In March, the GW Art Therapy Task Force and faculty decided we wanted to do something to respond to the overwhelming trauma that both Haiti and Chile experienced due to the earthquakes in January and February. Thus began the Healing for Haiti & Chile artworks. Each student and faculty member was given a 5” canvas mandala and asked to create an art piece that would be sold at upcoming gallery openings of the GW Art Therapy Gallery. In creating each healing circle, the theme was to use your artistic abilities to benefit a great cause. The first was scheduled for April 3rd for the EnCounter Culture juried exhibit. The second is May 14th for the Graduation Celebration & Exhibit.

The first event proved to be a great success, raising over $600 dollars in donations and healing circle purchases. Members of the art therapy community wonderfully supported the fundraiser and created art for a great cause! Through the use of creativity, each healing circle represented GW’s passion and empathy for those in need.

Healing for Haiti & Chile: GW Art Therapy Task Force Raises Money for Relief
by Markia Ware, 2nd year & Art Therapy Task Force President
Vicarious Traumatization
by Audrey Evans, 2nd year

As therapists, we are welcomed into our clients’ personal worlds, which are too often filled with tragedy and struggle. While walking alongside our clients in a therapeutic manner, we are witnesses to the injustice, grief, violence, and so much more that has led our patients into treatment. We create the safe space in which they are encouraged to tell their story, to give their traumatic experiences the validity and acknowledgment which they were denied for too long.

As art therapists, we have both the privilege and burden of viewing the expressive, sometimes disturbing, artwork of traumatized clients. Although we have learned not to experience with the client, we inevitably experience his or her process and product (e.g., the art; bodily responses) as we journey with him or her through the session. This may be traumatizing for both parties, yet the focus of the therapist must remain on her client’s needs. As a therapist suppresses feelings of fear or anger (usually at a perpetrator) during the session, she may later put off processing those emotions, due to continued focus on other clients, work, personal relationships, etc. It is soon disregarded as another day of “work” without the appropriate processing and self care.

As student interns and professionals, it is essential for us to take care of ourselves holistically (e.g., mind, body, and spirit) in order to maintain appropriate holding environments for our clients and to represent an appropriate model of self-care. While interning at a hospice, I have observed the devastation of loss as seen through the eyes of the children left behind by deceased loved ones. Before I enter a client’s home, I take a moment to process what I am about to observe, hear, and experience. I review my progress notes from previous visits (if available) and begin journaling about what the day’s visit may entail and how I am feeling on that particular day. I sit in the quiet, creatively expressing myself until it is time to leave my car and walk into my client’s home as a self-aware visitor. This allows more room for me to process what my client is experiencing during the session, and then once again process my reactions after the completion of the session.

We are the tools which provide safety and facilitation of the emotional expressions of traumatized clients. We witness the reexperiencing of such horrendous acts in a similar way as our clients had experienced the literal act/event itself; through our bodies. Therefore, it is part of our “work” to take care of our bodies and our minds (our tools) in order to most benefit our clients and prevent vicarious traumatization and neglect of those who we serve.

Grief Meanings

Statement of Purpose:
Our goal is to provide a channel for communication among students, faculty, and alumni as well as to introduce prospective students and the art therapy community to George Washington University’s Graduate Art Therapy Program. DRAWN from the Circle will provide articles, commentary, notices, poetry, humor, and anything pertinent to art therapy. If you wish to respond to anything presented in this issue, please send materials to: 
DRAWN from the Circle
The George Washington University Art Therapy Program
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Thank you to all contributors! Kelly Hartland
Self Care at its Finest: Touring the World One Turnpike at a Time

by LaToya Kinard and Lindsey Vance, 2nd years

This graduate program stresses the need for self-awareness, self-actualization, and self-care. Despite your ability to meet the needs of your clients, be present in your sessions, and apply your education, if you do not take time out for self care, your ability to provide for your clients is lessened and will eventually take a toll on you and the therapeutic relationship. During Spring Break, two classmates explored the significance of self-care, taking to the road and traveling to Wisconsin and Niagara Falls. Along the way we visually documented our journey.

Prior to this adventure, we were bogged down with papers, readings, assignments, internships, bills, and all other aspects of graduate life. Once the trunk and backseats were loaded with enough luggage for a family, we turned on the music, starting singing, and began our journey across the United States.

As we crossed over the Canadian border into the nature of the north, we were forced to reduce our pace and to breathe. We remembered that a simplicity in life is needed in order to appreciate and value all the moments of a day. We saw gorgeous artwork and vistas, met new people, and even had the opportunity to share our therapeutic knowledge. What we learned about self-care during this time is this: it is not until you accept and acknowledge your need for a break that self-care occurs. Therefore, in becoming an art therapist, take the time out to take care of you.

Baked Goods: Two Years in the Art Therapy Program

by Soo Ji Chung, 2nd year

I can't believe two years have gone by. Thinking about graduation brings mixed feelings. I wanted to share a piece of art work that I created for the final exhibit. This is a painting of cupcakes, which I strongly identified with throughout the graduate program. I am still confused about why I chose these objects. I guess something about the cupcakes resonates with how I saw “art therapy” in the very beginning. It is so sweet, soft, irresistible, well presented, attractive, inviting, and brings a sense of anticipation. Cupcakes start with basic ingredients, but develop into different forms and tastes. Once they are presented to customers, their arrangement stimulates individuals to pick what they desire. I feel like we all grew together in this program acquiring the “basics” and developing into unique forms along the way. Now, together, having reached the end, we are ready for the storefront window, and the customers that await us.
As I wandered the halls of the graduation exhibit reading the artists’ statements by the 2010 graduating class, I am overwhelmed by the growth, transformation, and self-awareness that has developed. I am reminded of the life changing aspects of the Art Therapy Program and attempt to prepare each incoming class regarding this process. Creating the graduation presentation, a powerpoint that reviews the past two years of training through photographs and words, I see the promise and excitement of each student at the beginning of their journey. Over the two years, the students seem to outwardly mature and inwardly deepen, though the time is relatively short. Comparing the Orientation pictures to the Graduation pictures, the transformation is visually apparent. It is exciting and an honor to witness this transformation with each student. As each student leaves, our hopes and wishes for their future and the future growth of art therapy travel with them.

Faculty Accomplishments

Elizabeth Warson was awarded a GW Cancer Institute, American Cancer Society Institutional Research Grant for her work with American Indian cancer survivors. The aim of the Healing Pathways: Art for Survivors project is to provide a culturally-relevant art therapy workshop to address quality of life issues for American Indian cancer survivors and their family members. Warson will begin this phase of her funded research in Summer 2010 in North Carolina with the Coharie community.

Donna Betts was involved with the GW annual “Research Day” which had a special focus on autism. Art therapy was an important part of the day’s events—Donna Betts sat on a panel discussion with collaborators from GW’s Autism Initiative team. She discussed the benefits of art therapy approaches with autism. Art therapy was showcased simultaneously in a poster session.

Betts worked with 2nd year student Markia Ware, and 1st year students Amy Bishop and Bette Peabody summarizing the clinical work these three students have accomplished with their clients who have autism. This disorder is an area of growing significance, as increasing numbers of individuals are diagnosed with autism, and the public as well as policy makers are becoming increasingly aware of the need for effective treatments. Art therapy is an especially beneficial modality for this population. GW has plans to establish an Autism Research, Treatment, and Policy Institute, which will provide internship and research opportunities for our art therapy students. In the meantime, Betts is collaborating with colleagues from other disciplines at GW on a research study that will attempt to identify and assess biological phenotypes of autistic individuals based on medication responsiveness for reverse pharmacogenomics analyses.

Tally Tripp has been presenting recently on art therapy and trauma related issues locally and internationally. “Countertransference Art in Responses to a Patient’s Trauma: A Co-Created Reality” presented to the Washington Trauma Conference: Intersections among Narrative, Neuroscience, and Psychoanalysis in Washington, DC, March, 2010.

“Enhancing our Skills in Trauma: An Art Therapy Perspective” panel with Anne Mills and Patti Prugh, presented to the Potomac Art Therapy Association, Maryland Art Therapy Association and Virginia Art Therapy Association’s Art Therapy and Trauma Symposium, March, 2010.

“Every Picture Tells a Story: Art Therapy and Trauma Processing” presented to the 2nd Bi-Annual European Society for Trauma and Dissociation Conference, Belfast Northern Ireland, April, 2010.
Lisa Garlock met with a group of nine Princeton undergraduate students during Spring Break. They came to Washington to spend their time learning about and experiencing Art Therapy with the organizational help of PATA. Princeton University provided funding for groups to continue their learning process over the break through service learning opportunities. Their days were packed with visits to schools for special needs students, arts-focused community-based organizations, and their visit to the GW Art Therapy Program.

The group was mostly business, pre-med, and science students, with one lone psychology major (who was the most interested in the dynamics of art therapy!). Garlock led them in an art therapy warm up and creating Flutter, or folded books. The atmosphere was playful, and they asked questions, bonded with each other through art and learned some new ideas. It was gratifying to see that students from such divergent fields could express themselves so well and unselfconsciously through art.

Lisa Garlock and Heidi Bardot will be returning to India again this summer with 16 students. We have added new internship sites, with the help of alumna Sangeeta Prasad, and have arranged for additional outings for the students to explore multiculturalism by immersing themselves in the community. Participants will include 12 GW art therapy students, an art therapy student from another program, and three students pursuing masters in counseling, international relations, and conflict resolution. This combination should result in some interesting experiences and discussions.

GW Art Therapy Program Awards

In order to promote art therapy research, students were asked to submit proposals for future research projects which would be completed during their time at GW. Two awards were given to two first year students and two to second year students for both The Kwiatkowska Fund and The Katherine J. Williams Fund—The Prasad Family Multicultural Award.

The Kwiatkowska Fund

The Kwiatkowska Award is given to students with exceptional strengths in the areas of family, assessment, or group research.

Dudley Joe Emick (2nd year)—research will examine art therapy interventions in the treatment of individuals suffering from addiction to chemical substances.

Kathryn Martin (1st year)—research an art-based assessment, the Bridge Drawing, to develop a standardized approach to evaluate suicide risk within the psychiatric in-patient population.

The Katherine J. Williams Fund

The Prasad Family Multicultural Student Award

The Katherine J. Williams and Prasad Family Multicultural Student Award is awarded to students from multicultural backgrounds or researching social and cultural diversity issues.

Iryna Natalushko (2nd year, Fulbright student from Ukraine)—research to determine if engagement in the creative process can be an effective loneliness-coping mechanism for adults.

Karina Donald (1st year—from Grenada)—research will explore art therapy with psychiatric Caribbean patients' and will add to the multicultural perspectives and literature in art therapy from a culture that has never been studied.

The Elizabeth Bapst Award

This award is in honor of Elizabeth Bapst, an alumna of the Program who passed away in February 2007. The award was set up by her family to support nontraditional art therapy students (i.e., 2nd or 3rd career) or to add to and enhance the GW Art Therapy Library. Therefore, with Bapst’s passion and interest in Jungian Art Therapy, we will be purchasing Jung’s Red Book in her honor for the library for student, faculty, and alumni use.
The First Seed: An Art Therapy Workshop in Taiwan
by Li-Chun Wang, 2nd year

“We do not know exactly what she is doing now, but as long as she likes it, we will be on her side,” my parents said. My father, a diligent member of the blue-collar class, and my mother, a dedicated stay-at-home mom, were extremely concerned about me when I decided to study abroad—in a country where people speak a language they do not understand, to study a subject they had never heard of before. After one-and-a-half years of training in art therapy, this graduate program is transforming me from an originally timid girl into a comparatively mature and confident individual.

Through witnessing the healing power of art-making at my internship sites, I have become more certain of the values of art therapy. When I visited my home in Taiwan during my last winter break, I knew that it was time to introduce and advocate for art therapy. I decided to start in the community where I live.

I held an art therapy workshop at the Kaohsiung Municipal Social Education Center in Taiwan. The majority of the participants were members of the Greenery Reading Club, ranging in age from their late 20's to 60's. Most of them were mothers (including my mother) who join this community-based club to read, write, learn, and grow from each other's support. My goals for the workshop were: (1) to introduce art therapy and its applications to various populations, (2) to provide an opportunity to experience the therapeutic potentials of art-making, and (3) to promote art journaling as a tool for self-care.

After a succinct introduction of art therapy and the concept of the mandala, I led a body-relaxation exercise followed by a mandala experiential using rice paper. As a facilitator, I encouraged them to express themselves and I emphasized acceptance. During the group, the participants shared their artwork, reflected on the process, and raised questions. Based on this hands-on art experience, the group shared concerns about “not having art skills,” frustrations related to unfamiliar materials, discoveries of artwork as the extension and reflection of the self, and surprises at the fact that art can increase communication and release tension.

One participant who drew an image of Buddha said, “It is amazing. When I look at my picture, everything starts to make sense. I suddenly realize that the picture reflects my concern and good wishes for one of my friends who is at the hospital now.” A participant who demonstrated flexibility said, “I accidentally spread the paint on the paper, and the colors went out of the mandala. It is not the design which I originally wanted, but I appreciate the uniqueness which the picture turns out to be.” This led to a group discussion about how to tolerate and resolve frustration.

I shared the artwork from my own mini-mandala journal to introduce art-making as a tool for self-care and self-expression, since these mothers dedicate much of their effort to their family instead of themselves. My own mother commented on her artwork: “I feel that my heart is floating and constantly concerned about many things. In my mandala, there is a sense of internal chaos. I have a lot of beautiful colors outside of the mandala, and I see a gorgeous fairy in the blue.” As another mother in this community, she noticed her need for self-care during this experience.

This workshop seemed productive and successful. From the participants’ response, I learned that a lot of people in Taiwan would love to know more about art therapy but do not have much information available to them. I considered this workshop as the very first art therapy seed I planted. With the efforts of other art therapists in Taiwan, I believe that art therapy will prosper in the coming future.

“Through witnessing the healing power of art-making at my internship sites, I have become more certain of the values of art therapy.”

Mandalas created by Li-Chun Wang
A Felt Story
by Monica Salinas, 1st year

On March 27 and 28th, John Lorance and Elizabeth Warson presented the workshop Felting the Senses: Feltmaking as a Therapeutic Intervention. As Warson stated, “feltmaking is a process that can be done with populations that may otherwise not be able to use art materials. . . From an art therapist’s perspective, the tactile process of feltmaking addresses the Kinesthetic/Sensory (K/S) level of Lusebrink’s (1990) Expressive Therapies Continuum (ETC).” The workshop was divided into professionals’ and students’ workshops.

From the student point of view:
Who knew that making felt for eight hours would be so much fun, and I would learn so much about myself. We learned techniques like felting a ball, snake, bowl, and making a sheet of felt, but what I learned personally was the most important. I learned to breathe, to plant my feet on the ground, and to be in the moment. The process was meditative and relaxing. I thought of my ancestors, who had to make clothes by hand...I felt as if we have become so detached from the process that is involved in making what we just purchase at Wal-Mart. The feltmaking process grounded me again, and I felt connected to the flow of life, my life. It was wonderful to have the opportunity for this experience that both Elizabeth and John provided.

Children’s Health Centers-SE
by Anne Hurley, 1st year

Children’s Health Centers SE Community Art Therapy Program started as an Expressive Art group in 2004 for students at the Washington Middle School for Girls. The program has evolved into a full time art therapy internship program with students from the GW Art Therapy Graduate Program administering art therapy in the health center. Art therapy intern, Anne Hurley worked with the CHC-SE Community Art Therapy Program for the academic year of 2009-2010. Anne conducted art therapy groups at Good Hope Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Ave Children’s National Medical Center’s health sites and Stanton Elementary School under the supervision of Art Therapist, Elva Anderson, MPS, ATR, LPC.

CHC-SE Community Art Therapy Program received a mini–grant (Fall 2009) from the Far Southeast Family Strengthening Collaborative. The art therapy space is now enhanced with furniture, children books, colorful mirrors, additional art materials, and provides each child with the Art Therapy Home Kits (papers, crayons, glue sticks and pencils). With the support of the mini grant and hard work by Anne over 250 children received art therapy services during this past year.
She looks nearly the same. No magical wand or cape. No stark business suit. The only thing different about alumna JeJung So is the name tag attached to her sweater, indicating she is a staff member of Mary Washington Hospice in Fredericksburg, VA. JeJung, a graduate of the GW Art Therapy Program in August of 2009, landed an art therapy job right after graduating and has been working for 6 months. Mary Washington Hospice contracted her for a year-long pilot program in order to prove the benefits of art therapy as a complementary treatment service. When asked how she arrived at a job position, JeJung states, “I just found one and went for it. Without this, I don’t think it would have evolved. Grabbing and latching onto any opportunity is what you need to think about.” JeJung remarks that through being part of this pilot program, she is already an “advocate for the profession,” having to prove the effectiveness of art therapy in her first work experience.

Discussing the transition from education to occupation, JeJung states that it is “a lot more responsibility. . . You can’t be a student anymore. You get pushed to become a professional.” At the same time, JeJung sees many similarities between her work and her internship experiences. “The work is similar to what you do as an intern but the expectation is different, and I feel that.” Reflecting on her school experience she shares, “what we learn in school is the most ideal way to approach things. But once you don’t have that, you have to work in therapy in a different way.” She also emphasizes having learned to “let the client lead . . . you hear it throughout grad school but it’s very hard to practice . . . you gain so much more than you think you would gain.”

JeJung stresses that the working world is another deep learning experience, somewhat like graduate school, full of opportunities to be “reminded of the things [that] your professor said to you.” Key phrases which echo graduate school lessons include the words of Audrey DiMaria, a professor and practicum supervisor of JeJung’s during graduate school. Paraphrasing DiMaria, JeJung states “you have to be willing to forego your plans for your client. Your plan has to be Plan B.”

As the conversation turns to discuss the work itself, JeJung’s eyes sparkle, her words gleefully describing the population with whom she works. As hospice services are not limited in their scope of clients, JeJung enjoys the diversity among those whom she serves. “I enjoy the challenge of this,” she replies excitedly. “I feel like I’m using every aspect of art therapy . . . and what it can offer.”

Difficulties at her workplace include cultural issues. She describes herself as the “only Asian person in hospice” and struggles with how this impacts her experience. She also struggles with a unique aspect to hospice work: home visits, something she had not done before now. “How do you deal with confidentiality when there’s no privacy,” she rhetorically asks aloud. In terms of her own challenges with this, she responds “I learn[ed] how to let go. [Now] I try to work with the environment, work with the circumstances.”

Just before leaving for another home visit, JeJung tells a story. During her first semester of graduate school, JeJung took a class on the history and theory of art therapy, with Professor Heidi Bardot. When it came time to stand and present on Jungian theory, JeJung remarks that she “did horrible . . . and it showed in the presentation.” Regardless of her grade on the assignment, JeJung remembers the detailed comments Bardot wrote to her on a grading sheet. Bardot’s comments encouraged her to believe in herself and “be a professional.” Importantly, JeJung learned from this written message that people can’t see what you know, they just know what you present. These words continue to remind JeJung to be confident, whether you feel it or not. Lessons, such as this one, seem to inspire JeJung the most in creating her identity as an art therapist.

After the interview, JeJung picks up her bag, professional materials in tow, and makes her way towards her next appointment. I cannot help but watch, knowing that in the bustle of Saturday, there is another beacon of the healing arts delivered out into the world. She has arrived.
The Art of Storytelling
by Katherine Phlegar, 2nd year

“The wealth of the soul exists in images.” Carl Jung

Once upon a time...
Through a wonderfully unique combination of storytelling, fine art, and art therapy techniques, Lisa Garlock invited first and second-year students to create and share their own myths in Advanced Studio, one of this spring’s courses in advanced issues. The first class began with an invitation to share a favorite tale, childhood story, or urban legend. After making art for every day over the course of four rapidly moving weeks (extended only briefly by the precise timing of this year’s snowmageddon), each member of the class had created a unique art journal full of wonderfully unique images and symbols, each holding their own personal significance. As a final project, students selected an image or story from their daily art journal to develop into a complete art piece. Momentary sketches and story ideas became transformed into exceptional pieces of artwork that can now be viewed in the hallway next to the studio space. The integration of myths into art-making and our daily experiences allowed the members of the class to deepen our understanding of our own stories and how to translate those experiences through our individual creative processes.

During the final class, everyone met to share the stories discovered and told in the daily art journals, the final completed art pieces and through the experience of the class itself. As the hours of the class sped quickly by, many stories were shared and heard—inspiring us to go find our own personal myths and to help clients to share theirs as well. The end. Or maybe, it is just the beginning...

National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day

GW Art Therapy students and alumni took part in National Children’s Mental Health Awareness Day with the Poto-mac Art Therapy Association (PATA) and AATA on May 6th. Both Tracy Councill and Deborah Bunkley presented on art therapy and Kimberly Hanrahan-Havern, Kate Martin, and Monica Salinas (pictured below left to right) assisted with art projects with over 50 children.

Photographs by Elva Anderson
Opportunities for Learning
by Julie Kotler, 2nd year

The 2010 National Arts Education Conference, *Drawing Parallels and Deepening Relationships*, was held in Baltimore, Maryland in April. Art therapists from all over the country were present at the pre-conference workshops hosted by Expressive Media Institute and the Institute of the Arts in Healing. For two days, educators presented workshops about the issues that face students in classrooms. Art therapists such as Judy Rubin, Sangeeta Prasad, Linney Wix, Stella Stepney, Rachel Brandoff and Barbara Mandel gave workshops to art educators about art as therapy. Workshops to support fostering resilience, building self esteem, squashing bullying, and embracing the ethnic heritage of our students in the classroom were presented in experiential formats so that art educators could better understand how art therapy works.

During the workshop, strategies for building a better art classroom were provided to enhance the student’s learning experiences. Efficient use of materials, new ways to discuss student art work, and most importantly, strategies for helping students to better understand themselves and others through their process and final product were provided to the art educators. While each of the teachers attending seemed to understand the power of art, it became clear through the experiential activities that they were learning important and new information about their own process. Some of the educators were emotionally touched and cried during the processing of the work they had created.

Struck by the power of art therapy, art educators took home new skills. They now have access to understanding the process and potential of art in the classroom. With insight into the creative process and its power, art educators can better understand the similarities and differences between art therapy and art education. The knowledge provided by this workshop will better inform and educate art teachers, and therefore help the students they teach as they mature into adulthood. Art educators and art therapists can learn from each other. Anything is possible with art.

The Seated Man
by Chris Kelly, 2nd year

Who is this seated man?
A father
A son
A brother
A husband
A student
A soldier
A businessman
A man of faith
A prisoner

As this seated man, I look into the future; it is though I am looking into a mirror. The reflection shows all that has contributed to the figure depicted before your very eyes. This seated man sits in silence, yet these events create a soundtrack to his life playing softly in the background.

This seated man is not yet fully defined, and sits in silence, anticipating how his creator will finish his canvas. This seated man is free. He is not bound to this chair, but looking out to the unseen.

Similar to the seated man of his believed salvation, this man sits vulnerable and stripped of his garments.

So again I ask who is this seated man?
Is he a product of a genetic factory line produced over generations and generations?

My answer is
I am this seated man

A father to an unborn child
A son to a mother and father
A brother
A husband to an unknown woman
A student
A soldier fighting the everyday temptations
A businessman selling myself to my own goals

A prisoner to my own mental slavery
A Christian
I am this seated man.
Farewell and Good Luck Graduates!
by Katryn Ellis, 1st year

It is not easy to get to know classmates who are a year or more ahead of you. This is especially true when class days do not always allow for much interaction between the two years in the Art Therapy Program. However, this has not stopped the first years and second years from sharing wisdom, stories, and experiences with one another. Whether it is a small break between classes, students working in the studio, or waiting for class to begin, the chances to get to know your fellow colleagues are always there.

The second years have been ready and available to help the first years get to know the program, what the classes and professors are like, and tips for success in the program, since the interview process last year. This year has flown by and the exhibit the graduating class has created for the spring show is just one example of all of the great accomplishments they have had in this program. The second years will be greatly missed and we hope that they will succeed in the field of Art Therapy. Good luck to everyone and let us know what lies ahead. Congratulations on this great accomplishment in life!

Artwork created by the 2010 Graduates for their Graduation Celebration Exhibit.
How do you get to know your classmates a little better in graduate school? With such a short amount of time and so much to do while we’re here—the papers, projects, internships, readings, and the incredible amount of learning, then there’s the getting to know who we are part that can be stressful and time consuming and interesting. It is all of these other things rolled into one. So again, how can we as a class get to know each other? At the beginning of spring semester, one of my practicum goals was to get to know my classmates better through making art. I think we did just that by doing an altered book round robin. Each of us chose a book to alter, gave it a theme, and started a few pages. Our books started traveling around the great circle of our practicum class. Each week, we passed the books to the left, and each week, we put a little piece of ourselves into one of our classmate’s books. As the semester went on, we would all wait patiently for the end of class when it was time to pass the books. I loved opening the book; first, to see what my new theme would be—how might I play this week? And then to see what had been created already. How might I add to this work of art for someone else? I found that I tried to think about that person, what might they like? What did I know about them? What little gift could I give them to keep for their own once our books came home? The art making could be as quick or as involved as time allowed and I found that I looked forward to working in the books each week. Some books were small so I worked small, which is harder for me, and some were large so I played. I experimented. I sewed. I used produce bags and made doors and fold-outs. I had fun! And then, nine weeks had passed and it was time for the books to come home to their owners. I am now the proud owner of a book which contains the gift of art from seven of my classmates. As a form of self-care and as a way to get to know each other, altered book round robins are a great way to go. As a class we all enjoyed the learning and the fun of getting to know one another.