

Artist Statement - Stuart Fuchs 11/13/14

A lifetime of direct experiences of how sound and vibration attunes and uplifts my own and others spirits, I have become a devout believer in the axiom "Music is the Healing Force of the Universe...Music of Love". I believe that music making is everyone's birthright and I delight in lighting a path for others to awaken their "long lost musician".

My first experiences with music were quite informal & unstructured. As a young boy I would sneak my father's oldest (and cheapest) classical guitar outside and spend hours alone enraptured in the wilderness, picking & tapping on strings & wood - attempting to echo and merge with the full chorus of natural sounds that were present. Although I encountered some formal training in my 20's and now work as a full time touring performer and teacher, I still continue the daily practice of making sounds for *no other purpose* than to simply listen to them, honor what shows up, and return to the present moment rejuvenated and reminded of my place in the cosmos.

It is with that intention that I have worked as an artist in residence at the University at Buffalo's Center for the Arts Arts in Healthcare Initiative. For six years I have worked in Roswell Park Cancer Institute, where tonight video compositions were filmed. As an artist in residence I have seen many miracles - It would be impossible to create a complete list of all the ways music, visual, movement and literary arts have improved the quality of the healthcare journey, for each persons experience with it is totally unique!

In the larger picture of arts in healthcare one thing is very clear; participation in the creative process connects patients, families and hospital staff to each other and to what is truly important in life. Whether singing songs, drumming or expressing the wide range of emotions found in a hospital, engaging in creative play honors the individuality & humanity in each patient's healing journey.

I am very grateful and feel truly blessed to have been given the opportunity to combine my passion for music and service over the past six years and during this 10-day residency at the University at Buffalo and Roswell Park Cancer Institute. Over the course of this residency the direction for this performance took shape in an improvisatory way.

Tonight's music and videos are snap shots of what I encountered during spontaneous patient visits. The live music you will hear are musical selections and meditations that for years have served to transform the hospital environment into something lighter. It is my hope that you will honor your own creative brilliance (yes, it's YOU!) and join in with your own contributions when invited. Please remember that making music is simple: it is just the courage to bring your contribution into the world and to move from one sound to the next. As one very wise cancer survivor once said to me: "Fear stands for False Evidence Appearing Real".

I am so very thankful for the amazing and supporting staff at UBCFA and Roswell Park who helped to make this project a reality. It has been a joy and an honor to work with you!

In gratitude,

Stuart Fuchs
November 2014.