

CREATIVE SANITY



“Art has always been the raft onto which we climb to save our sanity. I don’t see a different purpose for it now.” ~ Dorothea Tanning

“If you hear a voice within you saying, ‘You are not a painter,’ then by all means paint, boy, and that voice will be silenced.” ~ Vincent van Gogh

“I just decided, when someone says you can’t do something. DO MORE OF IT.” ~ Faith Ringgold

“For me, insanity is super sanity. The normal is psychotic. Normal means lack of imagination, lack of creativity.” ~ Jean Dubuffet

“To any artist, worthy of the name, all in nature is beautiful, because his eyes, fearlessly accepting all exterior truth, read there, as in an open book, all the inner truth.” ~ Auguste Rodin

“Everyone discusses my art and pretends to understand, as if it were necessary to understand, when it is simply necessary to love.” ~ Claude Monet

Dear Xavier High School, and Ms. Lockwood, and Messrs Perin, McFeely,
Batten, Maurer and Congiusta:

I thank you for your friendly letters. You sure know how to cheer up a really old geezer (84) in his sunset years. I don't make public appearances any more because I now resemble nothing so much as an Iguana.

What I had to say to you, moreover, would not take long, to wit: Practice any art, music, singing, dancing, acting, drawing, painting, sculpting, poetry, fiction, essays, reportage, no matter how well or badly, not to get money and fame, but to experience becoming, to find out what's inside you, to make your soul grow.

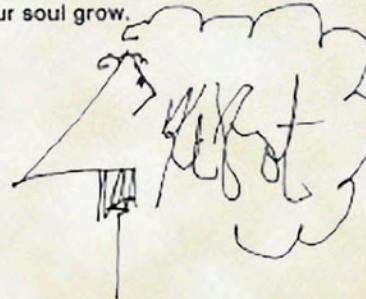
Seriously! I mean starting right now, do art and do it for the rest of your lives. Draw a funny or nice picture of Ms. Lockwood, and give it to her. Dance home after school, and sing in the shower and on and on. Make a face in your mashed potatoes. Pretend you're Count Dracula.

Here's an assignment for tonight, and I hope Ms. Lockwood will flunk you if you don't do it: Write a six line poem, about anything, but rhymed. No fair tennis without a net. Make it as good as you possibly can. But don't tell anybody what you're doing. Don't show it or recite it to anybody, not even your girlfriend or parents or whatever, or Ms. Lockwood. OK?

Tear it up into teeny-weeny pieces, and discard them into widely separated trash recepticals. You will find that you have already been gloriously rewarded for your poem. You have experienced becoming, learned a lot more about what's inside you, and you have made your soul grow.

God bless you all

Kurt Vonnegut



PREFACE

A Description of About 10 Seconds of Thought

It's the day after Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and I am torn. The juxtaposition of this day's call to consume, poised next to the anticipation of meaningful progress on this book is creating a conflict of interests. Having just finished the first of what will probably be many drafts for the introduction to *Sanity*, what pops up on my screen but a calendar reminder that today is Black Friday. Somebody, some unknown programmer at Apple computers, felt the need to emphasize the fact that I'm sitting here comfortably in my pajamas, now typing an impromptu protest to this invasion of the day at the same moment that others risk personal injury for a 30% discount. What the hell? Like I needed technology to remind me that, if I truly cared about the people closest to me, really loved them, I'd stop typing these words right now and make the most American of sacrifices by putting on my best shopper's game face and join the bustling throngs at the local mall.

It's not only Friday. It's Black Friday, complete with capital letters usually reserved for important holidays. Apparently, the opportunity for businesses to finish the year in the black is deserving of official holiday status. I now find myself uncomfortably lodged between the contemplative, aesthetic space that *Creative Sanity* occupies, and the heart-thumping tradition of dodging caffeine-charged soccer moms driving minivans and then weaponizing overflowing

shopping carts with agility drills in department store isles. It's a somewhat civilized smashup derby inside and out, but is it not our duty to go buy stuff? I love my family, really. Damn it! Now I'm off my creative game, distracted again! Black Friday has reached deep into a conscience too frequently riddled with guilt. To go or not to go? Without much hesitation at all, my mind runs through the same logic as it does every year. There is a time for buying gifts and this is not it. The pajamas are too comfortable, the crowds too nerve-racking, it's a month until Christmas, and we have an Amazon Prime membership. I hit the *close* button on the notification, open Photoshop and continue refining my cover designs for the book.

Disclaimer

This book casts a blanket of doubt over the value of technology. However, *Sanity* was in fact made almost entirely using technological processes and modern digital tools. But there exists a key difference in my application of those tools; I used them to *create*, not consume content. Words like *make*, *create*, *manipulate*, *edit*, *alter*, and *compose* are common terms for artists in the 21st century. Those words refer to the act of creation, not consumption. *Creative Sanity* owes much of its existence to the tools that allowed me to connect with artists all over the world on Instagram, edit artwork and compose pages in Photoshop, lay out this book in InDesign, and eventually publish it on internet platforms that reach around the planet. Technology provided an easy pathway for my ideas to transition from invisible in my

head, to visible. This wonderful journey would never have started had I not had these tools at my disposal. If a knucklehead like me can do this, then something must be said for the powers that modern technology can bring to the common man.

I want to say, “Thank you, technology!” A little time learning your way of thinking opened my eyes to your potential. You have provided me opportunities which would have never presented themselves had you not been invented. Wait, I just got a notice on my Instagram feed ...Yes! Magdalena Morey sent me her artwork and statement for the book! She thinks this project has potential! I love her work; her thoughtful sharing of what’s going on in her brain while in her art studio. That’ll be perfect for what I want in the book. Where was I? Oh yes. Technology offers benefits to those willing to use it as a tool, not a toy. Hold on ... Trump just got impeached but will remain president? How does that work? Be right back ... Also, Lil ’ Wayne is making a comeback on this year’s Grammy Awards show and Tesla’s Cybertruck has verified over 500,000 preorders. I wonder if Lil’ Wayne will show up to the Grammys in a Cybertruck?

Motivation

Creative Sanity’s intent is to direct the reader into a state of personal awareness using aesthetic thought as its means. It is based upon the notion that everyone is, in some way, blessed with the power of making something where before nothing existed. We are all creative.

This book shines a revealing light upon artists who spend a majority of their time in the challenging but fulfilling space of solving a new problem. It’s a place that offers immense benefit to those who choose to go there. *Creative Sanity* moves artists into a leadership role as they take us along their journey into a heightened state of awareness. Theirs is a hyper-focused world of personal discovery and visual communication. It’s an exploratory universe of personal interpretation and expression that uses unique combinations of line, shape, form, space, and color as a means to answer some questions while asking more. When placed against today’s frantic *click-n-view* world of technological advancement, the benefits of creating as opposed to consuming become clear. Art provides us with the opportunity to *see*, and seeing is believing. *Creative Sanity* represents a deep exploration of perceptions set in a time when perceptual truth is in doubt. This is where science, personal observation, and art intersect to create a collection of deeply held truths, each one unique to the artist who created it. Here, we appreciate the journey as much, if not more, than the answers provided by these creatives’ artworks and words. It’s a small but important part of the quest for an ultimate truth, with clues found in art and the meditative state of mind that created it.

This book represents a call to action for a change in sight; an awakening to perceptions using visual art as both the alarm and proactive response to a crisis of identity. What is being lost is our ability to find the *self* in a world that demands our attention from a multitude of fronts.

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Everywhere we look, the explosion of movement, color, and sounds on our screens are too alluring to ignore. While we reap the benefits of this constant access to limitless information, it has come at a cost that we are only beginning to understand. In simple terms, it seems we need to come up for air, to breathe, to pause if even for a moment in order to reestablish our location in the ocean of *too much*. This book offers a means to breathe the fresh air that creative acts can provide. It's a glint of what slowing down can do for our sanity.

The Science Behind *Sanity*

Aesthetic thinking induces a state of deep personal awareness, which is becoming more visible through the eyes of scientific research. Art is a valuable activity not only for the artist, but for those observing the work's assembly of elements into a unified whole. The study of art and our reaction to it, called aesthetics, sends the mind into intensely deep states of personal contemplation that can play a beneficial role in our mental and emotional health. Neuroscience is revealing that our brains are not the fixed organ that stops evolving at age 21 as previously thought. Instead, we now know that neuroplasticity, or the brain's ability to continuously adapt to its surroundings, provides us with an opportunity to steer our mind's growth in life-changing, positive directions. The term, "Garbage in, Garbage out," never carried more weight (I shudder to think of the effect that 1980s heavy metal had on my developing mind's worldview). There exists within us the capacity to strengthen the synaptic connections that

carry our thoughts to certain parts of the brain. It all depends upon what we choose to feed it. Extended focused activity and thinking increases energy flow to the areas of the brain responsible for contemplation, conceptualization, and self-awareness. We have at our disposal the ability to direct our thoughts. Those thoughts originate in the vast and always-active unconscious mind, then filter up to the conscious, becoming visible in the real world when expressed through a person's attitudes and activities. Entering into a state of directed awareness has the power to change the physiology of an organ long thought incapable of structural change.

Enter *Creative Sanity*, which can serve to divert a toxic thought flow by channeling the brain's power to higher levels of awareness and contentment. In this book, art becomes a training ground for positive brain function. It is more than a therapeutic tool. Art becomes a transformative tool, an essential element to our survival as the conduit for a deeper understanding of things, and our perceptions of things.

***Sanity's* Origin**

This book is inspired by a life spent on the frontlines of education as a career public school art teacher while raising two kids in the information age. In the post-millennium world, when the tech revolution hit, I witnessed the effects on young minds ill-equipped to handle this onslaught as humanity moved deeper toward full-on immersion into all things digital. Both as a parent and a teacher, I recall a certain amount

of confusion as to the role this newfound power would play, not only in mine, but in my children's and students' lives. Back in the mid-1990s, instant access to the world's information offered a pathway to the panacea of infinite knowledge. The internet's connectivity was sold on the notion that you would know more about everything and everyone who chose to participate. But this was based upon the assumption that we would want to know more, that access to infinite knowledge was a good thing, and that it would make the world a better place. Everything has its limits, including the human brain. Twenty-five years later, it has become obvious that, left unchecked, the dream of hitching rides on streams of infinite knowledge destined for the promised land, is in fact exacting a heavy toll on that which we still know so little; the emotional human.

Mental health issues are skyrocketing as the incidence of anxiety and depression continue, overwhelming my high school's teachers and counseling staff. Students' attention spans grow shorter and shorter. To this day, the *presence* required for extended lines of thinking to create visual art is a more fleeting quality in many who suddenly have at their fingertips a means of escape. But escape from what? I suppose that every student has their reasons for sacrificing the present in favor of what is seen as a path of least resistance. But we were made to create as much as we were made to consume. It's time to be consumed, body and mind, by the oasis of creative thought. The full-body experience of life trumps screens any day, but the divergence of combining new ideas into

one, of making things; that is the breath of life.

It was in this bizarre crossroads of technology meeting tradition that I found myself needing to choose sides. Teaching high school art classes in upper middle-class America provided me with a firsthand look at the intersection where 200 years of largely unchanged educational practice meets a culture wholly intoxicated and swept up in a binary stream of 1's and 0's. In 20 years of public school art education, never before had I seen a force so able to disrupt and challenge the very foundations on which our learning system was built. The digital media wave hit our teens especially hard. This beautiful assembly of young, open minds that were eager to exercise their imaginations started turning away from an opportunity to imagine something new. They are, more than other age groups, especially susceptible to societal shifts. Teens are the amphibians of the cultural ecosystem, first to be affected by environmental change. They are more susceptible than most to the market forces that drive our thinking and shape our world. As has always been the case, theirs remains a world in constant flux. Now, the timeless worries of peer acceptance and an unknown future are amplified in a *world wide web* of doubts and never having enough. It is pressure times 10, and as more phones passed through my art room door, I witnessed firsthand the onslaught on developing minds. Frantic streams of information created frantic minds that distracted from the task at hand. Everyone, it seemed, had an attention deficit.

Classroom curriculum could not compete

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with an ADD world. If Y2K was an inconvenience to an increasingly digitizing economy, it would be an all out threat to the validity of an educational system that had always been slow to react. Students suddenly had access to a more entertaining world, and we in the education business were left with an old school model that was quickly losing relevance in the minds of those it was designed to instruct. So there I was, 10 years into a career dedicated to helping young minds see the world through the lens of creative thought, but the world's pace suddenly sped up. They were exciting and also scary times, but I nonetheless decided to jump on board the shiny train speeding into the future. Little did I know where that train would take me, my students, my school, and my world.

The art of teaching, and of learning, continues changing form. It seems that, like the culture in which it exists, the bureaucracy of American education forgot to consider the value of face-to-face human interaction, authentic connectedness, and the value of process. Back in the early 2000s, we were all seduced by the efficiency of communication via the screen. It made the process of connecting easier, but did it make it better? It was 19 years into my teaching career, the year 2008, when I first started seeing a *different* kind of change in my students. Prior to that time, I had witnessed firsthand the dynamic relationship of art and creativity to its surrounding cultural environment, noticing the inevitable behavioral trends which students brought to the art studio. After 2007, that relationship felt different. As always, popular fashion, hair, and

music played their usual significant roles in driving the collective conversation of teens gathering every day for the rituals and routines common to public schools. These cultural trends would of course filter their way into the visual narrative of my students' artwork, and that was okay. Art does, after all, represent a person's reaction to their environment, and popular culture played a major role in how things were seen. At school, boundaries were clear and largely respected based upon a tradition of learning that went back generations: Go to school, do your best to leave your personal baggage at home, act as cool as possible to become as popular as possible, go to class and act like you give a damn about it, then go home. Not that anyone liked it, but school was still school. It was seen as a boring but necessary rite of passage to be endured in order to move on to personal independence and adulthood.

Then in 2007, smartphones arrived. Little did I know that technology would grow to become the single most influential force challenging my students' ability to critically analyze, think, and create. Any of us would be hard pressed to pay attention in schools built within a cultural environment filled to the brim with sensory distractions. And so the traditional model of classroom learning came into question when the expanded world offered by the internet seduced an entire planet into thinking that natural human curiosity would rocket society into a better tomorrow. Technological advances seemed to make a *Star Trek* utopian vision of the future a more tangible possibility.

In the midst of this change, the alluring

forces of progress that promised to beam us into a brighter tomorrow appeared to be, instead, an isolating force accelerating the intake of what others wanted us to see. With senses dulled by constant consumption, my students had in many ways lost their visual voice.

In my school, the first art medium directly impacted by digitization was photography. When I designed and implemented Colorado's first all digital high school photography curriculum in 1999, I was jumping on the forefront of a wave of optimism in public education as it redirected resources in an effort to catch up to the world's rapidly growing use of technology. The arts were bound to follow, and I wanted in. It was at that time impossible to know what the information age would mean to schools. Our task was to introduce technology to a student population that would need this training to thrive in the new economy. Tech held promise as the tool that would build a better tomorrow, and schools were all in. But the world's rate of technological change quickly outpaced our school's ability to adapt. The act of learning rapidly evolved beyond the brick-and-mortar building. Who needed schools when you could learn whenever and wherever you wished (a relatively new educational trend called *blended learning*)? Why bother memorizing facts when the whole of human knowledge was right in your pocket, just a few taps away? Carrying this logic into the most technological art form seemed, well, like the logical thing to do. The digitizing of photography represented a natural step in its evolution. The possibility of creating

art at a computer meant no more toxic chemicals in darkrooms where teenagers congregated and did, for better or worse, what teenagers did in darkrooms. It was exciting stuff at an exciting time. Photography would gain in credibility as an art form that bridged the widening gap between the casual play of visual art and more *useful* skills of learning a technological workflow. Cheaper and more convenient access to picture making was the expected outcome of digital photography; an improved product. Left behind was a messy and inefficient process. As I was soon to discover, the very human experience of creating art needs to honor, above all, the sometimes messy creative process.

On a larger scale, this monumental leap to digital image production has come at a cost. Photography has fallen victim to the efficiencies of the digital workflow. As images proliferate (I've seen estimates putting the world's daily image upload totaling at 657 billion), and mix into the internet blender, lines that separate fine art from everyday photography have become blurred. As an educator who was straddling the fence between fine art thinking and pop culture consumption, it quickly became apparent that digital photography was on the forefront of mediums to suffer an identity crisis in the digital torrent. Mostly due to its explosive proliferation as smartphones became the cameras of choice, photography became more every day than the everyday. Now, everybody is snapping pictures, and so now everyone is a photographer. But are they?

Beauty in Process

The most beautiful aspect of photography (and with all art) is also its biggest challenge because, unlike the culture in which it exists, photography in its purest form demands innovation in process. There is value in creative thought, but it is not immediately observable and cannot be measured by the numeric values so sought after in the information age. As true photographers seek that decisive moment to communicate, through the world or through themselves, a message that stimulates contemplation for the subject of the photograph, painters and sculptors pursue their truth through a practiced, refined process. Just as with more traditional media, process is everything. To stand out, the photographer must place themselves in a position of potential that others do not consider, then frame a section of reality that contains significant form. It may take 1/1000th of a second to create an image, but true photographers are willing to sacrifice hours, days, or weeks in order to find that magical moment. Painters and sculptors develop their language, their craft, over extended periods of time, failing more than succeeding, then failing again in an exploration of their process. Art requires sacrifice. Process is everything!

Seeing

The process of looking and seeing is two different things. More than anything, an artist (or art student) must slow down, exhale, internalize awareness, and begin connecting previously unconnected objects and ideas to create something new. This

divergent thinking is key to the creative process, and requires long stretches of focused concentration. Only then does one create the opportunity to move beyond the everyday act of looking, into the realm of seeing. Seeing is slowing down and noticing things that others pass by. It is pausing to consider the meaning, the potential significance of an idea's role in the greater scheme. We dive deeper when we see, discovering euphoric connections where the functional rush of everyday looking merely skims and moves on.

Creative Sanity celebrates those who, by diving deeper and sharing their journeys through their work, take us along for this ride of discovery. The artists invited to participate in this book show incredible commitment to their craft, to their process. Their ability to move paint or capture through their lens a decisive moment, changes a small sliver of the world with a collection of lines, shapes, form, and color that make it a more beautiful place. Like any quality work of art, theirs are intended to provoke a response. Our perceptions of their art may prompt judgments of beauty, a recollection of past experiences, or a series of questions requiring further investigation. Whatever your response, these works exist in time and space, created by people, for people, with the purpose of nudging us a little closer to a better understanding of our place in the play of life. To those who are open to it, seeing something beautiful takes our breath away while at the same time calming our soul and the heartbeat that feeds it.

As only she can, nature has a way of arranging light, shape, space, and time in calming

arrangements of beauty that appeal to our ancient selves. Along those lines, I've noticed a bias in the art world, reflected in this book, which favors natural form over man-made. And while we stare in awe at the accomplishments of humans and our ability to build fantastic structures, our souls crave a return to the source. Art provides a window to an awareness of the self through the recreation of that which we need but no longer have; connectivity to the rhythms and forms of our creator. The text and pictures contained in these pages in most cases flow toward an investigation of the artist's search for their truth via the natural world. These creatives render their own truths through a relentless pursuit of the ultimate truth found mostly in forms created beyond the human realm. Art is the connector, the spiritual link between perceptions of what *is*, and what *may be*. Lucky for us, the search continues.

Discovery of a freshly renewed appreciation of art and the creative process is *Creative Sanity's* ultimate goal. It offers a soul-calming change in course, a path to quiet awareness in the midst of all the noise in order for us to return to a state of mental and emotional balance. *Creative Sanity* documents the artist's mind as it imagines, with laser focus, new possibilities, then leaves for us a trail to follow in the form of art. The sanity of art and creativity are as built in a part of our being as the need to eat, but we too often find ourselves starved, not knowing where to find beauty or even grasping what it is. The visual experience of modern living often challenges the mind's ability to process the onslaught of stimulation. In

response, the creative and contemplative thought processes demanded by making art objects offers a timeless opportunity to slow the pace. Art gives the mind a chance to dive deeper into lines of concentrated thought. And as ridiculous as it may seem to devote a sentence, paragraph, or essay to the notion of rethinking thought, our overstimulated minds deserve a book's worth of pretty pictures and written reminders of what it is to quiet the mind in creativity.



Creative Sanity

"Theirs is a hyper-focused world of



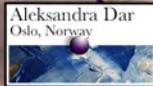


discovery and visual communication."

ART ON INSTAGRAM:



A UNIFYING LANGUAGE



PART I: HUMANS

In a universe of infinite complexity, the most difficult entity to understand is that which is closest at hand; ourselves. The human, as interpreted by artists throughout time, has the capacity to be both beautiful, as well as create beauty. Our unique ability to comprehend beauty is at once a wonderfully simple feelings-based interpretation of the world and our place in it, while at the same time amazingly complex in our attempts to understand why we are drawn to art that depicts any combination of forms referring to the human condition. Our interest is piqued when we see another person, or comprehend structures created by people. We are tribal in our curiosity to reach an understanding of one another and ourselves.

The artists in this section provide for us their observations of the modern human and our place in a world largely of our own making. Their works ask us to gain a better understanding of the subject's context and history as well as the artist who painted it. These artists, in their own way, acknowledge the fact that the creation and viewing of art is a two-way conversation between the creator and the viewer. In the end, there is no one right answer to solving art which addresses human issues. Like us, it is open to personal interpretation. It is this play of perceptual thought which allows us to reflect upon and study the subject for which we find infinite fascination: *Us*.



Michele Poirier-Mozzone

Norbert Waysberg

Michaela Hoppe

Kalyani Pradhan

Ella Shepard

Manolo Oyonarte

Christian Coop

Nakuna Halle

Ramtin Firouzian

Michele Poirier-Mozzone



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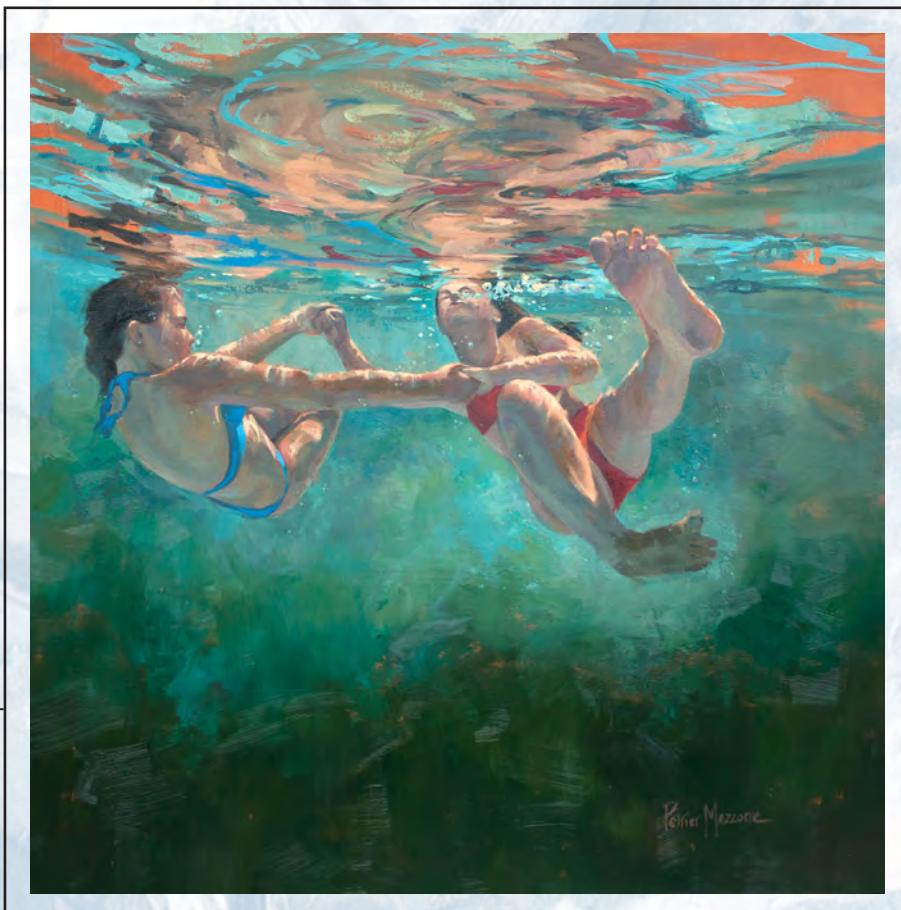
Creative Sanity

I paint for those paintings that I step away from with excitement and joy - the paintings that seem to paint themselves and fulfill me.

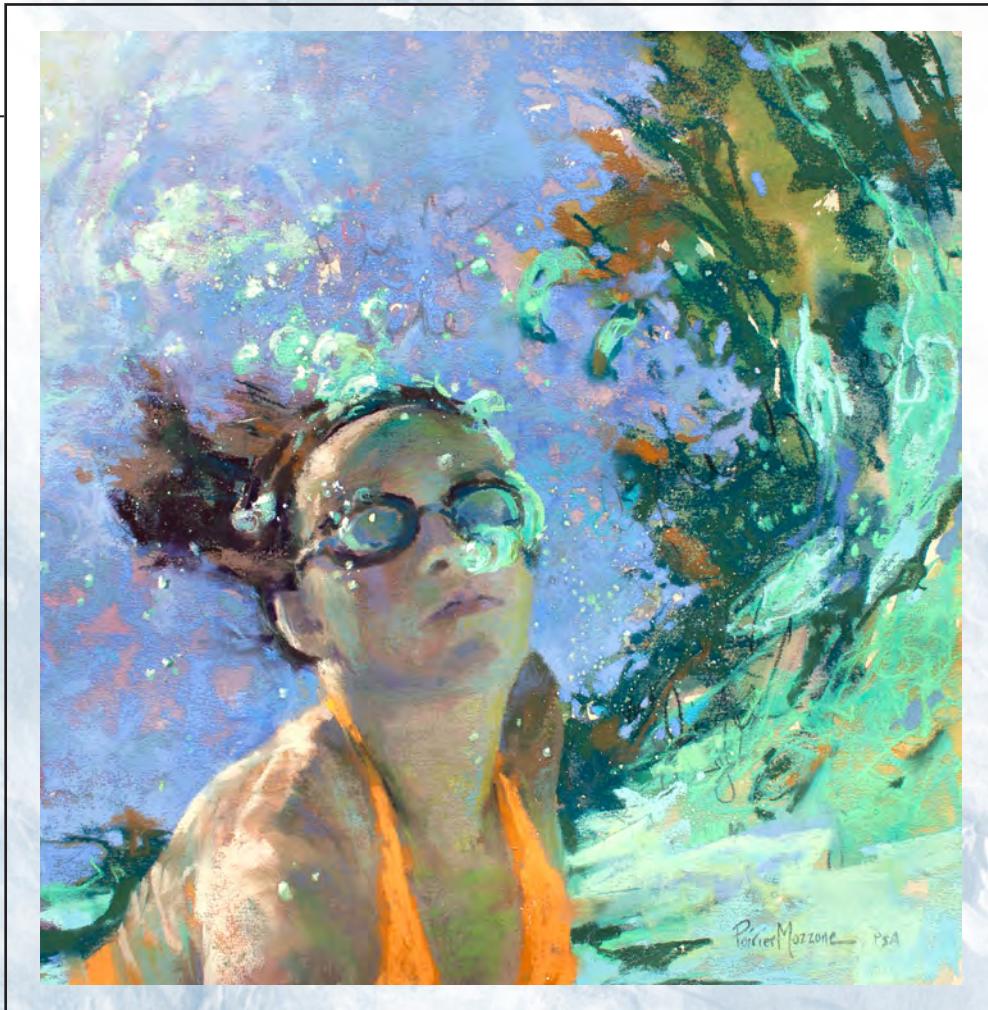
I paint for those paintings that make me lose track of time and outside distractions in my studio - when the act of creating becomes intuitive and spontaneous.

Those paintings can be evasive, but they keep me coming back for more.





In my Fractured Light series of paintings, I pair my dual interests of figurative imagery and colorful abstraction to create works that are at once representational but also loose, fluid, and irregular. They provide an opportunity for viewers to place themselves within the context of my work to experience broken ribbons of sunlight, fascinating distortions, sounds of rushing bubbles, and the weightless, slow dance of movement which all occur below the water's surface.



Aided by photographs, I work with soft pastel or oil paint to capture the unique feeling and distinct associations of the body suspended in water and in time.

Within these paintings, water is representative of life and change.

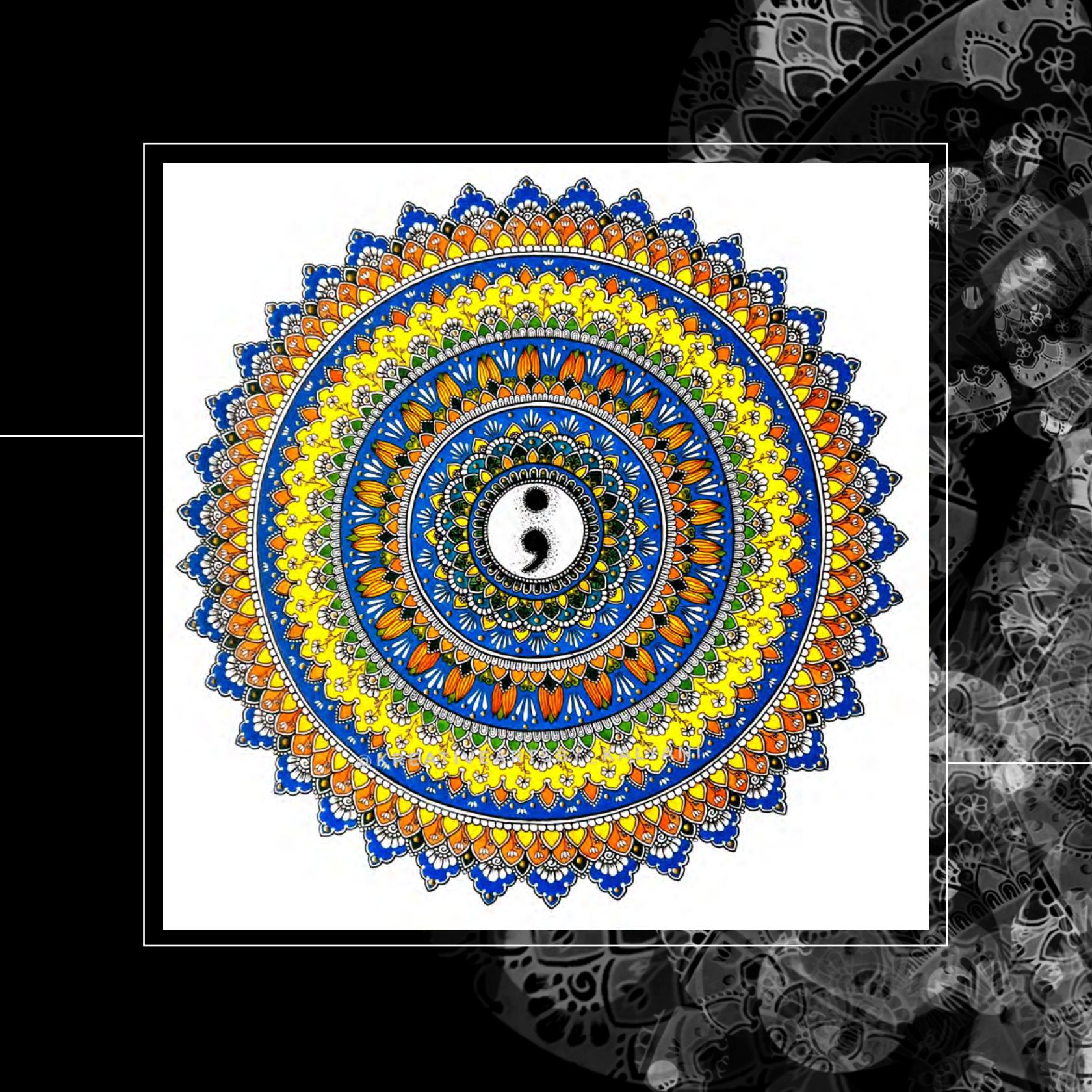
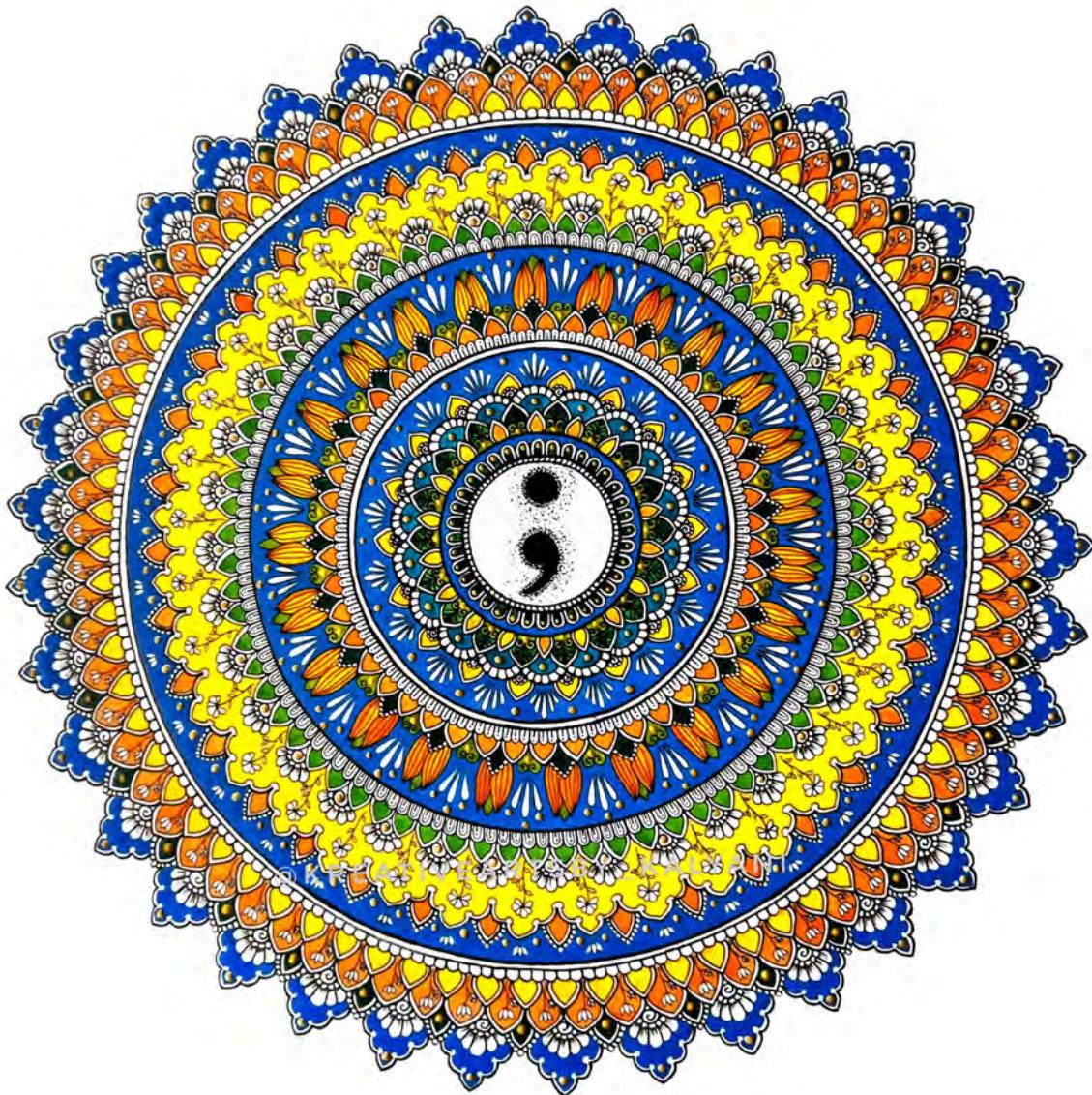
Bubbles are placeholders for the ideas and intentions that rise from individuals to the open air. And each figure can be interpreted as reacting to a fleeting moment in this distorted, wet world.

Kalyani Pradhan

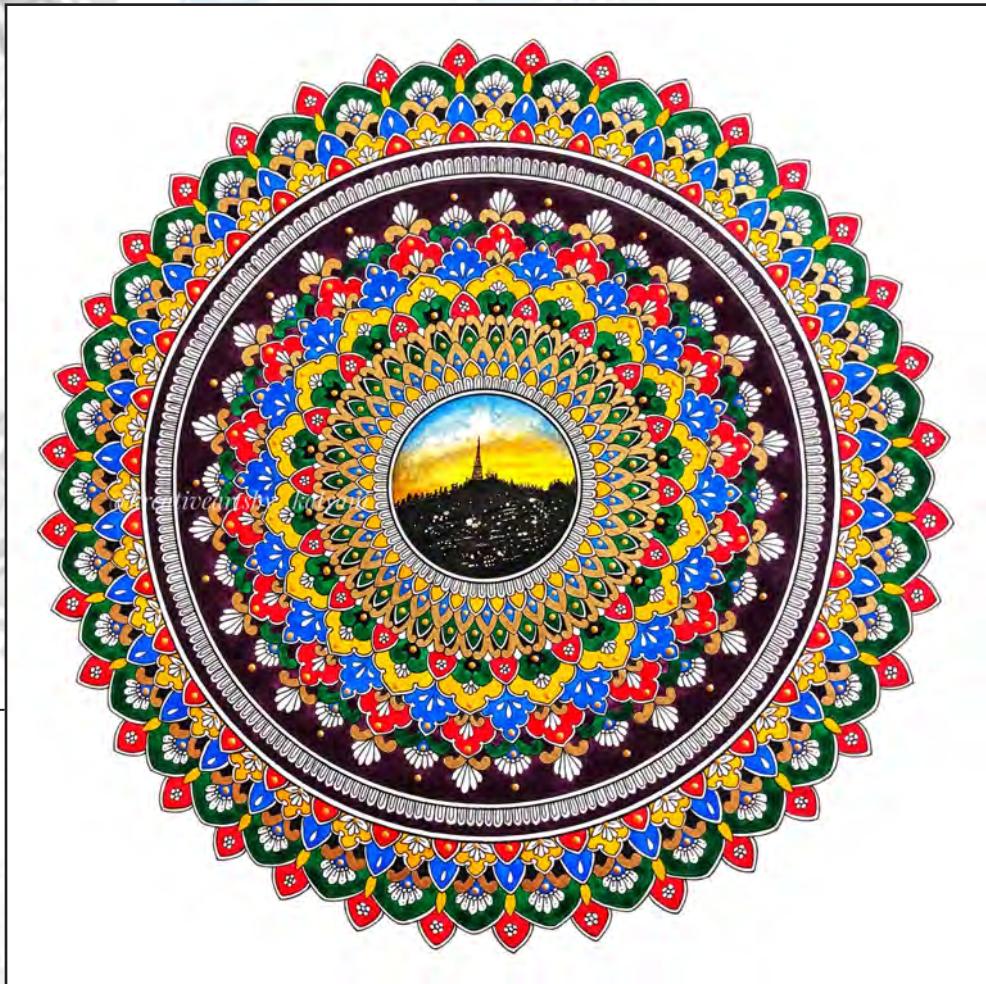


Kurseong, India

@creativeartsby_kalyani



Hi. I am a Mandala artist from India. My journey as an artist hasn't been long but I believe creativity is something that doesn't just happen one fine day. I belong to an artistic family and I think it has always influenced me. A few years back I realized I had an artist in me.





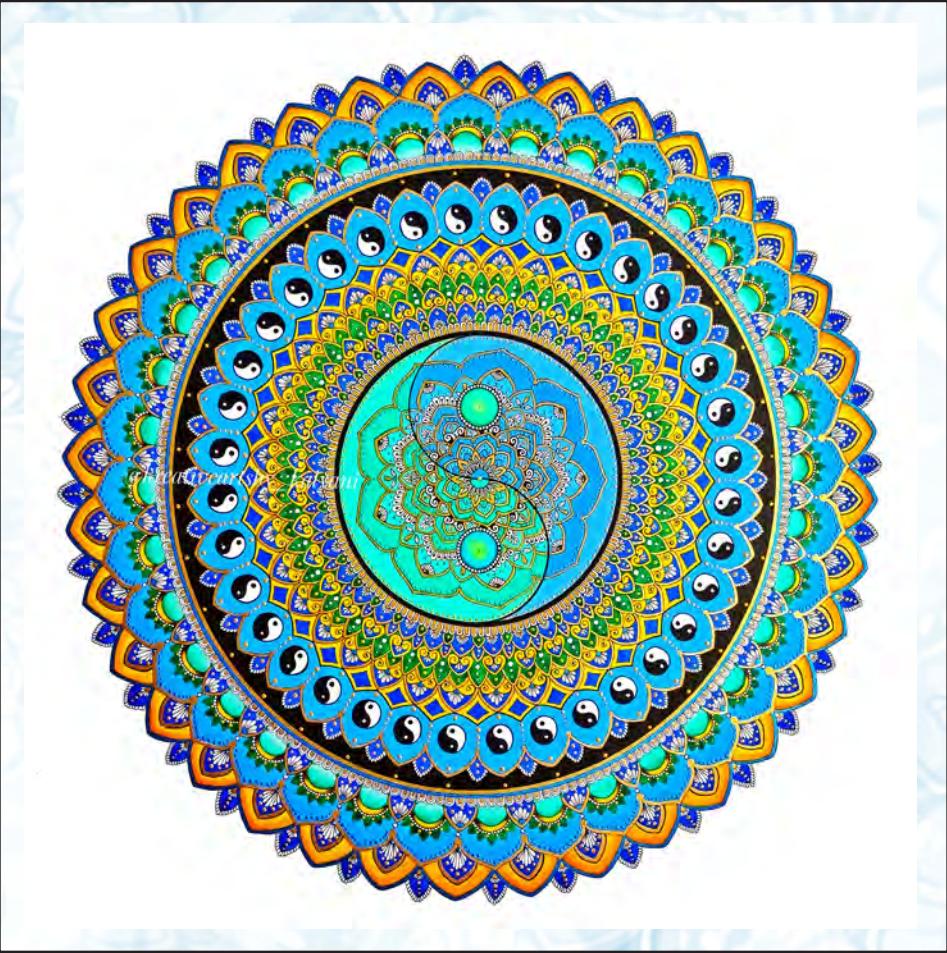
The art form I follow is highly intricate and meditative. I prefer listening Indian classical music mostly flute instrumental while working on my artwork. I sit for hours completely lost in the soothing music and flow of patterns and colours.

Mandala is a Sanskrit word meaning “circle”.

The term is mostly used in Hinduism and Buddhism and the word represents “universe”.

Mandala art can be very helpful if practiced for meditation.

Mandala art therapy can help overcome stress and anxiety.

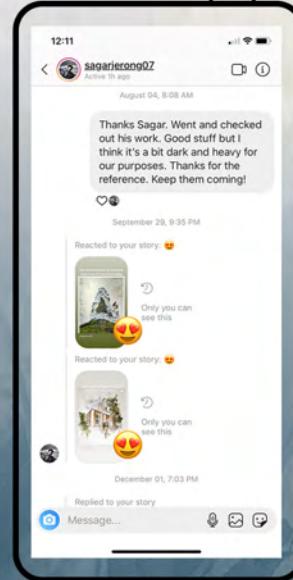
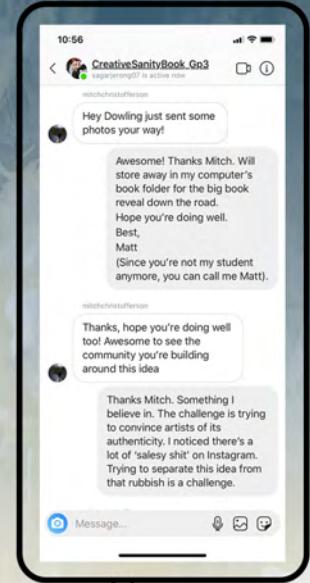
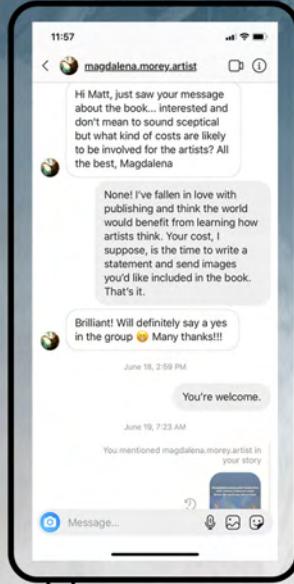


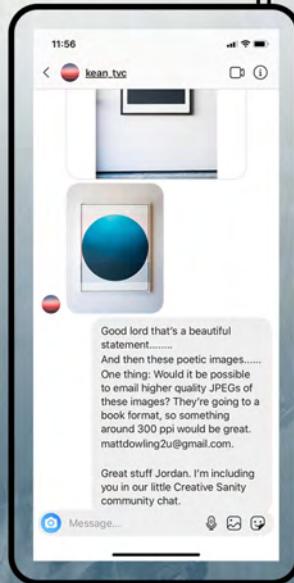
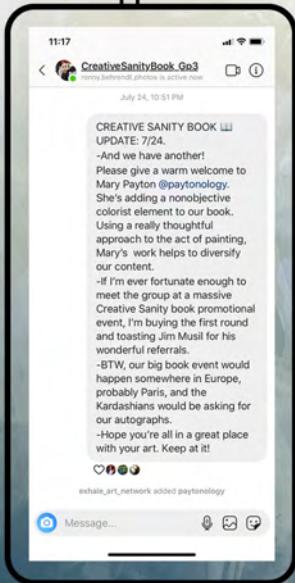
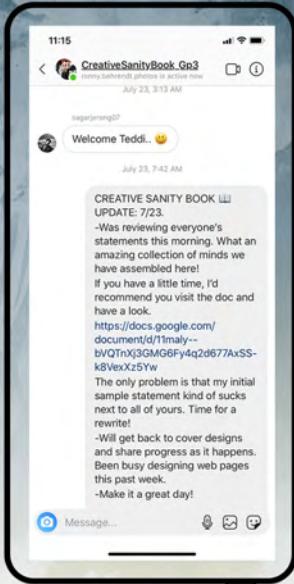


My works are mostly colourful. I work on different mediums like paper, canvas, wood and stone and use acrylics and watercolour.

I love what I do because I believe this art form has chosen me for a reason and I cannot be happier than when I'm creating.

#MEDITATION #ARTIST #ARTBOOK #COMMUNITY





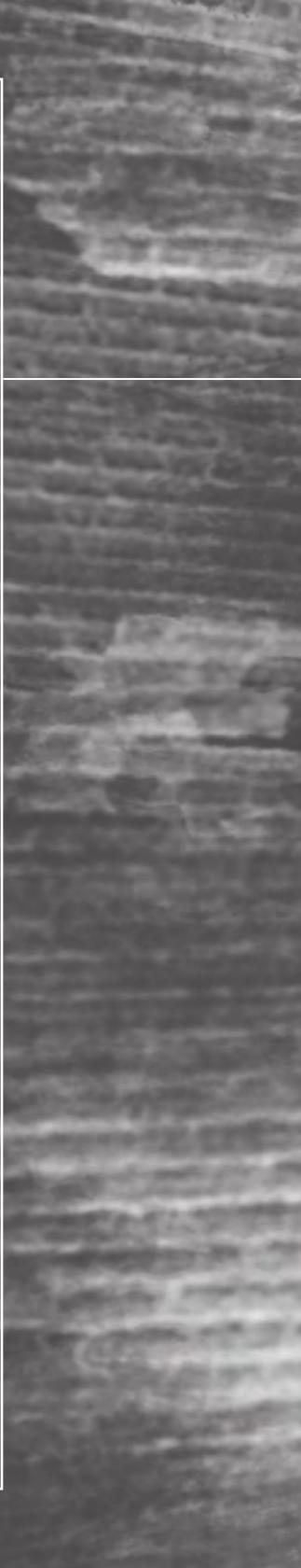
#CREATIVITY
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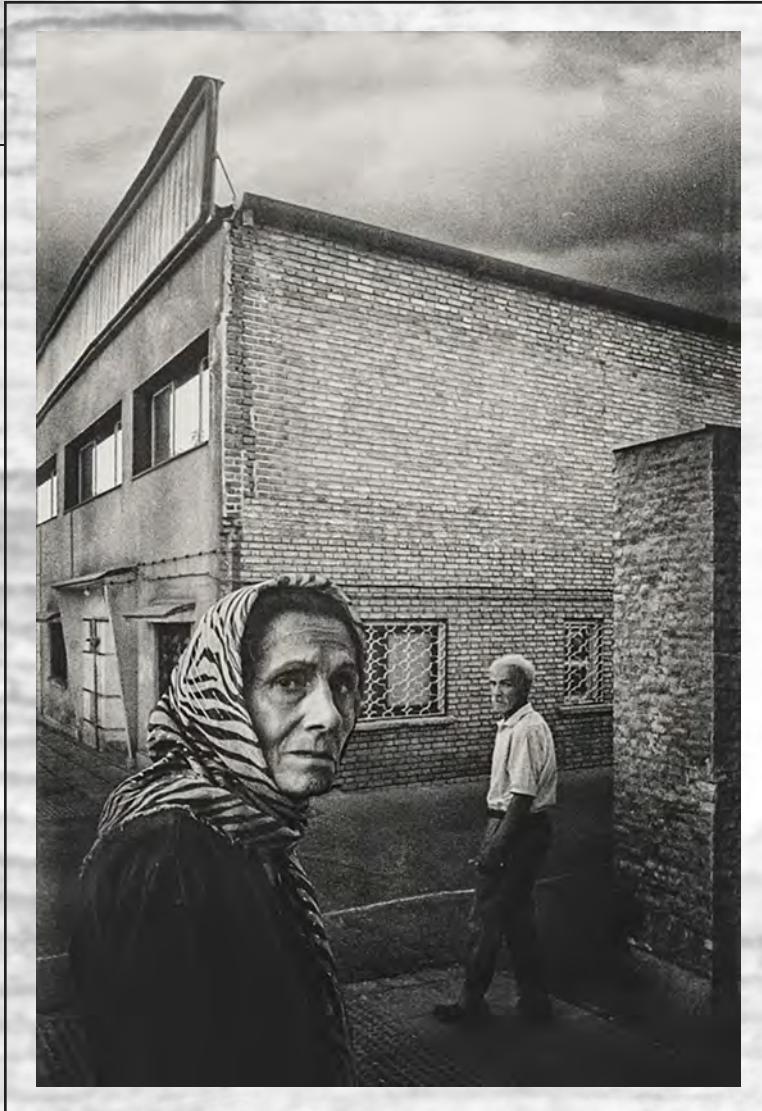
Ramtin Firouzian



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I've been photographing since I was fifteen. For over twenty years I took photos based on the interests of others. But I was not happy with them at all despite all the awards and admirations that those photos brought me. They had nothing to do with my own stories, dreams, wishes, regrets, and above all, my poems.

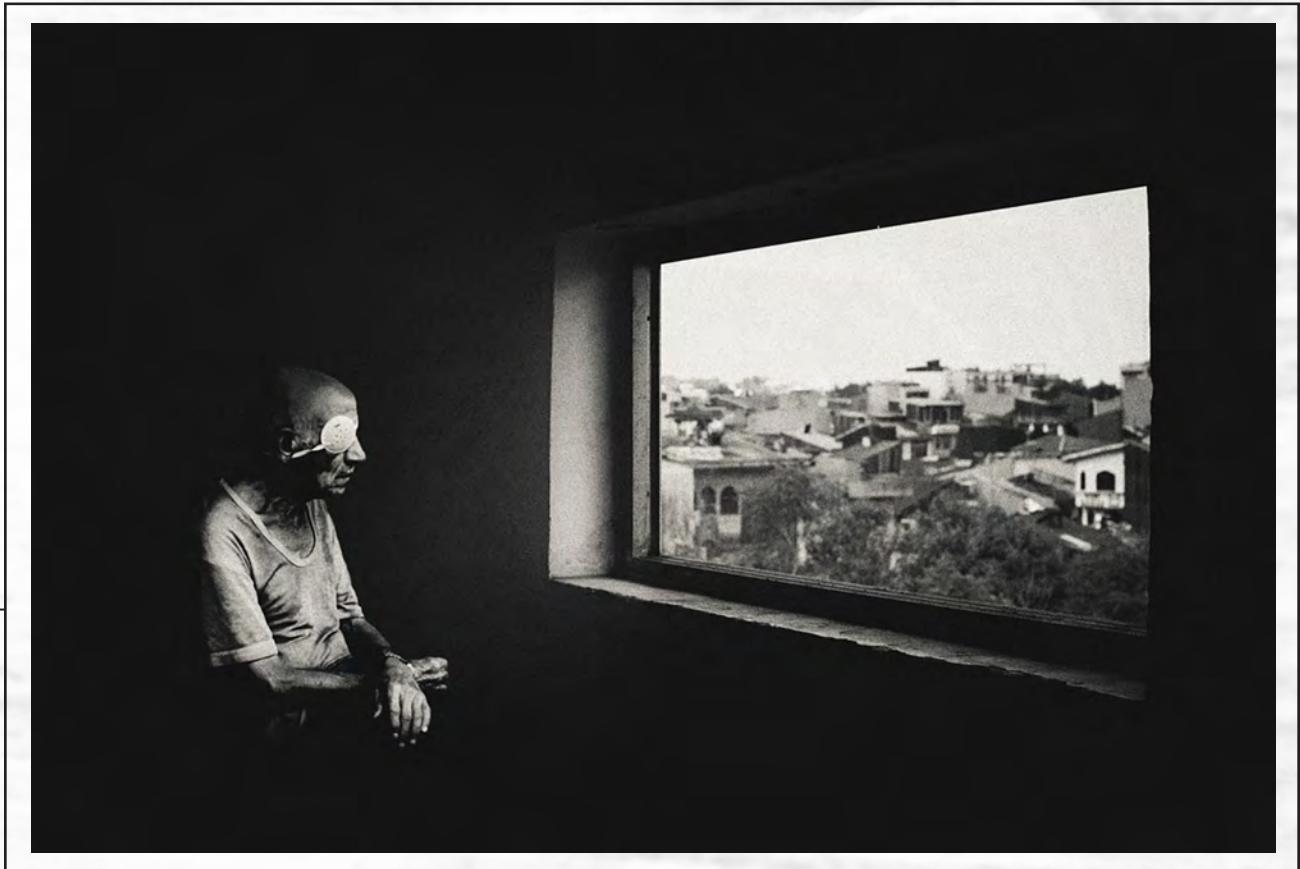
A few years ago, I gave up all the genres of photography that gave me money and prizes.

So I handed my camera to my poetic mind.

Now, I always draw mental images of my poems in a notebook next to the same poem.

Ramtin Firouzian

Whenever I have my camera with me, I look for my drawings in the street or anywhere else. If I get the chance and see a scene like a poem, my heart rate goes up and I take a photo.

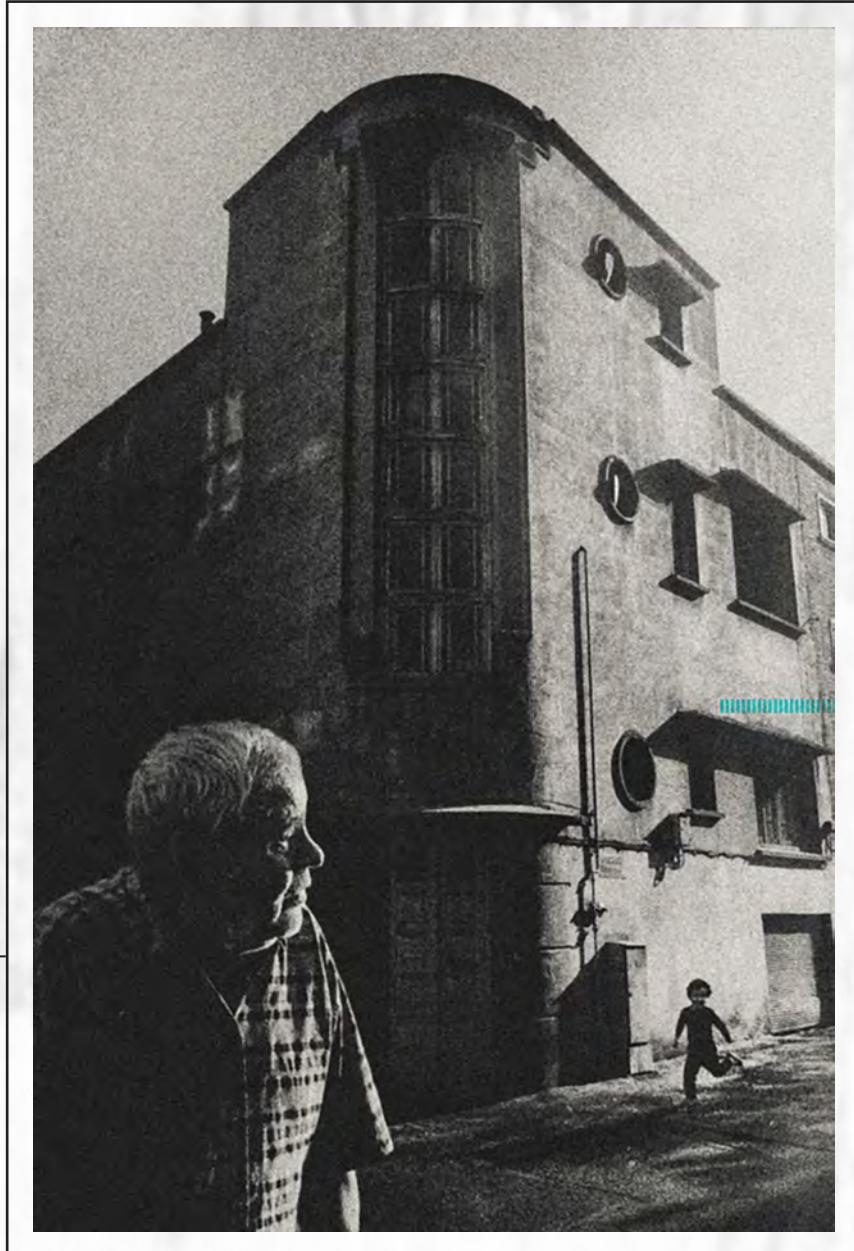


Creative Sanity

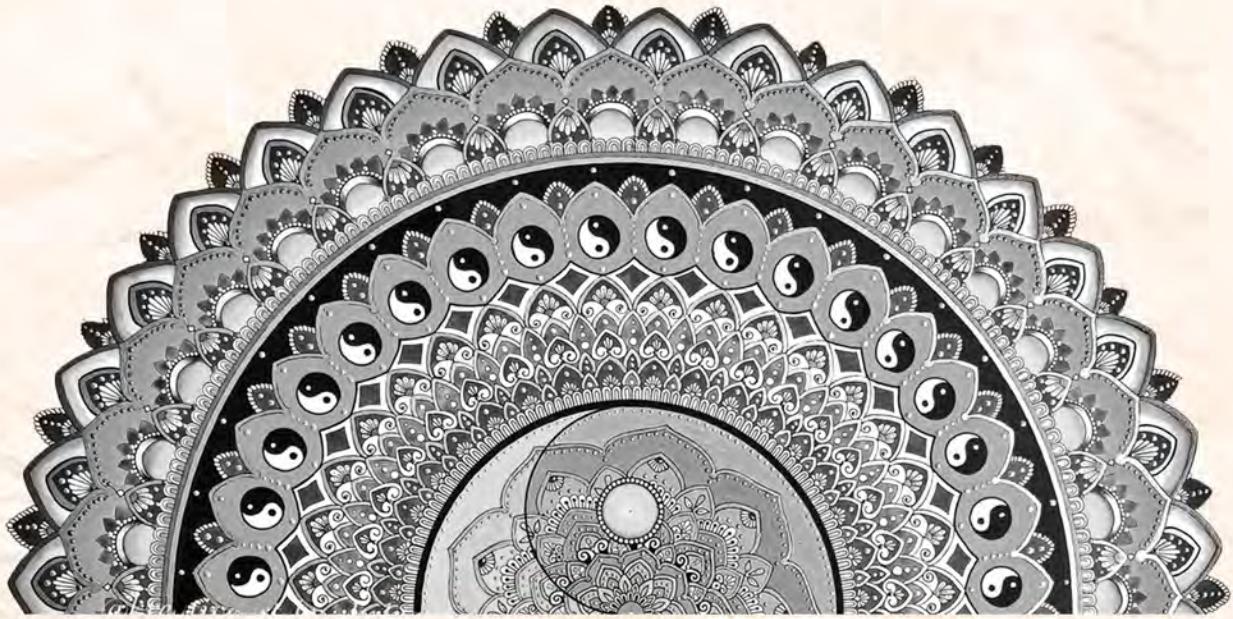
Eighty percent of my photos are taken this way and are exactly the images of my poems. These photos satisfy me, even if nobody likes them.

Just after I take a picture, I get an indescribable feeling that I guess only poets and writers have experienced; a feeling like a moment someone survives a fatal accident and sits amazed on the ground.

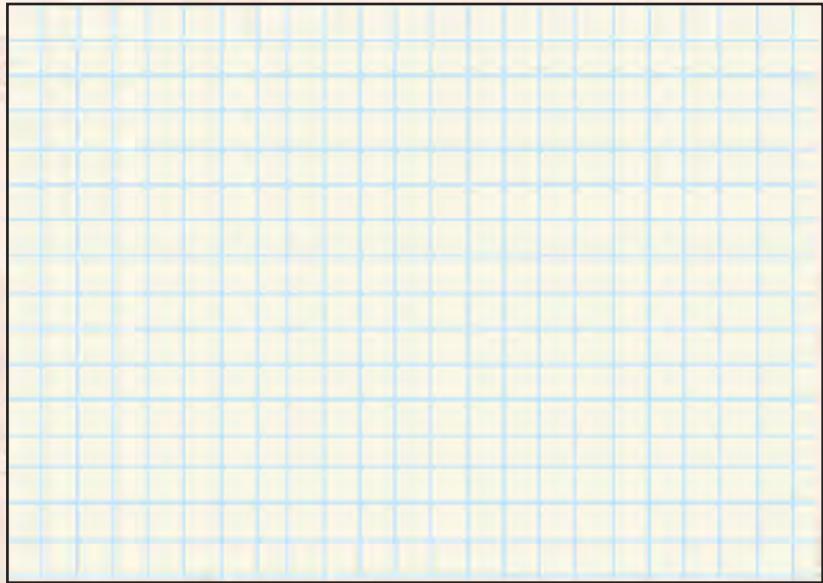
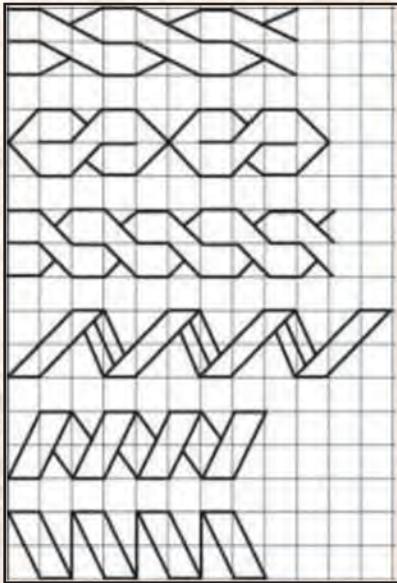




Time to relax and draw. Go grab a pencil, pen, or fine point marker...



Draw patterns



Just Draw.....



MEDITATIVE MARK MAKING

- Ball Point Pen
- Fine Point Sharpie

Focus on

Line

But pencil works too...



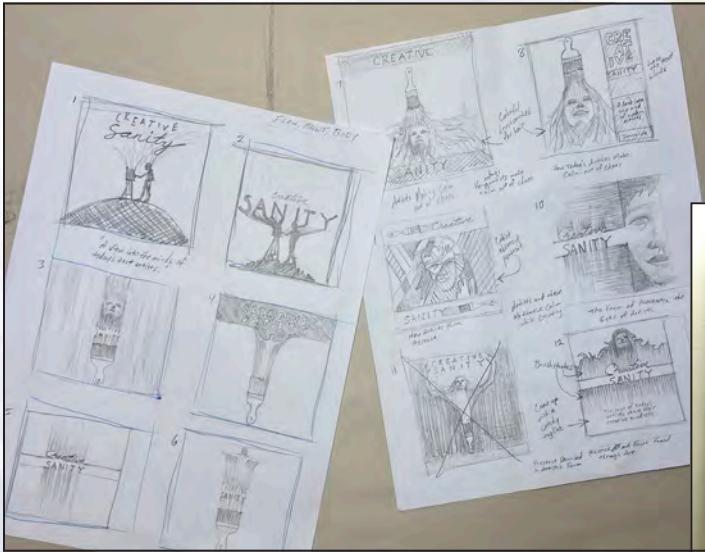
Free Doodle

sketch
A
Painting

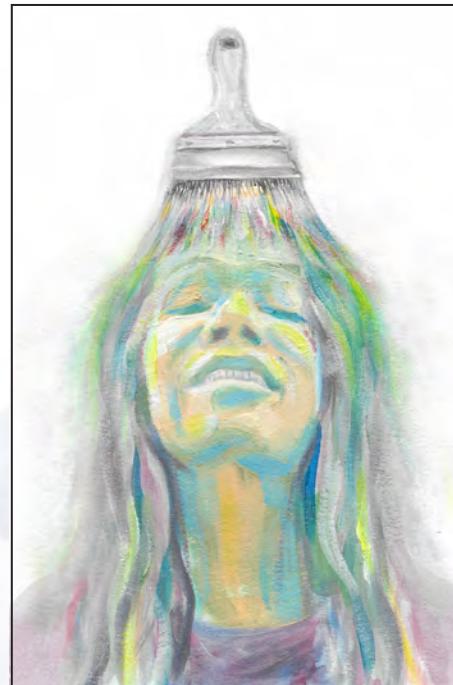
SKETCH
an
OBJECT

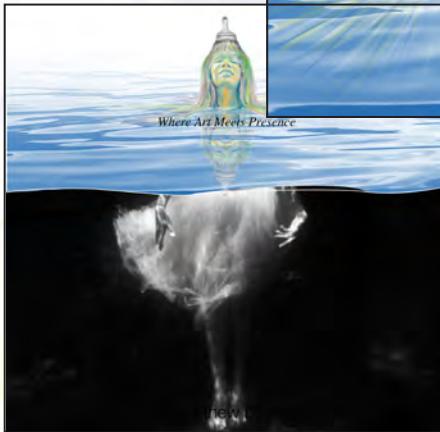
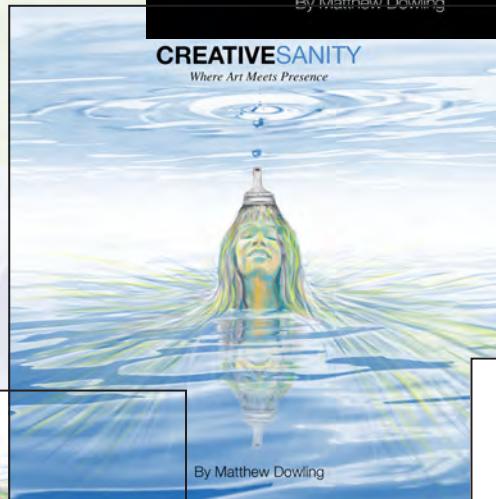
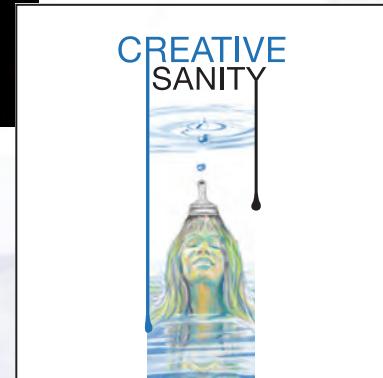
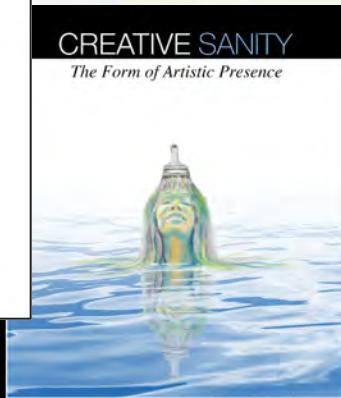
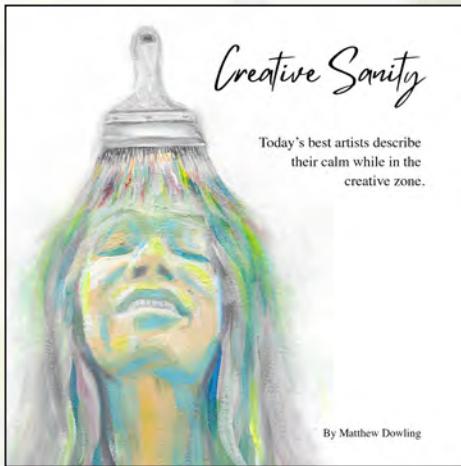
Just Draw.....





Early ideas, the process of elimination, and judging a book.....





by the cover.



EPILOGUE

I am a project-oriented person. Working toward a goal of my own design is a great source of pride; it's empowering and what gives my life purpose. There's an addictive quality to the idea that, no matter the objective, planning, and then successfully executing a project is pretty cool. In this instance, *Creative Sanity* represents the convergence of a lifetime's worth of solving problems in a visual arts space meeting my perceived need for people to create more and consume less. Now that it's completed, this book has reinforced the notion that we all need a project; a purpose that stretches our faculties beyond what we had thought was possible before we started. Throughout most of its creation, this book appeared crystal clear in its vision and intent, due in large part to the simplicity of its purpose; creativity is an ever-present source of pleasure and self-fulfillment.

The idea of *Creative Sanity* was all mine. I suppose I've had difficulty completing commission pieces because they usually involve input and opinions of others, and its motivation is primarily financial in nature. A commission project is shared input that muddies the waters of creative vision. But *Sanity* is my baby. I've nurtured it, fed it, dressed it up, focused its objectives, then released it to the world as the best version of itself it could be. Like my own children, I want this book to, in its own small way, make the world a better place. Art can do that. It's a powerful force of nature that can send the mind down rabbit holes of deep thought and contemplation. Art and aesthetics

sharpen one's perceptual skills in a way no other experience can. There are no 100 percent correct answers; just presence within the experience and a working through to the best solution in that moment of perceptual enlightenment.

I hope that reading this book has provided for you a renewed appreciation for the value that art and creative thinking can bring to your life. Remember, it's more about losing yourself in the process rather than falling into the trap of producing for a product (we have factories for that). In the end, the meditative processes of creating will provide for you a safe space to let your mind wander and imagine. It's a healthy thing to do, and you'll come out on the other side a more enlightened and refreshed human being, by simply *being* in a creative space.

I'd love to hear how *Creative Sanity* has affected your view of art, artists, and the role that making things plays in your life. There's no room for vanity here. Just get yourself into a creative space. So feel free to share your drawings, doodles, and journal notes and reveal what your beautiful mind is thinking. It helps us all learn a little bit more about the human experience. Contact me through Instagram or simply drop me an email to submit your work (see artist contact info on next page). But most of all, just get up and make something.

Happy Creating!
Matt Dowling