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End of Day

By Michelle Nye

I went hunting for an America promised in a dream
 and found the march of suburbia
 gobbling up open spaces.
 I found intersections of nature and man
 which spoke like urgent metaphors.
 I saw power-lines, broken fences and boarded-up buildings
 fighting for solidness and certainty
 against stormy skies and swallowing mists.
 Roads dotted with telephone-poles
 slicing through mountains and along coastal ridges.
 Oak trees with naked branches
 pushing electricity towers out of the way.
 Surrounded by the heat of a battle,
 I'm left with an ominous feeling of loss
 and a powerful sense of awe for what is to come.

This image is the result of journeys around California: coastal ranges, inland valleys and hills, from Mendocino to Martinez. When exploring these areas and feeling the pulse of our culture at large I see an America in transition. As we come face to face with the realities of resource scarcities (cheap oil, clean air and water, usable land, stable global climates) and the increasing difficulty in maintaining the lifestyles we've arranged for ourselves, the question arises; where will we go next?

I use each piece as a meditation on my life and on the course of humanity, writing over the image and then working in acrylics, inks and oils. Like omens and prophetic dreams these images evolve as personal and cultural warning signs. Molded, edited and reworked, what was an image of the present day emerges as if a memory, drained of actual color, saturated instead with hues of recollection, sepias and cloudy whites. I often feel that what I see through my camera is a document of what we've lost or are on the verge of losing.

