Terry Jackson-Mitchell stands next to her art pieces "Made in the UNITED States of America" and "Revealed."

In the summer of 1980, Nazi serial killer Joseph Paul Franklin took aim at an unsuspecting interracial group of four teenage joggers in Liberty Park and killed David Martin and Ted Fields.

After 30 years of blame and racist innuendo fueled by local newspapers and hate-breeders, Terry Jackson-Mitchell, the 15-year-old who survived the shooting, has put herself in a more favorable light and is on the artistic path to preach awareness.

Visit Jackson-Mitchell’s website to learn more about the artist.

“I’m Terry Jackson-Mitchell. I’m a victim of gun violence, [and of] a racist serial killer, and I’m one of 4 people in the country who survived,” Jackson-Mitchell said. “I kept this story quiet for 30 years, and I didn’t want people to judge me – I was not going to tell people who I was.”

That all changed with a Visual Design homework assignment to make a mask that tells the student’s story and a Race and Ethnicity course at SLCC.

The ethnicity class proved to be a relevant and needed outlet for Jackson-Mitchell to vent her trauma while discovering the steps to healing.

According to Utah Holiday Magazine, “Rumors were thick. It was the Barons’ [Jackson-Mitchell’s father’s] motorcycle club, it was the clan, the girls were hookers.”

The media would go as far to call Jackson-Mitchell a race mixer and even accuse her of setting up her two black friends. These accusations ultimately contributed to this young girl’s multiple levels of depression, remorse and PTSD as she got older.
“That’s all anyone remembered,” said Jackson-Mitchell, “They didn’t see my face. They didn’t know I was an honor roll student, a cheerleader or a good girl.”

“How This Space Evolved to Be a Hate-Free Zone” featured in downtown Salt Lake City’s Art Access Gallery opened on June 21 and ends on July 12.

It features several mixed mediums of art including oils, digital media, interactive chalkboard dedicated to thewhatithoughtisawbook.com and some abstract pieces accompanied explanations of their meanings.

“I wanted to show what racism looks like to me and how it’s affected my life,” Jackson-Mitchell said. “The Mormons didn’t accept me. The Mexicans didn’t accept me because I was too white. The whites didn’t accept me because my mom was Mexican, but the blacks all just said ‘come on in, we’re your friends.’”

Jackson-Mitchell’s reconciliation with the Martin and Fields families combined with her experiences at SLCC pulled her out of a 30-year rut and into the world of artistic expression.

“We are all made up of the molecules from stars. Why the hell are we working against each other instead of together?” Jackson-Mitchell questioned.

Jackson-Mitchell said that the finished exhibit will represent this 30 year timeline from her perspective, her downfalls and her growth. After July, it will also become a recurring part of the curriculum for a Race and Ethnicity course at SLCC.

From left to right: "Made in the UNITED States of America," "Revealed," "Lotus Awakening" and "Walking in the Space of Race."

3

Related
- Lady Bruins volleyball in a tight race for conference crown
- Music stars changing the movie scenery
- ‘Mirror, Mirror’ at SLCC’s Movie Under The Stars event