Here and Now

On the night of March 11, I loaded up the car with my art for the show "Invisibly Present / Visibly Absent". The following day I unloaded it and put the art back into my home. A virus invisible to the human eye very much made itself present and much human interaction became visibly absent.

The themes touched upon here are clearly related to environmental concerns, but don't depend on a certain carbon level becoming a tipping point in terms of climate disruption. Rather, much of the work is rooted in the wider notion of what our relationship should be with Nature. Our hubris needs to be tempered, our desire to control and conquer Nature needs to be checked. Failing to do so does tremendous damage to the outside world and to our inner lives.

With respect to the current pandemic, these notions are especially relevant if the ultimate causes of the pandemic are human actions like factory farming, deforestation or -- more directly -- the very real threat of dangerous bio-laboratory work. Nature (as in Katrina in New Orleans) or "alien" culture (as in Chinese wet markets) are often blamed for disasters rather than actions of establishment institutions.

It's fitting that this work appear at the Jerusalem Foundation's Al-Quds Gallery since the Israeli assault on Palestinian people and culture is the "tip of the spear" in many respects of a settler colonial / corporate model attack on indigenous populations whose culture tends to work more with Nature.
Charles Avila in *Ownership: Early Christian Teaching*, outlines Augustine’s beliefs: “The Creator, who alone is Absolute Owner, did not make us human beings so many ‘islands,’ without any relation to each other, but one human family, ‘made from one mud’ and sustained ‘on one earth.’...We enjoy the same natural conditions: ‘born under one law, living by one light, breathing one air and dying one death.’”
Ago

Ago 2017

40 x 30 inches
acrylic on canvas, snow, invisibly present
$5,000

Ago is one of the first and most successful "snow breakup" pieces. They are created by applying layer after layer of acrylic spray paint on snow as it accumulates on a canvas, often at night. The canvas is then brought inside, "breaks up" in some way, and eventually both melts and dries leaving the paint on the canvas.
Several years ago, my partner Emily and I visited the parents of a childhood friend of hers, Matthew, who was gay and had committed suicide. As we were in their backyard, I noticed a series of metal panels leaning up against a shack. "Umm Matthew" said that he was an artist and was planning on doing something with them, she didn't know what. Emily mentioned that I was doing art and "Umm Matthew" insisted that I take the panels and do something with them. One of these panels is so far the best example of both the "breakup" pattern of "Ago" and other pieces with actual individual snowflakes preserved.
Ancient Kitchen

Ancient Kitchen
20 x 16 inches
acrylic on canvas, with flora visibly absent
with flora visibly
$1,000
I've titled a past temporal piece "Answer Key." This piece similarly reveals to the viewer how something is made. But it also adds a political component: How being Palestinian (or seeing events through the lens of Palestine) can give you a short cut -- an answer key -- to the political machinations of various states and institutions. The colors are (slightly off in the case of the red/orange) Palestinian. And a key -- a symbol of Palestinian longing to return to the homes they were driven from by Zionist forces -- is visible absent. It also plays with the notion of simultaneously representing an eternal principle, being seemingly frozen in time while still acting in the now.
On Sept. 11, 2001, my then-partner was visiting me in D.C. and was helping out a bit with my media and political work. She was set to leave town that afternoon, but of course stayed after the attacks -- the planes stopped flying and she helped me full time at my job. We worked nonstop, trying to get information out that might avert the coming catastrophes. After about two weeks, I took her to Union Station so she could finally go back to Texas, where she was in grad school. Exhausted, I walked in the area, ending up at the Library of Congress, where they had a remarkable art exhibit about prophetic visions. Finally, I went to the main reading room, sunk in a chair and looked up at the rotunda to see: "We Taste the Spices of Arabia Yet Never Feel the Scorching Sun Which Brings Them Forth."
Bessie's Bosom′

Pronounced "Bessie's Bosom Prime" -- using the mathematical symbol "prime" meaning a distinct but related or derivative object.

24 x 18 inches
acrylic and excess "dirt" from "Bessie's Bosom" on paper
NFS

Here, Nature is not only an influence, but is the model in that Nature as a closed system, the excess of one part of the system becomes the input for another part. Thus, "artificial" materials act in a "natural" way.
Both in Tatters Together

30 x 14 x 17 inches
acrylic on spider webs on flora
NFS

An experimental composition of natural form with spider webs that seem to be modernist.
Celestial Powers in White Space

Celestial Wonders in White Space

14 x 11 inches
frozen paint on paper
$1,000

details
Colorful

KhaRabia Rayford was an activist in Washington, D.C. and a friend. She wrote a book of poetry titled We Are Colorful. It’s a cliche that white is the combination of all colors and black is the absence of color. But this is only true for light, not for pigments. As this piece, a sort of natural experiment, shows, the combination of all colors is brown. KhaRabia died on DC’s Emancipation Day in 2017. This piece was done on the following Martin Luther King Day in 2008.
Purpose of the Petroleum Age: A Secret Path

Purpose of the Petroleum Age: A Secret Path  2016
2.5 x 2 inches
acrylic, hydrangea invisibly present
NFS

This piece is the inside negative space of a dried hydrangea made visible by layers of acrylic paint sliced open. The title is taken from a Rumi poem with the line:

And if every way i closed before you
The secret one will show a secret path no other eyes have seen

I learned of the poem through a recitation by Duncan Mackintosh on YouTube, but it has been censored by the tech giant because of alleged "community" violations by the interviewer, who is now deceased. Ironically, I can no longer find the full poem on the Internet or elsewhere, nor am I completely certain it exists.

The piece is here mounted on an Arabic mosaic box in the Damascene style. Observing a craftsman working on such tile work in the Syrian capital, a great cultural center of human scale, in 2007 was a major inspiration.
One of my favorite memories as a child is of my mother, recently in the U.S. from Jordan, picking dandelions to make a salad. This piece was to be sliced like "A Secret Path" but it has stayed in this form.
Continuity of Government

Continuity of Government 2020

24 x 7 x 1 inches
acrylic on wood and spider webs
NFS

The *Tao Te Ching* speaks of good government being akin to how Nature manifests itself in the world, as if a *continuation* of it. This piece iterates the theme begun with "A Secret Path" -- except now on wood, thus "rings" are added to the wood. So human activity works with Nature to extend and highlight it rather than to constrict or control it. But we can also see the patterns of how government policy manifests on the natural world, with the revealed patterns showing a seemingly threatening climate map, complete with what appear to be horror-stricken faces of Buddhist dragons at the center of the "storms". On July 13, 1987, the Democratic Party Chairman of the Iran Contra Committee, Daniel Inouye, cut off Rep. Jack Brooks when he attempted to question Oliver North about plans for "Continuity of Government" which Brooks described as a "contingency plan in the event of emergency, that would suspend the American constitution." Most major media ignored the issue. This was right around the time of the celebrations around the 200th Anniversary of the U.S. Constitution. The hypocrisy hit me like a wooden two by four. I wrote a piece on some of this much later: "Killing the Constitution: How I Became a Radical Twenty Years Ago Today." Inouye and Brooks would die within days of each other in 2012.
Cradle

Cradle    2017
40 x 30 inches
acrylic on canvas
$3,000

This piece bent and almost fell apart as I carried -- cradled -- it in my arms with the snow heavy on it. This led to it "breaking" in such a way as to create two dominant lines which seemed reminiscent of the two rivers that nourish the "Cradle of Civilization".
Crystal Plastic

14 x 11 inches
acrylic on paper
$300
Dark Room

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on canvas
$1,000
Don’t Just Admire the Vase, Drink the Water

Don’t Just Admire the Vase, Drink the Water  2017-2020

6 x 6 x 7 ¾ inches
acrylic and watercolor, flies and spider on glass vase and jars
with water visibly absent
NFS

An ironic use of a Rumi line.
“I am an eagle...”

“I am an Eagle Playing with the Wind”

45 x 19 inches
acrylic on paper
flora and fauna visibly absent
$2,000

This is based on a line from the poem “The Delight Song of Tsoai-talee” N, Scott Momaday, which was put out as an “Art Challenge” by curator Dagmar Painter. Not everyone who proclaims they are something is actually that something. The bird I used was actually found dead on a road. Brave words are sometimes spoken by those who are actually roadkill. Many jackals say they are lions. In this case, it may have been a hawk, but it could have been a buzzard. Quite certain it wasn’t an eagle and it certainly wasn’t playing in the wind, at least not in any normal sense. Buzzard roadkill sometimes proclaims it is a soaring eagle.
I usually don’t sign pieces on the front – it seems an egotist mark that distracts from the work, but here I do so, mocking the practice of certain government officials’ signatures somehow adding “credibility” to the value of fiat money.
El-Ahrairah is the main mythical figure for the rabbit characters in *Watership Down*, one of several Arabic-inspired names or ideas in what initially seems like a distinctly English text. The work seems like a children’s book, but it’s actually about the search for a decent society.
Executing Birth

Made on April 9, 2017, my dad’s birthday, shortly after he died on January 27 of that year. April 9 was always a tough day for my dad’s birthday, as the “anniversary” of the Deir Yassin massacre in 1948, and, then, perhaps coincidentally, the fall of Baghdad in 2003. This piece is an early work featuring a larger structure rather than simply scattered flora. In this case, the viewer looks “through” a weeping willow.
Shortly after my partner Emily and I began dating, she was diagnosed with colorectal cancer. One consequence of this was that when we were on a drive, she’d have to go to the bathroom for a long time. At first, I’d be frustrated, but then I’d simply take this as an opportunity to observe nature, especially if we were at a state park or such, but after a while, I started doing art with the natural materials.
Future Flag:
Resurrected Bird Takes Flight and Eats the Maggots that Were Feeding Off It 2017

40 x 30 inches
acrylic on canvas
$4,000
“Gain-of-function” is a euphemism for biological lab work that makes dangerous pathogens more lethal, like making a deadly virus more easily transmissible – airborne. It’s also called the creation of Potentially Pandemic Pathogens in the scientific literature. Discussion of these issues has been notably absent, or deformed, during the current pandemic, something I have attempted to remedy. This type of work is justified as “biodefense” so that “we” will be able to anticipate what “the terrorists” or “Nature” might throw at us. This illustrates how institutional power is often maintained by playing off scare tactics that smear cultures deemed “the other” – or Nature, in a sense, the ultimate “other”. But some lab work has itself has become a threat, with the U.S. government proliferating biowarfare lab work since the 2001 anthrax attacks, which were a “false flag” attack – presented as coming from nefarious “Arabs/Muslims” when they actually originated from a U.S. government or allied lab. Since 2001, largely outside of public view, the U.S. government has sparked a bioweapons arms race that China, Russia, Britain and France and other countries are all now likely engaged in despite having signed the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention. Israel hasn’t even signed the treaty. With this larger piece, some of my artistic capacities are “gaining function” as I “use” Nature for my own conflicted ends. So it is also about staying mindful that with what power someone may accumulate, they must ensure (self) examination. Indeed, doing so should be a critical function.
Honeycomb

3 x 1.5 x 1 inches
acrylic on honeycomb
NFS, Work in progress.
Natural manifestations can take place inside the home, as in the patterns I’d see my mother and other Arabic women “read” at the bottom of a cup of Arabic coffee.

Iced Arabic Coffee 2
8 x 9 ¾ inches
paint on paper
$250
Layers

Layers 1989

17/16 x 1 7/16 x 1 7/16 inches
acrylic all the way down, here atop painted wooden block
NFS

The motivation for this at the time was to give form and substance to the layers I saw: Both the layers of lies and the layers of beauty.
My first preservation of snowflakes -- whether subconscious or by happenstance -- were done with yellow paint, just before Holocaust Memorial Day in 2016. Of course, Jews were forced to wear six sided stars by the Third Reich. Here, one of those preserved snowflakes is mounted on a matchbox I picked up from Bellevue, a noted Russian restaurant in Helsinki.

A snowflake is a clichéd, but true, reference to the uniqueness of each person -- and it resembles a spark. A matchbox is an allusion to the lighting of ovens, to the tinderbox of potential nuclear disaster, an increasingly likely coming Holocaust -- and to myself being thrown in a box.
Landing Upright: Before the Tree is Fallen

10 x 10 inches
acrylic on paper
NFS

This piece was inspired by a tulip poplar tree blossom which fell from a tree and landed upright. Soon after, the tree itself was cut down.
Impression

16 x 20 inches
acrylic on canvas
$1,500

This vertical snow piece harkens back to the famed artistic school.
Is the Return Message

24 x 18 inches
frozen paint on paper
$3,000

This piece is based on the Rumi poem “Love Dogs” about a man losing faith because he thought his pleadings to God were never answered. He was met in a dream by Khidr, the guide of all souls, and is told that the agonizing longing in his heart is itself the return message he has sought.
Long Time Ago

Long Time Ago When Grass Was Greener on the Other Side

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on paper
$1,500
I’d bought the air conditioning part at a scrap yard over a decade ago, knowing I’d wanted to do something with it but without knowing what. A great influence on me has been the music of Phil Ochs — especially his song “Changes” — a poignant song about Nature, mortality and intimacy with the opening line: “Sit by my side, come as close as the air.” But of course, we breathe in the air. And given our artificial environment and HVAC systems, even it is increasingly artificial, with some scientists now arguing that such systems are becoming an increasing threat to us as an airborne pandemic rages on. Here, I painted the object as close as the air and then hand sanded it down as finely as possible, so what was covered up became intimately apparent in a new way. An object that is rather artificial has artificial substances added to it and is artificially manipulated, but somehow harkens to a natural process, giving a measure of hope — allowing us to breathe.
Manna from Heaven

Manna from Heaven  2016

17 x 14 inches
acrylic on paper
$500
Night in the City

Night in the City  2019

40 x 30 inches
acrylic on canvas
$3,000

Contrary to cliché, a modern city at night is often in a white haze.
Miniature Arboretum

14 x 11 inches
acrylic on paper
$400
Here, I'm trying to learn that Nature is a closed system, containing no waste. The negative space from a screen piece becomes a piece.
Old Master’s Brushstrokes

Old Master’s Brushstrokes  2020

28 ¼ x 29 inches
frozen paint on window glass
acrylic on glass
$6,000

While many talk about the “Old Masters” — I’ve attempted to follow the oldest and greatest Master of all. Like much of my art, this is inspired by the Taoist work Tao Te Ching:

*The Master does nothing,
yet he leaves nothing undone....
A good artist lets his intuition lead him wherever it wants.
A good scientist has freed himself of concepts and keeps his mind open to what is.
Thus the Master is available to all people and doesn’t reject anyone.
He is ready to use all situations and doesn’t waste anything.
This is called embodying the light.*
Resolver (Natural Light)  2017-2020

3 3/4 x 5 3/4 inches
acrylic on found crushed beer can
NFS

Compulsions to control nature cause alienation, deaden our sense of wonder about the world, leading us to find escapism in addictive substances and behavior. But even the refuse of such behavior is itself wondrous if actually looked at with clear eyes. This piece also acts as resolution to competing schools of art -- effectively making a work like Jasper Johns' "Ale Cans" at one with abstract expressionist works.
Purple Riverwalk

Purple Riverwalk  2019

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on canvas
$1,500
Red Frozen Brain

14 x 11 inches
acrylic on paper
$300
One major aspect of the "breaking up" snow pieces is an analogy to the notion of being emotionally present and allowing your feelings and events flow naturally -- to release, to let go.
This is not a Protest Sign

This is not a Protest Sign
8 x 11 1/2 inches
pen and marker on paper
NFS

While covering the Trump-Putin summit in Helsinki in July 2018, I attempted to get a substantial question in by holding up this sign: "Nuclear Weapon Ban Treaty" -- a reference to the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which 122 countries had backed at the United Nations, but was being attacked by the US government and virtually all of its NATO proxies, Israel as well as Russia. (Other nuclear weapons states China, India and Pakistan abstained. North Korea actually voted for the resolution.) I also aimed to ask about the US government's refusal to acknowledge Israel's nuclear weapons arsenal, as exposed by Mordechai Vanunu. Another reporter who saw me making the sign falsely told the security officials I was planning a protest. Despite my attempts to explain what I was doing, I was eventually dragged out of the hall, thrown in the back of a police van and locked up by Finnish authorities until around midnight, when the media centers closed. I still managed to get much of my story out in the following days.
Rust

20 x 24 inches
acrylic on canvas, snow visibly absent
$1,500
Riverdale

Riverdale  2019

40 x 30 inches
acrylic on canvas
$5,000

This is an exceptionally successful use of floral structures.
Water and Ice

Water and Ice

14 x 11 inches
paint on paper
$200
Three Leaves

24 x 18 inches
acrylic with leaves and snow visibly absent
$1,000
Signed Snow

14 x 11 inches
acrylic on paper
$300
Seminal

Seminal

14 x 11 inches
acrylic on paper, Samaras visibly absent
$500

Made on May 23, 2018, the day after Philip Roth died. What began as a whimsical joke became a meditation on fertility.
Spring is seen as a time of birth, but the onslaught of waves of life can be overwhelming, in part because it also includes a great deal of death.
Remembering That Glorious Dream

Remembering That Glorious Dream    2019

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on paper
$3,000

An unusually successful layered flora piece.
Accelerate

The Vista I See Now Is Changing

30 x 40 inches
acrylic on canvas
$3,000

This piece involves a style of painting that uses snow, but the canvas is close to vertical, as most traditional painters have a canvas rather than horizontal, which is how most of my snow pieces are made. While making a painting, I sometimes have a song about something I’m feeling go through my head and that animates me. In this case, it was about choices and the song was “Accelerate” by REM:

*Sinking fast, the weight chained to my feet
No time to argue with belief ...*
*Where is the ripcord, the trapdoor, the key?*
*Where is the cartoon escape-hatch for me?*
*No time to question the choices I make ...*
*I’ve got to follow another direction ... Accelerate*
*The vista I see now is changing*
*Uncertainty is suffocating ...*
Purpose of the Petroleum Age: Bessie’s Bosom

Made from the old radiator of our car, “Bessie”. This adds another layer of irony on the notion of the “petroleum age” in that it not only is made from plastics, but also from auto parts. It’s also about the irony of people forming an emotional bond with their cars. Most of the colors used are either of “Bessie” or a female breast. It’s about comfort and freedom.
Blinding

Blinding  2017

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on paper
$1,000
Gold in the Darkest Blue

Gold in the Darkest Blue    2016

18 x 24
acrylic on canvas
NFS

This is inspired by the song "Fallen Down Moon"
Makin' out with Judas
Just to make your bail
We do shit like that
Just before we crack
But there's splendor in the cracks
And gold in the darkest blue

The piece has many more layers than an initial glance would indicate, causing the "cracks" that appear in parts of it, both fulfilling the title and relating to the "snow breaking up" pieces.
Most people who celebrate St. Patrick's Day by eating food dyed green are unaware of the origins. Christine Kinealy, a scholar of the Irish Famine notes that "Irish folk memory refers to the Famine dead as having ‘mouths stained green’ — because their last meal was often grass."
The Fountain

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on paper, rain visibly absent
$1,000
Like a Sailboat

Like a Sailboat  2019

16 x 11 3/4 inches
acrylic on canvas panel
NFS

"Traditional" art is like a rowboat: "Stroke, stroke, stroke." Much of modern art is like a motorboat: automated. I liken my art to being "like a sailboat" -- to work with Nature. This piece simply takes a canvas layered with paint and scrapes it down, creating a scene of a sailboat on shimmering water.
This especially successful snow painting brought home how the patterns it shows can simultaneously depict tiny veins -- or a distant planet. Such art brings the wonders of the outside world — where they are created — in.
What Leaves Leave

24 x 18 inches
leaf prints on canvas
$1,000

Spending most of my days in downtown Washington, D.C. for years left me longing for the most minute traces of Nature, so my eyes would dart around for shadows, reflections, even discarded chewing gum on the sidewalks -- and imprints as here. In the autumn, leaves leave their mark on squeaky clean D.C. sidewalks. No matter how much concrete is poured, Nature finds a way to be heard. This is also an example of the Taoist principle of "doing nothing but leaving nothing undone." Simply allowing the leaves to make their mark, to let the poetry speak without getting in the way.
Snow Window/Splendor in the Cracks

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on canvas
$2,000

This smaller snow piece is unusual in that light shines through the “cracks” — rather like a reverse stained glass window.
Makloubeh (Upside Down)

14 x 17 inches
acrylic on paper
$200
Wəd

This was a meditation on my using flora and how different forms of wood are processed in different ways, as people would choose.
Catcher in the Rye

The Catcher in the Rye   2016

25 x 39 inches
acrylic on window screen, snowflakes visibly absent
$4,000

Some of my first snow pieces were done on screens. This was motivated by two things: One was trying to preserve snowflakes, the other was the folk tradition in Baltimore of painting "nature scenes" on screen windows. This piece was for years in the guest bedroom in my home where the morning sun would hit it to beautiful effect.
Landslide 2016

24 x 18 inches
acrylic on paper snow visibly absent
NFS

This was made along with "Distant Map", but it literally fell as I brought it into the house. This is an extreme example of the idea that -- especially when working with Nature -- there are no mistakes, you "let the poetry speak."
Knocking Jesus

Knocking Jesus   c. 2008
17.5 x 22 inches
Collage
NFS

Jesus is of course typically depicted as "European looking". In 2002, Popular Mechanics published what purported to be an accurate, scientific picture of Jesus, here affixed to a widely reproduced print by Del Parson, a U.S. painter known for his Mormon themed paintings. Both my parents commented about how the "scientific" depiction of Jesus seemed "unattractive" to them. This raised the question of aesthetic standards and whether this "scientific" approach simply presented an allegedly authentic Jesus but simultaneously made this possibility "unappealing".
Sam Husseini  Artist Statement

My art has many layers: of natural and artificial, of visible and hidden, of valueless and priceless, of image and object, of temporal and permanent -- and attempts to reconcile such seemingly intractable opposites, upending dominant assumptions in the process.

Painting is often like a rowboat: "stroke, stroke, stroke". A lot of modern art is like a motorboat: automated. In contrast to both, much of my art is like a sailboat: It works with Nature.

My art considers "natural" processes, and both incorporates and extends them. In so doing, it questions what constitutes "nature". That is, "artificial" objects that have a nature-like process iteratively applied to them in a sense become "natural" over time. "Natural" objects that are swallowed by the "artificial" aren't really still "natural." Human beings are central to both processes.

"Be that empty". We don't see the world till we see the negative. "Don't just admire the vase, drink the water." Don't just paint a canvas with the likeness of a flower, paint the flower itself. Paint it again. And again. Then, cut it open, like a ripened fruit and look inside. Like an animal devours a carcass. Don't just paint a likeness of the snow, paint the snow -- and the rain and samaras. They all fall like manna from heaven. Really look at what we are provided.

There's a theme of resolving issues of image and object; allowing a thing to speak for itself. After an object is layered over and over, it can be cut or sanded down and the underlying reality of the object -- no matter how extensively it was covered up -- will again assert itself even though the "object" itself may seem invisible. This can also be done with collections of objects through the "emptiness" which connects all things.

My art is of this world yet has an ethereal quality. It rejects "materialism" in the usual sense of the word -- showing the beauty of the negative space of an object itself regarded as valueless. But it is completely materialistic in that it is about truly seeing the "everyday" physical world before us that we often ignore or even deride. Many only experience freezing crystal structures as an annoyance on a car windshield they diligently scrape off. Such are rarely regarded as wonders to behold.
Artist Statement, continued

Part of the process for my art is being in touch with the primitive -- gathering flora and fauna to include in the work. Each season provides fresh material every year as it did for our ancestors.

Now, our society is remarkably divorced from Nature, at times virtually at war with it as huge effort is expended in attempting to control it -- often producing disaster and trauma. We should instead be at peace with Nature. It ultimately is constantly present, no matter how much some work to pretend otherwise.

There's a theme of the role of memory; an influence of photography, "capturing" a moment in time. Much of the work is inspired by shadows and reflections and imprints -- these are especially important to me because they make much of our modern cityscapes more bearable.

Some works make allusions to geology, seeming to extend far back in time. Other works show the most fleeting of objects. Both these extremes are seen -- sometimes in the same pieces -- in how I work with snow. Some snow pieces look like land masses. Some preserve the most ephemeral and delicate of objects -- a snowflake.

I draw freely from influences from a wide variety of artistic, philosophical and spiritual traditions, at times attempting to reconcile ostensibly competing "schools".

I attempt to manifest in microcosm that peace with nature our society needs -- accepting spontaneity rather than seeking control; allowing nature and intuition take hold through the art and letting a path "unfold".

I've sought to co-mission Nature as a collaborator. We need to get out of the way and "Let the poetry speak." We desperately need a re-alignment around our relationship with nature -- and then come to a better understanding of our true identities and our own Nature.
About Sam Husseini

Sam Husseini -- born Usamah Husayni in Amman, Jordan, to a Palestinian father and a Jordanian mother -- is an artist and writer currently living in Riverdale, Maryland. During the late 1980s, after receiving a degree in Math and Philosophy from Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, he took sculpture classes in New York City. [During this time, he began his CompassRoses project -- painting compass roses in various places, writing at the time: "All places are holy. We are inter-connected. The compass rose is an immediate symbol of the fact that we are all on the same planet; simultaneously global and local."]

His interest in art continued in the following years and included photography in Washington, D.C., especially of the effects of nature on the Metro system in his "Concrete Expressionism" series, as well as during trips outside the U.S., including in Palestine. However, absorbed in media and politics, his painting and sculptural output was minimal until 2014 after moving to Riverdale.

He makes connections between his artistic and political work, seeking to reconcile the "Natural" with the "Artificial" in much of the former and "East" with "West" in aspects of the later. Similarly, he writes of seeing "layers of lies" in the political realm and "layers of beauty" in art and Nature. For more of his artwork, as well as writings about art, see: www.BeThatEmpty.org.