

Patricia Ayité
Artist Statement

Moving Towards Meaning – Allowing for the unexpected

With a family, a home, and a full-time job, “planning” for unstructured time (what a paradox) is not a luxury many days afford. But sometimes beds get left undone, a meal is late, or an email left unanswered, and the result may be a meaningful conversation, the best hug you ever received, or a brilliant idea for a new painting. Allowing for the unexpected in my life is sporadic at best. I am, by upbringing and heredity mostly, a person of structure. I am, by nature, explosive and passionate, with a need for structured variety. Bizarre combination. Probably difficult to live with or be close to.

I am conscious of the possibilities, the miracles that can unfold if I just stop mapping out each day, and just let myself be carried by the current of life. I have experienced this; I have even based life-changing choices on this; but I am still bound by years of external and self-imposed discipline, routine and structure, habits that have proven a solid foundation to a (relatively) productive life.

Sometimes, however, it is necessary to let go of the list, to forget about the chores at hand and let the breath of God touch my heart. I have often wished for entire days void of structure in order to have uninterrupted time to paint and draw, but most days fill themselves with the busyness of every day life and what time is left, what happens when I do finally meet with my paints, is like meeting with a lover one rarely sees. Nothing matters but the essential: the color, the shape, the texture, the expression and the union. What matters less is the realism of the form. What matters more is touching, feeling, sensing and interacting. In these intense moments, these moments when time is forgotten, and you are living fully in the moment, you come truly alive: Your body, sustained by your nervous system, and your spirit, sustained by the caressing waves of the all encompassing presence of the Great Spirit, uniting to fast forward into furious creation, resulting in bursts of color, clusters of shapes, mixtures of chaos and harmony.

You never know when you might be surprised by joy or visited by the shiver of the world beyond – but if you don’t allow for this possibility, it probably won’t happen: The thrill of possibility; the openness to the mystery.

Allow time and space for the miracle; let the colors have a voice. Once in a while, open the gate to the unknown, take a risk; you just might connect with something or someone you never knew existed. And yes, I do believe that structure and discipline are the frame and the mat for the miracles, for the mystery. They are the foundation, chaos moving towards meaning...

*Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life.
It turns what we have into enough, and more.
It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order,
Confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast,
A house into a home, a stranger into a friend.
Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today,
And creates a vision for tomorrow.*

Melodie Beattie