

FRANK GALUSZKA



MYTH AND THE COAST II  
Mannerist Paintings

FRANK GALUSZKA

MAY 1-30, 2011

WINFIELD GALLERY





## FRANK GALUSZKA'S MANNERIST PAINTINGS

Experienced by Catherine M. Soussloff

The possibilities presented by the pictorial space of oil painting long served artists as the pre-eminent place for the exploration of the world through art. Beginning in the sixteenth century, Mannerist painters observed both their world and their fantasies through canvases of increasing scale in which the human figure dominated. In these paintings color came to assault the eyes of the viewer with the brightest possible hues, strangely juxtaposed tonalities, and unexpected restraints on the infinite possibilities of the oil painter's palette. No longer simply, or only, representations of nature or the natural world, these paintings spoke about a way of being in the world that referenced the individual and his particular manner of existence through a typology of figuration and subject matter that recalled antiquity and the ideal, as much as it did *fantasia*, or outlandish invention. In Mannerist paintings everything happening in the human world of perception and gesture intensifies, such that the gaps in our knowledge of that world bear directly upon the space between figures, the disharmony of color, the apparent emptiness of a gaze.

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In the twenty-first century we have come to expect relationality and performativity from art that finds its forms in installation and digital technologies. The artist Frank Galuszka maintains a hold on the tradition of large easel paintings and the contemplative immersion required by the demands of technical virtuosity in drawing and the manipulation of the viscous paint medium.

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Speaking about his most recent group of paintings Galuszka uses the words *thin, cold, empty*. He consistently compares the female figures found in his compositions to the marble-like depictions of saints and pagan gods found in Mannerist painting. This historical style ostentatiously points to the manner

of making and construction—to painting and its *techné*—as much as to the story being told. The beings in Galuszka's paintings bear the imperatives of “behold” “learn” “mourn,” but they do not actively seek to elicit an affective response from their viewers. Rather, Mannerism—whether seen in Michelangelo, Bronzino or Galuszka—points both to the style of the artist and to the stylishness of the paintings.

The monumental scale of Galuszka's paintings relates to the prominence given to space in this style. Just as the Modernist Jackson Pollock astounded viewers with the immersive “all-over-ness” of his massive abstractions, so too the size of Galuszka's Mannerist paintings impress, but in another manner: through the gaps that they offer. The emphasis here lies in what the canvas restrains. Through the overly classicized figures, we miss the realistic human. Through the realistically depicted still-life motifs in the lower corners of the compositions, we miss this elaboration in other passages of the compositions. Through the simplifications of color for the sake of color itself, we miss the naturalism of lifelikeness. Unlike the Modernist aesthetic of the pure visuality of the idea of “paint itself,” Galuszka's Mannerism insists on finding meaning through “an unimpeachable spectacle upon our senses.” Can we imagine stretching a piece of canvas on supports larger than *Second Steps*? Pulling us to the lower front of the canvas, the basket of figs, so assiduously depicted, places us in the visual trough of the composition which almost slides downwards with the stream over the creek bed. Once there, head neckwards, the bulky figure of the child arrives virtually life-size in our field of vision.

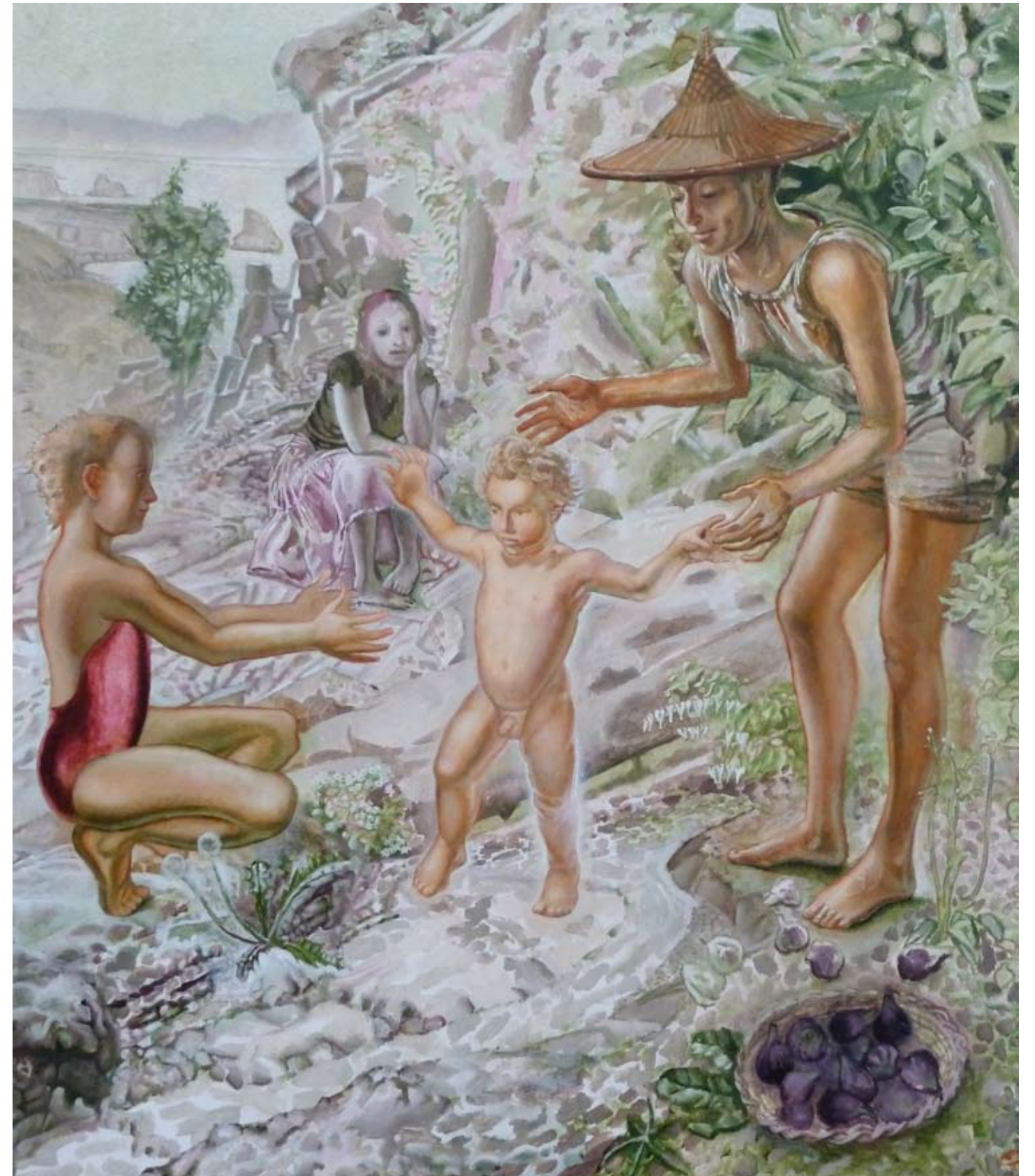
Galuszka's Mannerist paintings succeed in making us understand how individual perception rivals nature itself—how the so-called “natural world” might cede to the world in art.





*Psychic*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 34 x 45"

Right: *Second Steps*, detail

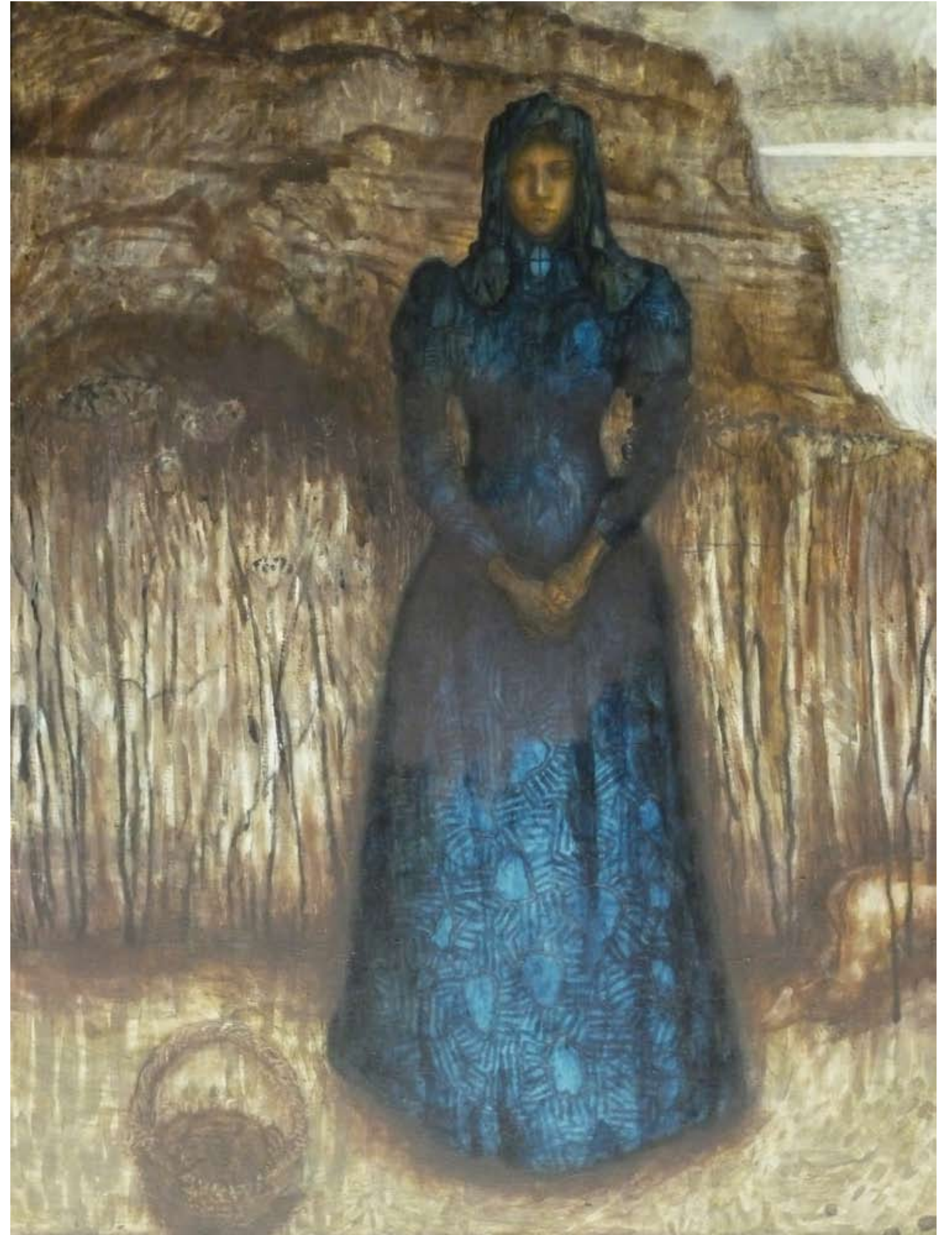






*Untitled (The Man)*, 2009, oil on canvas, 54 x 72"

Right: *Inga*, 2009, oil on canvas, 72 x 54"



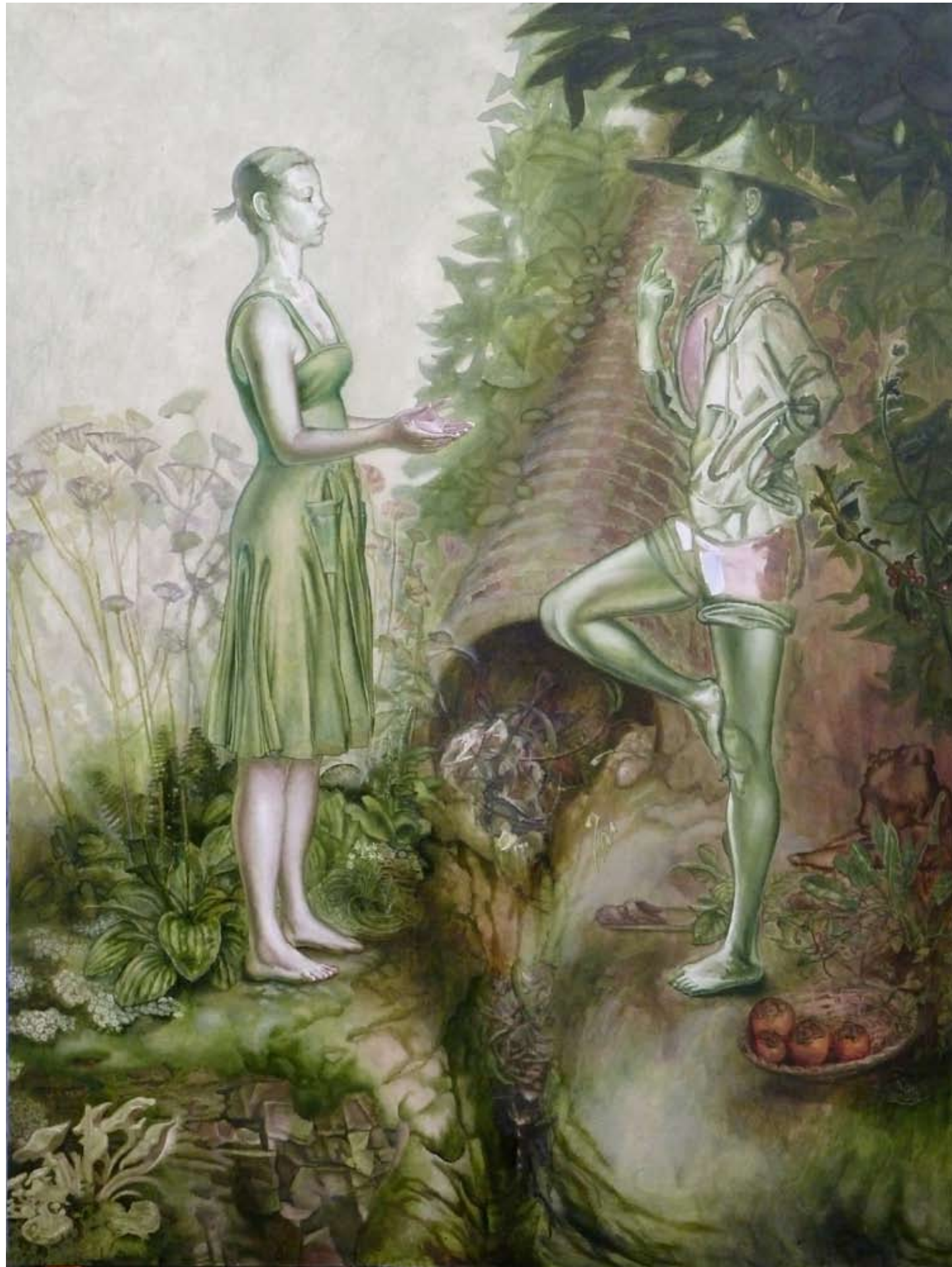




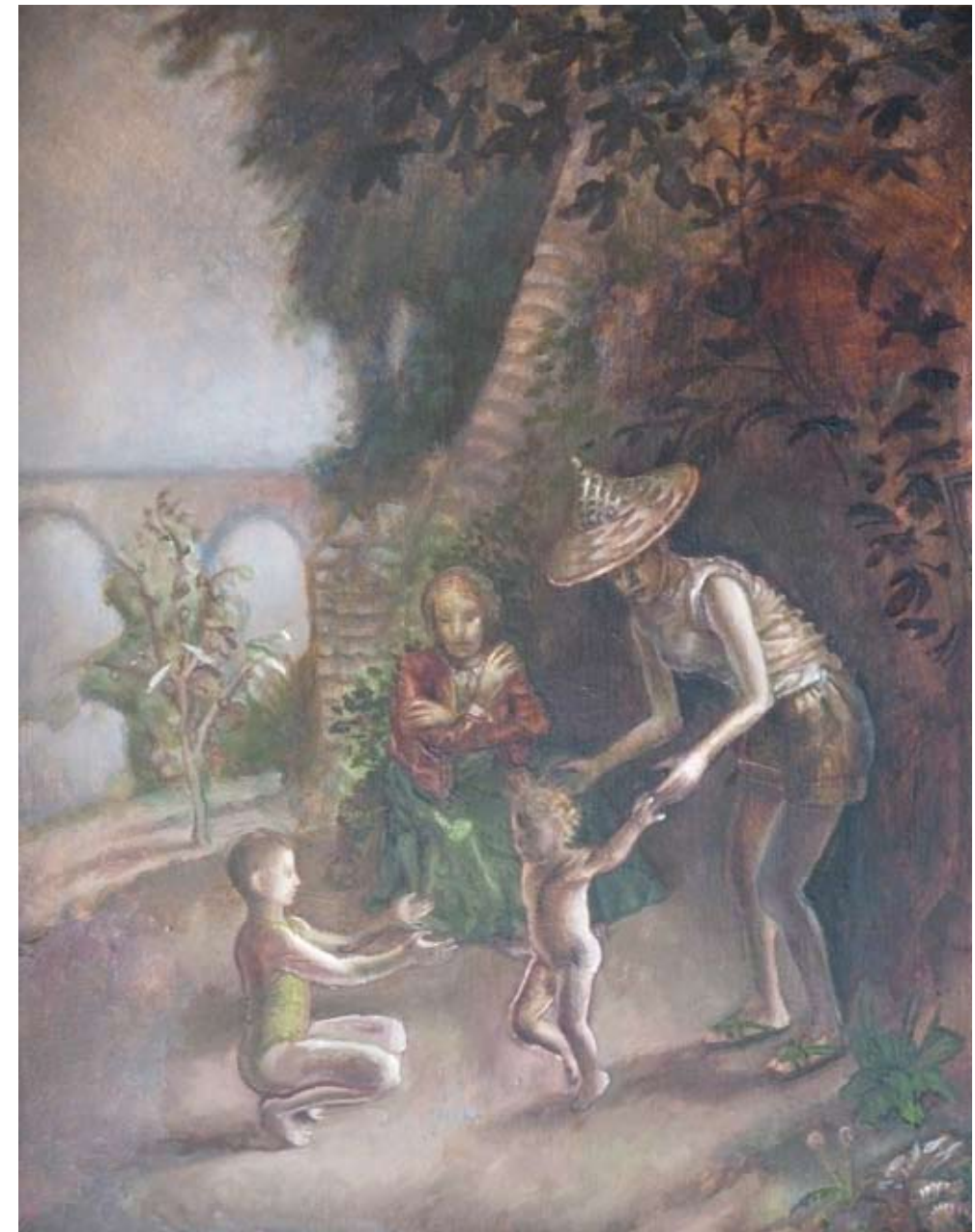
*Untitled (Woman on the cliffs)*, 2010, oil on panel, 11 x 14"

Left: *Bethany*, 2010, acrylic on canvas, 80 x 70"





Study for *Second Steps*, 2008, oil on canvas, 20 x 16"



Left: *On the Threshold*, 2009-11, acrylic on canvas, 72 x 54"



## NOTES ON MANNERIST PAINTINGS

Frank Galuszka

The paintings in this exhibition arise from meditations on the puzzles and values of the Mannerist project. In content, these paintings continue narratives that had been initiated earlier in my work. Re-felt as well as re-seen, these narratives, with different models and props, with adjusted iconologies, and with different emotional ambitions, are placed within landscapes taken from the central California coast.

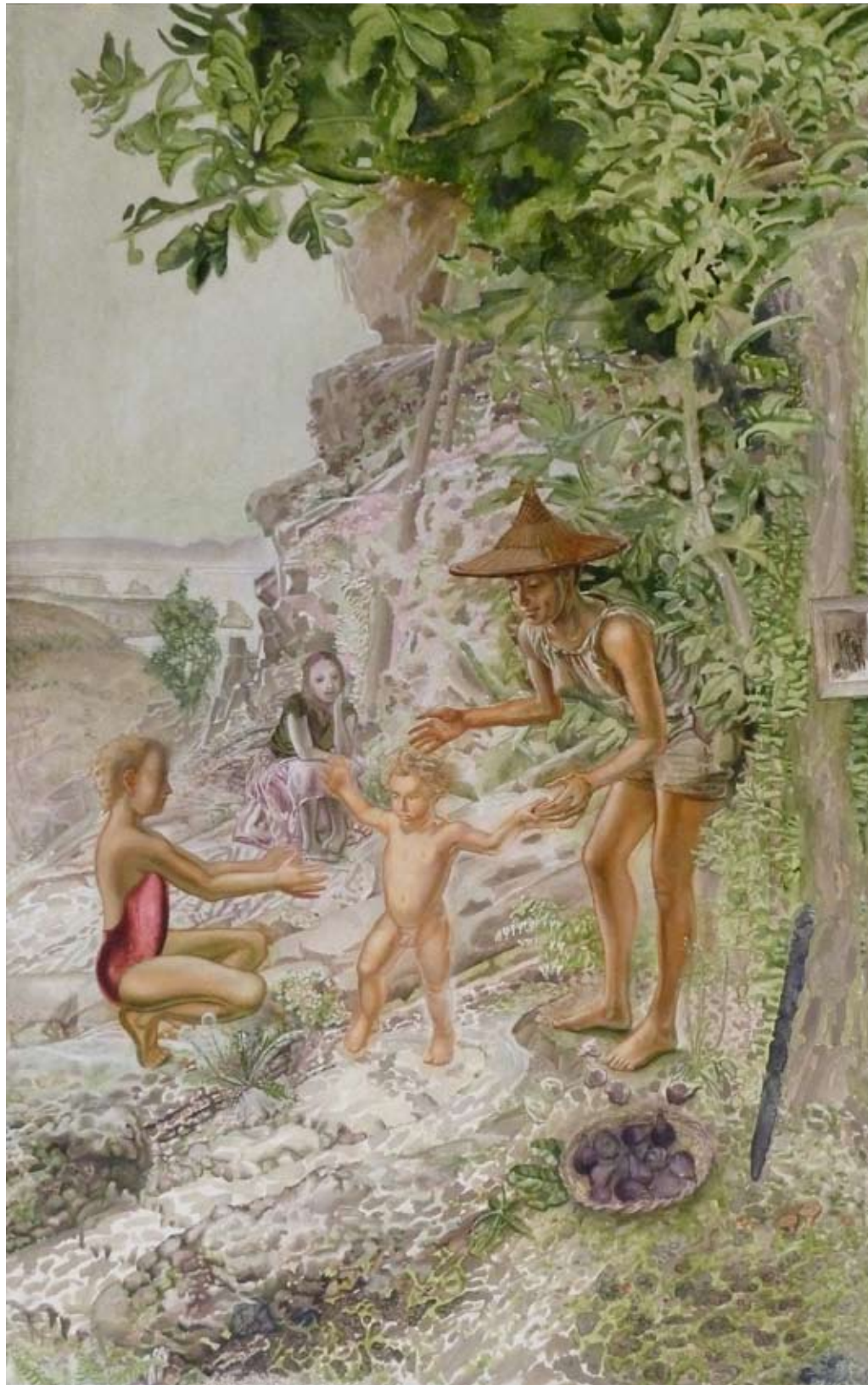
Seeking to enter and create worlds both coherent and apart, my paintings do not derive from any individual works of Mannerism, but from an imaginary descent into a way of thinking in which the proposals of these painters become familiar — even intimate.

January 2011



*Portrait of X*, 2010, oil on linen, 52 x 48"





## BIOGRAPHIES

**Frank Galuszka** studied at Syracuse University and at Tyler School of Art of Temple University, where he earned an MFA in 1972. He was a Fulbright Scholar in Romania during 1969-70.

Galuszka has had forty solo exhibitions including ten one-person shows at the More Gallery, Philadelphia. His shows include exhibitions at the Nicolas Roerich Museum, New York, The New York Studio School, New York, and at the Pennsylvania Academy, Philadelphia, REVOLUTION Gallery, Detroit, McCleaf Gallery, Philadelphia, Projects Gallery, Philadelphia and Winfield Gallery, Carmel.

His work has been exhibited in over one hundred group shows including at The National Academy of Design, New York; the Drawing Center, New York; The National Academy of Sciences, Washington, D.C.; Artist's Choice Museum, New York; in museums and galleries at the University of Pennsylvania, Yale University, Smith College, SUNY, Indiana University, Skidmore College, University of Arizona, University of Utah, University of California, University of Virginia, Rutgers University, the Academy of Art, Tientsin, China, Tokyo Zokei University, Tokyo, Japan; at museums in New Jersey, New Mexico, Kentucky, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Maine, Arkansas, Alabama, Tennessee, Indiana, Missouri, and California; at Sherry French Gallery, New York; REVOLUTION Gallery, Detroit; Delaware Center for Contemporary Arts; NEXUS Foundation for Today's Art, Philadelphia; Silvermine Art Guild, New Canaan, Connecticut; Fundacion para el Arte Contemporaneo, Mexico City, Mexico; Museum of Modern Art, Venice, Italy; Galleria Primo Piano, Rome, Italy; The Philadelphia Museum of Art, Philadelphia.

Galuszka is a Professor of Art at the University of California, Santa Cruz where he teaches painting. He taught at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia from 1974 to 1995; at Vermont College of Norwich University, Montpelier; at the Studio School of Painting and Sculpture in New York, at Tyler School of Art in Rome and in Philadelphia, at the Louisiana Tech Studies Center in Rome, and at The Aegean School of Fine Arts in Greece.

He curated and co-curated several exhibitions including "Abstract Icons," 1982; "Body-Mind-Spirit; the Work of Alex Grey," 1990; "The Map Is Not The Territory," 1992 and "Intimate Landscape" 2007. He served on the Philadelphia Art Commission from 1988 through 1992, and was Chairperson of the Art and Architecture Committee. He also served as member and chairperson of the Public Art Council of the City of Philadelphia.

Galuszka is represented by the Winfield Gallery, Carmel.

<http://artsites.ucsc.edu/faculty/fgaluszka/>

<http://frankgaluszka.com>

**Catherine M. Soussloff** has published in the fields of aesthetics, the historiography of art history, and early modern Italian art. Her book publications include: *The Subject in Art: Portraiture and the Birth of the Modern* (Duke); *The Absolute Artist: The Historiography of a Concept* (Minnesota); *Jewish Identity in Modern Art History* (California); and *Editing the Image: Strategies in the Production and Reception of the Visual* (Toronto). She currently holds the position of Professor and Head of the department of Art History, Visual Art and Theory at the University of British Columbia.

Left: *Second Steps*, 2009-10, acrylic on canvas, 100 x 63"





Cover: *On the Threshold*, detail

Title page: *Advice* (Large version) detail, 2009-11, acrylic on canvas, , 80 x 70",

Frontispiece: *Psychic*, detail

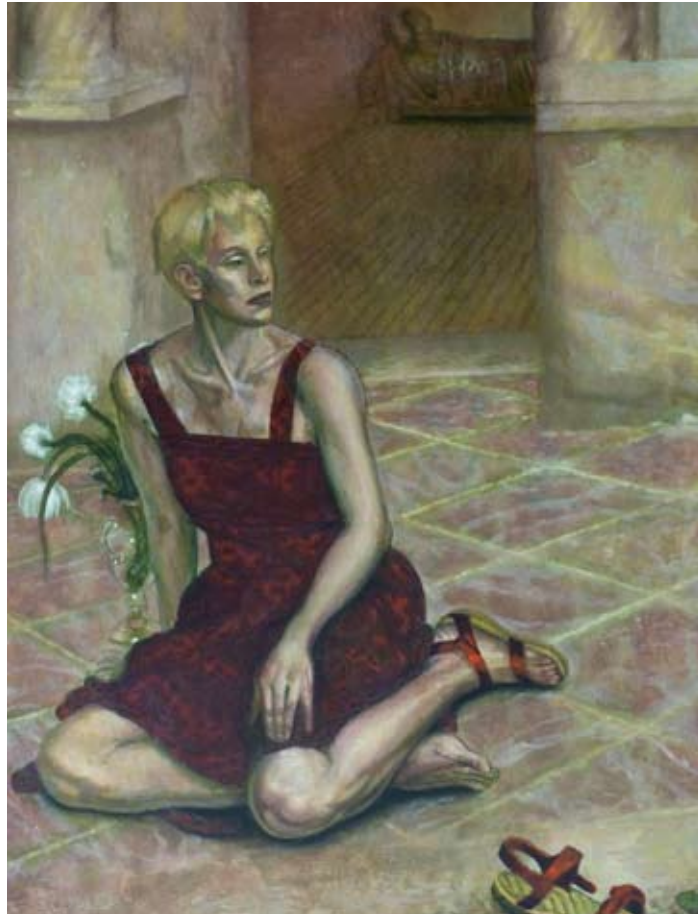
Left: *Advice* (Small version), 2010, acrylic on canvas, 48 x 48"

Back cover: *Bethany*, detail

The work in this exhibition was supported by grants from the University of California, Santa Cruz, and in particular by grants from The Arts Research Institute.

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## WINFIELD GALLERY

Dolores between Ocean & 7th  
P.O. Box 7393 • Carmel, CA 93921  
831.624.3369 • 800.289.1950  
[chris@winfieldgallery.com](mailto:chris@winfieldgallery.com)  
[www.winfieldgallery.com](http://www.winfieldgallery.com)