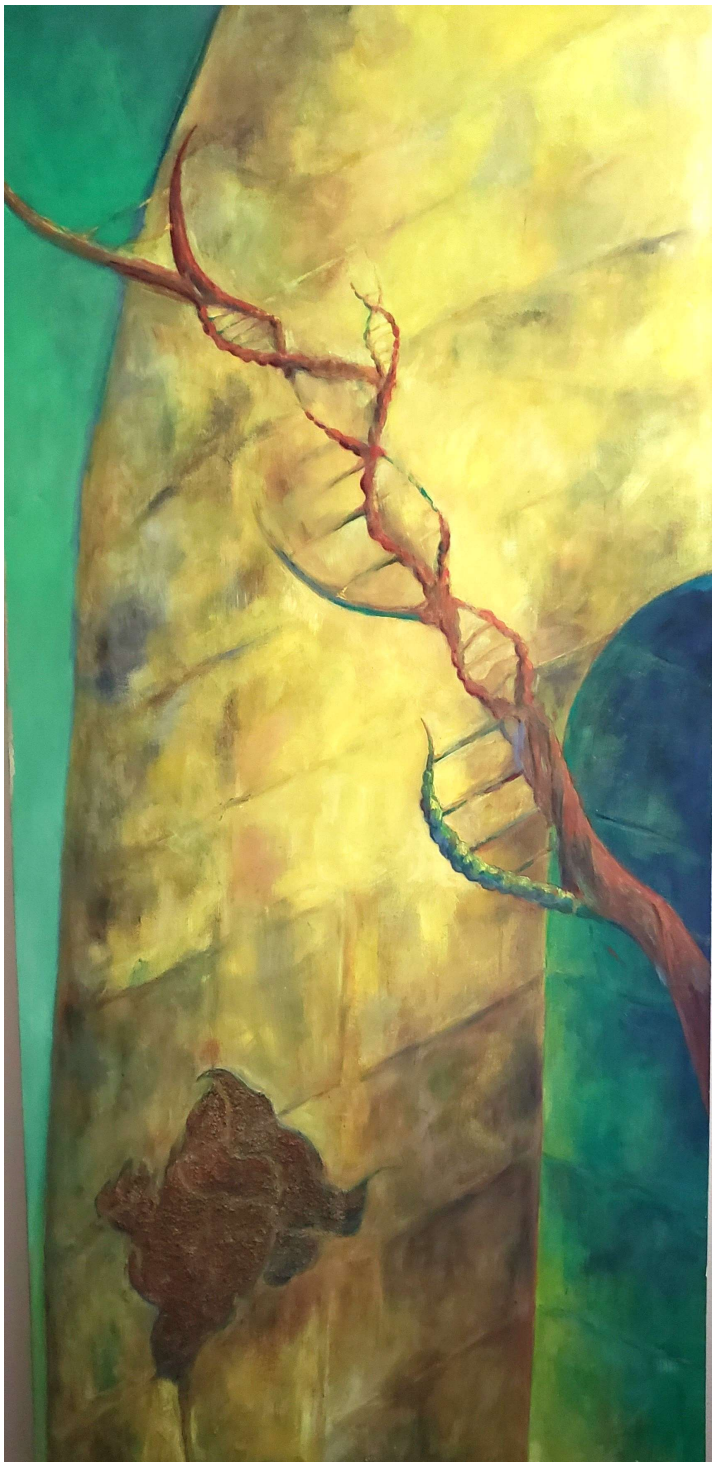
"Nucleoside Of Pangaia" - 1992



56" x 31" oil (with some sand) on canvas. 1992

From a season I received some new colors paint tubes, birthday gifts both from Pam Meier of Minneapolis, and P Segal in San Francisco generously gave me

Windsor & Newton tubes of *Emerald Green, Cobalt Blue* and *Lemon Yellow*, becoming favorites. This painting took advantage of those specific paints!

Painted during prolific years in my **Mission** district flat. Experimental, yet this feels complete. I came up with a vague idea of origins of life, with the recurring DNA strand (from my previous series in mid-80s), as a branch emerging from an emerald cavern. It looks as if it's from a sulphuric wall, tower, or possibly a geyser now turned solid after drying up. Seen in **Yellowstone**, and more vividly during those years — the **Black Rock Desert** in **Nevada** for the *Burning Man* event (those few of us felt we owned that event in its beginnings.) Those desert springs are certainly in the zeitgeist of this painting. Plus the new paint colors informed this. It is gemlike; elemental and chemical in nature.

The part I dislike, but fortunately doesn't dominate, is the vaguely meat-slab looking bit near the bottom. It's supposed to represent **Pangaea**— Earths continents in one single land mass in formative late Paleozoic and early Mesozoic epochs in this planets formation. Hence the title I originally gave this (taking liberties with the spelling). I added sand to that detail to separate it out — an experiment for me. It doesn't dominate as I said, and what does dominate is the color!
I'm changing the title to something related to chemical elements, related to gene formation. Something this painting attempts to vaguely convey.
"*Nucleoside of* ... (*somewhere*)" makes for kind of a pun that I like. "Pangaia" fictionalizes the meaning and it's sound, as there is no such thing.
Here's a technical description of what a nucleoside is :

> "A nucleoside is a molecule composed of a nitrogenous base (purine or pyrimidine) and a pentose sugar (ribose or deoxyribose). It is essentially a nucleotide without the phosphate group(s).
> When a phosphate group is added to a nucleoside, it forms a nucleotide, which is the monomer of nucleic acids (DNA and RNA)"

That doesn't describe the painting itself, but lends to a part of its concept. It has eye catching colors, and that is its best quality, and the oblique, vertical composition. Mythical, with merely a hint of science.

This now belongs to Cheryl Bales, now living in the Southeast part of the country.

- Dean Gustafson, August 2025