



Welcome to Contemplations!

This newsletter will show up monthly in your IEA inbox to inspire, uplift, and maybe make you laugh just a little.

It is with delight I create this space for you, and with anticipation I compose a few months' entries and then invite you, fellow IEA member, to compose thereafter! Do you have a story to tell, an encouragement to share, an insight to inspire? Then please submit to me [Patricia Baldwin Seggebruch](#) and let's begin to see what can come as we all reach out with the desire to help each other rise higher.

A great knot~

There is a great knot between art and money. *



Poppies and Snakeweed, 20 x 20 x 3 inches, by Lyn Belisle

Many have spent lifetimes trying to untie it.

What is the nature of art?

Is a work of art a commodity with a money value, to be bought and sold like vegetables, or is it a gift on which no real price can be placed, to be freely exchanged?

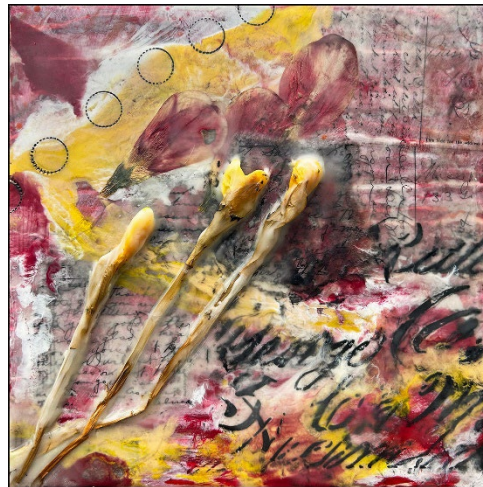
And if works of art are gifts and nothing but, how are their creators to live in the physical world in which food will sooner or later be needed by them?

Should they be sustained by reciprocal gifts made by the public—the equivalent of the gifts placed in the Zen monk's begging bowl?

Should they exist in a Shaker-like community of like-minded secularity?

How much of oneself can one give away without evaporating?

What if the evaporative can be captured, becoming something held?



Dear Della, 10 x 10 x 2.25 inches, by Melissa Stephens

A blank canvas

Potential.

Hope.

This is why I paint:

Always and forever, the trust in this as yet unrealized potential to take me somewhere.

At the start, *somewhere* was 'away from'.

Now, it is toward something,
into something.

Something that looks like revelation...

Inspiration

Connection

Truth

Authenticity

Something...

Is there ever the just right word for that which we yearn so heartily,
really?



"Himalayan Blue Poppies", 8 x 8 x 1 inches, by Josie Rodriguez

I have been living in a space of bright revelation since concluding EncaustiCamp at the end of July 2022. Each day feeding me a new dose of truth and beauty, pain, heartache, awe, wonder, inspiration–

This human life miraculous–ness.

I have been in a position to eat it all and thankfully I've not grown fat with pride or self–inflation, but rather alight with self–awareness and discovery beyond what I thought possible or necessary.

That is, I thought I was really **real** already, lol.

When we, society, turn from devaluing or undervaluing, to valuing our creativity for its own sake, for our own mental health and healing's sake–and not just that of the one but of the universal all–the world will become a very different place.

Trust in life, and paint.

Can it be so simple, so concise?

Some days I say heartily, **yes!**

Other days, I turn to the snow collecting on the sidewalks and piling along the driveway and get to work.

*These contemplations have been pulled together from thinking through Lewis Hyde's book, *The Gift*
Warmly in wax,

Trish

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