



(Gus Harper)

(statement)

At age five, I fell in love with the idea of being an artist. My mother was in art school at the time, and accordingly, she often went to gallery openings and museums with me in tow. I clearly remember viewing the post-war art at LACMA and being captivated by the vibrancy and daring of the large canvases. Too young to understand any of the criticism or cynicism intended by the art, I was enthralled by the unbridled enthusiasm or sweeping brushstrokes, large blocks of color, and disregard for convention.

Now I strive to harvest some of that same vitality in my own work. The "Signs of A Benevolent Universe" series started modestly as an exercise in technique. Taking a break from my normal figurative work, I began working on still lifes in order to hone my skills. I soon found myself looking more closely at particular objects, creating drawings based on previous drawings rather than models, and realizing that I had become fascinated by the opportunity to allow forms to morph and grow beyond my initial perceptions. Bell peppers became mountains, citrus became lava flows, and flowers became bell peppers. The original subjects were mere launching pads for a series of paintings fueled by the simple joy of creating. Each painting is a reaction to the previous painting.

Recently, I began another body of work that was based on a different set of goals. Overwhelmed by the intense color of so many canvases in the small confines of my studio, I began creating quieter and more subtle works. I combined elements from my earlier figurative work and my more recent journalistic work that began while I traveled in South America. Simple, understated human forms were covered with layers of stories, poems, and mantras. Drawing from experiences I had years ago working in Japanese rock gardens, I attempted to mimic the the flowing patterns I saw in the raked pebbles. This flow of words is used to add a sense of time and tenderness to these "poetic" paintings. The text, barely readable, is thankful and celebratory. Of course, it was not long until the more vibrant colors started creeping in, and now there are large red paintings to go along with the original blues and grays. Once again, I find that each painting is the inspiration for the next.

(selected solo exhibitions)

- Harvest Gallery, Glendale, 2008
- Robert Bruno Gallery, New Orleans, 2006
- Robertson Art Gallery, Los Angeles, 2004, 2002
- Fischer Gallery, Santa Monica, 2004
- Paramount Studios, Hollywood, 2003



(Gus Harper)

- Don O'Melveny Gallery, West Hollywood, 2002
- Ground Zero, Marina Del Rey (2001)

(selected group exhibitions)

- LACMAARSG, Los Angeles, 2008
- Assunta Fox, Orange, 2006
- Valley Art Association, Denair, 2002, 2003
- Create:Fixate, 2005, 2006, 2007
- National Orange Show, 2004

(selected collections & awards)

- Grand Prize, national Orange show (2004)
- LACMA art rental and sales gallery
- City of Angels (Angel of the City)
- UCLA Andersen Business School

(education)

B.A., Studio Art, U.C. Santa Barbara

B.A., Law & Society, U.C. Santa Barbara