

Nov12

## Timeout for Art: Making Room

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Last week, my “timeout for art” topic was “bare minimum.” Appropriate, because that’s about all I’ve been able to do lately.

This is a busy time for me, even in years that I’m not preparing for an art show. The garden needs to be cleaned up: vines pulled, tomato cages stored; raspberries cut back. Leaves settle in to all the flower beds, around the shrubs, and against the house. I don’t battle them as vigorously as I probably should, but I make an effort, until the snow comes. Inside, this is the time for weatherizing against the cold. For two weeks in a row, I picked up extra days at work. Good for my budget, but a strain to my schedule.

This year, my focus was on the October art show: art-making, matting and framing, documenting, pricing, packaging, shipping, travelling, setting-up, attending the opening reception, follow-up tasks, and then finally arranging to have it taken down, boxed, and stored.

Though I received a bunch of support and much-needed assistance, and it was a successful show and a good experience, it was still exhausting!

So, I gave myself time to recover. Time to mull over the adventure of it all, the mountain of things that had to be ticked off my list to pull it together, and the fact that I managed to do it. Time to settle back in at home, taking time with the dogs and with all the necessary fall activities. Time to get back to a regular schedule. I'm not always good at functioning "full-throttle," but when it comes to "recovery-time," I'm a master at it. But, it's been a month. I'm getting anxious to get back into the studio. So, this week my focus was on making room for doing just that.

The small upstairs room that has been my meditation/exercise space, and was given over to matting and framing activities over the last few months, had been then converted to a bedroom for my grandson. He moved in for about ten days, to take care of my dogs while I was away. He and I pulled the metal bed frame out of the side attic, and set it up. In order for the bed to fit in the small room, I had to move my Pilates chair, a small table, and a side chair into the studio.

We dragged the metal box springs, that I'd gotten free at a yard sale, up the stairs, around a tight corner, up and over and onto the frame...where it fell through, to the floor. Though we tried it several times, all accompanied by lots of groans and cussing, it was clearly not going to work. Unwilling to re-visit the struggle of getting it up the stairs and around the corner, only in reverse, we just left it on the floor. We pulled out the wooden support that served the same purpose, though without the bounce and comfort of springs, then dragged the mattress out and put it on top. Sheets on, and we were done.

And, though I knew it needed to be dealt with, I've been pretty much ignoring it for the last month. During which time I've added to the already impossible crowded studio with several packing boxes. It seems, in getting things ready for the show, I ordered frames, in the 16 x 20 size, *three times*, thinking that the problem was that I had forgotten to order them, when in fact they were on backorder. Which I would have known, if I had read the company's letters, rather than being so quick to believe my memory was failing! So, the studio has been packed, clumsily, to the rafters, impossible to even get through the door.

To remedy that, the bed had to come down, so that the side chair, small table and Pilates chair could be returned to their places, so that I could start to make sense of the rest. Getting that bed in to or out of that narrow side attic is a monumental job, that I should not have tackled alone. I managed it, but then spent the last two days in bed, with my back out. I had to miss work yesterday. Today, I'm better. And, feeling better, I can appreciate the progress I've made. Eventually, I'm confident I will once again have room for making art!