

A painting of a woman with long, flowing red hair, eyes closed, sitting in a meditative lotus position. She is wearing a blue long-sleeved tunic with gold embroidery at the neckline and blue and yellow striped pants. Her hands are resting on her knees in a mudra. She is barefoot. In front of her, on the ground, is a small, light brown, fluffy animal (possibly a cat or dog) curled up on a green cushion. The ground is sandy with several small, smooth, grey stones. The background is a lush garden with large green leaves and dense foliage. The overall style is soft and painterly, with visible brushstrokes.

the gift of revelation

Introduction

This is a conversation between the Artist, Elizabeth Brandon, and Robbie Short, Yoga instructor, about Elizabeth's series of yoga-inspired paintings.

“Robbie is my model for the painting “The Gift” and her inspiring asanas continually encourage me to explore new ideas in my own visual journey of Yoga. I have the deepest gratitude for Robbie's depth in Yoga history and knowledge and her loving ability to transpose those truths throughout her classes.”

Students of the Yoga community have experienced how the benefits of a mindful practice and growth-directed wisdom can be harvested with music, mantras, sanskrit terms, meditation, asanas, and revelations. If we want to study the sutras of Patanjali, we can access the answers to a higher wisdom and truth through our thought system. Art and the use of symbols, colors and design are also elements opening the path to realization from places in our bodies that go beyond our brain. Yogis learn about the ancient use of the mandalas and knowledge of the chakras, or energy centers as places of great wisdom in our own bodies. This venerable study, Yoga, is what we are tapping back into as a culture while manifesting new (for us, and actually old) power and wisdom. The magic, mystery, or interior wisdom is the place which inspires me to color, render, and create my art.

By using fruits, vegetables and flowers for my “yoga” paintings as a mediative guidance, I have embarked on a path to learn about these cryptic stations. Painting for me has always been a mediative act of love and genuine focus, much like yoga. The science of art and the science of yoga have proven to be similar as I study artistic anatomy.

In painting, I want to uncover the essence of my subject, not just an outside covering or ‘skin. That holistic approach is what gives Art a living quality and over time when you look at the same piece of art, it can reveal something different. Each time we look at a painting or image, we come from a different place of our being- which chakra is dominant or how do we feel that day? I could go on and on with those questions. For me these objects are symbols for our own discovery of looking inward to new territories and joyful dimensions.



The Gift

Oil on canvas 40"x 40"

Elizabeth - Artist:

The first painting established a portal into the yoga series. I posed my inspiring teacher, Robbie, in my garden, a sacred place not only in our landscape, but in ourselves. I loved her aqua blue costume giving me opportunity for designs in form and with a sparkling essence. Her red hair was like fire in the sunlight. Artists love that. My idea for the bright daylight which is warmth for me and the playful shadows give the feeling of safety and invitation to her garden. A naturally wrapped gift is placed squarely in front of her. She is the gift, her life is a gift, and gratitude is our journey. The stones are placement for a yoga mat and within the area are bouquets of flowers following the chakras, our own source of wisdom and energy. I placed her meditating outside the mat area for every place is our mat and where we are now is our practice. I wanted the stones to be in and out of light, light essence and shadow essence. The stone bench behind her is solid and strong, and the shadows from the trees give it character and loving interest. We can be like the stone, strong and grounded, when in that area of gratitude and meditation. We listen to the God from within to guide us and give us life energy.

Robbie - Yoga Instructor:

I see the garden as being the energy portal. A place to come and feel at home with yourself, nature, and the divine. In actuality, this sacred space is a source for new life as well as the changes of the seasons that can very well describe the various phases of our life and experience.

Painting the eyes closed, I see the invitation as a peaceful endeavor to reconnect to Self and what's truly important. An invitation to drop below the surface level to uncover what lies in the depths below what's just visible on the outside. In our modern society, this conveys the urgency to sit still and embrace moments of silence for renewal.

I see the present and think to myself that is the gift, to bring some stillness into the form that's often pulled in so many different directions. When we sit still, it's possible to notice the inner compass of our intuition. If we are quiet enough to really hear it's whisper or call, then it will point us in the right direction. We can trust as we follow this inner guidance that all will unfold as it should just as flowers begin as a bud and open up to full bloom. This particular piece reminds me of a famous story of the Buddha where he held up one singular flower. He did not say anything and one disciple understood and smiled and thus began his teachings.

You have mentioned to me a few times that your recent discoveries have revealed to you that your present work surrounds the 5th chakra. I am sure you cultivated this through the self awareness you have developed from your practice. Did you discover this through these paintings perhaps as well? Can you see how these tie together? Have you noticed the eyes closed and sitting in stillness and practicing some silence is a great way to balance the throat chakra as well as open up creativity? It's the passage for the heart energy to meet with the third eye, our intuitive center so it's such an important gateway! The color I was wearing that day also falls into the color palette of the throat center too. The shadow is covering much of my throat and neck and that is interesting.

Kundalini

Oil on canvas 18"x 40"

Elizabeth - Artist:

The first chakra painting that I created is represented by vegetables. I followed the chakra colors and approached each energy center with a specially selected vegetable and shape, for using the movement of the prana from the base chakra (*Mudlahara*) up to the silent crown chakra (*Sahasrara*). The reaching roots of the beets began the energetic movement upward to the cauliflower crowning towards universal wisdom. The whole form of the vegetable is more significant than all the details of each veggie surface. I use my brush strokes to define just enough information to indicate reality but not to over articulate the activity within the form. With a poetic expression, the viewer's imagination fills in his / her own information and becomes an active partner in the painting. Our brains will filter out too much information and concentrate on what we need to comprehend and appreciate with our inner eyes. For framing this painting, I chose inscribed sanskrit words for the eight spiritual qualities of the yoga practice. These separate practices are inclusive of the interior flow of energy moving us upward and enveloping all our necessary steps to wellness and peace. It is the reference to the ancient wisdom that we are rediscovering.

Robbie - Yoga Instructor:

Vegetables & yoga convey to us what nurtures us and what helps sustain life; in fact, all of these vegetables are very high in antioxidants especially the top two which I found interesting. Eggplant is highly potent with this quality and cauliflower is known to be one of the healthiest foods. The idea behind Kundalini in yoga is to awaken the primal life force to promote our spiritual maturity and heighten our consciousness through mystical experiences as we move up the channels. All the chakras hold their special importance and lessons but the idea is to work through our karmic seeds, evolve as we learn and grow, harvest the rewards of our labor, and be led towards liberation and a sense of oneness. I love that the plants you chose represent the colors and even some of the shapes that symbolize each chakra.

I first noticed the beets were carefully chosen for the first one which is all about our roots, our past, our tribal identity. I thought it was clever you chose an orange pepper for the second chakra that's about more personal relationships. When we are in a healthy and positive space in those personal relationships, life can be sweeter so the sweetness of an orange pepper is a perfect depiction. The corn representing the third chakra is one of my favorites I think simply because you designed them into a downward pointing triangle that's also revealed in that chakra's symbol meaning purification. The fourth one I found captivating because you often hear that one is usually represented by either pink or green and you used both. Plus, I love that once it's cut open it looks like the shape of our lung sacs. I also found it captivating that as humans we share breath with the plant kingdom. We depend on each other for life support which makes this Kundalini painting even more symbolic! I also enjoyed the idea of the stalk being the throat and how the leafy greens rise up towards the top two. The eggplant design models the two petaled lotus design symbolic of the third eye and the cauliflower is absolutely perfect for the crown since it's depicted as either purple or white and that it's usually a thousand petaled lotus.

Kundalini Shakti is the mother energy awaiting to be opened up from the base to flow abundantly upward through the spinal column towards the crown and the vegetables show the gifts we can receive from mother earth if the elements work with her. Consider the awakening that could be achieved if we kept ourselves in balance, maintaining our best health, and becoming increasingly aware so that we break our habits/patterns that block us from our full potential. How Enriching Life Could Continuously Be!



Seeds of Compassion

Oil on canvas 18"x 40"

Elizabeth - Artist:

The second chakra painting showed up as I was working in my yoga practice on heart openings and back bends. The emphasis on the fourth chakra emerged as if the heart breaks open and releases compassion not only to others but first through our own body and spirit. I used the image of the iconic watermelon and I chose to cut it in a provocative way with sharp cuts, like the pain of our opening at first. Once the seeds are released and float away into ourselves and the world around us, everything, everyone is knowingly united. The of floating seeds a blessing for the atmosphere and design I was feeling. Seeds are symbolic of life and growth. When these revelations come up for me I hope I can inspire. When you take a deep breath into the heart area, the release is palpable and very soothing and delicious. Its as if everything else falls away.

Robbie - Yoga Instructor:

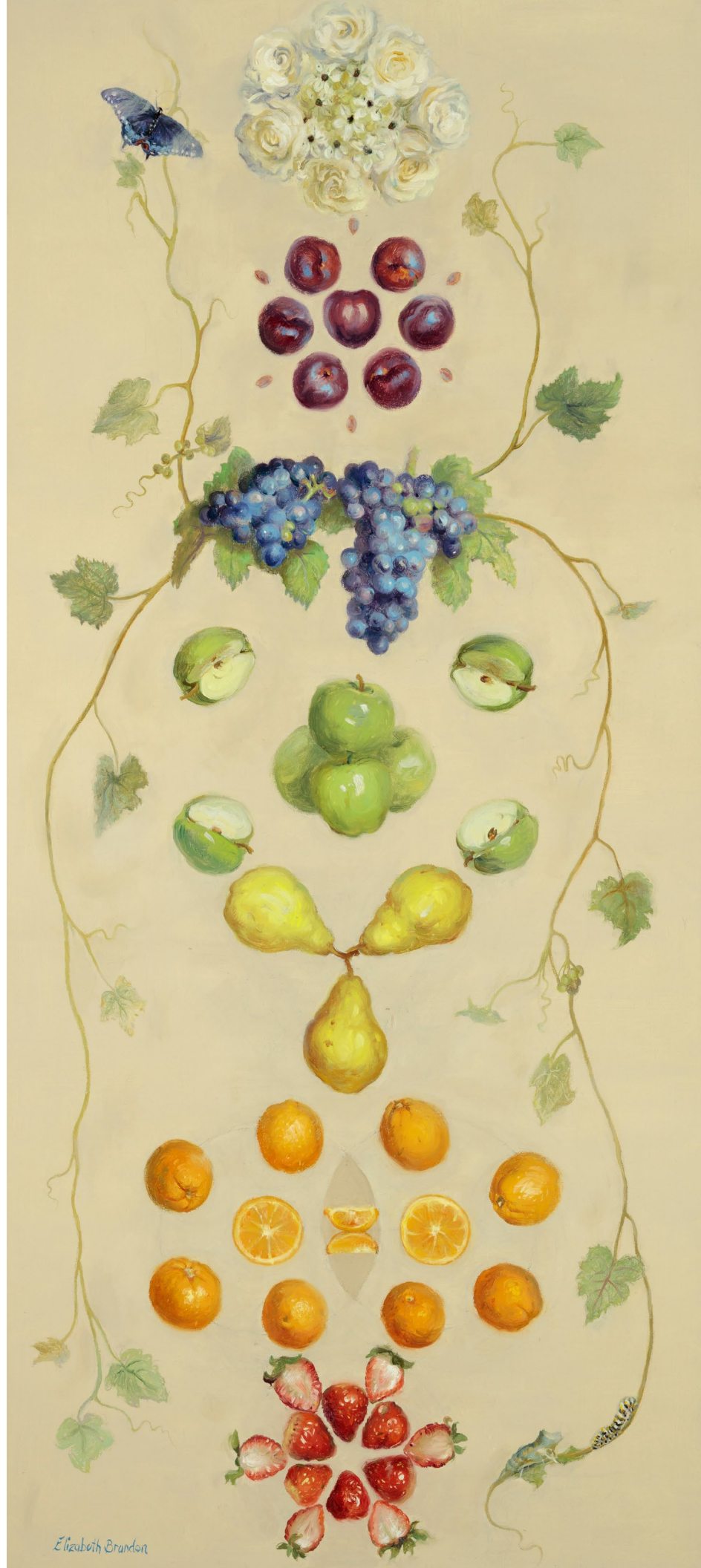
Seeds of compassion is the perfect name for this painting and (from the colors to the cut to the seeds that scatter up/down from here) at the center for the heart is my favorite! I have also thought it could be called the seeds of karma since every action leads to an equal and opposite reaction.



So much symbology here. For instance, in yoga we talk a lot about the life force or prana which gives us vitality. Picturing the chakras like fruit offers the viewer this idea/wisdom. The seeds run its course throughout both down yet stems from the heart. Herein lies the seat of the soul and we are made by love, for love, to love. Compassion is an aspect of that embodiment of love. But I also appreciate that it's winding like a spiral staircase. It can lead us up the staircase to heaven... to enlightenment. Evolution is not linear but rather circles around and sometimes in life, we have to revisit life lessons we have already learned in order to master them! As we move down and master these karmic lessons we excel, we grow, we prosper on so many multiple levels. We become fruitful but we must be careful not to attach to the fruits of our labor.

Frame: hand made white gold leaf with names of each chakra engraved around the perimeter of frame
Mudlahara, Svadhisthana, Manipura, Anaharta, Vishuddha, Ajna, Sahasrara





Vishuddha: The Fifth Chakra

Oil on canvas 18"x 40"

Elizabeth:

With this painting, I intuitively gravitated to the throat chakra which is in the first spiritual plane. We find our voice here and in good health are able to speak and voice our inner truth with faith and understanding. The fifth chakra is also connected to the sense of hearing. The lessons we learn from the lower chakras: foundation and security, creative power, emotions and personal power, and compassion are integrated where our choice of words move these energies upward toward inner spiritual reflection to the outward connection of our unique place in this world.

In this image I used the inherent value of numbers as my inspiration starting with one and ending with the number seven. For instance when you form two circles, the first line is revealed which appears in the second chakra.

Frame: Sanskrit words are engraved for the sounds of each chakra

LAM, VAM, RAM, YAM, HAM, AUM, AH

Stillness

Oil on panel 16"x 20"

Elizabeth - Artist:

As an artist I have trained myself to become still while reflecting on my subject and composing a painting. I approached this shelf-like design with concentration of who I am as an artist and the things I like to paint. I am aware that my yoga practice aligned well with my creative work. What images have continued to reappear in my paintings? Peonies are the flower I have loved since a child and tulips represent the spring flowers that I always look forward to paint. Wine bottles are a part of humanity's efforts to ring the best from grapes and the land and that is rich in symbolism as divine essence for me.

I let myself feel the spaces that I wanted to fill. This image represents my 'stillness' as I paint a still life and yet allowing the rhythm of the objects and light to move your eye throughout the painting. Fruit gives life itself to our physical body and the flowers and wine are symbols as inspiration for our other senses. There are empty spaces where we pause and even meditate about life and listen to our interior wisdom. Not everything needs to be filled with something. This makes the objects that we do choose to be even more beautiful and honored. I am sure there are more symbols that I haven't recognized yet and that is what is mysterious about each one of us as to what we choose and decide to do in our lives. We tend to choose our lives, our partners, our art from an unconscious yet completely truthful place.

Robbie - Yoga Instructor:

Love the empty spaces and how the flowers are so full of life. Just considering the life of a lower beginning as a seed being planted and irrigated in order to grow and bloom to it's potential. Yet we also know the flower has a life cycle like everything else...everything that expands, contracts so it too will eventually wither and die.

I recently read an article discussing the universe being mostly dark matter but it's in that matter which expands that create manifestations. So the empty spaces are actually just the beginning. In yoga, we also mention trying to create more space or breathing life into spaces particularly those problem areas that have issues since issues show up in our tissues. We can, transmute and transform these dull, dark, or dense areas to cultivate freedom from bondage and understanding from ignorance.

This shows how we need to create space in order to grow and evolve for ourselves in this lifetime...elevating ourselves to a higher state of consciousness.



Duality

Oil on panel 16"x 20"

Elizabeth:

Duality exists in the world and what does it look like? Here I placed pairs of opposites emerging from the shadowed boxes. Each has its own beauty and light, color and warmth. Compassion is called upon as the action towards what appears as opposites. We may achieve enlightenment when we can allow positions to release and dissolve into the One.



Transformation

Oil on canvas 22x 24"

Elizabeth :

Converging the horizontal with the vertical

The question we could ask ourselves is “How do I live in this world? We have two planes that meet with the worldly concerns and the spiritual (inner world) encounter. When we can balance these two realities of life, then we are living in Christ consciousness. We know through Christ’s example he lived with compassion and thus I chose the colorful flowers to converge and become abundant. Being centered and filled with beauty and light is a peaceful and uplifting place.



Abundance

Oil on panel 8"x 10"

Elizabeth:

“Is your glass half empty or half full” is a saying we grew up hearing. Have we ever stopped to understand this powerful message? The capacity of our minds to see abundance in our lives is available to us all the time. How do I see the situation? How do I experience the gift? With this intimate glass of water filled with colorful flowers I was inspired to paint a cup of water overflowing against the mysterious background of infinite possibilities. I’ve learned that beauty awaits us at every corner with every person and every experience that could occur. Even as we go through life’s trials, so may we come out with the meaningful experience of lightness and gratitude. When we acknowledge the gift of our life, pure abundance is revealed.



Pomegranates

Oil on canvas 14"x 18"

Elizabeth:

Mudlahara or Root Chakra sound: LAM

This chakra is red and grounded to the earth. It is our survival energy and governs our sense of safety.

Pomegranates are a powerful deep red fruit with a complexity of seed structure that is so abundant. The symbol of multiple seeds resonated to me as the seeds of growth planted in the earth for release. In this chakra, we can release negativity and volatile sensations and emotions. What are your core beliefs and do you adhere to tribal loyalties? The clay pot is a reference to ourselves as a container for growth. Egg shells broken might represent a freedom from unhealthy personal ties. When we are well grounded in our first chakra, we can move into the higher areas of life with a sense of security and a personal strength of where we come from.



Thank you for giving your time and spirit while viewing [The Gift of Revelation](#), a new collection of yoga inspired paintings by Elizabeth Brandon.

The paintings are available for sale and inquiries are welcomed.

Elizabeth will continue to add to her collection of paintings as revealed through her journey and will post them when completed.

Please contact her studio/gallery for information on how to purchase an original or print from the collection.

[Namaste](#)

Contact Elizabeth Brandon - info@elizabethbrandon.com

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short illustrated stories of Sadiebug with a hint of yoga!

Elizabeth Brandon

Poetic Realism