"The Flavor of Charleston & Mount Pleasant" South Carolina, USA

A Review of the sights by way of

photography, poetic stories & funny commentary

BOOK 1

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by

Grace Divine



An Educational Book

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The photography in this books constitutes Art. To view the art in this book as prints and to find out about other books by Grace Divine go to www.GraceDivine.com

DEDICATION

To all people who enjoy traveling.

PREFACE



I like images that spark my curiosity, that are whimsical, beautiful or fun. I also enjoy images that have unexpected things inside them. I enjoy it when orbs, or the like -unexpected lights- show on the image because typically these are not obvious to the photographer at the time the image was taken. Although fogs, mists and alternative feelings sometimes are evident to myself an other photographers.

One reason I enjoy photoshopping images is because I heard that the human eye can only pick up 1% of the electromagnetic light spectrum. And that makes me wonder. What if we, human beings, could experience more of this light? What would the world look like? Certainly, colors would be more vivid and more varied! Hence, I photoshop my work. This photography is artistic work because it delves into potentialities of human sight, perception and experience. As such, it engages the imagination and becomes a creative endeavor. I also enjoy approaching photography from unlikely, and unexpected non-traditional focus points. I enjoy focusing on shadows, strange reflections, and odd angles. Also, I like to photograph images in terms of their impact on memory and experience. I ask, how will this experience be imprinted on my mind? How will this be remembered? How will I experience this moment, from the past, henceforth in the future?

Ultimately, there is much more to this photography.

I thank you.

AUTHOR BIOGRAPHY

I am a survivor who believes in the inexorable power of the human spirit. I am a believer who has seen through tragedy into the eye of the setting sun knowing that the morrow can bring a new and brighter day. I am a compassionate human being who empathizes with the suffering of others and wants to be there for them. And I do this by writing transformational stories and creating art filled with characters and images that are imbued with passion and love.

I was born in California. When I was five, my parents divorced. Shortly after, my father abducted me. He put me in the trunk of a car where I held on to a plastic cane filled with candy as I lay spread eagle on my stomach. From Tijuana Mexico, I was flown to Torremolinos Spain where I was left in a dreary and secluded all girl catholic boarding school for several years. I remember this like a prison to which we were confined even during the holidays. Christmas, for instance, I and another child were the only children left. And throughout this time, I never saw my mother.

Some time later, when I became deadly ill from pneumonia, my paternal grandmother took pity on me and took me to Mexico City. There, I was exposed to the mysticism and magic of the native American Indian cultures. After, my father returned me to Spain. I finally came back to the United States. I was an American teenager who couldn't speak English. Happily, I saw my mother again. Sadly, several months after my return, she disappeared in a flood. 13 people disappeared in this flood in La Caňada Flintridge California. Her body was never found.

I went to ten schools in three countries for the first twelve years including four high schools. During this time, I had to contend with a father whose mental illness and drug and alcohol addictions caused him to be a dangerous sadist. I was barely eighteen years old when I ran away from home because he threatened to kill me with a 38 revolver.

As providence would have it, within a month, I found a job and bought a car. I moved into the dorms at the University of California at Irvine. From there, I graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Linguistics and the ability to speak several languages. While at UCI, I met and married a medical student. My first pregnancy ended in stillbirth. Notwithstanding this and other hardships I enrolled and graduated from UCLA Law School in 1992.

We moved to Texas and while I was raising my children, I graduated from the University of Texas Dallas where I received a Masters Degree in Arts and Humanities. There I took several writing courses. At this time, I began a career as a visual/writing artist. My artwork, mostly surrealist, includes extensive writings, short stories and poetry. I've had shows at womens' centers and several commercial establishments. I also taught art in public access television. One of my paintings "The Kiss of Death," is featured adjacent to a Picasso in the acclaimed documentary by the BBC: THE PRIVATE LIFE OF A MASTERPIECE: THE KISS BY GUSTAV KLIMT ICON OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

Then, after many years my husband and I grew apart and I filed for divorce. The next day I began to write. The writing was spontaneous and a year later I had a fully finished science fiction novel, APPLE TOWN, CALIFORNIA. I also drew and painted over eighty illustrations of the characters and story. When the movie agent asked me how I wrote it, I told him that I saw the images and "painted them on paper" with words.

Today, I engage my writing, photography and art in an effort to understand the nature of the human experience, the processes of the mind, the experience of memory, visual and mental perception and life in general. My art and writing also include queries into the nature of the universe as multidimensional and the existence of life after death.

Overall, my art constitutes a form of auto-biography. Historically, it could be seen to represent a glimpse into an American woman artists experience at the turn of the 20th century. And basically, I am glad to be able to share my artistic experience. And I figure, everyone is in some kind of quest to understand who and what they are. Perhaps, they will find my work useful.

Wishing the best to all,

Grace Divine

INTRODUCTION

I like to go places and to take photographs. In Spring of 2014, Steve and I traveled to Charleston, South Carolina, USA. This is considered "THE SOUTH" in the United States. It is a place filled with history and is the location where the US civil war commenced! It is also filled with churches, cemeteries and near old slave plantations.

I like to take photographs that offer unique views of the world. In my photography, I like to inquire about the 'mysterious' in the everyday. I am interested in the LIGHT and the SHADOWS and the effects these have on human perception and memory. And I am attracted to images of things that intrigue me. I love it as well, when I am surprised afterward, to find things that I hadn't seen in the images before.

After the photography is done, I further work on the images, allowing them to inspire me as I creatively digitize them. And when this is completed, I journal. I write down whatever insights, ideas, concepts and emotions, I gained from the entire experience. And the writings, you will find, are the writings that accompany each image. Please note, since these writings constitute a personal journal, I have taken the liberty to express them via a wide variety of literary genres. Some including poetry. Others include basic narrative and fact opinion. And still others making a serious attempt at comedic fare.

In the end, I thoroughly enjoy this process, as throughout, I experience what I would refer to as a kind of awakening. Also, the process helps me to get in touch with feelings related to deep shadow parts within myself. This is awesome, since as I become more aware of them, I am able to release them. And this release, I have found, typically brings me inner healing and ultimately, more enjoyment of life.

I earnestly hope that the images and writings here do the same for you. I hope these ideas awaken something inside you and that you will feel something new, and perhaps something even wondrous. To my mother... I LOVE YOU.

Poppies are red. Daisies are pink. I love these colors in lipstick, any day of the week.

Fleeting on the mouth. One moment there. and the next not. Why is lipstick so expensive? Nobody cares to ask that. I don't know!

But really, I heard lipstick's made from bugs. I don't know the reason why. So in the end, if this poem rhymes or not, it doesn't matter because the idea of flowers, bugs and lipstick is alright.

Mom, I know I never try hard enough. And I always have great excuses. Like I didn't sleep well the night before, and that is why my rhyming is so obtrusive.

BUT...

It doesn't matter in the end. Whether this is a poem or it is not. What matters is that when I gaze at these flowers, they remind me of your beauty and of your love.

I love you Mom.

Grace







Fig. #2

Beautiful pink walls!

PINK

A color that is joyful and peaceful!

Resting peacefully...



Fig. #3



Fig. #4

One human off to work...

The other already there... watching!

Ever heard the song... "Me and my shadow... strolling down the blvd." It is such a cool song. It has such cool rhythm. It's full of ebb and flow.

We all have shadow parts, inside and outside ourselves. It is those parts we seek to hide. from everyone including ourselves. But if you find your shadow, extend your hand as you would to a friend. For inside the shadow lay treasures immeasurable to no end. To face ones fears, face darkness, is to truly live beyond the edge. For the edge of life is darkness, but to see beyond the darkness is to truly see what's there.



Fig. #5



Fig. #6

And I exclaimed,

"ORB DO SOMETHING"

And this is what happened.

And by the lake...

A history of romance.



Fig. #7



Fig. #8

When interesting is written all over the face!

Some people are just interesting and have stories to tell.

Others are just plain boring.

I met both kinds in Charleston,

just like there are everywhere else.

This man was interesting.

One, two, three flowers... Maybe more and more and more flowers.

A steaming cafe Latte for breakfast. And a hallelujah brake while you zip it, for one moment. And then, you are off to work. Busy and worried, your mind rambling with demands, cares and insinuations.

> Where are you going this day? Where? Really... WHERE?

Where will you be today that it will impact your life for every tomorrow? And where will you be tomorrow, that you're so sure, is impacting everyone of your today?

Wait and smell the flowers for one moment. Take a coffee brake. Sit down and think... WHERE! And where, I wonder. Where is your heart today?

For me... my heart is with my mother. For tomorrow will be the designated day for "MOTHER'S DAY."

And I will take a brake today. As my heart will brake for just one moment thinking of my mother tomorrow as every tomorrow, for me, is every today.

One flower, two flowers, three... A cup of coffee, a moment's brake. And off you go to go to work. Where?

In memory of all mothers... xoxo Because I care. Grace Divine



Fig. #9



Fig. #10

A magnificent surprise near the sign!

FOLLOW ME!

Is it morning? I ask. As my eyes awake to see. No! Is the reply. As my mind aware now thinks.

It is evening. Or more correctly that time, when the opening of EVE is alike a flowering bud erupting orgasmically unto the land.

And as the last light shimmers through,speaking through gossamer pinks and oranges, it blends into the blues of the in-coming night sky, hinting to stain it with purples.

Ah! The beauty of nature. And I feel astonished.

And as I peer through a window, I see yonder into the landscape. Thank you...

A wonderful beautiful window it is indeed. But, what if there were no window here? And who in their wisdom put it in? And who created windows to begin with? Don't you wonder, whose idea was it in the end?

And I just have to say, I THANK YOU!

I hope, no matter where I am, within or outside myself, there will always be a window there so I can see.

And I pray, the Master architect, includes that. For I believe that to look into a window is to see far far away, as one's mind travels through an eternity.

Grace Divine



Fig. #11



Fig. #12

Who would have thought

views from a cemetery

could be so beautiful!

Look through a window...

There, you could find the world.


Fig. #13



Fig. #14

In an old house in Charleston...

HISTORY

MEETING STREET...

Where people meet!



Fig. #15



Fig. #16

And the reflection from the windows of a church.

Now, what stories could they tell!

Is that a moon?

Is that an orb?

Is that a planet?

l know...

But I don't want to know.







Fig. #18

In the slave plantation...

a slave quarter.

PAUSE

And the landscape lives.



Fig. #19



Fig. #20

One must look in and around the shadows...

IN AND AROUND THE SHADOWS

to find out what lurks there in the darkness.

More than you could ever imagine.

Today... how about having a thought... today? Give it a thought. How about exercising your brain? You know, thinking never hurt anyone. What are you thinking? Anything at all? So what do you think? You think!



Fig. #21



Fig. #22

And building...

just like in other metropolitan areas...

rise majestic from the ground.

At the courthouse...

To know when to speak

and to know when to be quiet

is an art form!



Fig. #23



Fig. #24

Oddly, cemeteries aren't scary here.

They are inviting.

What an oddity indeed.

As I sit in front of the computer this May 12, 2014, and think to myself.

GOOD MORNING.. to the sinuous world that surrounds me. Romantic, elegant and liquid as the ebb and tide of light swims dreamily through the spaces around me. Like a jazzy tune, recommended by a friend this early morn, merging playfully with my ear drums... I move slowly, and I feel happy...

A LETTER TO MYSELF

Grace,

These columns remind me of Plato. According to legends, we are creatures made of words. Really! Words! Look at biblical lore for instance. Or perhaps indulge in DNA and read the codes. Or more, just think about the everyday and describe it. And you will find, it is necessary to use words. For words surround our very souls. And in and out of us, are only words. In truth...words, words, words, make up our worlds!

Plato said, "False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil." From this statement we learn that according to Plato there is good and there is evil. And I believe that words, like seeds, can grow within us. And I ask, what is growing in your yard, Grace? Have you taken heed? Go out there. Take a look. Take a walk inside yourself. And see...

What does your garden look like? And isn't it true that to be a great gardener you must constantly de-weed. "Oh... so true!"

And I know it's a lot of work. But others before us have shown us the path. They have... So Grace, enter into the school of thought... And think by deweeding your mind and turning it into a beautiful garden!

Grace Divine



Fig. #25



Fig. #26

Passing by the hotel hall...

our reflections.

SHADOWS

SHAPES

MEANINGS

GOD IS EVERYWHERE THEY SAY ...



Fig. #27



Fig. #28

There was a wonderful Horticultural fair that Saturday!

We traveled there and took pictures.

At some churches,

the windows point upward.

UPWARD!

UP

UP

UP

AND AWAY...



Fig. #29



Fig. #30

A grand old clock...

like a coffin, keeping track of where we step.

And so we are reminded of time.

The tree sways

in the winds...

What wonderful stories are caught within its branches.

And then again, they could be sad.

In order to forget one must remember...

RIGHT?!

For one can not forget what one doesn't remember.


Fig. #31



Fig. #32

Plato is quoted as saying,"Poetry is nearer to vital truth than history."

What does this mean? Profound indeed!

I THINK... Everything is made of parts. History, for instance, is made of perception. Specifically, a uni-linear subjective perspective.

But poetry, what is it made of? Poetry is also made of perception but besides, it has an added feeling and emotion.

And what is truth in the end? I think truth is as elusive as life and God itself. It is mufti-layered, esoteric and divine. I believe... truth is beauty!

I think the message here is that to know TRUTH better, one must not only think it, but one must also feel it.

And where history makes us think, poetry makes us think and feel and therefore brings us closer to a beautiful "truth" experience.

And that is what I believe Plato refers to as "VITAL TRUTH."

Something akin to a grand experience of life versus a simple analysis.

Grace Divine

A POOL OF WHAT?



Fig. #33



Fig. #34

If I am to be laid upon the ground,

let there be a tree.

To keep me warm in cold winter nights.

And keep me cool from the summer heat.

DOORS

OPEN

CLOSE

LET US OUT

LET US IN



Fig. #35



Fig. #36

What if we do have souls?

And our souls live in the ground after we die...

What then?

Does it really matter what the markers look like?

l don't know.

I don't have answers.

I just have questions.

And the rose petal says

"LOVE"



Fig. #37



Fig. #38

A shape made of light of something that appears to have horns... THE DEVIL IN WHITE! Ha ha ha.... Funny but then maybe?!

Sometimes we move so fast through life,

that we forget to experience our surroundings.



Fig. #39



Fig. #40

Steve on the cell.

While I take pictures.

A chandelier should look good

from the top,

as it does from the bottom.



Fig. #41



Fig. #42

A bench, inviting us to seat.

But not on this one...

I feel like there is something there already.

Often I am disappointed,

at what lies in front of me.

But I know, at the same time,

I am not responsible for everything that lies in front of me.

NO ONE PERSON IS.



Fig. #43





Two flags

One which is real

One which is merely historical

Plato is attributed as having said, "That's what education should be... the art of orientation. Educators should devise the simplest and most effective methods of turning minds around. It shouldn't be the art of implanting sight in the organ, but should proceed on the understanding that the organ already has the capacity, but is improperly aligned and isn't facing the right way."

From The Republic

This image, with it's columns reminds me of Plato and Greek society. It would seem that so much of American society is owed to the philosophy of thought derived from Plato and other Greek wise people.

Today, as we climb the stairs into buildings inspired by these Greek Masters, do we ponder on their knowledge, advice and experience? I fear, not quite as much as we should, or at least I know this sentiment applies to myself.

Perhaps having the columns there, staring us in the face, will remind us to think of something. And I know from henceforth forward, it will remind me to think.

Think Grace... THINK!

Grace Divine



Fig. #45



Fig. #46

We were going somewhere.

I don't remember where.

"Of my feelings about the civil war while in a southern plantation"

Trees in a Southern plantation with branches reaching up into the skies.

Glimpses of blue skies sneaking through solitary and random, like pockets of simmering screaming whispers reminding us of where we are.

Confusion, delusion, corruption, pollution, but the trees still grow notwithstanding what.

And the voices of judgment are heard in the distance like dancing petals of dying camellias praying for a moment's end to a dreadful life.

Nothing comes and nothing goes without the notice of the Almighty GOD as the mighty God's horses pull each carriage to its end.

And so called Ladies and gentlemen get off of the carriage as whimpering slaves bend over in pain.

And here it is where ideas of grandeur crucify goodness and suffocate compassion under cover of silence as lies are bred to grow.

It is said corrupt men can not win should good men stand up and stop them. And yet there is always too few good men it seems until there are finally enough.

And then the civil war was fought.

And then the civil war was won...

And thank God good men from the North triumphed!

And that is good for all! Good for all.



Fig. #47



Fig. #48

Magical trees

Magical foliage

Magical land

Sad

Tearful

Gone away...

It is always sad and tearful

when something's gone away

Never to return

NEVER

And that word

NEVER

is a most difficult word



Fig. #49



Fig. #50

LOVE

is all there is

not just at the end

but always.

We delude ourselves to think anything else.

LOVE

IS ALL THERE IS

ALWAYS.