

The awe and wonder of the transfiguration¹

I didn't appreciate it at the time, but the creation of *Emergence 1: The Transfiguration* was a significant point in my work as an artist – a realisation that my art practice is directly informed by my spirituality.

More and more my art practice is bordering on the metaphysical and mystical – ambiguous, vague and quite often divine realities.

Stufjan Stevens, a New York-based musician and songwriter, has been quoted as saying:

*"I believe that music is a sacred form and it can be a language in which you communicate divine things."*²

As with Stevens and his songs, I believe a work of art can exist outside of me, and the process of mark making is one of transcendence beyond normal experience.

Like Stevens, it has always been difficult for me to explain the meaning of my work. Very often the origins are a mystery to me as much as for other people. I'm more interested in how people react to my work rather than intellectualising too much on its underlying meaning.

In biblical terms the transfiguration of Jesus was a divine confirmation for the three disciples (Peter, James and John) who accompanied him on the path that led to the heights of Mount Tabor to pray.

As with a lot of scripture, there is some debate whether the transfiguration of Christ literally happened or was meant to be understood allegorically.

For me, though, I know in my heart that when I created *The Transfiguration*, the meaning of it was connected more to a sense of awe and wonder at the power of divine love and humanity.

"... on the holy mount revealed to chosen witnesses ... wonderfully transfigured, in raiment white and glistening ... delivered from the disquietude of this world ..."

It's interesting that I didn't have a title for the work until it was close to being finished. Then like a whisper '*The Transfiguration*' came into my consciousness.

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¹ Bob Deffinbaugh Th.M., *The Transfiguration* (Luke 9:18-36), http://www.bible.org/page.php?page_id=597

² Iain Sheddon, *Into the Mystic*, *The Weekend Australian Review*, p. 14-15.