

# Abuse survivors' art is 'relief from a monster'

6 hours ago

**Sophie Parker**

BBC News, Wiltshire



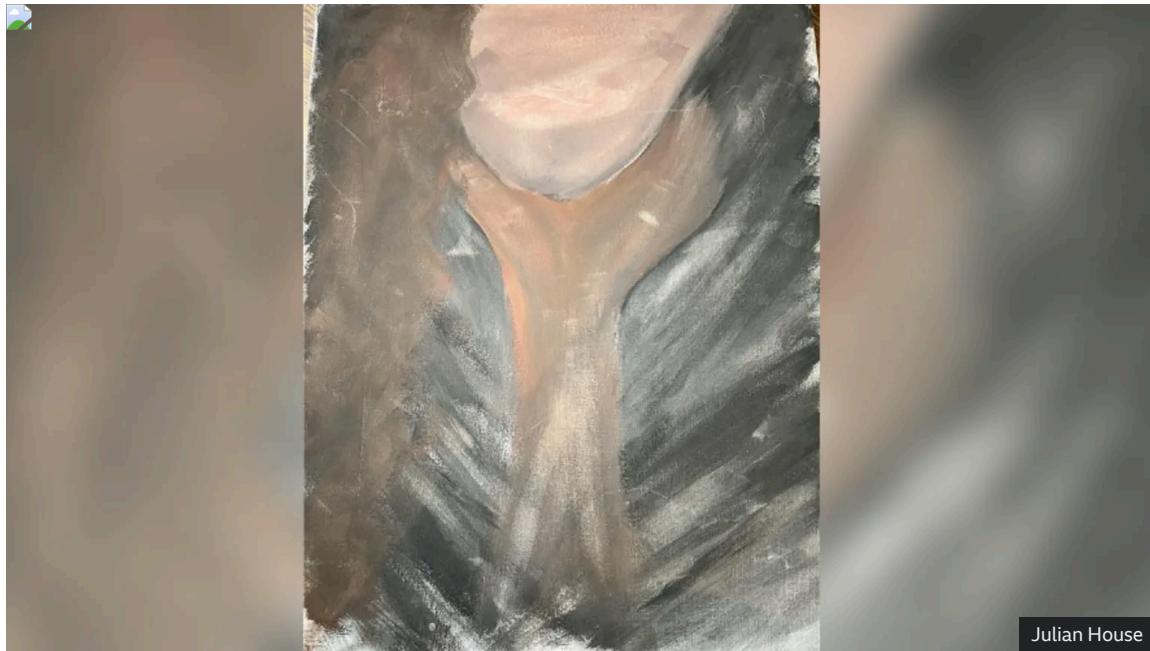
The exhibition has work on display from a number of organisations that help survivors.

Art created by domestic abuse survivors in Wiltshire will go on display next month in an exhibition called The Next Chapter.

"I was able to feel a sense of relief from the pain I suffered at the hands of a monster," one contributor said.

The exhibition will include paintings, drawings and poems, with smartphones and headphones to listen to stories behind them.

Organisations FearFree, GreenSquareAccord, Julian House, The Nelson Trust and Collaborate Digital have worked with the Wiltshire Council for the event.



"I put the brush in the black paint, it just happened from there, I did not know what I was painting" said the creator of this work.

## 'From the heart'

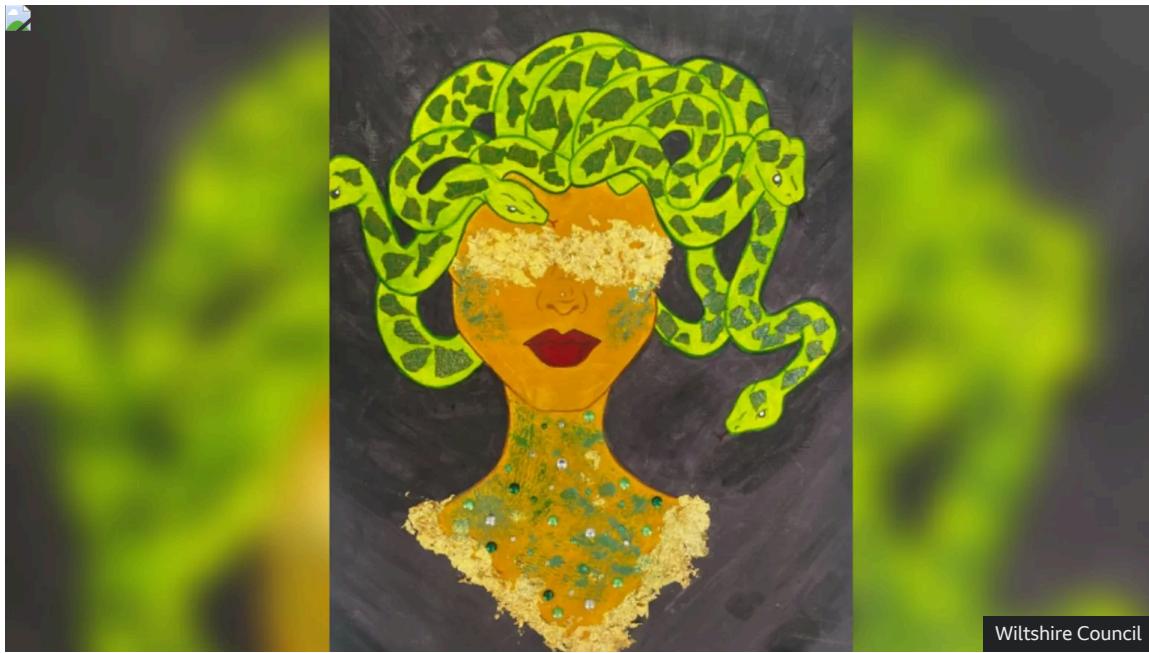
The survivors who have contributed have been through domestic abuse support in Wiltshire - the art and creativity contributed towards therapy and recovery.

One woman who produced art for the exhibition said: "With the art I created, I expressed my emotions and I was able to feel a sense of relief from the pain I suffered at the hands of a monster.

"I put the brush in the black paint, it just happened from there, I did not know what I was painting.

"It came from the heart. I want people to see my work and understand that domestic abuse is a serious matter.

"I am looking forward to [people] seeing the art and get them to imagine what life is like in an abusive relationship."



Wiltshire Council

This Medusa-style work will be part of the exhibition in March.

Diana, who works for the charity Julian House, added: "It's remarkable to witness the transformation of the women who were once denied the simple joy of painting due to their coercive circumstances now embracing art as a tool for healing and empowerment."

The exhibition will also feature podcasts produced by students from Wiltshire schools during healthy relationship workshops run by Collaborate Digital.

Cllr Ian Blair-Pilling, Wiltshire Council's Cabinet Member for Public Health, said: "The Next Chapter is not just an art exhibition, but a celebration of survival and strength and we're pleased we could help people share their stories with the public to raise awareness of domestic abuse."

The exhibition hosted by Wiltshire Council at County Hall in Trowbridge will run on 4 and 5 March, with the opening day including performances from a female vocal choir.

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