



**Break the Silence:
end child sexual abuse**

Announcing the winners of the 2015 Break the Silence Art Competition

created by the Communications Studies Thesis Group, Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Education, in collaboration with the Break the Silence research project team, Institute for Gender and Development Studies

**Breaking the Silence: End Child Sexual Abuse
Give children a voice. Be that voice.**

Child Sexual Abuse has long been considered a taboo subject and until recently, has not allowed a platform for those inflicted to stand up against its pervasiveness. It is the aim of Break the Silence to inspire a change. The Art Competition was initiated with an aim to instigate a positive message with its theme ***“Breaking the Silence: End Child Sexual Abuse .Give children a voice. Be that voice.”*** The Art Competition was an opportunity for young citizens and residents of Trinidad and Tobago to share their feelings, opinions, experiences, and ideas on child sexual abuse and to prompt a meaningful change.



First Place

Arjun Ramkissoon

“Breaking the Silence on Child Sexual Abuse”

Acrylic and watercolor, 2015

Using acrylic and watercolor mediums, my piece attempts to illustrate the severity of the impact of child sexual abuse. The demanding color scheme I used, strives to engage the minds of both adults and children and all genders alike. It depicts a young woman whose grown from her state of childhood, symbolized through a teddy bear. She is foreshadowed by her actual child self-craddled by her disassembled arm. This is a metaphor that explains how inhibiting traumatic childhood experiences that go unresolved can have on someone's perception of the world. Self-harm wounds from her detached hand sprout repressed memories of her abuse, only to have been mutilated to become

emotionally painful as well as unpredictable. Memories of trauma in the form of monsters inhabit her subconscious, personified by a stream of blue water in place of her hair.

The piece also includes a metaphor of the abuse in teh form of a butterfly. It is suspended upside down portraying a conversation between an adult or adolescent figure and a child. The grown figure is infecting the child with a harmful poison that is cutting through and cracking the butterfly which is my attempt to represent the grown state of child, after her 'caterpillar' stage which would be represented by the silhouette of the child's face. A chain also binds the adult and child together in confusing and complex confidence. My piece while being metaphorical is nature, is bright and fills the page. It shouts metaphors of the prison that child abuse creates for the youth of today and it does so in a way that conveys obvious signs of heartbreak and harm among children.



Second Place

Aneesa Karim

"Behind a Closed Door"

Watercolor, 2015

Alone in their home, he stands there lurking over her. A familiar touch, violating her innocence. She is silent, but her silence is piercing as she gazes through a narrow opening on the other side of the doorway. She is hopeful that someone might see her. No longer identifiable to her, its cold sinister hand pulls her blue, fearful body into the darkness behind a closed door.

This 18 x 12 inch illustrative, water color piece depicts a scene "Behind a closed door", a taboo and disturbing reality of child sexual abuse in Trinidad and Tobago.



Third Place

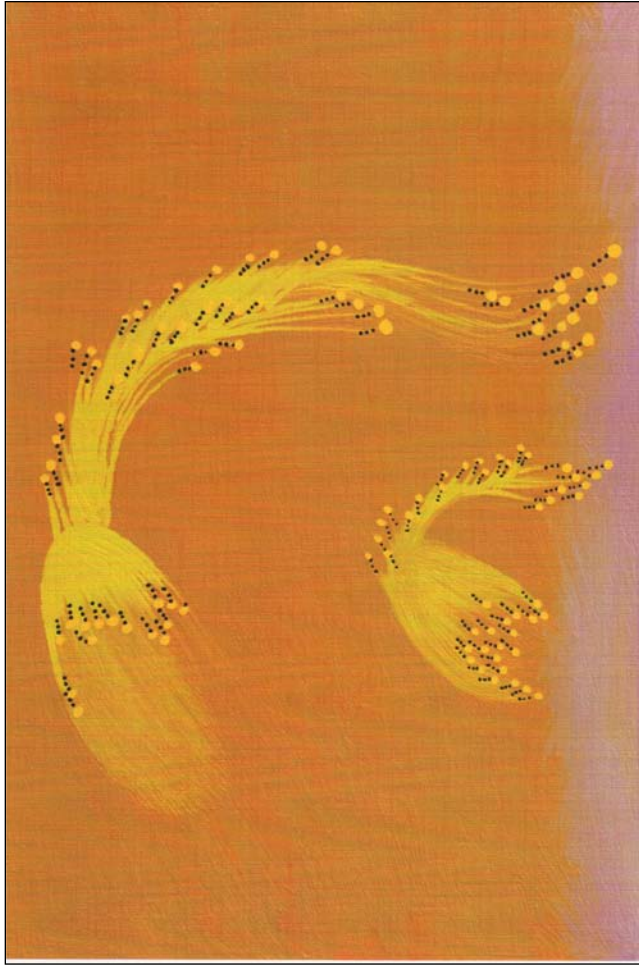
Rajendra Shepherd

"Don't"

Collage, 2015

"Don't" is a stark statement by a frightened girl in a doorway and a command to the adult self not to trespass. This piece is craft and illustration, and captures the tension that exists in this boundary. The child's shadow self is seen as a voluptuous woman and this happens outside of her control. The adult onlooker, who creates this shadow, shouts his fear.

Craft is a medium with a childish quality, yet the message it conveys can be potent. "Don't", as a word, is a powerful and striking statement that children must be empowered to use as a warning long before the sexualised image has a chance to be born.



Fourth Place

Allison Shepherd

“Everyone Needs a Haven”

Digital Imaging, 2015

We have a responsibility as adults to protect our little ones from abuse. Sexual abuse damages the psyche and the ability to love without fear. We must be vigilant and ensure the cycle is broken: keep our children safe; be their haven.