

CHESELYN AMATO
Artist's Statement
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I live my life as an artist and as a person as if every day is a sanctuary. I make art to create sanctuary for myself, and as prayer, and as offering of sanctuary for others. I feel compelled – both within ordinary and extraordinary time, that is, both in everyday time and sacred ritual time – to create a meeting place between the two – to bring the ordinary and the extraordinary, the everyday and the ceremonial together and to allow all of life to be sanctified and resonant in all its dimensions.

I am moved to embody my experience because of and in honor of awe, sublimity and delight. I love surprise and spectacle; I love light, color, pattern, rhythm, geometry, gesture, symmetry and asymmetry, movement and sound, mystical harkening and synchronistic presentments, and the unyielding experience, how wonderfully so, of meaning and its amplification in the most mundane to the most heightened contexts, from the familiar, comprehensible and predictable to the unexpected, inexplicable, ridiculous, and absurd to the odd, haunting, ominous, and even terrifying to the marvelous, mysterious and miraculous. These phenomena occur in the course of life and nature as givens, a cornucopia of beautiful and enchanting experience, perception and sensation. And, there is double joy because these effects are caused as well as by human acts of design, wonder that we ourselves shape and construct.

With sheer awareness, engagement, savoring, gratitude, celebration and service at the core of my impulse, inspiration and aspiration, I use whatever materials appear imbued to me to carry my intentions. Anything at all can turn out to be resonant or to be a vessel, channel, conduit or system to carry and ferry resonance. Making art is one of my responses to the passionate and compelling need I feel to represent and present the resonant meetings of phenomenal and numinous presence, where what can be seen and what cannot be seen – that equally exist – can and do mingle and coalesce.

For the last 7 or 8 years, I have been working with a color radiant mirror film that reflects and projects colored light phenomena just by being illuminated by a light source. The frequencies of color are revealed as shapes and choreographies of color on surfaces that catch the projecting rays produced either by being reflected up and against a surface above or by passing through the material and projecting against a surface below. What is most important to me about the material is that it is ephemeral, that what I make out of it hardly exists materially, and yet is a material effect. As a matter of fact, there is so much effect, it is hard to quite understand where it is coming from and what it is, but there is no trickery, no complex behind-the-scenes mechanics, nothing is hidden, the means are absolutely overt and apparent, just this thin flexible film and a bit of light, and voila! Still though, that gorgeous gift we call suspension of disbelief happens, and what is more exciting and delighting than that experience. Believing something because we choose to suspend what we know intentionally to allow powerful primal and mythic energies to be unleashed. How lovely to be human for this.