

Heart and Soul

Art process journal notes

Tuesday 30 July 2019

This is my first piece of art in more than 3 years and it is a powerful one. Lately, I have been reflecting on what Stuff Ink is all about, as well as what makes me special i.e. my unique selling point. Since I was young I have always had this knowing "that I was destined for greatness", however I still am yet to understand what greatness means in this context. Years ago, I was once also asked what my gift to the world was, which I responded "my life research, and my gift to me will be writing about it along the way", and again, I have never really been able to articulate what exactly my life research is. Given what I have been reflecting upon of late, what came through in my art today seems to fit perfectly with where I am at.

Medium

Chalk pastel on paper

My process

1. I started with an intention or word to focus my art on. Today it was the word WELCOME. I thought this was appropriate given I am just getting back in touch with my creative process again.
2. I created a clear space and then sat down and did a guided meditation on meeting my higher self. The purpose of this was to still my mind and get past the resistance and worry of not being able to create something 'that would look good'.
3. I then began drawing with no set image in mind. I just sat and looked at the pastel chalks until a particular colour jumped out at me and started with that. In this instance, it was the green of the bird.
4. I sat back and looked at my drawing. I then walked away for 15 minutes while the fixative was drying to give us some space. In that space, a conversation started to take place in my mind while thinking about the meaning of the artwork.
5. I came back and wrote the conversation down on the back of the artwork.
6. I wrote down these notes on my process and what I noticed.
7. Then I made myself type these up to publish on my blog before any negative thoughts got the better of me so I could come back to this again later.

What came up for me during the process

During the guided meditation, we were invited to meet our higher self through the light of our soul, which resides in our heart space. The form my soul took was one of the wise old man (think Gandalf from Lord of the Rings). We were guided to embrace, however what happened for me was that Gandalf reached out and took my hand in his. As he did I burst into tears and was overcome with emotion, however the emotion was nothing that could be labelled as happy, sad, joy. It was simply a very moving and powerful experience. I did notice that in the meditation I could not clearly make out any form that my soul took and this frustrated me as the more I tried to focus on a form, the more the shapes would shift and melt away into something else.

After the meditation I saw down and drew. It felt awkward drawing after such a long time yet the bird image immediately took shape. I was surprised that the bird really looked like a bird. The green colour chosen reminded me of the heart chakra and some poetry I once wrote about the heart:

Hold me closer, give me wings

The beauty of my heart will sing

The image representing the soul is an odd form – half flame, half flower and it does not feel like it is properly formed. I don't feel I can draw it clearly, much like in the meditation I could not see the soul take any clear shape as I was being guided to see. The colours remind me of creative energy and the sacral chakra, which represents the access point to the universe.

I looked at the completed image and felt compelled to extend the bird's beak to touch the flower. It reminds me of the phrase "to drink from the cup of eternal knowledge".

Heart and Soul – it's a song and it feels like a dance. They are meeting and greeting each other, and both images have distinct roles to play. The bird drinks the nectar of the flower and is nourished and fulfilled. The flower's purpose is to spread its seed and pollinate. It is a symbiotic and mutually beneficial relationship.

I took a break for 15 minutes while letting the fixative dry. During this time a conversation started up within between me (represented by the heart) and my soul. The idea to write a story took me by complete surprise and I immediately felt like this was something I had been waiting for, and yet at the same time, the suggestion scared me and sounded ridiculous. What story is this I wanted to know! So I came back to my art and wrote the conversation as best I could down on the back of the artwork.

It is sage advice to sit with this work for a couple of days and see what other insights might unfold. I do know this is the beginning of something big. I have no idea what that is or if it is anything anyone would be interested in, but I'm open to the idea that there could be a story and perhaps now, I could be the one to write it.