

Organising For Creative People

Sheila Chandra Watkins (ISBN 978-1-78678-022-5) £10.99

Sheila Chandra is on a mission to save artists from the damaging myths that keep them in chaos. This book opens with a powerful testimonial from the artist Stik, whom Sheila mentored from homelessness to successful artistry. From the outset it is a straight-talking, no-messing guide to getting your shit together as an artist. Within its welcomingly large-print pages, the romantic myth of the crazy artist is deconstructed and replaced with a comprehensive system for self-care – from streamlining shelving to organising last rites!

The nuts and bolts of surviving as an artist in a schizophrenic world which both fetishises and impoverishes artists, are rarely taught in arts education. So much financial anxiety, substance abuse and general bewilderment could be spared if this practical, empathic advice was more widely available. The power-politics of the arts industries would also be challenged – Sheila's suspicion that the "uncontrollable, creative chaos myth" has been spread to "make creative people malleable" rings true.

So this book is not just a tidy-your-desk manual – even though it may well inspire you, as it did me, to throw all your paperwork in a big pile, sort it out and feed a lot of it to the recycle bin – it is a handbook for self-mastery. Whilst there is plenty of detailed instruction, there is also space to "make this book your own". Sheila anticipates and offers ways to navigate the questions, dilemmas and obstacles that arise in the course of a creative career. Written in a conversational and friendly tone, this book offers the reader a highly intelligent consultation with a world-

class artist. Not only that, but as a map to building a solid foundation for artistry, you can consult it time and time again. Which for £10.99 is a pretty good deal.

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