

WHY I BELIEVE THAT EVERYONE HAS AN ARTIST INSIDE THEM

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I consider myself an artist. However, my belief is that everyone has an artist inside of them. When we create, we are reacting to Nature. There are no perfectly straight lines in Nature. It seems funny when someone says that they cannot even draw a straight line. If rendering something that requires a straight line, I use a ruler.

I might comment: “Look at the clothes you are wearing,” or “Look at the glasses you selected,” or “Have you ever changed a recipe?” All reflect the creative domain. If a person insists that they draw like a ten year old, I insist that is the age that they probably stopped drawing.

When I taught art to children, every child displayed creativity. They just needed encouragement to let it flow. They were dealing with color. Color is light and light is energy.

According to Jean Piaget, there are four stages of mental and cognitive development relating to artistic development: the motor sensory, symbiotic, concrete activity, and formal activity phases. He maintained that process is more important than product for development. As we enter adulthood, we become concerned with perfect solutions. In art, there are many solutions. If a child can go through the stages in a nurturing setting for growth before the feelings (pertaining to perfection) manifest, advancement is certain.

If a child colors a tree purple, applaud it. They are using their imagination. Isn't that what our greatest inventors have done? As we become older, we become more concerned with neatness and orderliness. Many people I know who declare they “do not have a creative bone in their bodies” are among those who freak out if their homes are ever in disarray.

Sometimes, overwrought with a project, I am a frustrated artist because I cannot find my tools. Knowing this and being aware of the way adults (which children are destined to become) feel about disarray influenced my most recent teaching experience.

Realizing it can be difficult to explore line, shape, and color if one is overly concerned about neatness, I tried to instill a very subtle area of concern about it as part of the process. I think Piaget would understand.

After telling *Creative Alternatives* (Houston) that I could not teach a session (due to my business), I heard that several parents had complained that I would not be back. And I knew I had done something right. The main difference between you and someone who is more artistic is that they have cultivated it.

We are all works in progress.