

## **MEMORIES**

Raimundo Figueroa

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### **A one-act play**

“Car il n’y a pas d’art l’a ou il n’y a rien a vaincre” Albert Camus

A large room. Upstage a kitchen table cluttered with oil paint, brushes, wooden mallets and other artifacts. Center, an easel with a small painting, several carved African figures, a stack of books. Left wall, a glass window overlooks an enclosed garden. Right, a wall bearing nine medium sized paintings. In the paintings, stamps, lists, postcards, letters, receipts, and other remnants of individual histories share a common space with flowers, masks, and abstract forms that denote organic beings. Surrounded by art, literature, and nature the following interview takes place.

Juan Delgado...”I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space.” William Shakespeare

Raimundo Figueroa: Creativity has no limits, no boundaries, no space. Imagination is the mother of creativity, and in creativity is the mother and father of all beings. Therefore, no limits exist in the infinite space. No Culture, no State, no Religion, no social attachment. To be one in the inner self is to be the King of all kingdoms.

Juan Delgado: “Before speaking further about culture, I must remark that the world is hungry and not concerned with culture, and that the attempt to orient toward culture thoughts turned toward hunger is a purely artificial expedient.” Antonin Artaud

Raimundo Figueroa: What is Culture? What is to have culture? If we go into the matter deeply and slowly, we first have to define what culture is. According to Webster’s Dictionary; Culture/cul.ture/1:

TILLAGE, CULTIVATION; also the growing of a particular crop, 2: the act of developing by education and training, 3: refinement of intellectual and artistic taste, 4: a particular form or stage of civilization; also a society characterized by such culture. If we determine that culture is the combination of a sophisticated mind and its surroundings, we find out, to develop answers to our existential questions. But we confuse ourselves and develop our minds in the most ordinary way by reading and being in vogue.

To be competitive and then to talk about being hungry; is there a connection between the stomach and the mind? For centuries people have spoken of exercises for cultivating the mind. That is why we have found no connection to the inner world. Please think about it: In everyday life, to be part of a so called successful society, an individual has to act according to the rules of the society. It may be culturally correct to express your feelings in a particular way, to have a particular dress code, to have a vehicle that goes with the culture you live in, to express your culture correctly regarding social matters, and to show your knowledge of the artistic tendencies and intellectual values used by your society to express its existence.

If I want to cultivate my mind, how do I go about it? Do I have to learn the cultural basics of my society? Or do I develop my neurological capacity to its highest level? To be simple and educated is not the same as to have culture. In our society to have culture is to have an intellectually rich language, to have an athletic mind, a mind that exercises every day, a mind that is intellectually active, intellectually. Actually, now that I think about it, in every society on this planet earth it is a status symbol to have culture and to know about culture, but this so called "culture" is not an effort to cultivate the mind but an effort to repeat like a parrot the words of a poem.

Juan Delgado: "Blindness is not darkness; it's a form of solitude."  
Jorge Luis Borges

Raimundo Figueroa: Solitude = Development. An inner state of great knowledge.

Solitude = Death = Darkness  
Death = Development

Juan Delgado: "...how many frogs attuned to the night, whistling and snoring with throats of forty year-old human beings..." Pablo Neruda

Raimundo Figueroa: Many things pass unnoticed in life; the sounds of the night may well be one of these. I have become accustomed to the scent of paint and images bloom non-stop from the imagination. The more we restrain intellectual activity, the quicker we connect our mind to unconsciousness. It is the responsibility of a creative mind to express sincerely and honestly what it feels.

Juan Delgado: "the right to live and succeed is conquered nowadays with the same procedure with which you conquer internment in mental asylum: the inability to think, amorality, and hyper-excitement" Fernando Pessoa

Raimundo Figueroa: In some of my paintings I treat the subject of madness. I think that many emotions that are distant for some human beings are the same emotions that manifest themselves in different ways according to the circumstances in which the individual has developed in life. The emotion of rage and the emotion of sadness are the same emotion. The point is to take the time to know thyself, to develop an understanding: develop the knowledge to identify emotions and with this knowledge to live a life understood in existence itself.

My intended labor through these paintings is to picture a suggested path so that the viewer completes each canvas. So a work is never completed without the vision of the viewer, and when he or she adds his or her emotions and responses then the work is momentarily completed.

(Curtain closes)

**Juan Delgado**