



Note From the Editor

This is the second issue of Arts Alive and I've learned many lessons in working on the two first issues.

Part of the learning came from a survey which Arts Alive Marketing Coordinator, Blair Dewan, sent out to our distributors. We had a 20 per cent return rate which is an excellent return rate—especially since we couldn't offer a chance to win a trip to Hawaii for filling out the survey and returning it!

I am happy to say most of the comments were very positive and, in particular, the new format of the magazine was very well received. Other helpful suggestions came in and were much appreciated. (I don't know what the readership wants / likes unless I hear from you.)

I did find one comment troubling, however. One distributor, who does not want to go on the record, wrote, "You should not use a tax payer funded magazine to promote amateurs, craft or artifact manufacturers. You have to promote real artists who are dedicated full-time in creating or performing arts." The author of these comments went on to say the stories in Arts Alive featured business people who "produce and sell products of very low artistic value and craftsmanship."

I beg to differ.

So does Michelle Binkley. I cheered when she asked me if I would be interested in a piece on the definition of an artist. In her column in the "Space For Rant" section, she writes we can all be artists if we want to nurture our creativity.

As far as I know, you don't need a license to be an artist, a singer, a painter or a dancer. Hooray for the freedom of the arts.

In May I attended a workshop using sound and voice. I learned that anybody can sing and have fun doing so (see page six for story). It was the very lack of guidelines which allowed all the participants to grow and learn.

Julia Cameron writes in her popular workbook, *The Artist's Way* that we all have a creative child within us. She pushes the definition of an artist past any boundaries. For Cameron, an accountant or lawyer can nurture their creativity in their own work and use it to enhance their job. Her seminars are titled, *The Artist's Way*, and yet she gets doctors, accountants, teachers and lawyers attending.

So what is it about all these people in licensed professions, who have to train for years in order to legally practice their craft, that draws them to seminars for "artists"? I suggest it is the freedom and growth people experience when they delve into the arts. The power they feel when creating on their own. The joy of seeing an idea happen. The arts are a wonderful, nurturing place where the spirit is allowed to run free because of the lack of licensing, definition and guidelines.

Art cannot be put into a box. Art moves, breathes, sings, feels, sees — and defies definition and licensing. I, for one, do not suppose to know what is a hard and true definition of art, nor can I judge it. I simply enjoy art and celebrate its existence.

So until somebody tells me art has a legal definition and there is a license one has to attain in order to practice in the arts, expect to see a wide spectrum of artistic activities covered in this magazine.

Gloria Loree

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