

Nathalie Lépine

Le Chemin des longs cous

In the Footsteps of the Long-Necked Women

"Beyond the works themselves and the irresistible attraction they exert, there is the very act of creation, full of secrecy, magic, suffering, and a dark side, shadowy, sensual, mysteriously compelling."

M.H.

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Nathalie Lépine



Nathalie Lépine:

Self-taught artist.

Painting and sculpture.

Born in France in 1965.

Educated at business school (Ecole de Commerce) in Paris.

Employed by large food industry groups.

1998: met the painter Mohand SACI and trained under him for 4 years at his workshop, l'Atelier des Nefliers.

Resident in St Martin since 2002.

Solo exhibition in New York in 2003.

Permanent exhibition at the Tropismes Gallery in St Martin since 2004

Regular exhibitions in Antigua : Jumby Bay and Admiral's Inn since 2011.

Christie's Auction House Paris, 2012 :

Sale of two paintings "Daphnée" and "A mes Parents"- Oil on canvas, 39x29 inches.

Art Studio in Terres Basses St Martin, Caribbean.

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Nathalie Lépine is one of those painters who hesitate to talk about their work. She will only venture to say that her most fervent wish is to paint an "invitation to a voyage" and to evoke the viewer's emotions.

She translates the complexity of the human, and particularly the feminine condition in hyper-simplified lines. Then she works to enrich the paint itself to intensify the subject matter. These are not anecdotal or mannerist paintings. The eyes are so compelling that it becomes unclear who is looking at whom. Words mix and mingle, producing strange encounters, fond complicity.

On closer observation, her faces are revealed to be nothing but enigmatic smiles, rising discreetly from internal depths. The seemingly cold and placid exterior serves, like a dialectic, to accentuate the outburst of internal light. For these women, enigmatic as they may seem, are pure tenderness.

Of course they pose questions. Of course they intrigue. Of course they are inquisitive and that can be disturbing. They provoke the viewer into asking questions of himself. Are they waiting for their messenger? They hope to find themselves at the crossroads of a "Carte de Tendre", a map that illustrates the pathway to love.

Angeline, oil on canvas, 77x 51 inches , 2011



Sometimes mothers, sometimes daughters, sometimes lovers, sometimes loving, they range from gentle to stoic, powerful, angry, rebellious.

"It is your duty to safeguard your dream."

Amadeo Modigliani.



"Man is the shadow of a dream and his work is his shadow."

Marie de Gourney.



" Each work is born of and nourished by the previous one. Every work undertaken must be pursued to exhaustion until it can go no further. Paradoxically, a "finished" work will never have exhausted its subject."

Mohand Saci.



" It is knowing how to let childhood express itself that produces the most beautiful paintings. Liberating the emotions and listening to one's own sensitivity. Moving forward on the long road of exploration. And always remaining true to one's self ."

Nathalie Lépine.



Nathalie Lépine likes to concentrate on specific subjects in order to pursue her research to the limit. She saturates her canvasses, then scratches them, accumulating layers of oil that she then scrapes in order, on the one hand, to get back to the basics and, on the other hand, to create a third dimension, depth. She values the role of chance and of spontaneity in every gesture. And so, each accidental mark on the canvas is the start of a new direction.

There is no geometric perspective in the classical sense, simply the layering of colors, of transparencies, of glazing that lead the eye beyond the subject itself. In her own way, she draws us into her world.



Le Sourire de Galatée #1, oil on canvas, 51x35 inches, 2013





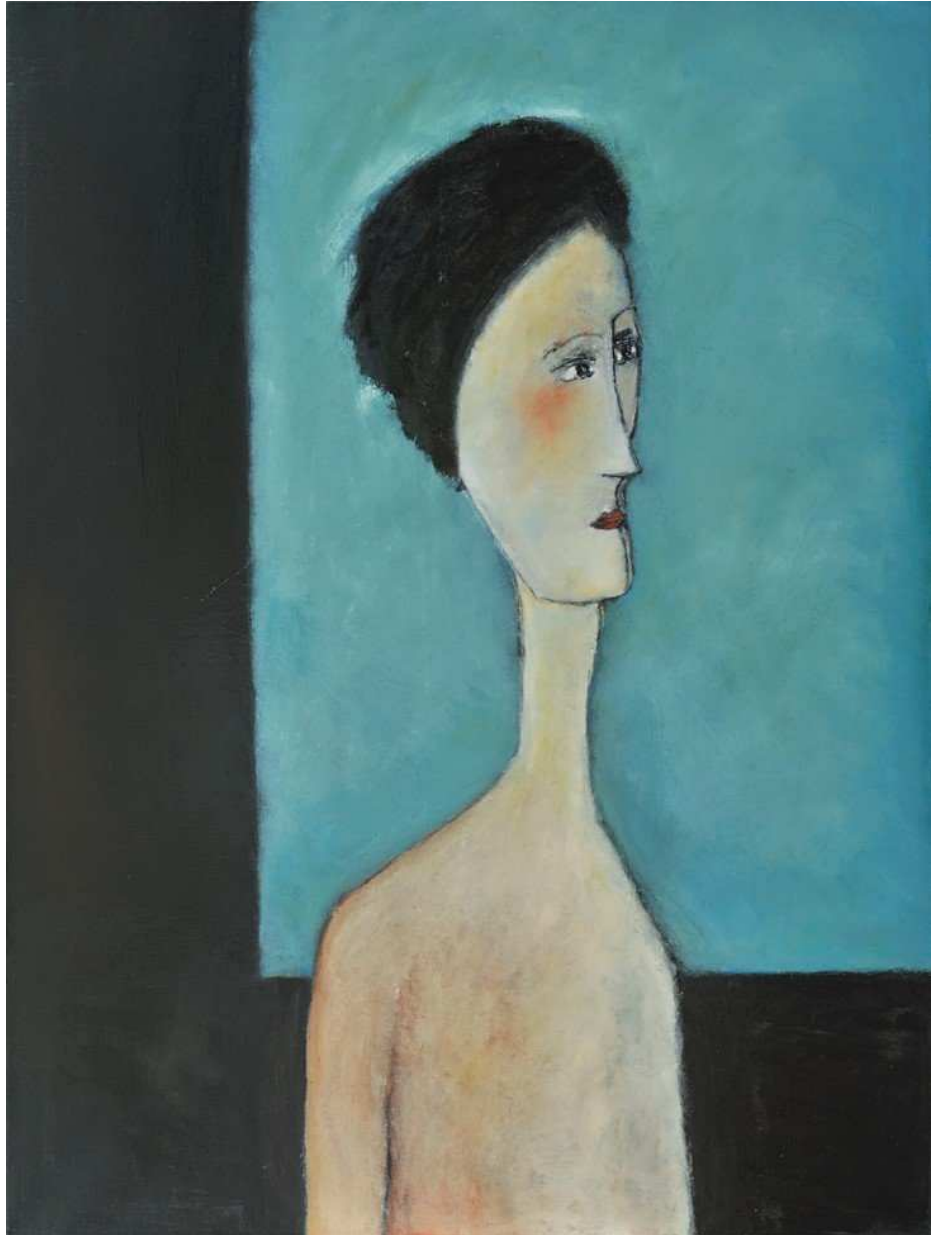
Le Sourire de Galatée #3, Oil on canvas, 51x35 inches, 2013





The painting "Commandeur #1" is a reference to the character of Don Juan when he met the statue of the Commander, symbol of the Last Judgment or the Day of the Lord. Don Juan will bear his cross.

Commandeur #1, oil on canvas, 51x38 inches, 2011



These long-necked women may remind us of the statues that Freud invited to his dinner table. They become "alive".

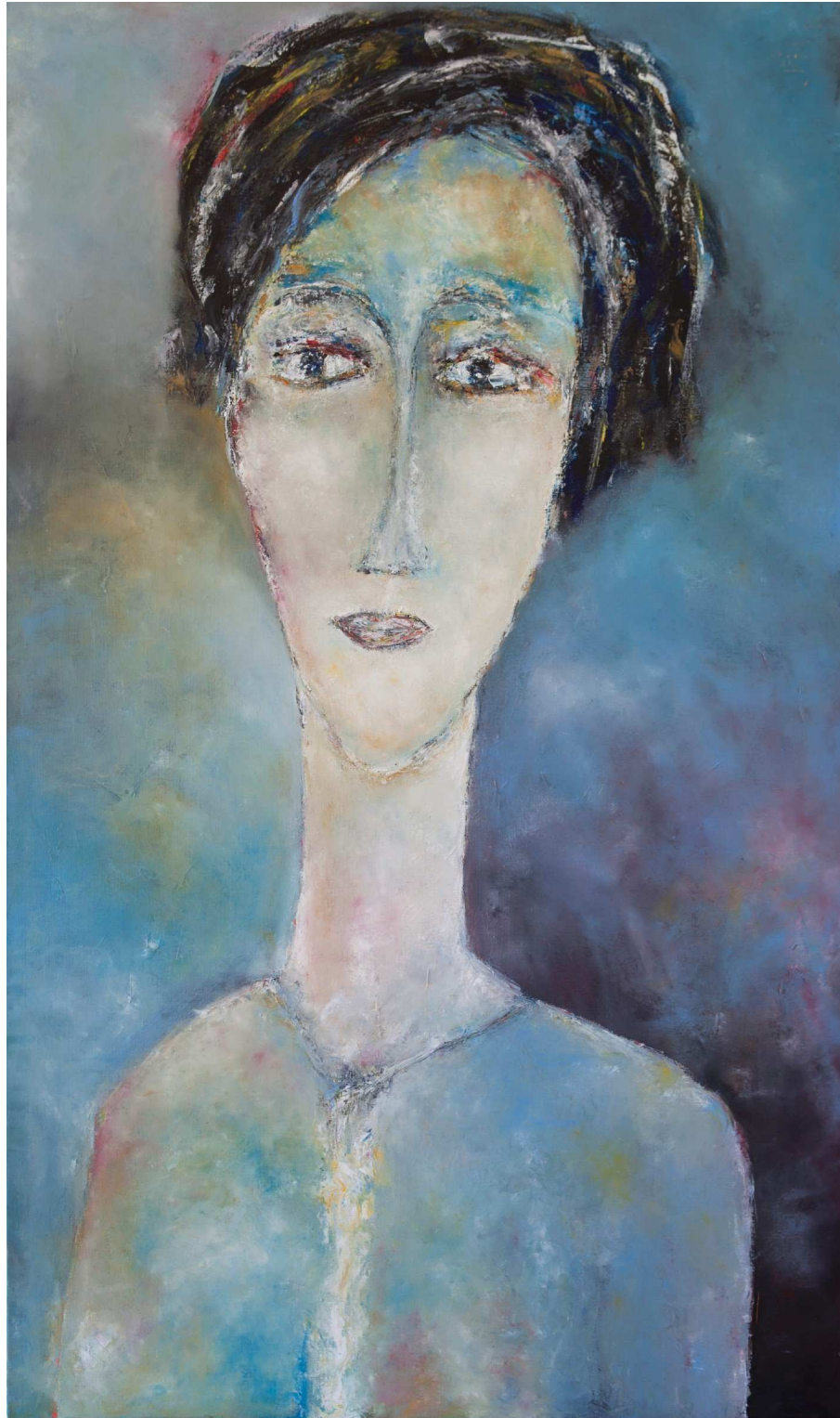
Commandeur #2, oil on canvas, 57x38 inches, 2011



Hemera :

One of the primordial Greek goddesses, mother of Gaia. She represents the light of the earth, daylight.

At nightfall, her mother Nyx, covers the earth with her veil of darkness to bring rest to man. In the morning, Hemera scatters the veil to reveal Aether, the brilliant blue of the day.

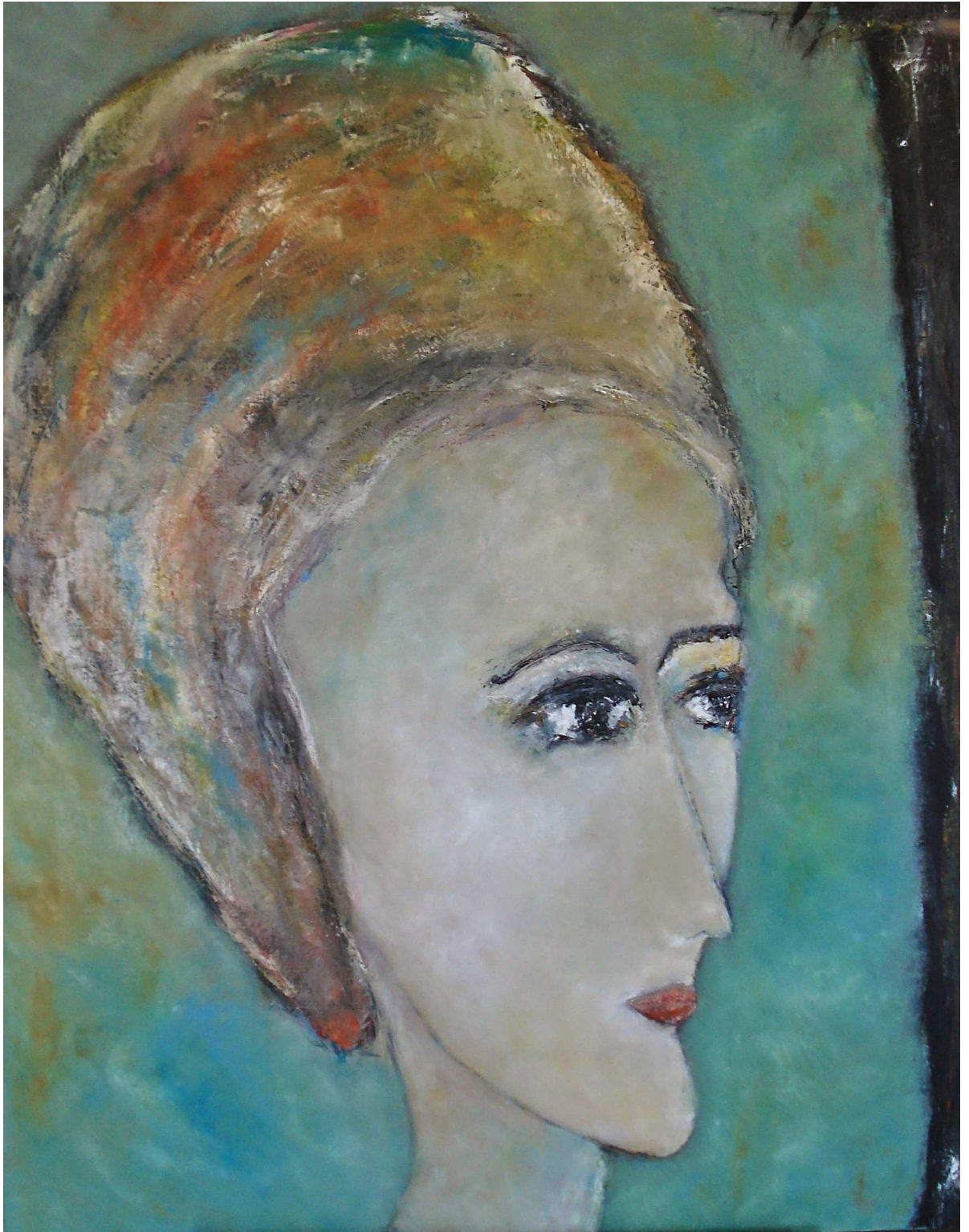


Minerva :

An oracle had predicted that if Jupiter had a son, the boy would usurp his father's throne and so a worried Jupiter devoured his own children. One day, he suffered such a violent headache that he thought his head would explode. He summoned Vulcan and asked him to split open his skull. And so Minerva was born, fully armed, with a warlike cry.

Goddess of the arts, of science, of wisdom, intelligence and war, Minerva remained a virgin throughout her life and fought against Neptune and the Titans.

Although she was a warrior Minerva did not favor war. She preferred to be an instrument of peace.



JUNO :

This Roman goddess, daughter of Saturn, sister and wife of Jupiter personifies the lunar cycle. She is the protector of legitimately married woman as well as goddess of the moon, of birthing, of marriage and of good advice.

Juno is jealous because her husband Jupiter is unfaithful. It is said that he gave birth to Minerva without her. She swallows a herb that makes her pregnant without any help from Jupiter and gives birth to Mars.

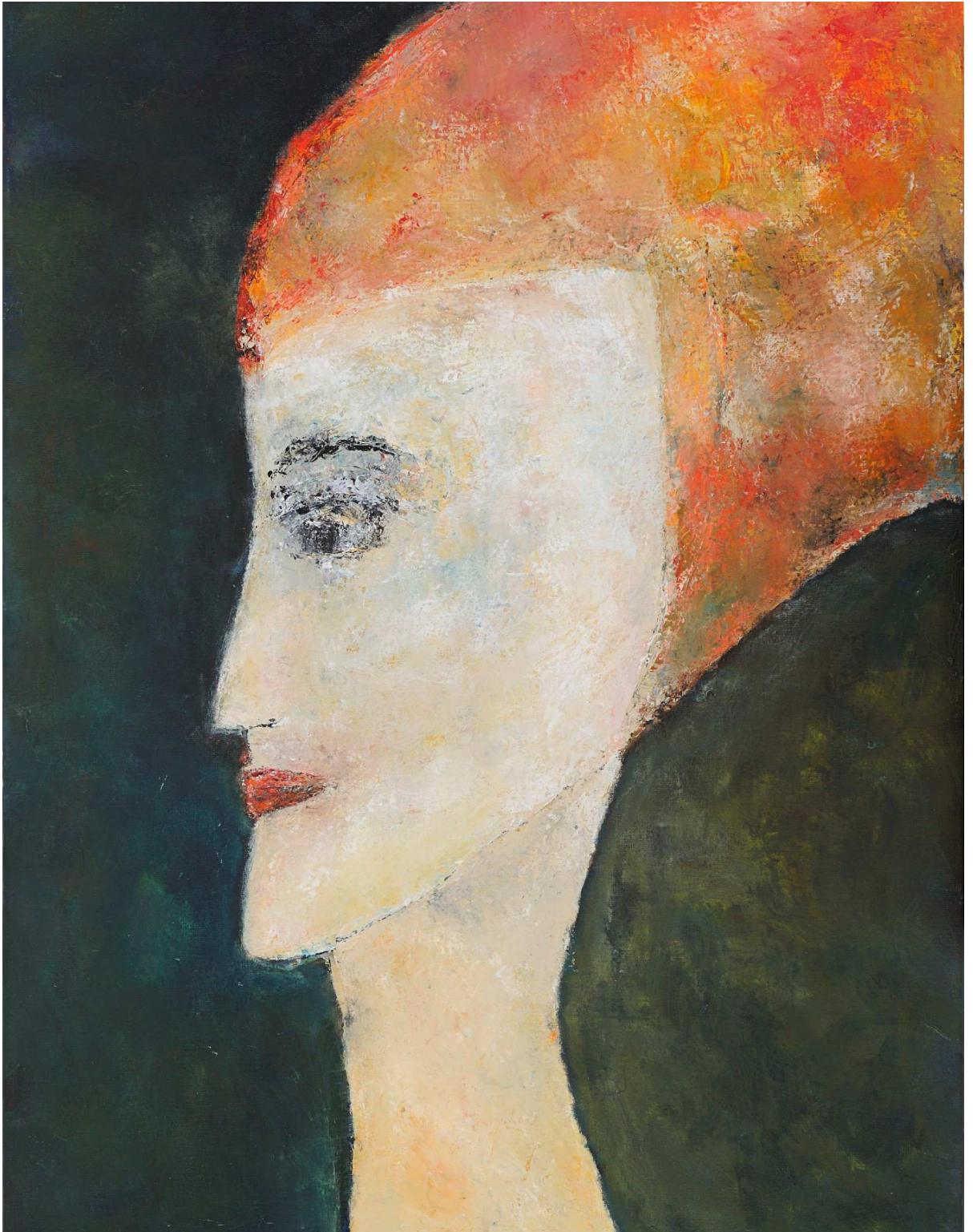
Her bearing is full of majesty. Wearing a veil decorated with a crescent of stars, her figure is draped and she holds a scepter, a cup, sometimes a flash of lightning.



INANNA :

A Sumerian goddess (Mesopotamia, Syria).

Goddess of physical love and of war, she reigns over life and death. Femme fatale, she is reputed to have had multiple love affairs. Although already a goddess and queen of heaven, she decides to become mistress of hell, abode of her sister and sworn enemy Erehkigal. Descending into hell, she is slain by her sister's judges. Her body is retrieved and injected with the food and drink of life. However, to be irrevocably saved she must find a substitute victim and in a fit of rage she designates her husband King Dumuzi. He will spend half of his life in hell.

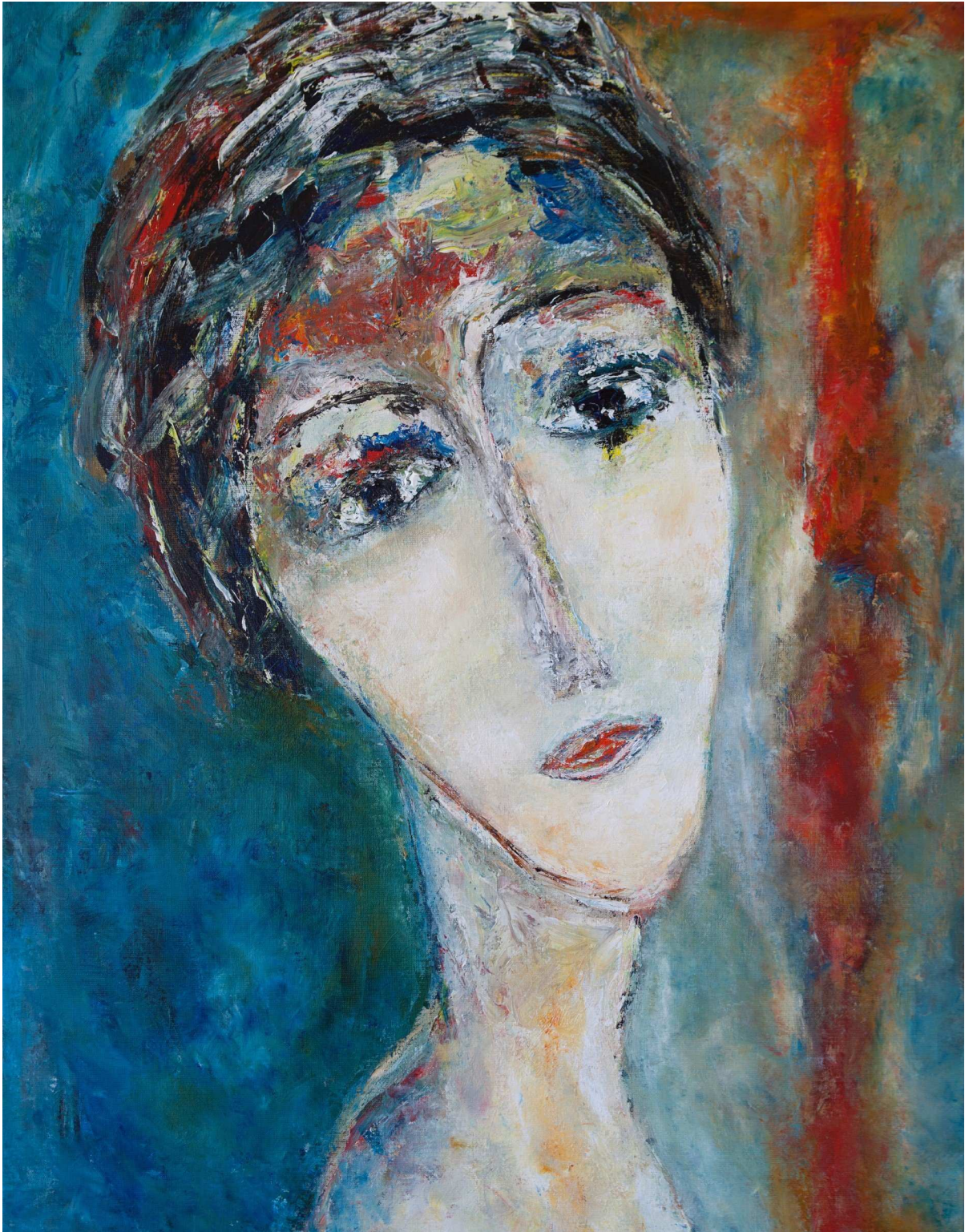


GAIA :

The Greek mother goddess is the maternal ancestor of all the gods.

In the beginning there was chaos. Then a deep crevasse opened up out of which sprang Gaia and Eros (god of love). Gaia gave birth to Ouranos (god of the sky), Pontos (god of the sea) and Ourea (god of the mountains). Later, with Ouranos she gave birth to the Titans and the Cyclops. Ouranos forced her to keep these monsters in her womb. With Pontos, Gaia gave birth to the primordial sea gods, Nereus, Thaumas, Phorcys, Keto and Euribia.

She is also recognized as the mother of far-flung heros, even of entire nations. Guardian of divine power, Gaia represents the twin characteristics of Nature: harmony and chaos.



Lighthouses

If the work of Lépine is an invitation to a voyage,
what could be more symbolic for this confirmed islander than lighthouses ?

Phare de l'île aux Moutons, oil on canvas, 43x28 inches, 2013



Next page : **Phare du bout du monde**, oil on canvas, 83x47 inches, 2012





*"The light in the darkness.
The grown children take to the seas to conquer their dreams.
When the shades invade the coasts the sailors trust the benefactress light.
Beacons preserve those poets from the reefs."*

Louis Lépine.

Phare de Terre de Feu, oil on canvas, 83x47 inches, 2012







"Seek out the light of the lighthouse at the end of the world."

M.H.

Cap Horn Mountains, oil on canvas, 59x33 inches, 2012







English Harbor, oil on canvas, 43x28 inches, 2013



Next page : **Phare de Leeuwin**, oil on canvas, 83x47 inches, 2012/49









Churches

The ways followed by Lépine's long-necked women are lined with churches
and chapels.
Places to meet, to find spirituality, contemplation, love and serenity.
There she likes to enter to feel enveloped in a beneficent mold.



La Dame en Croix, oil on canvas, 25x15 inches, 2011





Chapelle St Léonard, oil on canvas, 22x15 inches, 2011







Eglise de St Barth, oil on canvas, 16x11 inches, 2011



Previous page : **Chapelle de Glavenas**, oil on canvas, 57x45 inches, 2011

Eglise de Croissy, oil on canvas, 39x20 inches, 2011



Landscapes

And so these women continue their quest.
Lépine depicts their voyage as entirely abstract.
She shows us the landscapes of Burgundy that she loves.
A return to her roots, her memories, her joys and sorrows.
The layers accumulate in texture and depth.
The viewer has but to enter and happily lose his way.

Champagne #1, oil on canvas, 22x15 inches, 2012







Champagne #2, oil on canvas, 16x13 inches, 2012



Previous page : **Sancerre village**, oil on canvas, 39x29 inches, 2011

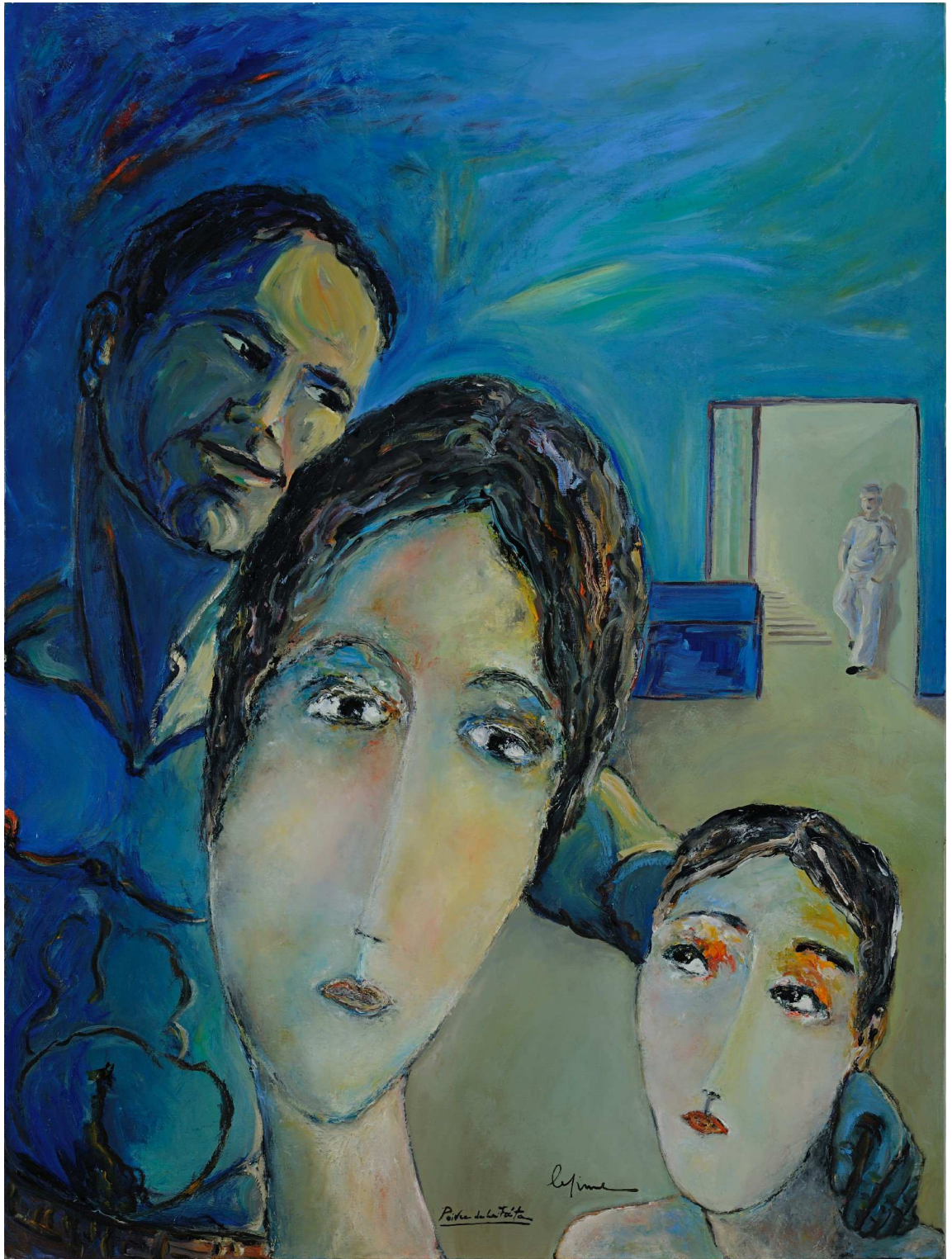
Champagne #3, oil on canvas, 16x13 inches, 2012



A tribute to my friend Patrick Poivre de la Fréta, "**Le Rapt**", a collaborative painting from 2009.

" Painting is a universal language that speaks to our consciousness and touches the depths of our soul."

Patrick Poivre de la Fréta.



*"What will remain of our agitations?
Who will remember them?
For some, there will be paintings."*

M.H.





Nathalie Lépine,
Peggy's Cove Lighthouse,
oil on canvas, 83x47 inches, 2013