



'Inner Heart'

'I wanted to create a magical, enriching environment utilising universal symbolism that invites the viewer to come inside, beyond the two-dimensional surface'

Robin Martin, Sydney

This article is considered one of the most definitive articles on Visionary Art by the professional art world. It was sent to 29 countries by leading champions of Visionary Surrealism to explain the enigma that is sacred art.

BY LYNETTE GORDON

Dazzling light across night skies...iridescent landscapes...winged messengers from celestial worlds...all part of the growing stream of art known as Visionary art.

To dispel a popular myth, Visionary art did not grow out of the psychedelic 60s and 70s. Its root lies deep in Surrealism, a style of art embraced by renowned masters such as Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci, who brought their inspired visions from worlds beyond into physical reality. Visionary artist and poet, William Blake, raised

many British eyebrows when he attributed the source of his poetry to the 'Universal Library', a place he went to in a dream state where he read books of poetry he was able to memorise when he returned to a waking state.

Inspired by the works of ancient and modern Surrealists, including Russian visionary Nicholas Roerich, art historian Michael Bell of the San Francisco Arts Commission has spent the last fifteen years researching Surrealism. He is recognised as one of the world's leading authorities on the subject, and



'Ecstasy'

'When twin flames unite anything can be achieved...even a star. As humanity evolves, there are new ways to find the Divine Lover. Twin Flames are fuelled in heaven; their treasure is a jewel to carry with them into the world'

Pamela Mathews, Auckland, New Zealand



'Resurrection'

'This image represents the inner serenity eternally shining above the changing tides of worldly creation. Genuine art, to me, is sacred and the sacred in life is art.'

Francois Mougel Co-founder L'Atelier International Association for the Arts, Glebe, NSW

a curatorial champion of Visionary Surrealism.

“To understand what Visionary Surrealism is, and it is still very much of an enigma to both the public and professional art world, you need to know something about Surrealism,” explains Bell. “There are three kinds of Surrealism: Social, which describes the art of Hieronymus Bosch, Classical, which describes the work of Salvador Dali, and Visionary. What distinguishes Visionary Surrealism from the other two styles is that it is the most positive. It looks to the highest ideals of humankind, seeing the optimistic viewpoint over all others.

Therefore, there must be a religious or spiritual content.” Among the first recorded works of art created by Visionary artists was the Ark of the Covenant documented in the Old Testament. In addition to the Ark, Moses commissioned artists Bezalel and Oholiab to supervise the building of the Tabernacle, as well as all vestments, oils and accessories. These objects of ritual were handed down throughout the ages to the present time in both Judaic and Christian liturgy. Moses, therefore, became the first recorded curator of Visionary art!

Today, almost 3,000 years later, the Visionary art movement spans the world.



'Dolphin Guardians'

Gilbert Williams

*Courtesy Visionary Publishing,
West Palm beach, Florida U.S.A.*

Gone is the image of the artist as a deeply suffering person on the fringe of society. Today's artist has a vision of humanity and the planet as works of art.

The largest Visionary art gallery in the world is 'Isis Rising' situated in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA. Established to promote Visionary art exclusively, Isis Rising now supplies 29 countries with paintings, sculptures, posters and cards of leading world artists.

Says Jach Pursel of Isis Rising, "We look at Visionary art as healing art, art that speaks to people of hope, peace, greater possibilities and realities. With all the changes in our world today, individual and global, Visionary art brings light to an often dark perspective."

For the last 40 years the professional art world has been largely dominated by abstract art which is purposefully designed not to say anything, to project into the viewer's world rather than open a world for the viewer to enter.

Visionary art in contrast offers a window into the artist's vision, a vision beginning to capture the imagination of the general public.

Visionary art is also winning the approval of a particularly tough-minded group of critics...children! Children like the colours, light and images and enjoy making up stories about what they're seeing. Jonathon Meader, a Visionary artist from Washington D.C., took his paintings to a children's hospital in New York. "The paintings were mostly of animals", says Meader. "Animals with human-like characteristics. As we took the pictures from room to room, a large crowd of children gathered, excited by what they were seeing and eager to talk about it."

The artists who bring forth these in-

-spired visions are typically unassuming, polite, friendly people. Today's Visionary artists are recognising the true healing power of their gifts. Many approach their craft through meditation, dream work and prayer, consciously choosing to bypass the chatter of the reasoning mind and tap into the reservoir of timeless truth within.

In addition to mastering techniques of the Renaissance painters and the more modern challenge of the air brush, many Visionary artists have studied anthropology, archaeology, mysticism and astronomy. Artists such as world-acclaimed Gilbert Williams, who has designed album covers for the Jacksons, Crosby Stills and Nash Paul Horn and many others...Michael Pangrazio, Art Director whose films include 'Return of the Jedi, E.T. and Raiders of the Lost Ark...Australia's Robin Martin, who has designed album covers for the music industry...Elizabeth Kyle of New Zealand, who has created a Renaissance Fair on her property high on the Kiamai ranges near Tauranga, N.Z., and whose unique works of art including a pony-sized rocking unicorn are attracting world attention...Steve 'Sundram' Harmer of Byron Bay, whose collection of paintings entitled 'Ancient Australian Dreaming' takes viewers on a journey through forty millennia of Aboriginal legend...all part of this growing world movement.

A number of Visionary artists have been drawn to Virginia Beach, Virginia, USA, to be close to the Association for Research and Enlightenment, the study site for the readings of the world-renowned psychic, Edgar Cayce. One is Francis Sporer, Art Director of A.R.E's magazine, 'Venture Inward'.

"Art, like science, is a legitimate way of searching for the truth," says Sporer. "The readings of Edgar Cayce suggest that an easy and effective way to positively influence our lives is to have important personal symbols placed in our living space. These symbols, often in the form of a mandala picture, are called Life Seals. Even if we don't give these Life Seals conscious attention but pass by them frequently, they will register on the unconscious mind and help awaken our higher ideals."

Sporer was greatly influenced by Carl Jung's personal and professional use of mandalas.

"Much of Jung's psychological theory revolved around his belief in archetypes", says Sporer. "These are fundamental symbolic images common to all people, a part of what he called the collective unconscious. One of these, the circle, was seen to represent the very centre of one's being. Mandalas can be used as a calming, centering tool for meditation, a pleasant reminder of our



'White Wind'

'I was given this vision of White Wind complete in all its detail. I believe if we open our hearts and minds to our visions and dreams, the ancient language of symbols will help bridge time, culture, race and creed.'

*Elizabeth Kyle,
Tauranga, New Zealand*

meditation, a pleasant reminder of our goals, ideals and purposes.”

Jose Arguelles, art historian and well-known author, believes art can bring peace to humanity. “Most people rely on artificial forms of entertainment rather than on their own creative abilities,” says Arguelles. “The general level of amnesia about our oneness with nature has reached alarming proportions. Visionary art has a role to play to awaken people from a cultural sleep and to create within them a sensitivity about our planetary home.”

Arguelles believes that to create a global consciousness, Visionary artists must use technology in strikingly new ways. He believes that until recently people used technology to gain control over nature but in the process lost the capacity to create art. He believes people must use their leisure time,

computer technology, and electronic communication networks to reawaken creativity on a planetary level. “I call the linking together of all artists and artistic organisations working for cultural transformation Planet Art”, says Arguelles. “The world’s cultures have produced many separate artistic forms. From these we are developing planetary art forms that may become the foundation for a new order.”

From our Visionary artists we will learn to cultivate appreciation and awareness in our everyday life, prerequisites for social and global harmony. As we do, the world will become, for all, a work of art.

Lynette Gordon is a journalist and screen writer/producer for tv and film. Having studied Metaphysics for over 30 years, she specializes in translating and presenting universal principles for positive living