

The Inner Sleeve

This month's artwork chosen by **Beverly Glenn-Copeland**

Chard Chénier

Prigat

Acrylic on canvas 1999

My earliest musical memories are of my father playing classical piano. However, as a child growing up, my parents, most especially my mother, exposed me to art in all its forms – dance, music, visual art and plays. I also insisted on being read to from tinyhood, a genetic memory perhaps of oral traditions where all history was passed to us in story.

So, what does this picture have to do with inspiration? It is, after all, the painting used on the front cover of my recent album reissue, *Primal Prayer*. To answer that I return to my childhood. When I was 12, I saw a painting, *Lonely Old Town*, by one of my parents' friends, depicting a person hanging out of their window bent over in sorrow, that moved me to unknown places for unknown 12 year old reasons. I asked my parents if they would buy it for me. They did, and placed it in our home where I could see it easily every day. This was not so strange, as the walls of our home had beautiful paintings of other friends of my parents, but it struck a deep chord.

Life went on through teen years, young adulthood into full-fledged adulthood. My connection with visual art grew more intense. Although I was myself a musician, I rarely listened to music once I stopped studying it formally, preferring and, in fact, needing to live in silence. But my walls started to be covered with the art of my dearest friends. My visual interests, though wide enough to include two and three dimensional art from many cultures, seemed to narrow down at various times to specific pieces.

I began going to art galleries whenever I needed an emotional lift. I had come to love the works of the Group of Seven – Canadian landscape painters from 1920–33 – and began seeking out and sitting in front of *Lake And Mountains* by Lawren Harris. It was a haunting piece and my sojourns to the gallery often consisted of sitting for a full hour in front of it, and then leaving the gallery refreshed and deeply calm.

One day, I remember musing about whether sight or hearing was most important to me if I was forced to choose. After only a moment's contemplation, I chose sight. A strange thought. A surprising choice. A musician choosing vision over the world of sound

– that stopped me in my tracks for a bit. Eventually I came to understand that music lived within me and would never cease to play in my mind, but to never see the beauty of the world or this beauty richly explored in visual art was more than I could contemplate being able to live with.

Beginning in 1970, I tried to accompany all of my albums with art on the cover. There were a few albums where I had no choice, but I have been fortunate enough that many have featured the art of various of my dearest friends, Marlene Bloomstone, Evelyn Wolff, Kathleen Brindley, Chard Chénier. Once years ago, I dabbled with the thought of becoming an art dealer so I could promote all of them. That never happened, though I gave it an amateur's try for a little while.

And so I leave you with this visual inspiration by the artist Chard Chénier, a dear friend and an inspiration, which now graces the cover of *Primal Prayer*. I look forward to more releases accompanied by more of my friends' art in the future. □ Beverly Glenn-Copeland's *Primal Prayer* is released by ORG Music. Keyboard *Fantasies: The Beverly Glenn-Copeland Story* will be screened at MoMA PS1 in New York this month

