

**Following is the artist's concept for the story behind the 'Observatory Gardens' paintings and some other related paintings.**

There is a large, old observatory on a hill which is at the end of a peninsula. It is surrounded by many small but mountainous islands that form a chain running north and south along the coastline of a bay.

Back on land, the hill and observatory are in turn surrounded by various kinds of gardens that fan out in all directions for several miles.

Underneath the observatory built into the hill are small shops, pubs, restaurants, galleries and concert areas. There are canals and underground streams that intermingle with the surrounding gardens, ruins and various small lakes. Some of these streams and lakes feed into estuaries along the coast.

There are also two cities nearby that are across the river from one another. There are also smaller villages nestled among the hills and valleys of this land until they gradually become more sparse inland.

No matter where you go in this land, though, there are plenty of gardens, picturesque ruins, small lakes and rivers of various sizes, as well as hills and valleys.

Then there are the luminorphs. These living things are plant, yet animal. They are mysterious and elusive and not fully understood. They rise from shallow water to dwell in the woods and ruins. They can be seen year round but are the most plentiful between dusk to dawn from Spring to late Autumn.

There are two different species:

The denser, plant-like ones are anywhere from three to twenty or so feet high. The smaller ones remain stationary and grow out of the ground like any other plant. The larger luminorphs need more water. So they creep slowly across the landscape at a snail's pace. These are the 'walking' luminorphs. There is also a subspecies of this group that produces helium and floats slowly from place to place. This species of luminorph seems to exhibit no distinct level of consciousness or awareness toward their surroundings.

The second group are the jellyfish-like translucent luminorphs. All luminorphs can phosphoresce, or glow, to a degree. Hence the name, 'luminorphs'. However, this species is particularly adept at it as they glow and undulate while changing colors. Some, at first glance appear to be made of nothing but light itself. This species is entirely airborne as they float gently across the sky, though never very high, occasionally coming to rest for short intervals.

Some of these brightly glowing luminorphs can fit in the palm of a child's hand. Others are giants. In the wild lands of the Ancients, the 'Old Ones' can be seen on rare occasions. They are as big as dirigibles that fly slowly across the sky, reaching out to one another, dancing and swirling like enormous dragons.

These larger translucent luminorphs have another peculiar characteristic as well. If a person touches one of the more solid plant-like luminorphs there is usually nothing remarkable about this. However, most people who have come into physical contact with one of the larger translucent luminorphs have had one of two different emotional reactions. There is a bit of a numbing sting in both cases but some people may experience a sense of euphoria and sudden insight, while others can feel a sense of dread and emptiness inside.

It has not yet been proven, but some people have said that they briefly felt a sort of telepathic connection with a sentient intelligence in these luminorphs that they encountered as well.

Another remarkable feature of this land around the observatory and its accompanying gardens are the inter-dimensional portals which exist. These are portals that one can come across here and there. Some people have a space-time portal on their property that they build an arch or door around, then plant a garden around it.

If one enters a portal you can find yourself in another land or even on another planet in another dimension. This is how people believe the luminorphs entered the world. It was just a few generations ago when the luminorphs, bit by bit, were first spotted by people.

The portals are unpredictable, though. Most portals remain consistent as to where you end up on the other side and how you return. No matter how long you take on the other side, when you come back with most of the space-time portals, no time has elapsed since you left.

Unfortunately, with some portals are unstable for some reason not yet understood. The location that you end up in changes without warning while days, weeks, months, or even years could pass on this side of the portal. This makes these fluctuating portals extremely risky. Even dangerous.

Aside from the luminorphs and the odd space-time portals that can be found here and there, life goes on as usual. The people of this land have their jobs, their art, their music and their various interests like gardening (almost everyone has a garden) and astronomy (the more well-to-do sometimes have small observatories built into their houses). Then of course, there is reading, film and television, computers, various sports and games, as well as conventional non-portal traveling by foot, by train, or by dirigibles and spaceships.

As you might imagine, people in this world are quite content for the most part. Life is not perfect, but pretty close to it.

Still, there is a growing uneasiness. There has been a steadily increasing number of cases in which people have reported feeling a sense of foreboding rather than euphoria, after coming into contact with one of the larger translucent luminorphs.

Then there is a rumor of war on one of the distant planets – and it may be spreading. War was thought to have been extinct for centuries. This is disturbing.



A Country House Garden



Autumn Spirits III



Loch Duich After the Rain



Observatory Gardens After the Rain



Observatory Gardens at Night



Observatory Gardens in Spring



Observatory Gardens in Winter



Ruins at Night



Secret Garden III



Secret Garden



The Old Ones



Water Garden at Dusk