



"I got a toy snake but it's not a real snake. You can make snakes out of paint and wood, but you can't do nothing with 'em. "

John Martin Artist Statement

Ora Mae, my auntie, she put me in this program a long time ago (1986). I go to church on Sundays and come back up here on Mondays. They have the youth class on Saturdays, I come here and just hang out and draw he died he left all his tools at the house. My other uncle in Vallejo. Bob, *he* used to work on cars and my cousin Chantell's dad did welding and metal stuff.

I walk from my house around nine or ten in the morning to get to Creative Growth. It takes a couple hours. Like walking 'cuz you can get around easier and the coolest things I have, I've picked up on the street. Better than stealing. Walking down Webster Street you can find hammers, nails, a screwdriver, pocket knives, wrenches, and tools. I like to use pastel and markers to trace them (tools) on wood and draw them on paper. I find books and magazines on the street and bring them down here (Creative Growth). You can find anything on the street.

I get ideas looking at comic books and watching cartoons on the tv. Can't watch TV right now 'cuz it's broken. Sometimes I take my scissors, cut cereal boxes and coupons, put 'em in my sketchbook. I like Smokey Bear, he's a person that be's on tv. He tells you not to play with fire matches or lighters. If you burn the house down you won't have the house no more. Got in trouble for playing with fire. My auntie told me, 'you know better than play with fire, you play with matches you can get burned. They not a toy. You got toys to play with.' She said, 'you gonna burn the house down then you got no place to live!' I never started a fire though.

My auntie likes to make fried chicken, you can't eat that alligator meat raw. Alligator meat you gotta cook in a cast iron skillet and then when there is leftovers you can take it to workshop *Creative Growth* with you. I come to Creative Growth every day, 5 days a week to make artwork. This is my job. "Thank you Jesus for John Martin...." (he sings)