

# THEODORE ROETHKE MUSEUM

## Dec 15 Virtual Speaker Series with Jessica Farrell

December 08, 2020 / Roethke Museum

We are excited to announce our next Virtual Speaker event will be on Tuesday, December 15 at 7:00pm EST. We welcome Jessica Farrell. Please [click here to register](#). A Zoom link will be emailed on the day of the event.



Jessica Farrell is a painter and mental health advocate living in Delaware County, NY. Jessica has always been captivated by the people who shared powerful stories of recovery, including that of her Aunt Barbara, who struggled with Bipolar Disorder as a young woman in the 1960s and 1970s. During this time, her Aunt kept a diary as she grappled to maintain sanity. Jessica's advocacy in the community and her Aunt's writing inspired her to create a series of paintings, which led to a book, *The Wilderness Diary*.

*The Wilderness Diary* features the recovery stories of people who have experienced struggles with mental health. Despite living with a greatly misunderstood condition, they advocate for those struggling today. Their words shatter negative stereotypes and authentically tell the real experience of living with a serious mental health struggle. Many are peer recovery specialists Farrell has worked with in her community.

Currently, Farrell is making a recording of her Aunt's diary to share with the public. During the Roethke Foundation talk she will read several of her Aunt's diary entries, speak about her family connection to mental illness and advocacy efforts in upstate NY. Ultimately, *The Wilderness Diary* is about triumph over great adversity. It speaks to Farrell's interest in creating an honest dialog around one of the most pressing issues of our time—mental health care.