

unseen avenue



ROSEMARY STARACE

unseen avenue

ROSEMARY STARACE

Argotist Ebooks

unseen avenue

CONTENTS

Click on title below to go to a page. To return here, click on to Contents at bottom left.

Introduction—A way of art

A note on format

For I realized

All right, agreed

A mystery lures us

Artists have found it useful

Who are you kidding?

At least draw

They always found something

A practice of small

Yes, this

A sabbatical for each

Opinions and moods

The silver

Self—

I wish

Able to take it

We require

If I didn't have to

I feel

Not know

Obsession dam

Really whole heart

I remember

I fall in

If you love blue velvet

Years of my delight

Worries often come over

My name is

Acknowledgments

About the author

A WAY OF ART

These image-poems are derived from Julia Cameron’s book, *The Artist’s Way*.^{*} My engagement with this iconic book began accidentally; my interest deepened as I discovered in the process of working a hidden, personal, and more enigmatic, “artist’s way.”

Starting with pages torn from the Cameron book, I mined and marked the existing text, enacting the ways of art upon prose that was attempting to elucidate it. I collaborated with a fixed object, finding opportunity in what was already given.

With each piece, I started from the top and worked down, obliterating the text that surrounded words that caught my eye. The first words set a theme or a tone, suggesting what might follow. I sometimes un-erased words I had first removed, or added tape, netting, and other materials of varying opacity to create layers and echoes. The poems that appeared surprised me; their content was both tethered to and released from the original prose, and from my conscious intent. First I balked at, then reveled in, their sometimes strange syntax and ambiguous punctuation. The poems felt primitive and oracular, as though pulled from the depths.

When the initial versions were complete, I exhibited them as a horizontal scroll, a path to read and contemplate. But I was moved to do additional iterations, which included copying the resulting poems by hand, sending them to a friend for re-use in his visual art, and finally returning my dimensional text-images to typographic flatness for combining into another book—this one. An iteration is an iteration.

An aspect of these and other hybrid works is that they connect two activities usually thought of as separate: writing and drawing. As both a writer and visual artist, this especially interests me. Is a poem written down or typed always also a drawing? How is a visual mark like or unlike a word? (Consider Emily Dickinson’s handwritten originals: her elaborate dashes and empty spaces.) And how does the arrangement of shapes/marks/letters/words affect meaning? Does one modality stand in front of the other, or are they like quantum events that can be two things at once, depending on the viewer and the point of view?

The “ways” of erasure, redaction, and page alteration are analogous to other creative processes and methods, like dreaming, where images appear unbidden, charged with an elusive resonance. Or like divination, in which tea leaves of text are studied to reveal hidden meaning. I think also of direct carving in stone, exemplified by Michelangelo’s famous and perhaps apocryphal, “I simply remove what is *not* the sculpture.” I think of illuminated manuscripts, which enfold ornamentation into the text, as well as employ it to decorate and elaborate. And of the palimpsest—though here are texts erased not for need of clean surface, but for the purpose of creating contexts that buoy and cradle the remaining words.

The residue of removal is not hidden, even in these virtual representations. This way of working allows the artist/writer to present a finished piece *and* show or account for its history. The reader can follow a trail of chips and smudges, or sense the *absences* that qualify the area around the remaining text. Art rarely arises full-blown or in isolation. That which comes before is integral to the outcome. The dust is also the art, say these pieces.

—Rosemary Starace

* *The Artist’s Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity*, Julia Cameron, Jeremy P. Tarcher/Putnam, New York, 1992. (The earliest editions list Mark Bryan as co-author “with” Cameron. Later editions cite only Cameron as the author. Some editions list Tarcher/Perigee as publisher.)

A NOTE ON FORMAT

The word spacing in these pieces corresponds roughly to the place the words occupied in the original text. The colors, shapes, and non-textual glyphs loosely approximate the overlays and marks on the first redactions I made, and seek to support meaning and add nuance.

The boxed comments outside the main areas echo the side column quotes in the Cameron book. Handwriting and sans serif fonts indicate margin notes and stamps I found in the used copy I worked from.

The numbers at the top of the pages in this collection correspond to the page numbers in the original book, so that the two texts can be compared.

X

X

X

all right, good agreed
morning.
And then,
wonderful
melting. dawn chant
freely.
the morning such
beauty and
morning. a great deal of
inner work
allowed
letters and bread.
morning
her first poem.
graceful use of
and
moved her to.
you may
you want
long to.
Often,
to love. In fact, mornings come
loving morning is
suddenly

Experience

A mystery lures us

the Changing

known

if I light this stick of incense,

*see a
flower
friend.*

idling

may tip us over

artists have found it useful.

this is no accident.

LOOK

our attention

CONTRACT

I _____

I _____

I _____ further understand

I _____

_____ ()

_____ ()

XXXXX
XXXXX

Who are you kidding? . . .

rotten

ugly little

violently to mind

always

disparagement.

“I am a brilliant

deep
of self abuse

torrent

torrent.....rotten

embarrassment

villain incident

ashamed

malevolent

a sexual

attention,

rotten

festered

ROTTEN

someone could praise

and not mean it.

at least draw a nice red X through it

