AWARE







Issue# 1, September 2008

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Members of the Canadian Artists Against Sexual Assault are pleased to announce the launch of the biannual community newsletter, "AWARE".

The collection inside features stories of hope, survival and triumph. The artwork expresses strength, creativity and grace. The photographs share excitement, diligence, leadership and pride.

The acute stages of Sexual Assault can feel extremely alienating, hopeless, exhausting and can wreak havoc on the body of the victim-survivor. The first step to creating social change is to stand up and speak out against segregation and prejudicial behaviour.

We must find acceptance within, to be able to teach acceptance to others. To hold knowledge inside that we are human and make mistakes, or are caught in situations where we are helpless and unable to find safety, but also to accept that time heals and memories fade. Being AWARE of the challenges ahead, and the ground below, and gradually leaving the paths, and pain behind.

— Bryn Ludlow



Defining Victim

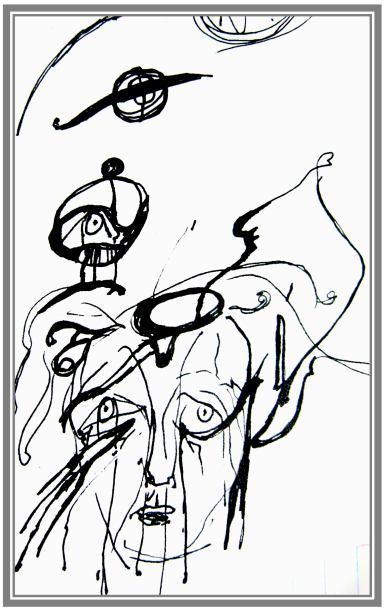
By
Bryn Ludlow

The term, "victim-survivor" was coined by Dr. Rhonda Wells-Wilbon, and originally quoted in the book, "No Secrets, No Lies: How Black Families Can Heal From Sexual Abuse by Robin D. Stone, 2004" because every person who is assaulted sexually is a victim, however they do not remain victims, nor do they forget that they were victims when they move into becoming complete survivors.

In text and in dialogue, sexual assault is stigmatized in society and this 'stigma' floats in the air and sticks to the word, "victim" because of its innocence, and vulnerability. In order to move forward, a victim must become a survivor, but this cannot be taken in- vain, because there are many stages that a victim of sexual assault must get through before they can be a survivor, and before they can feel like a survivor.

Therefore, I feel, as does Dr. Wells-Wilbon, that "victim-survivor," is fitting to refer to a person, or group of people who have been raped—who experienced a horrifying attack on the body and mind—and are not fixed in the position of victim, not completely a survivor and will never forget that they were once a victim.

The victim-survivor will move forward with strength and hope, while honouring the past, embracing their present and standing tall for the future.



Mercy Eudora, Notebook

Contributors

Ameara, Artist

Bryn Ludlow, Director of Canadian Artists Against Sexual Assault/ Artistes Canadiens Contre L'Assaut Sexuel (CAASA/ACCAS)

Deborah Singh, Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape (TRCC/MWAR)

John Trang, Artist & CAASA Member

Larisa Storisteanu, Assistant Director of Canadian Artists Against Sexual Assault/ Artistes Canadiens Contre L'Assaut Sexuel (CAASA/ACCAS)

Mercy Eudora, Artist

Tim Manalo, Artist & CAASA Member

Mandate

November 20, 2006

It is our commitment to the community to act on the need for an increase in artistic education of the prevalence of sexual assault in Canada.

Members communicate strategically on topics connected to our goals and educate the public about this common, but misunderstood act of violence by way of artistic creative production at events and gallery exhibitions. Extending beyond CAASA/ACCAS is the opportunity for the community to cooperate as an arms-length body with members to participate in events such as fundraising initiatives in-support of Victim Services Associations and Rape Crisis Centres in Canada.

A not-for-profit group, CAASA/ACCAS focuses on all media in the arts as a means of communication, with member works and external submitted works. Ultimately our goal is to negate stigmatization of victims, support survivors in a safe and open environment, and to use art as a tool for communicating our values and organizing against sexual assault.

CAASA/ACCAS has a mandate and policy which follows the terms in the Canadian Human Rights Act (R.S., 1985, c. H-6) and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. We have a zero-tolerance policy against libel and discrimination to the group and/or individuals of the group. Visit us online: www.igloo.org/caasaweb.

Objectives

1. Art to Create Awareness

- Introduce the high rate of sexual assault and violence in Canada through the expression of art.

2. Educate Community

- Problem-solve to find new methodologies for influencing change and action against Sexual Assault.

3. Eliminate Stigma

- Use art as a tool to debunk myths and stereotyping.

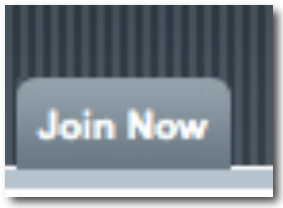
4. Conscious Critical Thinking and Dialogue

- Create workshops, conferences and online topics.
- Provide updated data on the prevalence of sexual assault.

1:4 Women you know have been sexually assaulted by someone they know.
— Statistics Canada, 2006

Join CAASA/ACCAS Today!

Go to: WWW.IGLOO.ORG/CAASAWEB and cick the tab, "JOIN NOW", and follow the prompts to register as a new user.



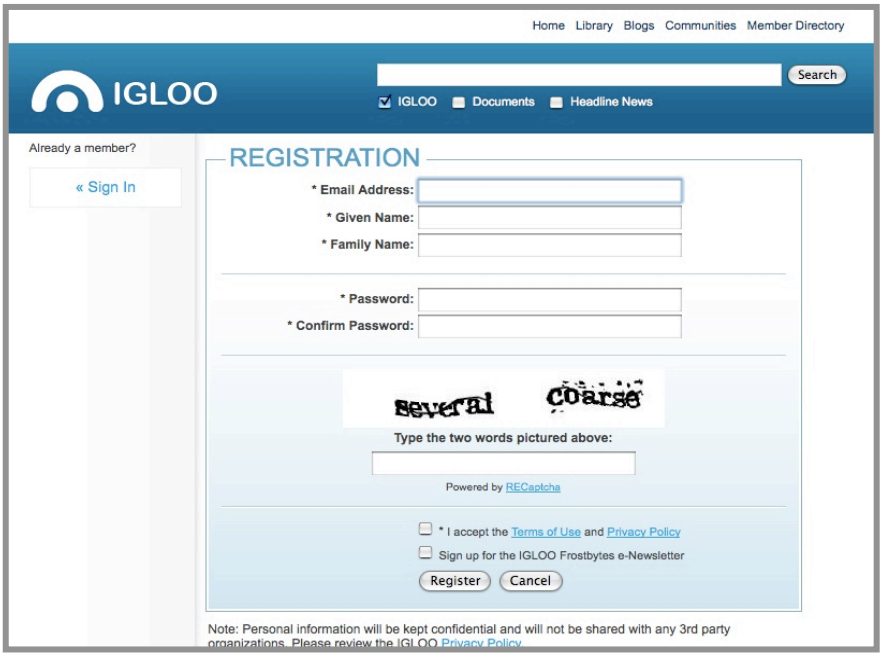
Your membership will be approved within 48 hours by an Executive CAASA Member, and you will be able to log-in with your username and password after receiving a confirmation email from igloo.org.

With your free membership, participate in discussion board topics, read about upcoming events on our calendar, view and submit artwork for the online art gallery, connect to survivor-reviewed links and resources, network with other members and gain support.

IGLOO is a secure web environment, and CAASA is one of many IGLOO "communities". View short video tutorials on www.igloo.org to learn how to use specific features on the site.



Youth Out Loud Walk to Stop Child Sexual Abuse, CAASA Arts Tent. CAASA Executive Team, from left: Alexandra Collas, Larisa Storisteanu, Bryn Ludlow. Photograph by Tim Manalo, CAASA.



"I have decided not to stand alone, so I will work to gain support from others who have been in my shoes to help prevent others from walking in my shoes."
— victim-survivor anonymous

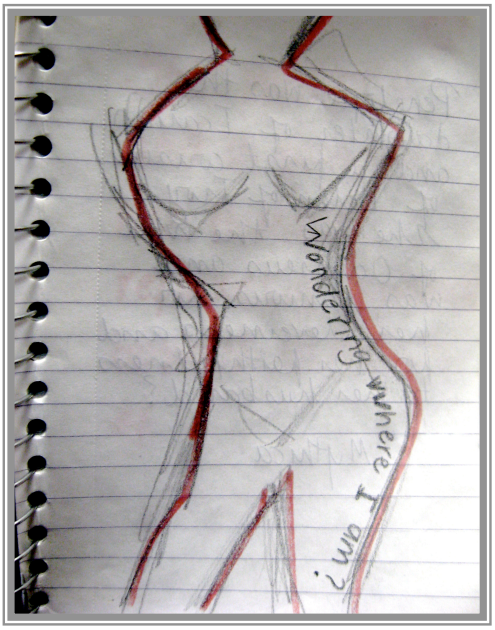
IGLOO.ORG new user registration website with only 7 easy steps.

The Light On Our Stories

A powerful exhibition exposing the emotional and physical impacts of sexual assault in Canada

By Bryn Ludlow, Director CAASA/ACCAS

On Saturday February 9, 2008, members of the Canadian Artists Against Sexual Assault gathered together to hang eighteen canvases, and eighteen corresponding notebook journals on the walls of the hallway at the Centre for Women's Studies in Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, University of Toronto.



Over seventy guests were invited to view the artwork, buy the artwork and read the stories of these brave survivors of sexual assault, who shared detailed accounts of their struggles.

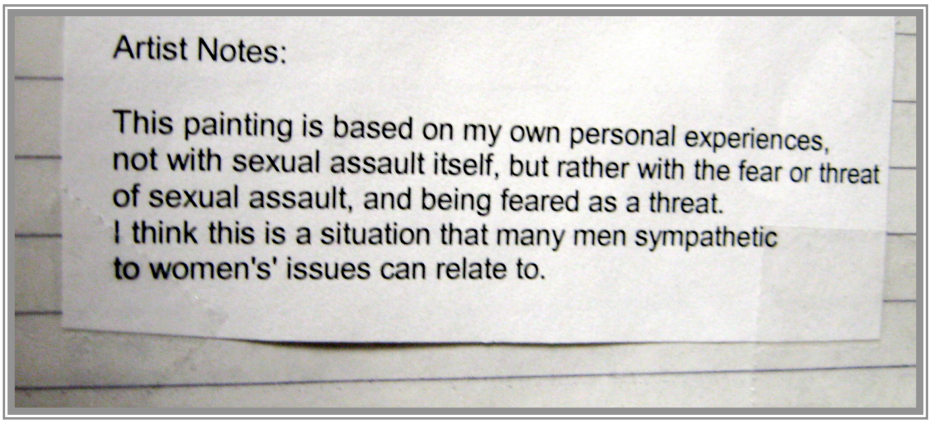


An "underground tool" given to survivors on the crisis line at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre is a pocket-sized notebook to document **their story.** Many victims of sexual assault use these notebooks before or after reporting the perpetrator so that when time goes by, or memory fades in and out, they have a record to use as a substantial piece of evidence for police and at Trial. In the notebooks, artists and artist-survivors shared all or part of their stories, with poetry, quotes and sketches and they hung underneath their canvases.

The core belief of CAASA is to expose issues of violence through presentations of artwork for people to realize that violence is still happening. Victim-survivors no longer need to be silent; they can share their stories of pain, and of triumph in a safe and respectable space.

Out of the eighteen canvases, we sold eleven at silent auction and raised almost $1,000 for the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/ Multicultural Women Against Rape.

View the artwork and photographs from the show online, and on page 11 & 12 of this newsletter.



IN FOCUS:
YOU ARE HERE
A Body Mapping Workshop for Queer Survivors of Sexual Assault

By Deb Singh, TRCC/MWAR

As a counselor and activist of the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape, I was honoured to co-facilitate **You Are Here: a Body Mapping Workshop for Queer Survivors of Sexual Violence** with Bryn Ludlow of the Canadian Artists Against Sexual Assault (CAASA) during this year's Pride week.

Queer women gathered to create art, work through their process of healing, talk, laugh and cry about their experiences of sexual violence. The two-day workshop allowed facilitators and participants to dive into some of the aspects of queer survivorship using art as a tool for healing. As a facilitator, I witnessed what LGBTQ women had to say about their own healing and resistance of violence through the creation of a piece of artwork. The body maps reflected the complexities of the women we have to become in order to survive violence.

The body maps themselves are life size mural drawings/paintings that encompass our journeys around violence and being lesbian, bisexual, queer. With co-facilitator Bryn Ludlow, we wanted to create a space where queer survivors could tell a story or timeline of their survivorship through images of ourselves. Women traced a double image of themselves on mural paper, one tracing reflecting one side of themselves and the second tracing reflecting another. Women used many materials to create the artistic images including painting, drawing and collage.

All participants created their own body maps as well as facilitators. For me, it was an experience of truly getting to share and reflect on how my queerness reflects back on my experiences as a survivor. I felt totally taken over by the process and almost left my participants to fend for themselves while creating the piece of artwork. I was able to express the secrets that rape has made me

(continued on page 6)



"I realized that I am my best resource and by putting it out on paper, through image and text, that it is really not my fault. and I am not alone."

keep, or that is, the secrets we as survivors feel we have to keep because society, the people in our lives can't/won't accept about sexual violence. For me, the process was scary, uplifting and challenging. I realized that I am my best resource and by putting it out on paper, through image and text, that it is really not my fault and I am not alone. Working out some of the emotion, the thoughts, the shared pain among other artist women gave me a sense of community. As a participant-facilitator it also gave strength to be able to hold other women's experiences and stories. I hope that women in the workshop shared that same experience.

You Are Here: a Body Mapping Workshop for Queer Survivors of Violence gave a real sense of queer survivorship, making it visible in our centre and the LGBTT2SQQI community during Pride week. The workshop gave a real spin on our work at the TRCC/MWAR, exploring how art can be a tool for healing, addressing and sharing the impact of sexual violence in the lives of all women.

When we are no longer able to change a situation - we are challenged to change ourselves. —Viktor Frankl





Body maps from participants of "You Are Here," June 23 & 25, 2008.





C O L O N Y

Watch me

Lay me at your feet

Broken ground me

Claim my landscape as yours

Place your fingers

On the hills and valleys of my flesh

Scorch me

Leave me listless

and foreign

Barren and deep

Full of history

Culture

Stories

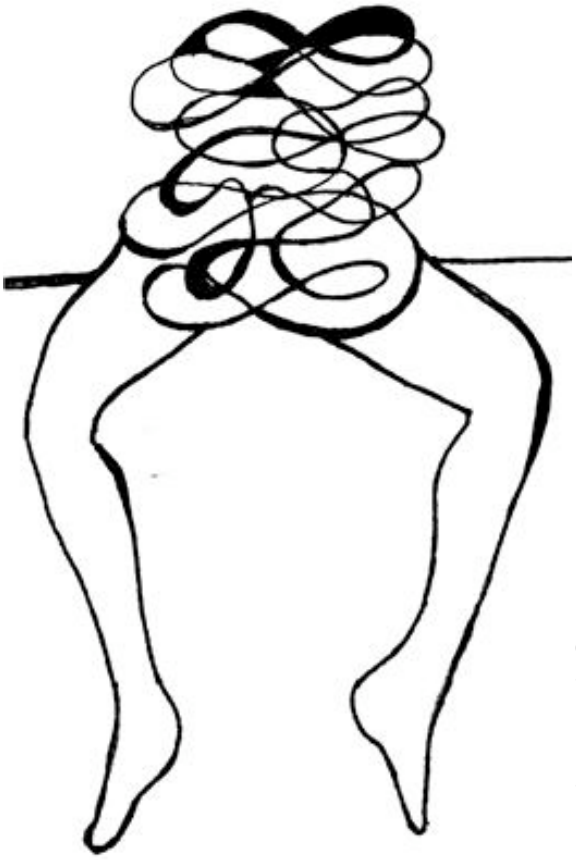
That cannot be told

A loss of tongue

A loss of self

I am a colony

— Ameara, Artist



Drawing by an anonymous artist

I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."
—Maya Angelou

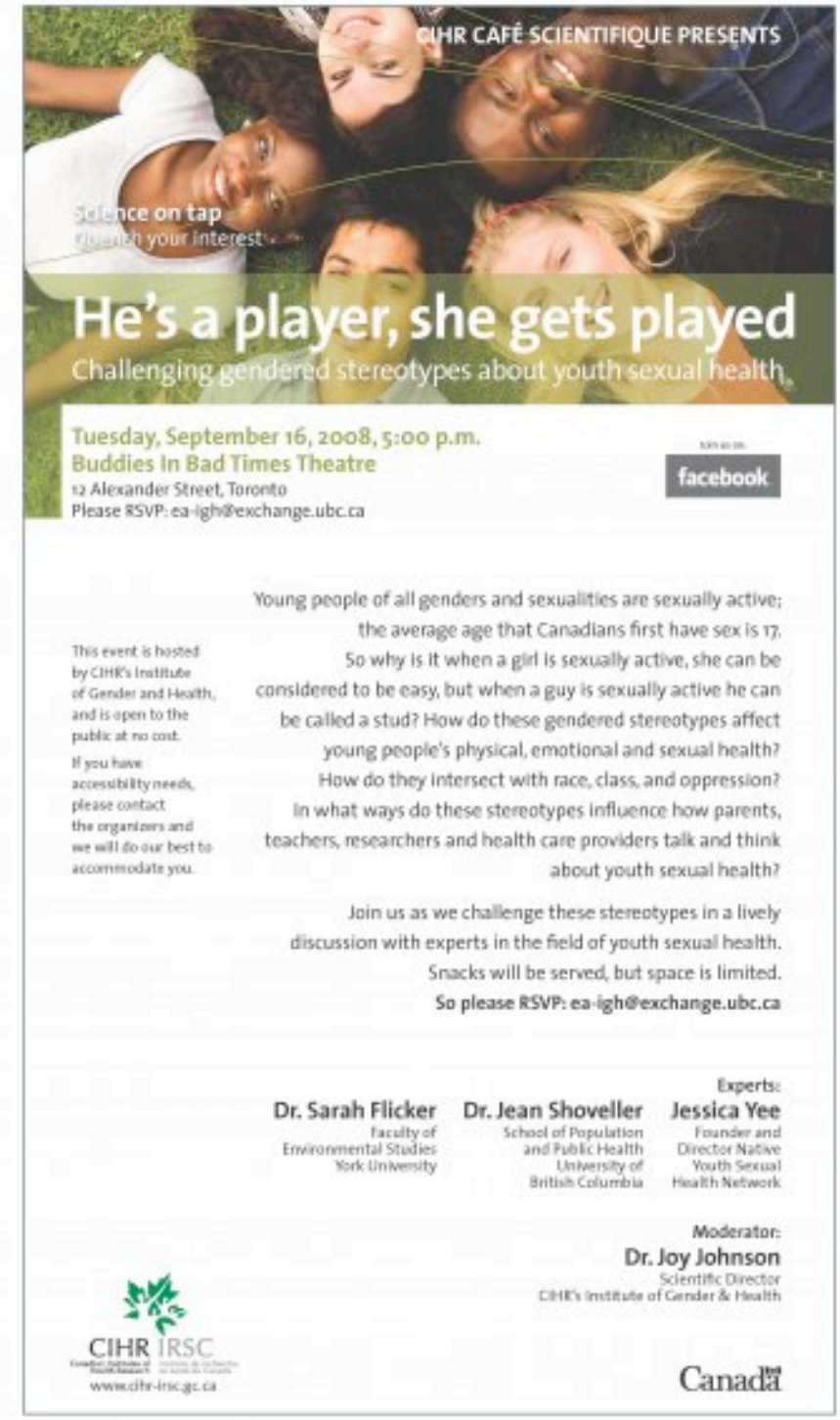
Community Action

CAASA Community Partner, **JESSICA YEE,**

Native Youth Sexual Health Network speaks at

Canadian Institute of Health Research

Café Scientifique





Jessica Yee, NYSHN speaking at "The Light On Our Stories" CAASA Art Exhbition, February 9, 2008. Photograph by John Trang, CAASA

The 7 A's of Healing

Conceived by Vancouver Medical Doctor and Psychotherapist, Gabor Maté, M.D in his book, "When The Body Says No"

1. ACCEPTANCE

2. AWARENESS

3. ANGER

4. AUTONOMY

5. ATTACHMENT

6. ASSERTION

7. AFFIRMATION

Reference:

Maté, M.D, Gabor. When the Body Says No : The Cost of Hidden Stress. New York: Vintage Canada, 2004.

Available on amazon.ca

I Love Myself Affirmations

By Louise L. Hay "You Can Heal Your Life"

Submitted by Larisa Storisteanu on the CAASA Discussion Board, May 29, 2008

In the infinity of life were I am, all perfect, whole, and complete I live in harmony and balance with everyone I know. Deep at the centre of my being, there is an infinite well of love.

I now allow this love to flow to the surface. It fills my heart, my body, my mind, my consciousness, my very being, and radiates out from me in all directions and returns to me multiplied. The more love I use and give, the more I have to give. The supply is endless. The use of love makes me feel good, It is an expression of my inner joy.

I love myself; therefore, I take loving care of my body. I lovingly feed it nourishing foods and beverages, I lovingly groom it and dress it, and my body lovingly responds to me with vibrant health and energy. I love myself; therefore provide for myself a comfortable home, one that fills all my needs and is a pleasure to be in. I fill the rooms with the vibration of love so that all who enter, myself included will feel this love and be nourished by it. I love myself; therefore I work at a job I truly enjoy doing, one that uses my creative talents and abilities working with and for people I love and who love me and earning a good income.

I love myself; therefore, I behave and think in a loving way to all people for I know that that which I give out returns to me multiplied. I only attract loving people in my world, for they are a mirror of what I am.

I love myself; therefore I forgive and totally release the past and all past experiences and I am free.

I love myself; therefore I live totally in the now, experiencing each moment as good and knowing that my future is bright and joyous and secure for I am a beloved child of the Universe and the Universe lovingly takes care of me now and forever more. All is well in my world.



When I dare to be powerful, to use my strength in the service of my vision, then it becomes less and less important whether I am afraid.
—Audre Lord

2007/2008 EVENT PHOTOS



Viewing artwork and notebooks





Pam Patterson, Ph.D, and Angela Miles, Ph.D (l-r) welcoming viewers to show and introducing CAASA



(l-r) Natoya Husbands, Bryn Ludlow (Director), Larisa Storisteanu (Assistant Director) , CAASA/ACCAS introducing the show



Aniska Ali, Coordinator of the CWSE (OISE/UT) and Pam Patterson, Ph.D., Faculty, CWSE (OISE/UT)



Angela Miles, Ph.D, Department Head, CWSE (OISE/UT)



Spoken Word Artist



Jessica Yee, Native Youth Sexual Health Network, Chair, Toronto Action Committee, Chair, Aboriginal Realities, Aboriginal Choices



Deb Singh, Counsellor & Advocate at the Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/ Multicultural Women Against Rape (TRCC/MWAR)

2007/2008 EVENT PHOTOS



A cookie, a curator, and a CAASA member, Monique McCabe



Sexual Assault Ribbons for sale- 25 cents



Student Group Coordinator and Student Life Coordinator at OCAD, Brent James serves up his delicious home made cookies



Alexandra Collas and Larisa Storisteanu, Assistant Director, CAASA/ACCAS set-up table at YOL



The Singing Grandmothers Against Child Sexual Abuse



Lee Maracle, Salish author



RAW Asian Taiko Drummers



Glenn Marais, Jambalaya Productions, and CAASA Member



Joanne Vannicola, Youth Out Loud

Credits

Angela Miles, Ph.D
Head, Centre for Women's Studies in Education (OISE/UT)

Aniska Ali, Coordinator
Centre for Women's Studies in Education (OISE/UT)

Deborah Singh, Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/ Multicultural Women Against Rape

Carla Watterworth, Marketing and Promotions, Aboveground Art Supplies

Jessica Yee, Chair, Toronto Action Committee; Chair, Aboriginal Realities, Aboriginal Choices; Canadians for Choice

Rosina Kazi, Outreach & Assistant Events Coordinator, 10% Venture; Toronto Women's Bookstore

Brent James, Student Life Coordinator, Ontario College of Art & Design

Glenn Marais, Singer/Songwriter, Jambalaya Productions, CAASA Member

Joanne Vannicola, Director, Youth Out Loud and the Walk to End Child Sexual Abuse

Members CAASA/ACCAS and dedicated volunteers:

Bryn Ludlow
Julie Gray
Larisa Storisteanu
John Trang
Alexandra Collas
Michael Long
Monique McCabe

CONTACT CAASA/ACCAS

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www.igloo.org/caasaweb

EMAIL

caasa-accas@rogers.com

CANADIAN ARTISTS AGAINST SEXUAL ASSAULT • SINCE 2006 • ARTISTES CANADIENS CONTRE L'ASSAUT SEXUEL • DEPUIS 2006

"In the End, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends."
— Martin Luther King, Jr