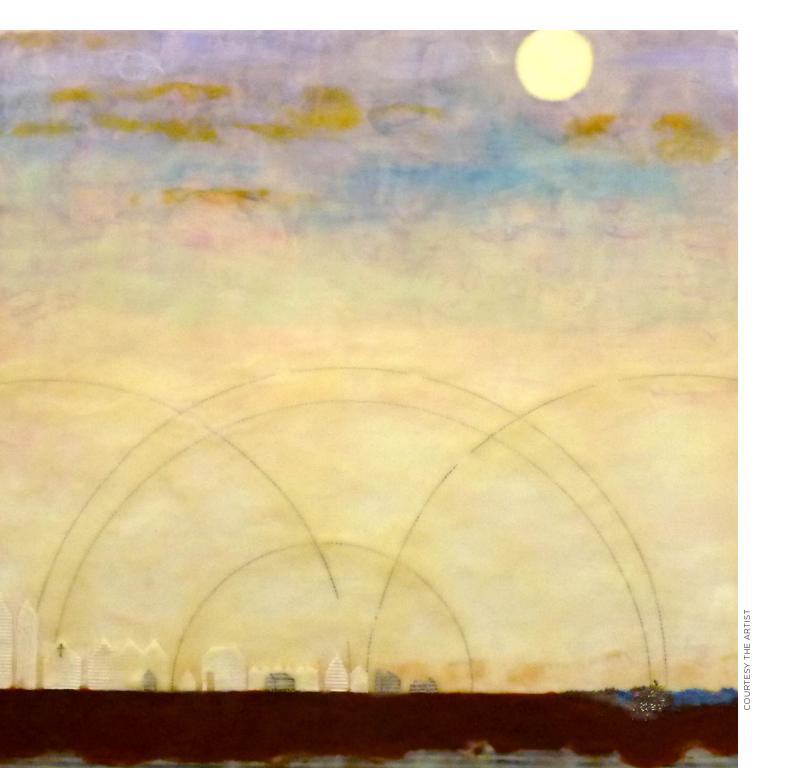
LINDA NUNES

Lunar City (Makarios), 2017 Encaustic and mixed media on cradled wood panel, 30 x 30 in



PETER HO DAVIES

Sightings

etting aside conventions and concerts, red carpets and book signings. Those expected appearances. Two categories.

First: sightings of the famous in their natural habitats. Michael Stipe in a restaurant in Athens, Georgia.

Ted Kennedy and David McCullough on Martha's Vineyard.

Patrick Stewart in a pub in Stratford-upon-Avon.

Sightings that confirm our reality, conform so perfectly, as if staged.

And second: the anomalous glimpse, the startling

Terry Waite, one-time envoy for the Archbishop of Canterbury, long-time hostage in Lebanon, dancing under the lasers at a Cambridge May Ball.

Michael Dukakis, years after his presidential run, at the arrivals gate at Logan, in a tux no less. (Welcoming a daughter home from college, we heard later.)

The sightings that don't vouchsafe reality, but stretch it, make it shiver slightly, tremble like a drum skin.

Still, we'd know them anywhere. Their reality more real than ours, bends it to their will.

But how to categorize this? The encounter, early one morning in a friend's kitchen, with his unexpected twin. Mistaking one for the other. Beyond the momentary embarrassment, the jokes about "evil twins," the uncanny, unsettling *inside-out* sense of the known in the unknown, the unknown in the known.

Or finally this? Night now, another kitchen, my own, finding my father, but not my father, an old stranger, dentures removed, mouth slack, features caved in. My father, whom for a moment I shy from.

Like spying one's own face in the mirror with its eves closed.

Something confounds, something has departed, but what?

Peter Ho Davies is the author most recently of *The Fortunes* (winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award). His work has appeared in Harper's Magazine, the Atlantic, Granta, and the Paris Review and has been selected for The O. Henry Prize Stories and the Best American Short Stories. Born in Britain, he now teaches at the University of Michigan