

A Letter From Robert Mertens

I'm highly recommending this Painting Workshop with Aviva to you, my Subud friends, and your friends and families.

It is a 5-day experience of healing and transformation given in a most delightful format. The format might be called "Process Painting" (in that it opens us to our creative source through the process of painting).

It is more than this describes. The group becomes open to a colorful, dancing spirit, that seems to flutter around the room, going in and out through the individual paintings bonding us all into a whole. Sometimes the spirit is deep and meditative, sometimes outrageous, often playful, always liberating.

Here's a little about how I came to know about it, how it works and my personal experience:

I first learned about this workshop last year from Aviva Gold, who is the workshop's inventor and facilitator. I felt an immediate attraction to what she told me about the workshop, so I bought her book (also called *Painting From the Source*) went to her website, and viewed many of her video links. I then found out that she was giving a 5-day Painting From the Source workshop at Esalen in March, which I attended.

Here are some of those links-

- About Aviva- <http://creativepassage.org/aviva-gold/>
- About Painting From the Source- <http://paintingfromthesource.com>
- An interview with Aviva <http://paintingfromthesource.com/downloads/DVDdownloads/Book-ProcessInterview-30min.mp4>

The workshop worked this way. In a secluded space totally dedicated to the workshop and reserved for the painters exclusively, we painted together for 5 days. There were 14 participants, plus Aviva and her 2 assistants.

There were 3 formal sessions a day; after breakfast until before lunch, from 2:00 to about 4:00, and after dinner to about 9:30, although we were allowed to be in there at any hour of the day or night. Aviva asked us to come to the beginning of each of these sessions where we had a short sharing circle before beginning the painting. We then painted for the whole period, or as long as we wanted.

We each worked on just one painting for the 5 days. We started with one small sheet of paper (about 17" x 22"). And added other sheets as the paintings grew (many reached the ceiling in height and 4 or 5 feet in width).

All of the pictures continually evolved and transformed during the 5 days, with many of them radically (and magically) changing themselves several times. The poster paint we used allowed us to paint over our paintings, as the Source revealed new and surprising imagery.

As we got deeper into the process, the paintings themselves began to tell us what to do next. Images bypassed our thinking to communicate truths directly to our awareness.

I felt a quiet and deep sense of satisfaction after each day's painting session and became close with the other painters. My painting took a surprising turn and eventually became an 8' high nude woman. I was led to name her "The Oracle", an archetype, always there to answer my questions.

Painting From the Source could be called "Process Painting" because the intent is to come in contact with deep and authentic places within, *directly*. Then the images that our inner self presents through the painting may awaken and enliven us. The energy in the room lifted all the painters.

There are 2 "rules" for Painting from the Source.

- **Rule 1-** *Be present with your painting and the paintings of each other, witness only. Give no praise, criticism, advice, analysis or "art talk" (such as "nice composition", "Your painting reminds me of Monet.", "I love that blue.", "I think you should change that.", etc.).*
- **Rule 2-** *Protect the safety and privacy of all the participants by keeping confidential the experiences of others in the workshop.*

Even though I'm a professional artist it wasn't necessary or even an advantage to get full benefit from the workshop. In fact, it may have been more of a challenge for me than some of the others being concerned that my painting looked good.

So what were my key take-aways?

As someone who was praised for my artistic ability from the time I was a small child and later making the visual arts my career, it became my habit to make pictures to be seen by others. *It was great to be working on a painting that was just for me and have it witnessed but not commented on by everyone else.* My own picture naturally found its place among the paintings of the whole group with its own presence.

Towards the end of the workshop I had 2 powerful dreams that began to illuminate an emotion that was not expressed in my family of origin, anger and it's more cosmic manifestation rage. After one of these dreams I had an energy that I do not usually have when I first awake. This may be a harbinger of some new integration taking place within me. I also witnessed some personal breakthroughs in the other painters of the kinds that are told about on Aviva's website.

I'm attaching a flyer with the above links, to give you a flavor of Painting From the Source. We have room for 12 participants to paint in the yurt at Seven Circles .

Please feel free to call me at [559-337-2104](tel:559-337-2104) or email me back if you think you might like to come and want more information.

Love, Robert

AWAKEN YOUR ARTIST'S SOUL *AT A 5 DAY PAINTING FROM THE SOURCE* *AND NATURE RETREAT*

You can connect to the power and beauty of your source within
through the process of painting.

Aviva's wise and gentle guidance will help you and your workshop partners open the door.

with Aviva Gold **October 19th-24th**



Visit: PaintingFromtheSource.com

Full 5 days tuition, lodging, food, and materials. Average cost \$1,100. Call Larry at
(559) 337-0211 for details and accommodation price levels.

Early bird average \$980 (register before June 15).

Questions about the process? Call Aviva (805) 640-1724 Email-Aviva@paintingfromthesource.com



at Seven Circles Retreat Center
In the Foothills of the Majestic Sierra
Near Sequoia National Park

Call - Larry
Phone - (559) 337-0211
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