

The background is an abstract painting. The top half features a complex, textured pattern of brown, tan, and grey, resembling marbled paper or a natural stone surface. A horizontal band of bright, white, blurred light streaks separates this from the bottom half. The bottom half is a deep, rich blue with subtle, wavy patterns and a slight gradient, suggesting a calm body of water or a vast sky at dusk.

RESONANT
JOURNEYS

PAINTINGS BY SARAH BOWEN AND BRIAN DICKERSON

JOURNEYS REVEALED: A VISUAL RECORD OF DISCOVERY

JUDITH PERRY

Art at its highest level shows us who we are and who we might be. Courage leads the way: it takes courage to explore the geography of our own experience, to understand how it has shaped us, and then be willing to reveal it to others. Sarah Bowen and Brian Dickerson have individually built their lives around a committed studio practice and a strong sense that their visual artwork is a form of inquiry. Their work is fostered by their engaged teaching practice and by a meaningful and supportive dialogue with each other that spans more than a dozen years. As an artist myself and a friend to both artists, I am thrilled to be involved in this ongoing conversation about how we move and direct our lives as creative people.

What resonates in the journeys of these two artists goes beyond shared interests and the formal qualities of their work. This traveling exhibition gives us an opportunity to look at the work of two individuals who have made very conscious choices about the kind of artistic lives they would pursue. It is the integrity behind the cumulative decisions to grow as artists that has created such authentic visual expressions.

Sarah Bowen leads a contemplative life in northern Vermont, and her luminous, intimate paintings represent a search for inner wholeness and integration. Brian Dickerson, who lives in Philadelphia and upstate New York, explores remembered landscapes in his iconic three-dimensional paintings on wood. Both artists explore the themes of life, death, and renewal. Both use subtle forms in their work and have a complex layering process involving the use of deep color harmonies that express the depth of our human experience.

Remarkably, what we are witnessing in the work of these two artists is a visual record of ongoing transformation. There is a sense of emergence and integration as Bowen's and Dickerson's visual landscapes evolve and change. Their dialogue with each other supports and clarifies this transformation. In Bowen's paintings, the images of planets rise and overlap; the circle form becomes a rich and clarifying symbol for the self and celebrates the potential that we all share for change and growth. Coming from a deep understanding of the ancient traditions of sacred art, her work reveals a very personal experience of transformation through the subtlety and quiet depth of its imagery.

The heavily layered and reworked surfaces in Dickerson's painted wood constructions reveal a deeply felt process of exploration. We see Dickerson's imagery moving from visual references of the Helderberg Mountain landscape of his childhood toward a more inward, subjective expression of the world. Each work contains hidden forms and apertures suggesting almost inaccessible mystery. Seen as objects, these paintings redefine our notions of sacred space and provide an opportunity for contemplation.

Artists help us make sense of our world. In an ever-changing and unsettled world, it is especially helpful to see how we might integrate our experiences and choose to live our lives. These paintings are at once about mystery and discovery, yet to discover their qualities will demand time and attention from the viewer. Sarah Bowen and Brian Dickerson have undertaken journeys that make the unseen visible, the unknown known. Their visual imagery shows how an inner life can ultimately connect us to the whole world.

Judith Perry is an artist and writer living in midcoast Maine. Her paintings reflect an interest in our connection to nature while her writing explores how we create our lives as artists.

RESONANT JOURNEYS

It's a matter of where you choose to step into the river of art...

THERE IS ALWAYS A NEED FOR TRANSCENDENT ART. ART, AT ITS BEST, IS A CONVERSATION OR DIALOGUE. SARAH BOWEN'S AND BRIAN DICKERSON'S PAINTINGS EMBODY BOTH OF THESE ATTRIBUTES. THE WORKS IN THIS SHOW ARE THE RESULT OF A LONG AND CONTINUING CONVERSATION BETWEEN THESE TWO ARTISTS. THE TITLE OF THE EXHIBIT AT HAND REFERS TO THE DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE TWO ARTISTS MORE THAN DIRECTLY TO THE ART ITSELF. BOTH OF THESE ARTISTS ARE EDUCATORS. BOTH HAVE CHOSEN TO LIVE AND WORK AWAY FROM THE CENTRAL VORTICES OF THE ART WORLD AND CURRENT STYLISTIC TRENDS.

THIS IS WORK BEING PRODUCED VERY INTENTIONALLY. EACH OF THESE ARTISTS IS IDEALISTIC IN THE INTENT TO CREATE WORKS THAT ARE TRANSCENDENT, MEANINGFUL, AND ENGAGED. THEY HAVE BOTH CHOSEN TO MAKE ART IN THE MODE MOST ESTABLISHED AS TRANSCENDENT, I.E. ABSTRACTION, EMPLOYING THE MOST TRADITIONAL OF MEDIA, I.E. PAINT.

SARAH AND BRIAN EACH STRIVE TO CONVEY ACTUAL EXPERIENCE AND SENSATIONS WITHOUT DEPICTING THEM. CONFIDENTLY THEY MAKE NON-REPRESENTATIONAL ART IN A WORLD ENTHRALLED WITH IMAGES. THESE ARTISTS ENDEAVOR TO COMMUNICATE ASPECTS OF THEIR PERSONAL EXPERIENCE OF BEING ALIVE IN THE BELIEF THAT THIS CAN BE CONVEYED IN ITS VISUAL ESSENCE. THIS IS THE CENTRAL GOAL OF THIS ARTWORK. THE IDEALISM OF THIS ENDEAVOR AND BEAUTY OF THE RESULTANT WORKS IS POWERFUL AND CENTERING.

JIM RICHARD WILSON, DIRECTOR

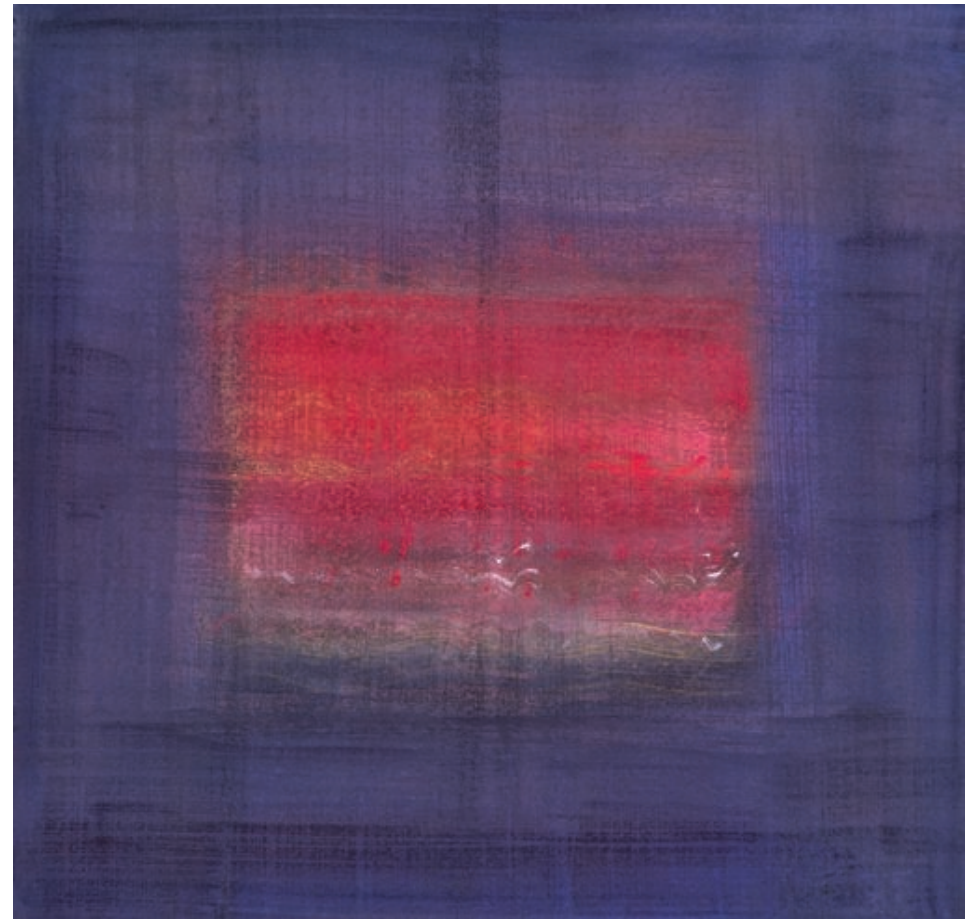


INNER LANDSCAPE #10, 2000
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 13-1/2 X 14 IN.



INNER LANDSCAPE #4, 1996
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 23 X 23 IN.

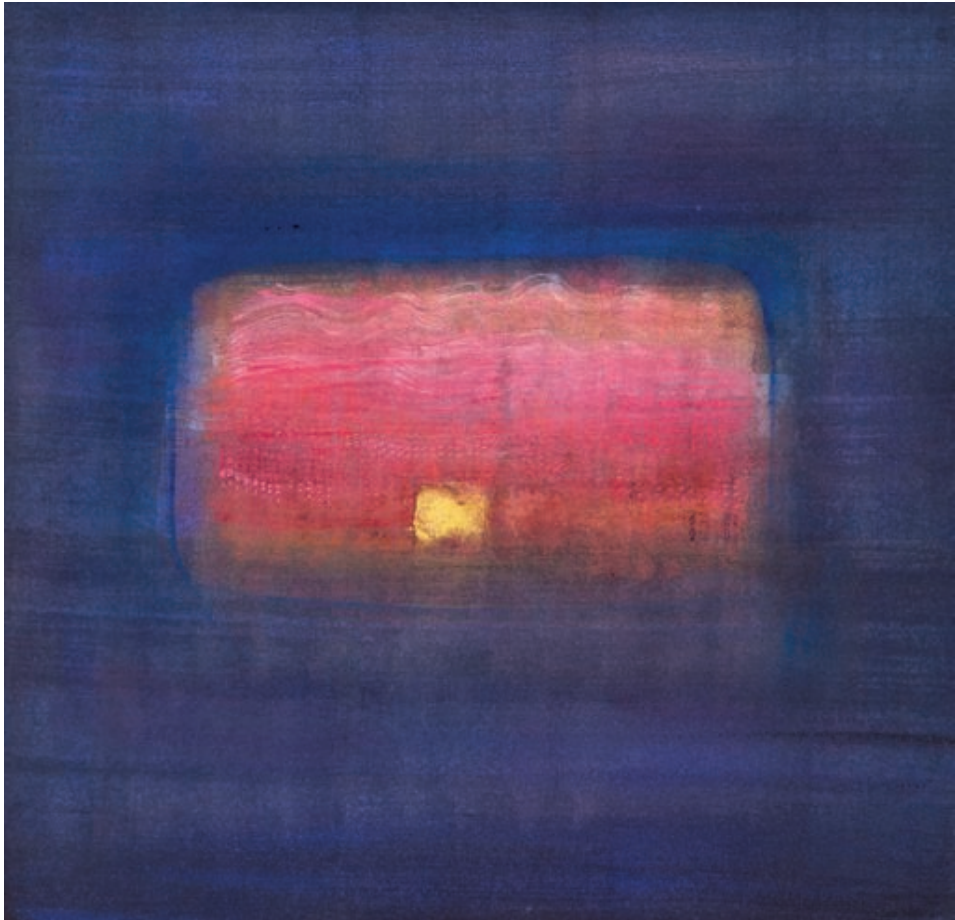
INNER LANDSCAPE #9, 2000
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 13-1/2 X 14 IN.





INNER LANDSCAPE #11 - LIMINALITY, 2000
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 13 X 13-1/4 IN.

INNER LANDSCAPE #12 - CENTERING, 2001
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 13-1/2 X 14 IN.





PLANETS RISING #3, 2005
OIL, WATERCOLOR, AND SILVER INK ON PAPER, 10-1/4 X 10 IN.

PLANETS RISING #16, 2006
OIL, WATERCOLOR, AND SILVER INK ON PAPER, 11-1/4 X 11-3/8 IN.





PLANETS RISING #17, 2006
OIL AND WATERCOLOR ON PAPER, 15 X 15 IN.

With roots in New York City and Vermont, Sarah Bowen lives and works in Vermont's Northeast Kingdom. She began her art career creating films and light projections in collaboration with musicians, dancers, and experimental theaters in the United States and Europe, and has been concentrating on painting for the past twenty-five years. She has held artist residencies at a number of art and educational organizations and teaches visual art and spirituality at Vermont College. Her paintings have been exhibited nationally and have received support from the National Endowment of the Arts, the Vermont Arts Council, and the Vermont Arts Endowment Fund.

Created through the day-to-day interaction of a meditative life with engaged studio process, her *Inner Landscapes* and *Planets Rising* paintings are personal visualizations of wholeness, spiritual connection, and transcendence. They belong to the ancient world tradition of sacred art in which the practice of visualization brings about a more unified state of being.

Each painting is on handmade paper. The oil and watercolor mediums resist and oppose each other, suggesting the resistances we experience in life – transformed in the paintings into a rich and unified whole. Like mandalas, these paintings are meant to offer visions of healing in a fragmented world.



HELDERBERG - GILBOA, 2007
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 53 X 48 X 9 IN.



SETTLEMENT #12, 2007
OIL AND MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 48 X 48 X 9 IN.

SETTLEMENT #3, 2005
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 36 X 36 X 9 IN.





SETTLEMENT #5 - HADITHA, 2006
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 30 X 25 X 10 IN.

SETTLEMENT #6, 2006
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 24 X 24 X 9 IN.





SETTLEMENT #7 - WINTER SOLSTICE, 2006
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 24 X 24 X 8 IN.

SETTLEMENT #9, 2006
MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 38 X 30 X 9 IN.





SETTLEMENT #11, 2007
OIL/WAX WITH MIXED MEDIA ON WOOD, 24 X 24 X 4 IN.

Brian Dickerson grew up in the Schoharie Valley, located in the Helderberg Mountain region of upstate New York. Following a high school visit to the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts he moved to Philadelphia where he is now a professor at the Art Institute of Philadelphia. In 1983 he and his wife Ninetta built a summer cottage outside of Rensselaerville, New York.

The *Helderberg Paintings* began from a boyhood recollection of witnessing the excavation of an ancient settlement site of the Owasco Indians near his family home in Middleburgh, New York. These paintings have evolved into a more introspective investigation of the memories and events associated with growing up in the region. The *Settlement Paintings* are an outgrowth of the earlier work beyond the personal associations of the *Helderberg* series. Using mixed media and wood construction, these sculptural paintings seek to achieve what one art critic referred to as “spiritual resonance.”

Dickerson’s work has been exhibited nationally. He has received awards in numerous galleries and museums including the Butler Institute of American Art, the National Academy of Design, Woodmere Museum, and the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts.

JOURNALS JOURNEYS

RESONANT JOURNEYS: PAINTINGS BY SARAH BOWEN AND BRIAN DICKERSON

WE ARE TWO ARTISTS WHOSE WORK SHARES IMPORTANT COMMON GROUND IN THE USE OF RICH COLOR HARMONIES AND SUBTLE VISUAL FORMS TO CONVEY THEMES OF TRANSFORMATION AND SELF-DISCOVERY. WHILE SHARING THESE THEMES, OUR PAINTINGS LOOK VERY DIFFERENT; SARAH BOWEN WORKS IN MIXED MEDIA ON PAPER AND BRIAN DICKERSON’S PAINTINGS ARE SCULPTURAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN WOOD. WE VALUE THE EXPERIENCE OF SHOWING OUR WORK TOGETHER AND HOPE THAT OUR “RESONANT JOURNEYS” OFFER A SPECIAL EXPERIENCE FOR THE VIEWER AS WELL.

SARAH BOWEN IS AN ARTIST, WRITER, AND SCHOLAR OF ART AND SPIRITUALITY WHO LIVES IN NORTHERN VERMONT. HER *INNER LANDSCAPE* AND *PLANETS RISING* PAINTINGS HAVE EVOLVED THROUGH THE INTERACTION OF MEDITATION AND INTENSIVE STUDIO PROCESS AND OFFER PERSONAL VISUALIZATIONS OF SPIRITUAL CONNECTION AND TRANSCENDENCE. LIKE MANDALAS, THESE PAINTINGS ARE MEANT TO OFFER VISIONS OF WHOLENESS AND HEALING.

BRIAN DICKERSON LIVES AND TEACHES ART IN PHILADELPHIA AND HAS LONGTIME CONNECTIONS TO THE HELDERBERG MOUNTAIN REGION IN UPSTATE NEW YORK. THE LAYERED AND REWORKED SURFACES OF HIS *HELDERBERG* AND *SETTLEMENT* PAINTINGS EXPLORE AN INTERIOR LANDSCAPE, WITH RECESSED AREAS AND APERTURES THAT SUGGEST A PRECIOUS, HIDDEN MYSTERY.



OPALKA GALLERY

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Opalka Gallery is the formal exhibition facility of The Sage Colleges. Located on the Sage Albany campus, the Opalka's primary concentration is on work by professional artists from outside the region. An important aspect of the cultural life in the Capital Region, the Gallery frequently features multidisciplinary projects and hosts poetry readings, recitals, and symposia, often in conjunction with its exhibitions.

The Opalka Gallery was constructed in 2002 with funds donated by the Opalka family. The 7,400 square-foot facility includes a vaulted gallery and a 75-seat lecture hall with Internet connectivity. The Opalka replaced Rathbone Gallery, which served The Sage Colleges for 25 years and garnered international attention for the quality and significance of its exhibitions. Opalka Gallery is a member of the Exhibition Alliance, the Association of College and University Museums and Galleries, and the Museum Association of New York.