



# WINDOW

Sigge Lundström

Signe (ant. strong)

**WINDOW**

Signe Lund Strong

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Thoughts that thump inside my brain  
may you have sun, may you have rain,  
may you have wind to fly about,  
may you fly in may you fly out !  
May you never be kept in bond,  
thoughts that would fly and rise beyond.  
Fly with the wind,  
and meet your kind,  
then come and inspire mere mortal mind !

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## FOREWORD

These poems did not come about to illustrate the paintings. Nor were the paintings inspired by the writing. They have individually welled up in times of joy or pain, sometimes from a sense of futility, at other times with a feeling of discovery: Eureka! I have found!

Many of the paintings were done in response to an overwhelming sense of beauty or a feeling of awe in the presence of the primeval power in nature. Often I had a feeling of kinship with living growing things around me, the sense that all life is one.

And then there were pictures which appeared in my mind, unexpectedly, forcefully, without any relation to what I was doing or seeing at the time. This often happened in the early morning when I had a quiet time, or at night when I could not sleep. Surprisingly, it would also happen when I was alert but with my mind free as when I was ironing. Very often it was not until much later that I saw the significance in these mind-pictures.

For years ill-health forced me to spend much time resting, alone. There was time to ponder, time to wonder, and time to wrestle with my uncertainties which were many. Occasionally it happened that poems came sailing into my mind. Some were like the softest whispers which were hard to catch. Others came with an audacity which surprised me. A few were already formed, like the small one "Bitter Brine". Others needed polishing or correction, with much work involved. Often I was not in the mood to take time off for a poem which I felt was forming. But I began to learn that there was some relevance, some message in them aimed at me. The knowledge dawned that stillness and aloneness were means of opening the senses to realities that I had often earnestly denied.

I think there is an urge to share what we find along the way, and to take part in what others found. I believe that in the process we pick up something which adds up to the completion we all naturally long for. What would have become of me, I shudder to think, if I had not had the shared experiences of people of other times and other cultures as well as of people now living.

Signe Lund Strong

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

### LOATHING

I would lift my hand against myself  
and kill the life I loathed,  
but I was young and feared the unknown  
and the niggling ifs  
of dire consequences.



*THOUGHTS. Pen and ink. (20x30 cm)*

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

## STRANGERS

Strangers we are  
my body and my soul  
though locked together  
from the beginning  
to the end of life.

We don't converse  
my soul and I,  
we don't inquire.

We coexist,  
fearing what we do not know.



*SUNRISE. Drammensford, Norway. Oil. (23x23.8 cm)*

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

WILD WASTES

I woke to know that I was walking  
as in wild wastes of nowhere  
in the barren landscape of my mind  
without relief nor place to rest  
nor peace nor purpose for my plodding.

Dumbly driven on by dread  
to find escape from emptiness,  
with contempt I counted tiny thoughts  
and small pursuits for nought.

But thought attracted thought.  
Pursuits proliferated,  
delight began to dawn,  
like delicate rays of the sun  
after long night's darkness.



*WHAT GOES ON OUT THERE? Oil. (50x60)*

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

WENDING A WINDING WAY

Wending a winding way  
in the endless labyrinths  
of my mind  
something came  
and stayed  
and could not be touched  
or explained.

It flooded my being  
and powered my will.

It filled my mind  
with knowledge and wonder.

No longer was I my centre,  
no longer my concern.



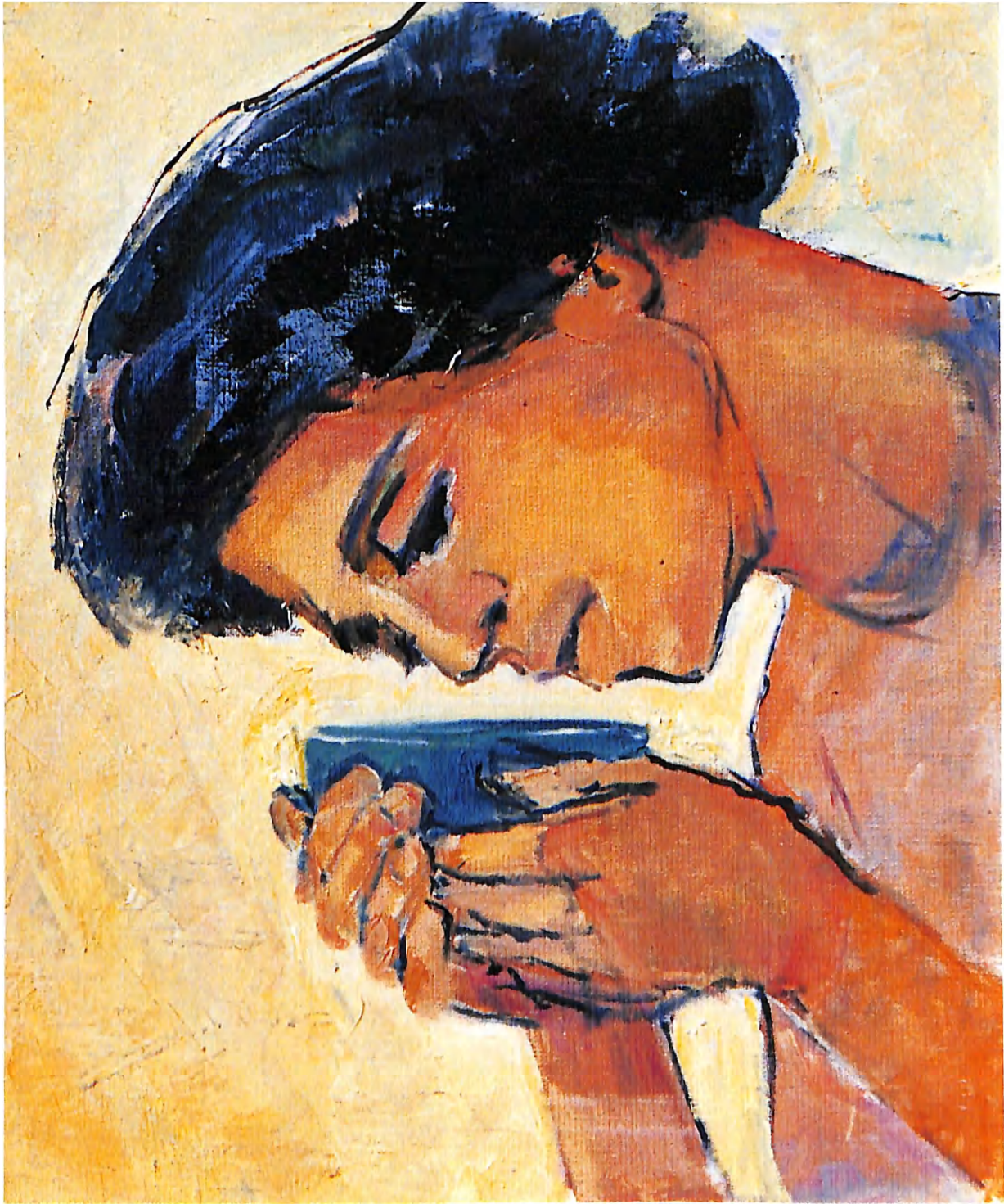
*WILLOWS IN AFTERGLOW, Somerset, England. Oil. (50x65 cm)*

**WENDING A WINDING WAY.**

**BITTER BRINE**

I feared sorrow's  
bitter brine,  
but as I drank  
it turned to wine.





*JASPER CUP. Oil. (30x40 cm)*

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

FLIMSY BRIDGE

Inside my frame  
there is something  
that has no name  
something I do not know.

When I am least aware  
wordless whispers waft  
into my mind  
like messages of importance.

When I quest  
or probe  
there is silence.

When I try to wrest  
or wrench  
knowledge from this inner part  
I meet with nothing.

My questing is rough  
it has no art,  
it wants to grasp and hold.

But when I wait  
without word or want  
I catch something  
which escapes from that other  
and makes a flimsy bridge between us.



*BURROW MUMP. Sedgemoor, England. Oil. (36x46 cm)*

WENDING A WINDING WAY.

RELENTLESS DAY

Relentless day  
with never a night  
stretching endlessly into the future  
would be cruel and crass.

Night without day  
would weigh the soul wearily.

Without striving  
would we know delicious rest?  
Would we know its savour?

Without disgust  
would delight not lose its thrill?

Would those who knew no anger  
know how to understand?

If heat had no cool to relieve it  
or hunger or thirst had no fill,  
hope could not be known  
amongst us.  
We would die  
drained of drive and daring.

As day is day  
because night is night,  
so joy cannot rejoice  
without suffering.

STRUGGLE

I asked for quick delights,  
for passing pleasures of the soul,  
but have to climb the steepest heights  
and find the distant goal.

And innermost I knew  
it matters not what I achieved,  
but that I fought and struggled  
and believed.

**WINDOW.**

**I STAND BY A WINDOW**

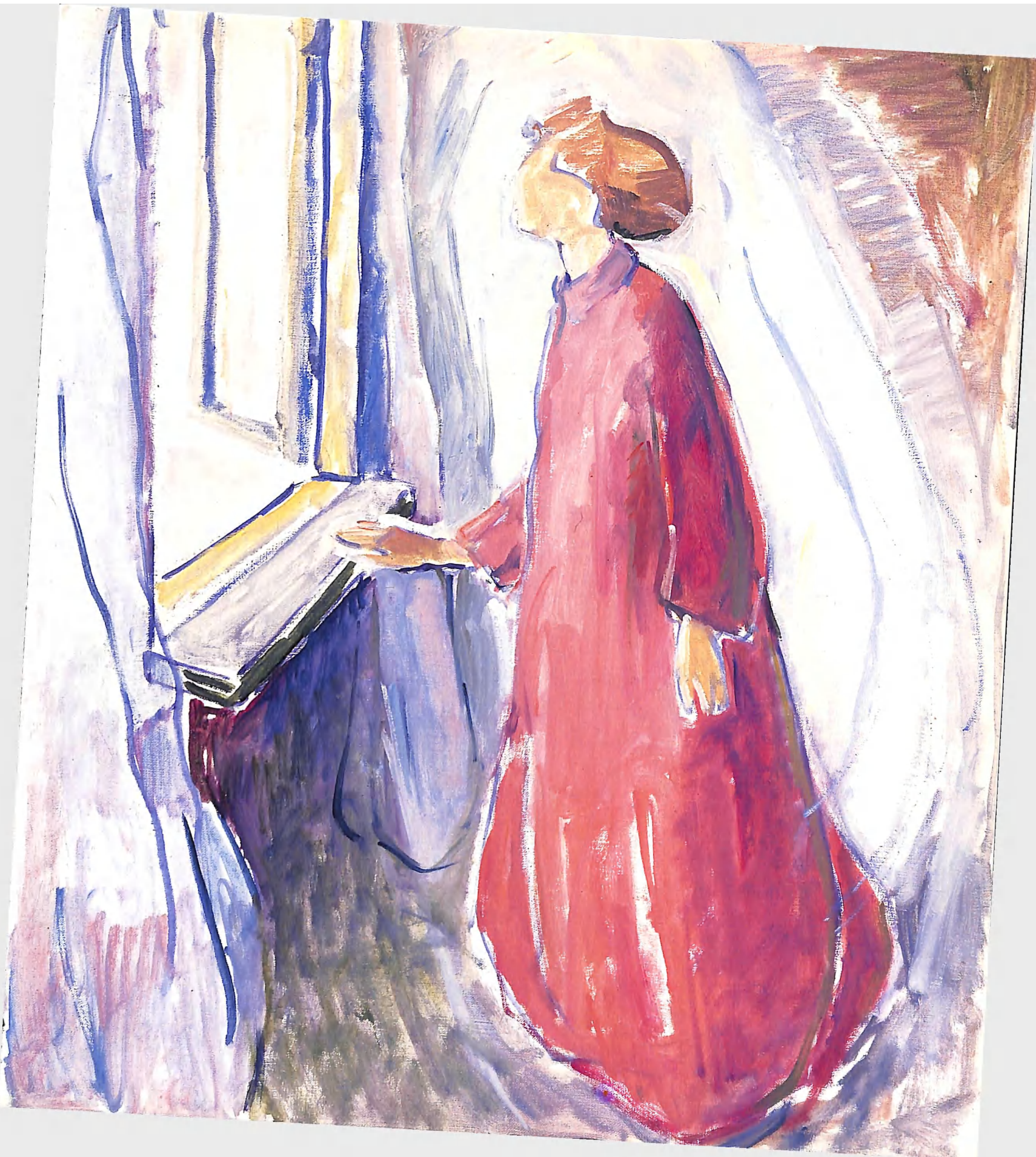
I stand by a window  
and look at a tree.  
Suddenly the tree is me  
and I am the tree.

Time stands still.  
My flesh and nerve  
no longer serve.

My soul,  
fused with its goal and secret source,  
finds a force  
delectable and pure.  
And I am sure  
beyond assuring  
of life enduring.

**TWOWORLDS**

I was allowed some moments  
of vibrant clear reality,  
some seconds in eternity  
where past and future knit,  
and nothing mattered more  
than being part of it.



**WINDOW,**

TREMBLING MOMENT

In a moment of truth  
I stumbled on eternity.  
I knew the core of life  
and all existence.  
In jubilant unity  
with all creation  
the living centre of my being  
KNEW.

That which had been hidden  
was revealed  
in one trembling moment of truth.





*MOMENT OF TRUTH. Oil. (60x65cm)*

**WINDOW**

IN CAMERA

I enter my inner chamber  
where peace is.

Light streams in from all sides  
and illumines my being.

The storms of the senses  
recede.

Joy wells up  
and irresistible love.



*STILLNESS. Pen and ink. (10x15 cm)*

## WINDOW

### IN THE MURKY MIST

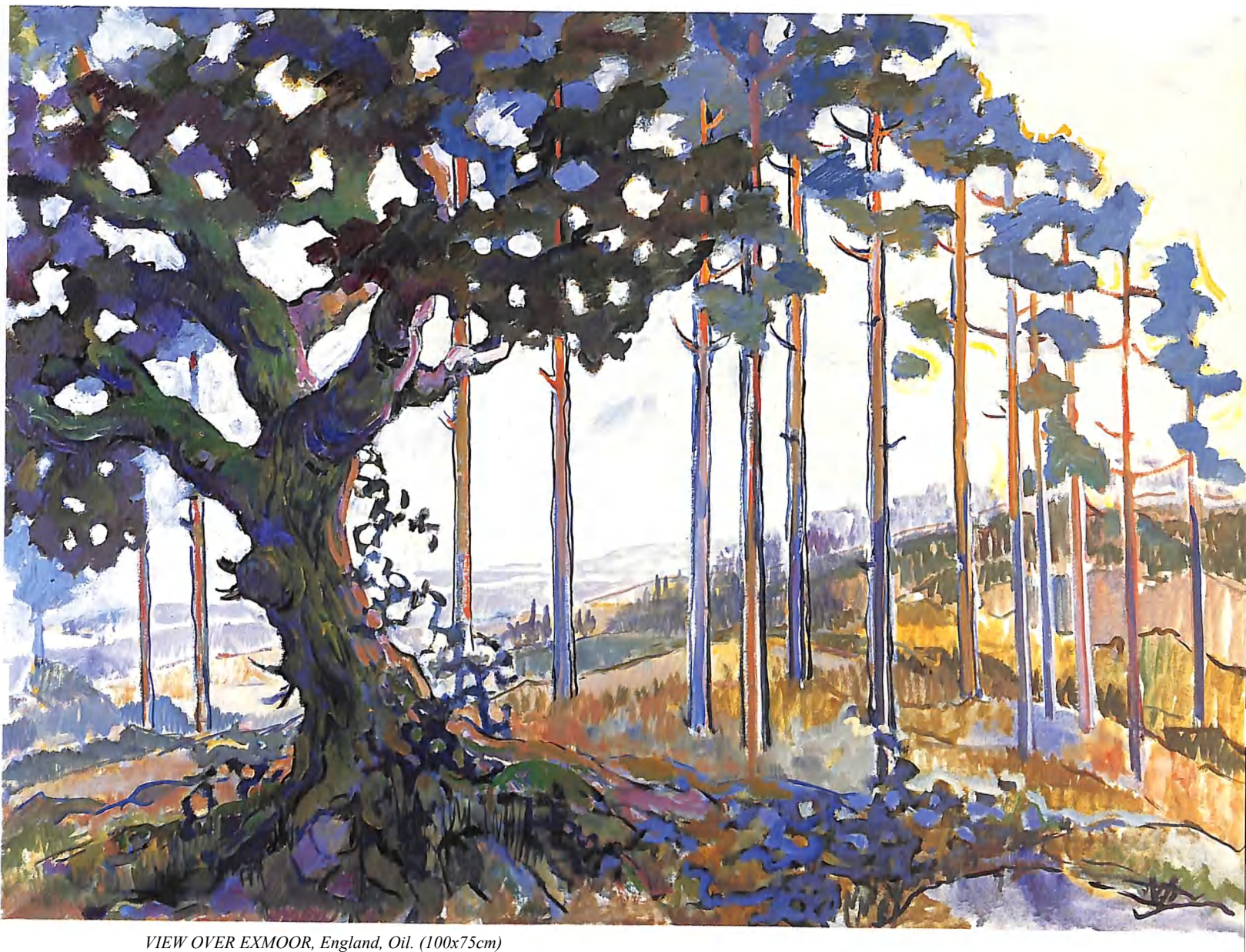
In the murky mist  
and the morning dew  
with darkness changing into light,  
I sat and pondered  
in a gentle wind.

And in the wind there was a thought  
and in the thought there was a power  
that hour by hour held me in arrest.  
It both commanded and caressed  
and stirred my will.

And I got up  
and did  
just as it bid.  
And it was good.

How did it come?  
Where did it get its goal and its intent  
that so convinced me  
that I got up and went  
about its business?

It had no substance  
but it was there.  
It had no sound  
but I heard it where  
no hearing was involved.  
I only knew that it was meant  
for me to do its bidding.  
And I went.



*VIEW OVER EXMOOR, England, Oil. (100x75cm)*

## WINDOW

### HAD IT NOT BEEN FOR YOU

Had it not been for you  
I would not have wanted to live,  
would have drugged myself numb.  
Walled within a prison of pain  
I raved.

I beat my head against the walls,  
voice hoarse from crying  
without the lubricant of tears.  
They dried up in my youth.

I pushed people away,  
I could not bear their touch,  
their words of friendship.  
I had nothing to give  
and was ashamed.

I swore to contain  
my despair, my fire  
for I found none to understand,  
no help at hand.  
Alone in the forest, in the field  
in the mountain and in my mind,  
that lonely tundra,  
I let the fire free  
to soar up and up.  
It left me scarred, blackened, spent.

Did you see?  
Did you know?  
Did you care?  
Did you pity?  
Was that why you came,  
silent beckoner?  
Or was it planned  
from the beginning of time?

You parted the darkness with light.  
You made me step out of my plight.  
You made me face my deceit,  
my conceit,  
the iron control  
of my life and my soul.

You made me give you all my trust  
without questions.



*TUNDRA. Oil. (30x25cm)*

## WINDOW

### HOW YOUNG

How young I am. How young!  
How fresh the senses  
to the flicker of day  
in the eastern sky!

My soul returns with joy  
the whispers of the wind  
in the morning.

When life quivers  
after dead of night  
I thrill to it  
like a tree whose sap quickens  
in response to the sun.

As a plant stretches to the light,  
as a bird wakes  
with a song in its throat,  
as a rock expands after night  
contraction,  
as all things according to kind,  
my soul meets the day.

How young I am! How young!

My inner eye sees new sights,  
hope floods my being.  
My soul throbs to a fresh tune  
which flutes its morning notes  
and trumpets majestic sounds  
into the day.

How young, how young I am!

My eyes turn from the window,  
mirror of eternity,  
and find the mirror on the wall.  
They see, unseeing,  
a wrinkled face and fading hair,  
clouded eyes,  
neck of sinews and of folds,  
sharp bones and sagging flesh,  
a stranger's image ,  
a shell which is not me.  
MY SOUL IS YOUNG  
ETERNALLY!





*HAUTS DE CAUX, Switzerland. Oil. (75x90cm)*

## WINDOW

### THE SEARCH WAS OVER

I stopped and knew  
the search was over.  
The wind blew  
in the clover.

The world was ringed  
with expectancy,  
a bird winged  
exultantly.

The air was filled  
with silent roaring,  
mind and spirit  
freely soaring,

and the scented morning breeze  
rustled in the apple trees.



APPLE TREES. Oil. (54x44cm)

## WINDOW

### INCONGRUITES

I have found,  
yet I am seeking.

I am satisfied,  
still I am longing.

Deepest sorrow  
is eternal delight  
and pain the loveliest flower.

### PARTICLE

My mind is at rest  
accepting.

It knows your presence  
and is satisfied.

But my soul is restless.

It stretches, it yearns  
to be absorbed  
in your immensity  
and to feel your vital power  
in its deepest depth.

O hidden God  
of all there is,  
You empower  
even a particle.



*LILY AND IVY. Pen and ink. (15x25)*

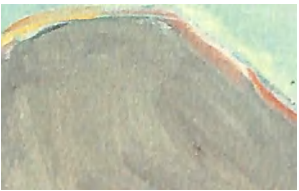
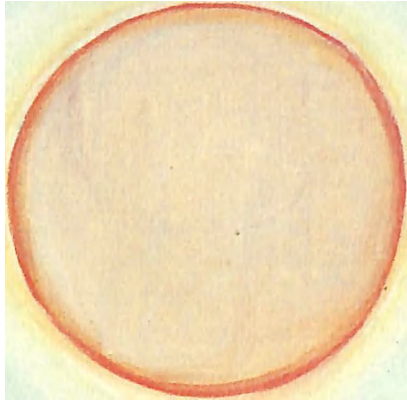
WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH

INTENT

No brain-born theories  
of beginnings with a bang  
or life evolved in slower motion  
can explain the intent  
that made something be  
out of what  
we can't imagine  
wasn't there.

Out of pure intent,  
whole, unembodied,  
all powerful and all embracing,  
unreachable by anything it made,  
came life.

Pure intent,  
unassailable,  
rules unimaginably everywhere,  
wholly real.



\*1

*SUN AND ROCKS, Stavern, Norway. Oil (70x70cm)*

**WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH**

WHEN I SIT

When I sit on a stone,  
when I rest on a rock,  
when I stand on the shore,

when I tread on the earth  
and on moss

or walk on a wooded hill,  
or wade in withered leaves,

when I breathe in rhythmic draughts  
the pungent air,  
the vibrant breeze,

my mind is still,  
and spirit clothes me  
and my will.





## WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH

### THE TREES AND THE SUN

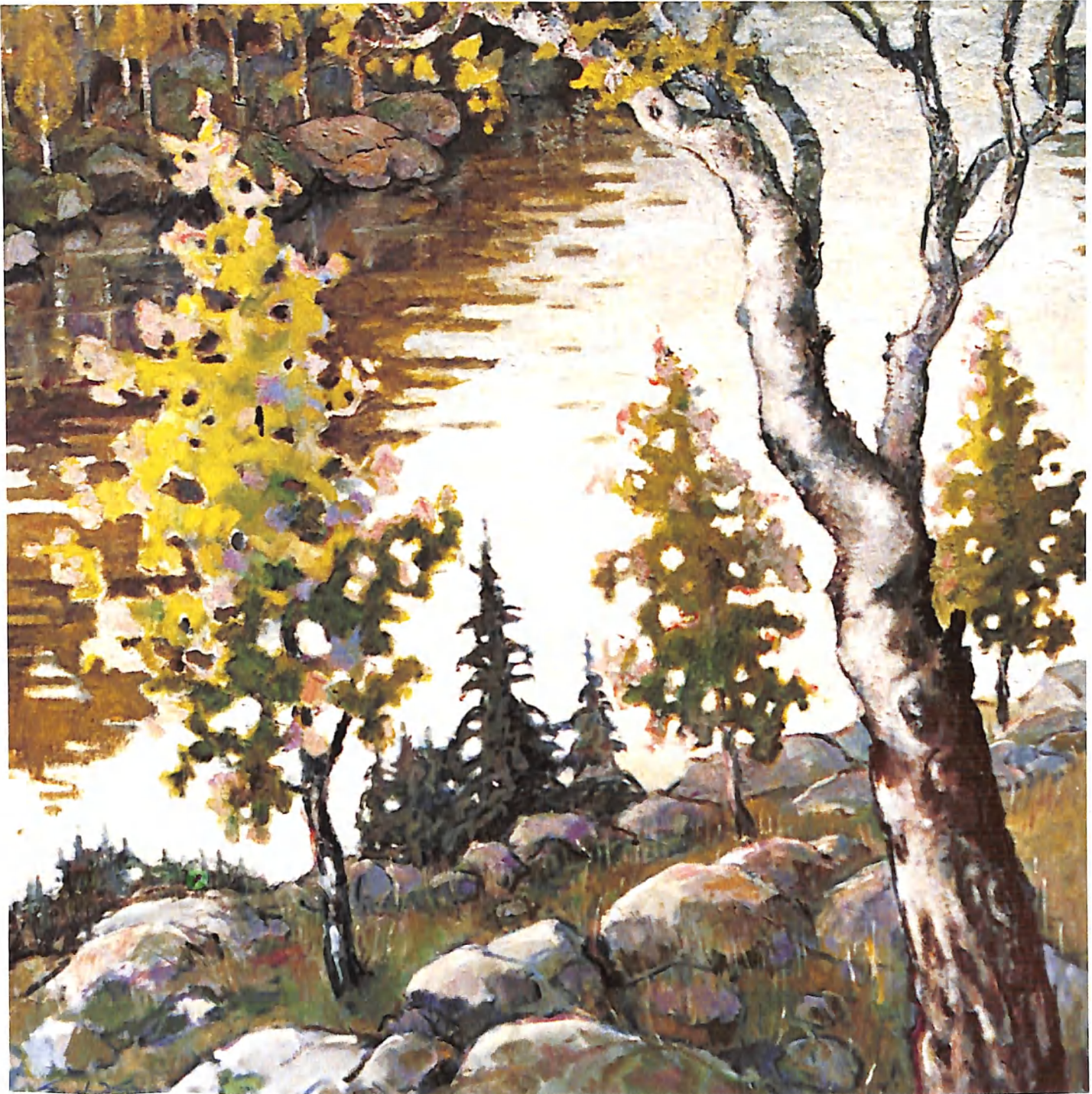
Like children stretch out  
for the mother,  
trees stretch out  
for the sun.

Seasons change.  
Coats of luscious greens,  
yellows, reds  
clothe the sturdy trunks  
and give food and shelter  
to thousands of tiny creatures

Storms rage  
and bend the branches,  
twist and wrench.

Still they stretch and grow  
and provide for others.  
Even stripped  
of summer beauty,  
in searing cold and winter blast  
they turn toward light  
and gather strength.

But man, the great, abandons  
his source of strength.  
He turns away from the light  
at the feeblest puff of wind or heat  
and feels deprived of his rights.  
He stops stretching  
and concerns himself with small desires  
and their fulfilment.



*STILL WATERS. Oil. (90x100cm)*

WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH

SUMMER NIGHT

Pale light  
of a summer's night...

Rough rocks rise into the sky  
from blue green depths.

The smooth sea,  
with silken surface, vast,  
will soon be ruffled  
by wafts of wind  
when the sun comes  
over the horizon.

A DAY IS BORN

My boat drifts  
on a lazy current.  
With oars resting in their tholes  
I watch enthralled,  
as a day is born.



*ROUGH ROCKS. Archipelago, Sweden. Oil (34x26cm)*

**WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH**

RAIN

Rain falls softly.  
It alters the colours  
of the landscape.

Grass grows deeper green  
where the sun had bleached it.

New grass quivers, pale yellow,  
against the old.

Ochre - tinted winter straw  
in scattered tufts  
take on shades of pink  
and seem to have new life  
in the rain.

Dull dust - toned sod  
darkens into musty umber.

The soft rosy tints  
of rough rock  
change into rain cold blues,  
from palest cobalt  
to the mystical shades of indigo.

But the water loses its lustre.  
The bright reflections of the sky vanish  
when the surface is ruffled  
as rain falls.

The blue green which melted  
into ultramarine  
becomes gravel grey,  
when it rains.

V



*JUNIPER. Stavern, Norway. Oil. (71x91 cm)*

## WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH

### BIRDS

How the birds  
do sing  
in the sky.  
They don't know why,  
they just sing.

They stretch the wing,  
they preen the plume,  
they don't presume  
to know a thing.

Yet they know  
it must be so.

They know the time,  
they know the way  
across the land and ocean spray.  
The very laws  
that make man ponder  
are to them no source of wonder.  
They just know.

And in joyous flight  
with fearless thrust  
they show delight  
and sing they must.





*PINE TREES. Glafsforden, Sweden. Oil (52x62 cm)*

WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH

LITTLE FLOWERS OF DELIGHT

Little flowers of delight  
bob in the breeze  
at the foot of a rugged rock.

I slip my hands gently  
under feather light flower heads.  
Stems feel cool between my fingers.

I lift my head  
and look into blue reaches  
of endless space.



*MEADOW FLOWERS. Oppstuhage. Arvika. Oil. (46x45cm)*

**WHEN I TREAD ON THE EARTH**

**DAWN**

Dawn leaks into the sky  
and spills out  
over the landscape.

It touches the tree tops.

Rocks catch fire.

Lakes become mirrors  
and lie there, shining.

**WAITING**

I know you are here,  
in every stone  
and blade of grass,  
but I cannot see you.

Dew drops  
and the morning breeze  
vibrate with your presence.

My soul is tuned  
and I am waiting.



*BLANKA PANNAN. Speke, Aruika. Oil. (75x65 cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT.**

**FLICKERING FLAME**

Flickering flame,  
elusive light  
by day and by night  
so alive.

Where to, glittering glow  
do you ever go  
fluttering?

Let me catch and hold  
your elusive gold  
for awhile!

Kindle, flickering flame  
in my barren frame  
kindred light.



*HANDS. Oil. (25x32cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT,**

**OXFORD STREET**

Glitter, glamour  
clatter, clamour  
pace, pretending  
lights blending  
crowds cramming  
traffic jamming,  
life flowing  
un-knowing  
stars urging  
hope surging.





*OXFORD STREET. Oil. (20x26 cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT.**

THOSE WHO COME AFTER

There are some  
with inner sight  
who see a light  
and guard it,  
and carry it  
from those who went before  
to those who come after.



*EVENING PROMENADE. Lidingö. Sweden. Oil (31x33cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT.**

**DO YOU SEE**

Do you see the light?  
It glints and shimmers  
and fills every space.

How beautiful it is,  
so blindingly brilliant,  
and how the soul quivers in response.

Exquisite,  
vibrant,  
undefinable light!



*DANCING TREES. Oppstuhage. Arvika. Oil (40x50 cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT.**

### GLORY

There is glory in everyone  
that longs to meet glory.  
It seeks glory to keep alive.  
No one can make it  
but glory is there in the stillness.  
It springs like a well  
in the pit of the stomach  
and rises to fill the rib cage.  
It goes to the head  
and makes you shout and sing.



*COUNTRY DANCE. Sweden. Oil. (44x60cm)*

**ELUSIVE LIGHT.**

**LIQUID LIGHT**

Liquid light  
rests like an aura  
around all things.

The quiet of my mind,  
the waiting of my soul,  
The silence of my will are tuned  
to the fragile peace of the morning.

My seeing eyes do not see  
what the morning reveals.  
But my waiting soul perceives,  
my still mind knows,  
my silent will affirms,  
the presence of eternity.

A song flies up  
from the depths of my being.  
It mingles with the light of day  
and soars into the sky.

*AUTUMN BIRCH AND TARN. Norway. Oil. (60x75cm)*





**THE VOICE OF SILENCE**

**STILLNESS SPEAKS**

In morning moments of peace  
stillness speaks truth into my being  
and I listen.



*SUNSET OVER GLAFSJORD. Sweden. Watercolour. (14x18cm)*

## THE VOICE OF SILENCE

### LIKE SAP RISES

My mind turns towards the unfathomable.  
Spirit touches my being.  
Power rises  
like sap rises in trees  
when the earth is warmed  
by the sun in spring.  
I am drawn to the road I wanted to go  
but never found,  
towards goals I do not see.  
My will finds substance  
and leads me.



*ROAD FROM MARRAKECH, Morocco. Gouache. (60x70 cm)*

**THE VOICE OF SILENCE.**

**SOUL RADAR**

Alone  
with a free mind  
and with the radar of the soul  
directed toward endlessness,

alone  
in early hours  
at the break of day  
I meet power  
which cannot be measured  
with instruments.

**SECRETS**

Enter into the silence.  
Let it draw you into its centre  
and reveal its secrets  
to be secret no more.



*MEDITATION. Oil. (60x70 cm)*

**THE VOICE OF SILENCE**

**UTTER KNOWLEDGE**

Walking in the woods  
I came upon a pool.

Light lay limpid  
on its surface.

Treetops and sky  
were mirrored  
on the shining water,  
reaching down  
to its depths  
in perfection.

The quiet soul  
mirrors life beyond our grasp,  
reaching down  
to the depths of our being  
with utter knowledge.

*POOL. Oil. (70x80 cm)*





## THE VOICE OF SILENCE

### TRUTH

You don't seek truth  
from curiosity  
but because you are of it,  
made to be powered by it.

Nothing is too much for it,  
and no price too high for it,  
no step too steep for it.

You know you are made for it,  
to be part of it  
for the sake of it,  
and be fulfilled.



*4 A.M. Stavern, Norway. Oil. (70x70cm)*

## THE VOICE OF SILENCE

### IFS

If life had turned out  
as I wanted it to be  
there would have been  
no tears in it for me.  
No tears of angry frustration,  
no sobs of lonely stagnation,  
only happiness and elation  
would I have felt  
where happy people dwelt.

If life had turned out  
as I thought was my right  
I would never have known  
the surge of delight  
that comes to one who has wept his fill  
and is tired out, and still.

### EYES

The way you look at me  
with eyes that know  
and see beyond  
disturbs my peace.

But do not pass me by.  
I would be lost.

*BY TYRIFJORD. Norway. Oil. (59x39cm)*

## EMBER BEARERS

### HURT

She hoped no one would touch her yet  
while she was reeling, hurt and stunned  
and no one did.

But she was shunned instead.

They walked in rings around her pain  
in dread  
of hurting her again.

But then she broke the ring of fear  
and drew them near  
and made them touch.

Then there were tears that fell  
not only hers, but theirs  
and healing worked its spell  
quite unawares.

*SORROW. Oil. (73x78cm)*



Sigurd Strong

## EMBER BEARERS

### EMBER BEARERS

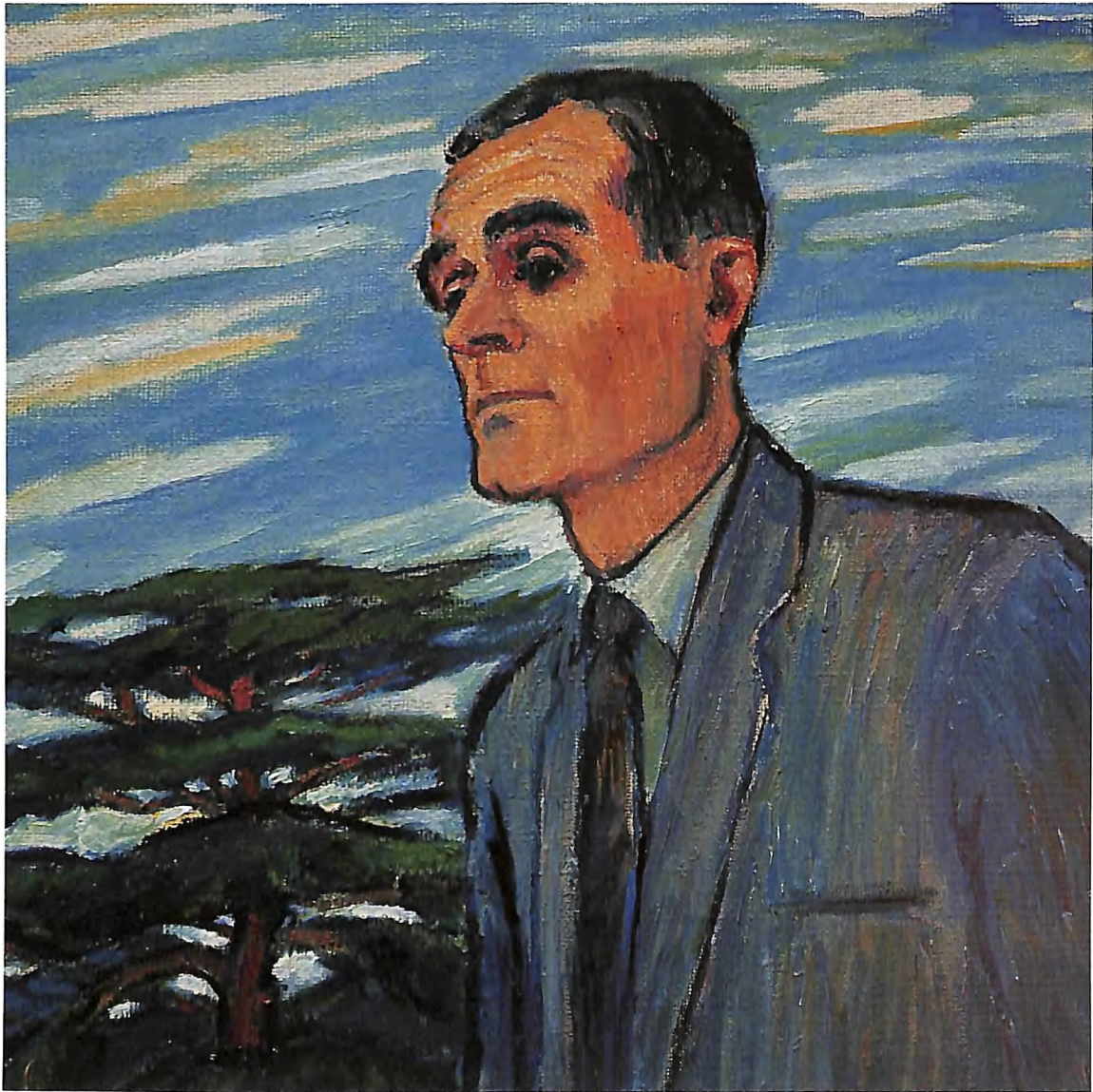
No boundaries, barriers or powers  
bar or bind  
the timeless company  
of ember-bearers.  
They erase  
time and space,  
link earth with eternity.

As they roam vast realms  
of suffering, vision, pain, tenderness,  
they fan a fire,  
the fire by which they live.

Though burned and charred  
and scarred for life  
they do not flee the fire.

Lit by its flame,  
powered by its heart,  
warmed and fed they roam the world  
with embers that kindle.





*PETER HOWARD. Fleet Street journalist, author, playwright, Oil. (70x80 cm)*

**EMBER BEARERS**

OUR TOMORROWS

To waiting mothers  
someone could be born  
who will live for others

and share joys  
and lift burdens  
and carry sorrows

and show us how to live  
in our tomorrows.

*PREGNANT WOMAN. Oil. (50x50cm)*

## EMBER BEARERS

### THE SEAT

The seat stands there  
in all its naked simplicity.

Friends are seated  
when they gather  
to enjoy food and drink  
and to nurture the spirit  
of fellowship.

A seat is used  
where peace is sought  
and bridges built  
over differences.

People are seated  
to find comfort  
when sorrow settles over life.

Seated are those  
who seek wisdom  
where it flows  
from wells of experience.

You are seated  
where books invite to banquet  
and the soul feeds  
on ethereal nourishment.

And seated are those  
who are gathered  
in the waiting room of life  
to find the ultimate goal.

But the seat just stands there  
in all its naked simplicity.



*FISHERMEN. West coast, Sweden. Oil (60x70 cm)*

**EMBER BEARERS**

LIKE A GIRL

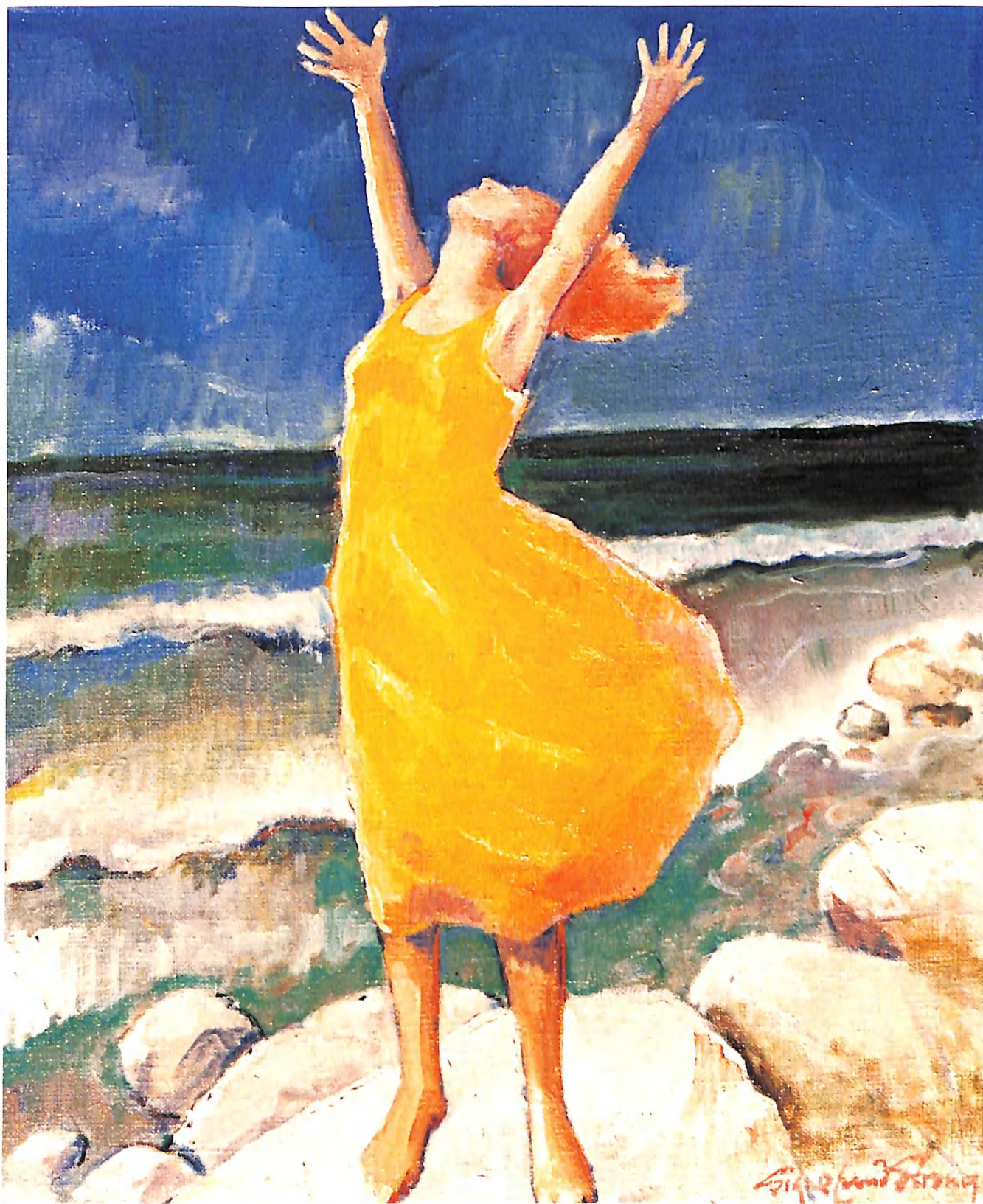
A soul  
is always young  
like a girl  
waiting for her lover.

A soul  
is like a virgin  
who yearns for endless bliss.

She stretches towards him,  
the masterful.

She calls  
and knows she will be heard.

Woe to him who hinders a soul  
from consummation.



EXPECTATION. Oil. (46x55cm)

## EMBERS BEARERS

### WHAT IS HUMILITY

What is humility?

Certainly not an act.  
Is it perhaps  
to face the fact  
the inescapable  
that we are incapable  
of fruitful noble living  
except it be the giving  
of the power which powers creation,  
sired,  
inspired.

Not for us to boast  
or toast  
or worship brain or skill,  
but let this giving gently fill  
our form  
to be available  
unassailable,  
a norm.





AGNES ERIKSSON 93. Oppstuhage. Arvika. Oil. (80x70cm)

## EMBER BEARERS

### EVERY WOMAN

Every woman  
is a Mary.

Every woman  
is born for caring,  
wisdom, courage,  
justice, order,  
tears, laughter.  
Every woman  
is capable of pain without complaint,  
suffering without bitterness,  
patience without feeling loss.

Every woman  
whoever she is  
or whatever her work  
is a mother.

There are always people  
who need a Mary  
to become what they are meant to be.

A Mary finds love  
in giving it.  
She has power  
to change the world  
where others fail.

A Mary wears the smile  
of fulfillment.

She knows.

WISDOM

Wisdom looks out of a wrinkled face,

observes keenly,  
feels strongly,  
reacts thoughtfully,

absorbs eagerly,  
reflects deeply,  
says nothing,

but gathers experience  
gladly shared  
with anyone who wants to know.

But who wants to know?

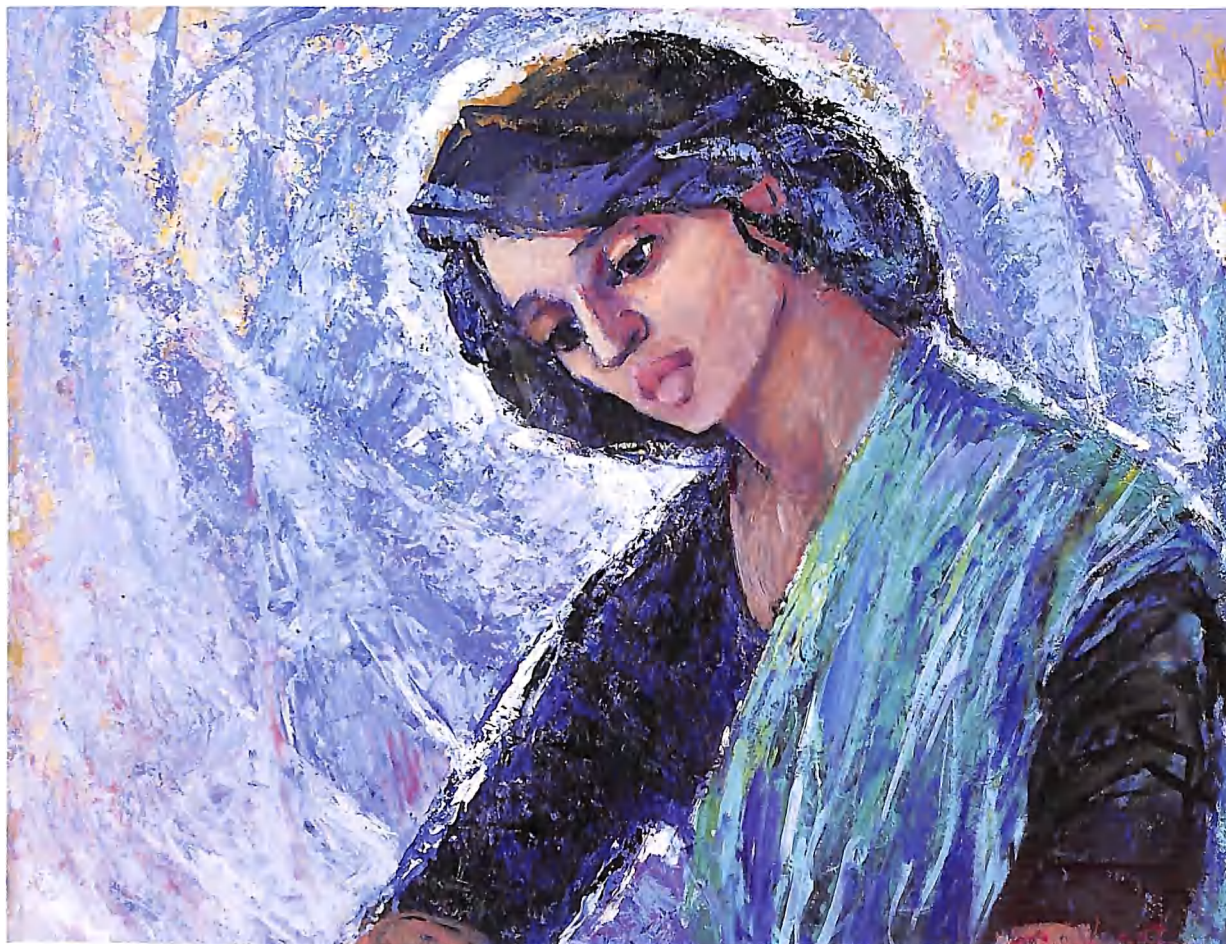
## EMBER BEARERS

### COMMONWEALTH

Some things are common to all the nations:  
hate begets hate and fragmentations.  
Truth begets truth. And our common foe  
is indifference to each other's woe.  
What we need is a common quest  
to help each other be our best.



*OBA ADELE II of LAGOS. Nigeria. Oil. (30x40 cm)*



*DR. SWAROOP RANI. India. Oil. (60x72 cm)*

HEALING

Healing  
stealing in  
while feeling  
still is dead.  
No more dread.

## EMBER BEARERS

### LIGHT A LAMP

Light a lamp!  
Give us vision!  
Strike a spark in sluggish souls,  
so we burn and bleed  
for greater goals!



*DR. FRANK N.D. BUCHMAN, USA. Originator, Oxford Group/Moral Re-Armament. Oil. (51x69 cm)*

**THE CHALLENGE OF ART.**

STRINGS

The strings are stretched.  
My instrument is poised.  
My hand is raised  
to strike a chord.  
But the melody is not there.

And I wait.

For it will not come at my bidding  
but in its own time.





*THE BLUE GUITAR. Oil. (80x90 cm)*

## THE CHALLENGE OF ART.

### THE SONG

A man sat facing the wider view.  
His feet were wet from the morning dew.  
He held an instrument on his knee  
and was waiting for a melody.

Years did pass, and as I went by  
I saw his outline against the sky,  
still waiting, poised to touch the strings  
and catch a melody on its wings.

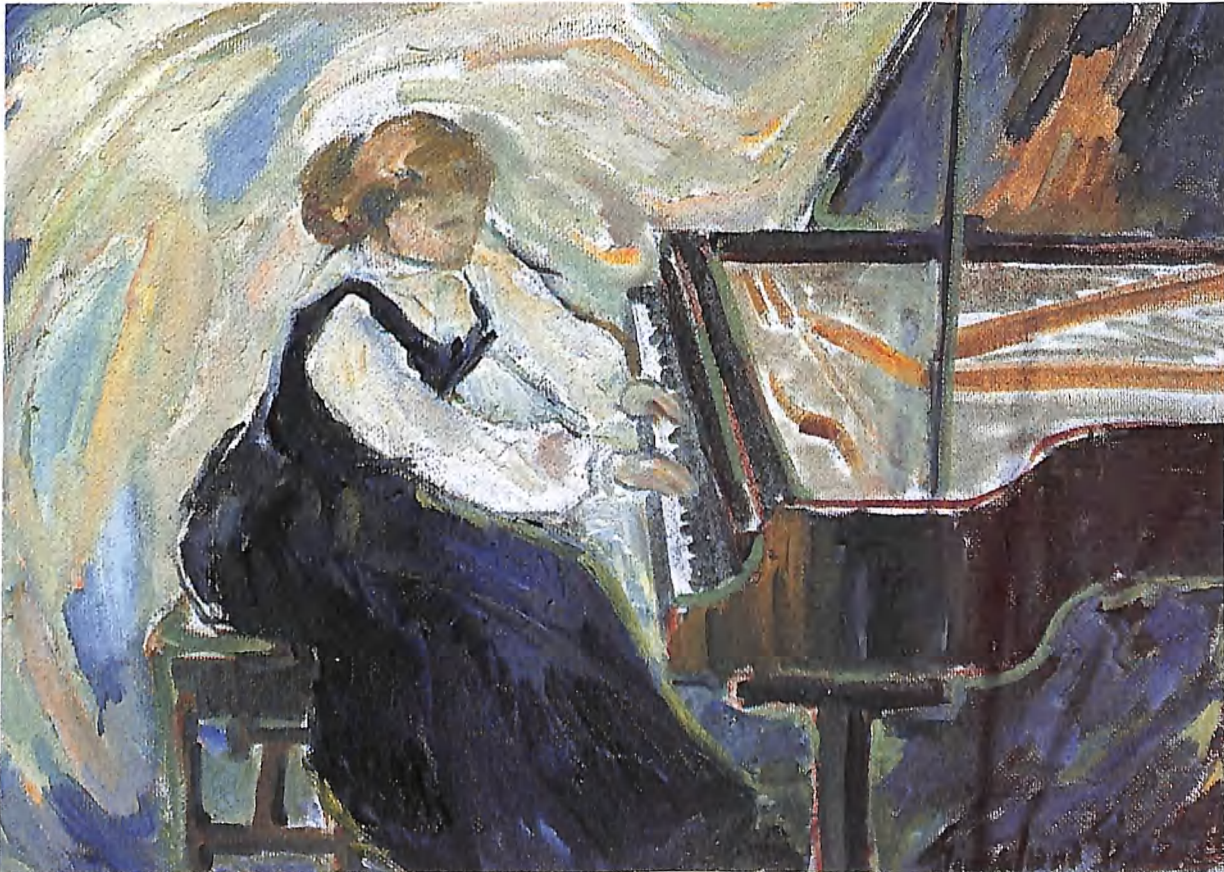
The man grew weary, his back was bent.  
He sat there still with his instrument.  
One day there came before his sight  
a single wanderer from the night.

Man! he cried, play me a song  
for I am weary, the journey long.  
I do not know the end of the way  
and I must wander day after day.

The man looked into the wanderers eyes  
and felt compassion from his cries.  
He moved his hand and touched the strings  
and a melody rose as if on wings.

ACCOUSTICS

Man seeks abroad  
for the music of eternity  
but finds it sounding  
in his own soul.



*RUTH LAGESEN, concert pianist and conductor, Norway Oil. (45x50 cm)*

**THE CHALLENGE OF ART.**

**HOW CAN YOU SING**

They laughed and said  
to him who sang:

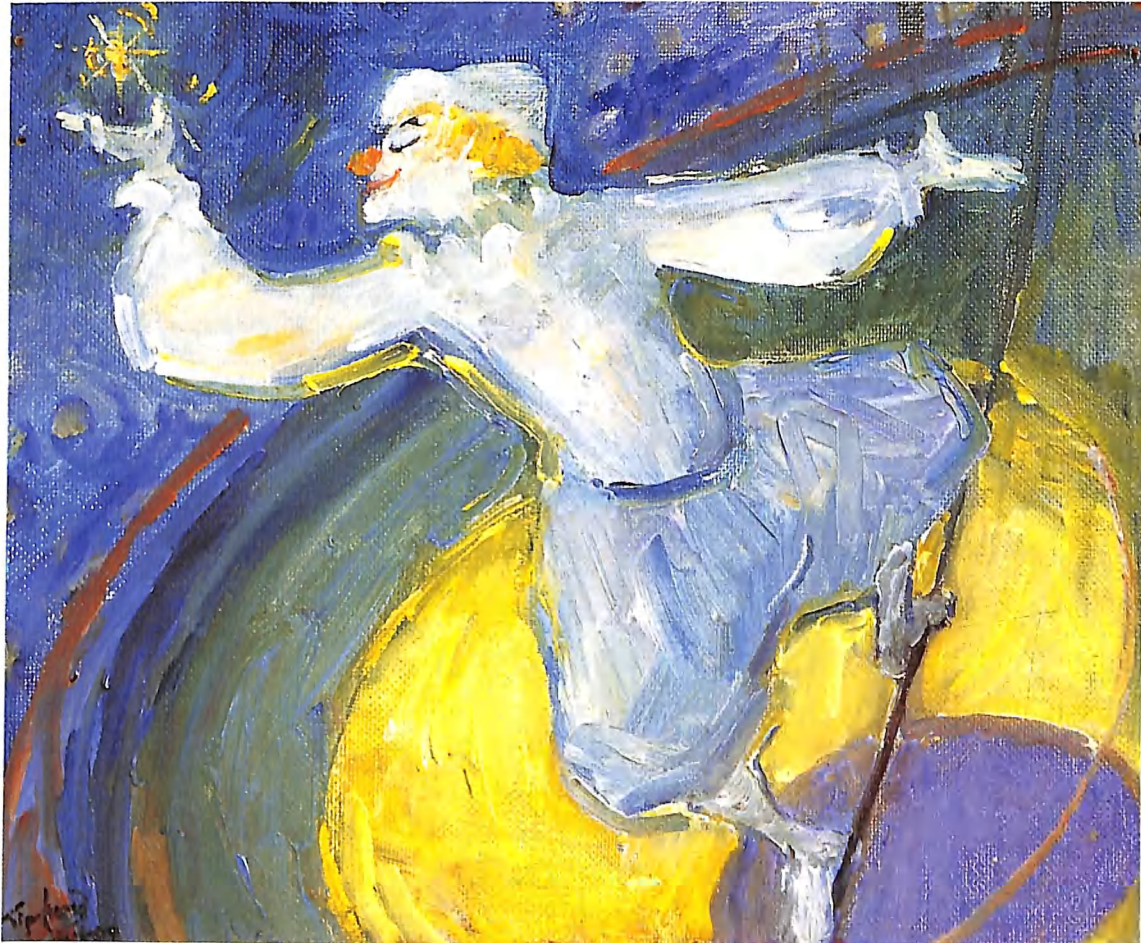
How can you sing of joy and  
beauty  
and sheer delight  
in a world of daunting duty  
and cruel plight?

Then he who sang  
made bold and said:

To offer sight to blinded eyes,  
to clouded minds open skies,  
to weary souls promised goals.

**HONEST WORDS**

Honest words  
are potent words.  
They cut through pretence  
like a knife cuts through an apple  
and exposes the core.



*CLOWN. Oil. (30x40 cm)*

**THE CHALLENGE OF ART.**

ART

Art is,  
as love is,  
an entity  
of pervading power  
with life and laws  
of its own.

Art can be rejected  
trampled on  
exploited  
shamelessly paraded  
but it can never be destroyed.

Art is,  
as love is,  
forever about its business,  
leading  
drawing  
lifting mortal man's aspirations  
into realms where spirit rules  
and matter melts into acquiescence.



*DANCING IN MOONLIGHT. Sweden. Oil (80x90 cm)*

## THE CHALLENGE OF ART.

### CONCEPTION

Art is not born to fanfare.  
It does not flourish in fame  
nor in the garish glare of fluorescence in its hidden womb  
in shops or in auction halls.

Art does not come to life  
by act of will.  
Talent strives in vain  
to capture it.  
When grasped at  
to mold and manage  
it slips silently  
out of hand.

Art lives in mysterious power and  
glory.  
It whispers to the soul  
in early hours.  
Not sleeping, not waking  
the soul knows  
and responds  
and conceives.

Secretly nourished,  
the concept grows  
until its time has come.  
Then the soul stirs  
and moves  
and labours  
and with mind as midwife  
art is wondrously  
brought to birth.





*REED FLUTE PLAYER. Norway. Oil. (46x34cm)*

**THE CHALLENGE OF ART.**

**HIDDEN MELODY**

This instrument  
the soul  
how finely tuned  
how keen!  
It plays the hidden melody,  
records the things unseen.

**GREATNESS**

He practises the greatest art  
who finds a way to another's heart.



*TULIPS. Oil. (35x45 cm)*

**THE CHALLENGE OF ART.**

FIBRILLATIONS

Visions fibrillate  
at the edge of my awareness.  
There is expectancy  
all around.  
Quietly I watch  
for something  
to take form and for meaning to emerge.

## THE CHALLENGE OF ART

### ART IS A HOW

Art is a HOW.  
It is an attitude  
to the here and now  
and to that other we do not know.

Art looks at everything  
from other perspectives.  
It is the creative solution.

Art is to see beauty  
in everyday things,  
the great in the small,  
the part in the all.

Art is about all existence,  
the inseparable oneness  
of spirit and matter,  
body and soul.

Art is a healer  
explorer, encourager,  
consoler  
teacher, truth-teller, prophesier,  
love-awakener.

Art is a bringer of heaven to earth  
and earth to heaven.

Art is not man's brain child.  
Art was  
long before man was.  
Art is the sound,  
the sight,  
the feel, the scent  
that accompanied life  
at the dawn of its mystery.

**CONCERN**

GOAL

The greatest goal  
is not ecstasy of soul  
nor fill of feeling  
but fulfilling our task  
and knowing completion.



*THE DEODAR of PORTSMOTH. By Strandvagen, Stockholm. Oil. (76x60cm)*

## CONCERN

### HUNGER

They sit.

Unstilled hunger,  
listless hands  
plead for care, for hope,  
for scope.

Too weak to hawk  
or beg or talk  
they follow  
with hollow eyes  
and silent cries  
where others walk.

No coin or scrap or rag  
that falls by weary feet  
will meet  
their need.  
Even ship and train  
with clothes and grain  
must come again.

Their inner cry  
is rising high  
and swells  
and tells  
how in the past  
and still alive  
a deadly drive  
has made of man  
a charlatan  
who grabs at gain  
and hopes in vain  
to satisfy himself  
at their expense.

Everywhere  
the silent sound  
lingers in the air,  
follows us around.





*DIVISION. Cornfield, Sweden. Oil. (60X50cm)*

## CONCERN

### THE WAY

There is a way of no desire,  
no demand.  
The way of truth and purity,  
of care and forgiveness.  
The way of seeing the divine  
in all men and in all life.

The source of wisdom  
and power and guidance  
and fulfillment  
is a gift for the seeker  
who walks in the way.

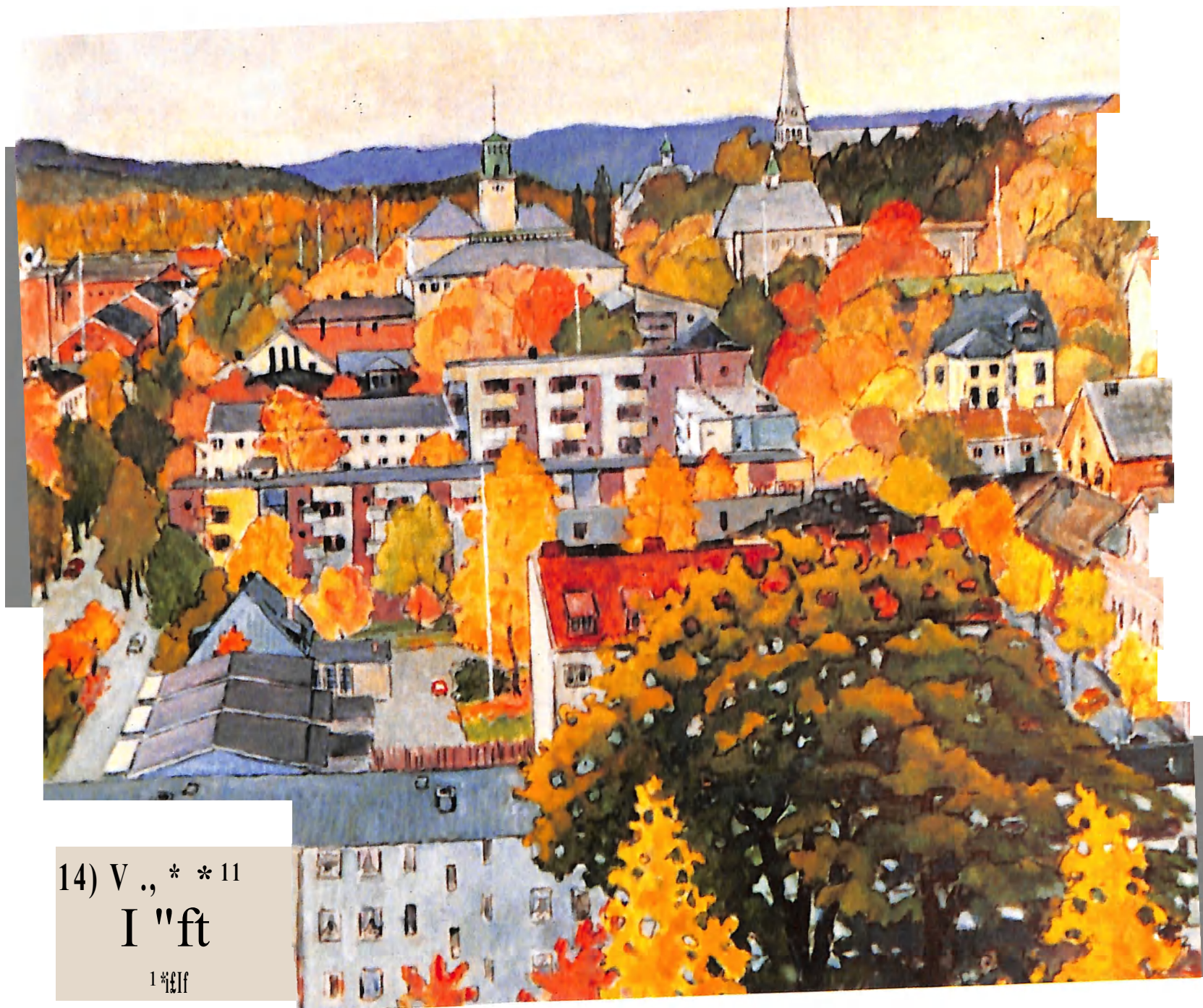


*ARTHUR IN THE GARDEN, Stoke St. Gregory, England. Oil. (65x75 cm)*

**CONCERN**

MASTERS

The world has changed:  
man can master matter.  
But man cannot master man.  
God can.



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ARVIKA EAST. Sweden. Gouache. (80x90cm)

CONCERN

PLATE GLASS WINDOW

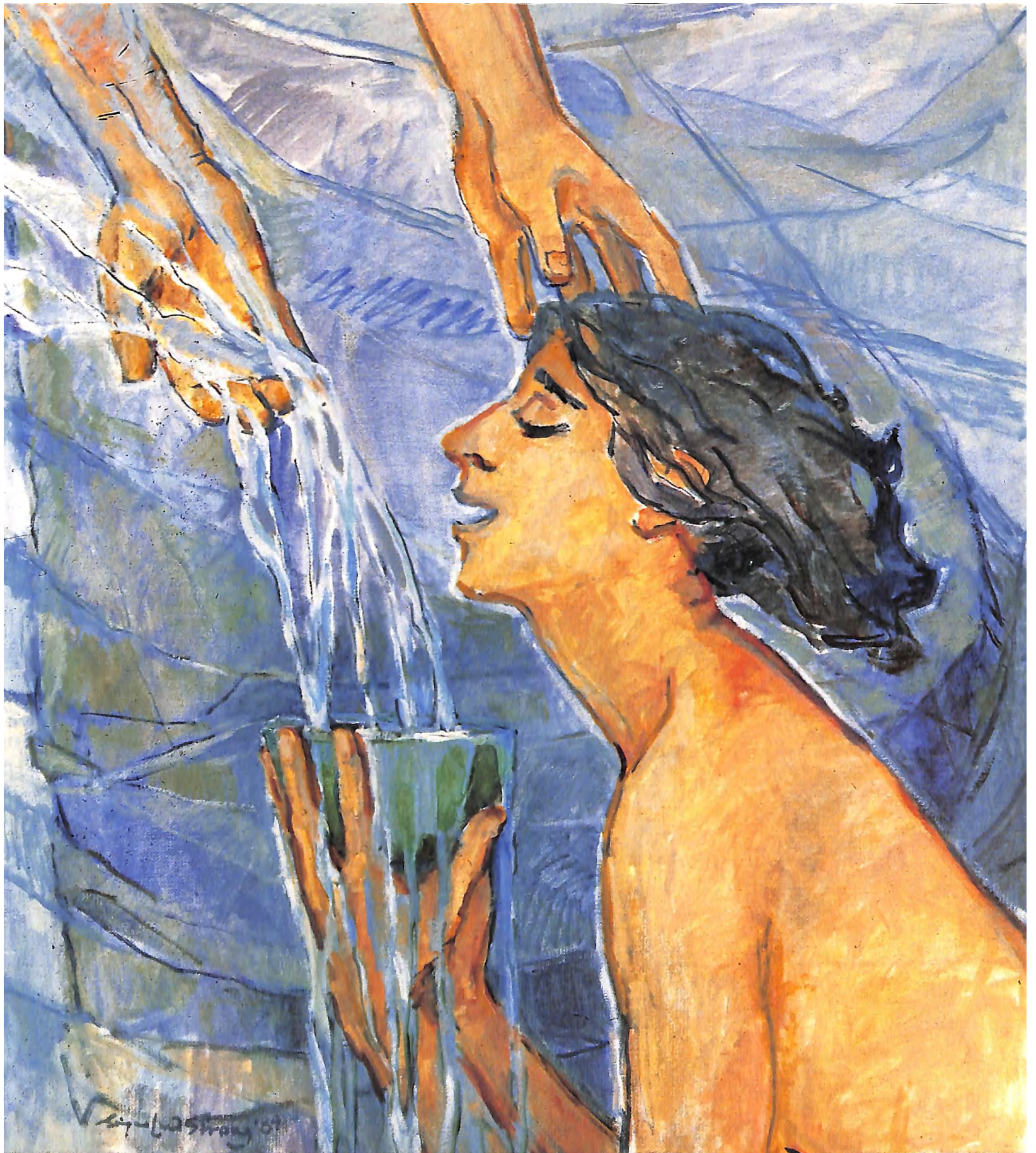
A cold night.  
A heated room.  
A plate glass window  
with stars of the universe beyond.  
Cold cannot penetrate,  
but news of hungry millions,  
cold, helpless ones,  
homeless hopeless ones,  
invade my boxed-in ease.

My comfort burns like a disease.

What must I do ?  
Should I be suffering too,  
add pain to pain, powerless to cure?

Locked in the grand design  
is a code to be broken by man  
to end crippling chaos  
and needless want.

Spirit - force!  
Eternal wisdom!  
God!  
Light the soul,  
change stubborn will  
to glad obedience!  
Guide us  
into selfless, fruitful deeds!



**KITH AND KIN**

**THE LILY**

There grew a lily in my bosom.  
It had a fresh and a fragrant blossom.  
When I would hold it to caress  
it gave its fragrance less and less.

I loved the lily in my bosom  
but let my hands not spoil its blossom.  
And it gave its fragrant air  
when tended for its own sake there.

And then the lily in my bosom  
sprang out in a far fairer blossom,  
and my spirit now has known  
joy at what it does not own.





*ANTICIPATION. Oil. (45x60 cm)*

## KITH AND KIN

### RELATIONSHIP

From the hour of their birth  
until your own last breath  
they cause you pain  
and you love them, love them.

They give you joy  
that is beyond description  
and you cry  
with happy tears.



*INGRID AND JOFFE. Oil. (45x55 cm)*

**KITH AND KIN**

SOFT LIGHT

Soft light  
fills the room  
and vibrates  
in the waiting for the morning.

Forces of birth and growth  
and life and death  
are of one substance  
with eternity.



*INGRID AND KJERSTI. Oil. (60x40cm)*

## KITH AND KIN

### APRON STRINGS

They must leave  
and you must let them go.  
They must never know  
the ache that is  
and was since the beginning  
and will be until the last.

Awesome ache!  
Ache of ages,  
made of fruitless fear  
of stones that make them stumble  
and sorrows they must taste,  
and yet delight,  
dear God, the sheer delight!



*MOTHER AND DAUGHTER. Oil. (40x60 cm)*

**KITH AND KIN**

INTERVENTION

There was happiness  
where agony  
had blighted them.

There was peace  
where hatred had torn  
at the fabric of their lives.

Spring of step,  
grace of gait  
power of purpose  
warmth of heart  
were there for all to see,  
proof of power  
that intervenes in man's affairs.

*IRISES. Oil. (65x75 cm)*





## KITH AND KIN

### LOVE

They felt made for each other,  
refreshed in love for each other,  
possessed each other in delight.  
Their love was their universe  
which they explored.

They lost of their surplus,  
that intangible other  
which makes life an adventure.  
Their vision dimmed.

Life lost lustre.  
Sex lacked challenge.  
They watched dreams and drives  
drown impotently.

They searched for a spark  
that lights the soul,  
an aim that asks for all and more.

Wrenched, their wretched wills  
creaked and cranked the wheels  
of unused senses  
in challenge and surprise.

Love deepened  
bonds strengthened  
purpose grew  
fears foundered.  
Tired and happy,  
they were fullfilled.



*AFTER RAIN. Värmland. Sweden. Oil. (45x60cm)*

## KITH AND KIN

### DREAD

She would not trust,  
she must control  
her heart and soul  
and all she met.

Lay bare, my dear,  
the dread you sense  
that none would care.  
Leap out in faith.  
You'll find power there,  
past the suspense.

### LET GO

Let go!  
Let go my dear  
your hold!

The time has come  
to yield and trust.

Slip quietly  
into the waters  
which bore you once  
ashore.

### DEATH

There was a deeper breath  
then not another.

The life that had lived  
and loved and laughed  
and created and cried  
had found a way alone  
from instruments and monitors  
and weeping  
into other spheres of life.

Slide willing  
on the tide  
and find your course.

Let the currents carry you  
safely.

FROZEN FLOWER

The flower I would pick for you  
lay buried under deepest snow.

The flower did survive the cold  
as did my love the ice of old.

The mystery of love will bind  
captive once all humankind.

*TREES IN SNOW. Sweden. Water colour. (36x46 cm)*



**KITH AND KIN**

**PLEASE**

When I grow old -  
well, I'm quite old now!  
When I grow really old I mean -  
that is *if* I do,  
you never know these things!  
So if I grow really old my child -  
but then you are my child no longer  
though you came of me  
and were me for most of a year!

Now with children of your own  
you are one flesh with your man  
as I am with mine.

Well then: if I grow really old  
in heart and mind and limb,  
one thing I ask:  
promise,  
promise not to pamper or protect!

I have suffered, I have lived.  
I have battled. I have laughed.  
I have drunk of delights  
that have poured  
from the source of life  
into the parched, tortured, twisted,  
tangled mass that was my inner self  
and cried to die.

This me was cradled,  
fed and loved to life  
as with parents' love and patience,  
but greater.  
Life bubbled where chryness was  
like a source what springs from the  
depths while we watch in wonder.

It trickled, poured  
and made a stream  
and the stream a river.  
The stream made pools and lakes  
and made way again towards the sea,  
source and sea the same.

There were boulders in the river,  
rocks and logs to dam the flow,  
sticks and stones.  
The force of flow  
made whirls and waves  
with froth and foam  
that rise in cascades  
to be hurled back  
into the river.

There are those who try  
to roll rocks away,  
who think them wrong,  
preventing progress.

Those rugged rocks  
that split dashing waters  
into sparkles,  
make rainbows in the sun,  
make salmon leap,  
make laughter in the soul,  
let them stand forever!

Never try to smooth the flow  
or still the stream!  
Let me feel the pebbles grate  
on the river bed!  
Let me dash my spirit against  
those timeless rocks.

KITH AND KIN

Let me, though weak maybe  
of limb and mind,  
run my course.  
My tears as I dash against the rocks  
are drops that fly from the waves  
and catch the light of the sun.  
My groans as I grate on the gravel  
are the roars of the river-run.

Fool is he who tries to scoop  
the river up with hands  
to stagnate in putrid pools.  
Burdened he darts to and fro  
to no avail.

Let the river run its course  
in tumult towards goal and source  
and merge with the majesty  
of the waiting sea!

*LIGHT AND SHADE. Sweden. Oil. (65x80 cm)*



## **AFTERTHOUGHTS.**

### **WHAT GOES ON OUT THERE?**

Being the oldest child, I felt utterly lost when I saw my younger sisters take my place in my mother's affection, as I thought. Early in life I was marred by an undiagnosed illness. I had to force myself to do what others did naturally. I felt different but could not understand why. Looking out at the stars at night I wondered what was going on out there, and if there was a point to it all, something that included me. But I was completely unable to put words to my feelings or even to formulate these large questions in my mind. Feeling inadequate and vulnerable, I did not mix easily with others. This is of course very common and one could ask what interest it might hold for anyone but myself. The answer is that I think it has a connection with what goes on "out there" which concerns us all.

### **A ROSETTE AND A ROSEBUD**

Suffering is a big word. It seems too big to use in relation to a materially privileged life like mine, especially at a time in history when so much unimaginable suffering exists. I hesitate to use it. But suffering cannot be measured. What is suffering to one may not be to another. What may break one, could make another.

At the age of 7 I was invited by a girl in my class to join a sewing circle she was starting. I felt honoured. She gave me a red silk rosette which her mother had made as a sign of membership, and told me to meet in a corner of the school yard at a certain time. We were all to walk to her home. When I arrived no one was there, and as I did not know her address I went home after some time of waiting. The next day I asked her what had happened. She said that I was not a member. When I showed her the rosette she insisted my mother had made it and it was not like the others and I was just jealous. I was shattered. I had been left out, whatever the reason was. I never found out. I may have even caused it myself. But what stayed with me was the sense of rejection. Since we had to see each other daily for several years I simply had to accept this as part of my life. But I could not rub her out of it, and I could not rub out the hurt. Still the biggest hurt was, why was life like that? Why had there to be such sadness? This incident could be dismissed as a childish bagatelle, but something big and dark and important had entered my consciousness.

Some time lapsed and we did all the usual things you do at the age of 7. One day something happened that I will never forget.



## AFTERTHOUGHTS

In class we were taught a song about a rosebud that would not open after the scorching heat of the sun, even after the cooling rains came to refresh it. The story of this poor rose was described with dance-like actions. Never had I encountered anything so moving. I walked home as if on air, and as soon as I got in I asked Mother to watch me perform the whole thing on the sitting room carpet. At the finish apparently I said, "It was very beautiful." My vocabulary was not up to describing what I really felt. Without realising it I had met beauty as a living force. It affected me powerfully.

I must have been 8 or 9 when my parents had a musical evening in our home. I was supposed to be asleep in my room next door. The programme that night went right above my head. But suddenly someone started a song about an old woman who lived alone in a small cottage at the edge of a forest. She was very poor but kept going with her weaving. And she was happy and contented. I did not cry easily, but that night I sobbed and sobbed for the old woman and for the beauty of the song, until finally I had to go to my mother for consolation. It was not a bitter crying. It was a response to something so big that I could not contain it. And now I wonder: would I have had the capacity to receive the impact of this experience of beauty without the experience of suffering and pain? At that point I was set on a long and winding path of discovery.

There was school. Homework, ropeskiipping, hopscotch and ball games. There was skiing, skating, sledging, mountain climbing and parties. I always felt inadequate, certain to get hurt in some way or another. But I learned to laugh and joke and act unconcerned. At home I shut myself up where I could read and draw and work with clay. I had always done drawing and colouring, but always had a sense of futility because my efforts never looked like the real thing. However, draw and paint I did, while at the same time I grew to accept the conventional views of what was good and what was "done", and what was not.

## MARGUERITES

One day I was sitting at my table painting marguerites in a vase. I was then in my late teens. With a sense of wonder I became aware that I was seeing more than the marguerites. I saw light around them. It could have been explained as the reflection of light on their petals, but I somehow felt it was different. It came from the inside of the flowers, or rather, it was part of them.

## **AFTERTHOUGHTS.**

The fact that I was seeing more than my mind could prove made a wondrous discovery. My inner eye saw something which had always been there, only I had not been aware of it.

My painting of the marguerites was finished in the end without their delicate aura. Partly I did not know how to paint it. Partly I feared people would laugh and think me odd or childish or worse, not acceptable. Again I wonder: had I not experienced rejection, sadness, and beauty, would I have had the predisposition to experience the delicate message of those marguerites? This knowledge coming directly to me without the means of books or of other people was my first realisation that there really are things which simply cannot be explained, measured, or touched.

## **THE GREAT DIVIDE**

In my middle twenties I was fretting how to put my art education to best use. I was frustrated that my skills and feelings did not operate together. I did not know how to express myself because I did not really know myself and what I was living for.

One day as I was dusting I heard a "voice" quite clearly saying, "You must stop fretting about your art and become an artist with people."

It was quite undramatic. I knew instantly it was the truth. I was a "loner" and had always withdrawn from people, fearing that I would not know how to cope with the emotional stress of differences of temperament, irritations, responsibility, hurts. I wore a mask to protect myself and let no one know my thoughts and feelings.

But now what I had wanted most, and had shed tears over, suddenly lost its grip on me. I knew the "voice" that "spoke" had to be obeyed and trusted. The immediate feeling was not of loss but of relief in spite of the frightening aspect of involvement with people. Accepting this "voice" as a true guide to my own best interests was like going on a blind date. I did not have to, but I knew I must, and wanted to. I did not know what it would mean, or how long it was to last - for life even? Nor did I know how to set about it. I started simply by helping friends look after their children.

My ability to paint, and even the desire, vanished. There were many years of varied experiences, and there was very hard work. One thing simply lead to another.

## AFTERTHOUGHTS

Very soon I found that getting involved with people, you meet yourself head on. I had got used to protecting myself by withdrawing and by half-lies and even whole ones. This had turned me into a cynical, critical person. The process of facing my real nature, or at least beginning to, meant I had to try and find ways of mending broken relationships. Admitting wrongs and saying sorry is never easy, but it turned out to bring rewards. I discovered that friendships grow out of what you put into them, not what you get out of them.

Finally I found myself helping a talented freelance photo-journalist, Arthur Strong. We were part of an international group working for the moral regeneration of the thinking and living of our age. They were causing change to take place where deadlock existed, both in personal and in larger circumstances. Change was always assumed to start with oneself rather than the other person. Some years later our assignments took us to the first assembly of the United Nations in San Francisco. The many meetings behind the scenes made us realise the importance of personal relationships and the creating of trust. We also saw the importance of integrity in the way journalists presented news and photos to the world. How tempting to angle an item, or to create sensation for the sake of personal recognition!

This proved a chance to get to know each other better. Some time later Arthur asked me to marry him. However, I had serious fears that our different backgrounds, temperaments and nationalities would create obstacles I would not be able to cope with emotionally, so I refused. But one day I experienced a real sense of peace about it, with a feeling that the marriage was meant to be, and so I accepted.

We were blissfully happy. Eventually our daughter Ingrid was born to our great delight and life seemed perfect. Then, true enough, obstacles did appear. They seemed insurmountable, and I thought at times that I would crack under the strain. But that is another story. We are now the richer for it. And often I think what I would have missed if I had given up!

Over the years my health deteriorated and it seemed that a different mode of living was becoming necessary. One day I again became aware of the, by then, familiar "still small voice". It now had a different message for me. I was to start painting again and start with a certain portrait. But this time I was quite doubtful about it. Our circumstances did not allow for easels, canvasses, tubes and bottles and the smell of turps.

The same afternoon there was a phone call from an old friend who asked us to come and share her spacious home with her. Her old mother had recently died. She was now alone, and needed to get on with her demanding job as a teacher. Coincidence? I doubt it.

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"Something out there" was surely at work, it was so perfect. The house was ideally situated for our activities and even had a lovely garden.

At the age of fifty I had my first exhibition. Four more followed. To my delight, my talents had returned and our busy life had provided insights that enhanced them. The years of "laying fallow" had proved to be a bonus. Now at the ages of 76 and 83 Arthur and I have in recent years held a joint exhibition. The year before our daughter, a textile artist, and I exhibited our work together; she has two children and with her husband works in the field of alternative medicine. Looking back I marvel at that surprise intervention in my youth. By grabbing for the fruit before its time I nearly spoilt what was meant to yield a bigger harvest. I think part of making peace with your real self, and with others, is getting used to trusting that inner leading.

## CHALLENGE

One incident happened quite soon after I started painting again, which stands out and has played a big part in my understanding of art, and of life as a whole. I was sitting comfortably by a great log fire when I became conscious of some thoughts wanting attention. I took my pen and jotted them down: "You are too bound by what people think. Your perception is dulled by your desire for acceptance and by preoccupation with your own thing. You do not hear the inner prompting because of the clamour of your desires. You may have to suffer and still learn to love and serve and believe. You may be rejected yet learn to stand firm. You may know fear and despair and still you will continue. You will do the small things, knowing they will be used in life's mosaic. You may never know where or how they fit in but you will be satisfied. You will be new, see new and do new things. You will be free because you will know who you are, your littleness, your weakness, your deceit and conceit, and you will know the greatness and the glory in you. Creative powers beyond your control will have free flow."

I realised that the artist is not important. The pictures are not either. It is what the pictures speak which is important, and that is a gift to, and not the merit of, the artist.

I have read somewhere that Japanese artists traditionally meditated, sometimes for days, in front of the empty sheet. When they were ready they knew exactly what to do and how to do it. But even more astonishing, the person who went to see art prepared himself by meditation in order to be receptive, or meditated before the picture and let it speak to him.

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It is not the intent of the artist which is important to the viewer, but what he himself perceives and can assimilate. He is co-creator in a sense. He gets the impulse meant for him from the same source as the artist. But being a different individual with a different inner set-up, he perceives a different message which then becomes part of his own experience.

## AQUARIUS

I am not a pacifist. Nor do I believe in war as a way to peace. I just feel there are other ways to solve our conflicts. Someone said, "Peace is not just an idea, it is people becoming different." Of course no conflict is a new conflict. They are the results of wrongs done by someone causing hurt to at least one other.

The long term effects are incalculable, with actions and reactions and reaction to reaction ad infinitum. Where to stop the chain of events? The obvious answer is: with ourselves. But the difficulty immediately arises - who decides what is right and what is wrong? We have taken it upon ourselves to declare obsolete many time-honoured guidelines for conduct as not modern, not suited to our more complex society. But right and wrong are not concepts which are optional. They are discarded only with disastrous results in other people's lives as well as our own. We have been stamped from our earliest beginnings with this special knowledge. We have been issued with a map. We have built-in instruments to receive direction as well as the power and courage to follow them. We have a tremendous capacity for recognition when we hit on the right way. We have also the capacity for apprehension when we take off on some course not in harmony with the universal design. They act like radar guides.

At a time when we have brought so much suffering on ourselves, more and more people are seeking how to replace lust with love, lies with truth, selfishness with caring. No state can provide that. No law can bring it about, only the courage of an individual who wants to scrap the old and start exploring his inner potential, his birthright.

However, it is apparent that to a large extent we have dulled our inner receptors. It is said that we are entering the age of Aquarius. Aquarius is the man with the pitcher with which he pours water over humanity, water being the age-old symbol for spirit. And the old prophecy says that this is to happen in our age, this next span of 2,000 years or so. Insight and inner perception will, according to this prophecy be given to reawaken and enhance the understanding of our inner selves and make them operative in the context of the universal design.

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### **THE BLUE GUITAR**

This is the name of a poem by the American Wallace Stevens. It set me thinking. Art is born, not made. The Blue Guitar seemed to say that to me. This big-fisted fellow with the strength of an ox expresses what goes on inside him with tenderness and beauty. I realised that even the toughest and roughest have a sensitive side. I am struck by the mind-boggling process inherent in art. The man with the blue guitar listens to the water bubbling and rushing among the stones. He hears the rustling of the leaves on the tree. He sees the play of the sunbeams on every blade of grass and every drop of water. This somehow forms in his mind into a melody and into musical harmonies. Out comes a sound from a wooden box with strings stretched across it, transformed by some alchemy which defies description. And in a different place at a different time the sound is carried through the ether and enters another human being whose senses receive them and whose mind interprets them as an experience which affects him. Joy and sadness, longings or memories come to the surface of his consciousness and add to the store of experiences and impulses which form his life.

Different people, different ages and different cultures have given different expressions to inner realities. But the realities themselves are the same through all ages. They are unchangeable. The only thing that changes is our awareness. Truth is truth but our minds can get dulled by self-interest, or hate, or love of comfort. We create rituals or dogmas or even indifference to shield ourselves against the impact of truth on our lives. We lose our inborn quality of perception. In silence we can recover this quality and enhance it.

We are all artists, creators of some kind. Some have obvious gifts like music, painting, writing. Others have special gifts for friendship, counselling, teaching, home-making, nursing - all gifts that oil the machinery of human relationships and draw the best out of others.

### **THE REED FLUTE PLAYER**

I listened to this reed flute player one summer evening out amongst the tall fir trees with the scent of new-mown hay mixed with the intoxicating smell of resin and pine needles from the trees. The flute was of his own making, and he talked of how he did it, and about many of the things he had inherited as a boy from his parents, of knowledge and insights into

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the forces of nature, and of the music which his family loved and guarded from ancient times. This man also made up his own tunes. His eyes did not seem to see us while he played - they were seeing things he interpreted on his flute. I went away that evening feeling I had been elsewhere with him. His costume shows he is from Setesdal in Norway. I made sketches of him that night and did the painting at home.

### CREATIVE FORCE

Creative force is an entity of spirit, a reality which communicates itself. It is not a talent which can be possessed or claimed as a personal attribute. The English poet Shelley wrote:

Rarely, rarely, comest thou,  
Spirit of delight!  
Wherefore hast thou left me now  
many a day and night?  
Many a weary night and day  
'tis since thou art gone away.

He knew that we cannot dictate to the spirit of delight. We simply cannot ask for it for our own satisfaction. All we can do is to be open without demand and be patiently listening even when there seems to be nothing. It is that nothing which is so hard to accept. But it is that nothing which can receive the something which is beyond the grasp of our minds.

Art does not exist to give a career to the artist, or fame. Art is a means of reaching the soul with knowledge beyond the physical. Art is born in silence, in solitude. Art is the miraculous result of inner listening. It is the response to inspiration from the unseen world. It is through all forms of art that humanity's basic longing for universal truth is kept alive. It sets us searching, exploring. And it is the nearest we get to expressing the inexpressible.

There is a tendency in us to seek emotional gratification in spiritual visions and experiences. Although feelings have a part in guiding human beings to spiritual truth, the aim is not the feelings but the truth and their source.

A sense of mystique has grown up around these things. But the world's great seers

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themselves have stressed that it is for everyone everywhere to know and to benefit by that unseen, seemingly hidden power and get the satisfaction of the effect on their living.

Here in the West Mother Julian of Norwich, an English illumined person of the Middle Ages, wrote, "The spiritual marriage is for work."

The poet and untiring spiritual revolutionary, St. John of the Cross, in the 16th century said, "Spiritual gifts are for the benefit of others."

A man of great insight in this century, Frank Buchman, who launched the idea of moral and spiritual rearmament, expressed this thought:

"When man listens, God speaks.  
When man obeys, God acts.  
When people change, nations change."

I believe art is a perfect instrument in our search for contact between the inner and the outer human being, a guide to the purpose of life on this planet.





**SIGNE LUND STRONG** was born 1915 in Norway, north of the Arctic circle, but her family moved to Sweden and she spent her childhood and early adult life there. She studied commercial art in Stockholm and Berlin and was fortunate to find work as an artist with the publishing firm Bonniers. She had to break her contract there for health reasons but was able to do some free lance work. Eventually she found her way to international work for reconciliation and unity across the borders. Through a surprising incident her art activity was terminated to be resumed equally surprisingly twenty years later.

During these years the conviction grew that you cannot hope for change in the world without people becoming different. These were years not without struggle, but they were also full of discoveries and experiences which found expression in painting and writing.

Signe and her husband Arthur are now settled in Sweden where their daughter Ingrid lives with her Swedish husband Jan and their two children Kjersti and Joffe.

These poems did not come about to illustrate the paintings. Nor were the paintings inspired by the writing. They have individually welled up in times of joy or pain, sometimes from a sense of futility, other times with a feeling of discovery."

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