



The Shared Easel

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Spring Cleaning — Creating Space

As I was writing this issue of the [Shared Easel](#), I seemed to develop spring cleaning fever. I have cleaned up and reorganized the art studio, the garage, cabinets, refrigerator and even my e-mail program. With all this focus on clearing things away, it seems like a good time to clear away some of the mental clutter as well; and focus on refreshing self perceptions.

How do our old thoughts and perceptions put limits on our lives? How are present and future possibilities restricted by holding onto long held definitions of ourselves?

During the past couple of years my desire to write has been growing, but I have held back. I realize now that by defining myself as an artist I have been blocking my way.

Clearing up the clutter in a room creates space, providing an opening to greater productivity. What would open up if we created the space in our minds, an opening to something new?



["Window Frames:
Gilded"](#)

<i>Spring Cleaning</i>	1
<i>Rearranging Space</i>	1
<i>Clutter Effects Success</i>	2
<i>Books to Consider</i>	2
<i>Make a Change</i>	3
<i>Recycled Frames</i>	3
<i>Kid Stuff-Organizing</i>	4

Rearranging Space

For years I had an idea for how I wanted to rearrange the art studio. The design didn't make much sense but I really wanted to try it out. I knew I would have less space.

Finally, about a year and a half ago I moved everything in the art studio around to fit my design. And although it seemed to work well for awhile, I just felt more and more cramped and less and less able to be productive. In fact, I found myself avoiding the studio as much as possible.

"The splendor of the rose and the whiteness of the lily do not rob the little violet of it's scent nor the daisy of it's simple charm. If every tiny flower wanted to be a rose, spring would lose it's loveliness."

- [Therese of Lisieux](#)

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Last month I changed my environment and overhauled the studio. I was determined to configure a setup that helped create the best work environment for my needs. I also removed loads of [clutter](#), throwing away bags and bags of unneeded “stuff”. And everything that did not belong in the art room found its way back to its rightful home.

What a difference! I have easy access to everything I need and there is space for the creative energy to flow. I love being in here again and have found that my new setup up works in ways I could not have anticipated.

Does Clutter Effect Success

In the November 2002 issue of [Art Calendar](#), [Jack White](#) wrote an article about the benefits of cleaning out a studio or office. He encouraged the storage or removal of all those things that we save for possible future use, and keeping accessible, only the materials that we need. The greater the [organization](#), the greater the opportunity for a flow of ideas and creativity.

[Jack White](#) questioned the possible link between a disorganized work space and the struggle an artist or anyone may experience in earning a living. He discussed how physical clutter gets in the way of our ability to think clearly and therefore hinders success.

I find that the more organized I am, the better I am able to focus and achieve my goals.

“Restore order & efficiency, regain peace of mind”

-[Ruth Campbell](#)

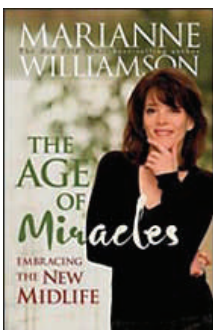
Time Management Facilitator
and [Professional Organizer](#)

831-475-8521

Books to Consider

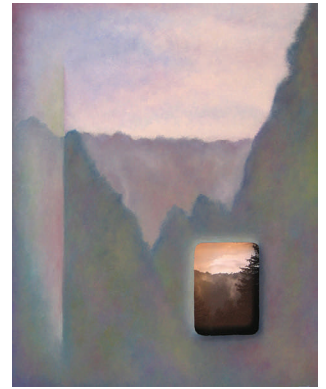
[Do One Thing Different: Ten Simple Ways to Change Your Life](#) by

[Bill O’Hanlon](#). O’Hanlon provides solution oriented techniques to help the reader make positive changes in their lives. Even small and simple changes can provide big rewards.



[The Age of Miracles: Embracing the New Midlife](#) by

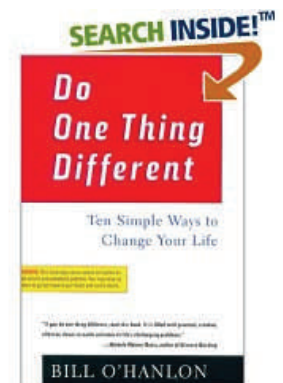
[Marianne Williamson](#). Marianne Williamson offers us a way to reframe the years of midlife as a “time for one part of ourselves to die and for something new to be born.”



[“Silhouessence:
Backyard”](#)

“Organization
begins and ends
in the mind.”

-Eric Braun



Make a Change

I often hear people say they would love to buy another piece of art but have no room on their walls. As an artist, I have an abundance of artwork, both on the walls and stored away. Sometimes I like to move them around, change the energy of the room, make the room feel fresh and new. I find that my family likes the changes as well.

Instead of seeing the same pieces on the same walls all the time, it's fun to *Make a Change*. Some people have linen for different seasons. Why not artwork?

Storing paintings...Keep paintings upright in a dry location. Avoid hot and damp environments that are conducive to the growth of mold and mildew. (like a basement).

Years ago, a couple of my paintings were hanging in a gallery. Without my knowing, the gallery owner decided to take one of the paintings down and store it in the basement. When I came to pick up my work, I found that the stored canvas was covered with mold. If it had not been for a friend of mine, who knew exactly what to do, the painting would have been destroyed.



"Contemplative Buddha"

Framing Tips - Locating and Using Recycled Frames by Jody Cramer

I started taking watercolor classes last year and soon found that I wanted to hang some of my paintings and give some to friends. I always thought it unfair to give someone an unframed work and expect him or her to bear the expense of framing it, so I went out to have a few things framed.

Wow! What an expensive process! I decided to check into "used" frames and soon found that they are abundant and inexpensive. Usually I pay between \$3 to \$10 for a frame with glass and a matt.

Often I buy great used frames and then paint something to go in them. I find used frames at flea markets, thrift stores and garage sales. Some of them require minor cosmetic touches. I always tell the recipient that the painting is in a recycled frame.

All in all, I think this is a winning concept from a conservation of resources point of view. It's also economically appealing and fun for people who like bargain hunting.

[Jody Cramer](#) is an artist and writer. She is the author of [An Excellent Life](#).



Kid Stuff— Organizing Art Supplies

In our house, we have a cabinet in the dining room set aside for arts and crafts supplies. Ok, as I write this, I realize that we have quite a few locations for storing art stuff.

My daughter has an art basket in her room filled with the materials she uses most often. The basket is a neat and attractive way to store art supplies and it is so readily accessible. The infrequently used craft projects and materials have found a home on a shelf in her closet.

Here are two articles I found at OnlineOrganizing.com:

[Creating a Children's Craft Corner](#)
by Lillian Vernon

[Conquering Kids Clutter](#)
by Debbie Williams



The [Buddha Series](#) and several of the [Window Series](#) are now showing at the [Institute of Transpersonal Psychology](#) in Palo Alto until March 15th 2008.



Now Showing

Several of my paintings are hanging at [The Spa at Pajaro Dunes](#).



[One of the E-Card Choices](#)

*Look for this in the next issue of
The Shared Easel
June 2008*

Family Time

- ◆ Spending Time with Family
- ◆ Family Activities
- ◆ Framing Tips, Books and More

What does your family do to spend quality time together?

[E-mail](#) your answer to me and it may be included in the June issue of the [Shared Easel](#).

Check out all the products available at the [online stores](#).

CHECK OUT THE [GALLERIES](#), [STORES](#), AND [E-CARDS](#)

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