

What is Doodle Art

by Gail McNaughton, February 20, 2011 ©

Doodle Art for me is a whimsical expression of my deep connectedness with spirit. It is the imaginative side of my being. It is as if my soul is coming out to play and taking me away from the stress and drama of life. It is the child within who wants to draw and colour and paint. It is mindless meditation. It is a way for me of visually thinking and taking me beyond the linear world of the written word. It helps me capture creative bursts in the midnight madness when I wake at 3 a.m. to draw and write. It is a way for me to be “original” at any hour of the day for I draw everywhere and anywhere. Through Doodle Art, I am one with the innermost spark of imagination that God planted in my seed of being. Doodling makes me one with the universe and is my bridge between heaven and earth.

The repetitive symbols of hearts, flowers, animals, cartoons, gratitude symbols, stars, angels and fairies represent to me that my artwork is all about healing the planet and reinforcing world peace through my own energy. It is the emotional “I” in form and colour.

If you would like to try your hand at Doodle Art, spend time with pen and paper, be present in the moment, and go with the flow. Meditation, praying, nature walks, feelings of gratitude, love and peace will still your ego and allow creativity. Many years ago, I took a course called Rainbow Centering in which you meditate using the colours of the rainbow while listening to a tape. There was a short version and a long version, but I only used the short one. Sometimes I cried, laughed or rested during the process of listening. I found this exercise highly effective and could actually see the colours. To this day, I dream in colour. I learned that not everyone dreams in colour and I realized what a lovely gift I have been given.

The process of life is lived from the inside out. Repetitiveness of our actions makes us more focused without realizing that our mindless doodling is causing action and reordering in the universe. 10% effort by us makes 90% effort by the universe to follow the laws of the universe. Doodling is doing soul work at the unconscious level and it helps dissolve the mind blocks and mind friction of day-to-day living. It is said that you eat the fruit of your own tree, so you might as well grow a happy, healthy tree with your internal resources.

Some suggestions to help you expand and grow are to:

- . Make a gratitude list
- . Make a list of what limits or contracts you
- . Celebrate and make a list of what expands you

The heart is the centre of consciousness within your body so when you put your self into your heart, events will happen in a serendipitous way. When the heart is open, so is a deep level of consciousness where you can dip into the river of opportunity and the writing and art brought forth are the ripe fruit of your tree.

The vision you invoke in the creativity of your doodles will be a testimony to your life's purpose. As a rosebud opens, the beauty, talent and essence unfold to create a better world. When you are the best you can be, you open the space for others to be the best that they can be. Remember, your life is the size of your vision so when you get a chance, make those doodles life-sized and if you need to, use a magnifying glass to see them bigger.

Value "the void" – the space between words and thoughts and the silence of the world – to find the part of the universe that wants to talk to you in signs, symbols, pictures and numbers. This "letting go" galvanizes change... so be it.

Your Dreams Are a Good Source of Inspiration

Lucid Dreams I believe are the source of my inspiration. It is the process of dreaming while knowing (being aware) that you are dreaming. This has become a skill that I am able to tap into. I am able to see during this period of time. Sometimes I catch myself laughing for I literally see fantasy. I am also able to utilize my own doodles in a video type of situation with the camera being my mind. I feel that I am at the movies. Unfortunately the doodle characters move too quickly – or at least I cannot catch up to them – so I don't get a sense of the ultimate story they are portraying. They are in bright colours and I am always amazed that I am creating them. Sometimes specific ideas are presented to me. Sometimes animals come to me. This meditative time is very important to my ability to have the resources to doodle. I am able to relay to others what I am seeing while in this lucid state, but primarily it takes place when I am resting in bed.

The wake-initiated lucid dream occurs when "the sleeper enters [REM](#) sleep with unbroken [self-awareness](#) directly from the [waking state](#)". There are many techniques aimed at entering a WILD. The key to these techniques is recognizing the [hypnologic](#) stage, which is within the border of being awake and being [asleep](#). If a person is successful in staying aware while this stage occurs, that person will eventually enter the dream state while being fully aware that it is a dream.

There are key times when this state is best entered. While success at normal bedtime after having been awake all day is difficult, it is relatively easy after sleeping for 3–7 hours or in the afternoon during a nap. Techniques for inducing WILDs abound. Dreamers may count, envision themselves climbing or descending stairs, chant to themselves, control their breathing, count their breaths to keep their thoughts from drifting, concentrate on relaxing their body from their toes to their head, or allow images to flow through their "mind's eye" and envision themselves jumping into the image to maintain concentration and keep their mind awake, while still being calm enough to let their bodies sleep.

During the actual transition into the dream state, dreamers are likely to experience [sleep paralysis](#), including rapid vibration, a sequence of loud sounds, and a feeling of twirling into another state of body awareness, or of "drifting off into another dimension", or like passing the interface between water into air, face front, body first, or the gradual sharpening and becoming "real" of images or scenes they are thinking of and trying to visualize gradually, which they can actually "see", instead of the indefinite sensations they feel when trying to imagine something while wide awake.

It Is All About the Flow

My inspiration comes from many sources and at the present time includes our new dog, Fleecy and two kittens, Poppy and Panda Bear. Each is a Doodle Art character. These doodles have carried through to a tattoo I have on my back, rug hooking and punch-needle designs, as well as painting and making photo art greeting cards, and other products like T-shirts and mouse pads, so it is all encompassing in my life. The tattoo was all about expressing who I am on the outside. I created it on the inside, drew it on paper, and then had a tattoo artist use my pattern to create this art on my back.

I've utilized my characters to help tell a story but I never know what the end result is going to be when I start – and that is the magic of the process. My pen has wings and an hour later I have a drawing. I draw on vacation, on planes, on trains, in reception areas waiting for appointments, waiting for my car to be fixed, on the beach, in the car, and wherever I feel that I can. I mainly draw 8½" by 11" sizes and all art is vertical and not horizontal. Each piece goes into a binder in chronological order so I have all of my artwork right from the beginning of this endeavour. In February, 2012, I will have created Doodle Art for 5 years, and I have over 100 selected Doodle Art pieces on my website for the public to enjoy.

The character, Mommy-Millie Bear is my Mother personified. I have felt alone many times in my life but especially around the time that my Mom was in her 90's. She had both legs amputated over a 10-year period and was in and out of hospitals and moved from her apartment to a retirement home and finally to a long-term-care facility. We also had friends who were in their late 80's. My mother-in-law had also moved to a long-term-care facility. I was grieving, knowing all these wonderful people would pass away. I created my cartoon characters as family and they used to make me feel happy, especially when I was drawing them and later colouring them in. They would never leave me, I often said to myself. I took enlarged and laminated doodle art to my Mom when visiting her and she had a pole light where I hung my art from the heart. She became my biggest fan and had her own private art exhibition. Having Mommy-Millie Bear keeps my Mom in my life as the bear has always been a totem to me. I also discovered that Mommy-Millie Bear represented all Mothers who had passed away and was there for all daughters and sons as a totem. This made me feel good that I could share my Mommy-Millie Bear with others.

Flowercat™ is my original character and came to me after the experience of watching an angel take my lost cat (missing cremated cat remains), who had died and was cremated,

to be housed in a teapot. The angel led me through this experience and I've written about it in my book, *Angel Witness*. She is the basis for the creation of all my art. I also wrote a poem about how she was born and drew some art around it. She has managed to remain in my psyche as she is eternally with me. She has enhanced my life and continues to share her story with me through the animal kingdom, my doodle animals that materialize and my pets, who live with us.

Choco-Cat came to the forefront after my husband, Bob and I attended a chocolate seminar. Choco-Cat wanted a birthday to bring us sweetness in life. My husband really likes caramel but I love chocolate and especially dark, rich healthy chocolate.

Chili-Chikka is a southern-style bird with peacock feathers and was born out of Mexican flavour. Iris Eye-Lash has eyes on her peacock feathers and her body is one big eye. She came to be while we were travelling in Scandinavia.

Sally Spider comes forth as Bob and I try to decide who is the spider and who is the fly in our relationship. She is there as comic relief with big hair and big eyes – “all the better to see you with”. She is very stylish with a coat of many colours and fits in everywhere. She is a very good listener.

Heart Cat says it all. She has a wide and open heart to love everyone and she has a heart shaped head but cat ears so she cannot be mistaken with her long whiskers. She often wears trendy colours.

Sammy the Snake is a very spiritual character as the sign of the snake has been with me a long time, emanating from a past-life experience of being bitten by a snake and dying, and also stoning a snake and roasting it over a fire when I was little. Snake energy has led me into the healing realm. Sammy is a very healthy and happy snake who has magical powers.

Lava Loo came to me while my husband and I were on an Angel Practitioner's course in Hawaii. I knew that a character was trying to come forth but it hadn't materialized until we were ready to board the plane to come home. I went to the washroom and realized the character should be called Lava Loo. I had a good laugh and then when I got on board the plane, I drew her.

Ollie the Owl came to me after visiting an artist, Kelly Dodge, who introduced me to her pet blue jay and then showed me a photo of an owl that she fed out of her hands. We also purchased one of her paintings, Lady Grey, which is an owl, and hangs in our cottage. I got in the car and drew Ollie right then and there.

Eli The Eagle came about to represent Bob, my husband. He soars like Bob and has the characteristics of bravery, humility and gregariousness. He has the ability to fly anywhere he wants but mostly presents himself in situations to look good sitting on trees, flowers or on people.

There are other characters and they are spokespeople. I can speak through them in a non-threatening way. They are there with peaceful messages of hope, joy, love and gratitude

The angels and mermaids come forth as they drift through my mind and when a heart is put behind a figure you know that an angel is present – because looking from the front, the heart becomes wings. I often draw the angel Elisha, and when Angel is in human form she is Angelica.

Our cat, Poppy, was named for a Remembrance Day poppy. My parents both died in November – my Dad on Remembrance Day and my Mom two days after her birthday. We also had to put our 17-year-old Main Coon cat, Walley, to sleep at the beginning of the month, so Poppy represents these lovely memories all wrapped into one character. Our other cat, Panda Bear, resembled a panda that Bob and I saw at the Atlanta Zoo. She has such a lovely even disposition and we feel she mothers us.

What To Doodle

I draw the same symbols over and over again, but over the years, I've also experimented with new shapes. I always include hearts, flowers, cartoons, angels, fairies, mermaids and the gratitude symbol. This is what I feel most comfortable drawing. I have one rule that I've followed right from the beginning and that is: with doodling there are no mistakes. In all the time I've doodled, I've perhaps thrown away two sheets of paper that I started something on and then didn't like or the paper got wet. If something needs to be changed, or I have drawn a line too far, or whatever it may be, I just incorporate it into the drawing. This to me is real success. I am not a perfectionist as that is not what my art is all about. It just "is" the way that it is supposed to be. I am not a fine artist. There is structure and I feel that my artwork is balanced on the paper, but this is because practice makes perfect, if you want to call it that. You get very used to your own style. I just "go for it" and draw what comes to me. I have colleagues who cannot get started as their "masterpiece" has to be all planned out. When I am designing a rug hooking Doodle Art, I do it the same way. I draw on the burlap and then go to my stash of wool and pick out colours that might work and then just start somewhere. The colour "speaks" to me along the way and the hooking gets done using this method. Being a visual person, and in need of using primary colours to intensify things, I am happy with my belief that the characters want to be boldly introduced to be memorable, yet the Angels and Fairies often are softer and more iridescent.

How I Exhibit My Doodle Art

My Doodle Art is exhibited on my website. I have also exhibited in the St. Thomas Library, on the art wall of our local MP's office, in the Santa Claus Parade, in stores on the photo art greeting cards of Doodle Art I make, in the homes of friends, family and colleagues, and during a Tour of Gardens when our home was on the tour. I hung the

art in our gigantic Blue Spruce tree. I also make enlargements for people and they are displayed in their offices and homes. Small 4" x 6" photos are put into frames and hung on walls. I hope to have an Art From The Heart show in 2012 to celebrate 5 years of creating Doodle Art.

My Artwork Is My Personality

My Doodle Art is very busy – there is little or no white space. This is the nature of who I am. I am a very busy person and many things are transpiring at the same time, so I believe this is reflected in my artwork. It is lively and colourful and “in your face” with bold frankness. But it is very calming to do. It is fantasy personified and self-expression of the fantasy artist that I am. My art often remains in bed with me, and I go to sleep with it at my side until my husband comes to bed and has to move it off his side. My art is given to him after completion and is put in his mailbox in the kitchen so he is the first person to see it. I now write poetry that goes along with the Doodle Art and I share it willingly with friends and colleagues. I’ve been a poet since I was 16 and all my poems are chronologically stored. Doodle Art is an added bonus to combine with my poems. I just love doing special art for all the festive seasons and we use my artwork for our Christmas cards and other celebrations like Valentine’s Day, Easter, and Thanksgiving. A highlight was creating Doodle Art for my husband’s 60th birthday that was made into 6-foot panels to be showcased at his party. His party theme was “60 Scoops & Counting” so ice cream was the theme in the panels. On top of that, Forest City Image Centre helped me put together a slide show of the Doodle Art and my husband eating ice cream cones, as I have collected quite a stash of photos of him doing this. Now I join him and ice cream is always a staple in our house.

Tips for Artists

Anybody can create Doodle Art. I like to use a medium, thick-nibbled pen in black or blue and that is my drawing tool. I use Xerox paper, which is plentiful but have also used napkins, envelopes, paper tablecloths at restaurants, placemats and scrap paper. When I colour in the Doodle Art, I use paint pens and brushes or magic markers. I particularly like luminous colours (magic markers) and have also tried glitter which makes the originals sparkly. (You just squeeze the glitter on where you want it and let it dry for a couple of hours.) I also have markers that you can mix and match, and subtract or add colour, which gives an interesting effect. I put all my finished art through the photo scanner, colour correct it, size it, name it and file it in a folder called “Doodle Art”. I also keep a book of samples. I make art cards of the Doodle Art and have stock cards that I use with my logo on the back. I have other cards that have my portrait and a message on the back. These I have made up by the Printer.

My tip to you is to try things out and get a feel for things that are comfortable. When we go on vacation, I make books of the art done on the trip and keep them with the photo albums I construct. I designed a colouring book that has uncoloured doodle art in it and it’s gone to third world countries. I appreciate the sponsors who contributed to my

project. All my original Doodle Art is stored chronologically in large black binders so I can trace the artwork right back to the beginning. I must say that I've tried new things along the way, and added new characters, but the artwork always looks the same, so I know that it is how I am to express myself.

Another tip is not to compare yourself to anybody else. I have met many different artists and we all express ourselves differently. At one point I didn't even call myself an artist but I do now, for how could you not be an artist and draw (almost) every day. The late artist, Paul Schleusner, who was a friend of mine, told me that he painted every day. You cannot perfect things for yourself if you just dabble in it once in awhile. Once you see yourself doing this over and over again – like a compulsion – you will know that you are an artist.

My sister got me started as an artist, when I was in my late teens, drawing giant bugs. I would draw the bug and then do dots inside the lines. I had a whole wall of bugs that were framed. I also made bread dough baskets, stained glass, knitted, crocheted, built willow furniture, created paper mache objects, and when I discovered rug hooking, I was hooked, so to speak. That is my other passion and I design my own patterns using my doodles as the basis. Antique rug hooking is an old and forgiving art because if you don't like what you've created, you just pull out the wool and rethink the colour and design. It allows me to create as I go and I like to be very spontaneous.

A highlight for me was taking an Art From The Heart program at Serenity House in St. Thomas. Although I wasn't suffering from a life-threatening situation, I was going through a grieving period. I was introduced to several different kinds of art, but it was the painting that I identified with. So, my hearts, flowers, and Mommy-Millie Bear got painted. I also painted a banner which hung in downtown St. Thomas in the Banner Art program, and was able to buy it at the end of the season. It now hangs in my home. My sister helped me design it, using her computer program to finalize the design from my original drawings. She also did this for art in my book, *To Have a Cup of Tea With a Cat & Other Cat Tails*. My Doodle Art has stretched to be included in my latest book on angels, *Angel Witness*, and some of the paintings mentioned above are in the book as well.

All in all, just “do something” instead of “nothing” and soon you'll be expressing yourself using your own style. Your doodling will bring out the best in you and add to the collective spirit of healing the world.