



Take Five Q & A with Suzette Boulais

1. What's your background in art?

I don't have any formal background in art. I didn't study it in high school or college and so am a bit of a late bloomer. I was raised in a household with two very artistic brothers, however, one who received a scholarship to Indianapolis' Herron School of Art and so I have been surrounded by art for much of my life. I was well into my 40s when I decided to experiment with art and pursue it on my own. Right from the start, with my very first painting, (which I still keep for sentimental purposes) I could see my style was leaning toward the contemporary and abstract and so have followed this path ever since.

2. What does your art aim to say?

My art aims to communicate universal, abstract concepts like peace, hope and serenity, and by doing so, offer a sense of calm to the viewer. My paintings are often abstract landscapes that use light to reflect hope, since light for me has always been a spiritual, not just a physical dimension of my work. With a strong interest in graphic design and a love of symbolism, my paintings are in many ways symbolic graphic designs set to color and paint. When I paint a circle, for example, I use it as a symbol to represent the unity of life. The sun and moon are symbols for the light of God. Birds in my paintings reflect the spiritual journey throughout our lives and water reflects the symbolic, unconscious life force.

3. Who is your biggest art influence?

My biggest influence to date is abstract expressionist Mark Rothko. I find his work with basic color schemes simple, yet sublime. On my best days when I feel my own colors and shapes are working together in harmonious

ways, I hope my paintings express a small element of the sublime, too.

4. How have you developed your career in art?

I can't say that I have developed a career in art. What I have developed is an avocation in art. Creating art is a part of my joy, passion, therapy, prayer, meditation, contemplation, connection to Source and soulful expression, all rolled into one. Creating art for me coincides beautifully with a favorite Joseph Campbell quote, "Follow your bliss." It's my joy and my bliss to enter the quiet, private sanctuary of my art room and see how each and every piece of art takes on a creative life all its own.

5. How do you seek out opportunities?

As a member of CIAO (Central Illinois Artist Organization) I like being aware of various opportunities to show my work along with the works of fellow CIAO artists. I have also found that promoting my art on Facebook and using my art as a backdrop to my Facebook Thoughts For Living series where I put quotes to art, is a great way

showcase some of my work. Facebook has also come in handy when making community connections when I do callouts to businesses or organizations to see if they might be interested in showing my work at their facilities.

After I made a public call out on Facebook about some of larger pieces that were available for display, for instance, Methodist College contacted me to say they were interested in hanging these pieces in the waiting room areas at their main campus. I was thrilled about this opportunity. Now with over a dozen of my pieces hanging at the College, my work gets lots of public exposure every single day. And what artist doesn't appreciate such public exposure?

You can see some of my pieces on display at Methodist College right here on this About Me webpage.