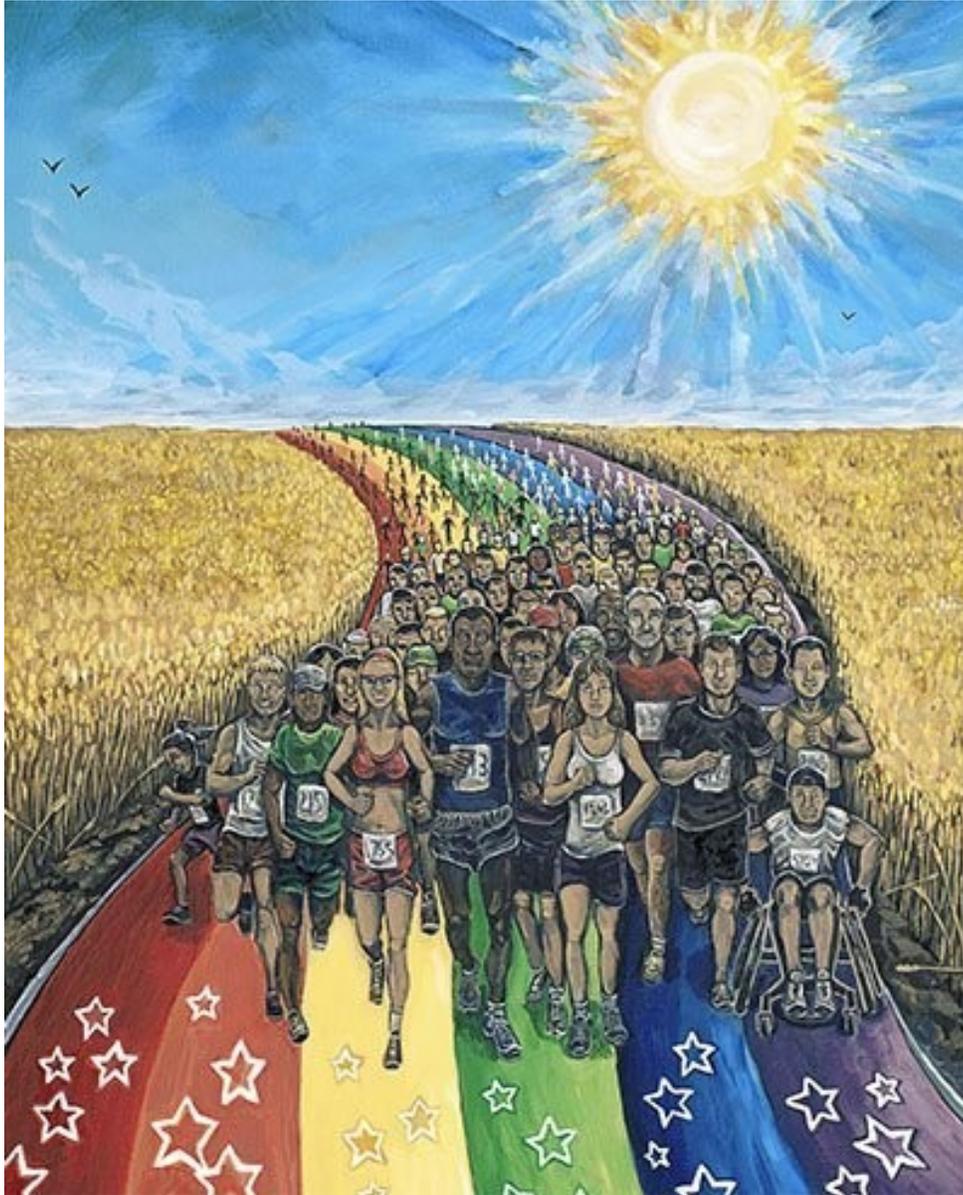


Connecting Through Arts

Does Kindness Really Exist?

October 25, 2019



Ryan Smoluk "The Journey"

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It only takes one person to make a difference.

By Ryan Smoluk

I'm not a very sociable guy. Maybe that's part of my autism (maybe not).

I spend a great deal of time isolated working on my projects.

Art is my life it's my passion.

Although I often work in isolation, I've had interactions with others who have changed my life dramatically for the better.

CONNECTING AND INTERACTING



Ryan Smoluk "Embracing Change"

I actually enjoy meeting and interacting with the audience at my art shows.

I have found that the more I interact and talk the easier it gets. It's all learned!

When the conversation is about the arts my mind is 100% focused and the conversation just flows freely. When the show or event comes to an end I somehow seem to revert back to the solitary guy again. Maybe that's the price I have to pay to have a creative mind.

When I have listened to some of my TV and radio interviews I am pleasantly surprised at what I have said, and how easy and intelligent my words seem to flow.

It's so unlike how I usually feel.

GRATEFULNESS

I am so grateful for some of the important people in my life that have reached out to me and encouraged and motivated me along the way, also for their friendship. I respect and appreciate their kindness so much.

STRONG WOMEN

I often mention the three strong women in my life, my mentor Diana Thorneycroft; my awesome sister Lisa; and my Mom, But actually there are four. My dear friend and website designer Kristen Guy is the fourth strong woman in my life.. I have known her for over 20 years.

Kristen is sharply intelligent, savvy and very funny.

MY WEBSITE TAKES MY CAREER INTO A NEW DIRECTION



As a teenager my Mom and I would often display my art at local conferences this is where I met Leona, Kristen's mom. Leona liked my art and asked if I had a website.

She told me how important it would be to have a website to showcase my art.

I told her no that it was far too expensive for me.

Leona said "No problem Ryan, I can help you with that, my daughter would love to design a website for you."

We exchanged numbers and she told me we will come and visit you next week!" WHAT???? I turned to my mom and quietly whispered, "Did that lady just volunteer her daughter to design a website for me?" I thought now that's never going to happen.

My Mom said "Ryan, Leona is a kind person, keep an open mind,

there are kind people in the world."

Ryan Smoluk "Flying High"

KINDNESS

True to her word Leona and Kristen did come to my home the following week, and many times after. Kristen photographed and measured all my paintings and sculptures.



Kristen and me

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

To this day Kristen has designed, updated over the years and managed my website. I think she has done an amazing job. It only takes one person to make a difference.

Kristen is in the process of updating my website. I am very excited about this new body of work, with the continuing support from the Manitoba Arts Council. All my new art will be ready for you to view on my website by Christmas.

It was kind people that went out of their way to help me up that made a big difference in my life!

To view my website visit www.ryansmoluk.ca

Cover Image: Ryan Smoluk "The Journey" Artist Statement: Life is like a marathon. It's a personal journey that begins one step at a time. This piece represents the colorful journey that people with disabilities are on together. The stars represent our dreams while the rainbow symbolizes the diversity and uniqueness of each person's journey.



Ryan Smoluk is a Winnipeg-based artist who has received substantial recognition for his work. In 2012 the United Nations selected one of Ryan's paintings, which is reproduced on a postage stamp and is available for sale worldwide.