

DENNIS EKSTEDT  
BIOGRAPHY

I am a painter who lives and works in Vancouver, Canada. I received my Diploma in Fine Arts in 1986 from Emily Carr Institute of Art and Design in Vancouver, B.C and my M.F.A in 1993 from Concordia University in Montreal. I was the Eastern Canada winner of the RBC Canadian Painting Competition in 2002 and my paintings are included in many public, corporate and private collections. I have had many exhibitions and have received numerous artist grants from the Canada Council for the Arts and the Conseil des Arts et des Lettres du Quebec. My work is included in the publications Carte Blanche Vol 2- Painting (2008) and The RBC Painting Competition: 10 years (2008). I have worked with many art consultants, including Soho Art Consulting, Kalisher, Art and Objects and Tatar Art Projects. I am currently represented by Herringer Kiss Gallery in Calgary, Alberta and Mark Moore Fine Arts in Los Angeles, and have work with Nancy Toomey Fine Art in San Francisco.

ARTIST STATEMENT

In my past paintings I've depicted human populations as web-like networks of light particles spun over the landscape. In these paintings clusters of undulating lights populate landscapes that are literally electrified by human habitation. My work investigates notions of human connectivity and habitation of our planet, as well as the celestial and cosmological nature of our habitation of Earth - the repetition of forms and systems found in the universe. I have long been intrigued by how networks of lights can physically mark a landscape while at the same time ethereally transcending it, resembling a schematic plan that depicts a kind of cosmic or celestial order. Over time I've depicted the illuminated night landscape as a kind of living organism, with its network of electric lights resembling a nervous system. I find it fascinating how this nervous system of electric light is ultimately a manifestation of human habitation.

Some of my most recent paintings are of a series I call Monument to Nature. Each painting is of a city at night that contains a human-made monument, to the natural world. But in these paintings the monument only adds to the luminous chaos of the city and comes across as a misguided attempt at an acknowledgement of or tribute to the natural world.

The paintings in my latest exhibition Observers depict events of luminous phenomena. Many of the paintings portray the moment where a silhouetted figure witnesses these events. These paintings are inspired by the paintings of the Romantic Sublime such as the Tonalists and Casper David Friedrich but represent a contemporary moment. The presence of these observers suggests uncanny encounters with the natural or artificial world. At the same time, there is a possibility that these encounters may also be a projection of the observers own consciousness.

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