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# The Path of Art into Spirituality

Painting as a contemplative process and the spirituality of nature – these are the key themes examined by the American artist Susan Swartz. In abstract gestural style, she applies layer upon layer of paint with brush and palette knife until the paintings seem to luminesce from within. And remarkably, whether she uses bright or dark colours, the outcome is the same: "Susan Swartz's paintings are infused with light."<sup>1</sup>

In her work the artist delves below the surface. To appreciate the meditative aura of her paintings a different mode of seeing is required: For her work does not elevate abstraction to the subject matter itself. Rather, "the artist's creative point of departure throughout her oeuvre is her profound reverence for the beauty of nature."<sup>1</sup> This finds expression in abstract coloured spaces, beneath which a vast meditative realm opens up. Her paintings do not aspire to represent "reality", as the reality of her art conforms to its own laws and the artist, as the title suggests, has embarked on her personal path.<sup>1</sup>

I am particularly delighted that the Foundation for Art and Culture has been able to make a valuable contribution towards introducing Susan Swartz to Central Europe and, in so doing, help liberate innovative creative energies. Her recent exhibition activity in Europe has inspired her to fashion thoroughly

new, relief-like paintings, which are now on view in Budapest for the first time.

Swartz interrogates the categories of beauty, truth and knowledge from her own deeply personal perspective. Her paintings are the manifestation of the creative aspirations of an artist who challenges us to reflect fundamentally upon the dimensions and structures of our very existence. Where do our origins lie? Which path should we choose? How do we come to terms with our sublimated sensibilities? And are they not the essential prerequisite for comprehending the world around us, for breaking through the isolation and conquering our anxieties?

As an attentive viewer or seeker, one enters the space of a museum on a quest: A quest Susan Swartz responds to with the emotive impact of her paintings, which render fundamental issues relating to our being, experiential, intelligible and palpable. The artist is now inviting us to abandon ourselves to this maelstrom of emotions as we follow her meditative sequence of paintings through the exhibition.

Walter Smerling  
Chairman of the Foundation  
for Art and Culture, Bonn









Nature Revisited 8  
2016  
31 x 31 cm / 12 x 12 inch



Nature Revisited 1  
2016  
31 x 31 cm / 12 x 12 inch



Nature Revisited 2  
2016  
31 x 31 cm / 12 x 12 inch