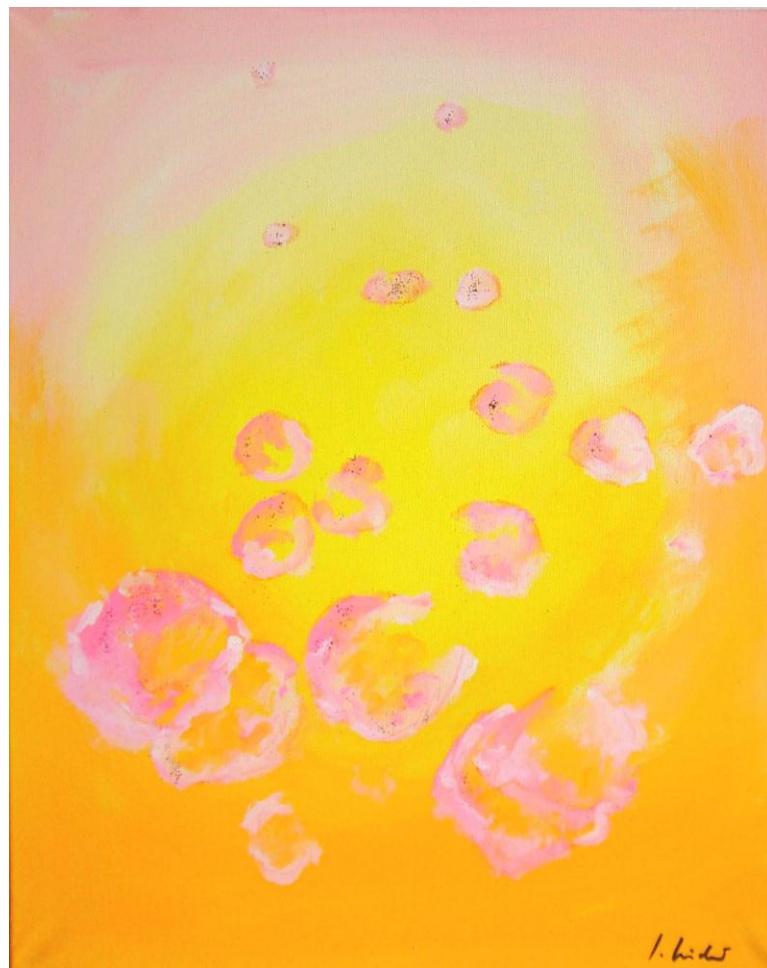


September 2012

THE GARDEN OF ROSES



Acrylic 40 x 50 cm (2012)

Pick a rose in the garden:

You will enjoy it for a few days;

pick one single petal from my garden of roses

And it will accompany you for ever...

Quote from 'Gulistan' (The Garden Of Roses) by Sheikh Muslihuddin Saadi Shirasi (1190 - 1283). Saadi, a Persian philosopher and poet, was an important exponent of Sufism. Sufism is a philosophy, a mystical movement within Islam whose main objective is to free the ego of man from material things and to encourage responsible actions. The paths that lead to this goal are manifold and are mostly conveyed by a teacher or master who presides over a kind of brotherhood.

All the rites in sufism are to praise Allah and can seem strange to the uninitiated, like the dance of the dervishes, the miracles of the fakirs and ecstatic music, but all this is rather marginal within the movement. Important contributions to literature, art, philosophy and science in world heritage came from the Sufis.

Who would like to know more about sufism, should look into the works by Challil Gibran (The Prophet) or the writings by the American Idris Schah.

But lets go back to our garden of roses, to the roses that, by the way, also adorn the magnificent garden at Saadi's mausoleum in Shiraz (Iran).

The rose, this noble flower, praised by the poets of all times, this artwork of nature with its beguiling perfume, a scent that seems to drift from the gardens of paradise. A scent that fills the air like a song, a scent you can compare to the sound of a human voice, for instance to the voice of the Lebanese singer Nouhad Haddad, better known by her artist name **FAIROUZ** (meaning 'Turquoise').

If one is listening to her, eyes closed, the air will be filled all of a sudden with the scent of roses.