

SPIRITUAL ART

Degard - a visionary artist's journey

VISIONARY artist Degard's first ever spiritual experience occurred at the age of just two. She recalls feeling the beneficent warm energetic presence of the Virgin Mary. These extraordinary experiences continued throughout her childhood.

In 1990, Degard thought she was a poet. Sitting with her painter artist friend Andy at a pub in Dingle Bay, Ireland, she had an extraordinary experience. Andy decided he now wanted to be a poet and Degard said she wanted to be an artist. From this point onwards, Degard, who had at this point had never picked up a paintbrush, started painting every day. It was a "Freaky Friday" moment.

After this experience Degard started working on the "Visionary" methodology she continues to manifest in her artwork to this day. Her first painting, "Spirit of Man," was channelled, as are all her paintings today.

Degard's approach to painting her works begins by asking a question of the Akashic records - Universal Mind/God/angelic presences. She doesn't know what to call this massive invisible presence.

The question might be "Can you show me the aura of ...?" The records then show her what it is in paint. She asked the records about Covid-19 at the beginning of the pandemic and understood its nature long before science caught up.

Degard trained as a fine artist, graduating from Chelsea College of Art with a BA and the Royal College of Art with a Masters of Research (MRes) programme. She is now undertaking a doctorate in Fine Art at the University of East London.

To cover the cost of raising her children, after completing her BA at Chelsea, Degard began working as a magician, which led her to be invited into the Magic Circle.

While attending a meeting with the circle, she noticed she could see a blue square around the chest of the meeting's chairman, who she soon discovered had recently undergone



PHOSPHORUS ATOM CONSCIOUS

THE three paintings on this page show in colour Degard's belief that inside of the atom is life and consciousness, not just the blank empty spaces in the atomic diagrams you learn about in school.

These paintings were shown in at the Lookout gallery in Aldeburgh and were greatly acclaimed by Prof David Berman, a string theorist, and Dr Ernst Fischer from the Hilma af Klint Foundation.



OXYGEN ATOM CONSCIOUS



THE AURA OF AN ATOM

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THE AURA OF HOME: This work is still on display at *The Power of Things*, which is an online show at the Royal College of Art. This painting is the aura of Degard's home, which shows that it is really beautiful.

The word "home" means a lot to her in philosophy as it is the last word used by G W F Hegel in his book "Phenomenology of Spirit." It is also a very important word in astrology. Degard believes she must be part of some of the astrological signs that love home.

triple by-pass heart surgery.

Degard explains: "I suddenly understood what these flashes of light were. They were his aura – his conscious energy. The square indicated surgical intervention, while the colour blue represented healing. I could see the experience of the whole operation in his energies."

She became completely aware of her ability to see the auras of those around her, so began her journey into the Visionary Art genre.

Degard then started asking questions of the records and thought it would be fascinating, for both herself and the viewer,



VISIONARY ARTIST Degard is pictured in her studio alongside some of her work.

to understand more about the nature of celebrity and success that many of us are so consumed by. What are the auras of those celebrities like?

Degard created over 400 paintings of celebrities and their auras, which gained her entry into the prestigious Royal College of Art.

Some of these paintings even sold to celebrities such as American actor Eva Longoria (*The Young and the Restless*, *Desperate Housewives*). Some of these auras of celebrities she is even nervous to show.

They reveal very personal details about some famous people.

Visionary Art as a genre in the 20th century was articulated and promoted hugely by Annie Besant and

Charles Leadbetter, two leading Theosophists.

The Theosophists, following in the footsteps of Madame Blavatsky, had a desire to integrate the scientific and the visionary as far as possible. In her doctorate work, Degard has come to the realisation that the Visionary as a genre is a standalone discipline.

She says: "We don't need to argue with science anymore and say the Visionary is not scientific. Science is about repeatedly seeing the see-able. Consciousness, the mind, life and our extraordinary experiences are the sixth sense.

"The Visionary should be heralded in its own right. You can't



SPIRITUALITY - Maslow's hierarchy of needs (above): Degard wrote an essay called "Art and Space." In this essay she realised that when, eventually, human beings are floating around in deep space in their capsules where all their needs are catered for, the one need humans will require more than any other will be our spirituality. This is a re-creation of Maslow's hierarchy of needs in the future.

study the Visionary using purely scientific methods."

Degard's "Atom Series" is represented here by three of her paintings which represent the atom fully. Atoms are, after all, the building blocks of life, so they must be full of consciousness and life. This she represents in colour, line and form whilst including the atomic elements which we know to exist.

Degard also has a huge interest in other Visionary artists, which is why she loves *Psychic News* and its art section.

To further the knowledge of Visionary Art she wanted to set up a gallery in central London where all the top galleries are. However, she had nowhere near enough funds to do this. One day she spotted a telephone box available to buy in London. It is directly outside the British Museum on Great Russell Street. Degard purchased it and started to display art in it, calling it the Visionary Brit Museum.

Everyone found this initiative really wonderful, and many

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artists are coming forward to show their work there.

Degard curates Visionary Art shows there all year round. The next shows are Degard's solo show "The Wailing Wall," followed by Suzanne Treister with a video installation and Madeleine Aleman's amazing work from Sweden.

"Establishing yourself as a Visionary artist can be difficult," commented Degard. "You are sometimes confronted by criticism, confusion, scepticism and rejection, which can be extremely disheartening to any artist."

"The Visionary Brit Museum is dedicated to championing these artists who dare to be themselves and share their ethereal experiences with a wider public – many of the people on their way to visit the British Museum each day."

During Degard's research into other artists, she discovered Hilma af Klint and her foundation. Hilma's huge "Paintings for the Temple" – which were commissioned by Spirit during a séance in 1906 and eventually comprised 193 works which she worked on from 1906 to 1915 – inspired Degard to also investigate the temple and her family's relationship to it.

Degard's latest work focuses on The Wailing/Western Wall in Jerusalem, Israel – a site of much distress.

"I have found twenty one relatives who were murdered in concentration camps from investigation of my family tree," she explains. "I would like to meet them for the first time and explore what they would have been like had they survived, effectively meeting them all for the first time via spirit portraiture."

"I hope this will go some way towards alleviating and healing these losses in my life. I would love to do this for others who have lost people too soon or not had the chance to really get to know them."

Degard has also articulated her thinking around Visionary Art by writing and self-publishing five books and having two papers published in academic journals.



MADAME BLAVATSKY AURA CONSCIOUS: This is Degard's interpretation of co-founder of the Theosophical Society, Madame Blavatsky's aura. It was shown at the Royal College of Art as part of a series called "Mystics and Scientists," which relates to the Scientific and Medical Network's event of the same name. This piece answers the question, "What is it like to see an aura in real life?" The painting lights up due to Degard's use of phosphorescent paint which you can ignite with black light.

You can visit the Visionary Brit Museum online at: <https://visionarybritmuseum.co.uk/>. It is open every day from 10 am to 5 pm. See more of Degard's work at: www.degard.org

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