



JAMES REEVE



JAMES REEVE

MORFINESCAS

jonathan clark fine art



Foreword

Observing James Reeve at work in his woodland studio, as I did while he painted me, is a mesmerising experience. The furious drawing of minute details with a short sharp pencil, the meticulous application of paint in a thousand journeys from palette to canvas, and the gradual spreading of teeming subject matter across the white canvas, all bring to mind the obsessive focus of the Old Masters.

But the Masters in question are not such lyrical classicists as Claude Lorrain. Instead one is reminded of Bosch and Bruegel, Richard Dadd even – for this is painting with a dramatic breadth of imagination, painting of such vision and strange certainty that it lodges in the mind and cavorts there long after you’ve turned away – just as Bosch’s *Garden of Earthly Delights* did on that first encounter.

Reeve’s paintings, it is sometimes necessary to remind oneself, have been made in the here and now. They belong to a new modernism, the kind of contemporary art that doesn’t feel obliged to up-end the laundry basket, or print life-size photographs – but it is contemporary art none-the-less, and holds within its folds 21st century psychologies, and the willingness to find a vision in today’s world of strange people and strange places.

Reeve, now living on Exmoor, has drawn experience from living and working in a miscellany of different countries: Australia, Uganda, Madagascar, India, Haiti, Egypt and the Yemen among them, before moving to Mexico in 1985, where he lived in the remote highland village of Xilitla, once the home of surrealist Edward James. Along the way he studied in Madrid at the Real Academia de Bellas Artes, and for eighteen months he entered into the austere order of the Jeronimite monks in Segovia. Wherever you look in Reeve’s life, there are footprints of mystical journeys.

Now, back on English soil, this far from typical Oxford-educated Englishman has gathered a wide international following. Since 2012 there has even been a museum entirely dedicated to his work in San Luis Potosí, Mexico. From far-off lands James Reeve conjures spirits – making Old Masters for the modern world.

JC Sept. 2015

Remembrance of Things Present

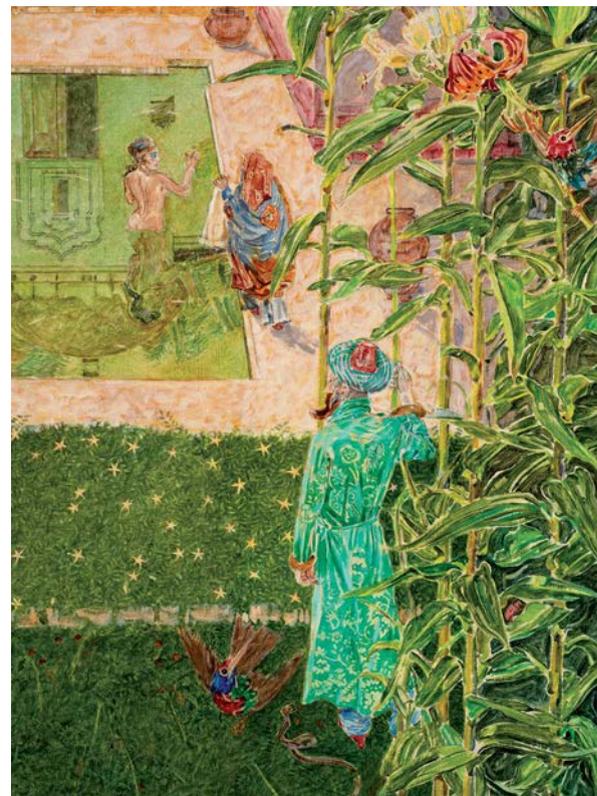
By Salomon Grimberg

As the intravenous morphine dripped into his system, the flood of images began to invade the mind of James Reeve. He recognized each one: some were readily familiar, and others, which had been relegated to oblivion, had returned as unexpected but welcome visitors. Many took him back to childhood, but many more were about death. Admittedly, they were sad, but also beautiful. Death, as the loss of life, was not worrisome to Reeve. No. It was something else that, almost imperceptibly – but perniciously – imbued those visions, something that, when he allowed it, hurt deeper than the surgical cuts he had just endured, the reason for which he had been placed on morphine. The terrible thing that he had been avoiding was the loss of love, of security, and of wonderment that followed the loss of innocence.

In fighting fiercely to retain his childhood innocence, Reeve retained the ability to access its private garden with awe. But sadness, the spirit he leaves in his painting, is the price paid for knowing what is there. Since boyhood, as an eager partner to his imagination, James Reeve gave it free reign, against all odds, which led him to absorb books, to understand people, to dream about and visit extraordinary regions, and ultimately, to become an artist that recorded extraordinary places in his heart. He had resisted growing up and leaving behind the Elysian Fields that had once nourished him, places where he felt safe, where he could do, or be, all or anything he imagined. And now, when it was unclear whether he was going to live or die, the effects of morphine had confirmed that he had

chosen well. Being visited by these morphine visions was like having old friends travel especially to be with him during these difficult times. Perhaps, they thought he was coming home and came to take him back. Perhaps. As for Reeve, he did not wonder why they were there, he was merely glad to see them again, and he began to paint.

Susannah and the Elders recalls the biblical Book of Daniel. Susannah and Joachim, her husband, live in ancient Babylon. Two older men, appointed judges,



often meet at the couple's home to counsel with the righteous Joachim. Each judge lusts for the virtuous Susannah but tells no one until the day when each discovers the other hiding in the garden hoping to watch Susannah at her bath. They scheme that once Susannah's handmaiden leaves, they will approach and threaten her: that unless she lies with them, they will accuse her of committing adultery with a lover who had emerged from hiding after her handmaid's departure. Upon hearing this, Susannah screams, her servants arrive, the judges make their accusation, and she is condemned to die. But Daniel, doubting the men's story, asks each separately to recall details of the event, details that do not match. Susannah is vindicated.

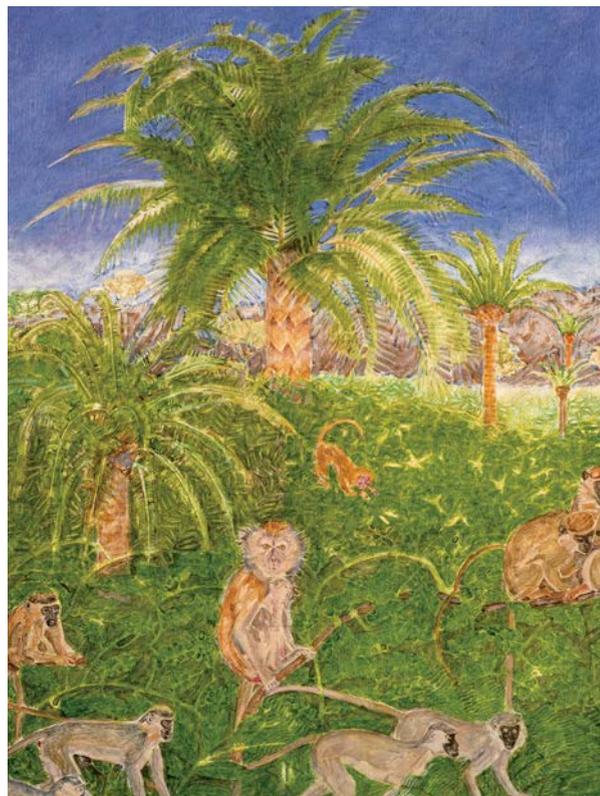
Reeve's *Susannah and the Elders* takes place the moment before each judge, waiting to approach Susannah when she is alone, discovers the other has also been hiding, and for the same reason. Far away, in the desert, a woman accused of adultery is being stoned to death by her accusers.

One who has not met James Reeve or knows little about him may wonder what drew him to Mexico and held him captive there more than thirty years. Like a child, lured by a mysterious place, Reeve left Guatemala "in search of a Toucan, more blue than green, that lived in the Mexican jungle," he explained, repeating stories he heard from a man who raised birds. "I thought it would be marvellous to get to know this bird," he explained as a matter of fact, "so exotic, and that is how I went in search of him in the jungle of Xilitla."

Two paintings, *Birds of Paradise* and *Monkeys*, hark back to Reeve's days in the forests of Guatemala and *jungla potosina* and are as revealing of those regions as of Reeve. It is no coincidence these works represent complementary domains: the birds as inhabitants of heaven, and the monkeys as legal residents of hell. On the lower left corner of *Birds of*



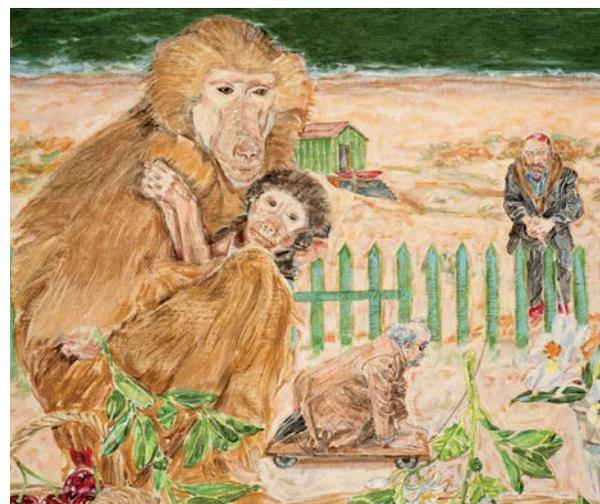
Paradise, four native hunters on their knees, spears in hand, are ready for the kill. Their headdresses are decorated with feathers taken from female birds of paradise similar to those flying overhead; their skirts are also feather decorated. One female lies dead at their feet, pierced through the chest; just beyond, two more flutter helplessly in a hunter's net; and high above, several are flying or perch on treetops. But at this moment, the hunters are focused on the Ribbon-Tailed Astrapia Mayeri, the only male bird-of-paradise in the woodland scene. These polygamous male divas display for hours their spectacular bodies in elaborate dances, poses, and other rituals to attract females and fascinate others who may be watching. They are magnificent – covered with long blue and olive-green feathers and adorned with ornamental ball plumes above the bill, with ribbon-like tail feathers three times their body length. Reeve knows these facts in detail, including the hunter's regard for the bird's life. *Monkeys* suggests a very different tale. A human encountering a troupe of monkeys must remain at the top of the hierarchy, being cautious to never provoke: a simple loud cough, a sneeze, or even a smile baring teeth may be perceived as an



intentional threat and cause a fatal event. Primates will stare at onlookers, but making eye contact with them can inflame their anger. In *Monkeys*, Reeve's treetop landscape is filled not just with monkeys but very specific breeds. The onlooker is being discovered by a heterogeneous species of diurnal monkey: Haplorrhini – an arboreal, dry-nosed primate – and one baboon. A conscious silence has taken over on both sides of the trail, as most of the primates have stopped their activity to observe the visitor before deciding whether to return to their tasks or explore further. As our eye travels clockwise, it focuses first on the lower right centre of the trail, stopped by the head of a male Mandrill. One of the largest primates, male Mandrills are unforgettable for the exotic colouring of their lower body, which here is mostly hidden in the high grass. By nature, around age six, the male Mandrill leaves the horde and spends the rest of his

life on the periphery, re-entering the group just to mate. Toward the upper right corner, a group of Vervet Monkeys sits along the treetops. Easily recognizable by their gray body and black face with white fringing, they are very social, easily adaptable, and their mother-child bond is very strong. But all is not well. They are being watched by a snake, in the upper left corner, coiled in a tree branch waiting for the opportune moment to make its move. On the lower left centre of the painting, seven Common Squirrel Monkeys, genus *Saimiri*, sit on the tops of tree branches. Nearby, on the middle left side, a group of small brown Rhesus Macaques is playing on the treetops. And just below them, on the lower left corner, a group of six Golden Snub-Nosed Monkeys stares out at the viewer. In China, these blue-faced monkeys are considered sacred, and coming upon them, a rare sight, can bring tears to the faithful. Adorable, yes, but they can tear off your face.

James Reeve's still lifes also reflect on the life disquiet. Although traditionally still life painting represents a *memento mori*, a reminder that life ends and that death goes on, Reeve's still lifes narrate life-altering events. A monkey on the table signals trouble. Food represents life's riches – what



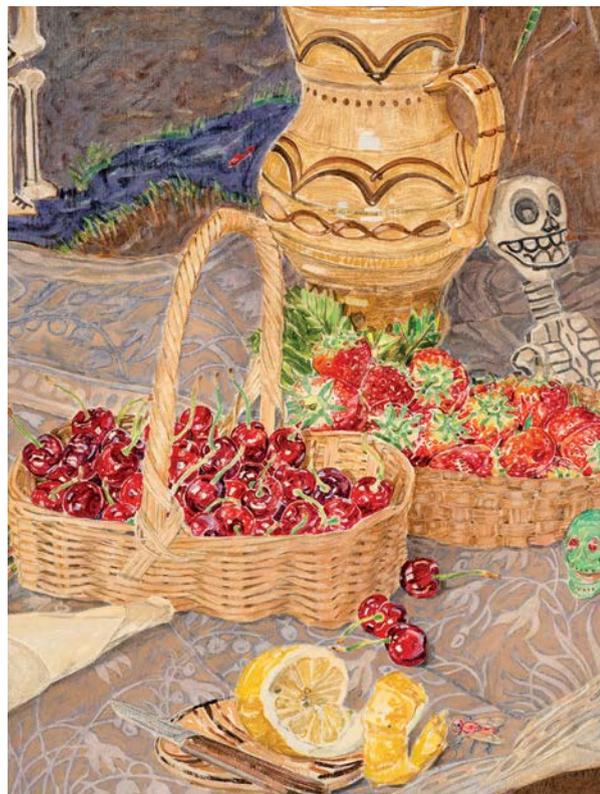
we need, and of which there is plenty. Carelessness or neglect of our needs can be costly. The largely unfavorable symbolism of the monkey, which is summed up in the condemnatory phrase, *turpissima bestia, simillissima nostri* (most shameful beast, so similar to ourselves), represents the disruptions we bring into our life.

So it is in *Still Life with Fungi*, where artichokes, asparagus, cauliflowers, celery, garlic, leeks, lettuce, mushrooms, onions, green and red peppers, summer squash, bought fresh for the preparation of minestrone, are laid out but momentarily neglected. While a group of women gathered by the open window are talking, one, Rosemarie, is on her hands and knees and another, Penelope, is signalling her to get up. "What is wrong?" she asks, observing that her friend has been acting strangely since returning from the market. "Nothing is wrong," Rosemarie replies, "although, I am becoming a miniature horse, like the ones flying above the kitchen table, and I am wondering whether I will ride alone."

Who would have thought that *Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls* is a narrative work? But it is. All these paintings are. In some, a story is more readily

apparent, in others, not quite. This one is among the latter. But each, in the end, rises out of a moment in time that left an imprint in Reeve, and because of the way his psyche works, he needs to frame each with a story. Hanging on the wall in *Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls*, glass-covered boxes serve as coffins to beetles and butterflies, dragonflies and moths, all separated by genus wings extended and pinned to an indigo background. Below them, on a table covered with a white on white patterned tablecloth, adult and child-size human skulls rest in a deliberate arrangement. Of the six children's skulls gathered in a basket, three appear to be smiling and two even seem to have tongues. Nesting among them are three Mexican sugar skulls, pink, green and yellow, and five marzipan skeletons – four females and one male, a priest – all dressed in Mexican





costumes, placed as if walking among the skulls. Four skeleton toys complement the still life: a hand puppet, a skeleton strung up with wire, and two skulls held up by sticks. Walnuts are linked to the gift of prophecy, and of the twelve spread out on the table, one cracked open is next to the portrait of a man. This painting is for and about him. Reeve needs to visualize what he senses to get closer to what he knows. An invisible presence gives *Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls* its emotional content, the quiet silence when we visit certain graveyards or dusty forgotten rooms in museums that house works not seen by the public but which contain an energy within that commands attention. “Yes, I am dead,” they say, “but the dead have lives also; our lives, however, are not noisy like the lives of the living. No, we have had enough of that. The lives of the dead are quiet and contemplative, which is why

only those who listen can hear.” Such a presence perceived in *Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls* is here magnified, albeit disguised. It is a memory nurtured by the mind of a young James, about the one who taught him about insects. How often we are pursued by memories of events that have taken hold of our lives and shaped them, despite, or perhaps because of, our ambivalence. The objects gathered in *Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls* are *omnia temporalia*, accumulated objects from Reeve’s childhood, loved things and possessions, vicissitudes of memories that give the composition its emotional content; and remind us that everybody dies.

The Hunt is Reeve’s homage to José Guadalupe Posada (1852–1913), the Mexican printmaker who found dark humour in politics, customs, and daily life. Reeve identified with Posadas’s dark humour and here adopted his spirit and elements of iconography. Posada’s satirical broadsides voiced Mexico’s belief that the worship of death includes the worship of life, an idea that originated in pre-Hispanic times when images of skulls – a promise of resurrection – decorated fabrics, jewellery, book illustrations, pottery and sculpture. Posada is remembered best for his images of *Calaveras*, skulls and skeletons that lead lives in death that parallel those of the living. *The Hunt* takes place in a puppet theatre open to a landscape split by a river that zigzags and a bridge that marries the banks of two worlds. It is night-time. Gray clouds spot the dark blue sky. The moon is partially concealed, and a shooting star falls. Evidence of life is seen in the distance: a factory chimney spewing smoke, and on the horizon an unidentified structure barely visible. While the town sleeps, the party in the puppet theatre is coming to an end. Objects cover an improvised tablecloth spread out on the ground. A horizontal basket contains three human skulls and a fourth rests to one side. Two

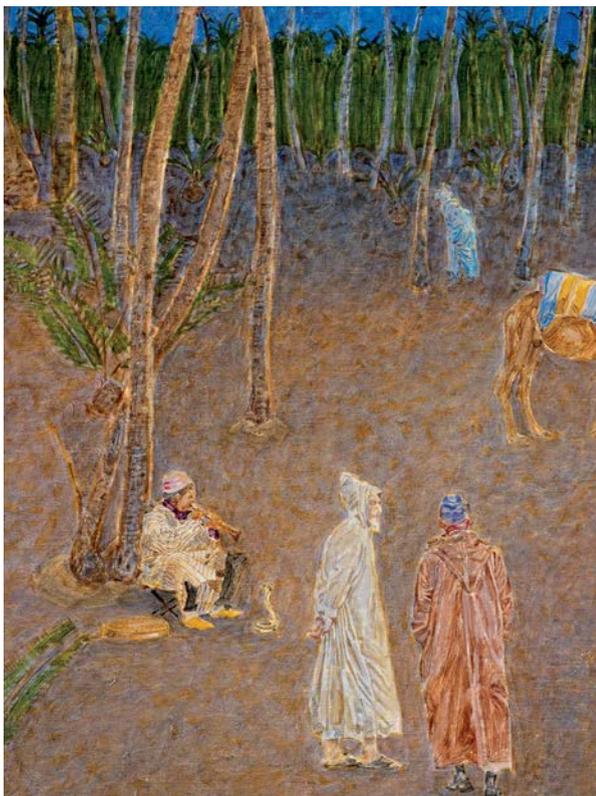
white napkins, one with red stripes and one striped green, rest partially on the tablecloth and partially inside the basket; each serves as a seat to a toy skeleton. Between them, a smaller basket contains four children’s skulls and three sugar skulls, two, pink, and one green. The plate, empty except for a green pepper and a knife, suggests the meal is finished. A second pepper half sits beside a partially eaten round of cheese. Two pomegranates, one split open, a cone of wild berries, and two baskets, one filled with cherries and one with strawberries sit behind a lemon, sliced and peeled. Behind the baskets a third toy skeleton rests against a pitcher containing more toy skulls – three on a stick and one hand puppet. More green and pink sugar skulls appear among the party foods. Various insects, scarabs, moths, butterflies, and flies are pinned onto the theatre curtains. A



butterfly with a human skeleton interacts with a scarab, and two skeletons suspended on each side of the wall disrupt the humorous scene. Outside, in the landscape, Posadas’s familiar *calaveras* continue the life they had before dying: a hunter and seven skeletons pursue a red fox, a couple dances, and two skeletons, sitting on the ground, are being burned alive... Life goes on.

The craquelure *trompe l’oeil* in *Stuffed Birds*, suggested by the dry tree branches set against the night sky, is not a network of fine cracks on the surface of the painting but evidence of the irrationality of the events portrayed. On an indigo surface, freshly cut bunches of red and black currants – bird food – rest next to exotic birds that have been stuffed, mounted, preserved, and exhibited under glass dome cloches. These taxidermy arrangements, made popular by ornithologist John Hancock in the Victorian era, were created to decorate. They are still found beautiful by those who do not know – or care – what it entails to produce them: from trapping the birds, to killing them, skinning them, curing the hide, cotton-wrapping their wired bodies, and mounting them in what resembles a natural habitat. But among some who know the process and have considered the birds, the end result is unhappy. In a too-small Mexican pine and wire cage, hanging with its door wide open, two birds flutter about – have they flown unwittingly into this trap? Under a full moon, on the ground below, witches and red foxes dance madly around a bonfire of dry leaves. Five white owls bear witness.

Two English Sisters take the Evening Air tells a tale of two spinsters vacationing in Marrakesh. They always wanted to travel to a place very different from England, but leaving its familiar safety held them back. Often they thought and talked about travelling, until the younger sister admonished, “If we don’t go now, we never will.” The older one



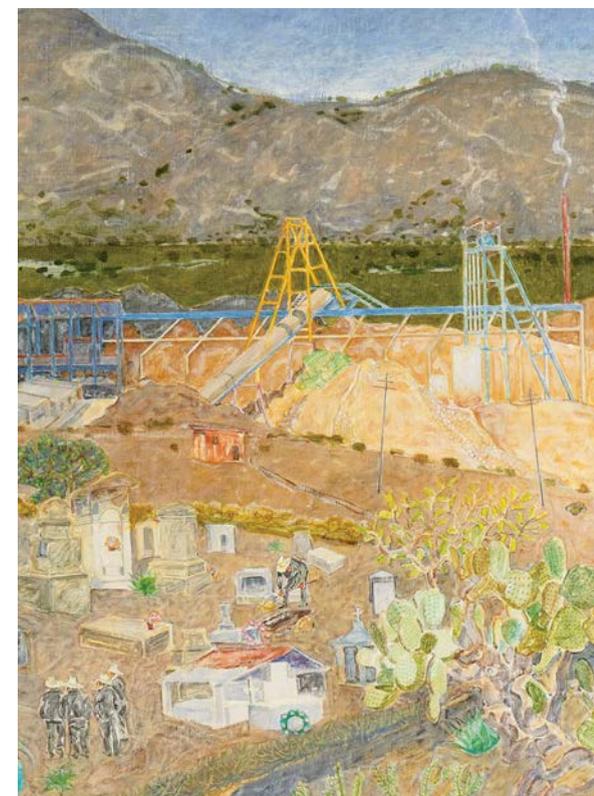
understood. Each had asked herself at different times, would her unused wings still fly? But self-conscious, each said nothing to the other. Insisting, the younger reminded how, as young girls, they heard stories about a family friend, Sir Wilfred Thesiger, born in Addis Ababa, about his adventures in French West Africa, Iraq, and Kurdistan. It all sounded so exotic. During adolescence, when the younger had read the diaries of Isabelle Eberhardt, the 19th century Swiss journalist who adopted Islam and travelled across the Sahara disguised as an Arab man, her heart raced. When she tried to share her enthusiasm for exploring what life had to offer, her older sister would reply curtly, that women like Eberhardt, or even Beryl Markham, their distant relation, were simply mad: end of subject. As evening turns into night, leaving the last vestige of light to illuminate the mountain edge, these English sisters, at last, are walking in the

desert. Between them and the city on the horizon line, palm trees with soft, deep green tops, caress the darkening sky. Camels graze as their riders, all men, stand, walk about or chat amongst themselves. A snake charmer plays the flute as his enchanted snake lifts its head; and vultures eat carrion, undisturbed. On this warm evening, the sisters are dressed in their English best: straw hats to protect them from the sun, fur stoles, one with the fox's head still attached. Arm in arm, one leans on an umbrella, the other on a cane as they walk, looking straight ahead, oblivious to their exotic surroundings. This will be their last trip, they decided. The vultures know better.

When James Reeve heard the word *camposanto*, Spanish for cemetery, the preciseness of its meaning startled him momentarily, realizing its English equivalent is less than accurate. The word explains further the Mexican attitude toward death. *Camposanto* means 'sacred country' or 'sacred field', and it was so clear to Reeve, when he first walked through one, that indeed, he was on holy ground. The sensation of being surrounded by peace and imbued by the desire to reflect on the brevity of life had removed all traces of any thoughts he had been entertaining before entering, evoking in him a joyful oneness with the spirit of the place. In Mexico, one arrives at a *camposanto* looking forward to visiting loved ones in their home. Should a visitor, by accident, run into the spirit of someone unknown, it will not surprise, as such meetings are not uncommon: a spirit may simply wish to greet you, or just ask whether you will kindly pass on a message to a loved one, tell them that she is "well and thank you for your concerned prayers," adding perhaps, "there is no need to worry". These exchanges are expected. "One does not need to fear the dead," the Mexicans say, "It is the living you need to be afraid of." "*Camposanto* is a sacred place," he repeated to himself, "a region

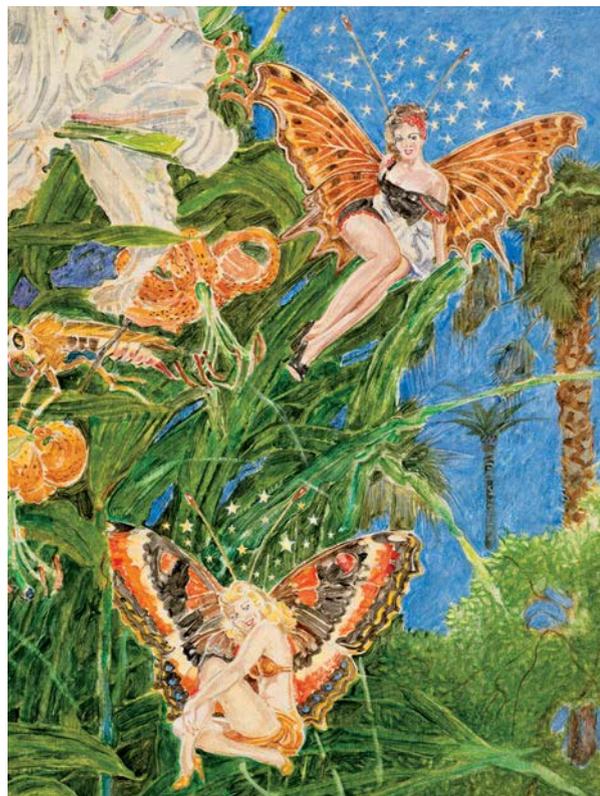
where the dead begin their eternal lives." It is not surprising that the physical boundary between the *camposanto* in a small country town and the actual town may be blurred. Thus, it is also not unusual to see an isolated grave here or there, on a street or road, adorned with plastic flowers, a cross, inscribed INRI, and an image of the Holy Mother of God.

Miners' Widows Celebrating takes place in a *camposanto* near a mine that was the scene of a terrible accident. Three widows sit at one gravesite, remembering their long-dead husbands' lives and drinking to their memory. Although thirteen was the number of miners that died on that day, only three were from here, Batacosa; the others are buried in their hometowns. Killed instantly by the avalanche, the bodies were barely recognizable when they were pulled out of the ground, covered in soil and soot.



One widow identified her husband's body because of the red, white, and black *paliacate*, or handkerchief, in his shirt pocket. She had given it to him that morning, freshly washed and pressed. Wrinkled and dirty now, she thought to herself, "At least he was able to use it." Today, she reminisces: "It happened so long ago when I became a young widow, yet, it feels like yesterday when the accident took place here. If being married was what I had, I knew even then I did not want more of it; I did not want to remarry. I did not miss him right away, did not believe I would miss him at all: his drinking ..." Her mind drifts away from what she does not wish to remember. The townspeople had been up in arms, angry at the slowness with which the bodies were being pulled out. Until they saw them lying dead, laid out side by side in front of them, crushed or dismembered, it did not seem real. Sometimes, it didn't still. The man whom she had said goodbye to when he left for work that morning was not the one the authorities gave her back. (She wondered why they were referred to as authorities.) The *camposanto* is a busy place today. She has not yet placed on his grave the flowers she brought. Instead, when she arrived, she sat and poured herself liquor from the bottle she had brought and drank from a plastic cup, disregarding her two friends behind her, talking about who knows what, and thought of him. A red snake slithers out from behind the grave and goes on its way unnoticed. The widows have visited two other graves before settling here. They talk about everything that comes to mind, the children and grandchildren, the town gossip. Their husbands are not mentioned. What had to be said about them was said long ago. One pours a drink from the bottle into a plastic cup; the other, who is speaking, holds it in her hand, and listens.

On May 27, 1949, in a cramped Los Angeles studio, a 22 year old strawberry-blonde model and aspiring actress posed nude against a red velvet background



for the celebrity photographer Tom Kelley. In a two-hour period, he produced six shots. The model's name was Norma Jean Baker. In 1953, when she was now Marilyn Monroe, Twentieth Century Fox learned that their hottest up-and-coming star was the "calendar girl" whose photo was hanging on the walls of gas stations around the city of Los Angeles. When she was asked, "Did you have anything on?" "Only the radio," was her innocent reply. The photograph, of which millions were sold around the world, and her disarming reply, signed her on to become the most famous *femme-enfant* in history. Despite detailed studies of her life – and death – her mysterious allure has yet to be understood. On August 5, 1962, James Reeve was standing on the Ponte Vecchio when he heard the news of Marilyn Monroe's death. The pang in his heart surprised him. Although he did not

understand at the time, eventually he would: the loss was also personal. Eventually, the feeling started making sense. What fascinated was how she became an adult, remained a child, and made it work. Perhaps, it was the harmonious integration of these opposites that explained her allure. She had accomplished what Reeve (and most of us) struggle with all our lives: to be ourselves, and to be wildly successful at it. There was truth in her famous statement: "I don't want to make money; I just want to be wonderful." Again, innocent and disarming, like the calendar image that stayed with him.

The Way to Fairy Land is the first panel of a triptych that presents episodes in the life of the Fairy Queen. Grass no longer grows on the trail that leads to the door of an ivy-covered brick wall that separates Fairy Land from our world. Those who would enter must pass through an arch teeming with insects, lilies of many kinds (cool tiger lilies, stargazer lilies, and orange and snow-white lilies), and fairies. Lilies are associated with purity and innocence but also with fertility and eroticism. Their frequent association with death signifies that innocence and purity lost are now regained. The sultry fairies sit or relax among the arch's greenery.



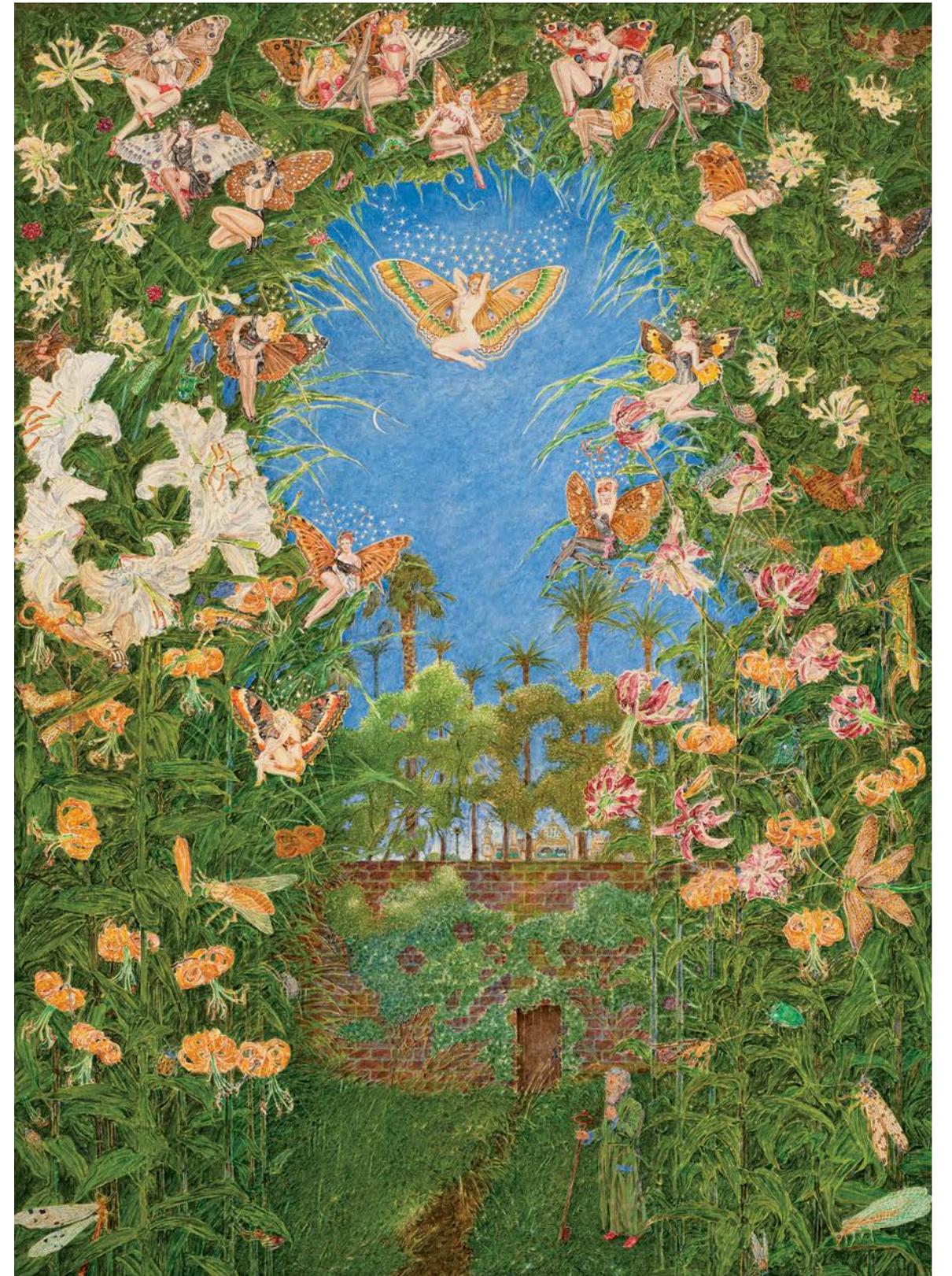
In seductive poses, like pinup girls, popular in the 1940s and 1950s, they look out at the onlooker with come-hither-red lipstick smiles. They wear sexy lingerie, silk stockings, and high-heeled shoes. Framed by the blue sky and a crescent of stars is a butterfly-winged Marilyn Monroe, nude, as she posed for Tom Kelley. Beyond the wall, towering over the Fairy Queen's palace, palm trees reach for the sky. The palace is ornamented with decorative arches and horseshoe-shaped windows covered with lace curtains pulled apart. Latticed windows impede indiscreet gazes from outside. Andalusian-style decorations feature white marble and turquoise faience stripes. Blue and white tiles cover the palace dome, which is crowned by a golden half moon. Atop the minaret on the left is a spire capped by a golden ball (legend has it, it is pure gold). Mahmet, the gatekeeper, is taking his morning walk through the garden. In his right hand, he holds the key to Fairy Land. The triptych's central panel is *The Fairy Court*. Here visitors enter through light indigo curtains, again, populated by insects and fairies. The Fairy Queen's ladies-in-waiting have pulled open the curtain to reveal the nun who keeps control of them. She holds a small dog in her right arm, and the court dwarf stands at

her right. She will ask what brings you here, and decide whether you will be allowed to stay. Behind her, in an anteroom, hang two tapestries, illustrated with scenes of classical antiquity. Suspended above is the Marilyn Monroe butterfly-fairy. Through an opening between the tapestries, guarded by sentinels, is the throne room where Her Royal Highness receives courtiers, visitors, and foreign dignitaries. The ornate, high-backed throne, upholstered with Prussian blue and royal purple velvet, sits within a canopy, crowned again by a gold half moon. But the room is dark and her chair empty. Where is the Fairy Queen? We have been informed the Fairy Queen is dead. She had been found crying and her wise advisor asked why: Was she suffering? Was something missing in her life?" "All I want is everything," she replied. "That is not possible," the advisor told her. "Only children believe they can have everything. You are a grown-up and adults must choose. You already have so much." But, like Icarus, the Fairy Queen believed her good fortune could take her farther, and, complacent, she flew too close to the sun.

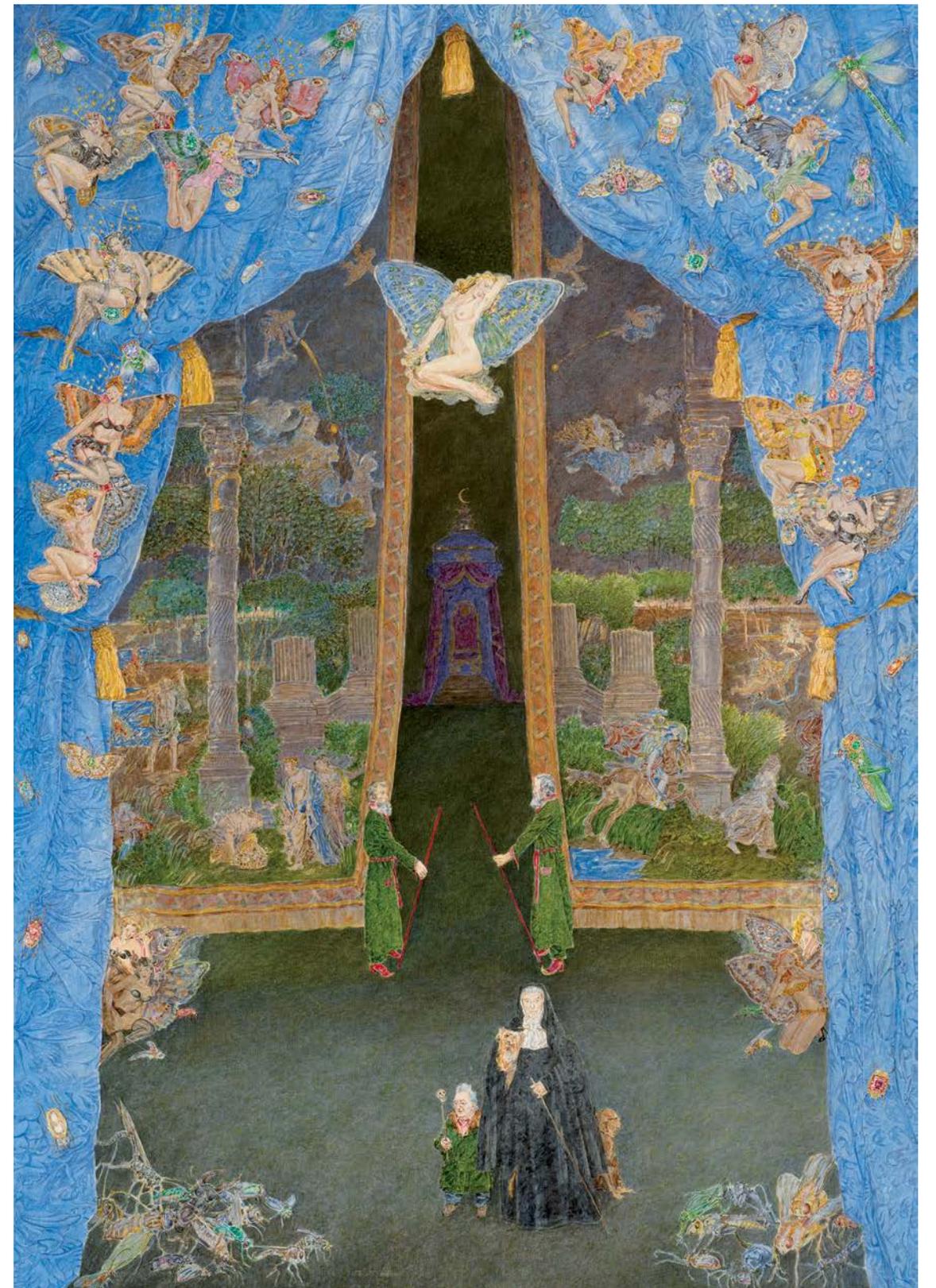
In *Burial of the Fairy Queen*, the final panel, the queen's coffin, covered in royal blue velvet and fringed with gold, is en route through the *camposanto*, carried by black beetles, her gravediggers. Though she was loved by so many from close and even more from afar, only a few of her ladies in waiting have come to say goodbye. Suspended above her coffin is her spirit, in the form of Marilyn Monroe, who only wanted to be wonderful.

S.G. 2015

The Way to Fairy Land 2012
oil on canvas 54 x 38 in / 137.2 x 96.5 cm



The Fairy Court 2012
oil on canvas 54 x 38 in / 137.2 x 96.5 cm



Burial of the Fairy Queen 2013
oil on canvas 50 x 40 in / 127 x 101.6 cm



The Hunt 2013

oil on canvas 40 x 50 in / 101.6 x 127 cm

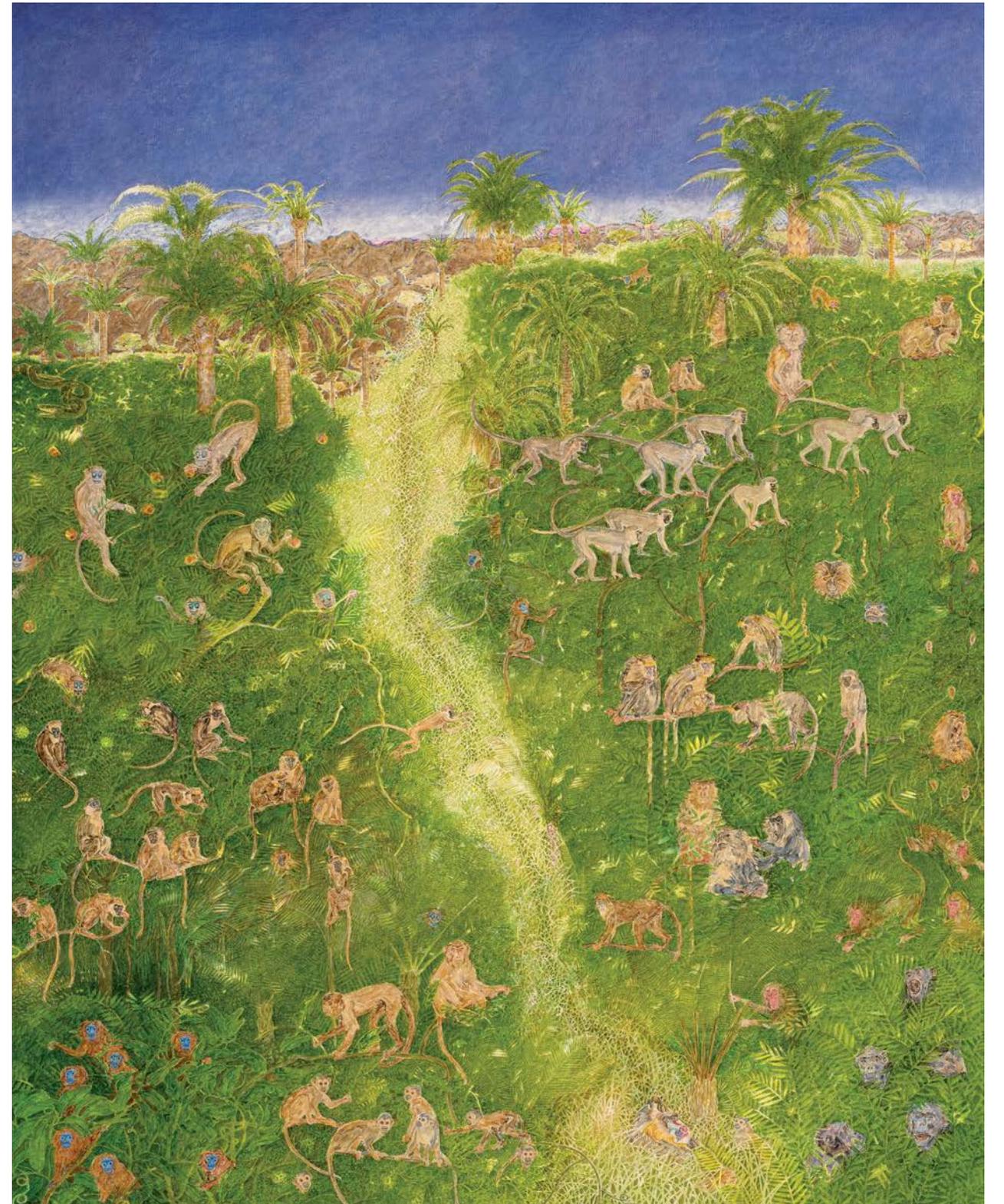


Birds of Paradise 2014
oil on canvas 50 x 40 in / 127 x 101.6 cm



Monkeys 2013

oil on canvas 50 x 40 in / 127 x 101.6 cm



Two English Sisters take the Evening Air;
La Palmerie, Marrakesh 2012
oil on canvas 38 × 54 in / 96.5 × 137.2 cm



Miners' Widows Celebrating, La Paz, Mexico 2013

oil on canvas 40 x 50 in / 101.6 x 127 cm



Susannah & the Elders 2013
oil on canvas 50 x 40 in / 127 x 101.6 cm



Stuffed Birds 2013

oil on canvas 40 x 50 in / 101.6 x 127 cm



Butterflies, Beetles & Skulls 2013
oil on canvas 40 x 50 in / 101.6 x 127 cm



The Beach 2012

oil on canvas 38 x 54 in / 96.5 x 137.2 cm



Hog's Head 2013

oil on canvas 50 x 40 in / 127 x 101.6 cm



Still Life with Fungi 2012
oil on canvas 38 x 54 in / 96.5 x 137.2 cm





JAMES REEVE

Born in 1939

After studying at Academia de Bellas Artes, Madrid during the 60s, Reeve travelled extensively, living and working in Haiti, Uganda, Madagascar, India, the Australian Outback, Guatemala, Jordan and Yemen

From 1985 to 2009, he was based in Mexico – first in a self-built house / studio in the jungle at Xilitla and then, from 1993, in a tenement block in the historic centre of Mexico City

He now lives and works on Exmoor, Somerset

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 1961 British Council, Florence
- 1963 Galeria Quixote, Madrid
- 1965 Galeria Fortuny, Madrid
- 1975 Arthur Tooth & Sons, London
- 1976 Collector's Gallery, Johannesburg
- 1978 Fischer Fine Arts, London
- 1980 Nevill Keating Pictures, London
- 1983 Browse & Darby, London
- 1986 Browse & Darby, London
- 1993 Museo Francisco Cossio, San Luis Potosí, Mexico
- 1994 Museo de la Hacienda, Mexico City
- 2000 Theo Waddington Gallery, London
- 2005 Museo de San Ildefonso, Mexico City
- 2007 Galería Interart, Mexico City
- 2011 Jonathan Clark Fine Art, London

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bevis Hillier et al., *James Reeve: An English Painter in Mexico*, Revimundo, Mexico City 2005

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