Mundi, Carmelita
Nature, Man, an artist...
Submitted by Sister Carmelita Mundi in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Fine Arts.
PREFACE

It is my intention to write about that "something" necessary to make up the only art that counts—GREAT ART. What can be said about creating in general must never be different from what is said of the process of making any art...including my own painting. Each varies only in intensity.

I believe the mystery of creating defies explanation as such. However, in the following pages are some thoughts I have concerning one striving to express a NEED to create.
GENERAL OUTLINE

I. Nature... teaches the secret of creativity.

II. Man.... learns from nature and knows of his place in the world.

III. An artist is the intuitive man who sees beyond looking and grasps much of the mystery of the inner life of things and the inner life of himself. A new concept is formed when the two "being-worlds" meet and become one.

IV. Art..... –a need arises and a throbbing desire to express what one feels is brought to realization in some physical material. Man has made something new and good.

V. History.. –an epoch with definite circumstances determines a specific response of the artist

but

the masterpiece of any period is timeless...always answering eternal permanent needs of all men everywhere.

EPILOGUE
The last verse of the poem, "God's Grandeur", by Gerard Manley Hopkins provided the title for my thesis painting, "Ah, Bright Wings".
CONCERNING THE PHOTOGRAPHS

The cover design is a detail of the thesis painting.

The complete thesis painting is seen in the plates found within the following pages.

I am indebted to Susan Hancock who took all the photographs for this work.
NATURE
defined in springtime...LIFE...is its theme
impatient growth and movement
sound and wheeled color
rise
up and out
of nowhere

the sky is thin blue
the dawn-til-moon sun
spreads
stretched beams
of keen delight
everywhere...
and
penetrates
the very heart
of every creature
with warmth
like a friend
solar sprays
clearing the atmosphere
sounding
to all
far and near
canticles
of returned birds

music reserved
only for this season
comes from
hurrying waters
running rhythmically
swiftly down
from
highest parts
waters once chilled
now warmed
gladly flow
and roll
down
winding
through
over
under
between
smooth glistening stones
and
tender sprouts
of new growth
all life continues to grow
bravely
colorfully
healthily
but
harmoniously
contributing
with beauty
in uniqueness
in being
itself
only a part
never apart
from
a balanced plan
of a ceaseless urge
to create life
for another life
by
LIFE ITSELF
CALLED
noblest created life
MASTER
of fish of the sea
birds of the air
cattle
all wild beasts
and reptiles
that crawl
BLESSED
TO BE
fruitful
fill the earth
conquer it
GIVEN
seedbearing fruits
and trees
to sustain
life.
LIFE
SOURCE
OF ALL
love
knowledge
creation

co-creator
to live happily
love
believe.
hope contagiously
answer responsibly
care for
preserve
contribute authentically
and
think creatively...
nature enters
into an untouchable
spiritual
thought world
as light broken by a prism
bends
rain-ribbons of color

man knows himself
the sole part
of nature
in whom
tangible
sensible things

possess
outside
one form

in its pure state
impossible to imitate
what's there
in length
and width
and deep within
and up
around
and down
named space
once within
man's spirit
it receives
new birth
lifted
recreated
reformed
the inner eye
sees
the heart
the very core
of things
above
around
beneath
before
within himself
it transforms nature
dreams and
reality
become one
the maker's own heart
spins
moves marine deep
expresses
what it feels
not without
but within
selects
omits
puts in
unites

and space
recording
not the round world
on a flat surface
but...
guided
by the eye
that creates
appreciates
the spirit of man
spreads
paint that colors
line that forms
deforms
transforms
joining hands
heart
mind
adding the breath of intuition
thus...
the immaterial life
is infused
into the material
that
man holds
and beholds
as something
good and new
mysteriously produced
by deep impulses
of the heart
of one who learned
to love
the great
the very great
THOUGHT
from all eternity
bit
by
bit
unfolds
like
the tightly
wrinkled petals
of vermilion poppies
creation's plan
summoning history
age after age
the family tree
grown long
wide
deep
and
strong...

from adam's children
to ourselves
planted near
the forceful flow-
INSPIRATION.

makers
record
man's evolving response
in a mysterious process
of change
with man-made treasures
glimpsing eternal beauty
fulfilling deep demands
undying needs
progressing toward
ever new art
for
every man
yesterday
today
tomorrow

makers
many in number
few fresh
(genius is a seldom-name
greatness always rare)
even one prophet
singly favors
the gifted age
in hide'n seek caves
earliest
stained paintings
of
incised beauty
century-tight tombs
fragmented temples
adorned
idealized
stand in mystery
assembled
time ago
for
men and deity
Rome
Renaissance
all tradition
spanning the ocean of time
ancient to modern
prehistoric
Klee
the Negro
Michelangelo
amazingly different
yet resembling
each other
like pink against red
every man
judges them to be
SO FRESH
AGELESS
since
MASTERPIECES
endure
timelessly modern
abstract
naturalistic
realistic
impressionistic
expressionistic
op
pop
or
post
are way out
or

for the past
present
and
to come
"I consider art as a preface. All our acts are the preface of what we shall never realize: OUR IDEAL."  

EPILOGUE

one who loves explosively
the joy that champagnes creation
and
all human gifts
free
restlessly urges
to express
inspiration—
outer world
inner
dipped paint
spread paint
poured paint too

what's it
why is it
how is it like
now your turn to see
what's already seen
reseen
now dwelling in the land
of
DREAMS DREAMS DREAMS
for
where is love
hope
belief
feeling...joy
for these I look
NOT THERE

they're nowhere
only
in the
inner-outer world
HERE
they're found
where
one and the other meet
greet
and become a part
of the
HEART OF MAN
where are
only
DREAMS DREAMS DREAMS
TURNED INSIDE OUT
OF
THE WORLD I LIVE IN
AND
THE WORLD I LOOK FORWARD TO
GOD’S GRANDEUR

The world is charged with the grandeur of God.
It will flame out, like shining from shook foil;
It gathers to a greatness, like the ooze of oil
Crushed. Why do men then now not reck his rod?
Generations have trod, have trod, have trod;
And all is seared with trade; bleared, smeared with toll;
And wears man’s smudge and shares man’s smell: the soil
Is bare now, nor can foot feel, being shod.

And for all this, nature is never spent;
There lives the dearest freshness deep down things;
And though the last lights off the black West went
Oh, morning, at the brown brink eastward, springs—
Because the Holy Ghost over the bent
World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

-Gerard Manley Hopkins
LIST OF WORKS CONSULTED


