

Inspirational magazing both the magazine and the	and therefore all rig	hts are reserved for

Cover: from the You and Me series, 2021 by Jacobien de Korte

# Inspirational art magazine

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## from the editor: first word

A warm and inclusive welcome to the June 2022 issue of the arts magazine Inspirational.

**ajay sharma: interview.** India based fine art painter Ajay, reproduces through his work, the world that he sees around him, yet he does so in an ingenious style and perspective, adding signs, symbols and metaphors. In an insightful interview Ajay tells us about how he started as an artist, what painting means to him, and what it may mean to his viewers.

**c o moed: feature.** US based writer and multimedia artist C.O. Moed has produced for Inspirational, a beautiful and heart-felt piece of work, combining the written word and photography, she gives us a slice of a life lived, and the relationships and memory around that life. We are so proud to be able to feature this stunning piece of work, and we are grateful to C.O. Moed for generously offering the opportunity.

**jacobien de korte: interview.** Netherlands based art photographer Jacobien features two series of work for Inspirational: *Home no Home*, and *You and Me*, along with an insightful interview. Through the human concepts of estrangement, loneliness, desolation, mystery, magic and melancholia, Jacobien produces hauntingly stunning work, work that can touch us all, and does. Jacobien is also the cover artist for this issue of Inspirational.

**ellen catanzaro: feature.** US based fine art painter and textile artist Ellen, has travelled widely and has used that experience of travel to feature in her work. Through "atmospheric abstraction" she reflects on the untamed natural beauty and atmosphere of the natural world that she has experienced through her travels. Moods and sensory observation are central to her work, and it shows.

## from the editor: first word

bianca biji: interview. Belgium based fine art painter, collage, and graphic artist Bianca, is an artist that never compromises, her vision is her own, her perspective - the same. Her work is bold, defined, weighty with meaning and association, and richly sourced. In a revealing interview, Bianca gives a frank summation of where she has been as an artist and as an individual, where she is now, and where she still has to go.

**prakhar punj: feature.** India based fine art painter Prakhar juxtaposes elements of reality with surrealism using paint, charcoal, and pen drawing. His work is bold and thoughtful, combining elements of reality and mythology to great effect. Prakhar is an artist that has a sophisticated eye on the world, and a steady hand to his work.

yari ostovany: interview. US based fine art painter Yari, produces the most stunning abstract work. These are expansively thoughtful pieces, mystical, mysterious, spiritual. Yari's work offers us an opening into which we can pass through into worlds of rich colour, light, and texture. In an interview, Yari expands on his work and of being a painter, what that means to him and how it has shaped his life and understanding.







#### What was your route towards becoming a visual artist?

**as:** I was naturally attracted to art since my childhood. During those days, when I was growing up; painting, drawing and colours fascinated me a lot. Seeing my interest in art, I was sent to art classes at a tender age where I explored the nuances of drawing and painting. I also remember spending hours watching the idol maker creating idols of Gods and Goddesses out of clay in my locality in his workshop. As a child I would try to recreate some of those idols later with whatever little skill I had acquired by watching him. All these activities - drawing, painting and making clay idols were my favourite pastime during my childhood. Though my parents wanted me to concentrate more on my studies and keep such activities of painting and creating clay idols to the level of just a recreation for myself, rather than getting involved too seriously in them. My art classes kept continuing with my studies simultaneously and when I was in 10<sup>th</sup> standard in school, I developed a strong desire to study Fine Art and take it as a profession.

## What is it about painting specifically, that you feel best expresses your message as an artist?

as: I graduated in Painting and later did my post-graduation in Printmaking, both from the Faculty of Fine Arts, M S University, Baroda, Baroda during the 80's had a strong tradition of figurative painting; artists like K.G.Subramanyan, N.S.Bendre, Jyoti Bhatt and many others were painting to express themselves through the figurative style. During those days, in the early 90's when I had joined the art institution, Baroda had become well known for its Narrative Art as well. Through the works of artists like Gulam Mohammed Sheikh, Bhupen Khakhar, Nilima Sheikh and others who incorporated a particular idiom of storytelling in their paintings, Narrative Art had become a hallmark of the Baroda school. Some of my teachers who were trained under these artists and later studied at the Royal College of Art in London, brought back a language with them that was perhaps tinted with a certain kind of narration, use of metaphor, signs and symbols as well as the tactile use of paint. They had interactions with artists like Andrzej Jackowski, Ken Kiff and other British artists while they studied in London. Inspired by the tradition of British landscape painting as well as artists who were painting in a much more fluid manner and that was a mix of abstraction and figuration, my teachers brought back a language on their return that had a certain newness to the kind of art practice prevalent in Baroda in those days.





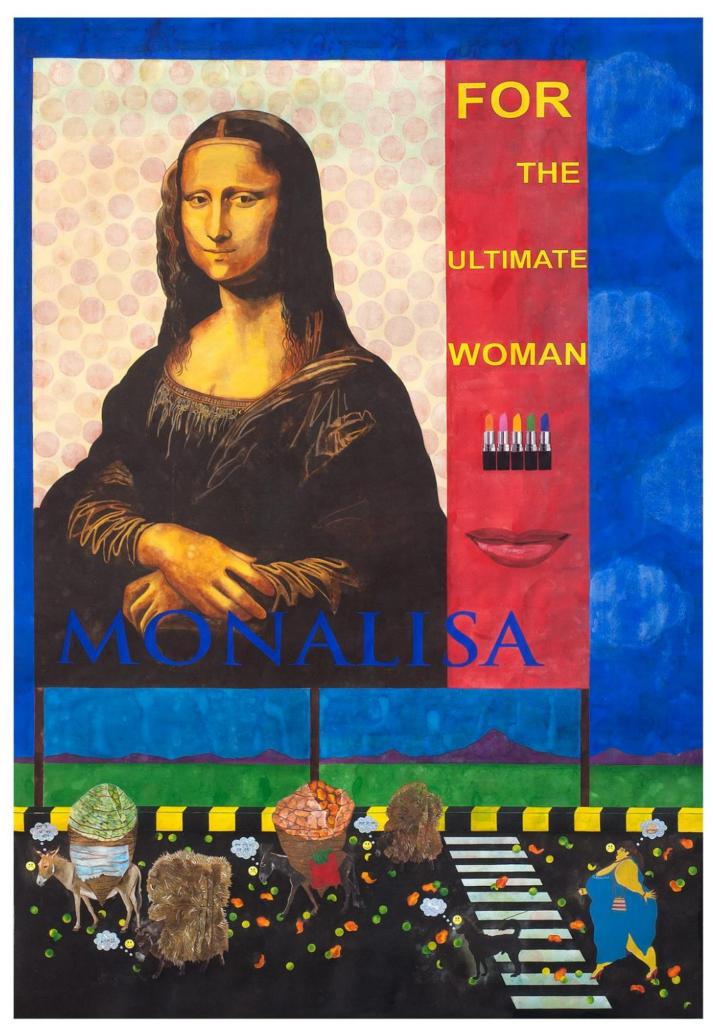
As a young student during the 90's I was inspired by all these aspects grappling with various styles that oscillated between figuration, abstraction and narration; later developing a language that imbibed all these together along with using vibrant colours, that gave a celebratory feeling to many of my art works. Though mostly the kind of images I have been painting over the past decades are images related to chaos, violence, despair and despondency underplayed within my works. Also my works are fraught with signs, symbols and metaphors that if read carefully and given a thought, may change the perspective of the viewers who are seeing an otherwise colourful painting in front of them. The message that I want to give my viewers are best expressed through these signs, symbols, metaphors and a sense of subversion that I use in my often flat and colourful picture plane. Within an excess and chaos of images in my paintings, they are understood best if people can read between the lines.

#### Where does the inspiration come from for your work?

**as:** I draw my artistic inspiration from the reality around me, where news, literature, poetry and cinema give direction to my artistic endeavour. I realize that the larger global cultures; socio-political conflicts, acts of violence, urbanization and urban life, environmental issues, all collectively impact and influence individual destinies. I try to weave in an element of subversion in my otherwise colourful and often flat picture plane using paint, transfer, collage, reproduction, print etc. in my works. I would like my works to reflect the time they are made in and to some extent be my subjective voice. If I look back, the consciousness of time in which I live in has always been an important component of my work although I have shifted gears in terms of method, medium, scale and imagery.

### You have said that your work involves a subjective way of looking atlife around you. How does that reflect in your work?

**as:** I tend to filter from a myriad of images around me that suits to what I would like to express through my art works, and thus according to the content of the work these objects or images that are part and parcel of my life acquire certain meanings for me. For instance, during the lockdown of the Covid19 pandemic, the worn out footwear of the migrant laborers scattered on the highway close to where I live, gave me a new perspective while I looked at them and documented them. I used images of these footwear in the digital artworks I executed at that time to express the plight of these laborers who had to walk miles and miles to reach their native homes during the lockdown.





#### Is your work planned in advance, or is it more a process of spontaneity?

**as:** My work is not too planned in advance. I don't usually make preliminary sketches and drawings that I reproduce as art works. I do have certain ideas that I sometimes jot down in sketchbooks but these ideas get majorly transformed in the process of working. I would say my works are more a process of spontaneity.

#### How would you like others to view and interpret your work?

**as:** I would like viewers to read between the lines of the images that I present them fraught with signs, symbols and metaphors, though they might have their own interpretation of the images I have executed.

#### Are you working on anything specifically at the moment?

as: Since the past few years I am into photography obsessively, photographing my surroundings that involves mostly reflections, light and shadow play apart from other themes that I find interesting. Prior to the Covid19 lockdowns and even during that period I had been exploring the digital media to create art works.

## Do you have any upcoming exhibitions, shows or events that you'd like to mention – on or offline?

**as:** I had a group show in January 2022 hosted by the **M S University Fine Arts Alumni Association** at the Faculty of Fine Arts, Baroda. This was an offline show. Prior to this in 2021 I had an online group show titled **An Imaginal Affair** curated by an art blog **artamour**. At the moment there are no exhibitions or shows in the pipeline.

#### And where can your work be found online?

as: I can be googled with key words Ajay Sharma visual artist Baroda with which my works can be found on google. I also have a Facebook page: @ Ajay Sharma visual artist, Linkedin account: @ajay-sharma and Instagram account: @ajaysharma1227 where my works can be viewed.































#### **Artwork:**

Page 8: Eating Habits, 2018

Page 9: Artist, 2015

Page 11: Hey Ram 2, 2018

Page 12: Chul tar kobekar andhokar bidishar nisha (Paromitar akdin), 2019

Page 14: Hoarding, 2016

Page 15: Gandhi Speaking, 2018

Page 17: (top) This is the House that Jack Built, 2019, (bottom) Money Plant Tree,

2014

Page 18: Art History Lessons, 2016



#### IT WAS HER NEW YORK

A story of an old Lesbian, undying love and every New Yorker we bumped into

#### MY MAMA DONE TOLD ME



Florence is refusing to do much but lie in bed.

I say, "Fine. You don't want to get out of bed, then go lay down and die."

She yells, "lie down! Not lay down! Lie down!"

I say, "You can't get out of bed, but you can still correct my grammar?"

She yells, "Yes! It matters!"

I yell, "THEN GET OUT OF BED!"

I look at her butchered hair. That's because the week before I took the household scissors and chopped off big chunks of it. I did that because it was a huge halo of wildness, so thick and silver sparkling. Now it was a huge halo of wildness that got caught in a buzz saw.

The Sunday afternoon All-You-Can-Eat-Jazz radio show begins.

We settle in to listen.

Sinatra comes on. She sings along.

"My mama done told me... a woman is two faced... cry in the night..."

Knowing something of her dating history, I ask her if that's true.

She says, "I didn't make it up. That's what's written."

I start laughing. She asks why.

"You're singing with heart."

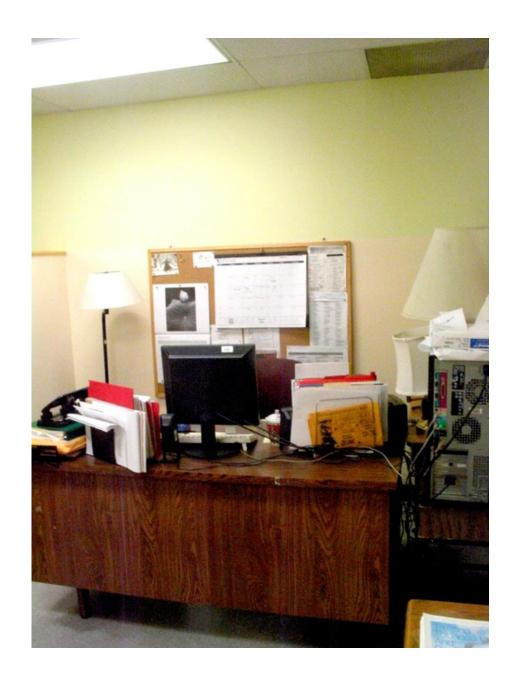
Shrugs, "I'm just trying to get the words."

And then she - who broke many hearts of many old girls and garnered many angry love letters and hurtful looks across crowded dances put on by the local gay and Lesbian senior citizen's center - she looks up and asks, "Is it true? A woman is two faced?"

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#### THE NOT-ON-TV OFFICE: WON'T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?

Fish gotta swim. Birds gotta fly. Rent and bills gotta get paid. And they call work for a reason.



The day job starts becoming a much-needed flexible-thirty-hoursa-week break from Florence stuff, unless I have to get on the phone with the insurance company, Medicaid, CASA II, the doctor's office, the home attendant agency, the insurance company again, the doctor's office again, CASA II again, the agency again... But mostly, each day I step into my cubicle, and, like part of a flotilla, I bob along with my favourite cubicle neighbours until it's time to leave.

Nick is in the cubicle on my left.



He talks to me over the "hedges."



Sometimes I hear him giggling in shock while he listens on his headphones o Wendy Williams on WBLS. We lend each other books. Because of him I'm trapped in the middle of an adolescent vampire series where I am reliving every disastrous crush I ever had - only these book characters have better luck than me, even when they want to suck blood out of the one they love.

I lent him a book about a woman's spiritual journey. I'm not sure if that's an even exchange, especially after he confesses he reads two pages on the train and falls dead asleep.

He makes coffee every day. I supply popcorn. He's the go-to man for pop culture. I supply the moral advice.

This is Adriene. She's in the cubicle on my right.



This is what I can see when we talk.



If it's not Monday, we talk quite a bit.

She listens to Michael Baisden on 97/KISS FM. This is an actual exchange:

A: Oh he's so nauseating.

C: Why do you listen to him?

A: Because he's an idiot.

Her radio, unlike my radio, doesn't get static. So, I end up listening to her radio over the cubicle wall. Sometimes we sing together and when Baisden plays Rock Steady by Aretha, I turn on my radio and hug it so it doesn't get static, and then me and Adriene chair-dance in stereo.

She's the go-to woman for basic information, like the seizuresand-video-game connection, best methods to kill mice, and the 70s. I supply the cheerful morning greetings, and one day even a home-baked gluten-free loaf of bread, which turned out to be inedible to both humans and mice.

When she really wants to upset me, she offers to hug me. When I really want to upset her, I talk about foods with wheat.

One late night, he office empty and quiet, I get on the phone and once again attempt to coax Florence into doing something... like live again. Even with Gabriella, the Medicaid Monday-through-Wednesday home attendant, holding the phone for her, it's hopeless and, finally in defeat, I end up saying how much I love her, and I'll see her soon, before hanging up.

Knock down 7.

Out of nowhere, I head Adriene. "You're a good daughter." Get up 8.

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#### WE FALL IN FOUR LANGUAGES



Rush hour, everybody rushing home.

Except for the nicely dressed lady lying on the ground by Greeley Square. Between the serious men's clothing store and Dunkin' Donuts.

There are a lot of people over her making sure her shopping bags and her purse are O.K. There is a cup of something by her and the security guy or police chief, or whatever he is, is talking into a walkie-talkie.

Me and two guys hang out on the curb by the flower pots and watch the skinny homeless guy shout at the crowd. He looks like the guy who kicked me in the ass when I bumped into him on a rainy day. Wouldn't be surprised if it was. This is his neighbourhood.

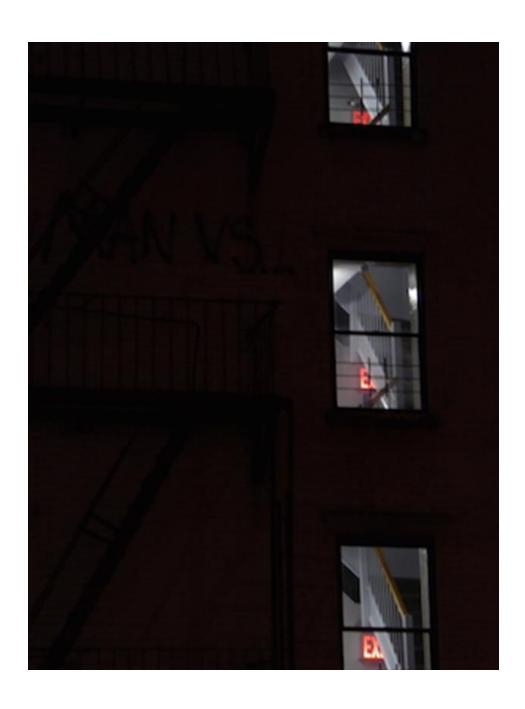
The two guys said that she began to fall and the homeless guy caught her and was shouting GET HELP GET HELP and once non-homeless guy showed up and shooed him away he got upset. After all, he was there first and just because he was homeless didn't mean he was less of a hero.

The daily convoy of twenty-five blaring police cars roar up Sixth Avenue. "She fell. Her heart, her blood pressure, or diabetic. Look, they gave her an orange juice with some sugar. Look, she is fine."

A third man joins us. His patter sounds like poems made of rain on a roof. When I ask if it is Arabic, his friends nod. "I speak Danish too. And Spanish and English and Arabic," he says.

We look across the street at the woman again. Two ambulances come as she sits up and talks on her cell phone.

"We are nothing," the Danish-Spanish-English-Arabic-speaking guy says to no one in particular. "A heart or something and we fall... we are nothing."



#### **NOT CONEY! CONEY ISLAND!**



Florence is not only refusing to get out of bed, she is refusing visitors everything but her back.

Kay, the recreational therapist, managed to get Florence to turn to her by playing a sonatina really badly on her portable electric keyboard. Annoyed by sloppy playing, Florence rolled over, corrected Kay's mistakes, and then rolled back into her little corner.

Kay didn't give up. She began mispronouncing composers' names. Badly. Florence rolled back over and began a lesson n how one is required to speak, and how De BUUUUSEEE is supposed to be pronounced.

A couple of days later, finished with my swimming lesson which actually went... swimmingly (in other words, I did not drown), I looked down from the glass balcony at the gym's pool filled with bodies going back and forth, and recalled a recent conversation with the Ex-Lover, the woman Florence had loved all her life, the woman who had loved Florence - her "Deutschie" - all her life.

They had first found each other when they were so young they still had hope, but were old enough they recognized passion and desire for one another. Decades later, they reunited, but only briefly: both too old to change their ways, or heal from a lifetime hiding away from love.

A while ago I located the Ex-Lover's number and address in Florence's papers and gave her a call. To catch her up on things. As thanks, she sent me the recipe for spiced applesauce cake she got from her grandmother - the one who hated Florence. Seemed like a fair exchange at the time.

No one knew Florence like this Ex-Lover. "Your mother, my Deutschie, was a great swimmer, your mother, my Deutschie, could swim anywhere, your mother, my Deutschie, we went to Coney and boy could your mother, my Deutschie, swim! She went out, and then your mother, my Deutschie..."

I knew Florence and Coney went back as far as Florence and the Ex-Lover. Years ago, before we knew her memory had begun to fray and she was hiding accidents and mistakes behind closed doors, I got Florence to talk into a microphone about the place she loved more than her piano - Coney Island.

Staring at all the swimmers below me, I wondered if I could coax Florence to roll back into life.

So, I called her.

"Hello Florence, I just finished another swimming lesson."

"I used to go swimming. I swam," Florence said.

"I KNOW. IN THE OCEAN." (I had to shout this because she had forgotten how to hold the phone up to her ear.)

"Right. And then you sit on the boardwalk, watch the people and they see you alone and they try to strike up a conversation."

"Get out of bed and I'll take you to Coney."

"NOT Coney. It's Coney Island. Coney ISLAND."

"O.K. Maybe tomorrow. Don't eat too much. And lie down."

And with that she clicked off to roll back into her own deep waters.

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#### THE SECRET OF THE FRUIT MAN



For the first time ever, the Fruit Man by the Avenue A bus stop on Clinton and Grand was closed - well, the first time not a Jewish holiday.

His fruit stand - an outside pyramid of overflowing old boxes piled onto the sidewalk and a bet-up space inside the stuff that couldn't stand the heat or the rain or the snow - was just like all the other fruit and vegetable stands in the neighbourhood. But while the rest dissolved into fancy supermarkets or gourmet coffee shops or Chinatown where fresh fruit sold out of their shipping boxes still meant something, the Fruit Man stayed on Grand Street.

Everyone in the neighbourhood went to him. Even Florence who hated him. Irene, my fellow Lower East Side girl and Florence's neighbour, loved his cantaloupe. I knew he couldn't have been evicted. The City sold the building to the tenants so that everyone could stay there without being kicked out because they weren't rich.

So, I called Irene. "Where's the Fruit Man?"

"He retired," Irene said.

"Really? Why? Was he sick?"

"No. He was 90."

"He was mean."

"No. He wasn't."

"He yelled at everyone."

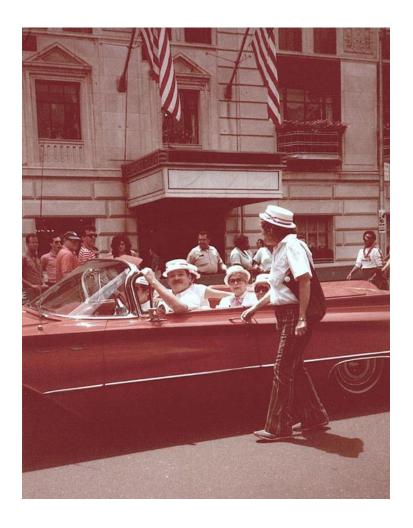
Irene cut me off. "All his customers were old and hard of hearing. That's why he yelled."

#### ONE DAY ON THE BMT



#### THE LIONESS RULES THE PRIDE

1982



The Gay Pride March.

Everybody came out to... come out. All the other gay seniors rode. In the convertible on the bus, in wheelchairs.

Not Florence.

58 years old. Waited her entire life to walk down a street as she really was. And she wasn't going to give that up and walk for anybody or anything.

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#### THE NOT-ON-TV OFFICE: BEFORE AND AFTER

Fish gotta swim. Birds gotta fly. Rent and bills gotta get paid. And they call it work for a reason.

But if you're lucky, one day you get to retire. Like Vivian. "Thirty – four years" she tells me, and then ticks off each job: "15 years Dictaphone operator, you know before there were computers, 11 years regular secretary, then 2 years legal secretary and now, here, 6 years medical secretary.



That's a lot, I tell her.

"Oh. I got plans," she says.

Like what?

"I'm going to California, going to see Disneyland. And then after that, I want to see what these TV shows are all about. So I'm going to *The Price Is Right*. And then after that, I'm going to Chicago - the Oprah Show. And after that? Come back home and see Rachel Ray.

Then what? Gardening? Cruises? Volunteer work?

Vivian gives me a rare look of "Art you nuts?"

"No. After that, the collage is right down the block. I'm going to learn PowerPoint and Excel. Mostly Excel. And then, I'm going to get another job.

Fish gotta swim. Birds gotta fly. Rent and bills gotta get paid. And they call it work for a reason. Even after you retire.

#### FOOD, LIES AND EATING WELL

Irene and I touch base. Her mother had a fall but is doing O.K. for now. Irene, on the other hand, is swamped with care taking. The strategy I used on Florence - reassuring and agreeing - is definitely helping her to get through the day.

Except for the issue of food. "I always offer to buy my mom food that she would enjoy," Irene tells me. "However, she refuses and insists on getting free food from the neighbourhood senior food program, but she only marginally enjoys these meals. She would prefer to eat fish and beef prepared Cantonese-style but there's no way that would be free. It's gotta be because pf the aftermath of the Chinese-Japanese war when she was a child."

Oh, the fear there isn't enough to eat because of the war, because of the Great Depression, because of poverty, because of... There was only one thing to do when faced with an old person refusing to spend money on good food. Lie, I write to Irene. Lie. It's how I got Florence to eat more. I told her I was getting all this free food from the government because she was losing too much weight. So she started eating again. Lie and tell your mom that the Chinatown Alliance opened a free food program for seniors.

"Oh Claire," Irene writes back. "You don't understand the power of Chinese networking. My mom just has to mention it to one person how delicious the food was and direct that person to Chinatown Alliance and sooner than you can say Chinatown Alliance, Chinatown Alliance would put out a wanted poster for the morally depraved Jewish chick who told a lie."



Well, I've always wanted to be wanted.

#### A WOMAN'S BED WHERE SHE LIES WITH POEMS



It's rumoured to be made of horsehair, this bed she has slept in since 1977.

Bought it with the only girlfriend she ever lived with (and eventually dumped for the Ex-Lover and their wild reunion fling when they were both in their 60s).

I think there was even a story of this girlfriend and Florence giggling like mad when they brought this queen-size mattress into the building because all the neighbors were watching and knew something different was happening behind closed doors. (or maybe that was the Christmas Tree story, another act of terrorism that only two middle-aged Lesbians could do in a Jewish enclave).

I never laid down n this bed.

I have stripped it, cleaned it, made it. I have sprayed it with Febreze. I have sat on it, held Florence's hand and comforted her on this bed. I have dressed her, undressed her and clipped her nails on this bed. And every time, thinking she was back in the tenement on Hester Street where sleepovers were common between friends, Florence would invite me to "lie down and go to sleep" in this bed.

Her bed.

The bed she bought to begin her life, new hope, new love. The bed where she promised herself better futures and denied worse pasts. The bed no man ever slept in.

The bed where she cradled herself through sleep, the radio playing all night NPR news shows. The bed she loved in, climaxed in, lost love in, splintered peace with frightening dreams in, refused to cry in. Cried in.

Her bed. Filled with poems fiercely recited as reality shattered and disappointment flooded in.

Tomorrow the Medicaid electric hospital bed will arrive. Its hydraulic lift will make bed-bathing Florence less backbreaking for Gabriella, the Medicaid Home Attendant. It will have bars to keep Florence from falling out in the middle of the night. It will have buttons that push Florence up to sitting and down to sleeping. And when it is no longer needed, it will be returned to Medicaid.

Tomorrow Gabriella and I will somehow coax Florence from her old bed. I will lie, not on her bed, but to her face.

I will say: "We are putting you in a special bed just for a little while. Until you get better and can sit up without being dizzy. And when you do get better and when you are walking again, you'll go lay down in your own bed and then we will go to Coney."

And she will correct me and say "Coney ISLAND. And I will LIE down, not LAY down."

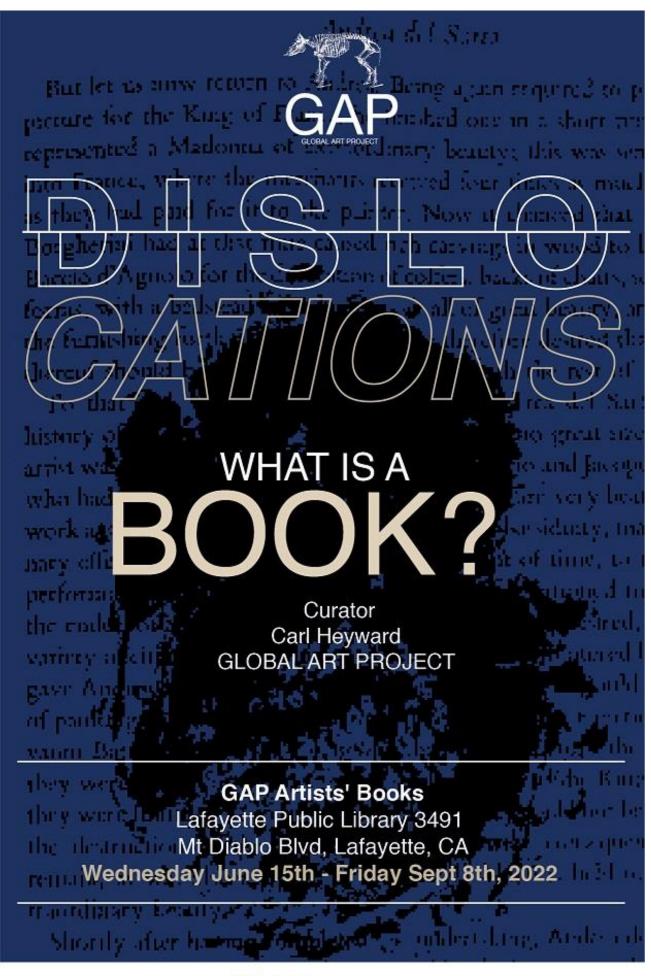
And I will nod and know my lies forever.

Keep in touch with C O Moed at:

website: comoed.net

instagram: @comoed0912

twitter: @comoed



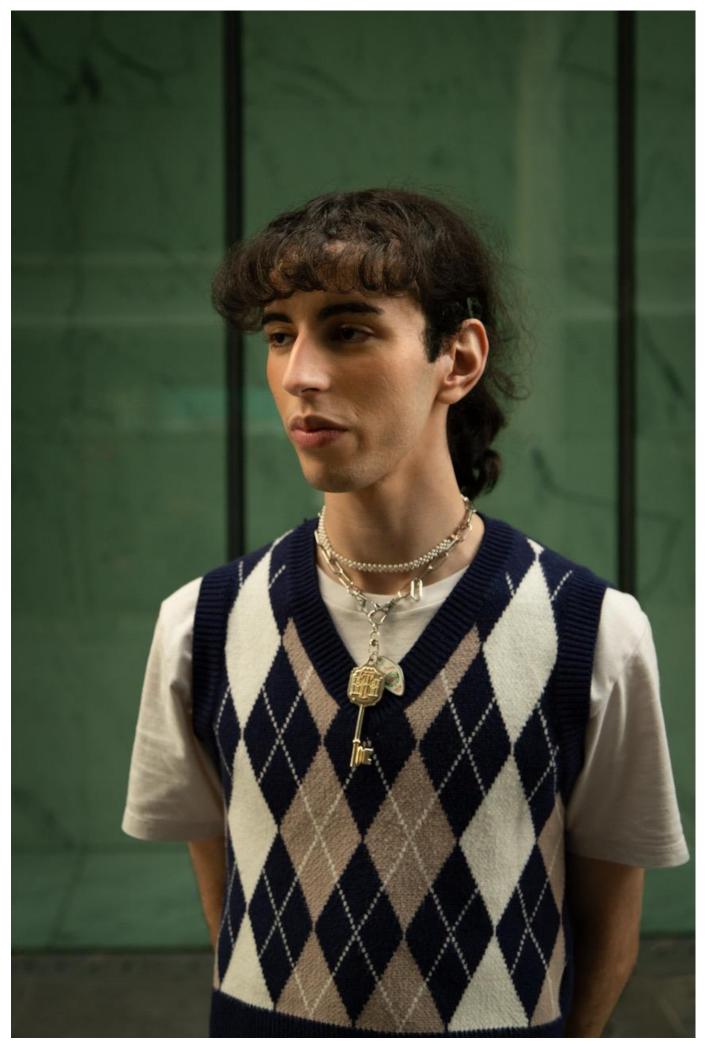
Email: artspeak2020@yahoo.com Phone: (925) 385-2280



















# jacobien de korte: interview

#### What was your route towards becoming a visual artist?

**jdk:** I found different disciplines interesting. I have broadly oriented myself because of this. Also applied art. But I feel most comfortable as an autonomous artist. At the art academy where I studied graphic design, I turned out to be strong in photography. However, this was not a discovery for me. What is most dear to you, you tend to protect. It was around 2018 that I started to profile myself as a photographer. Someone else actually motivated me in this. But that's quite a story...

## What is it about photography specifically, that you feel best expresses your message as an artist?

**jdk:** I can translate my interest and background (architecture, graphic design) in composition, color and arrangement very well into photography. Besides, I like to observe. My introverted side likes being behind the camera and being able to work out my photos in silence.

## You print your own photography. What does that bring to the process of your work?

**jdk:** For me, it's very important to print the photos myself. Each fine art paper has its own character, which enhances the expressiveness of my photo. In addition, I find the "craft" process very pleasant.

It's like painting. Be connected to your work from start to finish.

You have said that you try to express concepts like: estrangement, loneliness, desolation, mystery, magic and melancholia in your work. Are they specific concepts to you, or do you think they are shared by the many, or indeed, the culture in general?

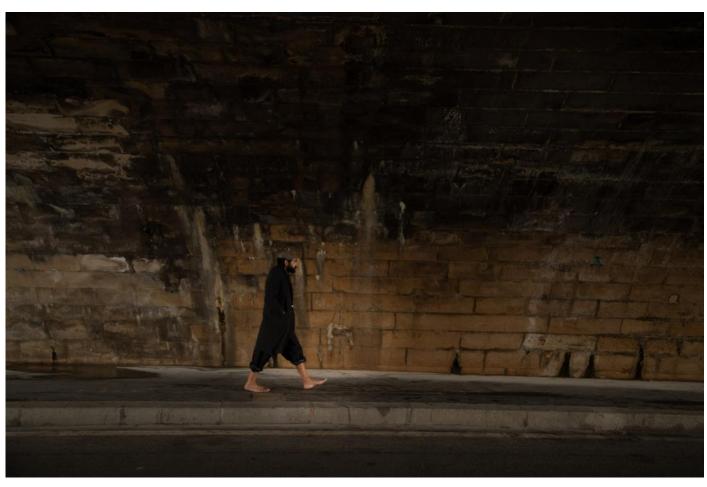
**jdk:** Yes, they are recognizable concepts for me. And many others recognize themselves in this too. This mutual recognition provides connection and comfort.

## Is your work planned in advance, or is it more a process of spontaneity? idk: I usually work intuitively and in different ways.

Expressing my feelings and/or wanting to tell a story happens in a way that best suits at that moment.

I also alternately work on recurring projects. These projects keep fascinating me.











# jacobien de korte: interview

#### How would you like others to view and interpret your work?

jdk: I hope they recognize their feelings in my work. That gives me satisfaction.

#### Are you working on anything specifically at the moment?

idk: I'm expanding existing projects with new work

### Do you have any upcoming exhibitions, shows or events that you'd like to mention – on or offline?

**jdk:** Now I work on two exhibitions in Rotterdam, but when this issue appears, these will be finished.

In September I'll participate again as an art member of Pulchri in the annual "salon" exhibition (The Hague).

I'm invited by the European Cultural Centre to participate next year during the Architecture Biennale in May (Venice) and Incubator Gallery (Lisbon) asked me to plan a new exhibition for next year.

#### And where can your work be found online?

Website: www.jacobiendekorte.com

Facebook: @Jacobien-de-Korte Instagram: @jacobiendekorte Linkedin: @jacobien-korte-de

And several online galleries.

#### **Artwork:**

Page 40: from the You and Me series, 2021

Page 41: from the You and Me series, 2021

Page 42: from the You and Me series, 2021

Page 43: from the You and Me series, 2021

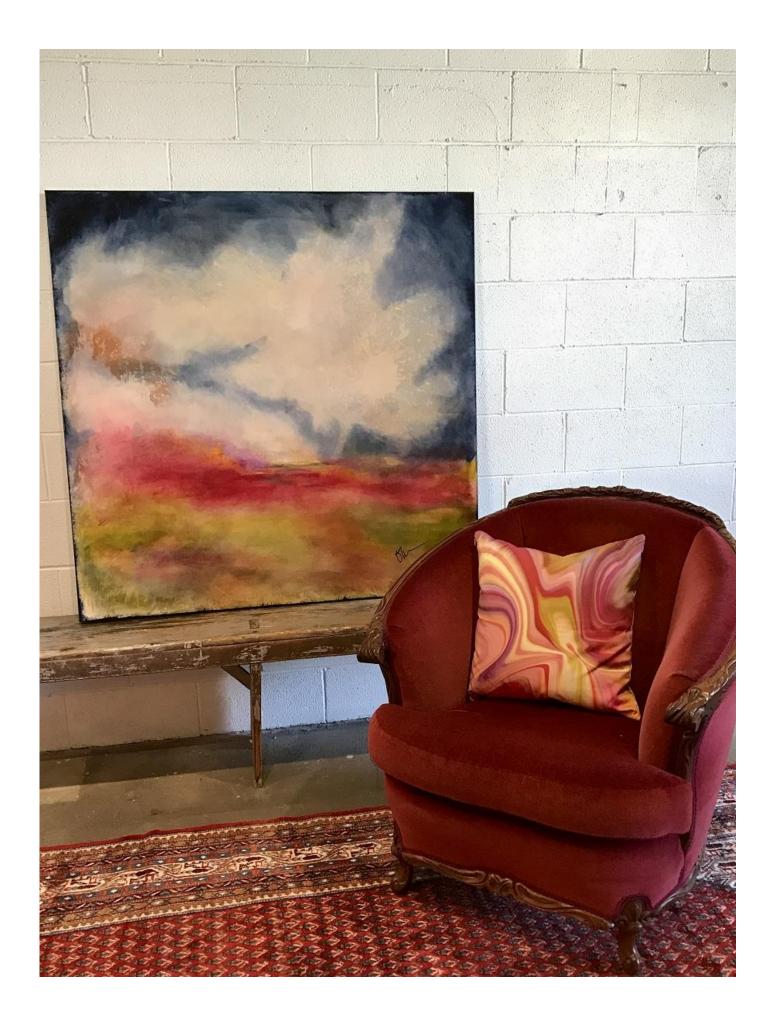
Page 44: from the You and Me series, 2021

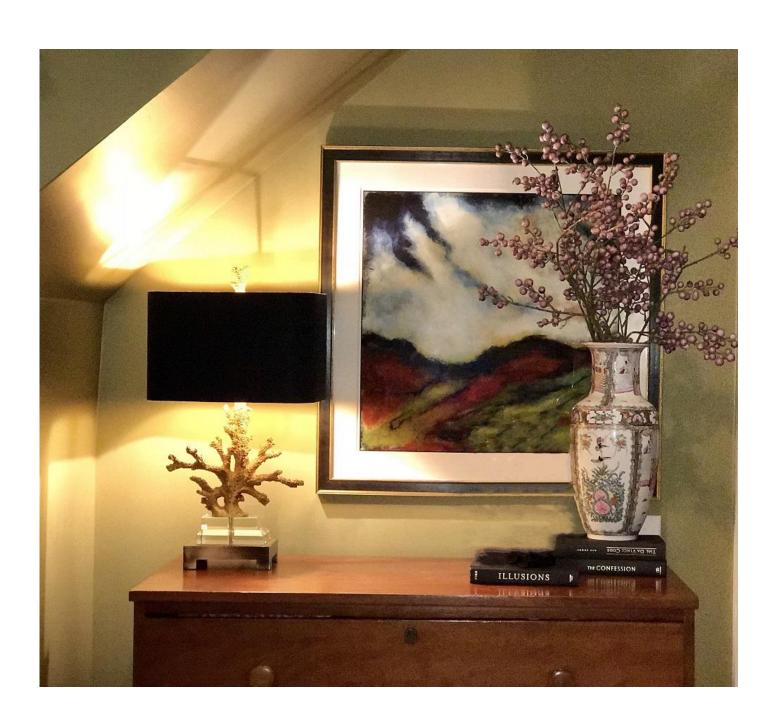
Page 46: from the Home no Home series, 2021

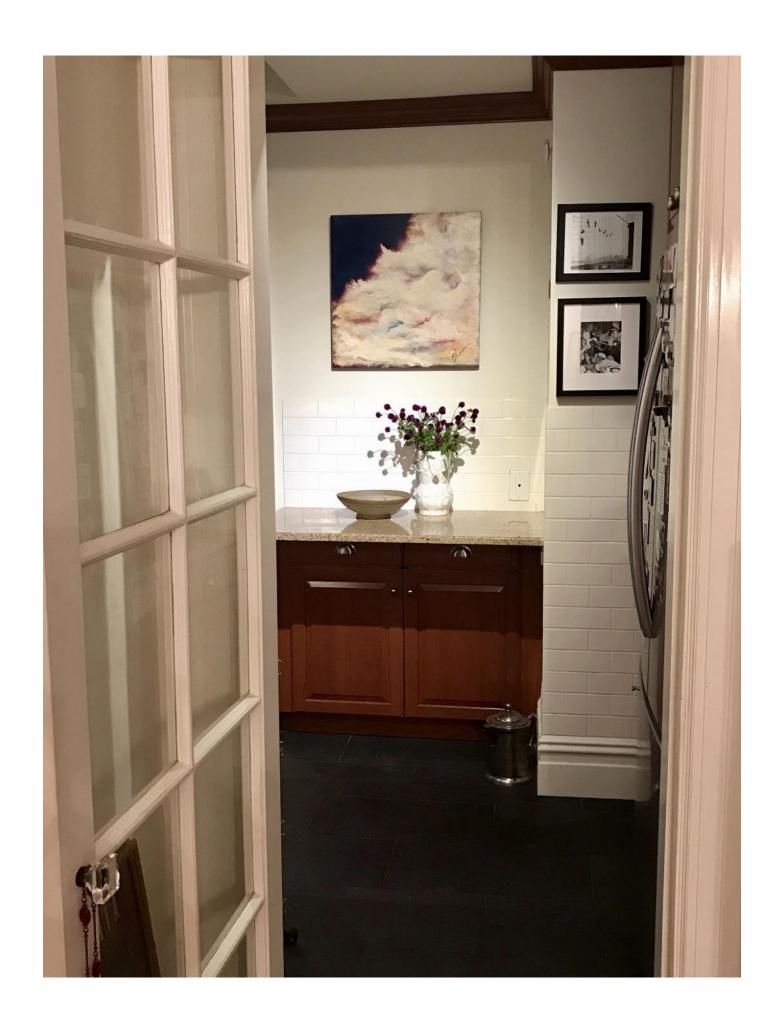
Page 47: from the Home no Home series, 2021

Page 48: from the Home no Home series, 2021



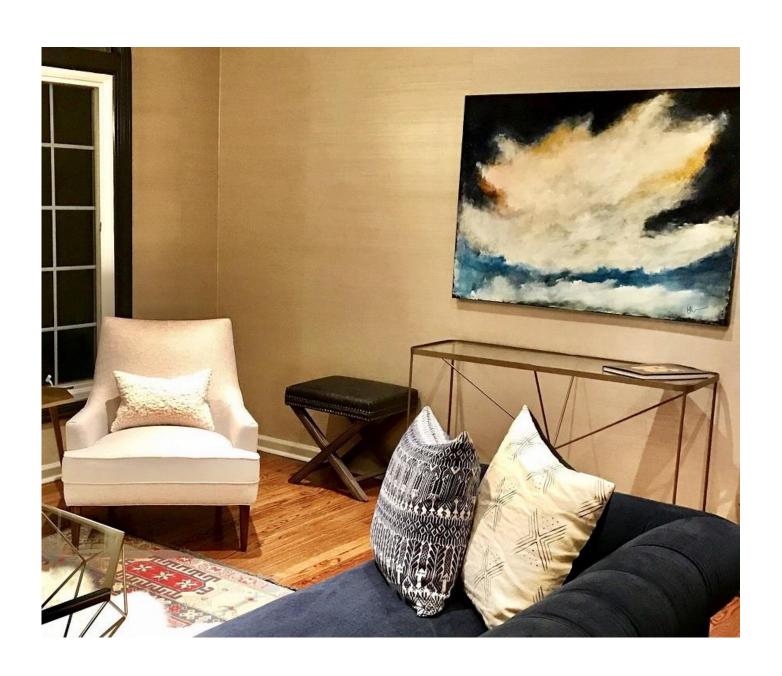


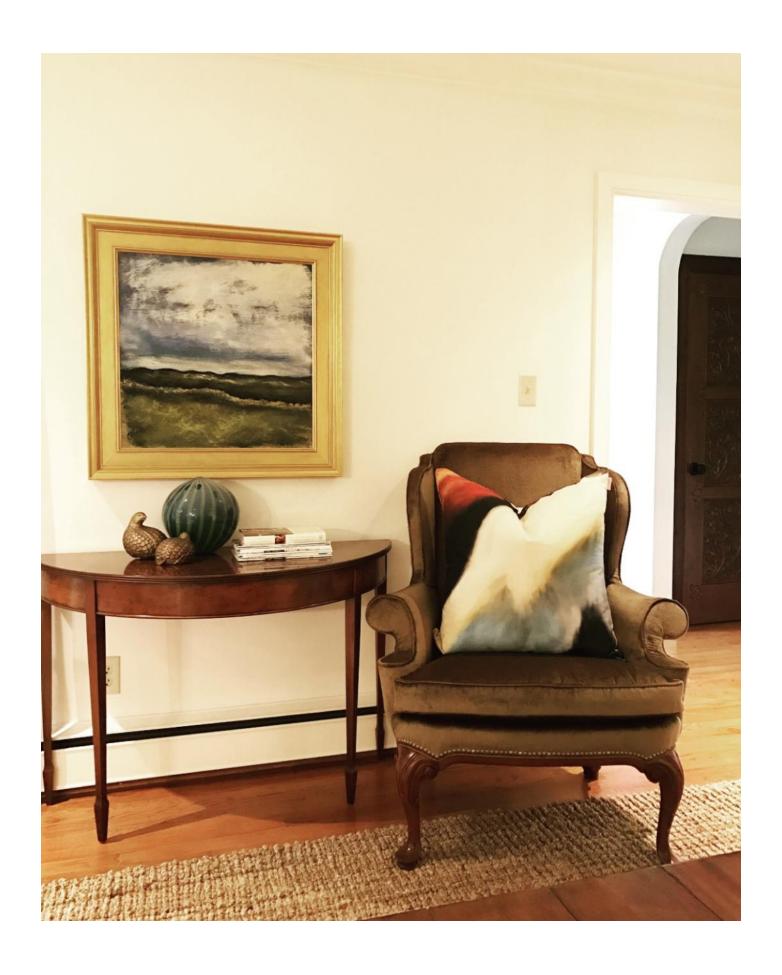


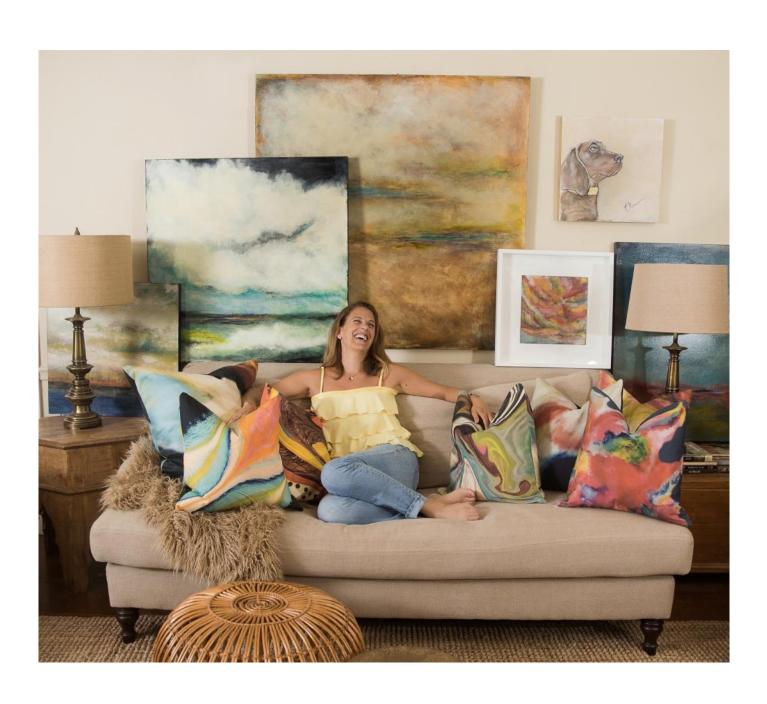












## ellen catanzaro: feature

Ellen Catanzaro is a local artist and textile designer in Chadds Ford, PA. Her artistic style can be best described as "atmospheric abstraction".

Ellen's art reflects the untamed natural beauty she experienced throughout her life and travels. Born to a Greek/American family, Ellen spent her childhood summers in a tiny island in Northern Greece, where the stunning blue sky meets the vast sea, and the golden wheat covered hills are dotted with wildflowers. Ellen married her collage sweetheart, Mike, and together they made their way to the West Coast...first living at the beaches of Southern California, where the colourful sunsets stole her heart, then in the moody rainy suburbs of Seattle, where the rugged, tumultuous, foggy mornings remain etched in her memory. They continued their adventures, traveling the world, as Ellen soaked in all the bold colors and interesting new cultures of each country they visited.

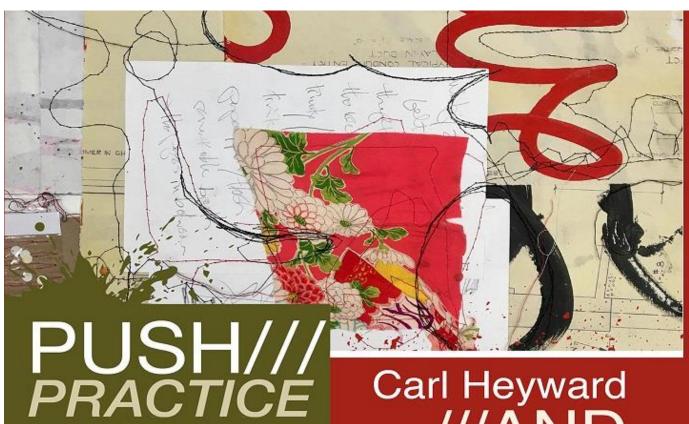
Drawing from her life experiences, large atmospheric abstraction art on wood became Ellen's signature style. As a child and as a young adult, she was always being creative...sewing painting, drawing and decorating, all as a means of self expression. As an adult, Ellen began painting primarily for herself, as art was not in their budget, and for friends, recreating scenes from vacations taken together, and small pet portraits, that she gave as gifts. Her first large painting on wood was created for her children's school fundraiser where her unique style was noticed! A dear friend who was an interior designer commissioned her to do a piece for her home, and began referring her to clients. Soon, through referrals and word of mouth, Ellen was working directly with clients and also with local interior designers, creating commissioned work for their clients as well.

To satisfy her love for interior design, and upon requests from clients, Ellen began to translate her art onto textiles, beginning first with pillows, and eventually into yardage and wallpaper! Ellen's paintings can also be purchased as custom sized Giclee prints. These different versions of her art have allowed Ellen to offer different price points, and different ways her art can be beautifully incorporated into the home!

You can see, and inquire about Ellen's work on ellencatanzaro.com, or on Instagram @ellencatanzaro.fineart

#### **Artwork:**

All imagery by Ellen Catanzaro









# Carl Heyward ///AND Akiko Suzuki Mixed Media MASTER WORKSHOPS

Pushing Practice While Identifying and Breaking Habitual Modes of Working: Paying attention to what's actually happening with you and with materials; how they interact and evolve; how ideas present themselves in various ways in conjunction with this process often supersedes expectation and offers opportunities for broader, richer and more personal expression. These are a few of the goals presented in The Carl Heyward Mixed-Media Workshops, achieved through the suspension of self-judgement, ordering creativity and analysis to their appropriate times and places; discovering confidence in problem resolution;

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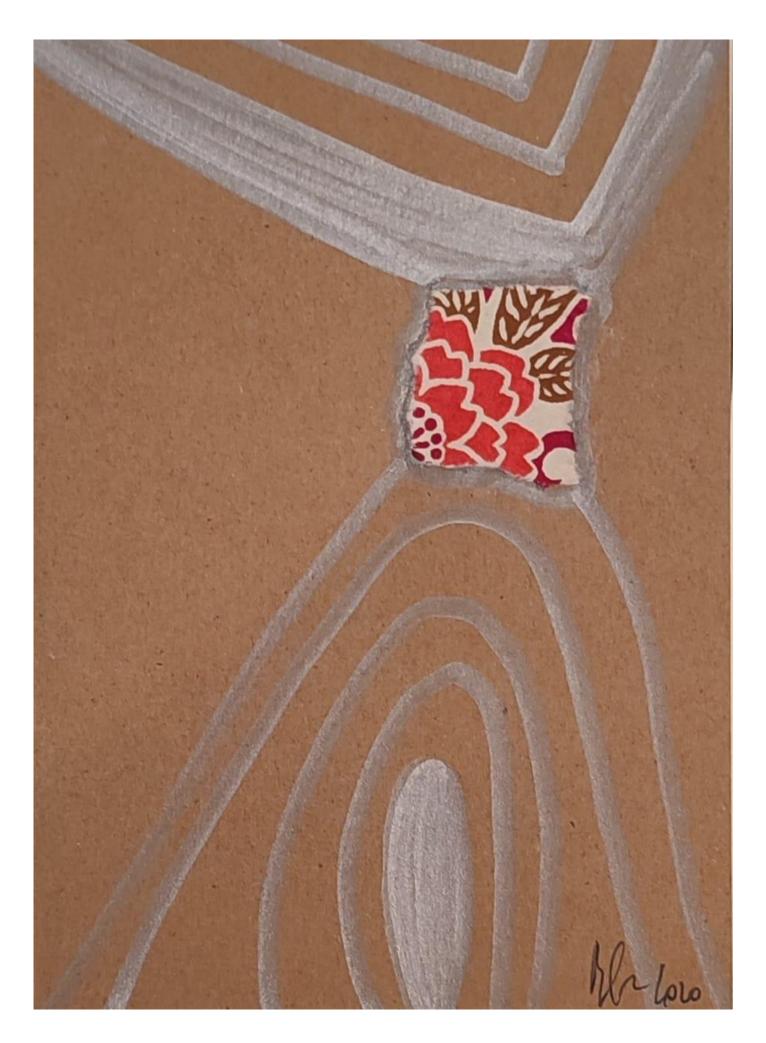
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#### What was our route towards becoming a visual artist?

**bb:** There was not a route, it just had to be like this... Since I was 3 years old, I drew. Before, I was singing with my father military songs, he was a soldier at that time. I still have my basket where I kept my coloured pencils. A sentimental treasure for me.

I remember that at that age, I wanted to invent a colour for the skin, the impressionists were so lousy. What an innocence or huge ego, already! Despite the fact that no one is an artist in my family, my parents inscribed me from the age of 12 in an art school. I really enjoyed it.

At 18 I tried to get in a superior art school; not a chance... We were paying to get in, in this school, at that time. There were only 3 places and everyone knew from the beginning who's going to have the places. Then the Romanian revolution.

Still the same situation. So I decided to leave Romania for a better future.

Here I am in Brussels, in Belgium and not in Paris, in France, as I wished. No comment.

I studied etching for 5 years in a renowned school "La Cambre". My dream was to make illustrations for books. I made a few "artists books". Everything I do, it's for myself, my pleasure and mental sanity.

## You have a graphics background. How do you think that background has influenced you as an artist?

**bb:** For me, graphics means: "less is more". You have to go to the essential, to be short and strong and direct as a hammer.

We were told that if the message of our poster is not understood by someone who is seeing it from a bus in movement, it was a bad work.

You have to be very precise.

I think it helps me a lot. Taking decisions, using the laws of the colour as we do in mathematics...

Graphics is a science, a manipulation of the perception. I think that it helps me to say things very straight, blatantly.

I use colours that produce maximal effect, I want to be "seen!"

I love to be "graphical" in my collages. Simplicity is the most difficult thing to obtain. And the most efficient in communication.



You always work in and associate yourself with the colour red. What is it about the colour red that makes you identify with it so?

**bb**: I feel red.

I'm red.

I see red or I see in red...

Aggressive, passionate, Impatient; sometimes dangerous and delirious! Also a warm person I hope.

I hate people, I love people.

I don't find balance and distance – like using red in a painting is a very big challenge because it takes the power. "You paint the town in red"... said someone in a pejorative way about the use I made of my favourite colour. Well, yes, and take it or leave it, I'd rather be red than beige.

May the red be with me!

## You are a multimedia artist. What appeals to the ideal of being multidiscipline?

**bb:** First, there's an exploration of different mediums that very often I didn't meet or have studied in a school. Which can be great!

Personally, I'd rather live in a small apartment because I don't want to spend my entire life trying to earn money to pay rents or have a studio. I'm feeling good in the kitchen, stirring in a pan at the same time. Art is part of my life...

But, I have a practical problem, where am I going to stock them? I'm quite prolific... it doesn't help, so they finish in boxes under the bed, hahaha.

The "virtual" has great advantages, you can put the colours that you want, write, erase, change in the blink of an eye everything, and all is stocked in a small place. It's "cheap" as an artistic supply.

I work only on my phone, no tablet, and the pc is "kaput". The only exception is my collages where my hands and brain are involved.

Also my unconscious... can be very dangerous, hahaha. I also paint with ink, kind of calligraphy, signs – nothing in relation with the Japanese or Chinese cultures. It would take a few lives to access them.









#### Is your work planned in advance, or is it more a process of spontaneity?

**bb:** It's never "prepared" in advance... little notebooks with sketches – I never had or need.

It's a bit different when it's a collaboration, the work of the others must be respected, and mine shouldn't take the power.

My best collaboration was indeed with Mark (Hopper) for the project WILD SECTOR where we were sending to each other pictures that the other transformed very freely. There was another collaboration including Judith Grunberger – THE THREE SPONGES but less successful.

For the photos, or when I take videos, I do it as an amateur, I'm an amateur anyway. I just push on a button. I'll be crucified for this by the "real photographers". Who needs technique in this world of "collages" and filters, layers... The personal reflection comes later as a builder of sense The reflection comes to correct and direct in a precise aim, the delirious spontaneity.

In my painting I'm completely free, it took me years to get out of the academism they fed me in Romania.

Let the steam off, would be the word for my conception of painting. Canalize it a bit, for God sake, says the brain, hahaha.

It's my space of freedom, I'm the God of my world and I do what I want. My castle, my rules.

Voila!





#### How would you like others to view and interpret your work?

**bb:** To see it as a drawing like children do, kids not yet at school – when they are 3 or 4 years.

They are fresh and spontaneous; they can paint a savannah where they have never been before.

But they go to school... unfortunately.

In what concerns the interpretation, frankly I'm not interested, everyone projects his own story, frustrations or dreams. An that's great!

Once my work is finished, I'm not responsible or the rest. We like or not, no obligation.

We can talk about it only in a constructive way.

I'll explain nothing, hahaha.

Very often I don't remember myself what I meant.

#### Are you working on anything specifically at the moment?

**bb:** Not really... I just continue... I don't make too many plans but I try to stay connected with my creative me most of the time by continuing to work a little bit every day. Sometimes on the tram going to work...

The periods of collages come and go. The same thing with the painting. To be sincere, for the moment, I work more on my phone, it's easier when you don't have full days of creation. Part time I'm a nanny for a very sweet little boy who has a very rare genetic disease, but he's extremely communicative, even if he's not verbal. Taking care of such a child is very creative and rewarding too.

## Do you have any exhibitions, shows or events that you would like to mention, on or offline?

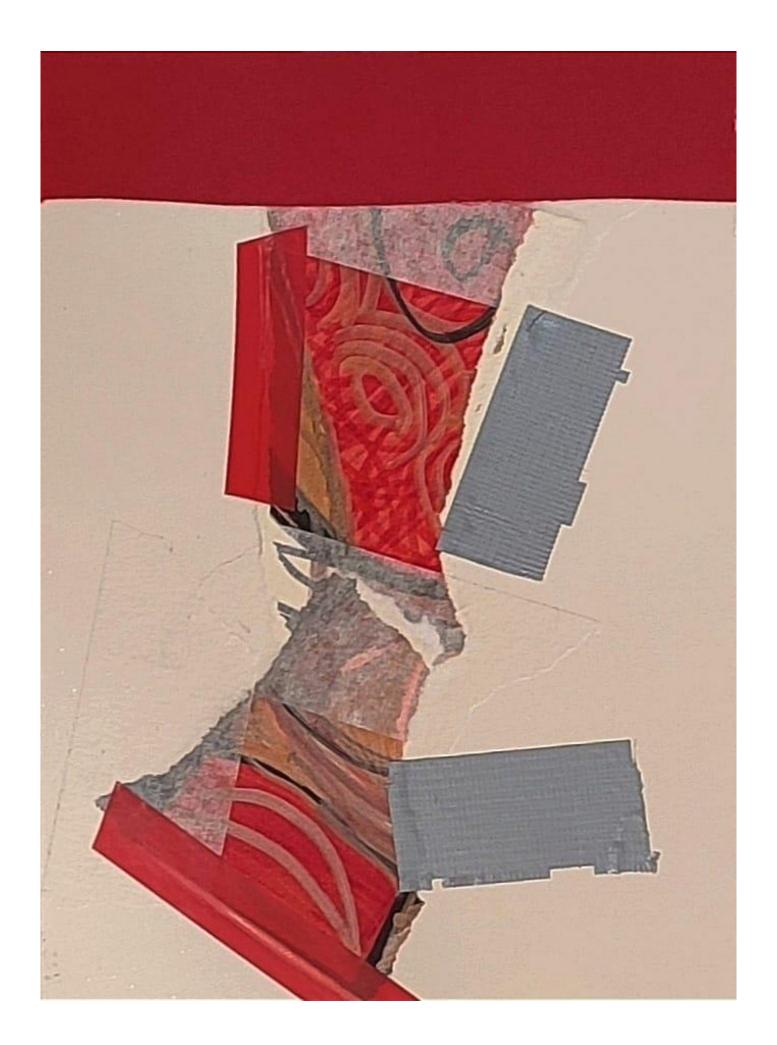
**bb:** Except "Inspirational", nothing. I don't even search anymore. I think I'm afraid to succeed and lose my freedom, be obliged to make compromises.

I'm a dramatic diva; all or nothing and the word "compromise" is not in my vocabulary, in what concerns the creation.

I have a wish to illustrate the poem "Tulips", by Sylvia Plath.







# **bianca biji: interview**

### Where can your work be found online?

**bb:** No site, at least for the moment.

On Facebook you can see my "evolution" in 10 years of work. My account on Instagram was at the very beginning the account of the collaboration between Mark Hopper (my partner in life and creation) and I. We are making time to time artistic projects that can be found too on Facebook under the name WILD SECTOR.

Otherwise, there's always coffee at home, and if someone wants to meet me and see my work, is welcomed.

### **Artwork:**

Page 62: Bianca Biji

Page 64: Bianca Biji

Page 66: Bianca Biji

Page 67: Bianca Biji

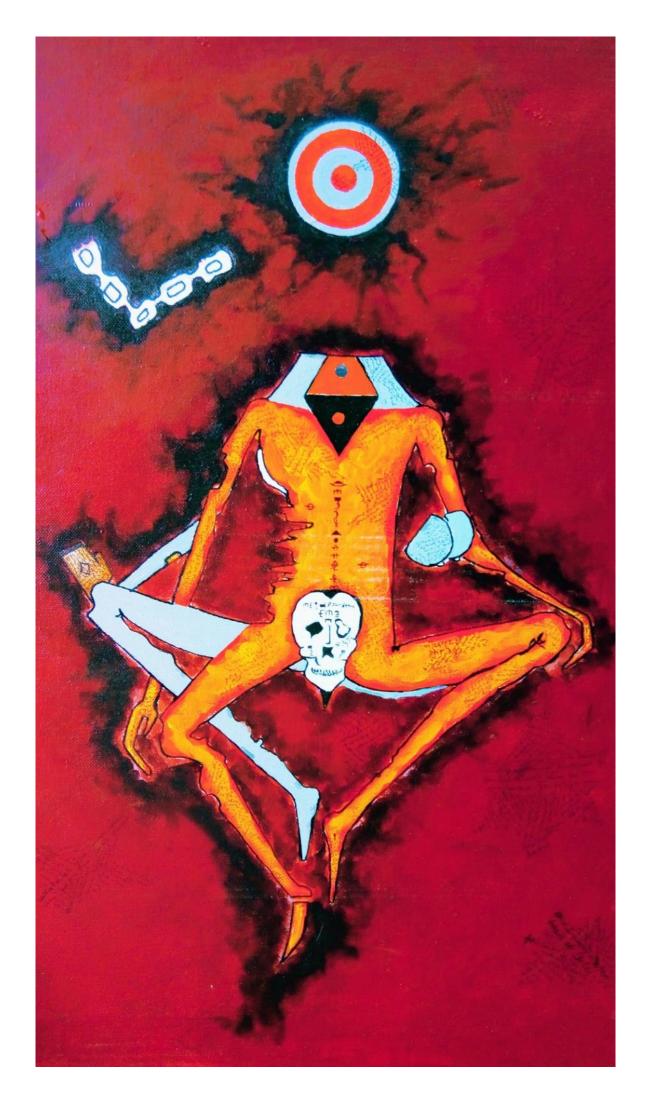
Page 69: Bianca Biji

Page 70: Bianca Biji

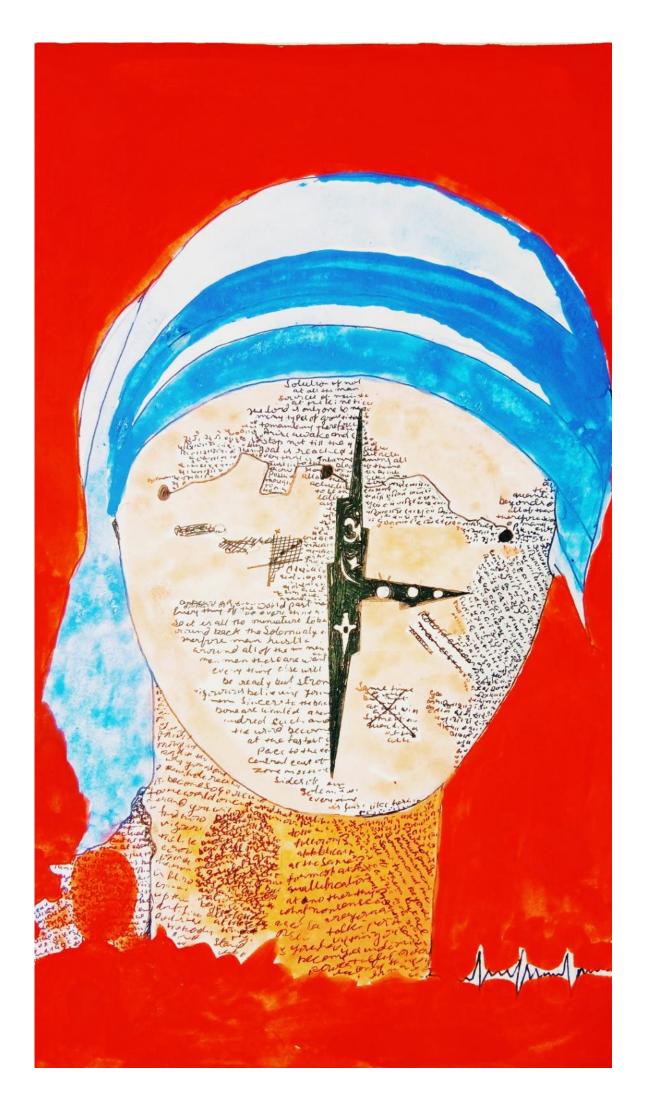
Page 72: Bianca Biji

Page 73: Bianca Biji



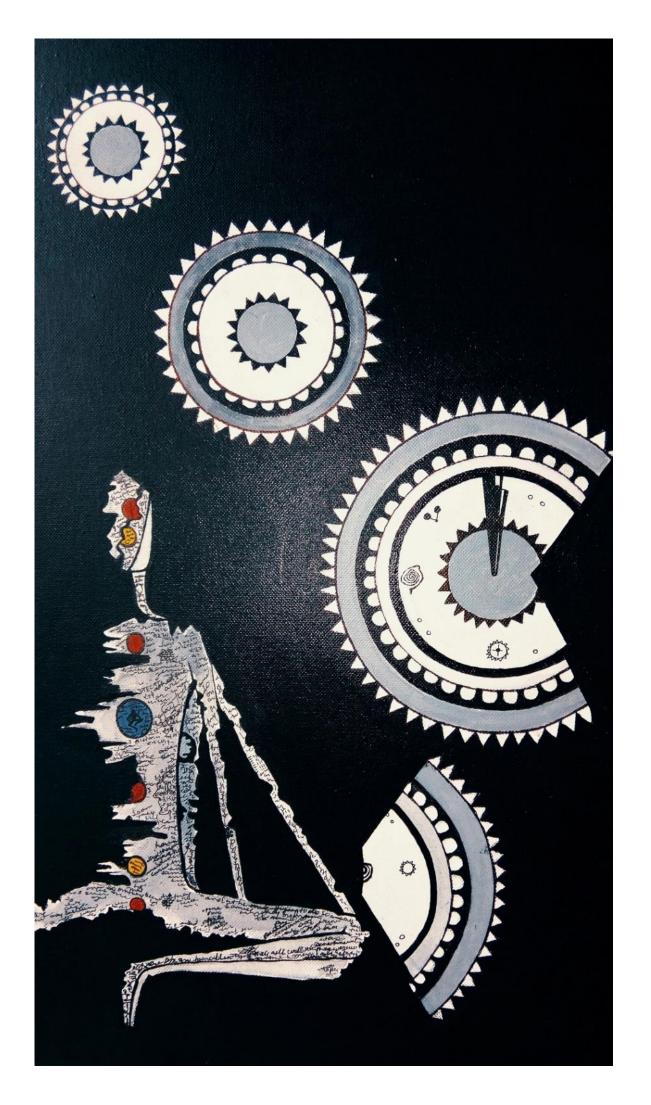




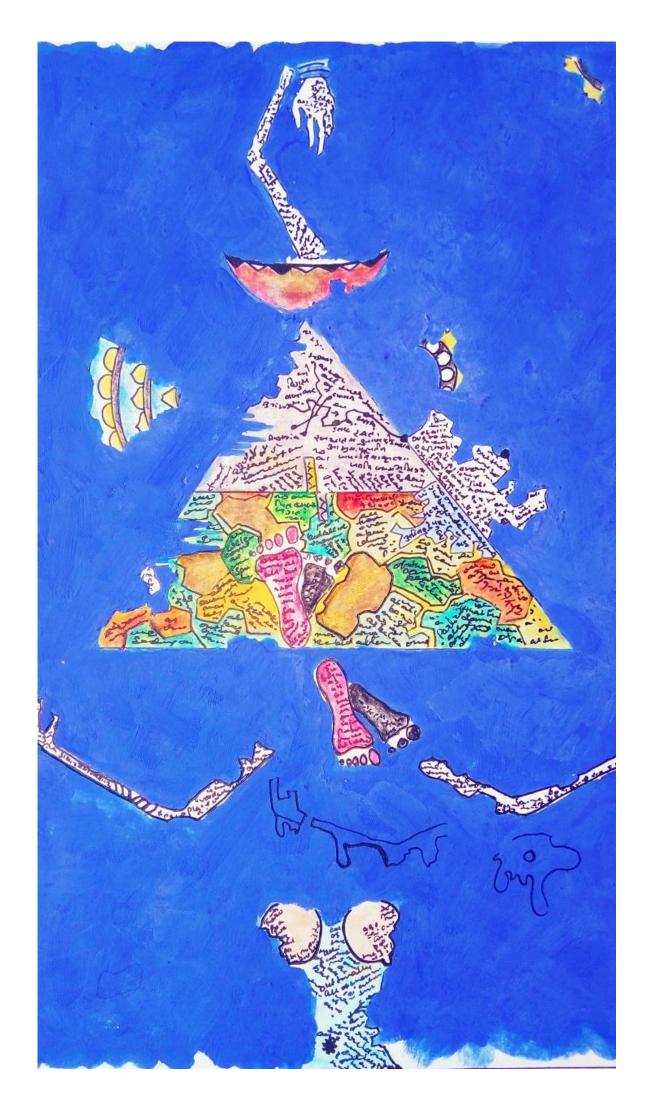












# **prakhar punj: feature**

Prakhar was born in Bihar, India and currently lives in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. He graduated is science stream from J.P. University, Chapra.

His art reflects his interest in travel and culture. He juxtaposes elements of reality with surrealism using paint, charcoal, and pen drawings. His rhythmic compositions convey feelings of whimsy with elements of surprise.

Prakhar's art is characterized by layers of depth and resonance, colourful lyricism, and a plethora of traditional contents. With an ancient mythological approach and sophisticated crafting, the artist unleashes a treasure trove of emotive possibilities and interpretations.

The artist portrayed end of time and humanity through absorbing sketches and colours.

The issues that he touched on included the struggle of mother to bring up her children safely and many others hazarding situations happening in her life.

Most admirable is his versatile creative approach in using mixed media and art techniques in brushwork and pen-strokes. He deftly combines the spontaneous dynamics of acrylic paint with graphite sticks and ink markers. As a superb colorist he integrates a range of contrasting and complimentary colors with unbridled confidence.

Prakhar's art embodies the inherent abstract characteristics in which an interplay of shapes, sizes, colors, and rhythms express his ideas and feelings. Additionally, his keen sensitivity to the natural world enlivens his art with a profound experience for the viewer.

### **Artwork:**

Page 76: Shiva Taandav (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 77: Remorse (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 78: 3 Stages of Life (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 79: The Last Time (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 80: Bliss of Wisdom (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 81: The Clash of Mother (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

Page 82: Untitled (acrylic, 18in x 24in)

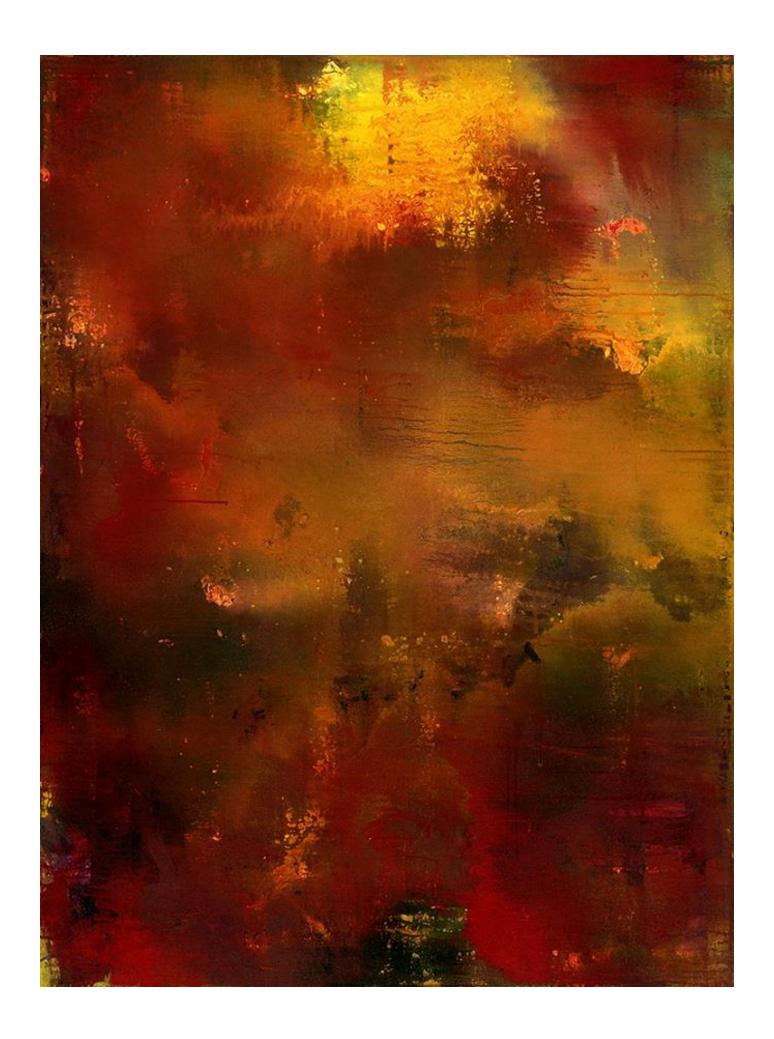
Page 83: Mother's Division (acrylic, 18in x 24in)





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# yari ostovany: interview

### What was your route towards becoming a visual artist?

**yo:** From childhood I was always interested in building things, putting things together.

As an adolescent I was very much interested in Modern Persian poetry (I was born in Tehran) but then was introduced to the visual arts through a series of art appreciation programs on Iranian television. My interest grew and grew and I took a drawing class and I was hooked.

Later on I studied art (painting as my focus) at the University of Nevada, Reno and then at the San Francisco Art Institute where I received my MFA in 1995. Since then I have been actively painting and exhibiting internationally.

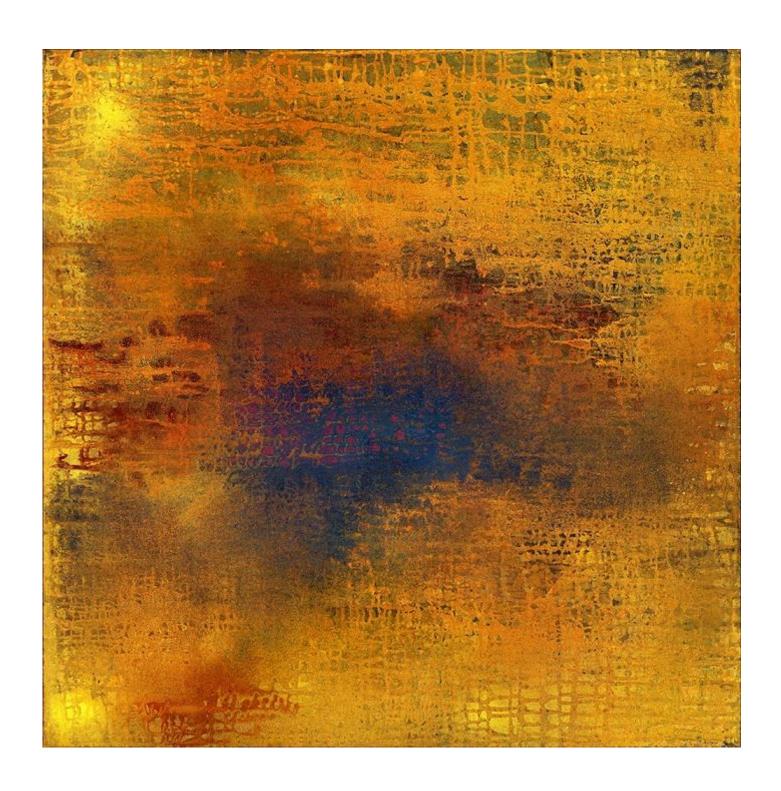
# What is it about painting specifically, that you feel best expresses your message as an artist?

**yo:** It is hard to put my finger on it but there is something magical in painting; the alchemy of paint, the tactile quality of it. It is alive and physical and at the same time mysterious and metaphysical.

As far as the message, Art to me is a personal spiritual journey, it is about trusting what's ahead and allowing it to happen as I dig deeper and go further. It is quite a solitary affair, what I share with the audience are the records of this deeply personal journey.

# You have said that your work, in part, is the search for Lux Aeterna. Can you explain what you mean by Lux Aeterna, and how it applies to your work?

**yo:** By that I mean the eternal truth if you will, the unchanging, the axis mundi; the still point. This is what I aspire to in my work, to have a glimpse of this inner light.







# yari ostovany: interview

### What is it about the abstract that appeals to you as an artist?

**yo:** We are all familiar with Walter Pater's famous quote "all art constantly aspires towards the condition of music" music being the most abstract of arts. Abstraction points to the push and pull of primordial and perennial energies closest to the source, these energies before they manifest themselves into a poem, a word, an action or even a thought.

### Is your work planned in advance, or it more a process of spontaneity?

**yo:** My work is process based and fully improvisational. In the studio I try to get myself out of the way as much as possible to let greater energies flow through me onto the canvas.

### How would you like others to view and interpret your work?

**yo:** I am touched when someone connects deeply with my work but I put no obligation on the viewer as to how to view and interpret my work. One of the most heart-warming feedbacks I have received was that looking at my paintings felt like staring into a flame and the other was that they are like poems.

### Are you working on anything specific at the moment?

**yo:** I always work on many pieces at the same time, at this time probably 30 pieces. This allows me not to be involved with A painting but with the PROCESS of painting. There are always pieces that I am in the middle of, pieces that I am finishing and pieces that I am starting. The order always shifts around, I go back and forth between them, they talk to one another and I learn from their conversations and exchanges.

## Do you have any upcoming exhibitions, shows or events that you'd like to mention – on or offline?

**yo:** I have two solo exhibitions coming up in September; one in Paris, France and in Mendocino, Northern California.

There are other solo and group exhibitions I am working on which have not been formally finalized yet.







# yari ostovany: interview

### And where can you be found online?

**yo:** I work with different organizations internationally. Some f the various sites online where you can see my work other than on my own website include Blue Rhino Art Consultancy, Singulart, IdeelArt, Artsy, 1stdibs and EmergEast to name a few.

This link provides a good starting point: <a href="https://linktr.ee/yariostovany">https://linktr.ee/yariostovany</a>

### **Artwork:**

Page 87: Chelleneshin, No. 22 (oil on canvas, 40in x 30in), 2015

Page 88: Arbour Zena (for Keith Jarrett) (oil on canvas, 36in x 35.75in (91cm x

90cm)), 2016

Page 90: Chelleneshin 35 (oil on canvas, 30in x 30in (76cm x 76cm)), 2016

Page 91: Chelleneshin 50 (oil on panel, 30in x 30in (76cm x 76cm)), 2021

Page 92: The Third Script 41 (oil on canvas, 30in x 30in (76cm x 76cm), 2020

Page 94: Conference of the Birds, No. 53 (oil on canvas, 40in x 40in), 2014

Page 95: Night Pilgrim (oil on canvas, 54in x 50in (137cm x 127cm)), 2016

Page 96: Simorgh Descending II (oil on canvas, 75in x 67in (190cm x 170cm)),

2015

# from the editor: last word

Thank you so much for purchasing this June 2022 issue of Inspirational, it is always very much appreciated, more than you can imagine. I truly hope that you enjoyed it.

Inspirational is all about generating support for working contemporary visual artists across a whole host of practices, disciplines, and time zones.

As editor of Inspirational, I would like to personally thank all of the artists and individuals that made this issue what it is: Ajay Sharma; C O Moed; Jacobien de Korte; Ellen Catanzaro; Bianca Biji; Prakhar Punj; Yari Ostovany.

All were generous in giving their time and their work for this issue of Inspirational.

I would also like to thank all of the official sponsors of Inspirational magazine: GAP (Global Art Project); 10dence Gallery; Confessional, an unsafe space; Balaclava.Q; Raw Art Foundation; Lavaru Art Center; Kuhl Tuli Productions as well as all of the champions, supporters, and subscribers of Inspirational magazine from around the planet. They are a constant, and they are the lifeblood of Inspirational.

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Inspirational is always open to submissions from visual artists in any discipline; as well as from art organisations, platforms, groups. So please feel free to contact me, the editor of Inspirational, directly at: <a href="mailto:d.johnhopper@gmail.com">d.johnhopper@gmail.com</a>

Inspirational has a dedicated site, which can be found at: https://inspirational-magazine.blogspot.com – as well as a facebook page where everything Inspirational can be found: @djhinspirational, as well as an Instagram space: @inspirationalartmagazine

Inspirational 63 will be on sale from July 1 2022.



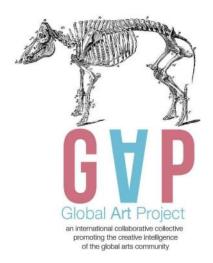
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