

Chasely Matmanivong

Artist Statement

“Art should comfort the disturbed and disturb the comfortable” - Banksy

There are numerous ways to extract the bad out of your body. Some write, some talk, but I chose to take the medium of oil paint on canvas to end a negative chapter in my life: the pain caused by painful relationships. This work is about my heart and being honest with myself

Each painting on a likeness of me when I was in a toxic state of mind during or after relationships. While the hair is an accurate representation of my hair during certain periods of my life, my face does not look like mine. I chose an abstract approach because I want the viewer to relate to me and my feelings. The majority of the subjects is in bust form. I chose to do this because I want to focus mainly on my head, specifically the eyes and mouth. In every painting the eyes and/or mouth are concealed by a strip of color. This is to show that I was blind to what was happening to me and because I never spoke up when the negativity of a bad relationship was taking over me. It was because I thought it was my job to make everything better: to fix what was happening. In some of the paintings, there is bruising around the eyes, mouth, and neck. This represents the physical and emotional abuse I received and is a metaphor for my restricted voice and my inability to see what was happening to me.

I want my paintings to make the comfortable uncomfortable and I want the uncomfortable, those who can relate to my abuse, to be comforted by the fact that you are not alone. My paintings are equally about my letting go and offering a hand to anyone who has felt similarly.