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The War Of Art

theWARofART

Break Through the Blocks
and Win Your
Inner Creative Battles

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STEVEN PRESSFIELD

"A vital gem...a kick in the ass." —*Esquire*



Synopsis

Think of The War of Art as tough love... for yourself. Since 2002, The War of Art has inspired people around the world to defeat "Resistance"; to recognize and knock down dream-blocking barriers and to silence the naysayers within us. Resistance kicks everyone's butt, and the desire to defeat it is equally as universal. The War of Art identifies the enemy that every one of us must face, outlines a battle plan to conquer this internal foe, then pinpoints just how to achieve the greatest success. Though it was written for writers, it has been embraced by business entrepreneurs, actors, dancers, painters, photographers, filmmakers, military service members and thousands of others around the world. "As I closed The War of Art, I felt a surge of positive calm. I now know I can win this war. And if I can win, so can you." - From the foreword by Robert McKee, screenwriting guru "[The War of Art] aims to help readers channel creative energy, unlock potential and overcome the fears that stop us from reaching our fullest potential. With courage, following the right formula and working hard, the book proposes that passion can be turned into purpose." - Ellen Degeneres book pick "Resistance is the voice in the back of our head telling us to back off, be careful, go slow, compromise. . . . [Steve Pressfield is] the godfather of the resistance, the five-star general in the war against fear." - Seth Godin "A vital gem . . . a kick in the ass." - Esquire "I've never read a self help book that wasn't fatuous, obvious and unhelpful. Until The War of Art. It's amazingly cogent and smart on the psychology of creation. If I ever teach a writing course this would be one of the first books I'd assign, along with the letters of Flannery O'Connor." - Jay McInerney, author of Bright Lights, Big City and Brightness Falls "Yes, The War of Art is hell. But Steven Pressfield is our Clausewitz who shows how you too can battle against The Four Horsemen of The Apologetic: sloth, inertia, rationalization and procrastination. Shakespeare, Rembrandt and Beethoven all are proof of what you can do with talent and General Pressfield." - Frank Deford, author and NPR commentator "A marvelous help for anybody who has ever encountered the resistance of a blank page, an empty canvas or an unyielding musical scale." - Stan Berenstein, co-creator of The Berenstein Bears Steven Pressfield is the author of the novels The Legend of Bagger Vance (made into the movie starring Matt Damon and Will Smith), Gates of Fire, Tides of War, Last of the s, Virtues of War, The Afghan Campaign, Killing Rommel, and The Profession. His nonfiction includes The War of Art, The Warrior Ethos, and the upcoming Turning Pro. His books are included in the curriculum at West Point and the Naval Academy, and are on the Commandant's Reading List for the Marine Corps. In 2012, Pressfield will launch his independent publishing company, BLACK IRISH BOOKS with his longtime editor, agent, publisher, and friend, Shawn Coyne.

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Customer Reviews

Know the enemy, know yourself, wrote Sun Tzu in his classic *The Art of War*, and your victory will be certain. For anyone who is stuck at a level below their God-given potential, who can't seem to get on track to do the things they need to do in order to achieve their most authentic goals, knowing the enemy and knowing yourself are one and the same. Steve Pressfield's magnificent little book *The War of Art* is about being more creative - but more important, it's also about fulfilling your potential as a human being. To do this, he says, you must overcome Resistance (the "R" is capitalized by Pressfield to represent the fact that it is a very real entity - as real to your authentic Self as Charles Manson or Genghis Khan were to their victims). The whole aim of Resistance, says Pressfield (who is the bestselling author of *The Legend of Bagger Vance* and *Gates of Fire*), is to prevent you from doing the work you are called to do. Resistance wants you to take it easy, to be ordinary and mediocre, to take the low road. Resistance is the reason so many people place a basket over the brilliant candle that shines within them. The fight against Resistance is, Pressfield says, a war to the death. Pressfield disputes the standard motivational cliché that you can have, do, or be anything if you follow the right formula and just work hard enough. Rather, he says: "We are not born with unlimited choices... Our job in this lifetime is not to shape ourselves into some

ideal that we imagine we ought to be, but to find out who we already are and become it." There are two occasions when Resistance will be the most relentless, and they are related. The first is when something really matters to you.

One thing is certain: Steven Pressfield was compelled by whatever source provides him inspiration for his craft to write this book. This is not a labor of love; it is a labor of compulsion. The book is also certain to draw extreme reviews: some will love it; others won't. Middle ground is unlikely. The book manifests itself: I don't think Steven Pressfield cares if he sells one copy, nor does he care whether we like it or not. He only knows that this was a book he had to write. I'm glad he did. The War of Art is a real-world extension of Bagger Vance, the Jonathan Livingston Seagull of the '90's. Pressfield's presentation draws comparison to many statements that have floated around in my head over the years. JLS said "You have the freedom to be yourself, your true self here and now." In the second edition of the Star War series (in the late '70's?) Yoda tells Luke Skywalker, "There is no try." Either do it or don't do it. The War of Art makes a strong case for both of these concepts. I was a fighter pilot for nearly 10 years, edited and published a newspaper for two, and entered the battlefield of corporate America two decades ago. As I concluded Pressfield's book, I was overwhelmed with the bittersweet feeling that I truly wished I had read this book when I was 20, not 52. Only having read one or two randomly selected pages when I got the book, I emailed by 20-year-old son in New Hampshire and made it "mandatory reading." He called me within 48 hours, and I couldn't fail to see the impression The War of Art had made on him. "Dad," he said, "For the first time in my life, I can see all the time I've wasted" The impact was as real as it was profound. I read once that "the only thing in the middle of the road is yellow stripes and dead armadillos.

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