

An abstract painting with a complex texture of green and blue. The colors are layered and blended, creating a sense of depth and movement. The green is a vibrant, almost neon shade, while the blue is a deep, dark hue. The overall effect is reminiscent of a forest scene or a natural landscape, but rendered in a highly stylized and textured manner.

SHINYA KUMAZAWA

ISOLATION  
WITH  
NATURE



How can I portray the awe of nature in a painting?

When I came to Canada 20 years ago, I used to paint in High Park just like Van Gogh and Monet. I loved it. I was surrounded by cherry trees in the spring, water lilies on Grenadier Pond in the summer, maple trees in the fall, and pine trees in snow in the winter. Nature was experienced with all my five senses: The sound of the wind, the smell of the rain or petals falling on my face... For a while, I focused on light and colour. Then I wanted to paint bigger so that the viewers can walk into the paintings. I asked myself: What else can I do to portray nature? How can I recreate the experience?

While not religious, having been born in Japan, my culture was one of mixed religions. My hometown, Suwa, is known for a Shintoism festival, where people worship mountain gods. My father is Buddhist and my mother is Christian. Meanwhile, I was deeply fascinated by stars and in awe of nature.

I never see my paintings as my self-portraits like Van Gogh. The form that builds on canvas is simply an outer shell to what lives inside - the energy, or perhaps the gods and spirits - that give life to a space.

(Shinya Kumazawa)



Walk in High Park. Oil on Canvas, 24x48"

Is nature looking better these days as people are working from home and not travelling? Pollution is down, animals are emerging... I walked in High Park and wondered.

To keep social distancing, it is smart to avoid popular paths along the pond. I walk on the smaller paths just above it and look down. When the reflection of the afternoon sun shines through the willow trees, that is when the magic happens.



Nature has emotions and sorrows.

I found this incredible image of a volcano within a coffee table book. I could hear a Bjork song in my head as I got lost in its wrath:

All he leads  
All he threw  
All he threw  
Nattura

Blue Wrath. Oil on Canvas, 60x36"



Red Sand. Oil on Canvas, 24x36"

This red sand path leads to a vortex. I followed the swirly marks on a hand-written map in Sedona, Arizona to this energy spot at Bell Rock. This huge pudding-shaped formation made of layers of red sand was sticking out from the ground. Built by thousands of years of dancing waves, erosion and shifting rock, it was violently loud - and yet calm and quiet.



Flow (Cherry). Oil on Canvas, 24x36"

After years of painting cherry trees in High Park, I was getting particular about the tree and scene I painted.

I like it when petals are back-lit.

I like it when pine trees are behind the cherry tree to give bluish green contrast, rather than when green grass is underneath

I like it when I can avoid the contrast of blue sky against the subtle pink.

In Japan, our teachings speak to falling petals, juxtaposed against life. It evokes the feeling of how temporal and fragile everything is.



Forbidden Forest. Oil on Canvas, 16x24"

In Japan, the people in Suwa Basin worship Gods of Mountains. In ancient Japan there were prohibited areas that people were scared to walk in. They became sacred, and people built shrines around them



Astronomy is the origin of my awe of nature. Every time I see the stars, they will instantly bring me back to my grade-school era. Everything changes over the years, while constellations remain exactly the way I saw them in my childhood. How small and insignificant we are in the endless space.

Milky Way. Oil on Canvas, 30x24"



The canopy was striking on this summer day in Tiny Beach on Georgian Bay. This long gravel path was arched by tall trees filtering the sunshine and making fluttering sounds as the lake breeze teased them.

New Path. Oil on Canvas, 40x24"

The snow started as I was painting pine trees in High Park. As it got heavier, people disappeared and silence set in. I was completely drowned in the mood and obsessively moved my brushes. Paint on the pallet became mixed with snow, becoming ice-cream-like. It was difficult to continue. Suddenly I felt something, and looked back - startled. There was a coyote standing behind me looking at my painting.



Winter Duck Pond. Oil on Masonite, 30x24"



History of Crabapple. Oil on Canvas, 48x60"

I originally started this painting in 2003. It was a painting of a crab apple tree in High Park. I liked the color but wasn't fond of the composition so I decided to overlay an image of the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome. The historic ruin over the deep pink cherry trees gave an impression that the dome was on fire. Never showing it in public, I kept it in my garage for over 10 years. In 2018, I decided to overlay the crab apple trees. When I paint crab apples or cherry trees, I naturally mimic the human life cycle in their blossoms. As Buddha's teaching, nothing in life is permanent. Life comes and goes. Falling petals represent death. The layer of paints are so thick now. However if you look closer, you might be able to spot the Hiroshima Dome.

## Price List



Walk in High Park

Oil on Canvas

24x48"

\$1600



Blue Wrath

Oil on Canvas

60x36"

\$2700



Red Sand

Oil on Canvas

24x36"

\$1000



Flow (Cherry)

Oil on Canvas

24x36"

\$1000



Forbidden Forest

Oil on Canvas

16x24"

\$600



Milky Way

Oil on Canvas

30x24"

\$800



New Path

Oil on Canvas

40x24"

\$1200



Winter Duck Pond

Oil on Masonite

30x24"

\$800



History of Crabapple

Oil on Canvas

48x60"

\$3500

