

## Another Illusion Within the Big Dream

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I was born in Milan, Italy in 1964 and have always designed ever since I was a child. It was a quiet magical space where I could spend hours daydreaming, creating pictures and playing with colors. When she recognized this tendency, my mother steered me into artistic studies from when I was young and I attended art school and ended up specializing in editorial and publicity illustration, followed by three years of experience in illustration at the European Institute of Design. For about six years I worked as a freelance for several publishing houses and publicity agencies.

However my goal was always to become a painter and I was fascinated, respectful and perhaps a little afraid of this profession, so I would say that my path has been a 'gradual one'.

In the middle of the flourishing eighties, in collaboration with a friend, we opened "Studio One", a little studio that we were very proud of, and worked together for three years and had a lot of fun.

After this period in which I dedicated myself to illustration, I began to feel limited at the creative level especially regarding space and dimensions so I embarked on a new stage devoted to 'trompe l'oeil ('deceiving the eye'), a fresco technique for public and private places. This took me travelling to different places, collaborating with colleagues and friends according to the size of the painting so I moved further and further away from the world of illustration.

Then a period of personal crisis and difficulty led me to take refuge completely in the creative process, leaving behind the more commercial aspect based on commissions. I had never really liked living in Milan and since I had a very independent job in 1995 I moved to New York where I started to do my first paintings.



I'm very grateful to this period of crisis because it completely changed my path and my perception – space and time were no longer limited. It was a feeling of great freedom and most of all the pure pleasure of painting without expecting anything. I would spend many hours every day totally absorbed and from the moment I started to work, my mind that was so very troubled and stressed in that period became calm, and concentrating I would feel a state of well-being, harmony and pleasure. I found this aspect that is inherent in all the arts very similar with the practice, and now I can recognize it as a state of “grace” that does not always take place.

I have always been a traveller fascinated by and curious about the world and its different life styles. In 1997, I came to Ibiza to help my old friend from “Studio One” decorate the Pacha Club. I'd never been interested in this island and thought that it was just sex, drugs and rock and roll! But it was spring and I discovered paradise. The clubs and that rock and roll world were only a small part of the island in a limited area. So I decided to stay for the whole summer and enjoyed it so much that I also remained there for the winter.

The light here is perfect for painting and the natural surroundings are beautiful. I have been here 17 years and I am still here and every time that I come back I feel a great sense of joy.

At the professional level, Ibiza has been very generous or perhaps I simply arrived at the right moment. I had several exhibitions – it was an international setting with many possibilities. It was like a concentration of culture with a lot of freedom and creative energy at the levels of painting,

music and fashion.

I had always been fascinated with oil painting and over the years my technique has been enriched with various bases created from different materials such as pigments, chalk, powdered marble, sand, glue, cloth and collage paper. Then I started on figures in oil colors that, according to the way they are used, create transparency, a veiling effect and a thousand possibilities for expression. It is a live material but you never finish discovering new aspects. Finally I found that resin is a very interesting innovation for creating levels and depths.



I am an artist who loves figures, their form, the sensuality of face and body always in relationship to natural elements. However, my paintings always start from an abstract more spontaneous base with the canvas flat on the floor. I enjoy letting different colors and materials fall and mix on the canvas and watching the result – it's always a surprise.

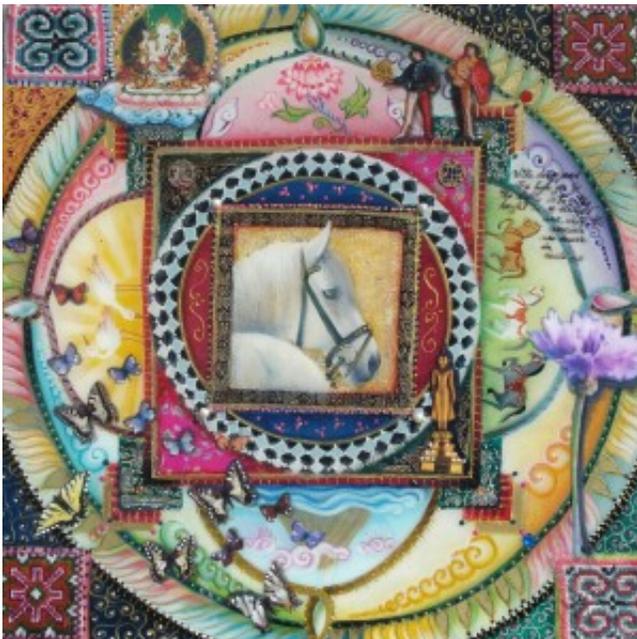
I love creating different levels of composition and materials in which hidden parts leave space to the imagination. The final part of the oil painting should accent some parts of the figure, leaving others incomplete. I often include texts or phrases from Buddhism or another Oriental philosophy.

In order to paint I need a rhythm, a routine and daily discipline, just the way that training strengthens a muscle. I usually work on two or more paintings at a time, according to my energy and the moment. Some paintings require more clarity and strength, a psychophysical balance, while others are quieter and concentrated, such as those called “mandala pop”, I alternate them like spaces in which I can retreat, focus my mind and consequently find a calm state.

Practicing yoga has given me some great benefits on all levels. At the physical level it has given me the strength and stability I needed to work on my feet for many hours on large paintings and at the next level the energy to make clear how to do it. Painting is a physical action that grows and evolves towards subtler spaces.

My many trips to the East and the philosophies of these countries have influenced my work, including the beauty and simplicity of the people, and Tibetan iconography often appears in my paintings. However, dreams and the unconscious are the most important source to draw upon.

Often through my dreams new paths and inspirations appear. I might dream of visiting an exhibition with beautiful unknown paintings, or paint something marvelous with an ease I have never experienced before. Of course the day after I try to reproduce what the unconscious gave me, and even if the results never reach the quality of the dream, they open up new paths, techniques and create enthusiasm. Dreams of clarity at the artistic level are a great door that open onto a world that is not limited by distractions and tensions, and we can always draw upon this source.



In 2001, I met Rinpoche. At that time I used to visit a Kagyupa monastery and in the library I found his book “Dream Yoga” and was hooked.

I feel fortunate to be able to dedicate myself to painting and to have met the Master. The teaching permeates our lives and creative work can become deeply enriching. The practice nourishes painting and vice versa and painting is often my favorite practice.

Some time ago playing a sort of mental game I asked myself if I would give up painting to dedicate myself solely to practice. Now the question is no longer valid because I have found that the two are

part of each other, thanks to Rinpoche for guiding us with his wisdom and showing us simplicity free from conflicts and duality. For the rest, the best paintings are always done in situations of complete relaxation, or openness and in the presence of our different emerging emotions.

A canvas can be compared to a mirror. There is often no reflection, or we struggle and criticize ourselves and judge something as an ugly work, with insecurity, doubts. Sometimes it improves, other times nothing happens. But how many times have we heard the phrase, 'Don't give it too much importance'. I have always had great faith and devotion towards painting and when it doesn't come from the heart, I feel empty and insensitive. The same thing happens when I approach the teaching. It works in the same direction.

... for the rest, a painting is another illusion within the big dream.

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