

The Starving Artist's Diet

A Survival Guide



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The Jackodile Press
Indianapolis, IN

Published & distributed by:

The Jackodile Press

Indianapolis, IN

www.jackodile.com

in association with:

IBJ Book Publishing

41 E. Washington St., Suite 200

Indianapolis, IN 46204

www.ibjbp.com

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Cover photo by John Lugar and Jack Lugar.

Author's photos by Elisabeth Lugar.

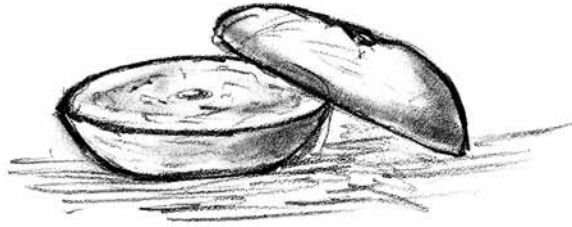
Illustrations by Jack Lugar.

ISBN 978-1-934922-35-4

First Edition

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010940113

Printed in the United States of America



PREFACE

Whetting Your Appetite

So, the Bohemian lifestyle looks good to you. You saw *Rent*; you read Kerouac; your parents were hippies. You're an intellectual. You're misunderstood. People think you're a slacker, but you're really out to change the world. You're not the average Joe (or Jane); you are an Artist. You wear the right clothes, live in the right place, and hang out in the right dives.

You're not Thomas Kinkadee making millions on cheesy landscape paintings for wall clocks and umbrellas. You're not even making thousands. Let's get real. You probably didn't even break a grand last year.

But you aren't just any artist. No, you're special. You've got your paints. You've got your stories, your scripts, and poems. You've got your performances, your instruments, your secondhand film and video equipment. You've got a wardrobe that tells people you're edgy but not trendy - because you don't follow trends, you start them.

So now what? What are you going to eat? Not much. Why? Because you have No. Freaking. Money. And where does that leave you? That's right. Starving.

Let's face it. For the most part artists are poor. There are, of course, a few exceptions: the millionaire whose art has already been sold at outrageous

"I bought a gallon of apple juice for a dollar and drank almost the entire thing for 'dinner.' I had explosive diarrhea for about a week until I saved up enough money to buy some Pepto."

BRONSON MAIJALA -
DRUMMER

"I have skipped many a meal for a candy bar."

COURTNEY KAY MEYERS - COMEDIAN

capitalist prices, the fortunate trust fund artist with an allowance still paying him at age 34, and the part-time artist who considers his subscription to the Independent Film Channel to be an oasis from the monotony of a direct deposit salary.

But they're not starving. You are. And you need a diet¹ that fits your budget and gives you enough food to survive.

"Supper of an artist: macaroni and cheese, and lots and lots of Captain Morgan 100, Sailor Jerry 93 proof and Cointreau for the fancy nights."

JAMI HARPER -
PHOTOGRAPHER

But where do you go? What do you eat? How often do you eat? These questions, and ones you never would have thought of, will be answered for you in this, *The Starving Artist's Diet*.

The greatest strength of the Diet is that it's an eating plan for everyone. It's perfect for the Laurels and the Hardys. If you need to gain weight because of your "Starving Artist" lifestyle, *The Starving Artist's Diet* will help you fulfill your every dining need. On the other hand, if you're a little on the large side, have no artistic talent whatsoever, and are looking for more than just another weight loss guide, *The Starving Artist's Diet* is perfect for you too. It's a guide to changing your eating habits forever and maybe discovering a new talent at the same time.

In fact, you don't even have to be an artist to succeed on *The Starving*

¹ Always consult a doctor before starting a diet program. I can, of course, tell you what the doctor will say about *The Starving Artist's Diet*. He'll say, "I think eating is better than starving to death, so even though this isn't the healthiest diet to follow, it won't kill you like starvation will. In fact, this may actually prolong your life, so before starting this diet, you may want to consider the consequences of your actions. That'll be \$120. Please pay on your way out."

I was just paraphrasing what the doctor would say, but I think that I'm pretty spot on. Even though I'm not a doctor, and never had the chance to play it with that cute little girl who lived across the street when I was a kid, I feel pretty strongly about my knowledge in this area. Sure, I've never appeared on *Oprah*, and I don't have my own infomercial, but I have something better: I have my integrity and the passion to see Starving Artists eating. But if you want to spend the money and consult your doctor, well then, go right ahead. I'm not going to stop you. I actually have no way of stopping you. I probably don't even know that you have this book. Of course, you think the government is tracking you. This may be true, but it probably isn't. They've got bigger paranoid lunatics to keep their eye on. You're basically nothing. Now, don't get me wrong. I'm not saying that to make you feel bad. It's just the truth. You're just a Starving Artist. Maybe once you hit the big time, then you can afford to be a little paranoid, but for now, just worry about your next meal.

Artist's Diet. You could have flunked out of kindergarten art for the inability to cut and paste or finger paint. The Diet does not discriminate. Do you love art? Have you doodled during class? Ever seen a picture of a drawing of a photograph of the Mona Lisa? Spilled ketchup on your shirt? Then brace yourself for a deluge of information that will save you money and help you lose/gain/maintain your weight.²

"I should be vegetarian, but I really enjoy meat. Something in my brain enjoys meat so much that it allows me to drown out the animal cries."

SEAN QUINN - COMEDIAN

² *The Starving Artist's Diet* makes no guarantee of weight loss, weight gain, or an improvement in your artistic skills. If you were truly serious about doing one of those three things, you'd have consulted an expert and spent your money much more wisely than you did when you bought this book.



CHAPTER 1

WHAT IS A STARVING ARTIST?

And other things you already know.

It's not really an age-old question. Most people haven't really given it any thought. Confucius never provided any insights into it, and *Webster's Dictionary* doesn't bother with a measly definition. You could, of course, go to Wikipedia and get a definition, but who really trusts Wikipedia except the student desperate to pad a bibliography for the report that's due in 20 minutes. Okay, sure, I used Wikipedia in the process of crafting this book, but ... well, that's really fairly self-explanatory.

So what is a Starving Artist, really? Is it someone who has no money, no insurance, and no food? How many tattoos do you have to have? What about piercings? More than two in the ears, one in the nose, or one on the eyebrow? The lip is pretty popular these days too. Is there a dress code? Holes in jeans? Splotches of paint? Mismatched clothes that somehow match?

"I only ate PB&J sandwiches on whole wheat bagels every night for dinner. I ate dinner late, like one hour before bed. I learned that the peanut butter and jelly kept me full while I went to sleep. Also, I drink a lot of coffee. That helps curb my appetite."

CP THE ARTIST - PAINTER AND DIGITAL ARTIST



Sarah Roberts

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"I am a big believer in being friendly. Being 'charming' not because it might get me something, or it might get me some PLACE, but the more pleasant you are, the nicer people will be to you. People smile when you come into the room, help you when you're down, and you would do the same for them. I think a lot of artists choose to seclude themselves and live the 'loner' artist life. I dive right in and become friendly and a regular with everyone, in every town I go to. Bartenders become fast friends, making life more affordable and certainly more pleasurable."



Photos provided by Sara Baldwin /
www.saratography.com

WHAT IS A STARVING ARTIST?

Why should we get bogged down with labels? Isn't that what you're fighting against as an artist? Fighting the status quo? It's a bit of a conundrum because the more you fight being labeled, the more you get labeled. So why worry about being labeled? You are what you are. Either you are or you aren't a Starving Artist, and that's for you to decide.

The same goes for this very specialized and hardly-researched diet. It's up to you to decide whether it will provide you with the body you've always dreamed of.³ You've never followed the crowd before. Why start now?

"I once ate six-day-old pasta leftovers. It was a nearly unbearable texture and taste, and I vomited about five minutes after I finished. Not what I was looking for, but I wasn't hungry anymore."

COURTNEY KAY MEYERS - COMEDIAN

THE STARVING ARTIST'S DIET'S

"ARE YOU A STARVING ARTIST?" QUESTIONNAIRE:

You're hesitating. You're wavering on whether to commit, whether to confess that you are or are not a Starving Artist. You want to be part of a meaningful movement, a part of something bigger, but it still has to be your own. Then maybe *The Starving Artist's Diet's* "Are You a Starving Artist?" questionnaire will help you. Answer the following quiz to determine your Starving Artist status.

1. Are you starving? YES No

Give yourself 1 point for yes.

2. How many of your ribs can you count from a relaxed position? _____

Give yourself 1 point for each rib.

3. When did you last eat? _____

Give yourself 1 point for any time under 24 hours and an additional point for each extra day.

³ Results may vary. In fact, I'm sure the results will vary, and if you're expecting anything other than varying results, well, you're just delusional ... and you should capture this moment on a canvas or in a song.

THE STARVING ARTIST'S DIET

4. What did you last eat? _____

Give yourself 5 points if it is not classifiable as food. Give yourself 1 point if it was food or food-like.

5. Have you actually sat down at a table and eaten a home-cooked meal within the last week? YES NO

Give yourself 2 points for a no answer. Take 1 point for a yes even though you probably don't deserve it.

6. When was the last time you cooked a can of beans in the can on the stove _____

Give yourself 2 points if you did it in the last week. Give yourself 1 point if you've done it even once.

"Save money if you eat out by drinking six glasses of water and refilling the chips and salsa. Better yet, eat Pho!"

BRONSON MAIJALA - DRUMMER

7. Have you somehow lost the last five days and only emptied a snack bag of Doritos? YES NO

Give yourself 5 points for a yes answer.

8. Have you passed a dumpster behind a restaurant and licked your lips? YES NO

Give yourself 5 points for a yes answer. Give yourself 10 points if you've found the temptation irresistible and dined at Chez Dumpster.

9. Do you dress in black? YES No

If yes, 2 points. If no, 1 point.

10. How many piercings do you have? _____

Take 1 point for each piercing other than the first two in your ears, which only count as 1 point for the pair.

WHAT IS A STARVING ARTIST?

11. Have you ever experienced instant hunger pangs while driving behind a tanker truck that says "not edible" across the back? YES NO

This is disgusting, and you really need to get back into therapy.

12. Is the stain on your shirt mustard or yellow paint? _____

Take 1 point if it's paint. Minus 1 point if it's mustard.

13. Has dirt ever looked appetizing to you? YES No

Give yourself 1 point if it looked appetizing. 2 points if you've eaten dirt since the fifth grade.

14. Have you ever made a (real) mud pie and then eaten it? YES No

Give yourself 3 points for eating the entire creation. Give yourself 1 point for resisting the hunger pangs and having the common sense to walk away.

15. Have you ever seen a pigeon outside your window and thought, "Chicken"? YES No

Take 2 points if you have. Give yourself 5 points if you've eaten pigeon cordon bleu while not appearing on a reality show.

16. Did you buy this book? YES No

Take 5 points if you bought the book (an attempt to boost your score and make your purchase more worthwhile) and take 5 points if you didn't (no real Starving Artist would waste money on a book like this).

17. Did you think this book would really help you with your diet? YES No

This was more of a rhetorical question, so save us all the embarrassment and keep your answer to yourself. Give yourself 2 points, unless you answered out loud - then take a zero for the entire test.

SCORING YOUR QUESTIONNAIRE

1-10 POINTS - Go back and finish college. Get your engineering degree so you can make a normal living and eat like a normal person. Otherwise give yourself an extra 10 points so you can bump up to the next level. Don't feel guilty. It's not like this is the first quiz you've cheated on. Besides, as a Starving Artist you know that sometimes you have to cut corners.

11-20 POINTS - You are borderline artsy which means you're probably a wannabe actor, director, or writer for television or film because you were in a high school play, and Grandma said you had talent. Fortunately, the lone author has voted (by a narrow margin) to let you continue.

21-30 POINTS - You are by all standards very artsy and extremely hungry. Please send your recipes for dirt and pigeon cordon bleu to recipes@starvingartistsdiet.com.

31 PLUS POINTS - You are sick and should be institutionalized. But that pretty much describes all Starving Artists, so don't go patting yourself on the back. You're normal ... in an artsy, hunger-pained sort of way.

If you refused to take the test or score it after pretending to apathetically read through the questions, then you truly cannot be labeled. So you really are a Starving Artist ... or not. You decide. Oh, here we go again. And if we have to revisit the whole "don't label me thing," then go back to the beginning of this chapter and take the quiz ... and score it this time.

So now you know. Either you are or you aren't a Starving Artist. How does that make you feel? You know what? Why don't you keep it to yourself? The only one who will probably care is your therapist, so save it for your next session. This way you'll have something to talk about because your therapist is probably sick of hearing about your dysfunctional childhood and how your brother/sister/dog was your mom's favorite. (If you're an only child, and you still weren't her favorite, you should probably keep working on that in therapy.) This is not to say you should suppress those painful memories. No, I'm just suggesting you switch it up a little. Give your shrink a break for a week, and then she'll really be ready to listen again.

In the meantime, grab a snack and enjoy a little light reading. Go on, you've earned it.

Things I am willing to eat in order to prevent starvation.

In times of desperation, when you are so hungry you can't form a rational thought, it's important to already have a list of things you are willing to eat. This'll keep you from eating foods, or other substances, that would be hazardous to your health. [Some of the things I have included in my personal list are staples such as paper, paste, grass (because there is such an abundance of it, and cats and dogs seem okay with it), cat/dog food (on the neighbor's porch), cigarette butts (they're probably just lying around, and keep in mind, waste not, want not), headcheese, and haggis.]

Friends who'll let me beg
for scraps with the dog.



Chapter 9

RECIPES

It's what's for dinner ...
or lunch ... or breakfast ...

Here are some of the greatest recipes ever collected for Starving Artists by real, live²² Starving Artists.

BREAKFAST

As an artist with a pretty wacky schedule, feel free to do the breakfast-for-lunch or dinner thing. Heck, you probably don't even know whether it's breakfast, lunch, or dinnertime anyway.

OATMEAL

- Ingredients: 1 big canister of oatmeal
Fresh fruit, if you have it
Cinnamon
- Directions: Read the side of the big canister.
Add fruit and cinnamon as desired.

"It's high in fiber, which is great for lowering cholesterol, and that big canister is usually less than two dollars." *Carolina Reyes - urban/pop/surrealist*

²² All suggestions contributed by dead Starving Artists were deleted just in case it was the recipe that led to their demise.

THE STARVING ARTIST'S DIET

COFFEE**

Ingredients: Coffee

Water

Directions: Put the coffee grounds in a coffee pot and brew.

It's just that simple.

SANDWICHES

BAR-B-Q SANDWICH

Ingredients: Wonder Bread

Barbeque sauce

Directions: Enjoy.

GRILLED CHEESE SANDWICH**

Ingredients: 2 Slices Wonder Bread

1 Slice American cheese

Directions: Toast bread.

Place cheese between toast, put on a plate, and nuke for 20 seconds.

Carefully remove sandwich as contents may be hot.

SUB SANDWICH

Ingredients: French bread loaf or sub roll

Directions: Eat.

"A loaf of French bread at Albertsons is \$1.49. Wash it down with a 99¢ Arizona Iced Tea, and you're full for the day! All the carbs you need for an energetic day of looking for a job." *Bronson Maijala - drummer*

BRATWURST ON A HOAGIE**

Ingredients: Hot dog

Bun

Imagination

Directions: Boil hot dog or wrap in paper towel and nuke.

Put hot dog in bun and top with ketchup or mustard.

Pretend.

** Author's Gold-Star Favorite.

RECIPES

HAM & CHEESE SANDWICH

Ingredients: Ham

American cheese

2 Bread slices

Directions: Assemble by placing slices of ham and cheese between the two slices of bread.

"Makes the perfect sandwich." *LeaAndrea Glover - painter*

SOUPS

TOMATO SOUP**

Ingredients: 1/4 Cup ketchup²³

1 Cup water

Salt (to taste)

Directions: Pour ketchup in a soup bowl.

Add water and mix (whisk for best results).

Nuke for 1 minute.

Serve with Grilled Cheese Sandwich (see above) if you're not too broke.

HOMEMADE BREAD BOWLS

Ingredients: Loaf of bread (unsliced, for obvious reasons)

* Many bakeries cut the price of their bread half an hour before closing.

Can of soup

Directions: Heat soup.

Cut out top of bread.

Pour warm soup into bread bowl.

"It'll fill you up." *Matt Dulin - painter*

²³ All condiments, sugar, sugar substitutes, etc., should be "borrowed" from your favorite dining establishment.

CP the Artist (Charlton Palmer)

Painter and Digital Artist
Atlanta, GA

www.cpthearartist.com
www.twitter.com/CPtheArtist
www.facebook.com/CPtheArtist
www.myspace.com/cpthearartist

"The craziest thing I've ever done for food was to go on Twitter and Facebook and ask to barter my art for food from fine ladies. Thinking it was for just laughs, I've gotten a lot of women offering to come cook for me. Now all I have to do is pick my Muse and let her loose in my kitchen.

"Using my talents to get what I want is the least I can do. I thank God I have good looks and talent or else I couldn't offer anyone crap. Being a Starving Artist you challenge yourself in thinking the next painting will sell. Sometimes I'll give away paintings that cost \$2,000 to create for \$150 worth of groceries.

"It's a struggle every day, but it's all for the dream of making it one day and being successful. You must make sacrifices and barter sometimes just to keep going. My day will come when I don't have to whore my art for a hot dish or a hot chick."



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



JACK LUGAR is the world's foremost authority on Starving Artist dieting. Just ask him and he'll tell you so. In fact it's not hard to be the foremost authority on something when you make it up and then write 20,000 words about it. Are you impressed? Because that alone should make you feel like starting a slow clap.

Lugar has made his career as a writer, attorney, and businessman. He is the founder of the non-profit *PROJECT: create* (artists fighting hunger... in a nonviolent sort of way). He has used his acerbic observational humor as a writer for Wanda Sykes' show *Wanda At Large*, and as a producer and writer for Louie Anderson's Louzell Productions. He has used that same acerbic observational humor at home and learned that he's safer when he doesn't. Lugar lives in Indianapolis, Indiana with his very beautiful wife (seriously, Google her), Elisabeth, and their three children.

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If you are interested in contributing to future incarnations of *The Starving Artist's Diet* either in print or on www.StarvingArtistsDiet.com, please send your stories and recipes to Jack Lugar at info@StarvingArtistsDiet.com