

CHEMICAL IMBALANCE

A VIRTUAL EXHIBITION CURATED BY AVORY CAPES



OPEN DECEMBER 8TH, 2021

SATELLiTE Project Space
satelliteprojectspace.com

CHEMICAL IMBALANCE



For centuries the world has recognized the ability of a 'madman' to create breathtaking and meaningful works of art, while simultaneously continuing to stigmatize the individuals with mental illness who are capable of producing such arresting imagery. How can the public condemn the mentally ill person that creates the work they praise? What can artists do to destigmatize mental illness with their practice?

In order to reduce the stigma around mental illness, Chemical Imbalance exhibits educational artworks created by artists with lived experience of mental illness that describe eleven young adult's struggles with mental illness. Through these artworks portraying the artist's experience with mental illness, Chemical Imbalance will act as an open conversation about the intersections of mental illness and the arts.

Chemical Imbalance effectively discusses the reality of living with mental illness, the physical effects such illnesses have on an individual, and how the arts serve as a creative outlet for those suffering from mental illness.

Chemical Imbalance is part of the SATELLiTE Project Space that hosts exhibitions from young and upcoming curators.

STEPH DANCER

Studio Arts Major, Brock University



Untitled (2020) by Steph Dancer is the cover image of this catalogue.



Steph Dancer is a Studio arts Major at Brock university and has been exploring in different mediums for over 10 years. In true Synchronist fashion she uses music as a conduit to create her expressionist work that is an exploration of her own observations and meditations of herself and society.



CONTACT INFORMATION



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STEPH DANCER

Studio Arts Major, Brock University



Steph Dancer, *Untitled*, 2020. Oil on canvas, 10 in. x 10 in.

"This work is about complex PTSD and dissociation during the pandemic. The sheer effort it takes to exist while suffering with a mental health disorder is cumbersome and at the height of intense isolation the water is a soothing place that offers a weightless retreat for the body allowing the mind a moment to escape and slip effortlessly from the past to the future."

– Steph Dancer

STEPH DANCER

Studio Arts Major, Brock University



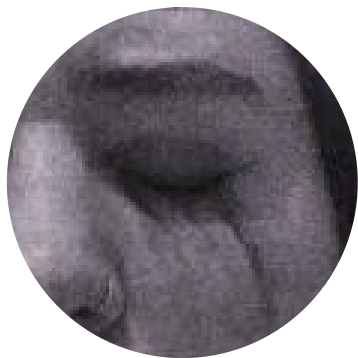
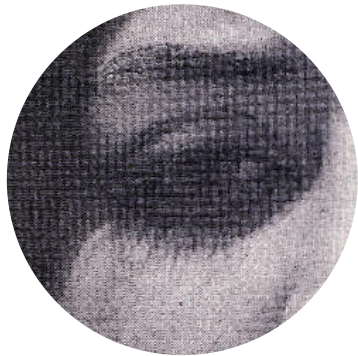
Steph Dancer, *Birds*, 2021. Mixed media on canvas, 30 in. x 40 in.

This piece is about dissociation and the destructive behaviour that accompanies complex PTSD. The extremes of complex PTSD often feel surreal, much like the fictitious birds and shapes seen on the figures' legs that are representative of pain, intense emotions, dissociation and isolation.

Waves of pain and dissociation are alarming and leave the sufferer feeling isolated, disconnected from reality and from others. These internal wounds simultaneously feel like the deepest caverns and like the lightest of birds fluttering about and brushing your cheek. The vivid shapes and figures are juxtaposed by a muted, hazy background portraying the duality of dissociative disorders and the feeling of being in a dreamscape.

RYLEE RUMBLE

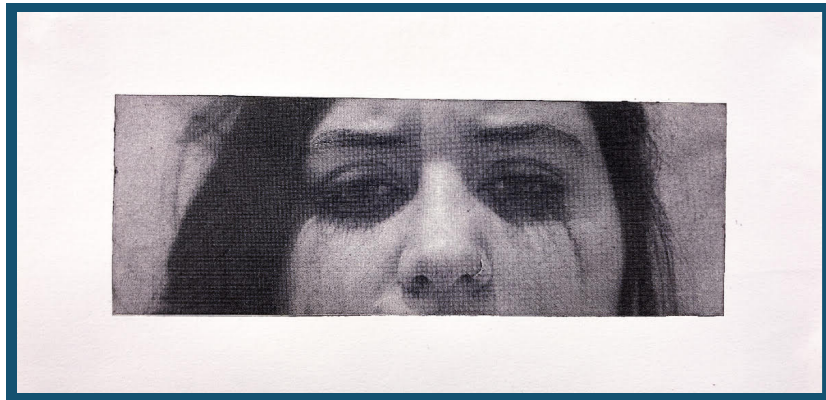
MFA Candidate, Western University



Working in both painting and printmaking, Rylee has recently obtained her BA in Studio Art and Art History from the University of Guelph and is currently a first-year MFA candidate at the University of Western Ontario. Her paintings are focused on abstracting feelings and memories through the use of colour; whereas her prints are representational feelings associated with mental health and what she has experienced with her depression.

RYLEE RUMBLE

MFA Candidate, Western University



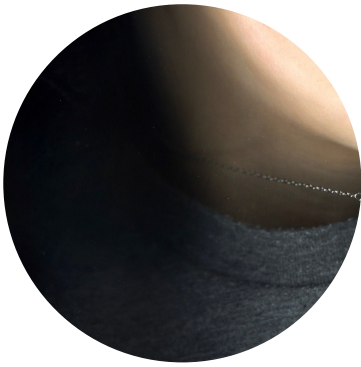
Rylee Rumble, *The Party's Over*, 2019. Photo-Intaglio, 15 in. x 17 in.

"This particular piece is centred around a panic attack. At my most vulnerable state I decided to document the moments after; the empty, numb, and lifeless feeling they cause. It is a portfolio of five printed twice, the first and only time I have and will be using myself as the subject for one of my own pieces. It was the first time I opened up about my own struggles in the hopes of it resonating with others. This piece relates to the exhibition as it is a raw representation of a very common occurrence for most people, just like myself. No one should have to suffer in silence, I know the pain and the weight that causes, and I want my art to help others as well. But most of all, I am doing it to help myself."

- Rylee Rumble

KAITLYN ROBERTS

MFA Candidate, Emily Carr University of Art + Design



Kaitlyn Roberts is an interdisciplinary artist absorbed in how art-making can create an empathetic relationship to the vulnerability and isolation surrounding mental illness. Through the use of her photography, installation, and mixed media, her practice-based study conveys certain aspects of her autobiographic experiences. By inviting viewers into her memoirs, Roberts aims to bring mindfulness and emotion into the gallery space.



Roberts is from Toronto, Ontario, where she achieved her Honours BA in Visual Arts from Brock University. Roberts has shown work in juried shows around Canada including, Niagara Artist Centre's *Fortune Favours*, the Visual Arts Centre of Clarington's *The VAC 39th Annual Juried Show*, Langley Art Gallery's *Memories*, and Gallery 44's *Envision*. Roberts is currently living and working in Vancouver BC, where she is a candidate of the Master of Fine Arts program at Emily Carr University of Art + Design.



KAITLYN ROBERTS

MFA Candidate, Emily Carr University of Art + Design



Kaitlyn Roberts, *a self-portrait*, 2020. Inkjet on paper, 25 in. x 35 in.

Depression is something you experience on your own. Other people have it. It is mentioned every once in a while, and we all know it's there. Yet, it is lonely and suffocating. It feels as though you are drowning in a frozen lake beneath a thick sheet of ice. What makes it even worse, is that you can see your loved ones standing on top of the ice, but when you try to scream, sound doesn't come out, but water fills in. They can't hear you.

This portrait was not taken the traditional way, with a camera. The scanner distorts the face, but silences the moment, showing the beauty of the emotion, and the imperfect. There is a disconnect between the subject and the viewer as they are isolated to their own separate moments.

ANNE HAMILTON

Resident Artist at TAP Centre For Creativity

Anne Hamilton is an autistic outsider artist. She attended Bealart from 2015–2018 and has been a resident artist at TAP Centre For Creativity since then. Her art focuses on her fascination with bottles.

Currently, Anne is attempting to cover the large wall in her studio with marker and alcohol ink vellum cut-out drawings of bottles.



ANNE HAMILTON

Resident Artist at TAP Centre For Creativity



Anne Hamilton, *Bottle Group III*, 2021. Yupo, marker, alcohol ink, gold leaf, 17 in. x 25.5 in.

"Being autistic basically guarantees accompanying mental illness. For me, these are anxiety and depression.

My practice is solely focused on my obsession with bottles and the meaninglessness behind said obsession. I draw any bottle that I am fascinated with. My monotonous practice of drawing bottle after bottle brings me stability—which is helpful in warding off my anxiety and depression to some extent."

– Anne Hamilton

JULIA FAWCETT

Studio Art and Art History, Western University

Julia Fawcett is an artist currently residing in Ontario and attending the University of Western for Studio Art and Art History. The main mediums Fawcett works with are acrylic paint and oil pastels. In her work, she explore subjects of sound represented visually, as well as portraits and nature, all while incorporating imaginative colours.



JULIA FAWCETT

Studio Art and Art History, Western University



Julia Fawcett, *Made You Strong*. Acrylic on canvas, 20 in. x 20 in.

"When thinking about mental illness, I decided to touch on the statement 'your struggle made you stronger' because I find it to be bothersome in some aspects. While the sentiment is well-meaning, I want to explain how much I suffered to get where I am now and that the process of gaining this strength should not be glamourized. My work explains that though my life may be pretty now, a part of me had to die to be able to grow, and it can be bittersweet to be congratulated for it."

– Julia Fawcett

CHLOE SERENKO

Honours Specialization BFA in Studio Art, Western University



Chloe Serenko (she/ they), more well known to others as 'Chloe' or 'Chloenko', is a 19 year-old Fine Arts Student specializing in experimental work using a variety of mixed mediums. She is a Canadian artist from the small town of Bowmanville, Ontario. Currently, they are attending their second year at Western University getting her Honours Specialization BFA in Studio Art. She dedicates herself to her practice by commission and personal works, sharing her artwork on social media sites. Chloe's goal for their future is to continue learning about art while improving her technical and conceptual skills, eventually becoming a successful contemporary artist and entrepreneur.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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CHLOE SERENKO

Honours Specialization BFA in Studio Art, Western University



Chloe Serenko, *Shattered Shelves*. Pinewood Shadowbox and Found Objects, 16 in. x 20 in.

"I crafted, stained and arranged this whole sculpture to represent my internal identity and perception of myself. A very large part of my life is my mental illness, specifically my PTSD and Anxiety. I never let my mental health define me however, it does play quite a large role in my life. I see myself as stuck in the past, on my own antique shelf; it is a mix-match of junk piled on shelves, useless to most people, but valuable and sentimental to me. Elements of isolated femininity and fragile materials play a large role in portraying my struggle with social acceptability as well as inability to communicate anxiety and internal distress to others. The dancer figure depicted on her shelf looks to the bright future ahead, full of growth and acceptance. Shelves carry meaning and weight to my identity and mental health. It is a metamorphosis of self, transitioning to healing and moving on."

– Chloe Serenko

SARAH HIRST

Body Positivity Painter and Stained Glass Artist



Sarah Hirst is a self-taught painter and stained-glass artist who recently began a business working as a full-time artist. Her stained glass works focus on body positivity and desexualizing women, while her paintings offer insight into her personal experiences with ADHD, depression, and the sexualization of herself as a woman.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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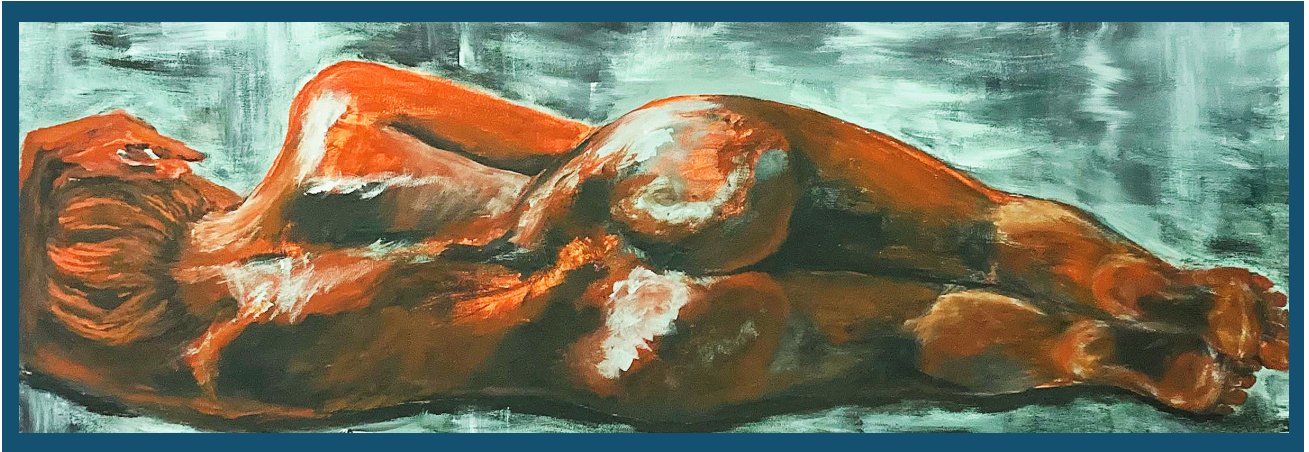
sc.artstudios@gmail.com



<https://linktr.ee/SarahCourtneyArt>

SARAH HIRST

Body Positivity Painter and Stained Glass Artist



Sarah Hirst, *Laid Bare*. Acrylic on canvas, 12 in. x 36 in.

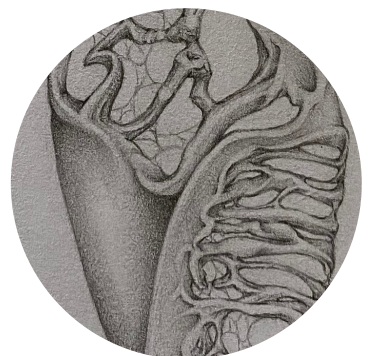
"Sometimes I just had to lie down and cry. Before my diagnoses, I felt immense pain and sorrow, but I didn't know why. I felt I couldn't ask for help if I couldn't explain the problem. I eventually turned to art and painted a representation of how I felt: vulnerable and stripped bare. By creating this tangible visual of my struggles, I was able to accept my feelings as real, even though they happened without a reason. Stigma can come from within, but through opening ourselves up, we can overcome our own judgments and get the help we deserve."

– Sarah Hirst

MATIJA SOCCIO

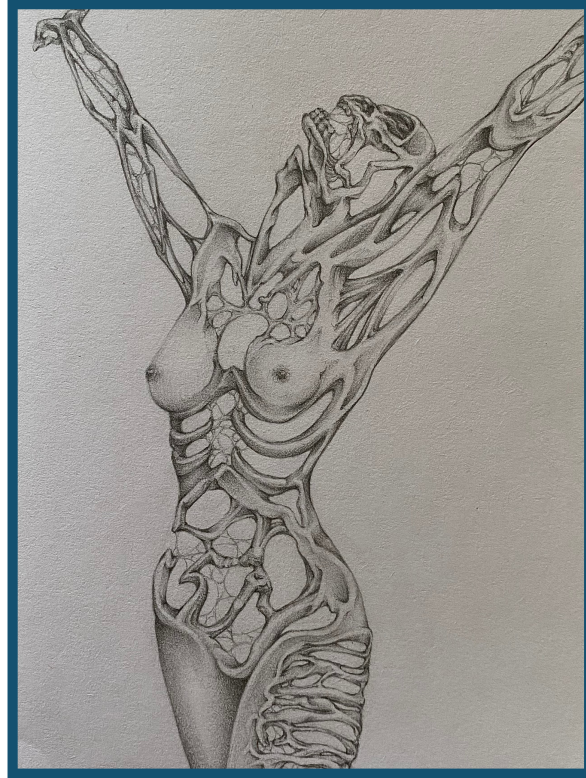
Self-taught Artist Residing in St. Catharines, Ontario

Matija Soccio is a self-taught artist that often experiments with a variety of mediums and artistic techniques; however, she prefers the basics of pencil and pen. Soccio loves art's ability to allow her to express herself and feel free of reality.



MATIJA SOCCIO

Self-taught Artist Residing in St. Catharines, Ontario



Matija Soccio, *My Body Is A*. Graphite on paper, 8 in. x 6 in.

"I don't really know how to explain this piece without getting too personal for comfort, but I drew it as a way of processing a lot of anxiety and self-destructive feelings. I'm a very closed off person when it comes to my own mental health and that's why I feel safe in my sketchbook. It gives me a way to express my feelings without having to articulate them. So I can be completely exposed without revealing anything at all."

– Matija Soccio

KATE NEWELL

Canadian Artist Residing in London, Ontario

Kate Newell is a Canadian artist, born and raised in Newfoundland. Drawing inspiration from her childhood, she uses oil paints to create landscapes, portraits, and various other subject matters. Kate is constantly exploring themes of mental health and community. She currently lives and works in London, ON.



CONTACT INFORMATION



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KATE NEWELL

Canadian Artist Residing in London, Ontario



Kate Newell, *Pitcher Plants are Carnivores*. Oil on Panel, 4 feet x 4 feet 11 in.

"Growing up in Newfoundland gave me a unique perspective of the world, people, and environment. The province is a comforting, loving, and warm place, but an often-perplexing dichotomy can also make it alienating, harsh, and cold, and the resilient culture makes addressing psychological issues difficult. The repeating pattern is a visual representation of my connection with my home province. The repeating figures create a disoriented, confused feeling, similar to the feeling of derealization. With no set environment, it gives a general feeling of displacement. This piece is a visual representation of my mental health and life experiences."

– Kate Newell

SAMMY ORLOWSKI

Illustrator and Zinemaker in London, Ontario



Sammy Orlowski is an illustrator and zinemaker based in London, Ontario. In her work, she aims to capture and explode out the absurdities of life in ways that make people laugh and feel invited to share in the nonsense.

CONTACT INFORMATION



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SAMMY ORLOWSKI

Illustrator and Zinemaker in London, Ontario



Sammy Orlowski, *It's All Just Smoke and Bees*, 2021. Acrylic on paper, 9 in. x 12 in.

"I often liken anxiety to a bunch of bees bouncing around in my head in a state of panic, keeping me from organizing my thoughts and finding calm. Depression, on the other hand, is like a thick fog or smoke that maybe slows down those bees, but it doesn't make grasping them any easier.

I wanted to capture these images using dark humour, contrasting the bright pastel colours and whimsical smoke waves with the expression on my face – my too-wide grin and yellowed eyes rolling in the back of my head. I like to strike a balance between adorable and off-putting."

– Sammy Orlowski

REBECCA PROPPE

Artist and Art Historian Residing in Toronto, Ontario



Rebecca Proppe is an artist and art historian living and working in Toronto, Ontario. Her work is comprised primarily of paintings and drawings dealing with feelings of anxiety and depression. It deals with the clash between inner and outer worlds, and is informed by both real and imagined environments, in conjunction with her background in art historical research.

CONTACT INFORMATION

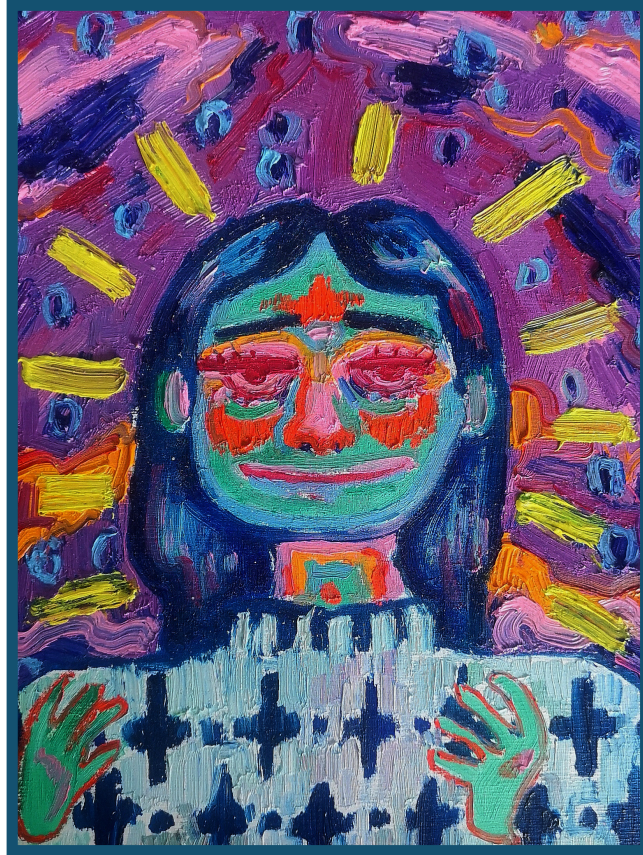
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REBECCA PROPPE

Artist and Art Historian Residing in Toronto, Ontario



Rebecca Proppe, *I'm Tryna Meditate*, 2021. Oil on panel, 8 in. x 10 in.

"*I'm Tryna Meditate*, reflects my journey of self-care and recovery after living a lifetime of untreated anxiety and depression. While life was sometimes made unbearable by my mental illnesses, I have developed a myriad of coping skills, including medication and meditation, to live life to the fullest. Still, being mentally ill means that there are good days and bad days regardless of how hard I try. In this piece, I wanted to convey the deep desire to at least attempt to radiate positivity for the sake of those around me - even though I'm not operating at my best."

- Rebecca Proppe

MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINES

Resources for yourself, friends, family, or others in need of help

Canada Suicide Prevention Service

Call 1-833-456-4566 (24/7) or 1-866-277-3553 (For Québec Residents)

Send a text to 45645 from 4 pm to midnight ET

Kids Help Phone

Call 1-800-668-6868 (24/7 for Canadians aged 5 to 29)

Text CONNECT to 686868

Hope for Wellness Help Line

Call 1-855-242-3310 (Available to all Indigenous peoples across Canada)

Connect to the online [Hope for Wellness chat](#)

LGBT Youthline Ontario

Call 1-800-268-9688

Text 647-694-4275

Connect to the online [LGBT Youthline live chat](#)

ConnexOntario

Call 1-866-531-2600

Text CONNEX to 247247

Connect to the online [ConnexOntario live chat](#)

Good2Talk

For post-secondary Students in Ontario

Call 1-866-925-5454

Text GOOD2TALKON to 686868

The Support Line - Middlesex CMHA

For individuals from London and Middlesex 16+ years.

Call 1-844-360-8055

Reach Out

For individuals living in Elgin, Middlesex, Oxford, and London

Call 1-866-933-2023

Text 519-433-2023

Connect to the online [Reach Out live chat](#)