

RUSSO ▲ LEE GALLERY

Artist Statement

In the fall of 2020, after a year of sorrow and hard work, I injured my back. Never in my life have experienced such pain. It truly brought me to my knees, literally and metaphorically. Surgery in January of 2021 corrected the structural issue, but the recovery has been long and slow. To this day I can barely stand or sit for more than 25 minutes at a stretch in front of my easel.

The bald women who are the subject of this exhibition are exhibiting deep vulnerability. Loss of hair is impactful for most women. No matter if due to illness, as part of a deep transitional ritual, or shaved for punishment, as after WW2 when women who had relations with German soldiers were shaved and paraded with signs around their necks up and down city streets.

I wanted to show a vulnerability that also faces the viewer with strength and courage, not victimhood. The “nakedness” is in full view. We are all hungry for deep authenticity in sharing ourselves with all our flaws, insecurities, and fears.

Poetry has been the companion to these transitional experiences tattooed on their bodies. Sharing our stories makes us connected and strong.

Anne Siems, Fall of 2021