allusive narrative, Chandler creates a complex matrix through an obsessive crafting that is highly additive and densely layered. The high-keyed hues and glitter flaunt Chandler's skill as a quirky colorist as they give the scene the giddy energy of a carnival. Acidic yellows, blazing blues and luxuriant burgundies bump up against lurid pinks and powdery pastels. Similarly, Chandler's broad brushstrokes alternate with finer ones, resulting in an intricate system of gestural painterliness that hovers between the cornball and the sublime. Pictorial space is shallow, but bottomless. Yet the keen sense of play makes the paintings seem not so much descriptions as outbursts of life. Tears, after all, are considered a release, a psychological tonic, and to many a glimpse of something deeper—not only the heart's own sign language, but emotional perspiration from the well of humanity. Tears lubricate celebrations and funerals, public rituals and private pain. Similarly, the votive-like candles in the Marie Antoinette works both conceal and reveal, poeticize the mundane and serve as vessels of memory. Whereas the diffuse flickerings and freely painted flames refer to the light of understanding, they summon forth what barely holds, what is mutable and contingent. Gnarly clusters of line seemingly hover, at once defiantly confrontational and vulnerable. Vehement, loaded strokes allow thinned paint to drip down, evoking melting liquid. Chandler manages to take an unabashedly beautiful lavender and mint green, or an intense burning orange and make them float as if they were as light and ethereal as air. As an image of illumination, the candle is an important symbol in various rituals, while blowing out candles on a birthday cake, of course, shifts the symbolism to the breath—life continuing beyond the extinguished years. Moving back and forth between abstract thought and sensuous physicality, Chandler confounds the translation of her work between perception and cognition—seeing and knowing, the literal and the illustrative.

But the important thing is not the specifics of these works. It is the spirit she conveys: that of a pure, unsullied wildness whose changes and constancies reverberate deeply in her mind. If there is a discernible shift in Chandler's art, it is more one of mood. The pleasure she takes in the vitality of her subjects seems to have deepened and become more forthright. The immediate decorative impact of Chandler's gorgeously seductive vignettes evokes the high-minded Neoclassicism epitomized in the pastoral fantasy of Marie Antoinette's fake bucolic realms. The darker, threatening side of nature that was to be depicted in much 19th century Romanticism was banished from this controlled environment. Chandler's enchanted gardens, polar landscapes and snowy Alpine vistas are similarly idealized; yet their sense of foreboding, of brooding melancholy, is all the more powerful for being tied to no particular event. They are paeans to the frozen majesty of the north, where once-terrifying views have been reduced to fragile eco-systems, just barely hanging on after centuries of human assault. Chandler argues that what we have lost along with this inviolable wilderness is the possibility of awe. At best we can hope to stumble across something pristine that might stir the soul, a patch of turf untouched by human excess. In any case, Chandler engenders an alternative world that both serves to locate or "place" us, however shakily or provisionally, supplying us with a visual equivalent for an internal state. In *Garden of Illusions,* an air of enchantment is evoked by emerald green and pink veils, creamy brown tones, in addition to a pale yellow luminescence that