

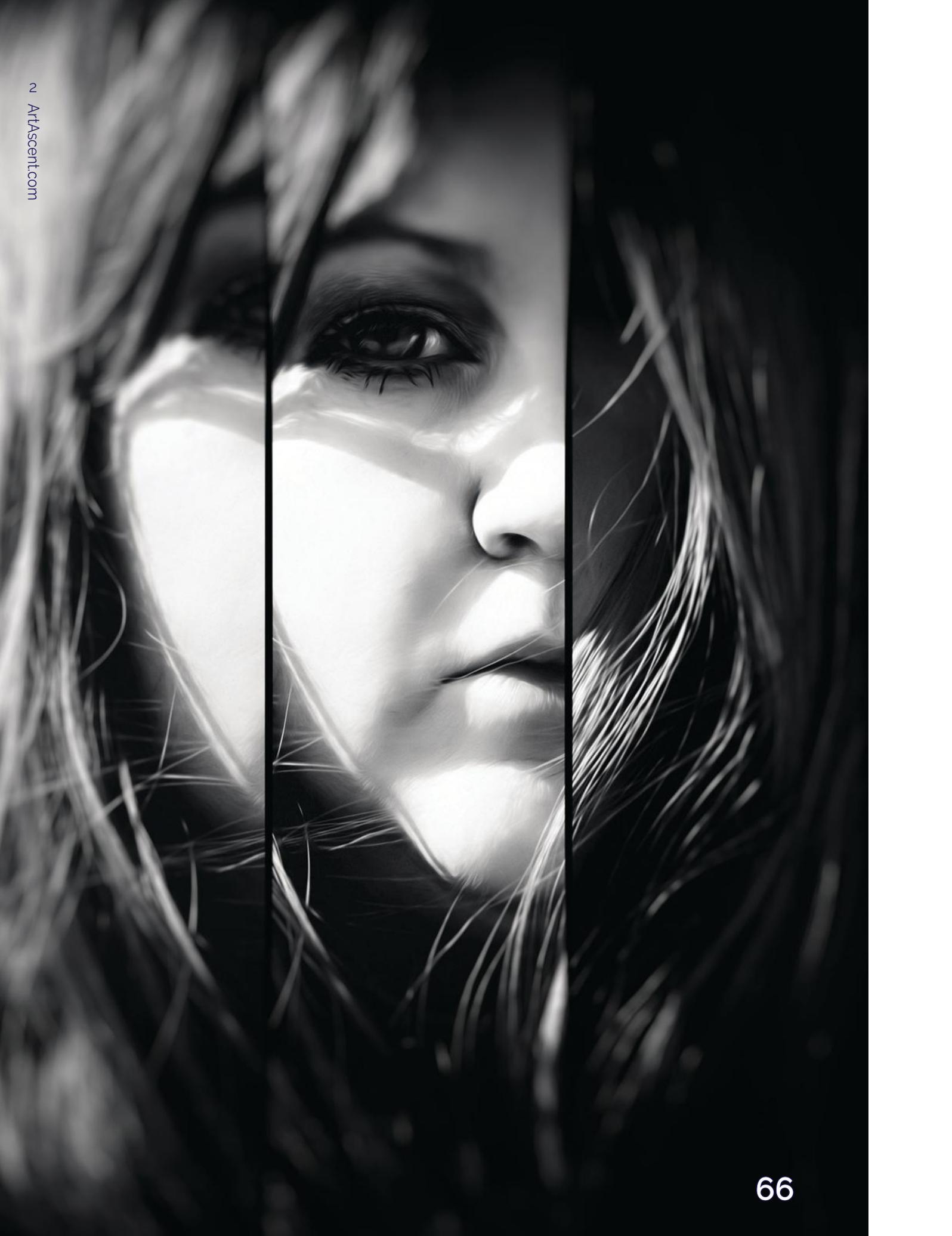
Showcasing International Artists and Writers • Poetry, Paintings and More

ArtAscent

Art & Literature Journal 54 April 2022



FEATURE:
Cold



Contents

6 FOREWORD

8 FEATURE

Cold

Explore this theme via a collection of inspiring pieces by international artists and writers.



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Foreword and Artist Profiles

Cinzia Franceschini is an Italian Art Historian specializing in History of Art Criticism, with a second degree in Communication and Sociology. She works in museum education departments and as a freelance writer. She writes about contemporary arts and social sciences, mostly about them at the same time.

Magdalena Riegler holds a bachelor's degree in Theater, Film, and Media Studies. In 2019/20, she did an exchange year in Berlin, Germany, at the Freie Universität where she focused on film studies. Magdalena is currently living in the Netherlands, working on her master thesis, and obtaining a second Bachelor in Circus and Performance Arts at the Fontys University in Tilburg (NL).

Oleksandra Osadcha is a freelance art historian, art critic and art exhibition curator living in Kharkiv, Ukraine. She earned her Master of Art degree in art history at Kharkiv State Academy of Design and Arts, where she is also currently researching her doctoral thesis.



On the Front Cover

Zoe

by Vicky Knowler



On the Back Cover

Drops of Me

by Leanne Trivett

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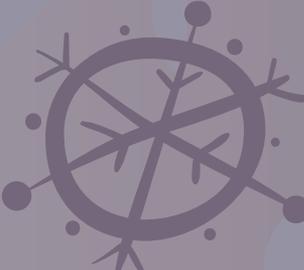
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ArtAscent
Art & Literature Journal

Showcasing outstanding
artists and writers from around the world

C  LD

Foreword

There are certain winter mornings when everything is frozen, even the sounds. The loud voices, the roar of cars, and the footsteps of passers-by are softened. They dissipate into the frosty air. Nature seems wrapped in a sort of protective membrane, as heavy as a woollen coat. People move quickly to find warmth and shelter inside. It is the effect of cold that freezes the words and gestures. The cold lashes the hands and face, but it can also embrace you if you listen to it deeply.

Cold can be a natural and environmental phenomenon, the sensation our body feels when temperatures are lower. However, it has also long been a powerful metaphor employed in arts and literature due to its symbolic and emotional value. The harsh climate of northern winters has inspired artists and intellectuals from every century: from the snowy landscapes of the 16th-century Flemish villages of the painter Pieter Brueghel to the foggy views of the romantic Caspar David Friedrich. Coldness distinguishes these paintings, but silence and quietness are their prevailing features. Even the philosopher Nietzsche when in Turin, an Italian city framed by the mountains of the Alps, recounted its cold, dry, and energizing air to describe its beneficial effect on the spirit. In a figurative sense, cold refers to the absence of emotions, the freezing of uncontrollable passions. But this lethargic moment of immobility can turn into a driving force, like the burst of spring.

Cold can leave us chilled or refreshed; it can feel lonely but also reinvigorating. It can be harsh like ice and impressive and balanced as marble. In the 54th volume of *ArtAscent Art & Literature Journal*, we will explore how contemporary artists and writers interpreted this two-faced archetype. Cold is a perfect feeling to share.

By Cinzia Franceschini

ArtAscent.com

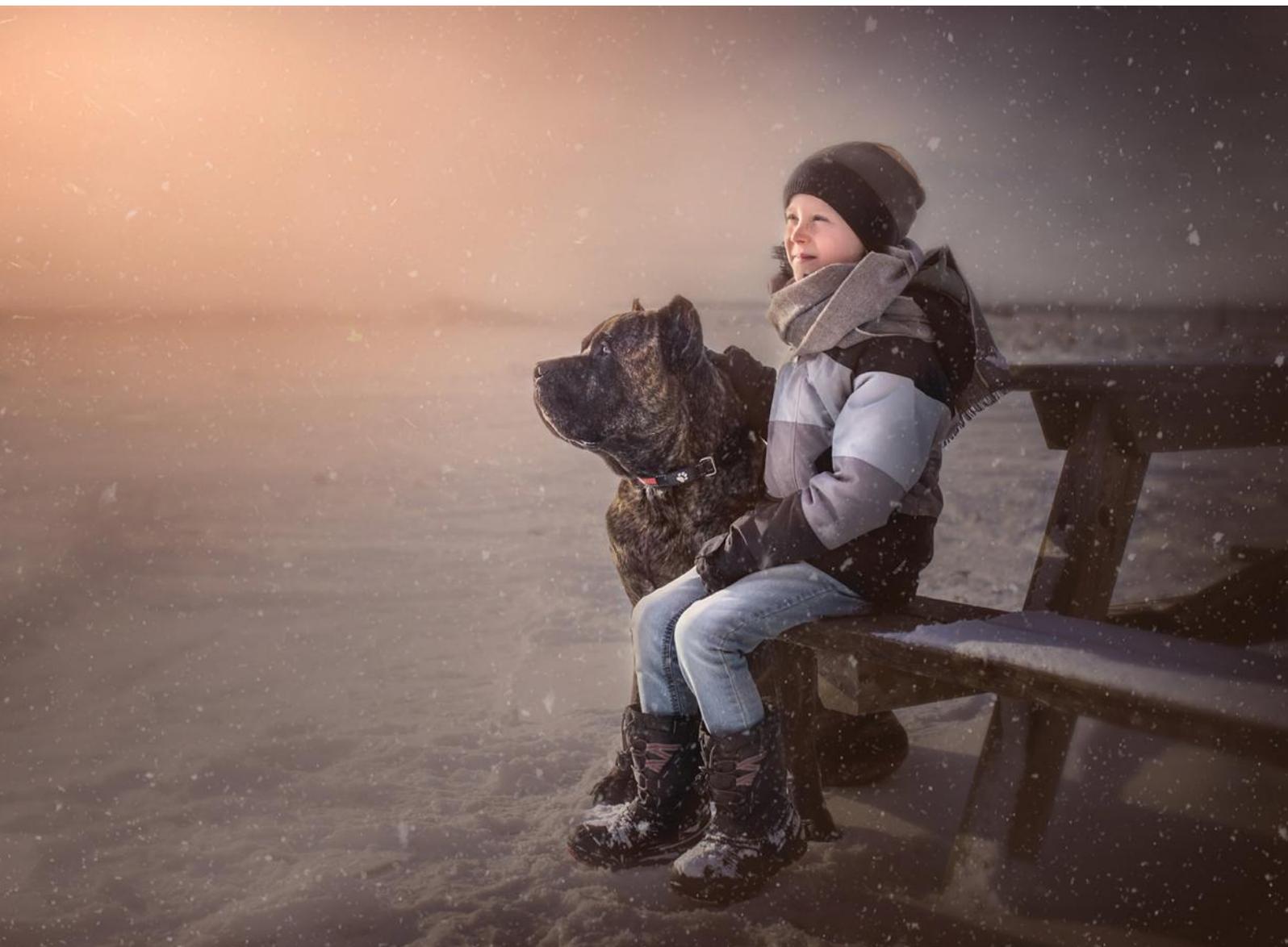


Vicky Knowler

www.champagne.photo

Harvey
Photography

Gold



Artist

We live in complex times, where the metaphorical cold of loneliness is commonplace. In a context of destabilizing detachment, Vicky Knowler searches through the medium of photography for a deep and steady connection between souls.

Vicky takes photographs set in an icy setting that are far from emotionless. Moved by the alienating experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, the artist searched for elements that could restore warmth and emotional contact. Interestingly, she found emotional support for her and her family in the household pet, Wendy the cat. This genuine and authentic relationship becomes the motor of her photographic project, *My Dog and Me*, which portrays children with their beloved dogs, close and safe in mutual trust even under the snowstorm. Vicky's photos thus become the storybook of this peculiar bond. The art project presented here involves several families who recognized the spontaneous relationship between humans and animals in their children and pets captured by the artist. What makes Vicky's photographs so special is that her point of view is never that of adults. She truly investigates what excites and interests children. Her photos try to give back the sense of wonder and imagination of their world.

Stylistically, Vicky's photographic practice is highly narrative. Each image is captured as a precise frame of a larger story and then edited in Lightroom or Photoshop, enhancing its more dreamlike aspects. But that's not all: Vicky accompanies the vision with a textual apparatus, which tells the characteristics of

the protagonists, children, and animals, allowing the viewer to get in touch with their simplicity. Best friend, brother, sister, guardian, or confidant...many roles are entrusted to the dog of the house. These roles are based on a bond that creates deep memories even in cold stress or discomfort. The photographs were taken in harsh outdoor conditions, specifically in January 2022 on the coldest days in the Kawartha Lakes. Vicky's photography fits within a particular artistic genre of portraying the world of childhood because of its joy and lack of fictional artifice. Although staged and elaborately premeditated, her photos—like those of the famous photographer Anne Geddes or those dedicated to children created by Elliott Erwitt—retain the purity and vulnerability of the tender age of infancy.

Vicky Knowler was born in Québec, Canada and moved to Toronto in 1997. She has come a long way before finding her mission and deciding to fulfill her passion for art and photography. She specializes in newborn, family, and children photography, winning several awards from International Baby Photography Contests. As a single mom who raised two children, she finds a powerful source of inspiration in their dreamlike world and expectations. Capable of keeping you warm from the cold.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Vicky Knowler

Ollie B

Photography

Gold



Artist

Dexter
Photography



NEXT SPREAD: *Ollie A*
Photography





Vicky Knowler

Bru

Photography

Gold



Artist

Lexi
Photography



NEXT SPREAD: Maci
Photography





Gold

With its 8850 meters of height, Mount Everest is the highest mountain above sea level. Freezing temperatures, constant winds, and sudden storms make its environment unsuitable for life. Everest became a sharp symbolic image in the poetry of Kesja Dabrowska.

The emotional potential of nature inspires Kesja. Meteorological phenomena such as rainbows and storms blend with the changing seasons and the summer or winter days' hot and cold climates. However, nothing in her poetry is literal: everything becomes a metaphor to speak of moods, an observation of her sentimental flow. The poem *Everest* refers to the subject of cold, exploring it on a physical, instinctive, emotional level. So, rainbows, radiant and positive days, are hidden or can be counted on the fingers of one hand, overshadowed by heavy years of storms and thunders. The warmth of a soft summer afternoon suddenly chills, becoming as spiky as an ice stalactite. It gets lost in the *winter of her life*. Dark periods of life, when you feel alone, helpless, hopeless, transfigure into icy peaks, like those of Everest, lonely and treacherous. The bitter cold can overwhelm the traveller, which can get lost.

The work of Kesja as a poet is the daily expression of the situations of life and mind. Pandemic and the state of health emergency greatly influenced her writing style and content, primarily modifying her mentality. The impact is not just on a day-to-day level, but it affects a different way of seeing and relating to the world.

In this manner, driven by the urgency of getting to the substance of a matter, her poetic style has been intensely purified. It tends towards simple and essential forms, working on evocativeness. Kesja's poetry acts as an attempt to reflect and draw a connection between the darker and more ambiguous side of poetry and the more explanatory and narrative one of prose. The lucid, visionary world of Edgar Allan Poe influenced her writing since her teenage years, providing with the same sense of foreboding and anguished apprehension. But also, famous poets such as Sylvia Plath and Rupi Kaur inspire her poetry, especially in the metaphorical and emotional use of natural elements and in the simple and immediate literary style.

Kesja Dabrowska is renowned as an illustrator and art practitioner in Greater Manchester, UK. She won several honours and awards both as an illustrator and a writer. She works as an illustrator of books for children and curates live projects. Her propensity to work with images as an art enthusiast makes her poetry incredibly visual and imaginary—an identifiable style, anything but cold.

By Cinzia Franceschini

Writer

Kesja Dabrowska

<https://kesjacorvussen22.wixsite.com/welcome>



19

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Everest

Supposedly
there comes a rainbow after rain
So where the hell
is mine hiding

Years of storms
and thunders rolled over
Yet I can count
my rainbows on one hand

Bring me the sun
you speak so softly of
Bring back the warmth
of a summer day

I've lived through
the winter of my life
Harsh as *Mount Everest*
and I am freezing to death



Kate Greenway

<https://womensartofcanada.ca/user/katgree/>

Silver

Dashing Through the Snow

Watercolour | 23 x 30.5 cm | Sold



Artist

Kate Greenway captures a glimpse of nature with its inhabitants and creates a sensitive look into the life and motion of living beings—her precise brush strokes merge with dreamy shades and open the path to a realistic dreamscape.

Kate makes us feel the surroundings and the possible sensations of the animals in her paintings. In *Dashing Through the Snow*, the wild passion and sincere pleasure of the sled dog literally jumps into the eyes of the spectator.

Forest Stillness mirrors the suggestion of its title. It is a brief moment of mutual acknowledgment, a moment of pause between the deer and the voyeur of this painting. Continuing beyond the first connection, one can see the frost forming around these two animals—the mother and its fawn—as if the observer would look through a frozen window. This visual statement of cold almost allows us to hear the clear silence of a day outside in winter.

In contrast to Kate's other paintings, *Winter Perch* has a clear pop of colour, introducing a small red bird sitting on the edge of a branch, round and fluffed up to resist the brisk cold. Through its light sparkling blue and the warming red of the bird, this painting combines a supple focus of simplicity with a sharp sense of harshness that winter months can sometimes bring along.

A recurring method Kate engages in is the inclusion of white spaces, an invitation for the audience to paint in their own story—a blank canvas to be filled by the observer's imagination, a friendly push to wonder what might wait in the background.

Kate shows her special attention to detail throughout her paintings and guides the viewer's eye through fine brush strokes. A shared approach to nature can be found in Joseph Zbukvic, a painter who shares similar mindfulness of light and the creation of dream worlds for the main subjects in his paintings. One can witness the surroundings gently fading into the background and leaving some spaces for the viewer's imagination.

Kate Greenway is a self-taught artist who specializes in watercolour techniques and includes forms of glass in her artwork. She completed a Master's and Ph.D. in Arts Education. Some of her recent exhibitions include Women's Art Association of Canada *Small Gems* and *En Plein Air* (Artists' Choice), Newmarket Juried Art Exhibition, Grey Cube Gallery *Blue* (Honorable Mention), Gallery 1313 Emerging Artists Show, and Gallery Ring Online Juried Art Exhibition *Animal* (Crystal Award).

By Magdalena Riegler

Silver

Kate Greenway

Winter Perch

Watercolour | 23 x 30.5 cm | \$150



Artist

23

ArtAscent

Forest Stillness

Watercolour | 23 x 30.5 cm | \$150





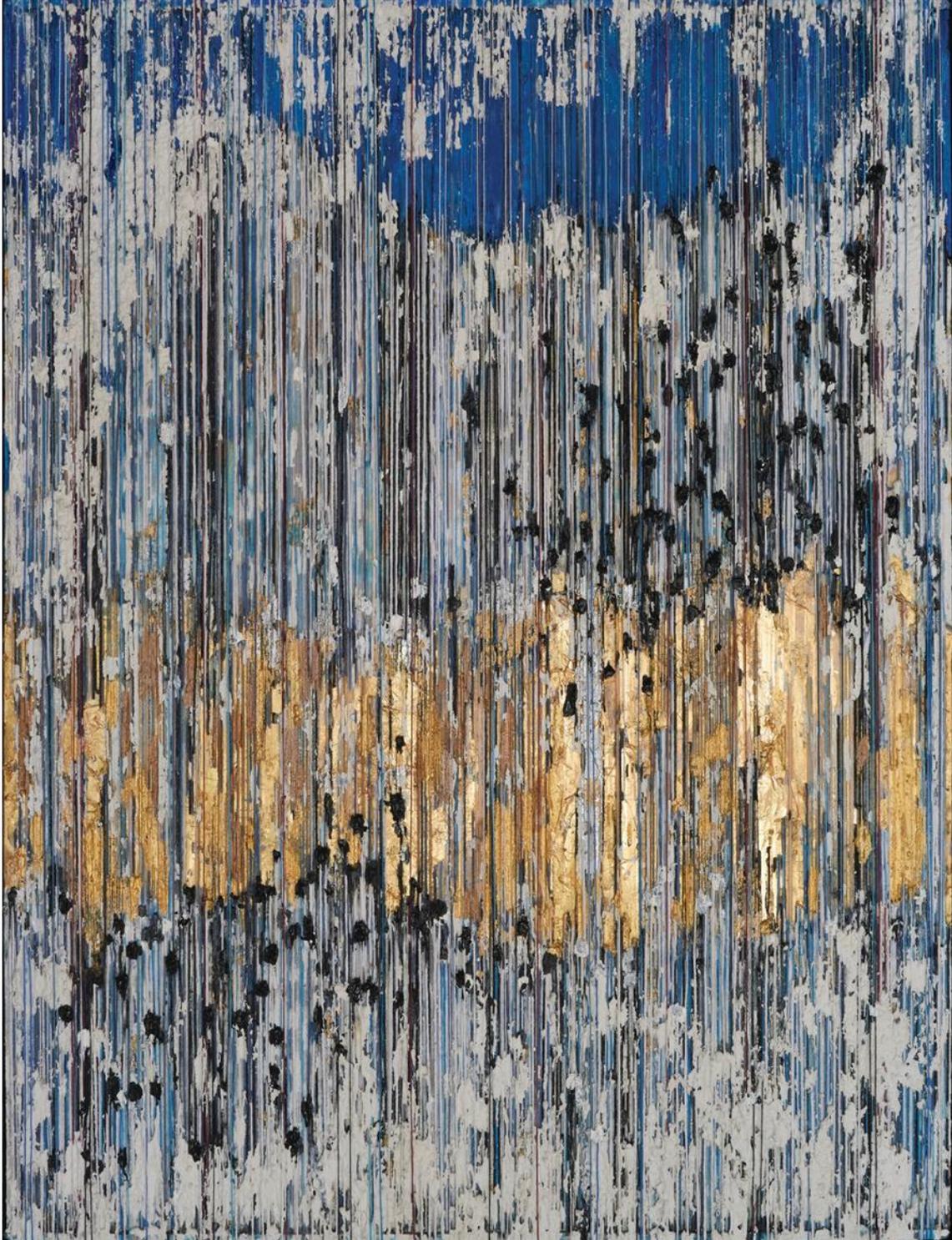
Eric Goldstein SCA

www.ericgoldsteinart.com

Bronze

Squamish Light

Mixed media | 101.6 x 76.2 cm | \$3,600



Artist

When talking about seasons, winter is hardly as romanticized and glorified as spring or autumn. Yet, it still has doubtless magnetism that attracts and excites artists like Eric Goldstein.

Eric's primary intent is "to capture the pondering presence we get from nature, not as it appears but as it feels to experience: incomprehensible, indescribable, and often very chaotic." Therefore, his choice of abstract visuality is an entirely logical avenue of expression.

The featured compositions were created using various materials: from traditional, like acrylic paint, to experimental, like sand and plaster. Although they follow the well-familiar painting format, the artworks are closer to decorative panels with a distinct monumental flavour. The latter is achieved with the noticeably large scale of the pieces. The irregular rows of horizontal and vertical stripes are intertwined into the quilt-like stream, giving the sense of turbulent dynamism.

The rich dynamism of Eric's compositions is perceived in strong contrast with the static freeze that is typically associated with Winter. Even in this seasonal period of chilling silence, the artist finds subtle movement—water under the ice, frosty night air, or silver morning light. There is no single figurative element in his compositions, but one easily recognizes the atmosphere of natural landscapes. The painter himself claims to be inspired by the palette, geometry and lines of the west coast of Canada, where he lives. Abstraction is inherently connected with nature, offering us its quintessence.

The collage approach to structuring the images reminds us of an outstanding abstractionist of the 20th century Paul Klee. Klee viewed shape not as form but as a process. Aligned with Klee's vision, Eric applies it on both compositional and coloristic levels. Fluidity and kinetic energy of the surrounding world is translated into a shimmering flow of lines and splashes of colour. In the artist's interpretation, cold loses its motionlessness, proving to be not the absence of life but one of its most delicate and, at the same time, powerful forms of existence.

Eric Goldstein is a mixed-media artist, born in New York, U.S.A and currently residing in Vancouver, Canada. He earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from Rhode Island School of Design in 1979. Eric has worked for 40 years in the film industry. Over the past 30 years, he has collaborated on over 100 film projects as a Director of Photography. He has received Eastman Kodak Award, Excellence in Cinematography, and the Leo Awards for Best Cinematography for TV Movie. Eric is a member of the Society of Canadian Artists, Federation of Canadian Artist Vancouver Chapter, and Federation of Canadian Artist Okanagan Chapter. He has participated in various art shows since 2010.

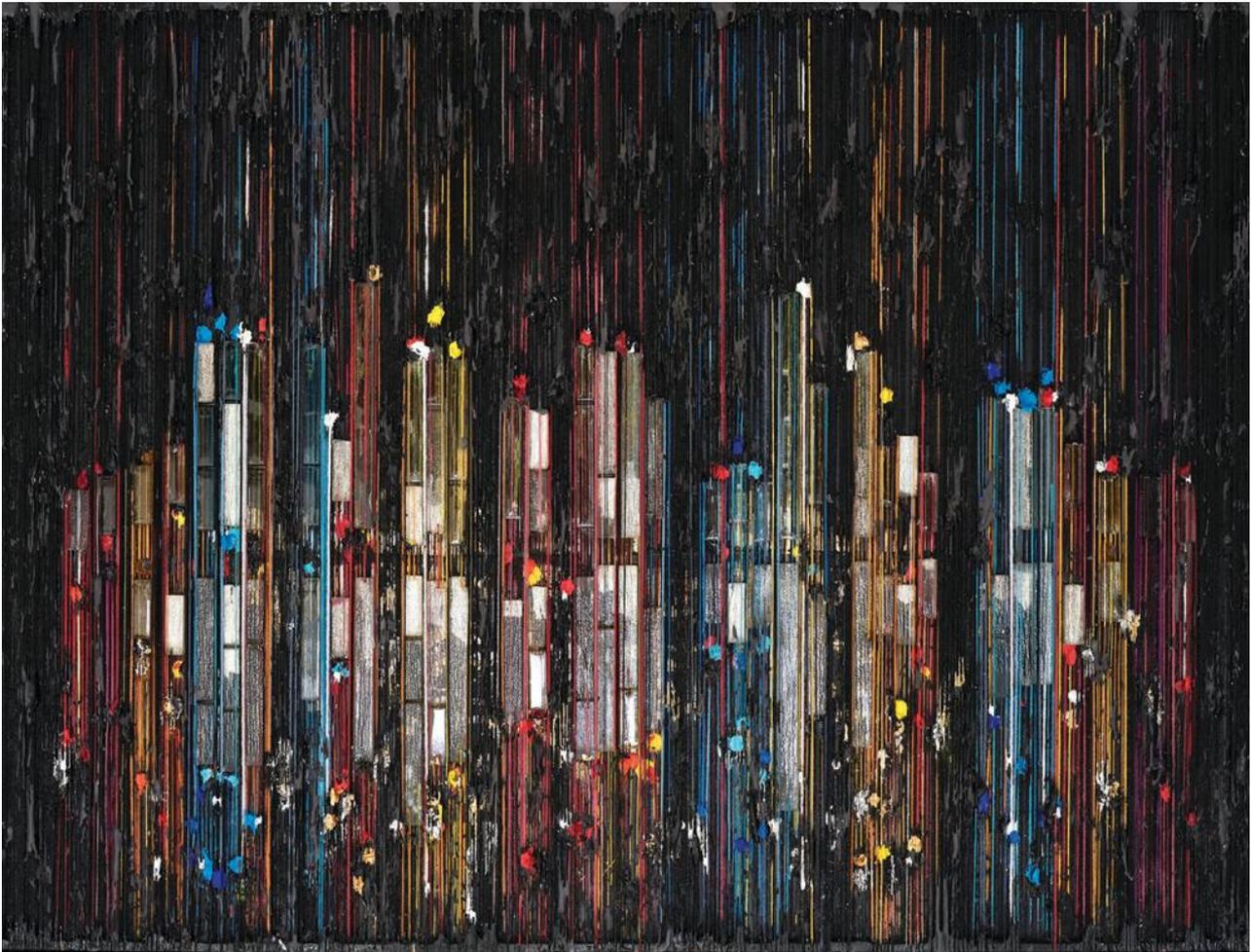
By Oleksandra Osadcha

Bronze

Eric Goldstein SCA

December Night

Mixed media | 76.2 x 101.6 cm | \$3,600



Artist

27

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Winter Water

Acylic and sand | 76.2 x 106.7 cm | Sold





Siena Hooper

sienatypes.etsy.com

Winter Artist

Inkjet print | 28 x 22 cm | \$120



Snow Meets Desert
Inkjet print | 28 x 43 cm | \$190



NEXT SPREAD: *Four Peaks, Arizona*
Inkjet print | 28 x 43 cm | \$190







Colleen Cassidy

Lingering

Photography | 66.3 x 99.3 cm | \$400



Presence
Photography | 66.3 x 99.3 cm | \$400

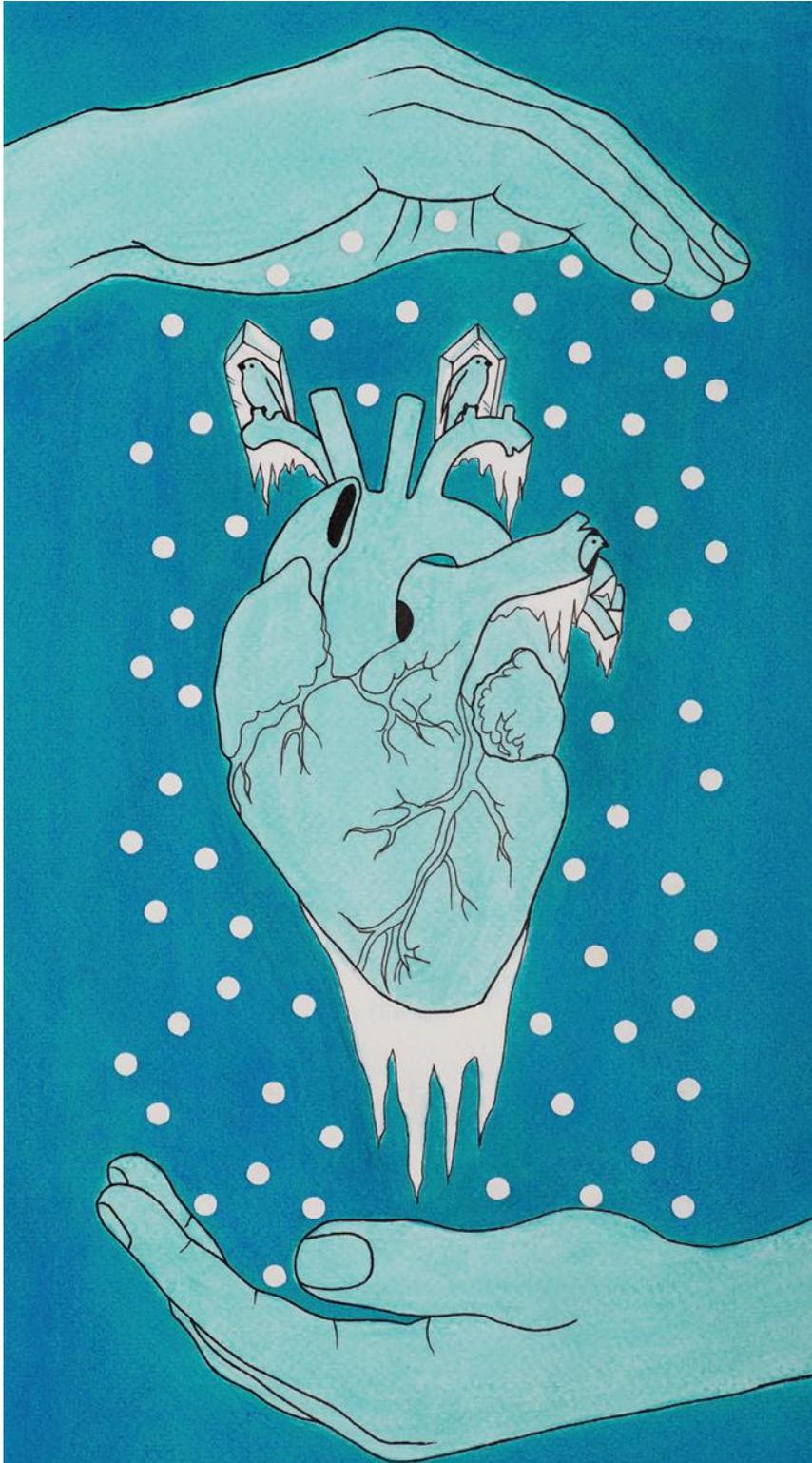




Valentino Campos

Cold Heart

Pen, wash and white paper cut-out on paper | 20.7 x 38 cm | \$3,200





Hollow

coils wrapping
tightly round my ribs
I'm heaving
nothing left
pumped all my strength
dried up of everything
no thoughts or feelings
a cracked shell of a person
lifeless
empty
frozen
hollow

Artist Interview

Hayley Haddad

Become acquainted with perhaps a few unknown dimensions – thoughts, ambitions, wisdoms, life changing moments – of this inspiring artist.



When it comes to your art, explain what you do.

Fueled by my interest in history, my recent work depicts imaginary, or even dreamlike, cityscapes that portray a dynamic continuance of time. In my drawings, I am exploring the concept of history as a synthesis of the past and present in which multiple vantage points of numerous incidents are juxtaposed in a single visual expanse. The result is a multifaceted aghast panorama that meanders through space, time, and history. The large-scale drawings are comprised of a combination of printed images and found photographs seamlessly melded with pen, ink wash, and transfer techniques. The montage of images is superimposed, rendering dynamic scenes that traverse elements of the past, present, and future.

The compulsive layering and building of the imagery and narrative within the scenes are what I find most satisfying about my work. This highly involved process of construction and elimination and reconstruction allows for an almost meditative exploration of the materials within the drawings and the creative process.



What project are you working on now?

Currently, I am building upon a concept my professor and I were discussing in one of our final "one-on-ones" before graduation. I am working on a series of large panorama drawings that incorporate the figure into the cityscape, using similar techniques to my other work, but with more drawing and painting elements.

How has your practice changed over time?

My work has become more concept driven over the years, focusing more on process and idea, rather than simply technique. Art school has definitely made me more experimental in my approach, helping me become grounded and more self-driven. Professional attitude is everything. After slowing down on the art-making while my girls were babies (they are three and almost two), I am beyond eager to jump back in full force.

Read about more amazing artists and writers.

Browse our Art Blog at ArtAscent.com.



Studio Spotlight

Soteris Sam Roussi

Catch a glimpse of the space in which creativity is born in this artist studio tour.

As a five-year-old, my focus was on making art. I mostly and exclusively painted in a spare room that served as an oasis and safe harbor for me—a place free of restrictions. I've found that there are practical advantages to this arrangement as the urge to create happens at all hours and for varying lengths of time from a few minutes to a half of a day of pondering.

My studios have always had the essentials—a sturdy wood panel used as an easel, paint-splattered rugs, half-opened jars of acrylics and tempera paint, and a bucket of murky residue that provides the subtlest range of grays. Finished paintings lean against the closet wall; older paintings hibernates on the attic floor.



Antoaneta Tica



Icy Willow

Wearable art, 200 recycled plastic bottles on cotton fabric, nylon crinoline horsehair, recycled wire, beads | \$10,000





Josephine Condotta

www.blushblondedesign.com

Out in the Cold

Mixed media on canvas | 121.9 x 91.5 x 3.81 cm | \$850





A Crack in the Fence

I could barely contain my tears and was certain my bloodshot eyes betrayed my grief. Forcing myself to put one foot in front of the other, I was just going through the motions of the day, doing only what was absolutely necessary. My neighbour Leo looked at me quizzically and cautiously asked how I was. Too sad to lie or pretend, I managed to choke out, "My cat died this morning,"

"I've never let my children have pets," he replied tersely and walked to his own mailbox.

Shocked by the coldness of his response and the lack of empathy for an innocent cat, I shook my head. What a fence he had put around his feelings, I thought. He certainly had not assuaged my grief; he made it worse. Not only did I no longer have my beloved Rusty, apparently I was not getting any sympathy or support, at least from him. I went inside to an overly quiet house, devoid of padded footsteps and purring. Every corner reminded me of Rusty: his food dish, his blanket, his toy mouse. My lap, where he resided during his waking moments, was barren.

Later, I found some roses and daisies on my doorstep. There was no note or card. The street was empty. Then, their familiarity struck a chord. A glance over to Leo's garden showed a definite match. I was surprised but touched. Maybe this was his way of consoling me, indirect though it was.

The next time I saw him, I thanked him. After a few seconds of discomfort, he said, "I need to explain something. I really am sorry about your cat. You see, when I was nine years old, my dog Skippy died. I was devastated. I cried for weeks. I never wanted to feel that pain again. So, I never had another pet. That's why I refuse to get one for my children."

I was stunned at his openness. My opinion of him thawed, and I saw him in a new light. Not as an insensitive person but as a guardian of his children's hearts.



Alex Ferrone

AlexFerrone.com

Sprinkler Wheels, Post Blizzard

Photography, archival pigment print | 20.3 x 30.5cm | \$225



Winter Red

Photography, archival pigment print | 30.5 x 20.3 cm | \$225



NEXT SPREAD: *Post Blizzard High Tension*

Photography: archival pigment print | 20.3 x 30.5 cm | \$225







Theresa Gage
clawingmywayin.wordpress.com

Abandoned in the Cold

Gray was the note she tucked inside.
Gray was the blanket she bundled tight.
Cold was the floor that dreary night.
Cold was the raging storm outside.
Gray was the shadow that flickered by.
Gray was the fear she left behind.
Cold was the wall that bared my cries.
Cold was the day she ran away.

William Horton
<https://www.williamhortonphotography.com>



Shadows from the Shore
Archival inkjet print | 76 x 38 x 1 cm | \$550



NEXT SPREAD: *Sun Dog*
Archival inkjet print | 51 x 36 x 1 cm | \$500

FOLLOWING SPREAD: *Ice Fog*
Archival inkjet print | 51 x 36 x 1 cm | \$500











Alexandra Iorgu

<http://alexandraiorgu.com/>

BOTH PAGES: *Frozen Figure*

Ephemeral sculpture, clay and native willow cutting | 80 x 40 x 15 cm







Taylor James-Rousson

<https://taylorjamesrousson.wixsite.com/portfolio>

Textured Depths

Oil on canvas | 31 x 31 x 0.5 cm | \$120





River

Another day,
another beating,
The weeks stretched
into months of dread.

Many winters have passed,
the autumn of life reaching me.

I'm no longer the cool spring river,
rushing headstrong into reality.

My source has dried out,
no one drinks from my bank.
A lonely stream of tinkling water,
drying out in the desert of expectations.

How many more will I feed before starving?

Hollow chest desperate for nourishment,
waiting for the ground below
to welcome me with the earthly hug.

How I've missed this
Death's cold embrace.



Soteris Sam Roussi

www.samroussi.com

Dunmeade's Wave Off

Acrylic and dry pigment on 100% rag, acid free museum board | 40 x 32 cm | \$3,373



Damsel's Tickler
Acrylic and dry pigment on 100% rag, acid free museum board | 40 x 32 cm | \$3,373



Soteris Sam Roussi

Nails Pointing Up

Acrylic and dry pigment on 100% rag, acid free museum board | 40 x 32 cm | \$3,373





Visitation At Mid-Night

They're rmm rmming around the livingroom, up-
ending the magazine rack, pulling on the leaves
of the dracaena I have nursed throughout
the long northern winter. Light's what we
all needed, the sun rising late and cold,
the sky black by 5 o'clock. Another lamp.
The plant agreed. Grew. Spring
sprang.

They've brought a bottle of juice—cranberry,
much less!—from the refrigerator, missing
their targets as they pour it into my china teacups.
My poor gold carpet! That red will never wash out.
How did they get in? I demand an explanation.
One of them points to a window—the screen's
in tatters, punched through, the hole large enough
for these pint-sized home invaders. The grownup
said it was ok, they say. He cut the hole for them.
And where's the grownup? There, by the window. He
looks about eleven; to a five-year-old, I suppose
he's an adult. By now, the kids have settled down,
playing quietly like model kindergarteners. Never-
the-less, this uninvited party is not acceptable. Even
in my sleep, I draw the line. You have to leave, I say.
Obediently, they gather up their things, their socks,
their sweaters, their little stocking hats, put the cups back
in the kitchen. I notice that nothing has been broken.

And you,

I turn to the leader, *what's the matter with you?*
You can't just break into a stranger's home. Where
do you live? And who are all these children?
I have no family, he says. They have no family.
We made a family together. We like your house.
I can't feel angry. They need help. Like my dracaena.
Needing help. Like me. Was it not I who gave them life?



Merana Cadorette

<https://merana-cadorette.pixels.com/>

Winter's Witch

Acrylic on wrapped canvas | 30.5 x 61 cm | NFS





Fire and Ice
Photography | NFS













Teresa Denz

<https://teresadenz.com>

Snowy Sky

Oil on canvas | 61 x 45.7 x 2.5 cm | NFS



Ode to my Grandmother

Like a strong blizzard wind
She reddens and blisters.
Whispers chill, like yellow fever,
Sharp and plentiful in their quivers.
Comforting as ancient carcasses
On a frozen ocean shore,
With intentions much the same.
Concealed and unencumbered,
Like an aneurysm in the brain.
See, my grandma, she is fierce,
With long claws that disembowel.
Her chill,
Not even tundra can run afoul.
Though from that cold, my roots were formed,
And from that cruelty, my tree sprung,
There lives no ice among these branches.
Billowing leaves of pardon, are there hung.



Leanne Trivett
www.leannetrivettsphotography.com

Scream

Self portrait digital image | 12.7 x 16.9 cm | \$635



Pull Apart
Self portrait digital image | 36.2 x 56.7 cm | \$635





John Laue

<https://www.facebook.com/john.o.laue>

Dust

Shall we celebrate the dawn
when harps and pillars of light
slope down waterfalls,
pink the eyes of animals
that twitch in their morning sleep?

When on grass blade arches
beetles' backs begin to glow
and the ground-low inchworms
hump and butt their heads?

When snakes in their holes uncoil
and swivel out to catch the sun,
their sharp tongues fluttering,
the glisten of their scales a treasure chest?

When at the roots of rivers
where the shore is stamped with stories,
beavers drag long liquid V's
pulling the streams behind them?

Shall we celebrate the dawn
when tongues of light
knife through curtains' laces,
rise chest-high on walls
of dark-dimensional rooms
like golden calendars unfurling?

O look at us now, the human race:
a pale girl starts and blinks
at the shrill of rainbows in her face;
a naked boy recoils
as his wakened sneeze
roils a universe of glowing dust.

Today is Monday; it is six AM.
WE must brush sleep-webs away,
pry the matter from our lids
and walk erect, with the sun
above our heads like some great halo.

But today, we fail to celebrate
as animals may, in glad awakening.
Sleeping late, we stir reluctantly,
think of burgeoning wars,
tension stretched to crises,
centuries of bitterness
building to a head.

No wonder we turn in our beds,
pull the covers tight,
curl their spines, hide in the heat
that rises from our thighs.
Soon toxic dust
may coat our pillows.

We could watch our world
be overwhelmed by waste
till we fall into such deep shadows
naked eyes are useless
frozen globes of glass;

We could see our hallowed greatness
fade to smoking ruins
as dawn's low animals break
and race for their holes
while devastation's robot angels pass.

Rebecca Finley
rebeccafinleyphoto.com



Hand Sanitizer Blues
Archival pigment print on metallic paper | 20 x 30 cm | \$500





Larry Wolf

<https://www.abrushwiththelaw.com>

Snowy

Acrylic on untreated canvas | 61 x 91.5 x 2.5 cm | \$2,500



Before the Dawn

Acrylic on untreated canvas | 122 x 183 x 1 cm | \$3,500



Larry Wolf

Subzero

Acrylic on untreated canvas | 91.5 x 122 x 2.5 cm | \$3,000





Polar Diptych

On the Day of the Polar Vortex

Too cold for mud turtles
to haul up on the bank to bask
rattled palms relay North winds
cum vulture thermals
belly-up fish on the menu today
in Southwest Florida
where I am warming walking
enfleeced but open-toed
as a freeze-stunned green anole

The Snowed-In People

One must have a mind of bomb cyclones
and polar vortices uncorked. Throw
another log into the woodstove.
Notch up the furnace. Plug in

electric blankets and space heaters.
Pull a comforter over your head.
Cuddle up a little closer if you can
against wicked cold air sourced

from Siberia, angry and impulsive,
Sharks from the Atlantic wash up frozen.
Oranges shrivel beneath rinds of ice.
Homeless lose limbs to frostbite's gangrene.



JC Hobert
jchobertart.com

BOTH PAGES: *The Tragic Gap or Cold Hard Cash*
Acrylic on canvas, copper, electrical outlet | 213.4 x 152.4 x 71.1 cm







Theresa Gage

clawingmywayin.wordpress.com

Cold Bloody Sauce

Peter had a dilemma. He gazed at his son and his wife. Their raggedy clothes hung on them. They were barely surviving, and he had no idea how he was going to pay the mortgage on the farm. The bank refused a loan too.

They had some canned foods, but they wouldn't last long. If the locust hadn't eaten the crops, Peter could have sold some of the vegetables at the market. He had his prized hog, Petunia. If he killed her, they'd have food but no money. He had fattened her with scraps from the dinner table and some grains he managed to stow away before the locusts struck. Peter didn't want to kill her. He hoped to win the grand prize at the state fair. If he won the money, his problems would end. *What to do?* He sighed.

Sarah, his wife, boiled tomatoes in a vat. She managed to save them from the locusts. "Peter, I have something to tell you. I'm ashamed. I should have watched him better."

"What happened?" he said.

"I left the vat a moment to grab another jar, when I heard a splat. I rushed in, but I couldn't save our son. He drowned and it's all my fault," Sarah said. Tears rained down her face. "It's too bad. It was my best barbeque sauce. I wanted to enter it at the fair."

Peter tasted the sauce. "Mm, sweet. Best to win a prize."

"But, Peter, what about our son? He contaminated it."

"Never mind the boy. Yes, it's sad he's gone, but truth be told, we're better off without him. Our finances are tight. One less mouth to feed," Peter said. "Bottle it up. We'll sell it at the market."

"You're a bit cold-hearted," Sarah sneered. "Did you care nothing for Marcus?"

"I loved my son, but he's gone. Go on now. Do as I say."

The next day, Peter brought some jars of the homemade barbeque sauce to the market. He gave out free samples and the people loved it. He sold all he had. He made enough money to feed his hog, his wife, and himself plus a retainer on the mortgage. He returned home.

"Any more of that barbeque sauce left?" Peter asked Sarah.

"No. I gave you the lot. I boiled the rest of the tomatoes, though. I could make some more," Sarah said. "Save a jar for the state fair, please."

"You make the sauce, and I'll start dinner," Peter said.

By the time Sarah finished, Peter had set a fine feast on the table. There was fried chicken, mashed potatoes with gravy, and homemade biscuits. They ate their fill and rubbed their bellies afterwards.

"Let me sample the new barbeque sauce," Peter said.

Sarah scooted her chair back. She walked down the stairs to the basement. Peter followed behind her. Instead of jars of the sauce on the shelves, one jar stood alone.

"Why did you only can one jar? You still have more sauce in the vat," Peter asked.

"No point in selling it if it's not the same. Go on, taste it," she said. Sarah opened the jar and scooped out a portion onto a spoon.

Peter tasted it. "It's not sweet. What's different?"

"Marcus isn't part of the recipe," Sarah said.

"I'll fix that," he said.

"How?" she asked.

He raised a mallet over his head as Peter stalked towards her. "A man's gotta do what a man's gotta do."

Sarah grabbed the knife she used to cut the tomatoes and plunged it into his chest. Peter fell in the vat.

The next week, Sarah took Petunia, the hog and some jars of her sauce to the state fair. The hog won second place, but her barbeque sauce won first prize. She had enough money to pay the mortgage plus enough to put away in her savings.

The judge asked her, "What is your secret? That sauce is mighty sweet."

Sarah thought of Peter when she answered, "Pig's blood."



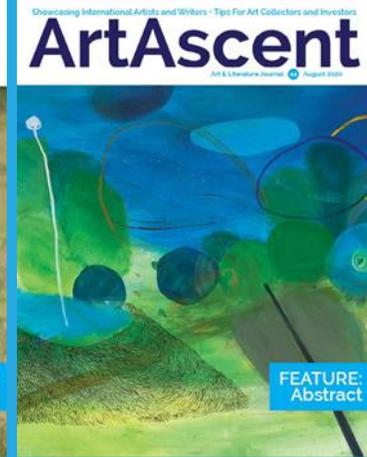
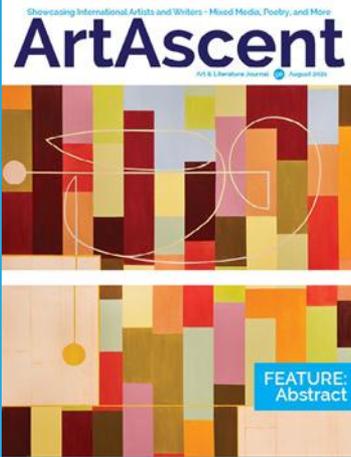
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