

JEWISH ARTISTS: ART LAB
SABES JCC/BETH EL SYNAGOGUE
SPRING 2016

PRESENTATION for FEB 9, 2016

Roslye Ultan /words & poems; Sharon Stillman/images & words

Selected poems: Roslye Ultan

WISDOM IN WORD & IMAGE: LITERARY & VISUAL PERCEPTIONS

*The Hebrew word Kabbalah means to receive. It is said that there are four ways to perceive the scriptures. The first is literally, the second allegorically, the third philosophically and the fourth mystically...Every time two travel together and talk about the Torah, they are visited by a presence from the other world. **Zohar***

*The hermit said: "Because the world is mad.
The only way through the world is to learn
The arts and double the madness, are you Listening?"*

*Robert Bly, Listening, **The Night Abraham Called to the Stars***

*Every way of knowing is blessed by bootleggers.
Because the government does not allow delight
To be sold, you have to find it on the country roads.*

*Robert Bly, The Country Roads, **The Night Abraham Called to the Stars***

The Hebrew Alphabet: A Mystical Journey

Aleph: represents and begins the word for Divine unity; everything in the universe is interconnected and composed of Divine Oneness. Meditate upon Aleph when seeking that spark of creativity to forge a new project. Add Vav to strengthen a sense of interconnection.

KABBALAH Wisdom (to receive)

Ten are the Sefirot that came out of nothingness, not nine-ten-eleven. Ponder this knowledge of wisdom, understand it and set the creator upon his throne again. Sefer Yezirah

Deuteronomy 32:7, 10, 13 ...even in unlikely places nourishment can be found:

Remember the days of old...He found him in the wilderness land...He set him upon the high place of the earth...That he might eat the yield of the land... That he might suckle honey from the rock.

The Book of Creation/ The Poetry of Kabbalah: Mystical Verse from the Jewish Tradition

The angel Metatron said to me:

Come and I will show you

The letters by which heaven and earth were created;

The letters by which seas and rivers were created;

The letters by which mountains and hills were created;

The letters by which trees and grasses were created;

The letters by which stars and constellations were created;

The letters by which wisdom and understanding, knowledge and intelligence, humility and rectitude were created, by which the whole world is sustained. (homage to Ezra Pound; to build a world)

The Divine in Hokhmah: A Woman's Kabbalah/wisdom frequently described as She in the Bible
Proverbs 3:13-18

*Happy are those that findeth wisdom,
And those that getteth understanding;
For its merchandise is better than the merchandise of silver;
And the gain thereof than fine gold...
Her ways are ways of pleasantness,
And all her paths are peace.
She is the Tree of Life to them that lay hold upon her:
And happy is everyone that retaineth her...*

Rukeyser (Out of Silence: Selected Poems (the tiniest creative exchange between one person and another could elicit an awakening))

*I think of the image brought into my room
Of the sage and the thin young man who flickers
and asks. He is asking about the moment when the
Buddha Offers the lotus, a flower held out as
declaration. Isn't that fragile? He asks. The sage
answers: I speak to you. You speak to me is that
Fragile?*

Howl and Other Poems, Allen Ginsberg

*Song (selected stanzas)
The weight of the world
Is love
Under the burden of
Solitude,
Under the burden of dissatisfaction
The weight,
The weight we carry
Is love...
Obsessed with angels
Or machines,
The final wish
Is love...*

Group Divided into 3-5 / results either individual or as group

Workshop: borrow a line or theme from one of these poems to create your own piece with images

Words of Wisdom

"What do you suppose an artist is? If a painter, an imbecile who has nothing but eyes, nothing but ears if a musician, a lyre at every level of his heart if he is a poet, nothing but muscles if he is a boxer? Quite the contrary, he is a political being, constantly aware of what is going on in the world, whether it be harrowing, bitter, or sweet, and he cannot help being shaped by it. No, painting is not interior decoration. It is an instrument of war for offense and defense against the enemy" Pablo Picasso

"A fool says what he knows, and a wise man knows what he says" Yiddish Proverb
What are you trying to "say" when you make art?

How does wisdom play a role in your creative process? Think about the knowledge/wisdom you have as an artist and how that helps you to make art/write a poem/take a photograph?.

What's your creative process? Does your creative process include any of these steps: Inspiration? Percolation? Preparation? Creation? Reflection?
Are you a planner or an intuitive when you create? Why do you think one approach is more successful than another?

On a lighter note.....

