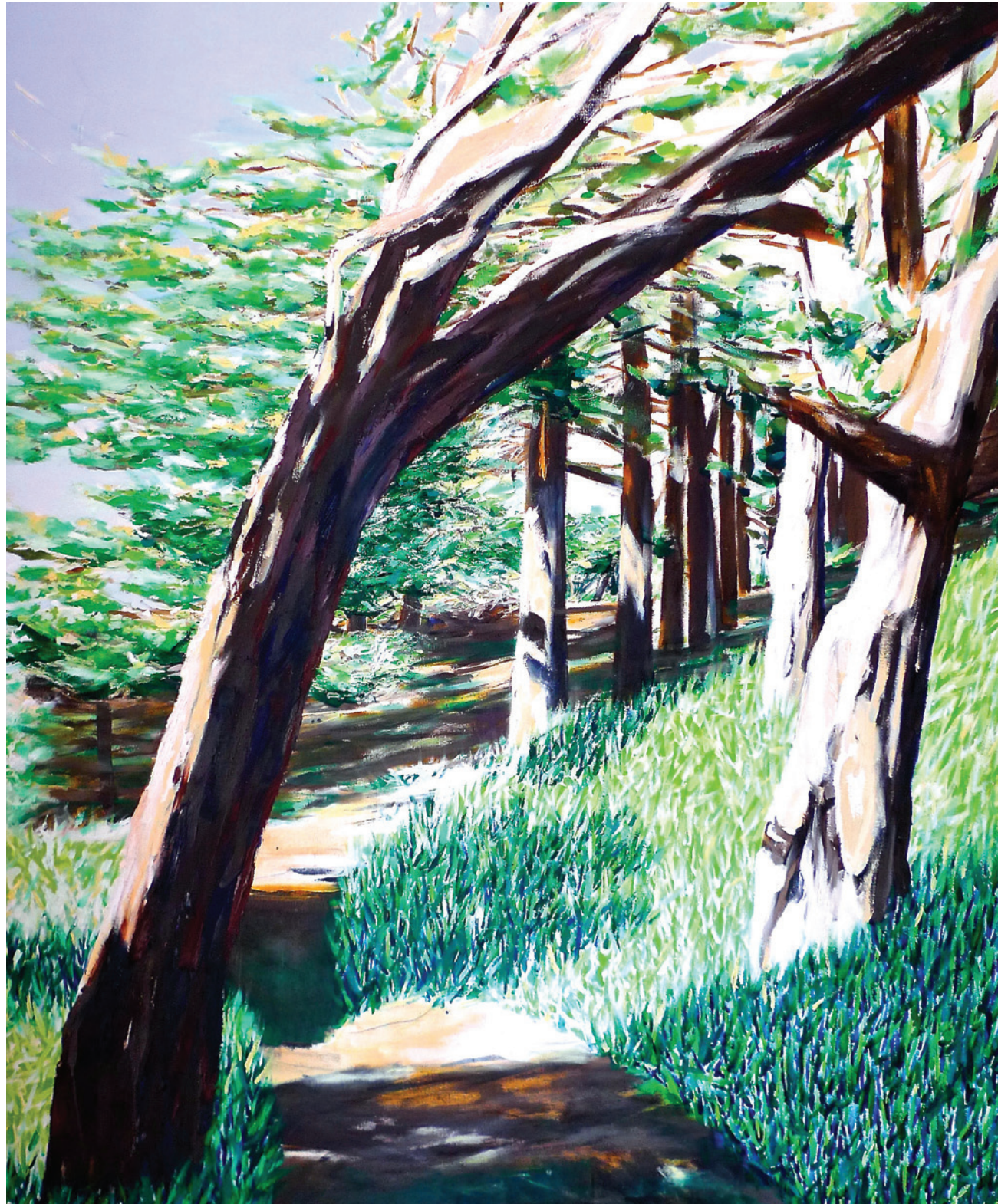


WILLIAM STANISICH

Land's End #1, 2001
Oil on canvas, 62 x 51 in



COURTESY ANDRA NORRIS GALLERY

DANIEL DAVID

Mushroom

When I went to prune
The limbs, groom the hairy,
Disheveled sprigs, I discovered,
High in a crook of the apple tree,
A slight, soft armpit hollow,
Or the tender back of a knee,
A solitary mushroom growing there.

What an obscene little phallus,
White, erect, exquisite, its round
Head a button for a king's mantle,
The stem curved precisely
As a girl's peduncular leg,
The underside delicately gilled,
A sea creature undulating
Along the bottom of the Pacific.

How did the spore find
This remote place, improbable
Shangri-la perched on the Himalayas,
Miniature utopia for mosquitoes,
And thrive on the smallest
Measure of light, soil, moisture?

I'm sure there are many more
Arcadias, vast, impressive landscapes,
California sequoias more majestic,
Requiring greater awe, eyes wide,
Mouth agape before the sublime.

But who am I to fell this timber,
Slice it and fry it in butter?
Delicious! I'll magically shrink
Myself into this pixy forest
And when the sun is harsh,
Loll in its shade awhile.

Daniel David is a writer, artist, and professor living along the southern shore of Lake Erie in North America. His poems have appeared widely in a number of venues across the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. His publications also include articles in the *Journal of Creative Behavior*, the chapbooks *Close to Home* and *Two Buddha*, and his novel, *Flying Over Erie*.