

M.L. SNOWDEN

*Celestial Array Triptych*

OIL FRESCO PAINTINGS  
OF  
THE GEOLOGICAL COREIUM



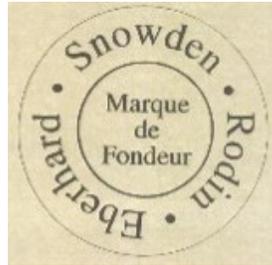
M.L. SNOWDEN

CELESTIAL ARRAY TRIPTYCH OF THE GEOLOGICAL COREIUM

*Celestial Array Triptych*

M.L. Snowden celebrates her international bronze collection, the *Geological Coreium* through a radiant new painting cycle *The Celestial Array Triptych*. Across three handmade panels titled *The Celestial Matrix*, *The Celestial Corona*, and *The Celestial Horizon*, Snowden invents a lustrous palette, opening the door onto the luminous center of universal creation. In these paintings, Snowden visions the cosmic birthplace of humankind among the planets and stars as they give rise to life, further illuminating and expanding Snowden's artistic oeuvre.





## *The Celestial Matrix*

### M.L. SNOWDEN'S PAINTINGS AND THE *GEOLOGICAL COREIUM*

The artist's *Geological Coreium* of internationally collected sculpture is composed of ten chapters of bronze designs that include the sculptures of the *Celestial Array*; arguably the most extensive body of bronze forged in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and at the millennium.

Enlarging her private vision, *The Celestial Array Triptych* is a unique and original painting cycle which has been created with the intention of visioning the diaphanous light of the cosmos as an atmospheric backdrop enhancing the display of sculpture. These lustrous master paintings stand at the vanguard of expanding the *Geological Coreium's* visionary universe.





## *The Celestial Horizon*

In Snowden's view, the luminous center of the universe empowers our human existence. Here in this conceptually epic fresco of the *Celestial Horizon*, Snowden bathes humanity in cosmic light, weaving radiant energy onto a glowing canvas.

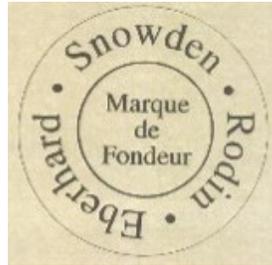
In this rare oil fresco, the sculptor asserts humanity's relationship with the core of deepest space.

Veils of carmine and Rembrandt Gold illuminate the far left female figure. The upper and lower figural icons interact with light, acting and reacting in the midst of stars and planets. Bolts of cosmic light pierce the mauve penumbra of the fresco's upper registers.

The central composition takes shape around the form of a golden spiral; a cosmic and mathematical formation seen throughout the universe from constellations to the growth of plants on earth.

*The Golden Spiral* is also the title of Snowden's bronze tour de force from the *Mathematica Aurea Collection* of the *Geological Coreium*. For the artist, the spiral light source of the painting captures a mantra of healing and provides a source of support for meditation in the manner of a tantric mandala.





## *The Celestial Matrix*

*The Celestial Matrix* affirms Snowden's role as a visionary artist, imaging humankind forming and emanating from the heart of cosmic creation. Here in this smooth central panel, Snowden builds luminosity and grandeur through translucent movements of color and light.

A central figural icon moves along the curvature of panel's lighted space, actively bracing against solar winds that sweep through the composition's atmosphere. Inundations of radiance reveal other-worldly landscapes rising at the feet of the central icon. Here within abstract skeins of color, cloud-like stairs arise, leading into deep uncharted reaches. In Snowden's fresco, deft plays of light and shadow illuminate a floating icon circling the panel's lighted window. A lower monumental figure anchors Snowden's compositional universe.





## *The Celestial Corona*

Whorls of interstellar particles swirl around a luminous vortex. Within this birthplace of the universe known as *The Celestial Corona*, interstellar dust, planets, stars, and humankind spiral from a central light-filled creative impulse.

*The Celestial Corona*, visions the sculptor's view of the cosmos, illuminating the progressive gestational path of matter. Through advanced stages of translucent brushwork that condenses into imagery, Snowden paints geological planets coming under cosmic forces of compression as they begin to emit light as stars. Humankind is a radiant poem within the cosmic web of connection.

The upper female figural icon is delicately painted in reverse. She is partially hidden in a skein of rainbow colored lenticular cosmic dust. Lightening helps to illuminate her gestation, shining through an upper clerestory of clouds. Through more than a thousand mutations of color, Snowden shades the far right and lower male figures in auburn and marine pigment glazes. Cranberry, Rembrandt Gold, and rich emerald, highlight a range of stars set against the deep Vermeer Blue of space.





## *About the Paintings*

### MEDIUMS AND TECHNIQUES

Snowden achieves the effect of energy, power and light through swirling baths of translucent color in creating oil paint frescos. Each painting's depth of color luminosity has been fostered through burnishing and glazing layers of color onto a sanded and specially wetted white gesso surface. With the panel acting like light behind stained glass, Snowden's technique utilizes micronized gold, silver, and gemstone hand ground pigments that have been floated in Snowden's own inventive recipe for the famed and illusive old master Maroger medium. With the fluidity of aired honey, the color is applied onto an artisan 30 x 40 inch French fresco prepared birch panel. Each of the three panels have been further smoothed with specialized brushes and glazing tools. Framed in gilded and carved walnut, the central panel weighs just over 70 pounds. The two side birch panels measure 20 inches by 30 inches.





## *The Celestial Matrix*

### HISTORIC BACKGROUND

Suffused with the sculptor's love of glowing patina surfaces, *The Celestial Matrix* exudes Snowden's lifelong mastery of luminous color. One aspect of the artist's color expertise arises from her knowledge and use of the Fournier patina from the atelier of Rodin; a formula and technique the artist inherited from her father, sculptor George H. Snowden.

The refinement of the Fournier patina in the 19th century can possibly be charted from the time Rodin had a professional association with the French painter Gustav Moreau; an association which flourished during the period when Rodin worked for the studios of Carrier-Belleuse. Moreau and a handful of painters exerted a profound influence on the development of

coloristic bronze patinas along with plaster cast and terra cotta finishes. Indeed, their color harmonies were highly regarded by foundry patina artisans who strove to expand their work with bronze chemistries. Perhaps it can be said that through Gustav Moreau and Rodin, a painterly influence can be felt in Snowden's handling of translucent heat-reactive chemical bronze patinas. Such an influence can also be felt in Snowden's eggshell-smooth painted panels, where the artist views the white hand-buffed picture plane as possessing the brilliance of polished bronze before the patina stage. Indeed, dispensing with drawings and grisaille underpainting in her drive to paint *alla prima* as required by her work with fresco, Snowden's painting technique is a tour de force of brilliant gemstone glazing. The technique illuminating *The Celestial Matrix* embraces the artist's continuous reach for rich color mediums that celebrate transparent light reflective qualities.





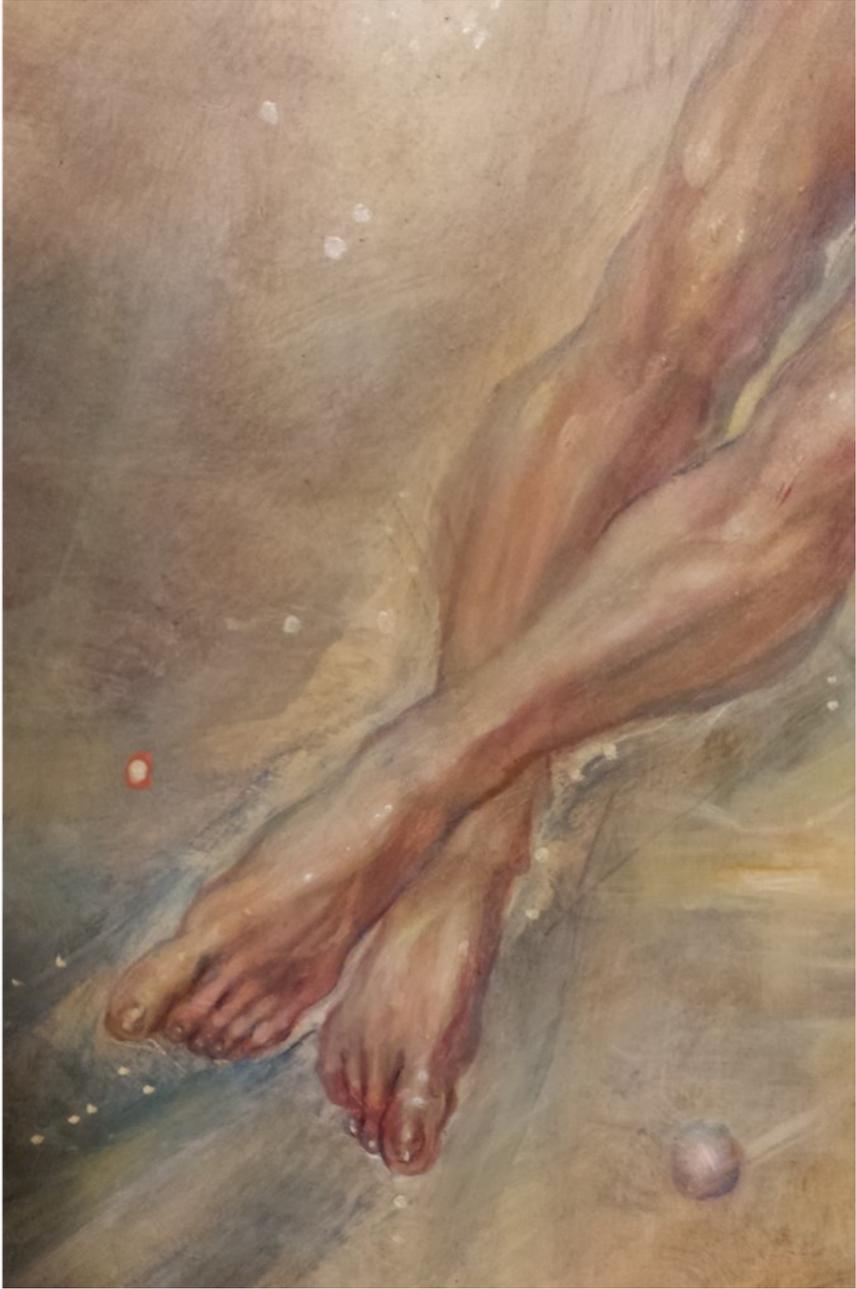
## *The Celestial Matrix*

### M.L. SNOWDEN'S PAINTING BACKGROUND

Encouraged early on by family friend Salvador Dali who worked with Snowden's father on the 1939 New York World's Fair, young Snowden seriously pursued the art of painting beyond her father's sculpture studio.

*The Celestial Matrix* fuses M.L. Snowden's warm to cool color harmonies that were mastered during her early tutelage with seminal painter, Stanton MacDonald-Wright (1890-1973), founder of the abstract color school, *Synchromism*. Snowden later studied painting with MacDonald Wright's protégé Khuri-Majoli at Loyola University.

Acting upon post-graduate grants awarded for both sculpture and painting, Snowden studied painting at the Louvre in Paris, the Vatican collections in Rome, the Uffizi in Florence, and at the Accademia in Venice. Today, Snowden pursues painting at her studios located in Paris, Southern California and Worthersee, Austria.





## *Finis*

A number of paintings highlight Snowden's artistic career. Among M.L. Snowden's oeuvre is the massive 10 foot *Olympic Triumph Mural* that was commissioned for Centinela Hospital Medical Center in southern California. Creation of the mural coincided with Snowden's pair of painted founder's portraits that were also commissioned by the Board of Directors.

In connection with creating the Main Altar Angels for the \$200 million Los Angeles Cathedral, Snowden created a painted Madonna for His Holiness, John Paul II at the Vatican. Snowden's paintings are in numerous private and public collections including the Honorable Leonard Firestone the Ambassador to Yugoslavia, the White House, and Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's personal collection of drawings and paintings at Buckingham Palace. **Ω**

Opposite: Portrait detail of *The Celestial Matrix*



