

Re-contexted

Multimedia Art Show at Macky Auditorium Gallery

John G. Young, M.D.

Artist's Statement
John G. Young, M.D.
Multimedia Artist and Retired Psychiatrist

This one-man multimedia show takes paintings that have been in my videos in different roles and re-contextualizing them for this art show. Stills from the many videos I created over the last 20 years become the subject of this conceptual show. The commentary on the paintings with the stills *is* the art show. At times paintings are backdrops for other actors; at other time the paintings, especially the portraits, are the main actor. Thus this show is art about art about art.

Therapists re-frame patient's problems in a new light. The patients are then able to see their current behavior as a re-edition of an old pattern or script they have been living out in their current situation. Insight occurs when they realize they don't have to interpret every event from that old perspective and can begin to change their behavior. So too, artists continually alter the context of their works either by extending the old context in a new direction or opposing the old context in a different way.

This post-modern exhibit is full of self-reference. Paintings in one context are referred back to earlier paintings or videos. It reminds me of the old joke about the man who was finishing a long monologue about himself. He turns to his colleague and says, "That is enough talk about me, what about you? What do you think about me?"

In the time of reproduction and "appropriation" of images, [cf. a video of *The Scream*: unauthorized copies of this man's face screaming reproduced over 1000 different sizes, times and places throughout the world], this show is different. Unlike "appropriation", the schtick artists of the last part of the 20th century, that is used to justify stealing images and reworking them for their own use, these painting are original. The paintings I created were then put to new uses in video, installations, covers for CDs, DVDs, and books, I appropriated my own images and re-contextualized them for this show.

Biography

John G. Young, M.D., President of Adventures in Creativity, retired board-certified psychiatrist, is a professional speaker and consultant on creativity, innovation and change. With a long interest in the cognitive and emotional factors of creativity and wellness, he now creates full-time and coaches others to be more creative. Dr. Young currently spends most of his time as a multimedia artist, painter, photographer, video creator/producer, writer, poet and musician. See www.adventuresincreativity.net

John G. Young studied with Betty DeMaree, A.W.S., Bob Wood, A.W.S., Edgar Whitney, A.W.S., Virginia Cobb, A.W.S., Poly Hammond, A.W.S., Carol Barnes, A.W. S., Louise Cadillac, A.W.S., Phil Steel at the Denver Art Institute, and Mark Daley at the Loveland Art Institute. He took classes at the Jewish Community Center, the University of Colorado and the University of Denver, but mostly is self-taught.

He has shown paintings at the Artemis Gallery, Denver, the Heart Gallery, Denver, the Patio Gallery, Georgetown, the Foothills Art Center, the Summit Gallery, Dillon, ART Mart Galleries, Boulder, with the Heritage Art Guild in Colorado. Sweet Shop Gallery in Loveland, Colorado, the Ellenkathryn Gallery in Boulder Colorado, and the Andrew Macky Gallery.

He has had one man shows at Colorado Federal Savings Bank , Zack's Restaurant in Denver, Colorado, the EllenKathryn gallery, the Studio Two Gallery at Rembrandt Yard in Boulder, CO and the Andrew Macky Gallery. Recent works have been juried into the Boulder Museum of Contemporary Art and the Best of Colorado Art Festival, the Energy show at St. John's Art Gallery, Open Studios in Boulder, CO, The Louisville National Fine Arts Show, The Core Art Gallery, "Word Play" exhibit and the Rocky Mountain National Watermedia Show.

Dr. Young studied film and video production at the University of Colorado. The videos have won the International CINDY award, the Telly Award, the Telly award and the Accolade award. Video stills have been used in this show; and paintings and graphics have been incorporated into the videos.



Proposal for a show at Macky Auditorium Gallery.

I overlapped a prior image using the shadows in the same location to show how a new show would be set up with the side commentary that would be the basis of the show.



Show in Chicago skyline sequence

In a wild dream sequence from the video, Show in Chicago, this image of flowers was decontextualized [removed, divested or isolated from its prior context] by reducing its size, then placing that image over a drawing of the Chicago skyscraper skyline that was constructed from a photo of that skyline.

This suggests references to Christo's preparatory drawings that preceded his constructions, i.e. temporary outdoor environmental works of art and thus is a work of art about a prior artist's work.

Proposal for a Multi-media Show at Macky Auditorium Gallery Fall 2011

This is a close-up of the prior image.



Calla Lilies at the Chicago dusk





“I threw down my banner.”

In *Show in Chicago*, a bold dream video sequence, the banner actually unravels down the side of the at the Art Institute of Chicago.



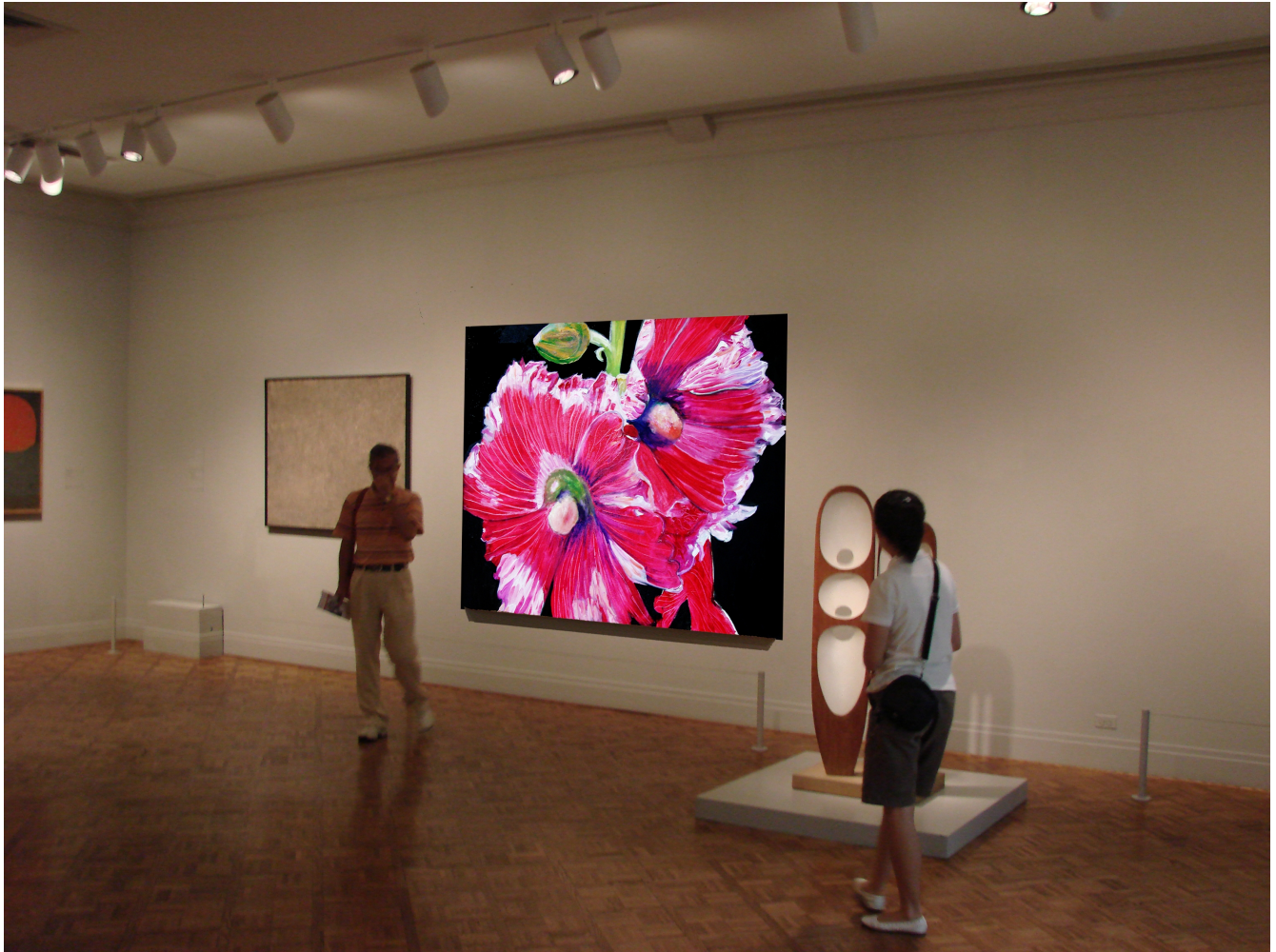
Show in Chicago: Gladiolas with Statue

When I went to the Art Institute of Chicago, I asked the guard if I could take pictures of the paintings. And he said it was OK as long as I did not use a flash. So I took the pictures.

But I was more interested in the context: the setting of the museum, and the people observing the images. Using Photoshop and making the necessary perspective alterations, I removed the paintings, but kept the shadows and frames and placed my own in their place. They then became the subjects of the video, *Show in Chicago*, a wild dream sequence.



Two Gladiolas at the Art Institute of Chicago



Hollyhocks in Art Institute of Chicago



Replacing the Georgia O'Keeffe's flowers at the Art Institute of Chicago. Only the shadows remain.



Orchids at the Art Institute

The trick is getting the perspective right. Re-contextualizing seems more accurate when the image is placed within the lines of perspective. It was easy as the paintings already there were in the correct perspective.



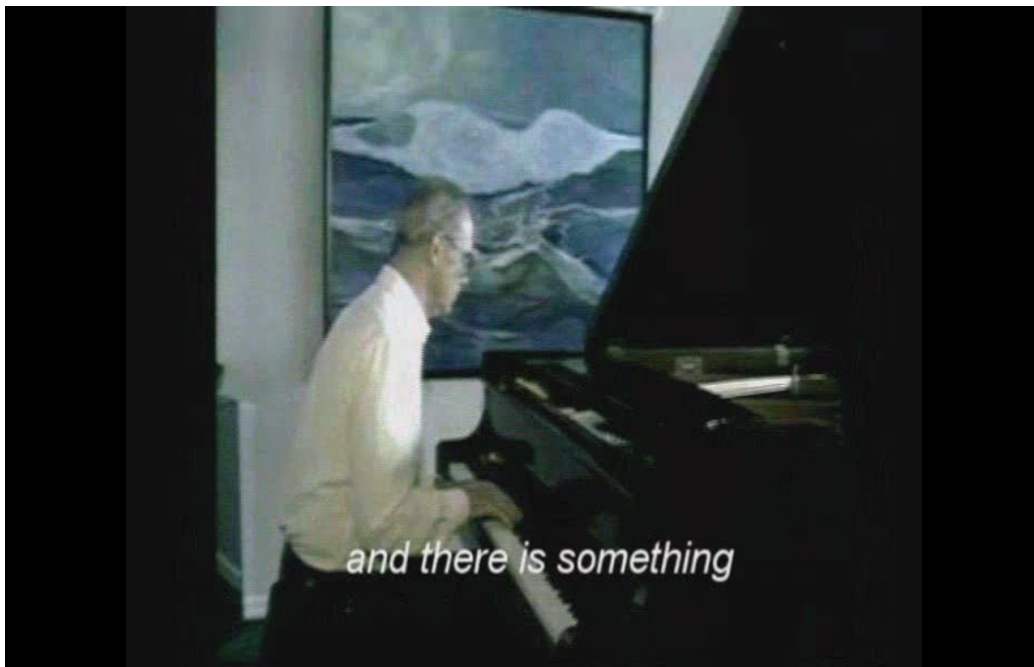
Stargazer at the Art Institute of Chicago

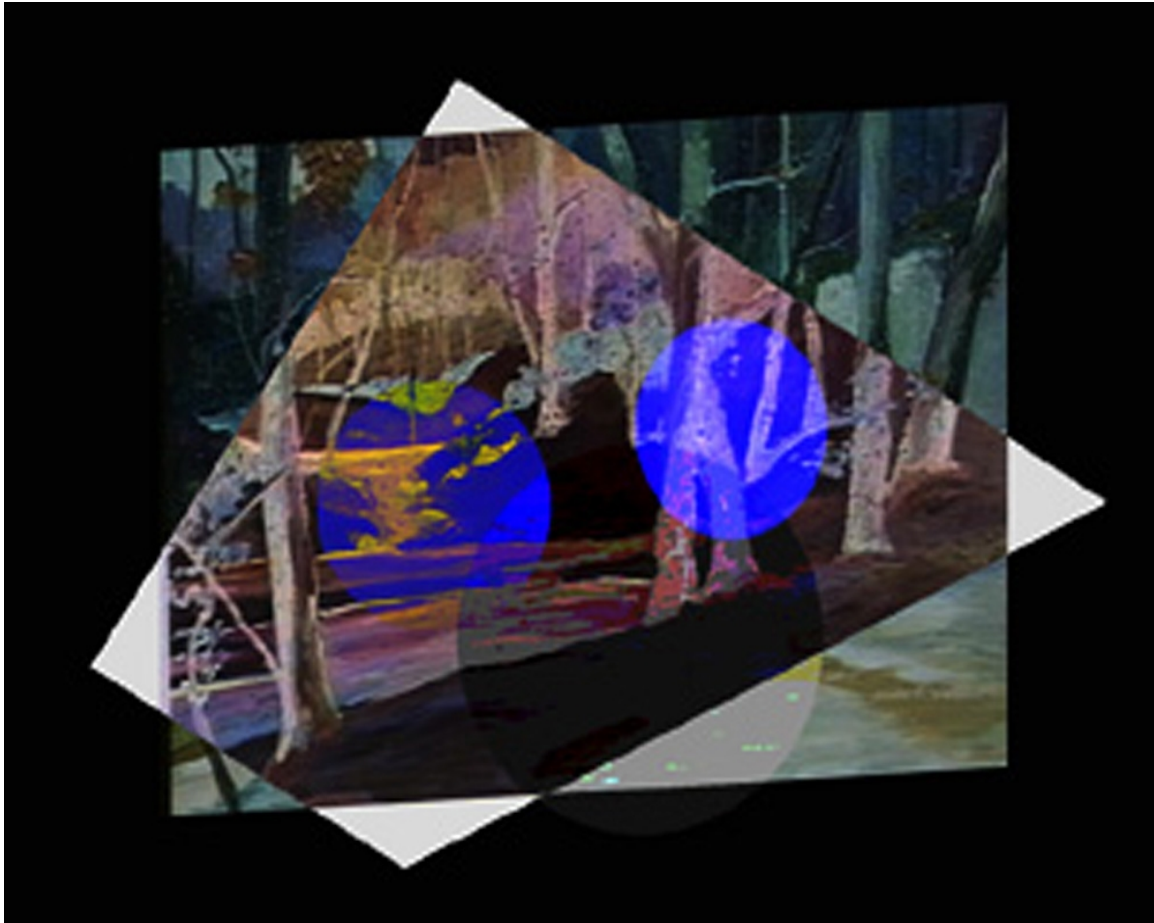


Three Roses at the Art Institute of Chicago



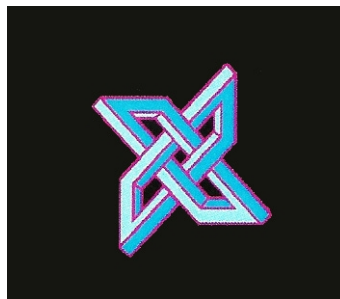
This image was from my first video, *The Creative Adventure*, a two-hour long, work on creativity. The painting in the background of the *Big Wave* was used as background for other videos such as *Poems at an Exhibition*. Artists even as sophisticated as Picasso painted backgrounds plays and ballets such as Diaghilev's *Les Ballets Russes*.

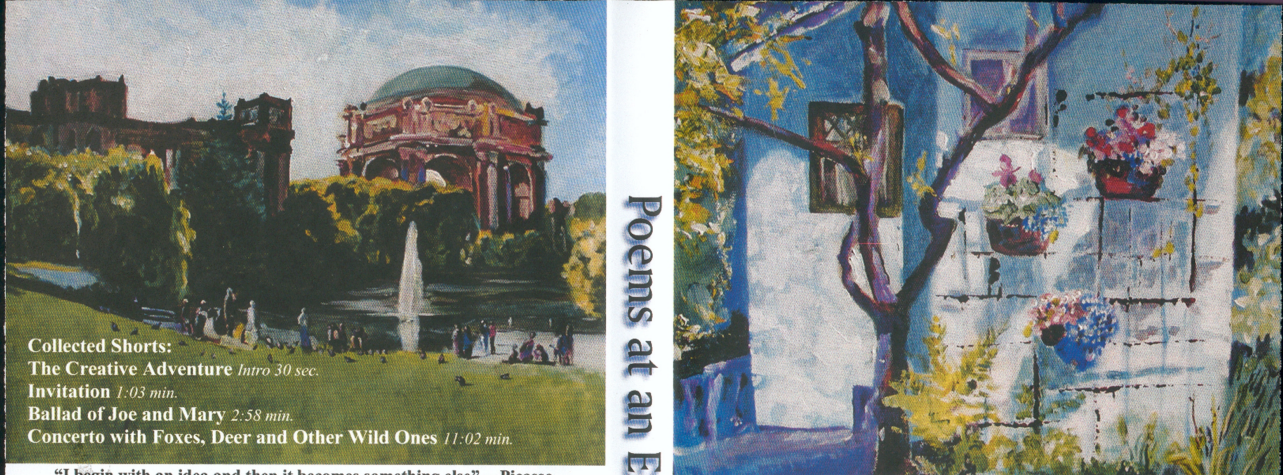




Sometime a painting, also in *The Creative Adventure*, now sold, can be altered, recontexted with filters such as those from Photoshop and other computer programs.

In my logo below, I redesigned the perspective in an impossible yet plausible way.






Collected Shorts:
The Creative Adventure Intro 30 sec.
Invitation 1:03 min.
Ballad of Joe and Mary 2:58 min.
Concerto with Foxes, Deer and Other Wild Ones 11:02 min.

“I begin with an idea and then it becomes something else” -- Picasso.

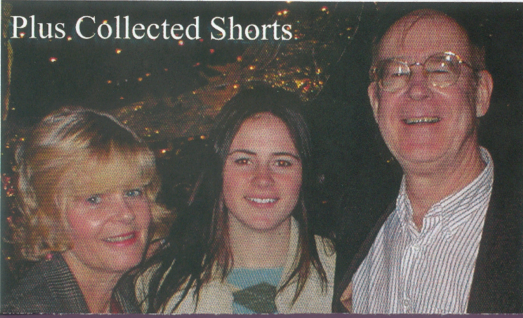
What started as a documentary of a one-man art show becomes a video poem on disability. In this work Dr. Young blends his art, poetry, animation, and music into a creative autobiographic documentary of his family’s attempts to cope with disability. His wife has multiple sclerosis, his daughter is hearing impaired, even the dog is mostly blind. This multi-media presentation shows how they overcome the challenges of loss, pain, rejection, and despair with laughter, courage and love. With interviews, by and of each family member, feelings emerge as spontaneously as the improvisational background music. In the end, this video reaches beyond one man’s family to the needs of all families who struggle with disability.

 John G. Young, M.D. is a multi-media artist and board-certified psychiatrist. He has long been interested in the cognitive and emotional factors of creativity and wellness. This video, *Poems at an Exhibition*, is his second work after creating and producing the two hour award-winning video called *The Creative Adventure*. For more information, go to www.adventuresincreativity.net.

© 2004 John G. Young, M.D. Adventures in Creativity Productions. All rights reserved.
 Color 49:40 min. DVD

Poems at an Exhibition

Poems at an Exhibition
 Plus Collected Shorts



***Poems at an Exhibition*, started out to be a documentary about a one-man show but rapidly became re-contexted into something else, a video poem about coping with disability.**





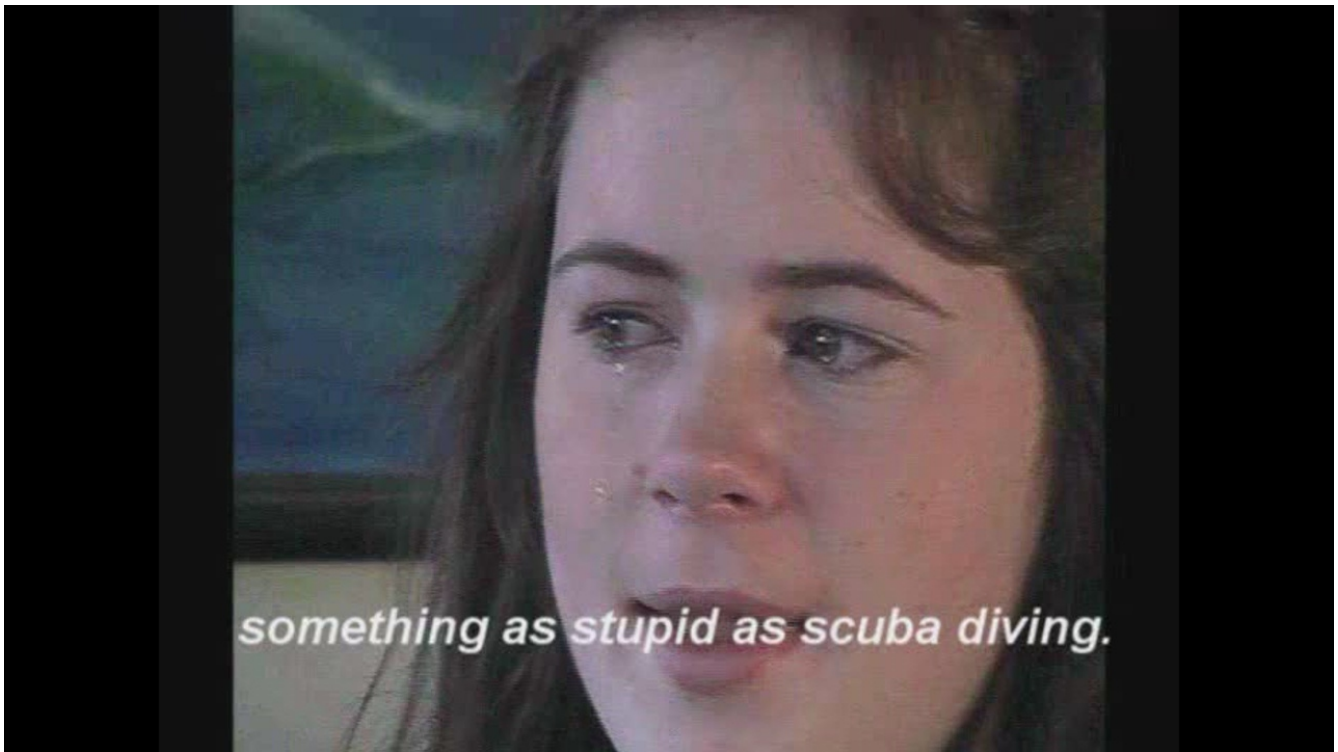
Cabin 9

I pushed your wheelchair
up and down bumpy sidewalks
venturing into Carmel's sixty plus
art galleries and pastry shops
past flowers and more flowers
looking for happiness
and finding it
mornings with mike
talking painting
and relaxing
at the end of the day
in cabin 9 with you

The painting Cabin 9 was made into a graphic so the poem could be added.



There is the *Big Wave* again in the background.



Amy had never grieved her hearing loss, at least in front of me. But when talking about herself and the side effects of having to wear a hearing aid in her left ear—she had already lost the hearing in her right ear secondary to a failed surgical procedure, she related not being able to hear her girlfriends talking to her in the shower with her aid off. And in the context of videotaping *Poems for an Exhibition*, she teared up thinking of the restriction of her not being able to scuba dive for the risk of high pressure in her only hearing ear.

The *Big Wave* again in the background suggests the welling up of feeling in the sequence. Images can suggest very different emotions depending upon the context.



Aspen Grove

Most artists paint with brushes and maybe painting knives. They try to avoid drips and spatters that occur accidentally when the painting is on the easel. In this painting I did the opposite, re-contexting what is considered a painting instrument. I dripped paint down the a slanted board and then dripped clear water randomly to define the trunks of the trees. The spatter became the leaves of the aspens and the brush below. No brush or knife was used.



Shades of Blues

**You st(o)p
to smell Alyssum,
with Canadian crutches,
long, stretched,
cerulean skirt,
close
to the ultramarine,
cobalt, and white
overflow of the large
earthen pot--
precarious balance,
dancing the blues.**



In the EllenKathryn Gallery I placed the painting of Diane bending over to smell the flowers, balancing and being hindered with her Canadian crutches, at a low level and the poem even below the painting at knee level so the viewer would have to re-contextualize the experience to read the poem. The poem in the graphic came later.





Thoughts From My Window*

**Mountain maids,
purple breasts to the sky.
When close to you,
I lose you.
When far from you,
I miss you.
Rocky affair,
breathlessly I seek your peaks
yet falter.**



I must love you from afar.

***Thoughts From My Window, *Trail and Timberline*, No. 717 p. 180**

In poetry metaphors re-contextualize, finding the similarity in dissimilar situations. Metaphors are noun likenesses. They are implied analogies. The word "metaphor" comes from the idea to "carry across." Metaphors help us look beyond the usual logical connections to other possibilities. Metaphors are not used to prove anything, but to show that there is more than one way of looking at a situation.

Metaphors not only compare or direct attention to unnoticed similarities, their very imprecision in language suggests *multiple* possibilities. One is forced beyond a literal look at a situation. Metaphors strain the old concepts and force us to consider new meanings.

The implied sense from this image in the poem represents longing. The size difference in the two images also suggest a different sense of a "close-up".



Paintings are used to convey an aura of culture in a room. Sometimes the room adds value to the paintings like a museum; at other times the paintings add value to the setting. Each is re-contexted. Here paintings add warmth to an industrial setting like my daughter's loft.



Shopping for Jewels

Visitors rarely visit,
disability being too chronic
for contemporary tastes,
so you venture out
in your wheelchair
dressed in pink
with a white
bandana-wrapped hat
to the outdoor market
looking for gems
of conversation
among the vendors
while others look on.

She says, "They stole
several pieces,
do it in groups,
one distracts,
others remove jewelry."

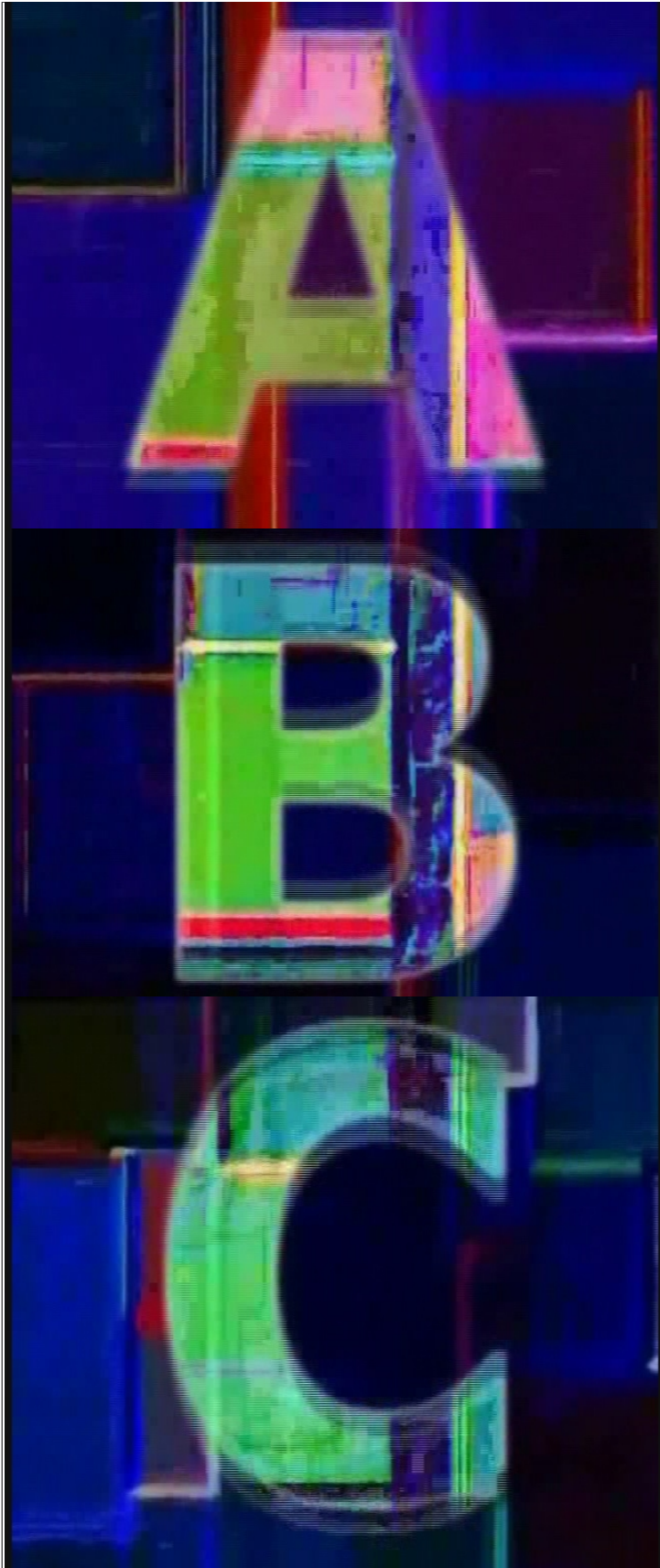
You muse, "No longer
come in groups,
MS took my peace,
distracted me from living.
I want to steal my life back. "



Gold Coast

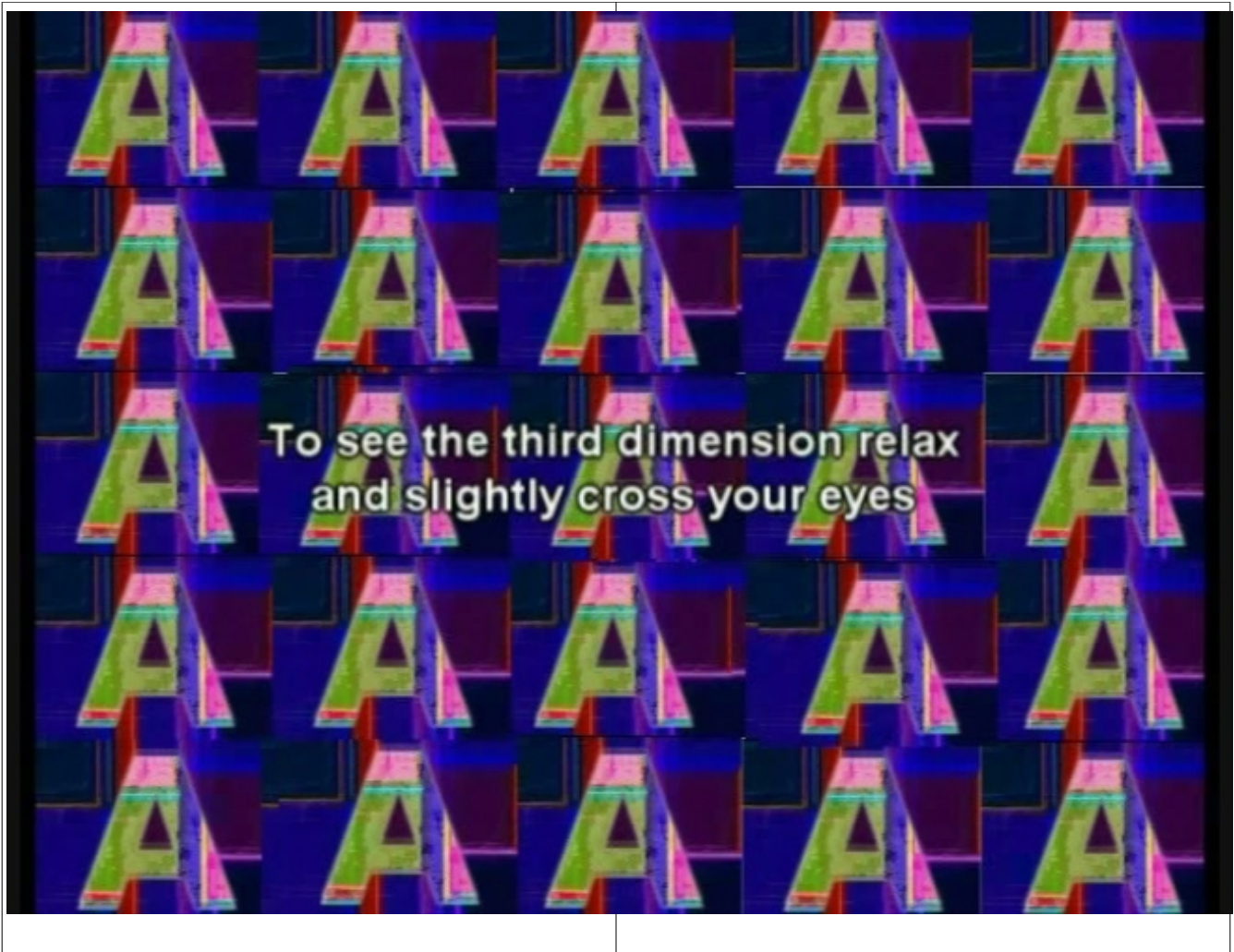
The painting was re-contexted by adding the dollar sign flashing in the video. There was a curved road already there in the painting; I put in the two lines in the video to complete the dollar sign. I also used gold paint as an accent in the cliffs.

California gold
panned out
in the interior hills,
money now
in Carmel homes
overlooking the Pacific,
so one late afternoon
I put a canvas
on an easel
and painted
the Big Sur coast
where surf crashed
into cliffs
and cashed
in on rays of gold.



Alphabet

In the initial video sequence, *Alphabet*, from the DVD *Word Salad*, the alphabet scrolls up the screen like an animated Jasper Johns.



Autostereogram

The re-contexting of the "A"s in the autostereogram is accomplished by altering the distance of the "A"s from each other.

To see the depth or Z-axis pull back ever so slowly, trying to focus on something behind the graphic. As you slowly pull away from the graphic, relax and let your eyes pick out the various images and bring them into focus. Once you get the images to "pop", stare at them for a bit longer. The longer you look at the images (well there are limits) the more depth you will see.

There should be six "A"s across the graphic at various depths. Zooming in and out is another way of achieving depth along the z-axis. Moreover, warm colors seem to advance; cool colors seem to recede. Sharp images seem close, blurred images seem at a distance. When images overlap; the overlapped image is viewed as behind the overlapping image

Word Salads come in many forms: In psychiatry it refers to a thought disorder found in various forms of psychosis; in the creative field a break from purely logical thinking to arrive at new meanings; in poetry it suggests playing with language such as the famous Jabberwocky poem of Lewis Carroll. Some word salads are complete non-sense and in others you have to dig for the meaning.

In this video, it is a mix of all these senses. This semi-divine comedy takes an out-of-the-box "mockumentary" approach to the creator-producer's state of mind and tells his tale through his alter-ego, Rembrandt and some of his friends.

It presents a new look at creativity and a new look at madness. It begins like an educational piece on creativity but soon evolves into a mad morality/mortality play. In it he mocks contemporary art, immigration policy, museum installations, architects, rap, himself—even God.

This video, Word Salad, begins with a series of sketches, using widely differing multi-media approaches from word-play games, graphic manipulations, documentary, fantasy installations, music/poetry videos, to posters and rap. It makes suggestions about the creative process and creative expression that carry through the video and looks at their relationship to madness.

Like the elements of a salad, the sketches are individually prepared before they get mixed together. Issues of bowing to the past vs. starting fresh, boundaries and intimacy, choosing and being chosen, standing out and fitting in, shallowness and depth, and duck, duck, goose get all mixed up. Psychiatrically poems move from ignoring issues [Sublime Suite and Strangers to Themselves] to the struggle to face one's demons [Plaza de Toros], to manic excesses [Hamilton and Chicken Salad.] The video poem gradually moves into madness. It progresses from the psychological madness of schizoid distance and manic excesses to the physiological madness of multiple sclerosis, its multiple ramifications, and anger about its indignities to existential madness of being tossed into existence with the prescriptions for living "left in a bottle too wet to read," only to then in the end having to face loss.

In the concluding neo-dada play Dr. Young tossed the entire work into an incredible chicken salad. It extends the focus from sense and non-sense to meaning and meaninglessness in the style of the "Theatre of the Absurd." The dialogue is full of chicken clichés, wordplay, looseness of association and other nonsense. Humor replaces the sad edginess and over-the-top emotionality of some contemporary art films focusing on madness, but it is not just funny, the video has a serious side too. It suggests we all have to hang together and face our demons, individually and collectively. He closes the psychodrama with a nod to Lewis Carroll's Jabberwocky poem—it sounds nice but makes no sense.

John G. Young, M.D., a retired psychiatrist and multi-media artist, created this unique experimental video. He blends Jungian, Freudian, and existential approaches into this complex psychodrama. Dr. Young did the paintings, graphics, poems/script, photographs, music/sound-scapes, performance, animations, videos, and voice-overs along with his wife, Diane.

(C) 2008 John G. Young, M.D.
Adventures in Creativity Productions
www.adventuresincreativity.net
jgyoungmdalc@hotmail.com

Word Salad: Creativity and Madness with Foxes, Deer, Ducks, and Chickens

W
o
r
d
S
a
l
a
d

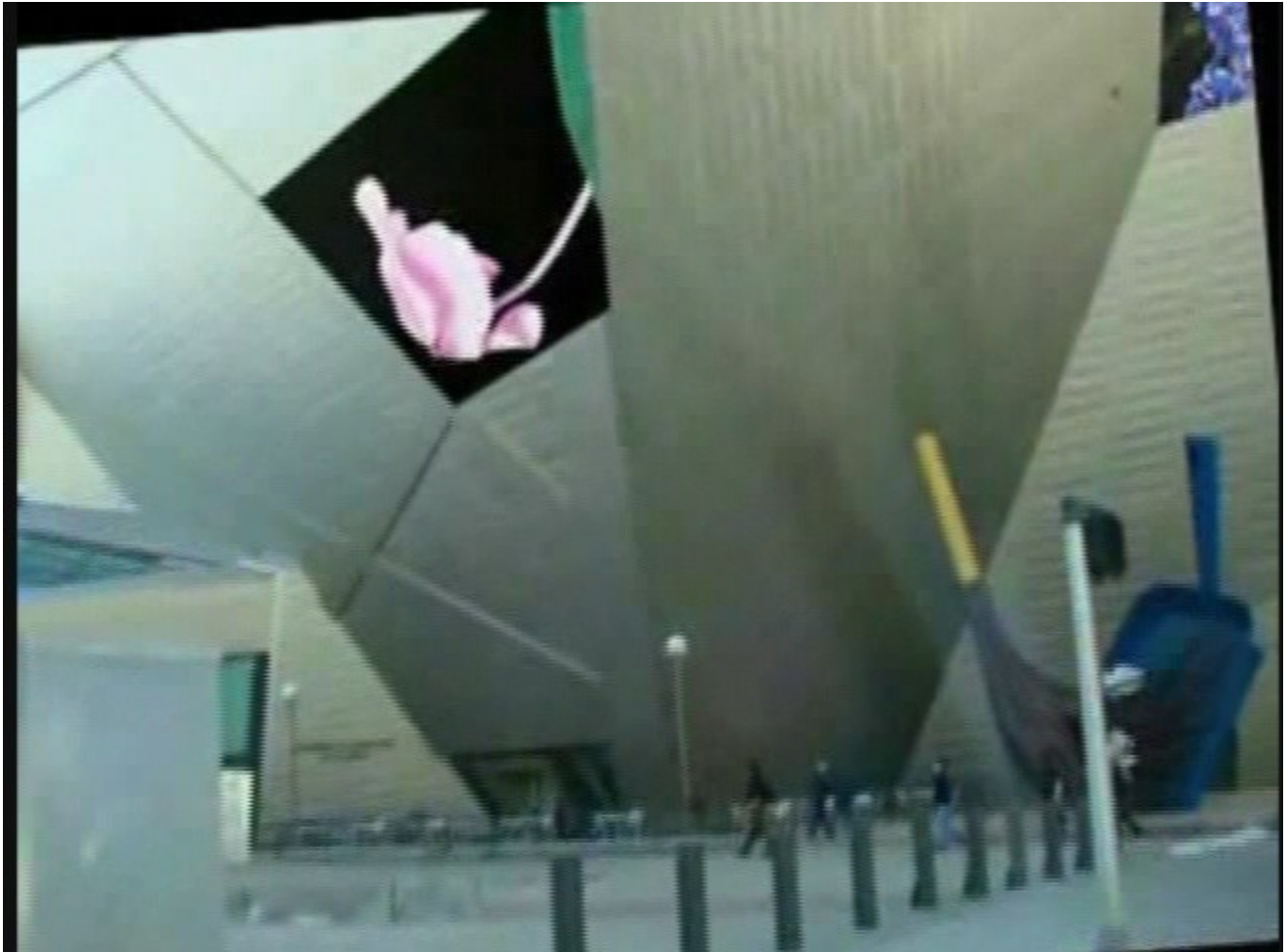


John G. Young, M.D.
Creator/Producer

Adventures in Creativity Productions

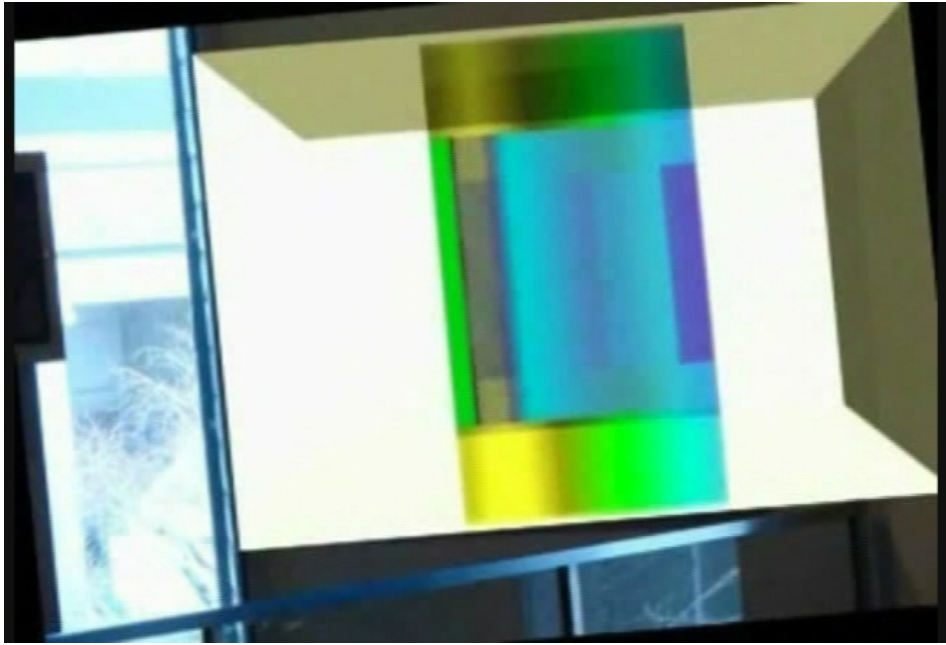
Word Salad

In this psychodrama the alter-egos of the video-artist are combined in a final group picture on the cover of the DVD *Word Salad*. Many of them had a speaking part with animation created by Crazy Talk and voices from wave forms generated by the AT&T Labs Natural Voices text to speech program--talk about re-contexting.



The Hamilton Addition to the Denver Art Museum

The flower echoes the sculpture and the painting is on an angle like the whole building. There is not a square edge anywhere.



This abstract video also finds itself tilted in the Hamilton.



Daisies

More daisies





P.I.P squared

The context for this video still is a picture within a picture within a picture etc. The external image of me holding a painting of a flower in front of another painting of a flower is repeated many times. In the video the commentary also is repeated within itself--talk about self-reference!



Slice Five

This video was sliced and diced multiple times: First by the computer when it crashed. All the images were sliced and the parts of the images were shifted in reference to each other. I was able to save the results and so I sliced them even more in this video short. The context keeps changing.



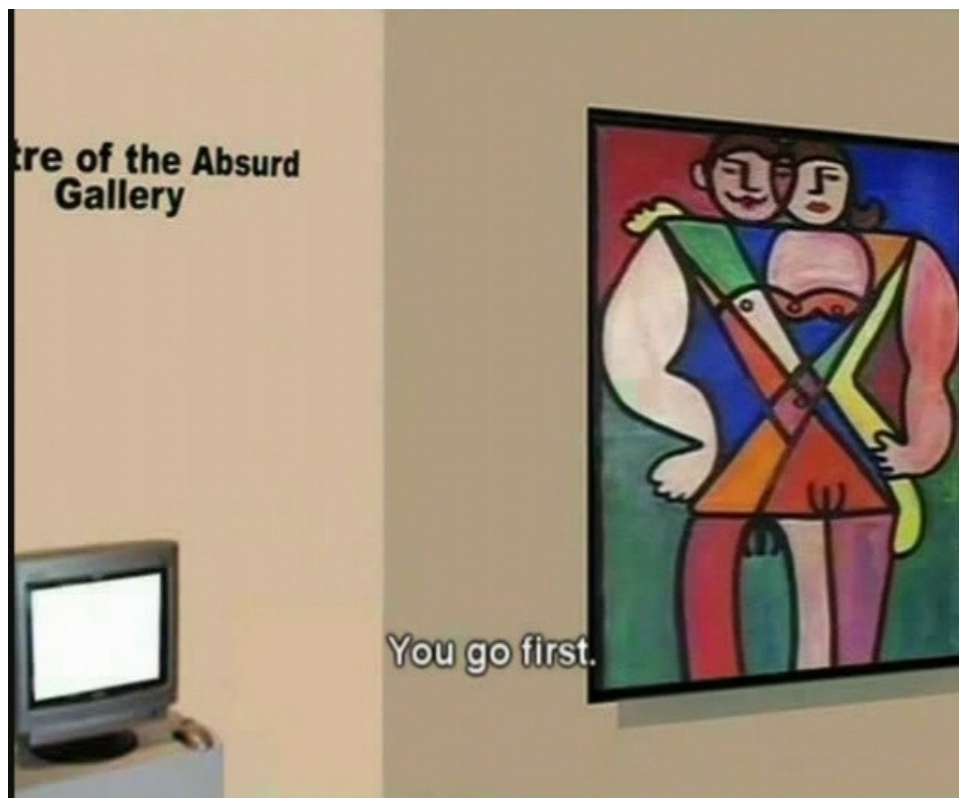
This shot was taken by the antique shop owner in a store in Atlanta. I did not have my camera with me and I did not have the cash to pay for the statue, but I did have enough to pay the owner for the image which I used as a joke in the love section of *The Creative Adventure*.



In this video Rembrandt emerges from a graphic reciting the poem *The Gift*. The time is “now.”



The magic of cinema spans the history of film and video over one piano improvisation played on June 3, 2006. Re-contextualizing the video of a painting of calla lilies in my backyard, the filters were changed to create the cinematic illusion of the same image being shot with the evolving technology of film. The shakes and scratches of the old film evolve to the 21st century techniques. This video is a favorite of my film professors.



In this absurd sequence in the video *Word Salad*, I took an old still from *The Creative Adventure* and animated my talking with new words using Crazy Talk. From video to still to video to still again. I looked a lot younger then.



Gift Rapt [14.59 min.] In this one man holiday show at Macky Auditorium Gallery at the University of Colorado, I look at the gift of NOW. Poems set the stage for this conceptual show. Some are serious, others comic; some rap and some rapture. The multi-media art works, like the poems, are multi-layered suggesting multiple meanings. In this my creative Now, I am exploring text, texture, lift-offs, collage and graphics, and gift-wrapping it to you.

Cabo [9.30 min.] When you go on vacation, the usual image is not one of going with a disability, but disability comes along for the ride.

Let me Sing a Love Song [3.58 min.] It was a day before Valentine's Day and I wanted to give a gift to my wife. I thought of a love song, and wrote the lyrics and improvised the singing.

Sing Along [0.47 min.] A beautiful candid moment of love.

To Eben Fine [1.07 min.] Diane had survived four threats to her life and was taking a long walk to Eben Fine Park in the sun.

Birthday Party [1.40 min.] Created with a simple cell phone, the issue of nakedness in creating comes alive. I was in my birthday suit, covered only by a balloon. The sexual references of the candle and Nancy blowing it out were intended.

Blue [1.28 min.] A conceptual entry into the Blue show at the Core Art Gallery, Denver, CO.

Clones [3.34 min.] This graphic deconstructed video poem with wordplay is a comment on the asexual side of reproduction and the hidden wish/fears of cloning.

Notes from Nod [0.59 min.] This edgy piece expresses the raw hurt feelings generated by alienation caused by religion.

Sir Reel [3.57 min.] Neo-dada, surreal experience trying to sublimate sexual and aggressive drives.

Slice Five [4 min.] Many layers of the Creative Unconscious emerge in this video collage.

Half to Whole [9.18min] Summary video to my workshop, Love and Y(our Creative Adventure). It examines many dimensions of love and its vicissitudes in a post-modern, minimalist, concrete video poem.

Gift Rapt Plus



John G. Young, M.D.

Gift Rapt Plus DVD

This video, Gift Rapt, was based upon my first one-man show at Macky Auditorium. Many of the paintings in the installation were wrapped with ribbons or ribbons were painted on the paintings. In the large painting of peonies at the end of the hall I placed a large white bow in a cross with a vertical ribbon symbolizing Christ on the cross and the hope for Spring in the Winter of our discontent. The show was held during the month of the financial crash of 2008.

The re-contexted word “Rapt” suggested wrapped, rapids i.e. turbulent times, the rapture, and the rap music in the video.

The rest of the video shorts are brief, edgy, post-modern pieces.



Giesha, Let's Dance

This is a still of a scene in Gift Rapt. I took the nutcracker from the display of items for sale during my one-man show that was held during the Christmas Nutcracker performances and had him invite Giesha to dance, continuing the theme of “not waiting for the storm to pass, but learning to dance in the rain.” Initially I was upset when I came in and saw another commercial enterprise going on in the gallery, but I went with it and re-contexted it to work in the video.

Originally the painting was just an abstraction, but I saw an image of a white faced Giesha and went with it.

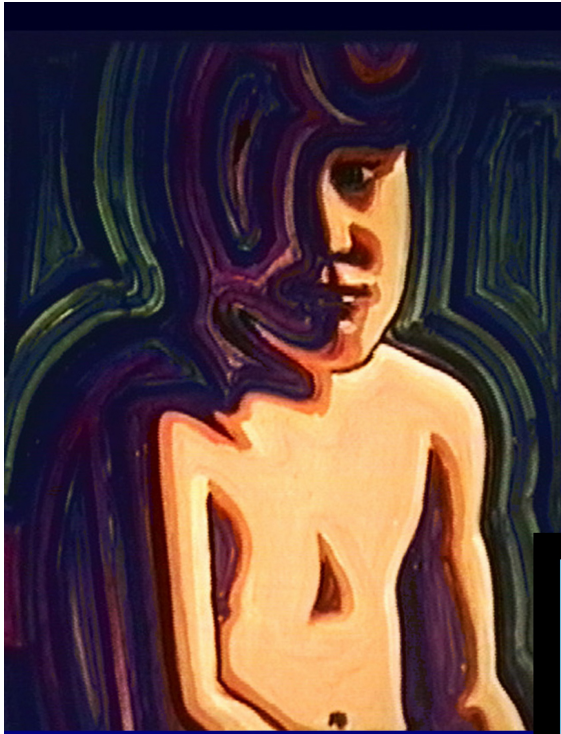


“Eat Vegetarian, I Do.”

Animated still from *Gift Rapt Plus*:

This collage questions the state of “now.” If we are to live in the “now,” what is it? Is it constant change [Heraclites] or changeless [Parmenides]? And what of the state of the NOW COW? HOW NOW BROWN COW* was a playful encounter with the idea that cows are vegetarian, why not us? In this animation it was fun to ask the cow how he felt. I painted on the “Black armband of protest.” Clearly he protests his, “Pre-meat” status.

**"How now brown cow" is a phrase used in elocution teaching to demonstrate rounded vowel sounds. Each "ow" sound in the phrase represents an individual diphthong. The phrase does not have an explicit meaning per se but can be used as a light-hearted greeting.^[1] Although the exact origins of the phrase are unclear, its use in teaching elocution can be dated to at least 1926. Wikipedia*



Over-ruled

He focused on the rule
rather than the real.
He followed a role
that wouldn't reveal
he had lost his soul
and couldn't appeal.

"I did what I was told.
The rules were more real
than the reality sold
for the security bought
when I was not
very old."



The S and M Blues

Although she needed
to be kneaded so she could,
like dough she needed
to be kneaded to be good.

"Beat me on the butt, baby
I got the blues, blues, blues.

"You beat me on the butt, baby
I pay me dues, dues, dues.

"You better not refuse, baby,
cuz you'll lose, lose, lose.

"So beat me on the butt, baby,
I got them ol' guilt-trippin' blues."



Blue

This graphic with two poems was an entry for the *Blue Show* at the Core Art Gallery which was to be about something related to "Blue". Most entries were paintings with the color blue a prominent part. I took the idea of blue as in depression resulting from a constricted life and black and blue as in sadomasochistic abuse. Singing the blues, the graphic got rejected and the painting I did of the young boy, a reconstruction from a pharmaceutical ad, got lost. But the graphic remains and now you are seeing it in this show. The visual pun on bums and buns was intentional.



Mona Lisa: *Half to Whole*

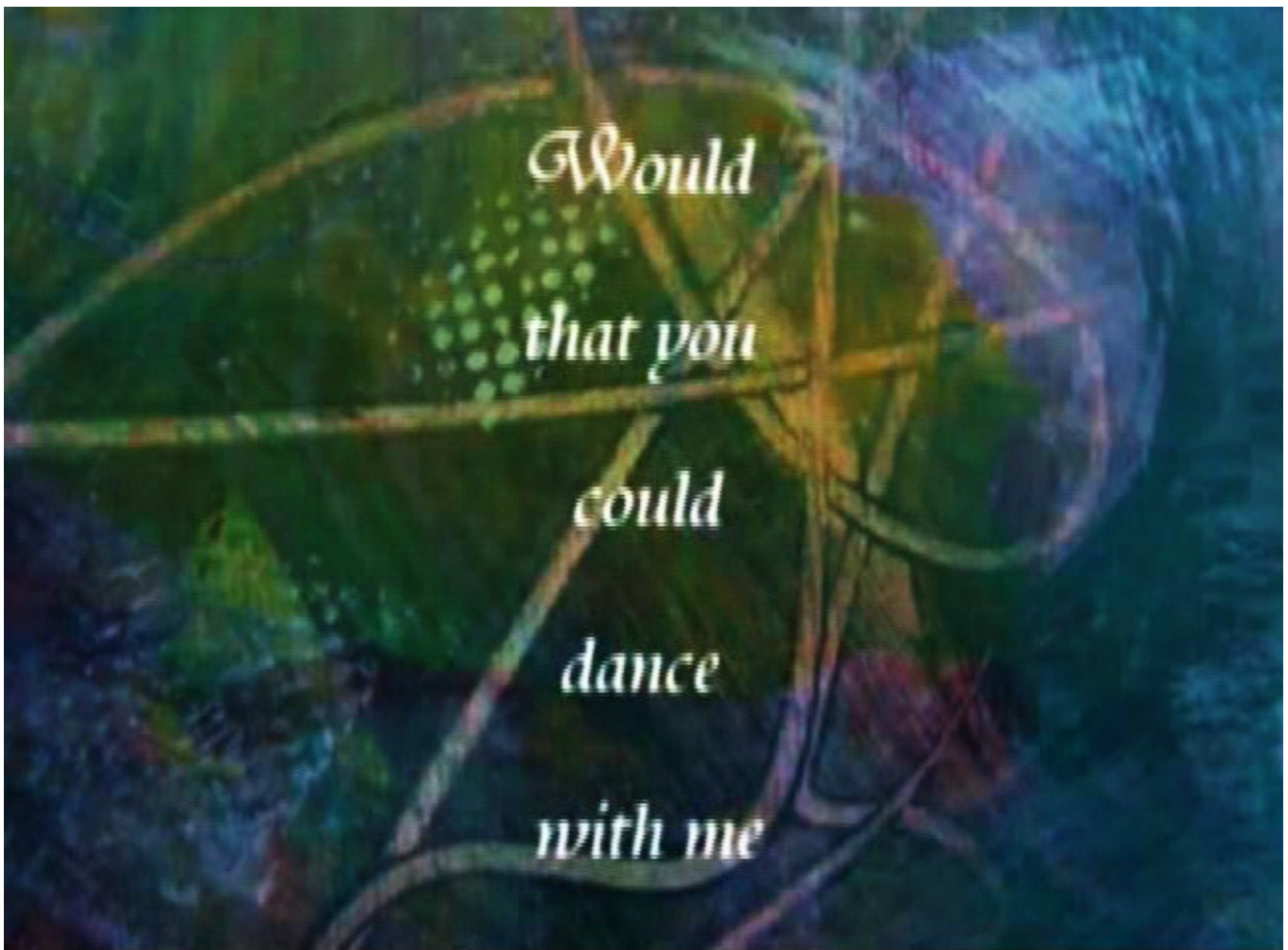
In the video *Half to Whole* I took the image of Mona Lisa and doubled and reversed one of the images then over-layed them. I then placed a paper mustache on the reflection and called it Mr. Lisa. Both these characters have major parts in some of my videos, *Chicken Salad, Half to Whole, Strangers to Themselves*. In this one there is no voice over, suggesting they can't hear each other, and the following commentary is that they cannot see eye-to-eye.



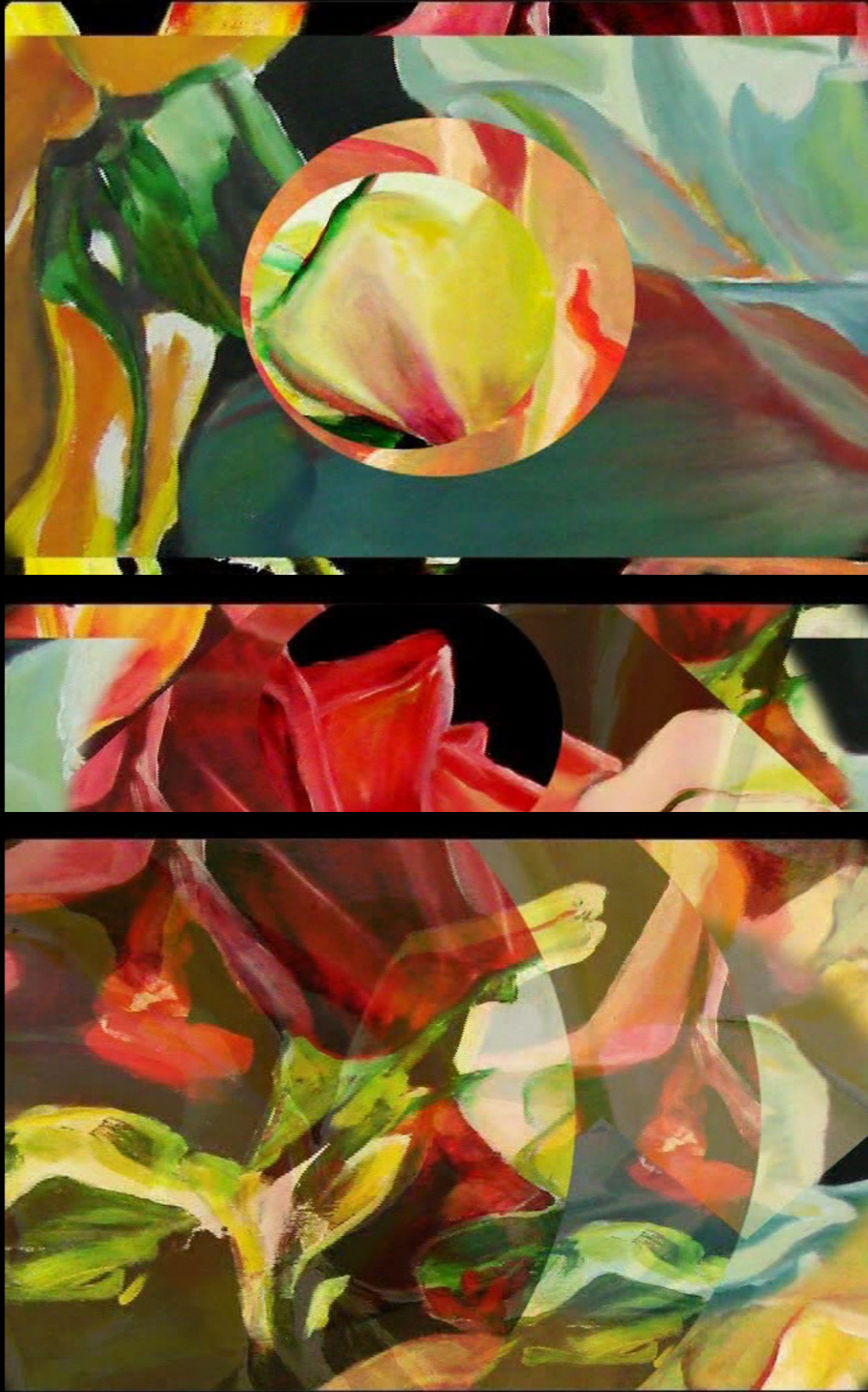
Let Me Sing A Love Song

This animated echo of my words extempore singing a love song with lyrics I wrote the day before Valentine's Day was strong on sincerity but weak on the singing, so I animated Mr. Lisa to repeat the words I did not enunciate clearly. This of course, is the reversal of the Mona Lisa painting above with a paper mustache and animated flowers.

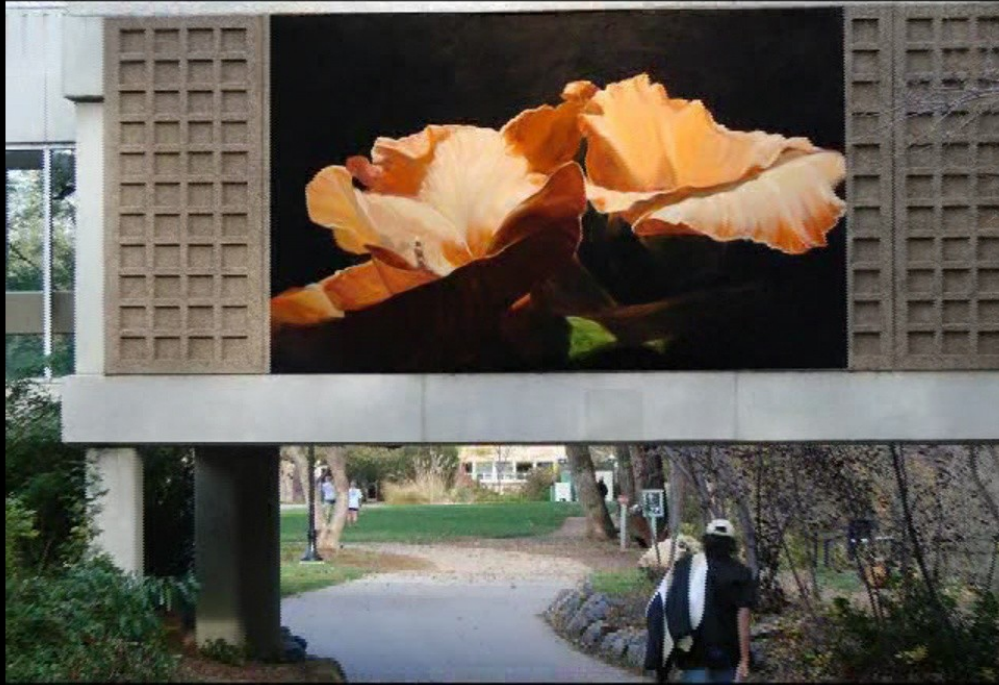
Mr. Lisa was also my erotic alter-ego in the video, *Word Salad*.



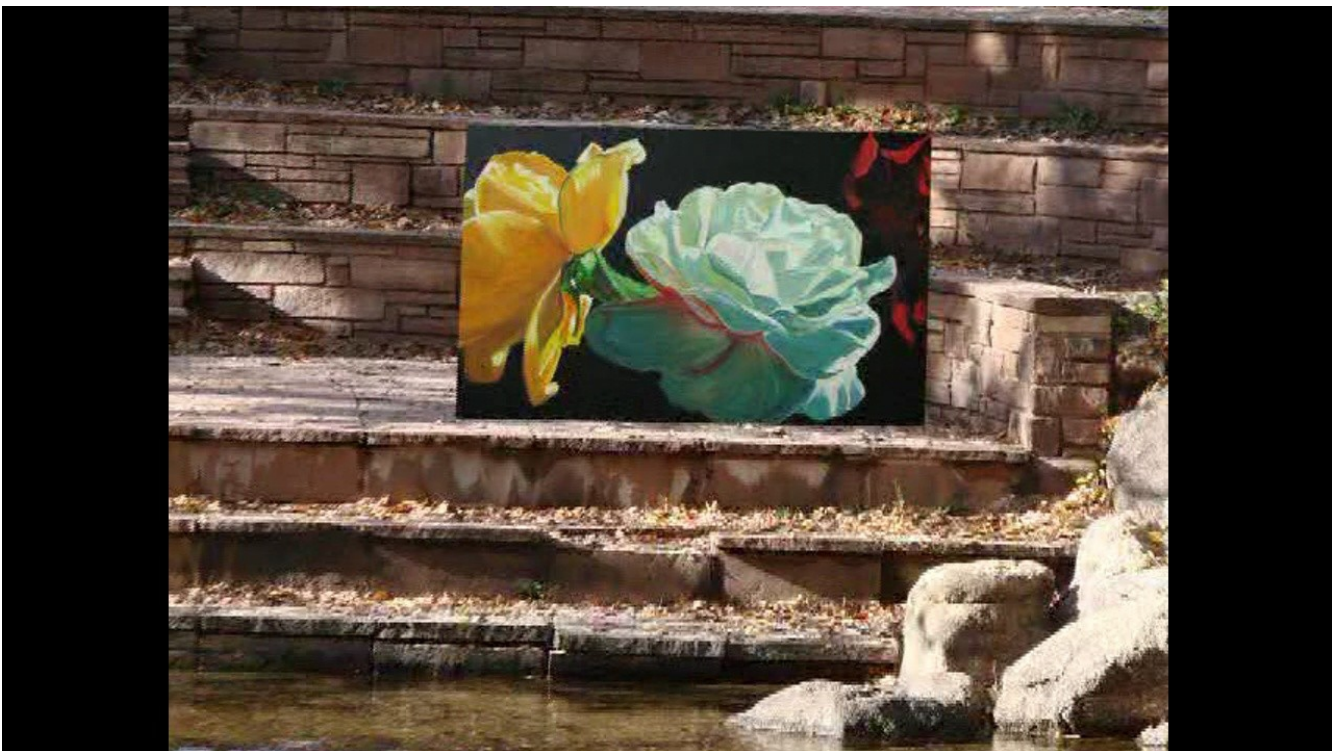
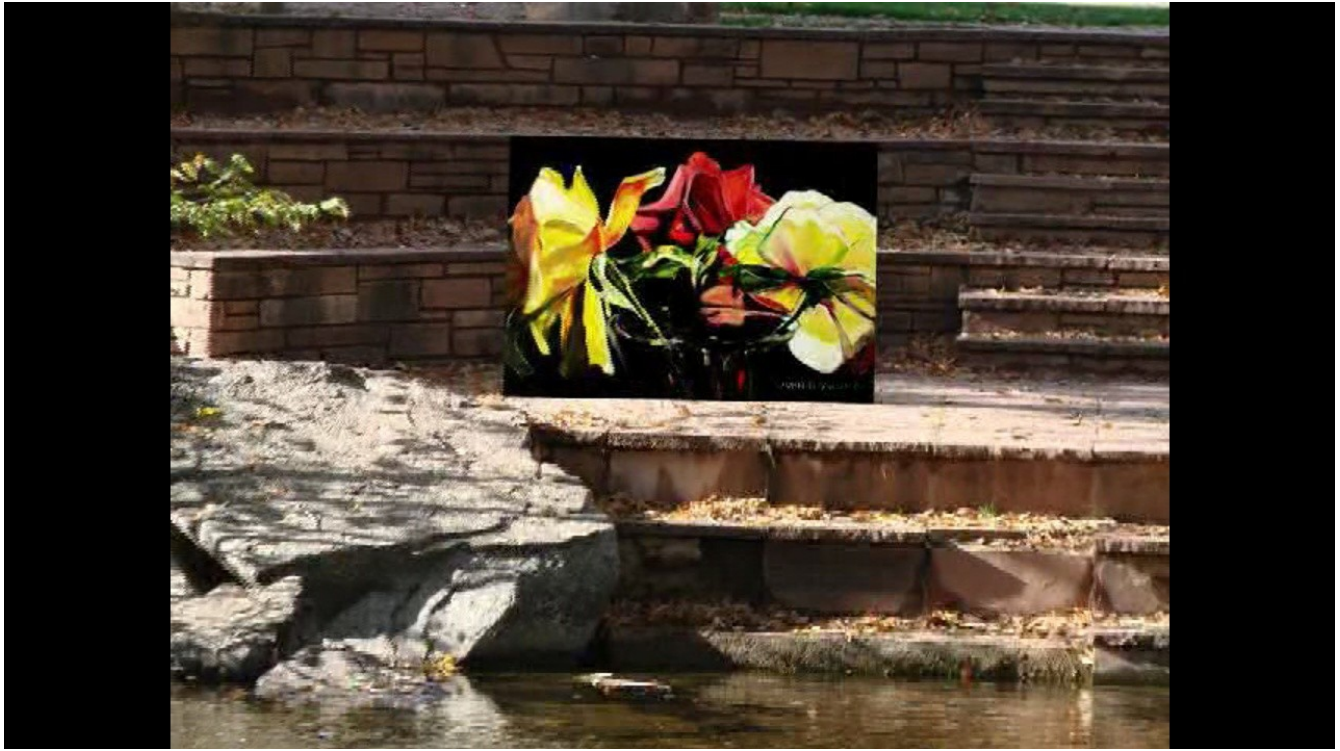
This close-up of a collage painting continues the theme of yearning, then learning to dance in the rain, rather than waiting for the storm to pass when it never will.



Video composite of an animation in the video *Installation at Boulder Creek*



More installations at Boulder Creek





These were not all Photoshop installations. I also placed paintings along Boulder Creek.



Snow Garden

Later I put paintings in the snow for another video. Not all were Photo-shopped in. Guess which ones were?



Blue Abstract



Piano Improvizations John G. Young, M.D.

Paintings Re-contexted to CD Covers

