

exhibition catalog

Scott Greene
BEWILDERNESS

Beau Carey
RISE

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Beau Carey
RISE

November 21, 2015 – January 9, 2016

Front Cover: Scott Greene, *La Bajada Bluff* (detail), 2013, oil on canvas, 50 x 50 inches
Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery

Back Cover: Beau Carey, *Regolith* (detail), 2015, oil on canvas, 46 x 54 inches
Courtesy of Goodwin Fine Art



516 ARTS
516 Central Avenue SW
Downtown Albuquerque, New Mexico
www.516arts.org

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516 ARTS FALL FUND DRIVE PRINT

Scott Greene, *New Growth*, 2015, linocut on Arches Cover White, 100% Cotton, France, 22 x 15 inches, edition of 20, Published by Hirsh Greene Press, Courtesy of the Artist

This print was generously created by the artist as a gift for donors to the 516 ARTS Fall Fund Drive.

INTRODUCTION

It is an honor for 516 ARTS to present these concurrent solo exhibitions by two of Albuquerque's virtuoso painters, Scott Greene and Beau Carey. While the mix of artists we show spans the country and the globe, it is a treat to be able to take a concentrated look at a major body of work by each of these artists who are hidden gems residing in our midst.

Scott Greene is well-known for his masterful oil paintings and prints that have been shown in major cities around the country for several decades. Adopting the language and finish of classical painting, his work combines historical references, satire and a pop sensibility in order to reveal the often divisive relationships between nature, politics and culture. Beau Carey is somewhat newer on the scene, but has been building a captivated following through prestigious residencies across the United States and in the Arctic. Working both at remote locations in the field and at home in the studio, his work explores historical and contemporary issues surrounding landscape painting and land use. Both artists represent a level of intense dedication to their craft, perpetually continuing to refine their skills, while bringing their unique visions to the landscape genre.

In this age of mixed media, multi-media, new media, digital media and visual art merging with other disciplines, it is also a special pleasure to focus our attention on the traditional medium of pure painting. Its timelessness and relevance remain strongly apparent in the work of Scott Greene and Beau Carey, who face the hard to fathom issue of climate change head-on. Their visions add another layer of meaning and experience to 516 ARTS' season-long collaboration titled *HABITAT: Exploring Climate Change Through the Arts*. These paintings can reach us in an emotional way, cutting through the chatter to new layers of consciousness, feeling and dreaming.

– Suzanne Sbarge

Executive Director, 516 ARTS



SCOTT GREENE was born and raised in Denver Colorado and has lived in Albuquerque for 26 years. He studied at California College of the Arts before receiving his BFA degree in Painting from San Francisco Art Institute in 1981, and his MFA degree in Painting from the University of New Mexico in 1994. A recipient of the Roswell Artist In Residency Grant, he has exhibited nationally and internationally at the Kulturtorvet Gallery in Copenhagen, Denmark, Austin Museum of Art in Texas; Canton Museum of Art in Canton, Ohio, Anderson Museum of Contemporary Art in Roswell, New Mexico, Albuquerque Museum; and the Kohler Art Center in Sheboygen, Wisconsin. His work has been featured in magazines such as *Harpers*, *McSweeney's*, *Zyzzya*, *Artweek* and *New American Paintings*. Scott Greene's work is represented by Catharine Clark Gallery in San Francisco, California.

BEWILDERNESS

BEWILDERNESS exists within imagination, and like a myth, is located somewhere between Arcadia and dystopia where the past and present collide. It is a state of mind in which contradiction is essential and even celebrated. Awe-inspiring natural beauty is revealed to be a construct; it is a refuge with no shelter, a place of spiritual certainty, utter confusion and blissful ignorance.

My work explores the balance between the natural environment and artificial constructs, and questions that the two are mutually exclusive. The notion of pristine wilderness as an embodiment of the sublime endures, yet exists side by side with the idea of nature as something to be controlled and exploited. I believe it could be argued that beauty in nature is a construct, and that all human activity, no matter how artificial and deleterious to the environment, is not only part of evolution, but also possesses some semblance of beauty.

– Scott Greene
November, 2015

SCOTT GREENE AND *THE COURSE OF EMPIRE*

By Jeff Krueger

"I just paint, and then... you know, then 'you' assign meaning." He included himself in that you. Is it that casual I wonder? Maybe it is for this painter? It is clear, he has mastered his craft. One would have to consider Scott Greene one of the most cinematic painters working today. His commitment and ability to render action, motion, gravity, and the pulse of multiplicity is exemplar. He even paints in 'technicolor' and I don't believe that is a coincidence.

What are our bounds, past, present and future? That is what Thomas Cole set out to paint with his cycle in the 1830s. He rendered America through the filter of ancient Rome, as was the custom of his day. Greene's *The Course of Empire* still tracks the progress of our nation from primitive past to its ruin, but abandons Neo-Classical traditions for the pictorial and narrative structure of contemporary film, which in its own way mimics Baroque and Romantic European paintings. It is a curious loop. Greene painted these paintings for



The Course of Empire: Peace Offering, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 15 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

BEWILDERNESS at 516 ARTS, his first solo show in New Mexico in over 20 years, and they make a fitting addition to 516 ARTS' discourse on art and climate change.

Greene's empirical cycle from 'Arcadia to Dystopia' is a fabulous ride and the painter is such the performer. One does not so much assign meaning as ponder the collision of references, while getting caught up in the epiphany of paint and illusion. This cycle begins with *Peace Offering*, a convergence of Spielberg and Bruckheimer. In the United States, Arcadia begins with entertainment. Have we allowed ourselves to make of our history what we please?

This painting depicts our colonial past, where Brachiosaurus looked out upon the Spanish Armada falling before Christ's flotilla. I remember Fox News reporting on that, and I believe they are teaching some form of this in Texas public schools. What is it about our clinging to an almost biblical exceptionalism that makes these paintings so relevant? I believe it is their use of humor, with paint having its own revenge, illusion being a greater truth than reality.

The most difficult of the five paintings is *Manifest*. It is hard to look upon an image of three black men lynched while at the same time knowing you are being entertained. It actually makes you sick that these two things can still co-exist as they once did in public executions. I call this painting *Quentin* as it could be a still from a Tarantino film. Where is the revenge? Who comes out



The Course of Empire: Manifest, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 15 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

on top in this one? Following the 'Course' as laid out by Cole, this would be our *Pastoral State*? Greene just skips the quiet repose. This painting was too difficult to accept at first, then I saw Collin Tilley's movie for Kendrick Lamar's *Alright*. Black men and Lamar himself getting shot, yet he keeps on smiling. He smiles through the entire film, as he floats and hovers over all. Does Christ smile from heaven like this?

In *Manifest*, the freshness of the paint, its fluidity and gesture of the train going over the cliff, that is a smile, a Goya smile. What Greene has given us is a portrayal of the way the West was had, except the train is heading east. Are we going backwards? You only have to list the names of the deceased and say yes; Freddie Gray, Tamir Rice, Michael Brown Jr, Eric Garner, James Boyd, Trayvon Martin. This is a long list missing many names. William Blake might have said some were sheep, some were bison. Greene's history painting matters because this is our present. The allegory is that the Civil War is still with us, and all notions of progress are bound to it.

What could be more Hollywood than an end-of-the-world road-trip? *Testing One Two* is the movie poster for the musical, "Mad Max learns to love the Bomb." What is sad and frightening is not only the lush crimson and burnt umber mushroom clouds, it is that this painting occupies this moment in Cole's cycle, the *Consummation of Empire*. This is our grand accomplishment?



The Course of Empire: Testing One Two, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 15 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

This is one of Greene's signature compositional and metaphorical devices. There is always a conflation of the sacred and the whatever.

We have become Oppenheimer's destroyers of worlds, or as William Burroughs says, "Soul Death." As a study in color, I would add the question why make beautiful what would otherwise be considered evil? This practice dates back to at least Giambologna's *Rape of the Sabine Women* from 1583, but Hollywood has taken this to a new level and Greene plays on par. Greene's rape of the horizon, is in many ways yet another fantastical dramatization of the bomb, a scene from a fairy tale, trying to make sense of what could be considered the human kinds most egregious remaking of nature.

Eminent Domain challenges Joel and Ethan Coen. The formalism of the oil tanks spreading across the entire foreground is faintly reminiscent of shots from *Fargo*. The pink bag adrift pulls us out of that formal space and places the mundane on equal footing as the grand gesture of the consumptive space. This is one of Greene's signature compositional and metaphorical devices. There is always a conflation of the sacred and the whatever. This painting as the others is much to do with paint, in this case, horizontal gestures building



The Course of Empire: Eminent Domain, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 15 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

How long will the effects of the carbon economy last? What will our memory of home be when this era has ended? In some ways Greene's painting is an image of the future past, nostalgia woven in.

space and illusion. Then there's the drone beautifully rendered. That is a Thomas Eakins' moment. As Eakins, Greene cannot let off on the image of now; who are we and what are our toys? What we have, has become our world. Eminent domain is thus not just a concept of State, but a core human attribute. It is interesting to think of Eakins in relation to this painting. Eakins painted in Philadelphia, and in many ways, this could be a *plein air* painting of the route to the Philadelphia airport, which passes by fields of oil tanks homed next to the Delaware River. For over a century our lives have manifest the need for oil, what followed is a laundry list of Superfund sites by rivers. How long will the effects of the carbon economy last? What will our memory of home be when this era has ended? In some ways Greene's painting is an image of the future past, nostalgia woven in.

Finally Greene brings us to *Shelf-Life* or what I like to think of as a better scene from a George Lucas film, one where nothing moves. (That must have been very hard for him as a director.) Greene brings the ice age back, to LA or is that



The Course of Empire: Shelf Life, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 15 x 24 inches
Courtesy of the Artist

Fla.? Where else would they have needed a cell tower to look like a palm tree. It is as the Statue of Liberty from *Planet of the Apes*. What a remarkable icon, the cell tower, certainly it is our new symbol of freedom and bondage. The irony is he depicts our future of global warming as the new or is that nuclear ice age? The second joke, is the dessert of that gorgeous pile of candied trash. It reminds me of the pile of trash that exists on the top of Mount Everest with the long line of climbers waiting to get to the very top. The excess that comes from the greed of will, what a course it is.

Jeff Krueger is an artist and writer living in Albuquerque. He has exhibited his work nationally and has taught or lectured in many well regarded Art Institutes and Universities; most notably the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, the Royal Colleges of Art in London and in Copenhagen.



Scott Greene, *Trading Post*, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 48 x 144 inches
Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery



Scott Greene, *Bear Market*, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 30 x 40 inches
Courtesy of the Artist



Scott Greene, *Mobro: High Seas Drifter*, 2015, oil on canvas on panel, 50 x 64 inches
Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery



BEAU CAREY was born and raised in Albuquerque. He received his MFA degree in Painting from the University of New Mexico in 2010 and has been an artist in residence at RedLine Denver, the Arctic Circle in Norway and Denali National Park in Alaska where he was the park's first wintertime resident. In the summer of 2015, he was one of five artists to be in residence on Rabbit Island in Lake Superior. He is a founding member of Denver's Tank Studios and has exhibited cross the United States. Beau Carey's work is represented by Goodman Fine Art in Denver, Colorado.

RISE

The works in RISE are drawn from the past few years of my residencies and travels. Through a combination of on-site field studies and larger studio pieces, I make work that reflects the individual characteristics of specific places while retaining a larger critical awareness of the landscape genre. Through the making of these paintings, questions arise that often span beyond individual bodies of work. RISE is a chance to examine how I have explored some of those questions over the past few years as I've traveled from the high Arctic, Alaska and New Mexico.

By using references to navigational coastal profiling and by borrowing and subverting compositional structures of traditional landscape painters, I examine how modern landscapes came to be spatially constructed. This practice, while fully absorbed into the cliché of modern landscape painting, is not innocuous. It is rooted in a history of globalism and environmental dominance.

Through my work I explore this spatial language, allowing individual works and passages to teeter into abstraction; other times I utilize repeating forms and colors, often mountain ranges and very dark blues and reds, from painting to painting. The works in RISE look specifically at how we will navigate and view a rapidly changing physical world.

– Beau Carey
November, 2015

A SUBJECT OF EXTREMES

By Claude Smith

Beau Carey has a knack for working in what conventional landscape painters would consider less than “optimal” conditions. He has painted in the Arctic under the watch of armed polar bear guards, in a remote cabin in Denali National Park where temperatures plummeted to 25 below zero, a temperature at which the very materials he must rely on to convey those primary documents of his experience, become unworkable. More recently, he spent a month marooned on a tiny island five miles off the coast of Northern Michigan in Lake Superior, battling isolation and bugs.

One might even go as far to consider him a 21st century naturalist, to which his extended research, exploration and documentation (not to mention his tolerance for challenging environments) bear witness to his experience of being fully immersed in the landscape. Having visited sensitive regions that can be considered ground zero for contemporary climate issues, Carey’s work addresses these rapidly changing environments. At the same time, he asks us to consider the very idea of wilderness, a subject presented here devoid of human life; so vast, untouched or inhospitable that human intervention is all but impossible. In an age when the earth’s resources are disappearing, glaciers are receding, species are facing extinction due to habitat loss, and sea levels are rising, standing in front of Carey’s paintings, one cannot help but feel a sense of unease, a constant reminder that climate change is a problem that is as big and expansive as the very scenes confronting the viewer.

Embracing the decidedly un-contemporary approach of *plein air* painting, Carey creates small paintings or studies directly in the field that serve as records of his initial experience. Temperature changes, weather patterns and passage of time can be interpreted as self-prescribed obstructions which force him to consider—and adapt to—his subjects through extended periods of looking and careful observation. In this technologically omnipresent age, where everything can be easily recorded, photographed and packaged for

Seemingly conventional landscapes become illusory experiments in pictorial dynamism; the landscapes you think you know, become unexpected and foreign.

immediate consumption and dissemination, Carey’s practice stands out as a genuine effort to experience and understand how landscapes are perceived and experienced.

Consequently, in order to honor the process—which he often does heroically—he must endure abnormally harsh conditions that cause him to make mistakes, choices and responses he might not otherwise make. Seemingly conventional landscapes become illusory experiments in pictorial dynamism, and the landscapes you think you know become unexpected and foreign. The work that comprises his exhibition RISE at 516 ARTS is the culmination of three distinct environments, all of which Carey experienced through prolonged residency trips and extended time in the field. Paintings from the Arctic Circle and Denali National Park are exhibited in concert with more regionally familiar, sweeping desert panoramas. As Carey demonstrates throughout RISE, he not only has a remarkably deft ability to render light and its more surreal qualities, but his compelling compositional arrangements offer an intriguing antidote to a genre of painting dominated by conventionalism.

In *Savage Canyon* we see a distant, rocky, snow covered mountain range, abruptly cleaved off by a large, white, sweeping slope. Closer inspection reveals an ever-so-slight pinkish tinge subtly creeping in from the bottom of the pictorial frame—a compositional trick that Carey uses so effectively that only an observant eye notices it. Similarly in *Fragment*, Carey’s sensitivity with color produces an effect that calls to mind what one might encounter in the quiet, chilly moments just prior to sunrise—a partly shrouded mountain range bathed in a glowing, bluish light.

Other notable works from the far north include the stunning *Pyramiden* and *Range*. Carey infuses each with vibrant, fleshy pinks and a fluorescent orange—colors that under normal circumstances might seem out of place for a

In his early fieldwork, he captures the fickle and illusive qualities of light, one of not only the most important aspects of his work, but also one of the most challenging.

landscape painting, though in the Arctic and far north Carey acknowledged that the light can appear as highly pronounced and unusual due to the reflective qualities of snow and there. In his early fieldwork, he captures the fickle and illusive qualities of light, one of not only the most important aspects of his work, but also one of the most challenging.

Looking at the small yet highly economized *Ojito Field Studies*, we can almost see Carey in his element working quickly to capture fleeting, quintessential, New Mexican desert moments while earthy reds, browns, greens and yellows converge into delightful abstractions. Looking closely, desert forms materialize suggesting nondescript plateaus and dunes; bushy flats and arroyos eventually give way to colorful ridges and ravines.

In the recent work, *1000 Plateaus*, we find Carey at home in his native state of New Mexico, where he has painted the flat mountaintops or mesas of his immediate surroundings. Rather than conform to predictable landscape conventions, Carey instead plays with the arrangement of space and stacks these elements in horizontal and vertical bands. While the composition is based in representation, it simultaneously suggests abstraction. Using a similar subversion of traditional landscape compositional structure, *Regolith* shows a massive mountain range suspended just above the central dividing line of the canvas and while snowy, craggy peaks extend skyward, a reddish-brown tinged void of similar volume simultaneously drops below the horizon. Carey uses the painting's title—a geologic term used to describe the surface of a terrestrial environment and its underlying foundation—as a subtle clue to understanding his compositional structure.

Regardless of the locale, Carey shows a remarkable dedication to not merely picturing the landscapes he visits, but rather offering compelling perspectives

of first-hand experiences. For many artists, production often comes as the result of working in a strictly controlled environment in which the variables are constant or at least dictated by habit. While Carey's studio practice neatly fits within those parameters, it is arguably his experience in the field—and with the unpredictable—that sets the stage for everything to follow. At a time when recording personal experiences has never been easier through technologically mediated devices, Carey offers an immensely satisfying approach to image making, one that not only reminds us to be patient observers, but rewards those who take the time to fully contemplate the world around us.

Claude Smith is the Education and Exhibitions Manager at 516 ARTS. He received undergraduate degrees in both Biology and Art History from the University of New Mexico in 2007. He has curated and organized exhibitions at 516 ARTS, Inpost Artspace and the Tamarind Institute and the New Mexico Museum of Natural History among others, and is a contributing writer to *New American Paintings* online.



Beau Carey, *Aquifer*, 2015, oil on canvas, 44 x 52 inches
Courtesy of Goodwin Fine Art



Beau Carey, *Breach*, 2013, Oil on canvas, 48 x 60 inches
Courtesy of Goodwin Fine Art



Beau Carey, *Fata Morgana*, 2012, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches
Courtesy of Cedra Wood

Wind Works *After "Trinitas"*

By Melisa Garcia

They are stretched out red and blue aliens
that I don't recognize from far away
Their handless-arms wallow up and down
like branches
from the willow tree in my backyard

they blow in and out of air
and fall over and onto their plastic side-hips
all through Pacific Coast Highway
until arriving to the junkyard where my father
collects all these shiny objects;

an old muffler
that was hanging from a curled fence;
a beat up hammer
head-first in the gravel
and several antennae ears
that my father is never going to use but still collects

Their eyes, stare to the smoggy sky,
dark like smeared eyeliner
and the sound of the air flowing through them
reminds me of my brother's slow and heavy
snoring

but as the semi-trucks
trudged on by, they drown out
their ongoing
breathing



mostly exhaling
like a leaf blower

Truly, I still wonder what direction
these red and blue aliens
really want to point to. Maybe east,
maybe west?

I whisper to them,
That's its fine if they just
let the wind take them by
I tell them let's not forget
why the wind works the way it does.

Los Antiplanos

After "Plateau"

By Melisa Garcia

El Primer Antiplano: First Plateau
Oscuridad/Darkness

The only way we are able to pay close
attention to the earth is when we are below
it and we see it as sky.
This is the only time
we pay attention.

This is the way we stop
living above the surface—plunge
into the ocean—forget that there is a shore.
That there is stable ground.

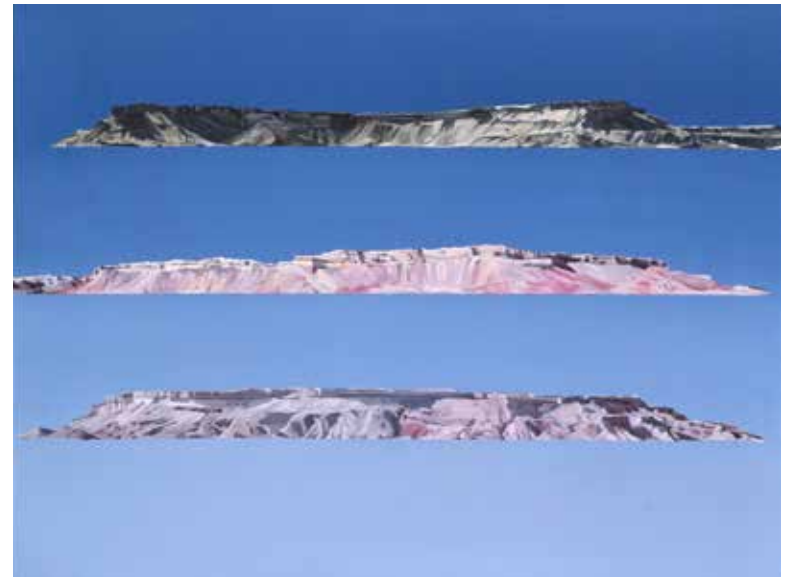
Second Plateau: Segundo Antiplano
Rosado/Pink/Magenta

stones, pink like tongues.
You only understand what the heart won't comprehend.
A simple math calculation. The reason I wrote this poem.
This stone. The heart.

Heavy to understand.

Third Plateau: Tercero Antiplano
The bruise/el morete

When we take time to recall this land
now the purple eyelid protectant
We take into account the weight of it



The lower part, the part we never see
That which we only understand after the pink
flesh

after understanding what darkness
we chose to live in first.

Beau Carey, *Plateau*, 2015, oil on canvas, 36 x 48 inches
Courtesy of Goodwin Fine Art

South Gate Water Reserve Tank *After "Oasis"*

By Melisa Garcia

Driving to my grandmother's house
meant that I'd see it. It's color
a dingy baby blue on days when the sky
was grey. But on other days when the sun
hit the side of its bulging metal stomach
an off-grey blue color. This was when
my grandmother lived about 15 minutes
from Long Beach, so I'd spot
the water reserve tank from the 405 freeway
heading South and play a game
of guessing how many gallons of water
were held inside it.

My father always said
too many for us to know. I always thought
that the water was recycled when it rained
before and that my grandmother counted the drops of rain
that hit her bedroom window and they magically
appeared inside of the water reserve tank. Each one
spilling into the mouth of the tank
as the storm loudly passed
through. So much that the only
memory of each drop was the accumulation
of dirt on the car windows the next day.



Scott Greene, *Oasis*, 2010, oil on canvas, 20 x 30 inches
Courtesy of Catharine Clark Gallery

After “Regolith”

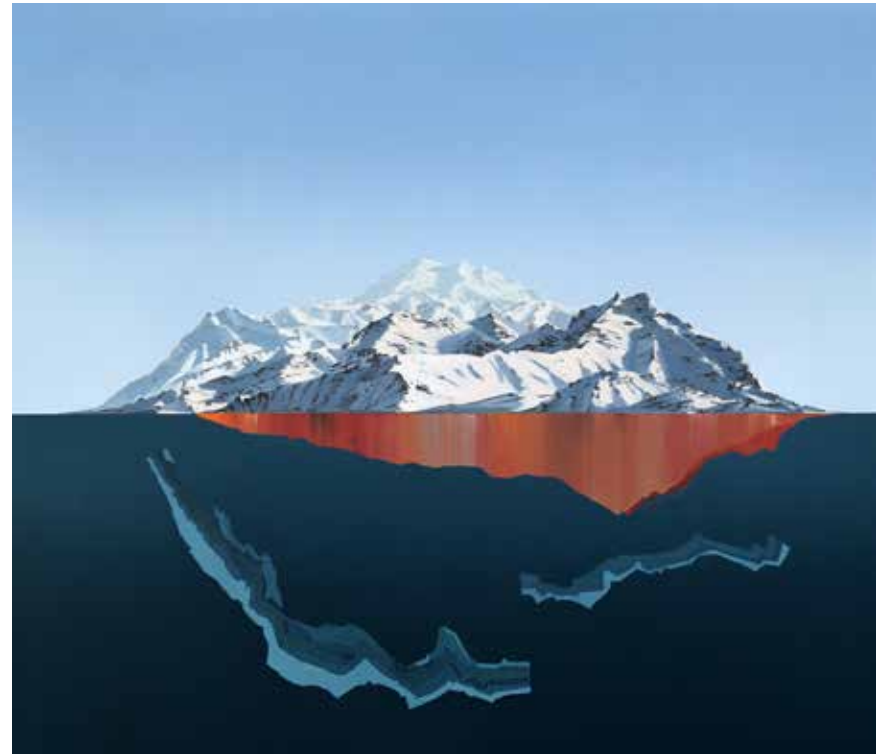
By Melisa Garcia

The top of the mountain is never flat.
And that which drowns is the thought of you.
That when I imagine it, I forget that you had legs—
plateaus, with a belt of water

And every time I found you, the water reached
the tip of the mouth, that is when I discovered
that a mountain—so vast and strong grows
from underneath the water—always talking back
to all that has existed underneath each bubble:
a secret enclosed of how I didn’t know that was a secret

And soon you fell apart, you were left in pieces
And I was able to understand that only a piece of
earth is left there and there and over there

Melisa Garcia is pursuing an MFA in poetry. Her interests lie in the representation of Central American literature in addition to the revival of that cannon. She also leads ekphrastic poetry workshops at the UNM Art Museum. Her work has recently appeared in *Miramar*, *The Mas Tequila Review*, and *Spillway*.



Beau Carey, *Regolith*, 2015, oil on canvas, 46 x 54 inches
Courtesy of Goodwin Fine Art

516 ARTS is an independent, nonprofit contemporary arts organization, operating a museum-style gallery in Downtown Albuquerque. We offer programs that inspire curiosity, dialogue, risk-taking and creative experimentation, showcasing a mix of established, emerging, local, national and international artists from a variety of cultural backgrounds. Our mission is to forge connections between art and audiences, and our vision is to be an active partner in developing the cultural landscape of Albuquerque and New Mexico. Our values are inquiry, diversity, collaboration and accessibility.

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