

The Artist Mentors Artist Series

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To reach the understanding that art is a calling is not always an easy undertaking for an artist at the start of her career. Sometimes this occurs during or after her studies in art school, but it may also happen later in life. Often it means changing the priorities of the artist-in-the-making and making concessions for allowing her art to mature. While today the number of women artists is steadily growing, there is still an array of challenges facing women who want to break into the art world.

The gap between the skills and talents needed in art studies and those required to become an actively creative artist can be large and at times too large. Finding her personal voice, nurturing the determination to take up space, to confront the hidden cultural messages regarding the demands on the artist as a woman, may all add up to impossible barriers. The accompaniment and support of another artist at this stage may be very significant in attaining the courage to create.

The conventional teacher/student relationship is but one option for artistic guidance. The encounter between an accomplished and beginning artist can take an informal character and be based on friendship, on regular studio visits or on support and making connections in the art world. The experienced artist can understand the difficulties her friend is confronting, give her emotional support, convey her belief that there is value in devoting herself to art while expressing her trust in her friend's artwork.

The Series of exhibits in which an artist's works are exhibited side by side with that of her teacher, mentor or artistic companion, seeks to shed light on this unique relationship. The series examines the artistic dialogue and the mutual influence between the two artists, the conditions which enable this framework to grow and its meaning for each of the artists. In addition, the series tries to consider the possible existence of a feminist approach to mentoring between artists and whether feminist theory can contribute from its practice in other spheres to the development of an alternative model of art mentoring.