

FREEDOM HOUSE

Isa Martinez, Director of Freedom House Program

Patricia Motus, OTR/L

Patrice C. Queen, Survivor, Artist In Residence
Healing Performance Arts Drum Circle Facilitator

Paul Feuerstein BFL President/CEO

<http://www.bflnyc.org/>



ADULT POETRY CLUB
ARTISTIC EXPRESSIONS
2013

How it felt being part of this project.

“When I join this project, a lot of ideas came to mind. I said to myself we can have a chance to express our feelings and thoughts through artwork.” We felt great that a lot of us worked together as a team. It took time, patience and a lot of effort. It was a lot of days and nights we worked hard on this. The project represents the people that were once victims and that are now free.

From all of us

CN, TPM, IS, TM, DM GR

untitled



By TPM

PREFACE

As I came close to ending my occupational therapy internship at Freedom House (FH), I asked the residents about their interests and ideas in order to start a new group at FH, which every OT intern is expected to start. After conversing with many residents, I observed a common theme amongst them, which was that the residents enjoyed writing poetry during their leisure time, but never shared their creative writing with anyone. Additionally, many residents stated that they enjoy poetry, however, did not engage in writing poetry for many years. Therefore, I started a new Adult Poetry Club at FH whose purpose was to allow the residents to express themselves through creative writing in order to promote positive mental health while sharing their creative writing with the members of the group. The residents became excited when I introduced the idea of the new Adult Poetry Club. The residents met every Wednesday and engaged in creative writing which

focused on a specific theme, 'freedom,' and what it symbolized to them, since now they are free. The residents shared their work by reading it out loud and provided an interpretation of their work. Moreover, the residents provided positive feedback about each other's work and encouraged one another. As the group sessions progressed, the residents and I thought about collecting all these poems and creating a "Freedom House Book of poems- a voice of Freedom House Residents." This book represents the courage and the strength of the residents at FH. Furthermore, this book is published in order to convey the message to incoming residents about how FH helped the former residents to experience 'freedom' all over again. In addition to including poems in this book, the residents also suggested including their drawings. I thank the residents for their dedication towards this project, the staff at FH for their support and Patrice C. Queen for putting this wonderful book together.

Pawan Preet Kaur, OTS
Occupational Therapy Student, York College

Sometimes in our work other artists influence and encourage us, for this I thank TPM whom we collaborated with from time to time



UNTITLED

By IS



KIDS ALWAYS HAVE TO RUN FREE

By IS

WHAT IS OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY

Our lives are comprised of activities we do everyday. These "occupations" have a profound impact on how we feel physically, emotionally, and even spiritually. They can provide a sense of well-being and satisfaction or they can create stress, imbalance and dissatisfaction. Occupational Therapy (OT) is skilled treatment dedicated to helping individuals whose lives have been altered by physical, emotional, or social problems, to achieve their highest possible degree of independence in daily living.



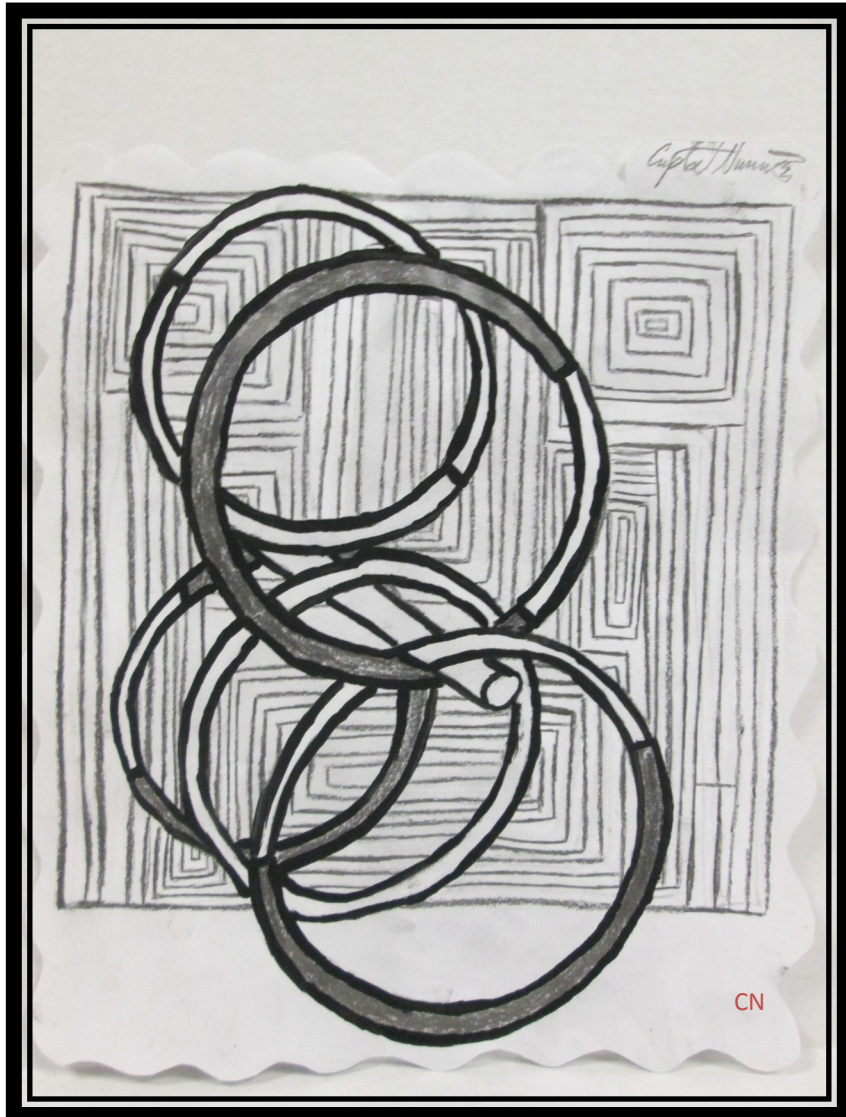
OUT OF THE CAGE

This eating bird, represents me being out of the cage where no one can control my life because now I am free of that life.

By CN

PHASES OF LIFE

These hoops represents different phases of my life. The first hoop represents me escaping from my situation. The second hoop represents the safe space I am now, Freedom House. The third hoop represents now, me being a good mother. The fourth hoop represents me putting my life together. The fifth hoop represents the courage and strength that tells me to keep going. By CN Resident



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POETRY

ART WORK

“Yourself”

This is your future,

grasp it,

treasure it

Time is relevant,

slowed down you should measure it.

So much we can build,

but our time once we give it,

is gone,

so be certain,

be certain to live it.

It's yours,

NOoneELSEs

no regrets left to ponder.

That sacrifice stayed, to realize that honor,

Is worthy of your own, where you build up your wealth.

You've worked hard,

but hardest to build is yourself.

By **TPM Resident**

Freedom

My abilities are unlimited

My destination is the strings of the sun

To a land where nothing is prohibited

Where you spread your wings and run

A place where the sky is blue

A place where happiness could be true

A place where smiling or even laughing is ok

A place where children jump and play

I'm leaving now, my train is here

My life is waiting for me to appear

I need not pack, I need to flee

With my wings on my back

I'm going to be free.

By **IS Resident**

Trying to Live a Fairytale

Sometimes I feel suffocated and don't know what to do
I have to find a way to stay strong for me and you
I suffer and my head starts spinning
I shouldn't feel like this, I should be winning
You are what keeps me strong and motivated
I really need to stop feeling obligated
Imma open my eyes and follow my ambition
I need to sit down, open my ears and listen
I've met the most wonderful friend
And I know it was my god for his job to send
Today I am a strong woman
Not gonna let no one put me down,
no men
My daughter is my heart and soul
She completes my life, she makes me whole
So I want to thank Freedom House for who I am today
Sucks I have to go cause I would love to stay.

By **DM Resident**

Freedom

Freedom House feels like
I have a right as a woman to defend
stand up to my rights as a human being
Freedom House feels like
I have a chance to protect my family
don't have to be lied to until there is a dead end

Freedom feels like
I can do what I can to fulfill my dreams
as whatever I want to be in life
and Freedom House gives me that stepping stone

Despite how people assume
of how I live and take care of my child
and have no abilities,
I have the power to prove them all wrong
as I challenge my learning disabilities

Freedom feels like forever lasting love in your life
You lose the person that hurt you
and gain something more meaningful,
trustworthy and loving
and that is God.

By **CN Resident**

Keep Reaching

So where do I stand, for all my reaching
I put out my hand, so long for seeking
Empty to touch, no carrying wind
So long I've waited, so I begin
Desire awakes me, my feet do I stand
And takes me, and takes me, and takes me, no plan
The outcome unknown, I leave through these hinges
I battle, rebound, I succeed through these inches.

By **TPM** Resident

Untitled

Chilling with other people next door in a group,
talking about different parts of life
It's wonderful to have freedom of speech
When I hang out with people from different races
I see how wonderful life can be with different types of cultures
being able to be free without people judging us because we are different
A freedom to be with friends and not to be alone because someone is always there.

By **CN** Resident

Freedom

Freedom to me feels free of slavery

A choice to get closer to God

Free of abuse and able to see a medical doctor

for anything now that I could not do then

Options to fix my life

without someone taking that privilege from me

Able to see my son grow without living in a dangerous environment

I have a chance to live

if it wasn't for Freedom House

Freedom to me feels like two doves

flying free in the sky and not having their wings clipped in a cage,

locked in a pet store

waiting for someone to take their right away

as a bird living in their natural nature

By CN Resident

I Feel Free

I finally feel free

Free from all my enemies

Heart was broken

But not anymore, all words are spoken

I'm no longer scared thanks to Freedom House

They got me to be strong, there is no doubt

No more lies, no more tears to cry

Now it's my time to go and say my last goodbyes

Time to move forward and forget the past

Take my worst memories, throw them in the trash

Today I can say I'm free

My time to shine, my time to see

Goodbye Freedom House I really thank you

Don't forget I will always miss you.

By DM Resident

I Feel Free

I finally feel free
No longer suffering from my past
I can finally smile
I can show my true beauty
And not be ashamed of how I look
I am no longer trapped
I'm free.

By GR Resident

Breaking the Chains

I sit here and wonder why me
I need a new life for myself and my precious son
I need some oxygen so I can breathe
I need to break free
I need the chance just to be totally me
I can't go on this way
By your actions my life has been affected
I no longer want to be a part of your game
You were using me and hurting me
Today is the day I will break free
from all the hurt you put me through
I won't look back
I am free
Finally I can be myself
I feel free but I'm still afraid
But I'm finally free
Free at last.

By GR Resident

Freedom

Free is to live life without no worries
About how much pain you can and will go through
Coming and going
Going and coming
as I please is being free
I don't care what you say or how you feel
Cause I'm free
Free to be me.

By TM Resident

A Shooting Star

I feel like a shooting star,
Running for my life to make it real far.
I was once trapped in a box,
Feeling surrounded by a rock.
I finally reached my destination,
Finally home feels good to feel the sensation.
Freedom House kept me strong
No more looking back to all the wrong.

I am now a woman of my power,
Finally free from all the showers.
I am no longer weak in my knees,
I lift myself up, no more getting stung by bees.
Now it's my time to go forward from Freedom House
I stand up to my goals, this is my wisdom.
Thank you Freedom House for making me stronger
I am now free, I will not take this pain any longer.

By DM Resident

Untitled

You say you will always be there for me
But when I really opened up to you
You just don't want to see
You act like you care
But when I have these thoughts and breakdowns
you don't care
You don't know how it feels to want to die
When I tell you I want to die it's no lie
It's building up ... I'm weak
I can't take this constant pain
My constant heart breaks
All the thoughts of death I have you don't care
I just want to break free
I want to break the chains
I'm no longer scared and afraid
I'm not getting abused anymore
I'm free
I am free and not ashamed anymore
I am free
I am a bird flying free
I'm free.

By **GR** Resident

Free

Is it so hard to be yourself,
fearing others perspective
You've fitted their clothes,
your you now neglected
Now their voice is yours,
from unspoken pressure
Your old art so raw,
is all that can measure
Your fearless sees flight,
that's all that I see
And what you express,
what you stand for is free

By **TPM** Resident

Freedom

Born to be free,
Born to be alive
Words that were so clear
As sharp as a knife
Years went by
the days are gone
You sacrificed your life
just to be fine
You live under the hills
You breathe under the sea
You hear charming bells
Still you can never see
That no one was hurt
But the little me
How could you enslave a human
That was born to be free?

By **IS** Resident

Freedom

Give me my freedom
Set me free
I gave you all I got
I gave you all my three
My heart,
my body,
my soul
Everything I got, I gave it all
Give me my freedom, set me free
Let me decide how my life should be
I had enough of being the fool
So stop telling me that the world is so cruel
Stop telling me that outside there I can't survive
See!!!
I've dealt with you and I'm still alive
So please get off my boat, it's time for me to drive!

By **IS** Resident