On Making Botanical Art: Dealing with the Fear

The First in an Occasional Series Devoted to Critical Aspects of Becoming a Botanical Artist

Beginning Sept. 12, Six Tuesday Evenings from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.: An Overview and Discussion Led by Scott Stapleton of the Book

*Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking*

By David Bayles & Ted Orland

Making botanical art is an inherently intimidating enterprise. You’re inspired by the stunning examples made by those who have gone before you. They appear to have been made, some of them, at any rate, by mortals like yourself. But the medium is so much harder to master than you had imagined. And your first best efforts fail to match what your mind’s eye can see so clearly. And you begin to think, Well, maybe not. Not me. I’m just not cut out to be a botanical artist.

The authors of *Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils (and Rewards) of Artmaking* understand perfectly. They’ve been teaching students like yourself for many years. And their book is an inspiring, instructive, and often funny guide to seeing your way past these and many other traps. Even better, their overall message – that everything you need to become the artist that you are is readily at hand, *it’s in the work itself!* – is just what you need to make it through to the botanical promised land.

This series is a must for every would-be botanical artist. And for those who are gaining confidence, or even wise in the ways of their art, it’s an opportunity to reflect on and share what we have all learned about making this intimidating art.

**No preparation necessary!**

By all means, read the relevant chapters ahead of time if you’ve got the time. They’re great. But they’re not required. They’ll be summarized each evening and you’ll get a useful handout as well to refer to.

**Don’t feel you have to attend every session.**

Registration is not required. Simply show up for the topics that interest you. Period.

**And you don’t have to pay a dime.**

We believe so strongly in the importance of this offering that we want everyone to benefit.

The complete list of topics is:

Topics in the Series “On Making Botanical Art: Dealing with the Fear”

With a Few Quotable Quotes to, as It Were, *Draw You In* Taken from the book *Art & Fear*, by David Bayles and Ted Orland Available as a free download at

<https://artistryinaction.files.wordpress.com/2016/03/david_bayles_ted_orland_art_and_fear.pdf>

**Sept. 12: “The Nature of the Problem” and “Art & Fear”**

“Today artwork does not emerge from a secure common ground: the bison on the wall is someone else’s magic. Making art now means working in the face

of uncertainty.” “Most artists don’t daydream about making great art—they daydream about *having made* great art.

**Sept. 19: “Fears About Yourself”**

“It’s easy to imagine that *real* artists know what they’re doing, and that

they—unlike you—are entitled to feel good about themselves and their art.”

**Sept. 26: “Fears About Others” and “Finding Your Work”**

“What is sometimes needed is simply an insulating period, a gap of pure time between the making of your art, and the time when you share it with outsiders.” “Look at your work and it tells you how it is when you hold back or when you embrace. When you are lazy, your art is lazy; when you hold back, it holds back; when you hesitate, it stands there staring, hands in its pockets. But when you commit, it comes on like blazes.”

**Oct. 3: “The Outside World”**

“What makes competition in the arts a slippery issue is simply that there’s rarely any consensus about what your best work is.”

**Oct. 17: “The Academic World”**

“The chances are (statistically speaking) that if you’re an artist, you’re also a student. That says something very encouraging about the desire to learn art— and something very ominous about the attrition rate of those who try. There is, after all, a deadly corollary: most people stop making art when they stop being students.”

**Oct. 24: “Conceptual Worlds” and “The Human Voice”**

“Compared to other challenges, the ultimate shortcoming of

technical problems is not that they’re hard, but that they’re easy.”

“Your art does not arrive miraculously from the darkness, but is made uneventfully in the light.”