

Fun Art Journaling

by Zura Ledbetter

Journaling is the most powerful tool I know of

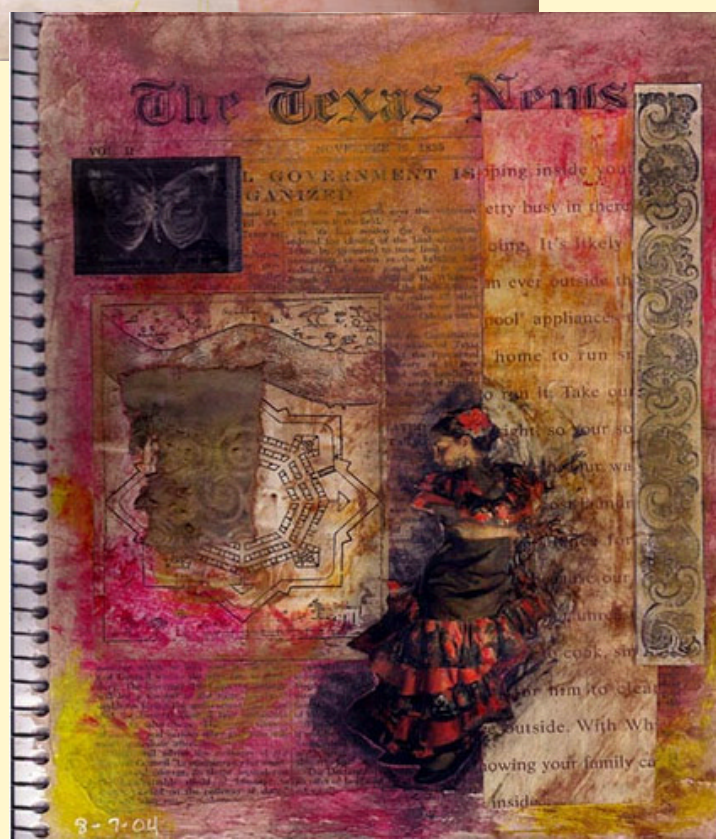
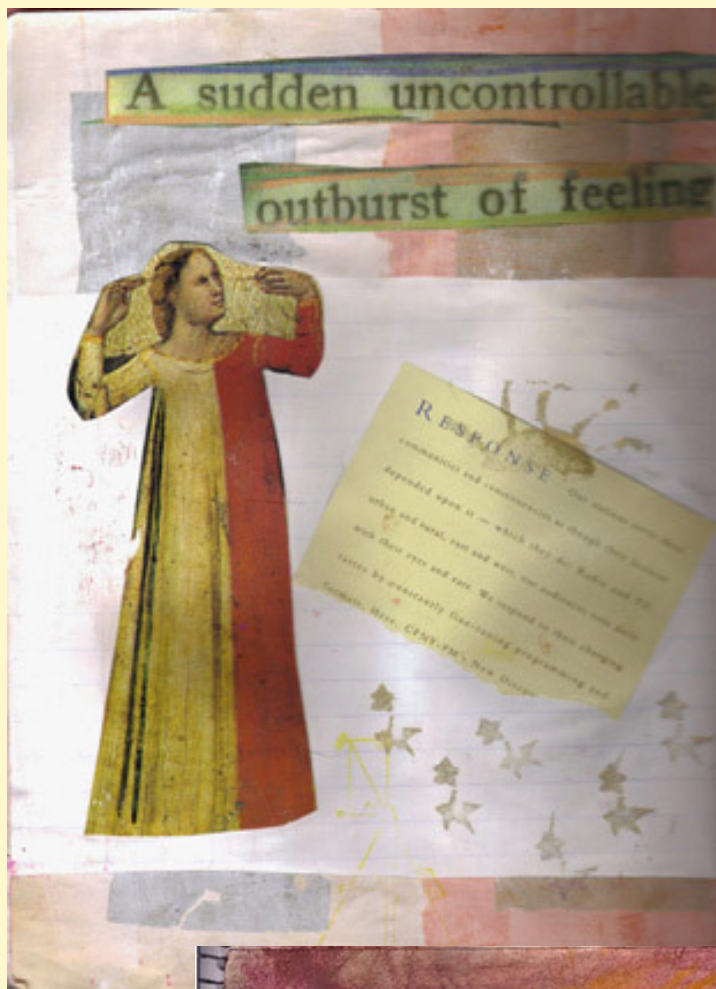
all journal pages by
Zura Ledbetter

to reach deep into yourself and come up with answers to many of life's problems. I have journaled for many years and it has never failed to help me make decisions, discover what's "really" bothering me, or trace the steps I made in a wrong direction.

But when I discovered combining art and journaling, I was in heaven! For visual people, adding visual elements to the journal page makes it much easier to express ourselves. Sometimes we don't know the words to express our feelings. And sometimes our words are very mundane. So adding sketches, collages, or just the junk mail from the day can be just the punch we need to put onto our journal page.

Searching for art journaling on the internet, one finds many beautiful works of art put in journal form. Many artists use this format for sharing work with one another. It keeps the art in one book so that it may be mailed and passed from one to another. It is apparent when looking at this type of art that it wasn't created in just a few moments.

I prefer to work in my journal in a more spontaneous way. Taking whatever scraps I've collected from my day that indicate what that day was about can create some pleasant journal pages. Or maybe I want to scour my magazine stash for images that reflect what I want to impart. At times I'll paint in my journal or sketch a few scenes from the day. Whatever medium I use, it is



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just to record that day of my life. Or to work through something that is puzzling me. It is not to produce art that will be submitted for critique or reward.

So, how can you really journal and do art at the same time? I have found that many artists keep two or more journals. They keep one that they put their most private thoughts in, and

another where they do art. Why not do that art for yourself? I think a journal is a very sacred thing that deserves the best. If you do art, why not do it along with the writing you do in your journal? Some people keep a gratitude journal, a dream journal, a journal of quotations or a poetry journal. Why not keep all that in one journal? I love keeping everything in my journal. When I look back at my journals from years passed, I can see everything I was about at the time. I see where I went, what I did, what my feelings were. I can also see what I bought, what I was reading and what held my interest at the time. If I had separated these things into different journals, I'd get a sliced-up view, not the whole picture of who I was at the time.

A fun art journal is also a place to practice art skills and techniques. If you want to learn to draw, what better place to practice than in your own, private journal? You can use watercolor or acrylic paints for the backgrounds of written pages to have a chance to try out various techniques. If you're interested in learning collage, make collages of your days by using visual images.



When I first started using the internet I began searching for journaling resources since this is one of my favorite activities. I was frustrated to learn that most resources on journaling are divided into two strict camps. Either writing-type journaling or strictly art-type journaling. Dan Price and Danny Gregory both combine art in a serious journal but they use only sketching. There seemed to be no resources for combining painting, collage, etc. into a journal where one really does any meaningful, deep writing.

For a while I just gleaned ideas from here and there and combined them for my own personal use. Later it occurred to me that if I was interested in this type of journaling, then others must be also. So, I wrote an e-course that teaches the techniques I use, called [Fun Art Journaling](#). The course is three months long and provides two weekly lessons. One lesson teaches some sort of art technique. The other lesson is about journal writing. Both lessons are "how-to's" with detailed instructions and pictures.

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Some of the topics covered in the three months are:

- Using symbols in your journaling
- Learning to Nurture Yourself
- Coptic Binding
- Adding Envelopes for Keepsakes to a Journal Page
- Making Your Own Rubber Stamps
- Learning to Letter
- Using Glue Book Techniques
- Using Dada Techniques
- Organizing Journals
- And Using Affirmations.

This is not a complete list — it's just a sample. A lot is covered in 24 lessons!

What the students who have taken this course report is that the relaxed style of instruction as well as the encouragement, has allowed them to keep meaningful journals and use their creative ideas as well. Combining art and in-depth writing is the perfect way for a creative person to get the benefits of journaling without having to face bland, blank pages each day.



The next session of Fun Art Journaling begins May 8, 2006. For information on this and Zura's other e-courses and eBooks, see

<http://ArtellaWordsandArt.com/>
ZuraBethLedbetter.html