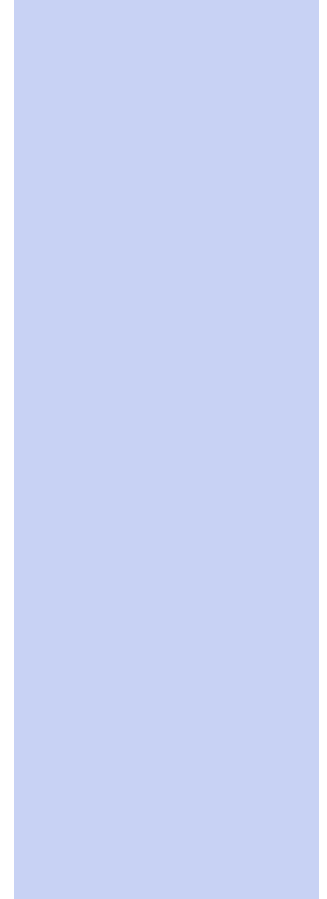
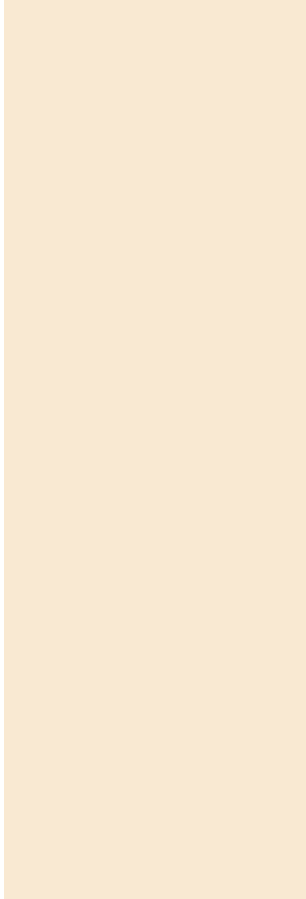




Ibu Rahayu Celebrates her 87th Birthday



Ibu Rahayu in Rungan Sari on March 12th 2015. The day before her 87th birthday. We give thanks for the guidance she has given us and pray for her health and long life. *(Photo by Angel Cacho Calvo)*



Birthday Celebration for Ibu Siti Rahayu Wiryohudoyo, organized by committee and Helpers, Subud South Jakarta, and representing Mrs Istidiatun da Silva and Mr Suryadi Haryono Sumohadiwijoyo, held on the terrace Hall, Subud Cilandak, 13 March 2015. *(Photo by Erwin Hudoyono)*





INTERNATIONAL HELPERS

12 March 2015

Dear Brothers and Sisters

For some time there has been discussion about the need for a new edition of *Bapak's Advice and Guidance for Helpers*, and a range of views have been expressed. This is a matter that has received the close attention of the International Helpers since we were appointed, and we and the WSA Chair and WSA-Executive have been in active communication about this issue. We decided that this was of such importance that we should not wait until the World Subud Council meeting in September to come together as a dewan to consider this, along with other issues, and we met in Wisma Subud, Jakarta, from February 26th to March 4th.

On February 27th we met with Ibu Rahayu, who invited our questions and gave wonderful explanations and guidance. It was evident that Ibu Rahayu had considered the matter of a new edition of *Bapak's Advice and Guidance for Helpers* very deeply, and she indicated that this effort had already been started. Ibu commented on the difficulties experienced in some countries with certain sections in the current book and she spoke of the need for a new edition that would be acceptable to and in accordance with the laws of all countries throughout the Subud World. Ibu stated that the key element of this task was for the content to be Bapak's advice on the broad outlines of helper issues and that this should be true to what Bapak expressed. Ibu added that the new book should be kept simple and understandable for people who were not in Subud or were new to Subud, and that what was not necessary could be left out. Ibu emphasised the importance of having just one book for all countries, and cautioned that if each country were to produce their own version this could start a process of fragmentation within Subud. Ibu advised that the new book should be submitted for legal review before it is published.

The following day, February 28, we attended a presentation of *Subud Archives Indonesia* (SAI). This included an excellent and detailed editorial analysis by Audrey Waclik, commissioned by SAI and Ibu's office, of *Bapak's Advice and Guidance for Helpers* and *On the Subud Way*. This was a study of the accuracy of translation and referencing, comparing the fidelity of passages of the English translations with the re-translated and published talks, with review by an SAI translator when necessary. The analysis revealed that significant translation and transcription inaccuracies were contained in *Bapak's Advice and Guidance for Helpers*, and that referencing was often inconsistent, incomplete, or inaccurate. The same was true to a lesser extent with *On the Subud Way*, which was compiled for both helpers and members, and included fewer sections that were specific for helpers. Neither book contains a bibliography. This analysis led Audrey and *Subud Archives Indonesia* to conclude that a new edition of *Bapak's Advice and Guidance for Helpers* needed to be based on the original sources, rendered in Bahasa Indonesia.

We are in agreement with these conclusions, and it is evident that for the new book to be of the quality necessary to truly reflect and honour Bapak's explanations and mission, this needs to evolve from a thorough and careful process that will take some time. The International Helpers will coordinate a working group - consisting of representatives from Subud Archives, Ibu's Office, and WSA, with input from National Helper dewans - to move the process forward. We will also consider the need for recommendations regarding interim sources of guidance for helpers until the new edition is available.

We ask for the patience, understanding, support, and prayers of the membership during this important undertaking.

The International Helpers, 2014-2018.

Area 1: Rashida Cooper, Istigomah Jenkins, Rosario Moir, Nahum Harlap, Lewis Haywood, Matthew Moir

Area 2: Olivia Brady, Dahlia Drejza, Sjarifah Roberts, Sahlan Crona, Arifin Konrad, Sanderson Topham

Area 3: Sarita Rodríguez Martínez, Myriam Ramsey, Suzanne Renna, Sjarifuddin Harris, Mahmud Nestman, Hoan Toan Phan

CHRISTCHURCH REVISITED

Osanna Vaughn writes...

Coming into down-town Christchurch five years since I was last here and four years after the earthquake is a rather surreal experience. It is extremely difficult to recognize anything because, quite simply, around two thirds of the buildings are gone and there are gaping spaces everywhere. Apparently someone asked why there are so many parking lots in Christchurch...

Suddenly, I recognized Victoria Park with its statue of Queen Victoria and its wrought-iron bridge over the River Avon. Then I saw the Town Hall, looking sad and abandoned, the steps where we sat in the sun all wonky and out of line. The first picture in the attached series shows that part with its pretty fountains as it used to be: the next as it is today. The structure on the right where we ate during our World Congress has slipped forward and dislodged itself from the rest of the building.

A number of old facades are being kept or restored, and a lot of new buildings are already under construction. A total of 1200 buildings were demolished. Artists have been given free rein to paint murals. The container market, which was set up to house many of the stores that had been on the main pedestrian street, is a fun place to browse and an excellent place to get a good coffee. Hagley Park only lost a few trees and seems completely unaffected by the quake. It is still a lovely place to take a stroll.

Christchurch Cathedral remains half destroyed, while long debates continue about whether to build a totally new one or rebuild and restore the old one. The Art Centre, where Subud members exhibited in its Gallery O, is already in process of restoration, following the museum which is now, once again, open to the general public. However, the old cinema and the theatre that were located there have already moved elsewhere and the space will be used differently. Projected restoration bill is close to \$NZ300,000,000. The COCA gallery where Ridwan Tompkins was exhibited survived fairly intact as far as I understand.

As for the Subud premises, the property continues to be a haven of great peace. The original hall survived the quakes and aftershocks with minimal damage, and the new one did not suffer too badly, though repairs are still due (in the photo above you see the upper glass window panes are gone). The little Subud house is also fine, though I believe some work may be needed on the foundations. Undoubtedly, the constant availability of the Subud Centre must have been a great consolation and support for the members, who have suffered through many traumatic episodes since the World Congress. For a visitor like myself, it is hard to conceive the full extent of the experience, but I can admire their courage and determination as they look to the future.

Check out this small photo collection for an impression of Christchurch today.

Reprinted from www.subudworldnews.com



“ *The Subud property is a haven of great peace...* ”

MSF CALLS FOR GRANT PROPOSALS

Muhammad Subuh Foundation (MSF) Call for Grant Proposals - Application deadline April 30, 2015

Subud groups may submit proposals for grants and/or loans for the ownership/purchase/construction/renovation of Subud houses. You may find an application for a Subud house grant or loan at our website <http://www.msubuhfoundation.org/grants/apply-for-a-grant> or contact Lillian Shulman, MSF Administrator, for an application and for any questions, lillianshulman@netscape.net

The submission deadline for applications is April 30, 2015. A second submission period is anticipated later in the Fall of 2015.



Portland Subud House, a grant recipient.

SUMMER ARTS CAMP 2015

In South Bohemia, Czech Republic, on a loop of the Vltava river, stands the Renaissance citadel of Český Krumlov, a UNESCO-protected jewel of old Czech houses, mills, churches and cobbled lanes. Welcome to a land of folklore and nature, home to Schweyk and dumplings and brown beer. The Iron Curtain ran here; now visitors hike the deserted tank tracks through pine forests and hills and sweeping meadows.

In a valley 2 miles (3km) down a flat cycle lane stands a Mill dating back to 1619, with a water meadow and a clear stream, and a hamlet of a dozen houses, called Staré Dobrkovice.

SICA and Subud Bohemia invite you here to visit and play for a 10 day arts camp, and to explore this exquisite town and rolling country.

Suggested dates are between the middle of July and middle of August, exact ones to be confirmed.

Accommodation includes camping, hostels, Pensions and hotels, all at reasonable prices.

Travel via Prague, Vienna or Linz, then road or rail to Český Krumlov.

Activities include music, dance, drama, mask, voice, and photography, and the possibility to share our work together in a performance.

There is also river-rafting, hiking, cycling, swimming and excursions on small trains to the woods and lakes of Šumava National Park.

We will keep the costs as low as possible. What would you like to do?

Contact: Gregory Gudgeon greggudgeon@hotmail.com



Countdown to Human Force in India

Do you want to:

- contribute in a concrete way to a social project?
- learn about a new country first hand?
- experience a new culture in a real and exciting way?
- learn about global issues and the social issues affecting particular communities?
- discover new talents and skills and gain confidence in yourself?
- develop personally by exploring your inner life?
- make new friends from all over the world?
- have fun?

If the answers to these questions are yes, what are you waiting for? The next Human Force camp will take place at Anisha, India – yes, we’ve been invited back! – between 17th and 30th June this year. It will cost a mere \$550 including board and lodging, trips, and transport to and from the airport in Bangalore.

Here is just a small sample of the testimonials from volunteers at Human Force camps over the past six years.

This has made a huge impact on my life, and is definitely something I will always go back to, a wonderful memory.

The camp changed my vision and encouraged me to become a better human being.

I felt that this camp helped me to get closer to myself. Perhaps even more so than the improvement in the local community, the camp empowers its volunteers for future work in any field.



I discovered personal skills I didn't know I had and I gave myself the opportunity to try activities I would never have attempted to do in other situations.

A huge thank you for keeping everything so beautiful...

Volunteers have benefitted on so many different levels – and now it could be your turn!

Please contact us now and ask for an information pack and application form: getinvolved@susiladharm.org

The countdown has started!

SUBUD GROUP ON LINKEDIN

Harris Madden writes...

Subud has had a 'group' on LinkedIn for the past seven years, since 2008. The group is a little bit different to other groups on LinkedIn, Facebook and other social media because it doesn't allow discussion (there is enough chatter online already). Rather, the purpose of the LinkedIn group is twofold.

First, by joining, it lets Subud members publicly identify themselves as Subud. This lets you acknowledge your connection to Subud (which will be one of the groups that appear at the bottom of your profile) and, in the public eye, it also associates Subud with people doing good everyday things right around the world.

Second, being a member of the Subud group on LinkedIn enables other members around the world to find you using Subud as part of their search criteria. Remember the often discussed but never built database of skills and expertise amongst Subud members? Well, it already exists on LinkedIn where you can find members in different countries and/or with particular kinds of skills and experience. If you're a LinkedIn user but you are not a member of the Subud group, simply go here and make a request to join. It's up to you whether you have the Subud symbol appear in the groups at the bottom of your profile.

AMAZONSMILE PROGRAM

Robiyan Easty writes...

Do you know about the AmazonSmile programme? Amazon will donate to a charity of your choice. You can search through a list and register your choice.

If you don't see the SMILE pop-up (for those who haven't registered their choice yet) you can Google www.smile.amazon.com It isn't in place on other sites like Amazon.co.uk as yet.

I couldn't find Susila Dharma International Association or plain Susila Dharma International, but it did find Susila Dharma USA Inc. I checked to make sure it was ours and it is in Beltsville so that seems to confirm it (Subud USA please confirm).

HEADLAND SCULPTURE ON THE GULF

Osanna Vaughn writes from New Zealand...

Veronica Herber was recently part of the three and a half-week art installation exhibition on Waiheke Island, which concluded on February 15. Known as Headland Sculpture on the Gulf, it is New Zealand's première sculpture event.

Renata Peek (Veronica's sister) and I took the ferry out to Waiheke from downtown Auckland, and were immediately impressed to see Veronica's work as we sailed round the headland to the dock. It was a real eye catcher.

The piece fully reflects Veronica's aspirations for her work. "I want people to have a direct experience when they observe my work, so that the mind and its immediate tendency to make connotations is put aside for as long as possible."

The installation was made with two thousand metres of 40cm white masking tape, doubled so that the lines measured cm in width. This means that the sum length of the contours on the hillside was one kilometre. The



sticky tape was further fixed by 3000 staples, but weather conditions over the course of the event - including rain and 40 knot winds - obliged Veronica to add a further 1500!

The following week Veronica began an installation that will follow the footsteps of 5 passers-by on the water front promenade in Auckland. *Reprinted from www.Subudworldnews.com*

THE MOTH AND THE KEY

Hanafi Fraval writes...

May I share with you a little incident that took place last night? We go for latihan on Tuesday nights to a gorgeous place owned by one of our members, located in Topanga Canyon, California. We were just closing up for the night, and after locking the door the key flew off its chain and fell on the concrete below. With three of us looking we just couldn't find it anywhere. I even turned on the light from my iPhone and started looking, scanning around the concrete floor outside the building. Suddenly a huge butterfly/moth landed right on the key! It just sat there and wouldn't let go.



A story of Democracy and Consultation Part 2 – A LOOK AT THE CENTRAL ROLE OF ZONE REPRESENTATIVE

Robiyan Easty, former Zone 4 Representative

Bapak often talked about the need for what he called social democracy. He also championed democracy in our brotherhood, based on receiving from within. Several times I saw Bapak ask if we agreed with his proposal and on one occasion he said, 'Louder! Bapak wants to know if you really agree'.'

There has been a lot of talk over the years about the flat organisation, but it has not been evident in practice. Democracy is messy and time-consuming. In the past we only had snail-mail (post) and telephone (expensive) for international communications. Add to this an organisation staffed by volunteers, most of whom have demanding life situations and thus limited time and it is hardly surprising if the democratic ideal was difficult to realise.

This changed drastically in the last term because we had the great combination of a set of councillors who gave their time and effort unstintingly and the huge developments in communications technology. Not only could we talk together easily in small groups but it was cost free. Only the bigger conference calls cost money and this was far less than in the past. Thus we were able to start moving away from the old top-down model and start to get much more participation from the member countries.

We should always remember that the WSC is congress in continuous session. At congress it is the countries who decide on policy and in the subsequent 4/5 years this ideally continues through the ZRs. Thus the ZRs are the custodians of policy, while the executive does the implementation. It goes without saying that there has to be a comprehensive and continuous consultation process, input of the ex.

One of our first tasks, mandated by congress, was to review the External Relations programme and we decided to retire it, against the wishes of the WSA chairs (former and current) and the Exec chair and of course to the disappointment of the very dedicated ER team. Many of the country chairs in my zone had not even known of the existence of ER until we instituted our consultation process.

This was an example of something that had a long history and had developed and grown by itself and it showed the importance of full interaction with member countries, which didn't support it once they got to



Robiyan Easty



Our funding still comes mainly from the members.





The importance of full interaction with member countries...



know the details. It was a very hard decision for us, but we were unanimous, which was crucial, and we felt it to be a showcase of how the ZRs should work on behalf of their member countries.

I should say here that at Luke's suggestion we formed subgroups of 3 or 4 ZRs to review a policy issue in detail and then bring it to all of us. The basis of this was trust. It did not need all of us to get immersed in the details because we knew that the sub-group would bring it to us for our input, along with input from the executive and IHs and that the final outcome would involve refinement and compromise. We came to see that this teamwork, based on trust and willingness to let go, is essential to a good outcome.

Responsibility without Authority

When Elias became the WSA vice-chair he pushed for the whole council to have a formal vote. This, however, is at odds with the Constitution, which was carefully crafted to give only the ZRs that power (actually responsibility), as the ones who represent the members. And what is this 'power' in reality? It is one of the great tests for anyone in a key role that they have responsibility without authority. Any authority we manage to have can only come from the authenticity of our inner feeling.

Another important factor is that our funding still comes mainly from the members. I recall a story in an old *Pewarta* that when Pak Usman was tested by Bapak about money, he saw a mountain of it stretching up into the clouds. Bapak commented that all of that is there for Subud to use when we can use it properly. It's worth considering what might happen if we suddenly got a lot of money to play with.

While the two WSA chairs are centre-stage and in the spotlight, the ZR is in the middle and easily attracts criticism both from 'above' and 'below'. Your ZR needs your support and here is why.

The ZRs are the workhorses of the organisation if they do all they are supposed to do – an impossible 4-page job description which will give you the formal duties but not convey what the job is really like. It is actually two separate but interlinked functions: ZR and ZC (zone coordinator) which are done with no remuneration and usually no praise.

The ZC function involves organising an annual zonal meeting in cooperation with the host country, managing the zonal budget together with the treasurer, creating and encouraging communications between countries and with their rep and assisting smaller countries in their development. This function alone is more than enough for one part-time person.

So what about the ZR function? ZRs are responsible to their countries and it is not uncommon for one or two countries to push strongly to have their own particular position adopted. The ZRs have to take all views on board even-handedly. Note that the ZRs were the only ones given a vote by the architects of the Constitution, because they are the ones who represent the members, a big responsibility. The WSA chair makes sure that the rest of the councillors are given space to speak and in the last term their input both by email and in meetings was always very carefully considered.

Some of those who participated in writing the WSA constitution report that the idea of the whole council having a formal vote was carefully considered and rejected. In fact there are always two votes, one of the full WSC and one of the directors of the WSA. The former is indicative and the latter is never just automatic approval of it; the ZRs have to consider the practicality of implementing something in their zones and also have personal liability in law. However, in the last term the two votes were the same in every case. We had worked through most issues in advance of the meeting, so we had mostly unanimous yes votes apart from the occasional abstention.

In a WSC meeting, the IHs cannot all be present at every plenary session as they have their own work in parallel. Their role is different. They cannot be expected to read all the details of complex organisational matters. But there are always some IHs present in plenaries and they are always listened to attentively and free to propose testing. It became clear (to me) that their role in council meetings is to help the work to go smoothly, to defuse personality and ideological clashes and to offer testing where felt necessary.

What Bapak Had to Say

Here is what Bapak had to say in an '84 talk to the SBIF Trustees, the forerunners of the ZRs:

'Through Subud, man is able to know for himself what is right and wrong. And because right and wrong is >

then part of us, we also learn to feel that we are the same as other people, that there is no division any more, between ourselves and others.

The trustees have a very heavy duty. They have to be able to approximate this state.'

'And therefore as trustees, you have to be diligent and faithful to the latihan kejiwaan. You may not allow yourself to be separated from the latihan.'

Sharif: 'Bapak said it's true that the various trustees are taken from the various zones, but their nature is what Bapak said yesterday, that they are Bapak's deputies. And Bapak embraces the whole world, in that Bapak considers the interest of Subud worldwide. And that is how the trustees also have to think. So when they join in the trustees meeting, they are no longer there just as representatives of their zones, but they are there to consider the universal needs of Subud.'

'The duty of the trustees is to supervise and arrange, in the best way possible. The best way possible is not to force people to be different from what they are. So it is not permissible for the trustees to force the Germans to be like the Indonesians or to force the Americans to be like the English...'

Perhaps you can see from the above why we on the last council came to consider it of paramount importance for the whole council to meet once a year, finances allowing. We needed to do latihan together and test together on difficult issues. We needed to get the international perspective that only meeting together can give. What's more, this is the forum where the wing chairs, also very hard working, interact closely with the ZRs, IHs and Exec to discuss programmes which involve them all.

In answer to those who grumble about the expense, I say that people working so hard for nothing (work out how much it would cost if they were paid even on Bapak's guideline of 40% of an equivalent worldly salary) should at least be allowed and even encouraged to meet together once a year.

Believe me, most councillors are pretty much exhausted by the end of the 4/5 years. Just consider the areas they have to deal with: archives, for the good of Subud in the future; creation and control of websites and agreeing on their content; appointing new MSF Trustees and working on a MoU between WSA and MSF; the key issue of multi-language translation; considering proposed updates to the constitution; working on the budget, making sure the IHs have enough money for their travels; communications and media, considering the rapid changes in technology; fundraising for all these things, considering the legal implications of changes to the law for non-profits and, as has been in the spotlight lately, making sure we comply with the laws against discrimination ... And many other things.

So I hope I have managed to at least give an outline of the functioning of the ZR and perhaps a little of the WSC as a whole. I have tried to speak mainly from my own experience and so the views expressed here are entirely my own. (More to come on specific issues.) ●

MODERNISING BAPAK

Anthony Bright-Paul writes in response to an article from Léonard Lassalle...

I see that my good friend Léonard Lassalle – my good friend of over 65 years - has joined his voice to those of the Subud modernisers writing in Subud Voice. I must take issue with you, Léonard.

Once again I see that he would prefer the word 'soul' to be used instead of the word 'jiwa'. Nobody knows exactly what the word 'jiwa' means. Is anybody the wiser by using the word 'soul'? I mean, do any of you guys know what a soul is anyway? Do you have one, by any chance, that could be put up on display, so that we could all be certain beyond peradventure that we would all know and understand precisely what is a soul for ever and ever afterwards?

The trouble is that those who have been brought up in the Church of England or the Church of Rome might immediately feel that they understand, and this untidy word 'jiwa' can now be put to bed. On the other hand those who have been brought up in a left-wing atheistic background will feel that they did not believe in the existence of the soul in any case, but at least the 'jiwa' did relate to that strange exercise which we all undertake called the latihan ke-jiwa-an. Notice something? The training of or by the jiwa.

So I ask you, would the substitution of one word by another add to your understanding? On the contrary it >

might lead a person to imagine they have understood, when no such heavenly transformation has taken place.



Bapak's advice is still the best...



Similarly my good friend Léonard feels that to be

‘opened’ should also be changed, which derives from the Indonesian ‘buka’ or ‘membuka’. He does not like the idea of being opened because it implies that that the person is ‘closed’. Well, that is a pity! It may indeed hurt one’s feelings, and indeed there has been many an applicant in the past who has declared that they are already open and so had no need of being opened.

Of course what they implied about themselves was that they were liberal minded and appreciated classical music and art and such like things. But all such things belong to the functions, to the ‘nafsu’, to what comes through the five senses. But, as we all know to be opened is to be opened precisely to those Higher Forces that do not operate through the portals of the nafsu. Unpleasant as it may be and hurtful to one’s pride, the fact is that we are mostly even now closed to the Higher Forces and very much open to the ‘daya-daya rendah’ the Lower Forces.

Latihan Kejiwaan – can it be called as well ‘Spiritual practice’?

Jiwa – can we use the word ‘Soul’? or others that can be understood by the one we are speaking to?

Would it Make a Difference?

So my good friend goes on. Tell me, dear Léonard, just what difference would it make to an applicant if he was told that the ‘latihan kejiwaan’ was a spiritual exercise? What would he or she imagine?

For many people, a spiritual exercise is like meditation, or the repetition of a mantra, or even the reciting of Hail Mary’s. Would that explanation suffice when a person is introduced to an exercise with a host of ‘O Groupers’? Or even, as I read in ‘Conversations with Friends’, where one fellow takes his friend to a hotel room to open him and jumps about much to the consternation of said friend?

No! Bapak’s own advice is still the best – experience first and explanations later. The best words for the ‘latihan kejiwaan’ are still the best. What is the point of trying to explain them in advance of experience? None whatsoever.

The wonderful thing in Subud is that progress is possible. Once a person is opened, well that is irreversible. But progress or regress that is another matter. As Icksan Ahmed was at pains to explain to me back in 1957 there is ‘Pembersihan’, that is purification. The root word in pembersihan is bersih, meaning clean. We do the latihan in order to get cleaned up and to make progress. We do the latihan in order to get free from the dominion of the Lower Forces, so that Right Feeling may arise.

Now people do not have to be ‘spiritual’ or religious in any sense to be opened in Subud. When Subud started in the USA it was at the height of the Flower Power era, (see ‘Conversations with Friends’) when there were those who drank brandy with their coffee for breakfast, where getting smashed was the name of the game, where sleeping around or promiscuity was the norm, yet those very people felt an inner need, a lot went to Cilandak and became prominent Helpers in Subud.

The fact is that every one of us was more or less entirely under the dominion of the Lower Forces. Even now how many people have achieved their own individuality? The fact is precious few. The fact is also that precious few have even read ‘Susila Budhi Dharma’ which contains the philosophical basis of Subud.

I happened to ring Mardiyah Tarantino a few days before Christmas. She was one of three ladies who made a special effort to be able to understand Bapak as he spoke. While conversing with her I spoke about ‘Susila Budhi Dharma’ and the necessity for Subud members to read and understand this book. I spoke to Mardiyah of the ‘jiwa yang Mulia’, which is translated as a noble soul. A far-off aspiration, Mardiyah averred.

Have we perhaps forgotten, O my Brothers and Sister in Subud, that far off as it may be, that the aim is not to have a low or base soul, but a Jiwa yang Mulia? Until such time as we are conscious and aware of the Lower Forces that act within us let us be very wary of trying to improve on Bapak with our very limited understandings. ●

WORDS THAT REFLECT OUR EXPERIENCE

Léonard Lassalle responds to Tony Bright-Paul...

My dear Tony,

Thank you for responding to my article in Subud Voice, I thought it might create some some reactions. Your title "Modernising Bapak" is rather unpleasant and is not at all what I am saying and I leave this with you. I love and respect Bapak too much to do what you imply by this title.



What I am saying is that there are other words in our respective languages that can replace the Indonesian ones; I am saying that spiritual consciousness can be expressed in other languages than Indonesian; what is important is that the words that are used reflect the experience of the person who uses them and are understood by the listener.

What I am saying also is that it is fine to use any language that we find appropriate when expressing a lived spiritual experience.

I agree with you, Tony, Bapak's words must not be changed, but let us use also words that truly reflects our experiences and that we understand through our living them.

My point is that the Subud members who wish to continue to use Indonesian words must go on using them as they feel comfortable with them, but the Subud members who feel more at ease to use their own language when talking about our spiritual practice should also feel free to do so.

It took me many years of practicing the latihan before I could use the word 'soul' and I find now, through experiencing its manifestation in my being, that it fits my understanding.

I leave with you your sarcasm as I do not see value in responding to it, but love you all the same, my dear brother.

See Léonard interviewed about his book 'The Source of Life' www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ort_14AX98 ●

THE LANGUAGE WE USE

Abdurachman Mitchell responds to Tony Bright-Paul...

“Bapak was constantly adjusting his words and his talks”

Good points Tony. However as I have several Rs in my name I will choose an R word. Rasa – to feel or to taste. One cannot explain the latihan but you can taste it, feel it, and that is what matters.

"If you forget everything I have told you, just continue to follow your latihan," I heard Bapak say one day at Anugraha. Having lived in Indonesia for 15 years and visited there frequently, I feel more comfortable with the Indonesian words, but others don't, and we must find what resonates with them.

The words of the Lord's prayers in Jacobean English resonate with me, partly because the words of the prayer have been spoken within me, and partly because that is how it was taught me in yesteryear. But for others they may prefer the modern English.

What matters for applicants and new members is the feeling and whether they feel that we are open to them, and the language we use is important to reflect that.

Later the points you make can be introduced as appropriate for the experiences they go through. Bapak was constantly adjusting his words and his talks to the people he was speaking to. He even spoke about free-thinkers and atheists coming to Subud and I guess the words of the opening sentence would need some adjustment there (which I personally find difficult).

You have recently had an experience where you have been filled with wonder at the wisdom of the words in 'Susila Budhi Dharma', which describes the process and meaning of the latihan. You also had the experience of meeting Bapak early on in our generation, with how we looked at the world at that time. I note that you usually say 'exercise' and not 'latihan'. It doesn't really matter does it?

We have a member in our group who came to reading SBD 15 years after he was opened. Before it turned him off. Now it doesn't.

I was astonished when I first came here that so few had read SBD. One can only suggest that it is the road map for those who want to understand the process of the latihan.

Bapak's words will always be there and many people who follow the latihan will come to the point of valuing them. After all they are not only in print but up there on the net! Anyone who wants to improve on them, let him/her try and see where it gets them. ●

A Reminder that Nothing Is Carved in Stone *Contributed by Marcus Bolt...*

"...that is how it is and that is why this 'spiritual training' is training to be alive. In fact, the term 'spiritual' is not the right term to use. However, there was no other way to describe this training; there was not another term that fitted the nature of the latihan. When Bapak called it 'training to live' [people asked], 'What does "training to live" mean? Why do we have to train to live? We are already alive aren't we, so what do we need training for?' So Bapak had to change the name to 'spiritual training'. The correct term is 'training for human life'..." (67 NYC 3)

THE INNER MANSION

by Stephen Latif Allen

Emmanuel Elliott reviews a new book about Subud...

“ *Most fascinating and unusual* ”

I have just read one of the most fascinating and unusual books ever written by a Subud member: THE INNER MANSION, by Stephen Latif Allen. Something of a polymath – the author is both a qualified Doctor of Chiropractic Medicine and the holder of Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in Music Composition as well as being interested in such diverse fields as quantum physics, neurology, astronomy, biochemistry, genetics, etc., etc. - Stephen is an American now living in Sri Lanka.

So this book is rather different: yes, it is a fascinating personal memoir; yes, it is overflowing with accounts of spiritual experiences – the stuff of most Subud books – but this one goes so much further.

At its heart, it seeks to share with the reader the training, guidance and wisdom imparted to Stephen by his two ‘super-helpers,’ Pak Sudarto and Mas Adji, throughout the author’s nearly two year stay in Jakarta in the early 70s, during much of which period he also enjoyed free access to Bapak’s home. In his introduction, Stephen writes, “Perhaps there will be information in the following pages that will be useful. Perhaps there will be information that is even unusual.” To which I can only add: And how!

He concludes his introduction with two Bapak quotes: one from the first recorded talk, the second from the last, nearly thirty years later.

From the first talk: “For this [latihan] will progress within you, deeper and deeper, and take you through the barriers Bapak talked about, as far as you need to go.”

From the second: “The fact is that because you lack courage, your latihan has no effect, no result, in your life. Why is it that only Bapak, who is one man alone, and an old man at that, is making progress?”

Against the backdrop of his own inner journey, Stephen sets out to investigate the causes of the obvious contradiction between these two statements, going into more than a little detail about the role of conscious awareness in the spiritual process, the different kinds of latihan, the influences of the various lower forces and much more. I believe that readers will find all this of immense value.

The writer devotes much of the second half of his book to the very deep work needed to resolve the core nafsu patterns, many of them inherited from our ancestors, which can run our lives and block our progress. He prefaces these pages with the comment, “Once again I had entered the Twilight Zone,” and acknowledges that “Few people may be willing to do the in-depth soul searching necessary to bring these rascals to light.” Stephen himself, however, driven on by an intense curiosity and sustained by great capacity and courage, is always up for it.

“

Resolving the core of nafsu patterns...

”

This latter segment will certainly not be for everyone. That said, I doubt that there is anyone who will not to some degree be inspired and enlightened by THE INNER MANSION. There may even be some who will feel it is one of the most important books ever written by a Subud member.

Early responses include:

‘A fabulous book.’

‘Brilliant book, very courageous.’

‘While reading I experienced a great widening of my inner being, as though I was experiencing what he was talking about. . . .It was very refreshing and continued for more than an hour.’

‘I think that Latif’s book is a wonderful reminder, a great wake-up call, at least that is the way I have found it. I have now read it for the second time slowly, particularly the Mas Darto sections and all of Adji’s advice, and – although it may sound presumptuous to talk of one’s own progress - I feel as if I have made more progress in the last three days than in the last fifty years. So I am very grateful to Latif.’

‘Although I have already spent several hours reading "The Inner Mansion" I have managed only the first 30 pages. It is such a concentrated work that I can read, absorb, and experience, even to my limited receiving, only a fraction of what is there. I am sure it will deepen the Latihan I will attend this evening. So... very many thanks indeed for that. When you told me about it I had an instinctive feeling I must have it.’

THE INNER MANSION is available from Emmanuel Elliott at emmanuelelliott@blueyonder.co.uk Price £10, with 60% going to Susila Dharma - £650 GBP raised so far for needy children in Indonesia.

Come Together!

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ARE WE “SUCCEEDING”?

Edward Fido writes from Australia...

“Do they stay?”

Success is one of those words much bandied about these days. It has featured in Subud recently when talking about certain individuals and their careers. I think success, in an avowedly spiritual movement such as ours, needs to mean far more than the achievements of some individual members. We need, I think, to differentiate between individual and group success.

There is an acid test of whether a Subud group works or not. Its provenance goes back to our founder, Pak Subuh. He stated that the success or failure of a Subud group down to its members themselves, with a special responsibility to the helpers. “Success” or “failure” to him was judged by whether the group was growing, static or declining.

Judging by his standards, with most Subud groups around the traps I know either static or declining, I don’t think we are up for a round of mutual self-congratulation just yet.

From what I hear of Lewes, they are somewhat exceptional because they seem to be growing and moving out of the old Subud laager.

It is easy to see what is wrong with Subud groups. Blind Freddie could. The issue is not fault finding but looking for and finding examples of non-hierarchical, democratic, growing, mutually supportive (not of just the “in” crowd) groups.

I am sure Lewes is not unique. There must be other examples as well. They may well be in Non-English medium countries or not so public.

Lewes was providentially obliged to “go public” because its bid for the St Anne’s Community Project brought it under public scrutiny. They willingly accepted that scrutiny and benefited from the experience. So has Subud worldwide, I believe. It has helped bring us into the 21st Century.

My own opinion is that it would also be a thoroughly good thing if Subud elsewhere, when ready, emerged from the shadows and faced public scrutiny. We should have nothing to hide and would have everything to gain by going mainstream and showing we are not some sort of weird New Age cult with all that implies.

The key words are “when ready”. Different groups are at different stages. I think when a group becomes more public, as at Lewes, they must be able to convince people that they have something to offer the general community. At Lewes this going public was definitely not a disguised recruitment drive. That is very much in harmony with Pak Subuh’s approach.

My gut feeling is, if people outside see what Pak Subuh called “the fruits of the latihan”, they will naturally be attracted. This is another acid test: are people so impressed by the average Subud member that, without proselytization, they become members?

Even more important, after joining, do people stay? Or is it only those with a family connection and support who do? If the latter I would be very concerned. It would mean we are currently unable to maintain the continued involvement of people who join from outside the Subud brotherhood. Would this be the reason for the “revolving door syndrome” many groups experience? Can this change?

My own subjective experience in the last few years is that the latihan in Australia has deepened and widened. I have seen this in my own Brisbane group, at the Melbourne City group and, very, very evident at the Subud Australia Congress in 2014.

This, I think, is due in large measure to the efforts of the immediate past and current National and International Helpers.

The Effects of the Latihan

One of the proofs for me is that I feel the effects of the latihan much more strongly in my everyday life. I think it affects my relationship with my family and others. From what I hear and read I am not alone here.

This change in the depth and quality of the latihan is the essential yeast which may enable Subud, in my country and elsewhere, to change in other substantial ways.

I think many Subud members have ardently waited for a real change. This appears to be starting to happen. We have gone through many difficulties to reach this stage and we need to realise much needs to be done to implement what we have individually received into our group lives.

Pak Subuh never thought of Subud as a safe laager for his special friends – he wasn’t into that scenario – but something for all humanity. Whilst he was alive he tried to lead and mentor us to show the fruits of the latihan and

do something useful for humanity at large. All the talks and testing sessions on his world tours, at World Congresses and in Cilandak, as well as the major enterprises he attempted to facilitate, were to that end.

““ The essential yeast... ””

Ibu Rahayu has followed in his footsteps. In fact, if the truth be told, she has given us far more responsibility for our own lives, such as no longer having the “Dear Bapak/Dear Ibu Rahayu” sort of secretariat where people wrote in with their personal problems, requests for name changes etc. She has put the responsibility right back onto us. That, I think, is an acknowledgement that we have either grown up spiritually or that we urgently need to do so.

I think we are at a watershed moment. We need to move on. I am hoping enough of us now have the spiritual and personal maturity to do so. It needs to be a group effort. There will be difficulties ahead. We need to surmount them.

Perhaps we need to look at a new paradigm of working together? I suspect so. I would suggest the outgoing National Committee of Subud Australia, with the active support of the National and International Helpers, has already provided an example. It is one we need to be grateful for.

We should no longer feel in the dark about how to proceed. Lewes and Subud Australia are good exemplars. There must be others. Their light needs to be heeded, shared and spread.

The essential yeast...

Message and Vision of Our Lady

The following account is taken from “Reminders of Reality”, the compilations of Subud members’ experiences edited by Emmanuel Elliott. Go to www.remindersofreality.weebly.com

This account was first published online by Subud brother ‘Adam Sunshine’ in January 2009 at <http://adamsunshine.blogspot.com/2007/05/message-and-vision-of-our-lady.html>

You may also be interested in his diary of dreams and visions at <http://adamsunshine.blogspot.com/2007/05/dreams.html>

Part One

In the past few years I have worried about increasing violence and wars in the world. I have prayed often and asked the question of God and Our Lady if it was correct for me to share the visions I had experienced with other people. I want to share a message of hope but I also do not wish to sound foolish or spiritually arrogant. I did not receive an answer to my question until recently.

Late this summer I received an answer. Just before bedtime I had a vision. This was not a vision of Our Lady but rather I began to see and hear the children, those living now and those still yet to be born. They were facing me, looking me directly in the eye, knowing the possibility of living in a world of peace. Their numbers grew from the hundreds to the thousands, more than I could see. They understood. I understood. It was for them that I should share this message, that it might open the possibility for this to become a reality.

Part Two

In late 1990 I resigned from my job and felt that I was to do something else but I didn't know what it was yet going to be. Shortly thereafter I suffered a serious back injury and spent several weeks and months healing. This was a very humbling and contemplative time for me. I cried when I left the apartment after being home-bound for several weeks.

As I was beginning to recover, a friend of mine who ran a local foundation for children and families affected by HIV/AIDS asked a friend and me to help at their annual rummage sale. I was able to attend and helped out at the desk. When it was over I began to think about the idea of opening a thrift store so that the foundation could have a source of funds for their ongoing work. I dismissed the idea when I realized I couldn't lift or carry anything and also had no capital to open such an enterprise.

That evening, just before bed, I felt a presence in the room and a change of energy just overcame me. It brings tears to my eyes now thinking of it because it was so real, so loving, so soft and graceful, yet so strong and knowing. I saw an image of Our Lady, Mary, in my mind. She emanated a feeling of safety and peace. She told me I was to open this store for the children and that she would open the way. All I had to do was follow her guidance and it would be. It was not a command, but a choice for me. When I reflected on this I thought that this was what I was supposed to do.

Our Lady showed me where to go to look for a vacant store. I went there the next day and took down a phone number. I asked one of the other tenants if they thought the landlord might be open to renting the space at below market rent since we had no money for a thrift store to help children and families affected by HIV/AIDS.

“ *She emanated a feeling of safety and peace* ”

They told me he was a millionaire and a hard driving businessman, so they didn't think it was likely. I pondered that but Our Lady told me to just go ahead and contact him. I mustered up some courage, phoned him and set up a meeting. I told him what we were thinking of doing, he sat there and listened quietly, and then just said, absolutely yes. We could use the storefront, in a prime business location, for 1/3 the market rent, payable after we got the store running. We could use it for at least a year but after that if he found a tenant to pay full market rent, we would have to relocate. What a miracle!

Part Three

I was stunned. It had happened just as Our Lady had shown me it would. This gave me confidence in my experience. I had experienced dreams and visions before but never anything that had manifested in the world so easily.

But now that we had been given a space I wondered what to do next. How do you open a thrift store with no money and nothing to put in it? Our Lady told me not to worry. I called my friend who ran the foundation and told her the news about the store. She said she would spread the word and see what she could come up with. I spoke with the neighbouring tenant who ran a bookstore and told her the landlord had approved our using the space. Without asking for anything she said she would be happy to give us shelving to use in the store. Another friend who had experience in retail said he would help run the store if we needed it. A local charity had an old van. They donated it to us to pick up donations. Someone else had a cash register they weren't using and gave it to us. Someone else had tables for displays.

Pretty soon we had all the basics, but nothing to put in the store and it was due to open in less than a week. I just surrendered it to God. The foundation director phoned her network of friends. A woman donated an antique baby carriage that we placed in the window with a sign to announce the opening of the store and seeking donations of goods. The community just opened their hearts. We filled the store within 2 days with donations of art, clothing and household goods. A group of interior designers picked up our cause and gave us high quality wares to sell. I was in awe and so grateful for the outpouring of love. It was just as Our Lady had shown me and I felt the peace and presence of her as things came to fruition.

We were up and running. We had many volunteers from all walks of life willing to help us in the store. It was hard work but there was such grace. Before long the foundation had a monthly source of income and we were able to pay the bills to run the store. What a blessing! For me it was a peak experience of sorts, in that the store combined business, recycling, charity, human effort and love all touched by a humble grace and divine presence. Money from the store helped expand the foundation's programs and run a summer camp for the kids.

Part Four

I'll never forget one boy at camp, Michael, who was 8 years old. All he wanted to do was be a normal kid and play baseball. He knew that he did not have long to live but faced his destiny with such courage, wisdom and peace. The look and strength in Michael's eyes has given me pause whenever I have faced difficulties in my own life. He was wiser and stronger than any adult I have ever met. He was able to play baseball that day at camp. He passed away just a few weeks later.

After a year of running the thrift store, living on a minimal but adequate income, working six days a week, I was nearing exhaustion. I began to question how I could continue. Our Lady came to me again and gave me the message "Seek Ye Refuge in the Garden, Restored". I didn't know what it meant at the time but it sounded good. There are many meanings really - rest in the beauty of nature, but later I also realized it meant to rest in the Heavenly Garden, restored to Grace. This was a profound message that touched me deeply.

I arranged to finally take a break from running the store and retreated to Orcas Island, near Seattle, for rest, contemplation and relaxation. I returned after a few days much more balanced and refreshed. I knew that I needed to take more time for meditation/latihan, but I wasn't sure how to do that with all my responsibilities. Again I just carried on and surrendered it to God.

A few weeks later we received news from the landlord that he had found a tenant and we would have to move >

unless we were willing to pay full market rent. The thrift store's revenues were modest and we could not afford to pay the full rent and support the foundation. We looked for another location but nothing seemed suitable or affordable. I meditated and asked Our Lady "what should we do?"

A few days later I felt her quiet presence come to me again. She said that it was done, our work was complete and we should just let it go. I was sad but I knew it was true. She said our store had been given life for a brief time, similar to the brief but beautiful life that a child with AIDS experienced at that time. She also said that there was another message she wished to tell me and she would visit me again.

Part Five

In the final days before the store closed we were still attempting to find another location to carry on the work. I knew inwardly it was unlikely but there were many people involved and they did not receive the same message I did. It did not seem appropriate for me to share the message I had received, that it was best just to go through the experience. One evening, again just before bedtime, Our Lady filled the room and my being with her presence. I became still and filled with peace, tears welling in my eyes.

Her message was "Lay Down Your Weapons". I understood this to mean to just surrender and let the store close, do not make any further efforts to continue. Once I understood this she said there was more.

I was shown a vision of what "Lay Down Your Weapons" meant for the world. Our Lady appeared all around the world, in various forms, speaking in many languages, touching the souls of children of all cultures conveying the message that it was time to "Lay Down Your Weapons". Children knew that it was time to end war and they were drawn together through this miraculous appearance to make this happen. It was an incredible vision.

With the power and grace of Our Lady I knew that it was possible. I asked her if this time was now and she said "Not now," but I would know when if I listened to my soul. I also understood that to "lay down one's weapons" was more than just weapons of war, but all things human beings use as weapons to harm one another. But laying down the weapons of war was the first stage of human beings learning to lay down the other weapons used to harm each other - such as money, food, water, resources, etc. It was a step to healing and uniting mankind to a next level of living.

This happened in 1992. Since then I have not experienced any further messages from Our Lady. At times, I have felt her subtle presence and it has given me peace. I have lived an ordinary life since then, caring for my family and working in the world. But I have often wondered when or if her final vision would occur. I know that if it will happen it will occur in God's time, not mine.

The message is simple really: How do you stop war? Lay down your weapons. It is common sense. We are all brothers and sisters living on this planet provided by God. War is family abuse on a massive scale. The family can be healed. There is hope.

To receive Reminders of Reality by email contact Emmanuel at emmanuelelliott@blueyonder.co.uk ●

“ Lay down your weapons...” ”

Still Life and the Miracle of Creation

Marcus Bolt studied at St. Albans and Maidstone Colleges of Art, graduating with a First Class Honours degree in Graphic Communications. He currently works as a freelance designer and has always painted in his free time. He hopes to become a full-time painter when he can afford to retire. He writes...

In the Spring of 2013, I read David Hockney's book *Secret Knowledge* – and found it liberating. Hockney sets out to prove that many of the greats – Holbein, Caravaggio, Vermeer, Canaletto, Ingres *et al* used mirrors, lenses, camera obscura and camera lucida – the hi-tech media of their day – to project images onto paper or canvas, and then traced the outlines. As Hockney points out, this in no way diminishes their genius; they still had to know how to render flesh, fur, metal and cloth in paint, how to design and compose etc. And they could have drawn from life just as accurately, but had full order books and busy schedules, so any short cut was a boon.

I already knew that Michelangelo, Durer and many others used the squaring-up technique to enlarge small sketches to Sistine Chapel proportions, so I thought, why not combine the two, but using digital photography instead of mirrors? (Hockney discovered mirrors have the same properties as lenses.)

Fifty years of studying art history and working as a designer – initially with pencils rulers, pens, bow compasses and Magic Markers, and latterly with digital photography, Photoshop and Quark – conspired with my reading making me realise I could create images in a similar way, thus avoiding the (to me) time-stealing tyranny of 'accurate >

drawing? And why not? Artists from the Impressionists, through the Modernists, to early and contemporary Conceptualists have won all the ‘What is art?’ battles, so that today, whatever one says is art is art.... (whether good or bad art is another question entirely). In other words, art is now whatever you want it to be (or can get away with, as some cynics would say).

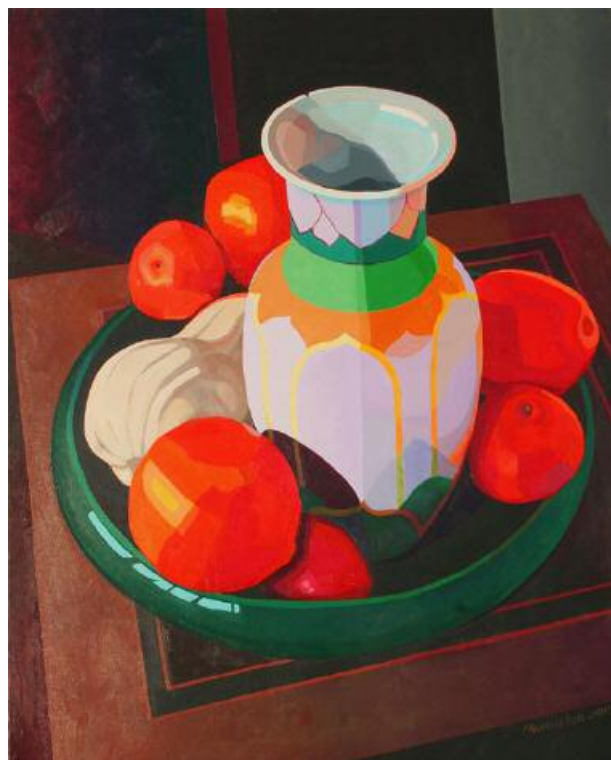
With a new technique under my belt, I returned to one of my original loves – still life painting. After years of studying the Dutch, Italian and French masters of the genre, as well as the Modernists (Picasso, Braques, Scott *et al*) through reproductions and in museum galleries, I realised, in an inspirational moment, that I could combine everything I know into a new way of looking and working. I could ally their traditional techniques with my own, more graphic approach and could put aesthetic rather than illustrative concerns as the primary concern. Thus each painting is a design of interlocking shapes and colour using everyday objects as a starting point rather than as an end in themselves.

It was all tentative at first, but now, after 30-plus works in two years (each painting a steep learning curve), I can at last see where I’m going.

My work is not created for museums, though – these are pictures as furniture for the home and/or office. But, as a conceit, my hope is that the casual viewer will see (and feel) in them those Zen-like moments of wonder at existence and that sense of still calm and *joie de vivre* I experienced while painting them.

To me, it is amazing that things exist at all, from a perfectly formed onion, peach or pear through to a plastic bowl. And it is a miracle of creation that they can be perceived by the mind through reflected light, shadow and colour via the eyes and then symbolically represented by the human hand. But the profoundest mystery of all is the very fact that we have consciousness and can be aware of being aware and can communicate that to others through the arts... And to me, that is what is meant by our being ‘created in God’s image’ – we too have been given the ability to shape raw material and to create, metaphorically, ‘something’ from ‘nothing’.

The four paintings shown below have been made recently and are for a company that hires out groups of related paintings to office complexes. To see more of my work, go to: <http://www.greenchair-gallery.co.uk> and click on ‘Current Exhibitions’, then ‘Still Life and the Miracle of Creation’ (exhibition runs until mid-April, and is then archived for a while).



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Acrylics on stretched canvas



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Acrylics on stretched canvas



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