

# LOST BEAUTY: ICEBERGS

ALBERTO REY



BOOK DESIGN BY MATTHEW MATEOSIAN



# GRATITUDE

I am fortunate that in my later years, my interests in science, art, culture and conservation have come together to form a fulfilling complex period in my life. My everyday is intertwined with research, making art, teaching, guiding, fly fishing, friends, and family. Any project, like Lost Beauty: Icebergs Project, that took eighteen years to realize could not occur without the support and influence of many individuals. For over thirty years, my wife and partner, Janeil, has provided a steadfast foundation to our family and my professional career so that I have been able to concentrate my efforts on investigating divergent interests and directions. My children, Graciela and Diego, have provided a sense of joy and a perspective to what is truly important. My many research trips to Iceland could not have occurred without the assistance and guidance of Throstur Ellidason of Strengir Angling Service, Iceland Travel and *Buffalo Spree*. On my second trip to Iceland, but first trip to document the icebergs of Breiðamerkurjökull, Ray McLain, a friend and colleague, accompanied me. Ray was a kind soul who left us too soon and continues to be missed by all who knew him.

This publication was supported by the sale of some of the paintings in this series. The support of these collectors was critical to the success of

Over the past forty years, the Burchfield Penney Art Center has been supportive of my work, and their Arts Legacy Project was instrumental in the creation of this publication. Three years ago, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with one of my students who had graduated from the State University of New York at Fredonia over two decades earlier. We have spent many hours sharing our thoughts about the complexities of aesthetics, and I am honored that he agreed to design this publication and share his process in the "designer's notes".

their names are noted next to the paintings that are now in their collections.

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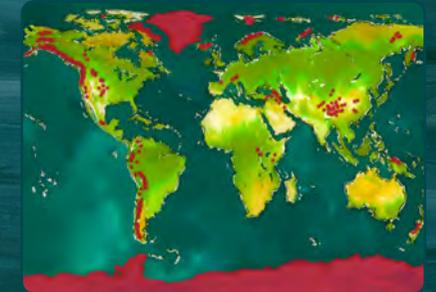
LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS PROJECT





## GOING, GOING...

Only 3 percent of the Earth's water is freshwater and almost 70 percent of this is stored in glacier ice. Most of the world's glaciers are retreating or melting, which will eventually lead to a significant loss of this source of usable water. The 20th century has produced the warmest period in the last 1,000 years. Greenland and Antarctica, which house 99 percent of the world's freshwater ice, have lost 5,000 gigatonnes of ice between 2002 and 2017. A gigatonne is one billion metric tons, or the weight of 10,000 U.S. aircraft carriers. Five thousand gigatonnes is enough to cover all of Texas in a 26-foot-high sheet of ice. Since the beginning of the 1900s, the total loss of ice has been estimated at around 49,000 gigatonnes or enough to cover the entire continental United States in 22 feet of water. This melt off has been a major contributor to the 8-inch rise of global sea level since 1880. The other major cause for the sea level rise has been the expansion of water due to increased temperatures. Glaciers and ice sheets are the world's water towers which have been created over the past hundreds to thousands of years. This ice is not being replenished and their finite amount of useable water is melting down quickly.



GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF THE PRINCIPAL GLACIERIZED REGIONS ON EARTH. GLACIERIZED REGIONS SHOWN IN RED.



A GIGATONNE EQUALS 1 BILLION METRIC TONS, OR ROUGHLY THE WEIGHT OF 6,000,000 BLUE WHALES—THE LARGEST ANIMALS ON EARTH.

Outside of Greenland and Antarctica, drainage water basins from over 150,000 glaciers cover over a quarter of the world's land surface. As the glaciers shrink, they will provide less fresh water availability in the future. These water basins are populated by almost a third of the world's population and some projections indicate that there will be a shortage of useable water by 2100. As the glaciers disappear, so does the water supply for humans and other organisms. The shortage of water will also affect the regions' production of crops and hydroelectricity. As the abnormally rapid shrinking icebergs melt, they also create disasters such as catastrophic floods, mud flows, and debris flows that alter rivers, ecosystems and the organisms that inhabit them. These changes will affect vegetation, farmland, and wetlands, leading to some of the species that inhabit these areas becoming extinct. The areas with the fastest shrinking glaciers are in North America, northern Arctic Canada, the Himalaya region, and South America. Some smaller glaciers, like the ones in the Rockies and the Andes, have already disappeared completely. Glaciers and ice sheets also house the history of the world's changes in climate and precipitation. When a glacier is gone,

the data for the region will also be lost. When a glacier is stable, its history can be accessed by vertically drilling into the glaciers or ice sheets to remove an ice core. Each ice core is a time capsule with a layered sampling of the annual snowfall, climate conditions, particulates, and chemical composition of the atmosphere including greenhouse gas concentrations, volcanic activity, and solar activity. Chemical composition can be investigated in the dissolved chemicals that were captured by the falling snow or in bubbles of trapped air. The longest ice cores can extend over two miles and can detect up to 800,000 years of history. In the United States, the ice cores are stored in a -32.8 °Fahrenheit library, at the National Science Foundation Ice Core Facility (NSF-ICF), in Lakewood, Colorado that houses over 5,000 three-foot-long round ice cores from glaciers around the world. The glaciers and ice sheets are affected by regional and global changes. For instance, in the 1970s-80s cooler atmospheric temperatures were evident. Global temperatures dipped again in 1991 after the eruption of Mount Pinatubo in the Philippines, but, since the mid-1990s, the global climate has been experiencing a consistent period of global warming. The Arctic region, which includes Iceland, has

been deeply affected by this warming, and the most recent projections indicate that sea-ice cover might disappear by 2100. One of the fastest retreating glaciers in Iceland, Breiðamerkurjökull, can be found in Vatnajökull National Park. The park is designated as a World Heritage Site because of its cultural, historical and scientific significance. Breiðamerkurjökull is part of the much larger Vatnajökull glacier. Vatnajökull's 1,800 feet thick sheet of ice is the largest glacier in Europe and covers a number of mountains, valleys, plateaus and active volcanoes like the Grímsvötn that last erupted in 2011 and closed airspace over the island. The Icelandic Meteorological Office notes that the next eruption is overdue. Grímsvötn usually erupts every five to ten years, and the volcano has been very active since the summer of 2020.

## NEARLY 70 PERCENT OF THE EARTH'S FRESH WATER IS STORED IN GLACIER ICE.

**Biological Regionalism:**  
**Skógafoss, Skógá River, Iceland**  
5.5in. x 10in.  
Watercolor on paper



On the southeastern edge of Vatnajökulland, Breiðamerkurjökull can be found extending into a lagoon that it created and which flows into the Atlantic Ocean. The first settlers arrived to this part of Iceland around 900 AD when the Breiðamerkurjökull glacier was spreading twelve miles further north beyond its present location. The glacier continued to grow through the end of the Little Ice Age in the 18th and 19th century. The naturalists' and travellers' writings during this period noted the advance of this glacier and the damage caused to mountain routes between farms and settlements, grazing areas, pastures and houses. The last structure that the glacier destroyed during its expansion was a local resident's farm

in 1702. The glacier was named after that family, the Breiðamörks. In the 1890s, the glacier started to melt and retreat back up the valley. By the 1900's, it had moved 3.5 miles. Like most of Iceland's glaciers, it retreated rapidly during the warm decades from 1930 to 1960. In the early 1930s, the retreating glacier created a depression and the melting ice filled the lagoon, named Jökulsárlón. As the temperatures increased during the later part of that century, the lagoon became a lake as more of the glacier retreated and continued to melt. The lake more than doubled in size between 1975 and 2004 as a consequence of rapid warming of the climate and its depth increased to 660 feet making it the deepest lake in Iceland. The tip of the glacier now floats on the lake and calving happens regularly throughout the warmer

months producing icebergs of various sizes. This calving accounts for about a third of the glaciers' mass loss. The rest of the loss is created by the thinning that occurs due to the warming temperatures. The icebergs last for around five years in the lagoon where they stay until they are small enough to flow through the narrow 100-meter wide and 20-meter deep channel that connects it to the Atlantic Ocean. Since 2000, this glacier has retreated very quickly, around 600 to 900 feet annually, and this mass loss is among the highest recorded in the world. Projections note that this glacier could lose half of its volume by 2100, and, a couple centuries later, the few remaining ice sheets might only be found on the tops of the country's highest mountaintops.

RIGHT: THE RETREATING EDGE OF THE BREIÐAMERKURJÖKULL GLACIER.

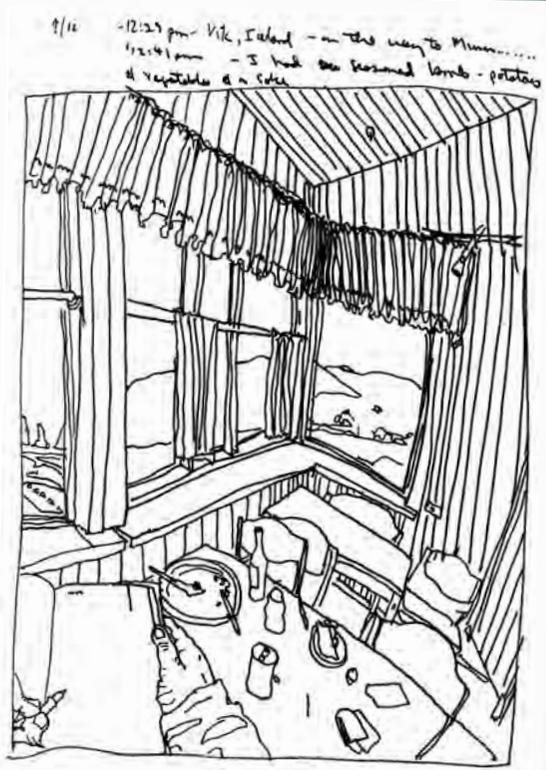
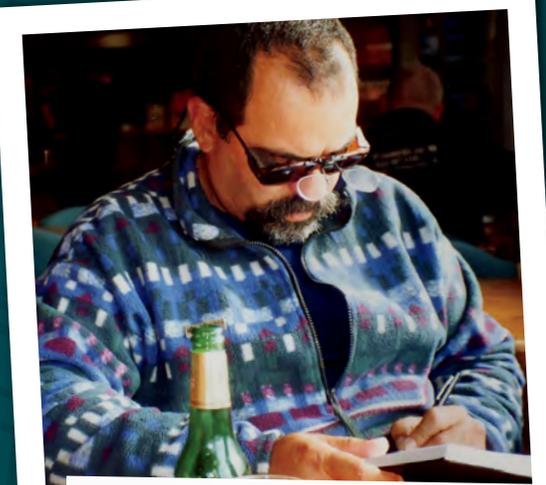




## THE BEGINNING OF THE LOST BEAUTY: ICEBERGS PROJECT

Keith Shidemantle, a fly fishing companion and pilot, and I were drawn to the uniqueness of the island and its secluded rivers. I had made arrangements with Thrustor Ellidason of Strengir Angling Service to fish some of the rivers he had leased that year and use his accommodations along the rivers during the off season in exchange for the use of my artwork and photography from the trip. By this point, I was working on a series of paintings that investigated rivers and fish from around the world as a way to link local and global environmental issues, and it was a perfect trade.

**Biological Regionalism:  
Breiðdalsá River, Iceland**  
43in. x 63in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

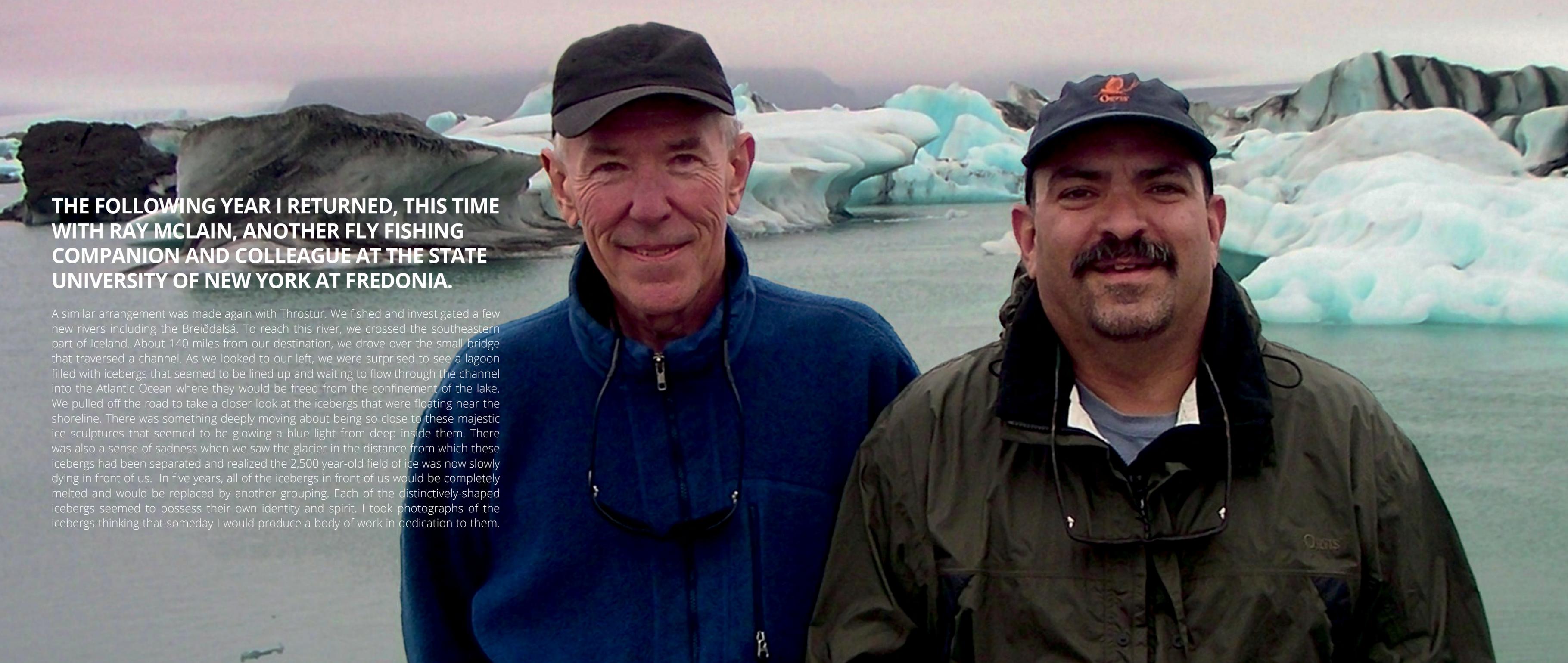




**Biological Regionalism:**  
**Brown Trout, Minnivallalekur River, Iceland**  
33in. x 48in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel



**Biological Regionalism:**  
**Arctic Char, Hrútafjarðará River, Iceland**  
33in. x 48in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

A photograph of two men standing in front of a lagoon filled with icebergs. The man on the left is older, wearing a dark cap and a blue jacket. The man on the right is younger, wearing a dark cap with an orange logo and a dark jacket. The background shows a large body of water with numerous icebergs of various shapes and sizes, some appearing to glow with a blue light. The sky is overcast.

**THE FOLLOWING YEAR I RETURNED, THIS TIME WITH RAY MCLAIN, ANOTHER FLY FISHING COMPANION AND COLLEAGUE AT THE STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK AT FREDONIA.**

A similar arrangement was made again with Throstur. We fished and investigated a few new rivers including the Breiðdalsá. To reach this river, we crossed the southeastern part of Iceland. About 140 miles from our destination, we drove over the small bridge that traversed a channel. As we looked to our left, we were surprised to see a lagoon filled with icebergs that seemed to be lined up and waiting to flow through the channel into the Atlantic Ocean where they would be freed from the confinement of the lake. We pulled off the road to take a closer look at the icebergs that were floating near the shoreline. There was something deeply moving about being so close to these majestic ice sculptures that seemed to be glowing a blue light from deep inside them. There was also a sense of sadness when we saw the glacier in the distance from which these icebergs had been separated and realized the 2,500 year-old field of ice was now slowly dying in front of us. In five years, all of the icebergs in front of us would be completely melted and would be replaced by another grouping. Each of the distinctively-shaped icebergs seemed to possess their own identity and spirit. I took photographs of the icebergs thinking that someday I would produce a body of work in dedication to them.



Still haunted by the icebergs, I returned four years later with my wife and two children. I had made arrangements with *Buffalo Spree* magazine and with Iceland's tourist bureau to write an article on family-friendly destinations to visit on the island. After traveling throughout the southern part of the island, we made our way east to Jökulsárlón to visit, what seemed to be, old friends in the lagoon. The previously documented icebergs were unrecognizable and a new group of icebergs were floating in the lagoon as the Breiðamerkurjökull glacier had continued to retreat up the valley. The mood was more joyous, as I was able to experience the scene through the eyes of my children and wife. The other difference was that I had made a prior engagement through the tourist bureau to document the icebergs by way of a small inflatable

motorized Zodiac. As the driver and I slowly maneuvered around each iceberg that loomed overhead, I could see the immensity of the true size underneath us in the clear emerald-tinted water. There was a sense of danger and excitement as we approached each iceberg, since we knew that they could capsize at any moment and crush us into the freezing water. After the initial panic wore off, there was a sense of peace and connectedness to the icebergs, as I realized that this would be the last time that I would see each iceberg. I continued to take photographs reaffirming my desire to create a new series of paintings in homage to them. I kept a folder of those iceberg photographs on the screen of my computer to remind me of the project I wanted to create. I would see that "icebergs"

folder regularly for thirteen years until in 2020 when the Covid virus created a pause in most of my engagements. I saw a window of 6 months that I could dedicate to the paintings, and I started the first painting in May of that year. Knowing that few people would see the finished work and even fewer would know about the history of the icebergs, and how they had become, for me, a metaphor for a much larger and complicated environmental issue, I wanted to create something that would last many years and be available to a wide audience. I was fortunate enough to have, in recent years, reconnected with a former illustration student who had become an acclaimed designer in Rochester, NY, Matt Mateosian. He was interested in being part of this project and together we created this publication.

# THE ICEBERGS PAINTINGS





## PALETTE AND PROCESS

The palette on the left shows the four colors of oil paint used to create all of the Lost Beauty: Icebergs Project paintings. The colors shown from left to right are titanium white, turquoise, cerulean blue and burnt umber. Unlike most other projects that are carefully organized, I started this series of paintings not knowing the final sizes of the paintings, where the work would be exhibited or what colors I would use. I began with small paintings that were painted on panels that had already been constructed and were extras from other projects. As I worked through the studies, I discovered the preferable sizes for the larger paintings, the right combination of gestural brushwork and the exact amount of light and color needed to capture the mood of icebergs disappearing into time.



Half way through painting the series, I was running low on Sennelier's turquoise and cerulean oil paint which was the key component to the work's vibrancy. When I went to purchase more, I realized that the company has discontinued that specific line of colors and that the new line used different formulas. I tried those new paints as well as several other brands without finding the exact effect. The cerulean paint was easily found, but I tracked down the last four tubes of the turquoise paint in small stores in Singapore and Abergavenny, Wales. I luckily had enough of the burnt umber paint that was made by Permanent Pigments out of Cincinnati, Ohio in 1970's. A highly respected color chemist and colorist, Henry Levison, ran the company. The titanium white used in the paintings incorporated a formula similar to that which Levison discovered 1950, which used zinc oxide to whiten titanium whites.



*The paintings are constructed out of MDO plywood boards backed with 1 x 2 inch lengths of wood. The painting surface is covered with two layers of Gamblin oil painting ground. The painting's composition is then laid out with a brush and black oil paint.*

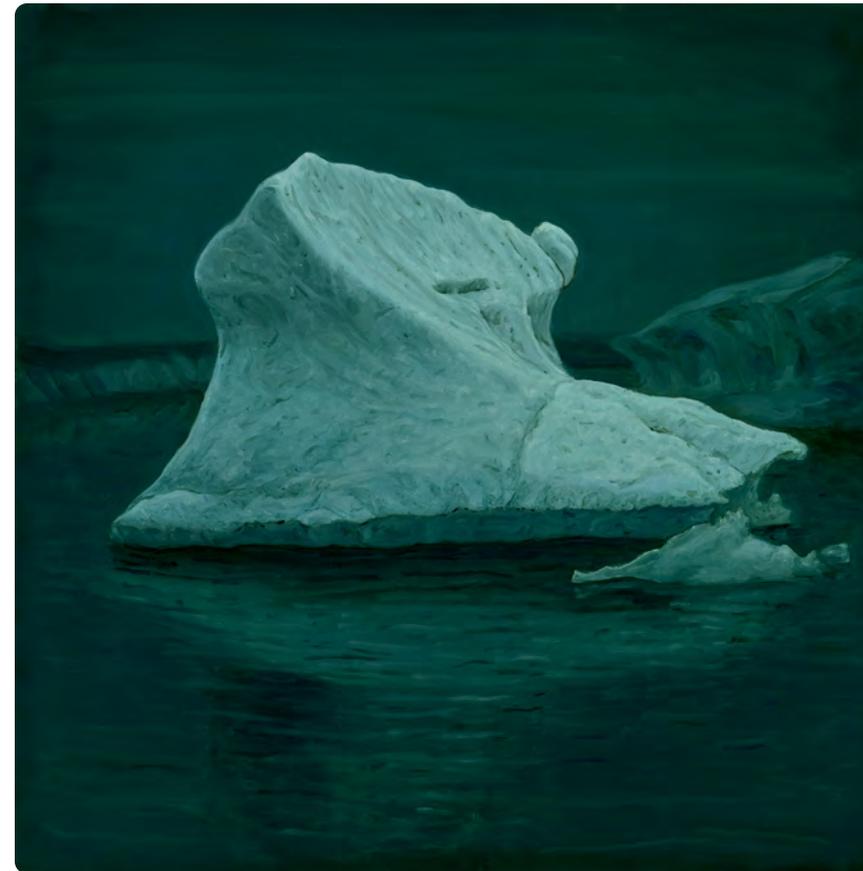


*Once the black lines are dry, a layer of color is roughly painted on—being careful to leave a ghost image of the line drawing but thick enough to be absorbed by the ground and provide a significant foundation to hold the final layers of paint.*



*The final layers of paint are applied thickly using gestural brushwork that capture the subtleties of the snow, ice and water. I start with the brightest part of the composition first and slowly darken the image to capture the desired mood and spirituality.*

## LOST BEAUTY: ICEBERGS IV



DESIGNER'S NOTE: FOR THIS SECTION, THE PRIMARY CHALLENGE WAS TO COME UP WITH A STRUCTURE THAT WOULD PRESENT EVERY PAINTING AT EACH STAGE OF THE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS—LINE DRAWING, UNDERPAINTING, AND FINISHED WORK—AND TO DO IT IN A WAY THAT WAS ENGAGING AND NON-MONOTONOUS. THE ONLY MANDATE FROM ALBERTO WAS THAT EACH PAINTING SHOULD DISPLAY AT ITS ACTUAL ASPECT RATIO SOMEWHERE IN EACH SECTION. BECAUSE THERE ARE A VARIETY OF PANEL SHAPES, AND DUE TO THE LIMITATIONS OF FIXED PAGE SIZE, WE DECIDED TO DISPLAY THE FINAL IMAGES CROPPED, AND TO INCLUDE THE WORK AT ITS ACTUAL ASPECT AS ONE OF THE IN-PROCESS PICTURES.

THE ONE EXCEPTION IS THE IMAGE ABOVE, WHICH SHOWS THE FINISHED WORK. BECAUSE THIS PIECE IS SQUARE, THE IMAGE OF THE FINISHED WORK ON THE NEXT PAGE HIGHLIGHTS THE MAIN BODY OF THE ICEBERG, BUT THE WATER AND SKY ARE LOST TO THE CROP.





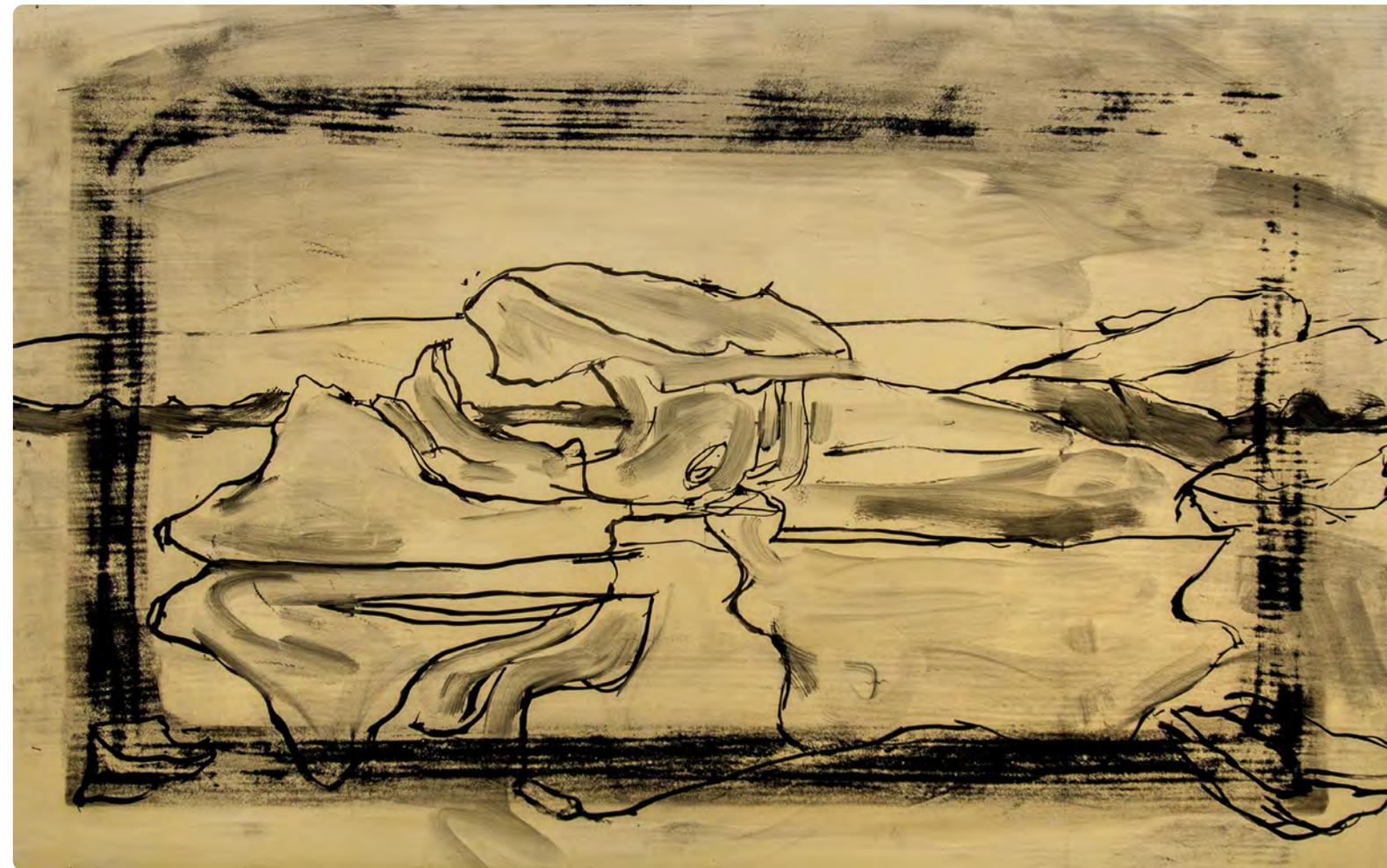
**Lost Beauty: Icebergs IV**

30in. x 30in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF JULIE AND PHILIP SNYDER

LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS VIII



DESIGNER'S NOTE: THIS IS ONE OF MY FAVORITE TWO-PAGE SPREADS BECAUSE IT HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF INCLUDING IMAGES FROM THE DEVELOPMENT STAGE IN GAINING A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR THE FINISHED WORK. THE UNDERPAINTING AT THE LEFT IS A TREMENDOUS EXAMPLE OF FOUNDATIONAL LAYERING OF COLOR TO CREATE MOOD AND DEPTH. THE LINE DRAWING ABOVE IS A COMPELLING IMAGE AS IT IS. IT ALSO HAS A SLIGHTLY DIFFERENT LOOK—THE PANEL WAS AN UNUSED LEFTOVER FROM AN EARLIER BODY OF WORK.



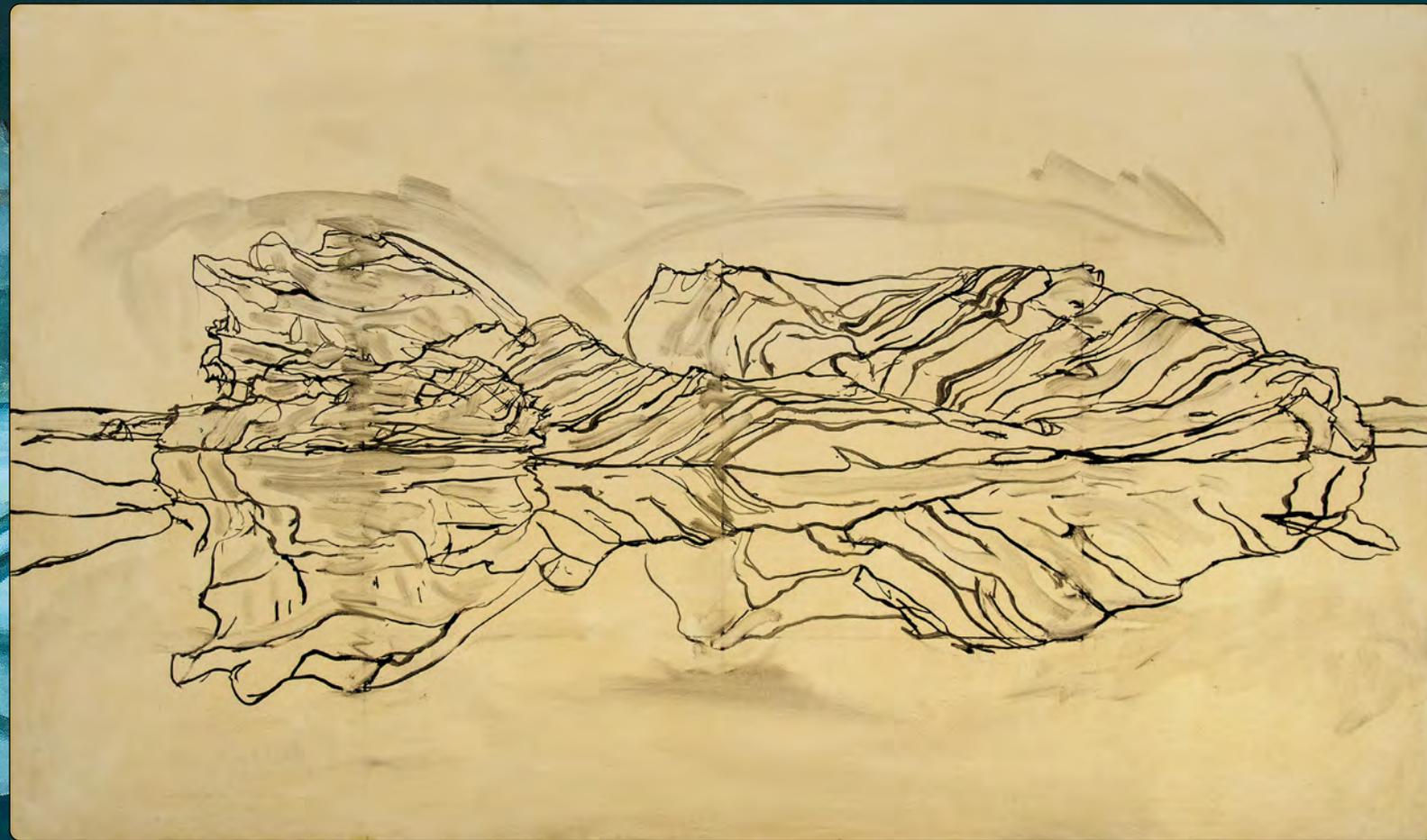
**Lost Beauty: Icebergs VIII**

18in. x 24in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF AMY DAHM

LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS X





**Lost Beauty: Icebergs X**

23in. x 39in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XI





**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XI**

25in. x 44in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

PRIVATE COLLECTION

LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XII



DESIGNER'S NOTE: ALBERTO PAINTED STUDIES FOR SOME OF THE ICEBERGS IN THIS BODY OF WORK. ICEBERGS XII IS THE FIRST SECTION THAT WILL ALSO INCLUDE THE PAINTING'S STUDY—ICEBERGS VII. IN AN EARLIER ITERATION OF THE BOOK DESIGN, THESE STUDIES WERE DISPLAYED IN NUMERICAL ORDER. AFTER REVIEW, WE DECIDED TO GROUP THE STUDIES WITH THE FINISHED WORK. WE HOPE THIS DECISION WILL ALLOW THE VIEWER TO BETTER EXPERIENCE THE EVOLUTION OF THE BRUSHWORK AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE PALETTE, AND GET A GREATER APPRECIATION FOR THE STORY OF EACH PIECE.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XII**

19in. x 36in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF ERIK AND GINA O'NEIL



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs VII**

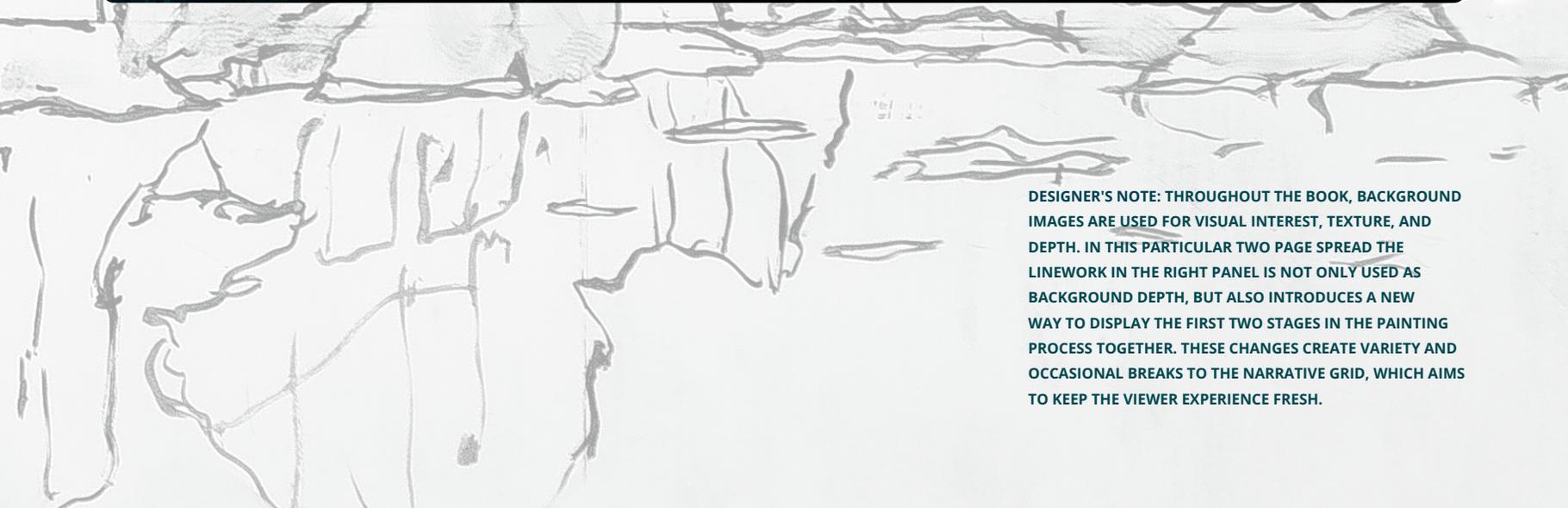
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XII*

17in. x 23in.

Oils on Wooden Panel



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XIII



DESIGNER'S NOTE: THROUGHOUT THE BOOK, BACKGROUND IMAGES ARE USED FOR VISUAL INTEREST, TEXTURE, AND DEPTH. IN THIS PARTICULAR TWO PAGE SPREAD THE LINEWORK IN THE RIGHT PANEL IS NOT ONLY USED AS BACKGROUND DEPTH, BUT ALSO INTRODUCES A NEW WAY TO DISPLAY THE FIRST TWO STAGES IN THE PAINTING PROCESS TOGETHER. THESE CHANGES CREATE VARIETY AND OCCASIONAL BREAKS TO THE NARRATIVE GRID, WHICH AIMS TO KEEP THE VIEWER EXPERIENCE FRESH.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIII**

19in. x 36in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

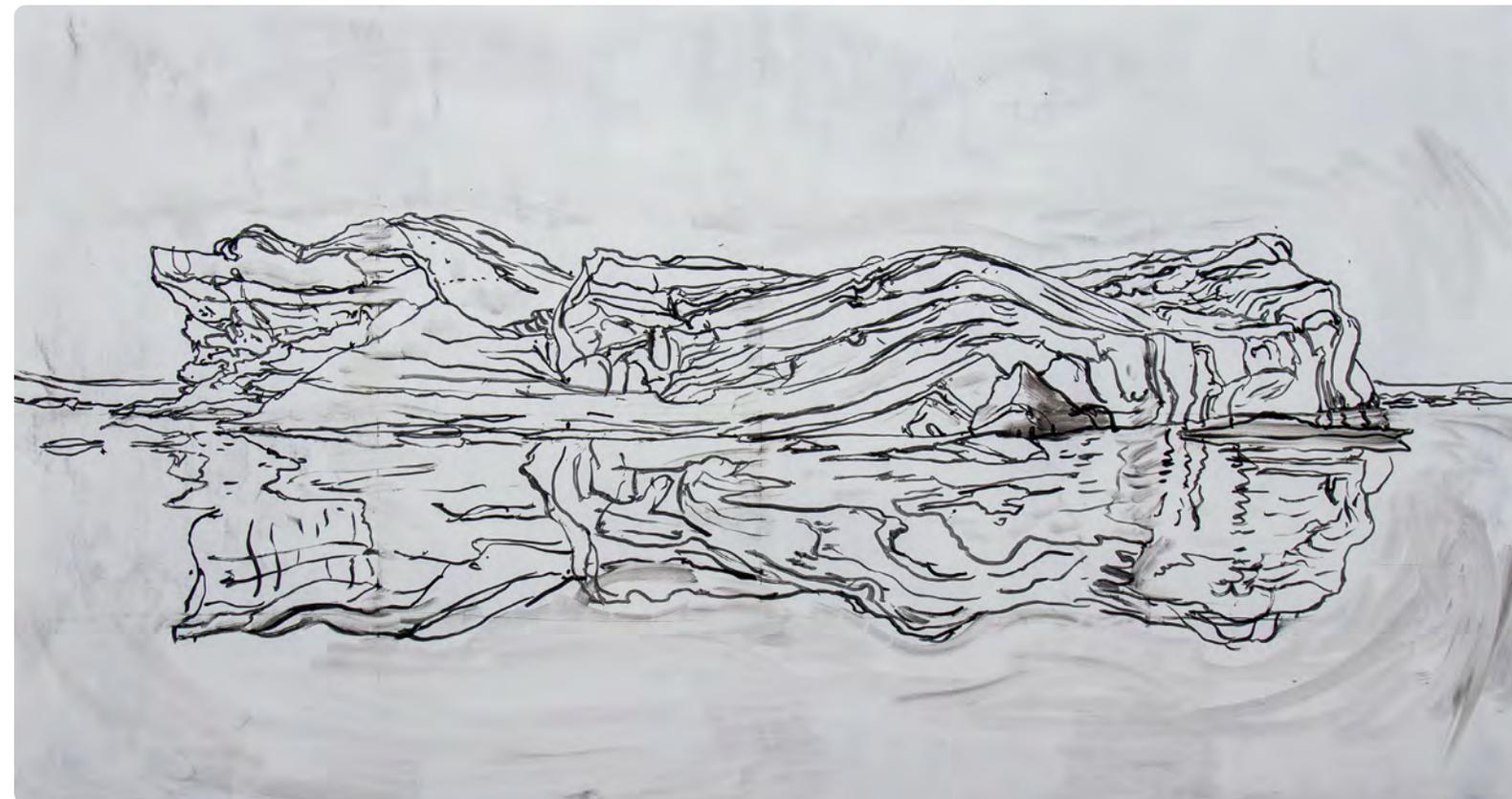
COLLECTION OF ERIK AND GINA O'NEIL



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs IX**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIII*  
15in. x 24in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XIV



DESIGNER'S NOTE: AN IMPORTANT CONSIDERATION, WHEN SELECTING THE IMAGES TO ILLUSTRATE EACH PAINTING, WAS SCALE. WHEN APPROPRIATE, THREE IMAGES OF OBVIOUSLY DIFFERENT SCALE WERE SELECTED, SO THAT THE VIEWER IS ABLE TO ENGAGE WITH THE PAINTING AT DIFFERENT STAGES, AND AT DIFFERENT LEVELS OF DETAIL AS WELL. THIS HELPS TO HIGHLIGHT TECHNIQUE, SHOW SUBTLETIES IN BRUSHWORK AND COLOR, AND PROVIDE AN APPRECIATION FOR HOW THOSE FACTORS BENEFIT THE OVERALL COMPOSITION AND MOOD.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIV**

19in. x 36in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

PRIVATE COLLECTION

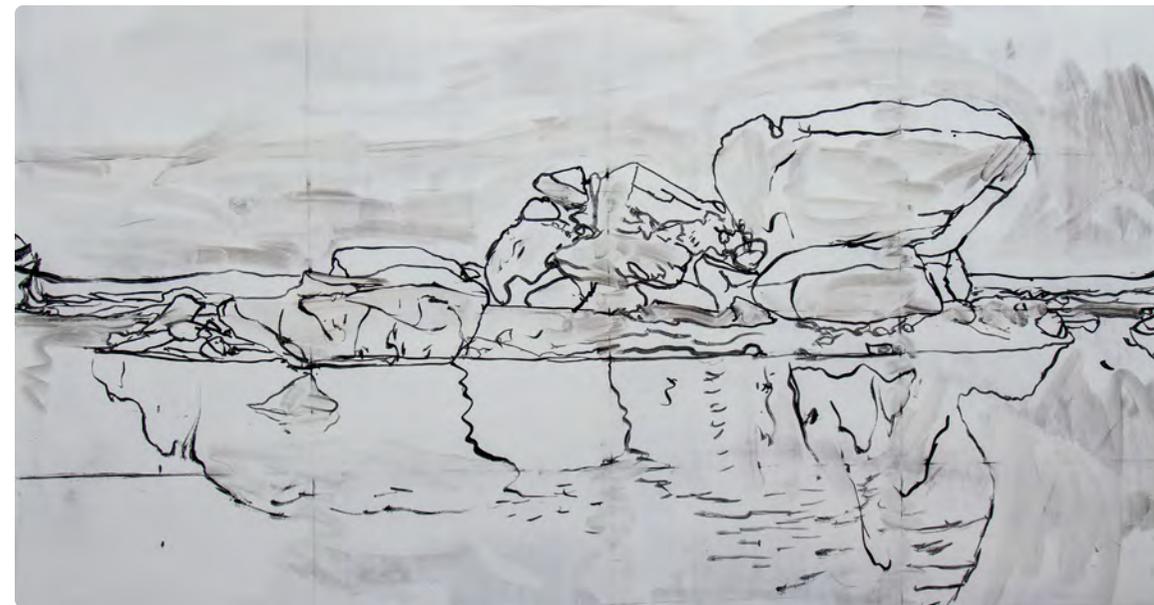


**Lost Beauty: Icebergs V**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIV*  
9.5in. x 29.5in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF ERIK AND GINA O'NEIL



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XV



DESIGNER'S NOTE: THIS PAGE IS UNIQUE, IN THAT IT IS THE ONLY PLACE IN THE BOOK WHERE THE INITIAL LINE DRAWING AND UNDERPAINTING APPEAR TOGETHER, UNCROPPED, IN PROPORTION TO THEIR ACTUAL SIZE. THE TWO IMAGES ARE CLEAR EXAMPLES OF EACH STAGE OF THE PROCESS, PARTICULARLY THE UNDERPAINTING—IT INCLUDES AREAS THAT ARE NEARLY DONE, AND OTHERS THAT ARE AT THE NASCENT STAGE OF THE INITIAL COLOR BLOCKING. WHEN PAIRED WITH THE ILLUSTRATIVE, EARLY-STAGE UNDERPAINTING CLOSEUP AT LEFT, THESE THREE IMAGES ARE NOT ONLY VISUALLY INTERESTING, BUT CLEARLY TELL THE STORY OF THE PROCESS BEHIND CREATING THIS BODY OF WORK.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XV**

19in. x 36in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs III**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XV*  
17in. x 23in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XVI



DESIGNER'S NOTE: I AM A HABITUAL TINKERER. I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW MANY TIMES I'VE NUDGED AND SCALED THE IMAGES IN THIS BOOK, JUST TO GET THEM RIGHT TO THE EYE. I'VE SPOKEN ABOUT A DEFINING STRUCTURE AND ITS IMPORTANCE, BUT JUST AS CRUCIAL IS FEEL—ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO FINE-TUNING AND FINISH WORK.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XVI**

19in. x 36in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF MARNETTE AND PAUL PERRY



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs I**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XVI*  
18in. x 30in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XVII





**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XVII**

19in. x 36in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST

LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XVIII



DESIGNER'S NOTE: THIS DOUBLE PAGE SPREAD OF THE UNDERPAINTING IS ANOTHER SLIGHT TWIST TO THE LAYOUT. THIS IMAGE HIGHLIGHTS THE BROAD, GESTURAL BRUSH STROKES USED IN THE UNDERPAINTING PROCESS. IT ALSO PROVIDES INSIGHT INTO THE FULL COLOR PALETTE USED TO CREATE THE DEPTH AND TEXTURE IN THIS BODY OF WORK.

ALSO OF NOTE: THIS PARTICULAR PAINTING AND ITS STUDY ARE PRIME ILLUSTRATIONS IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF STYLE FOR THE LOST BEAUTY: ICEBERGS PROJECT. WHEN COMPARING THE TWO, YOU CAN CLEARLY SEE THE EVOLUTION OF TECHNIQUE.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XVIII**

19in. x 36in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs II**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XVIII*  
18in. x 36in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel



LOST BEAUTY:  
ICEBERGS XIX



DESIGNER'S NOTE: FAIRLY EARLY IN THE DESIGN PROCESS, I KNEW THIS UNDERPAINTING PHOTO WOULD BE FEATURED AS A TWO PAGE SPREAD. IT ENCOMPASSES EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS SERIES—BOTH IN TERMS OF WHAT I THINK ALBERTO IS TRYING TO SAY, AND AS AN EXEMPLAR OF THE ARTISTIC SKILL HE EMPLOYS TO SAY IT. IT EVOKES A PARTICULAR MOOD. IT CONTAINS BEAUTIFUL TEXTURES, RAW BROAD STROKES AND EXPERTLY-WORKED REFINED AREAS. THE STILL-VISIBLE LINE DRAWING COMBINED WITH THE INITIAL UNDERPAINTING IN THE UPPER LEFT QUADRANT POSSESSES AN ETHEREAL QUALITY, WHILE OTHER AREAS APPEAR TO HAVE TANGIBLE WEIGHT. IT IS FULL OF LIFE. AND, LIKE THE ICEBERGS THIS SERIES WAS BASED ON, NO LONGER EXISTS TODAY IN THE SAME FORM.



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIX**

19in. x 36in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF MATTHEW MATEOSIAN



**Lost Beauty: Icebergs VI**  
*Study for Lost Beauty: Icebergs XIX*  
7.5in. x 19.5in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF DAVID FEDAK

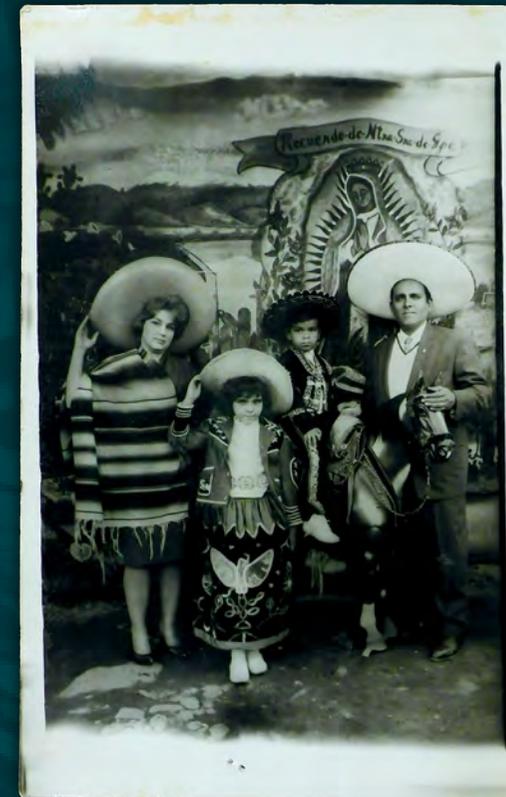
## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Alberto Rey is a Distinguished Professor at the State University of New York at Fredonia in the Department of Visual Arts and New Media. He is also an artist, ceramicist, videographer, writer, Orvis-endorsed fly fishing guide and the founder/director of a youth fly fishing program, Children in the Stream/4H. His artwork is in 20 museum collections, and he has had over 200 exhibitions. He has written and illustrated two other books, *Complexities of Water/Biological Regionalism: Bagmati River, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal* and *The Extinct Birds Project* and has co-written and illustrated another book called *The Survey of Canadaway Creek in Western New York*. More information is available on his website, [AlbertoRey.com](http://AlbertoRey.com).



## ALBERTO WAS BORN IN HAVANA, CUBA IN 1960,

but his home was a small farming town called Agramonte. His family received political asylum through Mexico in 1963 when Fidel Castro turned the island into a communist state. After living for a couple of years on the outskirts of Mexico City, his family moved again to Miami, Florida to join his other relatives who had recently left Cuba. When it was clear that Castro's rule would not be short term, his father got recertified to teach and the family relocated, in 1967, to a small coal-mining town in western Pennsylvania, Barnesboro (now called Northern Cambria). Alberto's introduction to fishing and his love of nature began in this rural setting. In 1982, he attended West Point Military Academy where he received an Honorable Discharge and transferred to Indiana University of Pennsylvania (IUP) to study biology. He soon switched his major to studio art. His junior year was spent at the Art Institute of Pittsburgh where he studied illustration. He returned to IUP his senior year to finish his Bachelors of Fine Arts—and twenty-six years later, he was the recipient of the university's Distinguished Alumni Award. After Alberto graduated from IUP, he lived in Boston, Massachusetts for a short period before heading to Miami to work on Christo's *Surrounded Islands* Project. He then moved to Hollywood, Florida where he worked at Joan of Art Studio creating stained glass and etched glass panels. He returned north to begin his graduate studies at the University at Buffalo, New York. In 1987, he received his Masters of Fine Arts in Drawing and Painting and began traveling throughout Spain, Italy, Morocco and Mexico. While teaching at Lincoln-Sudbury High School in a suburb of Boston, he also taught at The Art Institute of Boston, New England School of Art and Design, and the Museum of Fine Arts. He enrolled in courses at Harvard University in contemporary art and environmental studies. In 1988, he had his first solo exhibition in New York City at the Museum of



REY FAMILY AT THE BASILICA OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE.  
MEXICO CITY, 1964



**Las Palmas Son Novias Que Esperan**

(The Palms Are Lovers Who Wait)

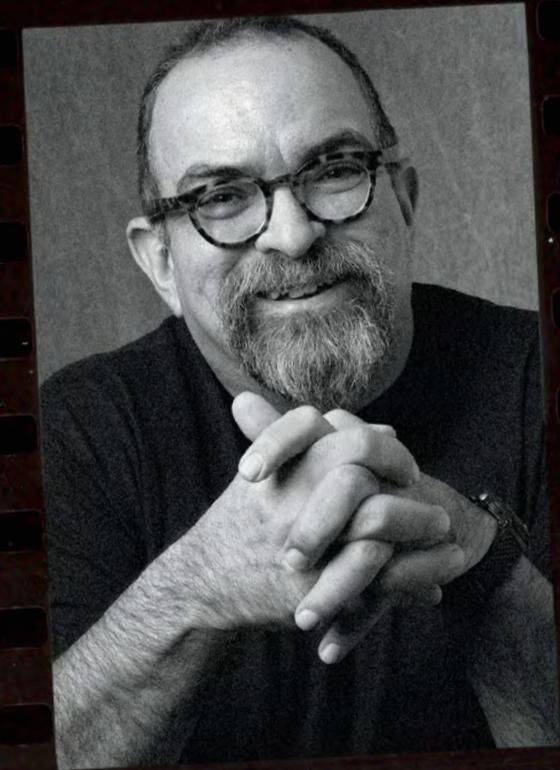
12in. x 10in. x 3in.

Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF BROOKLYN MUSEUM, BROOKLYN, NY

Contemporary Hispanic Art (MoCHA) and was also selected into the permanent collection of El Museo del Barrio in New York City. In 1989, he moved to Dunkirk in western New York to accept a teaching position at the State University of New York at Fredonia and married Janeil Strong of Gloucester, Massachusetts. In 1992, his works were selected into the permanent collections of the Albright-Knox Museum, Brooklyn Museum of Art and Bronx Museum of Art. In 1994, Alberto received the Hagan Young Scholar/Artist Award for distinguished research/creative activity as a junior faculty member and the Minority Visiting Scholar's Award from Central Missouri State University. In 1996, while at SUNY Fredonia, Rey accepted a position as the Director/Curator at the Chautauqua Center of the Visual Arts at the Chautauqua Institution. Soon afterwards he was appointed to the New York State Council on the Arts and to the Artist's Advisory Panel of the New York Foundation for the Arts. In 1998, Alberto returned to Cuba for the first time in 36 years. In 1994, he received the Hagan Young Scholar/Artist Award, in 2001, the Kasling Lecturer Award for distinguished research/creative activity and in 2003 was awarded the Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Scholarship and Creative Activity. In 2007, the State University of New York's Board of Trustees promoted Professor Alberto Rey to SUNY Distinguished Professor for Research and Creative Activity, the state university's highest rank. His artwork since 1986 has been influenced by his Cuban lineage and his attempt to find a sense of identity in a complex contemporary environment. His abstract work from 1982 through 1992 dealt with issues related to layered memories of Cuban iconography and his American experiences. After 1992, his drawings and paintings incorporated realistic imagery as an attempt to make clear connections between his past concerns, art history, regionalism, and his bi-cultural concerns. Since his relocation to western New York in 1989, he has researched local entomology, migratory and biological issues related to Great Lakes steelhead, angling art, and The Hudson River School. In 2000, his reflections on contemporary society started to incorporate environmental issues, perspectives in contemporary art theory and art history, biology and society's disconnections with nature. At that point, he also began to work in film and video. His research took him throughout the United States, Wales, Îles des Saintes, Aruba, Mexico, Spain, Cuba, Iceland and Italy. In 2014, the first book outlining Rey's work, *Life Streams—Alberto Rey's Cuban and American Art*, was published by SUNY Press in conjunction with his solo museum exhibition at the Burchfield-Penney Art Center in Buffalo. In 2016, Alberto wrote and illustrated his first book, *Complexities of Water/ Biological Regionalism: Bagmati River, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal*, about the most sacred and, yet, most polluted river in Nepal. This project also included a documentary, blog, exhibition and a website that archives the work, BagmatiRiverArtProject.com. Two years





later, Alberto wrote and illustrated his second book, *Extinct Birds Project*. The project also included an exhibition and website. In addition to this publication, *Lost Beauty: Icebergs*, he is currently working on an exhibition and book on the Oswego River and another publication on the Canadaway Creek, which he co-wrote and illustrated with colleagues and students from SUNY Fredonia and Fredonia community members. Both rivers are located in western New York. Alberto's paintings can be found in over twenty museum collections and have been in around 200 exhibitions. His films/videos have been screened internationally and his illustrated articles and artwork have graced the covers and pages of *Gray's Sporting Journal*, *Art of Angling Journal*, *Fish and Fly*, *American Angler*, *Saltwater Fisherman*, *Angler's Journal* and *Buffalo Spree*. He has also combined this past research with his interest in sharing the spirituality of fly fishing to become an Orvis Endorsed Fly Fishing Guide. He was a 2020 finalist for the Orvis Freshwater Guide of the Year, and was named the 2021 Orvis Flyfishing Guide of the Year. He also founded and served as director of the Children in the Stream/4H Youth Fly Fishing Program for the past twenty years. Alberto lives with his family in Fredonia where he works in his studio/barn, guides on the steelhead stream behind his home, and continues to teach drawing and painting at the nearby university where he has been a faculty member for over thirty years.

**Biological Regionalism:**  
**Atlantic Salmon, Breiðdalsá River, Iceland**  
48in. x 57in.  
Oils on Wooden Panel

COLLECTION OF THE ARTIST



## ABOUT THE DESIGNER

Matt Mateosian was born into a creative family of artists and makers. He has always loved to draw, and earned early high honors with prominent placement of his artwork (most likely drawings of X-Wings) on his grandmother's fridge. As a professional Designer, Illustrator, and Creative Director, Matt loves the challenge of creative problem solving for a diverse group of clients across a number of business sectors. Past projects include art direction and styling for broadcast television spots, logo design for one of New York's international airports, and the design of a mascot for a professional hockey team. When not working, Matt might be found hosting Art Class for Little Nerds (a remote art class for the next generation of creatives in the family), woodworking, or at a golf course hitting balls that land anywhere but the fairway.



## ALBERTO AND I FIRST MET IN 1993, WHEN I WAS A STUDENT OF HIS AT SUNY FREDONIA.

What he taught me then about process, craftsmanship, the importance of research, and professionalism are lessons I continue to use in my life as a professional and an artist to this day. I have also followed his work for the better part of three decades. Alberto is a craftsman, with a thoughtful sense of composition, interesting brush

technique and complex color layering that pulls the viewer into his paintings and their content. His choice of subject matter is always something that he has a deep connection to, and has educated himself about. When these factors are the impetus to create—and when that impetus intersects with his mastery of technique—that is when beautiful and powerful art is created. Consequently, it's both an honor and a responsibility to help tell this important story about climate change, Alberto's process and my thoughts on how this publication came together. In designing the book, I had the great luxury of time. Since there was no pressing deadline, I had time to live with the body of work as a whole and to become familiar with not only the finished pieces, but the great wealth of in-process studio photographs that Alberto provided. I printed everything out and arranged the photos on my large assembly table to do an initial sort. After the first culling, I tacked the selections up on the wall, further grouping them into a narrative structure. I spent the next week or so studying the selections on the wall. As I became more familiar with them, I identified hero shots and continued to refine the selections—further paring down the photos and adjusting the groupings to better tell the story. Once I was happy with the photo selections, I began sketching out, on paper, a framework for the layout. My goal was to create a foundational structure that provides continuity for the reader, but also creates unique visual interest on every page. A few variants include: cascading images that break the frame, different background images and textures, and iceberg-inspired text containers with organic forms. After translating these ideas from paper to digital compositions, I sent the first round to Alberto, so we could review and discuss. What came next was my favorite part of the process, because it was a true collaboration. Over the next couple of months we had many phone calls, discussing and refining each new iteration. These talks always resulted in a better product and—for me—a more intimate knowledge of this work. There was never any ego, and the conversation was always productive because there was mutual respect for each other. It was a fantastic experience, an experience that resulted in the book you're holding right now. I hope you've enjoyed it.





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