

TRANSCENDENTAL REALISM

THE ART OF ADI DA SAMRAJ



la Biennale di Venezia

52. Esposizione
Internazionale
d'Arte
Eventi collaterali

PALAZZO BOLLANI

Castello 3647- 30122 Venice

10 June - 21 November 2007

Hours: 10.00 am - 6.00 pm

COLOR, AESTHETIC SHOCK, AND NON-DUALISM: THE *SPECTRA SUITES* OF ADI DA SAMRAJ

by **DONALD KUSPIT**

Adi Da Samraj is seemingly able to manipulate colors and forms at will, combining and recombining them in endless configurations. The images seem to construct and “deconstruct” simultaneously, their parts fusing and diffusing indistinguishably, and yet the whole remains instantly and constantly graspable, whatever its permutations. Protean and unified at once, Adi Da’s ever-changing images become all-pervasive “big screen” experiences, perceptually riveting, indeed, sometimes excruciatingly intense, but always balanced and even sublime sensory experiences.

Adi Da Samraj’s *Spectra Suites* suggest a spiritual reality that can never be simulated, only evoked and experienced in what Coleridge called “moments of transcendence”—a sort of unpredictable peak experience of consciousness one thought was all but impossible in the course of everyday experience. In the *Spectra Suites*, they come at one in rapid succession, as though to force the eureka moment of vision. But the consciousness they convey and arouse is compelling because of its inevitability and spontaneity. The *Spectra Suites* are a kind of visionary pressure cooker, but what is being cooked under high visual pressure is transcendental experience. Perhaps that is the best way to realize it in the high-pressure world of mass society.

Adi Da Samraj’s *Spectra Suites* flood and suffuse the body and mind of the perceiver in colors and forms, affording pure joy. But they are carefully equilibrated in a narrative structure, conveying a sense of equanimity and balance as well as “supersensual delight”.

Evanescence is built into Adi Da’s beautiful art, as its constant movement, suggesting its ephemeral and elusive character—it seems to change and dissolve

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before one's eyes, suggesting that it is a process of interminable metamorphosis, and thus has no one identity and reality—indicates. It is Adi Da Samraj's imaginative triumph to have conveyed the illusions created by discrepant points of view and the emotionally liberating effect when they aesthetically unite in the psyche of the shocked perceiver.

From "Color, Aesthetic Shock, and Non-Dualism:
The *Spectra Suites* of Adi Da Samraj".
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(Published in *The Spectra Suites*, by Adi Da Samraj.
New York: Welcome Books, 2007.)

BIO

Art critic DONALD KUSPIT is a professor of art history and philosophy at the State University of New York at Stony Brook. He is a contributing editor at *Artforum*, *Sculpture*, and *New Art Examiner* magazines, and is the editor of *Art Criticism*. In 1997 he received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Distinguished Contribution to Visual Arts from the National Association of Schools of Art and Design. He has published numerous books on contemporary art, most recently *Mel Ramos Pop Art Fantasies: The Complete Paintings* (2004).