

THE YEAR AHEAD

A dear friend and I had a long and productive conversation recently about getting our upcoming year's work in alignment with our core ideals. She advised that we need to allow space in 2023 for new ideas to flow in by cutting back the dead wood from old ideas and ways of thinking that no longer serve us.

Coincidentally, I came across some suggestions from life coach Xavier Dagba that fit perfectly into this conversation. So, this New Year of 2023 I resolve to follow his advice. Here's what he had to say:

- 1) If you're a creative, let your number one priority be to hone your craft regardless of the number of people who show up to appreciate it.
- 2) Many people give up on their craft because they look for gratification in the wrong places.
- 3) It is great to receive external approval. It's even better to use your creativity as an outlet for intimacy with your soul, regardless of who approves of it or not.
- 4) Your creativity is a portal into new para-



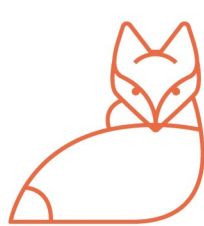
From my work in progress "Shame and Redemption"

digms. That is the first thing that will get dimmed when you fall into the trap of pointless comparisons...Or when you let receiving external approval be the benchmark for your self-worth.

- 5) Keep creating regardless of who shows up to appreciate it. You owe it to yourself.

In the latter half of last year, I reduced my social media presence by a significant amount. As I work on my goals for the upcoming year, I will be continuing that trend. The reason is two-fold:

The first is simply that I have a lot on my creative plate to accomplish. With the massive changes in how social media (such as Instagram) works and what gets filtered to the top of the feed, I cannot be taking time away from the sewing studio to keep up with the trends. I understand the reasons for social media's ever-changing algorithms and how artists are being encouraged to adapt. However, for the time being, I will be posting periodically so I can



ART SEW DIFFERENT

focus on my art work and not on being a content creator.

The second is that social media can be a mixed blessing. It can be a great place to learn new techniques, become inspired, or socialize. But it can also be a place where people fall into the comparison trap. I have had many conversations with friends, other artists, and entrepreneurs about how the fine line between being inspired by

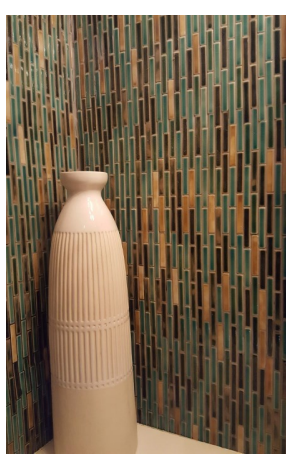
ON SOCIAL MEDIA

someone else's work and comparing our work to theirs is not always easy to walk.

We are all on different paths, journeys, and timelines, but sometimes we forget that, and it can be easy to get caught up in the comparison cycle. Sometimes we need to actively remind ourselves that it is great to be inspired by others and use the energy gained by seeing their work as motivation, but not to compare ourselves, our work, or our place on the journey to them. When I start to feel the comparison pressure, I know it is time to take a break.

To read this and other articles on my art blog, click [here](#).

INSPIRATION



QUILTATIONS

It's fun to be on the edge. I think you do your best work when you take chances, when you're not safe, when you're not in the middle of the road.

-Danny DeVito

ART TALKS

Have you ever been scared as an artist? The type of scared where you suddenly feel like a fraud and question all your abilities and contributions.

The very first time I had a piece accepted into a show, I felt that kind of fear. I was so excited to have my work recognized by the jurist and their belief in my work was so strong that they wanted to help me to share it with the rest of the world (albeit a small world because it was a small show). Yet at the same time, I was fearful that once the jurist saw my work in person, as opposed to the digital photo I had submitted to the call for art, that she was going to laugh and rescind the offer to show my work.

Well, I couldn't have been more wrong!

She loved it. In fact, she told me that of all the works she had selected for the show, mine was her favorite. I graciously thanked her, but inside my mind was spinning. Wow! I thought to myself. My work really spoke to her. I wasn't a fraud!

Of course, there were others in my personal life who told me my

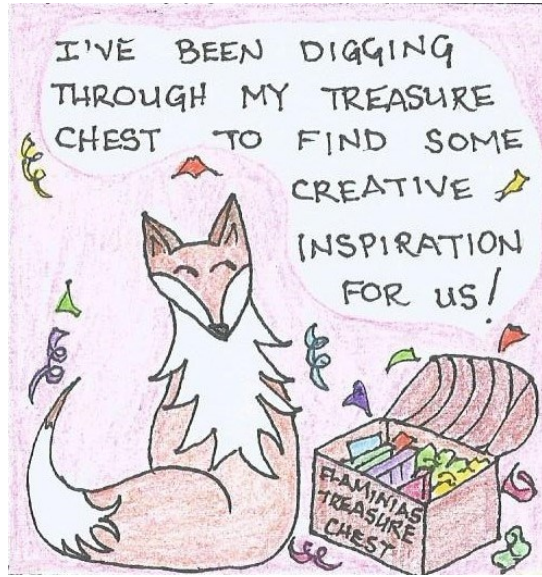
art was great and beautiful. It isn't that I discounted their comments and appreciation. In fact, their support is what keeps me going and makes me want to do even better work. Yet there was a part of me that acknowledged they were emotionally biased. A jurist who must evaluate hundreds or even thousands of artworks and selects mine, well, that's not due to emotional bias.

What I learned from that experience was that I have more to offer than I give myself credit. After having spoken with other artists,

friends, family, etc., I know this is not a unique feeling to me. Many of us second guess or devalue our contributions to this world, whether in the things we create, or the ways we raise our children, or the intellect that we provide, or in other ways.

It is natural for us to want our work to be validated by strangers. I don't think that necessarily goes away but having trust in ourselves and in what we contribute to this world is even more valuable.

FLAMINIA AND THE MACHINE



What treasures has Flaminia found for the New Year?

Check out the [latest episode](#) of Flaminia and The Machine [here!](#)

ARTSEWDIFFERENT, LLC

SEW WHAT'S DIFFERENT

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UNIQUE QUILTED AND FABRIC ART

As an artist, my passion is to create unique quilted and fabric art. I was always drawn to sewing as a child, and now I am able to live my dream of artistic creativity through fabric. I am inspired to use materials and techniques that range from the traditional to those I make up as needed.

That's what makes it ArtSewDifferent!