

## My Publications Work Sample

Introduction to the work samples: These series of books deal with the question of creativity. Creative expression has been an obsession of mine since the age of five when I used to draw weird symbol and ask my older siblings to read them for me. The response was inevitably this is meaningless. Over time, the meaningless symbols shared life with the more meaningful ones, yet a few still meaningless, some are abstract spaces in my paintings and writings; some are just chaos. What I call intentional mess or “messyah”. Walking the chaos slippery sloppy slopes, a few fall in. Paul Klee at the last years of his life was no exception as he slipped into madness.

As to the question of creativity itself, I feel Plato has the first word and the last word.

Plato:

- The good lyric poets; as the worshipping Corybantes are not in their senses when they dance, so the lyric poets are not in their senses when they make these lovely lyric poems. No, when once they launch into harmony and rhythm, they are sized with Bacchic transport, are possessed—as bacchantes, when possessed, draw milk and honey from the rivers, but not when in their senses.
- ...for a poet is a light and winged thing, and holy, and never able to compose until he has become inspired, and is beside himself, and reason is no longer in him.

The creative impulse at its fever-pitch madness is not psychosis but the divine inspiration.

Creativity reaches out to unknown regions and a realm beyond our human thinking faculty. The process is impossible to pin down. Our mood changes, the thought processes deepen, state of mind varies at different periods in our lives. With every change, the creative juice thins or thickens.

So the question is: if the process is so holy, mystifying and indefinable, how could we formulate anything? Yet we do. Man’s karma is to keep hypothesizing about the unknown and speculate on the impossible to know. Then we end up getting stuck in the labyrinth of mind, the web that we so elaborately construct. I am no exception.

The extreme “lost” is psychosis. Any treasures gained, prior to going crazy, is creativity. The risk of madness is present and clear danger, yet into the dark waters, we must dive. Let the divine madness dream it up and reason to deliver it.

## Publications

1. *The Birth of Image: Hieros Gamos.* To be published Sept 2013
2. *Alchemy and Creative Expression.* To be published 2014
3. *The Grand Conference of Birds at Grant Park.* Published, Amazon.com

### **1. *The Birth of Image: Hieros Gamos.* To be published Sept 2013**

**A good portion of the creative expression is party-favors received at the sacred wedding**

### ***Hieros Gamos***

#### **The Birth of Image: the Divine Child**

When we engage an image consciously

We celebrate the *hieros gamos* unconsciously

*Hieros gamos* is about a sacred wedding. In this myth, colors wed colors, a marriage of prismatic hues with earth colors.

Aristotle stated that the grind of everyday life dents the soul; the arts make the soul “whole” again. With the redemptive power of the arts and its healing force the soul recovers to face yet another day.

So here, we are listening to the wedding bells announcing a sacred marriage. A mythical wedding of celestial with terrestrial is underway.

Let’s join the party.

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A quote from Rufus, The Grant Park sparrow

*The Grand conference of Birds at Grant Park/ Hueless in Chicago*

### **Rufus**

Multiplicity surrounds us every waking hour.

Each image-maker must swim the ocean and reach the other side. The pilgrimage is to where all the opposites unite. In that realm, the moon romances the sun, Venus pairs with Mars, the unspoken finds its poetic voice to speak.

There in a hieros gamos (alchemy: sacred marriage) the invisible marries the visible. Only then, the divine child, a creative expression can come to life.

The image-maker celebrates the words, ideas, forms, and colors as harmonies that synthesize an image and impart life to the artwork. Now the image smiles grateful for coming from the world of darkness to the light of the sun--this physical life.

### ***2. Alchemy and the Creative Expression. Non-fiction.***

A Sample of writing will be available soon.

### ***3. The Grand Conference of Birds at Grant Park/Hueless in Chicago:***

Fiction-published.

This published work of fiction begins with a verse about creativity and goes on to the myth of inception of color and form and ends with a contemporary story.

**Pomegranate Garden**, Nader Khaghani, spring 2011

Pomegranate trees grow well in a fertile soul  
Soon a bough, an orchard, beautiful blooms  
For creativity in all you choose to do  
Enter the fruit garden to and fro  
In arts and chores the red white seeds grow  
Trumpet-shaped buds, orange flowers, and fruit  
When you seed, tend the garden, and prune  
The acid green leaves and the dull dry branches  
Ten thousand gun salute to you, the creator that arose  
When the finger of God pointed to the garden close  
Fait accompli, life and creativity, at creation you chose

Painted in Sistine Chapel in color and form your choice  
You are to play god in your blooming garden  
A microcosm that you may freely transpose  
Play, plant and plow with color, verse, and prose  
Create space, make music, or in words impose  
For to create is to enrich life  
To enrich life is to embrace living  
To embrace living is to have lived fully.  
To have fully lived is to leave your mark behind  
Create

## *Preface*

### **The Two-way Mirror of Arts**

A brief note about the twelfth century literary work of the Persian Sufi poet, Farid ud-Din Attar and his masterpiece of Persian poetry, *The Conference of Birds*.

To oversimplify the mystical tale, the birds estranged from their “home” decide to seek the palace of their maker Simurgh—a clever word with two meanings in Farsi: “a mythical bird,” and “thirty birds.” Two ideas wedded into one.

Birds meet at a conference to discuss the journey to Ghaf Mountain the mythical home of Simurgh. With many excuses, some birds avoid the hardship of the journey home. The parrot is more interested in the fountain of youth and the falcon excuses himself because he is used to sitting on a Sultan’s arm. Finally, thousands of birds begin the quest. They must cross seven valleys—the seven steps in Sufism in which one gets to know God as an inner experience.

On the journey home, along the way numerous birds perish due to weather, starvation, hunger, greed, fatigue, and slew of other obstacles. Eventually, thirty birds, half dead, make it to the Ghaf Mountain asking for Simurgh. To their surprise, the birds discover that Simurgh is actually their own reflection in the lake: each bird in singularity and the thirty birds in totality: i.e. Simurgh. One in many, many in one.

Similarly, the arts hold a magical two-way mirror before us. An artwork reflects the soul of one particular artist with the inner life that forms his or her personal expression. In the other reflection, we can observe the totality of human consciousness, the universality of life experience—the vast

**Plato**

*Shall we lay down, then, that there are two kinds of existing things,  
one visible, one unseen?*

**Rufus**

*Art is the unseen essence of life and color is its visible spice.*

**Mondrian**

*The artist wants and searches for a style: this is his [her] struggle.*

Rufus

*Do you ever listen to your inner callings?  
That little bird inside that only you can hear*

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## ***Chapter 1: Dean Cunningham's note in his Journal***

October 12

Rufus

*Do you ever listen to your inner callings?  
That little bird inside that only you can hear*

Dean Cunningham's note in his Journal

I keep inundating this journal with notes about Rufus the amazing house sparrow who has been hanging around art school for as long as I remember. Here is yet another note. Although I have previously recorded many of Rufus's observations on art, I have not written down how it all got started. I want to address that before I forget the details.

Rufus and I go way back. One day he magically appeared on the sill of my office window. His timing was perfect. At my desk, I was just about

ready to bite into a sandwich, and there comes the sparrow.

“Cheerpe.”

With that call, the bird was claiming his share of my lunch. He must have picked up the smell of the ham and cheese sandwich. I thought the poor sparrow must be hungry, barging in like that, and I best feed him. As it turned out, feeding Rufus was the wisest decision. In time, I discovered that when Rufus gets frustrated he poops all over the place. For a clean windowsill, I'd better have some food handy when Rufus shows up.

When his belly is full, Rufus is a charmer. To show his gratitude the sparrow tells me myths from the bird universe or even helps out with the school executive decisions. If I procrastinate, he acts as my alter ego. First he complains with a monotonous repeated nasal call: “cheep, cheep, cheep.” Meaning, “Are you going to decide or sit on your butt all day, dean?” So I get to work. Gather information, analyze, decide and announce my decision on the phone or even in an email. Then comes Rufus's response—either a “chirrup” or a “Philip” which are natural callings of a sparrow that Rufus uses judicially.

Flabbergasted that I can actually communicate with the bird, I expressed my delight and shock to Rufus, but he was so nonchalant about it.

His exact response:

“Hello, we birds have been playing muse to mankind for eons.”

I never knew that. When I pushed Rufus for more information he said that he was just a conduit and all inner visions and understandings come from the astral plane within my own self!. In the inner world one projects, listens, and receives.

Be that as it may, the chirrup I interpret as: “Cheer up, don't sweat it dean, you made a sound decision. All is well that ends well.” Generally, Rufus is right with a batting average of, oh, over 90%.

However, when Rufus throws a temper tantrum screaming, “Philip!”

I know I screwed up, making a bad decision, and if I go ahead with that particular course of action, troubles will be brewing in the near future. “Philip” has come to mean I used a Philip screwdriver on a flat head screw and that ain't going to work no way. So Philip means watch out for the unseen difficulties that your bad decision will entail.

Vincent van Gogh once said that no matter what one thinks of, there are always some unforeseen difficulties. I wonder if Rufus can see the unseen troubles brewing (my 'Philip' administrative decisions) in the astral plane to which I have no access at this time. Got to do some more inner work.

“Chur-chur-r-r-it-it-it-it.”

That is a female house sparrow, probably Rufus's mate. She complains if Rufus spends too much time in my office. Rufus himself sounds and looks different. Brightly gray and brown, with a black bib and stout bill and a face, round like a soup spoon. On top of his head, he sports a yellow spot very unusual for a house sparrow. His body is chunky and full in the chest. I usually hear that single "cheep" as a note of submission from other house sparrows when Rufus is around which tells me he is the leader of the sparrows hanging around the art school.

"Per-chic-o-ree."

Opus, the recorded sound of an American Gold Finch is announcing 3:00 PM. On the wall of my office the thirteen-inch Audubon clock displays twelve American songbirds painted around the clock; each one takes turn to announce the passing hour.

The mechanical call of American Gold Finch is a reminder that an appointment with a former student, Baroon, is soon coming up. A good painter, but he suffers from a chronic lack of confidence, just like me and most of the painters I know. A curse in creative expression, if you want to play god with small g you shall never be sure, but do it anyway.

Anyway, I have a problem. I wonder if Rufus can help him best; this bird is wise. In fact, I have noted many of his astute observations on color harmony all over my journal. Maybe I should give Baroon my journal to read Rufus. No, not a good idea. I have to think of something else. More advice

is like trying to solve a problem with yet another problem since too much thinking got Baroon artistically constipated in the first place.

On the other hand, maybe Baroon will listen to the birds better than the dean of the art school—a figure of authority, though I don't see myself as an authoritarian. In fact, so that creativity can thrive in school, I run a loose ship.

At any rate, God knows I have tried hard to help Baroon and so far have failed miserably. Rufus would grade my efforts with a 'Phillip.'

Rufus

*In arts: two powers must fuse*

*Seen with the unseen*

*In color: two sensibilities must mix*

*Hues with the harmonies*

*Feelings with the intuition*

*Intuition with the skills*

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## ***Chapter 2:***

# *The Creation Myth of the Primordial Pair: Color & Form*

Chapter 2: The Creation Myth of the Primordial Pair: Color & Form

"Cheerpe."

Here comes Rufus. I wonder what gem he has up his beak today. He usually tries to impress me with what he has learned about painting, and I tell you, he is astute.

Rufus:"Chirrup."

Dean:"Chirrup to you too, Rufus. What have you got to say today?"

Rufus: "Art is the unseen essence of life and color is its visible spice."

That means he has a myth to confirm the assertion. . If I were to tell you his creation myth of color and form, you would not believe me. You may even wonder what the dean of art school has been smoking. So instead, let me ask Rufus to retell that myth.

"Go ahead little one tell me the inception myth of color and form again, will you."

"Some goodies to eat first?"

"Sure, the legend then the goodies later."

Rufus: Okay dean you always drive a tough bargain. Look, other birds at Grant Park have had little or no interest in maintaining our bird annals. Of late, we sparrows, that is Moe and myself, have been doing the honors. I did not make up the myth; I could not even if I tried. I am quoting the myth from one of the old worm eaten and dilapidated pages of the birds' books, which we are restoring."

Dean: Okay I got it. We are talking a reliable source in here."

Rufus: You bet. And as the story goes, in the beginning and before man appears on the earth, everything was covered in a blanket of darkness. Only dark light shined on earth. As things thrive in darkness and reach for light, the only two sole residents of this earth, the birds and serpents, multiplied on earth in the darkness.

The first birds had wings but could not fly. So the birds walked and serpents crawled on the surface of this earth. Each covered in scales and only later feathers grew on the birds. Yet they were both in only neutral colors: white, gray, brown and black. Earth colors only, get it?



Occasionally the rain would fall, and a rainbow would appear somewhere. The hues of the rainbow, though faint, were a delightful sight. How do you say it? A treat. Enchanted the earth, creatures observed the magical colors and wished those gorgeous hues could come to earth to beautify them and everything else.

The birds and serpents were more foes than they were friends. In every encounter, each one tried to make a meal of the other. Occasionally fierce and massive battles would break out with much bloodshed and loss of lives on both sides.

Finally, one day a neda came.

“Let there be light.”

An immense sound vibration shook the space and instantly Mother Light shined on earth, the darkness withdrew, and the rains fell. A beautiful rainbow filled the firmament.

Dean: Wait a minute. What’s neda?

Rufus: “Neda is a mysterious sound that I can’t explain. I even asked Moe, the sparrow philosopher at Grant Park, and he couldn’t explain it either. So I say, we birds are not privy to it.”

“Not even on the astral plane?” asked the dean, surprised.

“No, to the astral plane we project, listen and receive, but to Neda we can’t project. It comes on its own. Neda is from the highest sphere beyond the astral plane, which is inaccessible to us. We can’t fly that high. What do you say in your digital age? Yeah, don’t have the bandwidth.”

“Okay, go on.”

Rufus: “Transfixed, the earth residents could not take their eyes off the heavenly light and gorgeous hues. They watched Mother Light sending her children, the hues, to color the earth and its residents beautiful. Overjoyed, the birds and serpents could hardly wait to be colored with those stunning hues.

The king of serpents, a rattlesnake known as Double Diamond, (AKA: Double Diamond works wonders, works wonders) observed the alluring colors that the hues were bestowing to the flowers. Impatient and interested in preempting the birds, Double Diamond appeared before the hues and demanded prompt action.”

Rufus thickened his voice and went on. "Hey, hues, welcome to our dark universe. Now don't go just coloring the hills and trees. Come, beautify the serpents at once and you are done. Go home."

The hues stopped casting turquoise colors to the trees, lime greens to the meadows, and responded. "You must be Double Diamond. Why, the earth first, its residents next. We will get to the snakes as soon as we are done with the birds."

"Birds! Did I hear you say birds? Leave them be. Neutral earth colors suit them just fine. Don't even bother with birds. Do the serpents right now, next the earth, and you can clear out of here. Like I said go home."

Appalled at such a self-serving order the hues responded, "Why, Double Diamond, you ought to be ashamed of yourself. You are a mean one. Mother Light sent us here on a mission. We must beautify all: the earth and its residents. No exceptions to the rule. Birds first, serpents next, that is the plan."

Double Diamond hissed. "Do you know who you are talking to? I am not in the habit of repeating myself."

Hues: "Please, Double Diamond, wait your turn. We will get around to you in a jiffy."

The children of light refused king serpent's demand for instant action and went on with their task of coloring the earth beautiful. They casted a variety of soft greens for the meadows, many violet hues to the distant mountains, but saved the shimmering colors of their pallets for the wings of butterflies. They made sure the hues of flowers in the plains, warm and cool colors, would bring joy to all hearts.

Ignored, Double Diamond rattled loud and pounced on the hues. Swallowing the children of light whole, the snake turned into a huge rainbow serpent. Double Diamond lit the sky as he kept growing in size and power.

Pleased with his newly found might, one day he decided to take over the entire cosmos, eliminate the fowls altogether and declare the snakes as the sole lords of the universe.

Having watched their archenemy, Double Diamond, rise to such enormous power, the birds were nervous. They aired their grievances to Father Sky who is responsible for order in the universe. Mother Light was already before Father Sky grieving the loss of her beautiful children the hues.

Note: After the verse and the myth of inception of color and form, the contemporary novel updates the search for creative expression to our postmodern times.

Here are some more teasers.

Rufus

*Each artist must pilgrim to where all the opposites unite.*

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## ***Chapter 3: The Aria: Madge-Madge-Madge***

Song Sparrow: "Madge-madge-madge."

Another aria prima vista to celebrate the hues that bounce, dance and paint the whole wide world beautiful.

Obviously the artist is frustrated and in despair. Easy to see that in the conflict of intention with expression, the dark demons of chaos have won the day. No muse visits his master. No inspiration comes his way--just a barren life devoid of creative expression.

For the song sparrow, the act of sitting on the windowsill looking inside at the painting has become a hurting thing. All the pictures tell the same tale. The obstacle in all the paintings is amply clear. The colors are motionless, unmoving, frozen, and soundless. The hues don't sing and forms don't play. Hardly any flow, so the colors in the pictures shed tears.

Anyone who has the inner ear can hear the pleas in the astral plane.

The paintings: "we are miserable, please rescue us, won't you?"

The same melancholy probably is running rampant in the mind of his patron, too.

The paintings smack of a convoluted existence far worse than death. A sudden death can be a blessing; severe pains and agonies stop abruptly, but not so with his master's artistic works. The paintings appear condemned to an eternal miserable life in limbo. All devoid of light, empty of hope. They hang between heaven and hell in nowhere space.

So why can't the hues come to life and dance with joy in his master's paintings?

Song Sparrow was unable to answer that question, but the bird had been eager to help so badly that sometimes his little heart ached with pain.

So at the conference of birds at Grant Park the birds attempt to bring home the prismatic harmony of hues in the mind of the artist. Will they succeed? This question hunts the artist and the birds throughout the novel.

At one point the artist gets closer to his passion, other times it appears a bridge too far...

Rufus

*Hush!*

*To hear the hue full song of color*

*Listen to silence*

*The chorus sings inward*

*“We are the beat, you are the heart, play.”*

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## ***Chapter 19: Peacock Is to Play the Universal Chord Of Prismatic Color***

Rufus

*The sound of passion is the voice of art*

Rufus

*Before you begin a painting*

*Mix the colors mentally and sing*

*Then listen to ensemble: are the hues humming along?*

*If yes, proceed to the canvas.*

*If not, love the hues deeper*

*Begin the next work*

*Listen to the color whisper*

*As soon as the harmony appears*

*Sing along with hues*

*Paint fast*

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## ***Chapter 20: The Joyful Dance of Colorful Light***

Having stayed silent too long, Parrot gets into the act. “Sounds and sights, images for insights, all songy mongy tastes tangy...”

Song Sparrow studies the parrot. It dawns on him that the smart parrot usually leaves his sentences unfinished for a perfect excuse to speak again.

Sneaky little one, noticing Song Sparrow’s intense gaze, Parrot turns to

him. "Hey, little one, I could have told you that mankind gets their inner visions, wisdom, images, you know, through sound or sight which make "innergy" with g. Your master's way is visual with v, but he has aligned himself to verbal also with v. That is a top-heavy problema. The peacock's sudden enlightenment, light, light, light with sound sound, sound, sound but can your master transform sound to visual, s to v spells suv, and keep the verbal side of his brain shut. Square peg in a round hole, square hole round peg, two..."

Shipshape, only now, the peacock strikes an instantaneous combustion, the hues vaporize, concussion turns into forces of light and reach to peak of its max power, any further delay will only plateau their vigor.

Peacock brings the force into its beak and ejects with all its might. The hues propel into action.

"Whhhhhhaaaaahhhh"

The universal chord of hues hit the airwaves. The cosmic color power is airborne. The peacock has plucked the universal heartstring.

The cosmic energy on the go with a loud forceful trumpet-like sound of the peacock urgently vibrates the air in the Buckingham Fountain Garden shaking the trees echoing to four corners with its mighty force, at large, the hues gain further oomph now almost in shape of a pale crescent rainbow collide themselves with the cool air amalgamate with the sound of silence at Grant Park and unveils a mysterious arc below.

The merging of light with color, sound with silence, achromatic with chromatic, soon escalates to vibrate the unforeseen powers into seen; the arc below flirts with the invisible energies of the park seducing the unseen Magical powers of its space into visible existence.

The warm colors want to break loose; can't wait to spread and claim the cool water droplets of the fountain mist to sway them to every side and up: hues, dance, dance, dance in the air to your heart desires; activate the light transparencies of sounds, invade the silent opaque grays which veil the sculpted horses of the fountain.

In astral plane, Song Sparrow finds the delightful neighs of the horses are now so hue full that the hard edges of the park curbs turn as soft and pliable as the tree roots underneath in the belly of the earth.

Having received some of the hue "innergy" the water horses spew a finer colorful spray to all four corners of the Buckingham Fountain. The water particles rush to collect at the center in a centripetal path, the centralized power moves around on its axis, begets color muscle and goes airborne, a tornado force turning onto itself in and out to the center and periphery.

All sounds suffocate in the garden in immediacy and urgency. Hush.

Silence and stillness before storm; a mysterious calm mutes the Buckingham Garden then the Grant Park freezes, and for one brief moment, the entire city of Chicago pauses for the action at Grant Park. The buses on Michigan

Avenue halt, the cabs stop, and the pedestrians crossing the streets freeze up as the city lights ice over. All frozen still and in anticipation. Falcon motions the parrot to be quiet, and Song Sparrow not to stimulate

greens, blues, indigos and violets pour out of the peacock's shrill scream. Each chord of color plucks its opposite to reinforce itself and solidify the band. Opposites attract, and similar magnetizes. Green pours into red violets, red mixes with blue green cyan, and warm yellow with the ultramarine blue. The admixtures recharges the mixing pairs with renewed intense life. Now in an ultimate taut tension again refusing to be in check, with a force of a cyclone the sea of hues pour once again pierces through the space, dislodges the obstructing silence, and with the speed of a bullet strikes the trees and ricochet into the garden.

Called fourth, awakened and now on the move, the color band of energy looks for a release above the ash tree, strikes the walls of foliage in the park, multiplying its magnitude many fold. Discharging wave after wave of chromatic oomph into the space of the fountain, shooting fourth like stars in want of a sky, it targets Baroon's outer ear to pave a path to the third inner ear to throw his consciousness into the unseen astral world—the heart of desires where the thirds mix into insightful ear and a musical eye. Having heard the trumpet-like vibration of color and sound, Baroon never looks back. His intuition remains dormant and his feelings untouched. Still crippled with his frustrations, his imagination registers the painting of Munch: the Scream. And then quickly files it away in the dark recess of his preconscious.

Abruptly, a sudden burst of silence. An exploding buzz of energy of a sea of hues breaks loose. Mystery moves vibrates enlivens every dead space into living colorful light.

Rufus

*The sound of passion is the voice of art*

## ***Chapter 22:***

# *Symphony Erotica*

...

Rufus

*Art is about making  
So shut up and do it,  
That's all there is to it  
You need you only you  
Don't need philosophy, psychology or any sociology  
You don't need anything at all  
Yet everything helps  
In life and in arts all connect*

## ***Chapter 27: Red Hot***

The hostess responds, but an ear-piercing sound:

"O-ka-ka-leeeeeee –konka-ka-reeeed," is stronger and more audible.

Reed, reed, reed.

The last sound stretches, expands to reeeeeeeed and contracts to red. Scarlet letters are pouring out of the hostess mouth and are echoing everywhere filling the space of restaurant. The sound wave of red vibrates the eardrum increases the speed and strengthens the reaction. His hand holds a huge hog bristle brush loaded with intense cadmium red light hue to paint the town intense red. Forget the brush, palms and fingertips go to work. Waves after waves of oomph of red flows filling the Loop, covers the high raises and heads to the restaurant.

The powerful tide runs on Wabash Street and gushes forward, throwing the door to the restaurant wide open. The red is inside, it floods the space and pours into psyche takes no prisoner as it claims all.

Lines obliterate, space flattens and perspective takes a hike. The flood of red, now blood color, immerses his interior covering his eyeballs. Wherever he looks, whatever he lays eyes on is in red, hot red, cool red, orangeish red and violet red. In between layers of his mind, pops up Matisse's painting: the Red Studio. A flat painting covered in red hues unifying the entire image. The only space definers are Matisse's own paintings hanging on the walls, or sitting on the floor, hence, providing a sense of depth in the painting.

Was Matisse stating that once red takes over, it ruthlessly paints the inner and outer worlds alike? A red universe that oozes with passion, as it transforms the studio to a red-hot jealous lover with a defining consuming power.

Wallowing in red, his breathing rhythm accelerates. His head numbs. An overwhelming need to run wild in the streets of Chicago like a zombie takes over him, but his feet are frozen. He can run only in his head ...to enter into a red orbit revolving around and around with the red of all descriptions: tomatoes peppers strawberries apples cherries pomegranates red poppies red roses Mars in red planet, and red robin in red sunset in red sky.