

Logic of the Titles

The print titles may appear puzzling but there was no desire to be deliberately obscurantist; the plainer options for labelling would have reduced content layers and subtle meanings from the overall exhibition concept.

The Hebrew term for this allusive nomenclature process is Remez – loosely meaning a trace or a hint, a homeopathic sort of spiritual or creative action and is part of the four traditional levels or structural scaffold of Jewish learning. This third level is a quadrant and a square within a sphere in which all the levels contain clues and vibrations of all the other levels. The simplest Pshat (basic level) contains its own Remez (clues, hints) and Sod (the highest level, penultimately touching the spiritual, non-material)) contains Pshat-Sod and in Remez there is Remez-Pshat and of course Remez-Sod. I'm writing this on the second level, Drosh (exegesis) extrapolating from information already available in Pshat (level one) – the seemingly basic level (which in the case of this project is of the overtly visual references to the physical environment on which the theme is anchored, the foundation thus for the experiences and understanding of the Nurturing of the Place.

The wording of each title gives the clues (Remez) to the visual content downwards to Pshat (basic), upwards to Sod (the highest level of experience and feelings) through extrapolation or Darshening on Drosh, (visual editing and digital recreation).

Nurture is at the centre of experience which is gestalt spirituality contained in the Hebrew word Makom meaning not only place but is also one of the many names of the Creator, of G-d, (Hamakom is the attribute of omnipresence). This is the source of the energy and spirit of everything created (Briah), without which the universe would cease to be: energy as magnetism, plasma physics, and so forth: the language and disciplines of science are parallel with the most essential Kaballah.

The titles may seem abstruse but I've carefully selected them as clues to content and to the overall feelings specific to the image in its aspect of Nurture. Other attributes such as kindness (Chesed), consideration, empathy, joyfulness (Simcha), awe (Yiras), physical fear (Pachad) and the many levels of Tshuva – return and acceptance, understanding, knowledge, wisdom (Chochma, Binah, Daas).

As in a musical composition, words play their resonances and vibrations, creating harmonies and changes in pitch, hinting at the flavour of connectivity and themes of the whole. The words are not arbitrary, nor is this interaction a strange syntactical puzzle, but a process which I hope is both pleasure giving and idea conveying, albeit involving dreadful polylingual punning and many layerings, and flavourings of the meanings.

If I'd titled images as Etude/opus/ etc, and given the key and other bland details of each piece the titles would be mere labels to the image. The way I've chosen may mean the titles do not describe the images easily but they are part of the totality of the work: words, ideas, feelings, visual references, text, extrapolation, hints and clues to a Sod, a totality, deriving from all this detail.

In the catalogue notes may appear further clarifications and sources, with provenance of the ideas and feelings, but I suggest it's more rewarding to treat the images as meditations, as puzzles, easily decipherable when one brings to each piece lateral reference to one's own knowledge and experience of the landscape.

We do not, cannot create a place from nothing (*yesh m'ayn*) but we can interact with an environment drawing sustenance and maintain it, repair damage and in the process grow and refine ourselves.