

# Art for the “Non-Artist” PROPOSAL



**Facilitated by:  
Jenny Santa Maria**





# Hi, I'm Jenny!

Perhaps my greatest gift is in bringing out the gifts in others, and I've spent my lifetime honing in on the art of teaching art. Since receiving my Art Education and Special Education degrees in 2013, I have worked with two populations- adults and underprivileged teens; both of whom face similar challenges: tremendous anxiety, perfectionism, self-doubt, and resistance. These experiences have shaped me as an art coach. I specialize in designing workshops for those who would normally shy away from taking an art class.

I've brought these creative empowerment workshops into many settings and esteemed institutions across New England. Museums, art supply stores, and libraries offer many classes, but few are tailored to the needs of those who "can't draw a stick figure". These safe, welcoming spaces have an air of encouragement, step-by-step guides, and one-on-one coaching all within a group setting.

It has been a privilege to witness beautiful creations unfold as individuals move beyond their limiting beliefs. We learn together there is no such thing as a "non-artist", only artists that have something in their way. I'd love to partner with your community to break down barriers and heal these creative wounds, fostering an environment where creative expression triumphs over competition. I believe that in today's world, nothing is more important than compassion and innovative thinking, and the arts hold the key to driving meaningful change for both current and future generations.



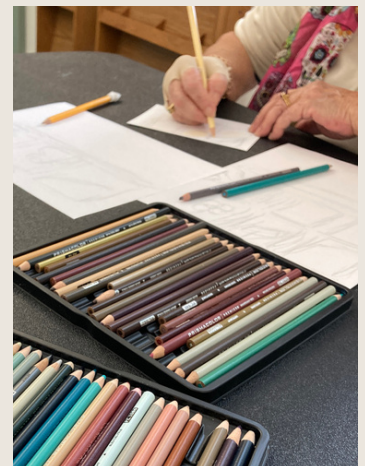
# Unlock Your Creative Potential:

## A Hands-On Sketching and Visual Brainstorming Workshop

This workshop is a launchpad for participants to begin their journey toward a more artful life, filled with possibilities. For those who have never taken an art class, this is an opportunity to think like an artist—creating meaningful works of art using a visual language they develop themselves. We'll focus on honing technical skills in sketching and visual brainstorming, while emphasizing a growth mindset throughout the process. Creativity is reclaimed through exploration and play using only paper and pencil. By the end, participants will have a solid foundation for ongoing artistic growth and creative exploration.

Participants should bring a sketchbook and pencil, as we will focus on working with dry media. I provide all necessary materials, along with a dry-erase board for interactive demonstrations.

The workspace is arranged in a U-shape or rectangle, fostering a welcoming, communal atmosphere that encourages interaction and shared experiences. Setup takes about 30 minutes, ensuring the space is organized and inviting for the group.



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Diana, Participant,  
Newport, Rhode Island

Thank you again for sharing your talent in, not only your unique artistic ability, but even in teaching, managing and presenting. You are gifted in many ways! You certainly teach more than art and provide a truly lovely experience in your class that I hope to pay forward in my own daily life. Thanks for shining bright and lighting the ways for others.

”

Jim, Participant,  
Tuckerton, NJ

Very thought-provoking. As a former teacher, I always wanted to learn how to sketch to illustrate ideas for my students and never bothered to try. I should have always set aside time to be creative. I appreciate that you broke down this process in an easy way. I will try this process at home and hang this work on my refrigerator!

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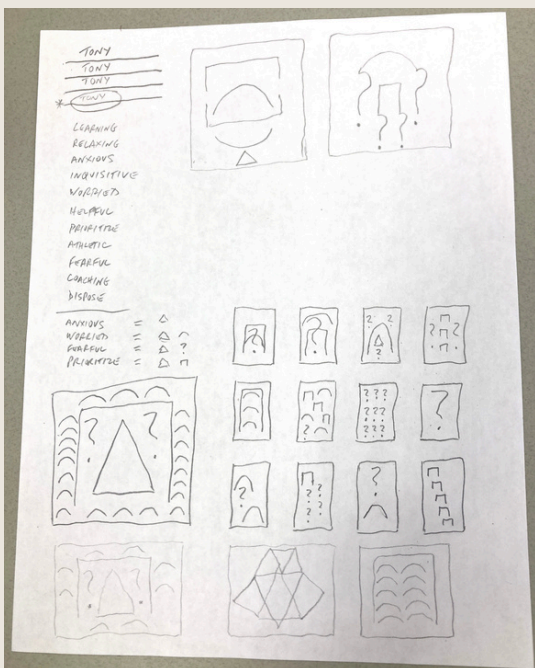
Nancy, Participant,  
Long Beach Island, NJ

I valued this class more than any other I've taken in years. I appreciated the conversations we had with fellow "non-artists". It's very true; we're all creative but have something in our way. I'd definitely come back for a part 2!



“If you can write your name, you can do this.”

# Overview



After a brief introduction and the origin story of the workshop, we start with a discussion on cultivating a beginner’s mindset and how to foster idea generation more fluidly, focusing on quantity over quality. We watch a short video capturing Picasso in the act of creation, where he sketches freely, layering new images over previous ones and allowing them to evolve without hesitation. This intimate glimpse into his process often sparks lively discussions.

We transition into a hands-on exercise I call "Making Peace with the Pencil," in which participants explore various pressures with the pencil and comfortable ways to sketch. If we can erase our light sketches, we’re ready to dive into the core of the workshop: visual brainstorming. Once we’ve reached this stage, participants see they have the tools and support necessary to sketch.

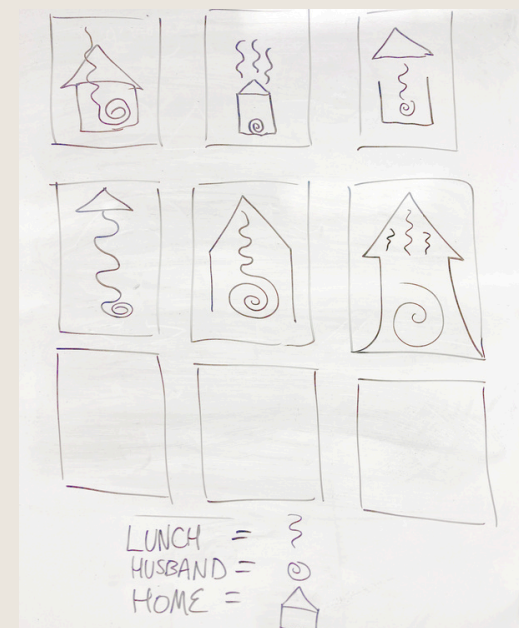
Next comes a guided exercise I call 'word purge,' where participants list whatever words come to mind, which are then grouped into themes. They pick a theme which then becomes the foundation for their creative work. Using words as inspiration, participants assign them simple symbols, creating a personalized visual 'key,' much like a map legend. By translating words into visual symbols, participants begin developing their own symbolic visual language, just as artists like Picasso, Frida Kahlo, and Keith Haring did.

“You win or you learn, but you never fail.”

We then combine these symbols to create relationships and interactions among them. We explore design principles such as repetition and scale, guiding participants in creating conceptual art that reflects their personal experiences—only the maker knows the true meaning behind their work. After brainstorming potential arrangements, we will transfer the preferred design to quality paper. A demonstration on shading techniques using Prismacolor pencils is provided, allowing participants to enhance their symbolic artwork with color.

Depending on the group's dynamics, we may share our artwork and engage in critique discussions. Participants are given a handout that includes a further reading list, suggestions for daily art practices, and a reflection worksheet to explore their personal beliefs about art and the creative process at home.

The goal of *Art for the “Non-Artist”* is to help participants build self-trust in their creative abilities while crafting layered, meaningful artwork that reflects their personal experiences and unique voices. This workshop is designed to tap into their imagination, empowering them to find meaning in their work and inspiring them to continue their creative journey after the class concludes.



“I can draw anyone’s portrait in 5 minutes, but truthfully it took me 37 years and 5 minutes to do it. Practice and patience is key.”

# Aims & Objectives

- **EMPOWER CREATIVITY AND FOSTER SELF-EXPRESSION:** BY PROVIDING A SAFE AND ENCOURAGING ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY CAN DEVELOP THEIR UNIQUE VISUAL LANGUAGE, REGARDLESS OF THEIR PRIOR EXPERIENCE.
- **FACILITATE HANDS-ON PRACTICE:** TO ENGAGE PARTICIPANTS IN PRACTICAL EXERCISES
- **INTRODUCE ARTISTIC CONCEPTS:** TO FAMILIARIZE PARTICIPANTS WITH KEY ARTISTIC CONCEPTS AND TECHNIQUES, SUCH AS LAYERING, SYMBOL CREATION, AND THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WORDS AND IMAGES.
- **ENCOURAGE PERSONAL REFLECTION**
- **CULTIVATING A GROWTH MINDSET:** PROVIDING EXAMPLES AND ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON CULTIVATING A GROWTH MINDSET THAT EMBRACES CREATIVITY AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT.
- **PROMOTE DISCUSSION:** TO ENCOURAGE OPEN DIALOGUE AND DISCUSSION AMONG PARTICIPANTS ABOUT THEIR EXPERIENCES AND INTERPRETATIONS OF ART.
- **PROVIDE RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED GROWTH**





**CONTACT INFO:**

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**EXPERIENCE:**

THIS ONE-OF-A-KIND WORKSHOP HAS BEEN SUCCESSFULLY DELIVERED IN VARIOUS SPACES, INCLUDING LIBRARIES, CLASSROOMS, AND ART CENTERS THROUGHOUT NEW ENGLAND. WITH OVER A DECADE OF EXPERIENCE IN SPECIAL EDUCATION, I AM SKILLED AT CREATING AND FACILITATING ART WORKSHOPS FOR DIVERSE AUDIENCES, BOTH LARGE AND SMALL. MY EASY-GOING, CAN-DO ATTITUDE HAS CONSISTENTLY HELPED PARTICIPANTS MOVE PAST THEIR SELF-IMPOSED LIMITATIONS. I HAVE MASTERS DEGREES IN BOTH SPECIAL EDUCATION AND ART EDUCATION, THOUGH I LEVERAGE MY EXPERTISE AS AN ART COACH.

**EVENT WRITE-UP:**

"IF YOU'VE EVER SAID, 'I CAN'T EVEN DRAW A STICK FIGURE,' OR AVOIDED ART CLASSES ALTOGETHER, THIS IS THE WORKSHOP YOU'VE BEEN WAITING FOR. ART COACH, JENNY SANTA MARIA, HAS TRIED-AND-TRUE METHODS THAT HAVE HELPED COUNTLESS PEOPLE MOVE OUT OF THEIR OWN WAY. SHE SPENT A DECADE IN THE CLASSROOM, HONING IN ON THE ART OF TEACHING ART WITH THE SELF-CONSCIOUS, DISCOURAGED, RESISTANT, AND ANXIOUS. THIS ISN'T A TYPICAL 'FOLLOW-THE-TEACHER' ART CLASS; INSTEAD, WE'LL TAP INTO YOUR UNIQUE CREATIVE VOICE AND DEVELOP ESSENTIAL SKILLS FOR VISUAL BRAINSTORMING AND BUILDING YOUR OWN VISUAL LANGUAGE. YOU WILL LEAVE THIS WORKSHOP WITH A WHOLE NEW PERSPECTIVE, EMPOWERED TO USE THE ARTS IN ANY AND ALL ASPECTS OF YOUR LIFE. BRING A SKETCHBOOK FOR WRITING AND DOODLING, AND GET READY TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITIES!"

**MEDIA:**

PENCIL AND COLOR PENCIL

**DURATION:**

2 HOURS

**PARTICIPANTS:**

MINIMUM OF 5, MAXIMUM OF 16, AGES 16+

**ROOM REQUIREMENTS:**

TABLES AND A CHAIR FOR EACH PARTICIPANT. I PREFER A U-SHAPED SEATING ARRANGEMENT, WITH A TABLE POSITIONED AT THE FRONT FOR THE DRY-ERASE BOARD AND SUPPLIES. A PROJECTOR IS NOT REQUIRED BUT WOULD BE HELPFUL FOR DISPLAYING THE 4-MINUTE VIDEO AT THE START OF THE SESSION. I WILL PROVIDE ALL NECESSARY EQUIPMENT, INCLUDING A LAPTOP AND ADAPTERS.

**FEE:**

TO ENSURE THIS WORKSHOP IS AS ACCESSIBLE AS POSSIBLE, I STRIVE TO MAINTAIN AN AFFORDABLE PRICING STRUCTURE. THE COST IS \$35 PER PARTICIPANT, WITH AN ADDITIONAL \$5 MATERIALS FEE. MANY FACILITIES I COLLABORATE WITH TYPICALLY SPLIT THE WORKSHOP COST 50/50 WITH THE INSTRUCTOR, AND I AM OPEN TO NEGOTIATING A STRUCTURE THAT BEST FITS YOUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS.