
Anniversary Edition

PERIPHERAL **ART**ERIES

CONTEMPORARY **ART** REVIEW

Special Edition

Installation • Painting • Mixed media • Drawing • Performance • Public Art • Drawing • Video art • Fine Art Photography



ORIT MARTIN
REVITAL LESSICK
MYRIAM GRAS
DANIELLE BAUDRAND
JEHAN HANJE
OZIE
GINA LOVE
ELISABETA VLAD
RAQUEL FORNASARO

Orit Martin



A work by Orit Martin

Peripheral **ARTeries** meets

Orit Martin

Lives and works in Jerusalem, Israel

My art is digital art, printed on canvases in limited and numbered edition. my paintings provide a new dimension to Jewish contemporary art. The paintings address the relationships and linkages among opposites in our experience: the transitory and the eternal, the spiritual and the concrete, the tangible and the abstract, Heaven and earth, the digital pixel and the stroke of the brush, the figurative and the abstract.

I draws inspiration for my art from the Kabbalah, from the Zohar, and from Jewish motifs. my art, however, has a universal character.

my art deals with existential topics such as the connection between soul and body, man's place in the universe, and man's facing the world and the Creator.

An interview by **Josh Ryder**, curator
and **Melissa C. Hilborn**, curator
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Adressing the viewers to a multilayered visual experience, Orit Martin's work accomplishes the difficult task of connecting opposites: the temporary and the eternal, the spiritual and the physical, the lower and the upper realms. In her captivating body of works that we'll be discussing in the following pages, create an insightful combination between traditional symbolism and the realm of imagination the viewers' perceptual and cultural parameters: we are very pleased to introduce our readers to her stimulating and multifaceted artistic production.

Hello Orit and welcome to Peripheral ARTeries: we would start this interview with a couple of questions about your multifaceted background. Are there any experiences that

particularly influence the way you currently conceive your works? And in particular, how does your cultural substratum inform the way you relate yourself to art making and to the beauty that you capture through your practice?

I remember connecting to art from a very early age. When I was two years old, my father made me a beautiful kaleidoscope, the kind you place opposite the sun and then look into it, to see colorful shapes turning inside of it. For me, this was an amazing experience.

We set together on the terrace and through the light that would reflect from the glass, we would see all sorts of images.

Years later, I realized that it was this experience which influenced me to search for images in the sky, especially in the spiritual sky... Since I remember myself, I have always





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been drawing and at a certain point I understood that I have been given a certain kind of gift and that actually is a very special treasure, to be able to see images inside my head, or may be... In the soul, actually... I suppose this is what we call 'inspiration'. I see images all the time and these connect to whatever spiritual issues I'm involved in, at the time. Musicians, for example, receive this illumination in the form of musical notes. Writers receive it as words. When I create pictures, I simply feel a tremendous urge to share with other people the images that I am, sort of, given, or seeing in my mind.

Your works convey a coherent sense of unity, that rejects any conventional classification. Before starting to elaborate about your production, we would suggest to our readers to visit <http://www.oritmartin.com> in order to get a synoptic view of your work: in the meanwhile, would you like to tell to our readers something about your process and set up? In particular, are your works painted gesturally, instinctively? Or do you methodically transpose geometric schemes from paper to canvas?

My art is Digital art, I use the computer as a painting tool; When you create digital art, most of the process is done on the computer using different applications.

This technique allows the artist to achieve precise nuances and transparencies of color that can not be reached in oils or acrylic. I work with many layers of painting (sometimes up to 60-70 layers) that reflected on each other and it creates very special effects of color and light. The final "original" image is a digital file ready to be printed. The images are printed on high quality canvas as limited editions. Each print is signed and numbered, stretched on a wood frame. Their bright, sharp appearance resembles an original oil painting. As an artist, my major purpose is transmitting visual information to as many people as possible. It was essential to me

to multiply my ideas and images and develop a line of affordable artworks. Therefore I create limited edition for each painting till 150 copies. A limited edition art has higher value than an open edition: the artist has the control over the number of multiples, and the prints hand-signed and numbered. The main idea behind small editions is, to preserve the artistic value of each multiple. (The less multiples of an artwork exist, the higher their value). Giclee' printing offers a flexible and convenient method of work: it is possible to prepare the digital files for printing in any desired size. the resulted artwork is similar to original oil or acrylic painting, with long-lasting vivid colors.

Each is stretched over a wooden frame ready to hang. 3) Do you think that there is a central idea that connects all of your work as an artist?

The main idea is the belief in spiritual life, and belief in the world that exists after life, a belief that our lives have deep spiritual meaning, and that our soul reaches here, to this world for a certain purpose. I try through art to illustrate as much as possible these spiritual spaces and landscapes that I feel in my soul, and see in my mind. I was exposed to the stories of people who had been through near-death experiences and these stories were tantalizing, for me.

I was fascinated by every detail of these accounts and started reading the research on this topic.

Today, there are many scientific researches that proves there is some kind of consciousness which continues to exist, after the bodily death. Besides this, today there are millions of testimonials, of people who have awakened from clinical death and were able to recount conversations their doctors had held over their previously dead bodies. So we know this isn't just some kind of cerebral hallucination - but real experiences.



For this special edition of Peripheral ARTeries we have selected *The Secret and Free Mind*, a couple of interesting works that our readers have already started to admire in the introductory pages of this article. What has at

once captured our attention of your artistic inquiry into the relationship between spirituality and imagination is the way you provided the visual results of your analysis with autonomous aesthetics: would you walk our



readers through the genesis of selected The Secret and Free Mind?

The picture I call The Secret - describes the secret or the mystery that we all are searching for its answer - the riddle of life and death.

The pit that the child see is gravesite, that usually signifies the end. but the child sees Here a new beginning. because he is a child, he can think "out of the box". The answer to these great questions can only be found



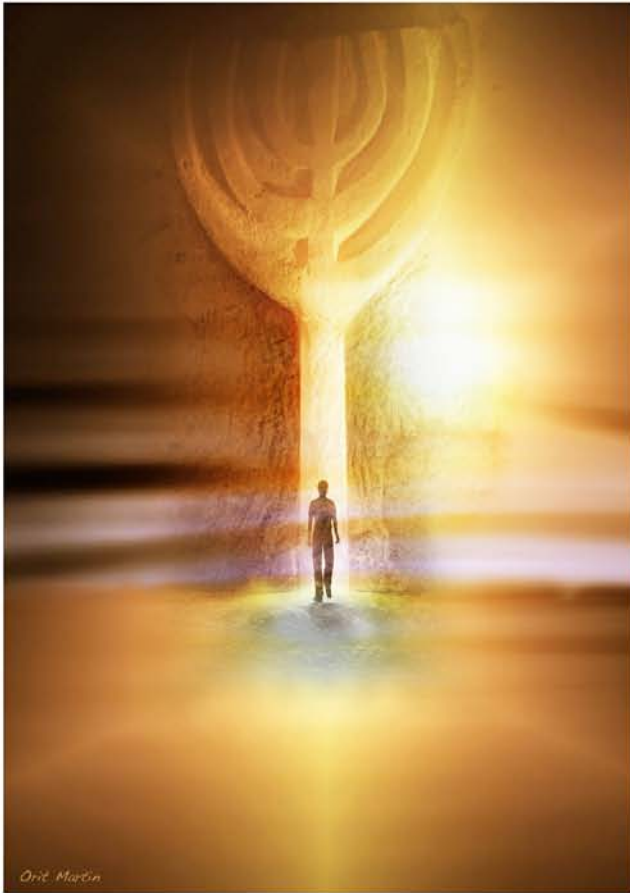


outside the box of ordinary thought. There's an impossible combination in the painting that invites us to think about the end of life in a new way. This may be just the beginning of a new world... The image of "free mind" also deals with a similar subject. There is a Jewish saying that the place you think about- is where you are. The child, is depicted in black and white, sits shriveled, and he may be look sad or depressed, but his thought can take him to a world full of joy and Color. Because the mind- has a very powerful force. This is the message of the picture.

Your artistic practice seems to aim to look inside of what appear to be seen, rather than its surface, providing the spectatorship with freedom to realize their own perception: we

like the way Elevation, rather than attempting to establish any univocal sense seems to urge the viewers to elaborate personal associations: when discussing about the role of randomness in your process, would you tell us how much important is for you that the spectatorship rethink the concepts you convey in your pieces, elaborating personal meanings?

I call my art - art for the soul because it really comes from a deep and inner place in me, and I hope that the images will create a similar experience in the viewer, and touch his deep inner point Someone once said about my paintings that they are an invitation to associate with your soul. There is a well-known saying that one picture is worth more than a



thousand words, because it evokes an emotional experience, while words can provoke resistance. I am trying to create a spiritual experience in the viewer, to activate the desire for connection with the Supreme Spiritual World. I try to depict the enlightenment that can be attained through connection to the spiritual world

Obviously, expressing such deep sentiments is not simple... in fact, this is a veritable challenge!

Anger or strong emotion- for example, can be expressed by splotches of bold red or orange; tranquility can be communicated via shades of blues but how in the world, can you express in concrete media, the longing of the soul to its

Creator? I'm not interested in creating for the sake of esthetics alone. Rather, the deeper meaning and the spiritual experience, that I hope people go through, by viewing my artwork, are what interest me.

Your works are rich with symbols and references to Jewish tradition and values: how would you consider the role of symbols in your practice? My art can be defined as contemporary Jewish art . I derive my inspiration from the Kabbalah (Which is the inner and mystical aspect of the Torah) the Zohar book, and ancient Jewish symbols, but my paintings have a universal character. My art offers to the viewer a new visual expression of spiritual and mystical





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perception, such as: enlightenment, awareness and meditation.

Classical Jewish art has always portrayed Jewish daily life, or places that are sacred in Judaism, but, it seems to me that even the most tantalizing painting of The Western Wall or Jerusalem, for example, moving as it may be, cannot convey the ups and downs one

experiences within the Processes of spiritual development, and spiritual consciousness.

Jewish art has always been extremely cautious regarding anything that has to do with imagery, so this is yet another challenge.

I regard this as a creative challenge that causes me to search for new ways to express the Jewish spirit .

Over the years your works have been internationally showcased in several occasions, including your recent solo at the community centre of Foster City, California. One of the hallmarks of your practice is the capability to create direct involvement with the viewers, who are urged to evolve from a condition of mere spectatorship. So before leaving this conversation we would like to pose a question about the nature of the relationship of your art with your audience. Do you consider the issue of audience reception as being a crucial component of your decision-making process, in terms of what type of language is used in a particular context?

It is very important to me that the viewers of my works awaken in their hearts excitement and spiritual yearning.

Someone once said about my paintings that they are an invitation to associate with your soul. There is a well-known saying that one picture is worth more than a thousand words, because it evokes an emotional experience, while words can provoke resistance. I am trying to create a spiritual experience in the viewer, to activate the desire for connection with the Supreme Spiritual World. I once exhibited my works in Massada, and went there only one time, to hang the paintings.

As fate would have it, on that very day, there was a group of tourists there, among them an elderly Jew, over eighty years old. He came over to me, pointing to one of my works, titled "the path of light", and told me he had just purchased it two days earlier, in a gallery in Safed. He said his wife had died half a year earlier and that since then, he'd felt extremely lonely but when he saw this picture, he felt as if he was receiving a Divine message, telling him

that G-d is with him. This miracle, of a person coming halfway around the world to tell me this, and on the only day That would be there, was a fortifying experience for me and made me feel really good about the comfort and solace my works contain, I hope..

There was a group of Chinese tourists, with spiritual inclinations who just fell in love with my paintings, at an exhibit they had been in. The guard of this place, told me later that he had great difficulty getting them out of there, when it was time to close. In the end, they ordered no less than 48 works, which I had to send through special delivery, all the way to China. And to this day, I am still in touch with this group and have even had an exhibit in China. So, you see, even though my artwork draws upon Jewish and specifically, Kaballistic motifs, they contain a universal quality, which anyone can connect to.

Thanks a lot for your time and for sharing your thoughts, Orit. Finally, would you like to tell us readers something about your future projects? How do you see your work evolving?

I exhibit the paintings in my studio- gallery in Jerusalem, and I am taking part with a permanent exhibition in a new gallery in Old Acko near the Ramhal's ancient synagogue, I am planning another exhibition in Tel Aviv and in California and you can also see all the paintings on my website:

www.oritmartin.com.

Thank you very much !!

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