



Starting Your Residency With A Good Book

Annotated Resources

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Inviting A Residency Mentor

Most artists have favorite books that inspire them, and we have some ourselves! A foundation of a good studio practice is finding a good book to read and inspire you in this journey. This is not an exhaustive list, but these are some of our favorites. Choose one that calls out to you and take it along in your residency. Or, better yet, go to your own bookshelf and select a book that speaks to you.

Artists, Guides and Art Mentors

[Your Mythic Journey: Finding Meaning in Your Life Through Writing and Storytelling](#), Sam Keen & Anne Valley-Fox. Jeremy P. Tarcher, Inc. Los Angeles, 1973. *(This book provides a comprehensive way to discover something about the myths that we each live by. You could use this book alone for a year's worth of writing/journaling prompts.)*

[Creative Strength Training: Prompts, Exercises and Personal Stories for Encouraging Artistic Genius](#). Jane Dunnewold, North Light Books, Cincinnati, Ohio 2016. *(Designed and written by a fiber artist for visual artists, this book has art exercises that help the reader to connect with their own story and to other artists with related stories. Unlike most books in this genre, this one is filled with art.)*

[Trust the Process: An Artist's Guide to Letting Go](#). Shaun McNiff, Shambhala, Boston & London. 1998. *(If you choose only one book to read, this is the one I recommend because it provides a foundation for the work of art making as a process for our own and the world's spiritual healing.)*

[No More Secondhand Art: Awakening the Artist Within](#). Peter London. Shambhala, Boston & London. 2013. *(This is a staple on the bookshelf for any artist who is looking to be authentic. There are twelve "encounters" that are self-directed art experiences with follow up reflection questions that are powerful enough to lead you in a new artistic direction.)*

[Art & Fear: Observations on the Perils \(And Rewards\) of Artmaking.](#) David Bayles, Ted Orland. Image Continuum Press, 1st edition. 2001. *(Written by working artists, this book speaks to how art is made and why it sometimes doesn't. We all want to be the next Picasso. This book will help you appreciate the beauty and delight of making ordinary art.)*

[The Creative Habit, Learn It and Use It for Life.](#) Twyla Tharp. Simon and Schuster. New York, 2003. *(Twyla Tharp dispels the myth that creating great art is somehow magic. It is not. We have all heard the phrase, "Just show up in your studio." Twyla Tharp uses story and a lifetime of creating to break down the steps of what that phrase actually means! This is one of the most highlighted books in my personal library. Highly recommended.*

[Learning By Heart, Teachings to Free the Creative Spirit.](#) Jan Steward and Corita Kent. Alworth Press. New York. *(Based on the unconventional instruction of Sr. Corita Kent at Immaculate Heart University and the free spirit of her own work, this book is both a guide to becoming a free creative spirit and a lesson plan to getting there. "We can all talk, we can all write, and if the blocks are removed, we can all draw and paint and make things" is the core truth of the book and life as a creative.*

[Art As A Way, A Return to The Spiritual Roots.](#) Frederick Franck. Crossroads. New York, 1981. *(Written and illustrated by hand, Frederick Frank, also the author of **The Zen of Seeing**, speaks to the aesthetic of art and art making. He calls us to see the beauty around us, and if we dare, to become engaged with that beauty in our drawings and paintings.*