

## ABOUT CLAIRE ROSENFELD'S WORK

We don't have to know [Claire Rosenfeld's] resume to perceive her knowledge of art history, her conscious and methodical use of technique even for the purpose of freeing herself from technique.

The New York artist has the feel of expressionism and has studied it profoundly. With her human figures, clothed or nude, immersed in an idyllic nature evocative of the cosmos, bathed in spirituality, she identifies especially with the pioneers of the Brucke. To these inherited, dominant, recreated values she adds tropical nocturnity, the faces and colors of the Caribbean mixed races.

Moving between reality and mystery, between daylight and mist, then winking a sudden eye in the direction of Picasso's *Demoiselles d'Avignon*, Claire Rosenfeld demonstrates a freedom and versatility that certainly triumph in this group of Artists in Residence. In a system of correspondences rather than oppositions that is a constant throughout her work, we must not forget to mention the implicit synesthetic relationship between her painting and music.

The artist's virtuosity becomes apparent in the variety of processes she uses, in the alternation of techniques. She handles pen and ink drawing, pastels, monotype, and oils ably and prolifically. She loves transparencies and the economy of medias, but there are studies the word applies well to her smaller formats where she deepens, intensifies, thickens the pigment. The atmospheres are more than external environments, they become internal and theatrical.

We have the impression that her work, hovering between quietude and anxiety, is always questioning itself, just as her protagonists interrogate space and the elements of the earth.

*Marianne de Tolentino*  
*Listin Diario, Dominican Republic*  
*(translated from Spanish)*

In Claire Rosenfeld's art, the colors remind us that people as well as things are composed of and permeated by fire, water, air, earth, and limitless space: Fire as light and sun and warmth of embracing bodies; air as mute speech and expressive gesture, flute song and echoing breath of mountains; water as baptismal fount and fluidical essence of human and arboreal limbs and branches; earth as the solid-seeming I am of creatures and things; and space--limitless space--in the seeing and knowing without which this harmonious world would collapse into shreds of unfeeling matter.

This landscape of primordial innocence is not one we have lost. We just tend to forget it very deeply, to the point where we cannot use the word paradise without implied ironic quotes. It is not an imaginary place; we carry it in our bodies, as small children, lovers, and also the very old are sometimes able to show us. Claire Rosenfeld's paintings and drawings are among the rare authentic reminders in contemporary art of our continued presence in paradise.

*Joel Agee*

Claire Rosenfeld's paintings and drawings have the brilliance of Fauve colors and glare with the stark emotion of German Expressionism, yet most of all, they distinguish themselves with a complexity and evolution of mood that are strictly individual. (They) are scenes rather than landscapes familiar in their seductive fantasy, but strange almost sensational in the compelling irony between heated colors and coldly placid moods. The luminosity of the bright primary colors breaks forth with poetic magnitude, illuminating the figures isolated in stark reveries. In one painting, three of them rest at a riverside, absorbed in the moment: they are unfeatured, one is cloaked as if by Bergman or Munch, and the darkness of the cobalt blue sky electrifies the stillness with a feeling of anticipation.

Ms. Rosenfeld's early work was loose and luscious, with less startling moods. In her recent paintings and drawings she evolved into more controlled handling of space. Her drawings (in pastel, shellac and/or dry pigment) became tools for working out the areas of her work which weren't yet formulated, allowing her, for instance, to introduce new people to the beaches and to see how the dark figures were reacting in brilliant places or how brilliant figures worked in dark places, finding the images that are a part of those places.

Her way to apply paint bright over dark over bright in some instances shows how she reaches into the darkness to pull out the light. And just as the colors come at the viewer in flashes, the figures gesture with poignancy. The climate of anxiety and the anticipation resolve themselves in the bright/dark stillness where time is congealed: the dynamics are becoming more important than knowing what will take place. Medievalists felt this way anticipating the place being not mine, but becoming its own.

*Laura Sue Schwartz*  
*Arts Magazine*

An artist can't simply will into being the spirit of a painting. It arises from circumstances too complex to predict or even enumerate. But it's clear that this spirit always involves two types of insight: fluency in the language of art, and real-life experience. Claire Rosenfeld's luminous work reveals plenty of both kinds of knowledge which is to say that she not only knows how to speak as an artist, but also has something to say.

Rosenfeld's art is inseparable from her affinity for nature and its spiritual resonances. Based in New York City, she travels regularly to the high deserts of the American Southwest and Mexico on extended painting trips, and in past years has journeyed throughout Europe and to India, Turkey, Indonesia, and Morocco. All these experiences resound in her work, in the affection she expresses equally for desert sunsets and bathers in waterfalls, for undulating mountains and figures as strong and sinuous as trees. With such motifs she uncovers a quiet radiance a kind of personal mysticism in their simplified forms and intensified colors.

The artist combines media as effortlessly as she blends experiences of life and art. The results are an ongoing vision of transcendent nature, and of cleansing water, air and light. In their presence, the viewer feels cleansed and renewed as well.

*John Goodrich*