

Artist's Statement

I view my work as a lifelong internal odyssey, a continuous voyage to places and experiences of emotion and thought I could neither anticipate nor even presume to comprehend until they are just past.

Work is the attempt to grasp the intensity of these moments, whether a feeling, a thought, or an atmosphere. Looking back at the images of a life time, the individual works are like maps of a hegira begun so early in childhood, and formed over a lifetime.

When I was a child my family moved to a small town on Long Island. There was a long tract of woods a half-block from our house that led all the way to the next town. Very quickly I discovered these woods and explored them, at first tentatively, then gradually more boldly. I particularly enjoyed being there alone, and I began feeling the great pleasures of being among the trees and leaves, the sky peeping through here and there, the glimpse of a house's gable with perhaps a window, sometimes with what seemed a mysterious curtain lit by a dim lamp. I remember very clearly how magical it seemed, and how important it was for me to keep returning there to have those private vivid moments.

It was to be many years before I realized the feelings were within myself, provoked to my consciousness by these surroundings. That somehow, even then, whatever my very innermost thoughts and feelings were, alone, in the woods, still just barely in sight of homes and town, these thoughts and feelings were freed to cognition, sometimes euphoric, sometimes eerie, but always intense, and always with deep pleasure.

Pleasure, of course, is addictive, and having an excessive nature I have pursued this pleasure with my life.

— Robert Kipniss
