I was inspired and compelled to create the signature piece for RAISE, “Tribute to the Reno Rabbits”. In 2006 while working for Best Friends Animal Society I was involved in a large rabbit rescue effort to save 1250 rabbits. To commemorate the lives of these brave rabbits I folded 1250 origami rabbits and hung them from three Japanese parasols. Each 32in. parasol holds over 400 rabbits in a rainbow of colors and sizes.

The initial number of 1250 rabbits grew to over 1500 before all the spays and neuters were complete. I want this art piece to remind people to spay/neuter their companion rabbits and for shelters to spay/neuter when rabbits come into their care.

It is my hope that you will let your eyes wander and feel the essence of the intelligent, brave, curious & complex life of the rabbit.

I call this piece “Easter Storm”. I found the 4 ft. discarded hutch in a field and did little to the structure. The rabbits are needle felted wool. Domestic rabbits are the third most popular pet animal and are also the third most often surrendered pet to shelters. Rabbits are impulsively bought as Easter gifts only to be abandoned or left alone in a back yard hutch when the novelty of a new pet wears off and the amount of work involved in a rabbit is not wanted.

Don’t impulsively buy a rabbit, do your research, then adopt. I want this piece to say that a rabbit is a commitment and they are deserving of a safe and caring home.

Rabbits have beautiful gentle eyes and it is hard to think about the abuse those beautiful eyes undergo as rabbits are used by the cosmetic industry to test their products. I wanted people to look at this collage of bunny eyes and to be moved to buy only cruelty free products. These beautiful eyes do not only suffer while being experimented on, but in lives lived in isolation and loneliness. Besides product testing an estimated 250,000 rabbits are being used for pharmaceutical and medical testing.

The photography for the collage is mine except for the photo of myself and my little rabbit “Angie”. The collage was made on form board and contains origami, black & white photos, wire and a gently gathered and carded piece of rabbit fur.
It took a year to collect the shed fur from my own house rabbits to fill the large ball that I made from a recycled hammock. The rebar tree was an idea I presented to an artist friend who then used his skills to make this “Hanging Tree” piece. He also added a leaf on the tree for “hope” he said. The rabbit in the piece is named Bodhi, meaning enlightenment. He is 18 in. tall and was made with a wire armature, core batting and roving wool. He is hand felted. I believe the piece delivers its own message.

Probably no other animal has been used as the rabbit has for multi-purposes: fur, meat, medical research and product testing, show breeding, rabbit mills for the pet trade, while others care for them as beloved family members as they have come to know the magic that is the rabbit.

Join me, use your art, your voice to R.A.I.S.E.: Recognition, Awareness, Inclusiveness, Support and Education for Rabbits through the creative arts.

“Rabbit Magic”, needle felt, glass.

R.A.I.S.E.

For information on showing the R.A.I.S.E. art installation please contact Debby Widolf, email: gbunndance@hotmail.com or visit dontdumprabbits.org.

Thank you for helping to RAISE the bar for rabbits!

Gerry Mulligan, “Laundry Day Helper”