

Enlightened or Awakening or Rise up 20" x 20"

Acrylic on canvas

Painting by Laura Vazquez Rodriguez

Inspired by Upright Revolution or Why Humans Walk Upright

By Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o

This painting illustrates my interpretation of this short story. It is a story about conflict and the human struggle for power. It is about harmony and chaos, life and death, unity and division. This is the story of man's endurance, his perseverance and his awakening to his life song, as the story goes, we are one body, "us for us" "unity is our power."

Like the story, my painting is a celebration of man's life song. Fashioned uniquely but united in purpose we must rise up and stand together to protect and serve one another in love.

At the bottom of my painting is a lion, strong and beautiful but untamed and dangerous. It is aggressive and competitive. The lion stares across at humanities brokenness, its parts divided and weak. It is prepared to fight but unable to move. Disconnected and crumbling the body is powerless.

Above the mound is a man who rises up clothed with the armor of love, unity and strength. He is blanketed in peace. He moves forward on his journey of reconciliation and hope. With a staff in hand he walks across the ruins. Butterflies rise up symbolizing transformation into love, faithfulness and harmony. Just ahead of him are two hearts united flying freely in the sky.