

PAUL McCLOSKEY'S ROAD TO ENLIGHTENMENT

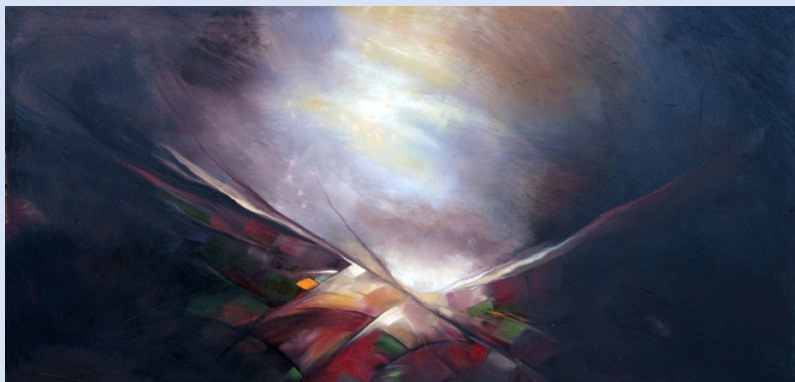
Michele-Andree-Unblugged



Paul McCLOSKEY was born in Carrickmacross Co. Monaghan, Ireland. But is now living and working in Gorey, Co. Wexford. Alongside his painting career, Paul has been a teacher of art and design for the past 26 years, and has taught both adults and students from 11 to 18 years. "I have always tried to balance the two, says Paul. But I consider it a privilege to be in a position to work with and influence young people, art allows you to connect on a different more spiritual level with students than most other subjects.

'For as long as I can remember art has been my passion, it's an integral part of my everyday life; it is the most stabilising influence on me the one constant throughout my life, it has given me identity and purpose, it has sustained me emotionally, spiritually and physically all my life. My wish is that someday my work will guide or lead people to a greater sense of their selves, to in some way connect with them perhaps beginning their road to enlightenment. My twin sister Jane (also an artist) have known as far back as we can remember that Art is who we are, when our brothers asked for toys we asked for sketchpads, paint and pencils and when we visited our grandparents in Duleek, there was always copybooks and pencils waiting for us...it was there that I learned that a piece of white bread worked perfectly well as an eraser!!My parents (now deceased) always encouraged us to make the most of our talent and have followed with pride the ups and downs of our careers."

Paul welcome, it is an honour and a privilege to do this article with you. Thank you so much for participating in this project by answering the following questions.





No. 1) What is art to and for you? (generally and personally)

For me art/painting is not so much a choice, but very much part of who I am, a part that must be expressed and released. Painting has given me true purpose and personal identity as it allows me to tap into that third dimension within, the creative, which I believe when tapped into is as close to a connection with

Divinity/Spirit as is possible. . I strive for expression of divinity/spirituality in my work. All great art comes from this place of no ego, this place of connection, of openness, of allowing. My duty is to allow with the utmost honesty, as only the painter/artist can truly know the level of honesty given to the creation of a work and therefore how more open he was to inspiration or divine influence. However a point comes when I know I have to let go of a particular work as a catharsis has taken place and released me, this is when I become an observer to its creation which is probably one of the most compelling desires for me as a painter, is to witness it as a creation. True art connects with the viewer on a deeper level than just the superficial and if the viewer is open they too can experience that connection to divinity through great art.

No. 2) What inspires you?

My most recent series of paintings 'Awakenings Reloaded' is inspired by the landscape, what we perceive as every day and perhaps ordinary, the places we merely glance at without allowing ourselves to get lost in the breath-taking creation and beauty that surrounds us, this visual influence is determined by the surrounding landscape of my environment, but its intention is primarily as a catalyst in expressing divinity and is therefore secondary to this expression. The varied and stunning Irish landscape coupled with our unsettled weather and therefore often fleeting and mottled light inspires me greatly. Often a view will change or an area will be spot lit by a simple break in the clouds, highlighting like a shimmering treasure or jewel, a corner of a field, the side of some rocky cliff or the dynamic sweeping curves of a valley reminding us that we are an integral part of and connected to a whole, encouraging us to see and most importantly feel its beauty and spirit and therefore reconnect to this vital part of us.

No. 3) When you are creating, painting, where does it take you? I mean where does your mind travel?

This is difficult to say really, ideally the mind should remain as absent as possible, the mind needs to be quietened and still in order to allow divinity to work through unhindered, it is a place of no mind, a place of connection to spirit, a place of open and alert awareness, a place of allowing as this is the only place of true creation.

No. 4) Do you think painting, music and health are related and if so, how or what makes you think so?

Yes I do, it can be said that the body, mind, music and art have rhythms and movement and when synchronised then beauty and health are the result, but also Music and Painting allow us to let go and connect with our higher selves and this connection gives the body/mind space to heal.

No. 5) How do you feel when you are painting?

This place of inner quiet, the calming of the constant chatter of the mind, which must be allowed to create is a place of PEACE.



No. 6) Do you identify with your subject and if so, on what level?

All subjects whether landscape, people still lives are energy, all come from the one source; therefore there is no



separation between me and my subject, a cycle, as separation only exists within the mind and in order to truly create I am in a place of no mind, therefore inevitably as one with my subject.

No. 7) Under what conditions do you work best?

I have two places where I work my garage is converted into a summer studio for large work and I have a room inside the house I use for research and smaller works.

I find I work best when calm and relaxed with the minimum amount of distractions, although I often get a sense of anxiousness or perhaps its adrenalin an excitement and energy particularly when beginning a new series of work, then I find I need to slow that down a little before starting. Once I'm into a work the opposite happens, I become so engrossed that all noise is silenced and all distractions disappear and I feel total peace.

No. 8) Does painting help you connect with your Higher Self, whatever that may be for you?

I believe I must connect with my higher self before I can paint. To truly, honestly and consciously create, connecting to this

higher self is integral it's a given, although often it's the process of painting that connects me to this. It is here in this place as mentioned before of 'no mind' that true art for me is made.

No. 9) How do you feel about creativity in the public school system?

Whether it be literature or visual art, often due to the system of points and 3rd level access means we tell our students/children what to think, often we do not listen as teachers/adults but instead expect to be heard, 'here is a poem and this is what it means', 'here is a painting and this is what the artist is trying to tell us'. Also skills in the use of words and materials, literary and visual are a necessary part of learning, for without them we cannot communicate our vision, but we need to remember as teachers/adults that these skills although important are secondary to allowing. A greater balance is needed between the two.



No. 10) In your opinion, what could be a simple solution to improve creativity in the public school system?

For every lesson of skill and craft taught there should be a class of free open honest expression, personal opinion and discussion whatever the medium, particularly and increasingly for senior students. They should be encouraged to feel and express that connection on an emotional level rather than just the images they see and words that they read.

No 11) What are you hoping to convey to the onlooker through your art?

Though my duty is surely to be open to these influences of spirit and divinity and to be honest in their expression them through my work, I believe the circle is not complete until that connection is communicated to the viewer. Therefore the audience also plays a vital role, not merely as dormant observers of the painting being viewed, but as an active participant in completing the spiritual experience.

Before and during the process the viewer or onlooker is not a consideration for me, I do not produce my work for anyone, nor even for me, however, whenever a work is completed I then become a witness to it, as revelation, an observer to it as an entity in itself, if the work was created with honest expression and awareness then all I can wish for is that I and the onlooker(s) can somehow connect with that spirit again, somehow connect to that divinity on some level or at least open a door to seeing the whole rather than just the part.

Paul, again thank you for sharing your thoughts and feelings so generously with us and inviting us into your most interesting world. I certainly hope we collaborate again in the future and until then, keep well and be blessed! ***Michele-Andree***

TO THE READER :

You are cordially invited to visit Paul's links below. And as always, your comments are most welcome and truly appreciated, thank you ever so much. Enjoy!

www.paulmccloskey.ie

<https://www.facebook.com/PaulMcCloskeyPaintingsGallery/>

https://www.instagram.com/paul_mccloskey_artist/

Comments

By Daniela on April 9th, 2012 at 12:07 pm

Awesome paintings... yes, I've always thought "the way to" is more important than 'the goal' more enriching, more introspective, more revealing.

By MAXX MAXTED on April 10th, 2012 at 6:40 am

I applaud you.

My own entry to my studio had an oval pebble set in the heavy post. It had been given me by Jason Monet, now deceased. I used it as a 'mezzuzah' do they call it in Jewish homes that contain a piece of scripture. A bit like dipping your right hand in Holy Water if green's the colour of your cloth.

I would immediately be 'beamed' to creative land and as soon as I entered the studio was totally oblivious to the outside world. If I had gone to the studio, out of 'working hours' on an errand I would rub the stone, enter and totally forget why I was there. I would have to go outside the studio and ask myself what it was I had come down for. Inside was like a Tardis or 'Cone of Silence'. Protected from outside vibes.

By Barbara pepper on May 1st, 2012 at 8:08 am

I found your words very uplifting. I myself am a painter and I can relate to what you are saying about the painting experience. Your work is beautiful very powerful a wonderful feast for the senses. Thank you for sharing such an enlightened point of view and for sharing such dynamic work.

By Daniela on June 19th, 2012 at 12:17 pm

As I first looked at this painting, my attention was taken by the intensity of the colours.

The browns and yellows of Earth, the dark blues, greys and black of Water, the reds and the oranges of Fire and all the blues of Air.

The stability and the solidness of the earth is fused into the breath of the air, the intensity and the vigorous passion of the fire is balanced by the purity and the fertility of water. All the four elements are expressed in the harmonious equilibrium and they vibrate in a sort of musicality at the same time.

Soon afterwards it was as if my eyes were walking along the path, which at the beginning I felt as a tunnel, then suddenly as a vortex, a flux where I was bounced, spiralling uncontrollably downward and upwards. In both cases, I had the perception of a journey, the journey of self-discovery, beyond physicality towards something uncontrollable, unmeasurable and undefinable. Whether a linear path or a vortex, the experiences and the events one lives, the emotions and the passions one feels, the obstacles and the difficulties one meets, will lead to that comforting light, even if still blurred.

and hazy. It is beyond any limitation, any physical boundary. A new dimension, temporary or long lasting but definitely valuable. It is one's being, one's self.