

# The Art of Living Colorfully

By: Behnam Bakhshandeh

February 25, 2003

When you see colors what do you see? Some people see the color itself and some people see more!

Since I was a little boy in Abadan, small industrial town in a southern state of Iran playing football (what you call soccer!) with my brothers and our friends and having a good time. I was fascinated by colors and their effect on me. I started drawing and painting from the time I was twelve. As I matured in my artwork as well as in my manhood, my relationship to color changed also. I got more passionate and more interested in using color in my life and experiencing what colors provided for me.

Think about it. Something we see everywhere is color! Everywhere! In our clothing, the rooms of our houses, our furniture, books, and even on our bodies. Everywhere they are bringing vitality to our lives through the little touches they add in our world.

Have you ever thought about what color your life is?

Yes, your life itself... the life you're living! Did you ever think what color your Love is? Or the color of your happiness? Or your passion, your anger, your peace of mind, your resentment, your joy?

Interesting, yes?

I think the color of life is different for different people and time to time you find someone who has the same color passion as you have, and then there we go...sparks! Or on the flip side, you meet someone with the same color anger as you do, and you run for your life!

So, let's look and see what colors we get! Where should I start?

Love, yes love is a good place to start. The color of my love is blue! Don't laugh! I know most people would think love should be red...like Valentine's Day...so mine is different and I will tell you why. When I think about the people I love, I am so calm and peaceful; I am full of joy and happiness. I think about my children and I feel lots of laughter and joy and blue is everywhere. When I think about the girl I love – same thing. I can feel joy in the color blue.

But let's not mistake love with passion! My passion color is purple! Yes, purple! Because it's so deep that red wouldn't make it! Passion is big part of my life. Passion for life. Passion for art. Passion for my work. Passion for beauty. And of course, passion for beautiful women! It's deep and it's burning! When I work on my painting or drawings, make a sculpture, play my

saxophone, or write poetry – I’m on fire! When I lead my transformational personal and business development courses I’m on fire! And when I’m in love with a gorgeous woman who is full of love, my whole life is on purple fire! I don’t know why? But it’s that color! Red’s not going to make it or represent that deep a passion!

Did you ever notice the color of your anger and upset? Mine is kind of white. I become so empty and drained when I’m angry and upset that I don’t think about anything else. I just get so deeply empty that it’s like a deep white shell and then nothing. Just white everywhere. Good or bad – that’s what it is. Actually, its whiteness somehow helps me to get over my anger faster and get back to my normal way of being – mostly funny and playful.

I think by now you might be wondering if the color of my upset is white, what’s the color of my peace of mind? I tell you – it’s green! Just a beautiful light green. What do you think? It reminds me of woods on a mountain and the greenery of spring when life is rejuvenating and the world is budding out of the ice, and you can see even the world is saying “Can we start over again?” In my old country, Iran, we celebrate a 5,000 year old tradition that’s as big as Christmas is here in the United States. We call it Norouz, meaning “New Day.” We celebrate it on March 21st at the spring equinox because spring brings new life and thereby new day. So the first day of spring is our New Year’s Day, and officially all the colors can come popping out to play.

I could go on and on about my relationship to colors, but I want you to think about yours.

If you didn’t listen to what was sociality dictated...if you stopped paying attention to the media, the ad industry, the clothing and beauty supply manufacturers – what would you pick as your life color? Or for any aspect of your life?

I suggest going back and experience the time you were not being influenced like now! See your color? What thing turned you on the most? What was the thing that would wake you up in the morning and make you run out of your house to play? And play like nobody was watching! When was it when you decided that being playful, totally self-expressed and being out there was not ok? That’s the time you gave up your own unique color of your life! Think about it.

It was a time that you would do anything, anyway, anywhere with no concern. No concern about “What if someone sees me?” No reservations about “What they would think of me?” It was you and the world as a big sandbox, and if there was anyone else, they were just a playmate! What was the color of your play then? What was color of your love, passion, and friendship then?

Believe me, I know it’s hard to go back then and look at it again. It was long time ago and some of us totally block it out and put it in our closet. But you want to look at it! It’s time to go back there and see what happened? Why? Because this is the only life you’ve got! This is not a test drive...this is it! So how are you going to do it? How are you going to live it? How will it turn out? What will the final chapter be? I don’t know about you, but I look at it every day. Every day I wake up and look at how I want this day to go and I live it the way I want. Not like a wild, irresponsible life, but like a life I love! Like a life I want to live! Do what I want to do! See who

I want to see! Go where I want to go! What about you?

I will leave you a nudge from the writer and poet Alfred D'Souza:

“For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin--real life. But there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be got through first, some unfinished business, time still to be served, and a debt to be paid. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.”

In the end, I can tell you this: the color of my life is rainbow – full of people...different races, different religions, different nationalities, different interests – all good!

Go rediscover your colors. Remember your precious innocence. No one can take it away or tell you how to color your canvas! Don't wait in the shadows for your real life to begin. Come out here in the light, go forth, and be brilliant!