

Engaging Revelation



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In spring 2024 I decided to photograph sights in my neighborhood (Coolidge Corner, Brookline, MA) that remind me of the Book of Revelation, the last book of the New Testament. The twenty-two chapters progress to the return of Jesus Christ, who judges the living and dead, absolutely destroys evil, and ushers in joy for believers in the Lord's Majestic Sovereignty. The Lamb symbolically marries New Jerusalem and establishes a New Heaven and a New Earth. The human tasked with recording the apocalyptic vision was John, banished to Patmos. His prophecy palette includes Old Testament imagery.

The project is not revelations about Coolidge Corner, Brookline. It's about sights, some significantly non-special, everyday, that can lead to thinking about the scripture. The visuals be local, the references cosmic, physical and intangible, a fusion of here and now and eternal. At least that's one way to see it.

The tone is dynamic, ranging from humorous to serious. Likewise, the images span from common to refined. That's debatable, and that's my stance. The arrangement is not entirely based on the order that the references appear in scripture.

A clock, jewelry shop near the church. "...the time is near" (Revelation 1:3).



A being like a 'son of man' orders John to write to the 7 angels of 7 churches. I viewed the steeple upon waking in bed, looking across the room under a desk.



The products symbolize cleanliness, linked to purity, a concept in Revelation. The humor is the notion that a small supply of cleaning products [i.e., a small dose of purity] would be enough to remove demonic possession from the church, and it raises the question: why is a church infested? It's exorcism humor, and I'm not an exorcist.



Perceived as more than a sidewalk object on Harvard Street, this traditional Celtic symbol, a solar circle cross standing for eternity, casts a shadow due to light basking.



This swing, perceived as a symbol of oscillation, evokes 1 Kings 18:21 when prophet Elijah spoke before a miracle: “How long will you waver between two opinions? If the Lord is God follow him; but if Baal is God, follow him.” Some think Elijah is one of two witnesses in Revelation 11.



The perception: the playground in Griggs Park represents youth. Everlasting life is triumphed in Revelation for believers in Jesus Christ.



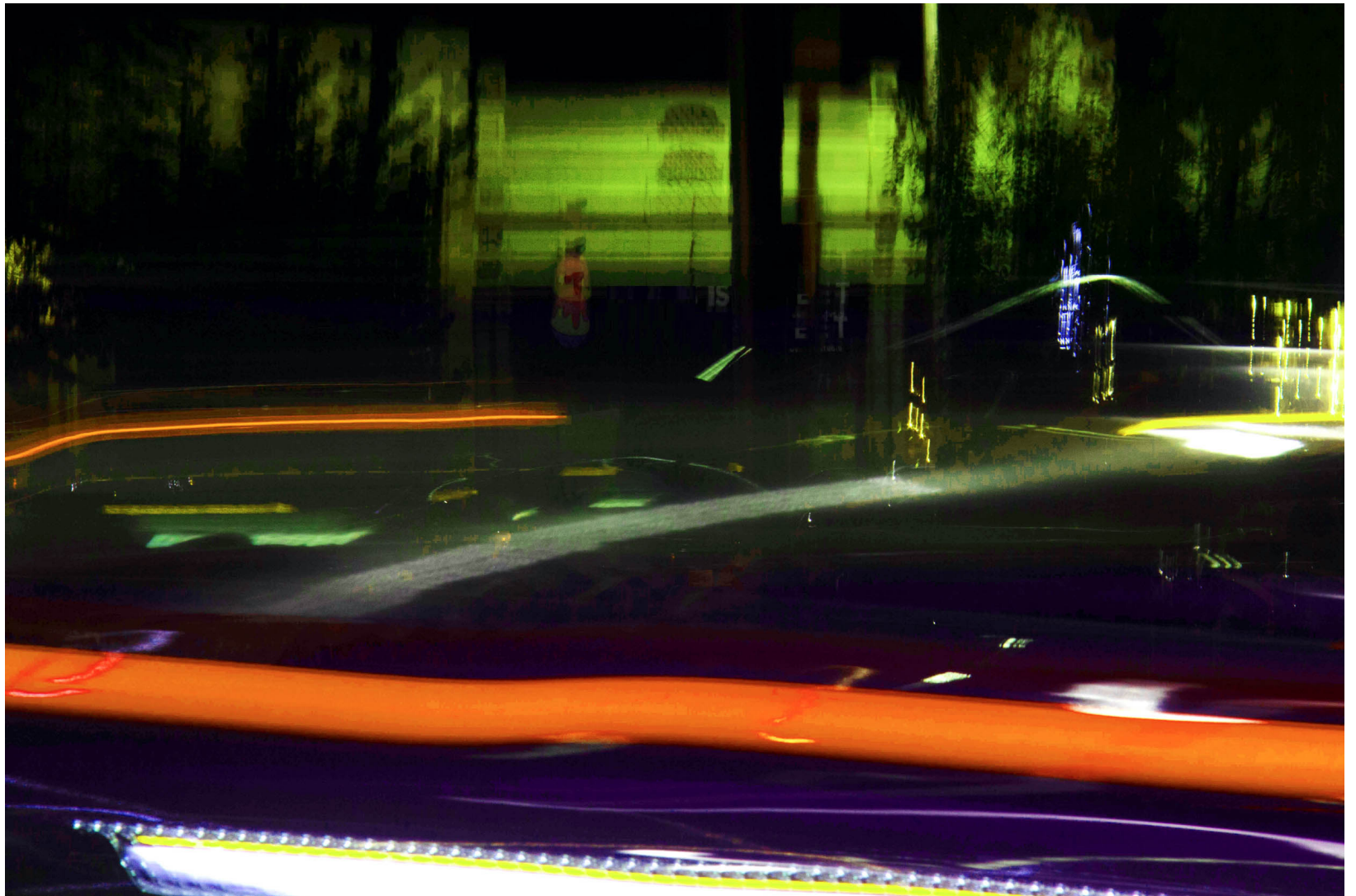
Fire is a fundamental symbol in scripture, including Revelation. Fire makes some think of hell. Fire makes others think angels with wings of fire or the burning bush. This fire alarm is not pulled. Is someone tempted to pull it? Would sounding the alarm save lives or would it disturb the peace?

LIFT THEN
PULL HANDLE

PULL FOR

FIRE

While Our Assailant Self-Destructs, Heaven Accelerates—A perspective of Satan ever failing to match God's might, a reality which excites heaven. This photograph is a night image of Beacon Street near Coolidge Corner.



Signs at Hollywood Cleaners on Beacon Street bring to mind clean attire, related to what the multitude in Revelation chapter 19 might wear to the Lamb's wedding.

OPEN

Antiques
& Repairs

DEK
CLEANING

The waste bin helps maintain cleanliness, which relates to purity, a concept throughout Revelation. (Evil, “akatharton” in Greek, stands for impurity.)



Imagination links this standpipe to a dragon able to spew water. “But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed out of his mouth” (Revelation 12:16). The woman had given birth to a son, whom the devil wanted to devour, but God protected her and the Christ child.



One definition of “vent” is to give free expression to a strong emotion. Jesus Christ expresses his feelings toward Satan when He throws the devil “into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown” to be “tormented day and night for ever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).



The honey, symbolized by the bear container, tastes sweet, like the little scroll the angel told John to eat (Revelation 10: 9-11).



This peace plant on the deck is a gift bought at a Coolidge Corner florist. Christ is the Prince of Peace.



These hanging pots on an apartment balcony near Griggs Park, perceived differently, serve as a reminder that the eyes of the Creator are upon us. The Lord is described as a potter elsewhere in scripture. Revelation celebrates the Lord's sovereignty and God as Maker is reinforced by the new heaven and new earth and references to some Genesis imagery.



Certain spiritual moments stir fear nearing God. Instances: waking at Bethel from a dream with a stairway, or ladder, in it, “[Jacob] was afraid and said, ‘How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven’” (Genesis 28:17). In Revelation 1:17 John writes, “When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said, ‘Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last.’”



Angels, represented by this one on top of the early twentieth-century Christmas music tree, are throughout the Book of Revelation.

