



I am a painter whose work celebrates the Hero's journey and my personal exploration of the myth of creation. I juxtapose realistic and abstract styles, combining oil and collage materials on canvas. I am currently able to focus full time to my artistic practice, but this was not always the case.

Leaving art school presented me with a real quandary. How was I going to sustain my artistic practice, develop at my own pace and on my own terms while having adequate resources to live on? I also wanted to be of service and spread the word of how art can help us identify and refine our innate gifts and talents. Building on my background in both art and psychology I decided to become an art educator. My first position came as art teacher to severely developmentally challenged adults. This experience convinced me of the power of art to provide a voice and release for those who felt silenced, unacknowledged and cast aside. Art became a lifeline to this population, as it was to me.

After 7 years I went on to teach art to elementary students in the New Jersey Public School system. This allowed me to grow artistically, expand my range of interests and earn a Master's Degree in Painting from William Paterson University. As an art educator at Andover Regional School District for 20 years I enjoyed designing creative encounters that were multi-stepped, process oriented and open-ended assignments. Witnessing how each student uniquely approached and responded to each project greatly expanded my personal vision.

In June of 2013 I retired from teaching and began to redefine my self as an exhibiting artist. I was soon given the opportunity to participate in a 2-person exhibit, "Capturing Nature" at Gallery 14 Maple, the co-sponsored gallery of The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and Morris Arts.

The Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation was present all those years I was teaching, offering programs and platforms to artists, students and the general public. It provided fellowships to inspire teachers and it exposed children to countless cultural programs that had profound impact on their lives. It sponsored festivals that celebrated poetry, music, visual and performing arts during times of economic strain

and waning support. It worked behind the scenes sponsoring organizations that may have closed their doors if not for the Foundation's belief, encouragement and generous support.

Morris Arts was also an invaluable resource while in the classroom. They are ever active in connecting teachers and students to artists in the community. They have always been leaders in advocating for quality arts programming in area schools. The Gallery at 14 Maple exhibit helped me redefine myself as a professional artist and provided me a bridge between my two chosen careers. To have an inaugural exhibit with the sponsorship of the two organizations that nurtured me for so long as an educator was extremely fulfilling.

I created a catalog of the exhibition and this has been a great asset to me in applying for future opportunities. In December of this year the Romano Gallery at Blair Academy, Blairstown, NJ, will sponsor "A New Earth Is Begun", my first solo exhibit of painting and verse. The opening reception will be December 3, 7-8pm. There will be a weekend reception, Sunday, December 6, 2-4pm. I will always be grateful for The Dodge Foundation and Morris Arts for their inspiration and sponsorship in shaping my two careers in the arts.

Joseph Losavio