



DAVID LIGARE

THE MEDIAN SEA

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Although I was born in far inland Illinois, I have spent nearly all my life within the sight or scent of the sea. Mine is not the sea of shipwreck and tragedy but a consonant world of calm contemplation; the grand forces presenting themselves as rational action. Just as the pastoral landscape represents a median world between civilization and wilderness, so too does the edge of the sea represent a threshold between the worlds of land and water with all that that implies; day and night, life and death, order and chaos, etc. Nietzsche describes the marriage of such opposites as the essential or "primal unity," within which all things dark and bright reside.

Generally speaking, my calm seas are a guise. They represent an anticipation and an expectation – a waiting. When I began my project to try to understand the ancient currents of our culture I set off on the seas described by Homer. His texts, *The Iliad* and *The Odyssey* are foundational to western culture and the timeless seas connect not only the continents, but the distant eras of our existence. Water itself is both ancient and completely contemporary. Homer describes the sea in various ways, most frequently as the enigmatic "wine-dark sea," but writer, Carol Alexander, writes that Homer also sees it as "a highway for ideas"

And so, the sea is more than attractive scenery. To paint it as so many have done is an act of reverence not only towards nature but for the timeless associations it calls forth. In his poem, *Meditation for Saviors*, Robinson Jeffers writes,

"Here where the surf has come incredible ways out of the splendid
west, over the deeps
Light nor life sounds forever; here where enormous sundowns
Flower and burn through color to quietness."

— David Ligare, 2016



Sea Study, 2009, oil on panel, 9 1/4 x 14 3/8 inches

Looking at David Ligare's pictures, one cannot help being struck by the care and deliberation with which they are painted, the singular, unruffled smoothness of their surfaces, affording the paintings what Vasari (1511–1574) called the "finality of perfection."

— Donald Kuspit, 2015



Sea Study Pt Lobos, 2003, oil on panel, 9 1/4 x 14 3/8 inches

Triton Museum

David Ligare: California Classicist
June 10 - August 14 2016
Reception, June 10, 6-8pm

Winfield Gallery

The Median Sea
June 1-30 2016
Reception, June 5, 3-6pm



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