

BARBARA LEVINE

Art



SELECTED WORKS

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND THANKS

To my husband Michael for his support, advice, enthusiasm and amazing spiritual energy, which were always there for me.

To my loving family, and especially, my children and grandchildren, for their constant encouragement and interest in my art and in this project.

To the expertise and patience of those who helped me put this book together:

Editor: Michele Lorenzo.

Layout design and graphic elements: Anna Rotty.

Photography: Sergei Starosielski, Ani Rivera and Anna Rotty.

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PROLOGUE

Throughout my career, I have worked both as a painter and as a tapestry weaver. My work has always been strongly influenced by the natural world and my quest to interpret it through close observation.

I have always been fascinated by the challenge of looking closely at natural objects to illuminate what their deeper structures reveal and inspire in the creative consciousness.

For me, the real drama within nature is perceived in the intimate relationship between the subject and the beholder. The phenomena of nature, such as flowers and butterflies, and their manifestations of tremendous natural energy—creatively transformed through the act of painting and weaving—exert a special psychic force on my being.

I am always experiencing the intense spiritual effect of color and minute structures: these provide the mainspring of my creative impulse.

My intention in creating this book of selected pieces is to share some of the work that has been the most endearing and fruitful to me in the creative process.

I have always enjoyed working in the media and art form that feels most appropriate to the subject matter—therefore, you will see Oil, Gouache, Egg Tempera, Watercolor, Pastel and Tapestry. There are abstracts, portraits and representational pieces—occasionally manifested simultaneously in the same oeuvre. Some of my earliest work has never been photographed, but is happily out in the world.



Stargazer Lily

1988. Oil on canvas, 25 1/4" x 27 1/2"

A celebratory expression of the joy of the rite of passage from childhood to becoming a man.



Belladonna

1988. Pastel on Paper, 20 x 26 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Paul Hamburg, Boston., MA.



Gladiolas

1990. Watercolor on Paper, 23 x 14 3/4 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Macheath Stuecklen, Pittsburgh, PA.



Floral Motif

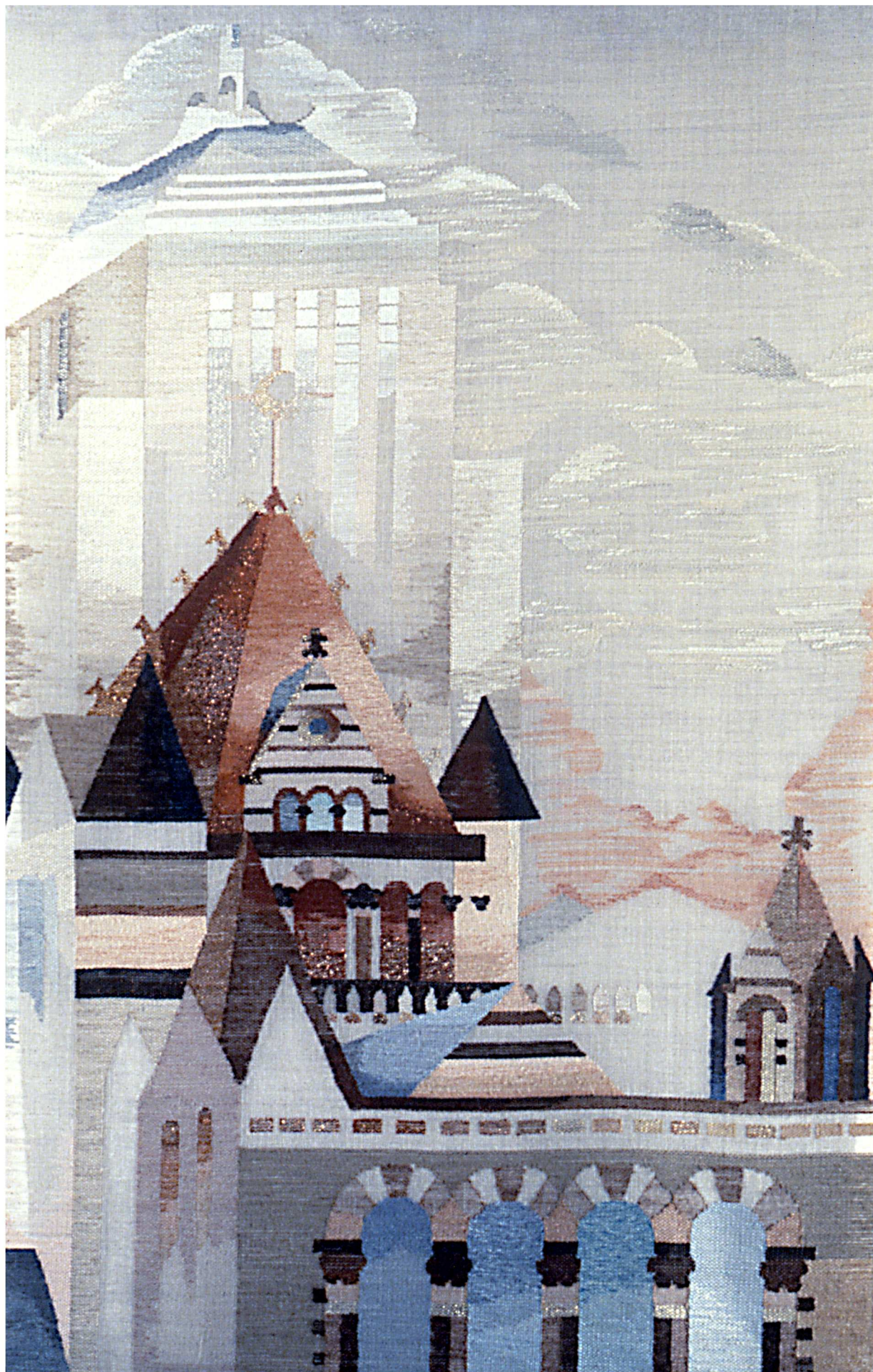
1982. Tapestry laid into a ground weave, 60 x 48 in.
Commissioned by: Mr. and Mrs. Larry Roberts, Boston, MA.

Amherst Town Hall

1980. Tapestry laid into a ground weave,
28 x 26 in.

*Struck by the architectural
immensity and detail of the
building, I stood across from the
Common and began to sketch my
impression. The Amherst Town
Hall was opened on November
19, 1890.*





Trinity Church With Hancock Tower I
(Backbay Motif in Two Parts)

1983. Tapestry, 77 x 48 in.

Inner Courtyard of the Boston Public Library II

1983. Tapestry, 60 x 36 in.

Commissioned by: American Express / The Boston Company, Park Square Building, Boston, MA.





Maple Trees I
(Tapestry in Two Parts)

1986. Tapestry, 84 x 48 in.



Maple Trees II

1986. Tapestry, 84 x 48 in.
Commissioned by: Prospect Hill Industrial Park, Waltham, MA.



Tree of Cyrpus I
(Oriental Motif in Two Parts)

1984. Tapestry, 96 x 38 in.



Bridge II

1984. Tapestry, 96 x 38 in.
Commissioned by: Corporate Space Inc., Newton, MA.





Dogwood And Poppies I
(Triptych)

1987. Tapestry, 48 x 29 in.

Dogwood And Poppies II

1987. Tapestry, 48 x 29 in.

Dogwood And Poppies III

1987. Tapestry, 48 x 29 in.

Commissioned by: Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Co.
Springfield, MA.

*The endless inspiration of the beautiful
trees and flowers that grow in my garden
was the impetus that invoked the design
for this Triptych.*



Heliconius
(Detail of a Butterfly Wing - Central America)

1994. Tapestry, 63 x 48 in.
Private Collection

Looking at part of a butterfly's wing, I concentrate on minute details - a close examination of nature - the delicacy and rarity of a life form.



Salamis Temora
(Detail of a Butterfly Wing - Africa)

1981. Tapestry, 48 x 60 in.
Private Collection



Birth

1975. Tapestry, 72 x 48 in.
Private Collection

*This abstract design was
conceived to honor the birth
of my son Trillium.*



Soul

1982. Tapestry, 50 x 48 in.
Private Collection

A natural design in a piece of wood became the deep force of a vision--- a metamorphosis of life's essence.



Sunsong

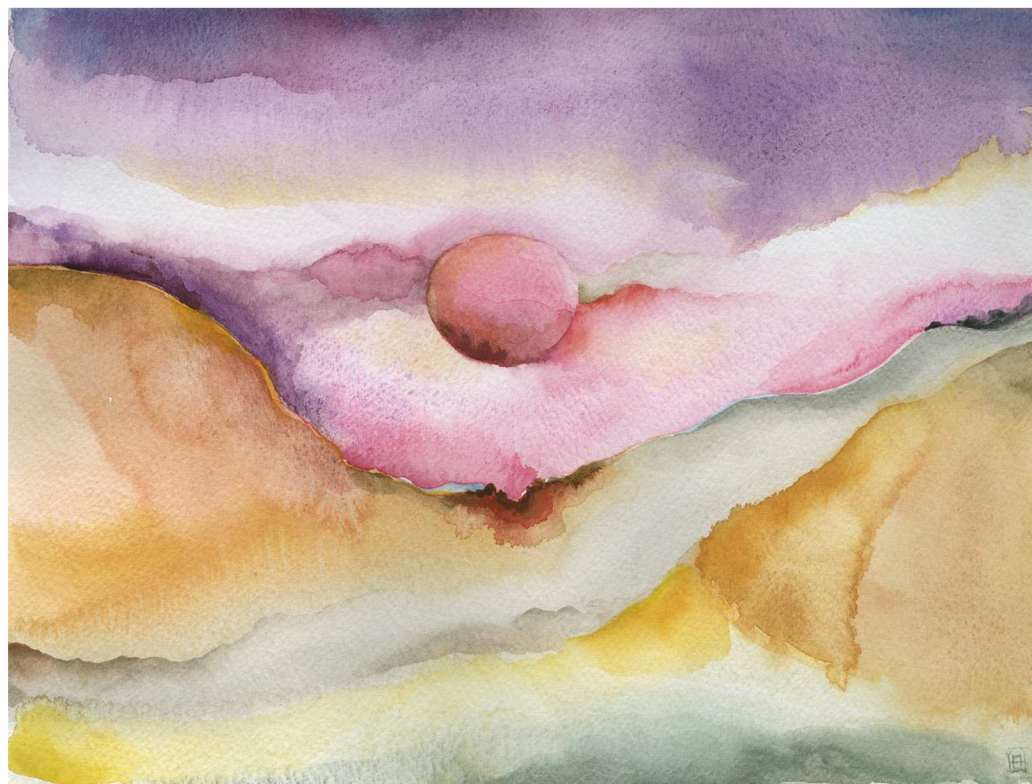
1977. Tapestry, 48 x 60



Flight

1975. Tapestry, 48 x 63 in.

Commissioned by: Podolak and Company, Miami, FL.



Tuscan Sunset

2006. Watercolor on Paper, 14 x 17 in.



Sunset Behind Clouds

1998. Watercolor on Paper, 9 1/2 x 22 in.



Liquid Sunset

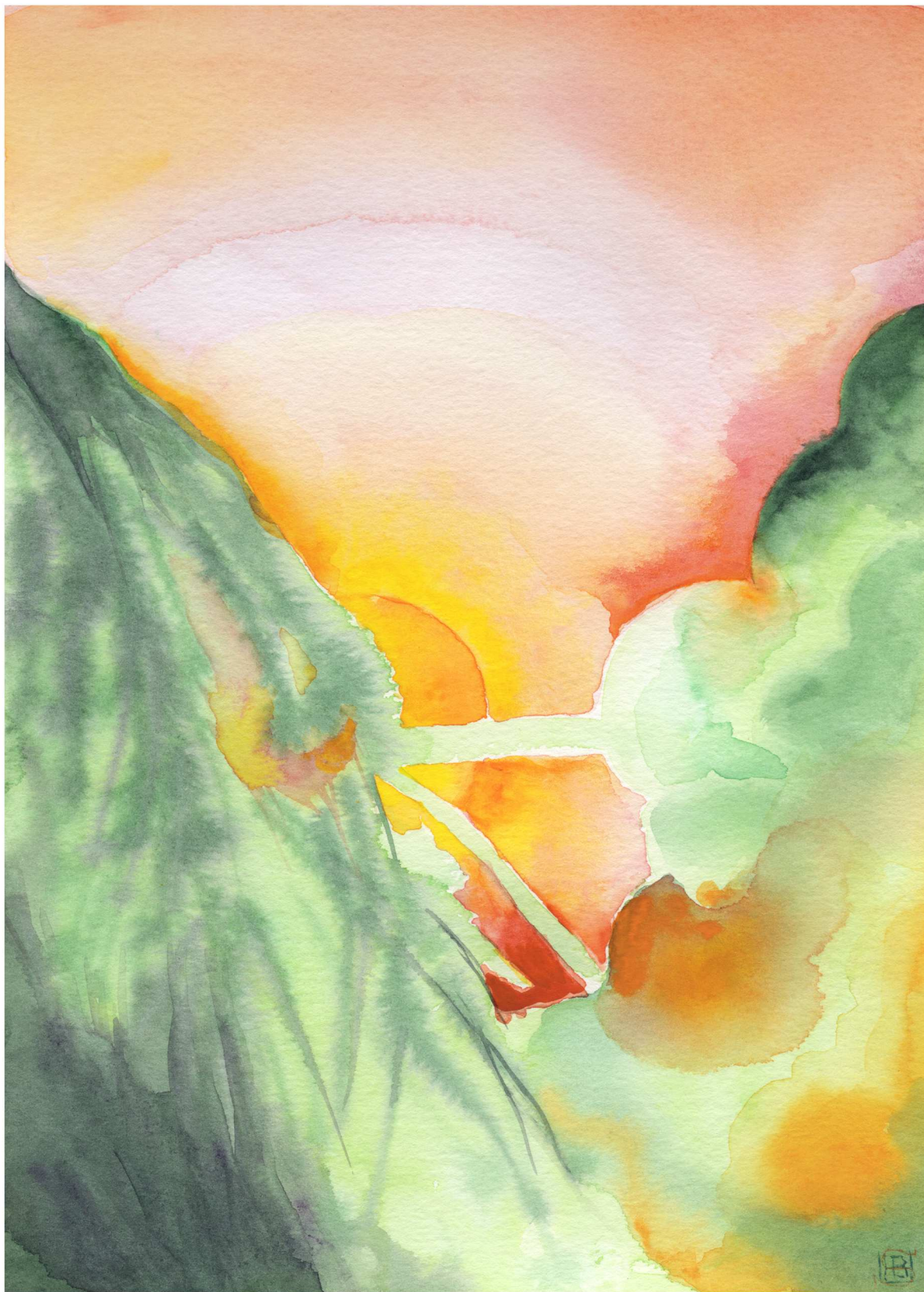
1998. Watercolor on paper, 9 1/2 x 7 in.
Rincon, Puerto Rico

*Sun-star-great luminary-eye of
heaven-giver of light and heat.
Before your final descent below
the horizon: a flash of green-your
promise to return.*



Sunset

1998. Watercolor on paper, 8 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.
Maui, Hawai'i



Sunrise

1998. Watercolor on paper, 9 1/2 x 7 in.
Rincon, Puerto Rico



Emerging Light

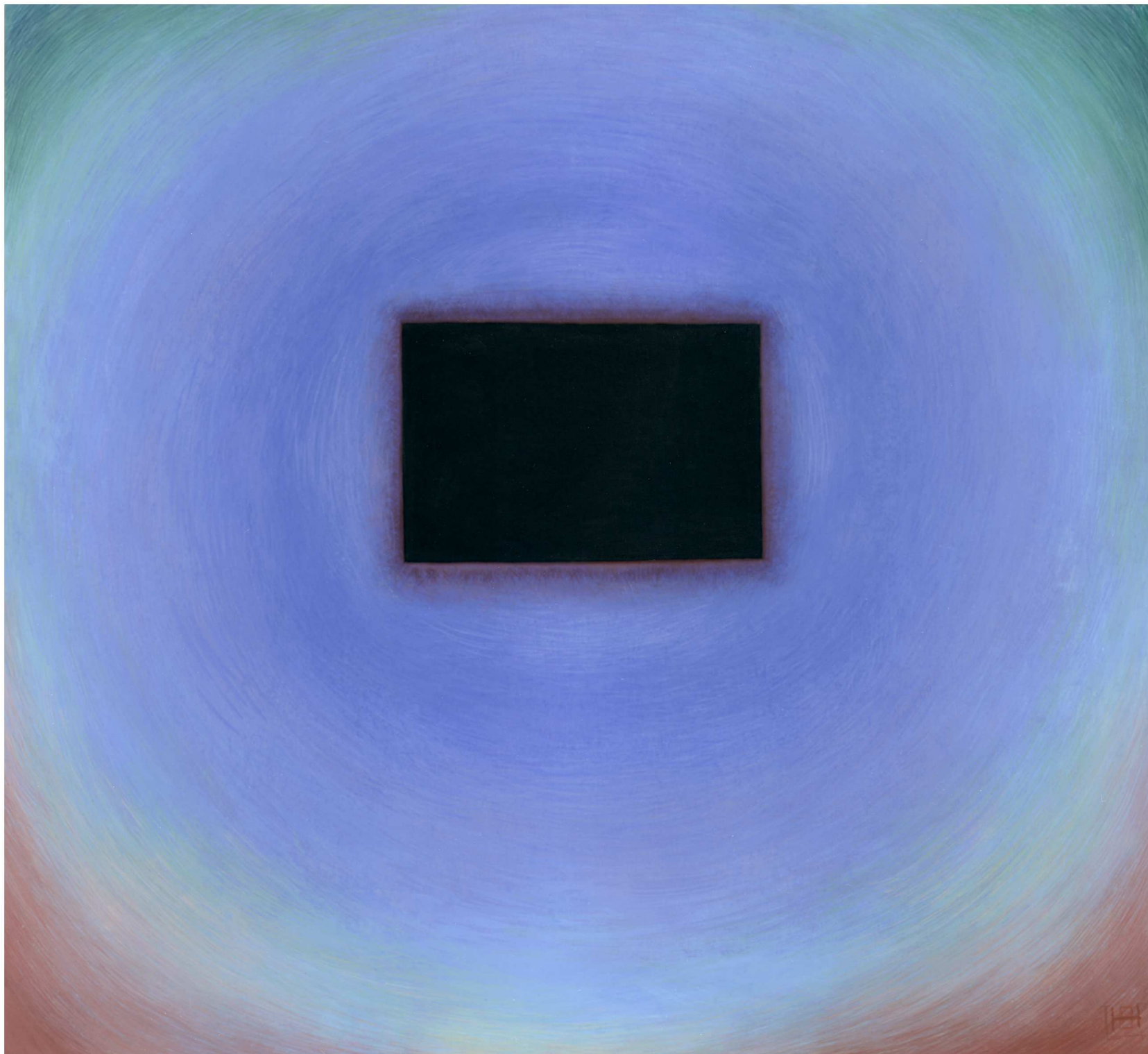
1980. Oil on canvas, 32 x 26 in.
Private Collection



Marigold For Macheath

1980. Oil on canvas, 16 x 16 in.

A mandala can take many forms: symbolic of the universe.



Blue and Black

1982. Gouache on paper board, 10 x 11 1/2 in.

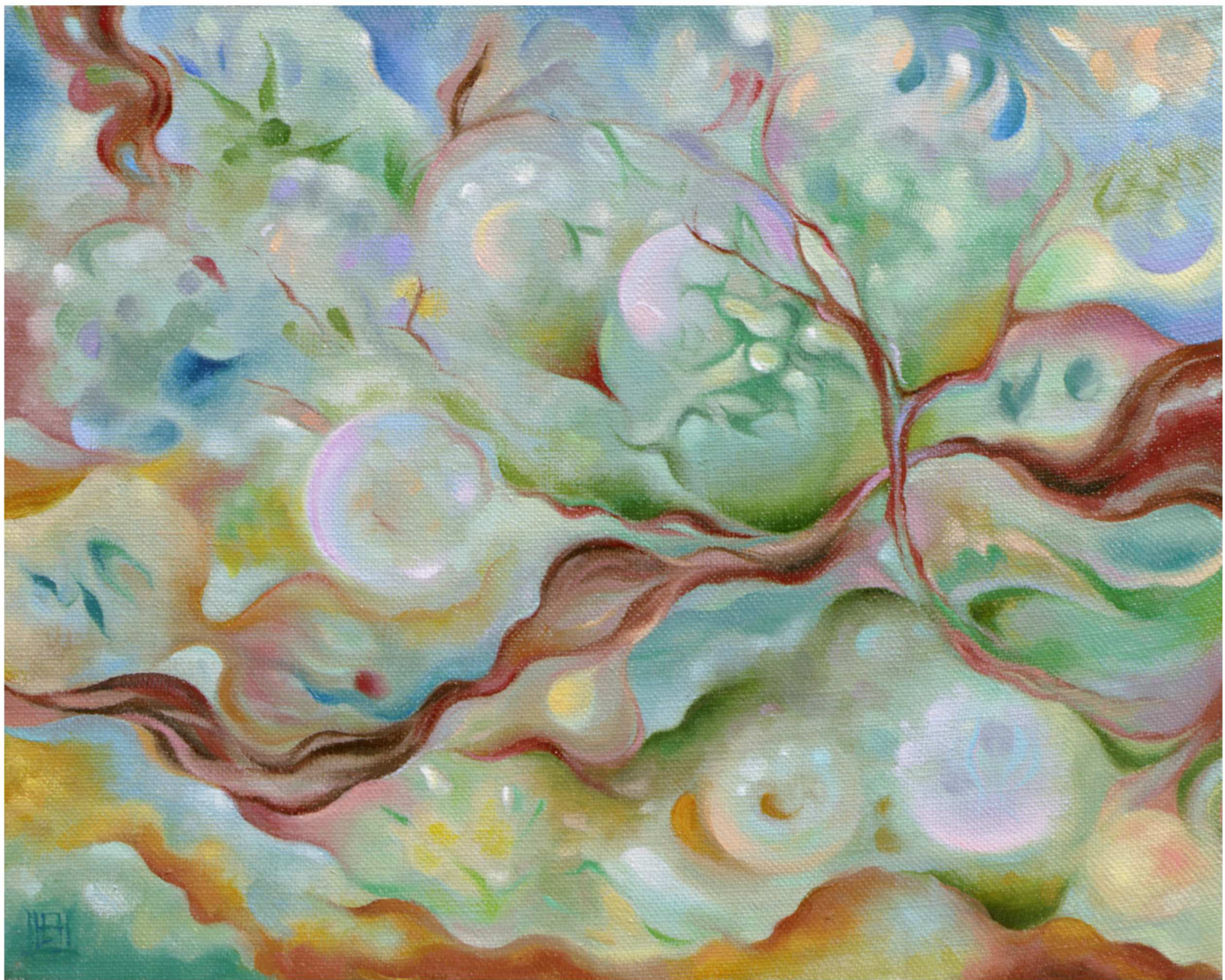


Coral - Under the Sea

1995. Tapestry laid into a ground weave, 48 x 65 in.

Commissioned by: Linco/Private Ledger Financial Service, Corp., Boston and Northampton, MA.

Land and sea are one. Mountains and valleys continue their kindred progression into the sea.



Last Snow in Sculpture Garden - Over the Land

1998. Oil on Canvas, 8 x10 in.



Red Amaryllis

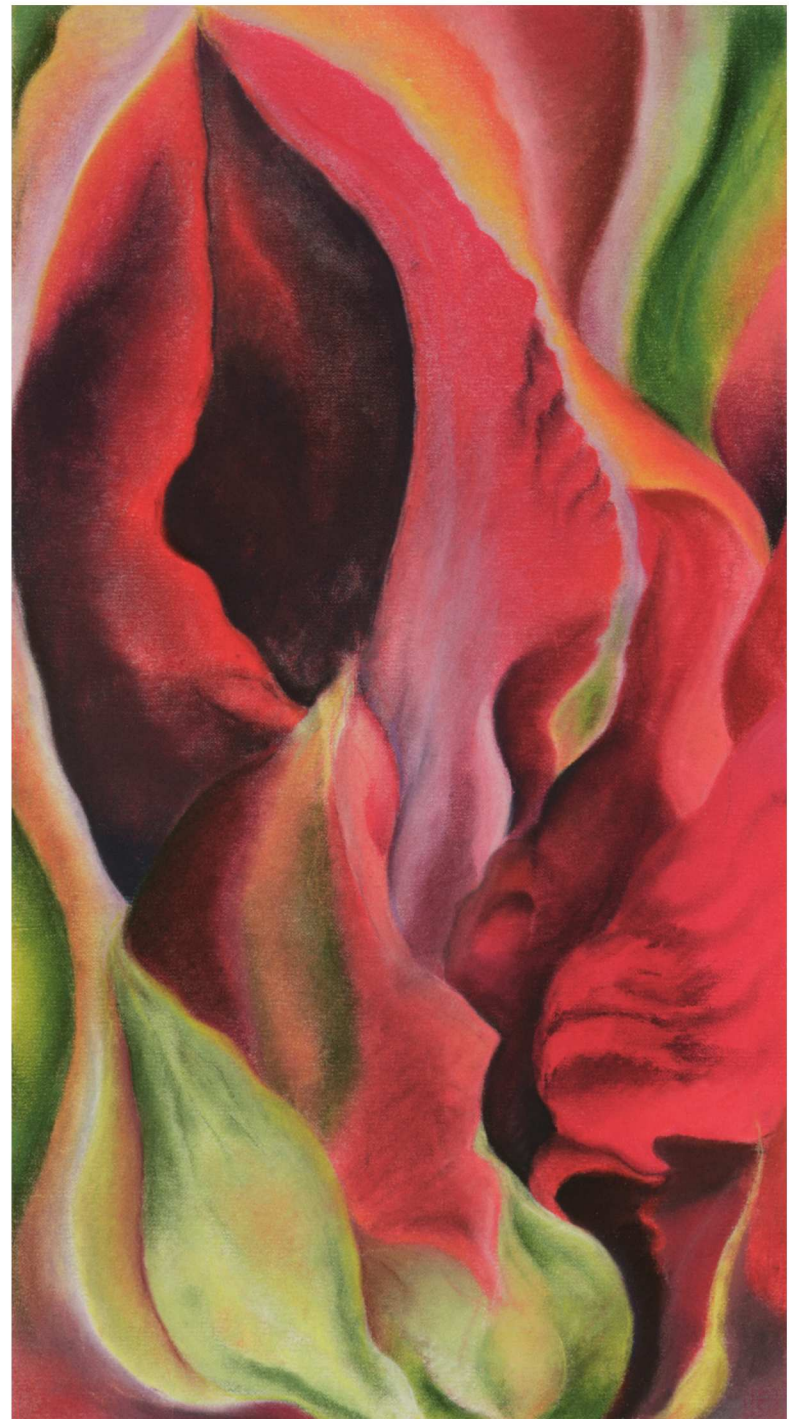
1991. Pastel on paper, 39 x 29 in.

Amaryllis: when you blossom, you reveal yourself in all your splendor - so grand and long lasting.



White Calla Lily

2011. Gouache on paper board, 7 1/2 x 5 1/2 in.



Amaryllis Bud

1994. Pastel on Paper, 21 3/4 x 12 in.



Musical Landscape

2013. Watercolor on Paper, 4 1/2 x 6 1/2 in.

Listening to music as I paint, each note evokes a brush stroke of color. The perfect equation of musical and visual arts.



Cellular Journey

2001. Oil on Canvas, 36 x 72 in.

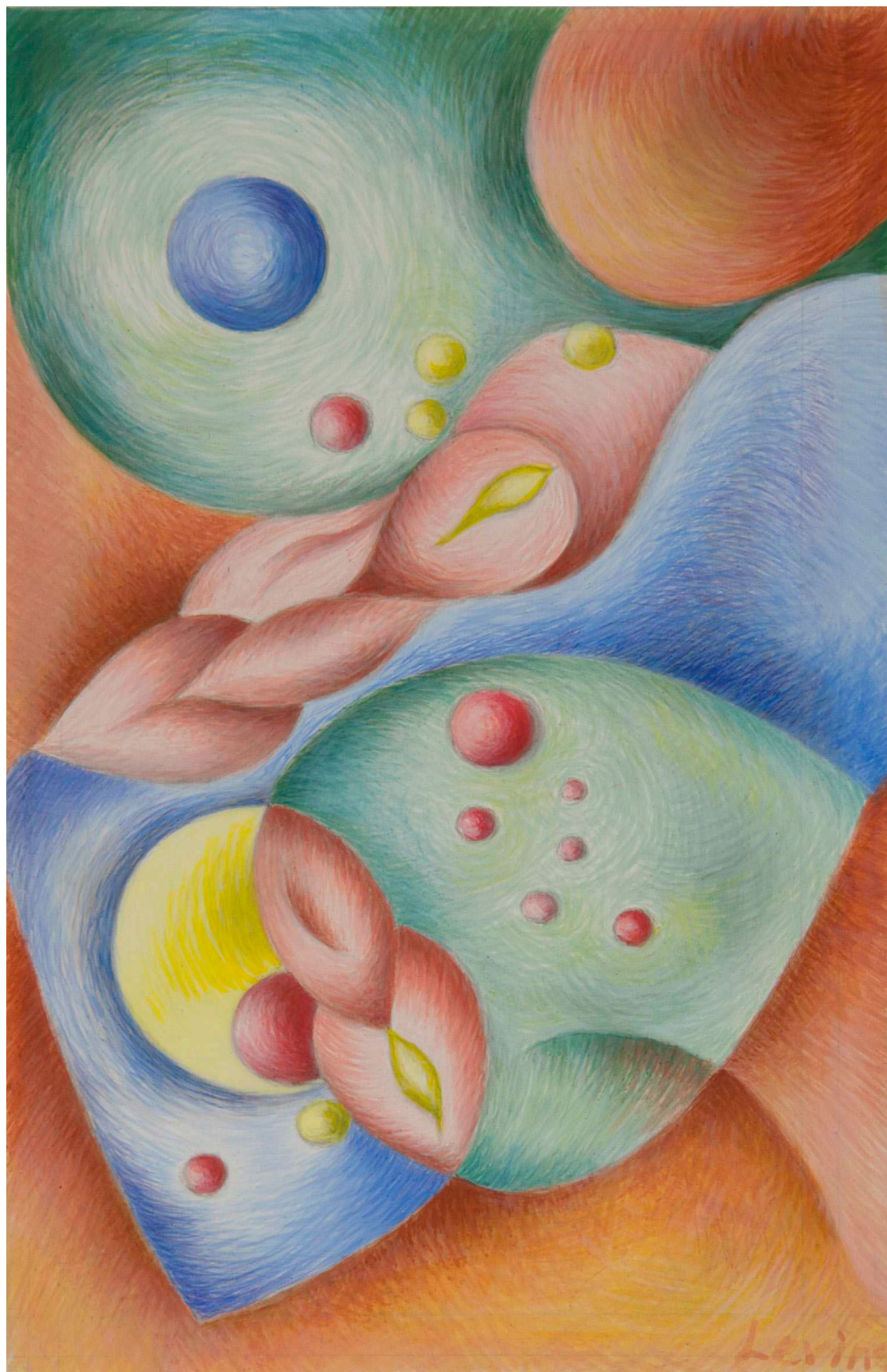
Commissioned by: Dr. Timothy Eberlein, Chairman of Surgery, Washington University, St. Louis, MI.

An imaginary study of the infinitesimal form of an organism considered as a whole.



The Garden

2012. Silverpoint drawing on prepared paper,
4 1/2 x 2 1/2 in.
(Preliminary sketch for painting)



The Garden

2012. Egg tempera on gesso board, 5 x 3 1/2 in.

A seed falls to the earth and unfolds to begin the gradual manifestation of new life.



Pomegranate With Avocado On Sicilian Lace

2012. Egg tempera on gesso board, 7 1/4 x 5 1/2 in.

Portrait of A Young Girl With a Hat

2013. Egg tempera on gesso board, 7 x 5 in.

*Oh egg yolk and pigment!
Together abiding time, permanence,
enduringly enremittent: producing in-
finite luminosity layer upon layer upon
layer...*





Dream of Michael

1980. Gouache on paper board, 12 x 11 1/2 in.

*A dream of Michael walking through an ancient Tuscan town.
A defined illumination painted from memory.*



Skyvine

1989. Oil on canvas, 32 x 60 in.
Mr. and Mrs. Irving Levine, Boca Raton, FL.



Portrait of Amaryllis I

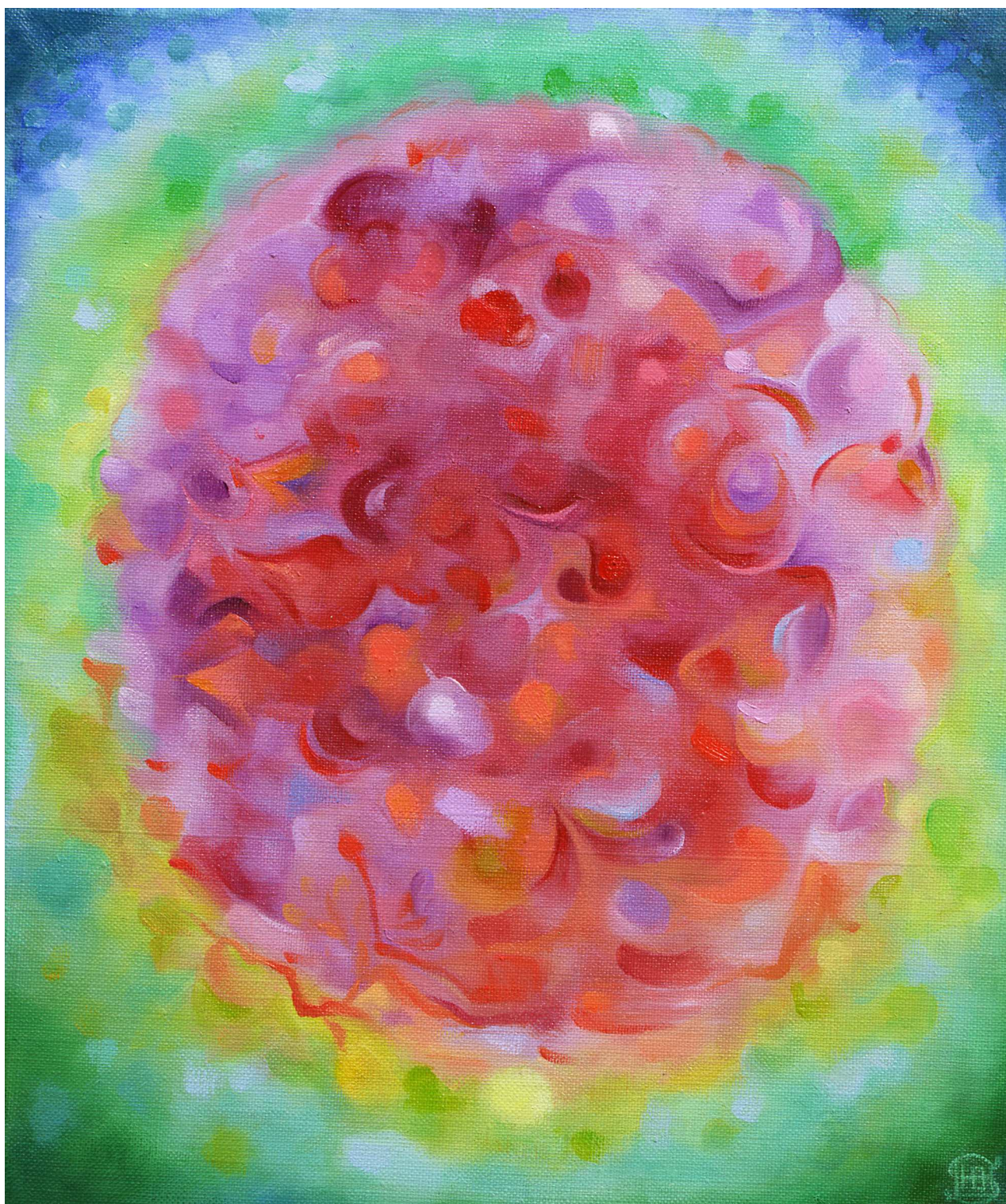
1991. Oil on Canvas, 25 x 21 in.

Observing a flower closely provides a surrogate for portraiture.



Portrait of Amaryllis II

1997. Acrylic on paper, 17 x 19 in. oval.
Mr. W. Denman Zirkle, Edinburg, VA.



Signora Giacosa
(Aura Portrait)

1999. Oil on canvas, 12 x 10 in.

My abstract portraits are a response to a unique mystical spirituality: an emanation of the personae.



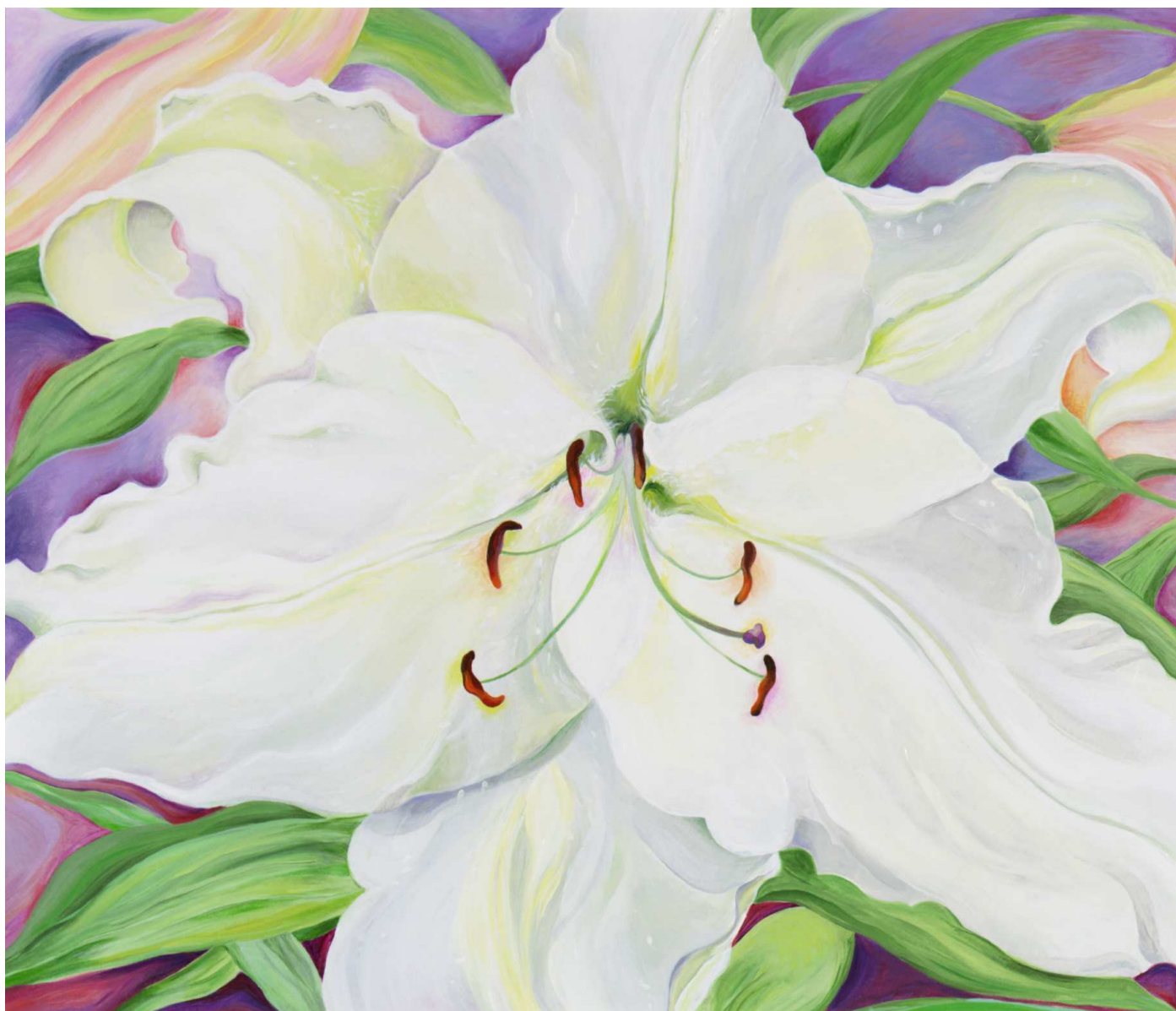
Girl Eating An Orange

1998. Oil on canvas, 20 x 24 in.



King Poppy

1992. Pastel on paper, 26 x 30 1/2.



Casa Blanca Lily

1996. Acrylic on canvas, 19 1/2 x 24 in.



Bearded Iris

1992. Pastel on paper, 36 1/4 x 32 1/2 in.



Blue Rose

1988. Pastel on paper, 22 x 19 3/4 in.
Private Collection

*Flowers are gifts of perfect beauty in their efflorescence, color
and, often, redolence - oftentimes summoning forth a memory.*



Lacetop Hydrangea

1997. Pastel on paper, 21 1/2 x 28 in.
Private Collection.



Hibiscus

1990. Watercolor on paper, 22 x 30 1/2 in.
Private Collection.



Plantain Tree

1994. Oil on canvas, 36 x 30 in.
Commissioned by: Attys.
Roberto and Maria Corretjer,
Hato Rey, Puerto Rico.

Plantain: younger sibling of the banana - a towering perennial herb. You are the staple food of many.



Pink Anthuriums

1991. Pastel on Paper, 31 x 27 in.
Mrs. Kimberly Eberlein, St. Lois, MI.

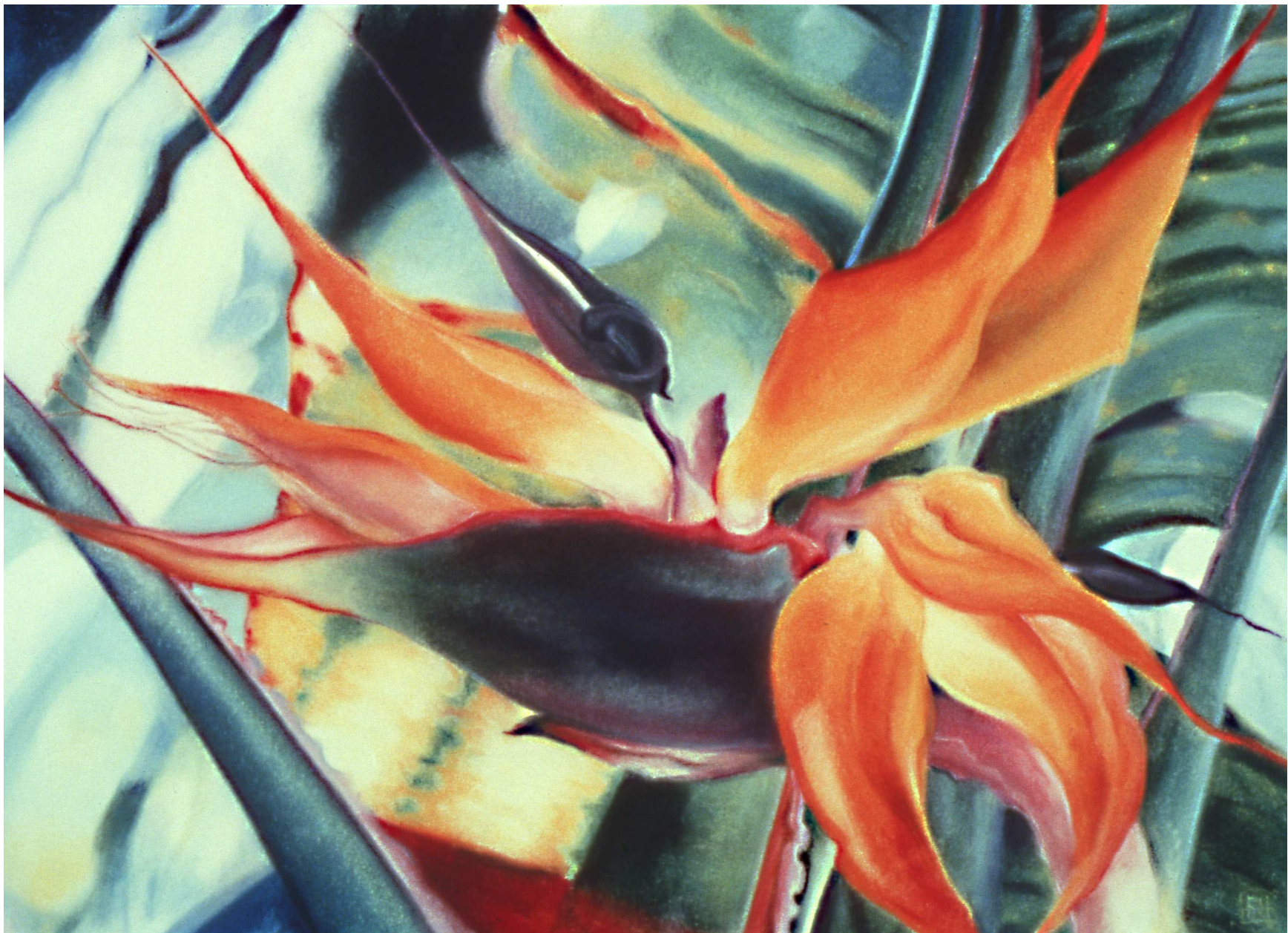


Flame of the Forest

1993. Oil on Canvas, 22 x 29 in.

Attys. Roberto and Maria Corretjer, Hato Rey, Puerto Rico.

In an open meadow: a tree of tremendous girth and lofty height, ablaze with enormous flowers, each beckoning with open arms. Bajandas, Puerto Rico.



Bird of Paradise

1993. Pastel on paper, 17 1/2 x 24 in.



Dancers of Senegal

2000. Gouache on paper, 15 x 22 1/4 in.

Whirling buoyantly in a dance of joyful rapture: patterns on fabric reflecting vivid wavelengths of light, and colors of brilliant intensity.



Il Campanile
(Giotto's Lily Tower, Florence, Italy)

1995. Watercolor on paper, 31 1/2 x 26 in.

*Amid a cloudy mist, as a soft rain was falling. Looking up,
the marble was alive and began to move among the clouds.*



Emerald Lake Vermont

1982. Gouache on paper board,
10 x 7 1/2 in.

*Looking down from the mountain
above the emerald green lake,
I experienced an intense visceral
belonging to the surrounding
environment.*



Autumn

1997. Oil on canvas, 16 x 20 in. oval.

Riding on a bike path, I paused to view the incandescent, ardent fervor of the autumn trees.

Techniques Addendum.

EGG TEMPERA PAINTING

Egg Tempera is among the oldest painting mediums--known in antiquity, it was particularly important during the Renaissance in Italy, The Netherlands and in Germany.

This complex and time consuming process begins by coating a linen covered wood panel with several coats of traditional Gesso (a mix of rabbit skin glue, water and calcium whiting). When dry, the gesso panel is rubbed with charcoal dust revealing imperfections, which are then carefully scraped with a sharp blade. When no dust remains, the surface is perfectly smooth and ready.

The image is then drawn on this surface with Silverpoint. This method is achieved by inserting a sterling silver wire into a stylus. The silver has an inert quality, which will not react with the applications that follow.

Diluted black or sepia India ink is then applied over the drawing, creating delicate lines and shadings in a Grisaille fashion, which will influence the relationship between the colors of the subsequent application of the tempera. Additionally, India ink contains shellac, which seals the Silverpoint drawing, making it impervious to the water based tempera.

Making the Tempera

The pigment is ground into a fine powder using a muller on a piece of ground glass with some distilled water. The resulting paste is then placed in a container and covered with a third more water.

For the egg medium, the yolk of a fresh egg is first separated from the white membrane, then pierced with a sharp point to drain the yolk into a container. The identical amount of distilled water is added, stirred thoroughly with a glass rod, and the resulting emulsion is covered and kept cool. This egg medium is the binding material, which will be mixed with the pigment paste.

Painting with the Tempered Pigment

The pigment and the medium are now combined equally in the well of a porcelain palette. A minimum of three wells are utilized

for each pigment, with each well containing a different value.

Egg Tempera demands a more delicate application than most other paints. It is applied with a very fine brush in pencil-like strokes, layer upon layer.

Warm or cool glazes, applied over the strokes, unify and enhance what lies beneath, creating transparent layers of pure color to produce clarity and luminosity. They can often number in the hundreds to achieve the necessary depth, shading, color and glow.

Due to the time and precision involved when painting a still life or portrait in Egg Tempera, after direct observation of the subject matter and absorbing its influence on my feelings, I then take an original photograph. High resolution photographs provide a great source of information with which to develop drawings and paintings in this medium, facilitating the extension of detailed memory—a critical part of the creative process.



Detail of *Pomegranate with Avocado On Sicilian Lace*, Egg Tempera on Gesso Board.

OIL PAINTING

During the sixteenth century, materials and techniques for oil painting were sufficiently developed to be esteemed for their direct and simple application. Slow drying oil paints are malleable and with this ease of manipulation, varied natural and atmospheric effects and can be produced expeditiously, without the precision required in other mediums.

After stretching a good quality canvas of linen on a frame, I size it first with Rabbit Skin glue, then apply 5-6 coats of gesso. When the gesso is completely dry, it is sanded until smooth. Having a purely blank canvas in front of one's eyes initiates a feeling of total freedom.

Using thin washes of color, I block in shapes, which helps to develop a rhythm before establishing the subject. Then, applying many layers of thicker paint mixed with the painting medium, delineated images begin to emerge.

My approach to beginning the work is completely flexible, and will vary depending on how I feel and what the subject matter suggests to me.

My abstractions are painted spontaneously with thoughts, feelings, and various symbolic influences that have been flowing through my being at times past and present.

Flowers are painted from life, and when a flower is finished blooming, I replace it with another of the same kind, which is naturally slightly different from the first, but blends its own configuration into it, thus creating an original distinctive form.



Detail of *Cellular Journey*, Oil on Canvas.

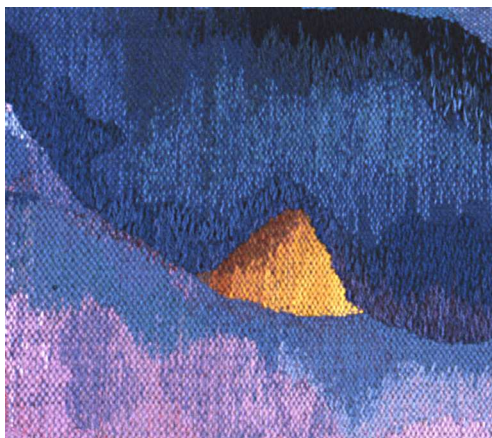
TAPESTRY WEAVING

I feel that the most significant contribution of my work to the art of Tapestry is in the manifestation of a new synthesis of modern American design with fine European traditional technique. The manifold images which I employ embrace the full spectrum from realism to the abstract and, at times, touch upon both realms simultaneously. Of all the prominent elements, color is the most vital and personal, for through the medium of the woven tapestry, color becomes a natural extension of brush and palette. The feeling of painting with the yarn and touching the colors becomes a very sensual and enriching experience.

The design of a tapestry is as important as its workmanship. After creating an original design (painting, drawing, collage, etc.), a full size cartoon is produced and pinned to the back of the warp threads as a weaving guide, while the original artwork is used as a color guide. The traditional use of a Linen Warp (the vertical threads) is employed for its unique properties of strength and integrity. The Weft (the interlacing horizontal threads) is primarily of wool, with varying degrees of yarn blendings according to the demands of the particular design.

I think about how I want the tapestry to evolve, to have a life and texture of its own. Each design element in a tapestry will have many individual colors working together in yarn groupings of three or more. With this intertwining of colors and textures, aligning shapes thus emerge which, when incorporated with the inlay techniques detailed below, create the perception and feeling of depth and movement.

The foundation of my inlay technique is the articulation of a four-fold alignment of Russian Weave, Plain Weave, Soumak and Pointillism. Each of these methods lends its individual dimensionality to the tapestry. As the use of Russian Weave is somewhat complex, due to its producing more surface yarn and texture, I will elaborate on it further.



Detail of *Salamis Temora*, Tapestry Weaving.

Each row of the design involves three distinct steps: In a unit of eight warp threads—counting the threads in two groups of four—the first row of weft would pass over the first three warp threads and under the fourth warp thread. I would then weave a row of linen Plain Weave to hold the yarns in place and to separate the rows. The following row would first pass under the second, then over the third, fourth and first warp threads.

The quality of the yarns is of utmost importance. A very solid dense

feeling would require a mixture primarily of wool. For a more gossamer and open effect, polished cotton would be employed with wool. Polished cotton used in conjunction with linen and/or silk would take this open gossamer effect even further. The possibilities of texture are almost as limitless as are those of color.



CHRONOLOGY

2002-14	Artist's Studio Exhibitions, Amherst, MA
2000	Nacul Center Gallery, Amherst, MA
1999	Marion Art Center, Marion, MA
1998	Rolly-Michaux Gallery, Boston, MA
1997	Wallace Library, Wheaton College, Norton, MA
1993	Mass Mutual, Springfield, MA
1992,1991	R Michelson Galleries, Northampton, MA
1991,1983	Skera Gallery, Northampton, MA
1985	Leverett Art Center, Leverett, MA Masters of Contemporary Tapestry Exhibition
1984	American Express/The Boston Company, Park Square Building, Boston, MA
1982,1981	Valley Women Artists 3rd & 4th annual juried exhibitions, Hampshire College Gallery, Amherst, MA. Lowry S. Sims and Lucy Lippard, jurors
1981	Gallery of Lighting Associates, Inc., N.Y.C.
1981	Valley Women Artists at Zone Gallery, Springfield, MA
1980	The Burnett Gallery, Amherst, MA
1979	The Bennington Arts Collaborative, Bennington, VT
1977	Schenectady Museum 6th regional juried exhibition, Schenectady, NY. Superior Merit Award
1975	The Mannings 2nd annual national handweavers juried exhibition East Berlin, PA. Awarded First Prize
1975	The Gallery, Russell Sage College, Troy, NY
1974	The Institute of Arts and Sciences, Manchester, NH. Awarded First Prize
1971-72	Owned and managed The Southern Vermont Gallery and Workshop, Manchester, VT
1970	Artists In Residence (A.I.R.) All Women's Show, N.Y.C.

Barbara studied painting and design in N.Y.C. at Parsons School of Design and at The School of Visual Arts; and Tapestry with Margareta Grandin Nettles. She has taught drawing, painting, design and tapestry privately, in schools and in workshops.



