



MONICA BASSETT

Painting with the Spirit

Exhibition from June 11 to July 10, 2014, Opening Tuesday, June 10 from 7pm to 9:30pm



Bassett Levitas, photo by Clarke Drahce, 2010, © Clarke Drahce



Monica Bassett, *India 2*, Acrylic, 195x97 cm, 2014

From June 11 to July 10 2014, the American Church in Paris presents the exhibition *Painting with the Spirit*, with American artist Monica Bassett. The exhibition combines paintings reflecting her personal approach, both artistic and spiritual, of which four are works created during a humanitarian trip to India in February 2014.

This collection of paintings by Monica Bassett is part of a movement called Lyrical Abstraction. The large, colorful paintings are full of energy, spontaneity, and spirituality. Through her method of Painting with the Spirit, the artist considers each stroke and each splash of color to be a form of “letting go” of emotion on canvas.

As part of a mission trip to Deep Griha Society, an NGO in the city of Pune, her purpose was to use art to meet the basic human need for beauty, meaning and creative expression with underprivileged women and children. Through the use of movement and color, this “Dancing / Painting” project evolved into a practice of self-empowerment, where Indians taught Bassett Bollywood dancing, and she, in turn invited them to “dance” their feelings onto canvas in order to transcend the difficulties of daily life. Hurling the barriers of culture, creed, and religion through creative expression led to a celebration of diversity which can be transformative.

The four paintings created during this experience were completed by the artist in her Paris studio. These paintings will be exhibited in the sanctuary of the American Church in Paris along with other large works created using the same artist’s process. A video highlighting her India voyage and method of painting will be projected.

Monica Bassett will conduct a performance during the opening of the exhibition with audience participation in the same manner as her “Dancing / Painting project”. The performance will be accompanied by poetry readings and texts, and musical accompaniment by the group Still Point.

A catalog published for the exhibition *Painting with the Spirit* will be available at the American Church in Paris.

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Monica Bassett, *Untitled 1*, Acrylic, 195 x 130 cm, 2014

ABOUT MONICA BASSETT

Monica Bassett, born in Chicago, USA, studied art and design before moving to France in 1994 to devote herself entirely to painting.

She uses art as a spiritual practice as well as a tool for self-discovery. Each stroke of the spatula becomes an intention or a prayer so that as the painting unfolds in all its dimensions, color and texture she infuses it with a subtle energy.

Her paintings can be described as spiritual landscapes; her work is fuel for the vitality of the inner life. Others can look at this art and feel that they know this place, too. Whatever the experience brought to the canvas, nightmare or beautiful dream, alchemy occurs that transforms the art into a simple offering, an authentic gift to the universe.

Her paintings are in private collections worldwide, including France, China, Dubai and USA. She also exhibits in galleries and participates in major art shows.

ABOUT THE AMERICAN CHURCH IN PARIS

The American Church in Paris is the oldest private institution outside the United States and the first of the American churches.

Established in 1814, the construction of the first church dates from 1857. The current church, located on the Quai d'Orsay, was completed in 1930.

In an ecumenical tradition, the American Church in Paris offers three Sunday services, promotes education, art and culture, and regularly offers many activities: concerts, conferences, themed events and exhibitions.



Monica Bassett and the people of Pune, India, February 2014

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Exhibition of Monica Bassett: *Painting with the Spirit*
June 11 – July 10, 2014, Opening June 10 at 7pm

Exhibition Catalogue *Painting with the Spirit*, available at the American Church in Paris

American Church in Paris

65 quai d'Orsay, 75007 Paris
Opening hours: 10am – 12pm and 3pm – 7pm
(except during weddings) www.acparis.org