

# Piecing it all together

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**Alicia Wills** poses for a portrait with one of her favorite collages in her living room.

A quiet house sits, lined with framed images of magazine clippings cut together to make something brand new. These images are carefully perched around. This quaint house is home to Alicia Wills, a local resident who teaches the very art she has lining her walls: collage...

...Wills teaches collage workshops out of her home... "Any form of creativity is great for stress, but the problem that most of us have is finding time to create something, to sit down and make something," Wills said. "Our lives keep us so busy. Part of what I'm offering is the opportunity to gift yourself the time to come and create."

Collaging is a way to let one's unconscious desires find expression through creativity, Wills said... "It provides you with time to play," Wills said. "It provides you with the time and space to be creative, and [it provides you] with creative form that allows you to access your inner voice and find some answers for yourself on how to make your life a little more sustainable."

Collage is an art that differs from others due to the way it is carried out. By using the art of others, people can create something new rather than directly putting pen to paper, Western freshman and arts interest Natalie Millsap said. People create art for different reasons, and what motivates someone can influence the art they go on to create. Even with painting or drawing, most things have been done before. Collaging is just another form of ultimately creating new and original art, she said.

Wills' workshops are a resource for people who are seeking direction in their lives. It gives them time to sit down and look at everything in a new light...

"It's good to exercise your creativity and your intuitive side," Wills said. "We don't get much chance to do that in our lives. We're busy doing linear things, [such as] working, studying [and] doing. When you're collaging, you get to park the left side of your brain and just play with pictures, and [see] what they evoke for you."

Collaging can be a mysterious art at times. You never know what you're going to create, and sometimes you don't understand right away what you have created. Wills had made collages only to realize weeks later what the meaning behind them was, she said. A completed piece can

mean anything from realizing one needs more space in their life to more fully understanding one's life goals.

While collaging is an art, Wills's classes aren't for artists. Some people might be intimidated by the prospect of making and creating something new from the bottom of one's heart, but the classes are for anyone who feels they need something extra in their life.

"I started doing collage for myself years ago and discovered that it was a really great tool for someone who can't draw [to] create art, and for accessing things that I couldn't quite figure out in my conscious mind." Wills said.

While these classes focus on bringing art together through images from magazines and other sources, the art of collage itself can involve practically any materials from water colors to simple pencils, Western art professor Cara Jaye said.

"It can be a fun and interesting way to re-contextualize an image," Jaye said. "You can take two things that really wouldn't be in the same place or the same world [and] put them together." Collaging has been around in various societies for a long time, despite certain sources claiming other artists, such as Picasso, to be the originators.

This type of art changes how people think about a piece of art or image, provoking new thoughts by putting something old together with something more foreign and unexplored. "It's a really fun and fruitful way to engage in incorporating a lot of different colors, materials and images into a piece," Jaye said. "It really frees people up. It can be so many different things.

Wills doesn't currently have any workshops planned, but will be scheduling them soon. People interested can go to her website at <http://www.manyhats.info/> to find out when they are.