



The Conversion  
of Jeff Williams

by Doug Thayer

234 pp. / \$18.95

Provo is a world away from San Diego. In this topsy-turvy tale, it is the wealthy, religious, east-bench Provoans who enjoy the best that life can offer and share it with a less privileged, laid-back, So Cal teenager over one summer vacation. At first, Jeff finds himself dazzled by east-bench affluence and faith. But as the summer progresses, events persuade him to rethink this religion-and-riches culture and to accept that the normal temptations and foibles of youth—without the Porsche—are just fine: “Every September before school, Dad gave me a blessing and told me to be receptive to the guidance of the Holy Ghost. I didn’t particularly like the idea of the Holy Ghost following me around, checking up on what I was doing all the time, but Mom said I needed all the help I could get, particularly when it came to girls. I liked living in Aunt Helen’s eight-million-dollar house. It made me feel like I might enjoy the summer more than I had thought I would. I knew that I wouldn’t be able to wander around the house in my boxers and t-shirt, but I felt important.”

WWW.SIGNATUREBOOKS.COM

.....

## ABOUT THE ARTIST

Maryann Webster was born in San Francisco and grew up in northern California. She received an MFA and a Research Fellowship award from the University of Utah where she now teaches. Recent exhibitions of her work have been in galleries in New York, Chicago, Berkeley, Santa Fe, and Portland.

She works with porcelain and glaze-like enamels that withstand extremely hot temperatures. She likes to imagine these durable materials outlasting our civilization.

.....

## ARTIST'S STATEMENTS

### THE FRONT COVER: *Destroying Angel* (center panel from triptych)

I am interested in ancient icons and their naïve style of expression. Ezekiel refers to fierce angels with eyes on their wings, and also great wheels called thrones or ophannim, which seemed to transport these beings. This angel is poised on a mushroom-shaped cloud with a radiation symbol at the center of the wheel. The planes represent the B-29 bombers that carried atom bombs. Nearby Wendover, Utah, was the top-secret take-off point for the Hiroshima-Nagasaki bombings. Growing up with the culture of constant nuclear threat and bomb testing in Nevada have greatly influenced this piece.

### THE BACK COVER: *Mutant Garden Diptych*

Adam and Eve represent pure, untouched nature. In this instance, however, the animals around them are sickly or altered in some way. Behind the two figures are seen a nuclear power plant and the mushroom-shaped clouds of atomic bombs. In one corner an angel witnesses the precarious scene, while Adam and Eve seem unaware of the destruction. Most of the background is covered with 22-karat gold leaf, which is intended as a metaphor for radioactivity. Historically, a gold leaf background represented the holy light of heaven. I have included a nuclear power plant because radioactive contamination is considered a serious threat to nature and human life. Utah is targeted by the federal government as the site of the world's largest nuclear waste dump at Skull Valley, fifty miles from the Wasatch Front.

.....

DIALOGUE

P.O. Box 58423

Salt Lake City, UT 84158

*Address Correction Requested*

