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*David Blum, The Dachshund Quartet (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches*

## Pictures from the Unconscious

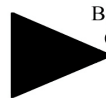
**David Blum**

The source material for the text comes from David Blum's personal diaries, dream journals, an unpublished manuscript, "Pictures from the Unconscious," and the DVD transcript from "Appointment with the Wise Old Dog."

## THE ANIMA



*Pastoral Symphony I* (1964), oil pastel on paper, 23.5 x 17.5 inches



Beethoven, Symphony No. 6 in F Major  
Opus 68, "Pastoral", Finale: Allegretto  
The London Philharmonic,  
Sir Adrian Boult, conductor

*Use lower right corner to shrink player*

### 1—PASTORAL SYMPHONY I

*Dream: A young woman led me through wheat fields that swayed in the wind to the Finale of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. There was a certainty about her, an inevitability in her stride. I felt that it was my fate to be guided by her.*

This was to be the first of my many attempts to paint the Anima, in her continual transformations, and suggests, in a primitive way, something of her knowingness, her resolve. But the marvel of her presence vastly exceeded my artistic ability.

I had no idea then what Mairi's goals were, or the power of consolation she would eventually bring me. Over time, I've come to realize that this feminine presence is not merely a personal experience. She's found in legends and literature. For Dante, she was Beatrice, leading him from Purgatory to Paradise. Goethe spoke of the Eternal Feminine, Jung of the Anima, the feminine form of Soul. She's come to me in dreams, in many different transformations





*Figure 2 Mairi of the Sunset (1964), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches*

## 2—MAIRI OF THE SUNSET

The Sunset is an arc—a half-circle—that is both rainbow and sunset; both are transitions. The rainbow is transition between storm and light, it partakes in both elements—the wild and the serene. Twilight is that which beckons to the world of darkness. Just as the rainbow hovers for a few minutes in the flux; its origin unseen, the sunset spreads wings like an angelic bird that gradually disappears into the darkness. Feeling is constant transfiguration. I must not resist the Anima's rainbow-sunset, although its origin, destination and purpose are unknown to me. As with the Anima of "The Pastoral Symphony," her left hand seems extended towards me. Rainbow and sunset combine again in subsequent paintings: "Imagination is Eternity," "Path of Venus," "Ocean Vision."



Figure 3 *Deirdre in the Glen* (1965), oil pastel on paper, 14 x 16.5 inches

### 3—DEIRDRE IN THE GLEN

*Dream: In her traditional Irish red wool skirt, bare-footed, a young girl runs amidst the green hills in a lonely Irish country-side.*

I can think of nothing more poignantly moving than Synge, in love with Maire O'Neill, working on his play, "Deirdre of the Sorrows," during his last weeks before being brought down by cancer at the age of thirty-eight. The play manifests a spiritual grace rarely attained elsewhere in literature. It is a benediction to the miracle, yet limitation of life:

DEIRDRE: (in a very low voice) "With the tide in a little while we will be journeying again, or is it our own blood maybe will be running away. (She turns and clings to him.) The dawn and evening are a little while, the winter and the summer pass quickly, and what way would you and I, Naisi, have joy forever?"

...It's a heartbreak to the wise that it's for a short space we have the same things only."





Figure 4 *Nature's Daughter Rising Amidst Flames* (1965), oil pastel on paper, 13.5 x 16.5 inches

#### 4—NATURE'S DAUGHTER RISING AMIDST FLAMES

*Dream: From out of deep, flowing waters, a woman arises, like Venus born from the sea. On the shores on either side, cities are consumed in flames. But behind her the trees still bear green leaves. In her hand she holds the sphere of the world, safe from danger.*

Taken on the objective level, Nature survives the agony that mankind inflicts upon himself, and our planet. During the late 1960's, the barbarism of America's intervention in Vietnam aroused such indignation within me that it daily drew me out of myself—away from music, away from introspection. I was desperate to do anything a single citizen could do to change the situation. It depressed me all the more to realize that Vietnam was only one of untold wars of similar brutality which plagued mankind and will continue to do so until man begins to accept responsibility for the dark side of his own psyche. On the subjective level, the Anima arises from the waters of the unconscious to protect the Self, (the inner world-globe). Nature's daughter appears here in all her freshness, bringing her healing-power to the world and to me. Of course, I cannot ignore the suffering around me, yet She wishes me to hold my sense of the value of life inviolate from the flames of my passionate outrage.



Figure 5 *The Peruvian Maiden* (1967), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

## 5—THE PERUVIAN MAIDEN

*Dream: A Peruvian girl with black hair was riding on a train and sat next to a man. She came from the simplest background and resided alone in the jungle in a one-room hut set on stilts. A sophisticated woman tried to distract the man, but he chose the Peruvian girl, and none other, to be his own.*

She resides alone, but content to be within her hut, its walls reflecting the violet of meditation, the gold of value. She bends in simple ritual towards the bowl. If she is preparing food, it is surely food of the spirit. Her posture could be called oriental, but it is, more simply, the universal bodily representation of the act of inner reflection. Nature grows in intertwining profusion around the hut. The water of the unconscious flows by; the stilts are firmly embedded within the stream. Even the serpent finds its home in the setting. The girl lives within nature and partakes of nature, but, as guardian of the soul, she has achieved a repose distinct from nature.





Figure 6 *Our Lady of Chartres* (1967), oil pastel on paper, 23.5 x 17.5 inches

## 6—OUR LADY OF CHARTRES

The spires of Chartres Cathedral reach into the sky, this mighty stone edifice of the Middle Ages evoking the wonder and admiration of modern man despite, or perhaps because of the spiritual transformations of the past seven centuries. Today, when intellectual, religious and cultural ideals are fragmented into thousands of pieces, it becomes all the more precious to place oneself in the shoes of the anonymous Gothic artisan inspired by the unifying image of the Virgin; when each, whether architect, stone mason, glass cutter, humble workman or artist of genius, participated in a central creation, a soaring symphony in stone which might carry the spirit of man closer to the Kingdom of God—without and within.

Taking the picture subjectively, my life is like a Gothic cathedral. Although I am not part of a medieval community, the age-old experience still lives within me. Let me turn from the distractions of modern times and apply myself, like a 13th century man, to the central task of building my cathedral. The stones of my life are interpenetrated by the presence of the Anima. She comes in music, in devotion, and in love; from her meditation arises the architecture of my being. Like a Gothic cathedral, it can never achieve completion because it must always be less complete than the totality it is trying to comprehend. "Notre Dame," builds in stones and dreams...



Figure 7 *Gypsies with Staffs* (1968), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

## 7—GYPSIES WITH STAFFS

*Vision: While in Rome, I had an inner vision of four gypsies on a journey by foot through the countryside—and I thought I should turn this into a painting. They walk between the simple brown of the earth and blue of the sky. Their colorful costumes denote the vitality of their beings. Each carries a staff—the staffs seem almost to be leading them.*

As I strolled down a deserted Roman street, this idea played in my mind when—suddenly, out of nowhere—three gypsy women appeared, beseeching me for money. This was a mysterious meeting with my other—wild—self. The gypsies have much in common with the Anima of "The Pastoral Symphony;" they walk toward the left and carry themselves with the same sort of knowing and determination. In their varied ages and characters they represent diverse aspects of the Anima. The golden-haired and black-haired figures appear many times in my later paintings. They need nothing but themselves. The gypsies are pilgrims, intent on a mysterious journey. They are a part of nature—wild, cunning; free yet relying on the herd principle, humble, yet proud. The gypsy within me says, "Disregard what your instinct does not value." I can venture to say, more than three decades after having painted them that part of their pilgrimage has been to lead me, often against my rational will, on the lonely path towards Individuation.



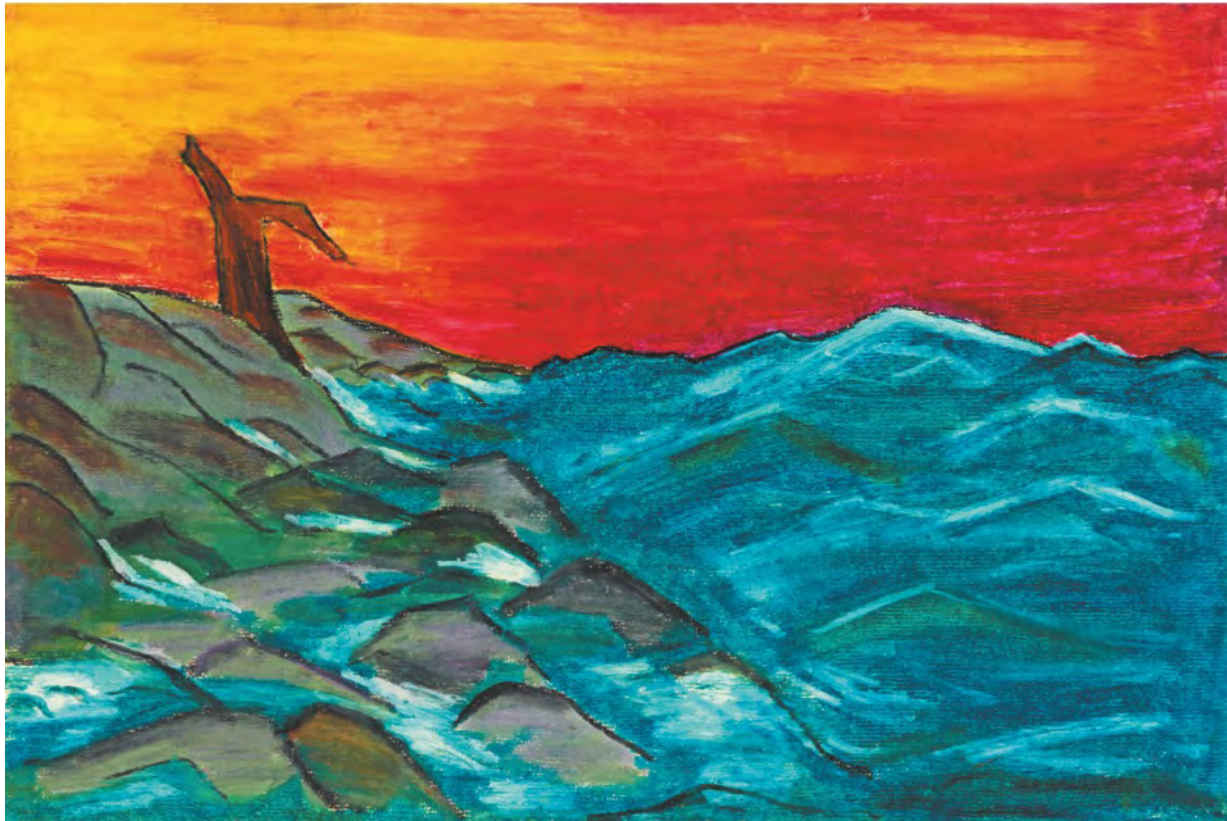


Figure 8 *Nuns with Torches* (1970), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 8—NUNS WITH TORCHES

*Dream: The nuns or priestesses painted in blue robes, carry candles to the transfigured music in the second scene of Act II, from, "La Forza del Destino." This was an actual treasured memory of my first hearing of Verdi's masterpiece, in my eleventh year.*

## CALLED OR UNCALLED



*Figure 9 Seascape (1970), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches*

### 9 – SEASCAPE

*Dream: The wild waves beat against the shore of an island upon which there stands a lone, weather-beaten tree. It is sunrise—"morning ecstasy;" the sky is blood red, streaked with gold. The picture is of a newly created world where water, earth, fire and air are in a primeval state. The tree has withstood many storms. It has lost its leaves but the warmth of the sunlight will restore them. One branch of the tree reaches upward towards the light, the other downward towards the water.*

The sky is the primeval forge whose fire is tended by an omnipotent and omnipresent force. The powerful rocks intermingle with the waves—water being the life source of the unconscious. I am this tree, standing alone in the midst of nature, awaiting rebirth. The painting depicts an openness to the unconscious, an awakening of my feeling side.





Figure 10 *God Will Act* (1971), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 10—GOD WILL ACT

*Dream: I was alone in the midst of a mountain valley. To my amazement, Alfonto's voice was heard: "Trust," he said, "and thou shalt not be alone." I knelt in prayer. From far off, a motorcyclist of death came roaring toward me. Alfonto appeared, raised a golden spear and said, "God Will Act." Instantly, the motorcyclist was destroyed. The Hand of God descended from the sky.*

This is the first time that Alfonto has appeared in a painting. I acquired him when I was six. He lived a peaceful life on a shelf for half a century. This simple frayed and tattered dog, whom some would think fit only for the dust bin, has been raised to the skies to guide and protect me, like one of those animals in a fairy tale, who mysteriously appears to help the protagonist out of danger at a critical moment. He is the non-ego, an uncorrupted essence from within myself. He carries the intuition and wisdom of the Wise Old Dog of my dreams. He is the Old Wise Man in dachshund form.

"God will Act" – what a grand concept, but could I believe in it? After all, I hadn't any idea who or what God may be, or whether God exists at all. And on whose authority was I accepting this pronouncement? That of a toy dachshund. But the dream had startled me, and it seemed inherently right to support my childhood animal when he came on my behalf to battle the forces of chaos.

I've since learned that the wonder of Alfonto's statement is that it can be interpreted on many levels. I've learned from the spirit of Alfonto that "death" can be experienced in many dimensions. One can risk dying spiritually in an hour, a day, a week. Healing isn't confined to getting well physically.



Figure 11 *God Summoned by Mairi* (1973), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

## 11—GOD SUMMONED BY MAIRI

*Dream: I followed the Anima through a tunnel that brought us upwards into the light. A rich, green valley lay before us. As far as the eye could see, all was fertile. It was a balmy day and the serenity of the scene reminded me of Beethoven's Pastoral Symphony. Suddenly there was a fierce rumbling, and a black cloud appeared like a tornado. It was a terrifyingly dark transformation of what had been a scene of bliss.*

*A mighty voice spoke from the tornado: "I am the Biblical God. I have come to remind you always to seek the Righteous Truth."*

*After these words had been uttered, the valley returned to its pristine state, and the Anima said: "This is the Land of Love. I have brought you here that you may never forget it."*





Figure 12 *God of the Wind* (1974), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 16 inches

## 12— GOD OF THE WIND

*Dream: I was rather desperately and ineptly rehearsing Mozart's G minor Symphony. Suddenly there came to my rescue a chariot pulled by four horses, driven by the God of the Wind.*

The image carried such force of reality that I awoke, startled and amazed. Again, I am at a rehearsal, feeling disorganized. (The rehearsal often stands as a metaphor for my efforts to integrate inner divergences into a unified whole.) The Mozart G Minor Symphony, with its balance of dark and light, delineates the path I must follow. As I stand alone, there arrives—like the whirling entrances of the four string sections in the coda of the Leonore III Overture—four horses pulling the God of the Wind—the Breath of Spirit.

This is what happens to a sophisticated modern man who debunks the Old Testament God! God and his four horses may arrive at any time. He may come in the sweep of a storm, in the flow of music, in the rapture of love, in the vastness of inner and outer nature. Autonomous though He is, He can be responsive to us. In 1995, when I faced a renewed radiation treatment for cancer, Leonore III was again invoked in a dream: the music told me that I had to risk going into the dungeon, (as Beethoven's heroine risks her life and goes down to the dungeon to free her beloved Florestan), in order to find my way to liberation.



Figure 13 *Loki* (1976), oil pastel on paper, 18 x 12 inches

### 13—LOKI

*Dream: I was with a man who was the model of civility and refinement. Suddenly, I saw a kneeling naked man with green face and wild hair. The fire he tends is like a tree of flames with branches that rise beyond the level of his head. His hand passes through the fire unscathed. The flames sprang-up from a cauldron set on the earth near his genitals. He wears a six-pointed crown of flames and is very much the master of his task.*

I have dreamed of the God of the Wind. Now the God of Fire has arisen, the God who visited the Romans as Vulcan and the Teutons, as Loki. Behind my civilized mask lies a primitive life-force. Fire means not only sex and procreation; it means the warmth of the hearth and ability to cook, (the discovery of fire was a cardinal point in evolution). We mortals owe our creativity to that arch-thief, Prometheus. Fire, too, is a particle of that great central power, the sun, of which I have been dreaming.





Figure 14 *God Shielding Fruit* (1978), oil pastel on paper, 9 x 12 inches

#### 14—GOD SHIELDING FRUIT

*Dream: I saw a field with hundreds of apples which were growing from the ground rather than on trees. They were imbued with a burgeoning force. An ancient man wearing priest-like robes came along and, with a giant shield, protected the apples so that they would not grow wildly. This Wise Old Man tends to the Anima-energy so that it will not become self-destructive. He who protects the fruit of life brings a patient wisdom that counterbalances (but in no way denies) the spontaneous fire.*



Figure 15 *God and the Golden Coffin* (1980), oil pastel on paper, 16 x 19.5 inches

## 15—GOD AND THE GOLDEN COFFIN

*Vision: Out of my golden coffin, I am taken into the hand of God.*

Some would see these as religious figures; others, perhaps, as archetypes. I don't know if they have their origin in the inner world or in some region outside of myself. The path for me does not consist of fixed meditation, definitive conclusion or binding conception. I cannot answer the question as to whether the essence of what we call God is to be found in mankind or mandala. Are the myriad mandalas in the Alhambra, an expression of our striving towards God, or God coming towards us? The main thing for me is how these archetypal figures act, how they move and relate. The dreams don't bring me an abstract spiritualism, but my own myth with its peculiar cast of characters who sometimes talk to me – and often set tasks.



## THE OPPOSITES



Figure 16 *Angels and Thieves* (1982), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

### 16—ANGELS AND THIEVES

*Dream: Words coming to me upon awakening:*

*To hold the forces of dark and light in balance.*

*When you have a red light*

*It shall be placed among the thieves;*

*When you have a green light*

*It shall be placed among the angels;*

*When you have both*

*They shall be placed side by side*

*And used wisely.*

One should not aim to be a "good" person and rid oneself of one's thieves. One should aim to be a balanced person, aware of the simultaneous presence of thieves and angels. Jung writes in, "Nietzsche's "Zarathustra," "Therefore they say about the philosopher's stone, which is the symbol of the self, '*lapis est media res inter corpora perfecta et imperfecta*,' the lapis philosophorum is not the perfect body, but is in the middle, between the perfect and the imperfect bodies. You would expect it to be among the perfect bodies, but the perfect bodies are up on the conscious level and that is not the real middle position."



Figure 17 *The Venetian Musicians* (1984), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

## 17—THE VENETIAN MUSICIANS

*Dream: I saw a gondola in which four musicians, clothed in Renaissance garb, were playing their instruments. Two trumpeters in gay attire stood facing the front; and two trombonists in purple priest-like robes sat facing the rear. The instruments were made of gold. The music, reverberating simultaneously in opposite directions, held the boat in balance. The image was accompanied by these words:*

*"The trumpets blast forth outwardly  
And the trombones intone their reflection inwardly."*

The gondola is the most mysterious of boats. As it glides with uncanny motion over the waves, it is in touch with the depth of the water and the depth of civilization. In this vessel, partaking of the deep, music expresses itself in energy and repose. Every outer task must be complemented by an inward one—Renaissance brought about by the play of opposites. The day after the dream, a synchronistic event occurred: I was looking for the first time through a book about old orchestral instruments and was astonished to come upon a photograph of an ancient Roman wall painting which depicted a standing trumpeter and two seated trombone or horn players.





Figure 18 *The Lantern* (1986), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 18—THE LANTERN

*Dream: There appeared a softly glowing, four-sided Chinese lantern. Each side was decorated with a delicate painting. These words came to me:*

*"The Lantern is like a dream.*

*You must study a dream through each of the four sides of the lantern.*

*Take care, when looking through one side, that its light shall not mingle with the light coming from the opposite panel.*

*Then, after you have viewed the dream through each separate panel, you may look over the top down into the lantern."*

I obeyed the command of the oracle. When I looked over the top, I saw, within the lantern, ruby-red blood, boiling as though in a cauldron. The painting can be seen as personifying the four functions in Jungian psychology, from left to right: intuition, feeling, sensation, thinking. There are many ways in which the lantern can be used to bring increased consciousness, and therefore, greater wholeness. For years I had viewed life from the standpoints of intuition, feeling and sometimes, thinking. But, when I looked, so to speak, through the sensation panel, the light shed by the other, more developed functions, blurred the image. Much of my extraverted activity in the real world was marked by a high degree of unconsciousness. Even though I hated to turn away, even momentarily, from the seductive filters of intuition and feeling, I wanted to respond to the lantern's age-old wisdom and truly make an effort to see through the sensation panel, with clarity.

During the intervening years, I have sometimes succeeded in being able to view the world more objectively, perhaps akin to looking down into the lantern where the four functions no longer over-lap but paradoxically, their separateness contains the potential for coming together. The very considerable benefits have included an increased awareness of synchronistic information about the presence of spirit beyond our normal confines of time and space.

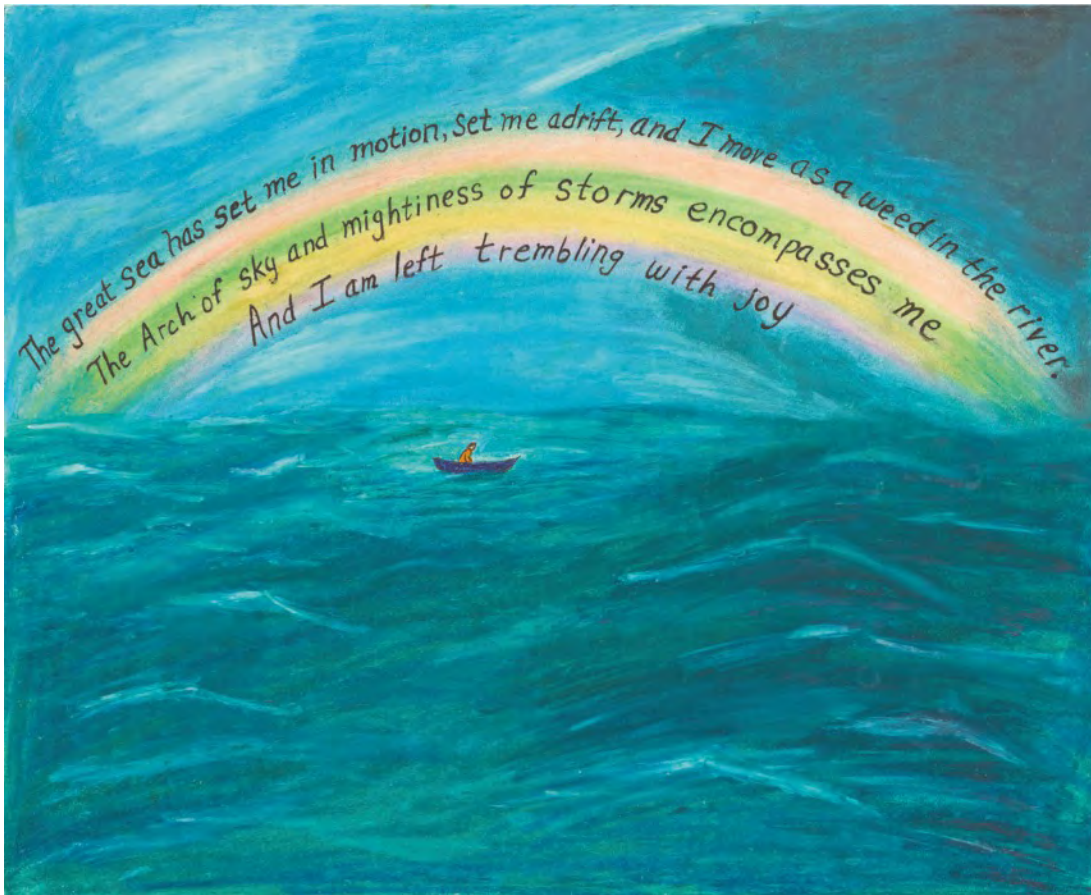


Figure 19 *The Eskimo Poem* (1988), oil pastel on paper, 16 x 19.5 inches

## 19—THE ESKIMO POEM

*Dream: I was nothing more than a solitary boatman. An Eskimo poem came to mind when I made the painting:*

*The great sea has set me in motion, set me adrift,  
And I move as a weed in the river.*

*The arch of the sky and mightiness of storms encompasses me, and  
I am left trembling with joy.*

Many times in my dreams I have found myself wandering – set in motion, set adrift – perhaps in an old European city or in the Irish countryside. Sometimes a taxi driver will take me to a place of value that I hadn't foreseen or I get on the "wrong" train, which turns out to be the right one. The movement of unconscious energy that directs me is not chaotic, but purposeful. It only seems chaotic when my conscious mind is not harmonized with it. Wandering with the unconscious is creative wandering. To trust to the movement of energy in the dream world, even if it sometimes seems random and fragmented.



## THE JOURNEY



Figure 20 *The Harvest* (1990), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

### 20—THE HARVEST

*Dream: I walked along a sunlit path to the outskirts of a village where rustic merry-makers were celebrating a festival of the harvest. Farmers were carrying bundles of wheat, and, in the village square, jugglers were displaying their skill, a custom dating back to the Middle Ages. I was tremendously moved by all this. The first movement of the Pastoral Symphony permeated the scene. ("Awakening of Happy Feelings upon Going into the Country").*

This dream came at a time of fulfillment. Fulfillment in that it was harvest time: the young man, who had dreamed, at seventeen, of following the Anima through the wind-blown fields, over the course of years, had learned how to communicate with Mairi Aeterna and integrate much of her feeling. Mairi's wheat field was now ripe. It was time for me to be a full participant in the harvest. As I was working on the picture, it seemed that Mairi drew herself as a peasant woman, cradling a child.



Figure 21 Vézelay (1992), oil pastel on paper, 16.5 x 23.25 inches

## 21—VÉZELAY

*Dream: I found myself on something akin to a medieval pilgrimage, beginning at the church of Vézelay in France. The Holy Grail was present; a crusader's boat was setting forth.*

In this remarkable church, – partly Romanesque, partly Gothic, set high on a hill overlooking the rich Burgundian countryside – Richard the Lion-hearted preached the crusade. In my painting, the Holy Grail is placed within the church. Papageno (as the faithful hound of the dream), and Sarah (as the eternal helpmate, Kundry), are in attendance. Megalithic stones; a forest and a simple village form the exterior. A crusader's ship has set sail to carry the power of my spirit over the seas of life. This dream/painting provides one of the key images in what could be called my religious pilgrimage. The musical quotation is the majestic theme of Parsifal, as heard at the beginning of the "Good Friday Spell."





Figure 22 Z (1993), oil pastel on paper, 16.5 x 23.5 inches

## 22—Z

*Dream: While I visited an ancient city, the letter Z suddenly appeared like a bolt of lightning. The houses, colored in vivid dark blues and violets, together with the gold of the highway and arches, convey a luminosity, even spirituality.*

In the Eastern Roman Empire the Greek letter Z was taken to signify "eternal life." This dream delivered a stunning awareness of the autonomous power of the unconscious. The dream road over the city provides me with a manner of sailing blithely on a "high-way" through life without pausing to gather the reverberations of the collective past. Yet, in the painting, the highway is golden, and Z at the end of the village seems to say, "Halt: Delay your journey until you look downwards to rehabilitate the forgotten community and integrate it into the stream of your life." The inhabitants have not yet emerged. However, the houses themselves, with their oval or diamond-shaped windows looking towards us, almost resemble people.

In 1993, we visited Ravenna and, while studying the magnificent sixth-century mosaics in the church of San Vitale, I saw a solitary Z prominently inscribed on Christ's robe. I inquired of our guide about this. She explained that Z stood for a Greek word meaning Zoe – or "Life." As if struck by lightning, I was stunned by the sudden remembrance of the enigmatic Z I had painted nearly two decades before.



Figure 23 *I Came, I Saw, I Passed* (1994), oil pastel on paper, 16.5 x 23.25 inches

### 23—I CAME, I SAW, I PASSED

*Dream: I walked by a row of restored Venetian palaces, one of them being a magic theater; not the largest or most lavish, but my own theater, taking its modest but rightful place on the historic street which was one of the loveliest in the world.*

*As I awoke, the following words came, paraphrasing Caesar: "I Came, I Saw, I Passed" (rather than "Veni, Vidi, Vici" – "Veni, Vidi, Abii").*

These words summarize the path of my life. I am now at the transition between "I saw" and "I passed." I have experienced the world, but don't need to conquer it. The ego can retire. The Self has other goals. One of these is to prepare for the unknown that surpasses my present existence; in doing so, to properly understand the patterns within my interior life experience, shaped by the cast of characters who reside in my magic theater. Perhaps these have been like a magic theater in my dream. In the painting, Mairi Aeterna offers guidance, but, significantly, from behind. I seem to know my way, and she only wants to be sure of it. I am following in the direction of that beneficent hand, (which appears from time to time, at critical transitions), descended from the skies, much as The Hand of God in the sixth-century mosaics in Ravenna's St. Apollinaris in Classe.



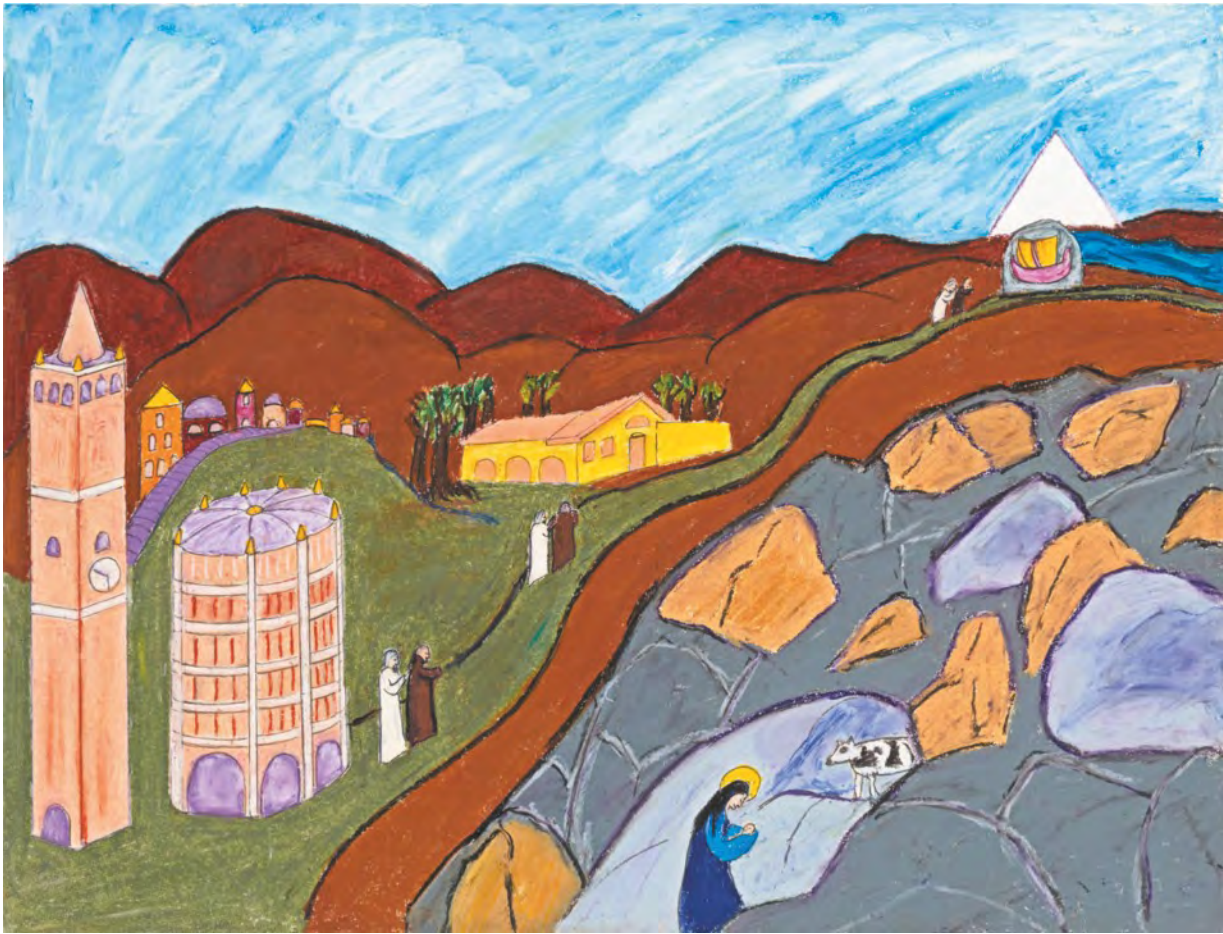


Figure 24 *Journey with the Monk* (1994), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 24—JOURNEY WITH THE MONK

*Dream: I was with Sarah, in Parma, exploring the backstage area of the 18th century theatre. A Franciscan monk came by and the backstage turned into a village in the countryside. The monk showed us his own farm house, from which a large cow came forth. (The animal resembled an Assyrian carved relief). The monk then led me alone, along a solitary hillside. At the summit I discovered a monolith, in the shape of a white pyramid, with an Egyptian inscription on it, which read: "The journey will be radiant." I cried out to the monk in amazement: "Is this reality, or is it only a dream?" The monk confidently led me on.*

This dream-journey takes the Christian faith back to its Egyptian origins. The boat that awaits me is reminiscent of the Crusader's vessel in "Vézelay." The Crusader's boat was a journey into life, while the Egyptian boat will take me beyond life, along the eternal flow of the Nile. While I was working on the painting, images that were not in the dream seemed to paint themselves, as if they were a natural extension of the dream. The first of these was the Parma Baptistery, at the beginning of the path; the second, the pyramid at the far end of the path; the third, the Madonna and child, living in a cave-like manger, which they share with a cow. (The Parma Baptistery combines the perfect form of a mandala with art-work which is primitive and which – in its child-like naiveté and faith – is imbued with a divine grace). One can envision the picture as a circular journey: beginning at the baptistery, leading to the land of the spirits,

revealing the Madonna and child, the spirit reborn or sustained in some living form, and returning to the Baptistery to be baptized.

**[From this point forward, the text, in the Narrative Voice, derives from David Blum's DVD: "Appointment with the Wise Old Dog," ([davidblummusiciananddreamer.com](http://davidblummusiciananddreamer.com))] S.B.**

Nine years ago, when I was fifty-two, I was diagnosed with cancer. After surgery and radiation, I was in remission for six years and I thought I was in the clear. But three years ago, lab tests showed that the cancer cells had returned; the question was where?

I knew that the situation was serious, and I was frightened. I had support from my wife, Sarah, my family and friends. But support also came from an unexpected quarter. Recently, my beloved, long-haired dachshund, Papageno, had died at the age of sixteen. Strangely enough, he now came back to me in a dream.





Figure 25 *The Dachshund Quartet* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 25—THE DACHSHUND STRING QUARTET

*Vision: Papageno and other dachshunds entered a church in a forest, took up stringed instruments and played Beethoven's 13th Quartet—music of health and joy that brought me reassurance in this time of trouble.*

Perhaps because music has always meant so much to me, it's often been a part of my dreams. Some days later, I made this picture of the dream in the enthusiastic way I used to draw when I was twelve. When one is faced with a life-threatening illness, one is fearful, as a child might be fearful. Sometimes, it's best to counter such fears with child-like means. It is an amazing fact that at a time of dire crisis people often unexpectedly find themselves supported by a power quite beyond their ordinary experience that makes it possible for them to cope. Any powerful image that arises spontaneously from within – no matter how irrational it may seem – carries a creative potential. I had such an experience nine years ago when my cancer was first diagnosed. According to the scans, the risks were extremely high.



Figure 26 *The Golden Eagle* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 23.5 x 16.5 inches

## 26—THE GOLDEN EAGLE

*Dream: The night before my operation, I had a dream in which a soulful woman, whom I call Mairi, came to my bedside. She gave me two dappled eggs she had taken from a golden eagle; from each of the eggs a golden child was hatched. One was named "Waves," and the other, "Wings." Energy flowed forth from these children, consisting of all that is most beautiful in human feeling.*

The eagle is a primal force of nature – revered and admired in every culture. (The letter A in Egyptian hieroglyphics is represented by the Eagle, standing for the warmth of Life, the Origin, the Day.) The eagle's natural energy and the Anima's spiritual blessing are a tremendous combined force. The golden children are my new-born life; the Puer Aeternus, that spirit of youth contained within The Wise Old Man. In the picture there is a controlled flow of energy in the form of a triangle beginning with its tip at the sun and enlarging as it passes through the eagle, the Anima and the new-born boys, until it finds its base just over me. If the blessing of spirit could be conveyed spontaneously to someone in deep dread, it was conveyed by the magical woman on that night.

I should explain that I'm a pragmatic, down- to- earth person, not a seer or a mystic. I'm a modern skeptic, without religious preconceptions. All of this doesn't matter when I am gripped with an image from a dream of astonishing power so that it plants its authenticity upon me. This process has intensified greatly during the last three years since the recurrence of cancer. While the doctors were trying to assess my condition, the dreams were basically ignoring the outer situation and were setting their own agenda. I was simultaneously undertaking two journeys: one, medical, the other, spiritual.





Figure 27 *Mairi Aeterna Pointing to the Pyramid and the Sun* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 27—THE WINGED PAPAGENO

*Dream: As I knelt before a totem pole, Papageno again appeared. Not only was this low-to-ground creature now elevated to the skies and endowed with the golden wings of an evangelist, but his chest bore a mirror that contained an image of Mairi of the wheat fields. She pointed the way towards the pyramid and sun. The pyramid appears just as it did in "Journey with the Monk." Papageno beckoned to me to join Mairi and move with her.*

At this time of crisis, the animal that carries the precious intuition, as in a fairy-tale, comes to me in the fullness of his power. And, as in Mozart's "The Magic Flute," he brings me a picture of the princess who has been neglected. The animal intuition makes her visible to me. The mirror shows Mairi Aeterna in motion. My task is now to follow her wherever she will guide me, a task which will be fulfilled in, "The Pastoral Symphony II." Even if I didn't know exactly why, I genuflected before the totem, which had increased, as I painted it. A lion, fox, bird, and fish, join the dachshund.

The cancer patient's spiritual journey is interrupted by innumerable medical tests. The question is always: how to cope? One night, I had a dream in which I was told that I had an appointment with the Wise Old Dog, the next day, at 1:15pm. When I awoke, I wondered: Why on earth 1:15pm? Then I realized that was the appointed time for a crucial MRI exam that I needed to take. So, when I entered the machine, it was less as a medical patient than as a friend of the old dog.



Figure 28 *The Dachshund Valley* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

## 28—THE DACHSHUND VALLEY

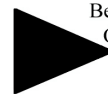
*Dream: I let the conscious mind will itself into the imaginative world. And, indeed, old Papageno did greet me. But, then he transformed himself into a young dog, playing in the fields. A village appeared, entirely inhabited by dachshunds. At night the great Mother Dachshund came down from the starry sky and spread her ears over the valley to protect any dog that was ill and afraid.*

Now, whenever I have difficulty sleeping, Sarah tells me that I am a dachshund in one of the blue beds, and I gradually sink into slumber.





Figure 29 *The Pastoral Symphony II* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches



Beethoven, Symphony No. 6 in F Major  
Opus 68, "Pastoral" Andante Molto Mosso  
The London Philharmonic,  
Sir Adrian Boult, conductor

Use lower right corner to shrink player

## 29—THE PASTORAL SYMPHONY II

*Vision: Mairi immediately appeared. We wandered arm in arm through the fields. Sarah was there too. Then, with amazing ease Mairi lifted me above the valley. At first, I held on to Sarah's hand, but, as I was taken into the sky, I was forced, against my dearest wish, to let go of it. This was unbearably painful – so painful that I couldn't even draw it. As Mairi and I glided among the clouds, I felt burdenless, without anguish. Mairi then told me that just as the medical radiation would infiltrate my body, her radiation would infiltrate my mind. She let the intense rays of her light pass into me. I was bathed in her luminosity, shaken to the core. All of her movements were inspired by the flow of Beethoven's music, the wondrous, mysterious modulations; the infinite melodic tenderness. I continued to let the music flow through me; tears streamed down my cheeks, but I let them come. In the middle of the movement, when the theme is played in different keys by oboe, clarinet, and flute, in turn, it was sung by Sarah, and Mairi. Every phrase brought consolation: I felt permeated by each of these female spirits. But, it wasn't time yet for me to leave the earth. She took me back down to the fields.*

My painting combines various elements of the vision. The Anima is seen bestowing her "radiation" upon me as well as carrying me in her arms beyond the valley and mountains. From the perspective of the dynamic flow of my inner life, a development may be seen from, "Pastoral Symphony I," through such paintings as, "Imagination is Eternity," "The Harvest," "I Came, I Saw, I Passed," to this "Pastoral Symphony II" in the sense that I become more and more a participant in relationship with the Anima. This evolution continues in "D + M," "The Kiss," and finds fruition in "The Sacred Marriage." A past dream comes to mind: on a visit to Jung's home at Bollingen, I discover there a circular group of Irish megaliths. As I awoke, the following words came: "Death is the same as life. It is the other side of the stream which flows from the Marriage of the Two Rivers."

I am recognizing a circularity to the recurring images and themes in my dreams and waking visions, which transcend chronological order. Are synchronistic patterns a mirror of life's circularity—body, psyche, physical universe—or the reverse? Do synchronistic occurrences come about in some mysterious way because they, too, belong to a circular plan? It is as though I stand in the middle of a circle—the circle representing the flow of events—both inner and outer which pass along the circle's circumference. Perhaps this "flow of events" or emergence of archetypes derive from a source beyond our limited spatial concepts, coming like a sphere from an unknown energy.





Figure 30 *Ali Baba's Cave* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 7.25 x 10.5 inches

### 30—ALI BABA'S CAVE

*Dream: I recalled that when I was twelve, I had made a drawing of a curiously similar cellar, in the foreground of which I'd put a ladder descending into a yet deeper pit. I knew I'd have to go down that ladder some day, and now I entrusted my imagination to Alfonto, and asked him to be my guide. He donned golden wings about his ears to light the way.*



Figure 31 *Madonna of the Grotto* (1995), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

### 31—MADONNA OF THE GROTTTO

*Vision: I had a talk with Alfonto. He told me that I need not fear entering Ali Baba's Cave. He led me down the steps to the upper level of the cave, and with him came all of the jolly dachshunds, whose very profession it is, as badger hunters, to burrow under the earth. Once there, the dogs gave me a concert, performing Beethoven's Quartet, Op.130, filling the cave with warmth and beauty. Then Alfonto told me that we were going to climb down the steep ladder that descends into the pit. He implored me to fearlessly follow him, saying that I had experienced Love and Wisdom, but that now I needed the most precious gift of all: Trust. Alfonto then put on a lighted miner's helmet with wings attached to it, like some mythic Nordic helmet. As we descended, the ladder transformed itself into a more accessible stone staircase. We progressed into a mysterious grotto, with quietly lapping waters and low gray clouds—inside had become outside. "Where are we? In death or in life?" Alfonto took up his spear and pointed at the dark sky. A swirl of golden light emerged in which Mairi and her child resided in all their simple majesty.*

*Alfonto said to me: "She is waiting to illuminate your inner journey."*

*"Yet, how can she enter into my life?" I asked. "She is transparent and I am concrete."*



*Alfonto: "When she reveals herself to you, you become more transparent and she more concrete; you thus share in each other's worlds."*

*David: "How will I know that she will be there for me in a moment of peril?"*

*Alfonto: "Acceptance cannot reject."*

The many dreams of a mother and child seemed insistently to point the way toward "rebirth" – some sort of continuation of spirit beyond life. The question is not whether I "believe" in rebirth, but in what the dreams have to say about it. And the dreams had something extraordinary to say. The guiding, healing image that first arose in my 17th year, as the Anima of the wheat fields proved to be foundational to my life from which all things flowed. What image has arisen now, as I lay in my hospital bed? The Anima once again as guide, healer and consoler. The archetype does not change; she embraces all. She cannot forsake. My Greek friend reminds me of the ancient adage: "Athena is with you—but you must do something, too."

After a period of stability, my cancer began to spread significantly. Sarah and I shed many tears about this—it was a really anguished moment. But we decided that our best, our only course was to follow the guiding spirits in my dreams and have no more resistance to them. In the week after our frank acceptance of death, I had three dreams about birth. Then came a whole series of dreams about the renewal of life, presented in symbolic form.



Figure 32 *The Path of Venus* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 23.5 x 17.5 inches

### 32—THE PATH OF VENUS

*Dream: Mairi arose as Venus from her shell, transformed herself into a rainbow and bequeathed the dew of her love to mankind until disappearing into the night, only to be born again the following day. I drew myself, as in the "Eskimo Poem," as a small figure in a boat, in the midst of the sea—in my smallness—open to everything. Alfonso was there too, in the shape of a constellation among the stars. As she progresses on her daily journey, Venus traces an oval – a bejeweled zero – which contains within it a three-dimensional life. Her energy is ever-replenishing. Here, as in "Sunset and Sunrise," and "God will Act," the circle of darkness and light, death and rebirth, can be conceived in different time dimensions: an hour, a day, a lifetime, an existence beyond life.*

The 6,000 year-old megalithic stones we saw, at the site of Almendies in Portugal, had signs of stars carved into them, patterned in conjunction with the constellations. Alfonso's constellation and the markings in the stones, glistening like stars, reflect his energy. These cross-currents of energies are cast over vast fields of time and space. They focus upon me and vitalize me in my brief moment of life.

When I die, these great forces – Venus's journey through water and sky, the architecture of the stars – will not disappear. They are infinitely larger than I am, and my spirit, in whatever form it takes, will be permeated by their presence.





Figure 33 *Sunset and Sunrise* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

### 33—SUNSET AND SUNRISE

*Dream: I stood with Sarah on a rock in the middle of the Atlantic ocean, with simultaneous views of the sun as it rises and sets.*

The two suns, east and west, form a circle around the earth. To witness the complete cycle of nature's renewal is a vast thing. Sarah and I are humbled. The rock upon which we stand provides a wider vantage point than that of the ego. ("God as the rock above the highest wave" —Schubert's "Lazarus.") Sarah and I can do nothing better than to stand together on our rock in mid-ocean and experience nature's replenishing circle not only in the context of twenty-four hours, but in the larger context of "life" and "death." We have different tasks to perform. Mine is to let go of life; hers is to hold onto it. From the dream's central vantage point, we can understand that letting go and holding on are not opposites. The spirit is a continuum.



Figure 34 *The Reflected Hand* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 13.75 x 16.25 inches

### 34—THE REFLECTED HAND

*Vision: The words: "As below, so above," came with this image.*

One of the principal benefits of knowing that your life will end soon is to act on your desires. So, we decided to go down into mankind's ancient sanctuary – the original cave of Lascaux in France – the Sistine Chapel of prehistoric art. When I descended into the cave and saw its walls and ceilings covered with astonishing paintings of animals, I felt swept along by a tremendous life force. It was as if I had entered into Cro-Magnon man's dream, and he had entered into mine.



## THE HEALING PATH



Figure 35 *From Lascaux to London* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

### 35—FROM LASCAUX TO LONDON

*Vision: In a half-awakened state, an image appeared of a great purple and gray animal, a composite between a horse and deer, as if it had just emerged from the cave of Lascaux. It had the portly, awkward, yet graceful shape of the Lascaux paintings. As it ambled cheerfully down London's Regent Street, doing no one harm, people made way for it with some consternation and amazement.*

Well, that's just how I feel. As the body becomes more limited, the spirit expands. At the end of all, I've turned into a prehistoric horse-deer.

Lately, my daytime hours have become increasingly inhabited by Mairi and my other dream figures.



Figure 36 *D+M* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 23.5 x 17.5 inches

### 36—D + M

*Vision: Mairi came to me by the sea as a black-haired Roman girl. We pledged ourselves in marriage. I asked Alfonto, "How can my love of Mairi, who will soon take me into her arms, also be my love for Sarah that will protect her when I am gone? He replied: "Mairi is greater than David. Her love penetrates him and becomes his love of Sarah. Thus, David and Sarah will always be together."*





Figure 37 *The Kiss* (1996), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

### 37—THE KISS

*Vision: A water-wheel appeared, the axel of which combines past, present and future Time. Alfonto was watching over the wheel, seeing to it that the shifting of Time was replenished by water splashing upon the axel from a bucket, while the wheel moved clockwise. The splashing water is Spirit – a power of revivification – the source of which derives from a region beyond our temporal perception. Alfonto explained further:*

*“Love is the quality of spirit that gives meaning to the movement of Time.  
Love is a gift of Eternity. It unites souls that would otherwise be separated.”*

*A deer drank from the stream as in a medieval mosaic: the soul thirsting for God.*

*Mairi was present.*

*I asked her: “Why must I endure so much pain and grief?”*

*She replied: "Think not of why you endure it, but of how you endure it. Be prepared in sorrow and in faith."*

*David: "How can I know that in death, I'll not fall into a void?"*

*Mairi: "Foolish boy," she replied. "Do you think that what you see on earth is all there is – that the Creator made no more than this? Don't you know that the "reality" around you is merely a preparation for the greater reality? These stones will crumble; these trees will die; this sky will change – all you see will disappear, but I shall remain. How can I forsake thee when I am the truest thing thou hast ever known?"*

*She came to me in the wind and we kissed. She permeated me with her spirit, and my presence allowed her to enter into the world. We were not two, but one essence.*





Figure 38 *Ocean Vision* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

### 38—OCEAN VISION

*Vision: On the island of Maui, as I watched the setting sun, it became gold. As the gold settled into the sea, it was cooled and transformed. As it sank further into the ocean depths, it formed an amber city; but there were more colors yet: emerald, ruby and sapphire. This was a city of the spirit, like Yeats' "Byzantium," Blake's' "Jerusalem," the City of Oz..." Within this mandala, a Mediterranean village spiraled up to its church. I saw dawn break: the light of the amber city became paler; day was born with a tranquil, golden luminosity into which I emerged with Alfonto by my side. The horses of Apollo prepared for their crescent journey. Suddenly, from the dome of the sky, The Hand of God descended in blessing... All was enclosed in a replenishing rainbow.*

*"Why is it," I asked Alfonto, "that, despite the complexity of life, the simplest things carry one's truest experience?"*

*He replied: "Simplicity prefigures eternity."*

*David: "How can I compare my earthly joy with the unknown yet to come?"*

*Alfonto: "The unknown holds the key to the box of treasure."*

*David: "Could the box be empty?"*

*Alfonto: "Not if the heart is full."*

*David: "When will my earthly existence end?"*

*Alfonto: "It has already ended. Thou hast stepped on to the bridge."*

*David: "The waves flow on. Must I depart, joining them in the endless unknown?"*

*Alfonto: "Unknown to thee; known to God."*



Figure 39 *The Two Moons* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 16 x 19.5 inches

### 39—THE TWO MOONS

*Vision: I was standing back stage at the Royal Concertgebouw, when Herbert van Karajan entered for his rehearsal. For a moment his eyes turned in my direction. They were in a far-away vision, the gaze hovering in detached, pale luminosity. Two moons suddenly appeared, hovering over the vast ocean: the eyes of a man looking entirely inward.*

When this great conductor closes his eyes while conducting, he removes himself from the outer world and, as in a trance, enters into the *melos*, the song of the Anima. From the depth of his concentration the spiritual architecture of the music is realized. Often in my dreams, energy is imaged in light. Here the light of the two moons dances, jewel-like over the dark waves. At the meeting point of light and water, of consciousness and the unconscious, a transcendent awakening occurs. Reflection is born, not only in the philosophical meditative sense, but as psychic energy. May I glide with the waves that know and understand all, that contain surging tempests and unearthly repose.





Figure 40 *Etruscan Tomb* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

#### 40—ETRUSCAN TOMB

*Dream: This painting was done shortly after our visit to the Etruscan tombs of Tarquinia. It depicts the exterior of my burial tomb. I imagine the interior contains two stone beds opposite each other, one for Sarah and one for me; at the foot of my bed, a basket prepared for Papageno, and above us, the Anima blessedly protecting us.*



Figure 41 *The Wheel* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

#### 41—THE WHEEL

*Dream: I saw a vast wheel that turns in all ways, at all times, and in all places.*

The wheel is made of wood and resembles a spinning wheel. It is formulated within the depth of the unconscious from which emerges a center of light. It is a psychic sun, an inner solar system. The wheel has nine spokes between which float nine planets; these are all the aspects of life from remotest history to present time. They vary in light and shade as the wheel ceaselessly turns.

All of life turns like a wheel. In relationships one fashions wheels of friendship and love. These overlap from person to person formulating a propulsion of energy. One need only join the twilight *corso* in an Italian town to sense the rhythmic motion of these relationships. When I conduct a concert, the orchestra, the audience and I are encompassed within a wheel, with its central energy flowing from the imagination of the composer. The earth rotates; the tides come and go; and there is a circular movement in the inner world as well as the outer. Yet, we often resist submitting to Nature's pattern. In our conscious attitude we tend to cut time into convenient slices of here and now, and are barely aware of the larger rhythmic patterns of which we are a part. The ancient wheel teaches us to participate in life in an unbroken way. One then senses an inseparable correspondence between the inner and outer, between aloneness and togetherness, between the limitation of our life's moment and the colossus of Time. What power has constructed this ageless wheel of wood and has set it in motion. Turning in all ways, in all time and in all places? Whatever that power may be, it also fashioned Alfonto's "Water-Wheel."

One of the fearful aspects of death is its vast autonomous power. But the dreams and visions have an autonomous power of their own. I feel that I'm meeting death with some measure of equality. But is it death? Shelley wrote: "Death is the veil which those who live call life. They sleep and it is lifted."



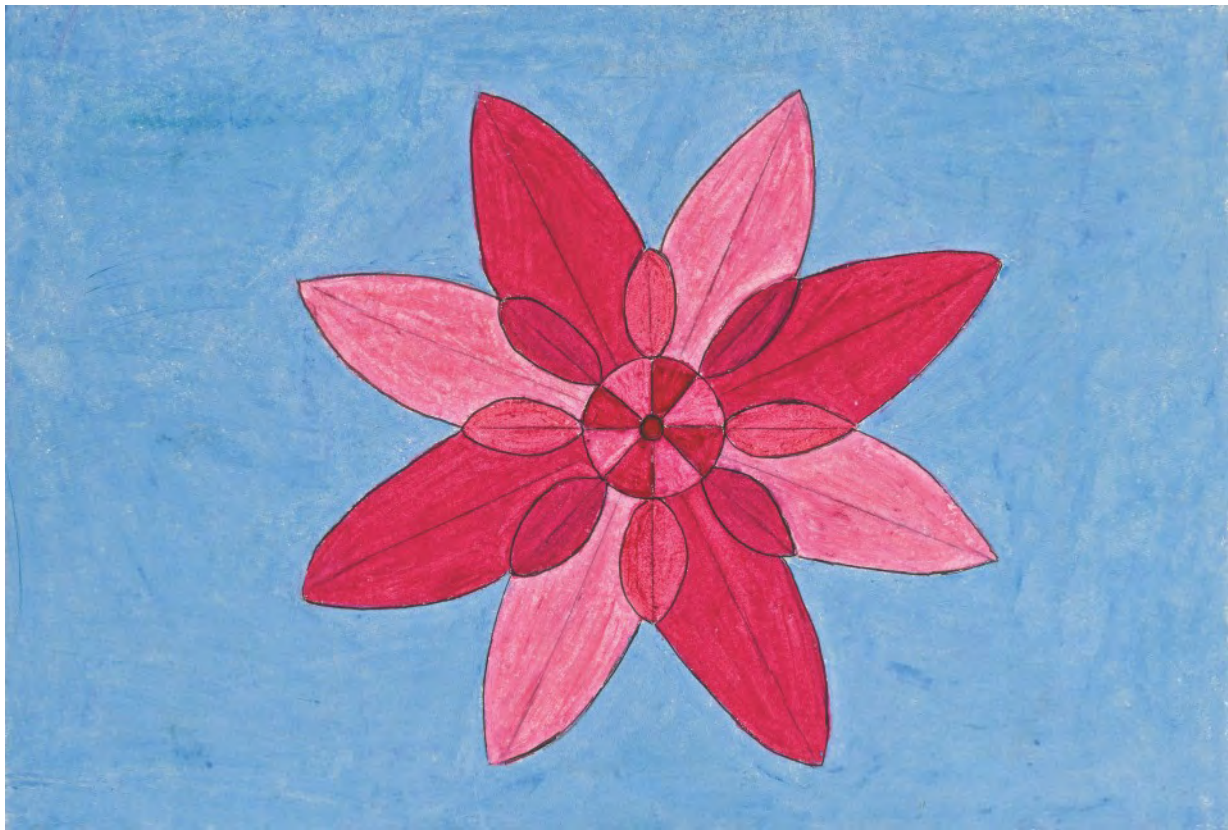


Figure 42 *The Rose* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 12 x 18 inches

#### 42—THE ROSE

*Dream: Deep within the earth lay a great Celtic cross in the center of which was a ruby, glowing with deep redness. The jewel turned green, yellow, purple and blue, finally returning to its own deep crimson. But now it turned into a rose as well as a ruby, and the rose said to me: "I am the center of life—the center of good, of greatness and of aloneness. Aloneness is the essence of depth. I am the heart of life. I enclose within my petals, yet I am enclosed; embracing yet embraced; bequeathing radiance, yet needing to be watered."*

I thought of how deep in the earth the ruby-rose was embedded. The voice spoke: "The depth attained through anguish."



Figure 43 *Imagination is Eternity* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 16 x 19.25 inches

#### 43—IMAGINATION IS ETERNITY

*Dream: Mairi and I stood by the edge of a vast, flowing river. The lines of land, sea, rainbow, mountains and sky sway gently in an eternal curve. Blake's words appear: "Imagination is Eternity."*

The nature of my life had been placed before me: to follow the Comprehensive Path—comprehensive meaning complete unto itself. Nothing that distracts from the unending line of feeling. Continuity of feeling is the way of the Anima. The eternal curve is in marked juxtaposition to my little life span. My existence in time and space partakes in this larger time and space. The Anima has taken me to the Pastoral Symphony stream. A humble deer, a simple hound—that is all I am or that I ever have been. Partaking of the stream means to give myself over to the ecstatic flow that surrounds me and is within me. Is her Spirit of Replenishment, drawing from the ocean bed and from ancient wells, subject only to the limited laws of time and space that I perceive as my life? Or is her Spirit that which is before conception and after death? I am enfolded in the wings of the Anima that soar into eternity.





Figure 44 *The Sacred Marriage* (1997), oil pastel on paper, 17.5 x 23.5 inches

#### 44—THE SACRED MARRIAGE

*Dream: This painting, from two dreams and from imagination, is permeated with my experience (both outer and inner), of the great Moorish Mosques in Cordoba and Granada. The dancers' reflection in the water and the double-Alfonto "drew themselves" while I was painting.*

The image coalesced with words which came to me while alone in the Mezquita, of Cordoba. The columns speak as I wander in their forest.

*"In the Mezquita"**by David Blum, 1997*

*I am the voice of the columns;  
My voice is great, but locked in stone.  
We are Staffs of Life— like your cane,  
What slaves have carved us, fashioned us,  
          polished us and erected us?  
We absorb your joys and sorrows,  
We have known greater sorrows than thee.*

*What is our voice, locked up in stone?  
Where is our soul, encased in polished marble?  
Why have we stood together through the ages,  
Rooted in Carthaginian plain or Roman forum?  
We hold the temple from collapse:  
an army of the soul's need,  
A forest of contemplation,  
an oration of Seneca, a meditation of Maimonides.  
We are questions that are perpetually asked.*

*We march with you, my child, through Eternity.  
We come to the Holy City of Byzantium.  
We measure your fragility with our strength.  
We are black with wars, red with love;  
Each different,  
Each guarding his own secret.*

*Sing the Ancient Song,  
          the song that belongs to the centuries.  
Sing the Mighty Song,  
          the song that tells of joy and woe.  
Sing the Silent Song,*



*the song that bursts with knowing all.*  
*Sing the Temporal Song,*  
*the staffs of life are we.*  
*Sing the Eternal Song,*  
*for which our vast numbers are poor.*  
*Sing the Holy Song:*  
*we are arched in prayer.*

*Those who sense our secrets, dare not speak*  
*Those who love as we have loved, can only whisper.*  
*Those who dare to witness that to which we strive, can stammer at best.*

### **Conversation with Alfonto:**

David: Will my staff be as strong as these columns?

Alfonto: Stronger yet, for thy living spirit supports thee.

David: But, when I must say farewell to life...?

Alfonto: There is no farewell, but eternal welcome.

David: Where is the *mihrab* of my faith?

Alfonto: Thy faith is arched over thy life; it encompasses the mightiness of storms.

David: I am but a grain of dust in the midst of infinity.

Alfonto: Spirit knows no measure,

Love knows no measure.

God knows no partiality.

Partake, and thou shalt know all.

David: I need courage to be alone in the forest.

Alfonto: Alone is Together.

David: My life is but one little column.

Alfonto: All is connected.

David: What shall I do in my remaining time?

Alfonto: Know the connections.

Have joy in them.

Triumph in them.  
 They will bring you nothing at all  
 But wisdom.

A friend recently tried to reassure me that miracles are always possible. I said that I'd gladly accept one, but doubted that one would take place.  
 Then I caught myself and said: "*In fact, a miracle has taken place.*"

David Blum

September 7, 1935 – April 17, 1998

## EPILOGUE

*By Sarah Blum*

David felt with all of his being that his inner experience did not belong to him alone. He also believed that everyone has the capacity to access their own inner reality, however irrational it may seem. His story is an invitation to enter into the process of self-discovery, which is of the highest value whatever our outer human condition and circumstances.

David's paintings and writings trace the arc of a singular inner journey, stretching across a lifetime process of self-exploration and transformation that grew out of David's dreams. Between 1970 and 1975, he was guided by Liliane Frey, a colleague and close friend of C.G. Jung. David's psychological work with this remarkably wise analyst led to his understanding of the symbolic meaning of the dreams and reinforced David's intuitive way of engaging with his dream figures, (the "cast of characters," as he called them), through direct dialogue.

David left nineteen volumes of diaries, and six volumes of journals that document and analyze 1,670 dreams, in addition to an unpublished manuscript. Taken as a whole, his diaries, journals, manuscript, and forty-four oil pastel paintings are the workshop in which David painstakingly confronted and intimately engaged with his dream figures, over a period of thirty-five years.

## Oil Pastel Paintings

C.G. Jung writes in his essay *Spirit and Life*, "**The psyche consists essentially of images. It is a series of images in the truest sense...a structure that is throughout full of meaning and purpose; mind and body are the expression of a single entity. This living being appears outwardly as the material**



**body, but inwardly as a series of images of the vital activities taking place within it."**

The images David painted emerged from the "collective unconscious," that universal space where we join together, no longer separated by ego boundaries. Through this unifying principle, this story belongs to all of us.

David's approach to painting his dreams was child-like, in its spontaneity and trust. Each one took him about five hours, after which he still appeared caught up in the dream. When he showed me a painting, he would often express surprise that the dream had continued its story, whether, for example, in the appearance of a new character (animal or person) or in the deepening of the landscape, through structure and color. In essence, David had entered into a profound meditative state where the conscious mind no longer inhibits the movement of the unconscious images.

## Music

Because music always meant so much to David, a conductor, writer, and listener, it was natural that music entered into his dreams, significantly deepening the imagery. At critical times during David's terminal illness with cancer, music defined the attitude he needed both for the medical challenges he faced and for his inner journey.

In a *BBC* article, "The Healing Power of Music", relating to his cancer experience David wrote, "It is my hope that the reader will look upon music, as I have experienced it during my illness, as a metaphor for his or her own experience. Each of us has a store of inner gifts. At a time of crisis, any powerful image that arises spontaneously from within oneself – in whatever form – brings with it a creative potential. A friend of mine, a cancer patient, finds precious moments of serenity in conversing with the kindly grandfather she had known only in her childhood. That is her music."

## Alfonto

Among the dream figures in this series, there is one who is closest to my heart – I suspect because I see David in him, although this character represents an infinitely greater David as well. From his 1995 diary, David describes something of the meaning carried by Alfonto who originated as a stuffed animal from his childhood:

**"This simple frayed and tattered dog, my companion from my sixth year, whom some would think only fit for the dustbin, acts as my guide and protector. He is the non-ego, an uncorrupted essence from within myself. He carries the wisdom of the Old Wise Man in dachshund form."**

This carrier of eternal wisdom, the dog as ever-faithful messenger between worlds, guided David through the final passage of his life's pilgrimage to the vision of wholeness. It is the Wise Old Dog who encapsulates David's central vision:

**"Love is the quality of spirit that gives meaning to the movement of time. Love is the gift of eternity. It unites souls that otherwise would be separated."**

## Death as Transition

During the last phase of his life David experienced a powerful coalescence of archetypal material relating to death and re-birth that was an initiation into a timeless religious pilgrimage. David's lifelong inner work seems to have moved him on a clearly defined pathway towards a spiritual goal.

When Jung was asked, at the end of his life, whether he believed in God, he replied, **"I don't believe, I know. I can't believe for the sake of believing. But, when I know a thing, then I don't have to believe."**

For David his life-long engagement with the psyche and its ultimate transformative power, as his pilgrimage unfolded, did not require that he believe. His, too, was an experiential knowing.

In 1996, less than two years before his death, David and I visited the original cave of Lascaux, in France, "the Sistine Chapel of prehistoric art." He concludes his ecstatic impressions of the cave drawings, particularly of those wondrous deer fording the river, in the following excerpt from his final diary:

**"I have walked into Cro-Magnon man's dreams and his images have walked into my dreams. This secret correspondence fulfills a goal, harmonizes my soul with something eternal, and floods me with energy that sweeps away my frailty.**

**I have dreamed of fording a river – perhaps a river that makes the transition I must now undergo. Then, let me live with the image of those five deer – confident, joyous, enthralled, submitting to the way of the river and its flow – doing gladly what must be done."**

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