



INTRODUCTION

Doodle. It's simple, right? Anyone can doodle. It is just making marks on the page while your mind is busy thinking or listening. Your brain doodles without judgment, without thinking or giving commands, and without expectations about the process. Disengaged from your inner critic, flowing along in the moment, you are present. Like a leaf floating on a moving river, doodling is fully itself and at the same time moving with the current.

Yet the word *doodle* bothers me because it sounds like something insignificant, immature, even trivial.

It does not fully express how important this process is. Doodling cannot be measured. It is a solid world in itself, and it is one of which I am humbly proud. Doodling is your voice spoken on the page, and it will take you places you cannot go alone. It is simple and yet full of complexity.

How can doodling add to your creative arsenal? For me, doodling is intuitive, organic, automatic mark making, where there is no censoring, just doing and discovering. By following its thread, you access inventive shapes and forms, new image combinations,

and design insights. This is the foundational concept for this book—to take that place you find in doodling, where mark making comes naturally, unbidden, and explode it into your creative life.

A doodle is already at your fingertips. It's mark making when you are otherwise occupied, perhaps talking on the phone or listening at a meeting. It is automatic, without deliberate thinking about what is "good" or "bad." It pours out of you easily, from a pure subconscious place, with no agenda for where you are headed. I describe this process as "one mark at a time," and it evolves into a conversation, so to speak, on a two-dimensional surface.

I believe that doodling is a creative source of inspiration for the more serious artwork that comes from thoughtful play and advancement into and inside of your creative life. I am an artist who doodles *all* the time: whenever I have a pen, pencil, or marker and a drawing surface, I am doodling. Always. It is my way of processing information visually, externally or internally, simultaneously or singularly, representationally or figuratively. I literally think on paper. Doodling keeps me connected to my art life and makes me feel as though I am always progressing.

This book is my way of sharing the art of doodling with you. Many of the ideas began with the curriculum for my online class *Doings of a Doodle*. This book continues to explore the doodle and how it can lead to more mature artwork. The invitation starts with a pencil. You begin with an inquiry or an observation. You simply do what comes naturally—doodling—and then you study your doodles and grow them into a larger piece, adding paint and mixed media. The doodle thus becomes a guide that leads to further decisions about composition and principles of design. Through

the step-by-step exercises and projects in this book, a simple doodle is translated into a more comprehensive and unified work, bringing out a style that is authentically you.

Your artistic style comes from deep inside you. It is there waiting, and its purpose is to be fully expressed. Just as your handwriting is uniquely you, so too is the way you touch the paper, the way you move your hand, and the doodles that flow when you are least concerned with making "art." These marks—these doodles—are foundational and powerful when translated and transformed into a larger format. There are treasures embedded within, including your unique voice.

I used to believe that when I shut the studio door, I was making art for me. Now I am learning that art is bigger than that. It's a shared experience. I need to make art for you, too, and we need to make it for each other. Art becomes something bigger and fuller when we all join in. This book is about discovering your fullness as an artist by courageously letting your doodles find their way into larger works. It is a place of creativity, full of potential and an adventure in the making and in the sharing.

I am excited to help you express your artistic self by awakening your creative spirit. I invite you to dig deep into this material. Delight in the process. It might challenge you; it might open doors for you; and it just might show you how incredibly inventive of a human being you already are.