

## The Tunnel Vision Tapes: Introduction

Emptiness is cause for anxiety in the human experience. Something about there being nothing there to give a sense of locus or substance may cause a person to panic. This anxiety motivates the human mind to create something where there is nothing and it is through this drive for “being” that causes each person to generate an internal cosmos that defines their reality. Our physical reality evolves in conjunction with our internal cosmology and becomes an extension our internal reality, giving a sense of time and place that yields a concrete presence from which we function. Sanity is borne out of a degree of harmony between the accurateness of the internal cosmology and the “real world”. This is the natural order of life from within the human psyche. Thus, it becomes unnatural for a person to indulge in the discipline of seeking out a state of awareness where they become immersed in “The Silent Stillness”. The human ego is most comfortable when surrounded by a physical realm that reinforces the concept of completeness derived from the interaction of places, events, social relationships, and possessions as defined by their sense of being. Yet the human spirit is driven to seek out this “otherness” that provides a sense of maturity in the growth of the human psyche.

It's easy to say all this in the introduction to a series of drawings created between January 9<sup>th</sup> and February 16<sup>th</sup>, 2010 and the comments I'm offering at this later date, like that explains everything. Certainly the journey to this point in my life could, has, and will generate many other writings from many different viewpoints, as would the journey of any “seeker” who has left a trail of artifacts along the “Path”. The name I've given the 3.5 x 5-inch sketchbook these drawings were created in is derived from a line in a poem written during this same time period. Other viewpoints of this time period would obviously include (auto)biographical texts that would seek to establish the context wherein these works were created. A journal of sorts already exists that would serve as a verbal snapshot of the daily routine of the time. During the same time period a discourse about the role of the Muse in creativity was taking place, and this resulted in several drawings where were given titles and subjects related to this discussion. Another topic that was being discussed during this time period was of the spiritual journey and momentary marking of an “arrival” that would yield yet another collection of writings. For the sake of brevity it is better to let those texts evolve elsewhere.

A sculptor has the benefit of working with materials that are already there as part of the creative process. As Michaelangelo is quoted as having once said, to carve an elephant, all one has to do is remove everything that isn't elephant. A potter has a lump of clay to form into a container. The emptiness within the container is as important as the physical presence of the object, as this space provides containment for seeds, liquids, or a sonic chamber for musical instrument usage. The modern artist has pieces of steel that can be welded together to form a sculpture. The painter, on the other hand, has an empty canvas with which to stand before and answer to. The draftsman has the blank sheet of paper that challenges the artist from the onset of creativity. Every mark is going to become an element of the final work, no matter how good the artist is. A wrong mark can be erased, but the erasure leaves a blemish on the previously untouched paper. Somewhere between the anxiety of emptiness and the anxiety of potential error, a work of art is created with

pencil on paper.

The formal training of a sculptor includes concern for “negative space” which is the area around the physical or “positive space” that is being created. A bronze sculpture of a ballet dancer with arms held up above her head creates negative space between her arms and hands. The sculptor defines this space as part of the work. Rembrandt is quoted with having observed that the space around a subject is as important as the subject in a painting. He was concerned with capturing a sense of dynamic interaction between the “air” of the Holland landscape and the physical objects being depicted in his work. In each discipline of media the artist is aware of the emptiness that physical object generates. In order to define and show “emptiness” (or this “mystery/mystification” that remains unseen) the artist has to create the contrasting element of “something-ness”. This unseen Mystery becomes visible in the blank regions of a drawing where there are no pencil marks. It is easier to show nothing this way than it is to show the wind blowing across the Dutch landscape, yet one can look at paintings where some effort was made to do this and get a sense of “wind-ness”.

This Mystery comes to us through the human effort to confront the unseen aspects of reality in search of self/no-self beyond the physical realm. The schools of thought that support this discipline provide many Paths from different parts of the world. A universal spirituality, that awareness of the presence of spirit in reality and the ability to have an intentional dynamic relationship with the unseen spiritual forces around us, can be utilized in any activity. Those that offer instructions that seek to balance Karma and guide us in methods to reduce destructive elements from our lives get us there quicker. The discipline of meditation will guide a person to experience this Mystery, but along the way the need to filter out metabolic stimulation like the sound of blood flowing through the ear drums during meditation will generate a process of fragmentation like the space between the lines in a drawing becomes the negative space that defines “emptiness” in works intended to do this. The duality of a circle drawn on a sheet of paper to define emptiness, as in the art work of John Cage, illustrates how we have to fragment in order to arrive at a sense of wholeness in the effort to become at ease with an awareness of the “otherness” that results in this spirituality. It isn't the awareness of emptiness that is the goal in all of this. It is the discipline of shedding anxiety when experiencing emptiness that allows us to become free from bondage of fear within one's sense of self. The “Tunnel Vision Tapes” sketchbook is a visual account of this moment in time that occurred for me somewhere in the middle of the five weeks or so it took to do these drawings. The anecdotes about each drawing will add narrative to these marks along the trail in and out of this moment in time, as it were.

Oliver Loveday © May 12-23, 2011 10am EDT



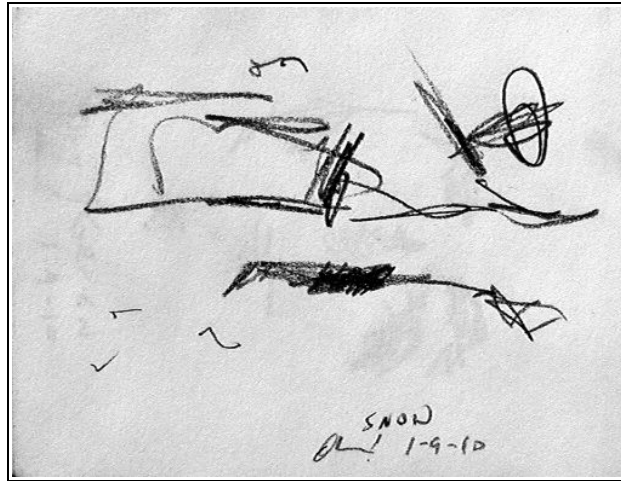
1. Cubist Mask , January 9, 2010

As a child I thought I had no imagination. When other kids would look up at clouds and point out elephants, pigs, and horses, I would look up and see cumulus clouds. In that rare moment when it was so obvious a blind man could see it, I might see something else beside just clouds. What I came to understand later was that my imaginings were directed elsewhere and there is nothing wrong with seeing the world for what it is. When I opted to study art in college this lack of transference in my imagination-stunted creativity reduced me to something of a human camera. I could do creative writing. I could whistle a symphonic movement never before heard. I couldn't "visualize" to save my life. When it came time to do an exercise in "Cubism" in drawing class, I had no idea what my professor was challenging me to do. Cubism would be something like making a lot of paper cubes and joining them together to create a sculpture of a model or physical object, then doing a drawing of this sculpture where there are no curved planes in the drawing. I got that part of the exercise now, but back then I was drawing a blank and doing really bad art in the kindest manner of speaking.

Cubism is well documented as an "art movement" within Western culture, but the deeper source of inspiration is lost to the (tribally-disenfranchised) civilized people who haven't been informed that the rest of humanity doesn't fragment reality into dysfunctional elements like the sacred and profane. The African tribal masks that inspired contemporary artists (to break down the subject matter into cubical elements) were depicting spiritual images of a very different nature than the Western Culture became concerned about with Cubism. I could intuit those tribal concerns much easier than I could visualize the abstraction from reality with Cubism. I'm aware of the spiritual elements associated with ceremonial objects, so I can say stuff like that. I finally did the math and got on with Cubism. It helped to do a sculpture first. That realist in me needed something physical to go by. So Cubist Mask isn't that steeped in Cubism. It is steeped in

a long string of works named “masks” given my interest in theater, realism, and the hidden things behind the mask. It's a place to start. Maybe I named it Cubist Mask in honor of that effort to break away from realism and began to visualize images outside my physical reality. I remember it was almost painful to do this when I first got started doing art that required that I function as something other than a human camera.

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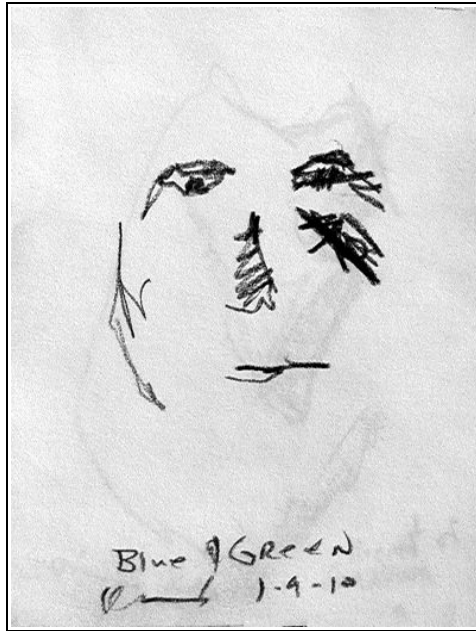


## 2. Snow, January 9, 2010

I love walking during a snow storm. The snow absorbs all the sounds of the environment and renders the air around me silent. There is only the sound of snow falling on snow, like the sound of blood flowing through my ear drum when there are no other sounds. The landscape is blanketed with new fallen snow and rendered pure with whiteness. Nature has reduced everything to white in a sea of nothingness.

Walking along the city streets before doing this drawing, I'm also seeing a promise of something else. The snow blankets the landscape so the evidence of destruction to the natural world can't be seen. The snowy landscape holds a promise of sorts for me. I see into the future for a brief instant and know that time will fall upon this landscape like snow and remove all the markings of the Western Industrial Culture from the landscape.

Oliver Loveday © 051211:11:20am EDT



3. Blue & Green Mask, January 9, 2010

I don't like doing portraits of anyone else because I'm prone to leave out details that they expect and include details they would rather not see. I guess that's the reason I prefer to do masks instead of faces. This isn't really a mask, but I added the word to the title later. Whatever. The task at hand, from the artistic challenge, was to do a face with the fewest marks possible. I nailed that "problem", to use the shop talk of artists. What I would really love to be able to do is recreate the pencil marks in metal and be able to suspend them in air with no visible means of support. That's the limitation of physical reality that an artist escapes from when an image is created on the flat surface of a two-dimensional work or with a computer and digital imaging. I think I wrote down Blue & Green at the time because the drawing had a sense of there being a blue and green hue about the face, like theater lighting. I don't know. I just wish he would stop staring at me from the paper of the sketchbook. Time to flip to another drawing.

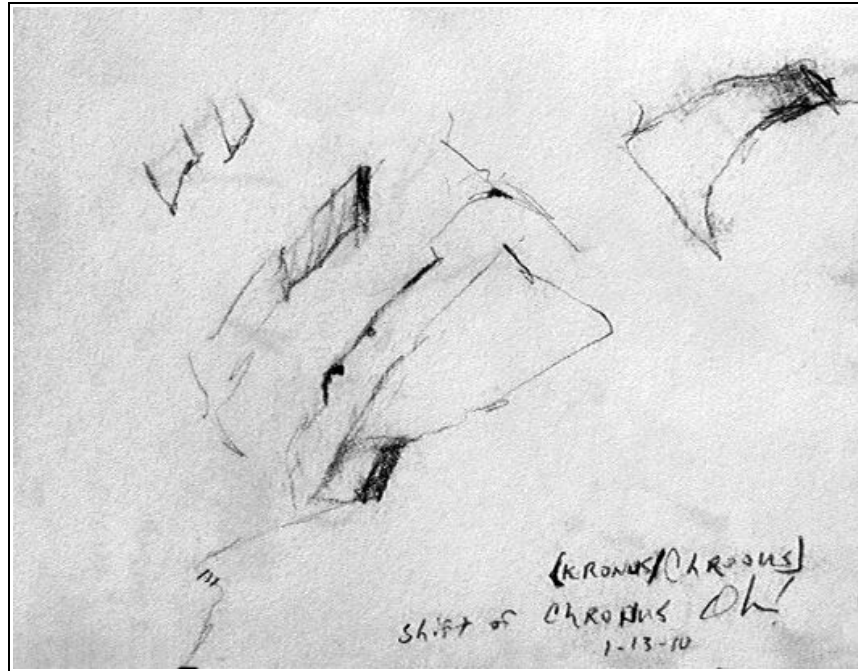
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#### 4. Regent of Sorrows, January 12, 2010

I think the title comes from a poem but I don't remember where. If I had my library of poetry books handy, I would be looking through one by a poet from Chile, but I don't, so I can't. That's the sorrow of it already. I had to look the word "regent" up again. From the dictionary: "A person who rules during the childhood, absence, or any unfitness of a rightful ruler." But this isn't a person. This is art. Like the blues that flows from the lips of a singer lamenting the loss of a lover or a sharecropper who sinks into the tormented sobbing of knowing that insects have destroyed this year's crops, the pencil marks contain my sorrows. These sorrows are too great for one man to embrace, so I invest the powers of containment in an expression of pencil marks on paper. At the center of the field of whiteness resides the illusion of a landscape viewed from overhead, thrusting up out of an unknown body of waters. Or is it the image of the lower part of a heart suspended in raw air with marks around it as though to protect it from further harm? Yet the circle is open as the heart is open, in spite of this field of sorrows, like a regent who is only temporary at best, and perhaps self-serving with ulterior motives at worst. It is due to the lack of recourse otherwise that demands that a regent be named and trusted in spite of misgivings, that such matters arise.

I really like this drawing as it has incorporated some of the drawing techniques I enjoy doing. A sense of solidity dissolving into formlessness at center stage while other lines define boundaries in the flatness of the paper and other marks show the gesture of the hand in celebration of the dance. At the core of dance as a spiritual exercise is the awareness that everything we do is a dance. As my arm dances in space around me, the dance is recorded by way of the pencil grazing the surface of the paper and leaving a trail by which the dance is captured in visual space. Dance, by God! Yes!

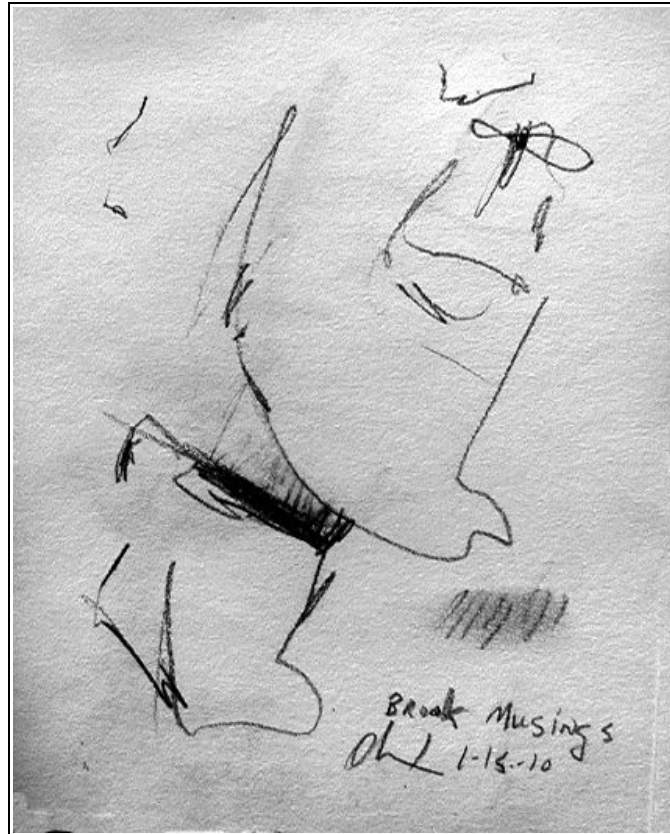


##### 5. Shift of Chronus, January 13, 2010

I never did figure out the right word for the title of this drawing. There was a word in there somewhere which was supposed to mean something about a shift in hue, like chroma. But the word kept coming out like another Greek word, which relates to time. Actually they are the same thing when it comes down to the laws of physics. The drawing is an attempt to show a time shift in human consciousness. Creativity addresses time, space, and functions outside the natural order of chronology. Without an awareness of time, we would not comprehend space or the distance between two points in physical reality. During periods of creative activity the artist experiences the sensation that time has been suspended, but as the pencil, paint brush, wood carving chisel, guitar, or stage charts are laid down, the hour is much later than we thought. It's easy to understand how these experiences with creativity can lead to an interest in the time-space continuum

The drawing continues this process of reclaiming markings from the past. The curl of air in the upper right corner was a frequent visitor to pencil drawings some thirty-five years ago. As a landscape, the drawing reminds me of a watercolor painting I did in 1983 entitled The Aegean Sea where the water vapor rising out of the water is made visible in the painting. The surface of the sea (or land) is below one's point of view now, as the horizon is not visible in this landscape. There are only fugitive elements of atmospheric embellishments visible. The air has been slightly bruised with the lightest of markings from the pencil. The wind blows it all to the East, or North, or leeward in the rising escape from gravity and transcendence into a new time zone. Like the journey of a person seeking spiritual truths in a world gone stark-raving mad, the new awareness of the bigger picture starts to gel and thicken in the curl of Chronus. My new word for the day.

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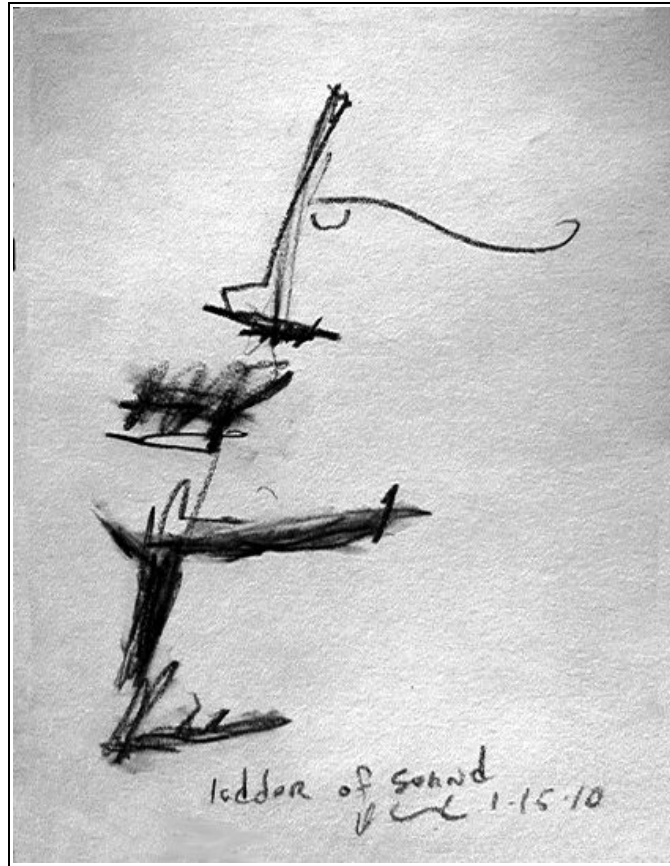


6. Brook Musings, January 15, 2010

As a young boy I enjoyed spending time alone in the woods. Sitting in a quiet spot while watching nature around me was always a time of peace. As I grew older and found that sitting by a small brook or creek was even more relaxing, I would seek out places where I could enjoy the solitude and sounds of water running over rocks. I discovered a nice city park a short walking distance from where I was living a short time before these drawings were started. I would meditate a few hours each day along the creek, resting on a natural seat formed by the roots of a box elder tree. The sounds of the creek would drown out the noise of the town a short distance away.

When I started drawing in the sketchbook, it was small enough to stash in my coat pocket. I would walk to the park and sit for a while, then pull out the sketchbook and do a drawing. On this winter day I wanted to capture the flow of the water in the creek, the winter sunlight shining down through the leafless trees, with crows flying off in the distance. I also wanted to capture the sounds of the water as it tumbled over bedrock jutting up out of the creek bed, with a goose swimming about nearby. I wanted to give a visual expression of the feelings the creek evoked in me. My thoughts would flow along with the water and slowly the creek and surroundings would wash away my worries. The music of the air was sweet in this respite for the troubles of the world. My hand danced across the paper and spaces between the lines became the slow eddies of water before me.

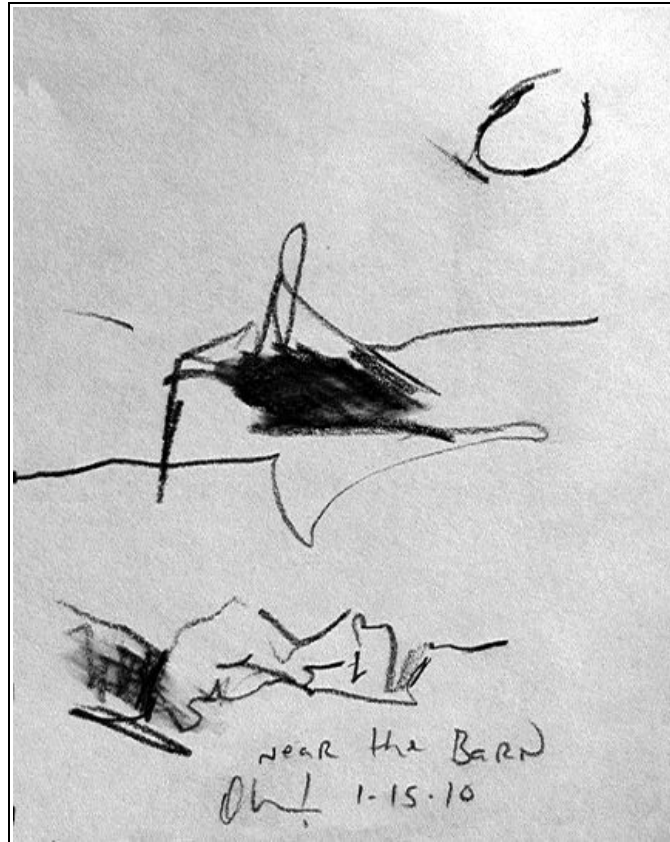




7. Ladder of Sound, January 15, 2010

Creativity was the great liberation for me. As I learned to create with words, art, and music I found that I could go anywhere my heart wanted to. I was free to do things and say things that “human” reality restricted me from doing. I felt like I was liberated from gravity, time and space. I could visualize. If I wanted to make sound a visual experience, I was free to do this. If I wanted to make music with color in a painting, there was nothing that could stop me. “Ladder of Sound” represents the sounds rising from the creek before me. They rise up from the rocks and go tumbling up into the air like a ladder I can ascend upon.

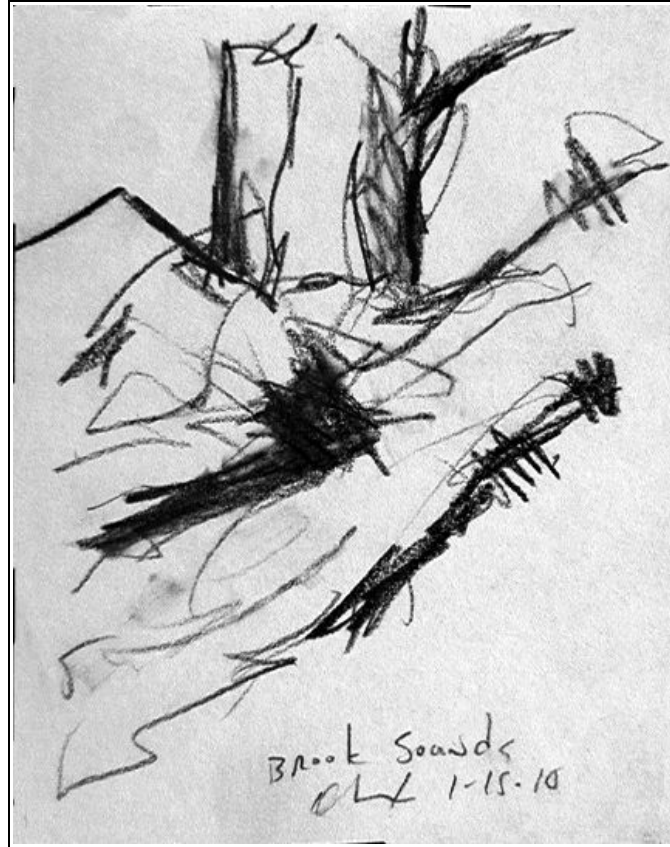
Sound has become different for me from what it meant back there before all of this. As I meditate and remember an experience, I sense the presence of sound as a visual experience. When I look at Native American artifacts, like the pottery and paintings from Ancient Mexico, scenes of humans speaking are found with objects coming from their mouths. The explanation is that this indicates that the person is speaking. Knowing that other people in other places depict sound as a visual element doesn't surprise me. I suspect that very young children can see sound, but over time they outgrow this stimuli. I watch toddlers as someone is talking and it is like they are looking at the words coming out of the person's mouth and flying up into the air. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.



8. Near the Barn, January 15, 2010

Somewhere beneath a slouching sun in the snow covered meadow stands a barn. Peering through the freezing wind that makes the eyes water, one sees the dark shadows and lines of emerging boundaries. Tears blur the view and wrinkle the lines as the hand shakes in the winter cold in the dance between space and paper. The crystal brilliant glint of sunlight reflected off the ice crystals burns into the retina. Survival isn't just a game when the slightest slip could cause a fall on ice. Paying attention to each wrinkle in time between blinks keeps the feet steady and the head on course.

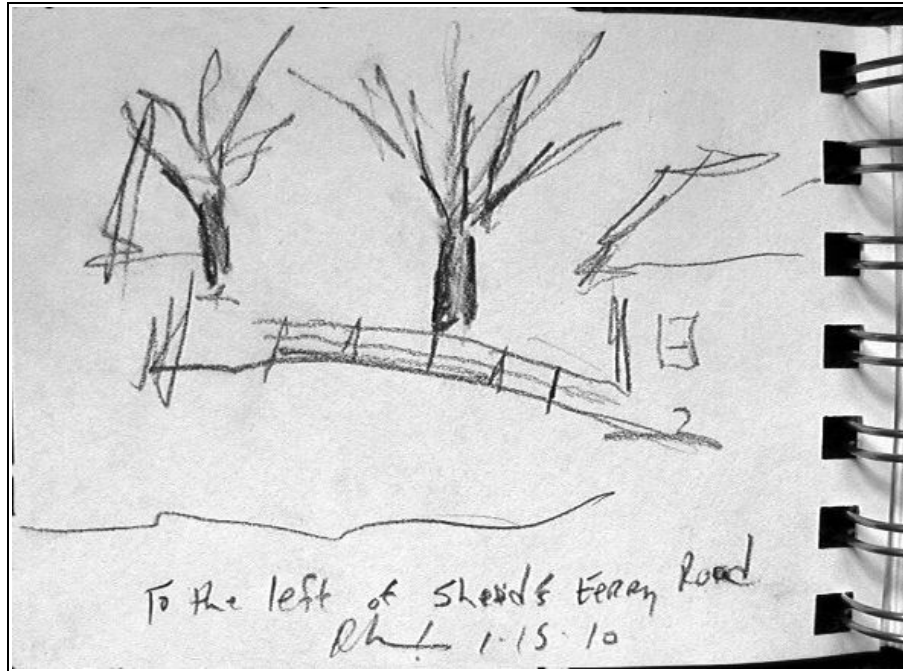
The music in the air; the crystal snap vibration of a winter snowy landscape, burns into the sinuses with each breath. Awareness is heightened. The wind clears the fog billowing from the nostrils. The labored trudge through the snow is exhausting. This brief respite from walking, as we are now near the barn, gives a view that is both comforting and surreal. A moment to catch our breath, as optic distortion streaks like shooting stars through the atmosphere. This isn't home, but it is the last stop before we are home. Another few breaths with attention to the details, as we can't let down our edge as we continue forward, but that will come next. We soak in the view between another few blinks as the wind gusts to remind us that this is no time to tarry. Survival depends upon continual movement forward.



9. Brook Sounds, January 15, 2011

Returning to the brook, which is called “Turkey Creek”, sitting on the natural seat of the tree roots, I look over the water to the trees along the other side. An old abandoned house sits a little to the left. The brook chortles along with syntactic syncopation, impacting the winter air with staccato bursts of rippling rhythms. Waves of mist rises up from the froth like some alchemical eruption. The hand chases the patterns of sound across the paper while dodging snow descending from the tree branches above. A watery melting landscape thickens the view as I risk extra marks in an effort to show the dynamic sonic atmosphere before me. The ripples of sound are invisible in the air, but not in the hand.

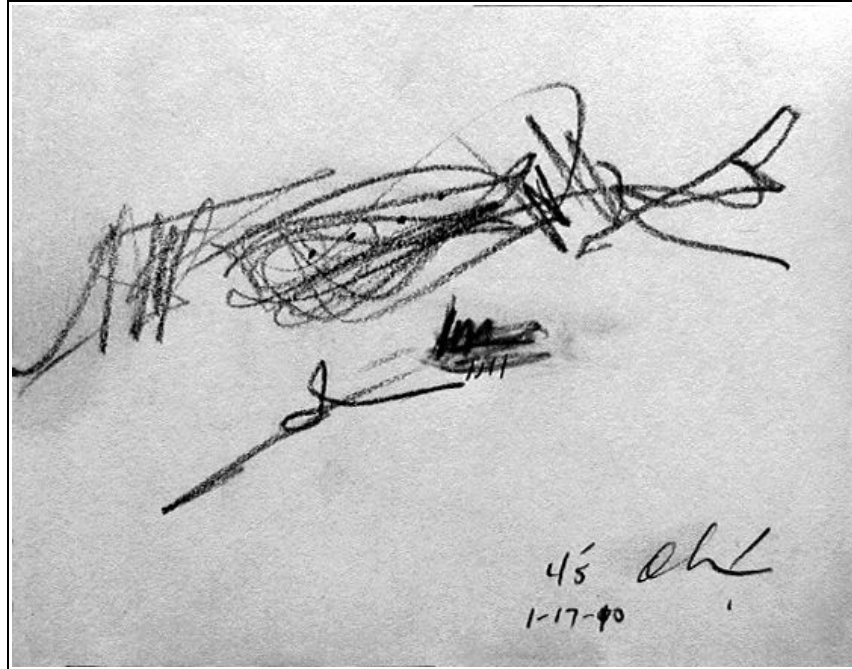
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10. To the left of Shield's Ferry Road, January 15, 2010

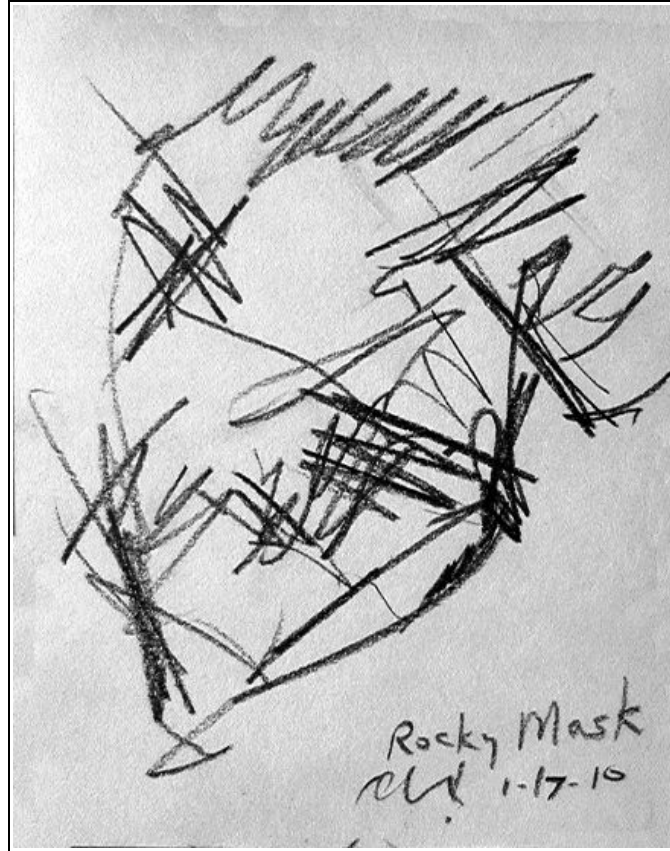
From my perch upon the tree roots along side the creek, I can see across the nearby road. The bare trees on the hillside, the fence alongside the yard in front of a house, and the snow-covered bank before me draws me back into the static physical realm. Like the Master's of Fine Art I've studied throughout my life, I attempt to create a drawing with the fewest lines possible. Sitting by the creek, I am surrounded by the sounds of water running past. The soothing vibrations washes through me and clears out all the negativity of the day. My thoughts can drift along with the creek or I can be in the moment and watch the birds flit about looking for food. This creek space has been sanctuary for months as I ride out the madness that is flowing through my life. No one is screaming at me or accusing me of doing crimes I never committed. No one is telling me how worthless I am because I have no money. I sit on my perch and feel at peace with the natural world. The human world that is based on greed, power, and deception dissolves from my spirit as I sit quietly and enter into the calm world of no thoughts.

Over the years I've had special places where I could go and feel connected to the natural world without people imposing their everyday personal funk on me. I haven't done drawings of any of those other places. They are personal spaces that I can remember and bring up in my mind when I need to draw from that feeling of completeness that I get there. On a mid-winter day my pencil flashed sparks of clarity across the paper and captured a time and place. In the Old Ways it is said that everyone needs a secret spot where they can go and find a quiet time. On this day my secret spot was very visible to the rest of the world, but the secret space within allowed me to spend many hours there alone. In the drawing it all comes back for a moment and now you know it also.



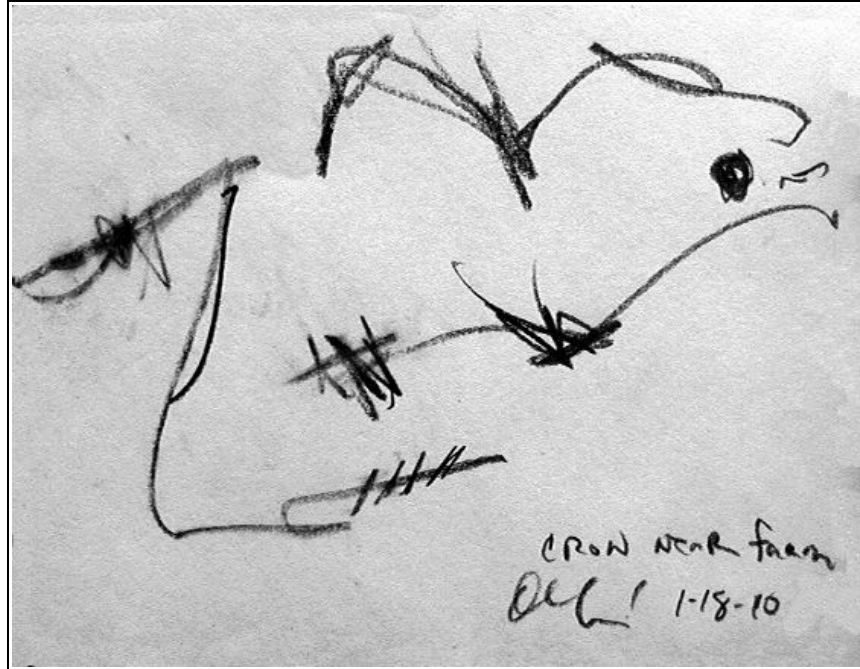
11. 4's, January 17, 2010

That hard edge of the street where compassion takes a left turn and concrete isn't just a pavement, it's an attitude that sucks your spirit dry and drains you of all motivation to live with any dignity, comes up sometimes, that hard edge, and knocks you clean out of any feel good you might have left in your bag of tricks. There is no blue sky or gray clouds, green earth or forest for the trees direction you can turn to now. All you can do is stand in the place of presence, raise your hands up towards whatever might be coming down if there is anything left up there, and talk to the air in front of you like it's the microphone that transmits your words into the great unknown beyond this visual, or lack of vision, hell, just pray, and from this direction, turn to the next direction and talk some more and spin a bit more and talk in that direction and once again until you've talked something to all four directions up there up there not up up but out there and now talk to it up there and it down there for another up and down six directions and then talk inwardly like you might still be in there after all of the madness of the street has sucked you out of your self so that there is nothing left but a hull of a person and talk talk pray like your life depends on it and slowly it feels like it's there. It's always there and will always be there. You just stopped refueling your jets until all the life force had been drained but now you are standing where you are meant to be, fully in your body, and it's okay now. These four. The 4.s. When you tune in and talk to the air out there, in those four directions, it makes a difference. It is mystery, but it works. No one owns it. It just is. You might be able to pay for it, but you can never buy it. Money doesn't work out there. Cha-ching cha-ching bling doesn't work out there. The bag of tricks you emptied already doesn't work out there. But those fours will always get you nines and sevens. It's those fours that hold it all together. That's the law of the universe. It's called a medicine wheel in some circles of life. It is the Great Circle of Life. Those 4's. I just don't draw them very good. But they are in there. 05.29.11.11am EDT



12. Rocky Mask, January 17, 2010

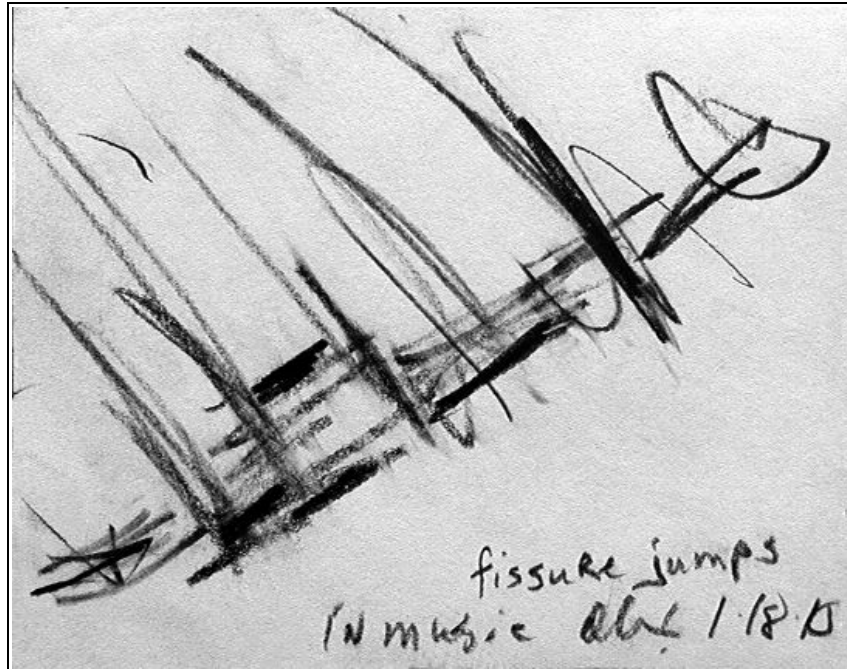
The universe just dissolved into nothingness again. Just when things seemed to line up and be going in the right direction, all of a sudden solid stuff just went to mush or a bunch of meaningless lines that keep moving in the flicker of light that keeps the night from becoming total darkness and I feel like I could put my hands right through the pile of stones in front of me. The mind plays tricks like it is going to create something out of nothing in that struggle to regain familiar bearings and make it be okay. But this is the okay of knowing that it is all there and it is all nothingness inside. The nothingness is inside. Out there is just the pile of stones that pushes me past attachment to materials that form and wear down to a pile of dust that blows away in the wind while I'm acting like this time and place will last forever but I am standing in a constantly changing universe that never stops stopping but never stops and the only constant thing I can hang onto is the constant changing out there. In here the mind filters out everything until the only thing I can sense is the nothing. The mask that forms in my mind as I look at that stone that keeps looking at me and grinning like it knows the secret to it all but isn't telling any lies shifts again in my mind's eye as I try to hold onto something real but the only thing left that is truly real is this sense of emptiness that all the forces out there try to get me to ignore but I can't. Then the mask drops from in front of the stone and the universe dissolves to nothingness again. It just is. 05.29.11.12:20pm EDT



13. Crow near Farm, January 18, 2010

Caw! Caw! As the crow jerks me from my drifting mind along the creek, soaring from the farm over on the hill where a dozen cows were grazing a few weeks ago but now all is empty but the snow beneath a black sun and fugitive cloud and I listen in the now as it talks like it has a message and I look over my shoulder and worry that the woman walking the dog knows I'm hearing messages from a crow but she's too busy talking to her dog as I shift out of human mind into universal mind and hear the message in this moment when I was really missing home over there beyond the mountain that I can't see from here anyway as the crow reminds me to stay in the Now and not get lost in those wandering thoughts. The crow passes closer for an instant looking down at me as if to say "yeah, you, I'm talking to you" and swerves to avoid the tree branches above me before soaring over the hill beyond my view as one last "Caw! Caw" comes reverberating through the suddenly shattered silence of this universal mind as if to say "now, now" but no one lives in the Now forever. Just right now.

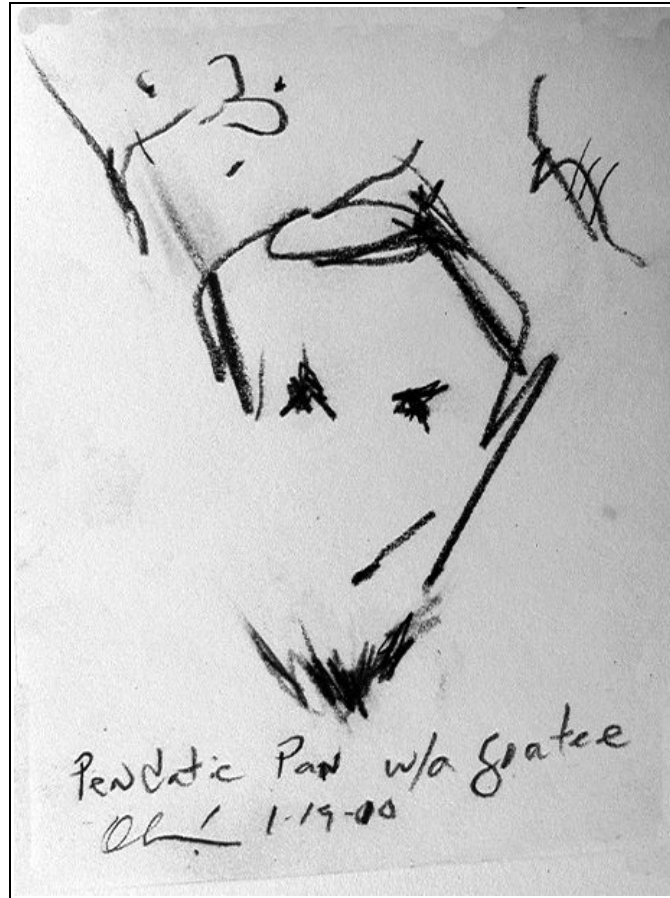
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14. Fissure Jumps in Music, January 18, 2010

At the bedrock of the creek bottom are fissures that add ripple noises to the water as it flows past me. The sounds bruise the air in pulse bursts. It is all pulse, like the heartbeat of our mother's as we float in fetal bliss. The pulse of the drum sounding out the heartbeat during tribal ceremonies reminds us that the earth has a pulse as well. The stars sing in the night skies to the pulse of nuclear fission that makes the light we see as it escapes the gravitation drag of the stars. These breaks in the pulse, these fissures that make the silence between the drum beats and pulses of reality are how we experience life. Beyond all of this in the steady flow of universal mind is where we connect with timeless space that is known as emptiness. If there are no time fissures, there is nothing to denote the passing of time or the passage through space. Everything we experience with our bodies is experienced through the pulse of the experience. The cracks in the rocks, these fissure jumps in music, reminds me of the silence that lies in between the spaces where there are solid stone faces along the creek bottom and the spaces in between the drum stick striking the drum skin that leaves a silence that I can only experience through the universal mind. Beneath the waters flowing along the creek are the fissures that create the drum beat of the creek, the water spirits rising up in these patterns, and the lines we cross into the visual music that marks the gate into the steady state flow of universal presence which we know as nothingness. The creek sings an anthem in celebration of my liberation from all that is. Beyond that is mystery. Beyond that is wetness if I lose my balance and fall in. I sit at the edge of this abyss and listen to the drumbeat of the waters flowing past me. I am awake. I have awakened. As the waters dance before me along these fissure jumps in music. 05.29.11.5pm EDT





15. Pendatic Pan w/a Goatee, January 19, 2010

Anyone who knows my writing could see this one coming sooner or later. "Pendatic" isn't a word. I do titles on the fly, so I write the words down the way I remember them. It gets a little mixed up in there sometimes. Spell check on the computer suggests a strange list of words, and "pedant" is at the top of the list. "A person who shows off his learning." in the dictionary. That isn't the right word. So I check a few other spellings and find this word, pander, and this definition: A person who caters to another person's evil desires. So I may be making up a word, pandetic, or I could be going for pentatonic. Pan is a male archetype from European folklore who symbolizes very serious spiritual concerns. As Catholicism moved across Europe, part of the cultural genocide that took place was to re-identify Pan as a symbol of evil. Images were modified to make him appear as the devil, although his original role was of a general sense of well-being amongst nature. A similar symbolic role might be Mother Nature, or male archetypes of tribal origin that play a flute and represents fertility and the source of inspiration with music.

I generally don't like to depict evil or dark images in my work. In order to have a hero or defender of social order, there has to be a bad guy. This Pan has a bit of a mischievous look about him, which isn't exactly evil. Maybe he is just a showoff this time. I don't know. I just draw them. 05.30.11.12:20am EST



16. Cowbell Music, January 19, 2010

Some days the muse goes on a break from all the serious stuff and out comes a series of light-hearted drawings. Being comical is spiritual also. I find that laughter and a good joke are as important as all other aspects of the work of awareness. Finding the humor in a difficult situation is a way of keeping it in perspective and not letting it get the best of me. When I find myself being overwhelmed by a task, I'm trying too hard and need to step back and regain my focus. There is wisdom in humor. Some call it crazy wisdom. Sometimes the hardest lessons come through humor. This isn't the kind of humor that puts someone down or gives the rest of us a good laugh at someone's expense. When I find myself trying to explain something to a person or group of people and it feels like we need to lighten up the discussion for a minute, I'll tell a joke. Over time I've found that in order to do this without telling derogatory racial jokes, or "body" jokes, and so forth, I need to direct the humor towards a subject that isn't going to offend anyone else, no matter what. The best subject for this kind of humor is myself. I can be humble in this without being self-depreciative. I just tell a silly, light-hearted joke about myself and we all have a good laugh. The break feels good and we move on. I have a lot of material to work with, so I'll never run out of jokes. "Cowbell Music" reminds me of this. It gives me a good chuckle. There's a deeper, serious side to it also, which comes through later, perhaps during meditation. 05.30.11.12:30am EDT



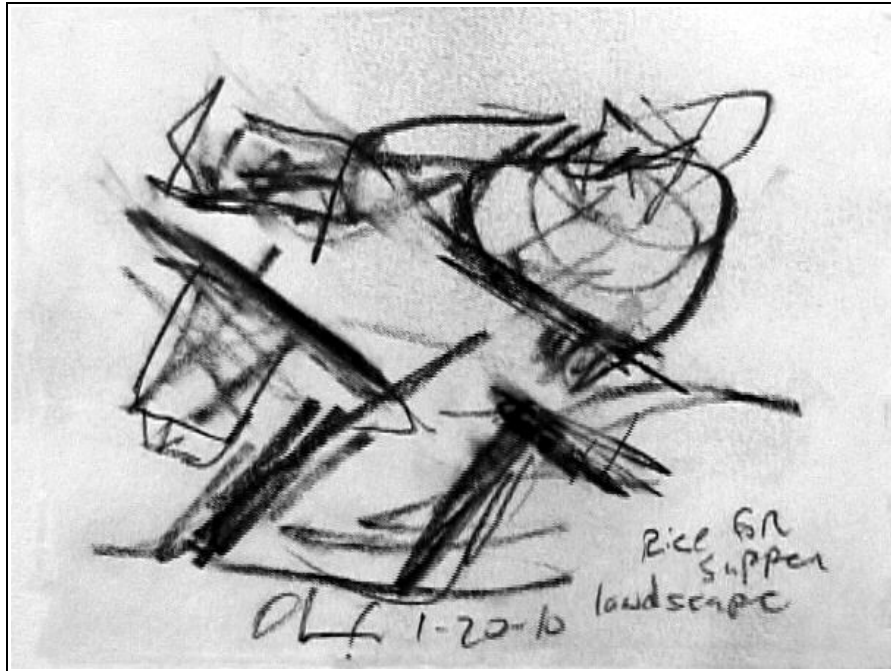
17. Amused Muse, January 19, 2010

In the writings of the Ancient Greek poet, Hesiod, it is related that a person who is gaining creative inspiration from a Muse is a contented person. It is easy to see how the word, amuse, comes from the word, muse, as well as other words like museum and music. Other cultures assign inspiration from other sources outside the human capacity, for inspiration seems to come from outside the artist, poet, writer, composer, clown, and so forth. To suggest that inspiration comes from a spirit offends some cultures, so not everyone is willing to credit a Muse as the source of inspiration for their creative efforts. Still, this ancient archetype comes down through history with the creative person being primarily male, and the Muse being depicted as female in gender. While the Sirens, those female spirits that sing from the flowing brooks and rivers, are associated with water flowing down stream, the Muses are associated with springs and fountains (ie. Water that is flowing upward).

With her comb beside her and a bit more work to be done on the hairdo, the Amused Muse glances away for a minute in this snapshot of a sketch. It's a windy day so there's not much one can do about hair anyway. This will have to do as she resigns herself to being depicted in a drawing. I would have to admit that I experience a sense of contentment while doing creative work and for a while afterwards. In Cherokee culture, there are similar "relationships" between the musician and what translates as "Wood Spirits" that bring the flute player his songs, or the Corn Maidens that provide a person

with a sense of well being in a similar manner as the Muses are said to do. I don't really have a clear idea of where inspiration comes from, but I do know that it is important to utilize it when I sense the welling up of creative energy. Sometimes it seems a little simplistic to assign the source of inspiration to a single source, like a Muse, but at the same time I feel that it is overly reductive on the part of some contemporary theories to assign inspiration as coming from a person's unconscious. There have been times when I've been inspired by a dream, but the work is something totally fresh in my experience, unrelated to any previous experience. I disagree with the saying that we don't create new things but just update old ideas. There's a deep well of inspiration for new things coming from somewhere, but it isn't my job to back-track and map that source. It's just my job to use it. Sometimes I image that source as being amused by my efforts, and that's okay too.

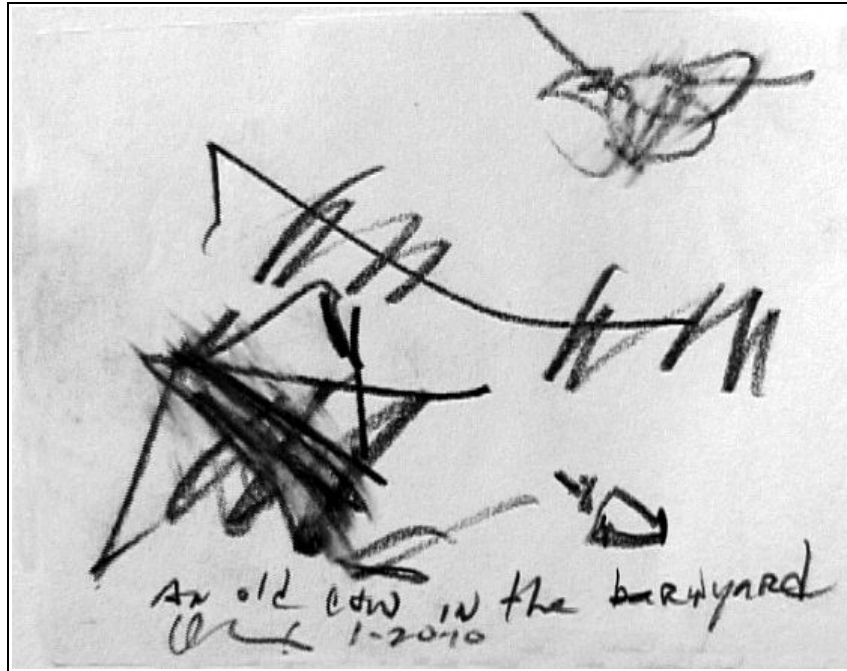
05.30.11.1am EDT



18. "Rice for Supper" Landscape, January 20, 2010

It was through pottery that I became a serious student of the Asian arts. I always felt a kinship with the "taste" of many of the experiences that opened up for me through the art work, poetry, music, and spirituality I found there. The use of ink or watercolor on rice paper became a favorite way of painting. The different way that space was shown in Asian art allowed me to explore new and exciting ways of making a painting. Taking the discipline of doing an ink drawing on rice paper very quickly (which really started out with under-glazes and slips on pottery) and doing drawings with pencil liberated me into approaching a drawing as a dance across paper.

"Rice for Supper" is borne out of the reality that all I had to eat that day was some rice I had picked up at the community kitchen the day before. A spiritual quest or journey always involves risk-taking, and sometimes those risks are real life situations like hunger or homelessness. I live in a society where materialism is the norm and hunger and homelessness is associated with anti-social behavior that might be brought on by mental disorders, and/or alcoholism and drug addiction. Irresponsible behavior or compulsive gambling and any number of factors might cause a person to become homeless, but there is little support in the contemporary society that I live in to support someone who is on a spiritual journey. Other cultures and societies are even less supportive, while some are supportive in the belief that to aid a person on a spiritual journey brings a blessing to those that provide support. This "landscape" shows my own struggle to accept that I am engaged in a journey of sorts that shouldn't have to be this difficult. There are times when it is good to fast or go without eating as part of a spiritual ritual, but there is nothing spiritual about being hungry as a direct result of other's greed and selfishness. It is spiritual to accept that a materialistic society is ignorant of spiritual concerns by choice and to keep on doing the best one can in spite of this. 05.30.11.1:30am EDT



19. Old Cow in the Barnyard, January 20, 2010

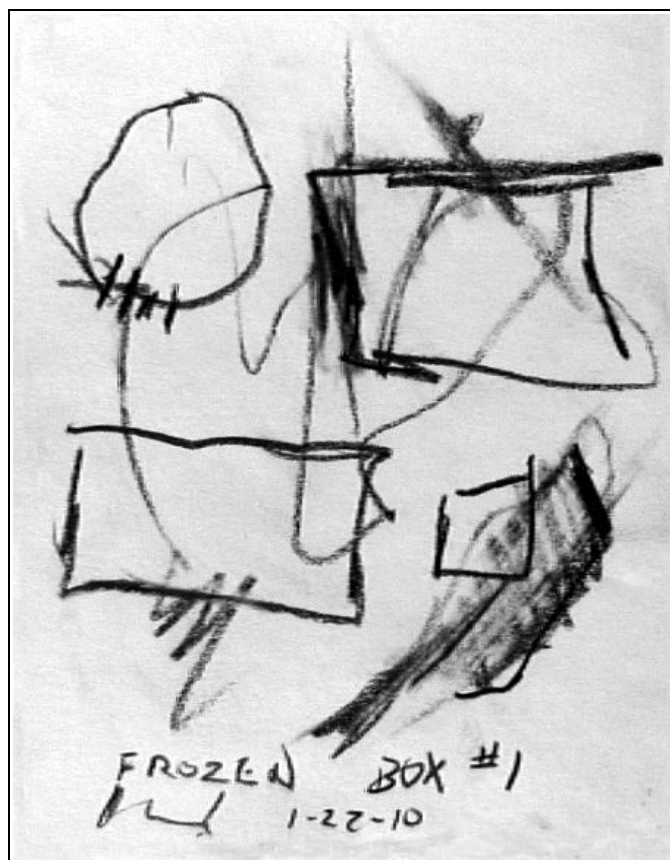
In a poem I wrote back about 1986 called “Bone-picking Blues”, I played off a Hoyt Axton song, “Bony Fingers”, where the question is asked, “What do you get when you work your fingers to the bone? Bony fingers.” In the poem I was going for the idea that when all you have left is bones, you play the bone-picking blues with them. (I was also picking a few bones about materialism in the poem, but we did that theme already.) Sometimes it feels like I'm reducing everything down to the bare, basic bones when I do art. A few scratch marks for a barn, and a few more for the tree-line behind the barn, while a wayward cloud (I think) and something over from the barn that is really stretching it a bit to say that that is the cow, what with the body parts not connected from where I'm looking, or something like that. Sometimes I don't want to see what the title is telling me the art work “is”, so I can just absorb the energy of the work without having to find anything “real” in there. I just liked the sound of the title after I did the drawing. The words kind of flow across the foreground of the drawing like a broken down barnyard fence anyway, so what the hell? I hate the power of suggestion like that. If the artist says there's a cow in there somewhere, it's up to me to identify the cow or I'm stupid. Since I'm the artist and I don't see a cow in there, not really, then what am I expecting everyone else to see? There's something down home about an old cow by the barn, and I like the drawing a lot, given the dark area of the lower left space and the energetic marks along the “horizon”. If my mind can see these things as a barn in a nice funky style and that's the tree-line, etc., that cool, but I'm still struggling with the old cow in there somewhere.

It's the same thing with society and all those “voices” out there on the media telling me that it is in the national interest to occupy a foreign country when I know it is a lie, but the power of suggestion makes it become okay somehow. Through the power of suggestion, what the eye can't see, the mind fills in to make it become real so I'm okay in society. Art isn't always accurate, but it is real. 05.30.11.2am EDT



20. Cherry Blossoms in the Wind, January 22, 2010

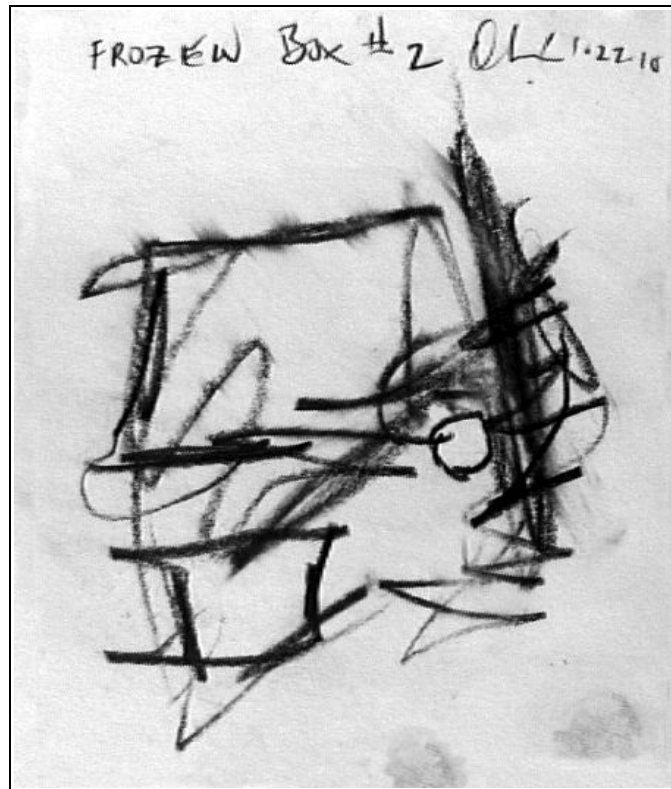
As the snow flies about in the dead of winter I seek understanding of the situation I am in each day, each moment. The coldness of winter is as deadly to me should I be forced to survive without shelter as the coldness of my reality within society that makes this a serious concern. I can focus on spiritual awareness and become detached from the dynamics of society even if this results in my untimely demise, or I can let the threat to my survival draw me out of my efforts to seek understanding through meditation before arriving at an understanding of why this is going on in my life at this moment. The options that others might have available to them are not there in my life. Employment is not a solution. Selling the art work that I do in order to generate income has hit a dead end. Other ways of making money that I was able to do in the past has become impossible. The box keeps getting smaller and smaller until I have arrived at point in my life where there are only two options, to die a pauper's death or find a way out of this situation. As I walk from the noon meal at the community kitchen to my meditation spot along the creek, I watch the snow. The anxiety of not making it is very real each day. I can't understand how this situation that I am in could have happened after all the positive efforts I have made, not only with the work I have done that should have generated some income, but also all the people I have helped in the past. Should I die now, I won't be able to do more for others. It is like those that I have helped have turned a selfish shoulder to this possibility. The snowflakes become cherry blossoms before me. The wind becomes the Grime Reaper. 05.31.11.12:45am EDT



21. Frozen Box #1, January 22, 2010

In 1975 I walked through a corridor where an exhibit of paintings was on display. Several of these paintings by an abstract expression artist featured open, white, rectangular spaces in the center of the canvas. The artist had posted comments about each work alongside of it, but I saw the possibilities beyond what his concerns were, as stated in his comments. I did a few paintings in a similar manner before launching off on my own stylistic usage of this artistic element. Looking at Native American ceremonial objects, warrior shields, which were wooden hoops with raw hide stretched over them to form a circle on which a symbol was painted to depict the warrior's spiritual identity, I started doing work I called "shield paintings" that featured white spaces where symbols should have appeared. The spiritual identity of these shields would be "emptiness", the most difficult identity a warrior could aspire towards, an identity devoid of expectations or desires, with karma in balance with respect to all relations. The "Frozen Box" series began a collection of works that offer tribute to all those along the way that had provided me instructions, guidance, support, and exemplary roles on my own journey towards earning one of these shield paintings. Our lives and experiences are frozen in time, but the spiritual inter-connectedness of those providing trail markers along the Path and those walking the Path behind them transcends time and space. The only spiritual limitations I experience along the Path are the ones I project upon it through my desires and expectations, the spiritual rigidity resulting from my self-imposed fears, and the very concept of emptiness as a goal. It isn't. It just is. 05.31.11.1:10am EDT





22. Frozen Box #2, January 22, 2010

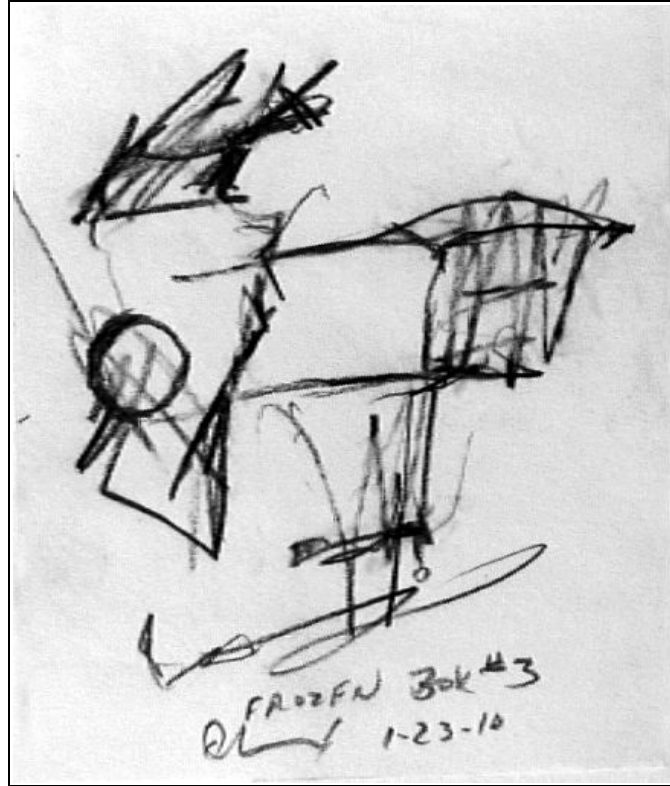
I have inverted a few of these drawings from black to white and so on just to see what they would look like in the negative. If I were working with white chalk on black paper it would work better sometimes. I draw from memory of visual imagery observed in the dark during physically strenuous occasions in my life as a reference for these “flash portraits” of a momentary presence. I don't see elephants in the clouds and I don't see “angels” (spirit beings with human form) in the air before me. I see energy. Something happens for a flash and then it is gone. Throughout the eons humans have engaged in ritual events that provide an opportunity to become aware and interact in various ways with the “unseen” forces around us. The experiences are generally trans-formative. Intent can be a factor with the outcome, whether good or bad, but the discipline of keeping good intentions as a distinction from expectations and desires is a very difficult one. Expectations and desires tend to be self-centered which generates a spiritual gravity towards negative intent. Like the saying goes: Be careful what you ask for. You might get it. When a positive energy manifests as a result of clean efforts of good intentions, there is a need to keep personal pride in check, for while the results are more effective when the person engaged in the ritual is acting with impeccability, the response isn't based on the individual but on the need, the intent of askance. The best we can do as humans is to do our best and get out of the way so the miracle happens in spite of us. When the mysterious elements of spirit blesses the Circle in a good way, it makes the world an easier place to live. She is beautiful to behold, this one. Yes. 05.31.11.2am EDT



### 23. Brook Song: Wild Wood Park, January 23, 2010

Some days it is just what it is. There is nothing nostalgic or romantic about trash in the creek. The frontier mindset of the invaders that you can dump your garbage in the water flowing past and the stream will carry it away never did work, because someone or something always lives downstream, but it is even worse now. It isn't just the increase of population but the nature of the materials that become garbage in the water. This is the garbage that we can see. It is "press-board" loaded with chemicals like formaldehyde that is very toxic and takes years to break down. It is glass bottles that break up into sharp edges that remain sharp long after other materials decompose. Buried in the creek bottom, they will cut someone walking in the creek one hundred years from now, or whatever landscape remains twenty thousand years from now. Even more critical is the unseen pollution that flows downstream, the chemical waste from the city. Animals can't see or know this is in there when they come to the creek to drink. As the creek flows to the river or man-made lake, the fish and other water/wild life are contaminated but the pollution that continues through the food chain, including humans that depend upon fish and other water/wild life for survival. The flowing water of mountain streams, creeks, and rivers are the blood stream of the Earth.

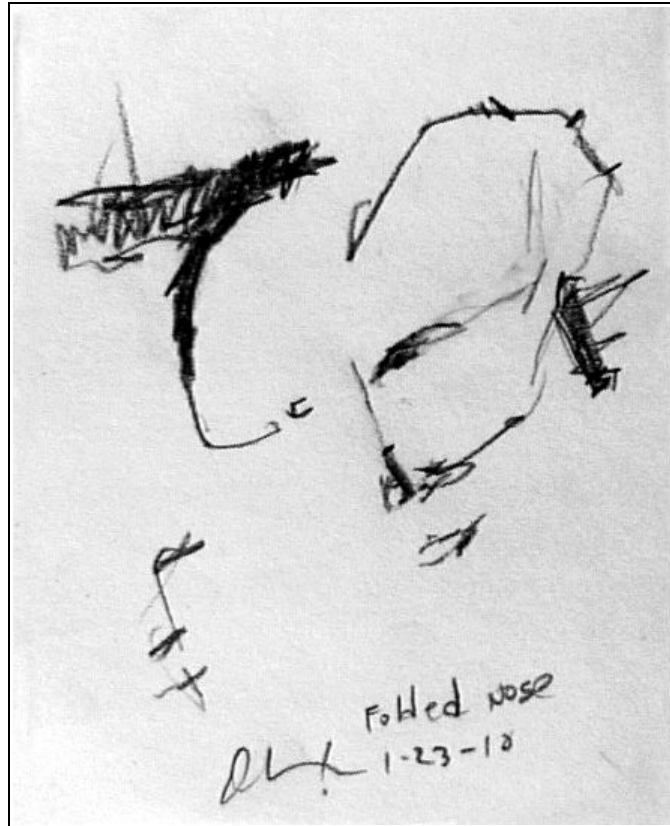
Inside of us it is the same. As we live our lives, we choose what we ingest as a reflection of how we respect our bodies. Our health depends upon how we treat our bodies. When we eat food that is unhealthy or use chemicals that are toxic to our bodies, we choose our consequences. The "unseen" pollutants are what we ingest on a spiritual level. Thoughts, information, and sensory stimuli that is negative and destructive pollutes our spirit. The cleaner we keep our minds and bodies the healthier we are and the healthier our children and future generations will be. Those that pollute themselves and the world around them aren't concerned for future generations. 05.31.11.11:55pm EDT



24. Frozen Box #3, January 23, 2010

Sometimes it is from a dream. Tribal cultures consider dreams to be an important aspect of reality that becomes an integral part of each person's spiritual identity. Some dreams are more significant than others, just like some experiences in daily life are going to have a long term impact on a person while other experiences are quickly forgotten. It is always important to pay attention to dreams, as they are windows into the deeper awareness within. Some dreams help us resolve conflicts in daily life while other dreams can be a source of inspiration or provide new approaches to endeavors. Some dreams are sacred messages that can be transformative. Generally a dream that is remembered is considered to be of significant value that needs to be utilized or shared. A culture that is resistant to social or spiritual changes will disregard dreams because this upsets the status quo. A person who remembers a dream but feels it is of no importance is going to dismiss it when they are fully awake. When it is valued by the person, society or the community, only then will it be of any importance as something that can be utilized in an important or sacred manner.

Several of these are from dreams. In a dream I was moving along side a wall like a movie set with the appearance of buildings, but there were no buildings, just the illusion of buildings. At first I could see through the windows and know there was nothing there but a facade. Then the walls became transparent and I could see beyond them to the empty landscape. As I moved along the "street frontage" a voice was talking to me. It wasn't a person but more like a sphere of energy like a ball of wind. It reminded me that nothing is permanent. 06.01.11.12:35am EDT



25. Folded Nose, January 23, 2010

Masks are a lot of fun to make and there are an endless number of possibilities in how to make them. Paper masks that cover the eyes and nose get folded in the middle to fit over the nose easier. Some masks are worn for protection, like the welder's hood or a knight's helmet. Other masks disguise or add dramatic impact to an actor. "Folded Nose" would make a good design for a mask, or he could be a spiritual messenger sticking his nose into the mix at the wrong time so it gets folded over on impact, err, appearance. Somewhere between "Birdman" and Mercury, he flies through in askance. Units of energy spark around him. In another realm, he would have been summonsed for an inquiry about something a great distance away. He would depart to check on the matter in question and return a brief time later. His nose is folded over from rapid transition into the appearance. 06.01.11.12:50am EDT

(This note (or the updated version) will appear on all PDF files related to the Tunnel Vision Tapes in the future. While the process of writing about each drawing and generating the PDF files is still in progress, financial support for this effort is still needed. I guess it takes a lot of guts to trust someone who is putting all their eggs into one basket based on a dream.)

## Yellow Buffalo Spiritual Awareness Training Circle

At some point the need to name and label something comes along. Choosing a name that identifies the purpose of an endeavor doesn't require that one state where they are in the process, or where they are going. Sometimes it's good to use a name that refers back to a point along the way. "Yellow Buffalo" was the name I gave to a state of mind I experienced during the summer of 1987. Later someone gave me a photograph of a buffalo and I pinned it to a piece of fabric and hung this up on the wall, with the inscription, Yellow Buffalo, on it. It is from this that I name the direction this is going in.

The dreams of the past six years have included many scenes where a group of people are working, creating, living, dreaming, and interacting together as part of a training process where creativity is the primary discipline towards an increased spiritual awareness. The feeling that comes from the dreams suggests that this collective effort not be referred to as a school or educational institution, but as a collaborative training circle. Using the word, circle, implies an openness at the center. The challenge is for everyone taking part in the process to function as a student in the areas where they draw instructions from others, and teach from their strong points. It's an stated challenge, not a stated goal. A dancer might guide others in morning exercises, then go to the kitchen to learn about good nutrition. A poet might work with a songwriter on meter and rhymes, then learn to split firewood. And so forth. The openness of the circle is a goal and isn't something that everyone can align themselves with.

The value of the dream as applied technology is in the works that come from the effort. Not everyone can participate in the training circle, but they can utilize the words, art, music, performance events and recordings, and so forth, that come from the training circle. It is through this support, the valuing of the works through monetary remuneration, that the training circle is able to function and provide new members to join and grow through the circle.

The "Tunnel Vision Tapes" anecdotal briefs with drawings is the first such work to be produced to support this dream. The collective support for a dream empowers others with the opportunity to embrace the challenges presented in this effort to bring a dream into reality. Funds to support this effort can be sent to me via the address on the contact page of the Loveday Studio web site. The goal for the Tunnel Vision Tapes is to see a hard copy publication of these drawings and notes at some point in the future. The drawings would be scanned at a much higher quality resolution than they appear here, but while this electronic media format is the fastest way to get the information out there, the work is still work and support is needed. Those that can support the effort are encouraged to send a minimum of \$20.00 (US). If someone isn't able to download the PDF files and wants them send on a CD, the cost is \$35.00 (US). Should the files be shared with others and they have the funds to support the effort, they are encouraged to send funds as well.

All other correspondence can be directed to the same address on the contact page.

Oliver Loveday © 052411:4pm EDT <http://www.lovedaystudio.com>