

SKETCHBOOK ADVENTURES

Prompt 28: An artful life – Adoring your creative self

My whole life I've been attracted to artful things. It makes me think of that line in the movie "Beetlejuice" (if you haven't seen it, stop reading this and watch this quintessential teen angst movie filled with amazing visuals like the inventive sets and costume design ASAP) when the daughter says: "I myself am attracted to the strange and unusual." I've always been attracted to the strange and unusual artful side of life as well.

I even dragged my parents to a matinee showing of William Burroughs' "Naked Lunch," and sat embarrassed but fascinated as his red-lipped wife, cockroaches, guns, drug use and typewriters filled the screen before me. Walking out of the theater to my mom's minivan in the late afternoon sun quickly sobered me back into my 11-year-old self.

My mom said, "Really, Nicole. Did you REALLY like that movie?"

"It's ART, mom," I retorted.

I refused to admit to my parents that I didn't enjoy watching a man shoot heroin and write on a typewriter in the shape of a monstrous alien head or cockroach. Even though a part of me couldn't wait for the end credits to starting rolling as my unsettled stomach turned, another part felt like I had found "my people." My people were the ones who didn't shy from fantastic thoughts of impossible wonderment (like cockroach typewriters). My people were not afraid to let the crazy out and see what would happen. My people had a fierce sense of purpose. My people were awkward with big noses, skinny ankles and large feet (or maybe that was just me).

Even though I don't sport red-rimmed glasses with huge lenses (like a miniature Sally Jessy Raphael minus the microphone) and a leg brace (that I wore for six long months to correct my lazy left leg that didn't grow as fast as the right one) anymore, I still feel (at times) like that awkward artsy kid in junior high that the other kids threw pennies at in the hallway. The thing that saved me then was making, and lots of times it's still the thing that saves me now.

Once I learned to embrace my differences and create art out of all the weird thoughts, images and agony and joy of my life, I felt a whole lot better. If you're taking this class, chances are that you have a least some idea of what I'm talking about.

Creative people tend to feel things a bit deeper and be more emotional than non-creatives. Those intense feelings then have to amount to something and that's where art comes in. Creating is our chance to make something out of all those feelings, thoughts and ideas. Creativity is what keeps artists like us sane.

It's time to pay homage to your creativity in this prompt. The goal is to create a page in your sketchbook that represents your creativity. If you don't consider yourself an "artist," you're wrong! The fact that you are taking this workshop makes you an artist! So it's time to give in to your weirdness and artistic impulses and portray all your creative awesomeness and gratitude on a page in your sketchbook. In the first example, I chose a few of my favorite tools for making and in the second I created a collage based around making. However you decide to depict the awesomeness of your making, have fun and fully explore any technique or style that moves you.

these are a few
of my favorite
tools

