

ART 105



THE ARTIST'S STUDIO:
where the magic happens



STUDIO AS SACRED SPACE:
interview with Outi Harma

ART NEWS



The Artist's Studio: where the *Magic* happens

During these difficult times Covid-19 has forced the world to go inward. With this there has been an opportunity to dive deeply into our private spaces. This has caused a mixed bag of reactions, both negative and positive.

The artist is the person in society that is willing to dive into these dark recesses, physically and mentally, to discover that which is often hidden and neglected. It may seem like a natural and god-given talent to do so, but the truth is with each exploration into the unknown there are many thresholds to pass with venomous gate keepers resisting entry. The artist has learned to face these demons knowing there is a good chance that there is gold to be found and brought back.

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There is a natural resistance to change, for the mind and body wants to be in a familiar and safe place. The artist studio is designed to be an experimental laboratory of the unknown. When the artist goes “In” the basic materials of their craft get to come out and new worlds emerge.

During this world crisis many artists are having the time of their life, because the world is saying to everyone, “Stay Home”. This encouragement of isolation finally supports the often necessary environment needed for the artists creative process.



People are turning toward the arts as a way to support this inward journey. This gives everyone the opportunity to find the treasures that live within and share them with their community.

***"And the day came
when the risk to
remain tight in a bud
was more painful
than the risk it took
to blossom."
- Anais Nin***



STUDIO AS SACRED SPACE: an interview with Outi Harma



Outi Harma, originally from Finland, has been an LA based artist for decades working primarily as a painter. Her images have found their way beyond the canvas onto ceramics, fabric, cell phones, and soul cards. Outi's works are currently being presented in Art105's group show called "Inside Out". We have had the opportunity to ask her how the Artist's Studio has played a role in her life.

What is an artist studio to you?

It is a sacred space, an "Art Church", where the creation happens. I can forget everything else and go into an imaginary world to process my life. Being in my studio and making art is like being with a good friend. It doesn't matter how you are feeling you can always hang out and be real. I always come out feeling better in the end.

What is your relationship with your studio?

The studio is a safe place. It is quiet with no distraction. I am familiar with going deep inside. That's where I find peace and beauty. I have been working on daily paintings as 30-day challenges in my apartment/studio. Even if it is just for an hour, it has become my daily meditation. I feel more in touch with myself through this ritual. Working on my art allows me to get away from the mental chatter so I can land into my whole being. I feel grounded in my body through the action of painting, because it forces me to be in the present moment.

What has been your experience during these challenging times of isolation?

Having less to do in the world has allowed me to focus on the work. By simplifying my life I can finally do my art without distractions. The introverted side is being fed. Being by myself, with my dog Dino, has become very magical. I am surprised about how much time I can spend alone. The studio is not a lonely place. I can create characters in the art that want to relate to me. In a way they are me. Art-making is a soulful experience where magic exists and it is here waiting for me all the time.

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What have you discovered during these times?

Not knowing whether or not my art was going to sell, or how I was going to exist, forced me to take the next big step in my work. I am now teaching classes online. They are a series of three hour classes through Zoom with a group of dedicated creative people.

I am finding that sharing my process is challenging me to find words to talk about my work. My art making process is not planned, it's more of an improv. With these workshops I am having to look at art making in a more systematic way, to help break down the process for others. Luckily some of my missed social life is being fed by these new connections with the people in the classes.

What is a thing you may do in your studio that others may not? I dance. The studio is a great place to move, express, and expand. In essence my paintings are a dance of colors and characters on the canvas.

For more information about Outi:

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