

Bodyscapes

Drawing What Ails Us Summoning Your Healing Symbols

Hosted by Women's Cancer Resource Center

Funded by The Lloyd Symington Foundation

An exhibition of art created by members of the WCRC community, staff, Bodyscapes interns and translators. Created in Bodyscapes Healing Art Workshops led by Diane Sciarretta, creator of The Bodyscapes Technique.

Opening Reception September 15, 2017

JanRae Community Art Gallery

Women's Cancer Resource Center, 5741 Telegraph Ave, Oakland.

Gratitude

Bodyscapes Artists

The Lloyd Symington Foundation

Penni Hudis, PhD
Interim Executive Director, WCRC

Jordana Autrey, Manager of the JanRae Community Art Gallery
Interim Community Engagement Manager, WCRC

Cassandra Falby, LMFT
Program Director, WCRC

Sciarretta Family

Dr. Raymond Pang, L.Ac, N.D
Doctor of Chinese Medicine who contributed
to my understanding of illness and healing

Marion and Bill Gough
Founders of The Foundation for Mind Being Research in Los Altos, CA
www.fmbr.org

Jeff Sher, editor

Bodyscapes Interns
Maria Lentzou, MA Expressive Arts Therapy
Stephy Walpole, MS, MA Expressive Arts Therapy

Bodyscapes Translators
Angela Castillo, PhD student, University of California Berkeley
Maria Jose Vides, Pomona College Class of 2018

Debra St. John, photographer
www.debrastjohn.com/product.html

Zanne deJanvier, graphic designer
www.dejanvier.org



Introduction

Higher self healing through symbolic art

This catalog features poems and drawings created by women living with cancer or surviving cancer plus women who support them. Bodyscapes Healing Art Workshops were offered to members of the Women's Cancer Resource Center. In the spirit of honoring WCRC's mission to create opportunities for women with cancer to improve their quality of life through education, supportive services and practical assistance, WCRC has been excited to host Bodyscapes Healing Art Workshops created by Diane Sciarretta, founder of The Red & Orange House Foundation. Both WCRC and The Red & Orange House extend their gratitude to The Lloyd Symington Foundation for funding Bodyscapes Workshops at WCRC for three years in a row. The composition of this year's group of artists reflects WCRC's multicultural community and is aligned with the LSF's commitment to fund programs for people from underserved communities living with cancer.

The women created their poems first. By engaging their intellect in seeking new words to talk about their cancer, they explored the realm of explanation and meaning. Then they shifted out of their minds and into their bodies. Tapping into the unique wisdom their body offered, they created simple line drawings of the parts of their body afflicted with illness. They rubbed pastel chalk directly onto the images, a symbolic massaging of their physical and emotional selves. The vibrant pastel hues express how they feel to live with cancer—their fears, sorrows, and physical pain and their hope for healing.

When the artwork was completed, they cleared the tools from the workspace. While gazing intently at their drawings, they softly recited their new collections of words, as one does a prayer or mantra. Thus they entered the state where summoning the higher self opens the doorway to the capacity for healing.

Diane Sciarretta
Founder, Red & Orange House Foundation
Creator of the Bodyscapes Technique



The Red & Orange House
where the power of art-making as medicine speeds healing

www.redandorangehouse.com
redandorangehouse@gmail.com

Front cover art: Nava Mizrahi, *Desire*, 2017. Pastel on Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"

Interacting with the artwork in this catalog

“A real work of art destroys, in the consciousness of the receiver, the separation between himself/herself and the artist.”

—Tolstoy

Bodyscapes art is a bridge from person to person, inviting you to enter into a relationship with the artists, to receive the artistic expressions of their feelings and to experience those feeling yourself. All the poems and drawings in this exhibit require that we confront what it must be like for these remarkable women who have lived with painful, confusing, and contradictory experiences of illness which are difficult to communicate.

When you view these drawings, call upon your deep empathy for the artists' journey with cancer and for anyone you know suffering with illness, unemployment, food scarcity, and homelessness. Allow yourself to feel so united to the artists that it feels as if what they expressed was just what you had been wishing to understand. Softly recite each poem while gazing at the drawing, knowing that in this connection, uniting with both the artists and all who view this artwork, lies the force of art to help healing.

Feedback

If you care to share your thoughts, impressions, or reactions to this artwork, please send your comments to Diane Sciarretta at redandorangehouse@gmail.com. Comments pertaining to your interactive healing experience will be particularly appreciated.

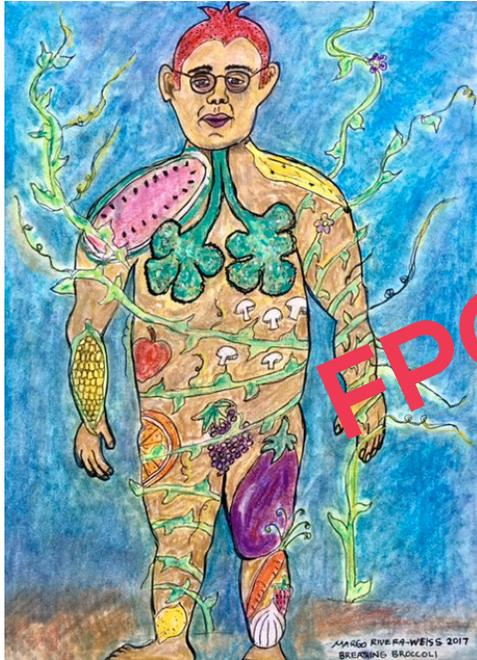
FPO



Maria Jose, *Blue Brown Girl*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"

Maria Jose, *Blue Brown Girl*, 2017

Brown Girl
Blue girl
You are the colors of the rainbow
You are the color of earth
You are the blue sky after the storm
You are also the storm
You are blue the color of your grief
And baby,
you never quite learned how to let go
You are a blue brown girl
You are brown because the sun loved you so much
But the sun forgot to tell you
Blue brown girls can't be blue
Because they are born brown



Margo Rivera-Weiss, *Breathing Broccoli*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"

Margo Rivera-Weiss, *Chartreuse Tendrils*, 2017

Chartreuse tendrils
Spiral embraces
Exuding focus
Vitality
Essential sages
Flourishing
My precious sustenance

Angela Castillo, *Disappointment-Forlorn Road*, 2017

a wandering soul
many times
caught
in barren landscapes
surmounting
comes with new words
a forlorn road
isn't enough
to enclose
vitality
a force
many time awakened

a forlorn road
vanishing
behind



Angela Castillo, *Forlorn Road*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 11"

FPO



Stephy Zoe, *Recreation*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 22" x 15"

Stephy Zoe, *Break A Butterfly*, 2017

A woman—
flies with her wings
discarded by the sea
A woman—
flesh to a skeleton
flaws on her sleeve
A woman—
bruised and wounded
falling on her knees
A woman—
reaching for life
suppressed in catastrophe
A woman—
spreading her wings
recreation will breathe.

Christy, *No Cell Ratio*, 2017

Mathematical Differences
a mixed number with no common measure
harmonical progressions totitive cell ratio
“a number less than
with no common factors
with a given number”
Mathematical Differences
stars shine with light at what ratio?
and die at what ratio?
the dimmest celestial star
throbbing in the observable universe.
Anxiety
Perturbation
“a small change in an orbit
caused by the attraction
of another celestial body”

FPO



Christy, *Mathematical Differences*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 11"



Penni Huddis, *Impediment*, 2017
 Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 11"

Penni Huddis, *Impediment*, 2017

Feeling mental and physical reactions
 Emotions that thwart me
 Feeling the resistance
 Or tension
 Become an impediment to moving forward
 Shifting the impediment
 From resistance to action



Nava Mizrahhi, *Desire*, 2017
 Pastel on Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"

Nava Mizrahhi, *Desire*, 2017

over exercised mind
 secrets complexity
 hollow emptiness

Air my element
 puzzled by clutter
 uterus less hollow

tantra
 puzzled
 no
 more
 Air
 of
 Desire.....

Dec, *Where Will I Be?* 2017

I don't know
where I will end up
to age-in-place
Fearful and vulnerable to bureaucracy
continue to endure
Where will I be?
Pain in my swollen knees
limited choices
susceptible to chaos
Where will I be aging in place?
It's hard to withstand the pain
Limbo



Dec, *Where Will I Be?* 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 11"



Christine Cahill, *Innocent*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 22"

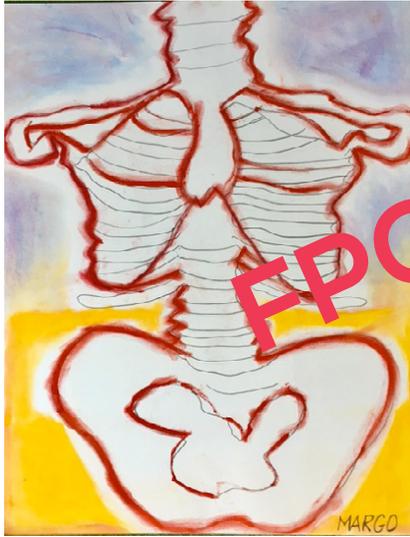
Christine Cahill, *Innocent*, 2017

stinging punishment
feet of clay
scorching rays
day after day

stinging punishment
roasted to life
i crack imperfect
suffer violent strikes

innocent
way to gain
nowhere to hide
accept pain.

stinging punishment
to the bone
i submit, broken
blistering stabs
lifesaving zone



Margo Salem, *Body Isolated*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 22"

Margo Salem, *Breathless Resentment*, 2017

Metastasized resentment

YOU think to KILL ME?!?

Resentment hidden in my body
Resentment taking my breath away

Resentment astonishingly grim,
menacing my bones, outrageous pain
ravaging my heart & community!!

Resentment

YOU think to SMITE MY LIFE FORCE?!?

Unresolved resentment
plunges me into lonely despair

Who AMONG you will be enamored of me
and my baleful truculence?

—my resentment



MariA, *Hand Shipwoman*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 22"

MariA, *A Wolf in Ship's Clothing*, 2017

In the cave of guilt for my departure
my senses are deadened
only my arrogance survives
to resist the burns of authority
Fears are hard to control
and seduce me to neglect and break faith
but mutinousness is my answer
I may be weakened but not dead
I am a wolf of humble birth
I am a wolf in ship's clothing
traveling to unite with the hope for care
longing to meeting with love



Dakota, *Transcender*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 11" x 15"

Dakota, *Transcender*, 2017

revelar todo mi potencia
 permitir
 todo mi ser interior
 se amplifique
 se eleve trazando
 un camino en el cual
 me permita recibir todo lo q' necesito
 ello protegerme
 dolor q' puieran causame
 todos los cambios
 asi aumentar mi capacidad de ser
 con brazos abiertos

Dakota, *Transcending*, 2017

treveal all my power
 allow all my inner being
 to amplify
 rising tracing
 a road
 allowing me to accept everything
 i need
 to protect me from the
 pain that caused me
 all the changes
 thus, increasing my ability to be
 with open arms



To-Minh Diep, *Untitled*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 22" x 15"

To-Minh Diep, *Reduction. Migration.* 2017

Circular horizon plane tapering
 Contour-cosm, margins gazed
 Surface, before girt coastlines
 Erosions between perimetric paths
 Fatigued earnest circuit – delineate

My elliptical equator
 Narrowest joinings exposed
 Weather-marred chromospheric canopy
 Faced with facing
 Weighted swollen countenance
 Clasped cirlet silhouette

Succession of active distance

Testimonials

Penni Hudis, PhD, Interm Executive Director, WCRC

First time making art. Never took an art class before. Why did I wait so long? Time just flew by as I experienced an amazing sense of relaxation and peace. In addition to being a wonderful sense of support for WCRC clients, Diane is an exceptional teacher. I am honored to have spent time learning from her in this class.



Christine Cahill

When you are dealing with breast cancer, you need as many positive ways to release the pain, fear, and anxiety as possible. Diane's Bodywork process, using illness to inspire and create a piece of art, is a powerful and healing way to release negative emotions. It is also nice to be able to share the experience in a poetic and visual way with others.

Christy

The title *No Cell Ratio* talks about the fact that our bodies all have cancer. So, what is the set ratio of cancer cells to normal cells?

Dakota

Me gusto el taller porq' me ayudo a ponerme en contacto directo con mis sentimientos en relacion a mi cuerpo y ala perida de esa parte de mi. El dibujar con mis propias manos esa parte especifica me permitio terminar de cerrar ese ciclo tan dificil para mi. Y si lo recomendaria para mas personas. Gracias.

I liked the workshop because it helped put me in direct contact with my feelings in relation to my body and to the loss of this part of me. The drawing made with my own hands of this specific part of my body allowed me to finish closing such a difficult cycle for me. I would recommend it for more people. Thank you, Diane.

MariA

It was wonderful to discover the hidden meaning of my situation. And approach it from a different perspective and realize its connection to my personal history, feelings, and emotions.

Maria Jose

My drawing deals with the issue of mental health as a brown girl. There is a lot of social and cultural stigmas about mental health in the places I come from. The drawing is talking about having to put on a facade and talk about joy all the time. That's the rainbow in the drawing. And the storm inside while having to maintain myself grounded in a culture that really does not see everything that I go through.

Margo Rivera-Weiss

The experience was really wonderful. Everything from the words to the poem to the drawing and the art, all connected and led back to how I feel about living—flourishing and being as vital as possible for every day that I can.

Margo Salem

Excellent parameters to showcase and direct personal creativity!! A scared, hilarious, profane and profound space created by our artistic “artist” facilitator!

Nava

Starting I was very frustrated and not sure what to do/what to write. One of those deer in the headlights moments. Once I got involved, you could not stop me from engaging. Surprised of all the words and process to write a poem. Enjoyed the poem writing a lot. Felt more connected to myself. I personally like words and felt more comfortable with them than drawing. However, the whole process was great and supportive not to mention productive. Thanks!

Bodyscapes Artist

The guided process of Bodyscapes helped me to not overthink or be too critical of myself, freeing me to remain present to create and observe my thoughts and feelings as my hands moved over words, colors, and texture.

Bodyscapes Artist

I felt a deeper understanding of my thoughts, even new thoughts. I will start drawing and writing poems!

Bodyscapes Artist

The Bodyscapes Technique allowed me to articulate in an expansive and complex way what I was feeling. Being able to name difficult emotions in a plural way permitted me to see those feelings as engines of transformation and not as obstacles.

Bodyscapes Artist

The teacher and environment were incredibly supportive. I was able to lose myself in my work and have a fantastic experience.

Bodyscapes Artist

The workshop creates a connection between our somatic bodies and the emotional components of illness.

History of WCRC

In 1986, a small group of women with cancer founded Women's Cancer Resource Center (WCRC) to provide direct services to women with cancer and to advocate for changes in the health care system. For the first two years, WCRC was simply an answering machine in one woman's living room. As word spread, our founders recognized that had struck a chord in the community.

What began as a group of volunteers has grown to a staff of eleven and a core group of nearly 200 active volunteers, providing extensive services to women with cancer and their loved ones. While WCRC's primary focus is still women with cancer, we have expanded to provide wellness programs for everyone—including people who do not have cancer—regardless of gender.

WCRC supports its community through wellness workshops, community dialogues, an art exhibitions in the JanRae Community art gallery. Most active are WCRC's support groups which are free, specialized, and secure. These groups serve WCRC'S African-American, LBTQIA, Grupo de Espanol/Latinas, and Young Women with Cancer members.



WCRC 2017 Bodyscapes Healing Art Workshops

Christine Cahill,
Margo Salem, Dee,
Margo Rivera-Weiss,
Diane and Dakota,
WCRC Interim
Director Penni Hudis,
expressive arts interns
Stephanie Walpole
and Maria Lentzou,
translator Angela
Castillo, Margo
Rivera-Weiss and
Diane and Christy.



Bodyscapes Invocation

In this moment, we come together as a community of women committed to using the power of the arts as a transformative tool for healing.

We stepped into this special room, a place where so many of our WCRC sisters have gathered to talk intimately about their lives. Today, we gather to contemplate how it feels to live or having lived in a body with cancer—the struggles, the fragility, the strengths, the joys, and all the love.

We bring our shyness and self-doubt in the sacred WCRC library and offer these fears to the Creative Spirit, knowing she will guide us mindfully and with joy. May we tap into our inner creativity to reveal new insights drawn out from the depth of our inner knowing.

May we be quiet enough to hear the creative muse. May we be inspired enough to step into the power of art-making to create poems and drawings which will pass along our stories in legacy—our profound stories of our lives lived on the journey of illness and wellness. May we be heard, understood, treasured, and held along the way, acknowledging the deep need in each of us to communicate our unique wisdom coming from these exquisite bodies.

May our hearts and spirits open to the power of art-making as medicine, knowing we do this not only for ourselves, everyone in this room but for our communities and everyone terrified to hear the words, “You have cancer.”

May they find strength from our stories.

Adapted from an invocation written by Gregg Cassin, Founder of Honoring Our Experience: The Long Term Survivors of AIDS.

The Red & Orange House Foundation

The Red & Orange House Foundation is a registered 501(c)(3) organization that seeks to improve the emotional health and overall quality of life for people living with illness and for their loved ones and caregivers by empowering them to participate in their own healing through guided, artistic self-exploration. Bodyscapes Art Workshops harness the exquisite wisdom of the human body, enabling patients to find meaning and insight at a crucial time in their lives. Bodyscapes helps patients and their families forget illness and reduce pain for a while, calm anxiety and worry, raise their spirits, enrich family relationships, and enhance their dialogue about the experience of illness with their medical team.

To learn more about The Red & Orange House Foundation and The Bodyscapes Technique please visit www.redandorangehouse.com or contact Diane at redandorangehouse@gmail.com

Diane Sciarretta

Diane Sciarretta is an experienced art educator whose core vision is to make art with people suffering with serious illness, with illness itself as the subject of their art. She developed the Bodyscapes Technique as a method of transforming her students from victims of illness to interpreters/artists whose goal is to find meaning in the experience of coping with serious illness.



Diane Sciarretta

Diane received her Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from The Boston Museum School and Tufts University, where she was awarded the Allie Pratt Traveling Art Scholarship. She majored in expressive figurative oil painting with a minor in literature. She went on to earn an art educator credential from The Massachusetts College of Art. Diane worked as a public high school art teacher and special education consultant using art to re-engage low-performing students.

Twenty years ago, Diane's teaching career was interrupted by serious illness. As part of her recovery, she developed what she would eventually name The Bodyscapes Technique out of her personal need to find meaning amid the disruption of her life and communicate her experience to her family.

One year into her journey with illness, suffering from crippling migraine headaches, she gained a crucial insight—she did not know what the inside of her head looked like. She consulted a medical anatomy book and began to create colorful pastel illustrations of her brain, representing simultaneously

the embattled parts of her physical body and her experience combating illness. Art-making soothed her soul and tapped into her personal source of healing power. Once she gave form, texture, and color—outside her body—to her pain and illness, she could see that her ailing body was not to blame. No words were written on it that branded her as a failed artist, teacher, or daughter. She also gained a new language to talk to her family that cut through her feelings of loneliness and alienation.



Diane Sciarretta
Cathedral In My Mind, 1996
Pastel on Fabriano paper,
24" x 36"

Six months later, a friend living with liver cancer came to visit Diane. Her daughter examined Diane's drawings of her migraines and stomachaches and commented, "I've only ever seen a liver on my mom's x-rays. Would you teach me to draw one so I can make a picture to help heal my mother's liver cancer?" In that moment Diane realized she could help the girl deal with her confusion and find hope. Every day while her mother napped, the girl placed one of her drawings on her mother's liver to help heal the cancer. Through art, the girl and her mother discovered a new way to communicate about the cancer that would soon separate them. The mother told Diane that she had found her calling.

Once she regained her health, Diane continued to develop Bodyscapes. In 2001, she organized and managed a weeklong art-making workshop with master therapist Joseph Zinker, author of the seminal work, *Creative Process in Gestalt Therapy*. In the summer of 2009, she helped children who had lost a parent to cancer express themselves through uplifting art projects at Camp Kesem in South Florida. In July 2012, she obtained a Certificate of Completion in the arts in a Healthcare Summer Intensive at the University of Florida's Shands Hospital, where she studied the history of and funding for transforming the health care experience through the arts. In 2014, she founded The Red & Orange House Foundation. In 2015, she was awarded a grant from the Anne Goss Foundation to conduct a Bodyscapes Art Workshop for the Child Life department at Riley Hospital for Children in Indianapolis. In 2014 and 2015, she was awarded Lloyd Symington Foundation grants to conduct Bodyscapes Art Workshops and art exhibits at Women's Cancer Resource Center. In 2016, she was awarded an Anne Goss Foundation grant to conduct Bodyscapes Art Workshops and an art exhibit for teens receiving dialysis treatment and the Child Life Department staff at Arkansas Children's Hospital in Little Rock.



Christine Cahill, *Innocent*, 2017
Pastel on Fabriano paper, 15" x 22"