

# We See: Creating From Verse



National Association of Women Artists  
South Carolina Chapter

## ***Acknowledgement:***

The South Carolina Chapter of NAWA wishes to thank poet

## **LISA HAMMOND**

for allowing us to use the inspiration of her poetry for this exhibit.

Writers of literature have long used art as an inspiration for their written work. In this exhibit we are turning this around and using poetry as a device to conceive a work of art. The exhibit theme encourages artists to be inspired by the poetry of South Carolina poet, Lisa Hammond. In this show, we asked our SC Chapter members to engage with Hammond's poetry and create a visual of their experience

Lisa Hammond's writing is grounded in the sometimes haunted landscapes of South Carolina and explores the intersections between story, art, history, family, and memory, all in the ordinary objects of her Southern home. Her poems have been published widely, and she is the author of three chapbooks of poetry, *Lily Watch* (Seven Kitchens Press, 2021), *Goddess Suite* (Small Fires Press, 2018), and *Moving House* (Texas Review Press, 2007). Dr. Hammond is Director of Faculty Affairs in the Office of the Provost at the University of South Carolina and is a professor of English at the University of South Carolina Lancaster.

## Wishing Tree

Every time we drive down Highway 701,  
first we cross Six-Mile Creek, then pass  
the Francis Marion Phillips 66.

The Black River bridge sweeps high over  
marshlands, dark slick mud pocketed with  
fiddler crab holes, the tide turning, then

the birds burst out from under the bridge,  
black wings beating until they settle again  
where we cannot see them. But before

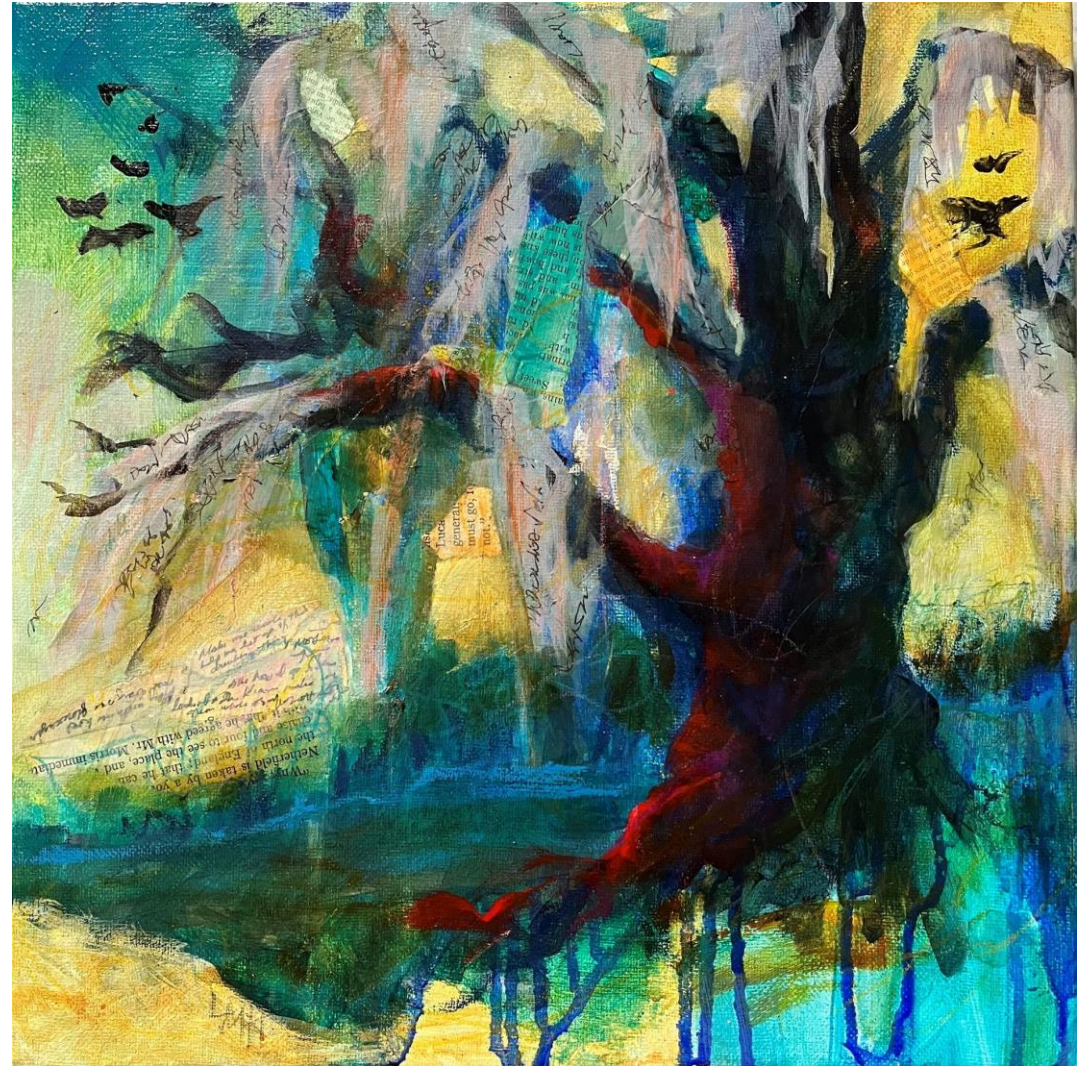
we get downtown, we drive under it,  
the wishing tree, old branches reaching  
to cross the highway, casting shadows

of granted wishes, how much money,  
how many lovers, as many as the leaves  
on the silver gray branches. No, more.

And who can say if mine was ever one, how  
if my mother was driving too fast or veered  
just out of range, or we were hurrying to get

shrimp before the market closed, or if I forgot  
to close my eyes, or perhaps that one branch  
did not reach quite far enough to span the road,

how my wish flew out the window,  
hung a minute in the fast hot air before,  
like a swallow gone astray, it fluttered away.



*Wishing Tree ~ Laura McRae Hitchcock*

Acrylic and Graphite

12" x 12"

\$450

# We step out for a walk

*On the unveiling of an Amiri Farris mural on the Lindsay Pettus Greenway, April 2021*

We step out for a walk, searching for our keys, our water bottles, sunscreen, shoes, the dog’s leash. Goldfish crackers for the small, diaper bags with bandaids for the newly toddling, camelbacks for the fleet of foot. We bring ourselves to the walk, our little selves running to get our wiggles out, our young strong selves fast sidestepping along the trail past our older slower selves, worrying about our ankles, our diabetes, our hearts, but still here, still moving.

We come for the greening, the quick moments between bare winter trees and the green buds peeking and the full bloom of new leaves, so fast we might miss it from one weekend to the next, the water quiet and dark one Saturday and yellowed with dense swirls of pollen from Friday rain the next.

We step out for a walk, hoping to see a blue heron wading or a hawk flash past, to puzzle over a footprint in the mud, a beaver’s, to hear an owl, the Carolina Wren, the Chickadee, the Eastern Towhee calling, *drink your teeeea*, the same little songbirds we hear in our backyards, but here in these woods, their voices lift higher, lift us higher.

We come for the sunshine, stepping out in our masks wanting to feel the air, worn down from a hard year in lockdown, working from home, the weariness of seeing ourselves and others in those small Zoom boxes, the voices of our work friends in our kitchens, where we cannot break bread with them or share wine with them, only listen to the meeting, the schoolwork, even church, alone in our kitchens and needing sun. So we step out for a walk and hope, maybe it won’t be crowded today, and we can let the mask dangle in our hands a while, our faces raised to sun and shadows.

We step out for a walk, to pick up litter along the trail, to try to feel care in this practice and not anger at the careless, wearing our gloves and carrying our trash pickers, collecting beer cans and empty chip bags and candy wrappers, leaving with a trash bag filled with debris and a heart filled with hope, knowing what we do here on this earth matters.

We come for the festival, the Kona ice, the food trucks and nature crafts, to see our children’s art, lily pad collage, happy big-headed self-portraits, a swirling Van Gogh downtown, potato prints, and pointillism hearts. We will walk the whole trail to find the name of our beloved child, to see the pride in that young face. We come for the mural, to see what the artist sees, what we painted in bits the festival week now whole, one vision we all realized, working with paintbrushes side-by-side.

We step out for a walk, bringing ourselves fast and slow, young and old, hurt and whole, Black and white and all the colors, to say hello to our neighbors and strangers alike, making neighbors of these strangers, bringing ourselves to these trails our town has built, the art our hands have made.

We step out for a walk.



*Eastern Towhee Calling “Drink your Teeeea” ~ Melinda Welker*

Photography	16” x 20”	\$250
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# Three Fish

## ***Still Life***

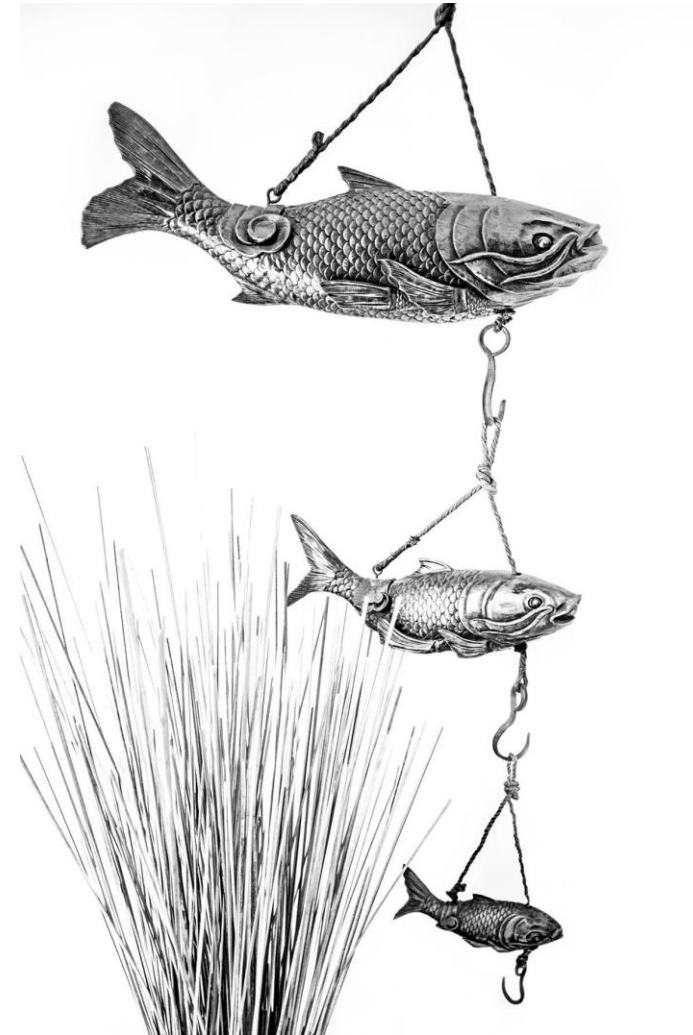
Carving hung prone on the wall,  
still as if God carved it out by hand,  
gouged the fin rays, then smoothed  
them to a fine raised point, left  
a hint of gill, the grain of ancient  
cedar, one knothole eye staring  
blindly up, mounted, waiting  
for water, the breath of life.

## ***Bream***

Shellcracker, bluegill, all bream  
bedding down in April, hungry,  
striking earthworms, crickets.  
One hits the lure, and fighting  
the line, swallows the pronged  
hook. Redbreast sunfish, belly  
reddened more by blood now,  
hook set deep inside, all catch,  
no release, still you flip towards  
freedom, your death in water.

## ***Silver Fish***

Faithful fish, you swam straight  
to a chain around my neck, leaving  
that river of black velvet where  
you waited with one coyote,  
flock of dragonflies, fall of leaf,  
Kokopelli, Buddha, all considering  
a rusty patina crescent moon.  
Your polished silver spoke,  
your Pisces body, divide of wavy  
line, the yin and yang of you.  
How you are harmony, fertility,  
fish of plenty, protection against  
great harm, freedom from desire,  
a charm more potent for perching  
just between heart and collarbone.  
Small fish but mighty, I pray you,  
take me to swim in your waters.



*Fish Out of Water ~ Melinda Welker*

Photography

26" x 20"

\$300

## Rope Swing

Suspended just over the water at high tide,  
that rope swing sways back and forth  
in the wind, frayed ends trailing.

We stand on the dock's old gray wood,  
buckled with time and water. A dare.  
Who will swing at low tide?

We all stand, imagining the impact,  
feet driven into the deep soft bottom  
through the shallow creek water.

The drop at just the right time, mid-creek.  
Too soon, too late, the bank, cypress knees,  
sharp sawgrass, thick dark mud.

We all remember the girl who slipped  
off too soon, her leg coated, black slick  
mud, bright blood. Her tears.

I still feel the burn of the rope filling my palm,  
prickles sharp on my foot. Half blind  
with water, judging the marsh, tide,

the moment, fall into darkness.



*Rope Swing ~ Mary Ann Browning Ford*

Acrylic

28" x 22"

\$1800

## Oh Girlfriend

I hear you, girlfriend. I've been there, girlfriend. You know what no one else knows, what he said when he left, where the bodies are buried, and oh girlfriend yes I will loan you my new wedding shoes, and you will bring them back again, maybe scuffed a bit, which will only make me love you and them more. Oh girlfriend, all that wine over all those years, remember wine coolers, that one bottle of that good French wine, that \$2.99 cheap red wine, and we can't even finish the bottle anymore—but we do still pass a good time. Oh girlfriend, I will never forget how you were the only one who noticed, the only one who stood by me when my fool sister—I love her, I do—when my fool sister friended my ex on Facebook. Did you ever hear back about your raise? how'd that last round of bloodwork come out? Oh girlfriend! I'll come with you next time, if you want. How I miss you, too many days of groceries and errands and handholding that asshole at work again. All those meetings, doctor's appointments, our calendars riddled. What about the third Saturday in March? the fourth? April is wide open. Girlfriend, let me tell you, I don't know how you do it all.



*Barbara Dancing Till The End of Time ~ Judith Carlin*

Freehand digital painting, archival pigment print on canvas

24" x 30"

\$800

# Moving House i

This house  
started small,  
grew

when dropped in water.  
One wing curled out  
so quickly

we didn't see it, sprig  
of morning glory  
run wild,

each leafy shade a room  
of sorts: mossy kitchen  
first.

Then the offshoots sprout  
roots: front porch, tin roof  
pinging

in the rain. Living room,  
school of fish on the walls,  
swimming.

A shop downstairs, hammers  
and flashlight, crickets  
chirping.

These shallow roots push down  
into marsh-covered soil,  
just below

a thin hide  
of grass.



*Moving House I ~ Meyriel Edge*

Acrylic

18" x 24"

\$475

## Moving House iii

Suspended  
in a circle of green,  
this house shows no signs  
of settling. A gust of wind  
might carry it away.

Our two forks rattle  
in the breeze, blowing  
through the kitchen.  
We catch them  
at dinnertime, wipe  
them through the dew.  
We never bother  
to lock up the silver.

Even our bed  
will not stay put.  
The sheets play ghost,  
the pillows fight,  
the quilt unravels  
when we're not looking.  
Unruly linens.

We drift too, open  
to pale moons, watching  
sprinklers undone,  
water's breath seeping  
slowly from grass.

We laugh at lawns.  
Not tied to one spot of green,  
we circle through seasons  
never touching  
ground.



*Moving House iii ~ Meyriel Edge*

Acrylic

12" x 24"

\$425

## Hydrangeas

*They plant them in trailer parks.* I am standing between the topiaries and the statuary, mossy urns hiding me from the women's view. Fragrant hoops and balls, rising spires of rosemary—they do not know I can hear them, back behind stone fountains splashing, zen temple bell, the little St. Francis. Poor Hortensia, with her matronly name, flowers I mostly see now run rampant alongside fallen fences, old foundations, old fashioned, blowsy pink or blue. At home I have the county extension agent's flyer, *Change the pH of Your Soil*, and I remember how the grandmothers buried tin cans at the roots, to bring out their blue eyes. I loved the fat conspicuous blooms, thick-barked stems, how they'd overtake beds when your back was turned. One neighbor poured hot bacon grease on roots to kill hers—come spring they'd leg themselves right up over her sorry fence again. Standing in the nursery next to the pot feet, those two old ladies so like that cranky neighbor, I remember the spring I planted mine, my first year in the new house, how I hoarded catalogues, Ayesah or Annabelle, Blue Bunny or Snowqueen, how the first years it struggled, every winter I thought it dead, every spring it crept back a bit, a lone small nosegay budding, nothing like the wild oakleaf outside my old bedroom window. I had thought them so *Southern Living*, lacecaps and mopheads trailing with grapevine over the silver and linen. I carried them at my cousin's wedding, thirsty bouquet drooping alongside the sheer ribbon before well before the toasts, photographs hurried. O Dear Delores, O Silverleaf, O Brussels Lace, here your solitary representative, a potbound pink Everlasting tucked away behind begonias, object of scorn. O Endless Summer, unhurried maiden, I wait months for your snowballs, each heavy flower spreading open to the wind, minding her own business.



*Gracious Hortensis ~ Joan Eckhardt*

Photography

16" x 20"

\$335

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*Old-fashioned Hydrangeas ~ Sandy Dimke*

Photography

19" x 13"

\$550

## To Fall in Love with Anyone

*More than 20 years ago, the psychologist Arthur Aron succeeded in making two strangers fall in love in his laboratory.*

— Mandy Len Catron

*If your house were burning down, and you could save one thing—not a person, not your cat—what would that one thing be? We are sitting at this sticky table in this too-loud coffee shop together over yet another meeting agenda. Tell your life story in four minutes. I am pretending not to see the sign in the window, *Special Pairings*. I am perfecting alone, I will live alone and die alone. We are only working. Before making a telephone call, do you ever rehearse what you are going to say? I am thinking, *who will die first?* I smell your soap. I can't do this again, stay up all night, drive home early, giddy. I read that story, the couple sitting face to face—*When did you last sing to yourself? To someone else?*—answering thirty-six questions. I know how it ends. You are watching, wary—who could blame you? I will not answer the questions nor complete the sentence—I wish I had someone with whom I could share—what? You are still here. I will not stare into your eyes, not for four minutes, not for one minute. It is not like riding a bike. Open all your doors and windows and take off all your clothes. Stand naked in the doorway in February. Ask if anyone would like to come in.*



*Left Out ~ Judith Carlin*

Oil and acrylic on canvas

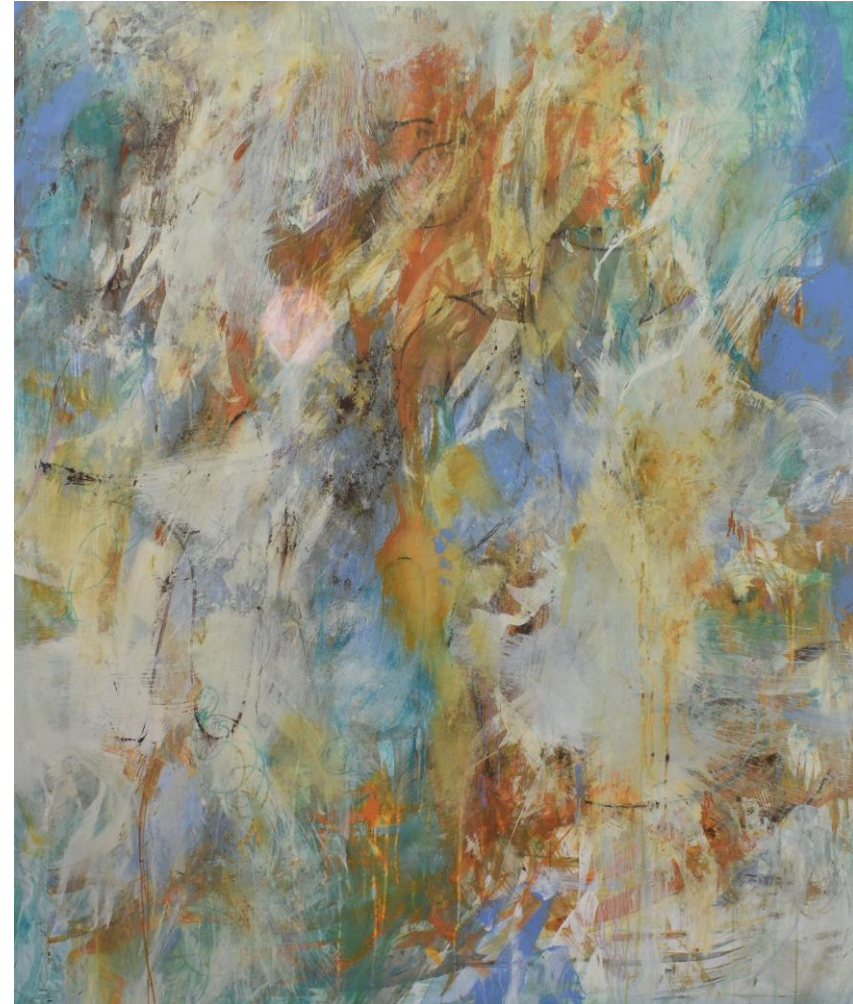
24" x 30"

\$1500

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*Take My Pulse ~ Penny Beesley*

Acrylic, charcoal, pastel, coffee on paper , mounted on panel      55" x 47"      \$2600

## Why We Missed the Eclipse

Thick gray haze blurred  
the sky long before dark.

I knew by afternoon  
the moon would hide  
itself unseen tonight.

Still, its shadow follows  
this path, leading  
to our door.

And do we open it?

No totality, only  
coppery darkness  
stills animals, wind,  
as quiet inside.

We just let the light  
refracted slip by

one more moment  
when we were  
not watching.



*Stairway to Forever ~ Rose Cofield*

Acrylic and collage elements on cradled wood 12" x 12"

\$225

# Stargazing for the Beginner

First a star chart, 34.5 latitude.

Or a planisphere:

with just two wheels you circle  
the sky around,

north-east at 2 a.m., change time.

Now November,

or perhaps warmer weather, late  
April? Choose your time,

the Summer Triangle, navigate  
southern skies, for

place too matters. Steer south  
of the city.

Imagine standing in a flat field,  
clear horizons, no trees,

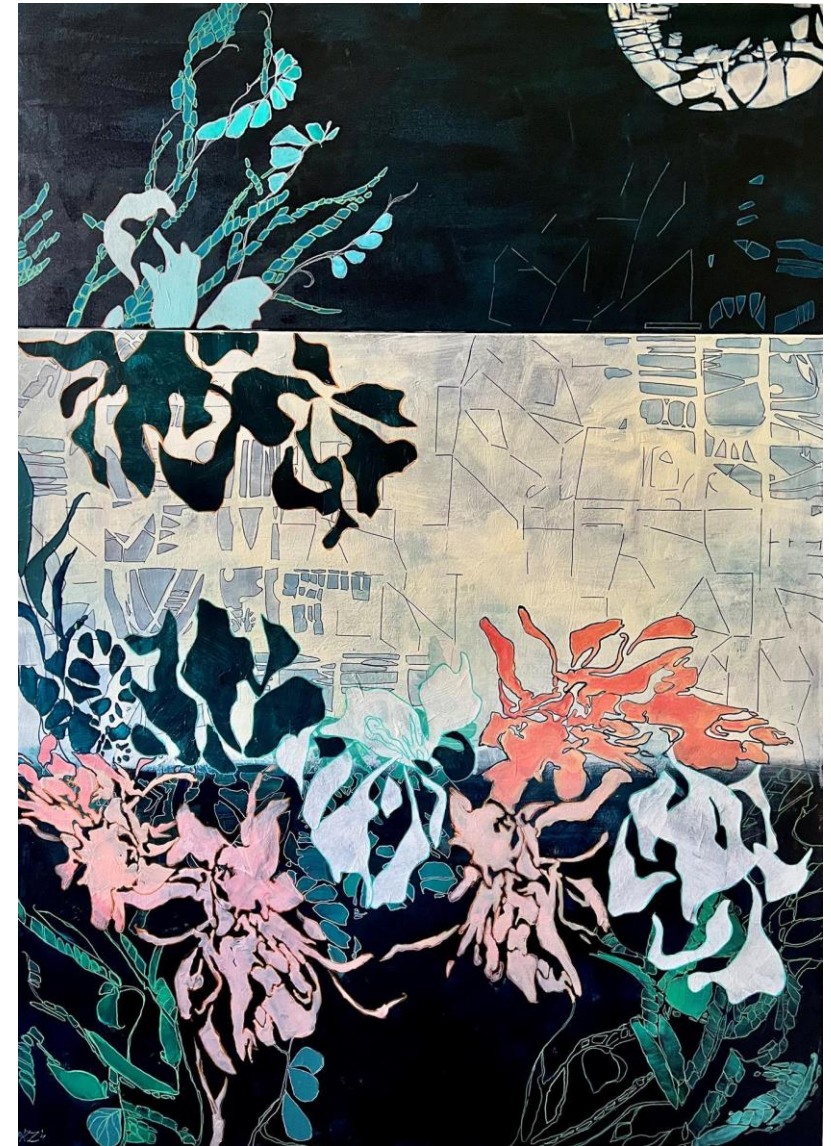
darkness, warm velvet movement,  
Cassiopeia rising above.

Celestial circle, small star map,  
grid lines dividing,

converging, one spot the center  
of the sky or the universe,

all the rest hidden by your mask,  
Polaris watching the path

of the sun cannot know half  
your calm certainty.



*Under a Gondola Moon ~ Pat Zalisko*

Acrylic / Collage on Canvas

56" x 40"

\$7000

## How to Identify Birds

*"Unfortunately, very few birds actually  
look like their pictures in field guides."*

—David Allen Sibley

First, field marks are relative.

How red the cardinal's breast,  
no shade the summer tanager,  
black crest and face, darker  
than the purple martin, except  
the blackbird's glossy wing.

The color means nothing,  
bleeds away into the sky.

So. Plumage, perching habits,  
length of tail or wing or bill.  
Prairie warbler, blackpoll warbler,  
answer the riddle: whose tail  
measures longer, tip to body?

Does the answer matter? Either  
way both flick the rain away.

Every detail sharp to eye—*find ten  
differences between these two birds*—  
my book open as I study posture,  
and I find only eight. I tip my face  
to the sun, feel shadows flit away,

small dreams and sparrows gone.



*Darling Starling ~ Sheila Grabarsky*

Acrylic and acrylic residues on canvas

36" x 24"

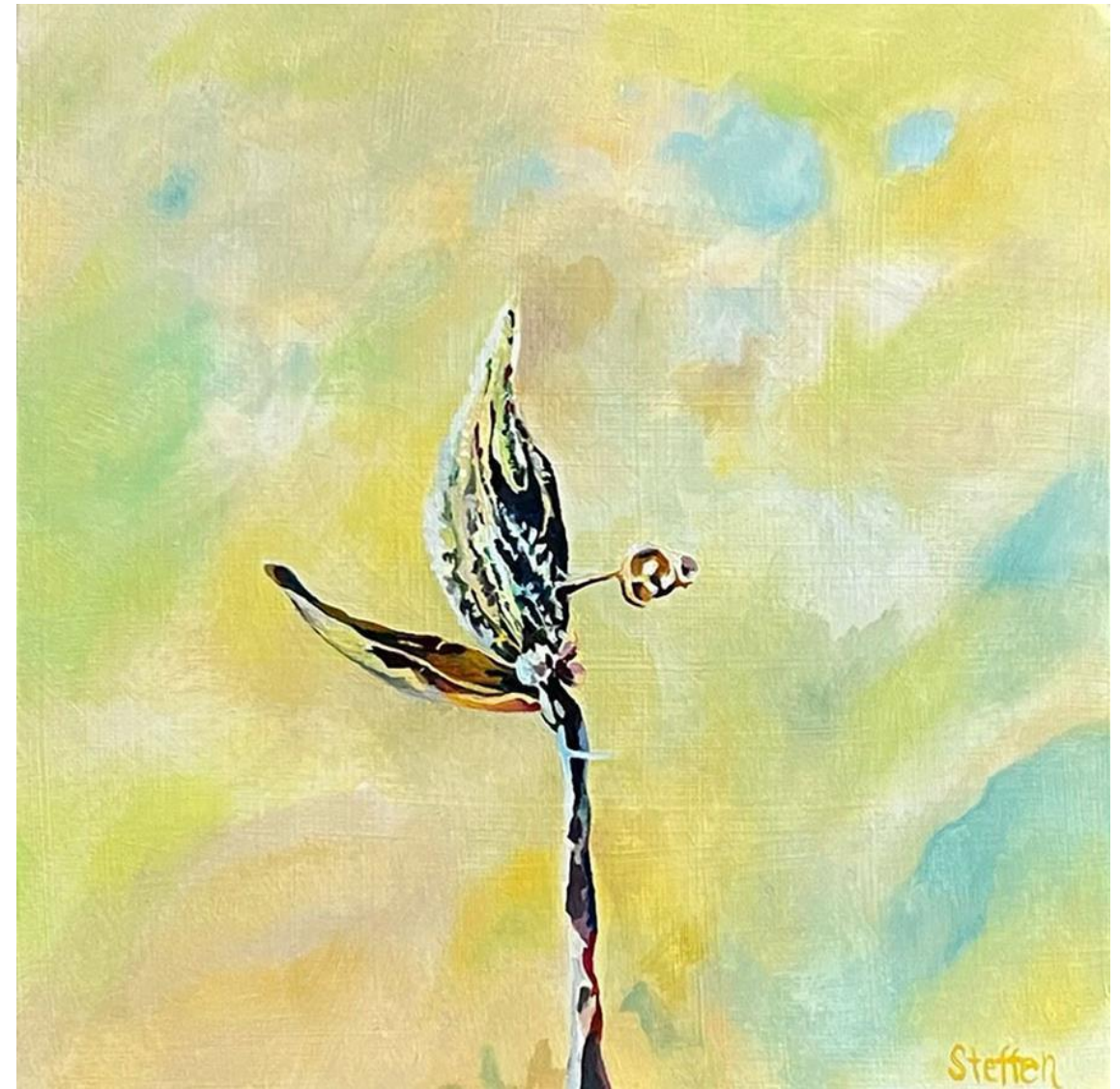
\$1700

## White Space

The world had a neutral background then,  
pale celadon or ecru, a creamy isolation,  
single sharp image centered foreground,  
a chaffinch nest and egg, rosy speckled  
shape suspended mid-air above the nest.

Delicate lines form each figure, brown ink  
shadow, feathered fern, mossy green, thin  
twigs woven into emptiness, settled into  
a branch, smooth barked hand holding  
the cupped center rounded and waiting.

Two ovals mirrored, poised small stilled,  
another echoing hollow below, white space  
between dormant. Why lift the egg, float  
it motherless above the carefully drawn nest,  
almost a halo, leaving it never to hatch?



*Milkweed Alone, Not Lonely ~ Mary Steffen*

Oil and cold wax on wood panel

12" x 12"

\$400

## On Comprehending Gravity

He holds that note,  
his mouth a perfect  
o of understanding:

song of the science  
of dropping, ode to the cup,  
falling again, again, again,

each time, picked up,  
returned. His hand holds,  
then drops, and no words

will stop this great force.  
If  $G$  is Newton's constant,  
 $M$  mass of the earth,

$r$  the distance to the center,  
still, no equation can measure  
this constant acceleration:

the cup, the ball, falling  
forever in this moment.  
No words can capture

the second of impact,  
force of gravity, refrain  
of fall, only that one

low note, as this boy,  
my small scientist, tests  
the world's physics.



*No Equation ~ Sheila Grabarsky*

Acrylic and acrylic residue on canvas

30" x 30"

\$2100

# The Wavelength of Light

Prepared slides litter the table,  
leg, wing, antenna, dragonfly,  
locust, honeybee. Phlox leaf,  
dandelion fuzz.

She is looking at tulip pollen,  
the faintest smear on a slide,  
constellation of brown star dust  
scattered across the heavens  
of thin glass.

The light is broken. She angles  
the mirror, shifting the sun  
to suit her purposes.

Her hair shines in the light,  
hiding her face as she bends,  
and I remember seeing the rope  
of one strand of her hair, how  
she let me pluck it out,  
thread it under the stage clips,  
how she adjusted the focus  
herself, *coarse focus adjustment*,  
*fine focus adjustment*.

She does not understand yet  
total magnification, 40x,  
resolving power, how  
*the wavelength of light*  
*limits resolution*.

She knows only the eyepiece,  
the mirror, the lens and the sun,  
enough, an infinity of tuning.



Celedon Garden ~ Earline Allen

Acrylic

18" x 24"

\$1080

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*Flower Storm* ~ Earline Allen

Acrylic

20" x 16"

\$760

## Last Peach

Peaches piled in the rough basket, heaped high under the handle, gold yellow red skins nearly bursting fat round firm, just barely a fingertip might indent the fruit, picked one minute before ripeness.

Every batch has one or two too hard; sit them on the windowsill, hide them away in a brown paper bag on the counter, wait.

Full summer will come, the last peach ripen as it sits, the leaves first fresh picked, still green, slowly wilting as the flesh draws moisture from the stem, from the air, some deep magic slowly spinning each drop into juice.



*Windowsill Ripe ~ Judy McSweeney*

Oil on Cracked Birch

24" x 12"

\$1250

## Found Objects

My friend Fran finds objects.  
Her space is cluttered  
with nests and feathers,  
a tiny cactus charm,  
a peso and lost pennies.  
She twists a new paperclip  
smoothly, snaking it  
across a flat black strip  
of metal.

She softens  
it with tassels, deep purple,  
a pale green.

She embroiders  
them in a canvas she creates  
from only scraps.

I can see her now, turning  
an old circuit board in her hands,  
her eye envisioning the stars  
she will wrest from its silver.



*Finding Aid ~ Fran Gardner*

painting, drawing, hand and machine stitchery, found object

24" x 11"

\$1000

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*Black and Blue ~ Penny Beesley*

Acrylic, charcoal, photo transfer collage, pastel on canvas 36" x 36"

\$1300

## Goddess Suite ii

Not all Tides earth friendly, she uses Good Home Methods, Seventh Generation a promise of peace, salvation, soft suds, soft hands: soap, rinse, sort, fold. Art of the infinite.

She remembers scraping buckskin, beating loose-weave linen in streams, washboard and tub, backyard clothesline heavy. Spending Mondays at the laundromat, quarters and a book.

Grand Wash, her rite twice a year, now replaced instead with empty ritual, wash each day, tumble dry low, handwash delicates, hang to dry. Ceremonies gone, she tosses in another load, stands in the windowless laundry room, folding her past, matching the corners by herself.



*Hanging Out the Wash ~ Mary Cooper McDonough*

Acrylic / Collage papers

20" x 20"

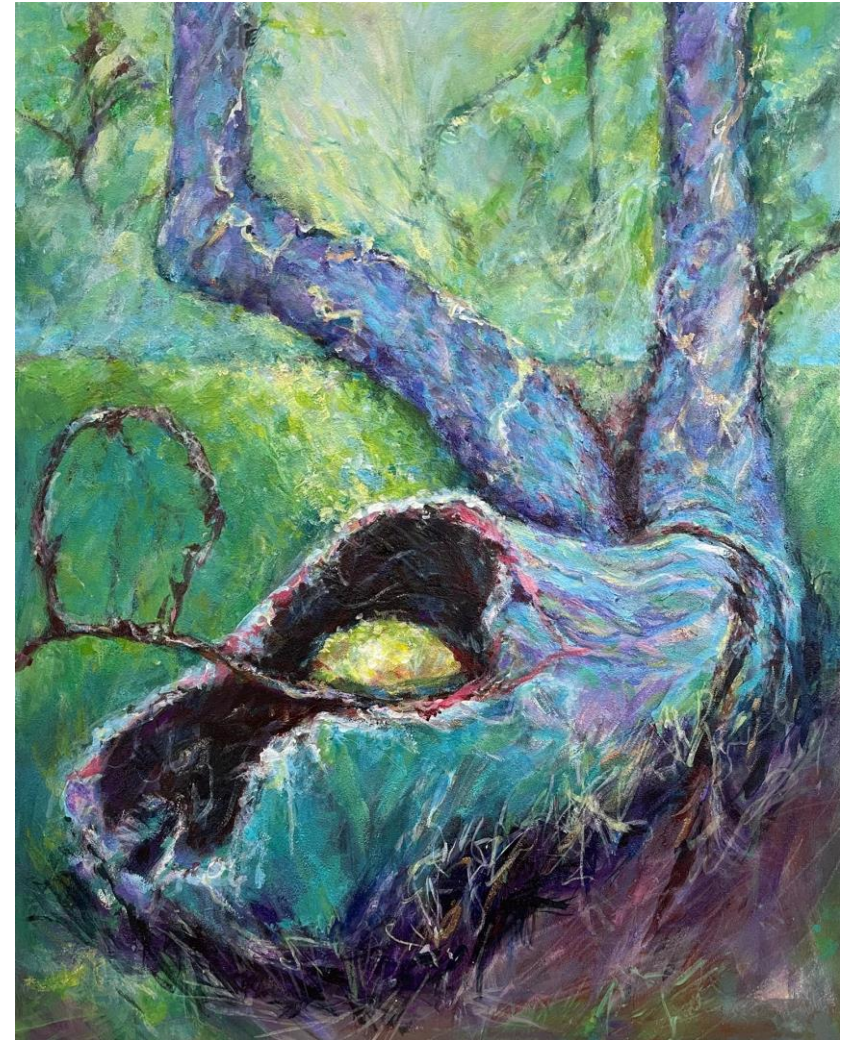
\$1125

## Goddess Suite vi

She turned to wood inside out, first a knot  
deep inside her womb. The doctors wanted  
biopsies, ultrasounds, but she said no,  
held still, felt sap rising in her sure veins.

She wondered what she would become, hoped  
for long-lived oak, but then her skin roughed up,  
pale papery bark peeled away everything  
irrelevant, left her trunk and heart exposed.

She could not tell how she knew it was time,  
how her fingers chose now to twig and bud,  
how her new leaves knew just how to unfurl.  
She just slipped into her tattered birch gown  
like so many good girls before her, waiting  
alone, trusting in trees, trusting herself.



*Trunk and Heart Exposed* ~ Catherine Conrad

Acrylic on Masonite panel

20" x 16"

\$900

## Goddess Suite viii

She fills her feeders sometimes twice a day—  
a wealth of soft-shelled black oil sunflower seed,  
cracked corn, wild thistle for the goldfinches,  
messengers bearing pleas into the heavens.

What luxury! feeding birds! once she brushed  
them quick away from crops, weighing every  
eager sparrow against the hungry child,  
one loaf less or more of coarse, gritty bread.

Some places still they sprinkle grain, offerings  
not to the birds, not to the air—to what?  
A hushed trail of desire around the house.  
She sits in sun, eyes closed, giving birdsong  
an audience. Tiny feet scatter chaff.  
Her familiars—she counts each gold feather.



*To Hear and Carry ~ Staci Swider*

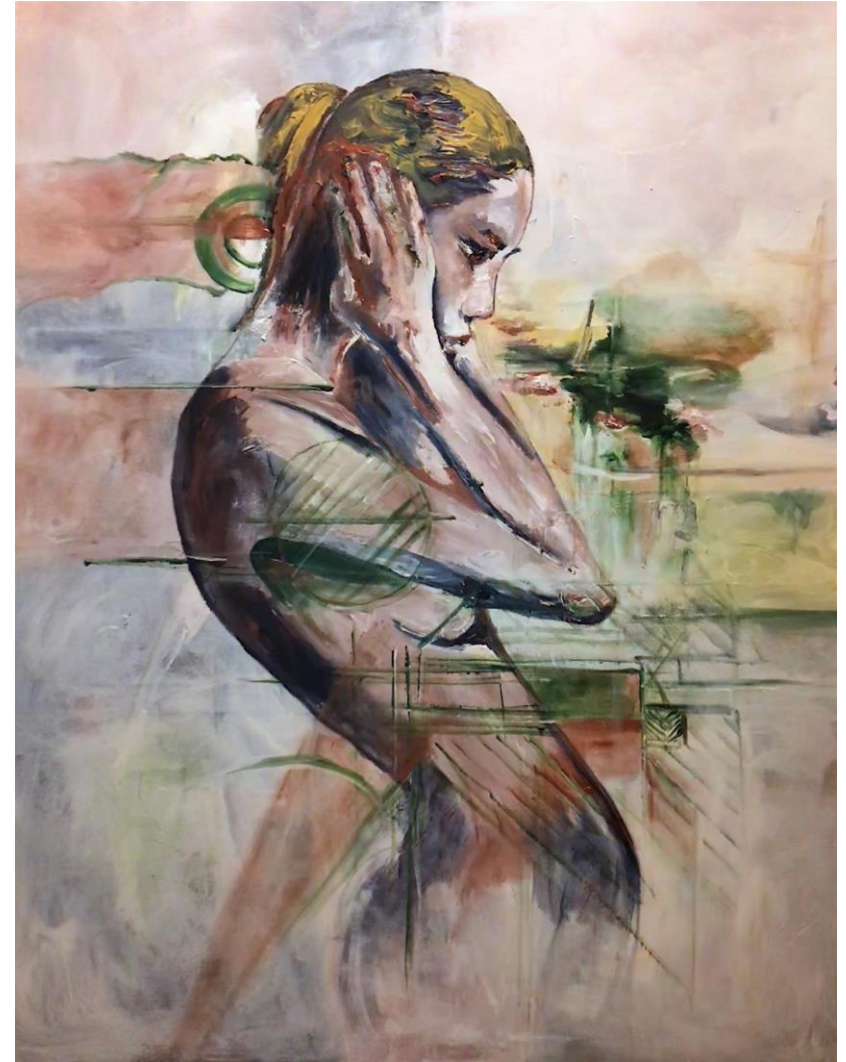
collage, mixed media on canvas/paper, bound with wool yarn 39" x 34" \$4500

## Goddess Suite x

The stove is easy, microwave three beeps.  
But she can never figure out the car:  
press menu, hold the knob, hit fast forward?  
She laughs, thinking of setting back sundials—

when she taught First Woman to watch the moon,  
thirteen cuts on stick or stone, bone or horn.  
Candle, water, hourglass, her body marks  
nights and days still regular as clockwork.

Pendulum, weights and springs, face and hour hand—  
minutes don't matter, all time will coil down.  
Still she's glad her phone sets itself forward,  
one less task to mind, one less time to wind.  
For now, she stops all clocks, slivers time still,  
one more wayward moment—then springs forward—



*Pendulum Goddess ~ Jennifer Jean Okumura*

Oil

60" x 48"

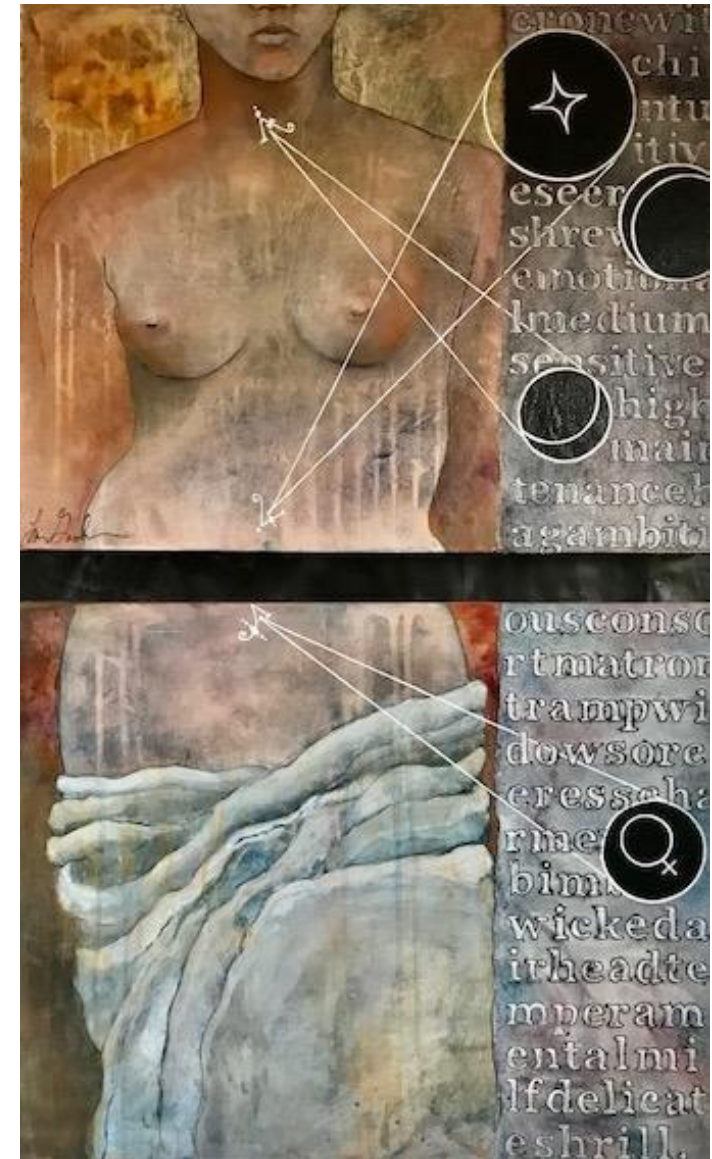
\$5000

## Goddess Suite xi

She Who Gathers and Pours Down Rain,  
First Queen of Heaven, Devourer of Men,  
the thousand names of Kali just a start—  
each now a footnote in some history book.

How she went from Mother of All, She Who  
Renews, to that lost Miss Modest Venus,  
striking that same shy pose, covering herself,  
from forty breasts to two, all subdued sex.

She tired quickly of her new size-two you,  
went to see her lawyer, left with papers—  
not quite ready to sign—*this petition*  
*in the matter of Goddess versus Goddess,*  
*also known as Woman,* marveling at this:  
how much harder it was to unname herself.



*Measure of Woman ~ Fran Gardner*

Mixed media including drawing, painting, stitchery 32" x20"

\$2500

## Goddess Suite xii

Sometimes that bag just got too heavy, full  
of papyrus scraps a thousand years old at least,  
a dried-out chapstick, stiff old rabbit skin  
from before tampons, buried deep just in case.

First she decided to throw out the sun—  
she had enough fire to last, handful of stars  
dusting the leather bottom dense as sand.  
She never really used the spear and shield.

Her cornucopia spilled fruit constantly,  
but she'd need it later, she thought, digging it  
out from underneath the moon and her phone.  
Though she thought of starting over, emptying  
everything, she finally just lightened her load,  
ocean still pouring from that small torn seam.



*Letting Go ~ Susan Irish*

Mixed media: leather and found objects on wood panel

18" x 18"

\$500

# Lily Watch

Another year we greet summer,  
    spider lilies waking in the Catawba  
        every May, this time blooming slow,

a cool April. We follow the lily watch,  
    high water warnings, papers reporting  
        clumps washed upstream, rare but still

enduring, nowhere else in the world  
    so many. Shooting roots deep  
        in rocky shoals, they cling stubborn

through flood, sweep and wave  
    in brave green bunches, until we breathe again.  
        I have watched them with other lovers

yet they are ours, even the year we missed  
    when your mother was sick, the year  
        we were too tired and stayed home instead.

Stars still shine in daylight.  
    The lilies raise their fringed white heads,  
        brief blossoming, they build and peak

and fade—only here I am not afraid to say,  
    *let me be your last.*  
        If I could cross that first wide stretch

of swift water, the lilies might carry me  
    the rest of the way, skip me over rocks  
        and grassy river. You would follow,

through the buds, through the dying  
    papery blossoms, you always do, the lilies  
        not minding our foolishness.



*Red Lily ~ Brittany Taylor-Driggers*

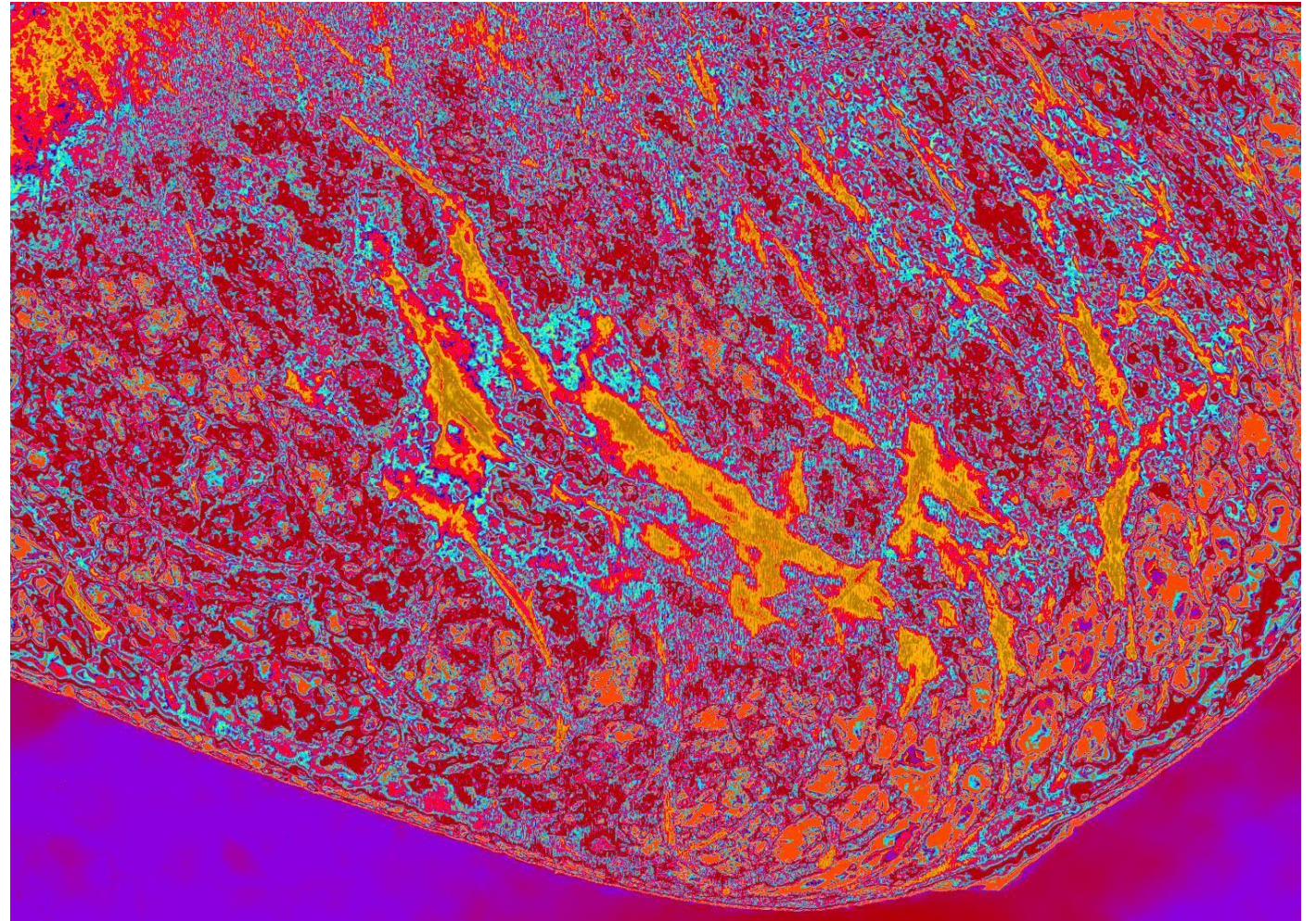
Crayon

30" x 23"

\$1000

## Biopsy

A photograph I didn't take, one we never thought to see. Magellan image of Venus glowing in darkness, deeper than the swirl of cloud, down through to the surface. Before only an imagined landscape, now touched by unaccustomed light. Something like a small volcano, lava trailing luminescent paths. Morning star or evening star, we don't yet know. We must wait to see. Either way a rosy underworld blooming.



*Diagnosis: Morning Star ~ Joan Eckhardt*

Photography

16" x 20"

\$335

## Peonies

We find them Friday night, stopping for milk and eggs, buds shut so tight I worry they will never open, but we buy two bunches anyway, sepal closed fast, sheath almost like the flower itself, variegated fortress holding back a riot of petals. By bedtime, one bud begins to ruffle out, a promise of filigree, plumping up slowly—in the morning, one colossal bloom. I search *peonies open* and find much about forcing, warm water, cutting stems. Coral Charm opens quickly, and Queen of Sheba, a bomb double peony. You are teasing me, contemplating the sameness of opening and not opening over your coffee. Some varieties take more time. Fern Leaf, Gay Paree. Great Prosperity. Ours are *common lactiflora*, I think, guard petals holding the delicate crown. All morning we watch another two open. The same heart, furled or unfurled.



*Peonies ... a Riot of Petals* ~ Mary Ann Browning Ford

Oil

24" x 24"

\$1200

## Peach Season

A California peach brings only sorrow, mealy reminder of what should be. So we drive an hour to the farm, where I have bought good South Carolina peaches with my mother, my cousin, my friends, my children, and now you. I made jam every summer for years. I have learned that peaches outlast husbands. We buy sweet corn, Clemson blue cheese. We missed the strawberries. Tonight I will make tomato sandwiches, which you think you don't like, but you've never had a homegrown tomato. Your life is about to change, I tell you. I pry you away from the preserves with a promise, my mother's bread and butter pickles. When she met you, she said, *that boy doesn't have an ounce of country in him*, but you know enough. We are here for the peaches, your first real peach. Today I begin teaching you the language of peaches: June Prince, cling, Summer Gold, freestone. The fruit pulls away from the stone or it holds fast.



*Sun-kissed* ~ Pat Zalisko

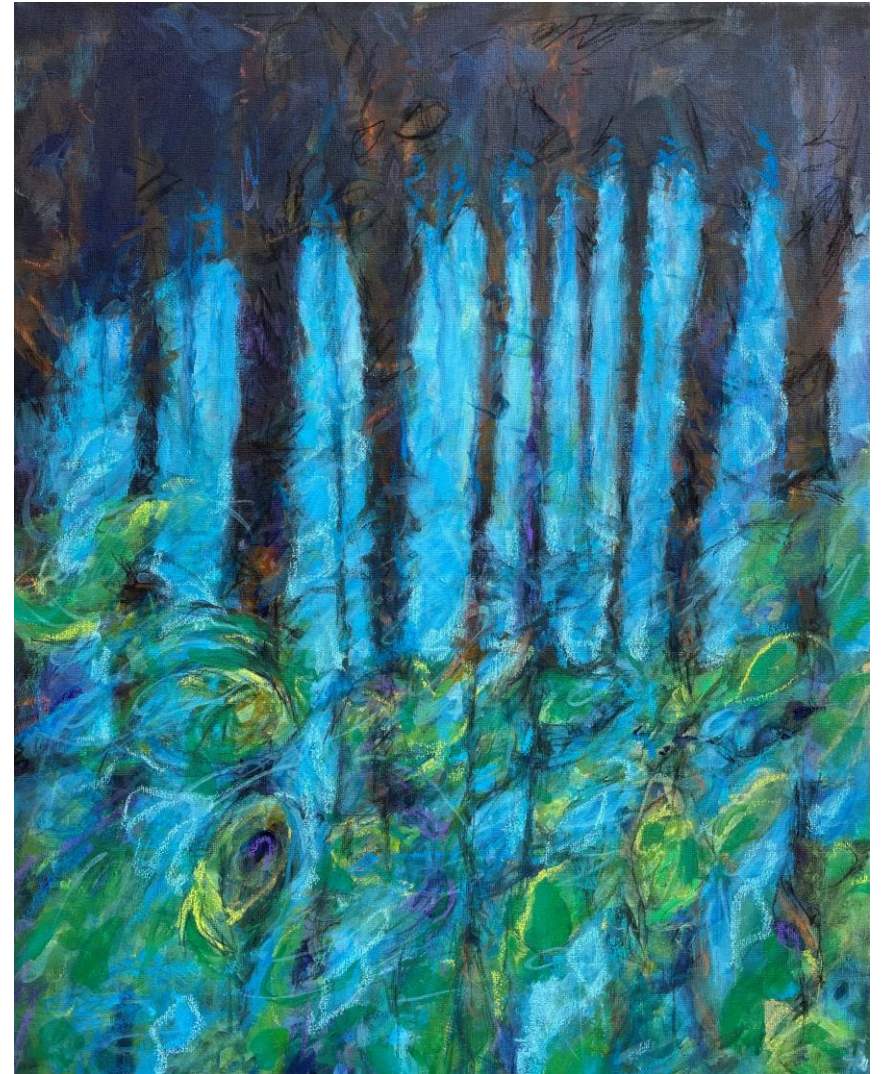
Acrylic / collage on canvas

48" x 48"

\$7250

## Self-Portrait, 48, without Glasses

If you could never know leaves except the ones you held in your hands, all the oak dogwood sycamore blurred in the distance, not one leaf, but darkness, if I could see my own dark hair greying, my own sloping roundness as curved crosshatching on fine textured paper, instead of yet another shape unfocused—if I could see, put the glasses on and see and still desire, then I would know the charcoal and my fingertips both, then I would know the line and the curve, then I would know this ample self.



*Seeing Through a Blurred Reflection ~ Catherine Conrad*

Acrylic, pastel, charcoal pencil on canvas

16" x 20"

\$900

## A While

At first you think love letters never lie. Each stamp licked back when you still licked stamps would stay, never peel away. Those letters would wear the word *love* out. *I love you with the window open, I love you in Florence.* It doesn't have to be *that* Florence, pale moonlight here too. For a while I kept a box of old letters under my bed, letters that once were true. But even in that Florence, soft marble wears down. I'm old enough to know the garden can fail for want of water. For a while, your first letter was once the only one, Hermes bringing love and goodbye sealed together in your unfamiliar scrawl. But then another arrived, and another, each inscription more extravagant: *beloved, my queen. She whose beauty is like the sea.* I make breakfast. I shop for the week. *They're always true at first,* I write, and then I stop myself. The Lady and the Unicorn next, envelope unopened a while. I start to write, *I want to tell you who I am before it's too late.* Athena, detail of a stamnos, Greek. I pay the bills. I go to work. Orchid with two hummingbirds. I wash the clothes. *I am so much older now.* Too old for this lotus, the envelope torn in haste, too old for the rose window. The postcard legend reads *terra incognita*. I am old enough to know better, but I still wait a while to see what happens next.



*The Letter ~ Sandy Dimke*

Photography

13" x 19"

\$550

# Poem Credits

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The following poems appear in *Moving House* (Huntsville: Texas Review Press, 2007) available at <https://www.tamupress.com/book/9781933896083/moving-house/>

- Moving House i
- Three Fish
- Found Objects, originally published in *Coelacanth Magazine*
- Last Peach
- The Wavelength of Light
- On Comprehending Gravity, originally published in *Southern Poetry Review*
- White Space
- [How to Identify Birds](#), originally published in *storySouth*
- Stargazing for the Beginner, originally published in *River Oak Review*
- Why We Missed the Eclipse
- Wishing Tree
- Rope Swing, originally published in *Kakalak 2006: An Anthology of Carolina Poets*, edited by Lisa Zerkle, Richard Allen Taylor, and Beth Cagle Burt (Charlotte, NC: Main Street Rag, 2006)
- Moving House iii, originally published in *Coelacanth Magazine*

The following poems appear in *Lily Watch* (New Orleans: Small Fires Press, 2021) available at <https://sevenkitchens.blogspot.com/2021/11/lisa-hammond-lily-watch.html>

- To Fall in Love with Anyone
- A While
- Self Portrait, 48, without Glasses
- Peach Season
- Peonies
- Biopsy
- [Lily Watch](#), originally published in *Tributaries, The Fourth River*

# Poem Credits Continued

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- The following poems appear in *Goddess Suite* (New Orleans: Small Fires Press, 2018)
- available at <http://www.lisaghammond.com/p/goddess-suite.html>
- Goddess Suite ii
- Goddess Suite vi
- Goddess Suite viii
- Goddess Suite x
- Goddess Suite xi
- Goddess Suite xii, originally published as “The Goddess Cleans Out Her Purse” in *CALYX*
- Uncollected Poems
- We step out for a walk, originally published in *The Lancaster News* and reproduced on signage at the Lindsay Pettus Greenway, Lancaster, South Carolina
- Oh Girlfriend, originally published in *Twelve Mile Review*
- [Hydrangeas](#), originally published in *Fall Lines: A Literary Convergence* 7/8 (2022)

Thank You

Mary Edna Fraser

who judged the exhibit and selected the winning artwork



**SOUTH  
CAROLINA  
CHAPTER**

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