

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

Lenka Clayton, May 2016

Some questions to create a structure and focus for your residency. Answer any that are useful to you.

Part One – Where are you now?

1. Describe where you are currently with your creative work. How much time are you able to work, where do you work, how do you feel about it, what are you working on? How has parenthood affected (or not) your working practice?

For as long as I can remember, my creative work has been about my family in some form or another. In the last four years it has been about my journey to motherhood. I have started labeling my work in terms of pre-pregnancy, pregnancy, and postpartum. All of my current complete fiber and needlework (as of 2.1.2020) has been created pre-pregnancy. I started as many beaded pieces as I could while pregnant so I could finish them postpartum. There are a couple I started pre-pregnancy, worked on during pregnancy, and plan to finish postpartum.

I am currently on maternity leave, so I am able to work in between his naps...and my naps. I work at the kitchen table and in the darkroom but I'm thinking about turning the desk outside Little Fox's room into my studio table. Sometimes it bothers me that I don't have a room of my own but I've been listening to many podcasts where artists who are also mothers talk about their work and most of them create a little space for themselves where they can work and be with their young children. They make it happen wherever it can happen. I've been inspired to do this for myself. I want Little Fox to see me creating and to be present while I create.

Since Little Fox was born I have felt a great surge of creativity. Some ideas I have had to let go and others I am beginning to execute. Those examples will come soon.

2. Describe as specifically as possible, anything about your current situation that makes your creative life difficult. Write initial thoughts in the box below then edit to make a prioritized list.

Space in which I can set up as my creative space and keep it up instead of taking it down after every studio

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

time. Lack of sleep from having a newborn. Time once I go back to work.

My challenges:

1. Sleep
2. Time
3. Space
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

3. What do you need that you don't currently have? Time? Space? Curiosity? Inspiration? Community? Solitude? New experiences? A mentor? Accountability? Sleep? Training? Materials? Assistance? Childcare? Write initial thoughts in the box below then edit to make a prioritized list.

I hope I don't need childcare. I'd really like to create with him around. I need space and time.

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

I need:

1. Space
2. Time
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

For each of the items on your list, what would it take to get each of these things?

1. I need to carve out the space on the desk leading into Little Fox's room.
2. I need to make the space in my weekly schedule. – Leave the classroom right at 3:30 unless I have an event I should attend. OR staying after 3:30 to work on my work uninterrupted.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

4. What would you like to do differently during your residency?

I would like to be more efficient about my list of action items. I bought a calendar in December specifically so I could keep track of work, personal and artwork to do's with the arrival of Little Fox in mind. I would like to make sure I am making with Little Fox around when appropriate. I want to create an organizational system for the new ideas that have come up.

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

5. Describe where you would like to be with your work after finishing the residency.

1. Complete most if not all beaded pieces that are currently in progress
2. Start new beaded pieces
3. Print double exposures in the darkroom
4. Complete Year One poem
5. Print, Transfer, and bead Memory poems

Part 2 - What will you do?

Write a manifesto and/or agreement for yourself

Use your reflections from part one to write a document outlining your approach to your residency. Describe the way you would like to work and why. Describe the things you need and how you might access them. What will you change? What does, could or might parenthood bring to your work? Are there expectations you can let go of, or new approaches you could explore? You can write your own manifesto, or feel free to use the one on the website. Record ideas below.

I've had a surge of creativity since he was born. So many ideas swirling around in my mind. I've decided to let some go. Just the ones that started to feel overwhelming and weren't letting me enjoy this precious time with him. I've kept the ones that allow me to observe him and myself through this time. That's why I will be participating in a self-directed, open-source artist residency. It is a residency to "empower and inspire artists who are also mothers." It is the "reframing of parenthood as a valuable site for creative practice, rather than an obstruction to be overcome." You can find out more or register a residency by visiting [#artistresidencyinmotherhood](#) or www.artistresidencyinmotherhood.com.

Follow my journey....1) works in progress and finished works on my website, click on the tab "Artist Residency in Motherhood" 2) musings and reflections on my blog in the category "Artist Residency in Motherhood" 3) progress documentation on Instagram with [#artistresidencyinmotherhood](#)

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

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👉 This is at least how I **think** I'm going to proceed.

Write it up, print it, sign it and put it somewhere you will look at it often.

Secure the resources you need

Fundraise if you need to. This could be applying for traditional art funding, or running an independent Kickstarter or Indigogo campaign. You might also take a creative approach; make an affordable edition and sell it to friends, family and colleagues, hold fundraising events, ask for donations, hold a garage sale, or sell shares in your career. Look at www.studiodirect.org for a great independent model of contemporary patronage.

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

Alternatively look at how you might reconsider things you already have access to. Could you use space in your home differently, or use other public spaces to work in? Could you change your routine or eliminate tasks to create more time? Could you appoint a friend or colleague as an accountability tracker, or mentor? Could you trade with friends for childcare or materials, or collaborate with others to make those things more accessible? Could you alter the way you work to make it more productive given your current situation? Write ideas below.

I would really like to create a Mother's Meet up or Create-Up. This is not an original idea but it would be nice to bring it to Phoenix. This could be a great programming idea if I get to be part of an exhibition or have a solo show soon.

*Need to do research on effective ways to make this happen.

Create a structure for your residency

Set a time limit (you can always extend it if necessary)

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

When does your residency start? *2/1/2020* When will it end? *2/1/2021*

Where will you work? *The darkroom and my house.*

How many hours a week will you work? *I will start out with 5 and try to increase from there.*

What will your ideal working week look like? Example below, devise your own system to fit your situation.

****Maternity leave will have worktime in between visitors and meet ups.*

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
4-5am	Feed/pump	Feed/pump	Feed/pump	Feed/pump	Feed/pump	Feed/pump	Feed/pump
5-6am	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Exercise	Skin-to-skin	Skin-to-skin
6am-3:30pm	Teach	Teach	Teach	Teach	Teach		
3:30-7:30pm	Bonding/Create	Bonding/Create	Bonding/Create	Bonding/Create	Bonding/Create		
notes	Possible create times to be distributed throughout the week:	*Darkroom *Beading *Gallery visit *Reading for inspiration *Meet-Up's *Workshops *Podcasts	*Sometimes bonding and create happen at the same time.	*Weekdays; 3:30-4:30: darkroom	*Weekend; Beading		

Create Accountability

Decide on a system(s) you will use to track your own experience, for example: a written document, a personal journal, a public blog, a website, regular meetings with a mentor, etc.

My initial reaction is to keep a log of what I do and when I do it HOWEVER, I can see that becoming overwhelming and it would possible keep me from actually creating because I will obsess over how to label each "thing" that I do. Instead I will...

1. Continue to post 'musings' on my blog and add ARIM label.
2. Post on Instagram by using #artistresidencyinmotherhood and #ARIM.
3. Add WIP's and finished projects to the ARIM tab on my website.

I will write in a personal journal and label it ARIM when appropriate.

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

Will you share the work you make? How? When?

See the answer above. Also, near the end I will hopefully be able to apply for solo exhibitions. I would also like to apply for public artist studios and create while the public sees me creating with Little Fox. The act of creating ANYTHING with him present becomes the concept.

Community

Will you undertake your residency alone, or with others? If you want one, how will you create a community and keep in touch with them. Who are they?

Right now I plan on doing this on my own however, as it progresses I would love to invite other artist mothers to join and start forming a community.

How might you begin?

I already have. – Sometimes I let the logistics of exactly what will I do and what will the final product look like get in the way of beginning but I've let go of the creative ideas that made me

An Artist Residency in Motherhood - Planning Tool

feel like that and am working on the ones that feel less restrictive and will just let me BE in the moment of motherhood.

Signed Megan Driving Hawk

Date 2/2020