

HEADSHOTS:

*People I know and
People I don't know*

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Photo credits:

Images of paintings photographed by Stewart Clements
Photos and research from Africa courtesy of Sarah
Meyers-Ohki and Jeff Hull via their travel blog,
<http://thelookingglasshalffull.tumblr.com>

*Thank you to everyone who lent me his or her image.
Deborah Kame Hall*

“Headshots: People I know and people I don't know”

Painted from photos solicited from friends and culled from the Internet, this series has a serendipitous beginning. I came across my mother's driver license and noticed how much of her persona was captured in that tiny photo. After printing it out I decided to make a painting from that photo, having never painted her before. That photo revealed more information than anticipated. I began to collect ID photos from others — my son Matt, his girlfriend Melissa, my husband Jeff, my daughter and her husband. I solicited other people I knew for theirs, including my boss. Due to the interference of security markings on drivers' licenses the photo source category expanded to passport and corporate/school style portraits. I became more spontaneous in soliciting subjects and began to use my iPhone and digital camera.

As the 2012 Presidential debates and election came upon us I wondered what it would be like to paint President Barack Obama. When the horrific crime of Malala happened I decided to paint her. This led to the “people I don't know” subset. Being a fan of Miles Davis brought his image into the series. The amazing faces of the people Jeff and Sarah were meeting and photographing were included, downloaded from their travel blog. Going to Wallys Café on Thursday nights to hear Matt and his fellow musicians — their faces were added. I collected the images of Prince Harry and Bill Clinton, one of my favorite presidents. Their images are publicly accessible via the Internet.

The experience of painting from photographs people I know and those I don't has proven to be very stimulating. Working from a photo I did not need to be concerned about my subject's physical comfort, time constraints, or retaining a pose. Lack of intimacy was also a fear but alone with the photo I found my focus and interaction were more concentrated. I am very respectful to the subject, as that person has trusted me with their face. Or in the case of those I don't know, they have trusted the world with their face.

Thank you to everyone who has participated in this ongoing series, especially to my family and to Jeff and Sarah, my informal collaborators.

Deborah Kamy Hull, March 2013





September 2012 — Seattle, Washington. Lucy and I were in a downtown park walking through a glade of trees painted blue. I was snapping pictures right and left. After photographing bronze figures seated on a park bench I looked up from the camera to discover there was a live person between them. This teenager looked directly at me, smiled, and waved an ok. My source is that snapshot, the face cropped and enlarged.



Teenager, Seattle park



This series began with my mother, Josephine Kamy, who passed away in 1997. One day I came across her driver's license and noticed how much of her persona was captured in that tiny photo. She must have had her hair done in preparation for that picture. Her lipstick appeared fresh and her outfit chosen in a color she felt was flattering. I decided to scan and enlarge the picture, as it seemed to be one she liked. She did not like to be photographed. After printing it out I decided to make a painting from that photo, as I never painted her before. The photo had revealed much more information than anticipated.



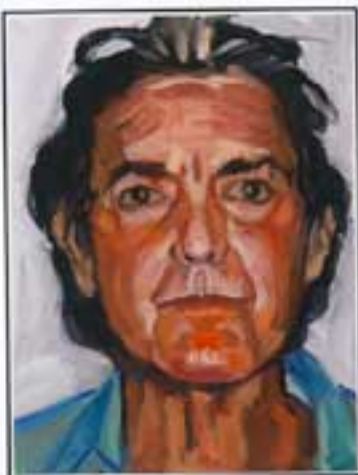
Josephine, my Mom



My Dad would tell me his story in bits as I was growing up — me the only child of children of the Depression. He was 2 when his father passed away. Shortly after, he was removed from his home and was fostered by many families though his baby brother remained with my grandmother and great grandmother. My grandmother kept trying to get him back and finally did when he was 12 or so. He attended a parochial high school in Chicago and put himself through undergraduate and graduate school. I saw him walk for his Masters degree. He was an industrial engineer, first working at different companies then starting his own consulting firm all the time teaching night school. He reinvented himself a few times, lengthened and shortened his family name. An extremely intelligent and well-spoken man with a lust for learning, he introduced me to classical and world music, visual art, and travel. When I was 21 Dad divorced my mother and remarried. He passed away at age 72 the summer of 2000 from a debilitating stroke. In the future I hope to research his stories as different versions were related to me. I had drawn him often when I was a child and chose this corporate style photo taken at an instant when he let his hair grow — most of my life he wore a crew cut.

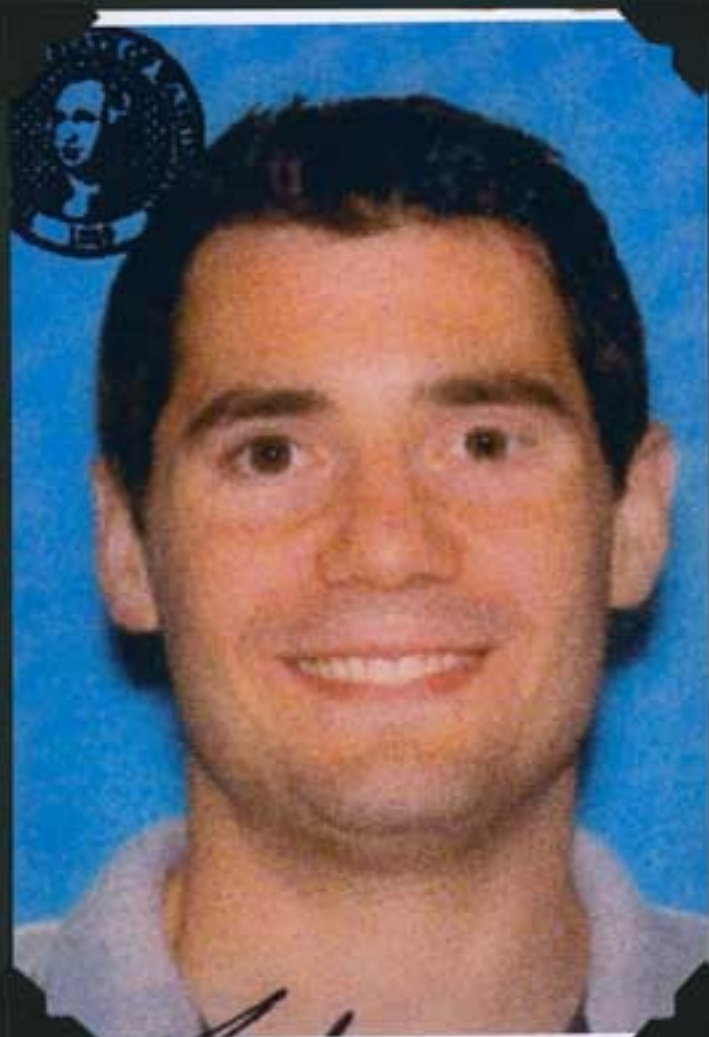


Eugene Kamy(kowski), my Dad



Jeff Sr. is my husband and a visual artist. We have been together since 1976, when I moved to Boston to attend graduate school. We met at the circulation desk when I applied for a part time job at BU's Mugar library, where he worked on the night staff. Later that evening Jeff called me. He had copied my phone number from my job application. He offered to put in a good word with the supervisor. (I did get the position). We married in 1982. There is no way I can summarize our life — you could say that I have lived with Jeff as long as I have lived in Boston. I scanned and enlarged the tiny picture on his faculty ID. He is wearing his favorite salmon pink T-shirt with a blue-green shirt, colors that often appear in his paintings.

Jeff Sr.



Dr. Matt is my son in law, the newest member of our family. He married our daughter Lucy on June 2, 2012. In addition to being a Doctor of Osteopathy Matt is a Captain in the U.S. Army. We (Lucy, Matt and me) went hiking together at Mount Rainier National Park last September. I wish they lived closer so we could all spend more time together. His photo was scanned and enlarged from his Washington state driver's license. Even in this standard mug shot you can see that his glowing and buoyant personality shines through. He is a very congenial person and we all like him very much.

Dr. Matt



Lucy, no. 1



Lucy is my first born, my girl. She has often been a subject in my work throughout her whole life. Last June she married Dr. Matt Nilan, who is a captain in the U.S. Army. They had met at their college, Loyola University in Chicago. Lucy is a ceramic artist. I had invited her to be part of the Headshot series and when visiting her in their new home in Tacoma last September Lucy handed me two passport type photos. To me, each one reveals different facets of her personality. I used both, for *Lucy 1* and *Lucy 2*.

Lucy, no. 2



Melissa is a student at Simmons College. She is a writer and involved in theater. Melissa also is my son Matt's girlfriend. She has been on vacation with us, at family parties, and Sunday dinner. The source photo for Melissa's portrait is her school I.D. that I scanned and enlarged, I think she has a spectacular smile.

Melissa



This portrait of Matt is the second painting made in the *Haadbot* series. He is the youngest of my three children. A student at Berklee College of Music he plays the trumpet. We have frequented Wallys Café to hear him perform. It is a nice bonus — we get to have a drink, listen to music, and be supportive parents all at the same time. Through him I met and was able to photograph the other young musicians in this series. Matt is tall and lean like his dad. Many friends and family have observed that he resembles younger photos of Jeff Sr. He was named after my grandfather, Matthew Kamykowski who played the violin. I scanned and enlarged his school I.D. for my source.

Matt Hull, trumpet



Axel sometimes plays saxophone with Matt at Wallys Café. He posed for me against the stage wall during a break one Thursday evening. It was dark and I had to use the flash on my digital camera — in the source photo note his eyes struggling with the light's sudden attack. Axel is also a student at Berklee College of Music.



Axel, saxophone



Nick plays piano with Matt. At Wallys Café he was the one of the bandleaders when they performed on Thursday evenings. Like Matt he is a student at Berklee College of Music. I photographed Nick with my digital camera during the band's break.



Nick on keyboard



Andy, a student at Berklee College of Music, sometimes played guitar with Matt at Wally's Café where I photographed him with my iPhone. He is from Paris, France.



Andy on guitar



Max R. plays stand up bass, often with my son Matt. Like Matt, he is a Berklee College of Music student. They play together at different venues and often collaborate together. Max use to haul his bass up our stairs to rehearse. I have seen him walking on the street pushing it on a dolly, using public transportation. Matt took his picture for me at Wallys Café during a band break one Thursday evening using my digital camera. Max is much taller than me and I wanted a straight on headshot.



Max Ridley, upright bass



Josh is a drummer Matt sometimes plays with at Wallys Cafe. I photographed him one night, his drums hidden behind him, in the harsh yellow light of the bar. He is a Berklee student.



Josh on drums



Sarah is in a relationship with my son Jeff. They met at their college, Columbia University in NYC. As she and he are currently on an adventure traveling around the world it seems more fitting to call her his beloved – a word that to me is much more romantic than the previously stated Facebook classification.* I consider her a dear friend. The photo I used for this painting was taken by Jeff and emailed to me from India this winter.

** An update — this February Jeff proposed to Sarah in Nepal. At about 15,000 feet in the Annapurna range, knee deep in snow, he asked Sarah to follow him for a photo at the edge of the trail. With all the mountains in the background he dropped on one knee and proposed.*

Sarah Meyers-Ohki



I am not sure why this photo was laying around our house. Perhaps one of the Jeffs was poking around our photo drawers, pulling out pictures and leaving them about. When I found it I knew this would be my source photo. Jeff Jr. has been my subject many times, though I never painted him as a child. I did paint him from life — as a teenager, college student, and an adult. Currently he is traveling in Laos with his fiancé, Sarah. They have been visiting other continents since the beginning of July. This is one of Jeff Jr.'s elementary school photos, a traditional pose. His haircut is a regular boy's haircut, a style insisted upon by his father. He is wearing what was most likely his favorite shirt.



Jeff Hull, Jr.



In September 2012 Jeff and Sarah began a 5-day trek up Mt. Kenya with a 4-member team (guide, cook, 2 porters). This is Samson. I really like his face and his headscarf. His photo was posted on their Tumblr travel blog, *The Looking Glass Half Full*.

Samson



Jeff and Sarah met 20-year-old Musa, in Kono, Sierra Leone. He was one of the first students to participate in the Wellbody Alliance's Peer Education Program (PEPTOK). The program, established in 2010, was informed by survey results revealing high rates of local teenage pregnancy. PEPTOK seeks to improve understanding of sexual and reproductive health among school-age children through peer-to-peer education. It also includes a community outreach component for building awareness in the broader Kono area. Musa would like to attend college to study civil engineering. He believes that more corporate social responsibility is needed to help rebuild Kono's infrastructure, in addition to basic services to provide light and water.

Musa's photo was posted on Jeff and Sarah's Tumblr travel blog, *The Looking Glass Half Full*, featuring PEPTOK.

Musa



Patricia, age 19, is one of the senior members of PEPTOK. Now with 2 years of involvement under her belt, Patricia is helping to train the next group of PEPTOK advocates. Since PEPTOK started, Patricia says, she has seen the rate of teenage pregnancy fall dramatically in the district. The work to affect this decline has not come easy though. "When we used to talk to people about PEPTOK, parents would malign us. They said we are telling the children to go have sex and to tell them things that will get them pregnant. Especially in Kono, the mothers don't talk about it. They don't talk to the girls about sex, it is a taboo." Patricia says that over time, with more discussion and with some results to show for it, this attitude has improved. The biggest change Patricia would like to see in Kono is the continued improvement and focus on education of the girls of the district. With a good education, she says, they can then become the future leaders of Kono and the country. After PEPTOK Patricia plans to go to university and practice medicine.

Her photo was posted on Jeff and Sarah's Tumblr travel blog, The Looking Glass Half Full, featuring PEPTOK.



Patricia



When Andrew, 18, one of the incoming PEPTOK members, met Jeff and Sarah, he was in his third day of training. He was very glad to have been selected after undergoing the program's written exam and interview process. Andrew was inspired by the senior PEPTOK members when they came to speak at his school, and their presentation convinced him to help out in his community. He dreams of educating people in his community to make positive changes in their lives.

"My dream is achievement. I want to educate. I do not want to become educated for myself, I want to become educated for the community, not to develop just my family, or my chiefdom, or my country, but for the entire world. Universally! This is my dream. If my dream comes true, the dream that I am chasing, I will do more than I have said."

Andrew's photo was posted on Jeff and Sarah's Tumblr travel blog, *The Looking Glass Half Full*.



Andrew, Sierra Leone



This young mother with blue earrings lives with her mother, father, and sister in a village in Sierra Leone. Sarah photographed her while visiting a comprehensive maternal and child health program run by Wellbody. I painted her because of her beauty and elegance. She gazes out at us with a timeless and classic expression. Her photo was grabbed from Jeff and Sarah's Tumblr travel blog, *The Looking Glass Half Full*.



Young mother with blue earring



I met Isabelle through my son Matt. He became fast friends with her oldest son Tal in elementary school. They had play dates, overnights, and also swim meets through BCNC, a local community organization. After Friday evening meets, the swim team families would swarm into the neighborhood Chinese restaurant, filling it with kids and adults, each age group self segregating to large tables. That is how we grew to be friends. Tal and Matt continued their friendship at Boston Latin School. Isabelle and I spent a lot of time on our cell phones, exchanging information of their whereabouts, comparing stories. It was in the middle of the boys' high school years that their family returned to live in Paris. The boys remained friends and Matt visited them in Paris. Tal chose to go to college in the US. He spent some of his holidays with us, till Matt got his own apartment. Isabelle and her family since have returned to the US, to Brooklyn so I will see her more. The source photo is taken with my digital camera, during her visit to Boston last fall.



Isabelle Y.



Noa Y, now



Noa Y, future

Noa is my friend Isabelle's daughter, her 3rd child, her girl. They visited Boston last fall, staying at the home of mutual friends. Before we went to lunch, as she had not gotten around to sending me her photo, Isabelle suggested I take her picture. She had been so busy with their recent move to Brooklyn from Paris. I looked around for a blank wall, pointing to one in the hallway I stated my usual request of posing as if this were for a passport or license. She complied. When Isabelle vacated the spot, first grader Noa popped in her place and posed, expectantly. I looked at Isabelle questioningly. She laughed and shrugged her shoulders granting permission. Thus Noa became part of my roster. There are 2 paintings of her — *Noa, Now* and *Noa, Future*. At first I thought it merely an inability to handle painting a child, an artistic challenge exemplified by the many elderly faces of Baby Jesus found in museums worldwide. I think that the underlying reason the first painting shows her looking more like a young adult is her sophistication and precociousness. I love the sweater she was wearing. They had come to Boston expecting warm weather and ended up needing to purchase her a sweater, a fuzzy chic white one, so French.



Noa Y.



I painted Prince Harry, the younger son of Diana, Princess of Wales because I always liked his face. I hunted on the Internet for the least notorious photo, one I think that his mother might prefer.



Prince Harry



Chris, Matt's roommate plays guitar and is a spoken word performer. He is a Berklee College of Music student from New Jersey. I snapped his picture with my iPhone last fall during a visit to their apartment.



Chris Lee, spoken word & guitar



I think I met Tom Oboe Lee in 1977. I was a grad student at BU and waitressing at the Newbury Steakhouse on Mass Ave. He was teaching at Berklee College of Music. The bar at NBS was a watering hole for the Berklee faculty. As many frequented the bar daily we all were familiar with them. Tom, being an extremely outgoing individual, would chat with all the waitresses. He found out I was a painter and taking ballet lessons. We began to hang out, eat out, go to openings and concerts, include our significant others. He was a founding member of Composers in Red Sneakers and of the Richard Mutt group. Tom is also a great cook, faculty at Boston College, recipient of many awards and now he is the one taking ballet lessons. We have remained friends and I respect and admire him deeply. Tom emailed me his passport photo to use as my source.

Tom Oboe Lee



Miles Dewey Davis III was born May 26, 1926 and died September 28, 1991. I am a Miles Davis fan. It is the timeless quality of his music — its like painting, *Kind of Blue* and *Sketches of Spain* are among my favorite albums. Davis moved to New York City to study at the Juilliard School of Music. He dropped out (after asking permission from his father) and began playing in clubs, jamming with other soon-to-be and already famous musicians. In his autobiography, Davis criticized the Juilliard classes for centering too much on the classical European and "white" repertoire. However, he also acknowledged that, in addition to greatly improving his trumpet playing technique, Juilliard helped give him grounding in music theory that would prove valuable in later years. His photo was downloaded from the Internet. I listened to his music on my iPhone while finishing this painting. It is dedicated to him.



Miles Davis



I became Junying's staff assistant at Harvard Medical School in May 2006. She is one of the best people I have ever worked for. In addition to being a well-respected and internationally renowned scientist, she is a kind and generous person. I chose to paint her because she is boldly wearing a yellow silk shirt in her corporate photo. As a leader in her field, it seems fitting.

Junying



I have known Nancy since I was 5 years old. We first met at Mrs. Wulf's neighborhood dance studio in Edison Park in northwest Chicago. We studied ballet, tap and tumbling. Nancy and I ended up becoming friends in high school — St. Scholastica Academy. Though we went our separate ways during college we would see each other when I was home for holidays. When that happened less and less we lost touch. However, through Mom she found me in Boston living on Thayer Street and visited as she moved east to attend Yale School of Drama. It was many years before we met again, this time in Park Ridge at a diner after my Uncle Stan's funeral. We are now back on track — a high school reunion, her visits here after a residency and to attend her niece's wedding, me visiting her to see one of her plays performed at a Chicago comedy festival. She is an amazing writer and teacher and one of the few people of my past that is part of my present. Nancy selected and emailed me this photo.

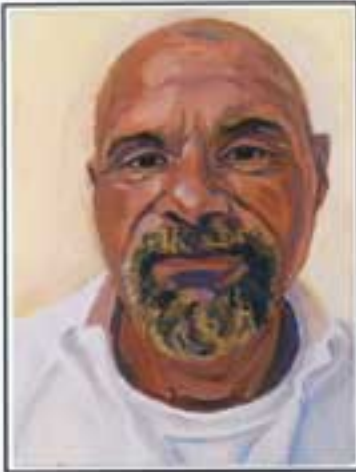
Nancy B.



Deb R. is my dear friend. We do a lot of girly things together. We shop; we meet for breakfast, go for walks. She gives me moral support and I hope I do the same for her. Last June, she flew to Iowa to attend my daughter Lucy's wedding. We met in our South End neighborhood years ago through our daughters. Deb has a major job running a non-profit in Boston therefore her corporate/press photo is my source.



Deb R.



Jeff E. is one of my go-to people at HMS where I work. He used to live in the South End. Like me, he has held other jobs before becoming administrative staff at the university. I painted him from a photo I took with my iPhone.



Jeff E.



Arlene cuts our family's hair. We first met just before my wedding day — she styled my hair. That was 30.5 years ago. Over time the rest of my family also sees her, though as customers they are not as loyal as I am. Or live in this part of the country. She knows a lot about me. The source image was taken with my iPhone at the hair salon.



Arlene



John is my next-door neighbor who vowed not to shave until he had completed remodeling his bathroom. John is very athletic and well groomed so I thought it would be fun to document this physical digression. I took his picture with my iPhone.

John H.



Bill Clinton is one of my favorite U.S. presidents whose face and personality I have always liked. He is very lucky to be married to Hillary, who grew up in Park Ridge, Illinois, not far from where I grew up. His post-presidential life is impressive. He remains active in public life, giving speeches, fundraising, and establishing charitable organizations including the William J. Clinton Foundation whose mission statement is "to improve global health, strengthen economies, promote healthier childhoods and health and wellness, and protect the environment by fostering partnerships among businesses, governments, nongovernmental organizations, and private citizens." The source photo, from his surprise appearance on the recent Golden Globes, is downloaded from the Internet. My main challenge making this painting was to ignore the black microphone that overlapped his black tie.



Bill Clinton

Malala: A portrait of courage *By Shehla Anjum*

I first heard about Malala and her father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, an educator who operates several schools in Mingora, the New York Times documentary "Class Dismissed in Swat." In that 2009 video, Malala spoke out about the importance of girls' education and defied the Taliban's edict to restrict girls' beyond the fourth grade. Defying the Taliban, her father continued to operate his school and Malala, then 11, continued to go to class. Moved by the video, I resolved to write about those little girls who longed for an education but couldn't obtain it. I contacted journalists in Pakistan and found a phone number for Yousafzai. I phoned and spoke to the father and the daughter. I asked if there was anything I could do to help them. Malala's response: Tell people about us.

My op-ed was published in our local paper, the Anchorage Daily News in March, 2009. A few weeks after we spoke, the Pakistani Army launched an offensive against the Taliban and the family was forced to leave Swat for a refugee camp. After the Taliban's defeat that summer Malala and her father returned and reopened the school. Soon students, including girls, flocked back. During our conversations in 2009, Yousafzai told me he was glad for my support and invited me to come visit his family in Swat. I finally took up his offer this spring. From my home in America, where I have lived since leaving my home in Pakistan in 1968, I traveled back to visit Malala in April. In the intervening years Malala has been recognized internationally as an advocate for peace and girls' education. In 2011 the Pakistani government honored her with the first-ever National Youth Peace Prize and the Dutch Kids Rights Foundation nominated her for its International Children's Peace Prize.

Our first meeting was in Karachi in March where she was receiving yet another award for her courage in standing up to the Taliban. Earlier that morning I had learned of an alarming new threat: The extremist group, Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, had placed Malala on a hit list. Malala walked into the room, a slight figure in a pink shalwar-kameez suit, her head covered with the marching duppata (scarf). We hugged. Tears welled up in my eyes. I was moved by that small girl with the soft voice who stood up for what she believed in and faced untold dangers. I asked Malala about her school, her classes and the award she had received the previous night. She spoke in measured tones and gathered her thoughts carefully. I saw no hint of any hubris. She seemed unaffected by her fame or her awards.

I told the family about the Taliban threat. Her father's face registered shock, but he recovered; Malala, however, kept her composure. I asked her if she was frightened. Her eyes flashed. "No. I feel no fear because life and death are in Allah's hand." Our meeting was short but soon I'd be on my way to visit them in Swat. The next month, in April, I draped a chaddar (a large covering) around my head and shoulders and boarded a bus in Rawalpindi for my journey to Swat, a valley in northwestern Pakistan. Malala gave me her room, a combined dining and drawing room while she bunked in another room with her cousins. Her awards, trophies, and citations from The United Nations and other foundations crowded several shelves. Books in English and Urdu jostled for space. Everything from the teen series "Twilight," to "Oliver Twist," "Anna Karenina," a translation of Engel's "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State," and a collection of 10 Paul Coelho books. Malala had read biographies of Pakistan's founder

Muhammad Ali Jinnah and the cricketer-turned-politician cricketer Imran Khan, as well as "A Brief History of Time," by physicist Stephen Hawking. She professed an admiration for the physicist. I wondered if she found "A Brief of Time" difficult. "Yes, and no. My favorite subject is physics and I understood most of the book."

I saw Malala play around with her younger brother and cousins. I saw her help her mother and speak spiritedly with her father about politics and her desire to stay in school at Mingora instead of going to a boarding school. Faced with continued threats from the Taliban, her father was considering sending her to a boarding school near Islamabad. She spent time on her new iPad and watched Pakistani soap operas with her friends after school. When I asked her for an iron, she took my clothes and ironed them herself. She was selfless, generous and gentle. I discovered a young girl, mature beyond her years, carrying a huge burden, aware of her celebrity but not taken with it. Her independent streak shone through. "I want to study and I want to have a career, because I never want to depend on anyone," she told me. She wanted to study physics in college and then law because "I need to know about law so I can enter politics and someday become the prime minister of Pakistan." She exuded absolute confidence in her ability to attain whatever she set sights on, and I had no doubt that she would succeed. A keen observer of her world, particularly Swat, she openly voiced her criticism. "I want Swat's civil administration strengthened so we can do things such as build schools and clean up the river here so it won't be a carrier for all the diseases we have, no one has paid attention to health, education and roads. All they want to do is loot money from the public."

She wasn't yet 15 but had blunt words for the army, which retains a strong presence in Swat. "When I'm the prime minister, I'll reduce the army's budget, and reduce the shipment of arms into the country. We will not compete in any more arms race."

Many young people in Pakistan aspire toward a Western education, but not Malala. "I'll only go abroad when I am finished with my education in Pakistan. I don't want to be Westernized but I want to learn about the good things in the West." On my last day in Swat we spoke about her love of books. In my notebook she wrote an Urdu couplet from a children's poem by poet and philosopher Muhammad Iqbal: "The only good people in this world are / those who are ready to be useful to others."

Soon after she wrote those words in my notebook, Malala grabbed her books and sailed out the front gate. "Malala, cover your mouth," her father called out to his feisty daughter. "If we don't cover our faces in Mecca why do we need to cover them here?" she had asked me a day earlier when we spoke about women's rights and purdah.

I caught a last glimpse of Malala as she adjusted her chaddar and pulled a corner across her face. "She covers her head but not her mouth," said her father. "I always have to remind her that we live in Swat." The reality of that was made tragic this week. *Shehla Anjum lives and writes in Anchorage, Alaska. She was born in Karachi and visits Pakistan annually.*



I painted this painting in honor Malala Yousafzai. On October 9, 2012, a Taliban gunman shot Malala as she rode home on a bus after taking an exam in Pakistan's Swat Valley. The masked gunman shouted, "Which one of you is Malala? Speak up, otherwise I will shoot you all", and, on her being identified, shot at her. She was hit with one bullet, which went through her head, neck, and ended in her shoulder near her spinal cord. After the shooting,

Malala was airlifted to a military hospital in Peshawar, where doctors were forced to begin operating after swelling developed in the left portion of her brain, which had been damaged by the bullet. After a three-hour operation, doctors successfully removed the bullet. This saved her life. Malala left Pakistan on board an air ambulance provided by the United Arab Emirates, accompanied by a full medical team. She was treated at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham - an NHS (National Health Service) hospital with a major trauma centre specialising in both gunshot wounds and head injuries. She underwent successful surgery on her skull and ear in a five-hour operation. The cost of her care and rehabilitation is being met by Pakistan. Discharged as an in-patient after making a good recovery from her surgery, Malala continues her rehabilitation at her family's temporary home in Birmingham and visits occasionally for outpatient appointments.

When Malala's attack was made public I became enamored with her image. The way her veil falls around her face brought to mind images of saints, I read recently in Vanity Fair that Malala was named after Malalai, the Afghan Joan of Arc, who died in battle, carrying ammunition to the freedom fighters at war with the British in 1880. I also discovered that we are both born on July 12th. It was extremely moving when ordinary Pakistani citizens began holding demonstrations. "We are all Malala" became a rallying cry in a country where millions of young girls are still denied access to an education.



Malala

Taliban Gun Down Girl Who Spoke Up for Rights By DECLAN WALSH *Published October 9, 2012*

KARACHI, Pakistan — At the age of 11, Malala Yousafzai took on the Taliban by giving voice to her dreams. As turbaned fighters swept through her town in northwestern Pakistan in 2009, the tiny schoolgirl spoke out about her passion for education — she wanted to become a doctor, she said — and became a symbol of defiance against Taliban subjugation.

On Tuesday, masked Taliban gunmen answered Ms. Yousafzai's courage with bullets, singling out the 14-year-old on a bus filled with terrified schoolchildren, then shooting her in the head and neck. Two other girls were also wounded in the attack. All three survived, but late on Tuesday doctors said that Ms. Yousafzai was in critical condition at a hospital in Peshawar, with a bullet possibly lodged close to her brain. A Taliban spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehsan, confirmed by phone that Ms. Yousafzai had been the target, calling her crusade for education rights an "obscurity." "She has become a symbol of Western culture in the area; she was openly propagating it," Mr. Ehsan said, adding that if she survived, the militants would certainly try to kill her again. "Let this be a lesson."

The Taliban's ability to attack Pakistan's major cities has waned in the past year. But in rural areas along the Afghan border, the militants have intensified their campaign to silence critics and impose their will.

That Ms. Yousafzai's voice could be deemed a threat to the Taliban — that they could see a schoolgirl's death as desirable and justifiable — was seen as evidence of both the militants' brutality and her courage. "She symbolizes the brave girls of Swat," said Samar Minallah, a documentary filmmaker who has worked among Pashtun women. "She knew her voice was important, so she spoke up for the rights of children. Even adults didn't have a vision like hers."

Ms. Yousafzai came to public attention in 2009 as the Pakistani Taliban swept through Swat, a picturesque valley once famed for its music and tolerance and as a honeymoon destination. Her father ran one of the last schools to defy Taliban orders to end female education. As an 11-year-old, Malala — named after a mythic female figure in Pashtun culture — wrote an anonymous blog documenting her experiences for the BBC. Later, she was the focus of documentaries by The New York Times and other media outlets. "I had a terrible dream yesterday with military helicopters and the Taliban," she wrote in one post titled "I Am Afraid."

The school was eventually forced to close, and Ms. Yousafzai was forced to flee to Abbottabad, the town where Osama bin Laden was killed last year. Months later, in summer 2009, the Pakistani Army launched a sweeping operation against the Taliban that uprooted an estimated 1.2 million Swat residents. The Taliban were sent packing, or so it seemed, as fighters and their commanders fled into neighboring districts or Afghanistan. An uneasy peace, reinforced by a large military presence, settled over the valley.

Ms. Yousafzai grew in prominence, becoming a powerful voice for the rights of children. In 2011, she was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize. Later, Yousaf Raza Gilani, the prime minister at the time, awarded her Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize.

Mature beyond her years, she recently changed her career aspiration to politics, friends said. In recent months, she led a delegation of children's rights activists, sponsored by UNICEF, that made presentations to provincial politicians in Peshawar. "We found her to be very bold, and it inspired every one of us," said another student in the group, Fatima Aziz, 15. Ms. Minallah, the documentary maker, said, "She had this vision, big dreams, that she was going to come into politics and bring about change."

That such a figure of wide-eyed optimism and courage could be silenced by Taliban violence was a fresh blow for Pakistan's beleaguered progressives, who seethed with frustration and anger on Tuesday. "Come on, brothers, be REAL MEN. Kill a school girl," one media commentator, Nadeem F. Paracha, said in an scathing Twitter post. In Parliament, Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf urged his countrymen to battle the mind-set behind such attacks. "She is our daughter," he said.

The attack was also a blow for the powerful military, which has long held out its Swat offensive as an example of its ability to conduct successful counterinsurgency operations. The army retains a tight grip over much of Swat. But that Tuesday's shooting could take place in the center of Mingora, the valley's largest town, offered evidence that the Taliban were creeping back. "This is not a good sign," Kamran Khan, the most senior government official in Swat, said by phone. "It's very worrisome."

The Swat Taliban are a subgroup of the wider Pakistani Taliban movement based in South Waziristan. Their leader, Mansur Fazlullah, rose to prominence in 2007 through an FM radio station that espoused Islamist ideology. After 2009, Mansur Fazlullah and his senior commanders were pushed across the border into the Afghan provinces of Kunar and Nuristan, where Pakistani officials say they are still being sheltered — a source of growing tension between the Pakistani and Afghan governments. But over the last year or so, small groups of Taliban guerrillas have slowly filtered back into Swat, where they have mounted hit-and-run attacks on community leaders deemed to have collaborated with the government.

On Aug. 5, a Taliban gunman shot and wounded Zahid Khan, the president of the local hoteliers association and a senior community leader, in Mingora. It was the third such attack in recent months, a senior official said. The military has asserted control in Swat through a large military presence in the valleys and support for private tribal militias tasked with keeping the Taliban at bay. But soldiers have also been accused of human rights abuses, particularly after a leaked videotape in 2010 showed uniformed men apparently massacring Taliban prisoners. In response to criticism, the army chief, Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, announced an inquiry into the shootings. An army spokesman said it was not yet complete. Shah Rasool, the police chief in Swat, said that all roads leading out of Mingora had been barricaded and that more than 30 militant suspects had been detained.

Reporting was contributed by Sama ul Haq from Mingora, Pakistan; Ismail Khan from Peshawar, Pakistan; Ehsanullah Tegu Mehsud from Islamabad, Pakistan; and Zia ur Rehman from Karachi.

This article has been revised to reflect the following correction:

Correction: October 9, 2012

An earlier version of the caption with the picture atop this article misidentified the city where Malala Yousafzai was attacked. It is Mingora, not Peshawar.



I began this painting in fall 2012 during the Presidential campaign. It was a way of supporting my candidate. While painting I would listen to radio talk shows airing sound bites pro and con, plus and minus. I finished the painting right after victory was declared. My source is a press photo downloaded from the Internet. I altered the original by removing the huge shadow of a microphone cast across his white shirt collar and changing the background to blue.



President Barack Obama