

# Healing through Creativity

## HEALING LEGACIES

**H**ealing Legacies is a national arts registry that promotes the use of artistic creative expression as a medium of healing. Founded in Burlington, VT in 1993 by a group of breast cancer activists, Healing Legacies now maintains a collection of over 500 works of art and writing by nearly 100 women who have faced breast cancer. The project is as much about the transformative process as it is about cancer.

Executive Director Tracy Tyler-O'Reilly describes the process as empowering. "Everyone needs to feel that their voice is heard," she says. "If you feel strong, you can go back through those doors and talk to the medical people differently. But it's not just about cancer. People with all illnesses need more support." And much of that support comes from within, she believes. Jean Hoffman Franck is an 18-year survivor of breast cancer whose powerful sculptures, cast in bronze, are a part of the Healing Legacies registry. "Having endured all the medical treatments for the disease," she says, "I think the best therapy was in the form of wet clay." (Franck's "Torso V" appears on the cover of this supplement.)

The catharsis isn't only for the artists. "It is an honor to be around when people see the work," says Tyler-O'Reilly. "They talk most about the bravery of the [artists]. One woman attended a slide presentation and stood up to say how grateful she was and that before this, she hadn't realized what her daughter, who had breast cancer, was going through."

Healing Legacies offers a narrated slide presentation, programs of readings and a traveling mini-exhibition. The collection includes photography, painting, mixed media, sculpture, fiber and textiles, ceramics, journals, poetry, handmade books, performance pieces, each accompanied by the story of the woman with the disease and her healing process. Their 10th major exhibit, "Up Front—Art & Writing by Women Who Have Faced Breast Cancer" opens November 2 at the Windham Art Gallery in Brattleboro, VT. *See event listings for details.*

HEALING LEGACIES CAN BE CONTACTED AT 877-815-8247, 802-863-3507, OR [WWW.HEALINGLEGACIES.COM](http://WWW.HEALINGLEGACIES.COM)



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