

5-2006

A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality: Creating a Business Based on Artwork

Christine Wirth
Buffalo State College

To learn more about the International Center for Studies in Creativity and its educational programs, research, and resources, go to <http://creativity.buffalostate.edu/>.

Recommended Citation

Wirth, Christine, "A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality: Creating a Business Based on Artwork" (2006). *Creative Studies Graduate Student Master's Projects*. Paper 76.

Follow this and additional works at: <http://digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu/creativeprojects>



Part of the [Social and Behavioral Sciences Commons](#)

*A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality:
Creating a Business Based on Artwork*
by

Christine J. Wirth

An Abstract of a Project
in
Creative Studies

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
For the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2006

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

ABSTRACT OF PROJECT

*A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality:
Creating a Business Based on Artwork*

This project was about creating a business in which I would create and sell my artwork. I developed the materials necessary for a legitimate business, which included a website, a three-dimensional flyer, a business card, a portfolio, and obtained a tax number. In addition, I created many pieces of artwork; some were created to sell and some were created out of the need for personal expression. This included jewelry, photography, paintings and sculptures. I was able to place my artwork in two stores. This project was a journey in risk taking and self-actualization. I was able to transform my dreams, ideas and visions into reality.

Date

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

*A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality:
Creating a Business Based on Artwork*

A Project in
Creative Studies

by

Christine J. Wirth

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science

May 2006

Buffalo State College
State University of New York
Department of Creative Studies

*A Journey in Transforming My Passion into Reality:
Creating a Business Based on Artwork*

A Project in
Creative Studies

by

Christine J. Wirth

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Master of Science
May 2006

Dates of Approval:

Dr. Mary Murdock
Advisor of Creative Studies

Christine J. Wirth
Student of Creative Studies

Dedication



To my two boys, Evan and Kyle, who are my sunshine.



To my husband, Jeremy, my love.

To my mom and dad, who everyday make me grateful that they are my parents.

To my Great Aunt Lee, who was the first artist I knew
and always fostered my love of art.

To my sister, Carolyn, who makes her life a work of art.

To you reader, without you these are just words on paper.

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	p. 1
II.	Purpose.....	p. 3
III.	Description.....	p. 4
IV.	Rationale.....	p. 4
V.	What This Project Adds Creatively to Myself and Others.....	p. 5
VI.	Pertinent Literature Narrative.....	p. 7
VII.	Expanded CBIR Abstracts.....	p. 7
VIII.	Selected Bibliography.....	p. 8
IX.	Process Plan Introduction.....	p. 9
X.	Timeline of What I Did.....	p. 9
XI.	Project Timeline.....	p. 10
XII.	Moments.....	p. 12
XIII.	Outcomes Introduction.....	p. 13
XIV.	Products.....	p. 14
	a. Journaling.....	p. 14
	b. Artwork.....	p. 15
	c. Business Materials.....	p. 18
	d. My Artwork in Stores.....	p. 20
XV.	Key Learnings Introduction.....	p. 21
XVI.	Content.....	p. 22
	a. Things That Worked.....	p. 22
	b. Things to Do Differently or Change.....	p. 23
XVII.	Process.....	p. 23
	a. Things That Worked.....	p. 23
	b. Things to Do Differently or Change.....	p. 25
XVIII.	Conclusion.....	p. 25
XIX.	References.....	p. 27
XX.	Appendix.....	p. 28

Introduction

This paper was born from an honest look within. It was a true journey in risk taking and self-actualization. A journey that lead me to discover what my passion in life is and the opportunity to pursue it and make it true. My original project was far from what I ended with. This change resulted from a combination of several experiences and influences; a conversation with my mom; no longer wanting to be jealous of people who were doing what they loved; being unsatisfied with my career direction; journal writing; self reflection; and an honest look to what I'd like the future to be and to be a true role model to my children. I wanted them to grow up seeing their mom doing something she loved, so they in turn will do what they love. What better way to teach them, but to show them? This project was a seed within that needed some sun, water and soil. This project was my opportunity to take that seed and begin the garden. It blossomed into the foundation that lead to a solid and legitimate business and the need to pursue my vision; a store that will incorporate selling art (mine as well as local artists), used clothing and encompass a studio and workshop to teach art.

Additionally, I was watching one of my favorite movies with my sons, "The Muppet Movie". We all love the song "Can You Picture That?" I looked up the lyrics on <http://www.lyricsdownload.com/muppets-can-you-picture-that-lyrics.html>. The words were a unique way to describe how I felt about my passion. I found myself singing this song over and over. When deciding on following my passion for my project this song kept coming back over and over. Thank you Electric Mayhem...

"Can You Picture That?"

Written by Kenny Ascher and Paul Williams

Performed by The Electric Mayhem

Dr. Teeth: RIGHT! TWO THREE FOUR!

Ohhh yeah! Whooo!

Everybody's lover, everybody's brother, I wanna be your lifetime friend.
 Crazy as a rocket, nothin in my pocket, I keep it at the rainbow's end.
 I never think of money, I think of milk 'n honey, grinnin like a cheshire cat.
 I focus on the pleasure, somethin' I can treasure, can you picture that?
 Can you picture that?

Let me take your picture, add it to the mixture, there it is I got you now!
 Really nothin' to it, anyone can do it, it's easy and we all know how.
 Now begins the changin', mental rearrangin', nothing's really where it's at,

Now the Eiffel Tower's holdin up a flower.
 I gave it to a Texas cat!

Fact is there's nothin out there you can't do
 Yeah, even Santa Claus believes in you.

Beat down the walls, begin, believe, behold, begat.
 Be a better drummer, be an up and comer. Can you picture that?

CAN YOU PICTURE THAT??!!

All of us are winnin, pickin and a-grinnin, Lordy but I love to jam
 Jelly-belly gigglin, dancin and a-wigglin, honey that's the way I am!

Lost my heart in Texas, Northern lights affect us, I keep it underneath my hat,
 Aurora Borealis, shinin down on Dallas! Can you picture that?
 Can you picture that? Can you picture? You gotta see it in your mind!
 Can you picture? You know it's quick and easy to find!
 Can you picture? You don't have to buy a frame!
 Can you picture? Can you picture that? Can you picture that?

Use it if you need it
 Don't forget to feed it!

Can you picture that?

PURPOSE

What was the purpose of this project? Simple...to live my passion. It has been a dream of mine to sell my artwork and eventually own a store. This project has been a part of me since I was a child. I always saw art as a “hobby”; something I did on the side, after I was done with school and work. This project was the first step in “getting out there”, in taking the risk. Up until now I have only given my art as gifts, never realizing or believing that I could make a career out of it. It was time to make this dream a reality. It began with changing my original idea and completely rewriting my Concept Paper (Appendix A) for this project. The rest is history!

I wanted to teach my children to be independent and follow their passion. I could talk to them until I’m blue in the face, but words are meaningless without action. A role model, I feel, is the best teacher. By seeing their mom take risks, fail, try again, and make her passion her life, they in turn will know chasing their dreams is a necessity in order to have satisfied lives.

This project also had an inner purpose. It forced me to take risks and act on all the ideas and desires I have had for years, which I had neglected out of fear. It was a time to find out who my true self was. It was a quest in self-actualization. Would I continue after rejection? Was I willing to put my true self out there? Would I work hard enough on all the pieces of this project, or just the fun ones? These are my dreams, so it was solely on me to make them come true. Gary Davis (1999) wrote, “The creative person must dare to be different, make changes, stand out, challenge traditions, make a few waves, and bend a few rules.” (p. 88) It has come to my attention that in order for me to be happy, I had to take his advice.

Description

This project was the foundation for an idea and philosophy I later will solidify into reality by opening a store based on my beliefs. I first needed to get my artwork out into the world. Up until now it was only given as gifts or stored in my closet or basement. I needed to take that first critical step and let go of my fears, inhibitions, and the idea that art is only a hobby and not fit for a career.

For this project, I set out to build a business from my artwork. I wanted to develop the materials necessary for a legitimate business: a business card, a name, a flyer, a website, a portfolio and a tax number. I also needed to get my art out there!! I wanted to place my work in consignment shops and sign up for an art show, and possibly a gallery show. In addition, I wanted to make more artwork whether it was to sell or to just create.

Rationale

There is no other rationale except this was something I needed to do. This was a vision I am passionate about and have always had a deep interest in. These ideas have lived with me since I could remember. I had to do this, or I would feel I had not fulfilled my purpose. Carl Rogers believed “that creativity was motivated by people’s self-actualization tendencies, the drive to fulfill their potential.” (In R. J. Sternberg, 2002, p. 298) It has been my lifelong goal to know myself. I have spent time and energy in painting, writing, walking, talking and thinking in order to discover who I am.

In Jane Piirto’s Pyramid of Talent Development, she describes the “thorn”, saying, “This model calls vocational passion the *thorn*, because it bothers, it pricks, it

causes obsession until it has its way, until the person with the talent begins to work on developing that talent.” (Piiro, 2004, para. 24-25) It is important for me to answer to my thorn. I am happy with life, but do not feel fulfilled and excited about my work. By creating and selling art, I am more focused and have a renewed sense of life.

Julia Cameron, in *The Artist's Way* (1994) describes how many creative individuals live under the shadow of others. I found myself doing many things, but none of them satisfied my creativity. I love being a parent and experience glimpses of creative moments, but there was always a feeling that I wanted more. I was jealous of anyone who is living out his or her creativity. I wanted to stop being jealous and live my creativity.

As stated above I wanted to teach my children to know themselves, to be their true selves. As they watch and see their mother “doing her thing”, I hope that they, in turn will find their passion and pursue it to the fullest extent.

What This Project Adds Creatively To Myself and To Others

This project was THE creativity in myself. All the literature I have read and studied has directed me to begin understanding who I am and explore my creativity. I have found one of the most important aspects of creativity within yourself is to find your true passion and to make your life a work of art. Gruber and Wallace state, “The creative person is unique, developmental change is multidirectional, and the creative person is an evolving system.” (In R.J.Sternberg, 2002, p. 93) This project has been evolution from wishing I could pursue my dreams to making them a reality.

Csikszentmihalyi wrote extensively on the experience of “flow”. He described it in his book, *Flow*, as our search for happiness. He further said that it was involving oneself with an activity to such an extent that nothing else seems to matter makes the experience itself intensely enjoyable. (Csikszentmihalyi,1990)

Gardner (1993) says “those ‘in flow’ ...feel that they have been fully alive, totally realized, and involved in a ‘peak experience’.” (p. 25-26) I have again experienced “flow”. It has spilt over into other areas of my life. Everything is more enjoyable and that which is not, is not as difficult. The world has more potential for pleasure and has potential influences for my artwork. While working on my jewelry, paintings, or sculpture, time seemed to mean nothing. I looked forward to “working” on my art. Even while I was designing the website and flyer, I would spend hours working and realize that I had not eaten all day!! It was time that I could lose myself in my creativity. It was a true return to my creative process.

I have inspired others to begin looking at their passions and begin following them. My husband has returned to creating woodworking and playing the guitar. My best friend will be entering art shows with me. A co-worker is returning to her loom, and I have begun to teach my son drawing lessons. Although I have not yet seen the results, an essential reason for pursue my passion is to teach by example so that my children will live to follow their passions.

Pertinent Literature

Introduction

Most of the literature that was used in the making of this project was to learn about the workings of establishing an art business, for ideas and influences in creating artwork and to inspire my creativity. My house is full of books; my sister always says I could open a library. I have many art books, books of poetry, reference book and novels. I carry what I have read in many of these books, but the books below were the most influential in the making of this project.

Expanded CBIR Abstracts

Beech, R. (2003). *The origami handbook*. Blackfriars, London: Anness Publishing Limited.

This book is a valuable reference for anyone interested in origami. It can be used for fun in creating origami or for the serious artist of origami to see what the classic and current trend in origami is. I was able to use this book to make a unique Sanbo Box origami for a business flyer.

Cameron, J. (1994). *The artist's way*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.

Although this book was assigned to read throughout the project, it was an important factor for my creative growth. Julia Cameron described how many of us live in the shadow of others; helping and nurturing them to grow in their lives and creativity and not taking the time for ourselves. This was a turning point in deciding what I wanted to do for my project. I originally was going to begin a facilitation business, but after reading about my shadow, I decided my passion truly laid in art. Thus, this project!

Clegg, H. & Larom, M. (1951). *Jewelry making for fun and profit*. New York: David McKay Company, Inc.

My Great Aunt Lee was an artist. She was an inspiration to me growing up. She was always giving me her art books. This was one of them. Below is a piece that I made from this book, which started my interest in jewelry making.



Smith, C. (2004). *Art marketing 101*. Nevada City, CA: ArtNetwork.

A must for anyone even slightly interested in selling their art. It is inspirational in encouraging artists to think and act like an artist. It is full of ideas to sell your art, get noticed and make a full time career of being an artist.

Selected Bibliography

Clark, L. W. (1973). *How to make money with your crafts*. New York: William Morrow & Company, Inc.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.

Davis, G. A., (1999). *Creativity is forever*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.

Gardner, H. (1993). *Creating minds*. New York: Basic Books.

Ascher, K. & Williams, P. (1993). *Can you picture that?* Retrieved February 11, 2006, from <http://www.lyricsdownload.com/muppets-can-you-picture-that-lyrics.html>.

Piirto, J. (1999). *Talented children and adults: Their development and education*. 2nd Ed. Columbus OH: Prentice Hall/Merrill.

Piirto, J. (2004). *Understanding creativity in domains using the Piirto pyramid of talent development as a framework*. Melbourne, Australia: Keynote Speech at Australian Association for the Gifted. Retrieved February 4, 2006 from <http://personal.ashland.edu/~jpiirto/Australia%20keynote%201.htm>.

Smith, C. (2004). *Art marketing 101*. Nevada City, CA: ArtNetwork.

Sternberg, R. J. (2002). *Handbook of creativity*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.

Torrance, E. P. (1990). *The incubation model of teaching: Getting beyond the aha!* Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Process Plan

Introduction

When asked what I did...everything! I have finally begun to live my dream, and this is only the beginning. For years I have wanted to sell my artwork and eventually open a store. This project has laid the foundation in making my deep set creativity a reality.

Timeline

What I Did

It is interesting that for everything I accomplished, it did not feel like work. Csikszentmihalyi (1990) says that when we are truly working in our creative endeavors we are in our "flow". When I look back, I am amazed at how much was done in a short amount of time. I looked forward to "working" on my project. The main focus was to get my artwork out of my closet, basement and mind and out into the public.

**Chronological Order of Events
Project Timeline**

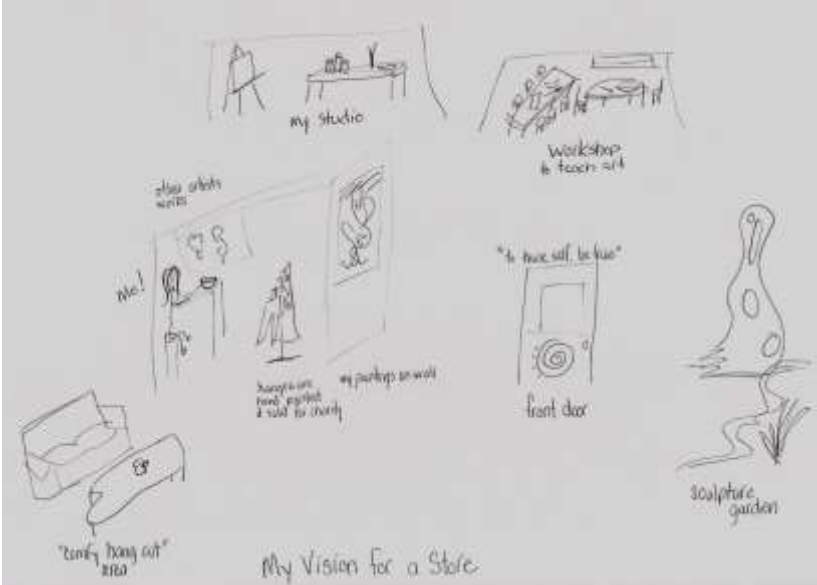
PHASE I		
Activity	Date	Hours
Create name and logo: use brainstorming and SCAMPER	Sun, Feb 5	1 hour
Create a flyer	Sun, Feb 5	2 hours
Business card	Wed, Feb 8	2 hours
Website	March 21	3 hours
Business portfolio	Through out project	10 hours
Notes for write up	Through out project	20 hours
Get tax number	Fri, Feb 3	2 hours
Begin researching a grant	Throughout project	7 hours
Artist Date: Sculpture Park	April 2	
Artist Date: Lockport Trail	March 18	
Artist date: Walk in snow	Feb 19	
Artist Date: Albright-Knox	Feb 10	
Artist Date: Presque Isle	March	
Morning Pages: journal	Daily written thoughts	10 hours
CREATE ARTWORK!	Throughout project	30 hours
	Total hours	87 hours

PHASE II

Activity	Date	Hours
Research and enter art shows	Feb 4 to April 29	10 hours
Present art to local consignment shops	Feb 12 to April 4	7 hours
Write up	April 10-April 16	10 hours
Finalize write up	April 16-May 6	10 hours
Bind project	April 20	3 hours
Presentation	May 6	5 hours
SIGN OFF!	May 6	1 hour
	Total hours	46 hours
	Total project hours	133 hours

PHASE III

I will continue selling artwork at art shows.
 I plan on opening a store selling used clothing, my artwork and artwork of others. I will have a studio in the back to continue working on my art and a workshop to teach art. I will have a sculpture garden surrounding the store. I would also like to have kids from the high school work and learn about business in this store and have their artwork displayed and sold.



This is a sketch of my vision for a store I will open in the near future.

Moments...

These are moments during this project that were exciting...

- I wrote Christine J. Wirth: *artist*, on my flyer. This is the first time I had written and formally acknowledged that I am an artist.
- When I decided to change my project from making a business based on facilitations to one based on my artwork. It was scary, exciting and exactly what I needed to do.
- When I explained my project to mom. At the time, her brother, my Uncle Dave was fatal. This prompted a conversation with her other brother, my Uncle Bill, on what they have done in life and looking back and not wanting to regret anything. This is exactly how I felt about this project, I did not want to look back and say, "I should have done this, I wish I had done that."
- The first time I meet and talked with Joann at The Towpath Marketplace. She was so receptive and interested in my artwork. The way in which she ran her consignment store was similar to my philosophy. She wanted all the artists to meet and brainstorm, gather once a month to hang out, and she encourages the artists to bring in people who have never been there before. I was so excited, I felt as if I had find a good home for my art!

- I began running again. This was unexpected in that I run here and there. This time, I was beginning to feel more focused and purposeful. I wanted to run to maintain energy, but it now was a time to clear my mind and think about what I needed to do next.
- The first time I had ever sold any of my artwork!! To make it even better, I sold four pieces.

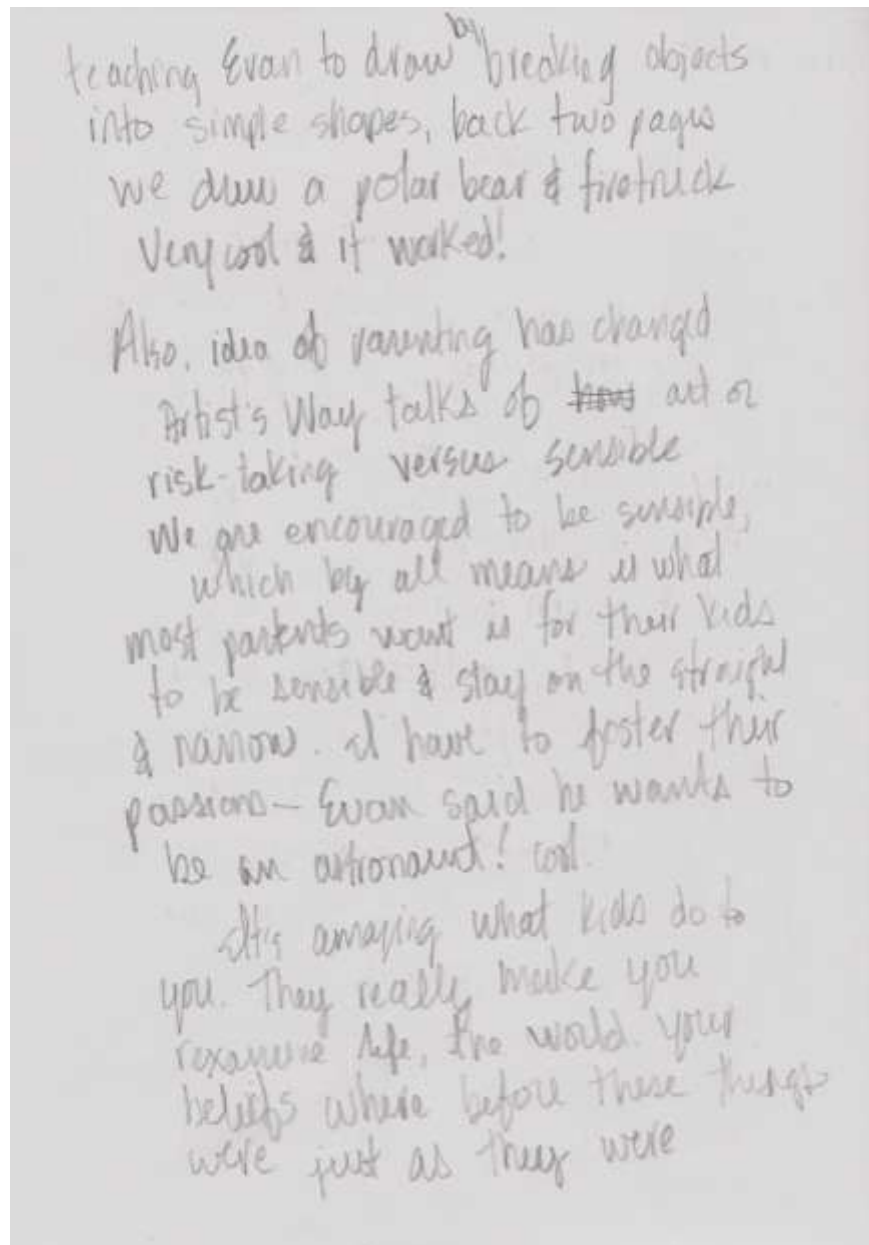
Outcomes

Introduction

So much was accomplished during this project, when I look back, I am amazed. These are ideas I have wanted to do for so long and here they are. I created an Evaluation Scale (Appendix B) at the start of this project in order to have a concrete way in which to track my growth, progress and changes. It was amazing to see the huge amount of production and growth on this form from the beginning to the end of this project. I loved to work on my art, so creating art was not the challenging part. That came when I was putting my art in the public. Well, I did it and it was nerve racking and exciting at the same time. Anyone that has been on a roller coaster experiences that, "Oh my, oh my..." feeling right before the big plummet. Well there I was thinking, "Oh my, oh my..." as I walked through the door of the first store to present my work. I was just as excited when I got home as the kid who just gets off the roller coaster. This project was as thrilling and as gut wrenching as the roller coaster plunge, but I have successfully reached my goals and realized that I wanted to do so much more.

Products That Have Resulted From This Project

Journaling



Writings. I wrote throughout this project. It was a medium in which to unfold ideas and to bring sense and organization to my life. It was in my journal that I made the pivotal decision to change the direction of this project entirely. It was full of exclamation points and colorful language.

Artwork

Journals. These journals were created from my photographs. I wanted to use my photography in a functional fashion. I am an avid writer and wished to have others use my artwork while on their own writing journey.



photograph on canvas transfer

Jewelry. These pieces were the turning point in knowing my art would make it “out there”. I had made a few pieces for Christmas. The people whom I gave them to would wear them even when they knew they would not see me. This was crucial in having others take a keen interest in my work.



glass beads and wire pendants

Painting. Painting has always been a personal, private exploration of my emotions and thoughts. I never was comfortable sharing my paintings with anyone unless they were very close friends or family. After this project, I am no longer afraid to share these “emotions on canvas” with others.



oil on canvas
4' x 2'

This painting was done in collaboration with my best friend, Heather Westlund. (My side is the right) This is the first time I have ever worked with another artist. If I were forced to comment, I would have to say it is about connection and transformation, of mind, of self, of deep within.



oil on canvas
18' x 14'

Interestingly, this piece represents the Chinese word for “real”. Although skewed in color and in paint, it is a long lasting image in living a true and real life.

Business Materials

Business Card



It is official. I am an artist.

Portfolio

I photographed my artwork, both past works and recent works. I placed them in a professional portfolio to present to potential customers and to display during art shows. Many of the pictures within this project are included in the portfolio.

Business Flyer



This was an interesting piece. I brainstormed on a unique way to create a flyer, one that customers would keep and use. I decided to incorporate origami in the design. I used it to hold my jewelry pieces, rings and business cards.

Tax Number

I was able to secure a tax number to make my business legal. Through many phone conversations and Internet searching, I finally found a website that literally took ten minutes to enter information and receive a tax number. What was interesting is although this was one of the more annoying parts of this project, I was still excited when I received my number, knowing it was a piece of the dream!

Grant

I had the idea to begin searching and writing a grant to gain monies for my art business and later to open a store. Like the tax number, I spent many hours making phone calls and searching the Internet. I found that most art grants are for projects and not for profit. I also found that in order to use a grant for a business, it must be a business that will be housed in a building you will restore or a not for profit business. There were many low interest loans available, which I will pursue when I am ready to begin the process of opening a store. It was not all a waste; I now know what will not work and agencies to go to when I am ready.

Website

I have always wanted to create a website in order to have an easily accessible way in which to look at my artwork. It was difficult to get just the right look, but I feel it turned out interesting and captured visually how I wanted to promote my business. (Appendix C)

My Artwork in Stores



Look, a real booth, in a real store!!! It is really out in the public!! This is in a store close to my house, Towpath Marketplace in Lockport, NY. Art is like a child, you put your heart and soul into it, and there comes a day where you must let them go out into the world. You just hope that you have given enough that it will make a lasting impression on others.



This is my artwork in another shop, Sister Moon's Broom Closet in Lockport, NY. It is so exciting to have my art out in the world!

Key Learnings Introduction

So much was learned from this project, about myself, my creativity, and how I am a part of the world. Most importantly I learned that this is just the beginning. I began this project with the goal of getting my artwork out into the public. This in turn uncovered my true vision, to open my own store. This project grew into so much more than originally expected. I worked through my fears, took risks, experienced the excitement and pleasure from creating art again, actually created a business, and evolved into my true creative self. It was truly an experience in self-actualization. And to make it even better, I sold some pieces!!

Content Pieces that Worked

Just about everything worked. This project was very satisfying to my creative being. It left me wanting to do so much more. The art that I have always created is now out there. This was my top priority going into this project and it was more than achieved. I now have my work in two different stores, and I have already sold four pieces!! I have made all the components for a legitimate business, some with an unexpected creative flair.

I also noticed changes in my life and in my family's life. I began running again, I was excited to talk about what I was doing, I began researching and buying healthy foods, I am doing an aggressive job search, I am teaching my older son drawing lessons, my husband is playing guitar more, our family is hiking, and I am looking at the world with artist's eyes again. The world is full of cool little niches and life is one incredible moment after another.

This project turned into more than just creating and selling artwork, I was refreshed in life. Things began coming into focus. I was reenergized. I was excited again. Lately I have consciously put my art on hold because of my two little boys. They have become my life and brought an immeasurable amount of happiness and true joy to my life. Yet as any mother will tell you, I was not taking time for myself. Revisiting my art, finding quiet time, journaling and getting back to that self that would get excited over bending some wire and mixing paint has made me feel whole again. Although this is beginning to sound like a Hallmark card, it is exciting to look within and find it interesting.

Things to Do Differently or Change

I should have begun this project a long time ago. Beside that there are only a few things I would change. First, I need space in which to work. Most of the art was created while I was with my children in the living room. I would involve my older son in choosing the beads for my jewelry, but most of the time my children were not very patient and tolerant of me working and not paying attention to them. I decided to convert a corner of my garage into a studio this summer.

Second, I had hoped to have participated in an art show. I had sent out applications to be juried, but was unable to have actually been in a show. This was disappointing, but I look forward to the jury process and hopefully will be in a real show this summer.

Lastly, I really need to make an ongoing list of materials bought and art sold. I did not think of this until talking to another artist. It is important to keep track of money going in and out for tax reasons. Also it is exciting to see your growth over time.

Process Pieces that Worked

First and foremost, I took risks. Although it was scary, it was exciting. I have grown tremendously from the experience. I am more confident and focused. Taking risks with my art has spilled over into other areas of my life. When I think about doing something, instead of disregarding it, I write about it and draw it out, and then do it.

I have revisited my true self, the one that was excited about life. I see beauty in the small things again. I have more joy in the things I do. I cherish moments spent with others. I take time to be alone to think things through. I learned to truly live again.

Using the Creative Problem Solving model, which includes clarifying the problem, idea generation and plan of action, I was able to reach success. (Davis, 1999) By writing out my ideas and discussing them with friends and family, I was able to solidify my ideas. I continually brainstormed for different ideas in how to create my art, where to sell my art and in making the business materials. One of the most successful pieces was the business flyer. I wanted something different, something customers would keep. I brainstormed and came up with an origami box with my information on it. After working on these ideas, it was time to move into action. Every time I drove around, I was looking for places in which to sell my art. I then reread literature on risk taking and continued to write in order to build my courage to bring my art outside of their safe haven in my closet.

Using Torrance's Incubation Model of learning, I went through the process of Heightening Anticipation, Deepening Expectation and Extended Learning. (Torrance, 1990) I Heightened Anticipation by changing my project idea and gathering my art and art supplies. I Deepened Expectations by doing research, buying more supplies, creating art, and making business materials. I also found that there were things happening in other areas of my life as well. I was watching less TV, I was going for walks, running, complaining less about my job, finding joy in the little things

and teaching my son drawing. I Extended my Learning by really enjoying the work and drawing out my ultimate goal of opening a store within three to five years.

Process To Change or Do Differently

The only thing I would have changed is to be true to writing everyday. I had some difficult family events happening during this project. My grandfather, a wonderful and inspiring man passed. My Uncle Dave, who was the only genius I ever knew and the guy who taught us to Vaseline the toilet passed as well. I neglected writing at times because I did not want to face the emotions I was feeling. There was a change when I stopped writing. I was more tense and confused. When I finally wrote everything spilled out.

Project Conclusion

This project has just begun. It was life changing and will continue long after these words are written. Below are lasting experiences that resulted from this project...

- I began teaching my son drawing lessons. We picked apart objects, animals, and people in the form of simple shapes. I wanted to encourage his artist development the same way his language development is encouraged.
- I began running again. This was a side of me that was revisited. I have always been an avid runner. I never was competitive (I have to interject I was damn good), but loved to run to *run*. To loosen up, to think, to look at the sky, to run through the woods...to be free.

- Let go of (most) of my inhibitions. This project was an exercise in risk taking. I worked hard to stop “working” so hard. I let go of the idea that I had to have this great career and do what society deemed was important. I now see the potential in putting in an eight-hour workday of painting. This seemed ludicrous, but now it is a relief. I thought at one point, “Imagine what I could accomplish if I worked eight hours a day on my art instead of on a job.” I am not jumping over a cliff, but taking small steps to reach this goal at the peak of my mountain.
- I realized that I can make it as an artist. It takes time, work and a lot of self-direction, but the passion drives me, so it will happen.
- “More people are going into vocations that they enjoy, instead of jobs that they must endure.” (Smith, 2004) I am currently unhappy with my job. This project was encouraging in that I have grown as an artist. From the experiences over the courses of this project, I now know I can make a career and life out of being an artist.

I will end this phase of this project by quoting my mom, “If you are happy, that is what is important.” I have found my happiness, my passion and it is now my life.

References

- Cameron, J. (1994). *The artist's way*. New York: Penguin Putnam Inc.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The psychology of optimal experience*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Davis, G. A., (1999). *Creativity is forever*. Dubuque, Iowa: Kendall/Hunt Publishing Co.
- Gardner, H. (1993). *Creating minds*. New York: Basic Books.
- Piirto, J. (1999). *Talented children and adults: Their development and education*. 2nd Ed. Columbus, OH: Prentice Hall/Merrill.
- Piirto, J. (2004). *Understanding creativity in domains using the Piirto pyramid of talent development as a framework*. Melbourne, Australia: Keynote Speech at Australian Association for the Gifted. Retrieved February 4, 2006 from <http://personal.ashland.edu/~jpiirto/Australia%20keynote%201.htm>.
- Smith, C. (2004). *Art marketing 101*. Nevada City, CA: ArtNetwork.
- Sternberg, R. J. (2002). *Handbook of creativity*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Torrance, E. P. (1990). *The incubation model of teaching: Getting beyond the aha!* Buffalo, NY: Bearly Limited.

Appendix A: Concept Paper

Appendix B: Evaluation Scale

Appendix C: Website