



Monticello

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS & VIEWS



Daniel Blagg

Starlite Motel.
Daniel Blagg, Oil
on canvas, 38
x 58"



The Sleep of
Wisdom, Daniel
Blagg, Oil on
canvas, 58 x 84"



Western Motel, Daniel Blagg, Oil on canvas, 38 x 58"



Home of the Brave, Daniel Blagg, Oil on canvas, 52 x 38"

DANIEL BLAGG

By S M Grant

Artist Daniel Blagg has been a fixture in the Ft Worth Art Scene for over 4 decades now. He, along with twin brother Dennis, is a cornerstone artist in the Artspace 111 group. Their gallery is located in an old refurbished factory just east of downtown Ft Worth. The building is, in a way, like home to the Blaggs as they moved their studios there some 40 years ago & eventually purchased it. The place was massive so they rented the additional studio space to fellow artists & friends like Nancy Lamb, Jim Malone & Matt Clarke, to name a few. It was reminiscent of New York's Soho in the early days, with something marvelous always going on. There was a creative electricity in the air & it was like nothing else in Ft Worth at that time.



Dan was there for most of these years as he moved in & took up residency as the studio manager/high sheriff of the building.

Recently I spent some time in the studio with Dan listening to stories about the early days of Artspace & his own personal



The Traveling Preacher, Oil on canvas, 58 x 38"

artistic evolution. It seems both he & Dennis were combat artists, U S Army designation 81E20; Dan was sent to Viet Nam & Dennis Korea. Apparently their mother, Mary Parrino Blagg, had stressed the value of art as they were growing up in West TX & they ran with it. They became known as the art guys in school & in the Army also. Upon their respective returns home from military service, both brothers enrolled in art school & started painting in earnest. Dan explained that he had a job with the US Post Office & it was so boring he decided to



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either do or die. He threw caution to the wind & committed himself to his passion, painting. As the years passed, he grew as an artist & his paintings started selling, allowing him to validate that early decision to go for it. His paintings have been acquired by many national collections both institutional & private. He is also in several museums most notably the Modern Art Museum of Ft Worth. He works predominantly in oil & watercolor & his canvases are unmistakable to those who know him. He has documented a large array of urban landscapes, concentrating on forgotten buildings, abandoned garages & empty streetscapes.



Home of the Brave, Daniel Blagg, Oil on canvas, 52 x 38"

He explains to me that these places just resonate with him. He is drawn to them for a myriad of reasons, but does not try to over think them. He likes to leave a little mystery around his work.

Dan's most recent work has a new element of whimsy in it as he introduces a series of small animals & birds into his canvases. The series referred to as "Critters in Crisis" is a collection of environments showcasing various critters in the most unlikely of resting places. I was particularly taken by a large piece he was just finishing up. The canvas,

displaying an owl resting on an abandoned flowered satin mattress against fields of grasses & feather weeds under a pale Texas sky was quite striking. Dan's contrast of textures & color in this painting make it extremely lifelike allowing the casual observer to feel he can almost reach out & experience a true tactile response to his touch. He explained to me something



The Sleep of Wisdom, Daniel Blagg, Oil on canvas, 58 x 84"

like this piece takes him about 2 or 3 months to complete & refine. When you consider this element of time coupled with the demanding technical accuracy required to create his canvases it gives you an even greater respect for the work. Among his other new pieces, my favorite is "The Traveling Preacher" The oil painting displays a motel sign sporting a rusty top hat with a crow resting atop the off /on bars. This is set in a field of prairie grasses with a Baptist Church signage & the classic West Texas sky. Again, I was struck by his ability to



Western Motel, Daniel Blagg, Oil on canvas, 38 x 58"

create the different textures so realistically & the subtlety of his use of color was also quite remarkable.

All in all this new collection is well worth a visit on Gallery

Night, it will not disappoint. I would imagine the canvases & watercolors will go quickly as they are classic Blagg with a new twist. The show is set up in the original refurbished factory which was remodeled by Margery Gossett a few years back. She has created a first rate Gallery space there, complete with outdoor gardens. Oh & just in case you were wondering Dan is no longer in residence. He

moved up to Monticello years ago, but still paints down there. Drop by Artspace 111 & take in Dan's new show & if you make it on Gallery Night you will be hard pressed not to really enjoy yourself as Artspace 111 is known for their great parties.

ArtSpace 111 is located @ 111 Hampton st, Ft Worth 76102
www.artspace.com or www.art@artspace111.com