

Moreen Austria



Moreen Austria, or Mox, to her inner circle is an artist whose works cross from sculptures, paintings and installations, navigating the layers of self, relationships and society, seeking identity and spaces of articulation and expression. The physical nature of working with metal sculptures she finds therapeutic, but discovered satisfaction in working with concepts, community, and collaborative projects with local literature and contemporary dance.

Her exhibition grant, Lawig, at the Cultural Center of the Philippines in 2016 which probed on the peculiar socio-cultural relationship of the neighboring islands she grew up and spent significant time between, awakened a sensibility to her locality. She began exploring community engaging art projects. In 2017, her work De-ling which spoke of the emphasis on social status, religion of the 1950s Negrense dogma that shaped the local society, became the first contemporary full length ballet in the Visayas based on a sculptural installation.

In the same year, she won the Grand Award for Metrobank Art and Design Excellence (MADE) for Sculpture Recognition, which opened opportunities for ongoing public art projects. Her passion to pursue art open for local community engagement remains but what drives her work is her satisfaction in the processes of each creation.

Austria has participated in various local and international exhibitions.

Moreen T. Austria

12 July 1975

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EDUCATION

Post Graduate Course in Business Administration, University of St. La Salle Bacolod	2006
Bachelor of Science in Management, University of the Philippines Visayas	1996

ART AFFILIATIONS

National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA) Visual Arts Committee Orange
Project, Bacolod City, Philippines
GreyRoom, Bacolod City, Philippines
Di Legno Gallery Singapore
Viva ExCon Organization

AWARD/GRANTS/FELLOWSHIPS

Grand Winner, Metrobank Art and Design Excellence (MADE) Sculpture Recognition Program	2017
Award of Excellence in Art : SM City Bacolod in cooperation with Metropolitan Museum Phils	2017
Turns In Form: An Extensive Research, (Selected contemporary Visayas Artists Exhibition)	2016
Viva Excon Curated Exhibition, University of the Philippines Visayas	
Cultural Center of the Philippines, Exhibition Grant	2016
Philippine Representative, International Art Workshop and Exhibition, Prince of Songkhla University, Thailand	2016
Semi-Finalist, Metrobank MADE Sculpture Competition	2015
Philippine Representative, 4 th ASEAN ART Workshop and Exhibition, The Princess Galyani Vadhana, Institute of Cultural Studies, Thailand	2015
Philippine Art Month, Abu Dhabi Art Hub, Mussafah, Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates	
Artist in Residence, Fellowship Grant	2014

How It Was; How It Will Be 2020

Public Art: Sculptures and Installation

Art District

Bacolod City

The world stood still with the outbreak of coronavirus disease (COVID-19), and an unparalleled global crisis sprawled through humanity. The existence of the “world that was” was suddenly replaced by a dystopian reality of people dying, human suffering, our freedom shrinking, and life in isolation. With the lockdown, it has brought about a sense of fear and anxiety sparing none. As we struggle with our physical and mental well-being, the short and long term psychosocial and mental health affects a more vulnerable sector: the children and adolescents.

This work aims to record a period when we could not see and hear children as we are used to and we are left to ponder on what impacts the quarantine, closure of schools, educational institutes and activity areas in the backdrop of this pandemic would have on the youth and consequently, the world that will be.



The interactive installation is made of mixed material (metal for the swing and leaf outlines; concrete for sculptures of children). It aspires to preserve a period of global shift of world view: when prominent capitalism turned to appreciation of life simplified; and fearyet hope in a time of uncertainty.



Pieces of the Self 2020

Installation and Prints

ALT Philippines

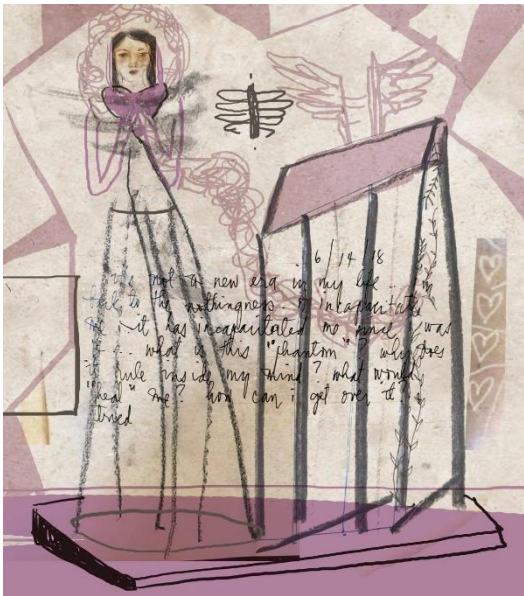
Beyond Seizing The Day, Galleria Duemila

Two objects standing side by side compose this installation entitled *Pieces of the Self*. A found stainless signage has been rendered vertically, welding four round bars to indicate a prison like cell, its shape not far from a casket...symbols of the depression side of the “poles” in Bipolar Disorder. Small pieces of glass and mirrors are also laid at the floor of the cage signifying how easily it is to break on days like those.

Beside the cage is a skeletal metal dress made of found stainless steel cut into strips. Taller than six feet and highlighted with a pair of wings, the object symbolizes the days when “flying” seems conceivable. Yet upon close look, the “dress” still has the semblance of a prison. Silver wire skinned from electric cables shroud both objects...interconnecting, in the vein of life capable of triggers.

The installation speaks of the struggles of bipolar disorder but, that the objects stand side by side is also an acceptance of “captivity” and a resolution to look past; a choice of accepting that pieces even the broken ones form a whole.

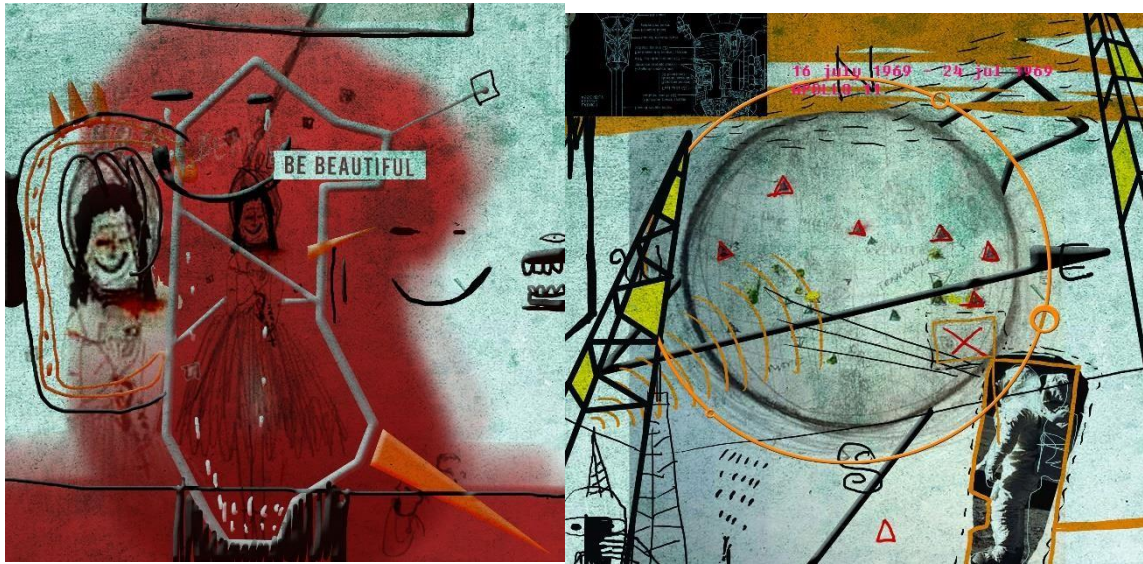




Double Double Moore in Trouble 2019

Laser Digital Prints (of charcoal, ink drawings)

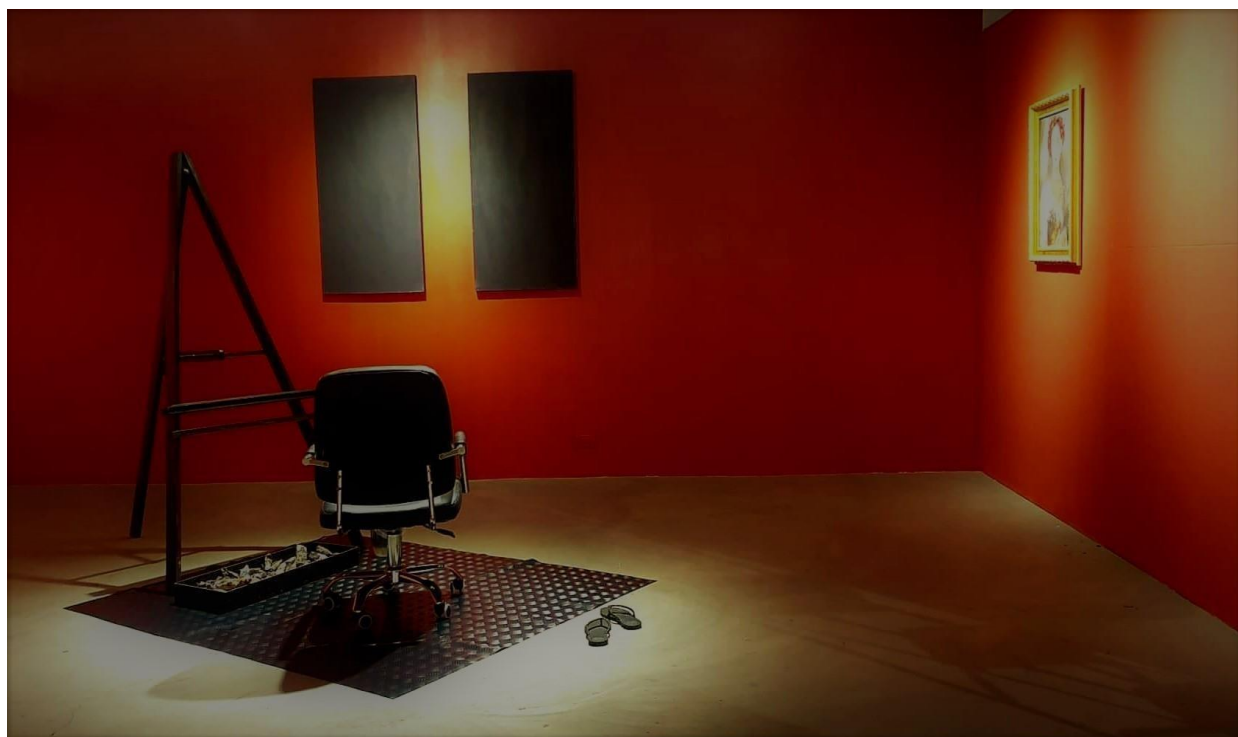
Tin-aw Gallery



Workspace 2019 : The Artist Is Absent

Installation and Paintings

Orange Project



100 Years of Sweetness

Public Sculpture 2019

Commissioned Work, Victorias Milling Company, Philippines

A gift to the VMC community in Victorias City, I conceptualized this commemorative 100 years marker in reflection of the goals of the company and the values the community upholds. Crafted from metal scraps from the sugar mill and plants, I worked for 30 days with young Don Bosco Technical Institute vocational students in hope that this marker will embed heightened awareness and a sense of belonging, promote a greater sense of identity and understanding of where the residents, students, employees, visitors, and tourists live and work hoping to create a memorable experience.



100 years of Sweetness 2019. Mixed metal (brass, stainless steel, steel, acrylic epoxy) dimensions variable

The Perigrination of M

Installation 2019

Not Another Mother and Child Show, Project Orange

Exploration of a different medium and insistence, when I thought the process more important than the form to deal with the issues of motherhood and recently losing a uterus after hysterectomy. I did cut and sew different textiles to assemble into a 3 dimensional uterus inspired structure of approx. 14x9x7 feet. I added welded galvanized iron shaped into flowers. The meticulous procedure underlines the journey and sacrifices of motherhood. The audience was encouraged to walk through the work.



The Perigrination of M. 2019 Sculptural Installation (textile on metal structure, galvanized iron, rose petals)

The Tale of Two Sisters

Sculptural Installation 2019

UnRefining Sugarlandia, The Negros Museum

In continuing my examination of the peculiar relationship between the two provinces of Western Visayas: Negros and Panay, I drew inspiration in their shared history where two points of intersection resulted to far-reaching consequences: 1. The Negros plantation frontier was opened mainly by migrants from Panay in the 1850s; 2. Sugar handling which bolstered the economy of Iloilo, was transferred to Negros in the 1930s due to labor problems. The end result in both events was economically favorable to Negros but catastrophic to Panay. The first crisis resulted in the evacuation of Panay weaving towns raised the population of Negros “from 30,000 in 1850 to 320,606 in 1893 in what is generally considered *the biggest single migration in Philippine history*” (Robustiano Echaz 1894).

There could have been no other way but the sea. People came in boats.

With my father from Panay and my mother from Negros, it was a way of life as a child to cross the same sea regularly for family visits and summer vacations. The highlight of my trips between the islands would always be the paper boats my mom and I made and carefully cast to sea.



The Tale of Two Sisters 2019. Sculptural Installation (brass, acrylic epoxy, on painted platform)



Installation View: The Tales of Two Sisters 2019. Dimensions variable

To Be or Not To Be; To Go or Not To Go

Sculptural Installation 2018

Caught in A Crossfire, Iloilo Museum of Modern Art

A sculpture done in mixed metal (brass, stainless steel, galvanized iron, acrylic epoxy), The 2 forms are representative of struggles in action and introspection: Do I become what is expected of me, or do I set myself free? Can I just proceed with what I want to do most withstanding consequences? Is it more difficult to assert identity being Filipino and a woman? This work poses these questions. Then again it opposes itself that maybe regardless of the world evolving and issues changing, culture considering and location varying, the struggle within would always remain universal and contemporary.



Installation View : To Be or Not To Be; To Go or Not To Go



Details from Sculpture To Be or Not To Be; To Go Or Not To Go, 2019. Mixed Metal. Dimensions Variable

De-Ling

Sculpture and Installation Exhibition 2016

Full Length Contemporary Ballet Based on Sculpture and Installation 2017

Set in Silay the little Paris of Negros in the 1940s, Philippines began a true story of Adela, daughter of a prominent haciennero of the province, who fell in love with somebody beneath her. Confined in the standards of society and the oppressive conservative Catholic upbringing, they broke her heart and she vowed never to speak again.... I explored to what extent would a Filipino woman of her time fight for what she thought right. I began by forging found 1940s galvanized iron to metal dresses, and created an entire installation inspired by her story. Unsatisfied, I collaborated with a librettist, a local dance company, a sound artist, and a lighting director and produced my installation into a full length contemporary ballet to make her story come alive. The production has been toured in the province, seen by hundreds of students as part of their Humanities and Contemporary Art in the regions studies.

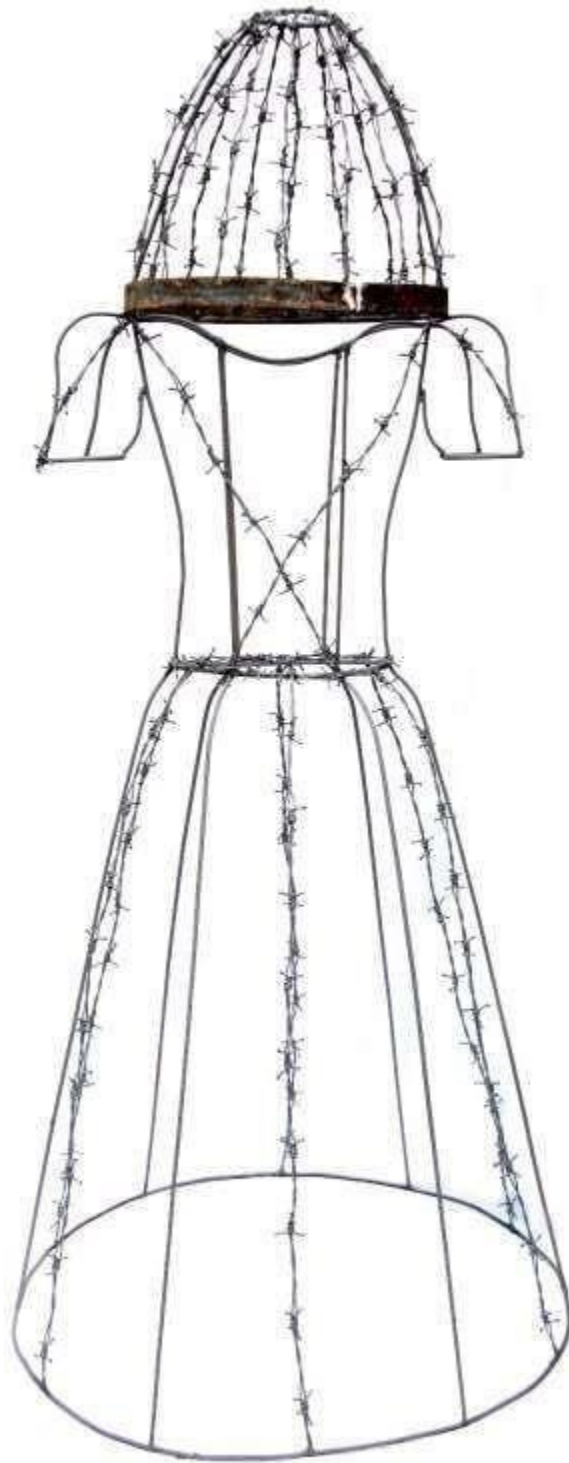








Work from *De-Ling Series* 2016 , mixed metal (steel, galvanized iron, brass) dimensions variable



Work from *De-Ling Series* 2016 , mixed metal (steel, iron, barbed wire) dimensions variable



Work from *De-Ling Series* 2016 antique galvanized iron salvaged from 1930s demolished house dimensions variable

Details from Installation, *De-Ling*, Gallery Orange Exhibition, Bacolod City 2016



Sculptural Works from *De-Ling Series* 2016 , mixed metal (steel, galvanized iron, bronze) dimensions variable



Installation view, mixed metal sculpture made from antique galvanized iron salvaged from 1940s demolished house , *De-Ling*, Gallery Orange Exhibition, Bacolod City 2016

It's All In Your Head

Painting with Sculpture presented as Installation 2017



Installation View ***It's All In Your Head*** 2017, Gallery Orange Exhibition March 2017

Sculpture ***Your Head*** 2017, mixed media (Stainless steel, galvanized iron, fabric), dimensions variable

Painting ***It's all Inside*** 2017, acrylic on canvass, 24 x 24 inches

Sit With Faith

Sculptural Installation 2017

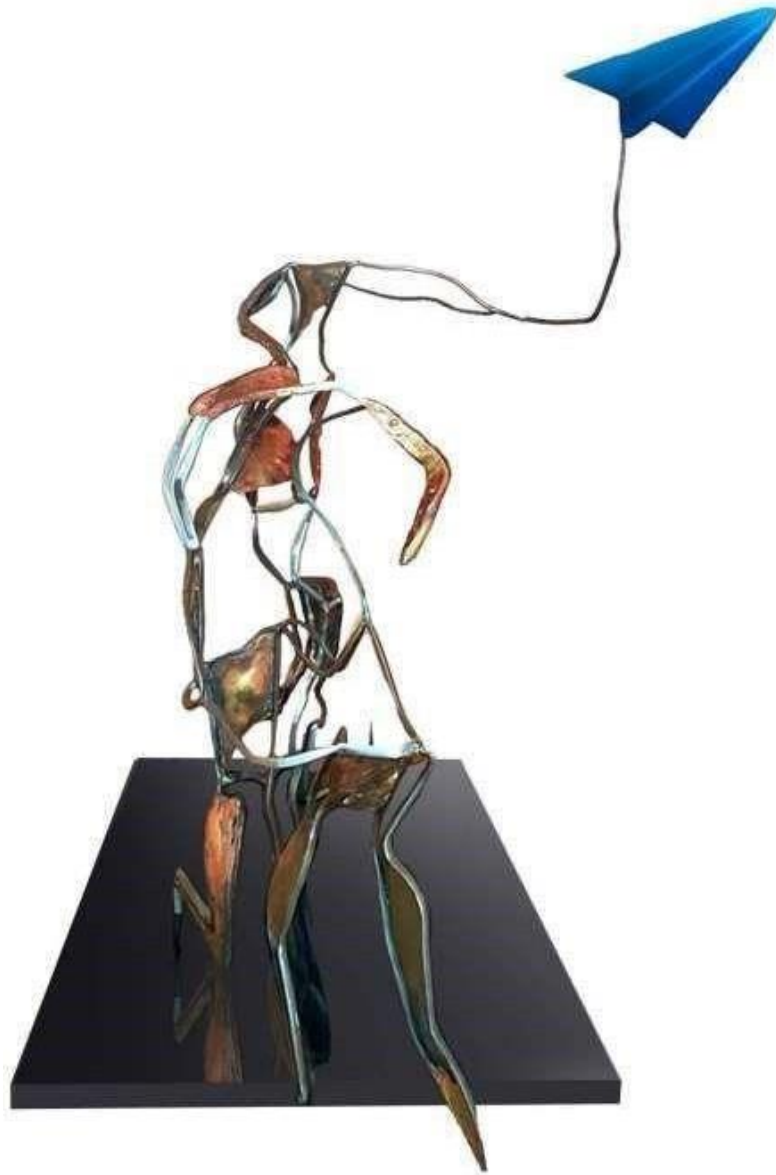


Installation View ***I'm Sitting On Your Faith*** , Gallery Orange Exhibition March 2017

Sculptures : ***Faith*** 2017 , mixed media (metal wood, acrylic, charcoal) ***Red Stool*** 2017 mixed metal, dimensions variable

Pagtaguyod

(Grand Prize Winner, MADE Sculpture Recognition Program 2017)



Pagtaguyod 2017

Stainless Steel, Brass, Granite Ceramic 33
x 20 x 20 inches



Mga Pangayao (The Migrants) 2016, mixed metal on wood, dimensions variable



Pag-alsa sang Mamumugon (Rise of the Laborers) 2016,
LAWIG Exhibition
Mixedmetal,
dimensions variable



Ang Maysarang Cag Mapi-ot (The Rich and the Poor) 2016
LAWIG exhibition, mixed metal, dimensions variable

Tabungos

Sculpture with Video Installation 2016

VIVA ExCon Curated Exhibition, University of the Philippines Visayas

A sculptural structure consisting of organic materials made up of bamboo splints and rattan in the shape of a jar evoking the Manunggul jar with its concept of navigating another world but capped with a sailboat-like structure that alludes to the caracoa or the Western –Visayan warship manned in the olden days by the artist who as navigator sets the direction for the trip. . The multi-sensory approach underscores the concept of art without borders as spatial and temporal arts mix. Thus, projected on the screen or seen in actuality are artisans going through the process of transforming bamboo plints and rattan into matting (amakan), baskets, houses.

Tabungos (in collaboration with Peter Fantinalgo and writer- historian Dr. Cecil Nava) is centered around the concept of the artist as a” teller of tales” and “keeper and transmitter of racial memory “across generations, a vessel of the past even as he/she navigates the sea of memory symbolized by the capacious basket, a container of tales both imaginary and historical. The installation aims to evoke a time when the artist as the multifaceted babaylan played a central role in society not just as” keeper and transmitter of racial memory” or as adviser or counselor the way Bangotbanwa in Shri-Bishaya does to Datu Sumakwel and our other Visayans ancestor but as “healer, historian, artist, ritual-producer, priestess, psychologist, proto-scientist and mediator between the material and spiritual world.”





Tabungos , 2016 mixed media (metal, bamboo, rattan, bronze, multimedia) approx. 14 x 13 x 11 feet

Widows of the Fallen

Semi-finalist, MADE Sculpture Competition 2015



Widows of the Fallen 2015, mixed metal, dimensions variable

Lost Dolls

Installation, Sculpture and Painting 2015

A picture of a Filipino thirteen year old girl, Angel, crying, handcuffed to a post, among the kids rounded up and locked up in detention centers to “clear the streets” for the papal visit and disturbing pictures from the detention centers showed children kept behind bars in bare rooms, exposed to populations of adult prisoners, unprotected from abuse moved me deeply.

Lost Dolls was my expression of ache, then ambivalence for the current state of the children of our society. In this multimedia exhibition, paintings of children in mediums ranging from oil, graphite, watercolor, and charcoal convey either obvious or hidden messages of hope and despair, recognition and celebration, pain and love, all subject to the viewer’s interpretation.

My main work, a sculptural installation of a metal swing amidst dead vines entitled “Where Is My Childhood?” poses the important question: what do we do with our children as a nation? It recognizes the universal “state” of children whether naturally or prematurely forced to cope with diverse intense situations. Beyond the perpetual issue of child labor, abuse, and prostitution, the meticulously welded birds is an allegory of hope and the perspective where children are raised to the best possible chances. The message being, *“it never stops...the children we raise will grow up to mold the society we collectively hold...”* The work also seeks to invite the viewer to sit or sway in remembrance of a childhood; a chance for introspection of the person who came out of that childhood.



Installation View Lost Dolls 2015 Gallery Orange



Details from exhibition Lost Dolls 2015

Free Standing Sculpture

Selected Recent Works



All is Not Lost 2018
Brass, Stainless steel, Acrylic Epoxy



Pas De Deux 2018

Brass, stainless steel, acrylic epoxy

12 x 19 x 24



Love Unexplained 2018

Brass, Stainless Steel, Acrylic Epoxy

24 x 19x 12 inches



Totally In Sync 2018
Brass, Stainless Steel, Acrylic Epoxy
19 x 15 1/2 x 5 inches



Esmeralda and Unicorn 2018
Brass, Stainless Steel, Acrylic Epoxy
12x 16 x 7 inches



Lady Love 2018
Brass, Acrylic Epoxy
21 x 15 x 15 inches



Love and Its Complexities 2018

Brass, Acrylic Epoxy

Dimensions Variable



Sugar Blues 2018
Brass, Acrylic Epoxy
Dimensions Variable



Always and Forever Us 2018
Brass, Stainless Steel, Acrylic Epoxy
12 x 18x 18 inches



The Altruist 2017
Mixed metal
32 x 48 x 18 inches



Joyride 2017
mixed metal

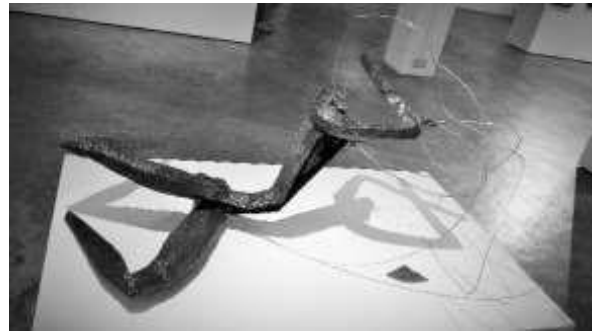
32 x 34 x 18 inches



You are What You Give, 2017

mixed metal

13.5 x 23 x 24 inches



Incitation 2015
mixed metal 70 x
37 x 60 inches



Incitation and Hope 2015

Mixed metal

40 x 45 x 48 inches