

EXPLORING

COLOUR

“THERE ARE NO
MISTAKES.

WHAT HAPPENS DURING
THE PROCESS OF MAKING
SOMETHING IS SACRED
AND ORGANIC”

COLOUR IS ALL AROUND US

AFFECTING US, VIBRATING, AND YET WE CAN BE NUMBLY UNAWARE

It is perhaps one of the most expressive of our choices in our environment.

We choose to paint a wall a certain colour knowing that the sun will brighten it or the shadows of the evening give it depth.

Sometimes we play safe and make sure that all our walls are neutral!

(And our lives?)

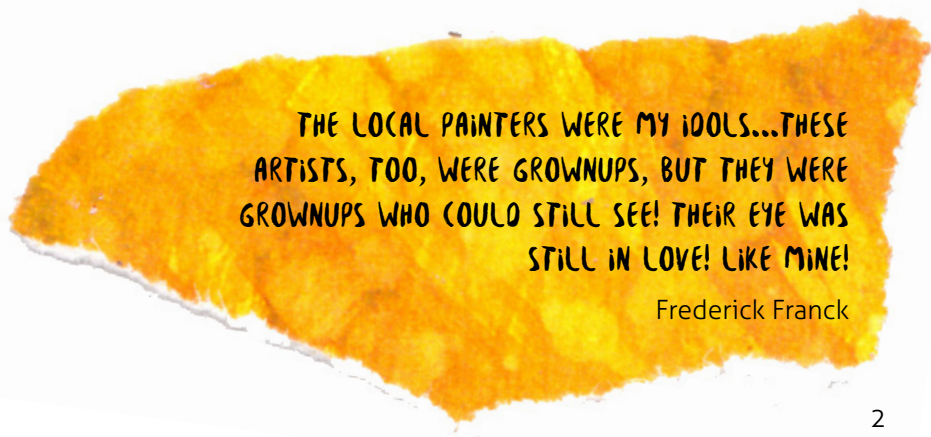
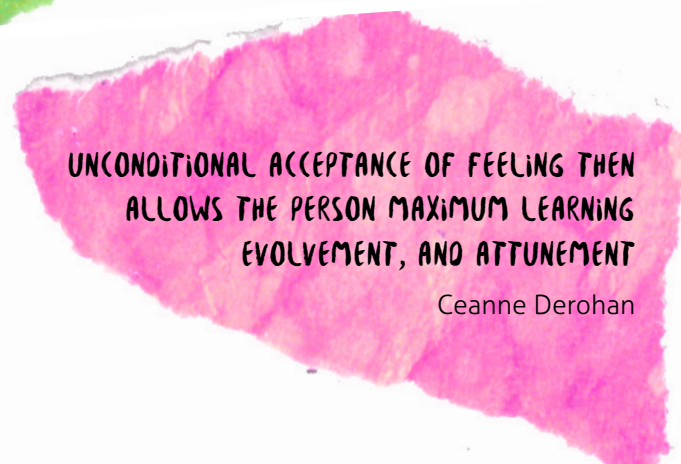
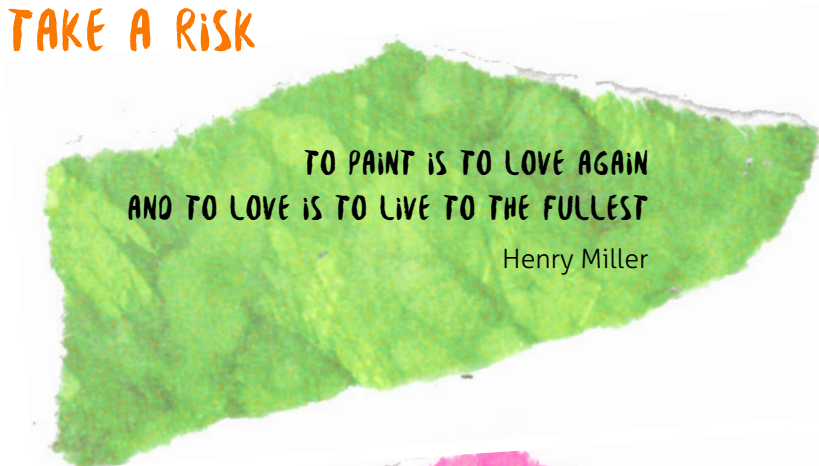
SO LET'S GO STRAIGHT IN AND TAKE A RISK

Take some paper
some strongly coloured paint
some water and a good thick brush

Now just see what happens
as you apply as much paint
as you can to the paper

Work as large as you can
Enjoy the *field of colour*
Lose yourself in it
What moods does it evoke?
What are you expressing about yourself
your likes and dislikes?

Try out colour combinations
that you would not try on your wall
or in your clothes
Take risks



AND THE GOLDEN BEES WERE MAKING WHITE COMBS
AND SWEET HONEY FROM MY OLD FAILURES"

A. Machado, translated by Robert Bly in *The Rag and Bone Shop of the Heart*

WHEN YOU START A PAINTING, IT IS
SOMEWHAT OUTSIDE YOU. AT THE
CONCLUSION, YOU SEEM TO MOVE INSIDE
THE PAINTING

Fernando Botero

ENJOY YOUR DISCOVERIES

Notice how colours that harmonize
like yellows tipped with blue
turning to shades of green,
can be soothing

Choosing colours that are
complementary

- like blues with oranges -
can be energising and surprising.

Everything works in some way, has some effect.
Nothing is a mistake in and of itself. There is always
an experience and a learning in it,
disturbing or otherwise.

Try letting pieces dry and later working again
on them

or even tearing up paintings and
collaging them together

to build up a rich surface of pure
colour

THE SUBJECT MATTER IS THE COLOUR

AND YOUR EXPLORATION OF IT

AND RESPONSE
TO IT

THE UNFOLDING OF THE UNEXPECTED
BECOMES THE ENERGY THAT DRIVES YOU.
YOU DISCOVER HOW THIRSTY YOU ARE FOR
EXPLORATION WITHOUT ANALYSIS. YOU
FEEL STRANGELY AT HOME IN A PLACE
YOU CAN'T DEFINE. YOU ARE TRULY
CREATING.

Michell Cassout and Stewart Cubley

BEING AWARE

of how we and other people use and choose colours
- and how on different days it expresses different
moods - helps us to connect with others

BECOME AWARE

of what you choose to wear,
what flowers you choose to have in your garden or room
and how you express a mood through your choice of colour
Perhaps the colours you have chosen not only affect yourself but others too.

Try being surprising to yourself.
Try wearing something you find daring.
Try arranging objects on a shelf to draw attention
to their beautiful colours. Try talking about your
ideas with other people and exchanging views on
different colours with them.

GIVE YOURSELF

time to explore colour. Enjoy painting. Spend longer
than you planned on this. Get used to doing something
without a specific outcome, no specific pressure to see
where it leads you.

At the heart of all creativity is a willingness to let go and play - and
risk the unknown.

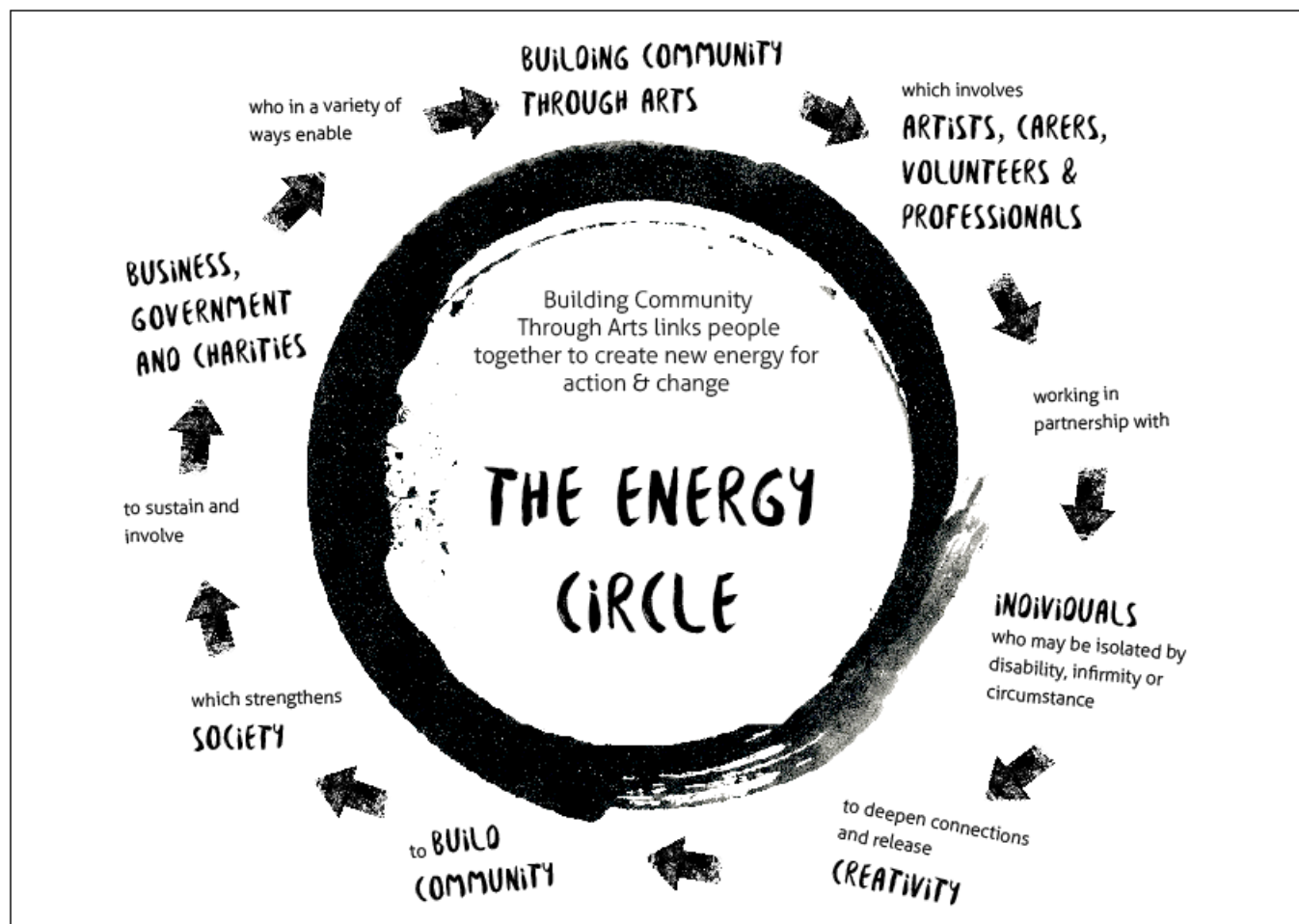
NOTHING NEW CAN BE
CREATED WITHOUT THIS
“CHAOS”

I TRY TO APPLY COLORS
LIKE WORDS THAT SHAPE
POEMS, LIKE NOTES THAT
SHAPE MUSIC

Joan Miro

ABOUT BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH ARTS

Building Community Through Arts (BCA) was developed as part of Kew Studio's outreach work in a series of projects from 1993 – 2002. Toolkits and programmes have been recently updated and are presented as a set of free tools for use by anyone wanting to develop a community using arts workshops and encounters. Visit kewstudio.org/explore-creativity/.



REFERENCES & CREDITS

All the quotes, with the exception of Robert Bly's translation of Machado, are taken from *The Vein of Gold: a journey to your creative heart* by Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*. It is a Tarcher/Putnam book, published by G.P. Putnam's Sons, New York.