

January 19, 2016

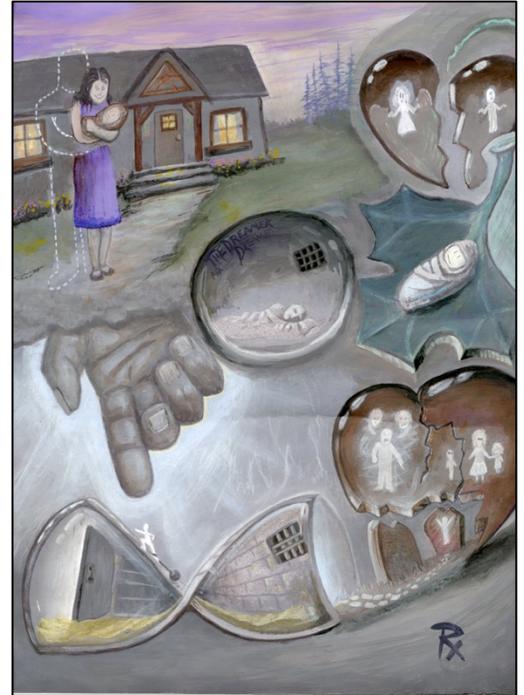
For immediate release: Exhibition featuring the work of inmates from Oakhill Correctional Institution to be held at local public libraries beginning March 3

“Artists in Absentia,” featuring the writing, art, music, and dramatic work of inmates from Oakhill Correctional Institution, will open on Thursday, March 3 at the Madison Public Library’s Central Branch. In collaboration with the Bubbler’s [Artist-in-Residence program](#), the exhibition will bring the art of these men out from the prison and into dialogue with the community. Our project seeks to provide a public space where the humanity of those we seldom see may be reflected in creative exchange between artist and viewer. It also directly addresses the importance of engaging inmates’ voices in Dane County, where we experience the most racially disproportionate incarceration rates per capita in the US.

The exhibition will consist of four components: texts (poems, short prose pieces), art (paintings, drawings, jewelry), musical recordings, and dramatic readings. An [online version of the exhibition](#) will host expanded content and will increase accessibility for those who cannot visit in person. A/V recordings, scans of art, and other materials can be made available to press in advance.

In addition, local filmmaker Marc Kornblatt (Refuge Films) has produced a [web series](#) featuring the artists, as well as a documentary about the exhibition’s creation. An opening reception, featuring a screening of the documentary, will be held on March 3 at 6 p.m. at the Central Branch with workshops to follow in the Bubbler throughout the month. The exhibition will then travel to other libraries in April and May.

“Artists in Absentia” is an initiative of the [Oakhill Prison Humanities Project](#). The OPHP was established as a unified UW-based organization in 2013, bringing together individuals and groups who have been offering evening classes to inmates for nearly a decade at Oakhill Correctional Institution, a men’s minimum-security facility in Oregon, WI. The project aims to provide participants with an opportunity engage with a variety of texts, develop various skills, and share a collaborative space for the exchange of ideas. Recently, volunteers have taught courses on drama/performance, creative writing, art, literature, and history.



For more information, please contact:

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www.oakhillprisonhumanitiesproject.wordpress.com