

Angels, Reindeer, Healing



Dear friends,

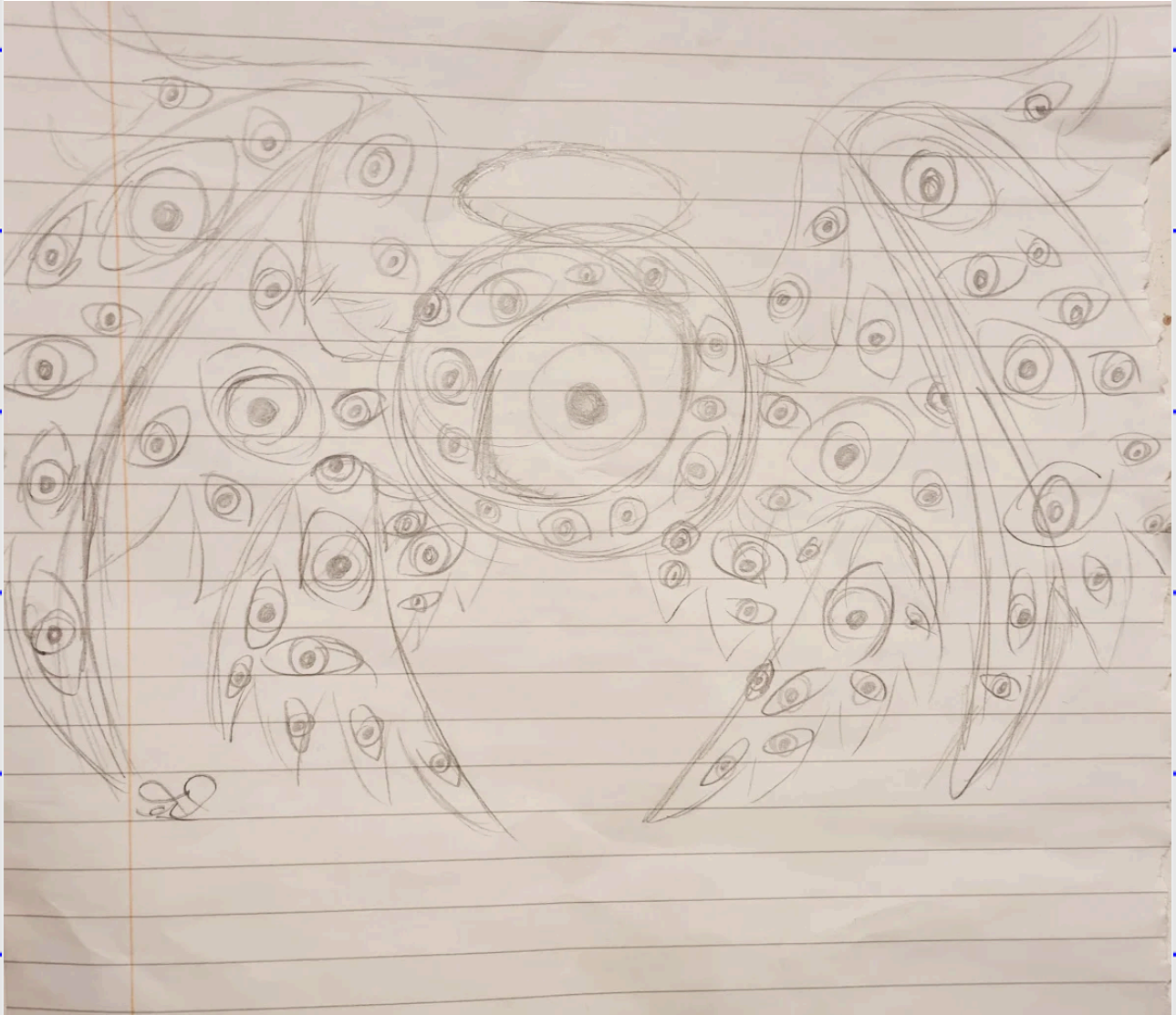
Sometimes the healing happens in the most unexpected ways. You don't know why and how, and it just does. When you need it, it touches you and you receive its fine substance, that transforms you, nourishes you.

The other day, a student offered me a drawing. That drawing was an invisible guidance in the form of a charcoal sketch. That day I was not feeling too well. During class, I noticed how a student kept drawing, while fixedly looking at me. By the end of the class, he walked across the room towards me very straight with a serious face, holding a piece of paper. He was tall, serious boy.

"It's for you", he said. Surprised, I hold the piece of paper and looked at it.

I went back home and observed the drawing with fuller attention, realizing in wonder how what seemed, at first, to be an abstract pattern was an angel. It was as if the drawing gained a life when looked at. The angel had a thousand eyes and was embracing me and caring for me.

I remembered. Of course! How could I have forgotten?



The week after, my student brought a folder filled with more drawings. The whole class, mesmerized, gathered around him, as he explained us what was his purpose. Sam was writing a story about angels and those drawings were illustrations for the story.

As we looked at the folder, where Sam had drawn all kinds of angels, seraphim, cherubim, archangels, he told us details about his story. The class connected for a moment with something beyond ourselves, and we all felt

it, a warmth of connection lifting us to a rather wonderful place, where we were all one.

Later that day, the school's careers adviser told me how she had seen similar pictures of angels, such as the one Sam had given me, in the offices of other teachers. Sam used to offer them to at times, to teachers, staff members, friends. These, moved by his gesture, would stitch them to the walls of their offices.

The school was being cared for, lifted, loved, by angels, drawn by a serious, kind, shy, 13 year old student.

The next class I offered Sam my own version of a drawing, a colorful one. Sam gasped, surprised, not expecting the gift.

You see I also knew and felt them, those invisible hands, rescuing us, loving us, embracing us, always there, caring for. us, when needed.

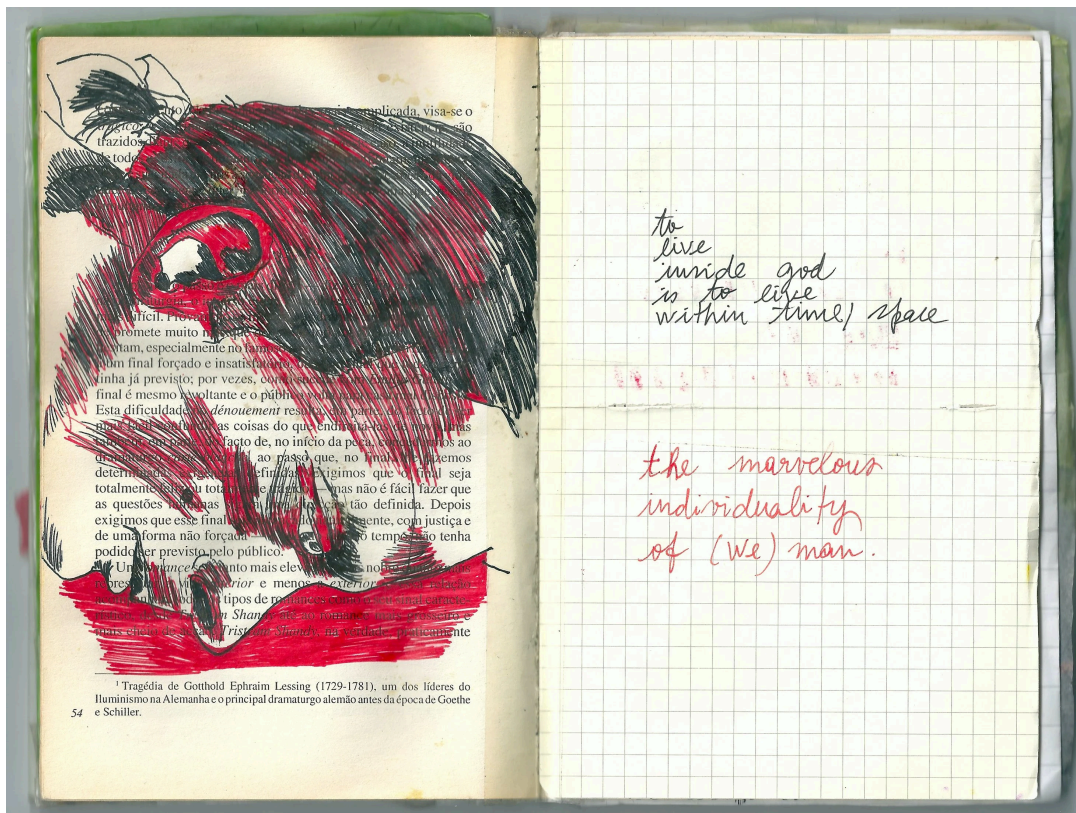


A few years ago, my brother-in-law died; he was a young man. Taken in a car accident, he left behind his wife, who was pregnant. My son was 10 back then,

and when he was told of his young uncle's passing by his dad, he began crying and ran down the stairs toward me.

"I want to see the "Wings of Desire," he cried out loud.

I have seen that film so many times. Maybe he had seen it with me, attracted by a sound, an image, when crossing the living room. I, myself, had seen the "Wings of Desire" as a 13-year-old, and something indelible had awakened in my being. I could not say what it was, but I could feel it, a presence, a feeling of an intimate presence, of someone guiding, loving. The trust that there was more to this world than what we were told about it, by history, culture.



A loving (human) culture

Love. That "unmoving", still, force, the cause and end of everything, that Eliot talks about.

"Love is itself unmoving, Only the cause and end of movement,"

How could we bring more of that to the current culture, to the current human civilization? How could we deepen love in our communities?

Isn't love, the deepest force driving us all, and our world ? Sometimes is hard to believe, looking at the planet's tough history and the challenges ahead.

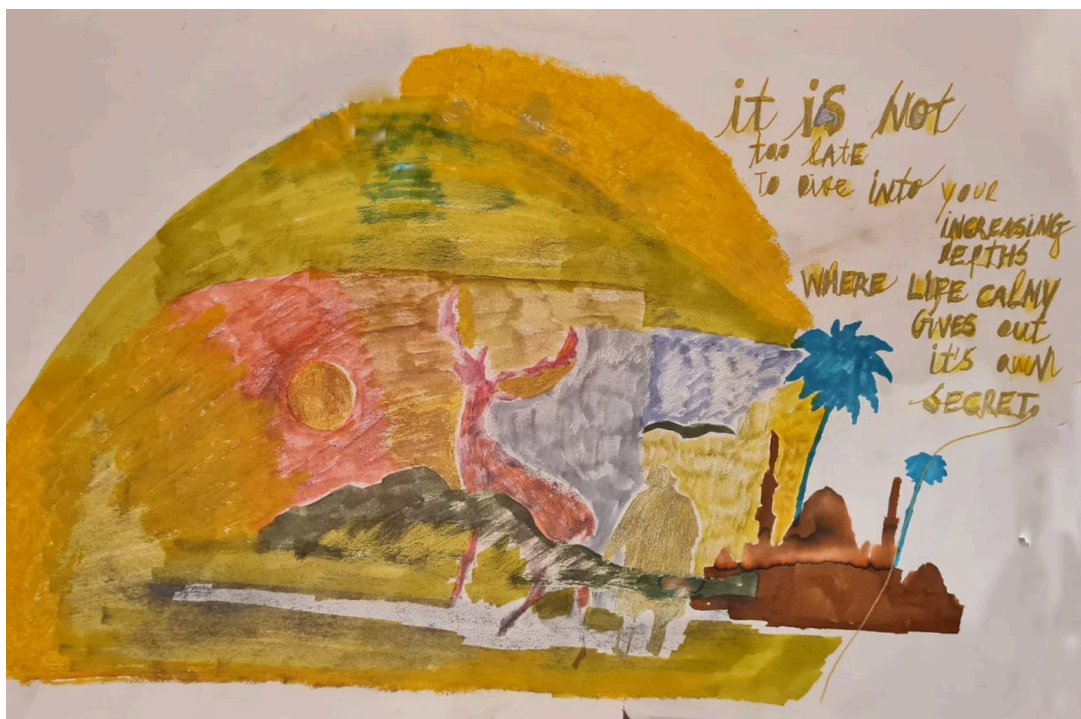
"History as the slaughter-bench" writes Hegel,

But is it, really, a slaughter-bench? What about the history of the arts, of music, of healing ?

"Years ago, anthropologist Margaret Mead was asked by a student what she considered to be the first sign of civilization in a culture. The student expected Mead to talk about fishhooks or clay pots or grinding stones. But no. Mead said that the first sign of civilization in an ancient culture was a femur (thighbone) that had been broken and then healed. Mead explained that in the animal kingdom, if you break your leg, you die. You cannot run from danger, get to the river for a drink or hunt for food. You are meat for prowling beasts. No animal survives a broken leg long enough for the bone to heal.

A broken femur that has healed is evidence that someone has taken time to stay with the one who fell, has bound up the wound, has carried the animal to safety and has tended that friend from nature, through recovery. Helping another being, through difficulty is where civilization starts."

Perhaps this is not a true story about Margaret Mead, and perhaps I changed it, and yet, it evokes, I truly believe, a truth. That when we move beyond self-interest and care for something beyond ourselves, for example, the community, love is deepened.



A caring civilisation?

A caring civilisation.

A loving earth.

Can we dare to care ? To really care? To open our arms and offer our will for the sake of the will of others, perhaps even quite different then ourselves? Others have done so for us. Can we do that to each other? Without asking anything in return?

It is difficult but possible.

"What if we stop worrying about time? Or about what we do not have? It may never be given to you, actually!" says Orland Bishop.

Why not then, emphasizing being here? Being truly here!

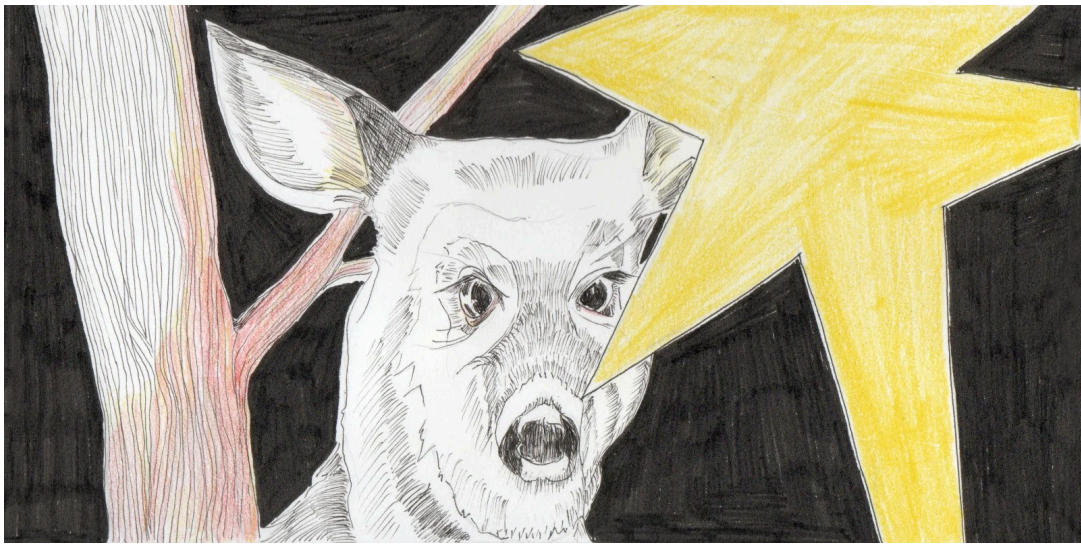
When we say and mean it "I am here" we enter the space of the heart, the space of love, of presence.

"Quick now, here, now, always" says Eliot.

Last time I saw Sam, he had brought something big. A big, big drawing folded in squares. The little group gathered around Sam, as he unfolded carefully his large drawing: In front of us, a big angel was taking shape. He had strong wings and loving eyes.

"This one is a cherubim" Sam told us. We exchanged affectionate smiles, and parted our way.

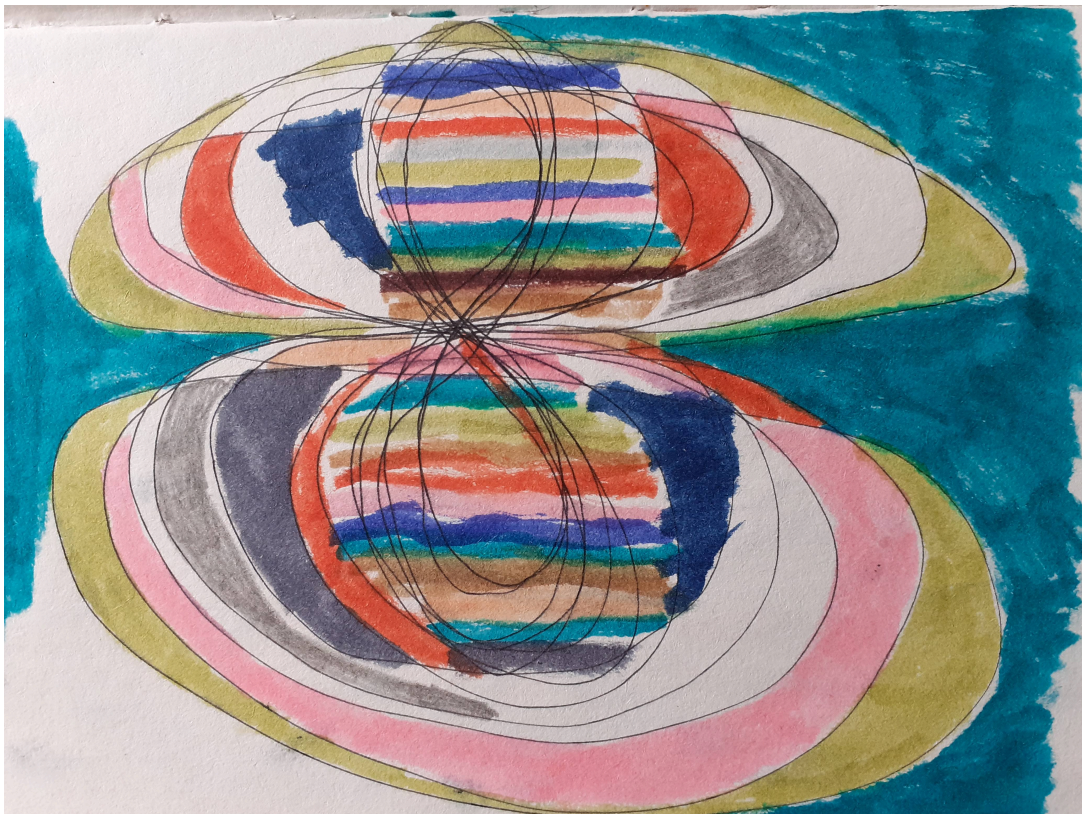
With love



NEW WORKSHOPS

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Drawing and the soul - open session

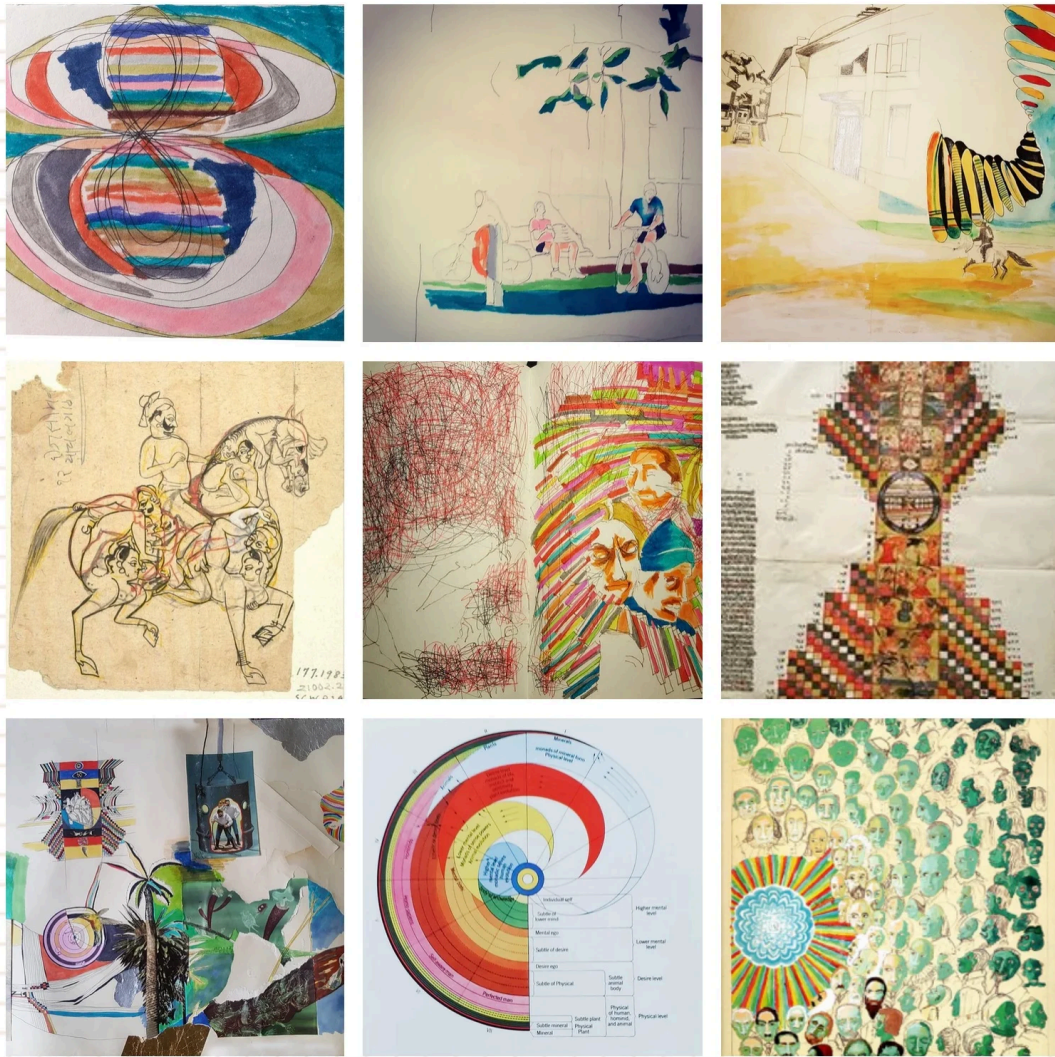


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