



Cosmic Gardens

**Annabel
Livermore**

**Kirk Hopper
Fine Art**



◀ Front cover: **Cosmic Garden 4**, 2022, oil on board, 51 x 35 in.

▲ **Cosmic Garden 8**, 2022, oil on board, 45 x 50 in.

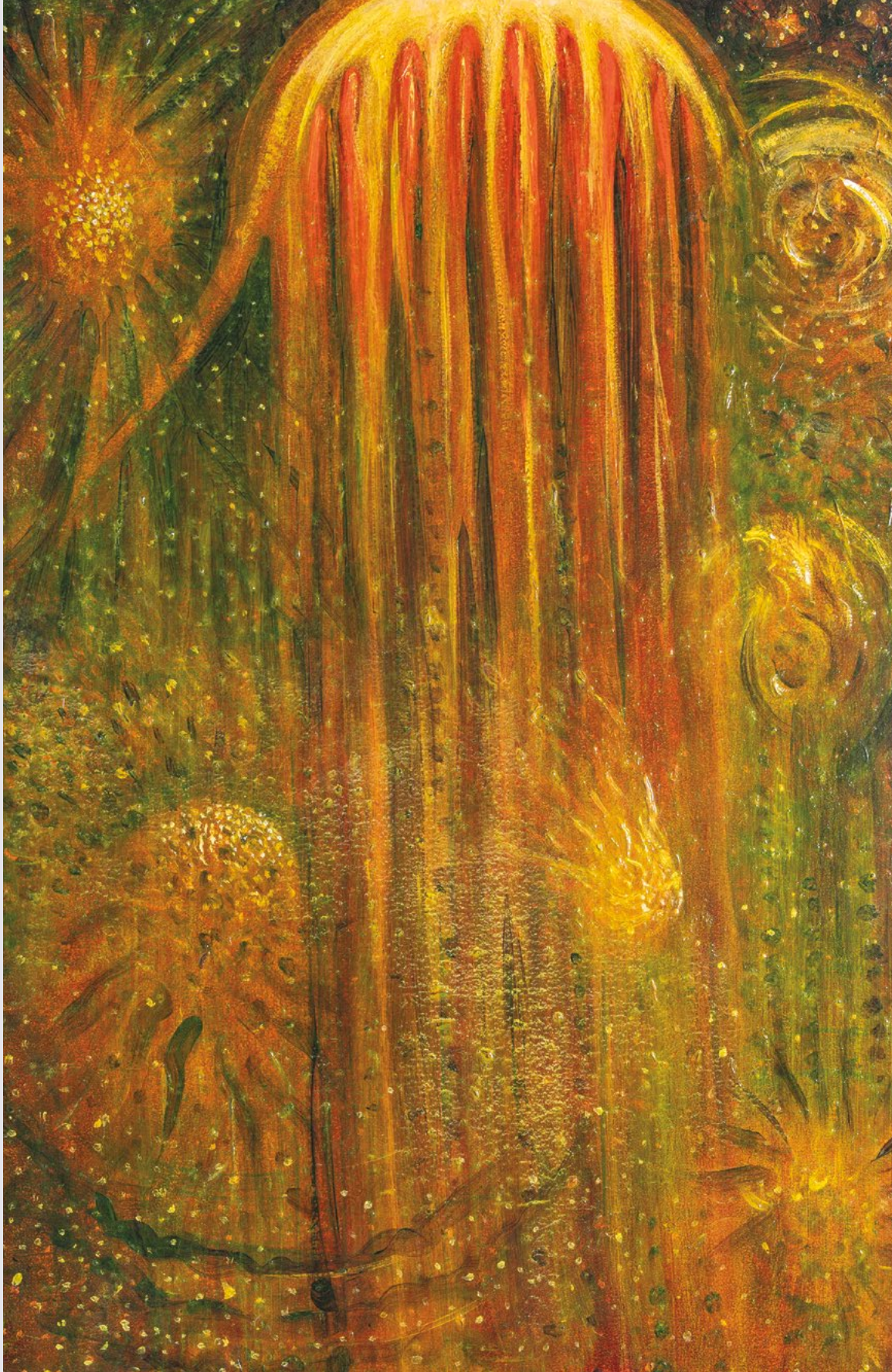
ESSAY BY SUSIE KALIL

Annabel Livermore's paintings present clues and references to other worlds, other times, other spaces. At the core of her art is that sphere of human existence inhabited by the marginal experiences of dream, imagination and memory—those often subliminal and turbulent layers of experience in which the potential for self-discovery and renewal reside. She enables us to address the most primal of human concerns: the difference between inner and outer worlds, between transcendence and metamorphosis.

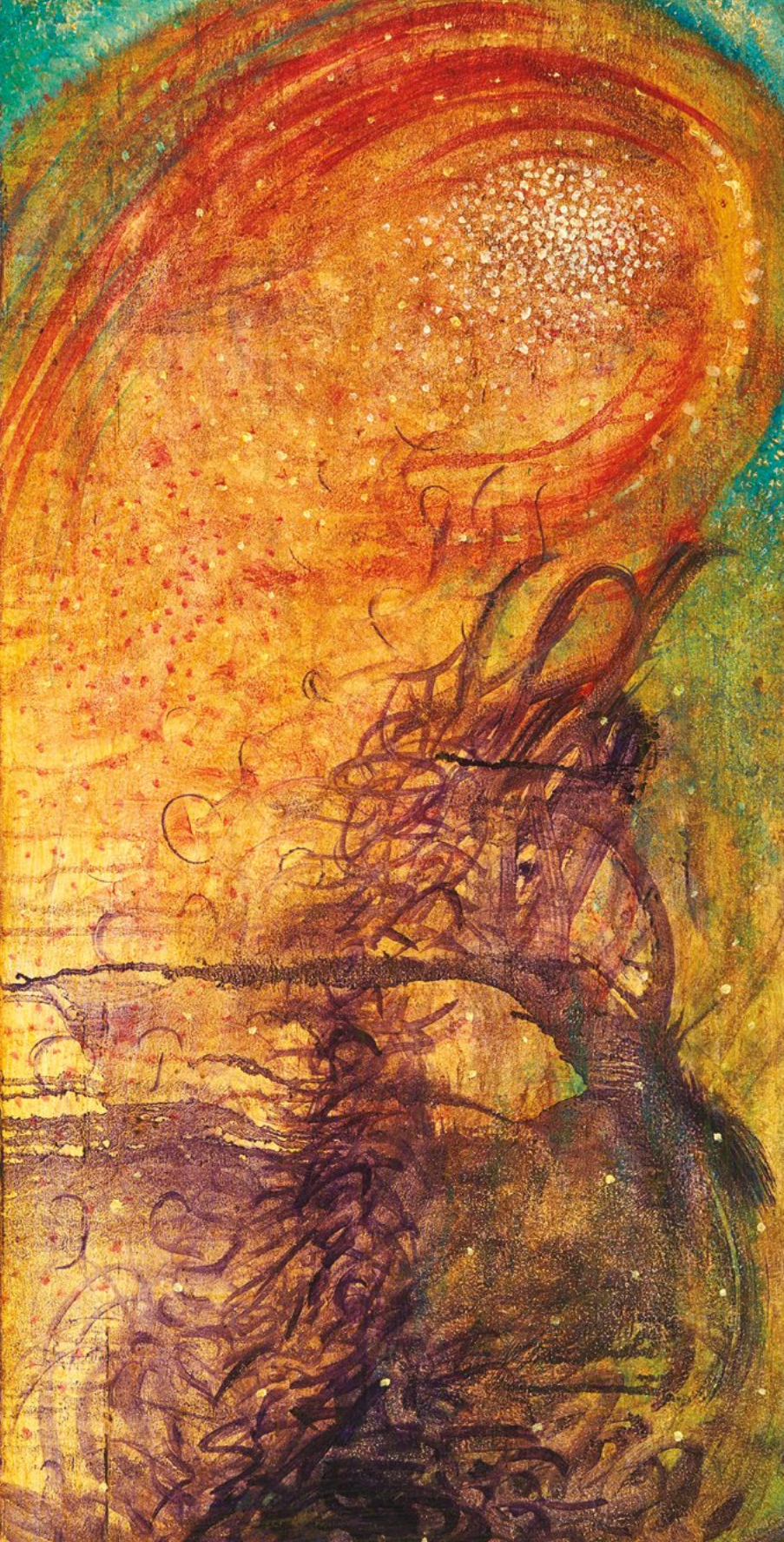
Constant throughout is an impression, as strong as a force field, of physical and psychic concentration. In many respects, Livermore belongs to that special set of artists who practice *peinture-poesie*, the union of painting and poetry. An obvious Romantic, she works in a primitive or Outsider vein, with echoes of William Blake, Victor Hugo, Hilma Af Klint, Albert Pinkham Ryder and Chaim Soutine.

► **Cosmic Garden 13**, 2024, oil on board, 24 x 45 in.



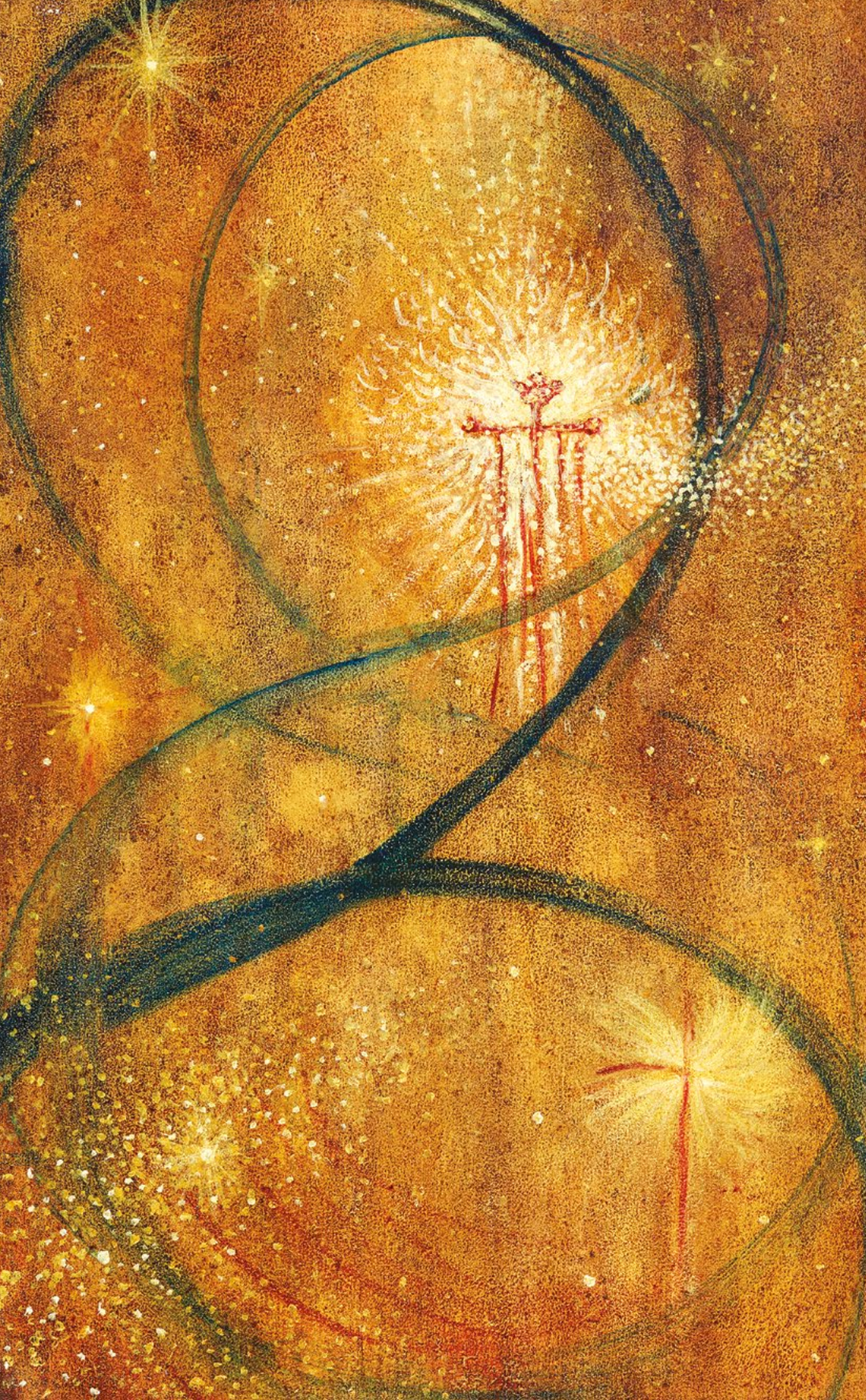


◀ **Cosmic Garden 2**
2022
Oil on board
51 x 35 in.



For some four decades, her primary subjects have been the physical and mental landscape, reminding us of seasonal change and the transience of existence. That energy-explosive dynamic of Livermore's art operates in *Cosmic Gardens*, a cycle of visionary abstract paintings that celebrate the spirit with a jarring, almost mystical conviction. Kirk Hopper Fine Art is honored to present twelve oil on panel works that show nature wandering, jesting, stretching the limits of her domain. From the marrow of nature, can existence renew itself? At what point do we cease to be who or what we were and become something different? The overwhelming content of *Cosmic Gardens* is one of the enigma of equivocal forces, the unsettling quality of a captured moment in eternal flux. Among Livermore's strongest efforts, in which she pushes and broadens a unique visual language, the paintings slip between image and abstraction, control and abandon, lines and seeping forms. All provide a sense of looking into the universe to an unknown infinity, a liminal state of life, death and whatever lies beyond.

We are shown the precision of cosmic structures, the spread of time and the artist's direct link with the primordial light. Spores, tubers, spiny pods, apparitions and ghostly icons intersect each other as gossamer presences that float alongside other organic forms or gently bump up against



membrane-like fields that are themselves both visceral and atmospheric. Fiery oranges and golden-toned auras coexist with green vegetal forms and red spiky cartilage. The paintings seemingly pulse with tension between matter and antimatter, breathing and smoldering as if in ecstatic bursts of erotic energy. Livermore's rhythmic, full body gestures and flickerings of brushwork unfurl areas of serpentine circuitry and shadowy forms that have also been lodged like tough shells, deep in our souls.

Aggressive, broad strokes alternate with delicate, finer ones, resulting in an intricate painterliness that hovers between the transgressive and the sublime. The sinuous movements of her brush are inward and almost savage, touching off raw wounds of desire and longing. At KHFA, Livermore's paintings seem to be living, breathing evocations



▲ **Cosmic Garden 6**, 2022, oil on board, 14 x 12 in.



▲ **Cosmic Garden 18**, 2024, oil on board, 50 x 35 in.



▲ **Cosmic Garden 9**, 2022, oil on board, 45 x 50 in.

of nature's forces. We can feel and see the hand of their maker—lyrical gesturings, uprushings, downstreamings, eruptions and blushings. Her pictorialism is multi-layered, drawing us more completely into the close space of the paintings. The dramatic contrasts of light and shadow are hypnotic, so much that as we stand before them, we feel ourselves traveling through the cosmos, letting our minds and bodies simply drift.



▲ **Cosmic Garden 19**, 2024, oil on board, 45 x 50 in.



In addition to the *Cosmic Gardens* series, KHFA is presenting over a dozen watercolors from Livermore's ongoing Garden cycle—achingly beautiful, jewel-like flowers in full bloom with vigorous, intertwined stems that awaken the senses. Inspired by the flowers growing in Livermore's courtyard and garden in El Paso, the ethereal watercolors capture light with loose, unfettered brushstrokes in rich hues of pink, crimson, coral and lavender. Infused with an air of fragility and joyful freedom, the flowers seemingly swell into colored shapes which are then pared back and coaxed into newly found volumes. Livermore's expressive range of wiry, crackling and gamboling strokes—

▲ **Floral Watercolor**, 2020, watercolor on paper , 30 x 22 in.

evocative smears and serpentine—are intimate reveries that convey a hunger for life as well as the fear of failing flesh. The rich colors and dynamic brushwork create a mood as elegiac as it is elegant. Part of an ongoing cycle, the Garden watercolors are like self-portraits, as if Livermore looked hard at herself in the mirror each morning. The flowers, meandering vines and ropy stems emerge into abundant life all at once. The constant “motion” of the flowers and flailing stems, their dipping in and out of focus, underscore the burgeoning vitality of nature, the otherness which lurks behind the fragile structures of everyday life.



▲ **Floral Watercolor**, 2020, watercolor on paper , 30 x 22 in.



A retired school librarian and self-taught artist from the Upper Midwest,

Livermore came to the desert climate of the Southwest in the early 1980s. Her subjects range from exquisite still lifes and mental “skylscapes” to gorgeously ominous locales, including the bars and streets of Ciudad Juarez, as well as New Mexico’s Jornada del Muerto Valley, Texas’s Big Bend and the dramatic coast of Cornwall, England. The heavily layered oil on panel paintings—protected by handmade, gilded frames and panes of glass—evoke parallel worlds that arouse strong afterimages and sharpen our attunement to all that might be possible.

In his *New York Times* review of *Postmodern Transgressions: Art Beyond the Frame* at Yale University Art Gallery, critic William Zimmer noted that Livermore is “fresh” and “a tough act to follow.” Her work has been the subject of museum exhibitions in Mexico and across the United States. A permanent showcase of her 2003–2008 cycle, *The Journey of Death As Seen Through the Eyes of the Rancher’s Wife*, has been established at El Museo Livermore, El Paso. Livermore currently lives and works in El Paso, Texas, and Fremont, Michigan. *Cosmic Gardens* is her third exhibition at Kirk Hopper Fine Art.



◀ **Cosmic
Garden 11**
2024
Oil on board
14 x 12 in.



◀ **Cosmic
Garden 22**
2024
Oil on board
51 x 35 in.



◀ **Cosmic
Garden 23**
2024
Oil on board
51 x 35 in.

▼ Back cover:
**Cosmic
Garden 21**
2024
Oil on board
50 x 33 in.



1426 n riverfront blvd kirk hopper fine art