

No Ilam Gyp

by Lee Zimmerman

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1) Conceptual Intent. -

There is something about a mask that can separate and elevate an actor to a mythic level. The mask can be as simple as white paint. The marble statues of an artist like Bernini are completely human in their form and actions, yet their whiteness separates them and elevates them to godlike qualities. My conceptual intent is to create a theater piece that takes the actors from humanity to myth in front of the audience, and through this process to touch on the essence of our relationship to art and the process of its creation. My story is the inverse of Pygmalion.

2) Questions to be raised -

I hope to raise question about the following relationships: background/foreground, future/past, humanity/art, and observation/creation. When is something background and when is it foreground and can something be both.? If I take a non-linear stance to telling a story can I hint to the past while projecting into the future, and become the present? Where is that line when the actor steps from inhabiting their humanness to becoming art? What if we expose the creation of the art to the audience, does that change their observations?

3) Style of the piece -

I want to use no words. This work will be like a Butoh dance - connecting with the audience not with words or even a linear story, but rather by creating an environment that enfolds them into the experience as it moves: connecting with empathy and emotion.

I propose to combine three elements: music in the form of a single instrument such as a cello, the actors/dancers who are eventually covered in white, and live silk painting that both mirrors what is happening onstage and points to a higher emotional theme. I will begin with an austere stage that contains three large white flats made from silk. At the end of the performance, there will be a large artwork that contains both a silk painting and the actors as elements. The process from the beginning to end will carry the non-linear story that both keeps the audience intrigued and challenges the audience to question.

4) Expectations -

I hope that working with the Red Eye will help me to develop these ideas and mount a more complete production. In order to see if I am hitting my intended target, I need critical viewers that are outside of myself and the production. I cannot see myself with fresh eyes. I am hoping that the work with Red Eye will help me to gain new insights and to reach for artistic questions outside of my experience.

Brief Bio - Lee Zimmerman

Lee Zimmerman is primarily a silk painter, who has exhibited his works in New Orleans, Minneapolis, Duluth, Santa Fe, and in England. He has performed large scale (8' by 4' minimum) live silk painting numerous times, working with symphony orchestras, jazz bands, string quartets, flamenco guitarists, and improvisational cello. He has also performed with dance companies, circus acts, poetry readings, and theater performances.

In 2007 he exhibited a startling series of veiled photographs. In January fo 2010 he performed a live painting event with Kathy McTavish called "A Story in Three Parts". This was followed by the Duluth Playhouse presentation of "The Secret Garden" in which he painted 180 square feet of silk, creating the garden, at each of the 20 performances. He did a live painting performance at the International Festival of Silk Painters in August of 2010, and just completed a live performance where he painted a 30' tall tower of silk in an hour while being lifted on ropes. Below is sample of his artistic Vita. A more extensive resume can be found at <http://duluthartists.org/cv.html>

<p>Patents, Awards, and recent grants</p>	<p><i>Patent, Chromatic Motion Diagnostic System and Methods (Pat. No. 5,485,230) issued to G. L. Zimmerman, January 16, 1996.</i></p> <p>Richard Kelly Grant for Lighting Design, 1993</p> <p>Grant through 2918inc. from the Minnesota Department of Transportation,, Examining the Consequences of Chromatic Motion Perception on Snowplow Trucks during Plowing Operations, 2003</p> <p>Grant through 2918inc. from the Minnesota Department of Transportation, Motion Perception in blowing Snow and Fog, 2005</p>
<p>Sample Arts Publications</p>	<p>"Natural Way of Looking, Part 1",with Phil Sandusky, American Artist, May, 1999</p> <p>"Natural Way of Looking, Part 2",with Phil Sandusky, American Artist, June, 1999</p>
<p>Sample Arts Exhibitions</p>	<p>Solo Exhibit of Oil Paintings, Living Room, New Orleans 1994</p> <p>"Expectations", Duluth Art Institute in 2002</p> <p>"Faith and Hope" International Silk Painting Festival, Member's Art Exhibit, Shidoni gallery, Santa Fe, 2004</p> <p>Art in Motion fashion show, with Lara Pitrowski, Minnesota Textile Center, 2004</p> <p>"Broken Angel", with Rachel Wagner, Art and Peace, First Methodist Church then moved to the Depot, Duluth, 2004</p> <p>"Reflecting Beauty" for the Bridging for Art Program, Duluth, 2005</p> <p>Art in Motion fashion show, with Tara LaSarge, Minnesota Textile Center, 2006</p> <p>"Model Session", International Silk Painting Festival, Masters of Silk Painting, Art Exhibit, Santa Fe, 2008</p> <p>Veils, Solo show of Photographs, Lizzards Art Gallery, October 2008</p> <p>"Venus of the City", Contemporary Silk Painting, First Prize, Harmony Hall Regional Center, Maryland, 2009</p> <p>"Woodwinds Floating on Strings", Ratner Museum, International Silk Painting Exhibit, Baltimore, presently on exhibit.</p>

<p>Sample Art Performances</p>	<p>Color and Motion, Large Scale Visual Illusion, Tulane university, New Orleans, 1997 Live Silk Painting Performance with Ann Gumper, Lake Superior Chamber Orchestra, Duluth, 2001 Live Silk Painting Performance, solo, Project Lulu, Tweed Art Gallery, Duluth, 2003 Live Silk Painting Performance, Gustavus Adolphus Orchestra, Nobel Conference, St. Peter, MN, 2004 Live Silk Painting Performance with Elizabeth Kuth, Project Lulu, Webber Hall, Duluth, 2005 Live Silk Painting Performance for Fashion Show, International Silk Painters Festival, Santa Fe, 2006 Live Silk Painting Performance with Paula Carnell, Art in the Garden, Wells, UK, 2007 Live Silk Painting Performance with musician Kathy McTavish, Cirrus COPA, Duluth, 2008 Live Silk Painting Performance, Duluth Superior Symphony Orchestra, Cirque de Soiree', Duluth, 2009 "A Story in Three Parts" collaboration with Kathy McTavish, Playground Theater, Duluth, January, 2010 "The Secret Garden" Live painting as part of the theater performances, Duluth Playhouse, February 18 - March 7, 2010 Live Silk Painting Performance for Fashion Show, International Silk Painters Festival, Santa Fe, August 6, 2010 Live Silk Painting Performance 30' tall tower of silk, Brave Event, Duluth, October 23rd, 2010</p>
<p>Sample of Community Activities</p>	<p>New Orleans Dance Board Chairman, 1997 - 1998 Lake Superior Chamber Orchestra Board Chairman, 2005 and 2006 Silk Painters International Board Chariman 2008 to present</p>

Supporting Materials

The best supporting material can be found online at the following addresses

4 minute video of a performance <http://duluthartists.org/lee1.html>

Images of Santa Fe Performance <http://duluthartists.org/fashion1.html>