

FROM THE COVER ARTIST

Arie Kupferwasser

I entitled my recent exhibit in New York City, in which *The Mirror* (cover art) appeared, *Practicing How to Dream*. Most of my work for this showing materialized between the winter of 2004 and the summer of 2005. During this time, I also began a private practice as an art therapist, left behind the institutional settings of nursing homes and hospitals in which I had been working, and allowed myself, after longer than a decade's length hiatus, to be wholly immersed in the process of artmaking that had so deeply enriched my childhood, adolescence, and college years. The work shown represented a time of great joy and triumph in my life and a rediscovery of essence. Although I had never worked extensively with oil pastels, it seemed to be the material particularly suited to allow me a sense of boundlessness, spontaneity, and intuition---all qualities counter to how I approached art in my earlier years.

My current process and method is largely, with a few exceptions, an exercise of the imagination at play, in which I approach the blank page with nothing in mind, allow for an image to form, and work until I recognize what I am doing. At the point of recognition, a struggle begins as the intellect wants to take over and shape what is on the page. In making these pieces, I discovered that a tyrannical intellect is really nothing but a child frightened of the dark, of the unknown. I was able to navigate spaces that were undefined, mysterious, and yet uncannily familiar by working with great speed and making choices---such as what color to use or where to make a mark---before I could consciously recognize my decisions. In that sense, I trusted my body to decide and move ahead of my intellect, which produced a dream state relatively free from judgment.

While producing this work, I have been seeking to understand more clearly how spiritual, ecstatic, and mystical orientations of experience relate with those of mundane, worldly, and day-to-day quality. My hope is that it inspires a similar contemplation in others...

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