

Embracing Imperfection

Fiber Art by Christine Hager-Braun



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Overcash Gallery, Central Piedmont Community College

1206 Elizabeth Ave, Charlotte, NC 28204

Embracing Imperfection

During the COVID-19 pandemic we all experienced stress triggered by social distancing, remote learning, financial instability, increased violence, loss of lives and so much more. We all felt various levels of agony, anger, fear, grief, disbelief, and depression. As a result, we realized the importance of our mental health not only in a moment of crisis but on a daily basis.

Inspired by our inner strength to cope when faced with adversity, tragedy, or severe health issues, I celebrate resilience through my work. Each piece I create reveals a deep awareness, acceptance and connection to my own personal and emotional growth through the challenges I have faced, in particular from my struggle with depression. There were times when I felt surrounded by darkness and withdrew from life around me. Yet time and again, I emerged from my self-isolation stronger and bolder. I learned to believe in my ability to heal and to trust in my perseverance.

As we face opposing forces in our lives – joy and sorrow, harmony and conflict, hope and despair – my art often has a juxtaposition of light and dark colors. But as there is rarely a clear-cut path through life, the shapes in my work do not have hard edges. Instead, they are only an approximation, a best effort, the deliberate embrace of imperfection.

In the exhibition 'Embracing Imperfection' I show textile art which revolves around the topics of personal growth, the gift of resilience, and the power of positive mindset. Through my work I strive to normalize the conversation about emotional well-being and to destigmatize mental illness. My wish is to encourage others to engage in this dialogue and reach out for help when needed.

The topic of emotional and mental well-being is especially relevant in the context of students. Young people are on a journey to establish their own identity. They often feel -real or perceived- peer pressure in person or on social media. In addition, there might be tensions within their families about the costs of their education and the expectations about their performance. Due to the lack of life experience, young people frequently cannot see the impermanence of their situation. By sharing my own story, I hope to inspire others to persevere, to heal, and to thrive.

Every new art quilt I create is influenced by my belief in the power of a positive mindset. Each piece reflects a triumph over our trials, a reminder of our daily successes, and the promise to ourselves that we will never give up.

Christine Hager-Braun

www.soularpowerfabricart.com – christine@soularpowerfabricart.com

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