

The Enchanted World of Amy Zerner & Monte Farber

By Jill V. Mangino

The first time I saw Amy Zerner's art I cried. Yes, I cried. I was in Joshua Tree visiting with friends and much to my astonishment Amy's husband Monte was a surprise guest for the night. I met Monte the year before in Mexico on a tour of the Mayan Ruins. Monte was in town on a layover from a business trip in Los Angeles. What we did not know was that we were in for an impromptu "art show." What I *really* did not anticipate was that I would be moved to tears from the beauty of his wife Amy's magical, goddess art tapestries.

Since 1988, Amy and Monte have combined Amy's gorgeous fabric tapestries and Monte's creative, intuitive writing to create 30 unique books and tools, divination systems, three children's books, a book about relationships and a coffee table art book, "Paradise Found", that they wrote about their work and their life together. They have combined their deep love for one another with the work of inner-exploration and self-discovery to build *The Enchanted World of Amy Zerner and Monte Farber*, books, card decks, and oracles that have helped millions answer questions, find deeper meaning, and follow their spiritual paths.

Infused with the powerful essences of Astrology, Tarot, Alchemy and Healing Energy they have produce bestselling titles including: *The Chakra Meditation Kit*, *The Animal Powers Meditation Kit*, *True Love Tarot*, *The Enchanted Tarot*, *The Instant Tarot Reader*, *The Psychic Circle*, *Karma Cards*, *The Truth Fairy*, *The Breathe Easy Deck*, *The Pathfinder Psychic Talking Board*, *The Healing Deck*, and *Gifts of the Goddess Affirmation Cards*.

What struck me most about Amy's tapestries was not only the uniqueness of her symbolic collages but an energy that seemed to emanate from them. As Monte's unrolled the large wall hangings, one by one, I felt of sense of sacredness and awe. I was at a loss for words, it was something I had never seen before and I knew was something she channeled from within the depths of her soul because her art touched mine.

When I finally met Amy at a Prophet's Conference in Key West , Florida I found her to be extremely grounded for an "artist", and especially one who is continually in touch with "transcendent" realms. Her authenticity and warmth radiates. I have tremendous respect for her commitment to bridging heaven and earth and delivering the wisdom of the sacred through her art. It's inspiring to say the least.

Amy's art collages combine different spiritual traditions which stem from her own eclectic spirituality, she believes at the core of every faith and belief system exists the same truth and expressing that truth through her art is her mission in life. Her rich and fantasy filled pieces combine ancient wisdoms, different

cultures, and time periods with unique fabrics and textures. In her pieces you will find butterflies, temples, birds, waterfalls, angels, planets stars, mountains and mermaids. Amy reveals, “The fabrics, ribbons, laces, appliqués, trimmings, and thousands of other objects that fill the bins and shelves of the second floor of my studio are my “paint.”

Amy will layer a Japanese flower appliqué with an Indian Turtle Amulet and old Indian Sari with ribbons and lace and much more. She combines many textures with lots of dimensions which she believes is synonymous to like the layers of life. You can uncover myriad symbolic secrets and mysteries in the complexities of her art which she describes as very “Zen”--spontaneous and infused with nature and both masculine and feminine energies.

According to Amy, “I believe our consciousness is connected to the Higher Forces. Through our use of oracles and through the creative process, Monte and I are trying to make a clear channel between us, and our Higher Selves. This “channel” concept has appeared in many of my tapestries. The image is a sort of ladder or a veil - a connecting energy that reaches from the Earth to the Higher Plane. My tapestries always show the dualities in life. From the flower at our feet, up to the stars in the galaxy. I try to put it all in there – that complexity, and make a balance out of it. Good art can elevate us from the mundane and lifts us out –reminding us that truth and beauty exist. It’s definitely about beauty!”

Amy’s life with collage art reflects the fact that wherever she and Monte go and whatever they do, they share a passion for collecting beautiful and unusual materials of all kinds. Monte says “Not only *our* finds but personal mementos of many friends and acquaintances find new life in Amy’s collages. Like orphaned children, they turn up on our doorstep, sent by people who want to see these souvenirs of departed times, friends, and relatives reborn, at her next exhibition.”

Amy’s inspiration comes from her surroundings. She admits, “I’m inspired every time I look into my garden or kiss my cat”. Surroundings and her environment are so important to Amy that she took great care in the building of her art studio which she considers the sacred birthing place for her work. In the winter of 1987, Monte designed and then supervised the construction of Amy’s large, two story studio, which they consecrated as a temple using techniques adapted from those of antiquity.

Monte marched around the cinderblock foundation seven times forward and seven times backwards, nearly “falling into the hole at least seven times!”. They wrote their favorite sayings in magic marker, like metaphysical graffiti artists(even though the carpenters thought they were a bit strange, they liked it). Before the large wooden beams for the floor arrived, the couple put crystals and jewels in the holes of the

cinderblocks, each placement accompanied by a different temple blessing prayer from a different culture. They wanted my studio to be a consecrated temple to the “Goddess” or Divine Feminine.

Amy knew she was an artist since she was 3 years old she would paint on her grandfather’s knee (while he painted). She even used a collage technique back then. She recalls that even as a child she would use six crayons in one hand and 4 magic markers in another. “Collage is a very therapeutic technique because it is a creative and spontaneous process; it allows me to be open to my soul language, to imagine the way I would like things to be. When we develop our abilities to visualize, we can achieve many goals, we can create our own reality. As I make the many decisions of placement and balance by intuitively adding and eliminating elements, my decision-making muscles are strengthened on a daily basis. By trusting and connecting to my “dream world” of metaphors and symbols, I draw up answers and revelations from the well of the unconscious. That is why I love to make art all the time, because it is such a spiritual journey. And its fun, too!”

With over 1,000 original collages, Amy has displayed her unique National Endowment for the Arts award-winning fabric-collage tapestries in more than 80 one-woman and group shows in galleries and museums in the USA and Europe. Amy has also integrated her fabric tapestries into a fashion line called Spiritual Couture™. Her wearable art pieces demonstrate her ability to perfectly blend high fashion style with her fine art sensibility; they are sewn together with a rare expertise and attention to detail. Spiritual Couture™ is represented exclusively by Bergdorf Goodman and Neiman Marcus.

Monte is what I would deem a “renaissance” man. Along with his charming personality, incorrigible sense of humor and sage like wisdom, he is an accomplished astrologer and professional psychic counselor to businesses and individuals, a musician and composer. His style of writing makes the mystical accessible and ancient wisdom easy to grasp and fun to experience. His first product “Karma Cards” were inspired by doing spot readings at parties. People wanted more and more, and unless they took Monte home with them or cloned him; that insatiable desire to tap into his source of wisdom could not be fulfilled. The *Karma Cards* teach people how to learn more about their unique situations and about astrology without needing an astrologer.

Monte’s interest in spirituality was influenced by the spiritual classic *Autobiography of a Yogi* and the *Seth Speaks* materials by Jane Roberts. However, he believes in the old maxim: “When the student is ready the teacher appears”. According to Monte his spiritual teacher was his wife Amy. He dreamt about Amy when he was 14, he saw her purple hair (yes, she has purple hair). “When I met Amy she was innately a spiritual

person and there was something I found within her that I did not find in anyone else. It was enchanting—almost fairytale.” Monte credits his dysfunctional childhood for deepening his psychic abilities and attunement- “I’ve always been able to recognize the truth when I hear it, it’s a survival technique when you come from a dysfunctional background . You become more open and able to read the signs and symbols of what is really going on.”

Devotion to their creativity is their spiritual path because they believe you are cleansing and healing yourself when you go within and tap into that creativity – it is where all the answers lie. Monte says, “We are all creative beings. It is encoded in our genetic makeup. We are all spiritual beings, too. In a very real way, creativity *is* spirituality. When we wish to create something that has never been before, we must first conceive of it and visualize it in our mind's eye. When we do this, we contact the essence, the spirit of what it is we wish to create. Has this spirit always existed or are we creating that, too? It doesn't really matter, for when we approach living as a creative process, we are emulating The God/dess Force, the creative energy that brings everything into existence, and questions of time and origination become irrelevant.”

Monte and Amy think that within us all is the power to make real what we can imagine. This is yet another way that proves the wisdom of the bible's statement that we are created in The God/dess's "image." That we, too, can create our universe. When we do, we glimpse the spiritual dimension in our mind's eye and feel its power in our intuition. By so doing we get closer to understanding the mission of our spirit: to actualize our soul's purpose, one moment at a time.

“By actualizing your creativity, you also become more spiritual. You can no longer deny the power of your invisible, inner life to influence your outer life. You must then take some responsibility for where you find yourself. To a large extent, you have made things the way they are for you by your reactions to the hand life dealt you,” stated Amy. She adds, “Consequently, you have the power to make things more to your liking. When you use your creative potential to do your best with what you have to make things the way you would like them to be, you are no longer a victim, you are, instead, living up to your true potential”.

Using the very same principles that have guided their creativity, Amy & Monte have handled their business affairs, with Monte acting as their agent and lawyer and Amy overseeing design and production of their projects for some of the biggest publishers in the world. With close to two million books in print in nine languages, they have received thousands of letters which “warm our hearts with tales of how our work has helped others to live their lives more fully”.

“Creatively, we agree with the Dalai Lama that the purpose of life is to be happy. Also, as Joseph

Campbell said, "Follow Your Bliss." For Amy and me, our bliss and our happiness has been our journey together on the path to making our life a work of art and our art a work of life. Sharing our art and our discoveries about life with others has also brought us much happiness."

Their collaborations help people live in their own enchanted world because the media presents us with worse case scenarios and negative images. "We want to instill hope and provide reminders of the magic and wonder and beauty that still exists and is inside all of us." Monte passionately adds, "Creativity *is* spirituality. By realizing and actualizing our creativity we become a spiritual human being, a most glorious occurrence. A world populated by such people can only make a paradise of our planet, a dream of the ages that is not only technologically possible at this time, but is crucial to our survival as a species."

I have rarely encountered a happier couple than Amy & Monte, they are the epitome of soulmates. Their holy work is trying to help people have the best possible life they can have! It is evident that their unconditional love, commitment and mutual respect for each other is the recipe that continues to inspire their ever-growing "enchanted" world that has touched the lives of millions.

For more information please visit: www.theenchantedworld.com

"Make your life a work of art and your art a work of life!"

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