

contains: The full nightmarish gallery

The Nightmarish

Art of Satsvarupa dasa



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Srila Prabhupada letter to Madhudvisa, 8 December 1973



by Krishnakant

The Nightmarish Art of Satsvarupa dasa

Satsvarupa's Valentine Hodge Podge

Knowing the wonderful service H.H.Satsvarupa Maharaja performed for Srila Prabhupada when he was physically present, one can only lament the steady decline he has exhibited in the intervening years. Rather than seeing his increasing physical and mental incapacity as some sort of sign from Krishna, he instead stubbornly refuses to budge from his baseless conviction that Srila Prabhupada authorised him to become an initiating *Acharya* in the infallible Brahma-Gaudiya *sampradaya*. So determined was he to convince others of his legitimacy as an initiating Guru, he even invented his own version of the May 28th 1977 conversation which to this day is still printed in the Srila Prabhupada Lilamrta (Satsvarupa Maharaja's biography of Srila Prabhupada). Below we give an amalgam of all four official GBC versions of the relevant section of the conversation (with variations in brackets):

Satsvarupa dasa Goswami: So (then) (they) (they'll) (may) also be considered your disciples?

Srila Prabhupada: Yes, they are disciples, (but) (why) consider ... who

Tamal Krishna Goswami: No. He is asking that these *ritvik acaryas*, they are officiating, giving *diksa*, (there)... the people who they give *diksa* to, whose disciples are they?

Srila Prabhupada: They are his disciples.

Tamal Krishna Goswami: They are his disciples (?)

Srila Prabhupada: Who is initiating ... (his) (he is) grand-disciple ...

And below is Satsvarupa Maharaja's invented version:

"So they may also be considered your disciples," said Satsvarupa, referring to those persons initiated on Prabhupada's behalf by the *ritvik acarya*.

"They are their disciples," said Srila Prabhupada.

Now he was speaking of initiations after his passing away.

"They are the disciples of the one who is initiating. And they are my granddisciples..."

In the actual recording, Srila Prabhupada agrees that all disciples initiated within the *ritvik* system are his

(**Satsvarupa:** "So then they'll also be considered your disciples". **Srila Prabhupada:** "Yes, they are disciples..."),

whereas Satsvarupa pretends that he said the disciples belonged to the *ritvik*, who was suddenly now not a *ritvik* at all, but somehow magically transformed into a *diksa* Guru. Satsvarupa Maharaja has preached for nearly three decades that Srila Prabhupada appointed him and ten others as *diksa* Gurus, even though the GBC abandoned this claim in the mid-1980s:

(Satsvarupa Maharaja in *Srila Prabhupada Lilamrta*) "Later, he would select "some of you," and whoever he selected could become an initiating guru."

As the GBC now agree, the above simply never happened; Srila Prabhupada only ever 'selected' eleven devotees to act as *ritviks*, or representative priests, not as *diksa* (initiating) Gurus in their own right. The effects of the strain of his bogus posturing is becoming increasingly clear, as is evidenced by the following letter he sent to all his disciples on August 20th 2003 regarding a bizarre lecture he had delivered three days before:

"I think my main point and theme was empathy. I want you to love me despite my faults, as detailed a disciple should do in the *Nectar of Devotion* verse I read. By playing this song "My Funny Valentine", I pledged that I

want to see you with a loving heart despite your faults just as we know Gaura Nitai loves us despite our faults.

I spoke of changes in myself and in ISKCON, in a positive way, my use of creative innovation and that I am doing that in the way I write and paint. I gave the examples of the Alto Sax player from the obscure Asian country in B.B. Govinda Maharaja's *bhajana* band (when she was asked she said her favourite saxophone player was "Pakka", her way of pronouncing Charlie Parker) and to demonstrate this kind of innovation I played a Coltrane composition intending you to see it as *bhajana* as pure and even superior to most *bhajana* music, his piece "The Wise One," and I improvised praise of Prabhupada as he played.

I also intended to give out a few copies of the "Rilke" prose piece and ask you to make photo copies of it so that each one could have it for study. I think it is a very important explanation of all devotees' passage through the 'dark night of the soul'.

(Letter to Disciples, Satsvarupa Das Goswami, 20/8/2003)

Above we see Satsvarupa admits to:

1. Playing a mundane pop song to his disciples: 'My Funny Valentine';
2. Comparing the mundane love song to injunctions in the *Nectar of Devotion* and the divine love of Gaura Nitai;
3. Playing mundane jazz music; again to his initiated disciples;
4. Claiming this completely mundane, sense gratificatory music was 'superior to most *bhajan* music';
5. Distributing the writings of a mundane German author (Rilke), again to supposedly initiated disciples.

It should not really be necessary to point out how incompatible the above behaviour is with that of bona fide Vaishnava Acharyas in our line.

But clearly it is, so here are some quotes from Srila Prabhupada:

"You cannot read anyone's book. If he's approved *sadhu*, you can read his book. Then you'll be benefited. If you read hodge-podge, then you will not be able to understand. Therefore *sadhu*. And *sadhu* means he gives quotation from *sastras*, authorized *sastra*."

(SP Lecture, 18/10/72)

"Nor do mundane songs produce real knowledge or bliss unending. Also, this transcendental vibration purifies one. Anyone can see practically how our students are becoming purified, but the chanters of material songs are not."

(SP Letter to Hayagriva, 26/9/70)

On top of all this, Satsvarupa is now spending more and more time painting (no doubt 'innovatively') peculiar and disturbing pictures, with no practical preaching purpose (such as book illustration etc), along with grotesque sculptures that are the stuff of nightmares. Satsvarupa has started to display to the world some of his art work on an ISKCON related web site. These ghastly, nightmarish visions revealed a mind wracked with fear, doubt and anxiety: Below is Srila Prabhupada's opinion on this type of art:

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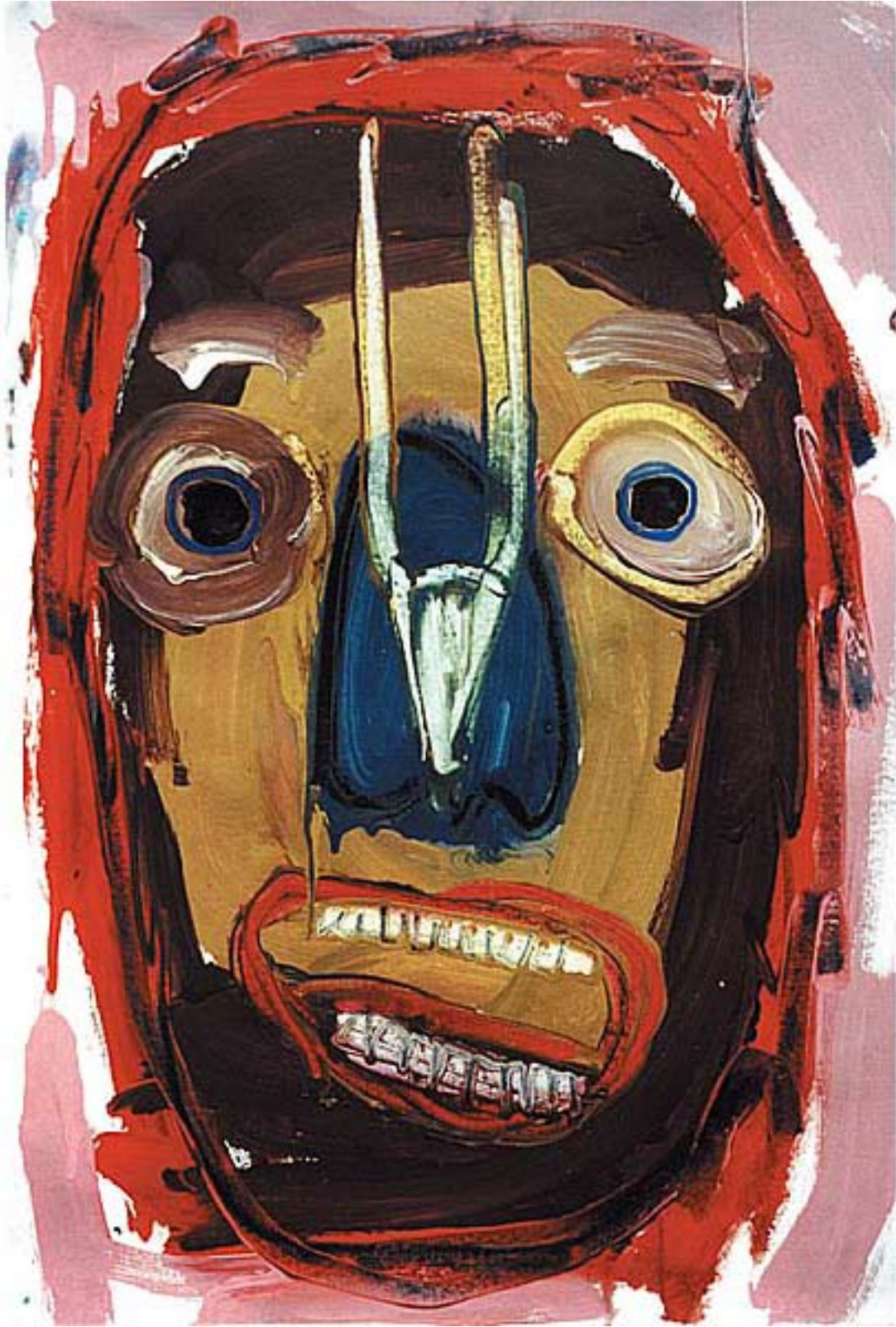
Srila Prabhupada letter to Madhudvisa, 8 December 1973

Following are examples from his extensive and *disturbing* portfolio.

- **Paintings**



ArtistPaints



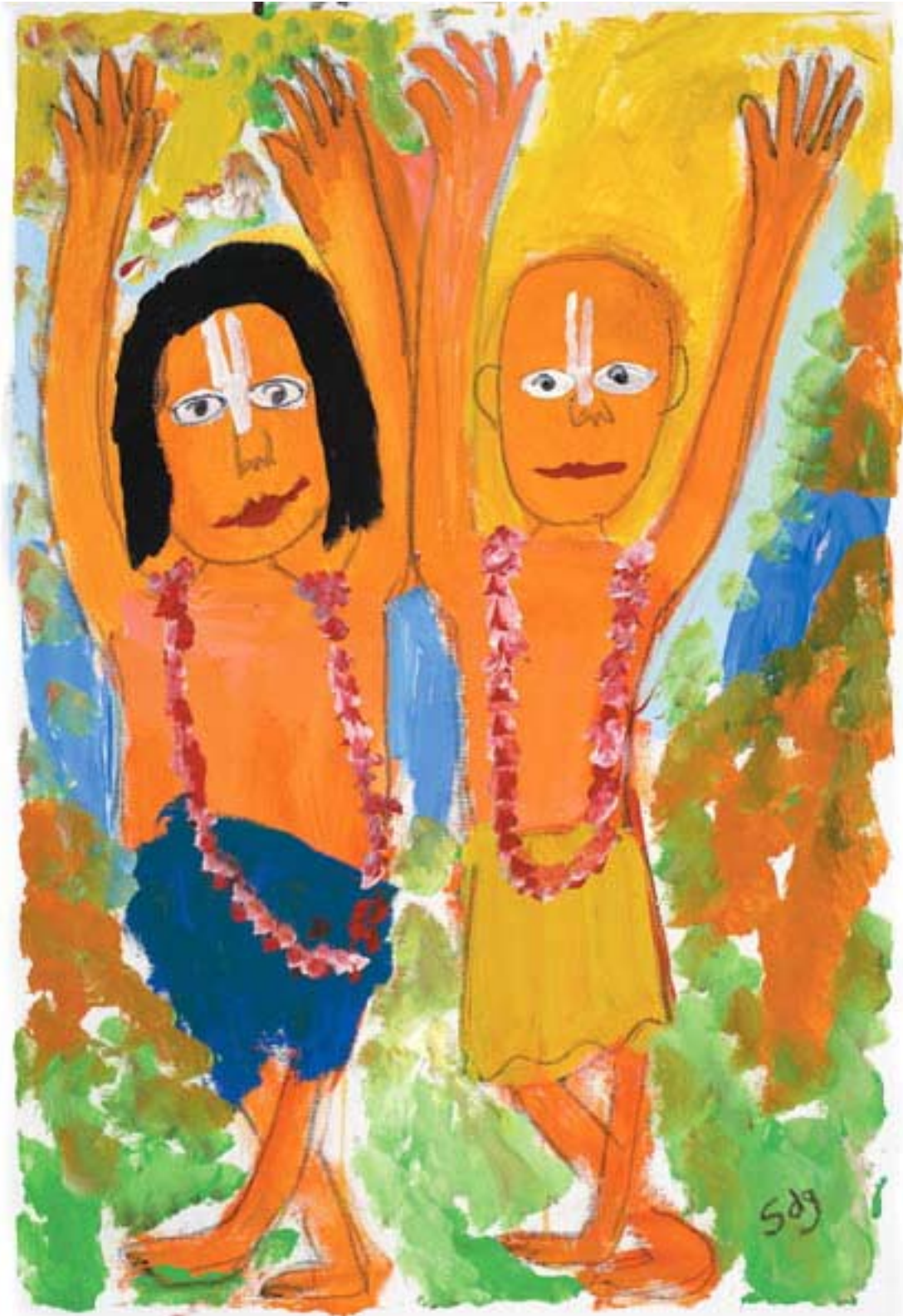
BlueNose



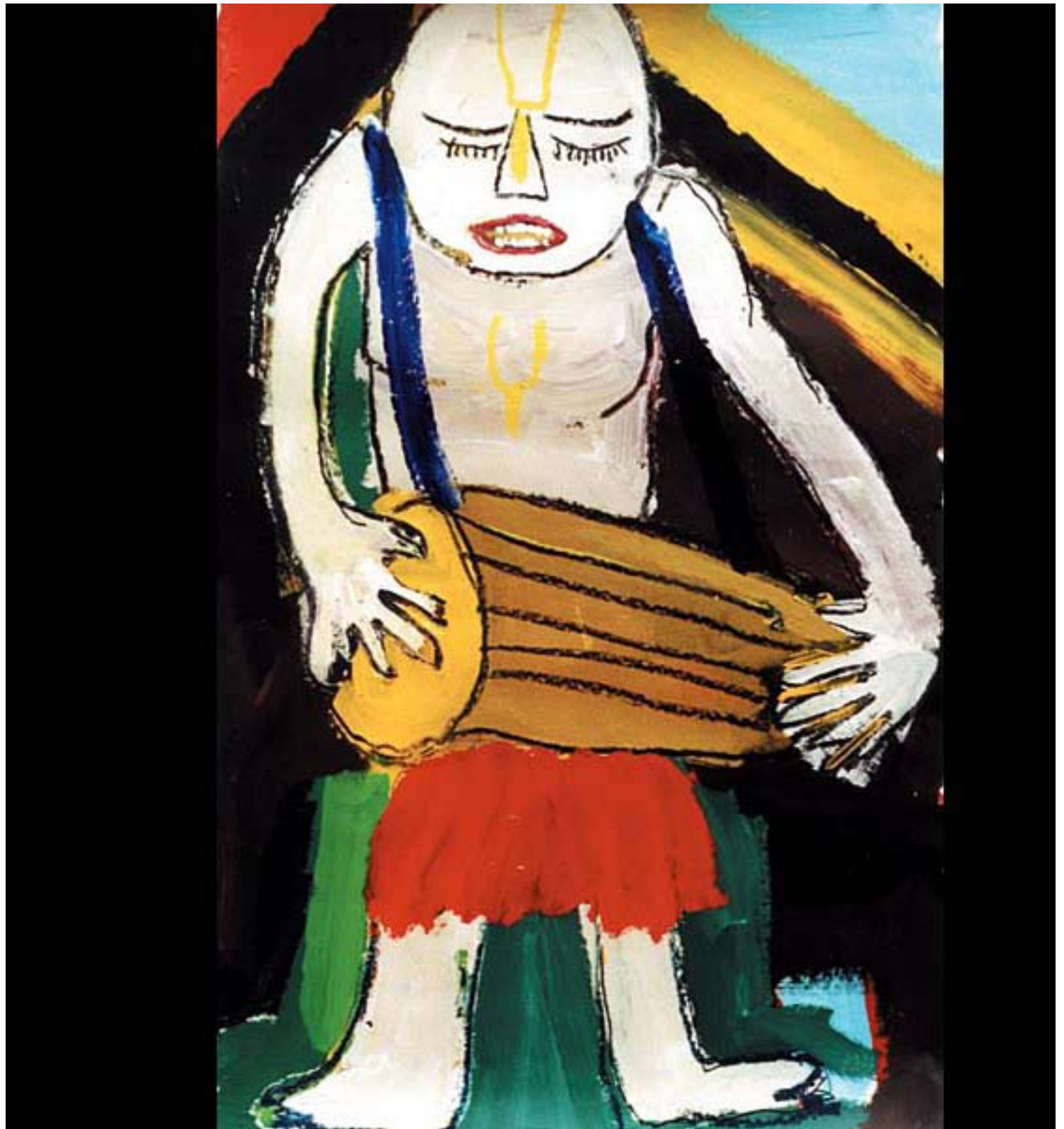
Comeback



DeadMan



Dance



DeepRhythm



Friendly



Friends



HumbleWork



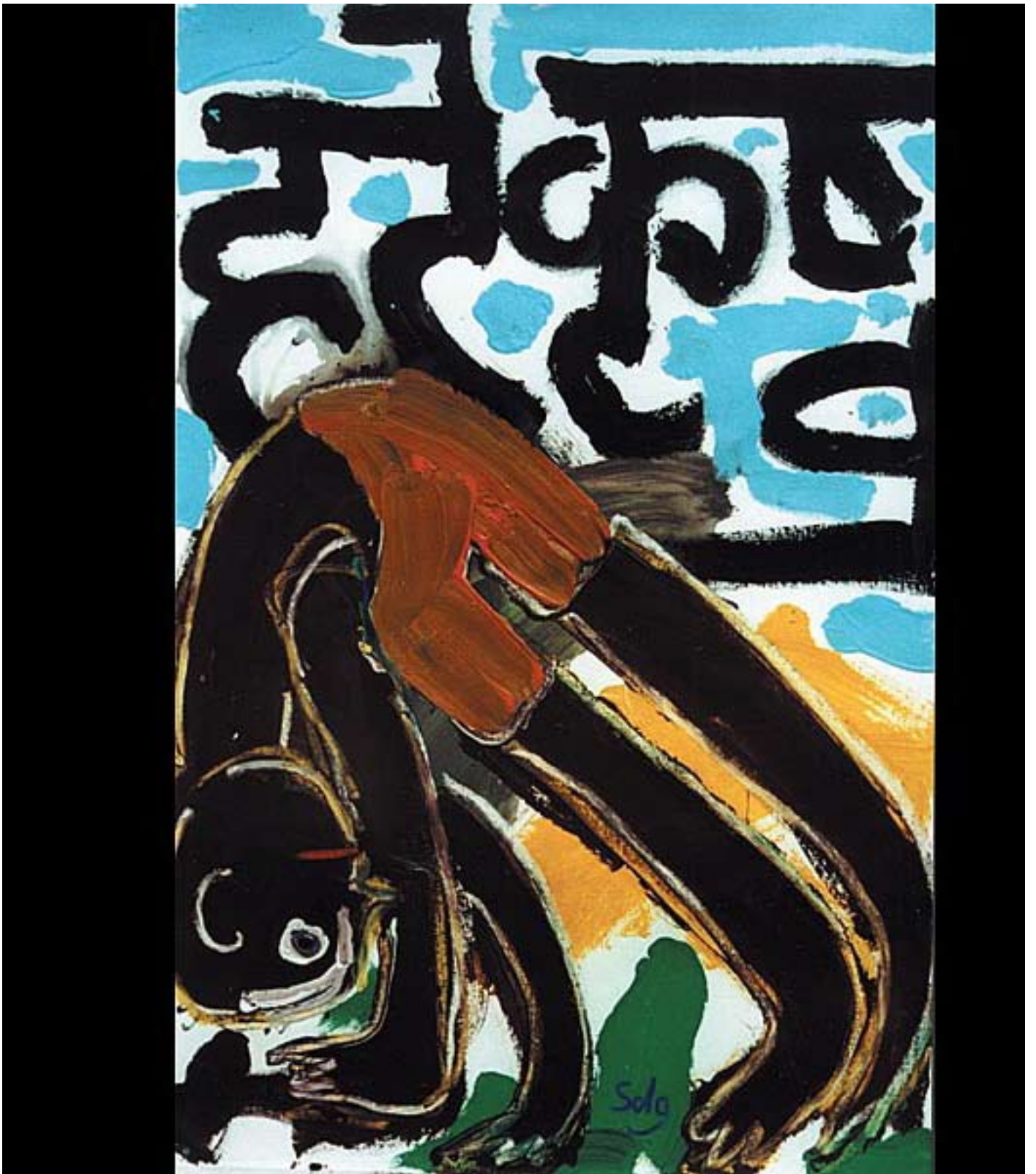
Mysteries1



Mysteries2



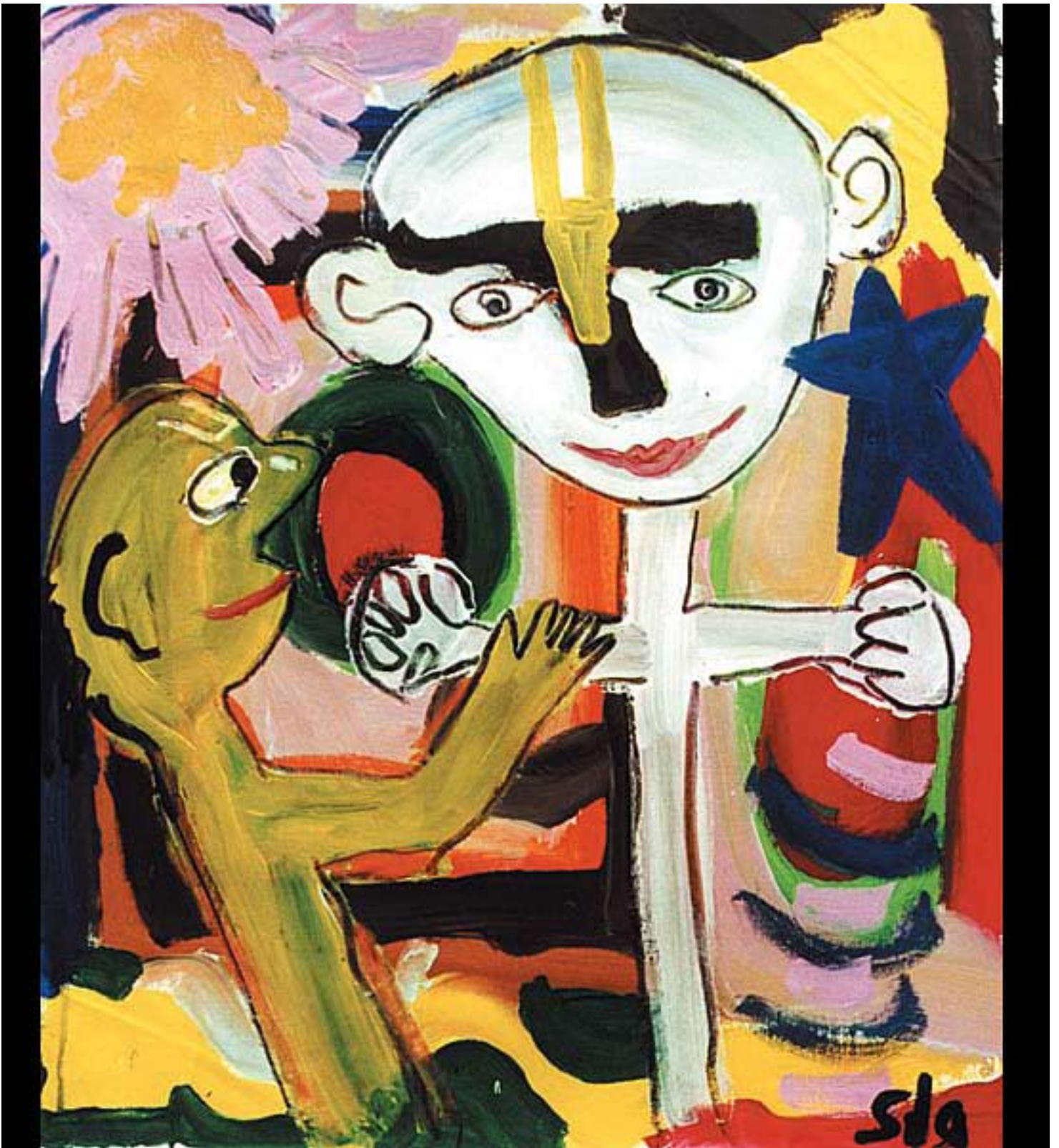
Radha-Govinda



SanskritBend



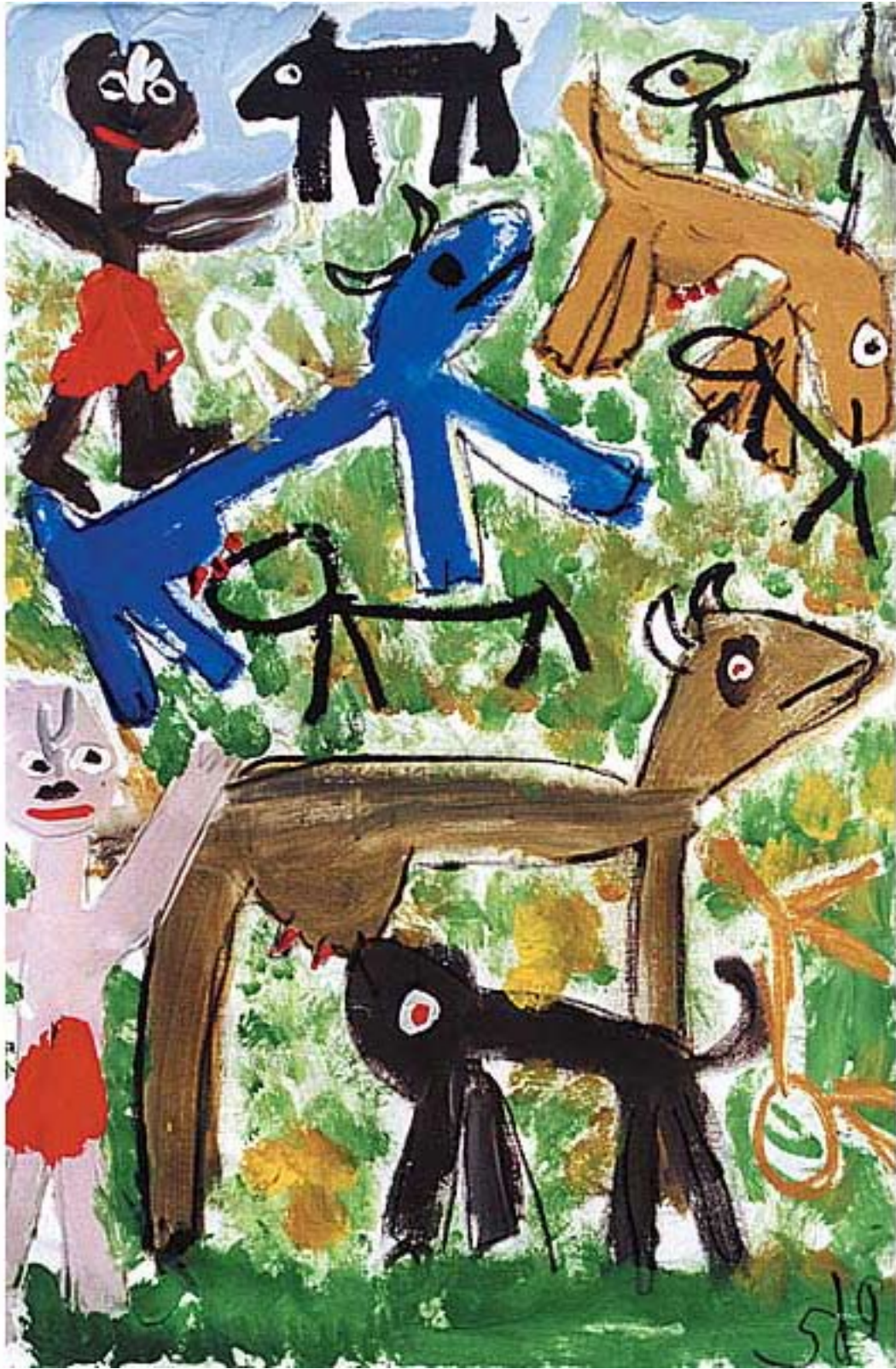
Something



Strength



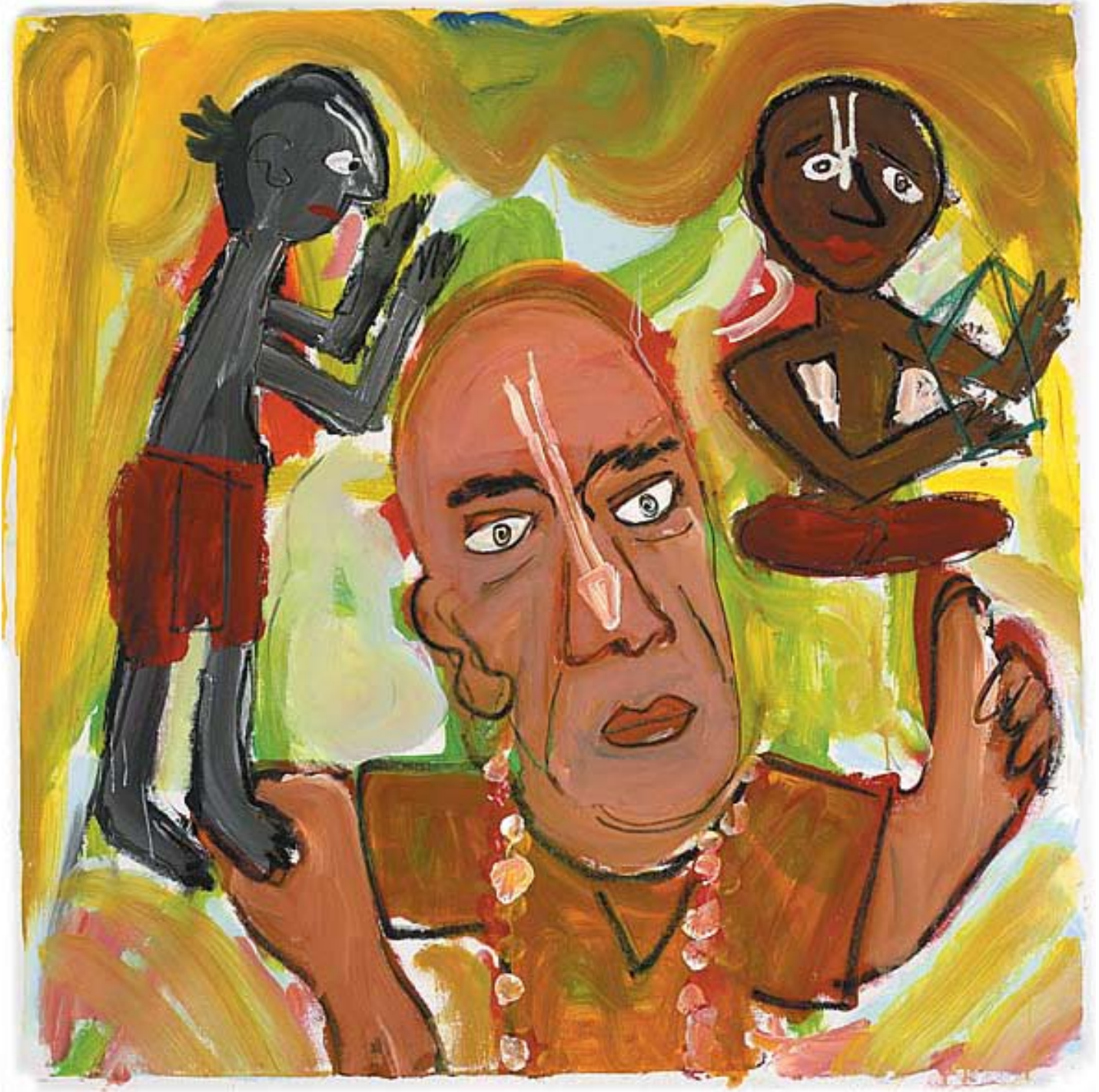
tracking image



Untitled



Untitled2



WhoAreThey



YogaAsana

- **Sculptures**



ZLookingUp3D



ZOpenArms3D



ZRaincoat3D



ZTiedDown3D



ZTorture3D

Obviously he needs help, and fast. Our prescription is that he publicly admits he was never authorised to do what he is doing, that he renounce his disciples and give them back to the person on whose behalf he was meant to be initiating all along - Srila Prabhupada. At least his disciples can never say we did not warn them.

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