

Expressive Nature: A Fusion of Nature, Meditation and Art

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The exhibition 'Expressive Nature' by Dana Marshall, at Castle Groeneveld in Baarn until the end of September, showcases the profound interplay between nature, art, and meditation. Gabrielle Bruhn, who visited the exhibition, describes the experience as both meditative and vibrant, with a tranquil atmosphere enhanced by the artwork's interaction with the space's architecture.

Dana Marshall's work is characterised by a blend of painting, photography, and natural objects, forming complex collages that explore both the visible and invisible aspects of the world. Her creative process unfolds in phases—painting, collecting, and photography—culminating in an organic amalgamation of chance and intention. This method allows for a dynamic and alchemical transformation, likened to a cook refining ingredients into a cohesive meal.

The exhibition features three series:

Dissolving the Boundaries - This series explores the dissolution of physical and conceptual boundaries, merging reality and imagination, and internal and external worlds into a unified whole.

Luminosity - In this series, light itself is the focus, embodying the subject and essence of the work. This idea draws a parallel to the Buddhist notion of emptiness, which is metaphorically described as luminous. In this context, emptiness does not imply nothingness but rather the absence of concept. It suggests a state of boundless potential and interconnectedness, often associated with a profound clarity or light.

Light Changes Every Thing - This series examines how light alters perception and experience, emphasising the transformative power of illumination.

Marshall's art is deeply intertwined with her Buddhist study and practice in the Sakyong Lineage, which spans over forty years and includes long retreats and intensive meditation training. Her approach to art is not only a technical endeavour but also a spiritual practice grounded in the concept of 'basic goodness' a term coined by Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche. This idea underpins her belief in the inherent goodness present in every being and manifests in her work through qualities like appreciation, openness, and warmth.

Marshall describes her artistic process as one of presence and receptivity, where the act of creation is a collaborative dance between her and the materials. Her dedication to this process and her practice of meditation prepare her to engage with her work from a place of unconditional confidence, free from the need to prove anything.

'Expressive Nature' is not only a visual exploration but also an invitation to experience the deeper layers of existence, touching on themes of beauty, transience, and the subtle interplay of light and shadow. Through her art, Marshall offers a glimpse into a world where nature and spirit converge, creating a serene, at times disorienting but reflective experience for viewers.