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## **WISCONSIN ARTISTS WITH MENTAL ILLNESS TO DISPLAY THEIR WORK IN HEALING ART SHOW**

*Opening Reception to be held on Saturday, October 6 from 5-9pm at Lakeside St. Coffee House (402 W. Lakeside St., Madison, WI, 53715). Many participating artists will be available at the opening reception, and available for interviews. This will give artists a sense of accomplishment, and help put an end to the stigma surrounding mental illness. NAMI Wisconsin would be happy to arrange interviews, as needed.*

Over 50 artists who live with mental illness will showcase their artistic talents at NAMI Wisconsin's 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Healing Art Show, hosted by Lakeside St. Coffee House.

"On behalf of the volunteers, members, staff, and board of directors at NAMI Wisconsin, we are honored to host our organization's 12th annual Healing Arts Show highlighting the thoughtful, talented, and creative skills of local artists. This event allows NAMI the opportunity to engage with Madison community members sharing our organization's commitment to education, support, and advocacy for families and individuals impacted by mental illness. NAMI provides help and hope to those who need it most," said Jessica L. Gruneich, J.D., Executive Director of NAMI Wisconsin.

The Healing Art Show is a unique opportunity for artists to showcase their artistic works and personal strengths, which challenges the general public's typical understanding of mental illness.

"I have had a life full of excitement with my illness, sometimes good and sometimes bad. I have learned many things from living with bipolar disorder. My bipolar disorder helps me to create, imagine, and put together art that comes from my feelings, and sometimes concentrating on certain art helps me to cope with parts of life that seem unbearable," said Angela McCormick, a 2017 Healing Art Show participant.

The Healing Art Show exhibit is free and open to the public at Lakeside St. Coffee House starting on September 28 until November 9, 2018.

NAMI, the National Alliance on Mental Illness, is the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization dedicated to improving the lives of individuals and families affected by mental illness. NAMI Wisconsin and dedicated volunteers work to raise awareness and provide essential education, advocacy, and support group programs for people in our community living with mental illness and their loved ones.

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**For images and quotes from last year's Healing Art Show artists, please see next page.**

For more information about NAMI Wisconsin, visit [www.namiwisconsin.org](http://www.namiwisconsin.org)

For more information on Lakeside St. Coffee House, visit <http://lakesidestcoffeehouse.com/>



*"I first started with photography around the age of 11, very simple things at first, but I could see the power it could give me to escape the bullying and find beauty in the world. Capturing images and making them speak has given me a voice I thought I would never have."*

- Whitney Johnson

*"For years, I've been very confused with the symptoms of my mental illness. After my diagnosis, I was very fearful of the stigma and isolated from everybody. Art saved my life.. It drew me out to the public so I don't have to live in a closet anymore."*

-Roaring Robert RRR



*"I have found that doing art forces me to challenge myself and expand myself. It really helps my brain communicate what I'm thinking when words won't suffice."*

-Jimmy Yanny

