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Visual GOF Finalist 2003

ARTISTIC RESPONSE

"Five hundred a year stands for the power to contemplate... a lock on the door means the power to think for oneself."

Most artists today work two jobs. One affords them the ability to do the other which is making art. This can become quite a balancing act at its best or struggle at its worst. I feel as if I have felt both sides of this situation. There are some times when I have felt that I have attained a balance between my job and my art and during those periods it is definitely easier to think, look at things, make decisions, etc.

Times of struggle bring out a different type of creativity. Sometimes I'm working at my job to the point where there is no time to think about art. At other times I have time to think but very little money to buy materials. These constraints sometimes can be interesting and in many instances can open up a lot of new possibilities....

The second part of this quote feels a little more antiquated. I don't think an artist has to have a metaphorical lock on the door to make art or have an idea. It's a more open experience and doesn't have to be bottled up. I think in the past probably it was really important to have one space in which to work and think, and it was probably less of a shared experience. Today the process of thinking and making has opened up significantly. There is an art community and it is easy to have a peer group within this network. My studio space adjoins with another artist and my entire block alone is filled with artist studios. We work around each other, get feedback on our work, learn from and influence each other. It is not a lonely experience. It is one that is filled with support....

The days where an artist works alone in a room have changed. An artist still needs the power to think for him or herself, of course, but a "lock on the door" does not prove helpful anymore. But an unlocked door provides endless possibilities to artists. Possibilities that were not available to artists in the past. I feel lucky to be an artist in this time.
