

Samara A. Doumnande

Artist

SamDoum Art

28 Goldfinch Drive

W. Henrietta, NY 14586

Samara@SamDoumArt.com

<http://www.samdoumart.com/>

home 585.444.0043

mobile 585.354.8083

Artist Statement

When I was just the tender age of twelve years old, I heard my first schizophrenic "voice." But no one knew, neither my mother, nor my father, because I was so ashamed and embarrassed about my experiences.

As I walked through the halls of my middle school (and then, later, high school), I was convinced that the whispers that I heard, about me, were false rumors spread by the students whom I shared the hallways with. And in the classrooms it was the same: the delusion, my delusion, that the other students were whispering, laughing at, and insulting me under their breath. Never did I imagine that the insults were not real. I thought, instead, that there were quite a few students, at the school that I attended, who were just plain jealous, who wanted to slander my good name. I did not tell my parents about these experiences because I was so ashamed, and I wanted to make it look like I had friends, when truthfully, at the time, I felt like I was all alone.

And then I received my first diagnosis, at the age of nineteen, while attending the art college of my dreams: Rhode Island School of Design (RISD). By then my symptoms had escalated, and I was no longer able to function in my physical world on account of my tortured internal world. When I had reached this point, I no longer could hide my symptoms. People began to take notice. I wasn't sleeping or eating properly, and a few times I spoke out loud to the voices, in defense of myself, thinking that the voices belonged to real people. And so, I finally broke down, and had to leave the school of my dreams in order to recover from my first, diagnosed, full blown schizophrenic episode. And so I flew home from RISD, to Rochester, NY, where I was admitted in Spring 2000 to Strong Memorial Hospital. After recovering, I transferred to a college closer to home, and attended Rochester Institute of Technology, where I received my Bachelors in the Interior Design program.

Fast forward 2017: I am now a full time artist, wife, and mother. I still struggle every day with the voices, but I refuse to let them win. And despite the misery I feel inside of me, I still see beauty on the outside of me, and I love to bring those objects of beauty to life, breathing new air into them through the process of capturing what I see in my external world, on canvas. Painting is a release for me: it is my "exhale". And when I get to see what I create on canvas, when I get to breathe it all back in, well that is my "inhale". Painting allows me to breathe fresh air inside of myself, it cleans out my soul, rejuvenates it, and brightens my internal world up, beautifully offsetting some of my internal struggles.

My ideal goal, as an artist is a concise one: and that is to create beauty. And not just for myself but those who will enjoy my works after they have left the studio. I want to brighten up someone's day, rejuvenate someone's soul and take their mind away from the struggles of everyday life, by allowing them to stop, freeze, gaze at one of my beautiful paintings, and breathe it all in: Inhale the beauty that was gestated, ironically, while living in the midst of voices.