Collaborative Memory Work

Recently, a community-run arts project in Syracuse asked artists to compose five versions of a single memory in a single medium. Artists were asked to render each successive memory piece without looking at the previous versions. Then, all five pieces were turned over to another artist, who was asked to create an interpretive piece of art based on these five memory pieces.

If you’d like to try something similar, here’s the prompt:

1. Write a creative nonfiction or poetic version of a memory that you find yourself frequently returning to.

2. Allow at least one month to pass, and then write another memory piece in response to the same memory. Do not look at your previous piece.

3. Repeat steps 1 and 2 until you have five pieces written about the same memory.

4. Review your five memory pieces and decide to either turn them over to another artist or create a collage piece on your own, using scraps and fragments from all five of your memory pieces.