

## Art Autobiography

My earliest and most memorable experience with art was in high school as a freshman. I was at a new school, with new people, and had just been forced to transfer school districts after being with friends and teachers I had known for eight years. My transition into a new place was a difficult one; the one class I was happy to have on my schedule was art class. The teacher seemed energetic, excited, and eager to start us on our year-long journey of art exploration. The first project we were assigned was to draw realistic hands, in any medium of our choice, in different settings. I have always thought that I was not naturally creative, and the project was a challenge for me. I did well enough, but knew I was lacking artistic drawing skills. I was sure my grade on the assignment wouldn't be the best. I was right, earning an average "C", and being a bit discouraged because I felt as if we were there to learn, not just be graded on our natural abilities.

To my surprise, that early assignment was just one of a few that was only given to measure a beginning point in where students were at artistically. The teacher had clear intentions of using the first few assignments as a starting point of which we would move forward from. It was quite the relief, as I feel that I always have liked art. There is one assignment from that year that sticks out in my mind. It was a painting assignment midway through the year, and the object of our work was ours to choose. I remember choosing an evening scene of lightning and a storm as my choice; it seemed challenging yet possible. I was working on my project in class and seemed to get stuck on how to appropriately draw/paint lightning. The teacher came over, saw I was struggling, and sat with me for half the class; he took the time to teach me the exact lines and brush movement to achieve the look of lightning. This small act of teaching and kindness had a major impact on me; to this day, painting is still the one aspect of art that I enjoy completely. I

don't claim to be an artist, but mixing colors by hand and painting lends me a sense of calm and happiness. I look forward to designing backgrounds for singing programs, as I am afforded the time to sit, be calm, and enjoy my painting. My art teacher gave not only myself confidence in my ability, but also the rest of my classmates as well. It was his first year teaching and he entered us into a city-wide painting contest for a mural that would appear in a local library on display, and on local tv. Our class won, and he seemed like a proud parent beaming on tv, showing our display of art to the world.

As for why I don't remember much about my early art experiences, I believe that it was because I had the belief that I was not creative and not good at art. I did my work as required but did not put much thought or effort into it because it wasn't a big part of my education as a young child.

Generally, the characteristic of being an artist by having the freedom to express oneself is a meaningful aspect of art. As a logical thinker, this freedom to create and not follow set rules or guidelines is a positive characteristic; it gives some sort of relief or break from always thinking one way. However, I do not feel I have been very successful in art because I believe it requires not only lots of practice, but also some natural given ability as well. Art is something that can be taught, but it is also subjective. The main reason I feel unsuccessful is because I don't feel creative enough to be considered an artist.

Overall, I do believe the concept of art is one with many positive characteristics. Lately, I especially enjoy viewing art as a medium that connects to many other different subjects such as literacy, math, science, and more. My first love is literacy, and I am beginning to learn how the connections between it and art can enhance one's confidence and capabilities in being an artist. I have always admired children's artists, especially those award-winning authors who seem to

write and draw a children's book seemingly so flawlessly and easily. Their ideas and creativity seem to have no boundaries. I ultimately aspire to become a children's book author someday; maybe after all these amazing courses through Adams State and the NASA Endeavor program, I may just have the confidence to do so!

I believe that art is a strong and powerful medium by which one can create, dream, and design, regardless of who you are, where you come from, or your level of ability. I view art as a form of communication, that can convey both positive and negative feelings that allow the creator to express how he or she views the world around us. I feel strongly that the arts should be a subject that is recognized for its power, and be advocated for when legislators and policy makers insist on reducing the budget by cutting arts programs. Whether it be painting, music, drawing, dance, sculpture, or any other form of artistic expression, we as adults and educators need to make sure that all children have art as a major component of their educational journey.

I am sure that it only takes one adult to make a difference in a child's life. For me as an "artist", it was definitely my freshman art class teacher, Mr. Wind. His time and effort led me to have a positive relationship with art that continues even to this day in graduate school, and beyond. My past learning experiences have shaped both my definition of art and my positive association with it. I think it is important for us to learn more about how and why art is important, in order to help not only our future students, but other educators as well.