



10TH ANNIVERSARY ZINE.



MISSION:

The Pandora Arts Collective is a caring and open community of people whose mission is to join together around the creative arts as a healing process.



VISION:

To facilitate and support mental health through the social and educational benefits of a free and welcoming creative art space.

PURPOSE:

- (A) to educate the public by providing courses, workshops and lessons about visual arts.
- (B) to break the isolation and improve the mental health of persons who suffer from mental illness by operating a drop-in arts therapy program.



**THE HISTORY OF
THE PANDORA ARTS COLLECTIVE SOCIETY**

By P Jean Oliver, Founding Member.
Victoria, BC. March, 2014





Bucket Brigade

Jean Oliver

Acrylic, 18" x 24",
on canvas board.
Private Collection.

Is the fire abject, raging, out of control? Is the woman beaten, facing the fire alone, are her shoulders slumped in defeat, her back to the onlookers? Bystanders who say, "That is not my house, that is not my fire." Or is

her back straight, is she facing her brigade, preparing to organize them into a front-line mastery of the blaze will they save the little house? They shout with her, "No one knows, but we have to try!" Or are the silhouettes serene, resolved and accepting, cleansed; waiting for the fire to burn itself out? Waiting until things cool down so they can build again from the ashes.

In the first five years of building Pandora, we used to joke that we were only ever thirty days from closing. Like accepting that sometimes our mental health will work against us, in the same way we accepted how precarious things were for us and our members. Denial would have been a kind of neglect of our commitment, in the same way it can derail recovery. We had learned this hard lesson from our various mental health journeys, that blunt realism is usually best. Acceptance enables a person to go to the next level of belief. In this way, we believed that even if we did close, it would only be for long enough to regroup, find some money and help, and reopen.

Much is made of the word closure. Learning to live with mental illness means accepting there's no such thing, and then being all right with that. It means ignoring the mind when you ache for sleep at night, and choosing the attitude you take with you through to the next day. It's all about deciding how we're going to face the new normal.

We need both the artist and the witness-viewer, recovery and stability for all comes from the symbiotic relationship of both (With the possible exception of juried art shows and art critics!)

But sometimes the artist needs help. Art supplies are expensive, so is transportation, affording a good breakfast, and a studio space.

Without the freedom to make art, what would there be for us to see? Artists need the crowd gathered nearby to decide what is their perception of art, and even of the mentally ill? And by association, of themselves. An onlooker? A bystander? Or someone who will pick up a bucket, fill it with water and pass it along?

Art has the power to teach us all how to look at the fire, not as a deadly inferno, but as a strengthening forge.

"WHY DON'T WE JUST RUN IT OURSELVES?"

The Pandora Arts Collective Society is a registered charity where members meet twice a week to experience the healing power of creating art together, while collaborating on community, and art events throughout the year.



Formerly a successful art-as-therapy program initiated by the Vancouver Island Health Authority (VIHA), and located on Pandora Street in downtown Victoria, funding was cut and the program was cancelled in 2004. Remaining members chose to recreate the program as an art collective, retaining the name Pandora. They felt the legend of the first human, and her little vessel filled with hope, encapsulated the struggles and victories inherent in surmounting mental health challenges.



In a mix of legend and myth, Greek Pandora (“the all giver”) was the first human to be created by the deities. She was given a vessel filled with all the chaos and blessings known to humankind. Her creators knew she would be tempted and open it, nonetheless she was charged with its safekeeping, and instructed not to look inside. Opening the container from simple curiosity, with no malicious intent, she released its contents to the world. She closed it just in time to capture hope inside! Creativity is, in the same way, an unavoidably tempting exploration of curiosity, a hopeful endeavor that is an expression of oneself to others. Creation is a gift we are meant to share—if kept locked up inside us it will make us ill.



The box
that became
our logo...



... and
symbol of
our shared
passion

SOARING SUE

in memory of Mrs. Budgie (Mme. Oiseau)

sue Mackenzie



Chère Madame Oiseau -
Je te verrai en haut
Car qu'est-ce que c'est
que le ciel
sans oiseaux

ca siffle sans cesse
sans oiseaux -
tintement



seagulls
in fog -
the sound of loss

whistling without cease
without birds-
tinnitus

songbirds
return-
hearing aids

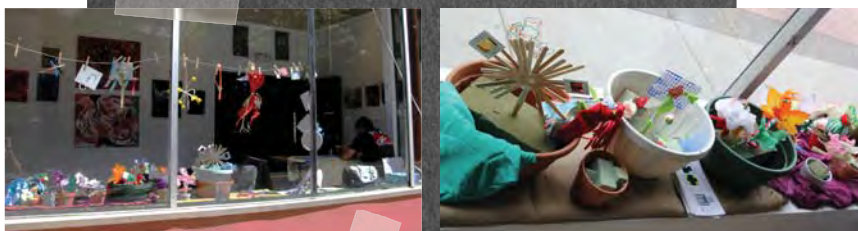
The founding members wasted little time protesting the program's closure, instead using their wits and artistic determination to decide what to do. From one casual query of, "Why don't we just run it ourselves?" grew the seeds of an idea. They would run it themselves, how hard could it be?



Aline Provost

There was a sense of the healing power of the program continuing on, the rightness of that decision that buoyed up these early Founders. Problems were ignored. They'd made art together and mattered to each other, they had become a family who supported each other. Now they would use that cohesiveness to go into business together.

Over the years, many business people and private citizens in and around Victoria have been inspired by the group's determination to self govern. Catching the spirit of the enterprise, all have backed the project with money, resources, expertise, and time. Community members have sat on the boards and given their contributions to the group's success. Many hundreds of participants have been helped to better health by this cost effective project. Pandora matured and in 2013, became a registered charity in its own right.



The secret to the Pandora Arts Collective Society's success is how they have persisted as a group. The program is protected by due diligence to financial stewardship, by a policy that dictates half the board remains program participants, and by not overtaxing their volunteer base. The health of the group is central to any projects the group decides to undertake. If something is not sustainable with the resources at hand, it is not good for Pandora.

Pandora Arts Collective - welcomes Ilyanna and her Frog
"Celebrating Color"

FROG

hangin' on
green
magical
memories
transformed
leaping
friends up
Kermit



Ilyanna

loves life
dreamer
creative
realism +
abstraction
animals rock
leaping lizards
loves puppets
-Animal
esp.

Ilyanna

hangin' on
peaceful
determined
learning
friends
imaginative
dancer
actor -
extraordinary



Frog

naturalist
water bound
sees all
reckless
spontaneous
loves flies

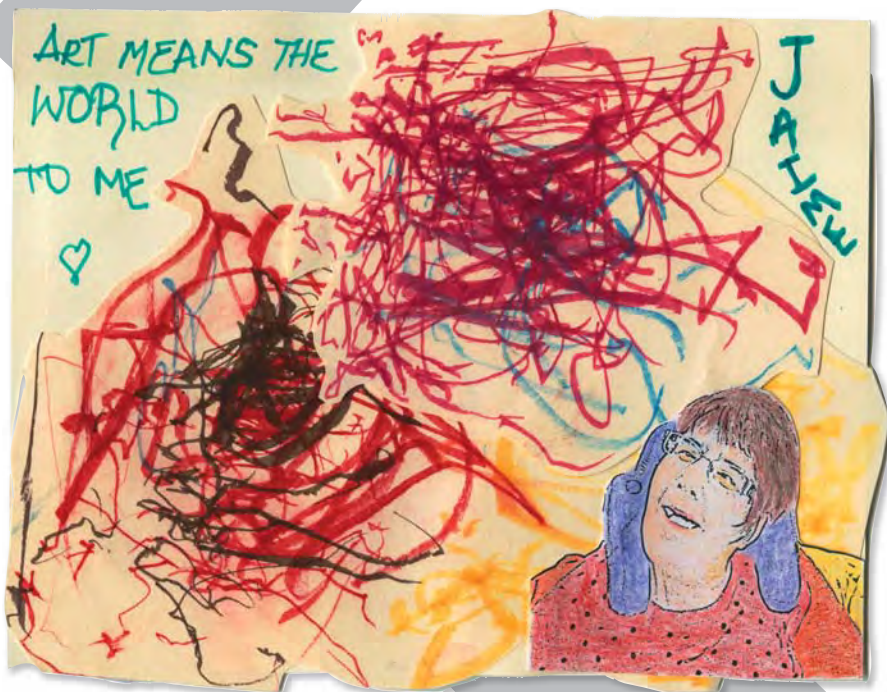
Celebrating Color

Art - this is where my love of color
and energy come from.



With help from the community, the group learned how to write grants, and was rewarded with three years of funding from the City of Victoria. Other grants and donations followed, including successful Gaming grants in years the Arts were hard to fund.

An early art room was provided by Laurel House until space was located in early 2005 at 1923 Fernwood Road. The Fernwood Community Association (FCA) accepted a proposal drawn up by Founders, donating the use of their hall two afternoons a week. Eventually funding was secured for a small back office to house supplies and hold meetings in.

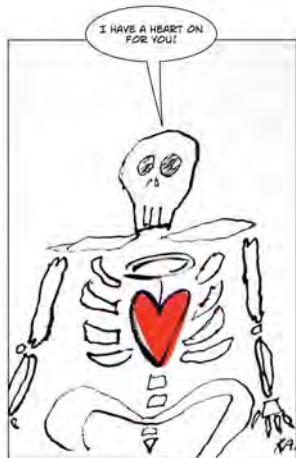


By 2007 Pandora had grown beyond the capacity to run on a volunteer basis. The original members, who had become both facilitators and the first Board members, realized for the group to flourish some areas needed more than their limited experience, and personal health restrictions could support. Member support, and administrative consistency were also needed. They decided to use a sudden windfall donation from Opus Framing and Arts Supplies to hire a trained Facilitator.



IT AIN'T NO
SIN TO TAKE OFF YOUR
SKIN AND DANCE AROUND IN
YOUR BONES

SKELETONS BY RANDOM!

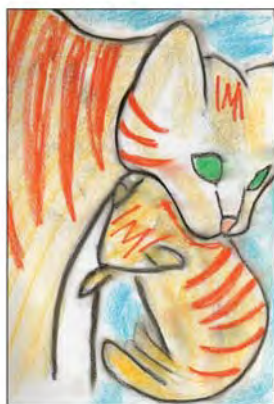


I HAVE A HEART ON
FOR YOU!



I LOVE
VICTORIA IN THE
WINTER.

JUST FOR FUN...
KITTIES!!!



My name is Karen

I love friends

middle name Ann
with an e
Karen Anne

I love the
colour pink

I love butterflies

I am very
happy as
you can see

I love
hummingbirds

Karen was born in Singapore and grew up in Scotland and Victoria, B.C. She lives with her mom and dad in James Bay across from Beacon Hill Park. She has been a member of PACS for three years.

I love my
mom and dad

I love
sunny
days

I love
music

I love
art

I love my cat
Chloe

I love all
animals

I love flowers

I love talking
to people

Do you know why?
I am soooo happy.

I am happy for loving!

They organized on their own terms, the Pandora Arts Collective as they came to be called, would be: member-directed, have no overly-restrictive criteria for admittance, no destabilizing time-limits on participation, no single-funding source that dictated what kinds of programs they would offer, and their membership would include anyone wanting to improve their mental well-being through the practice of making art.



PANDORA ARTS COLLECTIVE
MEANS CREATIVITY TO
ME. Oct. 2015.

joepiedom



generous support.
silent auctions..



group shows.
community connections..

STUDIO LIFE.



openings



inspiration

workshops



In this way, the membership has grown from its original eight members to over sixty in 2012, growth imbued by the art they make together.

The spirit of the Pandora Arts Collective is captured in their slogan "That which creates itself cannot be destroyed." There is an historic vessel like their namesake. With a history rich in compassion and determination; encompassing a dynamic past, present, and future filled with hope

...and an unshakable belief in the healing power of art.



facilitation



expression

participation

FROM THE FOUNDING MEMBERS OF PACS

I enjoy PACS as a way to find place in the community. My participation is always a rewarding experience. The social interplay during sessions is fun, healthy, and supportive. The underlying principles of PACS ensure inclusion, and cultural significance. We have built PACS up, in ten years, and we are making a lasting impact, in the arts, and in the social health and well being of the city.

Clive Beal



How does one describe a collection of experiences that filled in what was missing, and saved a life besides? The Pandora phenomenon is something of a successful mystery even to me, and I helped birth the thing. My involvement with PACS has tested me in ways that forged a new belief in myself. But it was the unconditional belonging that comes with PACS that gave me a way out. A way out of depression, anxiety, illness and despair; and a way back to my whole self through my art.

Jean Oliver

Pandora has enriched my quality of life. Having schizophrenia and being a founding member of PACS gave me the push necessary to get me into the community. Art has helped my sense of identity because art better defines mental illness. I also feel a great sense of accomplishment by participating in the programs and shows Pandora offers. And, of course, the members and facilitators are my friends, as they are all an inspiration to me. Thank you PACS for 10 wonderful years.

Ilyanna Jones.



I've been going to PACS for 10 years. I heard about it back when it was at Pandora Street. It didn't really change my life as much as help my confidence and give me a reason to get out of the house. The people are awesome. I love the energy of the group. When I lost my Mom, everyone was so supportive. Same deal as when I came out as trans. While searching for a tattoo idea, I spotted the motto, "That which creates itself cannot be destroyed." This slogan for PACS became my first tattoo. Thanks.

Madchina Hexubus

BOARD CHAIR

About 40 years ago here in Victoria I designed and operated an art program young people who, for whatever reasons, weren't allowed to have art in their lives. Some were labeled "disabled" others "socially and/or emotionally challenged" The power of art, communication, non-judgement and social support became really obvious. It helped all of my students, and it certainly helped me.

It is my great privilege to find myself sitting at the chair for a Society that embodies all of the aspirations I had back then, and more! PACS is a source of healing, refuge, creativity, friendship, respect, and love. Thank You!!

~ Bill Goers

LEAD FACILITATOR

"With a gentle hand
Support each individual
Creating
In community
And witness
Unfolding potential"

~ Lindsay Beal

TREASURER

I have been connected with PACS for nearly 5 years. I count many participants, the facilitators and board members as important friends. I am drawn to this community of good people because of their passionate creativity and activism, as well as their often heroic humbleness, compassion and honesty about life's struggles. Each year (every month really) PACS struggles to sustain the modest resources of place, supplies and facilitation that serve the creativity and wellbeing of so many. Consider a role as a volunteer or donor

~ Mike Emmi

<table border="1"><tr><td>CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Day Message</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Day Letter</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Night Message</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Night Letter</td><td></td></tr></table> <p>Patrons should mark on it opposite the class of service desired OTHERWISE THE MESSAGE WILL BE TRANSMITTED AS A FULL-RATE TELEGRAM</p>	CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED		Day Message		Day Letter		Night Message		Night Letter		<h1>CANADIAN NATIONAL TELEGRAPHS</h1> <p>Form 6102, replacing Form 2A-T.W.</p> <p>Exclusive Connection with WESTERN UNION TELEGRAPH CO. Cable Service to all the World Money Transferred by Telegraph</p>
CLASS OF SERVICE DESIRED											
Day Message											
Day Letter											
Night Message											
Night Letter											
RECEIVER'S NO.	TIME FILED	CHECK									
Send the following message, subject to the terms on back hereof, which are hereby agreed to											
Time does go by fast!											
It is hard to believe it has been 10 years since the Pandora Arts Collective Society came to the Fernwood Community Association looking for a space to run their art program after their funding for space was discontinued.											
That was now 10 years ago. Over those years there have been changes and adjustments and it has been a great relationship.											
The Fernwood Community Association would like to say CONGRATULATIONS to the Pandora Arts Collective Society on 10 years of success in our place - and we are looking forward to the next 10 years!											
-FCA											

The Pandora Arts Collective Society (PACS)

Pandora: Passion. In the Greek myth, gods created the first human and named her Pandora. They assigned her a vessel filled with humanity for safekeeping; they gave her curiosity to make her open it. She was no more responsible for releasing calamity to the world, than any of us are when mental illness is given us. She released the contents of the vessel out into the world. Where they belong, in all their glorious creation. And the gods saw they couldn't abandon her, their child. Mercifully, they held back hope inside the box, bequeathing the godlike power it holds.

Arts: Creating is an intimate experience and art, like a precocious child, is born of creation. Art is an extension of the maker's personality; it's expansive, undeniable, it comes alive when shared. When pluralized, the arts become a community.

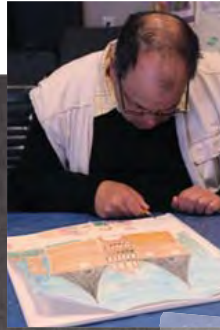
Collective: A collective is the symbiosis of ideas. It is our voice, our needs and skills together in the celebration of strength through cooperation. It is an extension of family where once there wasn't one. It too is community.

Society: To thrive, we need art makers as well as art viewers and supporters. The Collective brings the two together in a wonderful legacy.

And Charity:

PACS can now acknowledge our funders by issuing receipts. If you get us, you may wish to support the work we are doing at PACS. You may even wish to leave us a donation from your estate, or maybe even OF your estate--especially if it comes with a house, some land and a Trust Fund! But seriously, any amount will help. Your gift doesn't have to be money (or a house in the city), it could be of time or maybe you know how to make a poster?

The Pandora Arts Collective is a phenomenon we should and can repeat. Ours is a map that could lead to satellite groups. We are expanding to other days and different kinds of group sessions, like our new Youth Group. It is an ideal that has been met, a hope we know how to share, it is a template that can be traced.



ESSENTIAL SUPPORT



The Fernwood Community Association

This great organization has been PACS primary studio space and has 'had our backs' during the many ups and downs of emerging as a successful non-profit and charity.

Spider's Eye - one of Lindsay Beal's many creative alter ego's has been a generous source of creative inspiration and grant writing wisdom for 8 over years.

The Government of BC through gaming grants has been the most reliable funder, allowing PACS to begin to afford excellent space and facilitators.

Opus Art Supplies generously supported PACS 10 years ago by making us their Christmas charity, collecting and matching donations toward art supplies and since, has continued their generosity as well as serving as an important way of connecting with the community of artists in Victoria.

Once PACS became a charity in 2013,

The Victoria Foundation was able to offer the collective major support that brought stability and the possibility of long-term planning for the first time.

Through IDEA grants, the **Capitol Regional District** has been a steady source of support for workshops and special programmes that have allowed PACS to pursue new ideas and find new members.

The City of Victoria supported the emerging PACS with a 3-year Special Projects Grant.

Harbourside Rotary of Victoria has been able to offer important support in the last year as PACS continues to grow by reaching out to youth as part of our commitment to wellbeing through art and community

Over the past 10 years, art and wellbeing have been served through the hospitality PACS could offer. Continued thanks to **Discovery Coffee** for its ongoing generosity and **Level Ground Trading** for its early support in keeping the cup fresh and full.



Consider becoming a Pandora Arts Collective studio patron:

- Studio Coffee break for a month \$35
- Art Supplies for a week \$50
- Supporting a PACS participant in exhibiting his/her work as an emerging artists. \$75
- One Studio day for up to 15 people \$125
- Studio for a week for up to 20 people \$250
- Little Studio monthly rental \$300

(The Little Studio is our permanent space for drying paintings, storing supplies and communication with the community)

- Art angel for a month \$1,000
(providing space, facilitation and supplies)

<http://www.pandoraarts.ca/>



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