

BETH AMES SWARTZ

*A Moving  
Point of  
Balance  
Touring  
Schedule  
1985-1992*

May 24–July 7, 1985	The Nickle Arts Museum, Calgary, Canada
March 28–May 25, 1986	Multicultural Arts Center, San Diego, California
June 11–July 16, 1986	Woodbridge Conference Center, Snowmass Village, Aspen, Colorado
September 18–October 18, 1988	University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson, Arizona
January 13–February 19, 1989	Coconino Center for the Arts, Flagstaff, Arizona
March 4–April 16, 1989	Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Staten Island, New York
May 26–July 21, 1989	Salt Lake Art Center, Salt Lake City, Utah
September 19–November 12, 1989	Palm Springs Desert Museum, Palm Springs, California
November 25, 1989–January 29, 1990	University Art Museum, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona
February 15–April 15, 1990	Jewish Community Center of Greater Minneapolis, Minneapolis, Minnesota
June 15–August 15, 1990	Holtzman Art Gallery, Towson State University, Towson, Maryland
<b>Negotiations Underway:</b>	Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York. Nassau County Museum of Art, Roslyn Harbor, New York. Sewall Gallery, Rice University, Houston, Texas. Walker's Point Center for the Arts, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Other locations in the United States and Europe.

*Beth Ames Swartz paints from the soul and speaks to its joyous embodiment. The work is of a vision beyond seeing, and moves with unheard sound. The lucid brilliance of eyes-closed night journeys are chronicled with the power of close-to-the-eyes intimacy. Her radiant images breathe life into the form of our own remembrances.*

— James Turrell  
Flagstaff, Arizona 1985

*In Memory of . . .*

Dorothy Andres Ames

Ricky Andres

David Chethlahe Paladin

Preston Monongye

**1982–1988**

**BETH AMES SWARTZ**

## *Table of Contents*

3. PREFACE  
George Land
4. A POET'S WALK INTO THE ART OF BETH AMES SWARTZ  
Margret Carde
7. FOREWORD  
Peter Bermingham
8. SOME MOVING POINTS; THOUGHTS ON THE ART OF  
BETH AMES SWARTZ  
John Perreault
13. A MOVING POINT OF BALANCE
28. INTERVIEW WITH BETH AMES SWARTZ  
Margret Carde
37. ARTIST'S BIOGRAPHY
38. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY
39. SELECTED WORKS
40. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Since the book, *Connecting*,<sup>1</sup> was published in 1984, Beth Ames Swartz has completed four major painting series: *A Moving Point of Balance*, *Trans-Illumination*, *Alchemy* and *Celestial Visitations*. *Beth Ames Swartz 1982-1988* gives an overview of this recent work including its biographical and documentary sources.

<sup>1</sup>Mary Caroll Nelson, *The Art of Beth Ames Swartz*, (Northland Press, Flagstaff, Arizona), 1984.

## Preface

George Land,  
General Systems  
Scientist,  
Author and  
Consultant  
June, 1988

Without fanfare, the turn of our century was announced by an obscure Russian painter. Kandinsky, with his unprecedented art, invited us to preview a new, topsy turvy, explosively changing world. In his great prophetic works, he foretold the giant rift that would be hewn between the known past and an unknowable future. In quick succession Picasso, Klee, Miro and many others intuited the new directions society and its handmaiden, technology, would take as the twentieth century wrote a new story for mankind. Transportation, communication, energy, medicine, education, human relationships all shifted in ways that could never have been predicted by the past. Had we known what to look for, we would have seen that future in the seminal art that preceded it.

Manipulation of the material world has preoccupied humans for this past one hundred years. And what a success it has been. In nineteen hundred less than 10% of all people on the planet enjoyed an acceptable standard of living with decent shelter, food, nutrition, education and health care. Today, over 50% luxuriate in a quality of life known only to rulers in all the millennia preceding our epoch. And accompanying this cornucopia of blessings in the post-industrial cultures has come breakdown: distintegrating families, skyrocketing crime and drug abuse, meaningless education, alienation and cynicism. Once again, art was there to preinform us; found art, junk art, garbage art all pointed their finger at our pending plight long before our pursuit of plenty had generated its pollution.

And what has art to say of this twenty-first century we are about to enter? The

work of Beth Ames Swartz takes us on a journey into that world to come. Swartz's work unveils the natural transition our human social system is undertaking. Her art lays bare the inner laws of change and growth followed by all natural systems. When any system grows successfully it ultimately reaches the point when its basic pattern produces diminishing returns. At that point the system shifts radically; it changes from extending and replicating a limited pattern — that excludes the "different" — to a process of integrating those things left out of the system. Systems "de-structure" and "restructure" to integrate themselves internally and with their environment. They move to wholeness.

Beth Ames Swartz's art has evolved from the representational and lyrical through the torn and tangled fires of immolation to integrating and transforming the barren bounty of contemporary life. Materialism and spirituality now merge on canvas; fields of transcendent light meet jagged semi-precious stones; pulsating life molds into emptiness and leaps out again in these powerful, disturbing and liberating works. We are invited not only to sense the future of humans intermingling and integrating the excluded spiritual life, but to take yet another step on our own personal human journey; one leading both inside and outside simultaneously, to a dimension of swirling union. Bold enough to cross the threshold in these pictures, we gather into our souls the angels, the powers and the shadows that were once left far behind in our pursuit of the good life. We reach for wholeness.

When we venture forth and allow ourselves to be touched by these

transformational works it is as Lewis Carroll's Alice put it, "there's no use going back to yesterday, because I was a different person." That "different person" is the one who will be sensing, seeing and creating a very different tomorrow.

# A Poet's Walk Into The Art of Beth Ames Swartz

Margret Carde

*Every angel is terrible. And yet, alas,  
I welcome you, almost fatal birds of  
the soul, knowing about you.*

Written over sixty-five years ago, much of Rainer Maria Rilke's "Second Duino Elegy"<sup>1</sup> seems eerily descriptive of Beth Ames Swartz's new paintings, *Celestial Visitations*. The angels which have come to Swartz's canvases are not of an ethereal variety. They stretch and twist against the frame of their visitation with a real and muscular energy. From a place of awe similar to that of the poet, the painter also asks her angel subjects: Who are you? The poet answers himself with a catalog of entities strikingly evocative of the swirling vortices Swartz has painted. Each cosmic vortex is both a beginning and an end, a source and a return:

*You early success, coddled darlings of  
creation, mountain ranges, ridges  
reddened by dawn of genesis, — pollen  
of flowering godhead, articulations of  
light, corridors, stairways, thrones,  
vacant spaces of being, shields of  
rapture, tumults of stormy ecstasy,  
and suddenly, singly, mirrors which  
scoop again their outpoured beauty  
back into their own faces.*

Painted with the dynamic effects of Van Gogh's "Starry Night," Swartz's angels sputter forth energy and blessings like fountains or fireworks. Yet, at the same time, they seem to be sucking all that they emit back into themselves:

*For when we feel,  
we evaporate. . . .  
Does the cosmic space in which we  
dissolve taste of us?  
Do the angels really seize nothing but  
what is theirs,*

*what has streamed from them, or  
sometimes, as if by mistake,  
is a bit of our being taken with it?  
Are we mixed in their features  
like the vagueness on the faces of  
pregnant women?  
They're not aware of it in the whirl  
of returning into themselves. . . .*

Part bird, part flower and part agitated personage, Swartz's angels have no heads and their legs are heavy. Mothlike and visceral at the same time, they have hearts throbbing in their centers ("shields of rapture"), and their potency and fertility ("pollen of flowering godhead") is evidenced by genitalia.

Their opulence and hieratic symmetry tell us that they are ancient, and indeed one would have to go back to a prehistoric model to find spirit portrayed as so full of matter. Their form suggests the heavy-thighed, Neolithic goddess statues found throughout "Old Europe" (from the Adriatic to the Black Sea, from the Dnieper River to the islands of the Mediterranean). Often pillar-headed, these Neolithic fetishes combine the sexes into a female figure whose neck extends upward and ends suggestively without the actual definition of a head. As votive figures, they sometimes pose with their arms raised in a paradoxical gesture of vulnerability and awesome power.<sup>2</sup> If, as some scholars suggest, these statuettes represent the moment of epiphany when the god and the one adoring the god fuse, then they are surely ancestors of Swartz's angels. Shattered mirrors are scattered amid the vivid paintstrokes and flakes of crushed stone which compose the rich surfaces of Swartz's canvases. Thus they "scoop again their outpoured beauty back into their own faces" and "a bit of our being

[is] taken with it" as our fragmented reflection is gathered into the substance of these celestial visitors.

Swartz says that the space in the studio changed when the angels came. Standing in front of "Celestial Visitations #5," I felt what she meant. The mirrors imbedded at different angles reflected fragments of the space around me, but they did not reflect me in any coherent way. This mirrored painting seemed to join the space in front of me with the space behind me. I was included in the space, but I was seemingly disembodied. I felt airy, as if light were going through me, as if I were no longer solid — "For when we feel, we evaporate."

But empathic feeling at this intensity involves more than evaporation. The giving up of ego — which is what is implied, and is what brought Swartz to this body of work — is not without violence, pain and eruption. The mirrored glass is after all shattered. Paint drips like blood over the pheasant breast feathers collaged at the vaginal center of "Celestial Visitations #4." These angels are the outgrowth of a personal crisis and, as the artist says, they have been a long time coming.

Their real beginning was in 1982. Exhausted and stricken with an illness partly attributable to the hazardous processes she used to make her fire

<sup>1</sup>Rainer Maria Rilke, *The Duino Elegies*, C. F. MacIntyre, trans., (Berkeley, University of California Press), 1963, pp. 13-19.

<sup>2</sup>Marija Gimbutas, *The Goddesses and Gods of Old Europe*, (Berkeley, University of California Press), 1982, plates 128-30, figs. 130-46.

*A Poet's  
Walk . . .  
Continued*

paintings (various minerals, sand and earth were combined with processes of burning and burial to produce her extraordinary *Israel Revisited* series) Swartz had reached an empty place. "In every philosophical system," she says, "there is a moment where you can't get any further without surrendering. The Cabbala calls it 'the abyss.' I had reached 'the abyss.' "

But the Chinese also call such moments "dangerous opportunities." For Swartz, the abyss provided the necessity and opportunity to travel new roads. "After the fire paintings, it took me a year and a half to do my next painting," she says. "I was being pressured by deadlines, but, for me, the old processes no longer worked. I had to surrender to this new journey. I had to heal myself; I had no choice. As George Land says, it was 'grow or die.' "<sup>3</sup>

Swartz's journey led her in many directions. She studied Native American and Far Eastern healing practices, rituals and meditation. She saw the Rothko Chapel in Houston and was impressed

*"... the paintings seem to have been done for spiritual renewal not only for the artist but also for the community as a whole."*

by its creation of a complete meditational environment. This was comparable, she felt, to the environmental quality she had recognized in the painted Paleolithic

<sup>3</sup>George Land, *Grow or Die, the Unifying Principle of Transformation*, (Random House, New York), 1974.

ROBERT SHERWOOD



"Celestial Visitations #4" (The Angel of Irrevocable Choice), 5' x 4', mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy of Elaine Horwitch Galleries.

## A Poet's Walk . . .

Continued

caves in Europe. In both cases, she noted, "the paintings seem to have been done for spiritual renewal not only for the artist but also for the community as a whole." Similarly, her private search for healing and spiritual renewal led eventually to a public environmental work called *A Moving Point of Balance*, whose focus is seven paintings spotlighted in a darkened room.

Entering the space, viewer/participants move around a medicine wheel, the ancient Native American mandala which for centuries has guided individuals and groups into a ritual awareness of the paradox between unique identity and universal wholeness. Continuing into the darkness beyond, one encounters seven color baths located in front of seven spotlighted, seven-foot, square paintings which create seven meditational stations. The paintings represent East Indian chakras. Chakras are energy centers in each human being which are believed to balance and connect body matter with body energy. Red light bathes the viewer looking at the first chakra, "Base of the Spine." Then the following colors and paintings are coupled: orange with "Reproduction"; yellow with "Solar Plexus"; green with "Heart"; blue with "Throat"; indigo with "The Third Eye" and violet with "Crown of the Head." Light-reflective substances (microglitter and glass) cause the painted surfaces to appear luminous. The large scale draws the viewer into the paintings and the organic, internal imagery invites one to feel the focused area of one's own body. The experience can be visceral as well as symbolic.

In the next room, from the research team of Steinberg-Evans-Finch, Swartz uses a modern system of quartz slides projected onto white walls to create an ever-changing light painting. Passage through the darkened rooms of *A Moving Point of Balance* becomes a symbolic rite of passage. In this environmental piece

Swartz proposes an art that can actively heal.<sup>4</sup>

In 1986, having completed the installation of *A Moving Point of Balance*, Swartz returned to the studio. This time the paintings boiled. Figures like flowers and tree trunks encased with glittering matter danced asymmetrically in tension with the paintings' edges. "The figures were so powerful, sexual and physical," reminisces Swartz. "They seemed to be a nonverbal reconnection through my own body with the earth itself." She called this series *Alchemy*.

With its emphasis on transmutation, the *Alchemy* series marked a return to the earth in other ways. In her fire paintings, shoveling earth into the process of painting and burning had been a part of the whole painting ritual. In *Alchemy* the inclusion of ground and pounded azurite, chrysocolla, quartz crystals and shards collected from journeys to ancient ritual sites provided color and texture when imbedded in the paint. They brought with them a cellular memory of their earth origin and the stones are all reputed to have healing qualities. Gathered together these small fragments from distant contexts of time and place have a way of drawing the viewer into each painting's visual and conceptual synecdoches. Like William Blake's "world in a grain of sand," the concentration of stones and shards as the dust and starstuff of which the earth's plants and creatures are composed produces a create of what Gaston Bachelard calls "intimate immensity."<sup>5</sup>

In *Celestial Visitations*, *Alchemy* and *A Moving Point of Balance* the painter asks the viewer to travel between the world of interior imagination where solid and space are not separate and the exterior world where such things are less distinct than we commonly suppose. These paintings insist on a reverence for all of life's connections and require that we reach

inside to find the place in each of us where birth and death join hands and wave and particle exchange their roles.

Of course the knowledge — the epiphanies — attended upon by these angels is fleeting. It's hard to make the awareness they bring a permanent part of our consciousness in a world of street signs, hot dogs and errands. Perhaps it is something we can only half know. In Wallace Stevens's "Angel Surrounded by Paysans" the celestial visitor calls itself "the angel of reality" and then explains:

Yet I am the necessary angel of earth,  
Since, in my sight, you see the earth  
again,  
Cleared of its stiff and stubborn,  
man-locked set,  
And, in my hearing, you hear its tragic  
drone  
Rise liquidity in liquid lingerings,  
Like watery words awash; like  
meanings said  
By repetitions of half-meanings.  
Am I not,  
Myself, only half of a figure of a sort,  
A figure half seen, or seen for a  
moment, a man  
Of the mind, an apparition appalled in  
Apparels of such lightest look that a turn  
Of my shoulder and quickly, too quickly,  
I am gone?<sup>6</sup>□

<sup>4</sup>*A Moving Point of Balance* is a non-commercial, environmental work which will travel throughout this country and Europe through 1992. It began its tour in September at the University of Arizona Museum of Art in Tucson.

<sup>5</sup>Gaston Bachelard, *The Poetics of Space*, (Boston Beacon Press), 1969, 1984.

<sup>6</sup>Wallace Stevens, "Angel Surrounded by Paysans," in *Poems*, (Vintage Press, New York), 1959, p. 153.

"Celestial Visitations" by Beth Ames Swartz was presented April 21 through May 10, 1988 at the Elaine Horwitch Galleries, Scottsdale.

**Margret Carde** is an artist and free-lance writer living in Santa Fe.

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## *Foreword*

Peter Bermingham  
Director,  
The University of  
Arizona Museum  
of Art,  
Tucson, Arizona

Beth Ames Swartz is an unusual combination: an artist who, on the one hand, does not hesitate to seek and explore the most arcane recesses of ritual and art while, on the other, remaining disarmingly direct about the pain and the pleasure that this involves. Even in the Southwest, where the spirit life and art have mingled for centuries, her exhibition, *A Moving Point of Balance*, engages the mind and eyes in unique ways. It is spiritual without being preachy, ritualistic in process without being tedious or inaccessible. It rewards foreknowledge without demanding it.

Because *A Moving Point of Balance* calls for a certain faith and openness on the part of the viewer, we are apt to

forget that here we must be participants rather than spectators. Because the ensemble includes colored light strategically placed as well as music and additional "aids," we are apt to overlook the fact that the seven large paintings of the various life zones of the Chakra are probably Beth Swartz's strongest and most poetic work to date. They stand on their own merits very well — as has their creator for many years.

The University of Arizona Museum of Art is delighted to offer the first public viewing of *A Moving Point of Balance* in Arizona. We wish it a long, productive life as it visits other fortunate places on its national schedule.

# Some Moving Points; Thoughts on the Art of Beth Ames Swartz

John Perreault,  
Art Critic  
Past President,  
The American  
Section,  
International  
Association of  
Art Critics

## I: Introduction

Despite recent art historical investigations of the spiritual grounding of modernist abstraction, discussions of the same spirit in contemporary art are scarce and tentative, '70s feminist art criticism notwithstanding. Almost two decades ago we moved out from under the once-therapeutic spell of strictly formal (i.e., visual and logical) ways of looking at, interpreting and perhaps even making art, but the spiritual aspect of art — which some of us believe is at the core of art-making and art-experiencing — has not yet regained its rightful centrality within the critical discourse. Neo-Marxist and deconstruction-influenced trends in art writing, while once offering some insights, now seem only to fuel the proliferation of irrelevant art. Commodity critique has become yet another commodity; the disappearance of the author (artist) has meant the disappearance of responsibility.

Yet if we look at art globally — which means including pre-Renaissance art, non-Western art, and even unschooled art — it is certainly clear that a great many of the subjects we admire, even covet, were created for spiritual purposes. We may not subscribe to the particulars of the belief systems that generated these artworks, but the power is there; what we experience is an energy that cannot be explained away by formal, anthropological or political analysis. Some of our best Western artists have been attracted to African, Pacific and Native American visual expression and have, in fact, appropriated at least the outer forms. Yet time after time we treat these non-Western objects as if they were items of contemplation or accents for some private or public decor instead of understanding that they are spiritual tools.

*. . . Art is a quest, a healing and devotional activity that can change the artist, the viewer and life as we know it.*

In America, a number of artists are currently working in a spiritual mode; they hold on to and bear with the art system only to utilize its distribution and communication potential and its occasional economic largesse. They see art as more than paint on canvas, more than commodity, status object or investment ploy. Art is a quest, a healing and devotional activity that can change the artist, the viewer and life as we know it. Beth Ames Swartz, the subject of this essay, is one of these artists, and yet her work like the work of other artists working for a new spiritual art has not yet received its due.

In what follows I will try to examine Beth Ames Swartz's major work *A Moving Point of Balance* from several points of view, utilizing various contexts: Swartz's previous works and her development as an artist; the installation genre; and of course the tradition of spiritual art, noting some of the difficulties it may present to the viewer. My intention is to provide a setting for the proper perception of the work, a verbal pre-experience and/or post-experience through description and personal interpretation that I hope will point to its significance as an artistic and spiritual action or intervention. We do not have a critical vocabulary to discuss the spiritual in art. Since spiritual experience itself must be nonverbal, we will only be able to strain and improvise, using fissures in language and logic to point to what we are after.

The evaluative aspect of this analysis therefore may not be immediately apparent, so let me announce here at

the beginning that I feel very strongly that *A Moving Point of Balance* is an important artwork and that my experience of it was profoundly moving,

*. . . Swartz is not ironic. Some contemporary artworks are about the spiritual; Swartz's installation is spiritual, offering a direct challenge to officially sanctioned assumptions about art.*

and not a bit unsettling. It holds its own as "normal" art, for Swartz has a gift for color, texture, form and theater, but it is not an ordinary artwork. To reduce it to such is to miss the point. The parts do not separate out; photographs offer only hints. Much contemporary art uses religious imagery, but most often with ironic intent. Swartz is not ironic. Some contemporary artworks are *about* the spiritual; Swartz's installation *is* spiritual, offering a direct challenge to officially sanctioned assumptions about art. It places the critic as well as the artist at risk. My hope is that in what follows I will not be entirely foolish, but I know I must be as brave and as personal as a critic as Beth Ames Swartz has been as an artist.

## II. Arizona Revisited

When did I first meet Beth Ames Swartz? I mentioned her work in a review in New York's now defunct *Soho News* upon the occasion of the Western States Biennial when it was in Washington, D.C. I must have heard of her and her work when I was Distinguished Visiting Professor of Contemporary Art and Criticism at the University of Arizona in Tucson, but I know I did not visit her studio until early in 1981 when I returned to Arizona to do research for an article I was

*Some  
Moving  
Points . . .*

*Continued*

writing on contemporary art in that state for *Art in America*. One leg of the trip took me to the Phoenix area and I visited with Swartz in Paradise Valley.

I remember Swartz showed me early Lyrical Abstraction paintings and then pieces that were part of *Israel Revisited*, a traveling exhibition she was preparing. Something had happened between the paintings and the pigmented, burned, buried paper pieces she was now making. Lyrical Abstraction, of course, was a late and mostly enervated outgrowth of Abstract Expressionism.

*. . . Swartz, it now seems to me, was reconnecting to the spiritual center of Action Painting, but now pushing it forward by using performance and conceptual frameworks.*

Retaining only the ghost of the once heroic emphasis upon process and artist interaction with materials, Lyrical Abstraction eschewed the metaphysical intentions of Pollock, Rothko and Still. Swartz, it now seems to me, was reconnecting to the spiritual center of Action Painting, but now pushing it forward by using performance and conceptual frameworks. I did not quite grasp it at the time, but she had already embarked upon her spiritual journey,

The modestly titled *Israel Revisited* actually involved kabbalistic research and visits to ten sites in Israel linked to women mentioned in the Bible; at each site Swartz performed a fire ritual. Even for someone schooled in the avant-garde this was difficult to deal with, for she was deadly serious. When, however, the exhibition arrived at the Jewish Museum in September 1981, I was completely won over; the work was beautiful on many

levels: surface richness, formal invention, poetic import.

Since then I have followed Swartz's work with considerable interest. Although I have often been uncertain about her direction and, I confess, skeptical about some of her New Age pursuits, we clearly share beliefs concerning crucial issues: art is more than pleasing or shocking forms, art can heal, art has a spiritual mission.

After *Israel Revisited* Swartz returned to paint on canvas. She began including metal leaf, microglitter, and even crushed crystals. The paintings moved beyond formal and pictorial considerations and, starting from her own shamanistic experience, attempted to be instruments of spiritual transformation for the viewer as well as the artist. Can there be such a transfer of power? If the viewer is willing to put aside preconceptions about art, if the viewer is ready, if the viewer will allow himself or herself to participate, certain works of art may trigger unusual states of consciousness. The artwork is no longer a painting, but a technical apparatus that can create previews of higher states of consciousness. Swartz began creating a suite of paintings and, equally important, the proper setting for their viewing. When *A Moving Point of Balance* came into existence, one could not separate the painting and the setting. A Native American medicine wheel, color "baths" in front of each station (painting) and music throughout are integral to the experience. The paintings were made for the spotlights that illuminate them; they come alive.

Technically *A Moving Point of Balance* is an installation, but, unlike most works in this contemporary genre, the viewer is meant to follow a path from one painting to the next, standing in front of each, bathed in colored light. The sequence takes one

through the seven chakras or body-connected energy centers delineated by tantric yoga and ends in a balancing room of projected abstract shapes.

The contemporary installation is derived from the sets and environments created by the Happenings artists of the late '50s whose own work was influenced by much earlier Dada and Surrealist displays. It is an established art genre that takes many forms — temporary or not-so-temporary, nearly invisible or overwhelming — but the working definition is that it is an indoor artwork, halfway between stage-set and sculptural environment. The viewer is inside the art. The installation may be purely formal or it may have a narrative component. As a critic, I have supported the genre as part of the general movement to subvert the objectness and commodity aspect of most art. Swartz pushes installation format into another realm: the zone of the cosmic. We are in a cave; we are in sacred mind-space. There is no larking about and sensational effect. Just as in the past she used action-painting techniques, earth art and conceptual art strategies to point to the spirit, she so uses the installation form for higher ends.

I cannot vouch for the accuracy of her portrayals or visual interpretations of the various chakras, but as I moved from station to station different energies were apparent, different moods, definitely creating a psychological if not a psychic progression. She does not duplicate nor as far as I can see even refer to the traditional tantric images for the chakras; her versions seem to come from her inner being. While advised by a printed text to focus in succession upon connection to nature, relationship to others, self-empowerment, loving kindness, communicativeness, and knowledge, one is lead through the energy nodes of what

## *Some Moving Points . . .*

*Continued*

I take to be the invisible body. By the time I walked into the violet color bath and stood before the seventh chakra — the crown — there were definitely emanations of transcendence. If what I experienced is art it is a new kind of art or a very old kind of art reborn — an art that can make a difference in perception, conception and even the direction of one's life.

### **III: Conclusion**

We are not supposed to speak of the spiritual, particularly in an art context. Art, we thought we once learned for good, must not only be above politics, but also above religion; this is the only way to save it from being tampered with by princes and soldiers, priests, rabbis and mullahs. But is art so delicate and peripheral that it has no strength of its own and therefore must be cut off from life? For some of us it is close to the center of life. We must try to understand why there is, so to speak, a spiritual blackout in most discussions of art. There is, after all, considerable evidence that the most powerful non-Western art, the greatest modernist art and the most challenging new art have as their basis a spiritual intention. Nevertheless the spiritual is taboo.

Organized religion has given not only religion a bad name, but the spiritual as well. One need only consider the havoc wrought by established religions: religious wars throughout the centuries and up to the present; denial of basic human desires and needs; collusion with evil governments. Furthermore, false notions of spirituality have been used to control people rather than liberate them. Spirituality equals repression. On the other hand, there are truths purveyed by established religions, spiritual techniques preserved and used, needs met that are not purely sociological. There is beauty in

the meanings, if not always in the practices.

Cult religions are often no better than organized religions, since so many of them are cash-cows for charismatic charlatans. Spirituality equals gullibility. One must remember, however, that Christianity was once no more than a cult. Not all new religions are fraudulent; some may indeed be offering new truths or the surfacing of old, forgotten truths that established religions have lost or will not acknowledge.

We live in a culture of naive materialism, machismo and scientism. Naive materialism does not even respect the material world. The natural and the made environments are stage-sets for self-destructive posturings. Spirituality is wishy-washy. We are "men" (even some of us who are women) and we are strong and invincible, always in control. Spirituality is soft. We are always clear-headed and rational, not believing in anything unless it can be calibrated, predicted, manipulated and above all agreed upon by like-minded individuals. Spirituality is unscientific. But if we understood our place in the spiritual hierarchy as shepherds rather than generals, as brothers and sisters rather than as tyrannical fathers and mothers, as leaders capable of persuading rather than as masters who command, we might not destroy the world. Likewise, properly understood, reason can free us from superstition, while adding to knowledge — including the knowledge that reason has limits.

Finally, if we began talking about the spiritual intent, content and potential of art and begin using this constellation of values as factors in our evaluation of art, we risk offending those who do not share these values; we risk creating a threat to

established ways of thinking about art. We also risk appearing sentimental, mystical, irrational, emotional, idealistic and totally looney, for there is no cash value for the spiritual, whatever it may be or however it may be defined.

On the other hand, at this point we must be brave. The sins of the past are no excuse for the sin of the present, which in the realm of art is that we have not demanded the art we require: an art that is more than ironic entertainment and a comment on the emptiness of art and therefore of life. Idealism has returned, but stripped of its fallacies and madness. We decide what would be ideal — not what is real but what should be real — and we take the steps necessary to create these transformations. We do not want, I hasten to add, yet another art movement; we already have enough of them — appropriated, hyphenated, and as ephemeral as last month's art magazine.

We want and in some respects already have a major reordering of priorities. Dissatisfaction with the mechanics and the morality of the commercial art world has guaranteed that a new art world must come into existence, perhaps parallel to but above the commercial art world. I have no doubt that the normal, business-as-usual art world will continue, without noting this development, just as governments and philosophers have not yet noticed the larger change — a general reorientation towards the spiritual that is not doctrinaire, but open and forward-looking and respectful of others in the common effort. The commercial art world may be replaced by this new art world. Because it is not primarily commercial, it does not have a center; it does not have a critical establishment; instead it is a network of like-minded individuals. Eventually Beth Ames Swartz will be identified as one of the artists who initiated this transformation.

## Editor's Introduction to A Moving Point of Balance

*A Moving Point of Balance* is a multisensory installation wherein the viewer, by interacting with the art environment, becomes a participant. The experience consists of three parts: viewer preparation, passage through the chakras, and the conclusion, the balancing room. The following description may be read as stage directions for viewers about to become participant performers.

Viewer preparation, inviting viewers to awaken their intuitive, kinesthetic experience, begins when the viewer walks into a darkened room and stands under a quartz polarized light. Viewers are invited to breathe in the light and prepare for an inward journey.

From the quartz polarized light, viewers proceed to the medicine wheel. Circling the medicine wheel,<sup>1</sup> they may enact their directional relationship to a larger universe. Just as a wheel of stars appears to circle the earth's axis at night, marking cycles of seasons and centuries of evolution, so viewers, symbolically following the directional stones around the medicine wheel's still center, might sense cyclical patterns of behavior which have created personal and cultural consciousness.

Beyond the medicine wheel is the darkened room of the chakras.<sup>2</sup> Filled with soft music,<sup>3</sup> this room has seven, 7'x7' paintings, each spotlighted so that the edges are less clear than the center. In front of each chakra painting is a color bath.<sup>4</sup> Poured from above, this area of specific color provides a small stage within which viewers may stand and interact with the chakras. Viewers are invited to proceed sequentially from "Chakra #1" through each color bath until they reach "Chakra #7." At every station, they may pause to breathe in

the color and the music. As their outer eye takes in the luminous surfaces of each chakra painting, their inner eye can concentrate on particular chakra areas in their own bodies. In the system of correspondences which Beth Ames Swartz has adopted, the following chakras and colors are paired:

- "Chakra #1, Base of the Spine." Color: red.
- "Chakra #2, Reproduction." Color: orange.
- "Chakra #3, Solar Plexus." Color: yellow.
- "Chakra #4, Heart." Color: green.
- "Chakra #5, Throat." Color: blue.
- "Chakra #6, The Third Eye." Color: indigo.
- "Chakra #7, Crown of the Head." Color: violet.

After following the path of the chakras within the multisensory environment of colors and music, viewers are invited to conclude the performance with the Balancing Room.<sup>5</sup> In this room, rhythmically variegated light rays have been projected onto a white screen.



Seven lotus centers of the Kundalini. For 10,000 years in India the chakras have been experienced as connecting centers between body matter and body energy.<sup>6</sup>

Crystal-forming chemicals applied to special slides split the "white" projector light. These slides and a rotating quartz-polarizing lens produce visual effects designed to help viewers balance and reportion their feelings after the room of the chakras.

Beth Ames Swartz followed a pilgrimage trail in her preparation for *A Moving Point of Balance*. The seven sacred sites chosen for ritual performance prepared the artist for the painting of each chakra. The following descriptions accompanying each chakra painting are intended to introduce the reader to the history and significance of each sacred site and the psychological energy of each chakra. Although this information is unnecessary for a private experience of the paintings or the environment, it is relevant for understanding how an individual response might reflect larger human patterns of emotion and behavior.

<sup>1</sup>The medicine wheel used in the viewer initiation area was created by the Navajo shaman-artist, David Paladin. Just before his death in 1984, he lent this medicine wheel to Beth Ames Swartz for inclusion in *A Moving Point of Balance*.

<sup>2</sup>Chakras are energy centers in each human being which balance and connect body matter with body energy. See diagram, this page.

<sup>3</sup>The synthesized music heard in the room of the chakras is "The Hierophant." This piece was composed for *A Moving Point of Balance* by Frank Smith.

<sup>4</sup>Whether through experiential and historic associations, or through the penetration effects of light radiation on the human body, visible color affects thought, emotion, mood and involuntary physical response. In varying combinations, color is one of the given environmental conditions which evolved the psychological, physical and spiritual phenomenon that is called human. *A Moving Point of Balance* includes color baths because certain colors have historically been known to heighten an awareness of particular chakras.

<sup>5</sup>Research and development for the "Balancing Room," and color baths are copyright 1985, by Steinberg-Evans-Finch.

<sup>6</sup>Diagram of the chakras from: Joseph Campbell, *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space: Metaphor as Myth and as Religion* (Alfred Van Der Marck Editions, New York), 1985, p. 65.



*A Moving Point of Balance* on exhibit at Nickle Arts Museum, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, 1985.

*“The symbols of sacred Indian sites and the related rituals of myth and magic are reprocessed and renewed through Swartz’s sensibility; they crisscross the intriguing boundary between prehistoric consciousness and contemporary circumstance. A Moving Point of Balance has a manifest presence and focuses on symbolic touchstones that reflect the ‘conscious primitive’ aspect of Swartz’s work.*”

KARYN ELIZABETH ALLEN  
Curator of Art  
Nickle Arts Museum  
Calgary, Canada

*“Colors, orange, yellow, blue, red, these are in the sun and also in the blood vessels of the body. The sun’s rays flow down, flowing through the veins and arteries, flowing out and returning to the sun.”*

THE UPANISHADS

## Introduction to the Chakras

The chakras (the lotuses, the wheels), are specific places in each person's body which connect body energy with body matter. Awakening to the flow of the chakras is an ancient wisdom. As the yogi masters know, understanding body energy requires movement, flexibility and muscular concentration. Life opens these secret places and life is movement.

When Beth Ames Swartz imagined the conceptual puzzle that would be *A Moving Point of Balance* she could not have known the way in which each chakra painting would wind in and out of her own life experience. Yet Swartz's process of pilgrimage to sacred sites and ritual acknowledgement in each place of its ancient wisdom is a time honored custom. The hope for pilgrims has always been that their pilgrim's way might lead to spiritual growth.

An effort has been made to retell the story of these paintings in chronological order. However, the creative process does not always adhere to linear chronology. Just as in life, body energy and matter cannot be entirely separated, so in the following accounts the story of one chakra with its particular color, energy, ritual location and painting process seems often to fuse with the story of another chakra.

The story of *A Moving Point of Balance* is a story of personal healing. However, what is true for an individual is true for the whole. Just as each human being must balance the flow of life and energy within his/her own body sphere, so each human age must consciously balance the evolutionary energies which have produced its present historic moment. It is a tricky thing to balance the whole while all the parts are moving. The trick, as Atlas knew, is in knowing where to stand.

*Out of time . . . Out of Space . . .  
Stillness in motion.  
Balancing . . . Body and Spirit,  
begin at the beginning:*

**Chakra #1, (Mūlādhāra),** Base of the Spine  
Color: red  
Site: Snowflake, Arizona, an Anasazi,  
(Sun Clan), sacred site

The history of the Anasazi Indians who came to Snowflake and later vanished is told in story and myth. The following is one account:

*Some followed a shooting star to the south. One group followed a red cloud and were never seen again. Others followed the rays to the setting sun, or the glow of the distant mountain peak. If their crops did not grow, the seed path also became their guide.*

*The path of one migration crossed the trail of another. The Water, Sand, Sun, Tobacco and Rabbit Clans came from the mysterious red city in the south to settle along the Little Colorado Valley and its river tributaries. Some of the clans settled near Snowflake. To this site, filled with huge torso-like boulders, the people brought knowledge: how to build pueblo homes and irrigation canals; how to terrace plots for farming.*

*By the mid-twentieth century, though enormous energy was expended in building their villages, though they were growing cotton and corn, weaving cloth and making fine pottery, the Anasazi abandoned their stone villages all over the Southwest. The people were moving in ever narrowing circles towards their prophecy.*

*It is generally assumed that what motivated their movements was an endless search for adequate environments to supply their basic needs. But, if surviving legends are listened to with care, they tell of a people searching for peace.*

*An event occurred that signaled the time long-awaited. A super nova appeared in the sky so bright, night was as day. Clans came out of the wilderness to the hard and arid mesas of Black Mountain as though it were a promised land.<sup>1</sup>*

Nine miles outside Snowflake, Arizona, on September 23, 1982, Beth Ames Swartz began the journey which would end with "A Moving Point of Balance." Among the hundreds of huge, white, torso-like boulders which mark this place, she performed a medicine wheel ritual. The boulders are the Grandfathers and the Grandmothers who guard and protect the site's ancient wisdom. Within their presence, dressed in red, Swartz declared her intention to connect with the earth's healing energy.

Chakra #1, *mūlādhāra*, located at the base of the spine, between the anus and the genitalia, is the energy of the earth. It is the energy of self preservation. In the primeval animal world where life feeds on life, where the life of one being is sacrificed to the life of another being, autonomic adrenalin related responses such as fear, anger and escape are necessary for physical survival. These deep, involuntary, life protecting energies associated with Chakra #1 are often symbolized by power animals: the eagle, the horse, the deer.<sup>2</sup> Swartz's painting, "Chakra #1," focuses on the complexity of intuition and emotion that this first energy center provides.

<sup>1</sup>Linda Bryant, *Notes on Sacred Sites*, written for Beth Ames Swartz, 1983 ©. Bryant accompanied Swartz to the Grand Canyon, Prophecy Rock and Chaco Canyon.

Factual information: Frank Waters, *The Book of the Hopi*, (Viking Press, New York), 1977.

<sup>2</sup>For more information see "Interview" beginning on page 28.



*A Moving Point of Balance #1 "Chakra #1 — Base of the Spine," 7'x7', gold leaf and mixed media on linen, 1983, collection of the artist.*





*A Moving Point of Balance #2 "Chakra #2 — Reproduction," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1983, collection of the artist.*

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued

**Chakra #2, (Svādīsthāna), reproduction**  
(The Genitalia)  
Color: orange  
Site: Esalen, Big Sur, California

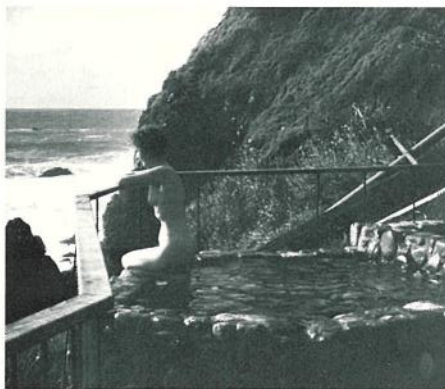
Esalen is located high above the Pacific Ocean on the northern California coastline. The Esalen Indians who predated anglo culture centered their activity around the soothing waters of its hot springs.

*The Esalen population has been numbered between 500 and 1,000. Soon after the arrival of the white man, these earlier residents disappeared. Very little is known of their religion, culture, etc.*

*Some facts about their beliefs have survived. For instance, these Indians believed that the sun could assume human form in order to kill. After death their people were all turned into birds, coyotes and owls. Because of this, the Esalen people revered these creatures.*

*The water of the hot springs was venerated. 'Water is immortal because it is everywhere; it is living all the time.' Approach to the springs was carefully reverent. Before entering the waters, sacred eagle down was scattered and a little water was sprinkled on oneself with a request for a long life. Early morning bathing was a ritual event. In myths, water became the standard method of magical resuscitation.<sup>1</sup>*

On January 29, 1983, Beth Ames Swartz went as a modern pilgrim to the waters of Esalen. She went to work with anthropologist, Michael Harner,<sup>2</sup> an expert in ancient, shamanic healing tradition.<sup>3</sup> Remembering the Esalen Indian reverence for the gifts of water she approached the hot springs with a sense of their purifying power. She went, not to seek long life, but to



Beth Ames Swartz at hot baths at Esalen, 1983.

understand the life preserving energy of the second chakra, reproduction.

Awakened at adolescence, the yearning to join together, to reproduce offspring, to provide for the preservatin of the species originates in *svādīsthāna*, the second chakra. This yearning for life is symbolized by the restless energy of water, always becoming, always changing, always remaining the same. The painting, "Chakra #2," has the swirling, flowing movement of the ocean, whose depths are the source of life.

*We need not a set of beliefs consciously held but an atmosphere, a quality of feeling about reality that preserves and deepens our sense of living in the midst of a cosmic mystery. If you experience this reality in yourself, it begins to spread through everything. It requires you to change.*

SUZI GABLIK

"The Reenchantment of Art"  
*New Art Examiner*, December, 1987, p. 31.

<sup>1</sup>Linda Bryant, *Notes on Sacred Sites*, written for Beth Ames Swartz, 1983. © Lowell John Bean and Thomas C. Blackburn, editors, *Native Californians, A Theoretical Retrospective*, (Ballena Press, Socorro, New Mexico), 1976.

<sup>2</sup>Michael Harner, *The Way of the Shaman*, (Bantam Books, New York City, New York), 1982.

<sup>3</sup>For more information see "Interview," beginning on page 28.

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued

**Chakra #3, (Manipūra), Solar Plexus**  
Color: yellow  
Site: Grand Canyon, Arizona

The Grand Canyon is the sacred place of emergence for the Hopi Indians. As the story is told:

*Sunrise. Grand Canyon, Spider Grandmother, Goyen Soutuhti, opens her web into the abyss.*

*Long Shining Threads  
as if  
To Reach the Other side*

*Tourists come. Earth's origin is read here. Spider Grandmother whispers in each ear. Sipapuni. Place of emergence. Maski. Place of the dead. The long journey in and out. The hole in the sky above the third world, into the fourth world. Tawa, the sun, lights the long passageway of the spirit through time.*

*Spider Grandmother told the people to separate and begin their migrations. Good and evil must struggle together. They must learn the meaning of life. She covered the Sipapuni with water saying: 'Remember this, your place of emergence.'*

*Learn to be true humans  
Tawa will watch over you  
Only those who forget why they come  
Will Lose their way.<sup>1</sup>*

The Grand Canyon is symbolically the *omphalos* or belly button of the Hopi world. Just as the fetus is fed through its umbilical connection to the mother, so the children of the earth are nourished through their connection to this sacred place of emergence. Through rituals done here, people feel the

nourishing strength of their original connection to the earth.

On June 19, 1983, Beth Ames Swartz listened to the story of how sacred water was here given to the people. In pilgrimage to the Grand Canyon, Swartz remembered the Hopi reverence for the powers of the earth: for "*Sipapuni*. Place of emergence. *Maski*, Place of the dead. The long journey in and out." Coming to this place of creation, emergence and death was a way of preparing herself for the task of painting Chakra #3.

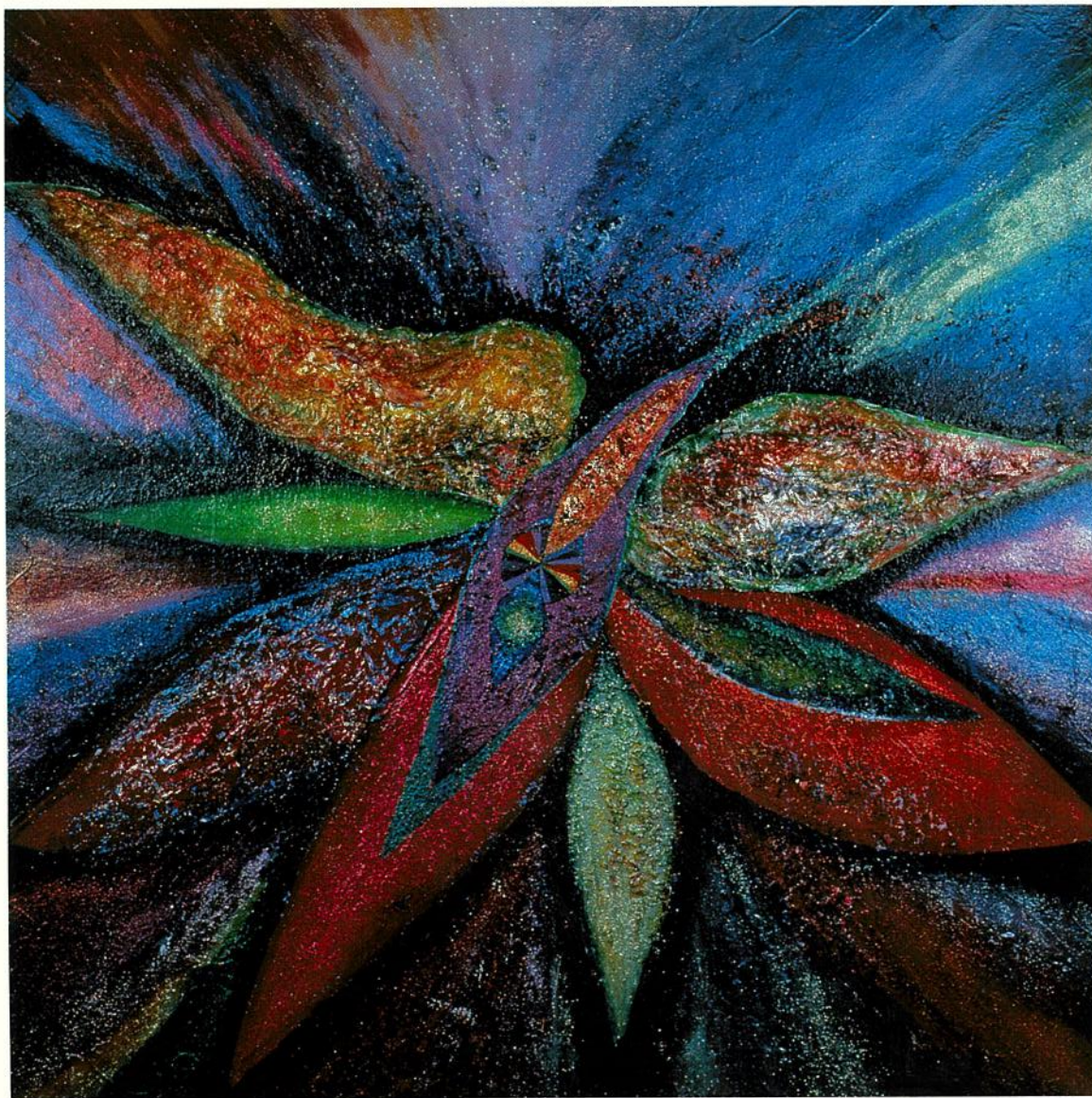
Chakra #3, *manipūra* or solar plexus, is located at the navel. This is the energy of mastery. It is a sense of developed intelligence or skill. *Manipūra* is will power, the ability to control and direct forces within and without. It is also the need to control, plunder and subjugate. *Manipūra* is the energy of fire; it forges and transforms. The painting, "Chakra #3," with its broken glass fragments and its expanding mandala segments, reflects *manipūras* energy of will as a creative or destructive force.



Beth Ames Swartz, Dawn Ceremony, Grand Canyon, Arizona, June 19, 1983.

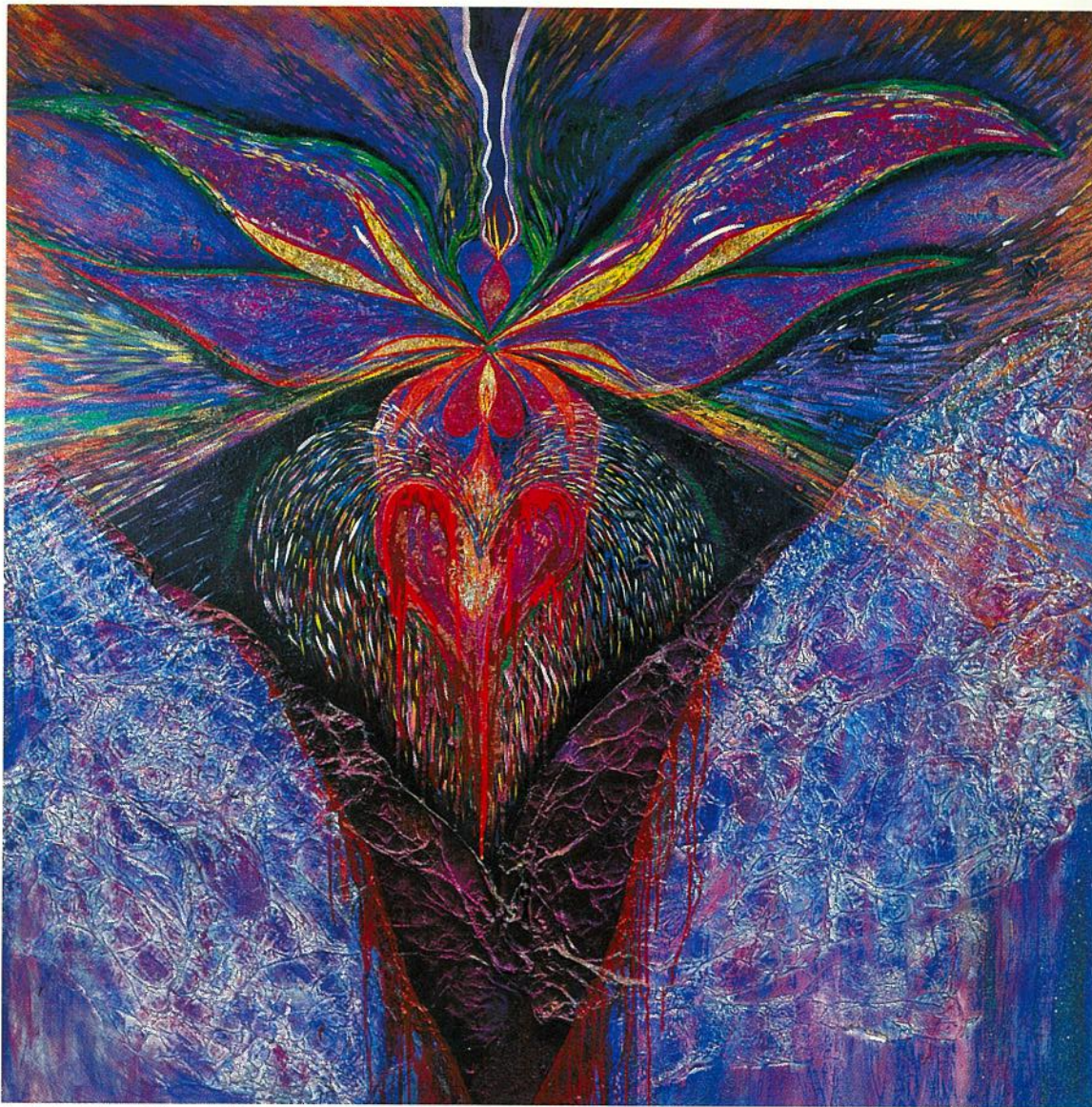
LINDA BRYANT

<sup>1</sup>Linda Bryant, *Notes on Sacred Sites*, written for Beth Ames Swartz, 1983. ©



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*A Moving Point of Balance #3 "Chakra #3 — Solar Plexus," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1984, collection of the artist.*



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*A Moving Point of Balance #4 "Chakra #4 – Heart," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1984, collection of the artist.*

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued

**Chakra #4, (Anāhata), The Heart**  
Color: green  
Site: Prophecy Rock, Hopiland, Arizona

At Prophecy Rock, located in Arizona, the Hopi legend of the "one hearted people" can be read. This story-engraved rock stands tall in a dry and open plain.

*The Hopis are descendants of the Anasazi. Located on the mesas of their land is Prophecy Rock, which is full of petroglyphs. This sacred place which bears the message of Hopi destiny is also the place where garbage is dumped. The people make no separation between the religious and secular parts of their lives.*

*For the signs of earthquake, floods and changes in the weather, the prophecy warns, 'be alert!' Wars will come. The first threat will be under the sign of the Swastika, which symbolized the four great forces of nature, in motion. The first threat will end, but another will rise again to join forces with the sun sign, creating another war. Then the threats will rest, to rise a third time in the symbol of red.*

*In the red symbol, the four forces of nature will be set in motion for the benefit of the sun. The whole world will shake and turn red. This will be a day of purification. The red symbol will either create peace and harmony, or will come as the destroyer. If this happens, the Hopi people will lose their traditions, and be reduced to one, two or three people. If they fail to remember why they came, the ants will inherit the earth.<sup>1</sup>*

On June 10, 1983, Beth Ames Swartz, leaning against the huge, inscribed rock listened to the Hopi prophecy which foretells that three times the earth will shake until all people learn to live in

harmony with each other and with the earth. If the people do not learn this one-hearted way, "the ants will inherit the earth."

The Hopi vision of a "one hearted people" living in harmony with all parts of the environment is strangely similar to the energy of chakra #4. Located at the heart, the chakra, *anāhata*, literally means "not hit." It is the zen sound of one hand clapping. Sounds heard by the ear or felt by the body are produced by rubbing or striking, the contact of two physical planes. The sound of one hand clapping is the sound of creative energy which is part of everything. It is Maya; it is the sound of subatomic transformation; it is the air. As Joseph Campbell says: like a bell "... its note is the beautiful sound of eternity that is heard by the pure mind throughout creation, and therefore within itself."<sup>2</sup> *Anahāta* is love, the opening of the heart when one knows: "Thou art another myself."<sup>3</sup>



LINDA BRYANT

Beth Ames Swartz, Evening Ritual, Prophecy Rock, Hopiland, Arizona, June 10, 1983.

<sup>1</sup>Linda Bryant, *Notes on Sacred Sites*, written for Beth Ames Swartz, 1983. ©

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Campbell, *Hero with a Thousand Faces*, (Meridian Books, The World Publishing Company, New York), 1970, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup>Jose Arguelles, Ph.D., *The Mayan Factor*, (Bear and Company, Santa Fe, New Mexico), 1987, p. 58.

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued



LINDA BRYANT

Beth Ames Swartz at Great Kiva, Chaco Canyon, New Mexico, June 21, 1983.

### **Chakra #5, (Viśuddha), The Throat**

Color: blue

Site: Chaco Canyon, New Mexico: The Great Kiva

Chaco Canyon, ancient Anasazi meeting place, has always been a crossroads for trade, for counseling and for renewal in community. A sense of how this place has been layered by time and use can be gleaned from guidebooks and stories:

*A shrine now exists a few miles outside of Chaco Canyon National Monument in New Mexico. It is a solemn prayer for the healing of the earth. Nearby stands a uranium drill site.*

*Prayer feathers*

*Songs and smoke*

*Circled*

*Throughout the night.*

*Chaco Canyon was a religious center that extended over 30,000 square miles, for thousands of years. From the tenth to the mid-twelfth centuries, Chaco was at the heart of a widespread trade system uniquely*

*expressed by its architecture. Chaco's great houses and kivas are larger in every dimension than those at other Anasazi centers. Without the benefit of draft animals and metal tools, Chaco builders brought more than 200,000 trees from many miles away for use in construction. Beams and rafters supported roofs and floors, and stabilized walls, doorways and windows. Tons of sandstone were quarried to build walls six feet thick and four feet high. Two hundred and fifty miles of straight, well-engineered roads, sometimes 30 feet wide, have been located. They all lead directly to Chaco.*

*There is much coal, oil, uranium and natural gas buried under the Chaco system. It was a magnet in ancient times, as it is for energy users today.<sup>1</sup>*

On June 21, 1983, at the Great Kiva in Chaco Canyon, there was an all night prayer ceremony led by Hopi Elder, Preston Monongye. Once a year at the tribal celebration of the summer solstice, the Hopi community gathers in ritual to renew their relationship to this moment in cyclical time which marks the beginning of the sun's withdrawal and rest.

Over centuries, Chaco Canyon had always been the meeting place for counsel and decision-making between tribes, for trade and for ritual observance in community. Chaco seemed a perfect place to dedicate the energy of Chakra #5, *viśuddha*, the place of creativity, abstract speech and communication.

Located at the throat, *viśuddha* cleanses perception from the fear of death. It is vastness and emptiness, which is space. Cruelty, manipulation, lust, killing and death happen in community, but they are not products of community. These

behaviors originate within the individual. They are the result of the process of scapegoating, blaming another person or another culture for the partiality or pain of one's own self. The key to living in peaceful community is in finding a way to live in peace with oneself.

*Viśuddha*, meaning literally, eating one's own words, is the place of abstract speech, where words and definitions have been purified by each individual's ability to accept and bear his or her own pain.

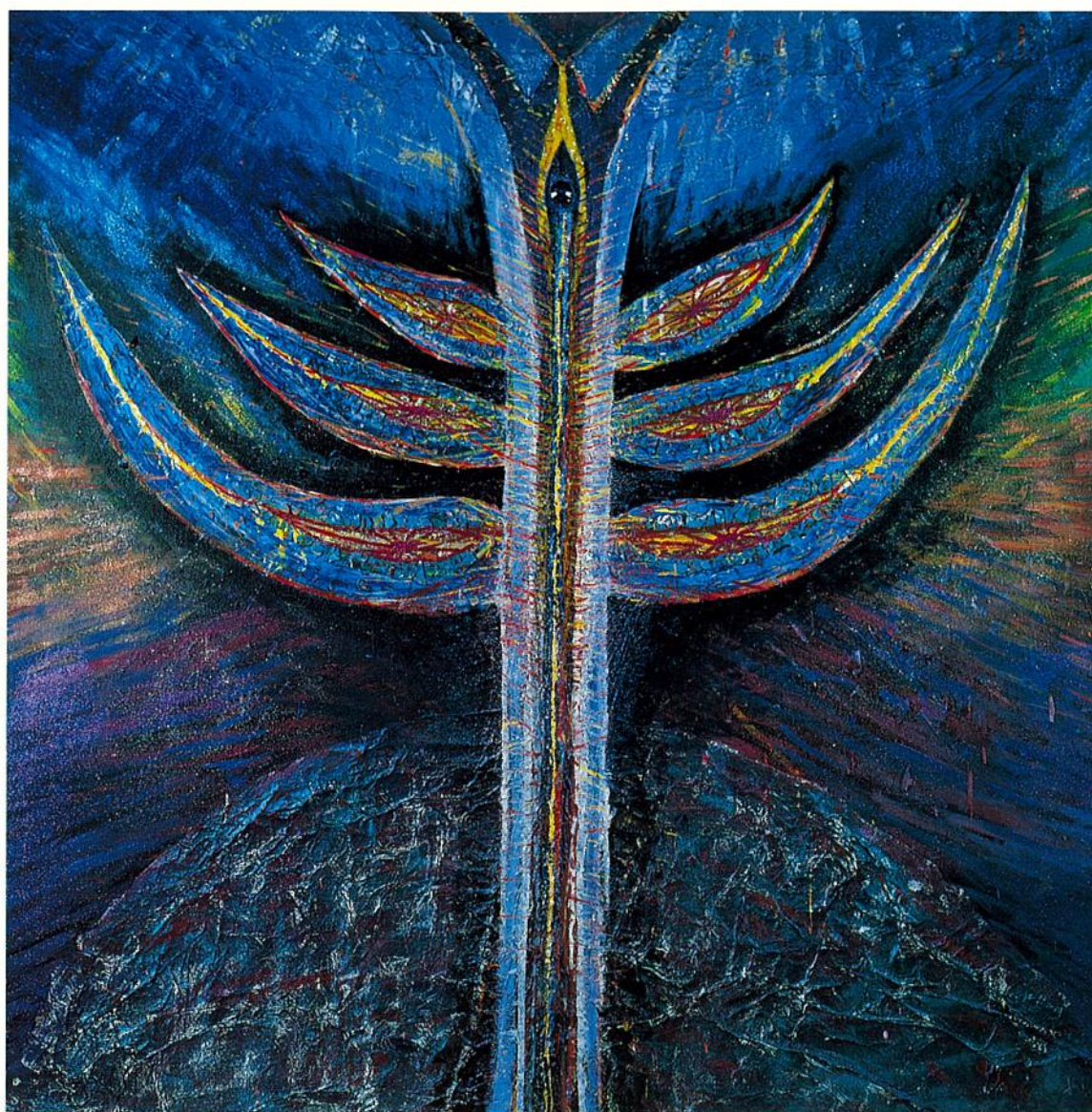
<sup>1</sup>Linda Bryant, *Notes on Sacred Sites*, written for Beth Ames Swartz, 1983. © Brody, *The Chaco Phenomenon*, (Maxwell Museum of Anthropology), 1983. Casa Rinconda Trail and Pueblo Bonito, (Booklets from Chaco Canyon National Monument, New Mexico).



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*A Moving Point of Balance #5 "Chakra #5 — Throat," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of Dr. and Mrs. William Hawkins.*





ROBERT SHERWOOD

*A Moving Point of Balance #6 "Chakra #6 - Third Eye," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of the artist.*

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued

**Chakra #6, (*Ājñā*), The Third Eye**  
(between and behind the eyes)  
Color: indigo  
Site: Grotte de Font-De-Gaume, Les  
Eyzies-De-Tayac, Dordogne, France

Fourteen thousand years ago a paleolithic culture in what is now southern France created ochre and black paintings of bison, deer and other herbivorous animals deep in the caves of the earth. These wall paintings were discovered on September 12, 1901, by Denis Peyrony. The passageways of the caves are too narrow for any human inhabitants to have lived there. The speculation is that these cave paintings were created for ritualistic, ceremonial purpose.

On July 15, 1983, Beth Ames Swartz journeyed to the caves of Dordogne. From all over the world other pilgrims had also come to this foreign soil. The pilgrims entered the narrow passageway together. Because the caretakers want to preserve the colors of the ancient paintings, only twenty people at a time are allowed to travel the dimly lit entryway. When everyone is within the cave, the lights go on for only fifty seconds. The animals seem to look directly at the visitors, as if they are old spirits staring across time and space, perhaps joining each person with his/her own ancient memory of connection with animal life.

Between and behind the eyes is chakra #6, *ājñā*, the third eye. *Ājñā* is the radiant image of God as authority or order. The image is a quality intuitively felt as what is, what has been and what always will be. The experience of God in

this inner eye takes physical and historic form: God as Christ; God as Buddha; God as Ishtar. Tied to time and place this holy experience within, becomes a window connecting the partiality of an individual life to a larger experience of wholeness.



Beth Ames Swartz before entering Grotte de Font-De-Gaume, July 15, 1983.

LINDA KILGORE FARNSWORTH

## Introduction to the Chakras

Continued

**Chakra #7, (Sahasrāra),** Crown of the Head

Color: violet

Site: Carnac, Brittany Coast

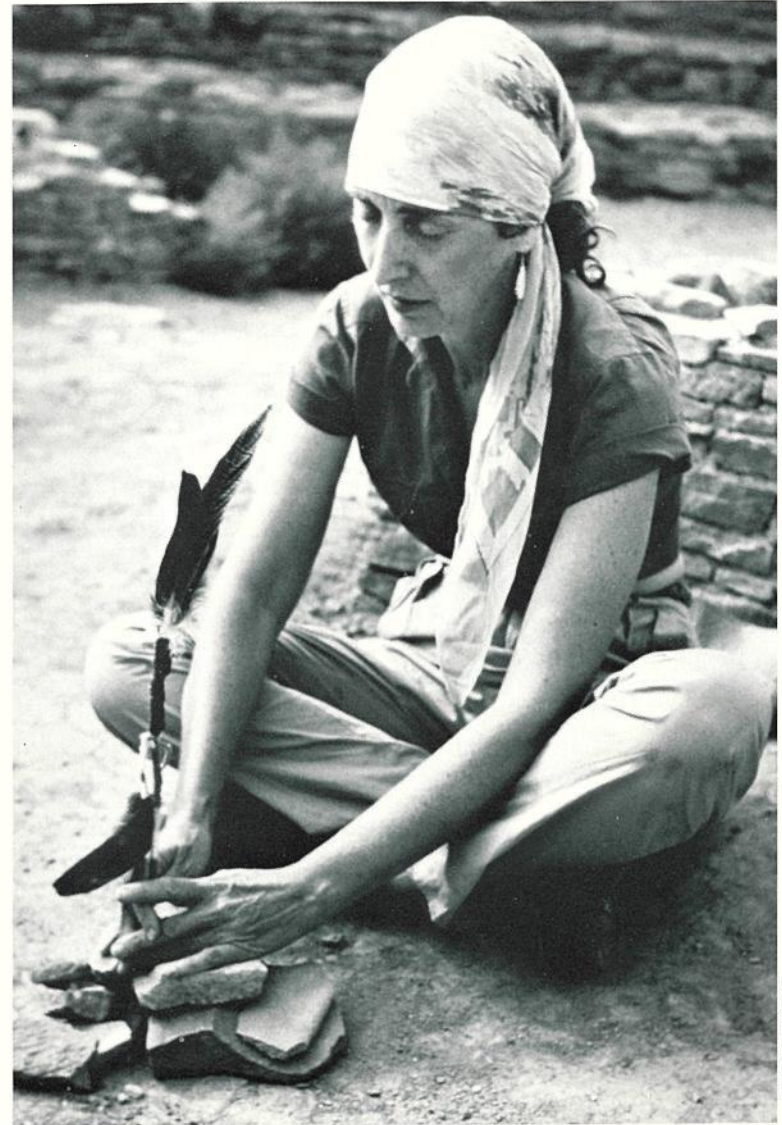
High on the Brittany coast, all windswept, green and gray, are the 5,000 year old megaliths of Carnac. The stone rows around Carnac include over 3,000 great stones. Seventy of the stones form an oval ring. The rest file across the great rolling countryside in 11 lines. The stones decrease in size as they fan out in a curve. Varying theories suggest that the stones were placed in relationship to the horizon, recording cyclical stellar, lunar and solar positions for yearly ritual events.

On July 20, 1983, Beth Ames Swartz came to this seventh and last pilgrimage site. The huge stones, 10' to 15' high, towered over her. These *menhirs*, hauled from great distances and placed with careful precision, are, even by the technological standards of our modern world, an astonishing communal accomplishment. Were these stone rows the yearning of a long ago culture to join the lesser rhythms of human life in right relationship to the larger cycles of sun, moon and stars?

Located at the top of the head and seen as an inverted corolla is chakra #7, *sahasrāra*, crown of the head. This hovering energy is associated with, but barely attached to the body. It is the energy of body becoming spirit. "By none but a God shall a God be worshipped . . ." <sup>1</sup> As this Hindu Tantric saying suggests, a body cannot know spirit without becoming spirit. This is being knowing non-being. It is the

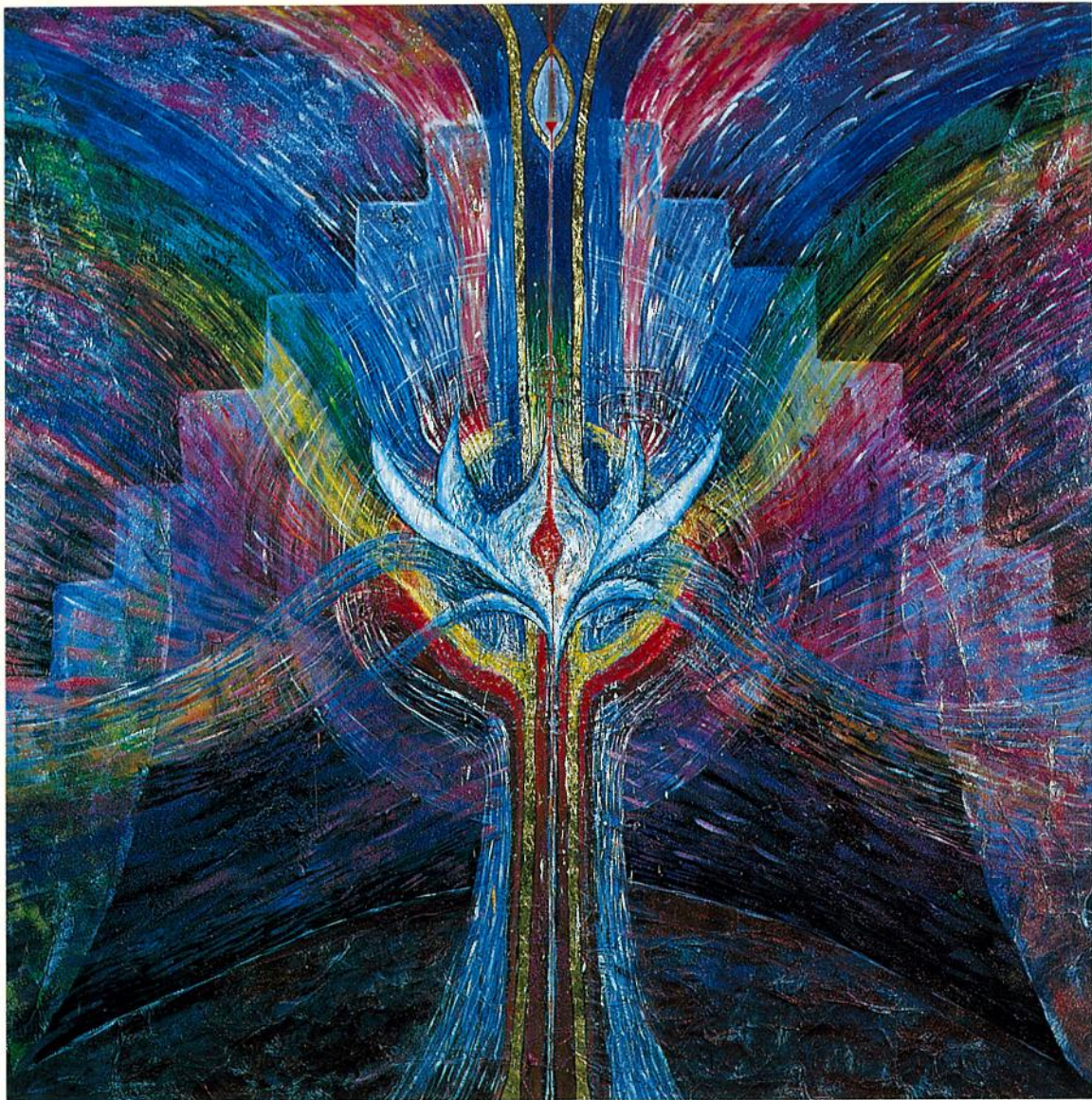
inevitable and unavoidable dance between wave and particle, life and death, spirit and body.

<sup>1</sup>Joseph Campbell, *The Inner Reaches of Outer Space*, (St. James Press, Toronto), 1985, p. 65.



Beth Ames Swartz: Ritual, Summer 1983.

LINDA BRYANT



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*A Moving Point of Balance #7 "Chakra #7 — Crown," 7'x7', microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of the artist.*

*“ . . . And I? I was once more to leave the security of my tribal home, to seek my own special place in what seemed to be an alien world.*

*“David,” he said. “David, never forget how to dance. Dance the dance of the medicine man. Call upon the spirit of our ancestors and listen to the music of their wisdom, the drumming of their hearts and the quiet chanting of their voices. Then dance. Dance to the music of their spirit as it mixes with the sound of your dreams. Dance David! dance and you will never be alone. I will be with you, dancing in your footsteps, singing with your voice, healing through your hands and loving through your heart.”*

Recollection from  
DAVID PALADIN



*Celestial Visitations #1 "The Angels of Joyousness," 5'x6', mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.*

## Interview with Beth Ames Swartz

Margret Carde,  
1988



KAREN MARSHALL

Beth Ames Swartz, Paradise Valley, Arizona, 1988.

**Margret Carde:** In the *Inquiry Into Fire* (1976-1978) and the *Israel Revisited* (1979-1983) series, destructive acts (burning and tearing paper; shoveling earth onto painting surfaces) were followed by a careful reforming of the broken pieces. The new shapes, rich pigments and glued connections of the finished work preserved, then transcended the painful history of each painting's construction. The paintings in both these series were widely acclaimed, yet shortly after *Israel Revisited*, you left your fire work — why did you leave your fire work and return to the canvas?

**Beth Ames Swartz:** In 1981 I became friends with Navajo medicine man David Paladin and participated in a medicine wheel ceremony. Later I was invited to become part of a pilgrimage with Hopi Elder, Preston Monongye. My adventures with Paladin and Monongye became a part of the inspiration for *A Moving Point of Balance*. During the three and one-half years it took to create the installation, I had many intense

narrative and visionary experiences, including physical, psychological and spiritual changes. To translate my new awareness into tangible form, it was necessary for me to create a new language, a different form of expression from that of my previous work.

**M:** *Israel Revisited* was a record of an art-life journey which took you to ten sacred sites in Israel. When you began *A Moving Point of Balance* you repeated the pattern of pilgrimage to sacred sites. Why do you go on these pilgrimages?

**B:** In traveling to sacred sites, I opened myself to new situations and new ways of seeing things. My name *Beth* is the Hebrew letter which signifies the essence of house, the archetype of all dwellings and containers.<sup>1</sup> Pilgrimage became my way of going beyond the dwelling — beyond the container — beyond the limits of my own identity.

**M:** Your idea of traveling beyond the edges of identity reminds me of the mythic journey of the heroic quest. The hero travels beyond the known world, overcomes the monsters and obstacles, returns home with, for example, the Golden Fleece. To be a hero in Joseph Campbell's view,<sup>2</sup> going beyond the horizon is not enough. One must be able to bring back what was there in a form that speaks to those who never left. In the sense of returning with rare gifts, are your pilgrimages a hero's quest?

**B:** To me, every life is heroic. In my own life the pilgrimages were just a beginning. Somehow the physical movement to sacred sites began a process of inner movement . . . or maybe the inner stirrings were what

prompted the outward search. I don't know. To me, the inner and outer journeying seem inseparable. In the sense of searching for new (or forgotten old) visions, it is the doing of art that is the hero's quest. Full of adventures, the art is both a chronicle of, and a wonderful residue brought back from, the process of creating. The paintings will always have meaning to me. I suppose that when they communicate powerfully to other people, then their journey goes beyond individual meaning into the realm of myth.

**M:** *A Moving Point of Balance* has as its content the chakras. What are chakras and how did you first become interested in this subject?

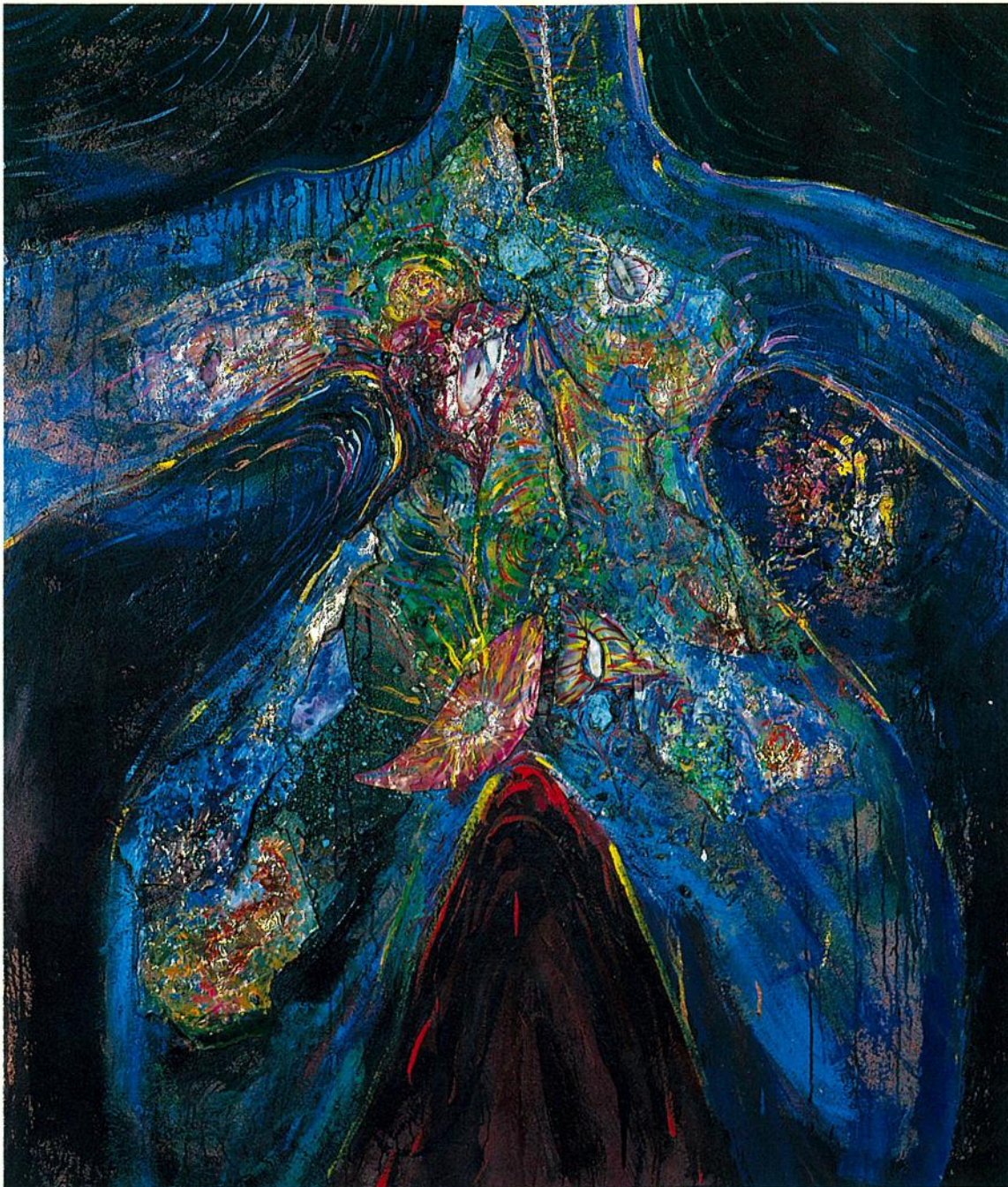
**B:** Chakras are energy centers in each human being which are believed to connect body matter with body energy. The system of the chakras is ancient, in India its tradition may be as old as 10,000 years. I first became interested in these old ideas when visiting a friend in Snowflake, Arizona. She did healing rituals which focused on chakra centers. The idea for a series of paintings based on this ancient tradition was the beginning of *A Moving Point of Balance*.

**M:** I know there are many stories which happened during the making of *A Moving Point of Balance*. Can you tell me some of your adventures.

**B:** Some of the things that happened to me when doing the pilgrimages in preparation for each chakra painting felt

<sup>1</sup>Migene Gonzalez-Wippler, *A Kabbalah for the Modern World*, (Bantam Books, Inc., New York), 1977, p. 18.

<sup>2</sup>Joseph Campbell, *Hero With a Thousand Faces*, (The World Publishing Company, Meridian Books, New York), 1970.



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*Alchemy #7*, 6'x5', mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy of Elaine Horwitch Galleries.

## Interview . . .

Continued

synchronistically appropriate to the energy of the chakra. For instance, the first chakra, "Base of the Spine," deals with the energy of self preservation. At Snowflake, the Anasazi Sun Clan Site, I had built a medicine wheel. Later that night as I was going home it started to rain; the road was muddy and my car got stuck. I left my badly tilted car and started walking. I crossed a barbed wire fence and went through a field. Suddenly, I felt that if I went any further, I would fall into a void. I got down on my hands and knees and moved slowly forward. I hadn't gone very far when the ground dropped away. Had I continued, I would have fallen into a deep, water-filled wash.

I remembered that I had passed a small shack and returned to it. All I could do was huddle down on the porch. Now the rain was poring down. Time expanded. It felt like hours, but really only a few minutes had passed. I heard rustling noises and became alarmed. Two horses — a white one and a black one — walked toward me and stood quietly looking at me. My fear turned to a feeling of great protection and I was able to fall asleep.

The next morning I got help with my car, and drove safely home. The protecting presence of those horses gave me courage in the same way that ancient cultures speak of totem animals lending their survival energy to chosen humans. It was this experience at Snowflake that led me to take Michael Harner's workshop at Esalen.<sup>3</sup>

**M:** Explain what you mean by "survival energy."

**B:** It's difficult to talk about energy. In our culture today, if you can't see it or

touch it or read about it, then it doesn't exist. But many scientists, for example the Simontons, who work on visualization in cancer research,<sup>4</sup> are beginning to ask question about intangible subjects: Is there such a thing as a will to live? What is that mysterious quality of the mind/body/spirit that makes us who we are?



Beth Ames Swartz and Preston Monongye, Scottsdale, Arizona, 1984.

Well, in the area of energy, our own culture provides very little insight. It seemed appropriate to walk with people who have a way of being with the unknown built into their cellular structure. A Hopi medicine man, for instance: he is the earth; he is the land. For a Hopi medicine man, the energy of nature — the energy outside, flows with the energy of the spirit — the energy inside.

**M:** How did you begin to walk with these medicine men?

**B:** I first met David Paladin because I wanted to take his workshop on the relationship between healing and art. When I walked into the room, he announced that he knew me already, and that I was a shaman. That certainly scared me!

**M:** Why?

**B:** Because, I'm not an Indian, I'm Jewish! He projected such power and authority that his statement made me feel that I might be required to give up everything I had worked for in the art world and everything I was in my own life in order to be true to my healing energy.

Paladin did a medicine wheel ritual with me. He had me hold the grandfather stone which is the central stone in the medicine wheel, (the same stone that is at the center of the medicine wheel at the beginning of *A Moving Point of Balance*). In Paladin's tradition this stone is the place of wholeness or stillness; the place around which the universe turns. It is the story-telling stone. It is the child's fire. It is wisdom.

Paladin went into a trance and declared that the animal most akin to my spirit was an eagle. I felt the presence of an eagle. He went on to say that *A Moving Point of Balance* would heal many people, (and this was before it was even painted!). It was very inspiring.

At Chaco Canyon, Hopi elder, Preston Monongye, blessed *A Moving Point of Balance* and called it a "one-hearted" project. He didn't look at slides. He talked about energy — so this is a whole area that we in western culture do not know much about.

**M:** Do you feel that you are a healer?

<sup>3</sup>Michael Harner, *The Way of the Shaman*, (Bantam Books, New York) 1982.

<sup>4</sup>Carl O. Simonton, M.D., Et. Al., *Getting Well Again: A Step by Step Guide to Overcoming Cancer for Patients and their Families*, (Tarcher, Los Angeles) 1978.



## Interview . . .

Continued

**B:** Yes, but we cannot pretend to be something that we are not. Whatever healing skills I have are grounded in who I am: a woman, an artist, a product of western culture. I believe that we all have the power to heal ourselves and others. Most of us do not remember how to do it. Shamanic healing does not necessarily heal the body. For a medicine man, healing refers to returning the soul to a wholeness with the body. Often, then, the disease symptoms disappear. But healing might also mean assisting a person to be able to die. Indians say that healing power is "walking the talk," we might say actions speak louder than words. For me, just walking into the studio is an act of healing.

**M:** How does the act of painting become a healing process for you?

**B:** Some people like to be safe. I have never felt safe. The way I have created safety is to learn to walk with death . . . and to make death my ally and my friend. One of the ways I work through despair or pain is by painting. To paint through images of despair until they resolve into images of harmony creates both a record of the despair and a resolution to the despair. Without denying pain, the painting becomes a visualization of healing.

**M:** You talk as if the very act of painting is a symbolic experience of death and rebirth.

**B:** I will tell you that it's ecstasy to paint. There are moments in the studio when the integration between me and the painting is so complete that I could walk into the painting and disappear. Do you remember the story of the Chinese

artist who presented his landscape to the emperor? Well, there was a cave in the painting. All of a sudden the cave opened up and the artist walked into the cave of his landscape. I think this story is about the void or death, the ability to jump into the abyss. Just looking at a blank canvas brings you to the question of trusting the unknown. Will the process come back?



Snowflake, Arizona, an Anasazi (Sun Clan) Sacred Site.

**M:** You say that painting can be ecstasy. Are there moments when your integration with the painting is joyful?

**B:** In the last three chakra paintings I had an extraordinary experience. I was doing psychosynthesis<sup>5</sup> with Penelope Young. One day during our work, (I was in a trance-like state), I had a vision of the last three chakra paintings. My body was connected to them by a gold umbilical cord. (I put that golden cord right through the center of the fifth chakra painting.) Later the vision expanded. I became the same as the light in the paintings. There was no separation. You can see how that golden shaft of light expands from being an umbilical cord in "Chakra #5," to a column of light in "Chakra #6," to a

great, infused rainbow of light in "Chakra #7."

**M:** How do paintings heal other people?

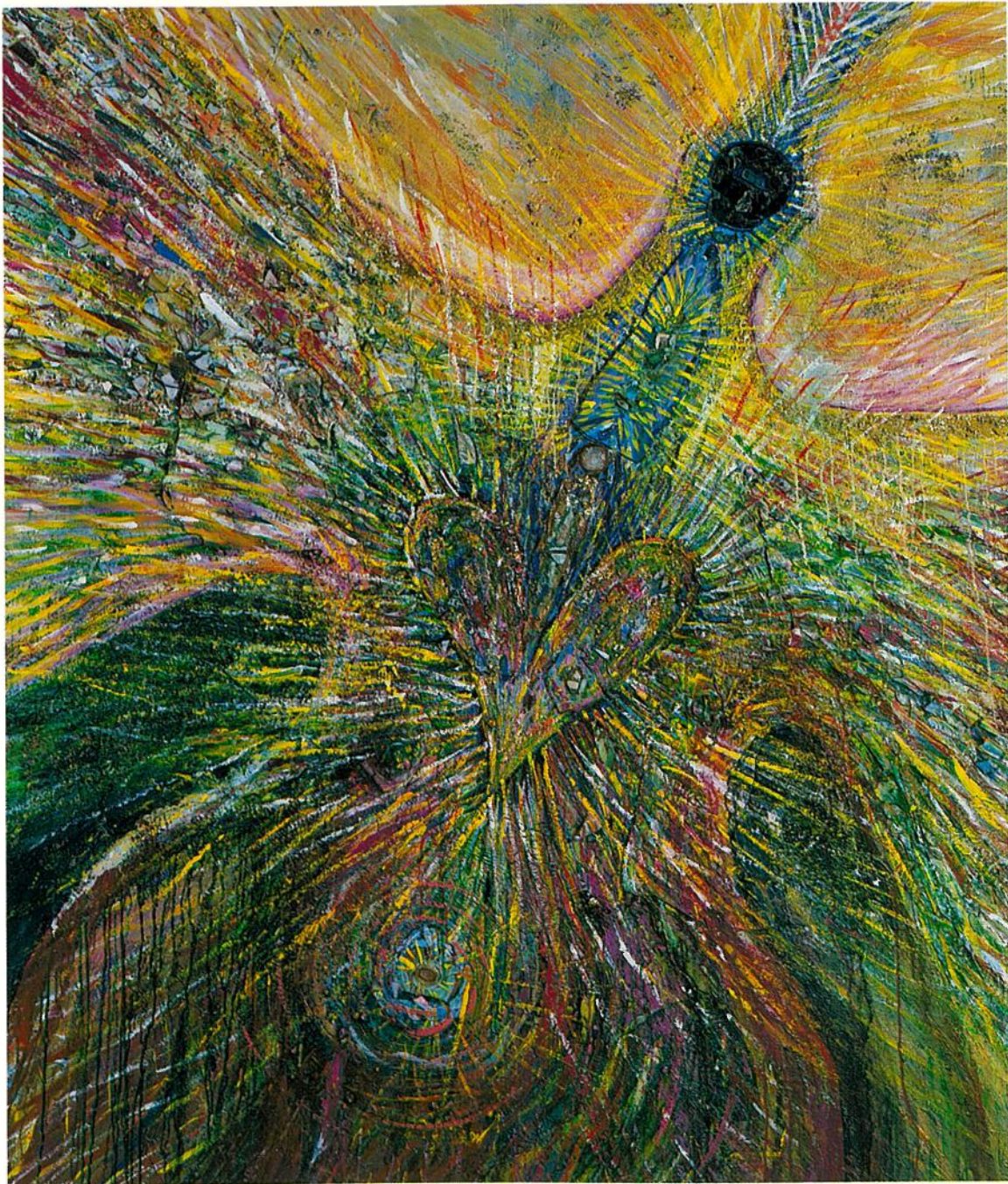
**B:** All paintings are not healing. The paintings and the multisensory environment in *A Moving Point of Balance* seem to have a healing effect on viewers. Perhaps this is so because the whole show invites viewers to shut out the outside world and to walk into that quiet part of themselves that is beyond daily thought.

**M:** This idea of a painting being able to heal the viewer seems new to me. Do you feel that you are pioneering a new field?

**B:** Just finding images which heal is not new. Every culture has had healing images: the Navajo hogan, medieval madonnas, churches, sweat lodges, labyrinths. We have plenty of healing images as precedents in architecture, painting and sculpture, but we've never actually looked at what is transmitted. What is the dialogue that takes place between the image which heals and the person who is healed? I don't know the answer to that question. I know that when *A Moving Point of Balance* opened in Canada, it affected people powerfully.

Through a computer study, done in San Diego's inner city and Aspen, Colorado, we found that 98% of people of all age groups from broad socio-economic and geographic backgrounds felt relaxed,

<sup>5</sup>Psychosynthesis is a form of therapy originally formulated by Roberto Assagioli, a contemporary of Sigmund Freud. R. Assagioli, *Psychosynthesis*, (Penguin Books, New York) 1965.



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*Celestial Visitations #5 "The Angel of Deliverance," 6'x5', mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.*



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*Celestial Visitations #8 "The Angel of Destiny,"* 6'x5', mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.

uplifted and spiritually moved by their experience with *A Moving Point of Balance*.<sup>6</sup>

**M:** Why, in order to understand something that is unseen and intuitive, like the reaction of these viewers to *A Moving Point of Balance*, would you go straight to a logical, left brain mechanism like a computer study?

**B:** I come from a scientific family. I wanted to know if the experience of people in Canada would be predictable for people in other places. Was it because the Canadian audience had been university oriented? In San Diego we were in the inner city, far away from academia. In Aspen we were in a resort community of wealthy people. You couldn't explain the reaction socio-logically. I learned that the multisensory environment was important to the whole experience. I learned that the Balancing Room was necessary. Many people, by the time they got to the seventh chakra were weeping. Some felt disoriented. So, what if I had sent them out into traffic after the seventh chakra?

If I'm asking people to plug into their right brain or their own sacredness, then I also have a responsibility of moving them back into the world in a way that allows them to integrate the new vision.

**M:** Perhaps *A Moving Point of Balance* might be seen as a model for replicating the journey of the hero. By moving to the edges of reality, through disorientation and a breaking down of outer defenses, a person returns to his/her old world not weaker but stronger?

**B:** From the computer study we think

that that seems to be happening for the viewers. It certainly happened for me while preparing for and painting the show.



Beth Ames Swartz at Prophecy Rock, Hopiland, Arizona, 1983.

LINDA BRYANT

**M:** In 1985-6, after *A Moving Point of Balance*, you completed the *Trans-Illumination*<sup>7</sup> series. Tell me about this work.

**B:** The *Trans-Illumination* series are transitional paintings. They bridge the gap between *A Moving Point of Balance* and the *Alchemy* series. With the *Trans-Illumination* series I saw my art in perspective. I saw my need to work directly with the elements that support life: the flow of water in the *Prana* (1974) paintings, the earth and fire transformations of the *Israel Revisited* (1980) paintings and extending the pipeline to the creative unconscious in *A Moving Point of Balance* (1982-85). This led me in a natural way to collage. Air, earth, fire and water both form and transform the natural world. They leave the story of their process in the rocks and canyons and riverbeds of their passage. After working with these elements in the painting process, I

began to love how found images carry the story of their birth. I also liked the mystery of disparate elements creating something new.

**M:** In 1986-87, you produced the work now called *Alchemy*. How did this work come about?

**B:** The chakra paintings used light reflective materials like gold leaf, foil and microglitter to produce the inner radiance of the chakra energies. In order to experience the radiance, these paintings needed to be illuminated in a darkened room. With the *Trans-Illumination* series I tried to return to natural materials without giving up a visual sense of inner connection to spirit. I found in the *Alchemy* series that using natural stones like mica, azurite, chrysocolla, amethyst and quartz crystals, I could create a radiance on the canvas without the need for a supporting environment.

**M:** The *Alchemy* paintings are figurative. Why do you think the figures emerged at this point in your work?

**B:** In a personal way the androgynous figures may have stemmed from balancing my own inner male and female character traits. At this point in my own life I was trying to understand how personal power, sexuality and relationships of all kinds could, in a non-competitive way, work together.

<sup>6</sup>Summary of computer-based studies was completed by Mary L. Westcott, Sociologist-Consultant, June 1986.

<sup>7</sup>The *Trans-Illumination* exhibition at the Elaine Horwitch Gallery in Scottsdale, Arizona, April 1986, showed large versions of privately done healing portraits which Swartz had earlier completed.

**M:** And then the figures sprouted wings, and you started using broken mirrors instead of broken glass.

**B:** And radiant light. . . . In *Alchemy* the dark background separates away from the figures. In *Celestial Visitations* the background is light like the figures, as if the background from the *Alchemy* series had suddenly moved into the light source. In "The Angel of Deliverance" the butterfly shape of the angel seems to be moving into the mist of the background. The luminosity comes from an almost excessive building of transparent layers, one on top of another. The effect is an infusion of light, space, solid and liquid.

**M:** In the 19th century, Turner used transparency techniques to marry the sky to the sea. In the 17th century, Rembrandt used transparent glazes to join the world of the spirit to the world of flesh. Your technique and the subject of spirit joined to physical form is not new. The way that you have joined collage and expressionist painting techniques to more traditional processes, however, makes these celestial visitations very contemporary. Why do you suppose the angels came?

**B:** Angels come to announce death and new life. I painted "The Angel of Deliverance" a couple of days before my mother died. In early March during our last visit together, it became apparent that she was close to the end of her life. I told her that "for the past six months the figures that I had been painting had all sprouted wings." I

didn't know why I was painting angels, but began to understand while we were talking. I told her: "My paintings are to help you go to heaven when you are ready." I explained that in Jewish mysticism there is a legend that every time we do a good deed or a *mitzvah* in this world, we create an angel in the next.<sup>8</sup> I said, "Mother, you have done so many good deeds in your lifetime, imagine how many angels you have created to help take you to heaven. When you are ready, all you have to do is put up your hands like this and say, 'I'm ready, take me,' and all the angels that we have both created will help you to heaven." She liked the idea but said that she was in no rush and we both laughed.

A week later she died. Her nurse told me that when she awoke early that morning she was very tranquil. Outstretching her arms, she said, "I'm ready; take me," and then she died peacefully.

**M:** Do you think about death for yourself?

**B:** For the most part, I think about life . . . the life of this planet. I feel very close to other artists who are also concerned. We are all — whether we make a whole environment or a single painting — creating a context for feeling. By providing a context for transcending the anger and fear which are so present in our world, this art becomes a vehicle for moving beyond the present discontinuity. We can begin to find new ways of living which are not so toxic to ourselves and our environment.

People call this art transformational, because it changes the way we live.

**M:** It sounds as if transformational thinking goes beyond the art world.

**B:** There is a network of people who share this vision of a world in peaceful cooperation. The Ojai Foundation in California has for years studied the mechanisms of peaceful cultures in order to provide models. I am coordinating a conference at the Rim Institute in Arizona this September. Artists who feel drawn to this idea that art can model healing changes have been invited to share their ideas and support each other, to create a hologram in the midst of a fragmented world. We must support each other so that we can be the bridge toward cooperation and peace.

**M:** You seem to have lost some of your *angst* in this latest work.

**B:** Yes, I feel empowered by all that my work has taught me. I'm like an eagle who has flown all her life in spite of the fact that she had rocks in her claws. Now, I have no rocks. I feel free.

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<sup>8</sup>Adin Steinsaltz, *The Thirteenth Petalled Rose*, (Basic Books, New York) 1980.



ROBERT SHERWOOD

*Celestial Visitations #2 "The Angels of Shared Purpose,"* 6'x5', mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.

# Biography

- BORN:** New York, New York, 1936
- EDUCATION:** B.S. Degree  
Cornell University, 1957  
M.A. Degree  
New York University, 1960
- SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS:**
- 1989 Elaine Horwitch Galleries, Palm Springs, CA
- 1989 New Gallery, Houston, TX
- 1989 Galeria Yolanda Rios, Sitges (Barcelona), Spain
- 1989 Nafplion Art Gallery, Nafplion, Greece
- 1989 Plaka Art Gallery, Athens, Greece
- 1988, '86, '84, '82, '80, '79 Elaine Horwitch Galleries, Scottsdale, AZ  
*A Moving Point of Balance* Traveling Museum Exhibition (see inside cover for touring schedule)
- 1985 ACA Galleries, NY
- 1986, '84 The Gallery, York, PA
- 1982 Sun Valley Center for the Arts and Humanities, Sun Valley, ID
- 1984, '82 J. Rosenthal Fine Arts, Chicago, IL
- 1981-1983 *Israel Revisited* Traveling Museum Exhibition: The Jewish Museum, New York, NY; University of California, Irvine, CA; Skirball Museum, Los Angeles, CA; University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ; Judah Magnes Museum, Berkeley, CA; Beaumont Museum of Art, TX; Albuquerque Museum of Art, NM; American Cultural Centers in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem
- 1981, '79 Frank Marino Gallery, New York, NY
- 1979 Springfield Art Museum, Springfield, MO
- 1978 Jasper Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1978 *Inquiry Into Fire*, Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Scottsdale, AZ
- 1977 "Ten Take Ten," Ten-Year Retrospective, Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center, Colorado Springs, CO
- 1976 Attitudes Gallery, Denver, CO
- 1976 Bob Tomlinson Gallery, Albuquerque, NM
- 1975 Pavilion Gallery, Scottsdale, AZ
- 1972 Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- 1971 Galleria Janna, Mexico City, Mexico
- 1970 Rosenzweig Center Gallery, Phoenix, AZ
- SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS:**
- 1989 Phyllis Weil & Co., New York, NY
- 1988 "The Transformative Vision," Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, Staten Island, NY (invitational with Audrey Flack and others)
- 1987 "New Sacred Art: Prayers for Peace," White Light Gallery, New York, NY
- 1987 Artists of the Western States Biennial, Elaine Horwitch Galleries, Palm Springs, CA
- 1986 "Artist as Shaman," Women's Building, Los Angeles, CA
- 1983 Exchange of Sources Expanding Powers — Invitational Touring Museum Exhibition, California State College (Touring), CA
- 1982 "Nature as Metaphor," Invitational, sponsored by the National Women's Caucus for Art, New York, NY
- 1981 "Paper: Surface and Image," Invitational Touring Museum Exhibition, Printmaking Council of New Jersey; Robeson Gallery, Rutgers University and others
- 1981-82 "Arizona Invitational," Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Scottsdale, AZ and Guadalajara, Mexico
- 1980-82 "Artists In The American Desert," Invitational Touring Museum Exhibition under auspices of Western Association of Art Museums
- 1981 Gallery Group, Ellen Terry Lemer Fine Arts, Inc., New York, NY
- 1980-81 Gallery Group, Frank Marino Gallery, New York, NY
- 1980 "Aspects of Fire," Invitational, Frank Marino Gallery, New York, NY
- 1979-81 "First Western States Biennial," Invitational Touring Museum Exhibition. Denver Art Museum; National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art and others
- 1979 Four Corners Biennial, Invitational, Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ
- 1978 "Expanded Image on Paper," Memorial Union, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- 1977 Whitney Counterweight, New York, NY
- 1976 "Looking at an Ancient Land," Fine Arts Museum of New Mexico, Santa Fe, NM
- 1975 Eight State Biennial, Grand Junction, CO
- 1975 Joslyn Museum, Omaha, NE
- 1975 "Arizona/Women/75," Tucson Art Museum, AZ
- 1968, '65 Arizona Annual Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ
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#### SELECTED PUBLIC COLLECTIONS:

- National Museum of American Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.
- San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, San Francisco, CA
- The Jewish Museum, New York, NY
- Denver Art Museum, Denver, CO
- Herbert F. Johnson Museum of Art, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY
- Phoenix Art Museum, Phoenix, AZ
- University Art Museum, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ
- Scottsdale Center for the Arts, Scottsdale, AZ
- Museum of Fine Arts, Santa Fe, NM
- Albuquerque Museum of Art, Albuquerque, NM
- Tucson Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ
- Everson Museum of Art, Syracuse, NY
- The Brooklyn Museum, New York, NY
- University of Arizona Museum of Art, Tucson, AZ
- Beaumont Art Museum, Beaumont, TX

#### SELECTED CORPORATE COLLECTIONS

- IBM Corporation, Endicott, NY
- The Arizona Bank, Phoenix, AZ
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- Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, Phoenix, AZ
- Subaru Corporation, Denver, CO
- Western Savings, Phoenix, AZ
- Valley National Bank, Phoenix, AZ
- Mountain Bell Telephone Company, Denver, CO
- Doubletree Inns, Phoenix, AZ
- National Bank of Arizona, Scottsdale, AZ
- Canyon Ranch, Tucson, AZ
- Madison Green, New York, NY
- Performing Arts Theatre, Calgary, Canada
- The Byzantine Hotel, Rethymnon, Crete

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# Selected Works 1982-1988

Items marked by an asterisk (\*) are illustrated within the catalogue. In dimensions, height precedes width.

A MOVING POINT OF BALANCE SERIES — traveling museum exhibition 1985-1992 (see inside front cover for touring schedule).

- \* 1. A Moving Point of Balance #1 (Chakra #1 — Base of the Spine) 7'x7', gold leaf and mixed media on linen, 1983, collection of the artist.
- \* 2. A Moving Point of Balance #2 (Chakra #2 — Reproduction) 7'x7', gold leaf, microglitter and mixed media on linen, 1983, collection of the artist.
- \* 3. A Moving Point of Balance #3 (Chakra #3 — Solar Plexus) 7'x7', gold leaf, microglitter, broken glass, foil and mixed media on linen, 1984, collection of the artist.
- \* 4. A Moving Point of Balance #4 (Chakra #4 — Heart) 7'x7', gold leaf, broken glass, microglitter, foil and mixed media on linen, 1984, collection of the artist.
- \* 5. A Moving Point of Balance #5 (Chakra #5 — Throat) 7'x7', gold leaf, broken glass, microglitter, foil, fabric and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of Dr. and Mrs. William Hawkins.
- \* 6. A Moving Point of Balance #6 (Chakra #5 — Third Eye) 7'x7', gold leaf, broken glass, microglitter, foil, fabric and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of the artist.
- \* 7. A Moving Point of Balance #7 (Chakra #7 — Crown) 7'x7', gold leaf, broken glass, microglitter, foil, quartz crystal and mixed media on linen, 1985, collection of the artist.

## ALCHEMY SERIES

The series was exhibited in the "Transformative Vision" at the Newhouse Center for Contemporary Art, March-April 1988. Staten Island, New York.

17. Alchemy #1 5'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
18. Alchemy #2 5'x4', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Tooker.
19. Alchemy #3 5'x4', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Herbert F. Johnson Museum, Cornell Univ.
20. Alchemy #4 4'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.

21. Alchemy #5 6'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Tom Cole.
22. Alchemy #6 5'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, copper, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
- \*23. Alchemy #7 6'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, copper, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
24. Alchemy #8 5'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Brian Monieson.
25. Alchemy #9 5'x5', azurite, quartz crystals, shards, rose quartz, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, amethyst, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Ms. Phyllis Blomme.

## CELESTIAL VISITATION SERIES

Exhibited at Elaine Horwitch Galleries in Scottsdale, Arizona, April 21-May 10, 1988.

- \*26. Celestial Visitations #1 (The Angels of Joyousness) 5'x6', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
- \*27. Celestial Visitations #2 (The Angels of Shared Purpose) 6'x5', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
28. Celestial Visitations #3 (The Angel of Compassion) 6'x5', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1987, collection of Stephen Larsen.
- \*29. Celestial Visitations #4 (The Angel of Irrevocable Choice) 5'x4', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla, feathers and mixed media on canvas, 1987, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
- \*30. Celestial Visitations #5 (The Angel of Deliverance) 6'x5', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
31. Celestial Visitations #6 (The Angel of Omnipotence) 5'x4', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
32. Celestial Visitations #7 (The Angel of Healing) 5'x6', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
- \*33. Celestial Visitations #8 (The Angel of Destiny) 6'x5', quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
34. Celestial Visitations #9 (The Angels of All Living Creatures) triptych 4'x4' (each panel), quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, courtesy Elaine Horwitch Galleries.
35. Celestial Visitations #10 (The Angels of the Dancing Light) diptych 6'x5' (each panel), quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Gary Tooker.
36. Celestial Visitations #11 (The Angel of Harmony) triptych (three panels) 23"x16", 19"x20", 23"x16", quartz crystals, rose quartz, shards, gold leaf, silver leaf, mica, broken mirror, amethyst, azurite, chrysocolla and mixed media on canvas, 1988, collection of Mr. and Mrs. L. Guli.
39. Celestial Visitations #12 (The Angel of Abundance) 41"x33", gold leaf, silver leaf and mixed media on paper, 1988, collection of Ms. Mari Anne Pyron.
40. Celestial Visitations #13 (The Angel of the Fruits of the Earth) 34 1/4"x42 1/2", gold leaf, silver leaf, and mixed media on paper, 1988, collection of Ms. Adele Seronde.
41. Celestial Visitations #14 (The Angel of Confluence) 36"x47 1/2", gold leaf, silver leaf, feathers and mixed media on paper, 1988, collection of Mr. Stephane Janssen.
42. Celestial Visitations #15 (The Angel of the Spheres) 36"x47 1/2", gold leaf, silver leaf, feathers and mixed media on canvas, 1988, collection of Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Linzer.

# Acknowledgements for A Moving Point of Balance

*It is with deep gratitude that I would like to thank  
the following: — BAS*

*Our goal is to have a permanent home for A  
Moving Point of Balance, where people may  
come to rest, to meditate and to renew themselves.*



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