

### *Ode to the Unfathomable*

There will be Light,  
To draw a circle on the face of the deep.  
Call a cloud with your voice,  
Of great and hidden things unknown.  
Out of the smoke,  
To dust, you shall return.  
And there will be Light.  
[By Rebekah Utian]

In this body of work, a world is formed and shaken, vivified and brought to dust. This world has life breathed into resplendent skies and verdant hills, yet it faces peril and deconstruction. At the end of this world, we find a beginning, remade into immeasurable radiance and glory. As we find ourselves in our own anxious and deteriorating world, it is my hope that by sharing the story of this imagined world, I offer its breadth for the viewer to be lost and found in.

In this series, I visually conceptualize the earth's creation, human destruction thereof, and the restoration of the world after its collapse. Drawing inspiration from the imagery permeating the biblical chapters of Genesis and Revelations, I seek to imbue my paintings with a sense of mystery and revelation. *Ode to the Unfathomable* begins with primordial gasses swirling into a central vortex. These chaotic gasses eventually disperse, unveiling soft clouds lingering in the sky. Next, the clouds pour forth waters that flood the globe. A waterfall carves through time and flourishing peaks; this stream offers its enlivening waters to every green wayside on its pilgrimage to the ocean. At the height of earthly splendor, the land ruptures into fire and smoke, commencing its downfall. Loosened sand and wind converge into a

whirling storm, revealing only fragments of the former earth. At the end of all days, the earth is absorbed by that most precious of materials, luminous gold, restoring the end into an endless beginning.

*Ode to the Unfathomable* imbues layers of meanings and symbolic resonances through number symbolism and material metaphors. While seven globes numerically symbolize physical and spiritual wholeness, the gold leaf suggests an incomprehensible illumination that engulfs the world over and beyond time. The title, *Ode to the Unfathomable*, is simultaneously the title of a seven-line poem, with each line relating to an individual painting within the series. Over the last year, I gravitated towards referencing elements of the natural world in my painting, conveying humanity's role as stewards of an environment that holds the possibility of beauty and revelation. I see this body of work as an elaboration on traditional depictions of landscape and contemporary modes of abstraction. The media of watercolor and gouache require patient, deliberate layering of pigment, which facilitated a meditative creative process.

I like to believe that revelation and meaning can be still found amidst the chaos of our world. *Ode to the Unfathomable* aims to evoke the magnitude of wonder that may be observed within the fragments of our daily lives. I hope that this series invites viewers to contemplate the immeasurable beauty and mystery hidden all around us.