



Playing to Learn in Higher Education: Thinking outside of the pizza box

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Bio

Megan Lotts is the Art Librarian at Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, where she teaches research workshops, builds collections, facilitates programming, and events, and closely engages with students and faculty researching in the Arts. Lotts has presented her research both nationally and internationally and has published articles in *portal: the Libraries and the Academy*, *Art Documentation*, *Journal of Library Administration, College and Research Libraries News* and more. In 2021 the American Libraries Association published her first book *Advancing a Culture of Creativity in Libraries: Programming and Engagement* and Lotts is working on her second book “The Playful Library” forthcoming July 2024. Her research interests include creativity, outreach & engagement, makerspaces, play, and the work of library liaisons. She is known for her work implementing LEGO® play, a culture of creativity, and curating the exhibition spaces at the Rutgers University Art Library, as well as teaching a semester long seminar “Playing to Learn in Higher Education.” Megan earned her MFA (2004) and MLIS (2007) from University of Wisconsin-Madison and has a BFA in Painting (2000) and BFA in Art History (2002) from the University of Illinois-Champaign-Urbana. She currently lives in New Brunswick, NJ and continues to create site-specific conceptual works of art.



Abstract

Play and playful learning can be freeing and allow for spontaneity, which is crucial when performing scholarly research, solving problems, or honing life-long learning skills. But also, playful teaching moments provide opportunities for individuals to engage with libraries in non-traditional ways which expands the ideas of what is possible in our civic spaces. Engaging play encourages individuals to reflect, strategize, and work in unconventional ways all while using tools which are readily and easily accessible.

This presentation will look at the course *Playing to Learn in Higher Education* which is a ten-week seminar taught by a faculty librarian in an academic art library. Those who attend will learn more about the pedagogy of play and view examples of playful learning activities and assignment used for multi-modal library engagement. But also, individuals will have the opportunity to try a series of playful learning exercises facilitated via a zine similar to an assignment used in the course.



Timeline (60 mins)



Intro & play pedagogy
(5 mins)



Playing to Learn in Higher Education
(5 mins)



Activities
(35 mins)



Questions, Answers, & Discussion
(15 mins)



What is play?

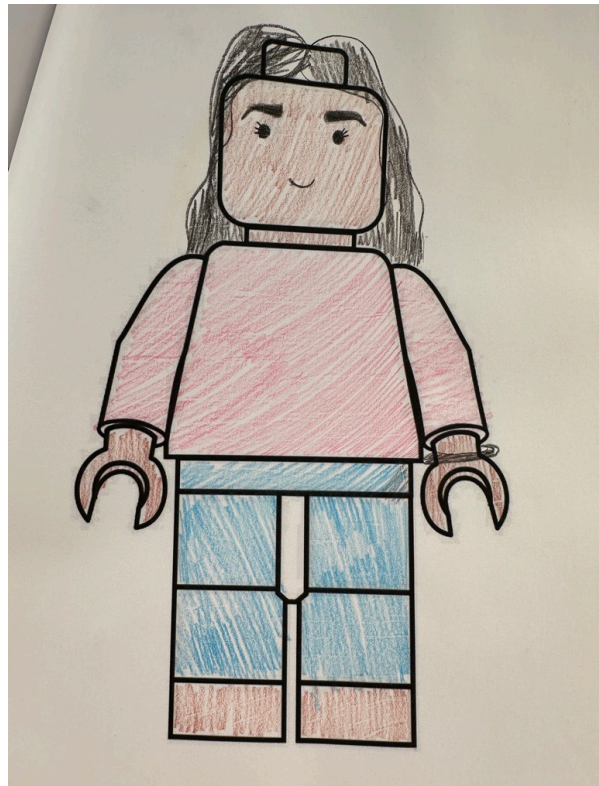
Benefits of play?



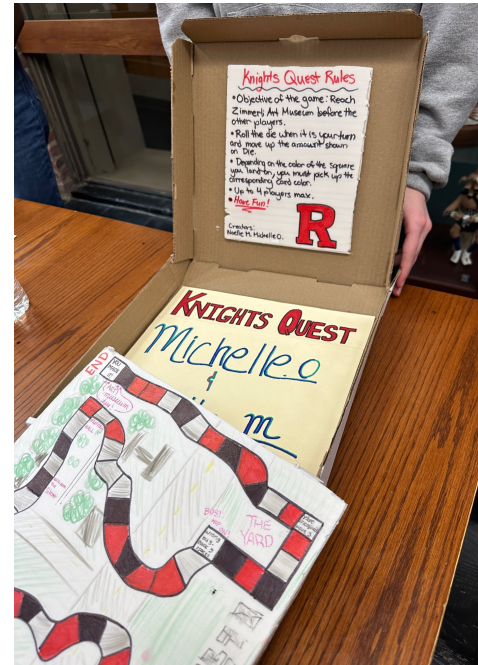
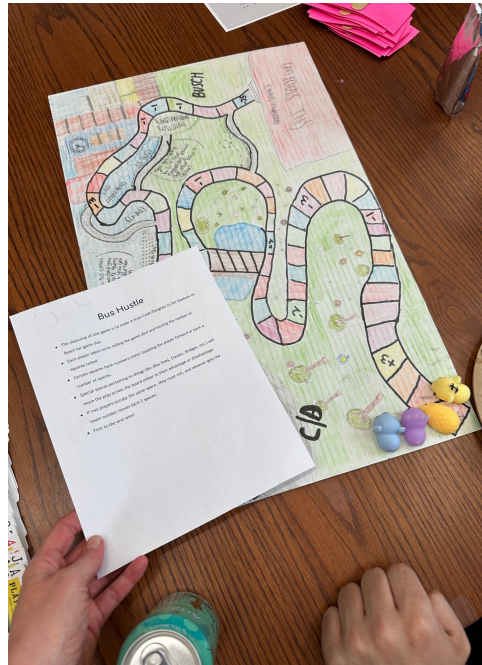


Playing to Learn in Higher Education

LEGO workshop



Making Games



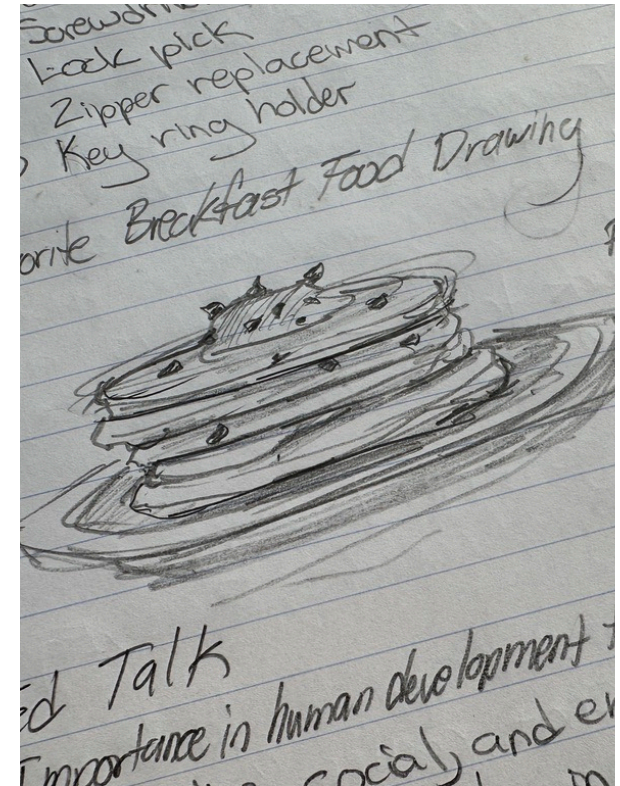
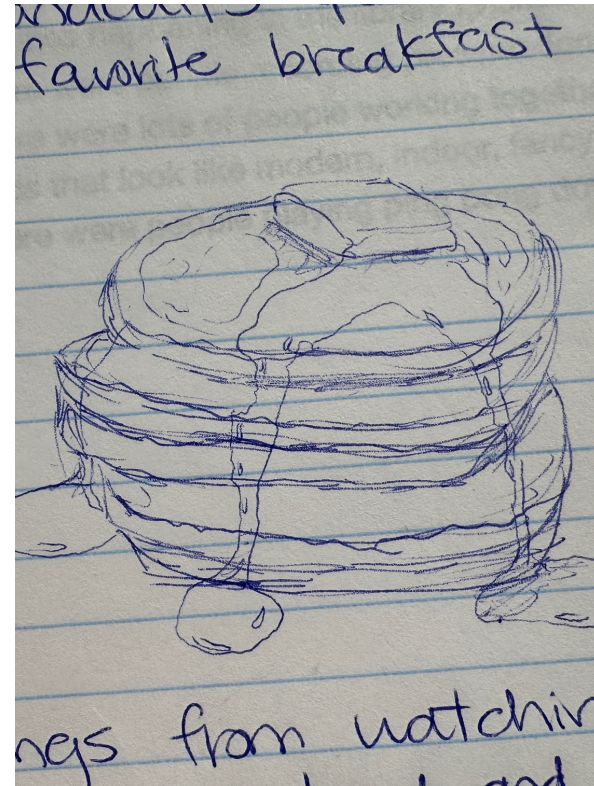
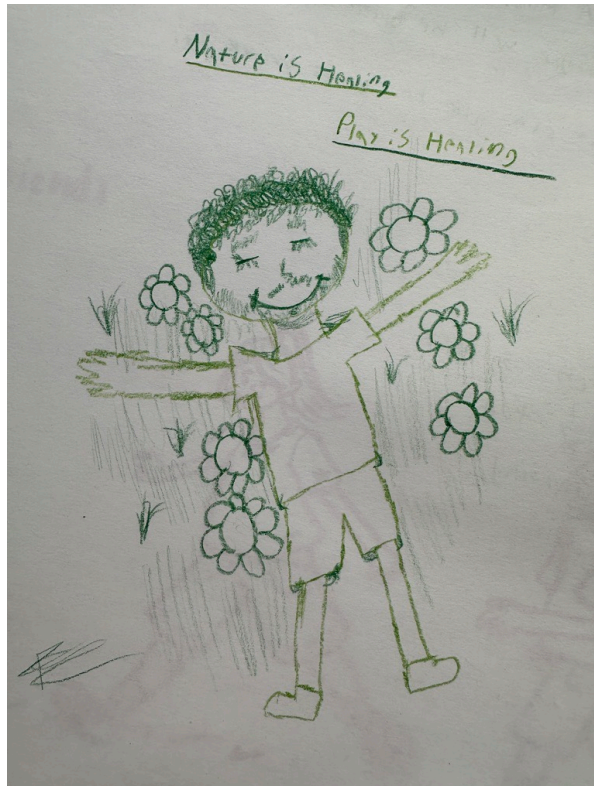


Making Zines

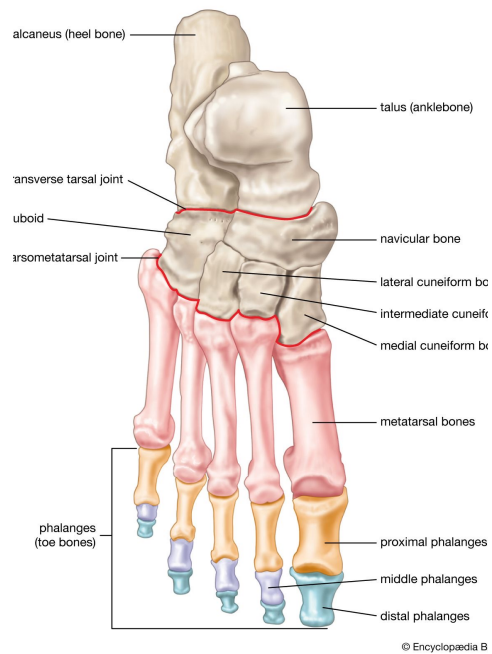


Visual Literacy

Drawing

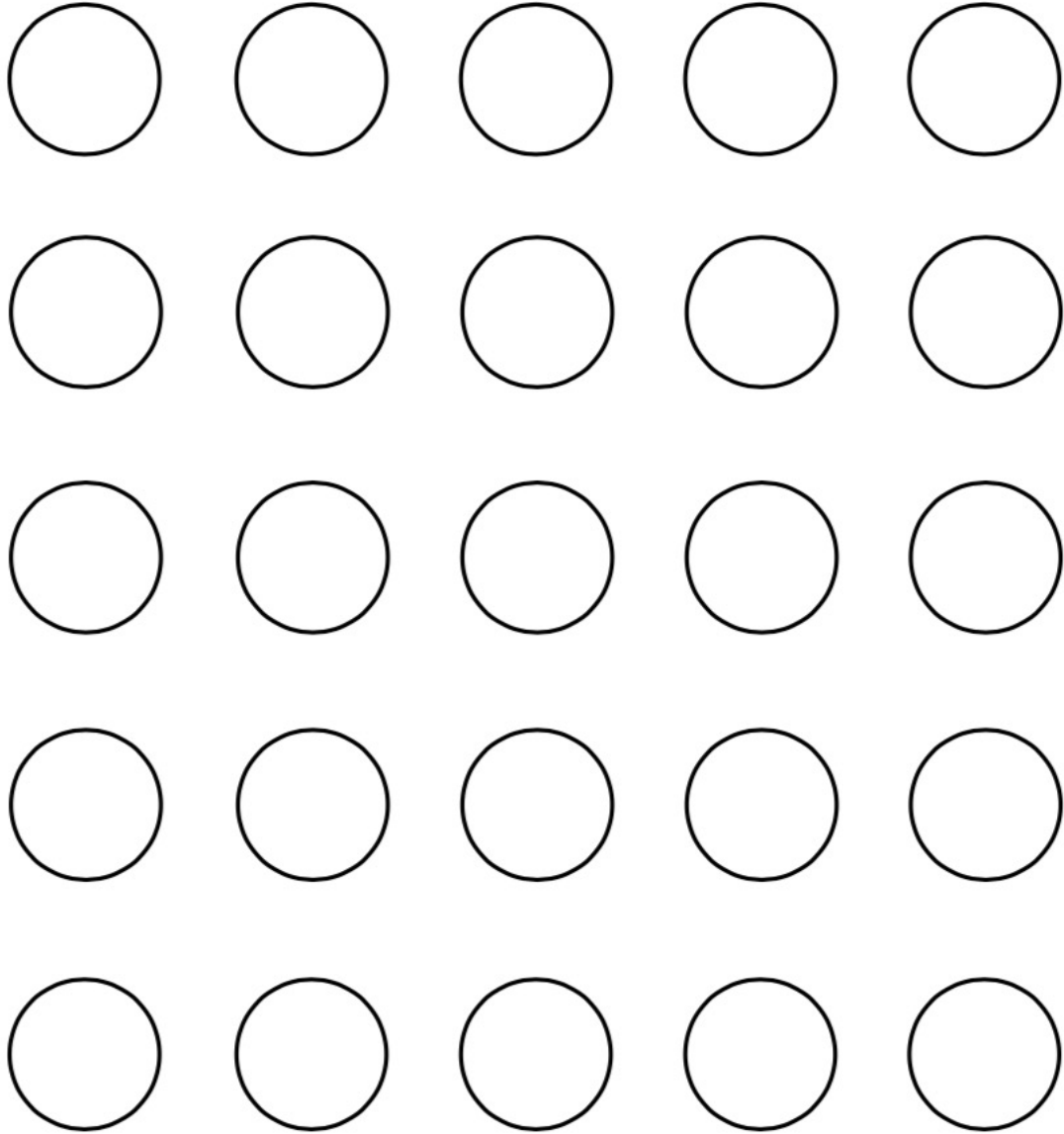


Vegetable feet

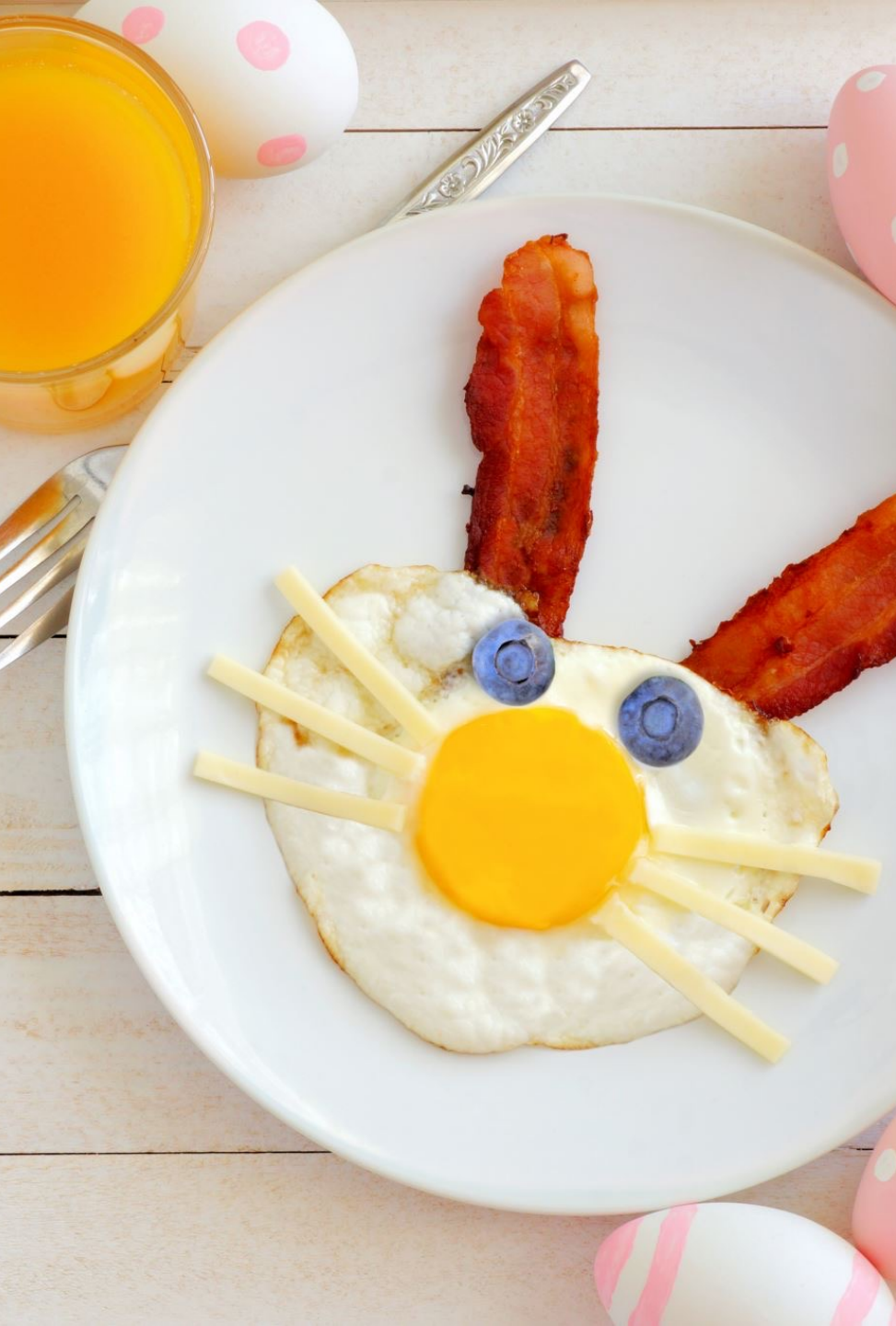


CIRCLE DOODLE TEMPLATE

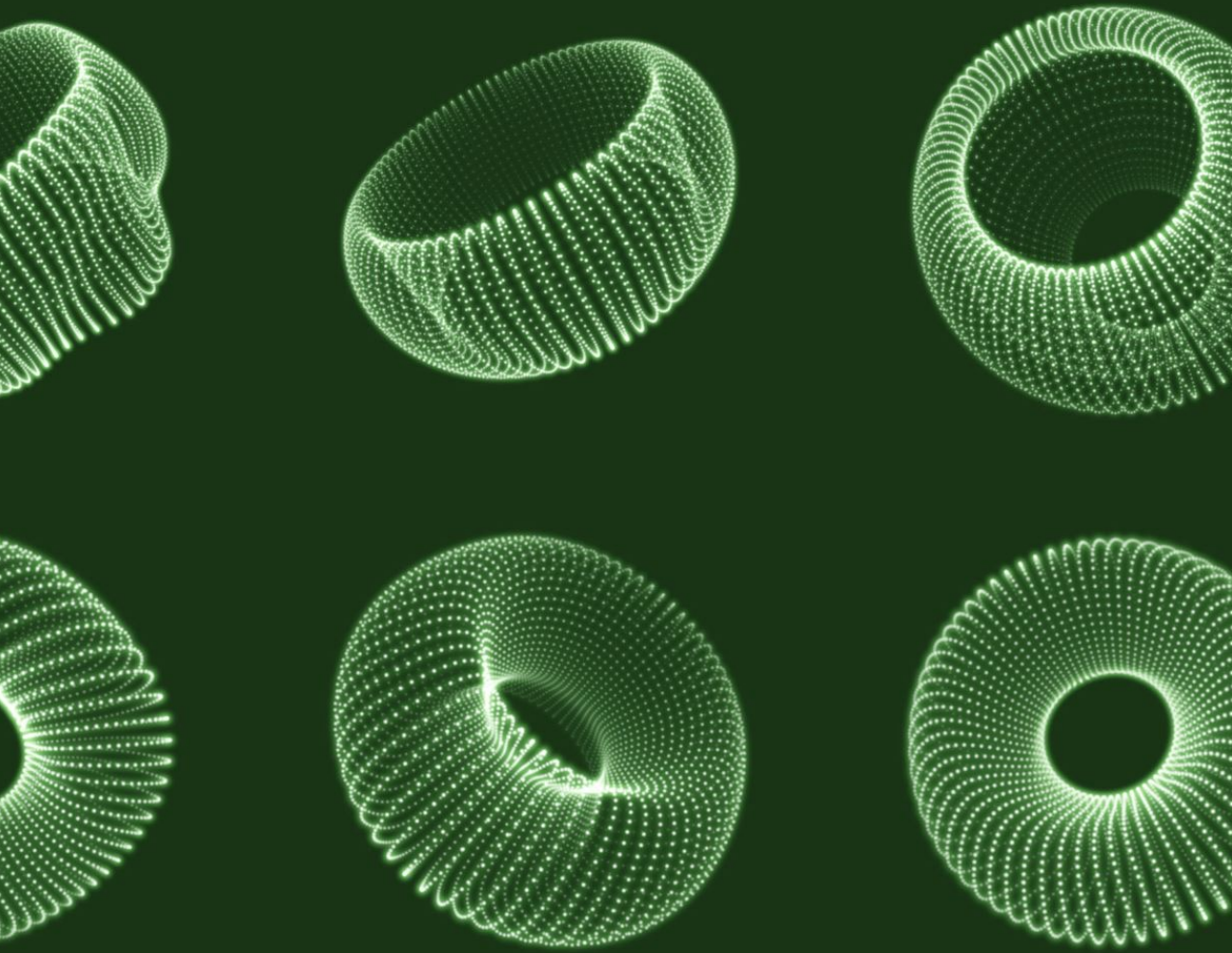
Use these circles as a starting point to create your own doodles!



CIRCLES



Draw your favorite
breakfast



6 LINE Drawings



6 WORD Stories



3 ideas



What did
you learn
today?

MEGAN LOTTTS

THE PLAYFUL LIBRARY



BUILDING ENVIRONMENTS
for **LEARNING** and **CREATIVITY**

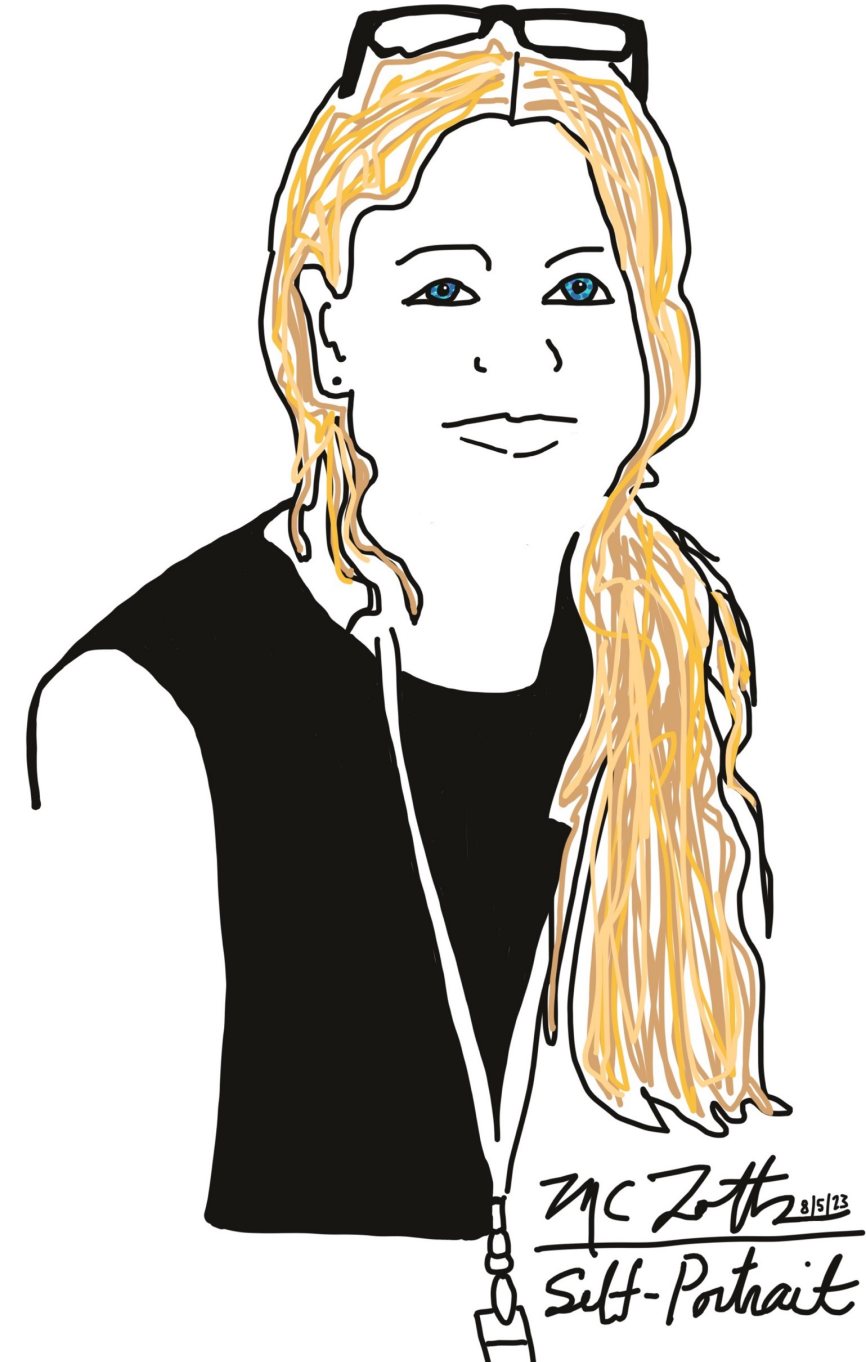
Learn
More...

ADVANCING A CULTURE OF CREATIVITY IN LIBRARIES

Programming and Engagement



MEGAN LOTTTS



Thanks, Questions, & Discussion

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