

MENTAL ILLNESS ACROSS GENRES

How Hollywood has helped shaped the narrative around mental illness.

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This series is a platform for us to share the other side of the story, and is a dynamic exploration of the intersectionality between mental illness and wellness, emphasizing the profound impact of storytelling in empowering others. Each week, we embrace vulnerability and bridge the gap between our stories and our labels as we lead the audience through their own transformational journey. These topics and panels were designed to inspire, inform, and ignite the storyteller in all of us.

Evening Agenda

"Alone" by UNCC Student Addison Lewis

Loving the Artist Within - 6:05

Introduction of the Panel - 6:15

Hollywood Game Show Segment- 6:20

Interactive Panel Discussion - 6:30

Q&A with the Audience: 7:00

Screening of The Horror of Trauma 7:10

Henderson Independent High School in Salisbury



Story Shout Out

Art & Soul Rowan in partnership with Guerilla Poets has a weekly art and poetry program at Henderson Independent High School in Salisbury. In this program, students learn personal development and social / emotional skills through visual and spoken word artforms.

This year, with the support of funding by Rowan Arts Council and NC Arts, the students have developed a movie for their end of year project. "The Horror of Trauma" is a comedic horror composed of four stories on traumatic experiences expressed through iconic horror movie themes. This movie was created with only 1 hour of shooting time for four weeks and faced many challenges that alternative schools face in regard to lack of resources. Despite these challenges and the challenges of foster care which 90% of our students faced...they were able to not only continue their growth in the personal development curriculum, but also write, act, do special effects and direct a movie that is not only entertaining, but also impactful. They had a blast putting this together. We hope you have a blast viewing it too.

A special thank you to our courageous panelist!

Joanne Hock is a passionate and prolific storyteller. She has written and directed 7 feature films and 6 documentaries, lensed and directed countless television commercials, and directed national and international television shows. Joanne is a Nichol's Fellowship screenwriting Finalist as well as Americans for the Arts workshop recipient at Sundance. Joanne gravitates towards projects that are purpose-driven that open people's hearts and minds and impact society in a positive manner.

Megan Smith, PhD, is an Assistant Teaching Professor of Sociology at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte. Her teaching and research interests are in mental health, loneliness, and deviant behavior. She has co-written a book, *Ties that Enable: Community Solidarity for Adults Living with Severe Mental Illness* (2010), and has a forthcoming textbook, *Sociological Insights on Mental Health and Distress* (2024). She speaks to local and regional organizations and publishes in non-academic journals on mental health and loneliness.

Alex Crow is a shift lead at Promise Resource Network for their Warmline. As someone with lived experience, she is on the front lines of empowerment as she listens to others tell their stories. Some, for the first time. "I have always felt very strongly about breaking the stigma around mental health, and I feel the best way to do that is by educating and, most importantly, by listening. There is nothing like witnessing someone discovering how powerful their voice is and realizing how much their voice actually matters- It is a feeling everybody deserves." Alex Crow, CPSS

JC Moore is the manager of the peer lead Promise Resource Network Warmline. As a person with lived experience, JC guides others through their own hero's journey as he helps them turn their story into their superpower. "I wish someone had challenged my language and reassured me when I was a suffering child, if but to tell me that I was "okay" and that I could cope with my challenges. Unfortunately, I didn't have that support, and as a result, I've lived a life filled with fear, emptiness, and numbness. I believe in changing the narrative around mental health and helping others understand that sometimes, our struggles build our greatest strengths. That process begins with the perception of what we experience and how we talk about it." JC Moore, CPSS

Ronald L. Lacey II is a documentary filmmaker and cultural anthropologist. His production company, Fade II Black Film and Video, LLC, has won numerous awards for outstanding storytelling, and his work has taken him to many places in the US and worldwide. Ron has even worked multiple times on several of Spike Lee's projects. The study of genealogy and African and African American Anthropology heavily influences Ron's films.