

## **Artist's Statement**

Distortions and imperfections created by the constantly changing and malleable element of water are the sources of endless inspiration, symbolism, and myth. These bold painterly images in this exhibit are born from these liquid origins. Each image distills various qualities of light, depth, texture, and movement down to rich minimal essences. These core minimal statements encompass the activity, vibrant life, and constantly changing properties of water within its containers.

A specific time of day or specific light dynamics are recalled, but each image represents a moment suspended and manipulated to hold a larger, transcendent myth of its own. Each painting casts further away from the representational depiction of the subject, and courts the interior stories that originally formed them.

Almost invisible changes in the light occur to remind us of the passing time. At night, an uneasy calm overtakes the process of painting. The night pieces are more searching and mysterious. Slowly letting go of specific exterior locations, these piece ventures into the unknown. Mostly black, red, and dark violet oil paint is embedded in the murky layers of wax medium and encaustic. The surface is scratched into, finger painted and melted, allowing for what may come through from layers underneath. These paintings beckon the viewer to look beyond the surface, to sense instead of see.

"Red Mill in the Clouds" was begun on site, then brought back and worked from memory in the studio. The scale allows for more space between the color changes and slower rhythms that radiate from the top. The shapes of light delineate color reflected on the moving water. They vibrate back and forth, up and down with very clear, hard edged brushstrokes.

Water has beckoned me as an artist for the last ten years. I started with scenes of oceans from the West Coast, then narrowed in on water falls in the northeast. I was drawn to the powerful waterfall as a symbol of subtle destruction. I am now drawn to slow moving rivers and calm lakes. This is either a process of my own aging, or less need to relate to water as a destructive force. It still holds power, wonder and mystery, reflecting aspects of my unconscious and life's illusions back to me.

**Suzanne Ritger**

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