

Daniel



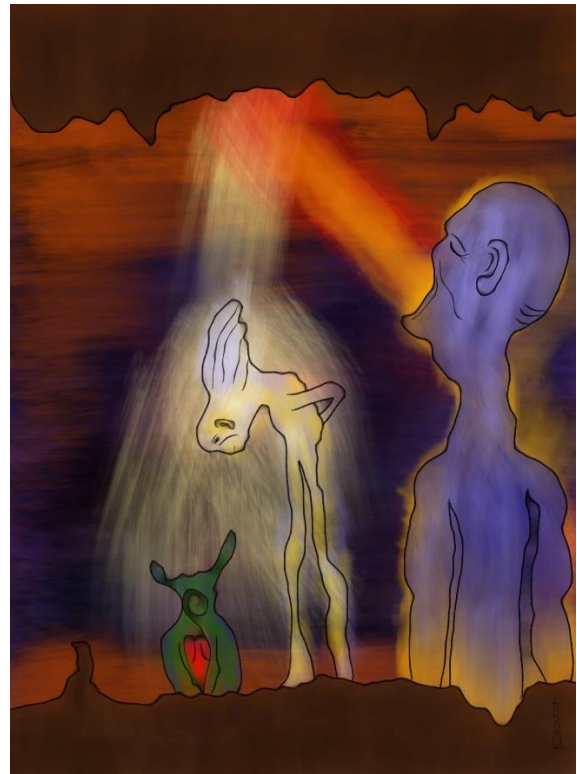
Leighton

What inspires you artistically? (Other artists, poetry literature, places, feelings, etc.)

My art primarily focuses on the feelings and emotions we all experience but often keep hidden. I'm inspired by the human condition, the internal struggles we face, and the masks we wear. My own experiences of trauma, chronic illness, and emotional exploration have deeply shaped my work. My art strives to connect and resonate with others on a deeply human level.

Have you always worked in this medium, if not briefly explain your artistic journey?

I'm a multi-disciplinary artist working primarily in painting, augmented reality, and filmmaking. I began making films at a young age and started programming at 11, but I didn't start painting until I was 40. Prior to that I didn't think painting was even an option for me, as I had decided when I was very young that I was no good at it. But finally I just needed an outlet to capture the visions and ideas I had. I started drawing with markers and colored pencils, and even my iPhone. When the iPad came out in April of 2010 I got one and painted every day for the next 10 years. When I first



started I had no idea that I would wind up showing my work in galleries and museums. I think the fact that I had little to no expectation that my work would lead anywhere, I just wanted to express. Because of that, I was able to let go of judgment and just allow the art to happen. Within a year and half, I had sold my first painting and not long after that was signed to a gallery, eventually leading to my first solo show. It was something I couldn't even have imagined when I started.

As part of that first solo show, I started working with augmented reality which allowed me to incorporate my programming and filmmaking skills into my paintings. It was quite extraordinary. It was one of those moments where I felt like everything I had ever done and gone through made sense and all happened for a reason.



Please briefly explain your process?

My art begins with a feeling or thought that I transform into a painting. I tune into my body, allowing sensations and energy to move through me and onto the canvas, often using an iPad. Some paintings extend into a further dimension with Augmented Reality, activated through my app, where I layer elements of animation, film, sound, and interactivity. My process is deeply rooted in visualizing and exploring emotions, acknowledging them, and creatively expressing them through various mediums.

How does your relationship with your body shape your practice?

My relationship with my body has significantly influenced my art, especially

due to my chronic illness and the many invasive surgeries and medical procedures I've gone through. This experience has led me to explore themes of vulnerability, empowerment, and transformation. My art often serves as a gateway to connect with the emotional body, enabling myself and others to embrace and grow from our experiences.

What do you want medical professionals to come away with after viewing your artwork? The general public?

For medical professionals, I hope my artwork provides insight into the patient's emotional experience, the trauma, and the human side of medical procedures. For the general public, I aim to create connection, empathy, and understanding. Through my art, I want to encourage others to look inward, embrace their unique journey, and realize they are not alone in their feelings and experiences.

What do you think the role of the artist/patient is in our modern world?

I believe the role of the artist/patient is to bridge the gap between the personal and communal experience. Artists have the power to express complex emotions and human conditions, fostering empathy and innovation. Patients, through sharing their experiences, provide insight into the healthcare experience from a

personal perspective. Both roles contribute to a richer, more compassionate understanding of the human condition, driving positive change in our modern world.



Images Courtesy of the Artist

<http://www.danielleighton.com>

<https://www.torranceartmuseum.com/>