

Turning Points Notes

Flying Horses: A chance encounter with one of the nineteenth-century carousels in Johnson City, New York brought back memories of riding the “flying horses” at Savin Rock in West Haven, Connecticut, my childhood home. Though the amusement park that housed the “horses” is long gone, the memory of the ride and reaching for the brass ring remains in my mind’s eye.

Flanders Fields: An extension of an annual shared Veteran’s Day lesson between my Middle School World Studies Class and our British “pen pal” class, this painting is based on the poem by John McCrae “In Flanders Fields” about the poppies that grew among the graves of fallen soldiers in Flanders, Belgium during WWI.

Grandmother’s Story: Comprised of items that belonged to my late Grandmother, they trace her journey as a young immigrant from Russia//Ukraine to 1920s New York. Pictured are a carved wooden plaque, likely after a painting by Russian artist Konstantin Federovich Yuon (1875-1958) a reminder of her past that now hangs on my wall as it once did on hers. The Zsolnay vase in the pattern celebrating Hungary’s Millennium (made between 1896 and WWI) was probably a wedding gift. Both items came with her when she crossed the Atlantic in 1923 to reunite with her husband who came ahead in 1920. The art nouveau candlestick was one of a pair which appeared on her dinner table at every family celebration until her death in 1977.

Remembrance: Painted in the midst of trying times, is both an ode to good times past and to the lives of loved ones lost to the pandemic. It pays homage to the deep emotions felt during those dark years, and to the comfort and peace afforded me through my painting.

Anemones: A companion piece to *Remembrance*, was painted as the harsh years of the pandemic were on the wane. Also known as “Windflowers,” anemones foreshadow the arrival of spring breezes and the anticipation of change and renewal to come.

Surprise: One of my earliest paintings done under the guidance of my then new and extraordinary watercolor teacher, David R. Daniels, *Surprise* represents the start of a fifteen year plus second career as an artist. While hiking on the Isle of Skye with my UK friends, I was surprised by the sudden appearance of these striking mushrooms. Researching my photos of them when I returned home, I discovered that their beautiful appearance concealed their deadly nature, a duality that would be a theme in many of my paintings in the years that followed. *Surprise* was both a turning point in how I perceived the natural world and in the emergence of a new and exciting approach to painting.

Six Photos: The photographs in this exhibit were part of a year-long project called “365-Give it a shot,” begun by Mary Haynes Johnson as an exercise for her class at Cecil College. Introduced to her group by Mary’s brother, Jim Haynes, a colleague of mine in a watercolor group, I began taking daily photographs and posting to the “365” group, sharing with the group members and posting outside the group for my FaceBook friends, a practice I still continue each day. Many of my photos have been a resource for my paintings, and I have begun to exhibit them as works in their own right.