

Andrea Hogan

Art Autobiography

Recall: My earliest experiences with art are watching my great-grandfather paint. His paintings were done with watercolors. I am thankful to have one of his paintings framed. He would also do sketches of different family members from time to time. He always said that people were the hardest to capture in a drawing. I can remember him working on a painting outside late in the afternoons. Looking back, I think this was his time of the day when he could unwind from working out in the garden. My great-grandmother and I would sit on the bench in the carport and watch him paint. I consider music to be a form of art as well. At home, my mother and I lived with my grandparents. My grandparents, Mom, and her siblings are all musically inclined. My grandfather was a band director. After his retirement, he opened a music store that was run by the family. Someone at home was usually playing guitar, singing, or playing the piano. My mom and grandmother also gave piano lessons at home and at the recreation center in town. When I was a teenager, my mom married a physical education teacher/football coach/art teacher. Drawing and painting was not something that came natural for me like my great-grandfather. However, it was great to have my step-father who was an art teacher because he was able to help me with my school projects. I can remember him helping me with a drawing project that involved eggs. Once we made a papier-mâché mask with chicken wire, newspaper, and paints. We also did things like calligraphy writing for a Shakespearean assignment. I still have a sketch book that my step-father gave to me as a gift long ago. Drawing and painting did not come natural to me even with the influence of my great-grandfather and step-father, but music became a great influence in my life. I learned to play the piano, sang with the family often, and learned to play the flute. These became my creative outlets. I still play the flute for special occasions

such as weddings and church events. When I need to relax and zone-out for a while, I find myself sitting at the piano playing for an hour or more.

Reflect: I feel that I have been somewhat successful with art as far as music is concerned. That is definitely my preferred form of artistic expression. After high school, my band director helped me get a performing arts scholarship which allowed me to sing in the college chorus. We were able to travel and compete during those years, and we also did musicals. I gained a lot of self-confidence during those years of performing with the chorus. I do enjoy working on craft projects too. My mother and I make wreaths and sew together. This allows us some time together, but it is also a creative time to pick out colors, patterns, thread, and materials. These projects take time and require some skill. At the end of the project though, you have a finished product. You have something you are able to show others that you created and designed. I think I am much better at making things with my hands rather than drawing/painting. One thing that my family enjoys during an outing is visiting museums. I think that because of my great-grandfather and step-father, I can appreciate works of art at museums.

Connect: Art is something that someone has created or produced. It could be an original or a replication. There are different modes of art such as paintings, drawings, sculptures, and dance/musical productions. Typically, I view art as something that is tangible. When someone finishes a painting or a musical piece, I believe you can get a sense of what they were feeling. I believe we all have a creative part of us. Somewhere along the way the creative side may go dormant, if it is not nurtured. My past learning experiences came primarily from my family. I am very thankful for the time my step-father spent with me showing me other ways to be artistic and creative. I can color nicely in the lines, but please do not ask me to paint a mural. My step-father was able to show me that I could create and design something artistic. He showed me

other art forms that I could be successful in. I am also thankful that my mom and grandmother showed me how to play the piano. I often listen to instrumental music when I am working, and because of my musical background I can appreciate the technique and time it takes to learn a classical piece. I look forward to learning how to use art with my students at school. Our students need someone who will make time with them to learn about different ways to be creative. Students need someone to show them it is ok to create, design, and use their imagination.