Greetings from my studio in Atlanta, Georgia!

I'm so pleased you chose to join me for "A Field Guide to Joy: Creativity, Health, and Nature" which starts on Monday, December 8, at 9:30 am Mountain Time (11:30 am for those on the East Coast, or 8:30 am on the West Coast) via the SFW curated Zoom platform.

Montse Carty (montse@santafeworkshops.com) will be our Santa Fe Workshops course facilitator. Her job is hosting our Zoom sessions, answering your technical questions, keeping me on track, as well as collecting files for our image reviews. Montse will email you an invitation with a link to our first Zoom meeting.

As you prepare for our first session, please take some time to familiarize yourself on a basic level with Zoom. Attached is a document from Santa Fe Workshops about using Zoom. Take time to set up a comfortable classroom environment in your home. I will make our Zoom room as warm and collaborative as possible with the intention of replicating the communal nature of a live studio space. When we create together, we grow together.

Also, for our first session, please choose three of your images that represent the kind of photographs or artwork you currently enjoy making. These don't have to be your best works of all time, but three that speak about what you are focused on currently. Please upload these images before 5 pm MT on Thursday, December 4* using this JotForm link: https://bit.ly/4oEAsHC

Use these specs —

- Full-size JPEG
- sRGB
- At least 2000 pixels on the long edge
- File Naming: FirstInitialLastName_Sequence.jpg (example: jsmith_01.jpg, jsmith_02.jpg)

***Note that late images submitted after the specified deadline may not be included in review/critique.** *Please respect all submission deadlines as they allow your instructor and course facilitator adequate time to prepare. Students who register within 3 days of the start date may be unable to participate in the first critique.*

At our first session, I will ask each of you to introduce yourself and then walk us through your three images, explaining where you are as an image maker. (Pro tip: Practice your words; you will have 5 minutes). If this sounds intimidating, please don't worry. We will gather in a non-judgmental space as creative people at different places on our image-making journey. Our strength together is to be in support of each other as we learn and grow.

Below is a list of our group meetings and a rough idea of our activities. For each session there will be an assignment to complete for the following week. Participants should have a sketchbook of their choosing with basic art materials (pencils, pens, basic watercolors, watercolor pencils…) and a smartphone with the Merlin app if possible. Looking at and

listening to birds is the springboard for our learning and image-making. Whether you are joining us from an urban or rural area, birds are all around us and provide ample opportunity to open pathways for personal storytelling, creative image-making, and connecting to joy. Why? Because joy lives alongside loss and struggle, but it must be actively cultivated in order to function as a tool of resilience and well-being.

Session one: December 8
Getting started— We will get to know one another through an introduction to the class content and how we will approach the topic. We will examine where creativity, nature, and health intersect and what the research tells us. We will examine our relationship to creativity and nature and how it drives our sense of well-being. We will review examples of creative work from the instructor and other artists exploring this space, and review participant's three images as a springboard into our work together.

Session two: December 11
Class will open with a voluntary sharing of the "homework assignment." Then, we will explore the concept of mindful observation. Practicing mindfulness in nature can sharpen our senses, and in doing so, we can become more aware of the richness of our surroundings, uncovering hidden wonders that can open our creative pathways. How does this practice foster a space for image-making? We will engage in a creative exercise and end with a discussion.

Session three: December 15
The layers of listening— Class will open with a voluntary sharing of the "homework assignment." Then, we will explore the concept of deep listening. How can we become present in a place and listen with the intention of driving our creative process? We will explore the sounds around us and explore how layers of listening can drive image-making and ground us in a sense of place. We will process this experience through a creative exercise.

Session four: December 18
Digesting our time together—We will engage in a review of our images made throughout class and the concepts that drove our work. Our discussions will help us examine practices that will expand our creative ecosystem and help us to create more profound and resonant images that connect us to our sense of well-being.

Everyone's time is so valuable, and I am grateful that you chose to spend your time in this class. For our sessions, let's be on time and fully present to make the most of it. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions. My email is tina.mullen9@gmail.com. Between our sessions, I will also hold scheduled office hours for those interested in speaking individually.

Kindly,
Tina