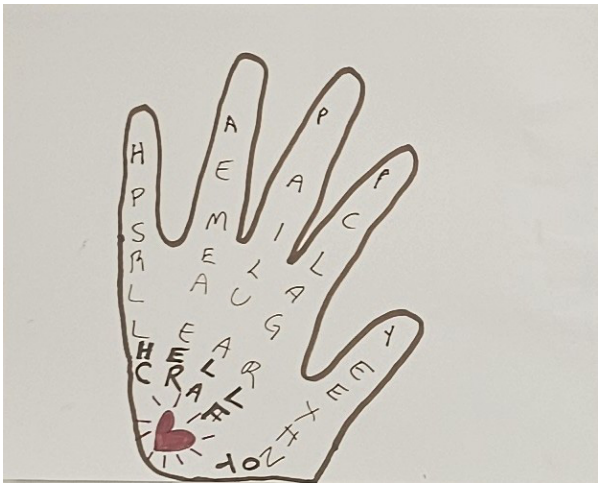


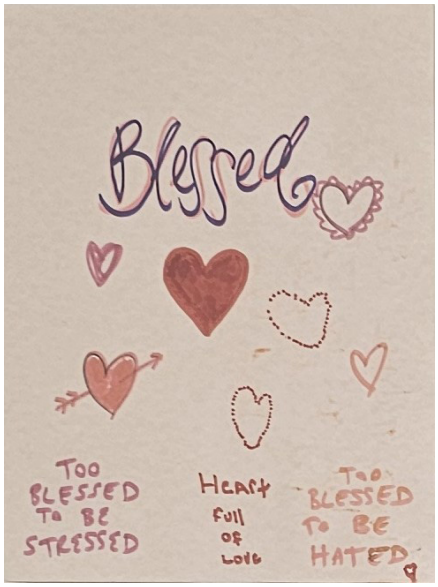










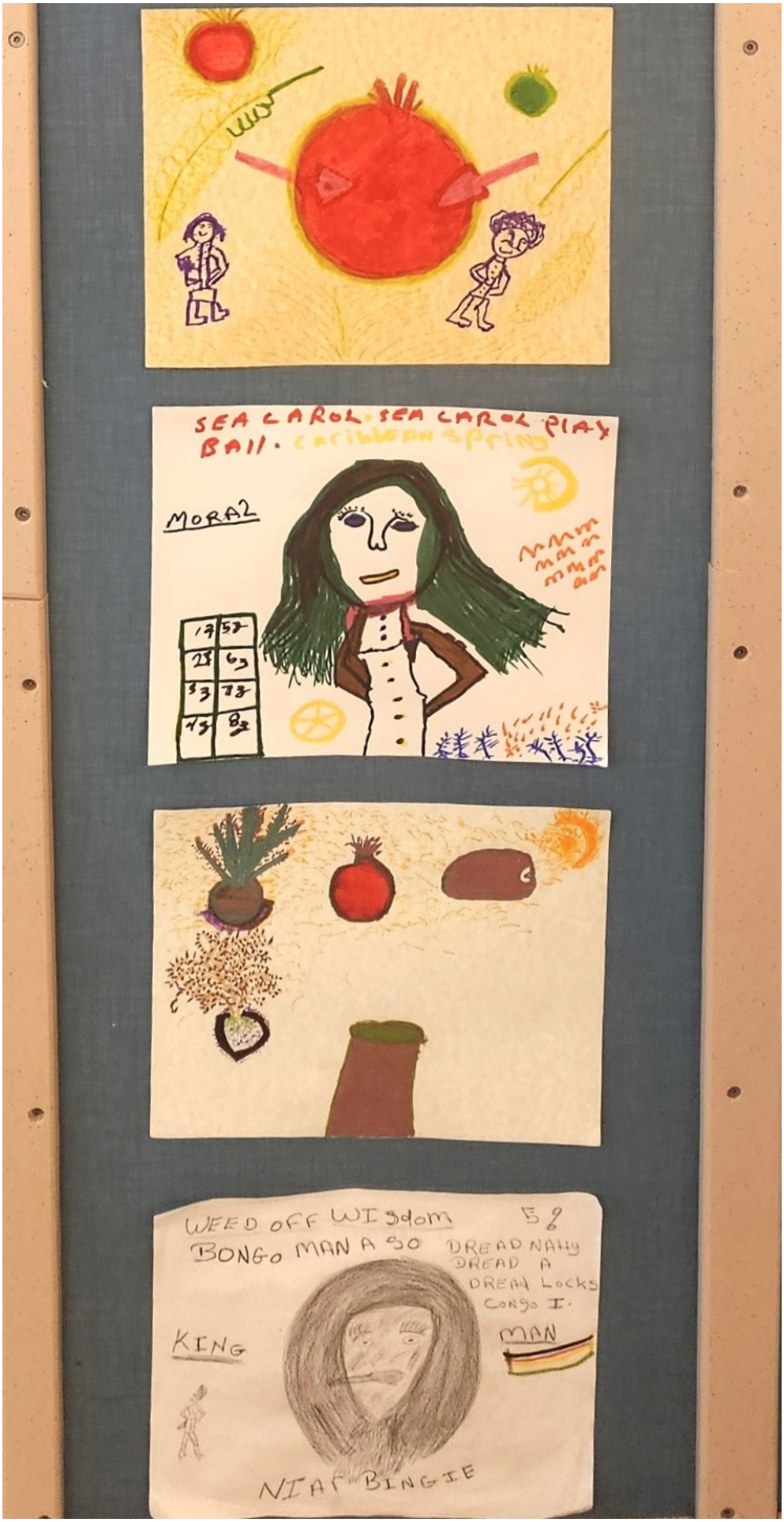


God bless the Knicks!
Keep up the good job!

- Rahmel C.



Simon Peter P.

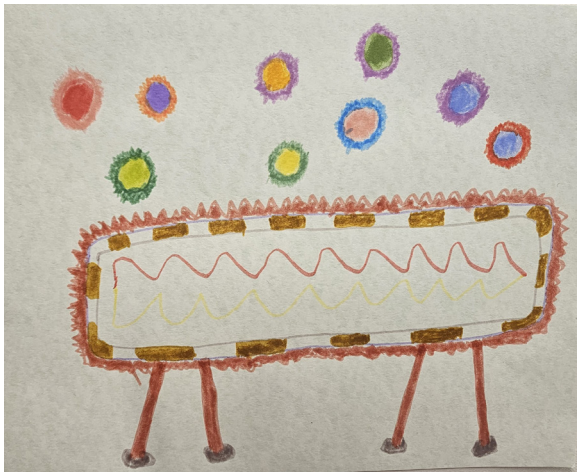


Simon's art work since he begins drawing in art class. Most of it is his thought as he celebrates his achievement.

- Simon Peter P.



Jose A.





Art is emotional. It is what you give your time to. - Joon S.

Acknowledgements

We thank **CHS patients** for: their willingness to participate and create the artistic expressions of themselves contained within this catalog; their courage to expand; their ability to connect to a new community of people; and their sense of agency to express themselves through the arts, giving voice to their humanity.

We thank CHS' talented and gifted team of **creative arts therapists** for working tirelessly with these patients to facilitate the groups and individual sessions where these creations were birthed:

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- **Grace L. and Mia L. (dance/movement therapist)**
- **Barbara B. (drama therapist), Jessie Y. (drama therapy intern)**
- **Jeff A., Eric G., and Makaria P. (music therapists) and**
- **Dr. Barbara B. (poetry therapist)**

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