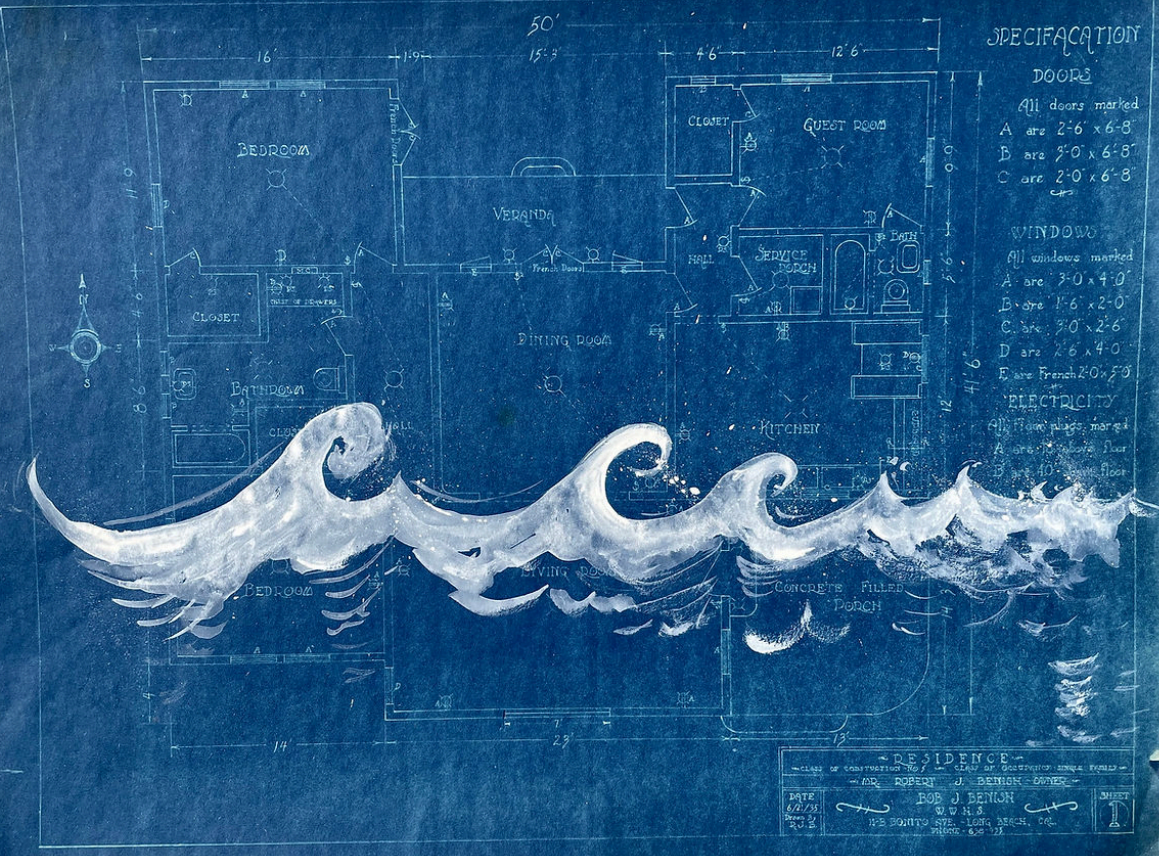




This series of watercolors on found drawings, contrasts the comfort of what “home” should be, with the realities of expansion, development, and extraction of the environment. The found architectural drawings were done by my father, Robert Benish, in school in Long Beach, California, when he was a teenager, in the early 1930’s. Oil was discovered in Long Beach in the 1920’s, which led to the port and harbor being built, and new housing. Workers were employed in the petroleum industry and later the factories that manufactured ammunitions and military aircraft, as WWII broke out. The first affordable housing track in Southern California was built in Long Beach in 1938, ostensibly to house the lower classes that were manning the oil refineries. The connections to war, oil, and climate are all too familiar, especially as we watch the Ukrainian crisis today.

On a personal note, my father went to fight in WWII not long after these drawings were made, bombing Hitler’s expansion into Eastern Europe to control the oil fields. When he returned from the war, like all veterans of the time, he was allowed to buy a house with low interest (in Long Beach), in one of those new affordable housing tracts. These houses today are filled with mostly communities of color, who like 14% of the population in California, live within 1 mile of hazardous oil and gas wells. Home is no longer a haven, but a reflection of our rising temperatures globally: filling with water, fire, petrochemicals, and illness.

There are 12 in the series, 37 x 51 cm. Watercolor on paper.
More HERE: <https://www.barbarabenish.com/climate-watercolors-2020>



RESIDENCE
 CLASS OF CONSTRUCTION No. 1 - CLASS OF GOVERNMENT UNDER PERMITS -
 MR. ROBERT J. BENJON - OWNER
 DATE 6/2/23
 DRAWN BY
 425 BOUNTY ST. LONG BEACH, CALIF.
 PHONE 6-2-73
 SHEET 1