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MAMAFESTO

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ISSUE #1

Todas las Madres

The Many Mothers

Mothers, Mamas, Mas, Mommas, Mummies, Mommies, Mums, Moms are:

Makers of children.

Female persons who are pregnant with or give birth to a child.

A structure from which other similar bodies are formed.

Women who conceive or nurture a child.

Women who adopt a child.

Women who raise a child.

Female parents of an animal.

Women who create, originate, or found something.

A creative source.

Editor's Note:

I am a mother of two. I always knew I'd have children someday. I never thought I would be a mother at 24yrs old. It's not that I think I was too young to begin motherhood, but it seemed early for me in my own life.

My first was born in 2008. I had felt very alone and isolated throughout my pregnancy, not to mention after giving birth to her and finding myself with no one to socialize with that could even hold their own head up. But I was clueless as to what it was that I needed. I thought when I could finally leave my mother to babysit and I go out with friends for a night I wouldn't feel so alone. I was wrong. While it was fun to see my friends, and go to concerts, or out for dinner once in a while, I still felt disconnected.

This sense of social disconnection translated into a disconnection from self. And, it only worsened after I gave birth to my second child in 2009. I was happy to be a mother. I was good at it. The emotional bond I was able to create with my children filled my heart with joy as a woman and mother. But, it wasn't enough to satisfy the creative being I had been prior to 2008.

Sometime between my first and second born a girlfriend of mine introduced me to the writings of Ariel Gore, the founder of Hip Mama Magazine. The first publication that I read of hers was, "The Hip Mama Survival Guide." Which turned me onto the similarly named magazine.

I purchased a subscription, but it wasn't until I received the creativity issue that I was truly inspired. I read an article that explained to me what had happened to my own creativity. I hadn't lost it as I thought, it was only that I was putting it to use in less obvious places. I had become very creative in the way I could effectively nurse my newborn while teaching my daughter to somersault off the couch safely. I have put a lot of creativity in the way I make fun, delicious, and nutritious meals for my two toddlers, who at the best of times would prefer to eat plain macaroni and tofu. Snacks are never a problem but full meals have become somewhat of a struggle. So, breaking down regular meals into snack form had become a real creative outlet for me.



I was grateful for this realization. It satisfied me for a time and made me aware of the fact that amidst the birthing and nursing and crying and kisses and singing and cuddles, I had not lost even a speck of the woman I was before I had children.

But learning to be the best prince I can be or becoming a master at belaying sibling conflict between two youngsters both at “that age” just wasn’t cutting it for the creative woman in me that wants to share more of herself with the world.

So, I went back to school, got a General Arts College diploma, joined a local burlesque troupe, and decided to write my own Zine. I am currently enrolled in a digital photography program at the same college, performing once a month on average as Gretta Bomb, burlesque dancer extraordinaire, and finally getting organized with my vision for my Zine, now known by more than just me as, MAMAFESTO.

-Chandra



The Wild Mother: Exerpt from, "Women Who Run With The Wolves," by Clarissa Pinkola Estes, Ph. D., p. 181-182

Relationships between women, whether the women share the same bloodlines or are psychic soulmates, whether the relationship is between analyst and analysand, between teacher and apprentice, or between kindred spirits, are kinship relationships of the most important kind.

While some who write in psychology today tout the leaving of the entire mother matrix as though it were a coup, that, if not accomplished, taints one forever, and though some say that denigration of one's personal mother is good for an individual's mental health, in truth, the construct and concept of the wild mother can never and should never be abandoned. For if it is, a woman abandons her own deep nature, the one with all the knowing in it, all the bags of seeds, all the thorn needles for mending, all the medicines for work and rest and love and hope.

Rather than disengaging from the mother, we are seeking a wild mother. We are not, cannot be, separate from her. Our relationship to this soulful mother is meant to turn and turn, and to change and change, and it is a paradox. This mother is a school we are born into, a school we are students in, a school we are teachers at, all at the same time, and for the rest of our lives. Whether we have children or not, whether we nourish the garden, the sciences, or the thunder world of poetics, we always brush against the wild mother on our way to anywhere else. And this is as it should be.





Dear, Me.

“January 25, 2011

I haven't kept a journal since before last summer, and then so much has happened since that it seemed ridiculous to even try and catch up. I quit my job at Underworld, Thib and I got married, I went to Thunder Bay for a month, and came back ready for my first year at Concordia university. Too much to go into. Leaving Underworld felt great. I loved working there, but knowing that it would never go anywhere was always such a drag. Getting married to Thib was the best. We had an awkward but sweet ceremony at the courthouse with family and friends in attendance, and then partied all day and night at Parc Lafontaine. The wedding made me really appreciate my parents and what wonderful people they are. They embraced all of our friends with open arms and are just so insanely generous. I got a ride back with them two days later to Thunder Bay. Spending the summer unemployed back in my hometown was exactly what I needed. I had time to chill with my family and catch up with old friends that I missed very dearly. It was the perfect dose of TBay. I went to Chandra's on my way back to Montreal to hang out with her amazing kids for a few days before she and I flew to Montreal. She stayed with us for about a week and we had a great time. When she left I was getting ready for my latest adventure, going to university. I was terrified at first, but after the first few days I got into the swing of things and it made perfect sense that I be there! I love university more than I ever expected. I love the student life, and being unemployed! I especially love my Dad for paying my tuition!

My summer was very eventful, but this winter is dragging on and on. All I do is study and watch Netflix, and hardly ever leave the house, which is great, but I think I'm coming down with a case of cabin fever. Today was the day that I discovered I am pregnant. My period is about 4 days late which is really weird for me, my period is always on time. I had cramps and all, then nothing. Today I was feeling pretty nauseous and decided to pick up a pregnancy test while I was out buying deodorant. I grew very anxious imagining that I could be pregnant and what the hell I would do, so while I waited for the pint of water to hit my bladder, I shaved the side of my head in anticipation. Pee time came and the stick did not even hesitate a positive result. I surprised myself with my reaction, I was simply pregnant, hmm... now what? So I instinctively called Chandra. When I told her, I broke down and cried a bit, I guess it had finally sunk in when I said it out loud. She was wonderfully supportive, which is why I called her to begin with. She had to go pick up her kids from daycare, so I fixed my hair and waited for Thib to come home. When he did I was brushing my teeth. He was surprised to see me home because I had skipped class, and also noticed I had shaved the side of my head. I told him I hadn't been feeling good so I stayed home. He asked what was wrong and I said "I'm pregnaaant". He said "What? Oh shit really?" and then went on to talk about how god-damn cold it was outside today. For the record it was fucking cold out today, like -30. Anyway, I let him get it out of his system, then he asked me what I wanted to do about being pregnant. I said I really didn't know. Just a few days ago I said I didn't know if I even wanted kids anymore, now here I am pregnant. Of course! Although I don't think I really meant that, I was just testing out a feeling. I have always wanted kids, always wanted a

family, always wanted to be a mother. After an abortion and a miscarriage, maybe this was the one I would keep? Thib was the best as usual, so incredibly supportive of whatever. I still feel like the decision is mine and he will follow me, which makes it hard because I want us to both want it together. He says he wants to have babies with me which makes me feel wonderful, but I guess the real question is, is this the right time? If we keep this baby, it will arrive in September, and I'll have to skip school. No big deal, I'll go back the year after. We are supposed to go to Italy with my family in May. People travel with babies all the time, PLUS my WHOLE family will be there to help me with the baby. OMG baby. My own baby. Our baby. Thib's baby is in my tummy right now. This is really messed up! I want to keep it the more I think about it. It's late and my shoulder is killing me now, gonna eat some bok choy and try to sleep."



This is my journal entry from the day I found out I was pregnant. I was already 5 ½ weeks along. We took the rest of the week to sleep on the idea and ended up choosing to keep it. That's when I went from being really into school to spending most of my time reading pregnancy books and watching birth videos on YouTube. After finally going back to school I had to get pregnant my second semester! I remember the moment we decided to keep the baby. We had thought about it for a week, discussed options, reasons, pros/cons, anything we could think of. I think from the get-go I wanted to keep it but it was important to me that my Thib be on my side. I didn't want to make such a huge decision on my own. When we decided to go for it, it was such a revelation: we're having a baby! I still remember the feeling. Awkwardly saying to each other, "So that's it? We're having a baby? Together? AAAAH!" Hugs and kisses ensuing. Maybe a few tears... It felt so weird after wondering my whole life when and how I would have a baby, to have it playing out before me, and committing to such a huge...DEAL. He wasn't planned, but I loved being pregnant and I love being his mum. I want another one already!



(Aislinn lives in Montreal with her husband Thib and son Billy, and would like to say she spends her days drawing, soaking in the tub, shopping, and going to shows, but rather spends her days doing laundry, dishes, and diapers, with the occasional movie and snack.)

On Birth Plans

In order to save money on lab fees, my husband and I went to a free clinic for a blood screen. Being broke and pregnant, it was a cheaper solution than having our midwives send the test in for us.

After the screening, while waiting for the onsite results, I had a bit of apprehension about sharing my birth plan with the staff. Unsurprisingly they cornered me while giving my results and forcibly expressed their disapproval of my choice to have a homebirth and use midwives. The doctor detailed every possible complication that could occur during labor. All the while assuming that I had made uniformed decisions, he seemed surprised when I had a chance to retort, realizing that I had in fact done my research to which he responded; - I know you are trying to do the hippie thing but...At that point I informed him that we are use to being judge but that I firmly believe in the choices I have made for myself and my baby.

This kind of attitude really upsets me and I did leave the clinic feeling angry but then remembered that this was not the first time someone judged me and it wont be the last.

My point is, whether you are choosing a hospital birth or a home birth the choice is yours and yours alone. The one important thing is to make informed decisions and to choose what is right for you.

My name is Emma Robitaille
I am from Montreal, Quebec, Canada
I currently live in Portland, Maine, USA
I am married to Nick Reddy
I am pregnant and due July 25th 2012



Worry

Patience

Compromise

Expectations



Boredom

Selflessness

Tenderness

Endurance

Regret

Intuition

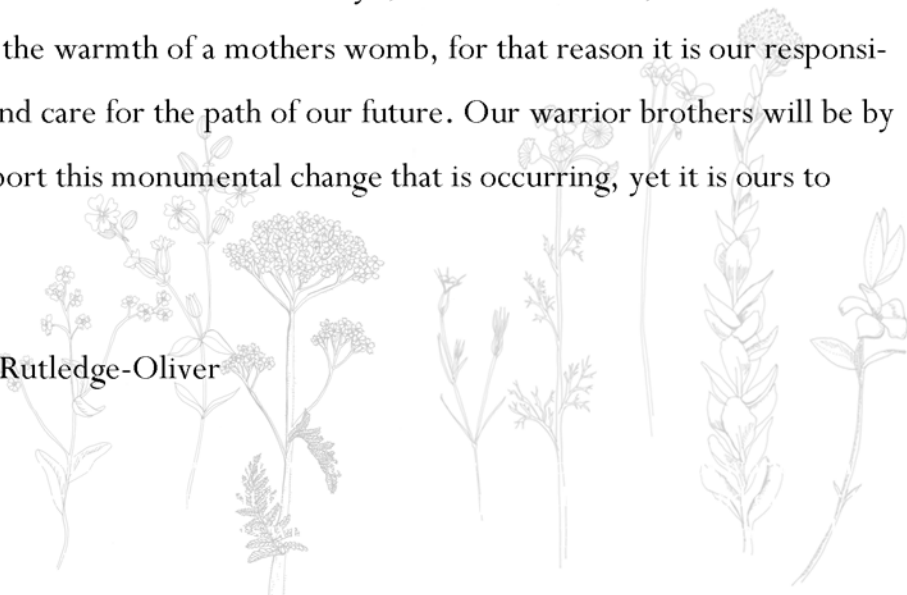
Doubt

Intimacy

On Womyn, Wombs, and Warriors

Be a living example. There are numerous battles with a million different views. It can be overwhelming especially when you have a critical eye. Surround yourself with like minded people. Write, when something hits your core as unacceptable. Put it out there, anywhere even if it your private journal. As far as being approachable, don't even think whether you are or not. Someone very wise once told me (in a crowd of over 3000 people at a Hay house convention) it is none of your business what others think of you. Even if you don't see any change it does not mean that we have not been part of creating it. It is our ego talking when we look back to see the reward for our efforts. As womyn, we are life source, no soul enters this world with out the warmth of a mothers womb, for that reason it is our responsibility to carve and care for the path of our future. Our warrior brothers will be by our side to support this monumental change that is occurring, yet it is ours to shape.

By: Karrie-ann Rutledge-Oliver



Midnight Mammary Mayhem x 2

2:30am.

I'm awakened by a cry. Baby number 1 is up to eat. I've had an hour and a half of sleep and I groggily roll out of bed to get ready to feed. I start with diaper changes. As I am doing Milena's diaper, Baby number 2, Hannah, starts to stir. The babies are 5 weeks old now and I'm only just getting some faint idea of a schedule. At this point I know that when I get up alone in the night with the babes, I can expect to be up for 3 hours, or I thought I could count on that.

[To preface, the babies were born 3 weeks early and were slow in gaining weight. I've been breastfeeding and having to top up with formula since birth, waiting for my milk production to hopefully meet their needs. So, the routine is usually to feed each separately (haven't mastered tandem feeding yet, it is NOT easy) and feed each a bottle, burp them forever and get them back to sleep. Feeding each baby separately is usually a nightmare because I have to leave one poor darling screaming in her bassinet until it's her turn. Sometimes I get the second one in my lap to snuggle while she waits, but she still screams.

On this particular night, I'm deciding to tandem feed because, frankly, I'm tired as hell and I am desperately hoping to make this feed as quick as possible. I change both diapers, and put them back down while I set up. Pillows on each side of me, a couple receiving blankets to cram into spaces, and my feeding pillow. I am sure to have a glass of water and my laptop (gotta stay awake and alert with the aid of the internet and tv series) on the tv tray and my phone has gotta be close by. I place the screaming babies on the pillows and get them latched on. Things are going good. They're eating well. "This is awesome," I think to myself. "This will be the quick feed I was hoping for! I'm so tired."

20 minutes later.

They're both off the breast, sleeping. I give them a little jostle and offer them more and one goes back on but the other isn't interested. She's satisfied. I spend a little time letting the baby finish and when she does I get them back in bed and settle in on the couch (I've been spending my nights there so as not to disturb dad...).

10 minutes later.

Whimpers emit from the bassinet. I leave them for a second; maybe it's just a moment of discomfort. Wails and screams erupt! I burp them both and they are still rooting for a nipple. Okay, definitely time for a bottle.

They pull my heartstrings while they cry and wait for the bottle to warm up. I feed them one at a time and they are FINALLY full.

4:45am.

Seems I still managed to do the feed in "record time." Unfortunately, they are still fussing and I alternate burping them, soothing them and rocking them back to sleep.



5:20am.

I got Milena back to sleep but Hannah still seems hungry?! I'm frustrated because I don't understand. I thought I packed them full! I offer her more and she practically devours my boob. Okay, so I sit back on the couch, and start another episode of Arrested Development because I'm nodding off and feeling aggravated. I realize she's asleep halfway through the show. I do some breast compressions and after a while she falls off the nipple. OKAY, this twin is finally fed. I put her in bed and would you believe it's Milena's turn?! Me neither. Well it is. I do the same for her.

Okay now it's friggin 6:30am!

I am STARVING. Ignore hunger, must sleep.

I hear a rumble in a diaper. Morally, I can't pretend I didn't hear it. Diaper changed, twin back in bed. I wish I had a diaper. I've had to go for a while now. We're set.

4-hour feeding marathon complete and I'm looking forward to another hour and a half of sleep if I'm lucky.

By Laura Paxton

(Laura Paxton is a new mom to twins at age 26. She and James had their babies Hannah Jamieson and Milena Adelaide on December 12, 2011. They are from Thunder Bay, ON.)



"Momma, last night I dreamt about my birthday!"

Motherhood Musings:

Les Belles-Lettres

Our Little Boy

*Two brown eyes that can light up the sky
A smile so big, a giggle and a cry
Sweet soft cheeks with dimples so deep*

He is my little boy

*Tiny little fingers and tiny little toes
Beautiful brown hair and a cute button nose
Eyelashes so long and kicks so strong*

He is your little boy

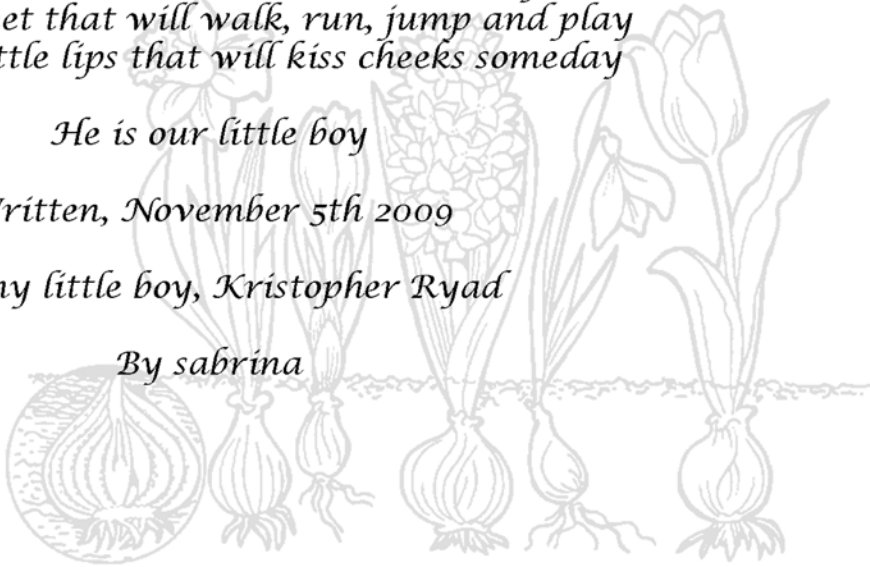
*With little ears that can hear the world and more
With little hands that will soon learn to explore
With little feet that will walk, run, jump and play
And with little lips that will kiss cheeks someday*

He is our little boy

Written, November 5th 2009

for my little boy, Kristopher Ryad

By sabrina



out into this gruesome life

we shoot;
gangly and gruesome
ourselves.
covered in Mother's
blood and Father's unfin-
ished
Hopes.
the body who carried us, we
have
heard her tick-tocking
heartbeat, and sensual
gurgles of food pulverized
to become
our nutrients.
it soothes.
her body was stretched
into another version of her-
self.
Her soft skins making
time and space
for her life
to alter,
to accommodate
Us.
the slimy nudity, the
moment
when her eyes lock with ours,
the
birth of one thousand stars,
it is her
choice to chew off
our umbilical cord

Or eat us herself.
while she licks her bloody
chops,
Father
may never even notice.

Architect

A man
wielded a jagged
knife to the woman's
fine, soft
abdomen.
He carved his
existence
to remain there forever.
He carved her
job,
her duty; the plans
in thick, red
lines
that turned white
long after
the birth
of the child.
Scars like canyons,
the woman knew it was
a map.
She lay awake
at night,
long
after he was
gone.
She kissed her fingertips,
and traced
the lines
to recall her purpose,
to recollect the plans.

Both poems written by:
Nicole Niehoff, 2011

My Journey from Loathing to Loving: “A Tale of Two Kiddies”

This isn't a happy story. I'm not even going to lighten it up with a sappy silver lining. I mean, sure, I lead an active and somewhat meaningful life right now, but that was absolutely not the case five years ago.

I was a willful and arrogant adolescent with nothing on her mind other than drugs, booze, and boys; estranged from Mom, and not really interested in bonding with Dad either. I really thought that my parents were useless wastes of time. Well, it should come as no surprise that a supremely naive young girl such as this would soon fall in 'love' with a 'man' a decade her senior. To make a long story short, it wasn't love and he was simply a manipulative boy trapped in a twenty-something drug addicted body. During my stint with this jerk, I became pregnant. I was utterly devastated. First off, I still wanted to be a teenager, and second, I was five months into my pregnancy when I actually found out about it. How could what I was doing harm this innocent being that didn't even have a choice in existing? Self-loathing and extreme guilt became predominant emotions for years afterward.

I consider myself lucky though. Remember that estranged mother I mentioned? The one who I hated and stole from for no obvious reason? She never stopped loving me, even after I broke her heart and coloured her hair grey with my antics. I began to learn then what motherhood was all about, even though I was still yet to experience the true reality of it. She brought me to every doctor's appointment, supported and brainstormed with me through every tough decision; actually, she was the one who suggested I might be pregnant. Let me jump back to there so as to avoid confusion with my story.

It had been about four months since I had last spoken with the father, and I had already started dating another guy (this time, he was my age and in no way manipulative or addicted to anything that posed a threat to his or my well-being). I went to visit with my mother, to test the waters so to speak. She was very pleased to see me released from the relationship she had viewed as a prison. At some point during our afternoon together, she observed that I looked a little swollen in the abdominal area. She told me to lie down on my back, and immediately thereafter started freaking out.

Apparently, if you are pregnant your stomach does not flatten at all when you lay on your back...it just stays round. Just to be sure, we went to the pharmacy bought a no name pregnancy test, and administered it right there in the store's public washroom. My mom still mentions it every time either of us uses the bathroom there. She and I still had a lot of roadwork to do in our relationship, but the support beams were back up and the water was flowing freely under the bridge that day. The day I found out I was pregnant.

So. I'm seventeen, I'm pregnant, and what the bleep am I going to do? Many options were presented to me at that time; and from many sources. I had much help from my mom, and from my now steady beau, who had accepted the news of this not being his kid so stoically as to be almost heroic. The two of them were my lodestones; my north stars. Without them I would have never stumbled out of that difficult period of my life with as few bruises to my psyche as I did. I was able to come to the decision to set up an open adoption for my babe. Through an invaluable organization called ARCS (Adoption Resource and Counselling Service) and with the help of a very dedicated and thorough licensee named Jennie Painter, I was able to commence and complete the process of choosing a suitable family for my baby, and subsequently give her over to their care. The couple that I chose could not have been a better match for me, my family and our baby girl.

I definitely did not see it that way at the time though. I believed I was a horrible, thoughtless and selfish creature. I was reckless enough to get pregnant and craven enough to shed the burden of childcare to suit my own loveless purposes. She was born healthy, robust and complication-free. But who knows what kind of illness I may have caused. Perhaps something dormant that would affect her as she grew up? To this day I have my mental fingers crossed against the unpalatable idea that she might yet manifest some serious affliction that could have been avoidable had I been more conscious of my body. It took me a very long time to realize that, "hey, you have a lot more reasons to be thankful here than you do to be self-piteous about."

But even as I write this, I can remember how confused I was. I was confused because amidst all the negative thoughts and feelings I did recognize all the good stuff;

it was what motivated me to make my decision in the first place. I adored Makenna's adoptive family, I admired my boyfriend who had supported me through the pregnancy and birth of someone else's kid, And I knew my little girl had the best I could possibly have given her. But somehow my heart hurt. It hurt badly. So when listing all those great things, and probably more to myself, I just couldn't understand what was making me so darn sad. I went on to spend four years of my life causing unwarranted destruction within my personal relationships; taking out my vengeful yet unspecified negative emotions out on those who treasured and loved me the most. I called it quits to a very loving and comfortable two-year relationship because of guilt. I had the best boyfriend I could have asked for, supportive, patient, kind and not to mention sweet on the eyes. But since I couldn't properly define or control my emotions, sweating the small stuff and flipping out for very little reason, the relationship ended.



Not long after that I jumped foolishly into another long-term relationship. Somehow, I hoped it would solve all of my emotional issues. I had totally met my verbal match though, that's for sure. I went from being the victim, to the aggressor, the yin of a very toxic yin and yang relationship. We were an on again /off again sort of thing. I was still dealing with my repressed guilt and self-hatred. He was dealing with the loss of a close family member. And neither of us was trying to make things easier for the other. I became pregnant again. Sometimes I think it was a subconscious effort, and sometimes I trust it was an accident. Either way, as my belly grew with this tiny life, so did a glimmer of hope and redemption. But there was much turmoil regarding fairness, and equality. How could I love these kids the same when their existences arose from such completely different circumstances? I don't think I could. Of course I love them differently, but I do love them the same amount; which is more than life itself.

I'm not perfect, I'm not successful, and I'm occasionally dishonest, irresponsible and disregarding of consequences and other people's wishes. But I am armed and

ready to face life with all its myriad of challenges, and I have two people whose ups and downs mean so much to me, that my ups and downs become but small molehills compared to the mountains I once perceived them as.

The last two years have been a veritable roller coaster. The emotional ups and downs have been an assault my composure. My spirit has been broken and repaired so many times that I feel like a tempered-steel sword of ages past. Having a baby to take care of has taught me that what I did with my first babe was okay. I arranged it so that she would be cared for and nurtured in a way that I couldn't have manage at that time. Just because I didn't keep her by my side, doesn't mean that I abandoned her, as I so often allowed myself believe. Not only that, but it has taught me that there is beauty and learning in everything. It has taught me not to take life so seriously but to make sure I live each day to its fullest. Walking down the street and hearing the name of every object chirped out in a cheerful sweet innocent voice, really makes squirrels and garbage and bikes and buses really cool again.



By Elizabeth Whenham

(Elizabeth is 23 years old and resides in Kingston ON with her son Riley. She is also the proud birthmother of her oldest daughter Makenna. She enjoys reading, writing and exploring the diversity of life.)

“Motherhood has matured me in a direction that art alone never could have done. The experience of being a mother is so visceral. Creating art is visceral. There is symmetry in their essence – a physical and emotional imperative. We rise to the calling. We are constantly being beckoned forth - a dance of leading and following. Children are like little mirrors gently requesting our humility. The artist in me cannot help but interpret the contours and edges of motherhood into a visual experience.”

~ Ingrid Dabringer



Ingrid is an established multi-media and fiber artist. She draws inspiration from all of her surroundings and life experiences, and nature is one canvas Ingrid cannot ignore. She has recently been commissioned to create biodegradable art in Ontario's North. Ingrid has traveled North America with her best-known work the map series, through which she explores line and shape.

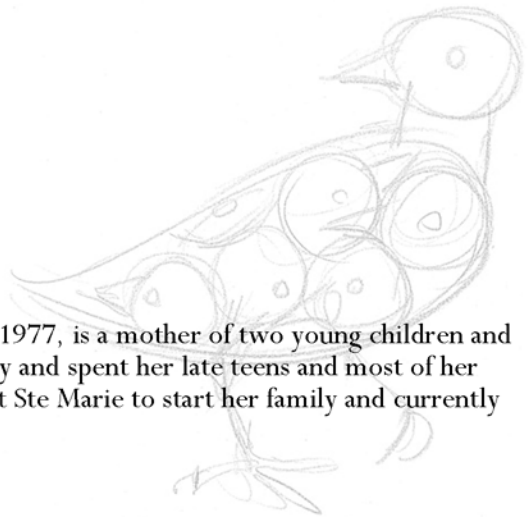
Ingrid has also had the opportunity to travel to showcase the Motherhood exhibit, which was funded by the Ontario Arts Council through their Northern Arts Grant. This series itself is multi-media and includes: relief carving and painting, sculpting and more. The Motherhood project is a concept and a feeling and a life-consuming experience expressed into a tangible and physical form.

On Hope and Beauty

Slowly the whole world is wiping the sleep from their eyes. Bringing in a new focus. Like a new born that can only see clearly what is in front of them. A mothers love, this is force that moves us. Pulls us to a gathering place. Heightened awareness move like flames in dry brush amongst the thirsty young. This restless feeling is stirring in all of us. The sleeping ones still manage to pacify. Filling their gaps with unmarked goods. Wrestling with their own identities. It is not what we see in the mirror, deeper then the place of ego. Past the shadows of fear. It is where fresh eyes hold hope and see beauty in the most uncertain places.

By: Karrie-ann Rutledge-Oliver

(Karrie-ann Rutledge-Oliver, born March 1st 1977, is a mother of two young children and an activist artist. She was raised in Thunder Bay and spent her late teens and most of her adult life in Toronto. At 30 she moved to Sault Ste Marie to start her family and currently resides and creates there.)



Ohhhhh, Man.

It's not like I am trying to find them a Dad. They have a Dad. He's 3,000 miles away and when he calls them once a week, I doubt he's asking them what their favourite colours are, who their best friend is these days, how their teeth are doing, or what their dreams were about last night.

Nonetheless, he is their Dad. They carry around parts of him: long legs and eyelashes, a certain type of sensitivity coupled with arrogance, and a comical banter. I am sure when they are older they will want to be close to their Dad. For now, pain-fresh for three years, they sometimes refuse to talk to him during that once a week phone call.

((the distance: so physical))

Since my boys were born, I've tried to shed gender biases. I've grappled with the idea of personality in relation to nature versus nurture. I've shown them exactly what a strong woman looks like; filled with my own idiosyncracies. I am a woman madly in love with mothering my beautiful, unique children, and yet dragged down by the burden of it all. They will never see me fail them.

. . . one foot in front of the other. . .

((it would be nice to have someone change the batteries in my smoke detectors or carry my groceries up the stairs. all things i have always done myself, and will still do. i want to be cradled.)))

I am the kind of Mom who wrestles, goes fishing, and tries to do tricks on her bicycle. Despite all of this, my sons love and adore their time with men. In fact, they crave it. Around men they become joyous little boys seething with a wild masculinity that I just can't exude or understand. There is a difference in the glow of their eyes when they pretend sword fight with a man than when I pretend to sword fight with them. Perhaps they are subconsciously obsessed with men the way that I am; all three of us wondering how to fill that void of masculine energy. Silly, silly single parenting, you give me so much to wonder.



(Nicole Niehoff is growing old in Portland, Maine with two amazing sons who love to ride bikes and dig in the dirt as much as she does. One day she will be a midwife, but until then she is wishing that she had eight arms and that there was an eighth day of the week. And she wishes to remind you to honor and be true to the ones around you.)



Common Ailments Remedied

diaper rash

- corn starch
- vegetable shortening
- olive oil
- breast milk
- coconut oil
- cream from coconut oil and shea butter: melt it down and add some mallow and rose petals (Maive musqué in french) macerated in grape seed oil (olive oil goes rancid to quick) the maive makes skin so nice and soft and I find roses are a wonder for skin

yeast infection

- athlete's foot cream
- coconut oil
- nystatin

bumps and bruises

- vegetable oil: rub a dab after the incident and it won't appear
- witch hazel

ear infections

- coconut oil
- garlic lightly sauteed in olive oil then cooled let it sit for awhile then strain out the garlic and squirt that in the ears

bug bites

- witch hazel

teething

- frozen berries
- Clove oil: mix up 1 drop of clove oil to 1-2 tbs of olive or safflower oil. massage on the gums
- Hazel wood necklace: the tannins in the wood neutralize acidity
- a cold over sized peeled carrot to gnaw on
- 'teething tablets' -belladonna and camilia, dissolves very quickly

Please feel free to contribute remedies that have worked for you and your family in our next issue!!! (mamafesto@hotmail.ca)

Miss-E Mouthpiece is one pissed off mama! She has a lot on her mind that she shoots out her mouth! She is one mama that you don't wanna fuck with. She is verbally armed and dangerous and is ready to take patriarchy by the balls!

She is every mama...

she is the single mama...

she is the married mama...

she is the queer mama...

she is the tired mama...

she is the neglected mama...

she is the liberated mama...

SHE IS....

ONE MOTHER/FATHERFUCKING PISSED OFF MAMA!

Miss-E is going to shoot her shit at the system each and every issue of Mamafesto. She rants with a cause: to make that mama voice heard! Miss-E gives recognition to the power struggles and inequalities that challenge all mamas. Miss-E keeps the privileges of being a mama in check. She recognizes that there are peeps out there that would like to bear children and have not had the opportunity too. She also recognizes that there are those that have lost children through struggle



or through the system. Miss-E believes that these mamas are still mamas and have the right to tell their story too. Miss-E got all mamas backs! Be warned, and prepared to join Miss-E Mouthpiece coming at ya through the pages of Mamafesto! Next issue Miss-E will be attacking the Harper regime and his reptilian partner Stephen Woodworth who was approved to reopen the abortion update.

Get your government outta my gitch !!

Verbally armed and Dangerous,

Miss-E Mouthpiece

Would You Like to Contribute?

Here are a number of ways:

·**Respond** to any story, article, poem, image in the current issue and your response may be published in the next issue of MAMAFESTO!

·Feel free to send in any writing you would like to **submit!** Be it short **stories, rants, recipes, remedies, poetry, artwork, anecdotes, etc.** Or if you've got an image to be used as the cover you can submit your work at anytime to MAMAFESTO@hotmail.ca

·Send in your **ideas** for future a issue! We wanna know what y'all want to read/write/share/talk/rant about!

·If you would like to **receive a copy** of MAMAFESTO and are not in Sault Ste. Marie email your home address with the subject line 'Address'

·If you are able to **help distribute** the Zine email us with the subject line 'Distribution'

·Have your child **colour our colouring page**, and it may be selected as the cover of one of our future issues!

·Check us out on facebook:

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Mamafesto-Magazine/135873966489556>

You can find information here regarding the next publication and how to submit.

Website Coming Soon!!!

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Get your kids to colour and send it in. Their colour stylings
could be on the cover of MAMAFESTO's November Issue!!!

From forming the idea, to sharing it and calling out to Mamas from all over for submissions, to laying it out and editing it, to finding the funds to put it to print, and just getting to know new Mamas and their lives, as well as some very wonderful people in my own community; putting this publication together has been an experience I will never forget. This is what it's all about folks: We have the power to create bonds and communities outside of our own backyards, let alone our cities, provinces, countries. It is our similarities that bring us together, and our differences that strengthen our connection. I am looking forward to having the privilege to do it again for our second issue in November 2012.

Thanks to all of our contributors to MAMAFESTO Magazine. We are grateful to Sault Ste. Marie, ON's local businesses that participated in the publishing of MAMAFESTO by way of purchasing ad space. Without the help and support of friends, family, and all who have been involved in the making of this Zine it would not be printed and in our hands today.

I offer special thanks to all the Mamas who shared their stories, and helped in bringing us all that much closer together.

I would also like to acknowledge the following people for their amazing support, ideas, artwork, connections and time:

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Carrie Surriano
Katie Campbell
Tiff Thompson
Arlene Pitts
A K Graphix

None of this would have ever happened without my own remarkable mother, Jeanne, or my two beauty babes, Hawk and Magpie. Thanks Loves.

