



COURTESY OF KEIKO TANABE

—LE PUY-EN-VELAY, FRANCE "I believe my love affair with France started even before I was born," says Japanese watercolor artist Keiko Tanabe, a resident of southern California. "My father was a renowned scholar of French literature and philosophy, and he literally devoted his life to his work, traveling back and forth between Japan and France. I suppose I inherited some of his Francophilia—growing up in Kyoto and Osaka, I was fascinated by anything Gallic. So, as a painter, it was natural for me to choose French landscapes as one of my favorite subjects.

"Earlier this year I paid a second visit to Le Puy-en-Velay, a beautiful town in central France, in a mountainous region called Auvergne. My father, who passed away in 2008, was particularly fond of this area, so returning here was a very emotional experience for me. This watercolor is one of my favorites from that trip, a sweeping view of the town and its distant hills from the Cathédrale Notre-Dame du Puy. The setting was simply breathtaking." ☺