Self-Portraits – Catharsis (1 of 4) A Way Out
2000 - Pencil & Ink - This series of four self-portraits were done prior to the yoga inspired series. They represent a catharsis, a phoenix rising from the ashes. The change, in my psyche and habit patterns, that these four images represent was twenty six years of conscious healing. The remaining 3 images were created over a summer.
Self-Portraits – Catharsis (2 of 4) In My Darkest Hour, I keep Hope Alive
2001 - Colored Pencil & Ink - I was stuck like stone in negative patterns of anger and grief. The hope of release
strengthened me to continue and not give up.
2001 - Colored Pencil & Ink - Read the “dress” from bottom to top. It tells a simplified version of the history of the path of healing I have been on.
The Hope that Joins Us through Time & Space: The Healing Power of Love

2001 - Colored Pencil & Ink - Love, with a capital ‘L’, is what has seen me through the most seemingly difficult times in my life. The power of love is our hope.
2001 - Colored Pencil - I read about yoga, which means unity. That inspired this work. Even though “I came to know “God” through Christ, it has not keep me from studying other sacred texts. I believe the truth and love of God, the Divine, can not be confined, or fully defined by a book. Sacred texts point the way; they give guidelines about how to have a “relationship” with, to begin to know “God”. I think prayer, communion, is a vital part of that process.
Self-Portraits – Little Mo & Big Mo

2001 - Colored Pencil & Ink - This image illustrates the integration of the split off part of me into the whole. Years of therapy, and the study and application of the teachings of Pema Choldron helped me to embrace, instead of disown, all parts of myself. This work is a promise “Big Mo” will love and never again abandon “Little Mo”.

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Self-Portraits – Sunflower Strong
2001 - Photo & Colored Pencil - I was teaching my students how to draw flowers, and write affirmations, while at home I was working on organizing photos, when I got the idea for this self-portrait, a visual affirmation. Awareness of, and responsibility for the words I speak to and about myself are an important part of self-healing.
Practice makes better, so I sketched my own features over & over. Then, cut & pasted them into a collage and let the words roll out onto the paper.
What is my responsibility? The question of “What are you doing to help humanity?” was repeatedly, sometimes nightly, asked of me as a youth, teenager and young adult. How I could help was not made known to me. I have spent the better part of fifty years trying to figure it out. It has been an inward journey. It has taken me to terribly painful places inside myself I did not want to see. It has put me in touch with poisonous anger, rage and self-hate so overwhelming I thought for sure it would destroy me in the process. I had what I considered to be a fortunate upbringing. I never wanted for food, or clothing or shelter. I went to good schools. I had the material things and opportunities to test my talents and abilities. At a young age, I was “introduced” to my own spiritual nature through religious training. I was a sensitive child and I am sensitive still. I am highly intuitive and empathetic. As a child, this ability confused me because of my lack of understanding. I felt the great sadness and despair of my parents and family that we were not supposed to talk about. When I said what I felt or saw, I was told I was imagining things. My questions were often met with criticism. I was unable to contain the emotional build up because of the no talk rule. I acted out. I rebelled making myself the target for blame. Look what I was doing to the family. I took on the blame. "I" took it on. I believed myself to be the cause of my family's suffering. The guilt grew. Anger covered it over. Now after decades of self-improvement and therapy, the mask of anger has been removed. The festering, open wound of guilt and self-condemnation was exposed. What benefit was there in me holding on to that all these years? I want to let go of the sadness. I want to feel, in the depths of my soul, I am a worthwhile human being. Why is it such a difficult step for me? I’ve worked long and hard for years, dedicating myself in service to others, to prove to myself that I am a good person. When will I believe in myself? The pain is not because others don’t believe in me; it is because I find it so hard to believe in myself. I want to believe the good things other people say about me. I do on some level. The disturbing sadness that has haunted me most of my life is below the surface. It is not logical. It has a strange hold on me despite all the evidence to the contrary. I’m closer to understanding and accepting what is, learning what there is to learn, and moving on. Want, prayer, silence, tears, writing...all these things help.
Self-Portraits – Books on the Brain

2002 - Pencil - I was working on so many ideas and rough drafts of books. At the time, I wanted to be a children’s book writer and illustrator. It seemed like a logical transition from teaching. I made this image to help me remember, at a glance, all the books I was working on. Most are still in rough draft form, as of 2009.
The idea for the first image of this self-portrait series came while in a yoga posture. Of course I had to stop, find paper and pen, and scribble the idea down so I wouldn't forget it. It was such a strong image that expressed a “solution” to what I was going through at the time.
After the first image was complete, I got an idea for the next and the next and so on.
I love to hang upside down. When I maintain a playful, child-like attitude, fear has no place to stay.
There are different kinds of balance; this is radial balance. Like a mandala, moving out from the center, that is how I want my love to be. Love is what I choose, over again and over again. There is really no losing, only putting off that which puts an end to self inflicted suffering. Be brave, love and be loved.
The yoga series morphed. Tae Kwon Do took its place. Yoga & TKD are both meditative. Practice of these physical disciplines brings me face to face with my fears. Releasing fear encourages quiet confidence.
The weight of the world on our shoulders, it’s a saying for a reason. What am I actually responsible for? I must not give too much weight to the voices and opinions outside myself, but instead listen to the voice within, and be true to myself.
A prayer for strength to simply be

I embrace all that I am, have been and will be. I embrace all that has happened to me.

I am grateful for the strength and energy to work to be free. I pray for a fearless spirit to be who I must be.

I embrace love, love, love... let the wonderful heart and head... no longer have a mind of pain, a sign of the pain. This sign is a reminder of the pain. No longer have a mind of rest. Peace.

At this time, the heart and head crone with joy instead.
NO... DON'T SAY...
DON'T SPEAK...
HOLD IT IN...
PAIN DEEPENS...
CONFUSION BEGINS...
WHEN I SAY...
IT'S WORSE...
IT DOESN'T
GO AWAY....

I'M READY NOW.
SPEAK MY HEART.
SPEAK MY MIND.
UNDERSTOOD OR NOT,
IT NEEDS TO BE SAID.
CLEAR MY HEAD.
HEALING...
HEALING...
THE TEARS
COME.
I SO WANT
TO BE FREE.
NO LONGER
RUN OR HIDE
FROM MYSELF.
LET GO.
BE FREE.

Self-Portraits – Yoga Series (8of 8)
2003 - Colored Pencil & Ink - To speak or Not Speak, That Is the Question!

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Self-Portraits – Influences
2004 - Ink - I have been influenced by so many, many souls. All contribute to the journey. Even as I write this, there is a part of me that knows that every soul that ever was, and every soul that will ever be, has an effect on me. We are all, after all, in a way we may never fully comprehend, one.
2003 - There is more to “me” than what I think, do and have.
Self-Portraits – Are We Who We Meet?
2003 - Ink - Unfinished, this work is a question. If I carry with me what I learn from others, if we are all one, if we are all reflections of “God”, how does it all fit together?

Are we who we meet? It’s just a question, an idea. Please don’t take me too seriously, but do take me seriously at the same time, please. I just wonder... wonder about why we are the way we are. What makes you, you, and me, me?
My sense of self develops in relation to others. Most of us internalize the projections of others. Learning to not take “it” on (the projections & judgments of others) is the focus of this unfinished work.
Self-Portraits – Rainbows Stay
2003 - Markers - I love color. Color keeps the blues away. Bright and beautiful colors will always be a part of my life, if I have something to say about it.
2003 - Pencil - This is a very rough draft of a self-portrait. So much inward turning, sometimes I feel like I get all bound up. It will work itself out, no matter how it feels.
2006 - I know despair. I know what it is to think “I could die and no one would notice.” I know what it is to feel sorry for myself and all alone. But no matter how desperate I feel, bottom line, I know and remind myself that God loves me, and I can love myself too. If you've been there, you know what I’m talking about.
2006 - I will not reject any part of myself. I will accept all that I am, glaring flaws and all. I accept. I love.
Self-Portraits – Transformation

2006 - It has not felt easy. I have felt rejected by most of my immediate family. I have had a few unsuccessful marriages. I have had numerous jobs. People come and go, in and out of my life. I do not form attachments easily; maybe that is a blessing. God is the only constant in my life. I want to evolve into whatever it is “God” wants me to be; I know it is in my best interest. The caterpillar is earthbound, until the transformed butterfly gives it wings.