

Blanchette

Bruce's Studio News

Process • Concept • Evolution • Solution

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Champing at the bit...*

** The definition of bit is a metal mouthpiece used for controlling a horse, and one definition of champ is to bite or chew noisily. The senses meant in the idiom champing at the bit refer to the tendency of some horses to chew on the bit when impatient or eager. In its figurative sense, it means to show impatience while delayed, or just to be eager to start.*

This pretty much expresses my state of mind last month. After minor elective surgery on my foot early in February, I was not prepared for a prescription of inactivity for the following four weeks. Sitting in a recliner with my foot raised for the first week was tolerable with the help of some good books and art journals to read, but beyond that I was "champing at the bit" to get back to the studio. Walking and standing proved difficult due to swelling and the uncomfortable "boot" I had to wear all the time, so it was a full two weeks before I could return to the studio, and then, only to sit at the computer with my foot up on a box. I spent a good deal of the time finishing a digital photo journal about my trip to Denmark last fall.

None the less I did get some overdue reading done and was also able to go to my sketchbook and journal to re-evaluate my current studio projects and look beyond them.

I managed, with the help of good friends, to limp into the life drawing class that I had organized in Chester, VT's VTica gallery, and a few good friends helped clear snow around my house and studio. By month's end I could run necessary errands like getting the collage shown here to the framery, readying it for exhibition.

Apparently the "urge to create" is something Robert Fritz addresses in this e-mail essay I received this month. (below) Mr. Fritz is a composer, filmmaker and organizational consultant, and founder of Technologies For Creating®. He is author of the international bestseller 'The Path of Least Resistance' and is based in Newfane, Vermont.



Collaboration in Absentia; Jacque Louis David & Cy Twombly • Collage • 2013

"Life as a Creator—The Fountain of Youth

If you consider how professional creators live their lives in relationship to most other people, one difference stands out: the youthfulness of most creators, no matter how old they are. They have more energy, more expression of their dynamic urge, a greater capacity for life, for truth, or irony, for failure and success.

The idea that somehow, by creating, you enter into a new type of life can seem rather far-fetched. But look at the history of creative people and you will see this played out as fact. How many old rockers are still rocking? Even today, Paul McCartney and Mick Jagger are vital, strong performers, still interesting, still interested in life. Paul is 70, Mick will be 70 in July. Clint Eastwood just gets better and better as a director, on into his 80s. Bill Cosby is still doing stand-up comedy at 75. Sean Connery is still active at 82. George Burns worked until he was in his 90s. The great artist Bridget Riley is still creating at 77, and her work is just as vital as ever. Gillian Ayres is still painting at 78. When asked about retiring, she said, "I wouldn't know what to do". She dismisses the suggestion that creativity diminishes with age. "I hope it increases all one's life," she says. "One can never have enough. Your art does change over the years - you're still trying to find out things."

Julia Child was just a few days short of her 92nd birthday when she died. Right up to the end she was still cooking and writing. And there are many, many more. Willy Nelson is 79, and will perform in Indio, California on March 1st, Mescalero, New Mexico on the 3rd, Amarillo, Texas on the 5th, Topeka, Kansas on the 7th, Houston, Texas on the 10th, San Antonio on the 11th, then on to Catoosa, Oklahoma on the 15th, Catoosa, Oklahoma on the 16th, then a few days off, and then on March 27th, Austin, Texas. How are you spending your March?

...vitality is a byproduct of the creative process.

This means that your life as a creator, no matter how old or young you are, is determined by your creative aspirations and involvement in the creative process. If you are interested in things, life becomes interesting. If you aren't interested, life becomes boring as hell. If you spend your life problem-solving, you can bet the engine will ground down to a depressing halt. You can't generate the type of life I'm talking about by spending your life problem-solving. But to make things—stories, art, poetry, films, music, theater, buildings, new recipes, new ideas, writing, and even the more creative aspects of business and organizations—is a different kettle of fish.

So the real fountain of youth is not found in external water sources or magic pills or the supernatural formulas. It is found within your creative humanity, in which each new day offers something that can be created." ©Robert Fritz 2013