



THE Carson J Spencer
FOUNDATION

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DENVER GALLERY PARTNERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATIONS TO HELP HEAL GRIEF THROUGH THE ARTS



DENVER, January 21, 2008— “I have made paintings and mixed media constructions of him,” says artist Sally Elliot of the grief she expressed through art after losing her son Kevin. “I made this skirt out of scraps from clothing I had made for my three children.” Sally will join a dozen other professional artists in a unique multilayered exhibit entitled “Mirrors and Metaphors: Reflections on Suicide, Mental Health and Healing through the Arts” shown at Access Gallery (909 Santa Fe Drive; Denver, CO) from February 8th – March 7th.

“I knew attempting to illustrate a universal point of view of any loss would be incomplete at best,” says the exhibit’s curator Alison Werasmith. “This exhibit offers the public a journey taken by artists as they search for meaning and healing when they return to their work.”

In an effort to engage a wider circle in the discussion of mental health advocacy, the art show will feature well-known professional painters and photographers who have experienced loss and are expressing their path to hope and recovery through the arts. This part of the exhibit is entitled: “Remembrance; Visual Expressions of Loss and Love,” and will highlight the powerful metaphorical works by exceptional Colorado artists such as Elisabeth Buhr, Trine Bumiller, Sally Elliott, John Fielder, Lauri Lynnxe Murphy, Charmaine Susch, Roberta Smith, Riva Sweetrocket, Reed Weimer and more.

“The first step in promoting mental health is to deconstruct the fear associated with suicide and mental illness,” says Dr. Spencer-Thomas, the Executive Director of the Carson J Spencer Foundation, a nonprofit dedicated to preventing suicide and promoting mental health and one of the partners involved in the development of the art exhibit. “In order for that to occur, we must become more comfortable talking about these issues. What better way to start than at a community event that is celebrating hope and recovery through the arts?”

Access Gallery is the proud host of the opening night of “Mirrors and Metaphors: Reflections on Suicide, Mental Health and Healing through the Arts” at 6:30PM on February 8, 2008 (909 Santa Fe, Denver; tickets are \$50). For more information go to www.MirrorsandMetaphors.com.

At the event, these Denver artists will be joined by scores of students, mental health advocates, business leaders and caring citizens for the opening night of the Mirrors and Metaphors professional art exhibit. Colorado’s beloved nature photographer, John Fielder will make brief remarks and dinner will be provided by LifeStyles Catering. West Pines Lutheran Medical Center and Regis University are sponsoring this event. Proceeds will benefit the Carson J Spencer Foundation, the Second Wind Fund, and Access Gallery. Tickets may be purchased through www.blacktie-Colorado.com.

About the Carson J Spencer Foundation

The Carson J Spencer Foundation, a non-profit organization, was founded in April 2005 following the suicide of its namesake. The Carson J Spencer Foundation envisions a world where leaders and communities are committed to sustaining a passion for life. We sustain a passion for life through:

- funding social enterprise for sustainable mental health initiatives
- delivering innovative suicide prevention programs targeting the working age population
- supporting the education of emerging entrepreneurs and leaders

For more information, please call Sally Spencer-Thomas 303-458-4323 or visit www.CarsonJSpencer.org.

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