

***GEO-EXPRESSIONISM:
The Paintings of
Jim Grafsgaard***

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Microbes 1 - 4

10"w x 12"-14"h each oil on panels 2003-04

Jim Grafsgaard: Geo-Expressionist Art

Background

I have been working as a visual artist, primarily a painter, since 1981. Over the last 8 years I have been exploring a description of nature I call Geo-Expressionism.

Vision

The microscopic world is the foundation of our biosphere – of all we see, of all we consume, of all we are, of all we do. It's not the colorless flat place some imagine, like dead stained tissue in a textbook. The microbial world is vividly alive and full of activity like the wild reefs of Micronesia, where I went diving as a young man. All around and within us, in our very blood and bones, on an incredibly tiny scale there are powerful tides surging with mysterious creatures and communities. These minuscule beings live and die, sustain or kill us, totally indifferent to our politics and dreams. Meanwhile their dramatic history, the basis of all life on our planet, plays out essentially unseen everywhere all the time with wit, terror and beauty on a vast scale both smaller and grander than our own.

Method

As I paint, I am consciously immersed in this earthly alien reality. To begin I drip and draw colors in irregular patterns – creating organic-looking centers and masses. Then I add strokes and touches to describe compact or radiant energies, movements and states of being (aggressive or timid, searching or static, living or dead). I build these patterns into communal yet distinct forms, delimited by lucent or deep dark negative-space. Sometimes, I add contextual elements from our everyday points-of-view – bits of water, land or sky. Always I aim for a living authenticity.

Meaning

My paintings may be small – a single organism – or large enough to cover walls with a sea of cells in motion. The images refocus our awareness to the deeper nature of Nature – to remind us of our place in the world. It is a place where we engage wonder, connection to the whole, and the most profound mysteries of identity – such as, “What makes these cells a Self? And this Self a Soul?”



Room for the Spirit 53”x 105” india ink on vinylized canvas 2002



Sea of Consciousness
48”h x 96”w oil on panel 2001



Geo Grande
96”h x 144”w oil on panels 2005



Birth of Venus

24”h x 24”w oil on panel 2005

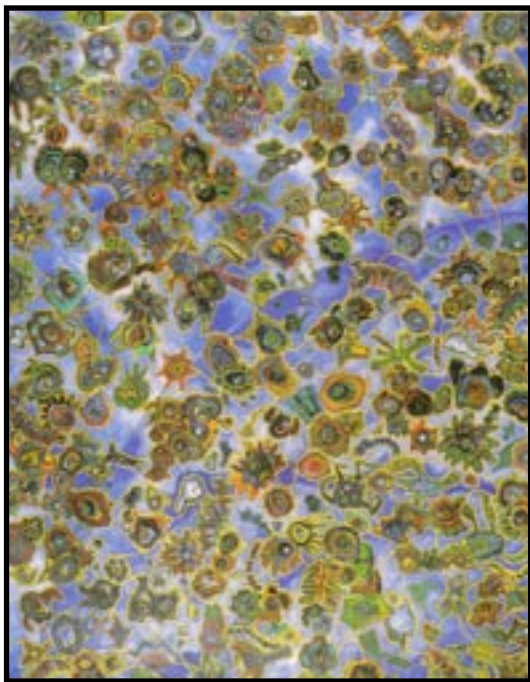


***What makes these cells a Self?
And this self a Soul?***

48”h x 46”w oil on panel 1999



Fragments 1 - 3
size varies within 24"h x 24"w each
oil/acrylic on canvas
2004 - 2005



Three Views of the Sky
60"h x 48"w
oil on canvas 2003



Double Nova
83"h x 43"w acrylic on canvas 2005



La Isla
48”h x 32”w oil on panel 2006

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