

An Artist Empowered

Define and Establish Your Value as an Artist—Now

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From the Mean Streets to Self-Realization

Find Your Walking Shoes

A sage from India sets the stage: “Wanting to reform the world without discovering your true self is like trying to cover the whole world with leather to avoid the pain of walking on stones and thorns. It is simpler to wear shoes.” If the artist doesn’t understand the mission parameters, then anxiety and fear reign, or worse—the artist abandons the dream.

EDEN MAXWELL (painter, writer, and kiteflier of some note) grew up in the hood of the inner city and fought his way out of the projects to find his walking shoes; he recalls: “Many years ago, with no net, guarantees, or a rich uncle, I gave up the ‘security’ of a promising Fortune 500 fast track position, health insurance, stock option plans, weekend brunches, and a doorman for an unpredictable life of what seemed at the time insurmountable obstacles. My intuition, not a muse, had been whispering the mantra: *go for it ... some day something of value will come*. Like the main character in the book *Shoeless Joe* by W.P. Kinsella (adapted into the film *Field of Dreams*), I had also bet the ‘farm’ on a disembodied voice only I could hear. Those close to me thought I was making a huge career mistake. If you don’t have faith in your own dream, then what’s the point?”

While having the dream to be an artist is admirable, persevering against the collective drag of disappointment, doubt, and adversity demands more: artists must fortify—not coddle—themselves with strength of character if they are to fulfill their mission. The artist must not only be self-reliant, he must also remain vigilant of those who would co-opt his fire from heaven to roast marshmallows.

An Artist Empowered paints a clearly defined portrait of the aware artist who possesses an inner strength supported by qualities elegantly summarized in The Eighteen Be-Attitudes. By answering the Three Core Questions, artists will dig deep and become empowered, knowing that rejection is merely a word, a reaction to action, not an eternal truth, or a life sentence.

Painters, poets, writers, musicians, dancers, filmmakers, actors, explorers, and innovators in any field can now turn to an important page in their lives with *An Artist Empowered*—the strategic and intuitive primer for mastering the expressed intention of this book: identify and elevate your sense of self, acknowledge the merit of your art, and fortify your character with an organic confidence. You are not required—in the Zen tradition—to believe in anything you cannot prove to your own self.

Immerse yourself in the exciting landscape of art, passion, history, space-time, intuition, dedication, and the most personal of quests—*dharmā*, or one’s purpose in life. Woven into the texture of this transformational work is a firsthand field-tested compass for finding the courage, stamina, and insight to be a creator.

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By affirming their dharma, artists will learn to intuitively grasp the truths and myths about rejection: there is a supreme advantage in knowing where you stand and why before stretching your neck out onto the bloodied block of public opinion—there is no shortage of willing executioners.

No matter how superb the work, to make a living an artist must not only create, he must also grapple with a daunting uphill task: relentless self-promotion while confronting an exclusive marketplace notorious for cronyism, inflexibility, and rejection. It is no great stretch to love the art of the past. Original art faces the most difficulty in gaining exposure and acceptance. Art history is fraught with great art that was debunked in its time. Gauguin and van Gogh created despite personal difficulties, including rejection—and are now called visionaries. Why would any artist willingly set himself up for a life of hardship by challenging the mainstream? What's the point of going through pain if you won't transmute the agony into ecstasy, the hardship into strength of character? Art is either a calling or a job. Many are called; few choose to go.

How did the art market evolve? Why is it essential to prune hope, wish, and the author's verboten word 'obvious' from your vocabulary? What is intuition? Is Muzak Mozart? What can artists learn from the original *Pinocchio*—not the sanitized Disney adaptation? Why was Plato wrong about art? How does the Law of Non-Attachment create opportunity? Can art be taught? What is art? What is truth? What is genius? The right questions emancipate artists from negative social conditioning in ways they might not have ever considered.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

EDEN MAXWELL was born to holocaust survivors in a displaced persons (DP) camp outside Munich, Germany after World War Two. His formative years were on the mean streets—a battle zone that attempted to block his path toward right action and right livelihood. He quickly learned to be decisive, to walk the walk knowing that excuses were not an option. Those early on life threatening confrontations in the hood forged his innate sense of self, a survival trait he needed then and now—to persevere as an artist. With a fire in the belly, Maxwell had embarked on a nearly thirty-year long odyssey to discover that his *dharma* dwelt in the wellspring of art.

He is the bestselling author of *The Magnificent Book of Kites*, Sterling Publishing, NYC; and he has contributed to numerous publications, including: *Popular Science*, *Omni*, *MacUser*, *Art Calendar Magazine*, *the Drachen Foundation Journal*, and the *Encyclopædia Britannica*. His artwork is in private collections here and abroad.

An Artist Empowered: Define and Establish Your Value as an Artist—Now
Triumph Over Rejection

Eden Maxwell

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