

# FLYING BLIND SCULPTURE And NEURODIVERSITY



By: Ryan Smoluk

Photograph by: Jenel Shaw

Connecting through the art

**T**his piece was a very complicated piece to make. I often think about a concept for years before I actually create it. Fortunately for me I have a very strong visual conceptual memory. It's a useful quality to have, if you are an artist.

I made this sculpture last year while we were in full lockdown. It's hard to believe that the saga goes on, and we are still on full lockdown here in Manitoba. The isolation has been so difficult for so many people. Having Autism has its perks, for me life has gone on pretty much the same. I just stay focused and continue to create lots of new art. Now when the museum of modern art in New York phones me I have all the artwork ready to go!!

### ON-LINE EXHIBITIONS

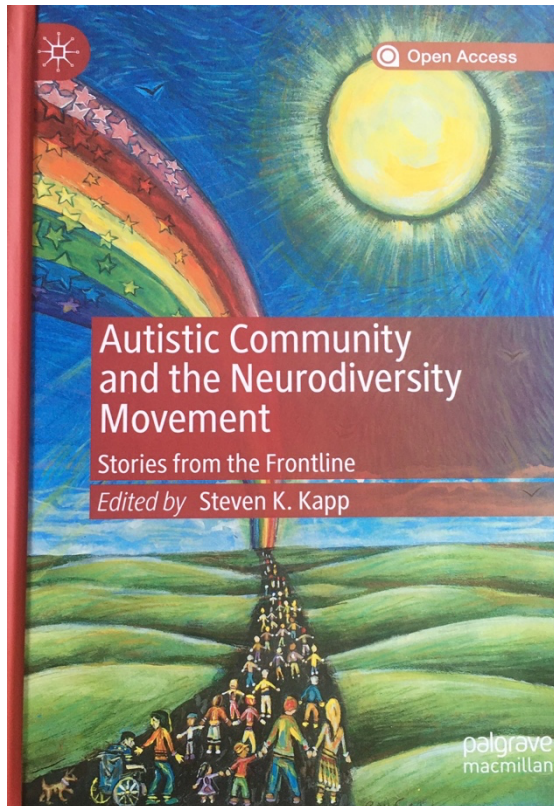
While so many galleries are closed to the public right now, some have been forced to have their exhibitions on-line. Having said that more and more people are becoming interested in the art world (that's a good thing)

### SOLO EXHIBITION

I also had a solo show on-line last year. It was choreographed by Arts Accessibility it was titled "WE ARE NOT AMUSED" it was a comical series of some of my cute animal paintings. The pets are all dressed up in fun costumes. It was a great show. Sometimes we just need to laugh.


## Autistic Community and the Neurodiversity Movement Book.

Editor Steven K Kapp UK. One of Ryan's earlier paintings "The Path" was selected for the front cover



Online Exhibition, solo show with Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba. Poster from the show titled "We are Not Amused". It was a series of comical animal paintings all dressed up in costumes.

 Arts AccessAbility Network Manitoba  
AANM PRESENTS:  
***WE ARE NOT AMUSED***  
A solo exhibition by  
Ryan Smoluk



Where: <https://aanm.ca/online-exhibitions/>

When: Opening November 6th 2020

## BOOK COVER ART

Last year one of my earlier paintings (The Path) made the front cover artwork for the book “Autistic Community and the Neurodiversity Movement”, edited by Steven K. Kapp . I was impressed by this book, its very interesting and informative. I felt honoured that they selected my artwork for the cover.

## FLYING BLIND SCULPTURE AND NEURODIVERSITY

My hope with this piece is to help raise the consciousness for those that struggle with neurodiversity, social barriers and biological challenges.

## DEFINING NEURODIVERSITY

Nick Walker explains it the best , “Neurodiversity is the diversity of the human brain and mind”. We are all just wired differently. I am not a writer I am an artist I express my thoughts through my art and I use my life experiences to draw on. If people like my art then I am happy.

I like the use of humour , sometimes dark depending on the project. Often I offer political commentary and fit it in somewhere between the art, with the hope it will spark a reaction or a dialogue in the audience.



## AVIATION EXPERT

I had the good fortune of meeting with an aviation expert Joe, a pilot who just happens to be a flight simulator instructor.

Joe so kindly invited me to join him in the Red Bird, a very rare piece of flight simulator equipment in the province. He explained a lot about the history of aviation, which I am a huge fan. The experience of flying in the simulator was just like flying in a real plane it was so surreal. It was the highlight of my year.



## ELECTRONIC TECHNOLOGY

With the knowledge I have learned from the flight simulator I now realize that I will have to hire a videographer to produce a short film to accompany the sculpture.

I wanted to viewer to be taken on a journey, to experience a wide range of emotions. The video images vacillate between a series of events from “please stand by”, test patterns, through turbulence – shattering glass and a brick wall landing.

## CLAY SCULPTURE

The body of the sculpture is made of clay. The mixed medium consists of: wood, clay, plastic, glass, paint, and steel. I acquired some actual steel instrument parts from a real airplane cockpit, which I incorporated into the piece.



## PROBLEM SOLVING

As an artist you can't do everything, I struggled trying to make a wooden frame for this sculpture. Long story short sometimes you have to phone a friend!!

I phoned my buddy Bruce for help; he is a carpenter instructor at MITT. (Manitoba Institute of Trades and Technology) I am a proud graduate of MITT from their computer graphics program. They have always been so supportive of my artwork and career even now years later.

To learn more about MITT follow this link: <https://mitt.ca/>

## M.A.C ART GRANT AWARD

When I last connected with you I shared how worried I was at possibly losing my art studio space. The thought of having to move all my sculptures and artwork out of my studio gives me huge anxiety just thinking about it. This is a fear many artists share.

GREAT NEWS!!

Thanks to Manitoba Art Council who awarded me an art grant which allows me to stay in my studio space for another year and buy enough art supplies for my next project. I feel so grateful that the M.A.C have supported me and value my art, I really do try to produce artwork that is different and original. Being awarded an art grant is true validation to any artist.

To learn more about the Manitoba Arts Council follow this link: <https://artscouncil.mb.ca/grants/>

## ALL WITHOUT WORDS PROJECT



## CREATING ART BY LISTENING TO MUSIC

Currently I am creating a new series of paintings called “All Without Words”

The music album is written by composer Justin Morell. And to be recorded by Grammy winning trumpet soloist John Daversa with the Henry Mancini Orchestra and choir. The music album is built around a theme vocalized by Justin’s son who has autism.

There is going to be a premier opening event scheduled for Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup>/2021 in Miami, FL. This project is an artist’s dream. I just listen to the most amazing jazz music and paint how it makes me feel and how I interpret the music. How cool is that?? I will keep you posted!

To learn more about this project follow the link:

<http://www.allwithoutwords.org/>



To see more [www.ryansmoluk.ca](http://www.ryansmoluk.ca)

