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Systems Failure

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Governors State University

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Systems Failure



Joyce Speechley Symoniak
M.F.A. Governor's State University, 2016
Graduate Thesis
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
Degree of Master of Fine Art

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Thesis Abstract/Overview

My thesis is broken into four major sections.

- Thesis statement and artist statement.
 - Overview Statement
 - Artist Statement
 - Concept Introduction
- The creation of my drawings.
 - Introduction
 - Development
 - Methodology
 - Summary
- The creation of photography and digital imaging.
 - Introduction of Digital Imaging
 - Development
 - Methodology/Conjoining Drawing with Digital Imaging
 - Summary
- Images
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Overview



Thesis Abstract

“Systems Failure” is a substantial array of digitally created images centered on many social and ethical issues that go undetected for numerous people. Many within our society live in silent anguish, something that remains unseen and undiscussed by others. “Systems Failure” shows the outsider a brief look into this life. While some images may seem as if the ugly side of life is being brought out, they are concentrated on the strength of humans. The focus of these images is on those who are trying to endure situations in which many cannot see or even understand.

I intend to bring the viewer into my imagery by combining a number of images into one solid cohesive piece. I will do this by using a variety of hand drawn, photographic and computer generated images, through this type of amalgamation I will be produce several signature images, the goal is to produce 20-25 images. Each individual image will be comprised of at least three different images, using Photomatrix and Photoshop the combined images will be set in a single composition.

My first set of files or images are created using Photomatrix, this involves setting three layers of a digital image to bring out underlying details. When creating my final digital images or combining my HDR images I use Adobe CC, Photoshop. My PSD files will be merged for many contain 75 and upwards to 200 layers, this makes for extremely oversized files. Therefore each file/image

will be merged as a single layer once all adjustments have been made. Final images will be printed on steel using no white, simply the steel will be utilized as a white. This allows the images to maintain a darker, look along with giving the image third dimensional appearance.

Artist's Statement

"In our culture images have become tools used to provoke specific and planned emotional reactions in the people who see them."

J. F. Davis

From this statement I have created my work for this series entitled "Systems Failure." The strength within this series of digitally created images is based upon many social and ethical issues that go unseen by many people. Using the power of imagery my plan is to give the viewer insight into a violent relationship provoking an emotional response in which they will continue to carry. The main focus is based upon violent relationships.

Using my daolistic style combined with my digital imagery my newest series, reveals the loss of hope yet exposes the inner courage of many women and victims of violence. The objective is to create an awareness into the life of many who suffered silently; those who have had to live in fear, silently and alone. The main, but not only focus are the issues in which many women face.

Utilizing my past fumage drawings and incorporating digital images with strong influences from the works of Wolfgang Paalen, Man Ray, Sally Mann, and

Will Ellis. My newest images exemplify the human side of what happens when our systems fail. The intent of combining the process between hand drawn and digital images gives the viewer a feeling of unrest in a surrealistic world. This conjoined with the lack of color brings the viewer into the darkened world in which the victim must learn to survive.

As an example; our government has voted away the funds to help protect women and provide them with the basics such as shelters, forcing them to stay in a violent relationship. These effects have been devastating, for every one shelter to protect women and their children there are two shelters for pets. Proving the pets within our society are given a higher regard than the people. This is just one example in which I plan to use the power of imagery to teach, educate and inform others.

My focus will not only be on the subject of women but an overall system which has failed the people in which it is supposed to protect. This should be a statewide concern as well as nationwide. I hope to bring attention to the issues, such as the abuse in which many suffer and the secret lives in which many live due to fear. My new series of work will bring awareness to those who have chosen to be blind regarding the state of being, which many of our friends and neighbors suffer unbeknownst to us. Many works will emphasize the strength and fortitude in which these people pose in order to survive.

Sometimes, violent people treat their boyfriends or girlfriends very well allowing the world to believe that all is good, indeed they can be loving and sorry

for their violent behavior. This can make it hard to see what's really happening from both the victim's eyes and that of the rest of the world looking in. Many times the victim is blamed for the abuse by the violent person saying things like "it wouldn't happen if you did what I said." Things might settle down for a while, but usually it's only a matter of time before the build-up to violence starts again. Being a victim of this type abuse is a deeply dark secret that very few share, including myself. Yet when we add the social issues and government reducing funding there truly is no place for these victims to run, talk or find self-pride again. Therefore my attempt is to reveal some of the areas in which our governmental system has failed.

The facts which surround my images will focus primarily on women focusing in a PSA style, in hopes of educating the viewer. Keeping in mind the facts some include:

- For every single shelter there is for women there are two and half for animals, proving society has a higher value on their pets than on the women.
- Domestic violence is the leading cause of injury to women between the ages of 15 and 44 in the United States, more than car accidents, muggings, and rapes combined.
- In many cases this type of abuse can be not only physical but mental.

- Battering occurs among people of all races, ages, socio-economic classes, religious affiliations, occupations, and educational backgrounds.
- Between 600,000 and six million women are victims of domestic violence each year.

The system that has failed victims, women, children and many others, I plan to bring this failure into the light through use of digital imaging. I am planning to show case a minimum 20 pieces of combined mediums, utilizing both my drawing skills and digital imaging, to complete a final digital image.

Utilizing my past fumage drawings and incorporating digital images with strong influences from the works of Wolfgang Paalen, Man Ray, Sally Mann and Will Ellis, these newest images will exemplify the human side of what happens when our system fails. The intent of combining the process between hand drawn and digital images gives the viewer a feeling of unrest in an unnatural world. This conjoined with the lack or little color brings the viewer into the darkened world in which the victim must learn to survive.

My vision is to use static images encompassing artworks from the Chicagoland area, along with employing in-studio photographic and drawings. I plan to use this as part of my thesis utilizing at least 2 different screens with one being the focal point joined by my Digital Images.

My self-challenge is taking a style, “Daolistic” which means peaceful and a “Surrealistic” style to create images which will impact the viewer. My intention

is to allow my subject to have a small moment of peace within their violent world, drawing the viewer into the surrealistic life.

My self-challenge is taking a style, “Daolistic” which means peaceful and a “Surrealistic” and violent life to create images which will impact the viewer. My intention is to allow my subject to have a moment of peace within their in violent world, drawing the viewer into the surrealistic life.

The core of my show will be on static images utilizing at minimum, three or more images combined, to create statement based pieces. The images are both drawn by hand and photography combined digitally to create one solid image. The selection process of which images will be used in this combined process is based upon the each individual pictorial statement. The image sizes vary from 14” x 22” to 36” x 22”. All static images are framed and wired backed for proper hanging. For exact sizing of all images you can view them under the Exhibition Images section.

Concept Introduction

"It's cold." "Where did he take her, My God where did he take her?" –

The fall had produced an early snow, leaving 4 inches on ground and continuing as the clock warned 3:00 am. My daughter was barely three weeks old when her father returned home from being out, with me being upset and concerned with his safety out on the roads, another argument erupted.

"I don't care what you think!" "You are a psychotic bitch, and shouldn't be raising this kid." He broken pass, throwing me to the floor like a rag doll, grabbing my daughter, back into the car and off he went. "If you want to leave, go now, but you will not get her back if you leave."

Once up off the floor all I could think about was, "it's cold." "Where did he take her, My God where did he take her?"

Sounds like a story line? It is, but it my story and the story of many women. Many stories will never be told and many hopefully will. This is my story and the concept for my thesis and MFA exhibition.

This is my letting go of my past and moving forward, after years of being controlled and abused I can let go, I can move forward. I had lived in fear for at least 20 years that I can or care to remember. I had planned an escape, which

took me five years plus to implement. Now I can tell my story and the story of many others, the story of abuse and fear in which so many live isolated.

Today, October 27 2015 CBS News reports Salon Workers are pushing to get training in spotting domestic abuse. Many have asked why, yet no one seems to truly understand that victims are not able to talk about what is happening to them. They live in fear, in fear of losing a child or children, fear of not being able to make ends meet. Fear that their lives will be destroyed and in some case their lives will end. Most people cannot begin to understand this type of fear or control, therefore I have added a couple of quotes which may help.

“Your abusive partner doesn’t have a problem with his anger; he has a problem with your anger. One of the basic human rights he takes away from you is the right to be angry with him. No matter how badly he treats you, he believes that your voice shouldn’t rise and your blood shouldn’t boil. The privilege of rage is reserved for him alone. When your anger does jump out of you—as will happen to any abused woman from time to time—he is likely to try to jam it back down your throat as quickly as he can. Then he uses your anger against you to prove what an irrational person you are. Abuse can make you feel straitjacketed. You may develop physical or emotional reactions to swallowing your anger, such as depression, nightmares, emotional numbing, or eating and sleeping problems, which your partner may use as an excuse to belittle you further or make you feel crazy.” (Bancroft)

“The scars from mental cruelty can be as deep and long-lasting as wounds from punches or slaps but are often not as obvious. In fact, even among women who have experienced violence from a partner, half or more report that the man’s emotional abuse is what is causing them the greatest harm.” (Bancroft)

Through the power of images I hope to bring new insight to the understanding of the power/control one can have over another. Grasping the meaning of abuse may help one gain an understanding into the life of the victim. This has been an issue in which many overlook or choose not to see. Bringing my hand drawn images together with my photographic imaging I have created this series “Systems Failure.”

The purpose of amalgamation the two mediums is to convey the unreal world of abuse to the forefront. The drawings bring the impression of a subtler or elegant atmosphere to a hostile world. Some portraits drawn with the intention is to show the tenderness in which the subject possess. Using the drawings of landscapes the intent is to show the subject still has life within them. While many feel they may not have a life, there is still a life of being one’s self and having the ability to grow. The photographic images bring the issue of abuse into the realm of realism by showing the subject in an enigmatic manor. Many images show destruction representing the devastation of person’s self-esteem or relationship. This permutation creates an uncomfortable mix, which is the intent.



Drawings



Introduction to Drawings



David's Walk

My drawings focus on the correlation of atmospheric moisture, the changing light of day or the harsh lighting from strong single light within the image. I incorporate the reflections of diffused sunlight from the surrounding environment into my grayscale landscape drawings. This allows my dark values to dictate the movement of a fog/mist like

environment. This environmental effect bestows my work with the drama created by extreme light in a world frozen in a single moment or emotion within a second of time. That dramatic lighting in mainly my portraits is intended so the viewer can relate to the harsh reality the subject is facing.

This atmospheric phenomenon/fog or dramatic light, within the drawings is often overlooked or frowned upon. My intent is to bring the viewer into my images allowing them to become one with the subject. I attempt to place my viewer within a moment of complete silence and solitude, yet allow the viewer

to find the unknown elements which are eluding the scene or are cast into the shadows. This may leave the viewer with a somewhat haunting feeling wanting the secrets which lay within the image to be revealed, allowing the viewer to become absorbed by the subject.

My landscapes originate from places in my life where I have found my own inner peace and solitude. Most images are only reflections or memories of places and personal experiences. Some places of which no longer exist, from Virginia, North Carolina and western Illinois. The portraits are not the reflections of one person but of many. The emotions within their faces states or shows their personal torment, while the positioning within the composition speaks of their will for self-survival. My drawings start with a sketch and/or photograph, then evolve into compositions in which line and form develop the foundation of my gray values.

Each drawing is a mixture incorporating graphite, graphite powder, and fumage. I selected these media for their carbon composition which help to facilitate a mood. In addition, the diversity of values allows my images to possess a wide range of emotion.

The graphite washes are applied as stable values and incorporate the defined elements of the image. Fumage is a technique created by utilizing the emancipated motion of a flame. The flame is allowed freedom to stream over the surface creating a soft line or eliminating edges from a solid formation. Layering the components helps to achieve the natural movements within my

images. This effect gives the images the look in which I have worked to achieve, having the viewer feel as if they are within the image themselves.

Development

My initial drawings are images of people and landscapes. The landscapes are from Virginia, North Carolina, and western Illinois my portraits are based upon others I have met on my journey. My work focuses on the correlation of atmospheric moisture and changing light of day, along with the drama in light creates in within a single moment. I incorporate the reflection of the diffused sunlight and the atmospheric refraction from the surrounding environment into my grayscale landscape drawings. This allows the dark values to dictate the movement of light located within the environment of my drawing. An example of this is shown in my image (figures 1-2 shown below), *Goshen Pass*; notice the diffused light source from the mountain top within the drawing. This image was conceived from my own photograph also shown on shown below. Goshen Pass is an image from Lexington, Virginia, created on a cradled, or raised, clayboard. This image measures thirty by thirty inches. The medium I chose was graphite, graphite powder and fumage; this process has been addressed under Methodology.

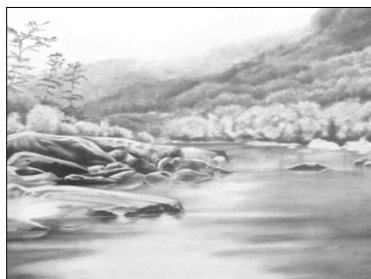


Figure 1: *Goshen Pass*



Figure 2: *Goshen Pass Photography*

In the images *Solitude I, II, and III* (figures 3-5, shown below), note the atmospheric element of fog within our environment. This type of weather pattern is often overlooked or unappreciated. However, by focusing on and maximizing the softness within the landscape, a moment of complete silence and solitude is created. This enables the viewer to find peace with the unknown elements which are eluding the scene or are cast into the shadows. This helps to show the peace that is possible within combined works allowing a sense of peace or possibility of peace. My intention is to leave the viewer with some



Figure 3: *Solitude*



Figure 4: *Solitude II*



Figure 5: *Solitude III*

uncertainty of time while allowing them to be absorbed in the image itself.

In *Solitude I, II and III* the images represent places of quiet, and motionless environment, yet they possess the movement of the haze which has been created by the soft gray values that surround the simplest elements. Each image was created in the same manner using graphite and fumage in an

eighteen by twenty-four inch format. I chose to incorporate the Daoist Principle, bringing the viewer into the images, or allowing them to become one with the subject.

The Daoist Principles are very different from what I had been taught to believe as a Christian. In the Old Testament it states that man has dominion over the rest of creation, and the 8th Psalm reverberates a similar viewpoint in stating that the Lord made man "a little lower than the angels," and, "Thou maddest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands and has put all things under his feet." (Norton) However, in the Daoist Principle and in Chinese art, particularly in the landscape paintings, there is a very different theory. The Daoist Principle suggests an entirely different relationship between humans and nature. The principle speaks of a harmony among all aspects of nature and claims, "Heaven and earth and I live together. (Norton) The harmony in nature within the Chinese landscapes is illustrated in the balance between such things as water and mountains. Waterfalls and mountain peaks make up much of Chinese landscape painting, with images of people seeking to understand the secrets of the power of nature. In many, if not most, landscape paintings, humans have a place. They are participants in the natural scene, but they do not dominate it. In my landscapes I attempt to put the viewer as the human element, without the physical image, allowing them to become part of the landscape.

Daoist theology emphasizes various themes found in the *Daodejing* and *Zhuangzi*. Some of the themes include naturalness, peace, emptiness

(refinement), flexibility, receptiveness, spontaneity, and the relativism of the human ways of life, all of which I have tried to portray within my images themselves and within my technique.



Figure 6: *Travelers Amid Mountains& Streams*

The artist Fan Kuan (960 - 1279) was a Chinese landscape painter during the Song Dynasty. Kuan is listed as the 59th of the 100 most important people of the last millennium by Life magazine. Kuan incorporated the Daoist principles within many of his works. In his work, *Travelers Amid Mountains and Streams*, painted in 1024 (figure 6), the viewer becomes one with nature. In viewing the painting, the viewer realizes how small he/she is compared to the expanse of nature. This seven foot painting focuses on the big picture of

nature and the world as a whole instead of the individual. This painting is considered to be one of the finest landscape paintings produced by a painting on the Daoist Principle of becoming one with nature, which is the emotion I have attempted to replicate within my own images. When comparing a detailed image of my drawing entitled *Veiled Valley*

to works of Fan Kuan, the similarities are reinforced and the concept is unified (figure 7-8, below).



Figure 7: *Travelers Amid Mountains And Streams*, Fan Kuan (Detail)



Figure 8: *Veiled Vista* (Detail)

My hand developed portraits are based from Sally Mann's works, and her self-portraits she created during her convalescence after a riding accident in 2006. My influences are based upon her images during that time frame. Sally Mann continued to work even being bed ridden, the images she took of herself were developed using a long-winded process which makes the images have an old photo appeal. The images are created using glass-plate ambrotype positives straight from the camera. The process is done using one side of a clean glass

plate was coated with a thin layer of iodized collodion, then dipped in a silver nitrate solution. The plate was exposed in the camera while still wet. Exposure times varied from five to sixty seconds or more depending on the brightness of the lighting and the speed of the camera lens. This can be controlled by the photographer in cases, however, Sally Mann had minimal control for she was not able to control the light within her room. The plate was then developed and fixed. The resulting negative, when viewed by reflected light against a black background, appears to be a positive image: the clear areas look black, and the exposed, opaque areas appear relatively light. (Wise Geek) This type of process does create imperfections within photo, causing the surface to be scratchy and may even have parts of the image peel off on the glass. This process gives the subject or the image a battered look, the darkness is due to this process and lends its self well to my works. It allows the elements of the subjects face to stand out from the background, this is my intention within my drawings. In viewing Sally Mann's images (figure 9, shown on the following page) in comparison with my images (figure 10, shown on the following page) one can see the similarities, with the difference being mediums. (See detailed images figures 11-12 on the following page).



Figure 9: *Untitled*, Self Portrait, Sally Mann 2006-2012

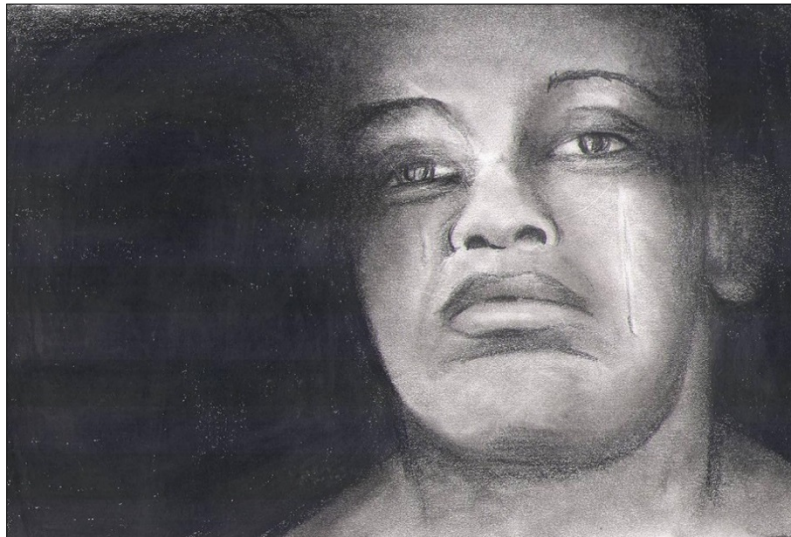


Figure 10: *Silenced*,



Figure 11: Sally Mann
(Detail)

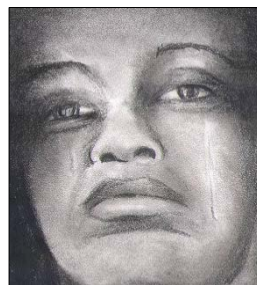


Figure 12: *Silenced*
(Detail)

My concepts have evolved through the development of my process. In other words, I start with the development of a technique (such as fumage), then I allow the fumage, or the technique, the ability to formulate my theme. This allows the process I have chosen to assist in dictating my concept for both my landscapes and my portraits. The movement of the flame on the drawing helps to depict the mood.

During my initial development of the technical process I switched from subject to subject challenging my own control over the medium. One of my first images created was *Sign of the Season*; this triptych started as a small single image and grew into a triptych measuring thirty by thirty inches. In *Sign of the Season*, the images are rendered tightly, allowing the elements to possess harder edges. The only softness shown incorporated within this piece is shown within shadows of the hard edged elements. In this piece, notice the detail of the softened fumage marks made within each flower petal and leaf (figures 13-15, below).



Figure 13: *Sign of the Season*



Figure 14: *Detail*

Sign of the Season was chosen for the subject due to its representation of a new beginning or a new season. The subject itself is of a single element, a flower, as seen in Solitude I, II and III. I find a simple elegance within a single element and try to bring out its own natural beauty in my drawings.

I then moved to the figure or figurative works, still trying to maintain full control over my technique. In the piece, *My name is Eric...*, I first incorporated a graphite wash before I proceeded to the fumage. While this image is only eighteen by twenty-four inches, it remains unfinished. In this image I have kept the subject simple, a single element, allowing my technique to develop around it. As you see from the detail, my technique started to become more fluid, allowing the fumage to show its true appeal (figure 16- 17, shown on the following page). It was from this series of works which I have chosen to use for my final series, "Systems Failure."

As I have further developed my concept I also developed my technique by pushing the marks made by the fumage process even further, as seen in the image *Lost* (figure 18, shown on the following page). My technique was enhanced through experimentation by changing the type of marks I was creating. The harder marks were created using a candle with a higher level of carbon. *Lost* is created on clayboard measuring eighteen by twenty-four inches. When examining this image, notice the change in mark making, for the smoke marks truly show their natural characteristics within this image. This change in

the mark making was incorporated to create the elongated effects within the image itself.

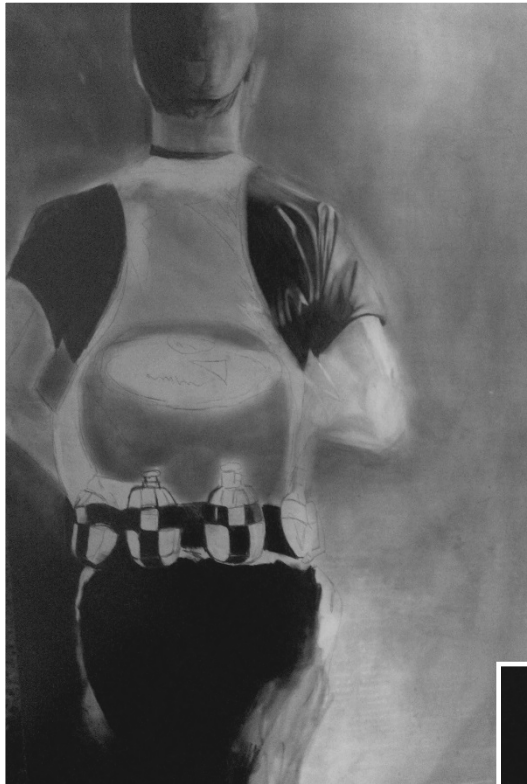


Figure 16: *My name is Eric...*

Figure 17: *Detail*

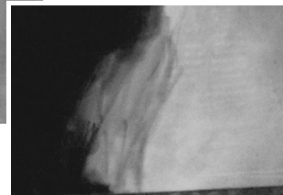


Figure 18: *Lost*

I refined my direction early in the summer of 2008; at that time my family was faced with issues which were both confusing and frustrating, all brought on by years of continued turbulence and abuse. We had lost direction as a family unit and were faced with having to find and restart our lives. My son had remembered how his grandfather would talk about the farm which his family had owned. It was the farm in Bowers Hill, Virginia which had brought them together as a family.

My father would talk about how he grew up dividing his time between the farm and New York City. My grandmother had left the farm with my father, leaving her two older sons behind to help tend the land. She headed to New York City in search of a job and hoped to send money back to her family on the farm. When my father talked about going home to the farm, laughter and love would shine in his voice. He did not remember where the farm actually was but he did have fond memories of fishing and lying in the cooling shadows from the surrounding mountains. He talked endlessly about his mother and the time they shared at the family farm.

After we had talked even further about the farm, my children and I had decided that we needed to find the farm and find our new start, so we headed to Bowers Hill, Virginia. It was in Bowers Hill that we came together as *our own* family. We found our own laughter and our own smiles and I found the concept of my series *Eternal Spaces*. Once in Virginia we found we were surrounded by its natural beauty and wrapped in the never-ending fog of the Smoky Mountains.

We did not find the farm, but we did find the town and we found the eternal spaces in our hearts for a place we now call our home in history, our place of beginning.

This was the beginning for me, my teenagers, and for my series *Eternal Spaces*. In *Veiled Vista* (figure 19, shown below), a vista in Virginia, I try to share with the viewer a feeling of being wrapped in the fog and mist of the mountains. I tried to capture the diffused light as I saw it through the low lying clouds. The low laying clouds or the fog are allowed to create the sense of seclusion. *Veiled Valley* measures 24 x 12 inches and started with a simple graphite wash creating the varied values of gray.



Figure 19: *Veiled Vista*



Figure 20: *City Traces*

Staying within my concept as shown in *City Traces* (figure 20, shown above), I chose to incorporate some manmade elements; this is reflective of the Virginia landscape. While *City Traces* is not an image from Virginia, it is the

image seen from the ranger tower just outside of Elizabeth City in western Illinois. I included it in the series because it is representational of my series. The landscapes surrounding Bowers Hill is scattered with small farms nestled into the mountain valleys. Using images from the series "Enteral Spaces," I have continued to develop new work. Some images from this series are combined with others in the creation of "Systems Failure."

Methodology



Figure 21: *Fumage* 1937

My methodology has been influenced by the works of Wolfgang Paalen and his Fumage process. Fumage is a surrealist technique invented by Wolfgang Paalen in 1938. It is a process that incorporates impressions which are made by the smoke of a candle or kerosene lamp on

a piece of paper or canvas. The technique was later employed by Salvador Dalí, who called it "sfumato." Both Paalen and Dalí used the technique as a basis for their oil paintings. Paalen's elongated surreal landscapes and Dalí's elongated, wavy treatment of animals and objects reveal the influence of the technique on their imagery.

One of Paalen's first images created using the technique was untitled and only known by *Fumage 1937* (figure 21, shown above). This image was created by using the fumage process on a wooden chassis; it was this image that evoked my curiosity about the process. Another one of his images which drew me into the process was *Orages Magnétiques (Magnetic Storms)*, which Paalen created in 1938 (figure 22, shown on the following page). This image was created on canvas and incorporated the use of oil paint with a fixative being applied in

between the layers. I was intrigued by the marks that were able to be produced with the use of a candle. When comparing my work and marks to those of Paalen's, there is a similarity in the process of the creation and mark making (figure 23, shown below). I greatly admire Paalen's technique and the technical process of fumage. As for his subjects versus mine; we both create images from places where we have found peace; however, we create in two very different styles. Paalen was an abstract expressionist and I believe I am more of an impressionist or Daoist.



Figure 22: *Orages Magnétiques* (Magnetic Storms), Paalen 1938.

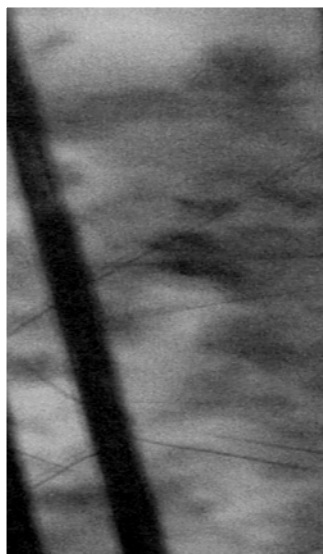


Figure 23: *Details*

Fumage is a method of making an image with smoke fumes or the soot.

Paalen's first images were created with a kerosene lamp and in his later images he utilized a candle. The marks are created by allowing the candle to travel freely across the surface in a continuous flow or line. The process is created by allowing the soot of a flame to flow over the surface of the art work, embedding the soot into the foundation. The soot can be easily removed or lightened. A layer of fixative is applied to adhere the soot to the foundation or the image.



Figure 24: *Les étranger*, Paalen

Paalen's technique began by allowing the candle to create its own idea of an image, allowing the movement of automatism, or automatic drawing. He would then fix the soot to the canvas and add a wash of oil paint. At certain points within the wash, the soot would bleed through the oil paint as shown in the image *Les étranger*, (figure 24, shown at left). Paalen would once again return to utilizing the soot from a

candle, allowing the flame to flow freely over the oil paint and canvas, and finish his works with additional oil paint.

In exploring this technique, I took the process of fumage several steps further by incorporating the use of a welder's torch, oil lamps, kerosene lamps, candles and butane lighters. The chemical reactions or the marks of all are dependent upon the varied amounts of carbon and hydrogen being burned. However, I chose to use graphite over Paalen's choice of oil paints. My choice of graphite use was due to the fact that graphite is a direct element contained with the carbon. Graphite is an allotrope of carbon, where the carbon atoms are bonded together in sheets of a hexagonal lattice. The following is an explanation of the different chemical compositions and their comparisons.

Chemical Compositions and Comparisons

Propane: A colorless gaseous hydrocarbon, used as fuel in a welder's torch. Propane contains 3 parts carbon, 8 parts hydrogen and petroleum.

Butane: A gaseous hydrocarbon, used as fuel in a lighter. Butane contains 4 parts carbon, 10 parts hydrogen, petroleum and a straight chain of carbon atoms and is isomeric with 2-methylpropane.

Kerosene: A mixture of liquid hydrocarbons obtained by distilling petroleum, bituminous shale, and is used to light lamps or kerosene lamps such as a camping lantern. Kerosene contains 12 to 15 parts carbon, 24 parts hydrogen and benzene.

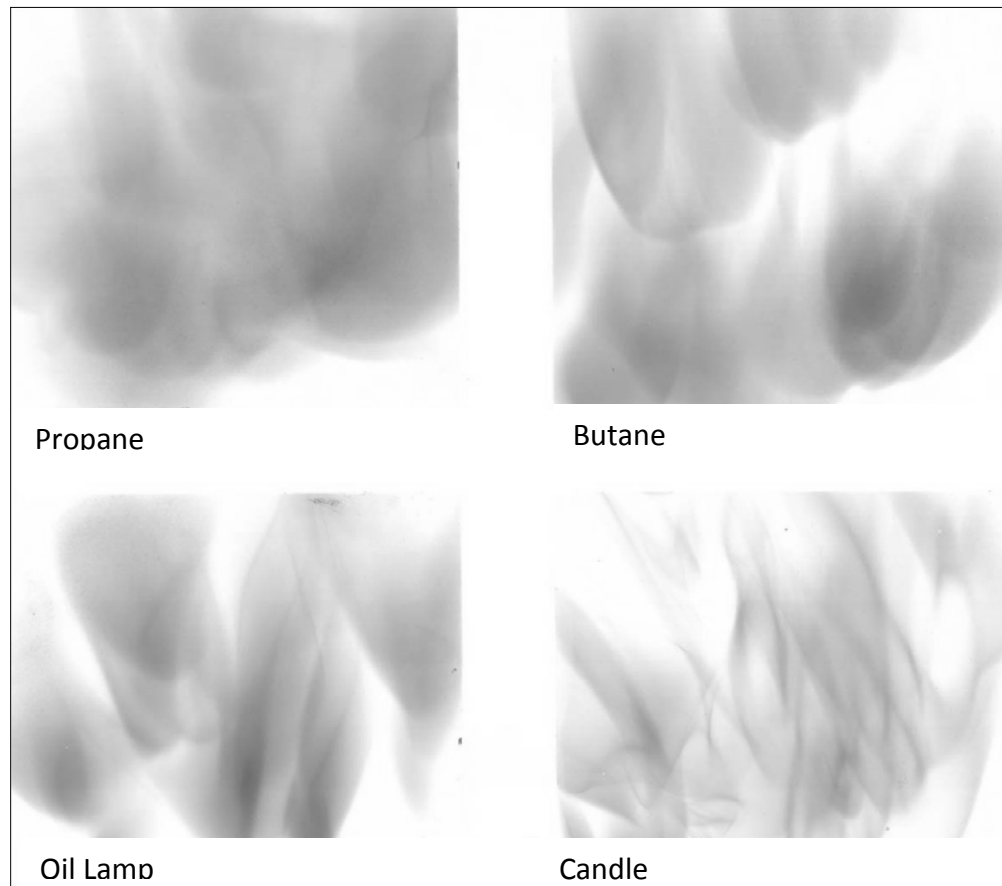
Lamp oil or liquid paraffin: A light-colored oil that is a mixture of hydrocarbons derived from petroleum and is used in small oil lamps. Lamp Oil contains 84 parts carbon and 110 parts hydrogen and benzene.

Candles: A solid block of fuel (commonly wax) and an embedded wick, used as a light source. A candle contains 335 parts carbon, 300 parts hydrogen, 18 carbon dioxide molecules and 12 helium molecules.

Soot is created by the impure carbon molecules. Everything is made from carbon, and when it is burned, the gas carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere. The soot marks are then created when too much oxygen is released and not enough carbon is being released. So instead of creating carbon dioxide, there is no oxygen, no dioxide, just unburnt carbon. Therefore, soot itself is not necessarily inside the smoke. The unburnt carbon is the soot, and the more parts of carbon an element may contain the more soot is produced or the mark that is created is darker.

Having general knowledge of the chemical compositions in regards to each tool helps to simplify my conception of this advanced fumage process. As stated in the ***Chemical Compositions and Comparison's*** section, propane had the least amount of carbon, allowing it to be layered having the ability to create softer values. While the candle contains the maximum highest amount of carbon, this helps to achieve the dark/black values within my images. The candle sepia tone. Each tool produces its own distinguishing marks (figure 25, below), allowing a diverse application.

Figure 25: Fumage marks.



My process begins with a sketch or a photograph (at times numerous sketches or photographs). Once I have found my subject I compose a final sketch, or a final idea, which is usually produced in my sketch diary. In addition to my sketch I add notes in which I detail what I feel is needed for the completion of the image and for my own visual memory. It is at this time that I consider reproducing the sketch to the actual size of the planned drawing. I may redraw the image to size if I feel there are elements missing.

I then proceed to reproduce the sketch on clayboard. Clayboard is made by Ampersand and is a museum quality panel coated with a smooth absorbent clay ground. The surface is comparable to the clay gesso grounds used during the Renaissance and has both additive and subtractive qualities that allow for removal of the medium to add contrast, texture, tonal value and fine details. It's characterized as a hardboard material prepared for compatibility with a variety of media. Hardboard is composed of ground wood fibers that are heat- and pressure-treated to form panels. They also contain a very small quantity of drying oil to harden (temper) the product. The product is made predominantly of aspen wood and is processed to remove undesirable qualities found in ground wood panels. It is finished by adding a layer of clay to the surface which internally and externally stabilizes it to maintain the panel's long-term integrity. I choose to use clayboard due its smooth surface. While it does not capture the graphite well, unless sprayed, it does lend itself well to the spontaneous movement or the smoke. The smooth surface allows the smoke to flow freely

over the surface, without the worry of vellum or rough surface catching an uneven mark.

Once the image is sketched I start by adding a graphite powder wash. At times the sketch can still be seen through the completed drawing (figures 26-27, shown below). The wash is created with use of sponges, chamois and, of course, my hands. I carefully layer the washes to achieve a background. It is the background that aids in setting the overall values, mood, and solidifies the atmospheric presents of the diffused sunlight.



Figures 26-27:
Drawing details.



During the next stage of development, the process may change from image to image. Most images would then be worked with graphite pencils, incorporating the setting in the harder edges of the elements within the landscape. Some have had the need to have the spontaneity of the fumage added at this time. This difference is shown in the detailed images *David's Walk* and *Goshen Pass* (figures 28-29, shown below). In *David's Walk* the hard edged trees were added at this point, while in *Goshen Pass* the mountains were laid in using the fumage process, same as in the portrait from "Silenced" (figure 30, shown on the following page), the soften technique helps add to the emotions of the subject.



Figures: 28 and 29, details.



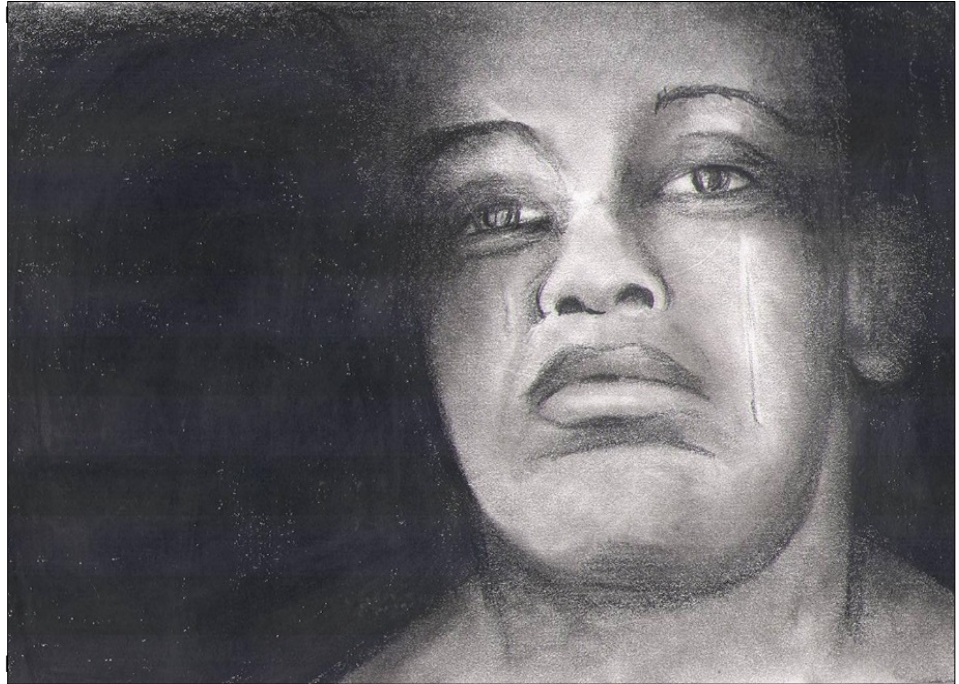


Figure 30: *Silenced*, Partial

The next step is to decide which style or type of mark I would like to incorporate. In many cases, I incorporate more than one type of mark, utilizing the varied tools of fumage. During the fumage process I work with my board propped up so that I am looking up at it. I need to work from beneath the board most of the time. I often opt to hang it from an elevated position, allowing the flexibility to tilt the board as needed. By tilting the board I can produce different effects, which allows the smoke complete spontaneity. This movement allows the marks to become elongated, taking on the natural movement or flow of the smoke. When working with smaller pieces I can hold them with one hand and use my non-dominant hand to change its angle as the torch's flame moves across the surface.

I can now proceed into working in a negative format. At this point I cannot just only add to, but I can take away from, the graphite or the fumage. The fumage is very fragile; therefore great care must be taken until the image is sprayed with fixative. In between each layer, of the fumage and graphite layers only, the image is sprayed with a workable fixative. The layering of graphite and fumage is composed of three to seven layers, with each layer being unified by the contrasting gray values. The tools I choose to complete the fumage process are selected for their individual attributes of producing marks.

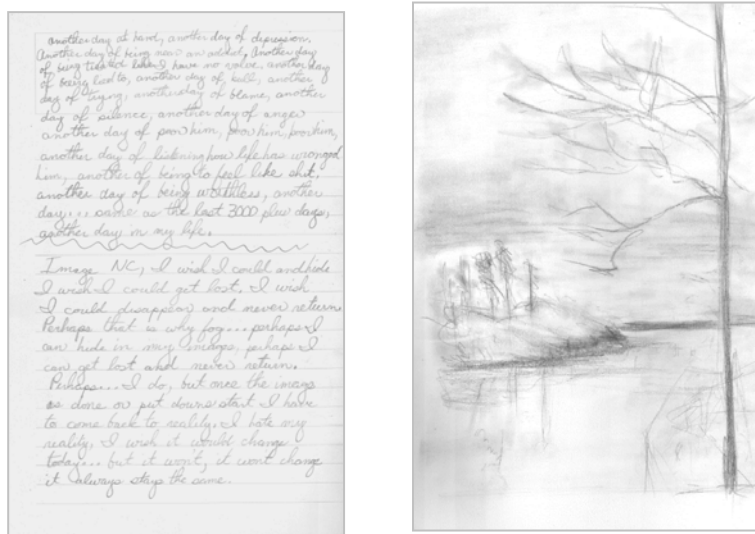
My final layer is solely composed with fumage. It is at this point that the dark values are intensified and defined and the harder edges are then softened. Before spraying a final fixative, I may once again work in a negative style, using a fiberglass eraser to accentuate the light. I finish the image by using a spray matte fixative, incorporating it into a digital format for my newly developed series.

Summary

I truly feel that I have mastered my technique and plan to continue in this style and further my concept of both series. In portraying the reflection of the diffused sunlight and the atmospheric refraction from the surrounding environment into my grayscale drawings I have created a technique that is uniquely my own.

These series of works has brought out a lot of self-reflection and has helped me on personal level to regain and redefine myself as an artist. By allowing myself to evolve as an artist I often had to revert to past experiences in creating work only to allow my work a solid progression. Just as I had incorporated my pains and pleasures of family and family history to allow my concept to evolve. This reflection and renewal can be found in my sketch book and journal of this series. A journal sample is shown below (Figure 31).

Figure 31:
Journal



I have chosen the Daoist theory to help me emphasize the natural beauty of my surroundings, the silence, the serenity, this helps to enhance a mood and a feeling. I have allowed the principles of the Daoist rule my works, for I do not proclaim superiority, but wish only to be one, wish to be equal. I have tried to allow my viewer the same feeling within each of my images.

Now that I feel I have close to a full completion of this series I plan to push it further by moving the technique into a color format. My plan is to utilize Wallis pastel paper, creating an under wash of oil paint, pumice, and turpentine, allowing the turpentine to flow freely over the paper. Once the oil paint has dried, I will then continue the process by adding soft pastels to enhance the image and the color. My end process will be incorporating the fumage process. While the texture of the paper will hamper the flow of the fumage, I am hoping that the spontaneous movement will be achieved in the first stage of the process. This will be a change from my series whereas the spontaneous movement came during the middle, final stages of creation and may add to the complete digital impact of my newest series.



Digital Imaging



Introduction



Silenced

Digital images are electronic snapshots taken of a scene or scanned from documents, such as photographs, manuscripts, printed texts, and artwork. (Wise Geek)

My goals within this this series, will expand beyond the elements of basic photography and use all types of digital imagery to create this series. My past studies at GSU have been in the area of studio art, now I have combined this learning with my current skills in digital imaging. I have explored varied art elements that have bridged fine arts and technology, establishing a visual connection between the traditional fine arts and digital media.

My interest has been in pushing this combination beyond limitations, while opening up an unequivocally new way to examine and manipulate both the fine arts aspects with digital media. Creating this initiative in digital literacy is a way of using critical thinking, creativity, and innovation. I have done this by integrating my skills to create a rigorous series of works which focuses on media literacy.

My graduate work is related to my present work, as a faculty member at the Illinois Institute of Art. I used my technical knowledge of the varied mediums while keeping my concentration on the essential elements of digital imaging. Using my experiences and continued education gained from GSU I not only have enhanced my own work, but enlightened my present students and broaden their understanding of the diverse media and compounds.

My work past works have involved the investigating of chemical reactions within a medium. I have incorporated past techniques into a stylized visual statement. Presently, I am utilizing the 1930's technique of "fumage", and it's compatibility with a more refined drawing. I am using this technique with the addition of graphite and graphite powder, replacing the use of oil paint for which Wolfgang Paalen was known. I now want to further enhance this method and investigate its possibilities by crossing it with digital images, for a strong statement based composition.

It will be within my own works in which my ideas will take platform in my MFA program, these images will take on the vigor in which they will be created. In our culture images have become tools used to elicit specific and planned emotional reactions in the people who see them. (Davis) The power behind images has been effective since the times of the first prehistoric art works, telling stories without having language as a common thread. Images have the power to create and play on human emotions. This is my intention behind my

planned work for this degree. I am moving many elements of my work into a more graphic and even political forum.

My planned work for this work will be seen in my series entitled “Systems Failure.” The strength of this series of digitally created images is based upon many social and ethical issues that go unseen for many people. While some images may seem as if they are bringing out the ugly side of life they are focused on the strength of humans. The focus is on those who are trying to endure situations in which many cannot see or even understand.

Utilizing my fumage techniques, and incorporating digital images and film, and with strong influences from the works of Jasper Johns and Adriana Lestido, these newest images will represent the human side of what happens when our system fails. Current plans in this new creation process will include static images with possible elements of film captured within the image. I plan to create this using After Effects and masking the images so they may be conjoined into one cohesive image. My vision is to use static images encompassing artworks from the Chicagoland area, along with employing in-studio films. I plan to use this as part of my MFA thesis utilizing different screens with one being the focal point joined by my digital images.

In keeping with my Daolistic style my newest series will reflect the loss of hope from yet reflect the inner courage of many women. The intention is to create an awareness into the life of many who suffered silently; those who have had to live in fear, silently and alone. The main, but not only focus is on the

issues in which many women face. As an example; we have voted away the funds to help protect women, these effects have been drastic, for every one shelter to protect women and their children there are 15 shelters for pets. This is just one example in which I plan to use images to teach and educate others.

My focus will not only be on the subject of women but an overall system which has failed the people in which it is supposed to protect, this should be a statewide concern as well as nationwide. I hope to bring attention to issues such as the abuse many suffer under and the secret lives in which many live due to fear. My new series of work will bring awareness to those who have choose to be blind regarding the state of being, which many of our friends and neighbors suffer unbeknownst to us. Many works will emphasis the strength and fortitude in which these people poses in order to survive.

My goal is to complete a set series of 20 pieces of work, reflecting my skills in digital imaging and fine art. This combination will prove to be a powerful exhibit of imaging, production, forms, movements, and the other elements. It will do so in such a manner that it will draw out the viewer's senses and intrigue in order to formulate their own perceptions.

Development

Working with the meaning of digital imaging in mind; *Digital images are electronic snapshots taken of a scene or scanned from documents, such as photographs, manuscripts, printed texts, and artwork.* (Wise Geek) I have chosen to create a body of work herein known as “Systems Failure.” “Systems Failure”, is combination of varied digital images, photographs, printed texts and artwork conjoined into one solid piece of artwork. You can review each piece which will be presented at my MFA exhibition and the construction at the end of you final thesis, in section four of this dissertation, along with an additional booklet which will be available for the viewer of “Systems Failure.”

My initial images are based from my own life experiences, and trying to develop imagery with a strong message. In doing so I have found that one image can tell a complete story, yet using only one image to create a single story was not possible. Therefore I have found through the use of digital imaging I can tell a story by combining images together into one cohesive image. I have incorporated not only photographic images but fine art images into one single composition in order to formulate a story. In many cases I have produced each individual element or image myself. In some instances I have brought an element from a stock photo company in order to formulate all the elements into one single image or story. Many of my works consist of three or more elements/images combined into a solid composition in order to have one

complete concept or work. This conjoining of images is seen in the image "Silenced" (shown previously on page 47). This image consists of four individual elements, two fine art pieces and two photographic images, verses a less contrived work such as "Hidden" (figure 32, shown at left). "Hidden" is only a combination of two elements both being photographic. While each image hold merit of its own, each has reasoning for elements placed within the composition. For example; within the image "Silenced" the image of the woman is drawn from many different women, mainly representing myself, I am only one of many. Her



Figure 32: *Hidden*

head is held high showing her self-pride, yet the tears of depression and defeat run down her face. The tape on her mouth is taken from a photographic image and placed digitally across her face. The image of duct tape was masked and pulled from a photograph in which I created by placing tape on a model and placing her head in a similar position. This was done in order to show the viewer some sense of realism. I integrated a second photographic image of destroyed buildings. I combined one more fine art element which is my drawing of the

head is held high showing her self-pride, yet the tears of depression and defeat run down her face. The tape on her mouth is taken from a photographic image and placed digitally across her face. The image of duct tape was masked and pulled from a photograph in which I created by placing tape on a model and

trees in the bottom of the image. It is these four separate images that were coalesced to create a solitary digital image.

In “Hidden” there are only two solid images used in this creation, both are photographic images. The intent was to keep the single image of the face somewhat *hidden* from the viewer. The intention was to keep this single piece simple with emphasis on the foreground or the trees not on the subject concealed behind the trees.

My development has been influenced by four artisans, Will Ellis, Sally Mann, Man Ray and Richard Hamilton. Will Ellis for his abandon buildings, Sally Mann for her self-portrait series, Man Ray and Richard Hamilton for their collage works. Once again I am in need to note that the drawings created were influenced by Wolfgang Paalen and his technique of fumage. My digital images are created to have this type of appeal, subdued, isolated allure, this is addressed under “Drawings Development.”

The artists where I have found my influences for this series have strong elements within their art work in which have drawn me to their works. For example: Will Ellis, his works are based in upper New York City. He has become a photographer in his own capturing derelict places and spaces in and around the New York City area. He has a book of his works published entitled “Abandon New York.” In an interview with Will he stated “More than anything, it’s the mystery that they hold for me. Most people’s first impulse when they see an abandoned building is to wonder what’s inside, and that’s how it started for me.

I think of abandoned buildings as a kind of wilderness, where boundaries between the past and present, the built environment and the natural world, the familiar and the surreal, all start to break down..." (Dussich) I have found Will Ellis's works to have a beauty laying underneath the destruction, (figure 33 shown below) just as I have found the women who have inspired me to create this series.



Figure 33: *Ornate Staircase*, Will Ellis 2014

Will's works are not just about capturing the abandoned buildings but about the light within each image as he may spend hours waiting for just the right light. This is where I have my influences for many of my own images. When



Figure 34: *Abandon Stairway*

comparing my images to those of Will Ellis I cannot say my works are equal but they have their merit and their own appeal (figure 34, shown at left). The image of the staircase I composed is a part of my work entitled, "Sarah's Way". The light beaming sedulity from above is Sarah's unsurpassed strength that I find in her every day. Will's works are

viewed as "inimitable interiors and still lives," (Dussich) my images are meant only as a small part of my overall work.

My hand developed portraits are based from Sally Mann's works, as discussed earlier in this dissertation under Drawings Development. In my digital portraits I look for the similar qualities of Sally Mann's self-portrait series. In viewing Sally Mann's images they have an agony shown within her eyes. It is this appeal in which I look to recreate. However, I have found it difficult to recreate an emotion that is not present by simply taking a studio image, therefore it times I have found that I must purchase the image. These images too are only a small part of my overall final work, I am working almost in a collage style in order to create and tell a story within each individualistic image.

My collage has been influenced by past artisan Man Ray. Man Ray had begun his career as an abstract but he eventually disregarded the traditional ideas of painting and move into photography. He did not give up his painting for he worked between the two different mediums. Dada and Surrealism were important in encouraging this attitude; they also persuaded him that the idea motivating a work of art was more important than the work of art itself. (MoMA.org) Man Ray never truly inspired to be a great photographer although he did work as a commercial photographer with meticulously composed images.

Man Ray found success in both the United States and Europe working as an artisan during the American modernism period in the 1910s. His art include many venues such as painting, sculpture, film, prints and poetry. Man Ray had strong influences from Cubism, Futurism, Dada and Surrealism working with

many great artist such as André Breton. He is perhaps most remembered for his photographs of the inter-war years, in particular the camera-less pictures he called 'Rayographs', but he always regarded himself first and foremost as a painter.

André Breton once described Man Ray as a 'pre-Surrealist', something which accurately describes the artist's natural affinity for the style. Even before the movement had coalesced, in the mid-1920s, his work, influenced by Marcel Duchamp, had Surrealist undertones, and he would continue to draw on the movement's ideas throughout his life. His work has ultimately been very



important in
popularizing
Surrealism.

(MoMA.org) It is
this appeal in
which I am
drawn to Man
Ray's works
(figure 35,
shown at left).

Figure 35: *Dora Maar*, Man Ray 1936

I am drawn Man Ray's works for they too a comprised of both his photography and his imagery, as seen in *l'Heure de l'Observatoire: les Amoureux* (Observatory Time: The Lovers) 1936, (figure 36, shown below). Man Ray has strong symbolic elements within this image leaving the viewer to wonder if the nude in the bottom of the image is dreaming. This is the same appeal I in which I intend to depict within my own work.

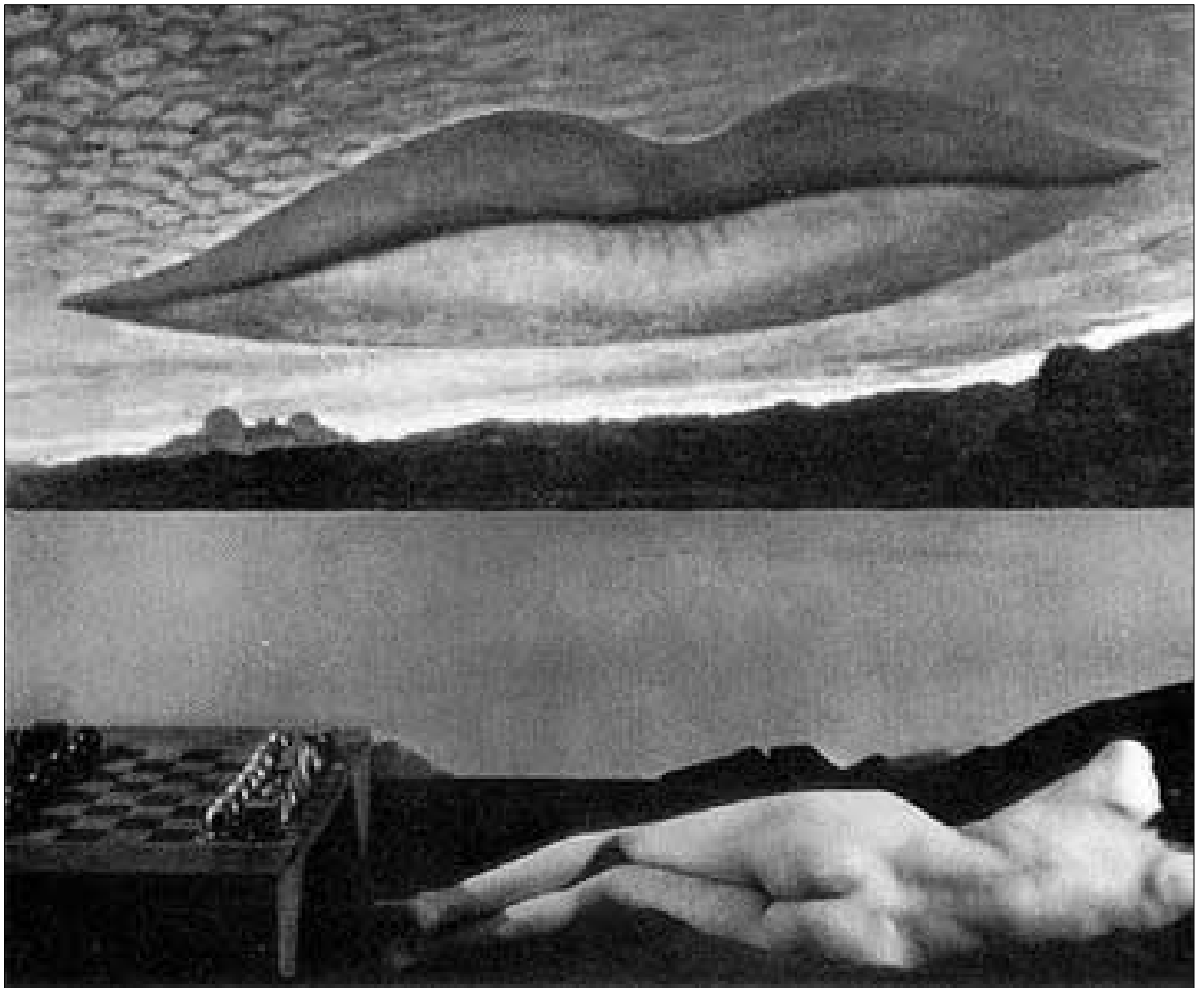


Figure 36: *l'Heure de l'Observatoire*, Man Ray 1936

As I would not classify my works as Surrealism, my intent is bring a surrealist ambiance feeling to my images. The feeling of something be surrealistic gives the viewer the suspicion that something is quite right, this is largely my intent.

Richard Hamilton would be another influence in which I need to recognize, for he does create works using a combined process of photography and fine art. Richard Hamilton was an English painter and collage artist. His 1955 exhibition *Man, Machine and Motion* and his 1956 collage, *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* (Figure 37 shown below) , produced for the *This Is Tomorrow* exhibition of the Independent Group in London, are considered by critics and historians to be among the earliest works of pop art. (MoMA.org) Hamilton's works however, are considered to be more of a fine art for his use of photography is only a part if his painting, and is displayed as such a painting. Yet I am influenced by his usage of both and unequaled balance between his painting style and photographic styles. His images are meant to portray the obscurity of every life and the way we are viewed as individuals.



Figure 37: *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?*

Hamilton's art contained the shock of the eclectic creating works that caused the

viewer to wonder about his intent and what he was portraying. Hamilton and only challenged the traditional hierarchy of values of painting he changed it becoming known as the "Daddy of Pop." He pushed the limits set by the British art establishment of what was proper subject matter for a work of art. Hamilton was a knowledgeable, deeply serious artist who loved and respected the great artists of the past. But he was also determinedly responsive to the modern. The critic David Sylvester, a friend of Hamilton's, described this as verging on madness, a consuming obsession with "modern living, modern technology, modern equipment, modern communications, modern materials, modern processes, and modern attitudes". (McCarthy)

I do not care to push the antiestablishment such as Richard Hamilton did within his works, I am influenced by his combined process of photography and fine art. I have found this combined process intriguing, allowing the images to possess a stronger statement. It is this type of statement in which I planned my work. I intend to have the viewer wonder what is happening within each image,

drawing the viewer into the realm of the image and leaving them with the yearning of more.

It is these artisans, Wolfgang Paalen, Sally Mann, Will Ellis, Man Ray and Richard Hamilton which have influenced this series of my work. Wolfgang Paalen solely for his process of fumage and the feeling in which this soft line technique gives to a single image. While I chose not to oil paint such he did, I have adopted his method within my drawings. This has helped my drawings to find the mood or emotion needed to create my final image. I have taken this idea into the digital range creating ghosts or silhouettes in soft line form, yet not being distinct for the viewer. This is done to draw the viewer closer to the image itself, or look deeper into the story behind the image.

Sally Mann's influence is from her self-portrait series, and the style in which she did create her images. While I am not planning to use glass-plate ambrotype for my images such as she did, but I have achieved the similar appearance by using an HDR process within my digital images and within my drawings. It is this style or type of look in which I have achieved on both in drawing and digital imaging. Using this style my subjects stand out from the darkened background, and become the main focus to the image, when called upon.

Will Ellis's works influenced me due to his light within each image he creates. The light seems to bring a new life into a surreal place, yet knowing the image is photographic the viewer can relate to that in place in time. The light

also brings hope of a time which has passed and a time which has yet to begin. There is beauty which lays asleep beneath the destruction in many of his images. This light and beauty is what has influenced my own photography and which has become a valued part of my series.

Man Ray's works possess the feeling of being in surreal place in time, it this in which I intent to achieve, in a digital format. Man Ray's works have the power to absorb the viewer into the image, in wonderment. The story is being told but it is not clear as to the reason for the image or the piece of work. My intent is for my works to have wonderment, upon first viewing. There is a story being told, but what is the story? Is the story told within or must one decide on their own or make the story their own. My intent is that one can make the story their own as they did in my encounters with other women. Yet the viewer who may not know of the story being told will be drawn into image and find the story.

As for Richard Hamilton, the main idea in which my influences have been sought, were due his combined process. He has combined his fine art and photography into enticing pictorials of life. His works however remain as fine art not digital, verses Man Ray's works which are digital. I found Hamilton's works be eccentric and vibrant through his use of color, shape and line. This is not my intention, my only intention here is to find a way in which both fine art and digital art can be combined to create works in which draw the viewer and make a strong statement as to the subject or story that is being told.

Using the influences from these artists I plan to have each digital image standing on its own merit, allowing the viewer a small moment into the subject's life.

Methodology

My development has been influenced by four artisans, Will Ellis, Sally Mann, Man Ray and Richard Hamilton. My methodology has been influenced by the works of Terry Dixon's. Dixon's work is the combination of fine art and digital art. His works are primarily fine art based with digital images incorporated within the work (figure 38, on the following page). Dixon incorporated a deeper meaning within his images, he has done this through use of symbolism. Dixon's symbolism is not obvious yet very distinguishable. Without an understanding of his work you would not understand Dixon's thought process. For example one could find hash marks within many of Dixon's works. The marks are representational of the amount of days the early railroad workers had spent working in the labor camps. The workers would work all day on the railroads and at night be locked away in a prison like bunker. The men would carve marks into the walls of the bunkers indicating the number of nights in which they locked up. Terry incorporated these marks into his artwork. He has also incorporated symbols in which represented the person of whose images was present in the artwork.

Dixon created his works by integrating various mediums and techniques. In some cases he created music to accompany his visual works. Many of Dixon's are a combination photography, paintings, computer artworks, electronic music

and in some cases he even added video and an excellent way of furthering his ideas and communication.

Dixon incorporates abstract lines with strong symbolic elements within his works. He will then add digital imagery and electronic notes to match or set the mood. He will produce the works via static imagery, once he has found satisfaction within a piece he may or may not move the piece into an animation or film. It has been known that Dixon uses a strong and poignant style within his painting, helping to keep his signature style. His imagery reflects a heavy influence of African Symbolism, Abstract Expressionism. Additionally Dixon's works show reflections of his musical background allowing the images to feel as if you are listening and looking into the subject, as shown in; *When are you coming back?* (Figure 38, shown below)



Figure 38: When Are You Coming Back?

Dixon's work utilizes different parts of the human face, and body, and abstracted in various ways both done by digital imagery and utilizing various computer programs, such as HDR and Adobe Photoshop. This is done with the intent to pull the viewer deeper into the creations having the viewer wanting to view or deeper into the subject. While many of his pieces show strong influence by interactions with society and political issues from both past and present issues, others are free flowing by use of the paint and hand work which seem to move to the rhythm of his musical influences of his past. This free flowing style with the strong political issues is the base of Dixon's current works and the show.

Dixon's works are complex and flow across through the use of color, line and expressive shapes. He uses a vivid color palette while incorporating strong paint strokes and ink abstract line on the surface of each image. The use of this type of line helps to bring the viewers eye across and around the single image. If he seeks to pull the static image into an animation the line helps to draw one's eye by breaking the lines through mixing the line in After Effects.

Using this type of understanding and process I too have incorporated many symbolic meanings. However the difference between Dixon's work and mine is that my final images are completely done digitally, and while Dixon uses digital images in his Fine works. Many of my symbolic meanings are explained in section of this dissertation with the images of my work.

For example, within the image "Silenced" (Figure 43, page 68);

- The image of the woman is drawn from many different women, mainly representing myself, I am only one of many.
 - Her head is held high showing her self-pride, yet the tears of depression and defeat run down her face.
 - Her mouth is taped shut, for many reasons, mainly because she finds her voice goes unheard.
 - Her voice is not heard within her own family, no one believes how this very kind man she had married could be abusive. The courts refuse to hear her for she is limited on funds, she has no lawyer to speak for her. This allows the courts to hear a lawyer's voice over her own. Even when she seeks an order of protection, they do not wish to hear her. At times the police not hear her complaints of fear, for many feel the threats made against her are only idle and she is over reacting. She wants to scream but no one cares to hear, instead of being heard she is being "Silenced," by many.
- Around her the buildings are in a state of destruction.
 - Many have been burned to the ground, just as her dreams of a good life have been burned or destroyed.
 - The many pieces of her life lay in bits and pieces upon the ground before her.

- A forest of trees blooms before her, showing proof of a life and knowing that the roots of life run deep.

This image was produced using two drawings and two digital photographic images to produce the one solid digital image. The images used are shown below, figures 39-42.

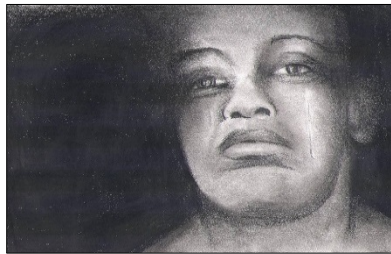


Figure 39



Figure 40



Figure 41



Figure 42

Together these four images are combined to produce “Silenced.” It is this type of process I utilize to create all the images seen within my exhibition. Upon inspecting the work entitled “Silence” you will find the four images used in its creation.



Figure 43: *Silenced*

In creating my images I start with an idea or thought, bringing my thoughts to life through sketches, such as the shown below. In other cases the idea or creation might begin with a photograph in which I use as my base concept. Also shown below is the base concept for the finished image of “Broken Childhood”. While the actual images are changed/modified digitally for the overall enhancement of the final product they are still started with a sketch as shown in figures 44 and 45 below.



Figures 44-45.

Once the over idea is complete, all images or parts which have been chosen for the completion of the final product are brought into an HDR program. (An HDR image is the combined image of varied exposures that give good detail of the subject in the photograph.) I use “PhotoMaxtric” as my program of choice. There are two steps to producing images in an HDR or High Dramatic Range format;

- **Exposure blending:** is the merging of multiple low dynamic range images into one image with higher dynamic range, this is done through a layering process. This is done more for print, allowing the image to be less pixelated.
- **Tonemapping:** is the processing of a high dynamic range image into a low dynamic range image for viewing on computer monitors, etc. this takes up less space when trying to open an image.

There are a number of ways to complete the exposure blending process, but you need to estimate the difference in exposures for the images. By doing this you can get a pixel value from the image and convert it into a uniform color value. For example, if you have two exposures that are three stops apart, multiplying values in the darker image by 8 will give values consistent with the brighter image (3 stops means three doublings of brightness, or 8x). (Grum) This is done by simply changing your exposure time for two to three shots.

Exposure blending could be completed by taking pixel values from the brightest image you have shot. If the values are overexposed then you will need to switch to the next image shot with the longer exposure. This is done by using the HDR software, in most cases this can be completed by the software itself, however I prefer to choose my own values, giving me more editing options. This allows me to have control over the alignment of the images, giving me the ability to soften images if needed. The image once produced by blending two to three exposures will cause no over or under exposure areas with the image. I use this for the benefit of creating a dull or greyed look overall. This is shown in the early stages of "SMORE" which is shown below. Shown are the three varied exposures in which this image was shot. This is only the first steps of producing the final image. (Figures 46-48 shown below.)



Figures 46-48

Using exposure blending by choosing my own pixels, I can tone down the colors and change the HDR presents into a subdued image. Below are the two the final images in which I plan to use for the image "SMORE". Note the distinctive difference between the two the images. In the first image the colors are brought down to nothing leaving most of the textures, while in the second image the details are brought out, they become a bit more intense and defined.



Figures 49-50

If I am using the image as a main focus than I may choose to use tonemapping. Tonemapping (shown above in figures 49-50) takes the value range down, which will maximize the details within the image. This is the hardest part, if you vary the contrast too much over too small an area you will get halos around the edges, causing an odd effect in the image. This will give the detail within your image a boost, however, in my images I prefer not to have distinctive details.

I try to have a soften image verses the high detailed, therefore I use HDR to bring down my details verses enhancing them. I use exposure blending over tonemapping, this way I have the control I need to dull down my images in most cases. While I do some tonemapping it is based upon my need or the appeal in which I am trying to achieve. In many HDR programs this process is quite simple, and done for one automatically, however, I prefer to control the process on my own verses having a computer do it for me. By doing this myself I have the control I need over the images in which I plan to use as a part of my finished product.

Once this process is complete I move all the planned images into Photoshop, this is where I begin creating the final composition. In some cases the composition needs to be changed from the first sketch. This is due to the fact the images may not fit well together without having to askew an image so much so it no longer appears natural or it takes on an unrealistic delineation of the subject. If this is case than the composition needs to be changed and reconsidered.

When all selected images are brought into Photoshop they are ranged into a foreseen composition. It is at this point when the images stand each on their own layers, the opacity on each layer is lessened allowing me to view the placement of each individual image. This is the most comprehensive way of viewing the proposed composition. This first step in Photoshop is saved as a rough draft, as shown in “SMORE” and “Broken Childhood.” Figures 51-52.

Figure 51: First Draft *S'more*



Figure 52: First Draft *Broken Childhood*



Images are basically layered in the first or rough draft, this is based upon the initial sketch or concept. Once images are placed within Photoshop they can be moved into a cohesive position before undergoing any manipulations.

The next phase of producing my work is working with the layers using the color adjustments. This is achieved by using color curves, saturations and color balance, the adjustments are done primarily on the light and dark tones, leaving the mid-tones as they stand. This process also helps to give the image a lack in contrast, allowing the viewer a feeling of softness within the subject. While many images appear to be black and white, they do have an underlying color. This underlying color is the crucial element which helps contribute to each final image's own disconcerting appearance. Most have undertones of a warmer value, the warmer value gives the viewer a sense of weakness or surrender. The warmer under tones lean on the orange or yellowish side, as I try to avoid red for that may create a sense of anger to the viewer. Some do have the underlying tones of cooler values, the intention by using a cooler under tone is to provide the viewer with a sense of coldness or strength. This strength is the strength in which my subject needs to move forward. At times I have found that Bicubic Interpolation is the best way to work my underlying colors. This is the best method of resampling photographic pixel images. The color is determined by the colors of the surrounding pixels.

Depending upon the effects I wish to obtain I may use NVIDIA Textures Tools. This is a download for Photoshop and I use it to create normal textural

maps, allowing me to create my own textures. This is a simple way to create texture within an image verses the traditional way, which is very time consuming and sometimes it's not worth it when working in high res images. At times I may use find a texture in which I wish to add within Photoshop itself however it very rare that I use a standardize texture.

Once I have found the balance of color and texture on each individual layer I can proceed to assessing the overall product or work. It is at this point in which I look at each layer evaluating how it would fit into the other layers (remembering each layer is a separate image) creating one comprehensive image. Each image is worked into a position of importance, simply by changing the positions in which they all lay. Once they are in a possible position they are then rasterized to help with softness verses leaving them pixelated. Rasterized layers are needed to create layer masks, which is a must in every piece I work.

I work layer by layer with the intention of compiling a final composition. Some layers will contain layer masks, while others may simply have elements erased, ghosted or feathered. This too depends upon the importance of that single image and how necessary it is to maintaining the combination of images together. In very rare situations I have had to bring individual completed layers into their own file for completion or create an alpha channel, before I was able to combine it into the final composition. In "Silenced" I had to bring the image of the duct tape into its own file in order for me to manipulate it effectively.

Upon finding satisfaction within each individual layer I return to the layering process, this done to enhance the final piece. In this final stage I may adjust the opacity or fill of each individual layer or image in order for the final piece to be prominent. In some images such as “SMORE”, the layers have been duplicate and flatten together. This allows the images to become ghostlike in some areas and stronger in others. Once I am satisfied with the final image it is saved as a PSD and pdf file. The pdf for printing of course, and PSD is if I feel the printing is not effective and I need to return to the file.

Summary

I truly feel that I have mastered my technique and plan to continue using this method and grow this series. In combining both fine art and digital into one cohesive image brings the viewer into a world of surrealism. This is the intention, for most viewers have no concept of the life in which my subjects have lead or are leading. It is the secret life of abuse.

In portraying the reflection of the diffused sunlight and the atmospheric refraction from the surrounding environment into my grayscale drawings, the harsh light on my subject or portraits, along with underlying tones of color, and textures I have created a statement based series in which I hope the viewer can grasp. The combination of all have a profound impact on the final image.

I have grown as an artisan and a person, learning that strength is not just within ourselves but can be found in others, as long as we are willing to allow them a view into our lives. As this series of works was almost not created, while I pondered the ideas and concepts, it has brought back memories of place in which I care not to go. It has brought out much pain and indecision of its completion, not only for myself but for the others in whom have helped me through this series of works. I have found help through other colleagues and their insight and critiques, all in which I deeply appreciate. My drive to move forward has been through those who are not able to speak for themselves but

need a voice to be heard. I am not an outspoken soul, but I can be a visual voice for those who cannot.

I have tried to keep the Daoist appeal within each image allowing the silence of the subject's world be her voice. I have tried to allow my viewer the same feeling within each of my images. The intention was to bring the viewer into the image, having them to ask why?

In the following section, "Images" each completed image has an outline of all the pieces which were incorporated into the final work, why it was used and the fundamental meaning or symbolic ideals. As I am close to a full completion of this series I plan to push it further by moving the images back into the HDR format to enhance each completed image.

My plan is to possibly go backwards, separate the layers, have each separate layer printed on clear acetate, and manually relayed them into a three dimensional format. This would be similar to the works of Joseph Cornell. Once this is complete my thoughts are to create electronic lightening effects within each 3-D box, highlighting and fading in and out on the portrait. While I am not sure of this effect or if perhaps it would even work, but it is my vision for the next phase or extension of my work.



Development of Images



Developmental Images

The pages show the development of my exhibition and series “Systems Failure”. It is set up showing the final image first followed by the combined images and an explanation of why the images were chosen and the meaning behind each one. The explanation is intended to give the viewer insight into the world of abuse and where our system has failed so many people.

Each element has a symbolic meaning as to its presence within the final image and its symbolic meaning will be explained in the following pages. This development area will also be a part of my final exhibition as I am planning a small booklet with the exact same set up, allowing the viewer this insight. The exhibition booklet will follow the placement of the images on the walls of the gallery.

Printing on metal was my foundation of choice, due to the refined elements it brings each and every image. In many cases parts of the image may not be seen at first, leaving the viewer wondering the meaning, as some elements vanish into the metal. Yet upon moving around the image these hidden elements become quite apparent. My intention with using this print medium is to bring the viewer deeper into the image walking around the image for the different views and finding the elements which lurk in the dark.

Title: *Alone* 33" x 24"

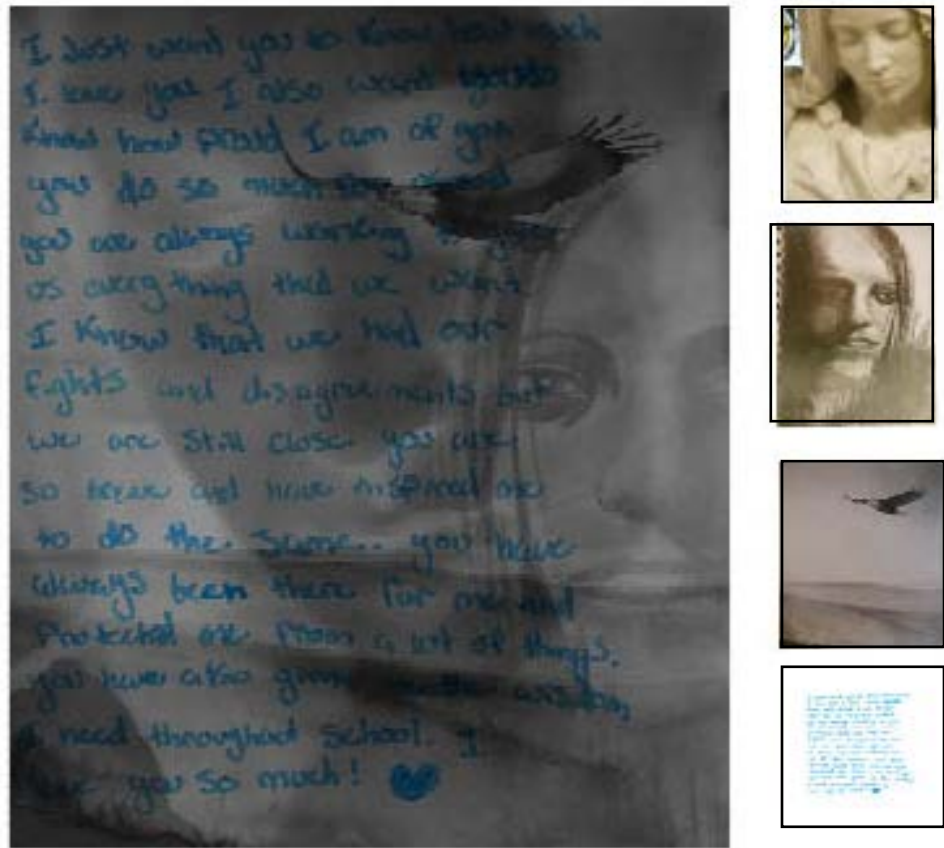


Alone was produced from six different images, one drawing and five photographic images were used in this development.

- The core/main image is a drawing in which the subject appears to be nude, showing her vulnerability.
- Her head is tucked downward as if her body is in a fetus type of position, representing the woman's fear and giving the sense of loneliness.
- The photograph of the flowers is placed within the woman's body showing that she can still find a way to grow or bloom even being surrounded by the numerous threats.

- Five different text messages surround her, the threats are overwhelming and she has no place to run or no recourse. The messages are condescending and threatening. They read:
 - What an evil person you have become but I know you will get what's coming to you.
 - Maybe I'll stop by and meet your friends now that I know where you live.
 - You want play you dirty bitch, so be it. Just tell Jon he still owes me a talk and I'll let the kids know how you don't want me to see Sarah.
 - I guess I will see you in court. You had enough to finish your basement and fly out to North Carolina, now it's my revenge.
- While the texts may not seem threatening to most, they are proving that the subject is being stalked and intimidated, therefore feeling vulnerable and alone.

Title: *Brave* 17" x 24"



Brave was produced from four different images two drawings, one photographic and one hand written letter which was reproduced digitally.

- The core is the letter, written by a child of a woman, who has had to face domestic abuse. The child writes "you are so brave." Referring to the issues in which the woman has faced in order to not only keep her children together but her finding a way to survive, admits the violence.

- The drawing of the woman is a portrait of her still struggling to find her way, making her life work no matter what issues she has faced.
- The photograph which fills the background is an image of the “Virgin Mary”, representing the strength the woman has found to carry on. The representation of a superior being shows the faith, hope and idea of protection for the woman.
- The drawing of Eagle shows the freedom this woman has found outside her relationship, away from the abuse and the ability to fly or move forward.
- The letter reads: *I just want you to know how much I love you. I also want you to know how proud I am of you. You do so much for us and you are always working to us everything that we want. I know that we had our fights and disagreements but we are still close. You are so brave and have inspired me to the same. You have always been there for and protected me from a lot of things. You have also given me the wisdom I need through school. I love you so much.*

While “Brave” may seem as if it a simple task, and many say why not just leave, it is not an easy task. Many women are faced with fear of what could happen once they do leave for they are left with no means of support. Many plan their escape for years without support and alone.

Title: *Broken Childhood* 16" x 24"



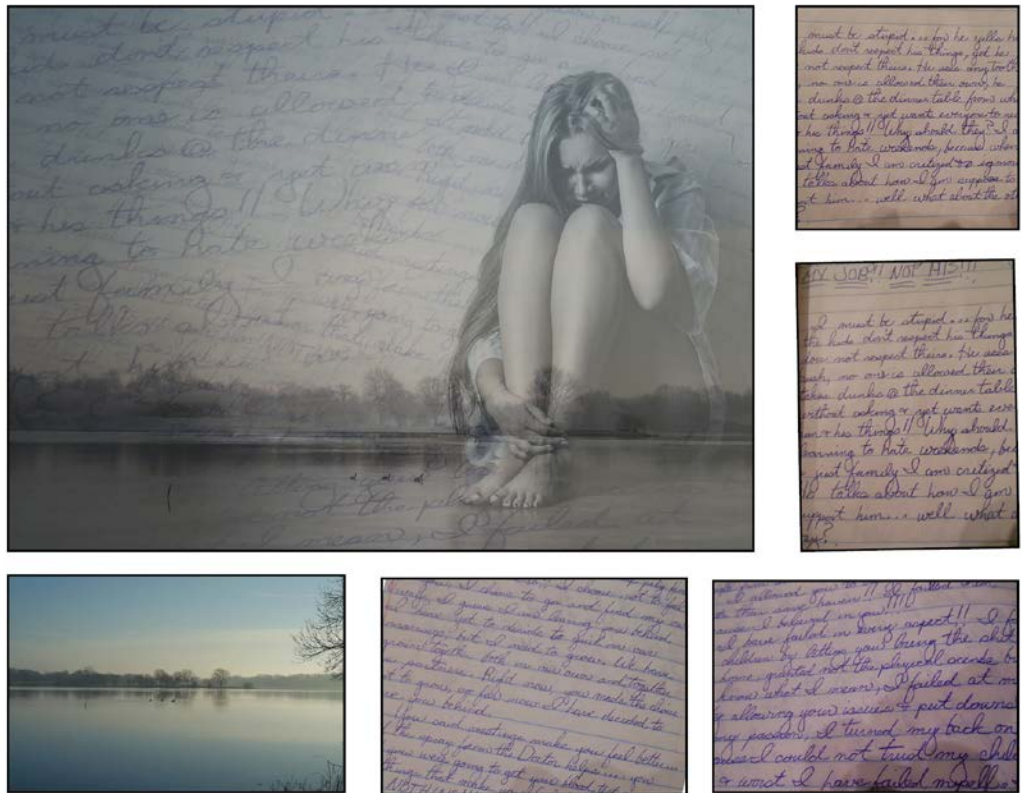
Broken Childhood is a reflection of the impact on children when they must live in a home with domestic violence. In many cases they become withdrawn and fearful, for they have no or little understanding of what is happening. Many grow up believing the violence is normal.

This image was created using three different digital images, as they all were positioned within the broken window. Additionally, the cracks within the window were digitally created, adding to the overall impact of the image.

- The base image is the image of the broken window, this was found with the frown face within the window, allowing the window to have direct view into the lives of the children.
- The toy doll is left out in the snow, alone and untouched. This is representational of the depression and loneliness many of these children experience.
- The final image is that of a young boy, this shows that the diversity with the type homes in which violence happens.

Violence in the home effects all children, it does not distinguish between race, religion, or gender.

Title: *Confusion*, 31" x 24"



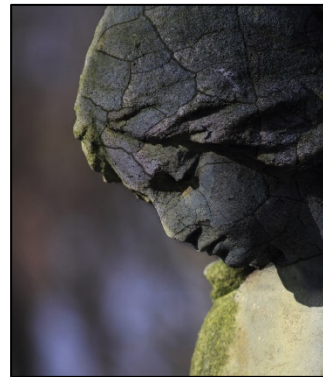
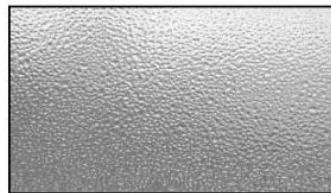
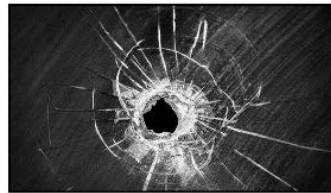
Confusion is comprised of six photographic images, carefully laid into a solid composition. While not all images are fully visible that is the overall intention. When studied, the viewer will find themselves brought into a world of self-blaming, as indicated by the personal diary pages. The intention for the viewer is to find the confusion within the image. The woman is alone, and frustrated, yet the serenity of the pond, adds to the confusion. Around her she is absorbed by her own words, "leave? Stay?" with the most prominent "I failed..."

- The base image is the woman sitting by herself, lost in a world of frustration and confusion.

- The five dairy images are from an actual diary, the first one talks about the “lack of respect” she receives from her partner, and how she “hates weekends”. In another entry she talks about “leaving” yet she remains unsure. In a third entry she talks about not having anything of her own, even her toothbrush is being told is not hers. The fourth entry she tells about how dinners are not family time her partner abuses both her and children by taking food from their plates and demanding they wait on him.
- The most compelling is the fifth entry when she writes about she failed, “I failed at... I failed myself.”

Many women in this situation become confused, at times they must leave their children behind depending upon the age of the child, they have no means of support otherwise. This leaves many staying in abusive relationships, allowing the children a home to live in and leaving the woman to feel as if she has failed.

Title: *Eve of Destruction* 18" x 24"



Eve of Destruction is based on the dying of our churches and cathedrals.

Many in the Chicagoland, twenty to be exact are set to close in 2016. This is a sad fact as we try to look for a future and hope, when at times all we have left is

faith. With the closing and deterioration of our churches our faith is diminishing.

This composition was composed of five digital images, all laid within different

PSD files brought into one solid image.

- The base image is of an abandon church in Gary Indiana. The walls of this once magnificent church are the only things left standing as the church roof has collapsed and the building has been vandalized.
- The broken glass was used to show greater impact on viewer allowing them to see through a minimal space, as if they were viewing the church from a quiet very private space.
- The angel with a scared faced is looking down from the heavens with sadness, she may be left wondering if faith itself has been destroyed.
- The broken glass and glass texture were created in their own Photoshop file helping to give the overall image its 3rd dimension. The same was done for the angel and the texture used as an aging or destruction process to her face.

Title: *Girl Gone* 30" x 24"

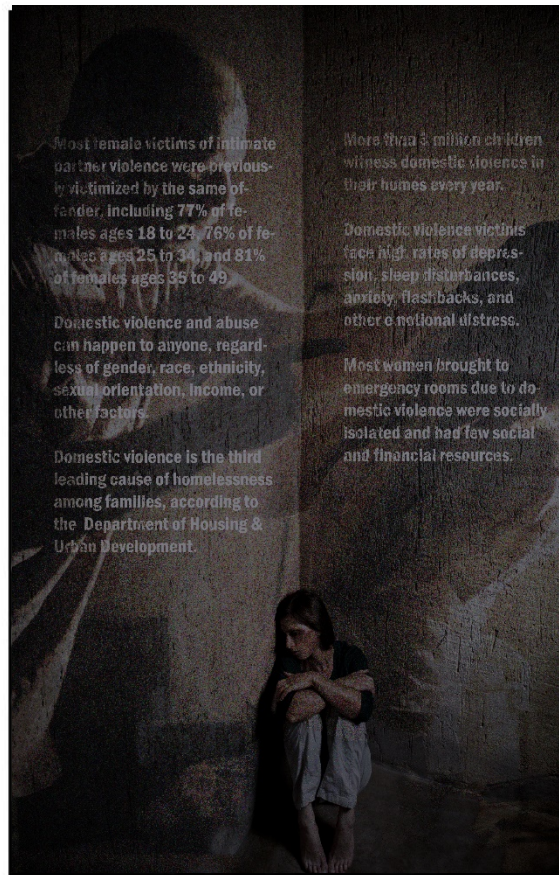


Girl Gone is based upon a dream. The woman in the images is wondering if she should leave where she would go, in a place of poverty and destruction. She is in pain and hoping her world will not go up in smoke. The image is created from three different images using digitally created smoke, along with other elements eluding the viewer's initial sight.

- The base is created using the destroyed the building as representing her life and dreams.

- The second image used is one of graffiti, the intention of this image is to give the viewer the idea of confusion, and finding her way through a world of confusion.
- The third of the woman or young woman, shows her beaten and defeated, with her reflection showing back through the marred wall.
- The digitally created smoke could represent the woman's fleeting life, confusion or passing of time. The placement of her hand could be perceived as her either pushing away or trying to hold on.

Title: *Help* 16" x 24"



Help is set as an introductory image to the series. It has two solid images with fact listed about domestic violence. The intention is for the viewer to spend a few minutes in reading about the subject, for without solid understanding most do not have a concept of the life in which many live, and impact it takes on those in the situation. The outsider believes that person being victimized should just leave, is not that simple. For many they are told if they leave they will lose their children, be left with nothing, some are told they will be hunted down and harmed. Domestic

violence is one of the most misunderstood violence actions within a person's life. It is also one of the best kept secrets within our society.

- The base image is the one the woman sitting alone in the corner of a room. The idea is to give the viewer the same feeling as the woman, alone and trapped.
- The second image is the conflict the woman must face, perhaps not every day but it is the reality of her life.
- The third element are the list of facts, the intention is not as much as insight but the challenge of the viewer to read the words and gain understanding. Facts listed within image read;
 - Most female victims of intimate partner violence were previously victimized by the same offender including 77% of females ages 18 to 24, 76% of females ages 25 to 34 and 81 % of females ages 35 to 49.
 - Domestic violence and abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, income or other factors.
 - More than 3 million children witness domestic violence in their homes every year.
 - Domestic violence victims face high rates of depression, sleep disturbances, anxiety, flashbacks, and other emotional distress.

- Most women brought to emergency rooms due to domestic violence were socially isolated and had very few social and financial resources.

These are only a few facts that should be of concern to all.

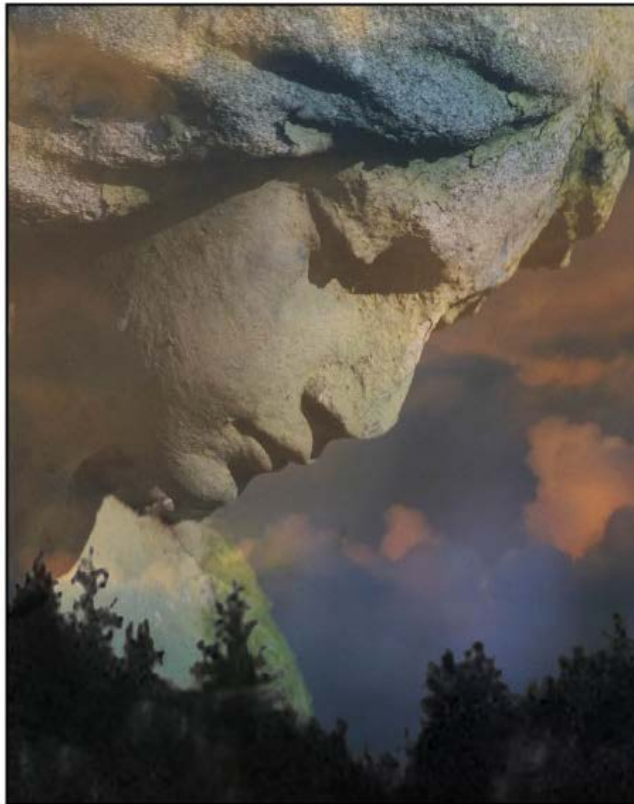
Title: *Hidden 17" x 24"*



Hidden was produced using two photographic images. Note the changes which were made from the original images.

- The photograph of the woman was purchased, she appears to be beaten, and the final placement of this image is set into a background with the color becoming desaturated and the lines being feathered or softened.
- The photograph of the tree is transformed and is hiding her soft face, as if she does not wish to be seen. She tries to block her pain from the viewer, yet we can see some of her abrasions from behind the tree. She tries her best to find refuge in the shadows of the tree, hiding her abuse from the world.

Title: *Hope* 19" x 24"



Hope is one of the final images that will be shown in this series for its focus is that *Hope* will come to all who are in need. For many it is all that they have left in this world, *Hope*. The final image is composed of the three solid images, one in which is a drawing, done with the fumage process.

- The base image is of the clouds and sun setting. The colors have been adjusted in order to give the viewer more hope. Many images lack color this one has the color added for it is to stand out from the others showing that hope does exist.

- The second image is of a drawing, the drawing by itself is entitled *New Light*. While only a portion of the image is being utilized the intention here to give the viewer a sense of serenity.
- The third image is the angel, she is beautiful, unbroken and floats above all earthly beings, looking down with a small smile, as if she is showing her great compassion for all.

The angel in the final is very soft and the viewer may only see a ghost of her, this is the intention. For only the viewer who finds or believes that there is hope may be the only one seeing her.

Title: *Jesus Wept, We Prayed* 29" x 24"



On Friday November 13, 2015 Paris and people of Paris fell under attack by terrorists, in the aftermath 128 people were dead, with many injured and the world left wondering why? The lights on the Eiffel Tower were turned out the following night, Saturday November 14. This was the first time since 1889 the lights on the Eiffel Tower were turned off, the idea of turning the lights on the Eiffel Tower sadden me, it had a great impact on myself and the world. It was that night in which I started to create this piece, without warning or meaning, people lost their lives for no reason. It is my lack of understanding as to why there can be so much hate, when we are all faced with a world full of hunger and

sickness. For a few days the world and the people had come together to pray, and hoped to find strength within each other.

Using five images from the Paris attacks (in which I purchased the rights) I created this single image, showing the world standing together as one, along with the tragedy of that night.

- The base image is the Eiffel Tower with the lights turned out, the one element that had a great impact on the world.
- Two images are of the police and emergency vehicles who were called into duty, showing the amount of responders.
- The four image was taken from one of the locations in which the shootings had happened. With notes written by varied people; “our spirit will never die” and “life for France” are two of the notes left.
- The last image shows the people praying together, trying to understand, “How can this happen?”

Once again the world was brought together by tragedy, we stood together even if it was only for a short time, we do know that we can unite and perhaps one day we will stay united.

Title: *Life's Vision* 18" x 24"



Life's Vision is based the many issues one faces in lack in health care, it is composed from four different images. This has been my inspiration for this series. Currently owned by the Museum of Modern Art in Boston, MA.

Title: *Lost* 19" x 24"



Lost is simply the combination of two images one digital and the other a drawing. The intention of the selection of the two are very simple.

- The drawing of the forest is to give the viewer the idea of being lost within the forest. The trees are deep and dark, yet there may be some hope as the light breaks through the trees.
- The second of a woman showing her anxiety as she struggles to find her way. She feels lost and alone without help and nowhere to turn.

Title: *Life Lost* 31" x 24"



Life Lost is a simple image which seemed to have come together successfully with two photographic images. The intention is to allow the viewer their own interpretation of what maybe happening in the image.

- Using an image of graffiti image, showing gang symbols draw the viewer into the composition wondering if the overall idea is based on gangs or gang violence. In the foreground the entangle vines add to the deeper meaning of the image.

- The second image is one of a young man, yet it is unclear as to if he is in prison just standing by a fence.

My intention with this image is to show the idea the street violence is not a myth but very real for many. Many young men and women are faced with being a part of a gang to survive, or become victims of the streets and neighborhoods in which they live.

Title: *Night-Fear* 19" x 24"



Night-Fear was produced using two photographic images and one drawing along with a digitally created water overlay. Each image was manipulated to fit the overall image, creating a haunting image of a person in the background of the final artwork. *Night-Fear* was created to show the nightmares in which many women must endure, some are very real nightmares others are the fear that is implanted into their minds. This image was produced with the intention of leaving the viewer to wonder if the figure in the background is real or a dream.

- The background image of a figure on fire could be seen as a nightmare in which this woman has on a regular basis and the nightly fear she faces, it may also be interpreted as the violence she faces.
- The drawing of the woman shows her inner strength.
- The hand held up is her hoping to make the nightmare stop. The hand has been manipulated to fit the image, using a puppet warp.
- The rain created which covers the image can be interpreted in two different ways. One is the woman's thoughts of putting out her fears and the other is her being unable to break out of her world of fear, being kept behind glass or locked away.

Title: *Not Me*, 19" x 24"



Not Me is based upon three images, and while the gun itself is not actually shown it is used to create the graphic over the women's entire body and the entire image.

- The base image is the one of the woman herself. She turned away with her hand over her face hiding, she is beaten and ashamed.
- The second image is an x-ray of her arm, showing the damage done by the beating. The red within the x-ray emphasizes the broken bones and the pain from the abuse in which she has endured.
- The final image which has been placed into several layers of the gun barrel covers her. This abstract covering adds to the overall feeling of the women. As she has been told that if she does leave she will be

killed. This may happen several times in an abusive relationship with the women not knowing if her abuser is just saying the words or if he is meaningful. Hence the reasoning behind the many layers of the gun barrel image.

Many times women are afraid to leave, and at times they are ready to fight their offender in hopes the outcome will not be as bad as predicated.

Title: *Protect Me*, 31" x 24"



CIRCUIT COURT OF ILLINOIS		JUDICIAL CIRCUIT DEPAUL COUNTY, ILLINOIS	
Case #		Case #	
Petitioner's Name		Respondent's Name	
Date of Birth		Date of Birth	
Allegations		Allegations	
Verified Petition for Order of Protection		Verified Petition for Order of Protection	
I am requesting an Emergency Order of Protection		I am requesting an Emergency Order of Protection	

Protect Me is created from three photographic images. Its subject is based upon Orders of Protection in which many women contemplate having done through the court systems. This can be a difficult issue, many times once a woman files for an Order of Protection the only effect it has to anger the person in whom the orders are filed against, making a bad situation even worse. While many onlookers simply suggest getting the order complete, they have no real

concept of how the stalker will react. Many times the orders are violated with no true consequences to the violator, for they need to be caught in the act, at which time it is too late for the order of protection to do any good.

Unfortunately the violators know this fact.

- The base image is the cemetery, for the obvious reason, an order of protection is not always the best solution. Even law enforcement (at times) do not take action if they feel the infringement is minor.
- The second image is one of an angel, while many may just see a woman, it is one of an angel. Here the angel is contemplating her thoughts did the woman below her make the right choice?
- The third image is several copies of an actual Order of Protection, one in which has not worked to help the woman who filed it with the court system. (There is one copy represented for every minor infraction from the abuser which went unenforced).

The intention is to leave the viewer wondering, just like the angel what would or could happen if the Order of Protection is issued?

Title: *Save Us*, 29" x 24"



Save Us has dual meaning, while that was not the intention it will depend upon the viewer to find their own interpretation. It was composed using three photographic images. Two were taken in Gary Indiana one from an abandoned church the other from an abandoned train station.

- The base image is of a woman whom may be crying or grieving. The intention for this image was to be in black and white. Using a black and white image as the base has allowed the color from the subsequent images to show their color through the white or negative color of the base.

- The second image is the abandon church, tagged with graffi. Leaving the viewer to wonder if the message is about the church or the woman.
- The third image is graffi, it states “Who will save us now?” Leaving the viewer on their own to interpet the message from the image.

Title: *Silenced*, 31" x 24"



Silenced was produced using two drawings and two photographic images to create one solid digital image

- The image of the woman is drawn from many different women, mainly representing myself, as I am only one of many.
- Her head is held high showing her self-pride, yet the tears of depression and defeat run down her face.
- Her month is taped shut, for many reasons, mainly because she finds her voice goes unheard.
- Her voice is not heard within her own family, no one believes how this very kind man she had married could be abusive. The courts refuse to hear her for she is limited on funds, she has no lawyer to speak for her.

This allows the courts to hear a lawyer's voice over her own. Even when she seeks an order of protection, they do not wish to hear her. The police refuse to hear her complaints of fear, for many feel the threats made against her are only idol and she is over reacting. She wants to scream but no one cares to hear, instead of being heard she is being "Silenced," by many.

- Around her the buildings are in a state of destruction. Many have been burned to the ground, just as her dreams of a good life have been burned or destroyed. The many pieces of her life lay in bits and pieces upon the ground before her.
- The forest of trees blooms before her, represent the proof of a life and the knowing that the roots of life run deep.

Title: *S'more* 30" x 24"



S'more was created using three photographic images. The image with the flowers was used twice during the layering process.

- The image of the woman is her holding her hand up, not wanting “some more” abuse, yet it has not stopped.

- The rain image puts a piece of glass between the woman and the viewer, it is as if we want to help but cannot. She is behind a glass window and cannot escape.
- The rain is also position so it is dripping onto the flowers below her, perhaps watering the flowers and hoping to find growth.
- The interior image is one for an abandon church. The flowers were sitting on floor with the graffiti “s’more” written on the wall, the scene was not set up. This image was use in two very different ways. The first layer of this image was used as a full HDR image.
- The second time the interior was used it was used as a line art image, giving the overall appeal of haunting or dismal scene.

Title: *The One I Called Father*, 31" x 24"



The One I Called Father is composed of three photographic images and a poem written by the daughter of domestic abuse survivor. This composition has a deeper meaning for it shows the impact on the family and children who must endure the raft of watching abuse in their own home. The viewer needs to keep in mind that for most children home is a place of safety and place children can feel safe from the outside world. When there is any abuse or violence in the home children lose that place of feeling safe.

- The base image is of a young girl, the girl whom has lost her safe place, even when reading her poem, the viewer will find that even her bedroom no longer feels safe.

- The destroyed building represents the destruction in which she finds her life. Not only has the abuse affected her home but it has left a scare deep inside her, leaving her to feel alone and fenced away.
- The hand print is the hand which was raised to both her and her mother, by their abuser.
- The poem entitled, “The One I Called Father” is written below.

A dark figure loomed in the doorway
 Black eyes stared at me through the ice-cold room
 Shutting my eyes and wishing this demon away
 Hoping to stay in this fairy tale world
 Hoping that this demon wouldn't take my soul
 This dark figure, the one I called father

 The figure who lifted his hand to my mother
 The figure who cut me with his words
 Like a sharpened sword cut me with every blow

 Now looking back the terror is still very much there
 Like a movie on constant replay
 Shattering the reality around me like a broken window
 The sound of a slap making my hand rise to my cheek

This memory slithers its way into my own reality

Like the snake in Adam and Eve

This dark figure the one I called father

Always lurking in the nights shadows.

Title: *Trapped* 18" x 24"



Trapped composed of three images, one drawing and two digital images.

The drawn images was included adding to coldness of the overall image.

- The base image is the image of the water which once flowed is now turned to ice as representation of the coldness this women must face. The ice runs over $\frac{3}{4}$ of the image and through the chain linked fence, as the women herself is trapped behind the fence.
- The image of the woman is then placed into the base image and layered between the ice images.

- The drawing of the woman is laid on top of the digital image and is also found placed between many layers of the ice.

Most women are trapped not behind a fence but trapped in a relationship due to financial issues. While the family may not be suffering the women are not allowed access to any type of funds leaving them trapped in an abusive relationship.



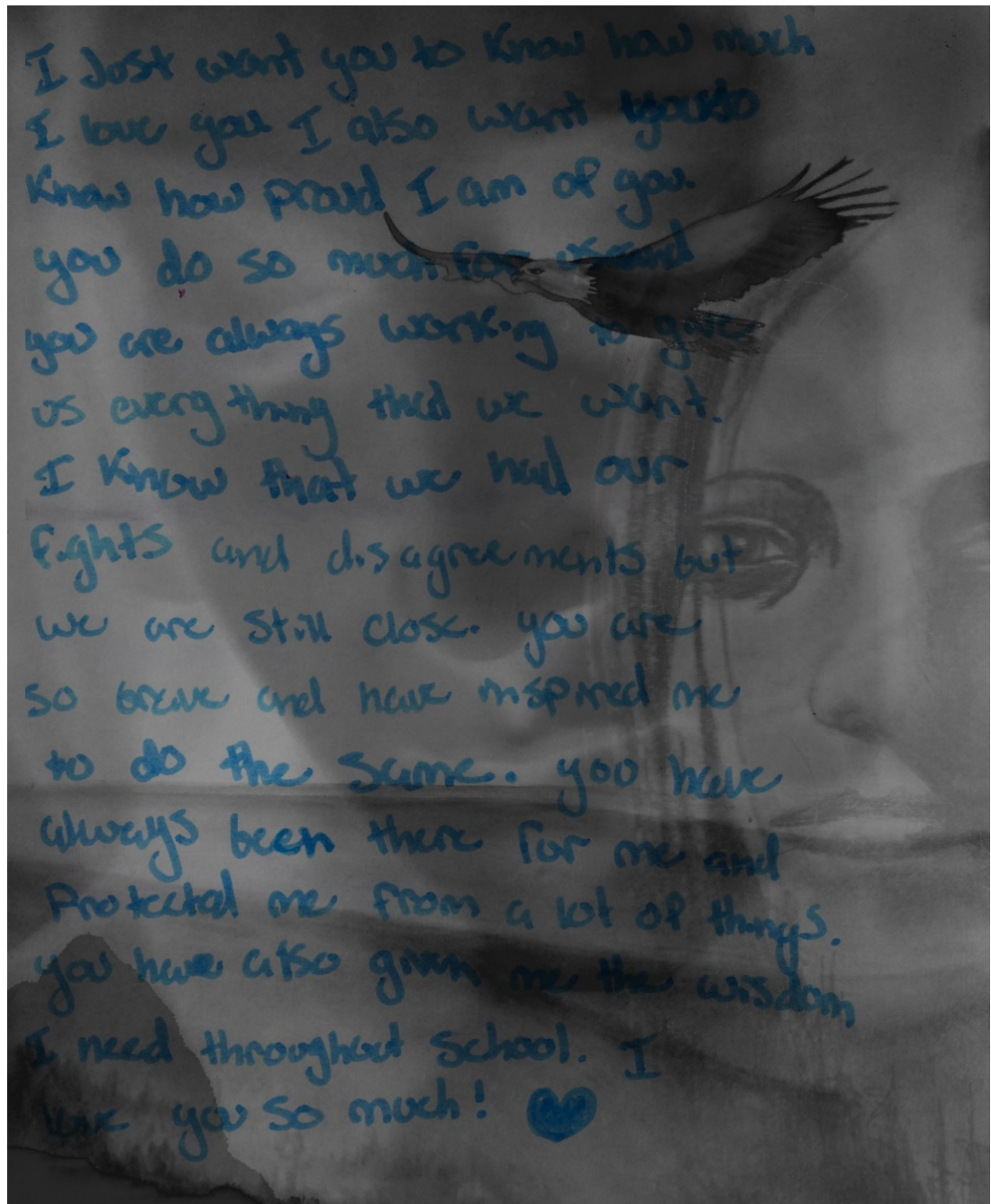
Exhibition Images



Title: *Alone* 33" x 24"



Title: *Brave* 17" x 24"



Title: Broken *Childhood* 18" x 24"

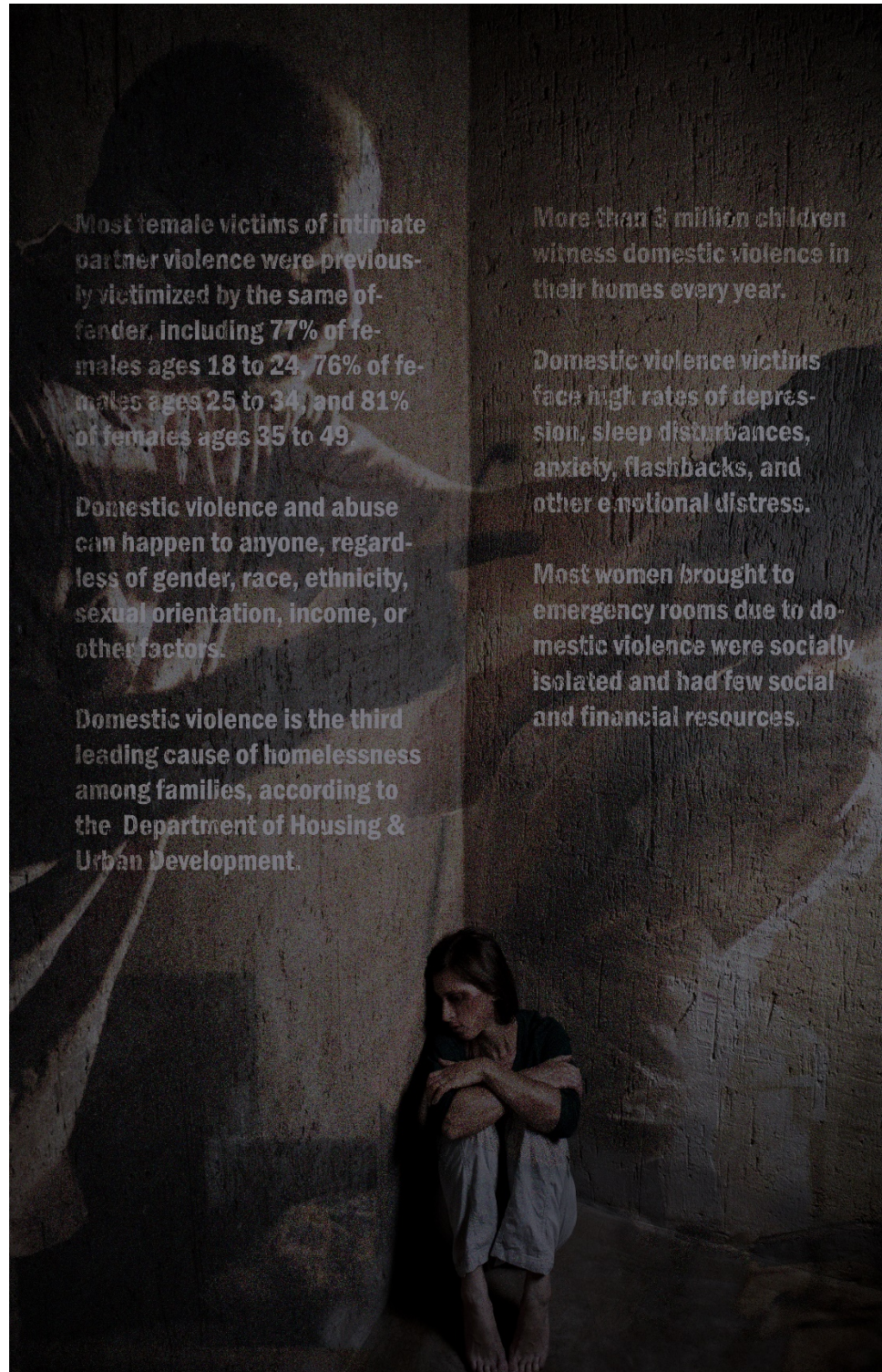


A woman with long, light-colored hair is sitting on a sandy beach, looking down with a distressed expression. She is wearing a light-colored, possibly white, shirt. The background shows a sunset or sunrise over the ocean, with a large, faint, handwritten-style text overlay that reads: "I must be stupid as foot to!! I choose not to forgive him don't respect his choice to go and find my own life, no one is allowed to blame you for what you do, as drinks @ the dinner mood to grow. We have to ask for his things!! I thought you were going to hate me now, you made the choice just family and friends I have decided to talk about it, meetings make you feel better, support him, the Doctor helped me, NOT H/PT!!". The text is written in a cursive, handwritten style, with some words underlined. The overall mood is one of sadness and contemplation.

Title: *Eve of Destruction* 19" x 24"



Title: *Help* 16" x 24"



Title: Girl Gone 30" x 24"



Title: Hidden 17" x 24"



Title: *Hope* 19" x 24"



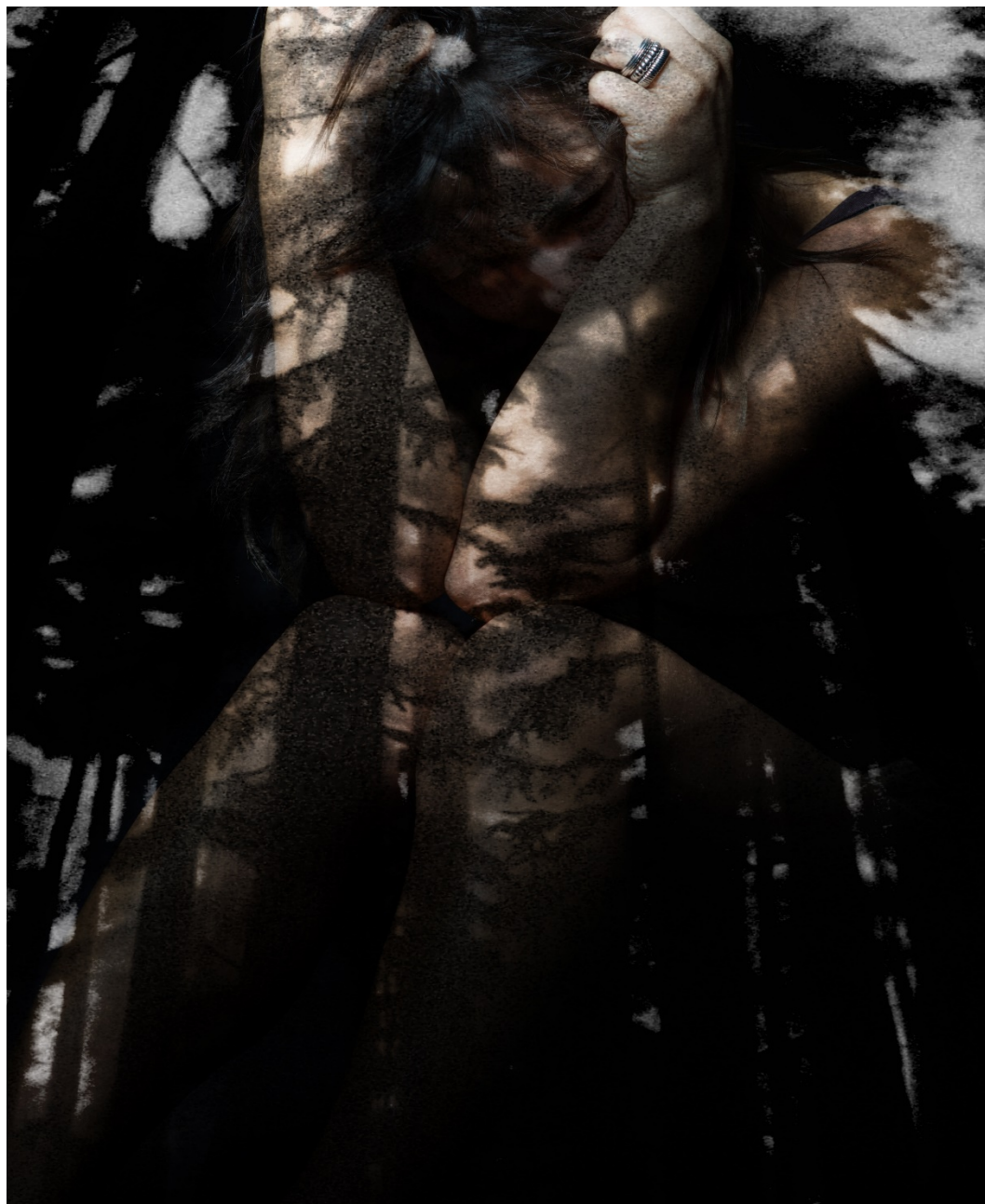
Title: Jesus Wept, We Prayed 29" x 24"



Title: *Life's Vision 18" x 22"*



Title: *Lost* 19" x 24"



Title: Lost Life 31" x 24"



Title: *Night-Fears* 19" x 24"



Title: *Not Me* 19" x 24"



Title: *Protect Me* 31" x 24"



Title: Save Us 29" x 24"



Title: *Silenced* 31" x 24"



Title: *S'more* 29" x 24"



Title: *The One I Called Father* 31" x 24"



A dark figure loomed in the doorway
Black eyes stared at me through the
ice-cold room
Shutting my eyes and wishing this
demon away
Hoping to stay in this fairy tale world
Hoping that this demon wouldn't
take my soul
This dark figure the one I called father
The figure who lifted his hand to
my mother
The figure who cut me with his words
Like a sharpened sword cut me with
every blow
Now looking back the terror is still
very much there
Like a movie on constant reply
Shattering the reality around me like
broken window
The sound of a slap making my hand
rise to me cheek
This memory slithers its way into my
own reality
Like the snake in Adam and Eve
This dark figure the one I called father
Always lurking in the nights shadows.

Title: *Trapped* 18" x 24"





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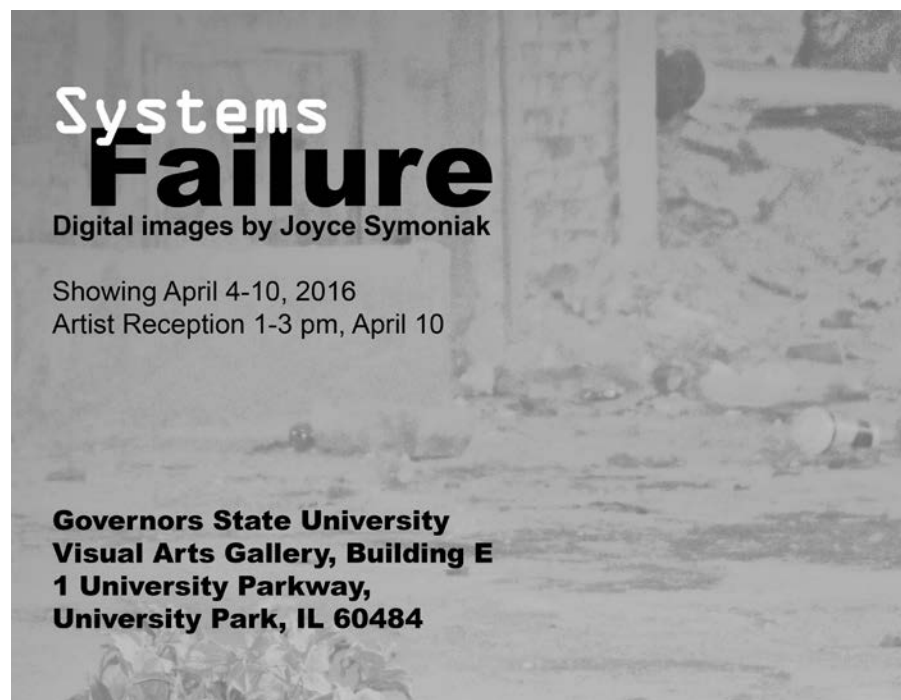


Appendix

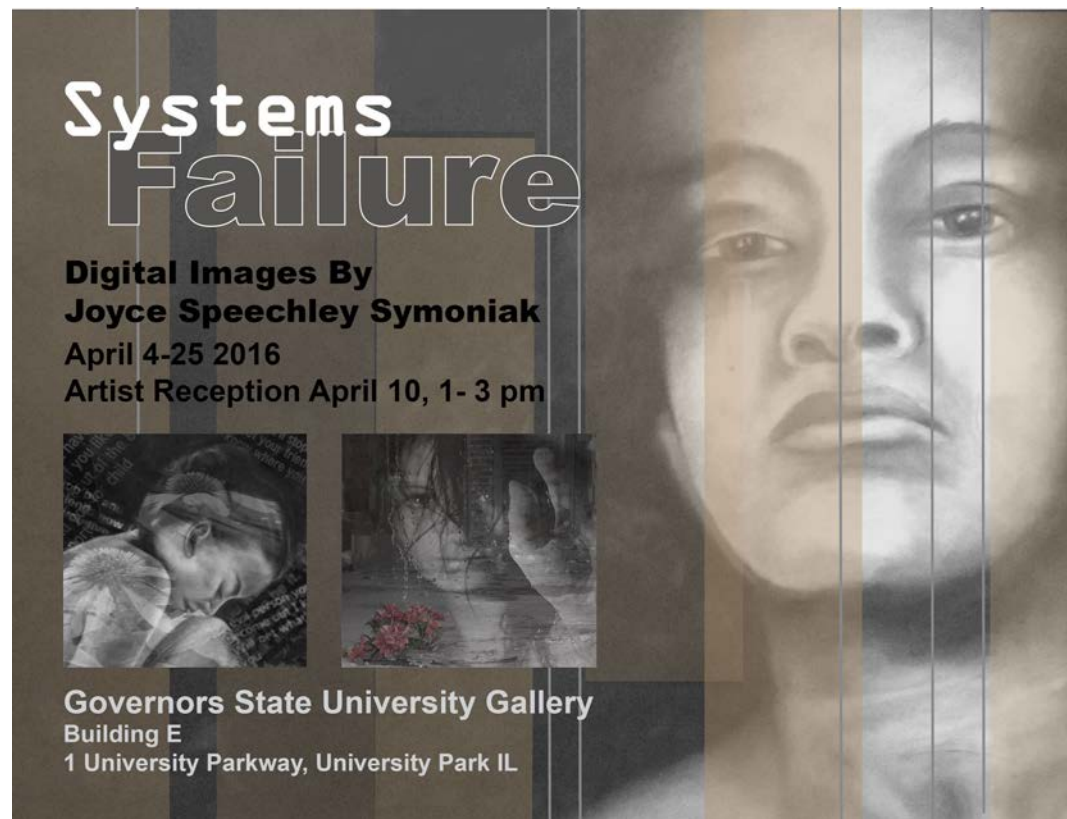


Appendix

Exhibition Postcard



Exhibition Poster



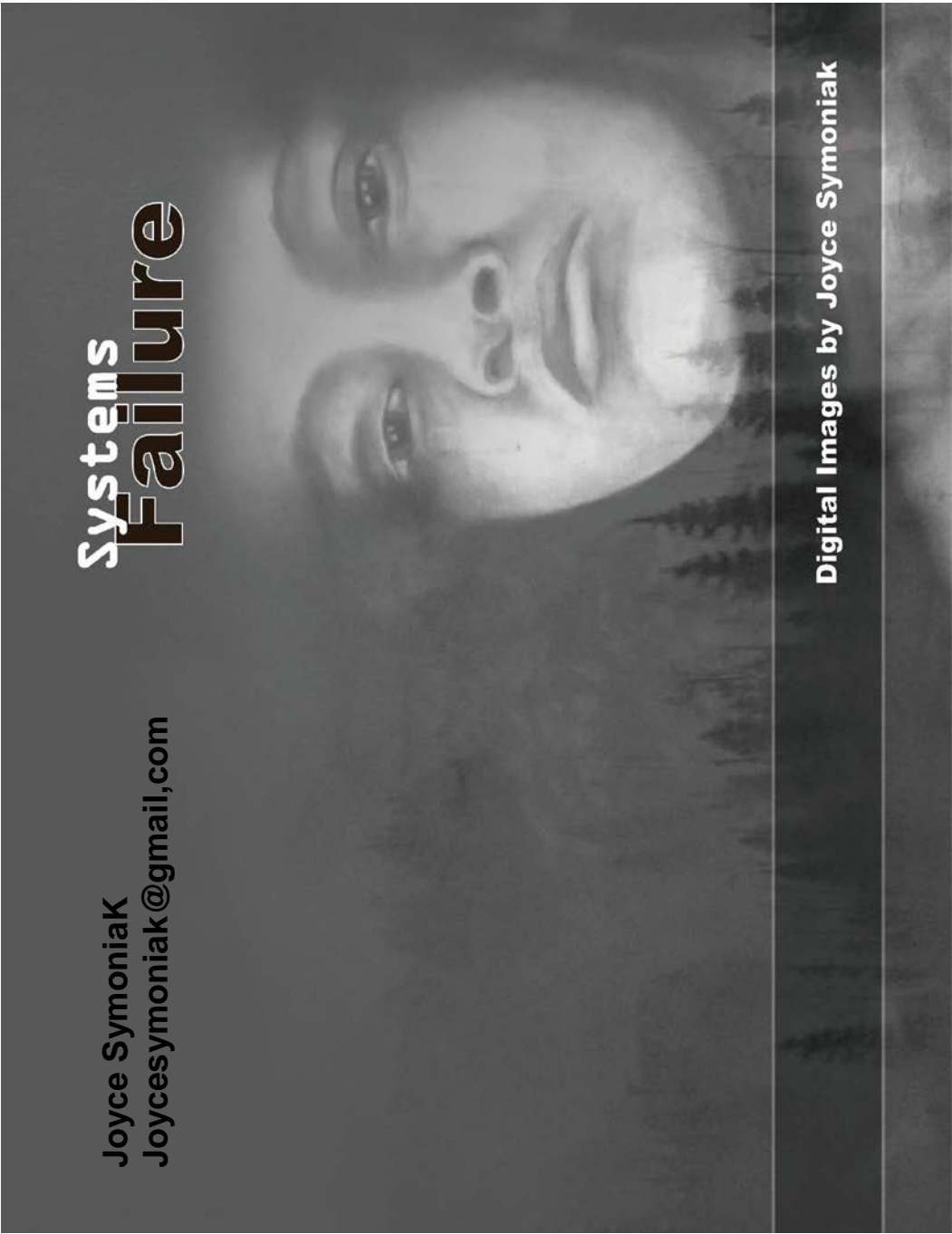


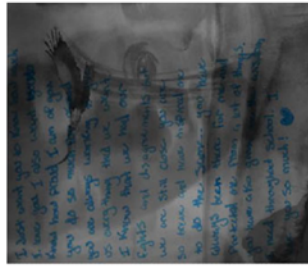
**Governors State University Master of Fine Arts
Joint Show Peter Bosy and Joyce Symoniak**

April 4-25, 2016 Visual Arts Gallery
Reception April 10, 1-3 pm

In Points in Time Bosy presents 52 iPhone images representing Shapes, Shadows, and Showers, juxtaposed with Systems Failure, Symoniak's 20 etched metal images based upon varied social issues.

Bosy and Symoniak met at GSU in 2008 while pursuing a Master of Arts and co-presented their art at that time. While their art media differ, they once again combine their work in this show to represent how GSU is more than a place to learn – it's a place that fosters teamwork, friendships and art style acceptance. The show expresses collaboration yet highlights creative difference.





Brave was produced from four different images two drawings, one photographic and one hand written letter which was reproduced digitally.

- The drawing of the woman is a portrait of her still struggling to find her way, making her life work no matter what issues she has faced.
- The photograph which fills the background is an image of the "Virgin Mary", representing the strength the woman has found to carry on. The representation of a superior being shows the faith, hope and idea of protection for the woman.
- The drawing of Eagle shows the freedom this woman has found outside her relationship, away from the abuse and the ability to fly or move forward.
While "Brave" may seem as if it a simple task, and many say why not just leave, it is not an easy task. Many women are faced with fear of what could happen once they do leave for they are left with no means of support.



Alone was produced from six different images, one drawing and five photographic images were used in this development.

- The core/main image is a drawing in which the subject appears to be nude, showing her vulnerability.
- Her head is tucked downward as if her body is in a fetus type of position, representing the woman's fear and giving the sense of loneliness.
- The photograph of the flowers is placed within the woman's body showing that she can still find a way to grow or bloom even being surrounded by the numerous threats.
- Five different text messages surround her, the threats are overwhelming and she has no place to run or no recourse. The messages are condescending and threatening.



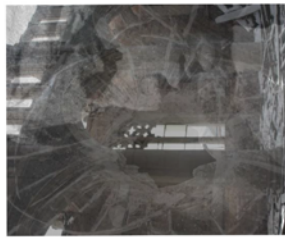
Broken Childhood is a reflection of the impact on children when they must live in a home with domestic violence. In many cases they become withdrawn and fearful, for they have no or little understanding of what is happening. The base image is the image of the broken window, this was found with the frown face within the window, allowing the window to have direct view into the lives of the children.

- The toy doll is left out in the snow, alone and untouched. This is representational of the depression and loneliness many of these children experience.
- The final image is that of a young boy, this shows that the diversity with the type homes in which violence happens. Violence in the home effects all children, it does not distinguish between race, religion, or gender.



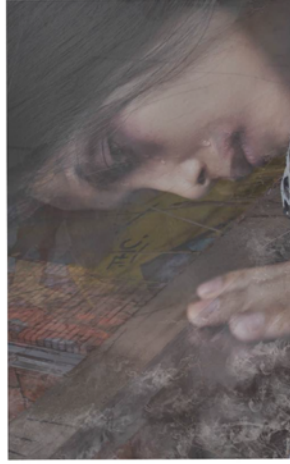
Confusion is comprised of six photographic images, carefully laid into a solid composition. While not all images are fully visible that is the overall intention. When studied, the viewer will find themselves brought into a world of self-blaming, as indicated by the personal diary pages. The base image is the woman sitting by herself, lost in a world of frustration and confusion.

- The five dairy images are from an actual diary, the first one talks about the "lack of respect" she receives from her partner, and how she "hates weekends".
 - The most compelling is the fifth entry when she writes about she failed, "I failed at... I failed myself."
- Many women in this situation become confused, at times they must leave their children behind depending upon the age of the child, they have no means of support otherwise.



Eve of Destruction is based on the dying of our churches and cathedrals. Many in the Chicagoland, twenty to be exact are set to close in 2016. This is a sad fact as we try to look for a future and hope, when at times all we have left is faith. With the closing and deterioration of our churches our faith is diminishing. The base image is of an abandon church in Gary Indiana. The walls of this once magnificent church are the only things left standing as the church roof has collapsed and the building has been vandalized.

- The broken glass was used to show greater impact on viewer allowing them to see through a minimal space.
- The angel with a scared faced is looking down from the heavens with sadness, she may be left wondering if faith itself has been destroyed.
- The broken glass and glass texture were created in their own Photoshop file helping to give the overall image its 3rd dimension. Texture was used as an aging or destruction process to her face.



Girl Gone is based upon a dream. The woman in the images is wondering if she should leave where she would go, in a place of poverty and destruction. She is in pain and hoping her world will not go up in smoke. The image is created from three different images using digitally created smoke, along with elements eluding the viewer's initial sight.

- The base is created using the destroyed the building as representing her life and dreams.
- The second image used is one of graffiti, the intention of this image is to give the viewer the idea of confusion. The third of the woman or young woman, shows her beaten and defeated, with her reflection showing back through the marred wall.
- The digitally created smoke could represent the woman's fleeting life, confusion or passing of time. The placement of her hand could be perceived as her either pushing away or trying to hold on.



Help is set as an introductory image to the series. It has two solid images with fact listed about domestic violence. The intention is for the viewer to spend a few minutes in reading about the subject, for without solid understanding most do not have a concept of the life in which many live, and impact it takes on those in the situation. The outsider believes that person being victimized should just leave, is not that simple. For many they are told if they leave they will lose their children, be left with nothing, some are told they will be hunted down and harmed. Domestic violence is one of the most misunderstood violence actions within a person's life. It is also one of the best kept secrets within our society.



Hidden was produced using two photographic images. Note the changes which were made from the original images.

- The photograph of the woman was purchased, she appears to be beaten, and the final placement of this image is set into a background with the color becoming desaturated and the lines being feathered or softened.
- The photograph of the tree is transformed and is hiding her soft face, as if she does not wish to be seen. She tries to block her pain from the viewer, yet we can see some of her abrasions from behind the tree. She tries her best to find refuge in the shadows of the tree, hiding her abuse from the world.



Hope is one of the final images that will be shown in this series for its focus is that *Hope* will come to all who are in need. For many it is all that they have left in this world, *Hope*. The final image is composed of the three solid images, one in which is a drawing, done with the fumage process.

- The base image is of the clouds and sun setting. The second image is of a drawing, the drawing by itself is entitled *New Light*. While only a portion of the image is being utilized the intention here to give the viewer a sense of serenity.
- The third image is the angel, she is beautiful, unbroken and floats above all earthly beings, looking down with a small smile.

The angel in the final is very soft and the viewer may only see a ghost of her, this is the intention,

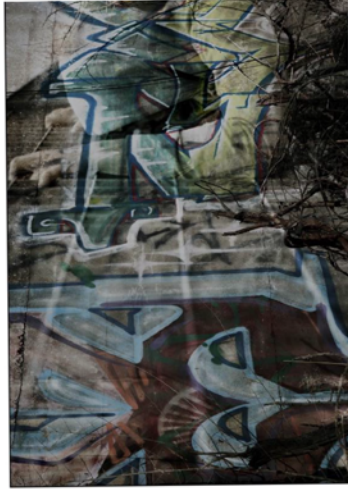


Jesus Wept, We Prayed. On Friday November 13, 2015 Paris and people of Paris fell under attack by terrorists, in the aftermath 128 people were dead, with many injured and the world left wondering why? The lights on the Eiffel Tower were turned out the following night, Saturday November 14. This was the first time since 1889 the lights on the Eiffel Tower were turned off, the idea of turning the lights on the Eiffel Tower sadden me, it had a great impact on myself and the world. It was that night in which I started to create this piece, without warning or meaning, people lost their lives for no reason. It is my lack of understanding as to why there can be so much hate, when we are all faced with a world full of hunger and sickness. For a few days the world and the people had come together to pray, and hoped to find strength within each other.



Lost is simply the combination of two images one digital and the other a drawing. The intention of the selection of the two are very simple.

- The drawing of the forest is to give the viewer the idea of being lost within the forest. The trees are deep and dark, yet there may be some hope as the light breaks through the trees.
- The second of a woman showing her anxiety as she struggles to find her way. She feels lost and alone without help and nowhere to turn.



Life Lost is a simple image which seemed to have come together successfully with two photographic images. The intention is to allow the viewer their own interpretation of what maybe happening in the image.

- Using an image of graffiti image, showing gang symbols draw the viewer into the composition wondering if the overall idea is based on gangs or gang violence. In the foreground the entangle vines add to the deeper meaning of the image.
- The second image is one of a young man, yet it is unclear as to if he is in prison just standing by a fence.

My intention with this image is to show the idea the street violence is not a myth but very real for many.



Night-Fear was produced using two photographic images and one drawing along with a digitally created water overlay. Each image was manipulated to fit the overall image, creating a haunting image of a person in the background of the final artwork. *Night-Fear* was created to show the nightmares in which many women must endure, some are very real nightmares others are the fear that is implanted into their minds. This image was produced with the intention of leaving the viewer to wonder if the figure in the background is real or a dream.

- The background image of a figure on fire could be seen as a nightmare.
- The drawing of the woman shows her inner strength.
- The hand held up is her hoping to make the nightmare stop.



Not Me is based upon three images, and while the gun itself is not actually shown it is used to create the graphic over the woman's entire body and the entire image.

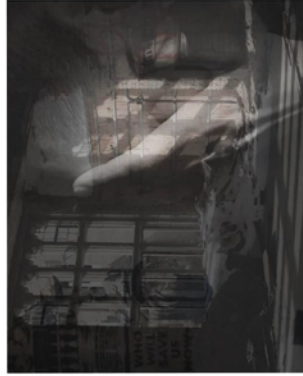
- The base image is the one of the woman herself. She turned away with her hand over her face hiding, she is beaten and ashamed.
- The second image is an x-ray of her arm, showing the damage done by the beating. The red within the x-ray emphasizes the broken bones and the pain from the abuse in which she has endured.
- The final image which has been placed into several layers of the gun barrel covers her. Many times women are afraid to leave, and at times they are ready to fight their offender in hopes the outcome will not be as bad as predicated.



Protect Me is created from three photographic images. It subject is based upon Orders of Protection in which many women contemplate having done through the court systems. This can be a difficult issue, many times once a woman files for an Order of Protection the only effect it has to anger the person in whom the orders are filed against, making a bad situation even worst.

- The second image is one of an angel, while many may just see a woman, it is one of an angel.
- The third image is several copies of an actual Order of Protection, one in which has not worked to help the woman who filed it with the court system.

The intention is to leave the viewer wondering, just like the angel what would or could happen if the Order of Protection is issued?



Save Us has dual meaning, while that was not the intention it will depend upon the viewer to find their own interpretation. It was composed using three photographic images. Two were taken in Gary Indiana one from an abandon church the other from an abandon train station.

- The base image is of a woman is whom may be crying or grieving. The intention for this image was to be in black and white.
- The second image is the abandon church, tagged with graffiti. Leaving the viewer to wonder if the message is about the church or the woman.
- The third image is graffiti, it states "Who will save us now?" Leaving the viewer on their own to interpret the message from the image.



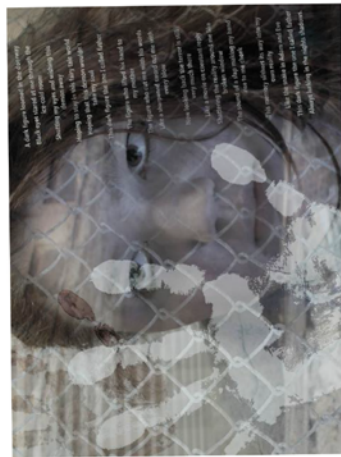
Silenced was produced using two drawings and two photographic images to create one solid digital image

- The image of the woman is drawn from many different women, mainly representing myself.
- Her head is held high showing her self-pride, yet the tears of depression and defeat run down her face.
- Her mouth is taped shut, for many reasons, mainly because she finds her voice goes unheard.
- Her voice is not heard within her own family, no one believes how this very kind man she had married could be abusive. The courts refuse to hear her for she is limited on funds, instead of being heard she is being "Silenced," by many.
- Around her the buildings are in a state of destruction. Many have been burned to the ground, just as her dreams of a good life have been burned or destroyed. The forest of trees blooms before her, represent the proof of a life and the knowing that the roots of life run deep.



S'more was created using three photographic images. The image with the flowers was used twice during the layering process.

- The image of the woman is her holding her hand up, not wanting "some more" abuse, yet it has not stopped.
- The rain image puts a piece of glass between the woman and the viewer, it is as if we want to help but cannot. She is behind a glass window and cannot escape.
- The rain is also position so it is dripping onto the flowers below her, perhaps watering the flowers and hoping to find growth.
- The interior image is one for an abandon church. The flowers were sitting on floor with the graffiti "s'more" written on the wall, the scene was not set up. This image was use in two very different ways.



- The One I Called Father* is composed of three photographic images and a poem written by the daughter of domestic abuse survivor. This composition has a deeper meaning for it shows the impact on the family and children who must endure the raft of watching abuse in their own home. The viewer needs to keep in mind that for most children home is a place of safety and place children can feel safe from the outside world. When there is any abuse or violence in the home children lose that place of feeling safe.
- The base image is of a young girl, the girl whom has lost her safe place.
 - The destroyed building represents the destruction in which she finds her life.
 - The hand print is the hand which was raised to both her and her mother, by their abuser.



Trapped composed of three images, one drawing and two digital images. The drawn images was included adding to coldness of the overall image.

- The base image is the image of the water which once flowed is now turned to ice as representation of the coldness this women must face.
 - The image of the woman is then placed into the base image and layered between the ice images.
 - The drawing of the woman is laid on top of the digital image and is placed between many layers of the ice.
- Most women are trapped not behind a fence but trapped in a relationship due to financial issues. While the family may not be suffering the women are not allowed access to any type of funds leaving them trapped in an abusive relationship.

Exhibition Guests and Comments