

George Bernard Shaw once said, "I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the community, and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can." This statement embodies the mission of the Lachapelle Funeral Home.

Since our inception in 1964, the Lachapelle Funeral Home has witnessed a very dramatic change in the community we serve. What was predominantly a "French" neighborhood slowly evolved into a very culturally diverse, low income population with very different needs. We had to adapt to the needs of this new community. As a result of the high incidence in homicide and gang related violence, the Funeral Home decided to partner with some local non-violence organizations, namely, Knowledge is Power and the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence. Christine Lachapelle-Miller is on the Board of Directors of Knowledge is Power, a Woodlawn Community based organization.

Knowledge is Power with the sponsorship and participation of the Lachapelle Funeral Home has a yearly community block party advocating non-violence and we close the party with a candle light vigil for all those who lost their lives as a result of violence.

Every year the funeral home hosts a fundraiser for a local charity. This year we held an art exhibit entitled, "Faces in Adversity" Healing through Art. All proceeds benefited the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence and Knowledge is Power.

We enlisted the help of a Curator, Melanie Drape to secure a particular type of art we wanted on display at the funeral home. We wanted art that not only portrayed non-violence, but grief and loss as well. We interviewed numerous artists and ultimately chose nine to show their work and also displayed the work of children who participated in a non-violence summer program sponsored by the Institute for the Study and Practice of Non-Violence. There were several different types of median; paintings, sculptures and video.

A favorite piece was "Forms of Memory" by Nina Magliocchetti. This was a series of seven multimedia sculptures representing anatomical hearts. The work explores the concept of memory and how we contain it; emotion and where it is experienced in the body; as well as examining our own relationships to the material objects we choose to hold on to. Items specifically representing the emotions of happiness, sadness, anger, disgust, contempt, fear and surprise, were donated to the artist during the winter and spring of 2007, and are displayed within each of the sculptures. The work facilitated a visual and tactile dialogue. The viewer was invited to participate by examining the objects, and leave something behind if they chose.

Along with all the art work the Funeral Home also provided wine from a local vineyard and cheese.

The event was a tremendous success not only from a monetary standpoint but it provided education to the community and facilitated a great deal of emotion and discussion from all who

attended. To this day we still encounter individuals who share with us how touching and meaningful the evening was to them.

Below are a few pictures from the art show at the funeral home

