HOLLY KING

ARTIST STATEMENT

This piece functions to cast my inside shadow out. The creation of a shadow box comes from a maritime tradition, so it seemed appropriate to depict the scene of my experience being date raped when I was 16 by my boyfriend who was a student at the maritime academy. The shadow side of his peers was exposed when they trapped us in his dorm room till the deed was done. Like many victims of sexual abuse, after the fact, I was humiliated and called a “whore”. My boyfriend made me promise not to tell anyone, not even my best friend. He coerced me by saying if anyone found out what had happened, he would get kicked out of school. I drove home crying and telling myself I had to forget what happened. He even apologized for it later and I didn’t know what he was talking about. I had forgotten for decades. Now in my 60’s I can see how the experience shaped my self-concept and ways of being in relationships. Creating this piece was a process filled with foibles and anxiety. After forcing myself to complete it, I found myself lighter.  The outcome somehow doesn’t seem to reflect the pain of the story or process. I guess even some scars can be cute. Like Alice in wonderland eating the cake and almost drowning in her own tears I was transported away from my shadowy secret into a light filled with a new narrative of healing.