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catalog Sacred Spaces

Sacred Spaces: A Journey Through Memory, Mystery and Meaning

The works in *Sacred Spaces: A Journey Through Memory, Mystery and Meaning* J Leahy paints numinous experiences where spiritual and earthly overlap. Churches mirror each other like portals. Angels sit at a poker table dealing with fate. A car burns in holy fire while scripture watches over. Conflict rides a motorcycle beside the Grim Reaper. The sacred is never distant in these works -it's embedded in American landscapes, bold in color, and carved into memory reflective of the spiritual tension between the seen and unseen, the sacred and the broken. Each piece serves as a personal meditation on loss, transformation, and the presence of the divine in American iconography and personal memory.

About the Artist

J Leahy is a contemporary American painter known for her spiritually charged interpretations of everyday and abandoned spaces. Her work blends religious symbolism with personal memory, often using American iconography as both palette and provocation.

"My work is a visual chronicle of wonder, grief, nostalgia and transcendence. With each painting, I explore the liminal spaces where time blurs between past and present, sacred and secular, earthly and eternal. I use striking color, expressive figures and surreal symbolism to animate deeply personal themes: loss, remembrance, spiritual searching, and the mysterious beauty of ordinary moments. Ultimately, my goal is not just to represent, but to evoke: to stir recognition, remembrance and wonder in the viewer's own inner world."

Wonderland

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 36x24 in.

Price: \$6,000

In Wonderland, I confront devastating loss with celestial hope—an explosion becomes a spiritual passage, as the figure stands on the threshold between life and eternity.

Wonderland is a visual psalm — a lament, a memory, and a testament of faith forged in fire. At its center is the flash of a burning car, a violent rupture that forever alters the landscape of a life. Standing nearby, calm and grounded, is a young man in a Bruins jacket — both witness and spirit, survivor and guide. Behind him, the cosmos unfolds, alive with stars, doves, and the subtle architecture of the divine.

The painting takes its title from the Wonderland transit station, a real place now transformed into an otherworldly threshold. The structure looms like a monument to both daily routine and the unknowable beyond. Etched below, Psalm 23 anchors the work with words of protection, resilience, and eternal presence — “Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death...”

This piece is not merely about tragedy. It is about transcendence. It is about the sacred that remains after all else is consumed. Wonderland stands as a tribute to a life lost, a soul remembered, and a promise that even in the shadow of death, we are not alone.



The Lord is my shepherd
Yea though I walk through the valley of the
shadow of death I will fear not for
Thou art with me
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life and I will dwell
in the house of the Lord forever
Psalm²³

Mirror-Mirror Church

Medium: Oil on Gessobord

Size: 12x16 in.

Price: \$950

A dual reflection of the same church — one side luminous, the other cloaked in shadow. The piece plays with duality: good and evil, seen and hidden, offering a spiritual meditation on the thin line between sanctity and sin.

Mirror-Mirror Church explores the fragile seam between light and shadow, faith and fracture, memory and presence. Two nearly identical churches sit side-by-side like reflections — one cast in darker side of sundown, the other in crisp morning light — suggesting duality not just in architecture but in time, perception, and soul. Though their stained-glass windows glow with the same fire, their surroundings speak of different seasons, different moods, and perhaps different destinies.

Inspired by the psychological tale of Jekyll and Hyde, the painting confronts how good and evil — or grace and decay — often dwell in the same body. The churches are not just architecture; they are selves. They are the same structure animated by opposite spirits. One offers sanctuary. The other suggests something was lost inside long ago. You are invited to decide which came first — the light or the dark — or whether they are forever coexisting. The bent fences in the foreground hint at the fragility of boundaries, both moral and spiritual. What begins as a peaceful village scene becomes a meditation on how close redemption and ruin really are.

This painting asks a quiet but resonant question: when you attempt to look into the mirror of the sacred, what do you really see — past, reflection, or the flicker of something beyond the veil?



Radiant Gabriel

Medium: Mixed Media on Canvas

Size: 30x15 in.

Price: \$1,500

Gabriel emerges as a messenger not just of annunciation but of radiant power. His presence is both a comfort and a warning, luminous with unearthly force.

Radiant Gabriel captures the celestial messenger not as a distant figure of myth, but as a living force — luminous, watchful, and commanding. Cloaked in fire-red robes and crowned with a golden halo, Gabriel opens one hand in a gesture of blessing or announcement. His wings, fanned wide in a blaze of electric blue, yellow, and orange, evoke both the divine and the elemental — wind, fire, spirit, voice.

The painting is alive with texture and motion, from the swirling circles that hint at eternal rhythms and hidden messages to the glowing triangle inscribed in the palm — a symbol of divine authority, revelation, or perhaps personal initiation.

This Gabriel is not passive. He stares directly into the viewer's soul, a messenger not just of sacred texts but of inner awakening. In a world cluttered with noise, Radiant Gabriel offers silence filled with purpose — an invitation to listen deeply, to stand ready, and to remember that divine voices still speak.



The Four Horsemen at Route 66₆

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 30x15 in.

Price: \$950

In *The Four Horsemen*, the apocalyptic vision of Revelation is reimagined along the mythic stretch of Route 66 — the American road of dreams and demise. Each rider, mounted not on traditional steeds but on chrome and thunder, barrels toward the viewer, emerging from a tunnel of spectral blues and crimson hues. Each marked in Revelation. At the heart of the composition rides War, flanked by embodiments of Death his scythe silhouetted against the harvest moon, Conquest, and Famine — each modernized, human, and eerily familiar.

This work contemplates the unstoppable forces that shape both history and individual fate, rendered with a sense of motion and inevitability. The iconic Route 66 sign anchors the work in American lore, while the surreal tunnel suggests a crossing between realms — physical and spiritual, past and future, life and judgment.

This is not merely an end-times scene; it is a reflection on how power, greed, mortality, and chaos ride beside us in contemporary life, sometimes in plain sight.



The Benediction

Medium: Acrylic on cradled Gesso Board

Size: 24x18 in.

Not For Sale

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures:
He leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul.

In this work, the priest bows low, his form cloaked in luminous vestments, yet the embrace is not solitary. Pressed against him is the veiled figure of a bride, her presence revealed not by face, but by the delicate folds of tulle and satin that spill into view. She remains hidden, a mystery, as though she is every bride and no bride at once.

The moment shimmers with layers of meaning — the earthly union of man and woman, the spiritual covenant of priest and Church, the eternal marriage of Christ and his collective body of believers. The embrace becomes sacramental: intimate yet universal, fragile yet eternal.

The golden halo crowning the scene transforms the gesture into something beyond ritual. Here, The Benediction is not spoken but embodied — in tenderness, surrender, and union. Though her face is unseen, the bride becomes the very center of the work: a symbol of the hidden, the holy, and the eternal mystery of love consecrated.

The painting is mounted on a cradle board transformed into the likeness of a great book. Along its spine and pages, Psalm 23 is inscribed, binding the image to one of the most cherished prayers of comfort and promise: 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever.' The work itself thus becomes both image and Word, prayer and blessing, a visual scripture that invites the viewer into the mystery of devotion and union.



Old Harvard Square

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 24x36 in.

Price: \$4,000

Old Harvard Square transforms a busy urban scene into a cathedral of memory, with everyday people haloed in luminous light heading towards final destinations.

A nostalgic rendering of a place once full of life, now dimmed. The spiritual undertones linger in the shadows and reflections of time.

Old Harvard Square is a time capsule painted in light — a reverent tribute to a place where intellect, routine, and the sacred quietly intersect. The historical facade of Harvard Square serves as both landmark and stage, where passersby in vintage coats blend with the glowing presence of haloed figures, suggesting that the ordinary may be lined with the eternal.

The painting captures the geometry and rhythm of city life — neon signs, traffic signals, patterned sidewalks — yet threads through it an unseen narrative. These are not just commuters waiting for a train; they are witnesses, saints, and thinkers caught mid-thought, mid-prayer, mid-stride. The “Don’t Walk” sign glows ironically in a space teeming with transition.

Rendered in warm golds, rich burgundies, and sacred blues, this piece is less about one location and more about the sensation of passing through a place that once held meaning — or still does, just beneath the surface.



Up-Town Stop

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 18x24 in.

Price: \$525

An ethereal transit station between earthly wear and heavenly light.

Up-Town Stop is a visual prayer of passage. A quiet yet radiant meditation on transition, grace and divine companionship. Set along a gently flowing river beneath a cascade of luminous bridges, the work weaves earthly beauty with celestial ascent. A monk, serene and barefoot, sits at the water's edge in monk-like simplicity, haloed and at peace. Two white doves - one resting on his shoulder, the other mid-flight - evoke the Holy Spirit, the soul, and the silent presence of love that transcends time.

Above him, trains cross bridges that seem to pierce the veil between the temporal and the eternal. These bridges do not merely connect locations - they symbolize the crossing from life to afterlife, from sorrow to serenity. The light breaking through the clouds suggests a moment of spiritual arrival, not departure - a destination where joy is restored.

The painting is a tribute to those who have journeyed beyond, and to the comfort of knowing they are not alone. It offers viewers a sense of peace: that there are stops along the way where heaven draws near, and love, like a dove, rests gently on the shoulder.



Mid-Town Stop

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 12x16 in.

Price: \$450

A companion to Up-Town Stop, this work reflects the human waiting rooms-literal and metaphorical. The presence of divine messengers hidden in plain sight offers spiritual commentary.

Mid-Town Stop captures a moment of suspended motion within the urban underworld. A subway platform frozen in blur and distortion, where the ordinary slips into the surreal. The Harvard-bound train emerges beneath a fractured canopy, surrounded by ghostly silhouettes and fractured reflections. The familiar Red Line has become something else; part dream, part descent.

Painted in icy tones with slashes of red and violet, the scene pulses with tension- architectural lines tilt unnaturally, shadow figures reach across the tracks, and even the map becomes abstracted, as if memory itself is untrustworthy. This is a portrait of liminality- not quite departure, not yet arrival- where souls pass through the city's veins like blood through a larger body.

As a counterpoint to Up-Town Stop, this work confronts the harder edge of transition: dislocation, anonymity, and the search for meaning in the in-between. It asks in a place built to move people, who stops long enough to be seen?



The Phoenix

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 14x11 in.

Price: \$550

From ruin emerges renewal. This piece imagines the mystic Phoenix rising from the ashes of a lost American forest- one that echoes with both grief and hope.

The Phoenix rises not only from fire, but from personal loss, memory and transformation. In this piece, a majestic bird of myth reigns from its perch above a vibrant living forest. Crowned in gold and streaked in fire-bright plumage, it radiates the trans-formative power of rebirth and spiritual sovereignty. Beneath its watchful gaze, the forest reveals a hidden guardian- formed from bark, branches and leaves-part tree, part sentinel. This earth spirit anchors the composition, suggesting a deep connection between the heavens and the natural world.

Two green-haired figures- mischievous and childlike- swing joyfully from vines, embodiments of renewal, innocence, and playful life force. In the upper-right, a crystalline the symbol against a burst of energy, reinforcing the painting's spiritual dimensions.

The Phoenix is a celebration of regeneration- of the cycles that carry us through destructions and back to life, joy and mystery. It invites us to consider the sacred interplay between spirit, nature, and the resilience of the human soul.

This painting is both an elegy; an invocation. It honors what has burned away and asks what we are willing to become when the ashes settle.



Gambling Archangels

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 16x20 in.

Price: \$900

Heaven and hazard collide as celestial beings sit at a poker table. A commentary on chance, fate and justice wrapped in Las Vegas iconography.

In Gambling Archangels, the celestial and the absurd collide at the edge of the universe- where angels gather not to battle, but to gamble. The table is the cosmos itself, a swirling galaxy of stardust and dark matter with lines of fate mapped in golden thread. Each archangel, crowned with a halo and clad in tailored vestments, engages in the divine drama with poker faces sharpened by centuries of watching humanity wager its own destiny.

The table holds more than cards and chips: a sword, a trumpet, a planetary orb- relics of judgment, prophecy and creation. These symbols rest on the felt like tools laid down in a moment of pause. The dealer angel, half-seraph half-croupier, controls the tempo suggesting divine order within cosmic chance.

This painting is not about irreverence- it's about perspective. It invites you to ask: if the divine watches us play the game of life, how high are the stakes and when the cards fall, who truly holds the hands of fate?



Ice Cream Truck Historical Museum

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size 24x36 in.

Price: \$3,000

Ice Cream Truck Historical Museum introduces a darker kind of nostalgia, where the innocence of childhood is complicated by an eerie undertone- a reflection on how memory can be both sweet and strange.

Ice Cream Truck Historical Museum is a portrait of sweetness gone slightly sour- a roadside relic wrapped in nostalgia, humor and unease. A weathered museum, once a temple to summer joy, now sees frozen in time, guarded by rusting trucks, crows, a grinning doll-like girl with a balloon and the haunting echo of chimes that may or may not playing.

Set against candy-blue skies and encroaching hills, the building and its surroundings suggest Americana on the edge of extinction. What was once innocence is now strange. The signs promise "WAFFLE CONES" and "SLUSHIES" but the palette and symbolism suggest memory loss, cultural erosion and how even the sweetest things can decay.

Shadows near the water drain below double the scene - perhaps hinting at the subconscious, or the inversion of nostalgia into something more complex. This painting with all its cheerful signage and cheerful menace, invites us to ask "What do we preserve in our museums and what truths do we bury beneath the surface?"



Transition

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 27x20 in.

Not for Sale

Framed by flowing drapery, a young woman gazes out the open window, caught in a moment that lingers between memory and becoming. One hand lifts gently to wipe away a tear, the other steadies her as she leans toward the light. Before her, Monarch butterflies rise into the air- fragile messengers of change, weightless and free. They symbolize resurrection and rebirth.

In her crimson dress, she is both rooted and restless, poised on the edge of something unseen. Transition speaks to that quiet place where grief softens and the heart begins to loosen its hold. The window opens not just to a garden, but to what lies ahead - tender, unknowable and filled with light.



Sa Gardienne

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 20x16 in.

Not for Sale

In *Sa Gardienne*, a man kneels in quiet agony, clasping his hands in grief or prayer, while an angel envelops him in radiant wings of solace. The celestial figure bows low, forehead to forehead, in a gesture of profound compassion and divine intimacy. With golden light spilling from the angel's back, heaven breaks into the human sorrow.

The background glows in heavenly blues and violets, anchoring the scene in a realm just beyond the veil. A single red cardinal—often seen as a messenger from the other side—rests at the angel's feet, anchoring the sacred visitation in the language of personal loss and hope.

Symbols of eternal life and resurrection—the Chi Rho and the ichthys—mark the corners like a silent liturgy. This is a portrait of grief held by grace, of the eternal reaching into the temporal, reminding us that we are never truly alone.



Abandoned Diner

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 16x20 in.

Price: \$650

An old diner, weathered and leaning, sits forgotten in the hush of a frost-kissed forest. Its windows flicker with phantom warmth- echoes of laughter, light and once lived. Perched along the rooftop and scattered below, a congress of bald eagles stand as solemn reverence, as though the past itself is being honored.

In this surreal intersection of decay and dignity, nature does not reclaim- it remembers. The blues of the building hum with cold light, while burnt umbers and autumn hues underfoot suggest a quiet burn, a fading ember of what once was. The piece evokes a haunting beauty in abandonment, inviting the viewer to reflect on what endures when the crowds are gone and the plates are cleared.



Abandoned Amusement Park

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 12x16 in.

Price: \$575

What was once a place of thrill and laughter now echoes with silence beneath a brooding sky. Rusted tracks twist above the skeletal remains of joy, looping endlessly with nowhere left to go. The faded "Cool Zone" sign, cracked and ghosted by time, marks the entrance to a forgotten sanctuary of summer. It's transformed by spray paint to the "Kill Zone". Beneath it, a broken ride lies like a relic- its winds clipped and purpose expired.

A lone raven watches from its perch, sentinel of the ruins. Nature begins to reclaim the grounds; gently, as if in mourning. There's a respect to the decay- a slow, poetic unraveling of a place that once pulsed with life. This piece captures the hauntingly cold beauty of a past gone by and present stillness as both spectacle and shadow.



Abandoned Button Factory

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 12x12 in.

Price: \$750

A cascade of color floods the forgotten stairwell- thousands of buttons, like confetti spilled from time itself. Each one unique, each one once destined for a purpose now lost. The staircase spirals into a dreamlike space where the past presses up against the present, refusing to be swept away.

There's a playful surrealism to the scene, but also something quietly solemn; a sense of industry long silenced, of hands no longer sewing, sorting, or stitching. Light dapples the rails and treads, catching on the glossy surfaces of buttons like frozen tears. This work turns the mundane into the magnificent, honoring what remains when the machines stop and only memory scatters.



Shipwreck in Greece

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 16x20 in.

Price: \$1,000

Along the storied coast of Greece, a shattered vessel lies in repose—no longer a means of passage, but a monument to the will of gods and the frailty of men. Its rusted frame recalls Odysseus' long-suffering fleet, scattered by storms stirred in Poseidon's wake. Perhaps it fell victim to the jealous seas, or drifted too near the sirens' shore. Whatever tale it carried has now been stilled, its journey surrendered to wind and sun.

Yet even in ruin, it holds power. Like the ark left behind when the waters withdraw, it bears witness—part myth, part memory, wholly sacred. The hills around it echo with ancient breath, and the sky becomes a thin veil between the mortal and the eternal. This is no mere wreck; it is a relic, a shrine to what endures beyond the voyage: faith, failure, and the solemn beauty of being brought to rest.



Down-Town Stop

Medium: Acrylic on Canvas

Size: 12x16 in.

Price: \$450

The final destination in a haunting trilogy. Down-Town Stop closes the journey begun in Up-Town Stop and Mid-Town Stop. If the earlier works hint at a spiritual tension and moral crossroads, this one descends fully into the infernal- a place where choices have already been made, and the reckoning is near.





A demonic face stretches across the canvas, flames licking upward around a grinning mouth and hollowed eyes. The "LAST STOP DEPOT" sits crookedly at the track's end, marked with the desperate plea: HELP. A lone figure stands inside, trapped or perhaps bearing witness. The train rails curve ominously into darkness, crossed by a signal too late to heed.

Swirls of color distort the sky into a vortex of madness and shadowy silhouettes fade into the flames. Here the architecture of consequence is on full display: every mark, every hue, every figure reminds us that all tracks lead somewhere- and some stops you don't come back from.



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