FINDING PARKINSONS

Doing Battle With My Brain

C. David Thomas

Finding Parkinson's is the story of my battle against this neuro degenerative disease. I was diagnosed in 2015, as a result of my exposure to Agent Orange while stationed in Vietnam in 1969-70. Through my art I have given you a window into my world and my battle against my brain.

C. David Thomas

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Introduction "We Are Our Brains" by Dan L. Monroe
Catalogue text by David Thomas
Edited by Johanna Branson, PhD.

Vietnam Translation by Le Cung Hau

This photograph was taken in 1969, on Engineer Hill located just outside of Pleiku, South Vietnam. I was sitting in the jeep that I drove the Battalion Executive Officer Major Jim Yannekis to visit areas where we were doing construction, mostly road paving. The Major didn't believe in going from city to city in large convoys. He felt that we were safer going it alone and that the enemy wouldn't give away their position for one lonely jeep. His instincts were apparently correct and we both returned home safely after our one year tour in Vietnam.

INTRODUCTION

I was one of 550,00 US soldiers in Vietnam in 1969. I was stationed in the central highlands working in support of combat engineering, including the use of Agent Orange.

When I returned to the U.S. in 1970, I continued my career as an artist, making work about the Vietnamese people. The prints that form the basis of this exhibition were made in 1976-1986. They had no specific subject matter; I was exploring printmaking processes and color. I left them largely unfinished.

I returned to Vietnam in 1987. This visit was the catalyst to establish the Indochina Arts Partnership, which showcased the artists of Vietnam for 24 years. From 1988 to 2012 I traveled to Vietnam constantly in support of this work.

In 2015 I was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease, which our government recognizes as being associated with exposure to Agent Orange. On December 14, 2020, I saw my brain for the first time in MRI brain scans. These scans compelled me to create visual images of my fight with my brain disease. These images fall into two categories:

1. Brainscapes: collages of images of my face and MRI scans of my brain
2. Rediscovered prints abandoned in 1986; the Brainscapes were combined with these earlier lithographs, allowing me to complete them.


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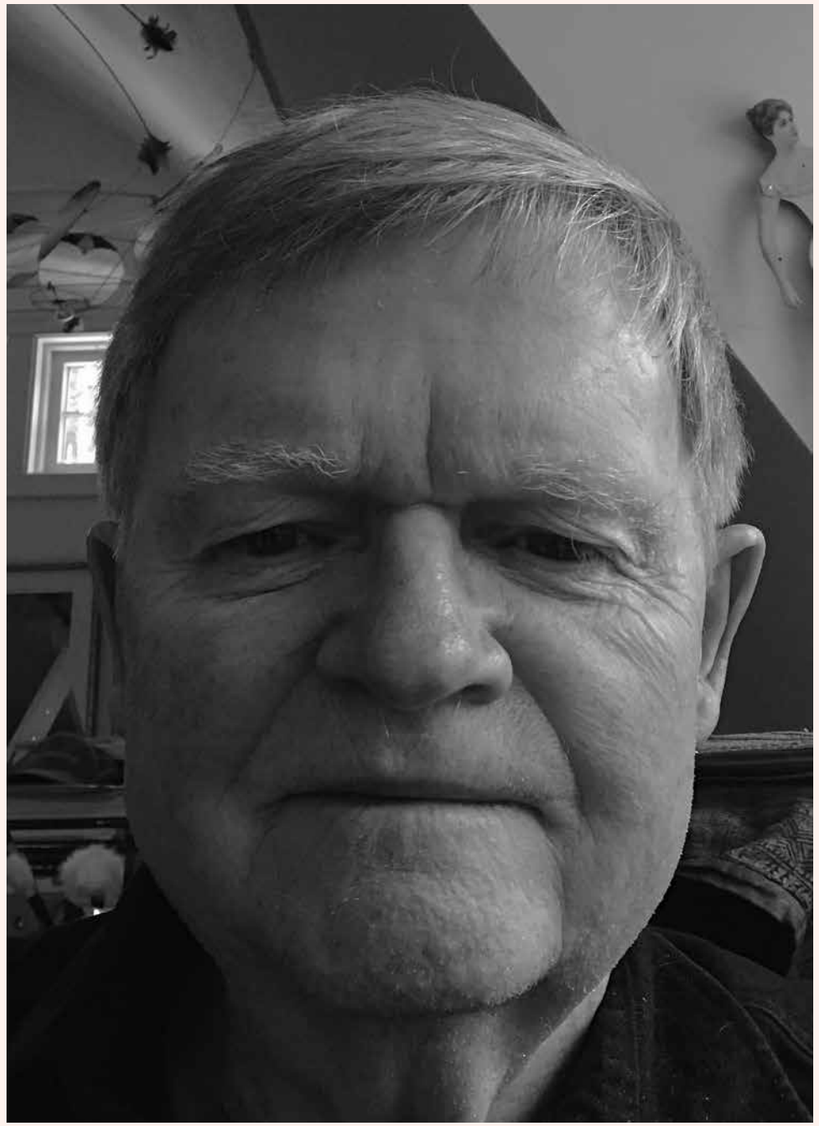


WE ARE OUR BRAINS

Commonsense ideas regarding our brains, our relationship to the external world, and the nature of Self shape how we broadly think about ourselves and the world. Most people believe our brains acquire information from the external world through our senses and then process this information to create an accurate representation of reality. Most further believe we are fully conscious of this reality, and we primarily make conscious decisions to navigate it.

These ideas derive from many sources. Some are thousands of years old. Yet, compelling as they may seem, they are pure fiction.

The reality we experience is not an accurate representation of the world "out there." Take a simple example. We have a blind spot in the vision of each eye that wipes out 12 degrees of our visual field. So why don't we experience this blindness? Our brains borrow visual data from outside these blind spots and fill in the blind areas. Consequently, we believe we see a seamless visual field, though a significant part of what we see is an illusion.

While eyes are necessary to see the world, visual experience is not created by our eyes. Instead, our eyes collect light from a very narrow part of the electromagnetic spectrum. Our brains convert this information into electrochemical data it uses to construct what we see. In truth, we see with our brains, and the world we see is highly abstracted. It emphasizes elements that may be of particular significance to our survival-- such as sudden motion by a large animal in dense bushes. Yet what we see is riddled with illusions and heavily influenced by our interests and even what we think.

Our other senses are likewise incapable of providing us with comprehensively accurate representations of the external world. The notion, then, that our senses and brains create a highly accurate representation of the external world is very simply untrue.

The feeling that we are consciously aware of most of what is going on in the world around us is equally fallacious. Our brains process 11 million bits of information per second from our senses while also taking care of other business, like carrying out complex regulations of our bodies. We are completely unaware of these activities. Our brains constantly make innumerable fast and non-conscious decisions for us. If this were not the case, we could not survive.

Conscious thought, while powerful, is slow. We can consciously process 50 bits of information per second compared to the 11 million bits of information we unconsciously process per second. We would never be able to act or react to the world around us with adequate speed if we relied on conscious thought alone.

Moreover, we can only consciously focus on one thing at a time-- multi-tasking is not possible. Also, we can keep only a few

things in mind at once. Conscious thought is, then, very limited in many ways. To keep us alive, our brains automatically and rapidly take care of myriad tasks and activities. These include regulating all of our bodily functions, coordinating all the movements we make, and determining complex decisions entirely outside our awareness. The latter choices reach far beyond what we might imagine. They include, for example, such fundamental decisions as who appeals to us as a potential life partner. Some people are 'our type,' and some are not.

Studies of identical twins separated at birth demonstrate that the powers of genes and unconscious decision-making are vastly more significant in our lives than we recognize. To illustrate, two identical twins, separated at birth at 4 weeks of age, were reunited at 39 years of age. Both were married to a woman named Betty and divorced from a woman named Linda. Both named their first sons James Alan. Both named their pet dog "Toy," worked part-time in law enforcement, vacationed at the same beach in Florida, suffer tension headaches, and are six feet tall and weigh 180 pounds. Contrary to what most of us believe, a far greater number of crucial decisions that shape our lives are determined outside our conscious awareness and control.

Fortunately, conscious thought enables us to learn many things that our brains eventually take over and do automatically. Driving a car, playing a musical instrument, and playing a sport are only a few examples. After extensive practice, one does not need to think about placing one's fingers on certain guitar frets to create a given chord. It happens automatically. Likewise, we do not have to think about every action we do when driving a car. This extends to the way we think.

Have you ever thought about the way you think? How, for example, do we construct an idea or a stream of thoughts? We do not predetermine every word we use before using it in a thought. Nor do we outline every sentence in a stream of sentences before unwinding them.

It would be impossible to function if we predetermined every word before using it in a thought or outlined, in advance, every thought in a stream of thoughts. We would be caught in an infinite regress if we had think about every word or thought before we think it.

While we can learn to think in new ways, the unconscious part of our brains always plays a fundamental role and largely hidden role in our thinking. We are the owners of our thoughts, but we are certainly not the conscious author of all of them.

This reality is further illustrated by an experience most of us have had. If, after working unsuccessfully to solve a complex problem, we let it go for a while, the answer often suddenly appears to us out of nowhere. This happens because our brains are constantly working on issues and problems outside conscious awareness.

As a consequence of this phenomenon, we have learned it is best not to rely entirely on conscious decision-making processes when dealing with complex issues. Instead, it is far more effective to wrestle with the problems for a time, take a break for several hours or longer, and then make a decision based on what feels correct. This method gives one's brain a chance to work on complex issues outside of conscious awareness. The result--consistently better decisions.

Discovering our brains work in radically different ways than we have assumed through most of our lives can be an exciting and, at the same time, disturbing experience. The way one's brain functions takes on a far more compelling set of feelings if one finds, like David Thomas, that one's brain is not functioning normally.

David, an artist, an educator, and a Vietnam Veteran, learned several years ago that he has Parkinson's disease, most likely due to his exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Parkinson's disease affects the nerve cells in the brain that produce dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that enables messages to be sent between nerve cells.

Too little dopamine, which is characteristic of Parkinson's disease, produces wide-ranging effects, including muscle rigidity, tremors, changes in speech and gait, and deteriorating cognitive processes. Unfortunately, there is no cure for Parkinson's disease, although symptoms can be relieved to some extent.

Through his Parkinson's disease, David has discovered that his Self exists at the pinnacle of an incomprehensibly complex set of interconnected neuronal networks and other structures and processes. If any of the core elements of this inconceivably vast system ceases to function normally, then the Self is changed. As a result, the body no longer works as it should. Neither does the Mind. The brain and the Self it creates must then adapt to its own malfunctions. Understanding and then dealing with these changes takes tremendous courage because adapting to physical, emotional, and cognitive malfunctions profoundly disrupts one's world views.

David, like most people, gave little thought to how his brain worked before he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's led him to essentially restructure his understanding of himself by realizing he is his brain. It also forced him to understand that many things regarding his Self are entirely outside his control. This is, of course, true for all of us. But it is painfully and terrifyingly evident when one's brain malfunctions, especially when it is impossible to predict how these malfunctions will further develop in the future.

People respond to the news that they have Parkinson's disease in many ways. However, David has reacted in a highly unusual way--by using his Parkinson's disease as a source of creativity and creative expression.

Fascinated by MRI images of his brain's activity centers at a given time, David has fused these brain images with pictures of his face. These images powerfully fuse internal and

external views of David's Self reacting to its own uncontrollable dysfunctions. The impact of these images is haunting.

Through these works, David wants to share information about Parkinson's disease and what it led him to discover. He also wants to share the probable reasons he has Parkinson's disease and the collateral experiences that have shaped his life and values.
During the Vietnam War, his unit, stationed in the highlands of Vietnam, dispersed vast quantities of Agent Orange to deprive the enemy of vegetative cover. Soldiers were told Agent Orange is harmless to humans. This was a monumental lie. It is a highly toxic defoliant that has devastating effects on plants and other life, including humans.

During the Vietnam War, the United States sprayed 20,000,000 gallons of Agent Orange over 20% of Vietnam and parts of Laos and Cambodia. Agent Orange caused and continues to cause many severe or fatal disorders, including birth defects, numerous forms of cancer, and other conditions, including Parkinson's disease. As a result, millions of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians and tens of thousands of US soldiers have been and continue to be harmed by this form of chemical warfare.

In spite of the Army's assurances, David questioned how Agent Orange could so effectively kill plants and be harmless to humans. He also wondered what the United States was doing fighting in Vietnam soon after his arrival. Nonetheless, he served faithfully and bravely, driving an Army Major many miles through enemy territory for most of a year in a single unaccompanied Jeep.

He was especially moved by young Vietnamese children. On his return from the War, he created many images of Vietnamese children, men, and women. In addition, he discovered a great deal about Ho Chi Minh, the Vietnamese leader who ultimately defeated the United States. He illustrated a book on Ho Chi Minh's life that revealed Ho Chi Minh's complexity and his ironic admiration of the American Constitution.

Art has been an essential part of David's life as an artist and as an art educator. Faced with a debilitating and incurable brain disease, David has chosen to share his experience, his new discoveries, and his convictions through art. David's response to Parkinson's disease is a testament to the realization that even though we are our brains and our brains work in mysterious and surprising ways, these facts in no way compromise the creativity and courage of the human spirit.

Dan L. Monroe
Retired Rose-Marie and Eijk van Otterloo
Director and CEO Peabody Essex Museum
Past Chairman, American Alliance of Museums
Past President, Association of Art Museum Directors
Founder of the Neuroscience Initiative at the Peabody Essex Museum

BIRTH OF A FLOWER, 1978, lithograph with digital print, 14 x 22 inches.

BIOGRAPHY

I was born in Portland, Maine, on July 15, 1946, to Charles and Betty Thomas, the middle child of their three children. From 1964 until 1968, I attended the Portland School of Art (now the Maine College of Art & Design). In June of 1968 I graduated from PSA, married my wife Jean, and enlisted in the U.S. Army to avoid what seemed like the inevitable draft. From April 11, 1969 until March 22, 1970, I was stationed in Pleiku, in the Central Highlands of South Vietnam. My job was to drive a jeep and draw blueprints. I also drew and photographed many of the children who surrounded my jeep whenever I stopped.

Above and right: Some of the dozens of Vietnamese children who surrounded my jeep whenever I stopped.

Opposite page: Private David Thomas. This photograph was taken following basic training in November 1968.

Specialist 5 David Thomas sitting in his hooch on Engineer Hill in Pleiku, South Vietnam in 1969

When I returned from my year in Pleiku, I wanted to express my feelings about that year before they faded into the background. My tour in Vietnam had changed my life. I was compelled to find a way to express the asymmetry of the effects of the war on the U.S. and on Vietnam. We mourn our 58,000+ American soldiers killed in Vietnam while they mourn the more than two million civilians killed in Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. As a result of chemicals sprayed and high tonnage of bombs dropped by U.S. military this number will continue to increase in Vietnam for many decades if not centuries.

1971 mixed media painting by Thomas of one of the many children who he befriended during the war.

These emotions took me to the basement of the house my wife had rented on Long Sands Road in Kittery, Maine. Having left my M-16 rifle in Pleiku, and now rearmed with paper and paint, I made dozens of paintings, mostly of the beautiful Vietnamese children I had befriended and the destruction we had inflicted on the Vietnamese people and their land. It was not in me to picket and march in protest to the war. Instead, from 1971 until 1975 I completed a series of paintings and prints in protest to the American War in Vietnam. One of these paintings is hanging on the stairway to my studio to remind me every day of the tragedy of the American War in Vietnam.

I became a college art teacher in Boston, where we still live. During the summer of 1987, while on my first sabbatical from Emmanuel College, I returned to Vietnam for the first of what was to become over fifty trips back. It was again largely the Vietnamese children who tore at my heart and reappeared in my work. I also became fascinated with Vietnam's great leader Ho Chi Minh and painted over fifty portraits of him and made an artist's book and trade book about his life and country.

At this time, I also began the nonprofit Indochina Arts Partnership to develop and coordinate programs of cultural and educational exchange in an attempt to bring our two countries, who had no diplomatic relations, closer together. For the next thirty years I worked with primarily artists from both countries to organize exhibitions, publish books, make films, and bring groups of American artists, students and others to

Flushing the toilet in Vietnam was accomplished with a gallon or so of diesel fuel and a match.

David Thomas (kneeling) at an orphanage in Ho Chi Minh City during his first return to Vietnam in 1987. Many of the children in this orphanage were fathered by U.S. soldiers.

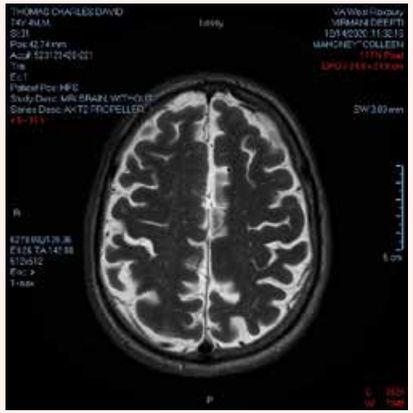
Vietnam while bringing dozens of Vietnamese artists and art officials to the U.S.

Little did I know when I returned to Vietnam in 1987, that I would spend the rest of my life trying to ease the pain caused by the American War there, to educate Americans here about the real tragedy of our invasion of Vietnam, and to humanize the people we had dehumanized in order to kill and poison them. I have been invited into the homes of our former enemy many times only to learn how much we have in common, not that which divides us. We have laughed and cried together and shared many beautiful memories and hopes for the future.

AGENT ORANGE

During the year I spent on Engineer Hill, I never really paid much attention to why nothing grew in this rich volcanic red soil of Vietnam's Central Highlands. I did know my unit was also responsible for killing the vegetation one hundred meters on each side of the roads we were constructing and at all work sites. This was primarily to take away the jungle growth where snipers and enemy soldiers could hide. We were told this would keep us safe.

1970 photograph of David Thomas taken at the airport in Pleiku, South Vietnam.



One of the dozens of MRI brain scans taken of David Thomas's brain on December 14, 2020.

One day while I was driving from Pleiku to Kontum I stopped to wait while a 2 ½ ton army truck, with a large plastic tank mounted in the back, was spraying the foliage surrounding a Vietnamese village ahead of us. When I asked what the soldier what he was doing he told me that he was indeed spraying the thick foliage with a defoliant to make it safe for us by taking away the hiding spaces for enemy snipers. He wore no protective gear and sprayed some of the defoliant on his finger and licked it off to prove to me that what he was doing was perfectly safe. I remember at that time I wondered how anything that killed vegetation so effectively be safe for us.

A couple of years ago I interviewed a Vietnamese family living near Da Nang whose two teenage sons suffer from severe physical and cognitive impairments resulting from their parents' exposure to Agent Orange during the American War. They emotionally recounted having been drenched numerous times by U.S. airplanes spraying the jungle. They saw that this deadly chemical quickly killed everything in its path, even the oldest and biggest trees. After the war ended, they returned to their homeland and began their family of four children, the two boys and two perfectly normal girls. The mother had dedicated most of her adult life to taking care of the boys but both parents were now very concerned about what would become of their two sons after they are gone.

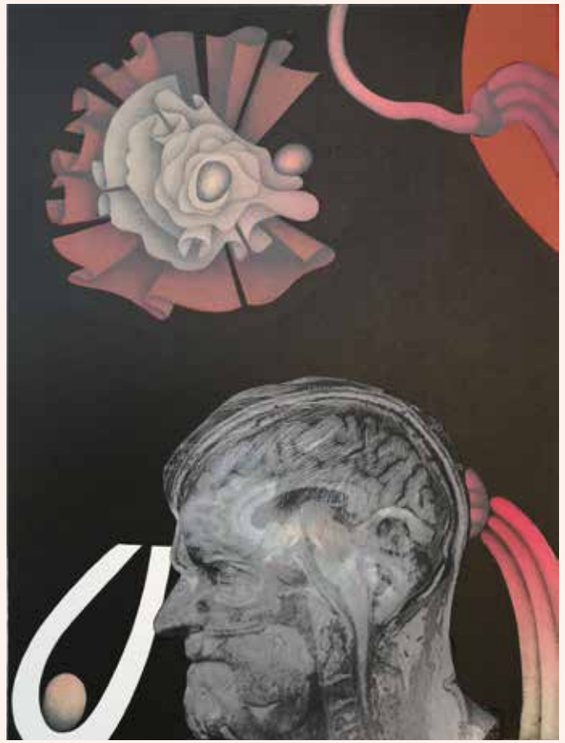
Vietnam reports that some 400,000 people have suffered death or permanent injury from exposure to Agent Orange. It is also estimated that 2,000,000 people have suffered from illnesses caused by exposure and that half a million babies were born with birth defects due to the effects of Agent Orange. The U.S. government has consistently stated that no scientific evidence links Agent Orange/dioxin to adverse health effects found in Vietnam. How can this be? The Veterans Administration authorizes U.S. veterans compensation for those who were exposed to Agent Orange for less than a year while the Vietnamese population has been exposed for decades. U.S. officials have begun talks with Vietnamese counterparts about a humanitarian approach to the issue. In addition, Congress has appropriated $40.1 million since 2007 for environmental remediation

of dioxin-contaminated sites and for related health activities, on a humanitarian basis.

PARKINSON'S DISEASE

The earliest memories I have of what may have been my first symptoms of Parkinson's disease were in the early 2000s when I began to have difficulty remembering my students' names and I lost my sense of taste and smell. Over the next fifteen years I have added several more symptoms, like shuffling my feet when walking and not swinging my arms. At first, I attributed this to normal aging; after all, I was then sixty years old. By 2005, I began to feel very confused but found it hard to pin down what was happening to me. I went to webmd.com and put in my list of symptoms. The resulting diagnosis was a 90% chance of my having Parkinson's Disease.

The VA estimates that there are 110,000 veterans currently living with Parkinson's disease.



1988 lithograph with brain-face digital image collaged.

After testing, I was officially diagnosed with Parkinson's in 2015, and placed on the standard medication for Parkinson's patients to reduce some of my symptoms and given a 100% VA disability rating. I read *The Brain's Way of Healing* by Norman Doidge, M.D. on the power of walking five miles every other day. Since then I have walked five miles every day. I hoped that walking twice as often would produce two times the benefit. I have walked approximately 4,730 miles or from Boston to San Francisco and half the way back. In addition to working in my studio every day, I have also done physical therapy, yoga and tai chi. I believe that this routine has slowed the advance of my parkinson's.

My symptoms have continued to slowly but steadily progress since my diagnosis. Because of the many widely varied symptoms and variable speed of the progression of Parkinson's, it is a very difficult disease to predict. The most difficult for me is the uncertainty about which symptoms I will develop, how strong they will be and the speed which they will advance. I currently live a fairly normal life but have great uncertainty as to how long that will last. I have not yet developed the classic Parkinson's tremor but do walk somewhat like a duck, have stiffness in my back and neck, and I only swing my arms if I remember to tell my brain. I drool at night and become confused very easily. I have waves of exhaustion that can hit me very strongly and quickly.

THIS WORK

On December 14, 2020, I saw my brain for the first time. My neurologist had ordered an MRI scan of my brain to check on the progress of my Parkinson's disease. After the scan was complete, I asked the technician for a CD of the "slices" of my brain. I wasn't exactly sure what I would do with them but was curious about what I would find on that CD. After looking at several hundred slices I became fascinated with the idea that everything about me and my entire life was somehow present in this incredibly complex organ.

I suddenly had a new subject to explore in my art. I didn't want simply to illustrate my brain, so I began this series by taking selfies of my face from different angles and expressions and then combined these with the MRI slices. It was fascinating to see my face and brain becoming one image and battling each other for dominance.

Then I began a series of experiments with these composite images. I added other elements, like one of the orchids growing in our kitchen. I printed some of these images on different papers and in different sizes to see which worked best. I made about fifty variations of this image and settled on about a dozen that I felt worked.

Next, I experimented with cutting my head out to give it a clean profile, took some old lithographs that I had done mostly between 1980 and 1987, and collaged the heads onto them. Many of these prints had not been exhibited because I never felt that they were complete. Suddenly and mysteriously, they were complete. How and why this happened is still somewhat of a mystery to me. The lithographs had come from my brain more than forty years ago and now they had been reunited with my actual MRI brain.

I continued to experiment with other ways of

combining these images. The most recent images are physically woven together like the tapestry of my life and my art. I have completed a couple dozen of these images.

WHERE I AM NOW

I showed the images to several friends and the response was consistently positive. They all felt that the images were "strong" and "powerful". I have spent a great deal of time lately attempting to figure out what they mean by that and why. Maybe their response is in part because they feel I am "brave" to face this disease face on. I really have little choice. Some of the images, especially the early ones, are startling images of me screaming and my brain looking like it is overpowering my face. These images are startling and a side of me that is unfamiliar to them. The most recent images are more autobiographical and familiar to them as earlier prints of mine but now have this face/brain image woven into them. Whatever the reason for their comments, I am inspired to journey on with this series and to reach my own conclusions.

I am concerned that the progression of my particular Parkinson's may not allow me to complete this series. Will my worsening cognitive and physical symptoms prevent me from finding some answers to the questions I have raised here? Or will this increase in symptoms simply become additional material for this series? Only time will answer that question.

One of the biggest concerns I have is becoming an increasing burden to my family. As my Parkinson's continues its relentless progression, and it will, I may become unable to walk or climb stairs or even stand unassisted. I will most likely be unable to take care of myself and even my basic needs like bathing and toiletry. My speech is likely to become more difficult to understand and my memory is likely to become weaker and I will become increasingly more and more dependent on those around me. Much of this sounds like the normal aging process. Of course, all of this depends on how much longer I live.

MY AIM WITH THIS EXHIBITION

Have you ever thought about how your brain works and about who controls what? I couldn't help but wonder if I would have any control of this disease and how it would progress. How much productive time do I have remaining? Would I have time remaining to complete this exhibition? What would I do after that? Will I be capable of initiating a new project?

The purpose of this exhibition and catalogue are to ask questions about the function and limits of this incredible organ. My desire is that these images will inspire you to think more about your own brain and the way you arrive at conclusions. Our brains are at best the combination of what we inherited from our ancestors combined with what we have added since our birth. What we don't know is how this will all be used during our lifetime.

I am haunted by the fact that my brain supported my being sent to Vietnam by my government to kill and poison innocent women and children simply because they supported a Communist-Socialist form of government rather than a Democratic-Capitalist form of government. Why didn't my brain stop me? I had options. I could have gone to Canada or prison. What controlled my choice?

Our brains are capable of learning not to touch a hot stove to protect us from injury and also how to make a rifle that can shoot twenty rounds in two seconds. Our brain can find cures for many horrible diseases while it can also create and use chemical and atomic weapons capable of unimaginable death and destruction. If human beings are to survive on this planet, we must now find a way to control better how we use our brains. Otherwise, we will most certainly cause our own extinction.

C. David Thomas, DFA
Edited by Johanna Branson, PhD.

THE EXHIBITION

ICA at MAINE COLLEGE OF ART & DESIGN, Portland, Maine, March 2 - 30, 2022
MEETING HOUSE ARTS GALLERY, Freeport, Maine, May 5 - 15, 2022
MACY ART GALLERY, Teacher's College/Columbia University, New York
DA NANG FINE ARTS MUSEUM, Da Nang, Vietnam, April 14 - 20, 2023
VIETNAM FINE ARTS MUSEUM, Hanoi, Vietnam, April 23 - 30, 2023

Vietnamese translation by Le Cong Hau

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

"While we can learn to think in new ways, the unconscious part of our brains always plays a fundamental role and largely hidden role in our thinking. We are the owners of our thoughts, but we are certainly not the conscious author of all of them.."

Dan Monroe

"Trong khi mà chúng ta có thể học cách suy nghĩ theo những cách mới mẻ, phần vô thức trong não chúng ta sẽ luôn luôn đảm nhận một vai trò căn bản và đa phần là ẩn chìm trong tư duy của chúng ta. Chúng ta chính là chủ nhân của tư duy mình, nhưng chắc chắn rằng không phải là tác giả có ý thức của tất cả các tư duy ấy..."

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

"Commonsense ideas regarding our brains, our relationship to the external world, and the nature of Self shape how we broadly think about ourselves and the world. Most people believe our brains acquire information from the external world through our senses and then process this information to create an accurate representation of reality. Most further believe we are fully conscious of this reality, and we primarily make conscious decisions to navigate it."

Dan Monroe

"Những ý tưởng thuận lý mà có liên quan đến não của chúng ta, sự tương quan đến với thế giới ngoại vi, và bản chất của Tự Ngã tạo hình cái cách mà chúng ta thường suy nghĩ khái quát về chính chúng ta và thế giới. Đa số người ta tin rằng não bộ của chúng ta thu nhận thông tin từ thế giới ngoại vi thông qua các giác quan và rồi chế tác thông tin này để tạo một biểu hiện chính xác của thực tế. Đa số người còn tin thêm nữa rằng chúng ta hoàn toàn ý thức trong thực tế này, và chúng ta chủ yếu là làm những quyết định có ý thức để dẫn dắt nó."

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

The idea came as he looked at images of his brain, part of the diagnostics of the disease. "This latest series is inspired by a set of MRIs," he said. " I became more and more fascinated with the idea of our brains. I didn't really think about it before. But when you have a neuromuscular disease, you think about it all the time."

Parkinson's Disease is a neuromuscular disease that can include tremors and shaking, stiffness, and difficulty walking. To counteract these symptoms, Thomas walks five miles each day, sometimes listening to National Public Radio, sometimes doing quiet thinking.

Lisa Rogers
Wellesley Weston Magazine

Cái ý tưởng ấy hiển hiện khi anh ấy nhìn những hình ảnh não bộ của mình, vốn là một phần của chẩn đoán bệnh lý của chính anh. "Loạt tác phẩm mới nhất này là cảm hứng đến từ một bộ chụp cộng hưởng từ MRI", anh ấy cho hay. "Tôi ngày càng trở nên hứng thú hơn với việc lấy ý từ não bộ của chúng ta. Trước đây tôi không thực sự nghĩ đến nó lắm. Nhưng khi bạn mắc một bệnh về thần kinh cơ, bạn sẽ nghĩ về nó suốt ngày."

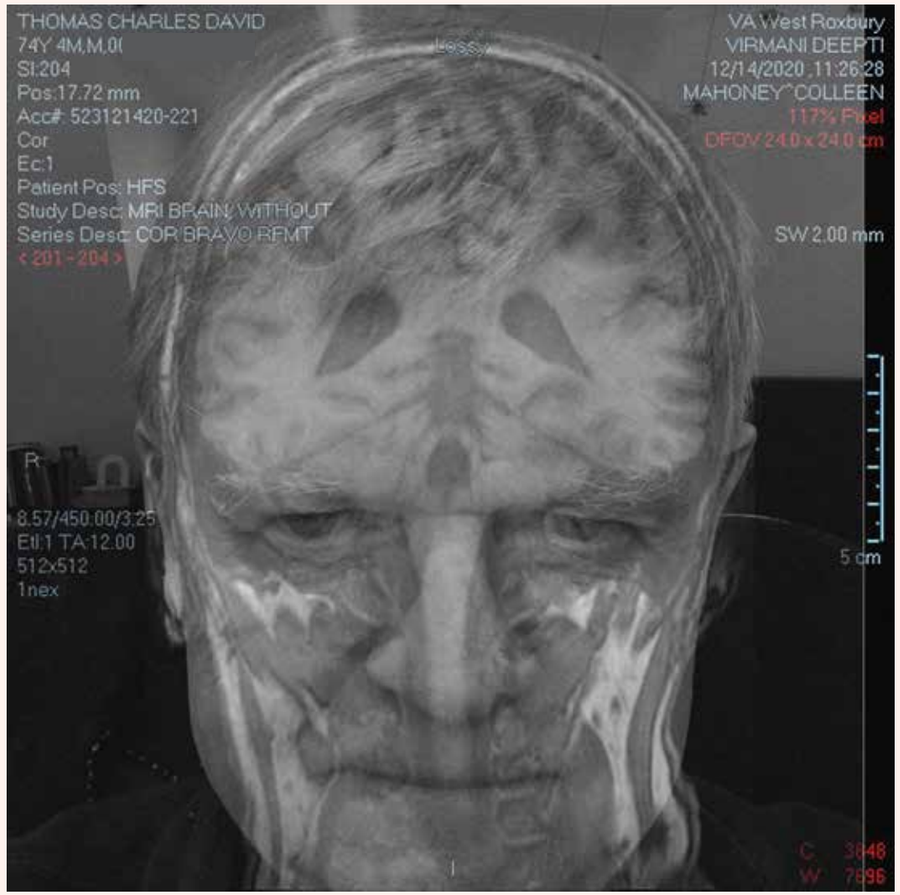
Bệnh Parkinson là một bệnh về thần kinh cơ có thể làm lật bật, run rẩy, lắc lư, cứng đờ và đi bộ rất khó khăn. Để chống lại với các triệu chứng này, Thomas đã phải đi bộ năm dặm mỗi ngày, khi thì vừa đi vừa nghe đài Phát thanh Công cộng, lúc thì trầm tư mặc tưởng.

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

"Discovering our brains work in radically different ways than we have assumed through most of our lives can be an exciting and, at the same time, disturbing experience. The way one's brain functions takes on a far more compelling set of feelings if one finds, like David Thomas, that one's brain is not functioning normally."

Dan Monroe

"Để có thể khám phá sự hoạt động của não chúng ta theo nhiều phương cách khác nhau một cách triệt để hơn là cách chúng ta thường nghĩ trong đa phần cuộc sống có thể là một trải nghiệm thú vị, mà cũng đồng thời là một sự bức bối. Cái cách mà não chúng ta hoạt động thực là một loạt các cảm giác mãnh liệt hơn hẳn những gì người ta có thể tìm được, thí dụ như của David Thomas, não bộ ấy không hoạt động một cách bình thường chút nào cả.

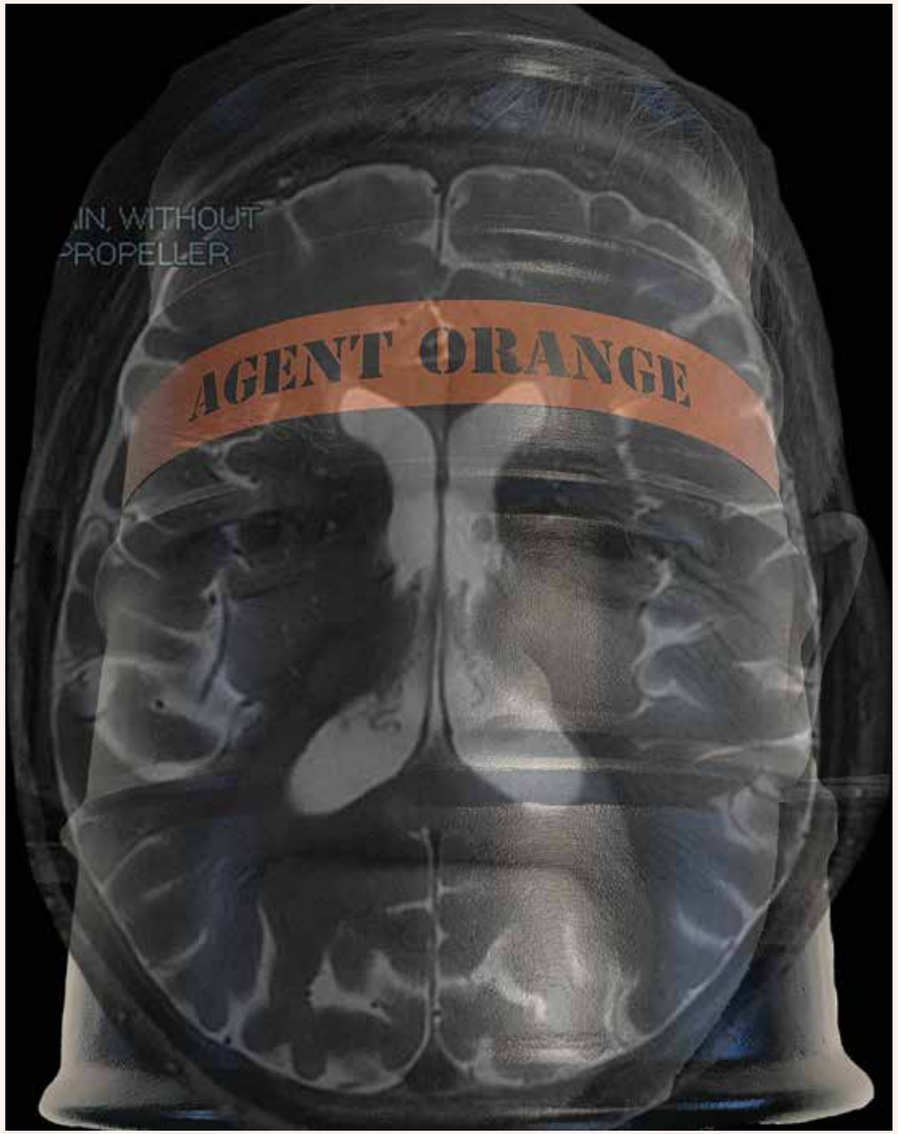


Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

"Through his Parkinson's disease, David has discovered that his Self exists at the pinnacle of an incomprehensibly complex set of interconnected neuronal networks and other structures and processes. If any of the core elements of this inconceivably vast system ceases to function normally, then the Self is changed. As a result, the body no longer works as it should. Neither does the Mind. The brain and the Self it creates must then adapt to its own malfunctions. Understanding and then dealing with these changes takes tremendous courage because adapting to physical, emotional, and cognitive malfunctions profoundly disrupts one's world views."

Dan Monroe

"Từ chứng Parkinson của anh, David đã khám phá được rằng Tự Ngã của mình hiện hữu ở đỉnh của một loạt hệ thần kinh chằng chịt kết nối phức tạp mà chưa có thể hiểu được và những cấu trúc và các tiến trình khác. Nếu có một thành phần lõi nào trong cái hệ thống khổng lồ chưa thể hiểu được này mà ngừng hoạt động thông thường của nó, thì lúc ấy Tự Ngã sẽ thay đổi. Và kết cục là, cơ thể sẽ không hoạt động đúng đắn như nó lẽ ra phải là như thế. Tư tưởng cũng y như vậy. Não và Tự Ngã mà nó đã tạo ra phải chiều theo sự hư hỏng của chính nó. Hiểu và thích ứng với những thay đổi này đòi hỏi một sự can đảm cực kỳ bởi vì thay đổi theo vật lý, cảm xúc, và nhận thức hư hỏng này sẽ xáo trộn mạnh mẽ thế giới quan của người bệnh.



Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 10 x 8 inches

"Discovering our brains work in radically different ways than we have assumed through most of our lives can be an exciting and, at the same time, disturbing experience. The way one's brain functions takes on a far more compelling set of feelings if one finds, like David Thomas, that one's brain is not functioning normally."

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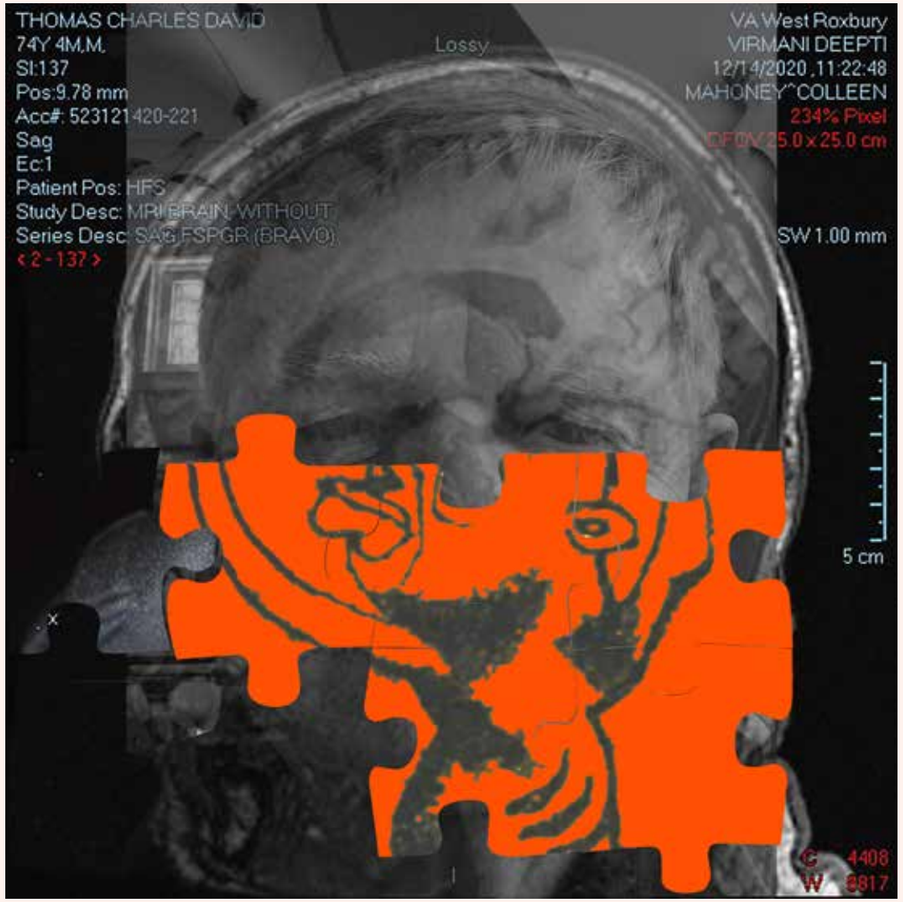
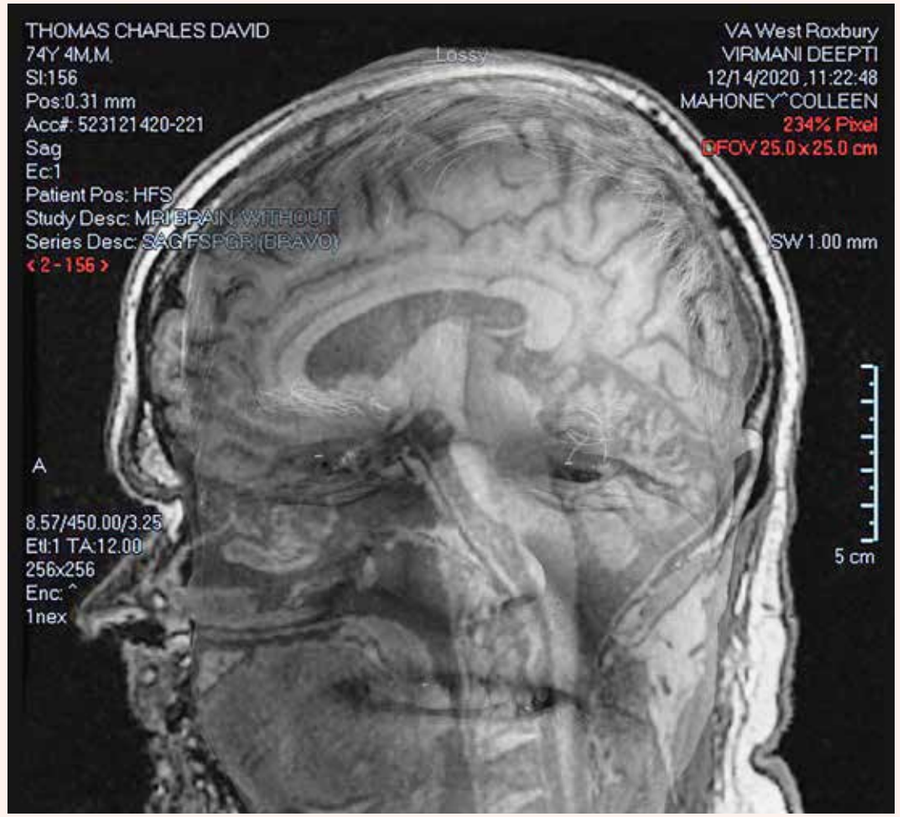


Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

Of Thomas's works, Sherry Goodman, director of education and academic relations at the UC Berkeley Art Museum wrote: "They're both dramatic and affecting in the seeming simplicity of the super-imposition (MRI and his face) while complex and profound in implication."

Sherry Goodman

Nói về các tác phẩm của Thomas, Sherry Goodman, giám đốc khoa giáo dục và quan hệ đại học tại Bảo Tàng Mỹ Thuật UC Berkeley viết: "Các tác phẩm này vừa bi thương và tác động vào cái dường như là giản đơn của một siêu khẳng định (hình MRI và khuôn mặt của anh ấy) trong khi nó cả vừa phức tạp lẩn sâu thẳm trong cách thể hiện.



Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

While eyes are necessary to see the world, visual experience is not created by our eyes. Instead, our eyes collect light from a very narrow part of the electromagnetic spectrum.

Our brains convert this information into electrochemical data it uses to construct what we see. In truth, we see with our brains, and the world we see is highly abstracted. It emphasizes elements that may be of particular significance to our survival-such as sudden motion by a large animal in dense bushes.

What we see is riddled with illusions and heavily influenced by our interests and even what we think."

Dan Monroe

"Khi đôi mắt của chúng ta thì cần để nhìn thế giới, cảm nghiệm hình ảnh lại không phải tạo ra bằng mắt. Thay vì vậy, đôi mắt chỉ nhận một phần rất nhỏ của ánh sáng trong quang phổ điện từ.

Não của chúng ta biến đổi thông tin này thành dữ liệu điện hóa để tái tạo những gì chúng ta nhìn thấy. Sự thật là, chúng ta chỉ nhìn thấy bằng não của chúng ta, mà cái thế giới chúng ta thấy thì rất là trừu tượng. Nó nhấn mạnh
những thành phần mà có thể chỉ đặc thù cho sự tồn tại của chúng ta – thí dụ như là những động đậy đột ngột của một con thú lớn trong bụi rậm.

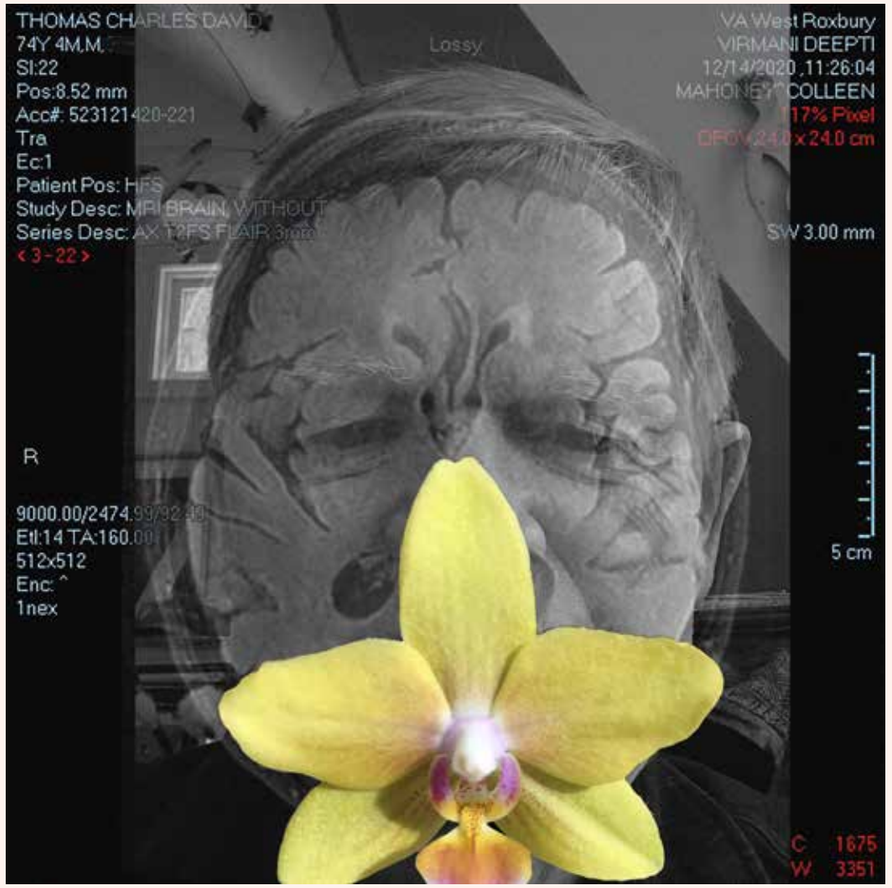
Tuy vậy, những gì chúng ta thấy thì ẩn đầy bí hiểm với ảo giác và ảnh hưởng nặng nề với các quan tâm của chúng ta và ngay cả cách

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

I am haunted by the fact that my brain supported my being sent to Vietnam by my government to kill and poison innocent women and children simply because they supported a Communist-Socialist form of government rather than a Democratic-Capitalist form of government. Why didn't my brain stop me? I had options. I could have gone to Canada or prison. What controlled my choice?

Davaid Thomas

Tôi bị ám ảnh bởi thực tế rằng não tôi ủng hộ việc chính phủ của tôi thuyên chuyển tôi đến Việt Nam để giết hại và đầu độc những người phụ nữ và trẻ con vô tội chỉ bởi vì họ theo Cộng Sản Xã Hội chủ nghĩa của nhà nước thay vì một chủ nghĩa Dân Chủ Tư Bản. Tại sao não của tôi không ngăn cản tôi? Tôi đã có sự lựa chọn. Tôi có thể chọn được chuyển đến Canada hay ngồi tù. Cái gì đã điều khiển sự chọn lựa của tôi vậy?



Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

On December 14, 2020, I saw my brain for the first time. My neurologist had ordered an MRI scan of my brain to check on the progress of my Parkinson's disease. After the scan was complete, I asked the technician for a CD of the "slices" of my brain. I wasn't exactly sure what I would do with them but was curious about what I would find on that CD. After looking at several hundred slices I became fascinated with the idea that everything about me and my entire life was somehow present in this incredibly complex organ.

David Thomas

Ngày 14 tháng mười hai, 2020, là lần đầu tiên tôi nhìn thấy não tôi. Bác sĩ thần kinh của tôi đã đặt lệnh chụp MRI não tôi để theo dõi tiến trình bệnh Parkinson. Khi mà kết quả scan nhận được, tôi hỏi xin y sĩ một CD các "lớp cắt" não của tôi. Lúc ấy tôi không chắc lắm là sẽ định làm gì với nó những cũng tò mò muốn biết trên CD đó là hình gì. Sau khi nhìn hàng trăm ảnh cắt lớp tôi bắt đầu háo hức với ý tưởng rằng mọi thứ về tôi và toàn thể cuộc đời của tôi bằng cách nào đó đã thể hiện trong cái nội tạng cực kỳ phức tạp này.

Untitled, Digital Print, 2021, 8 x 8 inches

The red tulip has been associated with Parkinson's awareness since 1980 when a Dutch horticulturist with PD developed a red and white tulip. In April 2005, the red tulip was launched as the Worldwide Symbol of Parkinson's Disease at the 9th World Parkinson's Disease Day Conference in Luxembourg.

This stylized red tulip drawing, with leaves shaped like the letters "P" and "D", was designed by early-onset PD patient Karen Painter. Karen and Jean Burns led the movement for it to become the nationally recognized symbol for Parkinson's Disease awareness.

"Hoa tulip đỏ đã biểu tượng cho ý thức về bệnh Parkinson từ năm 1980 khi một người làm vườn Hòa Lan bị chứng Parkinson nuôi trồng một giống tulip đỏ trắng. Vào tháng tư năm 2005, hoa tulip đỏ được phát động như một biểu tượng toàn cầu về bệnh Parkinson tại Hội Thảo Ngày Parkinson Thế Giới lần thứ 9 ở Luxembourg.

Bức vẽ hoa tulip đỏ này, với các cành lá hình tượng như chữ "P" và "D" được thiết kế bởi một họa sĩ mang bệnh Parkinson tên Karen. Karen và Jean Burns đã dẫn dắt phong trào để biến nó thành biểu tượng quốc gia về sự quan tâm đến chứng bệnh Parkinson.

Birth of a Flower, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1978 & 2021, 14 x 22 inches

"On December 14, 2020, I saw my brain for the first time. My neurologist had ordered an MRI scan of my brain to check on the progress of my Parkinson's disease. After the scan was complete, I asked the technician for a CD of the "slices" of my brain. I wasn't exactly sure what I would do with them but was curious about what I would find on that CD. After looking at several hundred slices I became fascinated with the idea that everything about me and my entire life was somehow present in this incredibly complex organ."

David Thomas

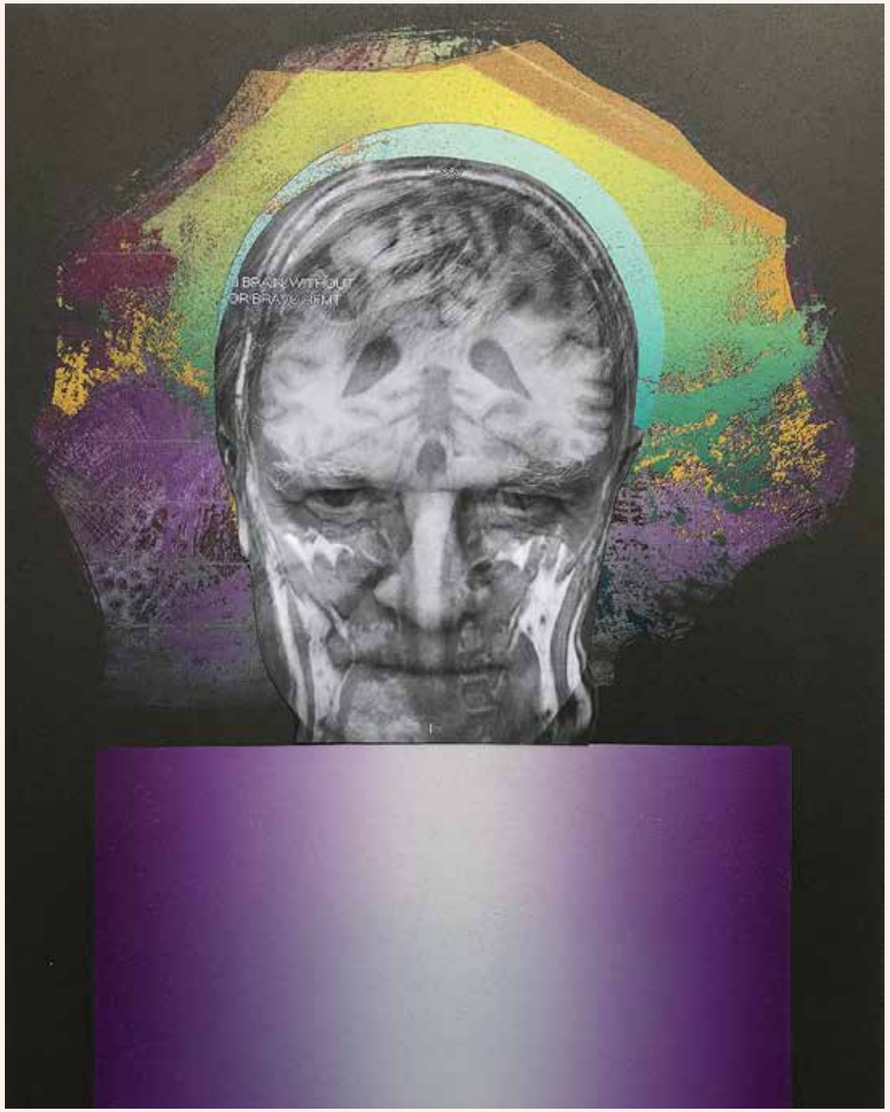
"Ngày 14 tháng mười hai, 2020, là lần đầu tiên tôi nhìn thấy não tôi. Bác sĩ thần kinh của tôi đã đặt lệnh chụp MRI não để theo dõi tiến trình bệnh Parkinson. Khi mà kết quả scan nhận được, tôi hỏi xin y sĩ một CD các "lớp cắt" não của tôi. Lúc ấy tôi không chắc lắm là sẽ định làm gì với nó nhưng cũng tò mò muốn biết trên CD đó là hình gì. Sau khi nhìn hàng trăm ảnh cắt lớp tôi bắt đầu háo hức với ý tưởng rằng mọi thứ về tôi và toàn thể cuộc đời của tôi bằng cách nào đó đã thể hiện trong một bộ phận cực kỳ phức tạp này.

Birth of a Flower (state proof), Lithograph with Digital Print, 1978 & 2021, 14 x 22 inches

Fascinated by MRI images of his brain's activity centers at a given time, David has fused these brain images with pictures of his face. These images powerfully fuse internal and external views of David's Self reacting to its own uncontrollable dysfunctions. The impact of these images is haunting."

Dan Monroe

Cảm thấy hứng khởi vì những hình ảnh hoạt động não MRI của anh David đã trộn hình ảnh khuôn mặt mình với những hình này. Ảnh này hòa hợp một cách mạnh mẽ sự thấu nhìn bên trong và ngoại cảnh của cái cách mà Tự Ngã của David phản ứng lại với những triệu chứng không thể kiểm soát của mình. "Tác động của các ảnh này thì thật là đầy nỗi ám ảnh.



Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1984 & 2021, 17 x 13 inches

"I suddenly had a new subject to explore in my art. I didn't want simply to illustrate my brain, so I began this series by taking selfies of my face from different angles and expressions and then combined these with the MRI slices. It was fascinating to see my face and brain becoming one image and battling each other for dominance."

David Thomas

"Đột nhiên tôi có một đề tài mới để khai phá trong nghệ thuật của tôi. Tôi không muốn chỉ đơn giản thể hiện bộ não của tôi, nên tôi bắt đầu loạt tác phẩm này bằng những ảnh selfies khuôn mặt của tôi từ nhiều góc độ khác nhau, cảm xúc khác nhau và kết hợp chúng với các hình MRI. Thật thú vị được thấy mặt của và não tôi hợp nhất thành một bức ảnh và đối chọi nhau để dành phần lấn lướt.

Fern, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1978 & 2021, 20 x 14 inches

During the year I spent on Engineer Hill, I never really paid much attention to why nothing grew in this rich volcanic red soil of Vietnam's Central Highlands. I did know my unit was also responsible for killing the vegetation one hundred meters on each side of the roads we were constructing and at all work sites. This was primarily to take away the jungle growth where snipers and enemy soldiers could hide. We were told this would keep us safe.

David Thomas

Trong khoảng thời gian tôi ở tại Engineer Hill, tôi chưa bao giờ thực sự để ý đến việc mà tại sao không có gì có thể mọc được ở dùng đất đỏ phì nhiêu vùng cao nguyên trung phần Việt Nam. Tôi biết rằng đơn vị của tôi cũng chịu trách nhiệm hủy diệt cây xanh mỗi bên của con đường là một trăm mét từ chổ mà chúng tôi đang xây dựng và cả từ tất cả các công sự khác. Điều này chính là để phá đi khoảng rừng rậm có thể làm nơi ẩn nấp cho các tay bắn tẻ và kẻ địch. Người ta bảo chúng tôi rằng việc này sẽ giúp chúng tôi an toàn.

Fragments, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1979 & 2021, 12 x 16 inches

"On December 14, 2020, I saw my brain for the first time. My neurologist had ordered an MRI scan of my brain to check on the progress of my Parkinson's disease. After the scan was complete, I asked the technician for a CD of the "slices" of my brain. I wasn't exactly sure what I would do with them but was curious about what I would find on that CD. After looking at several hundred slices I became fascinated with the idea that everything about me and my entire life was somehow present in this incredibly complex organ. "

David Thomas

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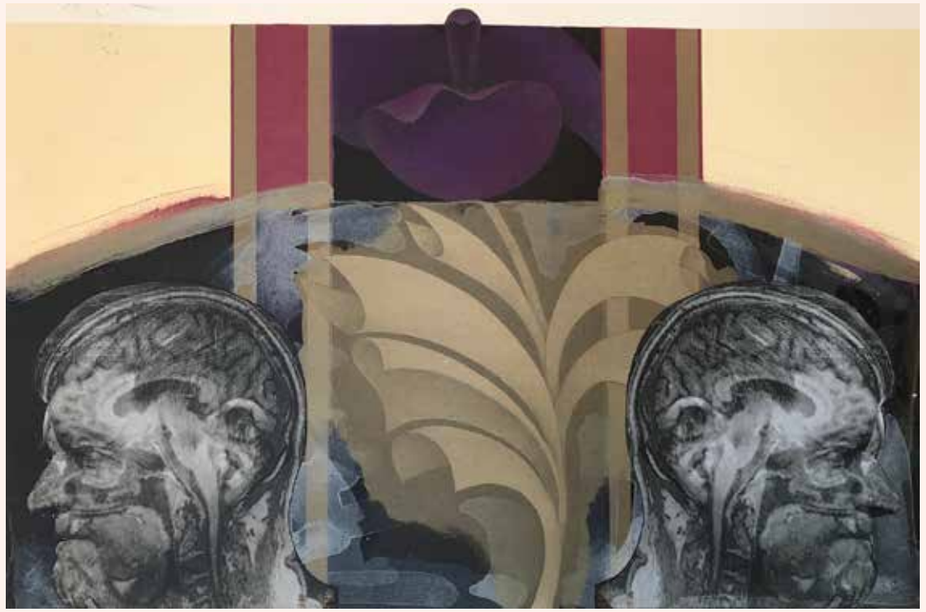
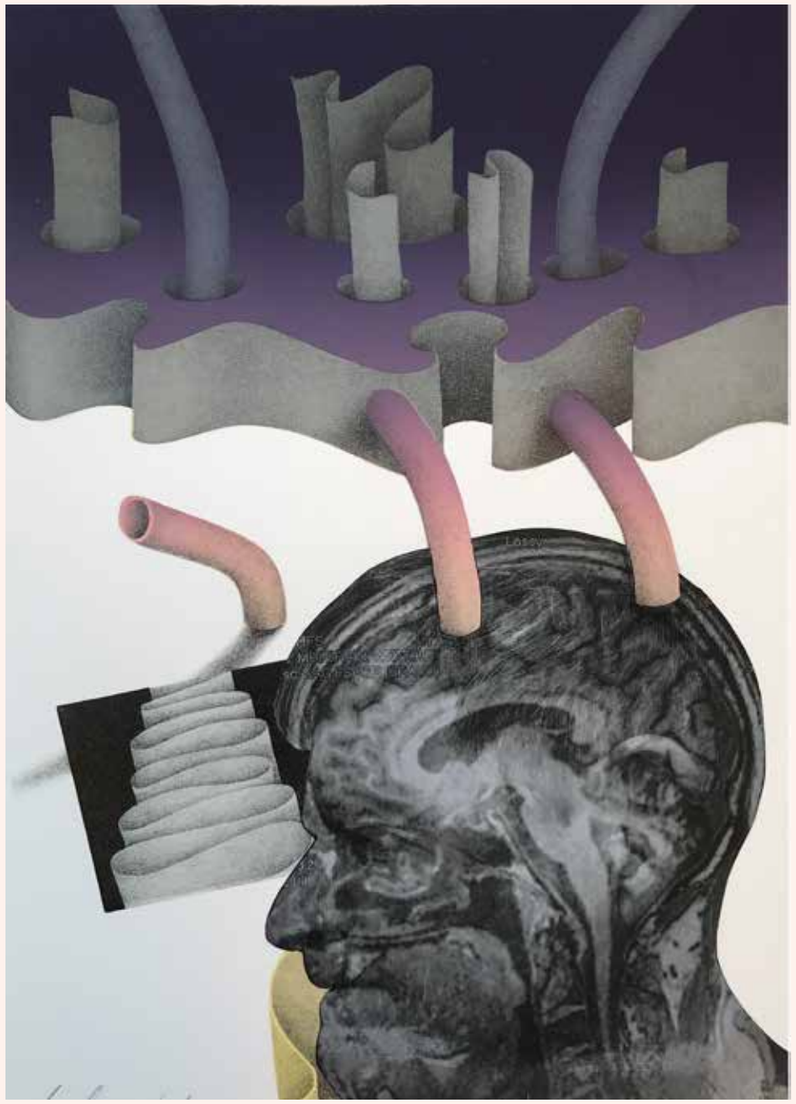


Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1984 & 2021, 15 x 17 inches

"During the Vietnam War, the United States sprayed 20,000,000 gallons of Agent Orange over 20% of Vietnam and parts of Laos and Cambodia. Agent Orange caused and continues to cause many severe or fatal disorders, including birth defects, numerous forms of cancer, and other conditions, including Parkinson's disease. As a result, millions of Vietnamese, Laotians, and Cambodians and tens of thousands of US soldiers have been and continue to be harmed by this form of chemical warfare.."

Dan Monroe

"Trong suốt thời kỳ chiến tranh Việt Nam, Hiệp Chủng Quốc Hoa Kỳ đã phun 20,000,000 gallons Chất Độc Da Cam lên trên 20% đất nước Việt Nam và một phần Lào, Campuchia. Chất Độc Da Cam đã gây ra và tiếp tục gây ra nhiều sự rối loạn hoặc tử vong, gồm cả biến dị sinh sản, nhiều hình thức ung thư và những rối loạn khác, kể cả bệnh Parkinson. Và hậu quả là, hàng triệu người Việt Nam, Lào và Campuchia và nhiều ngàn người lính Mỹ đã và tiếp tục bị tổn hại bởi loại hình chiến tranh hóa học này".

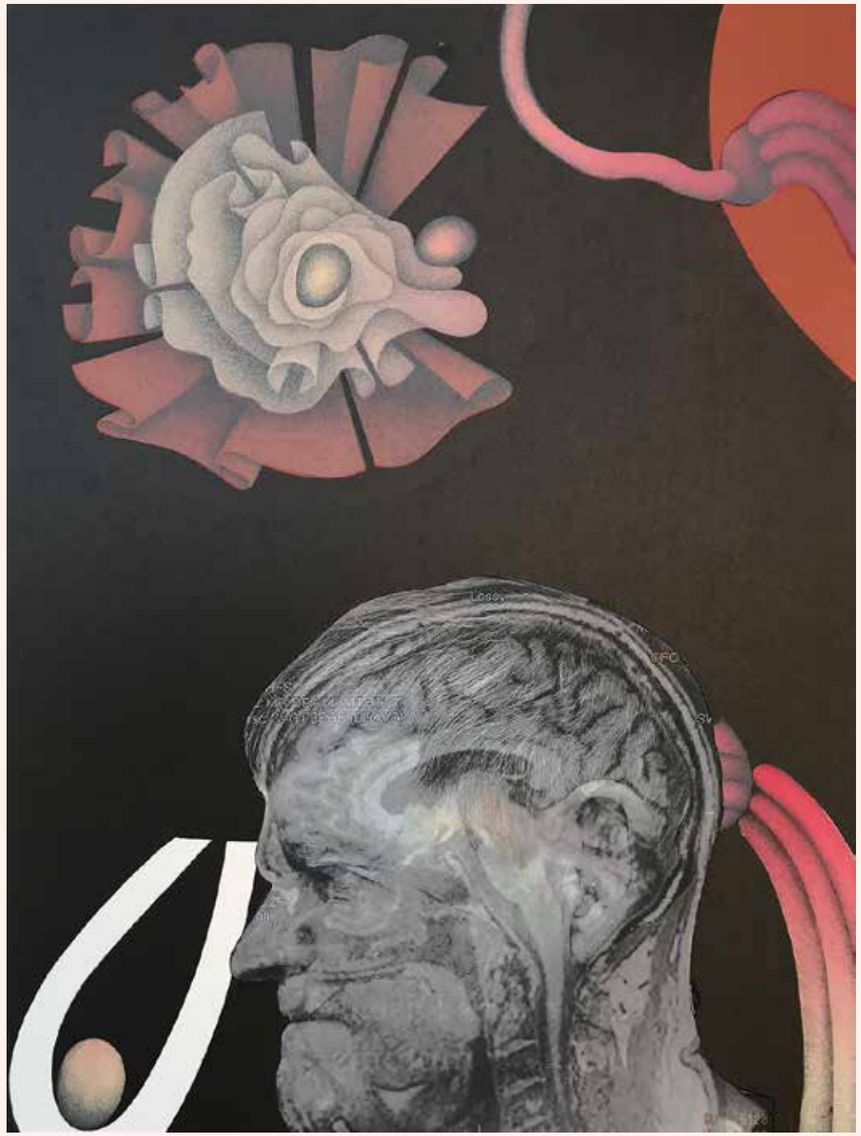


Landscape for Tomorrow, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1978 & 2021, 20 x 14 inches

"David, an artist, an educator, and a Vietnam Veteran, learned several years ago that he has Parkinson's disease, most likely due to his exposure to Agent Orange during the Vietnam War. Parkinson's disease affects the nerve cells in the brain that produce dopamine. Dopamine is a neurotransmitter that enables messages to be sent between nerve cells."

Dan Monroe

"David, một họa sĩ, một nhà giáo, và là một cựu chiến binh Mỹ, đã biết bản thân bị chứng Parkinson từ nhiều năm qua, rất có thể chính là do tiếp xúc với Chất Độc Da Cam trong thời chiến tranh Việt Nam. Những ảnh hưởng của bệnh Parkinson tác động vào tế bào thần kinh ở não nhằm tạo dopamine. Dopamine là một cơ chế dẫn truyền luồng thần kinh để cho tín hiệu có thể trao đổi giữa các tế bào."



Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1984 & 2021, 13 x 17 inches

"In spite of the Army's assurances, David questioned how Agent Orange could so effectively kill plants and be harmless to humans. He also wondered what the United States was doing fighting in Vietnam soon after his arrival. Nonetheless, he served faithfully and bravely, driving an Army Major many miles through enemy territory for most of a year in a single unaccompanied Jeep .."

Dan Monroe

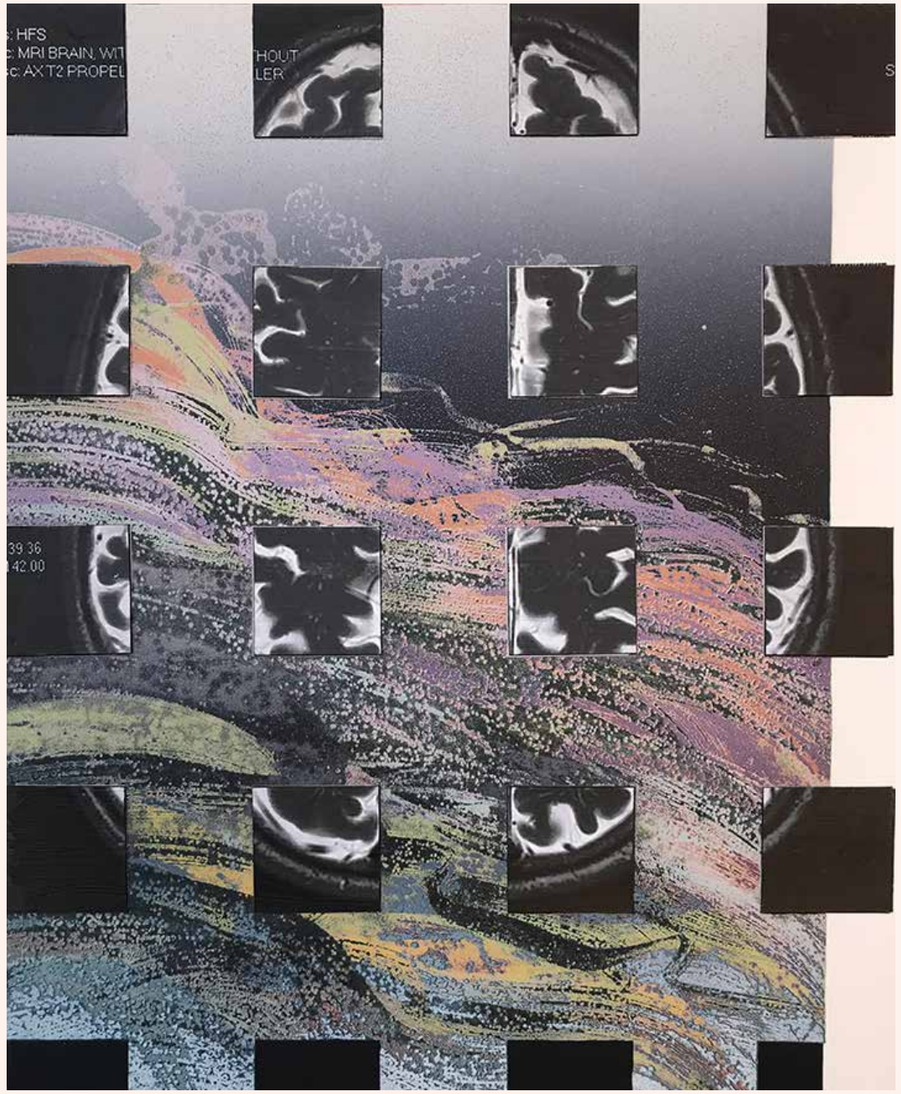
"Mặc dù có sự bảo đảm của quân đội, David đã chất vấn làm sao Chất Độc Da Cam có thể hủy diệt cây xanh mà lại vô hại với con người. Anh cũng tự hỏi, nước Mỹ chiến đấu để làm gì ngay sau khi anh vừa đến. Tuy vậy, anh cũng phục vụ trung thành và dũng cảm, lái xe đưa một Thiếu Tá quân sự qua nhiều dặm trong vùng đất của đối phương trong suốt cả năm chỉ với một chiếc Jeep không có hộ tống.

Buffalo Eagle Iron Works Presents, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1976 & 2021, 30 x 22 inches

Agent Orange is a blend of herbicides that was used by the U.S. military in Vietnam to defoliate trees and remove concealment for the enemy. The chemicals were used in Vietnam from 1962-1971. An estimated 2.6 million military personnel who served in Vietnam were potentially exposed to sprayed Agent Orange between January 1965 and April 1970.

Dr. David Rose

Chất Độc Da Cam là một hợp chất trộn lẫn thuốc diệt cỏ được quân đội Mỹ dùng ở Việt Nam để phá hủy tàn cây nhằm phơi bày chổ ẩn núp của kẻ địch. Chất hóa học này được dùng ở Việt Nam những năm 1962-1971. Một ước lượng chừng 2.6 triệu phục vụ viên quân sự tại Việt Nam đã bị tiếp xúc với thuốc phun Da Cam giữa khoảng 1965 và tháng Tư 1970.



Flowing, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1982 & 2021, 17 x 13 inches

During the year I spent on Engineer Hill, I never really paid much attention to why nothing grew in this rich volcanic red soil of Vietnam's Central Highlands. I did know my unit was also responsible for killing the vegetation one hundred meters on each side of the roads we were constructing and at all work sites. This was primarily to take away the jungle growth where snipers and enemy soldiers could hide. We were told this would keep us safe.

David Thomas.

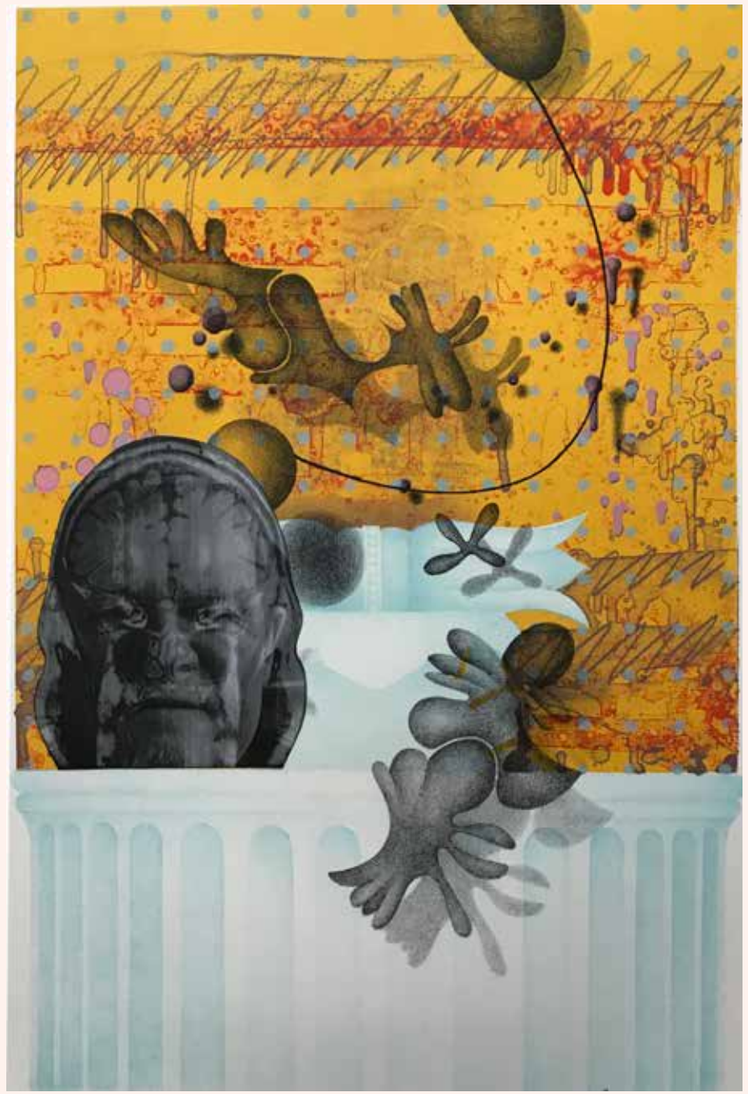
Trong khoảng thời gian tôi ở tại Engineer Hill, tôi chưa bao giờ thực sự để ý đến việc mà tại sao không có gì có thể mọc được ở dùng đất đỏ phì nhiêu vùng cao nguyên trung phần Việt Nam. Tôi biết rằng đơn vị của tôi cũng chịu trách nhiệm hủy diệt cây xanh mỗi bên của con đường là một trăm mét từ chỗ mà chúng tôi đang xây dựng và cả từ tất cả các công sự khác. Điều này chính là để phá đi khoảng rừng rậm có thể làm nơi ẩn nấp cho các tay bắn tỉa và kẻ địch. Người ta bảo chúng tôi rằng việc này sẽ giúp chúng tôi an toàn.

Banana 82, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1984 & 2021, 17 x 15 inches

Vietnam reports that some 400,000 people have suffered death or permanent injury from exposure to Agent Orange. It is also estimated that 2,000,000 people have suffered from illnesses caused by exposure and that half a million babies were born with birth defects due to the effects of Agent Orange. The U.S. government has consistently stated that no scientific evidence links Agent Orange/dioxin to adverse health effects found in Vietnam. How can this be?

David Thomas

Việt Nam thống kê rằng có chừng 400,000 người đã bị mất mạng hay thương tật vĩnh viễn do tiếp xúc với Chất Độc Da Cam. Cũng có ước lượng rằng 2,000,000 người đã bị nhiễm bệnh tật và nửa triệu em bé mới sinh với dị tật do ảnh hưởng của Chất Độc Da Cam. Chính phủ Mỹ liên tục khẳng định rằng không có chứng cứ khoa học liên quan đến Chất Độc Da Cam/dioxin làm ảnh hưởng đến sức khỏe ở Việt Nam. Sao lại có thể như thế được?



Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1977 & 2021, 23 x 16 inches

"Through his Parkinson's disease, David has discovered that his Self exists at the pinnacle of an incomprehensibly complex set of interconnected neuronal networks and other structures and processes. If any of the core elements of this inconceivably vast system ceases to function normally, then the Self is changed. As a result, the body no longer works as it should. Neither does the Mind. The brain and the Self it creates must then adapt to its own malfunctions. "

Dan Monroe

"Từ chứng Parkinson của anh, David đã khám phá được rằng Tự Ngã của mình hiện hữu ở đỉnh của một loạt hệ thần kinh chằng chịt kết nối phức tạp mà chưa có thể hiểu được và những cấu trúc và các tiến trình khác. Nếu có một thành phần lõi nào trong cái hệ thống khổng lồ chưa thể hiểu được này mà ngừng hoạt động thông thường của nó, thì lúc ấy Tự Ngã sẽ thay đổi. Và kết cục là, cơ thể sẽ không hoạt động đúng đắn như nó lẽ ra phải là như thế. Tư tưởng cũng y như vậy. Não và Tự Ngã mà nó đã tạo ra phải chiều theo sự hư hỏng của chính nó.

Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1977 & 2021, 30 x 22 inches

"I am concerned that the progression of my particular Parkinson's may not allow me to complete this series. Will my worsening cognitive and physical symptoms prevent me from finding some answers to the questions I have raised here? Or will this increase in symptoms simply become additional material for this series? Only time will answer that question. "

David Thomas

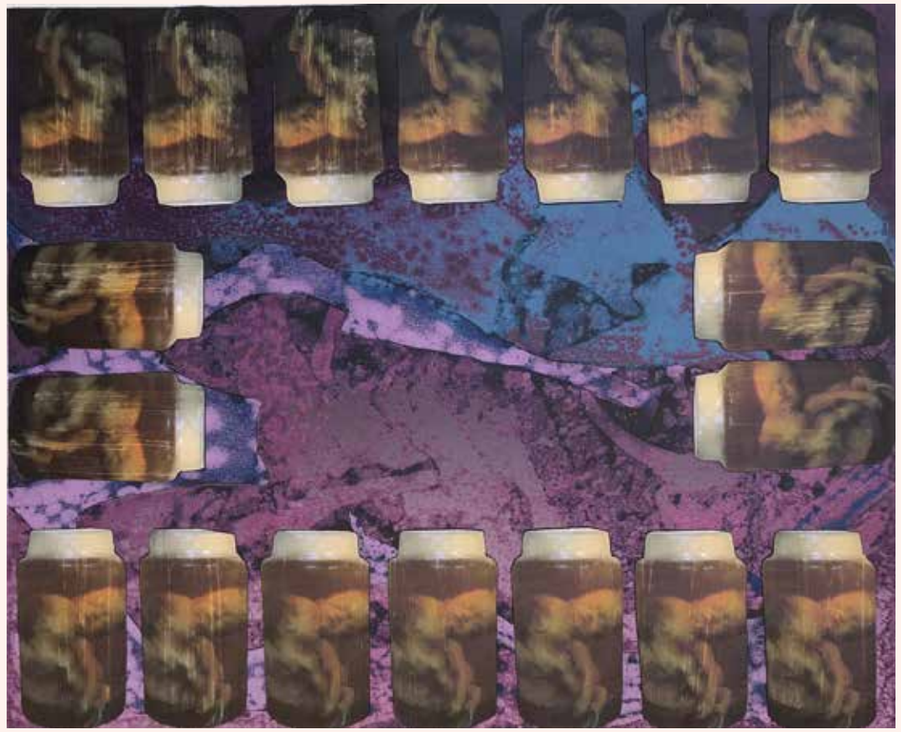
"Tôi lấy làm quan tâm về tiến trình bệnh Parkinson đặc thù của tôi có thể không cho phép tôi hoàn thành loạt tác phẩm này. Liệu ý thức sáng suốt đang tệ dần của tôi và các triệu chứng vật lý có ngăn cản tôi trong việc tìm một số câu trả lời cho các câu hỏi mà tôi đặt ra ở đây? Hay liệu các triệu chứng nặng dần chỉ đơn thuần là những vật liệu sẽ thêm vào trong loạt tác phẩm này? Chỉ có thời gian sẽ trả lời câu hỏi đó.

Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print 1988 & 2021, 30 x 22 inches

"Have you ever thought about how your brain works and about who controls what? I couldn't help but wonder if I would have any control of this disease and how it would progress. How much productive time do I have remaining? Would I have time remaining to complete this exhibition? What would I do after that? Will I be capable of initiating a new project?"

David Thomas

"Bạn có bao giờ nghĩ về não của bạn làm việc như thế nào và ai điều khiển nó chưa? Tôi không thể nhịn nổi mà cứ tự hỏi mình nếu tôi có thể kiểm soát được chứng bệnh này và cách mà nó tiến triển. Tôi sẽ còn bao nhiêu thời gian sáng tác nữa? Liệu tôi có đủ thời gian để hoàn thành cuộc triển lãm này hay không? Sau đó tôi sẽ làm gì? Tôi có sẽ có khả năng khởi tạo một dự án mới hay không?



The Deep, Lithograph with Digital Print 1980 & 2021, 13 x 16 inches

Little did I know when I returned to Vietnam in 1987, that I would spend the rest of my life trying to ease the pain caused by the American War there, to educate Americans here about the real tragedy of our invasion of Vietnam, and to humanize the people we had dehumanized in order to kill and poison them. I have been invited into the homes of our former enemy many times only to learn how much we have in common, not that which divides us. We have laughed and cried together and shared many beautiful memories and hopes for the future

David Thomas.

Lúc mà tôi trở lại Việt Nam năm 1987, tôi chẳng có chút ý nghĩ nào rằng tôi sẽ phải dành cả đời còn lại của tôi cố gắng xoa dịu nỗi đau gây ra bởi cuộc chiến của Mỹ ở đấy, rằng tôi sẽ giáo dục người Mỹ nơi này về thảm cảnh do sự xâm lăng của chúng ta vào Việt Nam, và rằng nhân đạo hóa những người mà chúng ta đã tước đi chất người để mà giết hai và đầu độc họ. Tôi đã được mời vào những ngôi nhà của những người mà đã từng là kẻ thù của chúng ta nhiều lần chỉ để thấy rằng chúng ta thật ra có nhiều điểm chung, không phải có những thứ chia cách chúng ta. Chúng tôi đã cười vang, khóc buồn cùng với nhau và chia sẻ những ký ức tươi đẹp và niềm hy vọng vào tương lai.

Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1977 & 2021, 13 x 16 inches

Commonsense ideas regarding our brains, our relationship to the external world, and the nature of Self shape how we broadly think about ourselves and the world. Most people believe our brains acquire information from the external world through our senses and then process this information to create an accurate representation of reality. Most further believe we are fully conscious of this reality, and we primarily make conscious decisions to navigate it.

Dan Monroe

Những ý tưởng thuận lý mà có liên quan đến não của chúng ta, sự tương quan đến với thế giới ngoại vi, và bản chất của Tự Ngã tạo hình cái cách mà chúng ta thường suy nghĩ khái quát về chính chúng ta và thế giới. Đa số người ta tin rằng não bộ của chúng ta thu nhận thông tin từ thế giới ngoại vi thông qua các giác quan và rồi chế tác thông tin này để tạo một biểu hiện chính xác của thực tế. Đa số người còn tin thêm nữa rằng chúng ta hoàn toàn ý thức trong thực tế này, và chúng ta chủ yếu là làm những quyết định có ý thức để dẫn dắt nó."

Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1984 & 2021, 13 x 17 inches

"David, like most people, gave little thought to how his brain worked before he was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. Parkinson's led him to essentially restructure his understanding of himself by realizing he is his brain. It also forced him to understand that many things regarding his Self are entirely outside his control."

Dan Monroe

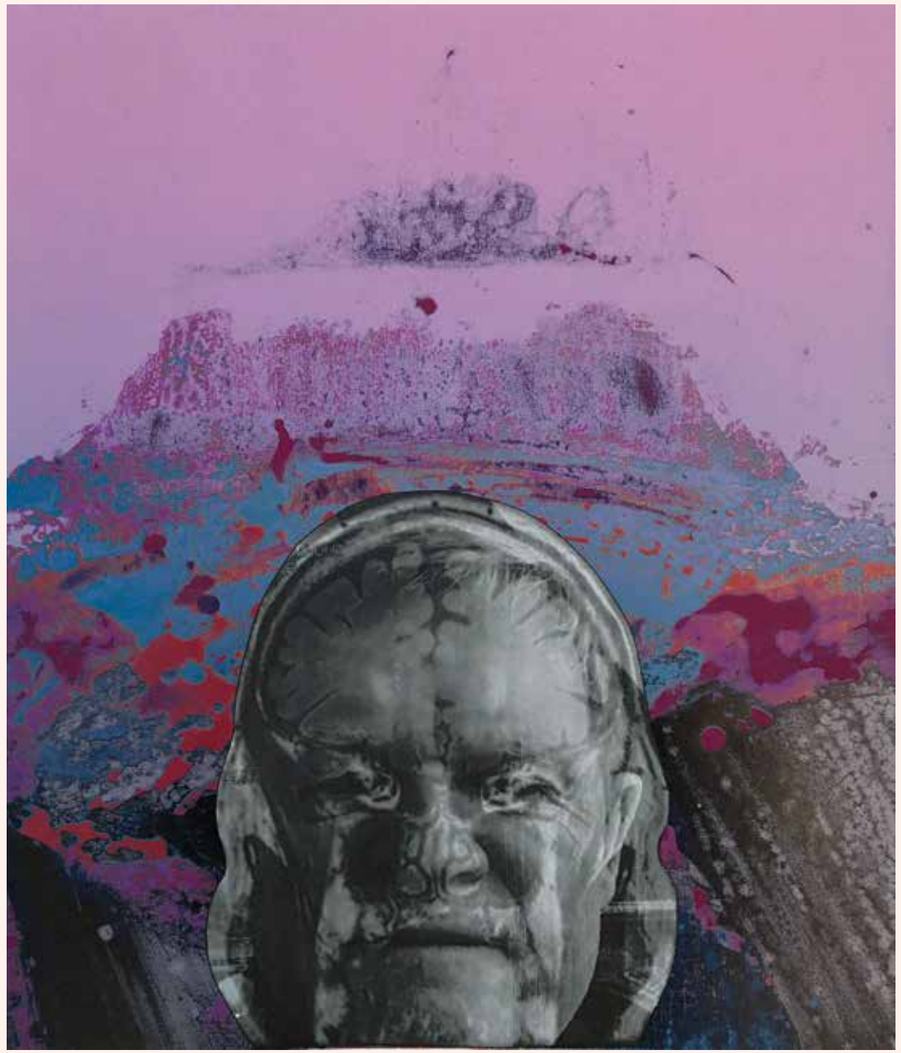
"David, như nhiều người khác, trước khi mà anh bị bệnh Parkinson, không có suy nghĩ nhiều về cách não của anh ấy hoạt động ra sao. Parkinson đã dẫn dắt cải tổ một cách cơ bản lại sự hiểu biết về chính anh ấy bằng cái ý thức anh ấy chính là não của anh ấy. Nó cũng buộc anh ấy hiểu nhiều những việc liên quan đến Tự Ngã của anh ta thì thực là hoàn toàn nằm ngoài vòng kiểm soát.

First Born, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1976 & 2021, 17 x 15 inches

So what is Parkinson's? The degeneration of the cells in one part of your brain that generate dopamine they die. You have less dopamine in your system. I hate that Parkinson's is not seen for what it is, dopamine deficiency. People find they don't get a much pleasure as they used to. IT is not as delicious when you have a meal, less fun, less pleasure. Loss of motivation, some call it loss of desire.

Dr. David Rose

Vậy Parkinson là gì? Đó là sự thoái hóa các tế bào trong một phần não bộ của bạn mà chúng tạo ra dopamine. Bạn sẽ có ít dopamine trong cơ thể bạn. Tôi ghét chổ mà bệnh Parkinson không được đánh giá đúng đắn, đó là sự thiếu hụt dopamine. Người ta sẽ thấy họ không có được sự sảng khoái như họ đã từng cảm nhận. Nó không ngon lành gì khi bạn dùng bửa, bớt vui thú hơn, bớt sảng khoái lắm. Mất động lực, có người gọi đấy là mất sướng.

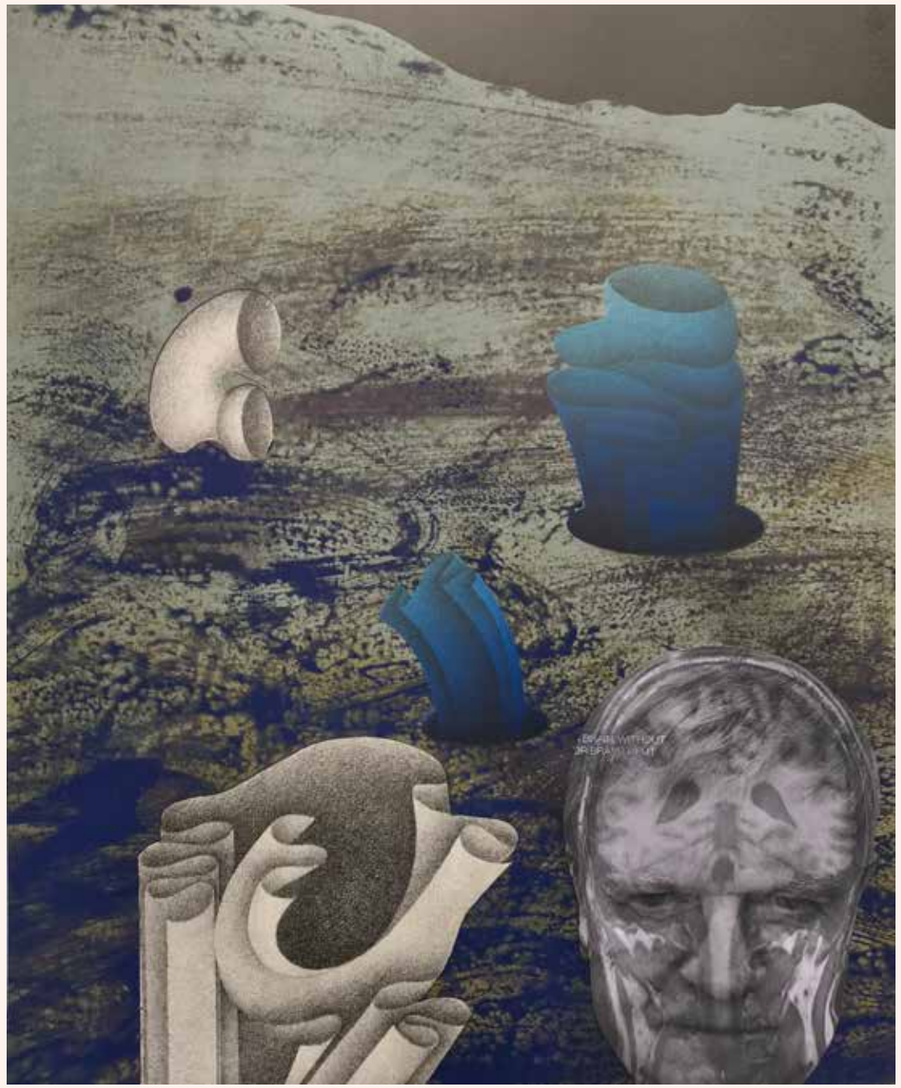


Untitled, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1979 & 2021, 15 x 20 inches

"Art has been an essential part of David's life as an artist and as an art educator. Faced with a debilitating and incurable brain disease, David has chosen to share his experience, his new discoveries, and his convictions through art. David's response to Parkinson's disease is a testament to the realization that even though we are our brains and our brains work in mysterious and surprising ways, these facts in no way compromise the creativity and courage of the human spirit."

Dan Monroe

"Mỹ thuật là một phần trọng yếu của cuộc đời David, với tính cách là một họa sĩ và nhà giáo dục mỹ thuật. Phải đối mặt với một bệnh não không chửa trị được và suy nhược dần, David đã phải chọn cách chia sẻ kinh nghiệm, sự khám phá mới của anh, và sự đắm mình vào mỹ thuật. Phản ứng của David đối với bệnh Parkinson chính là một di thư để ý thức rằng ngay cả chúng ta chính là não của mình và não của mình thì làm việc theo nhiều cung cách bí ẩn và lạ lùng, những yếu tố này không thể nào cản trở sự sáng tạo và can đảm của linh hồn con người."



Volcanic Landscape, Lithograph with Digital Print, 1979 & 2021, 18 x 14 inches

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EDUCATION
Rhode Island School of Design, Providence, RI, M.F.A. 1974
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, 5th Year Certificate 1973
Tufts University, Medford, MA, B.F.A. 1973
School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA, Diploma 1971-1973
Maine College of Art and Design, Portland, ME, Diploma 1964-1968

TEACHING
Lasell University, Newton, MA 2014-16
Massachusetts College of Art and Design, 2001-2011
Emmanuel College, Boston, MA, Professor of Studio Art 1976-2001
Hanoi Fine Arts University, Hanoi, Vietnam 2002-2003
Vietnam Fine Arts Museum, Hanoi, Vietnam 2001-2003

OTHER
U.S. Army (Corps of Engineers, Pleiku, South Vietnam, 1969-70) 1968-71
Founder and Director of the Indochina Arts Partnership, 1988-2019. The IAP is a non-profit corporation begun in 1988, with the goal to promote through cultural exchanges reconciliation between the United States and the countries of Indochina. It is now affiliated with the Worcester Art Museum in Worcester, MA.

Founding member of Gallery NAGA, Newbury Street, Boston, MA 1975 Gallery NAGA was the first artist's cooperative gallery in Boston

SPECIAL HONORS
Honorary Doctor of Fine Arts, Maine College of Art 2016
President, The Boston Printmakers 2007-09
RISD Alumni Award for Leadership and Service 2003
Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant to Vietnam 2002-03
Vietnam Art Medal 1998, (First foreigner to receive highest art honor given in Vietnam)
Faculty Excellence Award, Emmanuel College 1997
Nominated for the Vietnam Peace Prize 1996

EXHIBITIONS CURATED/ARTIST'S BOOKS PUBLISHED
Concept and design AGENT ORANGE: An American Legacy in Vietnam 2015 The focus of this artist's book is the dioxin contaminated defoliant Agent Orange used extensively in Vietnam. The book

documents the effects on both American soldiers and Vietnamese military and civilian populations and includes artwork done by both American and Vietnamese artists.

Concept and design for POSTAGE DUE - Forever Stamps 2011 This artist's book contains twelve sets of stamps that can not be found on U.S. Postal Service stamps. These include, among others, Vietnam's leader Ho Chi Minh working with U.S. soldiers during WW II, images of former American POWs drawn by North Vietnamese soldier/artists, images of agent orange deformed children, images of the My Lai massacre, images of a badly burned young gilt running from her village, and images of the two atomic bombs which were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan.

Concept and design for HO CHI MINH, A Portrait - This trade book was published in English and Vietnamese by Thanh Nien (Youth) Publishing House in Hanoi. The text was written by Lady (Adelaide) Borton. The book is largely a picture book of the story of Ho Chi Minh's life and times and Vietnamese art and literature. The book was recognized as one of the two best books published in Vietnam in 2003.

Concept & Design for An Artist's Portrait of HO CHI MINH
This artist's book contains 116 pages of images and text (approximately 58 of each) including a fictional diary by Ho based on actual events which occurred during his lifetime. The diary and factual information were written by Charles Fenn, Ho Chi Minh's biographer and the man who worked with Ho while in the OSS during WW II.

Concept and Design for VO NGUYEN GIAP - A Portrait, 2011

CURATOR
"As Seen by Both Sides: American and Vietnamese Artists Look at the War", This first major cultural exchange between the U.S. and Vietnam since the end of the war in 1975, opened in Boston in 1990 and traveled to fifteen U.S. and three Vietnamese museums until closing in 1998. The exhibition contained twenty artists from each country.

Curator and concept for "Seven Pillars: The National Treasure Artists of Vietnam", This exhibition contained seven of Vietnam's leading artists.

Curator for "An Ocean Apart: Contemporary Vietnamese Art From the United States and Vietnam"
An exhibition of contemporary art work by Vietnamese and Vietnamese/American artists organized for Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC.

EXHIBITIONS
More than 25 one-person exhibitions and over 100 group exhibitions

PERMANENT COLLECTIONS (selected list)
San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, UCLA, Boston Museum of Fine Arts, Philadelphia Museum of Art, DeCordova Museum, Portland Museum of Art, Yale University, Harvard University, Cornell University, Brown University, Boston Public Library, New York Public Library, National Museum of Fine Arts, Hanoi, Vietnam, RISD Museum, Federal Reserve Bank, Boston, U.S. Army Headquarters, Washington, Brooklyn Museum, Swathmore College, Wellesley College, Library of Congress, Boston

Athenaeum, U. of Chicago, Columbia University.

GRAPHIC DESIGN WORK (selected list)
Designer for Huynh Phuong Dong: Visions of War and Peace. Responsible for all aspects of design for 200 page bilingual book about Ho Chi Minh City artist Huynh Phuong Dong. Designer and artist for exhibition titled "HO CHI MINH"

Designer for Cultural Window Magazine at The Gioi Publishers, Hanoi, Vietnam. Responsible for complete redesign of the magazine.
Designer for series of books published by U.S. Embassy, Hanoi, Vietnam

GRANTS (selected list)
Fulbright Senior Scholar Grant to Vietnam
Rockefeller Foundation Grant
Ford Foundation Grant
Asian Cultural Council Grant
National Endowment for the Arts Travel Grant
Smithsonian Institution Grant
Kellogg Foundation, Expert-in-Residence, Battle Creek, MI
Vietnam Veterans of America Foundation Grant
Beyond War Regional Award, Newton, MA
Arts Lottery Grant, Newton, MA
Massachusetts Artists Fellowship, Finalist

PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIPS (selected list)
The Boston Printmakers Executive Board 1976-2018, President 2010-2012
Gallery NAGA Executive Board
Gallery NAGA Executive Board Chairman
Maine College of Art, Trustee
Veterans For Peace (Hanoi Chapter 160)