

# DEEP COLLAGE

Jean Hess Studio © 2023 Presented to Collage Artists of America. Earlier version Kolaj Live Knoxville, 2021.

## INTRODUCTION: A WHIPLASH TOUR

We collagists say we are open to random influence, but all of us come to the table with certain preferences. An artist's **vocabulary** of subject, palette, form, line results from these biases.

I favor **uplifting imagery** with no stringent message, no lesson:

Celestial imagery: Light, reflection, mist, floating forms.



Aerial imagery: A view from above.

Nature: Animals, plants, rocks, minerals and gems.



**I differentiate between "pure" or traditional collage** – paper glued to paper – and **"collage painting"** that mixes media and seals the surface with paint or resin.

I agree that collage is the most surprising medium. However, in my own work collage also needs **refinement** -- pencil, ink, paint, pastel – even if it is simply paper glued to paper. That helps to subtly obscure harsh edges, brighten found colors, clarify lines and add flourishes.

So there is "refinement."

**BUT**

**there is also "Mischief" – play, experimentation, destruction.**

## DEEP COLLAGE

"Deep" does not mean beautified or perfected.

"Deep" = Mischief = **Skewed**

### **GOAL: SURPRISE**

**Disruptive:** Shifting touch, changes, quirks, misses.

**Provisional.** Impermanence, experiment, testing.

**Energized, resonant, layered.**

**Revealing.**

**Evidence of **lapsed time**:** Percolation, re-thinking, contemplation.

Paul McCartney's time-lapse example: put down something you have written,  
wait, then resume ----->

### **METHOD: GOING DEEP**

***Laissez Faire:*** Allow for random accident and surprise.

**Amplification:** Paint; pencil; clear coatings; floaters; scattered dry pigment

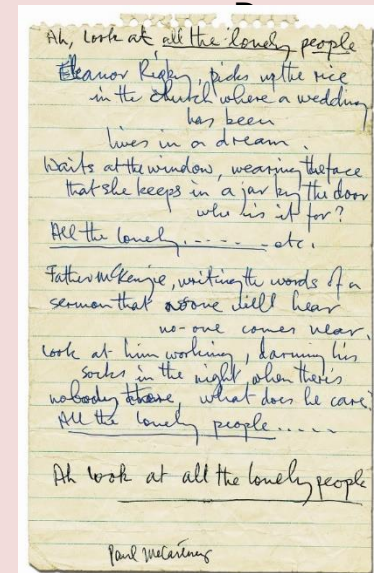
**Deconstruction:** Fracture; fragments; break-up; tear

**Reconstruction:** Re-arrange; restore

**Obfuscation:** Hide; mix; deface; scramble; shuffle

**Layering:** Light refraction; depth

**Excavation:** Reveal what's underneath



## Credits and Asides

Accidental Skew: David Remnick. "Paul McCartney Doesn't Really Want to Stop the Show." The New Yorker. October 11, 2021: [Paul McCartney, notes for Eleanor Rigby]

<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2021/10/18/paul-mccartney-doesnt-really-want-to-stop-the-show>

Intentional Skew: <https://www.amusingplanet.com/2017/08/the-art-of-deliberate-imperfection.html>

Japanese bowl with intentional flaw. Photo credit: [Chris Spackman/Wikimedia](#)



Notice a little "spirit lines" or dropped threads; maybe intentional. Photo credit: [Less than perfect](#)



Beatriz Milhazes' "decal" or mono-transfer work:

<https://www.jamescohan.com/exhibitions/beatriz-milhazes5/selected-works?view=multiple-thumbnails>

[https://whitecube.com/artists/artist/beatriz\\_milhazes](https://whitecube.com/artists/artist/beatriz_milhazes)

Collage Artists of America:

[www.collageartists.org](http://www.collageartists.org)

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