Bridging Empathy
A thesis presented in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Art in Jewelry and Metalsmithing in the Department of Jewelry and Metalsmithing of the Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, Rhode Island.

By Qianwen Lu, 2023

Approved by Master's Examination Committee:

Tracy Steepy, Head
Department of Jewelry and Metalsmithing
Thesis Committee Chair

Katherine Russell, Assistant Professor
Department of History, Philosophy and the Social Sciences
Thesis Committee Advisor

Breslin Bell, Lecturer
Department of Theory and History of Art and Design
Guest Critic
Bridging Empathy

Qianwen Lu
Caroline Lu, a contemporary jewelry artist born in China and trained in the United States, received her BFA in Jewelry Design from Pratt Institute in 2020. Her work revolves around the issue of intimate partner violence and resilient community of women who have endured assault and trauma. Her work aims to create a safe space for open dialogue, promote healing, and empower survivors to reclaim their strength and self-worth. She strives to challenge societal norms, inspire change, and encourage a more compassionate and supportive environment for survivors.
Bridging Empathy
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Special thanks to my committee members, Tracy Steepy, Katherine Russell, and Breslin Bell, my RISD Professors, Timothy Veske-McMahon, Seth Papac, Lauren Fensterstock, Brain Bergeron, Anne West and the Jewelry and Metalsmithing Department.

To my cohort, Yu Jeong Han, Oi Ying Valerie Ho, Ayesha Mohyuddin, Fei Gao, Weixin Wang, Meixian Li, Chongxiao Zhang, Xiaodai Huang, Sigrid Yu, Fangjun Liu, Yarina Dai & Cloris Ding.

To my photographer and models, Tiff Cheung, Jingtong Zhang, Meixian Li, Louise Jaeger, Yan Zhu, Yuanyuan Xiao

To Mom, Dad, my family and Shuaiting Dong

Thank you for your persistent support and encouragement — without it this thesis would not have been possible.
Bridging Empathy
"I have come to the conclusion that human beings are born with an innate capacity to triumph over trauma. I believe not only that trauma is curable, but that the healing process can be a catalyst for profound awakening—a portal opening to emotional and genuine spiritual transformation."

— Peter A. Levine
Bridging Empathy
ABSTRACT

As a jeweler, ally, and sympathetic witness to the traumatic stories of survivors, my work aims to support the process of reconstruction and reintegration for victims and the greater community. To move beyond isolation, resentment, and debilitating helplessness requires care and support. I want my jewelry to act as catalysts in the healing process by straddling both sides of the trauma-induced situation, to create greater awareness and empathy. National Coalition Against Domestic Violence shows that women are more likely to become victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, or other forms of physical and psychological abuse in unhealthy emotional relationships. These abusive behaviors can undermine women's self-esteem and sense of self-worth, leading to mental trauma. Women in such emotional relationships may feel powerless, controlled, threatened, fearful, and isolated. These experiences can lead to symptoms of PTSD, such as flashbacks, avoidance, emotional numbness, and insomnia. Trauma can make us shut down, collapse, freeze, or retreat. The sensory world of the victim is often a forbidden zone that they are unwilling to explore.

It is well-known that psychological therapy, medication, social support, and self-care for victims can aid in the healing of psychological injuries. Similarly, could the act of wearing jewelry, as a potential form of therapy, assist in the recovery process? In the following section, I will explore the societal support, opportunities, and environments that vulnerable people may need and how jewelry can serve as a catalyst to bring these fragmented and marginalized memories into awareness and reactions. It's essential to help people overcome the innate tendency to turn away from the painful realities that exist in the world. Developing sensitivity to acknowledge victims' testimonies in order to gain a greater comprehension of trauma is a choice we must make.
Bridging Empathy
A Trauma-informed Society

Professor Gabor Mate says that our society is a trauma-informed society.¹ Why do we get disconnected because it is too painful to be ourselves? In her interview with Gabor Mate, Jenara Nerenberg states that 60% of adults have experienced difficult childhood experiences, including drawn-out divorces, violence, and abuse. The effects of trauma are long-lasting, ranging from anxiety to post-traumatic stress disorder to causing physical illness. However, Mate suggests within the medical field, medical students and psychiatrists are so unfamiliar with reversing trauma, healing, and preventing it that they do not even hear the word “trauma” in most physicians’ education. Instead, they treat traumatized patients as if they have an autoimmune disease or mental illness every time they are confronted with them, without the physicians themselves realizing it. ⁵
Trauma does not lie in the external events that cause somatic and emotional pain, nor does it lie in the pain itself, but it is caused by our being trapped in a primitive response to the painful event. Trauma arises when we are unable to release blocked energy and fully move through our somatic and emotional reactions to hurtful experiences. The essence of trauma is the separation of the physical body and emotions.6

These blocked emotional reactions can be a result of not having the support of others after a trauma. Thus, trauma is not an event that happens to us but rather an experience within us without a sympathetic witness.7 It can be defined as any unresolved autonomic nervous system response. It is not necessarily about the event itself.

So the real question is, "how do victims reconnect with the present?"
Bridging Empathy
Bridging Empathy
Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence

National Coalition Against Domestic Violence shows that 1 in 4 women experience severe intimate partner physical violence, with impacts such as injury, fearfulness, post-traumatic stress disorder, contraction of sexually transmitted diseases.

1 in 3 women have experienced some form of physical violence. This includes a range of behaviors, such as slapping, shoving, pushing.

1 in 10 women have been raped by an intimate partner.

Women between the ages of 18-24 are most commonly abused by an intimate partner.9

These abusive behaviors can undermine women’s sense of self-worth, leading to mental trauma. They may feel powerless, controlled, and isolated. It has been suggested that trauma is a natural and non-pathological interruption that needs to be ended.8

Stop looking at us, start listening to us…
I felt that the crushing pressure of convincing her to stay alive fell solely on me, a teenager who also had serious issues with anxiety and depression. I was dealing with childhood sexual trauma as well, and at times she would coerce me into doing things that made me feel disgusting.
and panicked, asking me over and over to try sexual things that I was clearly unsure about.

- anonymous
I lived my whole life in the wreckage of my marriage, and every night I moved the table against the door of my room, yet I was still afraid.

- anonymous
We didn't talk to each other much until one day I wore a short skirt to the studio for the first time. I usually wore paint-splattered pants, so this day was different and he took it as a sign that I was a creature to be conquered.

- anonymous
The breakup was out of the blue to me. I am ashamed to remember kneeling on the floor, sobbing, grabbing his leg as he stood, unblinking, on the cold tile floor.

- anonymous

The relationship exists in its form but is dead inside. It is a terminally ill child, and it's time to put him to rest in peace.

I held him for a long time, not wanting to leave his small body lying in the cold soil. But I couldn't wait until his face was rosy and glowy, until we were both covered with maggots.

- anonymous
The relationship exists in its form but is dead inside. It is a terminally ill child, and it's time to put him to rest in peace. I held him for a long time, not wanting to leave his small body lying in the cold soil. But I couldn't wait until his face was rosy and glowy, until we were both covered with maggots.

- anonymous
When people saw my grief and depression, they symbolically patted me on the shoulder and ran away as if they had seen a flood of water; my friends were waiting for me to recover before hanging out with me. They only wanted a happy face from me, not a sad one. An upset me is like a dusty camphor
When people saw my grief and depression, they symbolically patted me on the shoulder and ran away as if they had seen a flood of water; my friends were waiting for me to recover before hanging out with me. They only wanted a happy face from me, not a sad one. An upset me is like a dusty camphor tree that unconsciously pours dust on those who pass by. I am really sorry to you - my dear friends.

- anonymous
Briding Empathy

I value the process of listening to survivor experiences because nobody wants to remember the trauma, neither as a society nor as victims themselves.¹⁰ I have listened to individuals who have endured mistreatment, emotional abuse, and domestic violence. I strive to protect the retelling of their stories away from any harm. We all want to live in a secure, controllable, and predictable world, but the existence of victims serves as a continual reminder that this isn’t always the case. We must overcome our innate tendency to turn away from reality and develop the capacity to pay attention to victims’ testimonies if we are to comprehend trauma.¹¹

Lawrence Langer, in his book “Holocaust Testimonies: The Ruins of Memory” (1991), describes: “Listening to accounts of Holocaust experience, we unearth a mosaic of evidence that constantly vanishes into bottomless layers of incompletion. We wrestle with the beginnings of a permanently unfinished tale, full of incomplete intervals, faced by the spectacle of a faltering witness often reduced to a distressed silence by the overwhelming solicitations of deep memory”.¹²
The "night sea journey" is the journey into the parts of ourselves that are split off, disavowed, unknown, unwanted, cast out, and exiled to the various subterranean worlds of consciousness...

The goal of this journey is to reunite us with ourselves. Such a homecoming can be surprisingly painful, even brutal. In order to undertake it, we must first agree to exile nothing.

— Stephen Cope
My work serves to act as a protective and seductive trap, deflecting negativity and disarming the harmful gaze of others. "Jewelry conveys an image of you that is not just your biological self. Jewelry is tightly bound with symbolism, and its use implies a developed sense of identity".13

It serves as a narrative fragment of the object’s owner, as an aid to memory, capable of triggering a personal story. In contrast to many other art forms, jewelry implicates the wearer through its intimate engagement with the body. The core of this format protects victims, an emphasis that differs from the exposure, the uncovering of wounds, and the public execution of personal experiences, in that jewelry is a social adhesive.

While there are no medications, apparatus, or individuals who can undo the reality that a trauma has occurred, Bessel van der Kolk speaks to the possibility of being able to heal the lasting physiological impacts of trauma:

But what can be dealt with are the imprints of the trauma on body, mind, and soul: the crushing sensations in your chest that you may label as anxiety or depression; the fear of losing control; always being on alert for danger or rejection; the self-loathing; the nightmares and flashbacks; the fog that keeps you from staying on task and from engaging fully in what you are doing; being unable to fully open your heart to another human being.14
This catalyst helps victims regain a sense of responsibility for themselves and take charge of their self-empowerment. I believe that wearing jewelry can become a way to restore peacefulness and focus by using the object of adornment to center the wearer’s body. It allows victims to maintain the ability to hold a mental state and feel in greater control subconsciously. By acknowledging past feelings of oppression, anger, and overwhelm, victims can practice regaining ownership over their bodies and improve their tolerance to emotionally process hidden triggers such as images, sounds, scenes, and physical sensations. My work provides an opportunity for victims to expand their “window of tolerance”. 
Art as healing is not a new idea. Since ancient times, the arts have been used to alleviate human suffering and to restore a sense of harmony, wholeness, or unity. The World Health Organization still defines “disease” in unscientific, almost poetic terms, as “a rupture in life’s harmony”. Cross-culturally, art has a long historical record of supporting life and health; art was a vehicle for experiencing the self as whole: body, mind, emotions, and spirit.15

- Kathy Luethje
Jewelry is presented in many cultures and traditions for its healing power in helping people overcome mental and emotional difficulties. Amulets are a form of jewelry widely used to protect people from evil or harm. Amulets often incorporate specific symbols and materials that possess mystical or spiritual powers within a particular culture or tradition. These symbols and materials are selected based on a shared system of beliefs and values that are deeply embedded and encoded within the culture.

For example, a cross necklace is a commonly worn amulet within Christianity, symbolizing protection and faith in the power of God. In ancient Egyptian culture, scarabs were used as amulets to represent the concept of rebirth and the cycle of life. In Chinese culture, Jade is believed to have protective and healing properties and is often incorporated into amulets worn for luck and good fortune. The symbols and materials incorporated into amulets are chosen for their mystical properties and the cultural messages and beliefs they represent. They serve as a physical manifestation of these values and reinforce them within the individual and the culture as a whole. Words, mantras, and words of power used in amulets come in various languages, such as curses, blessings, spells, and healing. The reference to amulets, both in format and form, empowers my works. I conceal magical symbols in every bead I use in my pendants, and the meditative touch of the wearer triggers these powerful incantations.
Fig. 1
Gold Necklace with Ornaments
Byzantine
6th century
The Met Collection
Fig. 2
Scarabs
Middle Kingdom
Dynasty 12
Egypt
Fig. 3
清中期 玉團壽紋佩
Jade pendant
Qing dynasty, China
The Met Collection

Fig. 4
清中期 玉十二生肖
Twelve animals of the Chinese zodiac
Qing dynasty, China
The Met Collection
The triple Moon symbol is commonly used amongst women to symbolize empowerment, representing the three stages of a woman’s life. The waxing moon represents the Maiden, representing youth and new life. The full moon represents the Mother, representing fulfillment, giving, caring, protection, and power. Finally, the waning moon represents the Crone and stands for wisdom, experience, knowledge, understanding, and completion. In its entirety, the symbol is signifying the eternal cycle of birth, life, and rebirth.16
The main inspiration for my work comes from the format of prayer wheels from the Tibetan region of China and the form of a Mandala. The shape of the prayer wheel is often a cylindrical spinning wheel on a spindle made of metal, wood, stone, leather, or coarse cotton. Traditionally, mantras are written in Ranjana script or Tibetan on the outer surface of the spinning wheel. The Tibetan Buddhist tradition holds that spinning the prayer wheel has an equivalent positive effect as reciting the prayer aloud, as per the texts that have been passed down. Mantras’ description can be found in Dan Martin’s research study "On the Origin And Significance of the Prayer Wheel According to Two Nineteenth-century Tibetan Literary Sources: "Typically, it is this mantra, Om Mani-Padme Hūm, that is wound about the central axis of the cylinder. It is not a prayer in any usual sense of the word but a part of a program of spiritual practice involving visualizations, as well as mantra recitations, and one aimed at generating the compassion of a Bodhisattva within oneself. At the same time, it may be repeated (with much scriptural justification) to allay all sorts of mundane fears as well as anxieties about future rebirths.”

A Mandala, which comes from the Sanskrit word meaning "circle," is an artistic representation of more profound meaning and higher thought that takes the form of a geometric symbol. It is used in spiritual, emotional, or psychological practices to focus one’s attention and encourage introspection. The specific details of a mandala’s meaning can vary depending on the individual who creates or observes it. Typically, a mandala symbolizes a spiritual journey, leading from the outer layers to the inner core, promoting self-awareness and ultimately resulting in peace of mind.

Harmonious touching begins with the victim’s hope, remaining true to themselves, the wearer is honest with themselves, and the process fuels them. Touching these pendants is essential, as I hope it can comfort women victims who may be triggered by traumatic memories. Through gentle touch and mindful breathing, I intend to help soothe their emotions and promote a sense of calmness. My work is activated through warm and continuous touching. The six pendants utilize temperature-sensitive colors on a portion of the surface and the beads. These materials have the unique ability to change color when exposed to warmth. When the wearer touches the pendants, the warmth from their palm and the skin triggers the color transformation. The heat is absorbed by the temperature-sensitive colors, causing them to shift gradually from dark to light and even change from one hue to another. This transformation occurs slowly, allowing the wearer to observe and capture every subtle change that takes place on the pendant’s surface. As a maker, my intention is to create an engaging, mediating, and transformative experience for the wearer. By focusing their attention on the evolving colors, the wearer becomes immersed in the process of transformation. They can feel the warmth left by their fingertips as it interacts with the pendant’s surface, forming a tactile and intimate connection. Throughout this mesmerizing process, the wearer is encouraged to engage in a peaceful dialogue with their own mind. The observation of the color shifts and the mindful touch become a practice of mindfulness and self-reflection, promoting a sense of inner calmness and emotional soothing.
Fig. 5
Pilgrim with prayer wheel
Fig. 6
Mandala Patterns
Bridging Empathy
I hope touching the work can be a healthy, less obvious way to cope. People can experience a calm, more meditative state through this cyclic motion and deep breathing. We can rely on touch to convey gratitude, sympathy, and love. When the victims focus enough on their own unspoken voice, working together with themselves, the real healing starts. Yoko Ono once said: “Healing yourself is connected with healing others.” As bystanders who may have never experienced domestic violence and trauma, witnessing the act of restoring calm, consciously participating in the silent viewing, accompanying and contemplating the victim’s continuous healing behaviors can act as a way to convey and build empathy.
In Tibetan Buddhism, devout practitioners spin cylindrical prayer wheels containing sacred mantras in order to offer sincere prayers. This practice is supported by a theory that “rotating mantras relate to numerous yogic or Tantric practices whereby the Tantric practitioner visualizes the mantra revolving around his or her nadis and especially around the meridian chakras such as the heart and crown. The prayer wheels are a visual aid for developing the capacity for these types of Tantric visualizations.”

I want the pendant to have the ability to help the victim regain self-empowerment not only by sacred symbols on the beads, mandala forms, but also by the part of the body where the pendant is located when worn. The moderate length of the pendant allows the subject to be located in the abdomen of the body. In qigong and Chinese martial arts the word dantian itself usually refers to the lower dantian, which is considered to be the foundation for rooted standing, breathing and body awareness. The lower dantian has been described to be "like the root of the tree of life. In Cohen, K. S. (1999)’s “The Way of Qigong: The Art and Science of Chinese Energy Healing” : "In speaking of the lower of the three energy centers, the term dantian is often used interchangeably with the Japanese word hara (обр; Chinese: fù) which means simply "belly." In Chinese, Korean, and Japanese Traditions, it is considered the physical center of gravity of the human body and is the seat of one’s internal energy (qi)”. I intend that by placing the piece on the abdomen, it serves as a constant reminder of the energy that resides within the wearer’s body. It symbolizes the power to find inner calm and harmony through meditation and synchronized breathing.
PITY IS NOT SOLIDARITY
Why are people so isolated from one another?
Why are people less empathetic in today’s social context?

Trauma is not an event that happens to us but rather an experience within us without a sympathetic witness. We cannot change the atrocities of the past but think about the cohesiveness in jewelry and the ability of jewelry to establish a bridge between two people.

Why is empathy so difficult to achieve? There are two main reasons, first refers to Elizabeth A. Segal’s research: “A lack of empathy might even be a result of brain processing being hijacked from other unconscious parts of our brain, as in cases where fear paralyzes us in a way that impedes cognitive processing”.  

Another more important reason is that: “the power of otherness to block empathy is particularly strong when we have a social aversion instilled in us, such as prejudice based on race or ethnicity or stigmas related to social outcasts. These barriers suggest there is a strong learned component that may reinforce the biological kin selection bias and diminish or block empathy for outgroup members.” This means that everyone has an empathy stereotype, that we are biased towards people we are close to and familiar with, and that we reduce and prevent empathy for external group members. For different groups, people sometimes weigh the pros and cons of helping and reflecting more social exchange; sympathy for marginalized people requires the ability to understand other peoples lived experience, to think differently, and to regulate ones emotions.
Instead, I focus on a different, more critical “solution.” Allies do not fear equality. Empathy is the first step towards making real change, and when looking at women victims of domestic violence, we need to focus more on the underlying causes and cultural beliefs that contribute to this phenomenon. For example, difficult childhood experiences where children witness violence being used as a way to maintain control within a family can distort their conscience and morality. In psychiatrist Freud’s treatment of Dora’s traumatic memories, he repeatedly records important observations about the prominence of jewels. One of Mr. K’s gifts to Dora is an expensive jewelry box. Jewelry is an object that defines relationships in Dora’s identity, a symbol of complex interactions. In Dora’s case, the transmission of sensation and seduction bound to an expensive jewelry box emerges more as manipulation than bridge-building. It creates meditational dis-equilibrium rather than healing and transformation. This brought a new consideration to my work and how it might be experienced by the wearer. I became curious about the conditions and capacities for healing that I am imagining and projecting in my work. This case also makes it impossible for me not to think about the bidirectional causality contained in my work. My jewelry is intended as a sign and narrative symbol to counteract the victim’s first layer of identity as a persecuted party to the event, marking the wearer in a positive and powerful way. However, the sight of my jewelry is not intended to elicit pity from those who have not experienced trauma and abuse.
In the exhibition of Nicholas Nixon’s Pictures of People in 1988. A group of activists from ACT UP is sitting in the gallery with photographs of people captioned as “living with” – not dying of – AIDS. The activists talked to audiences and handed out flyers that called for “no more pictures without context.” It concluded with the demand, “Stop looking at us, start listening to us.” They demand the visibility of PWAs and positive images. “In portraying PWAs as people to be pitied or feared, as people alone and lonely, we believe that this show perpetuates general misconceptions about AIDS without addressing the realities of those of us living everyday with this crisis as PWAs and people who love PWAs.”

They handed out a flier, the major statement is listed as:

The representation of people with HIV/AIDS impacts how viewers perceive PWAs outside of the museum.

The portrayal of PWAs as pitiable or fearsome perpetuates misconceptions about HIV/AIDS and fails to address the realities faced by those living with the disease.

PWAs are human beings whose health has deteriorated due to government inaction, the inaccessibility of affordable health care, and institutionalized neglect in the forms of heterosexism, racism, and sexism.

According to Douglas Crimp’s article on Portraits of People with AIDS, he says: Certainly we can say that these representations do not help us, and that they probably hinder us, in our struggle, because the best they can do is elicit pity, and pity is not solidarity. We must continue to demand and create our own counter-images, images of PWA self-empowerment, of the organized PWA movement and of the larger AIDS activist move-ment, as the ACT UP demonstrators insisted at MOMA. But we must also recognize that every image of a PWA is a representation, and formulate our activist demands not in relation to the “truth” of the image, but in relation to the conditions of its construction and to its social effects.

Crimp argues that photography can shape our perceptions of reality and influence our attitudes toward social issues. Douglas Crimp contends that self-representation enables individuals with HIV/AIDS to exercise agency and control over their images and narratives and emphasizes the significance of the social and political context in which images of people with HIV/AIDS are produced and disseminated. Bringing his argument to my situation, when facing domestic violence survivors as the actual wearers of my work, these photos should not be exploitative but rather redirect harmful gazes towards the ethical, social, and political perspective of the issue.
Fig. 7
Exhibition of Pictures of People in 1988
MoMA
Fig. 8
Pictures of People in 1988
MoMA
Fig. 9
Pictures of People in 1988
MoMA
Fig. 10
ACT UP activists sitting in the gallery
MoMA
Unlike *The Scarlet Letter* or marks of shame, guilt, and impurity, it is exposed to public humiliation. In my work, I want to penetrate a new type of self-judgmental stance - self-interrogating. Self-interrogating is not a process of execution or a repressive act of shaming or incriminating someone. As someone who had once blamed any victims of intimate partner violence, interacting with and wearing the work is a secret process of confessing and interrogating one’s behavior, confronting one’s wrongdoing, and taking responsibility for secondary harm done to victims. The form is kept secret precisely because I am willing to take responsibility for my own words. I am defending, supporting, sympathizing, understanding, and assisting them. Visualizing traumatic experiences for the viewer is used to inspire bystanders to act, to stimulate a sense of intimacy, empathy, and substantial help. The work provides a context of incriminating themselves, giving secret punishment, and contemplation to awaken people’s awareness and rigorous strategies and attitudes toward victim-blaming. Finally, it pleads for substantial participation and change from the audience.

In *Philosophy of Care*, Boris Groys calls on Lacan’s statement that “the gaze of the other is always an evil gaze” in providing a framework of artmaking as a redirection act that shifts the gaze of the other from the artist’s body to the body of work to “disarm the evil, the harmful gaze of the spectator.” Ancient and profound use of jewelry is as amulets, charms, and talismans, whose protective qualities are used to ward off evil and bad luck or as a means of deflecting harm. Through the maker and ritual use, amulets are empowered by faith and artists’ intentions. In modern society, I further reflect on how people transform negative emotions and traumatic memories. "The origin of the narrative may well have been the maker, but it is the wearer and viewer who complete the story." My work acts as a voice—a vessel of communication for the voiceless, the silenced, and the mute.
Jewelry is a catalyst. Every piece holds distinct power, potential, and energy that is activated by the body it adorns and its viewers. It is a performance held in the context of an ever-changing environment and audience. A performance that transforms all participants involved through a sacred reciprocal exchange of energy and empathy. "I see you," "I am here" I want people to feel seen, but the jewelry itself does not need to be seen nor flaunted. My work aims to witness and be witnessed in relationship with those who possess it and whom I work to empower. Through this both passive and dynamic act of jewelry, I aim to shift the paradigms and move towards a more empathetic society—one that recognizes our limitations yet attempts to bridge our isolation and individualistic mentalities that prevent victims of sexual and domestic abuse from feeling seen or understood.
Bridging Empathy
Bridging Empathy
CONCLUSION
Wearing my work is an empowering form of support for women who have suffered from intimate partner violence and trauma. It acts as a protective shield, transferring negative elements away, deflecting harmful gazes, and redirecting sensitivity to the societal structures perpetuating these issues. My work reword the wearer through its intimate engagement with the body, and this process protects victims. By acknowledging past feelings of oppression, anger, and overwhelm, victims can regain ownership over their bodies and improve their tolerance to emotionally process hidden triggers such as images, sounds, scenes, and physical sensations.

I want my work to provide an opportunity for victims to expand their “window of tolerance,” allowing them to maintain the balance to hold a mental state and feel in greater control subconsciously. Wearers play an integral role in activating the work, both consciously and subconsciously. It is my sincerest hope that the act of wearing the resulting work serves as a hidden outlet for expressing the deeply-rooted feelings and emotions that may have previously been buried within, allowing for the unconscious pain and fears of the victim to be unveiled and addressed. In these moments of vulnerability and revelation, the work has the potential to provide a profound sense of relief and reintegration from the mental, emotional, and physical afflictions that often accompany the aftermath of trauma. Through this process, the conditions for healing are planted within the mind and heart, serving as a source of comfort, restoration and reclamation that extends beyond the tangible manifestations of the artwork. May the transformative and healing power of my work continue to offer solace and strength to those who seek it.
ENDNOTE
1 Peter A. Levine, Healing Trauma: A Pioneering Program for Restoring the Wisdom of Your Body (Sounds True, 2008) 1-20
2 National Coalition Against Domestic Violence.” The Nation's Leading Grassroots Voice on Domestic Violence
3 Bessel Van Der Kolk, The Body Keeps The Score, Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, 201
4 Gabor Mate, The Myth of Normal: Dr. Gabor Maté on Trauma, Illness and Healing in a Toxic Culture (Democracy Now, 2022)
5 Nerenberg Jenara, Why Are so Many Adults Today Haunted by Trauma? (Greater Good Magazine, 2017)
6 Peter A. Levine, Healing Trauma: A Pioneering Program for Restoring the Wisdom of Your Body (Sounds True, 2008) 1-20
7 Peter A. Levine, Healing Trauma: A Pioneering Program for Restoring the Wisdom of Your Body (Sounds True, 2008) 1-20
8 Daniela Ramirez-Duran, Somatic Experiencing Therapy: 10 Best Exercise & Examples (Positive Psychology, 2022)
9 National Coalition Against Domestic Violence • Statistics
10 Bessel Van Der Kolk, The Body Keeps The Score, Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, 196
11 Bessel Van Der Kolk, The Body Keeps The Score, Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, 196
12 Kolk, The Body Keeps The Score, 197
13 Suzanne Ramljak, On Body and soul: contemporary armor to amulets, 15
14 Bessel Van Der Kolk, The Body Keeps The Score, Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, 205
15 Healing with Art and Soul: Engaging One's Self through Art Modalities, Kathy Luethje, 2
16 Cassie Uhl, The Meanings & Origin of the Triple Goddness Symbol
17 Imart Nepal, Buddhist Prayer Wheels: Meaning and Uses
18 Dan Martin, On the Origin And Significance of the Prayer Wheel According to Two Nineteenth-century Tibetan Literary Sources, 15
19 Joshua J. Mark, Mandala, 1
20 Hiroshi Motoyama, Theories of the Chakras: Bridges to Higher Consciousness, 23
22 Elizabeth A. Segal  Assessing Empathy (Columbia University Press, 2019) 76-91
23 Segal Elizabeth, Assessing Empathy (Columbia University Press, 2019) 78
24 Ekaterini Angelis, "Exploring the Long-Term Effects of Domestic Violence in Art Therapy Treatment", 11
25 Evelyn Rose, A feminist reconceptualisation of intimate partner violence against women: A crime against humanity and a state crime, 32
26 Ekaterini Angelis, "Exploring the Long-Term Effects of Domestic Violence in Art Therapy Treatment", 13
28 Douglas Crimp, “Portraits of People with AIDS.” , 118
29 Douglas Crimp, “Portraits of People with AIDS.” , 118
30 Douglas Crimp, “Portraits of People with AIDS.” , 126
31 Boris Groys, Philosophy of Care
32 Mark Fenn, Narrative Jewelry: Tales from the Toolbox (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing Ltd, 2017) 08
BIBLIOGRAPHY
Martin, Dan. On the Origin of the Prayer Wheel According to Two Nineteenth-Century ... 1987,
Mate, Gabor. "The Myth of Normal": Dr. Gabor Maté on Trauma, Illness and Healing in a Toxic Culture. YouTube, YouTube, 16 Sept. 2022
Motoyama, Hiroshi. "Theories of the Chakras." Google Books, Google, 2016,
Mark, Joshua J. "Mandala." World History Encyclopedia,
Nerenberg, Jenera. “Why Are so Many Adults Today Haunted by Trauma?” Greater Good,
Probashir Diganta. "Sexual Assault 'Mugshots' Challenges the Culture of Victim-Blaming." Probashir Diganta, Probashir Diganta, 8 July 2020.
International Forum, 53, 31-42.
Ramljak, Suzanne. Unique by Design: Contemporary Jewelry in the Donna Schneier Collection.
Yoko Ono Quotes. BrainyQuote.
List of Artworks:

Page 51, 62, 63, 69, 88, 89
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #1, 2023
Copper, resin, temperature sensitive paint, lapis lazuli
4.5" x 21" x 2"

Page 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 42, 93
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #2, 2023
Copper, resin, temperature sensitive paint, bead bone
5" x 23" x 0.25"

Page 24, 25, 26, 45, 70, 71
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #3, 2023
Copper, brass, acrylic paint, temperature sensitive paint
6" x 24" x 1.5"

Page 19, 48, 49, 60, 61, 72, 73
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #4, 2023
Copper, brass, acrylic paint, temperature sensitive paint
5.5" x 24" x 2"

Page 37, 40, 41, 43, 46, 47, 86, 87
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #5, 2023
Copper, brass, acrylic paint, temperature sensitive paint
5.5" x 23" x 2.5"

Page 44, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68
Healing and Empowerment: Women Victims of Intimate Partner Violence's Mantras #6, 2023
Copper, brass, acrylic paint, temperature sensitive paint
4.5" x 22" x 2.5"