

Questions and Answers with Gloria Vanderbilt

by Colleen Pepper Ayala

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1. Throughout your life as an artist, you have created paintings, collages, and Dream Boxes. Which is your favorite media in which to work? Why?

GV: I am passionate about whatever medium I am working in at the moment.

2. What compels you to paint in oils?

GV: Oils lend themselves to a solidity I very much like. Sometimes oils combined with acrylics give another dimension to oils which I use to achieve a translucent effect.

3. What determines if your paintings are created on canvas or gesso?

GV: Gesso has a resistant quality. Canvas is yielding. I know not why I choose to work on one rather than the other, except that I am drawn to whichever according to the subject. I also paint on wood and glass. All have their own unique inherent possibilities.

4. What drew you to art and continues to drive you as an artist?

GV: I started painting as a child and never stopped.

5. Am I understanding correctly that inspirations are derived from your appetite for life influenced by memories and beauty of a person?

GV: Appetite for life means that one is hungry for life experience and that it is a never-ending feast of discovery. Mary Oliver's poem "Messenger" begins, "My work is loving the world," a poem of the miraculous in the everyday. The poet's work is seen to be the same as the artist's work, "...which is mostly standing still and learning to be/astonished."

6. If the answer is no, what are your inspirations, or what attracts you to the subject matter that you focus upon or paint?

GV: My inspiration comes from a place the Australian Aborigines call "dreamtime." A spiritual dimension in daily life, which is not only self-evident, but more real than the material world and is experienced in sleep and in moments of vision. It is timeless and "everywhere." I believe art, poetry, and writing come from somewhere outside conscious control and that is where inspiration resides.

7. What are your current projects in art? I know that a book is scheduled for publication in 2009 but what else do you have scheduled in the horizon?

GV: I am presently working on a series of "dream-scape" paintings which relate to my novel *Obsession* (published 2009, Ecco Harper Collins), a psychologically sophisticated allegory of two personae – one non-sexual Apollonian, and the other aesthetic Dionysian – powerfully repelled and ultimately dynamically attracted to each other achieving a universal understanding of identity.

8. How do you like to spend your time for rejuvenation?

GV: Going to museums/movies/connecting with nature/catching up with friends.

9. What else that you would love to say in regards to what your artwork has given you and what it has given to others from all walks of life?

GV: Art is communication. We are all connected and it makes me happy when I reach a person through my vision.