

Evening River

thought and painting

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Preface

This is the second volume of the art book that results from my **Facebook**. Artistic creation is interaction between an artist and his surrounding people. Art is not an isolated object. On the contrary, it has been always shaped among people—as the interrelation between the artist and his friends. Day by day, I have painted and posted the painting in my ‘garden.’ Day by day as well, friends come to visit the garden and enjoy the flowers that I have offered as a gift of friendship. Art should not be directed by money, or personal fame of the artist. Most of things in the natural world donate their life for others—the moon shines without an idea to make money from its light. For me, art should follow nature, as said.

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May, 2013



Start





Before being van Gogh or Picasso, the artists share the same period of working hard. Like philosophy, art needs training and working hard before leaving everything behind. Philosopher and artist must be alone, in the end.

March, 9



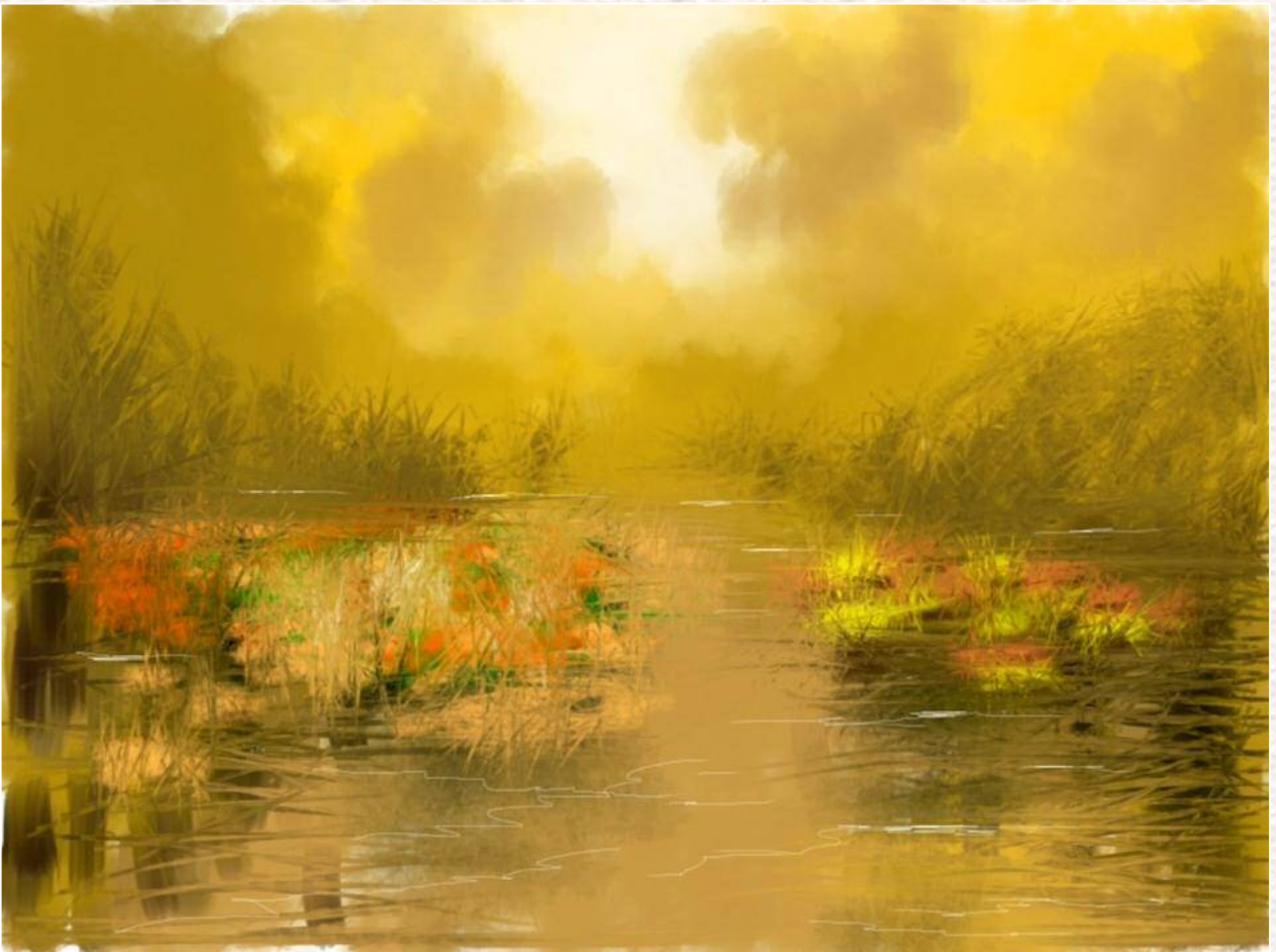
A friend writes to me, questioning, “How to start painting?” For this question, I would like to say: no how, just paint! In terms of skill, we need practice, like driving a car. Skill is needed, but not at the heart of painting. The way we look at the world is the heart. One day, when you observe the sky and water that you paint are clear and moving as if they have life, technique is enough. The rest is just your mind.

March, 9



Evening River, One. Sorry for my silence during this time--many works have to be done. I painted this in the morning, a short time before worked.

March, 10





Evening River, Two.
March, 10





The higher form of art is still manual. Digital technology has its limits in that without man's imagination it provides the same, as it is a machine. I like to make ebook as a manual work. Paper is manually designed for each book, for example. Certainly, it is done on a computer program. The old Chinese proverb says, "Sword is your mind." In the same way, it could be said, "Digital technology is your mind." Without the human mind and imagination, sword can do nothing.

March, 10



Evening River, Three.
March, 11



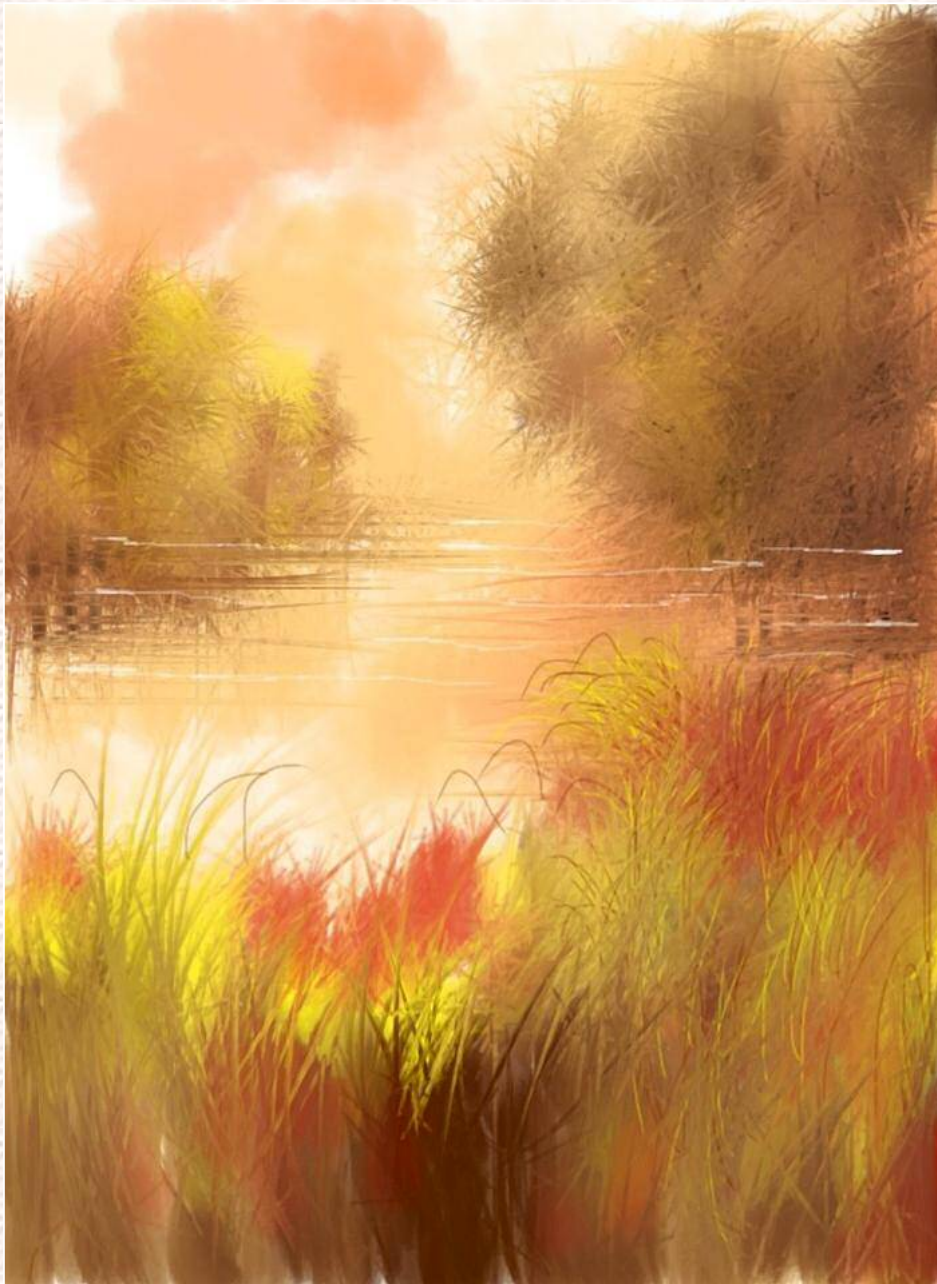


Evening River, Four.
March, 11



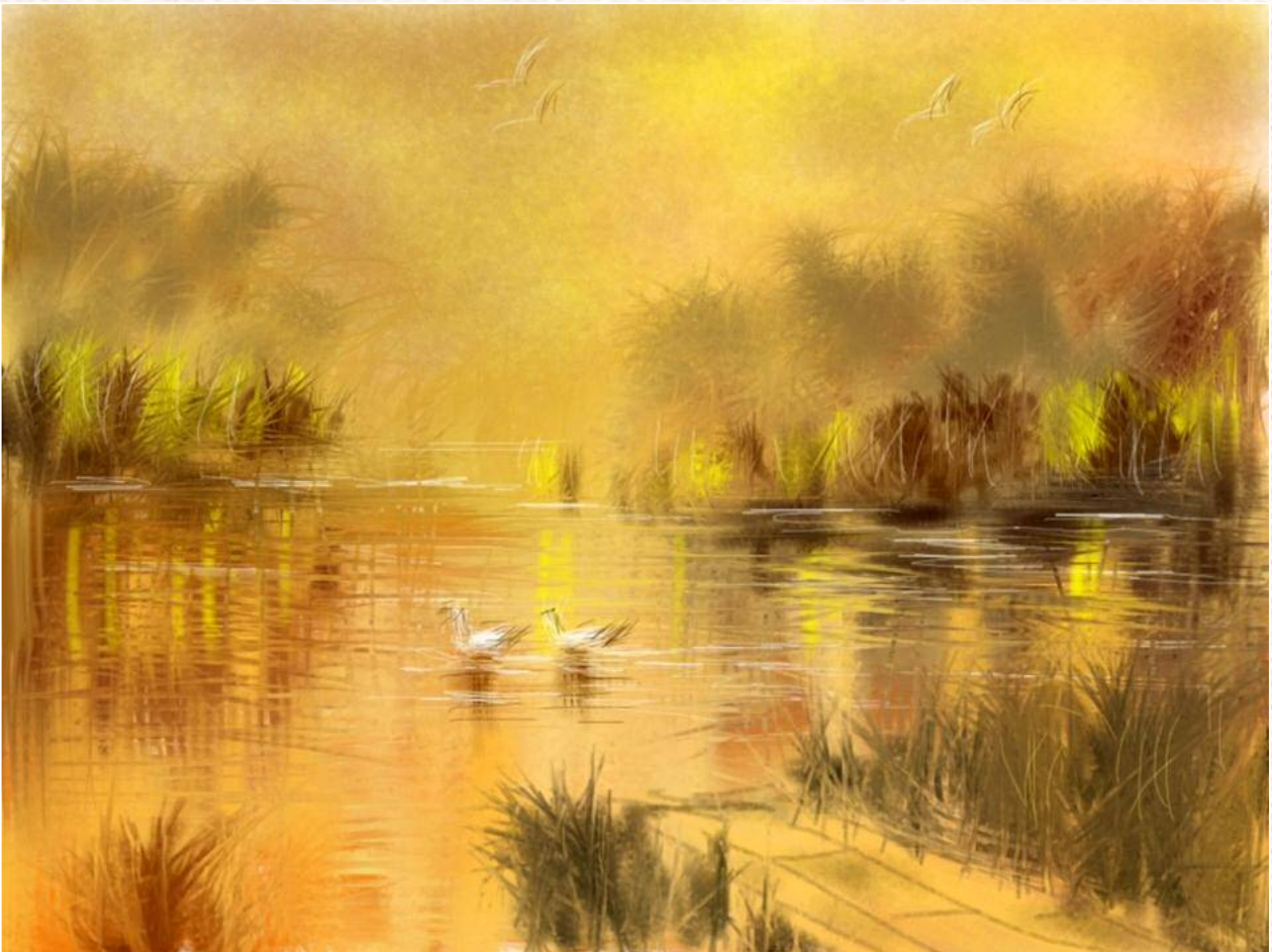


Evening River, Five.
March, 11





Evening River, Six.
March, 11





Evening River, Seven.
March, 11





Virginia Woolf in the River. She is one of my favorite writers. Some minutes ago, I went outside to walk with my dogs, thinking about the painting of river. Suddenly, I thought of her. This picture is dedicated to her. She liked the river and finally she committed suicide in the river.
March, 11





Evening River, Eight.
March, 12





Evening River, Nine. Art, in a sense, has to be incomplete. I spend around two minutes in painting this picture, applying a concept of incompleteness. 'Incomplete' means we do not need to paint everything. Raw data that appear to our eyes are complete, so they are not given in the form of art. The artist is a person to delete some unnecessary raw data. And if he does a proper thing, his work is art.

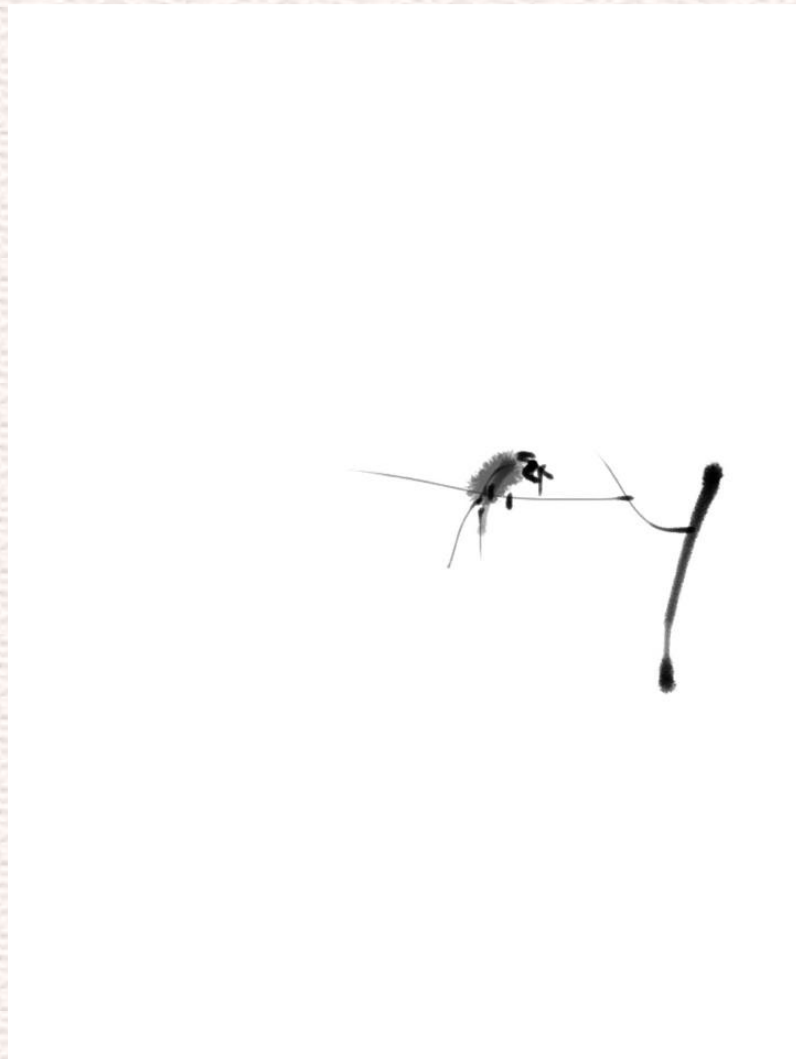
March, 12





No Name. This picture was created unintentionally. Just minutes ago, before I closed the painting program, I moved my finger to sweep the dust from the screen. Accidentally, it produced a first thickest line. Suddenly, I added some more lines, and the result was as you have seen.

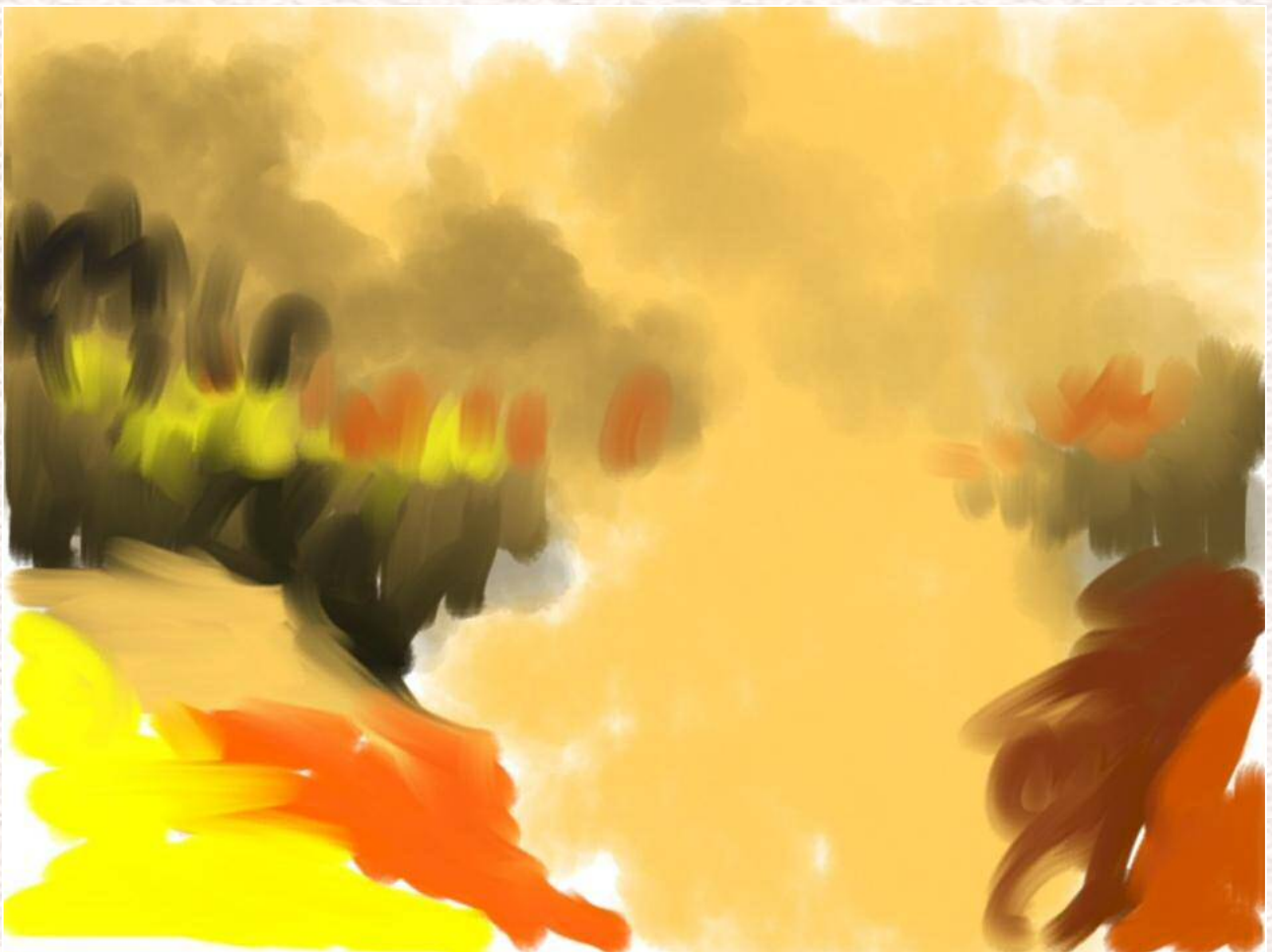
March, 12





For study. Dear friends, some among us may be interested in painting. This is the first draft of my painting, Evening River, Ten. The completed version will follow.

March, 12



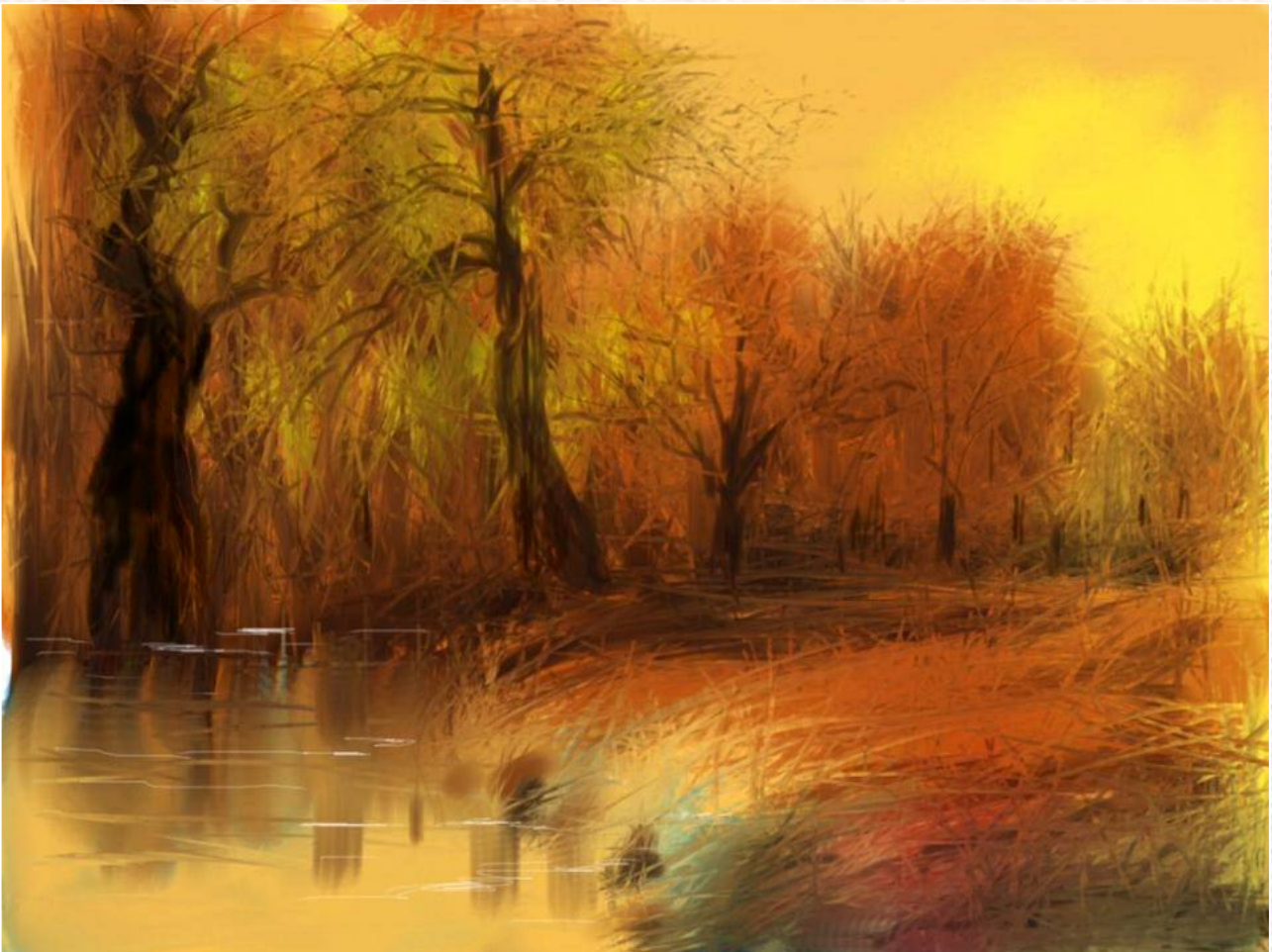


The completed version of 'Evening River, Ten.'
March, 12





Evening River, Eleven.
March, 12





Art, philosophy, and religion are three different brothers. As brothers, they share some roots from the same Unknown Father. Art is emotional, philosophy rational, and religion moral. We usually talk about goodness, truth, and beauty, as the three values for humankind. Beauty can be gained from art, truth from philosophy, and goodness from religion. Among the three brothers, art and philosophy sometimes behave crazily and aggressively in the view of religion. This should be understood by religion as a nature of his brothers. Brothers remain brothers, even though sometimes they hate each other.

March, 12



A reader's question: So... who's their daddy, sir?

My reply 1: Their Father is Something bigger than art, philosophy, and religion. Even now, I do not know Him yet. But I try to know Him.

My reply 2: Let me add some more thought. One of the questions that long disturb my thought is: 'Why we are born into this world;' and 'Does the universe just happen from accident.' Finally, we are just human with a limited time to live. The sun, the moon, the stars, and so on exist long before us. And when we die these things will still exist forever. The modern cosmology seems to share the same idea, or belief, that the universe is immortal. This is very important, for me. Man has to die, while the universe has not. Art, philosophy, and religion are created by man. In this sense, we should be aware that if we accept that there must be some reason behind the sending of us into this world, the Sender, whom I do not know but believe He must exist, is the person playing the role behind our activities found in art, philosophy, and religion. I believe further that the Sender likes harmony and beauty, more than conflict and ugliness--judged from his work seen around us. So, the aim of art, philosophy, and religion should be directed to the beauty and harmony of life, not just to provoke intelligent controversies alone.



Evening River, Twelve.
March, 12



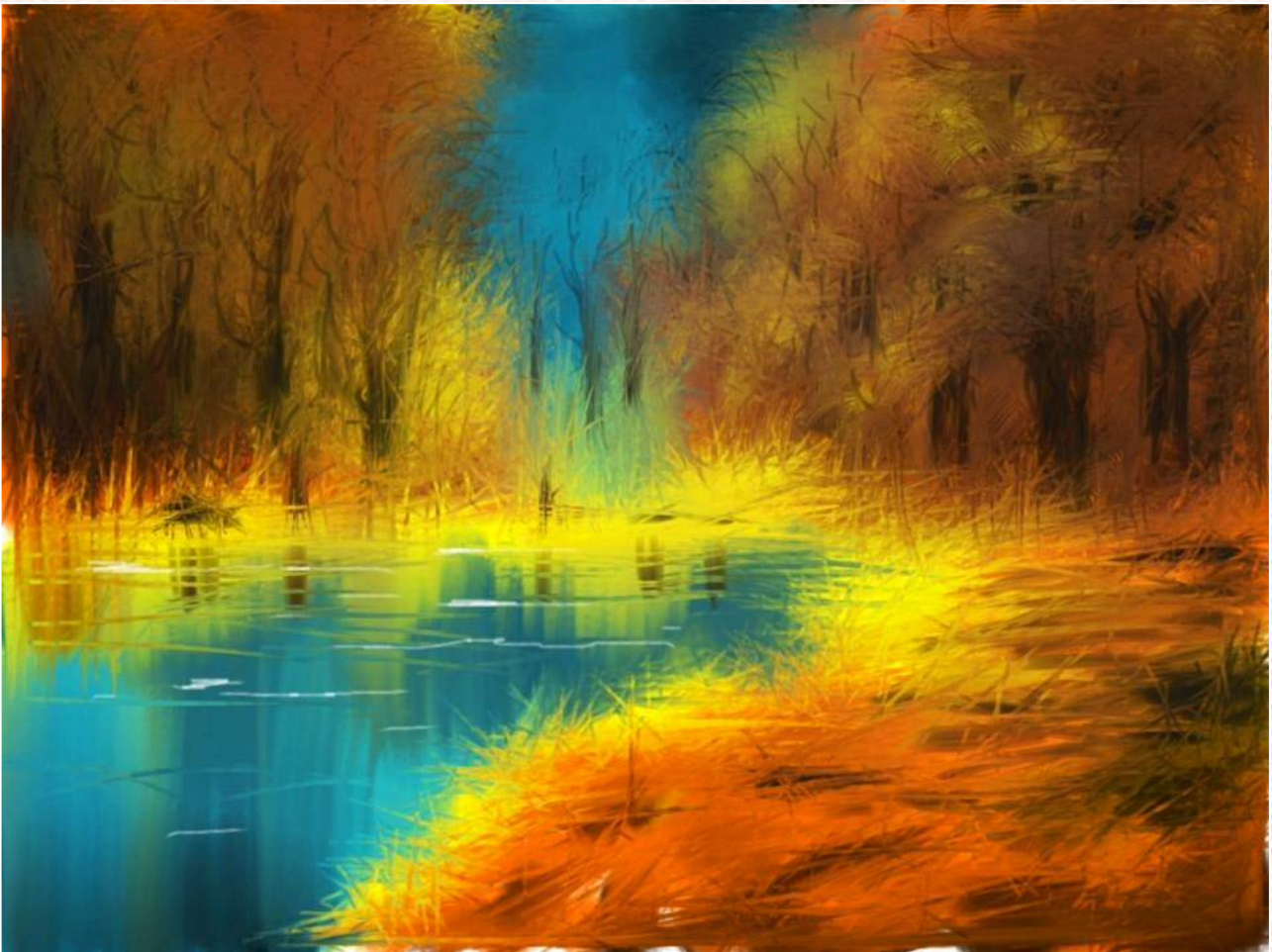


Evening River, Thirteen.
March, 13





Evening River, Fourteen.
March, 13





Evening River, Fifteen.
March, 13



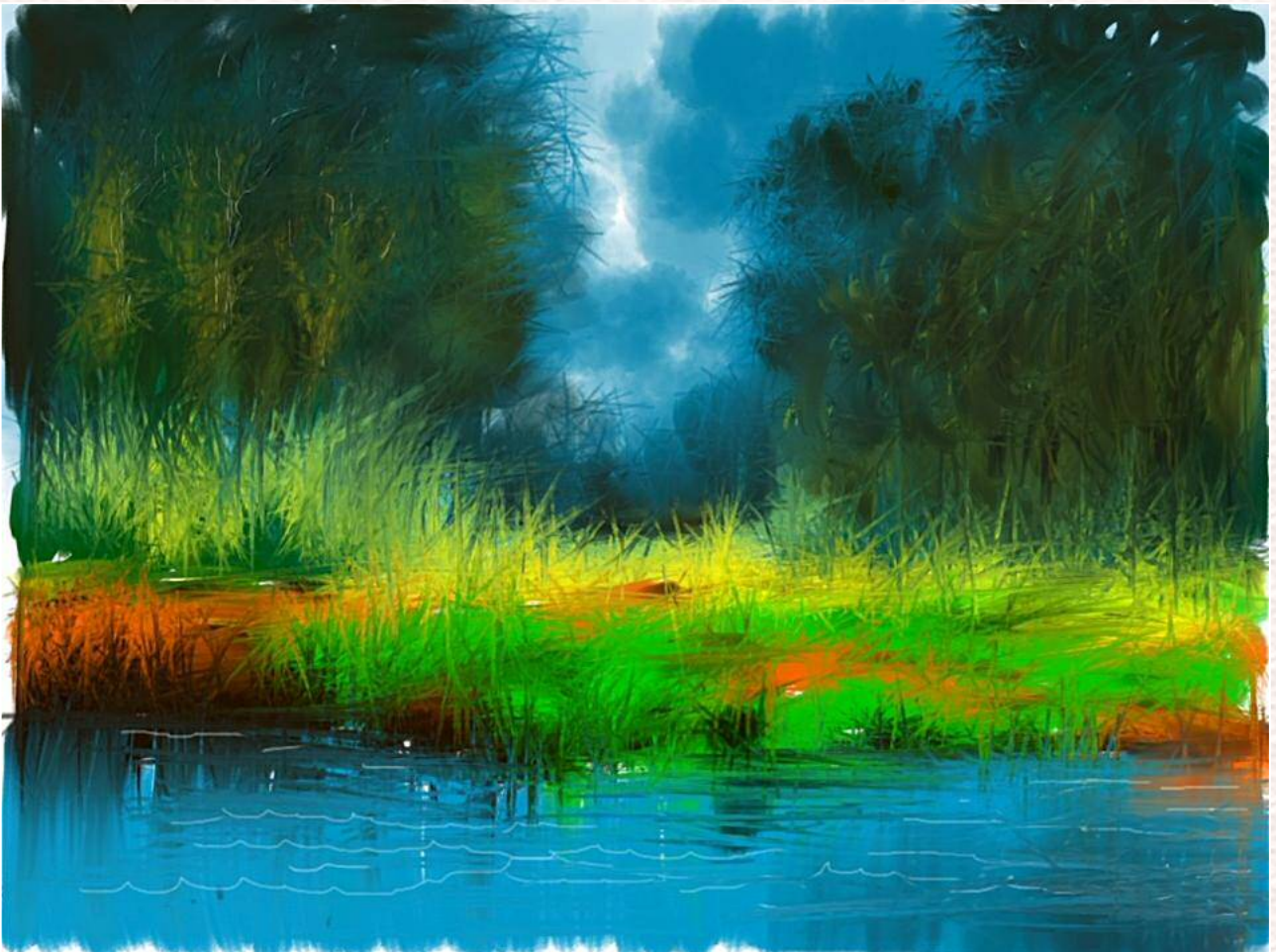


Dear friends, now I think I start to understand that art is absolutely ownerless. Some of your comments help me see and feel something that I, as the creator, do not see and feel before. Thanks.

March, 13



Evening River, Sixteen.
March, 13



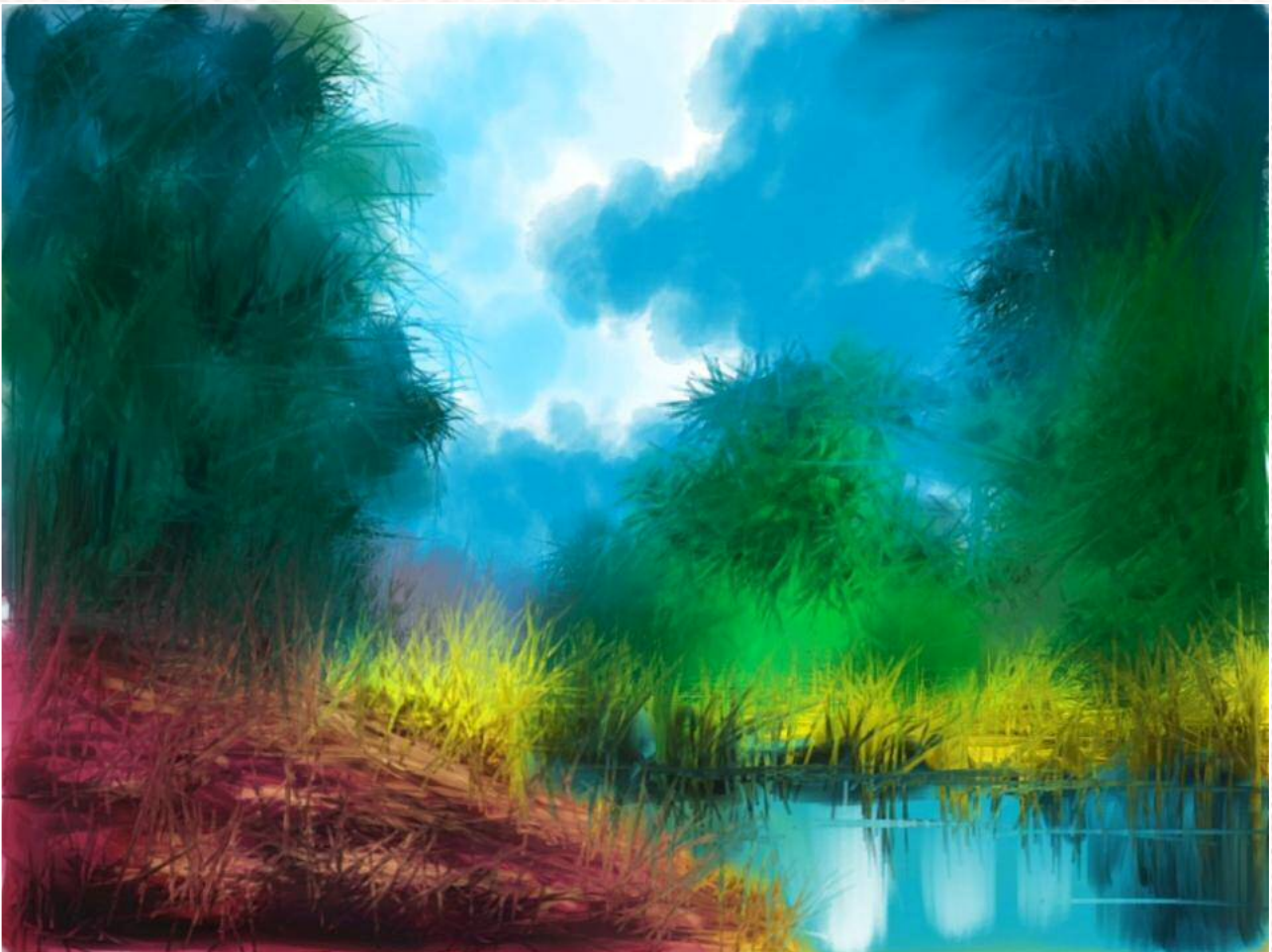


Evening River, Seventeen. Winter.
March, 13





Evening River, Eighteen. Spring.
March, 13





Old Memories, One.
March, 13





Old Memories, Two.
March, 13





Old Memories, Three.
March, 14





Old Memories, Four.
March, 14





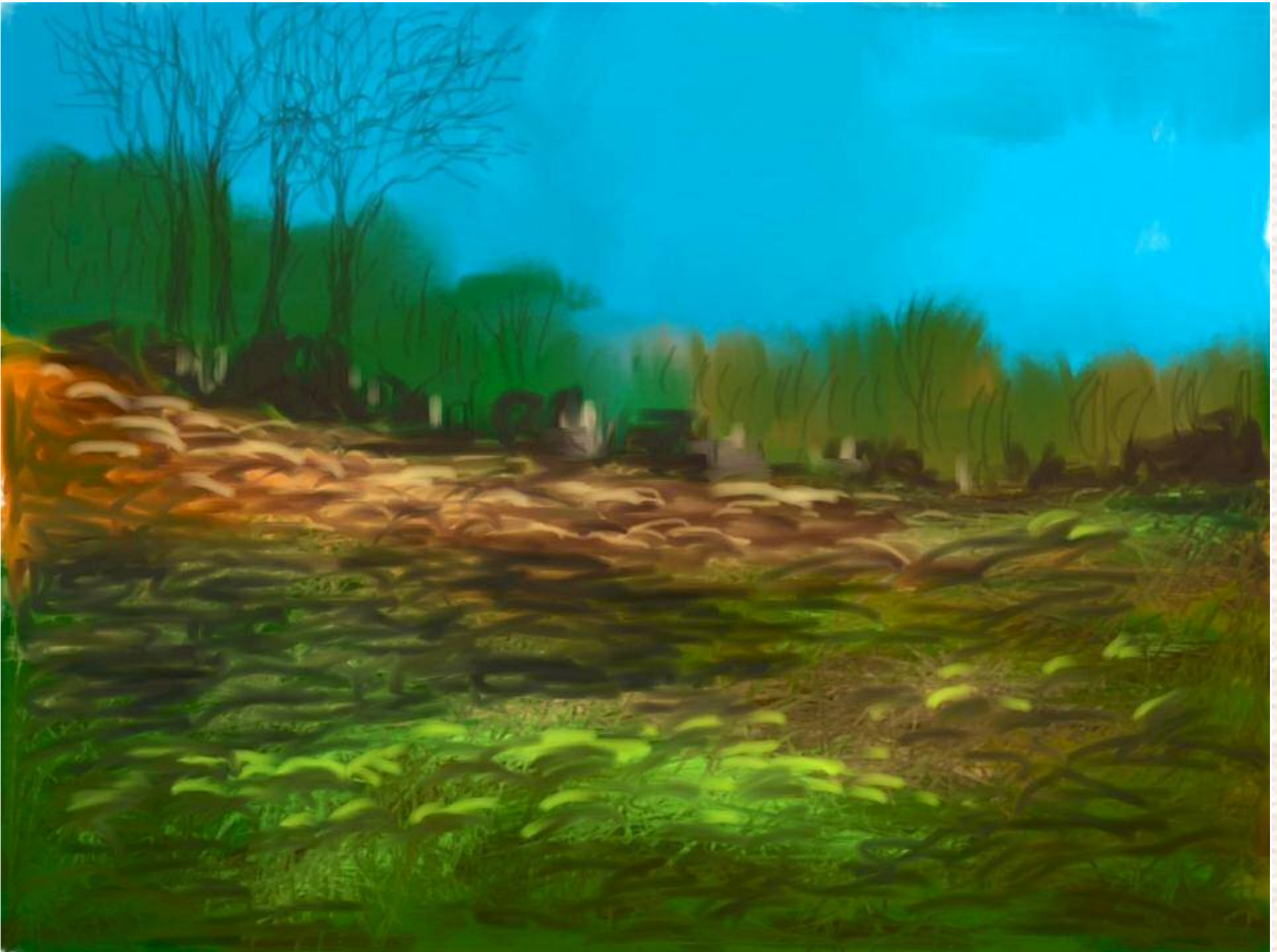
Rain Clouds over the Hill.

March, 14



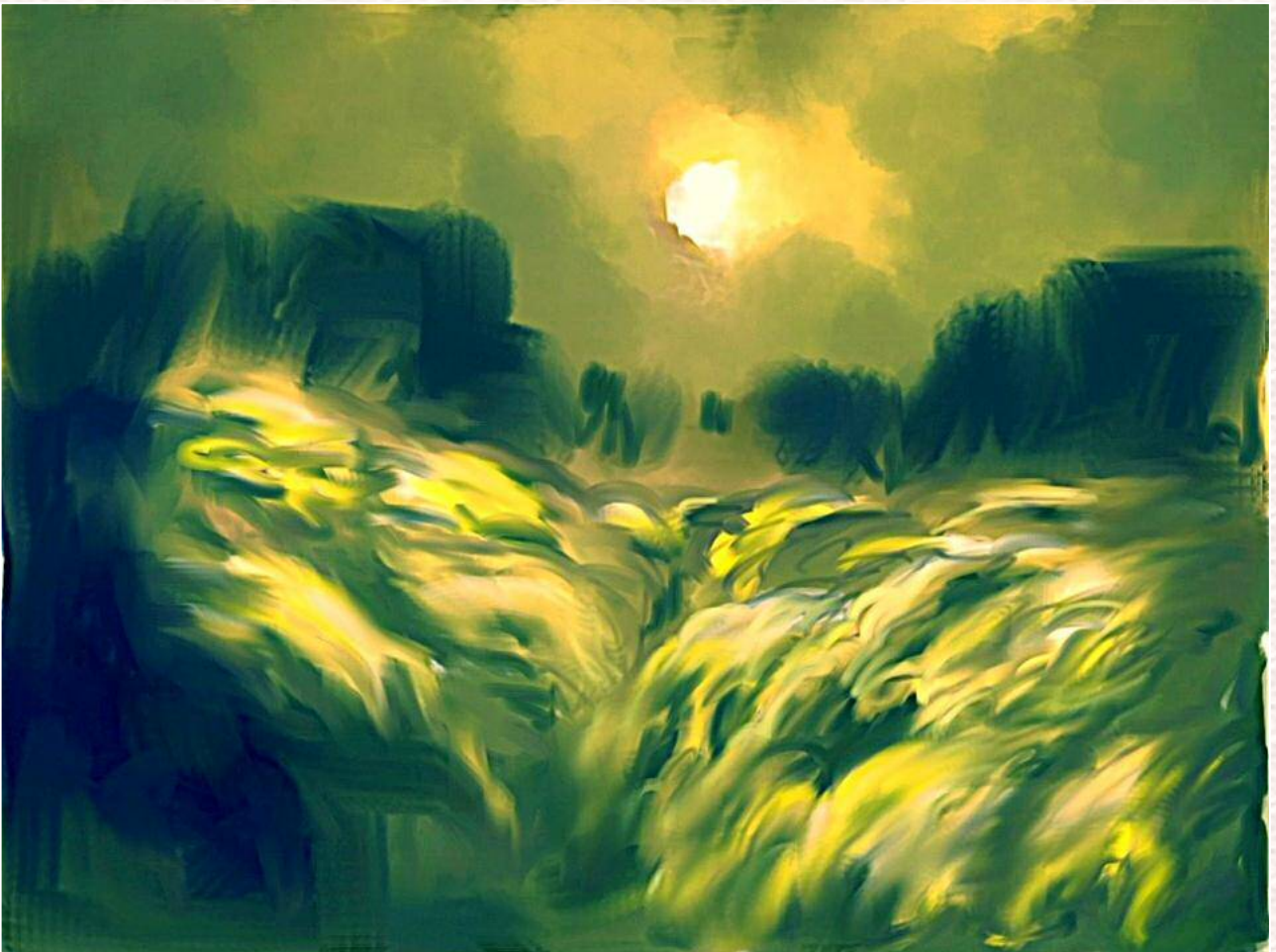


No Name.
March, 14





No Name.
March, 14





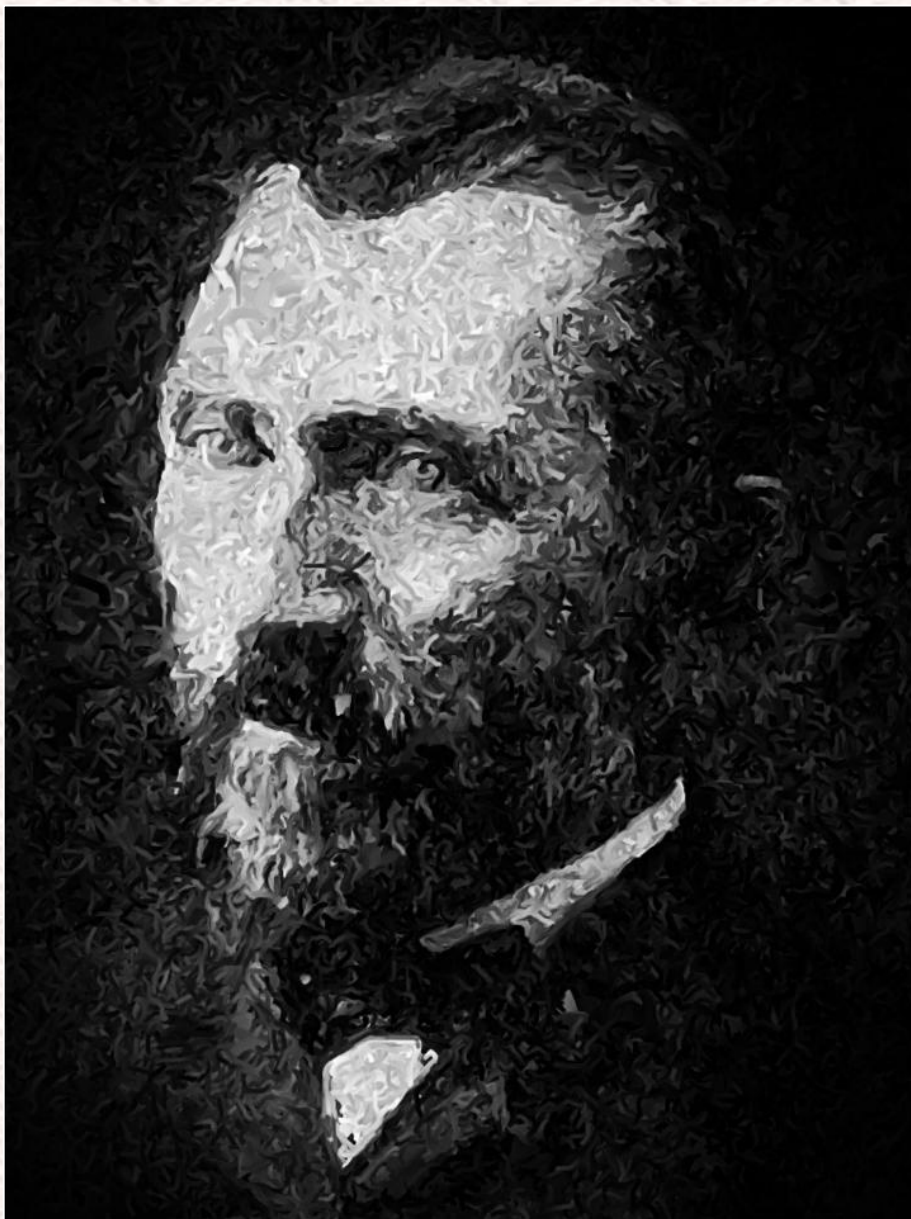
No Name.
March, 14





Vincent van Gogh, painted from his photograph. We usually know the face of van Gogh from his paintings. This is his real face.

March, 14





A Garden, One.
March, 14





A Garden, Two.
March, 14





A Garden, Three.
March, 15





A Garden, Four.
March, 15





Flowers, One.
March, 15





Flowers, Two.
March, 15





Flowers, Three.
March, 15





A joke just happens in my mind, when I see the picture of sunflowers painted by van Gogh some minutes ago in the Internet. A mathematician and his friend who was a philosopher, named Somparn, once visited the Van Gogh Museum in Amsterdam. While standing before the famous ‘Sun Flowers,’ Somparn asked his friend, “What do you see?” His mathematician friend said angrily, “Do not disturb me. I am trying to count the number of sunflowers in the painting.” Mathematician always has their way of seeing the world!

March, 15



Flowers, Four.
March, 15





Flowers, Five. Painted from the flowers on my working table.

March, 15



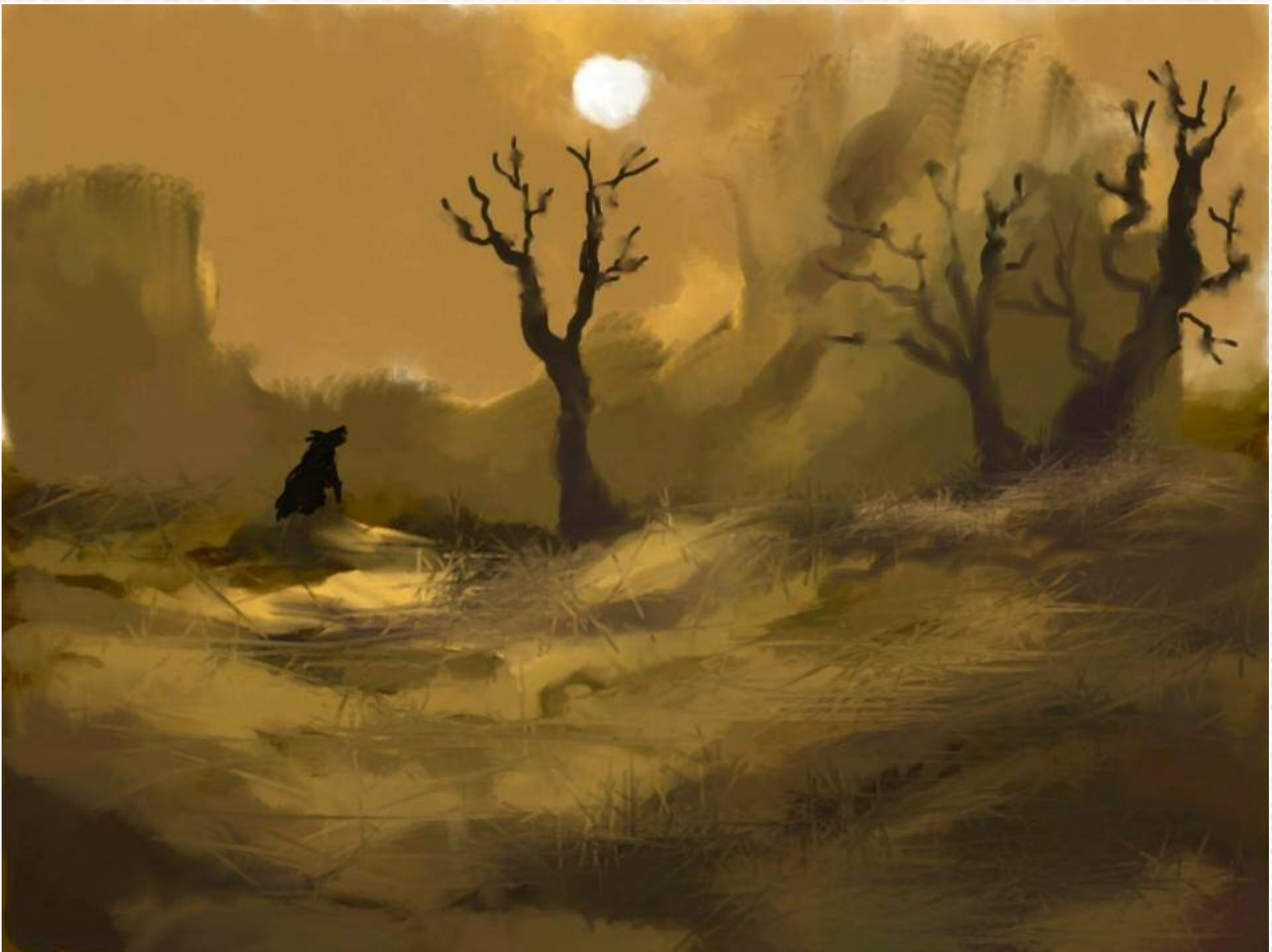


A Lonely Tree on the Hill.
March, 15





Lonely Wolf and the Moon.
March, 15





Sailing Ship in the Mist. Inspired by the painting named
'The Crescent Moon' painted by Montague Dawson
(1895-1973).

March, 15



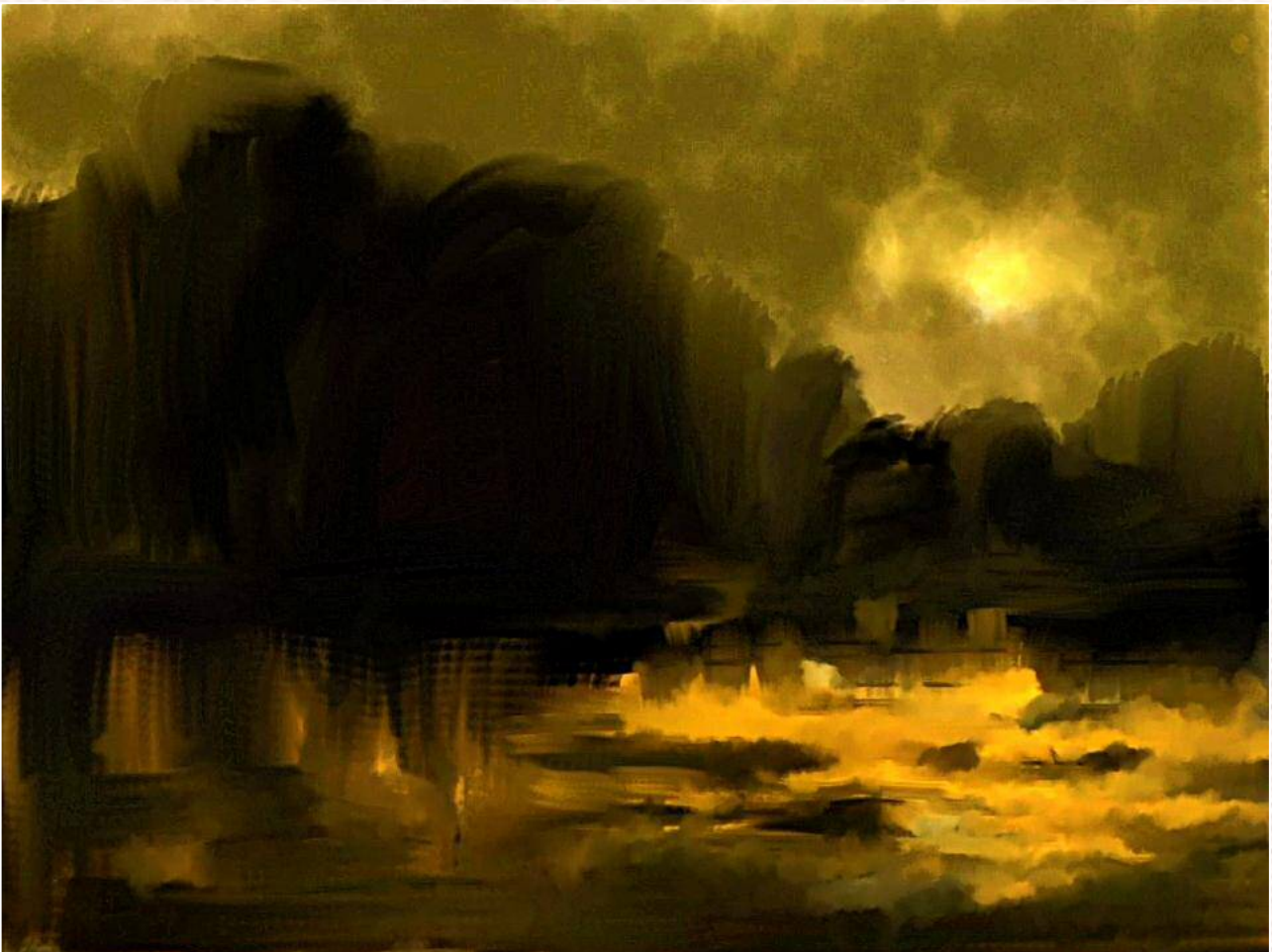


In the Storm.
March, 16





Sunset over the Mountain.
March, 16





The Storm Begins.

March, 16



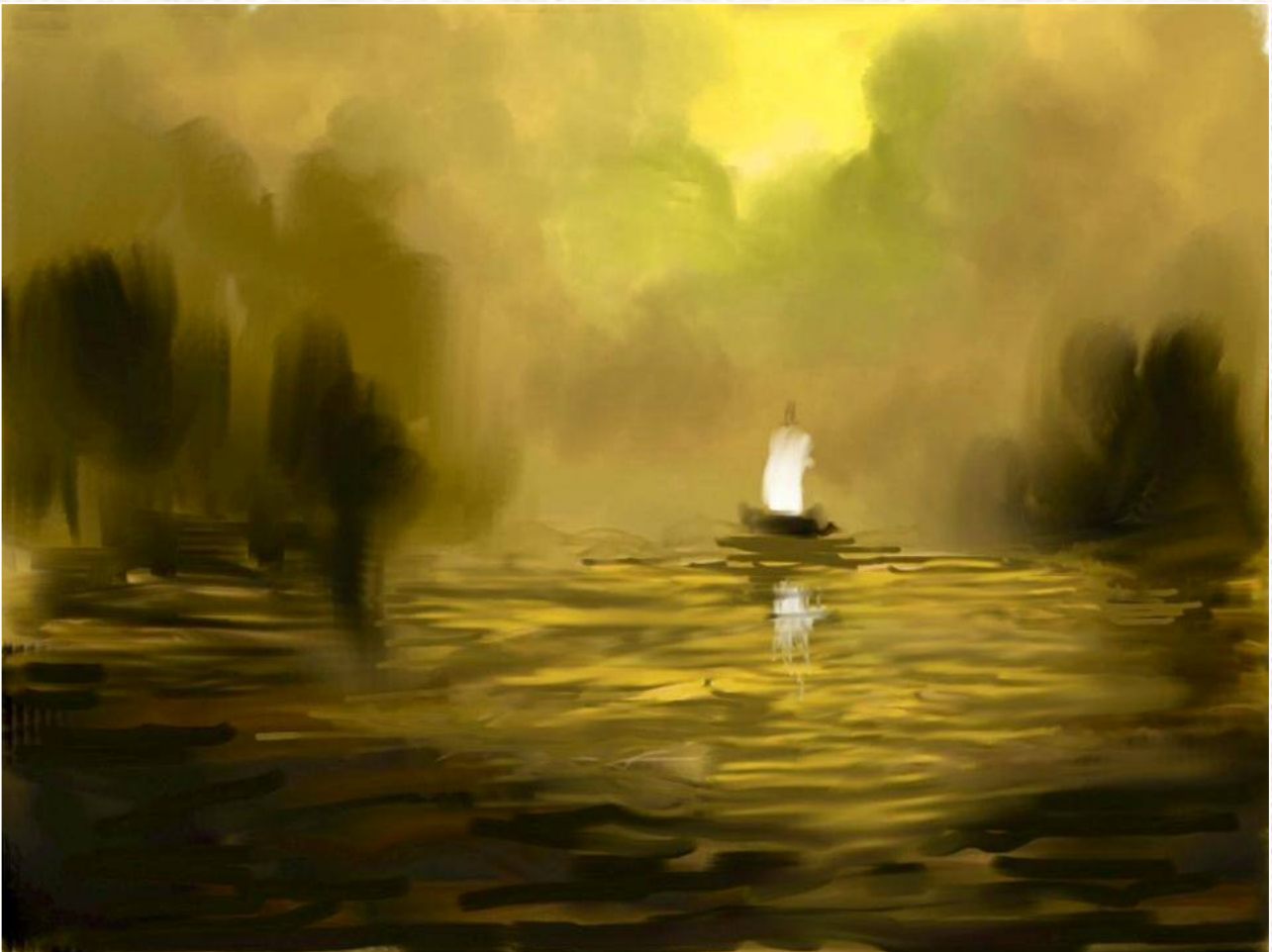


In the Storm, Two.
March, 16





After the Storm.
March, 16





Jesus in the Moonlight.
March, 16





Jesus in the Moonlight, another version.
March, 16





A Narrow Road to the Village.
March, 16





A Dream of Bangkok after Civil War.
March, 16





A Dream of Bangkok after Civil War, Two.
March, 17





A Dream of Bangkok after Civil War, Two (with frame).
March, 17



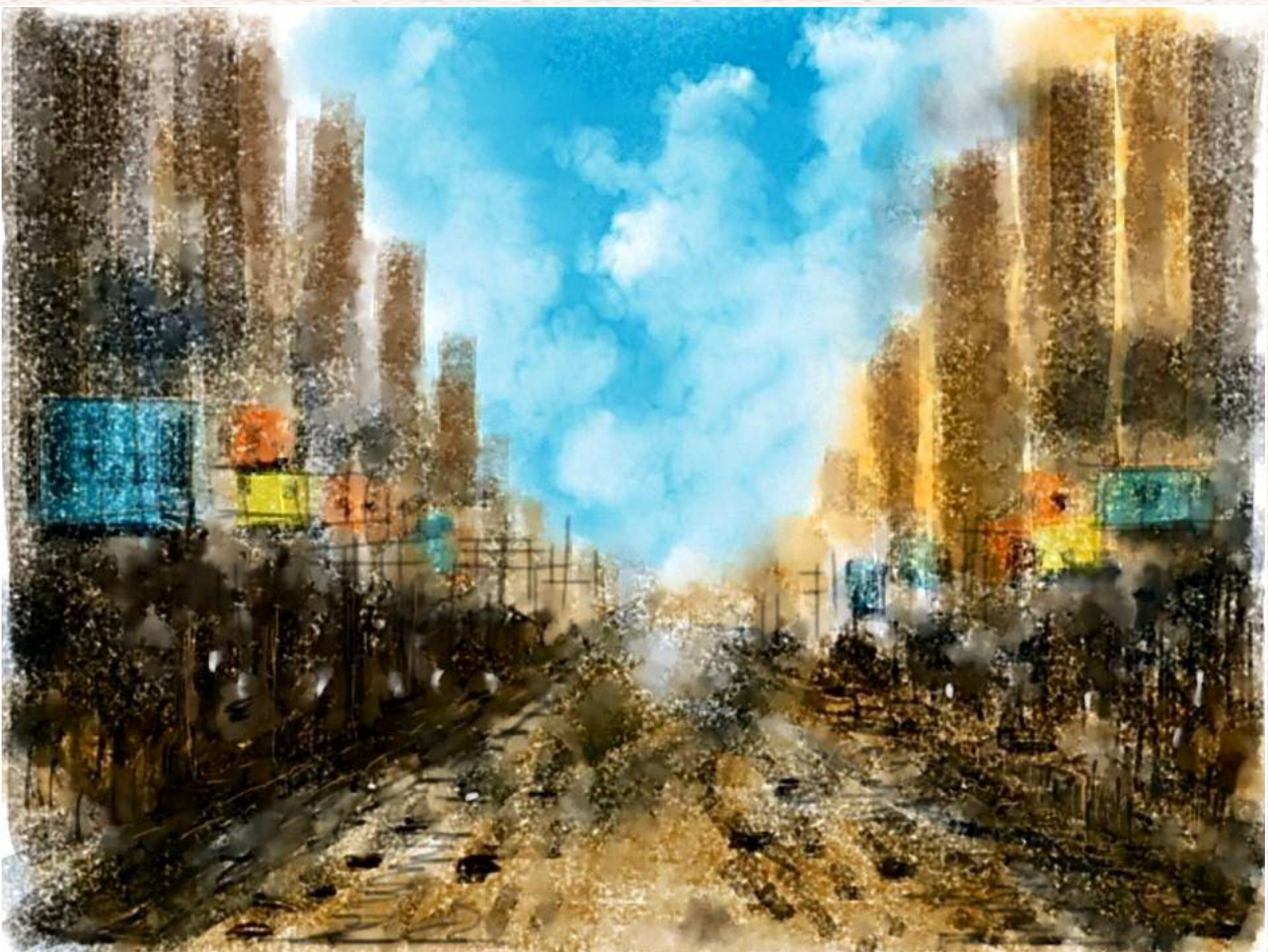


A Dream of Bangkok after Civil War, Three.
March, 17





Bangkok, A Day before Civil War Starts.
March, 17





While listening to my old music, some thought happens. Next three years, I will retire from Chula. The strange feeling deeply whispers inside. Everybody has to retire from their work someday. Retirement is a sign of many things. Some people know their life in the past is just illusion in the day of retirement. University, as honored institution, is illusion as well. I think when I retire from Chula, that will prove that in the past my life is what. If some people still read my books, listen to my songs, and love to watch my paintings; that means my life as university professor is lower than my life as individual without a label. A life as man never retires.

March, 17



Poor Peasants Returning Home in the Evening. Line drawing is one of the most basic techniques in art. Actually, I was trained for years in line drawing before painting. Van Gogh uses line drawing in some of his work. I personally love his line drawings more than his paintings. Even in his painting, van Gogh always uses the technique of line. Line is simple, but has a mysterious power.

March, 17





Flowers in Desert.

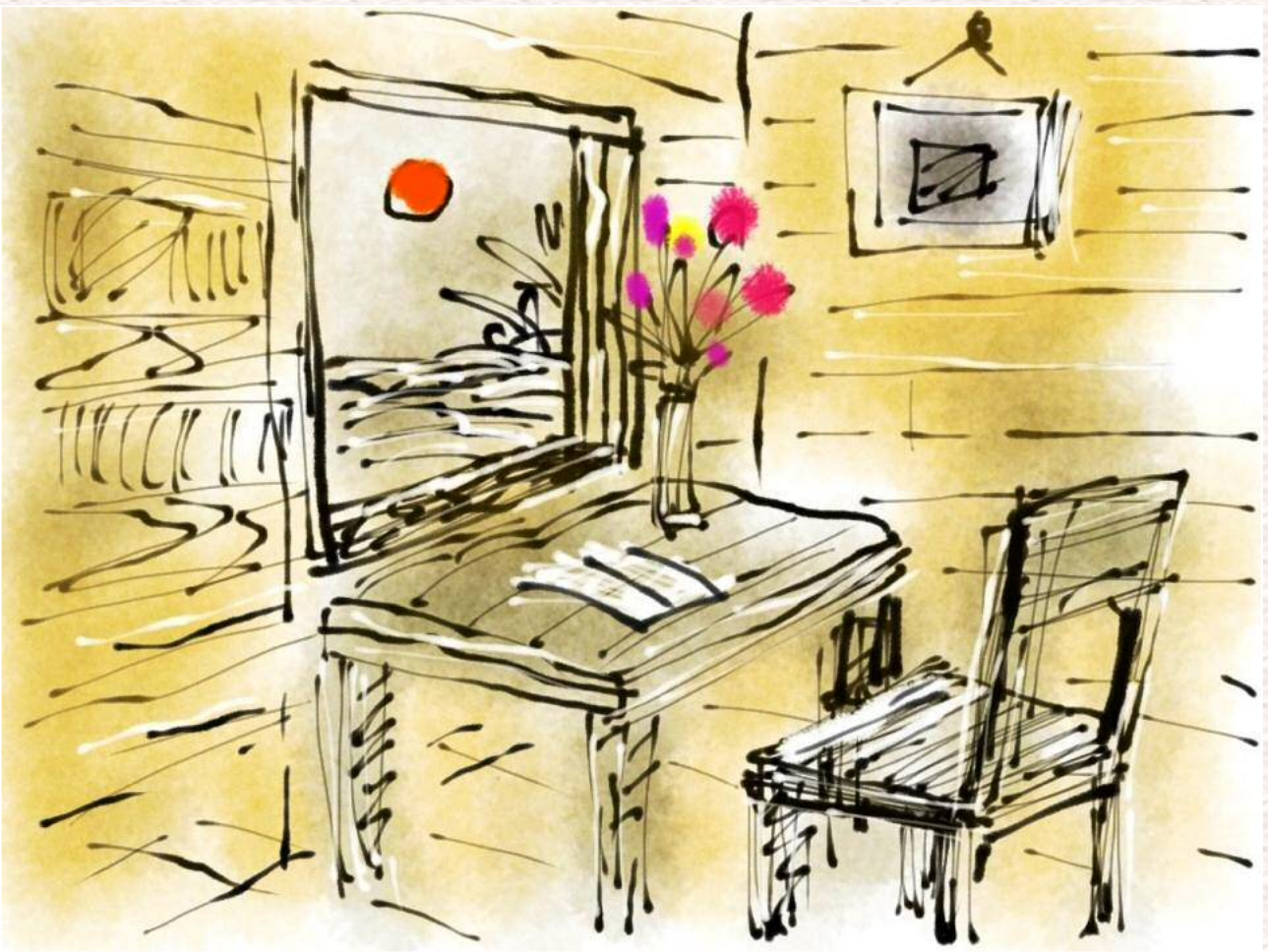
March, 17





A Reading Room.

March, 17





My Little Blind Dog. One of my dogs became blind recently. At first, I was so worried about him. Now he seems happy even though he cannot see anymore.

March, 18





Trees in Blossom.
March, 18





Same Trees in Snow.

March, 18



For this picture, a friend says: It's like I am reliving my past seeing all your drawings.



A Handicapped Man on the Beach.
March, 18





We Need the Window. To have the light and the air in the room, we need the window.

March, 18





For the previous picture, **a friend says:** With the picture and your statement above, I couldn't help but be reminded of the today-media-situation in Thailand. (I may be wrong. I'm so sorry, krub.)

I reply 1: Art can be anything--personal matter, politics, economics, religion, philosophy, or even nothing. It depends on the watcher, not the creator!

I reply 2: May I add some more. The painter paints physical objects. He cannot paint their meanings. It could be possible that the painter himself has some meaning, but he can never hope that the watcher must see the same meaning in the picture he paints. However, good art should lead to the same goal, even though there can be several means behind. That is: every meaning encourages good thought to move ahead for better life, individual and social!



Life of Pi, another version. Please not be serious!
March, 18



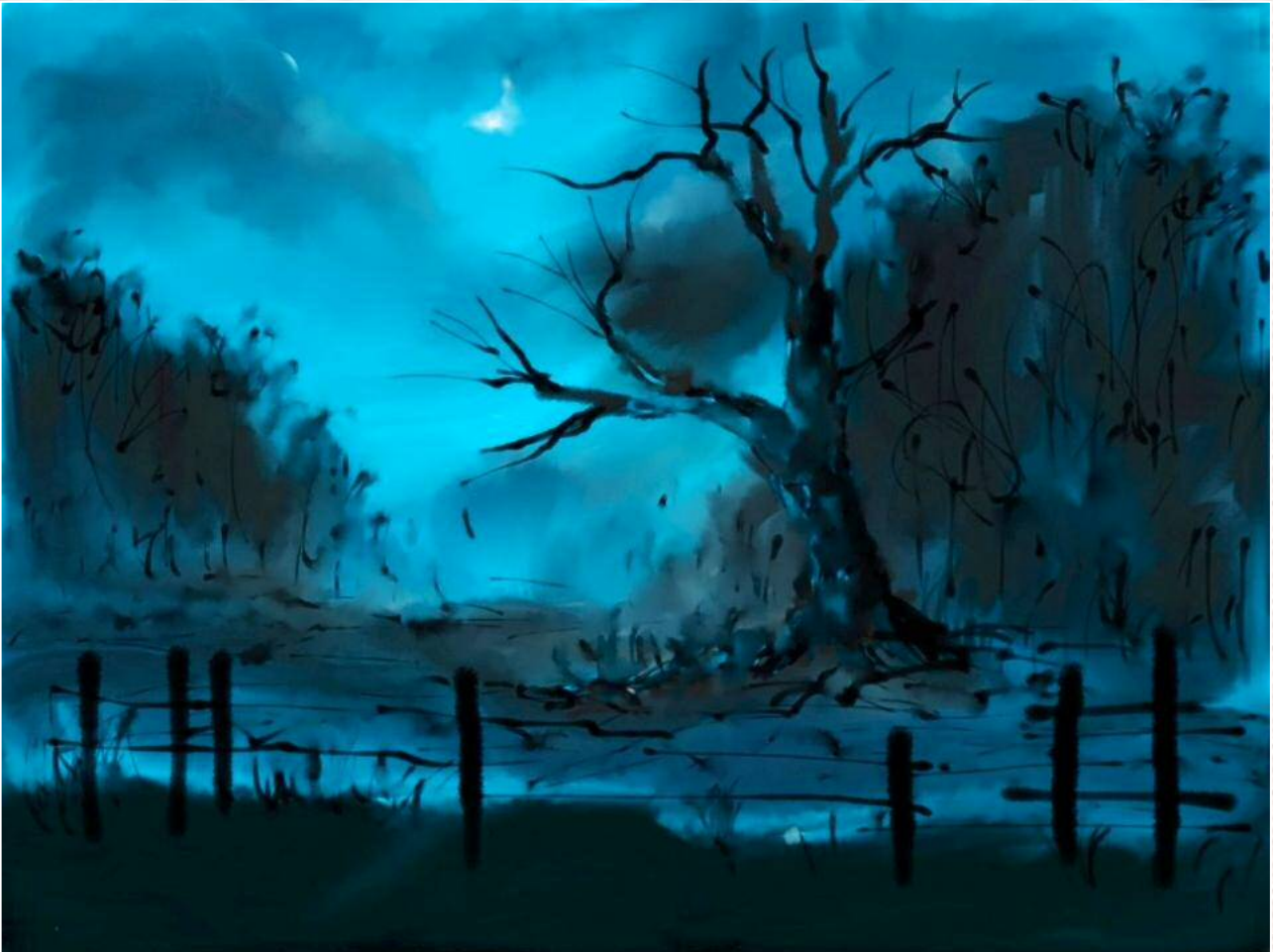


The Old Man and the Sea by Hemingway, my version.
March, 18





Crescent Moon. Painted while I was waiting for my daughter at her driving school, this evening.
March, 18





Fireflies. Painted at my daughter's driving school as well. The area where our home located, Klong 5, is the place where fireflies are still found.

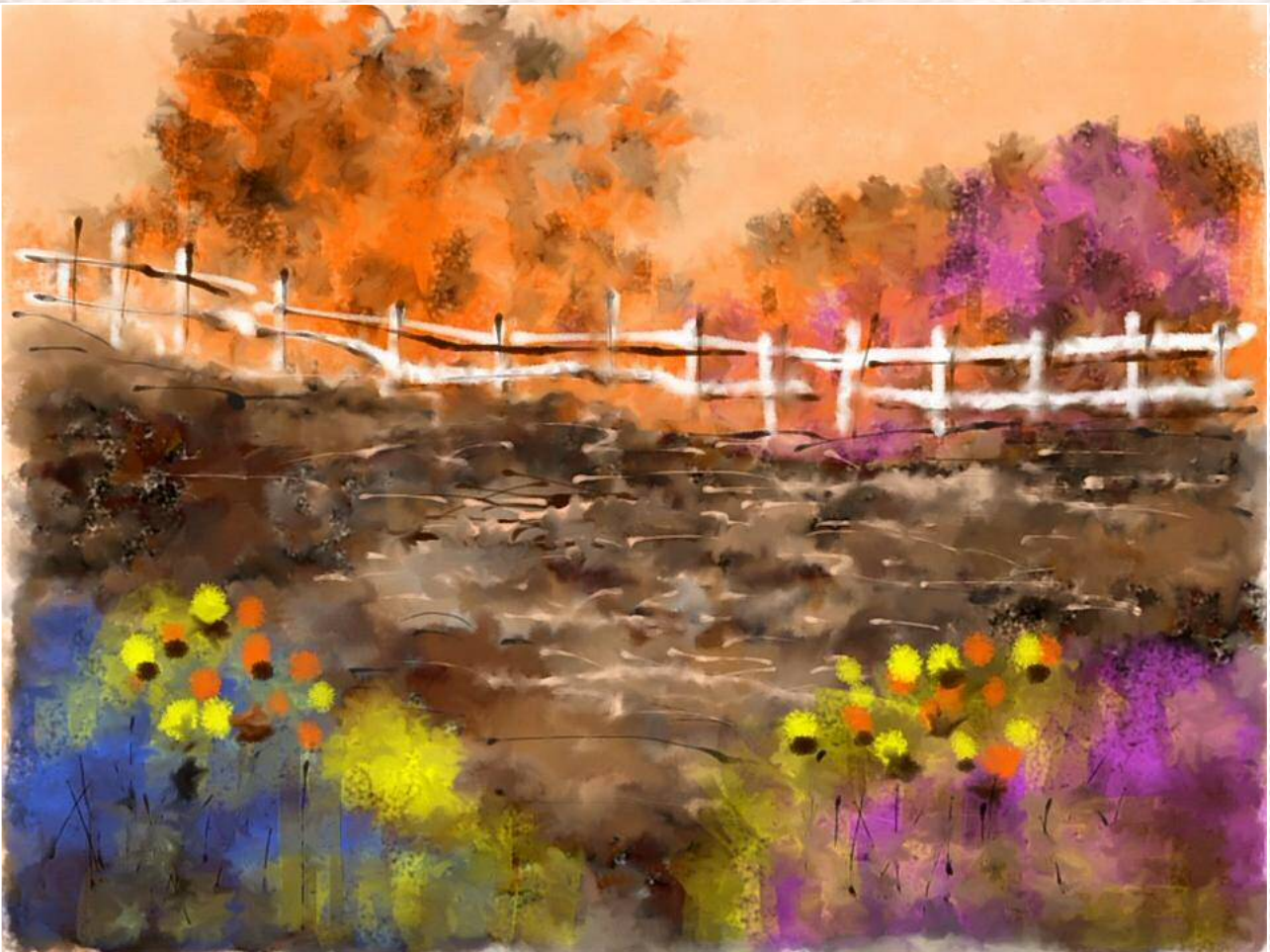
March, 18





Some Flowers in the Garden. Painted at the driving school as well.

March, 18





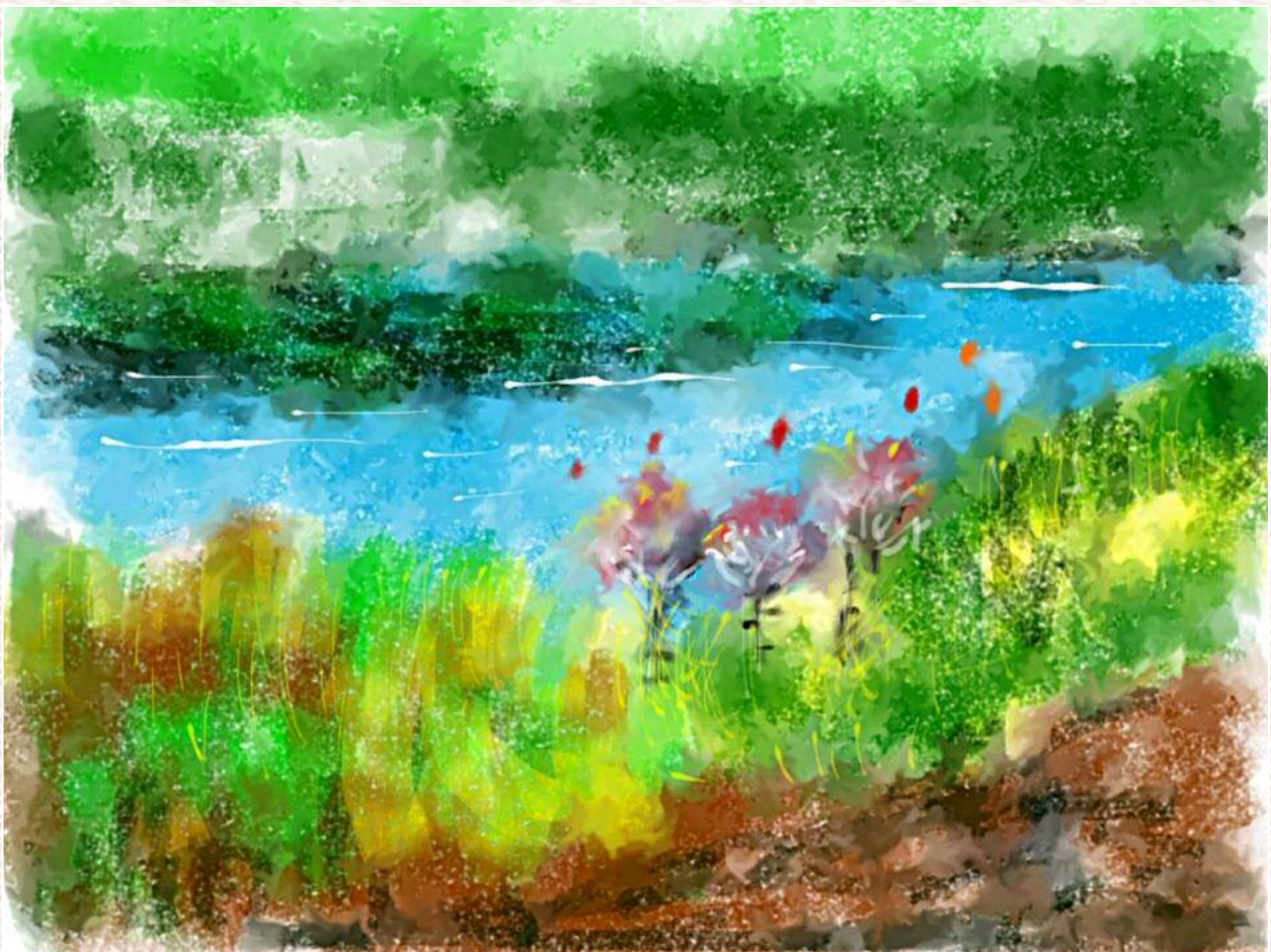
Sunset over Chao Phraya River. Painted at my office at
Chula, this afternoon.
March, 19





A Lotus Pond at the Driving School. After leaving my office, I came to the driving school with my daughter. Here, there is a small lotus pond. This is an outdoor painting, around two hours ago.

March, 19





Driving School's Office. The office of the driving school is so lovely. It is built over a lotus pond. While my daughter learned to drive, I painted this, around an hour ago.

March, 19





Full Moon over Chao Phraya River.
March, 19





Dear friends. Just within a month, I have noticed that there is a great improvement in my painting, both in terms of skill and idea. This might not happen if there is no interaction between us. And this reminds me of some great artists in the past like Vincent van Gogh. These artists painted lonely. No friends. No people to share such loneliness. But time has proven later that they are great. I think if van Gogh is born this day and does the thing that I am doing now, he must be greater, because he has friends to share friendship. Friends are needed in every human activity. Thanks again!

March, 19



The End





Author



Somparn Promta is a self-trained artist. He composes music; writes novel, poetry, short story, and essay. Actually, he is a Buddhist philosophy professor at **Chulalongkorn University**. While he was a philosophy student at Chula, he used to have a personal art exhibition, just one time in his life, to collect money for his education—but failed.

Besides working in art, Somparn also runs the online academic magazine, **The Wisdom Magazine**, published in Thai and English, monthly. His music and art book can be downloaded at the magazine website.