

Artist

AWAKENING THE SPIRIT WITHIN

JOCELYN JONES

Artist



Cover art and above, *Cueva de las Manos* (The Cave of Hands)

The very first artists were ancestors who stenciled their hands on the walls of prehistoric caves around the globe. The finest examples can be found in Cueva de las Manos (The Cave of Hands) in Argentine Patagonia. The oldest of these hands was discovered in the Maltravieso cave in Cáceres, Spain, and is thought to be some 64,000 years old. From Argentina and Spain to France, Australia, Indonesia, and even the United States, the discovery of these hands on walls has made us wonder about the role of artists in human evolution.

What People Are Saying about *Artist*

"From the perspective of a Hollywood studio executive, I am blown away by the wisdom and heart legendary acting teacher Jocelyn Jones imparts in her book, *Artist*. More than a how-to on becoming a great actor, *Artist* is a roadmap of how to become a brilliant human being. This book is as thrilling and inspiring as Steven Pressfield's classic, *The War of Art*, and should be a staple in any class encouraging creativity and imagination. I only wish I'd read this early in my career; I would have been wiser and more understanding. I encourage everyone interested in enriching their life and craft to read this book."

—DAVID PAUL KIRKPATRICK, former President of Paramount Pictures, former Production Chief of Walt Disney Studios

"*Artist* is the definitive look at the life and creation of the artist within you. Being an artist is a daily practice, and this book gives you the tools to embrace that life. It is a beautiful tribute to the soul of the artist and their creative process. Take the Journey with Jocelyn Jones. It's worth it!"

—MICHAEL PRESSMAN, producer, director, writer, winner of two Primetime Emmys

"Let me just say this—I feel the same excitement and enthusiasm as when I read *The Artist's Way* over thirty years ago. Jocelyn Jones' *Artist* is elevating—as if channeled through an ascended master while grounded with a best friend."

—DAVID KNOLLER, producer, director, winner of a Critics Choice Award, an AFI Award, three NAACP Image Awards, and two Primetime Emmys

"Having studied with Jocelyn, I can tell you: I've never met anyone who loves artists the way she does. Jocelyn saw me. The real me! The artist beneath all my pain and protection. She saw my heart and opened me up to it. She is one of my most treasured friends, and through reading this book, she'll become one of yours, too. *Artist* will open your heart and lead you to the artist inside. Enjoy the journey!"

—LEAH REMINI, actress, writer, producer, winner of two Primetime Emmys, and a PGA Award

"I absolutely love this book! Jocelyn Jones takes us on a spiritual journey that educates, inspires, and revitalizes the artist within. Her lessons and techniques are invaluable both professionally and personally. Being a student of Jocelyn's for over twenty years, it was a pleasure to gain insight into all that shaped her into the loving, caring artist and teacher she is today. As a reader, you'll want to put her lessons into action immediately. *Artist* is a gift to your body, mind, and soul! It will lead you to your authentic self—the artist within."

—LANA PARRILLA, actress, director, winner of two TV Guide Awards, a Teen Choice Award winner, and an ALMA Award

"Staggering! Jocelyn Jones inspires us all with her wisdom, spirit, artistry, and life!"

—PENNY FULLER, winner of a Primetime Emmy, nominated for two Tony Awards

"As a teacher of both acting and living, Jocelyn's guidance has influenced almost every aspect of my life. She's like an angel lighting the way. I am blessed to have been her student and so happy she is sharing this book with us. *Artist* is a gift!"

—KELLY RUTHERFORD, actress (*Melrose Place* and *Gossip Girl*)

"This book is amazing! In sharing her life's journey, Jocelyn makes us acutely aware of our own unique gifts. She offers invaluable tools. Tools that help us realize we have the ability to manifest everything we want. Tools that help us live in the NOW. Tools that help us realize how fulfilled we are when we truly live our lives in gratitude. I love, love, love this book."

—MIMI MAYNARD, producer, casting director, and actress

Artist

AWAKENING THE SPIRIT WITHIN



JOCELYN JONES



COPYRIGHT © 2022 JOCELYN JONES

All rights reserved.

ARTIST

Awakening the Spirit Within

ISBN 978-1-5445-2830-4 *Hardcover*

978-1-5445-2829-8 *Paperback*

978-1-5445-2831-1 *Ebook*

978-1-5445-2832-8 *Audiobook*

This book is dedicated to my three greatest loves:

My husband, Miles

My daughter, Samantha

And to the trees, who raised me…

Contents

What People Are Saying about *Artist* ..... *iii*

Artist ..... *xv*

Introduction *1*

1. The Journey Begins with a Goal *19*

2. Thinking You Know vs. Knowing You Know *37*

3. A Touch of Grace *49*

4. Learning to Notice What *Is* *63*

5. Living in the Moment *83*

6. Finding Spirit *101*

7. You Are Not Your Story *115*

8. Find *You*—Let the Rest Go *137*

9. Write Your Own Story *153*

10. Waking Up to Joy *173*

11. Tales from Hollywood *195*

12. Walking My Mother Back Home *213*

Conclusion *243*

Acknowledgments *267*

About the Author *269*



Artist

The artist is a soulful sort of being

A person who longs to express their experience in some way

They leave behind a trail of breadcrumbs

Like colored hands on cave walls

Reaching back to the age of stone

"I am here! I am alive!

My hand, therefore, I am!"

Once you see those hands on walls

Calling out as if to say hello

From there to here

From you to me

And back to you again

You are forever transformed

As if awakened to the timelessness that is NOW

All those hands

Reaching out through the ether

Somebody saw it

Somebody dreamed the idea

And once it was thought, it was done

And once it was done, it belonged to everyone

The artist sees what no one has seen before

And once expressed is embraced by all

As if it had always been there

At their most inspired, the artist seeks not only to express the truth of their discoveries but also to point us in the direction of our better angels. Their mission in life is to remind us that the potential of humanity is immeasurable.

The artist seeks to discover what we can *be* beyond what we already are.



Introduction

"Inside you there's an artist you don't know about."

—RUMI

This book is not your usual memoir

It is a teacher's tale

The stories told hold the seeds to personal lessons

The lessons learned grew into a teaching

The teaching bore more seeds

And on it goes

I offer this book to you because you are seeking

And because you found it

Or maybe because it found you

I am a teacher first and foremost. A reluctant teacher, true. One who—as you will learn—found traditional education insufferable. One who instead offers tools that inspire others to discover for themselves.

I believe there is an artist in everyone, and connecting to that creative source will lead you to your heart's desire.

I believe the evolution of humanity is the art of consciousness becoming aware of itself.

I believe we are far more than a person—we are a presence. And that presence of awareness is available to guide us in our life and art.

Asleep on the Job

We live in turbulent times, distracted by the complications of artificial intelligence, algorithms, and an ever-present tsunami of advertising and "influencers" coming at us from every direction.

We are bombarded with "information" from an out-of-control media hell-bent on telling us what we should think. How we should feel. What we should look like. How much to buy. Who we must vote for. And what and whom we should hate.

We are exhausted by a pandemic. Terrified by our political landscape. Overwhelmed by the environmental crisis. And despondent at man's inhumanity to man. It seems as if the whole of humanity has lost its way.

In the absence of leadership, education, civility, and common decency—the "wonders" of technology have come along and

hijacked our attention, rendering us little more than spectators trained to consume.

Speeding through existence—barely skimming the surface—we wonder why our lives seem superficial, unsatisfying, and unreal. Many of us feel detached from the planet, ourselves, and each other.

We don't realize this state of affairs persists because we *agree* that it does.

Whether we agree to *this* or we agree to *that* doesn't matter—we are agreeing to an *outside* reality—a media reality, a popular reality, someone *else's* reality, simply because we haven't been taught or encouraged to wake up and think for ourselves.

The answers to our problems are simple, but each individual must rise to the occasion for themselves.

If you feel like you're asleep, underwater, discouraged, defeated, lost, lonely, disheartened, hopeless, drugged, victimized, and/or addicted to things you know are unhealthy—I understand.

I have felt every one of these things at times. I believe we all have.

I was never beaten as a child. Never went hungry. I never worried about money—or whether I'd have a comfortable bed to sleep in. But I was disregarded. No one around me offered genuine interest in who I was or what I was going through, which led me to feel increasingly lost, alone, and terribly, terribly sad.

I think many people feel this way: ignored. In our current, highly narcissistic society, many of us suffer from not being seen or heard by a real-live, caring human being.

From a very young age, I turned to nature for comfort. And through that cherished relationship with the natural world, I discovered a connection to my own inner spirit. I learned to heal myself. I learned how to be whole. And so can you.

What is turmoil but a demand for change? What is an existential crisis but the opportunity to get back in touch with our values, meaning, and purpose—a signal to adopt actions and a direction that will lead us to a life we can be proud of?

We are being called upon to stop looking *outside* ourselves for answers, validation, and even love. We have reached a time in history when it is imperative for us to discover our own autonomy as beings. To heal ourselves, parent ourselves, love ourselves, and, most importantly, *listen* to ourselves. By "ourselves," I don't mean the incessant chatter of our self-centered egos, but rather the trustworthy counsel of our soul—which is there, waiting for us to be still, breathe into our hearts, and listen.

By listening to our own inner guidance, we have the opportunity to create our lives in concert with our higher selves and, in so doing, with the best in each other. This is what's meant by oneness, by wholeness—by unity. This is what's meant by awakening consciousness.

The chaos we're experiencing both individually and collectively is a sign of the times. It is summoning a new way to move forward. The time is: *now*. The question is: *how?*

Time to Wake Up

The answer is so simple it's difficult to believe: wake up!

Turn off all the noise. Ignore all the "influences," and connect to your own inner truth. The Law of Attraction is real. We *are* what we *believe*. We need to wake up and take responsibility for our thinking and what the hell we're placing our attention on. We need to understand and believe that a universal truth lies within each and every one of us. And we need to *believe* that truth into existence.

When we seek counsel from what we know in our own heart—and *act* on that truth—we move toward a higher state of humanity. This is the nature of evolution. This is why we're here! Our peril contains a message: *it's time to wake up and realize who you are and what you're capable of*.

Artists have always been our greatest opinion leaders. Artists are possessed by a need to reflect on what we're capable of beyond the day-to-day grind that dulls our senses and lures us into a collective sleep. This book is a humble attempt to wake up the artist in everyone—to connect you to your own source of inspiration and the solutions that live in the ether, waiting for you to tune in and listen.

If this book calls out to you, it is not because it offers answers to your most intimate questions, but because it offers stories and lessons that might lead you to discover those answers for yourself.

My goal is to help people uncover the very best in themselves—who you really are and what you are capable of when you listen to your own inherent knowledge. The book offers some age-old, very simple disciplines you can practice daily that will set you on the road to recovering your own autonomy.

My dream is to inspire people to contribute to the whole of humankind, each in their own unique way. I believe the most important thing in life is acting on what we know in our own heart to be true. If I can help others do that a bit more, I will have served a purpose.

My Story Begins and Ends with Acting

I am an actor's daughter. My father, Henry Jones, was a character actor whose Broadway career peaked in 1958 with a Tony Award for his performance in *Sunrise at Campobello.* In the play, Henry played Louis Howe, friend and advisor to Franklin Delano Roosevelt.

I was eight years old when it opened. I remember sitting fourth-row center, staring up at the grown-ups play-acting like children. To my young eyes, it looked like they were cavorting in a giant dollhouse. It still looks that way to me. A well-done play has a magic about it. I feel blessed to have grown up surrounded by the spirited people of that world. I loved their flamboyance, their humor, and their grown-up love of make-believe.

After my parents divorced, my father moved to Hollywood, where his life revolved around television and film work. Although "Henry Jones" wasn't exactly a well-known name, he supported our family through acting jobs alone. When he worked, we splurged on theatre tickets and dinners out. When jobs were scarce, supper might consist of a tuna sandwich or chicken noodle soup.

Everything about Hollywood seemed larger than life. To my young eyes, it was like living in a movie. The houses were mansions, the women glamorous, the men charming—even the freeways were triple the size of anything I'd ever seen—big roads leading to big dreams.

It seemed to me that all the superstars I met had two things in common:

1. Each and every one of them displayed a level of confidence I'd never seen before.

2. They seemed to have made themselves up out of thin air, manifesting an image and personality that resided somewhere in their imaginations. They became the person they dreamed of becoming. They did in their lives what they did in their work: they created a life of their own imagining—beautiful and dramatic.

I learned this truth: *acting is about creating a life where there once was none. It's about manifesting!*

I have been an acting teacher most of my adult life. I've taught actors who've starred in movies and television, people who've never set foot on a stage before, and every level in between. I've served as a creative consultant to some of the biggest movie stars in the world, and I've taught people with no innate talent for the job, helping them find confidence in their process and fulfillment in their careers.

In my thirty years of teaching, my intention has always been to offer techniques that will help actors connect to and flush out their best ideas. I engage them in ongoing conversations about the following:

- The benefits of a positive attitude

- Comporting themselves as a professional

- Imaginative administration

- Commitment to finishing the job
- The benefits of daily ritual
- The nature of inspiration
- And the inspiration of nature

I also talk to actors about the importance of intention in their work and that class begins and ends with *intending* to become the best person you can be.

I train actors to *know* that they know. I believe confidence is as simple as that: *knowing* that you know how to go about a thing.

Because actors sometimes get caught up in self-absorbed thinking, I offer practices to bend their interest toward concerns *outside* themselves. My intention is to give them tools that help ease them out of their carefully crafted personas in order to view the world from their *heart* as opposed to their head. I like to remind them: *a star shines not to bask in the glory of its own heat but to illuminate others.*

Actors

The actor as an artist is a seeker of souls

He wants to be *the hand*

He wants to be all *the hands*

He has a hunger to understand the nature of life

And is never as alive *as when in the throes of* being *someone else*

The actor is out to discover how life begins

By creating it himself again and again and again

Actors wear their insides out, reflecting for us the depth and breadth of the human condition. It's as if one life isn't enough for them. They want to conjure multiple lives before our very eyes.

When we see a performance we love, it lifts our spirit. We literally begin vibrating at a higher frequency, which invites us to leave our seats and *enter* the story. The actor is so real he transports us to another existence, and we take a little vacation from our own.

And when we return, feeling refreshed from our time away, don't we sometimes feel like, "Wow! If they can create that much life out of thin air—commanding thoughts, feelings, and behaviors at will—surely I can do a little better with my own?"

In this way, actors touch a kindred spirit in us all. Something in their work feels familiar, inspiring us to reach for more. Because actors create life in the moment, they have something to teach us all.

The more I explored the acting techniques I offer, the more I saw that they could apply to anyone interested in discovering and maintaining access to inspiration and the power of calling upon that connection at will.

Growing Up with Art and Artists

My father was an actor, my mother a photographer, and my step-father a writer. I grew up in one of the many artists' colonies scattered along the Hudson River Valley, often referred to as the Landing.

Clustered along a narrow, wooded road winding its way down to the river sits a collection of houses—some old, a couple new, a few dating back to the eighteenth century. On snowy winter nights, when the trees stand bare, the lights in the windows make the houses stand out like ornaments on a Christmas tree.

By mid-July, these houses hide behind the thick flora of ancient trees, an overgrowth of honeysuckle, and poison ivy—a metaphor for my experiences growing up there.

Because of the hamlet's proximity to Manhattan, an abundance of world-class artists have always inhabited the place. Country living grounds these luminaries, adding a sane contrast to the challenges of their celebrity existence in the limelight.

I remember these legends of the Landing gathered around our dining table, talking about their process and relationship with art. The painters were in a class of their own. They were different from the performing artists. They seemed anti-glamour, anti-fashion, and anti-establishment. Unlike performing artists, they weren't tasked with creating art before your eyes. Instead, at least in the '60s and '70s, they seemed transfixed on elevating the ordinary—something I became deeply interested in and that cropped up in my teaching later in life.

Point being, whether on the East Coast or the West, I spent my formative years studying a broad array of artists. Artists of all kinds. Artists at the top of their game. When they were into their work, they seemed lit from within—filled with joy and purpose. When they talked about a project, they led with enthusiasm. As long as they were involved in the creative process, they seemed happier and more authentic than in their everyday selves.

And when the project was over, they seemed to suffer a loss. They'd fall into doubt, wondering whether they could conjure all that magic again. It was as if they were going through withdrawal from the high of all that creativity.

I wanted to know more about that phenomenon. I wanted to know:

- Why do people become artists?
- What makes them different?
- What is their process?
- What are their problems?
- What makes them happy—*when* they are happy?
- And why did some of them take themselves out of the game completely?

Over years of observing, I developed a strong suspicion that an artist's *best* work didn't come from their head. In fact, it wasn't intellectual at all. An artist's best work seemed to come from their heart vibrating in unison with some higher, larger force. And with this unity came a passion. A sense of purpose. An enthusiasm for life. A devotion.

Boy, was I interested in that!

Just exactly what was that light I saw within greatness? It seemed to me of a spiritual nature. I would spend my life's work dedicated to understanding it.

Where Does It All Come From?

When their work is going well, artists feel *plugged into something*. Something that produces an energy not there before. Call it vision, call it the muse, call it inspiration—I call it spirit.

Spirit, God, muse, angels, guides, entities—these words and concepts can turn people off. Some people will bristle just reading this. It's as if these concepts have been hijacked by religious authorities and are not trustworthy anymore.

Awakening the spirit within is different. It is a deeply personal, one-on-one matter. This vital lifeline between you and *you* should be kept private and protected from other people's opinion, interpretation, invalidation, or alteration.

When I'm teaching, I refer to this energy exchange as *impulse* or *intuition* because I realize the concept of spirit-inspired art can be a little much for some.

But I challenge any artist to look at the four o'clock light streaming through a grove of redwoods, listen to the sound of water cascading over rocks, get drunk on the cherry blossoms in Central Park, eat a perfect peach, or dance under the northern lights on an island in Maine—I challenge them to *inhale* the miracles of nature and not feel a kindred spirit well up in them. When we take the time to observe and be touched by the power of nature, something moves in us. Something exciting. Something that feels familiar, like the best of us, like home.

There is a sleeping giant available to *anyone* who wishes to co-create either an acting role or the life of their dreams—no difference.

Getting to know that place within is one of the most *personal* things we do. Acknowledge and admire this spirit within, and your relationship will expand exponentially.

Exercise: Expanding into Unimaginable Truth

Throughout this book, I will offer meditations, exercises, and journaling prompts that will help you enter the present moment and open up a conversation with your heart.

Here's a fun way to feel connected to something greater than yourself. Stretch out on your bed, close your eyes, and consider this:

You are lying on a bed

In a room

In a city

On a planet

Which is spinning around at 1,000 miles per hour

While flying around the sun at 66,000 miles per hour

As our solar system circles the Milky Way at 450,000 miles per hour

And you are but one of more than seven billion human souls speeding through the cosmos

While seven other planets—also spinning, also revolving around the sun

Create exactly the right amount of gravity to keep the Earth in a stable orbit

And you snug in your bed

There we are! All of us whirling through the galaxy at an unimaginable speed. In perfect balance. Once you wake up to that, you've made a great start in appreciating the vastness of the spirit within. You've found wonder in what just a moment ago seemed ordinary and mundane.

Just as a benevolent force keeps the planets spinning in perfect order, the very same force keeps us on track as well.

To connect to the spirit within is to feel whole—in one deep breath, to realize we are complete. To connect to this power is to realize you *have*, have *always* had, and will *always* have indisputable inner guidance.

The moment you realize you can tune into that force is the moment you understand: YOU *are* that force, and you're *designed* to create the life of your dreams by listening to your heart. Coming to this understanding is like opening a long-lost letter from your higher self. Coming into this power is our destiny.

To connect to the spirit within is to never feel lonely again.

Your Connection to Spirit

Artists *live* to create. An artist in the act of creating is in ecstasy. They will tell you *creating* is their greatest joy.

I got to thinking one day—if the connection to inspiration/muse/spirit always brings joy, then we *should* be able to reverse engineer it. In other words, if the moment of inspiration is always connected to joy, can we *consciously* create joy as a means to live a more inspired and artful life?

I believe the answer is yes. Using the same techniques and exercises I give actors, I believe *anyone* can discover and connect to their own depth of joy. And because joy vibrates at such a high frequency, it opens us up to a more creative and inspired life.

This book is dedicated to helping you connect to and expand that source of inspiration—not just because the capacity to do so will elevate both life and art, but because in doing so, I am introducing you to your most powerful ally: YOU!

Not the you who you *think* you are. Not the personality you've spent your lifetime cultivating and are now so understandably attached to. Not the you who is wrapped up in the continuous worry, drama, and negative thinking we often addict ourselves to. Instead, I'm talking about the YOU who is waiting inside this marvelous equipment (body, mind, and spirit) to create the life *you* came here to live.

I want to help you locate and befriend the YOU who is an artist capable of manifesting anything.

By sharing my stories, I want to illustrate how the most challenging events of our lives are there to guide us to a higher perspective, to

our next lesson, to our next evolution, to an awakening of our best self—particularly when we embrace them as such.

People used to look up to artists not because of their popularity or personality but because of their special relationship with the muse. Actors, musicians, writers, painters, and dancers can wake up that harmonic in us, and we *feel* a connection moving quietly within. We feel inspired because they are inspired.

An inspired artist awakens our enthusiasm and interest in new things. Things *outside* ourselves. Those feelings may not last long, particularly if we don't know how to cultivate them, but we know we felt *something*, we felt *better*—we felt *right* somehow. If only we could feel that way all the time.

I believe we can. At least, I believe we can do a whole lot better.

- I believe art is the expression of a person who thinks for themselves.

- I believe there is art in everyone.

- I believe we are spirit in body, having an ingenious game with all this marvelous sensory equipment, and our nature is to grow, expand, and ascend to higher versions of ourselves.

- I believe in the art of living and that the simple act of making an egg for breakfast can be elevated to an artful gesture.

- I believe we are meant to create our lives with guidance from our higher selves, and we locate that connection by becoming still and turning our attention inward.

- I believe there's no better way to shift our world toward a more benevolent and unified collection of souls than for each of us to *exercise* and expand this intimate relationship to the spirit within, thereby living in coherence with our own heart.

This book is about luring, cultivating, and nurturing that profoundly personal connection as you draw upon the artist in you to create and manifest a life of your own making. If all of us strengthen our personal connection to this sacred place within, I believe we can manifest a soulful evolution of humankind rather than a sad extinction.

If you are an actor, if you are an artist, if you are someone seeking the tools to help you to create a more fulfilling, joyous, and artful life, well then, this book—which bears the seeds of my own lessons—this book is for *you*.