Magic in the Making

WHERE ANCIENT TRADITION MEETS CREATIVE PLAY

DEMONSTRATION PROPOSAL

Jenny Santa Maria
TEACHING ARTIST

Overview

Across cultures, the egg has long been celebrated as a symbol of renewal and celebration of life—a reflection of our shared humanity across time and place. This live educational performance explores the cultural and historical significance of ***pysanky***, Ukrainian egg decorating: introducing its historical and cultural significance, symbolism, and materials through demonstration. By bringing this centuries-old tradition to life, the demonstration invites viewers to try their own hand at the craft, carrying its history, artistry, and spirit into their homes to share with their families.

As layers of wax and dye build, so does anticipation, culminating in a final reveal when the wax is removed and the full design emerges all at once. No two works are ever the same, and each result is striking. A traditional pysanka is created step by step, followed by a live improvisation that unfolds in real time, guided by audience suggestions and shaped through the artist's skill and decision-making in the moment. Drawing on over 15 years of demonstration experience, audiences often describe the process as watching something akin to magic, giving the presentation a performance-art quality. Both works are completed live and gifted to audience members. Designed to engage audiences of all sizes, from intimate groups to high-capacity audiences in lecture halls, theaters, and large-scale venues.

Experience

I've been teaching pysanky for over a decade in a wide range of esteemed settings across New England. My workshops and demonstrations have been hosted by art centers, museums, libraries, and botanical venues, including the Center for Contemporary Art in Hudson Valley (NY), Omega Institute (NY), Newport Art Museum (RI), Brattleboro Museum & Art Center (VT), Grounds for Sculpture (NJ), Chapel of Sacred Mirrors (NY), Shelburne Craft School (VT), and Snow Farm (MA). I've also brought this tradition to higher education and retreat environments, including Monmouth University and Honey Hollow Farm in New Hope, PA. My work has been featured in numerous periodicals, including the Wall Street Journal ('22).

PROGRAM DETAILS

- **All ages welcome:** Family-friendly, inclusive, and accessible to a wide range of audiences.
- **No audience limit:** Adaptable to settings ranging from intimate groups to high-capacity audiences in lecture halls, theaters, and large-scale venues.
- **Audience participation:** Viewers are invited to help shape the creative process by suggesting colors, design elements, and artistic approaches, from painting techniques to creating gradients.
- **A small taper candle is used:** A small taper candle is used throughout the process. I would just need approval for its use and can provide a Certificate of Insurance (COI) if needed.
- **Two egg giveaways:** Two decorated eggs created during the demonstration are given away to audience members as a memorable part of the experience.
- **Virtual option available:** Fully equipped to present live demonstrations from my home studio, a popular option for libraries and remote audiences.

PROGRAM FEES

FORMAT	DURATION	FEE
In-Person Demonstration	90 minutes	**$250**
Live Virtual Demonstration	90 minutes	**$150**

BOOKING & CONTACT

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