Creating a Life of Art: A Personal Journey towards Creative Freedom

Kristen Hanks, University of Massachusetts Boston

Date of Completion
5-31-2004

Document Type
Open Access Capstone

Degree Name
Master of Arts (MA)

First Advisor
Nina Greenwald

Abstract
This paper is a journey through my life as a Creator, from early childhood to the present. As I have moved through the process of writing my creative history, I have been able, for the first time, to take an introspective, reflective look at who I am as a person and an artist/creator. Using skills introduced to me in the Critical And Creative Thinking Program, it has been possible for me to undertake the task of confronting my past, my present and my future. My journey towards creative freedom begins in early childhood as I struggle with being a creative person in a world that only seems to value certain forms of expression. From there I move on to high school and college, astonishingly creative yet confusing times. I begin questioning my future and wonder why I cannot conceive of defining a career for myself. When you feel creative and are passionate about all kinds of Art, what do you DO? Struggling with this question and internalizing negative messages about artists and creators seems to define this period in my life. Taking a look back I am able to see for the first time some of the blocks to my own creativity and its progression. After college I eagerly venture into the “real world” and all my deepest fears about being a creative person begin to surface. Will I ever “make it” or actually find a career in a creative field? Maybe I need to see what else is out in there in the way of a “real” job. The moment I head down this path, I abandon my creative passions of writing poetry and connecting with my inner artist. For a time, this vital part of who I am falls by the wayside and I am not sure what steps to take to reclaim it – I know that I need help. By some providence I find the CCT graduate program and I begin another amazing journey: the reclaiming of my creative self. Utilizing skills introduced to me in my CCT courses, I am able to begin excavating my past, present and future as a person who desires to be an artist and a creative person for life. Free-writing, strategic personal planning, and risk-taking are some of the tools that aid in my creative re-birth. Through the meta-cognitive process of critical and creative thinking, I am able to envision my life in a way that I never have before. I delve into my past to unlock blocks to my creativity, I recognize first-hand the importance of community in my life, and I allow myself to voice hidden dreams and to see them as possibilities. Finally I am able to reach a point where I can say, with conviction: I AM AN ARTIST and whatever I end up doing in my life, creating will be central and vital to whatever I choose.

Comments
Contact cct@umb.edu for access to full text

Recommended Citation
https://scholarworks.umb.edu/cct_capstone/134
The Creative Freedom Course is designed to take you step by step through the roadmap to making a living with your writing, based on my own journey of doing exactly that. Creative Freedom is about empowering you as the creative and giving you the tools and skills necessary to make a living with your writing.

Joanna Penn. I'm Joanna Penn, New York Times and USA Today bestselling author of thrillers as J.F.Penn, as well as bestselling non-fiction for authors. I take you behind the scenes of publishing on Amazon KDP, Kobo Writing Life and Draft2Digital. Plus why Amazon Author Central is important, how to create multi-country Amazon redirection links, the costs of self-publishing and considerations on piracy.