

## Review: Well Done

November 26, 2013

BY SIMONE ELLIN

### 'The Well of Being' comes alive on the page and in the gallery

It merits a place of honor in the waiting room of every therapist's office, in yoga studios, at meditation centers and on bookshelves in homes everywhere. And in every place where those of us who are no longer children seek comfort, insight, faith and meaning.

Jean-Pierre Weill's new illustrated book, "The Well of Being: A Children's Book for Adults," and the exhibition based on it, will be on display at the Gordon Center For Performing Arts from Dec. 3 to Dec. 15. It is for anyone who is human.



All artwork from "The Well of Being"

Like many works created by artists on their own psychic journeys, Weill's book did not start out as "The Well of Being."

"When I started, I thought I was illustrating [T.S. Eliot's] 'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock,'" said Weill. But that endeavor quickly gave way to the project's "true purpose," an exploration into the personal and universal search for well-being.

Weill, 59, who was raised in New Rochelle, N.Y., moved to Baltimore with his wife of 30 years, sculptor Rachel Rotenberg, to raise their five (now grown) children in an affordable but strong Jewish community. Weill trademarked the vitreograph, a unique process of drawing and painting on multiple levels of glass in 1991.



His work has been sold in galleries and museum outlets throughout the United States, Europe and Japan, and he has also designed original and limited-edition vitreographs for Disney Art Editions, Warner Bros. and Coca-Cola. While the artist is pleased by his vitreographs' recognition and commercial success, he recently closed Jean Pierre Weill Studios (where that art was created) in order to pursue "The Well of Being" and related projects.

The 186-page coffee-table volume, designed like a child's picture book with simple text and colorful watercolor illustrations, tells the story of a man who, Weill said, represents himself and "Everyman" who pursues peace and happiness.

The book traces Everyman's journey from birth — "when we were infants in the garden, with no thought to be anything other than ourselves ... when whatever we made is a masterpiece" — to the moment when we first experience self-doubt.

The book continues: "He discovered he could do something wrong. That he, or the world, could be wrong. And that he was alone. ... From then on, he practiced ways to rearrange himself, to make himself acceptable, so that he could return home."

Weill's delicately beautiful, evocative and sometimes humorous illustrations and his poignant and deceptively simple prose will resonate deeply with those who have struggled with feelings of inadequacy, whose self-images are dependent on external events and positive regard from others, and who have tried to quiet the negative voices that replay obsessively in their mind.

Intended to be read multiple times, "The Well of Being" provides new insight and new levels of inspiration with each reading.

In a vast sea of self-help books, "The Well of Being" finds a fresh and profound way to discuss mindfulness and the art of being here now. Appropriately, Ram Dass, the legendary spiritual leader who wrote "Be Here Now" in 1971, is one of several highly regarded authors and thinkers (including Cynthia Ozick and Daniel Goleman) who gave "The Well of Being" rave reviews.

The exhibition will contain all of the text and images from the book as well as several paintings created separately from the book that Weill said fit seamlessly into the exhibition.

The book's take-home message? "Our well-being is generated, not from the outside but from the inside," said Weill.

*"The Well of Being" will be on exhibition from Dec. 3 to Dec. 15 at the Gordon Center For Performing Arts (3506 Gwynnbrook Ave., Owings Mills). A book party and exhibition opening will be held on Dec. 3 from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Learn more about Weill and "The Well of Being" at [thewellofbeing.co](http://thewellofbeing.co).*

Simone Ellin is JT senior features reporter — [sellin@jewishtimes.com](mailto:sellin@jewishtimes.com)

## Related Posts via Categories

[New Orleans Jazz Lives On](#)

[Music, Puppets Connect With Seniors](#)

[Notes From The Spirit](#)

[Ah, Music](#)

[Dinner And A Movie](#)

[Breaking The Cycle](#)

[The Joke's On Us](#)

['A Genius Who Transcended Rock'](#)

['Dream Like An Artist, Dress Like A Banker'](#)

[It All Started With A Deli](#)



39DOLLAR GLASSES.com

BROWSE TODAY'S HOTTEST STYLES NOW

DIGITAL MAGAZINE

APP

SIGN UP FOR OUR E-LETTER

 FACEBOOK

 TWITTER

 YOUTUBE

NEWS

OPINION

ARTS & LIFE

COMMUNITY

INSIDER

About Us

OUR STAFF

NEWSSTANDS

DIRECTIONS

CONTACT US

OUR PARTNERS

Advertise

SALES STAFF

Marketplace

GUIDE TO JEWISH LIFE

JEWISH CAREERS

CONTESTS

CLASSIFIEDS

Other Publications

WashingtonJewishWeek

STYLE

  
clipper city