

ANAKACIA SHIFFLET'S COVID JOURNALS INSPIRE NEW BOOK

New Release Chronicles Shifflet's Long Journey Throwing Paint & Other Survival Tactics

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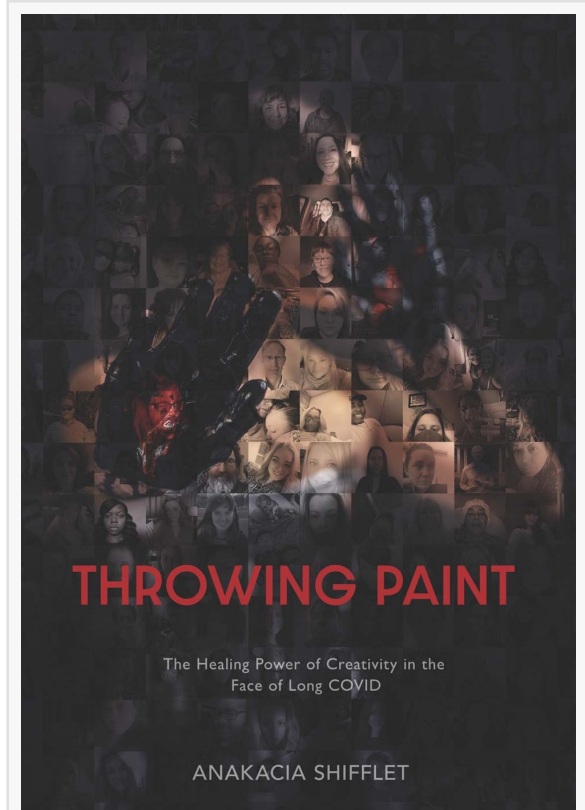
AnaKacia Shifflet today announced the release of her new book, "Throwing Paint"

(<https://shop.averilmarie.com/throwing-paint-book/>), which chronicles her many experiences coping and surviving with Long COVID. The book starts with a first impulsive act – literally throwing several different colors of paint on one of her original dress designs – to cope with the frustration of the COVID lockdown period – and then details that in the depths of her despair over the shutdown, the pause of her thriving gown design business and contracting both COVID and being diagnosed later with Long COVID, and all the ups and downs she went through in her ongoing fight with the virus.

"I was struggling to navigate through this very dark place I and most of us were in," she explains about those trying times in early 2020, "and I needed to clear a path through the negativity. I needed to release it somehow and throwing paint on one of my beloved creations seemed perfect at the time."

Little did she know it would lead to a calling to become a Long COVID activist, and that the

project would become an ideal way to illustrate the challenges of dealing with a mysterious long-term affliction that has outlived the pandemic itself. The response to her original painted dress experience (especially the YouTube video on it) led to local media coverage – KDVR Denver personality Dan Daru even threw paint on dresses with her in one segment – and fashion shows such as Expression of Tears/A COVID Story which she co-produced with Colorado Wedding



AnaKacia Shifflet wrote the new book *Throwing Paint* as an extension of the art therapy project she named *The Painted Dress Project*. The book chronicles her experiences (good and bad) with COVID, the lockdown period and her battle with Long COVID.

Magazine in June of 2021. Eventually she was invited to keynote at a statewide public affairs conference presented by the group Action 22 in October 2022, where she shared the rostrum with Governor Jared Polis.

"I kept extensive journals through the entire process, and this helped me survive every aspect of this long journey," she remembers. "I decided that while throwing paint was great therapy, continuing to write and work on the written content I created was even more important – in the same way I decided I had to throw paint on dresses, I decided I had to turn my journals into a book!"



In her book Shifflet writes frequently about her projects that involve "throwing paint" on models. The "black hands" image from one of those sessions was one of the more powerful images featured in the fashion show/art gallery exhibition she did in 2021.

The last two years of working on the book, doing events and networking with people all over the country (mostly via social media) convinced her that there was an even longer term role for her in advocacy and education, and she is also busy working on the launch of a 501c-3

organization – naturally called The Painted Dress Project – to further expand her outreach.

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AnaKacia Shifflet

"I hope that by sharing my story and the painted dress project, the culture gains a better understanding of the ongoing battle that those of us struggling with Long COVID are fighting every day," Shifflet explains.

One key facet of the book is the approach: it goes back and forth between Shifflet's own experience and narratives contributed by Long COVID patients from around the country. Each chapter ends with a list of constructive

action steps – almost like a homework assignment – which readers can use to address their own situation.

"I want the book, and the organization for that matter, to offer hope and validation for people have felt isolated in their own struggles with the disease," says Shifflet. "I explore the trials and tribulations of working with a wide variety of health professionals because I know thousands of people are on the same journey. The book is a first step toward sharing ideas and strategies for how to cope with it all, and the organization will take the next step by fostering group dialogue

and support for all who need it.”

The book is available through Shifflet’s website, but also can be purchased directly from her publisher Lulu.com (<https://www.lulu.com/shop/anakacia-shifflet/throwing-paint/paperback/product-nvq5ekd.html?q=Throwing+paint&page=1&pageSize=4>), Amazon (<https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0D4K3RYKC>) and Barnes & Noble (<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/throwing-paint-anakacia-shifflet/1145609570?ean=9798990113909>). The book will be available soon in select retail locations as well, although mostly just in her home state of Colorado; an Ebook version is also planned for this summer.



Shifflet (far right side of image) throws paint on models Brittany Osborn, Aly Hummel, Fatima Stansell-Gordon and DeAnza Banuelos at a recent Painted Dress Project fashion show.

For more information about the Painted Dress Project and the book, go to <https://averilmarie.com>.

About Averil Marie Collections

Averil Marie was launched in 2015 as a custom gown design and alteration business after years of working with bridal shops and clients strictly by word of mouth. It quickly gained traction with women wanting to have a say in how their gown should look, feel, and fit for their wedding day. In the beginning, they also re-constructed dresses and performed complicated alterations that dress boutiques were not able to do. In the summer of 2017, Averil Marie opened up an official studio location on Main Street in Rye, Colorado. This opportunity allowed the business to accommodate even more clients from all over the state, with a fitting room, consultation room, and workroom. Over the last couple of years, Averil Marie has transitioned to be not only a custom gown, re-constructed gown, and alterations business but now also offers their unique line of bridal gown designs allowing clients to explore even more options. The client base has also grown to include Utah, California and Arizona. Averil Marie serves clients who want something unique to their personal love story, something hand-made just for them, or need professional help on finding a gown ideal for their body type. Averil Marie also offers a unique and fun experience, and strives to create gowns that can be worn again and again.

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