



BEING SCENE 2015

WORKMAN ARTS PRESENTS  
**BEING SCENE**  
15TH ANNUAL JURIED EXHIBITION



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FOR:



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Julie Riemersma   *Anxiety*   archival digital print   2015



I would like to congratulate all the artists past and present who have participated in the annual Being Scene exhibition. This year we celebrate 15 years of showcasing visual art from extraordinary artists.

In 2000, Being Scene was born under the name of images and was presented as a year-long annual exhibition to celebrate the merger of three hospitals under the banner, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. It sprang from the desire to embrace and showcase our artists work and to create and maintain a permanent exhibition space for art to enrich our surroundings.

Twenty-eight 4' x 8' wooden cases were installed along the hallways of the administration building at the Queen Street site where thousands of artworks were displayed as part of a permanent rotating exhibition. In 2009, CAMH began its site redevelopment and the buildings that housed the exhibition were demolished and Workman Arts moved to 651 Dufferin Street.

Workman Arts has flourished in our funky new space. Significant opportunities continually arise for artists, from the new online art portal to commissions, such as the murals created for the new buildings at the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

The opportunities have extended beyond the artists to CAMH and to the community at large. Important relationships continue to be created and strengthened between art lovers and artists and between Workman Arts and the community. What's truly exciting is that each year the quality and volume of art submitted continues to grow, making the job of the three jurors a great pleasure and a challenge.

Today, Being Scene is professionally exhibited at Queen West art hub, the Gladstone Hotel. I wish to thank all the artists who submitted to this year's Being Scene, the jurors: David Liss, Adelina Vlas and Stephen Lewis, the Gladstone, CAMH and WA's Board of Directors and our staff who made this another remarkable year

A special thank you to Catherine Jones, who interviewed the artists and produced the audio-recordings for this special presentation.

Congratulations to this year's exhibiting artists. The 15th Being Scene edition is outstanding!

Lisa Brown C.M., M.S.M., R.N  
Founder and Executive Artistic Director  
Workman Arts



"Moments of beauty." That's the way a former patient described how he began to see the world through art, as he recovered from the darkness of addiction.

I'd like to welcome you to Being Scene 2015 -- and I invite you to discover moments of beauty in the treasure that is Workman Arts! Its artists have enriched our lives through their talents in different mediums from photography to collage, painting, drawing and sculpture. Through their creativity, they also convey a message of hope and recovery for people living with mental illness.

A big "thank you" to Workman Arts for producing the 15th annual Being Scene show for CAMH. The talent of our artists is superb. I am encouraged that more artists, including young people, are coming forward to share their work with the community.

And I encourage you to find many moments of beauty and humanity in this year's show.

Catherine Zahn, MD FRCP  
President and CEO, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)



On behalf of the board of directors of Workman Arts, I am honoured to welcome you to the 15th Being Scene Art Exhibit, a signature exhibition showcasing the work of an incredible company of artists.

While enjoyment of art can be on many levels and take many forms it is that moment that we turn a corner to see a piece that immediately elicits unsettlingly deep emotion, be it joy or sorrow or anything in between, that elevates art above all other expressions of humanity. I experienced that exact connection last year at Being Scene when I discovered a hypnotic portrait that unlocked a forgotten obsession. That level of engagement is not unique to my experience with Workman Arts; each event has contained at least one, often many, poignant moments of emotion or enlightenment.

This year's art exhibit is no exception, offering an amazing range of styles, subjects, techniques and inspirations from incredibly talented local artists who have experienced mental illnesses and/or addictions.

On behalf of the board of directors, congratulations to all the artists, the jurors and staff for once again presenting an exhibition that delights, challenges, enlightens and inspires.

I want to give special thanks to the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health without whose support and faith this and all of our work would not be possible.

Patrick Manley, CPA, CA  
Chair, Board of Directors  
Workman Arts



My first experience with the Being Scene exhibition was in 2007 when I was invited to participate as a juror. Shortly after that, I join the staff team as Visual Arts Manager and managed the exhibition production from 2009-2013. I am thrilled to be integrally involved again for the 15th annual iteration of this signature Workman Arts event, in my new role as Program Director. Over the past eight years of my involvement in Being Scene, I have had the privilege to meet dozens of new artists, seen and handled literally thousands of works submitted, facilitated five adjudications and managed and installed hundreds of works accepted for Being Scene. My experience is that the exhibition has become progressively stronger as WA artists continue to build their individual practices and as talented new artists join our organization.

Our 2015 jurors Steven Lewis, David Liss and Adelina Vlas were very focused on selecting works that reflect original ideas, are emotionally expressive and technically strong. These fifty-four artworks reflect this focus as well as the evolving and diversifying talents of our member artists.

Congratulations to all of the forty-seven 2015 Being Scene artists.

Chris Mitchell  
Program Director  
Workman Arts



It has been a great pleasure being involved in the programming of the 15th annual Being Scene exhibit. I was thrilled to meet the artists and see the huge variety of work as submissions were dropped off. Co-facilitating the adjudication was also an excellent experience; seeing the team of jurors decide upon a selection of works that are technically proficient, conceptually strong, and emotionally stimulating. Congratulations to all of the participating artists and thank you to Workman Arts for having me!

Sarah Turner  
Visual Arts Coordinator  
Workman Arts



On behalf of the Ontario Arts Council, welcome to the 2015 incarnation of BEING SCENE. Over the past 15 years, works featured in BEING SCENE have explored the facts and myths of mental illness and addiction through the visual arts. This exhibition, organized by Workman Arts, challenges our perceptions and helps increase our understanding of these conditions. It also provides an opportunity for aspiring, emerging and established artists with mental health and addiction issues, to exhibit their work.

The Ontario Arts Council is proud to support BEING SCENE. Our best wishes to all involved with the exhibition.

Judith Gelber  
Vice Chair  
Ontario Arts Council

For more than 50 years, the Ontario Arts Council (OAC) has played a vital role in promoting and assisting the development of the arts for the enjoyment and benefit of Ontarians. In 2014-15, OAC funded 1,709 individual artists and 1,078 organizations in 204 Ontario communities, for a total of \$52.1 million.



**Steven Lewis - Visual Artist in Residence**

One of the privileges of my roles in being part of this community is taking part in the selection process for the Being Scene exhibit, an exciting but daunting task. There are such a large variety of approaches to image making and visions being submitted. How does one choose? Together with my other colleagues on the panel, we were able to whittle down the choices to this year’s collection. No doubt worthy pieces were left behind, yet I feel what was chosen has created an exciting exhibit for 2015, and the 15th anniversary.

Steven Lewis is a visual artist, a painter. Working with oil paints, he creates portraits and figurative pieces as his subject matter. In the past he was a co-founder of SPINVFX working as a digital editor, compositor and motion graphic designer, servicing the advertising, television and film industry.

**David Liss - Artistic Director and Curator - Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art**

In my position as a museum director and curator I consider it an honour to be invited to adjudicate exhibitions because of the focused opportunity of seeing and thinking about artists and the ideas that inspire their works. What intrigued me most about my participation in the Being Scene exhibition was the breadth and scope of the inventiveness of the artists. Regardless of the necessary choices about what is included in the exhibition or not, the experience of looking at all of the works presented reinforces in me the value of the artistic imagination – for the artists and for viewers.

Since 2001 David Liss is Artistic Director and Curator of the Museum of Contemporary Canadian Art in Toronto, where he has evolved the institution from its humble origins in North York to Queen St. West where MOCCA has become a significant contributor to the cultural ecology of Toronto and beyond. Since the late 1980s he has developed, curated and organized numerous exhibitions at MOCCA, as well as independently and for the Gallery of the Saidye Bronfman Centre for the Arts in Montreal, including accompanying publications, programs and events. He has also worked at the Leonard and Bina Ellen Art Gallery at Concordia University, the Canada Council Art Bank, and contributed art reviews to the Montreal Gazette. He holds a BFA (1987) in painting and printmaking from Concordia University, is a Contributing Editor to Canadian Art magazine and is also a practicing artist.

**Adelina Vlas - Associate Curator of Contemporary Art - Art Gallery of Ontario**

It has been an honor and a pleasure to be part of the jurying panel for the *15th Annual Being Scene* exhibition. Reviewing the entries with my fellow jurors, revealed a wide range of approaches to art making that made our task challenging as well as rewarding. Working in a diversity of mediums, the selected artists have the extraordinary ability of distilling their lived experiences into works of art that are poignant, engaging and evocative.

Adelina Vlas, is the Associate Curator of Contemporary Art at the Art Gallery of Ontario. Previously, she has worked at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and at National Gallery of Canada. In both these positions she concentrated extensively on permanent collection displays and acquisitions. In Philadelphia, she has organized projects with younger-generation artists such as Carlos Amorales, Mohamed Bourouissa, Manon de Boer, Martha Colburn, Tim Hyde, Jennifer Levonian, Joshua Mosley, Fiona Tan and Tobias Zielony. In 2014, she organized the critically acclaimed exhibition Michael Snow: *Photo-Centric*, the first American museum survey of Snow’s photo-based work.



In celebration of the 15th anniversary of Being Scene, Workman Arts member Catherine Jones conducted audio interviews with 27 artists regarding their artworks selected for this exhibition and their arts practices. We invite you to use your smartphones to scan the QR codes beneath the participating artists’ images to hear their individual interviews.

**You can also listen to all 27 interviews by visiting  
[www.audioboom.com/WorkmanArts](http://www.audioboom.com/WorkmanArts)**



*"I was working with themes of loneliness and how it can be both good and bad..."*





"I am very fascinated with symbolism....My paintings are kind of like a story: a picture, a frame, a snapshot of a dream or a memory."



"I kind of like that there's a bit of imperfection there and I think the lesson from that is that I can make things that are imperfect and go from there."





*"I tried to embody each temperament in myself...The intention of the work was to let go of my mind and use more my body and my heart."*



*"The one thing in almost all my art is a sense of calmness...I think in my artwork I'm trying to find that peace and calmness that I don't always have in my life."*



*"I really like visually when you get layers and layers of stuff in between the light and the subject, and all these construction sites had it set out for me... It was a very small-scale... Christo."*





*"I am mostly interested in the unreliability of memory and also mental illness and how it affects our perception of the world."*



*"Whatever you are going through or what difficulties you have you can... look at it two ways. You can look at it negatively and be angry about it or you can try and make the best of your situation and... look at the bright side and try to persevere."*



*"I began the painting with great apprehension a year before it was completed..."*



*"I was really affected by loneliness and affected by isolation and trying to meditate on any type of sounds that would come to me in the process ... trying to articulate those sounds into some thing more malleable or tangible."*



"Connection is what I'm looking for...it was very spontaneous...everything has great energy.  
I tell myself 'the things I want do not exist' and the challenge is for me to create those things."



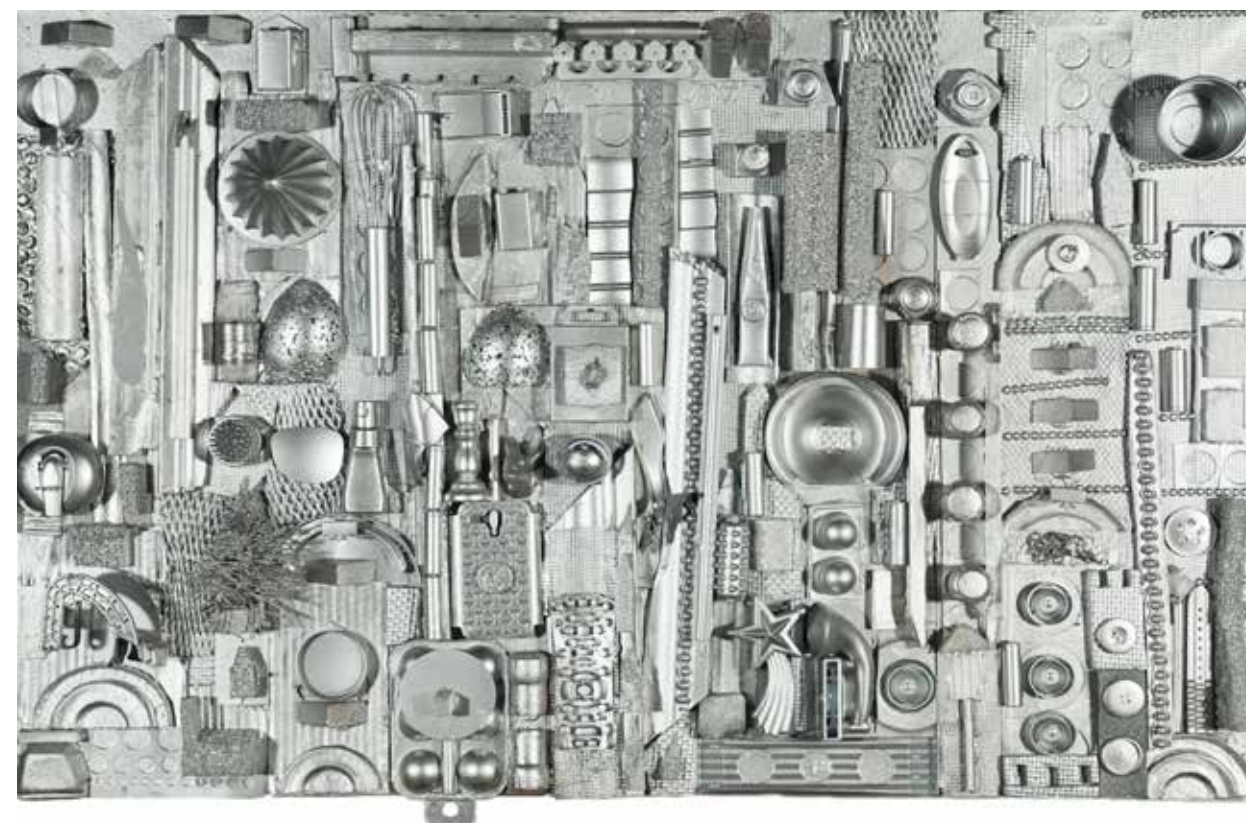


*"I tend to focus on the dark side of life with my art but I think that's a release and an outlet for me to express the kind of things I feel."*





*"The message I'm trying to get out with my art is about the emotional fragility of people who are suffering with various mental health issues or addictions issues and how there are sometimes unfair labels put on people which adds to the pain and the suffering that people endure. I'm using my art as a form of advocacy to help reduce stigma...."*



*"I've done 900 pieces... since I started approximately 5 years ago after I went through a spiritual awakening and one area I opened up is the chakra that is responsible for creativity. I use all different types of substrates and mediums."*



*"It's interesting to try to find ways to convey the movement and the staticness of different elements of the scene."*





*"Usually... I'll just sit with the camera and wait for as long as it takes for something to fly into the frame...and then that's the moment I want."*



*"I never took any lessons. I just drew because it helped me mentally...I do it three to four hours a day. Its about colour and it's about patterns and it's about inward searching."*



"When I do people's portraits sometimes I'll work for two or three weeks on it because I'm not sure what it's going to end up like... it usually ends up being something that I feel about them, but I'm usually going through a similar thing at the same time so it's kind of a reflection of both of us."



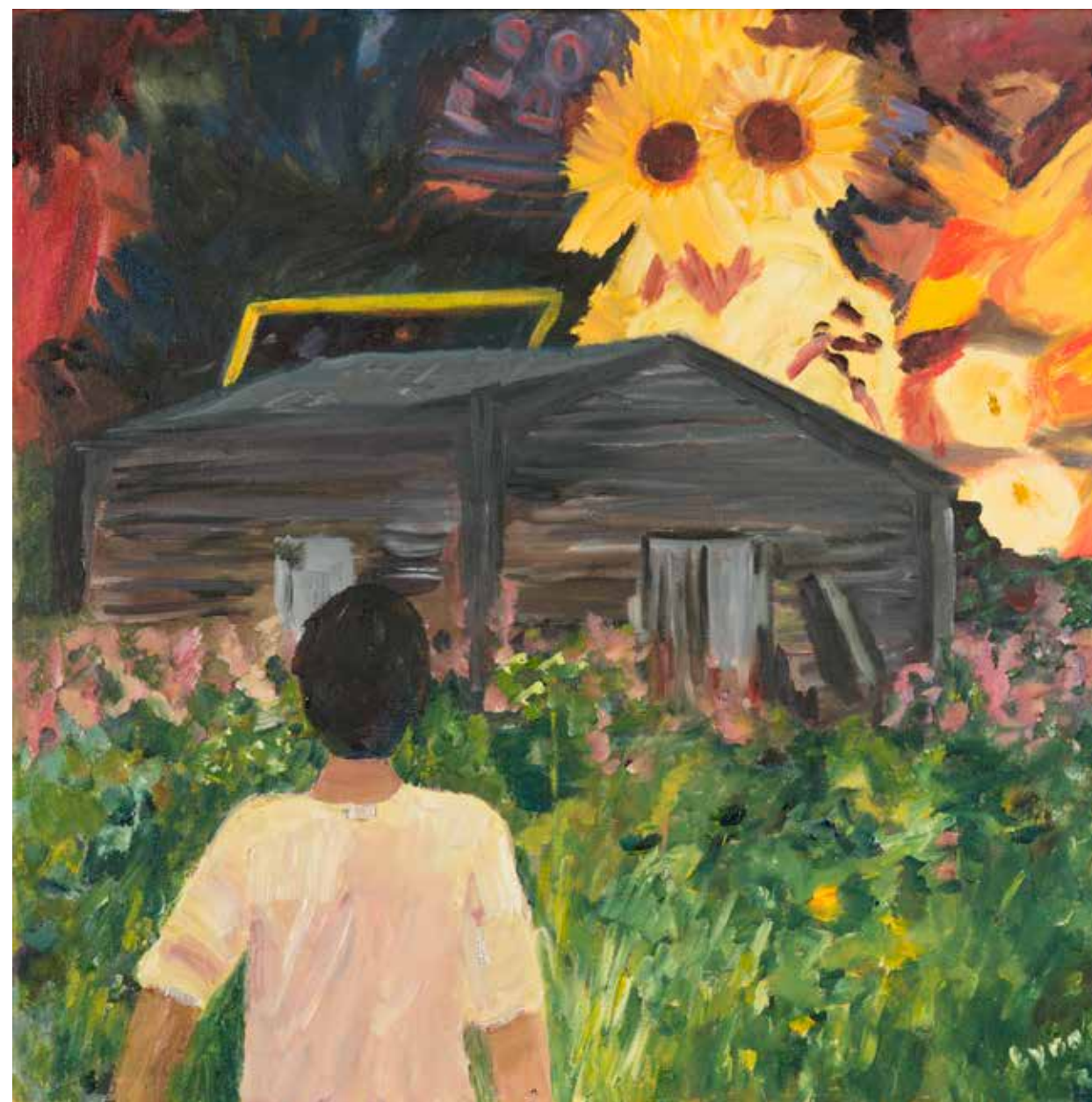


"It can happen to anyone; it doesn't really discriminate against wealthy or poor, or your gender or background."





*"I mainly paint on glass. It's a completely backwards way of painting because you have to build from the foreground to the background...it's really almost everytime...Its a surprise what it looks like."*





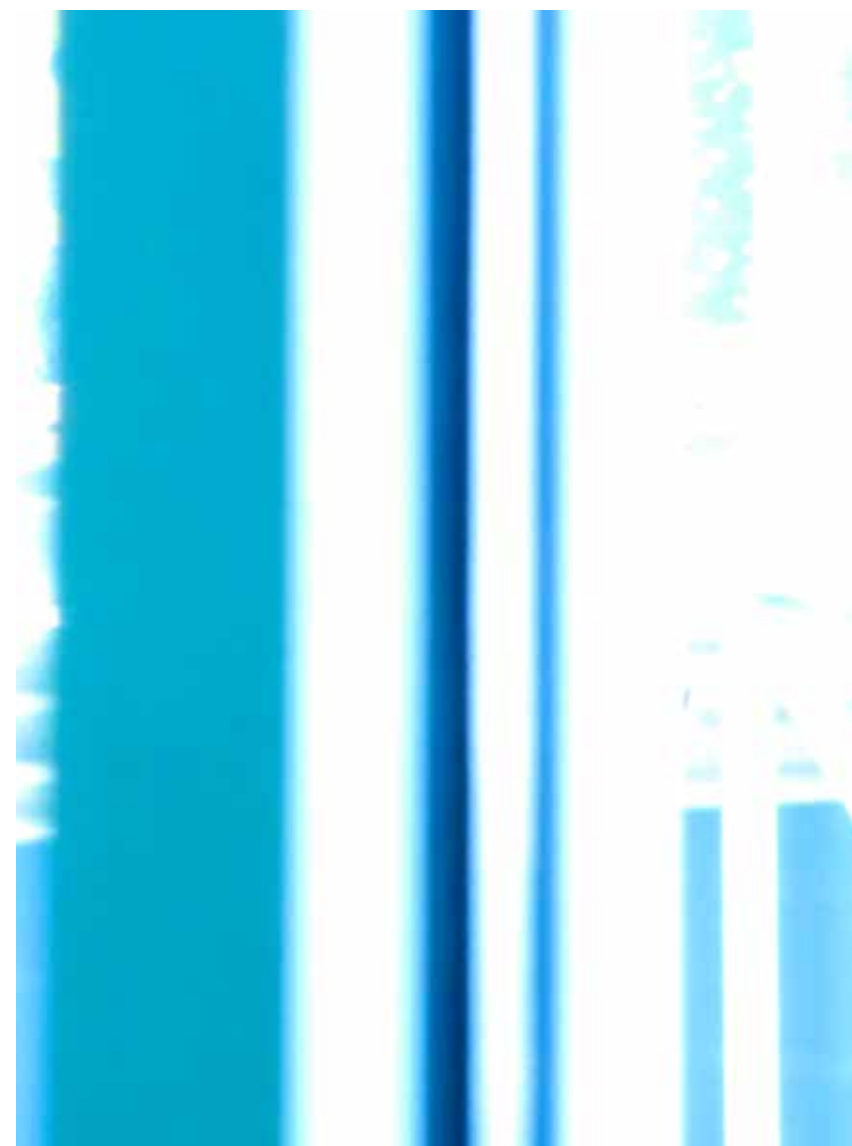
"I really felt much more confident as an artist... I started to really feel like I had some kind of control over the ability to create."



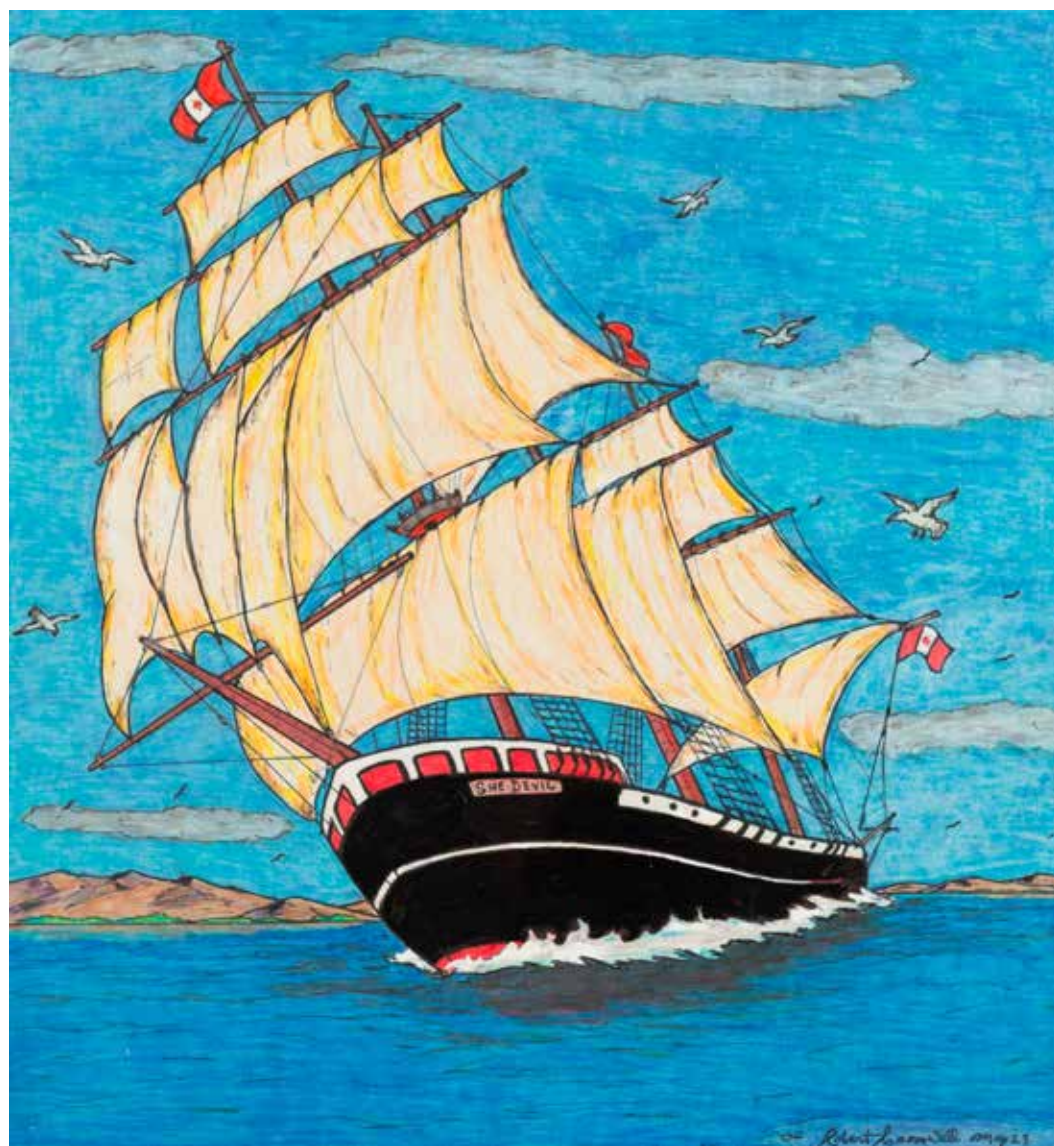




*"I am very pro-female. So a lot of my pieces are around women's bodies - their strength, their resilience, their sacrifice...especially for women of colour who I find have not always been showcased in conventional art work and art spaces. I think that we need a space and I am trying to create a space for that in my work."*



*"I still have the idea that what I'm feeling when I take a picture, some of that leaks out when somebody looks at the picture. So I am conscious of what I'm feeling when I'm actually taking the picture."*



"I am a Piscean. A lot of my pictures, they are all blue. Blue sky, blue water and a lot of action into it."





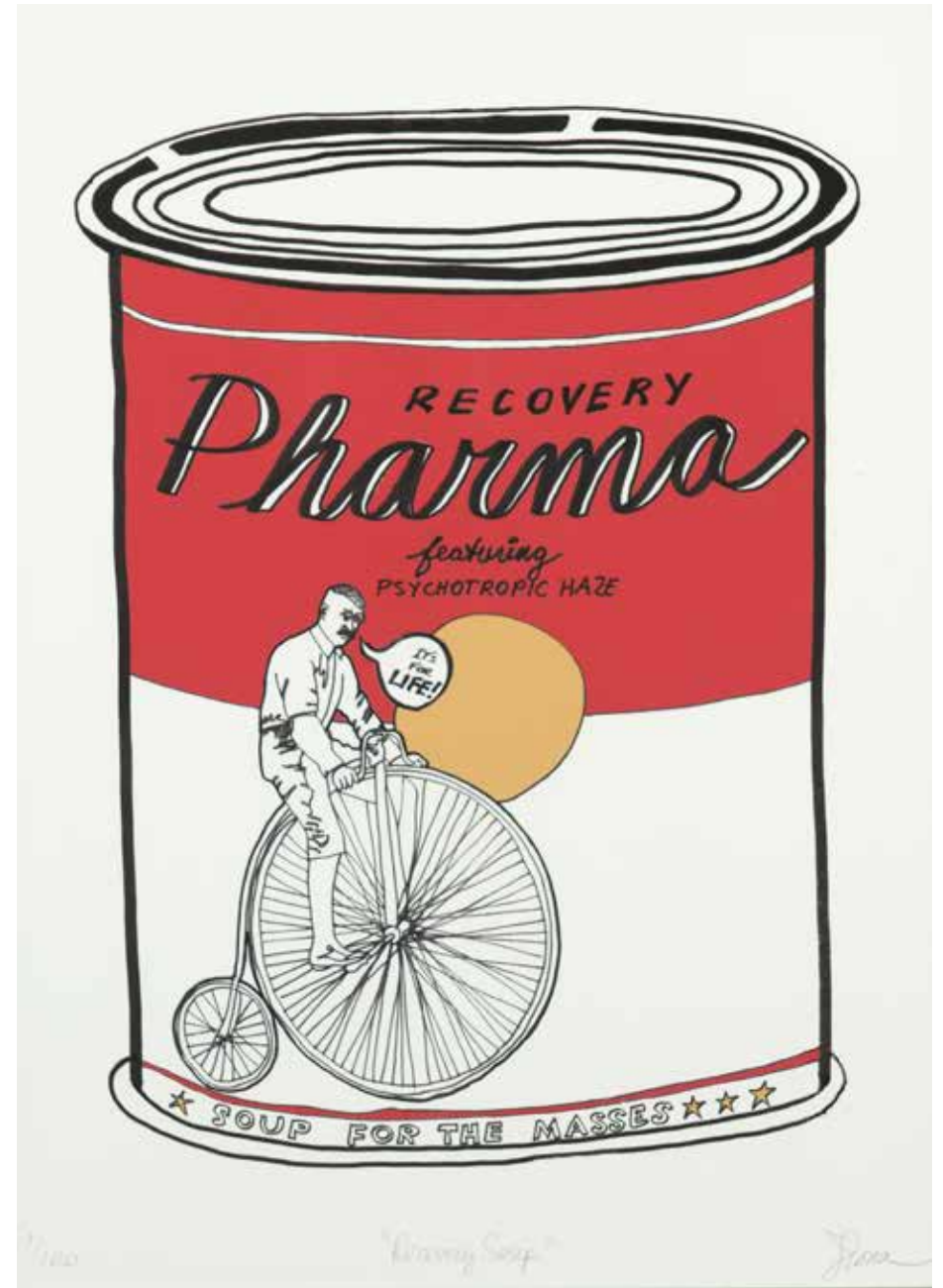
"I wanted to bring focus to what we consume in our bodies and also play off what I would consider a modern still-life."





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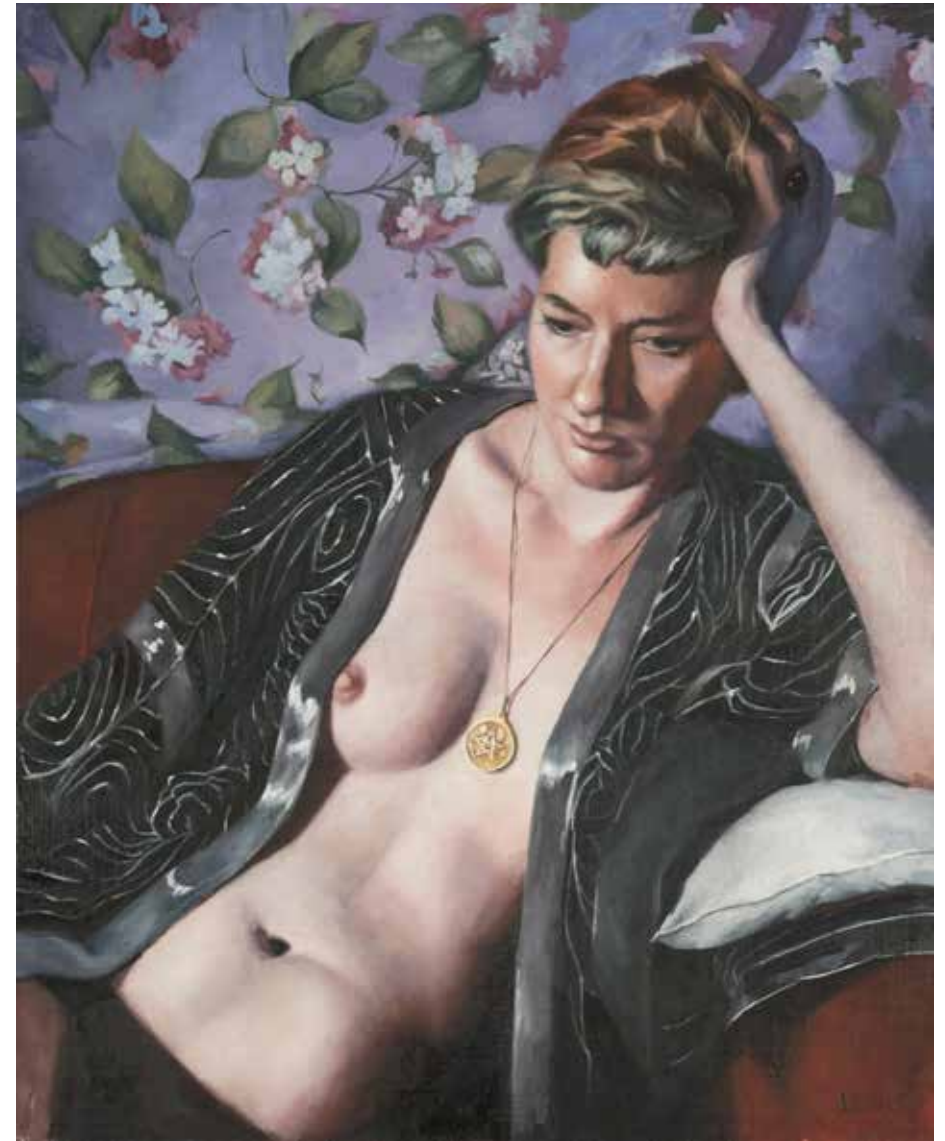
ANDRE KAN *Crawl* 2013 acrylic on wood panel 72" x 36" \$1,500.00



FIONA SETH *Recovery Soup* 2015 pen, ink, digital, giclée 15" x 12" \$100.00

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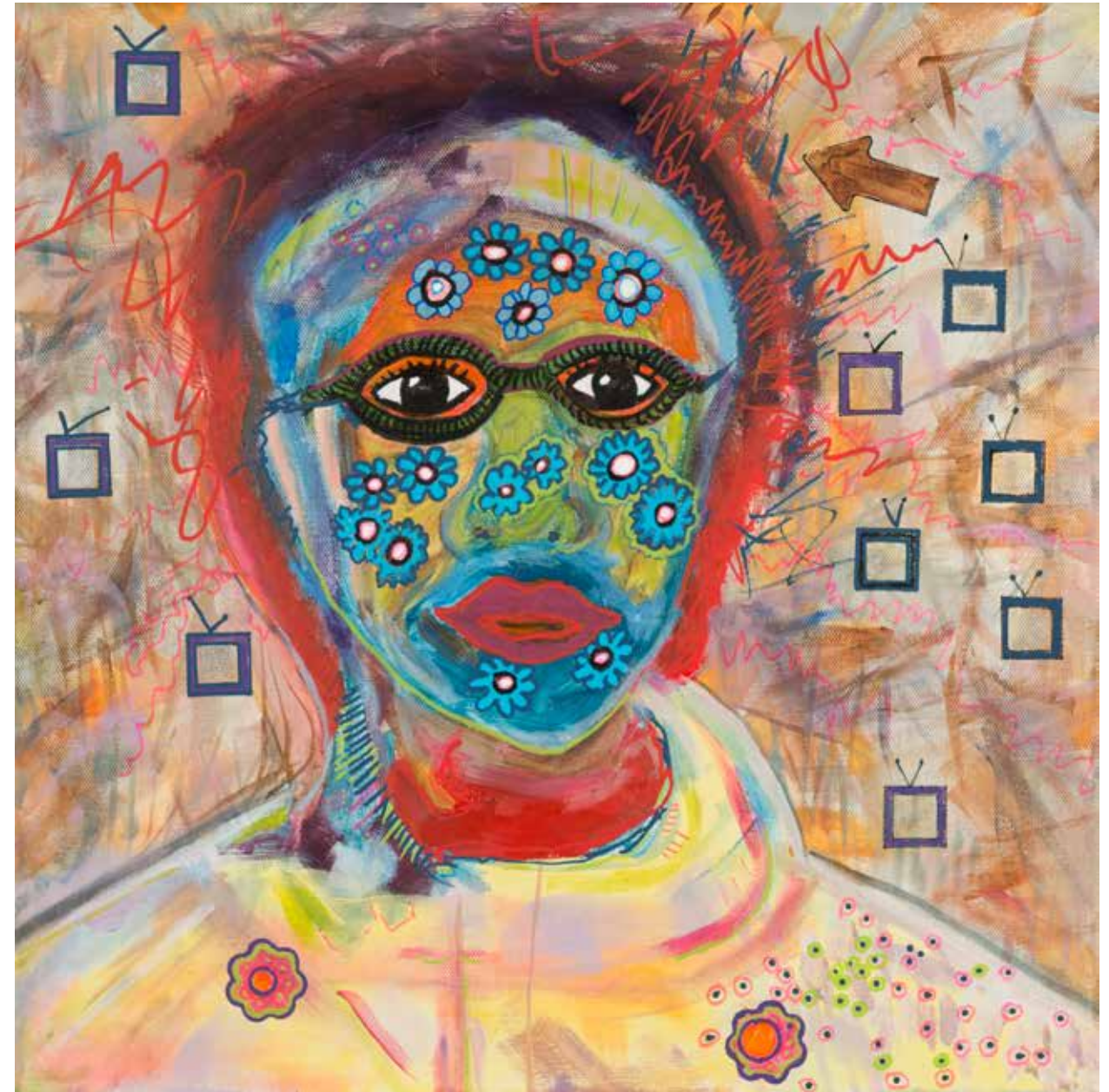


"I am fascinated with the fact that there's all these personalities out there and everyone is so different and yet it's all transient and will disappear."











*"The whole point was... to try and encapsulate what kids do today on Pinterest, Twitter, Facebook...I'm not on any social media. 'Shelfie' was my version of social media."*



*"Art has saved me in many ways and it has been my outlet in my darkest hour. It's helped pay the rent and it's linked me to people in the community."*



Workman Arts is one of the largest and longest-running multidisciplinary arts and mental health organizations in Canada and in the world, known internationally for its artistic collaborations, presentations, knowledge exchange, best practices and research in the area of the impact of the arts on the quality of life of people living with mental illness and addiction.

Founded in 1987 by Lisa Brown, a former psychiatric nurse at the Centre of Addiction and Mental Health and guided by the principal that the creative process is integral to the quest for personal and spiritual development, Workman Arts has grown over the years from a theatre company of eight members to a multidisciplinary arts organization with over 300 member artists. Located in the arts district in west-end Toronto, Workman Arts manages a 220-seat theatre, visual and media arts studios and training facilities. Its programs, approach and artistic productions have earned it national and international acclaim. An active Board of Directors with representation from the arts, finance and health care sectors support the staff. Workman Arts has a close, long-standing partnership with CAMH, Canada's leading research and clinical facility involved in mental health and addictions.

Since its inception, Workman Arts has created award-winning performances and exhibitions. These include annual exhibitions in the visual arts held in leading Toronto arts venues, the production and publication of literary works, over 30 original theatre productions including the Dora award-winning *Edward the Crazy Man* and *Third Eye Looming*, the creation of the internationally renowned Madness and Arts World Festival and the first and longest-running mental health film festival in the world, Rendezvous with Madness Film Festival.

Workman Arts supports the creative goals of emerging and established artists with mental health and addiction issues by providing a safe, nurturing environment where artistic projects, professional opportunities and personal and professional networks are developed and fostered. Through participation in creative and collaborative projects that encourage the exchange of ideas between artist and observer, and the shared collective experience of audiences engaging in performances or presentation of works of art, connections are made between Workman Arts artists and the public at large and the discrimination and prejudice associated with mental illness and addiction is eroded.



The Workman Arts visual arts studio offers artists much needed physical space for creating as well as professional space for peer collaboration and mentoring. The shared studio is managed by our visual artist in residence with session artists contributing to the daily operations. This dedicated space provides artists the opportunity to develop their portfolios, refine their work or focus on a specific body of work.

*"Workman Arts has played a major role in my development as an artist, which has had an incredible effect on my well being as a person with mental illness. I feel safe, supported, and best of all, I feel creative."*

WA Artist, 2014 Member Survey

*"I'm just at the beginning of my name path as an artist but, without Workman Arts, I doubt that I would have had the courage or hope to even start."*

WA Artist, 2014 Member Survey



Professional training has been an integral part of Workman Arts' offerings since the organization's inception in 1987. Workman Arts offers high caliber training in Media Arts, Literary Arts, Music, Theatre and Visual Arts delivered by artists and working arts professionals. These programs support members to reach their potential by honing their artistic skills and practice. Training programs are presented in a variety of formats and durations including multi-week courses, workshop intensives, seminars and one-on-one mentoring. All training programs are free of charge to members.

*"I feel safe, supported and understood at Workman Arts. I have learned much over the years by taking the various courses offered. I feel that I am back involved in the arts now, because of the opportunities here. That is really what I want and need as an artist."*

WA Artist, 2014 Member Survey

For over 28 years, Workman Arts' growing audiences have enjoyed evocative and thought-provoking artistic productions that entertain, educate and challenge public perceptions about mental illness and addiction while our artist members have benefited from exceptional training and education programs unlike anything offered elsewhere in the world. Workman Arts is the longest-running multi-disciplinary arts and mental health organization in North America and through our work we facilitate aspiring, emerging and established artists with mental health and/or addictions issues to develop and refine their art practices. Through our dynamic platforms producing visual art exhibitions like Being Scene and our annual film festival Rendezvous with Madness, we are engaging artists and audiences to think differently about mental illness and addictions through creation, presentation and discussions.

**Please join us!** Workman Arts would not be possible without the generous support of our valued donors. Whether you are an individual or represent a corporation or a foundation, we invite you to become involved today.

For more information or to make a donation please contact 416.583.4339 or visit our website at **[www.workmanarts.com](http://www.workmanarts.com)**

As a registered charitable organization, Workman Arts can issue tax receipts for the full amount of your donation.



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Patrons	Her Excellency, Sharon Johnston, C.C. Dr. Barbara Dorian and Dr. Paul Garfinkel
Exhibition Producer	Lisa Brown – WA Founder and Executive Artistic Director
Exhibition Director	Chris Mitchell – WA Program Director
Exhibition Coordination:	Sarah Turner – WA Visual Arts Coordinator
Jurors	Steven Lewis David Liss Adelina Vlas
Installation	Chris Mitchell Sarah Turner
Photography	David Sweeney
Graphic Design	Gust Creative
Audio Production	Catherine Jones
Printing	Digital Edge Print and Media Services
Framing	Adina Photo and Framing
Caterers	Gladstone Hotel
Special Thanks	Workman Arts Board of Directors, staff and members, Britt Welter-Nolan, Lukas Toane, Robin Rowe, CAMH clients and staff
Workman Arts Board of Directors	Patrick Manley – Chair, Mark Goldbloom– Vice Chair & Secretary, Adrienne Alison, Kaye Beeston, Melissa Bender, Lisa Brown, Miles Cohen, Jenna Leblanc, Juniper Locilento, Lori Spadorcia - ex officio

**WORKMAN ARTS STAFF**

Founder and Executive/Artistic Director	Lisa Brown
Managing Director	Scott Miller Berry
Program Director	Chris Mitchell
RWM Program Director	Geoff Pevere
Membership Manager and Hospital Liaison	Danica Brown
Education and Training Manager	Cara Spooner
Visual Arts Coordinator	Sarah Turner
Technical Director	David Sweeney
Administrative and Outreach Assistant	Jennifer Li
Visual Artist in Residence	Steven Lewis
Media Artist in Residence	Jaene Castrillon

**PROFESSIONAL SERVICES**

Financial Management: Lascelle Wingate Management Services  
Public Relations: Planet 3 Communications, Joanne Smale



Workman Arts' online art rental and sales gallery strives to promote and support member artists through the sale, rental and exhibition of their work to public and private sector clients. The program includes work by both emerging and established artists in a wide variety of mediums and sizes – suitable for display in an office environment. Rental fees are affordable, with most works priced at \$15/month and works are available for purchase starting at \$100. 100% of rental and sales fees directly support individual participating artists.

#### **LIVEN UP YOUR WORKPLACE**

Original artworks provide a sophisticated finishing touch for workplaces. Renting art allows our corporate clients to enhance their offices with the work of some of Toronto's finest emerging artists.

#### **TRY BEFORE YOUR BUY**

We want you to be certain you love the work you select. Renting from Workman Arts lets you live with artwork before making the commitment to purchase it. Although you can rent any artwork for as many twelve-month rental terms as you like; at the end of each rental term you have the option to buy the work. Workman Arts will apply up to six months of the rental fees paid toward the purchase price.

#### **CREATE NEW VIEWS**

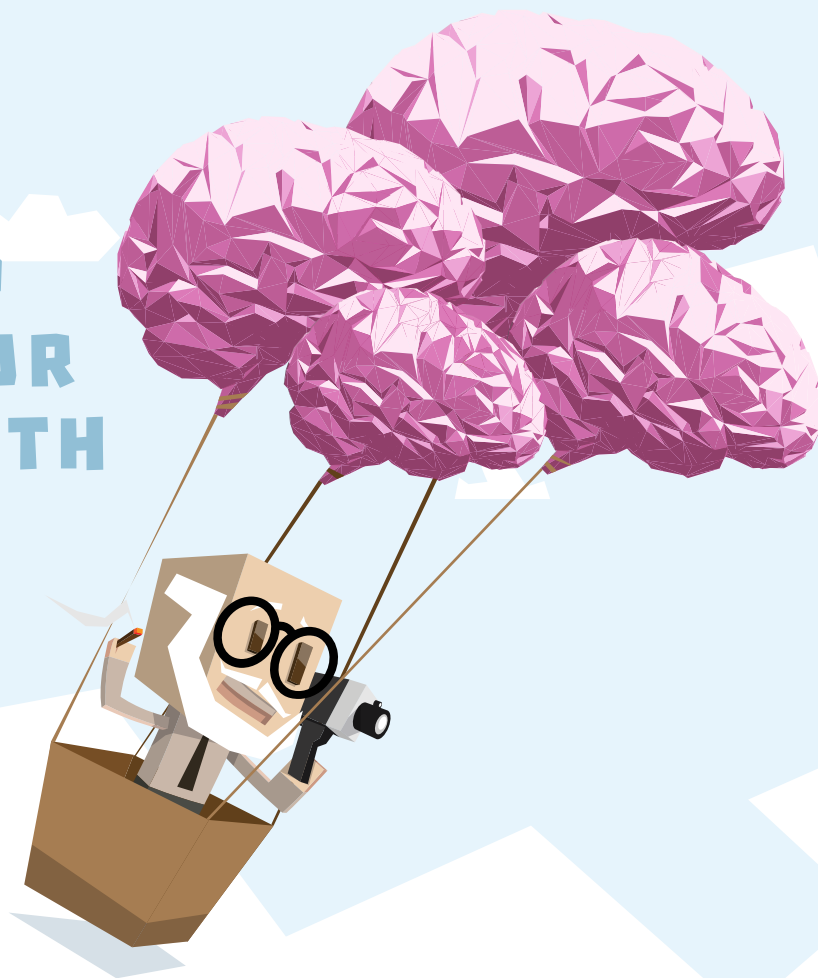
Who doesn't need a change of scenery now and then? Renting art lets you change the look of your office or workspace very easily.

To inquire about renting or purchasing work visit [www. Workmanarts.com/art-rentalsales/](http://www.Workmanarts.com/art-rentalsales/) or contact:

Sarah Turner  
Visual Arts Coordinator  
416.583.4339 ext. 3  
[Sarah\\_Turner@workmanarts.com](mailto:Sarah_Turner@workmanarts.com)

# RENDEZVOUS WITH **MADNESS** FILM FESTIVAL NOVEMBER 6 - 14, 2015

**WE HOPED YOU  
ENJOYED BEING  
SCENE 2015 AND  
WILL JOIN US FOR  
RENDEZVOUS WITH  
MADNESS 2015**



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