

Art, poetry and the pen: On the ontology of artistic creation

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Abstract: My paper by poetics creatrix will express what we do not know about artistic expression, in verse and in prose, and will call attention to the phenomenology of the arts. How the ‘arts’ create a footprint of the consciousness of humanities experiences. Applying charted comparisons of selective events and the response of the poets, painters, song writers. The life experiences of an artist and the world’s influence is “Tuning Forks of the Soul”¹.

Keywords: poets, artist, musicians, painters, phenomenology of creative thought, universal consciousness, sentience

“Writing is the painting of the voice”

Voltaire, *Questions sur l'Encyclopédie* (1770-1772)

“In You [Zeus] we live and move and have our being”

Epimenides of Crete, *Cretica* (700-600 BC)

“For we are also His offspring”

Aratus, *Phaenomena* (c. 270 BC)

Preface

When the dust settles from war, the babies’ cries are no longer heard. There is left throughout the universe’s existence an energy that wakes the sentience and conscience of humanity, and it will quote the poet for as long as their verses endure. It will play out by the thespians on the stage of humanity to express the consciousness of time.

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¹ See Christine McNeill-Matteson. 2011. “Tuning Forks of the Soul”. In Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka (Ed.), *Sharing Poetic Expressions. Islamic Philosophy and Occidental Phenomenology in Dialogue*, Volume 6, pp. 217-228. Dordrecht: Springer; Idem. 2017. A walk among the brushes: A personal reflection of Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka. *The poet. Agathos*, Vol. 8, Iss. 2 (15): 103-109.

Poems will be found in tattered notes on fields of war, and marked walls in prisons of humanity and the generations afterwards will study and try to understand the phenomenology of the dire attempt of the souls to survive and be heard long after they have passed.

History books are written with times and dates, and attempted facts (whether correct or not) of the past to archive humanity in effort to improve what and who is left. It is written for the attempt to give lessons of the past and present, to build societies back from the societies that were ruined by war, greed, and the lack of sustainability as an attempt to preserve for the future.

What inspires the poets to create, to want to leave a note of passion that no one else is willing to talk about? The artist to sculpture into existence the story of what was left from dead civilizations and painters to leave a field or painted sky to sooth the souls of a tired generation or hope for a generation to come; to pull from an energy of the universe evoking the reader, to be brought into the artistic expression and somehow change the course that otherwise leaves humanity in an emotional demise from war, human suffering or our inability for sustainable environment.

The ontology of poetic expression

We know from Socrates that “there is one good, knowledge, and only one evil, ignorance.” (see Diogenes Laertius, II. 5.31) Diogenes Laertius' ancient text *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers* (Book II, Chapter 5, Section 31).

Poets and artists have an inward compulsion to express and create. Often artist is asked when and how do they create, write, or perform. In the words of Bob Dylan (2004) - the 2016 Noble Prize Winner for Literature and Folk writer and singer -, in an interview was asked how does he write or compose the songs and lyrics. His response was: “it is almost as though they were magically written.”

In my poem, written in 2024, “The Encore of the Wind: A Poetic Composition,”

I have sat next to all the beginnings,
I have the rushing of wisdom
coming from the sea.

The wind calls out the encore
against the rocks
and it is me...

The ‘encore’ are the poets, expressing the calls of the universal phenomenology of time and existence. It is not deaf or blind by humanities’ limitations. When it is written and becomes verse and song, others are drawn to understand and relate, and it either soothes the soul or explains the turmoil it creates. In the movie *Dead Poet’s Society*, played by Robin Williams, he explains to his students about poetry, in his powerful dialogue, “The powerful play goes on and you can contribute a verse” (see *Dead Poet Society*, 1989).

The phenomenology that spreads from our beginnings to the moment we are taken up with words written in a poem or song that lingers, once heard, and begins to hold its own space, by the poem, the song, or the mystery of a paint brush. It lingers in the play, long after we, as humans, contribute; the play is humanity, the universe, time.

My poem “Women Before” expresses the ontology of poetic expression and the reflection over time:

If I could pick up the pieces
and build a bridge from me to you,
we’d brush our hair with scents of yesterday’s living,
color our lips with stains of mauve secrets.

There would be miles of many years,
across miles of tears and sacred truths.

We’d hang the railings with aprons tied together,
and our bras that covered our bosoms of nurturing souls.

Bridging over rivers from birthing beds wet with sweat and fluids from the
womb,
we would cry the storms with tears of sorrow, spring rains with tears of joy.

If I could pick the pieces of all our pain and build the hopes with the strength
remain
we would hear the chorus of all before us and harmony welcome those to
come.

President John F. Kennedy (1962), in one of his speeches a year before he was assassinated, spoke of the poet and their influence in time. He states, “Artists struggle to express beauty in form and color and sound. The writer’s concern is with man. Through history, and today, Shakespeare speaks to us as he spoke to his own age. Sophocles speaks to us across more than two thousand years. In our own time, even when political communication has often been strained, the Russian people have bought more than twenty million copies of Jack London’s

works, more than ten million books of Mark Twain, and hundreds of thousands of copies of Hemingway, Steinbeck, Whitman, and Poe.”

Poems written and read, for generations have been continuous in many ways, politics, arts, psychological effects on the young and the old. They inspire and heal, yes, they are provoking and unsettling. They express what few are willing to talk about and can cause loss of freedom from the voice of the poet.

Time and poetry are uncaptured. It is a freedom that is allowed by the phenomenology of the universe, the thread through time, and humanity either embraces or feels threatened.

However, they read and listen to the artist, the poets, they find refuge and hope:

A tradition of women
who have long since passed.
Has given belonging
to those who are last.
We stand in the clovers,
we pour tea at its best.
As the sweet bread is served
among all the rest.
May the Celtic women
long survive
into the histories
and the archives

Christine McNeill-Matteson, “Tea and Sweet Bread” (2025)

Every scholarly paper, book, or argument is introduced or reiterated or affirmed by a poet from the past.

The wisdom of verse, not intended to argue but to spread universal wisdom that comes from places only the universe (as in physics) can only be understood by seekers of wisdom.

What is the science of creative writing?

Plenty of speculation comes from psychologists and neurologists as to the spatial location of the mind.

The humanities are quickly being lost into the technical age and people start questioning if wisdom is something the culmination of collective information through systems of AI.

But what divides the moral artistic expression by human soul and the creative mind?

If you do not recognize this, then one would ask if you denied if there is a soul or a mind, and say, we are merely robotic duplications of things we are exposed to and culminated into an artist of replication.

Robert Lax, in his book, *The Dream Catcher*, as it is “narrated by S. T. Georgiou, talks about being a poet. He says,

Well, I think that peace has to do with resolving problems in a non-violent way. As Gandhi would say, weapons rebound. I believe that a poet, no matter what his or her theme is, tries to work in an ultimately harmonious integrative manner. Inclusiveness appeals to me. Why else do so many stars shine in the sky? I think the astute poet can give a foretaste of what real peace might be like. Poets demonstrate that communion between people does not have to be an exchange of growls, as history has conditioned us to think. Instead, poets can show how we can sing, laugh together. All the arts can encourage unity.

The Way of the Dream Catcher. Spirit Lessons with Robert Lax, 2002

Instead of conclusion: A haiku

Salty swells arrive,
tide splashing, rocky shoreline
lone poet stays watch...

Christine McNeill-Matteson, 2002



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