



Karen Silve: *The Sea & Shore*



The Sea & Shore— Finding Balance

by Karen Silve

May 2023

The artworks in my latest exhibition, *The Sea & Shore, Finding Balance*, were inspired by the journey I took this past summer from my studio in Provence to Italy, traveling between Venice and the Cinque Terre, where I enjoyed experiencing two shorelines. From the grandeur of Venice to the Cinque Terre's cliff-side peasant villages, the interplay of these colorful old-world landscapes with the majestic sea created a colorful dance. The shifting waters in the Venetian Lagoon offered inspiring reflections where the world seemed to be upside down. The water met the sky, the sky, the water. The city felt like it was constantly moving, shifting up and down. Similarly, kayaking off of the shoreline in Cinque Terre gave me a sense of imbalance, with the horizon moving up and down. This imbalance resonated with me. I think we all needed to re-balance ourselves after COVID. That was my focus on this body of work.

My work stems from the observations of experiences that I reformulate into abstract expressions. The emotions I experience are my subject. The color and marks are my language, which I employ to define my personal experience. In many of these paintings I played with what is above and below a surface. Is there a difference? Can we stand strong with the waters beneath us shifting?

front cover: *Breadth*, 58" x 84", acrylic on linen

left: *Adrift*, 48" x 36", acrylic on canvas



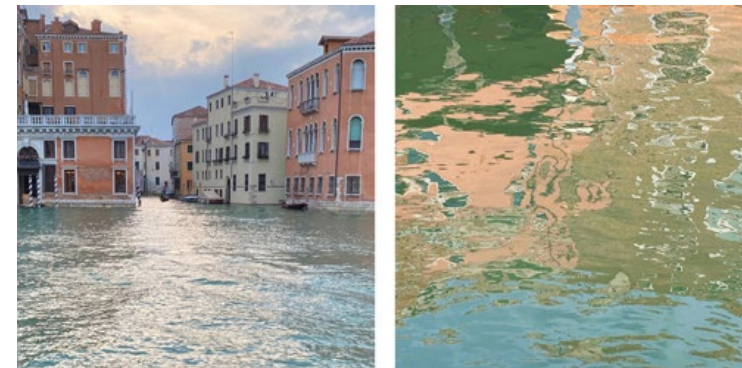
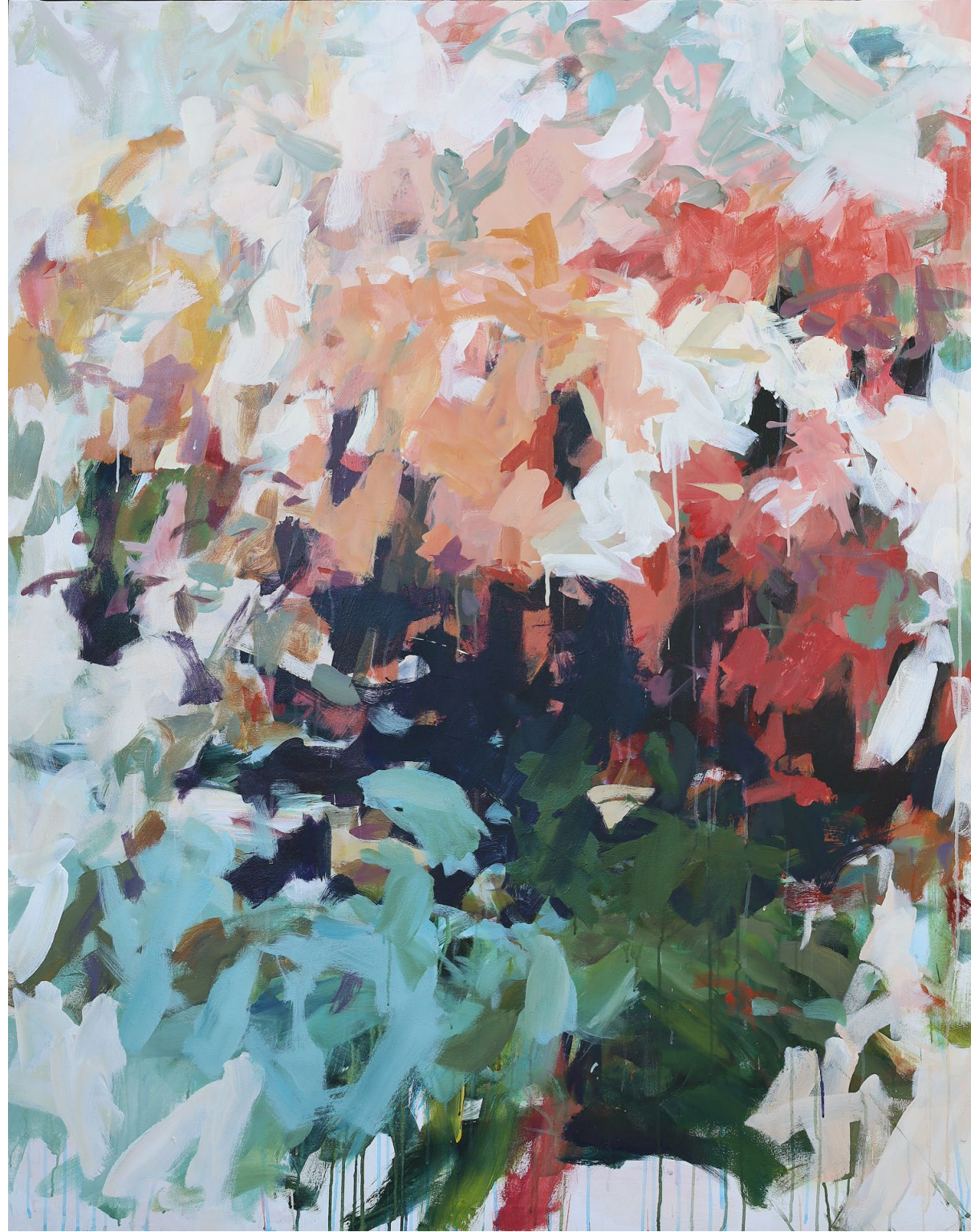
ARRIVING IN VENICE

I was a bit intimidated since I had never been to Venice. The instructions to get to my hotel were to take *Water-line 1* to a certain stop, then walk over many bridges to my final destination. Wandering through the streets, I found my way to my hotel and was already in love with the city. Thankfully, I stayed in the north part of the city. It was relatively quiet and gave me a sense of “home” for 5 nights.

I loved taking the boats on the waterways. In fact, more than once I decided to pass my stop and take the boat as far as I could, then take another one back. The light was beautiful when the sun was setting. The orange and yellow buildings faded into the water.

The Dance, 58" x 46", acrylic on linen





MANY REFLECTIONS

Reflections on the water were inspiring as the world seemed to be upside down. The water met the sky; the sky the water. Rusty pinks were at the horizon, both in the air and on the water.

The sky is abstract: something you can't walk on, nor is it containable. The water is containable if you gathered it, but has abstract similarities. You can't walk on it. There are many unknowns below the surface. It is vast with no boundaries. Above the surface we mostly see reflections rather than the structures or organisms below the surface. The buildings are the only constructions that we comprehend because they are manmade. However, they appeared to be floating on the surface of the water.

A Waft, 64" x 50", acrylic on canvas



CONSTANT MOVEMENT

You can't walk through the city without the feeling of constant movement shifting up and down. A city built on water makes one think the foundation can't be structurally sound. It's magical that the city is still standing many centuries after it was built.

In the painting "*Afloat*", I decided to suspend colors floating in white space to express the sense of the movement when one is walking through the city.

Afloat, 68" x 58", acrylic on canvas





Counterpoints, 58" x 84", acrylic on linen



PEGGY GUGGENHEIM – AN INSPIRATION

The first day I arrived in Venice, I took a walking tour. Statues and buildings were pointed out as well as the history of how the city was built. That same day, I took a water taxi and passed Peggy Guggenheim's home, which is now a museum. This devoted art collector and influencer led the way for the marriage of European and American artists and played a huge role for the birth of abstract expressionism as we know it today.

I feel like there should be a statue of Peggy Guggenheim due to all of her contributions. With the color of her home similar to the colors of many statues, I viewed the whole museum as her statue.

In the painting "*Counterpoints*", I thought a lot about how we learn from the past and the people who inspire us. The statue part on one side of this painting gave a wealth of life with colors and movement to the other side of the painting. The counterparts become dependent on one another.



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Opens on May 5th, 2023 - June 3rd, 2023

Opening Reception:

Friday May 5th, 2023, 5:00-7:00 pm

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Hidden Eddies, 40" x 30", acrylic on canvas

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