

Scars of the Medium, a Journey in Therapeutic Photography

An artist statement by Jennifer Loshaw

Throughout history, the desire for beauty has been used as a tool to help establish self-identity. Through the drifting dreams of William Shakespeare to the concepts taught by the Dalai Lama, we can see how society defines the self through a search for beauty. Since beauty cannot be positively defined, I find this to be a strange concept.

We create physical beauty believing it will identify us. Yet, our spirit makes up our identity. We cannot decorate this spirit; we cannot illuminate it in any other way than through personality and activity.

This exhibition is a response to the damage my body, the home of my spirit has suffered. The experience is one that most people will never understand; however, the subsequent feelings and the search for self-identity through the hunt for physical beauty may universally translated.

This series served as a healing tool for issues I have faced due to the changing condition of my burn scars. Making self-portraits became a powerful “therapeutic” outlet as I revisited my medical history. The process gave me an understanding that the feelings I was experiencing (and photographing) were temporary. This became a very important step in my development. I grew stronger and more confident in the idea of exposing myself in this manner. Emotions are important. Expressing them in a healthy manner is vital. These images are a gift to those who need the guidance and courage to begin their own healing.