

STATEMENT BY LESZEK FORCZEK
RE: ILLUMINISM - LIGHT AND DARK

Darkness. Light and darkness are the underlying realities of Nature, the Cosmos, and the individual soul.

One way of thinking about Painting is to see it in six aspects. The first three are: objects, form, and color. The second three are: light, space and movement. The latter three, light, space and movement, comprise the inner and invisible aspect of painting.

Strictly speaking, we do not see light, space and movement, but only experience their effect in our environment. In this sense, objects (matter), color, and form are the outer dimensions and manifestation.

Color links the inner and outer. The symbolism and mysteries of light and darkness as regarding ILLUMINISM, are traceable to ancient Persia and the historical figure of Manes. However, Taoist painting and Buddhist painting, although emphasizing nature and landscape, also contained a profound mystical element of the esoteric dimension of light and darkness, as well as space and movement.

ILLUMINISM and the quest for light, strongly developed as a theosophy during the Middle Ages, during Five Centuries of the Ikon culture which ended about the time of Cinambue and FraAngelica. One artist in particular created an amazing bridge between the Gothic and the Renaissance, and that was M. Gruenewald. His paintings are still considered as some of the most enigmatic and moving works ever created in the Christian tradition.

Other painters such as Rembrandt, Turner, Blake, and Cotman, have also contributed to the development of ILLUMINISM. Although ILLUMINISM stands on the shoulders of many great artists of the past, it was Rudolf Steiner Ph.D., the founder of Anthroposophy, who must be credited with most of its current development. Dr. Steiner was active during the time of great influx of Eastern spiritual influences in the West. He actively responded to the request of artists such as Kandinsky and Mondrian who were searching for a spiritual meaning in painting, during a time of chaos and crisis. Today, spiritual eclecticism along with trans-personal psychology, are commonplace. Dr. Steiner was exceptional amongst the avant-garde leaders in this compelling search for universal, global spiritual-social reform.

As his main inspiration, he drew from Goethe, the author of Faust and Goethe's Color Theory. Since his early work at university, Rudolf Steiner distinguished himself from a plethora of spiritual-religious leaders, by pragmatism and active interest, experimentation and research into color in art, science and spirituality. Having been

gifted with clairvoyance from youth, Dr. Steiner provided artists with a new basis to approach art, color and painting. Especially, he made the correlation between light, color and darkness with thinking, feeling and willing. This understanding of color as integral to the evolution of the human being, both cosmic and physical, was able to endow Art with a healing and spiritual property which appears to have a long future ahead of it.

The inspiration, instruction and illustrations examples provided by Dr. Rudolf Steiner are a continued source of inspiration for the spiritually-oriented artist. His voluminous teachings contain countless references to light, color and darkness. Despite this, Illuminism is created in the spirit of independent thinking, to which Dr. Steiner devoted his life.

Two artists in particular must be mentioned regarding the development of Dr. Steiner's indications. They are Arnold Von Rosenkrantz and my teacher, Liane Collot d'Herbois. Both of these accomplished and professional artists realized the importance of evolving the technical means to implement spiritual concept into painting. Both artists searched throughout their lives for a means by which to paint out of the light, in large, translucent, films or planes of color. An expression very familiar to Anthroposophic painting is that of "form arising out of color."

There are many meanings and possibilities to this seminal phrase. Both dedicated painters were determined to create paintings in which there was a sense of space developed through the sequencing of color. Secondly, they cultivated a luminosity, or at times an incandescent opalescence which glowed from within the color. Finally, they sought a sense of movement throughout the painting since Dr. Steiner constantly referred to color as movement to free painting from its static condition. Form out of Color, to this day continues to unveil its mysteries.

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