

# 2021 Brain Injury Art Show

**Presented by the Brain Injury Alliance of Washington**

**In Collaboration with Renton History Museum**



# 2021 Brain Injury Art Show

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Elisha Paris

*Butterfly Fly Away*

2021

My name is Elisha Paris and I am 39 years old. In December 2012 my life changed. I was in a terrible car accident, leaving me with 2 traumatic brain injuries and limited ability on my left side. I have recovered in the last 9 years to have the ability to walk and talk again, and to help my parents raise my beautiful daughter (Isabelle).

My life changed so much and I am learning to love my life and myself again. One of my favorite things to do is diamond painting.





# Carolyn Kyle

## *I Used To* Poetry

2020

My poem, "I USED TO", captures my life as an observer of the rich, spontaneous life that I once lived.

"Do It All. Don't Miss a Thing!" was my life mantra until.....I sustained a closed-head concussion, Traumatic Brain Injury, 2016.

I never imagined viewing life from afar, hoping to get back onboard that "Train of Life."

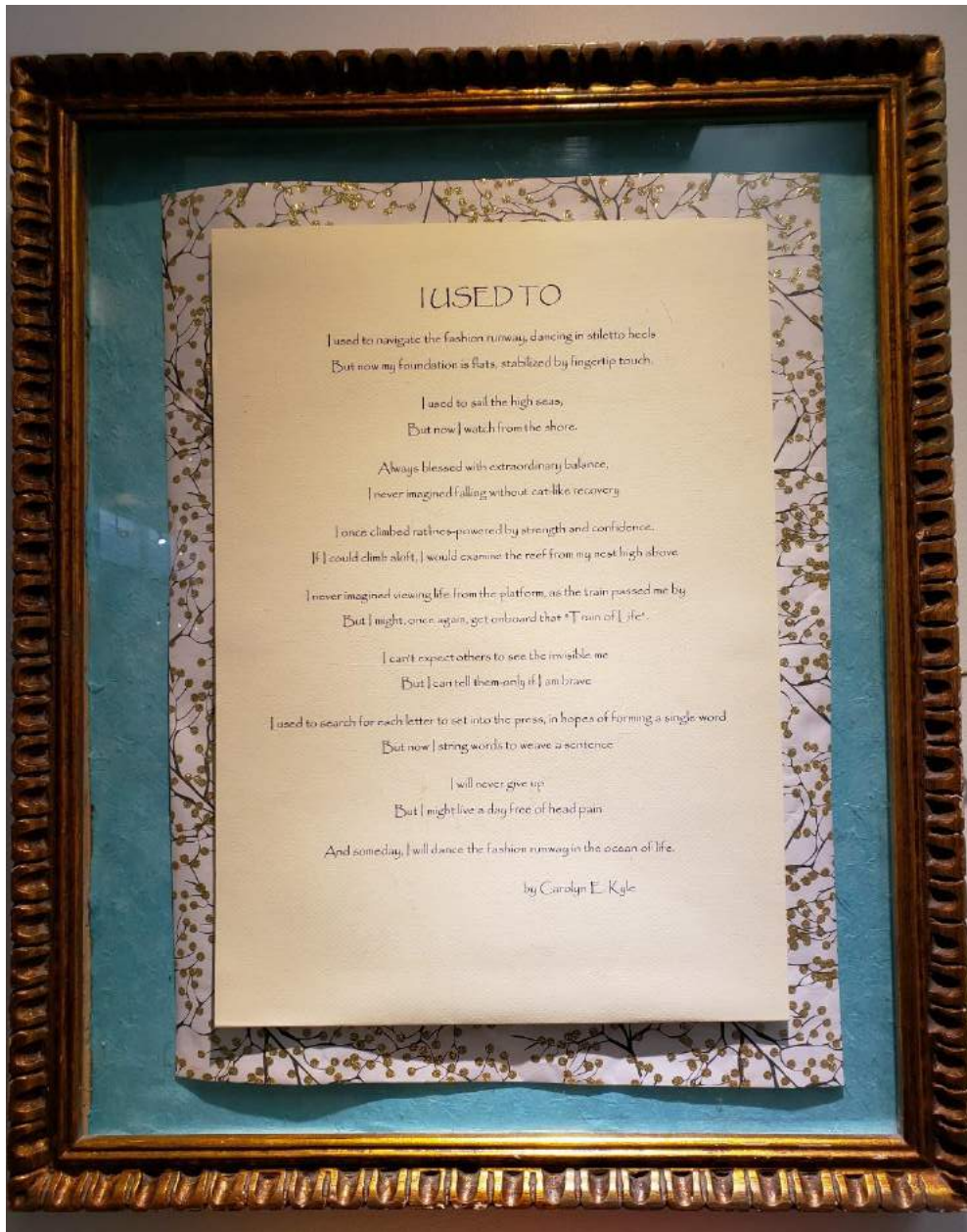
I cannot expect others to "see" the invisible me. I can tell them, if I am brave.

Poetry helps me process the world out there, and the world inside myself.

by Carolyn E. Kyle

Educator, retired

A woman with a changed brain



Heather van Vleck

*Tremor*

Acrylic on Wood







Peg Warren

*Christmas*  
Watercolor

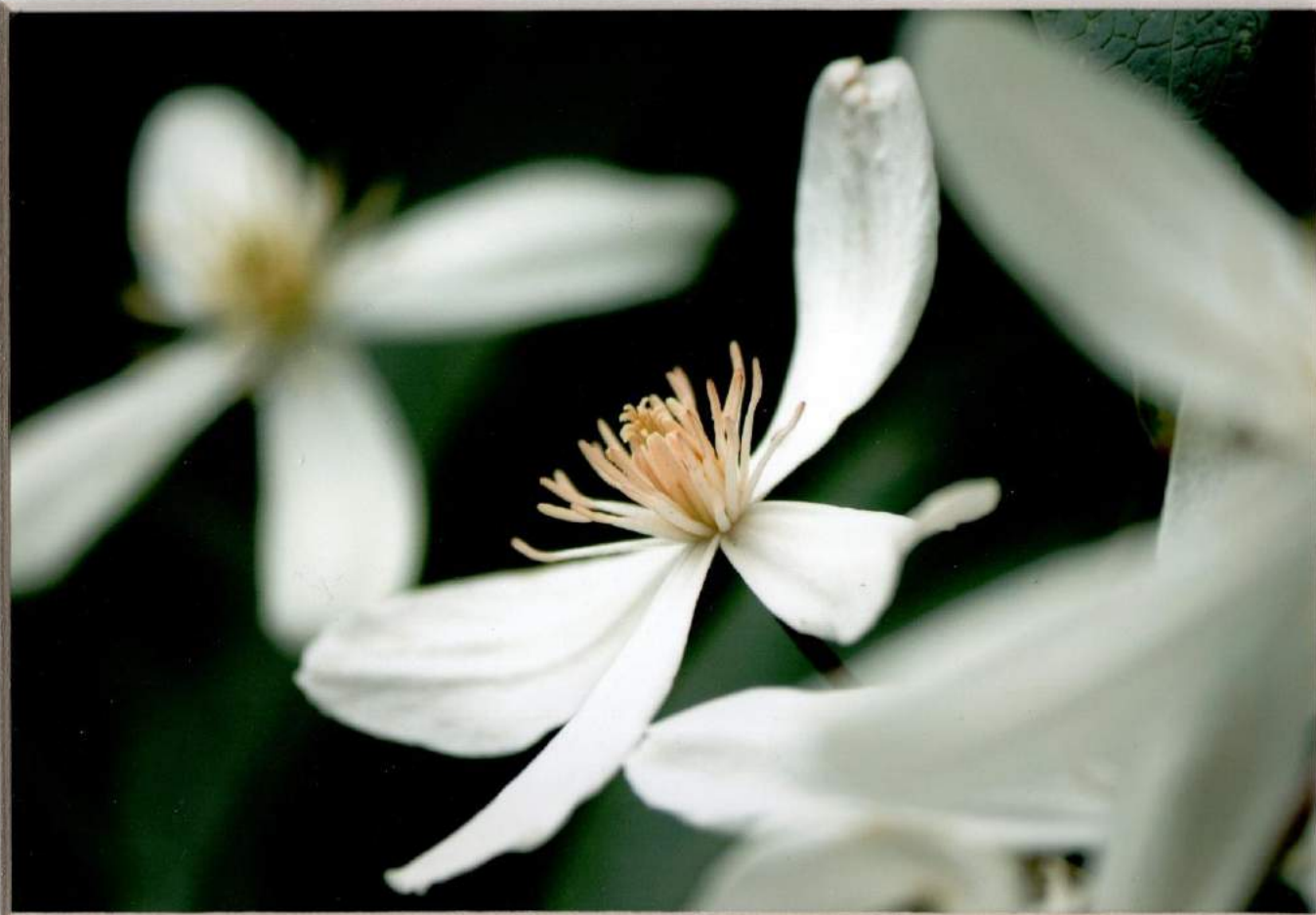
2019

In August 2016, I fell and hit my head. Later the next day I was in a helicopter taking me to the trauma center with a brain bleed. I will be forever grateful to my surgeon and staff who put me back together again.

There were changes after that. One was that I ventured into watercolor classes. I would never have even dreamed that I could this. I still don't but I show up and paint and marvel at God's mercies.







Rebecca Richards

*Spring Snow (Star Magnolia)*  
Photography

2019





Scott Sutton

*Blood, Sweat & Tears*  
Mixed Media

2021







Deb Lahue

*Anneke's Cooper*  
Paint

2021

Thankful for Art

Creating this piece to help a friend when her dog, Cooper, crossed the rainbow bridge, ultimately helped me on my healing journey. On many days I cannot function, let alone paint, but recently found that on the days I can, it helps me so much. It helps me focus on what I can do.

Although this piece isn't quite done, neither am I.

Tracy Sprenger

*Colorful Galaxies*  
Poured Acrylics

2020

In 1999, I was diagnosed with a very rare disease called Primary Central Nervous System Vasculitis that caused a brain injury, seizures and strokes. The only treatment for it is chemotherapy infusions but there is no cure. It can impact my thoughts and speech but one way I can always express myself is through my artwork.





# Rodney Lawrence

## *Untitled*

## Mixed Media

Rodney Lawrence, age 51, is a survivor of Traumatic Brain Injury as the result of a motorcycle accident shortly before his 18th birthday. At times he has been a landscape laborer while working alongside his father. Rodney has enjoyed drawing and painting since childhood.

Recently he became a resident at Sycamore Glen Adult Family Home in Clarkston, WA. He is happy to have encouragement and support for continuing to develop his artistic interests at Sycamore Glen.





Rodney Lawrence

*Untitled*

Mixed Media



Mia Lombardi

*Peace at Saltwater Park*

Acrylic on Canvas

2021





Liz Dreams

*Purple*

Watercolor and goache

2001

Parsons School of Design, NYC. AAS 1985

Purple is a series with each color. "Exit Art NYC - 9/11 Reaction Show" presented my piece called "Don't Call Me Ground Zero" 2001. Where a copy resides in the Library of Congress. Also shown at Gramercy Park Arts Society NYC, and Taos, NM.

I am currently in the process for obtaining a Jackson Pollack/Lee Krasner Grant.



Jamahl Wilcox

*An Angel with Me*

## Photography

My daughter was born 6 months before my first craniotomy and I had the perseverance to care for her as a stay at home dad during a recovery stage. When Naomi turned 2yrs old, that's when God sent my Angel to see me during prep for my 2nd craniotomy and my baby was the last person I saw before the O.R. & I still see her until this day.

Thank You BIAWA.org



# John Pavlish

## *Hope within a Void* Photograph



I have chosen this piece titled “Hope within a Void” to represent the experience of isolation and despair from a TBI. While acclimating back into society, I received a different treatment than before my injury. Without a physical handicap, people felt I am able to be at their level. It took me years to understand and accept this new trajectory of my life. I am not completely healed from the psychological and physical impact of a TBI. Though steady progress, I have been able to articulate myself and understand others.

Photography became an outlet in my life after having a stroke. This medium removes objects and focuses only on the subject from the artist’s perspective. Photography brings forth harmony and peace in my life, aiding myself in understanding and accepting who I am. Without photography, I would not be able to appreciate the joys of this world beyond darkness. My photography consists of a similar theme of reprocessing my journey with my brain injury.



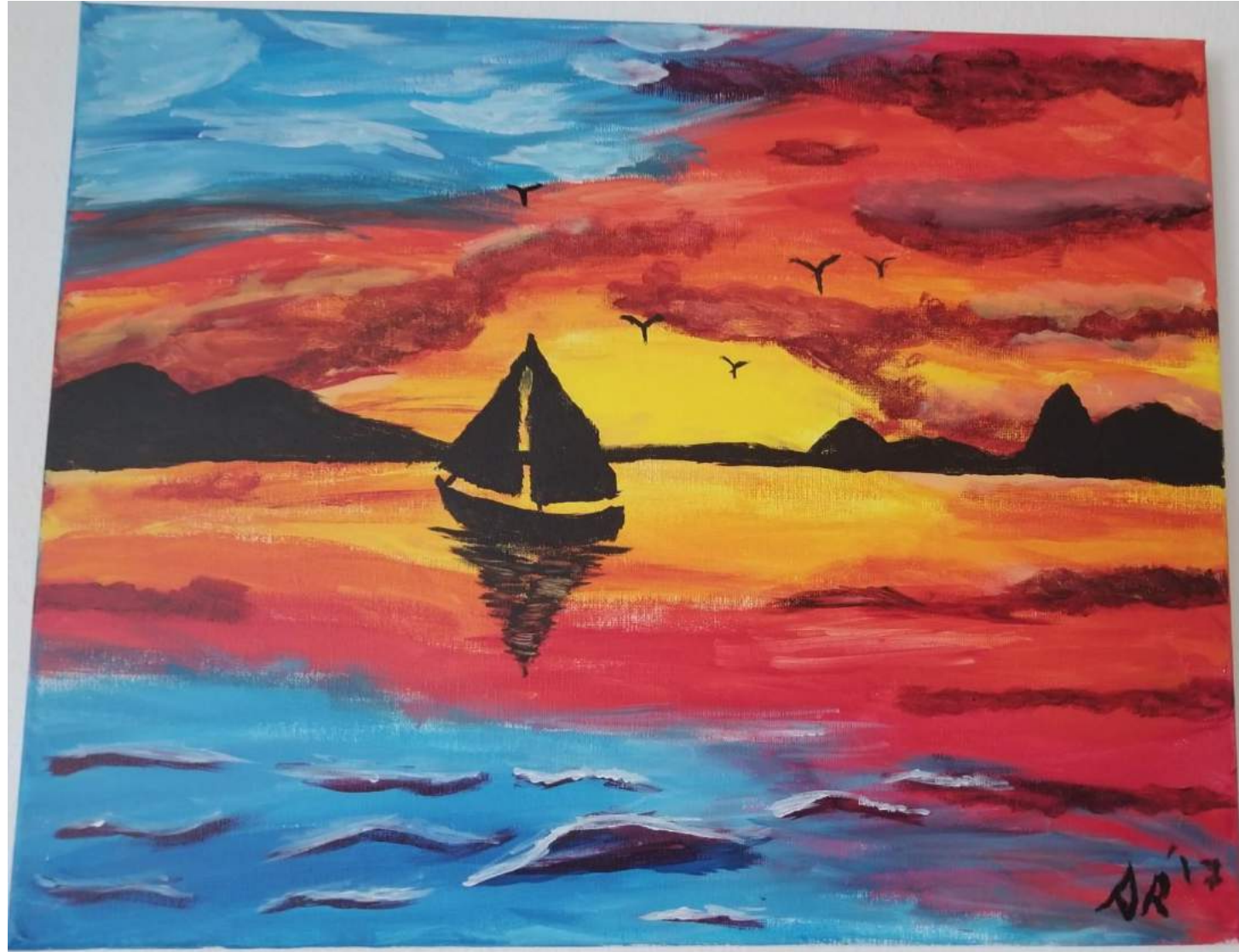
# Simon Rogers

## *Ship Out to Sea Sunset*

2017

I free hand-painted this picture prior to my traumatic brain injury in 2017 during a wine and canvas sip event. This art piece is of vibrant bright colors of blue, yellow, orange, red and black as the primary colors and is of an ocean view sailboat against a major sunset and mountains. There is also birds in the sky and a water shadow reflection of the sailboat if you look closely.

My traumatic brain injury occurred on December 12, 2019 where I was physically hit by a speeding car on WA HWY 109 in-between the "S curves" due to a tree falling on the highway in the middle of the night about 8:30pm. I was in Harborview Medical Center from December 12, 2019 to February 6, 2020 and am continuing outpatient physical therapy to help recover from my TBI.



## Brain Injury Alliance Art Show

"Then one day my life changed in an instant"

Whereas in the human art show of the Brain Injury Alliance of Washington, the Brain Injury Alliance of Washington (BIAW) is committed to the mission of the people of Washington with brain injuries, providing them with the necessary support, resources, information and educational services and social opportunities.

One of the most difficult challenges faced by the community of people with brain injuries is a widely recognized barrier of finding ways to the "show" of brain injury. The barrier is made from many and they make it an ongoing commitment to making art of life.

We are proud to provide a safe place for brain injury artists to showcase their art and tell the stories of their brain injury.



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]

[Caption]



[Artist Name]



[Artist Name]



[Caption]

[Caption]







Chad Larsen

*Maple Leaves*  
Needlepoint

2021



Carolyn Nelson, AAWA

*Buckaroo*

Oil

2021

Internationally known Royal Artist. Director, Instructor and fine art restorer.

Work acknowledged by the Royal family of the UK.  
My paintings are executed upside down as a method in drawing from the right side of the brain. Studies include FAU, Florida and Gothe Institute, Frankfort, Germany.







Kelly Hodges

*Fuel My Fire*  
Photography

2020

As a photographer I'm able to work with the local community college fire training academy, this shot was during an evolution of an overturned gas tanker leaking and on fire.

I was 5 when my TBI happened. I was kicked in the head by a horse while fetching my pony for a ride with my brother and dad. My TBI may have opened up my mind to seeing the beauty I do through the lens of the camera. Learn to dance with the beast.



Rhapsody Thomas

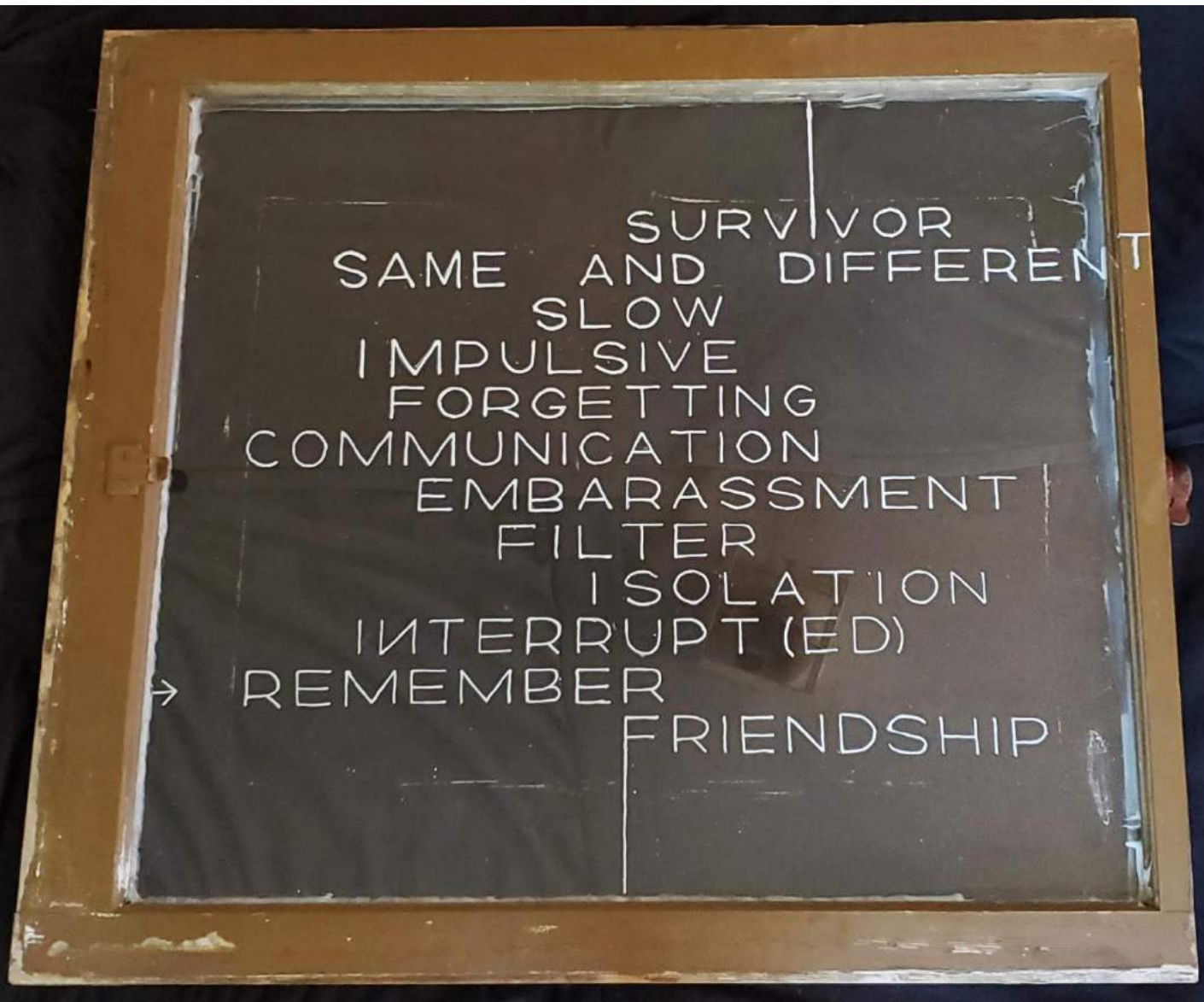
*WORDZ*

Mixed Media

2021







David Long

*Crossword:*  
*Frustrations*  
Whiteout on Glass

2021

Next Slide for Artist Statement

David Long

*Crossword:*  
*Frustrations*  
Whiteout on Glass

2021

This crossword is to be read in more than one direction; more than one reading can be true at the same time. Read the vertical word "Frustrations" starting at the bottom. The design got started on a zoom call with a support group (organized by TBI survivor Michele Kauffman) at an hour when we normally have an art workshop, but this time we were meeting to talk about ideas for an art piece. Early in the session, there was a conflict between two of us and it ended with one leaving the call for a while. Normally our meetings are great, but this time our disabilities clashed- one not able to control when they speak (filter) and another not able to retrieve what they were going to say before interrupted (memory). The remaining people on the call reflected on the conflict and we shared other frustrations we also experience with brain injuries. This is a great thing about connecting with other brain injury survivors: we can relate to each other's experiences. It can be affirming to find other people who understand too, in ways that people who haven't had brain injuries can't. Each person there- Marc Dunbar, Kathy Keylon, Stephanie Jones and Cinda Lium- added to the conversation and contributed words to this piece.

David Long survived a TBI from a fall in April 2016, thanks to the amazing surgical and care teams at Harborview Medical Center on the 9th, 8th, 6th and 4th floors, and thanks to the support from his family and friends. <3 There's a dent in his head but David is alive, and walking and talking and, slowly but surely, creating too.







Small white informational card below the painting on the left.

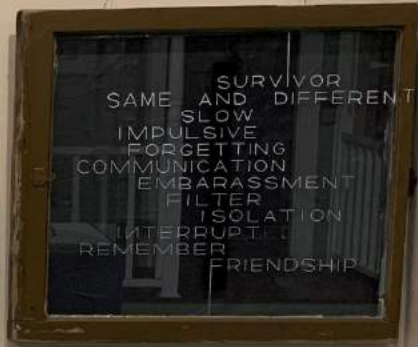


Small white informational card below the painting of the fire.



Small white informational card below the painting of the crowd.

Small white informational card with text, located below the painting of the crowd.



Small white informational card with text, located below the restroom sign.





# Rob Pezely

## *Wood*

2021

I am 49 years old. Currently live with my wife, Becky, in Seattle, WA.

My brain injury occurred near the end of 2017 when a car struck me as I walked in a Seattle area crosswalk. My brain injury has significantly changed my life. Before injury, I worked a very successful Seattle area startup. I currently am unemployed and enjoy maintaining our house and yard.

I also enjoy making small projects, including carving these small, wooden links from a single piece of wood. I found the shaping of these links to feel very soothing as I cut and sanded the wood into link shape.





Peter Eagen

*Mirror*  
Pottery

2021

In these you find the make-up of my mind, my brain. Once I thought of my adult brain as a boulder - solid, unchangeable except for some wearing over time. But I found that boulders are vulnerable when I experienced a TBI.

Now I realize that my brain is more like clay and stones. My brain has malleability, it was stretched, in some areas reshaped. But the stones are me, the essential self, which I have retained.

And the mirror - it is me. It is you. Do you believe your brain is an unassailable fortress? Know that it is not. See me. See yourself. Know you are vulnerable and go boldly into the world anyway. See yourself in the mirror and be clay and stones.



**Peter Eagan**  
**Reflected Stone**  
Clay, stones, mirror

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**Robert Bezely**  
**Love Link**  
Hand carving, turn wood

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Julia Sipe

*Chaos*  
Fused Glass

Next Slide for Artist Statement





Creating art is the driving force in my life, a reflection of the experiences that created who I am. As a result, sharing my art is as personal as sharing a journal. Some of my art was created during a time of great turmoil where doing the impossible was on my daily to-do list. In 2017 I took a fall that resulted in a broken arm and traumatic brain injury with vision issues. Recovery often felt daunting, even impossible but I am finally experiencing some improvement with my vision and the impossible seems possible once more. My passion for working with glass is one of my greatest creative outlets and one of the things that allows me to express the struggles of living with a traumatic brain injury.

My introduction to, and love of, the glass arts began in 1992 when I took a stained glass class. This led me to explore torch work before discovering my true passion - fusing glass. My work often incorporates words, some visible, some hidden within the swirling colors of the glass. My love of art glass led me to become a volunteer and eventually an instructor at Pratt Fine Art. Ten years into my experiments with glass I unearthed some surprising family history: my great great grandfather Stephen Slack, an illegal immigrant from England, was also a glass artist. He created stained glass windows for churches and cathedrals from coast to coast including the Battell Chapel at Yale University.

Over the years my love of glass work has led to inclusion in the 2009 Artist Trust EDGE program and other juried shows. My art was featured in an episode of the television series Prison Wives on the Investigation Discovery Network. I was selected as the official featured glass artist of the 2009 Pride where I created a float with glass panels as well as inclusion in a Pride art exhibition. My work is in several prominent art collections.

The work I have chosen for this exhibition, Chaos, was created from multiple disciplines of fused glass, cut pattern bars, torch work, cut mosaics, stringers and frit. The piece represents an injured brain and damaged vision working to make order out of the chaos left behind and the determination to build a better future.

Julia Sipe

*Chaos*  
Fused Glass





The 2021 Brain Injury Art Show is proudly sponsored by:

