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College of Visual and Performing Arts

A REMEMBERED SENSE OF BEING

A Thesis in Fine Arts

by

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Abstract

There have been moments in my life, when I have felt completely connected to something larger, part of a unified whole that exists somewhere beyond the immediate appearance of everyday reality. As a young child, I experienced this sense of connectedness for hours at a time while leisurely exploring my rural surroundings. But, as I have grown older and busier this feeling of unity eludes me, beyond my memory, like a name I can't quite remember. I am left with a sense of separation and a longing to recapture this feeling of wholeness that came so naturally in my youth. Through my painting I search to rediscover this unity between the specific elements of these spaces and the larger forms and forces of the world.

The landscape is the sanctuary I have found that brings me the closest to reuniting myself with this experience of wholeness. In these silent meditative places, I listen for the echo of something I am certain I once heard clearly. Through the process of painting the landscape and contemplating the natural rhythms and phenomenon I witness, I seek to fill the void created by my lingering sense of separation. The motifs depicted in my paintings are metaphors for a way of "being" in the world, a way I have experienced metaphysically in these sacred spaces and that I have gained poetic insight into. This phenomenon has reinforced my intuition of the universe as a single significant whole. It is my hope to awaken this awareness in those that are receptive to it.

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*Don't speak to me of crowds at whose mere sight the spirit flees us!
That you could confine the surging rabble that draws us with might to
compromise our every great design!
Lead me to heavens silence, whose delight the poet only feels.*

*-Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
Faust*

Introduction

There is a sense of the sacred and a prevailing unity with the eternal rhythms of nature that I investigate in my work. My paintings explore the places that I am deeply connected with and have found renewal in. In the regenerative solitude of these spaces I have experienced a sense of wholeness. I continually search to achieve unity between the specific elements of the landscape motifs incorporated and the larger forms and forces of the world.

I have had a connection with the landscape since I was a small child. I was raised on the remnants of a once active 50-plus-acre-farm. My siblings were much older than I and there were no other children in the area to play with, so I was left to entertain myself. I explored miles of old work paths that led to secluded “special” places that I would investigate. There were many abandoned outbuildings and barns that I converted into playhouses and forts. I was always in search of these special quiet places. I reveled in the sense of peace found in the silence and solitude they afforded. I would create clearings in the middle of the forest or in the middle of a hayfield and play contentedly for hours.

For the last 25 years I have spent my summers in a remote cottage that is situated 8 miles out on a narrow peninsula in Barnstable harbor. This special secluded place continues to be my connection to the landscape and nourishes my psyche in the same way as the places of my childhood. Pathways remain important to me as they connect and lead me to these places. I must traverse a lengthy winding trail between dune and marsh to get to the cottage. There is a rhythmic twisting and turning, up one dune and down the other. This pathway is my lifeline to the renewal that awaits me at its end.

There are many trees along this trail. For me, these trees are symbols of strength and perseverance. They stand steadfast against the severe weather they encounter. Their unique shapes are sculpted by the prevalent wind. The ones that survive the longest are often the ones that are clustered together, the ones that unite their life forces. Yet here and there are also lone trees that endure with the scars that show what they have witnessed, and the skeletal remains of those that finally have succumbed.

There is a small group of seasonal homes clustered at the end of this trail at the tip of the peninsula. Their triangular shapes are silhouetted against sea and endless sky. Their shapes invoke a sense of peace and stability. They become metaphors of meditative existence as they sit in complete stillness with their peaks set to the heavens. It is here that I have seen nature stage amazing light

shows, dramatic skies and spectacular cloud formations and felt intensely connected to the majestic force behind them.

It is the sense of being in this space that I have explored in the visual portion of my thesis. I have chosen painting as my medium for multiple reasons. It is portable and allows me to work in various locations where I can be fully immersed in the experience of being in the landscape. Through the inherent aura of color, painting elicits impressions and metaphysical energies that enable me to express what I have witnessed.

Context

My paintings recapture a moment when I was truly present and felt connected with a continuum of something beyond my personal physical existence, a sense of the eternal. This connection is needed now more than ever in a world constantly bombarded with fleeting technological sensations. My paintings elicit a yearning that invites deeper contemplation and refers to the memory of something forgotten and ignored in our harried lives -- the regenerative power of reflection and solitude.

The thinkers, poets and writers of the late 19th and early 20th century constantly inspire my work. During this time multiple disciplines were beginning to dig deeper into the mysteries of being in the world, a world that was changing at a

rapid pace. Only truths from experience and scientific experiment were becoming valid. Metaphysical philosophies were developed that attempted to fill the spiritual vacuum created by physical science. In philosophy, one of these was Phenomenology (the ways in which phenomena appear to us). This was the inspiring force that drove Paul Cezanne's final masterpieces of Mt. Sainte Victoire. Cezanne believed, and I concur, that one can "immerse oneself in nature, become part of universal consciousness, and penetrate into the essence of its being" (Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 2003, 180). He declared "everything is connected" and that this all-inclusive unity filled him with a "cosmic religious feeling"(Athanassoglou-Kallmyer, 2003, 180). Emmanuel Swedenborg influenced the paintings of George Inness with his visionary mysticism and philosophy, which divided the world into 3 worlds, the natural, the spiritual and the celestial. Inness was continually searching for the unity he found expressed in nature. Thoreau and Blake maintained the view that the universe has a soul and that all things are an endless manifestation of the soul of that creation. Rudolf Steiner proposed that there was a hidden spiritual reality that could be accessed and revealed through esoteric exercises. These are examples of the philosophies that have influenced artists and thinkers whose work in turn has influenced my own.

The historical movement that most closely embodies this metaphysical impulse behind my work is the Symbolist movement. At the end of the 19th century, the world was undergoing rapid changes in industrial advancements. The

Symbolist's felt that the logic of science and industry and commerce might be capable of satisfying practical needs and the individuals will to power but that the spiritual needs of people were neglected (Gibson, 2003, 18). Many people left the country and moved to the industrialized city and became separated further from any sense of community. Today we continue to deny the needs of our psyche by attempting to fill it with material possessions that only satisfy the physical. We are driven to distraction with technology that constantly bombards us with images and sounds. According to Steven Holl, "Throughout our world consumer goods propelled by hyperbolic advertising techniques serve to supplant our consciousness and diffuse our reflective capacity" (Pallasmaa, 2005, 8). As a "modern" society, we seek to fill the void we feel in our spirits by acquiring material possessions that further divide us, building a barrier of contrast and distinction. In our quest for individuality we create lives of division. Time needs to be set aside for reflection, solitude, silence, the space to daydream in. We need to reconnect with the regenerative power of contemplation. I feel compelled to reveal and awaken this awareness through my paintings for "Contemplation is not ultimately perfect unless it is shared" (Merton, 1961, 7).

The sense of place evoked in my work is not meant to portray the nostalgic longing for a simpler time, but a longing to belong and be reconnected with the sense of the world as the significant united whole that I experienced in my childhood. The longing for a time gone by, since Kant, is seen as anti-progressive. Progress requires we move forward into more complex and fulfilling

lives. Modernism ultimately usurped the Symbolist movement. Yearning for simplicity is seen as empty sentimentality. But progress has also separated us from something. While our intellectual and physical needs are overflowing, we are experiencing a loss of an indefinable quality, which I would attempt to define as the needs of the psyche or soul. As Pallasmaa observes, modernism “has housed the intellect and the eye, but it has left the body and the other senses, as well as our memories, imagination and dreams, homeless (Pallasmaa, 2005, 19). Therefore, my longing is not for a romanticized place or time gone by, but a remembered sense of being; a sense of being similar to that illuminated by Heidegger as “a form of being that knows all things, and knows the truth of all things, including itself” (Strathern, 2000,20). This is a metaphysical experience of “being”, outside of the limits of our physical existence. A way of “being” that is beyond the reach of rational proof or scientific evidence.

Primary Influences

Formally, my work is rooted in the tradition of landscape painting advanced and reinvented by George Inness and expanded upon by future artists as varied as Vincent Van Gogh, Edvard Munch, Paul Cezanne, James McNiell Whistler, Piet Mondrian, Richard Diebenkorn and Wolf Kahn. I am influenced by the process of expressionism and abstract expressionism through the gesture of the mark I make and the layering of paint to create surface.



Figure 1 – “House Uphill” – Wolf Kahn

I have been influenced by the work of many artists, writers and philosophers over the past 25 years. Some of these influences were fleeting and experimental, yet however brief they have made an imprint and are woven into the current texture of my work. The ones that have had the most obvious enduring impact are the subjects of this section. I have distilled this list to Van Gogh, Japanese poetry and woodcuts, Philosophy (in the form of Anthroposophy), and George Inness.

It is the color and ability to evoke emotional content that connects me to Van Gogh. Van Gogh often worked with a complementary color palette. He created mysterious vibrations between these kindred tones. Through their interplay he hoped to express emotions such as love, or hope. He painted the eagerness of a soul in the portrayal of a sunset’s radiance. He longed for completeness and union with something beyond his personal existence. This longing left him feeling

isolated and alone. He often wrote of the consolation he felt in the presence of the formidable forces of nature when he was immersed in the landscape painting. It is his constant striving to evoke his internal experiences that resonate with my own work.

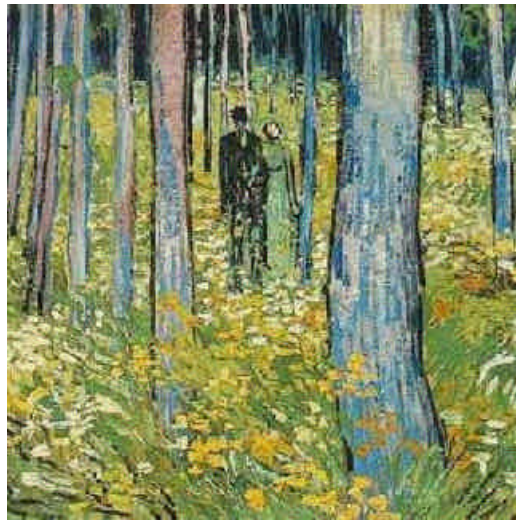


Figure 2 - "Undergrowth with Two Figures" –Vincent Van Gogh

Van Gogh came to admire Japanese art through the influx of prints that found their way into Europe in the 19th century. In particular, Japanese wood cuts which depict flat spatial relationships. The formal elements of these prints influence my use of space via the geometric buildings and formal divisions of space in my paintings. I am not seeking to depict large grandiose expanses but more intimate and personal studies of mood and color. Japanese sensibilities differ from European traditional realism that emphasizes copying from nature. The Japanese are more concerned with rendering the expressive content of forms (Wichmann, 1980, 76). In the West, the tendency is to impose ideas onto formless matter. Through contemplation, the Japanese allow a unifying form to

“arise out of oneself and the surrounding world” (Flusser, 1999, 73). I am also influenced by the Japanese preoccupation with nature that extends to their poetry particularly as it is distilled in Haiku. Poets in Japan create meditations on the fleeting seasons of life and, through them, express what they feel are “essential truths” about the nature of human experience. Haiku poets believe that it is important to approach nature with sincerity and humility. I remain open and receptive to these “essential truths” and lend them substance through my work.

It is these same impulses of wholeness and unity that have informed the many metaphysical philosophies that have arisen in the last century which, in turn, have inspired many of the artists that have influenced my work. Most of these acknowledge the idea of an unseen mystical “Reality”. All of these philosophies emphasize the need for contemplative silence and the intensity of observation to penetrate natural phenomena in order to connect to this “Reality”.

Anthroposophy is one of the philosophies I have had the opportunity to study in depth. The term literally translates as “wisdom concerning man” (Tuchman, 1987, 369). Anthroposophy is the name adopted by Rudolf Steiner (1861 – 1925) for his system of esoteric teachings. Steiner defined Anthroposophy in 1924 as “a path of knowledge, to guide the Spiritual in the human being to the Spiritual in the universe”(Tuchman, 1987, 369). Steiner purported to use the powers of his soul (rather than microscope and test tube) to investigate realms beyond the physical

with equal objectivity, thus deeming it “Spiritual Science”. He claimed to perceive phenomenon in non-temporal realms and then presented his thoughts in a scientific manner. He felt that we live in a world whose deeper aspects are hidden from our physical senses and that we each possess faculties that can be cultivated to lift the veil that separates us. He would then apply these “truths” to social concerns and developed a holistic methodology in areas as diverse as medicine, agriculture, art, and education. He saw self-knowledge as a pathway that leads to compassionate action in the world.

I have explored some of the meditation exercises outlined in Steiner’s text “How to Know Higher Worlds”. These involve things such as meditating on the qualitative differences of the feelings that arise when closely observing a stone, a plant, and an animal. The stone is only physical, the plant physical with an inherent life force, the animal adding the dimension of instinctual behavior and movement. It is the feeling that arises from these observations that must be absorbed not the intellectual insights. Another exercise involves meditating on a seed and imagining the potential that lies dormant, something invisible yet real. One expression of Anthroposophy is the belief of a similar preexistent human state prior to birth and the nearness of childhood to it. According to Steiner, man descends as a “spirit-soul” from a higher sphere into earthly existence (Salter, 1987, 4) and slowly incarnates into the world over the first nine years of life. According to Anthroposophy, as life advances the recollection of this preexistence grows dimmer. That would give one explanation for the deep sense

of connection I felt in my childhood and the increasing sense of separation as I age. However, there are certain things and experiences in life that give us hints of that previous wholeness, and one of those things is the silent contemplation of nature where this reconnection can be rediscovered and nurtured and insights regained (Steiner 1994). My work embodies this silent contemplative search through subtle shifts of color, light and atmosphere creating a sense of the mystery I witness.

In my opinion, the master of subtlety and mystery is George Inness. He has remained a strong and constant influence. The work I resonate most with is his later work, after he had adopted the mystical philosophy of Emmanuel Swedenborg. Swedenborg's belief that "everything in nature is a reflection of God's immanence -- which infuses the world with a 'living motion' that can open the individual to spiritual influx' -- was one of the underpinnings of Inness's landscapes" (Bell, 2003, 31). Inness's landscapes synthesize his observations from nature and his understanding of the human spirit. Working from memory, he would "manipulate light effects and simplify and harmonize compositional elements until obtaining an evocative whole. The goal was an overall unity that both was pleasing to the eye and touched the soul" (Cleveland, 2005, 15). Inness's paintings have an emphasis on mood, working in a low light, early morning and late in the day when colors are more unified. The color of the light strongly influences the cohesive unity of the scene. It is this mood, color sense and prevailing sense of unity that I seek to infuse in my own work. Inness also

had an appreciation of paint as a vehicle for personal, complex emotional expression that was truly innovative and ahead of its time.

His late landscapes exude a freedom of hand and an openness of brushwork that are the antithesis of academic rendering; their directness and economy can still seem radical, even Minimalist in intent. His work has long been considered a precursor to the painterly, process-oriented art of Jackson Pollock, Mark Rothko and Willem de Kooning. (Smith, 2003).

I am also working in this process-oriented manner in my application of paint and continue to expand my vocabulary of mark making.



Figure 3 - Morristown, NJ – George Inness -1869

Aesthetic

In my landscape paintings I am searching for more than a factual representation of the scene before me, I am looking for its poetic substance. Although my work remains representational, the conceptual idea of the object is more important than the physical form it takes. Before I begin a new painting, I immerse myself completely into the sensations of the surroundings before me. This process may continue for several days or weeks. I quietly observe the impressions I receive

intuitively. I often do on-site sketches and painting studies to further search out what I am experiencing. This is similar to what the Haiku poet calls “aesthetic contemplation”.

Pure poetry is not the decoration of a preconceived and clearly defined matter; it springs from the creative impulse of a vague imaginative mass pressing for development and definition. The poet must decide for himself what he did see, to formulate it, to create a form which will be his insight. (Yasuda, 1973, 27)

I employ this concept of “aesthetic contemplation” through the process of transforming the initial vague impressions of the observed subject and imagery around me together with the resulting insight into the nature of the experience, the total revelation. It is the realization of what the subject is, in its unity and oneness. It is not simply being aware of how beautiful the subject or surroundings are or how they affect me, it is a total openness to the complete experience of their existence. In this way, I extract the essence of the imagery from its incidental external appearance. There remains a similarity to the original imagery, but it must be transformed into an expression of its structure and what that structure has revealed to me (Yasuda, 1973, 23).

Annie Dillard observed in her book *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* that “Landscape consists in the multiple, overlapping intricacies and forms that exist in a given landscape” (Dillard, 1998,139). I physically employ this concept in creating my work. The surface is built up of a complexity of multiple overlapping layers that create a permeable space. These layers are intended to engage the viewer in an in-depth communion with the total experience. For example, when I am painting in the middle of a forest I am engaged on many levels, many layers of

experience. I observe the filtered light through the trees, I smell the earthiness of the soil, I hear the intensity of the silence, and thus, all my senses are engaged. I then leave these temporal elements and become aware of an anti-temporal sense of sanctuary and a deep sense of peace. Through the many layers, sensitive marks and colors, I seek to evoke this same discovery.



Figure 4 - A Certain Silence – Mary L. Moquin 2009 10: x 6.75" oil

Through intuitively rearranging the composition I continually explore elements until I find a combination that best evokes the experience witnessed. This often includes a paring down of the elements to simple geometric shapes. Geometry has long been associated with ideas of “sacred” and “mystical unity”. For artists like Mondrian and Kandinsky, “the purification of natural forms into abstract forms

implied the proposition that geometric configurations function as paradigms of spiritual enlightenment” (Tuchman, 1987, 64). For Plato, geometric forms encapsulate true knowledge. In Phenomenology, geometry and mathematics are perhaps the only things that can be shown to be beyond relativism. Geometry is seen as a form of perfect knowledge that exists in a realm of timeless truth (Strathern, 2000, 19). In my work, the triangle and geometric divisions of space often become the perfect forms to evoke what I am searching for. This underlying geometry serves as the skeletal basis of the formal design behind my conceptual vision as it inherently implies both stability and direction, consciousness becomes uplifted.

My preferred painting support is some type of wood panel. This forgiving and sturdy material can be scraped without fear of damaging the support. I find the hardness of the surface better accepts the marks I make as the resistance meets me directly in the same way that being immersed in nature does. I begin drawing intuitively in oil stick or china marker and achieve moments of transcendence when losing myself in the gestural process of drawing with the kernel of the initial insight within me as well as the muscle memory developed during preliminary exploratory sketches. I use a brush or rag with solvent to wash and move the drawing. These materials keep the painting malleable while I search out and block in the elements of the composition.

I employ multiple tools in order to make a large variety of marks. Pieces of rubber, kitchen utensils, palette knives and various brushes all serve. These marks refer back to the types of marks I have seen left by the tide and wind. There is a random beautiful quality to these marks and I constantly attune myself to that type of sensitive mark making. Nature never looks contrived or controlled but exquisitely intentional in its randomness. I search to find similar complexities and subtle nuances to recall and amplify the sense of sacred space and atmosphere of the initial encounter.

I often limit my color choices to a complementary color pair. Complementary colors “complete” each other by providing the presence of all the primary colors. Therefore, this keeps with my underlying concept of unity and wholeness. Light also plays an important part in my paintings often created by the subtle shifting of harmonic intensities. The lack of light, or its excess, further unites space and atmosphere. In low light the earth becomes one with the night and the clarity of individual forms decrease. During twilight, color is further united by a strong sense of the color of the departing sunlight that permeates all objects struck by it. By contrast, in strong sunlight, the objects can appear to dissolve by the intensity of the light and their density visually appears to lessen, again causing forms to unite. Quantum physics denies the concreteness of form, so theoretically we are not form, but essence momentarily confined to physical form and there are times when those boundaries are less defined. These are the boundaries I investigate.

Description of the Paintings



Figure 5 – “Presence” – Mary L. Moquin
Oil on panel 32” x 3”0”

In the painting “*Presence*”, the monumental structure of the house has been reduced to simple stacked geometrical shapes. These forms interlock and unite to form a large stable geometric form that penetrates into the vast sky. As an inhabitable space, we transcend the geometrical inert box it appears as. We know it has an interior that is hidden from us, an inner reality. This house has also become an allegory of human existence, despite the obvious physical

incongruities. According to Bachelard, “ A geometrical object of this kind ought to resist metaphors that welcome the human body and the human soul. But transposition to the human plane takes place immediately whenever a house is considered” (Bachelard, 1994, 48).

This lone “presence” creates a feeling of solitude that evokes references of sanctuary and sacred space. There is something represented here other than the self-evident physical reality, the house transcends the ordinary house and becomes a symbol of something unknown yet referred to. The vertical imagery implies upward movement that allows the ascent of the spirit beyond matter. It unites and becomes a conduit between earthly existence and something more akin to eternity. This house existed prior to me and will more than likely continue to exist many years after I have ceased. So it also alludes to a faith in the larger continuum. It acknowledges the existence of more than one reality, both the finite and infinite.

There is a strength and solidity to this house that evokes security and faith; its firm rooted-ness suggests fortitude and safety because it has been sturdily built to survive and withstand the many storms it has weathered, the house becomes a metaphor of endurance and perseverance. “We have to participate in the dramatic cosmic events sustained by the combatant house”. (Bachelard, 1994, 46). This tangible object, which is more than a shelter, points to the intangible experiences of survival and loss that all individuals encounter. There is a sense of poignancy, a longing or yearning elicited by the strength and protection this house embodies. The house is anthropomorphized as a material

symbol of existence that has become inured to hardships and remains steadfast and victorious. “And so, faced with the bestial hostility of the storm and the hurricane, the house’s virtues of protection and resistance are transposed into human virtues” (Bachelard, 1994, 46).

In contrast with the concrete presence of the house, the atmosphere surrounding it is mysterious and dreamlike. Initially, the house appears as little more than a silhouette until the internal color relationships unfold and complete the structure. There is a vaporous quality to the air that allows the house to breathe, the boundaries expand and contract, dissolve and solidify. This dreamlike quality engages and creates a space “where details grow dimhours pass unnoticed and space stretches out interminably...to daydreams of infinity” (Bachelard, 1994, 189). The sense of timelessness, or infinity is amplified through the surface that is built up of many layers creating a permeable space for the silence to penetrate.



Figure 6 – “Through the Rain” – Mary L. Moquin
Oil on panel 36” x 36”

Through the Rain, expresses the tenuous qualities of survival and existence. A small copse of trees is conveyed as a monumental group that stand united and secure upon an eroded patch of ground. They stand fully exposed to the elements; their ultimate chance of survival is undermined as the earth recedes beneath them. Yet, they evoke a secure sense of being by their united presence. There is prevailing vertical movement created through the directional lines of the trunks with the exception of one diagonal trunk that forebodes a

potential collapse, yet it survives because the others support it. The individuality of the trees melds into a unified mass that is silhouetted against a light lavender gray sky that permeates the intimate spaces between them. The murky atmosphere unites the picture in a contemplative moodiness and infers a somber note. The complexity of painted layers slows the eye from restlessly scanning inviting further contemplation.



*Figure 7 – “Interpreting Silence 2” – Mary L. Moquin
China marker and oil on panel 15” x 16”*

Silence is an important element in my work. When painting this series, I kept the idea of silence foremost in my mind. *Interpreting Silence, 2* comes the closest to evoking this intense silence. The house emerges from a veiled atmosphere created by multiple transparent layers of paint. There is a filmy quality, like breath on glass. The painting whispers “listen” through the subtle shift of grays and the absence of superfluous imagery. The details are subdued so that the soul of the object can be heard and felt without distraction. The intense silence of the painting increases an awareness of the expansive space it occupies. According to Bachelard “There is nothing like silence to suggest a sense of unlimited space” (1994, 43). At first the painting appears monochromatic, but slowly the relative temperatures of the grays cause the space to shift, recede and advance. The layers expand and contract and there is a breadth of calm. Observing the melding of the subject matter with the ethereal atmosphere reminds us that oneness is a matter of awareness and awakens a conscious connection with that oneness.



*Figure 8 – “Beyond Being” – Mary L. Moquin
Oil on Panel – 28” x 27”*

The sublime makes us aware of our own mortality, we are transient, our existence here is temporary and we have glimpsed something eternal in the continual rising and setting of the sun. “Whereas the beautiful conveys to us its fragility, the sublime conveys to us our own” (Sartwell, 2006, 18). The departing of the day brings to us an awareness of endings both temporary and final. There is poignancy in the sun setting, a sense of loss, time forever passed. In this painting I have touched on these experiences. I have frozen a moment of twilight, suspending the inevitable darkness to follow. The indistinct silhouettes

of the buildings begin to dissolve into the surrounding space yet they are still perceptible. There is a pervasive attitude of solitude expanding into the immensity of the sky that is constructed of multi layered complimentary hues.



Figure 9 – “*In Search of Stillness*” – Mary L. Moquin
Oil on panel 24” x 25” 2009

The painting *In Search of Stillness* reduces the artistic outer beauty of descriptive details to a minimum while preserving the atmospheric elements. Here I eliminate all distractions to a purity of form. “Ruthlessly reducing the artistic (tasteful outer beauty) to an absolute minimum increases its transcendent quality” (Tuchmann, 1987, 314). Stillness is an ever-increasing process of

distillation and condensation. The simplicity of the form assimilates the qualities of a symbol. “The symbol is a kind of limit of materiality and as such an approach to the immaterial” (Tuchmann, 1987, 314). Its basic structure relies on the geometry of the triangle. There is an eternal quality to the triangle, philosophers have debated about whether it is intuited, an ideal truth independent of the subjective. There is a pure sensual physicality to the paint. The grays bend and shift, rise and fall as a musician blends sound, into impressions beyond words and meaning. The unfolding of these elements requires time and mental stillness. “The silent painting, contemplated in more than a casual way has a numinous effect simply by reason of its radical concreteness, its unconditional immediacy. It communicates a certain irreducible non-discursive experience” (Tuchman, 1987, 49).

Conclusion

Through this work I have explored the essence of various moments I have witnessed. My intense observations bring the now of these moments into the here of existence. They serve as metaphors for a way of “being” in the world, a way I have experienced metaphysically and that I have gained poetic insight into through aesthetic contemplation. The phenomenon I have witnessed through this painting has reinforced my intuitions of the universe as a single significant whole. It is my hope to awaken this awareness in those that are receptive to it,

or, in the words of Baudelaire “to illuminate things with my mind and to project their reflection upon other minds” (Tuchman, 1987, 81).

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