

Caim

(*kyem*) n.

Sanctuary; a magic circle of protection; stain, blot; circular prayer drawn by hand around one's body to invoke love and protection in dark times. SCOTS GAELIC

Principle Investigator/Artist: Amy Schmierbach, Professor of Art and Design

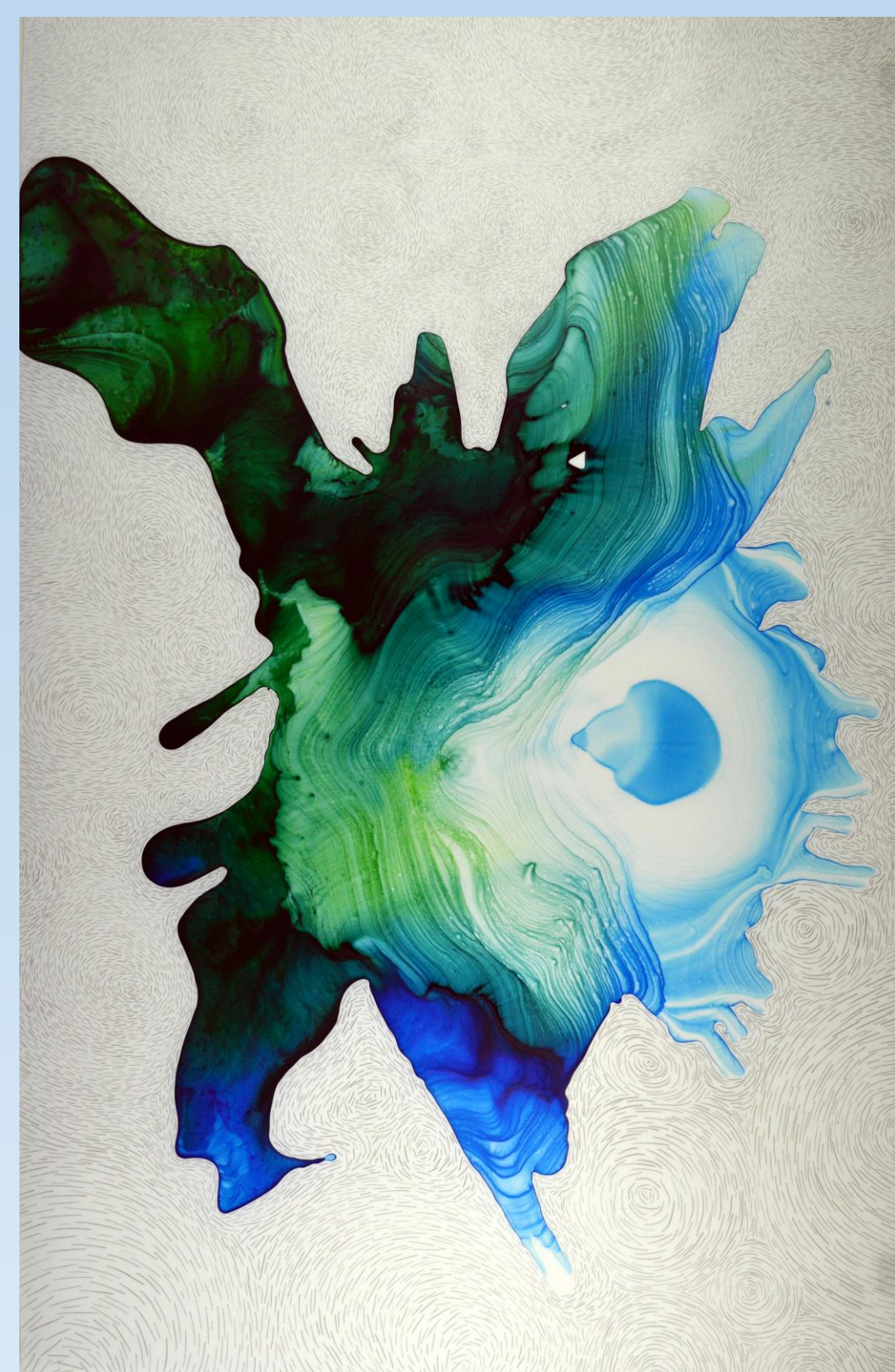
Two years ago I started meditating and with each meditation I drew an imaginary circle around myself. This journey began when I started to search for balance. Balance between work, family, art and life. In the Fall 2015 I received a Sabbatical. I wanted to create art work that reflected this search for balance but also inner peace and external awareness. Meditation was the beginning point of this research. During the Spring semester 2016, I initiated the URE project titled The Mindful Drawing Project. I, along with 12 faculty and students, ventured to find connections between drawing and meditation as we all pursued to be more aware and creative. Building this community of learners was the key to propel my art but also for my own personal discovery.

Process

Drawing, weaving, spinning yarn and embroidery bring me peace and awareness. The repetitiveness of these physical acts are soothing and cathartic but also symbolic of my journey.

Drawing allows me time to think and reflect. With each pencil or pen mark, I realize my presence and it acts as a mantra, "I am here." The large flowing ink splash reminds me that I can not control everything.

Weaving and spinning yarn creates relaxation of thought and mind. Linking breath and movement creates awareness of the present moment. When I loose the present moment, I loose my rhythm. The flaws in my fabric or yarn are indicators of these distractions.



Caim 6, ink and graphite, 40"x 26", 2016



Meditation, digital photograph, 30" x 20", 2016



Circumference 4, bamboo, alpaca, cotton, dye, bleach, 22" x 18", 2016

Materials

During this research I investigated materials that would contribute to the meaning of my concepts and the polarity of my journey: tension, instability, vulnerability and truthfulness.

Ink is permanent with the ability to capture flow of liquid. Photography captures the moment and the stillness of life, but does not always show the whole story. Weaving and textiles is malleable and forgiving, as it is easily dyed, bleached and mended.

Reflections and Community Connections

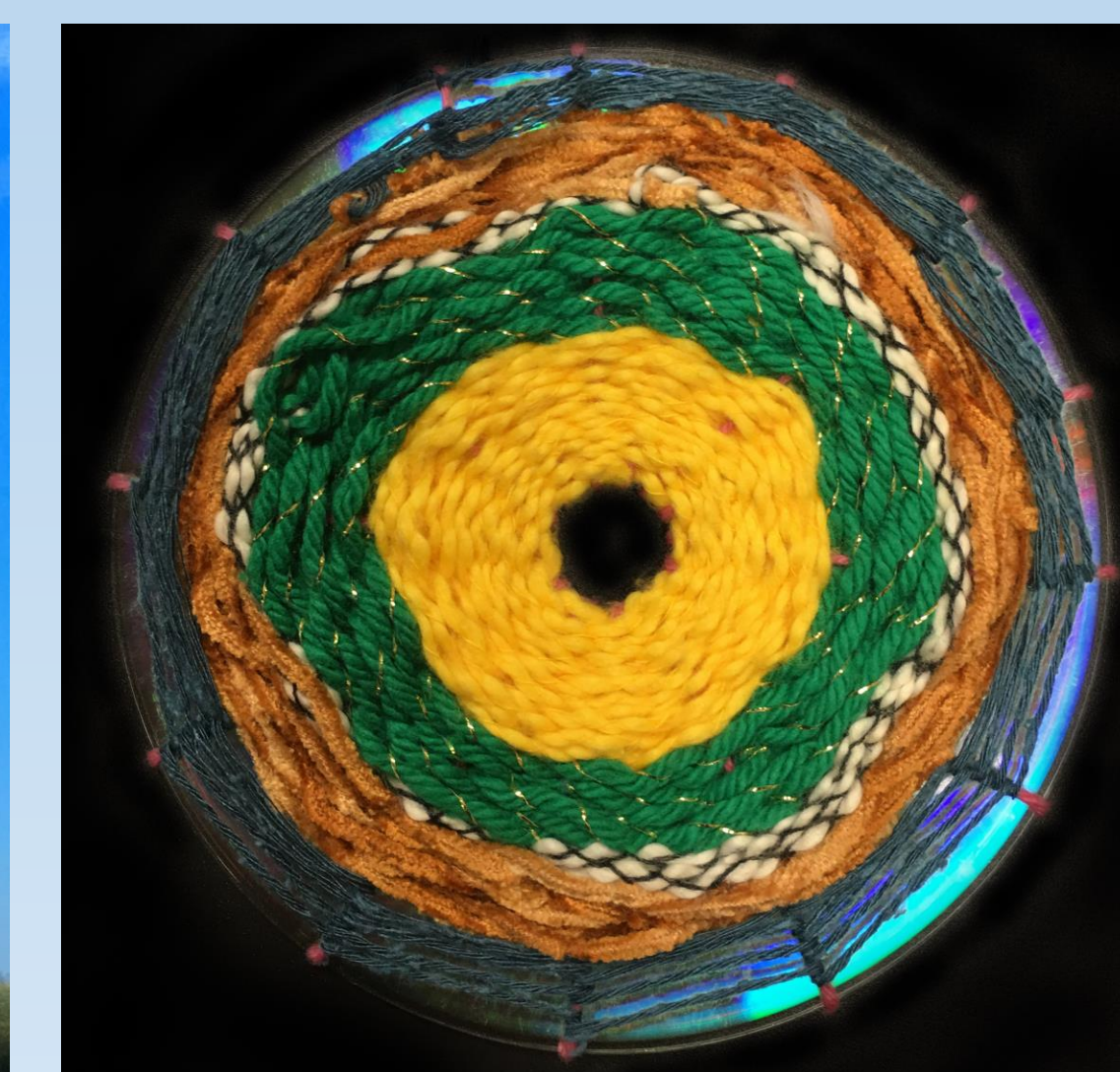
The work of this research is not narrative but instead documents time and reflects the inside of my circle.

But as I continue on this journey I realized the need to bring others into my circle. Spring 2017 started the beginning of a community wide art project that focuses on inclusion and acceptance. Weaving serves as a metaphor for building relationships and community involvement. All of our lives are not separate even though we are all different and have different beliefs.

Schools and community organizations were invited to participate in this weaving project. Over 700 participants have created cd weavings and are installed during the month of April 2017 at the Hays Public Library.



And the sky opens up..., ink on photo, indigo shibori dyed cotton, 10" x 8", 2017



Weaving Connections, cd weaving community project, yarn, cd, 5"x 5", 2017