

The paintings of Cynthia Rose Young portray the mystical, metaphysical and spiritual principles of deeply inspired spiritual art. The two basic aspects that manifest these principles are her preoccupation with light and the organization of her works around a luminous center.

Mandalas of Light

When we awaken on a bright and sunny day, we feel more alive and self-confident. Light puts us in touch with our own essence, with the inner "I." Whenever we allow the light to shine through us, we seem to be in closer touch with our spiritual being. In all the great mythologies of the world, the dawning of consciousness is identified with the coming of light into the world.

By having made light the central theme of her work, Cynthia puts us in touch with that creative force which is at work in the unfolding of our life and consciousness. Often the light appears in a sacred geometry of spirals and circles emanating in a mandalic harmony from the center. These images strike a balance deep within us and within nature. All of life is made up of circles within circles or as the famous Sioux mystic Black Elk said, "All is hoops within hoops."

The Center

As every artist intuitively knows, and as Rudolf Arnheim has demonstrated in his *Art and Visual Perception*, the center of a visual field is the point of balance where all forces come to rest. The symbolism of the Center concerns the turning of consciousness inward to that place where unity, infinity, transcendence, timelessness and Absolute Being are known.

The Center, being infinite, is not contained with any finite form. The point is but its symbol. The Center itself is eternally open – the paradigm of the Divine Heart ever outpouring its Infinite Love. The great revelations of God often referred to as "outpourings of Divine Light" are present in the theme of the Open Light Center of Cynthia's work.

Light Moving Nature, Spirit Moving Life

Cynthia's landscapes and seascapes repeatedly employ the four universal elements of Earth, Water, Fire and Air. The ancient philosophers made use of these elements, not literally, but as symbols of the four realms of being. Earth stood for the material universe, Water for the life of the emotions, Fire for the activity of the mind, and Air for Spirit which, like wind, is invisible, yet moves all things.

It is a universal law that the greater force always rules the lesser. Likewise, the Higher Reality rules the lower. In Cynthia's works, the light pours forth from the Infinite Center upon the world below, we notice, in the seascapes, especially Cosmic Ocean, that the level of the water drops as though 'under pressure' from the light above. At the same time, the light seems to exert a calming influence upon it. Is this not what we want in our life, to be moved by the light yet be brought to fulfillment at the same time?

The Path to Enlightenment

In the case of Landscapes, such as Sacred Meadow, an open path among the trees and flowers is often seen leading toward, even merging indistinguishable with, the Light. It as though the path, itself, was a creation of the light. And, indeed, in the case of the Spiritual Path, known by many names, such as "The Raiser-Edged Path," "The Straight and Narrow Way," "Wisdom's Path," and "The Mystic Way," the path and The Light are One. We see again, Cynthia's art, employs mystic symbolism to internally show us the way, the Path to the Light to the Center of our Being.

Piercing the Veil of Illusion

The ever-present clouds in Cynthia's paintings are not the clouds of nature floating overhead. Extending always from the sky to the earth itself, their function is as a veil between the earthly and heavenly worlds. Only as the mind is able to pierce this veil and see the Reality behind appearances does the "light shine upon one's way." In Cynthia's art, the clouds roll back in

obedience to the outpouring of the Light Center, revealing again the superior power of Divine Revelation and the Illumined Mind over all that veils the Higher Worlds from men's souls.

Mythical Expression

In many of Cynthia's work we find mythical birds and animals, symbolic flowers, angelic beings and transcendent persons. The natural world is transmuted into a magical world, a world in which all forms of creatures serve the light. Waters yield, trees bend, cloud roll away, all for the Light. In such a world, ordinary birds, animals, flowers and men would be out of place. Only what is revealing of a higher order of being and consciousness can dwell here. So we have unicorns, symbolic of the illumined spiritual natures of the mystic, the winged Pegasus, symbolic of the heightening of the natural forces and of the innate capacity for spiritualization, the Oriental Phoenix and others.

A Mystical Experience

No statement concerning mystical or metaphysical art is complete without noting the importance of the visual arts for the evolution and awakening of human consciousness. Mysticism is the direct, inner experience of the One, All-Pervading, and Supreme Reality. One is entitled to ask how the mystical experience comes about. For some it may come through meditation or religious aspiration. But for others it may come through science or mathematics. For many, however, it is some artistic expression in music or dance or some visual work of art which will provide the one thing needful for the awakening of consciousness out of its mundane existence. The awe, the wonder, the joy, the beauty which we experience in the presence of great works of art is like a 'foreshadowing in miniature' of those higher states of consciousness attained in mystical experience. No doubt for many, Cynthia Rose Young Schlosser's *Mandalas of Light and Mystical Landscapes* will prove to be 'the one thing needful' to start a mystical experience. Their contemplation can lead to the opening up of the Cosmic Center within one's self, for the great universal law is always in operation: Like gives birth to like.

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