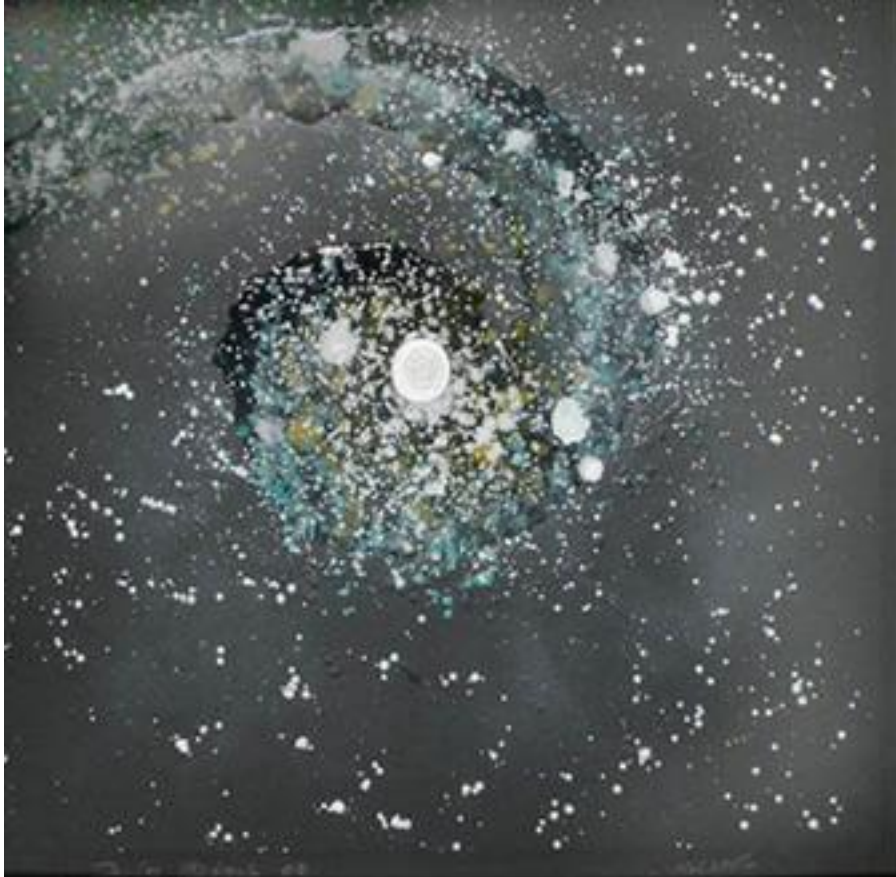


# Artist Statement

## Douglas Mehrens

### *Infinity and our Universe*



My work is the direct result of what is around us every minute, and something we all take for granted and seldom wonder about. The Universe - 15 billion years ago, 1,000,000 light years, the Big Bang, quarks, strange particles, leptons, superstrings, the 103 or so elements, all the elementary particles and the cosmic universe are what fascinate and intrigue me. My paintings express billions of years of evolution, the expansion of the universe and those elementary particles exploding and becoming part of us. No other medium represents my thoughts and ideas as well as encaustic wax.

“Encaustic” is defined as paint made from pigment mixed with melted beeswax and resin, applied and fixed by heat. I have taken this encaustic art uniquely to its extreme, whether it is a series of small

dots on canvas, silkscreen, and steel or 2 ft. square panels of solid-poured encaustic wax colors, some up to  $\frac{3}{4}$ " thick. I started 25 years ago with the simple notion that each single drop of crayon heated by a flame of a candle, could represent the vast universe, or a galaxy, elements, and even the smallest quarks that have never been seen. Over the years I have used many types of wax, from Crayola crayon, beeswax, and synthetic wax - mixing them together in every conceivable way.



I created my first wax painting in 1980. Since then, I've used every type of heat element, allowing the perfect consistency for dripping, pouring, splashing wax onto every type and density of textured surfaces. I never thought that 25 years later I would have dripped, poured, splattered and thrown some 250,000 crayons and hundreds of pounds of various waxes. Out of the 350 or so pieces I've poured, I have several hundred that I feel are great examples of enduring and unique encaustic art, both in 3-dimensional and 2-dimensional art forms.

My intention for the observer is to be able to stand in front of one of my paintings, and at least think subconsciously about the vastness of the universe and maybe ponder who you are in it. I would like to impart some appreciation for the incomprehensible size, origin and evolving nature of the universe and to revel in its simplicity and beautiful nature. After all, it truly is the big picture...condensed to these paintings in their abstract expression, pointing to the wonderment of our very small part in the universes landscape.