

# MARIETTA PATRICIA LEIS

## Nightshades

During January 2010 I was an Artist in Residence in Northern Thailand, a magical place in many ways—a sensual place of colors, smells, textures, patterns and nature.

In the evenings after a warm day spent working I would watch the light disappear from the sky. Ribbons of gray and black would transform the day into night with subtle gradients of light until a cocoon of blackness eventually enveloped the world below. Many times stars would twinkle or the moon would shine creating a compelling drama.

Those times transfixed me. They held a fascination for me. It was blackness without fear, a calming darkness. I find the nighttime very powerful and Thailand's darkness was exceptionally intriguing to me. After a day spent reeling from trying to capture the colors surrounding me in paintings, I found drawing the night sky was a wonderful way to slide into the velvety smoothness of the night.

The drawings were done with crosshatch strokes of pen and ink on 8" x 8" paper. As I watched the skies darken my lines became more intense intersecting previous lines over and over until blackness owned the space. When the last line was drawn I felt as though the sky and I had melded together.