

Soul Art: “The Chaos Trilogy” of Roland Salazar Rose

By Cheri Long

Once in a long decade or two, an artist emerges with something to say which we need to hear at this very moment. He speaks to our grappling for understanding of the world; he nudges our emotions and awakens the ability to question, to seek the great “aha” in the midst of whirling confusion. Roland Salazar Rose is such an artist: he has become a soul painter.

In his latest book, “The Chaos Trilogy,” he presents three series of his paintings whose themes have emerged from, and relate to Chaos Theory as defined by Edward N. Lorenz, whom Rose quotes: “A butterfly, flapping its wings in Hong Kong, may change the tornado pattern in Texas.” This notion bounces about, described from three perspectives, throughout the book.

The resulting text at once compels and fascinates, excites and challenges. The paintings in this book however, may whisper or shout—either way they wheedle or needle directly to the soul. Rational description fails to jump the gap between his exploding mountains and our synapses—the hills relax, they sleep, then suddenly they slam like crashing cymbals. And we stare transfixed at the soul of our world and its controversies. Salazar’s works cause us to see with microscopic precision, but also through the scopes of satellites. On a personal level, we experience the dank whisper of one betrayed; universally, we feel the sudden molten heat of the stealth bomber.

Maestro Salazar combines all of his many resources in this series. Of particular interest here is his usage—invention of—common chapapote (Mexican tar used to seal flooring here, which originated ironically from an oil spill on the seas) as a painting medium. His patented formula is Sal-Zar, which he uses directly onto paper, sealed, brilliant, with no need for interfering glass over the works.

This natural medium “is of special interest to artists,” writes Rose, “due to the visual attributes that result. In many ways the work resembles a print; this is because the (paper’s) edge is masked. Oil pastels, charcoal, graphite, soft and hard pastels can be intermixed in Sal-Zar. . . it saturates the paper . . . softens the medium.” Salazar’s use of chapapote drives his thematic forces and his particularly straightforward style of abstract expressionism. He projects powerful emotional imagery from his mind into the fabric of the paintings. He paints with the elements of Mexico herself.

With this series, at once bright and dark images which seem to melt into the paper, Rose has connected three sub-series which relate to the greater work: “The Eight Forces in Chaos,” “Strange Attractors in Sal-Zar” and “Eyeless in Gaza.” He describes in his dead-on observant prose not only the theoretical foundations of this collective work, but also the methods and materials, which relate directly to the subject matter. One has hardly encountered such an integrated body of work—the themes relate to the compositions and subjects; the materials themselves relate to the very heart of Mexico and her environmental health’s and ills. Our world is rendered; it is described; it is revealed in ways, which one cannot speak of. The wings of Salazar’s butterfly strokes change the tornado patterns of our souls. This is art at its peak of mastery.

Rose's e-books by ramblin/rose publications include: "If Only . . ." with poems by Bill Pearlman; "Mexican Vibrations"; "Twenty: A Magical Number," " Mexican Secrets" also with poems by Bill Pearlman; "Aztec Deities"; and "The Chaos Trilogy," which will be available for purchase at this lecture. (Rose's books can be downloaded gratis at www.e-artbooks.com) For more information and a peek through Rose-colored lenses, visit www.salazargallery.com

Cheri Long is a freelance writer and book editor whose articles and poems have been published in many magazines, newspapers and online. Her editorial clients are published widely, including the New York Times and the London Times Literary Supplement. Long studied English, art and drama, earned an MA in Literature from Northern Illinois University and has also been an artist for many years, specializing in oils and murals.