



CHALICE WELL {oil on panel, 19” x 17.5”}

This painting is from a real place in Glastonbury, England. From a sketch I made in the summer of 1986, during a few idyllic days I spent there on my first trip to the UK. It is of a well that lives in the Chalice Gardens in Glastonbury, and a beautiful zone of serenity. It truly is harmonic English garden, beautifully landscaped, with fountains, pathways, diverse botany, trestles, and deep in a shaded section is this well.

The design is an attractive example of early “sacred geometry” in the form of a **vesica piscis**. From Wikipedia:

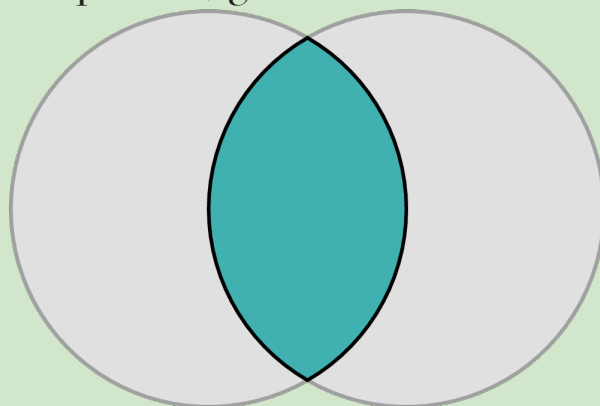
The vesica piscis is a type of lens, a mathematical shape formed by the intersection of two disks with the same radius, intersecting in such a way that the center of each disk lies on the perimeter of the other. In Latin, “vesica piscis” literally means “bladder of a fish”, reflecting the shape’s resemblance to the conjoined dual air bladders (“swim bladder”) found in most fish. In Italian, the shape’s name is mandorla (“almond”).



This shape has appeared throughout art history, and was apparent in a cosmic dream that I had that inspired a series of paintings, starting with this one from 1991.

Back to Glastonbury. It's a uniquely mythological town, of Arthurian legends, mystic new age proclivities, druidic elements, and some dark

British history. Yet it is a fairly normally functional small English town – and quite pastoral with its peaceful rolling West Country hills. I relaxed there for days, not in a hurry to leave. Especially after experiencing busy urban London. The pastoral, green area culler Pink Floyd's Atom Heart Mother album to mind. For days I spent up on Glastonbury Tor, enjoying the summery view, sketching, and meeting interesting people; a few of them were far out, talking of ufo's and magic wands. While I don't follow or believe in most things mystical, I still find much of it to be fun and attractive to a degree. I am an artist after all.



There are more stories and impressions that I could write more about. [ask me to play the radio broadcast I have, telling my hitchhiking story!] In fact I returned there twice more in 2000 and 2005 with my ex-wife Alisa, who gained a genuine interest in the place.



This painting belongs to my dear friends Joey and Jim Talley, who live in my favorite town of Fairfax, California – which in ways feels somewhat like an American Glastonbury to me.

- Dean Gustafson, June 2020

