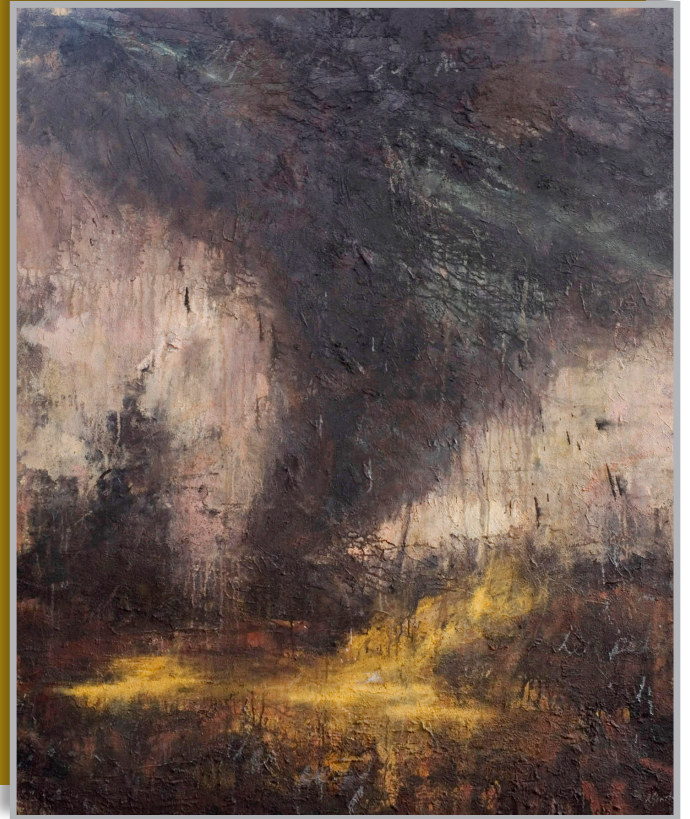


# GALLERY SPACE AT WAGNER





NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

# I will show you fear in a handful of dust

An Earth Day Exhibit

paintings & installations by:

Erick Sánchez

**GALLERY  
SPACE**  
AT WAGNER

Robert F. Wager Graduate School of Public Service | New York University | The Puck Building  
295 Lafayette St., 2<sup>nd</sup> FL., New York, NY 10012 | 212.998.7400 | [wagner.gallery@nyu.edu](mailto:wagner.gallery@nyu.edu)

( april 4 thru  
may 31, 2012 )

Curated by:

Frankie Crescioni-Santoni &

Ann Chwatsky

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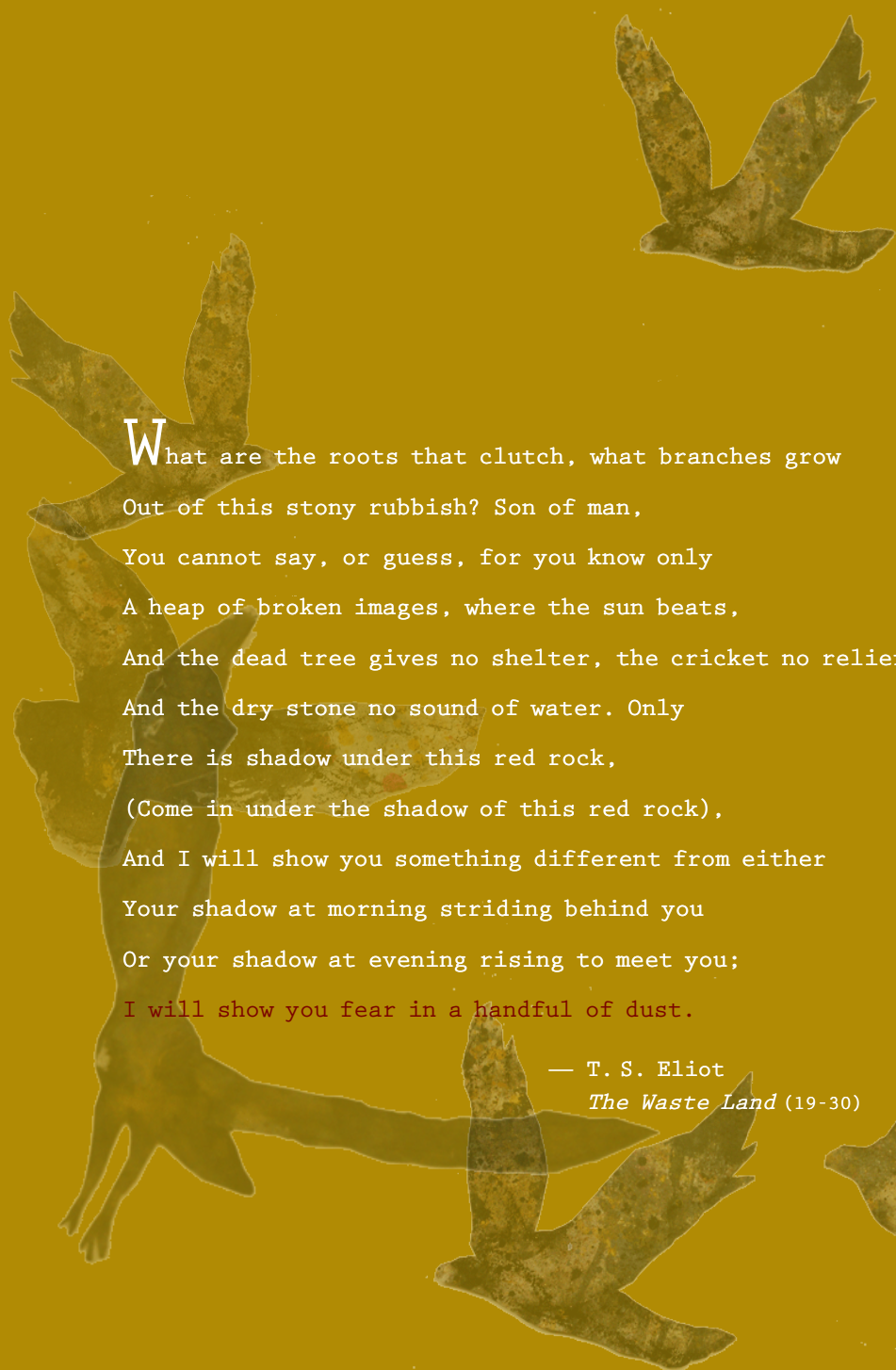
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What are the roots that clutch, what branches grow  
Out of this stony rubbish? Son of man,  
You cannot say, or guess, for you know only  
A heap of broken images, where the sun beats,  
And the dead tree gives no shelter, the cricket no relief,  
And the dry stone no sound of water. Only  
There is shadow under this red rock,  
(Come in under the shadow of this red rock),  
And I will show you something different from either  
Your shadow at morning striding behind you  
Or your shadow at evening rising to meet you;  
I will show you fear in a handful of dust.

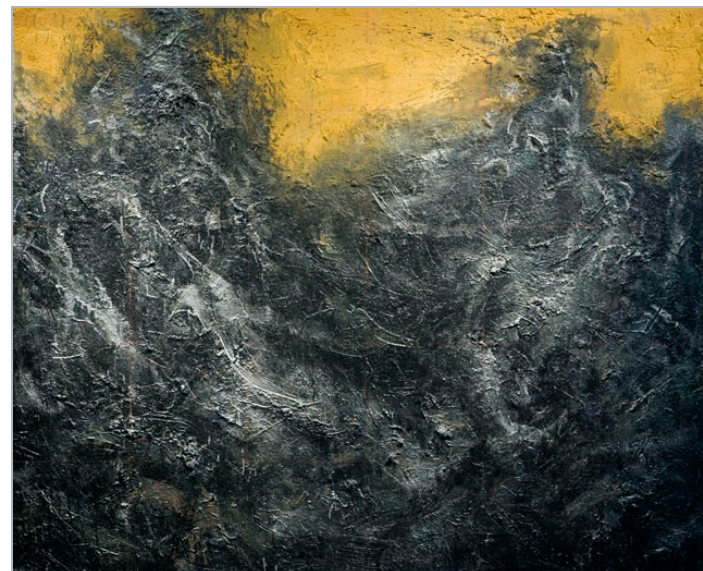
— T. S. Eliot  
*The Waste Land* (19-30)

**T**he Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service at New York University is home to the Gallery Space at Wagner. This collaborative endeavor with NYU's Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development brings artwork into a public workspace seeking to further engage the NYU community in dialogues on contemporary art and culture.

Since its debut in November 2005, the Gallery Space has hosted a variety of exciting and innovative exhibits featuring both established and emergent artists. Painting, ink drawing, photography, wall sculpture, paper collage, digital printing, and mixed media are among the multifarious and dynamic disciplines showcased in this alternative space. The five annual exhibits held at the gallery are alternately curated by NYU Steinhardt's Art & Art Professions faculty Ann Chwatsky and NYU Wagner's Frankie Crescioni-Santoni.

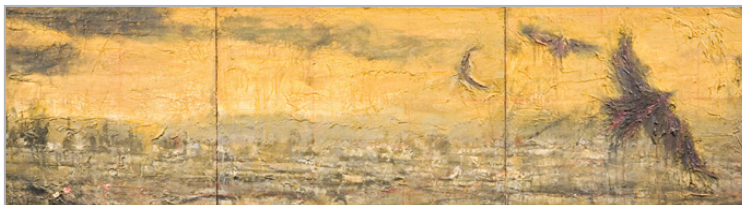
Located on the second floor of the historic Puck Building, the Gallery Space features two main display areas measuring 10 feet wide by 6 feet long and 29 feet wide by 6 feet long, as well as two smaller auxiliary walls. These spaces are primarily reserved for the exhibition of artwork by NYU faculty, staff, students, and affiliates, with a focus on fostering partnership and collaboration among the diverse University constituents. We have also presented a number of special exhibits by prominent guest artists whose projects align thematically with the school's academic mission and curricula.

For more information about the Gallery Space, including exhibition schedules and proposal guidelines, please contact us at 212.998.7400 or via e-mail at [wagner.gallery@nyu.edu](mailto:wagner.gallery@nyu.edu). □



*Me diste oro del que no brilla (72x60 in)*





Detail from *I will show you fear in a handful of dust* (108x60 in)

The Robert F. Wagner School of Public Service is proud to join worldwide Earth Day celebrations and NYU's Earth Week festivities by bringing *I will show you fear in a handful of dust: An Earth Day Exhibit* to our Gallery Space. Erick Sánchez's captivating, socially-conscientious display is an ideal fit for the Wagner School and its educational commitment to issues of environmental conservation and urban policy. The artwork is bold, emphatically cautionary in tone, and driven by a clear and earnest conviction in the role visual arts can play as agents for public discourse and policy change. Sánchez evocatively tackles such themes as ecological catastrophes and the devastation of natural habitats with urgency, gravitas, and a keen awareness of mission. Accordingly, he resorts to recycled items, earth-extracted materials, and environmentally-friendly pigments to execute his inventive, texture-rich canvases.

The Gallery Space at Wagner feels fortunate to collaborate with Erick Sánchez and to bring some of these art pieces to a public forum for the first time. We thank him for his generosity. Our gratitude to co-curator Ann Chwatsky for her invaluable expertise and to the Gallery Space Committee for their continued support. Finally, we would like to recognize the Wagner Environmental Policy & Action (WEPA) for their contributions toward the staging of this show and NYU Sustainability/Earth Week and the Student Network Exploring Arts & Culture (SNEAC) for their promotional efforts. □

— Frankie Crescioni-Santoni  
Co-curator, Gallery Space at Wagner

## CO-PRESENTER



**WAGNER ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY & ACTION (WEPA)** is dedicated to raising the environmental awareness of the Wagner Graduate School of Public Service community and contributing

to the process of making New York University a more environmentally educated and responsible institution. We hope to achieve this mission through the following objectives: providing informational events on environmental policy and careers; advocating for more environmentally progressive policies at Wagner; strengthening the school's environmental curriculum and emphasizing its relevance to other specializations; and partnering with practitioners from the environmental field and with student organizations from the NYU community. [www.wagner.nyu.edu/students/wsa/clubs/wepa.php](http://www.wagner.nyu.edu/students/wsa/clubs/wepa.php)

## PROMOTIONAL SPONSORS



**SUSTAINABILITY** is rapidly changing the face of NYU. In the last five years, with leadership from both the administration and the grassroots, we've improved our environmental performance and started building a sustainable campus culture from the bottom-up. At its heart, sustainability challenges us to examine our mission as a university in order to prepare the next generation of leaders for a less predictable 21st century. After all, sustainability is about more than just "going green." It's about developing new models for a more peaceful and prosperous global community.

[www.nyu.edu/sustainability](http://www.nyu.edu/sustainability)



The **STUDENT NETWORK EXPLORING ARTS AND CULTURE (SNEAC)** is a nonprofit student organization at NYU Wagner. Its mission is to promote informed discourse and activity in the arts and

cultural sector, with an emphasis on policy and administration. SNEAC supplements Wagner's programs and specializations through dynamic programming that address the intersection of cultural policy with other policy fields, arts administration and advocacy, cultural diplomacy, and urban revitalization through the arts. [www.wagner.nyu.edu/students/wsa/clubs/sneac.php](http://www.wagner.nyu.edu/students/wsa/clubs/sneac.php)

In commemoration of international Earth Day and in conjunction with Earth Week at NYU, visual artist Erick Sánchez has created a series of semi-figurative and abstract-expressionist paintings, installations, and works on paper for the exhibit *I will show you fear in a handful of dust: An Earth Day Exhibit*. These are the latest pieces in his environmentally-focused project *Dangerous Land*, which gives visual representation to the artist's meditations on human behavior and the concomitant natural disasters resulting from globalization, industrialization, and global warming. With this project, Sánchez argues for intensified environmental conservation efforts.

The inspiration for the exhibit's central painting, *I will show you fear in a handful of dust*, is lines 19-30 from Part I, "The Burial of the Dead," of T.S. Eliot's poem, *The Waste Land* (see p.3). In this well-known section of the poem, Eliot adapts some of its crucial imagery—the rocky, barren landscape, the absence of life-giving water, and the dead or dying vegetation—from the Biblical books of Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Ecclesiastes to suggest that "rain" is the nourishment which will revive a dying culture in body and spirit. Likewise, Sánchez's somber depiction of an arid poppy field, which offers no sustenance to the birds flying overhead, and menacing clouds, which serve as a harbinger of things to come, suggests that the world is moving towards crisis and chaos. The piece is also a re-interpretation of Claude Monet's poppy field paintings; Sánchez revisits the scene to suggest the consequences of global warming and human-originated ecological disturbances some 150 years later. With the size of the painting, his use of contrasting colors for great effect, and the melancholic beauty of this powerful scene, Sánchez leaves the viewer with an intense psychological impression and confronts him or her to consider his or her particular role in the Earth's future. Sánchez's "Ahora lo tuyo no te pertenece (Now what's yours doesn't belong to you)" features another physically barren landscape, this time with an empty river; this wasteland points to the decay and destruction of human values

—cont'd



*Apocalypse 8* (24x18 in)



*Apocalypse 10* (24x18 in)





*I will show you fear in a handful of dust* (108x60 in)





Monet's *Field of Poppies, Argenteuil* (1873)

in a world consumed by global warming and other forms of environmental abuse. Our own mortality—"fear in a handful of dust"—is once again frighteningly revealed.

*Me distes oro del que no brilla (You gave me gold of the kind that doesn't shine)* is Sánchez's rendering of the

worst environmental disaster the U.S. has faced: the BP Deepwater Horizon Spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010. Sánchez's thick brush strokes and the intense blackness of the combination of materials used for the painting's cresting waves of oil convey a sense of immediacy and danger. It is a painful reminder of the some 205.8 million gallons of oil spilled there and the 1,100,000 gallons of chemical dispersants used in the cleanup, as well as the extensive resulting damage to marine and wildlife habitats and to the Gulf's fishing and tourism industries.



Detail from *Hoy todos vamos en espiral* (144x79)

In this series of paintings, Sánchez is working with some unconventional combinations of materials, including recycled metals, clay, recycled rubber, glass beads, black magnum rock, and organic pigments, to make his acrylic paints highly rich in texture. His works-on-paper *Apocalypse* series is an

opportunity for him to showcase his impulsive brushwork; experiment with color, texture, and combination of materials; and get inspiration for future compositions. The exceptional intensity of emotions and instantaneity of these pieces make them true "mini-apocalypses."



*Ahora lo tuyo no te pertenece* (60x48 in)

Regarding the natural disasters represented in his *Dangerous Land* series, Erick Sánchez has remarked: "Theologists call it the Apocalypse; the Rapture. I call it destiny." In traditional Christian thought, "apocalypse" refers to some future cataclysmic event that will bring time to an end and inaugurate a new millennium. The apocalyptic mode, whether in the Bible, in literature, or art, involves a visionary who represents truth in word and image and encourages a change of heart and mind. With his visual manifesto, Erick Sánchez serves as an artistic seer affecting us with the "terrible" beauty of his landscapes, confronting us with our culpability and vulnerability and thereby motivating change. The immediacy suggested is fitting for Earth Day 2012. □

— Christina Godlewski, Ph.D.

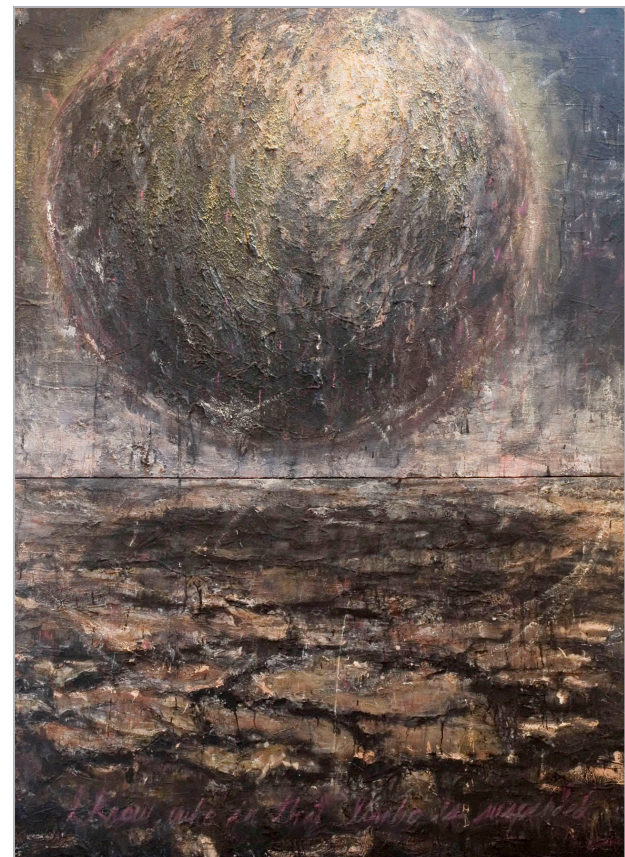


**B**orn in 1973 in Ponce, Puerto Rico, **ERICK SÁNCHEZ** is a visual artist based in New York City. He studied at the San Juan Art Students League in Puerto Rico and the Art Students League of New York and was the recipient of the Artist in the Marketplace Award from the Bronx Museum of Art, The Fantasy Fountain Painting Grant, and the Jean Gates Foundation Painting Award. His artist in residencies include The Vytlacil Residency in Sparkill, NY, and The Marchtz Residency Summer Program at the Institute for American Universities in Aix-en-Provence, France.

Sánchez's artwork is part of the permanent collection at the Tucson Museum of Art and his solo shows include: *Dangerous Land* at the 2011 Governors Island Art Fair in New York; *The Journey: Point of No Return* at the Museum of the Americas in Puerto Rico; and *Alternate Routes* at Rhode Island University. Selected group exhibitions include: *Paralelos Imposibles: Sánchez-Edwards* at the Abraço Interno Gallery in New York; *Glimpse: Enigmatic Visions* at the Williams Bennett Gallery in Soho, New York; and *Diálogo 365* at the Ice Box Gallery in Philadelphia. Additional samples of his work may be viewed at [www.ericksanchez.net](http://www.ericksanchez.net). □



Erick Sánchez (photo by Kate Daigneault)



*Yo se quién está en ese limbo* (79x108 in)

## ERICK SÁNCHEZ: RISK & PERSEVERANCE

Artist Erick Sánchez would be the first to acknowledge his paintings are not pretty in a conventional way. Consider the signature piece in the international Earth Day exhibit of his works that adorn the Gallery Space at NYU Wagner. The piece reimagines Monet's landscape of wild poppies more than a century after the classic scene was composed, rendering it as parched vista under a sickly sky, the bright-red blooms tinged an unsettling orange. Overhead, blackbirds scatter.

The six-by-nine-foot mural turns shimmering nature on its head, but is not devoid of hope for the future of the earth. Faintly, the lines of a grid crisscross the rough-textured canvas. In this and other scenes painted by Sanchez lies a hint of the artist's view that environmental degradation caused by human endeavors can be re-plotted to more healthful, even beautiful, effect.

"You might not find one of my landscapes hanging in someone's living room above the fireplace," Sánchez said. "But here I present Monet's landscape over a century after it was painted, in a condition of environmental collapse. It is, I think, one possible future for humankind, if global warming, deforestation and other patterns continue. However, it does not have to be that way." The title of the exhibit—*I will show you fear in a handful of dust*—is in part a reference to the many and varied pigments Sanchez uses, and his environmental message.

Sánchez began painting in only the past decade, after studying small business and running a café and an art gallery in Puerto Rico, where he was born and raised. "Painting was a hobby," he said. "I loved it so much that I decided it was what I really wanted to do."

He was in his late 20s when he began studying at the San Juan Art Students League. At 30 he closed his San Juan gallery and moved to New York City, enrolling at the Arts Students League of New York. In the ensuing years he won



Erick Sánchez during the making of *I will show you fear in a handful of dust*  
(photo by Kate Daigneault)

several grants. Word of two scholarship awards arrived literally on the dates he intended to give up and return home, his plane tickets already purchased. Risk and perseverance have paid off. His work has been shown in Philadelphia, the Netherlands, Long Beach, Calif., Barcelona, and New York's SoHo, among other locations. He struggles, as any emerging artist might, but finds himself cushioned by an enlarging circle of artists and mentors.

"I use my talents to accomplish a little bit of good for the world. If this exhibit touches off introspection, I would be satisfied. If it also led some people to take action to help save the world—wow, that would be amazing." □

— Rob Polner  
Director of Public Affairs  
NYU Wagner





*No me mires así que no fui yo quién apagó las luces* (48x84 in)



*Apocalypse 6* (18x24 in)



*Apocalypse 2* (18x24 in)



*Apocalypse 11* (18x24 in)



*Apocalypse 3* (18x24 in)

## EXHIBITION CATALOGUE:

- COVER: *El viento ya no está a favor (The wind is no longer in favor)* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 60 x 72 in | 2011
- Page 05: *Me diste oro del que no brilla (You gave me gold of the kind that doesn't shine)* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 72 x 60 in | 2011
- Page 09: *Apocalypse 8* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 24 x 18 in | (above) 2012
- Page 09: *Apocalypse 10* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 24 x 18 in | (below) 2012
- Page 10: *I will show you fear in a handful of dust* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 108 x 60 in | 2012
- Page 12: *Hoy todos vamos en espiral (Today we're all going in a spiral)* (detail) | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 144 x 79 in | 2011
- Page 13: *Ahora lo tuyo no te pertenece (Now what's yours no longer belongs to you)* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 60 x 48 in | 2011
- Page 15: *Yo se quién está en ese limbo (I know who is in that limbo)* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 79 x 108 in | 2011
- Page 18: *No me mires así que no fui yo quién apagó las luces (Don't look at me that way, it wasn't I who turned off the lights)* | acrylic & mixed media on canvas | 48 x 84 in | 2012
- Page 19: *Apocalypse 6* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 18 x 24 in | (above/left) 2012
- Page 19: *Apocalypse 2* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 18 x 24 in | (above/right) 2012
- Page 19: *Apocalypse 11* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 18 x 24 in | (below/left) 2012
- Page 19: *Apocalypse 3* | acrylic & mixed media on paper | 18 x 24 in | (below/right) 2012

All dimensions unframed.

## NYUWagner

Established in 1938, the **Robert F. Wagner Graduate School of Public Service** is a top-ranked leadership school of public service, with a faculty of thought leaders who reframe the way people understand and act on issues of public importance, and graduates who are bold, well-prepared change makers who expertly navigate real-world complexity and produce results that matter. We offer advanced programs leading to the professional degrees of Master of Public Administration in Public and Nonprofit Management, Master of Public Administration in Health Policy and Management, Master of Urban Planning, Executive Master of Public Administration, Executive Master of Public Administration (Concentration for Nurse Leaders), and Doctor of Philosophy. Learn more at [wagner.nyu.edu](http://wagner.nyu.edu).