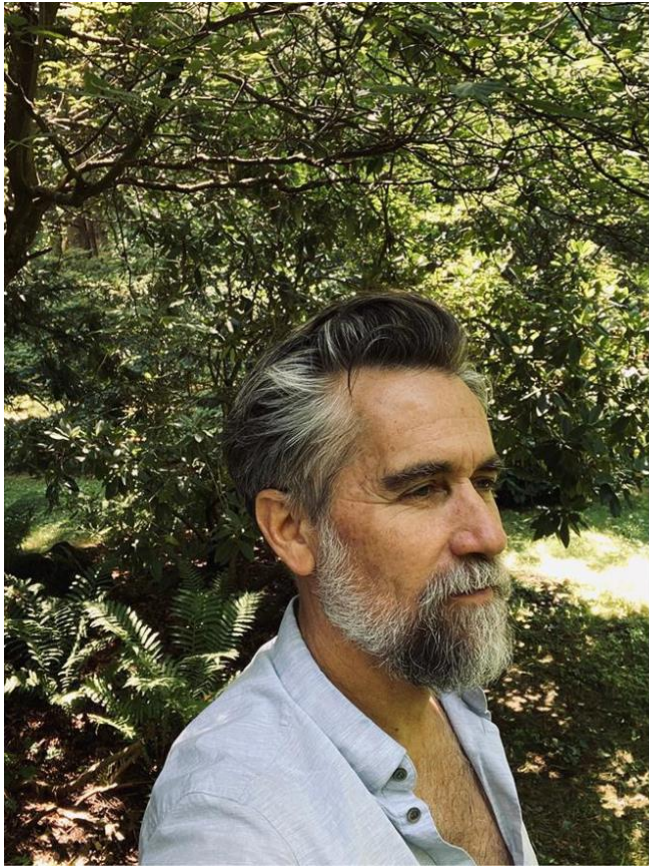


# DC MOORE GALLERY



FROM THE STUDIO:

DARREN WATERSTON

Over the past few months, DC Moore Gallery has been providing inside views into how our artists continue their practices to create new works of art, while sharing perspectives of their current, everyday lives. We are excited to continue this initiative and welcome your thoughts about these features, as we hope they will bring together our friends, families and colleagues. Please follow us at our gallery's [Instagram](#) or [email us](#) with questions or comments.

## From Darren Waterston:

Life during the coronavirus pandemic has felt like a psychological and creative odyssey, with alternating moments of sadness and acceptance, fear and peace, new terrors but also new joys. It's been an extraordinary time with its own particular epiphanies.

Leading up to our self-quarantine, I had just opened my exhibition at Victoria & Albert in London, finished a new body of work for my April DC Moore Gallery exhibition, and was working steadily on my chapel project; a large-scale installation called *The Congregation of Tears*. I was riding the momentum of the moment and in a gulf stream of productivity.



Top: Exterior of Victoria & Albert, London.

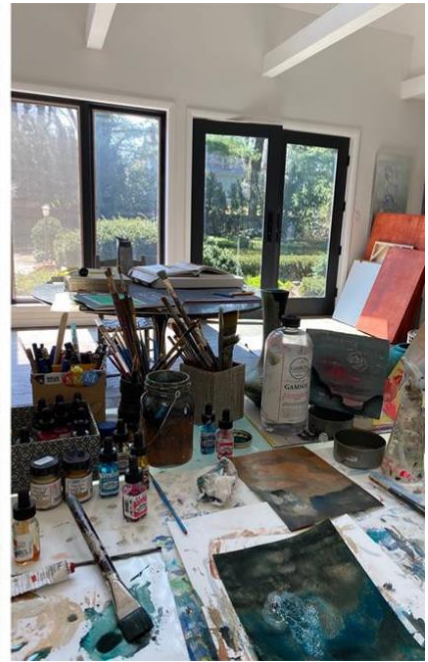
Bottom: Installation view of *Darren Waterston's Filthy Lucre: Whistler's Peacock Room Reimagined*.



Darren Waterston studio. Painting on left: *Every New Tempest*, 2019. Oil on wood panel, 36 x 24 inches.

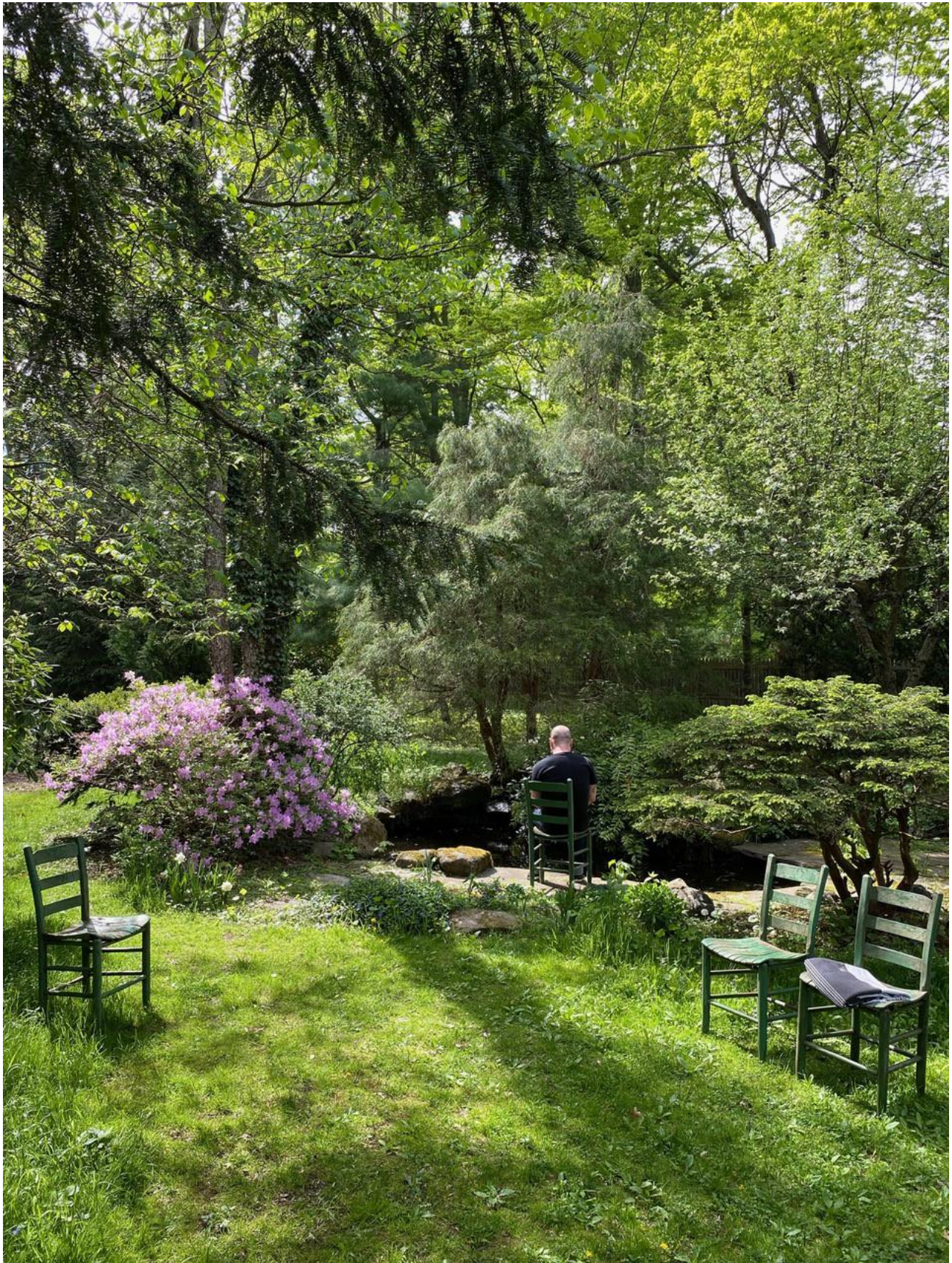
Just over two years ago, my partner and I bought a house in Kinderhook, New York, a lovely little village just outside of Hudson.

The move was inspired by finding a large, light-filled studio attached to a marvelous 18th-century Dutch house. It was a big undertaking and a somewhat disruptive change for us, but we took the leap, certainly never imagining this place would be such a sanctuary in the midst of a global pandemic.



Left: Darren Waterston home, Kinderhook, NY. Right: Darren Waterston studio.

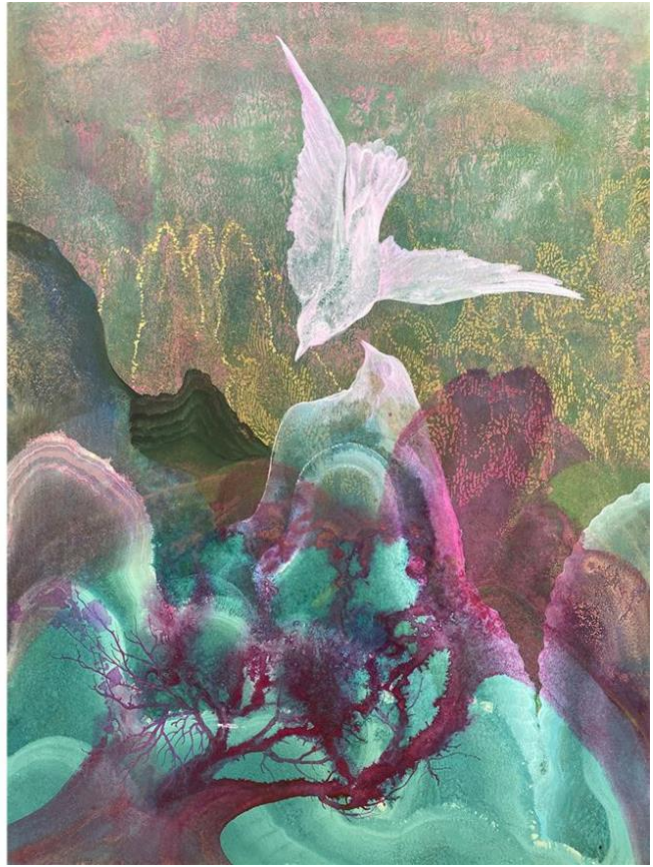
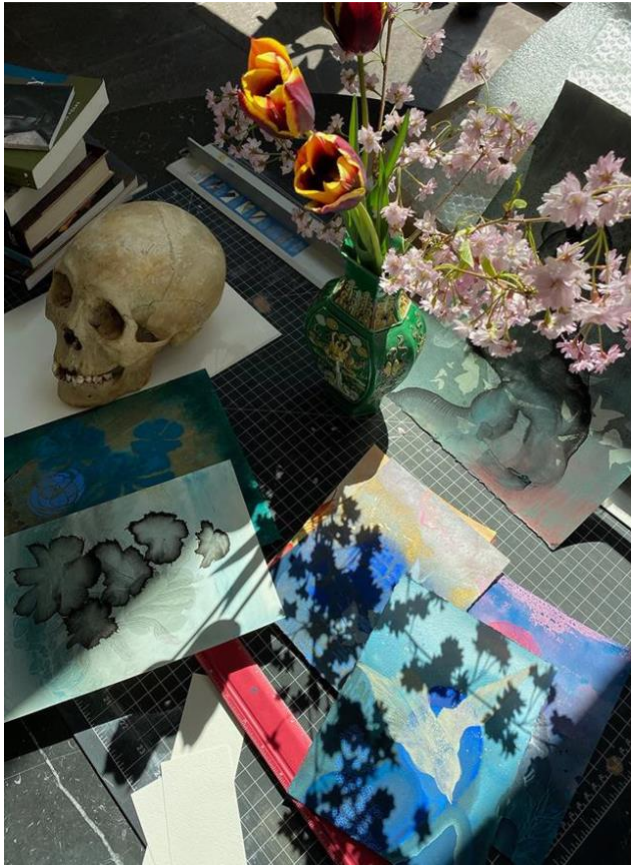
I remember that first week of March when everything shifted so quickly and I realized that the world as I knew it would be forever changed. For that first month, I was riddled with anxiety—a feeling I am not so familiar with—and I really struggled to find my equilibrium, let alone the focus to pick up a brush and be in studio. Instead, I would go outside into the chilly March air, pick up a shovel or a rake, and work in the garden daily for hours, cleaning up for the spring, and looking to the garden for signs of hope and renewal.



Garden, Kinderhook, NY.

The budding trees and bulbs did not seem to recognize the pandemic that was coming into full bloom. By early April, I decided to make work in response to the pandemic and to find a way to

support other artists facing dire financial emergencies due to COVID-19. I returned to the studio and over the next two months painted a series of fifty watercolors called *Strange Days* where a portion of the proceeds went to *Artists Relief Fund*.



Left: Darren Waterston studio.

Right: *Recollection no. 1*, 2020. Watercolor and gouache on rag paper, 16 x 12 inches.

Now, here we are, almost August, joined together in uncertainty and weary optimism.

I wear my mask to the farmers' market, drenched in hand sanitizer and settling into the new normal. We are all doing our best to take care of each other and experiencing ourselves and those around us in new ways. Most of all, I am affected by the woman working at my local little hardware store whose eyes always look so worried, and the guy at the market selling honey with little bees embroidered on his mask...we all share the same apprehensions and fears. Our human ability to quickly adjust and adapt is extraordinary, but not always a happy story.

The shape of everyday life here has become a vast array of patterns, rituals, acts of devotion and connection. I have eased into this new existence, so appreciating the time together with Jason, caring for each other and our geriatric dog, cooking, baking, cleaning, renovating, digging, sowing and now that it is warm, long daily bike rides followed by cocktails at dusk on the back deck.



Darren Waterston's dog Tancred.

I am also finding my practice as an artist shifting in unexpected ways. I am reminded of the more elemental aspects of life that have always shaped and nourished me as an artist, but which I have at times neglected or become too busy to experience. For now, I am less distracted by my usual busy pace and, frankly, less motivated to be in constant production-mode...less convinced that I have no choice but to push toward new professional accomplishments to embolden and sustain me.



Darren Waterston studio.

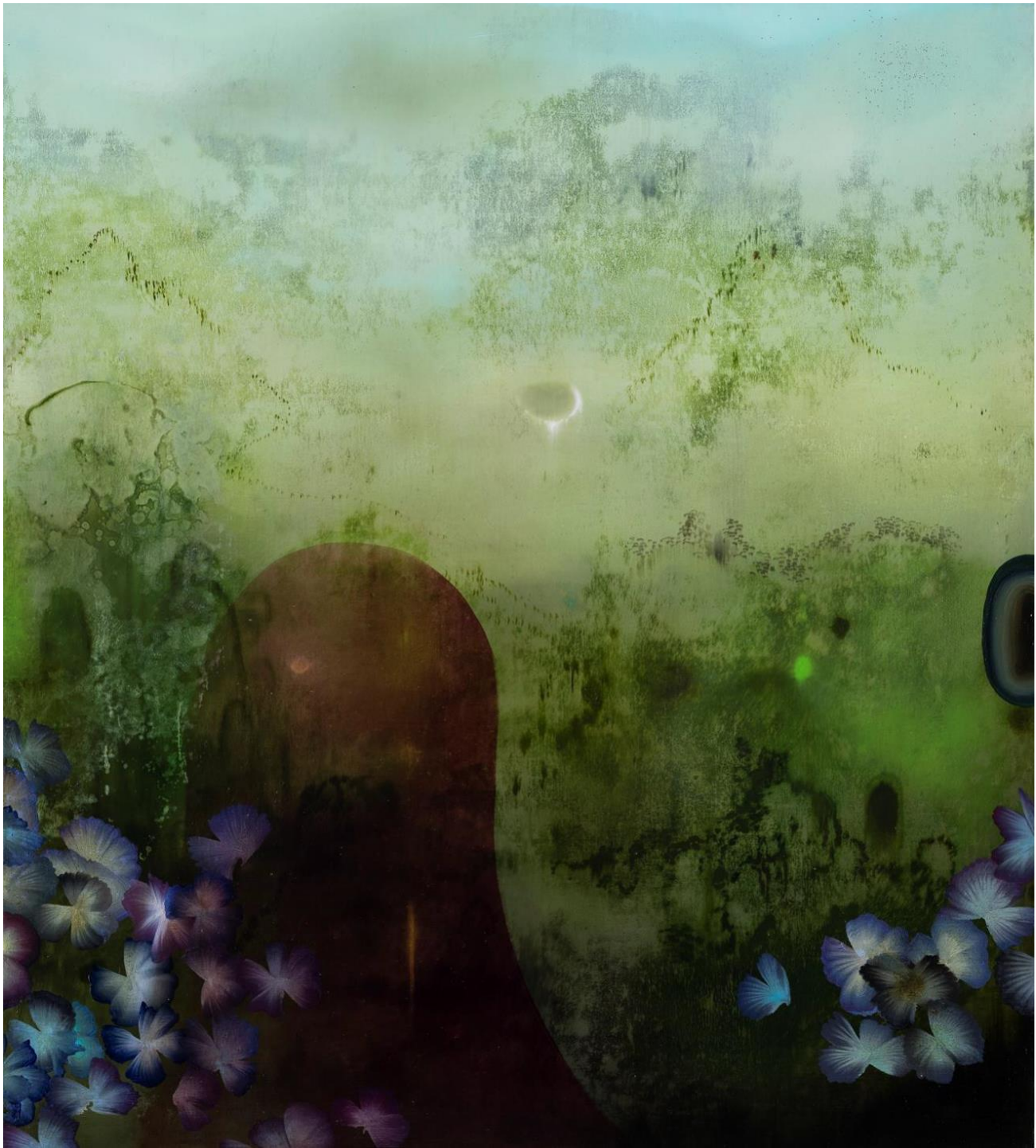
Painting on left: *Cyclops Dreaming*, 2020. Oil on wood panel, 36 x 24 inches.

Painting in center: *Symphonic Landscape*, 2019. Oil on wood panel, 59 ½ x 71 ½ inches.

Instead, this moment has brought a return to studied observation, a more deliberate contemplation and awareness of my surroundings, sensations, shapes, and the shifting light...a more phenomenological approach that I've always said totally informs my work. This careful attention is the big difference between looking and seeing...it's the driving force behind my work, a philosophical position I try to hold, and something I believe deserves all the labor and care it requires.

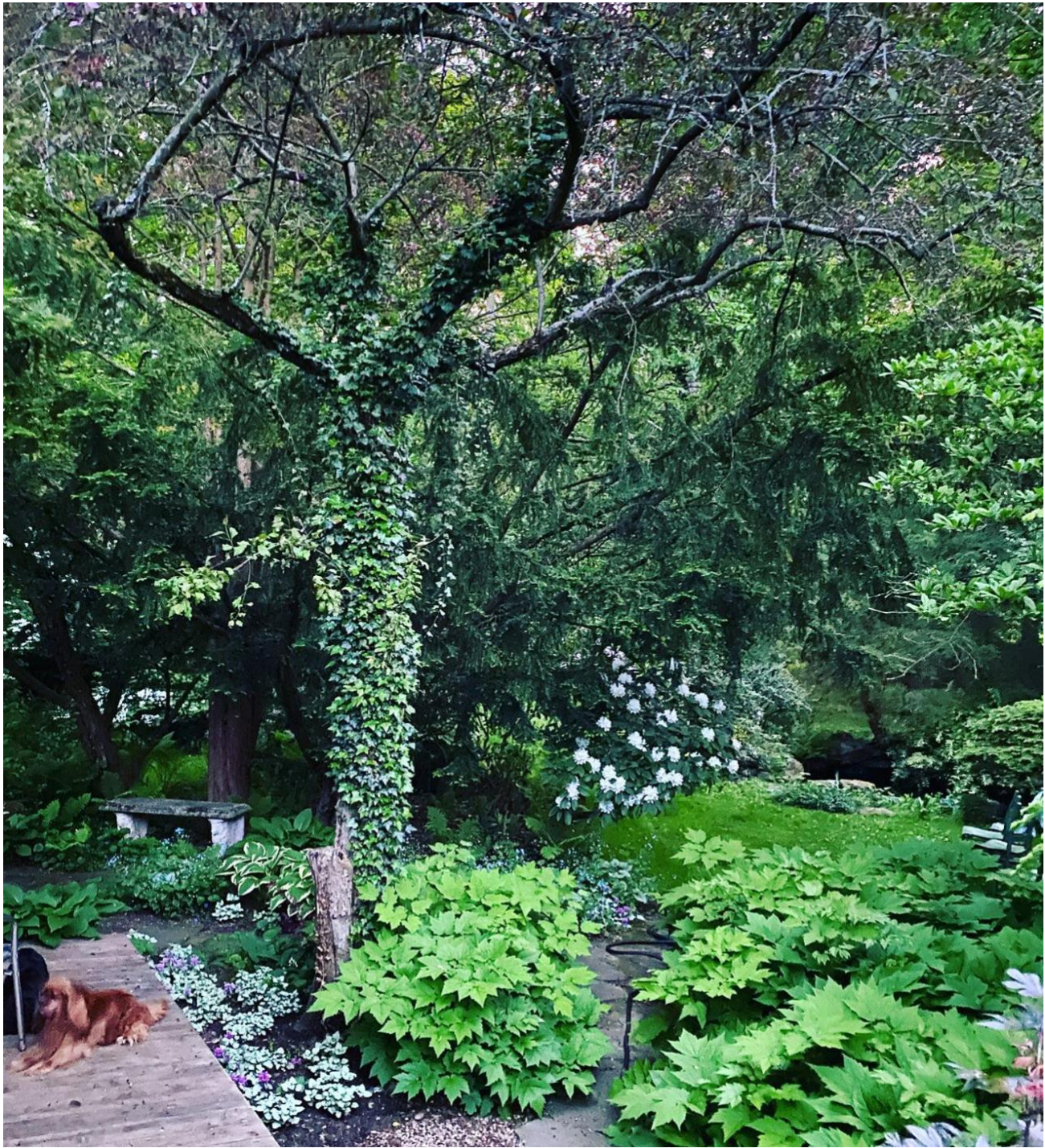
Wonder, death, pathos, and destabilized perceptions have been constant themes in my work—so yes, these days are calling my attention to all those experiences in intense and often uncomfortable ways. But I'm looking and listening and living with it all.





*Evensong no. 4*, 2020. Oil on wood panel, 20 x 18 inches.

There is a wooded area in the back part of the property where beds of electric green moss grow deep. I have been tending to these patches with a little rake and broom, like some Shinto monk, clearing off the dead leaves and pine needles. It feels like painting; a give and take of control, turning on the question of when to intervene and when to let things be. The garden has become very sculptural to me and when I work in it, I'm taking care of myself as well. I relate to it. I feel like I am the damp woods, the stump, the seedling, the virus.



Garden, Kinderhook, NY.

For More Information about Darren Waterston

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