



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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December 2, 2020

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery presents

Out of the Darkness

Artwork by Mark Benavides

Columbus Ohio 43215 - Southeast Healthcare continues to implement plans for ongoing care for patients, while keeping our staff members safe and healthy due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason, we have made the decision to temporarily close the Fresh A.I.R. Gallery to gallery patrons and showcase the work of Mark Benavides virtually through the exhibition titled Out of the Darkness running December 2, 2020 – January 15, 2021 online at <https://southeasthc.org/services/freshairgallery/2020-mark-benavides-exhibit/>.

Mr. Benavides says “My artistic career began two years ago during my recovery from Stage IV laryngeal cancer. I’d lost my vocal cords, my physical stamina, and my life as I had previously known it. Alcohol provided some comfort while I sat at home, but ultimately dragged me into dark, lonely places. One day, my wife suggested I try painting.

I’ve always been an active, outdoorsy, and creative person. As I’ve grown as an artist, the paintbrush has helped me revisit these and other places, to take them out of my memory and bring them back to life. Using a discarded table as a workbench in my basement, I paint snowy mountains, dense forests, boundless fields, and wildlife. When I’m creating, I’m active and working with my hands once again. This helps me manage my depression and anxiety, and I no longer want to drink.”

Mr. Benavides’ work will be available online and for viewing in person at the Fresh A.I.R. Gallery’s SEEN Studios located at 289. W. Walnut Street in Columbus by appointment

only for the duration of his exhibit. Contact the Fresh A.I.R. Gallery to make an appointment. His artworks are all available for purchase, and Fresh A.I.R. Gallery does not take a commission, so all proceeds go directly to the artist.

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery (Artists In Recovery) is a project of Southeast Healthcare and the gallery celebrates 17 years.

The gallery's mission is to exhibit the work by individuals affected by mental illness and/or substance use disorders. Through art, we educate the community and work to break down the stigma of mental illness and/or substance use by bringing focus to the artist vision. Southeast Healthcare is a comprehensive provider of mental health, chemical dependency, physical healthcare, vocational and homeless services that has been serving Columbus since 1978 and is in eight Ohio counties. Project support funding in part thanks to the Greater Columbus Arts Council, the City of Columbus and Franklin County for Fresh A.I.R. Gallery in 2020. www.southeasthc.org.

Fresh A.I.R. Gallery is located at 131 North High Street in downtown Columbus and is open weekdays from 8:00 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. Fresh A.I.R. Gallery's phone number is 614-744-8110.