

ANN HOLS BERRY

Migration



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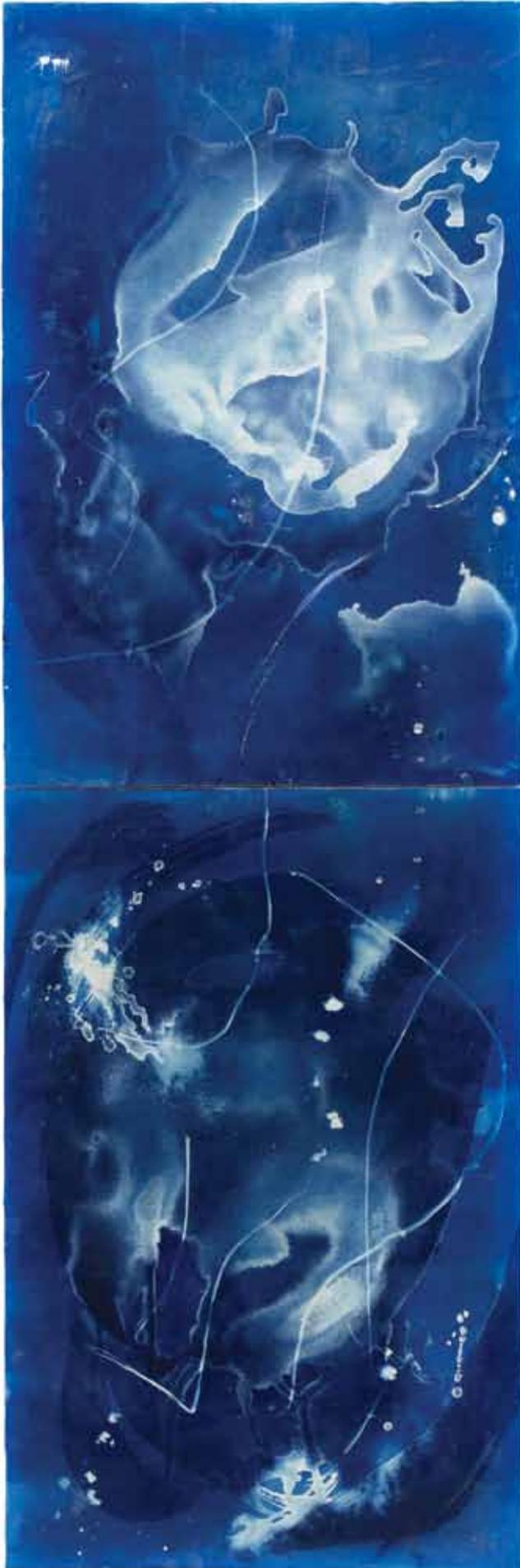
Front cover: *Hover*, 2014, cyanotype and gouache on paper, 72 x 36 inches
Title page: *Mapping the Dawn Sky*, 2014, cyanotype and encaustic on paper mounted on panel, 22 x 79 inches
Biography page: *Le Ciel Bleu*, 2014, cyanotype and gouache on paper, 22 x 31 inches
Back cover: *Taking Flight*, 2014, cyanotype, pastel and gouache on paper, 72 x 36 inches

ANN HOLSBERY

MIGRATION



Essay by Maria Porges



Navigating by Stars 1

2014

cyanotype, gouache and encaustic
on paper, mounted on panel

60 x 20 inches

ANN HOLSBERY:

THE (TRUE) BLUE YONDER

1 | BEING BLUE

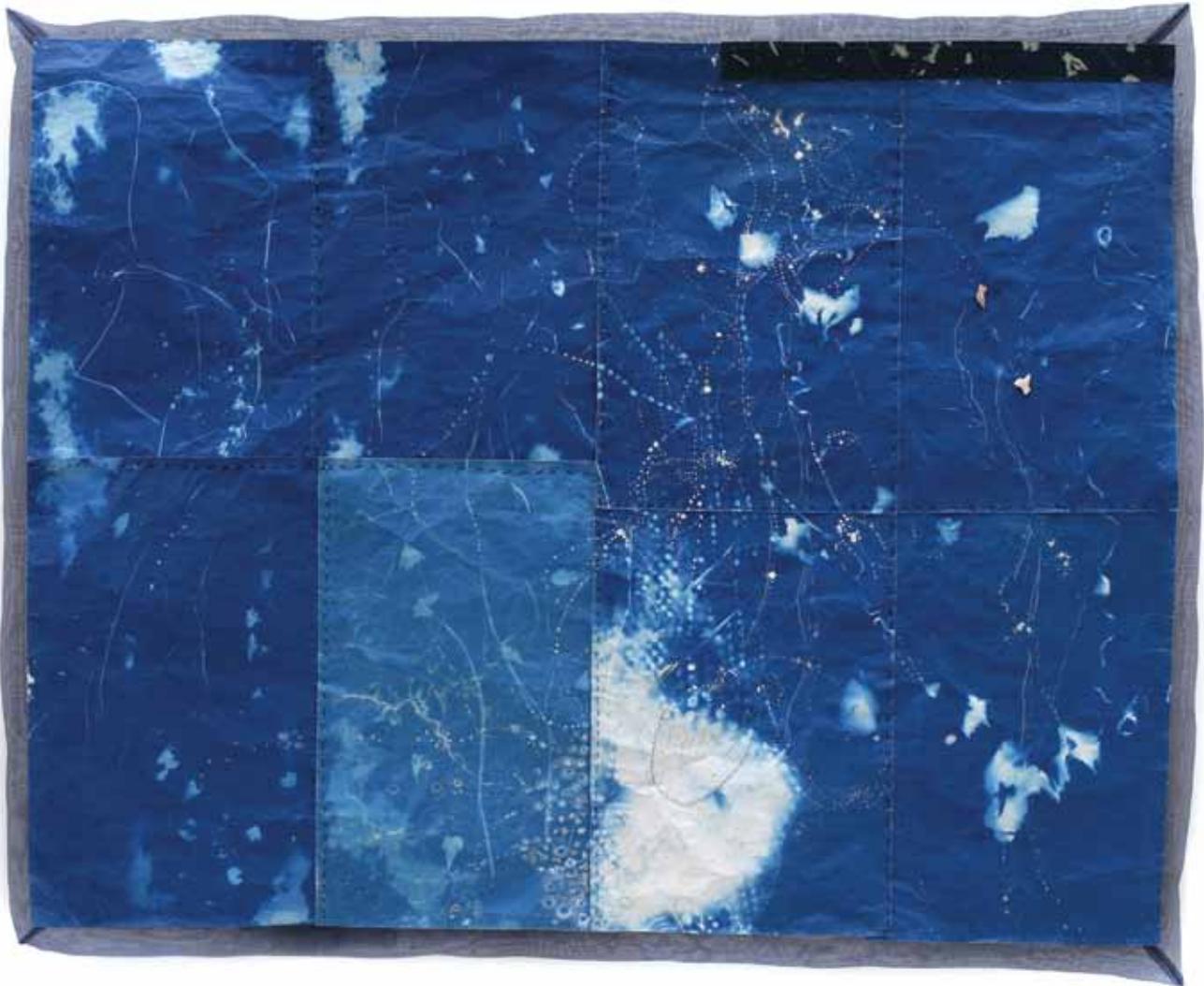
The relationship of humans to the earth on which they are born is based less on attachment to a particular place than on movement across it.

- Paul Virilio, *Terre Natale*

The path leading to Ann Holsberry's present body of work has been an explorer's journey—in some ways, one nearly as compelling as the destination. A series of experiments with media and subject matter that began in 2007 culminated with Holsberry setting out to investigate the possibilities for expressing her ideas through cyanotypes. In this archaic photographic process, developed in the nineteenth century, a deep Prussian blue predominates (due to the iron-based chemistry involved). Also known as blueprinting, cyanotypes were once widely used in engineering as a way to reproduce large drawings.

Holsberry, who has explored a variety of ways to use transferred images in combination with drawn or painted elements, knew some of the early work done with this method and was drawn to what she has described as both "their clarity and their mystery". In addition, there was a kind of fluidity about the way the images are made.

As I looked into the process, I found a "wide tent" that allowed for many approaches. In my painting, I like to experiment with materials and come up with surprises, and I have enjoyed being able to paint, drip, and pour the cyanotype chemicals in the darkroom, and then print in the sunlight.



Lido
2014
cyanotype, gouache, ink, beads, bone
and thread on paper with silk organza
36 x 43 inches

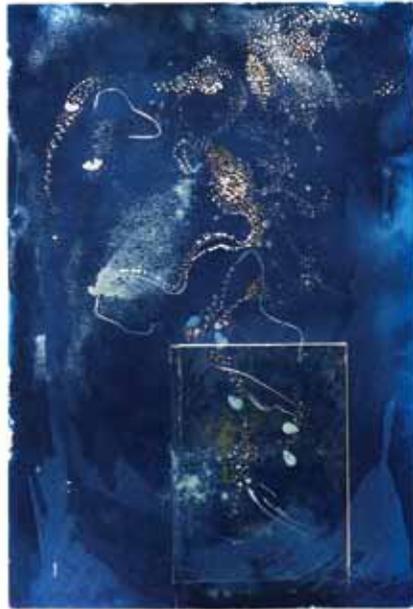
To make a print, a mixture of solutions of potassium ferricyanide and ferric ammonium citrate is applied to a surface, most commonly paper or cloth, which is then allowed to dry in a dark place. Exposure to ultraviolet light (sunlight) is necessary for an image to be generated. Whatever portion of the prepared surface is covered remains white (usually, by objects being placed on it) and the rest turns blue. The stronger the light, the deeper and more profound the shade of blue in the resulting print.

Holsberry began making evocative cyanotype-based compositions in the fall of 2013, starting with smaller panels that have been literally stitched together into the larger composition *Lido*. These panels, made separately in different locations in France, Venice and northern California, show her initial experiments with placing objects on the sensitized surface and then, after exposing and developing the image, enhancing these results with a variety of painting and drawing media. The fringe of a delicate shawl, placed on the panel in the lower right corner, leaves a trail of white dots, which are both emphasized and echoed in additions made in gouache and ink.

Exposures of the prepared surface are relatively short—20 minutes or less—after which Holsberry processes the print. Sometimes she paints with chemicals in ways that continue to alter the image; additional areas of white, for example, can be created by puddling various liquids. To make the five-panel piece *Mapping the Dawn Sky*, ammonia, bleach, and baking soda were used on the initial prints. Holsberry then re-sensitized each image, printing and developing it a second time to achieve a deep, inky hue in the darkest areas. “Throughout the process,” she explains, “I have often reverted to the simple goal of letting this be an exploration of blue. This color seems to meet the depth of feeling in this series, and is also the color of the sky, deep space, and the ocean.”

The delicate white lines in *Lido* refer to the migratory patterns of birds— an aspect of the natural world that has long been one of Holsberry’s interests. Each winter, she and her husband travel to the central valley of California to watch mass migrations of waterfowl from Canada. Similar lines can also be seen in *Navigating By Stars 1* and *2* (apparently, migrating birds travel mostly at night), compositions in which these slender, pale filaments suggest rapid movement through fields of deep blue and mysteriously cloudy white masses. Paradoxically (or, perhaps, logically), the place that offers Holsberry the best vantage point for daytime observation of flocks of ducks and geese moving across the landscape is near a hunting area, from which she has retrieved whole wings, left behind as a discarded byproduct of cleaning the carcasses of dead waterfowl.

These wings—or, rather, their pale shadows—are part of the striking compositions *Taking Flight* and *Hover*. Placed and then manipulated on the sensitized surface during exposure, the spread feathers generate abstractions of birds, fluttering forms seemingly adrift in mottled shades of blue. In the lower part of *Taking Flight*, a figure (the artist herself) appears, hands stretched above head towards the trio of birdlike forms. The title suggests a cloud-bound journey, but it could just as easily be through water—or, perhaps, like Icarus’s, falling, featherless, through blue air.



Opening
2014
cyanotype, gouache, ink and wax on paper
with navigation charts mounted on panel
22 x 50 inches



Taking Flight
2014
cyanotype, pastel
and gouache on paper
72 x 36 inches

The migration of birds is instinctive; they follow a path set by an inward genetic compass, across borders that are (for them) meaningless. But the word migration and its offspring—immigration, emigration—represent what could be described as the dominant sociopolitical issue of our time. Holsberry has been considering this issue: the way people move from one country to another, and why—in part, because of its meaning to her personally. Last fall, her son relocated from the Bay Area to Berlin, and she sees her French friends’ children doing the same, leaving their place of origin behind, moving to follow currents in culture and opportunities, connected in the internet’s vast, blue diaspora of ideas and inventions but still, far away from loved ones in time and space. In the triptych *Opening*, the smaller panels affixed to each of the larger rectangles wistfully, wishfully suggest portals, as if it were possible for us to cross continents in an instant. To be actually in the same room with someone we love, and not just together on Facetime.

2 | SEEING BLUE

The painting is a living thing and cannot be manipulated. If we are able to give up control and follow its movement, the painting goes its own way perfectly.

- Michele Cassou

At times, objects—like bird wings, for example—have served Holsberry as generative devices: both in the actions they suggest, and in the images they help her to create. Imaginative versions of such devices appear in some works; the concentric circles in the upper right quadrant of *Navigating By Stars 2* represent the markings created by such a machine, according to the artist. Others appear in the 49 panels of *Prima Materia*, over and under the many layers of paint that accumulated as she developed this massive work. The title alludes to the formless base of all matter—the Big Bang, where everything begins.

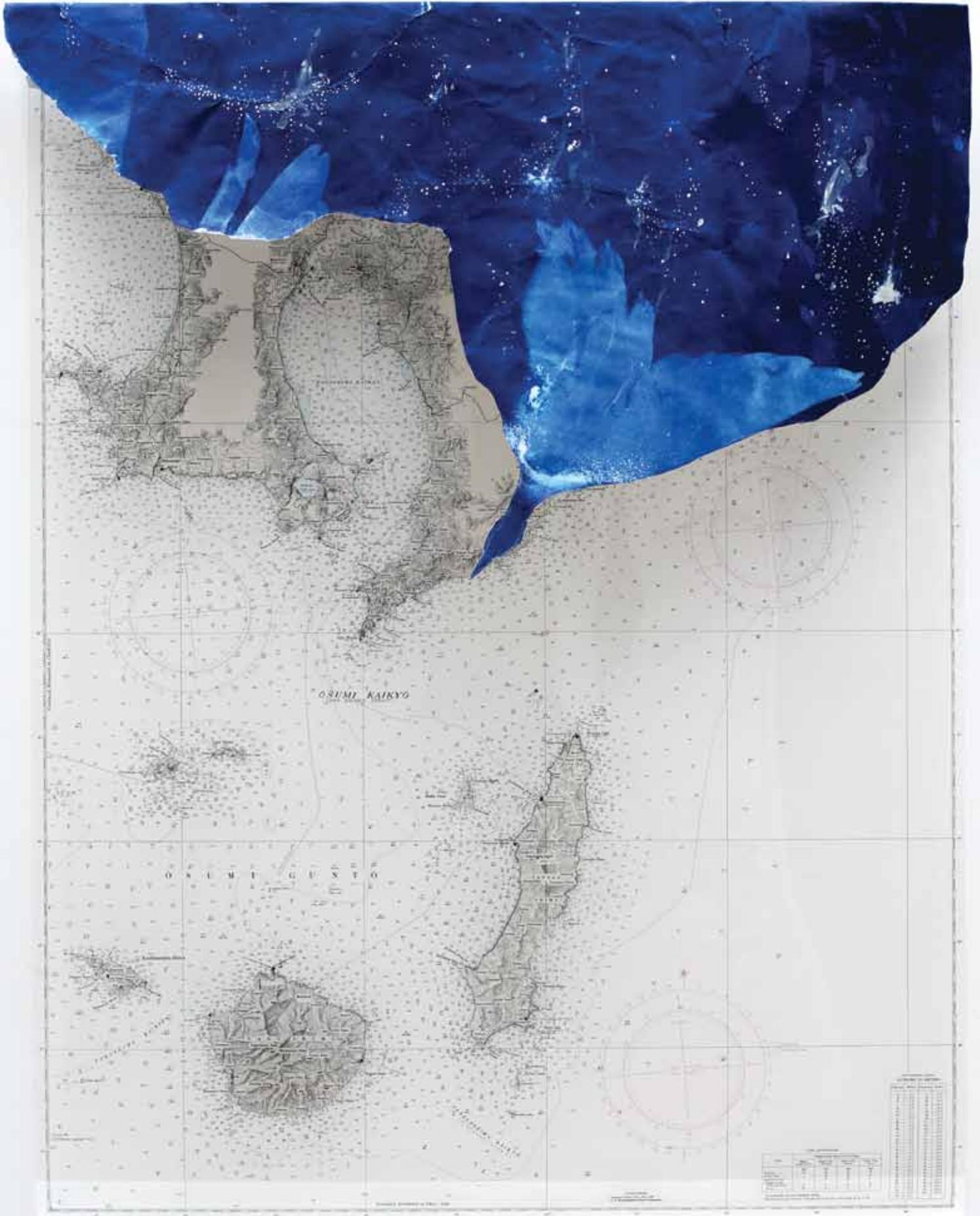
Generative objects, however, never determine a set of rules or preconceived notions of what a work will be. From the beginning, Holsberry has been determined to make art for herself,

Southward

2014

cyanotype, gouache and ink on paper
with navigation chart on acetate

38 x 30 inches

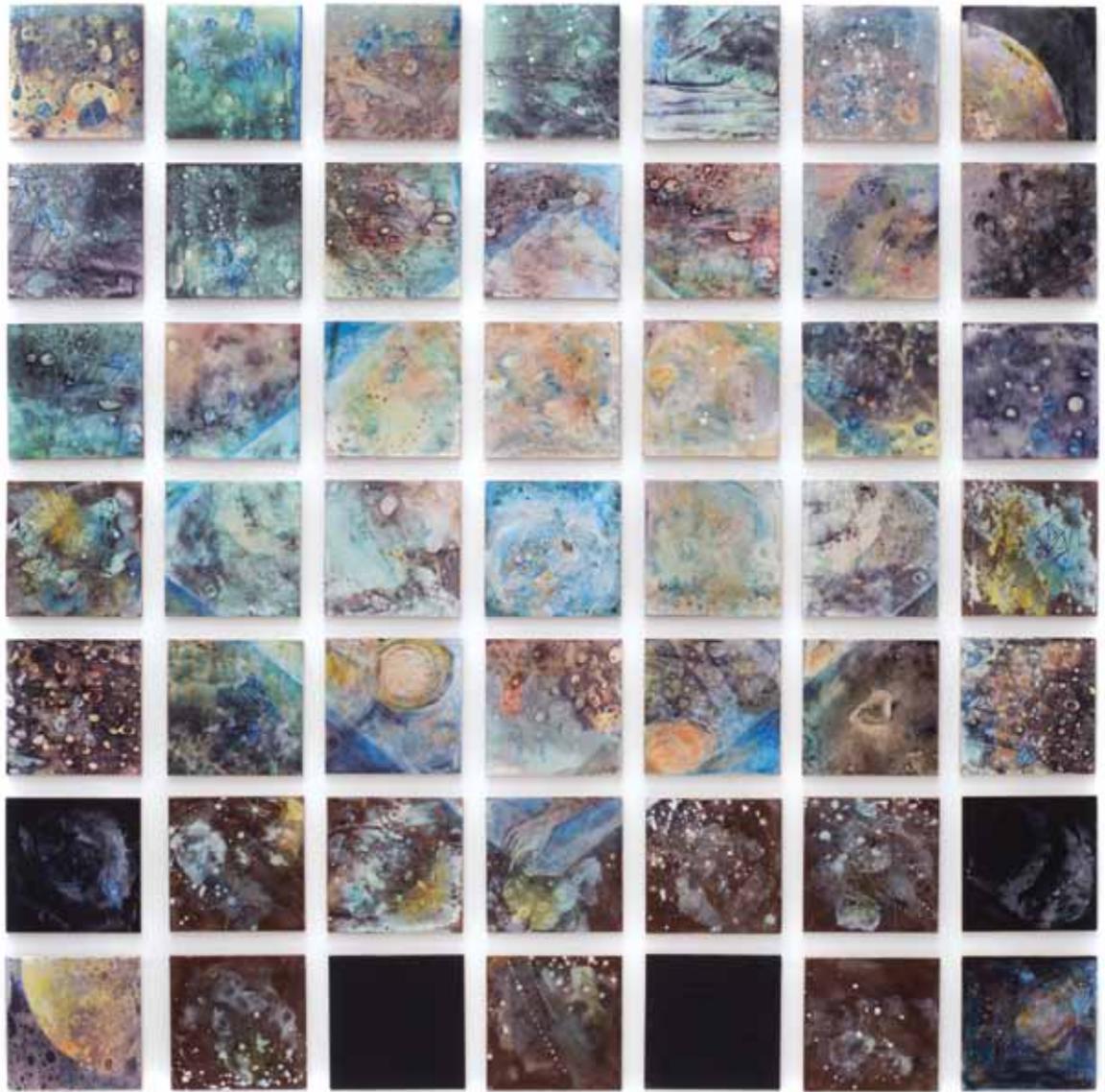


working intuitively out of what she feels both emotionally and physically. The painting process she has followed since the early 80s has allowed her to work from that place, never starting with a plan but allowing things to arrive by chance. An accomplished practitioner of Rosen Method Bodywork and Movement, she has not only instructed others how to be in their bodies in Rosen Movement classes, but has led workshops in the Painting Process, an intuitive approach to art-making. In other words, she has taught others how to move through life both literally and figuratively while seeking ways to access the unconscious and be free of preconceptions herself. In the works presented here, she has found a way to truly navigate by her own stars.

In my meditation and QiGong movement practice, I often feel in my body, or sometimes visually see, that I am hovering above the earth. These experiences flow directly into my art and allow me to feel that I am spreading an emotional map or net over great distances.

Maria Porges
Artist | Writer | Associate Professor
California College of the Arts





Prima Materia

2013

acrylic, ink, collage and encaustic on panels

48 x 48 inches



Navigating by Stars 2

2014

cyanotype, gouache and encaustic on paper mounted on panel
20 x 30 inches





New Passages
Ann Holsberry & Mari Andrews
2014
de Saisset Museum, Santa Clara, CA



MIGRATION'S
precursors...





Fleeting Calculations (right)
2011
encaustic on panel
33 x 14 inches

Hidden World (left)
2013
oil on canvas
33 x 28 inches



Nocturne
2010
acrylic, ink and silver leaf on panel
20 x 16 inches



Floating World
2013
ink and encaustic on mulberry paper
33 x 26 inches



Flight 1
2012
acrylic on panel
20 x 16 inches



Dale's Nest
2013
acrylic and graphite on panel
36 x 36 inches



Trace in the Sky and Constellations
2012
acrylic and encaustic on panel
38 x 60 inches



ARTIST'S STATEMENT

I am fascinated by layers: layers of memory, overlapping cultures, and the literal layering of different media and images that takes place in my work. I work with layers of paint, cyanotype, or molten wax, and then paint and draw on these surfaces with pencil, gouache and ink. This process creates a visual dialogue between surface and materials, and it is this tension between abstraction and pictorial representation that most informs my work.

Nature has always been a powerful presence in my life, and I often find inspiration in the cyclical movement of cellular, mineral, animal and plant forms. I am also fascinated by cosmology, in particular the way the earth and other heavenly bodies travel through space. Although references to the natural world or found materials serve as my starting point, ultimately I am reaching toward something more ephemeral and fleeting – toward the realm of things that are sensed but unseen.

For many years, my curiosity about this mysterious, unseen world of the imagination led me to study (and eventually teach) Process Painting, a method that gives greater rein to the unconscious. I have integrated this process-driven approach into my painting in recent years, which has helped me integrate external observations with the internal world of emotion and the unconscious. The resulting work can be described as “emerging from behind a veil” or “hovering between worlds”, and I find that it is this elusive quality that I cherish most. Above all else, I strive to make art that surprises me and that unfolds just ahead of my own ability to understand it.



BIOGRAPHY

Ann Holsberry grew up on the Gulf Coast of Florida, where she was strongly influenced by the culture of New Orleans. After finishing high school, she journeyed northward, receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Fine Arts from Randolph-Macon Woman's College and a Master's Degree studying design and urbanization systems at Cornell University. In response to the idealistic spirit of the times, she also earned a law degree, studying at Cornell and U.C. Berkeley (Boalt Hall). She continued to paint as she practiced law for twelve years in the San Francisco Bay Area, raising her son as a single mother during part of that time.

She eventually left the practice of law to devote time to painting and to the the healing arts, including exploration of the body-mind connection, meditation, and using painting as a guide to the unconscious. From a desire to explore the transformative power of art, she began painting for process rather than the result, studying with the Painting Experience in San Francisco. She also worked as a Rosen Method Bodywork Practitioner and Movement teacher. She taught Rosen Movement in the U.S., Canada, and Europe and conducted classes in Painting Process and Movement.

In 2007, after fifteen years of exploring this process-driven approach, she began exhibiting and selling her paintings again. In this most recent phase of her work, she moves between abstraction and representation, often finding inspiration in nature. For the past decade she has spent part of each year living and working in France, where she finds inspiration in the rich cultural history of Europe. Fittingly, her current work is an examination of the migratory patterns of people and animals as they travel around the globe.

ARTIST'S CV

EDUCATION

University of California at Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, MRP (Design) and JD
Randolph-Macon Woman's College, Lynchburg, VA, AB (Fine Arts)
Sarah Lawrence College, Summer Art Studies, Paris, France
The Painting Experience, San Francisco, CA

SELECTED SOLO EXHIBITIONS

2014 New Passages, de Saisset Museum of Art, Santa Clara University, Santa Clara, CA
2013 Flora & Fauna, Public Art Commission, Bus Shelters, City of Emeryville, CA
2011 Atelier Kulo, Paris, France
2010 Domaine des Grands Devers, Paris and Valreas, France
2009 Vero Gallery, Oakland, CA

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

2014 Array, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
2013 Emeryville Celebration of the Arts, Juried Exhibition, Emeryville, CA
50-50 Show V, Sanchez Art Center, Pacifica, CA
Vessels, Arts Benicia, Benicia, CA
Left Coast, Annual Juried Show, Sanchez Art Center, Pacifica, CA
2012 KALA Artists Annual Juried Show, Berkeley, CA
The Gift of Art, Cecile Moochnek Gallery, Berkeley, CA
Emeryville Celebration of the Arts, Juried Show, Emeryville, CA
Collect, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
Wax, Contemporary Encaustic Works, National Invitational Exhibition,
Pajaro Valley Arts Council, Watsonville, CA
2011 Shine, Berkeley Art Center, Berkeley, CA
The Gift of Art, Cecile Moochnek Gallery, Berkeley, CA
2010 The Gift of Art, Cecile Moochnek Gallery, Berkeley, CA
Speaking of Solitude, National Juried Exhibition, Marin MOCA, Novato, CA
Galerie Terres d'Aligre, Paris, France
2009 The Gift of Art, Cecile Moochnek Gallery, Berkeley, CA
Emeryville Celebration of the Arts, Juried Exhibition, Emeryville, CA
Working in Wax, National Juried Exhibition, Bedford Gallery, Walnut Creek, CA
Mendocino Art Center, Juried Show, Mendocino, CA
2008 The Gift of Art, Cecile Moochnek Gallery, Berkeley, CA
Industrial Art, Expressions Gallery, Berkeley, CA
Administrative Offices, City of Berkeley, Berkeley, CA
2007 Odd Fellows Gallery, Mendocino, CA

PUBLICATIONS & AWARDS

2013 Nash, Catherine. Authentic Visual Voices – Contemporary Encaustic and Paper, E-book
Public Art Commission, Bus Shelters, City of Emeryville, Emeryville, CA

Ann Holsberry's art is in private collections throughout the United States and Europe.

