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Art studios: fitting the practical and creative needs for the artist

Finished artworks are generally appealing to viewers because they are just that – finished. The paint has dried or the charcoal or pencils have finalized their final strokes and people see a completed project. But the artwork wasn't always in such fine shape. In the beginning the painting or sculpture or drawing was most likely unrecognizable. It may have taken the artist days, weeks, months, even years to reach their final stage: the end product, or more directly, the artwork.

Artists have different steps in the process to reach that end point. Some even have superstitious patterns that they go through in order to start a project, much like a baseball player may have a distinct routine he goes through before he goes up to bat. Often the artist even requires a special space to work in in order to get his artwork started and completed. Usually this space is his art studio, which is located in his home or in an old, renovated warehouse designed specifically for cost-frugal artists. The art studio fits his or her needs, or the artist would not be there. He would move on to a new situation.

Over the years, I have been in many art studios as an arts reporter/editor. Each studio reflects the artist and the image that this artist wants to portray. There have been spotless, well-arranged studios that I have been invited into. There have been messy, creative spaces that I have had the pleasure to view. There have been large, multi-roomed studios. There have been small, one-room places. There have been studios with live-in lofts and work spaces. There have been places designed just for work. There have been arts studios in attics, in dens, in garages. An art studio sometimes is nomadic, as the artist may simply need a pen and/or pencil and paper to work with and accomplishes his creations on the go. Why, I even met one artist who enjoys just pen and ink drawing while going to and from work while sitting on a bench on a subway. Yes, in a sense, an artist studio may be situated wherever the artist may find a niche for himself.

It's typical for a professional artist to look for low-rent, cost-effective areas to live. Around the Boston area, Somerville (Mad Oyster Studios, Vernon Street Studios, etc.), South Boston (Fort Point Arts Community), Waltham (Waltham Mills Artists Association), and - a little further away - Maynard (Artspace Maynard) are cities that have communities where artists may find work spaces either live-in or simply work places. Typically, artists' buildings are developed in areas that are in need of revitalization. As seen in Somerville and Fort Point, the artists often work to improve their home city's surroundings. Unfortunately, the improvements may reach the point where rents rise and the city becomes eventually gentrified. Unless there is a cap on the rents of the artists' studios, the artists may have to once again move on to areas that are not so developed. And the process repeats itself.

What follows in this article are some photos of artists' studios that I have taken as the arts editor/reporter at *Wilderness House Literary Review* from Spring 2012 through Winter 2014. We hope you enjoy them!



In Aparna Agrawal's art studio, Somerville, MA 2012.



Aparna Agrawal putting together pieces of her Trike Puzzle in her Somerville art studio, 2012.

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In Aparna Agrawal's art studio, Somerville, 2012.

'The Trike Puzzle'
installation
located in Aparna
Agrawal's art
studio, Somerville,
2012.



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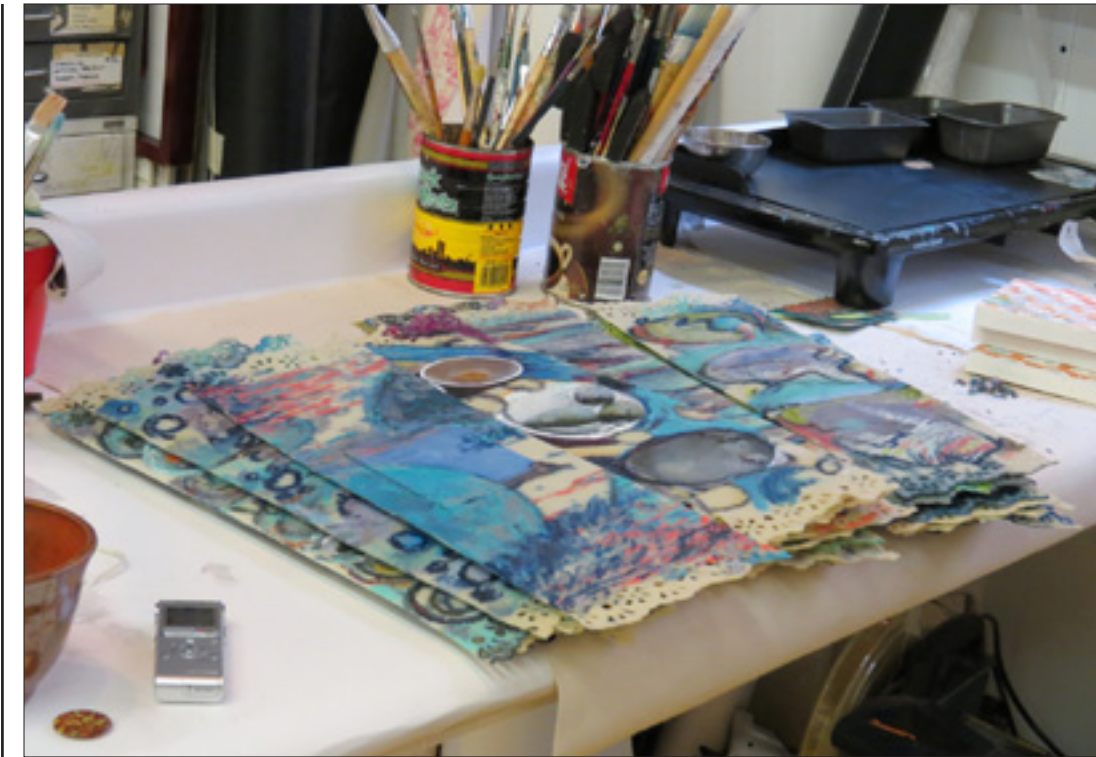


In David Foss's art studio, which is in his home, Braintree, 2012.



In Denise Malis's art studio, Somerville, 2013.

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In Denise Malis's art studio, Somerville, 2013.



Denise Malis sits at her art desk, in her art studio, Somerville, 2013.



Inside Jen Grassl's art studio, Fort Point, 2012.



Some artworks by Jen Grassl found inside her art studio, Fort Point, 2012.



In Dean Nimmer's art studio which is in an old building, Western Massachusetts, 2008. [Photo for NewsBlaze.com]



Dean Nimmer poses for a photo in his art studio, Western Massachusetts, 2008. [Photo for NewsBlaze.com]

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Inside Robert "Bobby" Gallagher's home basement's art studio, Northwest of Boston, 2013.



Robert Gallagher's outdoor art studio, Northwest of Boston, 2013.



Inside Michael B. Wilson's live-in art studio in an artists' community building, Waltham, 2014.



Waltham's Michael B. Wilson in his live-in art studio space, inside an artists' community building, 2014.



Boston's Swedish Weaver Susan Cheever at her favorite loom at Vav Stuga in Shelburne Falls, Maine, 2014. [Photo by Becky Ashendon.]