

# NEWSLETTER

## Remotely Reframing

-Karen Armstrong



I'm awoken early again—first by my aching parts and then by a racing brain. The pandemic has cut off yet another route of escape. The daily infection counts, more news of deaths across the country dominate the newscasts. But Manitoba's numbers are looking better aren't they? The vaccinations are coming right?—just a few more months. Surely it will all be better by the fall. For now, no gathering, no travel, no physical contact, no smiles (at least that we can see). This week I'll try new recipes. I'll try to lose myself in my painting, lose weight, get fit, invent new uses for these mountains of plastic grocery bags. I don't want to reorganize, but there's always paperwork to sort through—stacks of it in the corners. There's that chandelier to paint yet. I bought paint at the start of this Covid lockdown, thinking I would be prepared for every art/craft emergency. More yoga, more cross-country skiing will make my body feel better and make me feel better about my body. I'll try to eat better. I think about the next 7 meals worth of groceries to order.

I'm like a caged rodent, frantically assessing the limitations of my enclosure—inspecting every corner, every stockpile of assets to ensure survival. I wander around the crannies of the internet for ideas, going down rabbit holes within rabbit holes hoping to find a nugget of inspiration, a little light humour, or an escape route. In normal times, are all the activities we enjoy in our lives little escape pods—places we can

float around in space feeling weightless for an hour or two? The Covid has forced an assessment.

I get gravity. I believe in the forecasts by scientists and medical professionals. I respect the precautions to be taken to protect my family, friends and fellow human beings. I am acutely aware that I am privileged and fortunate to live where I live and have what I have and yet, I still want to plan future get-togethers and get-aways. Perhaps it's all in the way we approach our remote reality over the next 3 winter months. Maybe these different, more insular conditions might germinate the next great idea. Could the creative people of the world be in the most productive quarantined think tanks of the millennium? What original pieces of literature, music and art might sprout from these physically distanced bubbles?

Light a fire (only if you have a fireplace) or a candle and snuggle under a blanket with a mug of whatever you enjoy. Can't do that in July! If it snows, take a stroll through its silent magic. The Norwegians believe there is no such thing as bad weather only bad clothes. Mask up and wear your husband's coat if need be. No one will recognize you. No excuses—I will go out into nature and find walks I've never walked and take in scenes I've never seen. I'll feed this brain more inspiration than it can handle to get it through the winter.

Yet, there is the visiting, and the shared experience of making art that are really missed. The vaccinations offer the hope that we will be able to do it again. I've tried the zoom experience so as not to forget what my daughter's face looks like and to stay connected with my friends. By now, you too have likely done birthday celebrations, Christmas or New Year's via that medium. (I wonder how many keyboards have been spilled on.) To me, it's like watching a travelogue on TV—interesting but not the same as being there. I think I'll value the "in person" more than ever when our isolation has ended. If I have to have a resolution for 2021, then being more "present" it is.

Until then  
Stay positive and share your inspirations with others...at a distance

**Karen**

**If you have photos of your work that you'd like to share on our Facebook page, please send them to Karen at: [karmstro@mymts.net](mailto:karmstro@mymts.net)**

## A FEW VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS AND ARTICLES YOU MIGHT ENJOY :

### Eight On-and Offline Digital Exhibition Spaces for the Second-wave Lockdown

<https://hyperallergic.com/601014/eight-digital-exhibition-spaces-for-the-second-wave-lockdown/>

### The Art Newspaper

<https://www.theartnewspaper.com/coronavirus>

### The ARTery

<https://www.wbur.org/artery/2020/07/28/virtual-art-exhibits>

My pandemic painting: In an effort to leave my watercolour comfort zone, I agreed to paint a dog for my daughter-in-law. How could I resist with that monstrous tongue hanging out? Please send some images or stories of what you're doing so that I can share it in the next newsletter. Thanks and Happy New Year!

Cindy Rublee



## More humour to get you through the tough days...

