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DEBRA CHWAST PAINTINGS BY SETH CHWAST

PREFACE BY SEYMOUR CHWAST

# An Unexpected Life

A Mother and Son's Story  
of LOVE, DETERMINATION,  
AUTISM, and ART



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Debra Chwast

# An Unexpected Life: A Mother and Son's Story of Love, Determination, Autism, and Art



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Diagnosed with severe autism because a toddler, Seth Chwast appeared trapped in his own insular universe. His family members endured anguish, sought countless therapies, and almost gave up wish. Although Seth cannot properly cross the street alone, he's an icon for anybody who has been around a hopeless scenario and triumphs. Compiled by Seth's mom, Debra, *An Unexpected Life* tells the tale of their long challenging path, and her determination to greatly help her son. Then, at age group 20, Seth took a painting class, and everything transformed. More than merely a memoir, this visually breathtaking quantity is infused with wish, inspiration, and art. Miraculously, he exposed an innate ability to create amazing artworks that reflect his personal unique perspective and gave him a voice he had never had.



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AN EXCELLENT, Inspiring Story! Debra Chwast's amazing journey with her 28-year-old autistic child, Seth, is beautifully described in this memoir, which spans the years from Seth's diagnosis around age 2 to the present. As an educator who frequently works with college students who are autistic, I recommend "An Unexpected Life" to anyone who seeks a global beyond apprehension and darkness, beyond the bleak wall of denial, to a celebration of life and a kaleidoscope of options. For a different perspective, read this book. What might have been a very limited and frustrating life for both Debra and Seth, has rather become an interesting and fulfilling one. That is an extremely moving and inspiring publication, filled with Seth's lively paintings and sculptures, and it is a tale that should give wish to others who are challenged by adversity. Read it in 2 days. Five Stars This book was well crafted . Finally they made their personal animal paintings, not only educated by Seth's sensitivity to color, form and form, but also to his ability to observe, hear and process the space between the lines. Debra should gain the "Mom of the millennium" award. Each semester since January 2008, my students have researched Seth's internet site, watched the movies about his trip, analyzed his paintings and frequently shared their own tales of family and friends who have a problem with the anxiety and stress of living with a liked one diagnosed with autism. Seth is normally in the particular catagory of "savants", or those people who are autistic however also possess extreme capabilities in various areas. Seth's life changes dramatically when he picks up a paintbrush, and his functions are widely known at present. She definitely has gone far beyond to support her son "Seth" and make his lifestyle the best it can be. There are enough statistics and scientific information included in it for college use, but it is never dried out or boring. Very heartfelt, and an incredible story that provides us a peek into an entirely different world. If you know somebody with autism you should browse this book. This was one of two books I purchased to research this issue of art therapy since it can be used with autistic children This book is exceptional. Although I purchased the reserve to greatly help with my college presentation and report, it could easily be a satisfying publication for anyone to read, with a special emphasis on moms and sons. If you haven't tested his artwork - make sure to do - it is amazing. An Unexpected Life ~ The Trip of Debra and Seth Chwast I am an artist, teacher and mother who first learned of Seth and Debra Chwast on the Today Show. Influenced by Debra's tenacious spirit, passionate resilience and dedication to the discovery of her son's brilliance as an artist who is autistic, I immediately emailed Seth and Debra for authorization to share their story and Seth's artwork with my middle school artwork students. The tale of Seth (an autistic son) as informed by his mom is incredible. Wonderful book for anyone! While Seth and Debra's journey is quite different than other parents who've an autistic kid, there is a solid common thread that binds all who struggle against misunderstanding, ridicule and concern with the unknown. Debra never let up on the search for what to give meaning and purpose to Seth's life, and also her own, and when she uncovered his creative ability at age 20, developing that talent became the focus of their lives. ~ Elizabeth Adams-Marks, St. Louis, MO A Beautiful Tale About Possibilities and Growth An Unexpected Lifestyle could be my tale too! I've witnessed therefore many moms who have changed professions, split with their husbands, and have similar experiences to Debra. Seth is an amazing artist who I became aware of a couple of years ago when compiling my very own book featuring performers on the spectrum. What most impressed me about Debra and Seth's journey was how she progressed as a person through her child. My son, Kevin, can be on the spectrum and a gifted artist. I can relate to your time and effort it requires on the mom's part and how her lifestyle has now become tied permanently to her son. Debra Chwast includes a beautiful tone of voice about her romantic relationship with her autistic son, Seth. I also relate with her spiritual trip and her

evolved understanding of autism. Seth provides continued to paint and now travels and exhibits internationally. We are inundated with therefore many bad stories about autism, this book is a pure delight to read.



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