

The Studio Record

Paintings and Poems, 2021–2025

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Los Angeles

Painting came first.

The ground sitting there waiting for a mark.

Sometimes the image arrives before language.

Sometimes the poem finds its way to the surface later.

These pages gather a small portion of that movement—

Twenty-one crossings between paint and words.

A record of the studio as it unfolded.

Dichotomous

Uncommon Dialogue

Black and white
or the quiet portion of each
living inside the other

we speak as if the world
must divide itself
to be understood

yet every boundary
leans toward conversation

an uncommon dialogue
beneath the surface
of what we think we see

existence slowly uncovering
layer after layer

until the difference
between one way and another
begins to dissolve

and we notice

what we called opposite
was only the mind
searching for balance

each path
merely another turn

in the same mystery
learning how to reveal itself



Dichotomous

2022

Acrylic on canvas, diptych

12 x 24 in (30 x 61 cm)

Bubbles

Only Life

Being alive
like the sand castle
built by a child
they don't waste time
bubbles in soda lime
showing you all about life
and just when you think you see it all
they reveal another part
the hidden pattern
that's what it's about
creative art

nephew knows best
a wealth of clarity
through the eyes of a five year old



Bubbles

2021

Acrylic on canvas

26 x 26 in (114 x 191 cm)

Set Me Free

The Gate Opens

When I look into those eyes
innocence and joy running loose

something that was never meant
to return

the dance of life
already choreographed

still we ride

moving fast
bareback bronco
one hand on the saddle
the other in the air

heart sliding
glissando

sparks everywhere

love a dangerous rodeo
only the wind between us

the gate opens

set free



Set Me Free

2021

Acrylic, oil stick and spray paint on canvas

45 x 75 in (114 x 191 cm)

Bushido

The warrior
will know

when to move
when to wait

flowers
bloom



Bushido

2022

Acrylic on canvas

30 x 40 in (76 x 102 cm)

Red Maze

It's Going to Solve Itself

Its going
to solve
itself

ride the champion
no hands on this course
roll of quarters
mechanical horse

dressage to risk arbitrage
all these events
just a mirage

drop the two bits
let it go

the strongest line of defense
is patience

solely for the sake of mastery
let me tell you
beautiful baby

its going
to solve
itself



Red Maze

2023

Acrylic and spray paint on paper

18 x 12 in (46 x 30 cm)

Targets in the Field

More Zeros

More zeros
more heroes
more uncertainty
the truest beauty

more miracles
go ahead
leave that one blank

the homegrown temporary known
adjust the crutches
empty tank

still breathing

patience Devi
plastic flowers cannot love
but the heart can

the art of letting go
basking in the light
back to life
empty hands



Targets in the Field

2023

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

30 x 40 in (91 x 122 cm)

House Rules

At the Table

I try my best
albeit expectations
what are those

trying is dying
place your bets accordingly
this is the house house

only being
only seeing
only feeling

you know
the plot do what it do

at the table

in the foothills of Palermo
a Sicilian handshake

passing pasta con le sarde breaking bread
olive oil dripping like paint off canvas
thoughts in the head

lets meet again
for the first time

this time I gotta be
what I gotta be



House Rules

2023

Acrylic and oil on canvas

36 x 48 in (91 x 122 cm)

The Motion

Not the Faintest Notion

The only person i see
in the crowd
is you

rolling through the cliffs
Malibu

I thought i'd stay
savoring summertime
with you

hair floating in the wind
eyes closed

crossing the finish line
riding the coastline

what does it feel like

when a moment
knows it's disappearing

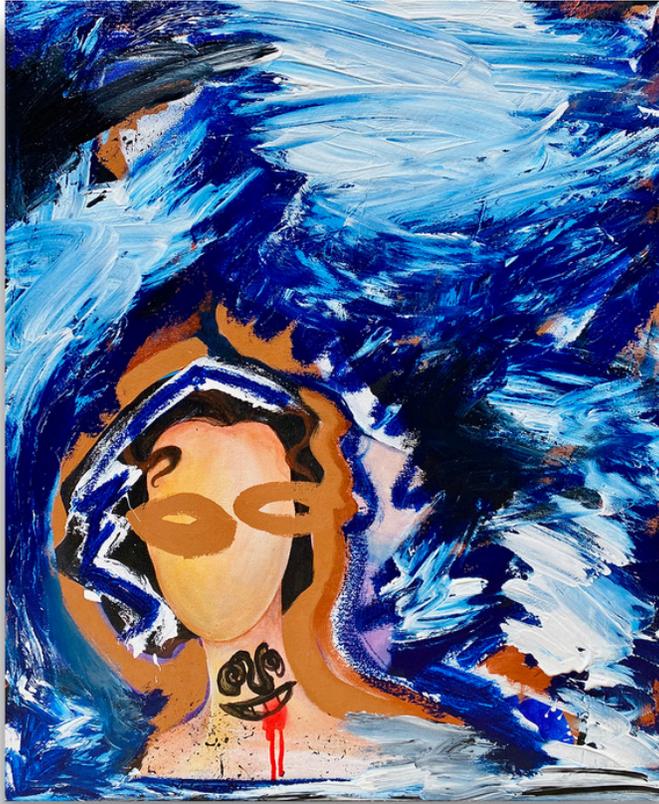
whether it was only
a snapshot
Fuji

or something
time refuses
to let go of

the sun
the road
God's place
the PCH
your face

the motion

not the faintest notion



The Motion

2023

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

30 x 24 in (76 x 61 cm)

Fallen King

Deep in the Game

Set the pieces
beautiful baby

black B8
dark G8

files
ranks

forked
smothered mates

face to canvas

fallen king

checkmate



Fallen King

2023

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

36 x 36 in (91 x 91 cm)

Bridging the Gap

Today is the Day

Zero to one
a to b
a quiet crossing
no crowd
just the step

how to love
a message from above
carried in wind
carried in light

the lonely road
solitary
long miles of silence
between trees

honeysuckle
juneberries
summer breathing
through leaves

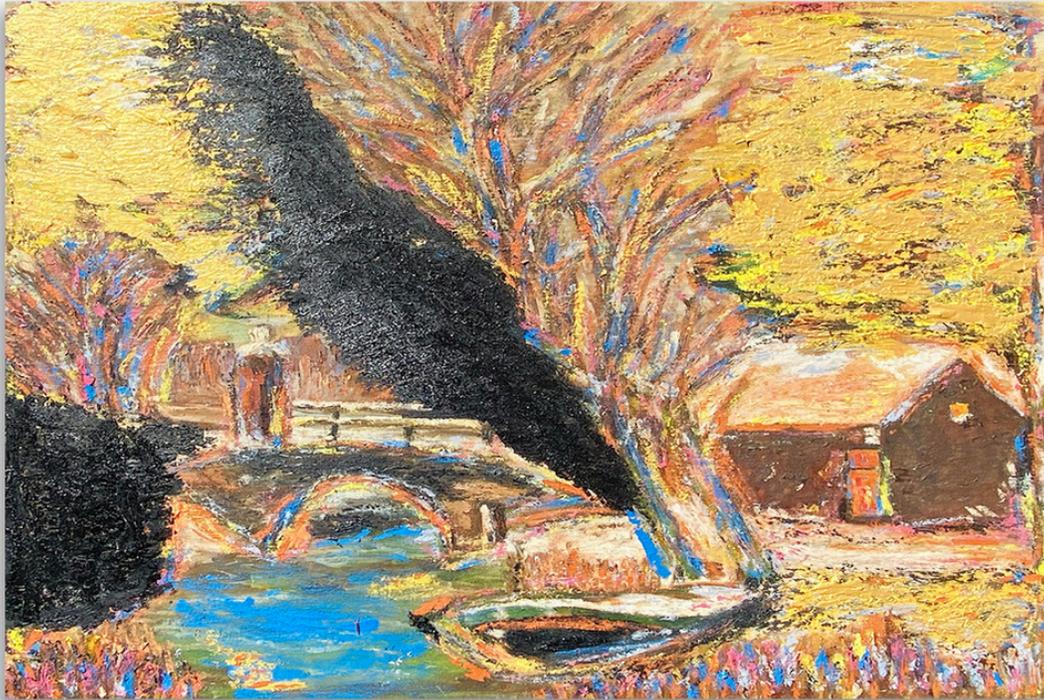
the only way through
is the shine
a narrow opening
in the mind

grand jeté
a leap of faith
air beneath the step

creating room
the debut
a clearing in the field

stay golden sunny boy

today is the day



Bridging the Gap

2023

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

20 x 24 in (51 x 61 cm)

Empress in a Wet Dress

This Sunshine Ain't for Everybody

An empress
in a wet dress

a new level
a new devil

go ahead
beautiful baby
dry off

this sunshine
ain't for everybody



Empress in a Wet Dress

2023

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

53 x 77 in (135 x 196 cm)

Autonomous

Who's Painting

Im not here for long
or however long you prolong
the lessons

windows of perception
a glaring reflection
looking right back at you

the takeoff
the shine

sit back beautiful baby
recline

past
present
future

what even is time

so high up here

you start to see
the unseen

branded humans
silk screen

light beaming
like a dream

what is reality really

other than blessings

on blessings



Autonomous

2023

Acrylic, oil stick and spray
paint on canvas, diptych

72 x 120 in (183 x 305 cm)

Tu me manques

Chateau Light

The beauty
in the beauty
all this time

Chateau light
afternoon shine
pool water breathing
something to believe in

lounge out
unwind
summer holding still

all this time
you were
just missing from me

I miss you



Tu me manques

2023

Acrylic on mirror

48 x 20 in (122 x 51 cm)

Held to Account

Le Café Marly

I do it for the moments
the ones that demand everything

for the souls
who look at you
and do not blink

along the path
they are the mirror
you cannot turn away

across the courtyard
the pyramid holds the sky
as if light itself were weight

and here
with coffee gone cold
I understand

this is not leisure

I am laying my life
on the line
for this

for the love
of craft

for the romance
that does not promise safety

the stone keeps the day's last heat
long after the sun is gone

no applause
no certainty

only the work
returning
again

it tests me

Oh, it tests me

and still
I stay



Held to Account

2022

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

40 x 30 in (102 x 76 cm)

In Captivity

Remembering Sunlight

Black and white
the mind draws its walls
names them truth
calls them the world

and still I am free

In captivity
and still I am free

because the spirit remembers the sunlight
not the borders we make
not the arguments of black and white

something older than the mind
something that never learned to divide

and in that light

the spirit remembers

it was never in captivity



In Captivity

2024

Acrylic on canvas

40 x 30 in (102 x 76 cm)

Almanac

Drawback

Maybe not doing is the doing
and all the go-getting
that the go-getting
ceased to reveal the true you

draw back
observing the divine almanac
a quiet, unfolding rhythm
that's certainly
the most beautiful canvas
for you to look at



Almanac

2024

Acrylic and spray paint on
canvas

40 x 60 in (102 x 152 cm)

South Facing

Party, Hardly

Spilt San Pellegrino
the only mountain I know
is Mount Pellegrino

the climb lives in my backyard

not Sunset Boulevard
but a picture-perfect postcard

bubbles and lemon
bietole — olio e limone —
fresh lemon chard

where color comes from heat
and love tastes like salt air

I keep mistaking it for home

pressed into paint
that remembers
what hands cannot hold



South Facing

2025

Acrylic and oil stick on
canvas, diptych

24 x 48 in (61 x 122 cm)

C'est Vous

Falling for your Soul

Falling for your soul
is my only chance at wisdom

the pursuit
is the only thing
that refused my pretending

all this time
the way I loved myself
was rehearsal

it's you
it's always you

and when the road shifted
we paved another
even in rain

a source of counsel
a lover
the nearest shape of the divine

where else
does understanding live
if not between
your heart and mine

a tree of life

a child
who does not yet know
what darkness costs

wisdom stretches out her hand

and I reach



C'est Vous

2025

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

24 x 36 in (61 x 91 cm)

This Path ≠ Recommend

The One Walking

Can you see a way through

my body bruised
black and blue

a tram line
or snow falling
through pine

dark gathers
light finds a seam

you ask for direction

from who

it is the one walking
the path is you



This Path ≠ Recommend

2025

Acrylic and spray paint on
canvas, diptych

30 x 80 in (76 x 203 cm)

22/7 or π

22/7

or π

close

but how close is close

a lifetime of irrational travel

every step a fraction of something greater

every turn a repetition that never ends

strap in beautiful baby

it keeps going

and the horizon never crystallizes



22/7 or π

2025

Acrylic and oil stick on canvas

30 x 24 in (114 x 191 cm)

Tomahawk Squeeze

When it's Sacred

I cant exist
without you

when its sacred
you hold it

in the only place
it was ever meant
to be held



Tomahawk Squeeze

2021

Acrylic and spray paint on
canvas

30 x 40 in (76 x 102 cm)

The work continues.

Another canvas waits in the studio.

Paint still wet, light moving across the floor.

A mark will arrive and the surface will answer.

The record goes on.

The Studio Record gathers twenty-one paintings and poems made between 2021 and 2025.

The texts were written in proximity to the paintings as part of the studio process.

All works and writing by Dominic J. Lopez.

Los Angeles