

# Veterans' stories pair with images at 'Art of War'

By Hilary Sloane  
For the Hi-Desert Star

**JOSHUA TREE** — Military veterans paired their words with images by Hi-Desert artists at "The Art of War," a performance held May 23 at the Beatnik Lounge in Joshua Tree.

This is the second year Mil-Tree, an outreach organization formed to help members of the military integrate with the community, hosted "The Art of War."

Writers Leilani Squire, Daryl Berlie, Terre Fallon Lindseth, Tobias Crabtree, Paul Lopez, Robert Caudall, Kay Meads, William Galloway, Dale Fredenburg, Dennis Teeters, Jen Housholder, Hugh Martin and Kenneth Klemm were teamed up with artists Steve Rieman, David Butterfield, Coco Hall, Kelly Witmer, Frederick Fulmer, Francene Kaplan, Claudia Bucher, Vickie Mynes, Shelly Swift, William Almas, Melissa Spurr, Dan-

ielle Giudici Wallis and Moira Fain.

As participants and organizers gathered before the opening, they went around the room and shared their feelings. Marsh Staubing, a member of Mil-Tree, had created a work of art for the first "Art of War" and had found it to be a moving experience.

Staubing said she was particularly excited about the new group of people who have come together. "There will never be a group like this again," she said.

Each writing was mounted and hung on the wall near the corresponding work of art. The art, ranging from Melissa Spurr's electric light sculpture, to Kelly Witmer's painting on canvas, to Steve Rieman's free-standing metal sculpture, expressed a depth of feeling and connection that those attend-

ing the event echoed.

Sue Cram, owner and operator of Joshua Tree Uprising Adventure, said she had come to support her friend Kay Mead. Mead's moving piece about the death of her husband at a young age from post-traumatic stress disorder was a healing process for her family. As Meade read, her children and grandchild listened from the front row.

Jen Housholder, a Reservist and musician, expressed her feelings through her song "Warriors Live On":

*I see your unseen wounds,  
And I will stay  
Until every piece of you  
Is at peace*

*Warriors live on  
These wounds will heal*

For future events, check the Mil-Tree website, [www.Mil-Tree.org](http://www.Mil-Tree.org).



**HILARY SLOANE** For the Hi-Desert Star  
Cheryl Montelle, founder of Mil-Tree, enjoys "The Art of War" held at the Beatnik Lounge in Joshua Tree May 23.



**HILARY SLOANE** For the Hi-Desert Star  
Kay Meads reads at the "Art of War" event held at the Beatnik Lounge in Joshua Tree May 23.



**HILARY SLOANE** For the Hi-Desert Star  
Miri Hunter looks at a Steve Rieman sculpture during "The Art of War" May 23.



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Artists and veterans meet before the "Art of War" at the Beatnik Lounge in Joshua Tree May 23.