

About: **A STORY FOR THE ELEVENTH HOUR**

Collectively, the paintings in ***A Story for the Eleventh Hour*** create a symbolic myth, a visual mantra that invites viewers to look into themselves and find their way by placing their own personal story within the larger contexts of the story of humankind and the universe itself. (Jean Houston in her book **The Search for the Beloved** discusses how, in order to develop, we must die to one story, one myth, to be reborn into a larger one.)

My myth, ***A Story for the Eleventh Hour***, incorporates visual elements from philosophical and religious systems such as that of the American Indian, Buddhism, Christianity, the Cabala, the chakra system of yoga and the even more esoteric systems of learning such as that of the *Seven Rays* as well as poetry by T.S. Eliot.

The series includes eight painting following the evolution of the universe and humanity within it, plus a subset of seven works consisting of ***A Personal Story*** representing phases of biological and spiritual development in an individual (*Wounding, Childhood, Adulthood, Maturity, Initiation, Integration, and Transformation*). Each of these seven images corresponds to one of the seven chakras of certain systems of yoga.

The paintings in ***A Personal Story*** also incorporate an image of me at age five as well as images from one of my favorite books, **Sensitive Chaos, the Creation of Flowing Form in Water and Air** by Theodor Schwenk.

Four main themes may be synthesized from my myth:

1. A Cosmological Journey of Being. The series recounts a voyage of being, the developmental journey of the universe and of the human race from the Big

Bang/sperm-fertilizing-egg to coalescence out of the void of the galaxies/of minds, through the stages of self and, finally, into the peace of enlightenment, a nirvana where "I" and "thou" are one. At this final stage, each life achieves a Buddha-like existence at peace with earth (the world of people) and sky (the world of the spirit). Finally, enough human beings achieve compassionate interdependence so that Buddha consciousness spreads from earth to nearby stars and further out into the reaches of time.

2. A Biological and Spiritual Journey of Self. The image of the triune eye (the "I – Eye – Aye") as well as a counterpoint image, "dying," dominates the message imputed to the viewer of *A Story for the Eleventh Hour*.

- The "I" of ego
- The "eye" of seeing
- The "aye" of affirmation
- The "dying" that occurs with the giving up of ego

A person travels from the smaller story (the "I" of ego) by seeing into the larger story (the "aye" of affirmation), a passage that asks for a giving-up of self in exchange for a belief in others, both as individual beings and, collectively, as humankind.

3. Visualizing Metaphysical and Spiritual Concepts. *A Story for the Eleventh Hour* hopefully reminds us that all metaphysical systems say the same thing, that all life is sacred.

The series suggest Buddha consciousness will spread universally when enough humans achieve enlightenment in a manner analogous to the teachings of the English philosopher Rupert Sheldrake who proposes a morphic resonance whereby natural systems may inherit a collective memory from all previous things of their kind.

Another esoteric source integrated into this series is Helen Burmester's **Seven Rays Made Visual**, teachings described by Alice Bailey (**The Treatise on the Seven Rays**) as given to her by Djwhal Khul, a Tibetan master; these teachings purport to provide a key to a preliminary understanding of the *Divine Plan of Creation* on cosmic, solar, planetary, human, and subhuman levels, and our place in the scheme as a whole. It proposes a holistic approach, a synthesis of invisible and visible worlds.

4. Still Time. Confucius said, "Everything flows on and on like a river, without pause, day and night."

T.S. Eliot's poetry (*Burnt Norton* and *The Wasteland*) provides the source for titles to four of the paintings in this series. Eliot considers the concept of time most strongly in the "Four Quartets":

Time present and time past
Are both perhaps present in time future,
And time future contained in time past.
If all time is eternally present
All time is unredeemable.

All things change. The great wheel of the law set spinning by the Buddha started in motion a new cycle of existence that eventually will be supplanted by a new Buddha. The universe may once again coalesce into a primordial point only to spark forth once again. We are born. We die. This is the karma of what it means to be alive and sentient.

We are at the eleventh hour.

Yet, there is still time.