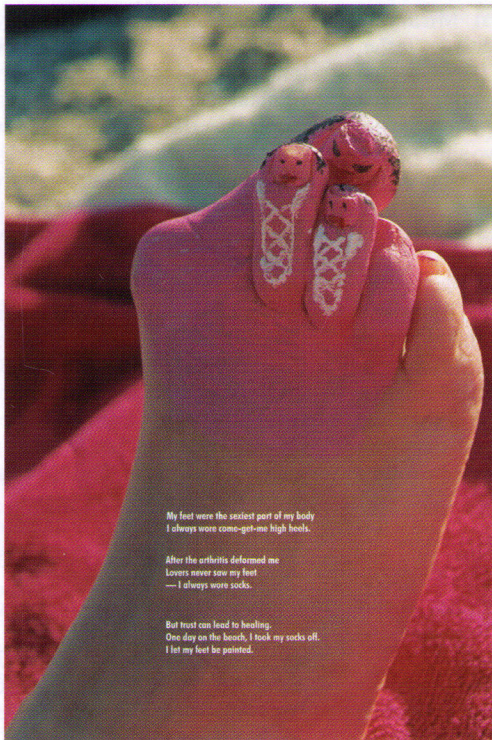


2005 American Psychiatric Association Annual Meeting
First Prize for Mixed Media Art and Best in Show

Editor's Note: The artwork "Transformed By Nature" is a mixed media and poetry installation presented as 2 large translucent banners overlaid with poetic text and hung with bamboo poles. It won First Prize for mixed media art and also "Best in Show," the top prize at the recent American Psychiatric Association's Art Exhibit in Atlanta, Georgia in May 2005. More than 17,000 people from around the world attended the APA Annual Meeting and art show winners were chosen by popular vote. This piece is a collaboration between UBC Dept of Psychiatry Clinical Associate Professor Dr. Caroline W.H. Choo and award-winning writer Paula Stromberg.

Transformed by Nature

by Dr. Caroline W. H. Choo and Paula Stromberg



My feet were the sexiest part of my body
I always wore come-get-me high heels.

After the arthritis deformed me
Lovers never saw my feet
— I always wore socks.

But trust can lead to healing.
One day on the beach, I took my socks off.
I let my feet be painted.

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Seeing my feet as birds
— emissaries between heaven and earth —
was transformative.

Over the years, my arthritis grows worse
but inside me, a pun from the laughing beach hums,
Don't be de-feeted.

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Artist Statement: This piece is about trust that can lead to healing. It documents one woman's journey as she conquers shame, allowing the artists to remove her ever-present socks as she comes to terms with her once-beautiful body being deformed by rheumatoid arthritis – finding humour in the process.

Bamboo poles used in the artwork reference Chinese scrolls and the now horrifying but once erotically-charged practice of female foot binding. Men paid large sums to unwrap the bound feet of their concubines and inhale the pungent flesh. Lotus feet, as they were known, were objects of sexual desire.