<div align="center">**BRAINSTORM SLOW-COOKER ©MEGHAN O'CONNOR 2020**</div>

BRAINSTORM:
What's the point? If you were going to paint a room in your house, would you pick the first color that pops in your head without looking at your options? Maybe you would, and maybe it would work out, but maybe not. Why not "go to the paint store and look at some swatches"? What would it hurt? Brainstorming is just educated decision making. It's about becoming aware of what's in your mind and around you.

How can you approach the idea of "_____"? Are there definitions or images that come to mind? Maybe some of what you've drawn makes you think about specific people, places, or things, social or cultural constructs, or repercussions? Or do you think about feelings or emotions, human behaviors? We all have different backgrounds, different "baggage," so each of us can approach the same ideas in very different ways, as long as we PUSH ourselves to do so.

The easy thing to do is the first little thing that pops into your head. The more challenging, but also more rewarding result, is to brainstorm, sketch, and come up with multiple ideas, ideas with layers, depth (metaphorically speaking). If your idea is a rabbit hole, do you want to stand at the entrance or explore its depths?

How can you kick-start your brainstorm (INSPRIATIONS)? **Document your brainstorming.**
-   Reading about certain imagery that happens to arise in your work
-   Watch, reflect, and write on personal or other experiences (like the news, personal mytholgy, etc.)
-   Look at other art and artists; at their imagery, content, or materials and working methods
-   Create sketches from the subconscious: exquisite corpse, record dreams (provides chance & spontaneity)...we've done this already!!!
-   Stream of consciousness writing/ drawing (no editing, whatever is in your head comes out)
-   Clustering or "mind mapping" (brainstorm bubbles)
-   **COLLABORATION: listening and talking to others about your ideas!**

SUBJECT MATTER:
Choose your subject matter? Do you want to choose the obvious? What are the possible pitfalls of choosing the obvious? WHAT IS THE OBVIOUS? Be aware of these pitfalls and either avoid them, or consciously use them to your advantage.

FORM:
What **FORM** will your **SUBJECT MATTER** take? Representational, Abstracted, or Non-objective? What color, size, type of mark? Will the actual or implied texture of the surface be altered? Will the colors or scale be altered to create a different meaning?

For example: I normally like to work with birds or other small animal imagery, or sometimes the elderly. First I have to choose the subject matter; but, a-bird, is-not-a-bird, is-not-a-bird…

Possible forms/ ways to visually portray your imagery
-   age: young, old, postmortem, in-utero
-   health: molting, weight, is it missing an appendage?
-   a specific species or iconography (with or without symbolism)
-   an image of a statue of a figure
-   scale: larger than life, life-size, very small
-   how it's drawn: realistic, photographic, collage, abstracted, non-objective
-   Mark making: controlled vs. chaotic, contour vs. gesture
-   Color: bright, dull, warm, cool, achromatic, selective color placement, earth-tones, monochromatic, complementary, etc.
-   Any combo of the previous, or anything not listed too

A lot of times the FORM you choose to present your subject matter can add MORE visual impact to your work than the choice of the subject matter itself.